

# COASTAL SPACES LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT STUDY



PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL LANDSCAPES  
in the South Gippsland Shire

MUNICIPAL REFERENCE DOCUMENT  
SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

**plān|sphēre** [ urban strategy planners ]





## Acknowledgments

The *Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study* forms part of the broader Coastal Spaces range of projects, being funded by the Victorian State Government, that aim to contribute to the more sustainable use and development of Victoria's coast.

The Study was project managed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Coastal Spaces Team, and overseen by a Steering Committee comprising local government, academic, DSE and regional coastal board representation.

Three Reference Groups were also established, one for each coastal region. The Reference Groups comprised representatives from the DSE, DSE Regions, local government, regional coastal boards, catchment management authorities, Heritage Victoria and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. The Gippsland Region Reference Group oversaw and contributed to the development of the landscape work for their geographic area.

The contributions of the DSE Coastal Spaces Team, Coastal Spaces Steering Committee and Gippsland Region Reference Group are gratefully acknowledged.

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## Introduction

The **Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study** was commissioned in December 2004 as part of the *Coastal Spaces Initiative*, led by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. The Study focuses on the coastal areas of Gippsland (Bass Coast to the NSW border), the Bellarine Peninsula and the coast west of Warrnambool to the South Australian border.

The project identifies and maps individual landscape characteristics within these coastal regions, identifies significant landscapes and provides an implementation framework to assist local government and other agencies in managing development impacts within coastal landscapes.

The Study is designed to implement the objectives of the *Coastal Management Act 1995* and the *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002*. This Study complements the landscape assessment work undertaken for the Great Ocean Road Region as part of the *Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study 2004*.

## This Document

This **Municipal Reference Document**, *Protection and Management of Coastal Landscapes in the Bass Coast Shire*, identifies and describes the character and significance of the coastal landscapes of the municipality. It also provides the background justification for the proposed planning scheme changes that are outlined in the Bass Coast Shire **Municipal Implementation Toolkit**.

## Study Area

Broadly, the Landscape Assessment Study covers all landscapes that are visible from the coast, and from which the coast is visible. This viewing pattern was determined by undertaking a field survey, the inland extent of which varies from 4kms to 10kms inland in the Gippsland Region. The

mapping of landscape character types and areas was extended through desktop analysis to a distance of 20kms inland from the coastline.

This Reference Document applies to the coastal landscapes of the Bass Coast Shire as described above. The study area is shown on Map 1, which also illustrates the coastal landscape character types and character areas of the municipality.

## Study Framework

In developing the methodology, analysis and recommendations, the study team devised the following Landscape Management Framework around which the study outcomes are structured.

### Landscape Character



**Significance + Change + Policy Gap = Action**



### Community Values

The framework is explained in detail in the **Background Report** that sets out the methodology for the project.

This Reference Document represents the application of the study framework to the Bass Coast Shire, specifically the *Landscape Character*, *Community Values*, *Significance* and *Change* parts of the framework.

## Structure of this Report

The relevant components of the study framework that are addressed in this report are as follows:

*Chapter 1 – Landscape Character*



*Chapter 2 – Community Values*

*Chapter 3 – Landscape Significance*

*Chapter 4 – Change in the landscape*

The remainder of the framework is covered in Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Municipal Implementation Toolkit*.

# Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment : Study Products

**Background Report**

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1 DOCUMENT

**State Overview Report**

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1 DOCUMENT

**Municipal Reference Documents**

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1 DOC PER MUNICIPALITY = 9

**Municipal Implementation Toolkits**

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1 DOC PER MUNICIPALITY = 9

**Acknowledgements**

**Introduction**

- 1. Project Brief**
- 2. Methodology**
- 3. Community Consultation**
  - 3.1 Community Questionnaire
  - 3.2 Community Photographic Exercise
  - 3.3 Significance Brochures
  - 3.4 Other Identified Values
- 4. Landscape Management Framework**

Landscape Character  
↓  
Significance + Change + Policy Gap = Action  
↑ ↗  
Community Values

  - 4.1 Landscape Character
  - 4.2 Community Values
  - 4.3 Significance
  - 4.4 Change
  - 4.5 Policy Gap
  - 4.6 Action

**Appendices**

- Project Brief
- Consultants' Inception Report
- Significance Areas Delineation Flowchart
- Planning Scheme Analysis Summary Tables
- Steering Committee Update Reports
- Reference Group Agendas
- Community Questionnaire
- Community Questionnaire Responses
- Community Photographic Exercise Survey Form
- Significance Brochures
- Significance Brochure Responses Summary Tables
- Significance Assessment Tables
- 'Evolution of Significance Areas' Table
- Reference Groups' Feedback to Character Area Analysis Papers

**Introduction**

- 1. Landscape Character Types & Areas**
  - 1.1 Introduction
  - 1.2 South West Victoria
  - 1.3 GORRLAS
  - 1.4 Bellarine Peninsula
  - 1.5 Gippsland Region
- 2. Significant Coastal Landscapes**
  - 2.1 Introduction
  - 2.2 Local, Regional & State Significance
  - 2.3 Visual Significance
  - 2.4 Determining Levels of Significance
  - 2.5 Supporting Evidence
  - 2.6 Evolution of Significance Methodology
  - 2.7 Community Opinion
  - 2.8 Significant Landscapes of Coastal Victoria
  - 2.9 Implications for this Study
  - 2.10 South West Victoria
  - 2.11 GORRLAS
  - 2.12 Bellarine Peninsula
  - 2.13 Gippsland Region
- 3. Protecting & Managing the Character & Significance of Coastal Landscapes**
  - 3.1 Introduction
  - 3.2 State Planning Policy Framework
  - 3.3 Landscape Management Guidelines
  - 3.4 Best Practice Policies
  - 3.5 The Significant Landscape Overlay
  - 3.6 Non Statutory Recommendations
  - 3.7 Outside this Study

**Acknowledgements**

**Maps included in this report:**

- Regional Landscape Character Types and Areas
- Regional Levels of Significance

**Acknowledgements**

**Introduction**

Landscape Character  
↓  
Significance + Change + Policy Gap = Action  
↑ ↗  
Community Values

- 1. Coastal Landscape Character**
  - 1.1 Coastal Landscape Character Types
  - 1.2 Coastal Landscape Character Areas
  - 1.3 Key Features
  - 1.4 Landscape Characteristics
  - 1.5 Settlements
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  - 1.7 Implications for this Study
- 2. Community Values**
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  - 2.2 Community Photographic Exercise
  - 2.3 Significant Landscapes Brochure
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  - 2.5 Implications for this Study
- 3. Landscape Significance**
  - 3.1 Visual Significance
  - 3.2 Supporting Evidence
  - 3.3 Determining Levels of Significance
  - 3.4 Significant Landscapes
  - 3.5 Implications for this Study
- 4. Change in the Landscape**
  - 4.1 Municipal Landscape Change
  - 4.2 Sensitivity to Change
  - 4.3 Management Considerations
  - 4.4 Future Character Directions
  - 4.5 Opportunities and Threats
  - 4.6 Landscape Management Objectives & Guidelines
  - 4.7 Implications for this Study

**Maps included in this report:**

- Landscape Character Types and Areas
- Aerial Photo
- Landform and Waterform (Topography)

**Appendices**

- Explanatory Character Area Analysis Paper
- Character Area Analysis Papers

**Acknowledgements**

**Introduction**

Landscape Character  
↓  
Significance + Change + Policy Gap = Action  
↑ ↗  
Community Values

- 1. Policy Gap**
  - 1.1 (Planning Scheme Analysis)
  - 1.2 Non Statutory Documents
  - 1.3 Implementation Options
  - 1.4 Adoption of this Study
  - 1.5 Implications for this Study
- 2. Action**
  - 2.1 Planning Scheme (Recommendations)
  - 2.2 Non-statutory Recommendations

**Maps included in this report:**

- Existing Zones
- Existing Overlays

**Appendices**

- Model SLO Schedule
- Package for each proposed SLO comprising:
  - Description of Boundary;
  - Boundary Map;
  - Boundary superimposed over Aerial Photograph;
  - Boundary superimposed over Existing Zones Map;
  - Proposed SLO Schedule



## 1. Coastal Landscape Character

The South Gippsland Shire is located approximately 100 kilometres south east of Melbourne and extends from the Venus Bay peninsula in the west to just beyond Port Welshpool in the east. Well known and notable landscape features of the shire include Wilson's Promontory, Cape Liptrap, Waratah Bay and Corner Inlet, with many of these areas protected by National Parks. Coastal townships of the shire include Venus Bay, Walkerville, Port Franklin and Port Welshpool.

### 1.1 Coastal Landscape Character Types

At the regional scale, the coastal areas of the shire can be divided into landscape Character Types based on broad areas of common physical, environmental and cultural characteristics. A professional assessment of landscape character underpinned this part of the study, focussing on objective distinctions between character types, and the relationship between landscape Character Types and their constituent Character Areas. The tasks that were undertaken as part of this stage are detailed in the **Background Report**.

A study of key landscape character elements including landform, waterform, vegetation and land use identified five Character Types in the South Gippsland Shire (shown on Map 1):

- Character Type 1: South Gippsland Coastal Plains
- Character Type 2: Bass Coast Cliffs
- Character Type 3: Strzelecki Highlands
- Character Type 4: South Gippsland Coastal Dunes
- Character Type 5: Wilsons Promontory Granite Coast

Established landscape classification mapping developed by Leonard and Hammond for the Forest Commission Victoria (*Landscape Character Types of Victoria*, 1984), and the current Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for

Australia (IBRA) (<http://www.deh.gov.au/parks/nrs/ibra/version5-1/index.html>) were also reviewed as part of the identification of coastal landscape Character Types. There was general agreement between these established classifications and the Character Types identified in this study. Where there was not, this is noted on the relevant **Character Area Analysis Paper**.

### 1.2 Coastal Landscape Character Areas

At a local scale, each Character Type has been divided into landscape Character Areas, which are separate geographical units within the same Character Type, or areas across which local conditions such as the density of settlement, pattern of viewing, or special landscape features vary.

In total, six coastal Character Areas have been identified (excluding National Parks). These are shown on the Landscape Character Types and Areas Map on page 6 and are illustrated in Figure 1:

- Character Area 1.3: Bunurong Coast and Hinterland
- Character Area 1.4: Tarwin Floodplain
- Character Area 1.5: Waratah Bay / Corner Inlet
- Character Area 2.3: Cape Liptrap
- Character Area 3.2: Welshpool Hills and Mount Hoddle
- Character Area 4.1: Venus Bay Dunes

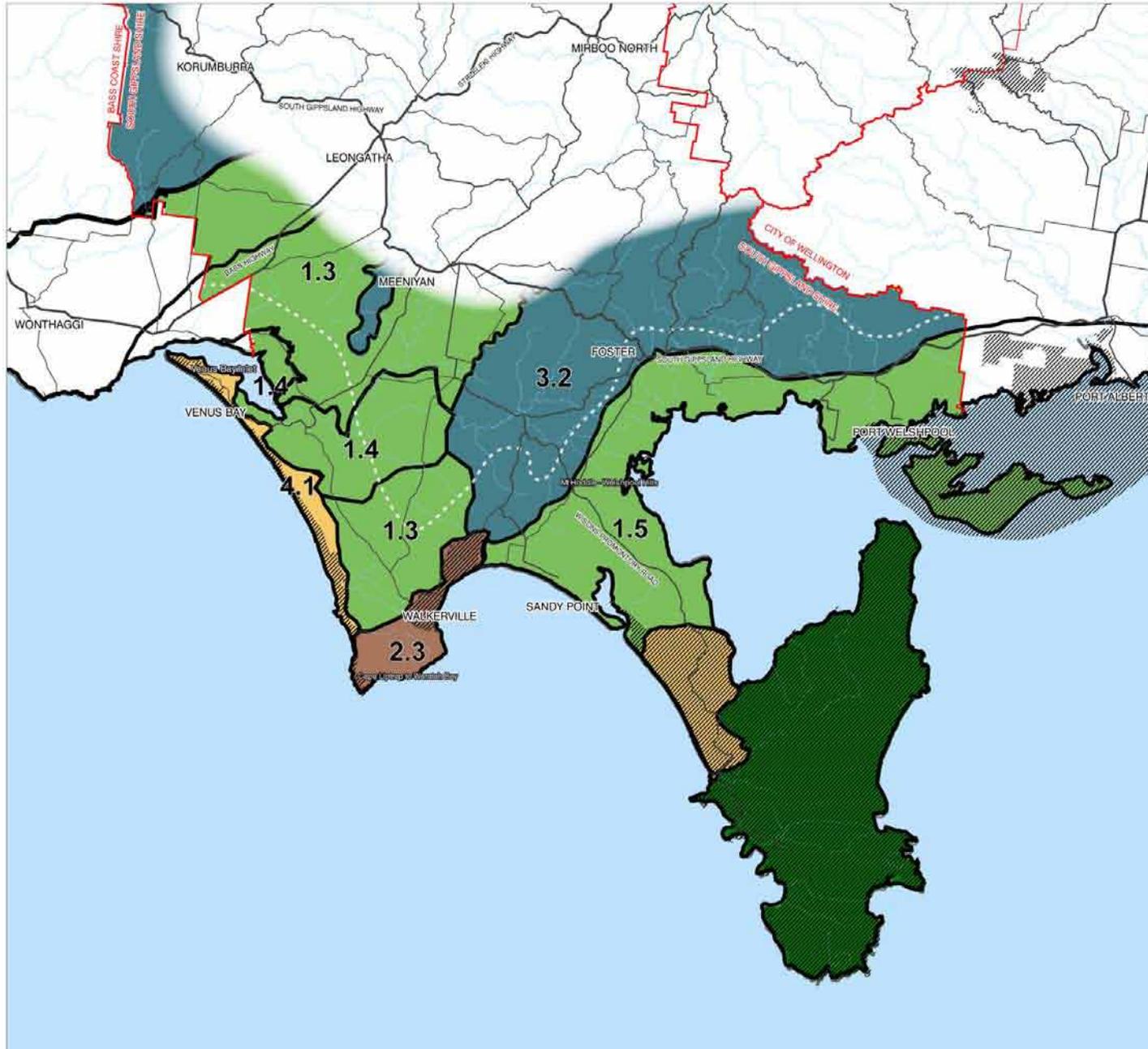
The characteristics of each are outlined in detail in the attached **Character Area Analysis Papers** (Appendix 2) that address the following specific issues for each Character Area:

- Key features
- Landscape characteristics
- Settlements
- Pattern of viewing
- Community and other identified values
- Landscape change and sensitivity to change



- Existing policies
- Opportunities and threats
- Management considerations
- Preferred future character
- Landscape management objectives and guidelines

An ***Explanatory Character Area Analysis Paper***, describing and explaining their contents is attached as Appendix 1.



**Legend**

**Landscape Character Types**

- South Gippsland Coastal Plains
- Bass Coast Cliffs
- Strezlecki Highlands
- South Gippsland Coastal Dunes
- Wilsons Promontory Granite Coast

**Character Areas**

1.1

**State and National Parks**  
(including Coastal and Regional parks)

**Roads**

**Hydrology**  
Watercourse  
Water body

**Municipal Boundary**

**Melbourne Metropolitan Area**  
including French Island

**Settlements**

**Inland extent of field survey / proposed Local Policy\***

\*This boundary encompasses an area that can be referred to as 'the coastal landscape' from the perspective of public viewing patterns (refer to the introduction for details). Desktop analysis has extended the Landscape Character Types inland beyond this line, as indicated.

**Study Area Boundaries**  
The study does not cover Metropolitan Melbourne or French Island.

**Landscape Types and Areas**  
South Gippsland Shire

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**Figure 1: Coastal Landscape Character Areas  
(South Gippsland Shire)**



1.1 Westernport Lowlands



1.3 Bunerong Coast and Hinterland



1.4 Tarwin Floodplain



1.5 Waratah Bay / Corner Inlet



2.3 Cape Liptrap



3.1 Bass Hills



3.2 Welshpool Hills and Mount Hoddle



4.1 Venus Bay Dunes



### 1.3 Key Features

The key features of the coastal landscapes of the South Gippsland Shire include:

- Dramatic and scenic coastal edge, including cliffs, rock stacks, high vegetated sand dunes, beaches and mudflats. The wild dunal coastline is largely free from development.
- Intact indigenous coastal vegetation communities dominating built form throughout the coastal edge and slopes to Waratah Bay.
- A near-coastal hinterland that remains largely undeveloped throughout offering outviews to local and distant landscape features.
- Mosaic of cleared and vegetated land throughout the Mt Liptrap Plateau.
- Expansive rolling hills and plains used for agriculture, interspersed by vegetation and settlements.
- Very flat and open topography providing contrast with and views to surrounding hills and sand dunes.
- Important water features including Anderson Inlet and the Tarwin River estuary, which is surrounded by native vegetation and is a valued scenic riverscape and recreational area.
- Expansive and scenic views to surrounding landscape features including Wilsons Promontory and the Strzelecki Range.
- Rolling rural character as a gateway to Wilsons Promontory.
- A sharp topographic contrast between coastal plains and hill slope contributing to the 'amphitheatre' setting of Corner Inlet.
- An undeveloped character across many of the prominent hill faces.

### 1.4 Landscape Characteristics

A municipal aerial photo and topographic map which follow this section illustrate the following landscape character elements that can be summarised as follows for the South Gippsland Shire:

#### Landform

The topography of the coastal hinterland of the shire ranges from flat to gently undulating with some areas of steep, dissected and rugged ranges. The coastal edge is also varied, with some parts characterised by low-energy beaches and mud flats with low cliffs up to 10 metres and some sections with large, steep dunes and extensive sandy beaches. Around Cape Liptrap, the undulating ridge and plateau slopes steeply to the sea creating a broad rocky headland with numerous outcrops and reefs and a small sandy embayment alternating with rocky landforms.

#### Waterform

At the southern coastal edge of the shire, Bass Strait is the dominant water feature. A number of small and large scenic inlets are sheltered by the seas of Bass Strait; the most important of these include Anderson Inlet, Shallow Inlet and Corner Inlet. Low energy inlets and swamps are the major water features with views across the water to Wilson Promontory being particularly important. Numerous farm dams and several minor creeks are present throughout the rural hinterland, many of which retain low riparian vegetation.

