

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee – Referral No 1

Bells Beach Elevated Walkway and Viewing Platform

18 November 2020

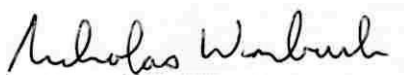
Planning and Environment Act 1987

Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee – Referral No 1 under s151 of the Act

Referral No 1 - Bells Beach Elevated Walkway and Viewing Platform

18 November 2020

Members of the Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee who considered this matter:



Nick Wimbush, Chair



Ian Hamm, Member



Andrew Hutson, Member

Contents

	Page
1 Summary of advice	3
1.1 Findings.....	3
1.2 Recommendations.....	3
2 Introduction.....	5
3 Cultural heritage issues	10
3.1 Aboriginal heritage	10
3.2 Surfing heritage	11
4 Key areas of advice sought by Minister.....	12
4.1 Function and need for the proposed structure.....	12
4.2 Response to site context	13
4.3 Intrusion upon the natural environment	14
4.4 Permanency of the structure	14
4.5 Potential increase in tourists.....	16

Appendix A Referral letter

Appendix B Submissions and consultation

Appendix C Document list

List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1: Location of proposed elevated walkway.....	5
Figure 2: Existing concrete path looking south to north.....	6
Figure 3: Proposed elevated walkway profile	7
Figure 4: Proposed 2.4 metre wide walkway cross section	7
Figure 5: Temporary walkway, 2019 Rip Curl Pro	8
Figure 6: Temporary walkway, 2019 Rip Curl Pro viewed from the water	8

Glossary and abbreviations

CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CMMP	Coastal and Marine Management Plan
Committee	Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee
Reserve	Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve
WAC	Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

1 Summary of advice

1.1 Findings

The Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee (the Committee) finds:

Overall need

- Subject to the comments about event management below, there appears to be no pressing or overwhelming need for a permanent elevated walkway.

Event management

- An elevated structure of some form is needed for athletes and coaches at the times when the Rip Curl Surf Pro is moved to Winkipop.
- The pathway under consideration appears to be the best location for the elevated structure to provide additional views of the break.
- The event organisers are neutral on whether a permanent or temporary structure is needed; if a permanent structure is not supported by the local surfing community then they can continue to use a temporary structure.

Access

- The existing concrete path appears to provide safe and effective access to the Winkipop viewing platform and surf break.

Tourism impact

- The proposed permanent elevated walkway may encourage more visitors within the reserve to view Winkipop but is unlikely to attract additional visitors to the reserve.

Fauna impact

- A permanent elevated walkway may provide for additional fauna movement across (under) the path but may hinder other fauna.
- A specific study on this issue could be undertaken to both assess impact and provide design input for a 'fauna friendly' elevated walkway.

Future steps

- As a minimum the proposal for a temporary elevated walkway more akin to the proposed permanent walkway should be considered as identified in the CMMP with associated evaluation.
- Other design responses could be considered as part of this process; for example, an at grade path replacement with permanent footings for rapid annual installation of a purpose built elevated walkway for surfing events.
- Continued community consultation is essential to inform the best outcome.
- Close engagement with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners must continue (as has occurred to date).

1.2 Recommendations

The Committee recommends:

1. **Develop a purpose designed and built temporary elevated walkway for the 2021 (or more likely 2022) Rip Curl Pro for evaluation purposes as proposed in the CMMP.**

- 2. This process should include consideration of:**
 - a) Specific technical advice on fauna movement and associated design parameters;**
 - b) Other options such as a temporary structure with permanent on-site footings at grade for rapid bump-in.**
- 3. No decision on a permanent elevated structure should be taken until the above trial process has occurred, noting that there are numerous statutory approvals required.**

2 Introduction

(i) Committee process

Item	
Date of referral	5 August 2020
Description of referral	Referral from the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and Minister for Solar Homes of a proposal for an elevated walkway to the Winkipop surf break. The elevated walkway is a proposal in the <i>Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve Coastal and Marine Management Plan 2015-25</i> (CMMP) but the advice sought is limited to the walkway (see Appendix A)
Common name	Bells Beach Elevated Walkway and Viewing Platform
Municipality	Surf Coast Shire
Committee of Management	Surf Coast Shire
Subject land	Access to Winkipop surf break lookout; Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve (see Figure 1)
Site inspection	Accompanied on Friday 16 October 2020 by Members Wimbush and Hamm with COVID-19 approvals and safety protocols in place. Meetings were held on site with representatives from the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and local community groups as well as DELWP and Surf Coast Shire Council.
Submissions and consultation	Six submissions to the CMMP were referred. The referral required consultation with other groups and individuals. The consultation undertaken including via videoconference is shown in Appendix B.
Date of this report	18 November 2020

Figure 1: Location of proposed elevated walkway



(ii) The proposal

A 45-year-old 60 metre long section of concrete pathway (see Figure 2) is proposed to be replaced with an elevated timber and steel walkway (see Figures 3 and 4). The purpose of the walkway is to provide a 'walkway with viewing opportunities' rather than a viewing platform.

