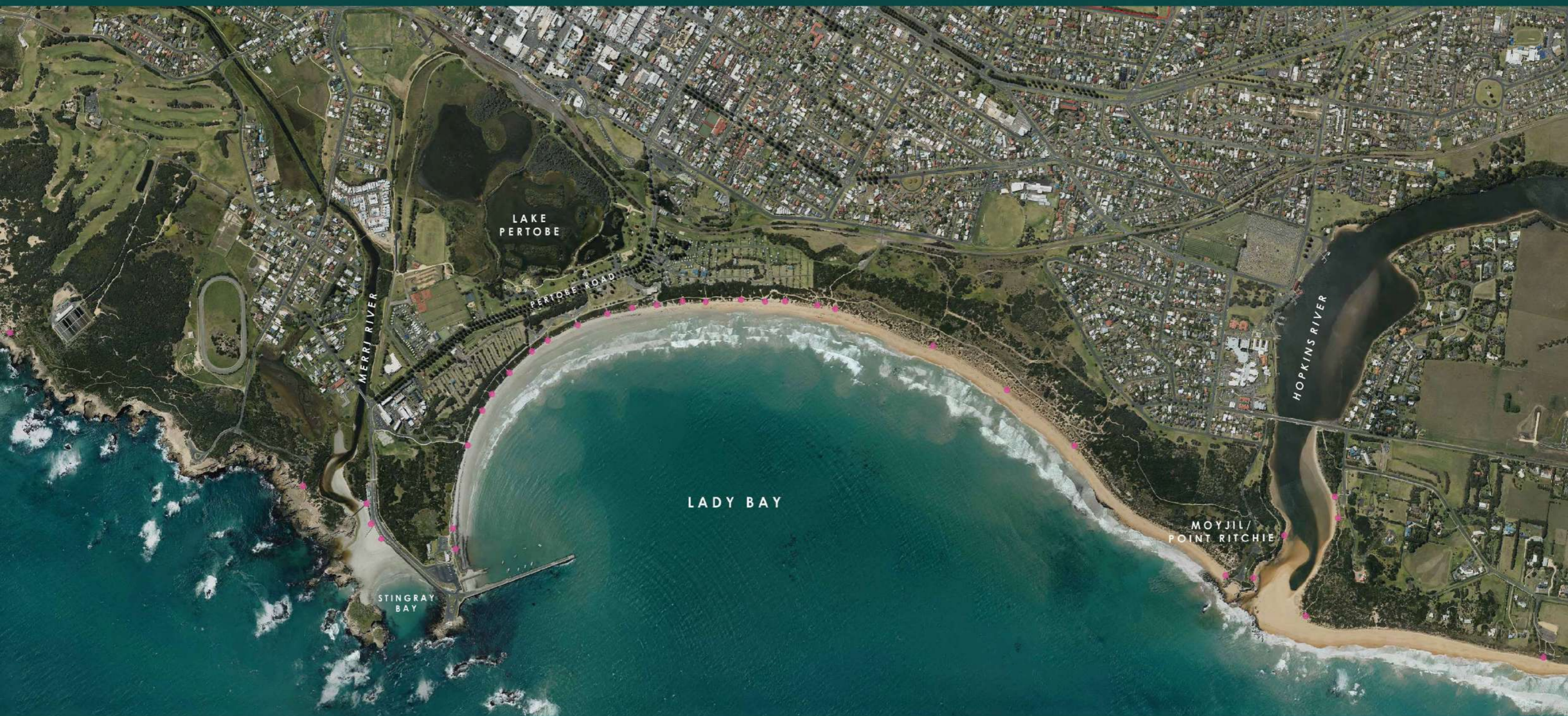




# Warrnambool Beach Access Strategy Background Report



MARCH 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DOCUMENT CONTROL.....3

DISCLAIMER .....3

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....3

ACRONYMS .....3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....4

1. INTRODUCTION .....5

1.1 STUDY AREA..... 5

1.2 WHY IS A STRATEGY NEEDED?..... 7

2. PLANNING CONTEXT .....8

2.1 PLANNING FRAMEWORK..... 8

2.2 ZONES, OVERLAYS AND CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE ..... 11

2.3 STATE AND PLANNING STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES ..... 16

2.4 LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES..... 18

3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS .....27

4. REFERENCES .....29

APPENDIX 1 – BEACH ACCESS POINTS SITE PHOTOGRAPHS .....30

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Name	Warrnambool Beach Access Strategy Background Report
Department	City Growth
Version	1.0
Version Date	3 March 2022

PREPARED BY:



DISCLAIMER

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Council acknowledges the Eastern Maar Nation as the original custodians of the lands of this general area. Council also acknowledges the descendants of the ancestors of Aboriginal nations within the lands forming the Great South Coast and particularly the elders of the Indigenous communities within both Warrnambool and this region.

Warrnambool City Council is honoured to have an important custodian role in partnership with Eastern Maar Citizens in looking after Country. Warrnambool City Council is proud of our Maar heritage and story. We acknowledge the Maar people and celebrate their rich, diverse and ongoing contribution to us all.

ACRONYMS

BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay
CoM	Committee of Management
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
DDO	Design and Development Overlay
DELWP	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning
ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay
EVC	Ecological Vegetation Class
HO	Heritage Overlay
PCRZ	Public Conservation and Resource Zone
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
SLO	Significant Landscape Overlay
WCC	Warrnambool City Council

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Warrnambool's beaches are beautiful natural assets which attract residents, visitors and tourists. These beaches play an important role for the community, providing spaces for a range of activities, recreation, tourism and events, as well as opportunities for people to connect with the natural environment and cultural coastal landscapes.

