

SURF LIFE SAVING CLUBS

LESSONS LEARNED

THE OFFICE OF THE
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT
ARCHITECT CHAMPIONS
THE QUALITY OF THE BUILT
ENVIRONMENT, WORKING
ACROSS VICTORIA TO
IMPROVE SIGNIFICANT
PROJECTS.

The Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) has provided design advice across a number of Victorian Surf Life Saving Clubs including Ocean Grove, Cape Paterson, Jan Juc, Torquay and Edithvale. This document reflects the Lessons Learned through the design and procurement process and also formal advice from design reviews.

It seeks to achieve high quality design outcomes by improving procurement practices. Surf Life Saving Clubs are highly valued community facilities that support emergency operations and need to be carefully designed to be resilient in a coastal environment and low cost to maintain and operate.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE REQUIRED TO EMBED GOOD DESIGN?

Project Feasibility:

- Provide architectural design expertise on the Project Steering Committee. This may include representation from the OVGA.
- A Surf Life Saving Club should be understood as a civic building that is unique, 'of its place', engenders community pride and provides the opportunity for multi-purpose use.
- Allocate adequate time and resources into developing the Project Brief to ensure that it is 'fit-for-purpose', is aligned with the Marine and Coastal Act (MACA) 2018, meets leasing requirements and offers clarity to bidders to ensure competitive bids.
- Consult with the relevant authorities, including local and state government, Life Saving Victoria and Coastal Management Authorities.
- Ensure a strategic approach with reference to Victoria's Resilient Coast – Adapting for 2100+ guidelines and consider life cycle planning of the facility.
- Visit precedent examples of Surf Life Saving Clubs to understand what a well-designed building can provide.
- Confirm the project budget early and secure funding commitments from stakeholders.

Procurement of Design Services:

- Ensure professional design expertise in assessing submissions from the Expression of Interest (EOI) and the Request for Proposal (RFP).
- Consult the OVGA website and the publication 'Government as Smart Client' at the inception of procurement to determine the best approach to protecting design quality and the best procurement method for selecting design services and the building.
- Elevate design in the bidding documents, eg. success relies on a high quality brief, EOI and RFP documents.

- Develop specific design principles to include in the EOI and RFP documents. Support the design principles with precedent images, comparative projects and the OVGA's publication Good Design and the Coast and the Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast, May 2020.
- Value design equally against time and cost in the evaluation phase. Reach agreement on the evaluation criteria and assessment weighting early in the process.

Masterplanning:

- Agree on a clear vision for the project early in the design process.
- Consider any sea level rise, storm surges, the Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) and climate change in the siting of a Surf Life Saving Club. Refer to Victoria's Resilient Coast-Adapting for 2100+ guidelines.
- Understand the ecology and potential latent conditions on the site and make allowance for in project contingency. For example, this may include soil contamination or asbestos.
- The spatial planning of internal and external areas should create a hierarchy of public and private spaces for Surf Life Saving operations. Engage a landscape architect to explore site planning solutions and avoid the need for security fencing.
- Minimise the impact of car parking on-site while still allowing for emergency vehicle access.

Procurement of Building:

- Ensure that the project is not rushed, in particular allow sufficient time for design development to ensure excellent design outcomes and future-proofing of the project.
- Use Design Review by skilled practitioners to monitor the quality of the building, explore potential opportunities and test that the design intent is being delivered.

Architecture:

- Create an intuitive and clear sense of address to the public entry for the Surf Life Saving Club. Designed well, a building's form can signal the entry without relying on signage.
- Understand that the building will often be viewed "in the round" and that the roof will often be visible due to topography and sightlines. The location of building services will require careful attention to detail to ensure that they are integrated within the overall design approach.
- Where there are deep floor plates for storage, encourage light wells and skylights to avoid the need for artificial lighting and ventilation.
- Maximise opportunities for access to natural ventilation through the building for air quality and to ensure that equipment can dry. This approach will improve the internal amenity and reduce reliance on mechanical systems.
- External and internal circulation spaces should be generous to ensure safe, legible paths and spaces that can ease points of congestion for equipment and movement for users.
- Ensure windows capture the opportunity to frame or screen views. Visibility into the building's function and activities is encouraged.
- Understand the impact of wind, rain and differential air pressure on facades and door openings.
- Capture the benefits in grouping services including kitchens and toilets for shared use.

- Demonstrate the community benefit and ensure equity in public access to new and existing use and development.

Materials and Finishes:

- Select robust and high-quality materials for their inherent properties in a coastal environment subject to corrosion and erosion. This includes the selection of door hardware, window frames, roofing and fixtures.
- Allow for the threat of bushfire in the siting and design of the building and the potential to function as a community refuge.
- Ensure a bushfire management plan is completed early in the design process to inform the choice of materials and construction.

Landscape:

- Landscape architecture must be embedded early in the design approach and is critical for site selection and the extent of building footprint.
- Avoid the removal of the native vegetation to provide wind protection, natural shading and reduce erosion.

Sustainability:

- Ensure a commitment to quality by requiring Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) features in the EOI and RFP. A benchmarked ESD tool, such as Greenstar, will elevate the whole-of-life considerations and allow for measuring the building performance and efficiency.
- Design the facility to ensure it is future-proofed for adaptability and potential expansion.



Ocean Grove Surf Life Saving Club
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