



City of Victor Harbor Recreational Boating Strategy 2026

City of Victor Harbor (2026)



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Executive Summary

Over 307,000 South Australians hold recreational vessel licences¹, and nearly 1,600 of these are Victor Harbor residents.²



Registration data shows that there are approximately 52,000 registered recreational vessels and more than 307,000 boat licence holders in South Australia¹. The number of people with boat licences is growing at a rate averaging just over 3% per annum³.

The growth in the number of boaters and the variety of activities they undertake present challenges and opportunities. Most of the challenges are the direct result of competition for assets like boat ramps and car parking. Some of this competition also extends to waterways, particularly between personal watercraft and other users.

The boating community of Victor Harbor, including permanent residents and visitors to Victor Harbor, has for some time voiced the need for the current boating facilities within the Victor Harbor region to be improved, this being in response to the population growth, the growing level of interest in boating as a leisure activity and safety concerns arising due to current facilities being over capacity.

¹ Marine Safety SA (2023)

² Department of Infrastructure and Transport (2019)

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020



The historic development of boating facilities in the area has occurred progressively over time, initially in response to commercial needs.

Victor Harbor is a rapidly growing coastal city and a well-recognised tourist and leisure destination. Within this context, the challenge facing the City of Victor Harbor, in representing the boating community, is to achieve a boating environment that recognises the needs of the boating community whilst acknowledging and respecting competing interests and constraints.

This boating strategy has been prepared in response to this need. The City of Victor Harbor is part of a region that is rich in economic, social, and cultural history and which has a highly valued coastal environment including Encounter Bay, river mouths of the Hindmarsh and Inman Rivers and the foreshore areas east and west of the Granite Island Causeway.

In 2004 the City of Victor Harbor engaged Connell Wagner Pty Ltd to prepare the 'City of Victor Harbor Boating Strategy' (2004) in consultation with a Boating Strategy Working Party.

There are numerous other relevant reports (up to fifteen) that have been prepared over the years that relate to the boating industry and potential multi-purpose boating facility and alternative sites in Victor Harbor.

To inform the delivery of this Recreational Boating Strategy, the City of Victor Harbor, drawing on the previous strategy and process, established a Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group, the membership of which represent a diverse range of interests of the Victor Harbor commercial and recreational boating community. This group was consulted on a regular basis throughout the study period, typically through a series of working group meetings during which a range of issues and options were explored and examined.

Whilst this strategy proposes options, both general and site-specific, in some cases further investigation will be required prior to work being undertaken.

Process

During the process of developing the boating strategy, particular emphasis was given to consultation, including input from the Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group (BMFAG) and other key community members, especially those with knowledge or opinions relevant to this study.

In addition, an extensive Community Consultation of residents and ratepayers of Victor Harbor was undertaken in December-January 2026, with a summary of this process in 2.4.

Of critical importance in such an environment is the role of Sea Rescue. This government-funded service responds to demands for their services from as far east as the Murray Mouth to all areas east, south, and west of Encounter Bay. Their effectiveness could be considerably enhanced by having access to improved boat launching facilities on the eastern side of the Causeway.



The strategy identifies and describes these challenges, they include:

- The poor condition of some boating facilities
- Ongoing management of boating facilities
- A lack of access to water and formal launching facilities
- A lack of formal high quality launching facilities east of the Causeway
- A shortage of boating facilities and amenities
- A shortage of car trailer parking
- The dangers associated with launching facilities
- Over capacity during peak times of current facilities
- Safety and response times for Sea Rescue in Peak Times (including traffic congestion from Sea Rescue Base to launching facility)
- Under-resourced waterway management and a subsequent lack of oversight over assets such as moorings, berths, channels, navigation aids and safety signage as well as compliance with local safety rules such as exclusion zones and speed limits



The strategy sets out several objectives aimed at meeting these challenges. They include:

- Improving the maintenance of public facilities and renewing and building new boating facilities
- Improving access and navigation
- Improving safety for the boating community
- Investing in destination locations
- Investing in boating safety and education
- Promoting boating across the region
- Improving the quality of data and information being made available to boaters



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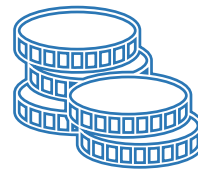


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1. Why do we need a recreational boating strategy?

Boating is one of our region's most popular recreational activities.

Over **307,000** South Australians hold recreational vessel licenses ¹



The recreational marine industry plays an important role within our region. Boating is a key economic driver that employs thousands of South Australians. It's also a key component of our region's visitor economy with boaters accounting for over 10% of South Australia's overnight stays⁴.

Boating is popular in Victor Harbor primarily because of the abundance of natural coasts. Victor Harbor has some of the State's best waterways, drawing locals and visitors alike to the natural beauty.



*At a state level, registration data shows approximately **52,000 total** registered vessels in South Australia.¹*

¹ Marine Safety SA (2023)

⁴ South Australian Boating Facilities Strategic Plan



Boating provides an important social and economic contribution to the region and has helped define the City of Victor Harbor's character. The boating sector plays a particularly important role in the commercial and recreational fishing industries, and in tourism, which contributes to the city's economic prosperity, health, and well-being through outdoor recreation.

As boat ownership and participation in boating within the region continue to grow, this strategy will assist in ensuring that boating infrastructure and facilities meet the needs of the boating community.



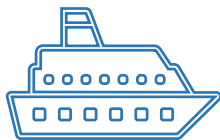
The boating community of Victor Harbor, including permanent residents and visitors has for some time felt the need for the current boating facilities within the region to be improved, this being generally in response to the population growth and the growing level of interest in boating as a leisure activity. The development of boating facilities has rolled out progressively over time, initially in response to commercial needs.

Victor Harbor is a rapidly growing coastal city as well as a well-recognised tourist and leisure destination. Within this contextual background, the challenge facing the City of Victor Harbor, is to achieve a boating environment that recognises the needs of the boating community whilst acknowledging and respecting the competing community interests and environmental and economic constraints.



Approximately **53%** of registered boats were used for harbour or sea activities. For many of these boats, fishing was identified as the main activity **83%.**⁴

⁴ South Australian Boating Facilities Strategic Plan



The strategy will establish a strategic approach to facilities funding so that boating activities and related tourism can grow to support a vibrant economy while responding to the boaters' and the wider community's expressed needs.

Marine infrastructure is costly to build and maintain, and it is important that available funding is best directed to those sites of highest need which will be informed by this strategy.

Commercial marine vessels also play a significant role in the region's future economy and the relationships and synergies between recreational and commercial facilities should be exploited.

Needs will vary but it is important that there is still equity of access for boaters. This may mean that some locations will have minimal or no investment whilst others are developed and expanded.

The City of Victor Harbor is part of a region which is rich in economic, social, and cultural history, and a highly valued coastal environment including Encounter Bay, river mouths of the Hindmarsh and Inman Rivers and the foreshore areas east and west of Granite Island Causeway.

The City of Victor Harbor Coastal Adaptation Study and Strategy (2021) states 'if seas rise as projected post 2050, seawater flows will increasingly overtop protection works in the vicinity of the reserve and playing fields on Flinders Parade and flow over Franklin Parade between Tabernacle Road and The Bluff.'

This boating strategy has been prepared in response to these projections and to place consideration on the need for creating infrastructure resilient to a changing climate and its associated impacts.



*The City of Victor Harbor has **32 kilometres** of coastline and only one dedicated launching facility.*

2. A contextual snapshot of recreational boating in Victor Harbor



Although Victor Harbor has six (6) boating facilities, most boating activity is concentrated at one key location. As Figure 1 shows, Bluff Boat Ramp is the most heavily used, followed by the other smaller and informal launching facilities.



In 2017, the City of Victor Harbor issued **2,644** boat launching tickets and 146 annual permits.