The elevated walkway would provide a level, elevated access pathway with at grade access at the southern end and steps at the northern end.

Under certain conditions the Bells Beach Easter surfing competition (the Rip Curl Pro) is held at the Winkipop surf break. The elevated platform would provide enhanced viewing for coaches and competitors during competition. The walkway would not be open to the public at these times.

Currently a temporary elevated platform is installed for the Rip Curl Pro (see Figures 5 and 6).

Figure 2: Existing concrete path looking south to north

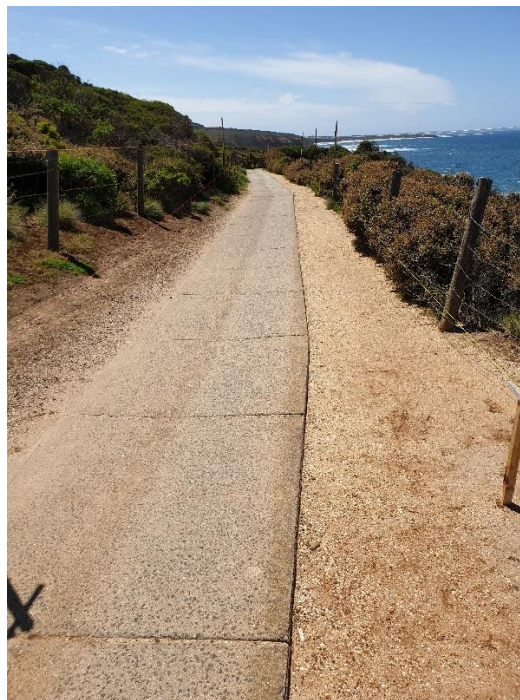


Figure 3: Proposed elevated walkway profile

Design diagrams showing the proposed replacement section of elevated timber pathway, as seen from the ocean side. The top diagram shows the proposed pathway in its entirety and the relative height of the vegetation on the ocean side of the path, and the second diagram shows how the vegetation on the ocean side of the path will screen the pathway when viewed from the ocean side.

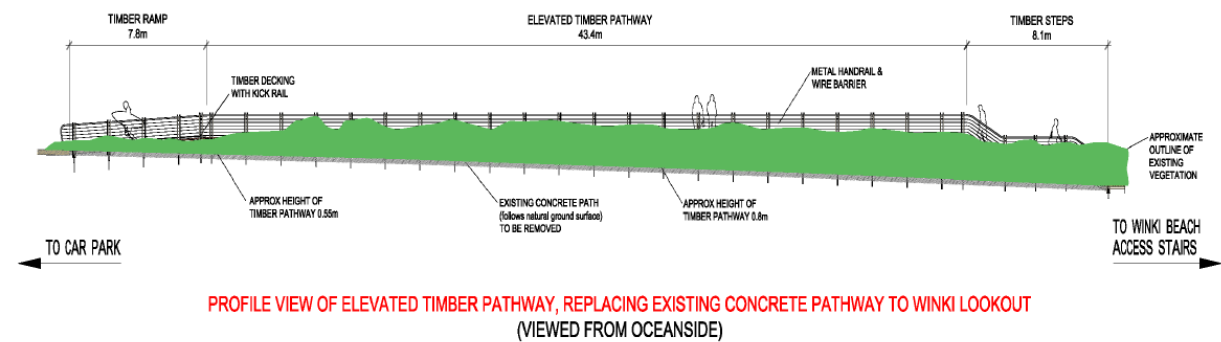
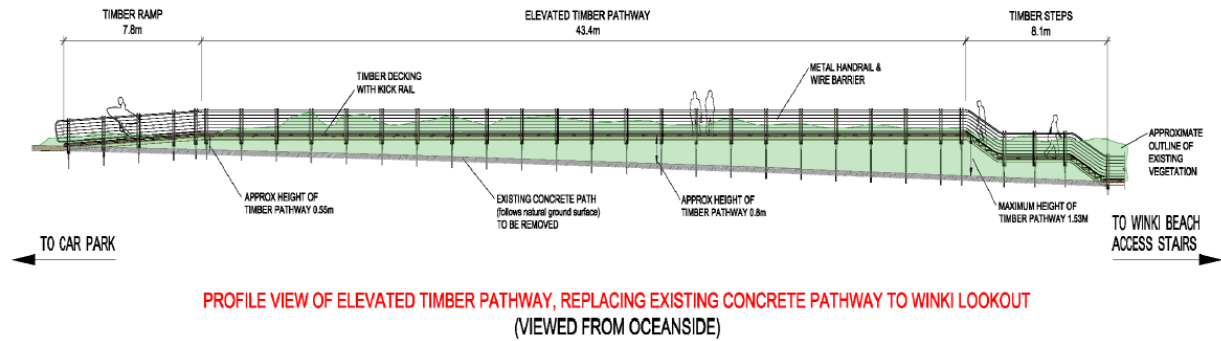


