

# REBUILDING BROOKES JETTY IN ST KILDA

## **INITIAL BUSINESS CASE**

Version 1.3

Bring Back Brookes Jetty Inc.

[bringbackbrookesjetty.org](http://bringbackbrookesjetty.org)

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# Brookes Jetty Initial Business Case

1. Executive Summary
2. Background
3. Business need
4. The project
5. Options
6. Costs and benefits
7. Project Stakeholders
8. References

## 1. Executive Summary

The removal of Brookes Jetty in St Kilda in October 2015 motivated the community group Bring Back Brookes Jetty Inc. to seek to rebuild a recreational structure at the site. The Jetty was built as an extension to a Melbourne Water outfall at Shakespeare Grove. This outfall is also now fenced off and is to be replaced. A replacement drain alone will not be sufficient. The opportunity exists to replace what is now an eyesore with an attractive and additional new recreational structure at Melbourne's most famous beach.

With assistance from the Council, a report has been obtained from marine engineers M P Rogers & Associates, which provides full details of three concept options that could be built at the site. All safety considerations have been considered. Another option, to link the site to the St Kilda Marina via the Jetty, arises in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Marina. A design competition will further explore imaginative proposals for the site.

There is a need to attract more off-season visitors to St Kilda. The Jetty site is popular with tourists who visit to view and photograph the sunset over the water. The sunsets are often spectacular. The site is ideal to provide this additional facility as an expanded attraction.

An indicative analysis of cost and benefits reveals that the community revenue generated by the attraction could exceed the cost of the project within a short time, possibly two years. The project thus represents an excellent investment.

Key stakeholders have no objection to the rebuilding of a jetty at the site. Bring Back Brooks Jetty has obtained letters of support from all key local business groups.

## 2. Background

Brookes Jetty and onshore boatsheds were originally constructed in the 1880s by a local fisherman and boat-builder, Fred Brooke. There was originally watercourse at the site. With the arrival of urban development, a wooden structure was used, at first, to channel this water into the sea. This structure likely formed the basis of the original jetty. An extended jetty was built in 1912. The structure was located on the St Kilda foreshore between the St Kilda Pier and the St Kilda Marina.

Over its long history, Brookes Jetty was repaired a number of times and, in around 1934, was rebuilt. The Jetty was highly valued by the community of St Kilda and those who visited the area.

The Jetty sustained damage from storms including significant damage to the head of the structure in June 2014. Sections of the timber Jetty were subsequently closed and engineering reports deemed that the structure was unsafe for public use. Coupled with the Brookes Jetty not meeting the current day accessibility standards, Parks Victoria, who had jurisdiction over the Jetty, decided against repairing the structure and demolished it in October 2015. This was done without consultation with the local community.

Since its demolition, the community group called Bring Back Brookes Jetty Inc. (BBBJ) was formed and seeks to have the Brookes Jetty rebuilt. BBBJ received funding from the City of Port Phillip to engage specialist coastal and port engineers, M P Rogers & Associates, to develop three concept options to replace the Brookes Jetty. (See link in References.)

The drainage outlet that exists today was built in the 1950s by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works. It has sheet piled sides and a concrete platform deck. This has now reached the end of its structural life and has been fenced off. It is to be demolished and replaced.

The Brookes Jetty structure that existed until October 2015 was built in around 1934. The structure was predominantly timber, including the piles, and included a steel handrail along one side as well as an electrical conduit underneath the deck that serviced a single lightpole at the head. The former Jetty was likely past its design life.

The Heritage Council Victoria recognised the Brookes Jetty as a Heritage Inventory Site (H7822-0578). However, the Port Phillip Council had no authority regarding the Jetty and it was not subject to a heritage planning overlay.

The City of Port Phillip's Urban Design Framework for the foreshore includes the rebuilding of a recreational structure at the site. This policy has been reaffirmed by the Council, subject to the normal safety requirements.

