The background of the poster features a photograph of several sea lions resting on large, textured rocks. One sea lion in the foreground is looking directly at the camera, while others are visible in the background.

BASS COAST
DISTINCTIVE AREA
AND LANDSCAPE

Draft Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy

MARCH 2022



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of the Bunurong land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.



Photos: Visit Victoria

© The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2022



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, the Victorian Government logo and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) logo. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

ISBN 978-1-76105-517-1 (Print) **ISBN** 978-1-76105-518-8 (pdf/online/MS word)

Citation

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2022). *Draft Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy*. State of Victoria, Melbourne 2022.

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone the DELWP Customer Service Centre on 136186, email customer.service@delwp.vic.gov.au or via the National Relay Service on 133 677 www.relayservice.com.au.

The Bass Coast declared area is among Victoria's most preferred places to live, work, visit and recreate. Its unique values and distinctive attributes — its Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage, biodiversity, significant landscapes, natural resources, productive land, strategic infrastructure and built form — need protection against overuse, overdevelopment and climate change impacts.

This *Draft Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy* and the *Draft Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy: Proposed Landscape Planning Controls* have been prepared for public

consultation by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in collaboration with the Traditional Owners the Bunurong people, the Bass Coast Shire Council and other relevant government agencies and authorities.

Written submissions are invited from the general public, community groups, responsible public entities, industry representatives and other interested parties. **Submissions must be lodged before 5 pm, Friday 29 April 2022.** Further details are available under 'Have your say' in this publication.



Contents

Introduction	01
About Victoria's peri-urban and regional areas	01
About the declared area	01
About this draft Statement of Planning Policy	08
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals	10
State and regional policy context	12
Implementation of the Statement of Planning Policy	15
Monitoring and review	16
Bunurong statement of significance	17
Our vision	18
Declared area framework plan	21
Policy domains	31
Bunurong cultural heritage	32
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	36
Landscape	42
Environment and biodiversity	54
Historic heritage	60
Sustainable economic development	64
Strategic infrastructure	70
Settlements	76
Glossary	125
References	129



Introduction

About Victoria's peri-urban and regional areas

The Bass Coast declared area has many places of cultural heritage, outstanding natural beauty and environmental, economic and social significance, as do many other peri-urban areas surrounding Melbourne and Victoria's regional cities and towns. The declared area has been under the safe stewardship of the Bunurong people for millennia, and it is rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Victoria's peri-urban and regional areas are important to Traditional Owners, for the protection of Country and the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices. They have unique ecosystems with native vegetation that provides habitat for threatened and endangered species. These picturesque landscapes, especially along the coasts, attract millions of local, interstate and international visitors; and tourism is a major contributor to local economies. Peri-urban and regional areas offer connections to nature and the state's rich heritage, as well as being locations of productive industries and important infrastructure. Their diverse land resources and infrastructure are also essential for the successful functioning of urban areas, providing these areas with clean air, drinking water, food and resources. Peri-urban and regional areas are central to the way of life Victorians enjoy.

The challenge facing the Victorian Government and community is to manage the growth of metropolitan Melbourne and the state's regional settlements while conserving and enhancing Aboriginal cultural heritage, significant landscapes, the environment, biodiversity and historic heritage. The many distinctive attributes of peri-urban and regional areas must be conserved and enhanced while also ensuring sustainable economic development, the provision of strategic infrastructure and the unique, preferred characters of settlements. Crucially, the state must mitigate climate change and adapt to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

A sustainable approach to planning and managing peri-urban and regional areas recognises, conserves and enhances their unique attributes — their landscape character, biodiversity and environment and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage — and ensures that development responds appropriately to them. At the same time, the things that make peri-urban and regional areas prosperous must be recognised, protected and enhanced: productive rural land and natural resources, local businesses, sustainable tourism, and transport and essential services infrastructure.

About the declared area

The Victorian Government has legislated to protect and enhance Victoria's distinctive areas and landscapes, so they can be enjoyed by current and future generations.

The Bass Coast Shire was declared a distinctive area and landscape under section 46AO of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act) by order of the Governor in Council published in the Government Gazette on 29 October 2019. The order came into effect on the same day.

Under section 46AO of the Act, an area of Victoria can be declared a distinctive area and landscape if it has a majority of the attributes section 46AP of the Act specifies — outstanding environmental, geographical, heritage, cultural, natural resources or productive land, strategic infrastructure or built form significance — and if its attributes are under threat of significant or irreversible land use change that would affect the environmental, social or economic value of the area.

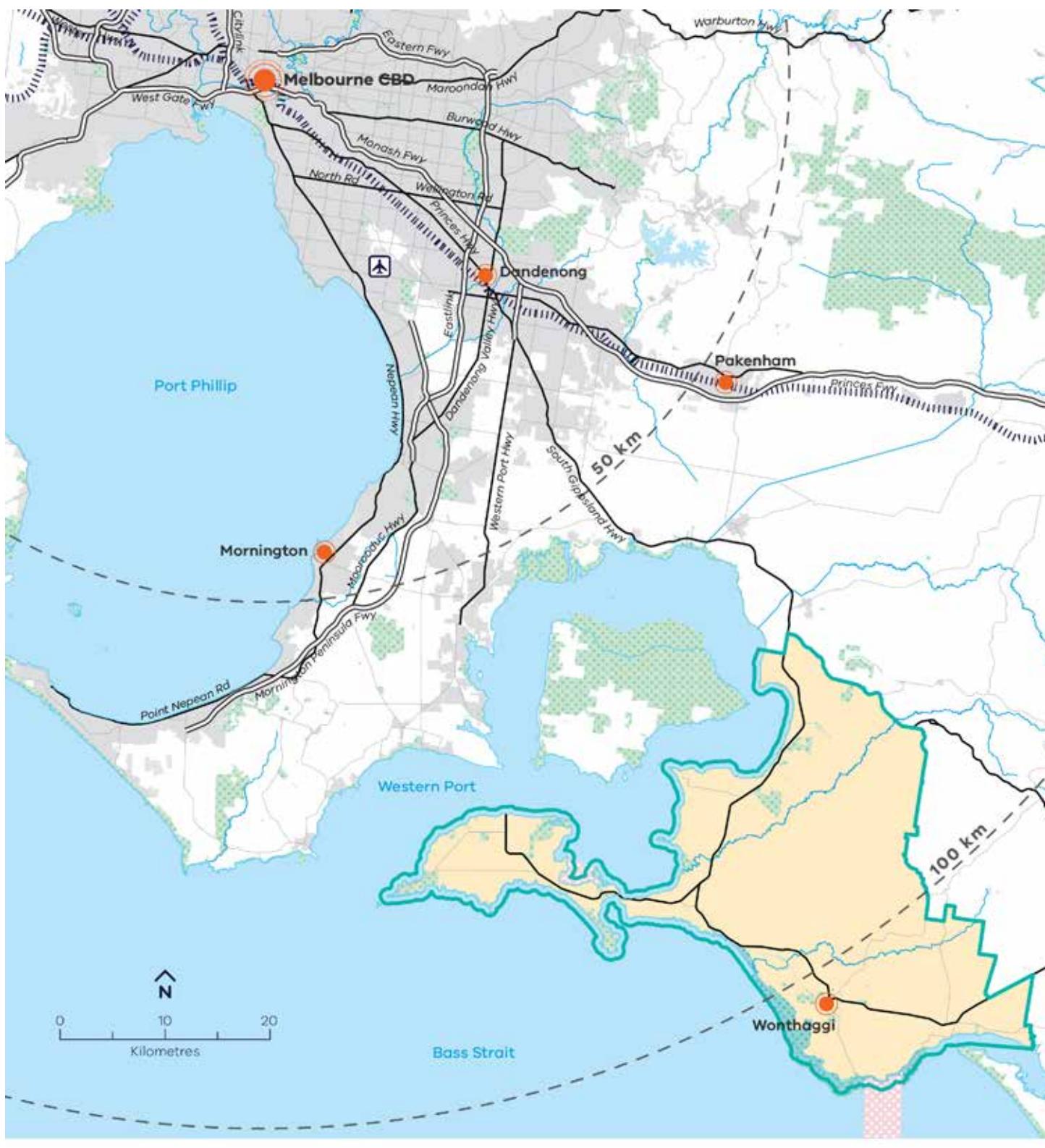
Table 1 lists the attributes required under section 46AP of the Act for the Minister to declare the Bass Coast Shire as a distinctive area and landscape.

TABLE 1: Attributes qualifying the Bass Coast declared area as a distinctive area and landscape

ITEM	ATTRIBUTE	DISTINCTIVE FEATURES
1.	OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. State, national and international areas of biodiversity significance including Phillip Island Nature Park, Bunurong Marine National Park, Churchill Island Marine Park, Westernport Ramsar Wetland, Churchill Island, Powlett River Mouth and Andersons Inlet and tributaries. b. Parks, river corridors, beaches and wetlands which are home to remnant vegetation and threatened species and are important wildlife corridors. c. An integrated catchment system of river corridors and coastal waterways (estuaries and wetlands) and a unique marine environment with diverse habitats and important feeding areas.
2.	SIGNIFICANT GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES, INCLUDING NATURAL LANDFORMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Bass Hills and Strzelecki Foothills provide a backdrop to landscapes throughout the shire and are highly visible from main road corridors. b. The San Remo to Kilcunda coastline contains open pastoral landscapes edged by rocky cliffs and slopes to Bass Strait. c. The Kilcunda to Inverloch coastline (the Bunurong Coast) is recognised for its rock formations, sand dune systems, dramatic cliffs and rock stacks. Eagles Nest is a dominant feature in the landscape and a site of national and geomorphological significance. d. Phillip Island has distinctive landscapes including rocky cliffs and outcrops of volcanic origin (such as The Nobbies and Pyramid Rock) as well as surf beaches and dune systems.
3.	HERITAGE AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Areas of significant cultural, spiritual and heritage value for the Bunurong people include the coastal dune systems, Western Port and Bass Strait, the Bunurong Coast, the Coronet Bay area, Bass Hills, Powlett River and the western and southern foreshores of Phillip Island. b. Important post-contact heritage sites which were significant to the economic development of Victoria. They include the State Coal Mine and associated mining heritage, and Churchill Island, the location of the first European farm in Victoria. c. A rich surfing history with a number of beaches recognised as a National Surfing Reserve.
4.	NATURAL RESOURCES OR PRODUCTIVE LAND OF SIGNIFICANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Major nature-based tourism destination of national significance, with tourism assets including Phillip Island, the Bunurong Coast and major events facilities. b. Extractive industries of state significance, particularly for their contribution to Victoria's supply of mineral sands. c. High-quality agricultural land, in particular the Powlett River Valley and the important Gippsland dairy industry.
5.	STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE OR BUILT FORM OF SIGNIFICANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Victorian Desalination Plant and associated pipeline are a significant piece of public infrastructure for Victoria. b. Phillip Island Road and Bass Highway form part of a significant transport corridor critical to the function of the region.

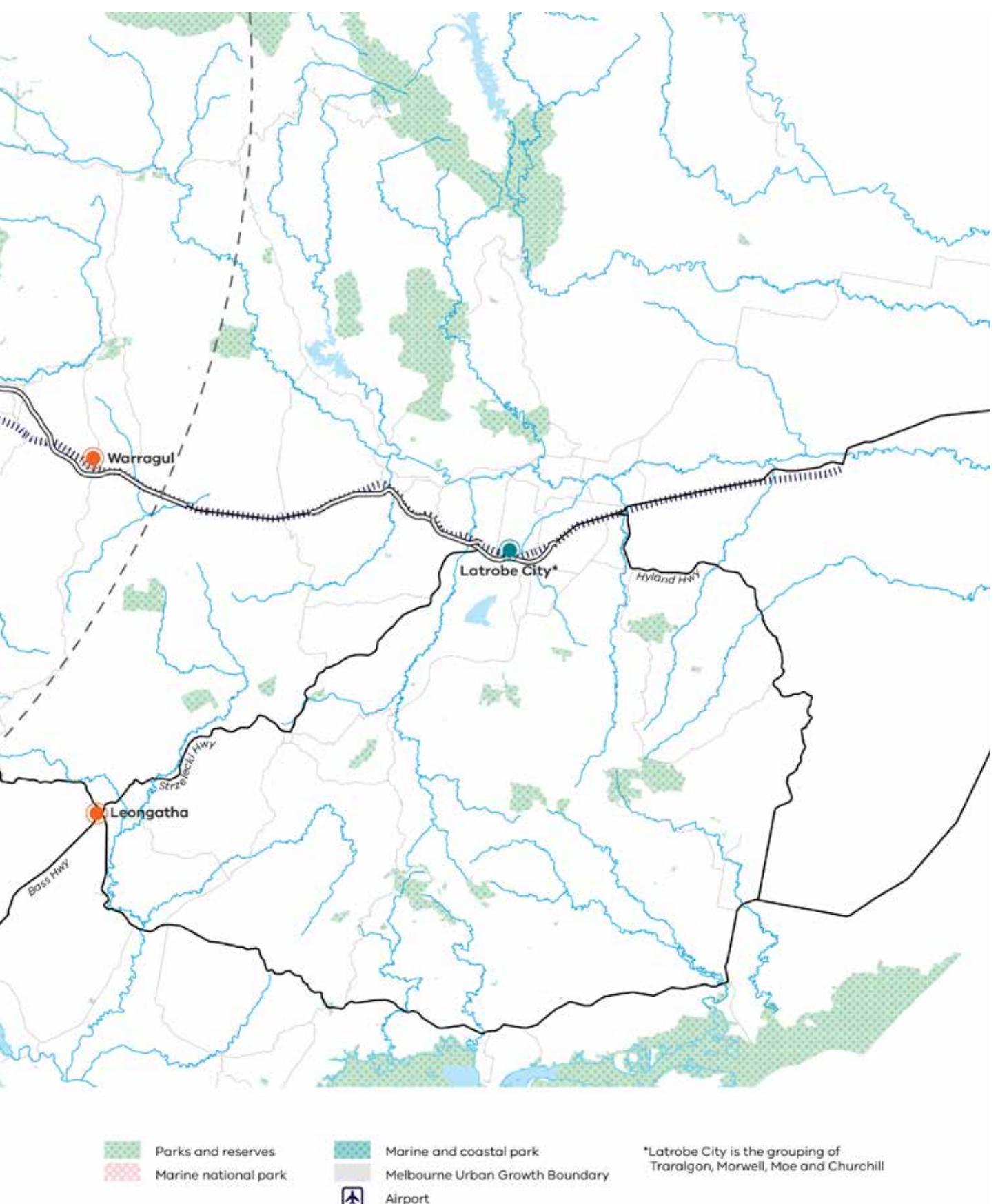


MAP 1: Location of Bass Coast declared area



LEGEND

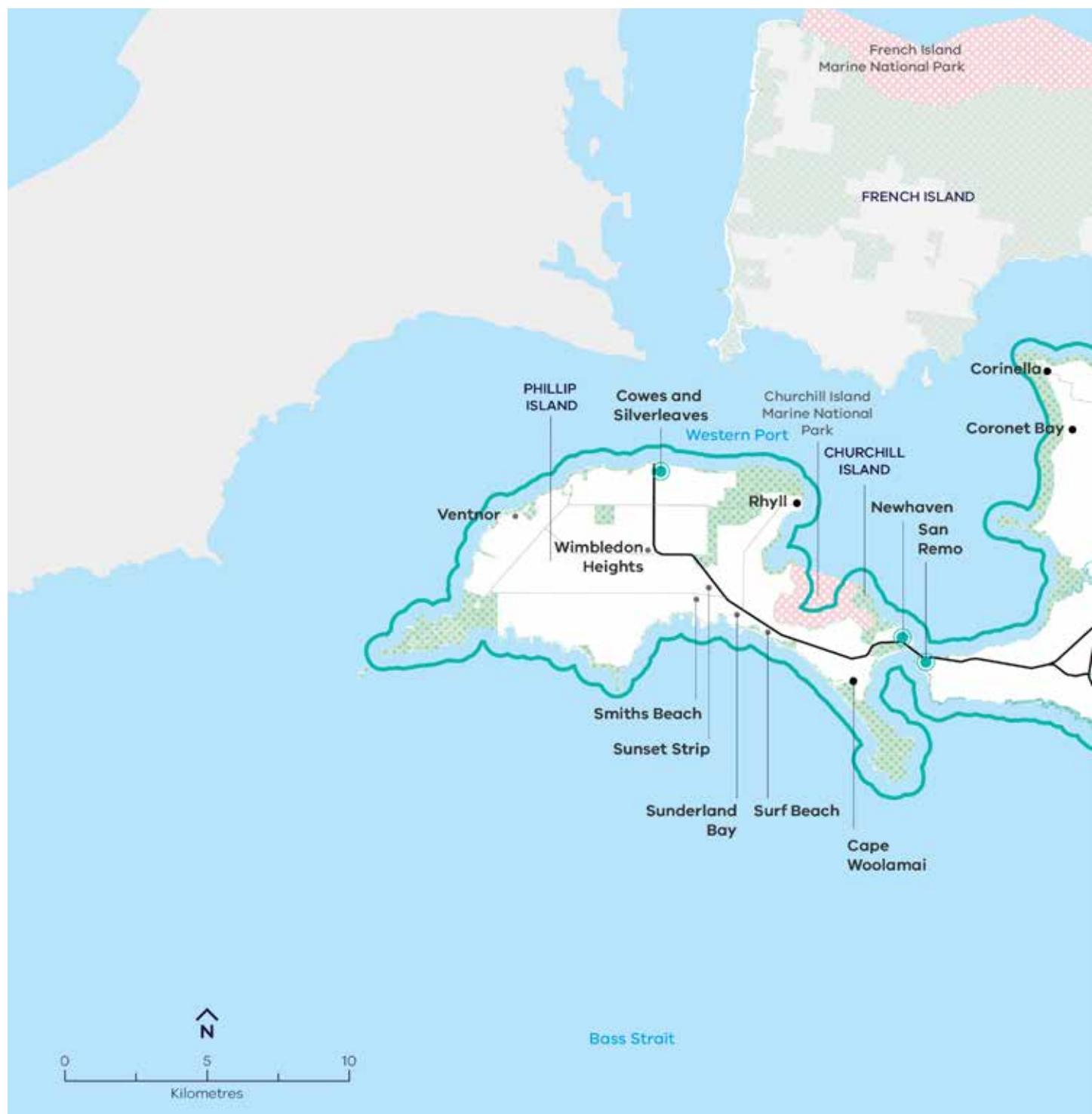
- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ● Capital city | ■ Declared area boundary | — Other roads |
| ● Regional city | — Freeway | — Rail |
| ● Regional centre | — Highway | - - - Distance from Melbourne CBD |



(Source: DELWP)

Map 2 shows the Bass Coast declared area in relation to Melbourne and to Warragul (which is a Baw Baw Shire regional centre) in Gippsland. **Map 2** shows the declared area at a larger scale. The declared area's boundary aligns with the Bass Coast Shire boundary and extends 600 m seaward of the low-water mark.

MAP 2: Bass Coast declared area



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary | — River |
| ● District town | — Freeway | ■ Parks and reserves |
| ● Town | — Highway | ■ Marine national park |
| ● Village | — Other roads | |
| ● Hamlet | | |
| ● Locality | | |



Yallock-Bulluk Marine and Coastal Park

(Source: DELWP)

About this draft Statement of Planning Policy

Under the Act, the Minister for Planning must prepare a Statement of Planning Policy (SPP) for a declared area, the purpose of which is to create a framework to guide the future use and development of land within the declared area to ensure the protection and conservation of its distinctive attributes. Division 3 of Part 3AAB of the Act specifies requirements for the contents, consultation, endorsement, approval, commencement and amendment of a SPP.

The process to prepare the draft Bass Coast SPP has been led by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in partnership with the Bunurong people, the Bass Coast Shire Council and other relevant government agencies and authorities. Before the preparation of this draft, there were two phases of public engagement with local participants and other stakeholders, and this draft draws heavily on the feedback from those consultations. The reports of that feedback — *Bass Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Community Engagement Key Findings Report* and

Bass Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Stage Two Community Engagement Key Findings Report — are on the [Bass Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes project web page](#).

The draft Bass Coast SPP aims to protect the declared area's outstanding landscapes and coastal landforms, unique natural environment, rich Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage, important infrastructure, productive agricultural land and natural resources. These are the distinctive attributes that qualified the declared area as a distinctive area and landscape, and which **Table 1** shows.

What's in a Statement of Planning Policy?

Section 46AV of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* says that a SPP for a declared area must:

- set a vision for a period of at least 50 years that identifies the values, priorities and preferences of the Victorian community in relation to the distinctive attributes of the declared area, including preferences for future land use, protection and development
- set out Aboriginal tangible and intangible cultural values, and other cultural and heritage values, in relation to the declared area
- set out the long-term needs for the integration of decision-making and planning for the declared area

- state the parts of the statement that are binding on responsible public entities (RPEs) and the parts that are in the nature of recommendations to which RPEs are only required to have regard
- include a declared area framework plan, which must provide a framework for decision-making in relation to the future use and development of land in the declared area that:
 - integrates environmental, social, cultural and economic factors for the benefit of the community and encourages sustainable development and identifies areas for protection and conservation of the distinctive attributes of the declared area
 - may specify settlement boundaries in the declared area or designate specific settlement boundaries in the declared area as protected settlement boundaries.





United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

As the State Government's lead agency promoting sustainable development, DELWP supports the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) and is committed to ensuring these goals are considered and reflected in policy.

The draft Bass Coast SPP will help to deliver on the UNSDGs, which provide a framework to achieve a sustainable future for all.

While the integrated delivery of all 17 UNSDGs applies to the declared area, the UNSDGs shown in **Figure 1** are the most relevant, and they provide a foundation for the draft Bass Coast SPP's vision, objectives and strategies.

FIGURE 1: Selected United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	The draft SPP aims to support active transport and healthy communities that have access to clean air and a healthy environment	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	The draft SPP aims to protect water quality by reducing run-off and improving water management
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	The draft SPP aims to provide certainty about the valued attributes to be protected while indicating preferred locations for potential long-term growth	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	The draft SPP aims to support the protection and sustainable management of natural resources
15 LIFE ON LAND 	The draft SPP aims to support the conservation and improvement of biodiversity values	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	The draft SPP aims to support governments working together with stakeholders to implement its objectives and strategies
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	The draft SPP aims to support sustainable economic growth and the visitor economy	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	The draft SPP aims to protect infrastructure and foster local businesses
13 CLIMATE ACTION 	The draft SPP aims to support mitigation and adaptation to climate change impacts	14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	The draft SPP aims to recognise the importance and support the conservation of marine life

State and regional policy context

The draft SPP aligns with several state and regional plans and policies, which seek to ensure that growth and change are effectively managed while protecting Victoria's natural assets, unique features and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage.

Gippsland Regional Growth Plan

The [Gippsland Regional Growth Plan](#) provides regional-level direction for land use and development decisions for six regional local governments: Bass Coast Shire, Baw Baw Shire, East Gippsland Shire, Latrobe City, South Gippsland Shire and Wellington Shire. It recognises the need to protect the region's unique assets, while accommodating growth.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

[Plan Melbourne 2017–2050](#) is the overarching strategic document for metropolitan Melbourne. The plan's policy 4.5.2 identifies the need to protect Melbourne's peri-urban areas, which are increasingly experiencing pressures for change: change that must be carefully managed so it does not undermine the long-term natural and non-urban uses of land in these areas. Relevant actions in Plan Melbourne's [Five-year Implementation Plan](#) are:

- *Action 74: Localised planning statements for distinctive areas and landscapes*, which is to prepare localised planning statements for distinctive areas within Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas
- *Action 103: Peri-urban town strategies*, which is to support councils to assess the growth potential of and where appropriate prepare strategies for townships in peri-urban areas identified in regional growth plans as having growth potential.

Victoria's Climate Change Strategy

The draft Bass Coast SPP supports the Victorian Government's commitment set out in [Victoria's Climate Change Strategy](#) to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, as mandated by the Climate Change Act 2017. This will be achieved by investing in innovative technologies, protecting and recognising the role of the natural environment in reducing emissions, and supporting businesses and communities to cut emissions. The strategy includes accelerating the state's transition to a clean, efficient energy future, with 50% of Victoria's electricity coming from renewable sources by 2030.

Marine and Coastal Policy

The declared area is valued for its coastal environment, and the draft Bass Coast SPP supports the objectives of the Victorian Government's 2020 [Marine and Coastal Policy](#) about the planning, management and sustainable use of coastal areas. The policy provides direction to decision-makers including local councils and land managers about dealing with the impacts of climate change, population growth, ageing coastal structures and other issues.



Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037

Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 aims to protect and improve Victoria's natural environment by achieving a net gain in the overall extent of natural habitats in terrestrial and marine environments. It recognises the importance of the natural environment to Victoria's way of life and the natural environment's high resource value.

Recycling Victoria

Recycling Victoria: A new economy is the Victorian Government's 10-year circular economy policy that outlines long-term goals, targets and initiatives to reduce waste and increase recycling in Victoria. A 'circular economy' reduces environmental impacts by avoiding waste with good design and by recovering and reusing materials and energy. The policy's goals include, by 2030, diverting 80% of waste from landfills, halving the amount of organic material going to landfills and cutting total waste generation by 15% per capita.

To make sure Victoria can meet these new targets and recycle more waste, as well as manage projected waste over the long term, the Victorian Government will continue to undertake long-term waste and recycling infrastructure planning.

Helping Victoria Grow: Extractive Resources Strategy

Helping Victoria Grow: Extractive Resources Strategy sets a framework for securing extractive resources vital to supporting growth and development across Victoria. The strategy identifies Bass Coast as a critical supply area for hard rock, gravel and sand.

Water for Victoria

Water for Victoria is a plan to manage current and future water resources to support a healthy environment, a prosperous economy and thriving communities. The policy ensures Victoria's water system is modern and efficient, innovative, future-focused and affordable. The plan considers all values of water including cultural, environmental and recreational values.



Implementation of the Statement of Planning Policy

Effective implementation of the Bass Coast SPP will require a concerted effort by all — governments, public land managers, the Bunurong people, businesses, industries, residents, visitors and the community as a whole — to work collaboratively, take ownership and share knowledge, expertise and resources to support the achievement of the long-term vision for the declared area.

Implementation through planning schemes

Once the final Bass Coast SPP is approved, it will come into effect immediately and will be taken to form part of the standard provisions of the Victoria Planning Provisions. Planning scheme amendments will be progressed to implement it into the Bass Coast Planning Scheme. This will provide a consistent approach to land use planning and development across the declared area.

The Bass Coast Shire Council will need to consider the final Bass Coast SPP in their role as the planning authority (where their role is to prepare planning scheme amendments) and as the responsible authority (where their role is to administer and enforce the planning scheme).

In reviewing planning decisions, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal will also be required to consider the Bass Coast SPP.

DELWP will work with the Bunurong people, the Bass Coast Shire Council and RPEs to facilitate any planning scheme amendments required to align planning policies and to introduce necessary planning controls to effectively implement the Bass Coast SPP.

Implementation by responsible public entities

In addition to implementation through the Bass Coast Planning Scheme, the Bass Coast SPP must be implemented by RPEs as agencies or bodies responsible for managing land in the declared area. Once the Bass Coast SPP is approved, under section 46AV(1)(c) of the Act:

- the **objectives** in the SPP will be **binding** on RPEs
- the **strategies** in the SPP will not be binding on RPEs: they will be **recommendations** to which RPEs must have regard.