Figure 4: Proposed 2.4 metre wide walkway cross section

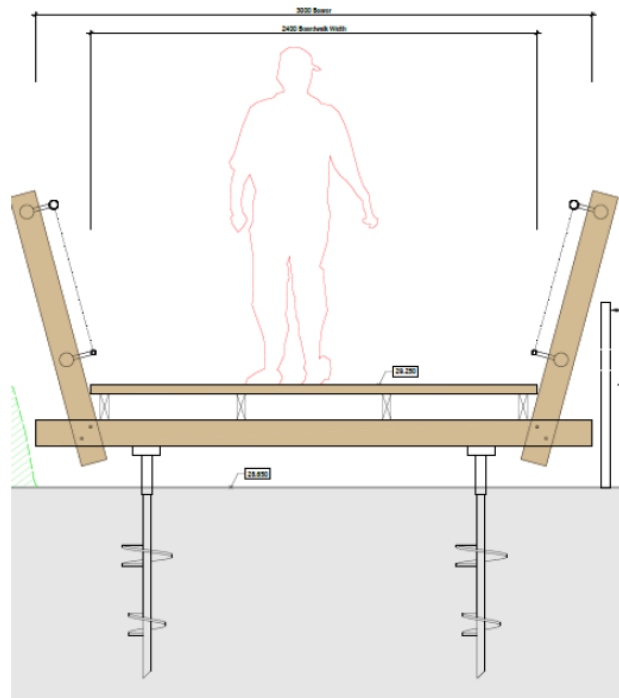
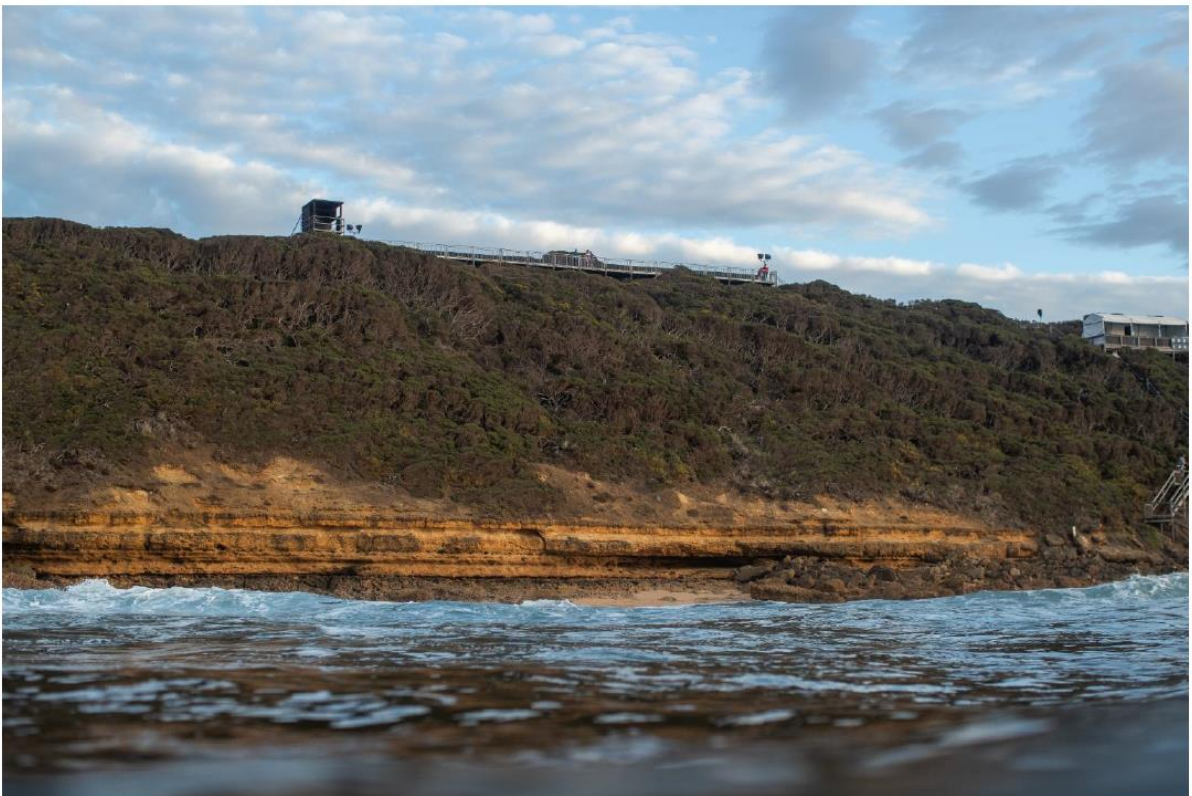


Figure 5: Temporary walkway, 2019 Rip Curl Pro



Figure 6: Temporary walkway, 2019 Rip Curl Pro viewed from the water



(iii) Approvals required

The CMMP requires approval from the Minister for Environment under s61 of the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*. The elevated walkway will require numerous other statutory approvals including:

- Consent under s70 of the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*

- Approval of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- Permit requirements of Part 5 of the *Heritage Act 2017*.

This advice is provided without reference to the application requirements or decision making inherent in those (and any other required) consents.

3 Cultural heritage issues

3.1 Aboriginal heritage

The Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve (Bells Beach Reserve), which incorporates Winkipop beach, is on the lands of the Wadawurrung people. The Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WAC) is the Registered Aboriginal Party appointed by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council under the Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, for the region that includes Bells Beach.

Aboriginal presence in the coastal regions of Victoria has always been strong. All along the western coast of Victoria (that is west of Port Phillip Bay to the South Australian border), there are a significant number of sites that demonstrate continuous Aboriginal presence. These include middens, evidence of cave occupation and landscape interpretation such as Budj Bim. In more recent times, contact between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people during the 19th century is also remembered, the site of the ‘Convincing Ground’ in Portland Bay being the best known of these places.

As WAC is becoming more engaged and involved in land management across the region, the awareness (and confirmation) of Aboriginal sites is increasing. Evidence of Aboriginal presence in the landscape (pre-contact) in the vicinity of Bells Beach is becoming known from time to time. For the Wadawurrung, this forms part of the connection to their ancestors who walked the land and shores for thousands of years and reconfirms their custodial responsibilities to ‘care for country’ for not only the present, but for future generations as well.

The Wadawurrung know that human interaction with the landscape is not a bad thing – that is how they have lived for millennia. For the Wadawurrung, human use of the landscape must be balanced with the welfare of the landscape; *“we must not harm country, for if we look after it, it will look after us”*. This philosophical standpoint underpins the approach to the consideration of proposals to change the landscape and is balanced with the context the landscape and proposal sit within.

The Wadawurrung indicated to the Committee they have no particular or steadfast position on the Winkipop elevated walkway proposal itself and are not opposed to it in principle. The existing concrete path cuts straight through the revegetating landscape, but does not impose itself beyond ground level, and indeed, has almost become part of the landscape. Equally, the proposed platform would be subject to a CHMP and its recommendations would take account of not only the physical impact of the platform, but the broader philosophical aspects relating to the cultural responsibilities to care for country. This includes whether (or not) the walkway might enhance or diminish the interaction experience between people and landscape.

It is essential that Wadawurrung are not only engaged in any considerations for the walkway proposal through formal process as established under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, but also engaged in any informal processes that may contribute to the eventual outcome of the proposal. The Wadawurrung, in addition to cultural heritage responsibilities, have, as a first nations people, a deep understanding of communities, their dynamics and the impact of change, both positive and negative. This insight may prove to be a useful contribution to a

wider understanding of the Bells Beach Reserve and its place in the perspectives of the various interested parties.

3.2 Surfing heritage

Bells Beach is a cultural centrepiece for the surfing community.

Since the 1950's, Bells Beach Reserve, including Winkipop, has developed and maintained a significance to the world surfing community. With commencement of annual surfing competition in the early 1960's that evolved to become the Rip Curl Pro from 1973, the world surfing community is drawn to Bells Beach at Easter every year. Now a significant cornerstone for the World Surf League's professional championship, Bells Beach Reserve hold a special place in testing the world elite surfers who come to 'ring the bell'.

The competition essentially imposes over Bells Beach Reserve for the weeks leading up to Easter, and the week after the event as it winds down. During this time, there is an increase in visitation by those drawn to watch the event (and its lead up), to experience the event and say they have made the pilgrimage to Bells Beach.

But outside of the weeks leading up to, and including the event, what is the relationship of the Bells Beach Reserve with the surfing community, particularly those for whom the Reserve is their 'local spot'? Do those surfers who view the Reserve, not as an international competition event venue, but as a place to surf regularly have a different relationship with the surf and the landscape?

During submissions to the Panel and a site visit by Panel members, evidence was heard that for many local surfers the Bells Beach Reserve was more than simply a place to surf. The Reserve has been a focal point for multiple generations who have grown up in Torquay and district since the 1950's. Over that time, the Panel was informed, the relationship of attachment to the place has developed, evolved, expanded and enhanced. Many youngsters learned to surf or had their first challenging surf at the Reserve. Many of these same young people grew up and stayed in Torquay and district and continued to access the Bells Beach Reserve regularly, being a place to develop friendships, rivalries (friendly of course) and deep relationships built on a shared experience of the surf breaks and hinterland.

Many of these people have brought, and continue to bring, their own children to the Bells Beach Reserve to learn and develop a relationship with the surf, the land and each other. This intergenerational transmission of connection to place is not dissimilar to that which is felt by many Victorians for the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The critical difference though, as submitted to the Panel, is the undisturbed nature of the landscape. This 'natural aspect', particularly from the surf, is one of the key elements that makes the Reserve not only a place to surf, but a place to feel connected both physically and socially. Places that can support people in times of 'dislocation' and mental health challenges, as highlighted during COVID-19, are increasingly important.

The cultural importance of the Bells Beach Reserve to the community of Torquay and district is not easily quantified, but is, none-the-less, real. The difficulty in articulating the deep affection and dependence that some submitters have for the Bells Beach Reserve was not an impediment to understanding their affiliations with the place, but rather a confirmation. Accordingly, these attachments and connections need to be given appropriate consideration in any planning for the Bells Beach Reserve.

4 Key areas of advice sought by Minister

4.1 Function and need for the proposed structure

(i) Path replacement

The existing concrete path is said to be 45 years old. The Committee is not qualified to provide an engineering or safety assessment of the existing path but observes from its visit that:

- the path has small cracks in two segments, but these do not appear to be posing any risk or hazard to safety or path stability
- while looking dated, the pathway is still providing effective access to Winkipop and appears sound with a level surface with no drop off to the gravel verges.

Surfing Victoria (who provide event facilities for the World Surf League Rip Curl Pro) indicated that the existing path is fit for purpose as a base for the temporary viewing structure they install (see Figures 5 and 6).

Those opposed to the elevated walkway advised the Committee they could see no need or reason to remove the existing concrete path.

The Committee considers that while over time the path will need to be replaced, whether with an at-grade or elevated walkway, there appears to be no urgent need for removal and replacement for access purposes.

(ii) Need for an elevated walkway

The Rip Curl Pro is occasionally moved to the Winkipop surf break from the Bells Beach break under certain surf conditions. When this occurs, there is limited viewing of the break available for athletes and coaches. Compared to Bells Beach itself, Winkipop is relatively undeveloped in terms of access and viewing platforms for competition purposes.

In recent years Surfing Victoria has installed the temporary elevated platform along the subject pathway. Due to the installation time, this temporary structure has been put in place whether it is used for the competition or not; it is erected 'just in case' the competition has to move to Winkipop.

There was considerable discussion and some disquiet amongst submitters about the use of Winkipop for the competition, but this is not a matter for the Committee. It is clear that if the competition moves to Winkipop, then elevated viewing for athletes and coaches is needed, and the pathway along the cliff top is the logical location.

It is also clear there is inadequate room for viewing during the competition; with the main Winkipop viewing platform being used by judges and organisers. The Committee thus accepts the need for some form of elevated walkway for competitions.

Whether the elevated walkways should be temporary (as erected now) or permanent (as proposed) is a more difficult question. The World Surf League and Surfing Victoria indicated that if the permanent structure proposed is opposed by the local surfing community, then the temporary structure used every year is adequate for their purposes and not a significant cost in the context of the event.

4.2 Response to site context

(i) Site context

The site proposed for the elevated walkway is along a transverse section of the existing concrete pathway that is part of pedestrian access from the car park above to the lookout platform and the beach below. The existing pathway runs across the slope. The existing section of the path earmarked as the site for the proposed walkway has foreshore vegetation to both sides that extends up to the car park and down to the steep decline to the water. The height of the vegetation along the waterside of the existing pathway varies but would be typical of ocean foreshore environs impacted by offshore winds in being generally in the range of 1.5 to 2.5 metres. Pedestrians using the existing pathway designated for the proposed walkway would have views to the water and surf-break mostly obscured by the vegetation although there are some opportunities for viewpoints.

There are two existing viewing platforms accessible from the Winkipop beach car park. As pedestrians descend from the car park there is access to the right to a platform that overlooks both Winkipop and Bell's Beach (The Button viewing platform). There are steps from this platform to Bells Beach. To the left of the car park access path, having descended steps from the existing pathway, there is a viewing platform to the water with steps continuing to the beach below (The Winkipop viewing platform).

(ii) Proposed walkway

It is proposed that the walkway be constructed to a length of 59.3 metres including ramp to the western end and stairs to the eastern end. The platform section will range in height above the ground from 0.5 metres at the ramp end to 1.53 metres at the stair end. There will be a 1 metre high balustrade and handrail. The construction of the walkway will be predominately of timber with stainless steel wires to the balustrade and steel handrails. The width will be 2.4 metres of decked walkway with splayed balusters to give a width at the handrail of 3 metres.

The current view from the water and other vantage points does not disclose the existing walkway within the foreshore to any marked extent. It appears that the proposed walkway balustrade and handrail will extend above the line of the vegetation and be visible from the water and other vantage points.

The detailing and material choices for the proposed walkway design are intended to reduce the visual impact of the structure within the context while relating the image of the walkway to the language of beachside and foreshore timber structures. While being visible from the water and various viewpoints the proposed walkway would not appear visually obtrusive within the context, although the design coupled with the proposed length would make it the largest permanent fabricated feature within the immediate context and potentially would be visually dominant.

