

Place-based knowledge (PBK): exploring a new paradigm through Point Nepean National Park, Victoria, Australia



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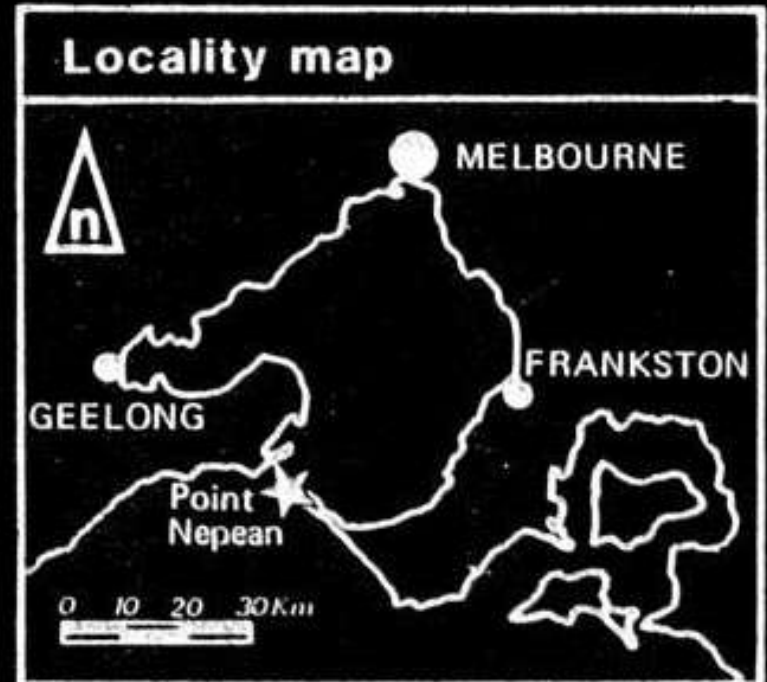
