



Submission on the DRAFT Patterson River Concept Plan

Formed in 1961, the BIAV is recognised as the voice of the marine industry – an industry worth \$4.5 Billion annually to the Victorian economy and provides 17,700 jobs. Our mission is to promote safe, sustainable boating and facilities through industry leadership.

The Boating Industry Association of Victoria (BIAV) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Patterson River Concept Plan (DEWLP 2018).

1. BIAV comment on the aims that will guide the development and implementation of the plan:

The draft Patterson River Concept Plan provides the lower precinct aims are to:

- ***‘Support a variety of recreational boating activities’***

The BIAV supports this aim in part and is appreciative of the acknowledgement of the BIAV Launchingway Precinct Master Plan (2017) in the DEWLP concept plan.

However, an opportunity to support improvements for the major user and infrastructure funding group (*registered power boat owners and marine licence holders*) of the lower precinct area appears to have been overlooked. The BIAV feels that any concept plan for a boating area precinct must enhance the experience of recreational boaters and not be distracted by development of opportunities for other usage.

The BIAV’s Launching Way Precinct Master Plan (2017) provides ample direction on user requirements and clearly identifies options for improving the usage, safety and amenity of the area. These options are supported by all land managers but appear to have been overlooked in favour of promenading, cycling and human powered water sports by the draft Patterson River Concept Plan.

Indeed, comprehensive user group and land manager consultation undertaken during the BIAV 2017 Master Plan did not support certain proposals forwarded in the draft Patterson River Concept Plan (*for example, L8 - Add launching area or pontoon at eastern end of lower reach for non-powered boats*, which is of great concern to us in terms of over-crowding and access, and in particular safety and liability).

- ***‘Create greater amenity for passive land-based recreation’***

While improvement in amenity for passive land-based recreational activity should be supported, if it occurs at the detriment of the boating area precinct (*i.e. the Launchingway facility and the upstream marina areas*) there will be opposition from BIAV and recreational boaters.

The draft Patterson River Concept Plan appears to overlook the operation of the lower Patterson river as a regional recreational boating area precinct and its designated future role under the Recreational Boating Facilities Framework (2014).

- ***‘Ensure the asset is fully, fairly and safely utilised by the public’***

The draft Patterson River Concept Plan acknowledges that the recreational boating facility at Launchingway is over capacity during peak periods yet provides for increased usage of the facility by the non-boating public and this is of concern.

The BIAV is not supportive of any initiative that will add to congestion of the facility and any decrease in associated safety outcomes where pedestrian traffic is mixed with vehicles towing or launching/retrieving vessels. The BIAV is resolutely opposed to initiatives resulting in increased congestion and impedance of navigation in the river channel.

- ***'To ensure its sustainability, both environmentally and commercially'***

Sustainability of the lower Patterson River area, and the large community benefits provided, can only be achieved through such a balanced approach.

The draft Patterson River Concept Plan could benefit from acknowledgement of the 'user pays' approach and that the current operational management approach at the Launchingway facility is recognised by the paying users as vital to future sustainability.

The BIAV is also of the opinion that current operational management of the Launchingway facility is a benchmark for any recreational boating facility of significant size. Additionally, Launchingway is recognised by the industry as the most important recreational boating facility in Victoria and the recreational boating industry relies on the sustainable operation of this facility.

2. Lower Patterson River Precinct specific proposals that are not supported:

Concept Plan Proposal	BIAV Comment
Improve amenity for broader community	
<i>L26. Local community events held on overflow car park a few times per year (not in peak season)</i>	Not Supported as highly likely to impede access, flow and safety. Distraction from purpose.
<i>L27. New toilet block at the eastern end of the car park</i>	Not Supported if detrimental to access, flow, safety and overall usage.
<i>L28. Larger picnic area at the eastern end of the car park</i>	Not Supported if detrimental to access, flow, safety and overall usage.
Improve safety	
<i>L7. Non-powered only boating zone at the eastern end of the lower precinct</i>	Not Supported

3. Concluding Comments

The BIAV would like to thank the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning for our inclusion in the consultation process for the draft concept plan.

BIAV's aspiration for this precinct is for it to be one of Australia's best quality and most prolific public boating facilities. Our preference is that we not be distracted by developing it for other uses. Precinct developments should be to enhance the public boating opportunities and experiences, so as to maximise the asset that the river and entrance to Port Phillip is.