

The background image shows a busy port scene. Large yellow gantry cranes are positioned over a blue container ship. Several yellow port tractors are visible on the pier. The sky is clear and blue. The bottom of the cover features a decorative wavy line in shades of blue and white.

RPS

PREPARING ADVICE ON VICTORIA'S FUTURE PORTS CAPACITY

Workshop summary report

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1 Why we engaged

1.1 Background

Infrastructure Victoria is undertaking a phased program of engagement activities to develop its advice to the Special Minister of State on Victoria's future ports capacity.

On 1 September 2016, Infrastructure Victoria released a discussion paper titled [Preparing advice on Victoria's future ports capacity](#). At the same time, stakeholders and the community were invited to join the conversation via Infrastructure Victoria's online consultation site.

The consultation site was used to collect submissions and feedback on the discussion paper and to encourage interested stakeholders and community to register for a targeted program of engagement activities between October and December 2016.

An overview of the timeline for engagement and the program for Infrastructure Victoria providing its advice to the Special Minister of State is provided in Figure 1.1.

1.2 About this report

Over the last three months, Infrastructure Victoria sought to build on conversations with stakeholders and the community about the need for, timing of and potential location of a second container port.

Throughout this phase, Infrastructure Victoria focussed on targeted engagement and consultation to examine the future capacity of the Port of Melbourne and the advantages and drawbacks of a potential future port at Hastings or Bay West.

Activities included five workshops with key stakeholders (local councils and business groups) and community (special interest groups and individuals) undertaken in and around Hastings, Geelong and Melbourne. Led by RPS as an independent facilitator, workshops were designed to hear the views and perspectives of individuals and organisations from a variety of backgrounds, sectors and communities.

Workshop sessions facilitated further dialogue around questions posed in the discussion paper on 'when' a second container port may be needed and 'where' it could be situated. Four, key topics were explored – the economic, transport, social and environmental considerations for a future port in either location.

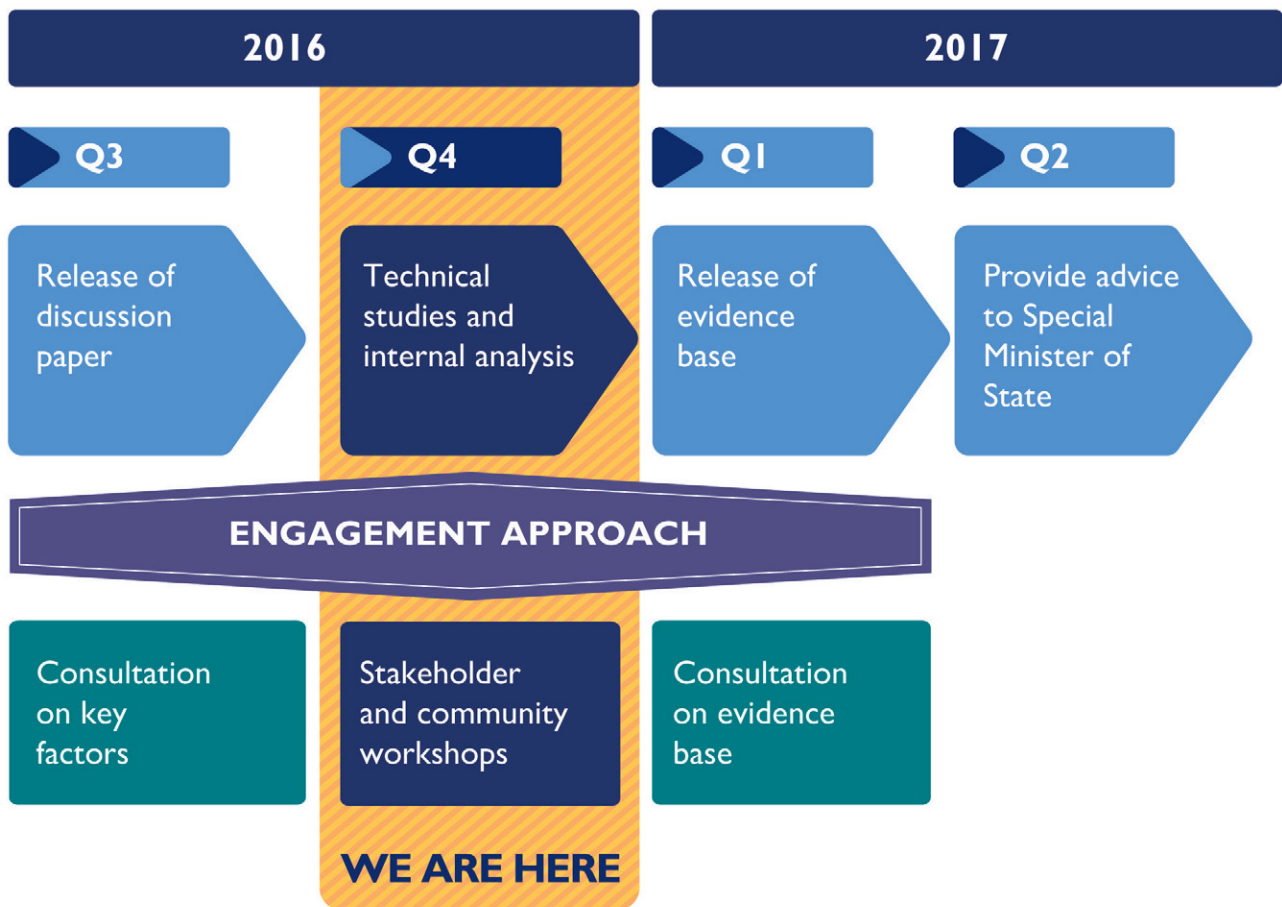
This report captures feedback themes from the five workshops undertaken and provides a summary of key issues and opportunities identified by community members and key stakeholders. It has three key sections:

- **Who and how we engaged:** provides an overview of workshop activities and participation by location and stakeholder and community group.
- **What we heard:** provides a summary of discussion themes and conversations by key topic, location and group.
- **Next steps:** provides a summary of how this report will be incorporated as well as next steps in Infrastructure Victoria's advice to Government.

In addition to this report, Infrastructure Victoria will release a full consultation report that will provide further information and key findings from the submissions process as well as broader engagement activities.

Information collected from workshops, including written notes and comments as well as further evidence provided by participants have been provided to Infrastructure Victoria for reference.

Figure 1.1 Ports advice timeline



2 Who and how we engaged

In developing the workshops for this phase of engagement, Infrastructure Victoria held separate sessions for key stakeholders (local councils and business groups), special interest groups and community members, in acknowledgement of the varying interests of these groups.

Acknowledging the history of planning for a second container port was also an important element. In considering the two potential locations, the option for a container port at Hastings has previously been subject to extensive consultation with stakeholders and the community in comparison to a Bay West option.

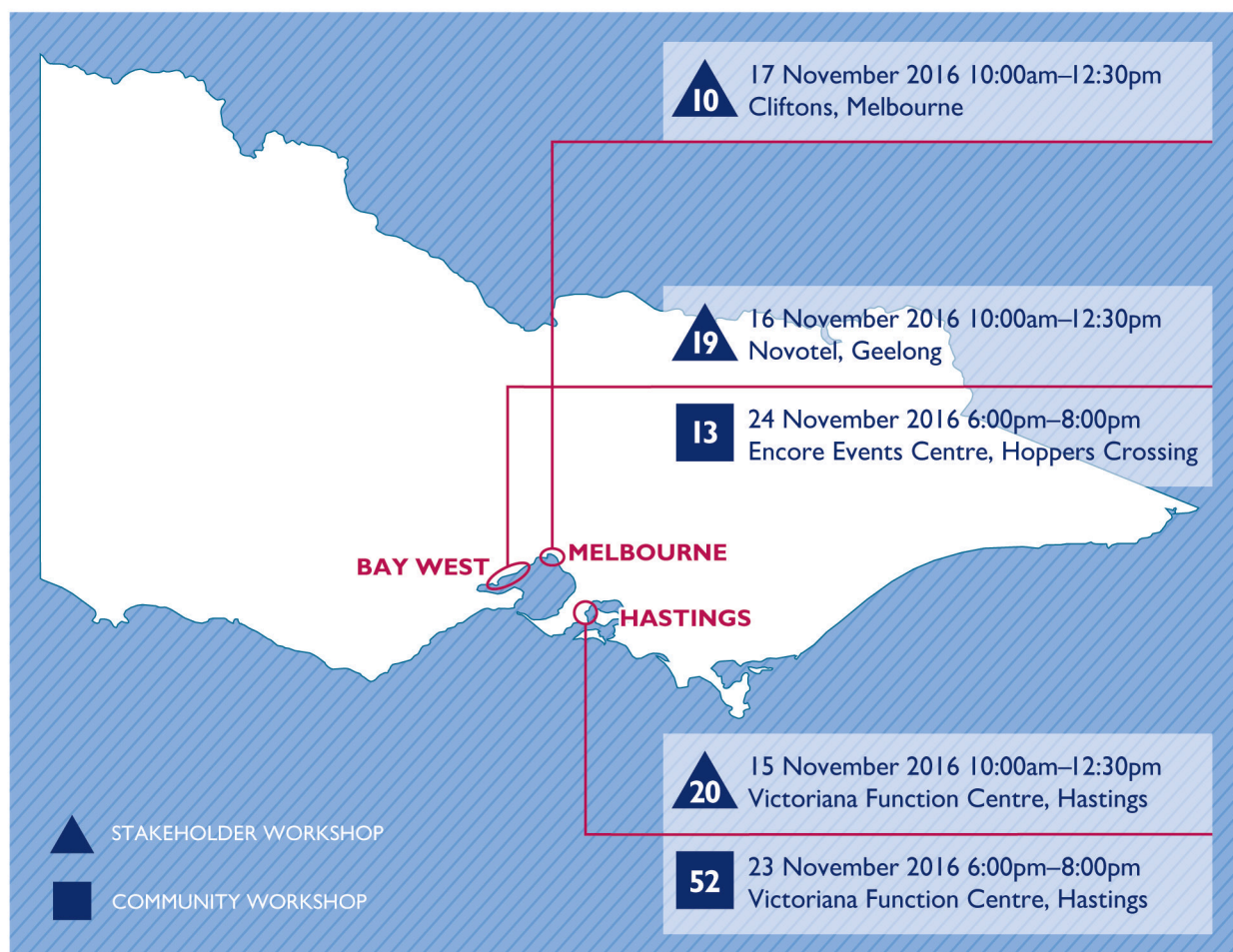
This may have influenced interest and participation in the workshops.