#### Vegetation

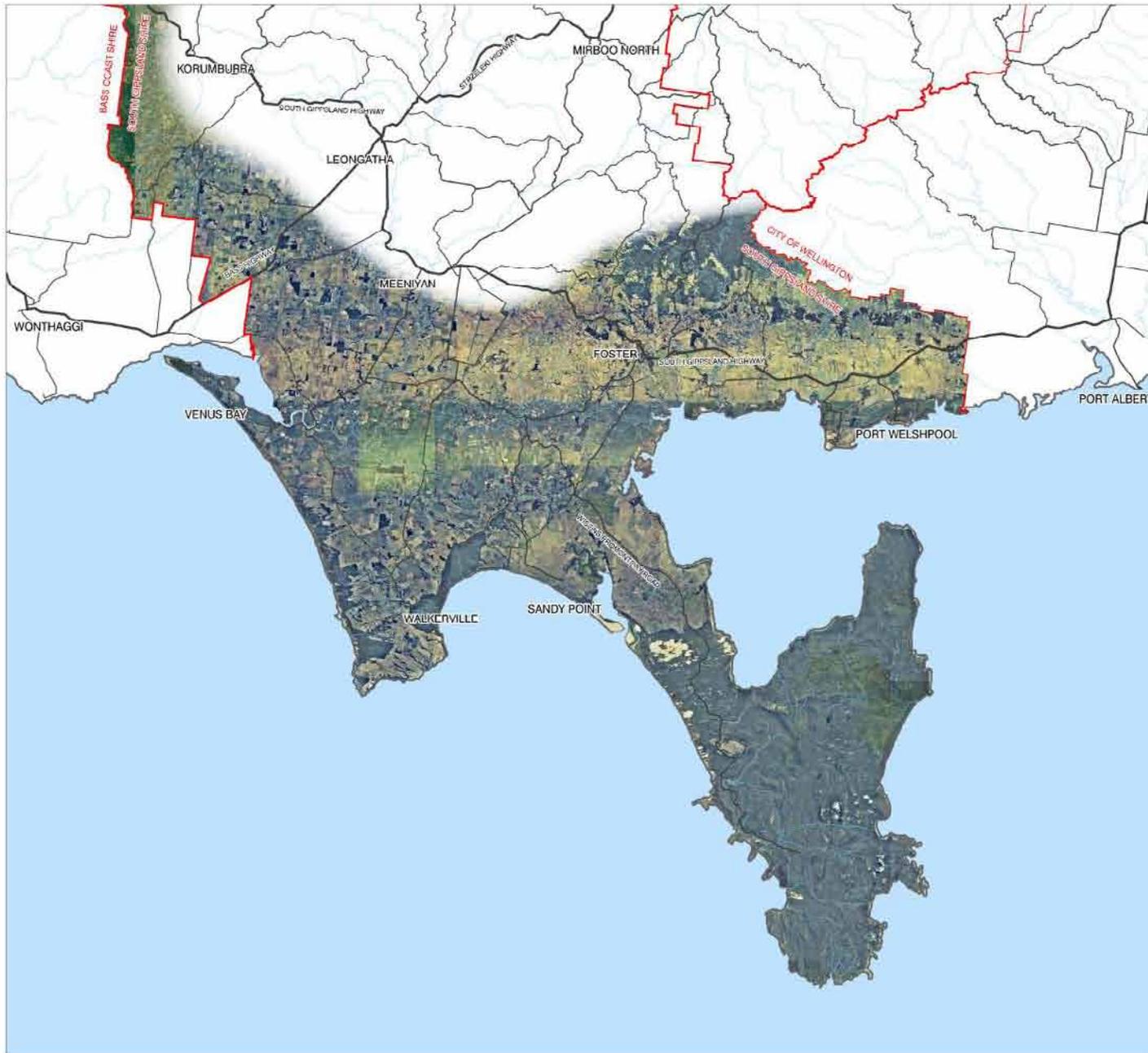
The coastal hinterland region of the shire has been largely cleared for pasture although some native vegetation is present in reserves and along roadsides. Vegetation at the coastal edge is varied, with saltmarsh vegetation occurring on mudflats around Corner Inlet, reedy wetland vegetation around estuaries and coastal heath and scrub vegetation throughout. The slopes to Waratah Bay including the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and environs of the townships are heavily vegetated with coastal forest including eucalypts, melaleuca



thickets and *Banksia spp.* Sclerophyll forests and woodland vegetation also occur in reserves and along watercourses.

## Land Use

Rural and pastoral land uses dominate throughout the shire with several medium-sized settlements, many of which are currently experiencing substantial residential growth. Homesteads and agricultural infrastructure are also scattered throughout the area at a low density. Large areas of the shire are reserved for nature conservation including the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and Wilsons Promontory National Park. Some former pastoral land in the area is being converted to lifestyle properties and tourist accommodation.



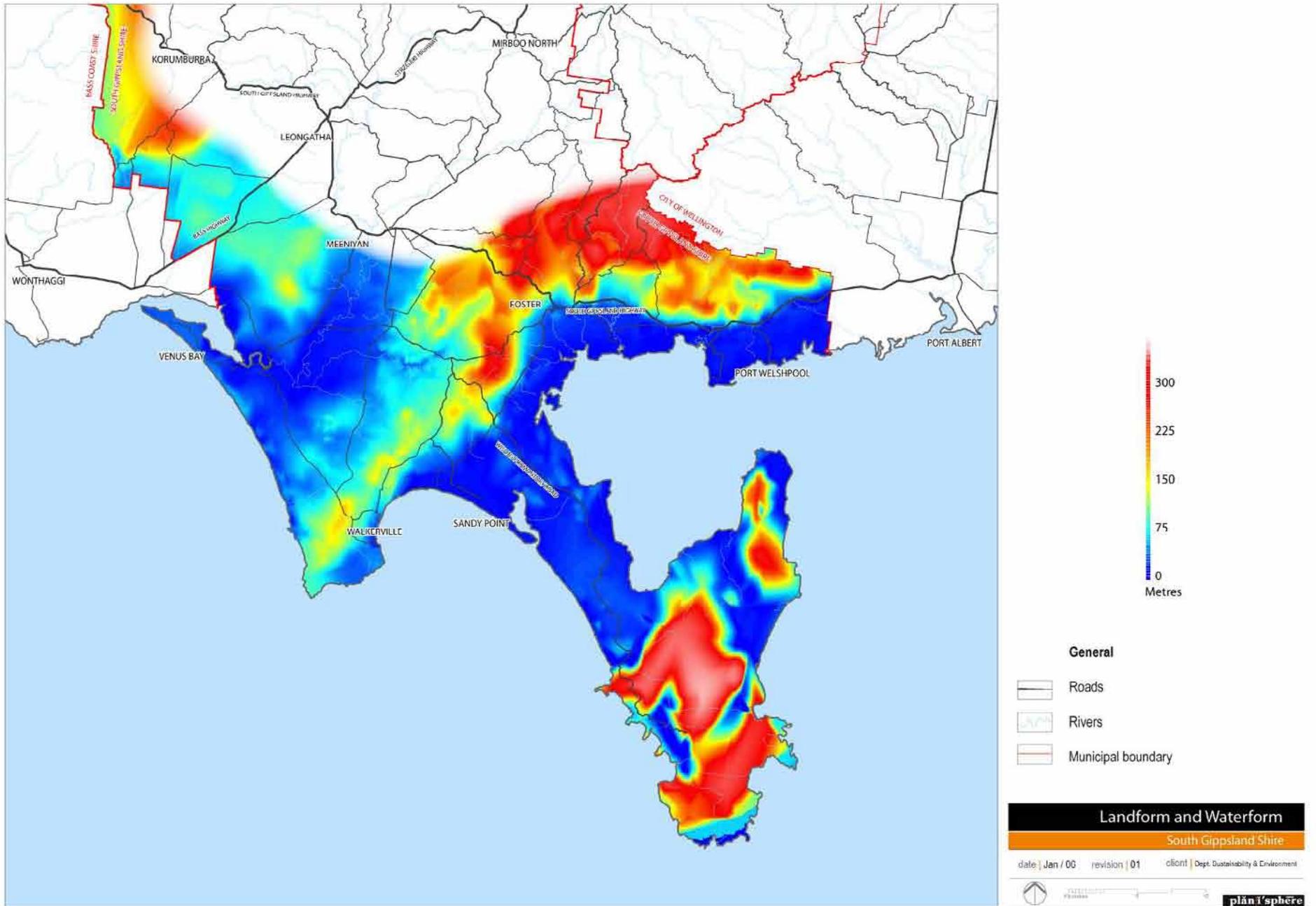
**General**

- Roads
- Rivers
- Municipal boundary

**Aerial Photograph**  
South Gippsland Shire

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## 1.5 Settlements

The focus of this study is the landscape between settlements. However, the following townships have been assessed at a broad scale in relation to their landscape character and relationship to the surrounding landform:

- Tarwin Lower
- Waratah Bay
- Sandy Point
- Toora / Welshpool
- Port Welshpool
- Walkerville / Walkerville South
- Foster
- Venus Bay

These assessments and landscape management guidelines in relation to their future management are included in the appended ***Character Area Analysis Papers***.

## 1.6 Pattern of Viewing

Views throughout the coastal region of the South Gippsland Shire are generally open and expansive, often terminating at important landscape features within and outside the shire. The key viewing locations within the shire include the Bass Highway, the Bass Coast Rail Trail, the South Gippsland Highway, Wilsons Promontory Road, and the many topographic rises and formal lookouts throughout. The most scenic and important views include those to Wilsons Promontory, the Bald Hills, Waratah Bay, the hills above Toora and the Cape Liptrap Lighthouse. Scenic panoramas are also available with views across the coastal plains and Corner Inlet to Wilsons Promontory as well as views across Waratah Bay to Wilsons Promontory. Inland views are frequently filtered by vegetation along roadsides or contained

by local topography. Because much of the Venus Bay coastline is difficult to access, viewing opportunities throughout this part of the shire are limited.

## 1.7 Implications for this Study

Landscape character is a key component of the Landscape Management Framework and a major input to various aspects of significance, change and the development of landscape management guidelines.

The Character Areas form the basis for describing the coastal character of the shire at a detailed level. It is from this underlying character that guidelines for appropriate development in the landscape can be derived. In each Character Area Analysis Paper the preferred future character and landscape management objectives and guidelines have been prepared to guide development decisions within the coastal areas of the shire.

The landscape character and pattern of viewing also help to identify the landscape features that are sensitive to change (this is expanded in Chapter 4 of this report).



## 2. Community Values

### 2.1 Community Questionnaire

At the outset of the project, a questionnaire was distributed throughout the study area. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine which areas of the coast are special to the Victorian community, what changes are occurring in coastal landscapes according to local people, and whether the community likes or dislikes those changes. Specifically, the questions included:

1. *What is special or significant about the landscape of the Victorian coast?*
2. *Is there one place on the Victorian coast that you think is particularly special or significant?*
3. *What are the features of that place that make it special or significant?*
4. *What changes have you noticed that are occurring along the coast? Are these positive or negative changes?*
5. *Is there one place on the Victorian coast that you think is unattractive or spoiled? Please describe?*

Respondents were asked which town they live in (or are closest to), and whether they represented one or more of the following groups:

- Local resident
- Land care / environment / coast care group
- Indigenous community
- Primary production / farming
- Other (please specify)

This allowed the returned questionnaires to be sorted into regional and municipal areas. A copy of the questionnaire and a summary table of all responses are appended to the **Background Report**.

## Findings

### Positive Features and Significant Places

Local residents noted that positive features of the coastal landscape of the South Gippsland Shire include low density housing, sweeping coastal views, the variety of beaches and mangrove habitats, undeveloped rural land, a good offering of recreational activities, undisturbed landscapes, the rugged coastline, sandy beaches, coastal vegetation, isolated places, scenic drives and extreme naturalness.

The broader community identified the entire coastline between Inverloch and Port Welshpool, the beach at Waratah Bay, Shallow Inlet, the Strzelecki foothills, Mount Hoddle and the Welshpool Hills, Venus Bay, Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, Anderson Inlet and Point Smythe as significant places within the shire.

### Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

The local community noted that negative changes that have occurred to the coastal landscape of the shire include high density development, high-intensity recreation such as waterskiing, erosion, damage to vegetation, inappropriate residential and recreational development, the location of housing on sand dunes, the development of wind farms, privatisation of the coastline, increasing industrial areas and uncontrolled development.

The wider community identified Corner Inlet, the Toora Hills and Venus Bay beaches as places that have been spoiled by pollution, wind turbines and views to wind turbines.

### 2.2 Community Photographic Exercise

A community photographic exercise was also undertaken as part of the study, to provide an insight into the local community's values in relation to scenery and landscapes, and to gain an understanding of which landscapes the local community believe are significant and, most importantly, what makes them significant.



Cameras were distributed on a regional, as opposed to municipal, basis, and though the results were not always specific to the South Gippsland Shire, the types of landscapes that were photographed and the explanations as to why, provide useful information for the future management of coastal landscapes locally.

Five disposable cameras were distributed to the following groups in the Gippsland Region:

- Friends of Walkerville
- Prom Coast Tourism
- Friends of the Prom
- Venus Bay Community Group
- Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (Cultural Heritage Program)

A photographic survey form accompanied the disposable cameras so that participants could write explanatory notes to accompany the photos. As part of the exercise, participants were asked to include photos that demonstrated each of the following:

- A. One photo from one place where they would take a visitor to show them the landscape of their area.
- B. One photo of a feature, place or view that they think is *significant* in their landscape and why they think it is significant.
- C. One photo of something they think is *scenic* or *beautiful* in their area and what makes it scenic or beautiful.
- D. One photo of a feature, place or view that they think is *unattractive* or *spoiled* and why they think it is unattractive or spoiled.

For the remaining photos, participants were asked to take photos of landscapes they liked or disliked, and explain why.

A copy of the photographic survey form is appended to the **Background Report**. A selection of the photographs taken by participants can be found in the **State Overview Report**.

## Findings

Following is a summary of the findings from the community photographic exercise in the Gippsland Region.

### **One photo from one place where they would take a visitor to show them the landscape of their area**

Photographs taken in response to where participants would take a visitor generally corresponded with a location that provides a general overview of the landscape in the area, featuring scenic views and/or a well known landscape feature.

### **One photo of a feature, place or view that they think is *significant* in their landscape and why they think it is significant**

Participant responses correlated mostly with photographs of locations that are scenically beautiful, are picturesque, or have social, cultural or environmental significance.

### **One photo of something they think is *scenic* or *beautiful* in their area and what makes it scenic or beautiful**

Participants chose scenic and beautiful locations based on the 'uniqueness' of the area, views, and the presence of environmental qualities particularly birdlife.

### **One photo of a feature, place or view that they think is *unattractive* or *spoiled* and why they think it is unattractive or spoiled**

Photographs of locations that participants felt were unattractive or spoiled were chosen for a number of reasons, predominantly relating to human impacts on the landscape. Some of the issues raised have the potential to be managed whereas others relate to more permanent impacts on the landscape.

### **Like and Dislikes**

The factors that participants liked about particular landscapes were related to locations that are 'natural' or unaffected by human impacts, have a variety of



landscape features, and include views to significant landscapes. Generally, landscapes that were considered to be negatively affected by human activity were the least liked. These included landscapes where structures ruin views or the environment has been severely degraded.

These findings from the community photographic exercise, and in particular the 'reasons for significance' proved useful in determining the significance criterion and methodology as outlined in Chapter 3 of this report.

## 2.3 Significant Landscapes Brochure

Following feedback from the community questionnaire and community photographic exercise, and combined with background research and field survey work, a map was developed that was the 'first go' at identifying the most significant coastal landscapes within the Gippsland Region.

The map was distributed throughout the Gippsland Region as a brochure seeking community input to further refine the preliminary significance areas shown on the map. As part of the exercise, the community was asked the following questions:

- *Do you agree that the landscapes shaded on the map are the most significant?*
- *Are there areas we have missed? If so, what makes the place (or places) significant to you?*
- *Are too many areas identified or are some areas too large? Should some be deleted?*

Again, the exercise was conducted at a regional, as opposed to municipal, level. However, as the summary of the findings below indicates, a number of significant coastal landscapes within the South Gippsland Shire were identified and considered by the community.

The significance brochure for the Gippsland Region is appended to the **Background Report**.

## Findings

Approximately 50% of respondents agreed with the areas highlighted on the Significance Map, however, many respondents commented that certain areas should be added to the map.

Those respondents who disagreed with the areas highlighted on the Significance Map generally did so because they felt that either certain areas were missing or not enough areas had been included. Some of these respondents suggested that the entire coast should be highlighted as significant.

Only three respondents felt that the areas highlighted were sufficient and did not request further areas to be added.

Many people suggested that areas should be added on the basis of their environmental or historical values, rather than visual landscape qualities. Many respondents suggested areas based on their significance as animal habitats or historical sites.

The community suggested additional potentially significant areas within the South Gippsland Shire including:

- Inlet areas between Port Welshpool and McLoughlins Beach
- Coastline between Waratah Bay and Sandy Point
- Scenic hills north of the South Gippsland Highway denoted by the ridge line of hills beyond Welshpool
- The coastline from Darby River to Shallow Inlet to Walkerville
- Duck Point

Other areas were considered, but excluded from further analysis because they are townships, or are areas of public land such as State or National Parks.

A summary table of all community responses is appended to the **Background Report**.



## 2.4 Other Identified Values

Established values relating to landscape were also determined from a variety of other sources, including:

- Existing surveys and research (e.g. Victorian Coastal Council Market research)
- Quantitative perceptions studies from other locations (e.g. Great Ocean Road Region and South Australia)
- Other evidence for valued landscapes (e.g. artistic inspiration, tourism brochures, National Trust landscapes etc.)

Within the South Gippsland Shire, the following established valued landscapes are of particular note:

- Venus Bay and environs is known to have high Aboriginal significance with extensive known occurrences of Aboriginal heritage sites throughout, particularly on the coastal edge and near dune and inlet edges.
- Corner Inlet including 'The Islands' at Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Park is an internationally significant wetland recognised by the Ramsar Convention.
- Corner Inlet is listed on the Register of the National Estate for plant species and plant communities that are of high biogeographic significance. Sourced historic sites within the area are listed by Heritage Victoria.
- Cape Liptrap identified in the Regional Forest Agreement Comprehensive Regional Assessment Aesthetics report for being a diverse landscape with windswept beaches, cliffs, heathlands and sheltered gullies.
- Cape Liptrap land unit identified in Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast as a table-top sedimentary unit with a patch work of pastures and bushland with spectacular views.
- Historic built form landscape features including the Cape Liptrap Lighthouse and lime kilns at Walkerville.
- The Corner Inlet 'amphitheatre' was identified by members of the study Reference Group as an important landscape setting.

- Several coastal landforms of geological significance, including Point Smythe.

## 2.5 Implications for this Study

The identification of community values about coastal landscapes allowed the study team to refine the methodology for assessing the significance of landscapes, including formulation of the significance criterion and supporting evidence categories. The level of importance attributed by the community to 'natural' or 'untouched' landscapes was of particular note, and has been included in the significance criterion.

The results of the work on landscape significance are contained in the following chapter.

Local community knowledge also helped in refining and finalising the landscape Character Types and Character Areas, and feedback regarding positive and negative changes in the landscape was considered when developing the Landscape Management Guidelines.



## 3. Landscape Significance

### 3.1 Introduction

The interface between the land and the sea is one of the most important manifestations of a landscape 'edge' – the boundary between two landscape types – as referred to in the 'significance criterion' (detailed later in this chapter). The coastline is expressed topographically as beaches, cliffs, dunes, wetlands, estuaries and other important and highly valued landscape features, most if not all of which could be considered visually significant in their local context at least. In fact, when any stretch of coastline is considered in comparison with its inland hinterland, it is likely to be judged significant. Therefore it has been concluded as part of this study that every non-urban part of the Victorian coast is at least locally significant. The response to the Significance Brochure provides evidence that there is widespread community support for this judgement.

### 3.2 Local, Regional and State Significance

This Study has assessed the landscape significance of each non-urban part of the coast, considered in relation to every other stretch of coast. Relative significance is important because it was a factor in considering whether additional controls on development were needed – in other words, whether more classes of development should require a permit, and whether more aspects of a development should be regulated.

This determination of whether additional controls were required was initiated by applying the Landscape Management Framework, which is explained in detail in the **Background Report**, and summarised in the introduction of this report. Recommended additional controls are outlined in detail in each of the **Municipal Implementation Toolkits** prepared as part of this study.

The Study has concluded that every coastal landscape designated as having regional or state significance, other than national or state parks, should be recognised by a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO).

SLOs are the appropriate planning tool to protect landscapes of significance. Some Councils have already protected landscapes in this way, and others may seek to do so in the future. The primary focus of this study has been on identifying and protecting landscapes considered to be of regional and state significance.

It should be noted that although some coastal landscapes are potentially nationally significant, it was concluded that a significance rating above state significance would be difficult to justify, given the state context of this Study.

### 3.3 Visual Significance

A single criterion has been used to assess whether a landscape is visually significant for the purposes of this study:

***The landscape is significant for its visual qualities, including landform features, views, edges or contrasts, and for its predominantly natural or undeveloped character, in which development is absent or clearly subordinate to natural landscape characteristics.***

Visual significance has been determined with reference to the 'landscape components' referred to in the criterion: landform features; views; edges or contrasts; and natural or undeveloped character. These have been rated as having moderate, high or exceptional visual qualities, as shown below:

#### Landform Features

A topographical feature or landmark such as a headland or a volcanic cone that provides contrast with the surrounding landscape.