Beach access is highly valued and will be subject to increasing demand as Warrnambool's population continues to grow. Warrnambool's coastal environment is dynamic, often with diverse climatic conditions which can contribute to shifting sands and unstable dune systems. It is important that beach access points along the coast are planned, designed and built carefully to ensure they can withstand the demands of increasing use and climate change. These access points must also provide safe and functional access, whilst protecting the natural and cultural landscapes that make Warrnambool's coastline special.

The preparation of a Beach Access Strategy will allow Council to gain a better understanding of the needs of stakeholders, community and visitors in accessing Warrnambool's beaches. Through consultation with stakeholders and the community and the development of the Strategy, Council will have a clearer picture of the strengths, challenges and opportunities for beach access along Warrnambool's coastline and a strategy for what can be done to improve it.

The Strategy will help inform Council's capital works and renewal programs and will also be used to support future grant and funding applications associated with improving beach access.

The recommendations of the Strategy are intended to provide guidance for Warrnambool's 33 beach access points between Shelly Beach and Logans Beach, over a 15-year timeframe.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 STUDY AREA

Council maintains 35 beach access points. The beach access points range from fully constructed access ramps to informal paths. Two of these access points, one at Levys Beach and another at Spookys Beach, were included in the recently completed Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan. A summary of the recommendations from this Master Plan are provided at Section 2.4.

The remaining 33 beach access points span across approximately eight (8) kilometres of Warrnambool's coastline. These 33 beach access points provide access to Shelly Beach, Pickering Point, the Merri River Estuary, Stingray Bay, Worm Bay, Lady Bay, Point Ritchie / Moyjil, Hopkins River Estuary and Logans Beach.

Warrnambool City Council is the Committee of Management (CoM), established under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, who are responsible for managing much of the Warrnambool coastline, including the 33 beach access points included within this study.

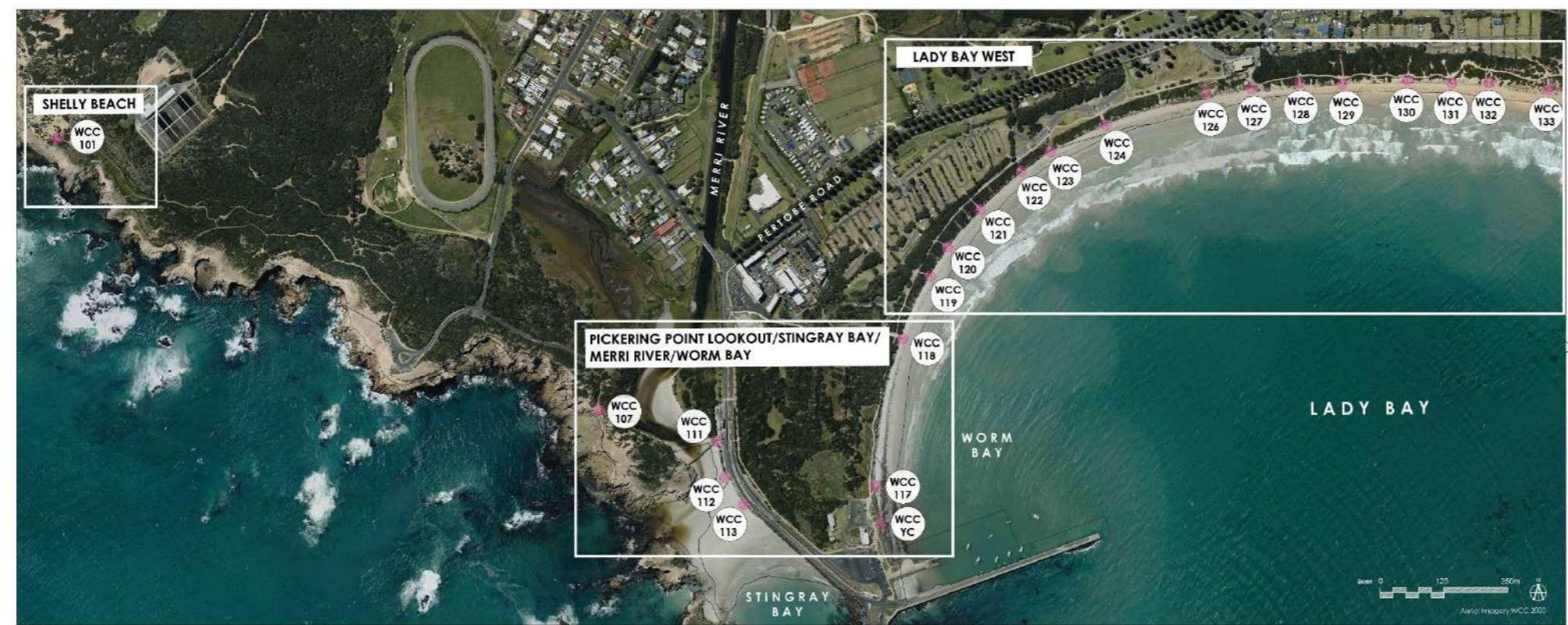
These 33 beach access points will be included into a Beach Access Strategy for Warrnambool. The study area and 33 existing beach access points are shown at Figures 1 and 2, with photographs of each access point provided at Appendix 1.