It is also important to acknowledge workshop composition and attendance was based on self-selection. In this sense, participation reflects the level of interest in the topic of a second container port from people and groups; and their feedback may not be considered as a representative of broader views.

In determining the content of the workshops, RPS worked with Infrastructure Victoria to determine the focus of activities for each group across different locations. This led to tailored workshop agendas.

Figure 2.1 shows participation by group across the different locations and includes the dates, times and locations of each workshop.

Figure 2.1 Workshop participation



2.1 Key stakeholder workshops

Key stakeholders were invited to attend workshops via email invitations from Infrastructure Victoria.

'Eventbrite', an online event registration platform, was used to assist in planning for attendee numbers, activities and catering. Attendees at the key stakeholder workshops represented organisations with an interest in the following sectors:

- Local Government
- Port operations and management
- Logistics and freight
- Education, research and policy
- Planning and economic development
- Environmental conservation and protection
- Victorian Government departments and authorities

It is important to note that during this phase Infrastructure Victoria also held meetings with other key stakeholders, including representatives from Victoria's commercial ports, stevedores, peak body representatives, planning and environmental groups and government agencies to capture additional feedback.

Feedback from these meetings is not reflected in this report as RPS was not involved in these discussions.

Key stakeholder workshops ran for 2.5 hours from 10:00am-12:30pm in Hastings, Melbourne and Geelong. Workshop agendas and activities were developed for each session to encourage the best input from different sized groups.

The purpose of each workshop was to:

- Outline Infrastructure Victoria's work on preparing advice to the Victorian Government on a second container port.
- Provide an overview of what Infrastructure Victoria has heard so far from feedback forms and submissions on the discussion paper.
- Capture feedback on the timeframe for a second container port (the 'when') and any issues with existing port operations and freight supply chains.
- Capture feedback on economic, transport, social and environmental considerations for the Hastings and Bay West options, as part of exploring the 'where' question, including issues and opportunities.

The engagement format for each workshop focussed on small group conversations where participants were asked to take part in discussions about the 'when' and the 'where' in relation to a second container port.

A summary of key feedback themes from stakeholder workshops is provided in Section 3.

STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS	
▲	15 November 2016 10:00am–12:30pm Victoriana Function Centre, Hastings
▲	16 November 2016 10:00am–12:30pm Novotel, Geelong
▲	17 November 2016 10:00am–12:30pm Cliftons, Melbourne

2.2 Community workshops

Special interest groups and individual community members from the Hastings and Bay West areas were invited to participate in community workshops to share their views.

Workshops were advertised in local papers, promoted on Infrastructure Victoria's social media channels including Facebook and Twitter, and posted on its online consultation site. Infrastructure Victoria also reached out through local networks and interest groups as part of encouraging wider involvement.

COMMUNITY SESSIONS	
	23 November 2016 6:00pm–8:00pm Victoriana Function Centre, Hastings
	24 November 2016 6:00pm–8:00pm Encore Events Centre, Hoppers Crossing

Community workshops were held in Hastings and Hoppers Crossing. The online event registration platform Eventbrite was used to manage registrations for workshops. The times and locations for community workshops were made publicly available on the Eventbrite website. Each workshop ran for two hours in the evening from 6:00-8:00pm.

The purpose of each workshop was to:

- Outline Infrastructure Victoria's work on preparing advice to the Victorian Government on a second container port.
- Provide an overview of what Infrastructure Victoria has heard so far from feedback forms and submissions on the discussion paper.
- Capture feedback on the most important factors Infrastructure Victoria needs to consider in preparing their advice – looking at economic, transport, social and environmental considerations for their area.

The engagement format for each workshop focussed on small group discussions where participants were asked to engage in two activities.

Firstly, participants were asked to talk about what they thought the most important factors were for Infrastructure Victoria to consider in its work. Each piece of feedback received during this activity was coded and aligned with the four key topic areas, being economic, transport, social and environmental considerations.

