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Surf Coast Housing Policy Project

VOLUME 2: RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS REPORT

October 2006

Contents

1. Introduction	5
2. Policy Influences Affecting Housing in the Surf Coast Shire	6
2.1 Commonwealth	6
2.2 State	7
2.3 Regional	13
2.4 Local	14
2.5 Overview of Policy Context and Research findings	24
3. Housing Issues and Options for the Surf Coast Shire	26
A. Sustainability	26
B. Affordability	35
C. Diversity	43
D. Infrastructure, Services and Transport	51
E. Character	65
4. Conclusions	69
References	70
Appendix A: Zones and Overlays	71
Appendix B: Consultation Outcomes	83
Housing Issues Workshop: 10 May 2006.....	83
Officer Issues Workshop: Thursday 20 th April 2006	87
Online Feedback Forms and Nomination Forms.....	90

1. Introduction

The Surf Coast Shire Housing Policy Project

The Housing Policy Project includes the following volumes:

Volume 1: Housing Strategy

Volume 2: Research and Analysis Report

Volume 3: Housing Demand and Supply

This report, Volume 2: Research and Analysis Report provides an in depth analysis of research into the strategic planning and policy context and its influence on housing in the Shire. The issues and options that arose through the research and analysis stage of the project are identified, and further detail has been added in response to issues arising during Stage 2 of the Project.

This report builds on the Stage 1: Draft Research and Analysis Report, which was originally prepared to:

- Brief Council on issues influencing housing in the Shire and seek guidance on options for the Housing Strategy
- Report on background research and analysis and the emerging issues and opportunities
- Brief the Project Committee following input from Council, to make the best use of the time available in Committee meetings.
- Provide a platform for the development of a Housing Strategy.

Preparation of this Research and Analysis Report has involved an investigation of current and future housing need (as set out in detail in Volume 3), identification of local housing issues, assessment of the broader State and regional policy context, and identification of key problems and issues requiring action. Volume 1: Housing Strategy responds to the issues and options set out in this report and provides objectives and strategies to address the issues, with actions to enable implementation.

Key issues influencing housing in the Surf Coast Shire were identified during the stakeholder and Council officer workshops held in April and May 2006, and these key issues have informed the structure of this report. Interviews conducted with key state government departments and agencies, and with infrastructure service providers also assisted in providing context, and identifying issues and potential constraints to growth, and opportunities for the future.

The body of the report is structured under five themes arising from the consultation:

Sustainability

Affordability

Diversity

Infrastructure, Services and Transport

Character

Key issues and options for addressing these issues are outlined under these themes and were the subject of discussion during workshops with Councillors and the Project Steering Committee. Many of the options set out within this report were refined and now form part of the Housing Strategy contained in Volume 1, while some other options were discarded.

2. Policy Influences Affecting Housing in the Surf Coast Shire

This section of the report provides an overview of the key influences on housing within the Surf Coast Shire from a Commonwealth, state, regional and local policy and strategic planning context. Each of these levels of influence are discussed separately, with summaries of key documents and policies provided and their implications for the Housing Policy Project identified.

2.1 Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Government has a primary influence on the supply and demand for housing due to its roles in setting monetary and fiscal policy, taxation policies, pension benefits, immigration levels and broader economic policy and thus influencing interest rates, income levels and employment location, type and levels. These factors should not be underestimated in their impact on all aspects of housing provision, demand and supply, and Councils must be aware of constraints created by the broader economic and legislative context within which the states and local government can operate.

In general the Commonwealth's policy position in relation to housing is that the market should operate as freely as possible, and the government's responsibility is to the most disadvantaged. The direct role of the Commonwealth Government in housing policy therefore relates largely to income support and housing affordability. Funds are provided through the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (CSHA) for the construction of public housing stock or the delivery of housing services. This financial arrangement between the Commonwealth and the States is subject to negotiation every 3-5 years, with the current CSHA due to expire on 30 June 2008.

The Commonwealth Government's contribution to the CSHA is on average approximately two-thirds of the funding with the remainder contributed by the States and Territories. However, this funding has been declining in real terms throughout the 1990s to the present, and is the subject of some contention between the levels of government.

The Commonwealth Government also provides support for low income households and individuals in the form of Rent Assistance. This non-taxable income supplement is paid to those receiving income support payments and who rent in the private rental market. Total outlays for Rent Assistance exceeded funds provided through the CSHA in the mid 1990s. In 1999-2000, in excess of \$1.5 billion was spent on Rent Assistance, while \$957.6 million was spent on the CSHA during the same period (source: <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/sp/statehouseagree.htm>).

In August 2005, a joint meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers for Housing, Planning and Local Government agreed to a *Framework for National Action on Affordable Housing*. The *Framework* is a commitment by all Australian Governments to a set of closely related activities that have been chosen to help determine the most appropriate ways of tackling the growing shortfall of affordable housing across Australia. The activities to be pursued under the *Framework* will occur over the period 2005/06 to 2007/08. The *Framework* includes four commitments:

- **Commitment 1:** Create a *National Sector Development Plan* for not for profit housing providers that will enable them to participate in large scale affordable housing initiatives.
- **Commitment 2:** Adopt a national approach to defining and analysing affordable housing need at geographic levels that can be reflected in planning policy and regulations and provides comparable standards of affordability.
- **Commitment 3:** Review current subsidy streams and investigate the potential to strengthen certainty in light of the commitment to increase the role of the private sector and the development of the not for profit sector.

- **Commitment 4:** Identify mechanisms and policy initiatives that will deliver increased affordable home ownership and rental opportunities for low-moderate income households for consideration by Ministers.

Ministers have also decided to explore the potential benefits of a new National Affordable Housing Agreement to promote a strategic, unified and coordinated approach to the provision of affordable housing across all spheres and agencies of government.

This initiative implies that housing assistance policy in Australia is currently under significant scrutiny and it is highly likely that post June 2008 there will be a significantly different policy framework and system of provision – one which could involve traditional planning and local government roles as well as housing assistance policies.

In addition to the CSHA and Rent Assistance to private renters, the Commonwealth also provides housing assistance in a range of other forms (often in partnership with State and Territory Governments), including Community Aged Care Packages, specific Aboriginal housing programs, Supported Accommodation Assistance Programs, Home and Community Care Program, and Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement. A number of concessional taxation arrangements are also provided by the Commonwealth Government, including negative gearing for rental properties, capital gains relief for family homes, and the First Home Owners Scheme.

2.2

State

State Planning Policy Framework

State policy is articulated in the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF), which is included in all Victorian Planning Schemes. The SPPF outlines specific principles that elaborate on the objectives of planning in Victoria, and describes the factors that influence good decision making in land use and development planning. These policies must be taken into account when preparing amendments to the Planning Scheme or making decisions on land use and development applications under the Scheme.

Objectives contained within the SPPF relating to settlement and housing are of relevance for planning for the current and future housing needs for the Surf Coast Shire. Further objectives relating to environment, infrastructure, economic development and particular uses and development are also important, particularly in relation to directing the location and intensity of future housing and ensuring the protection of sensitive environments.

Settlement

Clause 14 contains objectives relating to ensuring a sufficient supply of land (including for residential uses), and facilitating the orderly development of urban areas. Planning authorities are to plan to accommodate projected population growth for at least a 10 year period, having particular regard to the Victorian Government population projections and land supply estimates.

As discussed above, there is sufficient zoned and planned residential land supply to meet projected demand for up to the next 30 years within the Surf Coast Shire.

Housing

Clause 16 of the SPPF includes objectives that encourage:

- subdivisions in locations well served by physical and community infrastructure,
- residential development that makes cost-effective and efficient use of infrastructure, including energy and water use
- increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas
- provision of increased housing choice, and
- well-designed medium density housing that respects neighbourhood character.

16.03 Rural living and rural residential development

Clause 16.03-1 specifies that land should only be zoned for rural living and rural residential where it is located close to towns or urban areas but outside areas required for urban expansion, where it can be provided with electricity and water, has access to good quality roads and does not impact on high quality agricultural land or adversely affect waterways or natural resources. The Minister's Direction No. 6 should be used when considering allowing rural residential development.

Clause 16.04 also includes an objective for the encouragement of provision of crisis accommodation and community care units.

Environment

Clause 15 contains State-wide objectives relating to protection of catchments, waterways and groundwater, floodplain management, salinity, air quality, noise abatement, soil contamination, protection from wildfire, coastal areas, conservation of native flora and fauna, open space, heritage, energy efficiency, alpine areas and renewable energy.

Clause 15.08 Coastal Areas is of particular relevance to the Housing Policy Project, with the objective being:

In coastal areas, to protect and enhance the natural ecosystems and landscapes of the coastal and marine environment, ensure sustainable use of natural coastal resources and achieve development that provides an environmental, social and economic benefit enhancing the community's value of the coast.

The Clause requires that planning for coastal areas should be consistent with the Victorian Coastal Strategy and other action or management plans.

Specific geographic strategies are provided for the Great Ocean Road Region, and objectives relevant to housing include:

Protect the landscape and environment by:

- *Protecting public land and parks and identified significant landscapes.*
- *Ensuring development responds to the identified landscape character of the area.*
- *Managing the impact of development on catchments and coastal areas.*
- *Managing the impact of development on the environmental and cultural values of the area.*

Manage the growth of towns by:

- *Respecting the character of coastal towns and promoting best practice design for new development.*
- *Directing urban growth to strategically identified areas.*
- *Encouraging environmentally sustainable development.*

Improve the management of access and transport by:

- *Providing travel choices to and within the region.*

Encourage sustainable tourism and resource use by:

- *Supporting the land use and transport needs of key regional industries including tourism.*
- *Using natural resources with care.*

This Clause also notes that *"Planning for the Great Ocean Road Region should have regard to the Great Ocean Road Region - A Land Use and Transport Strategy (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2004)"*.

The following State-wide objectives also have relevance to the Housing Policy Project, in particular in considering defined boundaries to townships, identifying suitable areas for growth, ensuring that new development is energy efficient, and ensuring that consideration is given to the potential role of land for generation of renewable energy and its impact on nearby land uses:

- To assist the protection and, where possible, restoration of catchments, waterways, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.

- To assist the protection of:
 - Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard.
 - Floodplain areas of environmental significance.
- To assist the minimisation of risk to life, property, the natural environment and community infrastructure from wildfire.
- To assist the protection and conservation of biodiversity, including native vegetation retention and provision of habitats for native plants and animals and control of pest plants and animals.
- To assist creation of a diverse and integrated network of public open space commensurate with the needs of urban communities and rural areas.
- To encourage land use and development that is consistent with the efficient use of energy and the minimisation of greenhouse gas emissions.
- To promote the provision of renewable energy, including wind energy facilities, in a manner that ensures appropriate siting and design considerations are met.

Economic Development

Clause 17 includes objectives in relation to Activity Centres, Business, Industry, Tourism, Agriculture, Intensive Animal Industries, Forestry and Timber Production, Mineral Resources, Extractive Industry and Apiculture.

In many cases these objectives are relevant for consideration in the expansion of urban areas or increases in rural residential development, where there could be impacts in terms of reducing the potential for these economic activities (in particular agriculture) to occur or creating conflict between adjoining uses.

Of particular relevance to the Housing Policy Project are objectives relating to Activity Centres and Tourism. Clause 17.01 notes that Activity Centres (including strip shopping centres) should integrate residential uses where appropriate. Clause 17.04 Tourism encourages well designed and sited tourism facilities including accommodation, which is relevant for this project as there is overlap between planning for housing and for tourist accommodation, and because tourism plays such a large role in the economy of the municipality.

Infrastructure

Clause 18 includes objectives in relation to Declared highways, railways and tramways, Car parking and public transport access to development, Bicycle transport, Airfields, Health facilities, Education facilities, Survey infrastructure, Water supply, sewerage and drainage, Waste management, High pressure pipelines, Developer contributions to infrastructure and Telecommunications. The following objectives are relevant to the Housing Policy Project:

- To integrate land use and transport planning around existing and planned declared highways, railways, principal bus routes and tram lines.
- To plan for the provision of water supply, sewerage and drainage services that efficiently and effectively meet State and community needs and protect the environment.
- To facilitate the timely provision of planned infrastructure to communities through the preparation and implementation of development contributions plans.

These objectives have particular relevance for future growth of townships, and ensuring that existing infrastructure is used efficiently and new infrastructure (including access to transport) is provided to meet community needs. Ensuring that developers take responsibility for the provision of infrastructure is important to ensure the cost is not borne by the broader community.

Amended Clause 56 Residential Subdivision

New provisions for Residential Subdivision came into effect on 9 October 2006, and apply in the following zones: R1Z, R2Z, R3Z, MUZ, TS, CDZ, PDZ.

Associated changes will also be made to the SPPF, abovementioned zones, and some overlays. Four practice notes will be prepared to assist in the implementation of the various provisions of the Clause.

Of relevance to the Housing Strategy, the new Clause 56 provisions provide additional requirements to increase the sustainability of new subdivisions, with a larger number of requirements for larger subdivisions and fewer for smaller subdivisions (e.g. 2-3 lots). The new provisions include Objectives and Standards for integrated water management, safe and appropriate public open space, improved accessibility and integration of public transport, and management of construction waste and off-site impacts during construction. Compared with the version of Clause 56 exhibited in 2005, some sections are strengthened, while a few are weaker in the introduced Objectives and Standards. Generally, the word 'should' is used rather than 'must', which provides discretion for further guidance and strength to be provided through the Local Planning Policy Framework, which can detail Council's position on these matters (e.g. WSUD, management of construction waste and off-site impacts etc).

Other State Government Policies and Strategies

Further State Government policies and strategies that sit outside of the Planning Scheme are also relevant to the Housing Policy Project, both in relation to meeting housing and community needs and ensuring development occurs sustainably and in a way that protects the sensitive coastal environments. An overview of these documents is provided here.

Moving Forward

The provincial statement, *Moving Forward*, sets out initiatives to create growth and opportunities and to rebuild regional communities, and includes several actions in relation to housing and supporting regional communities. This includes attracting people to live, work and invest in provincial Victoria, with a focus on providing greater diversity and sustainability in regional housing through the establishment of a new Provincial Unit within VicUrban. Opportunities may be available in the future to work in partnership with the Provincial Unit to address issues that are identified through the Housing Policy Project, such as affordability or diversity of stock.

Managing growth in regional areas is also identified as an action, which includes ensuring that community, social, infrastructure and environmental impacts of growth are addressed, particularly in hotspots such as growing coastal areas. Greater support will also be delivered to small towns through initiatives such as the Small Towns Development Fund, which will provide support for projects such as improvements to physical and community infrastructure. Opportunities to seek funding through this program will arise through the development of a Housing Strategy for the Surf Coast Shire, to meet the needs of a growing and changing community.

Investments in new bus and transport connections are also identified, including park and ride stations for commuters, new bus services including links to rail, and improvements to V/Line trains. The proposed and potential improvements to public transport services and the road network within and to the Surf Coast Shire are discussed below under *Infrastructure Provision*.

A Fairer Victoria

A Fairer Victoria sets out a framework to address social needs and disadvantage, and includes strategies and actions to boost access to affordable housing through expanding its supply in low affordability areas and regional towns and ensuring that the Victorian planning system encourages and supports affordable housing objectives. It also includes actions to increase home ownership among low income Victorians, working in partnership with financial institutions, and to improve services and support for the homeless. Programs are identified for increased provision of affordable housing, and opportunities will exist for Council to advocate for assistance from the State Government in the provision of affordable housing in the Shire.

Transport Strategy

Meeting our Transport Challenges provides a transport plan for the next 25 years, recognising the projected growth in population of provincial Victoria, particularly along the coast, and the need to increase investment in regional transport infrastructure and services to cater for this growth. This includes increasing accessibility between

regional areas and to larger regional centres. Ten Actions have been identified, with the most relevant actions for the Surf Coast Shire relating to improvements to the regional arterial road network, improving public transport services and connections to fast rail, improvements to the V/Line rolling stock, extension to the rural school bus program and improved taxi services in regional areas.

According to the Department of Infrastructure, within the Surf Coast Shire this will equate to increased bus services between Geelong and Torquay, between Geelong and Lorne, a local bus service for Torquay-Jan Juc, and other potential public transport services, as well as the duplication of Princes Highway through the Shire. The proposed Geelong Bypass will also impact on the accessibility of the Shire to Melbourne. This document provides opportunities to seek funding for local area access demonstration projects and for advocacy to the State Government for improvements to public transport services to and between the townships in the Shire.

Coastal Strategies

Planning strategies for the region and for coastal areas more generally include the *Great Ocean Road Region Strategy*, the *Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study*, the *Coastal Spaces* initiative and the *Victorian Coastal Strategy*.

The *Great Ocean Road Region Strategy* (GORRS) is a 20 year land use and transport strategy which applies to the Surf Coast Shire, and is based on the four key directions of Environment, Settlement, Access and Prosperity. Relevant directions for the Housing Policy Project relate to protecting the landscape and caring for the environment (to be achieved through the protection of significant landscapes through the Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study), managing the growth of towns, and improving the management of access and transport. Managing the growth of towns will include establishing township boundaries and recognising the importance of neighbourhood character whilst ensuring that broader strategic issues (such as the provision of housing) are addressed. GORRS recommends that Neighbourhood Character Studies are conducted to protect the character of coastal townships. GORRS also directs growth towards townships where it can be accommodated without significant impacts and where access to reticulated sewerage, potable water exists and where there is available land. Winchelsea and Torquay are identified as the two growth areas within the Surf Coast Shire. Ensuring that growth takes place sustainably is also an important aspect of GORRS, which aims to implement the principles of best practice residential subdivision, reduced car use and improved public transport, and environmentally friendly development (including lot design for energy efficient housing, water conservation, local management of stormwater and wastewater treatment). Improving the management of access and transport will include directions to manage the Great Ocean Road whilst encouraging the use of inland routes, and improving public transport in the region and increasing the walkability of townships.

The *Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study* (GORRLAS) was undertaken as a part of GORRS, and provides an assessment of the character of landscapes and methods for their management, with an emphasis on protecting significant areas which are subject to development pressure. A Municipal Toolkit was provided for each municipality including the Surf Coast Shire, with recommendations made for changes to the Surf Coast Planning Scheme to implement the findings of the Study. This included a review of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) in relation to landscape character, rural residential development and townships, and the introduction of a new local policy specific to the landscape character of the Surf Coast. GORRLAS highlighted the fact that development pressures are a major issue for the Surf Coast Shire. The Study notes that, in particular, residential development occurring between coastal townships, at the fringe of townships or on isolated lots is presenting a problem for the Shire in terms of landscape issues. The Surf Coast Toolkit recommends that the form of residential development is carefully managed to ensure that landscape character is not compromised.

The *Victorian Coastal Strategy* is the key document that provides a vision and guides decision making, setting out principles, objectives and actions for the planning and management of the Victorian coast. The document is based on a commitment to ecologically sustainable development, and includes broad information on

demographic trends and the economic value of the coast. The strategy aims to ensure protection of significant environmental features, provide direction for future land use along the coast and identify areas that could accommodate growth. Of importance for the Housing Policy Project are the projected trends, which forecast that the Geelong, Bellarine Peninsula and Surf Coast Shires combined will increase in population by up to 10,000 people, and that a higher proportion of 50+ residents will be located on the coast, compared to the rest of Victoria. These trends have obvious implications for housing provision, with more people needing to be accommodated, and the needs of a more dependent ageing population needing to be addressed. Actions to direct the location and scale of use and development on the coast, that are relevant to the Housing Policy Project include: ensuring that MSS's take account of the nature and character of the coast and the role of its urban areas; protecting the character of coastal settlements and undisturbed areas between settlements; managing the growth of coastal towns by establishing township boundaries through planning schemes to ensure that growth is planned; utilising planning schemes as tools to avoid proliferation of development outside existing settlements, and inappropriate development within settlements; and confining coastal developments to activity and recreation nodes within existing settlements.

The *Coastal Spaces Initiative* was commenced following the success of GORRS and aims to assist councils to manage development pressures in coastal towns outside metropolitan Melbourne and to implement the *Victorian Coastal Strategy*. The Initiative commenced with the Coastal Spaces Inception Report, released in May 2005, which identified emerging issues, such as potentially unsustainable high rates of growth, the high demands placed on Councils to respond to proposed developments at the expense of strategic planning and the emergence of the significance of neighbourhood character in settlements that are undergoing change. The Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report was released in April 2006 and follows on from the Inception Report, providing a series of recommendations for improving strategic planning and tools for managing coastal development in a sustainable way.

Recommendations are made in relation to directing urban development into existing settlements, establishing urban boundaries, protecting non-urban coastal landscapes, prioritising environmental hotspots for provision of infrastructure and innovative solutions (where reticulated sewerage and water are not present), encouraging coastal-sensitive investment in tourism, discouraging disturbance of Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils, establishing a comprehensive approach to asset management on public land, and maximising regional communication and transfer of knowledge around managing and planning for coastal change. The report notes that the Surf Coast Shire and the City of Greater Geelong are "possibly the most progressed in relation to developing comprehensive strategic planning for all coastal settlements" including "well defined and justified settlement boundaries" (p.19).

Recommended Actions include finalising and implementing Framework Plans for Aireys Inlet and Lorne through the Planning Scheme. As the GORRS already provides strategic direction for the coastal areas of the Surf Coast Shire, there are few additional specific recommendations that affect the Housing Policy Project. However, while the Coastal Spaces Initiative has no direct impact on the Surf Coast Housing Policy Project, when combined with the *Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study* it ensures that development along the entire Victorian coastline is managed with appropriate policy.

Victorian Affordable Housing Growth Strategy

The Affordable Housing Growth Strategy for Low Income Victorians 2004 is a further state government policy that established Housing Associations as a primary means of providing more affordable housing. Housing associations are not-for-profit, community based organisations that receive government funding for housing projects. The Associations also obtain funding from other sources, including churches, donations, private sector and local government. The potential for the Council to work with these organisations will be explored further as part of the Affordable Housing Project proposed by the Council following the completion of the Housing Policy Project.

2.3

Regional

In addition to the State Government policies and strategies that apply to the region, G21 is providing an important role in planning for the region, and a G21 Region Plan is currently being developed. G21 is an alliance of five Councils (Greater Geelong, Surf Coast, Colac Otway, Golden Plains and Queenscliffe) and more than 150 participating local organisations working together towards a common vision. The group was founded in 2002. The core of G21 is a series of 'Pillar Groups' representing priority interest areas of the Region. These 'Pillar groups' are: Arts, Culture and Heritage; Community Safety; Economic Development; Environment; Health and Wellbeing; Lifelong Learning; Research; Sports and Recreation; Telecommunication; and Transport.

The Strategies and Plans that the G21 have been developing will have implications for this project. The first part of the Plan, *G21 Plan – Regional Context*, is essentially a background document that outlines the current economic, social and environmental state of the Region. It looks at strengths, weaknesses and opportunities while examining some future scenarios such as population forecasts, housing requirements and demographics. In relation to housing, a number of issues and factors are identified. They include:

- Affordability is a major and growing issue throughout the Region.
- Coastal towns and many locations within the Region are becoming unaffordable.
- Long term residents are being forced out of coastal towns due to increased land values and rates.
- Workers cannot afford to live in coastal towns.
- Need a greater mix of housing in townships and throughout urban areas generally.
- Need to look at new ways of increasing the provision of affordable housing and public housing, particularly in newly developing residential areas. Perhaps need to consider contributions from private developers.
- Issues exist with isolation of public housing tenants. Many public housing tenants are disadvantaged in that they have poor access to education, employment, public transport and a range of services and facilities that are more accessible to the wider community.
- That there is a need for a consistent approach to the provision of affordable housing across all Shires in the Region.
- There is an identified and growing need for retirement accommodation throughout the Region.

The *G21 Plan – Understanding the Region and Challenges for the Future* report focuses upon providing an understanding of the Region and to identify challenges that will be faced in preparing an overall Plan for the Region. There are a number of issues identified that will have implications for this project. Primarily though, this Report provides background and research information, including recent population and housing demographics and extrapolations, an in depth discussion about the residential development potential in the G21 Region, and looking at opportunities and constraints for possible urban expansion.

In addition, a *Housing and Community Services Forum* was held in September 2005 to enable stakeholder groups and individuals to provide input into the G21 Plan. Key issues and opportunities most frequently related to affordability and ensuring the provision of infrastructure and services. Issues and challenges that were most relevant for the Housing Policy Project were in relation to housing affordability and access to affordable services, ensuring infrastructure and service provision (including transport) keeps pace with rapid growth, and limited public housing funding due to lower demand (relative to Melbourne). Identified opportunities included: encouraging social planning principles through developer incentives, using social impact statements to direct social and physical infrastructure in new developments, G21 to advocate for key affordable housing principles and policies and changes to planning

legislation, and investigating affordable housing models (e.g. through housing associations).

2.4

Local

A number of local policies and strategies that are relevant to the Housing Policy Project are contained within the Surf Coast Planning Scheme, while others are yet to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme. Others also sit outside the planning system but have implications for the project. An overview of these local policies and strategies is provided below.

Local Planning Policy Framework

Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)

The MSS contains strategies for each of the townships within the Shire, either individually or together with adjoining or nearby townships. These are summarised below.

The key directions outlined for each township that have implications for the Housing Policy Project are:

21.10 Torquay – Jan Juc Strategy

- Maintaining a physical and visual break between Torquay and Geelong.
- Accommodating population growth and avoiding sprawl into sensitive or agricultural land.
- Encouraging diverse housing types.
- Protecting identified rural areas.
- Enabling urban expansion in designated areas of growth.
- Promoting urban consolidation and medium density development in designated areas.
- Protecting the coastal township character.
- Maintaining the low rise character.
- Protecting remnant vegetation and landscape quality around the townships.
- Encouraging complementary apartments and tourist accommodation in the Torquay Town Centre, which will be promoted as the commercial focus and civic hub of Torquay-Jan Juc.

21.11 Lorne Strategy

- Protecting the township character and its environmental and scenic values, preserving the amenity of residents, enhancing for tourism.
- Containing residential development within existing urban areas zoned for residential.
- Encouraging a range of dwelling types.
- Investigating opportunities for bush block and tourist residential development in the hinterland.
- Allowing infill development where it retains vegetation, preserves character, protects amenity, protects views from Great Ocean Road and allows for sharing of views, and applies the Surf Coast Style principles.
- Providing for tourism and accommodation activities at the periphery of core retail, with intensive high quality accommodation within defined precincts in close proximity to the central activity core and foreshore. A mixed use precinct and tourist accommodation precinct are identified.
- Providing for a diversity of activities at the periphery of the core retail area and within the defined mixed use and tourist accommodation precincts.
- Reviewing camping and caravan facilities.
- Ensuring community infrastructure meets the needs of residents and visitors.

