

22 July 2024

Port of Hastings Corporation
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To Whom It May Concern,

Port of Hastings – Port Development Strategy 2024

The Committee for Frankston & Mornington Peninsula (CFMP) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the *Port Development Strategy 2024*.

CFMP is the peak advocacy body for the region. The Committee provides strategic leadership, advocacy and influence to help attract government support and investment in Frankston and on the Mornington Peninsula.

The Committee is an independent, non-partisan, member-based organisation which works beyond electoral cycles and partisan politics to enhance the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of our region.

Our Strategic Plan outlines the bold vision the Committee has for the region, and it includes five key priority pillars:

- Homes and livelihoods
- Better infrastructure; better connectivity
- Sustainable development
- Smarter people; healthy communities
- A thriving local economy and world class destination

As the Peninsula's peak advocacy body, we look forward to working with the port authority in achieving positive outcomes for the Mornington Peninsula and wider region.

Port Development Strategy (PDS)

Social

A comprehensive, sustainable and ambitious vision for the Port, anchored by the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal (VRET), should be a priority for the Port of Hastings. The development of the terminal is a key priority of the Committee, alongside associated clean industry and advanced technology precincts that could be further developed within the 'Port Vision'.

In addition, the port has a responsibility to provide strong leadership within our region and must increase its involvement in shaping our region. *Community Partner* Membership of the Committee would provide the Port of Hastings with a leading voice alongside the regional water authority, local governments, and health and education providers from across the Mornington Peninsula.

The following items are ranked in terms of importance to the Committee for Frankston & Mornington Peninsula for consideration in the PDS 2024.

- *Confirming a 'Port Vision' for future operations in Western Port*
- *Increase our public profile and involvement in the community*
- *Ensuring successful interface between Port users, operators and the coastal townships (Good neighbour principals)*
- *Ensuring port safety and security*

Environment and Sustainability

The Committee believes that the Port of Hastings should engage in best practice environmentally-friendly principles.

PoH should undertake proactive, thorough and comprehensive studies of Western Port and surrounding areas to ensure any possible environmental impacts are managed in a uniquely sensitive area. PoH must also continue to respect the international significance of the UNESCO biosphere and Ramsar-listed wetlands within Western Port.

The proposed development of the VRET and further net-zero industries provide the port with an opportunity to take a leading role in facilitating Victoria's transition to a clean energy future. By doing this, the region will encourage like-minded industries to Hastings which will enhance the environmental and economic opportunities for the community.

The significance of the VRET should firmly place this project as a major priority for the PoH and continue to engage with key stakeholders and build community support for this game-changing project for our region.

The following items are ranked in terms of importance to the Committee for Frankston & Mornington Peninsula for consideration in the PDS 2024.

- *Promote energy-efficient practices and technologies in our port operations*
- *Design and develop port infrastructure using sustainable building practices*
- *Support clean-up events and restoration projects in collaboration with local organisations*
- *Ensuring environmental protection and management of impacts*
- *Ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and industry best practice governing port operations*
- *Ensuring climate change resilience*
- *Define the ports' role in preserving cultural heritage in Western Port*

Economic

The Port of Hastings should develop and strengthen connections with key local employers, local government, and the Committee to further develop economic and learning opportunities between the Port and schools, TAFE, and job-seekers.

From extensive feedback CFMP has received, some actions by the Port of Hastings to-date have not been conducive to building relationships with industry or driving commercial utilisation of its assets. The Committee would like to see a renewed cooperative approach led by the Senior Executive of the Port of Hastings so that the potential of the port as a significant economic driver for the region can be realised.

In addition to this, attracting and cultivating major proponents to invest in Western Port is crucial to the ongoing success of the Port and the region. This means a framework is crucial in order to provide certainty to businesses, proponents, local government and the community.

As previously mentioned, the establishment of the VRET would be a catalyst for further economic development pending further Environmental Effects Statements (EES) and appropriate projects that fit within the context of Western Port Bay.

The following items are ranked in terms of importance to the Committee for Frankston & Mornington Peninsula for consideration in the PDS 2024.

- *Activate and support economic activity (such as employment / partnerships)*
- *Maintain and identify a healthy pipeline of prospective projects*
- *Ensure the infrastructure investment is economically viable*
- *Facilitating trade growth for Western Port*

Infrastructure and Land Management

The Committee previously made a submission to the last PDS for the PoH in relation to Special Use Zone 1 land deemed surplus to the requirements of the Port Authority.