Figure 1: Study Area Boundary



Figure 2: Beach Access Point Location Plan

WARRNAMBOOL BEACH ACCESS - LOCATION PLAN (WEST)



REFER TO LOCATION PLAN (EAST) (BELOW)

WARRNAMBOOL BEACH ACCESS - LOCATION PLAN (EAST)



REFER TO LOCATION PLAN (WEST) (ABOVE)

## 1.2 WHY IS A STRATEGY NEEDED?

In 2019, Council completed an audit of the beach access points it maintains. The audit identified that some beach access structures are not fit for purpose, and some have a limited useful remaining lifespan.

In future, significant changes are likely to place additional pressure on Warrnambool's coastline. The population of Warrnambool was approximately 35,500 in 2020 and is forecast to reach close to 40,000 by 2036. (RDV, 2022). Warrnambool is also a popular and expanding tourism destination (WWC, 2021) and this will result in growing demand for beach access in the coming years.

The impacts of climate change are expected to bring a warmer year-round climate, more frequent storm surges with increased wave height as well as sea level rises. These forecast changes may cause significant impact on the coastline, including its fragile dune system and built infrastructure.

The preparation of a Beach Access Strategy will allow Council to get a better understanding of the needs of stakeholders, community and visitors in accessing Warrnambool's beaches. And, through consultation the Strategy will give Council a better idea about the challenges and opportunities for each beach access point and what can be done to improve beach access.

The Strategy will help strike a balance between providing safe, convenient access to the beach and minimising the impact on the natural environment and cultural landscape. The Beach Access Strategy will provide the framework for planning and managing Warrnambool's beach accesses into the future.

The following are some of the topics and questions that will be considered during the preparation of the Strategy:

- **Accessibility**
  - Are current access points fit for purpose?
  - Do current access points provide suitable access and inclusion for people living with a disability and special access needs?
  - How can accessibility to Warrnambool's beaches be improved?
- **Usage**
  - What is the hierarchy of use (most to least utilised)?
  - Are the existing access points appropriately located?
- **Safety**
  - What are the current safety issues and how should these be addressed?
- **Cultural Heritage**
  - Are there any existing access points that are having a detrimental impact on cultural heritage?
  - How can future works be planned, designed and constructed to avoid damaging sites of cultural significance?
- **Environment**
  - Are there any existing access points that are having a detrimental impact on the natural environment and flora and fauna habitat, in particular threatened or endangered species?
  - How can future works be planned, designed and constructed to avoid damaging the natural environment?

- **Historic features**
  - Are there any historic features within the study area that need to be considered in planning for renewal or upgrade to beach access points?
  - How can future works be designed to respect these historic features?
- **Foreshore activities and tourism**
  - Which access points are most frequently accessed by tourists?
  - Which foreshore activities and events rely on beach access?
  - Do the current beach access points provide suitable access for these foreshore activities and events?
- **Climate change impacts**
  - What are the potential climate change impacts on the existing beach access points?
  - How do climate change impacts affect the future maintenance regime for beach access structures?
  - What are the best design materials and construction techniques to ensure beach access structures have a long life, are adaptable to changing climates and avoid long-term maintenance issues for Council?
- **Maintenance and renewal costs**
  - Will the planned maintenance and renewal program need to change in the future?
  - What are the approximate costs of maintenance, renewal and/or replacement for the existing beach access points? Is this budget feasible in the long-term?

The recommendations of the Strategy are intended to provide guidance for Warrnambool's 33 beach access points over a 15-year timeframe. The Strategy will help inform Council's capital works and renewal programs and will also be used to support any future grant and funding applications.

The Beach Access Strategy will be informed by consultation with community and key stakeholders. It will also be informed by the various strategies, plans and policies that are relevant to coastal planning and specifically beach access. A summary of these documents is provided in Section 2. A summary of the key issues and opportunities identified through this strategy, plan and policy review is provided at Section 3.

## 2. PLANNING CONTEXT

The Beach Access Strategy will need to align with the requirements, objectives and strategies of the planning scheme and relevant State and local strategies, plans and policies.

A summary of relevant excerpts from Warrnambool’s planning scheme are provided at Sections 2.1 and 2.2.

A summary of relevant State and local strategies, plans and policies are provided at Sections 2.3 and 2.4. These are listed at Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Plans and policies applicable to the Beach Access Strategy

### STATE STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES

- Marine and Coastal Policy, Victorian State Government 2020
- Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014
- Victoria’s Coast and Marine Environments Under Projected Climate Change: Impacts, research and priorities (Victoria State Government 2018)
- Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast, 2020
- Protecting Victoria’s Environment-Biodiversity 2037

### LOCAL STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES

- Warrnambool City Council Plan 2021-2025
- Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan 2021
- Disability Access and Inclusion Policy 2020
- Active Warrnambool Strategy 2019-30
- Warrnambool 2040, Community Plan 2019
- Lake Pertobe Master Plan 2018
- Green Warrnambool 2018
- Warrnambool Harbour Master Plan 2018
- Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan 2013
- Moyjil Conservation Management Plan 2013
- Warrnambool Open Space Strategy 2013
- Warrnambool Coastal Vegetation Management Plan 2012
- Warrnambool Public Amenities Strategy 2013

## 2.1 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) guides land use and planning across the state and includes a range of objectives and strategies relating to management of coastal land and protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage. The following excerpts from the PPF are particularly relevant to the Beach Access Strategy:

### STATE AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

#### 11.03-4S COASTAL SETTLEMENT

*Objective:* To plan for sustainable coastal development

*Applicable strategies:* Limit development in identified coastal hazard areas, on ridgelines, primary coastal dune systems, shorelines of estuaries, wetlands and low-lying coastal areas, or where coastal processes may be detrimentally impacted.

