

COASTAL SPACES LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT STUDY



PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL LANDSCAPES
in the Wellington Shire

MUNICIPAL REFERENCE DOCUMENT

WELLINGTON SHIRE

plān|ī'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

1 DOCUMENT

State Overview Report

1 DOCUMENT

Municipal Reference Documents

1 DOC PER MUNICIPALITY = 9

Municipal Implementation Toolkits

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

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Significance + Change + Policy Gap = Action

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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

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Significance + Change + Policy Gap = Action

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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
 - 1.6 Pattern of Viewing
 - 1.7 Implications for this Study
- 2. Community Values**
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- 3. Landscape Significance**
 - 3.1 Visual Significance
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 - 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

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Significance + Change + Policy Gap = Action

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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 Wellington Shire stretches from the entrance to Corner Inlet in the west to the Gippsland Lakes in the east, incorporating the Ninety Mile Beach coastline. Prominent landscape features of the coast include the Nooramunga Marine and Wildlife Reserve, Lake Wellington and Ninety Mile beach itself. The shire's coastal towns include Port Albert, Seaspray, Golden Beach and Paradise Beach, and Loch Sport.

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 three Character Types in the Wellington Shire (shown on Map 1):

- Character Type 1: South Gippsland Coastal Plains
- Character Type 3: Strzelecki Highlands
- Character Type 6: Gippsland Plains

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.

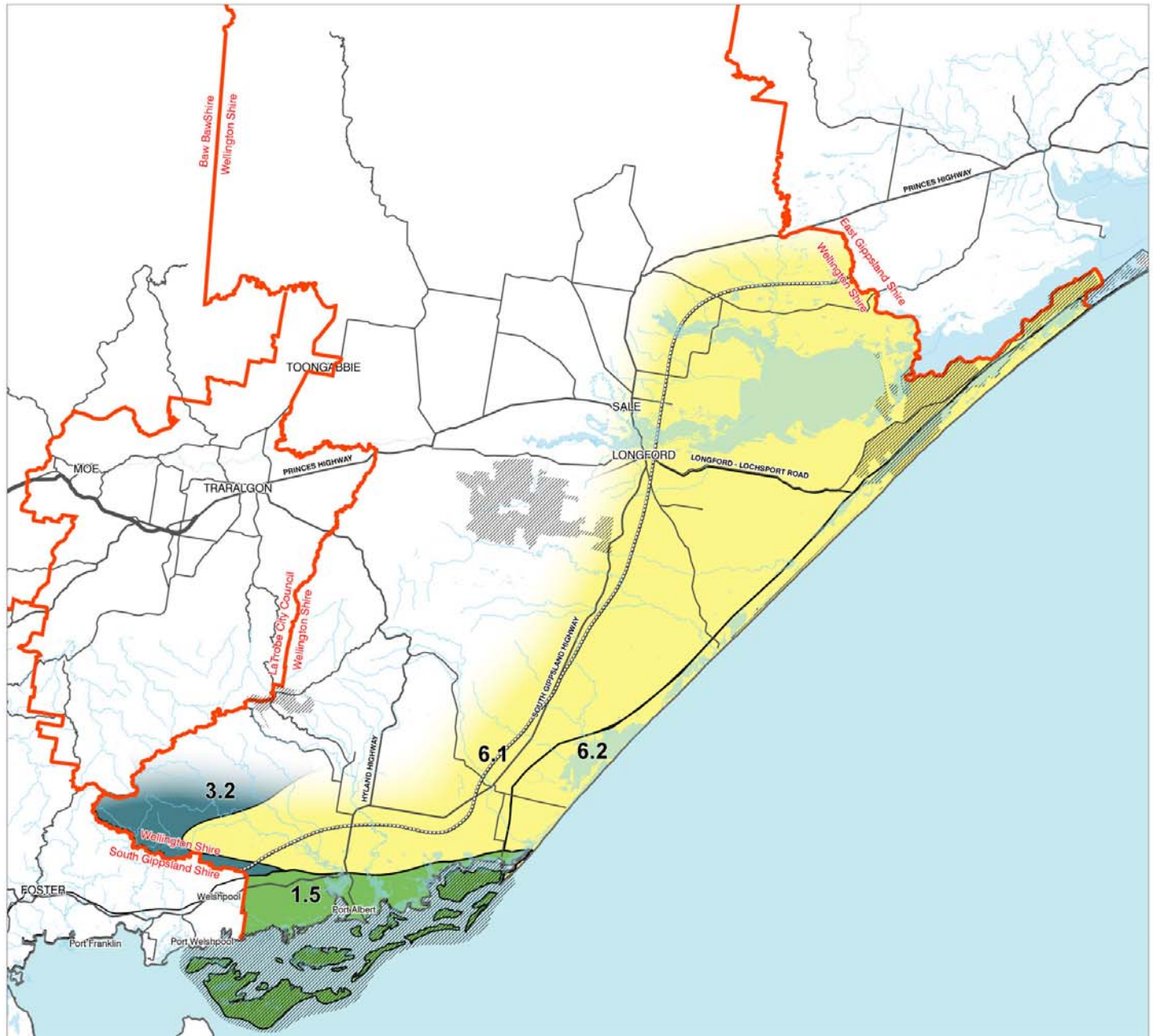
In total, three coastal Character Areas have been identified. These are shown on the Landscape Character Types and Areas Map on page 6 and are illustrated in Figure 1:

- Character Area 1.5: Waratah Bay / Corner Inlet
- Character Area 6.1: Gippsland Lakes Plains
- Character Area 6.2: Ninety Mile Coast

These are illustrated in Figure 1 and are also shown on Map 1. 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
- Gippsland Plains
- Strzerecki Highlands

5.1 Character Areas

- State and National Parks (including Coastal and Regional parks)
- Roads
- Hydrology**
- Watercourse
- Water body
- Administrative Boundaries**
- Municipal Boundary
- 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.

Character Types and Areas
Wellington Shire



**Figure 1: Coastal Landscape Character Areas
(Wellington Shire)**



1.5 Corner Inlet (Port Albert region)



6.1 Gippsland Lakes Plains (Latrobe River)



6.1 Gippsland Lakes Plains



6.2 Ninety Mile Coast (Loch Sport region)



6.2 Ninety Mile Coast (Seaspray – Paradise Beach region)



6.2 Ninety Mile Coast (Southern region)



1.3 Key Features

The key features of the coastal landscapes of the Wellington Shire include:

- 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 of productive pasture and cultural vegetation patterns
- Low-lying, flat topography towards the south of the municipality, adjoining an extensive inland lake system.
- Ninety-mile beach coastal edge with sand dunes and native vegetation.
- Extensive lakes and waterbodies surrounded by native vegetation and separated by narrow peninsulas.
- Large expanses of intact, low coastal and wetland vegetation.
- Important recreation and tourism destination.

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 Wellington Shire:

Landform

The topography of the shire is generally undulating with landscape features varying throughout the coastal edge and hinterland. Dunes, wide sandy beaches, low-energy mangrove and intertidal sand and mud flats dominate the south-western parts of the shire, while the extensive and continuous ocean coast of Ninety Mile Beach is the dominant landscape feature of the north-eastern parts. Gentle undulations along narrow spits and peninsulas are also

found between poorly drained mud and sand flats and shallow lakes and inlets.