Secondly, time was provided for tables to reflect on the feedback shared during the first activity. Groups were then asked to build on conversations by discussing each of the four topic areas in depth, giving consideration to issues as well as opportunities.

A summary of key feedback themes from community workshops is provided in Section 3.

3 What we heard

Infrastructure Victoria wanted to hear community and stakeholder views as part of gathering its evidence for the timing of, need for and location of a second container port in Victoria.

The purpose of workshop discussions was to draw on local knowledge and expertise to understand factors that are important to groups and whether any other evidence or inputs should be considered in developing independent advice to Government.

Information from all stakeholder and community workshops has been grouped into key themes.

In presenting key themes from discussions, it is important to note the following:

- This summary is based on qualitative data collected from participants. Due to the amount of feedback gathered during workshops, issues, opportunities and ideas have been themed and paraphrased.
- RPS has taken great care with transcribing feedback from workshop sessions, but unfortunately cannot guarantee the accuracy of all notes. We are confident that the full range of views has been captured.
- Unless otherwise noted the views expressed in this section of this report represent those of workshop participants and not those of Infrastructure Victoria or RPS.

3.1 When will a second port be needed?

Feedback about when to invest in extra ports capacity was collected from the Hastings, Bay West and Melbourne stakeholder sessions.

Copies of the discussion paper were made available at the workshops. Stakeholders broadly agreed with the key factors Infrastructure Victoria identified for deciding on when a second port will be needed in the discussion paper.

In summary, stakeholder groups told us that the timing of a second container port would be influenced by:

- Physical constraints at the Port of Melbourne including landside constraints such as encroaching urban development and waterside constraints such as increasing ship sizes.
- Economic constraints including the lease price of Port of Melbourne, which may cascade down to the consumer and affect Melbourne's ability to remain competitive.
- Social constraints and the acceptability of port operations in largely urban areas. Many participants cited the international trend of moving river ports out of cities.

Other participants suggested that the issue should be framed from a national perspective and should consider other freight and logistic mechanisms such as inland rail and coastal shipping.

An overview of key discussion points from each stakeholder workshop is presented in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Stakeholder feedback on when to invest in extra ports capacity**Hastings stakeholder workshop****15 November 2016, 10:00am-12:30pm, Victoriana Function Centre, Hastings**

- Participants felt pressure to expand the Port of Melbourne could eventually lead to its closure. Discussion looked at how a second container port could take up a complementary role rather than becoming a successor to the Port of Melbourne.
- Maintaining Victoria's competitive advantage was discussed as a key consideration in the timing of a second container port. This involves consideration of ship sizes – acknowledging the limitation of the Port of Melbourne in servicing larger ships and its ability to accommodate landside freight operations, especially rail.
- Stakeholders at the Hastings workshop also discussed the notion of social license and the continued acceptance of port operations in increasingly urban areas. They noted that further expansion of the Port of Melbourne's operations could impact on residential development and create more congestion.

**Bay West stakeholder workshop****16 November 2016, 10:00am-12:30pm, Novotel Geelong**

- Thinking about the timing of a second container port, participants reflected on the capacity constraints of the Port of Melbourne, including Swanson Dock and Webb Dock. They also noted issues with maintaining surrounding infrastructure like the West Gate Bridge and increasing the capacity of surrounding roads.
- Participants told us they were concerned about increasing pressure for land in a growing city and the Port of Melbourne's proximity to urban renewal areas, including Fishermans Bend. They questioned the vision for urban renewal of surrounding areas and whether the port has a place in the future.
- Participants questioned the long-term effects on price competitiveness from the Port of Melbourne lease, in terms of the cost of containers, and maintaining the attractiveness of Melbourne with other states, such as Brisbane and Sydney. They recognised the need to consider long lead times and the economic case of investment for other ports.

**Melbourne stakeholder workshop****17 November 2016, 10:00am-12:30pm, Cliftons Melbourne**

- Participants expressed concern about timelines associated with the development of a second container port. Participants were broadly in support of investigations into options sooner rather than later – citing long lead times for moving logistics, which are also subject to planning processes and approvals.
- Participants discussed the need for a 150-year vision in relation to the timeline for a second container port. It was noted that while “all good cities start with a port” they questioned whether city ports would be part of the future. International examples were cited where ports have moved away from the constraints of the city.
- Participants felt the expansion of the Port of Melbourne would be at odds with increased densification, urban renewal and congestion in the area. Also citing decreasing public tolerance for trucks, they noted that projects like the Western Distributor would not reduce enough of the pressure and that this would impact on the timing for the need new port capacity.



3.2 Where should a second port be located?

Feedback about where to locate extra ports capacity was collected from the Hastings, Bay West and Melbourne stakeholder sessions and the Hastings and Bay West community sessions.