Section 46AZK of the Act requires that:

A responsible public entity must not act inconsistently with any provision of the Statement of Planning Policy that is expressed to be binding on the public entity when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

That means that when developing or implementing policies or programs or making decisions in relation to the declared area, including when performing their regular functions or duties, RPEs must act consistently with the objectives of the Bass Coast SPP.

A RPE should endeavour to integrate the objectives and strategies which are relevant to it and its responsibilities into its policies, programs and decision-making in the declared area. A RPE should balance any conflicting strategies in favour of an outcome that best promotes the intent of the final Bass Coast SPP for the benefit of present and future generations.

As well, under section 46AZL of the Act, a RPE when developing or implementing policies or programs or making decisions in relation to the declared area should:

- consult with all levels of government and government agencies relevant to the decision
- use best practice measures to protect and conserve the unique features and special characteristics of the declared area
- undertake continuous improvement to enhance the conservation of the environment in the declared area.

Doing so will:

- better coordinate decision-making for land use and development across the declared area to achieve integrated management, environmental, infrastructure and development outcomes
- ensure any proposals for land use changes and development are consistent with the protection of the declared area's significant landscapes and with state-significant and nationally significant environmental, economic and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage values
- guide the sustainable use of natural resources, in keeping with the declared area's significant landscapes and environmental and cultural values
- reinforce the importance of building community resilience to environmental risks and climate change including the potential effects of natural hazards (such as bushfires and flooding)
- provide greater certainty for current and future residents and businesses.

Have your say

DELWP invites written submissions from the general public, community groups, RPEs, industry representatives and other interested parties about the *Draft Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy* and the *Draft Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy: Proposed Landscape Planning Controls*. These documents are supported by technical reports.

All documents are on the **Bass Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes** project web page.

A submission must state the name and address of the person making it, and it will be treated as a public document. Proforma submissions and petitions will only be counted as one submission, and any contact will be made through the first-named person.

Monitoring and review

To provide long-term certainty for the declared area, the Minister must ensure a review of the Bass Coast SPP is undertaken no later than 10 years after commencement of the SPP.

A SPP may be reviewed at an earlier date if strategic planning work (such as landscape assessments, biodiversity assessments or reviews of settlement frameworks or structure plans) identify the need for an earlier review. Following a review, a SPP can be amended or a new SPP prepared. A new or amended SPP would be prepared by the Minister and need to be developed in collaboration with Traditional Owners, RPEs and the wider community.

SUBMISSIONS MUST BE LODGED THROUGH THE ENGAGE VICTORIA PLATFORM AT <https://engage.vic.gov.au/project/distinctive-areas-and-landscapes-program/page/bass-coast> 5.00 PM, FRIDAY 29 APRIL 2022.

Where a submitter is unable to lodge a submission online, they should contact the DELWP Customer Service Centre on 136 186 (select option 6).

Submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published on the Victorian Government's engagement website. Personal information (such as a person's email address or phone number) should not be included in the body of a submission: the submission and the name of the submitter will be made public.

Bunurong statement of significance

The following statement sets out the significance of Bunurong Country and the declared area to the Traditional Owners.

We the Bunurong People are the Traditional Custodians of this Country, it's alive with our stories. These sands of the Bass Coast contain the footprints left behind by our ancestors in every cultural way.

The responsibility for the caring of our Country belongs to us as its custodians. She is our Mother and Bunjil our Father.

Our Country has always given us our physical means to flourish and survive, food, water and air. We are saltwater people, and the rivers that run into the sea

are our Country, and where these rivers meet the sea have always been important places to our people.

Our Country will continue to preserve us and our values into the future, as we will continue to preserve our Country and protect our past and persist within these modern spaces. We have been here since the beginning and will be here until the end.

These places hold our stories, culture and our Ancestors physically as well as spiritually, and it is by the Lore of Bunjil we protect, love and look after her.



Our vision

The vision for the Bass Coast declared area is set out below. It is a 50-year vision, and it identifies the values, priorities and preferences of the Victorian community in relation to the distinctive attributes of the declared area, including preferences for future land use, protection and development.

By 2070, the vision for the Bass Coast declared area is that the Bunurong people (represented by the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation), governments, public land managers, businesses, residents and visitors work together to ensure the declared area's distinctive attributes — the things people love about the area and value it for — are protected and enhanced for current and future generations.

- **Bunurong cultural heritage:** The Bunurong people's rights to self-determination and their aspirations for their Country, water and culture are realised through the self-determined transfer of relevant decision-making powers. Bunurong traditional and living knowledge, culture and practices inform planning and management decisions, to better protect the declared area's distinctive attributes. The community highly values Bunurong cultural heritage and sites, and it respects the declared area as Bunurong Country.
- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation:** There are net-zero emissions in the declared area. Extensive revegetation of landscapes and transformed agricultural practices support large-scale carbon sequestration. Investment in public and active transport alongside zero-emissions private vehicles has led to a zero-emissions transport sector. The declared area continues to adapt to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards including rising sea levels, coastal erosion, inundation and flooding, polluted run-off and bushfires. The built environment has been highly adapted to climate change impacts. Water is conserved, and there is sufficient water for the environment and consumptive uses. Sustainable economic development and strategic infrastructure support climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- **Landscape:** We protect and enhance the declared area's significant landscapes, with their many views, panoramic seascapes, rugged coastlines, tranquil wetlands, elevated rural hinterland and idyllic pastoral landscapes of rolling rises and gullies. We value the declared area's scenic beauty and recognise its importance for the community's health and wellbeing, for the environment and biodiversity, and for heritage and the local economy.
- **Environment and biodiversity:** Native vegetation cover is increased with biolinks encouraged, and remnants are protected from clearing and fragmentation. Revegetation on public and private land helps mitigate urban heat, sequester carbon and increase ecological values in urban areas. We highly value our abundant native flora and fauna and safeguard and manage habitat, particularly the habitat of endangered, threatened and vulnerable species. We protect and restore the health, function and biodiversity values of our important riverine, wetland, coastal and marine environs.
- **Historic heritage:** We protect the declared area's rich tangible and intangible palaeontological, maritime, sealing, early settlement, convict, agricultural, mining, industrial and leisure heritage. We seek a greater understanding of the relationships between the Bunurong people and our colonial heritage.
- **Sustainable economic development:** The declared area's distinctive landscapes, environment and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage support our prosperous, growing and environmentally conscious economy, which is based on sustainable tourism, environmentally conscious agricultural and natural resources practices and innovative manufacturing industries. We use renewable sources to generate energy, and Bass Coast is a net exporter of renewable energy to other regions. The economy is resilient to climate change impacts, having transitioned to net-zero carbon and beyond. Bass Coast is a leader of regional economies in sustainable economic development.



- **Strategic infrastructure:** The provision of new community infrastructure — infrastructure for transport, water supply, waste and resource recovery, energy, telecommunications, education, health and wellbeing, sport and recreation — is timely, integrated and in sequence with development. Investment in public and active transport alongside zero-emissions private vehicles has led to a zero-emissions transport sector. Waste is reduced to close to zero, and very little waste goes to landfills: most is reused, re-purposed or recycled. Infrastructure is resilient to climate change impacts, is sensitive to the declared area’s distinctive attributes and has supported the Victorian Government’s target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and Bass Coast’s net-zero 2030 target.
- **Settlements:** Urban settlements are well-planned and respectful of distinctive areas, including coastal vistas and ridgelines, high-quality agricultural land, significant sand resources and the natural environment. The unique character of settlements is maintained and enhanced with green breaks visible in between, and rural land used for productive agriculture and appropriately sited extractive resources. Wonthaggi is one of Victoria’s preeminent regional centres, providing

diverse housing, employment, education and health services. Across the municipality, revitalised town centres provide for the economic and social needs of the community. Ease of access between settlements, both active and vehicular, and strong community ties provide connectivity to the people of Bass Coast and their environment.

- **Other:** In 2070, the Bass Coast is a diverse, sustainable and thriving regional municipality. The population of part time and permanent residents feel ownership over the Bass Coast and work together to achieve their communal goals.
- The declared area’s regional centre, district towns, towns, villages and hamlets have protected settlement boundaries, protecting their environs for the long term and providing certainty for growth. Development respects each settlement’s unique character, role and function. The declared area’s landscapes, highly valued views, environmental and biodiversity values, Bunurong cultural heritage and historic heritage are protected in perpetuity.



Declared area framework plan

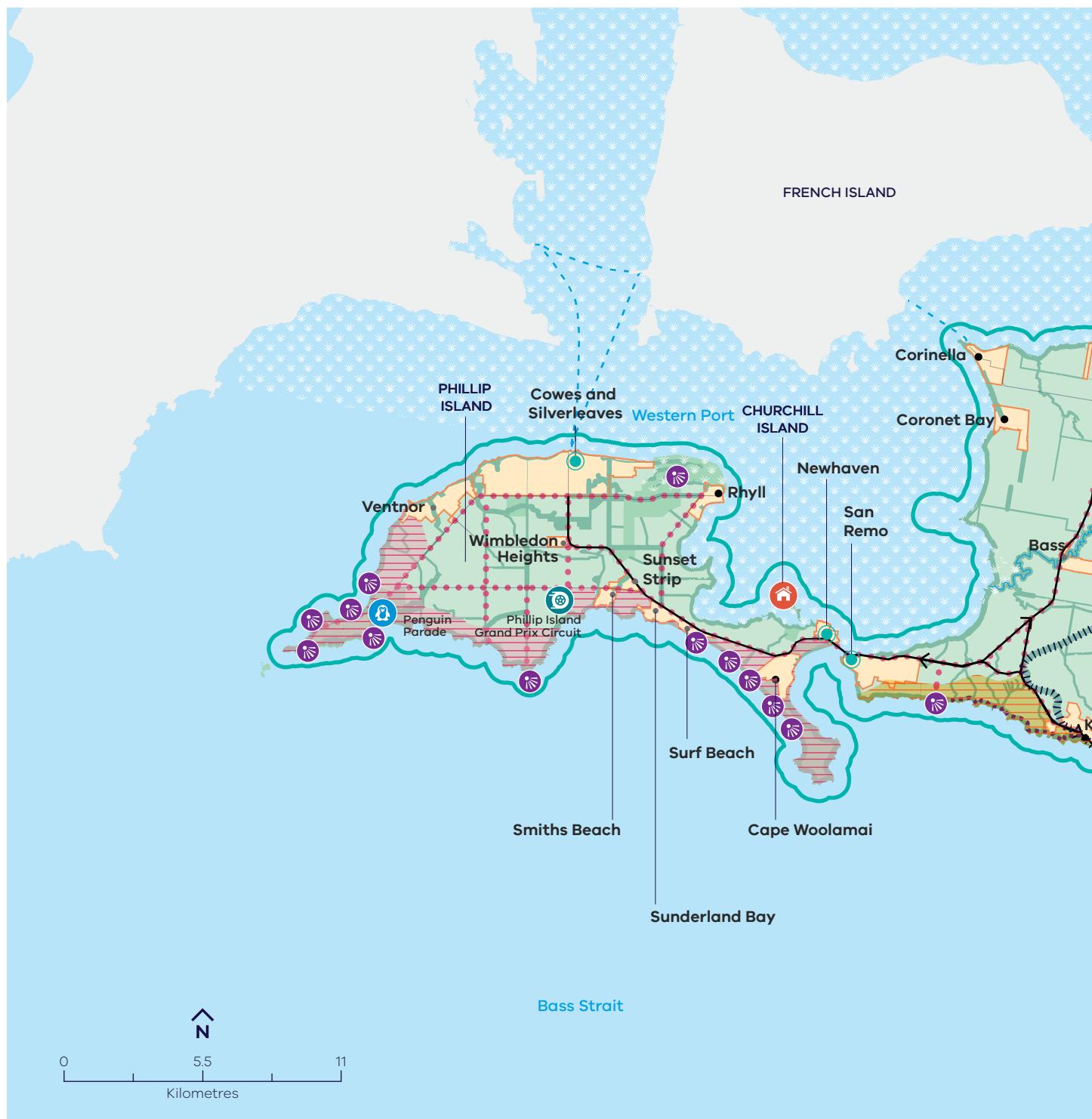
Map 3 shows the proposed declared area framework plan for the Bass Coast declared area. **Map 12** to **Map 31** also form part of the framework plan and show the proposed protected settlement boundaries for settlements in the declared area.

What is a declared area framework plan?

Section 46AV(2) of the Act requires a declared area framework plan to provide a framework for decision-making in relation to the future use and development of land within the declared area. The plan must integrate environmental, social, cultural and economic factors for the benefit of the community, encourage sustainable development and identify areas for the protection and conservation of the declared area's distinctive attributes.



MAP 3: Proposed Bass Coast declared area framework plan



LEGEND

Regional centre

Protected settlement boundary

State significant landscape

District town

Declared area boundary

Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast

Town

San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland

Village

Road corridor views*

Hamlet

Significant views within the landscape

Locality

Aboriginal cultural heritage

The entire declared area and beyond is Bunurong Country. The declared area's Aboriginal cultural heritage values must be conserved, strengthened and promoted in partnership with the Bunurong.

*manage development of infrastructure to maintain views to hills, rural hinterland and/or coast.



Phillip Island Nature Park
 Settlement area
 Future biolinks
 Ramsar wetlands
 River

Sustainable economic development and infrastructure

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| | Green breaks | | Ferry route |
| | Bass Coast Rail Trail | | Highway |
| | George Bass Coastal Walk | | Other roads |

- Movement network
- Key features
- ● ● ● ●
- ● ● ● ●

**Latrobe City is the grouping of Traralgon, Morwell, Moe and Churchill

(Source: DELWP)

MAP 3A: Proposed Bass Coast declared area framework plan, with a focused overview of the north-west aspect of the declared area.



LEGEND

- Regional centre
- District town
- Town
- Village
- Hamlet
- Locality
- Protected settlement boundary
- Declared area boundary

Aboriginal cultural heritage

The entire declared area and beyond is Bunurong Country. The declared area's Aboriginal cultural heritage values must be conserved, strengthened and promoted in partnership with the Bunurong.

State significant landscape

- Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast
- San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland
- Road corridor views*
- Significant views within the landscape

*manage development of infrastructure to maintain views to hills, rural hinterland and/or coast.

Sustainable economic development and infrastructure

- Green breaks
- Bass Coast Rail Trail
- George Bass Coastal Walk

Phillip Island Nature Park

Settlement area

Future biolinks

Ramsar wetlands

River

**Latrobe City is the grouping of Traralgon, Morwell, Moe and Churchill

Ferry route

Highway

Other roads

Movement network

Key features



(Source: DELWP)



MAP 3B: Proposed Bass Coast declared area framework plan, with a focused overview of the southern and inland aspects of the declared area.



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | Protected settlement boundary | State significant landscape |
| ● District town | Declared area boundary | Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast |
| ● Town | | San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland |
| ● Village | | • • • Road corridor views* |
| ● Hamlet | | |
| ● Locality | | ● Significant views within the landscape |
- Aboriginal cultural heritage**
The entire declared area and beyond is Bunurong Country. The declared area's Aboriginal cultural heritage values must be conserved, strengthened and promoted in partnership with the Bunurong.

*manage development of infrastructure to maintain views to hills, rural hinterland and/or coast.



- Phillip Island Nature Park
- Settlement area
- Future biolinks
- Ramsar wetlands
- River

Sustainable economic development and infrastructure

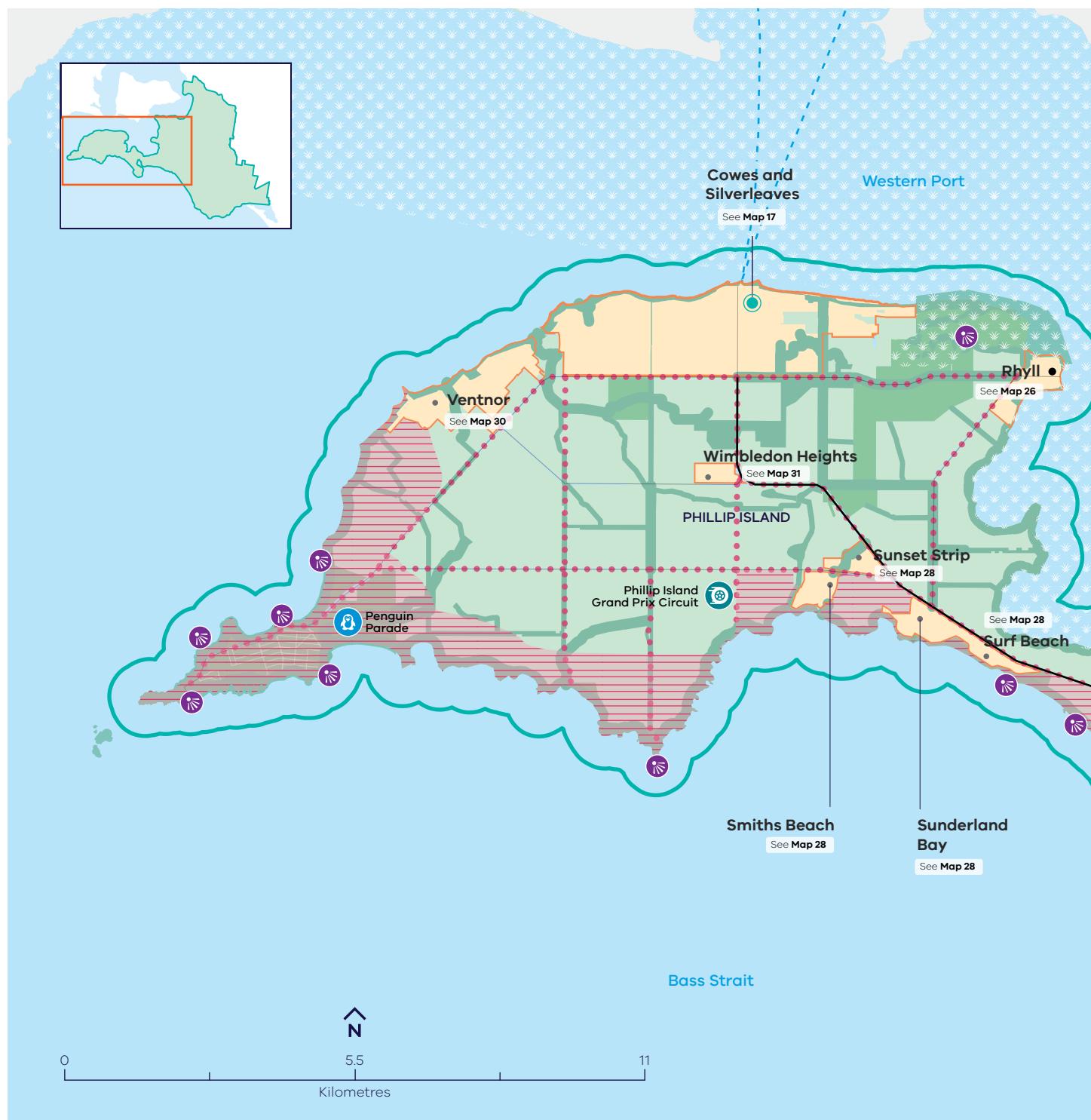
- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| ■ | Green breaks | — | Ferry route |
| ■ | Bass Coast Rail Trail | — | Highway |
| ■ | George Bass Coastal Walk | — | Other roads |
| | | → | Movement network |

**Latrobe City is the grouping of Traralgon, Morwell, Moe and Churchill



(Source: DELWP)

MAP 3C: Proposed Bass Coast declared area framework plan, with a focused overview of the western aspect of the declared area including Phillip Island.



LEGEND

Regional centre

Protected settlement boundary

State significant landscape

District town

Declared area boundary

Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast

Town

San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland

Village

Road corridor views*

Hamlet

Significant views within the landscape

Locality

Aboriginal cultural heritage

The entire declared area and beyond is Bunurong Country. The declared area's Aboriginal cultural heritage values must be conserved, strengthened and promoted in partnership with the Bunurong.

*manage development of infrastructure to maintain views to hills, rural hinterland and/or coast.



Phillip Island Nature Park
 Settlement area
 Future biolinks
 Ramsar wetlands
 River

Sustainable economic development and infrastructure

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Green breaks | Ferry route |
| Bass Coast Rail Trail | Highway |
| George Bass Coastal Walk | Other roads |
| | Movement network |



Policy domains

Under sections 46AO and 46AP of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the Minister can declare an area a distinctive area and landscape if it has particular, distinctive attributes and is under threat of significant or irreversible land use changes that would affect its environmental, social or economic value.

Table 1 in ‘Introduction’ lists the distinctive attributes that qualified the Bass Coast declared area as a distinctive area and landscape under the Act. These attributes interact in complex ways, and action is needed in each of the policy domains set out in this section to address the primary threats they face: climate change and its impacts and uncontained urban growth.

Together, the policy domains set out the long-term needs and other considerations to integrate decision-making and planning for the declared area. They provide a framework for achieving sustainable development and land management outcomes.

The policy domains are:

- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation**
- **Landscape**
- **Environment and biodiversity**
- **Aboriginal cultural heritage**
- **Historic heritage**
- **Sustainable economic development**
- **Strategic infrastructure**
- **Settlements.**

Bunurong cultural heritage

The Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation, whose ancestors have occupied the Bass Coast declared area for more than 35,000 years, are its Traditional Owners. The area is just a portion of the complex and broader Bunurong cultural landscape. The Bunurong people have a deep connection with all aspects of the environment including the earth, sea, rivers and sky. Over millennia of custodianship, the Bunurong people have developed a complete understanding of how to care for and manage Country.

The Bunurong people's connection to Country has been devastated by colonisation. Land-clearing for agriculture and development has destroyed aspects of tangible Aboriginal cultural heritage and continues to do so, although the Bunurong people are working to preserve and protect their sacred places, traditional cultural practices and stories.

The Bunurong people value the declared area's coastal landscapes as a source of food (such as shellfish). They once established campsites near rocky platforms and where there was access to freshwater. They occupied coastal areas in the warm and hot seasons, travelling along the coast to find sites rich in food. In the colder periods, the Bunurong people likely occupied upland and inland areas: mainly flat areas on ridgelines and hilltops. Inland areas provided different seasonal food resources and shelter.

There are currently 640 Aboriginal places within the declared area recorded on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register. Known places of cultural heritage significance are concentrated along the coast, and they include stone artefact scatters, shell middens, burial sites and culturally modified trees: these provide evidence of long-term Aboriginal occupation.

The area would certainly have Aboriginal cultural heritage sites that are yet to be identified and protected. Much of the area has not been thoroughly investigated, and sand dunes, sand ridges, freshwater sources, former swamplands, floodplains and areas of remnant vegetation indicate areas of potential Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.

Loo-errn

The cultural significance of the coastal landscapes of Bunurong Country is highlighted by stories about the land. One such story is the story of the Loo-errn, a gigantic, being-like blackfellow who lived on the Yarra. While baking eels in a ground oven on the Yarra flats, he spotted a swan's feather being carried by the south wind. He traced it to its source, where he found flocks of swans resting on Western Port. After a time, the swans flew off to the east and Loo-errn followed them to the Corner Inlet, at Wamman (the Bunurong name for Wilson's Promontory).

— Bunurong Land Council

The Bunurong people are the custodians of the declared area and have a deep connection to Country. Aboriginal cultural heritage must be acknowledged, and indigenous knowledge and practice protected, by enabling the Bunurong to heal and strengthen their Country. A holistic approach to managing the declared area sees oral histories, cultural practices and values shared and understood, as culturally appropriate. This will contribute to resilient communities and help increase community understanding of, respect for and appreciation of the area's rich Aboriginal cultural heritage.



What is a Registered Aboriginal Party?

A Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) is a Traditional Owner group legally recognised under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. It is the primary source of advice and knowledge on matters relating to Aboriginal places and Aboriginal objects in its area. It has many functions including:

- consultation about all cultural matters on Country
- evaluating cultural heritage management plans
- assessing cultural heritage permit applications

- undertaking cultural burns entering into Aboriginal cultural heritage land management agreements with public land managers
- ensuring that the health and wellbeing of Traditional Owners are prioritised.

The Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation is the RAP for the area, and it represents the descendants of the Boon wurrung-speaking peoples. It is currently preparing a Country Plan, which land managers should use, as well as direct engagement, to support decision-making.

Objective and strategies

Objective 1

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

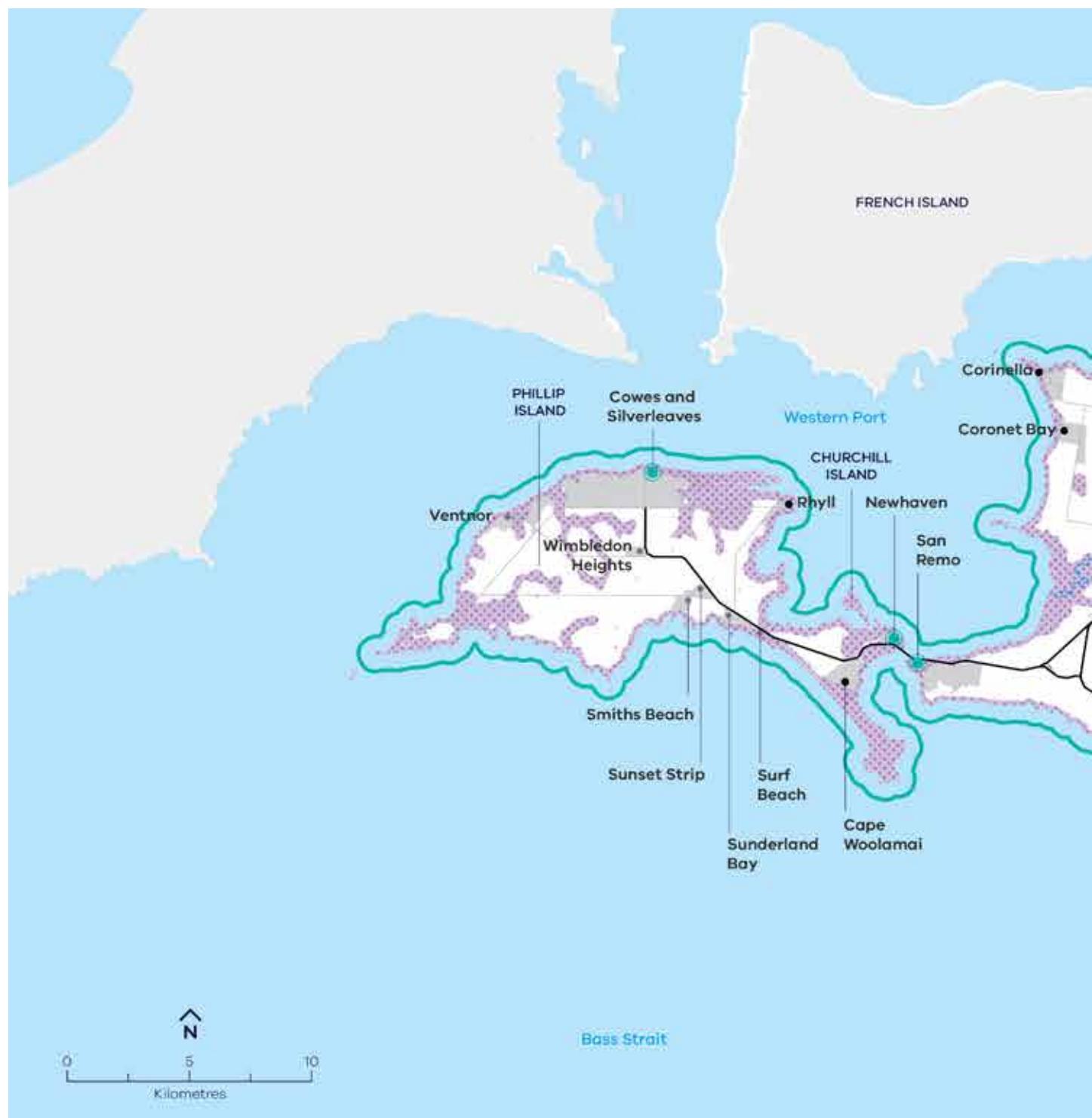
To recognise, conserve, strengthen and promote the declared area's Aboriginal cultural heritage values and work in partnership with the Bunurong people in caring for Country.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 1.1 Acknowledge Bunurong values, cultural practices and knowledge in making land use, development and land management decisions.
- 1.2 Actively involve the Bunurong people in identifying, protecting, managing and enhancing Aboriginal cultural heritage places and tangible and intangible cultural heritage values.
- 1.3 With the Bunurong people, promote and improve community education, awareness and understanding of Bunurong values, cultural heritage, language and cultural practices.