Waterform

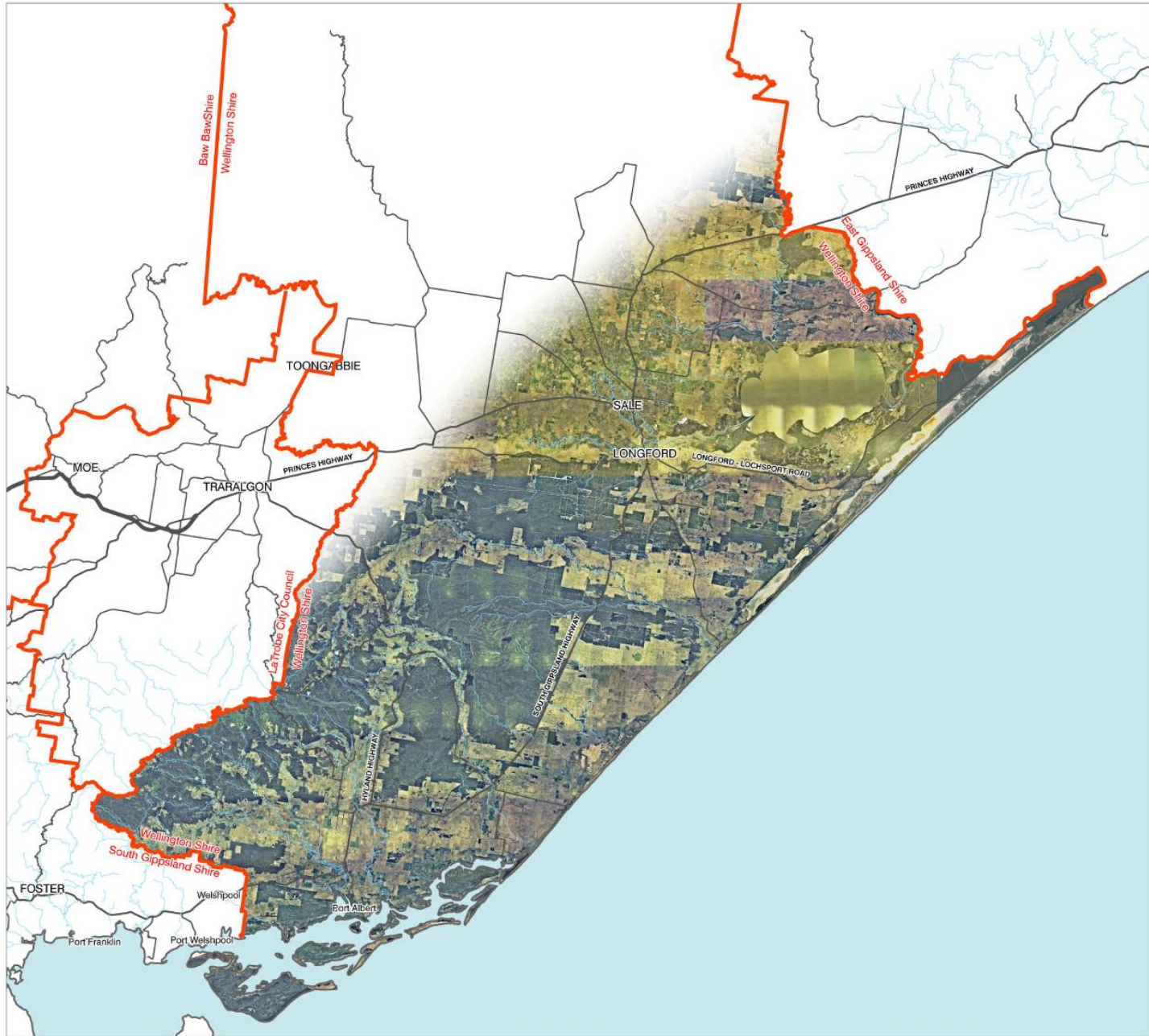
A number of important water features are present within the shire, including the large and permanent Lake Wellington, the long ephemeral lakes that occur behind the narrow coastal strip (e.g. Lake Reeve) and low energy inlets and swamps and lagoons. There are also several watercourses within the shire including the Tarwin and Tarra Rivers. Further inland, farm dams form a characteristic water feature. From the western part of the shire, views across water to Wilsons Promontory are also particularly important.

Vegetation

Vegetation generally occurs across open pastoral land in the form of exotic windbreaks, patches of wet and dry sclerophyll forests and woodland vegetation in reserves. Linear vegetation features including remnant vegetation along roadsides and exotic shelterbelts occur throughout pastoral land. Extensive areas of estuarine mangrove, salt marsh and swamp vegetation also occur around wetland and watercourse areas. Dunes along the coastline are often dominated by low indigenous coastal scrub.

Land Use

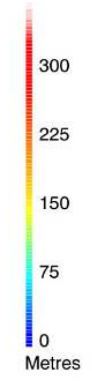
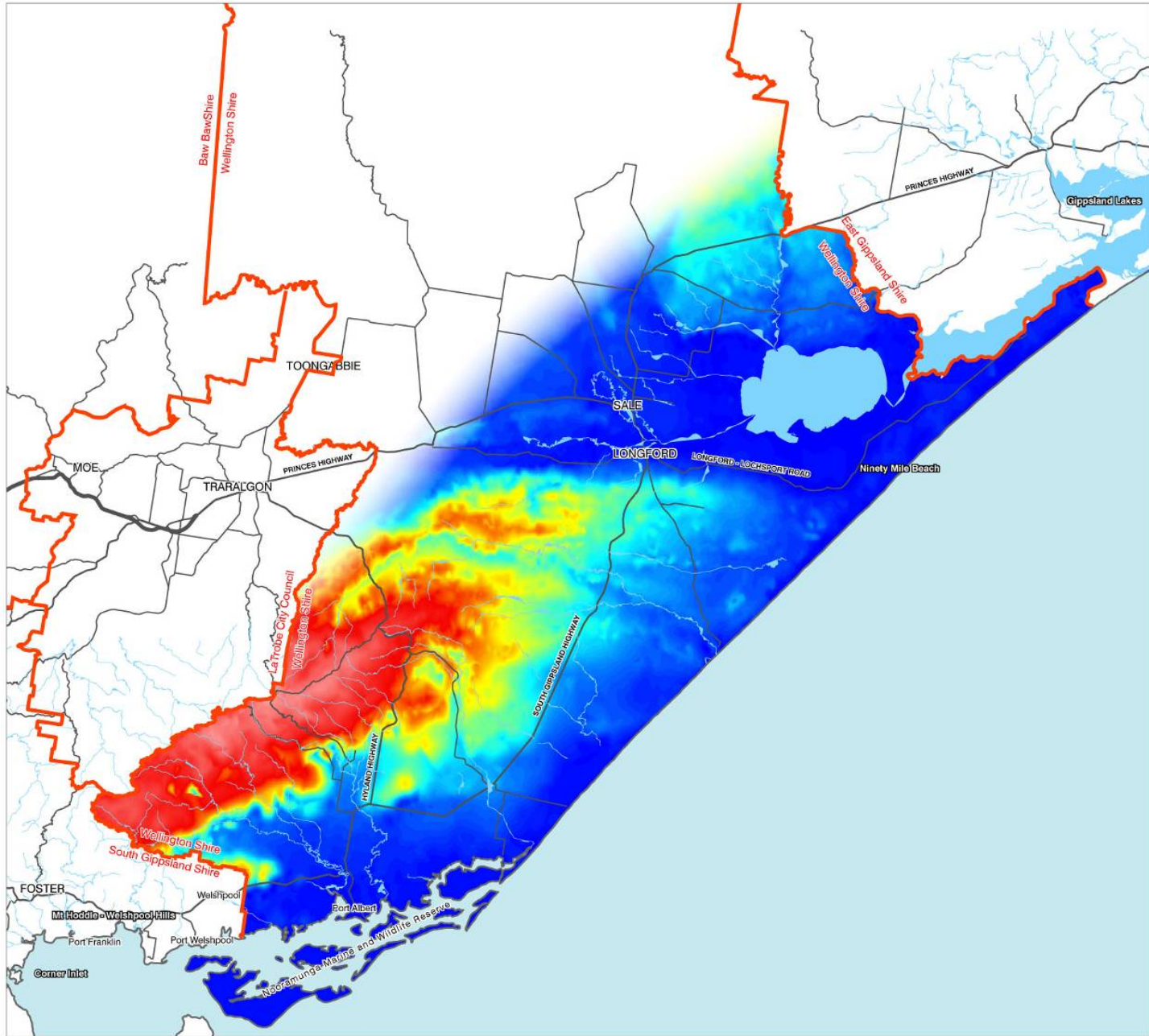
While much of the shire is used for pasture, large areas are reserved for nature conservation. Areas under plantation forestry and flora and fauna reserves also occur. Private land is generally used for residential buildings (including holiday residential) along the coastline. Small settlements, caravan parks, camping grounds and scattered farm residences form the other land uses that occur throughout the shire.



- General**
-  Roads
 -  Rivers
 -  Municipal boundary

Aerial Photograph
Wellington Shire





- General**
-  Roads
 -  Rivers
 -  Municipal boundary

Landform and Waterform
Wellington Shire





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:

- Port Albert
- Loch Sport
- Golden Beach / Paradise Beach
- Seaspray

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

There are a number of important viewing locations within the shire including the South Gippsland and Princes Highways, Wilsons Promontory Road, Ninety Mile Beach, the inland lakes, and several formal scenic lookouts. Long views across Ninety Mile Beach are particularly important, as are expansive and scenic views across the coastal plains and Corner Inlet to Wilsons Promontory. Other views include those to the inland lakes, views across water bodies and to the rolling hills. Views throughout the coastal region of the shire are generally open and expansive, terminating at landscape features such as Wilsons Promontory, Mount Hoddle, the Strzelecki Range and the Cape Liptrap Hills. 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.