#### 12 ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE VALUES

Planning should help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.

#### 12.01-1S PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY

*Objective:* To assist the protection and conservation of Victoria’s biodiversity

*Applicable strategies:* Strategically plan for the protection and conservation of Victoria’s important areas of biodiversity, considering cumulative impacts of land use and development, fragmentation of habitat and the spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens into natural ecosystems.

Consider impacts of any change in land use or development that may affect the biodiversity value of sites utilized by species listed under the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (CAMBA) or the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA).

#### 12.01-1L WARRNAMBOOL BIODIVERSITY

*Applicable strategies:* Discourage development that compromises the ecological integrity of the Merri River, Hopkins River and Russells Creek corridors and the coastal reserves. Consider as relevant the Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan 2013.

#### 12.02-1S PROTECTION OF THE MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

*Objective:* To protect and enhance the marine and coastal environment.

*Applicable strategies:*

- Enhance the ecological values of the ecosystems in the marine and coastal environment.
- Protect and enhance the overall extent and condition of native habitats and species diversity distributions across public and private land in the marine and coastal environment.
- Encourage revegetation of cleared land abutting coastal reserves.
- Minimise direct, cumulative and synergistic effects on ecosystems and habitats.
- Protect and enhance natural features, landscapes, seascapes and public visual corridors.
- Protect the heritage values, the aesthetic quality of locations, cultural links with maritime activities, sea country and sense of place.

Consider as relevant the Marine and Coastal Act 2018, Marine and Coastal Policy 2020, Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast 2020, Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014.

#### 12.02-1L COASTAL LANDSCAPES

#### Applicable strategies:

- Protect sites of cultural significance including Point Richie / Moyjil.
- Avoid development that detrimentally impacts on the scenic landscapes along the coast, river valleys and inland ridgelines.
- Minimise the visual impact of development including accessways.
- Protect vantage points and view lines to and from the public realm.

#### 12.02-2S MARINE AND COASTAL CROWN LAND

*Objective:* To ensure the use and development of marine and coastal Crown land is ecologically sustainable, minimises impacts on cultural and environmental values, and improves public benefit for current and future generations.

#### Applicable strategies:

- Maintaining safe and equitable public access
- Improves public benefit

#### 13 ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND AMENITY

Planning should strengthen the resilience and safety of communities by adopting best practice environmental management and risk management approaches, avoid or minimise natural and human-made environmental hazards and environmental degradation and prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change.

#### 13.01-1S NATURAL HAZARDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

*Objective:* To minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning.

*Applicable strategies:* Consider the risks associated with climate change in planning and management decision making processes and site and design development to minimise risk to life, property, the natural environment and community infrastructure from natural hazards.

#### 13.01-2S COASTAL INUNDATION AND EROSION

*Objective:* To plan for and manage the potential coastal impacts of climate change.

*Applicable strategies:* Plan for sea level rise of at least 0.8 metres by 2100 and allow for the combined effects of tides, storm surges, coastal processes and local conditions such as topography and geology when assessing risks and coastal impacts associated with climate change.

Consider as relevant the Marine and Coastal Act 2018, Marine and Coastal Policy 2020, Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast 2020, Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014.

#### 13.02-1S BUSHFIRE PLANNING

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

*Applicable strategies:* prioritising the protection of human life over all other policy considerations, directing population growth and development to low risk locations and considering the bushfire risk in decision making at all stages of the planning process.

#### 13.04-2S EROSION AND LANDSLIP

*Objective:* To protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes.

*Applicable strategies:* identify areas subject to erosion or instability in planning schemes, prevent inappropriate development in unstable areas and promote revegetation retention, planting and rehabilitation in areas prone to erosion.

#### 13.04-2L LANDSLIP

#### Applicable strategies:

- Avoid buildings and works that increase the risk of landslip in areas where landslip risks have been identified.
- Avoid vegetation removal in areas susceptible to landslip.
- Discourage development on steep slopes (in excess of 20 degrees)

#### 15.01-1S URBAN DESIGN

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

#### Applicable strategies:

- Ensure development contributes to community and cultural life by improving the quality of living and working environments, facilitating accessibility and providing for inclusiveness.
- Ensure development supports public realm amenity and safe access to walking and cycling environments and public transport.
- Ensure that the design and location of publicly accessible private spaces, including car parking areas, forecourts and walkways, is of a high standard, creates a safe environment for users and enables easy and efficient use.

Consider as relevant Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria 2017

#### 15.02-1S ENERGY AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

*Objective:* To encourage land use and development that is energy and resource efficient, supports a cooler environment and minimises greenhouse gas emissions

#### Applicable strategies:

- Support low energy forms of transport such as walking and cycling.
- Reduce the urban heat island effect by greening urban areas, buildings, transport corridors and open spaces with vegetation.

### 15.03-1S HERITAGE CONSERVATION

*Objective:* To ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance.

*Applicable strategies:*

- Provide for the protection of natural heritage sites and man-made resources.
- Provide for the conservation and enhancement of those places that are of aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, scientific or social significance.
- Encourage appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values.
- Retain those elements that contribute to the importance of the heritage place.
- Encourage the conservation and restoration of contributory elements of a heritage place.
- Ensure an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced

### 15.03-2S ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

*Objective:* To ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance.