MAP 4: Bunurong cultural heritage



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary | — River |
| ● District town | ■ Settlement area | ■ Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity |
| ● Town | — Highway | |
| ● Village | — Other roads | |
| ● Hamlet | | |
| ● Locality | | |



(Source: DELWP)

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Current and future climate change hazards and their impacts are an existential threat to the Bass Coast declared area and Victoria, and greater community resilience is needed.

In coming years, the area is forecast to experience higher average temperatures, more extreme heat events, less rainfall, longer droughts, more frequent extreme storm and flood events and rising sea levels. These will in turn increase coastal erosion, coastal inundation and flooding, increase bushfire risk, decrease water security and degrade water and soil quality.

Effective, sustained actions to mitigate climate change — to slow and then stop global warming — and actions to mitigate climate change impacts — to live with the effects of climate change — need all levels of government, the private sector, non-governmental agencies and communities to work together. Planning policies including local planning controls are essential tools to achieve these goals.

The response to climate change must be global. In 2015, 196 parties (including Australia) to the 1994 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change adopted the Paris Agreement, the goal of which is to limit global warming to well below two degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. The agreement came into force in November 2016.

To implement the Victorian Government's support for the Paris Agreement, the *Climate Change Act 2017* sets a long-term target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. [Victoria's Climate Change Strategy](#) sets out the strategies to achieve this target.

In the declared area, the Bass Coast Shire Council in 2019 joined the global movement of national, regional and local governments declaring a climate emergency. In September 2020, it published its draft [Climate Change Action Plan 2020–2030](#), and the council adopted the plan in May 2021. The plan sets a target of net-zero emissions by 2030, to be achieved through actions — groundwork, emissions reduction and adaptation actions — by the council and the community. In particular, the plan emphasises necessary transitions to greater energy efficiency, low-emissions transport and a circular economy, and it aims to increase vegetation cover.

Bushfire risk management

The objective of Victoria Planning Provisions Clause 13.02-1S is to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfires through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.

Much of the declared area has been cleared and is currently mostly grassland across a mix of flat ground, undulating hills and smaller areas of steeper topography. These areas generally have a lower fuel load, but areas of unmanaged grass vegetation are vulnerable to ember attack and fast-moving, wind-driven fires. There are also some areas with higher bushfire risk (such as coastal parks and reserves and foothill areas), where the vegetation is denser and fire behaviour is likely to be more intense.

Land use planning is key to preventing, managing and minimising bushfire risk in the declared area now and in the future, and it helps communities prepare for bushfire events. Settlement planning and development activities should direct development away from high-risk areas and include bushfire protection measures to reduce risks.

Planning should carefully consider the need to protect vulnerable communities and larger populations in bushfire-affected areas, and it should link strongly to emergency management planning.

As well as threatening human life and the environment, bushfires have economic consequences. Tourism businesses and destinations may need to close when bushfire risk is high, and agricultural businesses can lose land, stock and infrastructure. Businesses need emergency management and bushfire risk mitigation planning and actions to minimise these risks. Selecting and preferencing fire-resistant native vegetation species helps mitigate bushfire risk and supports local biodiversity.

Bushfire risk management that integrates scientific expertise with Traditional Owners' fire management knowledge can protect and enhance biodiversity values, mitigate bushfire risk and other climate change impacts and deepen peoples' appreciation of and respect for Country.

Coastal erosion

The declared area's beaches, cliffs, mudflats, coastal wetlands and estuaries are increasingly exposed to rising sea levels, storm surges and erosion. These climate change impacts alter the natural patterns and rates of erosion and longshore drift: the movement and deposition of sand, sediment and other material along the shore by waves. Coastal modifications (such as dredging, stormwater disposal, coastal protection structures and harbours) can have positive and negative effects on the coast.

As sand, soil and rock erode, public infrastructure, recreational facilities, dwellings and commercial and industrial premises, particularly in low-lying areas, are at high risk of damage. Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage sites are also threatened. The Bunurong people are saltwater people, and many Aboriginal cultural heritage sites are on or near the coast.

Changing patterns of erosion along coastlines force marine and coastal plants and animals to migrate inland. Estuary and wetland vegetation (such as mangroves) will naturally migrate inland to areas that are less-threatened by rising sea levels and permanent inundation. Hard infrastructure (such as seawalls and settlements) close to aquatic vegetation are barriers to the natural inland migration process. More visitors and greater use of beaches may damage dune vegetation and affect erosion if not managed adequately. The Victorian Government's 2020 **Marine and Coastal Policy** sets out a 'planning and decision pathway' showing how the objectives and guiding principles of the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* are to be used when managing coastal hazard risks including erosion.

Coastal inundation and flooding

Instances of flooding and coastal inundation in the declared area are increasing, and they occasionally require estuaries (such as the Powlett River, Bourne Creek and Wreck Creek estuaries) to be artificially opened. Estuaries often open naturally: ideally this occurs before high waters do damage to assets (such as infrastructure and agricultural land) on surrounding floodplains. However, if these assets are under imminent threat, an estuary may need to be artificially opened to prevent damage. There are severe environmental risks with artificially and reactively opening estuaries including mass fish deaths due to low oxygen levels, exposure of acid sulfate soils and disturbances to wetlands.

Floods often accelerate the erosion of river channels and damage nearby infrastructure and the natural environment. This is particularly so in areas that have been cleared of plants that protect the soil. Low-lying urban and non-urban areas around waterways are at greater risk of flooding. More areas near water bodies and coastal reserves will be unavailable for existing uses at times due to inundation, and the ecology of these areas will change as a result of flooding and storm events.



Water security

Declining surface water availability and greater demand for water resources must be planned for in the Bass Coast declared area. The Victorian Government's 2020 **Long-Term Water Resource Assessment for Southern Victoria** found that in the most recent long-term period, the total volume of available water in South Gippsland, which includes the Bass Coast Shire, had declined by 12%.

Water for agriculture is particularly important for the Bass Coast: the declared area is a key part of Melbourne's food bowl, and Melbourne's population

is projected to need 60% more food by 2050. A growing population and increased agricultural use will increase demand for water in the Bass Coast. Run-off-fed reservoirs are the traditional source of water for communities. Alternatives (such as stormwater harvesting and reuse, water sensitive urban design, passive irrigation and recycled water) must be pursued in new development, to provide water security in established urban centres and agricultural areas.

The Victorian Desalination Project at Wonthaggi and the pipeline to Berwick are integral to Victoria's water security and are the subjects of a strategy under the 'Strategic infrastructure' policy domain.



Objectives and strategies

Objective 2a

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To protect and enhance environmental assets and ecosystem services and support their resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts and natural hazards.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 2a.1 Avoid locating new development and retreat existing development from areas with significant biodiversity and/or high bushfire risk, to increase resilience.
- 2a.2 Utilise Bunurong biocultural knowledge and practices to better manage bushfire risk.
- 2a.3 Ensure bushfire risk management retains or enhances the area's valued biodiversity and landscape character while prioritising the protection of human life.
- 2a.4 Ensure coastal infrastructure is designed to withstand future climate change impacts and has minimal effect on existing environmental features including vegetation, natural landforms and natural water flows.
- 2a.5 Minimise the disturbance of coastal acid sulfate soils, particularly around Western Port, Anderson Inlet and the Powlett and Bass river mouths.
- 2a.6 Minimise the need for artificial estuary openings by mitigating flood risks with alternative methods (such as using flood-prone land in the Powlett River Valley as a biolink).
- 2a.7 Use best practice, water sensitive design and alternative water sources to reduce the consumption of potable water and the negative impacts of development on waterways, wetlands, beaches and the marine environment.

Objective 2b

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

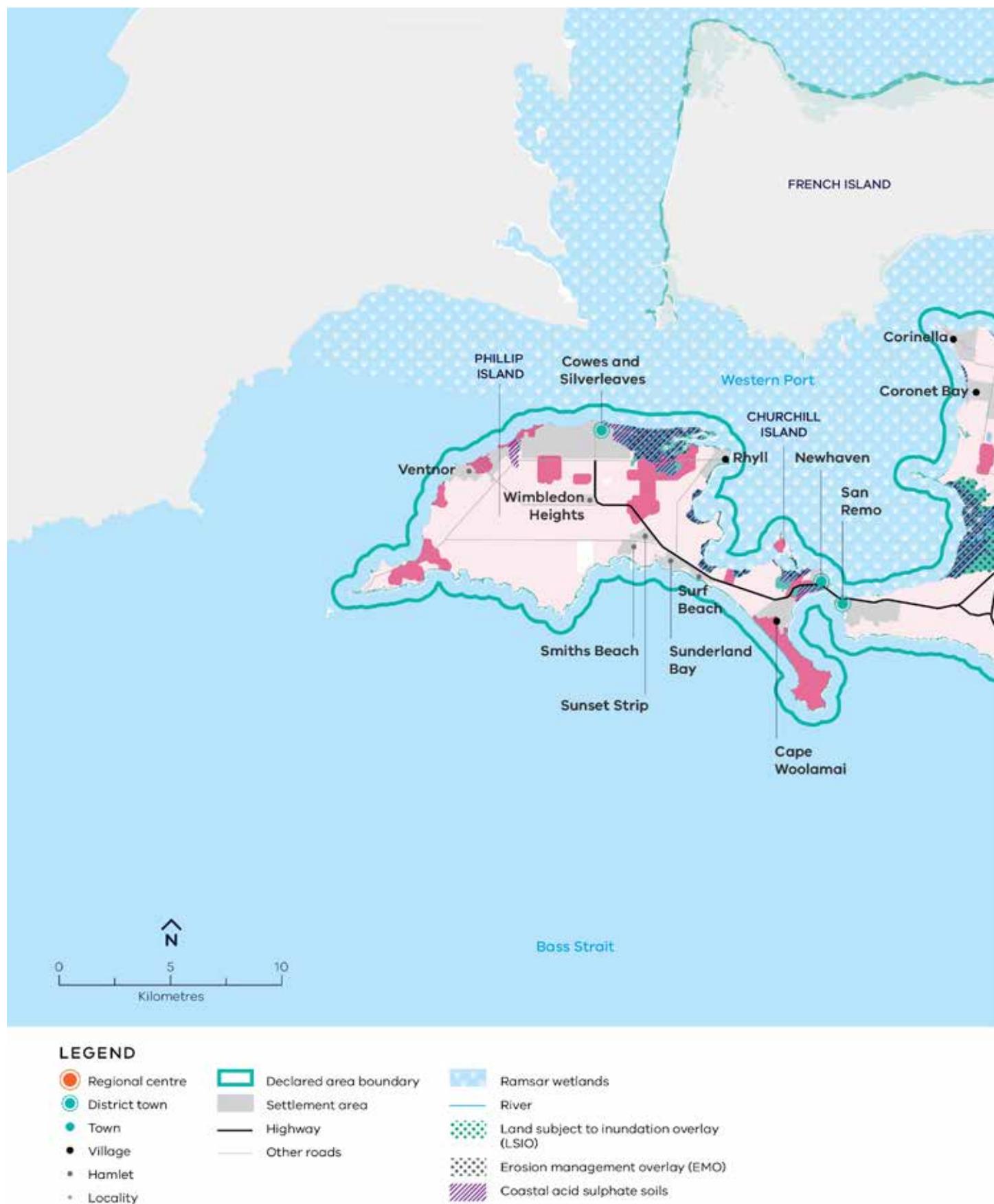
To ensure communities are prepared and places are designed to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of rising sea levels and coastal erosion.

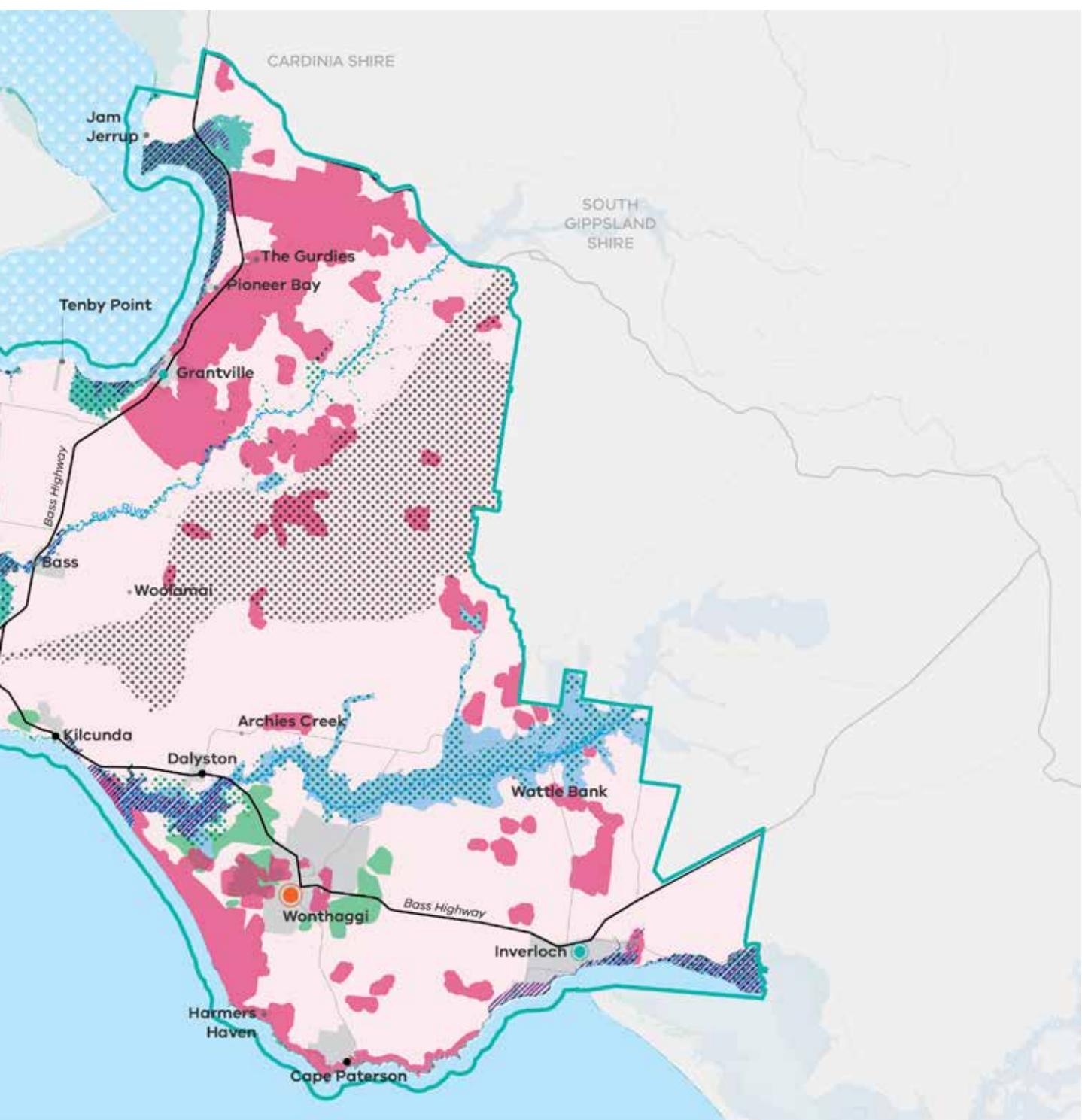
Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 2b.1 Avoid locating new development and retreat existing development and sensitive land uses in areas adjacent to waterways and estuaries or at risk of coastal and riverine flooding and coastal erosion.
- 2b.2 Ensure coastal erosion mitigation strategies and approaches restore and preserve natural systems, allow for wetland migration and reduce negative impacts on coastal environments.
- 2b.3 Ensure coastal and waterway infrastructure is located and designed to minimise impacts on existing environmental features including vegetation, habitat, natural landforms and natural flows of water.

MAP 5: Environmental risks





- [Light Blue Box] 100 year flood extent (ARI)
- [Teal Box] Sea level rise 2100 storm tide (82cm)*
- [Pink Box] Bushfire management overlay (BMO)
- [Light Pink Box] Bushfire prone area
- [Green Box] Environmental Significance Overlay 4 (ESO 4)

*Strategic work is currently under way to update projections and benchmarks for sea level rise, which will be incorporated into planning systems and policies to remain responsive to changing circumstances.

(Source: DELWP)

Landscape

The Bass Coast's coastal and rural landscapes are of outstanding natural beauty. The beaches and bays, rugged coastlines, rock platforms and formations, seascapes and bush provide stunning views, recreation and other enjoyments for residents and visitors. There are countless panoramic seascapes and other views across Western Port and along the Bass Strait coastline. Moving inland, rolling, pastoral hills and a patchwork of paddocks and native vegetation give way to the foothills of the Strzelecki Ranges, known locally as Bass Hills, which form an iconic backdrop to the rural hinterland.

The coastal and rural landscapes are also important to the region's Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage: there are many reminders of the declared area's agricultural, industrial and maritime past.

Continued pressure from human impacts — urban development and encroachment, visitation and trespass, water contamination from pollutants and run-off, vegetation removal and other damaging land management practices — and from climate change — rising sea levels, flooding, storm surges, changes in ocean temperature, erosion and bushfires — put the declared area's landscapes at high risk of incremental, cumulative and irreversible damage. Undertaking long-term planning for the declared area now can help to address these issues and safeguard its landscapes for current and future generations.

The declared area's landscapes are defined by both their character and significance. 'Landscape character' is different from 'landscape significance':

- **landscape character** (which **Map 6** shows) is the interplay of geology, landform, vegetation, water form and other natural features, combined with the effects of land use and built development, that makes one landscape different from another
- **landscape significance** (which **Map 7** shows) is based on the visual values of a landscape (that is, its scenic beauty, with consideration of other values such as Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage and environmental values) and less-tangible values (such as memories or associations).

Landscape character

With respect to landscape character, the declared area is made up of:

- four landscape types: areas with a generally similar landscape character
- within these landscape types, landscape areas: separate geographical units, across which local conditions vary.

Map 6 shows (and the following narrative overviews) the declared area's landscape types — South Gippsland Coastal Plains, Bass Strait Coastal Cliffs, Strzelecki Highlands and Western Port Localised Flatlands — and the landscape areas within each.

South Gippsland Coastal Plains

Map 6 shows the South Gippsland Coastal Plains landscape type, which comprises the coastal and coastal hinterland areas of Gippsland that extend east to around Lakes Entrance. In the declared area, this landscape type has four landscape areas: Westernport and Bass River Lowlands, Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland, Bunurong Coast and Powlett River Lowlands, and Inverloch and Anderson Inlet.

Westernport and Bass River Lowlands

The Westernport and Bass River Lowlands landscape area is mainly rural, low-lying and flat to gently undulating, and it has two areas abutting the eastern edge of Western Port. The northern area is north and east of Jam Jerrup and between the Bass and South Gippsland highways. The larger part of the area takes in the relatively flat coast and coastal hinterland further south, extending from Corinella to Woolamai, a small settlement at the base of the Bass Hills.

Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland

The Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland landscape area is on the Phillip Island north coast between Coghlan Road at the eastern edge of Cowes to the west beyond Ventnor, around Davie Lane. The area extends inland, taking in the rolling, rural landscape of central Phillip Island. The north coast is a sandy, mostly low-energy coastline adjoining Western Port and is elevated in parts. The hinterland features a patchwork of paddocks separated by long, straight roads running mostly north-south that are draped across the landscape.

Bunurong Coast and Powlett River Lowlands

The Bunurong Coast and Powlett River Lowlands landscape area includes the diverse, rugged Bunurong Coast between the southern edge of Kilcunda and The Caves to the west of Inverloch, and a largely cleared, rolling, pastoral hinterland that extends inland to the Strzelecki Foothills. Along the Bass Strait coast, high sand dunes, sea cliffs, rocky headlands, rock stacks and beaches are valued landscape features. The immediate hinterland is largely undeveloped, and in places it supports intact Coastal banksia woodland communities and large swathes of Coastal heathland vegetation.

Inverloch and Anderson Inlet

The Inverloch and Anderson Inlet landscape area is centred on Anderson Inlet, a shallow, sandy estuary where the Tarwin River meets Bass Strait. The landscape extends inland to take in the slightly steeper and more undulating hinterland to the south of the Powlett River flats, and it extends from the declared area's eastern boundary to west of Inverloch.

Bass Strait Coastal Cliffs

The Bass Strait Coastal Cliffs landscape type occurs in two parts of Gippsland: **Map 6** shows the part in the declared area. The type comprises a basaltic volcanic geology — the Mornington Volcanic Group — which also covers the Mornington Peninsula and French Island. At its interface with Bass Strait, winds and waves have shaped this geology into a varied, dramatic landscape of rugged headlands, sea cliffs and dunes. In the declared area, this landscape type has one landscape area: Phillip Island Coastal Cliffs.

Phillip Island Coastal Cliffs

The Phillip Island Coastal Cliffs landscape area is on the southern side of Phillip Island between Cape Woolamai and around Davie Lane south-west of Ventnor. The area is a varied, dramatic coastline of sea cliffs, granitic headlands and rocky platforms, with an elevated hinterland of rolling hills. Some beaches are small and sheltered, while others (such as Smiths and Woolamai) stretch out in long crescents with surf breaks that attract residents and visitors year-round.



Strzelecki Highlands

Map 6 shows the Strzelecki Highlands landscape type, which comprises the steep, dissected, rugged Strzelecki Ranges and its shallower foothills. The landscape type stretches between San Remo in the west to around Longford in the east and inland to the Latrobe River. In the declared area, this landscape type has two landscape areas: the Bass Hills and Kilcunda Coast, and The Gurdies Hills.

Bass Hills and Kilcunda Coast

The Bass Hills and Kilcunda Coast landscape area comprises the most prominent landforms within the declared area: the westernmost part of the Strzelecki Ranges, which rises steeply from the surrounding coastal plains, and the dramatic coastline between San Remo and Kilcunda. The coastal hinterland is elevated and pastoral, with the Bass Hills further inland consisting of rolling, cleared pastures.

The Gurdies Hills

The Gurdies Hills landscape area also forms part of the Strzelecki Ranges and is located at the ranges' westernmost edge and separated from the Bass Hills area by the Bass River Valley. The hills are lower and more undulating, and parts are covered by large areas of remnant forest and woodland. Within the declared area, they stretch from the shire boundary in the north to just south of the Grantville Nature Conservation Reserve.

Western Port Localised Flatlands

Map 6 shows the Western Port Localised Flatlands landscape type, which comprises flat, coastal areas of intertidal mud and sand flats, marshes and wetlands characteristic of this part of Western Port and its extensive tidal range. The landscape type is adjacent to or forms part of the Western Port Ramsar site, a wetland of international significance. In the declared area, this landscape type has two landscape areas: Coastal Mangroves and Mudflats, and Rhyll Inlet and Churchill Island Wetlands.

Coastal Mangroves and Mudflats

The Coastal Mangroves and Mudflats landscape area occurs in two locations on the eastern edge of Western Port. The northernmost location hugs the smaller bay on which Grantville is situated, and the other is centred on the Bass River estuary. Both locations are characterised by intertidal mangroves and mudflats at their coastal edges and a flat, low-lying, rural hinterland of cleared, marshy paddocks.

Rhyll Inlet and Churchill Island Wetlands

The Rhyll Inlet and Churchill Island Wetlands landscape area is on the eastern coastal edge of Phillip Island, and it hugs the low-energy, south-western side of Western Port. It is a tranquil, low-lying landscape comprising wetlands and a rural hinterland and includes Rhyll Inlet and Churchill Island.

Landscape significance

The entire declared area has landscape significance, consistent with its declaration under the Act. 'Significance' is categorised as state or regional significance; state significance indicates that higher levels of protection and management are required.

Map 7 shows the declared area's six significant landscapes, which are:

- the Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast landscape, which is of state significance
- the San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland landscape, which is of state and regional significance
- the Phillip Island Swan Bay Coast and Churchill Island, Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands, Strzelecki Foothills, and Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland landscapes, which are of regional significance.

Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast (state significance)

The Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast landscape includes the coast and coastal hinterland generally between Cape Woolamai and the south-western edge of Ventnor, including the Summerland Peninsula and Seal Rocks. It is a varied, dramatic coastal landscape of stunning sea cliffs, granitic headlands, rocky offshore reefs, basalt stacks and high dunes. Some of the sandy coves are small and sheltered; others (such as Woolamai and Smiths beaches) form long crescents that are pounded with sought-after surf breaks. The well-known and highly valued views in the landscape are of regional and state significance.

The incessant winds and Bass Strait seas have shaped this dynamic and picturesque coast, its exposed position further contributing to its untamed character. The high-energy landscape includes numerous visually and geologically significant landscape features including the seamed, granitic stack of Cape Woolamai, the multisided columns of The Colonades, the craggy Forrest Caves and the black basalt stack of Pyramid Rock.

Cat Bay and adjacent coves on the north-western Western Port coast are no less spectacular and rugged, with high, grassy dunes, rocky spills, black platforms and stunning offshore basalt stacks and islands. The nightly Penguin Parade at Summerland Bay attracts over 700,000 visitors annually, and Seal Rocks is home to one of the largest Australian fur seal colonies in Australia.

The elevated landscape edge and hinterland give rise to spectacular coastal views from the many lookouts and access points: there are far-reaching panoramas along the coastline and out to sea. While quite accessible to visitors, the western and north-western parts of the landscape beyond Smiths Beach have a particularly wild, undeveloped character: to the south-west, it is open ocean between here and Antarctica.

San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland (state and regional significance)

The San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland landscape is state-significant, and the coastal hinterland beginning slightly east of Kilcunda is regionally significant. The highly valued views along the coast are varied and include views of state significance.

The landscape's coast is one of stunning contrasts and iconic features. The high sea cliffs between San Remo and Kilcunda (where the Strzelecki Foothills meet Bass Strait) include jagged headlands and rock shelves — exposed to and battered by Bass Strait seas — interspersed with sandy coves and isolated beaches. The George Bass Coastal Walk from San Remo to Kilcunda offers commanding views of the dramatic coastline and Bass Strait.

The coastal edge between Kilcunda and west of Inverloch is just as visually arresting, with elevated cliffs and sand dunes, the iconic Cape Paterson headland and nearby offshore rock formations. Eagles Nest, between Cape Paterson and Inverloch, is a particularly notable sandstone formation protruding from the shore platform high out of the water. South of Kilcunda, the large, scenic estuary of the Powlett River meets the coast; there is a hinterland of intact and significant Coastal banksia woodland communities to the north and south of it. There are also views of iconic structures in the landscape (such as the Kilcunda Trestle Bridge and the Wonthaggi Wind Farm turbines).

As the coastline approaches Inverloch from the west, the elevation of the coastal topography steadily declines, merging into tidal sand flats and the low-energy Anderson Inlet landscape. This shallow, dynamic river mouth, edged by broad, sandy beaches and low, grassy dunes, provides important habitat for endangered migratory birds and other animals.