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 Wellington Shire include visually beautiful and diverse landscapes, views towards Snake Island, Wilsons Promontory and Corner Inlet, pristine beaches, uninterrupted views, the low visual impact of housing, clean beaches, rugged cliffs, indigenous sites, the lack of human impact, sand dunes and water features.

The broader community identified Corner Inlet, Mount Hoddle and the Welshpool Hills and Ninety Mile Beach as significant places within, and able to be viewed from, the Shire.

Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

The local community noted that negative changes that have occurred to coastal landscapes 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 farms, the industrialisation of the coastline, weed infestation of dunes, intensive development, erosion and loss of vegetation.

The wider community identified Corner Inlet, Barry Beach and the Toora Hills as places within or close to the shire that have been spoiled by views to wind turbines, overdevelopment and severe erosion.

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 Wellington 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.

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?*

It should be noted that 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 Wellington 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 one additional potentially significant area within the Wellington Shire:

- Inlet areas between Port Welshpool and McLoughlins Beach

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 Wellington Shire, the following established valued landscapes are of particular note:

- Sourced historic sites within the study area are listed by Heritage Victoria.
- The Gippsland Lakes are listed by the National Trust for being a unique estuarine environment and valued recreational resource, described in The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park Management Plans as diverse and undisturbed with spectacular views and extensive coastal dune systems; identified in the Regional Forest Agreement (CRA) for providing a scenic backdrop to coastal townships and main tourist roads; identified as internationally significant wetland system by the Ramsar Convention; identified as a significant regional landscape by the South Gippsland Shire Significant Landscapes Policy (Clause 22.12); and described in Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast as extensive lakes and dunes with outstanding scenic quality.
- The area also has high Aboriginal significance with extensive known occurrences of Aboriginal heritage sites throughout, particularly around the Gippsland Lakes and at the coastal edge.
- Lake Reeve is an internationally significant wetland identified by Ramsar Convention.
- Numerous historic coastal landscape features including Boole Poole peninsula.

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 moderate visual qualities, then the landscape is considered to be of Local Significance . NB: It is considered that every non-urban part of the Victorian coastline is of at least Local Significance . Therefore every landscape will have a minimum of one or more visual significance categories rated as having at least moderate visual qualities.	If one or more of the landscape components is rated as having high visual qualities, then the landscape is considered to be of Regional Significance .	If one or more of the landscape components is rated as having exceptional visual qualities, then the landscape is considered to be of State Significance .
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	Local	Regional	State

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 Wellington 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:

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.

State Significance: Ninety Mile Beach (part)

Ninety Mile Beach is the longest stretch of uninterrupted beach in the country and the second longest in the world. This unparalleled linear landscape with its combination of sandy beaches, low dunes, peninsulas, and wetlands is set against the wild seas of Bass Strait, is visually of state significance, and potentially of national significance in that context.

Ninety Mile Beach is protected by a series of official designations - National Park, Wildlife Reserve, and Coastal Park - that recognise the remarkable ecological and scenic values of this area. The landscape is characterised by large swathes of indigenous vegetation including coastal heath, mangroves, and dune grasses, and there are vast ocean views along its entirety.

Ninety Mile Beach is listed by the National Trust as regionally significant, as part of the Gippsland Lakes region. Due to its iconic landscape features and extent, Ninety Mile Beach is an international visitor destination, featuring strongly in Victoria's tourism promotion. Lake Reeve is a bird habitat of international importance that is recognised under the Ramsar Convention, and the area includes Rotamah Island, a bird observatory managed by the Royal Australian Ornithologists Union. The area is also important for its Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, the dunal systems still containing many remnants and evidence of indigenous settlements.

State Significance: Gippsland Lakes (part)

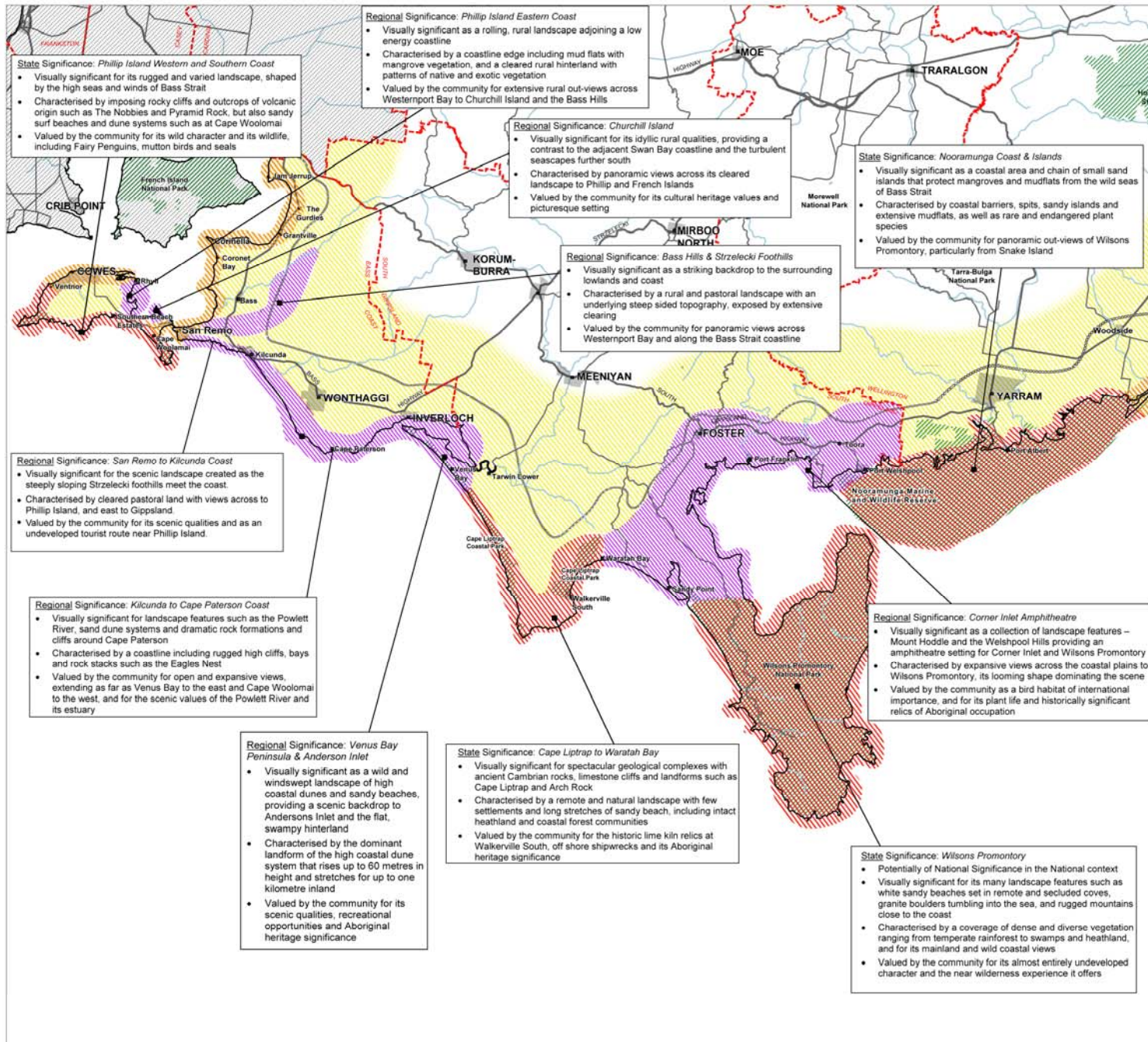
The Gippsland Lakes are of state significance as a unique estuarine environment with a network of lakes fringed by Ninety Mile Beach and extensive coastal dune systems.

Lakes Victoria and Wellington are the most prominent water features in this landscape but there is also a collection of islands and small peninsulas that contribute to its visual significance. It is the interplay of these features and their vegetated and undeveloped backdrop that make this landscape a valued scenic resource and Victorian icon.



As well as its visual qualities, also recognised by the National Trust, this landscape contains some of the most significant and well known environmental and recreational areas in the state. The Ramsar Convention notes this landscape as a wetland system of international significance, and there is a diverse array of flora and fauna, including many endangered species. There are some 60 sites of scientific interest in the area, including sites of geological and geomorphologic significance associated with the sand barriers that have led to the formation of the Gippsland Lakes. The Gippsland Lakes are a highly significant Aboriginal cultural landscape. Evidence of traditional indigenous occupation of this unique system of waterways is commonplace and is found in the form of shell middens, flaked stone artefacts, scarred trees and other traditionally significant sites and places.