Within the proximity, to the north, the St Kilda pier is being redeveloped, and to the south, the St Kilda Marina is also in the process of upgrade, with expressions of interest being called for. Meanwhile the removal of Brookes Jetty has unfortunately exposed the ugly Shakespeare Grove drain outfall as the main feature of St Kilda beach. In early 2019 the concrete structure of the drain was deemed unsafe for pedestrians and this is now surrounded on all sides by a high wire fence. Hence, the site is now an unsightly blight, which cries out for appropriate redevelopment.

### **3. The Business Need**

The primary business need is to restore the lost amenity of the Jetty and to attract more visitors to the area on a year round basis.

The Jetty was used as a promenade and for fishing. It provided unparalleled views of St Kilda beach and of Port Phillip Bay. It provided year-round views of the sunset over the water. It was quaintly narrow, however this did discourage some pedestrians. What exists there now is an eyesore.

Redevelopment of the Jetty provides a unique opportunity for the refurbishment of the St Kilda beach precinct. Plans are already underway to reconstruct the concrete drain outfall, which provided the platform from which the Jetty extended. Thus now is an opportune time to consider the merits of a joint reconstruction.

A refurbished structure at the site fulfils a business need in attracting more visitors and in providing an economic benefit. However the community benefit provided by a recreational structure is also significant, and should not be overlooked. This includes the amenity of a promenade destination and as a site for recreational fishing.

The MRA report considers in detail the issue of the water dept and safety. Another report commissioned by BBBJ, from Pitcher Environmental Management Pty. Ltd, considers the issue of risk management. It finds nothing that would “indicate that reconstruction of a similar jetty to the original Brookes Jetty would present an unacceptable risk in the current context.” (See link in References).

### **4. The Project**

St Kilda beach is Melbourne’s most famous beach and its most popular. It is the closest beach to the city and within easy reach by public transport. However visitor numbers to St Kilda are highly seasonal and highly weather dependent. There is a need to develop more off-season attractions.

It is highly desirable that Brookes Jetty be rebuilt as a sunset viewing platform. The site is already popular for this reason. (See link in References). However the sunset can only be seen clearly all year round over water from the position at the end of the former Jetty. Hence the Jetty can be marketed as a structure for this purpose. BBBJ has adopted the pitch: “Brookes Jetty: where the sunset meets St Kilda”. The former Jetty did not have this outstanding promotional feature.

The Jetty is immediately adjacent to Luna Park. Within 600m it has the St Kilda Marina on one side, and St Kilda Pier on the other. On the foreshore are many restaurants and the St Kilda Baths. All would mutually benefit from the additional attraction.

A sequence of destinations can be envisaged, graduating from the Marina during the day, the Jetty at sunset, and the penguins at St Kilda Pier later in the evening. The sunset is not viewable from St Kilda Pier. Immediately behind the foreshore are the Acland Street shops and the 96 tram terminus. The famous Espy resides on the Esplanade. The Jetty provides a seaside focal point for all these attractions.

## 5. Options

In their report, M P Rogers & Associates, (MRA), provide three reference design options, including sketch plans, sections, elevations and costings. These are for jetties of different lengths and widths. (See the link in References). All options provide for disability access.

The proposed MRA constructions use modern materials to provide good durability and minimal maintenance. This includes steel piles and a steel square hollow section frame with corrosion protection measures. The decking and kerbing could be timber, or alternatively, fibre reinforced plastic. Recycled plastic products could also be considered.

MRA provide a detailed analysis of the water depth and safety requirements. For a low swimming platform, a depth of 1.8m is required at lowest astronomical tide. This precludes a dedicated swimming platform at the site. The wave conditions also preclude a fixed floating pontoon. However a temporary swimming pontoon provided on a seasonal basis could be considered.

Prior to the construction of the Marina, the old jetty was used for boating. The MRA options do not extend to the boating zone, and a boating option has not been considered. This does not preclude boating altogether. If a ferry terminal at the site was deemed desirable, it could be accommodated.

Other than the three MRA options, further alternatives can be considered. Given the impending redevelopment of the Marina, a link from the jetty to the Marina is an attractive possibility. The length of such a structure would be approximately double that of the third MRA option.

Apart from the above, BBBJ has commissioned a design competition that seeks imaginative architectural ideas, which is expected to excite a great deal of public interest.