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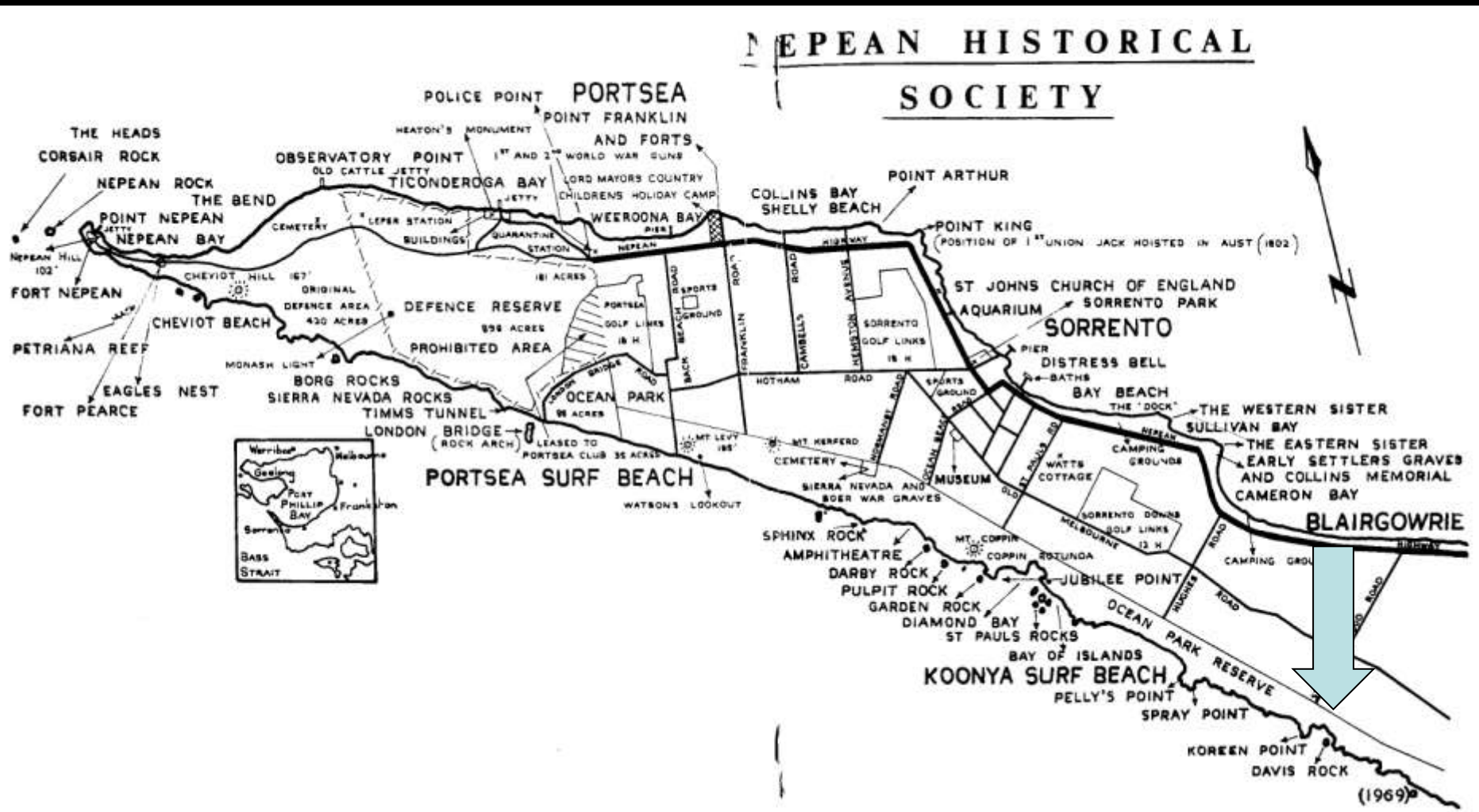
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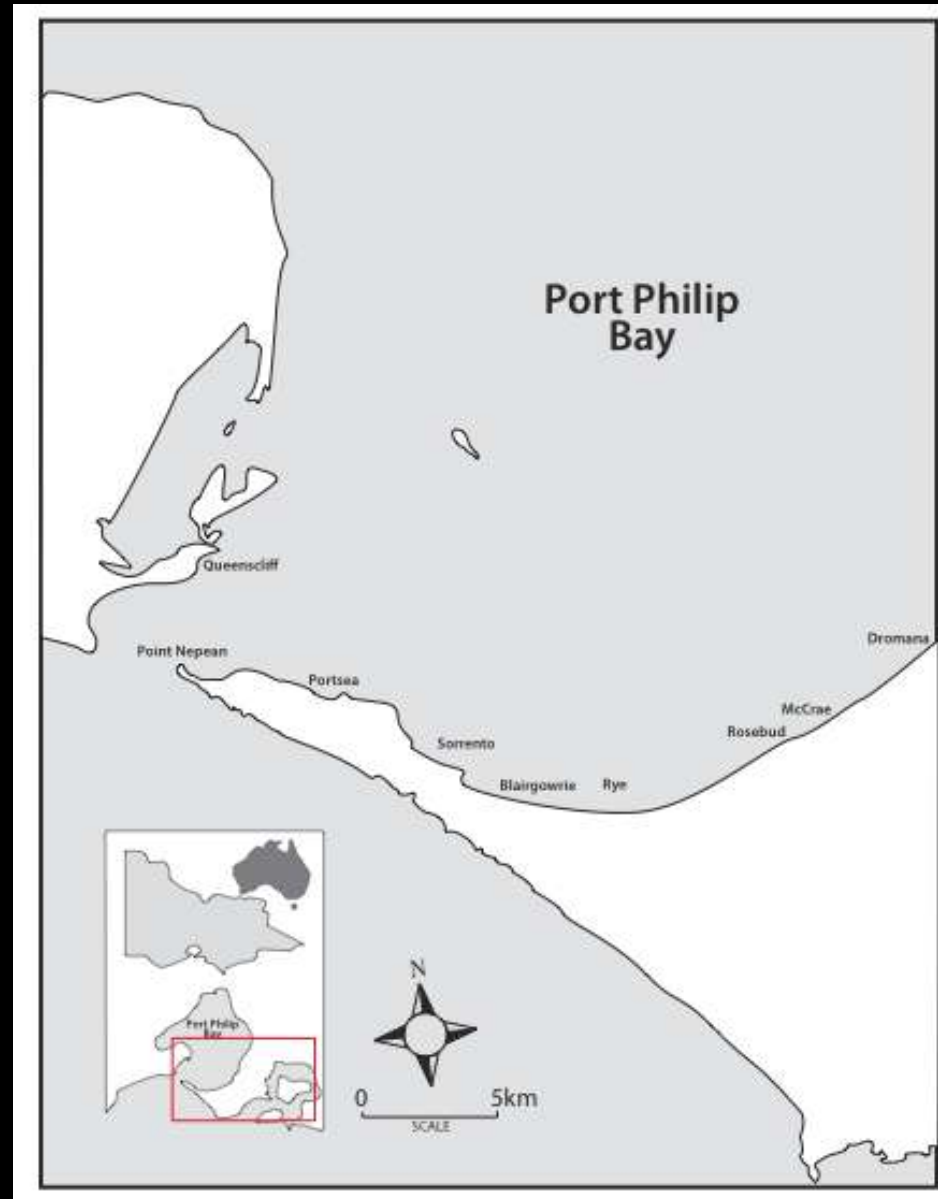