21.12 Anglesea Strategy

- Recognising the limited opportunities for new residential development due to environmental constraints, with no further residential development outside town boundaries.
- Protecting the environmental values both within and outside the town.
- Preserving and enhancing the landscape and built form character, including the low density form with buildings generally contained within the tree canopy with a sense of openness between the dwellings.
- Enabling some higher density development.
- Avoiding overdevelopment in Point Roadknight.
- Increasing the diversity of housing types.
- Investigating potential heritage significance and the application of various overlays.
- Reinforcing tourism retailing and accommodation roles of Diggers Parade and 'Four Kings' precinct, including potential for apartments and resort type accommodation in these areas.
- Protecting the significant vegetation surrounding the township, including through strengthened controls.

21.13 Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Strategy

This Strategy covers the four settlements of Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek and Eastern View.

- Ensuring that future development of the area is strictly controlled due to environmental sensitivity, high fire risk and to maintain scenic landscape vistas.
- Maintaining existing town boundaries, to protect the environmental values of the adjoining areas.
- Ensuring that low density development prevails in Fairhaven, Moggs Creek and Eastern View.
- Exploring potential for higher densities in some parts of Aireys Inlet, including infill and medium density development adjacent to commercial areas and some other areas of low environmental significance or low slope.
- Retaining the small-scale coastal bushland village atmosphere of the four communities.
- Providing for a diversity of housing to meet various household needs (including permanent and non-permanent residents).
- Ensuring that development is compatible with the surrounding environment and is not visually intrusive.
- Maintaining the low density character, including by ensuring that medium density housing is dispersed throughout town.
- Supporting the development of large vacant lots for appropriately designed tourist accommodation.
- Maintaining scenic landscape vistas along Great Ocean Road.
- Protecting the indigenous vegetation and environmental values of areas adjoining the settlements.
- Exploring extensions to reticulated water supply into areas suitable for medium density housing, and to Moggs Creek.

21.14 Winchelsea Strategy

- Encouraging future growth.
- Building on town's advantage to accommodate further growth without detracting from the character of the town or the potential for rural production.
- Encouraging infill development.
- Encouraging expansion of the fully serviced urban area into the south-eastern corridor.
- Maintaining the rural character of the township.
- Making efficient use of land.

- Providing a diversity of housing types.
- Protecting vistas and ridgelines.
- Ensuring rural residential development does not impede conventional housing growth in south-eastern corridor.
- Ensuring that new development is low rise and respectful of the strong rural and historic character.
- Exploring the capacity of the town to capture passing tourist trade and to provide increased employment opportunities.

21.15 Moriac Strategy

- Maintaining the green break between Moriac and Waurn Ponds.
- Directing growth into the designated residential area south of the rail line and west of Hendy Main Road.
- Preventing development north of the rail line due to drainage and infrastructure constraints and to avoid creating a physical barrier between parts of the township.
- Recognising the limits to growth due to lack of reticulated sewerage.
- Exploring rural residential development opportunities to the north-west of the town.
- Maintaining a compact urban area
- Protecting Thompsons Creek and providing buffers between the creek/service business areas and residential areas.

21.16 Bellbrae Strategy

- Ensuring the low density character of the settlement is maintained, including minimum lot sizes of 0.4 hectares.
- Recognising constraint to growth posed by lack of reticulated water and sewerage.
- Protecting the rural and bush setting, undulating topography and vistas.
- Providing community facilities to meet the needs of the town and its rural hinterland.

21.17 Deans Marsh Strategy

- Recognising the constraint to growth of the township posed by the lack of reticulated water and sewerage.
- Enabling some growth in permanent and non-permanent residents both within the town and in its hinterland.
- Exploring rural living opportunities within the hinterland of the town
- Ensuring lot sizes are large enough to retain waste water on site.
- Preserving the scenic qualities of the hinterland.
- Making efficient use of land.
- Supporting growth and development of a sustainable community.
- Exploring opportunities to take advantage of passing tourist trade.

21.09 Rural Residential Strategy.

In addition to strategies for each township, the MSS provides direction for rural residential land use and development through Clause 21.09 *Rural Residential Strategy*. This strategy notes the constraints to rural residential development, including:

- Protection of agriculturally valuable land
- Protection of land with environmental values
- Protection of land of high landscape and heritage value
- Protection of areas having future urban growth potential
- Physically unsuitable or potentially hazardous land (due to fire hazard, flood risk, soil contamination or steep slopes)
- Land use compatibility (e.g. adjoining conservation areas, industrial or agricultural land uses).

The Strategy divides rural living into two categories:

- Rural residential: Lots that are intended solely for residential purposes – lot sizes between 0.4 and 2 hectares, with most being below 1 hectare (Low Density Residential Zone).
- Rural living: Lots which would allow animal keeping or some form of hobby farming – lot sizes generally around 8 hectares (but not less than 4 hectares).

Lots of between 2 and 4 hectares are considered unsustainable and generally will not be supported.

The Strategy notes that most of the Shire's land is unsuitable for new rural residential or rural living due to the constraints discussed above, however, opportunities surrounding Torquay/Jan Juc, Winchelsea, Moriac, Bellbrae and Deans Marsh are identified, with lot sizes specified for each area.

Local Planning Policies

Two Local Planning Policies have relevance to the Housing Policy Project: Surf Coast Styles and Colours, and Anglesea Residential Development Policy.

22.02 Surf Coast Styles and Colours

Seeks to address the risk of the suburbanisation of the Shire by promoting sensitive and sustainable development by encouraging and reinforcing a distinctive style of architecture, materials and colours which complement streetscapes, landscapes and neighbourhood character.

Objectives are provided to facilitate the development of coastal style buildings that complement these values, encourage the use of materials, colours and designs that contribute to the identity of townships and complement the preferred character. Promoting an understanding and participation in the community to developing these styles is also a stated objective.

The policy for buildings and works includes:

- Architecture that has a coastal character (rather than suburban).
- Buildings to project a lightweight image
- Bulky structures and blank walls are to be avoided by disaggregating building forms.
- Simple building forms
- Use of light, shaded and textured materials.
- Use of timber and natural materials.
- Recessive or subdued colours in significant areas.
- Vibrant colours in commercial or tourist areas.

The effectiveness of this policy in achieving its aims is currently under review.

22.09 Anglesea Residential Development Policy

Applies to subdivisions within the Residential 1 Zone and buildings and works under the Significant Landscape Overlay. Includes objectives relating to:

- Preserving and enhancing low density coastal character and bush setting
- Retaining and enhancing indigenous vegetation
- Maintenance of low density of development and sense of space
- Maintenance of low profile building heights to minimise visibility
- Avoidance of buildings that protrude over ridgelines or form a silhouette
- Protection of residential amenity and shared views
- Encouragement of development that retains non-suburban appearance
- Encouraging the use of open style fencing
- Protection of flora and fauna on adjoining public land.

Strategies are provided to implement these objectives, and include specified site areas for Precincts within the township (varying from 400-450m² to 800m²), maximum building heights of 7.5 metres, maximum site coverage of 30% (40%

including paving and recreational structures), restrictions of buildings near boundaries, maintenance of informal appearance of roads and streets, and minimising the use of solid fencing.

Zones and Overlays

The policies contained in the SPPF and the LPPF are implemented in part through the zones and overlays applied to land within the Shire through the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. The Zones define urban and rural living areas, including areas where environmental or agricultural values are high, and control the uses that can take place on the land. The Overlays add a further layer of controls in relation to landscape and ecological values to be protected, protection from flood and wildfire risk, and control the form of development in specific areas. In combination with other parts of the Planning Scheme discussed above, the Zones and Overlays ensure that development takes place in accordance with local and state planning policies and objectives.

Details of the Zones and Overlays, including maps of the municipality and the townships, are included in Appendix A.

Other Local Plans and Strategies

Other plans and strategies have been prepared by Council which influence housing within the Surf Coast Shire, but do not form a part of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. Many of these are strategic planning documents (including draft documents), some of which are reference documents to the Planning Scheme, while the directions of others are yet to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme. The following documents have been considered in relation to their implications for the Housing Policy Project:

- Winchelsea Structure Plan 2021
- Deans Marsh Structure Plan 2026: Background and Discussions Paper
- Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment (2004) (and Amendment C18)
- Torquay North Concept Outline Development Plan 2000 and Update 2003
- Draft Torquay Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study
- Draft Torquay Jan Juc Strategy Plan Review 2005
- Lorne Strategy Plan Review
- Economic Development Strategy, 2005
- Community Plan – ‘Your Vision’
- Environment Management Strategy
- Tourism Strategy
- Open Space Strategy
- Strategic Resource Plan
- Rural Strategic Review

An overview of these documents and their implications is provided below, and their directions have been integrated into the Housing Strategy and the analysis of issues and options below..

Winchelsea Structure Plan 2021

The Structure Plan aims to maximise the efficient use of available land, consistent with the rural character of the township, provide a range of lot sizes and housing types, encourage low-scale development that is respectful of the existing character, improve the landscape character of the Princes Highway viewshed, and maximise local economic opportunities. These aims will be achieved by implementing land use zoning that caters for future forecast population growth, providing land owners with certainty as to the future intended use of land, identifying priorities for infrastructure upgrades for Council and other infrastructure providers and identifying policy gaps and strategies that will need to be undertaken in future.

The recommendations for Residential Growth include the encouragement of a range of smaller homes and lot sizes, the provision of housing for older persons in the

township and the development of policies that will attract younger families to the township in order to foster community and economic prosperity. The Structure Plan recommends that a sufficient supply of land should be zoned R1Z to cater for 20 new dwellings per year and suggests that future residential growth should be directed to the south-east of Winchelsea.

Deans Marsh Structure Plan 2026: Background and Discussions Paper

This document provides background and history of Deans Marsh and discusses a number of issues that will be relevant to the preparation of a Structure Plan for the town. This includes a literature review, population forecasts, infrastructure provision and land supply, and provides background information for examining the Deans Marsh area as part of the Housing Policy Project.

Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment (2004)

The Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment focuses on the identification and assessment of neighbourhood character in the townships of Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek and Eastern View. The Study looks at the detailed aspects that contribute to the character of the townships including Vegetation, Building Form, Building Height, Building Setbacks, Boundary Fencing, Views and Informal Appearance of Roads. One of the key findings of the Study is that the low density of built form and high vegetation cover are the greatest contributing factors to the character of the townships within the study area. In line with these findings, the recommendations of the Study generally seek to limit site coverage of buildings and hard surfaces and protect and enhance existing vegetation cover (particularly indigenous vegetation).

Amendment C18

As part of the Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment, a review of the development controls in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme was also undertaken, and recommendations were provided to assist in the implementation of the findings of the Study. Amendment C18 to the Surf Coast Planning Scheme seeks to implement the findings of the Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment.

The Panel recommended that the Shire should proceed with the amendment, subject to some minor changes, and the recommendations were generally agreed to by Council. The Panel made specific comments in relation to introducing neighbourhood character controls which may limit housing capacity in the absence of a Housing Policy that illustrates how housing targets can be met. However, it also notes that housing growth is to be directed to Torquay, and that the Housing Policy or Strategy is likely to result in little if any change to the proposed controls. It noted the inevitability of increasing house prices resulting from policies to limit development in the townships.

Torquay North Concept Outline Development Plan, 2000, and Update 2003, Tract Consultants

The first Torquay North Outline Development Plan was prepared in 1997 and has now been updated by the 2003 Plan. The Plan outlines a preferred form of subdivision if it is to occur within the nominated area, setting out principles in relation to road/pedestrian/cycle access, physical services, housing diversity, open space provision, community services and preferred neighbourhood character.

Draft Torquay Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study

This character study examined the elements within the physical and natural environment of Torquay and Jan Juc that make up neighbourhood character. The study established that the natural environment and close proximity and easy access to natural features such as the beaches, coastline and creeks highly contribute to the character of the area.

There are a number of implications of the character study that will impact upon this project. Firstly, the area that is the subject of the study is the most populous in the

Shire, and has already been experiencing substantial development and population pressures in recent history. The ability to retain neighbourhood character under these circumstances can be difficult.

Secondly, a number of recommendations are made in relation to the review of the planning schemes for this area. Some of the major ones relate to: protection of vegetation of environmental significance; protection of mature vegetation; development of performance criteria for setbacks, heights, site coverage and plot ratios; use of Surf Coast Style principles; development of a policy for new residential subdivisions that balances coastal character and allowing higher density development around activity nodes and recreation areas.

Thirdly the study recognises that future residential development on the coast should be focussed in growth centres such as Torquay and Jan Juc to assist in preserving the environmental sensitivities of the smaller settlements. However, Torquay and Jan Juc have a unique coastal character itself that could be adversely affected by unconstrained development.

Draft Torquay Jan Juc Strategy Plan Review 2005

This new strategy updates the one that was undertaken in 1996, which subsequently formed the basis for Clause 21.10 (Torquay Jan Juc Strategy) in the MSS. A number of strategies have been incorporated into the strategy in relation to sustainability, including: increasing densities of development to reduce outward urban sprawl; designing new subdivisions to incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design and enhance social interaction; providing more effective public transport; encouraging more diversity in housing and minimising cost of provision; encouraging greater energy efficiency; and protecting sensitive areas.

The key implications for the Housing Policy Project are:

- The current town boundaries are to be retained, with potential for long term growth west of Duffields Road to be investigated when the Strategy is next reviewed.
- The rural landscape between Torquay and Mt Duneed is to be retained by avoiding development north of the ridge line.
- Residential growth to continue within the designated corridors at Torquay North (up to South Beach Road) and Torquay West (up to Duffields Road), and on remaining zoned land north-west of Jan Juc.
- Medium density development to continue occurring within central Torquay, particularly around the Town Centre, but better designed to respect the neighbourhood character of the area.
- Higher densities of residential development to establish in new broad acre subdivisions around community, retail and recreational facilities.
- The supply and demand for housing to be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that land is rezoned in different locations to maintain more than 10 years supply of residential lots, and that both choice of location and competition in the market is realised.
- Land in the Low density Residential Zone between Grossmans Road and Deep Creek to be re-subdivided at conventional densities subject to co-ordination of subdivision between properties.
- Land in Torquay North immediately east of the Surf Coast Highway to be developed at conventional densities rather than as rural residential subdivision.
- New low density residential development to occur along the northern edge of Torquay, within the town boundaries and south of the ridgeline.
- Higher densities of low density residential development to occur in parts of the existing Low Density Residential Zone that do not have landscape and environmental constraints.

Lorne Strategy Plan Review

The Lorne Strategy Plan Review aims to provide the Shire with a “strategic planning framework that will assist resource management in Lorne over the next 15 to 20 years”. The Review is based on the *Lorne Strategy Plan* undertaken by Wilson Sayer Core et al in 1991, which set out a number of objectives related to Population,

Housing and Residential Development, The Economy, The Environment, Community Facilities and Infrastructure. The document identifies vacant lots and lots suitable for further subdivision, and recommends that a clearly defined urban boundary should be established, that fragile environmental and scenic areas should be protected and that residential development should provide for a range of household types. Special Investigation Areas on the periphery of Lorne for potential residential growth are identified, and some areas were recommended for inclusion within the town boundary.

Updated information on neighbourhood character is also included, based on 4 identified neighbourhoods. Two heritage precincts were also identified through the Heritage Study at the northern and southern ends of the township, and a Vegetation Assessment was prepared. With consideration to these three studies, six neighbourhoods were identified within the township, with recommendations made including in relation to the retention of the dominance of vegetation, limiting of building heights and inappropriate building form and discouragement of front fences.

Economic Development Strategy, 2005

The Economic Development Strategy identifies the Surf Coast Shire as one of the fastest growing municipalities in Victoria, and as such, it states that a greater emphasis should be placed on the provision of timely and quality infrastructure. The key principles underpinning the Strategy of relevance the Housing Policy Project include:

- *That population mix and diversity is equally as important as population growth.*
- *That improved sustainability and environmental performance is increasingly valued and sought out by people.*
- *Good urban design and amenity and cultural and leisure opportunities are critical to people attraction and retention, and are the cornerstone of creative communities.*

The Strategy identifies a number of themes that will provide for the future prosperity and economic wellbeing of the Shire. These include: People; the Shire's capacity to attract and retain highly skilled people; a more culturally diverse and highly skilled entrepreneurial population; the Shire's development as one of Victoria's major growth regions; the amenity, design and functionality of the Shire's townships; and an acknowledgement of the interdependence of business, industry, cultural and service sectors.

Strategic Resource Plan

The Strategic Resource Plan is the third in a series of Plans that sets the Shire's financial framework over a five year period (2005-2010). The Plan allocates funds to different programs and estimates the revenue that will be gained from each program over the next five year period. The Plan provides a number of key examples of where capital works/special project funding will be utilised to meet the requirements of the Council Plan 05/06, including:

- Development of revised Environment/Conservation Plan
- Review of the Municipal Strategic Statement
- Undertaking of a Housing strategy
- Participation in the Geelong Regional Strategy through the G21 Alliance

A number of these and other projects are relevant to the Housing Policy Project as they relate to capital works funding and projects that will influence future residential growth. The Strategic Resource Plan also estimates that the total population of the Surf Coast Shire will reach just over 35,000 people by 2021. This population growth forecast has implications for rate rises as well as increased maintenance for community infrastructure.

Community Plan – 'Your Visions'

The Community Plan was launched in 2004 and will provide the Surf Coast Shire an over-arching and long-term strategic direction. It has been developed to provide the Shire and the community with a shared vision for the future, and an ongoing

comprehensive strategy to promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area, involving extensive community engagement.

The Community Plan 'Your Visions' acknowledges that the Surf Coast Shire encompasses a diversity of rapidly changing communities from small coastal hamlets and sparsely populated rural communities to larger coastal towns. Additionally, the coast has undergone, and is continuing to undergo, a period of unprecedented change in terms of the nature of its population and housing and subsequent pressures on the natural environment. These issues and the responses specified below will have a measurable impact upon the Housing Policy Project.

Feedback from community consultation indicated that what was wanted in the future in relation to housing and development was:

- Limiting development (coastal areas)
- Retaining local character
- Environmental consideration
- Integrated Planning
- Stricter enforcement of guidelines
- Allowing more development (rural areas)

There is a discernable difference between the attitudes towards development between the coastal towns and the rural, inland towns. All the coastal towns want development to be 'limited', whilst the inland rural towns are interested in developing their towns as long as it respects the local character and the environment.

Health and Wellbeing Plan, 2006

The Surf Coast Shire Health and Wellbeing Plan was adopted by Council in July 2006. A key aim of the Plan is to raise awareness of public health issues and to embed public health planning across the Shire, with implementation of strategies occurring across Council Departments and Units. It is therefore important that the relevant objectives and strategies be incorporated into the Housing Strategy, to ensure an integrated consideration of planning for both public health and housing. The Plan has different tasks set for each of the three years of its operation, with the first year focussed on organisational learning and building capacity, the second year also beginning to plan, implement and create healthy public policy, and the third year focussing in addition on engaging and building capacity (stakeholders and the community as well as Council).

Year 1 will include workshop discussions which will develop whole-of-Council responses to issues that affect housing, including:

- Understanding the sorts of environments that Surf Coast residents live in.
- Considering health issues and impacts of those environments (including bushfire, social isolation, absence of pedestrian crossings).
- Determining how to respond to issues of social isolation, ageing and disability.
- Planning for and providing environments which support healthy behaviour choices, e.g given of healthy urban environment, encouraging walking, good access to recreational spaces, safe movement for older and younger people, provision of footpaths, lighting and public transport.

A relevant objective for Year 2 is *'To ensure that health and wellbeing objectives are integrated into new policies, programs and strategies being developed by the Shire.'*

While we are not yet in Year 2 of the Plan, it is prudent to commence the integration of these objectives into the Housing Policy Project.

In year 3 of the Plan, Strategy 1 – Learning Organisation will include community engagement to seek 'civic intelligence' on the key health priorities and issues affecting towns and communities; and the initiation of dialogue with developers to mitigate health impacts and maximise opportunities to create healthier built environments.

Environment Management Strategy

The draft Environmental Management Strategy aims to build on the achievements under the Surf Coast Shire Environment Conservation Plan. The guiding principle of the new strategy is to protect, manage and enhance the local environment while making a contribution to regional, state and national environmental objectives.

Under the heading of 'Resource Efficiency', Issue 16 speaks of sustainable development for urban design and planning. The responses outlined in the strategy that would have implications for the housing project are:

- *Promote Urban Forms which minimise transport requirements and improve the efficiency of land supply and infrastructure provision*
- *Encourage future development of urban transport systems (pedestrian and vehicular) which provide opportunities to limit the use of fossil fuels*
- *Promote subdivision and road design patterns that provide the greatest potential to utilise energy efficient dwelling design, with provision for and use of public transport modes.*
- *Improve the amenity of urban areas through provision of public open space and landscaping sensitive to local character.*

Tourism Strategy

The draft Tourism Strategic Plan for the Surf Coast Region is the result of a recently completed study into the current state of tourism in the municipality, and has a number of recommendations for the future of one of the most important industries in the shire. The vision for tourism in the Surf Coast Region is "To provide the leading sustainable tourism experience in Australia"

There were an estimated 930 jobs generated by tourism in the Surf Coast Shire in 2002, accounting for 10.6% of total employment, and it is estimated that international and domestic visitors to the Surf Coast shire spent \$10.1 million in 2004.

Key implications for the Housing Policy Project relate to tourism accommodation and holiday home use in the Shire, including:

- Nearly 2,550 rental holiday homes with an estimated 6,000 rooms are a significant feature of the Shire's holiday accommodation supply.
- Although the numbers are not specified in the Strategy, there are many private holiday homes within the Shire that are not 'principle places of residence'. Many of these residences are vacant for the majority of the year.
- The study highlights that many visitors to the Region, have a strong apathy to travel beyond what they are already familiar with, and there is little knowledge of destinations beyond this point. Therefore if some of these visitors become 'sea changers', they would be inclined to move to towns and areas that they have visited and become familiar with. This could have implications for housing demand in the towns and areas closest to Geelong and Melbourne where the large majority of domestic visitors visit.
- Balancing the needs of residents and tourists is a vital objective of the study. There is a large section of tourists that visit the area and make use of the 'lower scale' accommodation such as small motels and caravan parks. These facilities make up the great majority of available 'rooms'. There is a need to recognise the importance of these facilities within the context of the Shire's tourist industry.

Open Space Strategy

The Open Space Strategy was undertaken by the Surf Coast Shire, as a way to review current open space (foreshores, parks, nature reserves, recreation reserves, paths and other outdoor areas) and to identify ways of improving management and increasing community use and appreciation of those areas.

A number of current issues were raised in the Strategy that have implications for this project. The first is that a number of recent housing estates, particularly in Torquay, have insufficient open space and poor linkages to community facilities and foreshores.

Secondly, building upon the topic of linkages, there are major deficiencies in the provision of footpaths, and walking and bicycle trails across the municipality.

In section 3 of the Strategy (Design and Development Guidelines), the strategy recognises the role of the Planning Scheme in providing a tool to facilitate the adequate provision of open space in new subdivisions and redevelopments. The Open Space Strategy will contribute to the setting of the vision in the planning scheme.

Rural Strategic Review

The Rural Strategic Review is underway and is examining how rural land is currently used, identifying emerging trends and providing guidelines for the future use of rural land. The overall aims are to protect rural land for agricultural purposes and preserve the scenic value of rural areas throughout the municipality. The preparation of the Housing Strategy involved collaboration with the Rural Strategic Review project team, to share ideas and insights and to ensure that each project informs the other.

2.5

Overview of Policy Context and Research findings

As outlined above, housing in the Surf Coast Shire is influenced by policy at the Commonwealth and state level, and by Council's own policies in relation to other aspects of the Shire. Commonwealth policy has a significant influence on housing supply and demand, through the setting of monetary and fiscal policy, taxation policy, pension benefits, immigration levels and other broader economic policy, which in turn influences interest rates, income levels and employment. The state government and the Surf Coast Shire must operate within this broader economic and legislative context. The Commonwealth government also provides housing assistance to the States, provision of rent assistance, and other programs such as the first homebuyers grant. The recently agreed Framework for National Action on Affordable Housing suggests that in the future there will be a significantly different policy framework and system for provision of affordable housing.

In comparison to the Commonwealth government, the State government plays a much larger and more active role in planning for housing through the Victoria Planning Provisions, including the policy set out in the State Planning Policy Framework and the suite of zones, overlays and other planning controls that are made available to Councils to implement local policy. Other state and regional policies that sit outside the Planning Scheme or are only partially implemented through the Planning Scheme also have a large influence, particularly the Coastal Spaces initiative, the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy, and Moving Forward (the Provincial Statement).

The state government also plays a role in the provision of social housing, in part utilising the funds provided by the Commonwealth government. However, the State government is moving away from direct construction and management of this housing, and is increasingly relying on registered Housing Associations to construct and manage these properties, in partnership with the Office of Housing. The Housing Strategy has been developed within this context, and will need to be implemented in large part through the tools available through the Victoria Planning Provisions (primarily the Municipal Strategic Statement) as well as through partnerships with State government and Housing Associations.

G21 is a regional planning body involving representation of local government, and the forthcoming G21 Regional Plan will provide an important regional strategic context for housing. The background analysis for the G21 Regional Plan has already provided a platform for the development of the Housing Strategy, particularly the outcomes of the Housing and Community Services Forum. A regional Affordable Housing Strategy will also be an action of the G21 Plan, which will assist Council in the development of a local Affordable Housing Strategy.

The local strategic context for the development of the Housing Policy Project includes the plans, strategies and policies that sit both within and outside of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. The Municipal Strategic Statement (Clause 21 of the Planning Scheme) and the Local Planning Policies (at Clause 22 of the Planning Scheme) have greater statutory weight in planning decision-making than those documents that sit

outside of the Planning Scheme such as the Open Space Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, local Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Character Studies. It is through integrating the key parts of these strategies into the Planning Scheme (some of which are already included or have Planning Scheme Amendments in train) that these strategies are given greater strength. The development of a Housing Strategy must take into account the existing strategic directions that these set, as well as building upon these documents to fill gaps in the strategic framework. The Housing Strategy then sits alongside these documents, and assists in creating a strategic basis for the Local Planning Policy Framework and the application of zones, overlays and other statutory tools for implementation.