	Moderate Visual Qualities	High Visual Qualities	Exceptional Visual Qualities
	← = =	= = =	= = = →
Landform features	If one or more of the landscape components is rated as having <b>moderate</b> visual qualities, then the landscape is considered to be of <b>Local Significance</b> .  NB: It is considered that every non-urban part of the Victorian coastline is of at least <b>Local Significance</b> . Therefore every landscape will have a minimum of one or more visual significance categories rated as having at least <b>moderate</b> visual qualities.	If one or more of the landscape components is rated as having <b>high</b> visual qualities, then the landscape is considered to be of <b>Regional Significance</b> .	If one or more of the landscape components is rated as having <b>exceptional</b> visual qualities, then the landscape is considered to be of <b>State Significance</b> .
Views			
Edges or contrasts			
Natural or undeveloped character			
Supporting Evidence	Further confirmed by supporting evidence.	Further confirmed by supporting evidence.	Further confirmed by supporting evidence.
Level of Significance	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>State</b>

### 3.5 Supporting Evidence

The level of significance was further confirmed by consideration of the 'supporting evidence' (see table) categories, though supporting evidence did not contribute to determining the levels of visual significance. The supporting evidence comprised other elements, as opposed to visual qualities, that supported, but did not determine, in its own right, a landscape's significance. The assessment of supporting evidence for landscapes classified as having

regional or state significance is summarised in the *Supporting Evidence Assessment Tables* appended to the **Background Report**. The supporting evidence categories were:

Exemplar landscape: How representative is the landscape of a landscape character type?

Scarce landscape: How uncommon, rare or endangered is the landscape character type or area?

Iconic landscape: Is the landscape instantly recognisable as a place that represents the valued qualities of the Victorian coast? *Example sources: Artworks, tourism brochures, other publications etc.*

Documented cultural / heritage value: Does the landscape have documented cultural / heritage value? *Example sources: Local planning scheme Heritage Overlay, AAV register, Victorian Heritage Register, Register of the National Estate, National Trust Register etc.*

Documented environmental value: Does the landscape have documented environmental value? *Example sources: Local planning scheme Environmental Significance Overlay, Ramsar Convention etc.*

Established social / community value: Does the landscape have established social / community value?

Visitor attraction: How important is the landscape as a visitor destination?

### 3.6 Significant Landscapes

The significant coastal landscapes of the South Gippsland Shire are shown on Map 4, at a regional scale.

Statements of Significance have been prepared for these landscapes where they are of regional significance or higher.

The intended purpose and use of the Significance Statements is:

- As a complete statement of the values that make the landscape significant.



- Along with the 'Significance Assessment', able to be used to justify the significance and significance level of the landscape, as well as the use of the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO), where relevant.
- Able to form the first part of the SLO Schedule for that landscape (i.e. Statement of nature and key elements of landscape), followed by the landscape character objective(s) to be achieved, permit requirement and decision guidelines.

An explanation as to the structure of the Statements of Significance is contained in both the **State Overview Report** and the **Background Report**.

The significant coastal landscapes and their Statements of Significance are as follows:

### Regional Significance: Venus Bay Peninsula and Anderson Inlet (part)

The coastline at Venus Bay is a wild and windswept landscape of high coastal dunes and lonely beaches, providing a scenic backdrop for Anderson Inlet. Visually, it is a landscape of regional significance.

The dominant landform in this area is the high coastal dune system that rises to 60 metres in height and stretches for up to one kilometre inland. These dunes contrast with the calmer waters of Anderson Inlet and the flat swampy hinterland, and this scene provides a scenic outlook for the township of Inverloch. The landscape is largely natural and undeveloped with the exception of the currently contained housing settlement areas of Venus Bay. Vegetation is indigenous with an important stand at Point Smythe at the mouth of the inlet.

The landscape is highly significant for its Aboriginal cultural heritage values, with many known sites scattered throughout the dunal landscape. It is also of high community value for its scenic qualities and recreation opportunities, including fishing, walking and boating.

### State Significance: Cape Liptrap to Waratah Bay

Cape Liptrap and surrounds is a diverse coastal landscape of state significance, comprising spectacular views and dramatic rock formations.

This is a remote and natural landscape with few settlements and long stretches of sandy beach, which is home to intact heathland and coastal forest communities. The area includes spectacular geological complexes with ancient Cambrian rocks and limestone cliffs, and remarkable landforms at Cape Liptrap and at Arch Rock. There are also unforgettable ocean views from high points such as the Cape Liptrap lighthouse, particularly across Waratah Bay to the dramatic profile of Wilsons Promontory.

In addition to its visual qualities, the landscape has significant cultural heritage and environmental values. The area is recorded on the Victorian Heritage Register and is recognised by the National Trust for relics of the lime burning industry at Walkerville South, with the ruins of several kilns still evident at the base of the cliffs. The area is also notable for shipwrecks off shore, and the remains of many Aboriginal camps with middens containing shellfish, flints and charcoal. The fauna and flora of the area are also highly valued, with some 270 species of flowering plants including 27 orchids and many threatened species.

### Regional Significance: Corner Inlet Amphitheatre

Mount Hoddle and the Welshpool Hills are prominent landforms that provide an amphitheatre setting for Corner Inlet and Wilsons Promontory, with the entire landscape unit being of regional significance.

The collection of mountains and hills provides an impressive backdrop to this tranquil scene that changes constantly under different light and tidal regimes. High points in the landscape offer expansive views across the coastal plains to Wilsons Promontory, whose looming shape dominates the scene.

The area is also of high environmental significance. It is identified by the Ramsar Convention as a bird habitat of international importance, and is listed on the Register of the National Estate for its plant life, which is of bio-



geographic significance. Aboriginal middens are plentiful along the shores of Corner Inlet, adding cultural heritage to the landscape's layers of significance.

### **State Significance: Wilsons Promontory**

Wilsons Promontory, or "The Prom" to most Victorians, is an outstanding landscape of state significance (and potentially national significance in that context) for its dramatic landforms, wilderness qualities, and spectacular views. It is the most southerly point on the Australian mainland and is a designated National Park.

The whole promontory is cloaked in dense and diverse vegetation ranging from temperate rainforest, to swamps and heathlands. The coastline comprises many and varied landscape features, from granite boulders tumbling into the sea, to the whitest of sandy beaches set in remote and secluded coves. Rugged mountains close to the coast offer stunning views back to the mainland and out into the wild waters of Bass Strait, and for the surrounding coast, Wilsons Promontory is a looming presence providing a dramatic backdrop to views across Waratah Bay and Corner Inlet. As one of Victoria's earliest National Parks, the Promontory has remained almost entirely undeveloped and now offers a near wilderness experience for its many local and overseas visitors.

Wilsons Promontory and its thirteen offshore islands are listed on the Register of the National Estate for its landscape qualities and scenery. The light station at the southernmost tip of the promontory is particularly important for its complex of historical buildings that are grouped around a stone-walled space, with the lighthouse as the focus for this axis. There are also numerous middens and other significant Aboriginal sites in the area. The Prom, an iconic landscape, features widely in tourism publications, artworks and photography.

### **State Significance: Nooramunga Coast and Islands (part)**

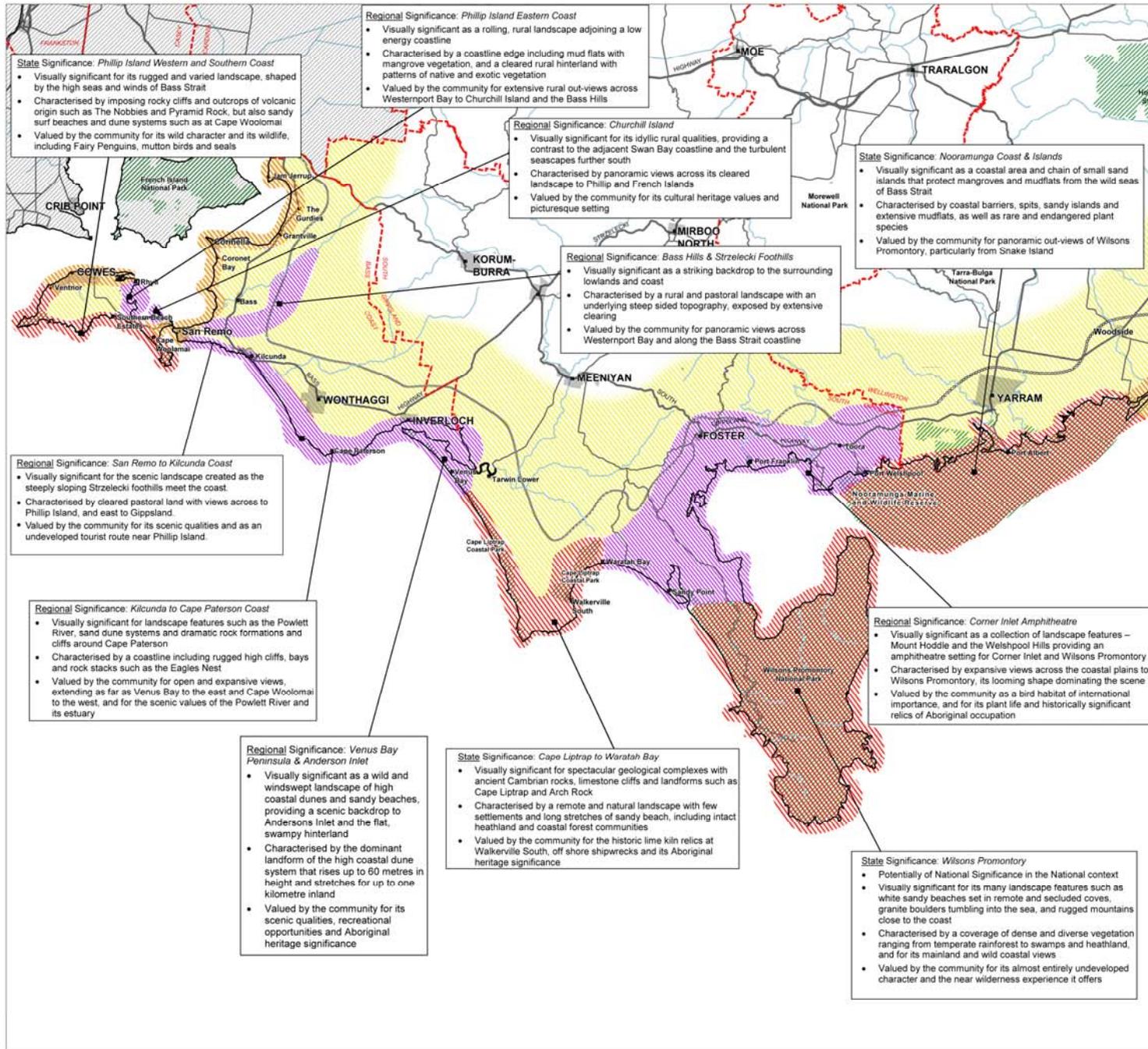
The Nooramunga Coast and Islands landscape is of state significance for its visual qualities, including a jagged coastline of mangroves and mudflats, and a

chain of sandy islands that protect the southern coast from the wild seas of Bass Strait.

The islands themselves are generally devoid of development, with campsites and walking tracks the only evidence of post contact human presence. The 'untouched' nature of the off shore landscape adds to the significance of the expansive and scenic views that are available to surrounding features, including Wilsons Promontory.

The area is identified by the Ramsar Convention as an internationally significant wetland, and is on the Register of the National Estate for its coastal barriers, spits, sandy islands and extensive mudflats, as well as rare and endangered plant species. It is also protected as a marine and wildlife reserve, and is well known for its Aboriginal significance, evidenced by numerous shell middens along the coast.

A table showing the 'evolution' of these significant landscapes (from the identification of landscapes on the Significance Brochure to proposed SLOs) is appended to the **Background Report**.



### Legend

- Study Area
- Inland extent of field survey / proposed Local Policy
- Coastal, National and State Parks
- Roads
- Watercourse
- Waterbody
- Municipal Boundary
- Not in Study Area
- Settlements

### Landscape Significance

- Local Significance  
It has been determined that every part of the Victorian Coast is at least locally significant.
- Regional Significance
- State Significance

The delineation of areas of significance on this map is indicative and approximate only. Due to the small scale of this map the delineation of significance continues across the urban areas of settlements, however urban areas are excluded from the scope and recommendations of this study.

The map depicts areas of visual landscape significance. Other aspects of significance, eg. environmental, cultural heritage etc. have been considered, but have not contributed to determining the levels of significance.

All areas of regional and state significance (outside National and State parks) are recommended for inclusion in the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO).

0 4 8 kilometres

## Significant Coastal Landscapes

### Gippsland Region (Part 1)

date | April / 06 revision | 02 client | Department of Sustainability and Environment



### 3.7 Implications for this Study

The landscapes identified as *significant* were a major input to the development of planning scheme and other recommendations i.e. the greater the significance of an area, the more likely it was that additional statutory controls were considered, although other factors, such as the adequacy of existing planning scheme provisions and the extent to which the landscape was under threat, were also taken into account.

This process is articulated in the 'landscape framework' that is explained in detail in the **Background Report** and is summarised in the introduction to this report. The outstanding input to the landscape framework 'formula' (landscape *change*) is discussed in the following chapter.



### 3 Change in the Landscape

Landscape character is a product of, and is affected by, changes that occur within the landscape. The aim of this study is to manage the *rate*, *scale* and *type* of landscape change, in accordance with the desires for the character of the landscape into the future.

Some types of change are detrimental to both the character and what residents and visitors expect or desire for the future of that landscape e.g. a large industrial development within a scenic vista. Other changes contribute to the character e.g. variations to patterns and colours in natural and agricultural landscapes across seasons. Others changes still, are the product of efforts by members of the community to improve landscapes e.g. revegetation of degraded sites.

This study has analysed anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape for each Character Area within the South Gippsland Shire, and these are addressed in detail in the **Character Area Analysis Papers**. However, at a municipal level it is relevant to review both the development pattern occurring (or expected to occur) across the shire, and the relative sensitivity of different types of landscapes to developments and ongoing landscape changes. These are outlined in the following sections of this chapter.

#### 4.1 Municipal Landscape Change

Ongoing changes to the landscape of the South Gippsland Shire include:

- Dynamic and changing coastal landscape including mobile dunes and blow-outs.
- Seasonal and ongoing variations in agricultural practices.
- Feature planting around new residences and homesteads.
- Dynamic and changing low-lying coastal landforms including coastal spits and mangrove islands

- Revegetation through active rehabilitation works by landowners and community groups, and natural regrowth of pasture.
- Clearing of established plantations, including some in prominent locations and establishment of some new plantations.

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the South Gippsland Shire include:

- South Gippsland Shire is projected to experience moderate population increase in the next 30 years.
- Rapid uptake of available residential land in coastal areas of Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Shires likely to push demand for coastal living into South Gippsland.
- Significant increase in coastal land values and increasing rural land values driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism visitation.
- Previously undeveloped subdivided lots (e.g. Promontory Views Estate).
- Foster is a designated growth area in the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.

Development trends and pressures known in or likely to occur in the shire include:

- Potential pressure for large scale subdivisions and 'resort-style' residential developments associated with marinas and golf courses, often in locations with scenic outviews.
- Pressure for development of tourism facilities in rural areas between settlements.
- Pressure for release of land for residential development particularly near the coastal edge throughout the Shire, and in rural areas adjoining existing settlements.
- Residential hobby farms within access to Anderson Inlet and the Tarwin River estuary.



- Subdivision of large pastoral landholdings for rural living and 'hobby farms'.
- Development of currently undeveloped lots in estates around Venus Bay
- The South Gippsland Shire is a moderate wind resource area and exposed topographies are currently (and might be expected to continue to be) subject to investigation for wind energy facilities.

## 4.2 Sensitivity to Change

The 'sensitivity to change' of landscapes relates to their ability to absorb different types of development, without altering the character or significance of the landscape. Sensitivity is a factor of the environmental and physical characteristics (e.g. vegetation and topography), the types of change or development likely to occur, and from where and how a landscape is viewed. For example, in the case of residential development, in landscapes of varied topography and vegetation, dwellings can be sited among vegetation, or nestled into slopes without substantially altering the valued landscape character, therefore making such landscapes 'less sensitive'. On the other hand, in a flat open landscape, or steeply sloping vegetated hillside, development of a dwelling would be much more conspicuous, and more likely to impact on character (either by being visible itself or requiring the removal of vegetation). Therefore, these types of landscapes are of 'higher sensitivity'.

The types and locations of landscapes that are most sensitive to development are outlined for each Character Area in the **Character Area Analysis Papers**. This analysis is based on the ability of the landscape to accommodate the developments existing and likely occur in the Character Area. Key inputs to this analysis included the environmental and physical characteristics of the Character Area (e.g. whether there is varying topography which affects visibility, or the type and density of vegetation cover), the existing pattern of viewing, and, broadly, the kinds of landscape changes anticipated.

Across the South Gippsland Shire, the coastline is generally sensitive to landscape changes such as removal of vegetation and the introduction of highly visible built form. The coastal edge in the western part of the shire is sensitive to any form of development due to its steep topography and

vegetated dune slopes that are prominent and contrast strongly with surrounding landscapes. The eastern coastal areas of the shire that surround Corner Inlet are largely open and flat, with a predominantly natural character. This part of the shire also provides important views to Wilsons Promontory. All of these characteristics make it particularly sensitive to large scale built elements that would contrast against the natural character or interrupt important views. Hinterland areas are often hilly but open due to their dominance of pastoral land uses. While the topography and existing vegetation can be utilised to reduce the impact of built form, landscapes close to roads and key viewing opportunities are still highly sensitive to built changes.

## 4.3 Management Considerations

For each coastal landscape Character Area within the South Gippsland Shire, the key issues for managing change in the landscape and possible solutions have been prepared. These are the first step towards developing a *Future Character Directions* statement for each area. The management considerations are outlined in the attached **Character Area Analysis Papers** and can be summarised for the shire as follows:

- Protect and enhance indigenous roadside vegetation, particularly where it can be used as a buffer to development.
- Retain substantial stands of indigenous vegetation as key character elements at roadsides and in townships and encourage the further use of indigenous plantings amongst pasture.
- Protect cultural vegetation elements that positively contribute to the character, including exotic windbreaks and feature planting around homesteads.
- Maintain extensive rural character outside settlements by siting new development long distances apart, back from roads and amongst vegetation. Large-scale built development should be sited close to existing built areas to avoid dominance of built form over the open pastoral hinterland.



- Contain linear residential expansion of settlements and strictly control the design and siting of dwellings, particularly adjacent to public areas to minimise visual intrusion of development.
- Large scale infrastructure should avoid prominent locations and be sited out of the coastal viewshed wherever possible.
- Development on private land adjoining the coast should be set back from the cliff top / coast so as to retain a dominant natural character and views to coastal and near-coastal hinterland features in absence of built development.
- Encourage development of dwellings and other buildings to be tucked into the inland rolling topography and away from prominent viewing locations.
- Protect the rural character and views throughout the 'gateway' to Wilsons Promontory by restricting linear urban sprawl or the cluttering of built development, particularly in landscapes visible from Foster–Promontory Road.
- The natural character of the low mangrove edge at Corner Inlet should be protected from built structures that clutter or detract from this natural character.

#### 4.4 Future Character Directions

A *Future Character Directions* statement has been prepared for each landscape Character Area within the shire. These statements describe the desired directions for managing the rate, scale and type of landscape change appropriate for each area, and reflect both the local community's values and aspirations for that landscape, as well as the study team's assessment of appropriate places for landscape change based on landscape characteristics and sensitivity.