Phillip Island Swan Bay Coast and Churchill Island (regional significance)

The Phillip Island Swan Bay Coast and Churchill Island landscape is a tranquil, low-lying landscape along the north-eastern coastline of Phillip Island. The landscape has valued views of local and regional significance.

Rhyll Inlet provides a rich diversity of habitat for coastal plants and animals, and it is accessible along boardwalks through coastal woodland and paperbark forest to intertidal mudflats and mangroves. There are expansive views from Conservation Hill across the inlet to Western Port.

Churchill Island is more undulating than the adjacent coastal flats. The island's cleared, rolling landscape is hillier on its northern side, which also supports an ancient Moonah forest. The land then climbs to a central high point, where there are historic farm buildings. There were once several islands off the Phillip Island coast (such as Cape Woolamai and The Nobbies): Churchill Island is the only one that remains. Views directly to the east across Swan Bay of Churchill Island are particularly noteworthy: the island appears to float on the still waters of the sheltered cove.

Beyond this landscape's marshy, intertidal coastal edge is a rolling, rural hinterland with indigenous vegetation and exotic shelterbelts. From here, the topography slopes up to a ridge that partially encircles the landscape, providing shelter and a quiet stillness to this highly significant part of Phillip Island.

Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands (regional significance)

The Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands landscape is a low-energy coastline of intertidal mangroves interspersed with shallow, sandy beaches and areas of low, eroding sandstone cliffs. The Bass River estuary is a unique estuarine saltmarsh environment in the southernmost part of the landscape. The low-lying landscape has a serene, secluded quality, affording expansive views across this sheltered part of Western Port to the heavily vegetated eastern side of French Island.

White mangrove mudflats are a spectacular feature of this landscape, and they are sensitive to changes in the duration and frequency of inundation: changes forecast as a result of rising sea levels. They provide a vital breeding ground for fish and are an important habitat for shorebirds. There are intact areas of Coastal saltmarsh immediately inland of the marine and estuarine tidal flats, beyond which is a backdrop of indigenous coastal shrubs and grasses. Reef Island, a tertiary volcanic outlier joined to the coast by a basalt rubble ridge, is another remarkable feature. Beyond the landscape's intertidal coastal edge is a flat, low-lying rural hinterland of cleared, marshy paddocks with some linear eucalypt reserves and exotic shelterbelt planting.

The Corinella Peninsula is more undulating and elevated than the rest of the landscape, and it has a variegated and visually interesting coastal edge. There are 15-m cliffs at Settlement Point and a substantial ironstone plane (known as the Corinella Fault), which has resisted erosion to project out above the level of the beach. Other coastal-edge features of the peninsula include protected, sandy coves scattered with rocks, substantial bushland reserves right up to the shoreline and small, offshore stands of White mangroves.





Strzelecki Foothills (regional significance)

The Strzelecki Foothills landscape incorporates the Bass Hills, The Gurdies Hills and the picturesque Bass River Valley that separates them. These features are some of the most defining of the declared area, particularly the Bass Hills that rise steeply from the surrounding coastal plains, providing a distinctive and highly visible backdrop to the Western Port lowlands.

The Bass Hills are a mostly cleared, pastoral landscape of bucolic rises and gullies. The foothills are steep and incised in some areas and more rolling in others. There are patchworks of paddocks, inclines and falls divided by exotic shelterbelts, and remnant vegetation lines roadsides and waterways. By way of contrast, The Gurdies Hills on the other side of the Bass River Valley are lower and less visually arresting than the Bass Hills. They undulate beneath large areas of remnant forest and woodland, particularly on the western side, providing a heavily vegetated edge to the Bass Highway and a bushland backdrop to the hamlets of Pioneer Bay and The Gurdies.

The Bass River meanders between the hills, creating a fertile valley floor with a serene, rural character. Remnants of riparian forest line the river, alongside which the railway line once ran. There are picturesque, pastoral views from within the dale, framed by the valley walls. The adjacent hills also provide many opportunities for panoramic views out over the grids of roads and shelterbelts of the pastoral plains to Western Port and French and Phillip islands.

Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland (regional significance)

The Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland landscape is a picturesque, rolling, rural landscape with a low-energy frontage to Western Port. Volcanic activity has shaped the island, and its basaltic geology forms an undulating hinterland punctuated by hillocks.

The topography is draped with long, straight roads and is overlaid with a patchwork of cleared paddocks. There are corridors of remnant vegetation adjacent to roadsides, and swathes of Swamp paperbark populate waterways and depressions. Rows of Cypress pines act as windbreaks and form iconic shapes on elevated horizons. There are numerous brick and iron chicory kilns in the hinterland, many ramshackle and abandoned: they are reminders of an important industry in the past.

The north coast comprises a series of dune-backed beaches separated by rocky headlands and some high cliffs and wide, basalt reefs that extend offshore. Red Rock Point is a particularly compelling feature of the Western Port coast, comprising stunning, red basalt outcrops that contrast with the adjacent, muted sand. Further west, McHaffie Point is likely to be an eruption centre from the Older Volcanics geological period and comprises 10–12-m cliffs cut in hard, red, volcanic tuffs. Rather more tranquil are the lower reaches of Saltwater Creek, an intermittent stream that is frequently sand-blocked; it is the only valley open to the sea on the Phillip Island north coast.



Objective and strategies

Objective 3

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To protect and enhance the declared area's significant landscapes, including their distinctive characters, physical features and cultural values.

Strategies

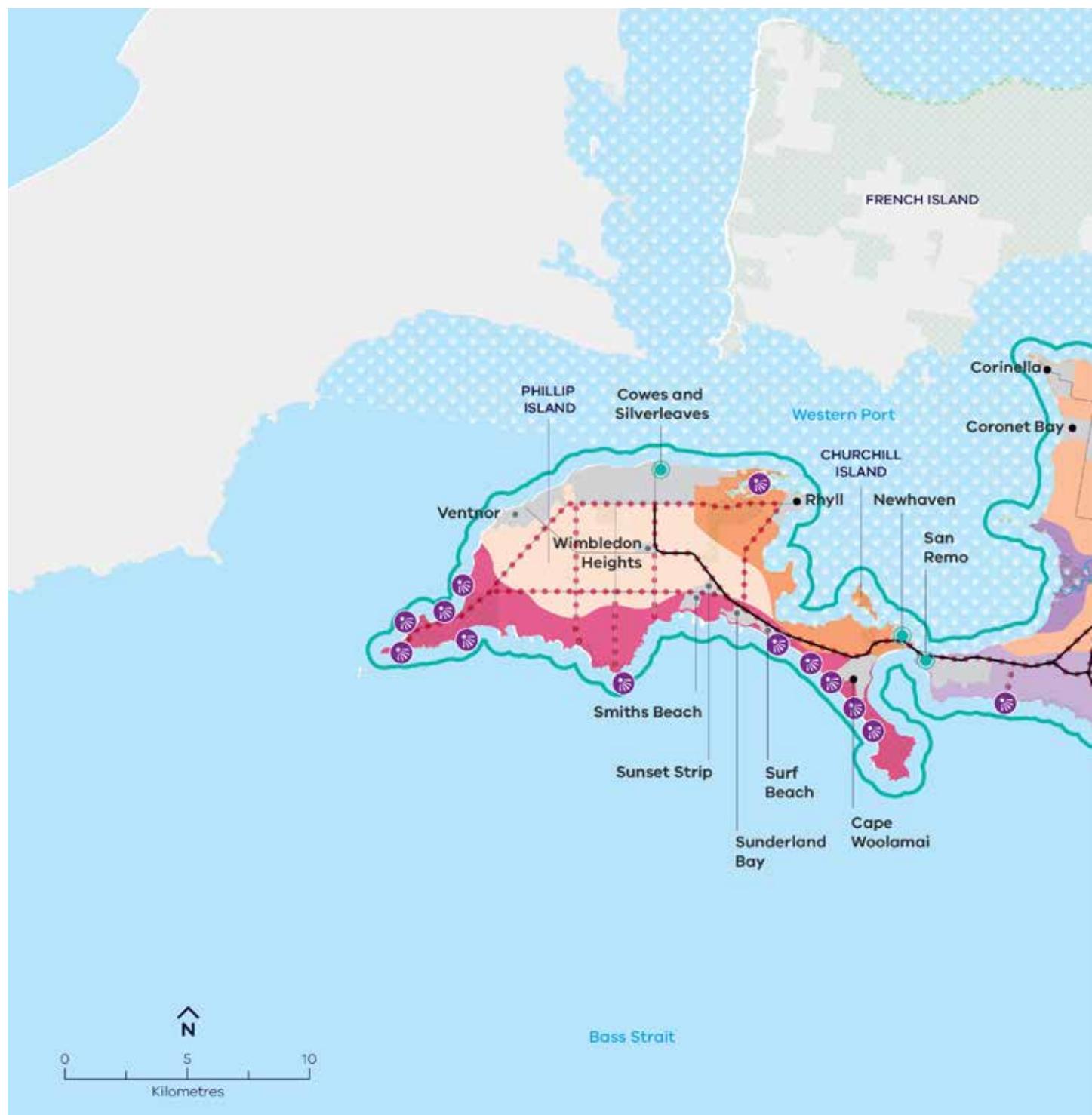
RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 3.1 Ensure landscape and seascape features that are sensitive to change are identified and threats to them identified and addressed in strategic planning processes.
- 3.2 Contain urban growth within settlement boundaries.
- 3.3 Discourage new residential development in the green breaks between settlements.
- 3.4 Ensure development responds sympathetically to the landscape character and maintains the visual dominance of the natural landscape by:
 - being sited so that buildings are tucked into the landscape among established vegetation or new vegetation buffers that screen development when it is viewed from the public realm

- providing substantial setbacks from road corridors and publicly accessible land
- using building forms and design detailing including materials and colours that immerse buildings within the landscape, so they are not visually dominant.

- 3.5 Ensure development is located away from and does not protrude above hilltops and ridgelines, so the natural contours and vegetation remain visible.
- 3.6 Manage land use, development and infrastructure to ensure that the dominance of significant landscapes, views and vantage points is conserved and enhanced by:
 - retaining the rural outlook from inland, main road corridors, particularly the scenic panoramas available of the Bass Hills from the Bass Highway
 - retaining views to the coastline and water from scenic coastal drives (such as the Bunurong Coastal Drive between Cape Paterson and Inverloch)
 - retaining and planting native and indigenous vegetation.
- 3.7 Retain and enhance remnant native vegetation in coastal reserves, along road and waterway corridors and on private land (for example in shelterbelts, along fence lines and on steep agricultural land), where appropriate and in accordance with bushfire risk management requirements.

MAP 6: Landscape character: types and areas



LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary |
| ● District town | ■ Settlement area |
| ● Town | — Highway |
| ● Village | — Other roads |
| ● Hamlet | |
| ● Locality | |

Ramsar wetlands

River

Parks and reserves

• • • Road corridor views*

● Significant views within the landscape

*manage development of infrastructure to maintain views to hills, rural hinterland and/or coast



Landscape character

South Gippsland Coastal Plains

- Westernport and Bass River Lowlands
- Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland
- Bunurong Coast and Hinterland
- Inverloch and Anderson Inlet

Bass Strait Coastal Cliffs

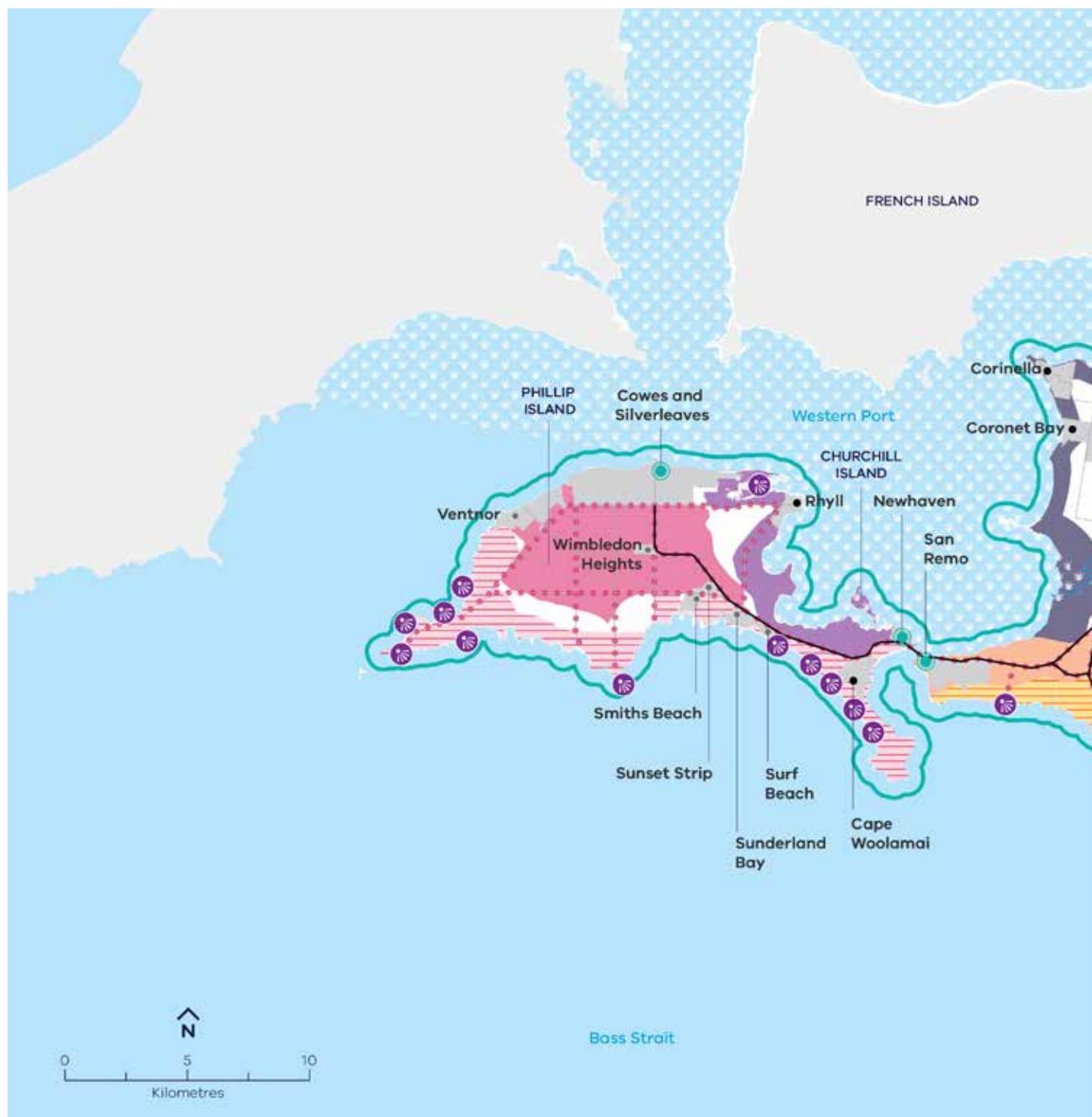
- Phillip Island Coastal Cliffs
- Strzelecki Highlands
- Bass Hills and Kilcunda Coast
- The Gurdies Hills

Western Port Localised Flatlands

- Coastal Mangroves and Mudflats
- Rhyll Inlet and Churchill Island Wetlands

(Source: DELWP)

MAP 7: Landscape significance



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary | ■ Ramsar wetlands |
| ● District town | ■ Settlement area | — River |
| ● Town | — Highway | * • • • Road corridor views* |
| ● Village | — Other roads | ● Significant views within the landscape |
| ● Hamlet | | |
| ● Locality | | |
- *manage development of infrastructure to maintain views to hills, rural hinterland and/or coast.



State significant landscape

- Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast
- San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland

Regional significant landscape

- Strzelecki Foothills
- San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland
- Phillip Island Swan Bay
- Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland
- Eastern Western Port Bay Coastal Flatlands

(Source: DELWP)

Environment and biodiversity

The natural environment, biodiversity and habitat of the declared area — its healthy marine and terrestrial environments and native vegetation — provide many social, economic and cultural benefits. They are integral to the cultural heritage of the Bunurong people, who over countless generations developed extensive biocultural knowledge and practices to manage habitat and biodiversity values.

The main refuges for biodiversity in the declared area are the various public land reserves — Yallock-Bulluk Marine and Coastal Park (which combines the Bunurong Marine National Park, Bunurong Coastal Reserve and other coastal and foreshore reserves and adjacent Crown land), Grantville Nature Conservation Reserve, The Gurdies Nature Conservation Reserve, Lang Lang Education Area and Churchill Island Marine National Park — as well as land managed by Phillip Island Nature Parks.

Its biodiversity-rich wetlands — the wetlands of the Western Port Ramsar site and the nationally important wetlands of the Powlett River mouth and Anderson Inlet — are sustained by rainfall on the steep slopes of the Strzelecki Ranges and Bass Hills, which flows into the Bass and Powlett rivers, Bourne Creek and other waterways.

The Bass Coast declared area has complex governance arrangements for managing threats to the environment and biodiversity: many RPEs manage public land and assets and deliver services. The area's particular environmental features and its location between peri-urban Melbourne and regional Victoria result in overlaps in jurisdictions and responsibilities.

Biodiversity and biolinks

Native animals including little penguins, whales, koalas and kangaroos are major tourist attractions to the declared area, particularly at sites managed by Phillip Island Nature Parks.

The wetlands of the Western Port Ramsar site provide habitat for threatened species including the Bar-tailed godwit, Curlew sandpiper, Eastern curlew, Lesser sand plover, Red knot, Australian fairy tern and Australian grayling. Andersons Inlet and its tributaries provide habitat for species listed under

the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement and the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement, which protect migratory birds in danger of extinction. The risk of extinction is exacerbated by climate change, which threatens habitat by increasing coastal erosion and inundation, reducing rainfall and polluting waterways.

The Bunurong Marine National Park is habitat for critically endangered species including the Blue whale, Southern right whale and Intermediate egret. Other endangered or vulnerable species to which Bass Coast is home include the Swift parrot, the Orange-bellied parrot, the Red-necked stint, the Grey-headed flying fox, the River blackfish and the Southern brown bandicoot.

Most of the declared area's native vegetation has been cleared since colonisation, and remnant patches can be better connected by facilitating biolinks that provide native fauna (such as the nationally significant Eastern barred bandicoot) with safe transit routes and access to food and water. Biolinks also help improve the genetic diversity of populations and the resilience of native plants and animals to threats including climate change impacts, and they also sequester carbon and help reduce emissions. The Bass Coast Rail Trail, the Bass and Powlett rivers and their tributaries, Screw Creek and the Phillip Island Wildlife Corridor are priority biolinks.

Biolinks can also be facilitated by protecting vegetation on private land. There is significant remnant vegetation on properties in the north-west of the declared area (such as on properties between the Grantville Nature Conservation Reserve, The Gurdies Nature Conservation Reserve and the Lang Lang Education Area). Further afield, connecting remnant habitat and integrating biolinks needs a regional approach that extends beyond the declared area.

Revegetation

Agricultural practices and revegetation activities on public and private land that seek to sequester carbon are important to achieving net-zero emissions in the declared area, particularly given its extensive areas of agricultural land and public open space. Retaining significant vegetation also sequesters carbon.

Maintaining and increasing vegetation cover helps reverse the urban heat island effect and any consequent risks to people's health in urban areas. Water sensitive urban design and passive irrigation will support vegetation growth in urban areas, despite declining rainfall.

What is carbon sequestration?

Carbon sequestration is the process of removing carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in soil, vegetation, other materials or underground. Carbon sequestration and net-zero emissions are the main approaches to reducing the overabundance of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Carbon sequestration occurs naturally through photosynthesis: plants remove carbon from the air and store it as carbon in their trunks, branches, foliage and roots and as dead organic matter in forest debris. Revegetation and reforestation increase the amount of carbon plants can sequester, and minimising land-clearing maintains their ability to do so.

The mangroves, seagrasses and tidal salt marsh vegetation of Western Port are particularly good at sequestering carbon because the oxygen-poor soil in which they grow inhibits the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere: carbon builds up in the soil, layer by layer, with time.

Science is also investigating geoengineering methods of sequestering carbon including carbon capture and storage. For centuries, farmers have also sequestered carbon by creating biochar — a carbon-rich substance made by partly burning crop waste — to enrich the soil.



Water and soil quality

Since colonisation, clearing native vegetation and increasing the extent of nonpermeable surfaces have reduced environmental health and functioning by increasing run-off and reducing water quality.

Clearing native vegetation reduces the land's capability to withstand rainfall events and filter water. In sloping areas, clearing increases the risk of soil erosion and agricultural run-off, which washes nutrients into waterways and wetlands, potentially creating algal blooms and damaging aquatic ecosystems. In urban areas, replacing vegetation with nonpermeable surfaces increases run-off that can wash household chemicals, fertilisers, litter and other pollutants into waterways.

Permeable surfaces, ground cover and canopy vegetation build the capacity of soil to hold and distribute nutrients. They also filter water and reduce run-off as stormwater and pollutants are absorbed and treated in situ. In urban areas, they mitigate the urban heat island effect, providing shade and evapotranspiration that help make living cooler.

A larger population and more-intensive agricultural production risk increasing run-off from settlements and agricultural land, run-off that pollutes water flowing into waterways and sensitive wetlands. More intense rainfall events can make this pollution worse.

Managing stormwater is a priority for settlements around Western Port, as stormwater run-off directly threatens the health of the Ramsar wetlands. In some places, stormwater must be redirected so it filters naturally before flowing into wetlands.

Acid sulfate soils — soils that are saturated with water, are almost oxygen-free and contain iron sulfide crystals — are harmless if not disturbed, but floods and increased urbanisation can disturb them. If disturbed, these soils can form sulfuric acid, which can trigger the release of other toxic elements that damage plants, animals and structures. The acid can also contaminate drinking water. Acid sulfate soils are particularly prevalent in wetlands around Silverleaves, Newhaven, Coronet Bay and Grantville; at the mouths of the Bass and Powlett Rivers; and at Anderson Inlet.

Urban expansion

Urban expansion, native vegetation removal and climate change impacts threaten the declared area's environment, ecology and biodiversity. Wetlands, coastal environs and waterways are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels, stormwater run-off, changes to tidal flows, visitation and trespass, increased nutrient loads and increased salinity. Hard infrastructure (such as seawalls and settlements) can change wetland and coastal processes by creating barriers and limiting natural adaptation (such as wetland migration and natural beach replenishment).

Expansion of urban areas must be carefully managed to limit stormwater run-off and restore water quality, particularly near sensitive wetlands. As the climate becomes hotter and drier, bushfire risk in and near settlements also increases.

In time and with careful management and improved planning protections, the declared area's environment and biodiversity values should improve. Agricultural and urban stormwater management, increased vegetation cover and biolinks will improve the area's ecological value.

Objectives and strategies

Objective 4a

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To conserve and enhance the declared area's biodiversity and associated ecosystem services by increasing the quality and quantity of habitat, particularly for endangered and vulnerable indigenous plant and animal species.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 4a.1 Utilise Bunurong biocultural knowledge and practices in the management of habitat and biodiversity values.

- 4a.2 Increase indigenous vegetation and retain and enhance remnant vegetation while being mindful of bushfire risk (for example, in shelterbelts, along fence lines and on steep agricultural land).
- 4a.3 Establish strategic biolinks, particularly along waterways and coastlines, to restore habitat and connect high-value ecological areas.
- 4a.4 Prioritise ecological restoration works in areas of high environmental, biodiversity and ecological value.
- 4a.5 Establish strategic biolinks to connect areas of high environmental, biodiversity and ecological value to increase connectivity and mitigate the effects of fragmentation.
- 4a.6 Minimise the impacts of weeds and pest animals on biodiversity values by undertaking best practice land management.
- 4a.7 Utilise revegetation to address erosion in coastal and undulating landscapes.
- 4a.8 Increase soil health with agricultural and regenerative practices that aim to increase nutrient retention capacity and carbon sequestration.

Objective 4b

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To protect and enhance the health and function of the declared area's integrated water system, in particular, the significant wetlands and marine environs.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 4b.1 Utilise Bunurong biocultural knowledge and practices in the management of habitat and biodiversity values.
- 4b.2 Reduce soil erosion in steep areas by revegetation, undertaking appropriate groundwork and fencing-off waterways, particularly in the agricultural areas of the Strzelecki Foothills.

- 4b.3 Reduce the agricultural run-off impacts of fertilisers, pesticides and effluent, especially in river catchment areas (such as by revegetating them).
- 4b.4 Minimise the impacts of high-risk invasive weeds (particularly capeweed, cordgrass and emerging salt-tolerant weeds) by developing and implementing best practice land management and prioritising areas abutting or adjacent to significant habitat and biodiversity.
- 4b.5 Reduce urban stormwater run-off impacts of household chemicals, fertilisers, litter and other pollutants, especially in locations subject to inundation or near wetlands.

Objective 4c

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To minimise human impacts and the effects of urban development on the declared area's environmental and ecological values.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 4c.1 Reduce land use, development and human trespass impacts in marine environs and coastal areas of ecological significance, especially those vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- 4c.2 Encourage sustainable tourism practices to reduce the impacts of increased visitation on the declared area's distinctive attributes.
- 4c.3 Facilitate sustainable public access to and minimise direct human impacts (such as from trespass and fishing) on sensitive sites and their surrounds.
- 4c.4 Ensure waste collection, storage and disposal activities do not affect sensitive or significant environs.

MAP 8: Environment and biodiversity



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary | ■ Ramsar wetlands | ■ Yallock-Bulluk Marine and Coastal Park |
| ● District town | ■ Settlement area | — River | ■ Future biolinks |
| ● Town | — Highway | ■ Parks and reserves | |
| ● Village | — Other roads | ■ Marine national park | |
| ● Hamlet | | | |
| ● Locality | | | |



Strategic biodiversity values*



* Strategic biodiversity values shown are based on statewide modelling. On-ground assessment is needed to inform decision-making at the property level.

(Source: DELWP)



Historic heritage

The Bass Coast declared area offers a window into the colonisation of Victoria, and its many palaeontological and archaeological sites reflect its rich fossil, maritime, early settlement, agricultural (including chicory farming), mining, industrial, convict and leisure heritage. Also, the area would certainly have historic heritage sites that are yet to be identified and protected.

The declared area, particularly along the coastline near Inverloch and Kilcunda, is a hotspot for dinosaur fossils and continues to be a highly valued palaeontological research area. Eagles Nest is the site of Australia's first-documented dinosaur fossil discovery, and many fossils have been uncovered: the fossils of two species of dinosaur are found exclusively in the area.

The declared area's colonial maritime heritage began with the arrival of sealers and explorers (such

as George Bass, after whom the area is named) around 1800. This was the start of the conflict with the Bunurong people in the area and their displacement. The extensive maritime history is evidenced by the many historic shipwrecks along the coastline. Part of the hull of the mid-19th century wreck of the *Amazon* is buried on the beach at Inverloch and can be seen when the sand level is low. The main wreck site is located in the intertidal zone at Flat Rocks and can sometimes be seen at very low tide. It is the only well-preserved, wooden-barque

shipwreck in Victoria: the Victorian Heritage Register describes it as a rare example of an international wooden trading ship.

Churchill Island was the site of Victoria's first colonial agricultural pursuit, in 1801. Agriculture is an important part of the area's history and continues to be an important industry.