The content of these policy influences are discussed in more detail below in relation to the 5 identified key issues. In response to these issues are numerous options for how these issues can be addressed through strategy. Many of these options have been further developed and carried forward into the Housing Strategy in Volume 1, while others have been discarded during the development of the Housing Strategy.

3. Housing Issues and Options for the Surf Coast Shire

This section examines the housing issues facing the Shire under the five headings identified during consultation: sustainability; affordability; diversity; infrastructure, services & transport; and character. The issues are examined with reference to all the material presented in the earlier sections of this report, in addition to the community concerns expressed during consultation and the feedback received from Government departments and agencies and local infrastructure providers. Options for addressing these issues are identified, and have been presented for discussion by Council and preferred options selected and carried forward into the Housing Strategy contained in Volume 1. Some aspects will also provide input and directions for the Affordable Housing Strategy to be developed by Council as a separate project.

A. Sustainability

Sustainability was identified as a key issue in community consultation forums for both this project and for the G21 Plan. In relation to housing in the Surf Coast Shire, sustainability includes protecting the ecological and agricultural values of the municipality including through setting limits to urban growth, and increasing the sustainability of the urban areas including through ecologically sustainable design. These issues range from local, through to regional as well as global impacts of human activities.

Environmental constraints to growth

Research has been undertaken for GORRS on landscape values, and by the Surf Coast Shire in relation to ecological and vegetation significance, each of which set limits to development. This research is generally reflected in the Planning Scheme controls in the form of overlays and policy. Discussions with the Department of Primary Industries has revealed that little detailed research has been conducted within the Shire by the State government on agricultural values, soil and geological types that would provide guidance on environmental constraints to growth of urban or rural living areas, although the Rural Strategy and the current review will provide this detail.

Across the Shire, environmental constraints to growth vary, with the most significant constraints existing in the coastal settlements of Anglesea through to Lorne due to the presence of significant vegetation and landscapes (both within and around the townships), steep slopes, the Great Otway National Park, and sensitive coastal or estuarine environments. Environmental constraints to growth in the hinterland towns are more frequently related to the protection of agricultural values and rural landscape character of the surrounding land. The risk of wildfire is also a potential constraint in some areas.

Significant environments and agricultural values in the Surf Coast Shire

Increased development along the coastline in recent years has placed pressure on sensitive environments and landscapes. Much of this development has been in townships, on land zoned for residential purposes, while other development has taken place between townships. Some of this development is highly visible due to steeply sloping land or the need to clear vegetation for construction or wildfire management, which impacts on the significant landscapes in the area. The state section of the planning scheme requires that development responds to the identified landscape character of the area, and that the impact of development on catchments, coastal areas and the environmental and cultural values of the area is managed. The Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study (GORRLAS) identified ribbon development along the Great Ocean Road and the visual dominance of development on hill faces, particularly on township edges, as key issues for the Shire.

Much of the land surrounding the coastal towns is publicly owned and zoned Public Conservation and Resource, which provides a clear limit to encroaching development and protects the environmental values of these areas as appropriate to their use. The identified environmental values of areas of private land around the coastal townships

are generally recognised through the application of the Rural Conservation Zone, which provides protection to the natural environment, notes the conservation values of the different areas where the zone applies, and limits subdivision to a minimum of 60 hectares. This provides a strong limit to growth around the coastal townships.

No particular environmental values are identified around the townships of Deans Marsh, Winchelsea, Moriac and Bellbrae. However, the Farming Zone requires consideration of the agricultural, natural resource and biodiversity values of the area. (Refer to Appendix A for further details of zones and overlays.)

In addition, the environmental values of many areas of the Shire are protected through the application of planning controls including the Significant Landscape, Environmental Significance and Vegetation Protection Overlays. The Significant Landscape Overlay applies to land in and around the coastal townships of Anglesea, Aireys Inlet to Eastern View and Lorne, as well as smaller areas adjoining the coast at Bells Beach, Torquay and Jan Juc. Although the three Overlay Schedules apply in different areas of the Shire, the key implication for housing is relatively common throughout, with the objective to maintain a low density scale of development. The schedules also seek to protect the landscape or residential character, or protect and enhance vegetation cover. The controls applying to Aireys Inlet to Eastern View are proposed to be strengthened further with a new amendment awaiting approval by the Minister. The combined application of all these overlay requirements provides a high level of protection and control over the form of development in affected areas, and many apply in areas where pressure for development is high.

Other areas with significant vegetation to the rear of Aireys Inlet/Fairhaven and at Bells Beach, non-residential land surrounding Anglesea (Anglesea Heathland), as well as small areas of Torquay and Jan Juc, are recognised in the planning scheme through application of the Vegetation Protection Overlay. The VPO provisions constrain development to the extent that identified types of existing vegetation should be retained, and this may reduce the development opportunity on the land.

The Environmental Significance Overlay applies to wetland and associated dryland habitats (ESO1), water supply catchments (including streams and lakes) (ESO2), and to areas of Coastal Moonah Woodland dispersed throughout urban areas of Anglesea and Aireys Inlet (ESO3). These overlays require permits for the removal of vegetation and/or consideration of the environmental qualities of the area, and thereby represent a constraint.

Development to the north and north-west of Anglesea is also constrained by the Alcoa brown coal mine, which covers a large area of land adjoining the town boundary, and is subject to a Vegetation Protection Overlay.

Further research into the agricultural values of the region is being undertaken as a part of the Rural Strategy Review, to determine any limitations to future development created by the need to retain particular areas of land for agricultural production or soil management reasons.

Significant landscapes and green breaks

The GORRLAS states that no further areas of significant landscape character warrant planning scheme protection. The principle of maintaining green breaks between settlements is however espoused in Council and state policy. There is policy to maintain the break between Geelong and Torquay, and between Moriac and Waurm Ponds, and to maintain urban boundaries around townships. Maintaining breaks between coastal townships is a key tenet of the GORRS and Coastal Spaces strategies. These strategies both stress the importance of establishing town boundaries for each settlement in coastal areas, to maintain compact townships, prevent ribbon development along the coast and to minimise impacts on sensitive environments and viewsheds.

The maintenance of these breaks is therefore a required component of the Surf Coast strategy.

Flooding, rainfall and climate change

While discussions with Barwon Water did not reveal significant limits to growth posed by water supply issues in the future, evidence suggests that there will be increased variability of rainfall within the region, which may also have implications for flooding impacts in water catchments and floodplains. The Barwon region has low to moderate rainfall variability in summer and low rainfall variability in winter, compared with other parts of the State. Between March 2001 and February 2004, the south-western part of the Shire received above average rainfall levels (the only area in Victoria to receive above average rainfall), while the northern and eastern parts of the Shire had average rainfall levels (Regional Matters, DSE, 2005). Over the period between 1990 and 2030, the area is projected to experience a change in rainfall levels of between a 9% decrease and a 3% increase.

Despite this relatively higher rainfall and lower variability, the Barwon region has obtained the highest number of rebates granted for water saving features (except for rainwater tanks) for regional Victoria, possibly indicating a stronger awareness of environmental issues when compared to other areas (Regional Matters, DSE, 2005). Concern was also expressed during the stakeholder consultation forum about the ability to provide water for an expanding population, and this could be addressed by investigating more stringent water conservation measures through the planning scheme and other mechanisms.

In addition to increased rainfall variability, climate change is also likely to result in increased storm surges and rising sea levels, placing communities within coastal hazard zones and low lying areas at potential risk. The Surf Coast Planning Scheme includes the Floodway Overlay and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay, which restricts development or places greater requirements on development in low lying areas in floodplains and near waterways.

Wildfire risk

Wildfire risk was identified during stakeholder consultation as a possible constraint to expansion of urban areas in the Shire. Wildfire is identified as a risk or limitation to development in various local area strategies contained within the MSS, particularly in coastal townships. In addition to strategies in the MSS aimed at ensuring that development has regard to the high fire risk in certain parts of the Shire, the Wildfire Management Overlay (WMO) applies to large areas of the Shire where the risk of wildfire is high and poses a risk to life and property. The WMO was established in collaboration with the Country Fire Authority, and applies to areas designated as bushfire prone by the Surf Coast Shire and endorsed by the Municipal Fire Prevention Committee.

It was noted during consultation that while wildfire risk can be managed, constructing dwellings to higher fire safety specifications to meet WMO requirements adds substantially to building cost, impacting on affordability. A further concern associated with construction in areas of high wildfire risk, is that these areas are often in areas with significant vegetation or high landscape values. The requirements of the Wildfire Management Overlay to undertake vegetation management to mitigate wildfire risk means that expansion of urban areas into such environments is often undesirable from an environmental perspective as well as due to wildfire risk. Clause 22.03 Fire Safety of the local section of the Planning Scheme provides additional requirements through the Local Planning Policy Framework for construction in areas subject to the WMO, within the Rural Conservation Zone, and in areas without reticulated water, including the objective of minimising the impact of fire prevention measures on vegetation with a high environmental value.

A further issue outlined in Regional Matters (DSE, 2005, p.35), is that the popularity of coastal and bushland areas for retirement (sea change/tree change) presents challenges, with an ageing and less mobile population with less familiarity with rural conditions and fire risk moving into areas of high fire risk.

In general it is considered that wildfire risk can be a constraint to development, but that danger to individual buildings can be minimised, sometimes at the expense of dwelling affordability and sometimes at the expense of environmental or landscape values.

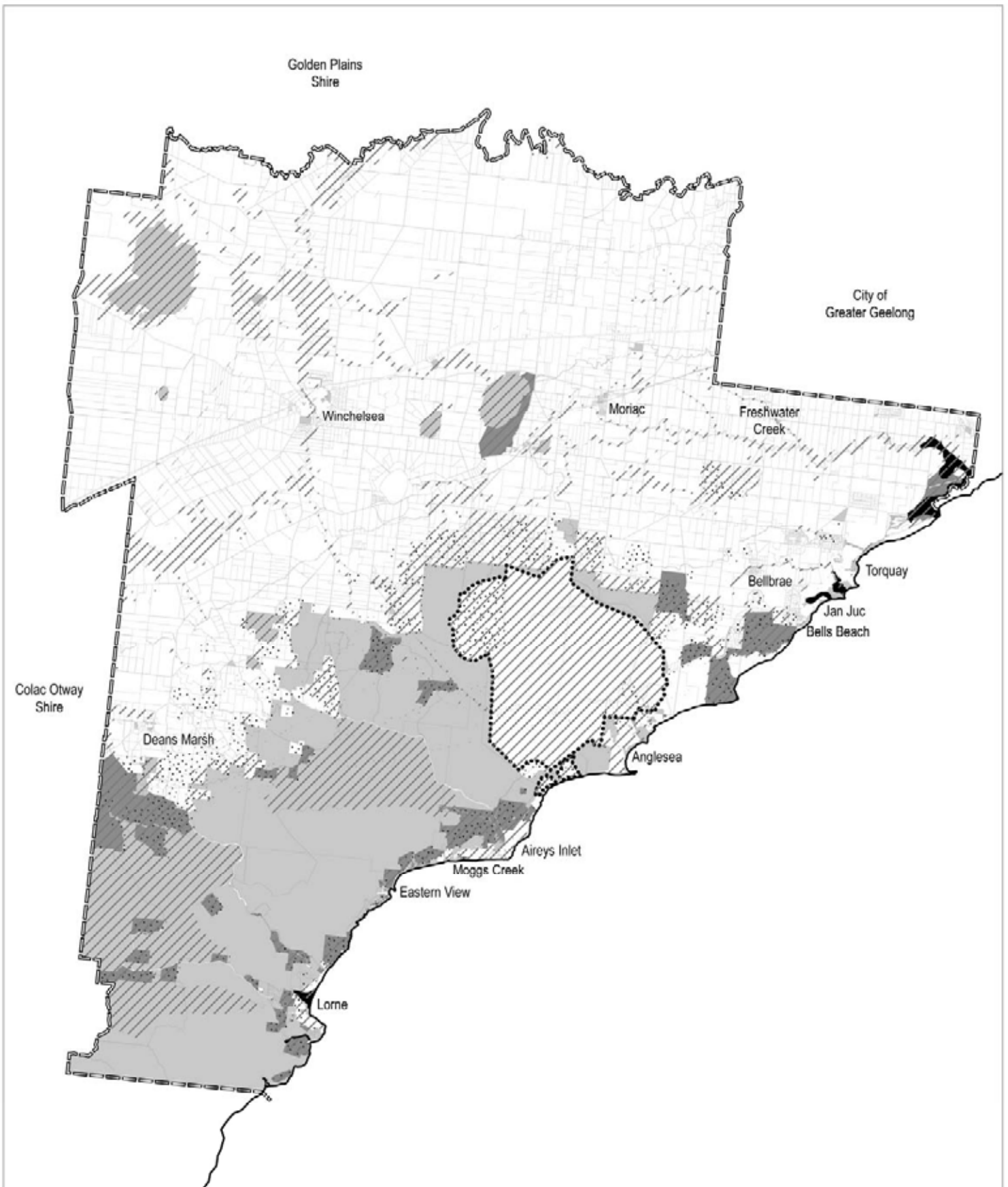
Acid Sulfate Soils

A report produced by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), *Acid Sulfate Soil Hazard Maps: Guidelines for Victoria* (Rampant et al. 2003) provides a tool for the management and identification of Acid Sulfate Soils, which pose a constraint to growth in many coastal areas. Acid Sulfate Soils or Potential Acid Sulfate Soils are not a concern in areas where the soils remain undisturbed, however when they are disturbed through drainage or construction (including infrastructure such as bridges or underground pipes), oxidation of the soil occurs and sulfuric acid is produced, leading to the degradation of lowland environments and estuarine water quality.

In the Victorian context there are large concentrations of these soil types around Port Phillip Bay, the Bellarine Peninsula, Inverloch, Lakes Entrance and west of Warrnambool. There is a comparatively small area that is affected by Acid Sulfate Soils or Potential Acid Sulfate Soils in the Surf Coast Shire of 482 hectares (426 hectares of private land and 56 hectares of public land), generally in largely estuarine environments and floodplains in Torquay, Jan Juc and Lorne. These affected areas are generally within 2.5 metres above current sea levels, as shown on the Environmental Constraints to Development Map on the following page.

According to the mapping prepared by DPI, in Lorne, the Acid Sulfate Soils (or Potential Acid Sulfate Soils) are generally in areas zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone, near the mouth of the Erskine River, including the area to the east of the Great Ocean Road. Some smaller areas of Public Conservation and Resource Zone, Residential 1 Zone, Business 1 Zone, Public Use Zone may also be affected (more detailed survey work would establish this). The PPRZ enables easier management of the soils by Council, and the zone places heavy restrictions on the types of development that can occur on the land. Likewise, for Torquay and Jan Juc, these soil types appear to be predominantly confined to the Public Park and Recreation Zone and smaller areas of the Public Conservation and Resource Zone areas along the Torquay foreshore, Spring Creek and Jan Juc Creek, although some Residential 1 Zone land may be affected where it adjoins this area.




Awareness of these soil types is an important first step to ensuring that further investigative work takes place prior to the development of these areas, to determine the likely impact (both environmental and economic) and the potential to manage this impact. However, the extent to which it will prevent development or intensification of development is unknown until that work has been completed.






Environmental Constraints to Development
Surf Coast Shire Housing Policy Project

date | May / 06 revision | 01 client | Surf Coast Shire

 **planisphere**

- Legend**
-  PCRZ and PPRZ zones
 -  Rural Conservation Zone
 -  VPO SLO ESO FO and LSIO overlays

-  Special Use Zone (predominantly mining, development precincts and Anglesea Heath)
-  Estimated extent of probable acid sulfate soils
-  Wildfire Management Overlay

Sustainable Development

A common definition of sustainable development is a level of “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (The Brundtland Commission, *Our Common Future*). For the Surf Coast Shire, this could be interpreted to mean ensuring that development occurs in a way that results in minimal adverse impact on local, regional and global environments, to ensure that future generations inherit an environment offering a comparable quality of life to that enjoyed by present generations. This has implications for the way urban areas should develop and be serviced, the types of buildings that should be constructed, and the types of offsite impacts that result from the construction and operation of urban areas.

State policy as reflected in the state section of planning schemes refers to sustainable development in terms of the efficient use of resources, the need to consolidate urban areas and encourage energy efficient development and housing design. Clause 15.12 Energy Efficiency includes the objective *“To encourage land use and development that is consistent with the efficient use of energy and the minimisation of greenhouse gas emissions.”*

For the purposes of the Housing Policy Project, discussion of sustainable development will be limited to urban form and residential buildings.

Land supply

Forecasts completed for this project by .id consulting have determined that the existing and proposed residentially zoned land represents a stock of almost 30 years of supply from 2006. The work anticipates a need for an average of approximately 400 new dwellings per year, and also assumes that some of the household growth will be accommodated within existing holiday houses in coastal areas. This average reflects the higher rate of dwelling construction at present (over 500 per year currently), declining to a lower rate of approximately 300 dwellings in later years. The .id forecast notes that the DSE forecast in rate of household growth is slightly lower than the .id forecast. This is due to the DSE assuming lower rates of development and a more rapid decline in household size. Should the DSE forecast be taken, it would seem that the supply of land in the Shire is even greater than the .id forecast.

In general, the combination of the Council’s existing policies, controls and public land ownership provide town limits to growth. It appears from this work that no further review of these policies and controls is required for reasons of accommodating the forecast growth in the Shire. Therefore it is possible for the Council to make these town limits more explicit in the planning scheme and thus avoid further speculation about changes to policy. It is more important for the Council to focus on the management of development within these boundaries.

Sustainable urban form

Promoting opportunities to increase the sustainability of urban form and development was seen by the community and Council officers as a key issue to be addressed by the Housing Policy Project during workshops. There is a growing recognition within the community of the finite nature of resources and the impact of development on the local, regional and global environments. The need to consolidate urban forms is often accepted in principle however is less readily accepted when applied to the immediate locality.

The Great Ocean Road Region Strategy and Council policies both identify the sustainability of urban development as important determinants of the location of growth areas in the Shire. Torquay and Winchelsea are identified as the two growth areas within the Shire, based on their access to reticulated sewerage, available land and potable water supply. Directing growth to these townships is also important to ensure that pressure for development in other parts of the Shire can be better managed. Both Torquay and Winchelsea also offer greater accessibility, with higher levels of public transport provision than other parts of the Shire. Rural residential subdivision is generally not supported as it can lead to inefficient use of infrastructure and resources, and for the same reason low density residential development should

not play a role in providing for housing needs in areas that do not rely on larger lot sizes for processing waste water and maintaining the rural character of some townships.

In addition, several Council strategies already recognise the need to consolidate townships to reduce sprawl and maximise efficient use of resources and infrastructure. Lorne has had a strategy of containment since the Lorne Strategy Review 1991 was adopted, due to the desire to protect sensitive surrounding vegetation and maintain the valued character of the township rather than sustainability, however the outcome is the same. Anglesea and Moriac have similar strategies which ensure a compact town.

Torquay and Jan Juc have seen major expansions in recent years with predominantly low density residential development. In general these forms of development are seen as less sustainable due to the increased infrastructure requirements. An area of Torquay has been identified for more compact forms of development, and this may be required in Jan Juc, Aireys Inlet and Winchelsea if sustainable urban forms are to be sought. In other smaller townships, the lack of reticulated sewerage systems limits opportunities for consolidation.

It is noted that somewhat paradoxically, the creation of smaller lots in subdivisions is also considered to potentially limit the ability to consolidate further in future when demand requires smaller lots. Small lots in Surf Coast frequently accommodate a large house with little space around, leaving no room within subdivisions for the addition of 'granny flats' or other forms of housing as the owners age. This indicates the importance of ensuring a range of lot sizes within any subdivision.

Sustainable subdivisions that create lots for optimal solar orientation are an excellent means of ensuring the sustainable forms of dwellings. However in general the lot yield from such subdivisions will be lower, and therefore land costs will be higher. The reduction in affordability of the lots is a community cost that must be taken into consideration. The management of construction sites to ensure runoff does not pollute waterways can be controlled by local law or planning policy. Waste generated during construction can sometimes be tackled to minimise the land fill generated, by separating recyclables at the construction site. This requires a local law or planning policy and might only be considered appropriate for larger scale developments due to the increased costs involved for the builder.

The recently revised Clause 56 *Residential Subdivision* within the Planning Scheme provides improved Objectives and Standards for new subdivisions, which partially address the issues discussed above. However, there is still scope for the Surf Coast Shire to introduce more stringent requirements and provide additional policy direction to achieve a higher level of urban sustainability than these standards provide for.

Sustainable buildings

Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) has long been a catch cry, and the state government has moved to require dwellings to have a minimum standard of environmental sustainability. The government has resisted recent moves by local government to establish varying standards of environmental sustainability in buildings through the planning scheme. Nevertheless there are other actions that the Council could take should it wish to promote ESD principles.

In general, larger dwellings are considered to be a less sustainable dwelling form, due to the amount of resources utilised to construct and operate the buildings, often to accommodate few people. In Surf Coast there has been a recent trend to build large houses (4+ bedrooms) resulting in a disproportionate number of these dwellings in the Shire. A policy to encourage smaller dwelling sizes would support ESD principles.

Water shortage is a problem generally shared by most Victorians and while no specific water shortage has been identified for Surf Coast, water sensitive urban design principles are generally considered to be appropriate in all regional areas. As noted in the discussion on flooding and rainfall above, take up of rebates for water saving features are already high indicating an awareness and willingness by the Surf Coast community to address this issue. A policy that encourages consideration of the inclusion of grey-water reuse systems, energy rated building materials and insulation may be considered.

The design of buildings to maximise energy efficiency is generally covered by state government standards, however the use of solar power could be further promoted by the Council, through education, planning policy or fiscal measures such as rate rebates.

Adaptability of housing to the changing needs of life cycle is another aspect of sustainable building design that the Council could pursue through the provision of advice, planning policy or demonstration. The state government is currently considering recommendations regarding the accessibility of housing that may have implications for the general adaptability of all housing in future.

It must be recognised by Council that the application of any additional standards for sustainability will probably increase the costs of construction. This can lead to reduced affordability, although long term affordability can be increased for the purchasers of this housing through lower operating costs. An alternative could be provision of free advice or referral to free advice to owners/builders to make changes to building designs that improve efficiency but do not increase costs.

Summary of Key Sustainability Issues in Surf Coast

- Any agricultural values that constrain future development need to be identified through the Rural Strategy Review.
- Significant environmental values constrain development along the coastal areas of the Shire.
- The potential for wildfire risk may limit some areas of development, increase cost of development and require education of new land owners about risks.
- Acid sulfate soils may constrain individual sites and areas in the identified localities.
- Sustainability of development and buildings is a concern of the local community.
- Land supply in existing and future residentially zoned land is adequate to meet the forecast needs of the Shire for approximately 30 years.
- Town boundaries are currently not definitively outlined in the planning scheme.
- Sustainable urban form may require the identification of more areas within townships to accommodate medium density forms of housing
- Sustainable subdivisions and sustainable buildings can be achieved, however the additional costs will usually mean that affordability, in terms of purchase cost, is reduced.

Options for the Municipal Housing Strategy

Agricultural values

The Rural Strategy Review will provide an update of the agricultural values of rural land to determine its appropriate use. This may assist in determining future land use options, including rural and urban uses, particularly surrounding hinterland townships.

Green breaks

Current strategies maintain green breaks between townships and the Council needs to reiterate these in all strategies to ensure these are maintained.

Environmental values

The environmental values of the Shire are well recognised in current strategies and controls. There is no indication that any of these are either inadequate or incomplete. However there is always opportunity to review and update this information as community values change and new impacts become apparent. The Council could undertake a regular review of its environmental policies to ensure that the controls are operating as intended and that no new threats have emerged.

Wildfire risk

Areas of wildfire risk should be avoided where possible in planning for future development due to the risks for residents, and also due to the higher cost of development in these areas. The Council may undertake educational programs to make new residents aware of risks and responsibilities in these areas.

Acid Sulfate Soils

Areas potentially affected by acid sulfate soils should undergo testing to determine the presence of these soil types prior to allowing development. Development or disturbance of affected areas should be avoided. Additional construction and potential remediation costs may be involved, and the potential for environmental damage resulting from disturbance needs to be managed. Council could acknowledge the presence of potential acid sulfate soils and the implications for development in the Planning Scheme to minimise risk of disturbance.

Sustainable urban development

The need for sustainable subdivision design in addition to the revised provisions of Clause 56 could be emphasised through planning policy or educational methods. Alternatively the Council could choose not to pursue this option due to the potential impact on affordability of land.

The Council can determine to pursue a sustainable land use policy that will require specifying the need for more sustainable urban forms (i.e. consolidation) in townships that have reticulated sewerage, in particular those that do not already have similar policies. Alternatively the Council may determine that other priorities outweigh this concern.

The Council could adopt policy or local law about management of construction waste, to ensure runoff does not impact on the environmental values of waterways, and to reduce land fill from construction sites.

As land supply is adequate, all town boundaries can be firmly and consistently delineated in the planning scheme (including setting limits to the direction of future growth indicated in some Clause 21 township maps). This would prevent speculation, although these boundaries will continue to require periodic review.

Sustainable buildings

The Council can prepare environmentally sustainable design guidelines for dwellings in Surf Coast, that deal with issues of orientation, minimising dwelling size, use of solar power, inclusion of grey-water reuse systems, dwelling adaptability, water sensitive urban design, energy efficient building materials and insulation. These could be applied through the planning system or be produced as educational/advisory materials only.

B. Affordability

The issue of declining housing affordability is not confined to the Surf Coast Shire. It is a problem which is being experienced in urban and regional parts of Victoria, as well as nationally, with efforts being made to provide a coordinated approach to addressing this via a National Affordable Housing Agreement which would involve Commonwealth, State and Local governments.

The affordability of housing may be of concern to Council as it is one aspect of the ability of the municipality to provide for the needs of its residents. Residents are concerned that dwellings are becoming unaffordable for young couples and that low cost and rental properties are not available for service sector workers.

One impact of the recent changes to the housing supply and demand in Surf Coast has been a reduction in overall affordability of housing. However there are parts of the Shire that still provide affordable housing, and there may be some strategies that the Council can choose to take to increase affordability or at least provide affordable options.

Affordability – a definition

Affordable housing is commonly defined as “Well located housing, appropriate to the needs of a given household, where the cost (whether mortgage repayment or rent) is no more than 30% of that household’s income.” Housing costs that exceed 30% of household income place the household under housing stress, particularly households in the lower 40% of the income distribution scale.