The Nepean Peninsula is a tiny sliver of land at the end of the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia. PNNP is at the very tip, approximately 700 hectares in size







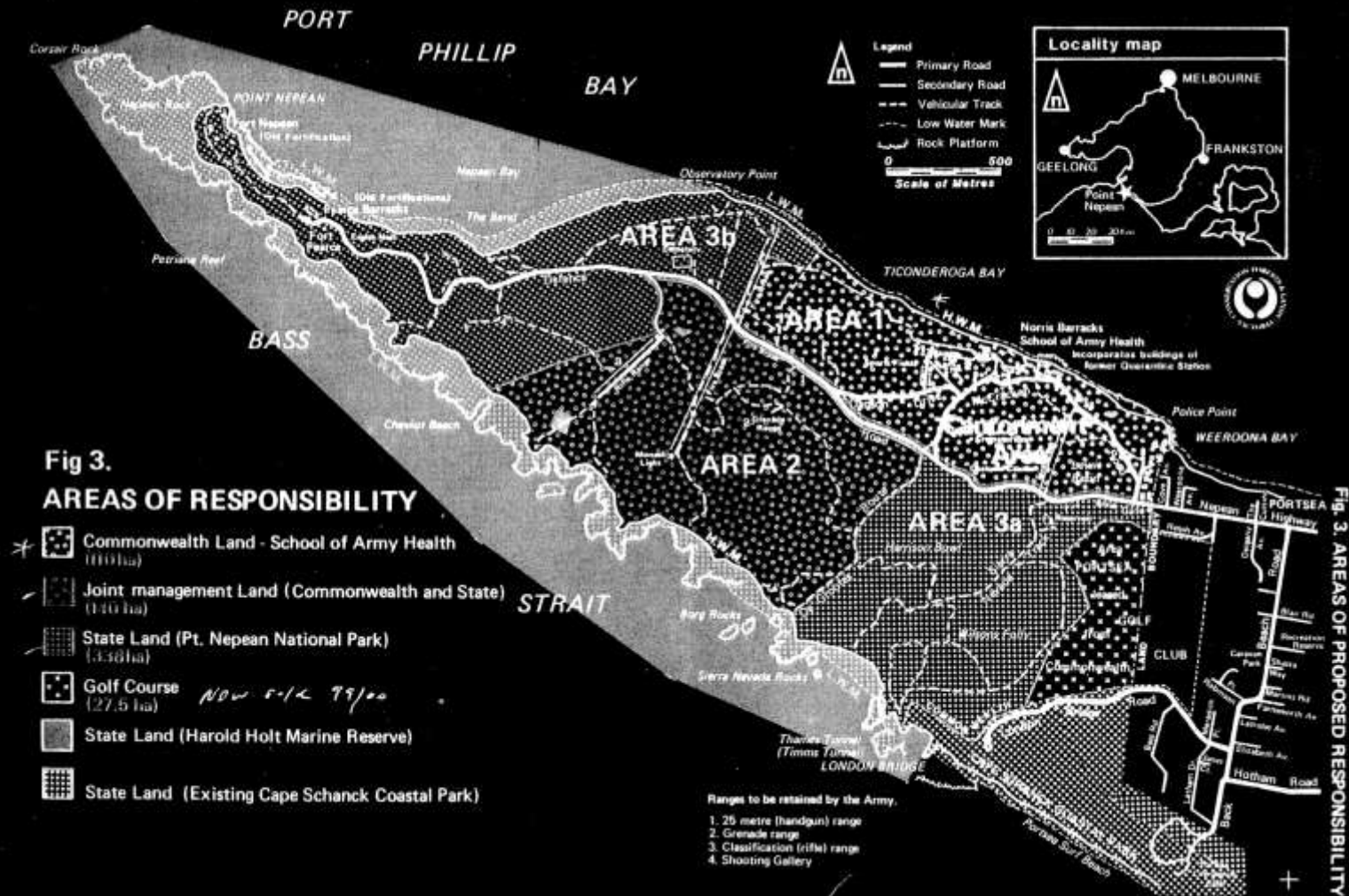




Thank you to PV for permission to use this composite photo of Point Nepean National Park