As early as 1826, the area was identified for its rich coal deposits. The State Coal Mine in Wonthaggi was Victoria's most important black coal mine, and it operated from 1909 to 1968, providing fuel for Victoria's industries and railways. Reminders of those times include mine shafts and tunnels, tram rails visible on Cape Paterson beach and the

Kilcunda Bridge, which was built in 1911 on the Woolamai–Wonthaggi railway. The mine's operation also shaped the establishment and growth of surrounding settlements: the early miners built coastal shacks, groups of which over time evolved into formalised settlements.

Phillip Island, San Remo and the many smaller coastal settlements have for generations been synonymous with weekend getaways and school holidays for many Victorian families. The declared area has several well-known surfing spots, and the southern coast of Phillip Island was named Victoria's first national surfing reserve. This connection with holidaying and leisure is an important part of the declared area's tangible and intangible historic heritage.

Objective and strategies

Objective 5

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To protect, strengthen and promote the declared area's historic heritage values.

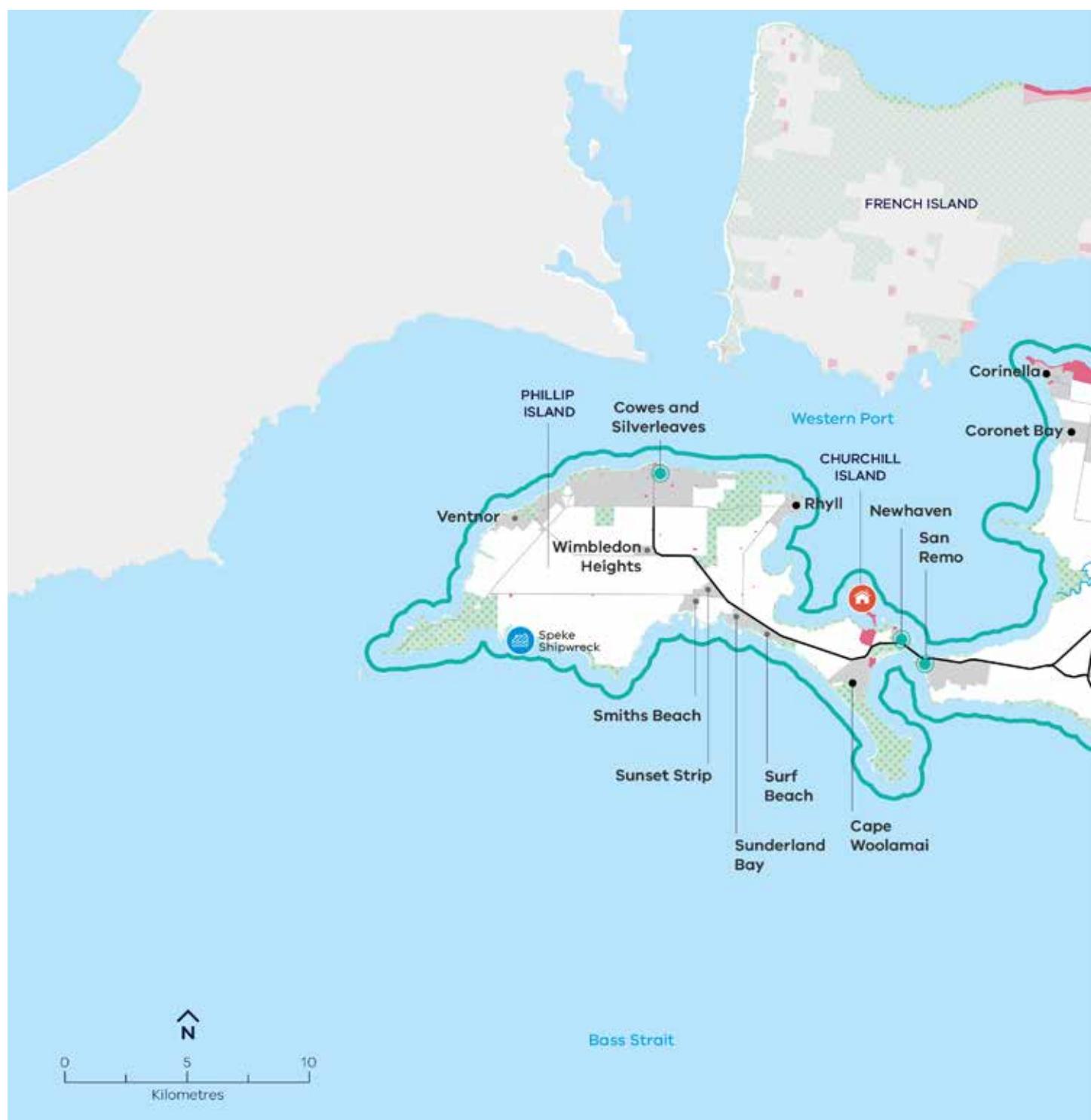
Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

5.1 Ensure significant historic heritage places are identified, protected, enhanced and sustainably managed.

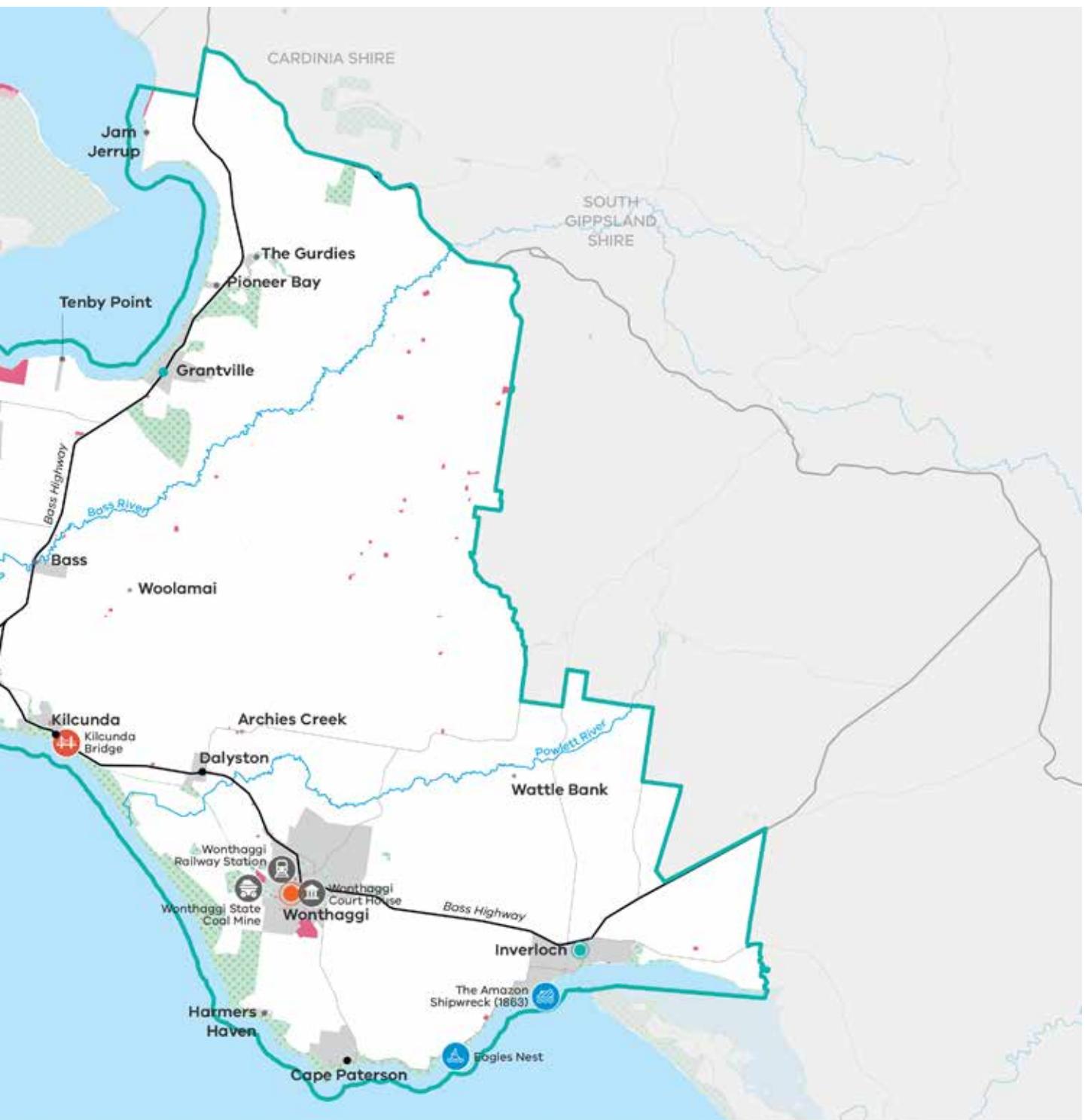
- 5.2 With the community, promote and celebrate the declared area's rich historic heritage values including its aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values.
- 5.3 Conserve and enhance historic heritage through responsible tourism development and practices.
- 5.4 Minimise the impacts of buildings and works on historic heritage places by designing and siting development to respect their distinct cultural characters and values.
- 5.5 Acknowledge, interpret and promote significant historic heritage values in the planning, design, development and management of land use and development.

MAP 9: Historic heritage



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary | — River |
| ● District town | ■ Settlement area | ■ Parks and reserves |
| ● Town | — Highway | ■ Area protected by heritage overlay |
| ● Village | — Other roads | ● Historic heritage locations |
| ● Hamlet | | |
| ● Locality | | |



(Source: DELWP)

Sustainable economic development

The Bass Coast is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in regional Victoria. The shire is close to Melbourne's south-east growth corridor, and it has strategic transport and communications networks and a growing regional centre with excellent services. It has a unique natural environment, a relaxed coastal lifestyle and many opportunities to live, work and invest.



Tourism

The tourism industry is one of the main drivers of the Bass Coast economy and a major employer. The area boasts world-class, nature-based tourist attractions, pristine surf beaches and major events (such as the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix at the Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit) that attract millions of visitors a year.

Developing a sustainable, year-round visitor economy is a key strategic objective. The 2016 *Phillip Island and San Remo Visitor Economy Strategy 2035* projects the number of visitors to the region will double from 1.85 million in 2015 to 3.4 million and be worth upwards of \$1.1 billion by 2035.

The establishment of the Yallock-Bulluk Marine and Coastal Park with a new walking trail between Inverloch and San Remo will increase tourism opportunities including by highlighting the Bunurong people's connection to and stewardship of Country. There are opportunities to increase the diversity and quality of visitors' experiences through agritourism, arts and culture and recreational and educational experiences celebrating the area's Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage.

More visitors, seasonal fluctuations in visitation and climate change impacts will put greater demands on local infrastructure (such as by increasing traffic congestion) and greater pressure on the environment and the lifestyle that attracts visitors to the region. Infrastructure must be designed, maintained and improved so tourism growth is sustainable and the area's Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage, environment and landscapes are preserved and protected.

The declared area's coastal assets and attractions (such as the Phillip Island Penguin Parade) are major tourism drawcards that are threatened by climate change impacts: rising sea levels and extreme storm events in particular. To protect the local economy, management of these assets and attractions must include rehabilitating habitat, revegetating, controlling weeds, monitoring the health of wetlands and managing bushfire risk.

Agriculture

Farming is a mainstay of the Bass Coast economy, with about 90% of land in the shire used for agriculture. The climate and rainfall are ideal for food production and winemaking. Areas to the east of the Bass Highway are of strategic significance for their contribution to the Gippsland dairy industry. The open, rural, farming landscape is an important contributor to the area's landscape setting and amenity, and it is important for tourism.

The declared area must protect its strategic agricultural land and agricultural operations. Farmers must be supported to adapt to climate change impacts and to innovate and embrace new technologies for sustainability, water reuse, value-adding and agritourism.

Natural resources

The declared area's natural resources are strategically important to Victoria. The Victorian Desalination Plant is essential for the state's water security, and the plant and associated pipeline infrastructure must be protected for the long term.

Bass Coast is a critical supply area for the raw materials needed for construction and infrastructure development. The area has active quarries (particularly sand quarries) and extractive industry interest areas, which indicate the land is likely to include extractive resources (such as sand, hard rock and gravel) that may be considered for extraction in the future.

Extractive industries are temporary land uses that require appropriate buffers during and rehabilitation at the end of their operating life in a way suitable to the surrounding landscape character, thereby providing a net community benefit. Remnant native vegetation is scarce in the declared area, so proponents of new industries (including extraction) should be encouraged to locate in areas of lesser environmental significance.

Renewable energy technologies — wind, solar and small-scale hydroelectricity — are live, readily scalable technologies that deserve investment and community support. Emerging renewable technologies — bioenergy and marine energy including wave, tidal and offshore energy — provide potential economic opportunities for the region as well as important ways to reduce emissions.



Objectives and strategies

Objective 6a

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To build a sustainable, responsible, year-round visitor economy that aligns with the declared area's significant landscape, environmental and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage values.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

6a.1 In partnership with the Bunurong people, facilitate culturally responsive tourism and related economic development that encourages the community to recognise, understand and celebrate Bunurong cultural heritage, rights and authority.

- 6a.2 Facilitate sustainable tourism- and recreation-related land uses and development sensitive to the area's landscape, environmental and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage values.
- 6a.3 Encourage infrastructure design and development that is adaptable to climate change impacts and that reduces visitors' impacts on the declared area's landscape, environmental and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage values.
- 6a.4 Encourage tourism and commercial development to include net-zero carbon infrastructure (such as electric vehicle charging stations).
- 6a.5 Improve gateways to settlements and points of interest by avoiding the introduction of intrusive signage and promoting features that enhance significant views and improve the visitor experience.

Objective 6b

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To facilitate a diverse, resilient, circular economy that promotes innovation in the productive use of rural land, natural resources and value-adding activities.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

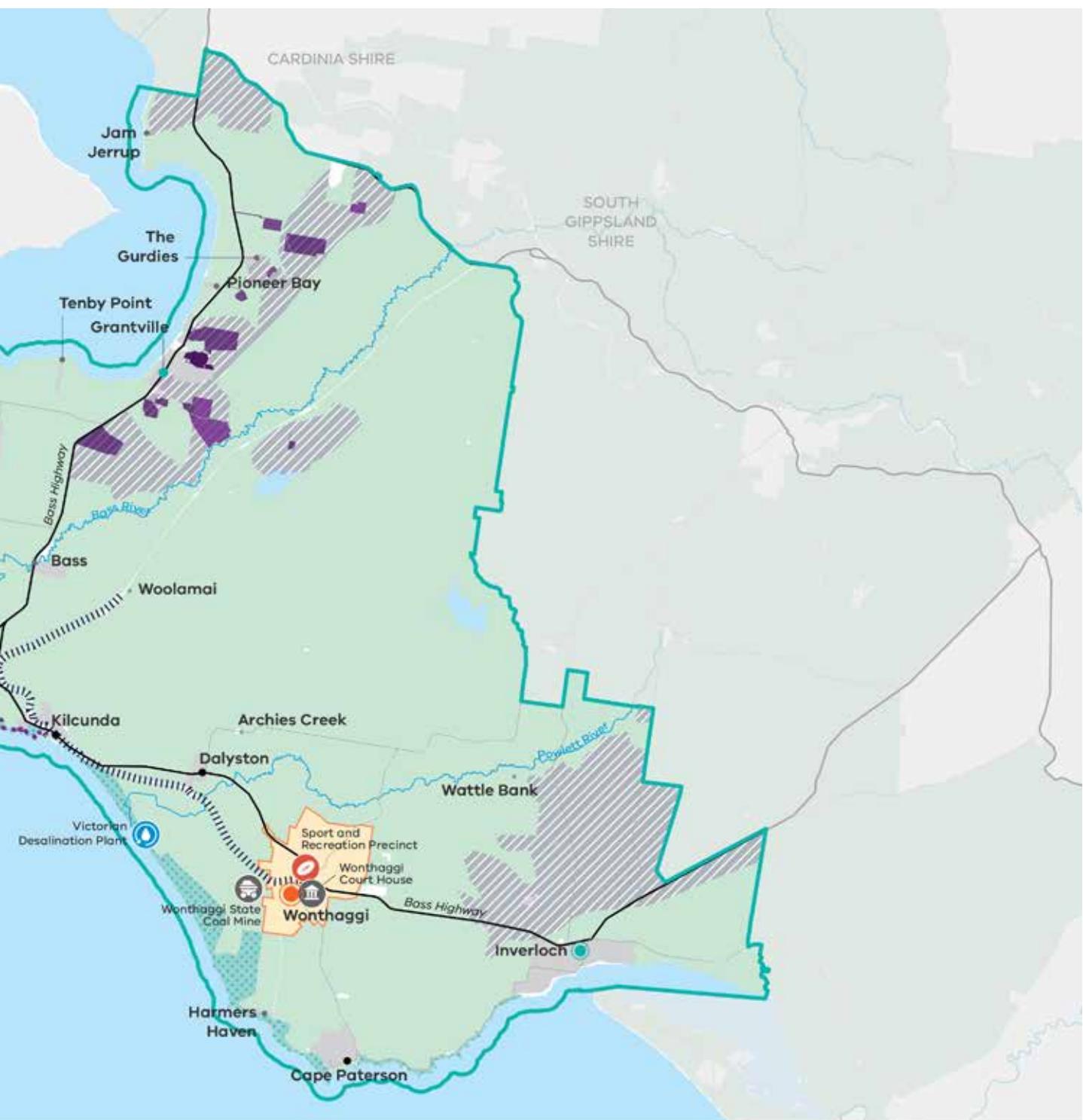
- 6b.1 Protect and manage extractive resource areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses and inappropriate development.
- 6b.2 Ensure proposals to establish extractive industries adhere to best practice measures to avoid and minimise impacts on the declared area's attributes, and ensure locations of lesser environmental and landscape significance are prioritised.
- 6b.3 Protect and manage strategic agricultural land and agricultural operations from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
- 6b.4 Encourage innovations in agricultural practices (such as regenerative agriculture, sustainable farming, water reuse and efficiency, carbon sequestration and new technologies).
- 6b.5 Encourage the development of agritourism operations in strategically identified locations.
- 6b.6 Restrict the supply of rural living land in rural locations to conserve and protect agricultural practices, natural resources and related activities and other rural land uses.
- 6b.7 Protect and manage the operations of the Victorian Desalination Plant and its associated pipeline infrastructure over the long term.
- 6b.8 Encourage the development of renewable energy facilities in locations where they will not adversely affect the declared area's environmental, Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage and landscape values.
- 6b.9 Encourage practices that reduce waste to landfills including reusing, repurposing and recycling.
- 6b.10 Encourage the development of a circular economy including procurement and supply chain decisions, particularly by identifying sites for key infrastructure.

MAP 10: Sustainable economic development



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary | — River |
| ● District town | ■ Settlement area | Bass Coast Rail Trail |
| ● Town | — Highway | ***** George Bass Coastal Walk |
| ● Village | — Other roads | ■ Phillip Island Nature Park |
| ● Hamlet | | |
| ● Locality | | |



- Economic development
- Historic heritage locations
- Extractive industry work authorities
- Extractive industry interest areas

Green breaks

Potential location for agricultural, natural resources and/or nature-based tourism land uses that protect and enhance significant landscape features

Yallock-Bulluk Marine and Coastal Park

* Note: the mapping of Extractive Industry Interest Areas is based on information in 2021 and is subject to change. Please refer to the relevant planning scheme for most up-to-date information.

(Source: DELWP)



Strategic infrastructure

The social, economic and environmental resilience of peri-urban communities depends on the provision, maintenance and upgrading of transport, essential services and other community infrastructure. All levels of government need to respond to existing and emerging community needs by providing infrastructure in sequence with development. New and upgraded infrastructure must reduce greenhouse gas emissions and be resilient to the impacts of natural hazards, as climate change increases their frequency and severity.

Energy

Renewable energy generation is essential for energy security and emissions reduction. Bass Coast's *Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2030* identifies that stationary energy — electricity, LPG bottled gas, mains gas and firewood — is the municipality's largest source of emissions. The plan is to transition the municipality from an energy system reliant on fossil fuels to one powered by renewable energy and for Bass Coast to become a net exporter of renewable energy.

Many sources of renewable energy are emerging economic opportunities for the area: wind, solar, small-scale hydroelectricity, bioenergy and marine energy including wave, tidal and offshore energy.

Transport infrastructure

Good transport networks are essential for economic prosperity and community wellbeing, providing access to jobs, markets, services and recreational opportunities. For settlements to grow sustainably, land use and transport planning must be integrated.

The Bass Highway connects the declared area to Melbourne and communities in between and beyond, and the South Gippsland Highway provides access to the Bass Coast from the north. As resident, visitor and freight movements increase, the Bass Highway corridor will need upgrading. Phillip Island Road (including the bridge at San Remo) and the Bunurong Coastal Drive are popular tourist routes affected by peak-visitor-period congestion that need careful planning to ensure they are resilient to climate change impacts and natural hazards (such as bushfires and flooding). Ferry services between Phillip Island, French Island and the Mornington Peninsula are also essential connections for residents, businesses and visitors.

Private vehicle use is currently the main mode of transport in the declared area. Buses provide a public transport alternative, but services are limited. Victoria's Climate Change Strategy seeks to accelerate the transition to zero-emissions vehicles (ZEVs) by setting a 50% ZEV target for all new car sales by 2030. Bass Coast's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2030 identifies transport as the second-largest source of emissions, and it includes actions to switch to low- or no-carbon transport. To reduce emissions, better low- and no-emissions, safer and more active infrastructure is needed: public transport, walking, cycling and electric vehicle infrastructure. For the shift to ZEVs to occur, charging infrastructure must be widespread and convenient to use. Active transport for shorter trips, electric vehicles for longer journeys and an integrated and well-functioning public transport system will together almost eliminate emissions by private passenger vehicles. Active transport also supports green tourism by increasing the usage of routes like the Bass Coast Rail Trail and George Bass Coastal Walk.

Community infrastructure and essential services

The social, economic and environmental resilience of Bass Coast communities depends on the provision, maintenance and upgrading of community infrastructure and essential services. This includes water supply, waste and resource recovery, electricity, renewable energy and telecommunications as well as schools, sporting facilities, libraries, health services and town centres.

As the resident, business and visitor populations grow, so do peoples' infrastructure and services requirements. All levels of government must ensure the timely provision of infrastructure and services in sequence with development, and infrastructure and services must be resilient to natural hazards and climate change impacts.

The cost and complexity of developing and delivering infrastructure and services across the declared area's dispersed settlements should be managed in line with the Bass Coast settlement hierarchy (shown in **Table 2**), which identifies their role and function as a regional centre, district town, town, village, hamlet or locality. Wonthaggi is the municipality's regional centre, and it is expected to accommodate much of the declared area's future population and employment growth as well as its health, education, civic and retail services. Cowes and Silverleaves, Inverloch and San Remo/Newhaven are identified as district towns, with Cowes continuing to service Phillip Island's residents, businesses and visitors in conjunction with San Remo.

Reusing, repurposing and recycling: the circular economy

Reducing the amount of waste created and recycling waste reduces impacts on the environment by reducing the need for landfills, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and retaining valued materials in the economy.

Victoria is forecast to create 40% more waste in 2046 than it does now. To maximise the amount of material recovered for recycling and to safely manage the remaining waste, Victoria's waste and recycling system must expand. Victoria's planning system can facilitate the expansion of waste and resource recovery infrastructure, to ensure facilities are where they are most needed and developed in line with regional priorities.

The forthcoming Recycling Infrastructure Plan (which will replace the Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan) will set out Victoria's projected waste and recycling infrastructure needs over the next 30 years. The plan will strengthen the links between waste and recycling infrastructure planning and land use planning, to ensure infrastructure is provided where it is most needed, while protecting community values.

Objectives and strategies

Objective 7

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To ensure the integrated and timely provision of transport, essential services and community infrastructure that meets community needs and increases resilience to natural hazard and climate change impacts.

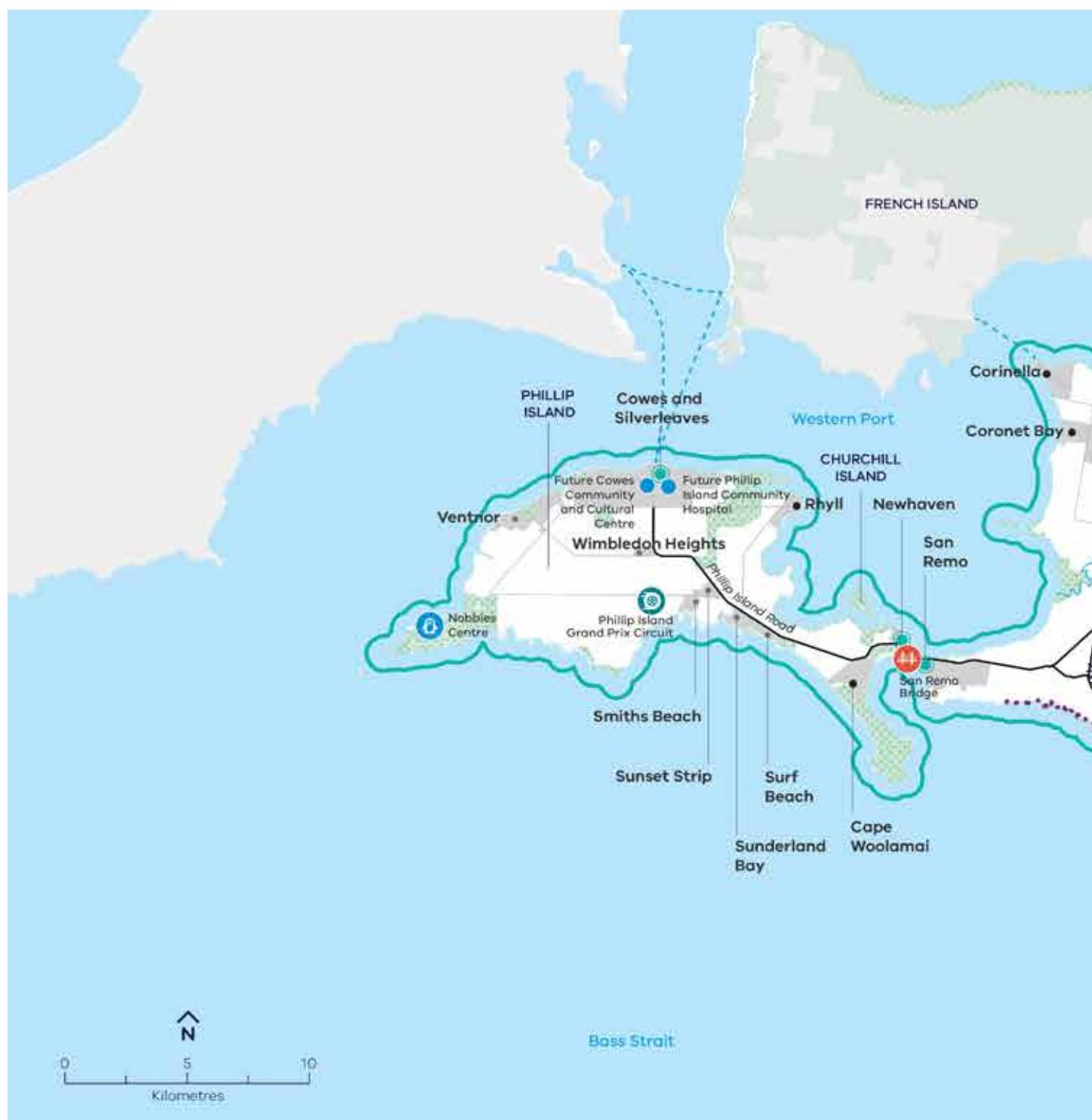
Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 7.1 Ensure design infrastructure is sympathetic to the preferred township character and landscape character by maintaining views from key transport corridors and providing vegetation that strengthens landscape character.
- 7.2 In consultation with the Bunurong people, ensure the provision, maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure conserves and enhances Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
- 7.3 Provide infrastructure in sequence with development to meet the needs of communities, local businesses and tourists.
- 7.4 Ensure major transport projects including any Bass Coast Highway corridor upgrades and access improvements to Phillip Island minimise impacts on landscape, environmental and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage values.
- 7.5 Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging safe, active transport within and between settlements, by providing and maintaining accessible public transport and walking and cycling infrastructure.