Feedback shows that there are clear links between economic, transport, social and environmental considerations for Hastings or Bay West with concerns, issues, opportunities and benefits to balance for each location.

An overarching point made by some participants at the sessions was that Infrastructure Victoria could consider a container port at both Hastings and Bay West in the long term. An overview of some of the specific themes is provided in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Key themes and considerations





Port of Hastings option

Economic

Stakeholder feedback – from the Hastings and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Participants from both sessions supported developing distribution centres at Hastings and Lyndhurst with strong links to Dandenong South and Kingston where clustering and colocation of industries, including transport, manufacturing and warehousing, is already happening.
- In general, participants agreed a port in Hastings would create new business opportunities, particularly in the growing food economy (including packaging and production in the south east) linked to increasing global demand for food. In particular, participants at the Hastings session emphasised the link to Tasmanian shipping as critical.
- A particular focus of conversations at the Hastings session was the need for certainty either way for a port at Hastings, investment decisions were hinging on a potential port and return on investment would be necessary to drive significant change in the area.
- Both sessions reflected on the need to support growth industries including boating, fishing and tourism and maintain existing industries including agriculture, forestry (paper and timber) and mining. Boat building was noted as one of the fastest-growing industries at the Hastings session – this was seen to be complementary to a port in the area.
- While the majority of participants at both sessions felt there would be growth in jobs with a port, some questioned the levels of automation in a high-tech future port, noting that while the port may not be a large employer, surrounding industries and sectors would benefit and this would facilitate job growth.
- Linked strongly to transport considerations, participants at the Melbourne session spent time reflecting on the need to consider the potential increased costs for exporters in Victoria's north and north west (due to freight distance), stating that east-west linkages and interstate linkages are vital no matter where a port is located.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- Unemployment was a broadly acknowledged issue for the community – it was noted that the area has the highest unemployment rate on Mornington Peninsula. Concerns were raised about fulltime, long-term jobs for local people especially given the trend towards automation.
- Emphasis was put on the world-class marine sector and skilled workforce located in the area. Some participants saw this as complementary for a future potential port development with expanding employment opportunities for maintenance and local engineering.
- Participants wanted to see employment projections and forecasts for property values – short and long term. Some participants touched on the construction of the Victorian Desalination Plant, which they said affected housing competition and rental prices and dislocated the local community.
- More broadly, participants emphasised the need to assess all costs associated with the Hastings option including impacts on tourism and visitor numbers for Phillip Island and associated industries, including fishing and boating – all large employers in the area.
- While there was broad support for more jobs and small business opportunities, participants wanted this balanced with potential impacts on ecological values – noting that many businesses in the area depend on a healthy environment. The need to encourage investment in green industries was also identified by a number of participants.
- The amount of land set aside for a port was an issue of concern to many participants. Many participants believed the land set aside was more than three times the size of some of the world's largest ports. They also noted the release of port land could enable significant economic development.
- Similar to the key stakeholder workshops, participants discussed potential benefits for the broader region, noting the opportunity to develop more exports out of Gippsland and the south east. As part of this, the notion of 'certainty' was seen as essential to facilitating strategic decision-making.



Port of Hastings option

Transport

Stakeholder feedback – from the Hastings and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Participants from the Melbourne session pointed to the need to look at transport infrastructure costs for the Hastings option, including road and rail connections, with an emphasis on providing for freight specific rail links and safeguarding corridors.
- A similar discussion was had at the Hastings key stakeholder session, where participants emphasised the strong link between transport and economic outcomes, focussing on the need to invest in road and rail links to achieve the benefits of the port.
- The need to create more certainty between land use and transport planning was an overarching theme, but particularly for Victoria's south east, noting projects like South East Rail Link and the North East Link freeway.
- Reflecting on broader transport connections, participants at the Melbourne session and some participants at the Hastings session saw the lack of interstate connections to the south east as a potential weakness for the location of a port in Hastings.
- There was some discussion at the Hastings session of potential future links with a south east airport creating multi-modal opportunities.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- Participants talked about 'staging' and the need for significant transport investment for a port, including widening and strengthening roads, upgrading intersections, rail freight links and grade separations. Numerous conversations touched on dedicated freight connections to ports, citing Port of Los Angeles and Port of Singapore as examples.
- Numerous participants raised concerns about increased truck movements related to port activities. Participants stated that running, congestion, and vehicle-related noise and dust would detract from the lifestyle and enjoyment of Western Port for local residents and visitors.
- Some participants were also concerned about the shipment, storage and transport of dangerous goods.
- Other participants focussed on potential waterside impacts from port-related vessel movements. They had questions about ship waiting time, anchorage and interaction with other water traffic. Some concerns were expressed about impacts on ferry movements between Phillip Island and Stony Point.
- Participants also wanted to know more about supply chain and distribution across Melbourne and beyond, asking for information on where goods ultimately end up. Broader conversations questioned the use of interstate and inland ports, with some suggestions that planning should be undertaken in the context of a national approach to freight.