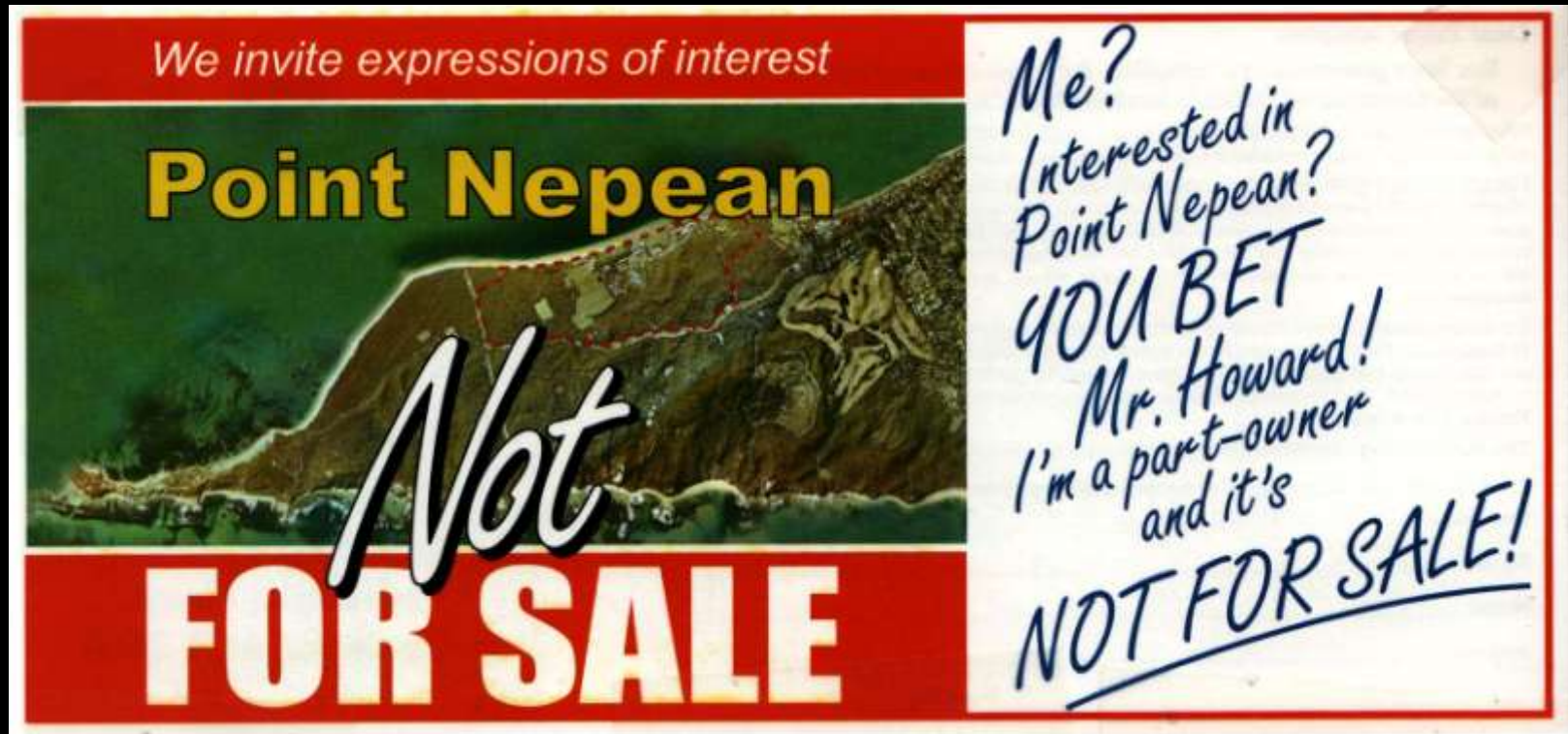


-  Built environment
-  Vegetated Coastal Hinterland
-  Port Phillip Bay Coast
-  Bass Strait Coast
-  Point Nepean Clifed Headland



Research context: Point Nepean

- Background - natural and cultural heritage significance of Pt Nepean
- The Community Reference Group (2003 - 28 people appointed to advise the Federal Government)
- Save Pt Nepean campaign – a community effort – 2003 - 04
- Pt Nepean Advisory Committee (Victorian State Government) 2004 - Dec 09
- Pt Nepean Community Trust (Federal Government body) 2004 - June 09



A rabble with a cause: the community gathers its forces to make its voice heard





Portsea Defence Land Master Planning Project -

What did the CRG achieve? The CRG wrote

“The Portsea Defence Land Draft Master Plan” which the Federal Government finally accepted as “The Portsea Defence Land Community Draft Master Plan”.

