



Port of Williamstown Action Group

PoWAG

STATEMENT of PURPOSE

PoWAG stakeholders include organisations that occupy the banks of the Historic Port of Williamstown. They include boat clubs and commercial maritime focussed organisations that have occupied their locations for well over a century. Consequently they share a keen interest as curators of that heritage of the Port and a legacy of their shared history in this most unique location. They are also representative of many local residents vis a vis their memberships and clients and are therefore absolutely invested in the Port's future.

The Victorian State Government is currently undertaking a once in a generation review, Williamstown Maritime Precinct Framework, which encompasses the Historic Port of Williamstown and the BAE Systems site on Nelson Place. Decisions made now will have wide-reaching implications for the Port, Williamstown and the heritage, amenity and safety of the site of Melbourne's first settlement.

The development of the Port of Melbourne (PoM) and the consequential increase in the size and number of ships using PoM , in addition to increased traffic from ferry services has had a major impact on the Historic Port of Williamstown as demonstrated by the increased frequency and strength of Wave, Wash and Surge events. The increasing occurrence of these events has adversely affected our historic Port's waterfront heritage and infrastructure and most importantly placed the safety of the Port's many users at risk.

PoWAG considers the Precinct Framework and requisite recommendations to the State Government as the perfect opportunity to rectify the critical lack of investment in waterfront infrastructure in the area and integrate the various commercial, recreational, cultural and heritage dimensions that distinguish the historic Port of Williamstown from other locations around Port Phillip

PoWAG with its extensive connections to the local community and its substantial maritime expertise is committed to working productively with Government and related agencies to implement on the agreed Framework's recommendations

As stakeholders, PoWAG considers that there are strong opportunities for the enhancement and development of the current marine infrastructure to achieve a fulfilment of a vision for future of Williamstown as the premier location in Victoria supporting and showcasing recreational boating and maritime heritage coupled to economic and community benefit.

Vision

The following are envisioned outcomes of having Victoria's premier maritime hub in the historic port of Williamstown:

Economic

1. A bustling visitor economy
2. Trading boosts for local retailers, accommodations, and hospitality providers
3. Business surety for maritime industry providers
 - a. Service
 - b. Repair
 - c. Maintenance
 - d. Manufacturing
 - e. Berthing and Storage
 - f. Safety
 - g. Compliance
 - h. Sustainability
 - i. Training and education
 - j. Sales and retail

Environmental

1. Seabed and foreshore protection
2. Sea life observation and protection
3. Sustainable fishing practices
4. Sustainable marina management

Visitation

1. Destination port for Tall Ships fleets
 - a. Premier location for visiting Tall Ships
 - b. Significant attraction for visitors
2. Regatta hosting capacity for sailing and cruising boats of all types and sizes
 - a. State, National and International visitors
3. Daytrip and overnight visitation capacity for recreational vessels
4. Actively encouraged, and supported day-trip berthing, with on-shoring capacity
5. Shopfront benefits for Nelson Place and beyond
6. Retail and hospitality benefits
7. Interpretation and visitor interaction with the history of the Port of Williamstown

Community

1. Confidence and pride that their historic waterfront asset is a safe harbour and boating precinct of international repute
2. A waterfront and shoreside interface that has great community attraction and appreciation
3. A place to go
4. An inclusive environment for all to enjoy from an on-water and interconnected on-shore perspective
5. Maritime headquarter capacity for service providers such as Water Police, MSV, PV and others
6. Pride in presenting the historic port and its heritage to visitors

Key Impediments to Development

There are two fundamental impediments to realising the vision

Safety

1. Lack of a **Safe Harbour** which would provide for the
 - a. Protection and safety of users of Hobsons Bay
 - b. Protection for and preservation of the valuable maritime precinct assets
 - c. Protection of Williamstown's waterfront heritage
 - d. Protection for all vessels
 - e. Protection for waterfront clubs and businesses
 - f. Protection for waterfront fishers and other visitors

Infrastructure

1. Old marine infrastructure
 - a. Jetties
 - b. Piers
 - c. Buildings
2. Lack of adequate depth of water to provide appropriate access to the waterfront from the seaward side
3. Lack of protection for marine infrastructure (see safety above)
4. Lack of development sensitive to the oldest Victorian historic precinct

Immediate Actions Required

1. Provision of Safe Harbour with wave, wash and surge protection
2. Rehabilitation/replacement of current jetties and waterfront infrastructure (esp. Seaworks), suitable for local and anticipated visiting vessels
3. Provision of infrastructure/services for visiting vessels
4. Safe pedestrian access to waterfront elements