An absolute measurement of affordability over a municipality or a smaller area is problematic due to the need for accurate household income figures to correlate with housing cost figures for the same time period. Household income figures are notoriously understated in surveys such as the census. Nevertheless qualified statistics are available for consideration and are reliable as a relative measurement tool.

Affordable Housing in Surf Coast

The Office of Housing collates information from a variety of sources to develop a picture of the relative affordability of housing in Surf Coast compared with other municipalities, and of areas within Surf Coast, as well as the availability of various forms of housing.

Privately owned housing

Valuation data provided in Section 2 of Volume 1 indicates that the median residential valuations have increased substantially over the last 5 years. In 2000 the median property valuation was \$159,000. In 2004 the median was \$369,000. This represents a 132% increase over the 4 year period. It is probable that increases of a similar magnitude have continued in the past year, although may begin to slow slightly as interest rates rise.

Increases have not been consistent across the municipality, however, with Moggs Creek and Eastern View recording a lower rate of increase, and Deans Marsh recording the highest, and Torquay and Jan Juc recording a very high increase of 135% or \$196,000 increase in the median house valuation over the 4 years. It is evident that Lorne, Bellbrae and Aireys Inlet/Fairhaven contain the most expensive dwellings, and Deans Marsh and Winchelsea the most affordable by quite substantial amounts.

These increases in dwelling prices can be largely attributed to the rise in land values rather than construction costs, as the average increase in property prices of 132% over 4 years is well above the inflation rate which has varied between 2.0% and 4% over the 4 years ending June 2006 (Consumer Price Index, Reserve Bank of Australia, www.rba.gov.au). While construction costs are also likely to have risen, this rise would be substantially lower than the increase in land values. Nonetheless, Council could explore ways to reduce construction costs, particularly for smaller and

higher density dwellings which tend to be expensive relative to larger homes which are purchased off the plan.

The increase in property prices has not been restricted to the Surf Coast Shire, although the rate of increase has been very high in comparison to other areas. Property prices in Geelong and Melbourne have also seen increases, although these have been far more modest, with the median house price in Melbourne rising by 20% to \$375,000 between September 2001 and September 2006. The median house price in Geelong has experienced a similar increase of approximately 19% to \$283,500 in the 5 years from September 2001 to September 2006. (Source: Real Estate Institute of Victoria, www.reiv.com.au).

Private rental market

The private rental market is a primary source of housing for lower income households. For this reason statistics about the private rental market are one method to determine the amount of affordable housing for low income households. Figures are collected by the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority which commenced in 1998 and is the central bond collection authority under the Residential Tenancies Act. The data from this source is reliable and does not typically include holiday rentals, however it will not include all long term rentals, as some rental arrangements do not involve a formal bond arrangement and therefore are not recorded, and not all information is accurately provided. It has been estimated by comparison of census data with the RTBA data that the undercount of rental properties is approximately 19%-20%.

Figures collected between September 1999 and March 2006 indicate that the proportion of affordable private rental housing in Surf Coast has steadily declined over this period from approximately 55% to 20% of all rentals. In the March 2006 quarter, affordable houses were equally distributed between all dwelling sizes (1 – 4+ bedrooms).

The private rental market is concentrated in the coastal townships, with only 2% of 'active lettings' recorded in non-coastal townships. The single highest location for rental properties is Torquay and Jan Juc with over 65% of the lettings. The vast majority of rented properties are 3 and 4 bedroom houses, making up 57% of the lettings. Approximately 23% are 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings (houses and flats). The proportion of occupied properties that are rented is approximately 16% based on 2001 census figures, which is comparable to other regional areas (15-20% for Bellarine Peninsula and 20.5% for regional Victoria overall).

However, based on figures supplied by the Council of rated properties and 'active lettings data' from the Office of Housing, only 7% of total dwellings in the Shire are rented (excludes holiday rentals). If the 20% undercount of rented properties mentioned above is taken into account, this would increase the proportion of rented properties to 8.4%, which is still very low. In addition, with the increase predicted in the occupancy rates of dwellings in the Shire as absent owners move permanently to the Shire, the number of available rental properties could decrease further.

The weekly rental data presented in Section 2 clearly indicates that rentals have increased substantially in the last 5 years and that the level of affordability has decreased substantially. The most affordable rentals are available in Deans Marsh and Winchelsea, with the least affordable in Lorne and Moggs Creek.

The rental for residential property in Surf Coast is extreme when considered in relation to nearby municipalities, regional Victoria and even most of metropolitan Melbourne. The median weekly rental for a property in Surf Coast in 2005 was \$234 per week. This compares with median rentals in Greater Geelong of \$185, Colac Otway of \$176, Queenscliff of \$200 and Golden Plains of \$185. Within western metropolitan Melbourne the 2005 median rental in Wyndham was \$200, Maribyrnong was \$203, Brimbank \$186 and Moreland \$216. On available data, the Surf Coast rental median was exceeded only by inner and eastern suburban municipalities.

Caravan parks and affordable housing for key workers

Within the Surf Coast Shire, caravan parks have not historically provided longer term accommodation, as is seen in some suburban parts of Melbourne, where long term leases and semipermanent dwellings often provide low cost housing. Indeed, some

caravan parks within the Shire have limits on the number of weeks per year that a caravan or cabin may be occupied, which serves to prevent permanent occupation. At the same time, high development pressure in coastal areas is resulting in the loss of caravan parks, which often occupy valuable and high amenity land.

Opportunities for new caravan parks and protection of existing camping and caravan facilities is also important in terms of providing tourist accommodation, which at the same time may assist in reducing the market for accommodation in dwellings that could otherwise be permanently occupied. Caravan parks have also been identified as offering transitory accommodation for seasonal employees of tourism areas during peak holiday periods, where the influx of visitors to the area combined with the high costs of housing make it difficult for employees to find local accommodation. The Lorne Strategy Plan Review notes the lack of suitable accommodation for key workers, and notes the need for a review of camping and caravan facilities in the town.

Caravan parks within Lorne and Anglesea were contacted to gauge their current use for temporary or longer term accommodation for key workers and others (e.g. retirees), as these townships have the greatest demand for key worker accommodation and are more remote from areas of more affordable housing. Three caravan park operators provided input: the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (operating the 5 caravan parks in Lorne), the Big 4 Anglesea Holiday Park (Driftwood) and the Anglesea Beachfront Family Caravan Park. Each operation varied, with only one of the Anglesea caravan parks currently providing potential for affordable accommodation for local employees (in addition to providing units for permanent retiree accommodation), with all operators having varying limits on the length of stay over a year or the peak holiday period. This poses a major barrier to the use of this type of accommodation over longer term periods. In addition, the high cost of much of the caravan park accommodation and the need to book the accommodation well in advance, effectively rules out the use of caravan parks for most employees of the tourism and service industries who often seek employment over the peak holiday periods.

Maintaining caravan parks as a low cost housing option is becoming increasingly difficult due to land price increases in coastal areas. Private caravan and camping sites are frequently lost to subdivision, and one of the private caravan park operators spoke of the imminent closure of a further two privately operated caravan parks within the Surf Coast Shire. The Council owned sites are therefore increasingly important for the maintenance of these facilities.

Public housing and rent assistance

As discussed in the earlier section on Commonwealth housing policy, direct provision of public housing for low-income earners is only one, and a declining, method of provision of housing. The provision of rental assistance is now a primary method of making housing affordable to low income households.

In Surf Coast there are approximately 81 dwellings (including short term leases) provided by the Office of Housing. Most of these are single dwellings, with approximately 25 being flats or medium density units. There are a total of approximately 660 rental assistance recipients in Surf Coast; approximately half are singles or couples with no children and half families with children.

By comparison Greater Geelong has 3612 Office of Housing dwellings, Colac Otway Shire has 315, and Golden Plains only 8.

The Office of Housing now provides funding for the provision of low cost or affordable housing through Housing Associations, which may also seek funding from other organisations including local government. Often funding by local government is provided by the provision of land. Discussions have been held with the two Housing Associations that currently operate in regional Victoria, and both of these are keen to discuss future housing options for the Shire with the Council, although one has a focus on addressing issues of homelessness.

Demand for affordable housing

Empirical evidence of demand for affordable and public housing is very difficult to obtain. The Office of Housing provides the following data on public housing waiting lists that may provide some direct evidence of demand.

The Surf Coast Shire includes the Anglesea and Winchelsea Districts within the Geelong Region. Waiting list applicants for these districts are relatively low in comparison to the region, as shown below:

Broadband Name	Number of Bedrooms				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Anglesea District	19	1	7		27
Apollo Bay			1		1
Barwon Heads District	38	11	7		56
Bellarine District	8	12	10		30
Colac	57	50	27	3	137
Geelong North District	430	328	164	45	967
Geelong South District	353	285	167	26	831
Lara District		4	14	4	22
Queenscliff District	13	11	4		28
Winchelsea	5	5	2		12
Geelong Region Total	923	707	403	78	2111

However, many argue that public housing waiting lists are an erroneous measure of demand as people will not register for the waiting list in areas where there are few houses available, such as Surf Coast, and therefore low chance of obtaining housing.

Given the rapid increase in housing costs and the dramatic decrease in the number of affordable rental properties over the last 5-10 years, it is however reasonable to assume that there is a substantial demand for low cost housing that is not being met.

Anecdotal evidence from the stakeholder consultation suggests that a large proportion of employees in Lorne and other coastal towns are travelling from Geelong, Winchelsea or Colac over peak periods, due to the lack of low cost housing in the vicinity. GORRS envisages that the service sector employment base for the region will be located in inland towns such as Winchelsea. There may also be opportunities to provide for employee accommodation within caravan parks in the area, as well as increasing the supply of dwellings in nearby Deans Marsh, where property prices are significantly lower. However, the lack of public transport between Winchelsea, Deans Marsh and the Lorne area presents an obstacle in terms of providing sustainable travel choices and catering for affordability, as residents would be car dependent. The long term sustainability of catering for employee accommodation in hinterland towns is also questioned in the Amendment C18 Panel report for the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Neighbourhood Character Study. As petrol prices increase employees will be unwilling or unable to travel long distances to lower paying jobs. Without employees

the tourism sector will suffer. There are economic imperatives, therefore, in addressing the housing affordability issue.

This anecdotal evidence is reinforced by Regional Matters (DSE) and the findings contained in the G21 Plan, which identifies issues of affordability, and the resulting impact on locals who are forced out of coastal towns due to increased land values and rates, and the fact that workers cannot afford to live in coastal towns.

Relative disadvantage measures

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSED) is based on variables reflecting social disadvantage, including the number of public housing units, low income, employment and educational attainment. It provides one means of assessing the relative disadvantage of municipalities across the nation. Surf Coast Shire is ranked in the highest advantaged category, of 1050 to 1125 on the IRSED, well above the Australian average of 1000. Macedon Ranges Shire was the only other Victorian regional municipality with the highest score on the IRSED index. The surrounding municipalities of Greater Geelong, Colac Otway and Golden Plains scored lower on the IRSED Index, with Greater Geelong scoring 870-999 (disadvantaged), and the other two shires scoring 1000-1019, just above the Australian average.

Another indicator of disadvantage and resilience is the percentage of children living in low income households, defined as those with gross weekly incomes of under \$600. Surf Coast Shire has a relatively low percentage, with 10-19.9% of children in this category, with the surrounding municipalities of Greater Geelong, Colac Otway and Golden Plains having between 20 and 29.9% of children in this category (Victorian average 20.2%). (Source: Regional Matters, DSE, 2005)

It must be recognised that in both these cases, the data is based on existing residents and not those who wish to live in the area but cannot, due to the cost.

Crisis and transitional Housing

The Salvation Army Social Housing Service provides housing services to people from the Surf Coast Shire, which is part of the Barwon Southwest Region. Offices are located in Geelong, Colac, Hamilton, Warrnambool and Portland, and the region includes the surrounding hinterland. This service provides information, financial assistance (e.g. rental assistance in advance or arrears) and referrals to crisis agencies in Geelong.

Over the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, the Housing Information and Referral service recorded 31 contacts from clients with a Surf Coast Shire post code. Obtaining greater and more accurate detail about the magnitude of the demand for these services within the Surf Coast Shire or a comparison with other areas is difficult, as the data entry system does not enable a breakdown of information for a local government area. It is not known what sort of support was provided to these 31 clients, nor what proportion of Surf Coast Shire residents were captured in this figure as they may be registered for Geelong if no address is able to be provided. As the services are not provided within the Surf Coast Shire, these clients are also more likely to be located in Geelong or Warrnambool where access to services is greater.

There is a need for more concrete information about the demand for crisis and transitional housing and associated services within the Surf Coast Shire. An action of the Affordable Housing Strategy should therefore be to work with the Salvation Army and the Office of Housing to gain quantitative and/or qualitative information about the demand for these services within Surf Coast Shire. A system for recording this information for a defined period could be established by the Salvation Army to fulfil this need. Appropriate objectives, strategies and actions can then be tailored to address the issue as determined through this process.

Figures provided by the Office of Housing (OoH) of housing stock for the Barwon South West Region indicate that there are 2 transitional housing units within the Surf Coast Shire, managed by Community Housing (compared with 108 in Greater Geelong, 22 in Colac Otway, and none in Golden Plains or Queenscliffe). The figures also indicate that all of the OoH owned rental crisis housing units in the Barwon South West Region are provided within the City of Greater Geelong, with 65 units managed by Community Housing. These units provide for the Surf Coast Shire, as well as

Colac-Otway, Golden Plains, Queenscliffe, Ararat, Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians and Warrnambool.

A balanced community

The need for a diverse community is discussed in a following section, which highlights the importance for social and economic reasons to ensure that a wide range of people from all sectors of Australian society can be accommodated within any one locality. On this basis it is evident that the range of opportunities for low income households to reside within Surf Coast – more particularly along the coastal sector – is very limited and becoming more so over time. This indicates a need for the Council to explore options to encourage greater provision of low cost housing.

Other current actions

The G21 Plan will include a project on affordable housing for the region, entitled *Affordable Housing Strategy and Actions*. This project will be led by the Department of Human Services, Salvation Army, SWRAH, and will also involve representatives from a range of other stakeholder groups, including the G21 Councils. The project will provide a strategy to respond to the identified lack of affordable housing in the G21 region, with tactical actions for implementation. It will identify demand for affordable housing, review its supply, and provide actions to ensure affordable housing is provided to enhance community wellbeing. This project will provide important contextual and policy direction for the Affordable Housing Strategy to be prepared by the Surf Coast Shire following the completion of the Housing Policy Project. In combination, these two affordable housing projects will ensure a region wide response to addressing issues of affordability, as well as a response tailored to the municipality.

Summary of Housing Affordability Issues in Surf Coast

- Housing costs, both for purchase and rent, have increased rapidly over the last 5-10 years
- The number of active lettings is low both in numbers and as a proportion of the total number of dwellings
- Surf Coast is the least affordable regional municipality in Victoria when comparing housing rental costs, and trends indicate this will continue
- There is an imbalance between the coastal and hinterland townships, with coastal townships having greatest exaggerations of unaffordability and lack of low cost housing
- As a result, there is a lack of low cost housing, for both short and long term occupancy in coastal townships.
- Provision of low cost housing for employees is necessary for the economic health of the Shire
- Locating low cost housing options in hinterland towns, distant from sustainable transport to employment nodes, is not a sound long term strategy

Options for the Municipal Housing Strategy

The Council has a number of options ranging from no action to a high commitment through funding or owning/managing low cost housing stock. These options could be explored further in the Council's proposed Affordable Housing Strategy.

No action

The Council could choose to remain inactive in this matter, and to leave this issue to state and federal authorities, Housing Associations and the private market.

Advocacy and Lobbying

The Council can undertake a role in lobbying state and federal governments for increased action to improve the provision of public housing or rental assistance in Surf Coast. By identifying a need for such housing the Council could raise awareness of the specific needs of the municipality, particularly the high relative cost of rental

accommodation and the lack of low cost rental housing for tourism and service sector workers.

Councils can also advocate to Housing Associations for provision of low cost housing in their municipality. Councils can initiate or facilitate action by a Housing Association by identifying need and commencing discussions with an association or potential other partners.

The G21 initiative, including the project to develop an Affordable Housing Strategy, provides a real opportunity particularly in the context of the Council's proposed Affordable Housing Strategy in the new financial year.

Encouragement of the private sector

The Council could identify and publicise the need for specific types of low cost housing, and seek to generate interest in provision of this housing by the private sector. Direct information could be provided, through publications, information sessions or workshops for interested real estate agents, land owners, developers and organizations. This information could also be targeted to holiday home owners to indicate the financial benefits of long term rental, particularly as interest rates rise. Increasing the supply of rental properties should have some impact in reducing rental costs.

Planning Policy requirements

As part of the Council's role as planning authority under the Surf Coast Planning Scheme the Council could implement policy to guide planning decisions on a range of matters. For example the Council could determine to develop a policy that requires the provision of low cost housing in larger developments such as the one smaller dwelling/lot per 10 lots/dwellings policy adopted by VicUrban. Other dispensations could also be allowed for that smaller site such as reduced car parking or infrastructure costs. The Council could also adopt a policy to actively encourage new caravan and camping facilities and discourage the subdivision of existing caravan parks.

As part of larger developments it may be possible to implement a Developer Contributions Plan that enables the provision of land for low cost housing.

Housing Associations that provide low cost or affordable housing could be allowed greater density or other dispensations such as reduced car parking, smaller open space or reduced setbacks under a local policy.

Local Law requirements

The Council could seek to introduce regulations about the rental of properties to increase the supply of long term rentals. This type of measure has been investigated by Byron Bay Shire Council (NSW) which has responded to community concern about the amenity of residential areas and also the cost of housing in the town, and has recently exhibited a Local Environment Plan that prohibits holiday letting of dwellings for more than 8 weeks per year. Areas in the centre of the town are exempt from this prohibition. (Local reaction to this proposal has been mixed and the Plan is not yet finalised.) Such a local law could be investigated for the coastal townships if considered appropriate by Council.

Rate remissions

The Council could choose to strike a differential rate for some properties to encourage owners to rent properties, or to discourage short term holiday rental. It is considered that the former option is likely to be more acceptable to the community, as it may be argued, as with the previous option, that holiday rentals are important economic driver for the coastal townships, by providing a range of short term accommodation for holiday makers. Caravan parks could also be encouraged to remain by a rate reduction, which would accord with the State government move to exempt caravan parks from land tax.

A reduced rate could perhaps be targeted at long term rental properties to encourage owners to consider the option; this may have the added benefit of reducing rents to renters, although of course this is not guaranteed. On current figures this would effect

7% of rateable residential properties in the Shire. Given the relatively small incentive provided through this means, it is unlikely to have a major impact on rent or the number of rentable properties.

Provision of land or funding

Many Councils have entered into partnerships with Housing Associations for the provision of housing. Partnership could be on the basis of funding or land provision. Ultimately the Council could be a partner in the provision of affordable housing, or even owners of dwellings, with Housing Association management. In such a partnership the Council can also specify the preferred types of tenants or households that are to be accommodated.

Development of an Affordable Housing Strategy for the Surf Coast Shire

Addressing issues of affordability facing the Shire will include further exploration and development of the options discussed above in an Affordable Housing Strategy for the Shire, which would build on the work of the Housing Policy Project.

C. Diversity

During the stakeholder and officer workshops, the lack of diversity in the Surf Coast housing stock was identified as a key issue requiring action. Concern was expressed about the fact that houses are getting larger, with a lack of variety in sizes and styles, and that where medium and higher densities of development are provided these generally contain 3 bedrooms or more with few smaller dwellings being constructed. This anecdotal information is confirmed by data collated for this policy by .id Consulting (report circulated separately). The need to provide a diversity of housing was also seen as important to ensure that a diverse population is able to continue to live in the Shire, including young people, lower income groups and key workers in lower end employment in the Shire.

Meeting the housing needs of a diverse population

Research undertaken by .id Consulting for this project indicates that while there is a diverse population across the Surf Coast Shire, there is not a great deal of diversity in housing stock. There is a dominance of larger dwelling formats, with growth seen in 3-4+ bedroom dwellings, while at the same time, household sizes are declining. This is a trend seen across the country, with smaller households occupying larger dwellings, which would previously have provided for families. This preference for increased living space has implications for diversity as well as for affordability and sustainability.

While there may be a demonstrated preference for larger dwelling formats, at the same time the lack of housing choice in the smaller dwelling formats may be artificially inflating this preference within the Surf Coast Shire. Rather than seeing an increase in smaller dwelling sizes, current trends indicate that there has been a decline in smaller dwellings due to the extension of these dwellings to create larger dwellings. If a greater number of suitable smaller dwellings were provided, there may be an increased incidence of smaller households occupying dwellings that are more suited to their current needs, and expanding at a later date or moving to a larger dwelling, for example, when they decide to have family. With greater housing choice it would also be easier for empty nesters, a group which will increase as the population within the growth areas of Torquay and Jan Juc matures, to downsize their family dwelling in the future to a smaller dwelling that better suits their needs.

It is recognised however, that high stamp duty costs paid upon purchasing a property, which are set by the State Government, make it more costly for home purchasers to easily change dwellings to suit their current household size and lifestyle, and can act as a barrier to people moving into housing that is appropriate to their needs. Couples are also more likely to purchase family size homes well ahead of starting a family to avoid needing to relocate at a later date.

Among the private rental market however, a greater diversity of smaller dwellings would provide improved opportunities for smaller households to find suitable (and potentially more affordable) accommodation in line with their current needs, as there is not the cost barrier to relocating.

The Surf Coast Planning Scheme notes the importance of providing a diversity of housing types to meet a diversity of household needs (including resident and non-resident households), particularly within the local township strategies contained within the MSS. For example, the Anglesea Strategy notes the need to provide a diversity of housing stock to meet the needs of an ageing population and growth in single parent households. Opportunities exist to further promote diversities of housing through the Planning Scheme to specifically cater for the current and projected housing needs of the different areas of the Shire through these Strategies.

Medium and higher density housing

While there is a dominance of larger dwellings in the Shire and it seems obvious to provide for smaller dwellings on smaller lots to increase diversity and provide for a diverse (including socioeconomically diverse) population, research by .id Consulting indicates that there is still a strong preference for retirees and empty nesters to have 2-3 bedrooms, but often in the form of lower maintenance properties such as units.

Finding demand for higher density living may be difficult amongst populations that are used to large areas of living space. Forster (2006) indicates that in an urban context there is still a reluctance for higher density living (apartments), except in high amenity areas such as inner city and inner suburban locations, and that the cost of these types of housing generally exceeds the cost of a standard single dwelling in areas where land prices are not high. However, this preference may change as retirees from urban areas move into the area from Melbourne and Geelong, as there is likely to need to be an increasing acceptance of higher density living in these urban centres due to declining land availability and increasing land costs, as well as State Government policies of urban consolidation. Higher density living may also offer low maintenance opportunities for accommodation purposes and part time residents of the Shire, particularly where this is promoted in high amenity tourist areas within Lorne and Anglesea (and perhaps Aireys Inlet). Rising prices in Torquay will also make higher densities of development more economically feasible in central areas around activity nodes. Providing higher densities of housing may assist in providing for accommodation demands, enabling a greater number of dwellings in the residential areas within the coastal townships to be freed up for permanent occupancy.

As there is a demonstrated preference for smaller households and even single person households to occupy 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings, there is unlikely to be much demand for single bedroom dwellings, unless a student or low income single population is being catered for. Feedback from Council officers is that there is an opportunity to promote student accommodation within the Torquay-Jan Juc area, as it is within close proximity to Deakin University and offers lifestyle advantages over many parts of Geelong. However, to cater for this it would be necessary to advocate for improved public transport services between the University and Torquay-Jan Juc, as these are currently infrequent.

Existing Strategies within the MSS currently demarcate areas within townships for higher density residential development (mostly to cater for tourist accommodation) and identify opportunities for medium density and infill development. Clause 21.10 notes that complementary apartments and tourist accommodation will be encouraged in the Torquay town centre, which will be promoted as the commercial focus and civic hub of Torquay-Jan Juc. Clause 21.10 promotes urban consolidation in Jan Juc firstly by utilising remaining infill opportunities, and then by allowing dispersed medium density housing in established areas. Opportunities for designating areas in the vicinity of the shops could also be explored, to enable more dwellings to be located closer to facilities, particularly after the opportunities within the Torquay town centre have been exhausted.

For the coastal townships, Clause 21.11 Lorne Strategy provides for accommodation activities at the periphery of the core retail area in defined mixed use and tourist accommodation precincts, and it is likely that further intensification of residential development will continue in the areas closest to Mountjoy Parade. Clause 21.12 Anglesea Strategy identifies some potential for higher density development, although this would need to ensure that the objectives of preserving the landscape dominance of the setting are able to be achieved. The potential for apartment or resort style accommodation has been identified for the 'Four Kings' and Diggers Parade precincts of Anglesea, with limited infill development in other parts of the township encouraged. For Aireys Inlet to Eastern View, infill and medium density development is encouraged adjacent to commercial areas in Aireys Inlet (up to 8 metres or two storeys in commercial areas), and in other conventional residential areas where land is of lower environmental significance, flat or gently sloping with no drainage or erosion problems, and serviced by adequate sewerage and water supply systems.

For the hinterland townships, the Winchelsea Structure Plan identifies the township as having the potential to accommodate a substantial proportion of future growth in the region, and includes recommendations to encourage a range of smaller homes and lot sizes, the provision of housing for older persons and attracting younger families to foster community and economic prosperity. These recommendations would assist in creating and sustaining a diverse population, which is currently showing trends of ageing, with quarter of the population over the age of 60 in 2001. In combination with the decline seen in young families until recently, these trends are reflected in the household structure, with predominantly one and two person households within the township. GORRS also designates Winchelsea as a growth area.

MSS strategies for Moriac, Deans Marsh and Bellbrae do not identify opportunities for medium and higher density housing, and this form of development would not be appropriate under current and proposed infrastructure provision due to the lack of fully serviced land, and due to the overriding objective of maintaining a small town or semi rural character. Moriac will continue to fill a niche role in attracting a young family market, however the outer suburbs of Geelong (Grovedale, Waurn Ponds, Highton and Wandana Heights) will cater for most of this demand. In areas without reticulated sewerage, residential lots of at least 0.4 hectares are required under EPA requirements to enable on-site processing of waste water. Existing lots of 1000m² in Deans Marsh are unable to retain waste water on site. Deans Marsh Strategy also includes objectives relating to making efficient use of land and supporting growth and development of a sustainable community, while preserving the scenic qualities of the hinterland.