Port of Hastings option

Social

Stakeholder feedback – from the Hastings and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Participants from the Hastings session felt that a port in the area could become a catalyst for research, education and training. This was linked strongly with flow-on social benefits related to revitalised industry, growth in employment and investment confidence.
- Participants at both sessions advocated for the value of the Peninsula's natural assets especially Phillip Island and its tourist appeal, which is strongly connected to community identity and wellbeing. Boating and fishing were also noted as highly valued, with the Peninsula's recreational facilities serving all of Melbourne south east.
- Looking at social benefits from a slightly different perspective some participants, particularly at the Hastings session, expressed an interest in exploring how a port could further support tourism. Suggestions included creating facilities for cruise ships and increasing ferries to Phillip Island, which would also increase economic value.
- The majority of participants at stakeholder sessions touched on the potential for air and noise pollution, which could impact local communities. It was suggested that automation of port facilities may reduce noise and visual amenity impacts, alongside other measures, such as buffer areas to protect local communities.
- Concerns about impacts on visual amenity for French Island were raised at the Hastings session.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- Land ownership and zoning of port land were widely discussed, particularly the restrictive nature of planning controls. Participants hoped some land could be released for uses that would support better community outcomes, including conservation, recreation and farming.
- Deep concern was expressed about the impacts on quality of life and amenity if a port was to be built in Hastings. Noting that this would be an enormous change for the area, some community members expressed concern about population growth, erosion of green wedges and loss of community identity.
- Participants raised questions about impacts on recreational uses of Western Port, including swimming, boating and fishing – questioning the legacy that would be left for future generations if a container port was built in the area. In particular, participants called for more analysis and transparency around how these impacts would be assessed.
- Other participants expressed frustration with the social impact caused by uncertainty. Some participants felt it was unfair for the government to restrict land use, which puts pressure on landowners in the form of rates and land tax.
- Many participants raised questions about Crib Point, in terms of its potential for residential development or as a potential port location. Some participants requested that Crib Point be added to the options being assessed by Infrastructure Victoria. Other participants were concerned about potential impacts on Crib Point beach – including visual amenity and environmental impacts.
- Participants stated that they were worried about the impacts of 24-hour port operations, including visual impacts from views of cranes, lighting, noise and emissions. Particular concerns were raised about health impacts, while other participants cited existing noise pollution from Crib Point tankers.
- Participants supported the notion of Hastings becoming a “maritime precinct” with or without a port, focussing on training and job opportunities. Questions were raised about whether zoning would allow this and how it could beneficially link with other developments, such as Yaringa Harbour without affecting amenity.



Port of Hastings option

Environmental

Stakeholder feedback – from the Hastings and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Protecting the Western Port Ramsar site was one of the most important environmental considerations raised by participants at both sessions, noting its unique ecology and marine values that are recognised worldwide. This includes mudflats, saltmarsh, seagrass, mangroves, and feeding/roosting habitat for birds. Participants at the Hastings session were also keen to understand more about whales visiting Western Port and Port Phillip.
- Participants raised concerns about Federal and State protected species, including two important fish species. Discussion raised questions about introduced species as a result of increased shipping and potential impacts on spawning, which could also affect recreational fishing. Participants at the Hastings session emphasised the importance of considering impacts on surrounding estuarine environments, including Watsons Creek.
- The importance of monitoring and managing potential environmental risks from vessel movements was discussed, including oil spills, and assisting ships to safely navigate environmentally sensitive waters.
- Participants questioned if a port in Hastings could contribute to improved protections and conservation measures for Phillip Island, such as increased monitoring, environmental offsets and investment in ecotourism. Stakeholders also advocated for the continued preservation of Phillip Island and its penguin habitat, highlighting their immense environmental and socio-economic value.
- Hastings participants were also interested in understanding whether there is potential to reuse dredged material to mitigate coastal erosion. They also noted opportunities to generate a rehabilitation program for other areas of Western Port.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- There were calls for more transparency in the preparation of environmental studies. Issues were raised in relation to the independence, credibility and peer review of specialist assessments. Particular concerns were raised about assessments under the Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act. Participants were also interested in seeing evidence of impacts and monitoring.
- Participants are looking for more information about the depth and width of any proposed channel, dredging volumes, as well as the impacts of dredging. There is an expectation that the same level of scrutiny as the channel deepening in Port Phillip Bay would be applied for either option, and that facts and figures would offer a comparison of the Hastings and Bay West options.
- The assessment of the value of natural capital assets was a key discussion point for participants. They expressed a desire to see a more integrated approach to research and specialist assessments, citing initiatives like Blue Carbon Lab and environmental accounting.
- Many participants stated that all costs need to be assessed, including the affect on coastal processes, damage to mangrove integrity, turbidity, impacts on sea grass and nitrogen balance, introduced pests, increased zoonotic agents (disease causing toxins and bacteria) and any impacts on penguins, seals, dolphins, whales and people.
- There were also concerns raised about impacts on future aquaculture.
- Participants expressed deep concern about the potential loss or deterioration of environmental values. Ecotourism was discussed at length and participants wanted assurance that a port expansion would not have any long-term impacts. Some participants believed environmental impacts could be managed and the two could coexist; citing one of the world's biggest ports (Singapore) is adjacent to a national park.
- Other participants felt that there were no offsets for environmental impacts. There were concerns the health of the whole bay and the Western Port Ramsar site would be threatened by potential oil and chemical spills from shipping.
- Broader than potential waterside impacts, participants also reflected on landside environmental issues including noise and air pollution, noting ships as the worst emitters and ports as having large carbon footprints.



Bay West option

Economic

Stakeholder feedback – from the Bay West and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Participants at both sessions shared the understanding that a port in Bay West would create jobs and reduce employment-related travel. There was also some discussion about encouraging the expansion and decentralisation of Geelong's employment centre into the East Werribee employment precinct.
- At the Bay West session, it was also noted that a port in the area would increase the number of job types required across the entire supply chain. This would boost employment following the exit of manufacturing as well as give access to a rich and strong skills base.
- Overall, participants highlighted opportunities for freight industry consolidation and cost saving potential in the west, including access to large parcels of relatively cheap land for agglomeration and industry expansion. At the Melbourne session participants also discussed the benefits of co-locating containers, liquid bulk and other trades.
- Participants at the Bay West session were particularly in favour of a port in the area as it could assist with long-term transport planning and infrastructure progression in the area, supporting competitive distribution and future potential links to Avalon airport.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- Employment was a particular focus for participants and many were keen to understand short and long-term employment projections for a potential port.
- Many participants held the perception that a port in Bay West would be a positive economic step for the west, replacing loss of manufacturing jobs. However, some concerns were raised about achieving a mix of jobs and not an excess of lower paid, casual positions.
- Participants focussed on up skilling and training opportunities, believing more could be done to encourage education, research and business into the area. Many individuals thought that the re-establishment of manufacturing in the area would be advantageous and complement the strong focus on logistics.
- During the session there was a shared idea that the Bay West option would be considered a growth corridor for the 'new Victoria', consisting of skilled hospitals, schools, and a strong local workforce.



Bay West option

Transport

Stakeholder feedback – from the Bay West and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Participants at both sessions agreed the Bay West option could provide an inland rail hub for the future with stronger road and rail connections with Melbourne and interstate than the south east. Additionally, Bay West could leverage existing logistics infrastructure and create synergy between Avalon airport and the new port for exports.
- Overall, participants felt that transport links would give a significant competitive advantage to a potential Bay West port due to the proximity to the Princes Freeway and plans for the outer metropolitan E6 transport corridor, which creates the opportunity for new road and rail transport links.
- Participants at the Bay West session noted the Princes Freeway and surrounding roads would need to expand so the area doesn't become a traffic bottleneck. Recognising this could constrain the boundary of Western Treatment Plant, some participants implied the Ramsar site could act as a buffer between freight and other land uses.
- Participants at both sessions discussed the importance of considering transport beyond the port gate, which includes understanding the end destinations for goods.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- Many participants were broadly supportive of the Bay West option, although they noted that better public transport would be needed to address concerns about traffic congestion.
- A number of participants expressed concern about increased freight traffic and transport access for people living in the area. In particular, they mentioned that wider road and rail corridors could become “double barriers” – dislocating communities and creating separation around transport corridors.
- Some participants called for a review of the way trucks are managed. Restrictions on truck movements at night were seen to be a big constraint. Revising curfews could provide an opportunity to reduce truck movements during the day and help to improve transport around Werribee and on the freeway for other road users.