A municipal wide *Future Character Directions* statement has also been prepared, outlining a future vision for all coastal landscapes within the shire:

*Throughout the shire the integrity of the coastline will be maintained by containing development to existing settlements, and ensuring that built form*

*and structures do not visually intrude into natural coastal edges. Development will be managed to retain extensive natural coastal environments including beaches, salt marsh, mangrove mud flats and dune coasts.*

*In rural areas, development will be set back from viewing corridors and among native vegetation so as to protect the scenic and open views to Wilsons Promontory and the Strzelecki Range. Development will also be restricted from intruding into scenic vistas near the coast, especially between Cape Liptrap and Walkerville.*

*The coastal hinterland of the shire will continue to be dominated by an open rural character, adjoining an undeveloped coastal edge offering outviews to scenic coastal features free of built development. Parts of the municipality will become increasingly vegetated with local species extending from bushland reserves, along roadsides and watercourses, and into open rural land.*

#### 4.5 Opportunities and Threats

A list of opportunities and threats to achieving the preferred future character of the coastal landscapes of the shire have also been identified. These have been summarised for the shire, based on the detailed opportunities and threats that have been prepared for each Character Area. The list of opportunities and threats for each Character Area contributed to the preparation of the *Landscape Management Objectives and Guidelines*.

##### Opportunities

- Strengthen vegetation at the edges of settlements to improve the interface between rural and urban areas.
- Protect and enhance roadside and riparian vegetation with indigenous species.
- Progressive revegetation of rural land adjoining coastal reserves.
- Increasing native vegetation cover in conjunction with new developments by incorporating appropriate landscaping which use indigenous species.



- Siting development back from viewing locations, amongst exotic feature planting or below the slopes of the inland topographic backdrop.
- Encouraging the increased use of indigenous vegetation in cleared areas as landscaping for new and existing built developments, as shelter-belts in pasture, and as revegetation of degraded landscapes.
- Mirroring traditional homestead structures by using exotic feature planting and wind breaks to soften buildings and structures.

#### Threats

- Dense development throughout the residentially zoned areas impacting on the vegetated and dune character.
- Built structures sited in prominent locations and / or without vegetative screening creating cluttered appearance on the slopes and dunes visible from the coast and hinterland.
- Uncontrolled vehicle access to coastal reserves and destabilisation of the landform, loss of vegetation and destruction of natural character.
- Ribbon development along roadsides, blocking outviews and creating a cluttered appearance.
- Urban expansion of coastal settlements beyond established settlement boundaries.
- Development close to the coast which alters natural character, including intrusive structures across beaches and mudflats.
- Cluttering of the rural landscape with smaller scale residential hobby farms and residences sited close to roads or large-scale resort-style residential developments.
- Destruction of environmental and scenic values of riparian vegetation through poor management.
- Intensive development along the coastal strip, dominating the low and subtle natural character of Corner Inlet mangrove coast and the Waratah Bay dunes.

- Residential and tourism development in private land adjoining scenic landforms and in vistas from roads.

## 4.6 Landscape Management Objectives and Guidelines

*Landscape Management Objectives and Guidelines* have been prepared for each coastal landscape Character Area within the South Gippsland Shire. These are included in the attached **Character Area Analysis Papers**. The objectives describe how to achieve the Future Character Directions and correlate with a set of more detailed design guidelines prepared to manage development, control negative change and protect and/or strengthen the valued landscape qualities of the area.

It is intended that the objectives and guidelines be included in local policy. The detailed recommendations in relation to this initiative are included in the *South Gippsland Shire Municipal Implementation Toolkit*. It is also intended that these more detailed, place-based guidelines be used in association with the whole of coast *Best Practice Policies* that have been prepared for all coastal landscapes of Victoria. The Best Practice Policies are included in the **State Overview Report**.

## 4.7 Implications for this Study

Known development pressures and the relative sensitivity of coastal landscapes to these and other changes are essential factors contributing to the identification of priority areas for additional controls. Where there are changes or pressures that negatively affect landscape character or significance, there is the expectation that there will be some control or management, either indirectly or directly through the planning system.

Future character directions provide a basis from which to manage the rate and scale of landscape change and, along with the landscape management objectives and guidelines, are central to the development of planning scheme provisions.

# EXPLANATORY CHARACTER AREA ANALYSIS PAPER



## APPENDIX ONE

## # Character Area Name

*A brief description highlighting the overall character, features and views experienced in the Character Area and its location within the study regions. It is derived from the study team's field notes and analysis of background physical data, and aims to capture the valued elements identified by members of the community through the questionnaire and disposable cameras exercise (where relevant). Accompanied by four photos depicting important elements of the Character Area.*

### Key Features

*Short statements identifying elements that make the Character Area distinctive. These are the places, views and features noted in the field survey or highlighted by members of local communities and visitors as the defining characteristics of the landscape. They are the sort of things that, should they be lost or changed in some way, the Area would not be the same.*

### Landscape Characteristics

*A description of existing landscape characteristics in the Character Area obtained from field notes and background physical data set out under the following headings:*

- *landform;*
- *waterform;*
- *vegetation; and*
- *land use.*

### Settlements

#### Settlement name

*An overview of the character and setting of key coastal and hinterland settlements in the Character Area. Settlements are often the locations of greatest divergence from the established character and may be under*

*substantial pressure for further change or expansion. As such the way the settlement sits within the surrounding landscape (including locations of particularly conspicuous development) is described in greater detail in this section. The descriptions also include overall characteristics of each settlement, and discuss the backdrop to viewing from the town. A photo of the settlement is often provided to assist in description.*

### Pattern of Viewing

*A description of how and from where the landscape of the Character Area is viewed and the kinds of views that are experienced. The existing pattern of viewing is defined by the major viewing corridors (e.g. roads, railways, walking tracks, scenic drives), the location of settlements and public use areas, and the occurrence of key viewing opportunities such as lookouts, or 'gateway' views defined by topography.*

*Types of views are described in terms of landscape features or vistas that draw the eye (e.g. prominent landforms), whether views are open or enclosed (e.g. by vegetation or topography) and the backdrop to viewing. This section also indicates how the Character Area is viewed from adjacent Character Areas.*

### Landscape Change

*Dot point list of anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape of the Character Area resulting from:*

- *dynamic and changing landscape features (e.g. evolving coastal landscapes);*
- *existing land use activity (e.g. seasonal variations in agriculture or harvesting of established forestry plantations etc.);*
- *landscape improvement (e.g. revegetation of degraded river valleys);*
- *development pattern (e.g. expansion of townships, increased rural residential living); and*
- *existing state / local government policies likely to affect change (e.g. constraints on type or location of development, release of land for expansion of settlements, policies to encourage development).*

## Sensitivity to Change

An assessment of the ability of landscapes within the Character Area to accommodate change without altering the valued characteristics of the Area. This is a professional judgement based on analysis of the environmental and physical characteristics of the Character Area, the types of change or development expected to occur, and the existing pattern of viewing. Sensitivity is rated as high, moderate or low. For example, landscapes less sensitive to residential development might include those in which dwellings can be sited amongst vegetation, or nestled into slopes of low hillsides without being prominent in the viewed landscape. The level of existing alteration to the landscape is also a factor for consideration.

## Community Values

A review of the what members of interested communities **like**, **dislike** and consider **significant** about the landscape of the Character Area. Inputs include:

- locations or features within the Character Area photographed as part of the community photographic exercise;
- landscapes identified as significant by respondents to the community questionnaire; and
- the landscape elements described in responses to the community questionnaire or photographic exercise as contributing to either the special or spoilt qualities of landscapes.

## Other Identified Values

A list of previously identified values in the Character Area sourced from:

- National Trust / National Estate listed landscapes;
- river listed on the Heritage Rivers Act 1992; and
- locations identified by the study Reference Groups as important;
- locations of high tourism visitation;

- landscapes identified as particularly valuable for character or aesthetic reasons in secondary sources (e.g. National Park Management Plans, Regional Forest Agreement regional assessments or previous landscape values studies).

These values are used as an input to the identification of Significant Landscapes in each region.

## Management Considerations

Dot points covering some of the key issues for managing change in the Character Area and possible solutions. This section is the first step toward developing a Future Character Directions statement for the Area.

## Future Character Directions

Statements which describes the desired directions for managing the rate, scale and type of landscape change appropriate for the Character Area. It is derived from the community's values and aspirations for the landscape of the Area and the study team's assessment of appropriate places for landscape change based on landscape characteristics and sensitivity. The Future Character Directions statement forms the 'stepping stone' between the existing character description and Landscape Management Objectives for the Character Area.

## Opportunities and Threats

A list of opportunities and threats to achieving the future character directions are identified. These build on the landscape change elements outlined above and aid in the development of Landscape Management Objectives and design guidelines and strategies for managing change in the Character Area.

## Landscape Management Objectives

A set of objectives to describe how to achieve the Future Character Directions for range of landscape elements (e.g. roads, vegetation, settlement edges) in the Character Area. These objectives drive the development of more detailed design guidelines and strategies to manage development, control negative change and protect and / or strengthen the valued qualities of the Area.

## Landscape Management Guidelines

*A table of detailed guidelines and strategies for managing change in the Character Area. Set out in four columns:*

**Character Element:** *Lists aspects of the landscape and development which warrant specific consideration (e.g. vegetation, roads, township edges and colours and materials).*

**Landscape Management Objectives** *Copied from previous section. State the intention and desired outcome for that character element.*

**Response** *The preferred method to satisfy the relevant character element objective(s) through appropriate design and siting of development, or strategic actions. Other methods of achieving the relevant objective may also be demonstrated.*

**Avoid** *Statements specify inappropriate actions or design responses.*

# CHARACTER AREA ANALYSIS PAPERS



## APPENDIX TWO

## 1.3 Bunurong Coast and Hinterland

**Landscape Character Type:** South Gippsland Coastal Plains.

This Character Area includes the diverse and rugged Bunurong coastline between Kilcunda and Inverloch and a largely cleared, rolling pastoral hinterland extending inland to the Strzelecki Range and east to Cape Liptrap (including the Bald Hills). Along the Bass Strait coast throughout much of this Character Area high sand dunes, sea cliffs, rocky headlands, rock stacks and beaches are valued landscape features. The immediate hinterland is largely undeveloped and in part supports native heathy vegetation in coastal reserves. Further inland, open grazing land is interspersed with corridors of native vegetation (especially riparian reserves and at roadsides), exotic windbreaks, farmhouses and settlements. Two major urban settlements (Wonthaggi and Inverloch) are within the Character Area, while Cape Paterson is a coastal holiday home location set atop the rugged coastline.

This Character Area extends across the Bass Coast Shire and the South Gippsland Shire and is split into two parts, separated by the Tarwin Floodplain.



## Key Features

- Dramatic and scenic coastal edge, including cliffs, rock stacks, dunes and beaches.
- A near-coastal hinterland that remains largely undeveloped throughout offering outviews to local and distant landscape features.
- Expansive rolling hills and plains used for agriculture, interspersed by vegetation and settlements.

## Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – Gently rolling throughout the inland areas, with very flat floodplains around the Powlett River and higher hills to the east overlooking Anderson Inlet and at the Bald Hills. The coastal edge consists of low dunes in the north, increasing to higher dunes up to 20m west of Wonthaggi. Either side of Cape Patterson is a scenic landscape of sea cliffs, rocky headlands, beaches and off-shore rock stacks including Eagles Nest which is a noted landscape feature. Low cliffs and escarpments adjoin Anderson Inlet in parts.
- **Vegetation** – Much of this area has been extensively cleared for pasture although a narrow strip of low coastal native vegetation including *Melaleuca spp.* occurs in coastal reserves. Similar vegetation also persists along much of the roadsides inland.
- **Waterform** – At the coastal edge, the seas of Bass Strait are a dominant water feature while there is one major river (Powlett River) which has a large and scenic estuary. Some small lakes occur behind sand dunes (e.g. Harmers Haven) while here are several minor creeks in the rural hinterland, much of which retain low riparian vegetation.
- **Land use** – *Pastoral land uses dominate the Character Area, with some cropping nearer to Inverloch. Wonthaggi is a regional service town and represents a substantial urban centre within the rural land. Areas reserved for nature conservation is confined to near-coastal areas and the adjacent marine reserve.*

## Settlements

### Kilcunda

The settlement of Kilcunda occurs in two distinct parts. The south-eastern portion lies within in this Character Area, on slightly sloping topography overlooking the coastal edge and flat agricultural hinterland. With the exception of a caravan park development is entirely confined to the north-eastern side of the Bass Highway and substantially set back from the coast. Scenic viewlines from within the township to the coast and rural hinterland are largely undeveloped. Above the township in the adjacent Character Area, a scenic gateway view from the Bass Highway offers views over the town and into this Character Area. A significant and scenic gateway view is available just above the entry to Kilcunda from the north.

### Cape Paterson

Cape Paterson is a small coastal holiday home location set atop the rugged coastline. The settlement is relatively compact and surrounded by vegetated coastal reserves (on three sides) and rural farmland. Limited vegetation at the rural edges creates a hard contrast with the surrounding landscape. The settlement slopes gently toward the cliff top, although development is almost entirely screened from the coast by vegetation and setbacks.

### Wonthaggi

A large regional centre with extensive urban development, is in part slightly elevated above the agricultural plains in which it is set. Large areas of public land (which relate to past coal mining activities), including nature reserves with intact indigenous vegetation break up the urban area. Gently rolling topography periodically obscures sections of the town from view meaning the full extent of urban development is not visible from any one point. Expansion is occurring into previously pastoral and low native vegetation towards the coast. High sand dunes are a visible landscape element as a distant backdrop to part of the town.

### Inverloch

Inverloch is a large regional centre located adjacent to the coast at the entrance to Andersons Inlet. Views to and from the foreshore to the town are largely concealed by substantial vegetation (both indigenous and exotic) that

provides a visual barrier along Surf Parade / Ramsey Boulevard. The town is contained in the west where it sits below the scenic cliff landforms visible from the Cape Paterson Scenic Drive. Inland, substantial suburban areas extend back from the inlet toward the Bass Highway, although the settlement is largely hidden from view from the highway (with some relatively intrusive exceptions). The surrounding rural character is important in visually containing the settlement. There is a large amount of undeveloped land in the existing residential zones, which is contiguous with the rural hinterland.

## Pattern of Viewing

Low rolling topography provides opportunities for open views, however these are frequently screened and filtered in the inland areas by low dense vegetation along the main roads. The northern edge of the open pastoral plains is bounded by the Bass Hills / Strzelecki Range topographic backdrop, while expansive views along the coast are a feature. A scenic coastal drive extends from Cape Paterson to Inverloch providing continuous and expansive coastal views over low vegetation. There are several established lookouts and short walking trails along this coastal edge, with views over scenic landscape features including the Eagles Nest, and distant views over Venus Bay to Cape Liptrap and north as far as Cape Woolamai on Phillip Island. From outside the Character Area, a scenic gateway view is available from above Kilcunda (viewing north east to south east), which takes in the wide ocean beach, dunes and pastoral hinterland. The Bass Coast Rail Trail is also an important viewing corridor which runs through the Character Area.

## Community Values

### Positive Features

People from within this Character Area noted that the provision of recreational activities, the largely undisturbed landscapes with natural features, limited human access and the rugged coastline are all positive features of the area.

### Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

The local community commented that inappropriate residential and recreational development, the location of housing on sand dunes, vandalism to foreshore

vegetation, ribbon development and the construction of wind turbines are all negative changes occurring within the Character Area.

### Significant Landscapes

- *The entire coastline in this Character Area was variously noted by survey and disposable camera respondents for undeveloped dunes and high seas (Kilcunda to Cape Paterson) and rugged cliff and rock coastline (Cape Paterson to Inverloch).*

The wider community feels that the entire coastline in this Character Area is significant, highlighting Anderson Inlet as a particularly significant place.

## Other Identified Values

- *The Powlett River Mouth and Estuary is listed by the National Trust for estuarine waters and swamp land that are separated from the ocean by a complex of coastal dunes.*
- *The Cape Paterson coastline is described by Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast as having high scenic quality with medium to high cliff landscapes interspersed with ponds and inlets.*
- *This Character Area is known to have high Aboriginal significance with extensive known occurrences of Aboriginal heritage sites throughout, particularly on the coastal edge.*

## Landscape Change

Anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape of the Character Area include:

- *Naturally dynamic and changing coastal landforms including dunes and cliff faces.*

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the Character Area include:

- *Projected population increase of 7,000 to 12,000 for the Bass Coast Shire by the year 2021.*

- *Significant increase in coastal land values and increasing rural land values driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.*
- *Increased tourism visitation.*
- *Substantial numbers of vacant lots in approved subdivisions on the outskirts of Wonthaggi and Inverloch.*
- *Approved 12MW (6 turbine) wind energy facility approved to the south of Wonthaggi (Bass Coast Shire).*
- *Approved 104MW (approximately 80 turbine) wind energy facility for the Bald Hills in the east of the Character Area (South Gippsland Shire).*

Development trends and pressures known or likely to occur in the Character Area include:

- *Pressure for residential lifestyle developments between Kilcunda and Wonthaggi, and Cape Paterson-Inverloch.*
- *The hinterland around Inverloch is subject to pressure for substantial tourism / recreational developments as well as low density residential development.*
- *New suburban developments and pressures around Wonthaggi, Cape Paterson and Inverloch for release of land.*
- *Pressure for large scale residential developments with a recreational component (e.g. golf course).*

## Sensitivity to Change

The scenic and prominent Bass Strait Coast edge (particularly landscapes viewed from Kilcunda or the coastal drive between Cape Paterson and Inverloch) is highly sensitive to development, particularly where built form is exposed above, contrasts with, or requires the removal of dense native vegetation. Undeveloped slopes in the immediate hinterland are also sensitive, however there are opportunities to site development several hundred metres back from the coast where undulating topography and low vegetation act as a buffer to development.

Some steep slopes and escarpments to Anderson Inlet are also sensitive to change such as the removal of vegetation or introduction of built form visible

from the Inlet. In the pastoral hinterland, open landscapes are common and the landscape is sensitive to built changes, particularly close to roads and other key viewing opportunities. There is some potential to utilise rolling topography and extant vegetation to reduce the impact of small-scale landscape changes, however large, vertical elements, large-scale land used change and infrastructure are still likely to be highly conspicuous in the largely open and undeveloped hinterland. Higher, open topography near the Bald Hills is also sensitive to many built elements.

## Existing Policies

The following State and Local government policies currently direct landscape change in the Character Area:

- *The Majority of the Character Area is zoned Rural (RUZ) within South Gippsland Shire and Farming (FZ) within Bass Coast Shire.*
- *The coastal strip is zoned Public Conservation and Resource (PCRZ). The settlements of Wonthaggi and Inverloch have a mix of urban zones including Residential (R1Z) Business (B1Z and B4Z), Public Use (PUZ), Industrial (IN1Z), with Low Density Residential (LDRZ) on the outskirts. Very small settlements such as Dalyston and Archies Creek are zoned Township (TZ).*
- *Environmental Significance Overlay 6 (ESO6) covering the Tarwin River within the South Gippsland Planning Scheme and extends inland through the Character Area following the Tarwin River environs.*
- *The Majority of the coastline in the Character Area is located within an Environmental Significance Overlay 1 (ESO1) within Bass Coast Planning Scheme to ensure that the coastal environment, including its visual amenity, landscape, wetlands and waterbird habitat are conserved, protected and enhanced.*

## Management Considerations

- *Scenic outviews located at the northern entry to Kilcunda and along Cape Paterson Scenic Drive warrant special management to maintain an undeveloped rural character protect views to scenic coastal features. Development should be avoided within the panoramas available from*

*these viewpoints, or designed and sited to avoid any visual intrusion and alteration to the character.*

- *Protect and enhance the character of the near-coastal hinterland by encouraging the progressive revegetation of rural land adjoining coastal reserves, and siting developments set long distances back from the coast and out of view of key viewing locations including Cape Paterson Scenic Drive.*
- *Maintain extensive rural character outside settlements by siting new development long distances apart, back from roads and amongst vegetation and siting large-scale built development within or close to existing built areas to avoid dominance of built form over the open pastoral hinterland.*
- *Protect and enhance indigenous roadside vegetation, particularly where it can be used as a buffer to development behind.*
- *Undeveloped and become increasingly vegetated as indigenous heathland vegetation is encouraged to extend out of coastal reserves to the inland side of coastal vantage points to act as a buffer to any further development set long distance back from the coast.*
- *At Kilcunda, no further development should occur on the coastline side of the Bass Highway in this Character Area. Support the containment of the settlement within existing undeveloped rural ridgelines north of the settlement.*

## Future Character Directions

*The Character Area will continue to be characterised by an open rural hinterland and an undeveloped coastal edge offering outviews to scenic coastal features free of built development. Development in the near-coastal hinterland will be restricted to the settlement of Cape Paterson or set a sufficient distance back from the coast to be nestled in topography and screened from views by landscaping and increased vegetation on the inland side of coastal viewpoints.*

*An open and uncluttered hinterland offering occasional outviews to the Bass Hills, Mt Liptrap, Mt Hoddle and the Venus Bay dunes will be interspersed with native vegetation corridors. Extensions to*

*existing urban areas will be sensitive to views from key viewing corridors, maintenance of open rural character and protection and enhancement of the wild, natural coastline.*

## Opportunities and Threats

### Opportunities

- *Siting development long distances back from roads.*
- *Siting large-scale built development and residential estates within or close to existing built areas.*
- *Progressive revegetation of rural land adjoining coastal reserves*
- *Strengthen roadside and riparian vegetation with indigenous species.*
- *Strengthen vegetation at the edges of settlements (e.g. Cape Paterson and Inverloch) to improve the interface between rural and urban areas.*
- *Site developments further back from the coast throughout the Character Area.*

### Threats

- *Urban expansion of coastal settlements beyond established settlement boundaries.*
- *Linear urban development along the coastal strip between Cape Paterson and Inverloch.*
- *Buildings that protrude into the skyline of hills and rises as viewed from roads and settlements.*
- *Cluttering of the rural landscape with smaller scale residential hobby farms and residences sited close to roads or large-scale resort-style residential developments.*
- *Suburban sprawl at the outskirts of Inverloch.*
- *Development on prominent slopes adjoining Anderson Inlet.*

## Landscape Management Objectives

- *To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation, particularly at roadsides and in riparian strips throughout the Character Area.*
- *To protect cultural vegetation patterns in the landscape.*
- *To maintain locations of highly scenic and natural vistas along roads and at formal lookout points.*
- *To retain clear views of the coastal dunes, cliffs and formations from coastal areas, including the Cape Patterson Scenic Drive and other coastal roads.*
- *To create a clearly defined edge softened by vegetation at interface between settlements and rural / natural areas.*
- *To ensure that the natural landscape dominates the coastal edge and foreshore of the settlements of Kilcunda, Cape Patterson and Inverloch.*
- *To retain the dominance of the undulating, uncluttered pastoral landscape throughout the hinterland by ensuring that buildings and structures outside settlements sit within, rather than dominate the landscape.*
- *To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape along the coastline, on hill slopes visible from main roads and settlements and prominent slopes adjoining Anderson Inlet.*
- *To protect the undeveloped Character of the coastal strip between Kilcunda and Cape Paterson and Cape Paterson and Inverloch.*
- *To recognise and protect the landscape of the Bunurong Coast as a places of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value.*
- *To protect landscape character and condition that are consistent with Aboriginal cultural values of the area.*
- *To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly on hill faces, in coastal areas and in other areas of high landscape values or visibility.*
- *To ensure that the open rural character and scenic coastal features of this Character Area are not dominated by plantation forestry.*

## Landscape Management Guidelines

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Vegetation</b>	<p><i>To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation, particularly at roadsides and in riparian strips throughout the Character Area.</i></p> <p><i>To protect cultural vegetation patterns in the landscape.</i></p>	<p>Avoid the loss of indigenous vegetation, particularly in dunes and elsewhere along the coast.</p> <p>Landscape around buildings using indigenous species (e.g. <i>Eucalyptus</i> or <i>Melaleuca spp.</i>) or non-invasive exotic / native feature planting that is already a feature of the character (e.g. existing shelterbelts).</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</b></p>	<p>Loss of roadside and riparian indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Use of non-indigenous species at roadsides.</p> <p>Loss of coastal vegetation.</p> <p>Highly visible development in coastal areas.</p> <p>Loss of shelter belts.</p>
<b>Key Views and Vistas</b>	<p><i>To maintain locations of highly scenic and natural vistas along roads and at formal lookout points.</i></p> <p><i>To retain clear views of the coastal dunes, cliffs and formations from coastal areas, including the Cape Patterson Scenic Drive and other coastal roads.</i></p>	<p>Avoid all visually intrusive development in landscapes visible within 500 metres of formal scenic lookouts in the Character Area and on the coastal side of Cape Paterson – Inverloch Road.</p> <p>Site and design development in landscapes visible within 500 metres of other key viewing corridors (e.g. the Bass Highway, the Bass Coast Rail Trail, Wonthaggi – Cape Paterson Road and the inland side of Cape Paterson – Inverloch Road) to retain the open rural character and views to coastal landscape features.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Key Views and Vistas'.</b></p>	<p>Development within 500 metres of key touring routes, and scenic lookouts.</p> <p>Visual clutter of open rural or natural landscapes from key touring routes.</p>
<b>Settlements</b>	<p><i>To create a clearly defined edge softened by vegetation at interface between settlements and rural / natural areas.</i></p> <p><i>To ensure that the natural landscape dominates the coastal edge and foreshore of the settlements of Kilcunda, Cape Patterson and Inverloch.</i></p>	<p>Strengthen vegetation at the edges of Cape Paterson to improve the interface between the settlement and rural / natural areas. Carefully manage building height to prevent visually intrusive developments above vegetation or visible from the coast.</p> <p>At Cape Paterson and Inverloch, where the settlement abuts the coast, the height and form of new development should be sensitive in scale to surrounding development and height of trees and should avoid increased visibility or overlooking of the foreshore.</p> <p>At Kilcunda, avoid any further development on the coastal side of the Bass Highway and contain development within existing undeveloped rural ridgelines. Development near the edges of the settlement should protect panoramic outviews to coastal landscapes and be sited amongst substantial vegetation to soften the interface with rural areas.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'All Settlements' and 'Coastal Settlements'</b></p>	<p>Linear urban sprawl.</p> <p>Unclear edges to settlements.</p> <p>Signage clutter at entrances and exists to settlements.</p> <p>Large developments in prominent coastal locations.</p> <p>Buildings dominating vistas to and from the coast.</p> <p>Increased overshadowing of the foreshore.</p>
<b>Between</b>	<i>To retain the dominance of the undulating,</i>	In rolling topography, minimise visual intrusion by siting development low	Buildings without vegetated landscaping.

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Settlements Hinterland Areas</b>	<i>uncluttered pastoral landscape throughout the hinterland by ensuring that buildings and structures outside settlements sit within, rather than dominate the landscape.</i>	<p>in slopes or using low building forms, tucked into the landscape and materials and colours that occur in the local area.</p> <p>Site servicing and access away from landscape features and areas of high visibility and avoid the loss of vegetation.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Between Settlements – Hinterland Locations'.</b></p>	<p>Buildings sited on prominent slopes or skylines as viewed from roads, coastal recreation locations and other key viewpoints.</p> <p>Development that is visible on ridgelines, particularly with the sea or sky as a backdrop when viewed from roads.</p> <p>Visually dominant development outside settlements.</p> <p>Buildings and structures sited close to main roads.</p> <p>Light coloured or highly reflective building materials on hill faces.</p> <p>Excessive cut and fill.</p> <p>Large building footprints.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations.</p> <p>Dark coloured building materials on ridge tops.</p> <p>Visible development on the coastal side of the Bass Highway in Kilcunda and other roads that abut the coast.</p> <p>Domination of the non-urban coastal areas by built form.</p> <p>Visually dominant development in coastal areas, between townships.</p> <p>Loss of coastal views.</p> <p>Ribbon development.</p> <p>Loss of rural outlook from road corridors.</p> <p>Visually dominant, bulky buildings.</p> <p>Buildings that have no relationship to landform.</p> <p>Loss of rural character.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
			Colours and materials that make no reference to the landscape. Broad scale expansion of non-agricultural developments in rural areas.
<b>Between Settlements Coastal locations</b>	<i>To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape along the coastline, on hill slopes visible from main roads and settlements and prominent slopes adjoining Anderson Inlet. To protect the undeveloped Character of the coastal strip between Kilcunda and Cape Paterson and Cape Paterson and Inverloch.</i>	Minimise building footprints and heights to retain an undeveloped appearance from foreshore and other public use areas. <b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Between Settlements – Coastal Locations'.</b>	Buildings and structures developed on the primary dune or in prominent locations overlooking the coast.
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<i>To recognise and protect the landscape of the Bunurong Coast as a places of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value. To protect landscape character and condition that consistent with Aboriginal cultural values of the area.</i>	Identify and preserve landscape conditions and settings of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage value. Respect the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of significant places by setting back, avoiding or carefully designing buildings, structures and other landscape alterations to avoid impacts on places, objects or landscapes that have Aboriginal heritage value.	Intrusive development that detracts from cultural heritage sites. Disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites. Lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities.
<b>Infrastructure and signage</b>	<i>To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly on hill faces, in coastal areas and in other areas of high landscape values or visibility.</i>	<b>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure' and 'Signage'.</b>	Loss of vegetation. Landscape 'scarring'. Visually dominating signage and infrastructure. Signage clutter. Large, visually intrusive or brightly coloured signage, particularly near to the coastal edge or intruding into scenic outviews are available from roads and settlements.
<b>Plantation forestry</b>	<i>To ensure that the open rural character and scenic coastal features of this Character Area are not dominated by plantation forestry.</i>	Set back plantations from coastal locations (including dune systems) and avoid highly visible locations including within 500 metres of the Bass Highway. Site and design plantation forests to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be of a scale that reflects the existing paddock sizes or scale of existing agricultural activity;</li> <li>• be integrated with existing vegetation (e.g. shelterbelts, remnant</li> </ul>	

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
		<p>indigenous vegetation) forest edges;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be designed with varied edges that respond to natural features; and</li> <li>• have with vegetative screens, preferably utilising existing indigenous roadside vegetation or shelterbelts.</li> </ul>	

## 1.4 Tarwin Floodplain

**Landscape Character Type:** *South Gippsland Coastal Plains*

A wetland environment with very flat topography surrounding the Tarwin River Estuary and part of Anderson Inlet primarily utilised for agricultural purposes. The Character Area extends inland to include the flood plains of the Bald Hill Creek and Fish Creek and their confluence with the Tarwin River. Open views are experienced throughout owing to lack of topographic and vegetative screening. The township of Tarwin Lower also occurs in the Character Area.



## Key Features

- Very flat and open topography providing contrast with and views to surrounding hills and sand dunes.
- Important water features including Tarwin River estuary and Anderson Inlet.
- Native vegetation around the Tarwin River and estuary creating a scenic riverscape and valued setting for recreation

## Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – Very flat landform of alluvial floodplains throughout with low energy wetland coastal edge at the Tarwin River Estuary and Andersons Inlet.
- **Waterform** – Water features including the Tarwin River estuary and Anderson Inlet are important elements in the character of this Area. The lower stretches of Bald Hills Creek and Fish Creek and their floodplains also occur in the Area, while there are numerous drainage lines entering into the Anderson Inlet, many of which have been artificially straightened.
- **Vegetation** – The vegetation is characterised by limited tree cover mostly in the form of coniferous wind breaks with much of the area covered by pasture. Large areas of reedy wetland vegetation (frequently weed infested) occur, with stands of *Melaleuca sp.* in large copses around the estuary. Saltmarsh vegetation occurs on mud flats around the Inlet.
- **Land use** – Pastoral land uses occur throughout the area, with intact swamps in less well drained parts. Homesteads and agricultural infrastructure are scattered throughout the area at a low density with the small settlement of Tarwin Lower the only urban area.

## Settlements

### Tarwin Lower

Tarwin Lower is set on flat topography and within mixed exotic / native vegetation adjoining the Tarwin River estuary. The town's character is modest

and low-rise with more recent rural living development on the outskirts in parts. Outviews across the estuary and to Venus Bay dunes are important to the setting of the township. There is potential to strengthen the links with the estuary through increased indigenous plantings.

## Pattern of Viewing

Open viewing is experienced throughout, terminating at high sand dunes outside the character area in the west and north, and low rolling topography in the east and south. Some important regional feeder roads traverse the area, providing the main viewing/touring corridors, while recreational uses of the Tarwin River estuary and the Anderson Inlet make these important places from which the character of the Area is viewed.

There are no notable official lookouts in the Area, although elevated views to the Character Area are available from surrounds providing views across flats to the Anderson Inlet and dunes behind.

## Community Values

### Positive Features

The local community commented that the provision of recreational activities, the rugged windswept coastline and the granite scenery are all positive features of the Character Area.

### Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

Local residents highlighted the location of marine parks in highly populated areas as a negative change for the area.

## Other Identified Values

- This Character Area is known to have high Aboriginal significance with extensive known occurrences of Aboriginal heritage sites throughout, particularly near the dune and inlet edges.

## Landscape Change

Anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape of the Character Area include:

- Seasonal and ongoing variations in agricultural practices.
- Feature planting around new residences and homesteads.

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the Character Area include:

- South Gippsland Shire is projected to experience moderate population increase in the next 30 years.
- Rapid uptake of available residential land in coastal areas of Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Shires likely to push demand for coastal living into South Gippsland.
- Significant increase in coastal land values and increasing rural land values driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism / visitation.

Development trends and pressures known in or likely to occur in the Character Area include:

- Residential hobby farms within access to Anderson Inlet and the Tarwin River estuary (especially between Townsend Bluff and Tarwin Lower).
- Residential resort-style developments adjacent to the Inlet.

## Sensitivity to Change

The open and undeveloped character of this Area makes the landscape sensitive to the introduction of built elements, particularly large or vertical structures which are viewed from key road corridors and towns. Many existing rural homestead developments are set in exotic vegetation and integrate well with the landscape, however more recent developments frequently lack landscaping and are more conspicuous. Low roadside *Melaleuca* vegetation and flat topography reduces visibility from roadsides in some locations making these areas less sensitive to small and medium scale landscape change.

## Existing Policies

The following State and Local government policies currently direct landscape change in the Character Area:

- The South Gippsland Shire Municipal Strategic Statement defines part of this Character Area as a sensitive coastal environment to be managed for its environmental, recreational, heritage and landscape values.
- The settlement of Tarwin Lower is zoned Township (TZ) with Low Density Residential to the south and east. Outside settlements the Character Area is Zoned Rural (RUZ) except for Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) along the Tarwin River and at the edge of Anderson Inlet.
- Much of the Character Area is covered by Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO6) for protection from flooding.
- A forthcoming Urban Design Framework for Tarwin Lower will outline opportunities and constraints to the development of the town and appropriate locations, if any, for urban expansion.

## Future Character Directions

*This Character Area will retain an open, low-density appearance, uncluttered by development except within the settlement of Tarwin Lower. Views from roads will be improved by increasing roadside vegetation as a landscape buffer to built form, or restricting development and planting where expansive open outviews are important such as between Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay, and open views across Anderson Inlet. Further development on the flats between Townsend Bluff and Tarwin Lower will be low-density, and sited amongst indigenous landscaping to actively increase the vegetated character of this part of the Character Area.*

## Opportunities and Threats

### Opportunities

- Increasing native vegetation cover in conjunction with new developments by incorporating appropriate landscaping which use indigenous species.
- Siting dwellings within Tarwin Lower, or in locations where existing vegetation (including exotic windbreaks) can be used as a visual buffer.
- Restoration and environmental management of the estuary.

### Threats

- Uncontrolled rural living and residential development creating a cluttered landscape throughout.
- Destruction of environmental and scenic values of riparian vegetation through poor management.
- Loss of outviews across Anderson Inlet and to the Venus Bay dunes through inappropriate siting of development close to roads.

## Landscape Management Objectives

- *To protect existing vegetation, including exotic shelterbelts, throughout the Character Area.*
- *To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation, particularly at roadsides and in riparian strips.*
- *To protect locally significant views and vistas which contribute to the character of the Area, particularly expansive, open out views between Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay, and open views across Anderson Inlet.*
- *To protect the flats between Townsend Bluff and Tarwin Lower from visually dominant development.*
- *To ensure buildings and structures sit within, rather than dominate the landscape.*
- *To retain the sense of uncluttered openness throughout the Character Area.*

- *To ensure that development in and around the settlement of Tarwin Lower does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including key views and viewing opportunities.*
- *To improve the clarity of the edges of Tarwin Lower.*
- *To improve the appearance of existing rural residential development on the outskirts of Tarwin Lower.*

## Landscape Management Guidelines

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Vegetation</b>	<p><i>To protect existing vegetation, including exotic shelterbelts, throughout the Character Area.</i></p> <p><i>To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation, particularly at roadsides and in riparian strips.</i></p>	<p>Design and site structures to minimise the loss of canopy trees and understorey wherever possible.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</b></p>	<p>Loss of vegetation, including exotic shelterbelts.</p> <p>Loss of indigenous vegetation, including canopy trees.</p>
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	<p><i>To protect locally significant views and vistas which contribute to the character of the Area, particularly expansive, open out views between Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay, and open views across Anderson Inlet.</i></p>	<p>Buildings, structures and other developments that occur in view fields should be designed and sited so as to retain the character and quality of the views.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</b></p>	<p>Unsympathetic development in key view fields.</p>
<b>Water bodies</b>	<p><i>To protect the flats between Townsend Bluff and Tarwin Lower from visually dominant development.</i></p>	<p>Where development on the flats cannot be avoided, use low scale building forms and appropriate materials and colours that are not highly visible, particularly from main road corridors.</p> <p>Utilise appropriate indigenous vegetation to further integrate the development with the landscape.</p>	<p>Visually dominant development on the flats landscape.</p>
<b>Buildings</b> <b>Natural landscape dominance</b>	<p><i>To ensure buildings and structures sit within, rather than dominate the landscape.</i></p> <p><i>To retain the sense of uncluttered openness throughout the Character Area.</i></p>	<p>Confine development to the settlement of Tarwin Lower wherever possible.</p> <p>Locate any development outside the settlement of Tarwin Lower sparsely, siting buildings and structures amongst existing vegetation or substantial landscaping of locally appropriate species.</p> <p>Reduce the visual intrusion of buildings by utilising low scale building forms, tucked into the landscape and materials and colours that occur in the local area.</p> <p>Keep development below the dominant tree canopy height.</p>	<p>Visually dominant development between townships.</p> <p>Buildings that protrude above the tree canopy height.</p> <p>Loss of coastal views.</p> <p>Ribbon development.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Settlements</b>	<p><i>To ensure that development in and around the settlement of Tarwin Lower does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including key views and viewing opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>To improve the clarity of the edges of Tarwin Lower.</i></p>	<p>Prevent cluttering of development along main roads and key touring routes outside the settlement.</p> <p>Ensure Tarwin Lower has a definite visual edge, delineating the boundary between urban development and the rural landscape beyond.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'All Settlements'.</b></p>	<p>Ad hoc or large-scale urban development outside Tarwin Lower.</p> <p>Unclear edges to the settlement.</p> <p>Signage and other structures cluttering roadsides outside Tarwin Lower.</p>
<b>Buildings</b> <b>Rural residential</b>	<p><i>To improve the appearance of existing rural residential development on the outskirts of Tarwin Lower.</i></p>	<p>In rural residential areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use permeable surfacing for all unbuilt areas to minimise surface run-off and to support vegetation.</li> <li>• Retain trees that form part of a continuous canopy beyond the property, and plant new trees in a position where they will add to such a continuous canopy.</li> <li>• Utilise vegetation for screening and to delineate property boundaries, instead of fencing.</li> <li>• If fencing is necessary, provide open style fencing of a type traditionally used in rural areas ie post and wire.</li> <li>• Locate buildings on the site to minimise views of the building from the main road into the settlement.</li> </ul>	<p>High, solid fencing.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation.</p> <p>Lack of vegetation</p> <p>Impervious surfacing.</p>

## 1.5 Waratah Bay / Corner Inlet

Landscape Character Type: South Gippsland Coastal Plains

This low-lying, flat Character Area covers a long stretch of varied coastline at the gateway to Wilsons Promontory. The Area exhibits a strong and open rural character wedged between the dramatic topographies of the lower Strzelecki Range and Wilsons Promontory. Scenic coastal landforms and extensive views to the Promontory provide valued visual links to natural landscapes. To the north, the Strzelecki Range and Mount Hoddle form the boundary and create prominent landscape features adjoining the flat plains. Low density development is scattered throughout, with several small lifestyle settlements on the coast and medium sized rural towns in the east.



## Key Features

- Numerous and diverse coastal edges including wide sandy beaches and inlets, low energy mangrove and intertidal sand and mud flats.
- Expansive and scenic views to surrounding landscape features including Wilsons Promontory and the Strzelecki Range
- Rolling rural character as a gateway to Wilsons Promontory.

## Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – Wedged between the dramatic topographies of the lower Strzelecki Range (including Mount Hoddle) and Wilsons Promontory, the landform of this Area is characterised by flat to gently undulating coastal plains of recent alluvial origin. Numerous coastal edges are important landscape features including dunes and wide sandy beaches and inlets at the Waratah Bay edge, and low-energy mangrove and intertidal sand and mud flats to Corner Inlet.
- **Waterform** – Low energy inlets and swamps are the major water features with views across water to Wilson Promontory particularly important. Corner Inlet including the Islands
- **Vegetation** – Much of the inland parts have been cleared for pasture, while extensive areas of estuarine mangrove, salt marsh and swamp vegetation as well as low indigenous coastal scrub on sand dunes.
- **Land use** – While much of the Character Area is used for pasture, large areas are reserved for nature conservation, in particular the low-lying and estuarine coastal edges. In the west, there are extensive holiday home settlements at Waratah Bay and Sandy Point, including several caravan parks and campgrounds. To the east, several settlements are located between the hills and Corner Inlet, including Toora, Welshpool and the historic town of Port Albert.

## Settlements

### Waratah Bay

Waratah Bay township sits at the boundary between this Character Area and the hilly and rocky cliff edge of Cape Liptrap. A strongly vegetated character is provided by substantial indigenous vegetation (including *Banksia spp.*) which is contiguous with the vegetation communities of the adjacent Cape Liptrap Coastal Park. The town is set on and beneath a minor escarpment and most dwellings are buffered from views from the coast by a well vegetated coastal reserve with low dunes, with the exception of the caravan park at the western end which is visible through vegetation on slopes above the beach. Newer dwellings are frequently up to three stories, although well set back from the road and in the most part below the dominant tree canopy height.



### Sandy Point

The high sand dunes in which the Sandy Point township sits are a unique feature of this Character Area. The settlement contains large contemporary dwellings including multiple-occupancy developments set on and amongst steeply undulating relict-dune topography, frequently creating imposing and dominant presence to views from within the township. Dwellings have been developed in locations and of materials that are highly visible from surrounding areas (e.g. across Shallow Inlet), although none is visible from the beach immediately adjoining the township except for the surf lifesaving club within

the coastal reserve. To the north, more modest residential development occurs on flats. There remains substantial established coastal vegetation throughout which is a positive feature of the town.

### **Toora / Welshpool**

Toora and Welshpool are the larger of the settlements set on the Corner Inlet flats beneath the Strzelecki Range on the South Gippsland Highway. The topographic backdrop is a dominant feature while both settlements have filtered outviews across flats to Corner Inlet and Wilsons Promontory. The towns themselves are small with modest, low-scale architecture and are surrounded by rural and rural residential land holdings. The Toora milk factory (no longer operational) is prominent and brightly coloured making it visible for some distance. Located within close proximity to the town is a wind energy facility consisting of 12 turbines atop the adjacent hillsides.

### **Port Welshpool / Port Albert**

These two port settlements are commercial and recreational fishing hubs set on the coastal edge of Corner Inlet. Open views across Corner Inlet and 'The Islands' to Wilsons Promontory are a feature of both townships. Port Welshpool is dominated by a large open port area with low-rise suburban development set back from the coast and largely hidden from view from off shore. Port Albert is an historic port set on a peninsula. The township is distinctly urban with a strong Victorian character through the historic town centre. Exotic feature plantings including Norfolk Island pines create a strong streetscape and the urban area is highly visible from the surrounding coastline and off shore.

## **Pattern of Viewing**

Open views are available throughout much of this Character Area terminating at landscape features outside the Area including Wilsons Promontory, Mt Hoddle, the Strzelecki Range and the Cape Liptrap hills. The dunes at Sandy Point are also prominent in this largely flat landscape. In the east, very flat topography and roadside vegetation contains some views while the low-lying nature of the Corner Inlet edge means it is largely screened from view except for a few access points at Port Franklin, Toora, Barry Beach and Port Welshpool. The South Gippsland Highway and Wilsons Promontory Road provide access to the Character Area and account for high volumes of touring related traffic.

There are several elevated views into this Character Area from adjacent Areas.

## **Community Values**

### **Positive Features**

People from this Character Area commented that the visually beautiful and diverse landscapes are positive features of the area. These include the views towards Snake Island, Wilsons Promontory and Corner Inlet, the pristine beaches, uninterrupted views of the coast, the variety of natural flora and fauna and the low visual impact of housing.

### **Spoilt Places**

The local community noted negative changes that were occurring in the Character Area. These include increased coastal residential development, housing that is too big or too close to the coastline, degradation of the primary dune system, the development of wind turbines, the industrialisation of the coast and weed infestation of dunes.

The wider community feels that Corner Inlet has been spoiled by views to the Toora wind turbines, Barry Beach has been spoiled by development at the edge of the coastal park, McLoughlins Beach has been spoiled due to severe erosion and the Toora Hills have been spoiled by the presence of wind turbines.

### **Significant Landscapes**

The wider community feels that significant places within the Character Area include Corner Inlet and the surrounding shore, hills and amphitheatre, the beach at Welshpool, the beach at Waratah Bay and Shallow Inlet.

## **Landscape Change**

Anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape of the character area include:

- Dynamic and changing low-lying coastal landforms including coastal spits and mangrove islands

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the Character Area include:

- South Gippsland Shire is projected to experience moderate population increase in the next 30 years.
- Rapid uptake of available residential land in coastal areas of Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Shires likely to push demand for coastal living into South Gippsland.
- Significant increase in coastal land values and increasing rural land values driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism visitation.
- Foster is identified as a growth area in the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.

Development trends and pressures known in or likely to occur in the character area include:

- Substantial pressure for residential development in rural areas.
- Potential pressure for large scale subdivisions and 'resort-style' residential developments associated with marinas and golf courses.
- Tourism and accommodation related developments particularly between Foster and Wilsons Promontory National Park.

## Sensitivity to Change

The open flat nature of this Character Area means many built elements will be visible. In areas of dominant natural character (e.g. much of the Corner Inlet coast), or where expansive and scenic views are available (e.g. views across Corner Inlet to Wilsons Promontory from important touring routes) there is a particularly high sensitivity to the introduction of large scale built elements. The Character Area is also sensitive to the piecemeal loss of natural character through inappropriate densities of development, or expansion of residential or rural residential land uses into undeveloped areas. Lower sensitivity is afforded to locations in which existing vegetation or topography can minimise the visual intrusion of development (e.g. at the 'toe of slope' adjacent to the Welshpool Hills). In the west, the dunes at Sandy Point are the only

substantial topographic feature across the flat plains and are thus highly visible and sensitive to development which contrasts with the dominant vegetated character. Existing examples of such contrast occur in the settlement of Sandy Point.

## Other Identified Values

- Corner Inlet including 'The Islands' at Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Park is an internationally significant wetland recognised by the Ramsar Convention.
- Corner Inlet is listed on the Register of the National Estate for plant species and plant communities that are of high biogeographic significance.
- Sourced historic sites within the Character Area are listed by Heritage Victoria.

## Existing Policies

The following State and Local government policies currently direct landscape change in the Character Area:

- The South Gippsland Shire Municipal Strategic Statement defines this area as a sensitive coastal environment to be managed for its environmental, recreational, heritage and landscape values.
- The Character Area is largely zoned Rural (RUZ) with settlements zoned Township (TZ) with small areas of Low Density Residential mostly on the outskirts of settlements. There are also large industrially zoned land (INZ) and Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) and Public Conservation and Recreation Zone (PCRZ), mostly covering coastal reserves.
- Almost the entire Character Area is subject to Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO3) to protect, among other things, the natural beauty of the coastal area. Several large areas are also covered by Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO).
- Urban design frameworks for Waratah Bay and Sandy Point define opportunities and constraints to future development of these settlements including noting locations for potential future expansion.

## Management Considerations

- Protect the rural character and views in throughout the 'gateway' to Wilsons Promontory by restricting linear urban sprawl or the cluttering of built development, particularly in landscapes visible from Foster – Promontory Road.
- Carefully manage development at the Corner Inlet coastal edge to retain intact natural coastal character by restricting heights of dwellings, controlling colours and clustering development at already developed centres (Port Albert and Port Welshpool).
- Contain linear residential expansion of Waratah Bay along access road and avoid exposure of built form above low dunes.
- Minimise clutter of built elements throughout hinterland areas to protect the rural character.
- Retain substantial stands of indigenous vegetation as key character elements at roadsides and in townships and encourage the further use of indigenous plantings amongst pasture.
- Strictly control the colours, materials and heights of dwellings at Sandy Point to reduce distant visibility and avoid impacts on amenity of the township.
- Protect cultural vegetation elements that positively contribute to the character, including exotic windbreaks and feature planting around homesteads.
- The natural character of the low mangrove edge at Corner Inlet should be protected from built structures which clutter or detract from this natural character.

## Future Character Directions

*This Area will continue to be characterised by open rural land adjoining a natural coastal edge. Settlements on the coast will be contained and development managed to retain extensive natural coastal environments including beaches, salt marsh, mangrove mud flats and dune coasts. Development in rural areas will be set*

*back from viewing corridors and amongst native vegetation so as to protect the scenic and open views to Wilsons Promontory and the Strzelecki Range (including Mt Hoddle).*

## Opportunities and Threats

### Opportunities

- Increasing indigenous vegetation throughout the Character Area, particularly as landscaping for new developments near the coast and in corridors linking with existing flora reserves.

### Threats

- Intensive development along the coastal strip, dominating the low and subtle natural character of Corner Inlet mangrove coast and the Waratah Bay dunes.
- Linear urban development along Wilsons Promontory Road creating a cluttered appearance at the gateway to the Prom.

## Landscape Management Objectives

- *To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation, particularly at roadsides and in riparian strips throughout the Character Area.*
- *To protect the indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape, particularly when viewed from the foreshore.*
- *To protect cultural vegetation patterns in the landscape.*
- *To protect locally significant views and vistas that contribute to the character of the Area, including open views to Wilsons Promontory the Welshpool Hills and Mt Hoddle.*
- *To protect the rural character and outviews that create a scenic 'gateway' to Wilsons Promontory (especially along Foster – Promontory Road).*

- *To ensure that development in and around settlements does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including key views and viewing opportunities.*
- *To manage development at the coastal edge of settlements so that the intact, natural, coastal character is the dominant feature of the landscape i.e. the Corner Inlet mangrove coastal edge of Port Albert and Port Welshpool and the Waratah Bay dunal coastal edge of Waratah Bay and Sandy Point.*
- *To ensure buildings and structures sit within, rather than dominate the landscape throughout the Character Area.*
- *To ensure that long stretches of the coastal strip remain free of development of any kind.*
- *To reduce the visibility of buildings or structures, within the coastal strip, outside settlements.*
- *To retain the open, rural character of the hinterland landscape.*
- *To protect the rural character and outviews that create a scenic 'gateway' to Wilsons Promontory (especially along Foster – Promontory Road).*
- *To minimise the visual intrusion of infrastructure, particularly in the landscape between settlements.*
- *To minimise the visual intrusion of signage, particularly in the landscape between settlements.*

## Landscape Management Guidelines

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Vegetation</b>	<p><i>To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation, particularly at roadsides and in riparian strips throughout the Character Area.</i></p> <p><i>To protect the indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape, particularly when viewed from the foreshore.</i></p> <p><i>To protect cultural vegetation patterns in the landscape.</i></p>	<p>Design and site buildings to maximise retention of existing vegetation throughout the Character Area, and provide for the planting of new indigenous coastal vegetation wherever possible.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</b></p>	<p>Loss of indigenous vegetation, particularly in coastal areas.</p> <p>Replacement of vegetation with built development.</p> <p>Loss of roadside and riparian indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Use of non-indigenous species at roadsides.</p> <p>Loss of shelter belts.</p>
<b>Key Views and Vistas</b>	<p><i>To protect locally significant views and vistas that contribute to the character of the Area, including open views to Wilsons Promontory the Welshpool Hills and Mt Hoddle.</i></p> <p><i>To protect the rural character and outviews that create a scenic 'gateway' to Wilsons Promontory (especially along Foster – Promontory Road).</i></p>	<p>Carefully design and site developments in landscapes visible within 500 metres of Foster – Wilsons Promontory Road to retain the open rural character and views to coastal landscape features.</p> <p>Set developments back from the South Gippsland Highway to avoid intrusion into views to Corner Inlet, Wilsons Promontory and the Welshpool Hills.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Key Views and Vistas'.</b></p>	<p>Unsympathetic development in key view fields.</p> <p>Development that intrudes into direct viewlines between roads and lookouts and scenic landscape features or the sea.</p>
<b>Settlements</b>	<p><i>To ensure that development in and around settlements does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including key views and viewing opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>To manage development at the coastal edge of settlements so that the intact, natural, coastal character is the dominant feature of the landscape i.e. the Corner Inlet mangrove coastal edge of Port Albert and Port Welshpool and the Waratah Bay dunal coastal edge of Waratah Bay and Sandy Point.</i></p>	<p>Prevent urban development cluttering views from roads and key touring routes, including Wilsons Promontory Road.</p> <p>Locate signage away from entrances and exits to settlements wherever possible.</p> <p><b>Also refer to best Practice Policies 'All Settlements' and 'Coastal Settlements'.</b></p>	<p>Ad hoc or large-scale urban development outside settlements.</p> <p>Unclear edges to townships.</p> <p>Signage clutter at entrances and exists to settlements, and 'gateways' to National and State Parks.</p> <p>Large developments in prominent coastal locations.</p> <p>Buildings dominating vistas to and from the coast.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<p><b>Buildings</b></p> <p><b>Natural landscape dominance</b></p>	<p><i>To ensure buildings and structures sit within, rather than dominate the landscape throughout the Character Area.</i></p>	<p>Site buildings within existing settlements wherever possible.</p> <p>Keep development below the dominant tree canopy height.</p> <p>Locate any development outside settlements sparsely, siting buildings and structures to avoid the loss of existing vegetation.</p> <p>Outside settlements, reduce visual intrusion by utilising low scale building forms, tucked into the landscape and materials and colours that occur in the local area.</p> <p>Integrate any new development with the landscape through the use of appropriate indigenous vegetation, and a landscape plan where appropriate.</p> <p>In coastal locations, materials and colours that minimise contrast with the surrounding landscape and minimise the visibility of buildings and structures when viewed from a distance, including from offshore.</p>	<p>Buildings that protrude above the tree canopy height.</p> <p>Visually dominant development with no relationship to the landscape setting.</p>
<p><b>Between Settlements</b></p> <p><b>Coastal Locations</b></p>	<p><i>To ensure that long stretches of the coastal strip remain free of development of any kind.</i></p> <p><i>To reduce the visibility of buildings or structures, within the coastal strip, outside settlements.</i></p>	<p>In flatter locations (e.g. adjoining Shallow Inlet) development should be substantially setback to minimise visual intrusion and retain a dominant natural character within 500 metres of the edge of the coast.</p> <p><b><i>Also refer to Best Practice Policy 'Between Settlements – Coastal Locations'.</i></b></p>	<p>Highly visible development within the coastal strip, outside settlements.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Between Settlements</b>  <b>Hinterland Locations</b>	<p><i>To retain the open, rural character of the hinterland landscape.</i></p> <p><i>To protect the rural character and outviews that create a scenic 'gateway' to Wilsons Promontory (especially along Foster – Promontory Road).</i></p>	<p>Use permeable surfacing for all unbuilt areas to minimise surface run-off and to support vegetation.</p> <p>Utilise vegetation for screening and to delineate property boundaries, instead of fencing. If fencing is necessary, provide open style fencing of a type traditionally used in rural areas i.e. post and wire.</p> <p>Retain the character of large open rural areas offering scenic outviews by siting developments back from roads, amongst vegetation and low in topography.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policy 'Between Settlements – Hinterland Locations'.</b></p>	<p>Loss of openness.</p> <p>Loss of rural outlook from road corridors.</p> <p>Visually dominant, bulky buildings.</p> <p>Buildings that have no relationship to landform.</p> <p>Loss of rural character.</p>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<i>To minimise the visual intrusion of infrastructure, particularly in the landscape between settlements.</i>	<b>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure'.</b>	<p>Infrastructure which breaks the skyline as viewed from roads and other key viewing locations.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation in prominent locations or densely vegetated areas.</p> <p>Visually dominating infrastructure.</p>
<b>Signage</b>	<i>To minimise the visual intrusion of signage, particularly in the landscape between settlements.</i>	<b>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Signage'.</b>	Avoid large, visually intrusive or brightly coloured signage in vegetated and coastal areas.

## 2.3 Cape Liptrap

### Landscape Character Type: Bass Coast Cliffs

This elevated Character Area consists of a broad rocky headland with flat undulating plateau creating a unique landscape unit extending from Cape Liptrap to the township of Waratah Bay. Natural landscape features including rugged coastal cliffs and beaches are scenic and valued elements of the Area and intact coastal vegetation communities dominate the few small settlements that occur along the Waratah Bay edge. Nonetheless, historic built elements including Cape Liptrap Lighthouse and limestone kilns at Walkerville add character to the wild natural landscapes.



## Key Features

- Intact indigenous coastal vegetation communities dominating built form throughout the coastal edge and slopes to Waratah Bay.
- Mosaic of cleared and vegetated land throughout the Mt Liptrap Plateau.
- Rugged coastal landforms including rocky outcrops, headlands, beaches and cliffs and Cape Liptrap.
- Open and expansive outviews including across Waratah Bay to Wilsons Promontory.

## Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – Underlain by limestone geology unique in the region, the landform is rugged and elevated above the surrounding coastal plains with a maximum height of 171m at Mt Liptrap. The undulating ridge and plateau slopes steeply to the sea creating a broad rocky headland with numerous outcrops and reefs at Cape Liptrap, and small sandy embayment alternating with rocky landforms (including Digger Island and Bird Rock) in the remainder.
- **Waterform** – With a coastline fronting Bass Strait and Waratah Bay, the sea is an ever-present landscape feature of this Character Area. There are a few permeant and ephemeral creeks rising near Mt Liptrap in the centre of the Character Area which have formed an incised eroded landform in parts.
- **Vegetation** – Throughout the plateau and slopes adjoining the Bass Strait coastline, indigenous heath and scrub alternate with cleared pasture and small pockets of woodland, particularly along watercourses. The slopes to Waratah Bay including the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and environs of the townships are heavily vegetated with coastal forest including eucalypts, melaleuca thickets and *Banksia spp.*
- **Land use** – Around half of the Character Area is contained in Cape Liptrap Coastal Park while most of the remainder is used for pasture. A few small settlements are tucked into the landscape near the coast and

there are historic built elements including Cape Liptrap Lighthouse and lime kilns at Walkerville. Increasingly, former pastoral lands are being converted to lifestyle properties and tourist accommodation.

## Settlements

### Walkerville / Walkerville South

Set in densely vegetated sloping topography and surrounded by Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, these two settlements are the sole built elements within an otherwise natural landscape fronting Waratah Bay. Nonetheless, dwellings and roads are generally well sited amongst vegetation and remain subordinate to the almost continuous tree canopy. Many dwellings have been sited for views and are exposed to the coast with colours and materials used in construction frequently creating high visibility from the beaches and off shore.



**Photo 1** Houses are tucked amongst vegetation but frequently remain exposed to the beach and coast at Walkerville South.

## Pattern of Viewing

Open views across low native vegetation and pasture are available throughout much of the higher parts of the Area. Views to Wilsons Promontory are important and characteristic of these higher slopes (although filtered through low native roadside vegetation in parts) as are distant outviews to the Bald Hills, Waratah Bay and as far as the hills above Toora. A particularly valuable view is located at the intersection of Cape Liptrap Road and Walkerville Road (the main access routes in the Character Area), providing a scenic panorama across Waratah Bay to Wilsons Promontory.

Lower slopes often contain more varied topography and denser vegetation, restricting outviews, however the townships and coastal edge in the east and south have valuable views across Waratah Bay. The Cape Liptrap Lighthouse is a tourism destination offering panoramic views.

This Character Area is also important as a prominent vegetated headland viewed from throughout Waratah Bay (including the settlements of Sandy Point and Waratah Bay) and Wilsons Promontory.

## Community Values

### Positive Features

People from within this Character Area commented that the rugged coastline, sandy beaches, coastal vegetation and views of Wilsons Promontory are the most positive features of the area.

### Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

The local community highlighted inappropriate high density residential development, loss of indigenous vegetation and the development of wind farms as negative changes that were taking place in the Character Area.

### Significant Landscapes

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park was cited as a unique and clean landscape with uninterrupted views of coast, and that the coastline at Walkerville is one of the most significant areas within the Character Area.

## Other Identified Values

- Cape Liptrap identified in the Regional Forest Agreement Comprehensive Regional Assessment Aesthetics report for being a diverse landscape with windswept beaches, cliffs, heathlands and sheltered gullies.
- Cape Liptrap land unit identified in Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast as a table-top sedimentary unit with a patch work of pastures and bushland with spectacular views.
- Historic built form landscape features including the Cape Liptrap Lighthouse and lime kilns at Walkerville, which are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

## Landscape Change

Anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape of the Character Area include:

- Naturally dynamic rocky coastal landscapes.
- Revegetation of pastoral landscapes.

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the Character Area include:

- South Gippsland Shire is projected to experience moderate population increase in the next 30 years.
- Rapid uptake of available residential land in coastal areas of Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Shires likely to push demand for coastal living into South Gippsland.
- Significant increase in coastal land values and increasing rural land values driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism / visitation.
- Previously undeveloped subdivided lots (e.g. Promontory Views Estate).

Development trends and pressures known in or likely to occur in the Character Area include:

- Subdivision of larger pastoral land holdings for rural living and 'hobby farms' and residential estates near Walkerville Road.
- Large and small scale tourism and accommodation developments especially in locations with scenic outviews (e.g. Cape Liptrap Road).

## Sensitivity to Change

Much of the Area has characteristics which make it highly sensitive to change. Steep, prominent and densely vegetated slopes and low, dense heathland vegetation allowing extensive outviews are conditions in which built elements, ground disturbance and vegetation removal would be highly noticeable. The dominant natural character of the coastal edges are particularly sensitive to such changes. Across the flatter and more vegetatively varied plateau there is greater opportunity to site smaller scale developments behind and amongst vegetation without altering character so long as the extensive outviews are maintained.

## Existing Policies

The following State and Local government policies currently direct landscape change in the Character Area:

- The South Gippsland Shire Municipal Strategic Statement defines this area as a sensitive coastal environment to be managed for its environmental, recreational, heritage and landscape values.
- The Character Area is a mix of Rural Zone (RUZ) covering the private land outside settlements and Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) over the coastal edge and Cape Liptrap Coastal Park (PCRZ). The settlements at Walkerville, Walkerville South and Promontory Views are zoned Township (TZ).
- The entire Character Area is subject to Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO3) to protect, among other things, the natural beauty of the coastal area. Some areas of ESO5 are designated to protect vegetation and control erosion.

## Management Considerations

- Strict controls on design and siting of development in Walkerville / Walkerville South to minimise visual intrusion of development into public use areas on the beach, maintain continuous indigenous vegetation canopy and reduce distant visibility (darker colours / non-reflective materials).
- Development on private land adjoining the coast should be set back from the cliff top / coast so as to retain a dominant natural character and views to coastal and near-coastal hinterland features in absence of built development.

## Future Character Directions

*The wild and natural character of this landscape will be protected and enhanced with increased indigenous vegetation throughout cleared areas linking in corridors with existing reserves. Development will be restricted from intruding into scenic vistas near the coast, especially between Cape Liptrap and Walkerville, and new developments in the rural hinterland will be sited away from scenic views from roads and set amongst vegetation. Walkerville and Walkerville South will be villages set amongst indigenous vegetation with dwellings constructed of colours and materials which minimise distant visibility.*

## Opportunities and Threats

### Opportunities

- Siting developments in rural areas amongst established or establishing indigenous vegetation.
- Encouraging the increased use of indigenous vegetation in cleared areas as landscaping for new and existing built developments, as shelter-belts in pasture, and as revegetation of degraded landscapes.
- Landscaping around existing dwellings in Walkerville / Walkerville South to reduce distant visibility and exposure to the coast.

## Opportunities and Threats (cont.)

### Threats

- Built form interrupting scenic outviews across Waratah Bay and to Wilsons Promontory.
- Residential and tourism development in private land adjoining scenic landforms and in vistas from roads.
- Developments in Walkerville which impact on the continuously vegetated character, protrude above the vegetated canopy or increase overlooking of the beach.
- Developments visible from the coast on private land between Cape Liptrap and Walkerville which destroy the sense of wildness and seclusion available along the coastal walking trails.

### Landscape Management Objectives

- *To protect the indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape, particularly when viewed from the coastline.*
- *To protect scenic vistas near the coast between Cape Liptrap and Walkerville, and outviews across Waratah Bay to Wilsons Promontory.*
- *To minimise the visual intrusion of development within Walkerville and Walkerville South to views from the public foreshore and distant views (including offshore).*
- *To contain any expansion of the settlements of Walkerville and Walkerville South into the vegetated and undeveloped landscapes between and adjacent to the settlements.*
- *To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape and vegetation on hill faces and ridges throughout the Character Area.*
- *To retain the dominance of the landscape in the rural and hinterland areas, particularly when viewed from main roads and key touring routes.*
- *To ensure buildings and structures sit within, rather than dominate the landscape.*

- *To ensure minimum visibility of buildings and structures within the coastal strip.*
- *To retain the natural and undeveloped character of the coastal strip between settlements by avoiding or carefully siting and designing development.*
- *To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly on hill faces, in coastal areas and in other areas of high landscape values or visibility.*
- *Relate landscape character to the relevant heritage values of significant places, by setting back, avoiding or carefully designing buildings, structures and other landscape alterations.*
- *To preserve an appropriate landscape setting for landmarks or features of cultural heritage significance, such as the Cape Liptrap Lighthouse and limestone kilns at Walkerville.*
- *To protect landscape character and conditions that are consistent with Aboriginal cultural values of the area.*

## Landscape Management Guidelines

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Vegetation</b>	<i>To protect the indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape, particularly when viewed from the coastline.</i>	<p>Design and site buildings to maximise retention of existing vegetation, and provide for the planting of new indigenous coastal vegetation wherever possible.</p> <p>Integrate any new development with the landscape through the use of appropriate indigenous vegetation and maximise the area on a lot able to support vegetation.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</b></p>	<p>Clearing of vegetated areas.</p> <p>Loss of indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Loss of coastal vegetation.</p> <p>Large areas of coastal land dominated by buildings.</p>
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	<i>To protect scenic vistas near the coast between Cape Liptrap and Walkerville, and outviews across Waratah Bay to Wilsons Promontory.</i>	<p>Site and design development in landscapes visible from the coast between Cape Liptrap and Walkerville to avoid visual intrusion by being set back from the coast and hidden by topography, or using low building forms, darker colours and non-reflective materials and landscaping with indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Avoid all visually intrusive development in landscapes visible within 500 metres of formal scenic lookouts in the Character Area, including Cape Liptrap Lighthouse.</p>	<p>Unsympathetic development in key view fields</p>
<b>Settlements</b>	<p><i>To minimise the visual intrusion of development within Walkerville and Walkerville South to views from the public foreshore and distant views (including offshore).</i></p> <p><i>To contain any expansion of the settlements of Walkerville and Walkerville South into the vegetated and undeveloped landscapes between and adjacent to the settlements.</i></p>	<p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'All Settlements' and 'Coastal Settlements'.</b></p>	<p>Unclear edges to settlements.</p> <p>Signage clutter at entrances and exits to settlements.</p> <p>Large developments in prominent coastal locations.</p> <p>Buildings dominating vistas to and from the coast.</p> <p>Use of light and/or reflective materials.</p> <p>Development which increases overlooking of the public foreshore of settlements should not be increased.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<p><b>Between Settlements</b></p> <p><b>Hinterland locations</b></p>	<p><i>To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape and vegetation on hill faces and ridges throughout the Character Area.</i></p> <p><i>To retain the dominance of the landscape in the rural and hinterland areas, particularly when viewed from main roads and key touring routes.</i></p> <p><i>To ensure buildings and structures sit within, rather than dominate the landscape.</i></p>	<p>Locate any development outside settlements sparsely, siting buildings and structures amongst landscaping in hinterland areas and avoid the loss of existing vegetation.</p> <p>Utilise indigenous vegetation for screening and to delineate property boundaries or open style fencing (e.g. post and wire) where important outviews would be interfered by vegetation.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Between Settlements – Hinterland Locations' and 'Ridges and Hill Slopes'.</b></p>	<p>Buildings and structures that are visible on ridgetops, particularly with the sea or sky as backdrop when viewed from roads, or in scenic outviews.</p> <p>Light coloured or highly reflective building materials.</p> <p>Excessive cut and fill.</p> <p>Large building footprints.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations.</p> <p>Linear urban development and visual clutter along main roads and key touring routes</p> <p>Linear urban development, ad hoc built form and other clutter visible along roads.</p> <p>Loss of rural outlook from road corridors.</p> <p>Visually dominant, bulky buildings that have no relationship to landform.</p> <p>Loss of rural character.</p> <p>Colours and materials that contrast strongly with the landscape.</p> <p>Buildings that protrude above the tree canopy height.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<p><b>Between Settlements</b></p> <p><b>Coastal locations</b></p>	<p><i>To ensure minimum visibility of buildings and structures within the coastal strip.</i></p> <p><i>To retain the natural and undeveloped character of the coastal strip between settlements by avoiding or carefully siting and designing development.</i></p>	<p>In steep or hilly locations, design buildings to follow the contours or step down the site, to minimise need for earthworks on the site and articulate buildings into separate elements to avoid visually dominant elevations.</p> <p>Minimise building footprints and heights to retain an undeveloped appearance from foreshore and other public use areas.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Between Settlements – Coastal Locations'.</b></p>	<p>Prominent built development in private land adjoining the coast.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations.</p> <p>Visually dominant development in coastal areas, between settlements.</p> <p>Loss of coastal views.</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure and Signage</b></p>	<p><i>To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly on hill faces, in coastal areas and in other areas of high landscape values or visibility.</i></p>	<p>Prepare a landscape plan that demonstrates the use of indigenous or non-invasive exotic plantings to minimise visual intrusion and ensures the remediation of impacted indigenous vegetation.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure' and 'Signage'.</b></p>	<p>Loss of vegetation in linear 'scars' in prominent locations.</p> <p>Large, tall or visually intrusive infrastructure close to roads, settlements.</p> <p>Infrastructure in undeveloped coastal locations.</p> <p>Signage clutter.</p> <p>Large, visually intrusive or brightly coloured signage, particularly near to the coastal edge or intruding into scenic outviews are available from roads and settlements.</p>
<p><b>Cultural heritage</b></p>	<p><i>Relate landscape character to the relevant heritage values of significant places, by setting back, avoiding or carefully designing buildings, structures and other landscape alterations.</i></p>	<p>Identify and preserve landscape conditions and settings of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage value.</p> <p>Respect the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of significant places by setting back, avoiding or carefully designing buildings, structures and other landscape alterations to avoid impacts on places, objects or landscapes that have Aboriginal heritage value.</p>	<p>Intrusive development that detracts from cultural heritage sites.</p> <p>Disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Landmark features</b>	<p><i>To preserve an appropriate landscape setting for landmarks or features of cultural heritage significance, such as the Cape Liptrap Lighthouse and limestone kilns at Walkerville.</i></p> <p><i>To protect landscape character and conditions that are consistent with Aboriginal cultural values of the area.</i></p>	<p>Site buildings and structures away from landmarks or features of cultural heritage significance, wherever possible.</p> <p>Maintain an isolated setting to the Cape Liptrap lighthouse and avoid developments which compete with for visual dominance.</p> <p>Identify and preserve landscape conditions and settings of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage value.</p>	<p>Development which is insensitive to the setting of heritage features / cultural sites by reasons of bulk, siting, design or other impact.</p> <p>Intrusive development that detracts from cultural heritage sites.</p> <p>Disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities.</p>

## 3.2 Welshpool Hills & Mount Hoddle

### Landscape Character Type: Strzelecki Highlands

This hilly Character Area stretches from Waratah Bay almost to Yarram and is part of the Strzelecki Range landform that extends inland to Warragul and west to the Bass Hills. The southern edge rises sharply from flat coastal plains forming the topographic 'amphitheatre' setting to Corner Inlet. Mount Hoddle and the Welshpool Hills are prominent and regionally significant landforms that are highly visible backdrops to coastal and coastal hinterland areas from Yarram to Waratah Bay while Mount Hoddle is visible as far west as Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay. While much of the Character Area has a cultural landscape quality contributed to by a pattern of cleared land and exotic vegetation, there is a distinct absence of built elements in prominent locations, with the exception of a large wind energy facility in the hills above Toora.



## Key Features

- Sharp topographic contrast between coastal plains and hill slope contributing to the ‘amphitheatre’ setting of Corner Inlet.
- Rural character of productive pasture and cultural vegetation patterns.
- An undeveloped character across many of the prominent hill faces.

## Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – Steep, dissected and rugged ranges underlain by geology contiguous with the Strzelecki Range to the north. The coast-facing edge is frequently steep and prominent against flat plains, while inland consists of rolling plateaux, peaks and valleys out of the coastal viewshed. Mount Hoddle is an outlying landscape that is highly visible inland of Wilsons Promontory.
- **Waterform** – Watercourses occur throughout the area, with creeks including Foster Creek and Jack Creek in the west and larger rivers including the Tarwin River, Fish Creek, Agnes River and Tarra River in the eastern parts. Numerous farm dams are also a characteristic water feature.
- **Vegetation** – The area has been heavily cleared and is now characterised by open pastures and exotic windbreaks with some patches of wet and dry sclerophyll forests and woodland vegetation in reserves and along watercourses.
- **Land use** – Almost the entire Character Area is used for pasture, while areas under plantation forestry and flora and fauna reserves also occur. Most substantial settlements in the Strzelecki Range occur outside the study area to the north although the regional centre of Foster is located close to the edge of the Area. There are scattered farm residences and rural living properties throughout.

## Settlements

### Foster

Foster is a small to medium-sized regional centre near the base of the Strzelecki Range. The settlement is surrounded by steep hillsides which form the backdrop to views from the town. Native vegetation provides a consistent character throughout while the siting of the township low on slopes and flats minimises visibility from surrounding coastal hinterland landscapes.

On the edges of the township there are individual farmhouses set in established gardens and some more recent rural living residences that frequently lack established gardens.

## Pattern of Viewing

Views experienced in the Character Area are defined strongly by topography. Throughout the southern edges of the Character Area, expansive and scenic views are available across coastal plains and Corner Inlet to Wilsons Promontory. There are a few formal lookouts in the hills above Toora and some dwellings sited to take advantage of these views. This southern edge is also a highly visible in the foreground and middle ground of views from key touring routes including the South Gippsland Highway and Foster-Wilsons Promontory Road as well as the settlements of Foster, Toora, Welshpool and Yarram. Further inland viewing is contained by local topography and vegetation and the experience is very much of the local pastoral and agricultural landscapes and townships with very few outviews from the primary road corridors or settlements.

## Community Values

### Positive Features

People from within this Character Area commented that the beautiful clean beaches, the local flora and fauna, the unspoilt views, rugged cliffs, scenic drives, indigenous sites and wide variety of recreational activities as the most positive features of the Character Area.

### Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

The local community noted that negative changes that were occurring or had occurred in the area include development in close proximity to dunes and the spoiling of views by the Toora Wind Farm.

### Significant Landscapes

The Welshpool hills and Mount Hoddle were cited as having significant landscape features contributing to the 'amphitheatre' setting of Corner Inlet.

## Other Identified Values

- The Corner Inlet 'amphitheatre' was identified by members of the study Reference Group as an important landscape setting.

## Landscape Change

Anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape of the character area include:

- Clearing of established plantations, including some in prominent locations and establishment of some new plantations; and
- Revegetation through active rehabilitation works by landowners and community groups, and natural regrowth of pasture.

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the Character Area include:

- South Gippsland Shire is projected to experience moderate population increase in the next 30 years.
- Rapid uptake of available residential land in coastal areas of Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Shires likely to push demand for coastal living into South Gippsland.
- Significant increase in coastal land values and increasing rural land values driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism / visitation.

- Foster is identified as a growth area in the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.

Development trends and pressures known in or likely to occur in the character area include:

- Further development of wind energy generation facilities, particularly along the coastward face of the range.
- New residential and accommodation development sited to take advantage of views.
- Subdivision of large pastoral landholdings for rural living and 'hobby farms.
- The South Gippsland Shire is a moderate wind resource area and exposed topographies of this Character Area are currently (and might be expected to continue to be) subject to investigation for wind energy facilities.

## Sensitivity to Change

The steep, prominent and largely cleared slopes contained in the southern slopes of this Character Area are highly sensitive to built developments which introduces contrasting colours and textures. Developments which occur on ridgelines and intrude into the skyline of key viewing corridors either on the southern coast-facing edge or inland hills will be particularly conspicuous. Particularly sensitive landscapes occur between Foster and Yarram where the Welshpool Hills are viewed in the foreground of townships, the South Gippsland Highway and are visible for long distances across low coastal flats. In the remainder, there is a greater opportunity to site developments lower on slopes or amongst vegetation to reduce their visual intrusion.

Where native vegetation occurs at roadsides and on visible hillslopes this is also sensitive to change and developments which involve substantial vegetation removal are likely to have significant visual impacts.

## Existing Policies

The following State and Local government policies currently direct landscape change in the Character Area:

- The Majority of the Character Area is zoned Rural (RUZ). There are urban zones including Business 1 (B1Z) and Residential 1 (R1Z) in major settlements including Foster. A number of small settlements zoned Township (TZ). There are some small areas zoned Rural Living (RLZ) throughout the Character Area. The Lance Creek Reservoir is zoned Public Use (PUZ1), with the area surrounding it zoned Environmental Rural (ERZ).
- The majority of the South Gippsland Shire part of the Area is covered by Environmental Significance Overlay 5 (ESO 5) to protect vegetation and prevent erosion.

## Management Considerations

- The coast-facing edges of the Character Area provide valued setting to many coastal landscapes and warrant special protection. In particular, the which form part of the Corner Inlet 'amphitheatre'.
- Encourage development to be tucked into in the inland rolling topography and away from prominent viewing locations and skylines.
- Large scale infrastructure should avoid prominent locations and be sited out of the coastal viewshed wherever possible.
- Plantation forests sited in prominent locations can create significant periodic landscape impacts upon harvesting. Wherever possible, these should be located in the lower two-thirds of the visible slope, avoid skylines and use native vegetation as screen to prominent viewpoints.

## Future Character Directions

*The southern edge of the Character Area between Mount Hoddle and Yarram will retain an undeveloped and increasingly vegetated character in which large scale development is avoided and built form does not dominate views from the coast and near-coastal hinterland areas, especially key touring routes. An open, rural and largely unbuilt character will remain throughout the rolling hillsides in which native vegetation and exotic feature planting are protected and encouraged. Rural living and lifestyle developments as well as*

*the majority of rural structures will be sited low on inland slopes out coastal viewshed.*

## Opportunities and Threats

### Opportunities

- Siting residential, tourist and other built developments (including the majority of agricultural buildings and structures) amongst rolling topography out of the coastal viewshed.
- Strengthening indigenous vegetation cover throughout especially around new developments to create linkages between extant flora reserves and coastal vegetation.
- Mirroring traditional homestead structures by using feature planting and wind breaks to soften buildings and structures.

