

**Rebecca Leonard declared a material conflict of interest in relation to 4.3 - Planning Scheme Amendment C133 - Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy Implementation - Adoption. This conflict of interest has arisen due to primary residents being located in the area affected by the Amendment and left the room at 6:20pm.**

### **4.3 Planning Scheme Amendment C133 - Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy Implementation - Adoption**

<b>Author's Title:</b>	Principal Strategic Planner
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<b>Department:</b>	Integrated Planning
<b>Division:</b>	Placemaking and Environment
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. C 133 - Planning Policy Documents Combined - Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy Implementation [4.3.1 - 86 pages]</li><li>2. C 133 - Background Documents for Planning Scheme [4.3.2 - 223 pages]</li><li>3. C 133 - Explanatory Report [4.3.3 - 7 pages]</li><li>4. C 133 - Instruction Sheet [4.3.4 - 2 pages]</li><li>5. C 133 - Table of Planning Scheme Changes [4.3.5 - 5 pages]</li><li>6. C 133 - Thompsons Creek Catchment Review Report 2022 [4.3.6 - 37 pages]</li></ol>

**Officer Conflict of Interest:** No officer declared a conflict of interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

**Status:** This report and attachments contains no confidential information under section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### **Executive Summary**

Planning Scheme Amendment C133 implements the Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy (RHFS), adopted by Council in 2019. The Strategy reinforces the primary use of rural land for farming by encouraging local food production and identifying the most suitable land for intensive and commercial farming. It provides clear policy direction for tourism and agri-tourism while seeking to protect significant landscapes and environmental values. The vision of the Strategy is: that by 2040, the Hinterland will be a key contributor to the local economy and a renowned visitor destination.

Amendment C133 inserts the Strategy into the planning scheme as a background document and amends local policy to include the strategic direction of the Strategy. It addresses an important policy gap relating to discretionary uses within the Farming Zone and introduces design guidelines for development in rural areas.

The amendment was exhibited September-October 2021 and Council referred the public submissions received to a Panel appointed by the Minister for Planning. A public hearing was held in March 2022 and the Panel report was received in April. It supported the amendment and Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy but recommended some minor adjustments to the policy documents. It also identified a number of gaps in the *Thompson Creek Catchment Review* (TCCR) which provides the strategic justification for the removal of a variation relating to the minimum lot size in the Farming Zone schedule.

In June 2022 Council received the Panel report and resolved to support undertaking further work on the Thompson Creek Catchment Review and policy wording prior to adopting the amendment. This would enable the changes to the Farming Zone Schedule to proceed as part of the amendment and improve policy changes in response to Panel recommendations.

The additional work on the amendment documents and the *Thompson Creek Catchment Review* has now been completed. The final draft version of the amendment documents are ready for consideration for adoption and are appended to this report (**Attachments 1, 2, 3 and 4**).

### **Outcome Statement**

Amendment C133 completes important strategic work that has taken six years to prepare and process. It implements the Council adopted *Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy* (RHF) 2019 into the planning scheme. The Strategy reinforces the primary use of rural land for farming and the importance of protecting significant landscapes and environmental values. It includes the introduction of new and improved policy on tourism and discretionary uses in the Farming Zone which encourages agri-tourism in suitable locations within the Shire. It also introduces design guidelines for new developments in rural areas.

The RHF strategy took four years to develop and received over 100 submissions to the draft and final draft versions. The amendment has taken two years to prepare and process and has been independently reviewed by Panels Victoria. The amendment documents have now completed a final stage of revision to incorporate the changes suggested by the independent Panel. Following rigorous review and evaluation, the amendments to the planning scheme are in a final form ready for adoption.

<b>Key benefits</b>	<b>Key risks</b>
<p>The amendment fills a policy gap in the planning scheme for discretionary uses in the Farming Zone that will assist in making planning decisions.</p> <p>The new Policy highlights the importance of protecting productive agriculture and the Shire's significant landscapes and environment.</p> <p>The new Policy also provides better guidance on areas of the Shire best suited for different activities such as large-scale farming and tourism.</p>	<p>The majority of the independent panel recommendations have been accepted and incorporated into the amendment; however, a small number have not been accepted. Ultimately the Minister for Planning and DELWP planning officers will analyze the changes and make the final decision on the wording in the amendment.</p>

### **Finance and Resource Implications**

Sufficient funds remain in the project budget to finalise the amendment including submitting the amendment for adoption with the Minister for Planning.

### **Community Engagement**

Extensive community engagement was undertaken during the four-year development of the Strategy, which included the preparation of a Background Report and Issues and Opportunities Paper (2017), the Draft Hinterland Futures Strategy (2018) and the Final Draft (2019). Over 100 submissions were received to the draft and final draft versions.

Public exhibition of the planning scheme amendment was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Section 19 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. It was exhibited from 2 September to 4 October 2021 and fourteen submissions were received.

Council heard from submitters at a Hearing of Submissions on 9 November 2021 and determined to refer the submissions to an independent panel on 2 December 2021. The report of the independent panel was received by Council on 14 April 2022. The report is available on Council's website and all submitters to the amendment were notified of its availability.

Community consultation for the amendment is now complete. Submitters will be notified of the outcome of Council's decision on the amendment following the 27 September 2022 Council meeting.

### **Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the revised *Thompsons Creek Catchment Review 2022*.
2. Adopts Planning Scheme Amendment C133 as exhibited, modified to incorporate post-Panel changes to Clauses:
  - 2.1 14.01-1L-01 'Protection of agricultural land'
  - 2.2 14.01-1L-02 'Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones'
  - 2.3 14.01-1L-04 'Other discretionary use and development in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone'
  - 2.4 15.01-6L 'Design for rural areas'
  - 2.5 17.01-1L 'Diversified economy - Surf Coast'
  - 2.6 17.04-1L 'Facilitating tourism in Surf Coast'
  - 2.7 Schedule to Clause 35.07 'Farming Zone'
  - 2.8 Schedule to Clause 72.08 'Background documents'
  - 2.9 Schedule to Clause 74.02 'Further Strategic work.'
3. Submits the adopted amendment to the Minister for Planning for approval pursuant to Section 31 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

### **Council Resolution**

**Moved Cr Schonfelder, Seconded Cr Allen**

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the revised *Thompsons Creek Catchment Review 2022*.
2. Adopts Planning Scheme Amendment C133 as exhibited, modified to incorporate post-Panel changes to Clauses:
  - 2.1 14.01-1L-01 'Protection of agricultural land'
  - 2.2 14.01-1L-02 'Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones'
  - 2.3 14.01-1L-04 'Other discretionary use and development in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone'
  - 2.4 15.01-6L 'Design for rural areas'
  - 2.5 17.01-1L 'Diversified economy - Surf Coast'
  - 2.6 17.04-1L 'Facilitating tourism in Surf Coast'
  - 2.7 Schedule to Clause 35.07 'Farming Zone'
  - 2.8 Schedule to Clause 72.08 'Background documents'
  - 2.9 Schedule to Clause 74.02 'Further Strategic work.'
3. Submits the adopted amendment to the Minister for Planning for approval pursuant to Section 31 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

CARRIED 6|1

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained</b>
Cr Allen Cr Bodsworth Cr Hodge Cr Pattison Cr Schonfelder Cr Stapleton	Cr Barker	Nil

## **Alternative Options**

**Alternative Option 1** – Adopt Amendment C133 as exhibited.

This option is not recommended by officers as it is unlikely that the Minister for Planning will support the amendment without the changes recommended by the Panel being included.

**Alternative Option 2** – Adopt Amendment C133 as exhibited, modified to include all of the Panels recommended changes.

This option is not recommended by officers as there are issues with three of the changes proposed by the Panel. The majority of the changes suggested by the Panel have been incorporated into the final draft version of the amendment documents. The three changes which differ from Panel recommendations are discussed in greater detail in this report and are considered well justified.

**Alternative Option 3** – Abandon the amendment

This option is not recommended by officers as the Panel supported the strategic work that underpins the amendment and found the amendment to be sound. The *Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy* provides a clear vision for the future management of the rural areas of the Shire and received strong community support. The amendment fills an important policy gap in relation to discretionary uses in the Farming Zone in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme and provides greater guidance to applicants and planning decision-makers.

## **Report**

### **Background**

Public exhibition of the amendment occurred from 2 September to 4 October 2021. A total of fourteen submissions were received. Council resolved to refer the submissions to a Panel appointed by the Minister for Planning on 23 November 2021. A public hearing was conducted from 2 to 4 March 2022. Nine submitters attended and presented at the Panel Hearing, including Surf Coast Shire Council representatives as the Planning Authority.

The Panel report was received in April 2022. It supported the amendment and Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy but recommended some minor changes to Policy wording. It also identified gaps in a background document to the amendment, the *Thompsons Creek Catchment Review (TCCR)*. Council considered the Panel report on 28 June 2022 and supported:

- Postponing consideration of adoption of Amendment C133surf to enable further work on the Thompsons Creek Catchment Report;
- Amending policy wording as recommended in the Panel Report; and
- Receiving an updated Thompsons Creek Catchment Report and modified Amendment C133surf at a future Council meeting.

The updated TCCR and modified amendment documents are appended to this report (**Attachments 1, 2 and 6**).

#### Support for the amendment

Overall, the Panel found the amendment to be ‘well founded and strategically justified’ and recommended that it should proceed. The Panel commended the work undertaken by Council in the development of the Strategy including the identification of ‘agricultural soil quality hotspots’, areas ‘well suited to tourism activities’ and ‘areas for farming’ in the hinterland and supported its translation into policy. The complexity of the work and the amount of research that went into the development of the RHFS was also acknowledged by the Panel.

Specifically, the Panel report found that;

- The Rural Hinterlands Futures Strategy, 2019 is appropriate and strategically justified.
- Subject to specific points and recommendations, the translation of the Rural Hinterlands Futures Strategy, 2019 into the Planning Policy Framework is appropriate.
- Use of mapping is supported.
- Seeking to cluster tourism activity and avoid ribbon development on major roads and tourist routes is supported.

Council (acting as the Planning Authority) proposed a number of changes to Policy post exhibition in response to submissions. The Panel supported the proposed changes in response to the Department of Transport and the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation submissions.

#### Panel recommended changes

The Panel recommended a total of thirteen changes to the Policy documents, generally for clarification purposes, to improve implementation. Ten of the recommended changes have been incorporated into the draft adoption documents

that are appended to this report (**Attachment 1**). Three of the recommended changes have not been made. Two of the changes are considered minor in nature and are not a fundamental part of the amendment. They are discussed in more detail in the following section of this report.

A matter of significance was that the Panel did not believe the *Thompsons Creek Catchment Review* adequately justified the amendments intention to remove a provision within the Schedule to the Farming Zone. The provision relates to a variation to the minimum lot sizes for subdivision or an 'as of right' dwelling in the Thompsons Creek Catchment area.

The Panel supported Council undertaking the review (which investigated the appropriateness of the provision) and said that it may have supported the proposed changes if the review had included the following information:

- Used a larger proportion of case studies;
- Used a combination of historical and current aerial photography, and site visits where possible;
- Compared the extent of works to those required by the approved Land Plan and the requirements of the relevant section 173 agreement;
- Provided a greater level of certainty to those landholders losing the ability to construct a dwelling "as of right."

At the 28 June 2022 Council meeting, Council supported officers completing this additional research outlined by the Panel. The additional work is now complete and an updated version of the *Thompsons Creek Catchment Review* (TCCR) is appended to this report (**Attachment 6**).

Removal of the exemption provision in the Farming Zone Schedule is considered to be a critical part of the amendment; therefore, updating the review and proceeding as intended was considered important for the following reasons:

- The existing provision allows a dwelling on a lot smaller than the minimum lot size in the Thompson Creek catchment if a land management plan is submitted:
  - This 'bypasses' current practice to require a planning permit to assess the suitability of a dwelling in the Farming Zone and the application of a minimum lot size appropriate to land capability and many other factors.
  - The normal assessment criteria applied to dwellings, such as access, setbacks, servicing, etc. is not able to be considered, which is considered to be a significant weakness in the exemption.
- The ability to create smaller lots in the Farming Zone has not achieved the outcomes envisaged when it was first introduced, and;

- The need for ongoing monitoring and enforcement for non-compliance once approval has been given places a burden on Councils resources with limited community benefit.

Discussions with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning representatives supported reviewing the TCCR prior to submitting the amendment to the Minister for adoption. As the Panel had outlined matters to be addressed the scope of the review was clear.

### **Discussion**

A total of thirteen changes to the amendment documents were recommended by the Panel. Ten have been incorporated into the draft adoption documents, appended to this report (**Attachment 1**). Three of the recommended changes have not been made for the reasons set out below.

#### **1. Clause 17.04-1L - Facilitating tourism in the Surf Coast**

The Panel recommended that the tenth Strategy:

- 'Discourage tourist development in the Bells Beach and Point Addis area,' be deleted.

The Panel highlighted that the Strategy was a repeat of a preceding Strategy:

- 'Discourage tourism uses and development on land that is subject to the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1.'

The Panel believed the tenth strategy was therefore redundant.

It is recommended that the Strategy be retained for two reasons:

- Bells Beach and land subject to the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 is outside the Rural Hinterland study area and therefore does not form part of this amendment; and;
- Implementation of the DAL project will most likely result in the deletion of the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1. Officers believe that the retention or deletion of the strategy is a matter best undertaken as part of a process that explores the implications more fully.

*Officer Recommendation: That the Strategy be retained in its current form.*

#### **2. The Panel also recommended that the following strategy be split into two separate strategies:**

- 'Promote nature-based tourism use and development in the Tourism and agri- tourism area shown on the Rural Hinterland Tourism Activation map in this Clause containing natural assets where bushfire risk can be reduced to an acceptable level without compromising the natural values of the site or surrounding area'.



By splitting the Strategy, the weight given to siting tourism activities in areas of lower bushfire risk would be greatly diminished compared to how it was originally intended as a fundamental guiding principle. The consideration of bushfire risk is intrinsically linked to the appropriate location of tourism ventures. It is important that the two issues are connected as it provides an important context for a tourism use which may or may not be acceptable due to the negative flow on impacts this can have on the protection of biodiversity and landscape values.

*Officer Recommendation: That the Strategy is retained as one Strategy.*

### **3. Schedule to Clause 35.07 - Schedule to the Farming Zone**

The Panel did not support the deletion of an exemption in the Farming Zone schedule that allows for the consideration of a dwelling or subdivision below the minimum lot size within the Thompson Creek catchment. The Panel believed the *Thompsons Creek Catchment Review* did not adequately justify its removal and clearly highlighted the gaps in the review. The Panel outlined what needed to be addressed in order for the deletion to be considered. Council has now undertaken that additional strategic work and it is considered that the deletion of the provision is adequately justified and can continue to form part of the amendment. The updated *Thompsons Creek Catchment Review* (TCCR) is appended to this report (**Attachment 6**).

*Officer Recommendation: The provision within the Schedule to the Farming Zone be deleted.*

The table appended to this report (**Attachment 5**) outlines all of the changes that have been made to the amendment following public exhibition. The 'post exhibition changes' give an overview of the changes made by Council (as the Planning Authority) in response to submissions. The 'post panel changes' provide an overview of the changes suggested by the Panel. In total nine clauses within the Surf Coast Planning Scheme are affected.

### **Outcome Analysis**

The amendment documents appended to this report (**Attachments 1 - 6**) have been updated to incorporate the feedback received from Panels Victoria. Overall, the Panel found the amendment to be 'well founded and strategically justified' and recommended that it should proceed. The complexity of the work and the amount of research that went into the development of the RHFS was acknowledged by the Panel.

Council (acting as the Planning Authority) proposed a number of changes to Policy post exhibition in response to submissions and the Panel supported those changes. C133 provides a clear vision and policy framework for the future of the rural areas of the Shire and the final draft version of the amendment documents are now ready for consideration for adoption.

### **Financial and Resource Impact Analysis**

Sufficient budget was allocated in Council's 2020/2021 Annual Budget to process the amendment and to cover Panels Victoria costs.

The remaining budget is sufficient to cover the final costs associated with submitting the amendment to the Minister for Planning for adoption and final notice following approval. Any unspent funds will be returned to source once the amendment has been adopted by the Minister.

### **Council Plan Assessment**

#### **Theme Three - Environmental Leadership**

Strategy 7 - Protect significant habitats, landscapes and biodiversity Strategy.

#### **Theme Four - Sustainable Growth**

Strategy 13 - Support tourism and events that encourage people to stay longer and appreciate and care for this place.

#### **Theme Five - A Robust and Diverse Economy**

Strategy 15 - Foster businesses that reflect local character and values including ethical, social and sustainable principles.

Implementation of the *Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy, 2019* through Amendment C133 is an important step in actioning the Council Plan. The Strategy seeks to promote tourism and agritourism in the hinterland but in appropriate locations to ensure productive agriculture, significant landscapes and environmental assets are protected. The Strategy and Policy documents that form part of this amendment carefully balance the need to protect the Shire's assets whilst boosting the local economy through tourism ventures and local food production.

### **Relevant Legislation, Policy, Strategies and Plans**

The amendment meets the requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, State and Regional Policy. The amendment has been assessed against the Strategic Assessment Guidelines and conforms to State Government practice notes and relevant Ministerial Directions.

**Previous Councillor and Audit and Risk Committee Consultation**

This item is not within the scope of matters considered by the Audit and Risk Committee.

*This item was discussed at the following Councillor briefings prior to being presented to Council for consideration. Councillor attendance at each briefing was as follows:*

*Councillor Briefing Date: 6 September 2022*

<i>Councillor name</i>	<i>In attendance (Y/N)</i>	<i>Councillor name</i>	<i>In attendance (Y/N)</i>
<i>Cr Gary Allen</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Cr Liz Pattison</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Cr Paul Barker</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Cr Adrian Schonfelder</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>Cr Mike Bodsworth</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Cr Libby Stapleton</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>Cr Kate Gazzard</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Cr Heather Wellington</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Cr Rose Hodge</i>	<i>Y</i>		

Councillor attendance at briefings is not a statutory requirement. Councillors are able to access and request information to understand matters being presented at a Council Meeting.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 02.03

10/06/2021  
C136surf

### 02.03-1

10/06/2021  
C136surf

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

### Settlement

Strong population growth in the Shire's coastal towns is expected to continue due to sustained interest in the region's natural environment. While there is pressure to expand some settlement boundaries into areas of high landscape significance, the landscape settings between settlements need to be retained.

Torquay-Jan Juc and Winchelsea are the only towns with capacity to accommodate substantial growth. Other towns are limited in opportunities to grow due to various physical, environmental or infrastructure constraints.

**Torquay-Jan Juc** is the gateway to Bells Beach and is the main urban growth centre of the Shire, with a population expecting to grow to 30,000 by the year 2040 (Surf Coast Shire, 2014). It is a popular destination for surfers, tourists, young families and retirees and is becoming increasingly popular for permanent settlement by those valuing a coastal lifestyle. It is important that while Torquay continues to grow as a tourist destination, it also provides retail and entertainment services for the growing local and sub-regional population. The Spring Creek corridor west of Duffields Road is an area identified for long term urban growth.

**Winchelsea** is the largest inland town in the Shire and is the major service centre for the surrounding farming community. It is rich in heritage and has an active tourism industry with wineries, berry farms, restaurants, cafes and accommodation in the broader district. Winchelsea is well serviced by a railway station, hospital, community and recreation facilities, and reticulated services, providing opportunities for population growth.

### Coastal towns

**Lorne** has a low permanent population and an economy that is strongly focused on tourism. Its tourism facilities, coastal location and association with the Great Ocean Road make it a prime tourism destination. The town encircles and slopes down to Louttit Bay. Larger lots surrounding the town serve as a buffer between the town and the Great Otway National Park. Further settlement growth is constrained by the National Park, significant remnant vegetation and extreme bushfire risk.

Out of all the coastal towns in the Shire, **Anglesea** has the highest percentage of permanent residents after Torquay-Jan Juc. It provides local convenience and tourist-related retailing services. Tourism is a vital component of the local economy and Anglesea is well placed to capitalise on the growing popularity of nature and adventure based tourism due to its natural setting and camp facilities.

The Anglesea Northern Hinterland, part of which was previously used for a power station and coal mine, lies to the north of Anglesea outside the settlement boundary. The facility's closure presents an opportunity for a select range of new uses. This land is significant for its biodiversity values, the presence of the Anglesea River and its landscape setting as the northern interface between the township of Anglesea and the Great Otway National Park.

**Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek and Eastern View** have a small permanent population and are popular holiday and retirement destinations. They are contained by dense bushland and a scenic coastline, abutting the Great Otway National Park. The Painkalac Creek, separating Aireys Inlet and Fairhaven, has significant environmental and geomorphological value. Further settlement growth is constrained by the conservation value of adjoining land, extreme bushfire risk and difficulties in providing infrastructure.

### Rural towns

**Moriac, Bellbrae and Deans Marsh** are small rural towns with a majority of residents commuting elsewhere for employment opportunities, but who choose to live in the townships for their rural residential lifestyle. They each offer a range of services to their local communities.

Council seeks to:

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

- Concentrate urban growth in Torquay-Jan Juc and Winchelsea.
- Contain urban development within settlement boundaries to maintain compact townships.
- Maintain non-urban breaks between townships to protect the rural landscape and significant biodiversity assets from urban intrusion.
- Strengthen the individual role of each coastal and rural town to maintain the Shire's diverse offering of experiences and opportunities.

### 02.03-2 Environmental landscapes and values

10/06/2024  
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#### Great Ocean Road and significant landscapes

The Great Ocean Road and south west coast region is characterised by scenic coastal vistas and landscapes that are of local, national and international importance. Native vegetation is intrinsic to the character of the area and is highly valued by the community and visitors alike. The Great Ocean Road with its coastal views is an important domestic and international tourist destination.

The physical landscapes of the Shire significantly contribute to the amenity of the Surf Coast, enhancing the lifestyle of residents and adding value to the tourism economy. Urban intrusion, visually prominent development, the introduction of pest species and the removal of vegetation can erode significant landscape qualities and coastal viewsheds.

The rural areas of the Shire have been categorised into landscape precincts, as follows and identified on the Landscape precincts plan in Clause 02.04:

- **Winchelsea Plains** (Area 1 on the Landscape precincts plan) – characterised by generally flat topography, with the Barwon River valley bisecting the flat plains. The Barwon River and its surrounding environs is the focal point of Winchelsea. The RAMSAR listed Lake Murdeduke is the dominant feature to the west, while to the east the landscape becomes more undulating gently rising to the volcanic cone of Mt Pollock.
- **Barrabool Hills** (Area 2 on the Landscape precincts plan) – a distinctive upland ridge that slopes steeply down to the Barwon River on the northern side and more gently southward to the Princes Highway. This precinct features Mount Moriac, the highest relief in the Shire. The Hills, comprising this precinct and west to Mt Pollock, are significant at a regional and local level for their historic and aesthetic qualities, geological and geomorphological properties and association with indigenous peoples.  
Both Precinct 1 and 2 are open and uncluttered, offering views to the surrounding landscape.
- **Mixed Farming** (Area 3 on the Landscape precincts plan) - undulating, cleared pastoral land bisected by the Barwon River in the west and Thompsons Creek in the east, ending in low, environmentally significant, open swamp behind coastal dunes at Breamlea.
- **Cape Otway Road to the Northern Foothills and Coast** (Area 4 on the Landscape precincts plan) - consisting of undulating open farm land bordering dense bushland. The gently rolling hills, incised creeks and gullies and pockets of remnant vegetation contribute to a sheltered and enclosed landscape. The landscape and environmental values of this precinct make it attractive for tourist and lifestyle use and development.
- **Otway Ranges and Coast** (Area 5 on the Landscape precincts plan) - dominated by the Great Otway National Park and the Anglesea Heath, consisting largely of dense forest in hilly terrain edged with low coastal heath. It also comprises an open valley landscape at Painkalac Creek. Bells Beach forms the precinct's north-eastern boundary and is where the pastoral landscape meets the seascape. The landscape of the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve and its surrounds is of high scenic value and is characterised by the relative absence of visible built structures. The hinterland to Bells Beach (bounded by Bones Road, Addiscot Road, Bells Beach Road and Jarosite Road) has a rural and bush landscape character, consisting of indigenous bushland comprising different vegetation communities from coastal scrub to treed dry forest, with remnant understorey and ground layers. The rugged coastline to the south-west encompasses

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

Point Addis with its beach and associated surf breaks. The heritage listed Split Point Lighthouse is the most prominent structure on the foreshore between Aireys Inlet and Eastern View. The settlements of Anglesea to Eastern View sit within fragile heathlands and open dry woodlands, making any development between townships highly visible along the coast.

Council seeks to:

- Protect and enhance the landscape values of the rural precincts.
- Encourage land use and development that is complementary to the rural landscape character.
- Protect and enhance the environmental qualities and landscape values of the Great Ocean Road and its coastal environs, including Point Addis, Bells Beach and its hinterland.
- ~~Protect the visual prominence of public viewing points along the Otway Coast and Ranges.~~
- ~~Protect the viewsheds of the region.~~
- Protect the visual prominence of the Great Ocean Road and vistas from public viewing points along the Otway Coast and Ranges.
- Protect the viewsheds of the region.

### **Biodiversity**

The Shire's settlements, coastal reserves and hinterland support vegetation of local and state conservation significance, including a range of threatened flora and fauna.

Creek corridors, heathlands, native grasslands, grassy woodland and scattered mature native eucalyptus trees are important biodiversity features of the Shire. Remnant vegetation, including riparian vegetation in wetlands, has high ecological value for the habitat it provides to native and migratory fauna.

The Shire is experiencing loss and fragmentation of vegetation, including rare endemic species due to development pressures, bushfire mitigation measures and other clearing. Pest species also adversely affect biodiversity of coastal reserves, native grasslands and bushland areas. This causes degradation of flora and fauna habitat, biodiversity and ecosystem processes and functions.

Council seeks to:

- Protect and enhance the Shire's significant biodiversity features.
- Protect and enhance remnant vegetation communities.
- Protect, enhance and re-establish indigenous vegetation patches and links.

### **River corridors, waterways, lakes and wetlands**

The Shire faces threats to the health of its waterways, wetlands, estuaries and marine ecosystems. Development on saline areas, such as lakes, estuaries, coastal wetlands and saltmarshes, can change hydrological processes and degrade land and water quality.

The Shire's remaining wetlands, including those in the Winchelsea Plains landscape precinct, have internationally significant ecological values. The management of development and use near waterbodies and waterways, including the Thompsons and Ravens Creek, can help minimise waste water discharge and any detrimental effects on water quality.

Council seeks to:

- Protect the health of waterways, wetlands, estuaries and marine ecosystems.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 02.03-3

10/06/2021  
C136surf

### Environmental risks and amenity

#### Environmental risks

The Shire is in one of the most vulnerable bushfire prone regions in the world. The Otway Ranges and Coast landscape precinct is one of the most fire prone areas in the State. Forested land presents a bushfire threat to the hinterland towns of Deans Marsh and Bellbrae and the coastal towns of Anglesea through to Lorne and the western edge of Jan Juc.

Landscapes in high bushfire risk areas are visually pleasing and are often sought after for use and development, including for tourism. However, the extent of required bushfire protection measures to safeguard these can adversely impact landscape and neighbourhood character and vegetation cover that should be protected.

In the face of climate change, environmental risks and their impacts can worsen including increased sea level rise, bushfire risk, storm surge, coastal inundation and riverine flooding.

Council seeks to:

- Direct development to areas where environmental risks, particularly bushfire risk, are lowest.
- Discourage urban development in areas prone to environmental risks where those risks cannot be mitigated.
- Manage the impact of bushfire protection measures by balancing the need to remove vegetation with protecting native vegetation cover and landscape and neighbourhood character.

### 02.03-4

10/06/2021  
C436surf Proposed C133surf

### Natural resource management

#### Protection of agricultural land

The agricultural capability and current allotment and tenement sizes in the Winchelsea Plains and Barrabool Hills landscape precincts are conducive to agriculture and much land is still used for broadacre farming.

Increasing development pressure in rural areas, often associated with tourism unrelated to agriculture, hobby farming, rural residential development, urban intrusion and infrastructure development, is changing the rural landscape. Inappropriate use and development in rural areas increases the price of land above its productive value, decreases farm affordability, and results in the loss of agricultural land.

These negative impacts are evidenced through:

- Development of multiple 'old Crown' titles with dwellings.
- Hobby farming or rural residential type living in productive farming areas.
- Small lot excisions.
- Construction of dwellings unrelated to farming.
- Pest plant and animal invasion.

Council seeks to:

- Protect the ability of future generations to productively farm the land.
- Avoid the loss of agricultural productivity associated with land use conflicts, particularly between farming activities and non-farm related residential development.
- Promote agri-food and agri-tourism (eg. wineries, cideries and similar produce based and complementary uses) that enhances the tourism offering without undermining the potential for agricultural production.
- Discourage use and development in rural areas that:
  - Is unrelated to agriculture or that does not complement an agricultural use.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

- Does not complement the landscape character and environmental values.

### Sustainable agriculture

The potential exists for irrigated agriculture, particularly in the east of the Mixed Farming landscape precinct, when recycled water becomes available from facilities like the Black Rock Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The area around Deans Marsh, Bambra and Pennyroyal has seen a decline in dairying, while agroforestry, grass seed production, vines and olive groves are emerging. This has resulted in enhancements made to patches of remnant vegetation.

There is a continuing shift towards intensive agricultural industries and hobby or part time farming. Intensive farming ~~is focussed mainly, including intensive animal production, is focused mainly in the Winchelsea Plains landscape precinct,~~ north of the Princes Highway where there is sufficient land to meet buffer requirements. ~~The intensive animal production industries for pig and poultry are growing in the Winchelsea Plains landscape precinct.~~ Subject to the availability of water, there are also opportunities for more intensive horticultural production to locate in the Barrabool Hills landscape precinct due to its topography, agricultural capability and its strategic location near the major market of Geelong. Grazing and grain farming is often undertaken in the Bellbrae hinterland.

Council seeks to:

- Protect and enhance the rural areas for their diverse agricultural, environmental and landscape values and opportunities.
- Encourage sustainable agricultural activities and associated rural industries, to grow and maintain prosperous and sustainable rural communities.
- Encourage innovative and adaptive practices like the use of enabling technologies, protected agriculture and vertical food production systems.

02.03-5  
06/06/2022  
GC183

### Built environment and heritage

#### Neighbourhood character

Vegetation plays a key role in defining township character and in softening urban development.

The coastline and areas of remnant vegetation and landscape quality surrounding Torquay-Jan Juc contribute strongly to the character and amenity of the town.

Other coastal towns each have a unique character. They are generally characterised by the dominance of indigenous vegetation cover over low-density built form and low-profile buildings with a sense of space between properties. Views of surrounding landscape features also form part of their character and amenity.

Development pressure and insensitive suburban style development threaten township character, which has been impacted by re-subdivision, infill development, larger and bulkier replacement dwellings and vegetation loss, including from the desire for views or for the creation and maintenance of defensible space for bushfire protection.

The streetscape amenity of commercial and industrial areas, including its landscaping and built form also contribute to the character of towns.

Council seeks to:

- Protect the coastal township character values of low urban density, recessive built form, vegetated coastal landscapes and ecological values of the natural environment.
- Encourage development to achieve architectural and urban design outcomes consistent with the preferred character of a town or area.



## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### Heritage

Throughout the Shire are numerous landscapes and sites of significance for their connections to Aboriginal living cultural heritage.

The Shire has post-contact European heritage places which define its character and contribute to the attraction of the municipality as a desirable place to live and visit. Throughout the Shire are buildings, streetscapes, structures, landscapes and precincts that represent community identity and need to be protected to maintain the Shire's character and sense of place. This includes a significant number of residential properties (including rural homesteads and coastal holiday homes), commercial buildings, places of worship, industrial complexes, and infrastructure.

Winchelsea features a number of valued historical buildings, including the Barwon Park Mansion and a bluestone bridge from the 1860's. In Lorne, the Mountjoy Parade Heritage Precinct is a significant and predominantly intact 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century cultural heritage landscape that contains a number of significant individual heritage buildings. Bells Beach is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register for its surfing, cultural and aesthetic heritage values. The Great Ocean Road is listed on both the Victorian Heritage Register and the National Heritage List for its historical, archaeological, aesthetic and social significance. The Split Point Lighthouse in Aireys Inlet is also of State Significance.

Council seeks to conserve the Aboriginal and post-European contact cultural heritage places in the Shire and manage change in a manner that enhances their significance.

### 02.03-6

10/06/2021  
C136surf

### Housing

Lorne, Winchelsea and Anglesea are experiencing an aging population and declining household size. Lone person households are increasing in Anglesea and there is a higher than average number of people identifying as living with a disability in Winchelsea.

A significant proportion of dwellings in the coastal towns are not permanently occupied, serving as holiday homes. This contributes to a lack of affordable worker accommodation, particularly during peak tourism periods.

The Shire is faced with declining housing affordability and limited dwelling diversity, particularly on the coast where there is a lack of smaller dwellings near the town centres and commercial services, community facilities and designated tourist nodes.

However, any housing growth should not compromise neighbourhood character.

Council seeks to:

- Support a range of housing types, sizes and configurations to accommodate the future needs of the growing and changing population.
- Support residential development densities that protect the historic and coastal character of the settlements.

### Rural residential development

Rural residential living is a highly sought after lifestyle in the Shire, especially in locations along the coast and within commuting distance of Geelong and Melbourne. However, rural residential development can lead to urban sprawl and requires the provision of services in remote areas to benefit relatively few households.

Rural residential development is not suitable in areas of high landscape or environmental significance, including land adjoining a conservation area, or in agriculturally valuable areas.

Rural living development is very limited in the Winchelsea Plains landscape precinct.

Torquay-Jan Juc, Winchelsea and Moriac contain opportunities for future rural residential development as identified on their respective framework plans in Clause 02.04.

Council seeks to:

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

- Limit the provision of rural residential lots outside settlement boundaries.
- Ensure that rural residential development does not detract from the landscape, cultural heritage, environmental or agricultural values of adjoining land.
- Locate rural residential development so that it avoids loss of agricultural land, natural hazards and adverse amenity impacts to residents.
- Direct rural residential development to identified areas in Torquay-Jan Juc, Winchelsea and Moriac where it can be efficiently serviced and does not encroach on future urban growth areas.

### 02.03-7 Economic development

19/06/2024  
C136surf Proposed C133surf

#### Employment

There is an opportunity to increase year round visitation and local employment in the rural hinterland through increased visitor stay and tourism and agricultural based activities that maximise the rural landscape setting, natural features and local food production.

There are opportunities to diversify the economy and provide local employment opportunities in Winchelsea by promoting the health, education, and tourism sectors, as well as the green industry sector (such as renewable energy and local food production), which seeks to minimise environmental impacts. The Princes Highway is a major truck route that presents opportunities for commercial enterprises.

There is minimal opportunity for industrial uses in Aireys Inlet due to amenity and environmental conflicts. These issues have also constrained the ability for the industrial estates in Anglesea and Lorne to expand. Employment precincts have been identified in Torquay-Jan Juc to enhance local employment opportunities.

Enabling residential and rural residential development on land close to recognised industrial areas often leads to residential amenity issues that compromise the viability of industrial operations, such as in the Anglesea Industrial Estate.

Council seeks to:

- Facilitate business and industry ventures in Winchelsea that provide local services, particularly in health and education or the tourism and green industry sectors.
- Promote economic development opportunities that protect local character, amenity and the natural environment.
- Protect industrial estates and employment precincts as an industrial land resource.

#### Tourism

The tourism industry is underpinned by the coastal location, environmental values and scenic qualities of the Shire. Tourism developments continue to capitalise on the environmental and landscape values of the rural hinterland, including for nature and farm based tourism: and a variety of accommodation options are required to meet demand. There is an opportunity to fill the gap in the tourism accommodation sector and complement the farm stay and B&B offerings in rural areas through the provision of well-designed group accommodation that complements the surrounding landscape. Caravan parks that are close to settlements and have a tourism focus can provide an affordable alternative.

The Great Otway National Park presents opportunities for the development of nature and adventure based recreational activities ~~and the~~, and there are opportunities for managed accommodation to be located outside of the National Park to complement these activities where landscape and environmental values are prioritised and bushfire risk is low. The Lorne hinterland may provide opportunities for small scale tourist accommodation like B & Bs.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

The shire is a popular events destination and council seeks to expand the number and type of events offered outside of the declared bushfire season which will help to balance the seasonality of visitation.

However, tourism development is often constrained by environmental risks in these areas and the need to protect the natural environment, landscape values and agricultural activities the industry seeks to capitalise on. Higher density and larger scale urban tourist development can compromise the low scale and vegetated character of the coast and its townships. Inappropriate tourism use and development can also cause amenity impacts on local communities.

The economy of Torquay-Jan Juc is largely based on tourism and the surfing industry. The Surf City tourist precinct is a primary destination for many visitors to Torquay.

With its shopping strip, hotels and other facilities, Lorne is a prime tourist destination of the Shire.

Winchelsea's historical and country village character provides an opportunity for further tourism growth for the town.

Council seeks to:

- Enhance the tourism industry by facilitating tourism use and development that protects residential amenity and the environmental, landscape, cultural and character values of the Shire.
- Promote natural resource and adventure based tourism use and development at a scale and form that respects its setting and surrounding land uses.
- Support the continued growth of Torquay-Jan Juc's local tourism and surf industry.
- Promote Lorne and its hinterland as a primary and year round tourist destination.
- Maximise tourism opportunities in Winchelsea by promoting its country village and historical character through commercial development.

### 02.03-8

10/06/2021  
C136surf

#### Transport

The Shire is highly car dependent, with limited public transport services between and within townships. Insufficient public transport is an added constraint on residential growth in some towns. Increasing traffic volumes on the Great Ocean Road (especially during the bushfire season) is resulting in congestion, traffic hazards and emergency response difficulties.

Pedestrian and cycle paths between and within settlements are limited and lack connectivity. Busy roads create barriers to local access, including access to the beach. In Winchelsea in particular, the Princes Highway and Barwon River divide the town, further emphasising the importance of connectivity within and between towns to ensure good access to facilities and services.

Council seeks to:

- Provide a permeable and well-connected street network particularly in new estates.
- Facilitate a transportation system that reduces car dependence and encourages walking and cycling for local trips.
- Integrate walking and cycling pathways with public transport and public open space.
- Facilitate a pedestrian and cycling network that improves connectivity between and within settlements and access to the foreshore.

#### Car parking

Peak summer car parking demands within coastal townships are much greater than in the winter months. In Lorne, there is a heavy reliance on public car parking due to a lack of parking spaces on private land, particularly in the commercial area when peak periods coincide with high levels of foreshore activity. Given a lack of car parking opportunities on the Great Ocean Road, car parking supply is also likely to become an issue in Aireys Inlet as its centres incrementally develop.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

While this shortage needs to be addressed, parking areas should not intrude on the visual and environmental sensitivity of the foreshore or detract from the public realm.

Council seeks to:

- Facilitate the provision of car parking spaces while maintaining environmental and amenity values.
- Discourage surface car parking that detracts from the public realm.

### 02.03-9

10/06/2021  
C136surf

#### Infrastructure

##### Community infrastructure

Outdoor entertainment and recreation opportunities are an important aspect of the Surf Coast region. The foreshore and riverbank reserves are the primary areas for public open space. These may be affected by the impacts of climate change, resulting in potential loss of open space and the need to identify new areas. For example, there is an imbalance in the distribution of passive open space in Torquay-Jan Juc, with an over-reliance on its foreshore.

The coastal population can triple in size during the peak tourism season in summer. This significantly increases pressure on existing services and infrastructure.

Although the population is aging, there are limited services for the aged. There is also a need for long day child care services in Winchelsea.

Council seeks to:

- Facilitate the timely provision of a range of community and recreation facilities including public open space.
- Facilitate improved access to aged care services and facilities.

##### Development infrastructure

A key infrastructure constraint in Moriac, Bellbrae, Deans Marsh, Moggs Creek and Eastern View is the lack of reticulated services, such as water supply, stormwater drainage or sewerage. This, in addition to insufficient public transport, further limits the growth of the townships.

Moriac is provided with a reticulated water supply system that only has capacity to supply planned development with an elevation of less than 105 metres AHD. A number of old and inappropriate subdivisions in Deans Marsh are unable to retain wastewater on site.

Urban stormwater runoff from lots not connected to a stormwater drainage system, particularly in Moriac, could pose a threat to the sensitive environment and water catchment area. The limited capacity of drainage infrastructure in the older parts of Torquay will also struggle to cope with redevelopment using traditional drainage models.

The Water Reclamation Plant in Winchelsea has limited capacity for growth.

Council seeks to:

- Facilitate the provision of development infrastructure in a timely manner.
- Ensure development will not impede the expansion of the Water Reclamation Plant in Winchelsea.

### 02.03-10

10/06/2021  
C136surf

#### Gaming venues

Gaming facilities are not part of the existing attraction of the Shire, with relatively few venues offering electronic gaming machines.

#### **SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

There are links between social disadvantage, problem gambling and proximity to gaming venues. Although gaming machines may be accessible to the community as a form of entertainment, they should not be convenient. The location of electronic gaming machines should also have regard to the socio-economic characteristics of a community.

Council seeks to:

- Discourage gaming facilities that may have a detrimental impact on the amenity, culture and character of the townships.
- Discourage locating electronic gaming machines in relatively disadvantaged areas that are most vulnerable to the potential harmful effects of gaming.
- Locate gaming machines at a distance that requires a pre-considered decision to gamble.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**12.01**  
31/07/2018  
VC148

**BIODIVERSITY**

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 12.01-1S

14/07/2022  
VC213

### Protection of biodiversity

#### Objective

To protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity.

#### Strategies

Use biodiversity information to identify important areas of biodiversity, including key habitat for rare or threatened species and communities, and strategically valuable biodiversity sites.

Strategically plan for the protection and conservation of Victoria's important areas of biodiversity.

Ensure that decision making takes into account the impacts of land use and development on Victoria's biodiversity, including consideration of:

- Cumulative impacts.
- Fragmentation of habitat.
- The spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens into natural ecosystems.

Avoid impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity.

Consider impacts of any change in land use or development that may affect the biodiversity value of national parks and conservation reserves or nationally and internationally significant sites; including wetlands and wetland wildlife habitat designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention) and sites utilised by species listed under the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (CAMBA), or the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA).

Assist in the identification, protection and management of important areas of biodiversity.

Assist in the establishment, protection and re-establishment of links between important areas of biodiversity, including through a network of green spaces and large-scale native vegetation corridor projects.

Support land use and development that contributes to protecting and enhancing habitat for indigenous plants and animals in urban areas.

#### Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- State biodiversity information maintained by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

#### Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Any applicable biodiversity strategies, including the relevant Regional Catchment Strategy (prepared under Part 4 of the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994)*
- *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Melbourne's Growth Corridors* (Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 2013)
- *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)
- *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)
- *Victorian Waterway Management Strategy* (Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 2013)

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 12.01-1L Protection of biodiversity in Surf Coast

10/06/2024  
C436surf Proposed C133surf

#### Strategies

Promote environmental buffers adjacent the Great Otway National Park that maintain a continuous form of native vegetation and minimise the spread of weed species into the National Park.

Provide and maintain buffers for coastal vegetation communities likely to be impacted by the coastal impacts of climate change that allow for landward migration of the vegetation communities (e.g. Saltmarshes).

Discourage extending settlements or intensifying development in locations containing significant biodiversity assets, unless these assets:

- Will not be fragmented or compromised.
- Will be incorporated into an open space network.

Protect the long term health of vegetation especially in visually prominent areas.

Site and design development to minimise vegetation removal, particularly indigenous vegetation that adds to the landscape character.

Encourage the planting of locally indigenous vegetation species to compensate for the removal of existing native vegetation.

Encourage the removal of environmental weeds identified in the incorporated document *Weeds of the Surf Coast Shire* (Surf Coast Shire, 2013), aiming for their eventual eradication.

Encourage the removal of exotic plant species in Lorne (excluding trees with heritage value).

Encourage the protection of Red Gums in Winchelsea's residential growth areas.

Encourage retention of existing vegetation on private land, roadsides and reserves.

Protect the endangered Merrans Sun Orchid in Aireys Inlet to Eastern View.

Protect the Coastal Moonah Woodland community in Torquay-Jan Juc, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet to Eastern View.

Protect the Bellarine Yellow Gum in Torquay-Jan Juc.

#### Policy guideline

Consider as relevant:

- A bond to be paid by the property owner or developer for establishing and maintaining new or replacement vegetation or for retaining existing trees, where either:
  - The site is visually prominent.
  - The long term health of vegetation may be compromised, including where special protection measures are needed to protect vegetation from surrounding works.
  - Significant vegetation is proposed to be removed.

#### Policy document

Consider as relevant:

- *Weeds of the Surf Coast Shire* (Surf Coast Shire, 2013)
- [Indigenous planting guide \(Surf Coast Shire, 2003\)](#)



## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 12.01-2S

31/07/2018  
VC148

### Native vegetation management

#### Objective

To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

#### Strategies

Ensure decisions that involve, or will lead to, the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, apply the three-step approach in accordance with the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017):

- Avoid the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
- Minimise impacts from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation that cannot be avoided.
- Provide an offset to compensate for the biodiversity impact from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

#### Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- State biodiversity information maintained by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

#### Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)
- *Assessor's handbook – applications to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**13.02 BUSHFIRE**

31/07/2018  
VC148

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 13.02-1S

31/07/2018  
VC148

### Bushfire planning

#### Policy application

This policy must be applied to all planning and decision making under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* relating to land that is:

- Within a designated bushfire prone area;
- Subject to a Bushfire Management Overlay; or
- Proposed to be used or developed in a way that may create a bushfire hazard.

#### Objective

To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.

#### Strategies

##### Protection of human life

Give priority to the protection of human life by:

- Prioritising the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.
- Directing population growth and development to low risk locations and ensuring the availability of, and safe access to, areas where human life can be better protected from the effects of bushfire.
- Reducing the vulnerability of communities to bushfire through the consideration of bushfire risk in decision making at all stages of the planning process.

##### Bushfire hazard identification and assessment

Identify bushfire hazard and undertake appropriate risk assessment by:

- Applying the best available science to identify vegetation, topographic and climatic conditions that create a bushfire hazard.
- Considering the best available information about bushfire hazard including the map of designated bushfire prone areas prepared under the *Building Act 1993* or regulations made under that Act.
- Applying the Bushfire Management Overlay to areas where the extent of vegetation can create an extreme bushfire hazard.
- Considering and assessing the bushfire hazard on the basis of:
  - Landscape conditions - meaning conditions in the landscape within 20 kilometres (and potentially up to 75 kilometres) of a site;
  - Local conditions - meaning conditions in the area within approximately 1 kilometre of a site;
  - Neighbourhood conditions - meaning conditions in the area within 400 metres of a site; and
  - The site for the development.
- Consulting with emergency management agencies and the relevant fire authority early in the process to receive their recommendations and implement appropriate bushfire protection measures.
- Ensuring that strategic planning documents, planning scheme amendments, planning permit applications and development plan approvals properly assess bushfire risk and include appropriate bushfire protection measures.
- Not approving development where a landowner or proponent has not satisfactorily demonstrated that the relevant policies have been addressed, performance measures satisfied or bushfire protection measures can be adequately implemented.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### Settlement planning

Plan to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities and prioritise protection of human life by:

- Directing population growth and development to low risk locations, being those locations assessed as having a radiant heat flux of less than 12.5 kilowatts/square metre under *AS 3959-2009 Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).
- Ensuring the availability of, and safe access to, areas assessed as a BAL-LOW rating under *AS 3959-2009 Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009) where human life can be better protected from the effects of bushfire.
- Ensuring the bushfire risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure will not increase as a result of future land use and development.
- Achieving no net increase in risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure, through the implementation of bushfire protection measures and where possible reducing bushfire risk overall.
- Assessing and addressing the bushfire hazard posed to the settlement and the likely bushfire behaviour it will produce at a landscape, settlement, local, neighbourhood and site scale, including the potential for neighbourhood-scale destruction.
- Assessing alternative low risk locations for settlement growth on a regional, municipal, settlement, local and neighbourhood basis.
- Not approving any strategic planning document, local planning policy, or planning scheme amendment that will result in the introduction or intensification of development in an area that has, or will on completion have, more than a BAL-12.5 rating under *AS 3959-2009 Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).

### Areas of biodiversity conservation value

Ensure settlement growth and development approvals can implement bushfire protection measures without unacceptable biodiversity impacts by discouraging settlement growth and development in bushfire affected areas that are important areas of biodiversity.

### Use and development control in a Bushfire Prone Area

In a bushfire prone area designated in accordance with regulations made under the *Building Act 1993*, bushfire risk should be considered when assessing planning applications for the following uses and development:

- Subdivisions of more than 10 lots.
- Accommodation.
- Child care centre.
- Education centre.
- Emergency services facility.
- Hospital.
- Indoor recreation facility.
- Major sports and recreation facility.
- Place of assembly.
- Any application for development that will result in people congregating in large numbers.

When assessing a planning permit application for the above uses and development:

- Consider the risk of bushfire to people, property and community infrastructure.

#### **SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

- Require the implementation of appropriate bushfire protection measures to address the identified bushfire risk.
- Ensure new development can implement bushfire protection measures without unacceptable biodiversity impacts.

#### **Policy guidelines**

Consider as relevant:

- Any applicable approved state, regional and municipal fire prevention plan.

#### **Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *AS 3959-2009 Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009)
- *Building in bushfire-prone areas - CSIRO & Standards Australia* (SAA HB36-1993, 1993)
- Any bushfire prone area map prepared under the *Building Act 1993* or regulations made under that Act

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 13.02-1L Bushfire planning

10/06/2021  
C436surf Proposed C133surf

#### **Strategies** **General strategies**

~~Discourage landscaping in a connected, continuous form where:~~

- ~~■ Open space networks are linked to or are near a bushfire hazard.~~
- ~~■ It would link a high risk bushfire prone area to an area of high activity.~~

Minimise risk to life and property at locations where events are held and where large numbers of people congregate through fire protection, safety and management measures.

Avoid development intensification close to or abutting the Great Otway National Park and its interface with urban settlement.

Avoid development in areas of biodiversity or landscape significance where bushfire mitigation measures will compromise their biodiversity or landscape values.

Site, design and construct buildings and the associated infrastructure to minimise the impact of bushfire mitigation measures on existing remnant native vegetation.

Manage the vegetation within the defendable space in a manner that respects the vegetated character of the location whilst meeting at least the minimum requirements for bushfire protection.

Discourage landscaping in a connected, continuous form where:

- Open space networks are linked to or are near a bushfire hazard.
- It would link a high risk bushfire prone area to an area of high activity.

Retain the Deans Marsh Lorne Road as a major fire break between Deans Marsh and the Great Otway National Park by discouraging the expansion of the town east of the road.

#### **Rural Hinterland objective**

To ensure that the type and intensity of use and development and its strategic location in the rural hinterland relative to bushfire risk is considered as a first principle.

#### **Rural Hinterland strategies**

Direct use and development designed to encourage the congregation of multiple visitors on the site to areas of lower bushfire risk.

Discourage events on private land in the rural hinterland where the site is not within or adjacent to a settlement, and the event will be held within the declared bushfire season.

Ensure that the capacity of emergency services to respond in a bushfire or other emergency event informs the suitability of the strategic location for use and development.

#### **Policy document guidelines**

Consider as relevant:

- Proposals designed to encourage the congregation of multiple visitors on the site or intensify such use, whether or not a site is in a Bushfire Management Overlay, should be accompanied by an Emergency Management Plan that includes risk mitigation measures that are proportionate to the use and commensurate to the risk.

#### **Policy document**

Consider as relevant:

- *Landscaping Your Surf Coast Garden for Bushfire* (Surf Coast Shire, 2015)-
- *Regional Bushfire Planning Assessment, Barwon South-West Region* (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2012)

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**14.01 AGRICULTURE**

31/07/2018  
VC148



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**14.01-1S**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Protection of agricultural land**

**Objective**

To protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.

**Strategies**

Identify areas of productive agricultural land, including land for primary production and intensive agriculture.

Consider state, regional and local, issues and characteristics when assessing agricultural quality and productivity.

Avoid permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors.

Protect productive farmland that is of strategic significance in the local or regional context.

Protect productive agricultural land from unplanned loss due to permanent changes in land use.

Prevent inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas.

Protect strategically important agricultural and primary production land from incompatible uses.

Limit new housing development in rural areas by:

- Directing housing growth into existing settlements.
- Discouraging development of isolated small lots in the rural zones from use for dwellings or other incompatible uses.
- Encouraging consolidation of existing isolated small lots in rural zones.

Identify areas of productive agricultural land by consulting with the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources and using available information.

In considering a proposal to use, subdivide or develop agricultural land, consider the:

- Desirability and impacts of removing the land from primary production, given its agricultural productivity.
- Impacts on the continuation of primary production on adjacent land, with particular regard to land values and the viability of infrastructure for such production.
- Compatibility between the proposed or likely development and the existing use of the surrounding land.
- The potential impacts of land use and development on the spread of plant and animal pests from areas of known infestation into agricultural areas.
- Land capability.

Avoid the subdivision of productive agricultural land from diminishing the long-term productive capacity of the land.

Give priority to the re-structure of inappropriate subdivisions where they exist on productive agricultural land.

Balance the potential off-site effects of a use or development proposal (such as degradation of soil or water quality and land salinisation) against the benefits of the proposal.

SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

**14.01-1L-01 Protection of agricultural land in Surf Coast**

~~10/06/2021~~  
~~C436surf~~ Proposed C133surf

**Policy application**

This policy applies to land in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone.

**Strategies**

Discourage the subdivision of land below the minimum lot sizes specified in the schedules to the zones.

Discourage any proposal to rezone, use or subdivide land for rural residential or urban residential development, other than land identified for future residential or low density residential development on the Torquay-Jan Juc, Winchelsea and Moriac framework plans in Clause 02.04.

~~Discourage tourism development in prime farming areas, particularly in areas with an open rural landscape~~ use and development that results in an unreasonable loss of productive capacity of agricultural land or adversely impacts on the productivity of adjoining agricultural land.

~~Discourage use and development in identified Agricultural Soil Quality Hotspots (shown in the Sustainable Agricultural Focus Area map at Clause 14.01-2L), that is not directly associated with soil based agriculture.~~

Discourage fragmentation and non-productive use of agricultural land.

Discourage dwellings unrelated to ~~the rural use of~~ agricultural production on the land.

~~Discourage uses not associated with an agricultural activity in rural areas.~~

**Policy guideline**

Consider as relevant:

- Whether ~~non-agricultural~~ land use ~~or~~ and development enhances the environmental conditions of the land by:
  - Protecting and re-establishing native vegetation, ~~including in riparian areas.~~
  - ~~Protecting waterways and natural water courses.~~
  - Controlling pest plants and animals, erosion, salinity, stormwater and nutrient runoff.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 14.01-1L-02 Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones

10/06/2024  
C436surf Proposed C133surf

#### Policy application

This policy applies to an application to use or develop land for a dwelling in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone.

#### Objective

To help effect the long term protection of rural land for agricultural purposes.

To protect the landscape character of rural land.

#### Strategies

Limit the number of dwellings built in rural areas.

Avoid the use or development of dwellings on lots below the minimum lot size where either:

- The land is not identified as a tenement in this policy, or
- The lot is part of a tenement, identified in this policy, and the maximum number of dwellings across the tenement would be exceeded, or
- The land is not subject to an approved land management plan identified in this policy.

Encourage the retention of rural land holdings and their continued use for rural production.

Avoid the use or development of an additional dwelling on a lot unless it is required for the operation of a productive rural activity that will generate a marketable rural commodity.

Ensure each lot used for a dwelling:

- Has a legal frontage to a road.
- Is suitable for a dwelling by way of its shape and configuration.

#### Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Limiting the maximum number of dwellings to one (including any existing or proposed dwellings) on:
  - A lot created under a Plan of Subdivision approved by the responsible authority prior to 5 October 2000.
  - A lot comprising a tenement on 18 December 1997.
  - A lot in the Thompsons Creek Catchment area (shown on Map 1 to the Schedule to Clause 35.07), that is between 40ha - 60ha in area, where a section 173 agreement requiring land to be managed and maintained in accordance with an approved Land Management Plan has been entered into and registered on title prior to (insert gazettal day/month) 2022
  - Each lot in Bellbrae Township as shown shaded on the Bellbrae Township tenement lot plan to this clause.
  - Each of lots 1 to 24 LP136440 in Jarosite Road, Bells Beach as shown shaded on the Jarosite Road tenement lot plan to this clause.
  - Each lot in Aireys Inlet as shown shaded on the Aireys Inlet tenement lot plan to this clause.
  - Each lot in Eastern View as shown shaded on the Eastern View tenement lot plan to this clause.
  - The consolidated lots of 18 and 76 LP10103, in Big Hill as shown shaded on the Big Hill tenement lot plan to this clause.

#### SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

- Each lot in Big Hill as shown shaded on the Big Hill tenement lot plan to this clause, other than the consolidated lots of 18 and 76 LP10103.
- Each lot in Cathedral Rock as shown shaded on the Cathedral Rock tenement lot plan to this clause.
- Each lot of Crown Allotments 1 & 2 Section F and each lot of Crown Allotments 1 to 10 Section B in Lorne as shown shaded on the Lorne tenement lot plan to this clause.
- Limiting the maximum number of dwellings on the tenement to one, where:
  - A lot comprises part of a tenement on 18 December 1997 if the total area of the tenement is less than twice the minimum lot size specified in the zone schedule.
  - A lot comprises part of a tenement on 18 December 1997 where the said part was acquired in a single transaction between 17 December 1975 and 18 December 1997, if the total area of the tenement is less than twice the minimum lot size specified in the zone schedule.
- On a lot comprising part of a tenement on 18 December 1997 where the said part was acquired in a single transaction between 17 December 1975 and 18 December 1997, if the total area of the tenement is at least twice the minimum lot size specified in the schedule to the zone, limiting the number of dwellings so that it does not exceed the maximum number of dwellings permissible if the tenement were a single lot.
- On a tenement comprising more than one lot on 18 December 1997:
  - Consolidating lots prior to the commencement of development.
  - An agreement under section 173 of the Act stating the owner will not apply to use or develop a dwelling on any lot that does not contain a dwelling or have a valid permit for a dwelling at the date of the agreement.

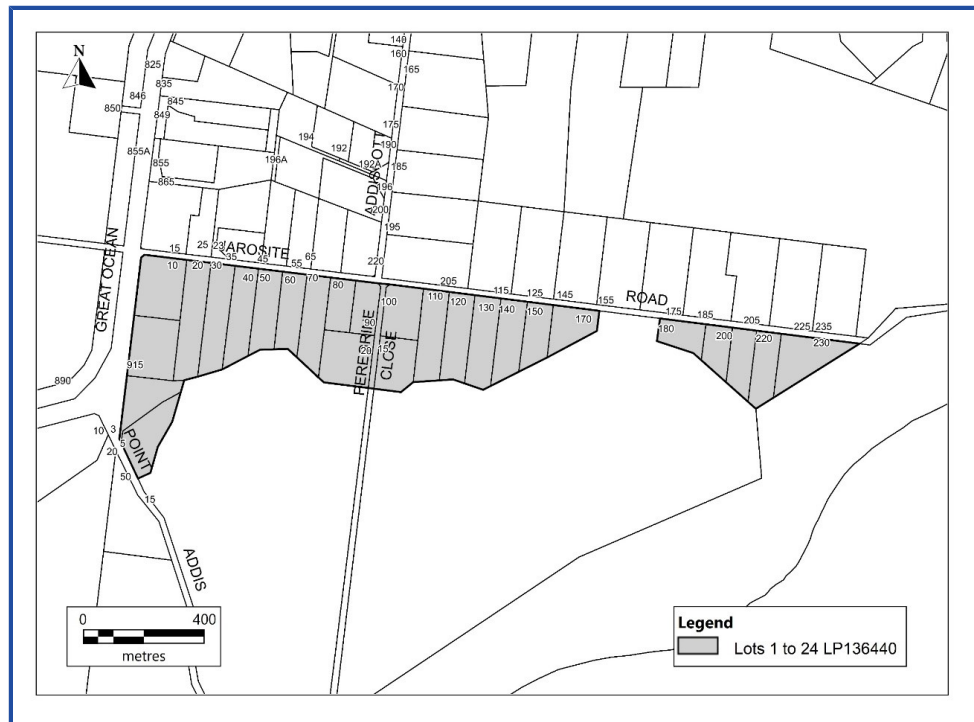
**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**Bellbrae Township tenement lot plan**



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**Jarosite Road tenement lot plan**



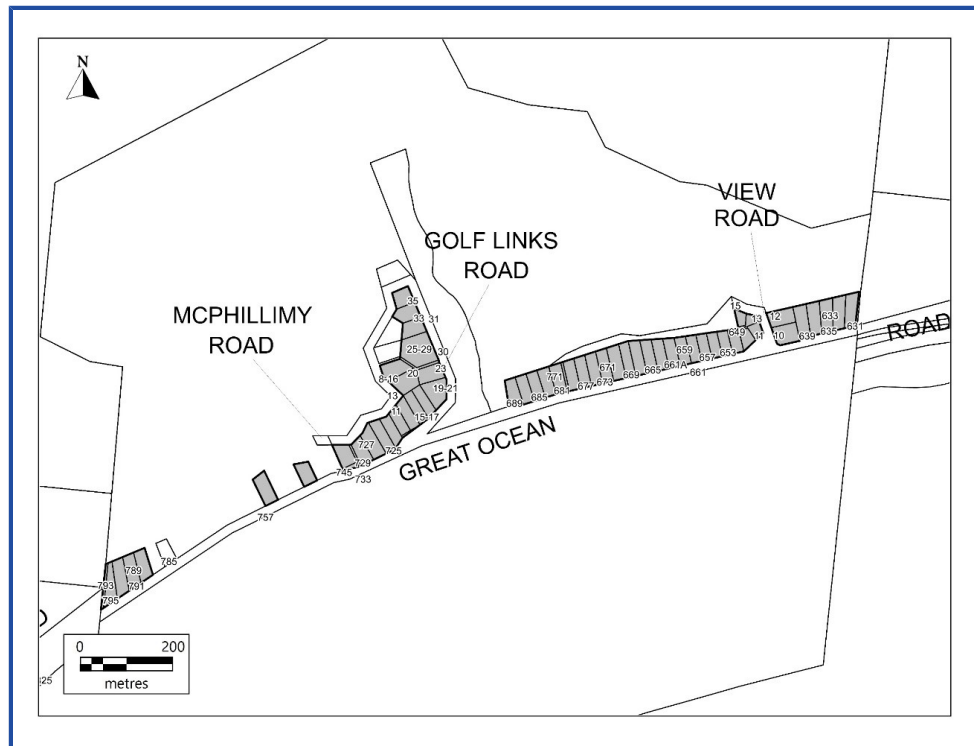
**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**Aireys Inlet tenement lot plan**



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

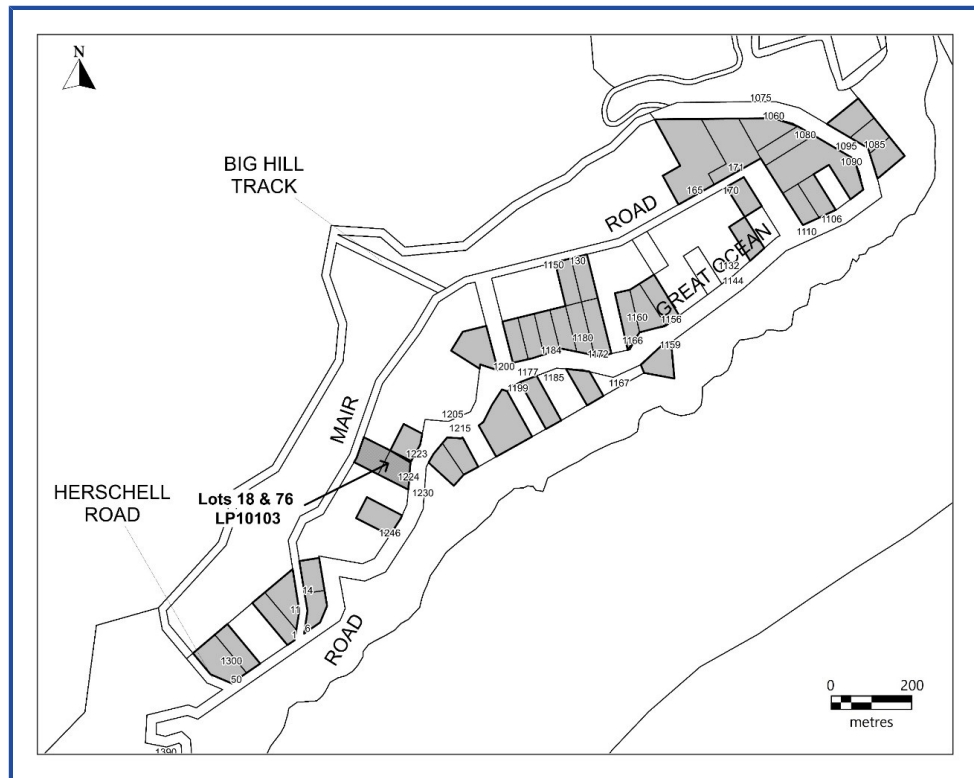
**Eastern View tenement lot plan**





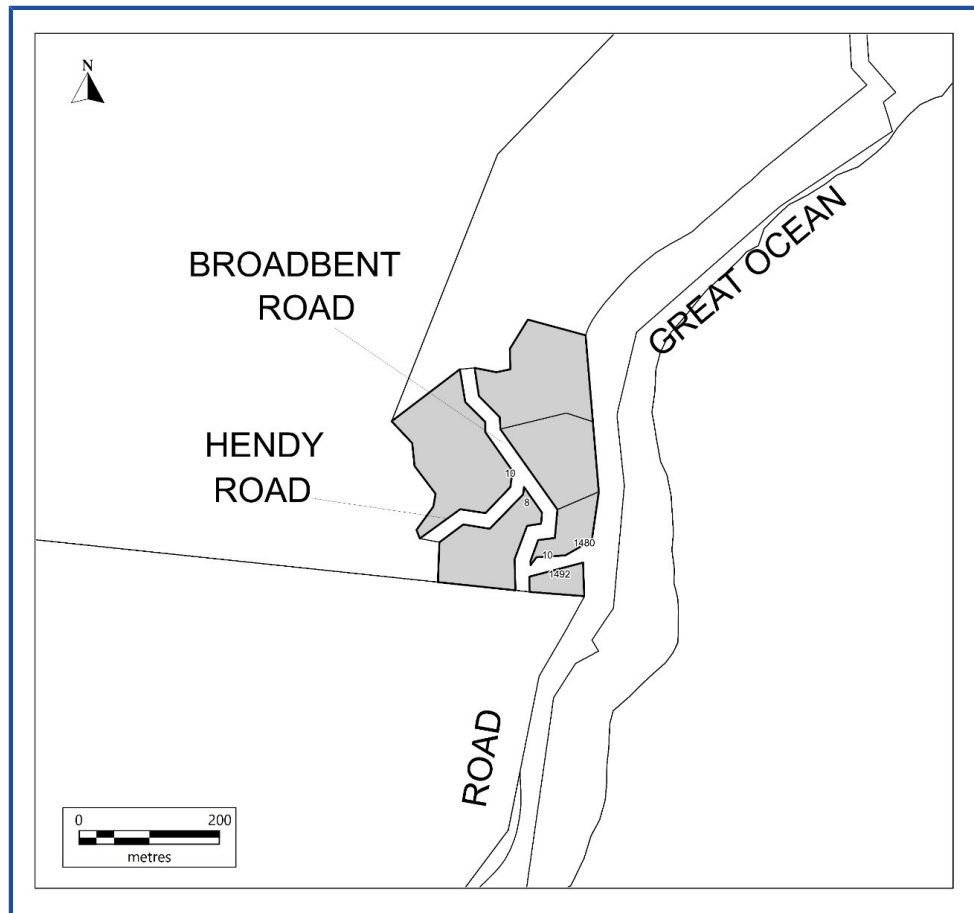
**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**Big Hill tenement lot plan**



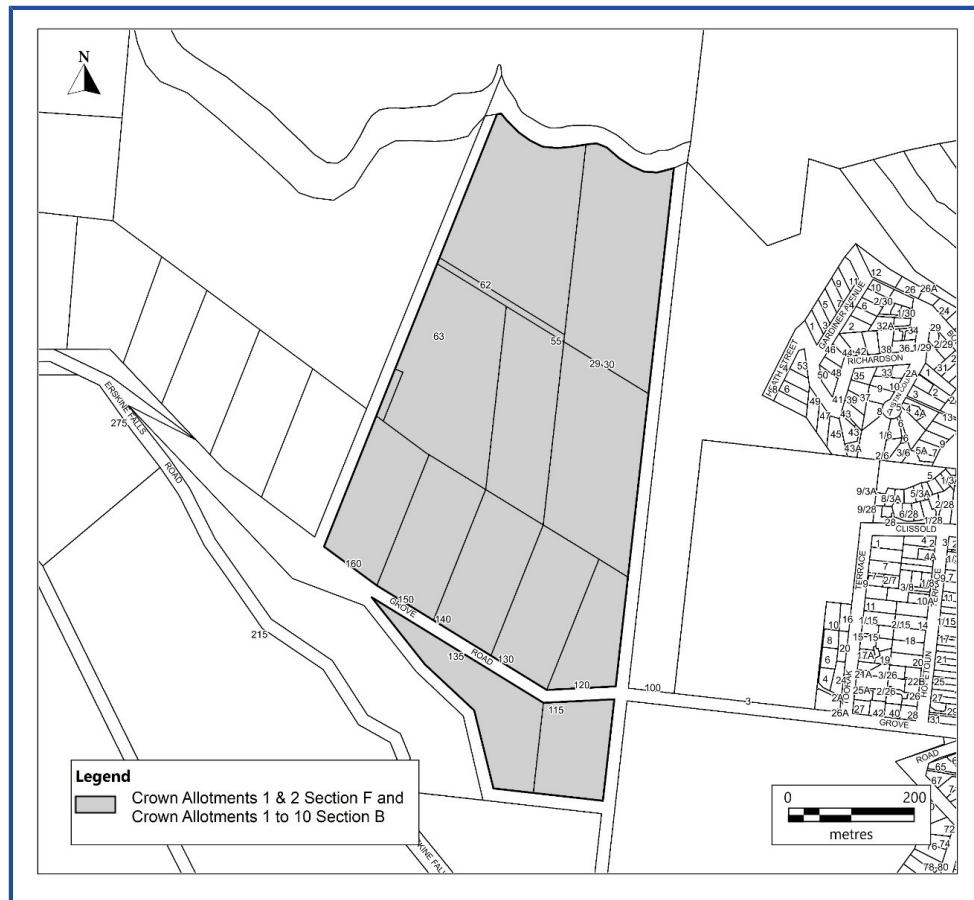
SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

Cathedral Rock tenement lot plan



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**Lorne tenement lot plan**



## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 14.01-1L-03 Subdivision in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone

10/06/2021  
C436surf Proposed C133surf

#### Policy application

This policy applies to an application to subdivide land in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone.