### **MRA Concept Option 1 - Original Jetty Alignment & Viewing Platform**

Concept Option 1 is for a new Jetty with the original Brookes Jetty alignment, approximately 70 m long and 1.8 m wide to allow for wheelchair access. It also features a 12 m x 2.8 m platform at its head, facing to the west for viewing sunsets.

The advantages of this option are that it provides a Jetty, similar to the original Brookes Jetty, to sightsee and promenade on. It provides universal access, including

for wheelchairs. It includes a sunset viewing platform with more space for users than the original Brookes Jetty.

It is the smallest footprint of the 3 options and therefore has the lowest cost, but therefore has less capacity.

### **MRA Concept Option 2 - Increased Jetty Width & Viewing Platform**

Concept Option 2 is for a new Jetty on a similar alignment to the original Brookes Jetty, approximately 70 m long. However, it features a wider 2.4 m deck for increased functionality. It also features a 12 m x 2.8 m platform at its head, facing to the west for viewing sunsets.

The additional advantages of this option are that it has increased functionality with a wider deck. It includes a sunset viewing platform with more space for users than the original Brookes Jetty. It has a greater footprint than Concept Option 1 and therefore a slightly higher cost.

### **MRA Concept Option 3 - Increased Jetty Length / Width & Viewing Platform**

Concept Option 3 is for a new Jetty, approximately 30 m longer than the original Brookes Jetty. Similar to Concept Option 2, it features a wider 2.4 m deck for increased functionality. Like the previous 2 options, it also features a 12 m x 2.8 m platform at its head, facing to the west for viewing sunsets.

The additional advantages of this option are that it is longer in length. The alignment features a turn to the west to provide greater clearance from the boating area. It has a greater footprint than Concept Options 1 and 2 and is therefore more costly.

### **Option 4 - A Jetty that links to the Marina**

A jetty that links to the Marina would provide a direct connection between the beach near Luna Park to the beacon (the lighthouse structure) at the Marina. Preferably this would connect both to the land near to the skate park and also to the beacon via a bridge over the boating channel.

The documents prepared by Port Phillip Council for the Marina consultation provide a list of opportunities and objectives for the Marina development. These include opening up the Marina area to public access including to the sea wall and the small beach on the western side of the Marina. It was considered desirable to enhance the local network of destinations and to create a welcoming public space.

In particular, a stated opportunity was to “Create a public promenade at the water’s edge, allowing pedestrians to view and experience the working Marina and the bay”. (See *Draft Opportunities and Constraints Paper* in References). A direct link to the Marina would undoubtedly take advantage of these opportunities.

A link from the Jetty to the Marina would admirably achieve further objectives identified in the Council’s consultation documents, listed, in part, as follows:

- Encourage people to spend more time at St Kilda Marina by improving access to, through, and within the site and creating welcoming spaces and activities for the community to enjoy.
- Maintain public views and open up new viewing experiences for the public, including views from the peninsula toward St Kilda and Melbourne.
- Connect public spaces to the water's edge via a promenade to view and experience the working Marina, the foreshore, and Port Phillip Bay.
- Create a seamless connection to the foreshore and surrounding activity centres and destinations through wayfinding.

(See *Draft Site Vision and Objectives Consultation Document*)

Being approximately double the length of the MRA Option 3, the cost can be estimated in proportion. BBBJ has made representations to the Council, that it in its tender process for the Maria redevelopment, consideration be given to making it a requirement that rebuilding Brookes Jetty be included.

### **Ideas Arising from the Design Competition**

BBBJ organised a design competition and, as a result of a most generous gift, offered a \$5000 award, known as the Leighton Prize. This architectural ideas competition was proposed by John Gollings and developed by James Brearley.

The purpose of the competition was to generate highly imaginative proposals for a new Brookes Jetty. A total of 108 high quality entries were received, from architects and architectural design students from around Australia and overseas. As a result much public interest was excited, and media interest drawn. See link in References.