### Threats

- Built structures sited in prominent locations and / or without vegetative screening creating cluttered appearance on the slopes visible from the coast and hinterland, especially between Mount Hoddle and Yarram.
- Rural living development and 'hobby farms' cluttering the rural landscape.

## Landscape Management Objectives

- *To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation features throughout the Character Area.*
- *To protect the cultural vegetation patterns in the Character Area.*
- *To protect the views of the coast-facing edges of the Character Area that provide a valued setting to many adjacent coastal landscapes, Mount Hoddle and the Welshpool Hills which form part of the Corner Inlet 'amphitheatre'.*
- *To ensure that development in and around minor settlements does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including key views and viewing opportunities*

- *To ensure ridge tops and visually prominent hill faces are largely kept free of development, particularly slopes visible from the coast and coastal hinterland such as between Mount Hoddle and Yarram.*
- *To encourage landscape change that is consistent with the cultural heritage values of the Character Area, including the historic barren landscape of the Bass Hills.*
- *To minimise visibility of infrastructure in coast-facing edges of the Character Area, particularly when viewed from the South Gippsland Highway.*
- *To encourage the appropriate siting and design of plantation forests that protects the character and viewing of the Area.*

## Landscape Management Guidelines

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Vegetation</b>	<p><i>To maintain and improve indigenous vegetation features throughout the Character Area.</i></p> <p><i>To protect the cultural vegetation patterns in the Character Area.</i></p>	<p><b>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</b></p>	<p>Clearing of existing stands of vegetation.</p> <p>Loss of indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Loss of exotic vegetation as a contrasting and scenic element of the character.</p>
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	<p><i>To protect the views of the coast-facing edges of the Character Area that provide a valued setting to many adjacent coastal landscapes, Mount Hoddle and the Welshpool Hills that form part of the Corner Inlet 'amphitheatre'.</i></p>	<p>Protect views from the South Gippsland Highway by avoiding intrusive development in the upper third of the visible slope, and carefully designing and siting development to minimise visual intrusion in the lower slopes.</p> <p>Protect opportunities for scenic outviews to Corner Inlet and Wilsons Promontory from roads, lookouts and residences by avoiding the inconsiderate siting of buildings in vistas from these locations.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Key Views and Vistas'.</b></p>	<p>Unsympathetic development in key view fields.</p> <p>Visually dominant development along the prominent southern edge of the Character Area visible from the South Gippsland Highway or Foster – Wilsons Promontory Road.</p>
<b>Settlements</b>	<p><i>To ensure that development in and around minor settlements does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including key views and viewing opportunities</i></p>	<p><b>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'All Settlements'.</b></p>	<p>Unclear or contrasting edges to settlements.</p> <p>Expansion of settlements into prominent or highly visible rural landscapes.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Between Settlements</b>	<i>To ensure ridge tops and visually prominent hill faces are largely kept free of development, particularly slopes visible from the coast and coastal hinterland such as between Mount Hoddle and Yarram.</i>	<p>Group buildings in the landscape amongst existing shelterbelts or substantial landscaping of indigenous or non-invasive exotic / native feature planting.</p> <p>Development on prominent hill faces or ridgelines (particularly with the sea or sky as a backdrop when viewed from roads) should be avoided wherever possible.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Between Settlements' and 'Ridges and Hill Slopes'.</b></p>	<p>Buildings and structures that are highly visible on the skyline.</p> <p>Light coloured or highly reflective building materials on hill faces.</p> <p>Dark coloured building materials on ridge tops.</p> <p>Excessive cut and fill.</p> <p>Large building footprints.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations.</p> <p>Buildings that dominate the landscape outside settlements.</p> <p>Visually dominant buildings in the landscape.</p> <p>Loss of rural outlook from main road corridors.</p> <p>Visually dominant, bulky buildings.</p> <p>Buildings that have no relationship to landform.</p> <p>Loss of rural character.</p> <p>Colours and materials that contrast strongly with the rural character or surrounding landscape (e.g. highly reflective or 'urban' materials).</p> <p>Visually dominant development on the slopes of Mt Hoddle.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<i>To encourage landscape change that is consistent with the cultural heritage values of the Character Area, including the historic barren landscape of the Bass Hills.</i>	<p>Relate landscape character to the relevant heritage values of significant places, by setting back, avoiding or carefully designing buildings, structures and other landscape alterations.</p> <p>Identify and preserve landscape conditions and settings of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage value.</p> <p>Respect the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of significant places by setting back, avoiding or carefully designing buildings, structures and other landscape alterations to avoid impacts on places, objects or landscapes that have Aboriginal heritage value.</p>	<p>Intrusive development that detracts from cultural heritage sites.</p> <p>Disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities.</p>
<b>Infrastructure and Signage</b>	<i>To minimise visibility of infrastructure in coast-facing edges of the Character Area, particularly when viewed from the South Gippsland Highway.</i>	<b>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure' and 'Signage'.</b>	<p>Loss of vegetation in locations that create visual scars visible from key touring routes and other public use locations.</p> <p>Visually dominating signage and infrastructure.</p> <p>Large, visually intrusive or brightly coloured signage, particularly near to the coastal edge or intruding into scenic outviews are available from roads and settlements.</p> <p>Signage clutter.</p>
<b>Plantation forestry</b>	<i>To encourage the appropriate siting and design of plantation forests that protects the character and viewing of the Area.</i>	<p>Set back plantations from coastal locations (including dune systems) and avoid highly visible locations including the western edge visible from the Bass Highway.</p> <p>Site and design plantation forests to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be of a scale that reflects the existing paddock sizes or scale of existing agricultural activity;</li> <li>avoid ridgelines and high slopes that are highly visible from roads;</li> <li>be integrated with existing vegetation (e.g. shelterbelts, remnant indigenous vegetation) forest edges;</li> <li>be designed with varied edges that respond to natural features; and</li> <li>have with vegetative screens, preferably utilising existing indigenous roadside vegetation or shelterbelts.</li> </ul>	<p>Dominance of plantations at roadsides, including continuity of vegetation without intervening screening planting (e.</p> <p>Plantations in prominent locations that will create visual scars with periodic harvesting.</p> <p>Loss of scenic outviews views from roads and lookouts.</p>

## 4.1 Venus Bay Dunes

**Landscape Character Type:** South Gippsland Coastal Dunes

Extending from Point Smythe at the mouth of Andersons Inlet almost to Cape Liptrap, this Character Area contains large coastal dune landforms extending for up to one kilometre inland. A large portion of the Character Area is reserved as part of Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, and with the exception of the sprawling settlement of Venus Bay in the north, is undeveloped. South of Venus Bay the Character Area is largely inaccessible except by four-wheel-drive, however, the high dunes are a backdrop landscape feature to the inland agricultural plains for much of the length of the Area.



## Key Features

- High, vegetated sand dunes which provide a prominent topographic backdrop and contrast to surrounding areas.
- A wild, dunal coastline free from development
- Shack set amongst dunes and vegetation at Venus Bay.

## Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – Recent wind and wave derived coastal landforms throughout with a low inlet flats adjacent to Anderson Inlet. Large, frequently steep sand dunes up to 60m elevation throughout the remainder, including some mobile ‘blow out’ dunes (although largely stabilised by vegetation). Extensive sandy beaches occur along the coast although there are minor reefs and rock outcrops at the coastal edge near Ten Mile Creek.
- **Vegetation** – A dense and diverse mosaic of coastal heath and scrub vegetation, including native grasses and low shrubs covers much of the Character Area. The only cleared areas are within the estates of Venus Bay, although some naturally barren mobile sand dunes occur.
- **Waterform** – The beach opens to Bass Strait and is subject to large wild seas. Ten Mile Creek is the only substantial permanent watercourse in the Character Area, although several swamps occur in poorly drained areas behind dunes.
- **Land use** – The majority of the Character Area is reserved in Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, and as such is largely undeveloped. The settlement of Venus Bay, some agricultural infrastructure and a few four-wheel-drive tracks are the only exceptions.

## Settlements

### Venus Bay

Currently Venus Bay is clustered in two main residential estates (Estates 1 and 2), with a third, lower-density estate set among coastal vegetation closer to the spit (Estate 3). The topography in Estates 1 and 2 is steeply undulating, with houses frequently set on the crests and slopes of stabilised dunes.

Although development is screened from coastal views by high dunes above the beach, many dwellings are prominent and visible from across flat floodplains of the adjacent Tarwin Floodplain Character Area to the east (Photo 1).



**Photo 1** Houses are set on steep dunal vegetation above flat floodplains on the eastern edge of the township of Venus Bay.

A surf club building is sited low in the dunes of the coastal reserve adjacent to Estate 1, and is not visible from the coast. In the lower density parts, dense vegetation throughout gives a distinctly undeveloped character from Lees Road, although dwellings are frequently visible amongst vegetation from across Anderson Inlet.

## Pattern of Viewing

As much of the Character Area is difficult to access, viewing opportunities are limited. The road access to Venus Bay gives close views to the high vegetated dunes and the township. Most views from within the settlements themselves are short, being constrained by topography, with the exception of those dwellings on the eastern edge which view over the Tarwin River floodplain and Anderson Inlet. There are five beach access points at Venus Bay, and a formal lookout which offers expansive views to Inverloch, Cape Paterson and Cape Liptrap. The dunes of this Area form a significant backdrop to views from adjacent Character Areas including views from Inverloch, across Anderson Inlet, Tarwin Lower and the Tarwin-Walkerville Road.

## Community Values

### Positive Features

People from within this Character Area noted that the extreme naturalness, lack of development and coastal dune scrub were all positive features of the area.

### Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

The local community commented that uncontrolled development and gradual urbanisation were negative changes that were occurring in the Character Area. The wider community feels that the Venus Bay beaches become spoiled when pollution 'scum' is visible in the ocean.

### Significant Landscapes

The wider community feels that Venus Bay, the coastline between Venus Bay and Sandy Point, Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, Anderson Inlet and Point Smythe are all significant places within the Character Area.

## Other Identified Values

- This Character Area is known to have high Aboriginal significance with extensive known occurrences of Aboriginal heritage sites throughout, particularly on the coastal edge.
- Several landforms of geological significance, including Point Smythe.

## Landscape Change

Anticipated and ongoing changes to the landscape of the character area include:

- Dynamic and changing coastal landscape including mobile dunes and blow-outs.

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the Character Area include:

- South Gippsland Shire is projected to experience moderate population increase in the next 30 years.

- Rapid uptake of available residential land in coastal areas of Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Shires likely to push demand for coastal living into South Gippsland.
- Significant increase in coastal land values and increasing rural land values driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism / visitation.

Development trends and pressures known in or likely to occur in the character area include:

- Development of currently undeveloped lots in Venus Bay Estate 3 (zoned Rural Living and Environmental Rural).
- Construction of dwellings on currently undeveloped lots zoned residential within Venus Bay estates 1 and 2.
- Pressure for release of rural adjacent to the settlement land for residential and residential / recreational uses.

## Sensitivity to Change

The entire Character Area consists of steep topography and vegetated dunal slopes which are prominent and contrast strongly with surrounding landscapes. Slopes visible from Venus Bay Road, across Anderson Inlet and from the Bass Strait Coast are particularly sensitive. These locations contain dark vegetation, fragile sandy soils and steep slopes exposed to key vantage points making them sensitive to any development type. Where secondary and tertiary dunes create small enclosed valleys within the Character Area, development would be screened from most public vantage points and therefore these are locations of lower sensitivity. The existing urban areas of Venus Bay which are not exposed to outviews from surrounding areas are also lower sensitivity to change.

## Existing Policies

The following State and Local government policies currently direct landscape change in the Character Area:

- Urban Design Framework for Venus Bay identifies opportunities and constraints to further development of the township and defines preferred areas for expansion.
- The South Gippsland Shire Municipal Strategic Statement defines this area as a sensitive coastal environment to be managed for its environmental, recreational, heritage and landscape values.
- Venus Bay Estates 1 and 2 are zoned Township (TZ) with Low Density Residential (LDRZ) in part of Estate 1. The lower density Third Estate is zoned Environmental Rural (ERZ).
- Outside settlements is mostly contained in public reserve and zoned Public Purpose and Recreation (PPRZ), with Rural Zone in small areas to the south of Venus Bay.
- An Environmental Significance Overlay covers the entire Character Area.

## Management Considerations

- Ensure buildings integrate better with surroundings by use of darker colours and landscaping around dwellings to minimise contrast and distant visibility, particularly on the eastern edge of the Character Area.
- Avoid expansion of the settlement of Venus Bay into prominent locations visible from the approach road to settlements, the Bass Strait coast or Andersons Inlet.
- Manage vehicular and pedestrian access across coastal dunes to minimise impact on vegetation and soils.
- Ensure building developments in coastal landscapes are sited amongst rather than dominating the topography (for example the Surf Club building).
- Retain the wild and natural character by avoiding any visible buildings and structures outside the settlement.

## Future Character Directions

*The densely vegetated dune character of this Area will be maintained by restricting uses and developments outside the township which disturb the dune sub-surface and impact on indigenous vegetation. No development will intrude into the skyline above the dune as viewed from key viewing opportunities including main roads and lookouts in the Character Area, and viewing opportunities in adjacent Character Areas. The three estates of Venus Bay will develop amongst vegetation in a manner which reduces visual contrast and distant visibility.*

## Opportunities and Threats

### Opportunities

- Consolidating smaller lots in Venus Bay to reduce building footprint and allow space for retention of indigenous dune vegetation.
- Encouraging less visible materials and landscaping to reduce distant visibility, particularly on the eastern edge of the Venus Bay Estates.

### Threats

- Dense development throughout the residentially zoned areas impacting on the vegetated and dune character.
- Dwellings and other structures set high on dunes so that they protrude into skylines and dominate the township streetscape.
- Urban development in undeveloped areas between Estates 1 and 2.
- Loss of vegetation throughout the lower density Estate 3.
- Uncontrolled vehicle access to coastal reserves and destabilisation of the landform, loss of vegetation and destruction of natural character.

## Management Considerations

- *To protect and enhance the indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape, particularly when viewed from main roads, lookouts and viewing opportunities in adjacent Character Areas.*
- *To retain existing indigenous vegetation to minimise the visual intrusion of new development.*
- *To contain the settlement of Venus Bay to less visible areas within topography.*
- *To ensure that development in and around the Venus Bay estates does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes.*
- *To retain the natural and undeveloped character of the Bass Strait Coastal edge.*
- *To strengthen the dominant vegetated character of the Venus Bay peninsula as viewed from Anderson Inlet.*
- *To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly on hill faces, in coastal areas and in other areas of high landscape values or visibility.*
- *To recognise and protect the landscape of the Venus Bay settlement and the wider Character Area as a places of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value.*

## Landscape Management Guidelines

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Vegetation</b>	<p><i>To protect and enhance the indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape, particularly when viewed from main roads, lookouts and viewing opportunities in adjacent Character Areas.</i></p> <p><i>To retain existing indigenous vegetation to minimise the visual intrusion of new development.</i></p>	<p>Design and site buildings to maximise retention of existing vegetation, and provide for the planting of new indigenous coastal vegetation wherever possible.</p> <p>Strengthen the continuity of vegetation across Venus Bay Estate 3 to minimise visibility to development across Anderson Inlet.</p> <p>Integrate any new development with the landscape through the use of appropriate indigenous vegetation, and a landscape plan where appropriate.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</b></p>	<p>Loss of coastal vegetation.</p> <p>Large areas of coastal land dominated by buildings.</p>
<b>Settlements</b>	<p><i>To contain the settlement of Venus Bay to less visible areas within topography.</i></p> <p><i>To ensure that development in and around the Venus Bay estates does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes.</i></p>	<p>Minimise visual intrusion by utilising low scale building forms, tucked into the landscape and darker colours and materials that reduce contrast and distant visibility (particularly at the eastern edge settlements).</p> <p>Retain or establish an undeveloped vegetated dune buffer to Venus Bay Estates 1 and 3 when viewed from the coast, the approach road, Andersons Inlet and adjoining rural areas.</p> <p>Encourage consolidation of small lots within the settlement areas to minimise the percentage of lots covered by development and maximise space able to support for retention or planting of indigenous coastal vegetation</p> <p>Strengthen vegetation at the edges of Venus Bay Estates 1 and 2 to minimise distant visibility, particularly from Venus Bay – Tarwin Lower Road.</p> <p>Minimise building heights to prevent visually intrusive developments, and avoid any development being visible from the Bass Strait Coast.</p> <p><b>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'All Settlements' and 'Coastal Settlements'.</b></p>	<p>Ribbon development between settlement areas.</p> <p>Unclear edges to settlement areas.</p> <p>Buildings that protrude above the tree canopy height.</p> <p>Visually dominating development.</p> <p>Light coloured, highly reflective materials.</p>
<b>Between settlements</b>	<p><i>To retain the natural and undeveloped character of the Bass Strait Coastal edge.</i></p> <p><i>To strengthen the dominant vegetated character of the Venus Bay peninsula as viewed from Anderson</i></p>	<p>Avoid any buildings or structures visible from the foreshore on the Bass Strait coast by setting new developments back on the inland side of dunes. Where development within the coastal strip cannot be prevented (e.g. development for essential public purposes):</p>	<p>Development visible from the foreshore.</p> <p>Buildings and structures that are visible on the skyline.</p> <p>Light coloured or highly reflective building</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
	<i>Inlet.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• site developments in the lower one-third of the visible slope, wherever possible (avoid buildings protruding above the dune ridgeline);</li> <li>• set buildings and structures among existing vegetation, maximising the retention of coastal vegetation;</li> <li>• utilise appropriate indigenous vegetation to further integrate the development with the landscape;</li> <li>• design buildings to follow the contours or step down the site;</li> <li>• articulate buildings into separate elements, and avoid visually dominant elevations;</li> <li>• construct buildings and structures of materials which reduce distant visibility (e.g. darker colours, non-reflective materials).</li> <li>• minimise overlooking of the foreshore; and</li> <li>• avoid pedestrian and vehicular access in highly visible or undisturbed areas.</li> </ul> <p>In circumstances where development can not be avoided above ridgelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• locate development to avoid the loss of vegetation;</li> <li>• construct buildings and structures of lighter materials to minimise visibility. against the sky.</li> </ul>	<p>materials on visible slopes.</p> <p>Dark coloured building materials on the skyline.</p> <p>Excessive cut and fill.</p> <p>Large building footprints.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations.</p> <p>Disturbance of fragile dune landscapes.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<b>Infrastructure and signage</b>	<i>To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly on hill faces, in coastal areas and in other areas of high landscape values or visibility.</i>	<b>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure' and 'Signage'.</b>	<p>Loss of vegetation in linear 'scars' in prominent locations.</p> <p>Large, tall or visually intrusive infrastructure close to roads, settlements.</p> <p>Infrastructure in undeveloped coastal locations.</p> <p>Signage clutter.</p> <p>Large, visually intrusive or brightly coloured signage, particularly near to the coastal edge or intruding into scenic outviews are available from roads and settlements.</p>
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<i>To recognise and protect the landscape of the Venus Bay settlement and the wider Character Area as a places of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value.</i>	<p>Identify and preserve landscape conditions and settings of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage value.</p> <p>Respect the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of significant places by setting back, avoiding or carefully designing buildings, structures and other landscape alterations to avoid impacts on places, objects or landscapes that have Aboriginal heritage value.</p>	<p>Intrusive development that detracts from cultural heritage sites.</p> <p>Loss or damage to Aboriginal cultural heritage relics, artefacts or places.</p> <p>Development that is insensitive to the setting of Aboriginal cultural heritage values by reasons of bulk, siting, design or other impact.</p> <p>Disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities.</p>