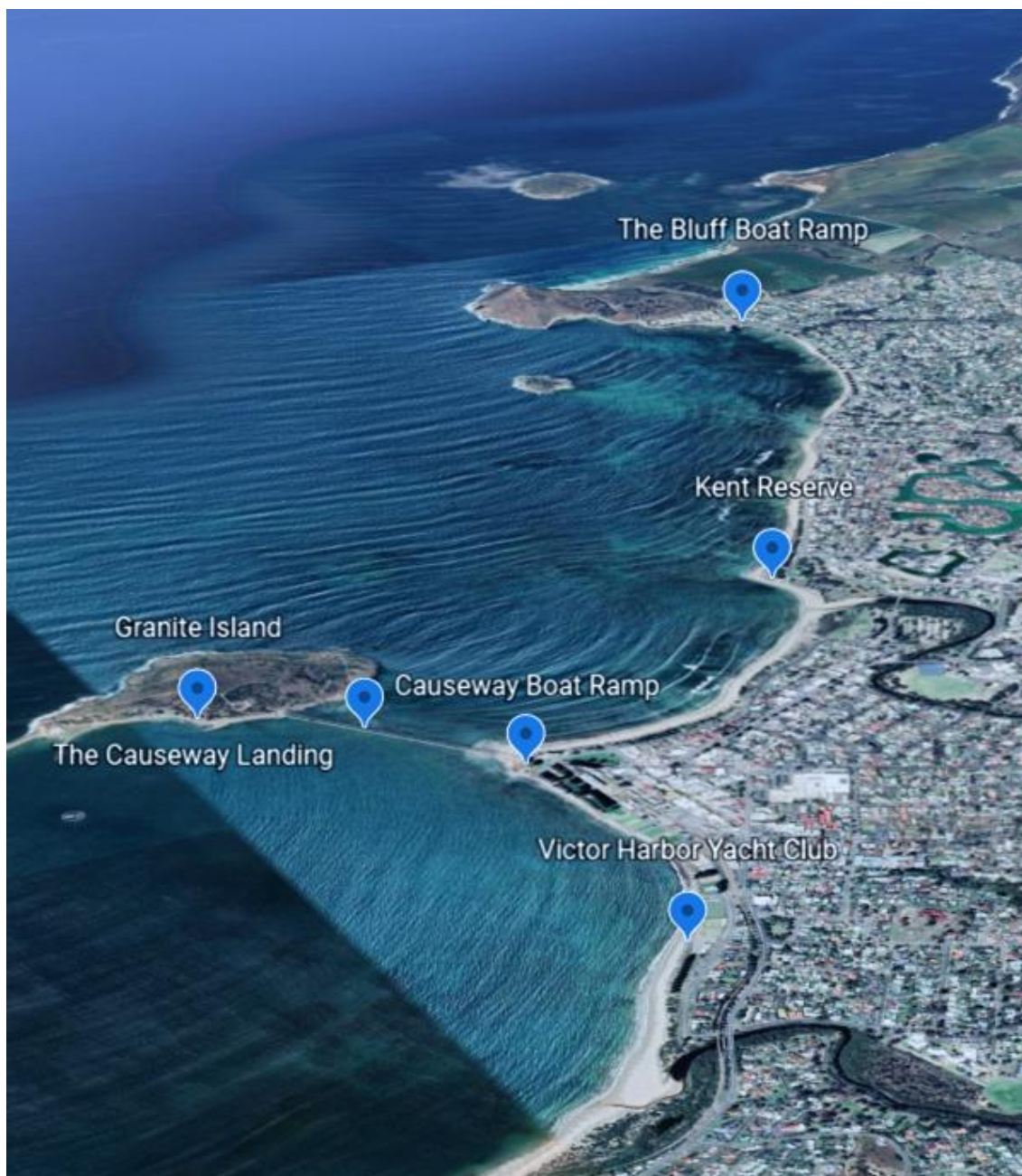


Figure 1 – Boat Launching Locations in Victor Harbor



2.1 Our boating environment

The boating environment of Victor Harbor can for convenience be split into two distinct areas. One is northeast of the Causeway and provides generally shallow water which is normally within the protection of Granite Island. However, it is still exposed to ocean swells with southerly winds making the launching of boats from the Causeway ramp hazardous at times. Reefs and rocky bottoms are located close to the sandy shoreline and there are some notable variations of depth in these areas. The other area, south and west of the Causeway (other than the shallow area around Davenport Anchorage) is more exposed and has the potential to become rough, with little warning, and can provide serious challenge, especially to the inexperienced or poorly equipped boat user.

The area close to, and Southwest of the Causeway and adjacent to Kent Reserve, is a natural anchorage (Davenport Anchorage) which can be hard to find without local knowledge of the reef that protects it. This area is generally preferred by shallow craft and non-motorised vessels.

The area south and west of the Causeway and Granite Island is most often used by recreational boat users accessing the reefs and fishing areas south and west of Rosetta Head and West Island.

West Island and parts of its immediate environs are designated as a Marine Protected Area where fishing is prohibited.

The Victor Harbor Yacht Club is located on the beachfront just south of the Hindmarsh River Mouth, this location being some 800 meters from the Causeway.

One of the Victor Harbor Sea Rescue bases is located adjacent to this site.

2.2 Environmental – Land, Water, and Legislation

The study area comprises significant marine, riverine and geological environments which interface with a built environment that has enjoyed significant growth and redevelopment in recent years.

Some of the more significant environmental features within the area (as well as their environmental significance) that have relevance to this strategy include:

Feature	Environmental Significance
Granite Island	Marine, flora and fauna, and geology
Hindmarsh River Estuary	Riverine - marine interface, flora and fauna including the swamp paperbark (<i>Melaleuca halmatorum</i>). An artificial river mouth outlet has been created here. The coastal discharge point for the Hindmarsh River has shifted over time and its current location has been influenced by human developments.
Inman River Estuary	Riverine - marine interface, flora, and fauna
The Coastline from Rosetta Head to Hindmarsh River Mouth	Coastal, dunal marine system; marine flora and fauna that includes the common Weedy Sea Dragon and Leafy Sea Dragons, dunes (native vegetation) etc; European and indigenous Heritage.
Kent Reserve	Indigenous (cultural) heritage
Benthic Communities - Encounter Bay	Sea grass beds
Norfolk Island Pines	Significant Trees, not being native to Australia.
Wright Island	Marine flora and fauna, and geology

Having regard to these environmental features as they apply to the study area, the following environmental legislative requirements should apply in any investigation and the ensuing upgrade for a particular boating facility. It is particularly important to have a thorough understanding of any legislative parameters prior to the implementation of any strategies to improve boating facilities in the region. A more detailed description of each is provided in the following sections.



Legislation	Specific to
The Environment and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999	Assessing the impact of activities on matters of national environmental significance including “threatened” species.
The Environmental Protection Act 1993	Promotes ecologically sustainable development, construction management and control of pollutants.
The Coastal Protection Act 1992	Protection and conservation of marine areas. Manages construction of facilities within coastal areas.
Native Vegetation Act 1991	The Act defines native vegetation as a plant or plants of a species indigenous to South Australia including a plant or plants growing in or under waters of the sea. Any proposed works in along the coast requires appropriate approvals including compliance with the Act. The Native Vegetation Council must be contacted regarding any proposal that requires the removal or disturbance of native vegetation.
Planning Development and Infrastructure Act 2020	Providing for the proper, orderly, and efficient planning and development within South Australia.
Fisheries Act 1982	Protects aquatic habitats and controls activities with the potential to affect water and/or seabeds. This act has been used to establish aquatic Marine Protected Areas (MPA).
Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988	Protects areas in which Aboriginal items exist or are recorded.
Native Title Act	Impacts on areas where Native Title exists or on which claims have been made.



2.3 Our facilities

There are six recognised locations for bringing in boats into Victor Harbor, with one formal and two informal recognised locations for launching boats in the Victor Harbor area, these being:

- 2.3.1 The Bluff boat Ramp
- 2.3.2 Kent Reserve (informal off beach ramp)
- 2.3.3 The Causeway Boat Ramp (not a boat launching facility)
- 2.3.4 The Causeway Landing (not a boat launching facility)
- 2.3.5 Victor Harbor Yacht Club (informal off beach ramp)
- 2.3.6 Granite Island (not a boat launching facility)

Almost all private berthing and swing mooring facilities on Granite Island were removed when the new Causeway was built. These are reasonably protected by the island itself as well as a breakwater on the eastern end of the island. However, the use of these facilities is generally confined to several commercial operators.

Council's Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group (BMFAG) provided advice that Granite Island jetty and environs is vulnerable to significant swells under certain conditions, thus making loading and unloading in these conditions hazardous to both personnel and property. In addition, the servicing of these facilities is made difficult by the limited access available across the Causeway that is owned by the Department of Infrastructure and Transport.

There is also a small boat ramp on the east side of the Causeway, near the mainland which is not suitable as a boat launching facility.

The following pages provide a summary of each of these facilities, including their features as well as any other observations or comments relating to their condition and any other problems with their use, as advised through consultation with the City of Victor Harbor's Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group.

2.3.1 The Bluff Boat Ramp

Location

Street: Franklin Parade

Area: Encounter Bay

Marine Area: Rosetta Harbor



Description

Largest formal boat ramp in the area, frequently used by small to larger boats. There are accompanying pontoons and car/trailer parking. This facility has the highest usage for the area by the full range of boat sizes however it can cause problems for larger boats at low tide. It is really the only significant facility open to the sea between Cape Jervis and Cape Jaffa and is currently operating at over capacity during peak times (e.g. during fishing events and peak summer periods, long weekends etc).

Facilities

Concrete ramp. Four lanes, basin, single lane channel, breakwater, and pontoons. Parking for approximately 45 cars/trailers. Toilets are located adjacent. Requires more tie off pontoons and access jetty to assist with congestion issues.

Condition

Boat ramp was upgraded around 2010. Previously channel markers had been damaged/misaligned, presumably by boat impact. New channel markers were installed in December 2022. Car park additions and upgrades are required as the ramp is currently operating over capacity during peak times (e.g. during fishing events and peak summer periods, long weekends etc). Channel has recently been dredged. Slime on-ramp and pontoons cause slippery surfaces.

Usage Capability

Most heavily used ramp in the region and has car/trailer parking available but requires additional spaces during peak times (e.g. during fishing events and peak summer periods, long weekends etc). A sheltered location generally provides good functionality for most users. Used by bigger boats although some difficulties during low tides and pontoon lengths are too short for large vessels. Launch and retrieval congested during peak times. Inadequate for boating demands during peak periods including compromised Sea Rescue Launching.

2.3.2 Kent Reserve

Location

Street: Kent drive

Area: Kent Reserve

Marine Area: Davenport Anchorage



Description

Informal beach launching, accessed from Kent Reserve and providing access to shallower water for small craft and wind surfers, jet skis etc.

Facilities

Informal beach launching. No defined channel. Toilets available. Sufficient parking for usage.

Condition

Beach launching area functional in reasonable weather conditions. Some evidence of sand disturbance in launching area. Launching requires 4WD vehicles and experienced boat operators. Seaweed build-up. Formal parking area nearby. Requires channel markers to pass through reefs. Signage improvements required to warn of reefs.

Usage Capability

Suitable for small vessels. Attracts demand from windsurfers, jet skis. Almost impossible to get in and out of the area depending on tide and weather due to numerous reefs.