## **6. Costs and benefits**

The costs of the three MRA options are detailed as follows:

Option	Concept Level Cost Estimate	Mid-point
Concept Option 1	\$850,000 - 1,300,000	\$1,075,000
Concept Option 2	\$1,000,000 - 1,650,000	\$1,325,000
Concept Option 3	\$1,500,000 - 2,250,000	\$1,875,000

On this basis, the cost of the Link to Marina option would be about \$3.75m. The cost of an option arising from the design Competition remains for future study.

The site on and around the drain outfall has become increasingly popular as a place for observing and photographing the sunset. Even in the winter, sometimes up to a hundred people are there. On a structure designed for the purpose, with unobstructed views, and promoted as such, much greater numbers could be expected. Many others will also visit the site, at other times, because of the improved amenity of the jetty, and as a result further enhancements that may arise as a result of the design competition.

Over the last several months, BBBJ has been conducting a Visitor Survey of people in the area at around the time of sunset. This is an on-going process, but the results so far are illuminating. Of the people interviewed, all had come there to view the sunset and all of them would like to see a better facility built.

In response to the question “Where do you come from?” the results were: local, 42%; other Melbourne, 15%; other Victoria, 18%, interstate, 3%; and overseas, 24%. In response to the question regarding visits to other local attractions, 60% said they would be likely to visit a nearby cafe or restaurant. These results are highly indicative of an economic benefit from an improved facility.

Additional visitor numbers are unpredictable but could be substantial. The site is highly “instagramable” due to the often spectacular sunsets. For the purpose of calculations we may make an assumption. Based on the sunset visitors alone, if we anticipate an average of only about 27 additional visitors per day, this is still additional 10,000 visitors per year.

An economic benefit arises from the expenditure of these additional visitors. An indicative assumption can be made about the expenditure per visitor. For example we may assume that 10% spend \$10, 30% spend \$20, 30% spend \$50 and 10% spend \$150. The latter would arise if the extra time spent at St Kilda causes their visit to Melbourne to extend to an additional day. At an average of \$35, this results in a total additional expenditure of \$350,000.

The recipients of this expenditure, in turn, also then have cause for additional expenditure. If we assume a multiplier of 1.5, then the total additional expenditure generated is \$525,000.

We can expect that this benefit would arise from the first option, and that more visitors could be expected if the facility provided is larger. Hence the benefit would also rise in proportion to the cost.

While the benefits do not of course accrue directly to the agencies funding the investment in the Jetty, all tiers of government may expect some revenue benefit, in particular the state government, to the extent that increased GST revenue ensues.

Considering the community as a whole, on these figures, an outlay of \$1m on the Jetty could be expected to be recouped in two years. With such a return, the jetty would appear to be an outstanding investment.

## **7. Project Stakeholders**

Parks Victoria  
Melbourne Water  
City of Port Phillip  
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning  
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions  
Business Victoria



The City of Port Phillip, Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water have all indicated that they have no objection to the rebuilding of the Jetty at the site, subject to safety requirements.

### **Local Business groups**

St Kilda Tourism & Events

Acland Street Village Business Association

Donovans restaurant

Bring Back Brookes Jetty Inc. has obtained expressions of support from the above mentioned groups, representing local businesses, and from Donovans, which is directly adjacent to the site. These letters are provided as an attachment to this document.

These groups recognise the significant benefits that will arise from providing an attraction that will promote high yield visitation to St Kilda. Travis Atkins, St Kilda Tourism & Events president, states that “we have a *once in a generation opportunity* to make this stretch of foreshore the best in the country”.

The business case for rebuilding the jetty is compelling, and well supported. St Kilda needs this project to be built.

Bring Back Brookes Jetty Inc.

January 2020.

## **9. References**

*Brookes Jetty Concept Options*, M P Rogers & Associates [link](#)

*Brookes Jetty Feasibility Risk Assessment Report*, Pitcher Environmental Management Pty. Ltd

Sunset viewing at the jetty site [link](#)

*Draft Opportunities and Constraints Paper*, City of Port Phillip, St Kilda Marina consultation

*Draft Site Vision and Objectives Consultation Document*, City of Port Phillip, St Kilda Marina consultation

Web site: [www.bringbackbrookesjetty.org](http://www.bringbackbrookesjetty.org)