



Nelson Bay Foreshore Concept Plan Workshop 3 September 2010

The public consultations promised by Ardent Leisure for the development of its "Concept Plan" for the revitalisation of Nelson Bay Boat Harbour and Foreshore commenced with a public information session on 28 August with around 150 people attending.

The first of two 6 hour intensive workshops was held on 3 September. The attendance was restricted to around 25, drawn from stakeholder groups, Marina tenants and representatives from the community and PSC planning division. TRRA was represented by Nigel Waters and Geoff Washington. Both agreed that the workshop went well with a surprising consensus emerging on most issues and some creative suggestions emerging. Another workshop will be held on 23 September where a more definitive draft concept plan will be worked up for presentation to another public information session before the full concept plan is finalised. That final plan will be placed on public exhibition, before submission to the Minister (not the Council) for approval.

Some key general points worth noting were:

- 1) The Part 3A Concept Plan will override the PSC LEP and DCP and once approved at state level it will be the planning instrument against which DAs for Foreshore land will be assessed.
- 2) The Nelson Bay Foreshore Plan of Management adopted by the Minister in 2008 will be the underpinning document for the current concept planning although, if necessary, it can be amended.
- 3) The process has been made aware of Council's Strategic Planning Principles approved at the Council meeting on 24 August, but these are regarded as just another input.

In general discussion there was acknowledgement of the following:

- There must be a solution to the traffic and parking situation for Nelson Bay as a whole
- State guidelines for consideration of potential sea level rise must be taken into account (Ardent Leisure feels that engineering solutions will be available)
- Additional commercial/retail development on the foreshore should not be permitted to adversely affect the CBD
- Built form should encourage a "fishing village" or coastal town "sense of place" - not a dense, heavy, high rise city style
- some new commercial development is inevitable, to fund public infrastructure works and new community facilities, although options for public funding (Council, State, Federal) should also be explored

The workshop broke into groups to develop possible ideas for redesign of the marina/foreshore precinct. Some of the major suggestions from the groups were:

- Hotel/conference centre at western end of Teramby Rd (provided kept to no higher than line of escarpment)
- Relocate eastern groyne further east (to limit of lease, which is special use zone within Marine Park) to give more options within the marina

- Relocate all charter boats, public wharf, fish co-op including wharf, and seafood shops, and fishermen's boat ramp to locations inside new eastern groyne (fishing fleet could still use current moorings)
- Redesign or replace marina buildings to face both ways and to give better uninterrupted view north from APEX Park and Stockton St
- Event space either on current car park at eastern end of Marina buildings (this could be dual use with the parking transferred elsewhere during big events) OR in expanded APEX park created by removing visitor centre and/or changing alignment of Teramby Rd
- Yacaaba Rd to extend through to Victoria Rd
- Need for new interpretation centre for heritage and natural and marine history displays – alternative locations - possibly combined with new charter boat booking centre OR replacing visitor centre (everyone thinks main VC should be on approach road to the Bay)
- Some new commercial development between existing marina buildings and new hotel
- Essential to protect existing public open spaces
- Retain park on Magnus – no extension of Fingal St down to Victoria Parade as proposed in Council's Planning Principles
- New public toilets in several locations

Areas of difference remain:

- Future of the beach within the marina – some still defending but most now accept a boardwalk is probably more compatible with other changes
- Car parking cut into the hillside south of Victoria Parade, with landscaped roof– some groups thought this unnecessary if parking addressed elsewhere. Park and ride from parking areas outside the CBD was preferred by the majority especially in peak seasons. Others believe that parking close to one's ultimate destination is essential. The traffic implications of hotel/conference centre are major and unresolved.
- Treatment of pedestrian movement from APEX Park across Teramby Rd – pedestrian overpass or at road level
- Future of visitor centre – options include remove centre and extend APEX Park, alternative re-use or replace with new building.
- Extent of new commercial activities east of 'event space' i.e. along foreshore to and past Cruise Inn on eastern Groyne – general preference for leaving as open space but will need at least new charter boat centre and/or fish co-op.

We need to remember these are all only first ideas – consultants will work up and come back to second workshop on 23 September – nothing is settled and all still up for discussion.