Opportunities for increasing densities of development in the more accessible townships of Bellbrae and Moriac may be an option if Council wishes to pursue threshold populations in these townships to warrant the provision of reticulated sewerage and water. This could also assist local residents to find suitable, lower maintenance accommodation as they grow older and their housing needs change, enabling them to age in place. If the constraints posed by the absence of reticulated sewerage cannot be overcome by encouraging threshold populations to be reached, as is likely to be the case particularly for Deans Marsh, there may be opportunities to explore and promote alternative forms of wastewater treatment at the neighbourhood level, and some increased density of development in select locations within townships, to assist in overcoming this barrier.

Providing for an ageing population

The need for retirement accommodation is identified as an issue throughout the region in the G21 Plan. Whilst there are lower proportions of older persons within Surf Coast Shire than in the Barwon Statistical Division, over the next 25-30 years there will be a significant impact from the population ageing in place as well as retirees moving into the area. Regional Matters (DSE, 2005) notes the relatively lower levels of aged care (high and low care) provision in Surf Coast Shire compared to the surrounding municipalities of Greater Geelong and Colac Otway, and compared with the Victorian average. The Shire had a similar or slightly higher provision to Golden Plains. Aged care facilities (including retirement villages) in the Surf Coast Shire include:

Anglesea

Lions Village (constructed 1970s-80s): 8 elderly person's dwellings.

Blue Cross nursing home nearing completion. Sixty beds, mostly low care, with limited high care.

Lorne

Lorne Hospital: 10 aged care beds included in hospital redevelopment.

Lions Club of Lorne Elderly People's Homes

Torquay

Lions Village: approximately 30 dwellings for elderly persons.

Retirement Village under construction in old caravan park in Old Torquay (cnr. Esplanade and Darrion Road) – 50 two bedroom dwellings, with care, meals etc. able to be provided. Retirement Village is a component of a larger development, which also includes an apartment and conference complex.

New proposal for 300 dwellings in retirement village – application to rezone land from Farming Zone to Low Density Residential. Proposal includes some one bedroom and bedsit dwellings, and a low care nursing home.

Winchelsea

Nursing home style beds within the Winchelsea hospital.

While it is likely that older persons will continue to seek housing in areas of high service provision such as Geelong, over time as the ageing impact takes place there will be a need to provide further aged housing and care services to support the ageing population in the future. As discussed above, providing housing choice in smaller townships where higher densities of development may not be desirable, is also an issue to be considered if residents of these townships are to be supported to age in place.

The .id Consulting report noted the high propensity for older persons to remain in separate family dwellings rather than to downsize, with older single persons in Surf Coast more than twice as likely to occupy 4+ bedroom dwellings than older persons in the region. As discussed above, this may be indicative of the low provision of medium density and low and declining provision of 0-2 bedroom dwellings in the Surf Coast Shire, and provides an opportunity to increase provision of medium density and smaller dwellings to fill this gap, thus freeing up larger format dwellings for larger households moving into the area.

Advice from Council officers is that the existing retirement village in Torquay is not meeting demand, and that a proposal exists to develop a new retirement village on the edge of the town away from services and infrastructure, including public transport. While retirement villages may fill a housing need, providing appropriate housing types to meet the needs of an ageing population interspersed with other housing types and close to services and infrastructure can have greater benefits for the residents as well as broader social benefits, including more diverse communities.

Diversity and affordability

Housing and population diversity is closely linked to issues of affordability, which is discussed in Section 4.B above, particularly in areas that are experiencing rapid price increases and in areas where there is currently a low diversity and a dominance of larger dwelling formats. Regional Matters (DSE, 2005) and the G21 plan note that rising house and land prices in coastal areas is forcing out locals who are not able to afford the high prices, and they are of necessity moving to hinterland towns which are more affordable. This has implications for the diversity of the community, as the remaining residents are often older, and new residents are often there only part of the time. Providing a diversity of smaller housing types, including affordable housing, can assist in maintaining a diverse population, which is important to ensure social cohesion and a local workforce, particularly in lower end and service industry employment.

Low Density Residential and Rural Living Opportunities

The Rural Residential Strategy within the MSS considers both the Rural Living Zone (RLZ) and the Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) as providing for rural residential uses, with lots of around 8.0 hectares encouraged (and lots below 4.0 hectares discouraged) in the RLZ to provide for on-site wastewater treatment and hobby farm uses, while lots of between 0.4 and 1.0 h are encouraged in the LDRZ (unless a larger lot size is required for wastewater treatment in that area). For the purposes of the Housing Policy Project, the LDRZ is generally considered as a part of the townships, while the RLZ is considered more as a rural land use and is not considered in such depth here. The LDRZ is also used in isolated pockets in the eastern part of the Shire, around the growth areas of Torquay and Jan-Juc (e.g Bells Beach). Rural Living is provided in Gherang and Wensleydale on the northern face of the Otway Ranges.

Rural living, as distinct from low density residential, will continue to play a relatively small role in housing provision in the Shire, as use of the Rural Living Zone is not directly supported by Government policy. Feedback from Council officers is also that rural residential development is generally discouraged within the Shire except in small areas adjacent to some townships, as indicated in the MSS strategies. The emphasis is instead placed on maintaining a clear distinction between urban and rural areas, and encouraging urban consolidation to ensure efficient use of infrastructure and to promote more sustainable and compact urban forms. Clause 16.03-1 of the State Planning Policy Framework specifies that land should only be zoned for Rural Living where it located close to towns or urban areas but outside areas required for urban expansion, where it can be provided with electricity and water, has access to good

quality roads and does not impact on high quality agricultural land or adversely affect waterways or natural resources. The Minister's Direction No. 6 provides further guidance for Councils when considering rural residential development.

While Low Density Residential provides an opportunity to expand townships where larger lot sizes are required for processing waste water, in areas with reticulated sewerage it is not recommended as such low densities of development are more resource intensive for the provision of infrastructure and services, and are not in line with the principles relating to sustainable urban form outlined above. However, there may be opportunities to intensify development in low density townships in the future if demand is strong enough to warrant the provision of reticulated sewerage and potable water supply. The appropriateness of rural living around hinterland townships will depend more on the impact on productive agricultural land and sensitive environments, and is a matter for further consideration in the Rural Strategic Review.

In addition to the townships and rural living areas, the Surf Coast Shire contains small hamlets and clusters of rural types of residential development within the Farming Zone, such as Freshwater Creek, which are likely to have come about due to old and inappropriate subdivisions or small lot excisions in the past. Under the current minimum subdivision areas of the Farming Zone, these smaller lot sizes would not be permitted, although it may still be possible to create smaller lots for existing dwellings through the provisions of Clause 35.07-3. The further intensification of residential land uses in these small hamlets is generally not encouraged for the reasons outlined above in relation to rural residential development. Residential development, including at lower densities, should be instead be channelled into existing townships which are appropriately zoned for residential land uses, particularly to those where reticulated services and other infrastructure exists.

Providing housing for key workers and skilled workers

Issues related to the provision of affordable housing for workers are discussed in the previous section.

Provision of housing can influence the ability of an area to attract skilled labour. Regional Matters (DSE, 2005) notes that there is often a lack of good quality housing in regional towns which may deter skilled workers from moving to regional areas, and skills shortages in construction-related occupations can create difficulties or delays in the construction of new housing in regional areas. Provision of a diverse range of housing types, sizes and price ranges is required to ensure higher paid skilled employees can be accommodated. This has implications for the local economy.

Providing for a future increase in diversity

While there is not a great deal of housing diversity across the Shire at present, in the short term this is not necessarily a significant issue to the extent that the Shire is currently experiencing a period of high growth, particularly in young families and early retirees. The housing types provided in the growth areas of Torquay are largely catering for this current demand, although it will be important to commence diversification of the housing stock in the short to medium term to ensure that increased diversity is achieved in the medium to longer term. The current diversity of the household types and the relative lack of smaller dwelling types also suggests that diversification of housing stock should commence in the short term.

A question for Council to consider is what level of intervention in the housing market is appropriate to either cater for a more diverse population now (i.e. encourage a diversity of socio-economic or household types through the provision of diverse housing opportunities), or to cater for a gradual increase in diversity to ensure that as the growth area residents mature there are dwelling types to cater for them when they wish to downsize. The report by .id Consulting suggests that a diversity of housing types will be needed over the next 25 to 30 years to cater for the empty nester population and the ageing population (those who are either ageing in place or migrating to the area following retirement).

As discussed above in relation to medium and higher densities of development, the older areas of Torquay and other areas close to services and infrastructure offer the greatest opportunity in the short to medium term for infill with more diverse dwelling

stock, particularly in the smaller dwelling formats. Existing growth areas may also provide opportunities for diversification of housing stock in the future, especially where the subdivisions are designed to enable future infill at more intense development densities. Current subdivision patterns, with large dwellings on small lots, make intensification of development and diversification of housing stock more difficult in the future. There can be some benefit in designing subdivisions at a slightly lower density now to enable infill development to occur later as smaller dwellings and lot sizes are required. However, consideration may need to be given to the trend for large dwellings to be constructed to ensure that opportunities for infill are not lost due to excessive site coverage.

Alternatives for future downsizing may also include retrofitting and dividing dwellings to provide two smaller dwellings, enabling residents to remain in their dwelling when their household size declines. Planning adaptability into dwelling designs now may enable this to be more easily achieved in the future, and future planning controls and policies relating to dwelling densities and subdivision would need to provide support for this if it is to be an option.

Provincial Unit: improving housing supply and choice

An action of the Provincial Statement, *Moving Forward*, is to establish a new Provincial Unit within VicUrban to assist Councils to address local housing issues.

The Provincial Unit will:

- identify potential sites for new commercial housing in regional areas;
- form partnerships with local councils to facilitate new housing developments;
- provide technical advice and information to councils and the Victorian Government; and
- conduct research into issues with an impact on commercial housing in provincial Victoria, including analysing demand, accessibility and affordability.

The new Provincial Unit will have a strong focus on creating greater diversity and sustainability in regional housing, particularly medium-density options within walking distance to town centres and developments that incorporate water quality measures, energy-efficient housing and waste minimisation. The potential for projects to be undertaken within the Surf Coast Shire have been discussed with the Provincial Unit, and it has been recommended that contact again be made following the completion of the Research and Analysis Report, to enable Council to approach VicUrban with an understanding of the housing issues that they may assist in addressing (e.g. through a profitable housing project to achieve greater diversity, sustainability, affordability or to provide for key workers). The types of projects that VicUrban has undertaken to date, and which would continue under the Provincial Unit, include a sustainable community at Officer in the south-east growth corridor of Melbourne, and a master planned community in Swan Hill.

Summary of Housing Diversity Issues in Surf Coast

- Surf Coast Shire has a diverse population but does not have a diversity of housing types. There is an over representation of large dwelling formats (3-4+ bedrooms), both new houses and extensions to old houses, and an under representation of smaller dwellings and medium density housing.
- As the population ages over the next 25-30 years, both as a result of ageing-in-place and in-migration of retirees or mature residents, the provision of smaller and low maintenance dwellings in accessible locations needs to increase.
- Opportunities to provide for diverse housing types need to be explored now to ensure that as the demand for smaller dwellings increases in the future, there will not be a lag in the provision of these housing types.
- Providing smaller dwellings now may also assist in freeing up larger dwellings that are occupied by older couples and other small households, due to the relative lack of smaller housing available.
- Council policies relating to location of higher densities may need review to ensure these are adequate to meet need for this type of housing
- The Surf Coast Shire currently has a relatively low provision of older persons housing and aged care facilities, which will need to be addressed to cater for future housing needs.
- High stamp duty costs provides a disincentive for home owners and purchasers to relocate to housing which is suitable to their current housing needs, resulting in smaller households often occupying large dwellings.
- Current subdivision patterns in growth areas, with large dwellings on small lots, make intensification of development and diversification of housing stock more difficult in the future.

Options for the Municipal Housing Strategy

The Council can consider a number of options relating to increasing housing diversity in the Shire.

Market forces

The Council could resolve to allow market forces to determine the types of housing provided in the Shire. The current tendency for larger homes on smaller lots in the new subdivisions will probably continue. When a demand for smaller dwellings is identified by the market these will be built. However the Council will not be able to determine where these are built. The social consequences will have to be managed.

Advocate for State stamp duty requirements

Stamp duty has been identified as one barrier to small households selling larger homes to buy smaller dwellings. The Council could advocate for changes to the stamp duty requirements to reduce/eliminate this barrier. The full implications of this option may need to be considered further. As this has implications for affordability as well as diversity, this could be further explored through the Affordable Housing Strategy.

Review identified areas for medium and higher density housing

While the Council does have policies directing or limiting medium density housing, this may be inadequate to accommodate future demand, or may be directed primarily at tourist accommodation, without adequate consideration of the specific needs of older residents and other smaller household types. Current policies could be reviewed over the next 5 years to ensure that adequate provision is being made for the identified future needs in all townships that can sustain higher densities.

Consideration could be given to allowing some further intensification of residential (as opposed to accommodation) development in designated areas within the coastal townships to provide more diverse dwelling types to cater for demand. This would need to be reconciled with other objectives relating to preserving character and

protecting landscape values however, and while there is likely to be strong community opposition in some areas, failure to provide for these more diverse dwelling types may have impacts on affordability and maintaining population diversity in coastal townships.

Develop a policy regarding diversity in subdivisions

New subdivisions generally create a reasonably homogenous product at present. The Council could adopt a planning policy that required new subdivisions to have a wider range of lot and dwelling sizes to cater for different prices and household sizes, and future diversity and intensification options over the medium to long term.

A policy could also be developed to require smaller scale medium density housing developments (e.g. 3 or more dwellings on a lot) to include a range of dwelling sizes or comprise mostly smaller dwelling types.

Adaptability of Housing

The Council could adopt a planning policy or provide advice about incorporating adaptable features within new dwellings. In the future, Council could also investigate a policy and planning provisions to enable retrofitting and subdivision of dwellings and lots to create smaller dwellings without necessitating demolition.

Elderly persons accommodation

In conjunction with developing a policy to encourage medium density development close to services and the policy could encourage this housing in a format that suits the needs of the elderly (e.g. single storey or with provision of lifts).

Council may also wish to consider future options for providing appropriate dwelling types for people to age in place in smaller townships where other policy objectives and lack of reticulated services would currently prevent this. This could possibly be achieved by identifying small areas where intense development would be encouraged within rural and coastal townships. This may need to be supported by alternative forms of wastewater treatment where reticulated services are not provided. It may also need to be supported by consideration of other aged care services or access to these services from these townships.

The alternative is to focus aged care facilities and appropriate housing in areas that are fully serviced, which would reduce the capacity for people to age in place and maintain community connections in the smaller townships, but would have benefits in terms of increased efficiency and accessibility of residents to transport, social and community infrastructure and services.

Rural residential

Options for further rural residential development are constrained by the objectives to achieve sustainable urban form and minimise impacts on agricultural land. Some rural residential opportunities are noted in MSS strategies, and the appropriateness of this type of development will need further consideration through this project as well as the Rural Strategic Review.

Provincial Housing Unit

Opportunities to work with the Provincial Housing Unit of VicUrban could be further explored. Council can assist in determining priorities of issues that could be addressed in potential housing projects in the Shire (e.g. key worker accommodation, ESD demonstration project, medium density development) prior to approaching VicUrban again.

D. Infrastructure, Services and Transport

Consultation with stakeholders and Council officers indicated that there are significant challenges facing the Shire in terms of physical, community and transport infrastructure and service provision and renewal. In new development, there is commonly a lag between the development of housing and the provision of appropriate infrastructure and services, which could be better coordinated. Public transport provision is low throughout the Shire, with some townships not serviced at all, and this results in a community with a high level of car dependency. The increasing costs of private transport will have an impact on the affordability of living in more isolated townships such as Lorne, and particularly those such as Deans Marsh and Moriac without a public transport service.

The State section of the Planning Scheme (SPPF) advocates for the efficient and effective use of existing infrastructure, through the location of new development in areas already well serviced by water, electricity and transport. The SPPF also encourages the timely provision of infrastructure in new areas, and provides for developer contributions. Clause 21.10 Torquay-Jan Juc Strategy includes objectives and strategies to ensure that infrastructure is provided to new developments, including a strategy to prepare a Development Contributions Plan (DCP) for developing areas. Council officers have advised that it has been difficult to enforce infrastructure provision in new developments and subdivisions in the absence of a DCP Overlay.

The Provincial Statement, *Moving Forward*, includes an action to support councils to manage and plan for growth, with grants available through the Provincial Planning Unit to address community, social, infrastructure and environmental impacts of growth, and to tackle infrastructure problems in 'hotspots' such as growing coastal areas. Funding for two thirds of a project cost may also be available through the Small Towns Program through the Provincial Victoria Growth Fund, for projects such as pathways projects, innovative water projects, civic renewal, community infrastructure and tourism infrastructure projects.

Physical Infrastructure provision

Advice was sought from infrastructure service providers and authorities within the Shire, to determine potential constraints to growth and opportunities for expansion of physical infrastructure. The advice generally reveals that there are no constraints to the level of development proposed within existing zoned and planned residential areas, which have been estimated to cater for projected housing demand and population growth for the next 30 years.

Water and Sewerage

Barwon Water was contacted to provide information on the provision of reticulated water and sewerage throughout the Surf Coast Shire. The map below, provided by Barwon Water, indicates infrastructure and service provision throughout the region, and their comments are summarised below:

- Barwon Water has provided comment on future residential growth in the Surf Coast Shire including new housing, constraints on residential growth and other related issues as part of the structure planning process for a number of towns in the Shire.
- Barwon Water believes that the housing strategy should be very closely aligned to the Structure Plans the Shire has for each town. Barwon Water will provide further comment if and when these are updated.

Current supply

- Torquay/Jan Juc, Anglesea, Lorne, Aireys Inlet / Fairhaven and Winchelsea all have reticulated water and sewer (see the Serviced Areas and Infrastructure Map on the following page).
- Moriac / Mt Moriac, Breamelea and Mt Duneed have water but no sewer.

- Barwon Water is continually constructing new infrastructure in the above towns on a needs basis as improvements become necessary from either growth or system inadequacies.

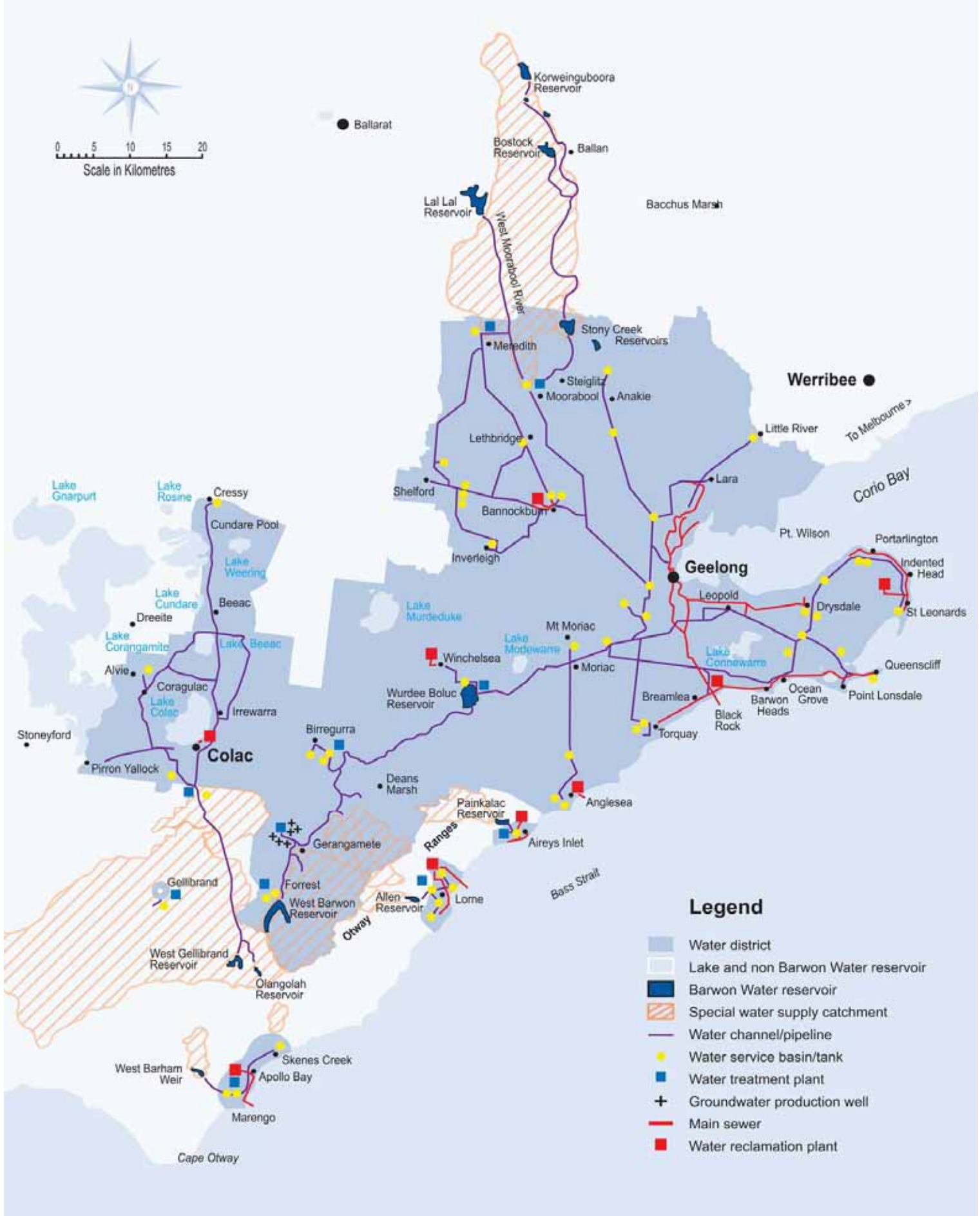
Future plans

- There are currently no plans to establish new water supply systems for towns not currently serviced. Barwon Water would only consider this if there is a requirement from local council or government.
- Barwon Water is continually constructing new infrastructure in its district on a needs basis as improvement becomes necessary as a result of growth or system inadequacies.

Seasonal fluctuations

- The water and sewerage systems are designed to cater for expected peak demands whenever they may occur. For coastal townships the peak water demand would likely be over the holiday periods when there is a significant population increase for a short period.

Barwon Water has not stated any limitations to its water or sewerage servicing capacity. However, there will be capacity limitations, particularly for water provision, and this can be tested with Barwon Water as options for growth or increased intensity of development in the different townships are determined. In order to ensure ongoing availability of water supply to cater for the demands of an increased population, it will be important to encourage environmentally sustainable development, particularly in relation to water conservation, with measures to reduce water use and encourage reuse. This will be important over the longer term as rainfall becomes more variable. Council officers have also identified a constraint to development west of Torquay due to the height of the reservoir which is lower than this area, and the resulting water pressure difficulties.



Serviced Areas and Infrastructure Map

Electricity

Powercor was contacted for information on the electricity supply to the Surf Coast Shire. A summary of their response is as follows:

Current Supply

- Powercor operates 66kV sub transmission lines that supply Zone Substations and Waurn Ponds and Colac. 22kV feeders from these Zone substations supply the Surf Coast Shire area.
- Smaller townships including Moriac and Deans Marsh are connected to rural feeder lines. Some rural areas are supplied by a single phase or single wire earth return high voltage network that has limited capacity. All existing power lines are predominantly overhead lines.
- Powercor has an ongoing 10-year Plan to upgrade the Network to meet expected load growths and improve reliability throughout the Region. The Plan is reviewed annually and changes in expected development of the region or proposed developments, if known, are considered as part of the plan.

Current and future capital projects:

Coastal Area

- New 22kV feeder at estimated cost of \$1.5M is being built in 2006 to cater for load growth in area from Torquay to Lorne.
- Transformer upgrade is planned for the Waurn Ponds Zone Substation which currently supplies Torquay and Anglesea down to the outskirts of Lorne.
- A new Zone substation is planned for the Torquay area in or around 2015.
- A new Zone substation is planned for the Lorne area in or around 2011.

Plains Area

- Transformer upgrade is planned for Winchelsea Zone Substation
- There are a number of smaller projects in the 10-year plan.

Future Development

- Surf Coast Shire has no townships that are constrained for future growth due to electricity supply requirements.
- Powercor is keen to be involved with strategic planning for the Surf Coast Shire area including new housing projects that affect their Network to assist in their future planning.
- Powercor meet twice annually with the Council to understand planned developments and is willing to provide advice on the impact of developments throughout the region, including timeframes and likely capital costs (both Powercor and customer funded) to augment the network where required.

Council officers have identified electricity supply issues in some parts of the Shire, particularly in Lorne, associated with high energy usage for heating and cooling of buildings. Promoting ecologically sustainable design in new dwellings and additions, as discussed above in Section 4.A Sustainability, will be an important element in ensuring that electricity supply is able to provide for an increased population.

Gas

SP Ausnet were contacted for information about the supply of Gas in the Surf Coast Shire. SP Ausnet own and manage gas infrastructure in the Surf Coast Shire and on-sell the Gas to wholesalers such as TRU Energy. Below is a summary of their comments:

Current supply

- Torquay and Jan Juc are the only townships in the Surf Coast Shire which have a Natural Gas supply. It is supplied by a large diameter High pressure main that traverses the Surf Coast Highway from Geelong.
- Other towns in the Shire are serviced with bottled gas.

Future Plans

- At the request of various interested parties, an investigation has been undertaken to supply and reticulate the townships of Anglesea and Winchelsea, however, the economics of each of the projects indicate that considerable funding would be required to make the projects viable.
- No other major proposed extensions of the network exist at this point in time, however, with the availability of funding, further investigations into green field areas may be initiated.
- Gas is not an essential service therefore the provision of future supply is demand driven.

Telecommunications

Telstra was contacted to discuss the broadband supply and mobile phone coverage in the Surf Coast Shire. Below is a summary of their response:

Broadband:

Current Supply

- Broadband internet access is available in Torquay, Jan Juc, Winchelsea, Lorne, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, and Bellbrae.
- Access is not available in Moriac, Deans Marsh and Winchelsea South.

Future Plans

- An expression of interest is underway in the townships of Moriac and Deans Marsh. If there is enough interest the exchange will be upgraded for broadband access.

Mobile Phone:

Current Supply

The two maps below show the current mobile phone coverage in the Surf Coast Shire.