*Applicable strategies:*

- Identify, assess and document places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, in consultation with relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties, as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.
- Provide for the protection and conservation of pre-contact and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage places.
- Ensure that permit approvals align with the recommendations of any relevant Cultural Heritage Management Plan approved under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Consider as relevant the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

### 17.04-1S FACILITATING TOURISM

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

*Applicable strategies:*

- Promote tourism facilities that preserve, are compatible with and build on the assets and qualities of surrounding activities and attractions.
- Create innovative tourism experiences.
- Encourage investment that meets demand and supports growth in tourism.

### 17.04-1R TOURISM – GREAT SOUTH COAST

*Applicable strategies:*

- Provide flexibility and opportunities for a diverse range of tourism development, including an increase in the supply of appropriate accommodation and tourism infrastructure.
- Provide for the sustainable management of regionally significant tourism attractions such as the Great Ocean Road, Great Southern Touring Route, national parks, major inland waterways such as Lake Corangamite, key coastal assets including Discovery Bay, and cultural heritage sites.

### 17.04-1L TOURISM

*Objective:* To develop Warrnambool as the western gateway to the Great Ocean Road Region and as a tourism hub for South-West Victoria.

*Applicable strategies:*

- Develop the Warrnambool Harbour area as an active coastal recreation precinct with improved visitor services and port facilities.
- Develop foreshore facilities based on Warrnambool's maritime heritage and environment.
- Support tourism and community access to the coast, without compromising the natural environment.
- Support tourism development in urban areas where their impacts and infrastructure requirements can best be accommodated.
- Encourage use and development of coastal and river areas that optimises their tourism potential while respecting the sensitive nature of these areas.
- Facilitate a recreation precinct in the Lady Bay area that responds to the sensitive nature of the area.
- Provide infrastructure that meets the needs of tourism development.

### 17.04-2S COASTAL AND MARITIME TOURISM AND RECREATION

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

*Applicable Strategies:*

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

### 19.02-6S OPEN SPACE

*Objective:* To establish, manage and improve a diverse and integrated network of public open space that meets the needs of the community.

*Applicable strategies:*

- Maintain public accessibility on public land immediately adjoining waterways and coasts.

## 2.2 ZONES, OVERLAYS AND CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

### ZONES

Warrnambool's 33 beach access points are located on land zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) and Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ). The PCRZ applies to coastline to the less urbanized areas of the coast, including Shelly Beach, Pickering Point, Lady Bay (East) and Logans Beach, whilst the PPRZ applies to the coastline adjoining the urban area, including Worm Bay and Lady Bay (West). Figure 4 shows zoning of land within the study area.

#### 36.02 PUBLIC PARK AND RECREATION ZONE

This zone seeks to:

- recognise areas for public recreation and open space.
- protect and conserve areas of significance where appropriate.
- provide for commercial uses where appropriate

#### 36.03 PUBLIC CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE ZONE

This zone seeks to:

- protect and conserve the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, scientific, landscape, habitat or cultural values.
- provide facilities which assist in public education and interpretation of the natural environment with minimal degradation of the natural environment or natural processes.
- provide appropriate resource based uses.

### OVERLAYS

There are five overlays which apply to the study area between Shelly Beach and Logans Beach. Figures 5 to 9 show overlays applying to land within the study area. These overlays include the following:

#### 42.01 ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY SCHEDULE 1 – COASTAL ENVIRONS

This overlay applies to coastal environs in Warrnambool with environmental significance. It contains a number of environmental objectives to be achieved for these areas, including protection of natural and cultural values, preventing and minimising coastal erosion, maintaining remnant vegetation, minimising the spread of weeds and encouraging planting of locally indigenous species.

#### 42.03 SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE OVERLAY – SCHEDULE 1 – COASTAL HINTERLAND LANDSCAPE AREA

This overlay applies to coastal hinterland areas recognised for their significant landscapes. It contains a number of landscape objectives to be achieved, including protecting the scenic qualities of the coast hinterland, recognizing important views and maintaining and enhancing these views.

#### 43.01 HERITAGE OVERLAY – HO19 WARRNAMBOOL BREAKWATER, VIADUCT AND HARBOUR AND HO51 HOPKINS RIVER MOUTH

This overlay seeks to:

- To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.
- To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.
- To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.
- To conserve specified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.

#### 43.02 DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY – SCHEDULE 2 – LOGANS BEACH

This overlay applies to sets design, subdivision and development parameters:

- To ensure the proper protection and management of the whale viewing area and its environs.
- To protect the local environment and significant views.
- To provide generous separation between dwellings to enable revegetation of the landscape.
- To limit intrusion on the skyline and ridgeline.

To encourage the designation of Appropriate Building and Access Areas at the time of subdivision.

To provide for a thorough permit application assessment process for buildings, particularly on the southern side of Hopkins Point Road in relation to landscape and environmental issues, by using as appropriate the Logans Beach Urban Design Guidelines (including the associated computer model).

A permit is not required for repairs and maintenance of existing buildings and works or buildings and works associated with informal outdoor recreation.

#### 44.06 BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT OVERLAY

The purpose of this overlay to ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire. Other purposes of this overlay relate to development, and in particular buildings.

### CULTURAL HERITAGE SENSITIVITY

Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity are defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018* and relate to landforms and soil types where Aboriginal places are more likely to be located. The cultural sensitivity areas are identified on maps available from the Aboriginal Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System (ACHRIS). Figure 10 shows the entire study area as an area of cultural heritage sensitivity. There are also particular sites of cultural heritage which have been mapped within study area. (AV, 2020)

In a planning context, any land use and development activities likely to cause harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage must have a management plan prepared and approved before the development or activity can be carried out (AV, 2020).

