

Submission on Draft Western Regional
Coastal Plan 2015 – 2020

Directly concerned with Port Fairy, I hereby provide comment and observations for consideration, and hopefully, action to include in the final plan. My recommendations are:-

1. Develop and enact an Estuary Management Plan for the Moyne River Estuary

Reference to page 31 of the draft plan will reveal that no estuary management plan for the Moyne River estuary currently exists. Environmentally, as I see it, such a review undertaken by Glenelg Hopkins CMA with assistance, if needed, from other authorities; is essential and long overdue and should be undertaken, completed and action started by the closing year (2020) of the plan.

My recommendation is that such a plan should cover and at least include the following:-

Ensure existing legislation concerned with industry and agriculture practices likely to impact on the health of the system be fully assessed and policed by EPA Vic;

All storm water drains and outlets leading both into the Moyne and the open ocean be vastly improved environmentally by the provision of litter filters, and that they be cleared of litter on an on-going basis;

Include a program to cover, where viable, the planting of suitable shrubs and vegetation bankside within the lower reaches of the river and around Belfast Lough. The goal being to reduce on-going bank soil erosion loss and associated turbidity.

Certainly, implementation of the above, would be of real benefit to the health and wellbeing of the estuary; improving the whole ecology of the system including the quality of water which will reflect on the health of sea grasses and their scope for improved growth and spread. Discharge into the open ocean of cleaner water would also be beneficial to the waters and ecology surrounding Port Fairy.

2. Ensure remedial action at the old tip and night soil sites are the highest and first priority for the Port Fairy coastline.

Referral to the case study at page 11 of the draft provides some insight into the problems now being confronted today, as a result of the much earlier placement of these sites behind the dunes, in very close proximity to the coastline.

My understanding is that removal of rubbish and debris from the beach at this time continues and is largely being undertaken by private contractors. The nature and potential pollution levels of the material being collected does not seem to be readily reported by authorities.

You will be aware that some time back, the specialist company, Senversa, following taking samples from bores at these sites and scientific analysis; reported a higher than accepted level of a number of chemical and toxic pollutants, and most alarmingly, that ammonia was present at 17 times above the accepted standard.

Undoubtedly, toxic elements are leaching into the ocean waters from these sites. It has been said to me that this is not a concern as these substances would be dissipated on entry to the ocean. However, are such statements scientifically based or is on-going environmental damage occurring along the Port Fairy coastline?

For the reasons stated above, it would be my recommendation that remedial action at this section of coastline should be the first and major priority above all others.

I hope my submission is of interest to the review team, and is fully considered to form a part of the final plan for Port Fairy.

Yours Sincerely,