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
- Other kinds of public parkland and conservation reserve have been taken into account but do not appear on this map.
- 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.

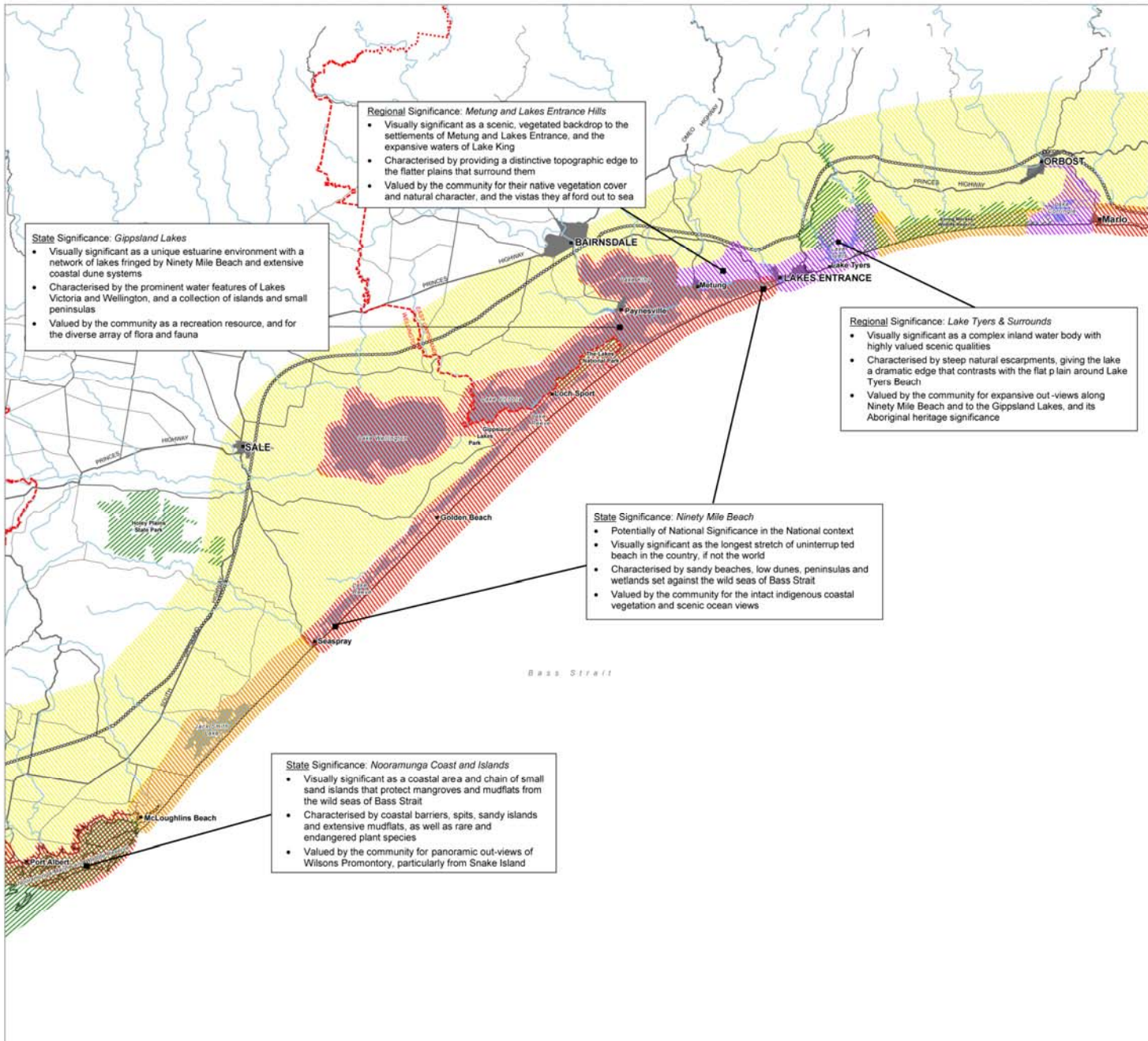
The map depicts areas of visual landscape significance. Other aspects of significance, eg. environmental, cultural heritage etc. have been considered, but have not contributed to determining the levels of significance.

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)



Legend

- Study Area
- Inland extent of field survey / proposed Local Policy
All of the area between this line and the coast is proposed to be managed with development guidelines and policy.
- Coastal, National and State Parks
Other kinds of public parkland and conservation reserve have been taken into account but do not appear on this map.
- Roads
- Watercourse
- Waterbody
- Municipal Boundary
- 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). Maps showing detailed proposed SLO boundaries can be found in the relevant Municipal Implementation Toolkit.

0 4 8
kilometres

Significant Coastal Landscapes
Gippsland Region (Part 2)



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.



4. 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 Wellington 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 Wellington Shire include:

- Rehabilitation of lakes and waterways by landowners / community groups.
- Land management works within the Gippsland Lakes Park.
- Dynamic and changing low-lying coastal landforms including coastal spits and mangrove islands
- Clearing of established plantations, including some in prominent locations and establishment of some new plantations.

- Revegetation through active rehabilitation works by landowners and community groups, and natural regrowth of pasture.
- Naturally dynamic environments at lake edges.

Drivers of landscape change and development patterns in the shire include:

- Trend for increased migration from cities and inland areas to the coast.
- Significant increase in coastal and hinterland land values and declining viability of agriculture driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism visitation.
- Increased storm-surge and flooding risks as a result of global warming, potentially restricting development at the lake / coastal interface.
- Migration from cities and inland areas to the coast and increased permanent population in coastal settlements.
- Aging population across East Gippsland and Wellington Shires.
- Some constraints on development at the lake / coastal interface is foreshadowed owing to storm-surge and flooding risks, particularly as a result of global warming.

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

- Potential for ribbon development along the Ninety Mile Beach Coast between Loch Sport and Seaspray as a result of take up of existing inappropriate subdivisions.
- Large-scale residential/recreational orientated developments often sited to take advantage of views.
- Potential pressure for large scale subdivisions and 'resort-style' residential developments associated with marinas and golf courses.
- Subdivision of large pastoral landholdings for rural living and 'hobby farms'.
- Pressure to accommodate recreational/residential developments along the shores of Lake Wellington.



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.

Much of the coastal edge of the Wellington Shire is characterised by the Ninety Mile Coast which features low heath and undulating landforms. These characteristics generally contain views, however sensitive landscapes are found where the edges of the landform adjoin open landscape features such as lakes, coast or flat rural hinterland. A general absence of development along the coastline tends to heighten this sensitivity. The north-western coastal hinterland area of the shire is mostly flat and open, and as such, sensitive to highly visible built elements. In the south-west of the shire, varying topography minimises the visual intrusion of development. Throughout the shire, the impact of development can generally be lessened by siting buildings back from viewing opportunities and retaining intact vegetation.

4.3 Management Considerations

For each coastal landscape Character Area within the Wellington 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:

- Utilise screening vegetation and long set-backs to avoid visual clutter with built elements.
- Encourage development of dwellings and other buildings to occur tucked into in the inland rolling topography and away from prominent viewing locations and skylines.
- 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 of the shire, including exotic windbreaks and feature planting around homesteads.
- Retain the wild and natural character of lake landforms and Ninety Mile Beach by siting developments inland of the dune / lake edge amongst vegetation and topography.
- The coast-facing edges of the shire provide a valued setting to many coastal landscapes and warrant special protection to ensure built development does not intrude into natural landscapes.
- 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



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:

Settlements on the coast will be contained, and development managed to protect the extensive natural coastal environments including beaches, salt marsh, mangrove mud flats and dune coasts. Development, including rural structures, will generally be sited low on inland slopes, out of the coastal viewshed. Indigenous coastal vegetation adjoining inland lakes and the coast will dominate, and large stretches of the shire will be free from built development.

An open, rural and largely unbuilt character will remain throughout the rolling hinterland, in which native vegetation and exotic planting, where it is a feature of the landscape, will be protected and encouraged. Development near lakes will avoid disturbance to the lake edge, be low-scale and set back to allow protection or rehabilitation of substantial riparian vegetation, and to protect the natural, unbuilt setting of views from the lake and lakeside recreational locations.