2.3.3 Causeway Boat Ramp

Location

Street: Ocean Street

Area: Police Point

Marine Area: Victor Harbor



Description

Only boat ramp (informal) east of Causeway. Car/trailer parking for some 6 trailers with cars and 6 cars. Boat ramp facility at odds with adjacent land use. Boat ramp barely suitable for small vessels and not suitable for large vessels. Ramp narrow with drop off on edges.

Facilities

Single lane concrete ramp. Narrow channel. Toilet facilities. Limited car and trailer parking a major issue during peak times.

Condition

Ramp currently in poor condition. Signage requiring upgrading. Sand attrition on northeast side of ramp but builds up on southeast side. Drop offs at the edge of ramp. Ramp not steep enough so vehicles need to reverse into water. Weed build up requiring ongoing clearing. Shallow approaches. Rocks in launching area.

Usage Capability

Insufficient mooring. No jetty. High usage during holiday periods. Surge and surf make launch and retrieval hazardous. Capable of only launching small vessels. Lack of parking. Difficult to access when high tourism foot traffic. Unable to be used during poor weather condition. Dangerous side currents. Shallow waters. State Government has recommended that this facility be closed when an alternative (e.g. East Beach) is built.

2.3.4 The Causeway Landing

Location

Street: The Causeway

Marine Area: Victor Harbor



Description

Previously a small timber landing, the Department of Infrastructure and Transport has completed the construction of a boat landing facility halfway across the new Causeway, to create improved access for local tourism operators. This upgrade occurred in 2022.

Facilities

No boat launching facility. Temporary tie off only with access only by foot (not vehicle).

Condition

New infrastructure, commercial priority use, multi-level steps, not suitable at low tide conditions, landings on both sides, in good condition. Navigable water to access at low tides is problematic.

Usage Capability

Priority commercial use, not suitable for large ship tenders to embark and disembark passengers (intention was never to accommodate these vessels).

2.3.5 Victor Harbor Yacht Club

Location

Street: Bridge Terrace

Marine Area: Victor Harbor

Description

Informal Beach launching facility accessed from Bridge Terrace. Beach Launch only. Currently used by sea rescue for specific vessel launching (amphibious Sealegs), the yacht club, and public.

Facilities

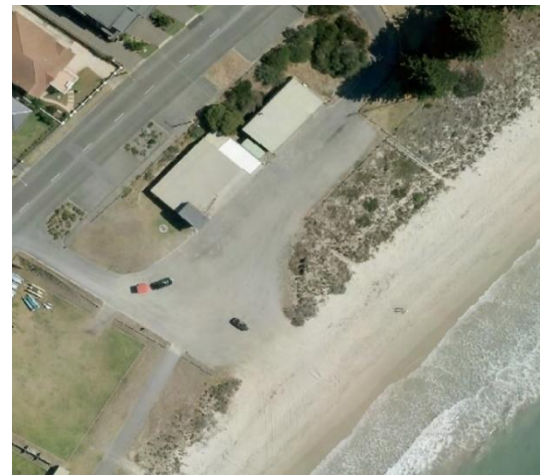
Informal beach launching. No defined channel. Nearest public toilet is at the Skate Park or Bridge Terrace cul-de-sac. No dedicated car and car/trailer parking.

Condition

Signage is poor and over-signing is an issue.

Usage Capability

Suitable for off the beach sailing vessels only, depending on weather as not protected. Currently used by sea rescue for one boat. Launching requires a 4WD or tractor to access the waterfront.



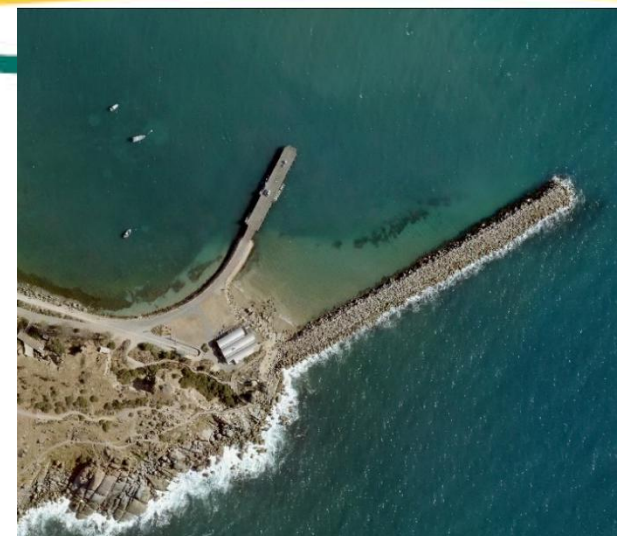
2.3.6 Granite Island

Location

Granite Island – northeast corner

Area: Victor Harbor

Asset Owner: State Government



Description

Dedicated pier and sheltered area on northeast side of Island (protection provided by adjacent breakwater) used by commercial fishermen and tourism operators.

Facilities

Breakwater. Jetty. A few swing moorings. Swing moorings leased/private owned. Responsibility of State Government. No boat launching facility.

Condition

Jetty is in poor condition. Landings in poor condition. Screw pile jetty has three lower landings, two are closed and one is open and serviceable. Berthing in the area is currently available on the new Causeway as well as one on the screwpile jetty. The programmed jetty works are in the Department's 5-year plan

Usage Capability

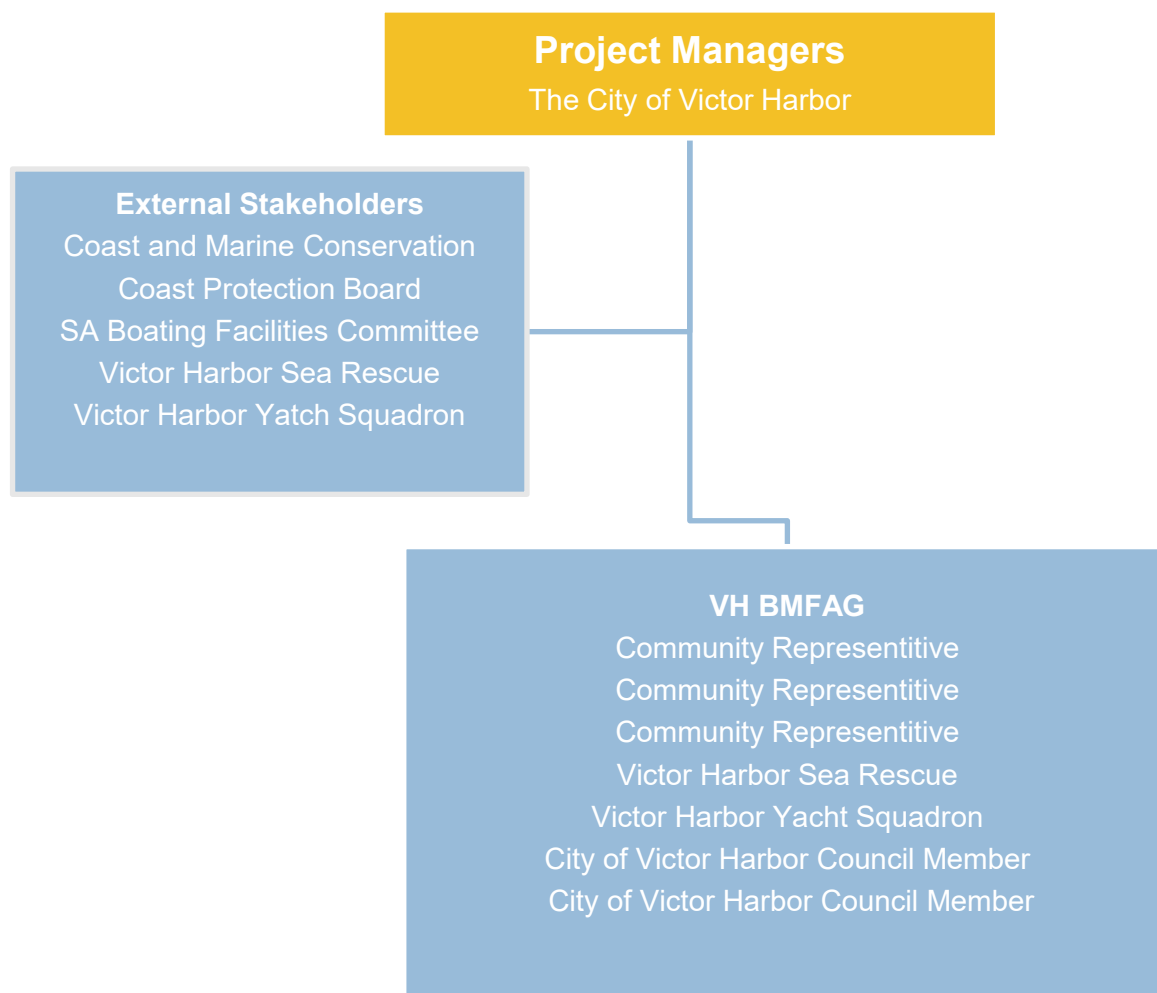
Usage declining due to failing structure. Limited mooring area. Mooring of larger commercial craft and recreational vessels. Seasonal usage. Ability to accommodate commercial vessels. Swing moorings leased. Jetty and mooring use at times compromised by swell and storm effects.

2.4 Consultation

The direction for this strategy was formulated by the key players including the City of Victor Harbor's Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group (BMFAG).

Effective consultation was an important process in the development of the Victor Harbor Recreational Boating Strategy. This was in the main, achieved through a series of workshops held with the BMFAG. This group is comprised of selected representatives of the Victor Harbor Community, Council Members, Council Officers, Victor Harbor Sea Rescue Squadron, and the Fleurieu Regional Development Board.

The channels of communication and strategy participants were as follows:





In addition, an extensive Community Consultation process was undertaken in December 2025 to January 2026 to allow residents and rate payers of Victor Harbor to comment on the draft of this Recreational Boating Strategy 2026 Report.

It is important to be aware that a Community Consultation process does not necessarily reflect the views of the overall community, as respondents are voluntary and not selected as a statistically representative sample of the community, and so the results may show unknown bias.

However, a brief summary of the consultation undertaken is:

- 603 people completed the community consultation process.
- There was clear community support for the draft of this Boating Strategy Report, with 64% of respondents supporting it, and 60% of respondents supporting strategic works East of the causeway, with conditions.
- The order of priority of issues about boating facilities presented to respondents was;
 - safety, then facility upgrades, building new facilities, parking and access, environmental protection, signage and education, and lastly promoting / boating tourism.
- If a new boating facility was built, main features wanted included;
 - dedicated car / trailer parking, all weather ramps, better sea rescue access and public amenities.
- Other major issues experienced by the respondents included;
 - congestion and long wait times at boating facilities, parking and traffic issues, safety risks, limited options for larger vessels, confusion around parking rules, inadequate facilities (wash down, fish cleaning, freshwater), and ramp and channel condition issues.



The key objectives of the Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group were:

1. To provide input into the most suitable outcomes to be considered in assessing future boating facility options for the area.
2. To represent the broader interests of the Victor Harbor community regarding the future use and development of boating facilities.
3. To critically review the preparation of the strategy and assist in the development of recommendations on its most appropriate form of implementation.

During consultation with the Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group representatives were asked to provide feedback on key facilities in the City of Victor Harbor and potential options and opportunities for future development and improvement to existing facilities. As the advisory group represents a cross section of the community, the responses provided a strong guide as to and representation of, the communities wants and needs.

The responses provided represented several viewpoints, however, most were underpinned by the need to improve and further develop existing facilities, developing a new launching facility, and offering a safe environment for boat users. The emphasis on improvement, further development, and safety have been considered a key objective of this strategy.

Who will the strategy serve?

- Victor Harbor Community (through economical benefits)
- Boat users
- Sea Rescue Squadron
- Victor Harbor Yacht Club
- Boating spectators
- Schools
- Tourist operators
- State, Regional, and Local boating interests
- Funding bodies
- Environmental authorities
- Marine industry including aquaculture
- Administrators of Marine Protected Areas



What is needed?

- A facility suitable for all conditions
- Berthing and mooring facilities
- Improved amenities
- Facilities capable of meeting Sea Rescue requirements
- Additional parking facilities
- All weather/tide commercial passenger loading facility

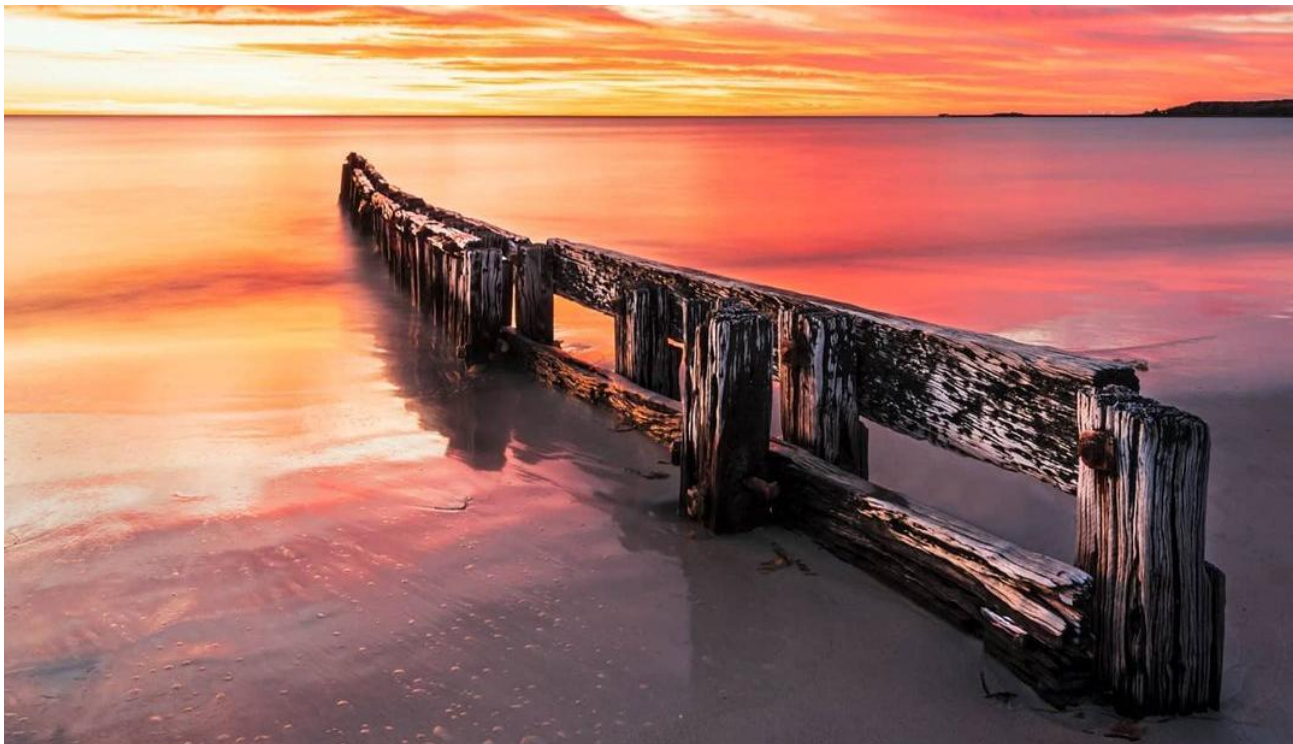
Why are facilities needed?

- Ensure safety can be provided where sea conditions cause problems and during peak congestion periods
- Increasing demand and an evident growth trend in boating activities within South Australia
- Changing trends in boating types (i.e., bigger, faster) demands improved facilities
- Need to accommodate commercial fishermen and tourism operators (including landing facilities for cruise ship tenders)
- Current facilities are poorly managed and impact adversely on the surrounding environment
- To promote boating as a leisurely activity within the region
- To make Victor Harbor a boating destination (already is, thus creating congestion issues)

Where are facilities needed?

- East of the Causeway

3. Challenges



The number of participants in boating is growing at around 2.5 per cent per annum. As the Victor Harbor population ages, so too is the average age of participants.³

The challenge of providing improved boating facilities in the Victor Harbor region has been a matter of considerable discussion for over three decades. From research and consultation undertaken to date, it appears that some locations and existing facilities are in obvious need of upgrades not only to meet user demands but also ensure facilities are safe, efficient, fit for purpose, and remain environmentally sustainable. Upgrades to boating facilities however, require some caution as they can be expensive and can impact on the sensitive coastal environments if not properly planned and designed. Due to the level of interest of users and the wider community, upgraded or new facilities will be closely scrutinised.

It is therefore important to understand the issues surrounding the rollout and expansion of facilities. During consultation, issues relating to each of the sites were identified as well as both the existing and any proposed new issues in a broader sense which apply to the overall context. These include environmental impacts, usability, safety management, accessibility, land use interface and ownership, cultural issues, and awareness.

³ South Australian Boating Facilities Strategic Plan (2017)



Outlined in the following section is a discussion of these broader issues as well as those relating to specific sites.

3.1 Safety

The safety of boat owners and users as well as the public who might interact with boating activity in a passive sense, is significant in this study. In particular, the need to ensure response times for Sea Rescue are kept to a minimum in an emergency has seen several issues emerge about the suitability of current facilities in terms of location and protection.

It has been strongly argued that the level of Sea Rescue capability is compromised by what is considered by the boating community, as an inadequate provision of boat launching facilities in the Victor Harbor region along with current facilities being at over capacity. It is also argued that improved boat launching facilities, especially those located in the eastern side of Victor Harbor should provide an improved level of Sea Rescue capability. Sea Rescue currently launches all of its craft (with exception of the Amphibious craft) from the Bluff Boat Ramp, particularly its larger boats. The ramp provides immediate access to those areas west and south of causeway, but a longer trip is required to gain access to those areas east of the causeway and Granite Island. Granite Island provides a substantial barrier and consequential time delay to Sea Rescue in the event of an emergency east of the causeway.

Whilst proposed strategic works East of the causeway is intended for a variety of users, the normal protocols for emergency rescue would prevail and the launching of the Sea Rescue vessel would have priority over all other users. The larger of the Sea Rescue vessels is currently being stored at Goolwa and there is an intention that once a suitably sized shed can be provided at Victor Harbor, the boat would then be relocated.

The case for a location to launch East of the causeway is supported by the need to reduce rescue time to this immediate area as well as to areas eastwards towards Goolwa, the Murray mouth and further beyond to the East. There are no formalised boat ramps from Victor Harbor to Kingston. Should such a facility be provided, it must be sized and designed to accommodate these bigger rescue boats. The current ramp at Policeman's Point is restrictive and unable to be used by the larger rescue craft.

An alternative option for the provision of a permanent mooring in the shelter of Granite Island was previously considered. The latter option is limited by the restricted access across the causeway (one way traffic / horse tram, etc) as well as the vulnerability of moored craft to the more severe storm conditions.

3.2 Boating Demand

The boating demand for the Victor Harbor area is steadily increasing, along with the demand for facility upgrades and for new facilities to be developed.



Previous studies on current and predicted boat usage in the Victor Harbor area have varied considerably and range from approximately 2,000 boat launches (and therefore retrievals) per year at the low end up to 8,000 to 10,000 as a projected upper figure. It is difficult to compare boat usage levels simply on population and boat ownership, as the waters of Victor Harbor are arguably more exposed and therefore more dangerous than many other boating destinations in South Australia. However, there is no dispute that the population growth in the Victor Harbor area, and increased boat ownership both in Victor Harbor and in other populated areas within day tripping distance of Victor Harbor, will result in an increase in boating numbers and therefore an increased need for boating facilities.