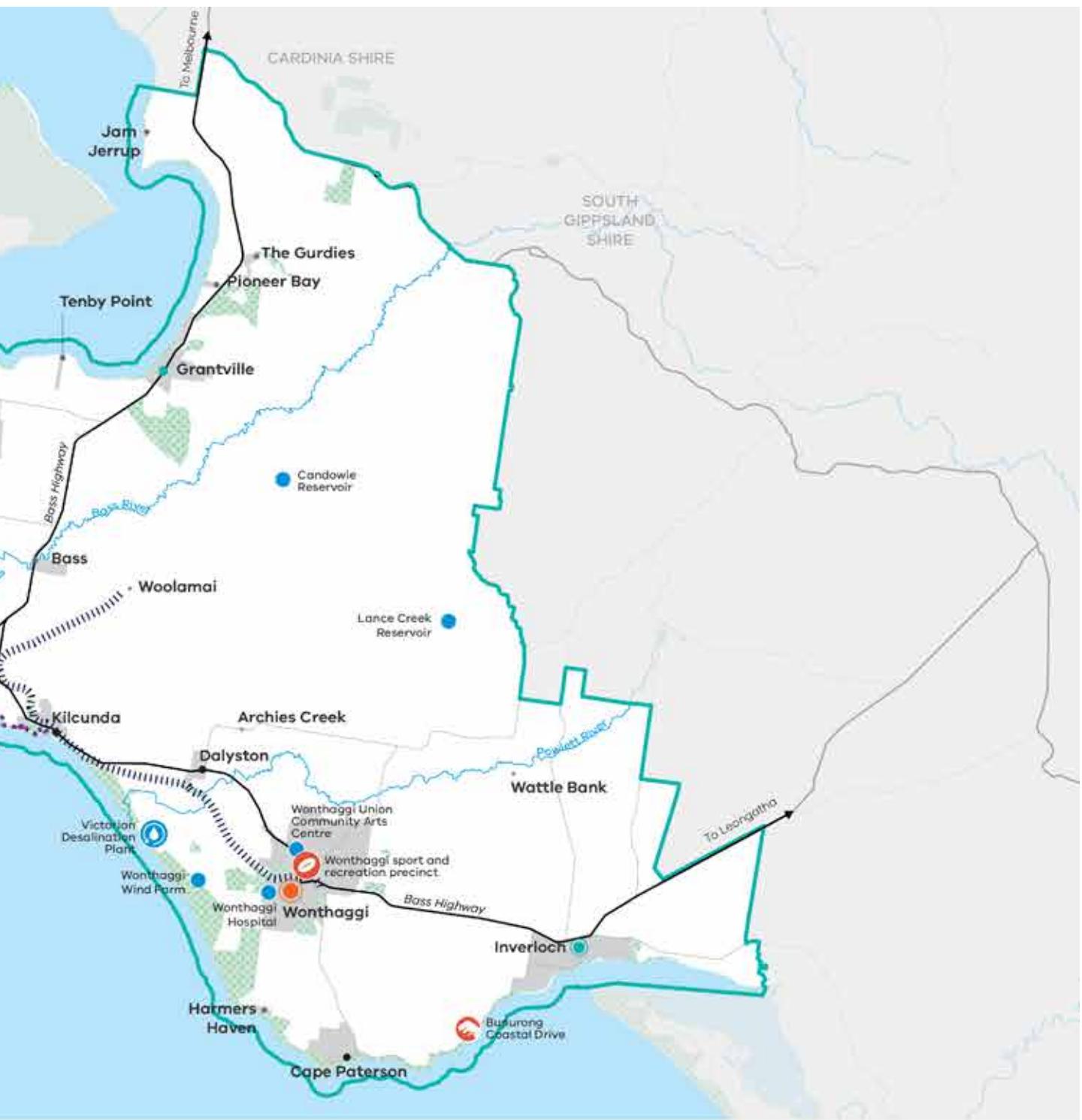


MAP 11: Strategic infrastructure



LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ● Regional centre | ■ Declared area boundary | — River |
| ● District town | ■ Settlement area | ■ Parks and reserves |
| ● Town | — Ferry route | ■ Bass Coast Rail Trail |
| ● Village | — Highway | ····· George Bass Coastal Walk |
| ● Hamlet | — Other roads | |
| ● Locality | → Movement network | |



Key features



(Source: DELWP)

Settlements

There are 25 settlements within the declared area, located along the coast or nestled among the vast rural hinterland. The character of settlements and the lifestyles they offer make them highly desirable places to live, work and visit. As a result, the Bass Coast Shire is one of regional Victoria's fastest-growing municipalities.

In 2016, Bass Coast had an estimated 33,464 residents excluding people living temporarily in holiday homes. By 2036, the declared area is forecast to have a population of 48,145 residents, resulting in demand for more than 11,000 extra dwellings. The growing population will also need a greater diversity of housing types and tenures for different household types (such as for older residents, smaller households and people with a disability).

The growing visitor population will also drive the demand for housing, other accommodation and services. An estimated 40% of dwellings in the declared area are holiday homes, and the proportion in coastal settlements is higher. The demand for coastal homes is expected to increase.

To achieve the long-term vision for the declared area, settlements must be carefully planned and managed so that development respects the relaxed coastal characters of settlements, with low-rise buildings nestled into the landscape to retain highly valued views, external materials that suit their surroundings, and space between buildings. The preferred township character statements recognise the characteristics that need to be maintained and enhanced to keep

the distinctive identity of coastal settlements and their unique senses of place. These statements will be implemented through planning provisions for built form (such as building scale, setbacks and height) in the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.

Decision-makers must recognise, conserve, strengthen and promote the declared area's Aboriginal cultural heritage and work in partnership with the Bunurong people in caring for Country. Settlements must have an adequate supply of well-serviced employment land, good access to active and passive transport, and community infrastructure. It is also essential to protect and enhance the native, indigenous and riparian vegetation that contribute so much to the declared area's character and the canopy cover within settlements that helps mitigate heat island effects.

Growth will need to be accommodated within existing settlement boundaries through the development of vacant lots and infill development. Land within growth areas will require more detailed structure planning to determine the areas suitable for development and to enable infrastructure planning.



Settlement hierarchy

The draft SPP proposes a hierarchy of settlements — regional centre, district town, town, village, hamlet and locality — and identifies the role and function of settlements. **Table 2** shows the proposed settlement hierarchy for each settlement including its designation and description.

TABLE 2: Proposed Bass Coast settlement hierarchy

SETTLEMENT	DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION
Wonthaggi	Regional centre	A settlement of 10,000 or more people with a large, diverse population, employment, and housing base. In a regional centre, there is provision of all essential services and higher-order goods, and education at all levels and access to large hospital and diverse medical facilities is available. A regional centre has strong relationships with surrounding settlements of all types.
Cowes and Silverleaves	District town	A settlement with a substantial and diverse population of 2,000–10,000. A district town usually has a dominant town centre and most essential services are available including a post office, schools, emergency services, medical/hospital facilities, retail services and accommodation options. There is some reliance on the regional centre for employment and higher-order services. A district town has strong relationships with smaller, nearby settlements and provides them with some higher-order services. District towns on the coast are popular visitor destinations. All are connected to reticulated water, electricity and a sewage system.
Inverloch		
San Remo/ Newhaven		
Grantville	Town	A settlement with population levels of 1,000–2,000, the number varying with general service provision and the diversity of the housing stock. Various services are available including a post office, supermarket, schools, a police station and some basic medical facilities. There is some reliance on larger, nearby settlements for employment and higher-order services. Towns on the coast are popular visitor, retirement and lifestyle destinations. All are connected to reticulated water and electricity, and most have sewer connections.
Cape Paterson	Village	A settlement with population levels of 500–1,000, the number fluctuating seasonally. Basic services are available including a general store and basic retail facilities, and most have postal services. A village has strong employment relationships with larger, nearby settlements and relies on them for services. Villages on the coast have moderate-to-high levels of holiday home ownership. Most are connected to reticulated water, and some have sewer connections.
Cape Woolamai		
Corinella		
Coronet Bay		
Dalyston		
Kilcunda		
Rhyll		

SETTLEMENT	DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION
Bass	Hamlet	A settlement with low and seasonal population levels of 200–500, the number fluctuating seasonally. There are limited services and connections to a sewage system. Hamlets on the coast have high levels of holiday home ownership and some small-scale visitor accommodation.
Harmers Haven		
Jam Jerrup		
Pioneer Bay and The Gurdies		
Smiths Beach		
Sunderland Bay		
Sunset Strip		
Surf Beach		
Tenby Point		
Ventnor		
Wimbledon Heights		
Archies Creek	Locality	A small cluster of houses with various lot sizes within the rural hinterland. A locality relies on larger settlements for services. Reticulated water and sewer connections are generally not available.
Wattle Bank		
Woolamai		

Note 1: Settlement descriptions are informed by the Bass Coast Planning Scheme Clause 02.03-1, Gippsland Regional Growth Plan, Coastal Spaces and other strategic work.



Bass

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Bass, which [Map 12](#) shows.

Bass is a small, historic hamlet located at the junction of the Bass River and Bass Highway. It has few services and relies on San Remo and Wonthaggi for most services.

Parts of Bass sit within the regionally significant Strzelecki Foothills landscape, which contains the Bass Hills and The Gurdies Hills, with the Bass River Valley between them. The landscape adjoining Bass is flat to gently undulating and includes a largely cleared, rural, coastal hinterland.

Growth will be accommodated within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Bass' growth and provide long-term protection for its environs. Bass can accommodate some low-density residential development within the boundary to the east of the settlement, but it will remain a small settlement.

MAP 12: Proposed Bass protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

 	Proposed protected settlement boundary
 	Settlement area
 	Declared area boundary
 	Highway
 	Other roads
—	River
■	Water bodies
 	Parks and reserves
 	Green breaks

(Source: DELWP)

Cape Paterson

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Cape Paterson, which **Map 13** shows.

Cape Paterson is a village that is a popular holiday and recreation destination. Its few commercial facilities mostly service the local population. The settlement's residential character is evolving in stages. Older areas have a modified grid of mainly unsealed roads with vegetated verges and much coastal vegetation. Newer development on land rising to the north is more diverse, while still influenced by existing development and the coastal character.

The settlement is located within the state-significant and regionally significant San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland landscape. This is a well-known, highly valued landscape of stunning contrasts and iconic features including the Cape Paterson headland, nearby sea cliffs and offshore rock formations (such as Eagles Nest).

Growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land and more substantial greenfield development north of Seaward Drive that will be sensitively designed to integrate with the regionally significant landscape. Cape Paterson's proposed protected settlement boundary will provide long-term protection for Cape Paterson's environs while containing its growth within an area close to nearby Wonthaggi's regional services and facilities.

Cape Paterson preferred township character statement

Development at Cape Paterson respects the characters of the established and newer areas with:

- generous open spaces in the public realm that reflect the setting with coastal planting, minimal hard surfaces, water sensitive urban design and active transport connections to existing coastal networks
- pedestrian-friendly road networks and streets that provide a sense of informality
- a mix of lot sizes and varied sitings of built form that reinforce a sense of spaciousness
- dwellings styled and finished in forms, finishes and colours that reference the coastal character.

The low-rise built form is one and two storeys. Dwellings occasionally have a third storey where a sunken site permits a taller form, but these do not impose on the amenity of others or the overall low-rise, coastal character of the area.

Any expansion of the village north retains the landscape significance of the open break north towards Wonthaggi with a vegetated buffer to northern views. A generous, landscaped setback to Cape Paterson Road retains the existing sense of arrival from the north.

MAP 13: Proposed Cape Paterson protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

—	Proposed protected settlement boundary		Water bodies
—	Settlement area		Parks and reserves
—	Declared area boundary		Green breaks
—	Other roads		

(Source: DELWP)



Cape Woolamai

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Cape Woolamai, which [Map 14](#) shows.

Cape Woolamai is a village that sits behind a fragile dune on the south-east tip of Phillip Island. It is mainly residential with a small commercial area. It is quite uniform in character, with a grid of consistently sized lots and houses of a similar style. The streets are narrow, with coastal trees and vegetation.

Cape Woolamai is adjacent to the state-significant Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast landscape, which is characterised by a varied, dramatic coastline of sea cliffs, granitic headlands, rocky platforms and beaches, with an elevated, gently rolling hinterland.

Limited growth will be accommodated within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Cape Woolamai's growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

Cape Woolamai preferred township character statement

Cape Woolamai has a strong relationship to its fragile, coastal environment setting with defined, sensitive, pedestrian connections to beaches and foreshores.

Development retains a sense of spaciousness through lower site coverage and generous front setbacks that reinforce the primacy of the well-vegetated streetscapes. The relatively flat landscape and existing low-rise built form is respected, ensuring building heights complement adjoining dwellings and do not exceed the prevailing tree canopy height.

New built form reinforces the rhythm and grain of streets, with breaks between dwellings. It employs a palette of styles, materials and colours that reinforce the coastal references with a simplicity of form and finishes — with the use of light, coastal colours, cladding and timber — and with the use of galvanised iron and coloured steel roofing. Indigenous vegetation is evident in the streetscapes and front gardens. Where used, freestanding sheds and garages are sited to the rear of lots.

MAP 14: Proposed Cape Woolamai protected settlement boundary



(Source: DELWP)



Corinella

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Corinella, which **Map 15** shows.

Corinella is a historic coastal village located at Settlement Point, which is at the head of a prominent peninsula with views to French Island and Phillip Island. It comprises mainly residential uses and relies on other settlements for commercial and community facilities. Corinella's informal street layout is a modified grid reflecting its location on a headland. It is clearly separated from Coronet Bay to the south.

Corinella is located within the regionally significant Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands landscape, a low-energy coastline of intertidal mangroves interspersed with shallow, sandy beaches and areas of low, eroding sandstone cliffs. The internationally significant Ramsar wetland borders both sides of the settlement.

Growth will be accommodated within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Corinella's growth and protect the green break to Coronet Bay and the surrounding landscape and rural areas. It will also prevent further linear development along the Western Port coastline.

Corinella preferred township character statement

Development at Corinella is on lot sizes consistent with those in the established residential areas, except in the Heritage Bay estate, which has smaller lots and more intense development.

Dwellings have a low-profile, coastal character, with one and two storeys and designs and choices of materials and colours that reflect coastal themes. Variations in the sitings and setbacks of dwellings create a sense of informality. Sheds and other outbuildings have a lesser visual presence in the streetscape. Informal, open streets mainly have grassed verges, and local streets are shared pedestrian-vehicle spaces. New commercial and community facilities consolidate the established village centre.

MAP 15: Proposed Corinella protected settlement boundary



(Source: DELWP)



Coronet Bay

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Coronet Bay, which **Map 16** shows.

Coronet Bay is a residential village located on the eastern shore of Western Port. It has a small commercial centre servicing local needs, a community hall and a reserve in the centre of the town. Development extends from the shore to a nearby ridge and adjacent farmland. Streets on the western side of Agar Road are in a grid pattern and on the eastern side are more diverse: larger lots there provide for low-density residential development.

Coronet Bay is located within the regionally significant Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands landscape, characterised by intertidal mangroves and mudflats at its coastal edge and a flat, low-lying rural hinterland of cleared, marshy paddocks. The village also fronts the internationally significant Ramsar wetland.

Growth will be accommodated within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Coronet Bay's growth and prevent further linear development along the Western Port shoreline.

Coronet Bay preferred township character statement

Coronet Bay is a residential community that celebrates and enhances its beach and foreshore setting. The settlement boundary helps maintain its visual relationship to the contrasting agricultural surrounds and the green break between Coronet Bay and Corinella.

Development uses materials and styles that respect and complement the village's low-rise, coastal, holiday feel. Generous setbacks retain the spacious, low-key streetscapes.

One-to-two-storey building heights and generous separations between dwellings allow dwellings to capture views of Western Port and the village's distinctive 'bay side of a hill' character.

Development east of Agar Road is differentiated from the established area by its lower-density housing and more spacious lots. Development in this area creates a new sense of entry to the village, reinforced by urban design treatments. Street treatments and tree planting make the main streets and the local road network distinctive.

MAP 16: Proposed Coronet Bay protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| | Proposed protected settlement boundary |
| | Settlement area |
| | Declared area boundary |
| | Other roads |
| | Water bodies |
| | Parks and reserves |
| | Green breaks |

(Source: DELWP)

Cowes and Silverleaves

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Cowes and Silverleaves, as **Map 17** shows.

Cowes and Silverleaves is a vibrant, coastal district town. It is the largest settlement on Phillip Island, and it is the island's primary commercial and community service centre for residents and visitors. It supports a large seasonal visitor community and has a significant foreshore precinct.

The district town's area is elevated and undulating, and the main street with its activity and avenue of cypress trees provides a sense of arrival and entry. Residential neighbourhoods on either side of the main street and town centre have an established grid of large, regular-shaped blocks.

The settlement is located within the Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland landscape, which is regionally significant due to its contrasting combination of basaltic headlands, low-energy beaches, offshore rock platforms and undulating hinterland, which is sparsely populated and contains a variety of vegetation. Part of Silverleaves adjoins the Phillip Island Swan Bay Coast and Churchill Island landscape, which is of regional significance due to its marshy intertidal coast, rolling hinterland with cultural patterns of indigenous riparian vegetation and exotic shelterbelts, and visual contrasts.

Growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Cowes' growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

Cowes and Silverleaves preferred township character statement

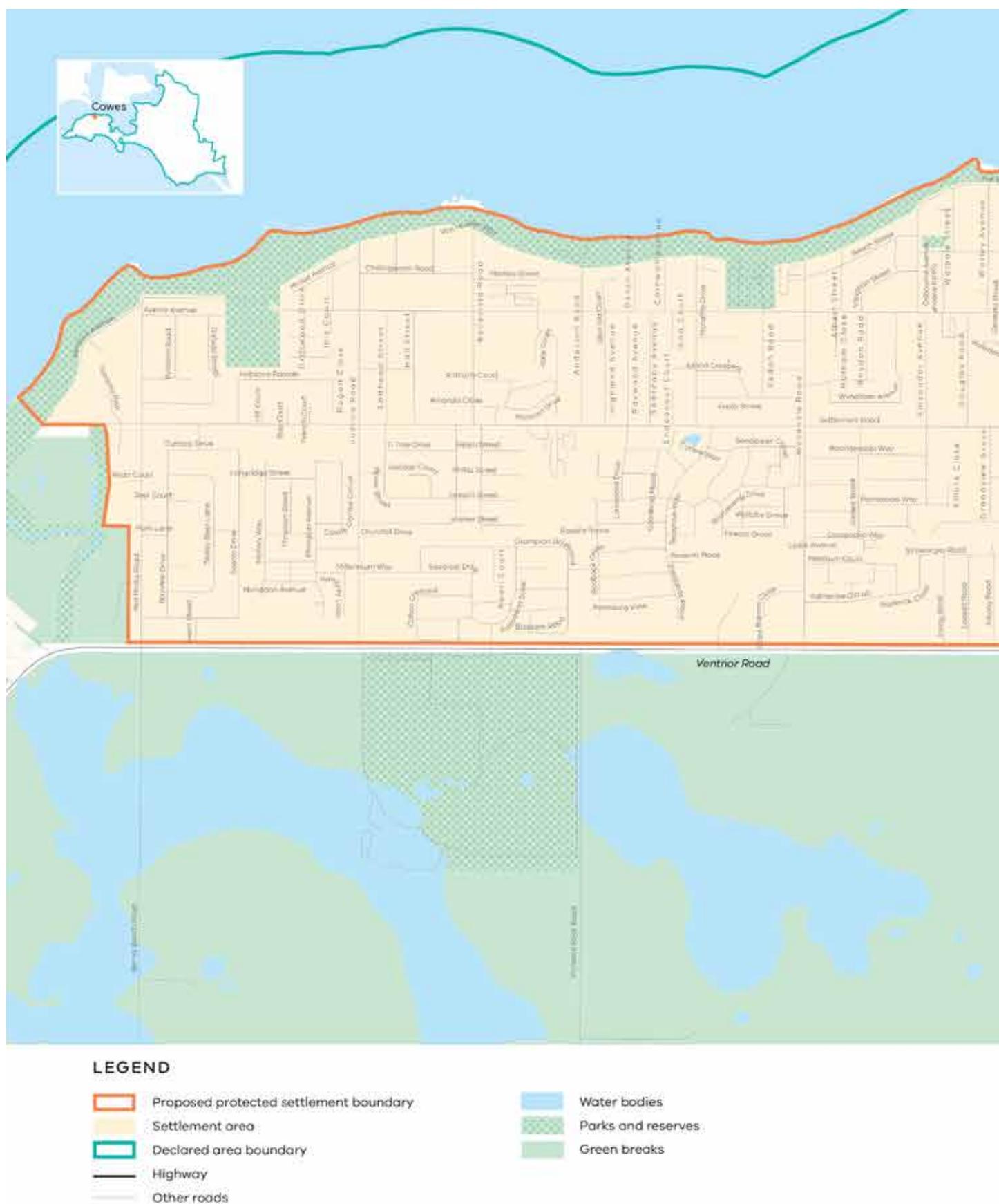
Development within Cowes is confined to the town centre and its immediate surrounds. Confining most development in this central location, where most activity occurs, helps retain and enhance Cowes' established character. Development in this area is offset by generous landscaping with native coastal vegetation.

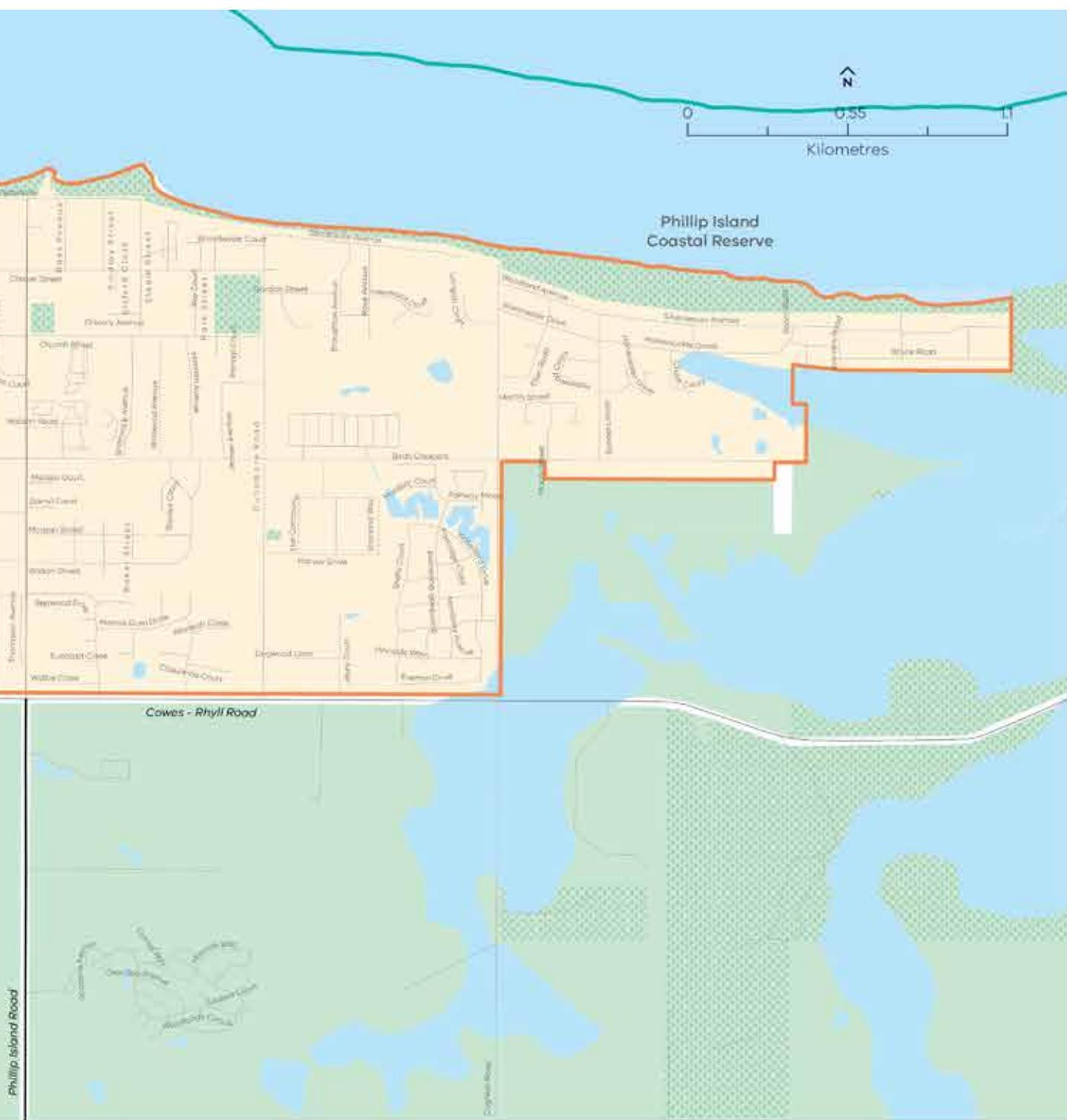
Other areas of the settlement retain their sense of spaciousness, with the informal siting of one- and two-storey dwellings in gardens with mainly native vegetation aligned along softly engineered streets.

Silverleaves retains and enhances its distinctive, highly vegetated, coastal-bush character in an informal setting. Development is sited to maintain existing vegetation and minimise the need to clear vegetation to mitigate bushfire risk, and it is visually subservient to the existing coastal vegetation and tree canopy. There is little or no fencing, so there continues to be little distinction between the public and private realms.



MAP 17: Proposed Cowes and Silverleaves protected settlement boundary





(Source: DELWP)



Dalyston

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Dalyston, which **Map 18** shows.

Dalyston is an inland village surrounded by farmland, and it relies on nearby Wonthaggi for most services. It adjoins the regionally significant Strzelecki Foothills landscape, which takes in the Bass Hills and The Gurdies Hills: the Bass River Valley lies between them. The landscape is

characterised by the undeveloped, rolling Bass Hills, clusters of remnant vegetation and expansive views to Western Port.

Growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Dalyston's growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

MAP 18: Proposed Dalyston protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

	Proposed protected settlement boundary
	Settlement area
	Declared area boundary
	Highway
	Other roads
	River
	Water bodies
	Parks and reserves
	Green breaks

(Source: DELWP)



Grantville

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Grantville, which **Map 19** shows.

Grantville is a town serviced by a small commercial strip along Bass Highway with retail, community and industrial uses on either side of the highway. It has widely spread residential areas and nearby vacant land and extractive industry.

The part of Grantville between the Bass Highway and Western Port is within the Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands landscape, which is regionally significant due to its low-energy coastline of intertidal mangroves interspersed with shallow, sandy beaches and areas of low, eroding sandstone cliff. The part east of the highway is within the Strzelecki Foothills landscape, which is regionally significant.

Growth will be accommodated by developing vacant land within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Grantville's growth, prevent further linear development along the Western Port coastline and provide long-term protection for its environs.