#### Strategies

~~Discourage subdivision of land unless it will result in land management practices that will protect and enhance the environmental condition of the land.~~

Design subdivision layouts to protect environmental assets on the land such as wetlands, waterways, significant trees and other significant vegetation, by providing suitable buffers around the asset.

#### Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Calculating the total number of lots for re-subdivision by counting only those lots that have a frontage with legal access to a road and are suitable for a dwelling due to their shape, configuration and means of access.
- Providing a 50 metre buffer from a wetland or waterway, 30 metre buffer from a minor waterway, 10 metre clearance from significant trees and 30 metre clearance from other significant vegetation in subdivision layouts to protect environmental assets.
- The use of agreements or covenants to protect identified environmental values.
- Avoiding subdividing land to create a lot for an existing dwelling, unless all of the following requirements are met:
  - There are two or more existing dwellings on the lot.
  - The ~~dwelling has~~dwellings have been occupied or capable of being occupied on and since 18 December 1997.
  - The lot intended to contain the existing dwelling is not greater than 1 hectare in area and is of a shape and configuration that will have minimal impact on the continuing agricultural use and management of the balance of the tenement (in particular, battle-axe shaped blocks are discouraged).
  - Since 17 December 1975, no other dwelling has been excised from any tenement of which the land has formed a part.
  - The larger tenement after subdivision complies with the minimum lot size requirement in the schedule to the zone.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**14.01-1L-04 Other discretionary use and development in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone**

Proposed C133surf

**Policy application**

This policy applies to an application to use or develop land (other than for a single dwelling) in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone.

**Objective**

To protect the primacy of agricultural production in the rural hinterland and strengthen opportunities for complementary use and development that respects the hinterland's scenic values.

**Strategies**

Discourage industry, manufacturing sales and warehouse uses that do not have a direct relationship with agricultural production or a use that is complementary to agricultural production on the land.

Ensure that discretionary use and development (other than industry, manufacturing sales and warehouse) is complementary to an agricultural activity on the property unless all of the following apply:

- The site is located outside an identified Agricultural Soil Quality Hotspot (shown on the Sustainable Agricultural Focus Area map at Clause 14.01-2L) and the Winchelsea Plains landscape precinct (shown on the Landscape Precincts plan at Clause 02.04).
- The site is strategically located with respect to a main road and bushfire risk can be reduced to an acceptable level.
- The use and development does not rely on publicly funded upgrades to municipal infrastructure or an extension of municipal services.
- The use and development is a tourism use or agrifood business and is located in an identified tourism node or is clustered with, and will complement, other tourism uses that have a direct relationship to agricultural production.
- The use is dependent on a non-urban setting.

Ensure discretionary use and development does not compromise the safe and efficient operation of arterial roads and tourism routes.

Prioritise the use of the land for agriculture and minimise the proportion of the property used for the non-agricultural use and development.

Discourage function centres in rural areas where the function centre use could compromise agricultural production.

Ensure that the agricultural productivity of land beyond the immediate impact area of the use and development is not adversely affected.

**Policy guidelines**

Consider as relevant:

- The impact of discretionary uses on agricultural productivity including from the proximity of a discretionary use and development to the boundary, increased traffic movements and the emission of noise.
- The impact and potential impact of agricultural uses on the discretionary use.
- The cumulative impact of discretionary use and development on the safety and efficiency of the road network
- Whether a non-urban setting is appropriate having regard to the impact and sustainability of:

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

- .. [Risk mitigation measures.](#)
- .. [Infrastructure provision and maintenance.](#)
- [The views of the Country Fire Authority and other relevant emergency service providers, including their capacity to respond to an emergency event on or threatening the site.](#)

### 14.01-2S

21/09/2018  
VC150

#### Sustainable agricultural land use

##### Objective

To encourage sustainable agricultural land use.

##### Strategies

Ensure agricultural and productive rural land use activities are managed to maintain the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resources.

Support the development of innovative and sustainable approaches to agricultural and associated rural land use practices.

Support adaptation of the agricultural sector to respond to the potential risks arising from climate change.

Encourage diversification and value-adding of agriculture through effective agricultural production and processing, rural industry and farm-related retailing.

Assist genuine farming enterprises to embrace opportunities and adjust flexibly to market changes.

Support agricultural investment through the protection and enhancement of appropriate infrastructure.

Facilitate ongoing productivity and investment in high value agriculture.

Facilitate the establishment and expansion of cattle feedlots, pig farms, poultry farms and other intensive animal industries in a manner consistent with orderly and proper planning and protection of the environment.

Ensure that the use and development of land for animal keeping or training is appropriately located and does not detrimentally impact the environment, the operation of surrounding land uses and the amenity of the surrounding area.

##### Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Victorian Code for Cattle Feedlots* (Department of Agriculture, Energy and Minerals, 1995)
- *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms* (Department of Primary Industries, 2009, plus 2018 amendments)
- *Apiary Code of Practice* (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2011)
- *Planning Guidelines for Land Based Aquaculture in Victoria* (Department of Primary Industries, No. 21, 2005)
- *Victorian Low Density Mobile Outdoor Poultry Farm Planning Permit Guidelines* (Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, June 2018)
- *Victorian Low Density Mobile Outdoor Pig Farm Planning Permit Guidelines* (Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, June 2018)

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**14.01-2R Agricultural productivity - Geelong G21**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Strategy**

Support new opportunities in farming and fisheries.

SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

14.01-2L Sustainable agricultural use

10/06/2021  
C436surf Proposed C133surf

**Strategy Objective**

To facilitate a resilient and innovative agricultural sector that is underpinned by sustainable land management practices.

**Strategies**

Support agroforestry where it is compatible with surrounding farming practices and minimises visual impacts when viewed from tourist roads.

Support agricultural use and development that is underpinned by adaptive practices like water minimisation and water recycling or reuse, and renewable energy sources.

Encourage intensive animal production, pig farms, poultry farms, large commercial farms with the potential for off-site amenity impacts and associated complementary uses in the Intensive and commercial farming area as shown on the map to this clause.

Minimise off site impacts by ensuring that intensive animal production is only supported in the Transition area, as shown on the map to this clause, where buffers and separation distances can be provided within the subject land.

Discourage non-agricultural uses in the Transition area, as shown on the map to this clause, unless the use complements the agricultural use of the subject land and does not prejudice the agricultural use of other land in the Transition area.

Encourage commercial farming and agri business and associated complementary uses in the Commercial and agri business focus area shown on the map to this clause.

Support infrastructure, agricultural activities and farm management practices that are ecologically sustainable and maintain or increase agricultural productivity.

**Policy guidelines**

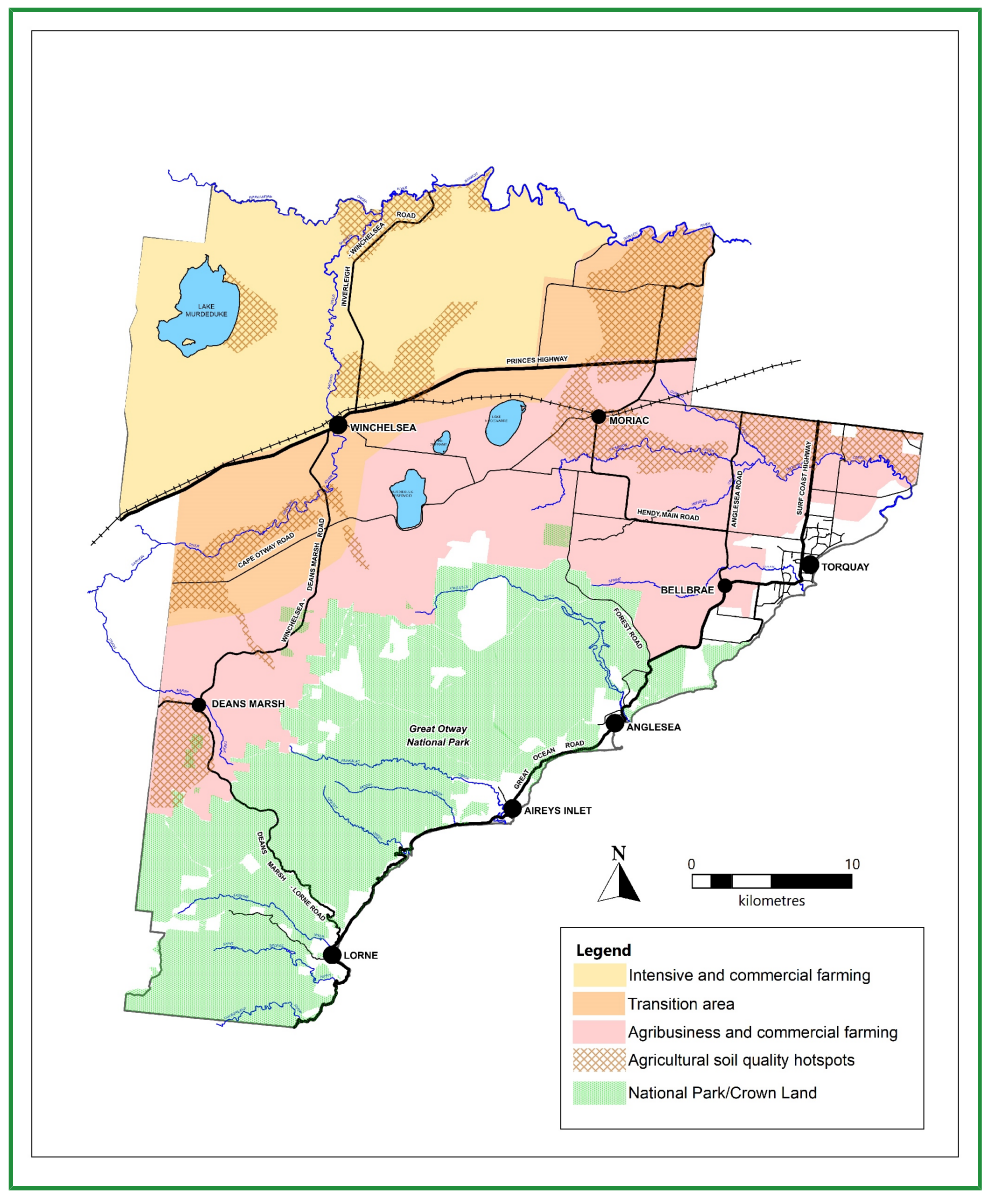
Consider as relevant:

- The sustainability of the land use and associated development irrespective of land area, having regard to:
  - Management actions for soil health.
  - Security of water supply and management of water resources.
  - The protection and enhancement of native vegetation.
  - Ongoing actions to control pest plants and animals.



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**Sustainable Agricultural Focus Area map**



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**14.01-3S**

04/05/2022  
VC210

**Forestry and timber production**

**Objective**

To facilitate the establishment, management and harvesting of plantations and the harvesting of timber from native forests.

**Strategies**

Identify areas that may be suitably used and developed for plantation timber production.

Promote the establishment of softwood and hardwood plantations on predominantly cleared land, as well as other areas that are subject to or contributing to land and water degradation.

Ensure protection of water quality and soil.

Ensure timber production in native forests is conducted in a sustainable manner.

Conduct timber production (except agroforestry, windbreaks and commercial plantations of 5 hectares or less) in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014* (amended 2021, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2021).

Ensure Victoria's greenhouse sinks are protected and enhanced by controlling land clearing, containing the growth of urban areas and supporting revegetation programs.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014* (amended 2021, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2021)

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**15.01 BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

31/07/2018  
VC148

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-1S

31/07/2018  
VC148

### Urban design

#### Objective

To create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.

#### Strategies

Require development to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural identity, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.

Ensure development contributes to community and cultural life by improving the quality of living and working environments, facilitating accessibility and providing for inclusiveness.

Ensure the interface between the private and public realm protects and enhances personal safety.

Ensure development supports public realm amenity and safe access to walking and cycling environments and public transport.

Ensure that the design and location of publicly accessible private spaces, including car parking areas, forecourts and walkways, is of a high standard, creates a safe environment for users and enables easy and efficient use.

Ensure that development provides landscaping that supports the amenity, attractiveness and safety of the public realm.

Ensure that development, including signs, minimises detrimental impacts on amenity, on the natural and built environment and on the safety and efficiency of roads.

Promote good urban design along and abutting transport corridors.

#### Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**15.01-1L-01 Design in Deans Marsh**

10/06/2021  
C136surf

**Strategies**

Orient development in Deans Marsh so it has active frontages to public streets and natural landscape features.

Site and design development in Deans Marsh and the surrounding rural land to protect the scenic values of the township entries, including by:

- Maintaining the dominance of the natural landscape from main road corridors outside the township.
- Delineating the boundary between urban development and the natural landscape beyond to ensure the township has a definite visual edge.
- Locating signs away from township entries wherever possible.

**Policy document**

Consider as relevant:

- *Deans Marsh Structure Plan* (Surf Coast Shire, 2008)

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-1L-02 Activity centre and commercial design

30/06/2022  
C134surf

#### Strategies

Design mixed use development so that uses with high public interaction, such as retail, are located on ground floor and offices and apartments are located on upper floors.

Encourage flexible built form that is adaptable to changing needs.

Limit the visual impact of large at-grade car parks from main roads by locating them to the side or rear of buildings.

Provide car parking spaces in all centres to meet the projected usual demand, not peak seasonal demand.

Maximise opportunities for:

- Basement and roof top parking.
- On-street parking.
- The sharing of car parking areas between uses within a centre.
- The creation of surface car parks away from the public realm, accessed by purpose designed laneways.

#### Aireys Inlet strategies

Set aside an area for outdoor dining and shade trees at the shop front edge of activity centres in Aireys Inlet.

Site and design commercial development adjacent to the Painkalac Creek in Aireys Inlet to respect the open scenic landscape character of Painkalac Creek.

#### Winchelsea strategies

Encourage uses compatible with the historic character (e.g. antique shops) in Winchelsea to locate in the 'Town Centre East' precinct and day to day services to locate within the 'Town Centre' precinct identified in the Winchelsea commercial centre framework plan in Clause 02.04.

Encourage a mix of cafe's and tourist type commercial developments fronting onto the Barwon River in Winchelsea.

Design commercial development in Winchelsea to:

- Respect and enhance the country village character or heritage theme (including pitched roofs, wide eaves, heritage colours and materials, and verandahs), particularly along the Princes Highway and in the town centre along Main Street.
- Be predominantly low rise, ensuring upper level development is designed to complement the preferred low-scale country village character, and ensuring trees remain the main feature of the skyline when viewed from the highway.
- Have active frontages to public streets and the Barwon River reserve, by ensuring windows and entry doors are orientated towards the street and avoiding large unvaried blank walls on a street frontage.
- Provide outdoor dining spaces that overlook the Barwon River.
- Respect, complement and maintain the prominence of heritage buildings and places within the streetscape and their contribution to the streetscape character through height, setbacks and scale of new built form. Upper level development should maintain the contribution of heritage buildings to the streetscape character of Winchelsea when viewed from the public realm.
- Locate landscaping works within flood affected areas (subject to the approval of the floodplain manager).

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

- Facilitate and encourage the 'greening' of the town centre through the planting of vines on verandah posts and the planting of canopy trees within the streetscape and where front setbacks are proposed.
- Encourage the use of landscaping to create a visually appealing entry through the town along the Highway.
- Contribute to and improve the pedestrian environment and prioritise pedestrian amenity.

**Policy document**

Consider as relevant:

*Winchelsea Town Centre and Highway Design Guidelines (Inclusive Design, 2019)*



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**15.01-1L-03 Signs**

30/06/2022  
C134surf

**Strategies**

Discourage the display of large, illuminated signs associated with electronic gaming activities.

Design and position signs to maintain the long term health of vegetation and minimise removal of or disturbance to vegetation.

Design commercial signs in Winchelsea to complement the country village or heritage theme.

Discourage signs in Winchelsea's Commercial 1 Zone that obscure the shopfront display or the architectural integrity of shopfronts.

**Policy document**

Consider as relevant:

- *Winchelsea Town Centre and Highway Design Guidelines* (Inclusive Design, 2019)
- *Winchelsea Townscape Study* (Mark McWha Pty Ltd, 1995)

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-1L-04 Streetscapes and landscaping

10/06/2021  
C136surf

#### Objective

To promote the development of co-ordinated and visually attractive streetscapes and landscapes in residential, commercial and industrial areas.

#### Strategies

Encourage vegetation species that are:

- Low maintenance with low water requirements.
- Of a sufficient height and spread to provide shade and assist in reducing the urban heat island effect.
- Respectful to the streetscape character.
- Indigenous, particularly in streets, nature reserves and open spaces that directly connect to areas of high ecological value.
- Not a weed species identified in the incorporated document *Weeds of the Surf Coast Shire* (Surf Coast Shire, 2013).

Select vegetation species that deliver a preferred street character in Torquay-Jan Juc and Winchelsea, consisting of a mix of native and exotic species.

Develop The Esplanade in Torquay in a manner that is consistent with its role in providing access to the foreshore and being the visual link between the town and the coast.

Encourage tree species in Winchelsea's heritage areas that respect the historic character, including species identified in the *Winchelsea Townscape Study* (Mark McWha Pty Ltd, 1995).

Break up large areas of parking with landscaping and shade trees.

Support street lights and furniture that respect the streetscape and neighbourhood character.

Limit the use of non-indigenous vegetation species except:

- Where it is used to provide continuity in the streetscape of existing avenues.
- In Torquay-Jan Juc and Winchelsea, where a mix of indigenous, native and exotic tree species is encouraged.

#### Policy guideline

Consider as relevant:

- Planting trees at a ratio of one tree to every four spaces in parking areas (including on street parking).

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-2S

10/06/2022  
VC216

### Building design

#### Objective

To achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.

#### Strategies

Ensure a comprehensive site analysis forms the starting point of the design process and provides the basis for the consideration of height, scale, massing and energy performance of new development.

Ensure development responds and contributes to the strategic and cultural context of its location.

Minimise the detrimental impact of development on neighbouring properties, the public realm and the natural environment.

Improve the energy performance of buildings through siting and design measures that encourage:

- Passive design responses that minimise the need for heating, cooling and lighting.
- On-site renewable energy generation and storage technology.
- Use of low embodied energy materials.

Ensure the layout and design of development supports resource recovery, including separation, storage and collection of waste, mixed recycling, glass, organics and e-waste.

Encourage use of recycled and reusable materials in building construction and undertake adaptive reuse of buildings, where practical.

Encourage water efficiency and the use of rainwater, stormwater and recycled water.

Minimise stormwater discharge through site layout and landscaping measures that support on-site infiltration and stormwater reuse.

Ensure the form, scale, and appearance of development enhances the function and amenity of the public realm.

Ensure buildings and their interface with the public realm support personal safety, perceptions of safety and property security.

Ensure development is designed to protect and enhance valued landmarks, views and vistas.

Ensure development considers and responds to transport movement networks and provides safe access and egress for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

Encourage development to retain existing vegetation.

Ensure development provides landscaping that responds to its site context, enhances the built form, creates safe and attractive spaces and supports cooling and greening of urban areas.

#### Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)
- *Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2021)
- *Waste Management and Recycling in Multi-unit Developments* (Sustainability Victoria, 2019)

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-3S

10/06/2022  
VC216

### Subdivision design

#### Objective

To ensure the design of subdivisions achieves attractive, safe, accessible, diverse and sustainable neighbourhoods.

#### Strategies

In the development of new residential areas and in the redevelopment of existing areas, subdivision should be designed to create liveable and sustainable communities by:

- Creating compact neighbourhoods that have walkable distances between activities.
- Developing activity centres in appropriate locations with a mix of uses and services and access to public transport.
- Creating neighbourhood centres that include services to meet day to day needs.
- Creating urban places with a strong sense of place that are functional, safe and attractive.
- Providing a range of lot sizes to suit a variety of dwelling and household types to meet the needs and aspirations of different groups of people.
- Creating landscaped streets and a network of open spaces to meet a variety of needs with links to regional parks where possible.
- Protecting and enhancing habitat for native flora and fauna, and providing opportunities for people to experience nature in urban areas.
- Facilitating an urban structure where neighbourhoods are clustered to support larger activity centres served by high quality public transport.
- Reduce car dependency by allowing for:
  - Convenient and safe public transport.
  - Safe and attractive spaces and networks for walking and cycling.
  - Subdivision layouts that allow easy movement within and between neighbourhoods.
  - A convenient and safe road network.
- Minimising exposure of sensitive uses to air and noise pollution from the transport system.
- Being accessible to people with disabilities.
- Creating an urban structure that:
  - Responds to climate related hazards.
  - Incorporates integrated water management, including sustainable irrigation of open space.
  - Minimises peak demand on the electricity network.
  - Supports energy efficiency and solar energy generation through urban layout and lot orientation.
  - Supports waste minimisation and increased resource recovery.
- Providing utilities and services that support the uptake of renewable energy technologies, such as microgrids and energy storage systems, including batteries.

#### Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-3L

30/06/2022  
C134surf

### Subdivision design in Surf Coast

#### Torquay-Jan Juc strategies

Ensure subdivision layout establishes lots for medium density housing in areas close to activity centres and lower densities in areas that contain significant vegetation or are visually prominent.

Encourage recycled water infrastructure (third pipe).

Design urban arterial roads and collector streets to present as parkways or avenues that link key destinations.

Design local streets to present as an extension of the open space system through the planting of large shade trees.

Design the street network, particularly in new estates, to reflect the coastal character of the area by applying innovative engineering solutions, such as surface treatment, footpath, kerb and channel design.

Replicate the interconnected, grid based street network of Old Torquay (identified on the Torquay-Jan Juc framework plan in Clause 02.04) in infill developments.

Design subdivisions to respond to the area's natural features and establish a natural environment character throughout the development area.

#### Winchelsea strategies

Design subdivisions to contribute to the country village character of Winchelsea by providing wide streets, open spaces, and adequate space for front gardens with a generous street setback.

Ensure subdivision of land adjacent to the Barwon River will facilitate the orientation of future commercial development towards the river environs.

Ensure subdivision within the commercial areas creates a pattern of fine grain development, enabling a mixture of shops, cafe's and businesses to activate the town centre.

#### Coastal towns strategies

Set aside land in subdivisions in Lorne for footpaths.

Design and construct new roads and footpaths in Lorne, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet to Eastern View, to achieve an informal appearance, with an emphasis on:

- Retaining vegetation in road verges, including curving road pavements to avoid vegetation.
- Using alternatives to concrete kerb and channel drainage, such as grassed swale drains.
- Encouraging surfaces and finishes that have an informal appearance, including gravel roads and accessways.

#### Moriac strategy

Encourage lot sizes that respect the town's rural character and enables provision of onsite waste water infrastructure.

#### Moriac policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- A minimum lot size of 0.4 hectares in the township.
- Minor variations to the minimum lot size of 0.4 hectares in the township where all waste water and septic tank effluent can be disposed of within the boundaries of the lot.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**15.01-4S**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Healthy neighbourhoods**

**Objective**

To achieve neighbourhoods that foster healthy and active living and community wellbeing.

**Strategies**

Design neighbourhoods that foster community interaction and make it easy for people of all ages and abilities to live healthy lifestyles and engage in regular physical activity by providing:

- Connected, safe, pleasant and attractive walking and cycling networks that enable and promote walking and cycling as a part of daily life.
- Streets with direct, safe and convenient access to destinations.
- Conveniently located public spaces for active recreation and leisure.
- Accessibly located public transport stops.
- Amenities and protection to support physical activity in all weather conditions.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**15.01-5S**

09/10/2020  
VC169

**Neighbourhood character**

**Objective**

To recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity, and sense of place.

**Strategies**

Support development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.

Ensure the preferred neighbourhood character is consistent with medium and higher density housing outcomes in areas identified for increased housing.

Ensure development responds to its context and reinforces a sense of place and the valued features and characteristics of the local environment and place by respecting the:

- Pattern of local urban structure and subdivision.
- Underlying natural landscape character and significant vegetation.
- Neighbourhood character values and built form that reflect community identity.



## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-5L-01 Coastal towns preferred neighbourhood character

10/06/2021  
C136surf

#### Policy application

This policy applies to the coastal settlements of Anglesea, Aireys Inlet to Eastern View and Lorne.

#### General strategies

Encourage building design, form, materials, features and colours that respects the low density coastal character of each town.

Maintain and enhance the vegetated landscape and encourage its dominance over the built environment.

Encourage a reasonable sharing of views of scenic landscape features from private land.

#### Lorne strategies

Maintain the informal streetscape character through:

- Informal landscaping with an emphasis on indigenous vegetation and tall canopy trees.
- The general absence of solid fencing.
- Driveway surfaces and finishes that are informal in appearance, including gravel, dark coloured concrete and exposed aggregate.

Protect and enhance the tall gum tree canopy and its role in providing a backdrop and canopy cover to the town and a border to the water's edge around Louttit Bay.

Conserve and enhance the preferred character of recessive built form within a tall canopy treed setting.

Reinstate the preferred character of a tall canopy treed setting in areas that are substantially cleared of vegetation.

Encourage development that provides openness between properties.

Protect the views between the ocean and Mountjoy Parade for its contribution to the character of the town.

#### Anglesea strategies

Preserve and enhance the non-suburban coastal character of Anglesea and retain its sense of houses dispersed in a bush setting.

Design buildings to have small footprints to allow space around buildings for landscaping.

Screen buildings with vegetation to achieve a sense of privacy.

Discourage solid fencing and encourage the use of post and wire fences or no fences at all.

Design and site development on prominent sites at Four Kings Activity Centre and Diggers Parade Activity Centre (identified on the Anglesea framework plan in Clause 02.04) to respect the heritage value of adjoining traditional beach houses on the Great Ocean Road.

#### Aireys Inlet to Eastern View strategies

Encourage the protection of indigenous remnant understorey and tree canopy dominated by Ironbark, Messmate, Manna Gum, Moonah and Drooping Sheoak trees.

Encourage informal fencing on property boundaries.

Protect the ambience of the night sky from artificial illumination, such as from signs and tennis courts.

Protect the dominance and visual presence of the Split Point Lighthouse and associated buildings on Eagle Rock Bluff.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

Limit the scale and intensity of buildings around the Split Point Lighthouse so that development does not intrude on views to the lighthouse or compete with its visual presence.

Protect the scenic open landscape character of the Painkalac Valley by avoiding vegetation removal close to the creek and wetlands.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-5L-02 Torquay-Jan Juc preferred neighbourhood character

10/06/2021  
C136surf

#### Policy application

This policy applies to an application to construct or extend one or more dwellings or subdivide land in a residential zone in Torquay and Jan Juc as shown on the Torquay-Jan Juc residential development framework plan to this clause.

#### Objective

To ensure development achieves architectural and urban design outcomes consistent with the preferred character of the residential areas of Torquay-Jan Juc.

#### All precincts strategies

Retain and enhance landscaping and trees as a major element in the appearance and character of Torquay-Jan Juc's residential environments.

Provide contemporary coastal architecture with a lightweight appearance, visually interesting well-articulated facades, simple detailing and roof forms, and a variety of lightweight materials and natural colours.

Provide visually recessive garages that are set back behind the building line or to the rear of dwellings so as not to dominate the streetscape or building façade.

Retain the openness of front gardens to the street by avoiding the use of front fences or by providing low or open style front fences, except in the General residential (standard density) precinct where all front fencing should be avoided.

Minimise adverse amenity impacts on adjoining properties by way of visual bulk.

Provide a landscape treatment that enhances the overall appearance of the development and the streetscape, including by siting development to maintain the predominant pattern of front setbacks in the street to allow for space to retain or plant canopy trees and shrubs.

#### Urban consolidation precinct strategy

Facilitate medium and higher density development that is respectful of the key elements of original building stock, including the low rise coastal character of the original fibro and weatherboard beach shacks, Californian bungalows and other Interwar and Postwar buildings.

#### Urban consolidation precinct policy guideline

Consider as relevant:

- A preference for development of up to 2 storeys (7.5 metres), with the option for 3 storeys where the development:
  - Has minimal amenity impacts on the streetscape and adjoining land uses (e.g. commercial, open space).
  - Is site responsive.
  - Achieves housing diversity by supplying smaller dwellings with one or two bedrooms.

#### General residential (mixed density) precinct strategies

Maintain the existing garden character formed by single and double storey detached houses in a garden setting.

Support infill development at a height that respects the scale of the surrounding area.

Provide setbacks to both side boundaries to maintain a sense of spaciousness around dwellings.

Respect older building styles and scales without replicating them.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### **General residential (mixed density) precinct policy guideline**

Consider as relevant:

- A maximum development height of 2 storeys (7.5 metres).

### **General residential (standard density) precinct strategies**

Maintain the existing character typified by dwellings predominantly of single and double storey scale.

Support contemporary dwellings within landscaped gardens.

Retain and enhance existing vegetation, including canopy trees, with a mixture of traditional coastal and indigenous species to strengthen the visual connection of the area with the coast.

Maintain consistent setbacks from the front and side boundaries.

Use articulation, including a variety of materials and finishes to provide visual interest.

### **General residential (standard density) precinct policy guideline**

Consider as relevant:

- A maximum development height of 2 storeys (7.5 metres).

### **Bush residential precinct strategies**

Provide space around dwellings to retain and plant vegetation, in particular indigenous canopy trees and large shrubs.

Encourage landscaping to achieve bushy front gardens.

Support development of a low-scale and modest form.

Where the topography is hilly, design buildings to follow the contours of the land.

Site buildings, including those taking advantage of ocean views, so that they do not dominate the streetscape.

### **Bush residential precinct policy guideline**

Consider as relevant:

- A maximum development height of 2 storeys (7.5 metres).

### **Residential growth precinct strategies**

Establish a landscaped and built form character that reflects Torquay-Jan Juc's preferred coastal character and integrates with surrounding areas.

Encourage the planting of indigenous and other coastal vegetation around dwellings.

Plant street trees to unify the appearance of the area and add a sense of spaciousness and leafiness in greenfield subdivisions.

### **Residential growth precinct policy guideline**

Consider as relevant:

- A preference for development of up to 2 storeys (7.5 metres) with the option of 3 storey development where it is in or close to activity centres and public open space.

### **Low density residential precinct strategy**

Maintain the existing low density, single dwelling character.

### **Low density residential precinct policy guideline**

Consider as relevant:

### SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

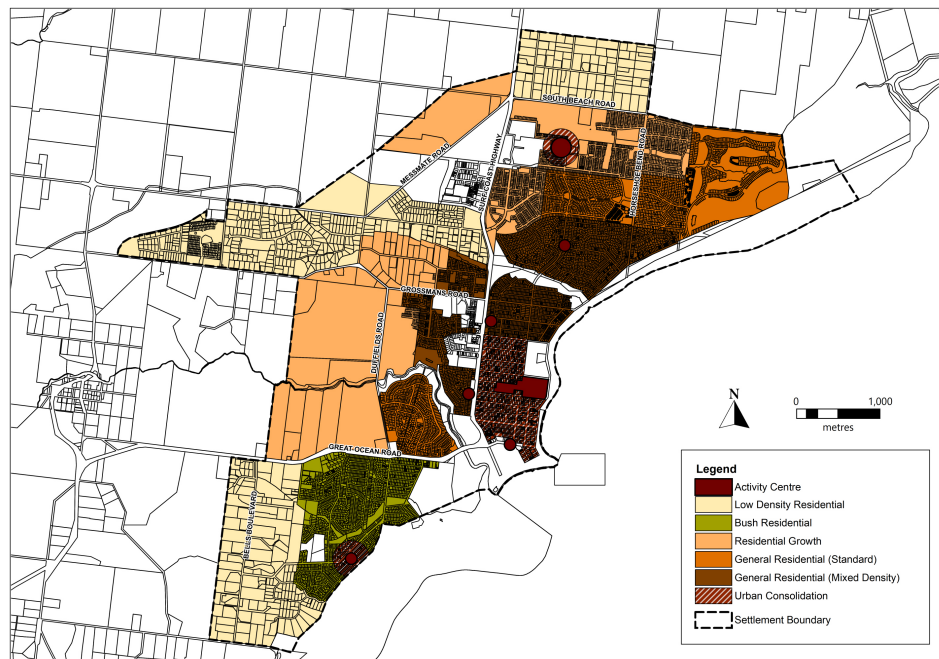
- A maximum development height of 2 storeys (7.5 metres).

#### Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Sustainable Futures Plan Torquay-Jan Juc 2040* (Surf Coast Shire, 2014)
- *Torquay-Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study Review* (Surf Coast Shire, 2012)
- *Torquay-Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study & Vegetation Assessment* (Surf Coast Shire, 2006)

#### Torquay-Jan Juc residential development framework plan



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**15.01-6S**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Design for rural areas**

**Objective**

To ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.

**Strategies**

Ensure that the siting, scale and appearance of development protects and enhances rural character.

Protect the visual amenity of valued rural landscapes and character areas along township approaches and sensitive tourist routes by ensuring new development is sympathetically located.

Site and design development to minimise visual impacts on surrounding natural scenery and landscape features including ridgelines, hill tops, waterways, lakes and wetlands.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 15.01-6L Design for rural areas

10/06/2021  
C436surf Proposed C133surf

#### Policy application

This policy applies to an application to use or develop land (other than for a single dwelling) in the:

- Rural Living Zone.
- Rural Conservation Zone.
- Farming Zone.

#### Objective

To protect and maintain open and uncluttered rural landscapes, including vistas from main road corridors.

#### Strategies

~~Encourage the siting and design of new buildings to:~~ Site and design development to be visually recessive in the landscape with a particular emphasis on protecting viewsheds from the Great Ocean Road and other tourist routes.

Encourage extensive space between developments to:

- Emphasise the rural landscape in non-urban breaks between settlements.
- Retain open vistas and the dominance of the rural landscape over built form.
- Avoid ribbon development along the Great Ocean Road and other tourist routes.

Site and design new buildings and structures to:

- Avoid locating on hilltops and ridges and from protruding above the apparent ridgeline.
- ~~Nestle~~ Be modest in scale and nestle discretely into the landscape.
- Avoid impacts to wetlands and waterways.
- Minimise the need for cut or fill.
- Be ~~modest in scale~~ grouped in a clustered arrangement on the site.
- ~~Complement existing farm structures~~ Use external colours and materials that complement their rural or vegetated landscape setting.
- ~~Avoid locating on hilltops and ridges~~ Minimise the potential for erosion and disturbance of native vegetation, including through earthworks and the creation of defensible space.
- Minimise the loss of land used or suitable for agricultural production.

Encourage ~~indigenous revegetation around buildings, wetlands and along waterways to blend development with~~ the planting of indigenous vegetation (or orchard trees as relevant to the rural context), placed to soften views to non-agricultural buildings and structures, create a sense of arrival and enhance their visual connection to the surrounding landscape.

Retain a definite edge to settlements, providing a clear transition point between the rural and the urban or township environments.

Minimise the visual impact of timber plantations on tourist roads.

#### Objective

To protect and enhance the rural character of the hinterland.

#### Strategies

Support the repurposing of agricultural buildings that are suitable for an approved use.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

Design new buildings to reflect the rural vernacular using:

~~Encourage buildings on the site to adopt a clustered development pattern rather than being dispersed throughout the landscape.~~

- Horizontal, rather than vertical proportions.
- External colours and materials that are non-reflective and in muted tones.

Design and site new group accommodation buildings to:

- Prioritise agricultural production.
- Be grouped in clusters, avoiding large, single footprint buildings.
- Reflect a consistent design theme.
- Be clearly distinguishable from a dwelling through their modest scale and clustered arrangement.

Design and site buildings in the Barrabool Hills landscape precinct (as identified on the Landscape ~~precincts~~ Precincts plan in Clause 02.04) to foster the historic rural landscape qualities of the area.

~~Minimise the visual impact of timber plantations on tourist roads.~~

### **Policy guideline**

Consider as relevant:

- The visual impact of vehicle accessways and internal roads.
- Whether vehicle accessways and internal roads that bisect productive agricultural land are appropriate.
- A minimum 20 metre wide native vegetation landscape buffer from any timber production use along a Category 1 or Category 2 road or any other tourist road.
- A minimum 20 metre wide native vegetation landscape buffer to screen development along the Great Ocean Road between Bellbrae township and Anglesea.
- The need for a visual impact assessment.

### **Policy documents**

*Hinterland Design Guidelines* (Surf Coast Shire and Inclusive Design, 2021)



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.01**  
31/07/2018  
VC148

**EMPLOYMENT**

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.01-1S**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Diversified economy**

**Objective**

To strengthen and diversify the economy.

**Strategies**

Protect and strengthen existing and planned employment areas and plan for new employment areas.

Facilitate regional, cross-border and inter-regional relationships to harness emerging economic opportunities.

Facilitate growth in a range of employment sectors, including health, education, retail, tourism, knowledge industries and professional and technical services based on the emerging and existing strengths of each region.

Improve access to jobs closer to where people live.

Support rural economies to grow and diversify.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.01-1R Diversified economy - Geelong G21**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Strategies**

Build on the region's competitive strengths, including tourism and agricultural land resources and economic, social and natural assets.

Support new businesses that provide employment and innovation opportunities in identified employment nodes across the region.

Support industries that utilise skills within the region.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.01-1L**

Proposed C133surf

**Diversified economy - Surf Coast**

**Objective**

To strengthen the rural economy through the considered diversification of land use.

**Strategies**

Encourage agribusiness, agritourism, nature and adventure based tourist activities and use and development in accordance with Clause 17.04-1L to assist in the diversification of the rural economy.

Support innovative land use that complements agricultural production or prioritises the protection of environmental assets on the land.

**17.01-2S**

04/10/2018  
VC149

**Innovation and research**

**Objective**

To create opportunities for innovation and the knowledge economy within existing and emerging industries, research and education.

**Strategies**

Encourage the expansion and development of logistics and communications infrastructure.

Support the development of business clusters.

Support the development of enterprise precincts that build the critical mass of employment in an area, leverage the area's public and private sector economic competitive strengths and assets, and cater to a diversity of employment types and scales.

Promote an accessible, well-connected, high-amenity and collaborative physical environment that is conducive to innovation and to creative activities.

Encourage the provision of infrastructure that helps people to be innovative and creative, learn new skills and start new businesses in locations identified to accommodate employment and economic growth.

Support well-located, appropriate and low-cost premises for not-for-profit or start-up enterprises.

Improve access to community-based information and training through further developing libraries as community learning centres.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.01-2R Innovation and Research - Geelong G21**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Strategy**

Support growth of education and research hubs at Waurm Ponds and Central Geelong with Deakin, CSIRO, The Gordon and Barwon Health.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.04 TOURISM**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.04-1S**

31/07/2018  
VC148

**Facilitating tourism**

**Objective**

To encourage tourism development to maximise the economic, social and cultural benefits of developing the state as a competitive domestic and international tourist destination.

**Strategies**

Encourage the development of a range of well-designed and sited tourist facilities, including integrated resorts, accommodation, host farm, bed and breakfast and retail opportunities.

Seek to ensure that tourism facilities have access to suitable transport.

Promote tourism facilities that preserve, are compatible with and build on the assets and qualities of surrounding activities and attractions.

Create innovative tourism experiences.

Encourage investment that meets demand and supports growth in tourism.

**Policy guidelines**

Consider as relevant:

- Any applicable regional tourism development strategy.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Tourism Investment Guidelines – Your Guide to Tourism Investment in Victoria* (Tourism Victoria, 2008)

SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

17.04-1L Facilitating tourism in Surf Coast

30/06/2022  
C434surf Proposed C133surf

General strategies

~~Direct tourism use and development to land within settlement boundaries or in locations with easy access to existing infrastructure, except where it is located in the Cape Otway Road Australia (CORA) Sports, Tourism and Accommodation Development.~~

~~Discourage tourism use and development on land outside settlement boundaries that is subject to the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 or where the removal of indigenous vegetation cannot be avoided or minimised.~~

~~Discourage tourist development in the Benwerrin-Mt Sabine area, Bells Beach viewshed and Point Addis.~~

Encourage tourism use and development that will increase visitor length of stay and increase visitor numbers in the off-peak period.

Encourage tourism uses and development to incorporate ecologically sustainable design.

~~Encourage low-scale eco-tourism operations and ancillary uses.~~

~~Limit the intensity and scale of tourism facilities and activities so that they respond to their natural setting and avoid adverse visual impact on the natural environment and rural landscape, except where they are located in the Cape Otway Road Australia (CORA) Sports, Tourism and Accommodation Development.~~

~~Design non-agricultural based tourism accommodation to complement the site's natural features and processes~~  
Direct tourism use and development to land within settlement boundaries or in locations with easy access to the infrastructure needed to support the use and development.

~~Facilitate the provision of infrastructure to support the tourism industry.~~

~~Encourage agriculture based tourism development in the rural hinterland to assist in the diversification of the rural economy.~~

Encourage tourism development in a non-urban zone to be:

- Located near existing townships.
- Sited and designed to avoid conflict with existing rural uses.

~~Limit non-agricultural based tourism development to nature and adventure based tourist activities that provide accommodation, except for key strategic tourist destinations such as the Cape Otway Road Australia (CORA) Sports, Tourism and Accommodation Development~~  
Encourage eco-tourism operations and ancillary uses that respond to their natural setting and avoid adverse impacts on the natural environment and rural landscape.

~~Limit non-agricultural based tourism development to the Lorne coastal hinterland or other selected rural areas~~  
Design tourism use and development to complement the site's natural features and ecological processes.

Encourage nature based activities that complement the environmental assets and landscape values on the land and surrounding area.

Discourage tourism uses and development on land that is subject to the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1.

Discourage tourism use and development in the Benwerrin-Mt Sabine area.

Discourage tourist development in the Bells Beach viewshed and the Point Addis area.

Encourage camping and caravan parks that are functionally distinct from a residential village by:



## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

- Providing supporting facilities focused on tourist needs, including communal and recreation facilities, ablution blocks, and facilities that allow for pre-booked or walk-up bookings.
- A balanced mix of short term accommodation types, including movable buildings, and sites for motor homes, camper vans and tents.

Encourage provision of caravan parks as affordable visitor accommodation Direct camping and caravan parks to areas located within or near existing settlements and in locations with easy access to a main road.

### Coastal towns strategies

Encourage the retention of the caravan parks and school camps in Torquay-Jan Juc, Lorne, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet as a low cost visitor accommodation option.

Limit non-agricultural based tourism development in the Lorne coastal hinterland.

Encourage the establishment of sustainable tourism activities in the Lorne hinterland where:

- Bushfire risk will not be increased.
- Environmental assets identified through the *Surf Coast Shire Biodiversity Mapping Project 2014* (Surf Coast Shire, 2014) will not be significantly impacted.

Encourage tourist accommodation in Lorne's Tourist Accommodation Precincts along Smith Street and at the eastern end of Point Grey, as indicated on the Lorne framework plan in Clause 02.04.

Promote opportunities for a variety of environmentally sustainable nature and adventure based tourism use and development in Anglesea and Aireys Inlet to Eastern View.

Retain the caravan parks and school camps in Anglesea as a provider of low cost visitor accommodation.

Promote opportunities for tourist accommodation in Aireys Inlet to Eastern View that are sited and located where the accommodation is located and sited to respond to its location and natural setting.

### Rural towns strategies

Support the establishment of tourism based commercial development in Winchelsea that is associated with its historic buildings.

Encourage activities and events in Winchelsea that attract year round tourism.

Encourage uses compatible with tourism in Winchelsea to locate in the commercial areas indicated on the Winchelsea commercial centre framework plan in Clause 02.04, with:

- Heritage and antique focused uses to locate in the Town Centre East precinct (between the Barwon River and Austin Street north of Willis Street).
- Local produce sales and restaurant focused uses to locate in the Riverside precinct.

Facilitate opportunities for Barwon Park to develop as a tourism and events hub for Winchelsea.

Facilitate low-scale tourist accommodation and enterprises in the Bellbrae that add to township that compliment the scenic values and appeal of the area.

Encourage bed and breakfasts and other forms of tourist accommodation a variety of tourist accommodation and produce based events in the Deans Marsh township to cater for visitors seeking a retreat from urban areas.

### Rural Hinterland strategies

Encourage agritourism and use and development in the tourism and agritourism focus area shown on the *Tourism in the hinterland activation map* in this clause.

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

Promote nature-based tourism use and development in the tourism and agritourism focus area shown on the *Tourism in the hinterland activation map* to this clause where bushfire risk can be reduced to an acceptable level without compromising the natural values of the site or surrounding area.

Direct tourism use and development to the tourism and agritourism focus area shown on the *Tourism in the hinterland activation map* to this clause.

Promote tourism use and development that emphasises:

- Local food, wine and produce, or
- Nature based experiences and outdoor recreation that prioritise the natural environment.

Discourage tourism use and development outside of the tourism and agritourism focus area shown on the *Tourism in the hinterland activation map* in this clause.

Promote the clustering of complementary tourism use and development with agrifood businesses at designated tourism nodes as shown on the *Tourism in the hinterland activation map* in this clause.

Ensure tourism use and development does not compromise the safe and efficient operation of arterial roads and tourist routes.

Avoid the proliferation of access points along arterial roads and tourist routes in rural areas.

Encourage a diversity of short term accommodation in the rural hinterland with a particular focus on bed and breakfast, host farms and group accommodation where an on-site manager is present.

Promote host farms in the Deans Marsh and Pennyroyal districts.

Direct Residential Hotels and Camping and Caravan Parks to areas:

- Of lower bushfire risk, and
- That have a connection or convenient access to a tourist facility, tourist attraction or outdoor recreation.

Encourage events in lower bushfire risk areas or outside of the declared bushfire season where:

- The use and development, whether permanent or temporary, will not limit the agricultural production capacity on the land or nearby land.
- The site is conveniently located to a main road.

### Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- For events in rural areas, the views of the Country Fire Authority and other relevant emergency service providers, including on their capacity to respond to an emergency event on or threatening the site.
- The need for a Traffic Impact Assessment that includes consideration of traffic impacts to the road network, and identifies measures to address any related road safety issues to an acceptable standard.
- Whether the proposed function centre:
  - :- Complements the primary use of the land for agriculture.
  - :- Will be conducted predominantly within a building designed to protect people and livestock on nearby properties from unreasonable interference from noise.
  - :- Has convenient access to a main road.
  - :- Will limit the operation or expansion of agricultural uses on the land or nearby land.
- Whether the location of a proposed camping and caravan park outside of a settlement:

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

- Relies on its location having regard to its proximity to existing tourist attractions.
- Is suitable by way of topography, road access, landscape significance and vegetation cover.

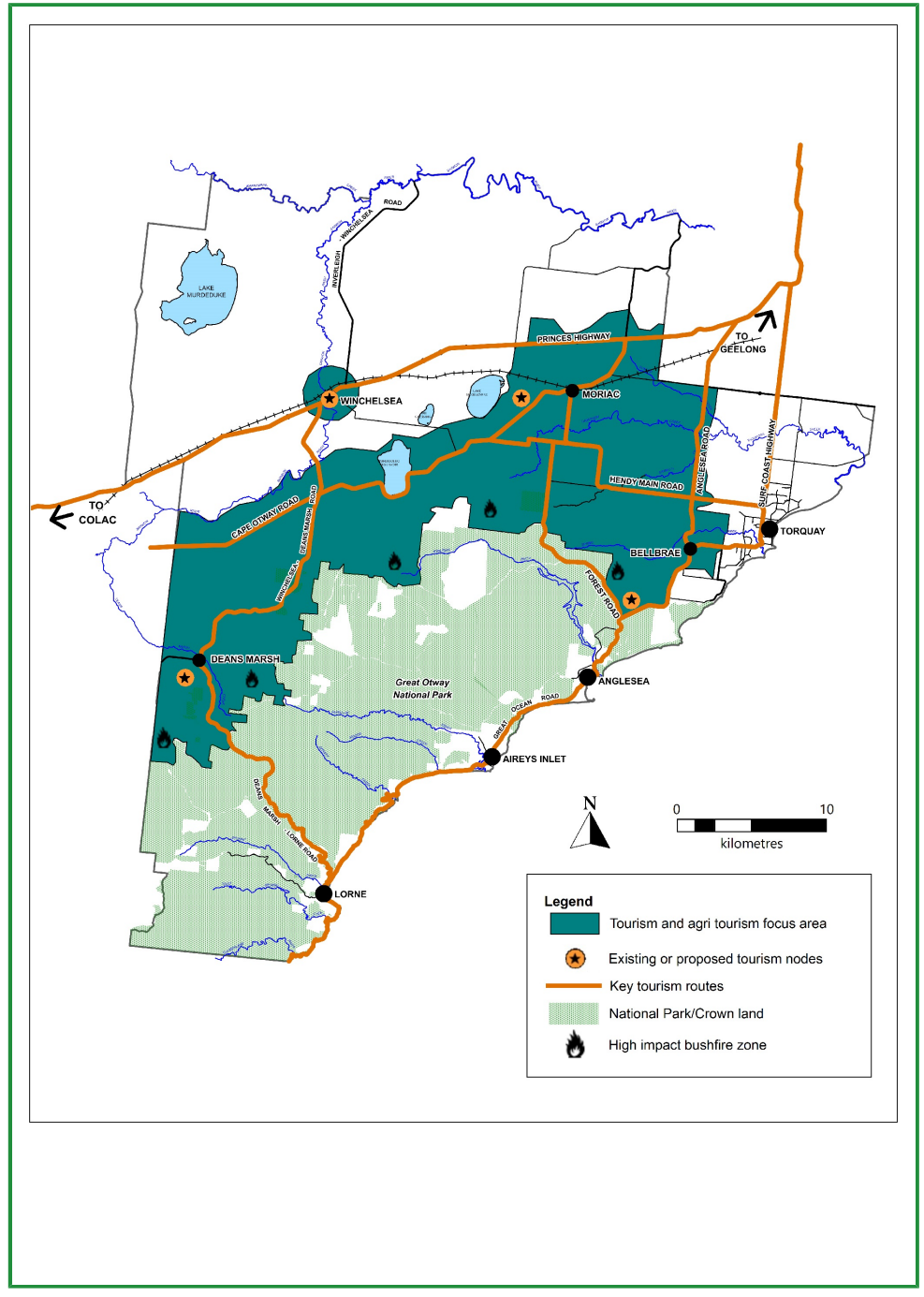
**Policy documents**

Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy (Surf Coast Shire, 2019)

Great Ocean Road Landscape Assessment Study (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2003)

Tourism in the Hinterland Activation map

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**



## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

### 17.04-2S

03/02/2022  
VC199

### Coastal and maritime tourism and recreation

#### Objective

To encourage a diverse range of strategically located and well-designed coastal and maritime tourism and recreational opportunities that strengthen people's connection with the marine and coastal environment.

#### Strategies

Support safe and sustainable recreation and tourism development including ecotourism, tourism and major maritime events that:

- Responds to identified demand.
- Minimises impact on environmental and cultural values.
- Minimises impact on other users.
- Minimises direct and cumulative impacts.
- Maintains public safety.
- Responds to the carrying capacity of the site.
- Minimises exposure to coastal hazard risks and risks posed by climate change.

Ensure a diverse range of accommodation options and coastal experiences are provided for and maintained.

Ensure sites and facilities are accessible to all.

Ensure tourism development, within non-urban areas, demonstrates a tourist accommodation need and supports a nature-based approach.

Ensure development is of an appropriate scale, use and intensity relative to its location and minimises impacts on the surrounding natural, visual, environmental and coastal character.

Develop a network of maritime precincts around Port Phillip and Western Port that serve both local communities and visitors.

Maintain and expand boating and recreational infrastructure around the bays in maritime precincts at Frankston, Geelong, Hastings, Hobsons Bay, Mordialloc, Mornington, Patterson River, Portarlington, Queenscliff, St Kilda, Stony Point/Cowes and Wyndham.

Support a sustainable network of facilities for recreational boating and water-based activities that respond to:

- Identified demand.
- Use and safety considerations.
- The carrying capacity of the location.
- Coastal processes.
- Environmental values.

Strategically plan and operate ports to complement each other in the context of the broader economy, transport networks and the maritime and coastal environments within which they are regulated.

Provide public access to recreational facilities and activities on land and water.

#### Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- *Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study* (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2006)
- *Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan 2013 - Gippsland Coastal Board*

#### **SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

- *Recreational Boating Facilities Framework July 2014 - Central Coastal Board*
- *Western Boating Coastal Action Plan 2010 - Western Coastal Board*

#### **Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Marine and Coastal Policy* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2020)
- *Siting and Design Guidelines on the Victorian Coast* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2020)
- *Victorian Coastal Strategy* (Victorian Coastal Council, 2014)

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**17.04-2L Coastal tourism and recreation**

10/06/2021  
C136surf

**Strategy**

Encourage coastal dependent recreational and tourism activities that complement and promote the coast's natural and cultural values.

SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

06/02/2020  
C128surf

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 35.07 FARMING ZONE

Shown on the planning scheme map as FZ.

1.0 Subdivision and other requirements

20/04/2022  
VC205 Proposed C133surf

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	<del>Thompsons Creek Catchment</del> <del>Barrabool Hills / Deans Marsh District</del>	60 hectares <del>This may be reduced to 40 hectares provided the following conditions are met:</del> <del>40 hectares</del> 1. A land plan is submitted that shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>■ that principles of biodiversity have been applied</del></li> <li><del>■ fencing of areas of remnant vegetation and/or conservation areas to exclude stock</del></li> <li><del>■ a minimum area of 10% established to trees (increasing to 15% where salting or other problems exist)</del></li> <li><del>■ proposed management practices in the fenced-off areas especially for the control of rabbits, foxes and noxious weeds</del></li> <li><del>■ evidence that the recommendations of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment will be implemented in recognised hot spot salt areas in the Thompsons Creek Catchment Plan</del></li> </ul> 2. The owner enters into an agreement under Section 173 of the Act which commits any present or future owner to the implementation of the land plan and ongoing management of maintenance of the property so the land does not revert back to its former state.
	<del>Thompsons Creek Catchment / Otway Hills and Coastal Hinterland</del>	60 hectares
	Winchelsea Plains	80 hectares
	<del>Barrabool Hills</del>	40 hectares
	<i>Refer to Map 1 to this Schedule</i>	
Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling (hectares)	<del>Thompsons Creek Catchment</del> <del>Barrabool Hills / Deans Marsh District</del>	60 hectares <del>This may be reduced to 40 hectares provided the following conditions are met:</del> <del>40 hectares</del> 1. A land plan is submitted that shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>■ that principles of biodiversity have been applied</del></li> <li><del>■ fencing of areas of remnant vegetation and/or conservation areas to exclude stock</del></li> <li><del>■ a minimum area of 10% established to trees (increasing to 15% where salting or other problems exist)</del></li> <li><del>■ proposed management practices in the fenced-off areas especially for the control of rabbits, foxes and noxious weeds</del></li> <li><del>■ evidence that the recommendations of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment will be implemented in</del></li> </ul>



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance	Area/Dimensions/Distance
		<p>recognised hot spot salt areas in the Thompsons Creek Catchment Plan</p> <p>2- The owner enters into an agreement under Section 173 of the Act which commits any present or future owner to the implementation of the land plan and ongoing management of maintenance of the property so the land does not revert back to its former state.</p>
Thompsons Creek Catchment / Otway Hills and Coastal Hinterland		60 hectares
Winchelsea Plains		80 hectares
Barrabool Hills		40 hectares
Deans Marsh District		40 hectares
	Refer to Map 1 to this Schedule	
Maximum area for which no permit is required to use land for timber production (hectares)	All land	40 hectares
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to construct an out-building associated with a dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing building used for agriculture (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a road (metres)	<p>A Transport Zone 2 or land in a Public Acquisition Overlay if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Head, Transport for Victoria is the acquiring authority; and</li> <li>▪ The purpose of the acquisition is for a road.</li> </ul>	100 metres
	<p>A Transport Zone 3 or land in a Public Acquisition Overlay if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Head, Transport for Victoria is not the acquiring authority; and</li> <li>▪ The purpose of the acquisition is for a road.</li> </ul>	40 metres
	Any other road	20 metres

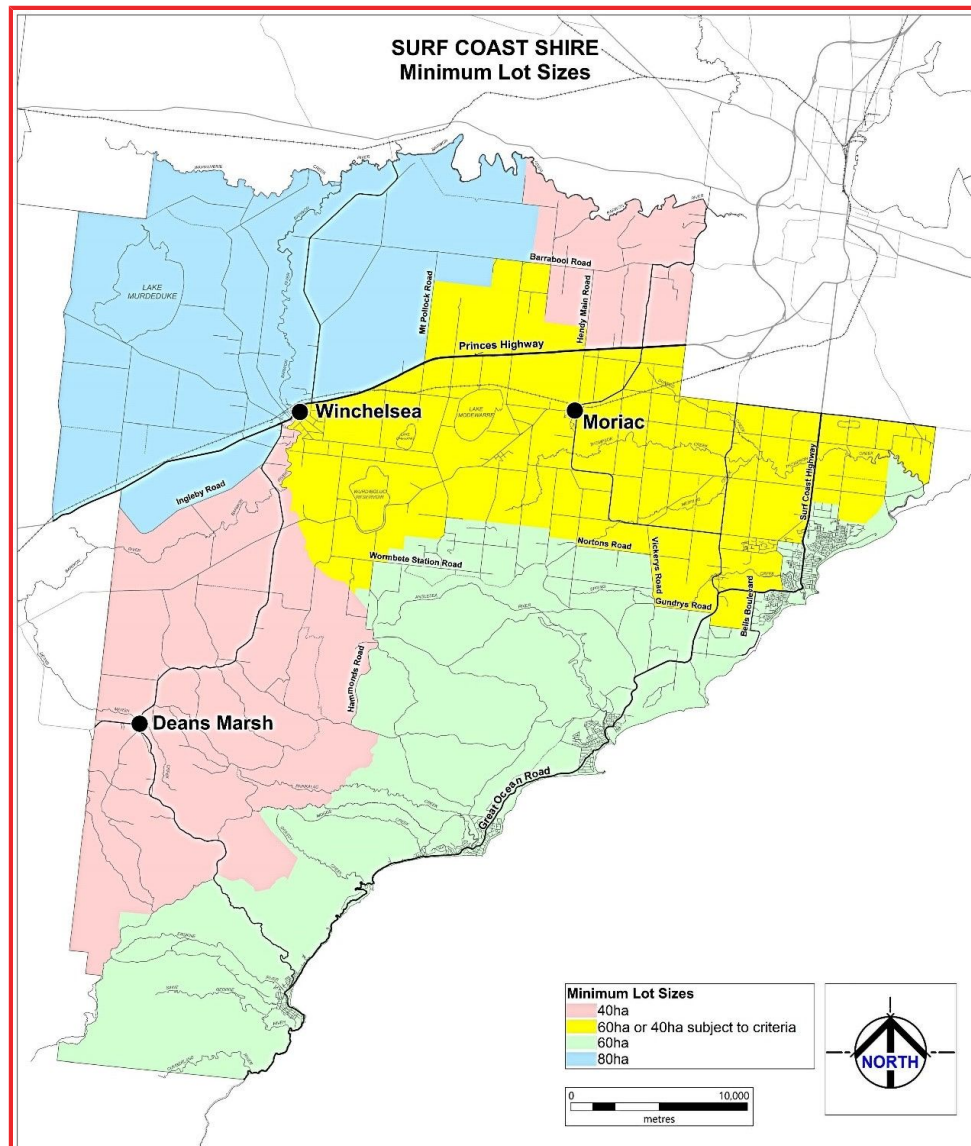
**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

	<b>Land</b>	<b>Area/Dimensions/Distance</b>
Minimum setback from a boundary (metres)	Any other boundary	5 metres
Minimum setback from a dwelling not in the same ownership (metres)	Any dwelling not in the same ownership	100 metres

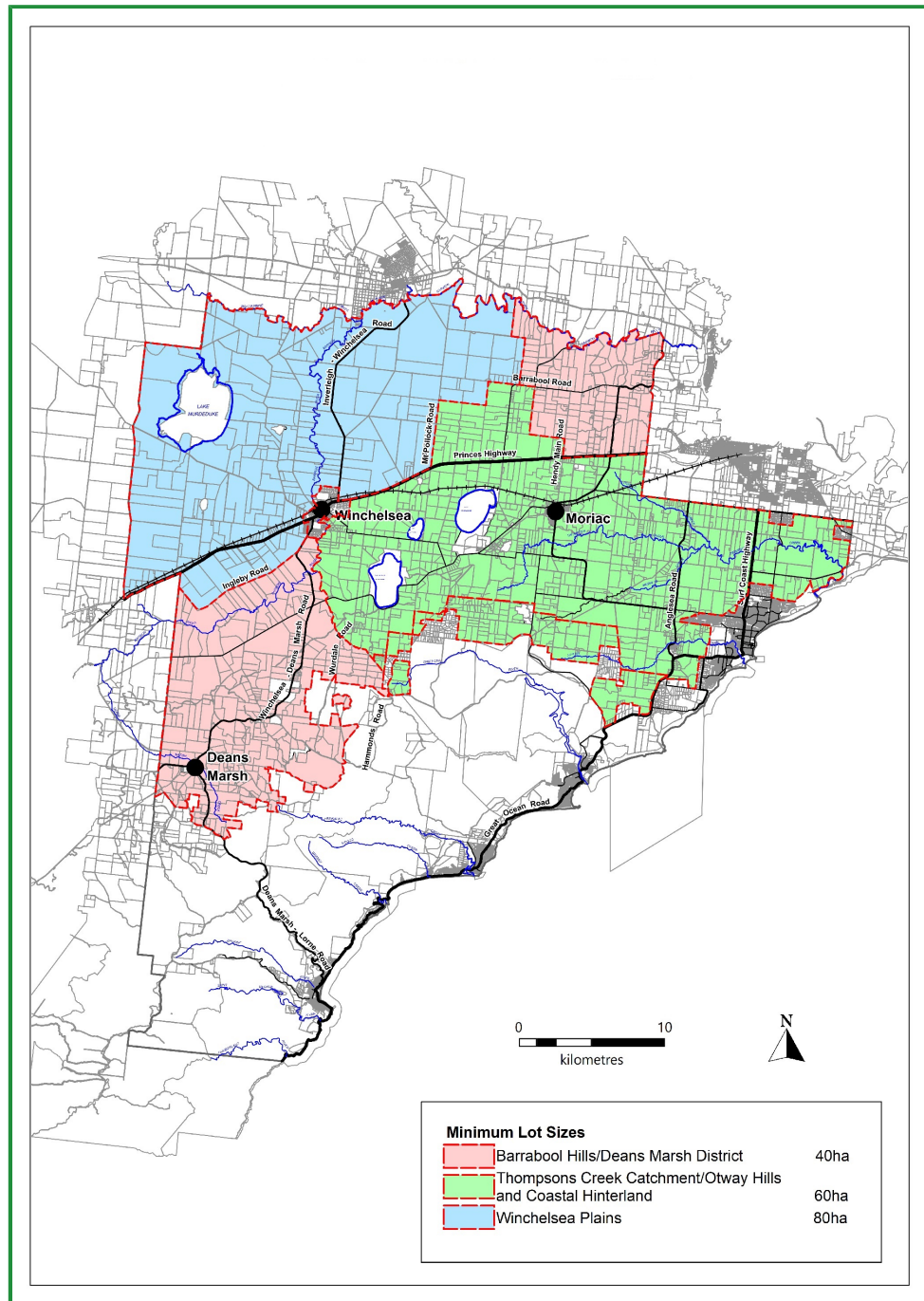
<b>Permit requirement for earthworks</b>	<b>Land</b>
Earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary	All land, except land contained within the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO3) for or impacted by the construction of the Princes Highway West duplication project and associated works not including the construction of a grade separated interchange at the intersection of Princes Highway West with Cape Otway and Devon Roads.
Earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater	All land, except land contained within the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO3) for or impacted by the construction of the Princes Highway West duplication project and associated works not including the construction of a grade separated interchange at the intersection of Princes Highway West with Cape Otway and Devon Roads.

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**Map 1 to the Schedule to Clause 35.07**



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**



SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

31/07/2018  
VC148

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.08 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1.0 Background documents

30/06/2022  
C434surf Proposed C133surf

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<i>Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2004)	C18
<i>Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan</i> (Surf Coast Shire & AXOS Urban, 2015)	C110
<i>Anglesea Futures Land Use Framework</i> (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2018)	C129surf
<i>Anglesea Great Ocean Road Study</i> (Planisphere, 2016)	C97
<i>Anglesea Neighbourhood Character Study</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2003)	C16
<i>Anglesea Streetscape Project</i> (Mexted Rimmer Associates, Andrews Consulting & Huw Hulse, 1996)	C97
<i>Anglesea Structure Plan</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2012)	C79
<i>Barrabool Uniting (formerly Presbyterian) Church &amp; Manse: Heritage Assessment</i> (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd, 2014)	C103
<i>Bellbrae Stormwater Master Plan: Proposed Re-Zoning West of School Road</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2013)	C74
<i>Bellbrae Structure Plan</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2010)	C74
<i>Biodiversity Mapping Project</i> (Surf Coast Shire, Department of Environment and Primary Industries & Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, 2014)	C96
<i>Comprehensive Strategy Plan for Torquay/Jan Juc</i> (Henshall Hansen Associates, 1996)	NPS1
<i>Deans Marsh Structure Plan</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2008)	C67
<i>The Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study</i> (Planisphere, 2003)	C68
<i>Growing Winchelsea – Shaping Future Growth</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2015)	C120
<i>Hinterland Design Guidelines</i> (Surf Coast Shire and Inclusive Design, 2021)	C133
<i>Improving Our Waterways: Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</i> (Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 2013)	C85
<i>Indigenous Planting Guide for Rural Areas within the Surf Coast Shire</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2003)	C49
<i>Indigenous Planting Guide for Urban Coastal Areas within the Surf Coast Shire</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2003)	C16
<i>Landscape Assessment Study North of the Princes Highway: Background Report</i> (Planisphere, 2007)	C68
<i>Landscaping Your Surf Coast Garden For Bushfire</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2012)	C96

SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<i>Lorne Neighbourhood Character Study</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2006)	C34
<i>Lorne Strategy Plan Review</i> (Environmental Resources Management Aust & Maunsell Australia, revised 2004)	C34
<i>Moriac Structure Plan</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2010)	C80
<i>Open Space Strategy 2016 – 2025</i> (Ross Planning, 2015)	C96
<i>Pathways Strategy 2012 Review Part A: Process, Background Policies and Recommendations</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2012)	C96 C133
<i>Paleert Tjaara Dja: Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan</i> (Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, 2020)	
<i>Regional Bushfire Planning Assessment, Barwon South-West Region</i> (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2012)	C96
<i>Remnant Roadside Vegetation of the Surf Coast Shire</i> (Peter Moulton, Mark Trengove & Geoff Clark, 1997)	NPS1
<i>A Review of Domestic Wastewater Management in Bellbrae</i> (Van de Graaff and Associates, Geocode & LandSafe, 2010)	C74
<i>Rural Environment Study: Report on Environmental Resources</i> (Ecology Australia, 1996) <i>Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2019)	NPS1 C133
<i>Salinity Management Overlay Project Cover Report</i> (EnPlan-DBA, Dalhaus Environmental Geology & Chris Harty and Environmental Management, 2006)	C38
<i>Spring Creek Catchment Plan</i> (Spring Creek Catchment Committee & EnPlan Australia Pty Ltd, 2003)	C74
<i>Spring Creek Urban Growth Framework Plan Working Paper 3 Landscape and Urban Form</i> (Hansen Partnership, 2008)	C74
<i>Surf Coast Housing Policy Project</i> (Planisphere, 2006)	C39
<i>Surf Coast Places of Cultural Significance Study: Report on Stage 1 Volume 1 – Methods and Results</i> (Context P/L & Dr Carlotta Kellaway, 1998)	C74
<i>Surf Coast Playground Strategy</i> (Surf Coast Shire, 2011)	C96
<i>Surf Coast Shire Gaming Policy Framework</i> (Coomes Consulting Group, 2008)	C72
<i>Surf Coast Shire Places of Cultural Significance Study: Selected Lorne/Deans Marsh Heritage Place Assessments 2003</i> (Surf Coast Shire, amended 2005)	C15
<i>Surf Coast Shire – Salinity Management Overlay: Salinity Occurrences and Mapping Background Report No 4</i> (Dalhaus Environmental Geology Pty Ltd, 2006)	C38
<i>Surf Coast Shire Rural Land Use Strategy</i> (RG Ashby & Co, 1997)	NPS1
<i>Surf Coast Shire Rural Residential and Rural Living Strategy</i> (AGC Woodward-Clyde, 1997)	NPS1

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<del>Surf Coast Shire Rural Strategy (RGMG, 2007)</del>	<del>G68</del>
Surf Coast Shire Urban Tree and Vegetation Policy (Surf Coast Shire, 2006)	C96
Sustainable Futures Plan Torquay-Jan Juc 2040 (Surf Coast Shire, 2014)	C66
Thompson Creek Catchment Plan (Thompsons Creek Catchment Committee, 1998)	NPS1
Torquay and Jan Juc Structure Plan (Surf Coast Shire, 2007)	C37
Torquay-Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment (Surf Coast Shire, 2006)	C37
Torquay-Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study Review (Surf Coast Shire, 2012)	C66
Torquay/Jan Juc Retail Strategy (Tim Nott, 2011)	C66
Torquay North Outline Development Plan (Surf Coast Shire, 2012)	C66
Torquay North-West Outline Development Plan (The Planning Group & Essential Economics, 2002)	C6
Torquay Town Centre Parking and Access Strategy 2011-16 (Surf Coast Shire, 2011)	C66
Tree Species Selection Criteria for the 'Torquay North' Development Plan Area (Surf Coast Shire, 2010)	C96
Winchelsea Growth Area Outline Development Plan (Surf Coast Shire, 2011)	C120
Winchelsea Industrial Estate Master Plan (Surf Coast Shire, 2010)	C120
Winchelsea Town Centre and Highway Design Guidelines (Inclusive design, 2019)	C134surf
Winchelsea Townscape Study (Mark McWha Pty Ltd, 1995)	NPS1

## SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME

10/06/2021  
C136surf

### SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 74.02 FURTHER STRATEGIC WORK

#### 1.0 Further strategic work

30/06/2022  
C134surf Proposed C133surf

- Complete assessing the heritage significance of nominated heritage sites and undertake a further scoping study to determine any additional places of potential significance.
- Review:
  - ~~The appropriateness of subdividing land in the Thompsons Creek catchment area to 40 hectares subject to meeting conditions specified in the Schedule to the Farming Zone.~~
  - Schedule 13 to the Design and Development Overlay Coastal Boulevards as it applies to land within Old Torquay in light of Old Torquay's role as an urban consolidation area to accommodate future growth.
- Investigate:
  - The potential to increase lot densities within the Bells Boulevard East Low Density Residential Area.
  - The potential for increasing housing densities in the Low Density Residential area between Strathmore Drive, Great Ocean Road, Bells Boulevard and the upper tributary of Jan Juc Creek.
  - The potential for low density residential development or sustainable tourist accommodation on sites identified as investigation areas in Lorne, considering bushfire risks, access and the need to protect significant biodiversity assets on the site.
  - The potential to develop land north of Coombes Road, west of Messmate Road up to the northern ridge line, for rural residential development subject to a supply and demand analysis.
  - The potential for urban growth to the north-east of Torquay to facilitate growth beyond 2030.
  - The potential for increased densities at the Collins Street Low Density Residential Estate, Winchelsea if initiated by landowners.
  - The need for and feasibility of expanding the town centre along Hesse Street (west side), Winchelsea.
  - The feasibility of developing an employment precinct north of the railway line in the Cressy Road area, Winchelsea.
  - The location of a possible school precinct in Winchelsea.
  - Zone/overlay responses for low density residential development in the investigation areas that are contiguous with the urban edge of Lorne.
- Establish the exact settlement boundary on the northern ridgeline of Torquay when specific development opportunities are investigated with the aim of avoiding any visual intrusion of development north of the ridgeline.
- Prepare:
  - A precinct structure plan for the Winchelsea Town Centre (including all land in the Commercial 1 Zone east and west of the Barwon River and the intervening Crown Land).
  - A vegetation management plan to protect and enhance the avenue of oak trees along the Winchelsea/Deans Marsh Road.
  - A Winchelsea Development Contributions Plan for the provision of new community facilities and infrastructure.



**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

- Design guidelines to guide future development of the Moriac Town Centre.
- A landscape assessment for the Barrabool Hills and ridgeline that includes consideration of Wadawurrung living cultural heritage values.
- Introduce planning controls to protect and enhance identified biodiversity sites and corridors in Moriac.



DECEMBER 2020

# Hinterland Design Guidelines *DRAFT*

Prepared by INCLUSIVE DESIGN



## ***Disclaimer***

The material contained in this publication is offered by Surf Coast Shire solely for information purposes. While all due care has been taken in compiling these guidelines, Surf Coast Shire takes no responsibility for any person relying on the information and disclaims liability for any errors or omissions in the publication.

Conforming to this document does not automatically guarantee Council approval of your design. Diagrams are indicative and opportunities and constraints will vary from site to site. Multiple planning controls can also apply to a property which the guidelines have not considered. For example overlays identify natural hazards or attributes occurring in a localised area. These include the Bushfire Management Overlay, Salinity Management Overlay, Vegetation Protection Overlay, Flood Overlay and Significant Landscape Overlay.

Please contact the Surf Coast Shire to discuss which controls affect your property and what this means for your design.

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# Part 1

# 1. Executive summary

The ***Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy***, adopted by Council in May 2019, is an economic development and planning strategy that provides the strategic framework for future land use and economic stimulation of the Shire's rural areas. The vision of the strategy is for the hinterland to be a key contributor to the Surf Coast economy by 2040. This will be activated by drawing some of the 2.1 million visitors to the Surf Coast Shire into the hinterland to new destinations, events and experiences such as outdoor recreation, culture, arts, food and wine.

The strategy recognises that the creation of these new destinations will require careful planning to ensure farming continues to be the primary purpose of the hinterland and environmental and landscape values are not compromised. The rural landscapes in the hinterland are highly valued by the community and visitors, and an important element in its economic future. They also form part of an important cultural landscape for Aboriginal people.

## **Principle 3 of the strategy is that;**

*Development (built form) should avoid negative impacts on: environmental and landscape values and adjoining agricultural uses through appropriate siting and detailed design measures.*

These guidelines have been developed to ensure land use conflicts can be managed and identify ways to achieve responsive design outcomes that will protect the important environmental and landscape character.





## 2. Introduction

### ABOUT THE GUIDELINES

These design guidelines are intended to help landowners, developers and their designers prepare a design that responds sensitively to surrounding uses, landscape and ecological qualities. They outline the expectations and constraints of building in this area. The guidelines are in three parts.

**Part 1:** Explains why the guidelines have been prepared, where they apply and how they fit into the planning system.

**Part 2:** Outlines what the guidelines seek to achieve.

**Part 3:** Provides guidance on how the design priorities outlined in part 2 can be achieved.

### WHY ARE THE GUIDELINES REQUIRED?

The Surf Coast Shire community and its visitors highly value the Hinterland for its landscape setting, which includes the internationally renowned Great Ocean Road and Bells Beach. It provides important green breaks between urban settlements, particularly Geelong and Torquay.

These guidelines focus on the landscape characteristics and design solutions that will help a proposal sit well within its setting. This will be of particular importance along key tourist routes including the Great Ocean Road, Deans Marsh-Lorne Road, Deans Marsh-Winchelsea Road and Cape Otway Road.

The hinterland is home to many endangered species and ecologically significant sites including the Ramsar listed Lake Murdeduke. The guidelines have been developed to help new proposals, through careful site planning and design, preserve the dominance of the landscape over built form. Protecting environmental assets and scenic vistas and the natural appeal of the Surf Coast Shire.

The Hinterland supports productive agriculture and tourism businesses that are crucial to the local economy. Agriculture is the primary focus within the Farming Zone and responsive siting is critical to ensure agriculture can continue to expand, innovate and evolve.

## WHERE DO THE GUIDELINES APPLY?

The guidelines apply to the Hinterland of the Surf Coast Shire. The Hinterland covers all private land outside a town or urban settlement boundary, shown indicatively in figure 2 below. The guidelines will need to be considered for all planning permit applications for a development on land zoned either Farming Zone (FZ) or Rural Conservation zone (RCZ).



## 3. About the hinterland

The hinterland forms part of Melbourne's food bowl and is an important contributor to the regions food security. It boasts a long agricultural history in the dairy, beef, sheep and grain industries.

It contains diverse and scenic landscapes featuring the rolling Barrabool hills and Otway foothills, the open Winchelsea plains, inland lakes and waterways, native vegetation, a dramatic coastline and the backdrop of the Otway Ranges.

The picturesque setting, the quality local produce and close proximity to Melbourne and Geelong makes the hinterland an ideal tourist destination. Small boutique businesses are growing in numbers, particularly in the agri-food and agriculture sectors. These businesses capitalise on the assets that the Hinterland has to offer and make a significant contribution to the local economy.

These new ventures, along with more traditional agricultural operations, contribute significantly to the region's diversity, longer-term sustainability and overall productivity. State and Local policy within the Surf Coast Planning Scheme seeks to encourage growth in traditional and more innovative farming practices.

The siting of new development is a key contributor to its success. Land use conflicts can arise when sensitive uses like dwellings are located too close to agricultural ventures. Separation is critical and directing urban type activities to urban areas where it can best be accommodated.

# Key features of the hinterland



Figure 1: Map of key features

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***THE HINTERLAND COMPRISES 1,020  
SQUARE KILOMETRES (OR 60 PERCENT) OF  
THE SURF COAST SHIRE.***

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Much of the hinterland is among the highest fire risk areas in the world. A Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme applies to these areas. Before deciding on what venture you wish to undertake in the hinterland, it is important to first understand the risks and difficulties associated with building or undertaking a venture in high fire risk areas. You may be highly restricted for safety reasons.

The Surf Coast Shire and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) have a number of publications which provide guidelines for development in rural areas and these should be your starting point. Visit the CFA web site for more information.



HINTERLAND DESIGN GUIDELINES / PAGE 12

## The hinterland towns and major routes

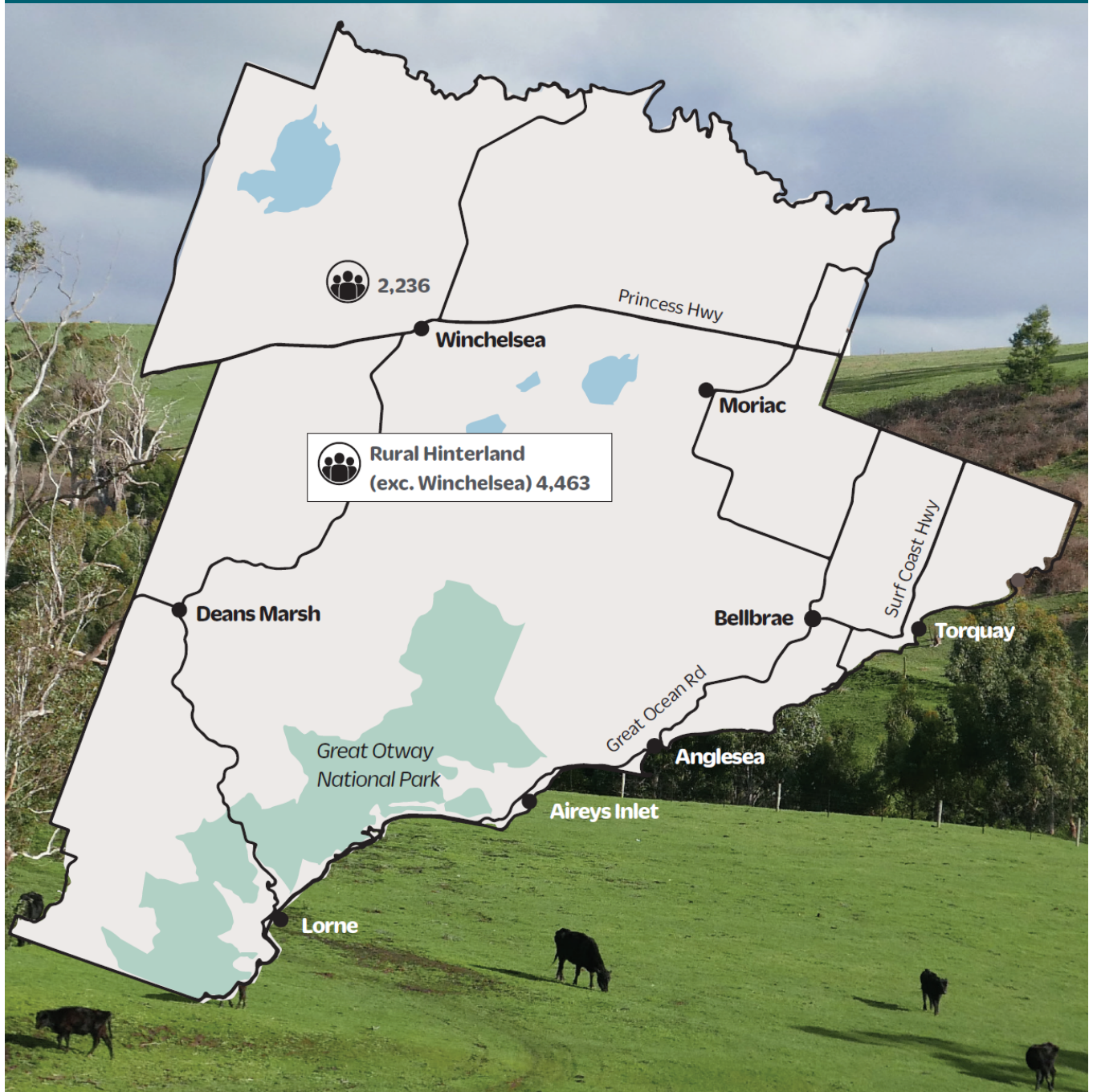


Figure 2: Map of the hinterland

## 4. How do the guidelines fit into the planning scheme?

The guidelines are a background document in the Local Planning Policy Framework. This means that they will be used to inform the planning permit decision making process. They focus on siting and design and provide guidance on how best to meet the objectives and strategies contained within the **Planning and Local Planning Policy Framework of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme**, particularly Clause 15.01-6L (Design for rural areas).

They also provide direction on how the issues relating to agriculture, dwellings and design and siting, identified within the Farming Zone (FZ) and Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) can be met.

The following issues under the Farming Zone (FZ) are discussed in these guidelines, providing design solutions for how to:

- locate buildings in one area to avoid any adverse impacts on surrounding agricultural uses and to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land.
- Avoid locating a dwelling where it will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.
- Minimise the impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used on the natural environmental, major roads, vistas and water features.

- Avoid siting a dwelling where it could be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation.
- Avoid siting a dwelling where it could adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
- Consider the impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.

And under the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ):

- protect and enhance the natural environment of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitats and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge areas.
- minimise any adverse impacts of siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used on landscape features, major roads and vistas.
- minimise the visual impact of existing and proposed infrastructure services on the landscape.
- minimise adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the area or features of archaeological, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.



## HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

The guidelines are intended to be used as a planning application reference guide for developers, applicants and decision makers. They provide an indication of the issues and considerations that might arise when determining the location and design of development in the Surf Coast's hinterland.

It is important to note that these guidelines are indicative only. The hinterland covers a vast area, encompassing many different types of landscapes and farming and tourism uses. It is impossible to be definitive about what development will be acceptable on a particular site.

For this reason these guidelines should not be read in isolation. They form part of a broader package of documents that seek to protect the productivity of agricultural land, significant landscapes, environmental assets and the Great Ocean Road Region.



## OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Relevant documents include:

### ***Surf Coast Shire***

- Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy,
- Surf Coast Shire's Sustainable Design book,
- Landscaping Your Surf Coast Garden for Bushfire.

### ***Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning***

- Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study,
- Coastal Spaces,
- Siting and Design Guidelines for structures on the Victorian coast,
- Surf Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes ,
- Green Wedge and Melbournes Agricultural Land.

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***[WWW.SURFCOAST.VIC.GOV.AU/HOME](http://WWW.SURFCOAST.VIC.GOV.AU/HOME)***

***[WWW.DELWP.VIC.GOV.AU](http://WWW.DELWP.VIC.GOV.AU)***

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# 5. Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy

The Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy, 2019 provides the context to this document. It contains five key objectives and seven guiding principles, outlined below. The vision of the strategy is that:

***The hinterland will become a key contributor to the Surf Coast economy and renowned visitor destination by 2040.***

The Strategy highlights that tourism, lifestyle living and productive farming can sometimes be at odds with one another and that responsive siting and design can help minimise those conflicts. The guidelines provide illustrated examples of what responsive siting and design might entail in an

attempt to avoid or minimise these conflicts.

## Strategy objectives

- Elevate the value of our environment and rural landscapes.
- Encourage agriculture and innovative businesses.
- Stimulate agri-tourism to enhance the Surf Coast as a visitor destination.
- Support tourism activities which complement the agricultural, landscape, and environmental values.
- Secure enabling infrastructure to deliver the vision and objectives of the strategy



## PRINCIPLES FOR BALANCE

The Rural hinterland futures strategy has 7 principles to help find balance and set priorities for siting and design in the hinterland.

**Principle 1:** *Agriculture will remain the primary purpose of land in the Farming Zone.*

**Principle 2:** *New uses and development should not result in an unreasonable loss of productive capacity of agricultural land, or impact on the productivity of existing adjoining agricultural uses.*

**Principle 3:** *Development (built form) should avoid negative impacts on: environmental and landscape values and adjoining agricultural uses through appropriate siting and detailed design measures.*

**Principle 4:** *New industrial, storage (warehouse), or manufacturing uses on Farming zoned land should have a direct relationship with the agricultural production of the land or surrounding district.*

**Principle 5:** *Environmental values and rural landscape features will remain the defining physical and visual attributes of the hinterland.*

**Principle 6:** *Tourism and agritourism attractions should be clustered around key nodes in the hinterland.*

**Principle 7:** *Discretionary use and development will consider fire risk including landscape type, vehicle access, the ability to mitigate the risk and the capacity of the emergency services.*

The **Hinterland Futures Strategy, 2019** divides the Surf Coast Shire into three geographic areas that are well suited to different types of farming/tourism activities, these are:

- Intensive and commercial farming,
- Agribusiness and commercial farming.
- Tourism/agri-tourism

These areas (shown in figure 3) are located at Clause **72** of the Surf Coast Shire planning scheme and guide discretionary land use.

Although the guidelines discuss siting issues the focus is on general siting principles. For specific guidance on buffer requirements between sensitive land use and select farming activities please refer to the relevant code of practice. Codes of practice are incorporated documents located at **Clause 72 of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme**.

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**[WWW.PLANNING.VIC.GOV.AU/SCHEMES](http://WWW.PLANNING.VIC.GOV.AU/SCHEMES)**

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# Indicative land use map

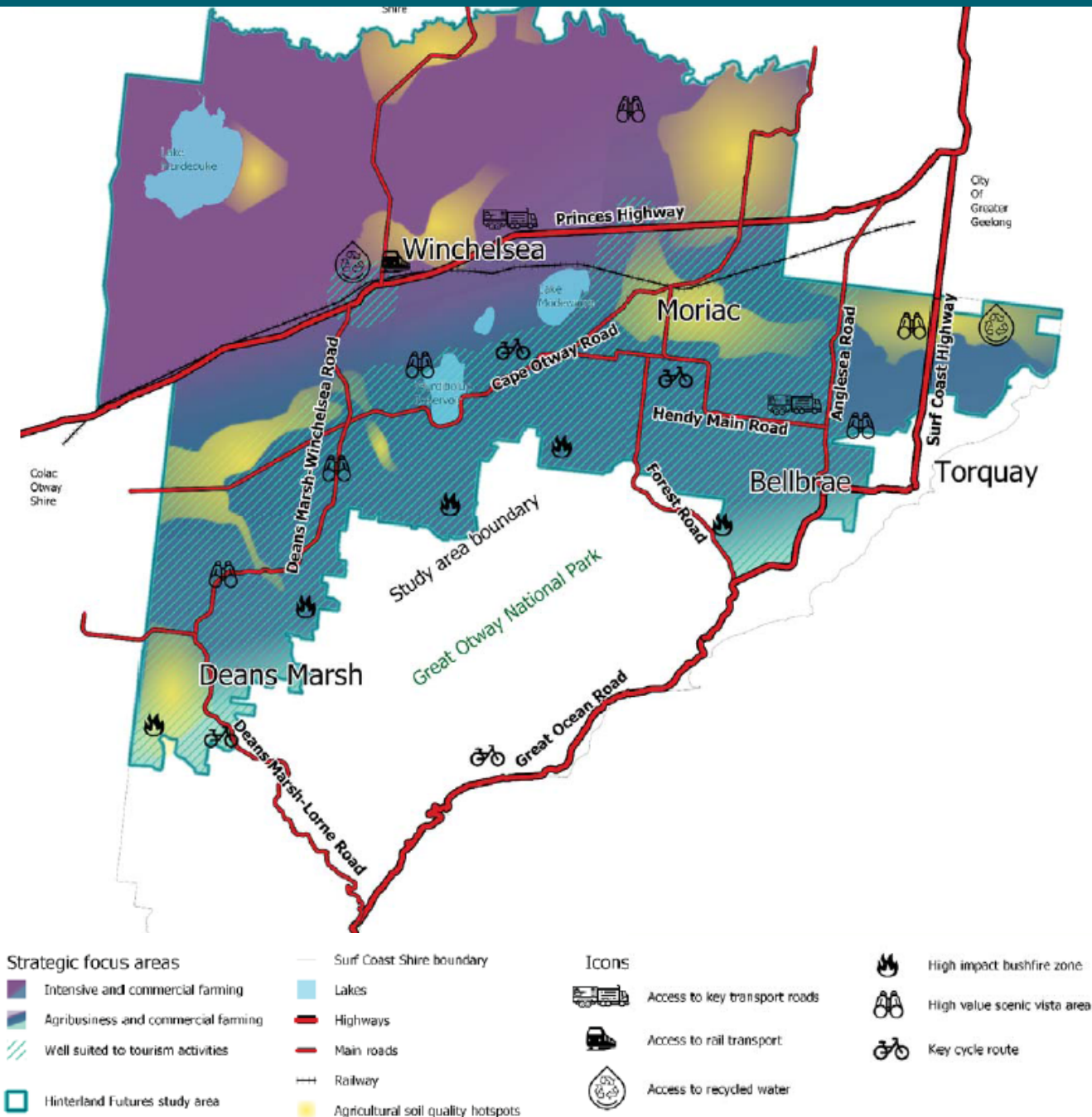


Figure 3: Strategic focus areas



# Part 2

# 1. What do the guidelines seek to achieve?

Design is often a matter of balance. Design that is considered to balance the objectives and principles of the Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy well, will respond to the following four overarching design priorities;

- Being a good neighbour,
- Protecting the landscape,
- Sustainable development,
- Minimising vulnerability.

**Being a good neighbour** to surrounding properties is about avoiding or minimising conflicts between land uses. Agriculture is the primary purpose of the Farming Zone and will remain the dominant land use in the hinterland.

**Protecting the landscape** ensures the valued aesthetic characteristics of the Surf Coast hinterland remain the dominant feature.

**Sustainable development** provides guidance on responsive design that will help minimise the environmental footprint of new development.

**Minimising vulnerability** from natural hazards (such as bushfire, flooding and land instability), improves community and asset resilience to such events.



Personal desires and tastes will always influence a design (as an example, minimising costs or locating a development to enjoy the best views). Although valid and important they are not the only priorities. The Hinterland supports local businesses and is an asset to the whole community. Reconciling the above design priorities is essential and a proposal that fails to meet them may not be supported. Each site will differ and design constraints will vary in their significance depending on the sites geographic location.

## BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

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### *Prioritising agriculture as the primary purpose of land in the Farming Zone*

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Surf Coast is a beautiful place but its agricultural areas are also working landscapes, bringing with them all the unavoidable noise and smells and long working hours that comes with farming. Non-agricultural development often come with expectations that are in conflict with farming practices. These guidelines seek to 'build in' qualities that minimise the sensitivities between different uses so that farmers, as the priority, can continue farming.

The Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy encourages the co-location of similar farming uses as an additional solution. This co-location will also assist in the sharing of work force, resources and access to infrastructure (such as highways, rail or recycled water).

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***Managing farming / lifestyle expectations are outlined in the Surf Coasts publication:***

***'Rural Life - what to expect'.***  
***WWW.SURFCOAST.VIC.GOV.AU/HOME***

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## PROTECTING THE LANDSCAPE SETTING

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### *Elevating the value of our environment and rural landscapes*

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The hinterland provides the setting for internationally renowned attractions such as Bells Beach, the Great Otway National Park and the Great Ocean Road. Its beauty and proximity to Melbourne and Geelong make it a highly sought after place for lifestyle change, tourism and urban growth. It also forms part of an important cultural landscape for Aboriginal people.

The landscape and ecological qualities that underpin the hinterlands character are highly valued by the community and are a key attribute to the local economy. Being so highly sought after makes it vulnerable to over development and inappropriate development.

Development can be located or designed in such a way that its impact on its surroundings is maximised or minimised. High profile architecture can add visual interest to a destination however it is preferable that architectural efforts are used to make the building recessive; allowing the landscape to remain the dominant feature.

The guidelines in **Part 3** outline how a building might be sited and designed within the landscape to protect and enhance the areas built and natural landscape values.

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN FEATURES

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### *Preserving the natural environment and building resilience and environmental leadership*

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Sustainable design is crucial for our future well-being. It includes the protection and enhancement of our biodiversity assets as well as designing for a reduced ecological footprint.

**Part 3** of the guidelines outline how a building might be sited and designed within the landscape to protect biodiversity and reduce energy consumption and ongoing energy costs.

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### *Design tips for smarter construction in the Surf Coast can be found in:*

*‘Sustainable Design Guidelines’.*

***WWW.SURFCOAST.VIC.GOV.AU/HOME***

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## MINIMISING RISK FROM NATURAL HAZARDS

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*Careful building and landscape design  
can help protect life and property from  
risks such as fire and flood*

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Despite its great beauty, living and working in the hinterland means exposure to the impacts of drought, bushfire and flood and other extreme weather events as well as challenges that may arise as resources continue to be depleted.

**Part 3** of the guidelines outline how a building might be sited and designed within the landscapes to ensure the risks associated with these events can be mitigated as much as possible.





# Part 3

# 1. Design guidelines

This part of the guidelines outline the design characteristics that will help designers achieve the **Four Design Priorities** of:

- Being a good neighbour,
- Protecting the landscape,
- Sustainable design, and
- Minimising risk.



Figure 4: Design priorities for good design

The four design priorities shown in figure 4 are explained and illustrated in more detail in the following section, under the design tasks of:

- Understanding the site and the setting,
- Siting your development,
- Orientating your development,
- Designing buildings to fit in, and
- Landscaping your site.

For each task there is a:

- **Guiding principle** and **Design response** options

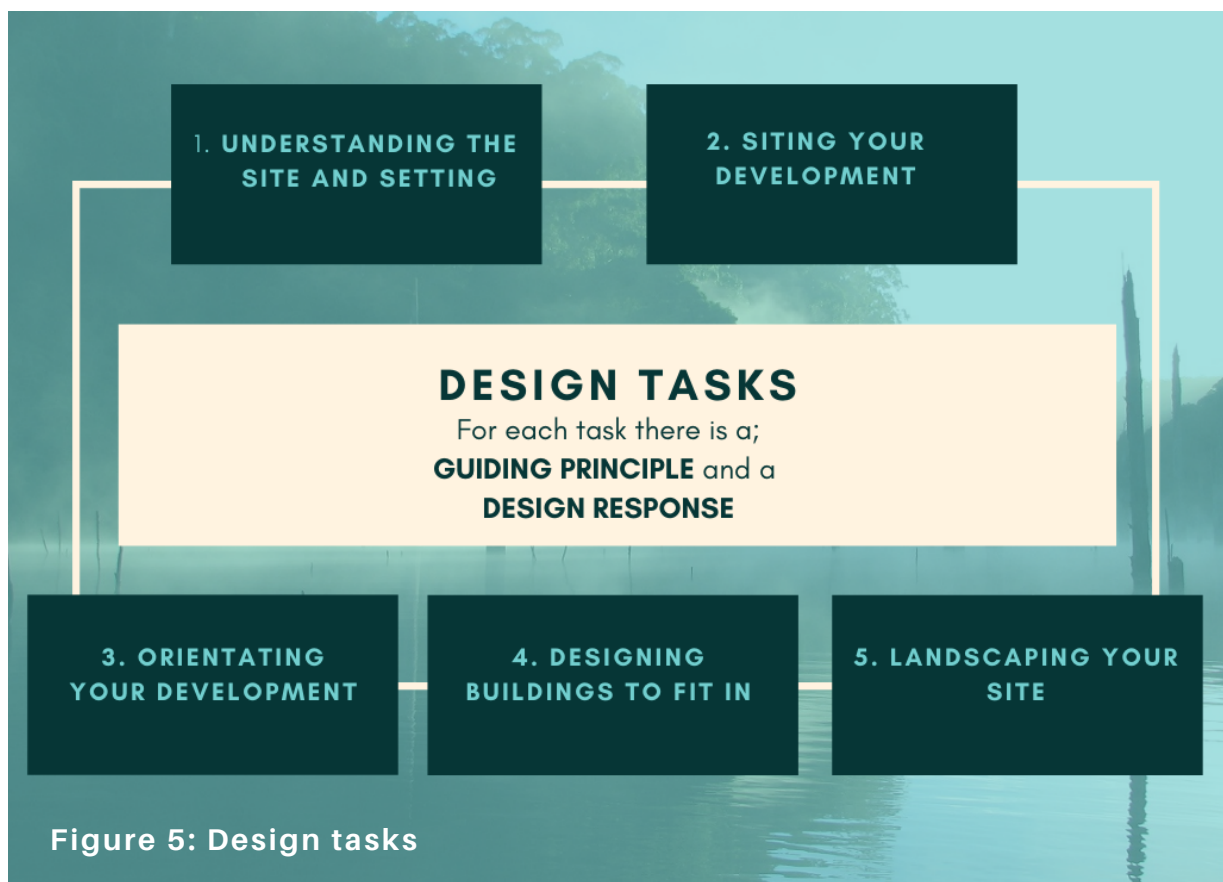


Figure 5: Design tasks



A variety of design options are presented in table form below. The design characteristics that are considered to comply are presented within the tables in **green**. Design characteristics that are variable in their impact are indicated in **amber**. Those that could have a detrimental impact are indicated in **red**. Where no design option is available the square remains blank.

Illustrated examples are provided showing designs that comply and don't comply in a hypothetical scenario. The guidelines also include comments that can be used to inform your design decisions, helping to balance characteristics that may be at odds with one another.



## 2. Reconciling the guidelines

The inclusion of many of these contributory or 'green' characteristics in a design will assist a design to fit within the landscape setting. But it is not always necessary or indeed possible to embody all the 'green' characteristics in a single design.

It is further acknowledged that with careful design, good design outcomes can still be achieved outside of those characteristics identified in the green statements. However in such cases a statement will be required, that explains how the alternative design technique achieves the four design priorities.

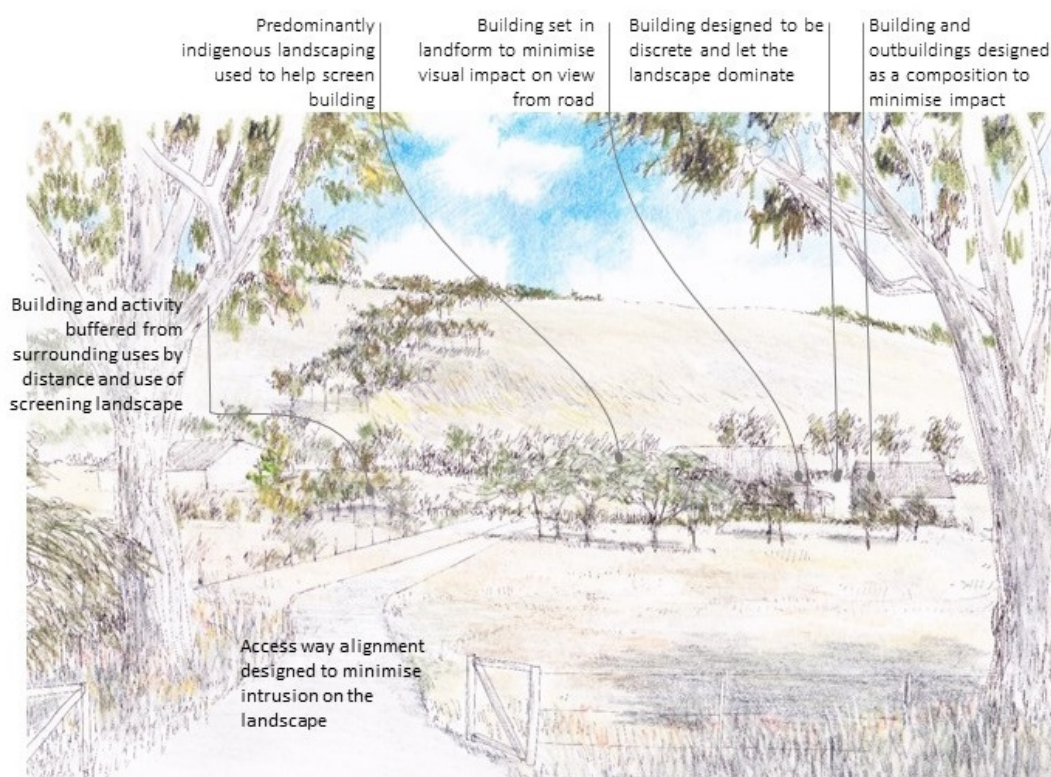


Figure 6: Reconciling the four Design priorities

Figure 6 provides an illustrated example of co-ordinating many design decisions to reconcile the four design priorities. It is also recognised that in some circumstances it may be difficult to reconcile some or all of the green characteristics.

**Example 1:** The design outcomes under 'sustainable design' that require a development to orientate the windows of habitable rooms to the north may clash with the green design outcome under 'being a good neighbour' that requires a development to be screened from sensitive uses and those uses lie to the north. In such circumstances the design should indicate the screening and/or management measures that will be employed to ensure compliance with both.

**Example 2:** Achieving a high aesthetic landscape standard does not compensate for a development that generates unacceptable levels of noise or traffic and is not a 'good neighbour'.

Characteristics are not transferable. Failure to meet one design priority cannot be reconciled by meeting another.

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***All design priorities have to be met for a development to meet the siting and design requirements of the relevant zone***

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# 3. Understanding your site and it's settings

## MANAGING CONFLICTS THROUGH SITING CONSIDERATIONS

To ensure that your development respects the sensitivities of surrounding uses, it is essential to understand your site and its surroundings.

Understanding the setting can help avoid amenity problems in the future. The needs of landowners can differ dramatically from one another. Giving careful consideration to the proximity of nearby sensitive uses and interfaces is crucial.

These may include farming uses (such as intensive and commercial farms), tourist activities (outdoor adventure, food and drink and accommodation) and lifestyle properties (rural dwellings).

It is important to consider what your development will be sensitive to and what developments will be sensitive to you. This will help you decide the suitability of your site for development and how it should address its surroundings.

Potential amenity conflicts are shown in the diagrams below.

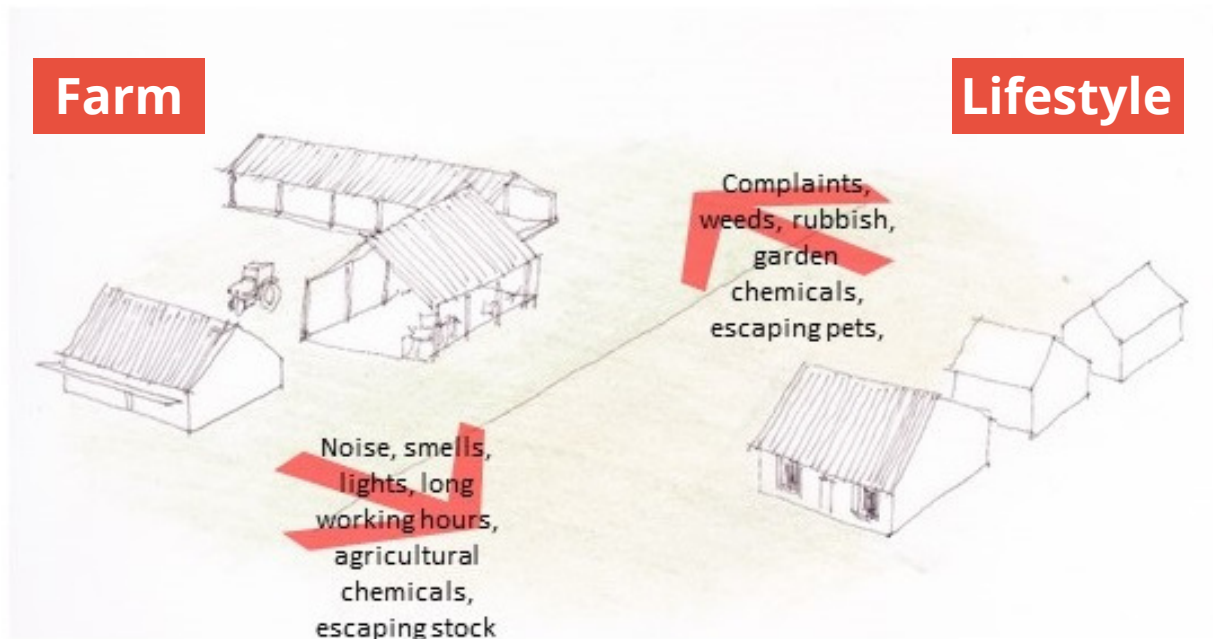


Figure 7: Potential land use conflicts (agriculture - lifestyle property)

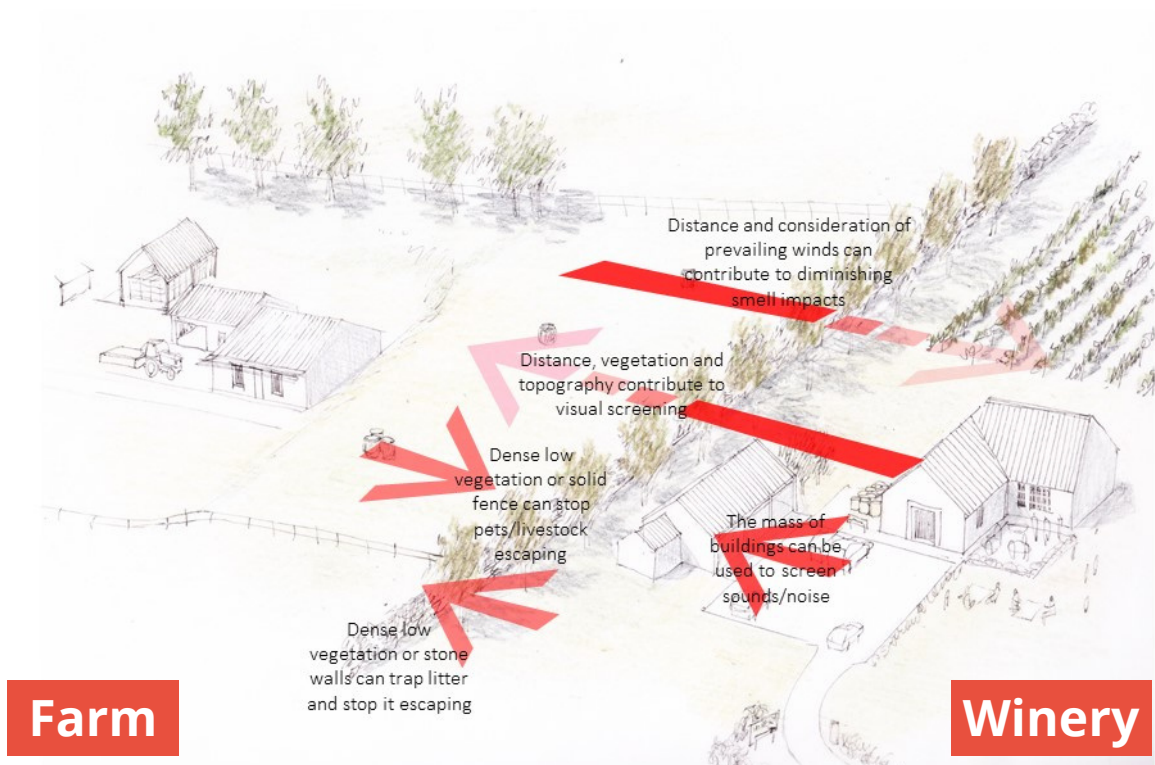


Figure 8: Potential land use conflicts (agriculture - tourism)

## MAXIMISING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH CO LOCATION

Careful site selection can improve access to surrounding uses, maximise existing infrastructure and share resources with surrounding businesses.

**For example:** Clustering places that rely on high levels of visitation can create a honeypot of attractions, enhancing the appeal of a destination. These may include specialty café's, cellar door outlets and larger rural produce shops.

## RESPONSIVE DESIGN

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*Responsive design is about understanding  
your site and its surroundings*

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Every site has different sensitivities, qualities and capacity for development. A site analysis will identify matters to respond to in the design response and help a development fit into its surroundings.

Every site has different sensitivities, qualities and capacity for development. A site analysis will identify matters to respond to in the design response and help a development fit into its surroundings.

A **site and context analysis** should cover the site and adjoining properties. Its purpose is to identify any sensitivities both on and off the property that the design needs to respond to. It should establish the developments 'visual catchment' (this is where it can be seen from). Noting that, it will rarely be a consistent distance around the property.

The visual catchment should identify key viewpoints and vistas from main roads, scenic viewpoints and adjacent properties. The visual impact of a development will be an important factor influencing decision making.



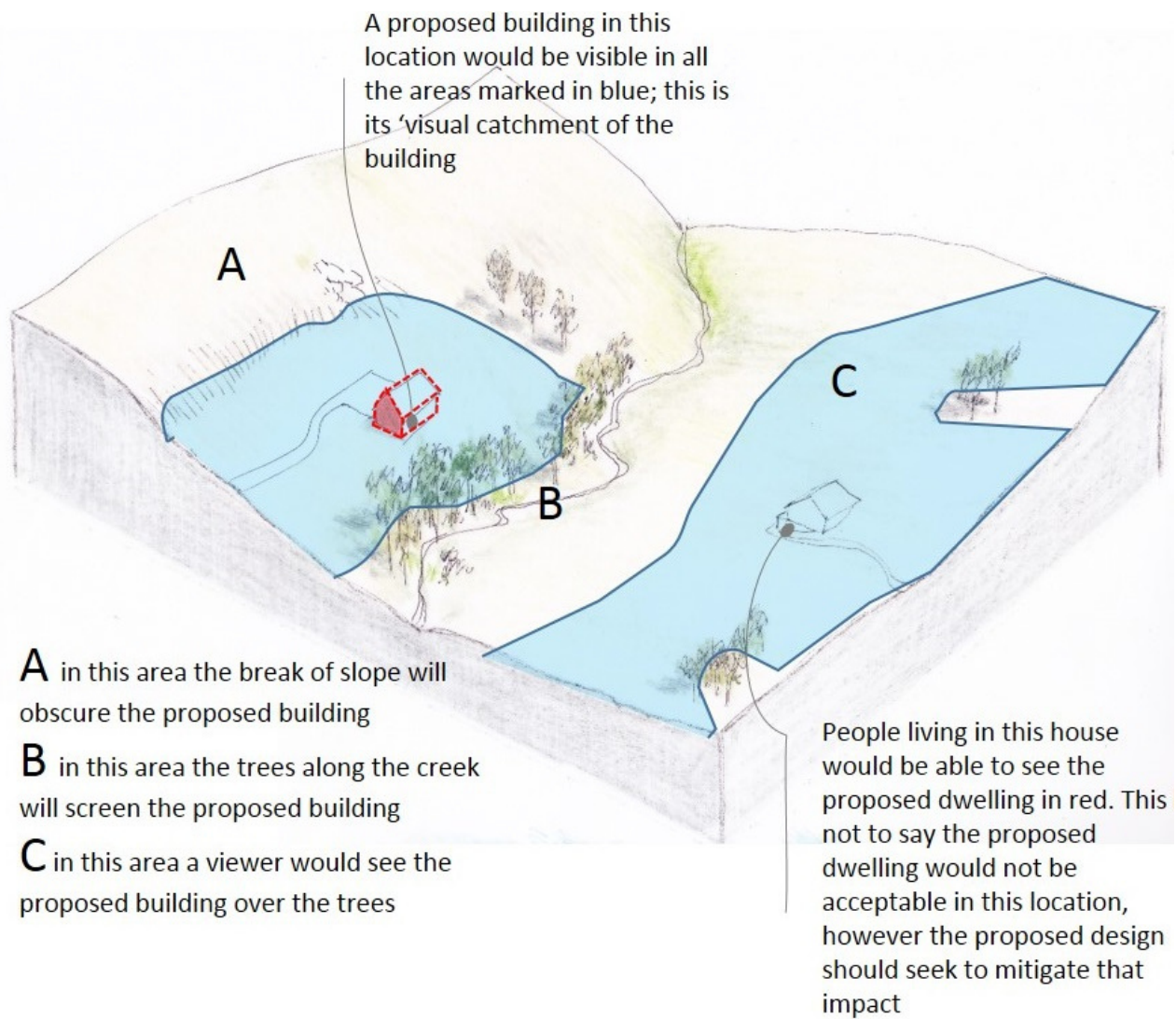


Figure 9: Example site and context analysis - visual catchment



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***SITE AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS PRINCIPLE:***  
***Design decisions are informed by an***  
***understanding of the qualities and sensitivities***  
***of the site and its surrounds***

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The site and context analysis should contain the following information:

- Surrounding uses and locations of buildings,
- Location and type of site Boundaries,
- Buildings (existing and proposed),
- Landscape features such as areas of indigenous or distinct vegetation, rocky outcrops, rivers, creeks or drainage lines,
- Access points to the site,
- An indication of the visual catchment for the development. This will be multiple points for large or complex proposals.
- Prevailing and dominant winds,
- Hazards (such as floodways, salinity or bushfire).

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**PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPE PRINCIPLE:**  
*Sensitive uses (such as dwellings) should ensure maximum screening and / or separation from farm industries*

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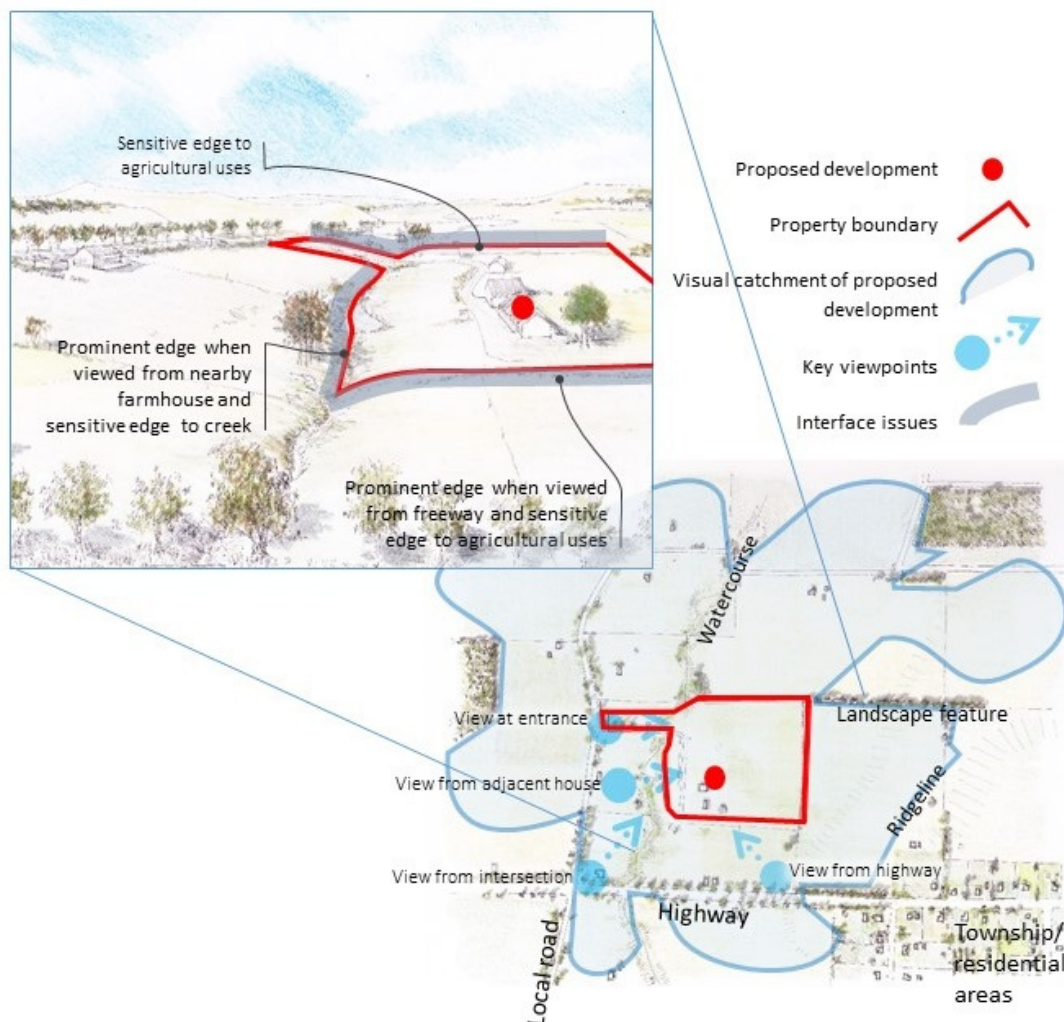


Figure 10: Example of sensitive edges and key view points

## 4. Siting your development

Buildings are often located to enjoy the view or for ease of access from a major road. Whilst these are important and valid considerations it can result in buildings being prominent in the landscape. Views from the road should be protected from high profile development to preserve the 'natural' appeal of the area.

*Note: There is 'no right to a view' from your property across a landscape under the Farming or Rural Conservation zone, however it is still an important matter for consideration, in the spirit of 'being a good neighbour'.*

### BASIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Site and design a building with the intention of 'blending' into the natural environment,
- Avoid buildings on the top of a hill or on the apparent skyline when viewed from a significant viewpoint,
- Protect native vegetation,
- Site development away from creeks to enable the planting and fencing of riparian zones,
- Avoid intrusion into culturally sensitive areas,
- Where natural buffers such as a ridge or dense vegetation exist, development should use these buffers to screen the development

from neighbouring farming activities or main roads,

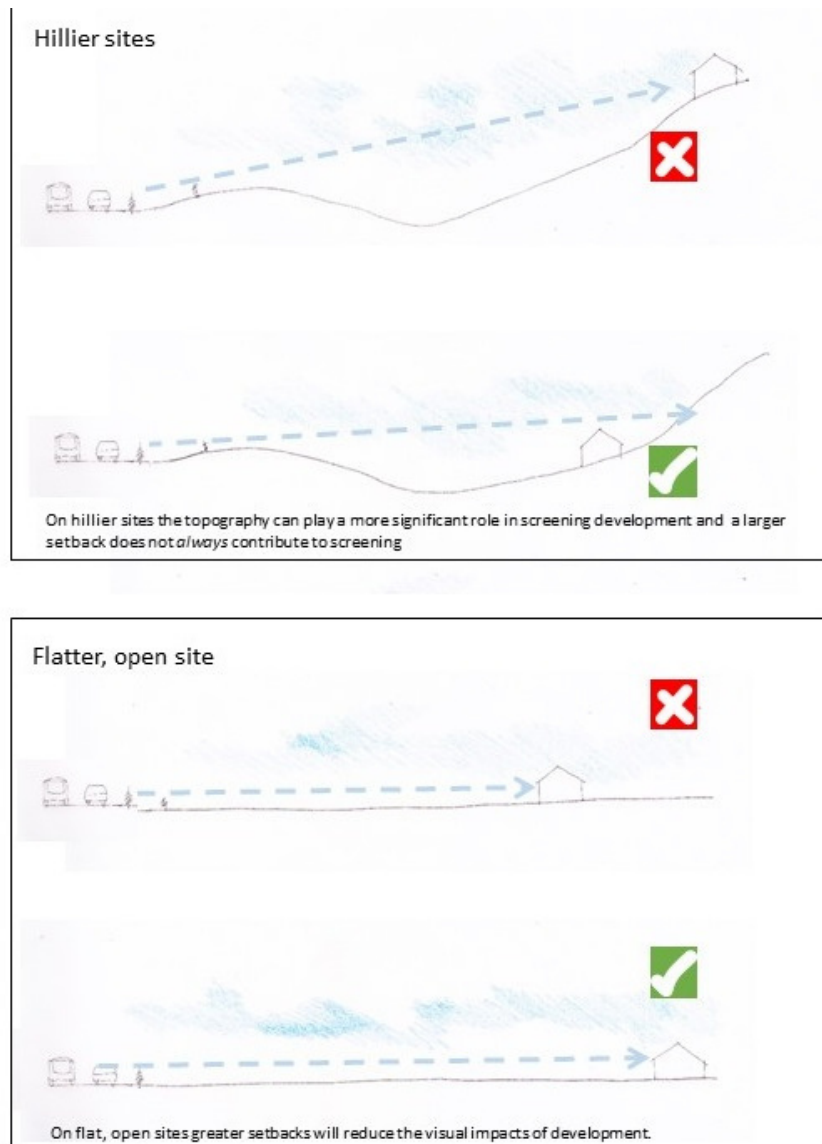
- Locate to minimise exposure to hazards (bushfire and flooding),
- When multiple buildings are envisaged, balance the level of separation to ensure they do not present as over development, uncharacteristic of the rural setting.
- Avoid scattering built form across the site.



**TABLE 1: Building siting considerations**

Building siting options	Does it help new development be a good Neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Building (s) located where they do not cross the skyline when viewed from key viewpoints	Will assist in diminishing intrusion on valued landscape	Least impact on landform		Ridgelines are typically more exposed than other locations so avoiding them may help ensure the buildings are less vulnerable to extreme weather.	The skyline is a particularly important component to views of the landscape. Built elements that protrude in to it will have a significant impact.
Buildings located away from environmentally or culturally sensitive areas	Minimise intrusion on valued landscape character and is more respectful of indigenous values	Minimises impact of development	Will help minimise impact on ecological values	Will reduce vulnerability to flooding and protect waterways	Watercourses are both environmentally and culturally sensitive
Buildings located to make use of landform and vegetation to provide screening	Will help screen buildings and retain the valued landscape,		Locating buildings near stands of large trees may result in their removal for bushfire safety	Will create a localised microclimate. This may either be beneficial (shade, wind amelioration) or detrimental (over-shadowing, creating a frost trap)	Using deciduous trees for screening may be less effective in winter than it will in summer. For bushfire safety it is best to have adequate separation to vegetation.
Buildings located to maximise distance to sensitive surrounding uses and main roads	Will usually make the building less prominent however sometimes landform may make alternate, closer sites more appropriate by virtue of being better screened.	May require a longer drive or accessway that may contribute to the impact of development	Likely to have a more significant impact on drainage and microclimate	Longer accessways may increase the potential for development to be cut off through land slippage, fire, flood	Buildings located a significant distance from access roads may help diminish impacts but other means such as using landform or existing screening landscaping may be more effective.
<b>key</b>	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland	

## SITING CONSIDERATIONS - WHAT TECHNIQUES WORKS WHERE



**Figure 11: Siting considerations - when to use distance / screening / topography**

Buildings should be sited to minimise their intrusion on the surroundings.

- On flat sites with few trees it is generally best to maximise distance between new development and existing sensitive uses.

- On sites with more varied topography the undulating landscape may provide opportunities for screening.
  - Building on a skyline are to be avoided, particularly when visible from a significant viewpoint, such as a tourist route.
  - Landscaping should be used to improve visual screening.
- Siting a development in a location that requires removal of vegetation (other than weed species) should always be avoided.



**Figure 12: Siting considerations - screening and solar access**

Deciduous trees including fruit trees are recommended for solar access. They enable winter sun to heat up a building but provide shading in hot summer months. Deciduous trees may not be suitable where visual screening is the main objective. In such cases they should be used in conjunction with indigenous vegetation.

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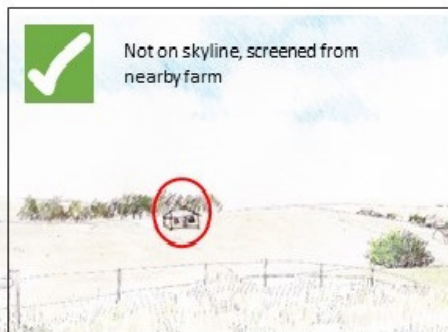
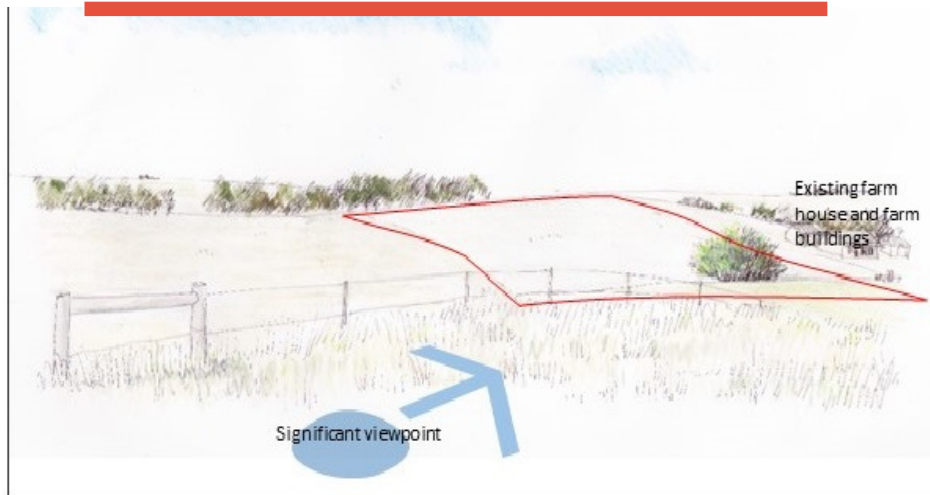
***Suitable indigenous species are available at  
[WWW.SURFCOAST.VIC.GOV.AU/HOME](http://WWW.SURFCOAST.VIC.GOV.AU/HOME)***

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***The optimum setting for a building requires consideration of many factors***

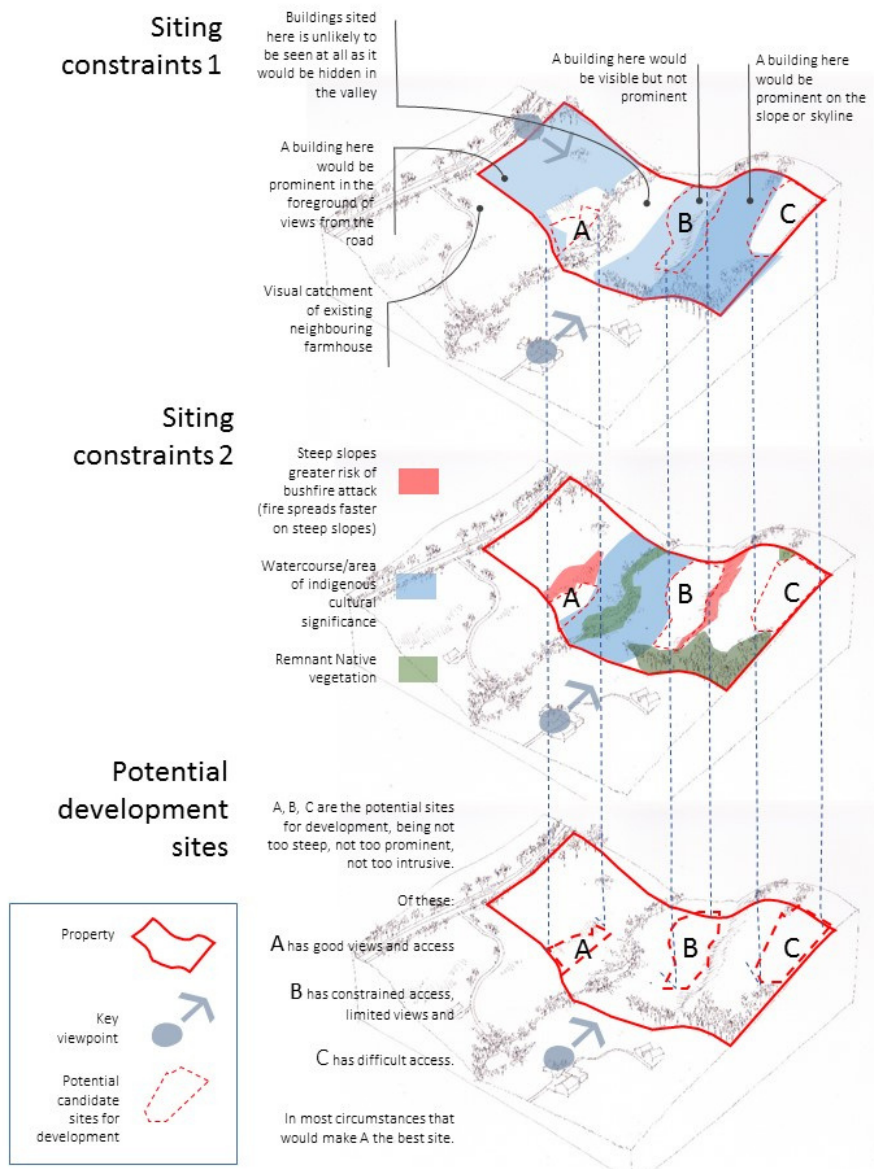
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**Figure 13: Siting considerations - avoiding amenity conflicts and landscape protection**



***Finding the best location on the site is about balancing constraints and opportunities***



**Figure 14: Siting considerations - how to effectively respond to siting constraints**

## 5. Orientating your development

While we all need to use some energy in order to create a liveable and comfortable home, most Australian homes use far more energy than they need. Space heating and cooling is the major energy user within the average home. Significant savings can be made by designing homes to reduce space heating and cooling costs.

This can be achieved by designing your house to maximise solar access. Orientate living spaces and larger windows to the north, with shade provided to the north and west. When the view is to the south or west the northerly aspect should still be maximised. Large westerly facing windows need to be shaded to manage summer heat. Windows are a source of heat gain in summer and heat loss in winter. Although double or triple glazing is expensive, it is cost effective in the long term, reducing ongoing heating and cooling costs.

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***For more information on energy efficient design refer to:***

***'Surf Coast Shire's Sustainable Design book.'***

***[www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/home](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/home)***

***and***

***Australia's guide to environmentally sustainable homes***

***[www.yourhome.gov.au](http://www.yourhome.gov.au)***

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***ORIENTATION PRINCIPLE:  
Orientate the building to maximise  
solar access. Living areas should be  
located on the north and sleeping and  
utility areas on the south***

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**TABLE 2: Building orientation considerations**

Building orientation	Does it help new development be a good neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Habitable rooms orientated to north			Facilitates passive solar design. Allows comfort to be achieved with lower levels of resource consumption	Reduces dependence on mechanical heating and cooling and externally provided utilities	Generally preferable, may require careful internal design on sites with a short axis facing north
Roof plane orientated to north			Supports installation of solar panels Reduces dependence on mechanical heating and cooling	Reduces dependence on mechanical heating and cooling and externally provided utilities	
Large picture windows to the west	Can cause glare in the afternoon when the sun is low		These typically gain significant amounts of heat in the evening and increase reliance on mechanical heating and cooling		Generally to be avoided
<b>key</b>	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland	

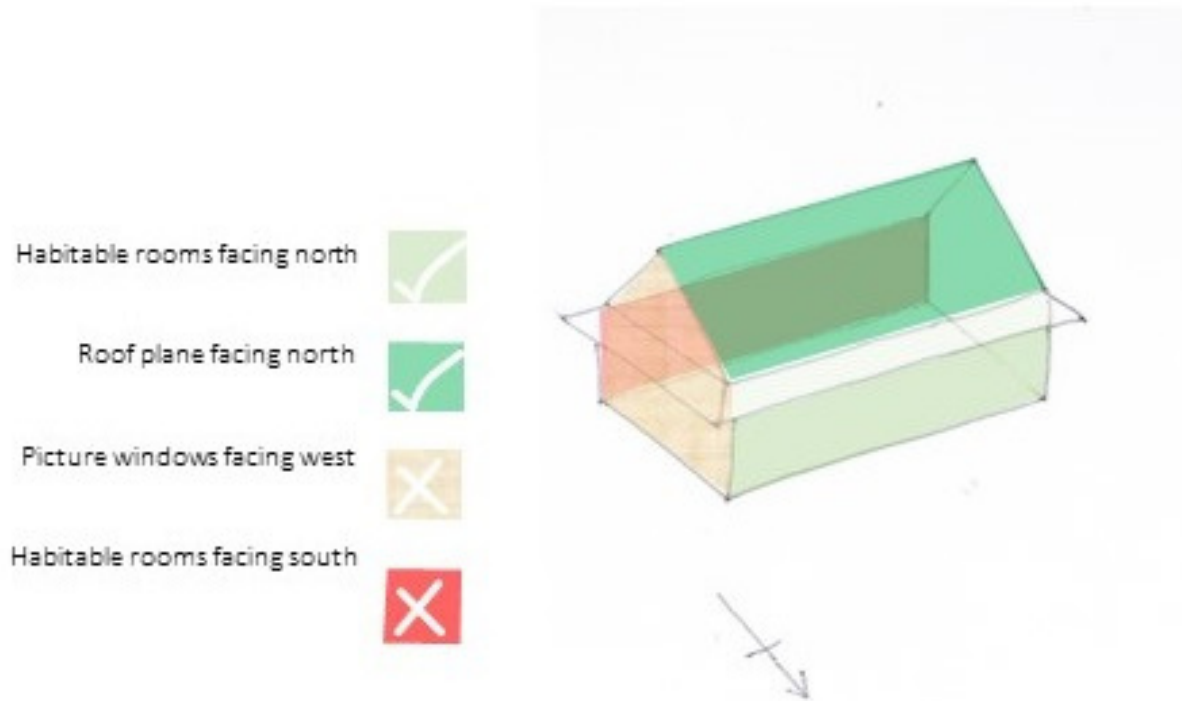


Figure 15: Orientation for solar access



## 6. Designing buildings to fit in

The Surf Coast hinterland has a look and feel that distinguishes it from other areas. This unique character and sense of place is a combination of different factors. These include landform, vegetation, architecture and settlement pattern.

Development that doesn't respond sensitively to these factors can erode the character and introduce a jarring element to the landscape and existing built form. This can happen when a building looks like it belongs somewhere else, either a different region or suburbia. Such discordant development may draw too much attention to itself, diminishing the rural setting.

### BASIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Retain existing buildings where practicable,
- Complement existing buildings when they are retained,
- Built form should respond to the landscape never the other way around (e.g. Avoid excessive cut or fill),
- Buildings should seek to be discrete and allow the landscape to be the dominant experience of place,
- Buildings should be sited and designed with the setting in mind, rather than relying on solving issues through landscaping or onerous management measures,
- Buildings should use natural and non reflective colours and materials that blend in with the rural setting.

**TABLE 3: Building design considerations - responding to existing buildings**

Response to existing buildings	Does it help new development be a good neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Reference local architectural compositions and features in new buildings	Can help minimise intrusion on valued landscape character	Can help reduce impact of development and makes built form appear more settled in the landscape			Care should be taken to avoid pastiche of old buildings and respectfully distinguishing the old from the new development
Retain and reuse existing buildings where possible	Can assist in retaining the areas valued character		Has low embodied energy by maximising opportunities for recycling and reuse.		Generally preferable where possible although if these buildings are of no value or are detrimental to the areas broader character these may be removed
Removal of existing buildings	May increase the sense of upheaval on the site	Unless it removes an existing detrimental building the removal of an existing building will change the balance and composition of buildings in the landscape	The removal of the materials and remediation of the site will require careful consideration to minimise wastage or the investment of significant amounts of energy.		Where practicable any buildings that have to be removed should have materials and resources reused on site.
<b>key</b>	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland	

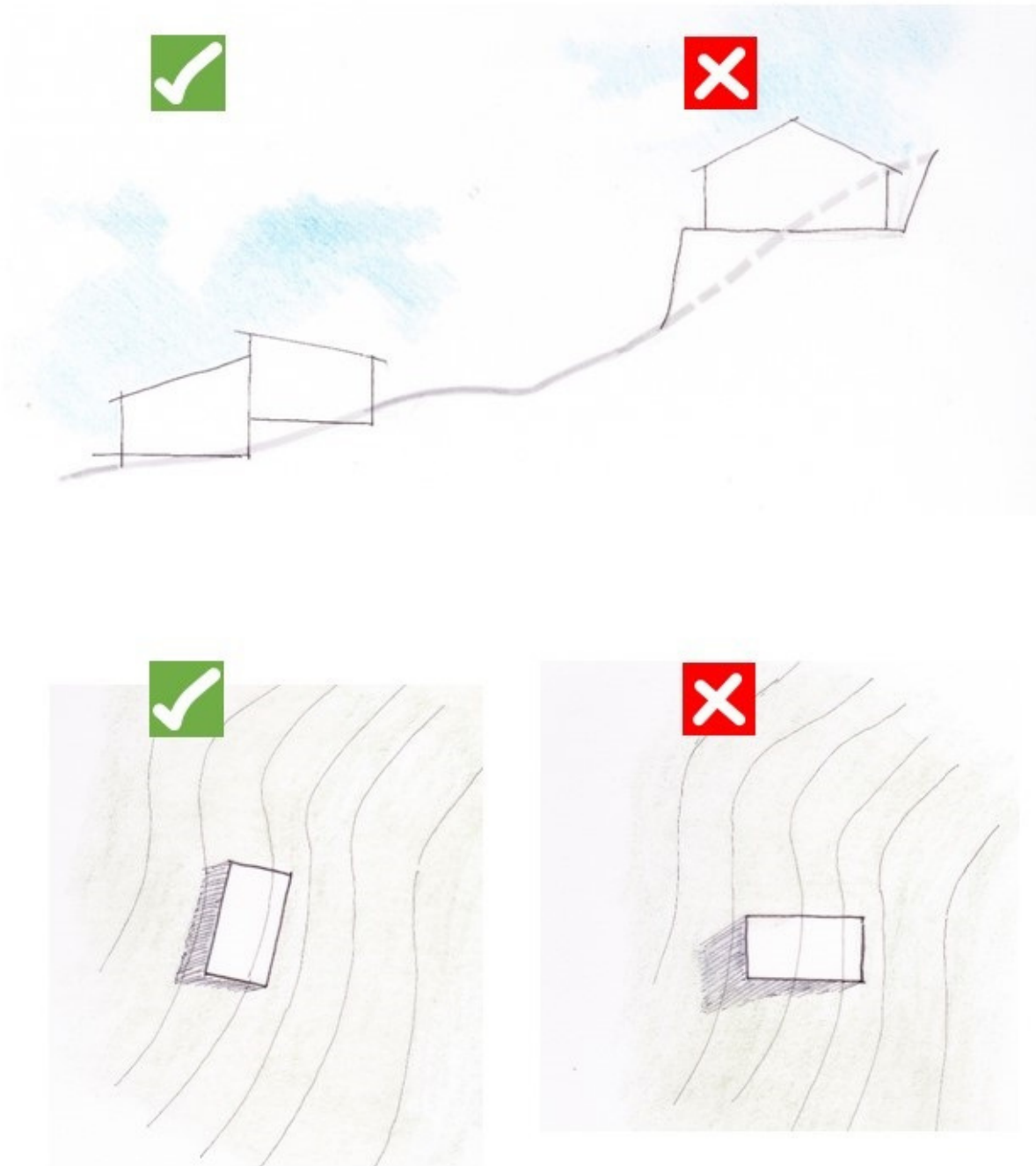
## Convert old farm buildings into cellar doors





**TABLE 4: Building design considerations - responding to landform**

Response to landform	Does it help new development be a good neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
long axis of building aligned along contours	This will usually have the least intrusion on the valued landscape	Least impact on landform	Generally does not require as significant engineering as cantilevered forms however may create challenges for solar access when the slope does not face north	Generally easier to ensure stability rather than larger engineered structures	Generally preferable where possible
Built form responsive to underlying slopes	Minimise intrusion on valued landscape character	Minimises impact of development and makes built form appear more settled in the landscape	Minimal impact on drainage. However, depending on orientation of slope may present challenges achieving good solar access (section 3.3)	Care needs to be taken to avoid impacts on drainage and maintaining vegetation cover	Changes the landform should be used sparingly and be well maintained
long axis of building aligned perpendicular to contours	Will usually make the building more prominent	Significant intrusion on valued landscape	Likely to have a more significant impact on drainage and microclimate	May create stability and landslip issues	Generally not preferred unless built form steps down with the landscape
key	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland	



**Figure 16: Responding to landform - working with the natural contours**

**TABLE 5: Building design considerations - multiple buildings**

Building composition options	Does it help new development be a good neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Cluster or clusters of buildings (including outbuildings)	Can help minimise impact on the balance of the site, subject to adequate screening. Can concentrate impacts where they can be best managed	Can enable landscape interventions to be concentrated to achieve the best effect at screening development	Minimises intrusion into landform and creates potential to diminish impact on areas drainage and habitat values	Concentrating development reducing interface issues that become harder to manage with more scattered development	Generally preferable where possible. However care needs to be taken to avoid the development appearing like an island of urban form.
Building infrastructure clustered with building (water tanks, solar panels, waste storage areas)	When designed in an integrated manner the infrastructure is less likely to be intrusive or detrimental to the areas valued character.	When designed in an integrated manner the infrastructure is less likely to be intrusive or detrimental to the areas landscape.	These can greatly assist in achieving sustainability objectives	Can reduce dependence on externally provided utilities. Screening of external gas bottles and orientation of taps away from buildings can help reduce risk of bushfire	Screening and careful use of recessive materials and colours that complement the main building can be effective in diminishing the impact of essential infrastructure on the character of the building
Scattered development	Locates development over a larger area. Tends to generate greater vehicle movements. May be appropriate for small tourist accommodation.	Typically requires a longer distance accessway and infrastructure such as power lines. More difficult to landscape to screen development when that that development is spread over a wider area	Will make it more difficult to efficiently provide centralised utilities such as hot water and waste management	Longer interfaces between bush and assets such as buildings can make them harder to defend against bushfires	Generally to be avoided where possible

key	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland
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**TABLE 6: Building design considerations - building form and mass**

Building mass and form	Does it help new development be a good Neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Buildings with a horizontal emphasis	Will help give buildings a low and offer a better fit with the rural character	Will help ensure landscape remains the dominant element	Condensed built form reduces cooling costs in summer and heating costs in winter.		Generally preferable
Simple roof form	These tend to be recessive in the landscape and have low impact on the areas valued character		Solar panels can be attached straight onto pitched rooves without the need for framing.	These tend to be easier to maintain and when there are no internal valleys in the roof form this helps to slow down the build-up of fuel, reducing bush fire risk.	Generally preferable. Where practicable outbuildings should reflect the roof of the main building or buildings in pitch and form.
Buildings with a vertical emphasis	Will tend to increase the prominence of buildings which may erode the areas valued rural character and may increase the visual impact on surrounding properties	Will tend to give the building a high profile that will erode the prominence of the landscape			Not generally recommended
Complex and intricate rooves	These tend to increase the prominence of a building			Roofs incorporating valleys or other areas where fuel might gather increase the buildings risk of bushfire.	Not generally recommended

key	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland

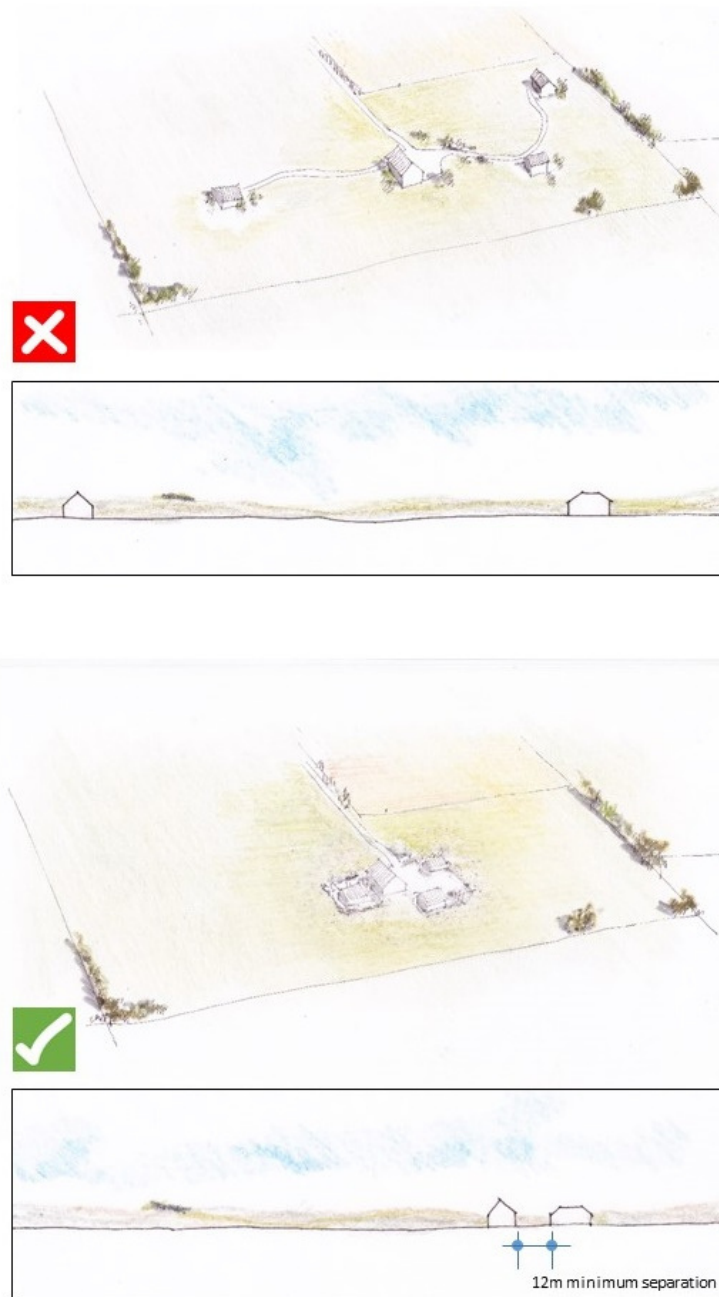


Figure 17: Minimising the impact of multiple buildings

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***Clustering buildings enables a development to make the best use of landscaping and minimise disruption. The optimum cluster is not too dense and not too spread out***

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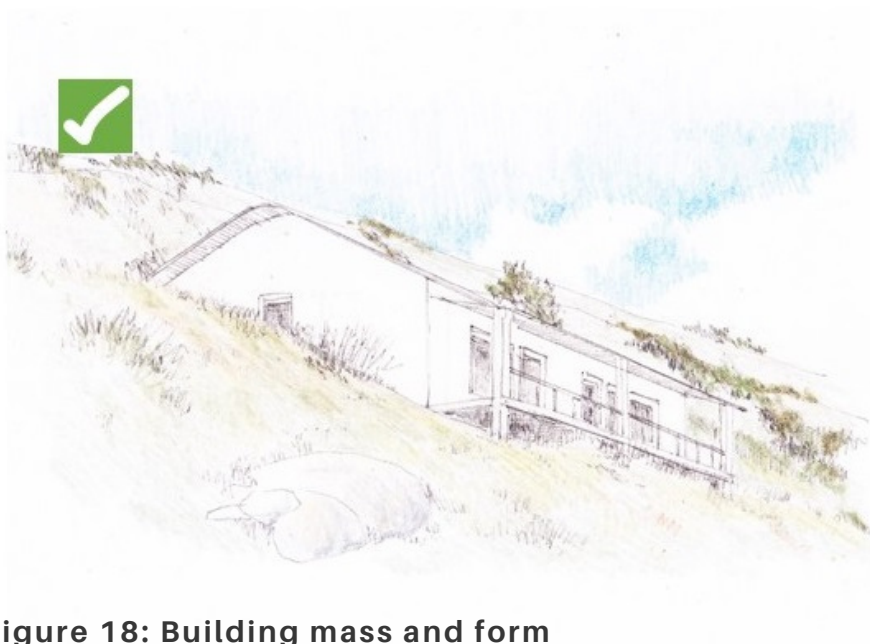


Figure 18: Building mass and form

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***Horizontal buildings can have a lower impact  
on the landscape and are easily screened***

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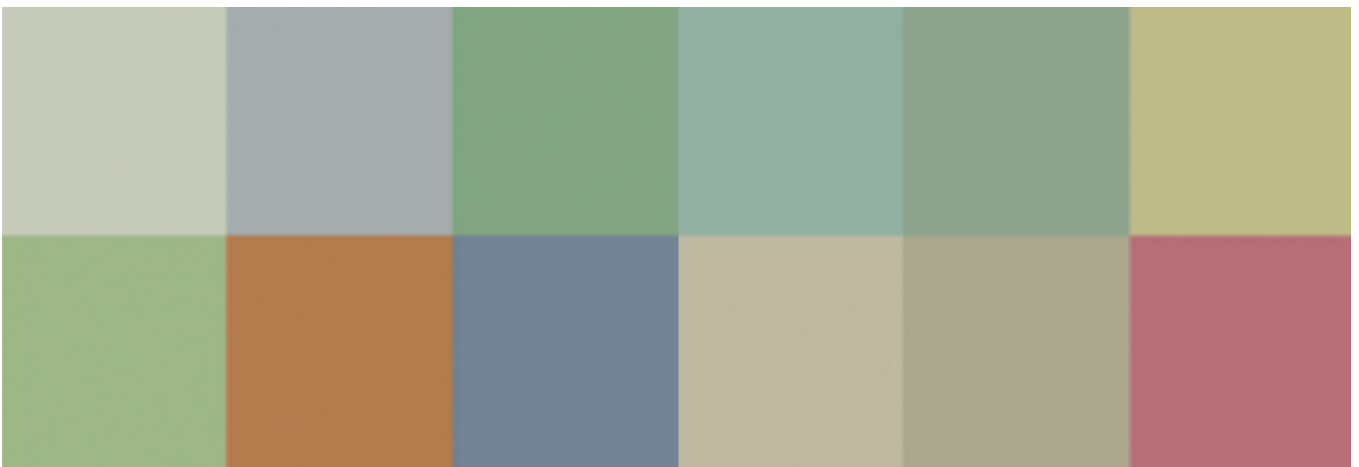
**TABLE 7: Building design considerations - colours and materials**

Colours and materials	Does it help new development be a good Neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments	
Muted colours as	Diminishes the visual impact of development	Decreases the prominence of the buildings	Dark colours attract the sun and can add to cooling cost.		Generally preferable,	
Timber	Minimises intrusion of development on valued landscape character	Spotted gum and Silvertop Ash age to a soft grey that may assist a development to fit in	When locally and sustainably sourced	materials must comply with the construction requirements of Australian Standard 3959-2009 for the determined Bushfire Attack Level (BAL).	May be used effectively on features such as verandah posts to good effect	
Stone	Will contribute to ensuring the development reflects the vernacular	Helps buildings to blend into the landscape	locally sourced stone preferable		Typically expensive, may be used sparingly for features to good effect	
Corrugated iron	May contribute to ensuring the development reflects the vernacular	Will contribute to ensuring the development looks settled in the landscape	Can have poor insulation value			
Consistent use of materials and colours for all principal buildings	Will assist the development appear less intrusive	May assist in diminishing the visual impact of development				
Metal cladding	May create glare unless care is taken to select a muted finish		Can have considerable embodied energy and poor insulation value			
Brickwork	Not typically characteristic of the area		If used on the inside of the building (external walls have a light weight cladding such as timber), it significantly reduces heating and cooling costs		Not generally recommended	
Bright colours, shiny materials	Will draw attention to the development, is highly reflective and creates glare within the landscape	Will intrude on the landscape				Not generally recommended

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**Consistent use of appropriate materials and colours  
can help it blend with the local environment**

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Palette of subdued, recessive colours (source Surf Coast Sustainable Design book).

**Figure 19: Colours**





**TABLE 8: Building design considerations - architectural features**

Architectural Features	Does it help new development be a good neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Verandahs	Will assist building to fit in better to rural character and help screen activity	Will help screen the built wall and can give the building more of a feeling of fitting into the landscape	Verandahs to the north can reduce dependence on mechanical heating and cooling		Generally preferable particularly to the north of a building
Deep eaves		Can diminish the impact of vertical walls in the landscape	Deep eaves to north can help control solar access and reduce dependence on mechanical heating and cooling		Generally preferable where verandahs are not employed
Steep roof (over 20 deg pitch)	A steeper roof pitch will generally help a building fit into its surroundings better where those surroundings are characterised by older buildings.	A steeper roof pitch can diminish the 'boxiness' of a building, however in a generally flat landscape with few trees it can give a building a higher profile	Steeper roof forms can facilitate better ventilation and support comfort in summer although they need careful design to ensure comfort in winter		Materials and colours (refer section x) can be used to diminish the impact of a steep roof pitch where the setting indicates one be employed but at a cost of increasing the visual profile of the building
Incorporated and prominent garages, porticos and rendered facades	These elements collectively have a suburban character which will diminish the valued rural character of their surroundings	There suburban character is likely to detract from their landscape setting			Generally to be avoided

key	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland



Figure 20: Architectural features

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**Verandahs and deep eaves on the north and west faces reduce unwanted heat gain and are consistent with the character**

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## 6. Landscaping your site

Landscaping is a key contributor to the aesthetic appeal of the Surf Coast Hinterland. Good landscape design, careful species selection, consideration of bushfire mitigation, landform, accessways, gateways and fencing. Good landscaping makes the most of the existing vegetation on the site, enhancing degraded land and extending wildlife corridors.

Balancing landscaping and bushfire mitigation can be complicated. The publication 'Landscaping your Surf Coast garden for bushfire' is available on our website and is a useful resources when designing your bushfire responsive garden.

### BASIC LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES

- Use locally sourced indigenous planting where possible (they are adapted to the local conditions, reflect the character and provide habitat.
- Minimise departures from the areas vegetated character.
- Maximise existing vegetation and the natural topography when designing your building. Site buildings well clear of existing native trees.
- Minimise impermeable surfaces in general but create a hard surface around buildings in bushfire prone areas.
- Manage noxious and environmental weeds on your property.
- In bushfire prone areas, maintain a 3m wide cleared area (with no vegetation) immediately surrounding buildings used for accommodation.

- Locate landscaping to minimise bushfire risks and consider non-flammable materials in construction, such as retaining walls and fencing.

**TABLE 9: Landscaping - vegetation**

Provenance of vegetation	Does it help new development be a good neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Predominantly indigenous, local provenance	Least likely to escape and spread as weeds or carry diseases	Best suited for local conditions, generally hardy	Generally low water requirements when established High habitat value	Most likely to survive prolonged periods of drought	Generally the best choice, if suitable plant types exist
Predominantly indigenous, other	Not likely to escape but may cross pollinate locally indigenous vegetation on neighbouring land	Usually well suited for local conditions, generally hardy	Generally low water requirements when established Good habitat value		
Predominantly Native	Some natives can become weeds and spread into neighbours property	Often well suited for local conditions, generally hardy, with several exceptions			
Horticulture and fruit trees	Management of seed dispersal important to protect biosecurity if horticulture undertaken nearby	Autumn colours provides connection to the seasons	Supports local food production. Provides shade in summer and access to sunlight in winter to habitable spaces	Higher water requirements and can be located closer to a dwelling for shade	Generally a very good choice
Predominantly Exotic provenance	A significant number of exotic species can become amenity weeds	Likely to be incompatible with form, colour of native vegetation. Heritage trees such as oaks are suitable as avenues into Moriac, Deans Marsh and Winchelsea.	Depending on provenance can be water and resource hungry, can become environmental weeds	Can be vulnerable to prolonged drought but can assist in protecting against bushfire (if significant moisture content can be maintained)	Generally not appropriate except where compelling reason to use exotics exist (such as bushfire protection) Check with Council to ensure you are not introducing any environmental or amenity weeds
Declared weeds (refer Weeds of the Surf Coast Shire)	It is your responsibility to manage declared weeds on your property	Likely to adversely change landscape character	Can deplete soils and harbour pest animals	Can contribute to erosion	

**TABLE 10: Landscaping - energy efficiency and bushfire mitigation**

<b>Gardens surroundings buildings</b>	Does it help new development be a good Neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Deciduous trees to N/west of buildings	Management of leaf litter spread by wind will be required		Will let winter sun in but screen hot summer sun	Will help reduce dependency on mechanical heating and cooling	See CFA advice "Landscaping for bushfires" and "Landscaping your Surf Coast garden for bushfire" for further advice
Existing mature and healthy trees retained	Will help screen buildings	Will help provide the new building with a settled, established character Protects skyline	Habitat value, particularly old trees containing hollows	Can provide shade and help mitigate micro-climatic extremes however will need adequate separation from buildings to manage bushfire risks	See CFA advice "Landscaping for bushfires" and "Landscaping your Surf Coast garden for bushfire" for further advice. Note buildings should be located a distance of 1.5x the mature height of the tree
Irrigated trees, vines and groundcover between building and rural unmanaged landscapes	Will help screen building	Will help screen building	Species selection to consider maintenance and irrigation requirements	Healthy trees and vines with high moisture content can help reduce bushfire risk if adequately separated from buildings	Reliable consistent irrigation will be essential to provide a degree of long term protection against bushfire attack through planting
Hard paved and fire resistant areas around buildings	Will reduce chances of building being a vector for the spread of bushfire			Will help reduce bushfire risk	Refer to "Landscaping your Surf Coast garden for bushfire" for advice.
Water bodies near buildings	Will reduce chances of building being a vector for the spread of bushfire		If building is designed for cross ventilation, can assist with cooling buildings in summer	Will help reduce bushfire risk Can assist in providing water storage in times of drought	

<b>key</b>	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland
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**Figure 21: Landscaping for energy efficiency and bushfire mitigation**

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**Careful landscape design can improve the comfort of a building and reduce bushfire risk**

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**TABLE 11: Landscape - access design**

Accessways and entries	Does it help new development be a good Neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
On steep sites (10%+) access ways aligned to avoid crossing contours at right angles	Least likely to scar the landscape with retaining walls and cut and fill	Least impact on landscape character	Will have least impact on drainage	Least vulnerable to land slippage and erosion	Generally lower impact on hilly land
On flatter land (less than 10%) accessways aligned along property boundaries	Characteristic of area	Characteristic of area, minimal distance and intrusion	Typically straighter access ways minimise paved length and area		Generally lower impact on flat sites
Farm Gates at entry		Fits into to local character		Designed for rural conditions	
Minimise width and area of hard paved / impermeable surface	Will reduce detrimental impacts on drainage	Typically less visually intrusive	Less impact on the sites drainage/hydrology	May increase run off and generally to be avoided except adjacent to buildings where may help reduce risk of bushfire attack	
Align access ways adjacent to vegetated edges where possible	Can reduce visibility and help diminish light pollution from “headlight sweep” at night	Can help screen access way	Can create conflict between wildlife and vehicles	Can create a longer interface between human activity and areas of vegetation, increasing vulnerability to bushfire	
Suburban style gates	May contribute to the ‘suburbanisation’ of the rural environment	Typically clashes with rural character		Typically not built for rural conditions	Gates have a high profile from roads and subsequently a significant impact
<b>key</b>	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland	



Figure 22: Access design on undulating land

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*The access should work with the contour of the land*

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Figure 23: Access design on flat land

---

***Access should be located parallel to property boundaries***

---

**TABLE 12: Landscape - boundaries**

<b>Boundaries</b>	Does it help new development be a good Neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Wire and post fencing	These are characteristic of the area	Least impact on landscape character	Will have least impact on drainage and enables movement of native fauna	Can limit incursion from escaped stock	Generally preferable
Vegetated boundaries	Characteristic of area, can help screen buildings	Characteristic of area and provides shade for stock	Can contribute to habitat values with appropriate species selection	Can provide beneficial microclimatic effects	Compatible with wire and post boundaries
Stone walls	Can help screen buildings	Characteristic of area when locally sourced Can provide habitat	Utilise local resource		Typically expensive and best restricted to high profile locations
Mounded boundaries	Can provide effective buffer to minimise noise of activities	Can help screen buildings	May be disruptive to drainage and might divert stormwater flows	Will need particular care to maintain vegetation	
Solid metal fences	Often intrusive	Typically uncharacteristic	High embodied energy, can be disruptive to drainage	High wind loads may increase risk of damage	Generally inappropriate
<b>key</b>	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland	

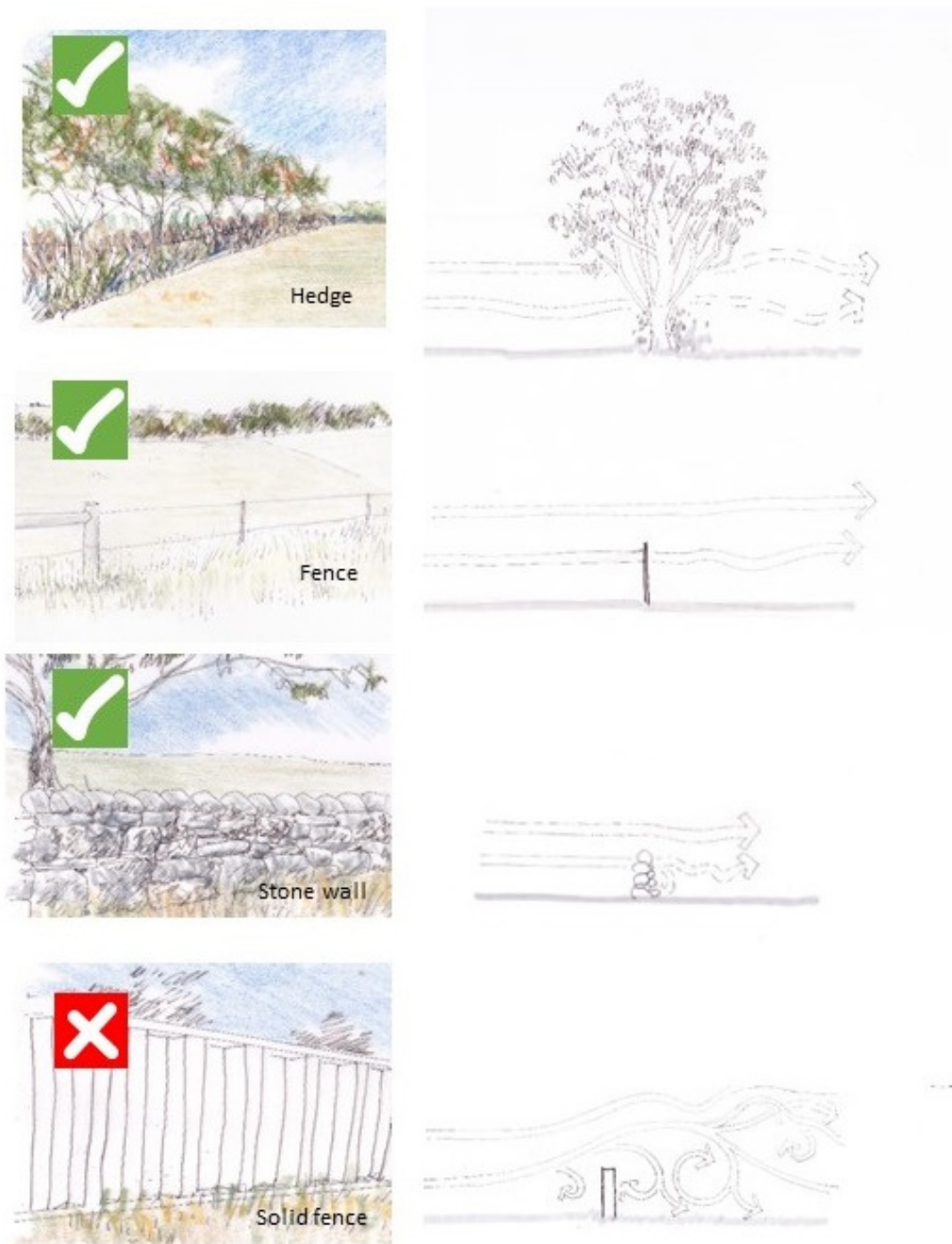


Figure 24: Treatment of boundaries

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***Materials used on boundaries are important to the character and affect the micro climate***

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**TABLE 13: Landscape - responding to landform**

Landform	Does it help new development be a good Neighbour?	Does it help Protect the Landscape?	Does it contribute to Sustainability?	Does it help Minimise vulnerability?	Comments
Minimal variation to non-degraded landforms	Minimal disruption to characteristic and valued landscapes	Least impact on landscape character	minimal impact on drainage	Generally stable with appropriate vegetation	Generally preferable, assuming site is not degraded, in which case land form modification may be required to return it to a healthier condition
Limited use of mounding	Can provide a buffer for noise	can help screen buildings when appropriately planted	Can impact drainage	Care needs to be taken to avoid flooding and maintaining vegetation cover	Can be useful when used sparingly and well maintained
Retaining walls	can impact drainage	Visually intrusive			Without careful design these may present a good and a bad viewpoint. If retaining walls are required should be designed and landscaped so view from surroundings considered

<b>key</b>	Generally contributory to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland	Variable impact on achieving the objectives of these guidelines – use with great care	Generally detrimental to achieving acceptable design outcomes in the hinterland and should not be used	Generally neutral impact on achieving good design outcomes in the hinterland
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# Part 4

# 1. WHAT TO SUBMIT

Prospective applicants for development are strongly advised to discuss their proposals with a Council Planning officer before they commit to finalising their design. This will help ensure new development is:

- A good neighbour,
- Fits in with its surroundings,
- Is sustainable, and
- Resilient to natural hazards.

To assist Council officers consider a

proposal in a timely manner applications for development in the hinterland should be accompanied by:

- A site and context analysis as described in **Part 3 - responsive design**.
- A cartographic representation of the visual catchment of the development.
- A statement outlining:
  - How the development responds to adjoining properties and impacts on key viewpoints (if any).
  - what sustainable design features have been included.
  - how the design has addressed the detrimental impacts of any characteristics included in red or amber statements.



HINTERLAND DESIGN GUIDELINES / PAGE 77

## 2. Development template

To help determine if your proposal meets the siting and design requirements of the Farming Zone (FZ) and the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ).

DESIGN CONSIDERATION	RESPONSE
<p><b>SENSITIVE USES</b></p> <p>What are the sensitivities of the adjoining properties?</p> <p>What are the sensitivities of the proposal in relation to surrounding uses?</p> <p>How does your proposal minimise the impact of these sensitivities?</p>	
<p><b>VIEWPOINTS</b></p> <p>What are the key viewpoints of the proposal from its surroundings?</p> <p>What impact will the development have on those viewpoints?</p>	

Has the proposal been sited to minimise impacts on viewpoints and sensitive edges?

## DESIGN CONSIDERATION

## RESPONSE

### BUILT FORM

Does the built form incorporate the design responses outlined in these guidelines?

### LANDSCAPING

Does the landscaping incorporate the design responses outlined in these guidelines?

### LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

Great design complements the local setting.

***Where a development deviates from the design responses outlined in these guidelines, a written statement is required outlining how the overarching principles have been met***





# Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy



ADOPTED MAY 2019

## Document Control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Draft	May 2018	KH / MT
Draft V2	6 Jan 2019	SB / KH / MT
Final Draft for Review	26 Feb 2019	SB / KH / MT
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Adopted	28 May 2019	KH / MT

## Acknowledgment

The Surf Coast Shire proudly acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples of the Eastern Maar Nation, and the Wadawurrung as the traditional custodians of the Surf Coast Shire Region. We acknowledge that the Surf Coast Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy is based upon the lands of the Wadawurrung, Gulidjan and Gadubanud people.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to their traditional lands, which continue to be important to them today and into the future.

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# Part A

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy provides direction to Council on the economic activation and vitalization of the rural hinterland areas of the Shire that is based on research, consultation and supported justification. It is an economic development and planning strategy with a focus on rural areas, not the Shire's towns which are supported by their respective structure plans. The Strategy relates primarily to land in the farming and rural conservation zones.

Surf Coast Shire's hinterland comprises some 1,020 square kilometres (or 60per cent) of the Shire and is integral to the Shire's image and its economy. The hinterland has a diverse character, with productive agriculture and rural land, tourist businesses, rural townships, rolling hills, waterways, native vegetation and scenic landscapes all forming a rich and valued environ.

The Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy has been developed to provide a clear vision and high level strategic direction for the Surf Coast Shire hinterland to vitalise the economy and ensure its long term sustainability. The pressures of urban growth, climate change, the evolving role of agribusiness in the Shire and changing technology drive the need for a new strategy so that the area can adapt and thrive. Urban growth in particular creates the need to generate new jobs to retain or grow the current contribution that the hinterland makes to the Surf Coast economy.

The Strategy is evidence-based and the result of extensive background analysis and community engagement and consultation with government agencies, community groups, landowners, stakeholders and businesses.

One of the Strategy's key findings is that the rural landscapes in the hinterland are highly valued by the community and visitors, and an important element in its economic future. They also form part of an important cultural landscape for Aboriginal people.

The hinterland currently contributes about 6per cent to the local economy, and there is opportunity to grow this percentage to support our growing population.

## The aims of this Strategy are:

- To increase the hinterland's contribution to the local economy from a baseline of 6% by supporting existing agricultural uses so they develop and thrive; and
- to develop agri-food, agritourism and tourism opportunities in the hinterland that are complementary to the rural landscape and environmental values.

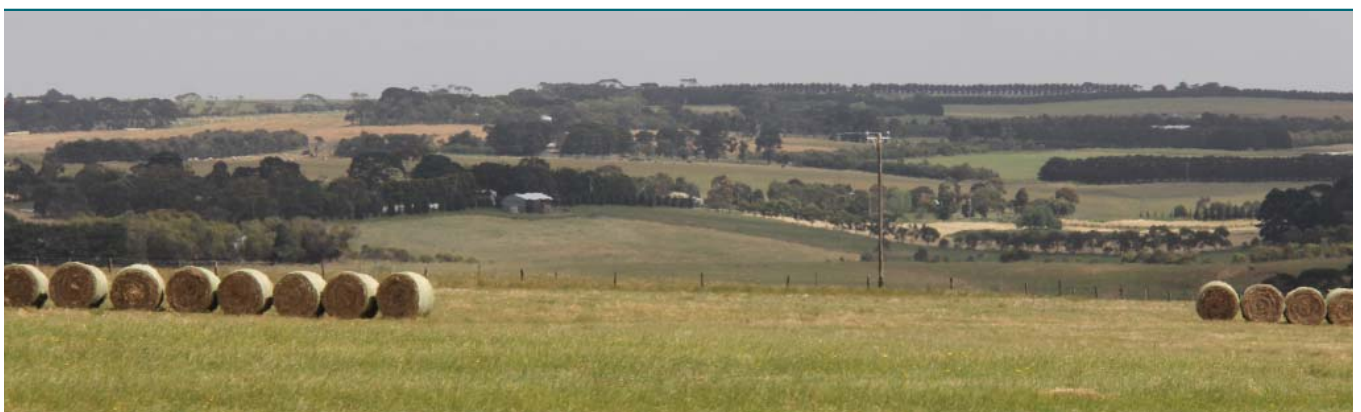
There is an opportunity to draw some of the 2.1 million visitors to Surf Coast Shire into the hinterland to new destinations, events and experiences such as outdoor recreation, culture, arts, food and wine. These new destinations will require new or improved infrastructure to support them, and amendments to the planning scheme to provide the policy framework to facilitate this opportunity, whilst balancing support for farming and protecting important environmental and landscape values.

## The Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy Vision is:

By 2040 the hinterland is a key contributor to the Surf Coast economy and renowned visitor destination.

The Strategy has five key objectives to achieve the vision:

<p><b>Objective 1:</b></p> <p>Elevate the Value of our Environment and Rural Landscapes as the Defining Feature of the Surf Coast Hinterland and its Significance to the Local Economy.</p>
<p><b>Objective 2:</b></p> <p>Encourage Agriculture and Innovative Businesses Displaying Sustainable Land Management Practices to Enhance our Reputation as a Forward Thinking Business Destination.</p>
<p><b>Objective 3:</b></p> <p>Stimulate Agritourism to Enhance the Surf Coast as a Visitor Destination.</p>
<p><b>Objective 4:</b></p> <p>Support Tourism Activities which Complement the Agricultural, Landscape, and Environmental values of the Surf Coast Shire.</p>
<p><b>Objective 5:</b></p> <p>Secure Enabling Infrastructure to Deliver the Vision and Objectives of the Strategy.</p>



## 2. INTRODUCTION

### Why have a strategy?

There is a need to provide strategic direction in relation to guiding and enhancing the economic development potential in the rural hinterland, particularly in relation to informing future policy changes to the Surf Coast Planning Scheme for discretionary uses in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones.

Surf Coast Shire is one of regional Victoria's fastest growing municipalities. It is located in south-western Victoria, 120km from Melbourne and 21km south of Geelong. Its proximity to the Princes Highway and the Geelong Ring Road provides convenient road access that enhances the Shire's appeal as a lifestyle, holiday, tourist and business destination. Population forecasts estimate that about 43,000 people will call Surf Coast Shire home by 2036. This growth will mean creating over 1,650 additional jobs in the same timeframe.

While urban centres, like Torquay, will absorb much of the forecast population growth, Council expects the Shire's rural hinterland to play an increasingly important role in economic contribution and job provision.

This hinterland covers about 1,020 square kilometres (or 60per cent of the Shire) and includes the localities of Deans Marsh/Pennyroyal, Freshwater Creek, Modewarre, Moriac and Winchelsea. The hinterland is dominated by farming and other rural uses (which occupy about 45per cent of the total defined area) and land associated with the Great Otway National Park. Winchelsea is the largest town in the hinterland and acts as a regional centre for many local farmers.

Land within the settlement boundary of townships is not within the scope of this strategy as they are covered by structure plans which establish strategic land use directions for these places. However, it is noted that the towns in the Shire's hinterland serve important roles within the Shire serving local communities and visitors. Some already function as tourist hubs, and in appropriate locations there is scope for further development and economic activity in line with their structure plans.

The Great Ocean Road is another significant feature of the Shire that connects the coastal townships and traverses significant landscapes, including the Great Otway National Park. It is also a nationally-listed heritage place that is greatly valued by the community and recognised internationally as a tourist icon, with 3 million visitors annually. The region itself receives over 5.1 million visitors. The coastline and wide rural vistas are a significant draw-card for the tourism industry, which is a major industry sector for the Surf Coast Shire. These visitors and the surrounding population present a significant opportunity for the hinterland.

The Surf Coast rural hinterland has a long agricultural history in the dairy, beef, sheep and grain industries. More recently, a number of smaller boutique businesses have been established, particularly in the agri-food and agriculture sectors. These new ventures, along with more traditional agricultural operations, contribute significantly to the region's diversity, longer-term sustainability and overall productivity. There is also opportunity to explore innovative farming practices and value-add production to increase the economic output and viability of farmland.

This strategy aims to respond to these emerging issues and provide leadership, vision and a clear direction for the rural hinterland of the Surf Coast Shire, for land in the farming and rural conservation zones.

Our natural assets, including our natural environment and the rural landscapes, have helped create these opportunities. Council seeks to conserve and protect these assets, whilst utilising their value and capitalising on the opportunities they have created. To realise these opportunities, the Local Planning Policy Framework will need to change and this Strategy will guide these changes.

## How Was This Strategy Developed?

The Strategy was developed in two stages.

### Stage 1

Stage 1 of the project produced background research which aimed to:

- Understand current State and Commonwealth policies which may influence the hinterland.
- Provide a snapshot of the value of economic activity in the hinterland, with benchmarking of comparable areas (Yarra Valley, Onkaparinga).
- Identify key enabling infrastructure (roads & access, water, telecommunications) and the opportunities they present.
- Understand the soil compositions and broader land tenements.
- Identify the implications of climate change and adaptation.
- Describe the various current planning scheme regulations as they apply to the hinterland.

### Stage 2

Stage 2 of the project produced a Background Report, Issues and Opportunities Paper and Draft Hinterland Futures Strategy, which were based on this background research and community, agency and stakeholder consultation.

Community consultation on the Issues and Opportunities Paper included a hard copy and online survey (42 respondents), three workshops at Deans Marsh, Moriac and Bellbrae, written submissions, interviews with stakeholders and businesses and public exhibition of the documents on Council's website. Council's Environment and Rural Advisory Panel also contributed to the Hinterland Strategy's vision and the background research. Council received nine(9) written submissions, with many submissions from landowners seeking to maximise the highest and best use for their land. (Refer to the Consultation Report for further details.)

Therefore, this strategy should be read in conjunction with the following background reports:

- Background Report (HillPDA and Associates, 2017)
- Issues and Opportunities Report (HillPDA and Associates, 2017)
- Community Consultation Report



## Study Area

Figure 1 shows the study area. It became evident as Council developed the Draft Strategy that the original study area excluded rural land on the south western edge of the Shire with good land capability and a number of established tourist uses, in districts like Pennyroyal, so Council expanded the Strategic Framework Plan in the Draft Strategy to include those areas. The study area does not include townships in the hinterland which are guided by their respective structure plans. The study area also excludes the Great Otway National Park.

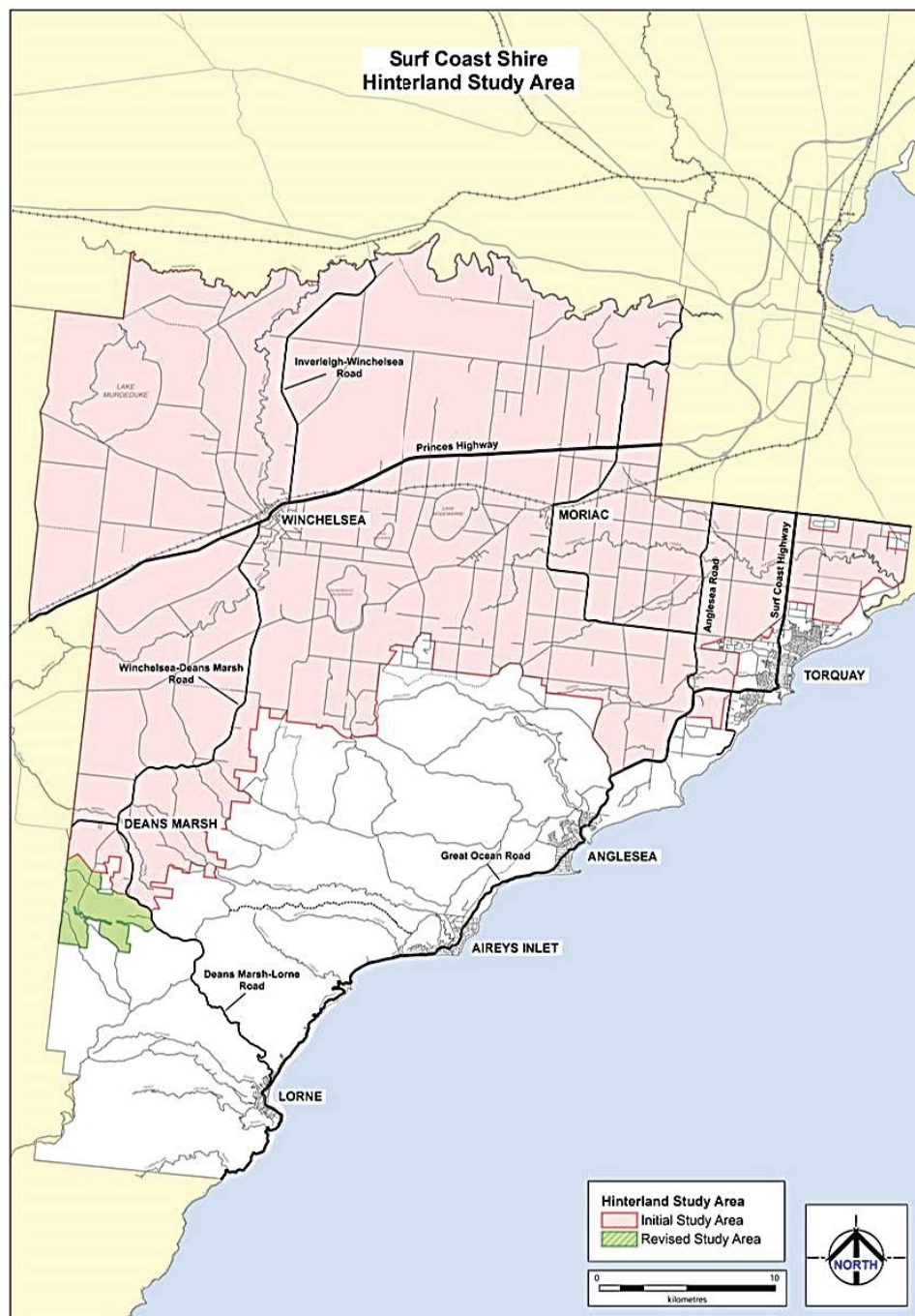


Figure 1 - Hinterland Study Area

## Social and Cultural Value of the Hinterland

Although the Strategy has an economic and planning focus about land use, Council acknowledges that the value of the hinterland extends beyond the economic. The community, landowners and visitors greatly value the environmental, landscape and amenity attributes of the hinterland.

During the Environmental Rural Advisory Panel workshops, a strong theme also emerged about support for the production and consumption of local food. That led to Council's recently produced "Local Food Program". The Local Food Program is closely aligned with this Strategy.

The Hinterland is also part of an important cultural landscape for Aboriginal People. The Surf Coast Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy is based upon the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung, and the Gulidjan and Gadubanud people of the Eastern Maar Nation. The Shire's Aboriginal story spans thousands of years, continuing to this day. There is scope to promote Aboriginal stories, improve our understanding, and share economic prosperity with Aboriginal people in our region.



## Linkages with Other Strategies and Plans



## 3. CONTEXT - DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

Research for the Hinterland Strategy identified the following key emerging trends and challenges. Some of these are natural while others are man made. However, each emphasises the need for a strategy for the Surf Coast Shire Hinterland.

### Urban Growth

The Surf Coast Shire has two designated growth townships: Torquay and Winchelsea. Winchelsea is growing slowly but has an aspirational goal of increasing from 1,500 people to 10,000 people by 2030. Torquay is our fastest-growing township, with the population expected to grow from 17,588 (current estimate) to 30,000 people by 2040. The population of Torquay/Jan Juc increased by 35.4per cent between 2006 and 2011.

This growth, and the ripple effect as Melbourne continues to grow is putting pressure on regional areas to accommodate more people. In turn this puts pressure on existing township boundaries, as developers ask councils to allow expansion and new “greenfield” sites. If not carefully managed, greenfield urban growth presents a risk to viable agricultural land, scenic landscapes and green breaks between townships. Loss of native vegetation, loss of wildlife habitat and additional stormwater entering waterways adversely affects our environment.

Our environment, including our coast and forests, undulating rural areas and green spaces are what make the Shire a major tourist destination and tourism is our main economic activity.

Primary production, farm gate and agri-food or agritourism represents a further 6.6per cent of the Shire’s economic output. The loss of arable farming land and important rural landscapes to growing townships could have severe consequences to the future economic potential and job creation contribution of the hinterland.

### Rising Land Values and Lifestyle/Hobby Farms

Land values vary across the hinterland but broadly they increase as one moves east towards Geelong south towards Torquay and Lorne. High land prices also place pressure on the hinterland’s important agricultural uses, as the return on investment is generally significantly lower for agriculture than for uses like accommodation.

Buyers often pay a premium for rural lifestyle properties or hobby farms in the hinterland, with prices currently almost double the regional Victorian median. On hobby farms the main purpose is as a place to live (lifestyle) and not agricultural production. Council expects this to remain strong , with pressure for further subdivision of rural land in future.

The rapid increase in land values in the Surf Coast hinterland compared to regional Victoria at large has led to a high incidence of “land banking”, where land is purchased primarily as an investment. Sometimes this practice has led to reduced areas of land being available for productive agriculture, with banked land either being offered for lease at rates prohibitive to productive agriculture, or maintained in a manner not aligned with recognised best-practice management.

## The Evolving Role of the Hinterland and Agribusiness





Strong population growth, combined with a large visitor economy, is changing our regional landscape and agribusiness.

Agribusiness is a significant contributor to the visitor economy, with rural landscapes, wineries, harvest trails, farmers markets and small scale food producers contributing significantly to the region's appeal to domestic and international visitors.

## Climate Change and Environmental Risk

Climate change, with decreased rainfall, more frequent storm events and warmer temperatures, will affect many aspects of the hinterland over time. Although rainfall totals will decline, that rain will more frequently fall as extreme downpours, with more flooding.

**BARWON SOUTH WEST HAS BEEN GETTING WARMER AND DRIER. IN THE FUTURE THE REGION CAN EXPECT**

	Temperatures to continue to increase year round	More hot days and warm spells and fewer frosts
	Less rainfall in Winter and Spring	More frequent and more intense downpours
	Harsher fire weather and longer fire seasons	Rising sea level
	Increased frequency and height of extreme sea level events	

Source: DELWP Climate Ready Barwon South West

Extreme weather will threaten coastal infrastructure and urban settlements, with flow on effects to transport, tourism and the natural environment. Sea level rise and coastal erosion will impact on low lying roads and iconic tourism destinations like the Great Ocean Road. Heavy rainfall, erosion and landslips could threaten safety and tourism infrastructure.

The Surf Coast hinterland contains productive agricultural land, waterways and significant environmental assets like the Great Otway National Park. Agriculture in the hinterland is less likely to be severely impacted by climate change than the “food bowl” regions of Victoria, like the inland wheat and cropping production areas. However, dry conditions in those areas will place greater pressure on remaining land to become more productive, and areas that can be irrigated will be critical.

Climate change impacts like increased temperatures, sea level rise, lower rainfall and storm events will hasten native vegetation loss and species decline. As a result our existing environmental assets become more important. Protecting them is central to supporting biodiversity, agriculture and the Surf Coast economy.

By 2040, Barwon Water expects to see a 7 per cent reduction in flows to reservoirs due to climate change. However, in future, recycled water may provide an alternative in areas near the Black Rock and Winchelsea water reclamation plants. Greater reuse of waste water on-site by private businesses will also help. (This is discussed further in the Recycled Water section of this report).

## Consideration of Bushfire Risk

Environmental risks, particularly bushfire, are a major issue for the Shire and climate change is likely to increase these risks. Large areas of the Shire, including the coastal townships, are covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) in the planning scheme, and most of the Shire is a designated Bushfire Prone Area under the Building Regulations.

In response to the recommendations of the Black Saturday Bushfire Royal Commission, the State Government introduced state-wide reforms including policy provisions emphasising the need to prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.

With the focus on resilient communities, bushfire risk must be considered in decision making at all stages of the planning process. Development should be directed to lower risk locations and use and development, including events, in high risk locations is to be avoided.

When siting tourist facilities, residential development and other sensitive uses, bushfire risk will be a key consideration.

## Technology

New technology continues to change business and communication. All businesses, including farming, are increasingly dependent on information technology to do business, access information and communicate with customers and suppliers. High speed internet access and mobile phone coverage are essential to business and visitors expect them to be available. Our hinterland has areas without mobile phone coverage (“black spots”) and limited broadband internet access. The NBN is progressively being delivered but gaps still exist. Today, both visitors and the local community expect comprehensive communications coverage in rural areas, particularly in popular areas.



## 4. CONTEXT - THE HINTERLAND ECONOMY

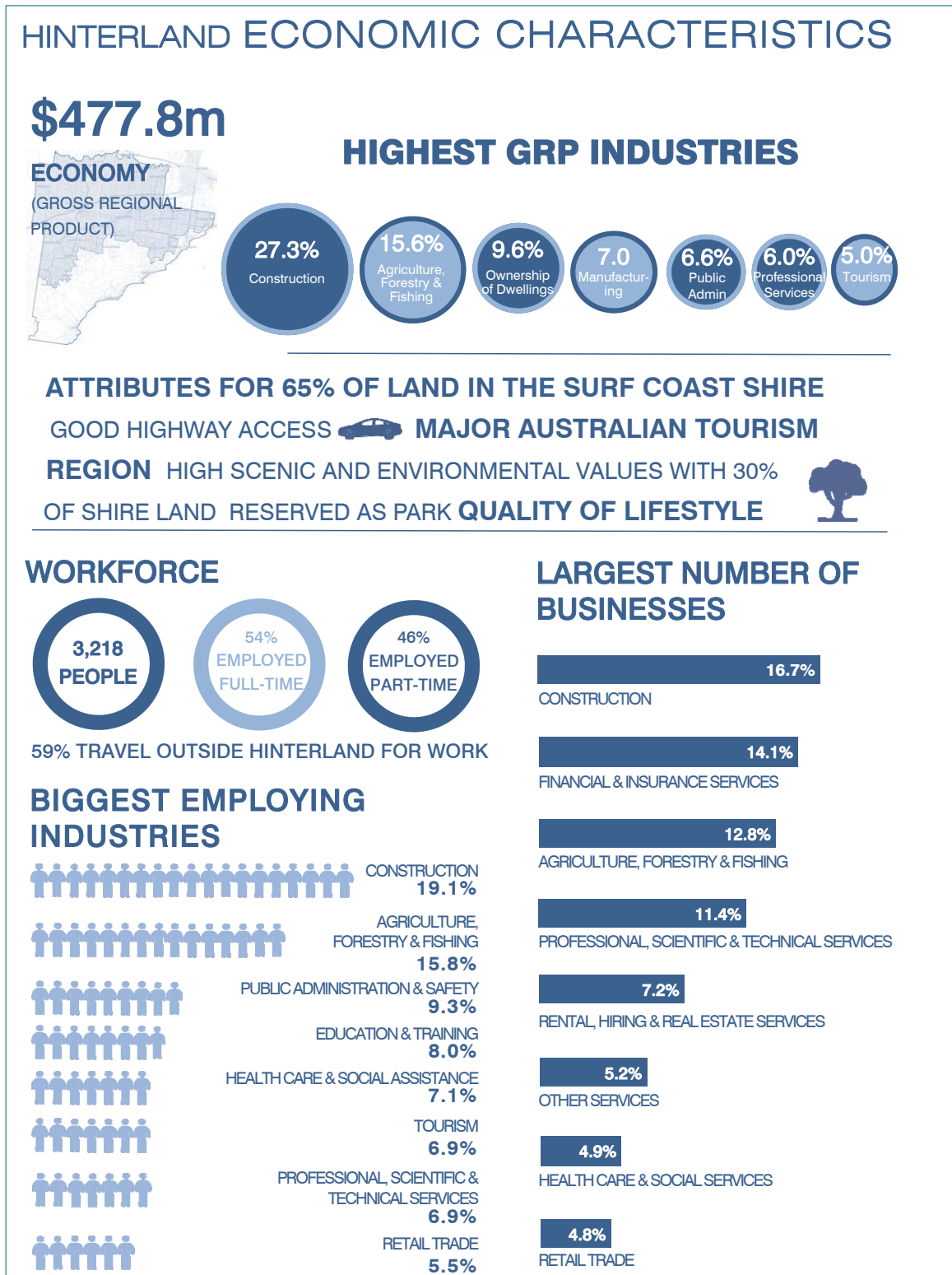


Figure 2: Hinterland Economic Characteristics  
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, REMPlan

## 5. CONTEXT - KEY FACTS

Council prepared a detailed Background Report to support this Strategy which was exhibited in November 2017, together with an Issues and Opportunities Report.

Part B of this Strategy is a summary of the context and background research and the insights that lead to the directions in this Strategy.

The following is a summary of the key contextual facts:

The Shire is experiencing high population growth, particularly around Torquay, and the Shire requires 1,650 new jobs to support the future population.	Surfing, tourism and construction industries are major drivers of the broader Surf Coast economy. Agriculture is a significant contributor to the hinterland economy.
There is a policy gap in the planning scheme on discretionary uses in the rural zones that needs to be filled to provide guidance.	More guidance is required in the planning scheme on the location and design of development in rural areas and in significant landscapes.
Agritourism has potential to stimulate business in the hinterland, as the beauty of the landscapes is both a tourist drawcard and a lifestyle attractor.	There is increased growth and development pressure on rural and environmental values in the hinterland and key tourist attractions like the Great Ocean Road.
Hobby/lifestyle farms are a dominant and growing land use in the hinterland.	There is undersupply of product to attract visitors to the hinterland.
Intensive agriculture is growing in the region. It has an important role to play if aligned to the hinterland vision.	About 3per cent of Surf Coast Shire's 2.1 million visitors currently come to the hinterland. This represents enormous potential for tourism.
Small-scale food production has been growing in the region due to the opportunity provided by the tourism industry and a developing "Otways" brand.	Commercial broad-acre agriculture is still the dominant land use in the hinterland. This is changing, however it is still a major economic contributor and has an important role to play in sustainable land management.
Visitors are seeking experiences such as outdoor recreation, culture, food and wine and events.	Existing infrastructure is struggling to meet the growing needs of the hinterland.



## 6. VISION

By 2040 the rural hinterland is a key contributor to the Surf Coast economy and renowned all-year visitor destination.

### What does this look like?

High value rural landscapes and natural environment are recognised as a defining feature of the economy in addition to their intrinsic scenic value.

A thriving agricultural sector based on innovative businesses that display sustainable development and land management practices, is complemented by local food, high-quality tourism products and outdoor activities, that provide a year round experience. Our significant environmental assets and landscapes will underpin these values.



## 7. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

The Strategy has five key objectives:

<p><b>Objective 1:</b></p> <p>Elevate the Value of our Environment and Rural Landscapes as the Defining Feature of the Surf Coast Hinterland and its Significance to the Local Economy.</p> <p><i>Recognise the role that the natural environment and landscape plays in the rural hinterland economy and develop its contribution to the Surf Coast Economy.</i></p>
<p><b>Objective 2:</b></p> <p>Encourage Innovative Agricultural and Other Businesses Displaying Sustainable Land Management Practices to Enhance our Reputation as a Forward Thinking Business Destination.</p> <p><i>Ensure new businesses are “clean and green” and achieve best practice.</i></p>
<p><b>Objective 3:</b></p> <p>Stimulate Agritourism to Enhance the Surf Coast as a Visitor Destination</p> <p><i>Develop Agritourism as the area with the highest potential to develop Surf Coast’s reputation as a food destination and increase the hinterland contribution to the Surf Coast Economy.</i></p>
<p><b>Objective 4:</b></p> <p>Support Tourism Activities which Complement the Landscape, Agricultural and Environmental Values of the Surf Coast Shire</p> <p><i>Ensure new tourism activities are complementary to existing values that we wish to retain and enhance and make a positive contribution to the economy.</i></p>
<p><b>Objective 5:</b></p> <p>Secure Enabling Infrastructure to Deliver the Vision and Objectives of the Strategy</p> <p><i>Improve on our road, servicing, recycled water sources and supporting infrastructure to enable the economy in the hinterland to thrive. Advocate for improved public transport services. Look for new opportunities to build resilience.</i></p>

## The Strategy has the following key seven principles:

The principles sometimes overlay and therefore need to be balanced against one another.

### Principle 1:

Agriculture will remain the primary purpose of land in the Farming Zone.

### Principle 2:

New uses and development should not result in an unreasonable loss of productive capacity of agricultural land, or impact on the productivity of existing adjoining agricultural uses.

### Principle 3:

Development (built form) should avoid negative impacts on: environmental and landscape values and adjoining agricultural uses through appropriate siting and detailed design measures.

### Principle 4:

New industrial, storage (warehouse), or manufacturing uses on Farming zoned land should have a direct relationship with the agricultural production of the land or surrounding district.

### Principle 5:

Environmental values and rural landscape features will remain the defining physical and visual attributes of the hinterland.

### Principle 6:

Tourism and agritourism attractions should be clustered around key nodes in the hinterland.

### Principle 7:

Discretionary use and development will consider fire risk including landscape type, vehicle access, the ability to mitigate the risk and the capacity of the emergency services.

## 8. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The following section of the strategy demonstrates spatially the directions and outcomes of the Strategy. They have been informed by the background research and opportunities identified to achieve the Vision for the hinterland.

Implementation will require several actions, both economic and planning, to achieve the Vision and Objectives, including a planning scheme amendment. These actions are outlined in Section 8.

### Strategic Framework Map

The Strategic Framework map, shown in figure 3 is the overarching plan for the Strategy and divides the hinterland into three strategic focus areas well suited to:

1. Intensive and commercial farming.
2. Agribusiness and commercial farming.
3. Tourism.

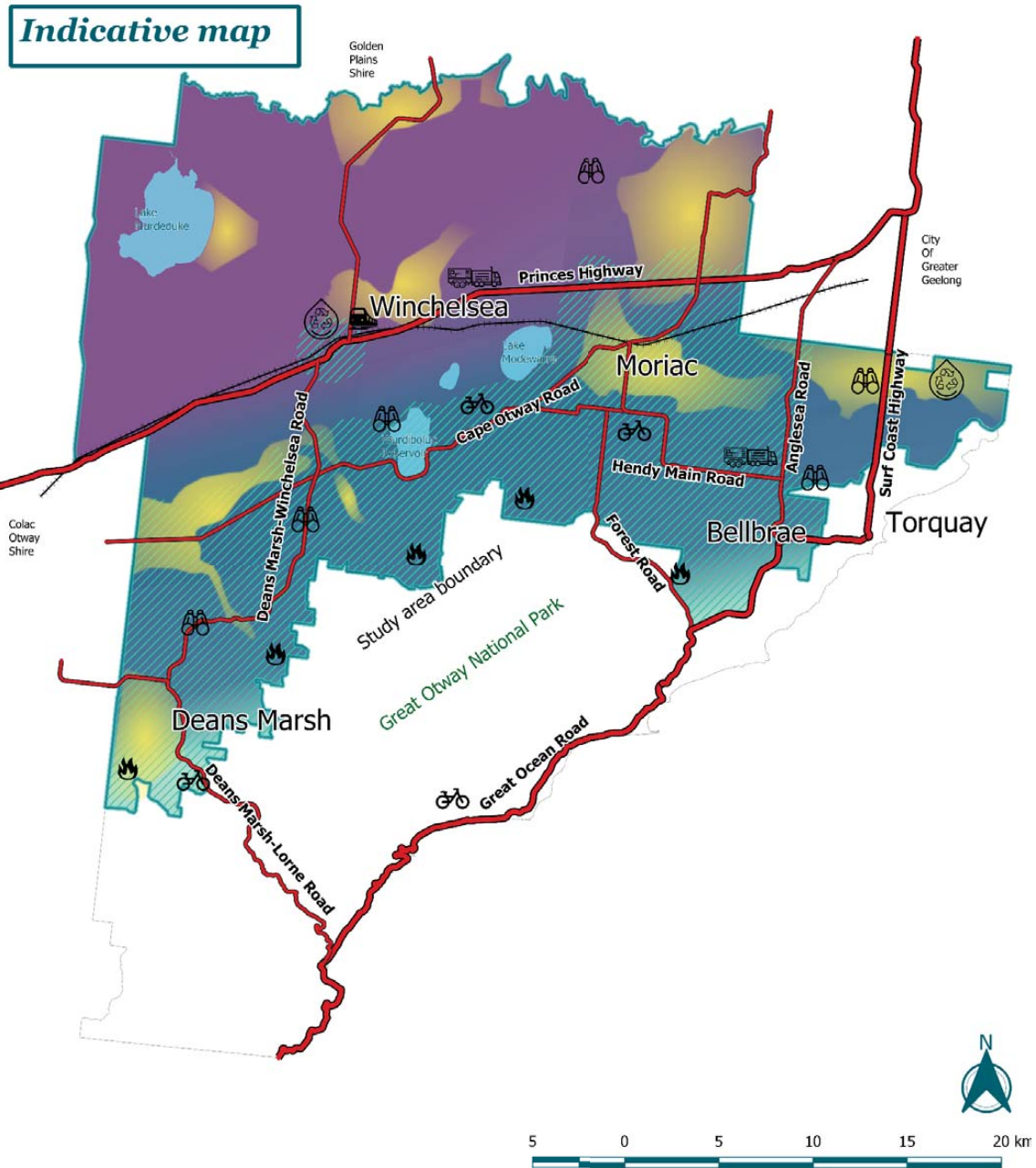
There are a number of areas throughout the Hinterland where strategic focus areas overlap. This reflects findings that many areas are suited to a broad range of complementary activities. E.g. the agribusiness and commercial farming and the tourism focus areas overlap on the Cape Otway Road.

The development of the maps has been informed by technical information regarding landscape and environmental assets, land capability, lot sizes, accessibility to transport, services, water and workforce and the like to direct uses to areas where they are most suited and are best supported.

It should be noted that the areas shown on the plan are for guidance and the borders are not fixed. Planning applications can be considered for land both within and outside the areas shown and will be considered on their merits. The areas indicate what the land is 'well suited to' based on location, access to key infrastructure, and land attributes.

The Strategic Framework map also identifies the key transport and tourist routes and important infrastructure that can help business to grow within the hinterland. The townships of Winchelsea, Moriac, Deans Marsh and Bellbrae are identified as focus areas for tourism and agritourism. These towns provide basic services, are located on identified tourist routes, and currently support a number of tourist destinations. The strategy seeks to grow these areas as activity hubs. The intention is not focused on the town itself but also the surrounding area, with the town symbolising the focal point.

The roundabout at the intersection of the Great Ocean Road and Forest Road has also been identified as an activity focus area. Directing development to these locations is intended to avoid ribbon development along key tourist routes. Clustering land use has the added benefit of businesses stimulating other businesses, and is also important in relation to bushfire risk management. It also assists the CFA with regard to deploying limited resources during emergency events if activities and development are geographically clustered and proximate to each other.



<b>Strategic focus areas</b>		<b>Icons</b>	
Intensive and commercial farming	Lakes	Access to key transport roads	High impact bushfire zone
Agribusiness and commercial farming	Highways	Access to rail transport	High value scenic vista area
Well suited to tourism activities	Main roads	Access to recycled water	Key cycle route
Hinterland Futures study area	Railway		
	Agricultural soil quality hotspots		
	Surf Coast Shire boundary		

Figure 3: Strategic Framework Map

## Areas Well Suited to Intensive and Commercial Farming

The Intensive and Commercial Farming Focus Area, shown in figure 4, features large land holdings, high quality soil and lower land prices compared with other parts of the hinterland. The productive soils and remoteness of much of this land from residential areas makes this area better suited to more intensive production. The area has access to Winchelsea, road freight, recycled water and the key road freight network including the Princes Highway. Endangered grasslands and Lake Murdeduke, which is an internationally significant wetland, are also features of this area.

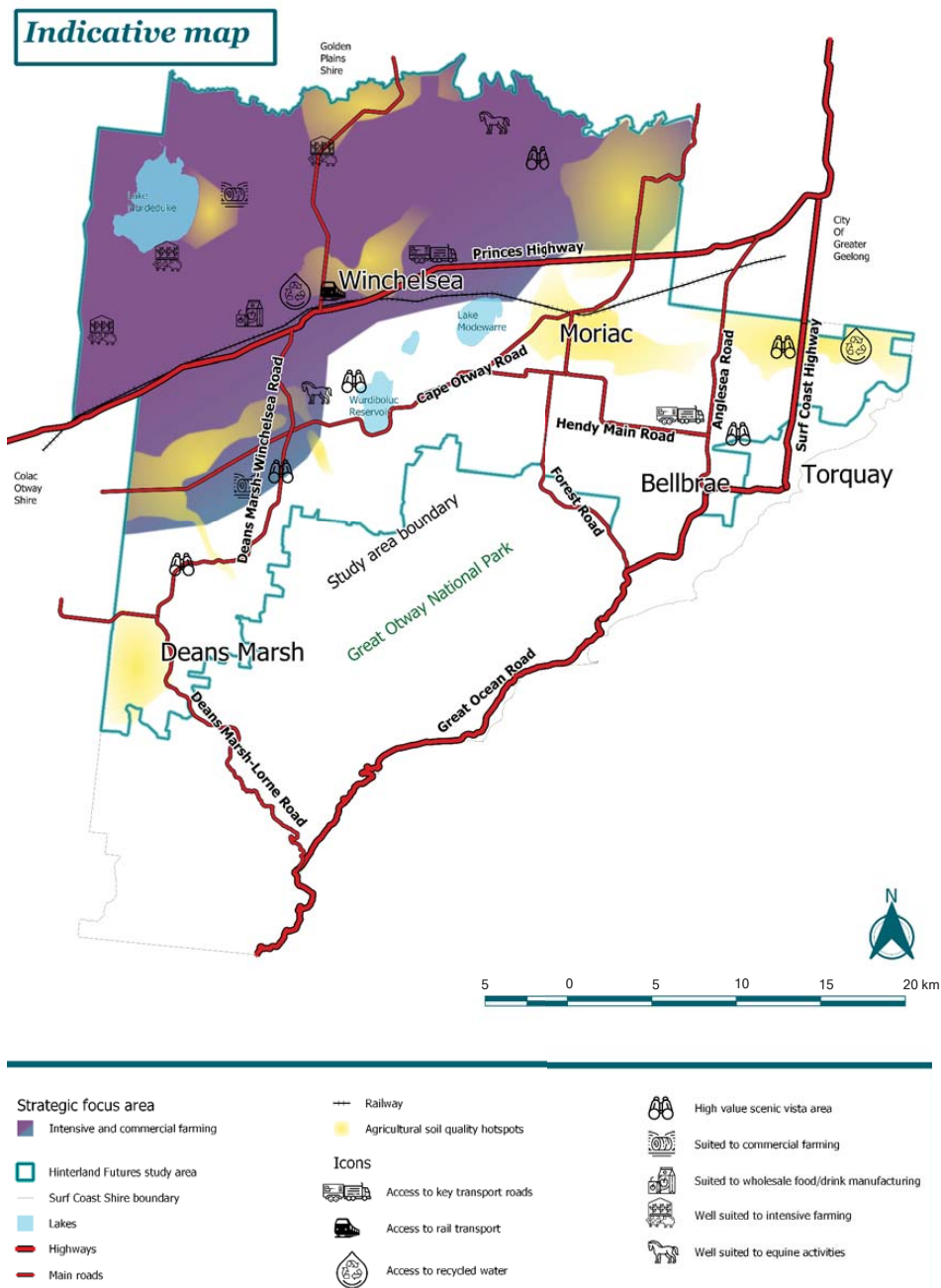


Figure 4: Areas well suited to intensive and commercial farming

## Areas Well Suited to Agribusiness and Commercial Farming

Areas well suited to agribusiness and commercial farming, shown in figure 5, are characterised by moderate-sized land holdings with marginal to good quality soil. The higher rainfall in the south western parts of this area and access to recycled water in the north east may support commercial farming. The area has access to the Princes Highway, Cape Otway and Anglesea Road and Torquay. Rolling hills and the backdrop of the Great Otway National Park are a feature of this area.

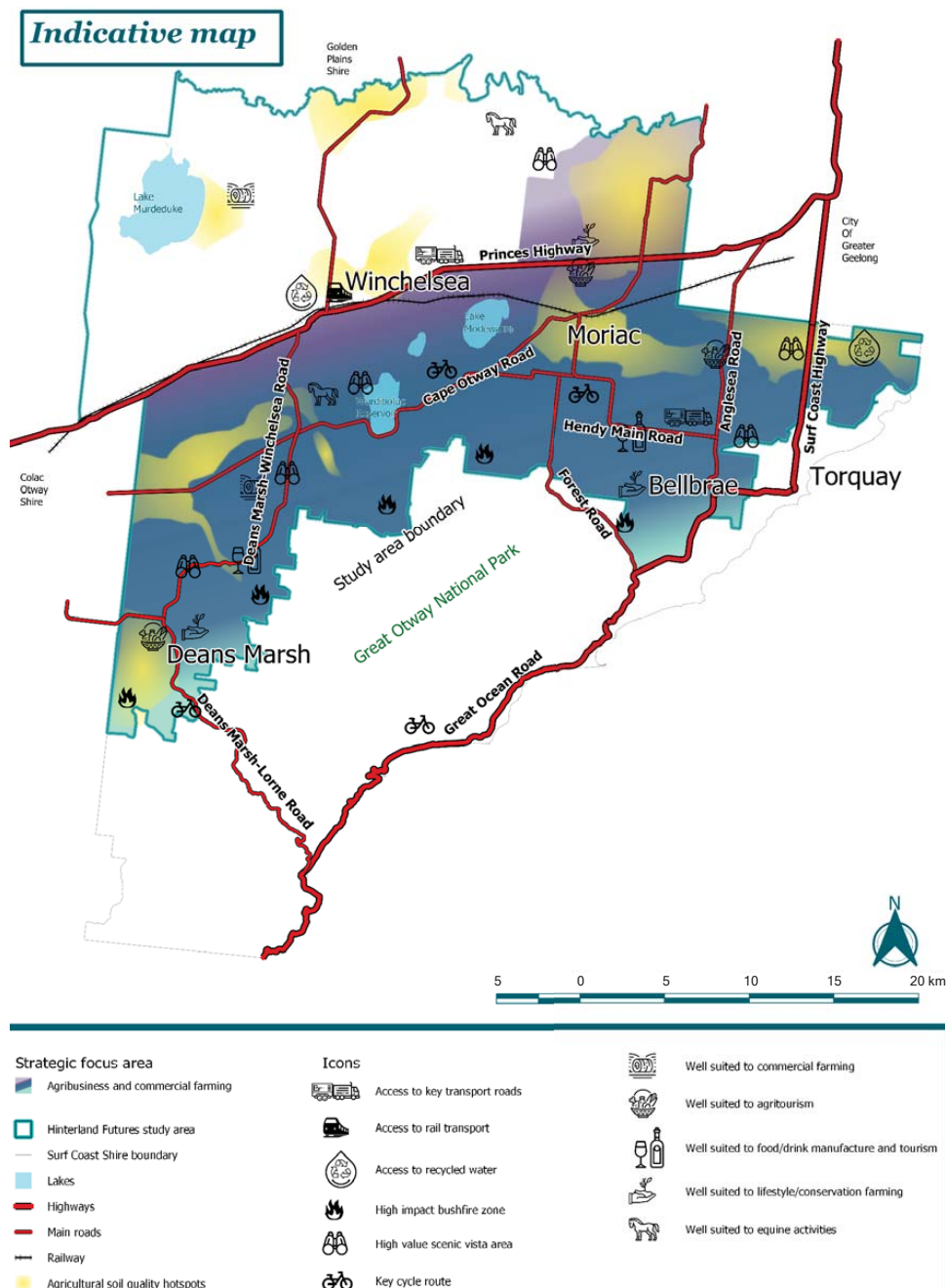


Figure 5: Areas well suited to agribusiness and commercial farming

## Areas Well Suited to Tourism

Areas well suited to tourism, shown in Figure 6, are characterised by a mixture of lot sizes (including smaller lots) with variable soil quality. The high coverage of indigenous vegetation and access to the Park lends itself to tourism-focused land use, when carefully balancing bushfire risk management and protection of environmental values. Land closest to the Park contains dense vegetation and is at high risk from bushfire. Tourism clusters are well suited to locate around Winchelsea, Moriac, Deans Marsh and Bellbrae as shown on the map.

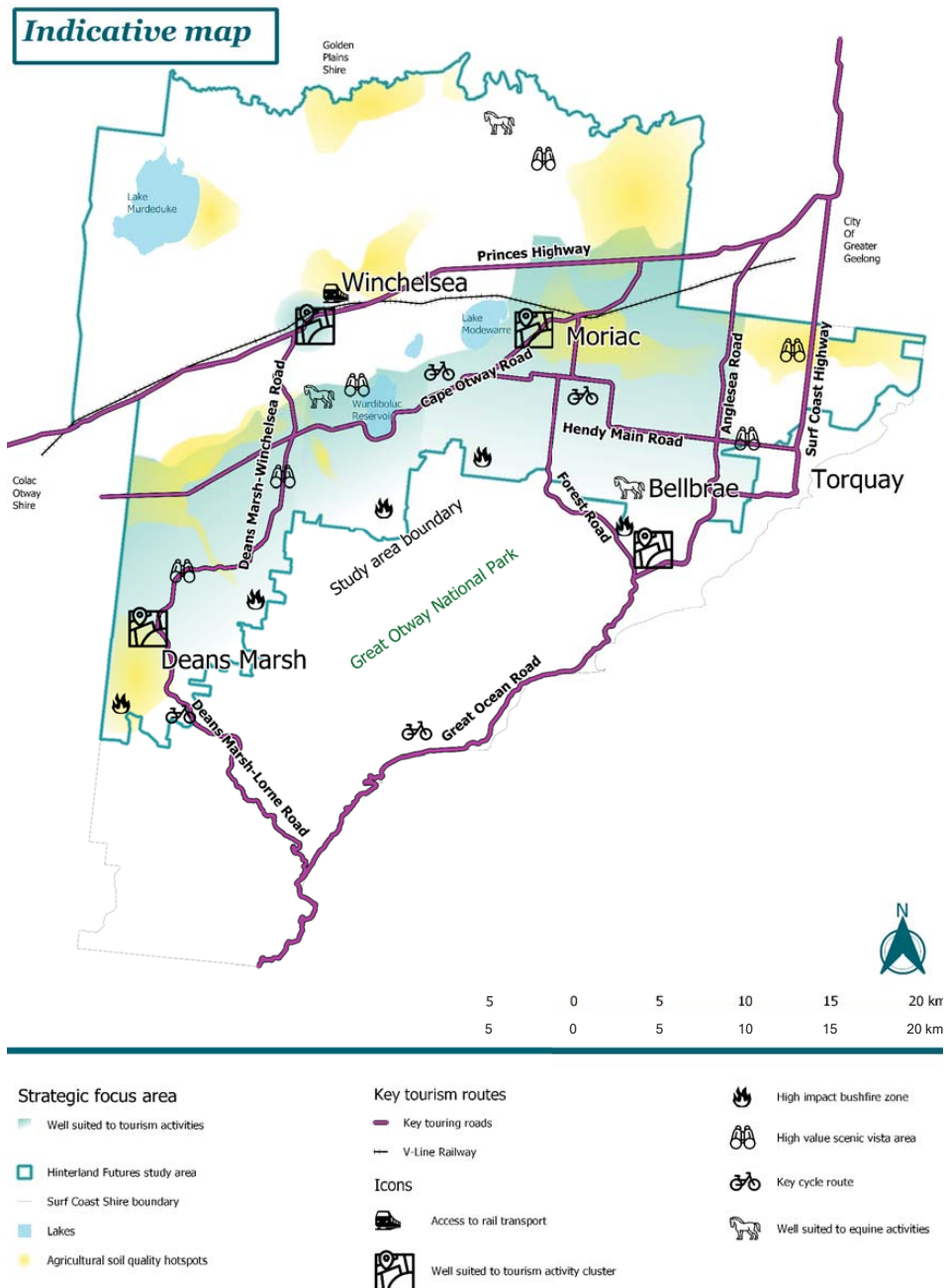


Figure 6: Areas well suited to tourism



## 9. ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following tables outline the actions necessary to implement the Strategy and achieve each objective, and identifies the lead agencies and timing.

### Objective 1:

Elevate the Value of our Environment and Rural Landscapes as the Defining Feature of the Surf Coast Hinterland and its Significance to the Local Economy.

PRIORITY ACTIONS	LEAD STAKEHOLDER	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDER	TIMELINE
<b>ECONOMY AND MARKETING</b>			
1.1. Support the valuable role agricultural producers have to play as stewards of the natural environment by enhancing communication networks and providing tools and guidelines on best practice land management.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	G21 Agribusiness Forum, Agriculture Victoria, Surf Coast Planning	Ongoing
<b>LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>			
1.2. Encourage nature based activities and agritourism in areas identified as high environmental and landscape value that preserve those values as a priority. New uses must be complementary and must address bushfire risk.	Surf Coast (Planning)	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	Short
1.3. Direct intensive agriculture to areas where identified high environmental and landscape values are not compromised.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short
1.4. Refine planning policy to encourage new uses that complement identified significant environmental, agricultural, and landscape assets.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short
1.5. Overcome land use conflicts by preparing planning policy to suitably direct uses to appropriate locations for access, land capability, risk, land sizes, and proximate to complementary land uses.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short
1.6. Strengthen planning policy to protect green breaks and encourage co-location of complementary land uses such as tourist facilities around key infrastructure.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short
1.7. Prevent ribbon development along the Great Ocean Road and strengthen protection of important vistas along its route. Investigate the need for guidelines for development on the Great Ocean Road.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short
1.8. Implement Strengthening Town Boundaries discussion paper actions to define settlements long term, contain urban growth and protect agricultural and environmental assets in the Shire.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short

Definition: Short: 1-2 years, Medium: 3-5 years, Long Term: 5 years+

PRIORITY ACTIONS	LEAD STAKEHOLDER	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDER	TIMELINE
LAND USE AND PLANNING			
<p><b>1.9.</b> Maintain the green breaks between Torquay and Mt Duneed Road and between Torquay and Bellbrae. Maintain the existing Farming Zone and encourage permitted uses in the green break between Torquay and Bellbrae which do not adversely impact on the Great Ocean Road or its landscape. Support the ongoing use of land for existing uses such as arts and small scale accommodation and for lifestyle/hobby farming. If new uses are proposed, encourage co-location with existing complementary uses.</p>	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short
<p><b>1.10.</b> Develop new local planning policy to guide the design and siting of development in rural areas, significant landscape areas and on major tourist routes to ensure there are no adverse impacts on significant environmental, agricultural, and landscape assets and they incorporate environmental sustainable development principles.</p>	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short

Definition: Short: 1-2 years, Medium: 3-5 years, Long Term: 5 years+

## Objective 2:

Encourage Agriculture and Innovative Businesses Displaying Sustainable Land Management Practices to Enhance our Reputation as a Forward Thinking Business Destination.

PRIORITY ACTIONS	LEAD STAKEHOLDER	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDER	TIMELINE
ECONOMY AND MARKETING			
2.1. Support the implementation of actions of the Sustainable Agribusiness Strategy for the G21 Region (2017-2021).	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Short
2.2. Initiate training and support to improve the skills of lifestyle farmers in sustainable land management, animal welfare and biosecurity.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Short-Medium
2.3. Develop a network to connect non-farming landowners with potential producers to increase access to and utilisation of existing productive agricultural land.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Short-Medium
2.4. Develop and promote case studies of innovative local businesses that align with the vision of the Hinterland Strategy.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Ongoing
2.5. Encourage the development of an agribusiness communication framework considering applications such as Farm Table, Farmer Exchange, G21 Virtual Hub and the Agri Collective.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Short-Medium
2.6. Collaborate with key partners including Deakin University, Marcus Oldham College and the Food and Agribusiness Network G21 Region on initiatives that increase the productive capacity of the Hinterland.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Medium

Definition: Short: 1-2 years, Medium: 3-5 years, Long Term: 5 years+

### Objective 3:

Stimulate Agritourism to Enhance the Surf Coast as a Visitor Destination.

PRIORITY ACTIONS	LEAD STAKEHOLDER	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDER	TIMELINE
<b>ECONOMY AND MARKETING</b>			
<b>3.1.</b> Support the actions of the Surf Coast Shire Local Food Program to encourage the growth of small to medium food production businesses.	Surf Coast (Planning)	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	Short-Medium
<b>3.2.</b> Encourage the development of new tourism products that incorporate locally grown and produced food.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Short-Medium
<b>3.3.</b> Connect small-scale food producers and agritourism experiences through the development of new or the enhancement of existing tourism trails.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	Surf Coast (Planning, Infrastructure); VicRoads	Medium-Long
<b>3.4.</b> Support the implementation of the Otway Harvest Trail marketing and action plan, especially in relation to expansion of their digital presence and brand collateral.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Short-Medium
<b>3.5.</b> Engage with small scale agrifood tourism businesses to facilitate connections and provide information to increase capacity & knowledge.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Short-Medium
<b>ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP</b>			
<b>3.6.</b> Advocate to the State Government to broaden the allowances for localised, small-scale aggregation of farm-gate produce to prevent ribbon development of farm-gate stalls.	Surf Coast (Planning)	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	Short
<b>LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>			
<b>3.7.</b> Review planning policy to support the use of existing small lots to develop innovative agritourism ventures and demonstration farms in association with agriculture.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short

Definition: Short: 1-2 years, Medium: 3-5 years, Long Term: 5 years+

## Objective 4:

Support Tourism Activities which Complement the Agricultural, Landscape, and Environmental Values of the Shire

PRIORITY ACTIONS	LEAD STAKEHOLDER	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDER	TIMELINE
<b>ECONOMY AND MARKETING</b>			
4.1. Encourage the development of tourism products in the hinterland which provide low-impact outdoor recreation activities, such as fishing, cycling, kayaking, and dedicated off-road cycling e.g. mountain-bike riding and cyclo cross and horse trails.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)		Medium
4.2. Secure a new signature event for the hinterland in the off-peak that meets bushfire management requirements and aligns with Great Ocean Road or regional (Winchelsea & Otways) destination branding.			Short-Medium
4.3. Develop tourist trails with a product or experience focus to enhance the visitor journey and connect inland destinations with the Great Ocean Road and key access routes.			Short-Medium
4.4. Undertake a range of hinterland promotions with a focus on food trails, arts, culture, heritage and food tourism.			Short-Medium
4.5. Work with Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism and Regional Roads Victoria to map the visitor journey and identify new hinterland itineraries and touring routes to raise awareness of Hinterland destinations off the Great Ocean Road including a review of directional and interpretive signage to raise awareness of hinterland destinations off the Great Ocean Road.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism; VicRoads	Medium
<b>ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP</b>			
4.6. Continue to advocate to State Government to broaden the scope for appropriate tourism opportunities and complementary uses in the Rural Conservation Zone that capitalise on and enhance the natural assets of the region and meet bushfire management requirements.			Short
<b>LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>			
4.7. Revise local planning policy to support the clustering of tourism/agrifood business by encouraging the development of key attractions in desired activation points throughout the hinterland.	Surf Coast (Planning)		Short

Definition: Short: 1-2 years, Medium: 3-5 years, Long Term: 5 years+

## Objective 5:

Secure Enabling Infrastructure to Deliver the Vision and Objectives of the Strategy

PRIORITY ACTIONS	LEAD STAKEHOLDER	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDER	TIMELINE
<b>ADVOCACY</b>			
5.1. Advocate for Cape Otway Road to become a Regional Roads Victoria managed road due to its increased profile as an alternative inland route to Lorne and destinations further along the Great Ocean Road.	Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	Surf Coast (Planning, Infrastructure)	Medium
5.2. Advocate to the State Government for upgrades to the road quality, pull-out lanes, bicycle lanes, and road network signage along State managed roads, in particular Deans Marsh-Lorne Road, Cape Otway Road, and Anglesea Road.	Surf Coast (Infrastructure)		Short-Medium
5.3. Seek funding to improve safety, including sealed shoulders, for Horseshoe Bend Road and Barrabool Road.	Surf Coast (Infrastructure)		Short
5.4. Informed by the Sealed Road Network Strategy, seek funding for improvements to the road network to enhance agricultural productivity.	Surf Coast (Infrastructure)		Medium-Long
5.5. Advocate to maximise the coverage of the NBN and other telecommunications services in the hinterland.	Surf Coast		Ongoing
5.6. Advocate for improved public transport services particularly along the Great Ocean Road and Geelong -Warrnambool rail line including the potential to service Moriac Station and connector road between the hinterland and coastal townships.	Surf Coast		Ongoing
<b>LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>			
5.7. Consider undertaking a Cycle Tourism Strategy that includes identifying key cycle tour routes for upgrade (including bike lanes) and the promotion of safe cycling.	Surf Coast (Infrastructure)	Surf Coast (Planning)	Ongoing
5.8. Support the development of innovative beneficial recycled water reuse schemes.	Surf Coast (Infrastructure)	Surf Coast (Planning)	Ongoing
5.9. In partnership with Barwon Water, explore the potential to provide access to recycled water to enhance agricultural and agritourism development in the hinterland that is consistent with the objectives of this strategy.	Barwon Water; Surf Coast (Eco Dev)	Surf Coast (Planning, Infrastructure)	Medium

Definition: Short: 1-2 years, Medium: 3-5 years, Long Term: 5 years+



# Part B

## 10. CONTEXT

### The Hinterland Economy

The hinterland encompasses about 60per cent of Surf Coast Shire and contributes an estimated \$478 million (38per cent to the overall \$1.25 billion economy). While this figure is significant, when compared on a per capita basis, the hinterland (\$37,400) does not perform as strongly as the Surf Coast Shire as a whole (\$42,500) or Victoria (\$68,681). Therefore, increasing per capita gross regional product presents a significant opportunity to grow the hinterland economy.

Driving this contribution of almost half a billion dollars are 3,218 jobs, predominantly in construction (615), agriculture forestry & fishing (512) public administration & safety (298) education (260) and accommodation & food services (241).

In total, the hinterland represents an estimated 35per cent of the 9,293 jobs on the Surf Coast. While 35per cent may, in some instances, be considered a significant contribution, there is a need to provide additional jobs in the hinterland just to keep pace with population growth. Projected population growth in the hinterland means generating 130 new jobs by 2036, if it is to retain a 35per cent contribution to total employment in the Surf Coast Shire.

However there is a significant opportunity for the hinterland to play a greater role in growing the economy and support the goals of increased population in Winchelsea. If the hinterland could grow its contribution to 40per cent of the jobs in the Shire, then it would have a total of 2,400 jobs by 2036, which is an increase of 670 jobs from 2011. This higher rate of contribution is a worthwhile and achievable goal for the hinterland economy. Given the prominence of the agriculture and tourism sectors, it is appropriate that this job creation will be via the inter-relationships that are already being developed between agriculture, manufacturing (such as food and beverage processing) and tourism (such as food and farm based tourism). Similarly, given the importance of our natural environment and rural landscapes, it is appropriate that this growth occur in “clean and green” sectors that add value to the agritourism offer of the area.

Note: With the boundaries of the hinterland (in terms of data capture) extending to the fringes of Torquay, there is potential for this figure (as well as employment, exports and value add activity) to be over represented, particularly as it includes West Coast Business Park and areas of Coombes Road (Torquay).

### Exports and Value Add

The hinterland currently generates about \$310 million in exports annually. In this context an export is any good or service exported outside of the Surf Coast Hinterland Region that has been generated by local businesses/organisations. Therefore, goods and services provided to Anglesea or Geelong are classified as regional exports. Perhaps not surprisingly, the agriculture forestry & fishing sector is the main driver of regional exports, contributing \$116 million (37.4 percent). The construction sector is also a significant contributor, representing \$83 million (27percent) of hinterland exports, while manufacturing exports are estimated at \$35 million (11.3 percent).

Of interest is the predominance of the rental, hiring and real estate sector when considering value added activity. Value added activity represents the marginal economic value that is added by each industry sector in a defined region, and is the major contributor to gross regional product. It is often viewed as the best measure of a growing economy. The rental, hiring and real estate sector contributes an estimated \$82 million (19.5 percent) of value added activity in the hinterland. The predominant driver of this sector is the appreciation of



land values resulting in very little flow-on impacts in terms of employment and wages. Construction at \$74.3 million (17.6 percent) and agriculture forestry & fishing, \$65.6 million (17.6 percent) are the next largest contributors. In contrast to the rental, hiring and real estate sector (36 jobs), agribusiness and construction generate over 1,100 jobs combined.

An opportunity presents to facilitate employment outcomes in sectors with higher value-add. The rental, hiring and real estate sector currently accounts for 1.1 per cent of hinterland employment even though it generates 19.5 percent of value-add activity however provides no benefit to agricultural productivity. A continued shift to 'higher order' sectors should be encouraged to align with the existing strengths and the increasing skills profile of the population, as well as tourism potential of the area. In this regard creating employment outcomes in sectors such as food and/or beverage manufacturing and professional science and technology would both generate additional jobs and boost productivity.

## Agribusiness

The recent Sustainable Agribusiness Strategy for the G21 Region conveyed a wide divergence in farm scale on a G21 regional level, identifying that 48 per cent of farms have an annual turnover of less than \$50,000 each and, between them, only produce 4 per cent of the total value of our primary production. Conversely, 4 per cent of farms have an annual turnover greater than \$1 million each, but produce 45 per cent of all value. Therefore, while the Surf Coast landscape is dominated by small farms, a very small number of large farms dominate the economic contribution. Given mixed farming and grazing are the dominant forms of agricultural land use, accounting for 86 per cent of agricultural lots in the hinterland by number and 77 per cent by land area, increasing the productivity of this sector, and in turn the land area it comprises, represents a significant opportunity.

In addition, a key focus in stimulating the hinterland agribusiness economy should be to support the lowest-output farming properties to increase their output. This may come through increased access to best-practice land management information resources, development of landholder discussion groups and support networks, and reviewing planning policy to enable more diverse agri-food and tourism operations on small and under-utilised farming zone lots.

## Soils and Land Use

The Surf Coast hinterland is characterised by distinct soil regions. The relatively flat volcanic plains in the north west have been well suited to broadacre cropping and expansive farming. Pockets of fertile, texture contrast soils around the Barrabool Hills and Deans Marsh lend themselves to highly productive, pasture-based operations, berry and fruit production. The lighter sedimentary plains surrounding the Thompson Valley are well placed to support market gardens and niche artisan agriculture due to their higher sand content and lower nutrient holding capacity. This region holds strong appeal for lifestyle farming as it is close to the coast and regional centres.

The distinct soil characteristics heavily influence the productive capacity of the land and agricultural practices are adapted accordingly.

Subdivision of Farming Zone land in each of the five landscape precincts is restricted to the minimum sizes (hectares) shown in figure 7 below.

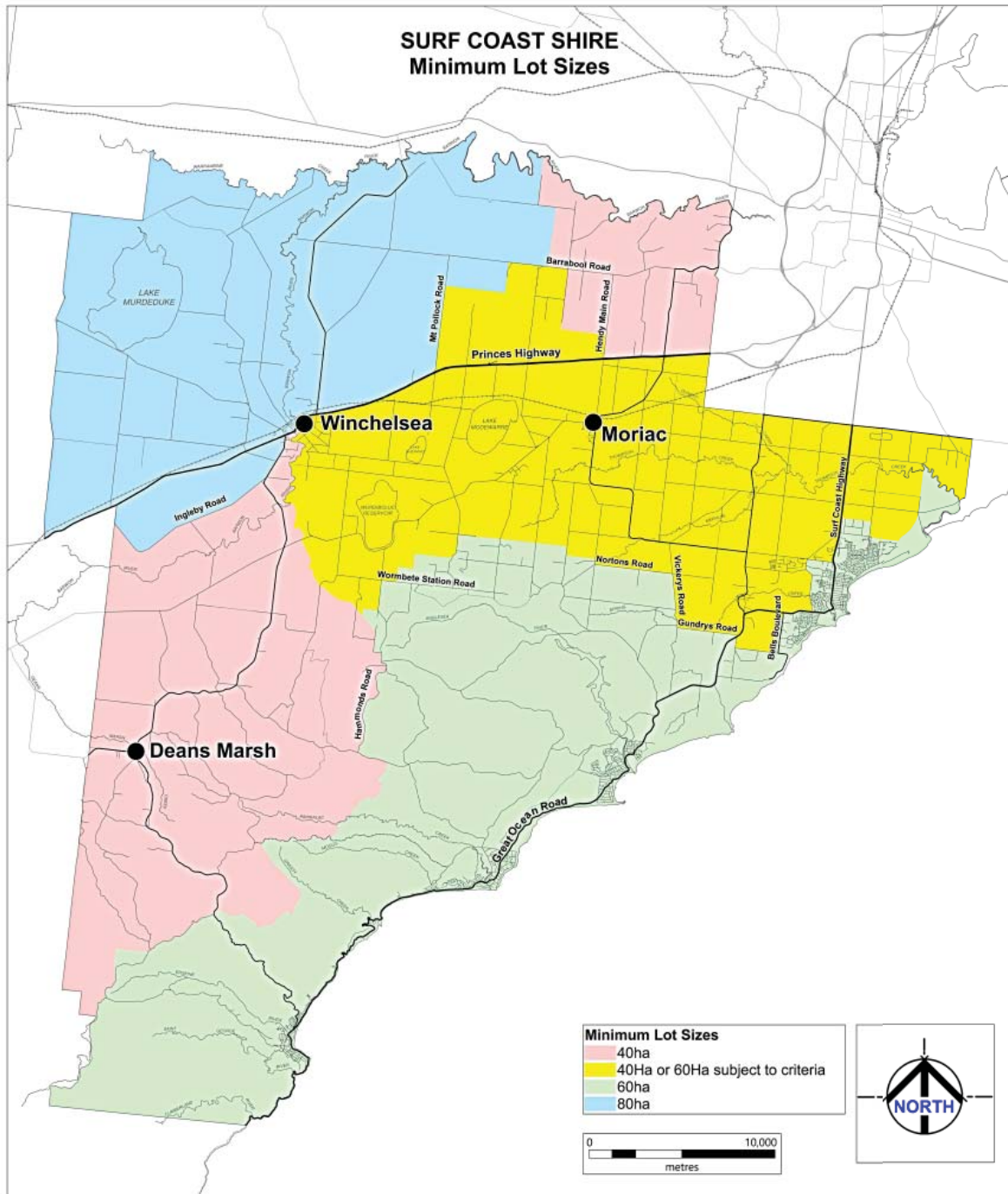


Figure 7: Minimum Lot sizes

Mixed farming and grazing - with/without infrastructure - are the dominant forms of agricultural land use, accounting for 86per cent of agricultural lots in the hinterland area by number, and 77per cent by land area. When livestock production - both sheep and cattle - are included the proportion of lots and land consumed rises to 95per cent and 93per cent respectively.

Land use practices in the hinterland have traditionally been driven by soil type, topography and water availability.

Existing land use practices in the hinterland can be grouped into the following categories:

### > Intensive Farming

Intensive farming involves importing considerable proportions of animal or plant nutritional requirements and is predominantly structure-based (livestock housing, feed pads, glasshouses etc). Intensive farming operations have traditionally been directed towards the north-west of the hinterland due to larger sized lots allowing for buffer distances and direct access to arterial roads. Intensive farming operations are often more demanding on resources like water and soil, as well as infrastructure like roads than other commercial farming enterprises and require a high level of control over growing conditions. This means that they can play a key role in ensuring food security in the face of climate change.

In the future, intensive animal farming practices will remain best suited to the north-west. As recycled water irrigation districts are developed, opportunity arises for new intensive farming operations like horticulture to emerge in new areas like the Thompson Valley. Importantly, guidelines embedded in planning policy need to be developed to ensure these operations complement the surrounding landscape.

### > Commercial Farming

Considered traditional farming, this category includes broadacre crop and hay production, grazing livestock production, fruit orchards and olive groves, market gardens, vineyards, commercial flower production and nurseries. These farming practices are dependent on the land's inherent productive capacity, which is linked to soil type, topography and annual rainfall.

Commercial farming operations of varying scales are spread across the hinterland and play a key role in maintaining the valuable rural landscapes. As commercial farming is the second largest employer in the hinterland, ensuring that commercial farming operations remain viable is critical to the hinterland economy. Commercial farming operations can be supported by mitigating land-use conflicts, maintaining transport infrastructure and promoting best-practice land management to all landholders.

### > Lifestyle Farming

Lifestyle farms are often situated on smaller lots, where land-owners derive their main source of income off-farm, and includes farming where commercial production of agricultural commodities is not the main driver for land use decisions. Lifestyle farms are valued not only for their capacity to produce agricultural commodities, but also for intrinsic lifestyle and aesthetic values. Conservation of native vegetation is often a high priority for lifestyle farm owners.

Due to the size of lots and the motivation for land ownership, lifestyle farms are highly represented in the low-output farms category. While lifestyle farms have the potential to enhance the rural landscape vistas, they may require a higher level of guidance than commercial farms, as lifestyle farms are an entrance point to rural land

holding for property owners from non-rural backgrounds. Additional information resources and farm discussion groups can support the upskilling of lifestyle farm landholders in best-practice land management, as well as potentially lifting the output of some of these farms.

Similar to lifestyle farms, banked land and absentee landholder lots are largely represented in the low-output farm bracket. Providing resources and improved planning policy to encourage higher levels of land use and the development of niche agribusiness operations is a distinct opportunity. This will support some of these properties progressing to higher output farm categories.

### > Agroforestry and Non-farming related Conservation Landholdings

Conservation-based land holdings are defined as land where conservation and revegetation of native vegetation is the primary purpose. This can include emissions offset sites, state and national parks and privately-owned conservation blocks. Agroforestry and emissions offset plantations can be expected to increase once Australia reinstates a standardised Emissions Trading Scheme.

Conservation land-holdings can play a role in enhancing the visual beauty of the hinterland. These practices can be beneficial to the development of visual buffers to reduce the impact of intensive farming structures and other land uses.

Agroforestry (commercial forestry on farms) may have an environmental benefit but require the ability to harvest regularly to achieve a commercial outcome. If this is done sustainably, the environmental benefit is still captured e.g. by rotations and not full scale clearing of the land.

Revegetation and agroforestry practices in the region are promoted by a number of community groups including the internationally recognised Otway Agroforestry Network (OAN) and Tree Project. These not-for-profit groups who work with local farmers to establish and manage multi-purpose trees and revegetation projects on farms. These projects help create biological infrastructure to underpin environmental and agricultural sustainability.

This work demonstrates collaborative ways where a diverse range of revegetation projects can be integrated into existing farming systems to support and enhance agricultural production and land management practices, This in turn drives further economic benefits and enhances landscape values.

## Tourism

As the start of the Great Ocean Road the Surf Coast, with its proximity to Geelong and Melbourne, its beaches, national parks, many recreational opportunities, major events and beautiful natural environment, is a tourism drawcard of regional Victoria.



Figure 8: Tourism Visitation Map

In 2017, Tourism Research Australia estimated the Surf Coast welcomed more than 2.12 million visitors who stayed a total of 2.7 million nights and spent \$433 million. About 53per cent of visitors are day trippers, 44per cent are domestic overnight visitors and 2per cent are international visitors.

The Surf Coast receives 40per cent of the 5.29 million visitors who travel the Great Ocean Road annually and spend over \$1.2billion per year. It is recognised a key national and international tourism destination. Figure 8 depicts the close proximity of Surf Coast Shire and its hinterland to Melbourne.

The role the hinterland can play in receiving these visitors and reducing pressure on the coast is significant. Currently however, the Surf Coast hinterland receives an estimated 3per cent (67,479) visitors on average per year. About 71per cent of these visitors are day trippers, 28.6per cent are domestic overnight travellers and international visitation accounts for less than 1per cent.

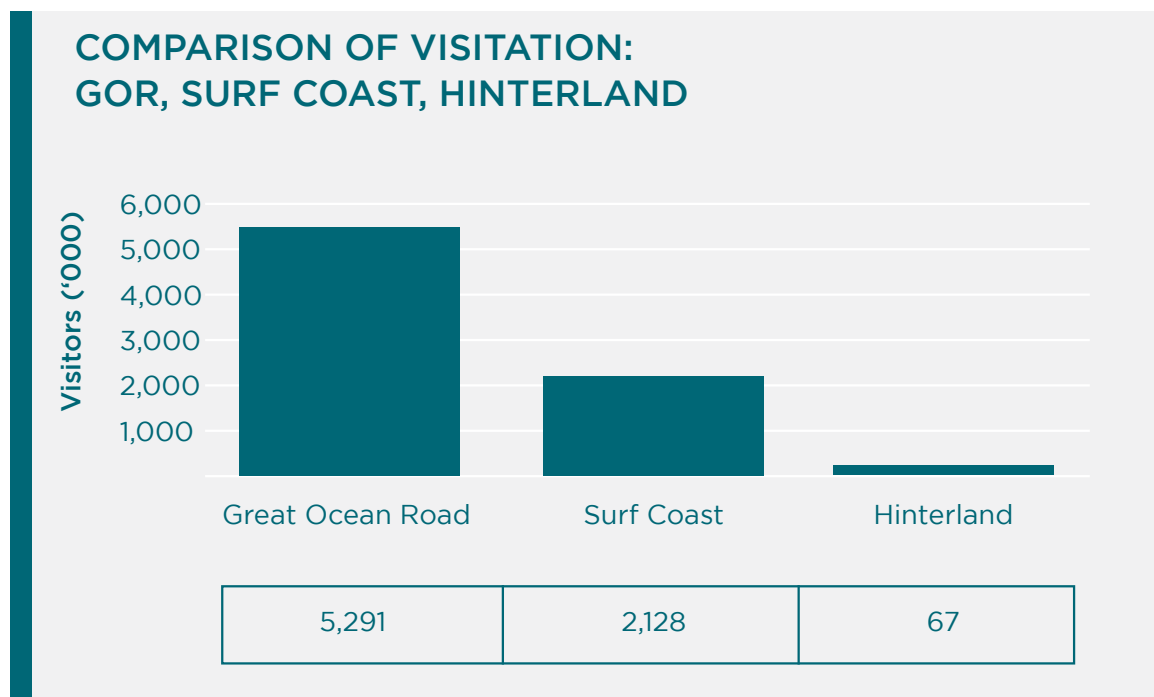


Figure 9: Visitation Comparison  
Source: Tourism Research Australia

It should be noted that the tourism visitation to the hinterland is so low that a visitation average of 10 years must be used to get to the minimum statistically viable sample size.

While a larger volume of visitors might travel through the hinterland to access the Surf Coast and the Great Ocean Road, the evidence shows that very few are stopping. Figure 9 above depicts the comparison of visitors to the hinterland against Surf Coast and Great Ocean Road.

#### Why do people visit the hinterland now?

More than half (52per cent) of all day or overnight visitors to the Surf Coast hinterland come to 'visit friends and relatives' which is also the most popular activity.

The tourism activities listed in the table are of low volume and typically very low yield in terms of expenditure and time spent in the region.

The second most popular activity 'Outdoor/Nature' mostly consisted of people going to the beach. This suggests that a typical visitor would visit the hinterland to pick up friends or family and then recreate outside the hinterland region on the coast.

For the region to become a renowned visitor destination, more investment is required in a range of quality tourism experiences and activities ideally focused around a social activity. See figure 10.

Reasons to visit the Hinterland	Most Popular Activities
Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR) (52per cent)	Social Activities (73per cent) - VFR, eating out & sightseeing
Holiday (35per cent)	Outdoor / Nature (21per cent) - go to the beach, national park or farm
Business or Other (12per cent)	Active outdoor sports (18per cent) - playing sport, fishing, cycling or golf.

Figure 10: Tourism Activities

Source: Tourism Research Australia

Tourism activities in the Surf Coast Hinterland can be broadly divided into two categories:

### > Agritourism

Agritourism can operate both commercial agricultural or food/beverage processing operations combined with a tourism experience.

Examples of agritourism ventures include farms which incorporate a dining experience, wineries which operate a cellar-door, berry picking and farm gate sales.

Regions with strong agritourism sectors, such as South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula and the Yarra Valley, see visitors spend more money per visit. Tourism Research Australia estimates the average expenditure per visit to the Fleurieu Peninsula at \$694 while in the Yarra Valley visitors spend \$424 per trip. In contrast, average visitor expenditure on the Surf Coast is \$378 per trip. It should be noted that this figure is for the whole of Surf Coast Shire, as expenditure estimates for the hinterland were not possible to obtain due to the low level of visitation.

In support of developing the agritourism sector an international visitor survey conducted for Tourism Australia in 2013, cited "good food, wine, local cuisine and produce" as the third most commonly cited deciding factor (38 per cent) among foreign travellers. This is ranked as a priority ahead of "world class beauty and natural environment" (4th) and "interesting attractions to visit" (5th) and spectacular coastal scenery (9th) when considering a destination.

This suggests that a beautiful natural landscape on its own is not a key attractor in its own right. Diversifying tourist expenditure in agritourism has the potential to flow benefits through a variety of industries, creating jobs and new growth in agriculture, manufacturing and transport. The Surf Coast hinterland's current lack of diversity in agritourism offerings is limiting its potential to become a strong agritourism region.

This opportunity is particularly evident in gourmet food and beverage production, which, if developed, could strengthen and broaden the Surf Coast economy, supporting the hospitality industry as a year round product.

### Food/Beverage Processing

Food and beverage processing in the hinterland consists of several wineries and makers of smallgoods, jams, cordials and preserves. These facilities are either very small in scale or directly linked to agricultural production on the property.

While these examples, might be considered agritourism, there is a much broader range of business types in this category that may not be linked to an agricultural use, but do provide a substantive tourism experience.

### Otway Harvest Trail

The Otway Harvest Trail (OHT) is an existing local producers' trail located in the Great Ocean Road hinterland. Members include businesses that produce and/or sell local farm-origin food and beverage products, as well as other goods like homewares and wool; restaurants; accommodation; and other tourism activities.

The OHT is a member-driven and volunteer run group has built an audience and visitation into the area and has created an environment for producers to work together. The Trail has grown from less than 20 members in 2009 to 65 members in 2018, supported by a dedicated website, brochure and 'Otway Harvest Twilight Festa' event.

Member businesses are situated throughout the Surf Coast and Colac Otway region. This allows the best clustering of complementary product and acknowledges the fact that visitors to the region take no notice of shire boundaries.

Otway Harvest Trail producers are now exporting their products to retailers and restaurants in Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Sydney.

Development of the Trail is guided by a strategy, business plan and marketing plan. Several key projects identified through to 2021 are expanding the digital presence, brand collateral (photography, video, business profiles) and implementing a three year marketing plan.

The future development of the OHT needs to be understood by Council and supported where possible.



## > Tourism

This category represents every other type of tourism experience which does not incorporate agricultural production into their land management.

Examples of non-agricultural tourism attractions in the hinterland are accommodation, Barwon Park Mansion, the Great Ocean Road Chocolaterie & Ice Creamery, and LiveWire Park.

Future development in this area might also consider cheese making, gallery spaces, function venues, day spas, horse trail rides, Segway tours, events, coffee roasters, micro-breweries, wildlife parks, cultural products and 'destination' restaurants.

Specific opportunities relating to food/beverage processing, accommodation and events are outlined below.

There are limited opportunities to develop cideries, distilleries, coffee roasters, breweries and cheese makers, due to restrictions in the current planning scheme. Allowing a broader range of food and beverage production needs to be considered in the planning scheme.

### Tourism Accommodation

With the exception of several motels in Bellbrae and Winchelsea, accommodation facilities in the Surf Coast hinterland are primarily B&B and small cottages. There are an estimated 60 properties currently available for rent on AirBnB in the hinterland.

There are eight larger-group accommodation facilities, including camps and cottage style accommodation combined with a meeting space for corporate retreats and special events (eg weddings). These venues are mostly clustered in the Pennyroyal Valley. In Winchelsea, there is one caravan park and one free RV 48 hour stop.

The style of accommodation is fairly similar, with little diversity and a tendency to cater for a domestic, budget, visitor market.

The estimated total number of available beds in the hinterland is 450 on any given night. The amount and diversity of accommodation is not currently enough to support the hinterland as a renowned visitor destination.

There is an opportunity to grow the tourism accommodation sector, particularly in relation to 4+ star accommodation in larger facilities to complement the existing offering.

Much of the land to the north and east of the Great Otway National Park is of poorer soil quality, containing a mixture of smaller farming lot sizes, with many supporting significant native vegetation. A range of accommodation types would be suitable in these areas, taking advantage of the national park and agritourism offering located nearby.

There are several larger properties in this area with adequate land area to accommodate a larger facility. The key management issues will be siting the development appropriately within the landscape while meeting any environmental and bushfire standards.

It should be noted that any accommodation proposal will need to consider bushfire risk, particularly if located near areas of increased hazard. On-site managers with emergency management plans, and a readiness to close on extreme fire danger days could be some of the requirements for accommodation proposals in areas identified as having high fire risk.

## Events as a Motivation to Visit

Events staged in Surf Coast Shire generate over \$105 million in expenditure annually and are attended by over 250,000 people and viewed by a global estimated audience of 32 million people.

The hinterland currently supports a number of small to medium sized events in Deans Marsh, Bambra, Winchelsea and Moriac, which have a distinct community flavour. While signature events such as Amy's Grand Fondo, Great Ocean Otway Classic Ride, Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race and others travel through the hinterland, their main benefit is received in the coastal townships of Torquay, Lorne and Anglesea.

Regional events can be used to stimulate visitation to the hinterland and there is an opportunity to identify and secure events that provide a social activity, utilise key visitor attractions, generate economic outcomes and align with the type of experiences a visitor might expect in the hinterland. Events which help balance the seasonality of visitation in the region should be encouraged to entice people to visit year round. In particular, events are encouraged which promote visitation in the cooler months of the year and outside the declared bushfire season.

An increase in accommodation stocks would leverage further economic benefit.

There is also future potential for the hinterland to benefit from the large number of events held on the coast through supply of accommodation when occupancy is at its peak or as an 'add-on' activity for event patrons while in the region.

## Environment and Landscape

The landscape setting is the greatest attribute available to the Surf Coast Shire, featuring open and uncluttered rural landscapes, rolling hills, dense bushland, tree lined creeks and lakes with extensive bird life. The hinterland enjoys the Great Otway National Park as a tree clad backdrop, connecting the hinterland to the internationally renowned Great Ocean Road with its dramatic coastline and tourist towns. The beauty of the landscape attracts entrepreneurial landowners who bring innovation and fresh business ideas. The close proximity to Melbourne makes the hinterland very accessible.

The Shire also contains rich and diverse environmental assets including wetlands of international significance, endangered grasslands and large expanses of heathland and bushland that provide habitat for many threatened species. These environmental assets are an intrinsic part of the Shire's landscape values, which is reflected in the lower land values in depleted areas.

Native grasslands located in the northern and western parts of the Shire are recognised nationally as being among the most threatened vegetation types. They are highly fragmented and have been largely cleared for agriculture, with patches generally remaining around rocky outcrops that can be difficult to farm. Farming activities such as grazing can be compatible with native grasslands provided they are not excessively grazed or disturbed. Due to their significance, landowners with native grasslands have an opportunity to manage their asset for a return, such as through the EcoMarkets program for native vegetation offsets.

The natural environment provides important ecosystem services, including soil stability, water purification and clean air all of which are required for sustainable and productive agriculture.

The Surf Coast farming community embraces our natural environment, with a large proportion of landowners actively involved in community land regeneration groups. For example, the Otway Agroforestry Network has become a national leader in combining conservation with improved land management practices to make a sustainable income. Increases in agroforestry and sustainable farming practices have resulted in a landscape scale increase in native vegetation coverage, particularly in the Deans Marsh, Bambra and Pennyroyal areas. Their practices are addressing many land degradation issues and are improving soil and water quality, targeting weeds and planting for erosion and salinity management. They help to highlight the importance of sustainable land management.

## Recycled Water

Recycled water in the Shire is generated at the Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Black Rock, Lorne and Winchelsea water reclamation plants.

The two main potential sources of recycled water for the hinterland are the reclamation plants at Winchelsea and Black Rock.

Black Rock is Barwon Water's largest water reclamation plant (WRP) and treats sewage from the greater Geelong region, Bellarine Peninsula and Torquay. It is located near Breamlea close to Torquay, with the Thompson Valley further to the west.

The Black Rock WRP produces both Class A and Class C recycled water and discharges up to 20,000 megalitres or million litres of recycled water into the ocean via an ocean outfall each year. To put this into context: 20 GL of water is sufficient to irrigate more than 2,000 hectares of crop/pasture and horticultural land. On average, about 1,200 megalitres of Class C recycled water (or 6 per cent of the available recycled water) is currently used by properties from Barwon Heads in the east to Torquay in the west to grow turf, flowers, pasture for grazing and horticultural crops, as well as to irrigate golf courses.

Class A recycled water is available for supplying to residential housing in the Armstrong Creek and Torquay North growth areas for domestic use like toilet flushing and garden watering, and watering sports grounds and parks. Some Class A recycled water is also supplied to intensive farming north of Torquay and is largely used for growing flowers, turf, and high value fresh produce.

The Winchelsea WRP is a relatively small plant and produces about 110 megalitres of Class C recycled water each year. At Winchelsea, the recycled water is used on-site to irrigate tree lots, at the Winchelsea Golf Club and by the Surf Coast Shire Council to irrigate the Eastern Reserve. The opportunity for increased recycled water with the growth of Winchelsea will provide an opportunity to the agribusinesses north of Winchelsea in the commercial farming areas.

Barwon Water has recently adjusted its priorities from being a water utility to a leader of the region's prosperity and in doing so, set a zero waste target. This will involve turning wastes into productive resources in a sustainable way that help grow the regional economy, continuously improve productivity, attract new industries to the region and create new job opportunities.

This direction is strongly aligned to a goal for the Hinterland Strategy, which is for rural land to be used productively and sustainably, while retaining its environmental values.

The zero waste target will involve utilising all water resources for their highest and best use, including reusing 100 per cent of the recycled water produced at Barwon Water's reclamation plants.

The use of an additional 20,000 million litres of recycled water per year will require an increase in the number of smaller horticultural, agricultural and recreational customers like the ones currently supplied by Barwon Water, and the supply of Class A water to residential developments in Armstrong Creek and Torquay North. Importantly, the large volume to be used will also require a step-change to more significant recycled water uses including large-scale agricultural or horticultural schemes.

An early step in helping to meet Barwon Water's recycled water target is developing recycled water use on 100 hectares of Barwon Water's land holding around the Black Rock water reclamation plant.

Barwon Water recently called for Expression of Interests, releasing its Agribusiness and Recycled Water Opportunities Black Rock Water Reclamation Plant Expression of Interest in February 2018 and subsequently Winchelsea Water Treatment Plant in December 2018. This project is looking to stimulate productive recycled

water use on the land immediately surrounding the plant and importantly help inform long term, strategic opportunities for the Thompson Valley and hinterland.

The Surf Coast Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 has an objective of improving the reuse of resources with an outcome that “recycled water is used to support agribusiness appropriate to the Shire”. The Plan says this will be achieved by working “in partnership with relevant stakeholders to investigate the feasibility of recycled water to support agriculture in the Thompson Valley and other rural areas”. There is an opportunity to explore this in partnership with Barwon Water.

The study will align with the Sustainable Agribusiness Strategy for the G21 Region (2017 - 2022) which has a strategy to “encourage recycling of key resources to create value-added opportunities for the agribusiness industry”. This is to be addressed by “investigating the feasibility of extending reticulated water to rural areas to facilitate growth of the agribusiness industry and climate change resilience.”

Further, the study aligns with the Geelong Economic Futures 2017 report published by the Centre for Regional and Rural Futures, Deakin University in partnership with CoGG. The report identifies and analyses five emerging economic opportunities in the region with strong credentials for attracting large-scale investment and in turn creating sustainable economic futures.

One of the opportunities is “irrigated agriculture using secure recycled water supplies” to provide high-value farming and food services. The key to realising the opportunity is the provision of high-security water which in turn can drive secure farming of more profitable export focused crops and value-adding food services. The report also notes the opportunity needs to be underpinned by commercial investment principles including being led by market demand and not led by the supply of recycled water, as has traditionally been the case when the public sector has attempted to develop schemes. The project also needs to be commercially viable in scale.

The study will also consider the work completed in the RMCG report from 2009 which looked at recycled water use in the Thompson Valley east of Anglesea Road, which is only a small portion of the hinterland area.

## Water Reuse

Apart from Barwon Water projects, there is also potential for private businesses to develop their own recycled water plants and beneficial water irrigation schemes. Where there are economies of scale, privately operated recycled water plants open up opportunities for irrigation and increased production in locations where reticulated water supply is not available or too expensive to use on agricultural land.

## Reticulated Water and Sewerage

The rural nature of the hinterland means that a large part of this area is not served by the reticulated water network. This is also in part due to tapping restrictions to reticulation mains only. Given the treatment cost and high quality water output at reservoirs in the hinterland, it is likely that Southern Rural Water will continue to receive license applications for groundwater extraction to serve agribusiness. Alternative water provision options that may provide existing and new agribusiness include a new recycled water network. Presently, Winchelsea is the only township in the hinterland area that has access to recycled water (Class C).

Reticulated sewerage is only provided to some townships in the hinterland. Opportunities to expand the reticulated sewerage system more broadly within the hinterland are more likely to occur where there are clustering of uses to ensure viability of any new service provision.

## Road and Cycling Infrastructure

The car is the primary mode of transport in the hinterland. However, the transport infrastructure is not of a sufficient quality to accommodate high volumes of traffic, especially along the Lorne Deans Marsh Road, which is experiencing higher demand and is a key connection with Great Ocean Road.

The Great Ocean Road is the primary tourist route through the Shire and whilst it is predominantly a coastal route, its connection to the hinterland must be strengthened to support rural agribusiness enterprises and tourist related activities. Other notable roads that require attention include Hendy Main Road (main road between Torquay and Moriac), Cape Otway Road (main inland road to Winchelsea South, connecting to Deans Marsh Road) and Mount Duneed Road (which defines the northern municipal boundary with Geelong). Many of the unsealed roads are unsuited to tourist traffic. The Pennyroyal Valley has a large cluster of tourism-related businesses on unsealed roads and access is problematic.

Cycling, both on and off-road, is also problematic throughout the area. There are no bike paths and inadequate bike lanes for safe cycling from towns into the hinterland, which limits accessibility and choice of alternative and more sustainable modes of transport. A future project could prepare a Cycle Tourism Strategy to identify key cycle tour routes and infrastructure requirements to promote safe cycling in the Shire.

Through this strategy, actions should be identified that will ensure key arterial and tourist road networks are upgraded to an acceptable standard for all users. Improvements to the road network will ensure local residents, business owners and visitors to the hinterland can reach their final destination in a safe and comfortable manner. At the same time, improved road hierarchy and construction quality will encourage greater exploration of the hinterland by visitors, promoting a broader economic benefit.

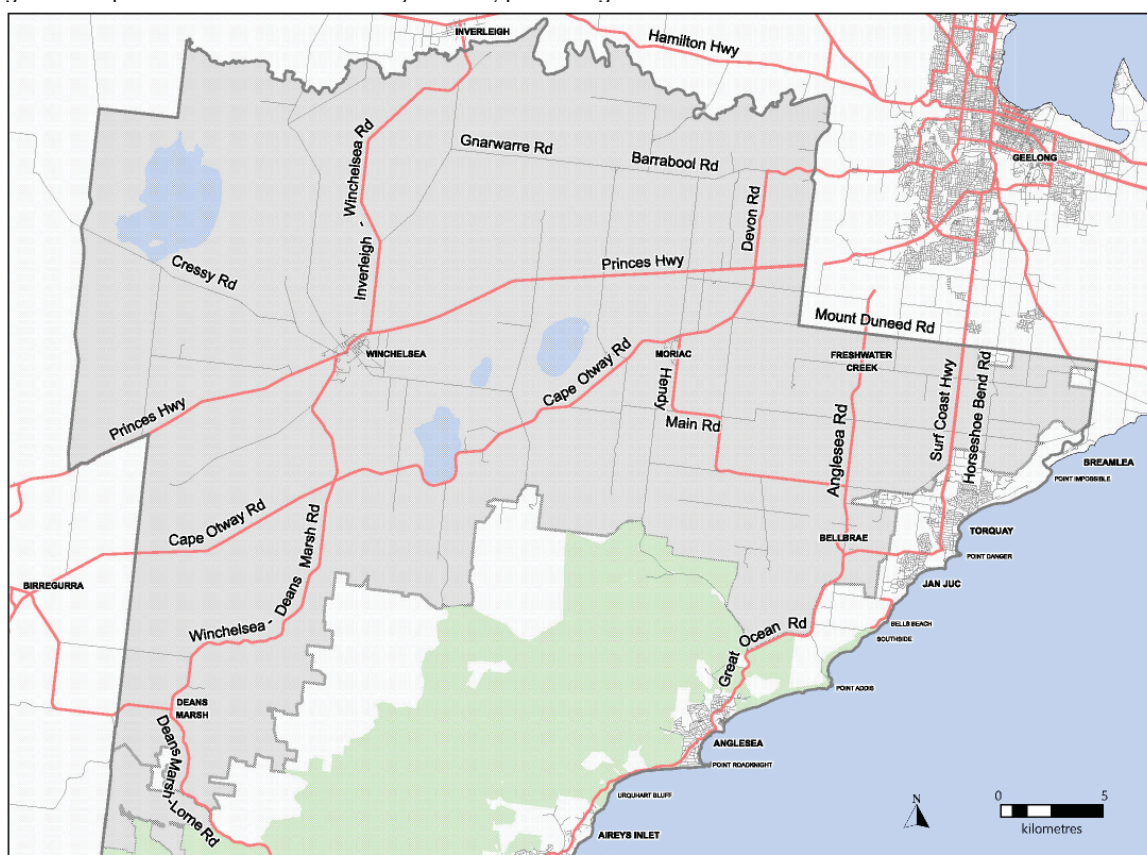


Figure 11: Road and Cycling Infrastructure

## Public Transport

Public transport services are available in the hinterland by way of bus and rail. However, frequency and range is a significant barrier to building future capacity and usage. Without improvements to the availability and frequency of public transport services, the private car will continue to be the dominant mode of transport, particularly for those uses in the hinterland that attract visitors, such as nature-based tourist attractions and agritourism and tourism uses. There is a need to ensure that the road network, particularly the major tourist routes and tourist destinations, is of a safe and user-friendly standard that ensures accessibility.

## Telecommunications

As already acknowledged, in time the NBN will service most of the hinterland. Winchelsea already has a fixed line NBN with Deans Marsh and Moriac receiving a wireless NBN network. The NBN will continue roll out across large parts of the hinterland, but in the meantime the lack of up-to-date telecommunication services is hindering existing businesses' ability to operate effectively and to service new customers.

## Natural Gas

As with other infrastructure services within the hinterland, a reticulated natural gas network is limited to Winchelsea. Extension of the existing natural gas supply is likely to be limited to those areas identified for urban growth.

# 11. LAND USE PLANNING CONTEXT

## State Policy

State policy directs that productive farmland is to be protected for its quality and productivity and highlights that the key threats resulting in a loss of farmland is;

- Urban encroachment,
- Rural subdivision and the creation of small farming lots,
- Rural living or dwellings on small lots in rural areas which can lead to land use conflicts.

Regional planning undertaken by the State Government seeks 'to develop regions which have a strong identity, are prosperous and are environmentally sustainable'. The Surf Coast Shire is within the G21 Region with Torquay - Jan Juc identified as a peri-urban town capable of facilitating growth. State planning policy directs the establishment of urban growth boundaries to ensure that green breaks are maintained, agricultural land and environmental assets are protected in the long term.

The State Government has prepared Localised Planning Statements for State Significant Distinctive Areas, which include the Mornington Peninsula, Macedon Ranges, Bellarine Peninsula and the Yarra Valley. These areas incorporate the rural hinterland and associated townships around metro Melbourne and regional cities. Surf Coast Shire was not identified as one of these significant distinctive areas but it does share many common characteristics and issues including a peri-urban locality, high environmental and landscape values and urban growth pressures.

In December 2017, the Victorian Government introduced into parliament new legislation to strengthen the protection for state significant distinctive areas and landscapes. This built on the implementation of respective localised planning statements. The legislation aims to secure the long term sustainability of townships in the Macedon Ranges region by designating long term settlement boundaries that can only be changed by the Minister for Planning with the consent of parliament.

In 2017 Council received a discussion paper on Potential Mechanisms for Managing the Torquay/Jan Juc Town Boundary. The paper considered the options for Surf Coast Shire in strengthening the settlement boundaries around Torquay/Jan Juc, with several recommendations likely to be implemented in the coming years, to recognise and protect the key agricultural, environmental, landscape and tourism values in the Shire and to manage the pressures of urban growth. Some of the options emerging above in "distinctive areas" may be applicable to the Surf Coast Shire.

All land within the Surf Coast Shire south of the Princes Highway is recognised through State Policy as being within the "Great Ocean Road Region". The Great Ocean Road is of State significance as a major asset and national and international tourist destination. The Great Ocean Road Region Strategy (DSE 2004) seeks to encourage the use of inland routes to manage traffic impacts along the Great Ocean Road. This presents an ideal opportunity to increase visitation within the hinterland.

Note: The Victorian State Government have undertaken numerous reforms to State Policy and format of Planning Schemes in Victoria in recent times, including policy implied in the lead up to and subsequent to the November 2018 State election. Given the flux of changes, not all changes are reflected in the State or Local Planning Context Sections of this Strategy.

## Local Policy

One of the founding principles of Local Planning Policy is directing urban growth to designated growth townships as shown in the G21 Regional Growth Plan and consolidating infill development in existing settlements within a defined settlement boundary. In the Surf Coast Shire most urban growth is directed to Torquay/Jan Juc and Winchelsea. Coinciding with this framework of strategically directed growth is a strong local policy of maintaining green breaks between townships and between Torquay/Jan Juc and the City of Greater Geelong on the northern boundary (Armstrong Creek). It has demonstrated in recent years that around Torquay in particular the green breaks are under greater pressure from outward urban expansion and more strategic work should be done to protect them from encroachment and inappropriate development that would undermine their value.

The Municipal Strategic Statement of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme (SCPS) is based on the underlying principle that the natural environment is the single most important attribute and asset of the Surf Coast Shire. The Surf Coast Shire has many natural assets such as the coast, waterways, wetlands, scenic rural landscapes and native vegetation which are recognised as being significant in State and Local Policy within the planning scheme. Specific overlays have been applied to many local assets including wetlands and waterway, significant landscapes and indigenous vegetation. Endangered vegetation, including native grasslands which are vulnerable to agricultural practices, is problematic to map and in many areas of the Shire they remain unidentified.

Overlays also define areas subject to environmental risk, with the Bushfire Management Overlay covering all the small coastal townships including the Great Otway National Park.

The eastern boundary of the rural hinterland study area is partly defined by the Great Ocean Road. It is a major tourist icon, access route and key destination. One of the challenges is to balance these characteristics with the potential threat of inappropriate development along its length, visual intrusion and advertising sign clutter which would adversely impact on its values. The Significant Landscape Overlay and policies on landscape in the planning scheme are largely based on a 2004 high-level study "The Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study". The Strengthening Town Boundaries Project identified that there is an opportunity to revisit sensitive landscapes at pressure points which are under threat from urban expansion or inappropriate development, particularly around Torquay/Jan Juc, and undertake updated and more specific landscape and environmental studies.

Compatible with the concept of protecting the Great Ocean Road, there is also an opportunity to ease the pressure and grow economic and social value elsewhere in the study area by supporting new tourist-related businesses on other arterial roads and within settlements.

Adverse impact on the Great Ocean Road from ribbon development can also be reduced by co-locating new tourism development in key areas to capitalise on existing infrastructure. Locations should be of low agricultural value and be appropriately sited and designed. For example, the lots fronting the Great Ocean Road service road between Elkington Road and Forest Road is one such area where tourism development could be clustered,

Current rural policy in the SCPS builds on the broad State setting on rural land and has been significantly informed by the Surf Coast Shire Rural Strategy 2007.

The majority of the hinterland areas are zoned Farming Zone or Rural Conservation Zone. The Farming Zone, introduced by the State Government in 2005, limited non-agricultural development and in 2013 State Government changes were introduced to provide more flexibility in discretionary uses including tourism and accommodation.



Local policy needs to be reviewed in response to these zone changes to provide clearer guidance on where to direct the increased range of discretionary land uses. The distinctive soil types, rainfall, nutrient holding capacity, lot size configuration, land values and significant landscapes and environmental assets all influence suitable land uses.

Clear policy will also manage land use conflicts and enhance business viability through directing land use activities with similar characteristics or requirements to suitable geographic locations.

The key directions in the Local Planning Policy Framework relating to rural areas fall under the following themes- agriculture, tourism, environment and landscape. They can be summarised as follows:

- Direct anticipated high population growth into existing townships, primarily Torquay/Jan Juc and Winchelsea and protect the rural landscape from urban intrusion.
- To maintain a clear rural-landscape separation between settlements and particularly between Torquay-Jan Juc and the Armstrong Creek southern growth corridor of Geelong.
- Protect and enhance the rural areas of the Shire for their diverse agricultural, environmental and landscape values and opportunities.
- Support agriculture and rural industries that build the economic base of the Surf Coast Shire.
- To recognise that rural landscape vistas are highly valued for their contribution to the amenity and liveability of rural areas.
- Encourage tourism based uses that complement the natural and rural setting without compromising these values.

The above principles are explained in more detail below.

## Agriculture

The key purpose of Farming zoned land is for productive agricultural land use, and this Strategy supports the primacy of agricultural activities on farming land. Clause 21.05 Agriculture in the SCPS focuses on maintaining agricultural opportunities in the rural areas of the Shire. Key elements of the policy are summarised below:

- Protect agricultural opportunities through minimising the use of agriculture areas for housing.
- Discourage the use and development of productive agricultural land for activities that are not reliant on the soil.
- Maintain technically viable farming lots as much as possible and avoid small lot subdivision in rural areas.
- Support niche related farming outcomes where these can be done as part of larger lots.

Emerging agricultural uses where niche farming and tourism work together are examples of where existing smaller lots within the hinterland can potentially be used in a way that can complement adjoining farming activities.

Policy at Clause 21.05 recognises future opportunities for supporting agricultural production including investigating changing the minimum lot sizes for the Farming Zone in the Thompsons' Creek valley to

potentially support more intensive farming outcomes associated with to access to recycled water and value adding that may occur with such outcomes. Supporting such outcomes will require consideration of numerous planning matters including those that fall under each of the policy themes discussed in this section.

## Rural landscape

Clause 21.06 Rural Landscape of the SCPS recognises the important role the coastal and rural landscapes make to the amenity of the area including the contribution to the lifestyle of residents and a value to the tourism economy. Managing impacts on the rural and coastal landscape and associated environmental values is a key focus of the policy.

Clause 21.06 identifies five landscape precincts based primarily on landscape features, but also factoring in land use, agricultural quality, tenement/allotment patterns and environmental values.

This policy has recently been strengthened by the Shire's review of the Bells Beach hinterland following the findings of the Bells Beach Taskforce. This is an example of where policy can be enhanced to provide clear direction about uses and the scale and extent of development expected in a rural setting which in the case is focused on discouraging development that would impact on the important vista. This context of discouraging development in certain areas is best implemented where other opportunities for development are recognised in the policy providing balance across the overall rural setting.

Building on this, there is an opportunity to improve policy guidance in the planning scheme relating to directing tourist uses and accommodation to preferred locations with lower stand-alone agricultural value but medium conservation or landscape value. Major uses or clusters will be focused in areas with good road access and connection to key infrastructure.

Further guidelines for the types of uses, scale, location, design and siting of tourist use and accommodation in significant landscapes, similar to the Bells Beach Hinterland provisions, could be applied to the wider hinterland context.

## Environmental values

The rural hinterland areas contain key environmental assets and the synergy between management of rural areas and environmental outcomes is important. These links in land management and environmental benefits can also align with enhancing the character and landscape features that are associated with many parts of the rural hinterland.

New development needs to be balanced against the protection of natural assets including native vegetation. If use or development is to occur where environmental assets exist, there needs to be a sensitive response to the environmental features, appropriate management of the risks such as bushfire, and enhancement of the environment where possible. This includes adequate separation between built form and the environmental features to ensure the asset can be protected and enhanced whilst managing bushfire risks.

## Bushfire planning and risk

The Otway District is recognised as being one of the highest bushfire risk areas in Australia and with the onset of climate change, the potential for the number and intensity of extreme bushfire events is expected to increase.

To strengthen the provisions relevant to bushfire planning, in 2018 through Amendment V148, the State Government introduced reforms to all Victorian planning schemes, including changes to Clause 13.02-1S of the SCPS. The result is an increased emphasis in State Policy on minimising and managing the risk to communities from bushfire at all stages of the planning process.

The bushfire risk and emphasis of the policy means that not all sites within the Hinterland will be suitable for development in all instances and the type of use and development and its strategic location must be considered as first principles.

*To demonstrate good bushfire planning and risk management, the starting point for any development should be to locate the development in a lower level of bushfire risk, and have good access to and within the site.*

While the Otway National Park and areas heavily vegetated with trees and other elevated vegetation pose obvious risks, other landscapes, including areas containing unmanaged grasslands can also pose risks. In considering new proposals in the hinterland, it will be vital to recognise and understand the different landscape types and the risks they pose. Lower risk areas will continue to be the preferred location for proposals, particularly those that encourage multiple visitors to a site.

In the Hinterland, examples of lower risk locations might include those areas around the townships of Moriac and Bellbrae or locations lacking large forested areas that are more than 3km north of the Great Otway National Park and proximate to larger settlements.

Due to the challenging topography and high levels of vegetation, the areas in the south and south-west of the Shire and the area north-east of Anglesea are considered to be high risk locations. As the road networks that service these areas also travel through high risk areas with dense vegetation and challenging terrain, safe and reliable access during a bushfire event to place of safety in the east cannot be guaranteed.

Locations around Pennyroyal are also at a comparatively high risk from bushfire with the contributing factors including the challenging terrain and topography, the vegetation classifications and the road networks. Proposals in this area that encourage visitation will require careful consideration.

Important bushfire risk factors to consider include the need for effective site selection that provides extensive separation from forested areas and reliable vehicle access to areas of safety. Site based emergency management arrangements and bushfire protection measures are necessary secondary considerations. It is recognised that in order to deliver site-based separation from the immediate bushfire hazard, vegetation modification might be required. Proposals that require vegetation removal for the creation of defensible space should avoid areas with high environmental values.

The Surf Coast Shire has prepared a Shire-wide Bushfire Management Statement to better understand the bushfire risk at a strategic level. The associated maps consider the combination of vegetation, terrain and

topography, road networks and their reliability, proximity to settlements and the impacts of weather under certain conditions. Figure 12 shows those areas that are subject to the highest risk through to the areas of lowest bushfire risk in the Shire.

All use and development proposals in the hinterland must consider fire risk. In particular, uses that result in the congregation of multiple visitors to the site should be directed to areas of lower bushfire risk.

In addition to the relevant provisions in the SCPS, other key matters for consideration include:

- Having regard to the landscape risk, whether the Approved Measures in Clause 53.02 of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme should be exceeded;
- The suitability of transport routes and vehicle access and the ability to provide safe and reliable access to and from the site during an emergency event;
- The strategic location of the site having regard to the capacity of emergency services to respond in the event of a fire or another emergency event;
- The type and intensity of the use and development, including whether it will result in additional bushfire ignition sources;
- The extent of native vegetation removal required to mitigate bushfire risk to an acceptable level;
- Emergency management procedures and whether the measures proposed are proportionate to the use and commensurate to the risk.

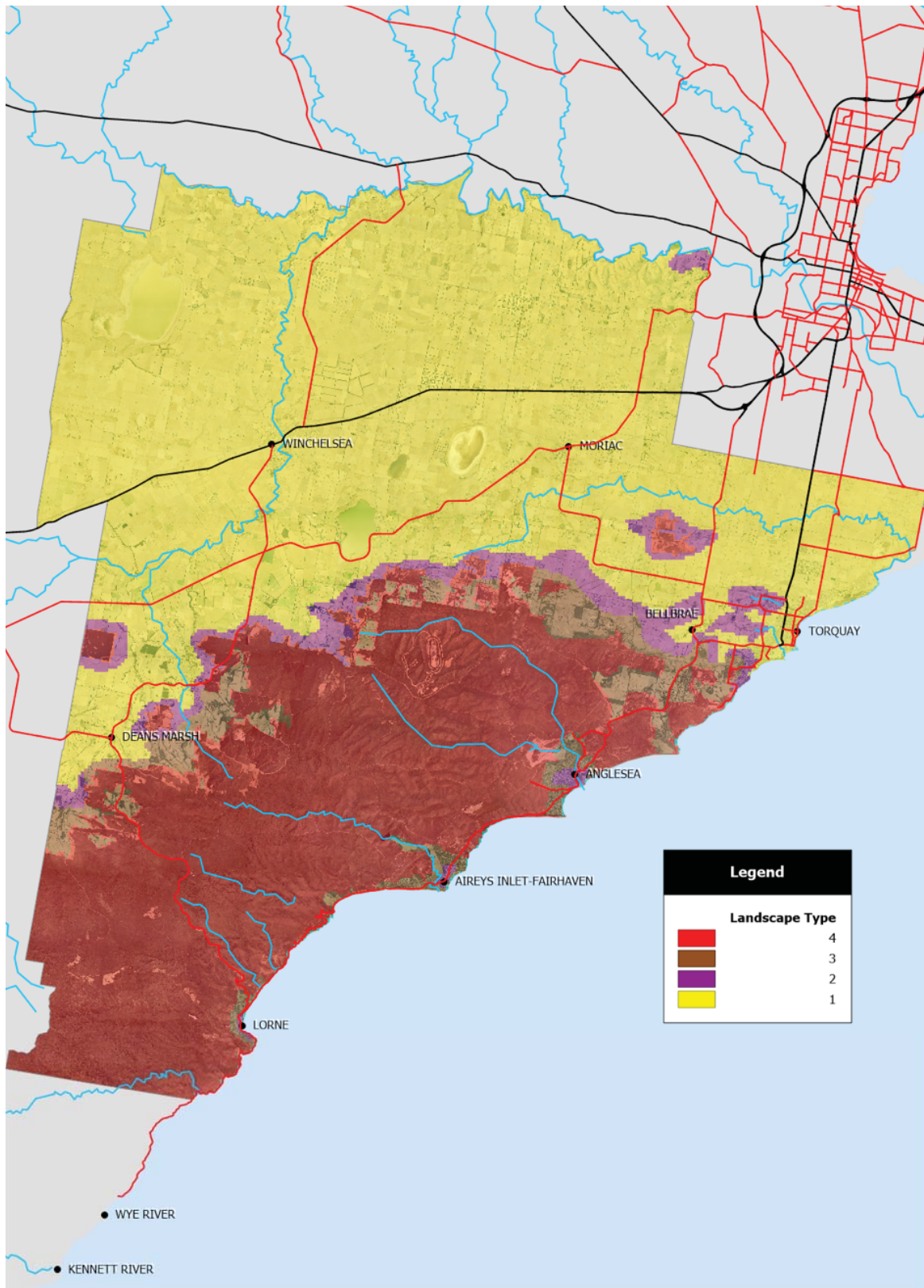


Figure 11: Bushfire Landscape Type Map

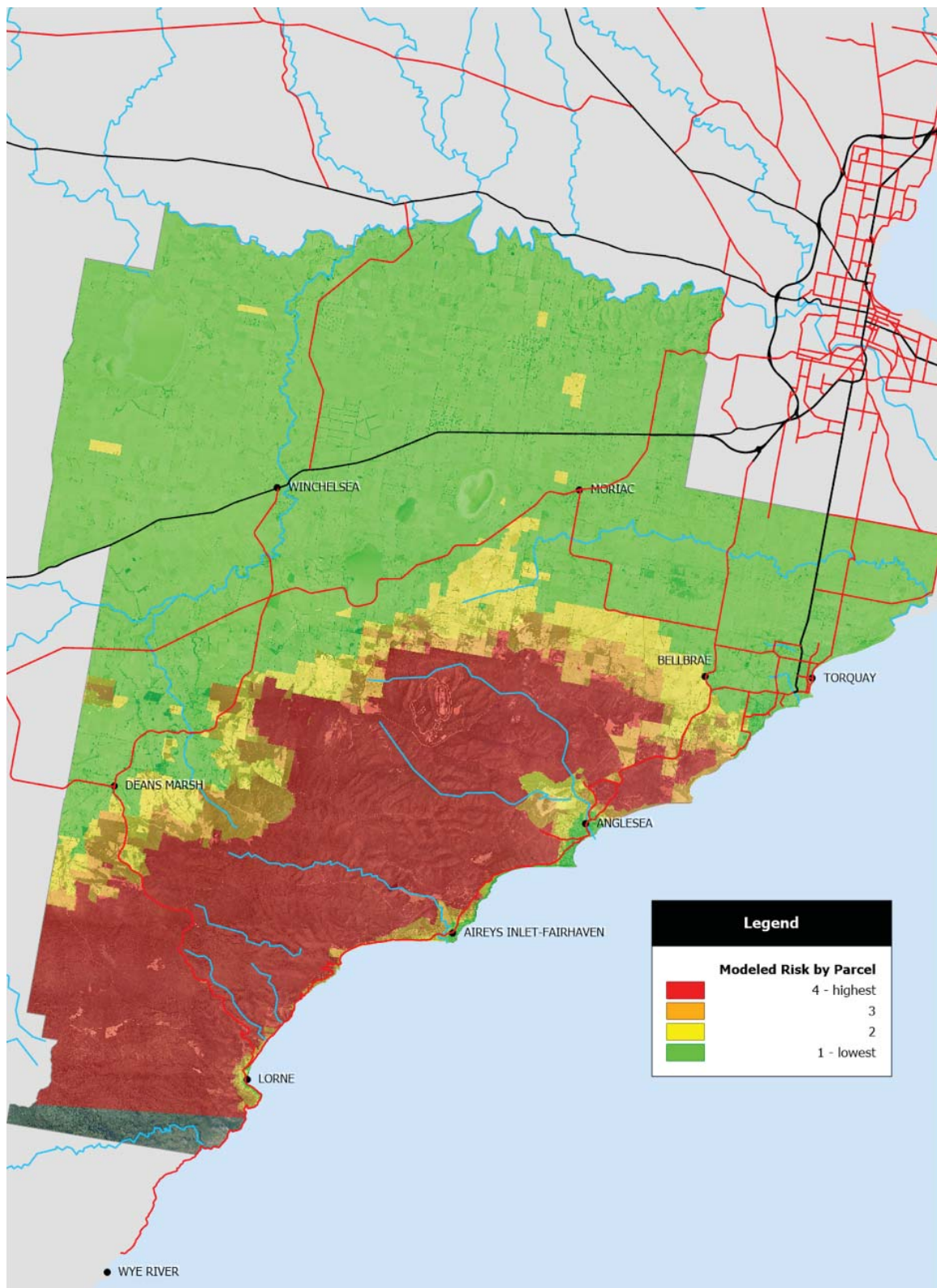


Figure 12: Bushfire Development Complexity Map - Area of modelled risk by Parcel

## Tourism

Clause 21.04 Tourism in the SCPS outlines the key directions related to tourism use and development which can be summarised as follows:

- Tourism development in the farming areas of the Shire should generally be of a small scale that does not compromise the agricultural use of the land. High profile tourism is directed to urban areas where infrastructure is available.
- Tourism development should be of a nature, designed and sited to avoid conflict with existing rural uses, preserve the rural landscapes and environmental values, avoid loss of high quality agricultural land, and be within proximity of existing townships.
- Tourism development should enhance the environmental condition of the land through protection and re-establishment of native vegetation and control of pest plants and animals, erosion, salinity, stormwater and nutrient runoff.
- Discourage tourism development from locating in prime agricultural land, particularly in areas with an open rural landscape.

Use of the words “small scale” as described in the first dot point have not been defined adequately in the planning scheme which is not helpful in assessing applications. There is an identified need for better policy to inform decision-making for tourism development where the scale of the development meets the principles for the Strategy rather than being confined to “small scale”. Tourism activities should be directed to land of medium environmental and landscape value, where bushfire risk can be managed, and avoided in land suitable for intensive and commercial farming to avoid land use conflicts. There is also an opportunity to encourage future tourism developments and activities to form clusters in areas identified as well suited to tourism activities in figure 6, such as around Winchelsea, Deans Marsh, Bellbrae, and Moriac.

More broadly, the 2013 changes to the rural zones in Victoria making more tourist and accommodation uses discretionary has opened up opportunities that did not previously exist. However, the SCPS lacks planning policy to guide decision-making for use and development applications in the Farming Zone in particular, where uses no longer need to be connected to the rural use of the land, and uses such as “industry” can be approved with a planning permit. Uses such as traditional industry have the potential to conflict with Council’s vision for the hinterland and the types of businesses sought, which are complementary to rural uses. However, some types of uses which fall under the industry definition such as microbreweries, distilleries, cheese making, art/ sculpture, and food processing etc could be appropriate, if co-located with tourism uses in the hinterland, and / or complementing or making use of agricultural produce from the land. Opportunities exist through the implementation of this strategy to provide clearer decision-making guidelines and direction.

Some land in the hinterland with high environmental or landscape values is zoned Rural Conservation Zone, which is very restrictive. Uses such as “outdoor recreation” and “place of assembly” are prohibited. Tourism opportunities that utilise the natural setting in hinterland areas such as Deans Marsh and parts of Bamba could be realised if changes are made to the zone at a State level; although there are still opportunities for accommodation in these areas such as group accommodation and farm stay. Council has been advocating to the State Government for the inclusion of “outdoor recreation” in the zone for several years. However, should uses such as outdoor recreation be permitted, there would need to be clear planning policy to ensure that the proposals that make use of the natural setting are appropriate and do not have significant impacts on environmental and landscape values.

A photograph of a man and a woman walking together in a field, possibly a vineyard or orchard, with trees in the background. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color. The word "Appendices" is written in large white font across the bottom of the image.

# Appendices



# APPENDIX 1

## Definitions

The planning scheme definition allocated to a land use will determine whether a permit is required or not or whether the activity is prohibited under the zone where it is to occur. Where land is proposed to be used in more than one way, each use will need to be defined and determine if it permissible by the zone. If one use is the primary use occurring on the land, a prohibited use may still be able to occur as an ‘ancillary’ use.

HINTERLAND STRATEGY TERMS	HINTERLAND STRATEGY DEFINITION	POSSIBLE PLANNING SCHEME LAND USE TERM	PLANNING SCHEME LAND USE GROUP
AGRIBUSINESS LAND USE			
Agribusiness	Includes all aspects of the food and fibre supply chain from the growth and production through to the manufacturing. Includes intensive, commercial and food manufacturing as well as a range of agricultural support services not associated with a land use.	Rural store	Warehouse
Food/Drink Manufacturing (wholesale)	Large scale not retailing directly to public. Includes large scale breweries and industrial scale food processing	Rural industry	Industry
Intensive Farming	<p>Farming that is carried out in a manner not necessarily tied to the land’s background productive capacity. Intensive farming involves importing of considerable proportions of animal or plant nutritional requirements. Intensive farming is predominantly structure-based (livestock housing, feedpads, glasshouses etc).</p> <p>This category includes housed livestock production such as housed pig farms and barn-raised poultry, cattle feedlots, intensive dairy farms. Also included in this category are protected horticulture, hydroponic and aquaponic glasshouse fruit and vegetable production.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal husbandry</li> <li>• Animal production</li> <li>• Grazing animal production</li> <li>• Intensive animal production (includes Intensive dairy farm and Cattle feedlot)</li> <li>• Pig Farm</li> <li>• Poultry farm (includes broiler farm)</li> <li>• Poultry hatchery</li> <li>• Aquaculture</li> <li>• Crop raising</li> <li>• Horticulture</li> <li>• Landscape gardening supplies</li> <li>• Garden supplies</li> <li>• Plant nursery</li> </ul>	
Commercial Farming	<p>Farming that is carried out as a commercial enterprise (excluding the above). Considered traditional farming, this category includes broadacre cropping and hay production, grazing livestock production, fruit orchards and olive groves, market gardens, vineyards (not associated with a winery), commercial flower production and nurseries.</p> <p>May include free range pigs and poultry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal husbandry</li> <li>• Apiculture</li> <li>• Animal production</li> <li>• Grazing animal production</li> <li>• Pig Farm</li> <li>• Poultry farm</li> <li>• Aquaculture</li> <li>• Crop raising</li> <li>• Horticulture (includes market garden)</li> <li>• Rice growing</li> <li>• Landscape Garden supplies</li> <li>• Plant nursery</li> </ul>	<p>Agriculture</p> <p>Retail Premises</p>

HINTERLAND STRATEGY TERMS	HINTERLAND STRATEGY DEFINITION	POSSIBLE PLANNING SCHEME LAND USE TERM	PLANNING SCHEME LAND USE GROUP
<b>AGRIBUSINESS LAND USE</b>			
Lifestyle Farming	This includes farming where commercial production of agricultural commodities is not the main driver for land use decisions. Lifestyle farms are often situated on smaller lots, where the land-owner derives their main source of income off-farm. Lifestyle farms are valued not only for their capacity to produce agricultural commodities, but also for intrinsic lifestyle and aesthetic values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal husbandry</li> <li>• Animal production</li> <li>• Grazing animal production</li> <li>• Crop raising</li> </ul>	Agriculture
Land banking	The main source of income derived from the land is the growth in land value.		Agriculture
Agroforestry	Conservation based land holdings where conservation and revegetation of native vegetation is the primary purpose. This can include agroforestry, emissions offsets, state and national parks and privately owned conservation blocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crop raising</li> <li>• Timber production</li> </ul>	Agriculture
Equine activities	Land managed primarily for horse production and training. This includes horse studs, stables, spelling and agistment farms. May include horse trail rides and horse related events and shows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal husbandry</li> <li>• Animal Keeping</li> <li>• Animal boarding</li> <li>• Animal training</li> <li>• Horse riding school</li> </ul>	Agriculture
<b>TOURISM AND ACTIVITY BASED LAND USE</b>			
Tourism Activities / Attractions	<p>Tourism attractions may or may not incorporate commercial agricultural production into their land management. Includes historic buildings (such as Barwon Park Mansion), the Great Ocean Road Chocolaterie, LiveWire Park, restaurants, pubs, cafes, and museums.</p> <p>Can also include fishing, on/off road cycling, golf &amp; other outdoor sports, bike parks and trails.</p> <p>Future development in this area might also consider cheese making, gallery spaces, function venues, day spas, horse trail rides, Segway courses on private land, events, coffee roasters, micro-breweries, wildlife parks and 'destination' restaurants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food and drink premises</li> <li>• Hotel</li> <li>• Restaurant</li> <li>• Manufacturing sales</li> <li>• Primary produce sales</li> <li>• Market</li> <li>• Art and craft centre</li> <li>• Carnival</li> <li>• Cinema</li> <li>• Circus</li> <li>• Exhibition Centre</li> <li>• Art Gallery</li> <li>• Museum</li> <li>• Function centre</li> <li>• Conference centre</li> <li>• Reception centre</li> <li>• Animal husbandry</li> <li>• Animal training</li> <li>• Horse riding school</li> <li>• Minor sports and recreation facility</li> <li>• Outdoor recreation facility</li> <li>• Golf course</li> <li>• Pleasure park</li> <li>• Zoo</li> <li>• Winery</li> </ul>	<p>Retail Premises</p> <p>Art &amp; Craft Centre Place of Assembly</p> <p>Agriculture</p> <p>Leisure and Recreation</p> <p>Winery</p>

HINTERLAND STRATEGY TERMS	HINTERLAND STRATEGY DEFINITION	POSSIBLE PLANNING SCHEME LAND USE TERM	PLANNING SCHEME LAND USE GROUP
<b>TOURISM AND ACTIVITY BASED LAND USE</b>			
Agritourism	Agritourism businesses operate both commercial agricultural or food/beverage processing operations and a tourist activity. This may also incorporate a dining experience and includes wineries which operate a cellar-door, berry picking, farm stay and farm stalls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winery</li> <li>• Manufacturing sales</li> <li>• Primary produce sales</li> <li>• Crop raising</li> <li>• Host farm</li> </ul>	<p>Winery</p> <p>Retail Premises</p>
Food/Drink manufacturing (tourism)	Includes wineries, small scale breweries cideries and distilleries, as well as makers of smallgoods, jams, cordials and preserves - retailing direct to public. May include dining or experience based tourism attraction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winery</li> <li>• Manufacturing sales</li> <li>• Primary produce sales</li> <li>• Crop raising</li> </ul>	<p>Winery</p> <p>Retail Premises</p> <p>Agriculture</p>
Accommodation (medium - large scale)	Includes caravan parks, camps, RV stops, hotels, motels, accommodation combined with a meeting space for corporate retreats or events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camping and caravan park</li> <li>• Residential building</li> <li>• Residential hotel (includes motel)</li> <li>• Backpackers' lodge</li> <li>• Tavern</li> </ul>	<p>Accommodation</p> <p>Food &amp; Drink Premises</p>
Accommodation (small scale)	Includes, B&B, AirBnB, farm-stays and cabins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group accommodation</li> <li>• Host farm</li> <li>• Dwelling</li> <li>• Bed and breakfast</li> </ul>	<p>Accommodation</p>
Nature based activities	Visiting the national park and can include bush walking, cycling, fishing, on/off road cycling, outdoor sports, bike parks, trails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor sports and recreation facility</li> <li>• Informal outdoor recreation</li> <li>• Natural systems</li> </ul>	<p>Leisure and Recreation</p> <p>Natural Systems</p>
Events	Open air music concerts, exhibitions, Arts trail, sporting events, cultural events, fairs, craft shows, markets, dog trials, flower festivals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art and craft centre</li> <li>• Cinema</li> <li>• Exhibition Centre</li> <li>• Art Gallery</li> <li>• Museum</li> <li>• Market</li> <li>• Community market</li> </ul>	<p>Art &amp; Craft Centre</p> <p>Places of Assembly</p> <p>Retail Premises</p>
<b>GENERAL TERMS</b>			
Complementary use	A land use which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhances the quality of the existing use of the land.</li> <li>• is compatible and can be integrated with the existing use and surrounding uses.</li> <li>• is not detrimental.</li> </ul>		
Green break	Non-urban land between townships		





**Wadawurrung**  
Traditional Owners  
Aboriginal Corporation

# Paleert Tjaara Dja

Let's make Country good together 2020 – 2030



Wadawurrung Country Plan



## Caring for Country

*"Comugeen budjo thalikiyu kin bil beng-ordi-ngadak. Ngarrwabil, boron, guli, bagurrk. Comugeen budjo bengadak ngarr-uk dja, ngubiyt, weagoon gobata gupma wurring-wurring baap beng-ordi-nganak, djarrima murrup-nhuk bengadak.*

*Gobata Wadawurrung balug jumbuk didalbil murrup-nhuk bundjil monomeeth beek-o weagoon. Mutjak-ak noogie n'uder durrallully wa-ngarrak Wadawurrung balug bengadak mirriyu boron-dja gobata-k ying, ngarrimilli, wah-ak, karrung, kuy-a, nyanayit-yanunit, djilenawurr, baap willam beng-ordi-ngadak".*

"We deeply respect our people of the past. Our Elders, children, men, women. We deeply respect their knowledge of Country, water, life, their care of the traditions and of each other, we stand with their spirit.

Great spirit **Bundjil** told us to take care of the great life within the land. To only take what you need without selfishness. Wadawurrung shared their knowledge of singing, dance, trade, camps, fishing, hunting, paintings, and homes to us to protect for our future generations. We all need to help".

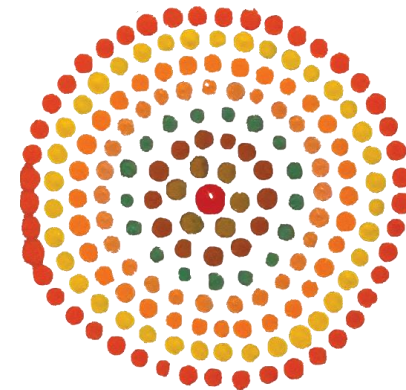
Stephanie Skinner, Wadawurrung Traditional Owner 2019



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**Warning,** please note this document may contain the names and images of people who are now deceased.



## Foreword

As Chair of the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation it gives me great pleasure in presenting our Healthy Country Plan. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge all Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, our Ancestors and pay respect to our Elders past, present and emerging.

Our connection to Culture and Country continues to provide us with the strength to practice and pass on tens of thousands of years of knowledge, as Wadawurrung People.

Caring for our Country, land, sky, and waters, and continual cultural practices are core to our identity as the Traditional Owners of Wadawurrung Country. Our People have endured trauma, violence and dispossession since invasion and have demonstrated an innate ability to continue their cultural practices which has provided strength to ensure our survival. We are connected to our land, our skies, our waterways, and our coastal areas, keeping them healthy keeps our People and Culture healthy.

In *Paleert Tjaara Dja*, Let's make Country good together 2020-2030 -Wadawurrung Country Plan, you can see the result of information gathering from many Wadawurrung People, including our respected Elders. Sharing of knowledge through many gatherings, imparting stories about Country which will now be shared with our future generations. I would like to thank all our People who have come together to contribute to this plan.

This plan articulates how Wadawurrung see Country being cared for and managed over the next 10 years. This includes walking together with government (federal, state, and local) and other key stakeholders to achieve self-determination, ensuring we have sustainable Wadawurrung managed investment in Country going forward.

Our responsibility as the decision makers today, is to ensure a future for generations of Wadawurrung that will follow. This plan is one of the key steps in realising that future.

*Koling wada-ngal* (Let us walk together)

Patrick Fagan

Chair

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation





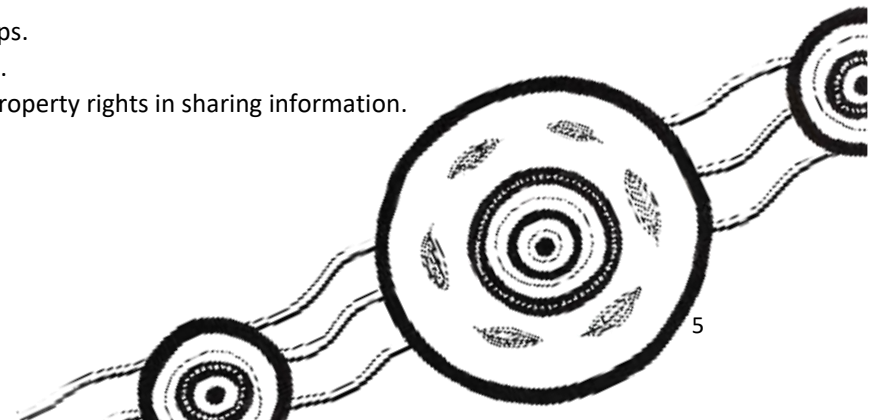
## Principles

Wadawurrung are a proud first nations people committed to working with our members, neighbours, government agencies, land and water managers and the broader community as we protect and heal Country together for all people.

**Paleert Tjaara Dja – Let's make Country good together 2020-2030** – Wadawurrung Country Plan invites a respectful working, learning and committed sharing together approach based on cultural knowledge and practices.

The principles that guide our partnerships in Caring for Country are:

1. Respect and Acknowledgement for Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and our cultural, ancestral, spiritual and historical connections to Country.
2. Wadawurrung people's right to access and care for Country as an expression of our cultural obligation, responsibilities, connectedness, our well-being and as our economic basis.
3. Country is interconnected, alive with dreaming and creation stories, imprinted with our cultural values and social history – there is no separation between cultural and natural resources and people.
4. Free, prior and informed consent requires genuine engagement from the beginning of decision-making or project planning in a way that is relevant to us, providing timely information and processes that support cultural governance.
5. We seek partnerships that are genuine, are of benefit to Wadawurrung people, are in the spirit of reconciliation, that address past negative impacts and enable self-determination and real outcomes.
6. Providing appropriate and equitable resourcing for Wadawurrung people to participate in their obligation of care and management of Country.
7. Open and honest relationships that sustain effective working partnerships.
8. Wadawurrung Traditional Owners are the holders of cultural knowledge.
9. Respect for and appropriate protection of our intellectual and cultural property rights in sharing information.



## Acknowledgements

The *Paleert Tjaara Dja* – let’s make Country good together 2020-2030 Wadawurrung country plan was developed by Wadawurrung Traditional Owners through the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation with the assistance of Conservation Management.



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Art throughout the plan is taken from artworks produced by Wadawurrung artists Trina Dalton-Oogjes, Nikki McKenzie, Jenna Oldaker and BJ O'toole.

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This report is available for download from the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation website: <https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/>

## Key words in Wadawurrung Language

Throughout our Country Plan, we have used **Wadawurrung language** as it is inseparably culturally connected to us, our Country, Culture, kinship and family.

We are reviving our language. Its use teaches our young ones, shares it with the public and encourages its use back on Country. Wadawurrung language was traditionally a spoken language not written, so there can be numerous different meanings and spelling variations.

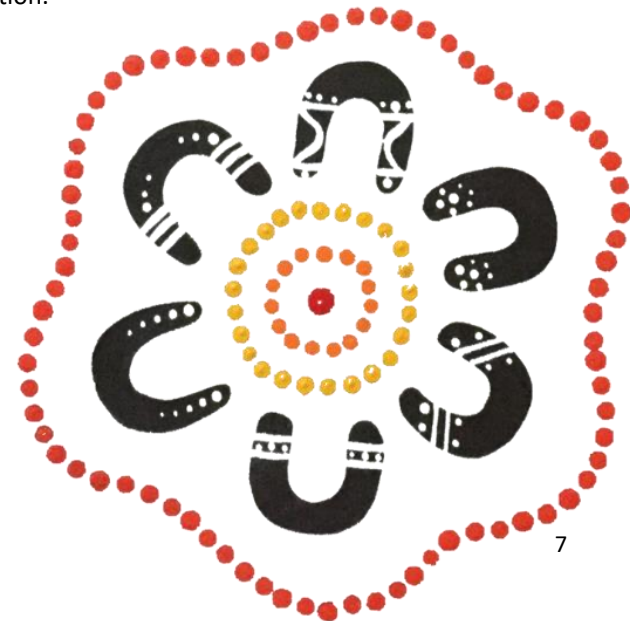
Our language, Country and people are all Wadawurrung, they are all know as Wadawurrung.

We are the custodians of our language and the cultural authority on the correct spellings and usage. Protocols are in place to protect the cultural heritage of Traditional Owners from cultural misappropriation, and cultural heritage is protected under cultural heritage and copyright laws of the Australian State and Commonwealth Governments.

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) as the Recognised Aboriginal Party under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Victoria) may assist and provide guidance on the use of Wadawurrung language for publication.

*“If we look, we can see and if we hear language,  
it belongs to country; it’s always been here and describes country.”*

Corrina Eccles - Wadawurrung Traditional Owner



7

## Wadawurrung Language

Animals		Things		Places	
Eel	<i>beniyak</i>	Spirit/s	<i>murrup</i>	Werribee	<i>Weribbi</i>
Bat	<i>balayang</i>	Fire	<i>wiyn</i>	Torquay	<i>Jan Jook</i>
Crayfish	<i>Bam bam</i>	Country	<i>Dja</i>	Airey's Inlet	<i>Mangowak</i>
Oyster	<i>barnabeel</i>	Water	<i>Ngubiyt</i>	Black Hill	<i>Kareet Bareet</i>
Mussel	<i>murrabal</i>	Bowl or vessel	<i>Tarnook</i>	Geelong	<i>Djilang</i>
Possum	<i>Walart/walert</i>	Basket	<i>beenyak</i>	Beaufort	<i>Yarram Yarram</i>
bandicoot	<i>Kwenda</i>	Mountains	<i>Barre</i>	Lake Burrumbeet	<i>Burrumbeet</i>
Quoll	<i>Yoorn</i>	Ocean	<i>warre</i>	Skipton	<i>Worram</i>
Black Swan	<i>Kunnawarra/Connawarre</i>			Little hills	<i>Anakie</i>
Tawny Frogmouth	<i>Waanawal</i>	Feelings			<i>Anakie youang</i>
Cockatoo	<i>Djirnap</i>	Good	<i>Paleert</i>		
Brolga	<i>Porronggitj</i>	Take care/be good	<i>Gobata</i>	Bellarine - resting by the fire	<i>Bellawiyn</i>
Little Raven and often used for crow	<i>Waa</i>				
Kangaroo	<i>Goim/gooyem</i>				
Wallabies	<i>Goyin</i>			<b>Program or Action Names</b>	
Wedge Tail Eagle	<i>Bundjil</i>			Strengthening	<i>Wurrurrwilwa</i>
				Taking care of country and waters	<i>Gobata Dja baap Ngubiyt</i>
				Us supporting us – cultural strengthening	<i>Gobata bengadak tjarra</i>
<b>Bushtucker plants &amp; resources</b>				Bringing fire spirit to country	<i>Wiyn murrup goopma dja</i>
basket	<i>beenyak</i>			Taking care of country and waters	<i>Gobata Dja baap Ngubiyt</i>
Manna gum	<i>Lurrup</i>			Us supporting us – cultural strengthening	<i>Gobata bengadak tjarra</i>
Waters or waterways	<i>Yulluk/Yaluk</i>				
Yam Daisy	<i>Murnong</i>				



*“Smoking ceremonies have been on conducted on Wadawurrung country by our ancestors for thousands of years, we continue this cultural practice to welcome visitors, cleanse and protect our country and to acknowledge our ancestors so no harm is brought onto our Country and as a visitor you have safe passage. Wadawurrung Traditional Owners are the appropriate people with cultural permission to do ceremonies.”*

Corrina Eccles

Aunty Vi and Uncle Bryon  
Smoking: photo credit:  
Barwon Water

## Wadawurrung Culture and Country

As Wadawurrung Traditional Owners we live by **Bundjil's** lore to care for Country and all things living as our ancestors have always done. Our **Dja** (Country), is more than a place. Our coastal cliffs, wetlands, grassy and volcanic plains, and people were all formed by **Bundjil** and our ancestor spirits who continue to live in the land, water and sky. **Kareet Bareet** (Black Hill near Gordon) is where **Bunjil** created Wadawurrung people. **Lal Lal** Falls near Ballarat is where **Bundjil** created the waterways and where he returned to before heading to his resting places in the stars continuing to watch over us.

Our **Dja** is interwoven with relationships no matter whether the shape of that relation is human, granite hills, **Waa** (crow) or **Larrap** (Manna gum). Country is filled with relations speaking language, sharing stories and following lore. These spirits they link us back through time in a continuing connection with our past, our cultural practices and our stories. These spirits connect us to our Country and each other which gives us ongoing respect for our obligation to care for our Country.

As Wadawurrung Traditional Owners today we have fought hard to survive the impacts of colonisation and dispossession and maintain this connection with **Dja**. Our Elders suffered deeply, and these impacts continue to be felt across the generations. With our Elders strength and resilience from knowing Country wasn't ceded, they ensured our cultural connections, knowledge and responsibilities for Country continued. Our Elders voices were silenced due to fear and protection for their children as assimilation policies threatened to break us up, but we survived, and their voice and spirit is strong again. It is through their leadership that the next generations of Wadawurrung are standing up proud, practicing and sharing culture and Caring for Country. Having learnt from our Elders the ability to adapt to the changing circumstances of colonisation, has helped us to be resilient and maintain our cultural identity and practices within contemporary society.

We are determined to ensure our cultural authority for making decisions on looking after our Country is recognised and respected. We want to see cultural knowledge as the basis for this management of Country knowing this will help heal our Country and people, for us and for the benefit of everyone living on, visiting and enjoying Wadawurrung Country.

We continue to be on Country, performing ceremonies, dancing and singing in language. We are teaching our young ones the stories, how to hunt and harvest food, medicine and resources sustainably. To continue good practices as our ancestors did with aquaculture systems, **beniyak** (eel) and fish traps. Looking after our waterways and reinstating cultural flows so our **beniyak**, perch, blackfish and yabbies remain.

We are providing leadership in reinstating cultural burning practices so that Country like inland grasslands can again provide our favourite foods like **murnong** (Yam daisy), lily tubers, grass seeds, **Goim** (kangaroo) and **Walert** (possum).

We are educating the broader community and retelling the stories of history in our Country to provide a richer understanding of how important our people have been and continue to be in the formation and functioning of modern-day Victoria. We are strengthening our system of governance, building our cultural businesses as an economic base. Caring for Country is essential for maintaining these relationships and connections, for passing on cultural knowledge and practices to our younger generations and maintaining our cultural identity.

*"Did you know that Geelong is known for its wool textiles but Wadawurrung people were weaving, sewing and making clothing for thousands of years like possum skin cloaks."* Corrina Eccles



**Walert** skin – cultural gift - photo Melinda Kennedy



**Lal Lal** Falls – photo Al Dermer

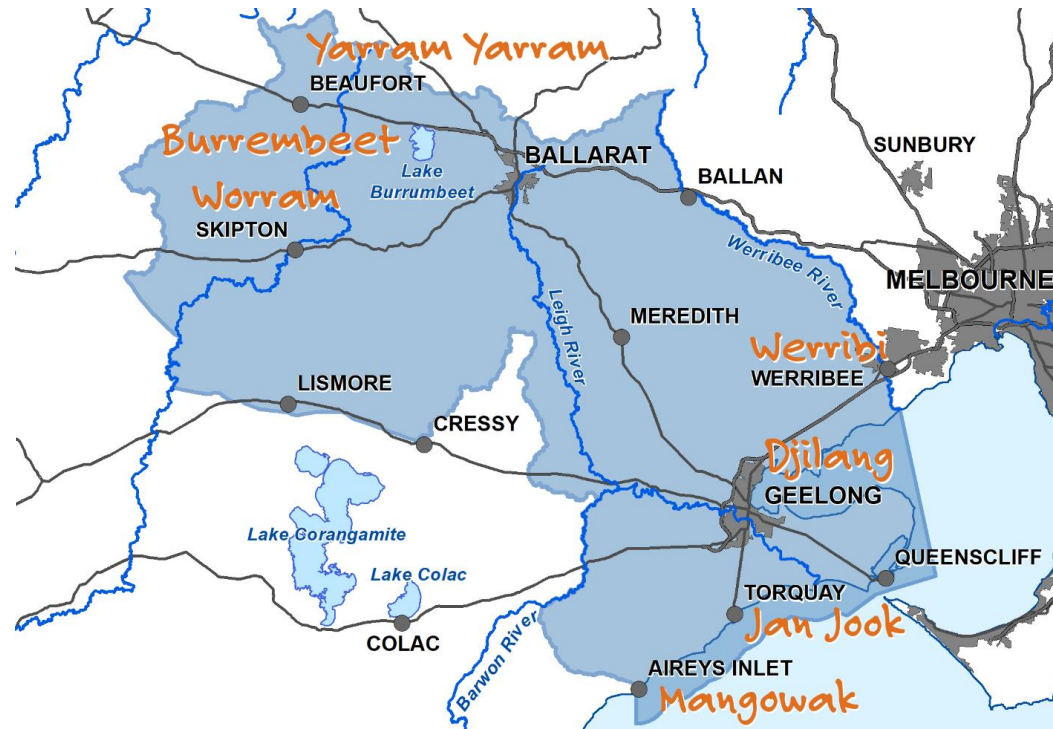
## Our Country



1 million hectares

80% freehold

20% crown lands



Wadawurrung Country encompasses an area from the Great Dividing Range of Ballarat, the coast from the Werribee River to Mangowak (Airey's Inlet), including Djilang (Geelong), Ballaarat (Ballarat), Torquay, Jan Jook, the Bellarine Peninsula and Surf Coast. This plan is for our Country as currently defined by our Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) map and responsibilities and covers over 10,000 square kilometres or 1 million hectares. This area may change as Treaty and other land and water negotiations progress.

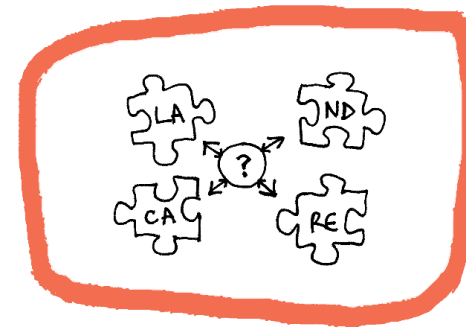


There are the imprints of our ancestors across this interconnected cultural landscape. The Mt. Rothwell and Little River stone arrangement is significant as a place of ceremony linked to our seasonal calendar. Nearby are the remains of our living spaces: our homes in the basalt stone hut, ovens and hearths. Across our Country are stone tool making sites, scar trees and ceremony places. Our people modified the basalt rocks to construct channel, weirs and dams as a system of water management to trap, store and harvest fish and eels.

A mass of stone tools are found throughout our Country today which form part of our cultural heritage.

Many of the place names are derived from Wadawurrung language. Geelong comes from *Djilang*, which means tongue of land or peninsula. Moorabool from *Murrabul* meaning mussel, Connewarre from *Kunwarra* meaning black swan and *You Yangs* from *Wurdi Youang* meaning big hill.

Our has diverse landscapes from the hill ranges to grassland plains, down to coastal forests, heathlands and ocean. Much of the plains have already been converted into agricultural land and urban areas but as the population expands there is more pressure placed on water sources, more land is converted and more pests are introduced. Having many different land managers makes coordination of Country management difficult.





*“These paintings retell the stories of history of our people on the goldfields. It gets our culture across.”*

Wind and Sky – Aunty Marlene Gilson – Wadawurrung Elder

## Our Journey

From the early 1800s the lives of Wadawurrung people became permanently changed when Europeans took our rich Country that provided year-round abundance of food. The grassy plains, waterways, wetlands, coastal and sea Country were taken over by squatters, eaten by sheep and cattle and cleared for farming and urban development.

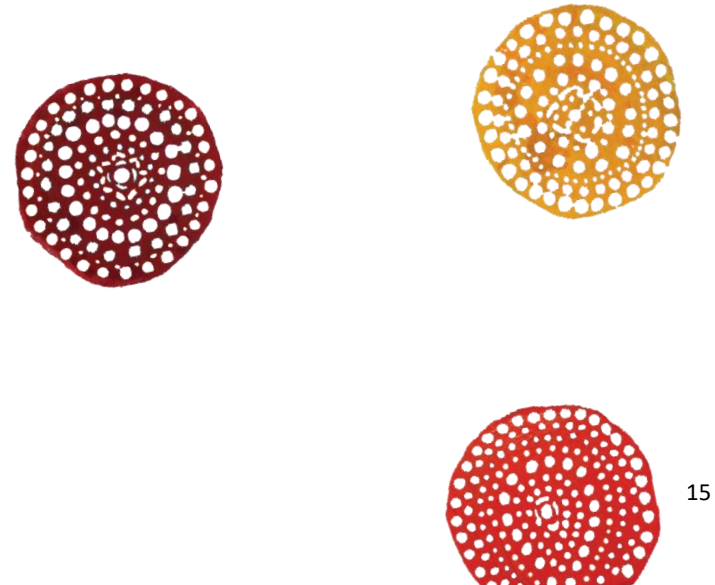
Our Country with its veins of gold was dug up leaving it disturbed and turned upside down and full of holes.

Our coastal Country became home to the sealing and whaling industry with **Djilang** (Geelong) as a major township and port.

Our Country contributed to much of the wealth that Victoria was built upon and prospers from. Our people have always fought to remain on Country.

Through these dramatic changes our relatives adapted their cultural knowledge and skills to remain living on and Caring for Country to survive. They became workers on our Country in whatever way they could. Some of our people worked in the gold fields as miners, bark cutters, child minders and fur merchants selling possum and kangaroo skins.

Other families became workers on pastoral stations, women continued to weave and sell baskets.



European interactions had a devastating effect on Wadawurrung ancestors that continue to be felt deeply by our people today. Dispossession, disease and massacres decimated our people despite the efforts of our warriors and resistance fighters. The thousands of Wadawurrung in clans and family bands were diminished to a fraction of our population, around 70 individuals.

Smaller groups of our people joined larger ones until one main group remained. Laws and government acts strongly controlled all parts of our lives throughout these times.



Banongil station overview – photo Sarah Eccles

The Wadawurrung today are the seven family groups, the descendants of John Robinson our apical ancestor, numbering approximately 600 people. John was the son of Wadawurrung Elder, *Canobeen* – Queen Mary of Ballarat (or *Borriyallock*) and John spent much of his time in the 1800s on the *Terrinallum*, *Booriyallock*, Mt. Emu and *Banongil* stations near Skipton in the north-west of Wadawurrung Country with his parents and people.

We have connections with our neighbouring Traditional Owner groups in northern and central Victoria. Including the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Bunurong, Taungurung and Dja Dja Wurrung together we are known as the Kulin Nations, sharing similar languages, common creation stories and joint cultural ceremonies and events.

Wadawurrung Traditional owners today are spread across Country in areas such as Ballarat, Gordon, Mortlake, Geelong and Torquay with some living in other parts of Australia but maintaining spiritual and familial links by returning to country frequently.

Some of our relatives were forcefully removed from their families as children. Recent history has damaged the relationship we have with our Country and each other. These impacts are still felt today and resonate through our generations and daily lives.

The strength, resilience and leadership of our Elders coming together against many challenges to our identity and culture became a way for Wadawurrung people to regain our voice and our stories. It became a way to pass on knowledge and empower the next generations to look after our Country and culture, spiritual and familial links with Country. From a few Elders meeting around a coffee table in the late 1990's our representative organisation was born. Giving us a voice and way to look after our culture and country to advocate for our people's needs.

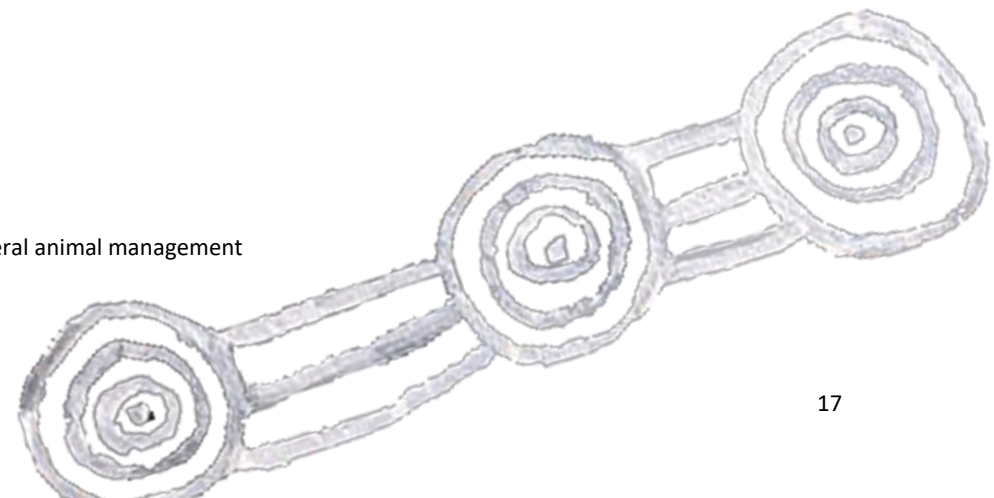
This organisation, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) was registered in 1998 and appointed in May 2009 as a Registered Aboriginal Party with statutory rights and under the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. This means we are the legally recognised corporation for working with as custodians, decision makers and knowledge holders for looking after our cultural heritage and Country.

WTOAC has over 300 hundred members and its role is to respond to the needs of the Wadawurrung community and to coordinate the activities, resources and partnerships necessary to protect and strengthen culture, manage land and sea Country and support community health and wellbeing.

Wadawurrung corporation has grown significantly over the past 5 years with many achievements in looking after our culture and Country since its establishment. It has increased its ability to provide a wide range of professional services.

These include:

- Cultural heritage assessments, management plans, protection and management works
- Welcome to Country & smoking ceremonies
- Artworks and linkages to Wadawurrung artists
- Cultural education and awareness workshops
- Dance and cultural practices workshops
- Wadawurrung language and cultural interpretation advice
- Cultural advice into environmental, urban and water plans
- Reconciliation Action Plan development
- Caring for Country services - cultural burning, weed, water and feral animal management



## Our Wadawurrung Country Plan

The **Paleert Tjaara Dja** – Let's make country good together 2020-2030 – Wadawurrung Country Plan is our collective dream and direction for the future of our people and Country. It tells the story of what is important to us, and what we need to do about it. It will be a guide for building upon our cultural heritage management work and progressing our broader Caring for Country aspirations.

The plan will also help us strengthen our people's cultural knowledge and education to be able to develop our land and sea management program, pursuing purchases, access and co-management arrangements for Country. This can provide our people and future generations a foundation for protecting our culture and Country and have culturally appropriate social, cultural and economic development opportunities.

The plan will help guide our Treaty, Traditional Owner Settlement Act and Native Title negotiations, and our conversations with government, and other partners.

We used the Healthy Country Planning approach, which is based on the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, an international best-practice adaptive management framework for developing conservation management plans.

Healthy Country Planning is the adaption of this for use in Australia amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It takes a participatory, community strengths-based approach to planning. Other communities who have used this tell us of how valuable it has been for them.

<http://www.natureaustralia.org.au/science-in-action/conservation-planning/healthy-country/>



Generations of Wadawurrung people on country at Lake Connewarre photo Al Dermer

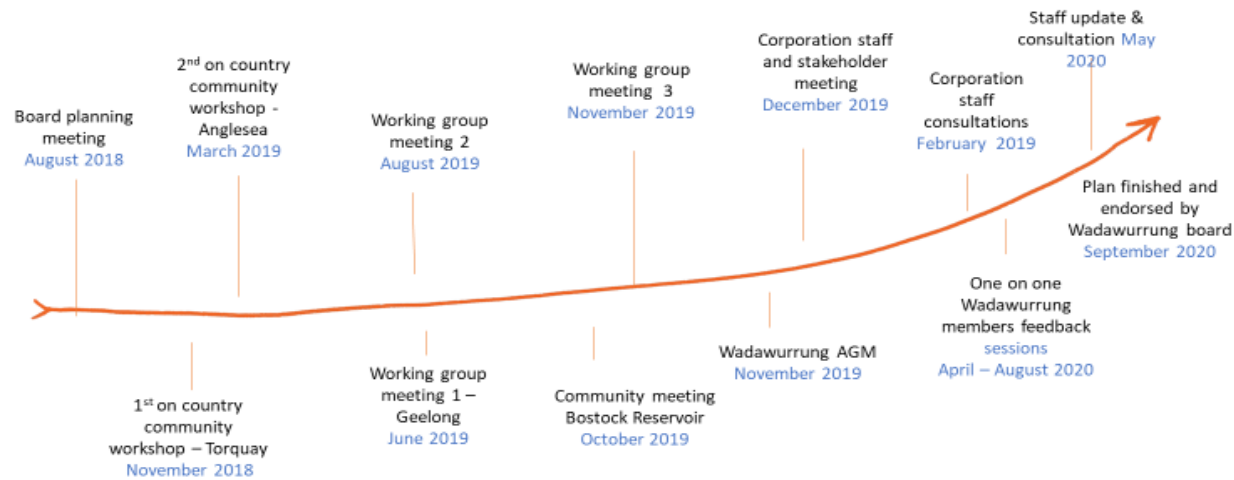


Moorabool river: photo credit Barwon Water

### Developing the plan together

Our Country plan was developed over two years beginning with a planning meeting with the Wadawurrung board in August 2018. This was followed by on Country community workshops that provided us the time to strengthen our relationships with each other and Country. While identifying what our collective dream was, the values important to us and what was threatening the health of our Country and people.

A working group was formed with representatives from family lines that worked on what we are going to do about this, the goals, strategies and indicators. Community meetings and one on one discussions with Wadawurrung members provided feedback and further input. The timeline below shows how we developed the plan together.



A 15-page visual summary version of this plan has been produced to help in sharing our plan. It is downloadable from the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation website <https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/>

### Video to tell our story

Videos are a good way to communicate to our Wadawurrung members but also to the broader public. We employed Wadawurrung people to help gather stories, images, create artworks and develop a video series. There are five videos in the series which we used to both communicate with Wadawurrung members about the plan and getting involved and to share what's in our plan.

There is the **Paleert Tjaara Dja** - let's make country good together 2020-2030 - overview video. This is available on our website as well. <https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/>

Then four shorter videos are:

1. Introduction to country
2. Introducing the Country plan approach
3. Vision, Scope, Values & Threats
4. Programs & Goals



## Our shared Vision

*Wurrgurwilwa gupma bengadak Wadawurrung wurring-wurring baap dja*

All people working together to make Wadawurrung Country and Culture strong



## Wurrgurwilwa gupma bengadak Wadawurrung wurring-wurring baap dja

All people working together to make Wadawurrung Country and culture strong.



"These are the important things that we want to look after"  
**OUR VALUES - BUILDING BLOCKS**



**THREATS TO OUR VALUES**  
"There are lots of threats that stop our values from being healthy but some are worse than others"

**Gobata Dja baap Ngubiyt**  
**Taking care of Country and waters**

- Caring for Country Team
- Cultural Values Management • Co-management
- Dja and Yulluk (Country and Water) Acquisition and Management • Cultural Burning
- Representation on planning boards, committees and advisory groups
- Cultural Heritage Management (Physical artefacts)

**Gobata bengadak Hjaava**  
**Us supporting us – Cultural Strengthening**

- Culture and language strengthening Program
- Keeping Place – A safe place for our cultural resources, for Wadawurrung to practice culture
- Cultural Centre – Sharing and education and Enterprise
- Wadawurrung cultural education and language
- Elders Support Services

**Wurrgurwilwa Wadawurrung Corporation**  
**Strengthening Wadawurrung Corporation**

- Employment and mentoring
- Enterprise development & support
- Recognition and Respect for Wadawurrung people, Treaty
- Engage with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) members
- Strengthen governance and systems in WTOAC
- Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

### 3 PROGRAMS / 18 STRATEGIES

"These are the 3 programs we have decided to focus on to reduce the worst threats and improve the health of our values"





Tarnook for welcome to Country ceremony - Photo credit Barwon Water

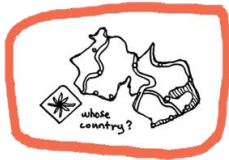
**Our plan has 4 key parts that guide us in progressing our cultural heritage and Caring for Country aspirations:**



**Our shared Vision** of a healthier future for Wadawurrung people and Country.



**Our 9 Values**, the really important things we need to look after to achieve our vision.



**16 Threats** we need to reduce to make our Values healthy.



**3 Programs** and **18 strategies** what we have decided to focus on to reduce the threats and improve the health of our values.

## Our Values – are what we want to keep healthy

Values is just another way of saying 'the main features we want and value on Wadawurrung Country'. They are the elements that keep Country healthy and are important for us to look after. Values can be cultural, ecological, or economic and livelihood based.

All of Country is important, but we have limited money, time and other resources, so these are what we see as a priority to look after. We came up with a list of nine values which are important to us. We also thought about how healthy our values are so we can consider what is needed to make them even healthier.

We collaborated and identified what makes our values healthy and how we will measure that so that we can tell if they are improving in health or getting worse. We have chosen indicators that will help us to measure the health of our values like a doctor taking blood pressure to see if our heart is healthy.

### Key to health of values



**Very Good** – as healthy as it can be



**Good** - might need a bit of support



**Fair** - needs a lot of support



**Poor** - needs urgent attention



## Wadawurrung culture and people

We are the protectors and carers of this Country and this Country protects and cares for us. We belong to and are spiritually connected to this Country and this Country is part of us. We are inseparable, no matter where we are, we are bound together. When Country is sick, we are sick. We talk to Country in language to help us both heal. Our stories, dances and songs keep us strong in our culture. Our lore and law guide us in keeping our people and Country connected and healthy.

For a long time, we haven't been able to practice our culture and speak our language freely, but now we are learning to stand proud again and teach our children our cultural ways; how to weave baskets, craft spears, prepare possum skin cloaks and perform ceremonies.

We are committed to connecting our people, strengthening their connection and knowledge, our people know their identity, who they are and where they belong.

### Current Health:



**Goal:** By 2025 70% of Wadawurrung Traditional Owners have strong cultural connection and knowledge, we are practicing culture and speaking language.

### Indicator:

- % of Wadawurrung people speaking to each other in language
- Participation in community events

*"How we connect with the spirit of our ancestors is what connects us"*

Aunty Vi - Wadawurrung Elder



*"By touching the scars on the tree, you are connecting directly with your ancestors"*

Uncle Bryon Powell, Wadawurrung Elder – Scar Tree

Photo Credit Sarah Eccles



## Wadawurrung cultural sites and places

There are many physical (tangible) places that have the imprint of our ancestors living on Country like stone huts and stone arrangements, rock wells, artefact scatters or stone tool making sites. There are ochre pits, living places, oven hearths, rock and spear grinding grooves, scar, birthing, cooking and ring trees, geoglyphs, rock art, mens and womens ceremony places.

Living places are made up of the midden sites, discarded food wastes from many meals in the one location. They are next to rivers, lakes and bays or in the sand dunes by the ocean. Depending on where they are found middens can contain all kinds of **kuwiyn** (fish), stone tools, shellfish, animal bones and even fishing hooks. Today the living places show us what the different clans ate in the various locations that Wadawurrung people lived and camped.

There are many more cultural places that are intangible and also carry the imprint of our ancestors. We can feel them in places where our songlines pass through and in the places in our creation stories. In this way all of Country is connected.

### Current Health:



**Goal:** By 2029 Wadawurrung people are involved in the management of all known sites.

### Indicator:

- % of known sites protected





*"Educating people of cultural ways, connects them to care for Country too."*

Corrina Eccles  
Photo Corrina Eccles



## Enterprise and employment

Before Europeans came into our Country, thousands of our Wadawurrung people lived in large family groups as an organised community with agricultural and aquacultural practices as a social and economic base.

Our Country with its bountiful resources sustained our people and enabled them to prosper. Past and present policies prevent us from fully benefitting from our Country's resources. This also prevents us from caring for our people and Country in the way we would like. Wadawurrung people are spread all over Australia and work in a range of jobs but there is only a few working in the Corporation on Wadawurrung Country. We will seek ways to have our Country once again as the rightful economic basis for our people's enterprise and employment. We are developing a Caring for Country team and enterprise so Wadawurrung people can be contracted to look after Country, to further looking after cultural places, to lead cultural burning and fire management.

We want our people to further develop their cultural education, art and tourism businesses. We bring our traditional knowledge into current businesses and pursue aquaculture and agricultural enterprises with products that are culturally important to us and help heal Country. We will integrate traditional Aboriginal perspectives into contemporary landscapes and designs. Which represent our cultural architecture design that represents our cultural connections, stories and language into the housing estates and infrastructure development on Country.

### Current Health:



**Goal:** By 2030, 60% of Wadawurrung people who want to work on Country have jobs or businesses.

### Indicators:

- Number of Wadawurrung owned businesses
- % of Wadawurrung people employed on-Country



*"Our ancestors were innovative; the use of warrigal greens is the first recorded use of insulation technology for shelters, it was used as a fire retardant and is still eaten as bush tucker today"*

Melinda Kennedy

Melinda, Tammy and Zade, Wadawurrung people carrying on cultural practice of *buniya* eel traps photo - Corangamite CMA

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## Bush tucker, medicines and resources

Our Country is our supermarket, hardware store, clothing store and pharmacy. **Murnang** (murnong or yam daisy), which is similar to the sweet potato eaten today was once plentiful and nutritious. It can be eaten raw but is usually cooked in baskets. Women used digging sticks to remove the tubers and turn the soil.

Most of the large animals, including **Go-yin** (wallabies), **Goim** (kangaroos), **Walert** (possums), ducks and swans were hunted and processed by men using boomerangs and spears. **Buniya** (eels) were caught in eel traps (tubular-shaped baskets) and water birds were caught in nets that our women wove and made from plant fibres, a practice we continue today. The sea provides bountiful sources of crayfish, abalone, mussels, oysters, pipis and fish.

Many plants are used as medicines. Black wattle gum resin was used for treating diarrhoea and applied to wounds to prevent infection. Grass trees have many uses the leaves are good for thatching, the flower spikes make spear shafts, and the sap makes glue and incense. They are **Wiyn** (fire) tree from which fire is made.

### Current Health:



**Goal:** By 2030, there is enough of Wadawurrung People's favourite bush tucker.

### Indicator:

- % of Wadawurrung bushtucker available



**Murnang**, yam daisy - photo sustainable communities 32



### Kuwiyn (Fish) Traps

Kuwiyn traps are a cultural practice and knowledge continued to be used for generations. They were made beside rivers, lakes and tidal marine locations.

Some were circular in shape extending from the shoreline and others straight across rivers and streams.

Materials used included stones, branches, sticks, reeds and clay.

In flood waters or high tides **kuwiyn** and **buniya** (eel) would swim into the traps and remain inside as the water lowered again, making it easy to collect the **kuwiyn** and **buniya**.

Tammy Gilson – **buniya** eel trap in Morabool river cultural flows project.

Photo credit Corangamite CMA



## Yulluk (Waterways, Rivers, estuaries and wetlands)

*All our waters are living sources from Bundjil – the Karringalabul Murrup, the Creator spirit. He created all you see. Our waters were made for our survival, the survival of all things living.*

Melinda Kennedy, Wadawurrung Traditional Owner

Our main river systems are the Barwon/Moorabool, Yarowee and Leigh rivers or Barre Warre Yulluk. Yulluk (great river) that runs from the barre (mountains) to the warre (ocean), and our stories tell of these connections. The name Barwon is derived from parwan meaning 'magpie' or 'great wide'.

Fyansford is a significant cultural place where the Barwon and Moorabool meet.

The chain of ponds from the Barwon River to Reedy Lake, Hospital Lake, Lake Connewarre and Estuary Bay is connected through water and our Connewarre (Black Swan) Dreaming. The Connewarre Wetland Complex is internationally significant for wader and shoreline birds and forms part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula RAMSAR Site.

Our waterways were like our highways, they were how Wadawurrung people moved around Country.

Our people used canoes or in calmer waters, Murriyans bark floats, or punts pushed by long poles to gather the abundance of food. On the natural rises along the waterways our people camped and caught eels, other fish and waterbirds to eat. Important decisions were made on the banks of these waterways by our Ancestors. They were important living and meeting places. Just as they are today.

**Yulluk** animal life:

- 22 native and recreational fish species, including Estuary Perch and Australian Grayling
- 50 mammal species including the Platypus and Swamp Wallabies

**Current Health:**



**Goal:** By 2030, there is enough water in the waterways of **Barre Warre Yulluk** that it flows through the system, without barriers and is clean enough to drink.

**Indicators:**

- Water Quality
- Amount of water
- Cultural flows
- % of economic access to water
- Number of artificial barriers in waterways



Yulluk



You Yangs photo credit Sarah Eccles





## Inland Country

Our inland country includes western volcanic plains and grasslands, with their temperate grasslands and grassy eucalypt woodlands once had enough food and resources for us to live here permanently all year in our stone huts as a community in family groups. The grasslands were full of food grasses, and our women harvested roots and tubers, like **Murnong** and bulbine lily with their digging sticks. Our Country is home to many different types of snakes, lizards, frogs, moths, birds and mammals. **Kwenda** (Bandicoot) or **Yoorn** (spotted tail quoll) was once here as was the eastern barred bandicoot who helped our women in digging and tilling the soil to increase the growth of **Murnong**, helping our women to till the soil but now are extinct or rarely seen in this landscape.

Fire and cultural burning in this Country was and continues to be important for renewing growth, food for animals and people. The remnants of farming terraces near Little River are a further reminder that our people were farming and managing this country, well before Europeans and sheep took over our lands.

Now the Victorian Volcanic Grasslands are one of the most threatened ecological communities with less than 5% left as it turned into farming and housing estates.

**You Yangs** National Park, north of Geelong holds strong cultural importance and connections. A place created by **Lowen** one of our creator beings; he flew down from the north. Everywhere a he landed, it turned into granite.

Below the **You Yangs** National Park within the cultural landscape of the volcanic plains is an 11 000 year old stone arrangement that pre-dates the pyramids. These significant sites tell of our old people's knowledge as this country's first scientists and astronomers. We look forward to the day when we can again fulfil our obligations in managing this important cultural place.

There are many Wadawurrung camp sites where our people created permanent water sources, natural rock depressions in the granite that our old people chipped and modified the into rock wells, placing covers on them to keep the water clean and stopping evaporation. Rock artefacts from stone tool making workshops are near to these campsites and the large granite rocks.

Heading west is a continuation of this rock country **Anakie Youang**, meaning 'little hills' that comprise of Coranguilook – the western peak, Baccheriburt – the central peak and Woollerbeen known in our stories as the three sisters, this country holds veins of gold and where the wealth of Victoria has come from. Inland country has Brisbane Ranges National Park, with its gullies and open gum woodlands. The major township of Ballart, plus **Kareet Bareet** our creation place and **Lal Lal** is our creators final resting place on country.

**Current Health:**



**Goal:** By 2030, the current extent of volcanic grass lands and woodlands is increased by 5%.

**Indicators:**

- Extent of volcanic grasslands
- Age classes of woodlands
- % of grasslands with cultural burning
- % of cultural foods in grasslands

Volcanic grasslands photo Greening Australia

**Victorian Volcanic Grasslands**

Victorian Volcanic Grasslands used to cover much of Wadawurrung Country. The central plains were covered in vast open areas of grasslands with small patches of woodlands.

They are classified as a threatened ecological community.

**Plants:**

- Kangaroo grass
- Wallaby grasses
- Spear grasses
- River gums

**Animals:**

- Yarra Pygmy Perch
- Plains Wanderer
- Striped Legless Lizard





Pt. Addis photo credit Sarah Eccles



## Coastal Country

Our coastal country stretches from the Werribee River, it takes in the Avalon Coastal reserve, **Jilang** (Geelong) - stingaree bayside, the **Bellawiyn** (Bellarine) Peninsula and down along the Barwon, Torquay and Airey's inlet coastline.

Our coastal dunes are layered with living places and hearths from the many generations of our ancestors living, harvesting, sharing meals, trading in these living places and practicing ceremony here. We have the largest stretch of registered cultural sites in Australia along our coastline. Our fish traps, which were used to catch the abundant fish have survived the storms and sea level changes. Ochre pits of different colours are dotted along our sandstone and limestone cliffs and headlands.

Our sandy beaches, rock pools, rocky platforms and reefs were and continue to be places of abundance for harvesting food and resources like crustaceans, shellfish and kelp.

The coastal woodlands and Anglesea heathlands hold stories that teach us of cultural practices like the **moonah** woodlands which are disappearing putting our marriage stories at risk. Our **Wiyun** (grass trees) which we use for fire and spears are badly affected by disease.

The coast holds cultural significance for Wadawurrung People today. With the number of people who call our coast home and come to visit increasing, there is more pressure on the coastal plants, animals and sites.

**Current Health:**



**Goal:** By 2029, native vegetation extent remains or increases and cultural places are protected.

**Indicators:**

- Extent of **moonah**, ironbark and heathlands
- % of cultural sites assessed by Wadawurrung
- Condition of coastal cultural sites
- Increased breeding of shorebirds



Coastal woodland country - photo credit Sarah Eccles



## Warre - Sea Country

We see our **Dja** land and **Warre** sea Country as all one but we have highlighted it here as it needs some real help. Known by many as the surf coast and enjoyed by visitors the world over for its legendary long rolling surf breaks such as Bells Beach where the sea floor contours harness the big swells of the Southern Ocean.

For us it is full of resources, favourite foods and living places along our coast that show how the seas provide so plentifully for generations of Wadawurrung. Fishing, diving, harvesting from the rocky and intertidal reefs.

The estuaries where **Yulluk** (waterways) and **Warre** connect are essential breeding areas, once places of plenty and still so important for ongoing renewal of sea life.

Our sea Country includes Pt. Phillip Head and Pt. Addis Marine National Parks which extend along nine kilometres of our coastline. This area is east of Anglesea to Bells Beach abutting the Great Otway National Park. Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary, Pt. Lillias to Pt. Wilson to Kirk Pt, Wedge Point (Port Phillip coast) and Clifton Springs on the Bellarine Peninsula coast include saltmarshes and seagrass beds.

Kelp forests with their giant and bull kelps are homes and food sources for hundreds of sea animals. They are where some of our favourite foods, rock lobster and abalone. These kelp forests provide many resources and can be used to create water carriers.

Huge mammals also use these waters and you can sometimes spot Blue Whales, Southern Right Whales, Killer Whales and seals offshore.

Increased pollution from coastal communities, agricultural and industry run off is changing the sea hydrology and choking our sea life with plastics. Our **Wavre** is being overused and heating up with climate changes. We are seeing the loss of our kelp forests and dramatic changes in sealife which we all depend upon.

With so many people sharing and using our coastal and sea Country, Wadawurrung struggle with lack of recognition and equity in access and use of our coastal and sea resources.

**Current Health:**



**Goal:** By 2030, the **wavre** (sea) life in species, the seaweed and water quality remains at 2020 numbers and levels.

**Indicators:**

- % of kelp forest and dependent sea life
- % of sea grass with sea grass dependent fish
- % of Wadawurrung people accessing sea resources

*“Our links to coastal and sea Country are vital!  
They continue to be a place where we can swim, fish, harvest and connect,  
a safe place to revive and partake in our living culture.”*

Melinda Kennedy



## Native animals

Native animals are all the animals that are indigenous and belong to Wadawurrung Country.

It includes mammals like echidna and spotted-tailed quoll, birds like **Porronggitj** (brilga), emu, amphibians like frogs, reptiles like snakes, fish and eels. It also includes insects like butterflies, ants and spiders.

There are many animals that used to be found on Wadawurrung Country but aren't any more like dingoes and bilbies. All these animals are important because together with the plants and people they make Country healthy.

Some of these native animals we have strong cultural affiliations with as part of our cultural kinship. They can be totemic species for which we have obligations to protect and look after, like **Connewarre** (black swan).

### Current Health:



**Goal:** By 2030, no more of our native animals have become threatened

**Goal:** By 2035, at least one threatened species is no longer threatened.



**Indicators:**

- Numbers of different types of native animals
- Numbers of threatened species: Striped Legless Lizard, Golden Sun Moth, Growling Grass Frog
- Number of Wadawurrung people who know and are looking after their totemic animals



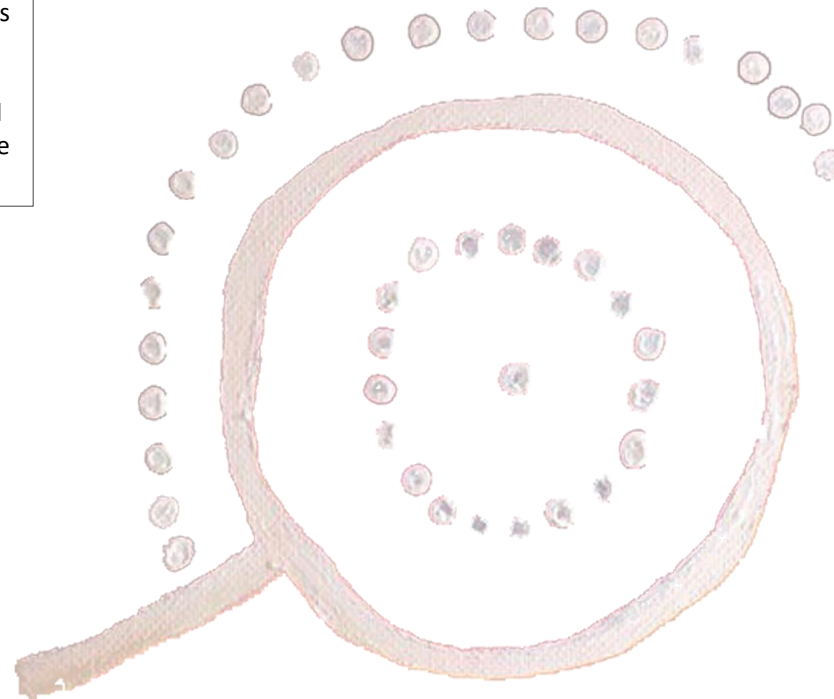
Waanawal Tawny Frogmouth - photo credit Sarah Eccles

**Yoorrn Spotted-tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*)**

The spotted-tailed quoll used to be widespread across Wadawurrung Country but is now nationally listed as endangered.

Yoorrn is found in the rainforest and wet forests where there are plenty of rock crevices, tree hollows and caves for den sites. They are solitary and hunt at night for mammals such as possums, birds and reptiles.

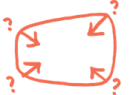
In our coastal country, the north areas of the Otway National Park and the Anglesea Heathlands is one of the few places we still find Yoorrn.




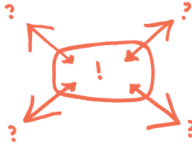
## Threats - the problems that make our values unhealthy

There are many threats that stop our values from being healthy but some are worse than others. We want to work on the worst threats first. We ranked them by looking at the amount of damage they cause across our values, how badly they hurt our values and how easy the damage is to fix.

We used the following to decide the ranking for each threat against the relevant value thinking about how bad and the area of damage that would be reasonably expected within 10 years under current circumstances:

Amount of Damage (Scope)	
	<b>VH</b> Very widespread —everywhere the value is
	<b>H</b> Widespread
	<b>M</b> More local
	<b>L</b> Very local

Is it Fixable (Irreversibility)	
	<b>VH</b> Not fixable, for all intents and purposes
	<b>H</b> Fixable but really expensive
	<b>M</b> Fixable with reasonable commitment of resources
	<b>L</b> Easily fixable at relatively low cost

How bad (Severity)	
	<b>VH</b> Destroy or eliminate
	<b>H</b> Seriously degrade
	<b>M</b> Moderately degrade
	<b>L</b> Slightly impair



This table shows how we ranked each threat against the targets they affect to come out with an overall rank in the right-hand column

Threats \ Targets	Wadawurrung cultural sites and places	Sea Country	Inland Country	Rivers, estuaries and wetlands	Wadawurrung culture and people	Native animals	Bushtucker, medicines and resources	Enterprise and Employment	Coastal Country	Summary Threat Rating
Urban development	High	High	High	High	Very High	High	High		High	Very High
Lack of coordination	High	High	High	High	High	High	High			Very High
Lack of recognition	Very High				Very High					Very High
Sea level rise	High	High		Medium			High		High	Very High
Water extraction	High	High		Medium			High		High	Very High
Lack of capacity	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium	High
Rising sea temperatures		Very High							Medium	High
Inappropriate location of wind farms	High				High	Low				High
Inappropriate visitation	High	High				Medium			Medium	High
Vandalism	Very High								Low	High
Cinnamon fungus			High				High		Medium	High
Weeds		High	High	High			High		High	High
Rabbits	High	High	High	Medium			High			High
Foxes and cats				High		High	Medium			High
Bushfires	High		High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium		Medium	High
Drought	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	High		Medium	High

## Threat descriptions

These are the threats we will work on first as they affect our values the most and by dealing with these threats, we have the best chance of making our values healthier.



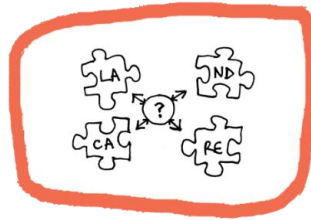
### Urban development

Much of our Country has been substantially modified by urban development, particularly in those areas centred on Geelong and Ballarat. Our country is experiencing the largest urban growth corridor in Victoria.

The G21 Regional Growth Plan predicts that the population of this region will increase from its current 294,000 people to 433,000 by 2041.

The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan predicts that the population of the Central Highlands region will increase from its current 169,300 people to 247,500 by 2041.

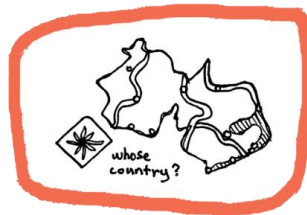
As the population grows there will be greater pressure to develop more land for housing, commercial and industrial purposes.



### Lack of coordination between land managers

Many different organisations are responsible for managing land in our Country. These include local government, state government departments, non-government organisations, private landholders and community-based groups such as Landcare. This means we must engage with a range of organisations with different goals and governance structures.

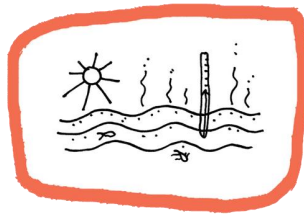
The way the land is managed at the moment is not working well and we want it to be looked after in a coordinated and holistic way.



### Lack of recognition

Many land managers do not recognise Wadawurrung people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of Wadawurrung Country. We are often excluded from decisions making processes regarding what happens on Country. There is lack of education around the Aboriginal cultural heritage act and our role as the legally recognized corporation to work with in protecting cultural heritage.

This is disempowering and not best for Country. By recognising us as the traditional owners and working with us to take care of Country we will all benefit. We will continue to seek formal recognition through all means available.

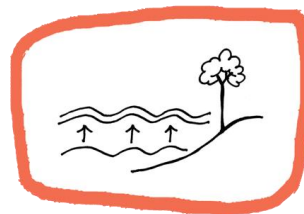


### Rising sea temperatures

Sea surface temperature is projected to increase in the range of 1.6 to 3.4 °C by 2090 under high carbon emissions.

This poses a significant threat to the marine environment through biological changes in marine species, including local abundance, community structure and enhanced coral bleaching risk.

The sea will also become more acidic proportional to emissions growth.



### Sea level rise

Sea level rises due to climate change will lead to inundation of coastal areas and loss of cultural sites.

By 2030 the projected range of sea-level rise for the region's coastline is 0.08 to 0.18 m above the 1986 – 2005 level, with only minor differences between emission scenarios.

Under certain circumstances, sea level rises higher than these may occur.



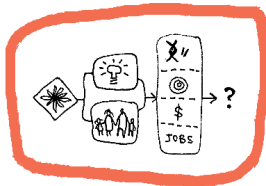
### Yulluk (Water) extraction

The upper Barwon/Moorabool, Yarowee and Leigh rivers or Barre Warre Yulluk catchment (including 94 tributaries) covers 5,380 km<sup>2</sup>.

These rivers provide the majority of the drinking water for Geelong and Ballarat. Water is extracted from rivers and underground aquifers to supply town water, farming and industry. To hold water in sections for use there are many weirs and barriers placed into our waterways.

This results in less water going into our rivers, wetlands and estuaries, affecting the waterflows and availability.

This harms our plants, animals, their homes, the nurseries for species such as wetland birds, fish and shellfish. This also affects their ability to feed, breed and impacts our cultural values and stories.



### Lack of capacity

It is our cultural obligation to look after Wadawurrung Dja but there are only a few people who have jobs taking care of Country.

To be able to work with the many land managers on Wadawurrung Country we need support for more Wadawurrung people to build the wide range of skills needed. To be able to combine both current natural resource management techniques with traditional knowledge and practices.



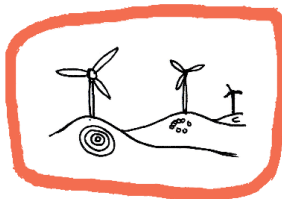


### **Inappropriate visitation**

While we welcome visitors to our Country we want them to be respectful, be careful and educated about the impact they have.

Using 4WDs, vehicles, bikes and motorbikes or by walking in sensitive areas can cause the loss of native plants, damage to cultural sites and erosion. Walking dogs on beaches and other places can disturb wildlife especially breeding shorebirds. Some places are sacred and should only be visited by certain people.

We have people camping authorized in areas that are not designated camp areas that cause impacts to Country.



### **Inappropriate location of windfarms**

We encourage and value green technology that limits harm to Country however windfarms have often been constructed in the wrong place, destroying cultural sites or cutting through (intangible heritage) song lines and story lines. We are also concerned about their impact on birds such as wedge-tailed eagles.

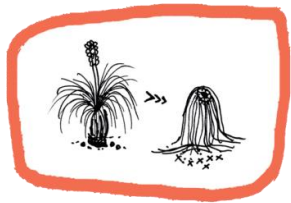
This can be prevented through consultation with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners in the early stages of wind farm proposal development.



### Vandalism

Most people enjoy and respect the places they visit but there are some people who deliberately deface, damage or destroy signs and cultural sites. It is disappointing to see rubbish and graffiti around our cultural sites and places.

We feel this disrespect of our special places deeply.



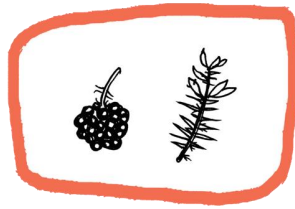
### Cinnamon fungus

Cinnamon fungus (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) is an introduced root-rot fungus that causes dieback of native plants.

Our **Wiyn** (fire) trees, the grass trees and other native plants are being killed by this fungus. It is spread through the transport of infected soil on tyres and shoes. Whilst there are measures to limit the spread of the fungus, such as staying on established tracks, wash down stations to clean shoes and wheels. As there is no known treatment to remove or destroy the fungus once an area is infected.



Cinnamon Fungus – before and after



## Weeds

Many types of plants found on Country are non-indigenous species that have come from other places. Some do very well and become weeds spreading rapidly, causing harm and stopping our native plants from thriving.

This can also include the many plantations like pine plantations in our inland country.

Once these weeds start to grow, they can be spread by wind, water, by attachment to animals, humans and machinery, inclusion in mud, soil, fodder and mulch, ingestion as a food source or intentionally by humans.



Weeds



## Bushfires

Our Wadawurrung ancestors managed *Dja* (Country) with *wiyn* (fire). Ongoing traditional fire burning management can reduce the destruction of hot and rapid bushfires.

Sophisticated knowledge developed over millennia of when and where to burn shows that fire was an essential tool for land management.

This practice provided an increase of not only food and medicine plants to harvest but increased the biodiversity on healthy *Dja*. Today, we are bringing back cultural burning practices and putting Wadawurrung people back onto *Dja*.

When we take fire out of the landscape over time, we see thicker forested areas and dry sclerophyll matter build up over time. This creates higher intensity bushfires and very little stands a chance to survive. Wadawurrung want to reduce that risk, keep our people safe and eliminate the damage to culturally significant places, native plants and animals.

Bushfires endanger lives and destroy property. With climate change, harsher weather patterns and longer fire seasons prevail. The need for the return of managing *Dja* with fire is intrinsic.

*'Wayn gurr dja - 'good Country*  
*Willem wiyn canboo - a fire was there once*  
*Wayn gurr karrung - It was a good place to camp*  
*Maiwan - a long time ago*  
*kimbarne wiyn murrup - here fire spirit*  
*yangarramela' - come back'*  
Tammy Gilson – Wadawurrung



### **Drought**

More frequent and more severe droughts due to climate change will result in less water in waterways and wetlands and therefore less water for plants and animals.

More water will be taken out of waterways and groundwater for use by the community, agriculture and other industries



### **Rabbits**

Rabbits are considered the Corangamite region's worst introduced grazer.

A single pair of rabbits can produce 30-40 young a year. Rabbits establish warrens where suitable soil conditions allow and quickly establish breeding populations. They cause loss of plant cover and soil erosion through eating native plants and digging burrows.

They can stop native plants from growing back after a fire because they eat all the seedlings.



### Foxes and cats

Foxes and cats are pest predators that kill our native mammals like **boo** (bandicoot), spotted-tailed **Yoorn** (quoll), birds like orange-bellied parrot and reptiles.

Foxes and cats have contributed to some native species becoming extinct on Wadawurrung Country.

### There are many other threats, including the following:

- Goats
- Deer
- Poor management of fisheries
- Herbicides and pesticides
- Stormwater runoff
- Treated effluent disposal
- Mining
- Weirs and reservoirs
- Lack of resources
- Waste Dumping
- Horse riding estates
- Wrong way fire
- Recreational fishing
- Boating churning up water
- Ballast water
- Wrong disposal of whale carcasses
- Grazing



Yaluk Wiyn Burt - Welcome and Water Ceremony- photo credit Sarah Eccles

## Programs and Strategies

These are the projects we have decided to focus on our priorities that we can do with our partners to reduce the worst threats and improve the health of our values, to heal Country and strengthen Wadawurrung people.

### *Gobata bengadak tjarra* (Us supporting Us – Cultural Strengthening)

- Culture and Language Strengthening Program
- Keeping Place – A safe place for our cultural resources, for Wadawurrung to come together on country and practice culture
- Cultural Centre; For Sharing, Education and Enterprise
- Wadawurrung cultural education and language
- Elders Support Services

### *Wurrurrwilwa Wadawurrung Corporation* (Strengthening Wadawurrung Corporation)

- Employment and mentoring
- Enterprise development and support
- Recognition and Respect for Wadawurrung People, Treaty
- Engagement with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) Members
- Structural reform of Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC)
- Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

### *Gobata Dja baap Ngubiyt* (Taking Care of Country and Waters)

- Caring for Country Team
- Cultural Values Management
- *Dja* and *Yulluk* - Country and Water Acquisition & Management
- Co-management
- Cultural Burning
- Representation on Planning Committees
- Cultural Heritage Management (Physical artefacts)





Wadawurrung welcome to country at women's AFL at Geelong football club:  
Photo credit Sarah Eccles



*Gobata bengadak tjarra*

(Us supporting Us – Cultural Strengthening)

### **Culture and Language Strengthening Program**

We are already providing some opportunities for Wadawurrung families to learn language and culture. We will provide dedicated ongoing opportunities year-round so that all Wadawurrung People can be on Country to share and learn and strengthen our cultural identity and family connections. Healing and building our Wadawurrung nation so we can continue to care for Country and share our rich culture with the broader public.

To provide connection to cultural knowledge and better understanding of Country in residents, visitors and lands managers. We will provide a safe place for our young people to learn and practice culture, so they can stand strong, proud and lead with this cultural knowledge.

#### **Goals:**

- By 2021 we have established an ongoing cultural strengthening program for Wadawurrung people.
- By 2030 our younger generations are leading cultural practices.

### **Keeping Place – A safe place for our cultural resources, for Wadawurrung to practice culture**

We will have a keeping place, a place that is for Wadawurrung to use and come together. A place to keep our cultural resources safe, where we can gather to share and be on Country.

**Goals:**

- By 2029, Wadawurrung people have a keeping place that is a safe space for practicing and passing on culture where our cultural artefacts and resources are housed and protected.

### **Cultural Centre – For Sharing, Education and Enterprise**

We are negotiating the use and development of cultural centres where visitors can come to learn and celebrate our people, our rich culture and Country. Visitors will be able to buy our cultural arts and crafts and take tours. We are incorporating our culture into existing centres, tourism experiences, school camp programs and housing developments and new precincts. Examples of partnerships that share our culture are; the Great Ocean Road Chocolaterie - Corroboree garden program and coastal bushtucker range, the discovery trail at Harpley Estate near Werribee and the Sovereign Hill hidden histories and education program at Ballarat. We will increase our partnerships to expand these opportunities for sharing our culture.

**Goals:**

- By 2028 Wadawurrung people have a cultural learning centre for visitors and local people.
- By 2023 Wadawurrung have established two additional partnerships for incorporating cultural experiences into existing education or information centres.
- By 2027, 50% of Wadawurrung language names for places are back on Country

### **Wadawurrung cultural education and language program**

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) have a cultural education program that shares our cultural and language with the public, particularly within schools. We will build on our existing program and develop a calendar of events so that groups can select the program, location and time that suits their needs.

We are developing a language program that can be incorporated into schools as the basis of introducing Wadawurrung culture. We have cultural and language resources such as the Wadawurrung language app and dictionary to support our people and the public to learn Wadawurrung language. We are working with local councils and developers in renaming places to language names to raise awareness. For example, outside of Geelong in the Bellarine Peninsula, the Armstrong Creek area is being renamed **Dooliebeel** which reflects our language for river red gums and grasslands.

#### **Goals:**

- By 2025, 5% of schools on Wadawurrung Country have the language and culture program in their curriculum.
- By 2022, our Wadawurrung language app will be accessible for all mobile phones.
- By 2021 our calendar of events for cultural education and language will be available.

*"When you use place names and you understand the meaning of the names it educates, connects and strengthens our culture."*

Bryon Powell - Wadawurrung Elder

### **Elders Support Services**

Our Elders have enabled us to survive and began building the foundations for us to thrive and to have our cultural knowledge and practices. They began the important fight for recognition of Wadawurrung people, developing our representative organisation, standing strong for our identity. It is our responsibility to continue their dream of having people understand who we are, to share our culture. To once again have access to our Country as our economic base to take our rightful place as a politically and culturally empowered first nations people.

With our Elders, it is our priority to provide to support for their wholistic care. They need ongoing support to look after their health, their homes, their cultural and community connections and all-round well-being. At times they have accessed services that have not provided for their needs and it is in honouring their request we have a Wadawurrung Elders support officer who provides tailored support for Elders. Giving the Elders time together socially, providing cultural activities, health and domestic supports.

Support to attend gatherings, meetings and continue to give vital input into the Wadawurrung corporation to guide our cultural business.

We want to continue this role and build on these services to be run as an ongoing program, to meet their individual, cultural, family and financial needs so they can enjoy the benefits of their hard work and struggle for recognition. To respect, capture and share their cultural knowledge and stories.

#### **Goals:**

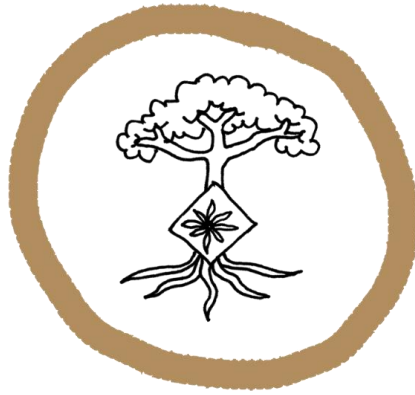
- By 2022 we will have developed an ongoing Elders support program.
- By 2023 the Elders cultural knowledge and stories will be captured for their families to share.



Joyce Eccles, Wadawurrung Elder and 5 generations of Wadawurrung on country  
Photo credit: Fern Milne



Uncle Bryon sharing knowledge - *You Yangs*  
Photo credit Al Dermer



## Wurrgurwilwa Wadawurrung Corporation

(Strengthening Wadawurrung Corporation)

### Employment and mentoring

We will increase the capacity of Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) by increasing the number of staff employed to deliver this plan. Staff will be supported to do their jobs well through training and mentoring.

#### Goals:

- By 2025, WTOAC will have doubled the number of staff and budget to deliver the programs in this Country plan.



### **Enterprise development and support**

We will create sustainable businesses and employment through many of the projects within these program areas, including through the Land and Sea Management Program. We will expand other cultural services the Corporation already provides and increase our arts, cultural tourism businesses and business partnerships.

We will take an innovative approach in adapting cultural knowledge and services to address threats that are making our Country sick in a way that provides work on Country, examples of this are seaweed farming and native grasses production.

We will support our members to develop businesses outside the corporation that compliments and increases Wadawurrung people's ability to be employed in looking after culture and Country. We will expand on programs where Wadawurrung are already actively involved such as tourism experiences and cultural tours.

#### **Goals:**

- By 2024 the Caring for Country Team will be generating 20% of WTOAC's income, employment and training opportunities.
- By 2027 Wadawurrung aquaculture, cultural services and tourism, wind farms and seaweed farming are generating income and employment for our people.

### **Recognition and Respect for Wadawurrung People, Treaty**

We will use the Country plan to progress our Native Title, Traditional Owner Settlement Act and Treaty negotiations to give us the legal security and recognition of our connections and cultural responsibilities to care for Country. In this way decisions about Country will be made by Traditional Owners and not the broader Aboriginal community who live on our Country. We will have worked with our partners and stakeholders to develop information that reaffirms our legal role as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) in looking after cultural heritage and providing cultural education and services. This will help stakeholders to clarify who to contact and be clear on their legal responsibilities and accountability.

We will develop signs to acknowledge people are coming into our Country, to help them understand our culture and how to care for Country. We believe that once people have greater understanding of culture and Country, respect and recognition will follow.

WTOAC will improve its branding and media presence through our own and partners websites and social media. As well as through development of branded products that educate and develop awareness.

#### **Goals:**

- By 2023, the Wadawurrung brand is known, respected and trusted.
- By 2023, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners will have achieved more formal legal recognition for our Country.
- By 2025, 30% of national parks, councils and tourism experiences have acknowledgement and story signages.
- By 2029, 70% of people who are living on Wadawurrung Country know that it is Wadawurrung Country and who we are.

*"We are an oral culture, we need someone to yarn to us about what is happening."*

Mary Shuttleworth - Wadawurrung

### **Engagement with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) Members**

WTOAC will be known by all Wadawurrung People. They will see the value of the Corporation, understand that it represents them and will want to be actively involved. WTOAC will achieve this by having a strong governance structure, supportive systems, policies and tools that blend cultural and legislative requirements to increase communication and engagement of its members and stakeholders.

**Goals:**

- By 2021 WTOAC has increased its communications to all members through a community engagement worker and various forms of media.
- By 2026 WTOAC has increased its membership base by 30% across all family lines.

### **Structural Reform of Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC)**

We will grow WTOAC so there are enough appropriate people with the right knowledge to support Wadawurrung people and care for Country. This will include developing the Healthy Country and Culture Committee to make sure that all WTOAC activities are based on cultural knowledge.

**Goals:**

- By 2021 the WTOAC Healthy Country and Culture Committee is guiding projects.
- By 2022 WTOAC has strong governance, an effective corporate structure, policies and tools in place to provide the skills and workforce required to look after our Country and People.
- By 2027, WTOAC is the employer of choice for Wadawurrung people.

## Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

We are already working closely with land, water and natural resource managers at all levels of government, with environment and friends' groups.

We, as Wadawurrung People, are valued and recognised as Traditional Owners and are involved in making decisions that affect our People and Country.

With so many land and water authorities, environmental and user groups we want to support better coordination across stakeholders engaging and working with us. This will limit our capacity being overstretched, it will support a more interconnected, cultural landscape perspective to managing country.

We will continue to work with our neighbouring Traditional Owners groups, as our ancestors have for thousands of generations.

### Goals:

- By 2027 WTOAC is known and being engaged by 60% of our stakeholders in any decisions to do with cultural and environmental management in our Country.
- By 2030, we have healthy relationships and partnerships supported by agreements with 60% of our priority stakeholders.

*"Keep connecting, coming together, this will keep us strong"*

Melinda Kennedy



**Djirnap our fire carrier**

**Djirnap** the cockatoo was our fire carrier, carrying the fire on the top of his head. He would not share his fire, he kept it to himself. **Waa** (Crow) and pigeon were the first to try and steal the fire, but they could not. Along came the sparrow hawk. He befriended the **Djirnap**, they shared some tucker at camp.

After a big feed, later that night **Djirnap** fell asleep beside the fire. Sparrow hawk took the fire and shared it amongst the people.

**Djirnap** still wears his yellow firecrest and underneath his crest lies a bald patch where the fire once burnt him.

Tammy Gilson,  
Wadawurrung Traditional  
Owner (from **Wiyin-Murrup**  
**Yangarramela** - Fire spirit  
comes back)

**wiyin** - photo credit Corangamite CMA



*Gobata Dja baap Ngubiyt*  
(Taking care of Country and waters)

### **Caring for Country team**

We are establishing our own a Caring for Country Team under the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC). The team will consist of existing and new positions. Their role will be to coordinate and deliver our Country Plan.

#### **Goals:**

- By 2021, our Caring for Country Team is established.
- By 2028 Wadawurrung priority diseases, pest weeds and animals are reduced in our important cultural places and landscapes.
- By 2024 our caring for country team is contracted to manage priority diseases, pest weeds and animals across our cultural landscapes.

## Cultural Values Management

We have a Cultural Heritage Team that actively manage our cultural values and which will be expanded and strengthened. They work with our partners on agreements and plans with support from our Healthy Country and Culture Committee. Initially we will focus developing these agreements within the Bellarine Peninsula, and our coastal and sea country.

Our Cultural Heritage Team, will work closely with land and managers, including councils to help them understand our important cultural heritage and places across country will be assessed and map by Wadawurrung so we know their threats and protection needs.

The cultural values of our coastal country are disappearing so fast as sea rise and their and our responsibilities in managing cultural heritage.

### Goals:

- By 2024, cultural heritage values along our coastal country are assessed.
- By 2027, Cultural Heritage Plans or Agreements are in place to guide the protection of priority cultural places.



Point Impossible spear sharpening and midden site, photo Sarah Eccles



Barwon meeting the sea  
Artwork by Nikki McKenzie



### Dja and Yulluk (Country and water) Acquisition and Management

In current legal frameworks, across the 1 million hectares of Wadawurrung Country we own and manage 54 hectares (Bostock Reservoir). We will use Bostock Reservoir to build our skills in contemporary land management to compliment and strengthen our traditional management practices and address the new management problems we face today.

Without access to Country and water we are limited in our role and ability to care for Country. We will continue to work towards acquiring important and culturally significant places on freehold like the property that includes the sacred site stone arrangement at Mount Rothwell, near Little River.

Building upon our relationships and partnerships with landholders and management authorities will give us additional opportunities for access and input into looking after Country. The Barwon and Moorabool Rivers and tributaries are important water resources for us and are highly impacted so we will focus our water management activities here initially.

#### Goals:

- By 2025 WTOAC have acquired 3% or 30 000 ha of our Country and it is managed for the benefit of our community.
- By 2029 WTOAC are working with private landholders across 40 000 ha of freehold land in access and management arrangements.
- By 2030, the water in the waterways of *the Barre Warre Yulluk* is clean enough to drink.
- By 2025, the waterways of the *Barre Warre Yulluk* will have sufficient cultural flows and connectivity to support culturally important species.
- By 2025, we will have negotiated access to water rights as an economic base for Wadawurrung.

### **Co-management**

Co-management can provide us with enterprise opportunities, jobs and access to more of our important cultural sites and places so we can take care of them. We will start to negotiate co-management arrangements for the **You Yangs** Regional Park and coastal crown land, as they contain many culturally significant sites. We would like co-management to be a pathway to full management by Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) for some areas identified by Wadawurrung.

#### **Goals:**

- By 2025 **You Yangs** Regional Park and the extended western grasslands are co-managed.
- By 2029 20,000 ha (10%) of crown land that are special places to us are in Wadawurrung management.

### Wiyɩn murrup goopma dja – (bringing fire spirit to Country)

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners are bringing cultural burning practices back to **Dja** to renew our Country, reaffirm our cultural connections, our identity and heal Country and people. Cultural burning practices build both a resilient ecosystem and culturally connected landscape. We will work alongside some of our neighbouring Traditional Owners and in partnership with other land management authorities, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria, Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) and Country Fire Authority (CFA) work to learn, share and build knowledge.

These collaborations focus on incorporating cultural burning into regulatory frameworks, planning and practice.

Working together we are implementing old cultural knowledge and understanding as a way to support cultural burning practices that meet cultural and ecological objectives to reduce the risk of damaging bushfires. In 2017, The **Wiyɩn-Murrup Yangarramela** (Fire spirit comes back) project was an example of a collaborative approach of working in partnership with key stakeholders to showcase how Wadawurrung people used fire on grassland **Dja**.

To continue a Wadawurrung-led cultural burning program we are building our capacity by practicing and learning on Country, training in fire management skills and acquiring equipment to build up our **Wiyɩn murrup goopma dja** management team. We will be able to contract out our services across all tenures, towards making Country healthy and upholding our cultural responsibilities to care for it in a way that provides jobs. Initially we will focus our attention on cultural burns in You Yangs Regional Park and surrounding grasslands, Point Addis National Park, Brisbane Ranges National Park and Steiglitz Historic Park.

#### Goals:

- By 2023 our **Wiyɩn murrup goopma dja** management team is established with the capacity to lead and be contracted for public and private land burns.
- By 2025 cultural burning practices are integrated into all levels of burn plans and 50 % of burns are led by Wadawurrung Traditional Owners with DELWP, Parks Victoria and CFA collaboration.

## Representation on Planning Committees

Wadawurrung People are respected and valued as the Traditional Owners of Wadawurrung Country and have decision-making powers through representation on key planning committees. We will focus on Committees that represent a number of land and water managers in the Geelong and Ballarat areas where urban development pressures are increasing.

### Goals:

- By 2022 key planning committees and plans have incorporated Wadawurrung management concerns and this is informing decisions.
- By 2030 Wadawurrung People's principles of sustainability are incorporated into housing estates such as emission reduction targets, water minimisation and green energy are mandatory in housing developments.



*"Our voice and knowledge is vital at the highest level if our Country is to be protected."*

A sunset over the ocean with a silhouette of a bird in flight. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange glow. The bird is silhouetted against the bright sun. The ocean is dark with some white foam from waves. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow.

Koling wada-ngal

Let's walk together

Nyatne

Thanks

**Appendix 1: Learning as we go  
(monitoring, reporting and improvement)**

We will use signposts (indicators) to check if what we are doing is working.  
We will know that our strategies are working if the threats are reducing and the health of our values are improving.  
If it is not working as we expected we will review our strategies and actions and adapt them until we find what works.

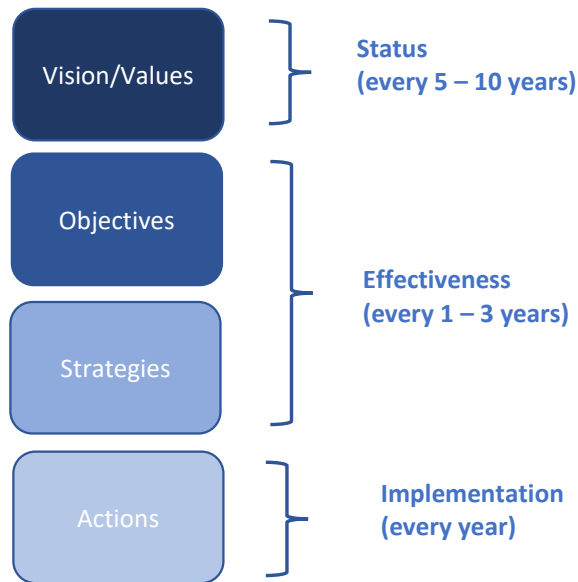


Figure 2: The link between monitoring and the plan



Figure 3: The different levels of reporting

## Appendix 2: References

Corangamite Catchment Authority Corangamite Natural Resource Management Plan for Climate Change, Corangamite Catchment Authority

Corangamite Catchment Authority Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-2019

Corangamite Catchment Authority Corangamite Invasive Plant and Animal Management Strategy 2010

Corangamite Catchment Authority Corangamite Waterway Strategy 2014 – 2022

Corangamite Catchment Authority Corangamite Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Strategy 2009

Corangamite Catchment Authority (2005) Corangamite Native Vegetation Plan 2003 – 2008

The Wadawurrung People – Did you know?

Wadawurrung Traditional Fishing Methods poster

Wadawurrung Country of the Victorian Volcanic Plains (2019)

*Wiyu-Murrup Yangarramela* – Fire Spirit Comes Back





*Planning and Environment Act 1987*

## **SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

### **AMENDMENT C133SURF**

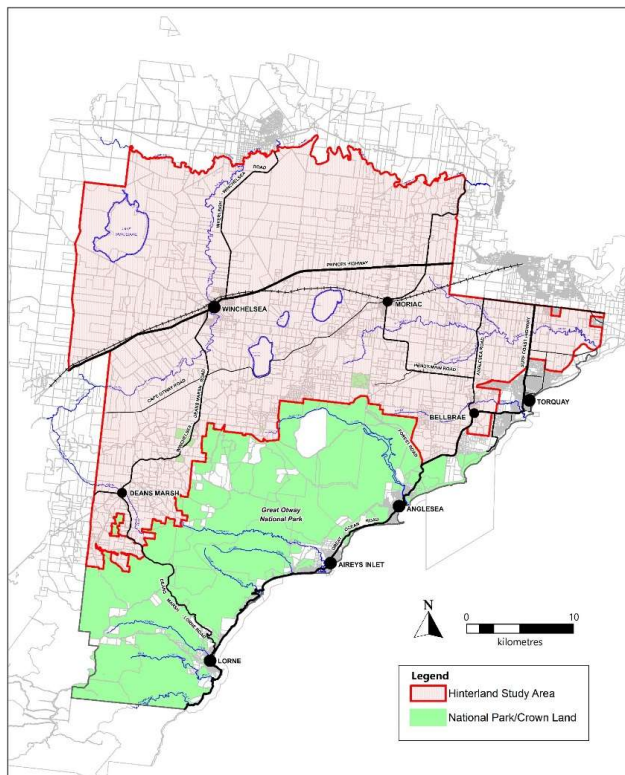
#### **EXPLANATORY REPORT**

##### **Who is the planning authority?**

This amendment has been prepared by the Surf Coast Shire Council, which is the planning authority for this amendment.

##### **Land affected by the amendment**

The amendment applies to land zoned Farming and Rural Conservation Zone within the Hinterland Study Area shown on Map 1.



**Map 1: Land affected by the amendment**

##### **What the amendment does**

The amendment implements the strategic directions of the Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy 2019 by providing a planning policy framework that enables increased agricultural, agritourism and tourism opportunities while protecting the environmental and landscape values of the hinterland.

Specifically, the amendment:

- Amends Clause 02.03 (Strategic directions),
- Amends Clause 12.01-1L (Protection of biodiversity in Surf Coast),

- Amends Clause 13.02-1L (Bushfire planning),
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L-01 (Protection of agricultural land in Surf Coast),
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L-02 (Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones),
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L-03 (Subdivision in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone),
- Inserts Clause 14.01-1L-04 (Other discretionary use and development in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone),
- Amends Clause 14.01-2L (Sustainable agricultural use),
- Amends Clause 15.01-6L (Design for rural areas),
- Inserts Clause 17.01-1L (Diversified economy in Surf Coast),
- Amends Clause 17.04-1L (Facilitating tourism in Surf Coast),
- Implements the Thompsons Creek Catchment Area Review report 2022 by amending the Schedule to Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone) through the removal of the variation to the minimum lot size of 60ha,
- Amends the schedule to Clause 72.08 to insert reference to three new background documents, titled:
  - Hinterland Design Guidelines (Surf Coast Shire and Inclusive Design, 2021),
  - Paleert Tjaara Dja: Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan (Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, 2020)
  - Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy (Surf Coast Shire, 2019)
- Amends the schedule to Clause 74.02 to delete completed further strategic work in relation to subdividing land in the Thompsons Creek Catchment Area. Identifies the need to undertake a landscape assessment for the Barrabool Hills that considers Cultural Heritage values.

#### **Strategic assessment of the amendment**

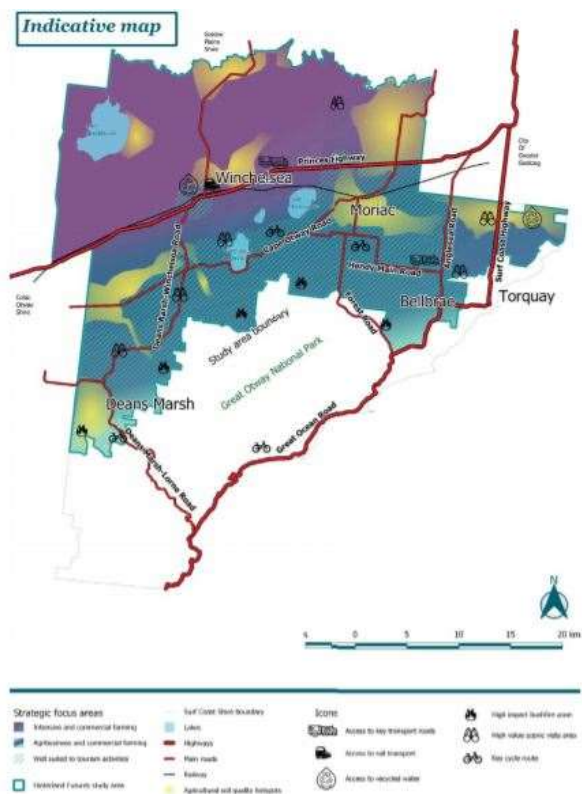
##### **Why is the amendment required?**

The amendment implements the strategic directions of the Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy (2019). The strategy is an economic vitalisation and land use planning strategy that seeks to enable opportunities for increased agri-food, agritourism and tourism opportunities in the hinterland. The amendment ensures that this growth is carefully managed for the continued protection of farming as the primary land use of the hinterland. The strategy and amendment direct careful management and protection of the significant environmental and landscape values, which are highly valued assets to the Surf Coast Shires community.

The strategy recognises the importance of agriculture to the future economy of the hinterland and divides the Shire into two agricultural areas with access to key infrastructure, high quality soil and lot sizes that are best suited to intensive and/or commercial farming. An additional area is identified that overlaps the commercial farming area that features natural landscapes and environmental qualities. This area is also suitable to a combination of tourism and agritourism land uses. These areas are shown in the Strategic Land Use Map (Map 2).

A significant portion of the potential tourism/agri tourism area is at risk from bushfire and policy direction is included within the amendment to ensure land use is directed to areas where risks are low or can be adequately mitigated.

The amendment is required to provide clear land use planning and strategic direction that will help vitalise the hinterland whilst protecting the primacy of the land for farming. It provides improved decision-making tools for discretionary uses in rural areas and design principles to protect the high landscape and environmental values.



**Map 2: Strategic Land Use Map**

The amendment is also required to implement the recommendations of the Thompsons Creek Catchment Area Review report (2021). The report completed a review of the effectiveness of a permitted variation to the minimum subdivision lot size in the Thompsons Creek Catchment Area where certain criteria can be met. The review found the provision to be ineffectual and its original intent of addressing salinity issues obsolete since the introduction of much improved mapping and more integrated decision-making tools into the Victoria Planning Provisions and the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. The review report recommended the removal of the variation from the Thompsons Creek Catchment Area.

The amendment inserts the Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy (2019) as a background document to provide further context to the amended policies introduced through this amendment. It also inserts the Hinterland Design Guidelines (2021) as a background document. The guidelines provide siting and design criteria to ensure new development in the hinterland continues to protect the valuable landscape and environmental character and minimises potential land use conflicts.

**How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?**

The amendment implements the objectives of planning in Victoria (sections 4(1) and 12(1)(a) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*) by providing for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land within the rural parts of the Surf Coast Shire.

**How does the amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?**

The amendment implements the Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy (2019). The strategy was developed using a triple bottom line approach, carefully ensuring economic growth, the values of the community and environmental and landscape assets were given equal consideration.

The strategy seeks to significantly grow the economic contribution made by the hinterland over the next 20 years by providing a planning policy framework to enable increased agricultural and agri tourism and tourism opportunities.

Through the development of the strategy the community expressed a strong desire to protect the environmental and landscape values of the hinterland and design guidelines form part of the amendment to ensure these values continue to be protected.

**Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?**

The Country Fire Authority was consulted during the preparation of Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy and a detailed section on how best to avoid bushfire risks through land use planning was included. A significant portion of the hinterland, generally abutting the Great Otway National Park, is covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay and is subject to a landscape scale bushfire.

The amendment amends Clause 13.02-1L (Bushfire planning) to ensure risks associated with bushfire are elevated and fundamental to land use planning decision making.

**Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any Minister's Direction applicable to the amendment?**

The amendment is consistent with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes under section 7(5) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. It also complies with the requirements of Minister's Direction No. 11 Strategic Assessment of Amendments.

**How does the amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?**

VPP 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values)

The amendment supports and implements the following clauses within VPP 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values):

*Clause 12.01-1S – Protection of biodiversity:*

To assist the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity

*Clause 12.05-2S – Landscapes:*

To protect and enhance significant landscapes and open spaces that contribute to character, identity and sustainable environments.

The amendment introduces design guidelines for new development in the hinterland that includes siting principles in relation to remnant vegetation and design principles and assessment criteria for sensitive landscape settings. This assists the implementation of the VPP strategies:

- Avoid impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity.
- Ensure development does not detract from the natural qualities of significant landscape areas.

VPP 13 (Environmental Risks and Amenity)

The amendment supports and implements VPP 13 (Environmental Risks and Amenity), Clause 13.01-1S (Natural hazards and climate change), Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire planning), Clauses 13.03-1S (Floodplain management), 13.04-3S (Salinity), 13.05-1S (Noise abatement) and 13.07-1S (Land use compatibility). In particular:

To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.

The above policies are implemented through the inclusion of local strategies that provide local context and additional decision-making tools on the above matters.

VPP 14 (Natural Resource Management)

The amendment supports and implements VPP 14 (Natural Resource Management), Clause 14.01-1S (Protection of agriculture):

To protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.

It supports and implements the following key strategies:

- Identify areas of productive agricultural land, including land for primary production and intensive agriculture.
- Avoid permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state's agricultural base.
- Protect productive agricultural land from unplanned loss due to permanent changes in land use.
- Prevent inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas.
- Protect strategically important agricultural and primary production land from incompatible uses.
- Avoid the subdivision of productive agricultural land from diminishing the long-term productive capacity of the land.

The strategies are implemented through the inclusion of local strategies to guide decision making on the above matters.

Clause 14.01-2S (Sustainable agricultural land use):

To encourage sustainable agricultural land use.

The amendment supports and implements the following key strategies:

- Ensure agricultural and productive rural land use activities are managed to maintain the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resources.
- Support the development of innovative and sustainable approaches to agricultural and associated rural land use practices.
- Support adaptation of the agricultural sector to respond to the potential risks arising from climate change.
- Encourage diversification and value-adding of agriculture through effective agricultural production and processing, rural industry and farm-related retailing.
- Assist genuine farming enterprises to embrace opportunities and adjust flexibly to market changes.
- Support agricultural investment through the protection and enhancement of appropriate infrastructure.
- Facilitate ongoing productivity and investment in high value agriculture.
- Facilitate the establishment and expansion of cattle feedlots, pig farms, poultry farms and other intensive animal industries in a manner consistent with orderly and proper planning and protection of the environment.
- Ensure that the use and development of land for animal keeping or training is appropriately located and does not detrimentally impact the environment, the operation of surrounding land uses and the amenity of the surrounding area.

The strategies are implemented through the inclusion of local strategies to guide decision making on the above matters.

VPP 17 (Economic development)

The amendment supports and implements VPP 17 (Economic Development), Clause 17.01-1S (Diversified economy):

To strengthen and diversify the economy.

It implements the following key strategy:

- Support rural economies to grow and diversify.

The strategy is implemented through the inclusion of local strategies to guide decision making on the above matter.

And Clause 17.04-1S (Facilitating Tourism):

To encourage tourism development to maximise the economic, social and cultural benefits of developing the state as a competitive domestic and international tourist destination.

It implements the following key strategies:

- Encourage the development of a range of well-designed and sited tourist facilities, including integrated resorts, accommodation, host farm, bed and breakfast and retail opportunities.
- Promote tourism facilities that preserve, are compatible with and build on the assets and qualities of surrounding activities and attractions.
- Create innovative tourism experiences.

The strategies are implemented through the inclusion of local strategies to guide decision making on the above matters.

#### **How does the amendment support or implement the Municipal Planning Strategy?**

The amendment supports and implements Clause 02.03 (Strategic Directions), in particular:

- Maintain non-urban breaks between townships to protect the rural landscape and significant biodiversity assets from urban intrusion.
- Protect and enhance the landscape values of the rural precincts.
- Encourage land use and development that is complementary to the rural landscape character.
- Protect the visual prominence of the Great Ocean Road
- Protect and enhance the Shire's significant biodiversity features.
- Protect and enhance remnant vegetation communities.
- Direct development to areas where environmental risks, particularly bushfire risk, are lowest.
- Protect the ability of future generations to productively farm the land.
- Avoid the loss of agricultural productivity associated with land use conflicts, particularly between farming activities and non-farm related residential development.
- Protect and enhance the rural areas for their diverse agricultural, environmental and landscape values and opportunities.
- Encourage sustainable agricultural activities and associated rural industries, to grow and maintain prosperous and sustainable rural communities.
- Facilitate business and industry ventures in Winchelsea that provide local services, particularly in health and education or the tourism and green industry sectors.
- Promote economic development opportunities that protect local character, amenity and the natural environment.
- Promote natural resource based or adventure tourism at a scale and form that respects its setting and surrounding land uses.

The amendment strengthens and provides further direction to implement the above strategies by amending or inserting the following Clauses of the PPF:

- Clause 12.01-1L (Protection of biodiversity in Surf Coast)
- Clause 13.02-1L (Bushfire planning)
- Clause 14.01-1L-01 (Protection of agricultural land in Surf Coast)
- Clause 14.01-1L-03 (Subdivision)
- Clause 14.01-1L-04 (Other discretionary use and development)
- Clause 14.01-2L (Sustainable agricultural use)
- Clause 15.01-6L (Design for rural areas)
- Clause 17.01-1L (Diversified economy – Surf Coast)
- Clause 17.04-1L (Facilitating tourism in Surf Coast)

**Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?**

The amendment makes proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions by providing local context to state planning policy in relation to the areas most suited to agriculture and tourism in the hinterland areas of the Surf Coast Shire. The amendment amends and inserts new local policy to provide guidance in relation to discretionary uses in rural areas.

**How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?**

The amendment will not directly impact on any government agency. The amendment will be exhibited to all relevant agencies and referral authorities in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

**Does the amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?**

The amendment is not expected to have any impact upon the objectives, strategies and decision-making principles of the Transport Integration Act 2010.

**Resource and administrative costs**

The amendment is not expected to have any significant impact on the resource and administrative costs of Council.

**Where you may inspect this amendment**

The amendment can be inspected free of charge at the Surf Coast Shire website at [www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au)

The amendment is available for public inspection (subject to social distancing requirements resulting from COVID 19), free of charge, during office hours at the following places:

- Surf Coast Shire Council, 1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay

The amendment can also be inspected free of charge at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website at [www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection](http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection).

*Planning and Environment Act 1987*

**SURF COAST PLANNING SCHEME**

**AMENDMENT C133surf**

**INSTRUCTION SHEET**

The planning authority for this amendment is the Surf Coast Shire.

The Surf Coast Planning Scheme is amended as follows:

**Planning Scheme Ordinance**

The Planning Scheme Ordinance is amended as follows:

1. In **Purpose and Vision** – replace Clause 02.03-2 with a new Clause 02.03-2 in the form of the attached document.
2. In **Purpose and Vision** – replace Clause 02.03-4 with a new Clause 02.03-4 in the form of the attached document.
3. In **Purpose and Vision** – replace Clause 02.03-7 with a new Clause 02.03-7 in the form of the attached document.
4. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 12.01-1L with a new Clause 12.01-1L in the form of the attached document.
5. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 13.02-1L with a new Clause 13.02-1L in the form of the attached document.
6. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 14.01-1L-01 with a new Clause 14.01-1L-01 in the form of the attached document.
7. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 14.01-1L-02 with a new Clause 14.01-1L-02 in the form of the attached document.
8. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 14.01-1L-03 with a new Clause 14.01-1L-03 in the form of the attached document.
9. In **Planning Policy Framework** – insert new Clause 14.01-1L-04 in the form of the attached document.
10. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 14.01-2L with a new Clause 14.01-2L in the form of the attached document.
11. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 15.01-6L with a new Clause 15.01-6L in the form of the attached document.
12. In **Planning Policy Framework** – insert new Clause 17.01-1L in the form of the attached document.
13. In **Planning Policy Framework** – replace Clause 17.04-1L with a new Clause 17.04-1L in the form of the attached document.
14. In **Zones** – Clause 35.07, replace the Schedule with a new Schedule in the form of the attached document.
15. In **Operational Provisions** – Clause 72.08, replace the Schedule with a new Schedule in the form of the attached document.



16. In **Operational Provisions** – Clause 74.02, replace the Schedule with a new Schedule in the form of the attached document.

End of document

POLICY CLAUSE NO.	POST EXHIBITION CHANGE	OUTLINE OF CHANGES PROPOSED BY COUNCIL	POST PANEL CHANGE	OUTLINE OF CHANGES PROPOSED BY PANEL
02.03 Strategic directions	None		None	
12.01-1L Protection of biodiversity in Surf Coast	None		None	
13.02 Bushfire	None		None	
14.01 Agriculture				
14.01-1L-01 Protection of agricultural land	None		Yes	Deletion of a repetitive strategy.  <b>Policy amended.</b>
14.01-1L-02 Dwellings in the Farming and Rural conservation zone	Yes	<p>Local policy amended in response to submission 3. A new strategy and decision guideline has been inserted to enable the consideration of a dwelling in the Farming Zone (FZ) where a Section 173 agreement has been entered into to implement an approved Land Management Plan.</p> <p>The amendments provide an avenue for the two land owners who had received approval under the current provision within the FZ (but have not yet built a dwelling), to apply for a permit after the</p>	Yes	<p>Panel did not support the amendment to policy suggested by Council in response to submission 3 because it did not believe the <i>Thompsons Creek Catchment Review</i> (TCCR) adequately justified the removal of the provision within the Farming Zone. The provision enables a variation to the minimum lot size within the Thompsons Creek Catchment.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that there was a need to review the effectiveness of the variation but was not convinced that Thompsons Creek Catchment Review (TCCR) adequately justified the removal. The two main areas of concern were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that it was limited to two case studies, and</li> </ul>

		provision is deleted from the planning scheme.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that it relied solely on a desktop review using aerial images.</li> </ul> <p>The Panel recommended a number of changes to the TCCR. These changes have been made and the TCCR has been revised to incorporate the Panel's suggested changes.</p> <p>In light of the changes the policy can now be amended.</p> <p><b>Policy amended.</b></p>
14.01-1L-03 Subdivision in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zone	None		None	
14.01-1L-04 Other discretionary use and development in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone	Yes	Local policy amended in response to submission 12 (Department of Transport) to ensure road safety issues are considered.	Yes	<p>The Panel supported Council's post exhibition changes.</p> <p>The Panel also recommended that the second strategy be amended for clarity and provided example wording. The wording provided by Panel has been modified slightly to remove a grammatical error and to ensure the original intention of the strategy (to protect agriculture) is retained.</p> <p><b>Policy amended.</b></p>
14.01-2L Sustainable agricultural use	None		None	
<b>15.01</b>				

<b>Built environment</b>				
15.01-6L Design for rural areas	None		Yes	The Panel recommended that two new policy guidelines should be inserted relating to accessways.  <b>Policy amended.</b>
<b>17.01 Employment</b>				
17.01-1L Diversified economy - Surf Coast	None		Yes	The Panel recommended that the first strategy should be amended to be a high level statement referencing the requirements at Clause 17.04-1L (Facilitating tourism in Surf Coast).  <b>Policy amended.</b>
<b>17.04 Tourism</b>				
17.04-1L Facilitating tourism in Surf Coast	Yes	Local policy amended in response to submission 12 (Department of Transport) to ensure road safety issues are considered.	Yes	The Panel supported Council's post exhibition changes.  The Panel also recommended a number of additional changes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent language within the wording and tourism activation map,</li> <li>• Removal of the green breaks from the tourism activation map,</li> <li>• Greater clarify within the policy wording.</li> </ul> <b>Policy amended.</b>  Two changes suggested by the Panel have not been made;

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The deletion of a strategy relating to Bells Beach.</li> <li>• Splitting tourism activities from bushfire consideration.</li> </ul> <p>The changes relating to Bells Beach have not been made because this matter can be more effectively dealt with when the DAL project is implemented into the planning scheme.</p> <p>The changes relating to bushfire have not been made as tourism and bushfire are intrinsically linked and if separated the context is lost.</p>
<b>35.07 Schedule to the Farming Zone</b>				
Map 1 to the Schedule to Clause 35.07	Yes	The map within the schedule was amended to clearly show the boundaries between the minimum lot size areas.	None.	The Panel supported the mapping change made by Council post exhibition.  <b>Policy amended.</b>
<b>72.08 Background documents</b>				
Schedule to Clause 72.08	Yes	An operational provision was amended in response to submission 13 (Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation) Transport) to include the background document ' <u>Paleert Tjaara Dja: Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan (WTOAC)</u> '	None	The Panel supported the inclusion of the document.  <b>Provision amended.</b>
<b>74.02</b>				

Further Strategic work				
Schedule to Clause 74.02	Yes	An operational provision has been amended in response to submission 13 (Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation) to include further strategic work relating to a landscape assessment for the Barabool Hills.	None	<p>The Panel supported the inclusion of the further strategic work.</p> <p><b>Provision amended.</b></p> <p>The Panel did not support the deletion of further strategic work required for the Thompsons Creek Catchment area; to investigate the appropriateness of having a variation to the minimum lot size within the Schedule to the FZ.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that there was a need to review the effectiveness of the variation but pointed out a number of gaps with the <i>Thompsons Creek Catchment Review</i> (TCCR).</p> <p>The Panels recommended changes to the TCCR have been made and the further strategic work is now complete and can be removed.</p>

## Thompsons Creek Catchment Review Report Version 2

### 1. Introduction

This review completes further strategic work identified under Clause 74.02 of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. The Schedule to Clause 74.02 (further strategic work) is located within the Operational Provisions of the scheme. It recommends:

*Reviewing the appropriateness of allowing subdivision of land in the Thompsons Creek catchment area to 40 hectares subject to meeting conditions specified in the Schedule to the Farming Zone.*

This review investigates the appropriateness of a reduction in the minimum lot size in the Thompsons Creek catchment, the background to the introduction of the Thompsons Creek provision (the provision) within the Farming Zone schedule and its success since introduction. This review is a background report to Planning Scheme Amendment C133, which implements the *Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy (2019)*.