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

- Strengthening indigenous vegetation cover throughout especially around new developments to create linkages between extant flora reserves and coastal vegetation.
- Developments inland of the dune / lake edge amongst vegetation and topography.
- Minor expansion of Seaspray on low flats away from prominent views and landscapes on the inland expansion of the town.
- Increasing indigenous vegetation throughout, particularly as landscaping for new developments near the coast and in corridors linking with existing flora reserves.
- Siting residential, tourist and other built developments (including the majority of agricultural buildings and structures) among rolling topography out of the coastal viewshed.
- Mirroring traditional homestead structures by using exotic feature planting and wind breaks to soften buildings and structures.
- Encourage landscape improvements that utilise indigenous vegetation to improve the character.

Threats

- Ribbon development along the Ninety Mile Beach Coast, especially between Loch Sport and Seaspray.
- Development (including dwellings) atop the low escarpment overlooking Ninety Mile Beach south of Seaspray and/or without substantial indigenous vegetation landscaping.
- 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.



- Lineal sprawl between settlements and large-scale residential/recreational developments adjacent to major water features which impact on the natural value and unbuilt character of the Area.
- Developments that disturb natural geomorphology and landform, particularly along rivers and lakes.
- Dwellings and other building close to roads and/or without softening landscaping cluttering the open rural character.

4.6 Landscape Management Objectives and Guidelines

Landscape Management Objectives and Guidelines have been prepared for each coastal landscape Character Area within the Wellington 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 *Wellington 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 sorts 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
- 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.

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;*
- *locations identified by the study Reference Groups as important;*
- *locations of high tourism visitation; and,*
- *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.

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 among 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.

Existing Policies

A summarised list of State and Local Government policies currently directing landscape management in the Character Area.

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 that describe 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

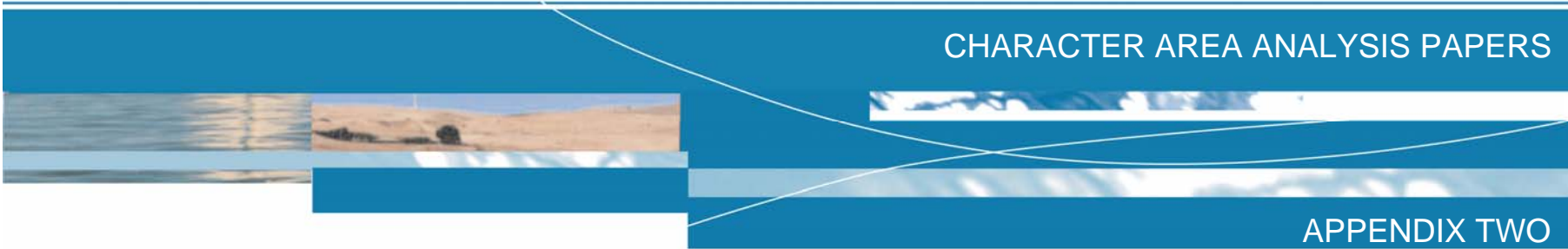
A table of detailed guidelines and strategies for managing change in the Character Area. Set out in four columns:

Character Element: Lists aspects of the landscape and development that 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

6.1 Gippsland Lakes Plains

Landscape Character Type: Gippsland Plains

Flat to gently undulating mostly pastoral Character Area adjoining the Gippsland Lakes. Large inland waterbodies including Lakes King, Victoria and Wellington are the major landscape features, and the edges of which are locations of increasing pressure for recreational uses and settlements. Very flat topography provides open and expansive views. Although there are few topographic features to break up the expansive plains, scattered vegetation and settlements create points of variation to the character.



Key Features

- Low-lying, flat topography adjoining extensive inland lake system.
- Native vegetation at lake edges providing natural landscape setting in parts.
- Rural character throughout hinterland areas.

Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – The landform includes extensive lowland coastal and alluvial plains characterised by generally flat to gently undulating terrain. Extensive mud flats adjoin the lakes in parts and dynamic landforms including floodplains and lake edges are a feature.
- **Waterform** – The northern half of the Character Area is dominated by the large waterbodies of Lakes Wellington, King and Victoria forming the largest inland lakes system in Victoria. The lakes are fed by large rivers including the Latrobe, Avon, Nicholson and Tambo, the surrounds of which include extensive areas of seasonally inundated floodplains and mudflats. South and west of Lake Wellington, water features are less extensive with a scattering of farm dams and medium-sized creeks.
- **Vegetation** – Although the Character Area has been substantially cleared for pasture, elements of the pre-European vegetation remain including dune scrubs, coastal tussock grasslands and heathy woodlands Tea-tree and Banksia woodlands occur nearer to the coast on the south side of Lake Wellington. Linear vegetation features including indigenous remnants along roadsides and some exotic shelterbelts are also a feature.
- **Land use** – The flat plains of this Character Area are extensively used for pasture with some substantial settlements in the northern half (the towns of Sale and Bairnsdale are likely to occur in this Character Area although were not surveyed in this study) while in the south small settlements and infrastructure scattered loosely throughout.

Pattern of Viewing

The key viewing opportunities in this Character Area include the South Gippsland and Princes Highways, recreation locations and the lake edges settlements. Views from the Lakes themselves are also important. Open long-range views are available throughout this Character Area. There is very little topographic variety to form the backdrop to viewing except at the northern and eastern edges of the Area where views to rolling hills in adjacent Character Areas are available. Accordingly, the key landscape features including Lakes Wellington and Victoria are largely hidden from view. Nonetheless, open expansive views across water bodies are an important feature of the character.

Community Values

Positive Features

Members of the local community commented that the remoteness and lack of human impact in this Character Area were its most positive features.

Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

The wider community, however, identified intensive development, loss of vegetation, erosion, privatisation of coastal areas and industrial areas along the coast as negative features and changes occurring in the region.

Significant Landscapes

The Gippsland Lakes were noted in the community survey for natural beauty and views and photographed by participants in the disposable cameras exercise.

Other Identified Values

- The Gippsland Lakes are listed by the National Trust for being a unique estuarine environment and valued recreational resource, described in The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park Management Plans as diverse and undisturbed with spectacular views and extensive coastal dune systems; identified in the Regional Forest Agreement (CRA) for providing a scenic backdrop to coastal townships and main tourist roads; identified as internationally significant wetland system by the

Ramsar Convention; identified as a significant regional landscape by the South Gippsland Shire Significant Landscapes Policy (cl22.12); and described in Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast as extensive lakes and dunes with outstanding scenic quality.

- The Character Area also has high Aboriginal significance with extensive known occurrences of Aboriginal heritage sites throughout, particularly around the Gippsland Lakes.

Landscape Change

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

- Naturally dynamic environments at lake edges.
- Revegetation of degraded landscapes and natural regeneration of unproductive pasture.
- Land management works within the Gippsland Lakes Park.

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

- Migration from cities and inland areas to the coast and increased permanent population in coastal settlements.
- Aging population across East Gippsland and Wellington Shires.
- Significant increase in coastal and hinterland land values and declining viability of agriculture driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Increased tourism and recreation visitation.
- Some constraints on development at the lake / coastal interface is foreshadowed owing to storm-surge and flooding risks, particularly as a result of global warming.

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

- Pressure to accommodate recreational/residential developments along the shores of Lake Wellington..
- Potential for linear residential sprawl and intensive residential development at the lake edges, particularly Paynesville to Bairnsdale.

Sensitivity to Change

Flat and open topography and a lack of topography and vegetation makes it more difficult to integrate many large-scale and vertical developments. However, many smaller developments can be sited back from viewing opportunities and the edges of the lakes without substantially altering the character. Intact roadside vegetation and slight rises also provide locations of lower sensitivity to change.

Existing Policies

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

- The majority of the Character Areas is zoned Rural (RUZ) with large bushland reserves in the south east zoned Public Conservation and Resource (PCRZ). The edges of Lakes King, Victoria and Wellington are in the most part zoned Public Conservation and Resource (PCRZ) although Rural Zone extends close to the edges of Lake Victoria in the and Lake Wellington near Seacombe. Larger settlements in the Character Area are zoned Residential (R1Z), Public Use (PUZ).
- In the Wellington Shire, part of the Character Area, the Gippsland Lakes and the coastline are covered by Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO1) which aims to protect the natural beauty of the coastal landscape and protect visual amenity, among other things.
- Many watercourses and lakes are covered by Environmental Significance Overlay 2 (ESO2) to protect and enhance the ecological, habitat, aesthetic, scientific, floristic, faunal, cultural, educational, and recreation values of wetlands.
- Large areas surrounding Lakes King, Wellington and Victoria are covered by Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and / or Rural Floodway Overlay (RFO) for flood risk.

Management Considerations

- Avoid large-scale and vertical elements which substantially alter the open rural character.
- Utilise screening vegetation and long set-backs to avoid visual clutter with built elements.
- Protect the integrity of the lakes as substantial natural landforms without dominant built development.