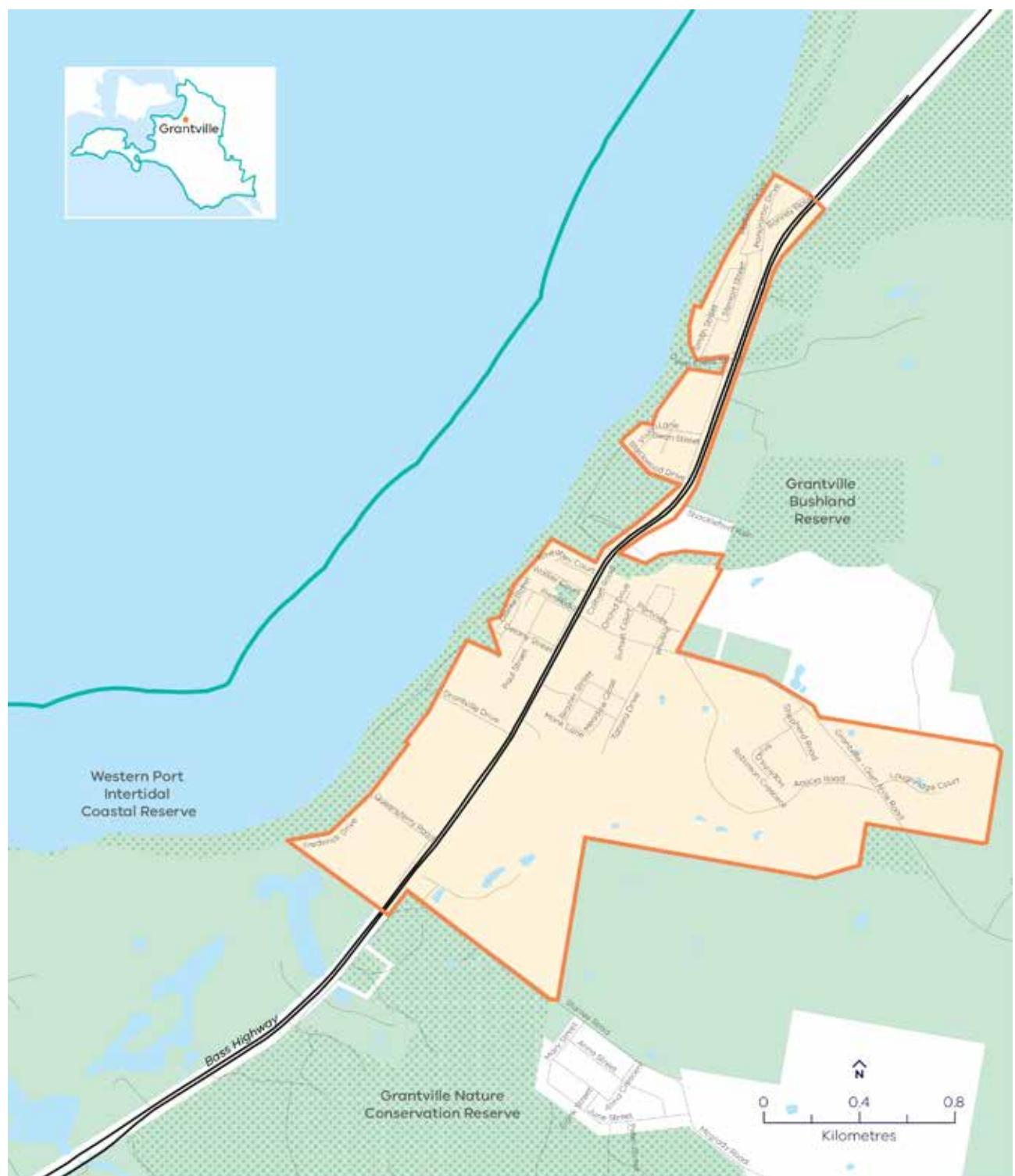
Grantville preferred township character statement

Grantville's foreshore precinct is a diverse, attractively presented destination with a clear connection between it and the town centre.

The northernmost mixed-use precinct including Stewart Street, Malcolm Court and Panoramic Drive builds on its coastal foreshore character with enhanced vegetation along streets.

The elevated, low-density lots on Arcadia Road retain their spacious, vegetated bush characters and are protected against the loss of vegetation that can occur as density increases.

MAP 19: Proposed Grantville protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

—	Proposed protected settlement boundary
 	Settlement area
—	Declared area boundary
—	Highway
—	Other roads
—	River
■	Water bodies
 	Parks and reserves
 	Green breaks

(Source: DELWP)



Harmers Haven

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Harmers Haven, which [Map 20](#) shows.

Harmers Haven is a coastal hamlet with no services and limited infrastructure: residents rely on nearby Wonthaggi for their services. It is located high above Bass Strait and is sheltered by dense foreshore vegetation. Housing in the settlement is diverse, and development transitions into the agricultural landscape to the north.

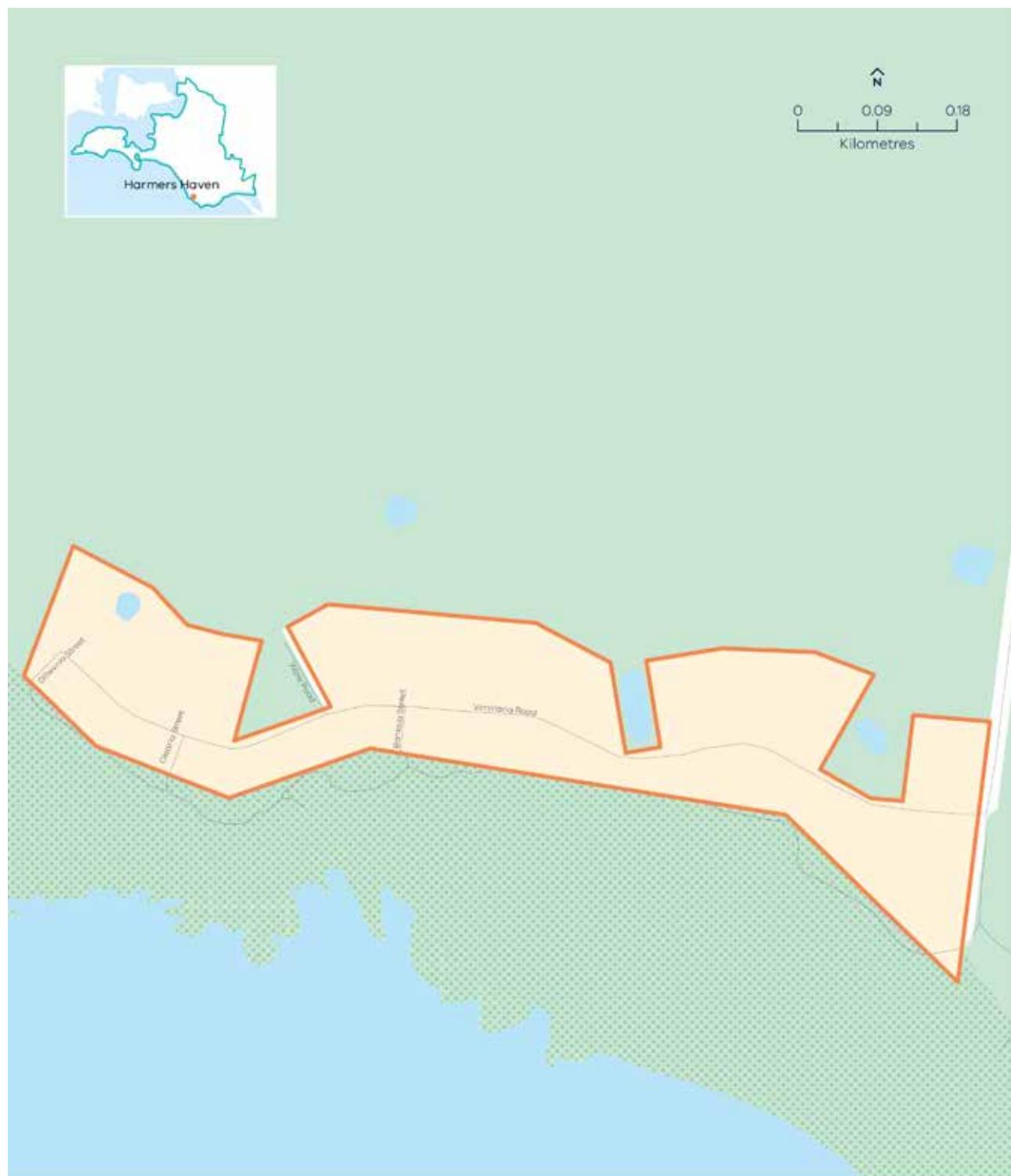
The hamlet is located within the regionally significant part of the San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland landscape. The hinterland is a mostly open, elevated pastoral landscape with commanding views of the coastline and beyond. The hamlet borders the state-significant part of the same landscape, which is characterised by exposed, jagged headlands and rock shelves battered by the wild Bass Strait seas.

Harmers Haven will remain a small settlement. Its growth will be limited and will be accommodated within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will provide long-term protection for its environs.

Harmers Haven preferred township character statement

Harmers Haven retains its distinctive character as a small, compact, residential community with a diversity of dwellings on a mix of conventional and low-density residential lots. Development south of Viminaria Road retains a coastal, rural-hamlet character, with varied dwellings well set back from the street among established coastal vegetation. This character contrasts with the area to the north, which has larger dwellings on larger, less-vegetated lots.

MAP 20: Proposed Harmers Haven protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

	Proposed protected settlement boundary
	Settlement area
	Declared area boundary
	Other roads

	Water bodies
	Parks and reserves
	Green breaks

(Source: DELWP)

Inverloch

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Inverloch, which **Map 21** shows.

Inverloch is a coastal district town and a popular lifestyle and holiday destination. Its town centre provides a range of commercial, community and recreational services, and residents depend on nearby Wonthaggi for higher-order services. Inverloch's character is shaped by its setting on Anderson Inlet and the Tarwin River estuary and by the coastline of broad beaches, tidal flats and dunes. The older, established neighbourhoods around the town centre give way to areas along the foreshore that are redeveloping, and there are recent, contemporary precincts to the east and west. Areas south-west of the town are defined by dense canopies of trees and coastal shrubs.

Inverloch adjoins the state-significant and regionally significant San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland landscape, characterised by its low-energy coastline within Anderson Inlet; a shallow, dynamic river mouth edged by broad, sandy beaches and low, grassy dunes; and a mostly cleared, rolling, pastoral hinterland. The Inverloch Surf Beach is highly dynamic and over the past eight years has experienced significant erosion of the dunes and coastal vegetation. There are extensive areas of non-developed grassland at the edge of the settlement.

Growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land and land to the north-west of the town within the proposed protected settlement boundary. This will contain Inverloch's growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

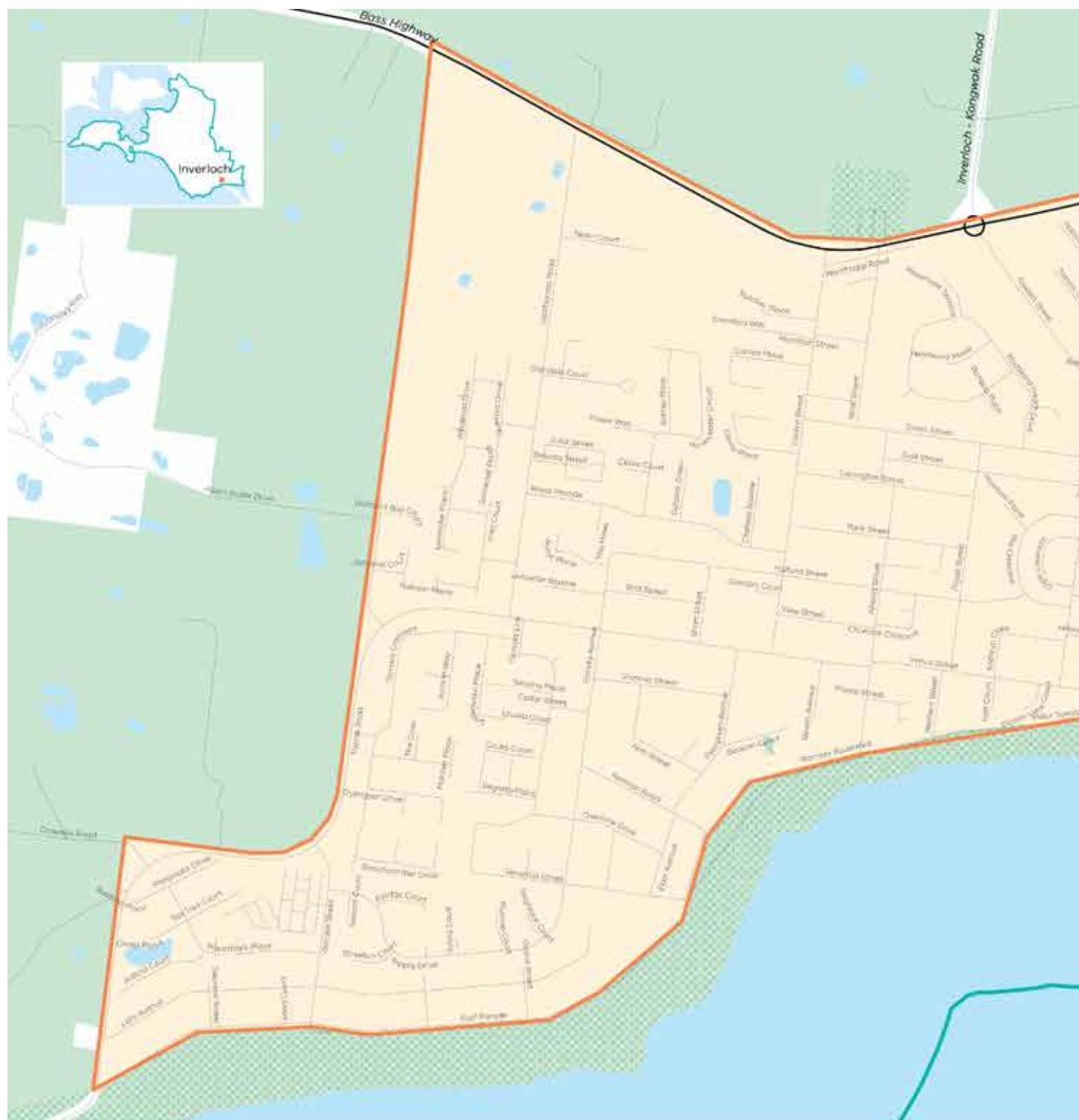
Inverloch preferred township character statement

Development at Inverloch occurs on larger lots with wide frontages. Buildings are casually sited on lots with low site coverage, providing space for boats, recreational activities and vegetation.

Street spaces are generous and well-vegetated and have informal pedestrian environments. Development reflects the distinct character of its neighbourhood. In established areas, change takes the form of redevelopment and rejuvenation. Except within the identified medium-density area, the distinct, valued character of the established areas reflects the prevailing lot sizes, lower site coverages and prevalence of mature trees.



MAP 21: Proposed Inverloch protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| — | Proposed protected settlement boundary |
| — | Settlement area |
| — | Declared area boundary |
| — | Highway |
| — | Other roads |
| ■ | Water bodies |
| ■ | Parks and reserves |
| ■ | Green breaks |



(Source: DELWP)

Jam Jerrup

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Jam Jerrup, which [Map 22](#) shows.

Jam Jerrup is a small, residential hamlet fronting the Western Port coast, and it has no services or facilities.

Jam Jerrup sits within the regionally significant Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands landscape, a low-energy coastline of intertidal mangroves interspersed with shallow, sandy beaches and areas of low, eroding sandstone cliffs. It is located on an escarpment and has informal, well-vegetated streets. Many dwellings are oriented to and have an outlook over the foreshore reserve and the eastern reach of Western Port.

Growth will be very limited and contained within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will provide long-term protection for Jam Jerrup's environs. Jam Jerrup will remain a small settlement.

Jam Jerrup preferred township character statement

Jam Jerrup retains its distinctive character as a small, 'hidden' residential hamlet. Foreshore Road defines the westernmost extent of development and protects the foreshore.

Development respects the tempered scale and height — one and two storeys — of residential development, facilitating views over Western Port.

Any enhancement of the road reservation retains a sense of coastal informality and relies on natural (rather than engineered) systems and treatments.



MAP 22: Proposed Jam Jerrup protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| — | Proposed protected settlement boundary | | Parks and reserves |
| | Settlement area | | Green breaks |
| — | Declared area boundary | | |
| — | Other roads | | |

(Source: DELWP)



Kilcunda

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Kilcunda, which [Map 23](#) shows.

Kilcunda is a coastal holiday and residential village with some commercial uses and community facilities. Residents rely on nearby Wonthaggi for most services.

Kilcunda sits in an elevated, undulating landscape, with development on both sides of the Bass Highway. Parts of the village are concealed from the Bass Highway by the rolls and folds of the landscape or by pockets of roadside vegetation. Most of Kilcunda is within the regionally significant Strzelecki Foothills landscape, which is characterised by rolling hills and clusters of remnant vegetation. Part of Kilcunda is within the state-significant San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland landscape, which is characterised by exposed, jagged headlands and rock shelves battered by the wild Bass Strait seas, the spaces between forming sandy coves and beaches. As well as its stunning and contrasting natural beauty, Kilcunda offers views of iconic structures in the landscape (such as the Kilcunda Trestle Bridge and the turbines of the Wonthaggi Wind Farm).

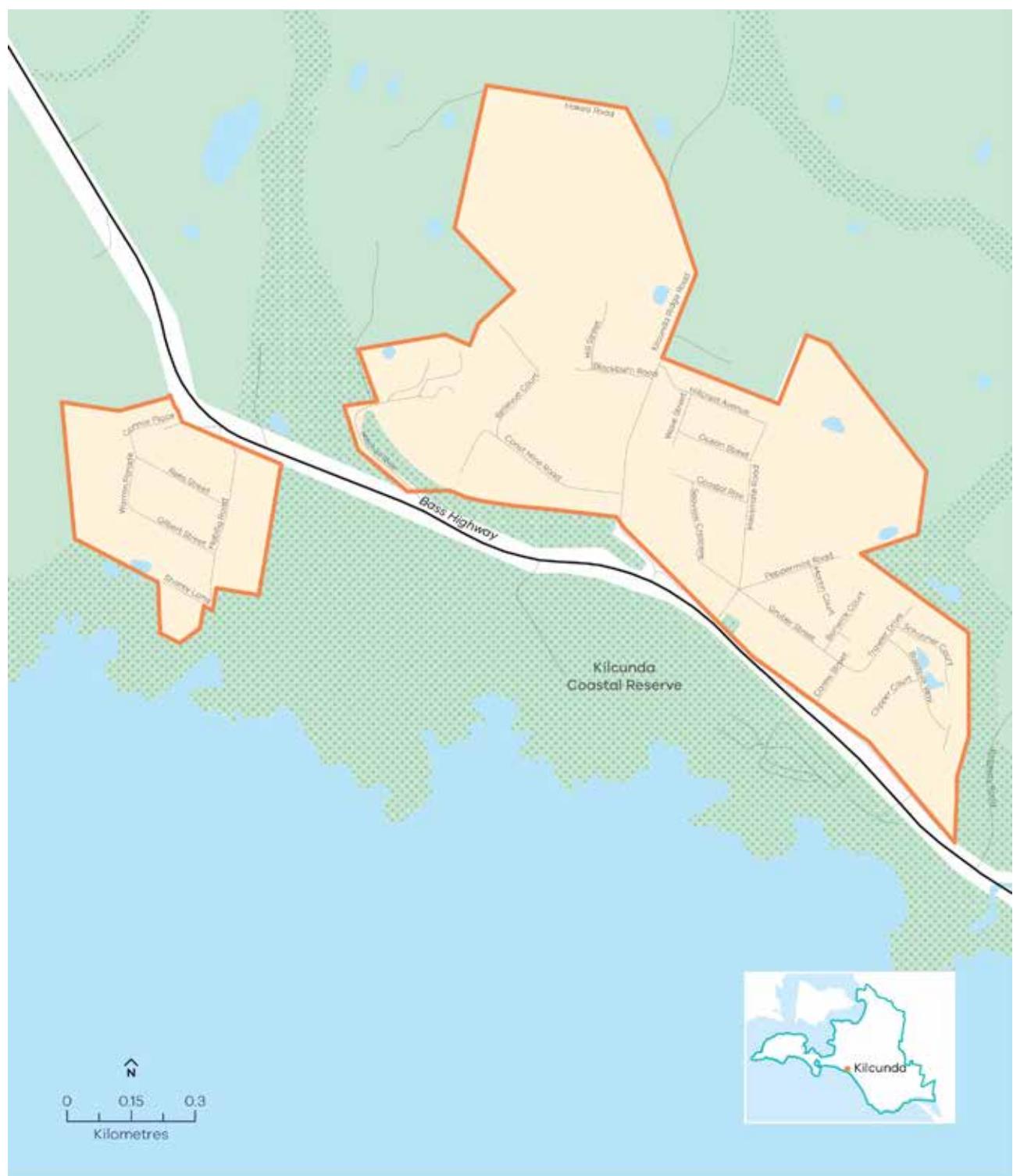
Growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Kilcunda's growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

Kilcunda preferred township character statement

Kilcunda's main elements are its foreshore, community gathering space, residential hinterland and rural landscape setting.

The alignment and design of streets and the layout, width and size of lots consider and respond to the gradients of the topography, retaining the landscape's natural contours. Development is sited informally and has generous setbacks, to retain a sense of spaciousness.

MAP 23: Proposed Kilcunda protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

	Proposed protected settlement boundary
	Settlement area
	Declared area boundary
	Highway
	Other roads
	Water bodies
	Parks and reserves
	Green breaks

(Source: DELWP)

Newhaven

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Newhaven, which **Map 24** shows.

Newhaven's character is shaped by its role as an arrival and departure point for Phillip Island, its proximity to Churchill Island and its location on Western Port at The Narrows. Newhaven is distinguished by its narrow, treed, informal foreshore road that follows a series of small coves and promontories.

Part of the settlement is located within the regionally significant Phillip Island Swan Bay Coast and Churchill Island landscape, which is tranquil and low-lying and comprises wetlands with a rural hinterland.

Growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Newhaven's growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

Newhaven preferred township character statement

Phillip Island Road provides a sense of arrival to Phillip Island. The commercial role it provides is reinforced by generous setbacks, landscaping and partial screening of car parking spaces on the large, spacious lots of the existing commercial and tourism developments. Further back in the township, a low density of development and spacious landscape setting are character attributes that convey a sense of a more relaxed holiday destination.

There are small areas of medium-density development close to the small convenience strip. The existing character of residential areas is retained: development maintains current lot sizes and prefers modestly sized dwellings in generous garden settings.

Larger lots provide for housing diversity in Newhaven. Lower coastal land that is subject to inundation and rising sea levels is unsuitable for conventional development. Streets favour grassed verges rather than hard-edged engineering, and local access streets have one or no footpaths.



MAP 24: Proposed Newhaven protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

	Proposed protected settlement boundary		Water bodies
	Settlement area		Parks and reserves
	Declared area boundary		Green breaks
	Highway		
	Other roads		

(Source: DELWP)



Pioneer Bay and The Gurdies

Protected settlement boundaries are proposed for Pioneer Bay and The Gurdies, which [Map 25](#) shows.

Pioneer Bay and The Gurdies are residential hamlets with no commercial or community facilities: residents rely on Grantville for services. Pioneer Bay is located between the Bass Highway and Western Port and is bounded by a vegetated ridge. The Gurdies follow this ridge inland to the north-east. The surrounding landscape of Pioneer Bay includes a reserve and a well-vegetated foreshore area. Pioneer Bay has an informality to its street network.

Pioneer Bay sits within the Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands landscape, which is regionally significant due to its low-energy coastline of intertidal mangroves interspersed with shallow, sandy beaches and areas of low, eroding sandstone cliff. The Gurdies is set back from Western Port within the Strzelecki Foothills landscape, which is regionally significant because of the landform features of the Bass Hills and The Gurdies Hills.

Limited growth will be contained within the proposed protected settlement boundaries, which will also provide long-term protection for the environs of Pioneer Bay and The Gurdies.

Pioneer Bay township character statement

Pioneer Bay retains its distinctive character as a residential hamlet. It has a low-scale built form of one- and two-storey dwellings and space between taller dwellings, which maintain a coastal outlook. Any improvements to the public realm including streetscapes retain the informal character.

MAP 25: Proposed Pioneer Bay and The Gurdies protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

	Proposed protected settlement boundary
	Settlement area
	Declared area boundary
	Highway
	Other roads
	Water bodies
	Parks and reserves
	Green breaks

(Source: DELWP)

Rhyll

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Rhyll, which [Map 26](#) shows.

Rhyll is a village that has panoramic outlooks over Western Port and a strong relationship to its foreshore. It sits on rising land on a hill, and its character is reinforced by the extent of tree cover and coastal vegetation. Many of its streets are unsealed and have grassed, vegetated verges.

Rhyll is within the regionally significant Phillip Island Swan Bay Coast and Churchill Island landscape, which is characterised by a marshy, intertidal coast and a rolling hinterland with patterns of indigenous riparian vegetation and exotic shelterbelts.

Limited growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Rhyll's growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

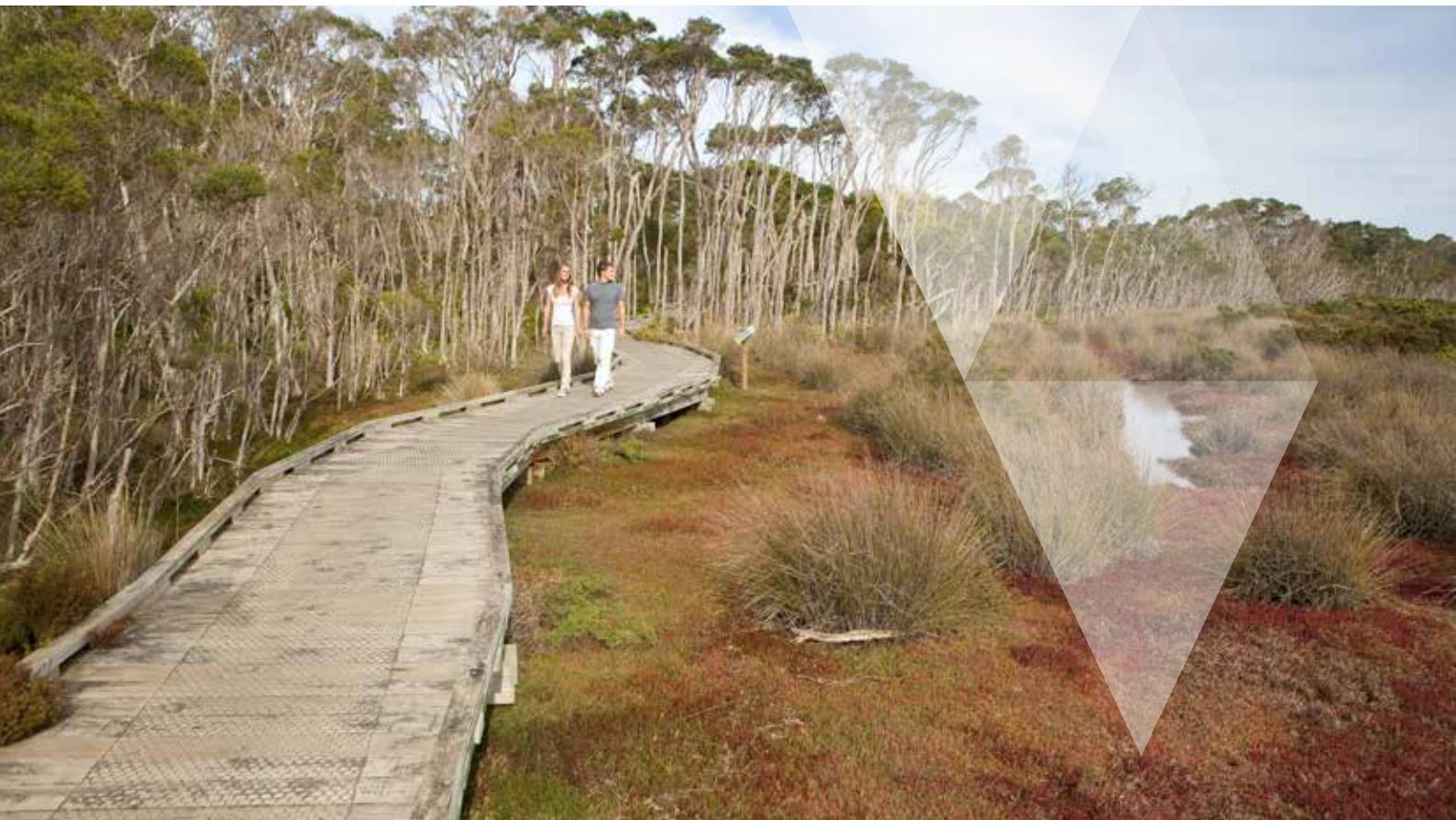
Rhyll preferred township character statement

Rhyll retains strong visual contrasts between its built environment and the adjacent rural landscape.

