



# SEMAPHORE

Newsletter of the Maritime Law

Association of Australia and New Zealand



## Positive Moves Afoot in Melbourne to Create Enhanced Focus on Maritime History

After considerable analysis over the past year, a couple of key projects appear to be coming together which will give a much-needed boost to Victoria's maritime sector and place new focus on Melbourne's status as a "great port city".

On September 21 the municipality of the City of Melbourne endorsed a Feasibility and Business Case for the development of a maritime heritage area in and around Docklands and the Yarra River (or Birrarung), in conjunction with the Victorian Government.

The feasibility study has indicated significant support for the development of a "precinct as a trail" concept connecting maritime assets while also recognising Aboriginal maritime heritage.

The concept also proposes an important role for the historic Mission to Seafarers building at 717 Flinders Street (depicted in illustration below), built in 1917 by the Mission to Seafarers, in helping Melbourne celebrate and preserve its rich maritime and seafaring history. This heritage-listed building at North Wharf, Docklands spans 2030 square metres and currently includes a consecrated chapel, courtyard, domed room, hall and other multi-functional smaller spaces.

The business case assessed the opportunities, constraints, risks and indicative costs involved in the City of Melbourne assuming management responsibility of the Mission to Seafarers building.

It is proposed that a redeveloped building will continue to support the continued delivery of seafarer welfare services, be available for other community uses and play a key role as part of a defined maritime heritage precinct.

In addition, the City of Melbourne is advancing its proposed A\$300 million Greenline Trail project, running along the North Bank of the Lower Yarra River. This will involve a four-kilometre pedestrian and cyclist pathway from Birrarung Marr all the way to the Bolte Bridge. The initiative is also a potential medium for fostering public recognition, and exploration, of Melbourne's maritime heritage.

Speaking earlier this year, Lord Mayor of Melbourne Sally Capp likened the Greenline to New York City's Highline, and saw that the project would be one of the largest developments Melbourne has undertaken since Federation Square opened in 2002.

In May 2021 the City of Melbourne endorsed a Draft Greenline Implementation Plan for works along the north bank of the Yarra River (or Birrarung). In August 2021 a community engagement process was launched through the Participate Melbourne [Website](#). This online engagement platform is live until Sunday October 3, 2021 and interested MLAANZ members are encouraged to get involved.

It now appears likely that the "trail" concept will be incorporated into the Draft Greenline Implementation Plan.

*MLAANZ president David Goodwin is a director of the Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network Inc (MMHN), a not-for-profit formed to address deficits in awareness of the city's maritime heritage and to facilitate co-operation, collaboration and co-ordination across stakeholder groups connected to*

*shipping. MMHN has been heavily involved in progressing both the maritime precinct and Greenline initiatives. For more information see [www.mmhn.org.au](http://www.mmhn.org.au).*

September 2021