The 2018 Port of Hastings Strategy identified areas deemed surplus to Port needs and recommended those areas be investigated for industrial uses. 585 hectares of 3,500 was identified by the Port as suitable for this purpose.

Although approximately six years has passed, the amendments to the planning scheme to rezone these areas from SUZ1 to general industrial remain uncertain. The Committee urges local and state governments to act now in addressing these rezoning proposals to support local industry and retain local jobs on the Mornington Peninsula.

As of 2021, there were 43.3 hectares of vacant Industrial 3 and Commercial 2 zoned land within the Mornington Peninsula Shire. Based on current industrial land exhaustion rates, this supply is estimated to last 3.4–4.3 years.

Additionally, 19.6 hectares of vacant Industrial 3 Zone land is subject to overlays that may delay development in the short term due to planning constraints. This indicates that there may be as little as 1.9–2.4 years of remaining developable industrial land in the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Further consumption of industrial land since 2021 has exacerbated the already critical situation in the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Industrial precincts on the Mornington Peninsula are heavily occupied by non-traditional uses such as cafes, dance studios, gymnasiums, and storage facilities. These competing uses further pressure the availability of developable land for employment-creating industries.

The Port Development Strategy 2024 provides a unique opportunity to recommend restricting non-traditional industrial uses and facilitating the development of larger industries in these areas, in addition to identifying land surplus to port needs.

The Committee calls for surplus port-related land to be made available for broader industrial and commercial uses to support local industry, encourage investment and create and retain local jobs. Rezoning of Special Use Zone 1 land is critical to meet the growing demand of general industrial use and appropriate development within the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

The need for this rezoning to occur is even more crucial with developments surrounding the Port, and the potential for major projects like the VRET and proposed Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain (HESC) to be established in the region provide further economic opportunities.

In addition, since 2018 and the last PDS, the housing crisis on the Mornington Peninsula has worsened.

The Victorian Government has identified that the Mornington Peninsula Shire will need to create 31,000 new dwellings by 2050 in a region landlocked by the ocean, bays, national parks, green wedge and urban growth boundaries.

Diverse housing options across the region are now vital to securing more homes for would-be home owners, renters, and workers.

The Committee is advocating for appropriate surplus port-related land to be rezoned residential – in addition to industrial – to increase housing supply where it is close to major roads, infrastructure, services and public transport.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire and Victorian Government must further explore this proposal and ensure any land released for these purposes is utilised effectively and located close to essential services, roads and public transport.

Additionally, any rezoning should be exclusively for residential or industrial purposes, given the identified surplus-port land sits within the Urban Growth Boundary. More than 70% (or 520 square kilometres) of the Mornington Peninsula is already zoned Green Wedge, so repurposing any surplus land to meet housing needs and secure local jobs is necessary.

The use of surplus land no longer required by the port is crucial to helping address the housing and industrial needs of our region, and, will help ensure the growing PoH is adequately serviced by a workforce that lives locally and is proud of the activities and projects within the Port's domain.

The following items are ranked in terms of importance to the Committee for Frankston & Mornington Peninsula for consideration in the PDS 2024.

- *Manage port buffers*
- *Manage transport corridor impacts*
- *Protection and management of port access / supply chains (Road, Rail & Channels)*
- *Preserving land for future port developments*
- *Ensuring port safety and security*



Final Comments

- *What barriers or risks do you see for port development this decade?*

Risks to the ongoing success and growth of the Port include: uncertainty over the Port's appropriate role is not good for community or business; national debates about Australia's green energy targets becoming bi-partisan risk business confidence – particularly in the relevant off-shore wind sector; and not planning for the future use of the port will be short sighted – only 10 years ago the PoH was destined to be a container port.

- *What opportunities do you see for port development this decade?*

Opportunities for PoH include: the advancement of off-shore wind and Hastings' strategic location to the Gippsland Offshore Wind zone; the ability to encourage green and high tech related industries to invest in our region close to the Port; and the ability of the PoH to host major proponents and export to the world.

With the appropriate future-led planning, effective engagement with community and key stakeholders, and with a vision to become home to the renewable energy hub of Victoria – the future of the Port of Hastings is a positive one.

The unlocking of surplus land the Port no longer requires remains pivotal and urgent in helping address the regions' industrial and residential land shortages.

With the right leadership, the PoH could play a leading role in addressing both these issues and helping shape a brighter future for the Mornington Peninsula.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

If you have any questions about this submission, the Committee can be reached at info@cfmp.org.au and you can visit our website at www.cfmp.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

Josh Sinclair
CEO

On behalf of the Committee for Frankston & Mornington Peninsula