There are other issues relating to boating demand which have been raised during the consultation process and have a bearing on the provision of boating facilities. These include:

- Victor Harbor's strategic position as a tourist, recreational and marine activity destination.
- The special and supporting demands of the diverse range of boat users including:
 - Sea usage
 - Accessibility
 - Car and trailer parking traffic management ramp size/capacity jetty conditions
 - Wash down facilities and waste management
 - Boating maintenance providers
- The beach and immediate waters used by the Yacht Club are considered ideal for smaller yacht and dinghy racing and this area should have separation from any proposed strategic works East of the causeway.
- Potential demand for overnight mooring for visiting boats (i.e., yachts, tourist craft and commercial fishers) and the need to provide safe mooring/berthing for such users.
- Demand for launching and mooring in the summer has increased substantially due to increasing population in Adelaide, Fleurieu and surrounding regions. Extra long-term mooring/berthing facilities would substantially alleviate this problem.

3.3 Environment

There is no question that the Victor Harbor community highly regards its environmental value. This heightened awareness of environmental value is likely to be further strengthened by the declaration of several Marine Protected Areas in the Victor Harbor vicinity.

It is therefore imperative that any proposed boating facility upgrade be developed in full recognition of the environmental issues surrounding it and the need for clear and specific



environmental management strategies for minimising and controlling the environmental impact of any proposed development.

The Boating Strategy has clearly demonstrated that the future upgrade or development of facilities must be accompanied by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. The Coast Protection Board requires all new proposals for coastal development to be reviewed by them. The Board has standardised procedures for reviewing any coastal development which require a detailed account of environmental impacts and management plans to manage the impacts.

Critical to the development process, however, is an appreciation of the coastal/marine environment and processes inherent within, these including:

- An understanding of sand movement and reef conditions (completed, refer John Chappell Engineers report, 1998)
- Offshore aspects including marine biota and seagrass habitat and movement (completed as part of the Causeway replacement)
- Accessibility aspects including intrusion into Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
- On shore environmental aspects including flora/fauna, Aboriginal and European heritage, dune systems, etc. Note that the river mouth outlets for both the Inman River and Hindmarsh River have already been artificially redirected.

3.4 Land Use, Availability and, Ownership

Land use issues for existing facilities will primarily relate to recognition of all adjoining land uses and how the development or redevelopment of any facility will interface with these respective uses. Land availability will have an impact on the size and configuration of a facility as well as the opportunities and constraints for an upgraded or new development.

Land use problems might arise where the normal tasks of launching and retrieving craft and the associated activities impact detrimentally on adjoining properties or areas. Without appropriate planning of a location and understanding the extent of supporting infrastructure, boating facilities may conflict with surrounding uses such as vehicle and pedestrian traffic, beachfront housing, open space, and commercial activities.

The most obvious examples of existing land use conflict currently occur at the Causeway ramp on Police Point where pedestrian/vehicle conflict at peak times is a major factor, and possibly at the Bluff where poorly defined parking areas and insufficient space cause traffic congestion and parking overflow into the adjoining roads and residential areas.

Land ownership for most coastal locations will be public ownership (Crown land) although the adjoining land may be in private ownership. Ownership issues in coastal locations can include matters relating to native title, easements and encumbrances, agreements and covenants which must be considered (and effectively managed) as part of any development.

3.5 Cultural Heritage

It is understood that there are Native Title claims applying to the Victor Harbor foreshore area. It is recognised that Kent Reserve has significant indigenous heritage value however no significant works are planned for this area.

Further, for the remainder of the study area development of Crown Land for the purpose of a new boating facility or upgrades will require a clearance process, which can include a requirement to undertake archaeological surveys to ensure there are no unidentified sites are disturbed. Should any sites of significance be located, consultation with the relevant indigenous group(s) would need to be undertaken.

3.6 Awareness

Education and awareness have been raised as significant issues in the context of developing the strategy. These issues should not be just confined to boat users but also extend across the community and focus on future boating generations and anyone that might visit the coast.

The education of boat users about the conditions of using a particular facility as well as the dangers of the overall Victor Harbor area will in the main, come from on-site signage and boating pamphlets specific to the region. It appears that current facilities do not provide sufficient information to ensure boat users are fully aware of local conditions. In the past, users have probably relied on word of mouth and first-hand experience as the means of raising awareness of these issues.

CCTV has been installed at the Bluff Boat Ramp facility, allowing users to remotely view the availability of parking spaces. Information on facilities is available on the City of Victor Harbor website.

3.7 Marine Protected Areas

It appears that the level of education and community awareness on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) has helped to get this message out to boat users through targeted consultation and brochures about the introduction of MPAs. The Encounter Marine Park and the Encounter Bay Sanctuary Zone are managed by the State Government and protects part of the nationally significant Encounter Bay whale aggregation area. Southern right whales visit this coastline for annual mating and birthing activities between May and September each year, making it a great location to view whales from the shore-based viewing platform. Off-shore, the sanctuary zone conserves large areas of deep-water reef habitats. The State Government is responsible for reinforcing the significance of the MPA legislation and respective locations. Overtime, the boundaries of protected areas and fishing exclusion zones change and are not addressed as part of this Strategy.

3.8 Specific Sites

Following the review of the global issues as outlined earlier in this section, the Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group reviewed the following sites and identified and listed various key issues in relation to these sites.

3.8.1 Bluff Ramp

- Only protected boat ramp in the region
- Poor location for eastern destinations
- Long travel times for Sea Rescue to eastern destinations
- Requires upgrade including additional pontoons and holding bays
- Parking facilities and traffic movement inadequate for the demand
- Conflicts between users during seasonal peak periods
- Lack of facilities and amenities in the area – washdown, fish cleaning
- Slippery surfaces on ramps, managed by council on a regular basis
- Currently over capacity and in need of additional facilities
- Will require regular dredging in its current state

Significant discussion focussed on the perceived poor boating accessibility of some of the study areas due to the westerly location of the only protected boat ramp at the Bluff. Even so, in some conditions, the waters in the dredged channel and the immediate open waters are highly exposed and a challenge even for experienced users.

The pontoons, ramp, and channel all need some upgrading and have insufficient capacity to safely satisfy the needs of users at peak times (e.g. during fishing events and peak summer periods, long weekends etc). The existing land-based facilities are somewhat limited at times by the lack of formal parking and traffic circulation arrangements. Consideration should be given to extending this area to accommodate increased use. Signage was also highlighted to be a problem at the time of consultation, however, has since been upgraded by the City of Victor Harbor Council to address the Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Groups concerns. The level of usage was also considered by some to justify an amenities block in the immediate vicinity of the ramp, which has now been completed. Discussion with the Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group also explored the possibility of extending the trailer parking beyond Whalers.

Other options could be explored to deal with peak demand such as increasing the ramp fees during the Tuna Season to cover the additional car and trailer parking spaces or provision of a shuttle service to an additional parking area. Having alternate remote parking facilities will assist with the vehicular parking but does not address the congestion and queuing at the boat ramp or time spent lined up in the sea channel waiting to return to land. The further that carparking is away from a boat ramp, the longer it takes for a boat to be retrieved. Having additional pontoon / jetty lengths assists in having more boats docked and allows for



more people to go to their vehicle at any one time. Additional pontoon length with boat tie offs, is recommended.

Overall, there is strong support for improvement of the Bluff facility in the short term, in which the key recommendations pertaining to this site should be undertaken in the immediate future.

3.8.2 Kent Reserve

The Kent Reserve beach launching area has been generally accepted as being appropriate to cater for smaller recreational craft and beach launching. There is also recognition of the indigenous cultural significance of Kent Reserve and the potential for this to be an issue should any development in this area be considered. Similarly, the proximity of the Inman River estuary raises environmental considerations if any significant development is proposed in this vicinity.

A key consideration of this site is its proximity to the adjacent reef surrounding Davenport Anchorage, both having environmental significance as well as posing some dangers to boat users. The key issues for this site are, therefore:

- Limited to small craft beach launching
- Currently used for smaller craft such as dinghies, kayaks, wind, and kite surfing
- Aboriginal Heritage
- Inman River estuary interface
- Dangerous reefs and shallow waters
- Requires cardinal markers to mark passage through reefs to Yilki. Reefs past Granite Island and as far as the Bluff make navigating to it dangerous, especially for yachts.
- Lack of trailer parking
- Lack of signage
- Seaweed build-up
- Soft sand
- Low tide has inadequate water level
- High tide has swell movement and surge
- Easterly winds dangerous for loading and launching
- Only for experienced operators with well equipped vehicles

The level of boating usage of this area, together with its environmental significance have resulted in the generally consistent view that there be no significant upgrade works at this site other than improved signage.

3.8.3 Causeway Landing

The Causeway landing, while not a particularly significant boating facility, was mentioned during meetings with the working group and has therefore been included in this list. The key features of this facility are:

- No land-based facilities
- Accessibility constrained by tourist traffic and Causeway limitations
- Limited protection and exposure to winter swells
- Constrained draft, especially at low tide

The limitations of land-based access via the Causeway with its conflicting uses, effectively prevent this facility from any significant upgrade regarding increasing capacity. The Causeway landing replacement was undertaken by the Department of Infrastructure and Transport in 2021-2022.

3.8.4 Granite Island

Noting that the State Government is the asset owner, the BMFAG discussed at some length the opportunity that the sheltered section of Granite Island provides for improved boating facilities. There appears to be some potential for accommodating cruising yachts and larger recreational craft which may be seeking a sheltered mooring between Wirrina and destinations beyond Goolwa (South East – Robe / Cape Jaffa).