- GSM mobile phone coverage is available to most towns in the Surf Coast Shire. There are some coverage issues in the Otway hills and some small sections of the coast line.
- The CDMA coverage is also available in most townships. CDMA also coverage issues in the Otway hills and close to the coast line.
- Satellite mobile phone coverage is available throughout the shire.
- Telstra has indicated that upgrades have recently been undertaken to improve mobile coverage in the Great Ocean Road area.

Future Plans

- Telstra are proceeding with a 3G network rollout and this is currently available in the Geelong area. The 3G network enables higher data transfer rates allowing video services on mobile phones.

Drainage

The Surf Coast Shire was contacted for information on drainage issues that could influence future residential development. Implications for consideration in the Housing Policy Project are summarised as:

- In most cases throughout the townships in the Shire, the current drainage infrastructure is running at capacity, so any increase in runoff resulting from increased development and hard surfaces needs to provide a management plan, through capture, home use, infiltration systems and other techniques. This may result in increased cost implications for developers.
- Greenfield development sites must ensure that there is no further increase in the discharge rate from pre-development levels.
- Infill development can provide storage and re-use options which are often required to satisfy energy ratings. The increase in hard surface areas is often an issue.

As options for more intense development or possible expansion of urban areas are determined in Stage 2 of the Housing Policy Project, advice will again be sought from the Engineering Planning & Design Department. Opportunities to implement Water Sensitive Urban Design principles through the Planning Scheme (including potentially through the Development Contributions Plan Overlay), and other mechanisms can be sought to mitigate impacts of new development on existing drainage infrastructure and on waterways.

Flooding

Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) was contacted to determine whether there would be any implications in relation to flooding with increased intensity of development or expanded urban areas in the Shire. Their advice is summarised as:

- The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and the Floodway Overlay (FO) represent the CCMA's current mapping of flood affected areas in the Shire, and these overlays were introduced into the Surf Coast Planning Scheme approximately 6 months ago. The LSIO provides additional permit requirements for development in flood areas or flood fringe areas affected by a 1 in 100 year average recurrence interval flood. The FO applies to land where the risk and frequency of flooding along waterways, major floodpaths, drainage depressions and high hazard areas is greatest, and consequently applies to a smaller area than the LSIO. Refer to the Environmental Constraints to Development Map, and the Overlay Map in Appendix A for details.
- New development and subdivisions should incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles as outlined in the Urban Stormwater: Best Practice Environmental Management Guidelines (CSIRO, 1999), to retain and reuse stormwater in subdivisions, reduce offsite flood impacts of development, and to protect water quality in waterways. The revised Clause 56 Residential Subdivision provisions, introduced in October 2006, include new standards for integrated water management including WSUD, however Council has the option to introduce broader and more stringent policy or requirements to ensure a higher level of WSUD is implemented.
- Development and expansion of urban areas should not pose flooding implications where low lying land is avoided.

The CCMA is willing to provide further comment as options for development in different townships are identified.

Social Infrastructure

The provision of social infrastructure to support resident populations is an important component of providing for future housing needs. Providing for social infrastructure will include ensuring accessible public open space and community gathering spaces, as well as access to other community facilities, including libraries, childcare, education and health facilities. Social infrastructure needs vary between different parts of the Shire depending on the demographic profile of the area, and will change over time. For example, the provision of services and infrastructure to support young families (including childcare, kindergartens and schools) is a current priority for Torquay growth areas, whereas in the next 25 to 30 years there will be a greater emphasis on providing for the needs of an ageing population (including aged care and health facilities).

Accessibility of residential areas to shopping and commercial facilities is also an important consideration. Social isolation, particularly with new residents moving into the area and lacking social networks, was an issue raised by Council officers, and which can be improved through the provision of community facilities, information sources, as well as through subdivision design which promotes interaction.

Existing MSS Strategies for townships generally include discussion of existing facilities and objectives, strategies and actions to provide community services to cater for the current and future populations. In Lorne, this includes providing community, leisure and emergency services for an expanding population, including a post primary school facility, and to focus facilities around the municipal offices and the town centre. The Lorne Strategy seeks to meet the needs of residents and visitors in a way which is responsive to changing demographic structure. The Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Strategy notes that demand for community facilities is low due to the low resident population, and that local community needs in terms of facilities will mostly be met through facilities at Anglesea and Lorne. At the same time, it is recognised that there is a need to cater for a diversity of household types, including residents and non-residents. The Anglesea Strategy does not, however, include objectives and strategies for the provision of community services, which offers an opportunity for further strategic work to be undertaken to provide guidance on social and community infrastructure needs for the community.

Moriac Strategy notes that a small range of community and commercial facilities and well developed open space areas are provided in the town, but there is a lack of public transport (Moriac train station is closed) and youth facilities. Bellbrae Strategy notes existing community and commercial facilities, including a primary school which currently provides for overspill in demand from Torquay (although this will be met shortly with a proposed new primary school in Torquay), and the need to provide community facilities for the town and its rural hinterland. Deans Marsh Strategy includes strategies to support and encourage ongoing community development activities and investigate opportunities to provide after school care activities for commuting families. Winchelsea Strategy does not include strategies in relation to the provision of community infrastructure, although some of the existing facilities are noted. This provides a further opportunity for additional strategic work to fill this gap.

The G21 Plan Housing and Community Services Forum identified an opportunity for social impact assessments to be used as a tool to ensure provision of social and physical infrastructure in new developments. A municipal wide social needs assessment would also be a useful tool to identify gaps in service and infrastructure provision, provide a more comprehensive range of actions and strategies, and create a platform to seek contributions from developers and other State and Federal Government sources for social and community infrastructure as well as for physical infrastructure.

Health and Wellbeing

The Surf Coast Shire Health and Wellbeing Plan was adopted by Council in July 2006. A key aim of the Plan is to raise awareness of public health issues and to embed public health planning across the Shire, with implementation of strategies occurring across Council Departments and Units. It is therefore important that the relevant objectives and strategies be incorporated into the Housing Strategy, to ensure an integrated consideration of planning for both public health and housing. The Plan has different tasks set for each of the three years of its operation, with the first year focussed on organisational learning and building capacity, the second year also beginning to plan, implement and create healthy public policy, and the third year focussing in addition on engaging and building capacity (stakeholders and the community as well as Council).

Year 1 will include workshop discussions which will develop whole-of-Council responses to issues that affect housing, including:

- Understanding the sorts of environments that Surf Coast residents live in.
- Considering health issues and impacts of those environments (including bushfire, social isolation, absence of pedestrian crossings).
- Determining how to respond to issues of social isolation, ageing and disability.
- Planning for and providing environments which support healthy behaviour choices, e.g given of healthy urban environment, encouraging walking, good access to recreational spaces, safe movement for older and younger people, provision of footpaths, lighting and public transport.

A relevant objective for Year 2 is *‘To ensure that health and wellbeing objectives are integrated into new policies, programs and strategies being developed by the Shire.’*

While we are not yet in Year 2 of the Plan, it is prudent to commence the integration of these objectives into the Housing Policy Project.

In year 3 of the Plan, Strategy 1 – Learning Organisation will include community engagement to seek ‘civic intelligence’ on the key health priorities and issues affecting towns and communities; and the initiation of dialogue with developers to mitigate health impacts and maximise opportunities to create healthier built environments.

Open space and linkages

Clause 15.10 Open Space of the SPPF provides for the “creation of a diverse and integrated network of public open space commensurate with the needs of urban communities and rural areas”.

In coastal townships the primary open space areas are generally along foreshore reserves, creeks and floodplains/wetlands, beaches and in the National Park and other public land surrounding the townships. These open space areas are more commonly owned and managed by the State Government (generally land within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone) rather than the Surf Coast Shire (most of the land within the Public Park and Recreation Zone). Additional smaller public open space areas exist within townships, although on the whole there is often a reliance on the foreshore and beach spaces to serve local residents, which are in many cases quite distant from the main residential (as opposed to tourist accommodation) areas. In Anglesea for example, there are few smaller parks within residential neighbourhoods, while in Aireys Inlet and Fairhaven, residential areas are generally closer to public open space, with a larger number of small neighbourhood parks dispersed throughout.

In Torquay and Jan Juc, community feedback and the Surf Coast Open Space Strategy suggests that new subdivisions are not providing adequate community facilities, including useable open space and links to open space and community facilities outside developments. For example, in the Torquay Sands development there are no community facilities or small commercial facilities provided, and as all the open space comprises the golf course there is little other passive or active open space that is able to be used by local residents (e.g. to kick a football).

Another concern raised by the community and expanded upon in the Open Space Strategy is the lack of accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists across the municipality, as footpaths and bike links (or linked open space networks) are often not adequately provided. This presents an opportunity to ensure that future subdivisions are designed to provide maximum walkability and accessibility to areas of open space and other community and commercial facilities. Ensuring provision of adequate open space to cater for areas where increased population densities are proposed will also be important.

In the hinterland townships of Moriac, Deans Marsh, Bellbrae and parts of Winchelsea, the larger lot sizes may reduce the need for public open space compared with typical residential areas. However, open space for community use and interaction is still important in these townships and appears to be adequate to meet current needs, and is generally located within close proximity to the residential areas with smaller lot sizes within the townships. Further provision of open space and linkages between residential areas and open space and other community facilities will remain important as populations within these townships expand. Moriac Strategy in the MSS provides a good example of catering for future open space needs as well as pedestrian and cyclist connectivity in any future residential development.

The Open Space Strategy includes the 8 major goals to meet the open space needs of the municipality. The implementation of this Strategy will assist in ensuring that improved open space areas are provided in new development, that the existing environmental, cultural and landscape values are protected, that open space is accessible and linked with pathways, and that different open space needs are provided in areas across the Shire.

The Great Ocean Road Region Strategy includes a Direction for improving the management of access and transport, which includes improving the walkability of townships. Opportunities could be taken to ensure that future subdivisions provide a layout which is walkable (e.g. providing a grid subdivision pattern rather than curvilinear layout with court bowls), with footpaths and cycle links provided to reduce car dependence and promote opportunities for community interaction. Pedestrian and cyclist pathway systems should also be used to link open space networks.

Transport Infrastructure and Accessibility

As with other types of infrastructure, transport infrastructure in the Surf Coast Shire needs to find a balance between catering for peak holiday periods with its high traffic volumes and parking demand, and the underlying year round needs of the local communities. Some public transport service and infrastructure improvements and inland road capacity increases are proposed through State Government plans and strategies to cater for current and future road travel, including GORRS, Moving Forward and Meeting Our Transport Challenges. The impact of increased traffic volumes on local communities will need to be considered. While some roads are planned for duplication or improvements, the capacity limits of the Great Ocean Road are recognised, and only minor improvements are proposed, with traffic encouraged instead to use inland routes.

Issues of rising fuel costs combined with the low provision of public transport throughout the Shire have been identified by the community as significant issues for the region, including the impact of travel costs on the affordability of living in different parts of the Shire. This is particularly relevant in parts of the Shire that have little or no access to public transport, as there is a heavy or total reliance on private motor vehicles in these areas. Public transport provision will be a limiting factor in the ability of some townships to expand, particularly Deans Marsh which is not currently served by public transport and no proposals to service the town exist. Torquay and Jan Juc have a higher provision of public transport, although this is still low compared with regional centres such as Geelong. Outside Torquay, Winchelsea and Moriac offer the greatest potential for increased public transport provision, and lobbying the State Government will be important to ensure that public transport improvements are made. The potential for Moriac to expand and to be serviced by public transport through the reopening of the rail station provides a significant medium to longer term opportunity to provide for affordable and accessible housing in the Surf Coast Shire.

Roads

Discussions with VicRoads have taken place to determine the possible impacts of future road infrastructure improvements and traffic volumes on housing within the Surf Coast Shire. VicRoads is responsible for the following arterial roads within the Surf Coast Shire (local roads are the responsibility of the Surf Coast Shire):

- Great Ocean Road
- Princes Highway
- Surf Coast Highway
- Anglesea Road
- Bells Beach Road
- Winchelsea-Deans Marsh Road
- Deans Marsh-Lorne Road
- Merrawarp Road
- Devon Road
- Hendy Main Road (parts)
- Inverleigh-Winchelsea Road

The completion of the Geelong bypass in 2009 is expected to result in some impact on the Shire, as it will reduce travel times from Melbourne by up to 15 minutes during peak and holiday periods and is expected to result in increased traffic flows on some roads. The bypass will terminate in Waurm Ponds (exact location yet to be determined), resulting in some increase in traffic volumes on Anglesea Road as this road becomes a more convenient route to the coast beyond Torquay. A Public Acquisition Overlay on the east side of Anglesea Road will provide for any necessary duplication (subject to future demands, as they are not currently sufficiently high to justify duplication). Freshwater Creek and Bellbrae are likely to experience increased volumes. Vehicles travelling to Torquay will need to go back towards Geelong from the end of the bypass to access the Surf Coast Highway, however there is not expected to be much change in traffic volumes on the Surf Coast Highway as a result of the bypass. It is possible that traffic along Mount Duneed Road would increase, and to the north of Mount Duneed Road.

There is expected to be a general, but not significant, increase in traffic along Princes Highway. Duplication of this road from Geelong (Anglesea Road) through the Shire to Colac is a proposed longer term strategy (depending on demand and future priorities). There is a current bid for funding to extend the duplication from Anglesea Road to Devon Road, about 10km from Geelong. There is no plan for the upgrading of the Princes Highway to include a bypass of Winchelsea, and incremental volume increases of 1-2% per year are expected. Current 60km speed limits through the town are not expected to change, and the existing 4 lanes through the town would continue with median strips to assist pedestrian crossings.

The capacity of the Great Ocean Road is not intended to be increased, although safety improvements are proposed including further barriers and turn out lanes. Improved driver information is also being investigated, including travel time information, and encouragement for drivers to take inland routes in one direction of their trip rather than the Great Ocean Road.

Key issues for the Housing Policy Project to take into consideration include the possible impacts of increased traffic volumes and proposed road capacity increases on the townships these roads pass through. If townships are to expand where there are proposed infrastructure improvements or expected traffic volumes on roads which pass through the towns, consideration will need to be given to how this would impact on the local community. For example, an increase in traffic through Bellbrae may call for any expansion of the township to be on one side of the road only to reduce impacts on amenity, safety and community dislocation. Service roads could also be considered to assist local traffic movements and separate through traffic.

Public Transport

Information on public transport services and provision was obtained through an interview with a representative of the Department of Infrastructure, and from the McHarry's website. McHarry's operates the public transport services in Surf Coast Shire, including the Vline rail and bus services and local and regional bus services. Advice from Council officers is that there is no community transport provided in the Shire.

Current Public Transport Provision

A local bus provides a service connecting Wombah Park, Jan Juc, Torquay and Geelong train station, with 8-11 bus services per day in each direction from Monday to Friday (commencing/terminating either at Jan Juc or Wombah Park), extending until the early evening. Weekend services are less frequent, with only 6 services per day in each direction on Saturdays, and 1-2 services per day in each direction on Sundays.

A local bus service is also provided which connects Torquay with Deakin University and Waurm Ponds, with 7-9 services in each direction per day between Monday and Friday, 1-2 services per day on Saturdays and no service on Sundays.

An additional Vline bus service provides connections between Geelong and Torquay and along the coast to Apollo Bay. This route services the townships of Torquay, Jan Juc, Bellbrae, Anglesea (and Point Roadknight), Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Eastern View and Lorne. Four to five services are provided per day in each direction between Monday and Friday, 2 services per day on Saturdays and Sundays. In addition to providing a regional link, this service provides local connections between townships along the coast and between Torquay-Jan Juc and Geelong, however the infrequency of the service reduces its role as an effective form of public transport.

The Vline train service runs from Geelong to Colac and Warrnambool. The only stop within the Surf Coast Shire is at Winchelsea. There are three services per day which stop at Winchelsea between Monday and Saturday, and only one service on Sunday.

Moriac and Deans Marsh are not currently serviced by public transport (Moriac Station is not in use).

Future Public Transport Improvements

Future public transport improvements proposed as a part of state government strategies *Moving Forward* and *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* include additional bus services between Torquay and Geelong, an improved summer timetable for Vline buses along the Great Ocean Road. There is also potential for a town service for Torquay and Jan Juc and potential additional bus service from Apollo Bay through Colac to Geelong.

Proposed public transport improvements for Torquay and Jan Juc will deliver 1 additional morning peak service out of Torquay and 1 additional evening peak service out of Geelong, as well as 6 interpeak round trips per weekday. On weekends there will be a further two round trips per day. Advice from the Department of Infrastructure is that the timetable is currently being finalised, and the service will be linked with the new regional fast rail timetable.

A new summer timetable proposed for the Great Ocean Road coach service will provide increased services between mid December and Easter, with additional trips between Geelong and Lorne.

A town service for Torquay and Jan Juc (including Torquay Sands, but not Bellbrae) is also a possibility currently being considered by DOI. This could utilise the existing school bus during weekdays and on weekends, when it is not in use for the school bus circuit.

Hinterland towns (Deans Marsh, Bellbrae, Moriac, Winchelsea) will be looked at further for public transport improvements in conjunction with the fast rail. The G21 plan has also looked at options for increasing rail services, in particular between Colac and Geelong, which could increase services to Winchelsea and Moriac. An option being considered is to utilise the Apollo Bay school bus to provide a return

service within school hours from Apollo Bay to Colac and through to Geelong, rather than adding an additional train (as it is unlikely that there is sufficient capacity for this). There would be potential to run this service on weekends also, as the school bus would not be in use on these days.

Discussions with the Department of Infrastructure revealed that there is significant potential to reopen Moriac train station in the future, particularly as developments such as Armstrong Creek take place and result in increased traffic volumes in the area. The City of Greater Geelong plan for the Western Wedge, including the rejuvenation of the Geelong Railway Station Precinct (with a potential housing development) may also provide an opportunity to relocate the train stabling yards to a nearby station such as Moriac, which would enable this station to be reopened. Independently of these influences, there are opportunities for Council to advocate for its reopening, as Moriac could potentially operate as a park and ride facility, or could be encouraged to expand to the point where the reopening of the station would be feasible in its own right. The final location of the Geelong bypass may also have an influence. Either way, DOI cannot see the reopening of Moriac station occurring for at least another 3-4 years.

Summary of Infrastructure and Transport Issues in Surf Coast

- There are no apparent constraints to development of existing and planned residential areas posed by the ability to service areas with physical infrastructure and services.
- Townships lacking reticulated water and sewerage will continue to be constrained under current infrastructure provision and proposed upgrades. The potential to service towns not currently serviced can be explored with infrastructure providers.
- Some township strategies do not provide guidance on the provision of social and community infrastructure, and there is not a municipal wide community/social needs assessment responding to the demographic profiles and proposed future housing development of each area.
- In past subdivisions, open space was often not adequately provided, although this is improving in recent new subdivisions. The implementation of the Open Space Strategy will provide for improved open space provision in the future.
- There is a lack of accessibility across the townships in the Shire due to the frequent absence of footpaths and cycle paths.
- Linkages between residential areas and open space and community facilities is often poor.
- Road access to coastal townships is primarily along the Great Ocean Road, which is not proposed to undergo any significant upgrades in the future.
- Road traffic will be refocussed to some degree to inland routes, resulting in increased traffic impacts in some townships (particularly Bellbrae, and also Deans Marsh and Winchelsea).
- Public transport provision is low across the Shire, with Torquay and Jan Juc having the highest level of service provision.
- Winchelsea, Bellbrae and the coastal townships have a relatively low frequency of public transport service.
- Moriac and Deans Marsh currently have no public transport services, although opportunities may be available in the future to service these towns (particularly Moriac with the reopening of the rail station).

Options for the Municipal Housing Strategy

There are number of actions that the Council could consider in relation to the provision of infrastructure and transport to support the provision of housing in the Shire.

Maintain close liaison with service authorities

The transference of information between Council and service providers appears to be good at present, however a more formalised process could perhaps be sought to ensure that on-going coordination is maintained.

Council could consider testing options with Barwon Water for intensifying development or increasing townships boundaries in hinterland townships currently unserved. Moriac may offer such an opportunity, particularly when considered in conjunction with the potential provision of public transport services to the township. Threshold populations could be explored, as well as the potential for alternative forms of neighbourhood scale wastewater treatment, to enable the provision of smaller, lower maintenance dwellings to increase diversity and enable local residents to age in place.

Reticulated services and drainage

Due to the trends of increased variability in rainfall in the future, it would be prudent for Council to consider encouraging or requiring conservation measures as a component of Ecologically Sustainable Design. This could be promoted through the planning scheme through the use of other mechanisms such as incentives, to assist in ensuring the ongoing supply of water to meet future demand.

Given the cost implications for extending the reticulated gas supply beyond Torquay and Jan Juc, and the relatively lower efficiency of utilising electricity or wood fires for heating, encouraging the use of ESD features through the Planning Scheme to reduce energy use will be important. This may also assist in reducing the need for or magnitude of electricity supply upgrades.

Water Sensitive Urban Design principles for new subdivisions and developments can be promoted through the Planning Scheme to reduce the impact of development on waterways and drainage infrastructure, and to promote onsite re-use and recharge to groundwater.

Development contributions and investment in infrastructure

As outlined in the MSS, there is a need for a Development Contributions Plan Overlay for growth areas to ensure that infrastructure costs are borne by the developer (and purchasers) rather than the broader community, and to ensure the timely provision of infrastructure to new developments. The need for this can again be outlined in the Housing Strategy.

Where infrastructure is not able to be provided through development contributions associated with new development, Council will need to plan for capital expenditure to cater for future needs and growth in population, for example in areas where infrastructure is ageing and a process of renewal is required.

Opportunities to seek funding through the Small Towns Program through the Provincial Victoria Growth Fund could be investigated to improve infrastructure in rural and coastal townships (e.g. pathways projects, innovative water projects, civic renewal, community infrastructure and tourism infrastructure projects). Council would need to provide at least one third of the project cost if a funding application is successful.

Review social/community infrastructure needs and provision

A Shire-wide approach to the policies for the provision of social and community infrastructure based on current housing forecasts would assist in the ensuring that housing provision is coordinated with infrastructure provision by Council and other authorities and the private sector. It may also assist Council in preparing a Development Contributions Plan for more areas of the Shire, as discussed above.

Social Impact Assessments could also be encouraged or required through the planning scheme for new larger scale subdivisions, to ensure that social infrastructure needs will be provided for and that subdivision design will promote community wellbeing, including providing opportunities for social interaction.

Open space and linkages

Implementing the Open Space Strategy will be important to ensure that adequate and appropriate open space is provided in new development, including linkages between residential areas and community and commercial facilities. This should include a gradual increase in the provision of footpaths and pathways within and between towns throughout the Shire, which would necessitate capital expenditure and possible land acquisition. Alternatively, opportunities for shared traffic precincts in smaller townships or areas could also be explored.

The Housing Strategy can assist in ensuring that subdivision patterns provide for walkability, and promote the need for open space and improved linkages to community and other facilities to provide for the current and future needs of residential populations.

Traffic management

Traffic management strategies may be required to assess and plan for changes as a result of the Geelong by-pass. This could ensure that residential areas are safe and pleasant places to live.

Advocate for better public transport

Several Council and state government strategies recognise the need for improved public transport facilities to the hinterland towns, and between the employment nodes and other towns in the region. While improvements to public transport services are proposed within the Shire, these are not substantial and a relatively low level of service provision would prevail.

Under current plans, Moriac and Deans Marsh would remain unserved. Council could play an important role in advocating for further improvements to public transport services, especially if increased growth is proposed for Moriac, as the opportunity may exist to reopen the Moriac train station.

The potential for additional services including a township service for Torquay-Jan Juc, a service between Apollo Bay, Winchelsea and Geelong (perhaps including Moriac), and for the use of school buses to provide local bus services is also being considered by DOI. Lobbying DOI may assist in elevating the priority given to these services.

Further opportunities may also exist for Council to advocate for additional public transport services and infrastructure, and other accessibility improvements, including:

- To improve connections between Torquay and other parts of the Shire with Geelong and Deakin University, to take advantage of the initiatives identified under Action 5 of Meeting Our Transport Challenges (Delivering a first class public transport system for Provincial Victoria: providing services to assist local students and youth access tertiary education, jobs and community facilities).
- To seek funding to implement a Local Area Access Demonstration Program under Action 8 of Meeting Our Transport Challenges. The Local Area Access Demonstration Program will fund local councils to develop and implement small-scale demonstration projects that improve access to local facilities and services, and support the use of sustainable transport alternatives such as walking and cycling.

E. Character

During stakeholder and officer workshops, the protection of character was identified as an important element in planning for an increase in population and housing, and managing increased pressure for development. Various types of character were seen as important, including neighbourhood character, township character, coastal character, landscape character, and rural character. An overriding feature of community opinion and Council policy is to protect the unique qualities of the different parts of the Shire, and to avoid development which detracts from the general low rise scale of the municipality, results in continued urban sprawl of growth nodes, or results in the suburbanisation of the townships. Threats to character identified during workshops included the development of large houses on small blocks with little area remaining for landscaping, increasing densities which reduce sprawl but at the cost of privacy, and ensuring that Torquay retains its own distinct character rather than becoming like a suburb of Geelong.

Neighbourhood and township character

The Great Ocean Road Region Strategy places a high level of importance on the protection of neighbourhood character, and suggests that the completion of Neighbourhood Character Studies will be the most effective way of protecting the character of coastal townships. Across the Surf Coast Shire, Neighbourhood Character Studies have been prepared for Aireys Inlet to Eastern View, Anglesea and Lorne, and a draft Torquay Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study has also been prepared. Some parts of these studies have been integrated into the Surf Coast Planning Scheme through the township strategies of the MSS, and neighbourhood or township character is generally covered in these strategies to some degree, even where a formal neighbourhood character study has not been undertaken:

- Torquay – Jan Juc Strategy notes that the traditional street layouts, diversity of house and lot sizes and low rise nature contributes to the distinct character of these townships.
- Lorne Strategy identifies the protection of coastal township character, environmental values and scenic landscapes as a key challenge in the face of continued pressure for development.
- Anglesea Strategy notes that a key contributor to character is the dominance of indigenous vegetation over the built environment, with objectives and strategies to preserve and enhance this landscape and built form character, and to protect broad vistas. New larger dwellings and the pressure to re-subdivide are identified as impacting on this character.
- Winchelsea Strategy notes that further growth can be accommodated without detracting from the strong rural and historic character of the town. However, the strategy also includes objectives and strategies to protect the vistas and ridgelines, and new development should respect the low rise character of the town.
- Bellbrae Strategy provides objectives and strategies to ensure that the low density character is maintained, and notes that the character is also derived from the rural and bush setting, undulating topography and vistas.
- Deans Marsh Strategy includes objectives to preserve the scenic qualities of the hinterland.