Future Character Directions

An open rural character will be retained throughout this Character Area and enhanced with increased coverage of native vegetation in stands and corridors throughout. Development near to the edges of waterbodies will avoid disturbance to the lake edge, be low-scale and set back to allow the protection or rehabilitation of substantial riparian vegetation and protect the natural, unbuilt setting to views from the lake and lakeside recreational locations.

Opportunities and Threats

Opportunities

- Encourage landscape improvements which utilise indigenous vegetation to improve the character.
- Strengthening vegetation links across cleared landscapes and within townships with the use of indigenous vegetation.

Threats

- Lineal sprawl between settlements and large-scale residential/recreational developments adjacent to major water features which impact on the natural value and unbuilt character of the Area.
- Developments which disturb natural geomorphology and landform, particularly along rivers and lakes.

- Dwellings and other building close to roads and / or without softening landscaping cluttering the open rural character.

Landscape Management Objectives

- *To strengthen the presence of native and indigenous vegetation throughout the Character Area, particularly at roadsides, and in settlements and riparian strips.*
- *To protect and enhance the presence of indigenous vegetation adjacent to lakes, rivers and other waterbodies.*
- *To protect the cultural vegetation patterns in rural areas.*
- *To protect locally significant views and vistas that contribute to the character of the Area, including scenic lookouts and recreation locations with views over the Gippsland Lakes.*
- *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 the impact of new development on sense of space and openness in the rural landscape.*
- *To protect the largely natural and unbuilt views of Lakes King, Victoria and Wellington from the lakes' edges.*
- *To encourage landscape change that is consistent with the cultural heritage values of the Character Area.*
- *To recognise and protect the landscape of the Gippsland Lakes as a place of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value.*
- *To minimise the visual impact of signage and infrastructure, particularly adjacent to the Gippsland Lakes, or areas of high visibility.*
- *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
Vegetation	<p><i>To strengthen the presence of native and indigenous vegetation throughout the Character Area, particularly at roadsides, and in settlements and riparian strips.</i></p> <p><i>To protect and enhance the presence of indigenous vegetation adjacent to lakes, rivers and other waterbodies.</i></p> <p><i>To protect the cultural vegetation patterns in rural areas.</i></p>	<p>Retain existing native and indigenous trees and understorey, and provide for the planting of new native and/or indigenous vegetation wherever possible.</p> <p>Encourage the planting of indigenous vegetation species throughout the Character Area, particularly for rehabilitation works, including at the edge of lakes, rivers and other watercourses.</p> <p>Use indigenous vegetation in preference for exotic, except for the use of non-invasive exotic species (that are already a feature of the area) in open rural areas away from lakes and watercourses.</p> <p>Protect and enhance indigenous roadside vegetation throughout the Character Area.</p> <p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</p>	<p>Loss of native and indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation as a feature of the landscape, such as roadside planting, vegetation in settlements and shelterbelts in open rural areas.</p>
Key views and vistas	<p><i>To protect locally significant views and vistas that contribute to the character of the Area, including scenic lookouts and recreation locations with views over the Gippsland Lakes.</i></p>	<p>Consider the cumulative impact of developments visible from all key viewing corridors (e.g. touring routes, highways) and scenic lookouts on the open rural character of these views, and the availability of scenic views lakes and waterbodies.</p> <p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Key Views and Vistas'.</p>	<p>Unsympathetic development in key view fields.</p>
Settlements	<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>Refer to Best Practice Policies 'All Settlements'.</p>	<p>Unclear edges to settlements.</p> <p>Signage clutter at entrances and exists to settlements.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
Between settlements	<p><i>To manage the impact of new development on sense of space and openness in the rural landscape.</i></p> <p><i>To protect the largely natural and unbuilt views of Lakes King, Victoria and Wellington from the lakes' edges.</i></p>	<p>Design buildings near lakes and waterways to be low scale and set back a sufficient distance to allow for the protection or rehabilitation of a substantial zone of riparian vegetation (e.g. over 100 metres).</p> <p>In rural residential and low density residential areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Utilise vegetation for screening and to delineate property boundaries, instead of fencing, except where substantial vegetation would interrupt important or panoramic outviews. If fencing is necessary, provide open style fencing of a type traditionally used in rural areas e.g. post and wire. <p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Between Settlements'.</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 make no reference to the landscape.</p> <p>Visual clutter (including buildings, structures and signage) along highways and key touring routes outside settlements.</p> <p>High, solid fencing.</p> <p>Loss of vegetation.</p> <p>Lack of vegetation</p> <p>Loss of rural outlook from road corridors.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p><i>To encourage landscape change that is consistent with the cultural heritage values of the Character Area.</i></p> <p><i>To recognise and protect the landscape of the Gippsland Lakes as a places of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value.</i></p> <p><i>To protect landscape character and condition that consistent with Aboriginal cultural values of the area.</i></p>	<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>Loss or damage to Aboriginal cultural heritage relics, artefacts or places.</p> <p>Disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities.</p>
Infrastructure and Signage	<p><i>To minimise the visual impact of signage and infrastructure, particularly adjacent to the Gippsland Lakes, or areas of high visibility.</i></p>	<p>Set back non-boating infrastructure from lakes and lake edges.</p> <p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure' and 'Signage'.</p>	<p>Loss of vegetation in locations that create visual scars visible from key touring routes and other public use locations.</p> <p>Tall or dominant structures near to roads or lakes.</p> <p>Visually dominating signage and infrastructure.</p> <p>Large, visually intrusive or brightly coloured</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
			signage, particularly near to the coastal edge or intruding into scenic outviews are available from roads and settlements. Signage clutter.
Plantation forestry	<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 lake edges and avoid highly visible locations including adjacent to the Princes and South Gippsland Highways.</p> <p>Site and design plantation forests to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be of a scale that reflects the existing paddock sizes or scale of existing agricultural activity; - avoid ridgelines and high slopes that are highly visible from roads; - be screened from touring routes by retaining shelterbelts or remnant indigenous vegetation (including understorey) or with substantial indigenous vegetation landscaping; and - be designed with varied edges that respond to natural features and integrated with existing forest edges. 	<p>Dominance of plantations at roadsides, including continuity of vegetation without intervening screening planting, especially along the Princes and South Gippsland Highways.</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>

6.2 Ninety Mile Coast

Landscape Character Type: Gippsland Plains

In this Character Area, recent coastal and alluvial landforms have formed a series of narrow spits and peninsulas which separate the Bass Strait Coast at Ninety Mile Beach from the extensive inland lakes system of Gippsland Lakes. There is an unspoilt natural character in the northern half of the Character Area where extensive indigenous coastal vegetation dominates and the intersection of landforms and lakes creates a scenic setting to minor settlements and recreation locations. In the south, the Character Area has been substantially cleared and less dramatic landform and only a low density scattering of built development creates a uniform rural character to the coast edge.



Key Features

- Ninety-mile beach coastal edge with sand dunes and native vegetation.
- Extensive lakes and waterbodies separated by narrow peninsulas.
- Large expanses of intact, low coastal and wetland vegetation.
- Important recreation and tourism destination.

Landscape Characteristics

- **Landform** – The extensive and continuous ocean coast of Ninety Mile Beach dominates the Character Area. Dunes at the coastal edge are usually no higher than 10 m and topography across the Character Area rarely exceeds 20 m. Gentle undulations along narrow spits and peninsulas are found between poorly drained mud and sand flats and shallow lakes and inlets. The Character Area also includes a number of islands within Lake King near Lakes Entrance.
- **Waterform** – Water features including salt lakes and lagoons are a dominant element of the landscape of the Character Area. Long ephemeral lakes occur behind the narrow coastal strip (e.g. Lake Reeve) while the northern and western edge of the Character Area is bounded by large permanent lakes including Lake King and Lake Victoria.
- **Vegetation** – The vegetation includes freshwater and coastal wetlands, mangrove scrubs, saltmarshes, dune scrubs and coastal tussock grasslands, and behind the dunes coastal tea-tree thickets and some extensive *Banksia* woodlands near Loch Sport. Relatively small areas have been cleared, predominately for shack dwellings and settlements.
- **Land use** – Much of the Character Area is set aside for nature conservation in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and The Lakes National Park. Where there is private land, this is used for residential (including holiday residential) in the settlement of Loch Sport, and the small coastal villages of Golden Beach, Paradise Beach and the Honeysuckles. Some dwellings have been developed in a remote vegetated strip near Lakes Entrance.