Development respects and reflects the spacious, well-vegetated lots by restricting building footprints and retaining existing vegetation.

Medium-density development is limited to the areas adjacent to commercial areas at Fisherman Point, which is the focal point and town centre.

Streetscapes have an informal feel and use water sensitive urban design.



MAP 26: Proposed Rhyll protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| — | Proposed protected settlement boundary | | Water bodies |
| | Settlement area | | Parks and reserves |
| | Declared area boundary | | Green breaks |
| — | Other roads | | |

(Source: DELWP)

San Remo

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for San Remo, which [Map 27](#) shows.

Together with Newhaven, San Remo is a district town. It is a residential and holiday visitor settlement with a small commercial centre. Located at the edge of the Anderson Peninsula (where the Bass Hills terminate) and the entrance to Phillip Island, it offers panoramic outlooks: the settlement is prominent and exposed in views across Western Port. Views towards the water are framed and captured by the local street network.

Most of San Remo is within the regionally significant Strzelecki Foothills landscape, which is characterised by the undeveloped, rolling Bass Hills, clusters of remnant vegetation and expansive views to Western Port. Part of San Remo is within the state-significant San Remo to Inverloch Coast and Coastal Hinterland landscape, a highly valued coastal landscape of stunning contrasts and iconic features, which can be appreciated from the George Bass Coastal Walk: the walk provides commanding views of the dramatic coastline and Bass Strait.

Future growth will be contained within the proposed protected settlement boundary. Growth will occur with the development of vacant residential land and greenfield development to the east of San Remo. Development will be sensitively designed to integrate with the regionally significant landscape. Development of land to the east of San Remo will support the establishment of the new Bass Coast College located in this area.

The strategic planning of the growth area and the design of development must address:

- Aboriginal cultural heritage values, by engaging with the Bunurong people
- the state-significant and regionally significant landscapes within which San Remo is located including:
- protecting the scenic journey along Phillip Island Road, which is characterised by rolling hills, remnant vegetation and picturesque views
- protecting the ridgeline to the north
- using external materials that reduce the visibility of buildings
- the San Remo preferred township character statement



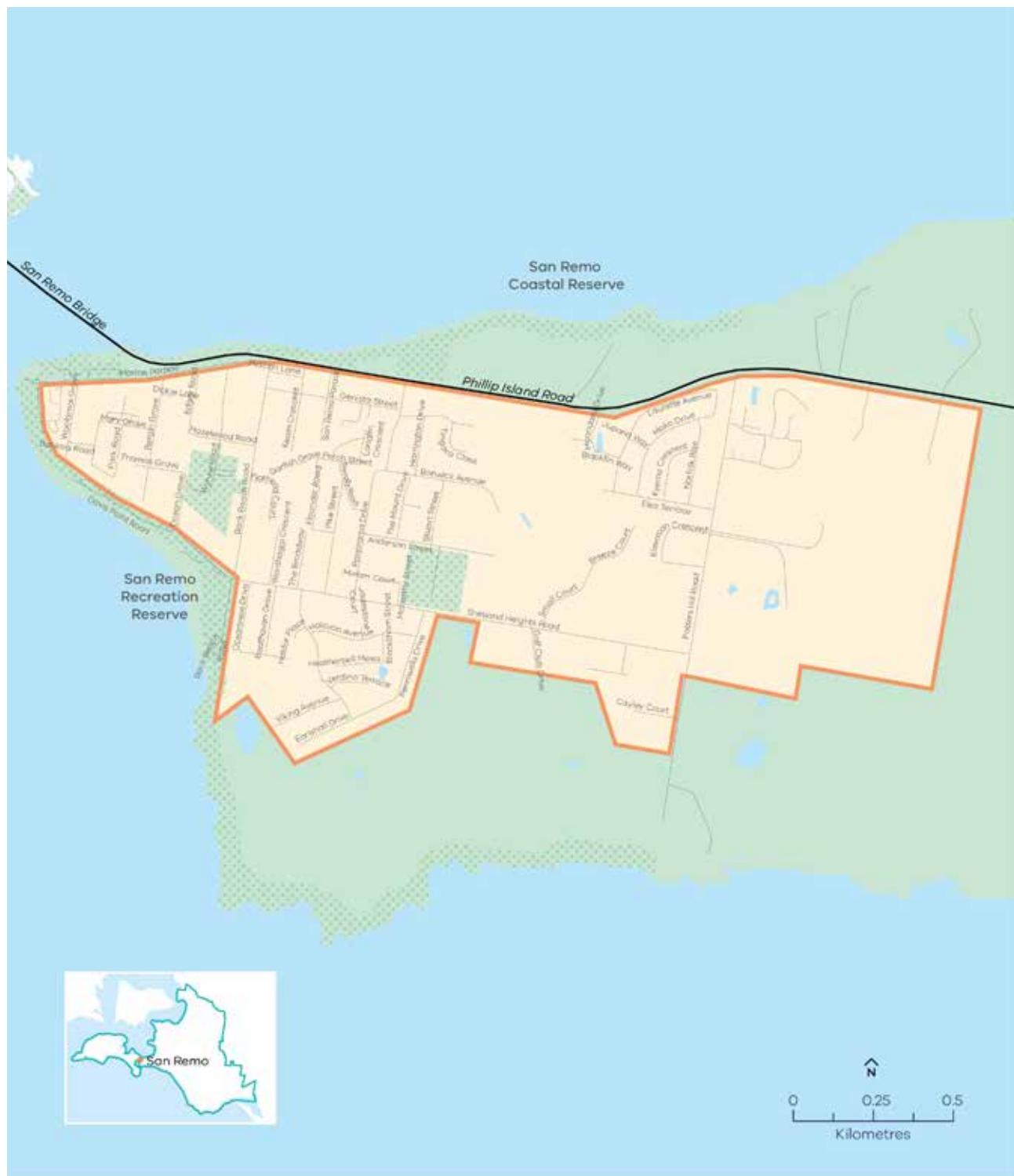
- the local transport network, by engaging with the Department of Transport
- drainage, by engaging with the Bass Coast Shire Council and Westernport Water.

San Remo preferred township character statement

The foreshore setting of San Remo's town centre is the settlement's main focus. Behind the town centre, the topography and coastal outlook and environs influence the design of development.

Development respects the topography by responding to the gradients of the landform. Cut and fill is minimised, and built form respects the existing coastal outlook. Streetscapes utilise appropriate and distinctive native vegetation. Tree planting in the road reservations contributes to the character of the new residential estates.

MAP 27: Proposed San Remo protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

 	Proposed protected settlement boundary		Water bodies
	Settlement area		Parks and reserves
 	Declared area boundary		Green breaks
 	Highway		
 	Other roads		

(Source: DELWP)

Smiths Beach, Sunset Strip, Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Smiths Beach, Sunset Strip, Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach, which **Map 28** shows.

These four, close-by hamlets are located along a section of Phillip Island's southern coastline renowned for its excellent surf beaches. Residents rely on nearby Newhaven, San Remo and Cowes for most services. The settlements are in exposed locations, with minimal canopy tree planting. Other than Sunset Strip, the settlements engage with beaches, bays and headlands. Most streets are unsealed and informally designed.

Smiths Beach, Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach adjoin the state-significant Phillip Island Western and Southern Coast landscape, which is characterised by its gently rolling hinterland which adjoins volcanic cliffs and headlands 30–50 m high above rocky shore platforms and beaches. Sunset Strip is within the regionally significant Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland landscape, in the undulating hinterland, which is sparsely populated and has a variety of vegetation.

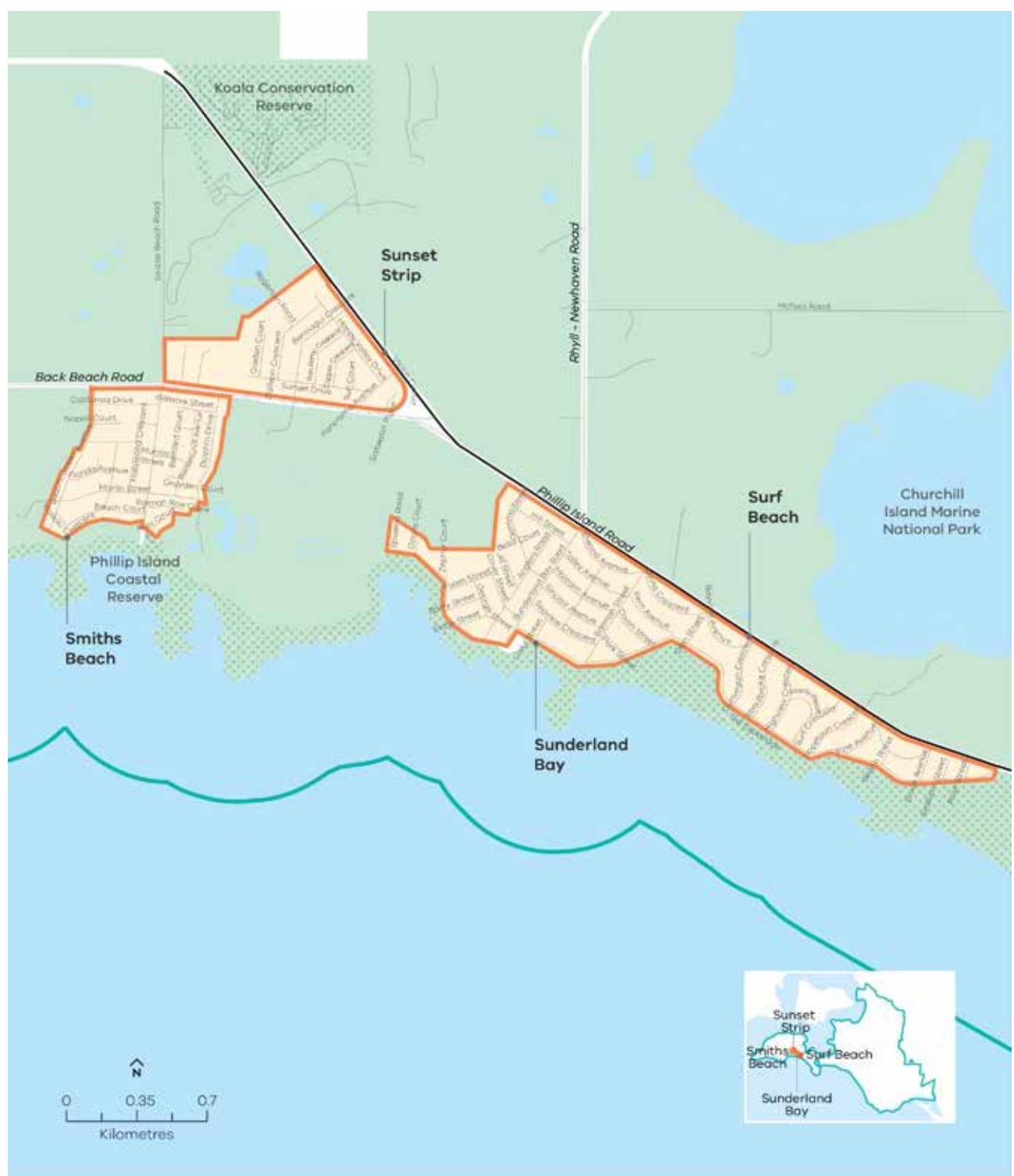
Limited growth will be accommodated by low-density residential development to the west of Sunset Strip. The proposed protected settlement boundary will contain the four hamlets' growth and provide long-term protection for their environs.

Smiths Beach, Sunset Strip, Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach township character statement

Development at Smiths Beach, Sunset Strip, Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach retains a sense of space. Built form is designed with generous, informal setbacks and is limited to two storeys. Front setbacks are varied with little distinction between the public and private realms, facilitated by no or minimal fencing. The street networks maintain their sense of informality with soft edges and verges.



MAP 28: Proposed Smiths Beach, Sunset Strip, Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

	Proposed protected settlement boundary		Water bodies
	Settlement area		Parks and reserves
	Declared area boundary		Green breaks
	Highway		
	Other roads		

(Source: DELWP)

Tenby Point

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Tenby Point, which **Map 29** shows.

Tenby Point is a coastal hamlet with a narrow strip of dwellings extending along Bayview Road, which terminates at a headland and the foreshore. There are no services: residents rely on surrounding settlements for them. It is characterised by deep, regularly shaped lots, with native vegetation surrounding dwellings and distinguishing the settlement from the surrounding agricultural landscape.

The settlement is within the Eastern Westernport Bay Coastal Flatlands landscape, which is regionally significant due to its low-energy coastline of intertidal mangroves interspersed with shallow, sandy beaches and areas of low, eroding sandstone cliff.

Limited growth will be accommodated within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Tenby Point's growth and ensure it remains a small settlement, providing long-term protection for its environs.

Tenby Point preferred township character statement

Tenby Point's structure and character are defined by Bayview Avenue, which terminates at the coastal foreshore. The well-vegetated streetscape has an informal nature, and upgrades to the public realm and interfaces blend into the vegetation. Low-picket, post-and-wire or no fences allow for views through to low-scale dwellings and native and unstructured gardens.

The settlement's vegetation includes large native trees, bushes and scrub. It is a dominant feature and defines the visual relationship of the built form to the street. The dimensions and rhythm of lots are consistent along the avenue, providing a sense of spaciousness, and built form siting varies. Development respects the mainly low-scale dwellings by using simple building forms, pitched roofs and timber materials. The visual impact of development from Bayview Avenue is minimised through the use of sympathetic materials and generous front and side setbacks capable of retaining existing trees and new planting.



MAP 29: Proposed Tenby Point protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

- Proposed protected settlement boundary
- Settlement area
- Declared area boundary
- Other roads

- Water bodies
- Parks and reserves
- Green breaks

(Source: DELWP)

Ventnor

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Ventnor, which **Map 30** shows.

Ventnor is a hamlet located immediately west of Cowes on the west coast of Phillip Island. It is mainly a holiday destination and has limited commercial and community services, due to its proximity to Cowes. It is located in two distinct pockets and is screened by foreshore vegetation. Its grid of mainly unsealed streets has generous grassed, vegetated verges.

Ventnor is within the Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland landscape, which is regionally significant due to its contrasting combination of basaltic headlands, low-energy beaches, offshore rock platforms and undulating hinterland, which is sparsely populated and contains a variety of vegetation.

Limited growth will be accommodated by developing vacant residential land within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will contain Ventnor's growth and provide long-term protection for its environs.

Ventnor preferred township character statement

Ventnor Road continues to be a non-urban corridor with occasional dwellings in a rural setting. It conveys a sense of an important approach to some of Victoria's primary tourist attractions: The Nobbies, the Penguin Parade and the rugged coastline around them.

In established residential areas, there is some subdivision and redevelopment of existing lots. Development reflects the existing neighbourhood character with informally sited, simple, one- and two-storey coastal dwellings, spaciously accommodated on generously sized lots with low site coverage.



MAP 30: Proposed Ventnor protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| | Proposed protected settlement boundary |
| | Settlement area |
| | Declared area boundary |
| | Other roads |
| — | River |
| — | Water bodies |
| | Parks and reserves |
| | Green breaks |

(Source: DELWP)

Wimbledon Heights

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Wimbledon Heights, which **Map 31** shows.

This hamlet is located in the middle of Phillip Island, and it has few services and facilities. Residents rely on Cowes for most services.

Wimbledon Heights is within the regionally significant Phillip Island North Coast and Hinterland landscape area, in the undulating hinterland, which is sparsely populated and has a variety of vegetation.

Limited growth will be contained within the proposed protected settlement boundary, which will also provide long-term protection for its environs. Wimbledon Heights will remain a small settlement.



MAP 31: Proposed Wimbleton Heights protected settlement boundary



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| | Proposed protected settlement boundary | | Water bodies |
| | Settlement area | | Green breaks |
| | Declared area boundary | | |
| | Highway | | |
| | Other roads | | |

(Source: DELWP)

Wonthaggi

A protected settlement boundary is proposed for Wonthaggi. The boundary's location is subject to further work.

Wonthaggi is a regional centre and the declared area's primary service and employment centre. There are opportunities for the large-scale expansion of residential and employment uses.

Growth will be accommodated within designated growth areas within the current settlement boundary and the future protected settlement boundary.

The resolution of the location of the future protected settlement boundary will be informed by strategic planning work led by the Bass Coast Shire Council in collaboration with the Bunurong people, DELWP and other relevant agencies and authorities.

Objective and strategies

Objective 8

The following objective is binding on RPEs.

To plan and manage the sustainable development of settlements in the declared area consistent with each settlement's unique character, role and function and the protection and enhancement of the area's landscape significance, environmental and biodiversity values, Bunurong cultural heritage and historic heritage values.

Strategies

RPEs must consider where relevant the following strategies to achieve the objective when performing a function or duty or exercising a power in relation to the declared area.

- 8.1 Direct urban development to a hierarchy of settlements identified for growth through designating change areas and clearly defining long-term settlement boundaries.
- 8.2 Implement protected settlement boundaries for each settlement identified in the proposed Bass Coast settlement hierarchy.
- 8.3 Limit the expansion of settlements in high-risk locations, actively reducing the risks associated with natural hazards.
- 8.4 Ensure development is designed to respect the identities, coastal characters and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritages of settlements and their environs.
- 8.5 Ensure development at the periphery of settlements is designed to transition to the surrounding landscapes, integrating development with its environs, landscape character and features, subject to addressing bushfire risks.
- 8.6 Ensure development in settlements maintains and enhances views of the rural hinterland, coast and foreshore.
- 8.7 Ensure development in settlements achieves best practice environmentally sustainable design and development for the full life of the development.
- 8.8 Encourage the provision of an adequate supply of well-serviced employment land in settlements to support local and regional jobs and services.
- 8.9 Encourage the voluntary and proactive use of cultural heritage management plans.
- 8.10 Ensure development close to existing and potential future extractive resource areas protects resources for future extraction.

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
Aboriginal cultural heritage	Tangible heritage — Aboriginal places, objects and ancestral remains — and intangible heritage — knowledge of or expression of Aboriginal tradition including oral traditions, performing arts, stories, rituals, festivals, social practices, craft, visual arts and environmental and ecological knowledge (not including anything that is widely known to the public), as set out in the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i>
Biodiversity	All components of the living world: the number and variety of plants, animals and other living things including fungi and micro-organisms across land, rivers, coasts and oceans.
Built form	The combination of features of a building including its style, façade treatments, setbacks, height and site coverage.
Biolink	A connection across the landscape that links areas of habitat and supports natural processes that occur in a healthy environment including the movement of species to find food and water.
Coastal acid sulfate soils	Soils in low-lying coastal areas and the marine environment that contain high concentrations of iron sulfates. They are relatively harmless in their undisturbed (submerged) state but produce and release large quantities of sulfuric acid when exposed to oxygen through excavation, dredging or drainage, harming coastal and marine environments.
Declared area	An area to which an order under <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> section 46AO applies. Map 2 shows the Bass Coast declared area.
Declared area framework plan	A plan required by the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> section 46AV(2) to provide a framework for decision-making in relation to the future use and development of land in the declared area.
District town	A settlement of 2,000–10,000 people. A district town usually has a dominant town centre and most essential services are available including a post office, schools, emergency services, medical/hospital facilities, retail services and accommodation options. There is some reliance on the regional centre for employment and higher-order services. A district town has strong relationships with smaller, nearby settlements and provides them with some higher-order services. District towns on the coast are popular visitor destinations. All are connected to reticulated water, electricity and a sewage system.
Environmentally sustainable design	Design that maximises efficiency and sustainability with respect to water resources, stormwater management, transport, waste management and urban ecology.
Extractive industry interest areas	An area established to raise awareness that extractive industry is a potential land use and to afford protection of the industry from competing land uses.
Green break	Predominantly rural land located between settlement boundaries.

Habitat	The place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs.
Hamlet	A settlement of 200–500 people, the number fluctuating seasonally. There are limited services and connections to a sewage system. Hamlets on the coast have high levels of holiday home ownership and some small-scale visitor accommodation.
Historic heritage	Historic types of heritage places including archaeological sites and artefacts, buildings, structures, precincts, gardens, trees, cemeteries, cultural landscapes, shipwrecks and their artefacts and significant objects and objects associated with places. ‘Historic’ can refer to a range of time periods or eras.
Indigenous vegetation	Vegetation local to the area.
Landscape character	The sum of the physical features of an area (such as its topography, geology, waterbodies, vegetation and urban development).
Landscape significance	The designation of a landscape as special or important due to its visual, cultural heritage, environmental, scientific, social and other values.
Native vegetation	Plants indigenous to Victoria including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses.
Peri-urban area	The area beyond Melbourne’s Urban Growth Boundary and comprising local government areas with a mostly rural character, located all or partially within a 100-km radius of Melbourne.
Peri-urban town	A settlement outside Melbourne’s Urban Growth Boundary but within a 100-km radius of Melbourne.
Protected settlement boundary	A settlement boundary in a declared area protected under a SPP. It is a long-term boundary intended to contain the settlement’s growth. Such boundaries apply to settlements identified for growth.
Regional centre	A settlement of 10,000 or more people with diverse employment opportunities and accommodation options. In a regional centre, there is provision of all essential services and higher-order goods, and education at all levels and access to large hospital and diverse medical facilities is available. A regional centre has strong relationships with surrounding settlements of all types.
Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP)	A Traditional Owner group legally recognised under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> and responsible for managing and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage for a particular area. The Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation is the RAP for the declared area. A RAP is the primary source of advice and knowledge on matters relating to Aboriginal places or Aboriginal objects in an area.

Responsible public entity (RPE)	An agency or body responsible for managing land in the declared area. In the context of declared areas, responsible public entity means any of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Secretary (within the meaning of the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>) • the water corporation responsible for the area in which the declared area is located • a municipal council whose municipal district contains land in the declared area • Parks Victoria • the Victorian Planning Authority • a catchment management authority for a catchment and land protection region that contains land in the declared area • Department of Transport • Victorian Rail Track • any committee of management or trustees in relation to land in the declared area • any Traditional Owner Land Management Board in relation to land in the declared area • any other public entity prescribed to be a RPE in relation to the declared area.
Retreat	The decommissioning or relocation of existing structures, assets or uses away from areas that are or will be negatively impacted by natural hazards. Retreat of natural systems may also be required: for example, saltmarsh habitat that would naturally migrate landward in response to rising sea levels may be obstructed by the built environment, and corridors of undeveloped land may be required to allow for the movement of species and functioning of habitats.
Role and function	A settlement's designation, purpose and relationships within the wider settlement hierarchy for the declared area.
Settlement	An area comprising settlement- or urban-related land uses that includes housing, community facilities, commercial and industrial areas and other uses.
Settlement boundary	The boundary that marks the limit of urban development in an area including a protected settlement boundary.
State significance	A quality of environmental, landscape, economic and cultural heritage value important to the State of Victoria.
Statement of Planning Policy (SPP)	A Statement of Planning Policy approved under <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> pt 3AAB in relation to a declared area.
Stationary energy	Electricity (including renewable energy generated and exported to the grid), LPG bottled gas, mains gas and firewood.

Town	A settlement of 1,000–2,000 people, the number varying with general service provision and the diversity of the housing stock. Various services are available including a post office, supermarket, one or more schools, a police station and some basic medical facilities. There is some reliance on larger, nearby settlements for employment and higher-order services. Towns on the coast are popular visitor, retirement and lifestyle destinations. All are connected to reticulated water and electricity, and most have sewer connections.
Traditional Owners	An Australian Aboriginal group with Country in an area. The Bunurong people are the Traditional Owners of the Bass Coast declared area.
Urban heat island	An urban area that is significantly warmer than surrounding peri-urban areas, mainly because of land use changes — vegetation removal and development — that result in land absorbing more heat from the sun. Waste heat generated by energy use also contributes.
Village	A settlement of 500–1,000 people, the number fluctuating seasonally. Basic services are available including a general store and basic retail facilities, and most have postal services. A village has strong employment relationships with larger, nearby settlements and relies on them for services. Villages on the coast have moderate-to-high levels of holiday home ownership. Most are connected to reticulated water, and some have sewer connections.

References

- Aboriginal Victoria (2019). *Cultural Heritage Management Plans*, Aboriginal Victoria, Melbourne.
- Bass Coast Shire Council (2016). *Phillip Island and San Remo Visitor Economy Strategy 2035*, Bass Coast Shire Council, Wonthaggi.
- Bass Coast Shire Council (2021). *Climate Change Action Plan*, Bass Coast Shire Council, Wonthaggi.
- Capire Consulting Group (2020). *Bass Coast Distinctive Area and Landscape: Phase Two Engagement Report*, Capire Consulting Group, Melbourne.
- Capire Consulting Group (2019). *Bass Coast Distinctive Area and Landscape: Phase One Engagement Report*, Capire Consulting Group, Melbourne.
- Claire Scott Planning (2021). *Distinctive Areas and Landscapes: Bass Coast Assessment Review*, Claire Scott Planning, Melbourne.
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (2018). *Helping Victoria Grow: Extractive Resources Strategy*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (2019). *Gippsland Climate Projections 2019*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2021). *Victoria's Climate Change Strategy*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2020a). *NatureKit*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2020b). *Marine and Coastal Policy*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2020c). *Recycling Victoria: A new economy*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019a). *Long Term Water Resource Assessment*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019b). *Southern Gippsland Renewable Energy Roadmap*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019c). *Victoria in Future 2019*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017a). *Bass Coast Planning Scheme*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017b). *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050 Five Year Implementation Plan*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017c). *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050 Metropolitan Planning Strategy*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017d). *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017e). *Bass Coast Planning Scheme*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2016). *Water for Victoria*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2014). *Gippsland Regional Growth Plan*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Sustainability and Environment (2006). *Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Sustainability and Environment (2008). *Underpinnings of fire management for biodiversity conservation in reserves*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Sustainability and Environment (2012). *Code of Practice for Bushfire Management on Public Land*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (2018). *Victoria Extractive Resources Strategy*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- RMCG (2014). *Bass Coast Rural Land Use Strategy*, Bass Coast Shire Council, Wonthaggi.
- Sheridan J, Larsen K and Carey R (2015). *Melbourne's foodbowl: Now and at seven million*, Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne.



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning