



Ref: [REDACTED]

25 May 2005

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Dear [REDACTED]

RE: RECREATION NODES – VICTORIAN COASTAL STRATEGY 2002

The Hon. John Thwaites, MP Minister for Environment has requested that I write to you to provide clarification on the term “recreation node,” as used in the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002. The need for this clarification has arisen because of the possibility of ambiguity relating to the use of the term on coastal public and coastal freehold land.

As you would be aware, the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002 is the key document which provides a shared vision to guide all decision making by the community and governments that affects the coast. A key objective is to provide direction for the location and scale of use and development on the coast.

The Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002 clearly states (excluding the urban area around Port Phillip Bay) that appropriate areas for coastal development will be confined to activity nodes and recreation nodes. Recreation nodes are defined as areas outside of established settlements (activity nodes) that have a priority for recreation and water related activities or improved facilities and that can be developed consistent with ecological sustainable development principles outlined in the Strategy. Public benefit is a clear requirement.

The Minister has clarified that the term “recreation node” should only apply to identified sites on coastal **public land** for recreational works for public benefit. This clarification should assist both planning authorities and developers in interpreting the Victorian Coastal Strategy and hence, to protect the values of the coastal environment whilst providing for appropriate sustainable use.

The Victorian Coastal Strategy provides direction that Regional Coastal Boards, working in conjunction with local government, committees of management and Parks Victoria will further define the precise location, appropriate use and development, scale, hierarchy, function and boundaries of recreation nodes.

As you would be aware, the Coastal Spaces Project, a joint initiative between the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Victorian Coastal Council, will encourage implementation of the Government's long term policy aims for the coast – to achieve growth that is sustainable, to contain urban growth to settlements and to protect landscapes between settlements.

I am pleased to advise that as part of the Coastal Spaces Project, a sub-project will be undertaken by Carol Sweatman of Carol Sweatman Environment and Community to further define the precise location, appropriate use and development, scale, hierarchy, function and boundaries of recreation nodes across Victoria's outer coast, Westernport Bay and south western Port Phillip Bay.

The Coastal Spaces Project is providing the opportunity to stimulate discussion with key stakeholders and local government to find the most appropriate approaches to address the challenges involved in further protecting the coast and managing growth pressures.

Should you require further information on the above, please contact Andrew Buckley, Executive Officer at the Council's East Melbourne office (ph 9637 9456). Alternatively, should you require further information on the Coastal Spaces Project, please contact John Ginivan, Project Director at DSE's East Melbourne office (ph 9637 8045).

Yours sincerely

Diane James
Chairman