Settlements

Lakes Entrance (part)

A distinct topographic change occurs at Lakes Entrance between the flat lakes and plains of this Character Area, and the steep rolling topography contained in the adjacent Lakes Entrance Hills and Hinterland Character Area.

Development within Lakes Entrance is primarily clustered in the low, flat plains between Lake King and North Arm which are contained in this Character Area (Photo 1). While highly urbanised, the flatter topography makes development less conspicuous in this part of the settlement than the surrounding escarpment. Nonetheless, large or high developments tend to dominate the landscape and views from the lakes, and in some locations dwellings have been sited in prominent locations amongst sand dunes interrupting the otherwise undeveloped coastline character.



Photo 1 At Lakes Entrance the flat plains of this Character Area are substantially developed.

Loch Sport

This relatively large settlement is developed in low rolling topography and dense coastal woodlands between Lake Reeve and Lake Victoria. Vegetation and topography provide a setting in which the extent of the settlement is not apparent from any single vantage point. While dwellings at the Lake Victoria edge are in many cases exposed to views from the lake, dwellings are characteristically screened by dense vegetation in views from Lake Reeve and the coastal dune strip (with a few exceptions, see Photo 2).



Photo 2 Dwellings at the south eastern edge of Loch Sport set in vegetation overlooking Lake Reeve.

Golden Beach / Paradise Beach

These two townships form an almost continuous strip of low coastal dwellings for seven kilometres of the coastal edge of the Character Area. A consistent character of simple, modest single storey dwellings set in vegetation persist throughout, whilst low to medium sand dunes and coastal vegetation (in which there are numerous camping sites) buffer views to development from the coast. A small town centre with a wide avenue entry and open views to the sea is found at the southern edge.

Seaspray

A medium-sized coastal settlement set on flats behind low to moderate dunes (3-8 m). A seaside suburban character of one to two-storey dwellings is gradually evolving with larger, modern dwellings. Development appears to spread loosely into surrounding rural land. An inlet adjoining the town is an important landscape feature and the focus of much development. To the north of the settlement ephemeral lakes contain expansion and provide a natural landscape character. The Ninety Mile Beach coast retains an undeveloped wild character as dwellings within the township are screened from view from the beach by dunes, however, more recent development south of the town has occurred on flats adjoining low 1-3 m dunes and houses compete with the low topography for visual dominance.

Pattern of Viewing

Long views along Ninety Mile Beach have become the iconic experience of this Character Area. However, inland of the Beach, roads and townships are frequently set low in the topography and coastal heath and dunes contain views. In some parts of the Character Area, including the township of Loch Sport, expansive open views are available across the inland lakes.

High recreational use of the larger inland lakes and coast makes these important locations from which the Character Area is viewed.

Two formal scenic lookouts at Lakes Entrance view over the northern extremes of this Character Area. The view from these locations is frequently used in tourism publications and has become an iconic image of the landscapes of the Victorian Coast.

Community Values

Positive Features

People from within this Character Area noted that the wilderness, sand dunes, pristine beaches, lakes and water features were all positive features of the area.

Negative Changes and Spoilt Places

Members of the local community commented that overdevelopment along the foreshore is one of the most negative changes taking place in the Character Area.

The wider community feels that Lakes Entrance has been spoiled by multi-storey buildings, rock walls, the dredging channel and buildings too close to the foreshore. They also feel that the Gippsland Lakes area has been spoiled by high levels of pollution and mismanagement.

Significant Landscapes

The Ninety Mile Beach coast and Gippsland lakes were noted as iconic landscapes containing wild and natural landforms that were valued for their lack of built development.

Other Identified Values

- Lake Reeve is an internationally significant wetland identified by Ramsar Convention.
- Numerous historic coastal landscape features including Boole Poole peninsula and the artificial outlet to the sea at Lakes Entrance.
- High tourism and recreation visitation, and the iconic image of the coastal lakes landscape at Lakes Entrance.
- This Character Area is known to have high Aboriginal significance with extensive known Aboriginal heritage sites throughout, particularly on the coastal edge.

Landscape Change

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

- Rehabilitation of lakes and waterways by landowners / community groups.
- Land management works within the Gippsland Lakes Park.
- Naturally dynamic coastal and lake landforms.

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

- East Gippsland Shire as a whole is expected to grow strongly and age significantly over the next 30 years.
- Trend for increased migration from cities and inland areas to the coast.
- Increased permanent population in coastal settlements.
- Significant increase in coastal and hinterland land values and declining viability of agriculture driving change in land use from traditional farming practices to residential or tourism / recreational.
- Some potential for modest expansion of Seaspray identified by a draft Coastal Town Design Framework for the town.
- Increased tourism visitation.
- Increased storm-surge and flooding risks as a result of global warming, potentially restricting development at the lake / coastal interface.

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

- Potential for ribbon development along the Ninety Mile Beach Coast between Loch Sport and Seaspray as a result of take up of existing inappropriate subdivisions.
- Large-scale residential/recreational orientated developments.

Sensitivity to Change

While low-heath and undulating dunal landforms contain views in much of this Character Area, sensitive landscapes are found where the edges of the landform adjoin open landscape features such as lakes, coast or flat rural hinterland. An absence of built development throughout the Area heightens this sensitivity. Particularly sensitive landscapes include the low, steep and vegetated slopes of Loch Sport adjoining Lake Reeve, and the Ninety Mile dune coast where dense, low native vegetation and light coloured fragile soils enhance the visibility of disturbance and / or built form. Higher sensitivity occurs in locations that are visible from recreational or tourism destinations (e.g. the lookouts at Lakes Entrance, or views from Lake Victoria toward Loch Sport) due to the high numbers of viewers.

Some locations including the settlements at Lakes Entrance and the Lake Victoria edge of Loch Sport already have an established built character and are therefore less sensitive to most developments.

Existing Policies

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

- The Wellington Shire Planning Scheme Coastal Land Policy aims to minimise the impact of human activities on the ecological values of the coastal and lakes environments and sets out policies to contain urban settlements and appropriately design buildings for environmental and visual values.
- The East Gippsland Planning Scheme sets out a policy for tourist, commercial or industrial developments in non-urban areas to retain the productive capacity, environmental and landscape quality and generally rural or natural character of these localities.
- Much of the Character Area including large stretches of the coast and lake edges is zoned Public Conservation and Resource (PCRZ) with Environmental Rural Zone (ERZ) over most of the private land. Settlements are predominantly Township Zone with Residential Zone (R1Z) and other urban zones at Loch Sport.
- Many watercourses and lake edges are covered by Environmental Significance Overlay (Wellington ESO2 and East Gippsland ESO23, ESO53, among others) to protect and enhance the ecological, habitat, aesthetic, scientific, floristic, faunal, cultural, educational, and recreation values of wetlands (Wellington) and to conserve and enhance the environmental sustainability and ecological integrity of these values (East Gippsland).
- Large areas surrounding Lakes King, Wellington and Victoria are covered by Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and / or Rural Floodway Overlay (RFO) for flood risk.
- The Entrance at Lakes Entrance is covered by a Heritage Overlay (HO225).
- Forthcoming Coastal Town Design Frameworks for Loch Sport, Golden Beach / Paradise Beach, The Honeysuckles, Seaspray, McLoughlins

Beach, Woodside Beach and Robertsons Beach will provide a sustainable vision for the future form, image and function of these settlements and give greater certainty about what is possible in terms of future development.

Management Considerations

- The iconic natural scenic character of the northern sections of the Character Area (Lakes Entrance to Loch Sport) warrants careful management to ensure built development does not intrude into natural landscapes, islands
- Ensure the natural character of Lake Reeve is retained by strictly controlling development in Loch Sport to avoid impacting on the vegetated character as viewed from the lake and causeway.
- Retain the wild and natural character of lake landforms and Ninety Mile Beach by siting developments inland of the dune / lake edge amongst vegetation and topography.
- Encourage greater vegetation in the southern parts of the Character Area

Future Character Directions

This Character Area will be characterised by natural landforms and contained urban development. Indigenous coastal vegetation adjoining inland lakes and coast will dominate and large stretches of the Character Area will be free from built development. The majority of new development will be located in existing settlements including Lakes Entrance and Loch Sport but sited and landscaped to retain natural and wild landscape edges at Ninety Mile Beach and Lake Reeve respectively. Other settlements will be low scale and tucked into the existing topography and vegetation to minimise visual intrusion into the landscape. An increasingly vegetated character will develop throughout the southern half of the Character Area, south of Seaspray.