Our vision for Point Nepean?

“The future vision for the Portsea Defence site is to create a public park managed as a whole and integrated with the Point Nepean coastal and marine environment to enhance its special sense of place. The future use should recognise the diverse relationships of people with this place over time.”

“The Portsea Defence Land Community Draft Master Plan”
vision statement was only partially implemented!

The Australian Federal Government decided that the majority of its crown land (317 hectares) would be governed by a Trust (PNCT) for five years prior to being handed over to the State Government, and that 17 hectares would be given to the local Municipal Shire (MPSC) to be used as a Public Park. The Victorian State Government established a Point Nepean Advisory Committee (PNAC) to guide the Minister and Parks Victoria towards eventual acceptance of the land. So the deep political divisions remained!

The PNCT and the PNAC worked independently of each other:

PNCT – to develop a vision for PNQS (their jurisdiction)

PNAC – envisioning a new model for a unique National Park -
putting ‘place’ at the heart of governance ...



Point Nepean: towards an integrated National Park ... 2006



Point Nepean: towards an integrated National Park ... 2006





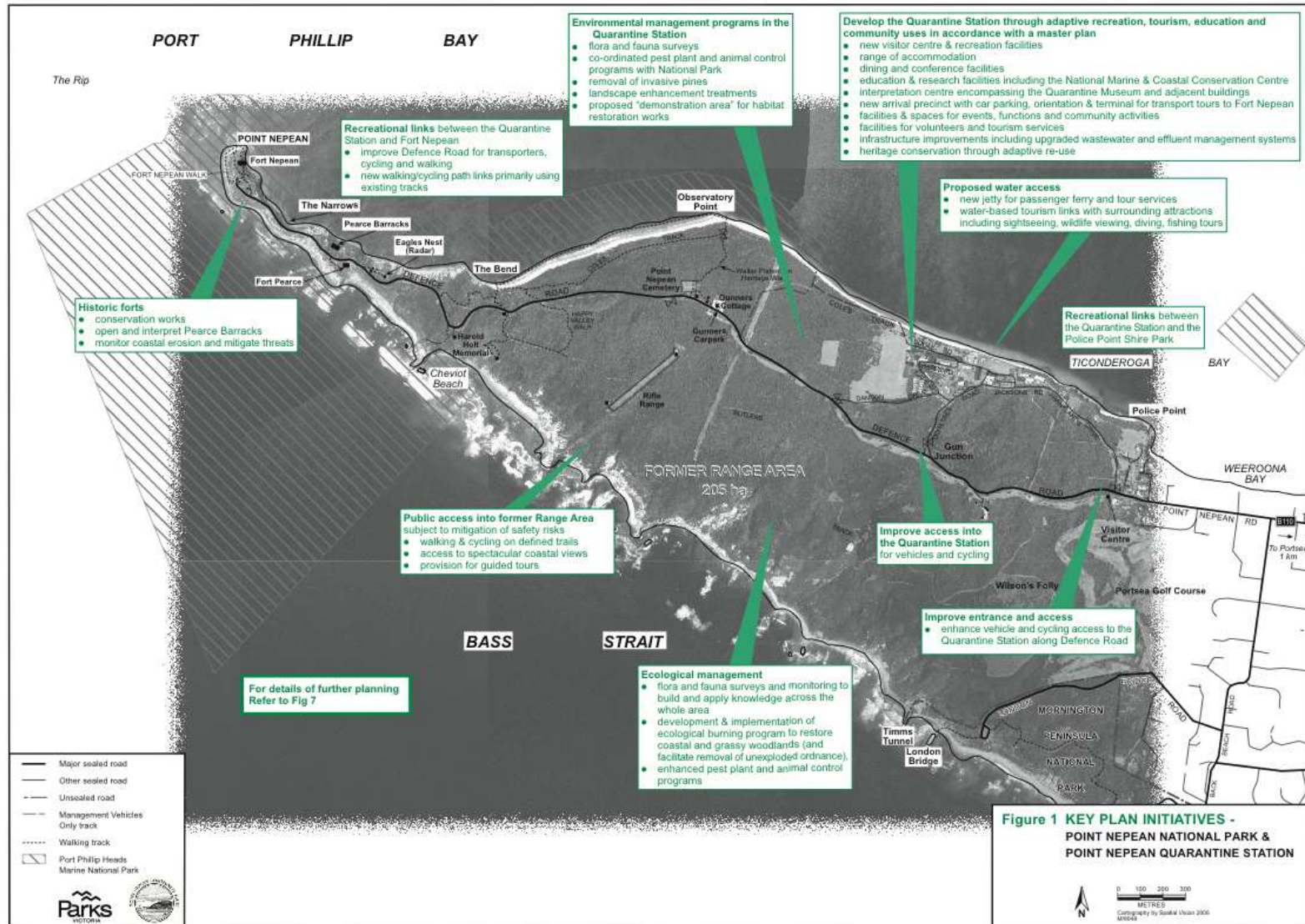
In December 2009, the Australian Federal Government finally handed over the remaining 317 hectares to the Victorian Government, and on 6 December 2009 the new Point Nepean National Park was formed.