The island is however poorly set up at present to accommodate an influx of recreational craft without impacting the operations of the commercial fishers who use the swing moorings or the jetty for berthing their larger fishing vessels.

Access to the island remains restricted and would continue to provide an impediment to any expansion of activity on the island. The key issues relating to Granite Island boating facilities are, therefore:

- Unpredictable level of protection in all-weather limits mooring capability
- Underutilised sheltered mooring area
- Limited facilities to support recreational and commercial vessels
- Servicing accessibility limited by the causeway
- Limited opportunity for commercial activities on Granite Island to benefit from the boating
- Swing moorings inefficient solution for servicing/access/management
- Exposure to storms, swell movement, surge, and northern winds
- Poor access to the city
- No parking
- Poor condition of screw pile jetty

3.8.5 The Causeway Boat Ramp

The boat launching facility conflicts with adjacent land use in that it is located next to a highly used open space area which in peak tourism season, involves pedestrian activity that is generally inconsistent with boat launching activity. The relatively restricted access to the site results in significant pedestrian/vehicle conflict and effective operation is impeded by tourism operators, especially during peak periods.

The causeway ramp is also vulnerable to sand and seagrass accretion on the southern side as well as erosion to the north. In addition, it has limited protection and is vulnerable to the effects of swell, making it difficult to use by the uninitiated and the unwary. Clear and informative signage as well as improved channel markers are especially important for this facility, the key features of which are:

- Only boat ramp east of the Causeway
- Limited to smaller vessels
- Direct access to the Victor Harbor CBD, Granite Island, and generally protected leisure waters
- Vulnerable to sand build-up and storm damage
- Not all-weather and subject to surge, limited to ideal weather conditions only for small craft
- Dangerous to inexperienced operators
- Dangerous side currents
- Impacts significantly on adjacent land uses
- Lack of parking
- Shallow waters
- Ramp is not steep enough
- Insufficient mooring and jetties

This boat ramp, while not ideal due to its inappropriate location, and questionable level of protection, is the only boat launching facility of any significance east of the Causeway. It should arguably be retained but only with minimal improvements until such a time as a better facility is available. State Government has recommended that it be closed as soon as a suitable alternative is built, e.g. East of the causeway.

3.8.6 East of the causeway

This location does not exist at this time but the need for strategic works East of the causeway has been argued for up to 30 years, this being the basis for the previously proposed eastern-side scheme. Key features of such a facility are:

- Provision of direct access to the waters east and south of the Causeway and Granite Island
- Improved Sea Rescue response in all weather

- Allows adequate berthing for Cruise Ship Tenders
- Potential integration of public facilities for boating purposes
- Environmental issues require careful management – sand, seagrass, water quality
- Potential impact on foreshore facilities
- Limited land available to support such a facility
- Demand figures vary for such a facility
- Opportunity to integrate with stormwater management
- Recent studies (Coastal Adaptation Study & Strategy: Victor Harbor; 2021), has reinforced the need for walls (could be a breakwater) along the eastern-side area to protect sand drift and erosion along the parks and bowling club areas.

An Engineering Report done in 2015 suggested that a regional multipurpose boating facility could be built for just under \$5 million, with estimates several years ago suggesting the cost to be about \$11 million. These costs would need to be revisited to reflect the likely cost in 2026. This could be funded gradually by building the structure over say a five-year period, with funds also coming from the State Government and the private sector. A very manageable building program could be something like:

- Year 1: complete detailed design work and funding structure;
- Year 2: site preparation and infrastructure build (stormwater drains, power etc);
- Year 3: build permitter breakwater/groin and install boat ramp;
- Year 4: build car/trailer parks and land facilities (wash down, tourism facilities e.g. BBQ area, cafes;
- Year 5: build boat finger jetties/moorings (up to say 60 moorings largely funded by selling leases to boat users).

Note: Leasing permanent mooring finger jetties along with having trailer parking bays would likely solve the trailer parking problems at the Bluff Jetty.

Many trailers used to launch boats would be expected to leave the boating facility area if boats are able to be moored permanently on finger jetties.

Numerous locations and designs for a multi-purpose boating facility have been prepared and considered over the last twenty years, but nothing has yet been agreed upon as acceptable to all stakeholders in the community, and significant further work is required to develop an acceptable complete structure.

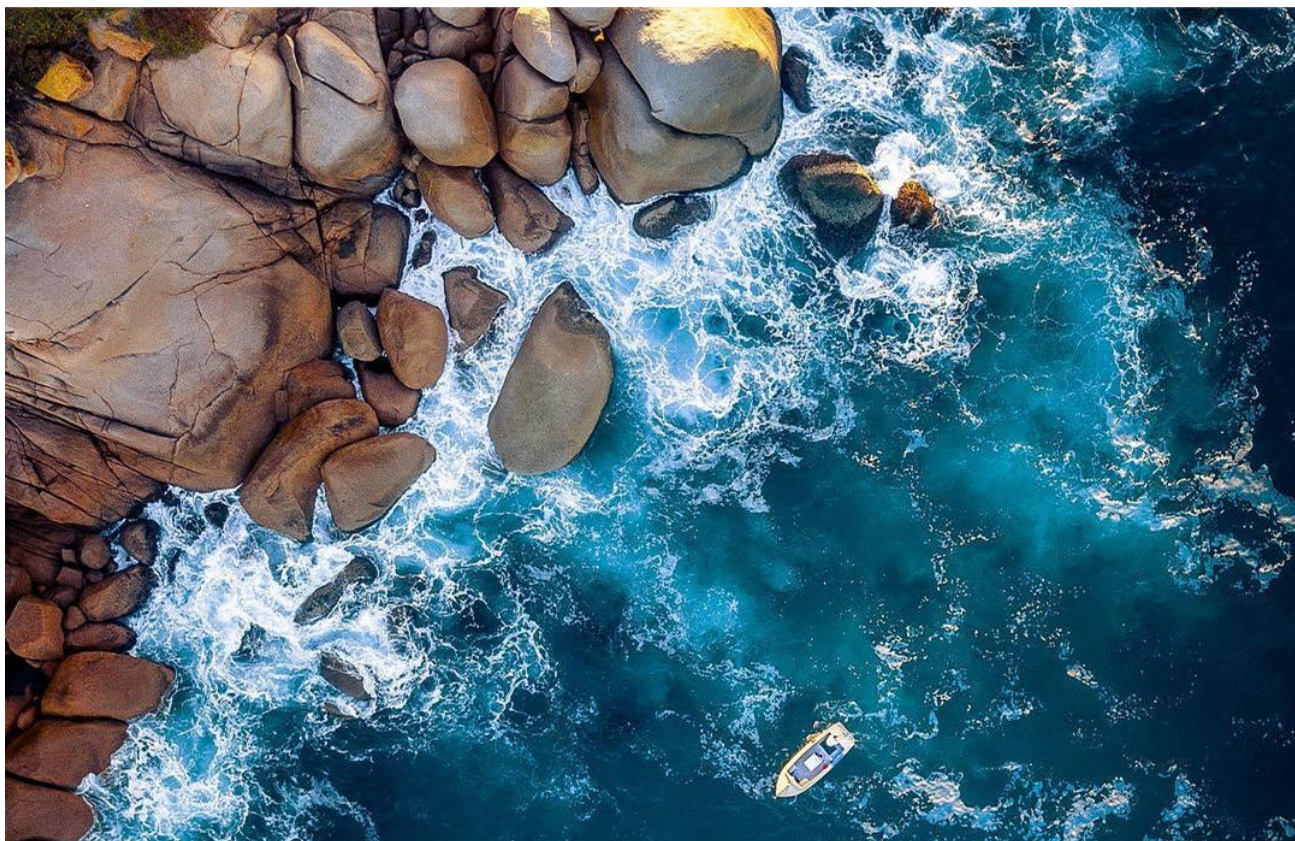
Issues to be addressed further and presented to and agreed by Council include;

- Future demands or requirements as a result of potential climate change.

- 
- Engineering design requirements to satisfy and environmental issues, eg finger jetties, launching ramp numbers and design, miscellaneous facilities (wash downs, fish cleaning).
 - Environmental considerations, including marine life, seagrasses, erosion, sand drift, beach ecosystem and animal life (Environmental Impact Study to be done).
 - Car and trailer parking requirements.
 - Traffic and road challenges.
 - Cost and future maintenance requirements (note that opportunities exist for interested parties in the private sector may be able to assist with design work and funding).

A final design is to be agreed upon based on available funding and feedback received following the Environmental Impact Study.

4. Opportunities



4.1 Introduction

Having identified and considered the various issues associated with the different boating facilities in the Victor Harbor area and boating environment, some considerable effort then went into the examination and review of the range of options that might be possible for future development of boating in Victor Harbor so as to be included as part of the Victor Harbor Recreational Boating Strategy. These are discussed under the same headings used in the previous section titled Challenges and Opportunities and will be used for the basis for selecting the strategic actions which are provided in the section titled Strategic Actions.

4.1.1 Safety

The safety of boat users in the Victor Harbor area currently is and will continue to be an important issue for this Boating Strategy as well as being a driving force in the case for both the upgrading of existing boating facilities and for a new facility somewhere to the east of the Causeway. This matter was described in some detail in previous sections, and the options for improvement are set out as follows:

- A comprehensive and sustained education program is a key factor in the raising of awareness of the Victor Harbor community and especially the existing and potential future boating community as to the unique and potentially highly dangerous offshore waters in the region. Obviously, if boat users only go to sea when conditions are safe to do so, the need for Sea Rescue would be greatly reduced. Hence the education focus should be a key element for improving boating safety in the Victor Harbor area.
- Improved and consistent signage relating to the full range of boating facilities throughout the Victor Harbor area, with the appropriate warnings to boat users of the dangers of this region, should become an integral part of the education process as described in the previous point.
- The development of a safety strategy that includes the role of Sea Rescue. There is a need for significantly improved facilities that would allow for safe launch and return retrieval by Sea Rescue personnel in all but the most extreme weather conditions.