Opportunities and Threats

Opportunities

- Low scale infill development in Lakes Entrance and potentially Loch Sport, the latter set amongst retained native vegetation.
- Developments inland of the dune / lake edge amongst vegetation and topography.
- Minor expansion of Seaspray on low flats away from prominent views and landscapes on the inland expansion of the town.
- Strengthening vegetation links across cleared landscapes and townships with the use of indigenous coastal vegetation.

Threats

- Ribbon development along the Ninety Mile Beach Coast, especially between Loch Sport and Seaspray.
- Development (including dwellings) atop the low escarpment overlooking Ninety Mile Beach south of Seaspray and / or without substantial indigenous vegetation landscaping.
- Developments visible amongst natural vegetated spits, islands and lake edges outside settlements, especially those viewed from key touring routes (e.g. Princes Highway at Lakes Entrance) and recreation locations (i.e. on the lakes).

Landscape Management Objectives

- *To protect indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape at the coastal edge of the Character Area and adjoining inland lakes.*
- *To strengthen the presence of indigenous coastal vegetation, particularly south of Seaspray and within existing settlements.*
- *To protect locally significant views and vistas, including expansive open views across the inland lakes, natural and unbuilt views along Ninety Mile*

Beach and views from formal scenic lookouts at Lakes Entrance over the northern extremes of the Character Area.

- *To ensure that development in and around existing settlements does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including the natural and unbuilt character at the edge of the Gippsland Lakes and Ninety Mile Beach.*
- *To reduce the visual impact of buildings and structures at the coastal edges of large settlements, such as Lakes Entrance.*
- *To minimise any increase in development visible above the dunes and coastal vegetation outside settlements, when viewed from the beach, foreshore or offshore.*
- *To avoid buildings set high on dunes or development that will be visible on the skyline.*
- *To protect the largely natural and unbuilt views of Lakes King, Victoria and Wellington from the lakes' edges.*
- *To recognise and protect the landscape of the Gippsland Lakes as a place of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value.*
- *To minimise the visual impact of signage and infrastructure, particularly adjacent to the Gippsland Lakes or Ninety Mile Beach or areas of high visibility.*

Landscape Management Guidelines

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
Vegetation	<p><i>To protect indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape at the coastal edge of the Character Area and adjoining inland lakes.</i></p> <p><i>To strengthen the presence of indigenous coastal vegetation, particularly south of Seaspray and within existing settlements.</i></p>	<p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</p>	<p>Loss of indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Lack of indigenous vegetation within settlements.</p> <p>Highly visible buildings and structures at the coastal edge.</p>
Key views and vistas	<p><i>To protect locally significant views and vistas, including expansive open views across the inland lakes, natural and unbuilt views along Ninety Mile Beach and views from formal scenic lookouts at Lakes Entrance over the northern extremes of the Character Area.</i></p>	<p>Minimise the contrast between landscape and built development for any development greater than 500 metres from important scenic lookouts (e.g. from above Lakes Entrance).</p> <p>Consider the cumulative impact of developments visible from all key viewing corridors (e.g. touring routes, highways) and scenic lookouts on the natural landscape character of these views, and the availability of scenic views to the ocean, or lakes.</p> <p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Key Views and Vistas'.</p>	<p>Unsympathetic development in key view fields.</p>
Settlements	<p><i>To ensure that development in and around existing settlements does not impact on the characteristics of surrounding landscapes, including the natural and unbuilt character at the edge of the Gippsland Lakes and Ninety Mile Beach.</i></p> <p><i>To reduce the visual impact of buildings and structures at the coastal edges of large settlements, such as Lakes Entrance.</i></p>	<p>Within the smaller Ninety Mile Beach settlements (e.g. Golden Beach / Paradise Beach, Seaspray, McLoughlins Beach) minimise visual intrusion by utilising low scale building forms, tucked into the landscape and colours and materials that reduce contrast and distant visibility (particularly at the coastal edge settlements or locations or in vistas to the coast from main roads).</p> <p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'All Settlements' and 'Coastal Settlements'.</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
Between settlements	<p><i>To minimise any increase in development visible above the dunes and coastal vegetation outside settlements, when viewed from the beach, foreshore or offshore.</i></p> <p><i>To avoid buildings set high on dunes or development that will be visible on the skyline.</i></p> <p><i>To protect the largely natural and unbuilt views of Lakes King, Victoria and Wellington from the lakes' edges.</i></p>	<p>Site buildings within existing settlements wherever possible and prevent urban development close to main roads and key touring routes outside settlements.</p> <p>Design buildings near lakes and waterways to be low scale and set back a sufficient distance to allow for the protection or rehabilitation of a substantial zone of riparian vegetation (e.g. over 100 metres).</p> <p>Avoid any buildings or structures visible from the foreshore on the Bass Strait coast by setting new developments back from the Coast and natural coastal landforms. Where development within the coastal strip cannot be prevented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site developments on the inland slope of dunes (avoid buildings protruding above the dune ridgeline); • set buildings and structures among existing vegetation, maximising the retention of coastal vegetation; • utilise appropriate indigenous vegetation to further integrate the development with the landscape; • design buildings to follow the contours or step down the site and avoid visually dominant elevations; • minimise overlooking of the foreshore; and • avoid access in highly visible or undisturbed areas. <p><i>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Between Settlements – Coastal Locations' and 'Between Settlements – Hinterland Locations'.</i></p>	<p>Visible development from the foreshore.</p> <p>Buildings and structures that are visible on the skyline.</p> <p>Light coloured or highly reflective building 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>Development outside settlement areas.</p> <p>Buildings that protrude above the tree canopy height.</p> <p>Visually dominating development.</p> <p>Ad hoc urban development cluttering roadsides along key touring routes.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p><i>To recognise and protect the landscape of the Gippsland Lakes as a place of high Aboriginal cultural heritage value.</i></p>	<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>Loss or damage to Aboriginal cultural heritage relics, artefacts or places.</p> <p>Disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
<p>Infrastructure and Signage</p>	<p><i>To minimise the visual impact of signage and infrastructure, particularly adjacent to the Gippsland Lakes or Ninety Mile Beach or areas of high visibility.</i></p>	<p>Set back non-boating infrastructure from lakes and lake edges.</p> <p>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure' and 'Signage'.</p>	<p>Loss of vegetation in locations that create visual scars visible from key touring routes and other public use locations.</p> <p>Tall or dominant structures near to roads or lakes.</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>

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 (Wellington Shire)

Port Albert

This port settlement is a commercial and recreational fishing hub set on the coastal edge of Corner Inlet. Open views across Corner Inlet and 'The Islands' to Wilsons Promontory are a feature of the township. Port Albert is a 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 (Wellington Shire)

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

- The Character Area is largely zoned Rural (RUZ) with settlements zoned Residential 1 (RUZ1) 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.
- A number of areas within the Character Area relating to Wellington Shire is subject to an Environmental Significance Overlay to protect, among other things, the natural beauty and the environmental significance of the coastal area adjacent to the Nooranmunga Marine Park.
- Draft Urban Design Guidelines for Port Albert and Palmerston have recently been released for public comment by Wellington Shire Council. The guidelines aim to provide a sustainable and contemporary design framework that will ensure land use and development in the township complements the natural and cultural values of the area; complements the maritime heritage focus of the township; and is consistent with the low density nature of the township, among other things. The guidelines set out a maximum building height of two storeys across the township and requires development to integrate with existing historic character through complementary building forms, materials, heights and setbacks.
- 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.

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.

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.*

- *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
Vegetation	<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>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Vegetation'.</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>
Key Views and Vistas	<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>Also refer to Best Practice Policies 'Key Views and Vistas'.</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>
Settlements	<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>Also refer to best Practice Policies 'All Settlements' and 'Coastal Settlements'.</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>Buildings</p> <p>Natural landscape dominance</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>Between Settlements</p> <p>Coastal Locations</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><i>Also refer to Best Practice Policy 'Between Settlements – Coastal Locations'.</i></p>	<p>Highly visible development within the coastal strip, outside settlements.</p>

Character Element	Landscape Management Objective	Response	Avoid
Between Settlements Hinterland Locations	<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>Also refer to Best Practice Policy 'Between Settlements – Hinterland Locations'.</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>
Infrastructure	<i>To minimise the visual intrusion of infrastructure, particularly in the landscape between settlements.</i>	Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Infrastructure'.	<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>
Signage	<i>To minimise the visual intrusion of signage, particularly in the landscape between settlements.</i>	Refer to Best Practice Policies 'Signage'.	Avoid large, visually intrusive or brightly coloured signage in vegetated and coastal areas.