Research context: Point Nepean

Parks Victoria took over management of Point Nepean National Park. The PNCT, the PNAC and community stakeholders became redundant.

Developing an alternative model for PNNP to Parks Victoria's management for all of Victoria's National Parks became a distant vision ...

PV's master planning orthodoxies tend to segment and instrumentalise the values inherent in a site rather than recognising a site's inherent capacity to generate interest and therefore a self sustaining economy



The Burra Charter helps us to make ‘good decisions about the care of important places’.

It states:

1. ‘The place itself is important’
2. ‘Understand the significance of the place’
3. ‘Understand the fabric’
4. ‘Significance should guide decisions’
5. ‘Do as much as necessary, as little as possible’
6. ‘Keep records’
7. ‘Do everything in logical order’

References: *The Burra Charter*, The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, Australia ICOMOS, 1999 and *The Illustrated Burra Charter*, Peter Marquis-Kyle & Meredith Walker Australia ICOMOS 1996

(ICOMOS=International Council on Monuments and Sites)



What values do we ascribe to a place?

The Burra Charter gives us 5 categories:

1. Aesthetic value
2. Historic value
3. Scientific value
4. Social value
5. Other approaches



How do we establish the significance of a place? The Burra Charter gives us some guidelines:

- 1. Collect information*
- 2. Assess cultural significance*
- 3. Prepare a statement of cultural significance*
- 4. Write the report*

As an advocate for heritage, the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

follows this process in preparing and writing its case study reports and its recommendation for nomination for registration at local, regional, state or national level. From the outset, the NTAV has been fully supportive of the establishment of a fully integrated National Park at Point Nepean. Point Nepean is listed on the National Heritage List. Premature nomination, however, means the listing is now incomplete.

Why should heritage and place matter to people(s) all around the world?

it has to do with identity ...

with memory

with who we are

as a person ...

as a human being

as a community

locally and globally



So let us journey from different perspectives – from the land ...



So let us journey from different perspectives – from the air ...



So let us journey from different perspectives – from the intimacy of the flora ...



So let us journey from different perspectives – from the indigenous, from the European ...