Bay West option

Social

Stakeholder feedback – from the Bay West and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Participants at the Bay West session discussed the potential impacts a port could have on the amenity of the surrounding area, particularly for growing residential and urban areas.
- Some participants at Bay West session expressed concern about impacts on coastal development and recreation for areas surrounding the port, including fishing, boating, cycling, walking and bird watching. Locations including Wyndham Harbour and Werribee South were mentioned.
- Despite these concerns, overall, participants at both sessions acknowledged that apart from bird watchers and visitors to the Ramsar wetlands, Werribee is not a tourist destination.
- While acknowledging potential impacts, participants at both sessions generally focused on the benefits of increased employment opportunities in North Geelong and Wyndham, and emphasised the importance of maintaining and strengthening industry links between Melbourne and Geelong.
- Participants at both sessions felt that the social benefits of providing employment opportunities would have significant lifestyle benefits. At the Bay West session in particular, there was some discussion of knock-on effects for land and property values that would contribute to positive socio-economic outcomes.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- Some participants held the perception that the space in the Bay West area is limited, and that the port would place pressure on developing areas and valued places like the market gardens. Statements were also made about the importance of maintaining the coastal aspect and making sure open space is protected.
- Participants were eager to see some social offsets included as part of a potential port development including improvements to walking paths, observation points and better access for fishing. It was noted that a port in the area should complement not detract from its surroundings.
- Some participants questioned whether dredging would affect access ("exclusion zones") to areas of the channel for boating and fishing, such as Corio Bay, noting this would have significant social impacts.
- Parts of the Western Treatment Plant contain highly valued Ramsar protected wetlands. Community members noted that this site is visited by up to 8,000 people each year and is the second most visited bird watching site in Australia, so ensuring its social and environmental values are safeguarded is critical for the area.
- Participants discussed potential health impacts on communities around the port due to increased noise pollution and reduced air quality. These impacts were seen as significant drawbacks and some participants felt the benefits of a new port should be assessed against the cost of potential poor health outcomes for local people.
- Linked to transport discussions, participants touched on the importance of designated freight corridors and investment in supporting infrastructure to keep up with urban development and population growth.
- Generally participants supported a port at Bay West on the basis that Geelong has the potential to grow and that areas like Wyndham offer opportunities to new families and refugees to settle in an areas that has local employment potential, good transport connections and relatively affordable housing.



Bay West option

Environment

Stakeholder feedback – from the Bay West and Melbourne sessions

Key discussion themes

- Participants reflected on the environmental importance of the Ramsar wetlands, which is located along the western shoreline of Port Phillip Bay and extends through parts of the Western Treatment Plant. Participants at both sessions emphasised the importance of protecting the unique biodiversity of the site, including any impacts on the lifecycle of migratory birds that travel to the wetlands.
- Participants at the Bay West session in particular talked at length about potential impacts on the Western Treatment Plant, which treats the majority of Melbourne's sewage, provides habitat for wildlife and is used for farming. Some stakeholders questioned whether a port and related infrastructure would constrain the plant and impinge on Melbourne Water's ability to manage and expand the site into the future.
- While generally participants at both sessions supported joint planning to guide future development of a potential port near the Western Treatment Plant, some questioned whether it would be viable to maintain the plant in this location into the future – reflecting on the similar dilemma faced in planning for and locating port operations.
- Participants at the Bay West session wanted more thinking to be done on decreasing the environmental footprint of a potential port by investing in renewable energy solutions. Suggestions included the potential for solar and wind farm energy systems on treatment plant or port land.
- Participants at the Melbourne session highlighted that the treatment plant has been operating for over 100 years. They noted any port development nearby would need to consider salinity and soil contamination, factoring in related time and cost considerations for managing this.
- Managing potential impacts on water quality for Port Phillip Bay was raised at both sessions, noting the focus on monitoring and reporting on the health of the bay. In focussing on the health of the bay, participants also raised introduced species as an issue and questioned the potential impacts of dredging.
- The notion of dredging of the bay to allow for large size container ships was a point of contention for the group at the Bay West session in particular. Questions were also raised about the scale of dredging required to allow access through the Port Phillip Heads.

Community feedback

Key discussion themes

- Some participants were concerned a port may affect the community's access to a clean local environment.
- Key concerns raised included impacts on the Ramsar wetlands, including Lake Borrie (which forms part of the listed site) as an important migratory bird habitat with significant environmental and social value.
- Protecting the habitats of threatened and protected species was also a key concern – the orange-bellied parrot and the growling grass frog were mentioned in particular.
- The impact of dredging on marine habitats was discussed at length. Significant concerns were raised about the affects of sediment movement on surrounding areas like the Point Cook marine reserve and reduced resilience to sea level rise. Some participants also questioned whether dredging would affect the water table.
- Participants made reference to the potential impact on visual amenity as an environmental consideration. They noted that the coastal aspect alongside preserving a buffer between Geelong and Melbourne as part of preserving local environmental and landscape values.
- Some participants suggested a set percentage of freight could be mandated for transport by rail, which would be better for the environment. Some participants also felt different fuel options and renewable energy sources that are being developed could help to reduce the environmental footprint of a future potential port.

4 Next steps

It is clear from the workshops and submissions that there is strong interest from stakeholders and local communities in contributing to the discussion about when and where a second container port is located in Victoria.

This report captures the key opportunities, potential issues and general feedback from stakeholders and local communities. We understand Infrastructure Victoria will consider this feedback alongside the extensive technical assessments that are being undertaking and outcomes of targeted engagement including one-on-one meetings. It is essential they be considered side by side as the technical inputs will inform and shape future feedback and visa versa.

In early 2017, Infrastructure Victoria will release a report presenting its evidence base and commence the next phase of engagement, which will offer another opportunity for public comment and feedback.

RPS Group would like to acknowledge and thank everyone that participated in the workshops for their genuine interest and willingness to contribute.