#### Thompsons Catchment Review Report - Versions

The original Thompsons Catchment Review Report was prepared in March/April 2021 and was exhibited as a background document to Planning Scheme Amendment C133 during the public exhibition period. Exhibition occurred in September and October 2021. In March 2022 a Panel hearing was conducted to resolve outstanding submissions to the amendment. The Panel considered the background paper and identified a number of shortfalls with the report, highlighting that if the following issues were addressed, the changes recommended in the report might have been supported. The recommendations and subsequent work included:

- Use of a larger proportion of case studies
- Use of a combination of historical and current aerial photography, and site visits where possible
- Comparison between on-ground works and those required by the approved Land Plan and relevant section 173 agreement obligations
- Provision of a greater level of certainty to those landholders losing the ability to construct a dwelling “as of right”

The review report was updated in July/August 2022 and the changes suggested by the panel included.

The other significant change to the background report relates to the translation of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme (the scheme). The scheme was translated into the new Planning Policy Framework (PPF) format in June 2021 through Planning Scheme Amendment C136surf. Section 3 of the background report reviews the provision against policy to understand whether there are other mechanisms within the planning scheme that can achieve the desired outcome sought by the provision. Section 3 has now been updated to have regard to the new PPF format and show where the referenced policy is now located.

#### What the Provision Does

The provision was introduced into the Schedule to the Farming Zone of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme in 2000. That provision currently allows consideration of applications to reduce the minimum subdivision lot size from 60 hectares to 40 hectares in the Thompsons Creek Catchment area. The schedule also allows consideration of applications to reduce the minimum land area for which no permit is required to use and develop the land for a dwelling from 60 hectares to 40 hectares.

Extracts from the Farming Zone Schedule are shown below at Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 relates to subdivision and Figure 2 relates to dwellings.

**Figure 1: Schedule to the Farming Zone (extract): Subdivision**

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	Thompsons Creek Catchment	<p>60 hectares</p> <p>This may be reduced to 40 hectares provided the following conditions are met:</p> <p>1. A land plan is submitted that shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ that principles of biodiversity have been applied</li> <li>▪ fencing of areas of remnant vegetation and/or conservation areas to exclude stock</li> <li>▪ a minimum area of 10% established to trees (increasing to 15% where salting or other problems exist)</li> <li>▪ proposed management practices in the fenced off areas especially for the control of rabbits, foxes and noxious weeds</li> <li>▪ evidence that the recommendations of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment will be implemented in recognised hot spot salt areas in the Thompsons Creek Catchment Plan</li> </ul> <p>2. The owner enters into an agreement under Section 173 of the Act which commits any present or future owner to the implementation of the land plan and ongoing management of maintenance of the property so the land does not revert back to its former state.</p>

**Figure 2: Schedule to the Farming Zone (extract): Dwellings**

Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
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<p>Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling (hectares)</p>	<p>Thompsons Creek Catchment</p>	<p>60 hectares</p> <p>This may be reduced to 40 hectares provided the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A land plan is submitted that shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ that principles of biodiversity have been applied</li> <li>▪ fencing of areas of remnant vegetation and/or conservation areas to exclude stock</li> <li>▪ a minimum area of 10% established to trees (increasing to 15% where salting or other problems exist)</li> <li>▪ proposed management practices in the fenced off areas especially for the control of rabbits, foxes and noxious weeds</li> <li>▪ evidence that the recommendations of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment will be implemented in recognised hot spot salt areas in the Thompsons Creek Catchment Plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. The owner enters into an agreement under Section 173 of the Act which commits any present or future owner to the implementation of the land plan and ongoing management of maintenance of the property so the land does not revert back to its former state.</li> </ol>
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The provision has been in effect for over 20 years and this is the first review that has been undertaken. The review explores the appropriateness of the provision by considering four key matters:

- The purpose of the Thompsons Creek provision in the schedule to the Farming Zone
- Whether there are other mechanisms within the planning scheme that would achieve the purpose of the Thompsons Creek provision and can do so effectively
- Whether the alternative subdivision lot size provision has been used since being implemented into the planning scheme
- Whether the Thompsons Creek provision has been effective in achieving its purpose, including consideration of the success of implementation.

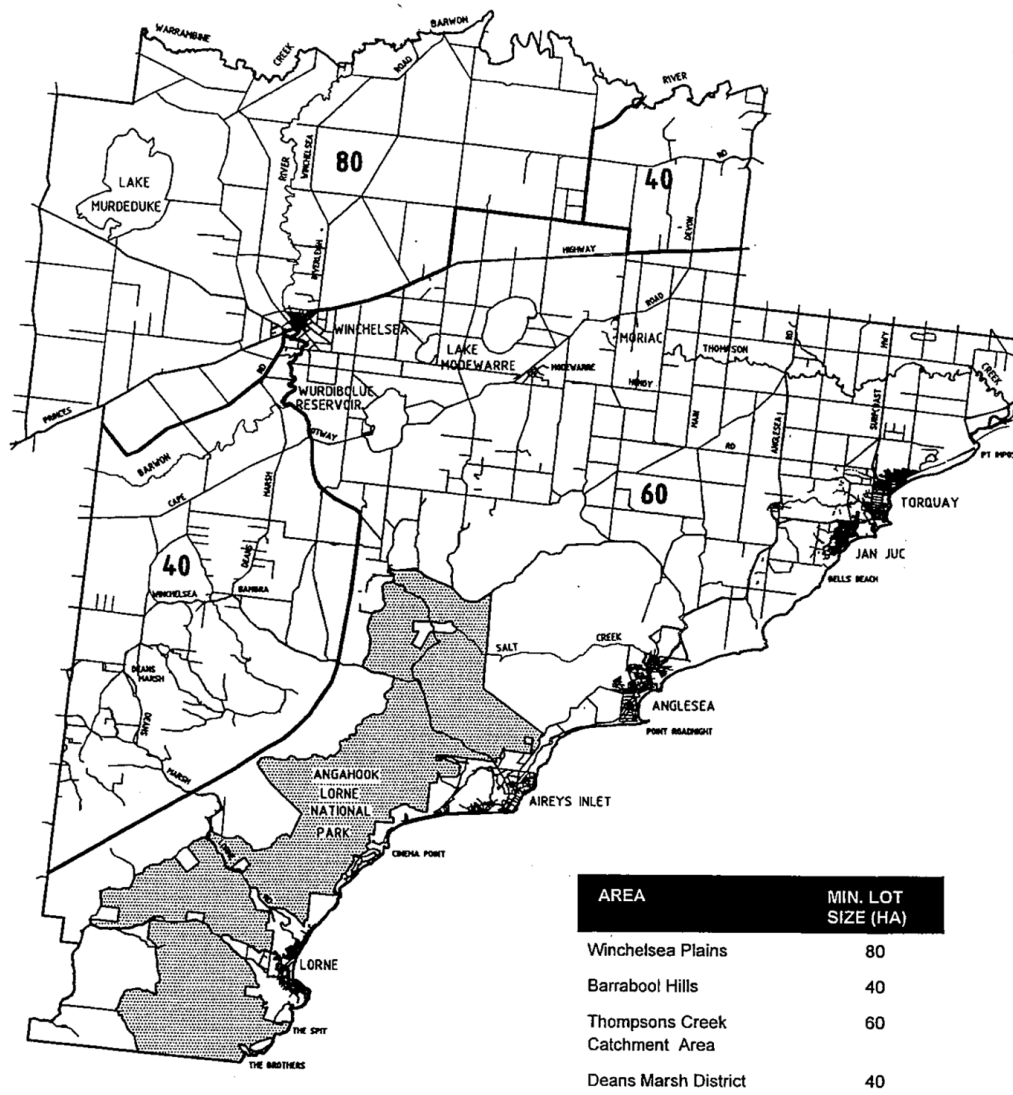
## 2. Background

### Introduction of the minimum lot size in rural areas

The *Rural Land Use Strategy*, (1997) is a key background document for the agricultural strategies and policies contained within the Local Planning Policy Framework of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. An Agricultural Strategy was inserted into the Planning Scheme in 2000 along with a schedule to the Farming Zone which introduced the allocation of suitable lot sizes for subdivision in rural areas.

A *Rural Strategy Review Report* was undertaken in 2007, which found that the methodology applied through the 1997 strategy was sound and the resultant minimum lot sizes continued to be relevant. The minimum subdivision lot sizes recommended by the 1997 strategy are shown in figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Recommended minimum lot sizes (Rural Land Use Strategy 1997)

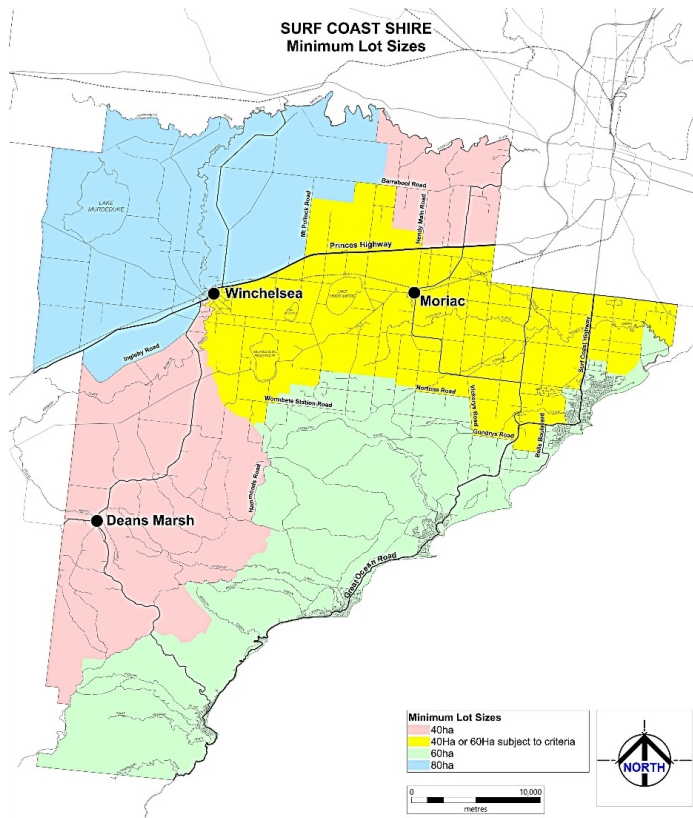


Introduction of the Variation to the Thompsons Creek Catchment area

As shown in figure 3, the Thompson Creek Catchment Area was "allocated" a minimum subdivision lot size of 60ha. However, during the exhibition of the amendment, Council (acting as the Planning Authority) received submissions requesting that a variation be included for land in the Thompsons Creek catchment area. Ultimately, Council supported the variation and the greater 'Thompsons Creek catchment area' was split into two areas.

The revised subdivision lot size map that was adopted into the Planning Scheme is shown at figure 4 below.

**Figure 4: Minimum subdivision lot sizes in rural areas (Surf Coast Planning Scheme)**



The land mapped in green and in yellow in figure 4 is the area referred to as the ‘Thompsons Creek Catchment Area’ in figure 3. Both areas have a 60ha minimum lot size (the minimum lot size recommended by the 1997 strategy). However, the yellow area now also permitted the consideration of a reduction to 40ha provided certain criteria could be met. The land mapped in yellow is the subject of this review.

Council considered that a reduction in lot size in this area would be warranted, provided it could be demonstrated that the land would be managed in a more environmentally sustainable way. The focus on this area as a priority for environmental enhancement was highlighted in the 1997 strategy, which identified it as an area where salinisation was a significant issue.

Ultimately, it was written into the schedule to the Farming Zone (the Rural Zone at the time) that if a land management plan was submitted and approved, a variation to the minimum lot size could be granted. The Rural Land Use Strategy 1997 described a Land Plan as being prepared “under the same guidelines as those used to enable tax deductions under S.75D of the Income Tax Assessment Act”, meaning it should consider land management issues like pest plants and animals, salinity and other matters leading to land degradation, fencing, levee banks, drainage and the like.

Planning Panels Victoria, upon consideration of the submissions, supported Council's intention but believed that the provision was fraught with risk, noting that the provision would need to be closely monitored and reviewed. The need for a review was included in the Agricultural Strategy in the planning scheme under 'future strategic work'. This is the first review of the provision to be undertaken.

#### Methodology for Application of Minimum Lot Sizes

The *Rural Land Use Strategy*, (1997) reviewed the Shire in terms of physiography, geology, soils, climate and water resources and used these factors as the foundation to determine the most suitable lot size for a parcel of land to be technically viable for agricultural productivity.

The 1997 strategy described the Thompsons Creek coastal plain as follows:

*The Thompsons Creek coastal plain extends adjacent to and between the Barrabool Hills and the Bellarine Peninsula. The soils of the area are largely comprised of sediments and some volcanic plains. Most of the area does not exceed 60m. The area is bordered by extensive dunes between Torquay and Breamlea.*

The strategy identified the Thompsons Creek area as being of average agricultural quality with a recommended minimum lot size of 60ha, being most suited to grazing. 60ha's was deemed capable of supporting a sustainable farm practice. The strategy noted that higher quality land could be more intensively farmed with a lesser land area capable of providing a financial return. As shown in figure 3 above, the minimum lot sizes varied across the Surf Coast Shire from 40ha to 80ha.

For the Thompsons Creek area, it recommended that:

*Land holdings are to be maintained in relatively large parcels though a diverse range of agricultural uses will be permitted.*

Although the area was identified as being most suited to grazing, it noted that it was also currently used for crops such as potatoes, turf and flowers.

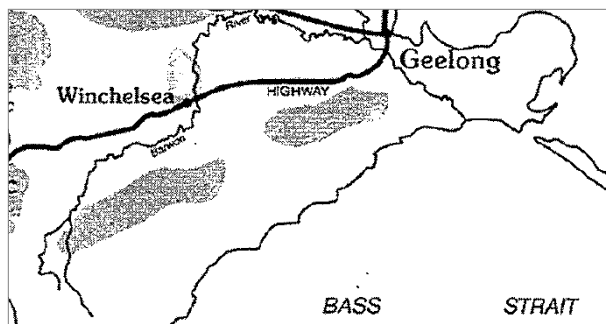
In addition to having regard to the technical viability of lots, the strategy took into consideration existing development and tenement patterns, protection of landscape and ecological values and existing and preferred rural land use. The strategy identified the importance of the Thompsons Creek valley as a significant landscape and green break between Geelong and Torquay. It urged against further fragmentation of this land.

#### Salinity issues in the Thompsons Creek Catchment

The *Rural Land Use Strategy*; 1997 (the strategy) identified salinity as a major issue for the Surf Coast Shire, with the rising water table and outbreaks of salting in the Thompsons Creek catchment attributed to historic tree removal. The strategy included mapping of salinity priority areas for control works, also highlighting the need for deep rooted vegetation to reverse the impacts.

Two priority areas are shown in the Surf Coast Shire, one of which is in the Thompsons Creek catchment area and shown in figure 5 below.

**Figure 5: Salinity works priority areas (Rural Strategy 1997)**



#### Recycled water in the Thompsons Creek catchment

The *Rural Strategy Review, 2007* highlighted that if recycled water became more readily available, it could influence rural land use in the Thompsons Creek catchment area, specifically along the Surf Coast Highway corridor. The strategy stated that:

*There is potential for an expansion of soil and shed based irrigated horticulture utilising recycled water from the Black Rock Wastewater Treatment Plant. This would be focused on the area between Torquay and Mount Duneed.*

The strategy went on to say that;

*Horticultural enterprises, including turf, tomato and flower production are based around recycled water supplied from Barwon Water's Black Rock Wastewater Treatment Plant. These industries have grown in significance since 1993 and Barwon Water has indicated that there will be increased scope for productive use of recycled water in the future. Currently, expansion of horticultural development is constrained by the cost of infrastructure to deliver recycled water to suitable areas.*

It is important to note that although the strategy review in 2007 identified the rural land use opportunity for this area, it did not recommend any changes to the minimum lot size nor did it specifically review the operation or success of the 40ha variation. The strategy did however highlight the importance of elevating the need to protect landscape values and cautioned in the Thompsons Creek valley that:

*Any shed based agriculture needs to be carefully sited to preserve landscape values.*

The strategy review did highlight that:

*Future access to recycled water for irrigation could result in a reclassification (upgrading) of agricultural quality class for land in the south-eastern end of the precinct.*

The implication of the above is that, if recycled water did become available between Torquay and Mount Duneed and that its use was found to be environmentally sustainable, the technical viability of the lot sizes might be affected. This review does not investigate the environmental effects or the alternative planning controls as a result of recycled water but notes that such an investigation may be warranted if that resource comes on line.

If such a review takes place, as highlighted by the 1997 and 2007 strategies, the implications of increased fragmentation and/or development would also need to be carefully considered due to the negative impacts it could have on the highly sensitive landscape and agricultural values. The land between Mount Duneed and Torquay forms part of the Surf Coast Shire Distinctive Area and Landscape, declared by the Victorian Government in 2019 and again in September 2021.

#### The Planning Process

As it relates to the Thompsons Creek area in the Farming Zone Schedule, approval must be sought from the Responsible Authority to vary the minimum lot size from 60ha to 40ha.

Subdivision applications under the provision require a planning permit and consideration can be given to the creation of lots of 40ha-60ha subject to the conditions in the schedule being met. Dwelling applications under the provision do not require a planning permit. An approval is required, however, which includes the submission of a satisfactory Land Plan. The considerations associated with reducing the minimum lot size in either scenario are the same and this is the process referred to below.

The process initially requires the approval of a Land Plan (the Plan) which is assessed by Council's delegate against the requirements within the schedule to the Farming Zone. The requirements written into the Schedule are limited.

The internal process includes referral to Council's Environment Department, who considers whether the proposed plan, once implemented, would result in an improved environmental outcome for the allotment.

Once all available information is considered, the plan is either approved or refused. If approved the land owner must enter into a legal agreement under section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (S173 agreement), which once executed, should be registered on title to provide transparency for all future landowners. As the S173 agreement runs with the land, unless otherwise stated, future landowners would have ongoing obligations associated with the implementation and monitoring of the approved Plan.

#### Issues with the Thompson Creek Provision in the Farming Zone Schedule

For a subdivision application, the schedule allows the minimum land area to be reduced to 40ha if a land plan is provided and approved as part of a planning permit for the subdivision. The land plan must also be bound by a S173 Agreement.

It is noteworthy that the Thompsons Creek provision is not linked to a particular objective and there is no associated provision within the scheme that calls up consideration of whether the subject land is suitable for a reduced lot size. Compounding this absence is the lack of any provision that enables consideration of whether the land plan itself is appropriate, including adequacy of the criteria against which the appropriateness of a land plan can be measured. The deficiencies within the criteria are discussed in more detail below.

For a dwelling application, the schedule allows the minimum land area for which no planning permit is required to use and develop the land (for a dwelling) to be reduced to 40ha if a land plan is approved and bound by a S173 Agreement.

The same deficiencies exist as for subdivision; however, this is further compounded by the fact that the (dwelling use right) approval is not a planning permit and is not associated with a planning permit. Put simply, it is a provision that seeks to avoid a planning permit being triggered. That is:

- The approval is not a planning permit and there are no notice requirements or review rights
- It is an approval that sits outside of the planning scheme and unlike a planning permit, it does not require a lapse date or sunset clause to be built into the approval
- As it is a provision that seeks to avoid a planning permit being triggered, the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone are not considered.

#### Issues with the Process

Based on a review of S173 Agreements held by Council, the Thompsons Creek provision has resulted in only a handful of approvals over the past 20 years. In addition, Council does not have a formal monitoring and compliance process associated with the implementation of the Land Plans and to date, there has been little follow up on the Land Plans' implementation.

The deficiencies in the provision that were identified in the previous section also adversely influence the approval process. That is: an application under the Thompsons Creek provision only calls up consideration of the variation requirements in the schedule; an approval is not able to have regard to the purpose or decision guidelines of the Farming Zone. This means that consideration cannot be given to how a reduction in lot size and house entitlement could impact agriculture on the land or nearby land, and where no planning permit is required, no notice or third party appeal rights exist.

This makes the provision inconsistent with the adopted *Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy 2019* and Planning Scheme Amendment C133 which seeks to ensure agriculture remains the primary land use in the Farming Zone in the hinterland.

Council's Environment Department has also expressed difficulties with the assessment process, particularly where there are no existing environmental assets on site. In these instances the provision includes no information about what should be assessed and what environmental benefits are to be achieved. For example, it is not a prerequisite of the provision that the site contain significant vegetation and where none exists, the requirement of 'protecting' and 'enhancing' remnant vegetation then lacks meaning.

As shown in the case studies below, the sites are often devoid of native vegetation. In such circumstances the only environmental benefit is the introduction of native vegetation plantings (irrespective of whether this might positively impact the water table), and management of pest plants and animals. It's worth noting that the Thompsons Creek provision also specifies the need to plant deep rooted vegetation; however, this requirement is confined to sites within an identified salinity hot spot. Only two of the six sites reviewed were subject to the Salinity Management Overlay, which was introduced in 2010 through planning scheme amendment C38.

#### Advice from Planning Panels Victoria Prior to the Introduction of the Provision

A panel hearing considered the submissions to the planning scheme amendment to implement the New Format Planning Scheme (NFPS) at the time of the provision's introduction in 2000. The Responsible Authority (Council) submitted to the Panel that the conditional variation was at the request of submitters to the planning scheme amendment.

The Responsible Authority sought the advice of the land use consultant (R.G. Ashby & Co. Pty. Ltd), who agreed that there was merit in achieving land improvements. The Panel summarised the proposed variation as follows:

*The conditions that would allow a 40ha minimum involved the preparation of a "land plan", commitment to improved land management practices, and a S173 Agreement to commit the present and future landowners to continuing the implementation of the land plan and maintenance of the land in an improved state. In essence, the Council believes that the conditions imposed if a 40ha minimum was to apply would lead to a better overall outcome.*

The Panel commended Council for this performance-based approach and agreed that the incentive to be able to obtain a 40ha minimum could encourage better land management. The Panel did, however, express concern regarding the ongoing implementation of the land plans and enforcement of the S173 agreements. It cautioned that:

*Once the land has been subdivided and sold, the new owner may not have the same level of commitment provided by the person seeking the subdivision. It could be very difficult for Council to enforce the intent of the S173 agreement. It would be unfortunate if the variation to the Schedule as proposed by Council became an escape clause which did not achieve the hoped-for performance outcomes.*

To safeguard against the above, the Panel recommended that the provision be subject to monitoring and review three years after its introduction to ascertain the success of the provision. Because of the low number of early approvals, the review was not undertaken within the suggested three year time frame.

The first review was undertaken in 2020 and this review appears to support the NFPS Panel's concern that the ongoing enforcement of the S173 agreements is problematic.

### **3. Other Mechanisms in the Planning Scheme that can Achieve the Desired Outcome**

The question then becomes, are there other mechanisms within the planning scheme to achieve a positive environmental outcome within the Thompsons Creek catchment area without the need to vary the minimum lot size?

A decision to allow the use and development of land for a dwelling or to vary the minimum lot size below an area that has previously been deemed to be technically viable, is a significant one. This is particularly so given the potential for long term agricultural impacts, including the exacerbation of land fragmentation and its associated consequences. The benefits of such a "trade off" should be clear and consistent with the purpose of the Farming Zone.

While a dwelling or a subdivision drawing on the provision may provide a short term financial gain to the land owner, ensuring a commensurate investment in the land to improve environmental sustainability has proven to be challenging and largely unsuccessful.

The following section reviews the controls within the Planning Scheme relevant to the Thompsons Creek catchment area. This includes:

- Clause VPP 35.07 (Farming Zone),
- Schedule to Clause 35.07 (Schedule to the FZ),
- Clause 21.03 (Environmental Management),
- Clause 21.05 (Agriculture),
- Clause 21.06 (Rural Landscapes),
- Clause 22.01 (Rural Tenement policy)
- Clause LPP 44.02 (Schedule to the Salinity Management Overlay).



In June 2021, the Surf Coast Planning Scheme was translated into the new Planning Policy Framework format (Amendment C136surf). As a result, the clauses referenced above have now been relocated. This is further explained under each referenced clause below.

Schedule to Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone)

The schedule allows for land located within the Thomson Creek Catchment to apply for a reduction to the minimum subdivision lot size from 60ha to 40ha. To do so a Land Management Plan must be submitted to and approved by Council and a S173 Agreement entered into to ensure the land management plan is implemented in perpetuity.

The schedule sets out the criteria that enables a variation to be considered.

**Figure 6: Subdivision requirements in the schedule to the Farming Zone (extract): Subdivisions**

Subdivision and other requirements		
	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	Thompsons Creek Catchment	<p>60 hectares</p> <p>This may be reduced to 40 hectares provided the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A land plan is submitted that shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ that principles of biodiversity have been applied</li> <li>▪ fencing of areas of remnant vegetation and/or conservation areas to exclude stock</li> <li>▪ a minimum area of 10% established to trees (increasing to 15% where salting or other problems exist)</li> <li>▪ proposed management practices in the fenced off areas especially for the control of rabbits, foxes and noxious weeds</li> <li>▪ evidence that the recommendations of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment will be implemented in recognised hot spot salt areas in the Thompsons Creek Catchment Plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. The owner enters into an agreement under Section 173 of the Act which commits any present or future owner to the implementation of the land plan and ongoing management of maintenance of the property so the land does not revert back to its former state.</li> </ol>

For a dwelling to be an as-of-right use (section 1 - not requiring a planning permit) on a lot of 40ha, the above conditions must also be met. That is; the conditions required to be met in order to justify a reduction in the subdivisional lot size are the same as those required to be met in order to justify a reduction in the minimum lot size for a dwelling (ie. so the dwelling would be as-of-right).

Clause VPP 35.07 – Farming Zone

Most private land within the Thompsons Creek Catchment area is zoned Farming Zone. The Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) applies to some pockets of land within the area but the RCZ does not form part of this review. That zone does not include the variation to reduce the subdivisional lot size and in the RCZ, use and development of the land for a dwelling is not an as-of-right (section 1) use irrespective of lot size.

The primary purpose of the Farming zone is to protect agricultural land and promote farming as the dominant land use. More fully, the purpose of the zone is:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture*
- *To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land*
- *To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture*

- *To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities*
- *To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision [emphasis added]*
- *To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.*

Under the Farming Zone at clause 35.07-3, a permit is required to subdivide land and:

*Each lot must be at least the area specified for the land in a schedule to this zone. If no area is specified, each lot must be at least 40 hectares.*

A permit may be granted to create smaller lots if any of the following applies:

- *The subdivision is to create a lot for an existing dwelling. The subdivision must be a two lot subdivision.*
- *The subdivision is the re-subdivision of existing lots and the number of lots is not increased.*
- *The subdivision is by a public authority or utility service provider to create a lot for a utility installation.*

A permit is required to use and develop the land for a dwelling where the lot is below the minimum lot size specified in the schedule to the zone.

Before deciding on an application, the Responsible Authority must consider the matters set out in the decision guidelines to the zone.

Given the breadth of considerations, the full list of decision guidelines has not been set out here. However, a snapshot of the considerations is provided below and those that overlap the variation requirements have been underlined for emphasis:

- Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land.
- How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.
- Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
- How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.
- Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.
- Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.
- The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
- The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.
- The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure.
- Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site.
- The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.
- The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.
- The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian

buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.

The full list is comprehensive, enabling the Responsible Authority to consider a wide range of pertinent matters in rural areas, including (but not limited to);

- Access to recycled water
- Agricultural land quality
- The need for a land management plan
- Any potential impacts on agricultural production and adjoining land uses.

Importantly, the specific environmental considerations relating to the protection of biodiversity and the need for revegetation, including in saline discharge and recharge areas, are addressed.

The parent provision enables a decision to be made based on all matters relevant to the zone. This integrated approach provides a level of rigor that is lacking in the current Thompsons Creek variation, where the singular focus is on biodiversity and salinity management. The limited criteria required to permit a variation under the Thompsons Creek provision is so targeted that the broader and increasingly important farming issues, are either subordinated or ignored.

It is considered more appropriate for a planning permit to be triggered that enables a holistic assessment against the comprehensive matters set out in the Farming Zone. Doing so, applies a transparent and a consistent planning process to all land within the zone and is consistent with the vision of the Rural Hinterland Futures planning scheme amendment which seeks to strengthen the primacy of farming in the hinterland.

#### Clause 21.03 (Environmental Management)

In June 2021, the Surf Coast Planning Scheme was translated into the new Planning Policy Framework format (Amendment C136surf). As a result, the referenced strategies under clause 21.03 were moved to clause 13.04-3L: *Salinity*.

The Environmental Management Strategy identified salinity as a major environmental risk in the Surf Coast Shire. It stressed the importance of protecting saline assets (such as wetlands) and avoiding saline risks to the natural and manmade environment. The strategy focused on avoiding use and development in saline areas and avoiding activities that could exacerbate the problem. The strategy encouraged taking;

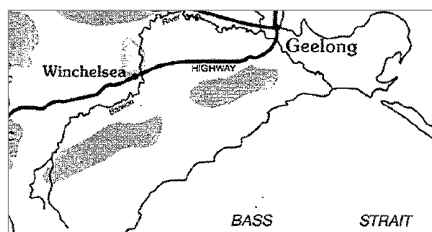
*Appropriate measures to mitigate the risks (associated with salinity) (Content now reframed and moved to clause 13.04-3L).*

The Strategy required that all land shown in Map 1 to the Clause (shown below) submit a salinity impact report. It stated that the strategies (within Clause 21.03) will be implemented by (inter alia):

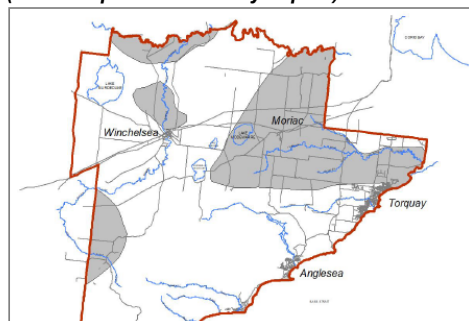
*Requiring the submission of a salinity impact report for any land uses and developments that can significantly change surface water and groundwater hydrological flow patterns within those areas shown on Map 1 to this Clause – ‘Areas of Potential Salinity Impacts’, with measures to mitigate the expansion of existing areas effected by salinity or the generation of new areas effected by salinity (Content reframed and moved in part to clause 13.04-3L. Remainder of strategy deleted as a requirement cannot be built into a policy and the requirement duplicates that of the Salinity Management Overlay).*



**Figure 7: Salinity works priority areas  
(Rural Strategy 1997)**



**Figure 8: Map 1 to Clause 21.03  
(Areas of potential salinity impact)**



A comparison of figure 7 and figure 8 above shows that the extent of the identified potential saline affected areas covers a much greater area than was understood in 1997. The improvements to mapping technology has enabled the creation of more detailed and accurate mapping.

It is important to note that the original priority area was confined to a small area within the Thompsons Creek Catchment; now the area extends further eastward and northward. The land to the north falls within a different subdivision lot size area meaning that the transparency of the current variation control is questionable.

The Salinity Management Overlay (SMO) was introduced into the Surf Coast Planning Scheme through amendment C38 in 2010 and is discussed in more detail below. The overlay mapping is more targeted and applies to 'hot spots' within the greater 'potential salinity impact' areas.

#### Clause 21.05 – Agriculture

In June 2021, the Surf Coast Planning Scheme was translated into the new Planning Policy Framework format (Amendment C136surf). As a result, the referenced strategies under clause 21.05 were distributed between Municipal Planning Strategy clause 2.03-4 and clause 14.01-2L: *Sustainable agricultural use*.

The Agriculture Strategy sought to protect farming land for future generations and encourage sustainable farming practices. The strategies that align closely with the outcomes sought through the variation are as follows:

*Promote agricultural activities and farm management practices that are ecologically sustainable and maintain or increase the productive capacity of the land (Content now at clause 14.01-2L: Sustainable agricultural use).*

The following strategies discourage the current variation to 40ha:

*Discourage the subdivision of rural land so as to maintain technically viable farming land parcels, preserve long term farming and farming related opportunities and maintain valued rural landscapes (Content deleted: duplicated content that is already implicit in clause 14.01-1S: Protection of agricultural land).*

*Apply minimum lot sizes in the rural zones to ensure that rural lot sizes remain technically viable (Content deleted: completed Further Strategic Work).*

*Strongly discourage fragmentation and non-productive use of agricultural land. Discourage the proliferation of housing on small lots and additional houses unrelated*

*to the rural use of the land (Content deleted: duplicated content that is already implicit in clause 14.01-1S: Protection of agricultural land).*

As discussed earlier in this report, the 1997 strategy found that the technically viable lot size for the Thompsons Creek Catchment area was 60ha. A provision that encourages a smaller lot size in order to achieve a biodiversity gain is at odds with the above strategies and the equivalent State policy.

The policy under 'key issues and influences' recognises that:

*While comparatively modest, the economic value of agriculture continues to grow and there is potential for further development of agricultural production, including irrigated agriculture based on the use of recycled water from the Black Rock Wastewater Treatment Plant (Content now at clause 2.03-4).*

As mentioned earlier, if it's found to be environmentally sustainable, access to recycled water may change the technically viable lot sizes for this area but currently, only a limited number of farms have access to recycled water.

The strategy under 'undertaking further strategic work' sets out the need for:

*Reviewing the appropriateness of allowing subdivision of land in the Thompsons Creek catchment area to 40 hectares subject to meeting conditions specified in the Schedule to the Farming Zone.*

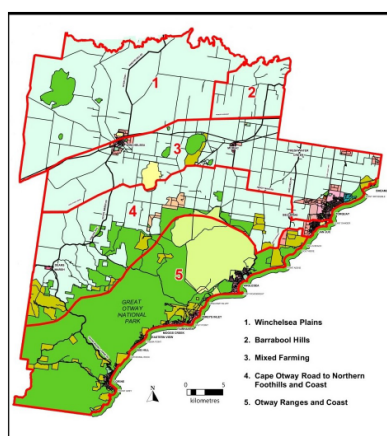
This is the work being undertaken here.

#### Clause 21.06 – Rural Landscapes

In June 2021, the Surf Coast Planning Scheme was translated into the new Planning Policy Framework format (Amendment C136surf). As a result, the referenced strategies under clause 21.06 were distributed between Municipal Planning Strategy clauses 2.03-2 and 2.03-4 and clause 11.01-1L-01: *Settlement in Surf Coast*.

The Rural Landscape policy divided the rural areas of the Shire into five landscape precincts based on landscape features, and also took into account land use, agricultural quality, tenement/allotment patterns and environmental values. Both the 1997 and 2007 rural strategies and reviews highlighted the importance of landscape setting. Map 1 to Clause 21.06 shows the five precincts.

**Figure 9: Map 1 to Clause 21.06 – Landscape Precincts**



The Thompsons Creek Valley is within precincts 3 and 4, supporting 'mixed farming' and being part of the 'Cape Otway Road to Northern Foothills and Coast' precinct described as:

*Mixed Farming – takes in a band of predominantly undulating, cleared pastoral land bisected by the Barwon River in the west and Thompsons Creek in the east, ending in low, environmentally significant, open swamp behind coastal dunes at Breamlea. (Content now at clause 2.03-2). The eastern saltmarsh area has a strong sense of isolation and openness, In the west the allotment and tenement sizes are conducive to agriculture, particularly broadacre farming. In the east the potential exists for sustaining an irrigated agricultural industry should recycled water become available. (Content now at clause 2.03-4).*

Of importance to this review is the policy direction to:

*Maintain clear, non-urban breaks between Geelong and Torquay and between the coastal settlements (Content now at clause 11.01-1L-01: Settlement in Surf Coast).*

The provision is also contrary to the above policy direction by enabling further fragmentation of the critical green break between Geelong and Torquay.

#### Clause 22.01 (Rural Tenement policy)

In June 2021, the Surf Coast Planning Scheme was translated into the new Planning Policy Framework format (Amendment C136surf). As a result, the referenced strategies under clause 22.01 were distributed between clauses 14.01-1L-02: *Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones* and 14.01-1L-03: *Subdivision in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone*).

The Rural Tenement policy at clause 22.01 (now at clauses 14.01-1L-02 and 14.01-1L-03 (the policy)) protects agricultural land through strict guidelines around permitting dwellings in rural areas; it also set out the requirements for subdivision. The policy covers the tenement and other conditions under which a variation can be considered and is thorough in its specification. The Rural Tenement policy required all rural subdivisions to:

- *Require a written report which addresses the decision guidelines of the Rural Conservation Zone or Farming Zone, as applicable (strategy deleted: see below).*
- *Require a land management plan which demonstrates how the proposal achieves good land management practices. A land management plan should be prepared along the lines of a 'whole farm plan' as described in 'Whole Farm Planning, Principles and Options', edited by BK Garrett, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture, 1993 (strategy deleted: see below).*
- *Where relevant, requiring the implementation of a land management plan within a specified time as a condition of permit (strategy deleted: see below).*
- *Disregard subjective considerations, such as the perceived non-viability of a lot for farming purposes, personal hardship, or family circumstances, which do not form part of the statutory decision guidelines (strategy deleted: see below).*
- *Require a subdivision layout that takes into consideration the ongoing protection and enhancement of any environmental assets within the property, ensuring adequate buffers (50m from a wetland/waterway, 30m from a minor waterway, 10m clearance of significant trees and 30m clearance of significant understorey) are provided around the asset to ensure protection from current or future land use or development (Note: strategy reworded and moved to clause 14.01-1L-03: *Subdivision in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone*).*

- Require an owner to enter into a section 173 agreement to protect any environmental values identified by the responsible authority (Note: strategy moved to clauses 14.01-1L-02: *Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones* and 14.01-1L-03: *Subdivision in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone*).

When the Surf Coast Planning Scheme was translated to the new Planning Policy Framework, the above content was either redistributed to clauses 14.01-1L-02 and 14.01-1L-03 or, where the content repeated clause 35.07 or other State provisions, deleted.

The Rural Tenement Policy (now clause 14.01-1L-02: *Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones* and clause 14.01-1L-03: *Subdivision in the Farming Zone and Rural Conservation Zone*) continues to be an important decision making tool for limiting the proliferation of dwellings in rural areas. However, the translation of the planning scheme into the Planning Policy Framework format recognised that planning has moved on since clause 22.01 became part of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme in 2010. In light of this, the first four strategies listed above, which are now entrenched in the State standard provisions (including the Farming Zone and State policy), have been deleted from the local policy section of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. The considerations contained within the first four strategies continue to be important; however, they are now standard considerations under the State provisions. The missing benefit is the requirement to revegetate the site with native trees to reverse the impacts of salinity, however this is addressed in the next section.

#### Clause 44.02 (Salinity Management Overlay)

As mentioned above, the reason behind the introduction of the Thompsons Creek variation was to improve the environmental quality of the land, largely by mitigating salinity impacts in the identified priority area within the Thompsons Creek catchment.

With the introduction of the Salinity Management Overlay into the Planning scheme and map 1 at Clause 21.03 (now at clause 13.04-3L), it is now understood that the extent of the problem is much greater than previously thought. The area originally identified was confined to a patch of land to the south of the Princes Highway; whereas it actually extends into both the 40ha area (north of the highway and west of Geelong) and to cover most of the 60ha Thompsons Creek Catchment area.

When the Thompsons Creek variation was introduced, there were no other mechanism with which to address salinity issues in the Shire. However, with the introduction of the Salinity Management Overlay (SMO) there is access to more accurate mapping, policy to address salinity issues and a Schedule to the SMO, which requires a planning permit for buildings and works, vegetation removal and subdivision in saline effected areas.

The overlay includes the purpose:

*To encourage revegetation of areas which contribute to salinity.*

For any proposal triggering a planning permit under the Salinity Management Overlay, the following information must be submitted with the application:

- *The source of water supply.*
- *Water use requirements and effluent or water disposal provision.*
- *Any existing vegetation proposed to be removed.*
- *Details of the species, location and density of any proposed landscaping.*
- *The water balance under the current land use and any proposed land use.*
- *Title and ownership details.*



- *Topographic information including natural contours of the land, highlighting significant ridges, hill tops and crests, slopes in excess of 25 percent (1:4), low lying areas, drainage lines, waterways, springs, dams, lakes, wetlands and other environmental features on or in close proximity to the subject area.*
- *Geology types.*
- *Location and area of outcropping bedrock.*
- *Soil types.*
- *Size and location of high recharge areas and discharge areas from the site inspection, soil types, soil depth, and soil percolation rates/infiltration.*
- *Size and location of discharge areas and areas of high salinity risk from the site inspection, including the identification of shallow water table within 3 metres of the surface (depth to water table), and soil salinity from soil tests or vegetative indicators.*
- *Area of land and the proportion of the development site identified as high recharge or discharge areas.*
- *Location, species and condition of existing vegetation (both native and exotic species).*
- *Existing degraded areas and recommendations for land management practices and remedial works required to overcome any existing or potential land degradation.*
- *Any other application requirements specified in a schedule to this overlay.*

The level of detail required clearly shows the complexity of the issue and the need for a more integrated approach. Revegetation and management of existing vegetation on the site can be appropriately managed and enhanced without the need for a subdivision variation.

#### **4. Summary of Findings**

Minimum lot sizes were introduced into the planning scheme more than 20 years ago and following public exhibition, a conditional variation to the 60 ha lot size in the Thompsons Creek Catchment area was included in response to submissions. Council supported the variation, anticipating that the control might assist in reversing some of the impacts associated with dryland salinity through sound land management practices. The provision that enables a variation to the 60ha minimum lot size acts as an incentive to encourage good land management practices.

Planning Panels Victoria cautioned against the variation and recommended that Council closely monitor and review the operation of the control and this review has found that the provision has not delivered the anticipated benefits.

It is evident that there has been limited uptake of the provision (six properties in total). Additionally, interrogation of “before and after” aerial photography showing the relevant case study sites (see Appendix 1) where approvals have been granted, shows little to no change on half of the properties.

The variation has resulted in further fragmentation of farming land in an area of high landscape significance and where a 60ha minimum lot size was deemed to be a technically viable land size for farming productivity.

Compounding the failure to realise the anticipated benefits, is the weakness in the provision itself. There is a disconnect between any objective or provision that calls up consideration of whether the subject land is suitable for a reduced lot size in the first instance and a subsequent lack of criteria against which the adequacy of a land plan can be measured.

As it relates to a dwelling, the Thompsons Creek provision seeks to avoid a planning permit being triggered and as such, in addition to the above issues:

- An approval under the provision is not a planning permit and there are no notice requirements or review rights
- Any approval sits outside of the planning scheme and unlike a planning permit, it does not require a lapse date or sunset clause to be built into the approval
- As it is a provision that seeks to avoid a planning permit being triggered, the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone are not considered

Overall, the review highlights that planning has progressed since the introduction of the Thompsons Creek provision in 2000. There is now sufficient flexibility and guidance within the provisions of the Farming Zone, Schedule to the Farming Zone and other strategies and policies within the planning scheme to achieve the environmental outcomes sought by the Thompsons Creek provision.

The variation was introduced at a time when there was limited information in the planning scheme to guide sound land management practices and in particular, to mitigate and address salinity impacts. Since that time, policies have been updated, the rural zones reviewed and a Salinity Management overlay and direct policy relating to salinity control included into the Planning Scheme.

The processing of approval for a dwelling seeking a variation to the minimum lot size is difficult for the Responsible Authority due to the manner of the approval and results in important decision guidelines not being considered. This creates an inconsistent approach to planning for rural areas.

The introduction of the Salinity Management Overlay has shown that the previously mapped salinity priority area was inaccurate and the foundation for the variation, no longer sound. There are sufficient mechanisms, requirements and decision guidelines within the Planning Scheme to achieve the desired outcome in a far more transparent and efficient manner. It is therefore recommended that the variation to the minimum lot size in the Thompsons Creek Catchment in the schedule to the Farming Zone be removed.

#### Providing a Greater Level of Certainty to Landholders

The Panel requested that a greater level of certainty be given to the landholders who would lose the ability to construct a dwelling 'as of right' if the provision is removed. Two out of the six properties that have applied for a variation under the provision have not constructed a dwelling. If the provision is removed those two landowners will lose their ability to construct a dwelling 'as of right.'

Inclusion of transitional provisions within the Schedule to the Farming Zone is not an option as an approval under the Thompsons Creek provision (as it relates to dwellings) is not a planning permit; instead, it is an approval that sits outside of the planning scheme.

As an alternative solution, Planning Scheme Amendment C133 proposes to include a new strategy under Clause 14.01-1L-02 (Dwellings in the Farming and Rural Conservation Zones) to enable a previous approval granted under the provision to be considered when a planning permit application is made to use and develop a dwelling on a lot that is below the minimum lot size. The current strategy discourages the use or development of land for a dwelling on land below the minimum lot size except where the land is a separate tenement.

It is proposed that an additional circumstance be included to provide an opportunity for the additional criteria to be considered. The revised wording is as follows:

*Limit the number of dwellings built in rural areas.*

*Avoid the use or development of dwellings on lots below the minimum lot size where:*

- *The land is not identified as a tenement in this policy, or*
- *The lot is part of a tenement, identified in this policy, and the maximum number of dwellings across the tenement would be exceeded, or*
- *The land is not subject to an approved land management plan identified in this policy.*

A policy guideline is then proposed that refers more specifically to the deleted provision;

Consider as relevant:

- Limiting the maximum number of dwellings to one (including any existing or proposed dwellings) on:
  - A lot in the Thompsons Creek Catchment area (shown on Map 1 to the Schedule to Clause 35.07), that is between 40ha-60ha in area, where a section 173 agreement requiring land to be managed and maintained in accordance with an approved Land Management Plan has been entered into and registered on title prior to (insert gazettal day / month) 2022.

The above strategy will provide policy direction for decision makers when assessing future applications for a dwelling on the two remaining properties that have not yet acted on their approval. This is believed to provide the most certainty available within the current planning system.

Five years has lapsed since both approvals were granted. Under normal circumstances where a planning permit is granted, the permit would have expired after four years (or after two years if the use or development had not commenced). It is considered reasonable to expect that a new approval would be required after that length of time.

All landowners within the Thompsons Creek Catchment area were sent a targeted letter as part of public exhibition of the amendment, alerting them of the intended removal of the provision and what the implications of this could be. Only one property owner put in a submission to the amendment and they were heard by Panel. The submitter's dwelling is now under construction and the removal of the provision should no longer personally affect them.

Following gazettal of the amendment a second targeted letter will be sent to the two landowners who have not enacted their 'as of right' entitlement for a dwelling informing them of their ability to apply for a planning permit.

## **Appendix 1**

### **1. Has the alternative subdivision lot size provision been used?**

The initial desktop review found 28 examples where a Section 173 (S173) agreement associated with the subdivision of land or the use of the land for a dwelling was entered into within the Thompsons Creek catchment, since the provision's introduction in 2000. Following the Panel Hearing for amendment C133, a more comprehensive review was undertaken for each of the 28 properties. This revealed that only six of the examples drew on the Thompsons Creek provision, (i.e. sought a variation to the minimum lot size of 60ha). The six examples are listed in Table 1 below.

A S173 agreement requiring the implementation of an approved Land Plan has been recorded for each property. The following table presents the site location and S173 agreement requirements.

**Table 1: Sites that applied for a variation to the lot size under the Schedule to the Farming Zone**

<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>173 AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>APPROVAL INFO</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>
900 Mt Duneed Rd, Freshwater Creek	The section 173 agreement relates to the land being managed in accordance with the management plan attached to the Section 173 Agreement.	Dwelling. PG20-0014 – March 2020	Construction of dwelling commenced February 2022
230 Buckley School Road, Buckley	The section 173 agreement relates to the land being managed in accordance with the management plan attached to the Section 173 Agreement.	Dwelling. OA2546 – March 2015	Dwelling not commenced
270 Buckley Road North, Buckley	Section 173 Agreement requires land cannot be further subdivided, land must be managed in accordance with land management plan, ongoing maintenance of the land and annual reporting.	Two lot subdivision. 11/0366: 2011	Subdivision complete
515 Ghazeepore Road, Mt Duneed	The section 173 agreement relates to the land being managed in accordance with the management plan attached to the Section 173 Agreement.	Dwelling. OA2586 – March 2018	Dwelling constructed
1025 Dickins Road, Freshwater Creek (335 Hunts Rd)	The land to be managed with the approved environmental management plan for Thompsons Creek.	Dwelling. S173: January 2009	Dwelling constructed
380 Pettavel Road, Freshwater Creek	The Section 173 Agreement relates to the land to be managed in accordance with the land management plan endorsed which allows a dwelling to be constructed without a planning permit.	Dwelling OA2539 – January 2015	Dwelling not commenced

## 2. Has the provision worked successfully?

The review looked at each of the sites listed in table 1 and the conclusions are set out at the end of the appendix to the review.

### **CASE STUDIES**

The following information was reviewed for each case study:

- The approval (planning permit or approval of “other matter” subject to whether subdivision or dwelling),
- The delegate report,
- The approved Land Plan,
- The executed S173 agreement,
- Aerial photography as evidence of on-ground changes since approval,
- Site visit to observe (from roadside) fencing and replanting works undertaken.

#### **Case Study 1: 900 Mt Duneed Road, Freshwater Creek**

##### *What the planning permit approved*

An application was submitted seeking approval to reduce the minimum lot size required to use the land for a dwelling, from 60ha to 40ha, under the schedule to the Farming Zone.

The application was assessed as a general planning matter and not as a planning permit. A planning permit was not triggered by the planning scheme. The schedule to the Farming Zone stipulates the need for an approval to reduce the minimum lot size.

The planning matter was assessed against the variation requirements within the schedule to the farming zone and was approved on the basis that the land management plan suitably fulfilled the criteria. It was believed that the implementation of the plan would result in an improved environmental outcome for the allotment.

Construction of a dwelling commenced on the site in February 2022.

##### *Land Plan*

The Land Plan (the plan) was endorsed under planning approval no PG20/0014 on 4/4/2020. The plan observed that there was no remnant vegetation on the site and that it was degraded due to past land use practices. It also noted that it was not in a recognised hot spot salinity area.

The plan recommended revegetation within the site as follows, shown below in figure 10:

- 8.1ha (14%) of the property revegetation to approximate EVC standards, including;
  - Supplementary understorey plantings of areas A-F (7.1ha),
  - Plantings of both understorey and canopy species in areas G-H (1.0ha);

**Figure 10: Revegetation required on Land Plan**



The plan included a pest, plants and animal management and eradication plan and appropriate planting schedule and species.

The commencement date for the works was the date that the S173 agreement was executed; being 18 August 2020.

Milestone	Deliverables	Reporting
Commencement	Section 173 Agreement executed by both parties	Date of Commencement 18/8/2020

The plan set out land management tasks to be undertaken within the first 2 years, annual tasks and tasks to be undertaken between years 1 and 3 and 3 and 5.

The site visit undertaken in July 2022 confirmed commencement of the dwelling construction and showed evidence of replanting and newly erected fencing. Indigenous vegetation has been planted as required along the southern boundary – abutting Mt Duneed Road.

**Figure 11: House under construction. (Photo taken looking north from Mt Duneed Rd)**



**Figure 12: Replanting.** (Photo taken looking east along property boundary - abutting Mt Duneed Rd)



#### Section 173 Agreement

The S173 agreement came into effect on 18 August 2020 and set out that:

- *The Owner applied to the Responsible Authority to reduce the minimum subdivision area for the Land on the basis that the Owner enter into an agreement under section 173 of the Act committing the Owner and any future Owner to the implementation of a land plan.*
- *The Owner has agreed to enter into this Agreement to record the Owner's obligation to ensure that the Land is managed and maintained in accordance with Land Management Plan to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.*

The requirements of the agreement are that:

The Owner agrees with the Responsible Authority that unless the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority is obtained, the Owner must:

- *Implement the Land Management Plan;*
- *Manage the Land in accordance with the Land Management Plan; and*
- *Maintain the Land in accordance with the Land Management Plan, on an ongoing basis and to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.*

#### Salinity

The Salinity Management Overlay does not apply to this property.

#### **Case study 2: 230 Buckley School Road, Buckley**

*What the planning permit approved*

An application was submitted seeking approval to reduce the minimum lot size required to use the land for a dwelling from 60ha to 40ha under the schedule to the Farming Zone. The application was assessed as a general planning matter against the schedule to the Farming Zone.

The planning matter was assessed against the variation requirements within the schedule to the farming zone and was approved on the basis that the land management plan suitably fulfilled the criteria. It was believed that the implementation of the plan would result in an improved environmental outcome for the allotment.

Conditional approval was granted on 26 June 2015 to use the land for a dwelling without needing a permit through the reduction of the minimum lot size to 40ha. No dwelling has been constructed on this property.

#### Land Plan

The Land Plan (the plan) was approved on 26 May 2015. The plan found no remnant vegetation on the site, stating that it had been previously cleared for agriculture. The plan identified a number of weeds on the site and set out strategies for pest plant and animal management. The plan identified that the site was not in a salinity hot spot area.

The plan also recommended that 4.7 ha of the site be planted out with native trees and included a list of suitable species; a work program template, which set out the works to be completed; required timeframes; a blank box for the land owner to fill in the completion date. Notably, revegetation of the site was required to occur every year for the first 5 years.

The S173 agreement was executed on the 20 August 2015, triggering the commencement date. The purpose of the agreement is described as follows:

*The Land is within the Farming Zone. The Schedule to the Farming Zone provides that the minimum area of which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling may be reduced to 40ha provided that certain conditions are met. Those conditions relevantly require:*

- *The preparation of a land management plan; and*
- *The owner to enter into an agreement under Section 173 of the Act which commits any present or future owner to the implementation of the land plan and ongoing management of maintenance of the property so the land does not revert back to its former state.*

*The Land management Plan has been prepared and approved by the Responsible Authority.*

#### What changes have occurred on the site since the approval of the land management plan?

The following aerial photos show the land at 230 Buckley School Road, Buckley in 2014 (prior to land plan approval) and in 2022.

The property is rectangular in shape with a wind break of exotic tree species planted along the boundaries. The extent of vegetation is unchanged between 2014 and 2022 and it would appear that no revegetation works have occurred since the execution of the S173 agreement.



Figure 13: 230 Buckley School Rd: 2014



Figure 14: 230 Buckley School Rd: 2022



Figure 15: View south. Photo taken from Buckley School Rd: 2022



A site inspection of the property was completed in July 2022. The site was viewed from Buckley School Road, looking southward. This view of the site confirmed the conditions visible in the aerial photographs; that no revegetation works have been undertaken on this property and no dwelling has been constructed.

Salinity

The Salinity Management Overlay does not apply to this property.

**Case study 3: 270 Buckley Road North, Buckley**

This example differs from the other case studies in that it relates to a variation to the minimum subdivisional lot size. A planning permit was granted and the subdivision is complete. The smaller (40ha) lot contains a dwelling and the balance lot exceeds 60ha; no planning permit is required to construct a dwelling on a lot over 60ha in this area. A site visit was not undertaken for this property but aerial photographs indicate that no revegetation has been undertaken.

ADDRESS	LAND PLAN OBLIGATIONS (summarised)	Evidence of being met
270 Buckley Road North, Buckley (11/0366: 2011)	Fencing of existing vegetation: Year 1 Revegetation in designated areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area 1: Year 1</li> <li>• Areas 2-5: Years 2-4</li> </ul> Increase size of existing dam on lot 1: Years 2-4 Pasture management: annually Pest plant and animal management: annually Grading of internal road: annually <b>Two lot subdivision: subdivision completed</b>	Unknown  None apparent None apparent No Unknown Unknown Assumed

**Figure 16: 270 Buckley Rd North: 2011**



**Figure 17: 270 Buckley Rd North: 2022**



**Salinity**

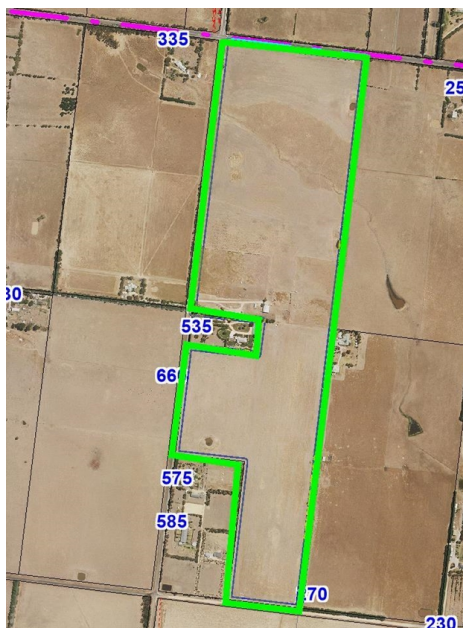
The Salinity Management Overlay does not apply to this property.

**Case Study 4: 515 Ghazeeport Road, Mt Duneed**

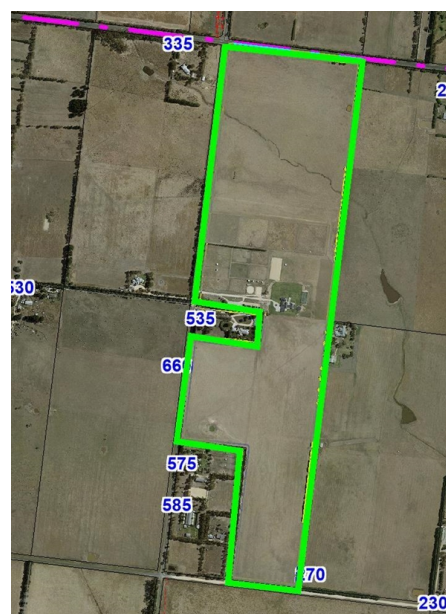
ADDRESS	LAND PLAN OBLIGATIONS (summarised)	MET YES/NO
515 Ghazeeport Road, Mt Duneed (OA2586: 2018)	Annual work plan Revegetation % fencing of same: Year 1 Fencing to exclude stock (riparian): Year 1 Crash grazing of stock exclusion areas: ongoing Permanent creek crossing: Year 1 Pest plant and animal control: ongoing Other <b>Dwelling: dwelling constructed</b>	Unknown None apparent None apparent N/A None apparent Unknown Unknown

The aerial photographs show the site in 2017 (prior to approval) and 2022. The photos show little to no change across the property in five years.

**Figure 18: 515 Ghazeeport Rd: 2017**



**Figure 19: 515 Ghazeeport Rd: 2022**



A site visit was undertaken for this property in July 2022 confirming that the dwelling has been constructed. The visit also confirmed the lack of planting that was apparent in the aerial photographs and that the creek that runs east to west across the property has not been fenced or revegetated as required by the land plan.

**Figure 20: Photo of dwelling. (Photo taken from Ghazeepore Road - looking east)**



**Figure 21: Photo of drainage line (Photo taken from Ghazeepore Road - looking east)**



Salinity

The Salinity Management Overlay does not apply to this property.

***Case Study 5: 1025 Dickins Road, Freshwater Creek (335 Hunts Road)***

1025 Dickins Road, Freshwater Creek (335 Hunts Rd)	The land to be managed with the approved environmental management plan for Thompsons Creek.	Dwelling. S173: January 2009	Dwelling constructed
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The aerial photographs show the site in 2007 (prior to approval) and in 2022. It is clear that planting has occurred in three locations.

**Figure 22: 335 Hunts Road Rd: 2007**



**Figure 23: 335 Hunts Road Rd: 2022**



The aerial photograph comparison and site inspection (undertaken in July 2022) confirm that revegetation works have occurred on this property.

The photographs at figures 25 and 26 show revegetation of the north western corner of the site and the area abutting the Thompsons Creek (that forms the southern boundary of the property). Revegetation is also apparent along the eastern boundary.

A dwelling and infrastructure for equestrian activities has also been constructed.

**Figure 24: Photo of dwelling. (Photo taken from Dickins Road - looking south)**



**Figure 25: Photo of revegetation in north western corner of property. (Photo taken from Hunts Road - looking east)**



**Figure 26: Photo of revegetation along Thompsons Creek. (Photo taken from Hunts Road - looking east)**



Salinity

The Salinity Management Overlay applies to the north eastern corner of this property (see Figure 27). No planting has been undertaken in this area.

**Figure 27: Salinity Management Overlay (Surf Coast Planning Scheme)**



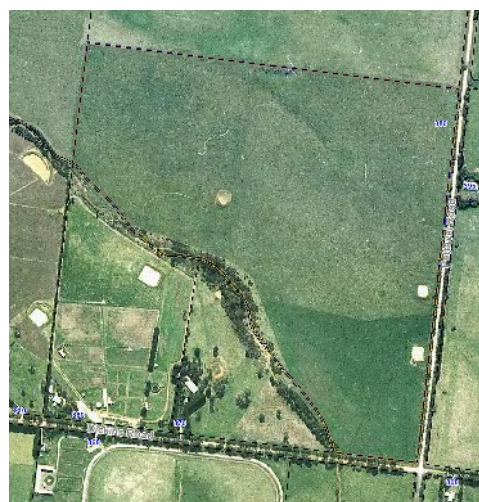
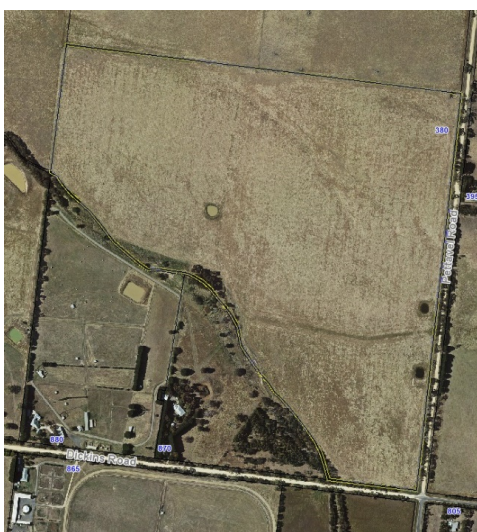
***Case Study 6: 380 Pettavel Road, Freshwater Creek***

380 Pettavel Road, Freshwater Creek	The Section 173 Agreement relates to the land to be managed in accordance with the land management plan endorsed which allows a dwelling to be constructed without a planning permit.	Dwelling OA2539 – January 2015	No evidence of commencement
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The aerial photographs show the site in 2014 (prior to approval) and in 2022. However, the aerial comparison does not clearly indicate whether or not the site has been revegetated.

**Figure 28: 380 Pettavel Rd: 2014**

**Figure 29: 380 Pettavel Rd: 2022**



A site inspection (undertaken in July 2022) found evidence of recent revegetation works, both along the creek line and in the south eastern corner of the site.



**Figure 30: Photo of revegetation along the creek (Photo taken from Pettavel Road - looking west)**



**Figure 31: Photo of revegetation in the south western part of the site (Photo taken from Dickins Road - looking north)**

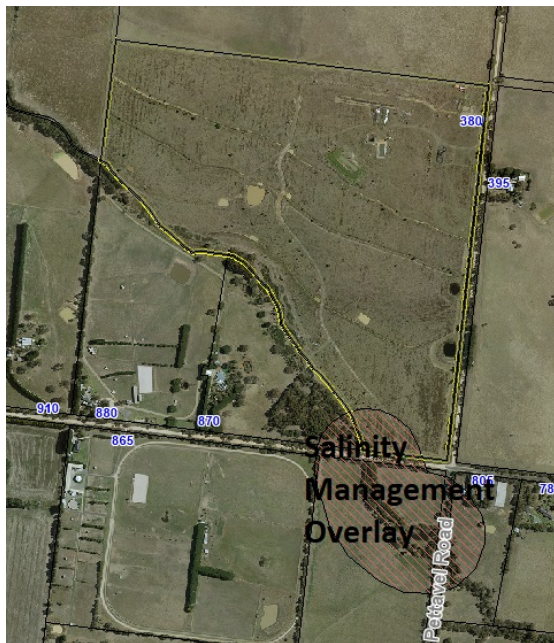


There was no dwelling on this property.

### Salinity

The Salinity Management Overlay applies to the south western corner of this property (see Figure 32).

**Figure 32: Salinity Management Overlay (Surf Coast Planning Scheme)**



### Case Studies: summary of key findings

Each dwelling application was processed in a similar way. Approval was required to vary the land area for a dwelling without the need for a planning permit. Each application resulted in an approved Land Plan and the relevant parties entered into a S173 Agreement binding current and future owners of the land to the actions and obligations set out in the Land Plan/s. The subdivision application (case study 3) followed the usual planning permit process excepting that a reduction in the minimum lot size was approved subject to an approved Land Plan and S173 Agreement. It is the dwelling approvals that are discussed further here.

Overall, three of the five applicants have acted upon their approval and constructed a dwelling on their property; two have not. All of the properties will continue to be bound by a 173 agreement to implement a land plan.

Revegetation has occurred on three of the properties (900 Mt Duneed Road, 335 Hunts Road and 380 Pettavel Road) and dwellings have been constructed (or are under construction) on two of the three properties. Two of the properties are also subject to the Salinity Management Overlay (SMO) and while planting has occurred on each of these properties, minimal planting occurred on the SMO affected land on one property and no planting in the SMO occurred on the other.

The revegetation of the remaining two properties (230 Buckley School Road and 515 Ghazeepore Road) does not appear to have been undertaken. The land management plans required an increase in tree planting across the site of up to 15% and evidence of this

revegetation should now be visible considering the time that has elapsed since approval (between 5 – 11 years). There is no visible evidence that planting has occurred.

There was no evidence found on many of the files investigated to show that reporting had been undertaken and submitted to the Responsible Authority in accordance with the relevant Land Plans. In the absence of this information, it is not possible to easily determine whether regular pest plants and animal management has occurred.

In conclusion, the provision was somewhat successful in achieving an increase in vegetation cover on half of the small number of properties that took advantage of the Thompsons Creek provision. With limited planting having been undertaken on the land identified as a salinity hotspot area, the provision appears to have been unsuccessful in reducing the impacts of salinity. The burden to Council of yearly monitoring and review is considered to be outweighed by the minimal benefit returned as evidenced over the 20 years since the provisions introduction.

**END**