Figure 4: Zoning



Figure 5: Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 Coastal Environs





Figure 8: Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 2 Logans Beach

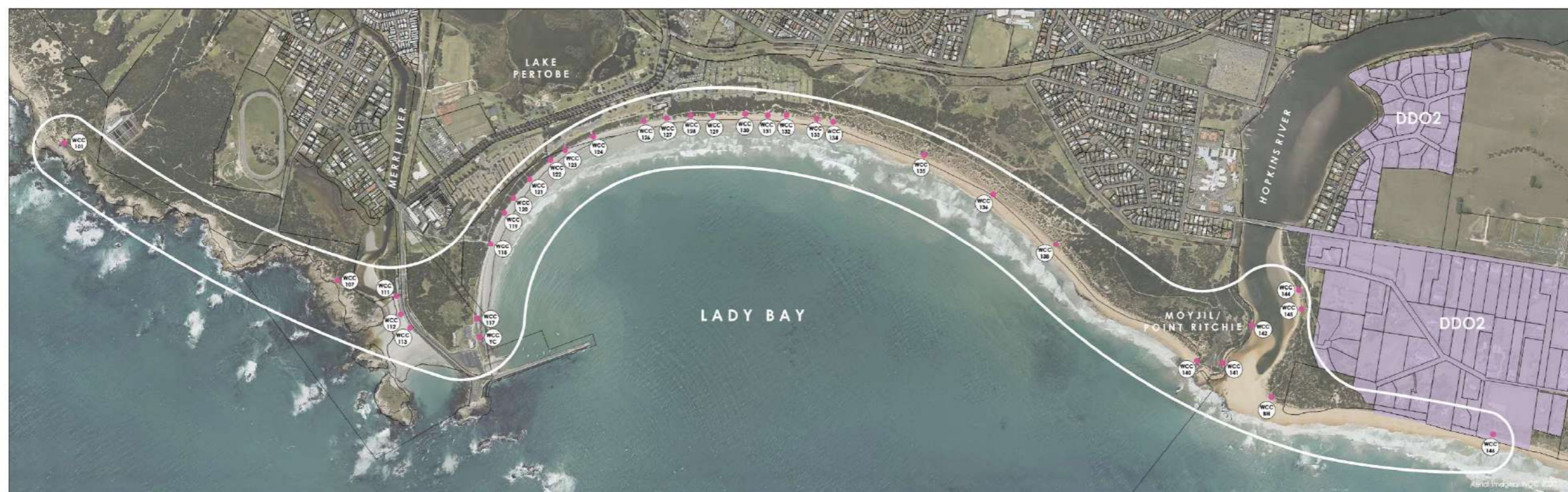


Figure 9: Bushfire Management Overlay

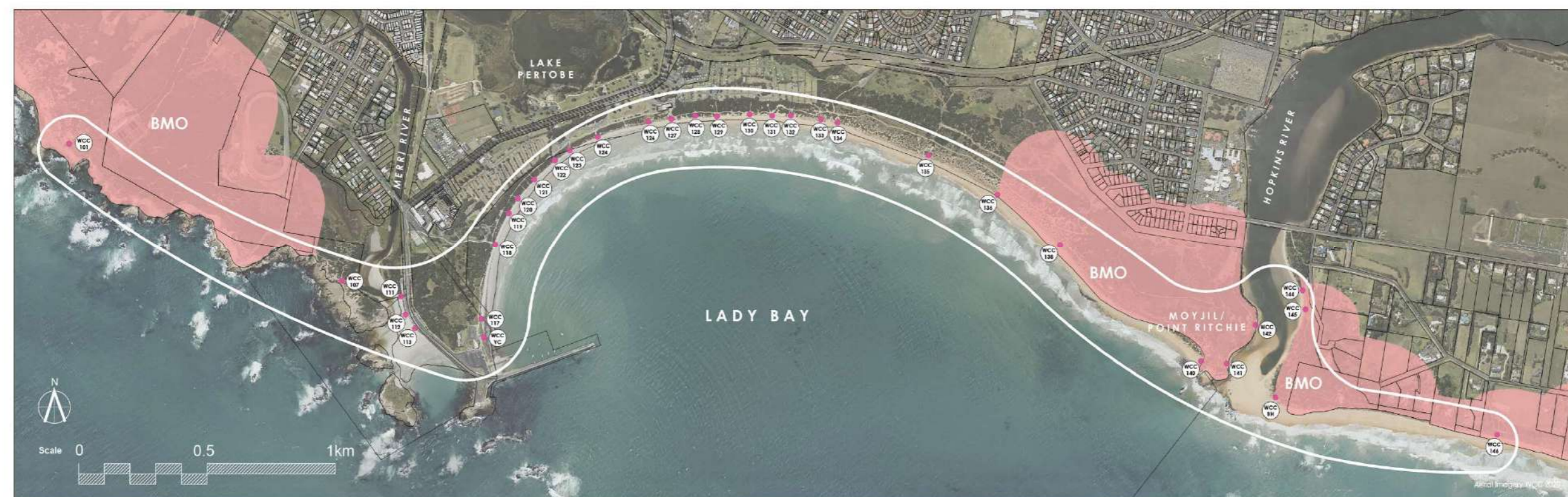


Figure 10: Cultural Heritage Sensitivity Areas (covers all 33 beach access points within the study area)



## 2.3 STATE AND PLANNING STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES

### MARINE AND COASTAL POLICY, VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT 2020

The Marine and Coastal Policy sets out policies for planning and managing the marine and coastal environment. The Policy is a long-term approach for the next 10-15 years.