The use of the proposed walkway by visitors and those who wish to get a good view of the water would make people more prominent within the landscape and in views back from the water.

A photomontage showing a view from the water of the proposed walkway was part of the Surf Coast Shire submission. This view is inaccurate as it appears to show the walkway more visually prominent than it would be in reality.

It was noted during submissions that it was intended that during the 2020 Rip Curl Pro a temporary structure would be erected that would follow the approximate dimensions and height of the proposed walkway. This would have enabled an in-situ analysis of the visual impact of the walkway within the context. This did not occur due to COVID related cancellation.

On balance the proposed walkway would present a long term permanent feature within the landscape and immediate context. The design has been undertaken to partially ameliorate the potential visual impact through detailing and material choices. If it was deemed that a walkway of the proposed scale was required, then the design and configuration could be acceptable in reducing the visual impact. The impact should be tested through the erection of the temporary structure as planned.

4.3 Intrusion upon the natural environment

The erection of the proposed walkway would locate a permanent and long raised structure within the natural environment. Currently there is a concrete pathway and narrow cleared areas either side which the proposed walkway would follow.

There have been no environmental studies undertaken to assess the potential impact on vegetation or fauna of the proposed walkway. The raised walkway could provide potential for vegetation to grow underneath and for animals to cross the path but there has been no assessment of whether this would be a better outcome than the current narrower concrete path or what height of walkway above the ground line would be optimum.¹

The proposed design would extend above the vegetation to provide views to the sea. This presumes the vegetation will not grow and obscure viewing from the walkway. If this were to occur it would challenge one of the key justifications for the raised walkway. Conversely, if the vegetation were to reduce in height, either due to the impact of usage or changing environmental conditions, the walkway could become visually more prominent. In the absence of vegetation studies, it is difficult to predict whether the vegetation will remain at the same height

The proposed walkway appears to be of a width that is close to that of the concrete path and adjoining cleared areas. If the walkway were required to proceed it would appear prudent in the absence of vegetation studies, that the designed width does not require removal of any additional vegetation.

4.4 Permanency of the structure

The access to Winkipop is a critical part of the infrastructure at the Bells Beach Reserve. It provides access to the beach year-round and, lately, also serves as the place for a raised platform during the annual surf carnival.

¹ Some submitters suggested for example the elevated walkway may be a greater barrier to larger fauna such as wallabies compared to the existing path.

The existing access is via a concrete footpath that is approximately 60 metres long and approximately 1.5 metres wide. It is over 40 years of age and is in a reasonable condition, although cracks are starting to appear. It has served its basic purpose since its construction and, with proper maintenance, may continue to do so for some time to come. In recent years, it has also served as the base for a temporary platform that is supported by scaffolding (see Figures 5 and 6). This structure is usually erected for a period of approximately 2 weeks and provides public access to Winkipop, except when Winkipop is used as part of the surf event and the platform is used exclusively by contestants and their coaches.

The temporary platform has been erected for the past 2 events (and would have been for 2020 except for COVID-19) and can be erected going forward, an acceptable alternative exists.

The CMMP envisaged that:²

With regards to the proposed elevated walkway, the existing concrete pathway to the Winkipop stairs will be maintained until after the 2020 Rip Curl Pro and if a temporary elevated walkway on this pathway is installed for the 2020 Rip Curl Pro:

- i) that as far as is practicable, it should be similar in height, width, length and character to the permanent timber walkway proposed in this plan;
- ii) an evaluation of the temporary elevated walkway is undertaken during, and immediately after, the 2020 Rip Curl Pro in consultation with Council's Bells Beach Committee.

This installation and evaluation did not occur due to COVID-19. The main issue is what the best permanent outcome for the Winkipop pathway is, when considering its main uses – access to Winkipop for the ordinary surfer and as an observation area for surf athletes and their coaches. The outcome must also consider other aspects such as environmental and visual impact between the existing and proposed options.

The Bells Beach Reserve has been significantly revegetated in the past 20 years and the Winkipop footpath environs have seen significant environmental restoration. Further consideration will be required to ensure the adaptability of options to changes in the landscape, for example the continued growth of vegetation or cliff face stability.

The current options are either to leave the footpath as is or replace it with an elevated platform. Given the need for future adaptability to address the issues above, further options may need to be developed.

Whatever proposal is ultimately adopted, the need to provide assurance for ordinary surf users and the professional surf community that they will have good access with minimal environmental impact in the years ahead is important. This will do much to alleviate any uncertainty that may presently exist and allay concerns of disproportionate impact.

The Committee considers that there needs to be further consultation and evaluation around a permanent elevated structure, including the development of a temporary structure that is more aligned to the proposed permanent one identified in the CMMP.

² Draft CMMP page 48.