A number of local policies and design controls apply through the scheme to maintain and enhance the identified character of the townships.

Local Planning Policies that aim to protect character, include the Anglesea Residential Development Policy, the Surf Coast Styles and Colours Policy and the Coastal Development Policy. The Anglesea Residential Development Policy reinforces and strengthens the Anglesea Strategy in the MSS, and applies to buildings and works on land subject to a Significant Landscape Overlay. It provides objectives relating to preserving the low density, non-suburban coastal character, protecting indigenous vegetation and flora and fauna, maintaining the sense of space and openness, maintaining low profile buildings, protecting shared views, and avoiding development

impacts on ridgelines. Strategies include specified site areas varying by precinct, maximum building heights of 7.5 metres, maximums for site coverage and other requirements to ensure that the objectives are able to be achieved. As the Significant Landscape Overlay applies to all residential land within the township, it provides a high level of protection to the character of the township.

The Surf Coast Styles and Colours policy seeks to address the suburbanisation of the Shire by promoting sensitive and sustainable development, encouraging and reinforcing a distinctive style of architecture, materials and colours which complement streetscapes, landscapes and neighbourhood character. This policy applies to all land in the Shire with the exception of the Farming Zone, Rural Living Zone and Heritage Overlay areas, and comes into play when a planning permit is required for a development. Therefore, the policy has no influence over the form of development where a planning permit is not triggered by another part of the Planning Scheme, and so would be likely to have limited influence in areas where lot sizes are generally greater than 500 square metres and no overlays apply to the land. Advice from Council officers is that this policy will shortly undergo a review, to address current issues with the policy in relation to character, as well as the impact on affordability due to the additional built form requirements contained in the Policy.

The Coastal Development Policy applies to land in the Rural Conservation zone, and within the SLO1 and 2 and DDO 1 and 2 (Torquay/Jan Juc). The policy applies requirements relating to application content, dwelling density in Fairhaven, Moggs Creek, Aireys Inlet and Lorne. Minimum lot sizes range between 450 sq.m. in areas of Aireys Inlet and Lorne, to 1000sq.m. in Fairhaven and Moggs Creek. The higher site minimums impose significant constraints on further consolidation of these localities. The remaining provisions of the policy require careful consideration of vegetation characteristics, building scale with buildings generally limited to 7.5m, limits site coverage in the SLO1 and 2 areas to 35%, and a plot ratio of 0.5. View sharing is a concept maintained through this policy.

Nine Design and Development Overlay (DDO) schedules apply to various parts of the Shire, with several of these schedules providing specific requirements in relation to design and built form to ensure that various elements of local character are preserved and enhanced. DDO1 provides for the protection and enhancement of the coastal township character of Torquay and Jan Juc, maintaining the low rise scale. DDO2 applies to a small strip of land along the Surf Coast Highway to provide a setback. DDO3 covers the Split Point Lighthouse Precinct in Aireys Inlet, ensuring that the heritage and landscape values are protected. DDO4 ensures that development consolidated around the commercial core of Lorne includes a mixture and scale of development that is complementary to the overall character of the centre. DDO8 provides for the protection of the coastal village character in new development in the Torquay Town Centre Extension. DDO9 seeks to establish a cohesive village character for the Anglesea Town Centre, ensuring the use of Surf Coast Styles and maintaining the low rise character. These Schedules protect the low density, low rise scale and openness of the townships. In addition, Amendment C18 implements the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment (2004), and is currently awaiting approval from the Minister for Planning. One of the key findings of the Study is that the low density of built form and high vegetation cover are the greatest contributing factors to the character of these townships, and in line with these findings the proposed Planning Scheme Amendment seeks to introduce tighter development controls (height, plot ratio, site coverage, and lot size) and add new controls, policies and guidelines for protecting and augmenting indigenous vegetation cover. Two additional DDO schedules (DDO10 and DDO11) are proposed and apply to various parts of the townships. Amendment C18 also proposes a Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO), including setbacks, building heights, site coverage, design detailing, landscaping and other requirements for the Aireys Inlet Lighthouse Precinct.

The Mountjoy Parade Heritage Precinct Policy outlines the specific heritage objectives for a small area of land along the foreshore of Lorne.

As further neighbourhood character studies are finalised, further DDO schedules can provide protection to areas of specific character or provide for the creation of a preferred character. The NCO can also be used in other locations for the protection of

identified character elements, for example where development is particularly consistent and this consistency is integral to the character of the area, but heritage or landscape controls are not warranted. As with Amendment C18, the NCO can also be used in conjunction with an Environmental Significance Overlay to provide protection to environmental values.

Protection of coastal landscape character

Clause 15.08 Environment of the SPPF notes the need for planning for the Great Ocean Road Region to respect the character of coastal towns by promoting best practice design, directing growth to identified areas and ensuring that development responds to the landscape character of the area. GORRLAS identified the visual dominance of buildings on hill slopes, buildings that do not relate to their topographical setting, and the use of 'heavy' urban and suburban building forms (where 'light' building forms previously predominated) as key issues for the Shire.

The GORRLAS Municipal Toolkit for the Surf Coast Shire noted that the existing Significant Landscape Overlays (SLO) provided adequate protection for the most significant areas of the Shire (areas which have both high landscape value and high pressure for development). The SLO1 applies to the Great Ocean Road and Coastal Environs, recognising the area as internationally significant, and contains the objectives of preserving and enhancing the scenic and landscape values and the low density scale of development. SLO2 relates to Coastal Townscape Character, and protects and enhances the low density residential character, maintaining the individual identities of each township. SLO3 applies specifically to Anglesea, as discussed above, and seeks to retain and enhance native vegetation cover, maintain low building height and ensure that buildings are sited and designed to avoid protruding over or above ridgelines. Amendment C18 seeks to replace the SLO and VPO schedules that apply in the area with DDO and ESO schedules, to strengthen the level of control over the landscape and neighbourhood character in the coastal townships of Aireys Inlet to Eastern View.

In combination, the suite of SLOs and the proposed new ESOs and DDOs provides a high level of protection for the landscape character of the private land along the coastline, as well as for the local character of each township.

The Strategies within the MSS for each township along the coast generally provide further support for the protection of landscape character. For example, the current Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Strategy notes that development is to be strictly controlled to maintain scenic landscape vistas, with strategies to protect viewsheds along the Great Ocean Road. The proposed amendments to this Strategy under Amendment C18 place further emphasis on the protection of the coastal character and indigenous vegetation in these townships and landscapes.

Summary of Character Issues in Surf Coast

- Recent pressure for development in the Shire, particularly in the coastal townships, has had a negative impact on township and neighbourhood character.
- GORRS identifies that the preparation of Neighbourhood Character Studies is the most effective way of protecting this character in coastal townships. Neighbourhood Character Studies have been undertaken for the coastal townships (draft only for Torquay and Jan Juc) and recommendations included in the planning scheme.
- The neighbourhood character and related controls impose significant constraints on development that need to be considered in the context of the overall Housing Strategy.
- Neighbourhood Character Studies have not been undertaken for the hinterland townships, and there may an opportunity for this to be conducted. Neighbourhood Character Studies could build on the Structure Planning work undertaken for Winchelsea and Deans Marsh.
- Ensuring the protection of neighbourhood character will be particularly important in areas proposed for increased housing provision, particularly Torquay – Jan Juc and Winchelsea, as these areas will experience significant change in the future.
- Protecting the valued rural character of hinterland townships is important, while protecting the landscape dominated character of coastal townships is generally the most important element of character in these areas.
- Preventing the suburbanisation of the townships is an issue across the Shire, and the Surf Coast Styles and Colours policy provides guidelines for new development and buildings and works to protect valued character. The effectiveness of this policy in achieving this aim is under review.

Options for the Municipal Housing Strategy

Neighbourhood and township character

The Council has a comprehensive set of neighbourhood character studies for the coastal townships that apply significant development guidelines and some constraints to subdivision. The promotion of other objectives relating to consolidation of townships will need to have regard to the findings of these studies and the resultant planning controls. While the Council has the option to review these controls and impose different controls that may achieve other aims, it is not considered a viable option.

Where consolidation may be possible within the existing planning scheme regime, new design guidelines will be required to ensure that development respects the character of the townships, in particular the coastal environs and the general spaciousness of existing development.

Studies of the rural townships of Winchelsea and Deans Marsh could be undertaken as an adjunct to the development of strategies for these townships.

Protection of coastal landscape character

Again, the Council has a large body of planning policy and controls to protect the character of the coast. There are few options that can be identified to improve or change the policy and control regime for these areas. The current state and local planning policy reflects community views about the importance of maintaining these areas free of urban encroachment.

4. Conclusions

This report draws together demographic analysis and forecasting, an analysis of the strategic and policy context influencing housing, and the issues and options identified through consultation and interviews, to provide an overview of the key housing issues facing the Surf Coast Shire over the next 25 years.

Five key housing issues have been identified and explored for the Shire: sustainability; affordability; diversity; infrastructure, services and transport; and character. Options for addressing each of the key identified issues were provided for consideration by Council, to inform the development of a Housing Strategy for the Shire. While many of these options have been further developed into the Housing Strategy in Volume 1, a number of options have been considered and discarded during the development of the Strategy.

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Department of Sustainability and Environment (2006) Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report

Victorian Coastal Council (2002) Victorian Coastal Strategy

Department of Human Services (2004) Strategy for Growth in Housing for Low Income Victorians

G21 (2005) G21 Plan – Regional Context

G21 (2005) Understanding the Region and Challenges for the Future

Council Strategies and Plans:

- Winchelsea Structure Plan 2021
- Deans Marsh Structure Plan 2026: Background and Discussions Paper
- Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Neighbourhood Character Study and Vegetation Assessment (2004) (and Amendment C18)
- Torquay North Concept Outline Development Plan 2000 and Update 2003
- Draft Torquay Jan Juc Neighbourhood Character Study
- Draft Torquay Jan Juc Strategy Plan Review 2005
- Lorne Strategy Plan Review
- Economic Development Strategy, 2005
- Community Plan – 'Your Vision'
- Environment Management Strategy
- Tourism Strategy
- Open Space Strategy
- Strategic Resource Plan
- Health and Wellbeing Plan

Appendix A: Zones and Overlays

Land use zones control the uses that can occur on land and overlays generally control the form that the development may take.

Zones

Residential 1 Zone

This zone applies to much of the land in Torquay, Winchelsea and the Costal townships. This zone provides for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings to meet the housing needs of all households.

Low Density Residential Zone

This zone applies to many areas of the Shire, primarily on the edge of Torquay, Winchelsea, Bells Beach and some individual subdivisions north of Torquay. It provides for low-density residential development, which can treat and retain all wastewater in the absence of reticulated sewerage.

Township Zone

This zone applies to the smaller inland settlements of Deans Marsh, Bellbrae and Moriac. This zone varies from other residential zones in that it also provides for a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.

Industrial 1 Zone

This zone applies to a few parcels of land in Winchelsea. It provides for manufacturing industry, the storage and distribution of goods and associated uses in a manner which does not affect the safety and amenity of local communities.

Industrial 3 Zone

This zone applies to two sites in Torquay, one in Anglesea, and one in Lorne. It provides for industries and uses in specific areas where consideration needs to be taken about the impact upon other industrial uses.

Business 1 Zone

This zone applies to areas throughout Torquay, Winchelsea and the coastal townships. It encourages the intensive development of business centres for retailing and other complementary commercial, entertainment and community uses.

Rural Living Zone

This zone applies some areas north of the Wensleydale area. It provides for residential use in a rural environment, and for agricultural uses which don't adversely impact upon surrounding uses.

Rural Conservation Zone

This zone applies to many areas throughout the Shire, and generally abuts, or is surrounded by land that is zoned for Public Conservation and Resource. The land parcels are generally located on the outer edges of Torquay, Winchelsea and the coastal and inland townships. There are also parcels clustered to the north west of Lorne, near Modewarre, the Wensleydale area, around Bells Beach and individual parcels along the Great Ocean Road. Its purpose to protect and enhance the natural environment and to encourage development and agricultural uses which are consistent with sustainable management and land capability practices.

Farming Zone

This zone applies to the majority of the Shire, particularly away from the coast and to the north and east of the Otway Ranges. Its purpose is to provide for the use of land for agriculture.

Public Use Zone (Schedule 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7)

The Public Use Zone applies to various parcels of land within the Shire, primarily within Torquay, Winchelsea and the coastal towns. The uses specify in the Schedule relate to Service and Utility, Education, Health and Community, Cemetery, Local Government and Other public use. The purpose of the zone is to recognise public land use for public utility and community services and facilities, as well as providing for associated uses that are consistent with the intent of the public land reservation or purpose.

Note: There doesn't appear to be any PUZ2 (education). Schools and the like are mainly in PUZ 1 (Service and Utility) and in Lorne in the R1Z

Public Park and Recreation Zone

This zone is mainly located in and around Torquay, Winchelsea and the coastal and inland towns. The purpose of the zone is to recognise areas for public recreation and open space and to protect and conserve areas of significance.

Public Conservation and Resource Zone

This zone predominantly covers the Otway Ranges and the 'water side' land along the Great Ocean Road. There are also other areas scattered through the north of the Shire. It is applied in order to protect and conserve the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, scientific, landscape, habitat or cultural values, to provide facilities which assist in public education and interpretation of the natural, and to provide for appropriate resource based uses.

Special Use Zone (Schedule 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6)

This zone applies to a number of specific areas in the Shire as outlined below. Its purpose is to recognise or provide for the use and development of land for specific purposes as are outlined in the Schedules.

- Schedule 1 is in relation to the Alcoa Lease Land behind Anglesea. It is to provide for coal mining and electricity generation, whilst protecting the visual amenity and significant flora and fauna values of the land.
- Schedule 2 specifies land for the Anglesea Vehicle Proving Ground to be used for the purpose of testing vehicles and for driver training and education
- Schedule 3 is to limit development and subdivision of the Anglesea Heathland.
- Schedule 4 is to provide for the use and development of the land for public and community services and facilities within the Torquay Community Development Precinct.
- Schedule 5 is to encourage tourism development in a number of high profile precincts that include the Surf Coast Gateway, Surf City and Town Centre Foreshore Precincts at Torquay, and the Diggers Parade and Four Kings Precincts at Anglesea.
- Schedule 6 applies to the Lorne Refuse Disposal site and provides for the continued operation and development of that site.

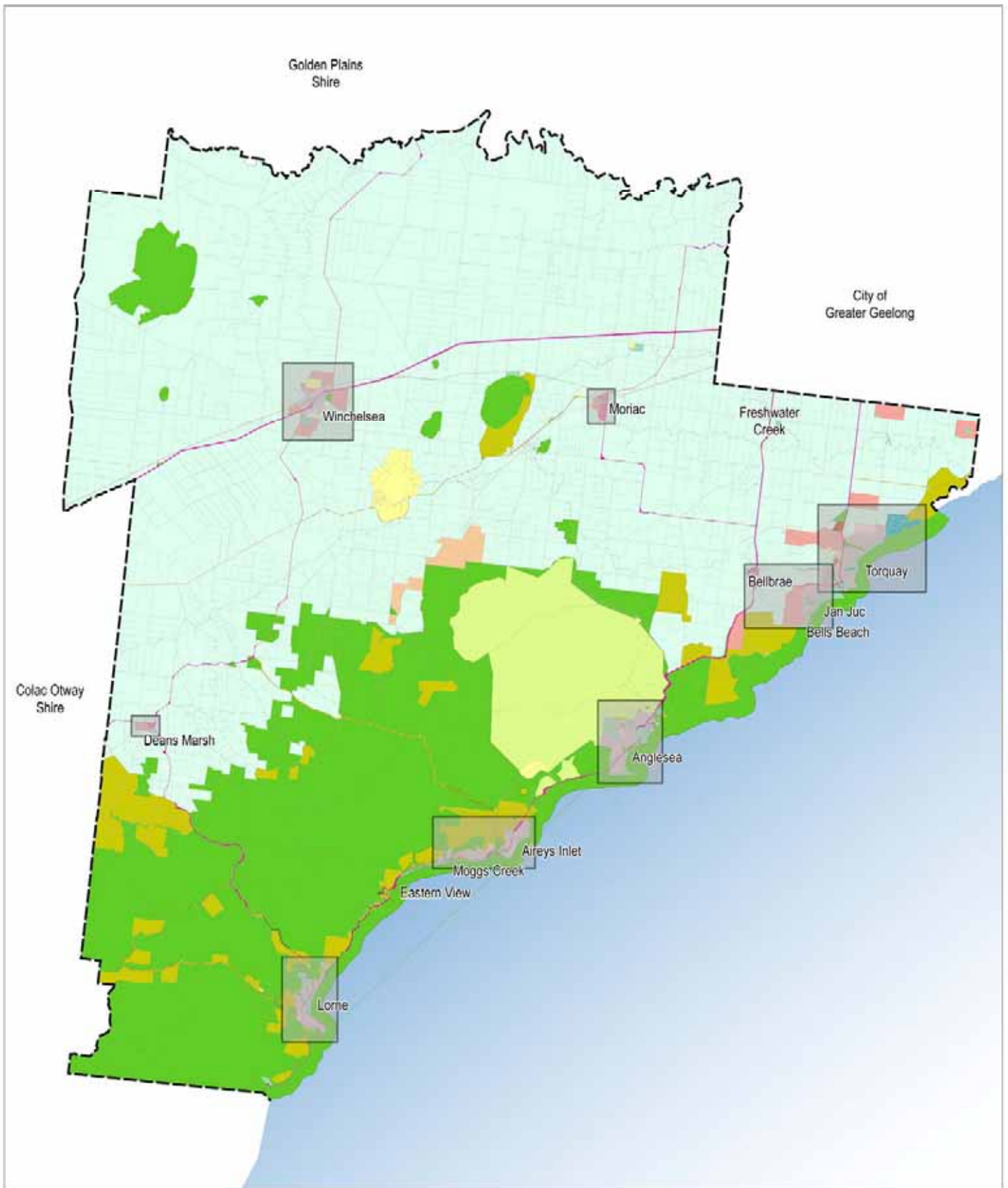
Comprehensive Development Zone

This Zone is applied to 3 specific areas across the Shire. Its aim is to provide for a range of uses and the development of land in accordance with a comprehensive development plan that are outlined in the Schedules.

- Schedule 1 applies to the Torquay Town Centre (Taylor Park Precinct) area. Its purpose is to provide for the integrated development of the precinct for retailing, car parking, office and community uses.
- Schedule 2 applies to the Sands Torquay Residential Lakes and Golf Course Comprehensive Development Plan. Its purpose is to provide for the development of a residential lakes and golf course estate as set out in the Golden Beach Concept Plan.

- Schedule 3 applies to the Torquay Town Centre Extension., to facilitate the integrated development of the land for retailing, office, car parking, community and residential uses, treating the former Primary School site as one consolidated parcel.

The following maps can be accessed from the Surf Coast Shire website www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au for better viewing.



Planning Scheme - Zones
Surf Coast Shire Housing Policy Project
 date | May / 06 revision | 01 client | Surf Coast Shire
 plan i'sphere

Zones	
PCRZ	TZ
PUZ	LDRZ
RCZ	RLZ
PPRZ	R1Z
IN1Z	B1Z
IN3Z	RD21
SUZ	
FZ	
CDZ	

Legend

- Refer Township Maps
- Municipal Boundary





Overlays

Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)

The purpose of this Overlay is to identify areas where the development of land may be affected by environmental constraints. There are three deferent applications of this Overlay:

- ESO1 applies to Wetland and Associated Dryland Habitat Protection. These areas are considered significant because of one or more of the following reasons. The sites contains habitat associated with wetlands and waterways of local, regional, state or national significance and the site is protected under an international wetland agreement. Its objective is to essentially protect and ensure the long term future of terrestrial and aquatic habitat for native flora and fauna.
- ESO2 covers Special Water Supply Catchment Areas. The aim is to protect and maintain water quality and water yields in catchments and also to ensure that subdivision land use and development meet the requirements of the land use determinations for the catchment.
- ESO3 covers the Coastal Moonah Woodland which is listed as a threatened community under the '*Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*'. The aim is to protect and ensure its long term future and to minimise the impact of residential development upon its vegetation and habitat value.

Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)

The purpose of this Overlay is to protect areas of significant vegetation and to ensure that development minimises loss of vegetation. There are three deferent applications of this Overlay:

- VPO1 covers Significant Native Vegetation and are considered significant due to a number of factors including containing important biodiversity links, have high conservation significance and are representative of a depleted vegetation type in the region or State
- VPO2 applies to the Anglesea Heathland Vegetation which is listed on the Register of the National Estate due to its floristic values.
- VPO3 applies to the Bellarine Yellow Gum which is identified as a threatened species under the '*Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*'. The overarching aim of the Overlay is to protect and ensure the long term future of the Bellarine Yellow Gum.

Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO)

The objective of this overlay is to identify significant landscapes and to conserve and enhance the character of significant landscapes. There are three deferent applications of this Overlay:

- SLO1 applies to the Great Ocean Road and Coastal Environs. It recognises that this area is internationally significant. The objective is to preserve and enhance the scenic and landscape values and protect and enhance the low density scale of development.
- SLO2 relates to Coastal Townscape Character. The objective of this Overlay is to protect and enhance the low density residential character and maintain in individual identities of each township.
- SLO3 applies to Anglesea. The aim is to retain and enhance the native vegetation cover, to maintain a low building height and to ensure that buildings are sited and designed to avoid protruding over or above ridgelines.

Heritage Overlay (HO)

This Overlay applies to many buildings and places throughout the Shire and its intent is to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural and cultural significance and the elements which contribute to that, to ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.

Design and Development Overlay (DDO)

Applies to areas that are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development. There are eight different applications of this Overlay:

- DDO1 applies to the Torquay/Jan Juc Coastal Township Character. The objectives are to protect and enhance the coastal township character of the specified area and ensure that development is of a low rise scale and that relocated buildings are designed, sited, renovated and finished in a manner that is compatible with the amenity and character of the surrounding streetscape and locality.
- DDO2 applies to Part Surf Coast Boulevard and Bell Street Torquay. It aims to strengthen the identity of Torquay, to recognise the tourism potential of the area as a gateway and ensure that development compliments or contributes to making an attractive entrance statement to the town.
- DDO3 covers the Split Point Lighthouse Precinct and ensures that development adjacent or close to the Split Point lighthouse is sympathetic to the heritage and landscape values of the precinct. It also aims to safeguard the landscape values of the lighthouse when viewed from beyond the site.
- DDO4 applies to the Lorne Commercial/Tourist Accommodation Precincts, of which there are three in total. It aims to improve and enhance the image and appearance of the Lorne commercial and tourist precincts, to consolidate development within the commercial core of the township and to encourage a mixture and scale of development that is complimentary with the overall character of the centre.
- DDO5 covers industrial areas. Its objectives are to enhance the visual character of the subject areas, protect the amenity and minimise any adverse impacts upon the surrounding areas, and to ensure that development is an appropriate size and scale with its surrounds.
- DDO7 applies to the Surf Coast Boulevard of which there are three in total. The overall objectives of the Overlay are to recognise the regional tourism importance of the Surf Coast Highway, to create an integrated landscaped boulevard and to promote excellence in the architecture design and massing of buildings. The Overlay has additional objectives for each precinct.
- DDO8 applies to a number of precincts that are collectively known as the Torquay Town Centre Extension. Its objectives are to ensure development complies with the design elements of Surf Coast Style, to protect the coastal village character of the area and to encourage development with a pedestrian emphasis.
- DDO9 covers the Anglesea Town Centre and aims to establish an identifiable and cohesive village character for the centre, ensuring the development complies with the design elements of Surf Coast Style and retains the low rise character of the centre.

Development Plan Overlay (DPO)

The purpose of this Overlay is to identify areas which require the form and conditions of future use and development to be shown on a development plan before a permit can be granted to use or develop land. It also states that it can exempt an application from notice and review if it is generally in accordance with a development plan. There are three different applications of this Overlay:

- DPO1 applies to Land at Wybellena Drive and Bimbadeen Drive, Fairhaven. The objective is to ensure that residential development of the land is undertaken in a manner, layout and intensity consistent with the vegetation and landscape values of the land.
- DPO2 covers the Coombes Road Rural Residential Precinct. There are requirements that must be met relating to subject land under this Overlay. Applications for subdivision must be referred to the Roads Corporation and the Secretary to the Department administering the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act*

1988. In addition to this an archaeological field survey must be carried out and submitted with any application for a planning permit.

- DPO3 applies to the land at 40 Coombes Road, Torquay. The development plan for this site must contain a concept plan and an environmental management plan.

Floodway Overlay (FO)

The purpose of this Overlay is to identify waterways, major floodpaths, drainage depressions and high hazard areas which have the greatest risk and frequency of being affected by flooding. It also ensures that any development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of flood water and to protect the quality of water and waterways as a natural resource.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)

This Overlay's purpose is essentially to identify land in a flood storage or flood fringe area affected by the 1 in 100 year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority.