4.1.2 Boating Demand

There has been considerable debate as to what the boating demand currently is with acknowledgment by council that the Bluff Boat Ramp is currently operating at over capacity during peak times (e.g. during fishing events and peak summer periods, long weekends etc). Assuming no change in the standard of current boating facilities, as well as the predicted level of demand, facilities must be upgraded. It can be argued that the level of boat use both based on the existing level of facilities as well as following a facility upgrade, will continue to increase, the question being how far this might be. Research shows that the population of just the Fleurieu region could almost double over the next twenty years, along with surrounding growth, both Metro Adelaide and Southern Suburbs, will increase demand significantly.

4.1.3 Environment

There is no question that the Victor Harbor coastal zone and offshore marine areas are highly valued for their amenity and environmental significance. This fact has been reinforced in the City of Victor Harbor Coastal Adaptation Study (2021), and City of Victor Harbor Urban Stormwater Management Plan (2024).

The existing level of foreshore infrastructure has in some cases impacted quite severely on the coastal environment however, the greater level of community awareness today means that any future development will be afforded a high level of scrutiny. Carefully planned development may assist with reducing such impacts and reduce ongoing maintenance costs where erosion is present.

Any future development will require not only a thorough examination of the environmental issues relating to the proposed development but also clear strategies for the management of such impacts both during construction and for the duration of operational life of the facility.

4.1.4 Land use, Availability, and Ownership

Because land availability along the Victor Harbor foreshore is premium, existing boating facilities are invariably located in a manner that gives rise to overlap and potentially conflict with adjacent land uses. Any option for new facilities is also similarly constrained by the availability of land as well as the potential impact of any proposed facility might have on adjacent land uses. In considering these various options for either upgrade of existing facilities or for the provision of a new facility, the question of land use, availability, and ownership will be an important one.

When considering the option for strategic works East of the causeway, consideration was given to co-locating such a facility within the Yacht Club and Sea Rescue, however, despite this apparently providing an opportunity for sharing of such a facility, other factors more strongly favour the selection of a preferred location further west.

4.1.5 Education and Awareness

Having explained in some detail the benefits of educating all ages of the Victor Harbor community as well as potential boat users from outside the community, as to the uniqueness and challenges of the boating experience within the Victor Harbor area, the following options are suggested being appropriate to raise the level of community understanding on boat safety as well as providing adequate information to boat owners and users and that this be updated and reinforced on a regular basis.

- Establish education programs in primary and secondary schools on this subject.
- Ensure tourist offices and operators strongly reinforce the theme of the uniqueness and challenges of the Victor Harbor boating experience, this not just applying to boat users but also the general public, this particularly including the partners and families



of boat users who are likely powerful messages in addition to those received by the boat users themselves.

- Ensure that signage relating to boat operation and safety throughout the Victor Harbor region is consistent, easy to follow and clearly warns of the dangers of boating under certain conditions.

4.2 Specific Sites

4.2.1 Bluff Ramp

In recognition of the Bluff ramp's status as the most protected and used boating facility in the Victor Harbor region, it is appropriate to undertake upgrade works to promote and enhance this role and to provide a safer and more functional facility that responds to users' needs, especially during peak periods.

The options for upgrading the Bluff boat ramp might include:

- Upgrading the boat ramp, the channel, the jetty and parking areas to provide greater safety and an improved rate of boat launching and retrieval, more parking for cars and trailers, improved and safer circulation and operation as well as an improved standard of lighting.
- Carefully assess the environmental impact of any proposed upgrade works and develop an appropriate strategy for managing such works and if such works may assist in managing erosion at Yilki.
- Recognise the environmental value of the area adjacent to the Bluff boat launching facility and ensure that the impact of any upgrade works on this area is minimised and properly managed.
- Monitor the effectiveness of signage at the boat ramp and general vicinity so as to clearly inform patrons of their responsibilities from an operational, safety, and car parking point of view, this signage being part of an overall theme for boating in the Victor Harbor area, whilst avoiding Cluster Sign Blindness.
- Specific upgrade works may include:
 - Widen and deepen the channel and swing basin
 - Extending break wall along the length of the channel
 - Install additional floating pontoons and potentially overnight berthing along an extended break wall
 - Upgrade the existing pontoons
 - Extend the capacity of the vehicle and trailed parking
 - Create a formal overflow carpark, adjacent to the ramp, that can be implemented as required
 - Improve traffic flow
 - Review the intersection at Solway Crescent

- Upgrade water and stormwater management
- Provide additional amenities, fish cleaning, wash bays, increased waste disposal

4.2.2 Kent Reserve

There have been several schemes proposed for the upgrade of the Kent Reserve to provide a significantly higher level of boating facility, and at least one of these included inland waterways and mooring berths in the mouth of the Inman River. It has been generally acknowledged that any scheme of this type and scale should not proceed due to the environmental significance of this area and the relatively shallow and rocky offshore area in the vicinity of Davenport Anchorage, as well as extensive reefs and hazards from the Kent Reserve area out past Granite Island and to the Bluff. The options for development at Kent reserve are therefore directed towards maintaining the status quo, both from an amenity and functionality point of view.

- Retain the existing beach launching area which provides beach launching in a relatively informal manner and with reasonable safety, especially in calm conditions.
- Ensure signage of this area is very clear from a boating point of view, thus advising intending boat users of the potential dangers of boating in Victor Harbor waters, such signage being consistent with the overall theme for boating in the wider Victor Harbor area.
- Maintain the existing beach access.

4.2.3 Granite Island

The Granite Island boating facilities have a long history however, boating facilities in this sheltered portion of Granite Island have several shortcomings and are generally confined to loading and unloading from the jetty, limited use of swing moorings in the sheltered portion of this bay, and occasional mooring by visiting cruise yachts looking for shelter or supplies as they move around the coast between Wirrina and Cape Jaffa.

Boating facilities on the island are significantly compromised due to the restricted access both for personnel and supplies to and from Victor Harbor and the island due to its extensive use by supply vehicles, tourists and the horse tram, as well as lack of parking area and facilities for boats and trailers.

4.2.4 Causeway Ramp

The options for upgrading the Causeway ramp should be confined to improved safety and education for users for its most effective use, despite serious constraints (e.g. lack of parking, narrow and difficult road access through tourist traffic, dangerous side wash). As discussed in previous sections, this facility should only be retained until such time as alternative improved facilities are available in the area. Options therefore include:

- Decommission after the completion of an alternative facility

- Warn and communicate dangers when using the facility

4.2.5 East of the causeway

The case for strategic works East of the causeway responds to the demonstrated growth in the regional population, boat ownership growth, and the need to provide better and safer access to the waters east of the Causeway and Granite Island for recreational and commercial boat users (including tourism operators and cruise ship tenders) and Sea Rescue craft.

From an environmental perspective it is recognised that significant work is required to assess the environmental impacts on land and at sea prior to a firm decision to proceed with a detailed design and funding case for this site. Notwithstanding this, investigations to date have indicated that the general area in the vicinity of the Bridge Terrace proposal is probably the best area for such a location. Additional work on the level of protection, water depth, breakwater or wave attenuator design and stormwater management will be necessary prior to the ultimate selection of the final location and configuration.

The proposed East of the causeway and associated breakwaters may have a beneficial effect on the movement of sand but that would need to be assessed in the modelling incorporated in the Environmental Impact Statement. An earlier marine engineering report (Coastal Adaptation Study & Strategy; Victor Harbor 2021) had suggested that the addition of groins along the coast may assist retaining and reduce sand drift.

Stormwater outlets could be incorporated into the overall design of an East of the causeway and surrounds strategic works, to reduce the current erosion caused by the existing outlets.

An area that has been considered for a proposed development comprises a significant seagrass habitat which is both ecologically important and at risk from the development. The seagrass at this site comprises a species rich environment which is responsible for the maintenance of important coastal processes.

As a result, all alternative sites east of the Causeway should also be investigated.

The ecological roles of the area include some of it being of high productivity and a nursery ground and habitat for numerous fish species. In addition, seagrasses are important in stabilizing sediments and slowing sediment transport and consequently beach erosion processes. The seagrasses in some areas considered will almost certainly be lost due to the development and the timeframe for recovery is likely to be extended (10+ years). Furthermore, it is probable that the seagrasses adjacent to some development sites will be adversely affected. In general terms I would expect the loss of 1 Ha of seagrass beds directly associated with this development and a temporary reduction in the vitality of adjacent beds over an area of 5-10 Ha (refer AC Cheshire & D Miller, 1998).



Observations from other sites (e.g. Whalers Wharf launching ramp) indicate that seagrasses are likely to re-establish overtime and they are relatively resilient to impacts from boat traffic. Providing channel depths are sufficient then propellor damage is unlikely to be a persistent problem. The algal and invertebrate flora associated with the patches of hard substrate are less susceptible in that, although they are likely to be lost during the construction, they are generally robust communities which will readily re-establish.

The short- and long-term impact on the sea grasses and habitat for sea dragons and to a wide range of sea life would be assessed as part of the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement.

Also, the John Chappell Engineer Report (1998) prototype analysis determined that sand movement along the coast at this point was in and out to sea, and not so much along the coast. There have been a number of additional studies and reports completed over a 30-year period. These will all form part of the background documents provided to an appropriately qualified consultant to undertake the Environmental Impact Statement for strategic works East of the causeway.