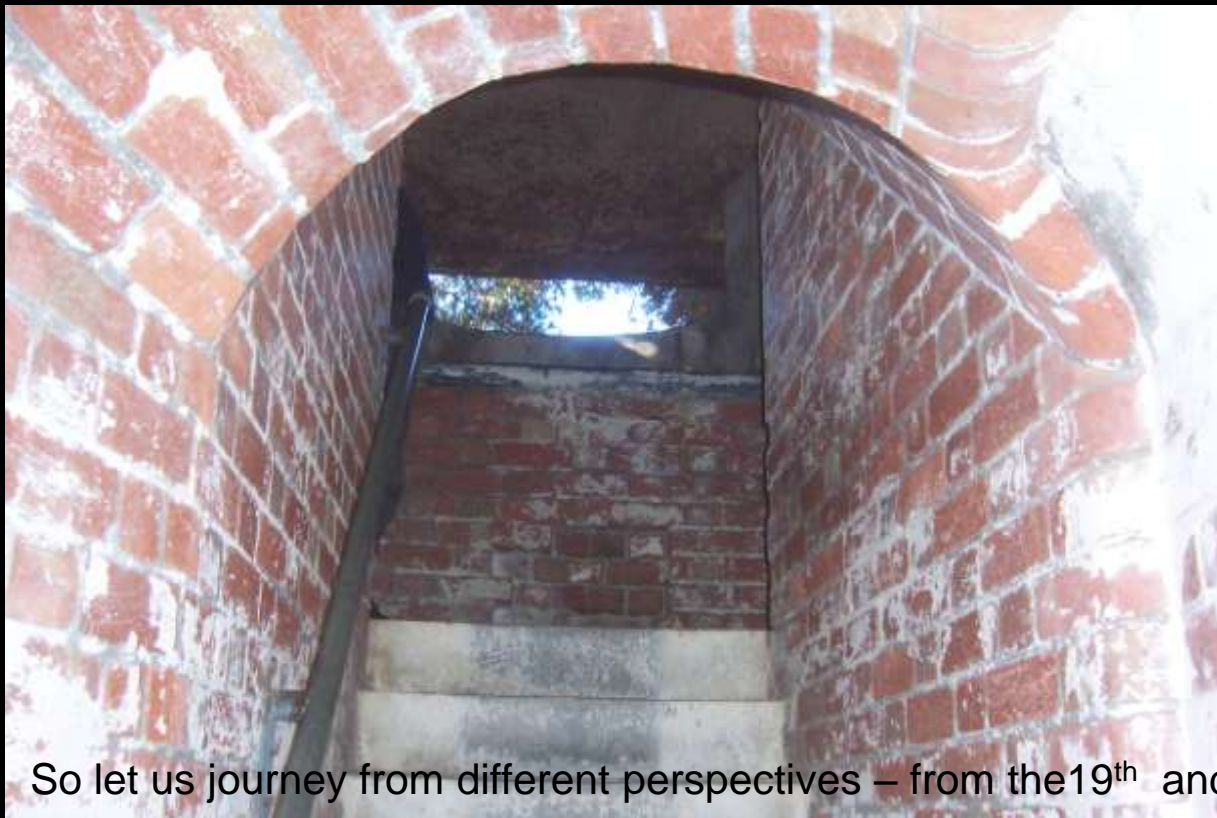


So let us journey from different perspectives – from the former Quarantine Station ...





So let us journey from different perspectives – from the former Quarantine Station ...



So let us journey from different perspectives – from the 19th and 20th C defence installations ...

So let us journey from different perspectives – from the seascape ...



So let us journey from different perspectives with an open mind to explore place based knowledge as a new paradigm ...



The aim of this research is to develop a new PBK paradigm and governance model for managing public assets. Its focus is twofold:

1. to improve understanding of place-based learning, and
2. to establish strong connections with public asset managers whose cultures are responsive to innovation in public asset governance and management

Methodology:

- A. Review relevant literature in relation to place-based learning models, with particular attention to practical precedents
- B. Identify key Victorian land and sea assets in the public domain that confront the problem of resourcing
- C. Establish a place based learning model capable of implementation in partnership with a major Victorian public asset manager.

This paper will focus on 1 and A using PNNP as our example.

The literature review found very little on the term PBK. The concept of place-based learning/ education is generally poorly understood outside school contexts.

Other terms searched included: place based-education; place-based learning; place-conscious education; place-based orientation; place pedagogy and place-based perceptual ecology.

If, instead, one focuses on current activities and their management, a different picture emerges. The literature on the regulation of — as opposed to physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual engagement with — public assets is much better developed.



Lateral thinking took us into related fields:
sense of place; oral history - story telling and narratives;
cultural heritage interpretation; tourism and tourism management;
eco-tourism and geo-tourism; and immersive environmental education.

From our research we developed six themes:

1. Sense of place
2. Narrating place
3. Place-based education
4. Ecotourism and Geotourism
5. Symbolic capital
6. Governance/management





Why a new paradigm?

The proposition, that models for the management of public assets that secure 'sense of place' are lacking, inadequate or poorly understood, arose from the on-going experience of the chief investigators in their respective professional roles as place designer (Carter) and cultural heritage advisor (de Jong).

In particular an opportunity to observe the multi – agency management of the Point Nepean site and the subsequent transfer of a major public asset (the Point Nepean Quarantine Station, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria) from Federal to State government ownership presented an opportunity to examine the role 'sense of place' played in planning the future amenity of the site.

Developing a sense of place means capturing the creative potential of the place. This is found in the foundational stories which created the place –but how do you materialise that creative, dynamic genius loci in the visitor experience? (Paul Carter)

Why a new paradigm?

The conventional techniques used for visitor information are not adapted to this task of engaged reimagining. Even when interactive, interpretation strategies position the visitor as consumer.

Conventional interpretation systems treat the place as static and inert – as a theatre that awaits their animation. But a sense of place comes from the fact that the place is already alive with stories and the challenge is not to conjure them up from nothing but to draw attention to the traces of what is already there – and what is already there are not only buildings, and views, plants and dreams, sounds and smells, but a host of stories (Paul Carter).