The policy applies to land 5 kilometres inland from high water mark and 3 nautical miles from the high water mark.

This policy ‘*guides planning and management of the marine and coastal environment so that ecosystems, communities, industries and built assets are resilient in the face of future change, including from natural hazards, climate change, population growth, or a combination of these factors*’ (DELWP, 2020).’

The Policy contains directions on the following matters:

- Traditional Owners’ rights, aspirations and knowledge
- Ecosystems and habitats
- Natural features and landscapes
- Cultural values and heritage sites
- Value of marine and coastal Crown land
- Managing coastal hazard risk
- Emergency response and preparedness
- Coastal settlements
- Marine and coastal industries
- Recreation and tourism
- Buildings, structures and access
- Stewardship and collaborative management
- Funding for sustainable management of marine and coastal Crown land
- Marine Spatial Planning Framework

The policy seeks to address a number of issues facing marine and coastal environments. One of these issues is threats to marine and coastal health, such as projected population growth and visitor numbers. This is particularly pertinent to Warrnambool where the expansion of the residential growth areas will see a likely increase in resident population and increase in the number of visitors to coastal sites.

The policy also describes the decision pathway which shows how the objectives and guiding principles of the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*, should be used in decision making, as shown in Figure 2. This Policy and the planning and decision pathway will be used to guide the approach to consultation, planning and decision making in developing the Warrnambool Beach Access Strategy.

Figure 11: Planning and decision pathway



## VICTORIAN COASTAL STRATEGY 2014

The Victorian Coastal Strategy focuses on five significant themes:

1. Managing population growth
2. Adapting to a changing climate
3. Managing coastal land and infrastructure
4. Valuing the natural environment
5. Integrating marine planning.

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide guidance for agencies and decision makers for coastal, marine and estuarine environments, provide a framework for the development of plans for coastal Crown Land and engage the community to continue to value the coast and marine environments and to participate in its planning and management.

There are many parts of the Strategy which are applicable in the development of a Beach Access Strategy for Warrnambool. Two of the most relevant sections of the Strategy detail policy related to on-shore environment and heritage.

## VICTORIA'S COAST AND MARINE ENVIRONMENTS UNDER PROJECTED CLIMATE CHANGE: IMPACTS, RESEARCH AND PRIORITIES, 2018

This report discusses some of the impacts of climate change on Victoria's coast. They include:

- Physical and chemical impacts, such as sea-level rise, wave and wind changes, more frequent and extreme storms and rainfall changes, with less rainfall in winter and spring and more frequent and more intense downpours, nitrogen cycle changes and ocean acidification.
- Biological impacts, including biological changes due to ocean acidification, species and habitat changes, declining number of shorebirds, changes to marine ecosystems.

The report acknowledges gaps in current knowledge about climate change and the potential impacts it is likely to have on biological systems. The report also acknowledges that there needs to be improved understanding of what the likely climate change impacts will be in coastal regions. The report identifies three priorities for improving knowledge. They include:

1. Understanding the effects of increased climatic variability.
2. Understanding the importance of links between catchments, estuaries and broader coastal waters for maintaining marine ecosystem health.
3. Understanding the cumulative ecological consequences of coastal development to meet human needs.

*'With climate change affecting storm frequency and intensity, understanding how beaches respond to large events is critical in predicting habitat change. In Victoria the changing vegetation ecology on the dunes greatly impacts this dune response but is largely unknown (Victoria State Government, 2018. p. 16).'*

## SITING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR STRUCTURES ON THE VICTORIAN COAST 2021

These guidelines apply to planning and management of marine and coastal environments.

The guidelines apply to use and development on Crown land, including structures such as toilet facilities, shared trails, boardwalks and stairs, car parking and public lookouts.

The guidelines require that the design of buildings and structures responds to site-specific environmental, social and cultural conditions. There are 15 fundamental considerations detailed in the Guidelines, including:

1. Aboriginal cultural heritage
2. Coastal processes
3. Geology
4. Morphology
5. Hydrology
6. Vegetation and ecology
7. Climatic conditions
8. Views
9. Public Open Space
10. Local character and sense of place
11. Heritage
12. Public access
13. Increased function and adaptability
14. Sustainability
15. Materials and finished

## PROTECTING VICTORIA'S ENVIRONMENT - BIODIVERSITY 2037, 2017

Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 is the Victorian Government's plan to stop the decline of biodiversity and achieve an overall improvement. The vision is 'Victoria's biodiversity is healthy, valued and actively cared for.

2037 targets include:

- No vulnerable or near-threatened species will have become endangered.
- All critically endangered and endangered species will have at least one option available for being conserved ex situ or re-established in the wild (where feasible under climate change) should they need it.
- We achieve a net gain of the overall extent and condition of habitats across terrestrial, waterway and marine environments.