4.5 Potential increase in tourists

The elevated pathway as an added attractor to increase tourist numbers was raised by some submitters as a concern. The Bells Beach Reserve has in the past suffered from being ‘loved to death’ from increasing tourist visitation.

This in turn has created conflict related to parking provision, litter, damage to the reserve from people accessing vegetation and environmental impact from toilet facilities. Council as reserve manager with volunteer groups has undertaken significant active management to control visitor numbers and provide appropriate facilities for visitors to reduce impacts.

There was no specific evidence provided to the Committee that the proposed elevated walkway would provide a material change to visitor numbers by itself. Whilst potentially an attractive feature of a planned visit to Bells Beach for some, the Committee finds it difficult to accept that the walkway would attract additional visitors to the Bells Beach Reserve over and above the large numbers that visit at present.

Council has recently replaced and improved the path from the Winkipop car park to The Button lookout. An elevated walkway on the Winkipop path may attract additional people in this direction because if well designed it would be visually attractive and level, offering additional views over the vegetation to the Winkipop break. However, this would likely attract people already in the reserve rather than additional visitors.

Appendix A Referral letter



Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes

8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002
Telephone: 03 9637 9504
DX210098

Ms Kathy Mitchell
Chief Panel Member
Planning Panels Victoria
GPO Box 2392
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Dear Ms Mitchell

REFERRAL OF BELLS BEACH ELEVATED WALKWAY AND VIEWING PLATFORM TO GREAT OCEAN ROAD REGION STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

I refer the Bells Beach elevated walkway and viewing platform components of the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve Coastal and Marine Management Plan 2015-25 to the Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee (GORRSAC) appointed under Part 7, section 151 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* for advice. Under its Terms of Reference, GORRSAC can provide advice on matters referred to it by me, including review of coastal and marine management plans.

The Surf Coast Shire Council is the committee of management for the reserve under the *Crown Land Reserves Act (1978)* and has submitted the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve Coastal and Marine Management Plan 2015-25 (CMMP) for approval under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*.

The Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve is an important place to the Traditional Owners of Country, the Wadawurrung people, an important part of Victoria's heritage, and an internationally renowned surfing location. It is included on the Great Ocean Road and Environs National Heritage listing and Victorian Heritage Register and is designated as a landscape of national significance.

The CMMP proposes to replace the current concrete paths with an elevated timber walkway that can also function as a viewing platform during surfing events. The proposed elevated walkway and viewing platform is the one component of the draft CMMP that I seek the advice of the GORRSAC, rather than the broader CMMP.

On-site surveys were undertaken in 2018 and 2019 to gauge public opinion on the proposal. There were 502 respondents to the first survey and 379 respondents with 6 separate written submissions to the second. The majority of respondents in 2018 were in favor of the proposal (or said they could live with it), while the majority of respondents to the 2019 survey, which included a design concept, were not. Further consultation was planned to take place at this year's Rip Curl Pro however this has not taken place due to the postponement of the event.

The key unresolved issues raised in submissions by respondents that are to be subject of GORRSAC's considerations are:

- the function and need for the proposed structure (adequacy of existing viewing platforms)
- response to site context including siting and design of the proposed structure
- intrusion upon the natural environment and landscape, including views from the water
- permanency of the structure
- potential increase in tourists, leading to more litter, greater visual intrusion and damage to the natural environment.



In addition to the issues raised by respondents, other issues for consideration by the GORRSAC include:

- Aboriginal values (tangible and intangible)
- post-contact cultural heritage values
- proposed design and impact upon a landscape of national significance, including views from the water
- safety upgrade requirements
- protection of vegetation adjacent to the proposed walkway and viewing platform
- provision for faunal movement
- the Victorian Government's policy commitments in the Victorian marine and Coastal Policy, Great Ocean Road Action Plan and declaration of the Surf Coast Distinctive Area and Landscape.

Out of scope is a review of the broader CMMP. The advice from GORRSAC should include a recommendation on the appropriateness of the proposed elevated walkway and viewing platform as well as any proposed design and any mitigating measures to be considered.

As the Surf Coast Council has already undertaken considerable public consultation on the CMMP, I would like the GORRSAC to undertake targeted consultation in round table meetings or small group forums with key stakeholders (including discussions with the six submitters to the CMMP where the issue of the walkway was raised). This may be undertaken by video conferencing or similar technology to allow the review to be conducted as soon as possible. I would appreciate timely advice about the outcome of the review, preferably by the end of October, to allow me to finalise this matter.

Please include representatives from the following organisations as part of the review discussions:

- the Wadawurrung Aboriginal Corporation as the recognised Traditional Owner group for the reserve
- Surf Coast Shire Council as the committee of management for the reserve
- the Bells Beach Committee which advise Council on the management of the Bells Beach Surfing Reserve
- local user groups such as Greater Torquay Alliance, Surfers Appreciating Natural Environment, Surfrider Foundation
- surfing event organisers such as the Torquay Boardriders Club and the World Surf League
- the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

A referral package of information including the 6 submissions, additional background information including a summary of submissions received in relation to the proposed elevated walkway and viewing platform, will be forwarded to Planning Panels Victoria shortly.