What have we learned so far?

What have we learned so far?

The Point Nepean Quarantine Station engagement produced initial research that showed that the development of a 'place-based knowledge' program offered an alternative approach to the management and resourcing of the facility and adjoining park into the future.

The PBK approach was story-based, the idea being that the symbolic capital of the site (resident in the meanings attaching to its human and non-human heritage) increased in value as the volume of symbolic exchange increased. Catalysts in this growth, it was proposed, were all forms of creative engagement with the site, including a wealth of informal learning and knowledge transfer activities.

Criteria for a PBK approach were developed from experience and an expansive literature review

1. PBK and place
2. PBK and knowledge
3. PBK and interpretation and communication
4. PBK and custodianship
5. PBK and management of public assets



Criteria 1. PBK and place

PBK emerges from place

Place is dynamic, evolving, changing

PBK puts 'sense of place' at the heart of a new relational paradigm.

PBK creates 'experiences where people can build relationships of care for places close to home' (Sobel, 1996)

PBK gives people the opportunity to bond with the natural world

PBK is experiential, connects place with self and community

A PBK approach encourages seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling the world around us

Thomas Berry's phrase 'a re-enchantment with the world' is appropriate



Criteria 2. PBK and knowledge

Breaking open place knowledge

PBK is inherently multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary

Knowledge creation/ making

Acknowledging the layers of meaning – challenges and possibilities

Ensuring no compromise of authenticity and integrity of culture – not dependant on outside expertise or adapted knowledge

Intent: to deepen understanding and appreciation

A new emphasis on bottom up approach

PBK approach is to reveal rather than impose

Recognising communities as possessors and generators of knowledge

Aim is not to 'plan' but rather to reveal (Stanley model, p. 213), by creating an inventory of common meanings, aspirations and values, that lead to a language of connectedness and a set of guiding principles for the positive development of place and identity (Stanley model, p.219)

“Only one kilometre”: walking slowly, spending time in one place



Criteria 3. PBK and interpretation and communication

PBK is embodied and local

Communicated through stories and other forms of narrative

Opportunity to explore multiple stories

Acknowledge contested spaces

Polyphonic narratives v the 'master' narrative

Awareness of the significant silences in history

Should not privilege one interpretation over another

Informed imagination – stories and insights

Narrative power of the camera/ the poet/ the artist etc

Potential to use stories to change the places we love and who we are (M Findlay)

Re-narrating: opportunities for new understandings

envisaging /envisioning new futures

Conversational narratives

Symbolic meanings

Criteria 4. PBK and custodianship

Stewardship and custodianship

Belonging and ownership

Social capital – the invisible web of relationships

Quadruple bottom line: social capital; environmental well-being;
financial accountability; futurity



Criteria 5. PBK and management of public assets

Partnerships/ inclusivity

Broad-based, encouraging empowerment, encouraging cooperation

Future oriented – leading to positive futures for all

Encouraging involvement rather than consumption or spectatorship

Useful in terms of interpretation and long term site management

Local communities and local authorities working together

(include school programs)

Re-appropriation of a territory's heritage

Mutual tourism knowledge

Open minded to a new choreography of place



Place Based Knowledge – Point Nepean National Park, Victoria, Australia



PBK leading to a new choreography of place
... taking up the challenge and the opportunity

PBK leading to a new
choreography of place
... taking up the challenge
and the opportunity



“ Change is a constant - the signal for rebirth” Christina Baldwin, author

A fresh approach is needed!!

Recognise the rich and diverse heritage of your place

Use PNNP's heritage to plan for a sustainable future for the region (outward looking from inward strength)

Tell PNNP's story – past, present, future ... creatively, imaginatively, truthfully

Build strong and inclusive networks and partnerships throughout the region and beyond

Resource the community ... empower all people

“ ... we are at one of the special moments in history, we can do something special, move outside the heritage niche ...” outside the PV model ...

Peter Beecham, English Heritage, 2002

Natural and cultural heritage places are a key resource of the State of Victoria, Australia. PNNP is a key natural and cultural heritage site ...

SO CELEBRATE PNNP!



“There is a time for the museum but there is also time simply to live with the past and allow it to grow and adapt with the present generations” Jacquai Goddard, Conservation Director, NSWNT



Thank you. You are invited to Point Nepean National Park - to encounter place, to explore the many paths, tracks and roads, to take in the expanse and savour the detail, to be present, to participate creatively and contribute to its history