Options for such a facility would therefore need to include or should consider:

- Land availability
 - Environmental impact factors and their management
 - Engineering design to satisfy environmental and sea rescue safety issues
 - Cost and future maintenance requirements
 - Traffic access and parking demand
 - Integration with Victor Harbor Foreshore Plan and Coastal Adaptation study
 - Incorporate coastal park requirements
- Installation of an integrated signage system for boating at Victor Harbor\

Dredging costs for any boat ramp and marina can be considerable. If strategic works East of the causeway are completed, Council and/or State Government may need to allocate sufficient operating funds to provide for periodic dredging. A good design of the breakwater or wave attenuator will also help reduce the tidal influx of sand and silt into the marina basin.

Council would seek funding from State and Commonwealth governments to enable this project to proceed. Having the Environmental Impact Statement completed, designs completed and a detailed cost estimate, would put Council in the best position to seek grants from State or Federal Governments. Some private sector parties showing an interest in assisting with funding and design work also need to be pursued.

5. Strategic Framework



Boaters in Victor Harbor will be provided with a better boating experience through the provision of boating facilities that perform to a high standard, have adequate capacity, are well maintained, are safe and provide improved accessibility for all.

5.1 Introduction

Through a process of consultation with the BMFAG, key stakeholders, other interested parties, and members of the public, the issues relating to the development of an improved boating environment at Victor Harbor as set out in previous sections have been examined and reviewed. From this review, options were identified and developed as presented within this strategy. The strategy provides guidance to the implantation of a series of interrelated actions affecting several locations and the wider community. It is set out under the same six key headings used to identify the issues and the options including safety, boating demand, environment, land use and ownership, awareness, and specific sites.

This strategy is based on stakeholder feedback, and the vision, values, and themes emerging through the consultation process.

Values

- Boating recreation
- Community safety
- Natural environment
- Social and cultural heritage
- Economic environment including costs

For each key issue the strategy provides:

- An objective
- A clear set of actions
- Responsible parties
- An indicative timeframe

The Action Plan is a live document subject to ongoing change.

Vision

A functional boating environment for Victor Harbor which achieves a balanced response to seasonal demand, environmental values, community safety, and economics.

This strategy identifies a series of priorities which will be implemented to deliver the objectives



5.2 Action Plan

Whilst this strategy identifies the priorities, an annual action plan will be prepared or reviewed and to advise of which projects and actions will be undertaken in the forthcoming year. Several factors will influence each action plan, including maintenance needs, asset condition, facility demand, project readiness, safety concerns, budget constraints, and emerging issues.

5.3 Partnerships and Collaboration

Delivery of this strategy will require collaborating and working in partnership with Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group, land and infrastructure managers, the community, boating stakeholders and the Traditional Owners to identify opportunities and support outcomes. Working in partnership with Government agencies and facility managers presents opportunities to navigate planning and approval needs, integrate plans, and to identify other funding sources. In some instances, working with private landholders or private industries may be required to deliver boating outcomes.



Common Themes from consultation with the Boating and Marine Facilities Working Group (2021)

Boaters in Victor Harbor will be provided with a better boating experience through the provision of boating facilities that perform to a high standard, have adequate capacity, are well maintained, are safe and provide improved accessibility for all.

Recreational Boating Strategy 2026

Strategy Objectives

1. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by supporting and improving the maintenance of our public facilities.
2. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by continuing to invest in renewing and building new boating facilities.
3. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by continuing to invest in destination locations.
4. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by providing for improved access and navigation.
5. To improve waterway and boating safety by investing in marine safety and education.
6. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by promoting Victor Harbor as a boating destination.
7. Capitalise on the blue water economy (cruise ships, etc)

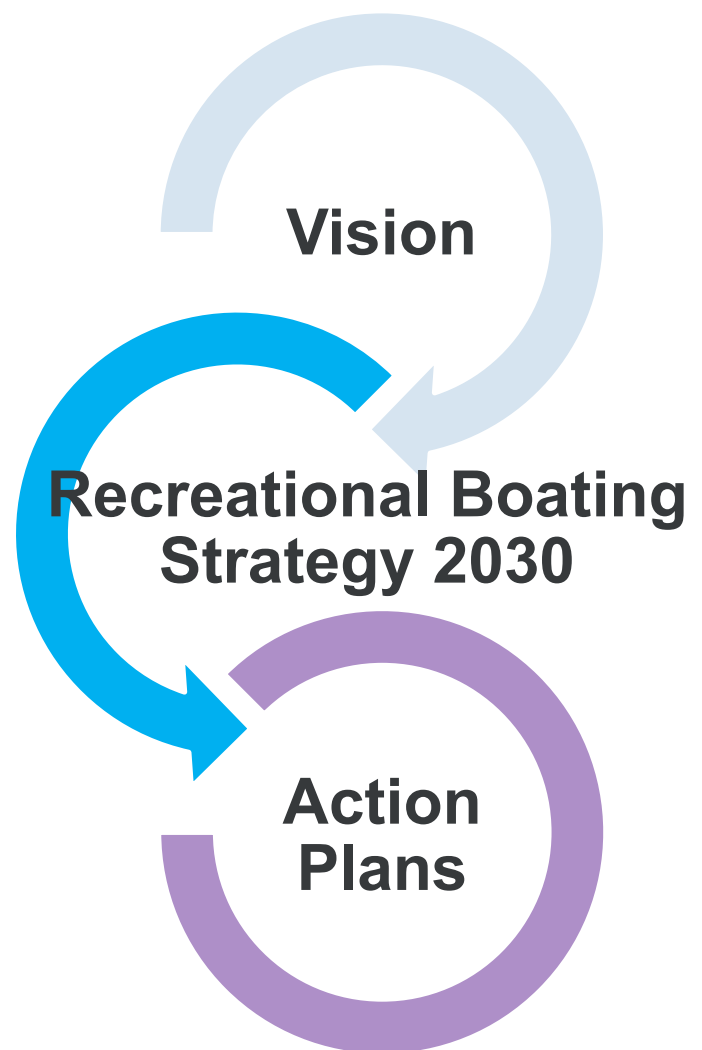
Prioritisation will consider these factors

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Asset condition and maintenance needs | • Boating safety |
| • Waterway risks | • Ability to reduce congestion/ increase capacity |
| • Improved navigational accessibility | • Co-contribution |
| • Facility demand (current or potential) | • Project readiness |
| • Improved DDA access | • Emerging issues |

Prioritisation of actions

should also consider the following principles

1. All elements of the boating system should receive funding, including infrastructure, safety, education, and promotion.
2. As current facilities are over capacity, priority should be given to strategic works Southwest of the Causeway.
3. The Bluff Boat Ramp, where the largest concentration of boaters resides, should be given priority for maintenance and minor upgrades to fill the gap until a new facility is constructed.
4. Boat ramps should be prioritised over other land based facilities.
5. Co-contributions or grant funding should be sought where possible.
6. Environmental, social, cultural, and economic consideration.



6. Monitoring, Reporting, and Action plans



Each year, an annual action plan will be developed or reviewed to put into effect each of the objectives in this strategy

The key objectives and action outcomes from consultation with the Boating and Marine Facilities Advisory Group are summarised within this section.



One of the most important stages of the strategy will be its ongoing monitoring and review. This stage is of critical importance if the progress of the strategy's implementation is to be measurable and if community acceptance is to be maintained.

Council and its stakeholders will need to review this strategy and its action plans to confirm the conclusions and proposed strategies remain valid. As new information comes to hand such as the changes in demographic profile, new government policy, or major infrastructure and grant opportunities, the strategy may be modified.

Monitoring and evaluation activities within the scope of the Strategy need to be undertaken continually. It is recommended that council undertake a review of the Strategy and its implementation as required.

Strategic Objective	Actions
1. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by supporting and improving the maintenance of our public facilities	1.1 Develop this boating strategy - Complete 1.2 Develop an action plan - Complete 1.3 Develop/improve maintenance program 1.4 Monitor and review action plans
2. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by continuing to invest in renewing and building new boating facilities	2.1 Develop an action plan in accordance with objectives
3. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by continuing to invest in destination locations	3.1 Provide berths, moorings, and destination jetties, including suitable berthing facilities for Cruise Ship Tenders 3.2 Provide new/additional amenities to facilities
4. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by providing for improved access and navigation	4.1 Continue dredging of boat ramp as required 4.2 Incorporate inclusive access facilities 4.3 Expand the network of formal boat ramps and launchings
5. To improve waterway & boating safety by investing in marine safety & education	5.1 Monitor and improve regulatory and wayfinding signage 5.2 Undertake regular compliance reviews of facilities
6. To enhance the Victor Harbor boating experience by promoting Victor Harbor as a boating destination	6.1 Develop a program to promote boating experiences 6.2 Develop a boating tourism plan



Time	Action
Short-Term (2026-2028)	• Cost and establish the terms of reference for an Environmental Impact Study for an East of the causeway strategic works. • Establish that strategic works East of the causeway as part of the Victor Harbor ten-year financial plan. • Review of current launching charges • Install one more pontoon at bluff boat ramp on breakwater • Improve garbage facilities at current ramps • Lobby state government to remove the boating exclusion zone on the Northwestern Side of West Island (exclusion zone use now redundant)
Mid-Term (2029-2032)	• Progress with the development strategic works East of the causeway to reduce demand on Bluff Boat Ramp, improve safety and enhance the blue water economy to victor harbor.
Long-Term (2033+)	• Complete the development of strategic works East of the causeway to reduce demand on Bluff Boat Ramp • Upgrade the Bluff Boat Ramp • Infill the beach area on the northern side of the boat ramp and construct additional boat ramp parking • Removal of Causeway Ramp on completion of the strategic works East of the causeway