If you require any additional information about this project, please contact Michael Noelker, Program Manager Land and Built Environment, Barwon South West, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, on (03) 5220 2011 or at michael.noelker@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes
05 / 08 / 2020

Appendix B Submissions and consultation

Party	Written submission	Spoke Committee session	to in	Attended site visit
Surf Coast Shire Council represented by Kate Smallwood, Gab O'Shea and Ben Schmied	X	X		X
Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning represented by Geoff Brooks, Liz Patterson, Franca De Luca and Ann Gove	X	X		X
Surf Rider Foundation represented by Darren Noyes-Brown	X	X		X
Greater Torquay Alliance represented by John Foss and Christine Barr	X	X		X
Surfing Victoria represented by Adam Robertson and Peter Murphy		X		X
World Surfing League represented by Andrew Stark and Scott Hargreaves	X	X		
3228 Residents Association represented by Andrew Cherubin	X	X		X
Bells Beach Preservation Society represented by Maurice Cole	X	X		X
Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation represented by Corinna Eccles and Alison Fowler	X			X
Alan Miles	X			
Surfers Appreciating Natural Environment represented by Graeme Stockton	X	X		
David Bell				X

Appendix C Document list

No.	Date Received	Description	Presented by
1	13/04/19	GORRSAC Terms of Reference	GORRSAC
2	05/08/20	Letter of Referral	Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change
3	07/09/20	Letter to Parties regarding Bells Beach Referral	GORRSAC
4	10/09/20	Letter to Parties regarding Preliminary Meeting	“
5	23/09/20	Directions and Meeting Schedule	“
6	03/09/20	Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve Coastal and Marine Management Plan 2019 (CMMP)	Surf Coast Council, Ms Smallwood
7	26/08/20	Bells Beach Engagement Report 2019	“
8	16/09/20	Minutes of Bells Beach Committee – Bells Beach CMMP 8 October 2019	“
9	03/09/20	Minutes of Bells Beach Committee – Bells Beach CMMP 28 October 2019	“
10	“	Council Minutes – Bells Beach CMMP 26 November 2019	“
11	16/09/20	Coffey Landslide Risk Assessment Plan	“
12	“	Winkipop Elevated Boardwalk Landscape Concept Design	“
13	“	Winkipop Boardwalk side profile from ocean side with accurate vegetation height drawing	“
13(a)	29/09/20	Correspondence regarding Winkipop Elevated Boardwalk updated profile view	“
13(b)	“	Winkipop Elevated Boardwalk updated profile view	“
14	16/09/20	Winkipop Elevated Boardwalk Functional Briefing Notes	“
15	“	Preliminary Engineering Drawing – T.D. & C. Pty. Ltd	“
16	“	Photos of Temporary Walkway from Bells Rip Curl Pro 2019	“
17	“	Additional Photos of Temporary Walkway from Bells Rip Curl Pro 2019 (80+cm higher than concept, viewed from surfer positions in water)	“
18	03/09/20	Redacted collated submissions (Greater Torquay Alliance, Surfers Appreciating the Natural Environment, Surfrider Foundation - Surf Coast Branch, Alan Miles, Andrew Cherubin - Bells Beach Preservation Society)	“
19	“	Submission of Graeme Stockton	Mr Stockton
20	15/09/20	Further written submission of Alan Miles	Mr Miles

No.	Date Received	Description	Presented by
21	25/09/20	Submission of SANE	Mr Stockton
22	“	Updated Submission of SANE	“
23	28/09/20	Presentation for Greater Torquay Alliance	Mr Foss
24	23/09/20	Submission of Surf Coast Shire Council	Ms Smallwood
25	“	Presentation of Surf Coast Shire Council	“
26	29/09/20	Submission of DELWP	Mr Brooks, DELWP Barwon South West
26(a)	“	Attachment A - Marine and Coastal Policy 2020 - Planning and Decision Pathway - DELWP	“
26(b)	“	Attachment B - Marine and Coastal Policy 2020 - Chapter 11 Buildings Structures and Access (Note Policies 1.1-1.5) - DELWP	“
26(c)	“	Attachment C - Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast 2020 - 15 Fundamental Elements	“
26(d)	“	Attachment D - DELWP Application for MACA Consent BSW	“
26(e)	“	Attachment E - DELWP Risk Assessment template	“
26(f)	“	Attachment F - DELWP Risk Management Guidelines	“
26(g)	“	Attachment G - Surf Coast Declared Area	“
27	“	Presentation of DELWP	“
28	30/09/20	Presentation of DELWP – Marine and Coastal Act	“
29	02/10/20	Presentation of Surfrider Foundation	Mr Noyes-Brown
30	9/11/20	Submission from Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation	Ms O'Connor