Wildfire Management Overlay

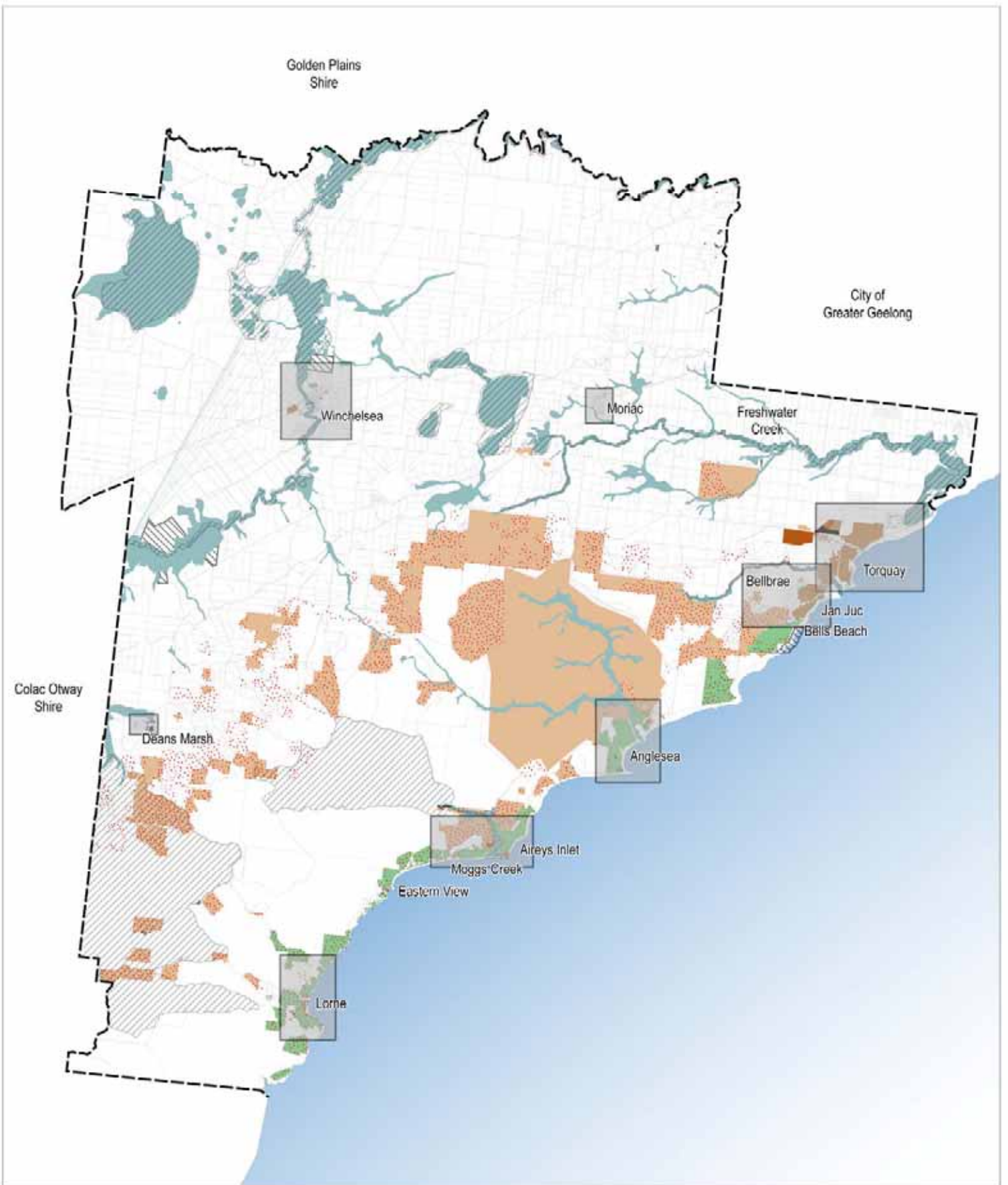
Applies to land where the intensity of wildfire is significant and likely to pose a threat to life and property. The overlay sets additional requirements relating to built form, siting, access, water supply, subdivision and vegetation management that must be achieved in new developments and substantial extensions in order to minimise this threat.

Environmental Audit Overlay

The purpose of this Overlay is to ensure that potentially contaminated land is suitable for a use which could be significantly adversely affected by contamination.

Restructure Overlay

This Overlay identifies old and inappropriate subdivisions which are to be restructured. It aims to preserve and enhance the amenity of the area and reduce environmental impacts of dwellings and other development.













Planning Scheme - Overlays
Surf Coast Shire Housing Policy Project



date | May / 06 revision | 01 client | Surf Coast Shire



Zones

 LSIO-FO	 EAO	 DPO
 ESO	 RO	 WMO
 SLO	 VPO	
 HO	 DDO	

Legend

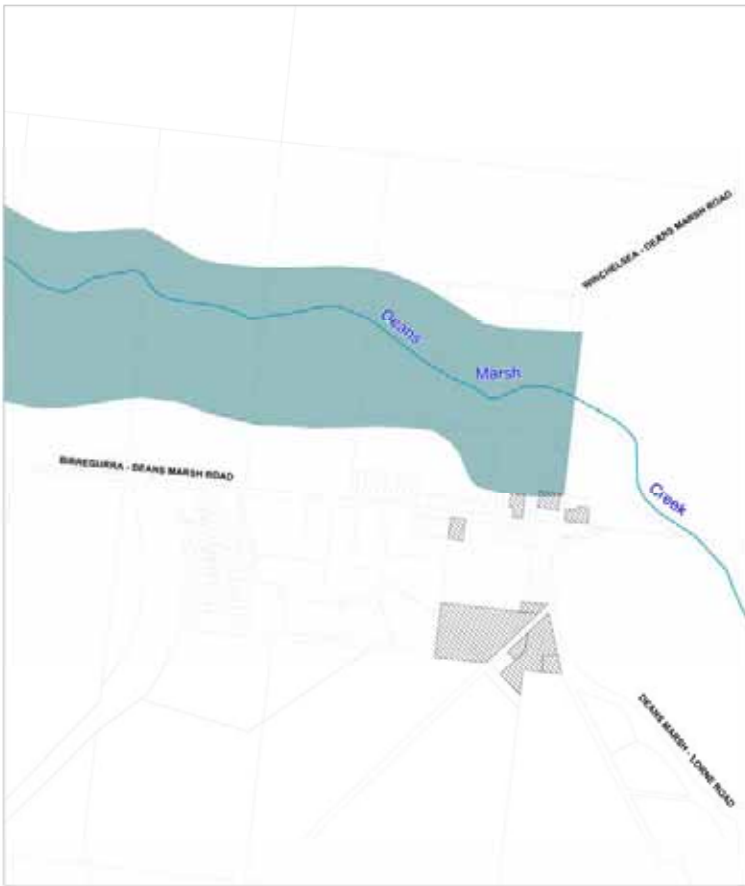
	Refer Township Maps
	Municipal Boundary



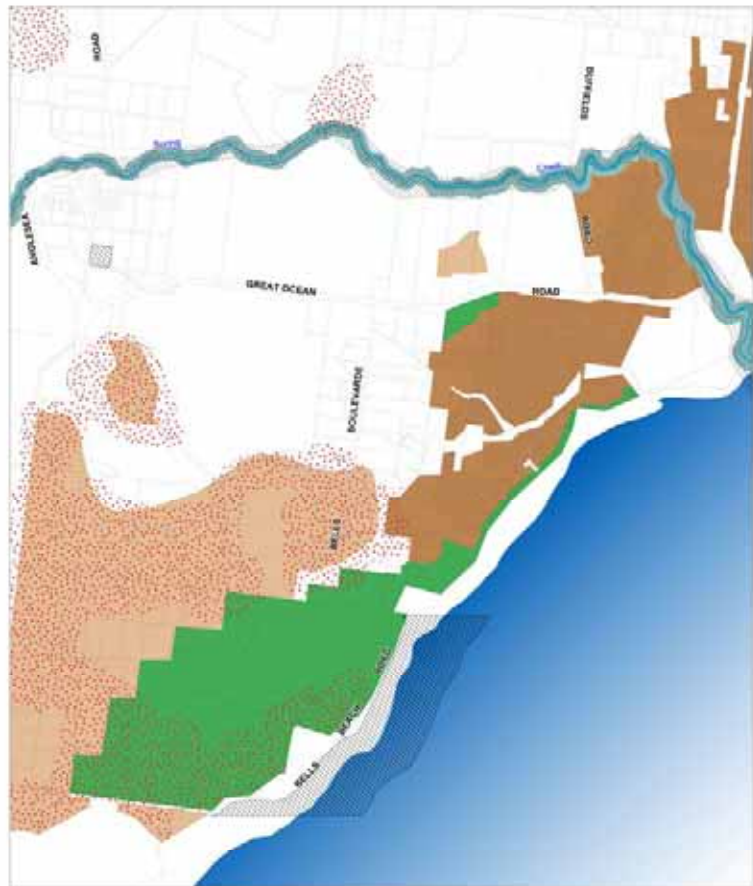
Planning Scheme - Areas with Area Overlays
 Legend
 Major Waterways



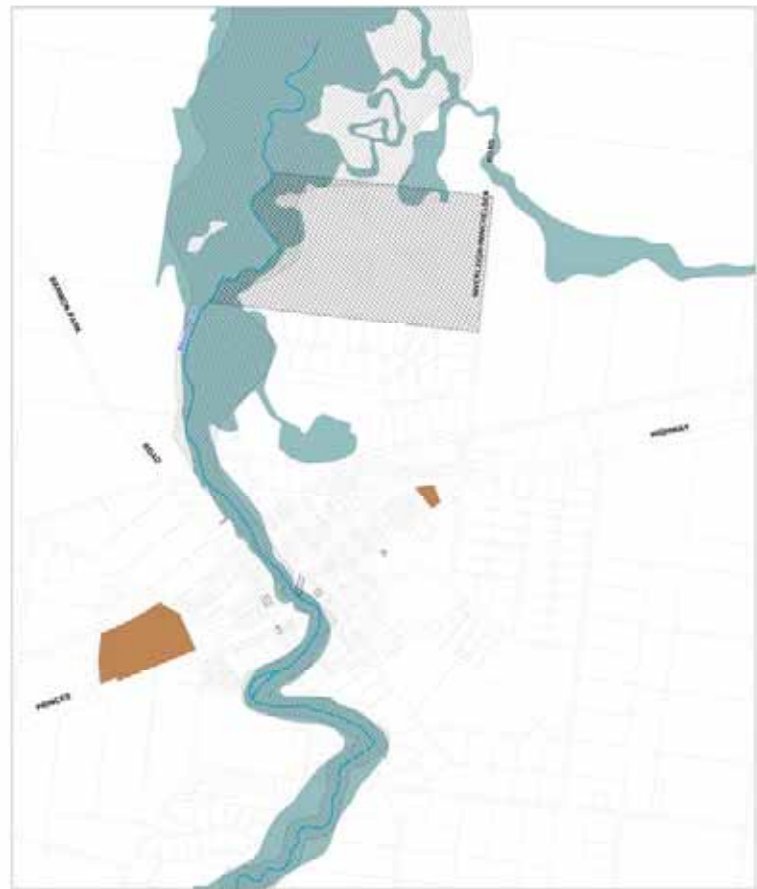
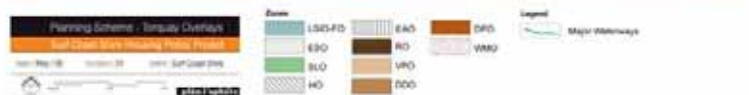
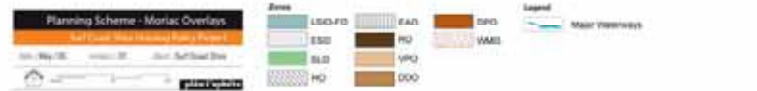
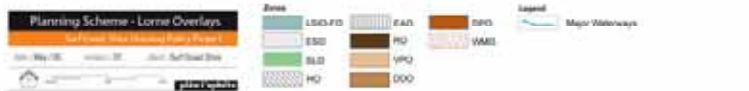
Planning Scheme - Angelsea Overlays
 Legend
 Major Waterways



Planning Scheme - Deans Marsh Overlays
 Legend
 Major Waterways



Planning Scheme - Bellbrae / Jan Jan Overlays
 Legend
 Major Waterways



Appendix B: Consultation Outcomes

Housing Issues Workshop: 10 May 2006

The Housing Issues Workshop was attended by approximately 25 participants, including community group and community representatives, State Government department and agency representatives, Councillors and Council officers, as well as regional planning representatives, service authorities, planning consultants and developers.

Participants were grouped across 4 tables to ensure a broad range of interests and viewpoints on each table. A facilitator was appointed to each table to assist with discussion. Following a brief Mayoral welcome and presentation by the project consultants, Planisphere, groups were asked to address four questions before reporting back to the whole group. Mike Scott (of Planisphere) then provided an overview of the points raised, identifying key issues to be addressed by the Housing Policy Project.

The outcomes of this workshop will be used to inform the preparation of a Draft Research/Analysis Report, which will be presented at a Council briefing session in mid June. A summary of the workshop outcomes will also be included in this report.

Questions addressed at the workshop were:

Issues:

What are the major housing issues confronting the Surf Coast Shire at present? What will be the major housing issues in 20 years time?

Actions/Response:

What do you think needs to be done to address both the current and future housing issues in Surf Coast Shire? Do you think the Council could take a more active role in addressing these issues?

Workshop groups found that their responses to the two questions under the heading of *Issues* were largely the same, although some groups felt that the current issues would be intensified in the future. Current and future Issues have therefore been grouped in this summary of workshop outcomes, although some future issues have been identified as such.

Likewise, under the heading of *Actions/Response*, actions identified to address the issues raised were in most cases noted as actions that Council could undertake or play a role in.

As all notes made at the workshop have been recorded, some of the comments below are repetitive, however this assists in determining the key issues raised. This also includes notes made by Planisphere during group presentations.

Current and Future Issues

Current and future issues are grouped according to the key issues that were identified during the workshop.

Affordability

- Accessibility of rental properties for workers – problem in most coastal towns, especially Lorne.
- Need for social housing (add to diversity).
- Cost of housing precludes the young as older people have more resources (implications for social diversity – changing demographics, need to consider provision of schools and health care etc.)
- Living costs – e.g. petrol prices will shape where population will settle.
- Need to provide employee housing – potential role of caravan parks.

- Lack of affordability in coastal areas. Housing inland is affordable but transport is a problem.
- Infill/higher density – is not affordable.
- Lack of affordable housing (including social housing)
- Need to integrate affordable housing and household/age types.
- Lack of affordable housing in coastal areas for service employees (high transport costs, negative effect on economic development).
- Price of land/houses for younger families etc.
- 5 star energy rating and fire prevention/ratings increases construction costs by around 20% due to cost of building materials.

Diversity

- Lack of diversity.
- Ensuring a variety of housing styles and sizes.
- Desire to stay in townships but in smaller houses/accessible housing.
- Diverse housing types to include provision for downsizing (e.g. dividing larger dwellings – adaptability of design), whilst retaining existing character.
- Why are big houses being built?
- Infill/higher density – is not diverse
- Need to address decreasing average household size.
- Future issue – lack of community due to lack of diversity of housing stock.
- Future issue – providing diversity while maintaining local character.
- Future Issue – dormitory towns.
- Caravan parks are starting to be closed
- Lack of private rental and lack of seasonal housing.
- Diversity = social sustainability (diverse socio-economic mix and age structure)
- People moving in are wealthy – increases the demand for expensive properties.

Sustainability

Development/buildings (construction and use):

- Sustainable neighbourhoods will become essential in the future.
- Current housing may not meet needs in 20 years time (e.g. aged housing, high energy costs to operate existing large dwellings).
- Efficiency of housing: water and energy (both in new dwellings and in the retrofit of older dwellings).
- Future – increased demand on water with increased density and population.
- Future issue of availability of resources e.g. water with changing weather patterns etc.
- Construction waste.

Natural environment:

- Increased development means decreasing existing vegetation.
- Management of wildfire risk.
- Does the area support the population? Need to consider the type of housing and development that best fits the environment.
- Impact of waste on sea and creeks.
- Visual impact of development.

Neighbourhood Character

Existing areas:

- Pressure for housing to get higher to prevent sprawl – privacy and expectations of neighbours.
- In the future towns in the Shire can be developed as a community (neighbourhood character, like Lorne and Anglesea)

- Important to ensure that Torquay is not seen as a suburb or Geelong.

New areas:

- Development of very large houses without much garden.
- Sprawl of growth nodes (urban boundaries spreading) – Torquay.

Infrastructure and transport

Physical infrastructure:

- Lag between housing development and infrastructure and service provision.
- Need for coordinated infrastructure development.

Community/social infrastructure:

- Increasing need for aged care services and facilities.
- Community facilities – where are these in new developments e.g. lack of ovals at Torquay Sands, lack of bike links, needs small shop to help reduce travel.

Transport:

- High costs (and rising) for private transport and low accessibility to public transport.
- Public transport – need to increase provision.
- Cost of commuting – need to improve public transport so people can live in Winchelsea and work in Lorne (for example).

Other

- Future demand on Torquay town centre
- Future - fewer car trips, more development of public transport.
- Availability of land – e.g. land is available in Torquay but not Lorne, while land is undeveloped in Winchelsea but is not available (land banking).
- Need to ensure land use zoning provides for housing over the next 20 years.
- Tourism – non- residential uses are taking up residential land (e.g. accommodation, B&Bs)
- State/Commonwealth Government policy impinging on Surf Coast Shire – e.g. encouraging Torquay as a growth node.
- Note that issues vary across the Shire
- Sale of Government owned land/housing – loss of opportunities
- Lack of developable land in some parts of the Shire.
- Finding a balance between permanent and non-permanent residents.
- Smaller builders unable to compete with larger developers.
- Lack of available, suitable land
- Residential land being taken up by non-residential uses – e.g. Erskine on the Beach.

Actions/Response

Addressing Issues:

- Consistent policy advice is needed.
- Encourage smaller lot sizes with smaller building footprint
- Encourage adaptable housing (e.g. to encourage splitting original dwelling to enable downsizing to occur).
- Encourage alternative subdivision designs (e.g. smaller lots with increased open space to provide for greater protection of environmental features like creeks/more communal space – increased sense of community).
- Encouraging caravan parks to locate adjacent to existing towns.
- Encouraging employment in different sectors e.g. home occupation.
- Locate high density housing close to public transport.

- Improve public transport between towns within Surf Coast Shire.
- Make more blocks available for development.

Council Role in addressing issues:

- Shire can join with others to lobby for tax relief for smaller/less expensive houses (market issue).
- Zoning to support affordability
- Support group for self-build and other programs (OoH to assist)
- Provide support for the setting up of housing associations.
- Support sustainable development applications by process incentives – fast tracking.
- Form partnerships with other agencies such as Barwon Water/PowerCor
- Partnerships with community to build older person's housing on Shire land.
- Development and implementation of Neighbourhood Character Studies for each township.
- State and Local Government funding e.g. Shire could subsidise bus service in new development area (or old development area)
- Encourage shop top or similar development in some areas to increase diversity.
- Develop Neighbourhood Character Studies and plot ratio controls.
- Encourage smaller lot sizes with smaller building footprint
- Shire should play an educative and consultative role (e.g. on design), with proactive policy.
- Provide plot ratios
- Ensure enforcement of regulations (e.g. works without permits, non-compliance with permits)
- Consider use of Rural Activity Zones (e.g. for Caravan Parks adjacent to towns).
- Ensure Planning Scheme encourages diversity
- Council to investigate building on existing strengths and assets of the area, in the types of housing that are encouraged.
- Ensuring growth is sympathetic to community values.
- Partnerships with State Government (around housing development).
- Using rates and taxes to direct development.
- Encourage employment in particular sectors.
- Lobbying for better transport.
- Community engagement/ownership in diversity.
- Inclusionary zoning.
- Integrate affordable housing.
- Need to clearly identify what the problems are by townships (and generally).
- Council to advocate for environmental retrofit at point of sale.
- Construction waste – ensure Council enforces use of eco bins and other requirements.
- Lobby state government to make more blocks available for development.
- Council to be more prescriptive about requiring diversity within large developments – in Torquay, Winchelsea and Moriac in particular.
- Opportunity to encourage co-housing.

Officer Issues Workshop: Thursday 20th April 2006

Strategic framework for Housing Policy Project– other strategic work to consider:

MSS review – the second review is due next financial year.

Opportunities at Bellbrae will be explored over the next two years.

Rural Strategic Review:

- Retirement
- Tourism (cabin, caravan parks)
- Recreation
- Surf Coast as a destination, recreational experience.
- Rural residential is discouraged.
- Need to work with consultants for the Rural Land Use Strategy.

Open Space Strategy – connected communities (emphasis on public transport between townships and to hubs/activity centres, walking, connectivity, G21 Strategy, Moriac Rail station).

Pathways Plan

Torquay-Jan Juc Structure Plan – looking at growth to the north and west, principles around sustainable growth, location of facilities, road hierarchy, Development Contributions Plan (has been difficult to get development contributions without DCPO). Report due late May-June 2006.

Review of Surf Coast Styles:

- Affordability implications
- Council resolution to review – instigated by a Councillor but more about character than affordability.
- Consultant will be engaged in May 2006

Town boundaries – already quite clear and set (particularly coastal towns)

- Letter from Minister – will not support the expansion of Lorne.
- Framework Plans for inland towns are clear, but will be looked at again.
- Winchelsea Structure Plan adopted by Council and Planning Scheme will be updated.
- Torquay and Winchelsea will be reviewed.

Environment Management Strategy on exhibition.

Development Pressures

Torquay and Jan Juc

Draft Neighbourhood Character Study Report on Torquay-Jan Juc

- Will be reported to Council on 2nd May for exhibition.
- Does not include minimum lot sizes (considering Torquay is a growth area)
- Encouragement of diversity of character elements addressed – will be a challenge.

Single dwellings are sought after – but consideration now given to higher densities/more diverse housing.

Some pressure now for 1:200m2 dwellings

May require some zoning changes

Future low density area – west of Torquay – pressure for retirement living at higher densities.

Potential to provide for student population from Deakin Uni – would require public transport improvements. Feedback from real estate agents as that this could be in demand. Could attract future residents.

Employee housing – hospitality and retail – can't find accommodation (more a problem in other coastal towns further from Geelong).

High long term rental costs – 2nd least affordable in regional Victoria (after Queenscliff) due to summer rentals – Office of Housing

Problem of high number of bedrooms in units – not seeing the 1 and 2 bedroom units.

Change towards more multi dwellings causes concern in some coastal townships. Most objections are in Torquay.

10 apartments were proposed above business zone in Torquay, supported by Council but not built.

Lorne

Pressure is still medium density and tourist accommodation.

Infill development is almost at capacity, not many subdivisions are occurring.

Most activity is happening in tourism precinct – larger scale tourist accommodation.

Along coast, 800-1000 apartments/units (4-5 star) in current applications, mostly in Lorne and Torquay.

High proportion of employees from Colac. DIIRD application for funding for employee housing unsuccessful. Employees often live in caravan park. The community plan will address this.

Anglesea

Not much development pressure or activity at present – except 4 Kings.

Redevelopment of single dwellings and infill.

Caravan park – cabins privately owned but not lived in permanently (this is not allowed – maximum number of weeks per year they can be occupied). Could provide for itinerant workers.

Aireys Inlet and Fairhaven

Low density residential subdivision behind Fairhaven. Some in Aireys.

Aireys – some diversity (400m² around shops, 500-1000m² elsewhere)

Council is working with the Office of Housing to develop 17 units for people over 60 on Council land.

Concern that Lorne style development will spread to Airey's-Fairhaven.

Winchelsea

A few 10 lot subdivisions over the past few years – standard lots.

Land prices have increased from \$17k to \$85k over the last few years.

Demand is increasing.

Geelong bypass will further increase this.

Moriac

Not much development taking place.

Has 2000m² lots with problems with effluent treatment. Larger lot sizes needed to adequately treat.

Other towns

Little change.

Bellbrae – some investigations have taken place into potential for expansion. A 2000 person population could sustain a package sewerage system.

Densities – if you were going to Deans Marsh or other small townships you would be looking for a more rural lifestyle, so wouldn't want small lots.

Region

Armstrong Creek in the City of Greater Geelong – Structure Plan being prepared. Will cause pressure – will provide for a population of 70,000 (13,000 in next 15-20 years). Background paper to be released shortly by DLA.

Social needs

Ageing population – oversupply of large houses/2 storey buildings. Note that there will be flows of older people from outside municipality as well as people ageing in place.

Retirement village not really meeting need in Surf Coast Shire – elderly housing close to services is needed.

Adaptable dwellings are needed – not provided at present except for a few individual cases.

There is no community transport

Problem of social isolation

- new families
- lack of public transport
- lack of childcare services outside Torquay (long day care only available in Torquay)
- recognition of the social connections that can be fostered through urban design, subdivision and building design.

Need to focus on the early provision of services and facilities to promote community development

- Problems of people assimilating into the community after coming from areas with more activity.
- People come for the sea change and then start to demand similar services to what they are used to.

Infrastructure and Services – sewerage, water, electricity, gas, telecommunications

Water and sewerage – Barwon Water. A doubling of the Black Rock treatment plant proposed.

Telecommunications – ADSL 5km radius from centre of Torquay, and in other towns. Needs to be spread out further.

Rural communities have poor mobile phone coverage and only dial up internet connections.

Optical fibre should be required in every new subdivision.

An intranet/community website would help promote social interconnections and reduce social isolation, particularly for new people moving into the area. Wireless network being set up in The Sands development.

Development to the west of Torquay will be a challenge due to slope and water pressure (as reservoir is lower).

Ecological Sustainability

The Quay estate, Horseshoe Bend Road – includes sustainability principles, had proposed to include a third pipe line for grey water, however the salt content of

recycled water was an issue at Black Rock treatment plant, and cost of pipe too high. Includes a rainwater tank for all toilet flushing.

Example of Barwon Water Project, joint subdivision – wanted an overlay, used s.173 agreement to include rainwater toilet systems in a new development. The Quays estate is being used to measure success.

Neighbourhood Environmental improvement program in Anglesea – water and energy reduction program.

- partnership between EPA and Surf Coast Shire
- education role
- CCP milestone 5
- Greenglobe accreditation
- Has done a lot to educate the community.

Water Sensitive Urban Design is now being driven by developers.

Energy saving initiatives in business – bid for funding (Vic 1000 project for G21)

Powercor - High power demand due to air conditioning and heating. Black out in Lorne recently (use of heater in reverse cycle air conditioners).

Gas not available outside Torquay – too expensive, and as houses are already set up with electric appliances the take up of gas supply would be too low for it to be viable.

Water is a key issue in terms of housing development

Economic Development

Pressure on affordable housing for service industries and lower end jobs.

Torquay not such a problem as employees in Torquay can live in Geelong - it's cheaper and close. More of a problem elsewhere, particularly Lorne where employees often come from Colac

Home based business difficult due to affordability issues, or cheaper in Bannockburn.

Based on the Australian average, there would be 1200 SME, 800 of which would be home based business.

Online Feedback Forms and Nomination Forms

During public notification of the workshop, feedback forms were available online to enable interested people to submit comments on the housing issues facing the Surf Coast Shire and future opportunities. Only one completed feedback form was returned, however returned nomination forms for the workshop also included feedback on issues, and this is summarised below:

Issues and Opportunities:

- Providing **increased diversity** of housing to meet community needs and ensure a diverse community (medium and higher densities, elderly person's housing, increased diversity of holiday)
- **Affordability** (dramatic increase in land prices (even in Winchelsea), high long term rental costs – DHS, higher costs along coast, greater affordability in inland towns)
- Low cost **employee accommodation** (itinerant workforce, service industry and lower end jobs – potential increased role of caravan parks)
- **Providing for an ageing community** (particularly in 20-30 years when ageing impact takes place – when the young couples/families age)
- **Protection of character** (neighbourhood and township) – in relation to infill development (concern about the spread of Lorne style development along coast).