Chapter topics include:

- A vision for biodiversity in a time of climate change
- A healthy environment for healthy Victorians
- Linking society and economy to the environment
- Investment
- Biodiversity response planning
- Working with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians
- Better protection and management of biodiversity
- Government leadership

There are a list of 20 priorities included in the plan as follows:

1. Deliver cost-effective results utilising decision support tools in biodiversity planning processes to help achieve and measure against the targets.
2. Increase the collection of targeted data for evidence-based decision making and make all data more accessible.
3. Raise the awareness of all Victorians about the importance of the state's natural environment.
4. Increase opportunities for all Victorians to have daily connections with nature.
5. Increase opportunities for all Victorians to act to protect biodiversity.
6. Embed consideration of natural capital into decision making across the whole of government, and support industries to do the same.
7. Help to create more liveable and climate-adapted communities.
8. Better care for and showcase Victoria's environmental assets as world-class natural and cultural tourism attractions.
9. Establish sustained funding for biodiversity.
10. Leverage non-government investment in biodiversity.
11. Increase incentives and explore market opportunities for private landholders to conserve biodiversity.
12. Adopt a collaborative biodiversity response planning approach to drive accountability and measurable improvement.
13. Support and enable community groups, Traditional Owners, non-government organisations and sections of government to participate in biodiversity response planning.
14. Engage with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to include Aboriginal values and traditional ecological knowledge in biodiversity planning and management.
15. Support Aboriginal access to biodiversity for economic development.
16. Build capacity to increase Aboriginal participation in biodiversity management.
17. Deliver excellence in management of all land and waters.
18. Maintain and enhance a world-class system of protected areas.
19. Adopt a whole-of-government approach to implementing the Plan.
20. Establish a transparent evaluation process to report on progress towards delivering the Plan.

The plan also details initiatives to deliver each priority and where appropriate lists who will be responsible for undertaking it.

## 2.4 LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES

### WILD COAST LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN 2021

Of the total 35 beach access points maintained by Council, there are two beach location points that are not included in the subject area for the Warrnambool Beach Access Strategy. These two beach access points excluded from the Strategy include Levys Beach (access point from Levys Beach car park which branches off into two beach access points) and Spookys Beach. These access points were included in the recently completed Wild Coast Master Plan 2021.

The Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan was prepared by Blom Design and Council in 2021.

The Wild Coast Precinct is located at the western edge of Warrnambool and covers an area of approximately 230 hectares and 3 kilometres of coastline. This Precinct is culturally significant and ecologically interesting and it forms part of a broader area known as the Belfast Coastal Reserve. This Precinct also provides a range of recreational activities for local Warrnambool residents and visitors. The location of the Wild Coast Precinct is shown at Figure 13.

Figure 13: Wild Coast Site Location Plan



The Coastal Management Plan, prepared in 2013 identified the key values and some of the key management issues facing the Wild Coast Precinct. In response, this Landscape Master Plan expanded on the Coastal Management Plan, identifying the need to protect the cultural and environmental values of the Precinct and ensure recreation, tourism and land uses are carried out in a respectful manner to prevent damaging this special place.

Through consultation and discussion with stakeholders, six key place principles were developed for the Precinct, which helped informed the objectives and recommendations of the Plan. The place preinciples and objectives included:

#### PLACE PRINCIPLES:

- A. *Celebrate and respect culture and connection to Country*
- B. *Embrace and conserve nature*
- C. *Enrich biodiversity values*
- D. *Enjoy and promote recreation*
- E. *Create a unique visitor experience*
- F. *Improve safety for visitors*
- G. *Maintain the ‘sense of place’ with minimal development*

#### OBJECTIVES:

- OBJECTIVE 1: *Acknowledge and respect cultural heritage and connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples. Conserve and protect these values through careful landscaping measures.*
- OBJECTIVE 2: *Enhance and restore native habitat for biodiversity, through revegetation, weed reduction measures and improved protection of habitat.*
- OBJECTIVE 3: *Ensure new structures, built works, landscaping and signage are designed and constructed in a sensitive way that is respectful to cultural heritage and environmental values, including habitat and native vegetation.*
- OBJECTIVE 4: *Recognise the role of the Precinct in providing for recreation opportunities, including walking, bird and nature observation, cycling, horse riding, fishing and surfing.*
- OBJECTIVE 5: *Respect nature, acknowledging the risks associated with flood function, bushfire, climate change, sand shifts and dune erosion. Engage climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.*
- OBJECTIVE 6: *Improve the safety of visitors, particularly walkers and cyclists.*
- OBJECTIVE 7: *Enhance visitor’s experience of the Precinct, through infrastructure improvements and improved wayfinding and information signage.*
- OBJECTIVE 8: *Clearly define authorised access trails and tracks and formalise car parking to help prevent visitors from going off-track and causing damage to vegetation, bird and wildlife habitat, sand dunes and cultural heritage sites.*
- OBJECTIVE 9: *Recognise the role of cultural heritage and the natural environment as a driver of tourism and encourage visitation to the Precinct in the form of sustainable tourism.*
- OBJECTIVE 10: *Provide opportunities for education and interpretation. Share information with visitors about the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and connection of the Eastern Maar Peoples to this area and the significant environmental values of the Precinct.*
- OBJECTIVE 11: *Encourage and enforce rules and regulations, and discourage the use of the Precinct as a destination for off-road vehicles and motorbikes.*
- OBJECTIVE 12: *Work in collaboration and support partnerships with local groups and individuals, volunteers, government organisations and Eastern Maar Peoples to see the plan implemented.*

The recommendations of the Master Plan included recommendations around future management and improvements to the Levys Beach and Spookys Beach access points. Figures 13 and 14 show plans for Levys Beach and Spookys Beach, detailing the recommendations for each site and the beach access points.

Figure 13: Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan (Levys Beach Recommendations)

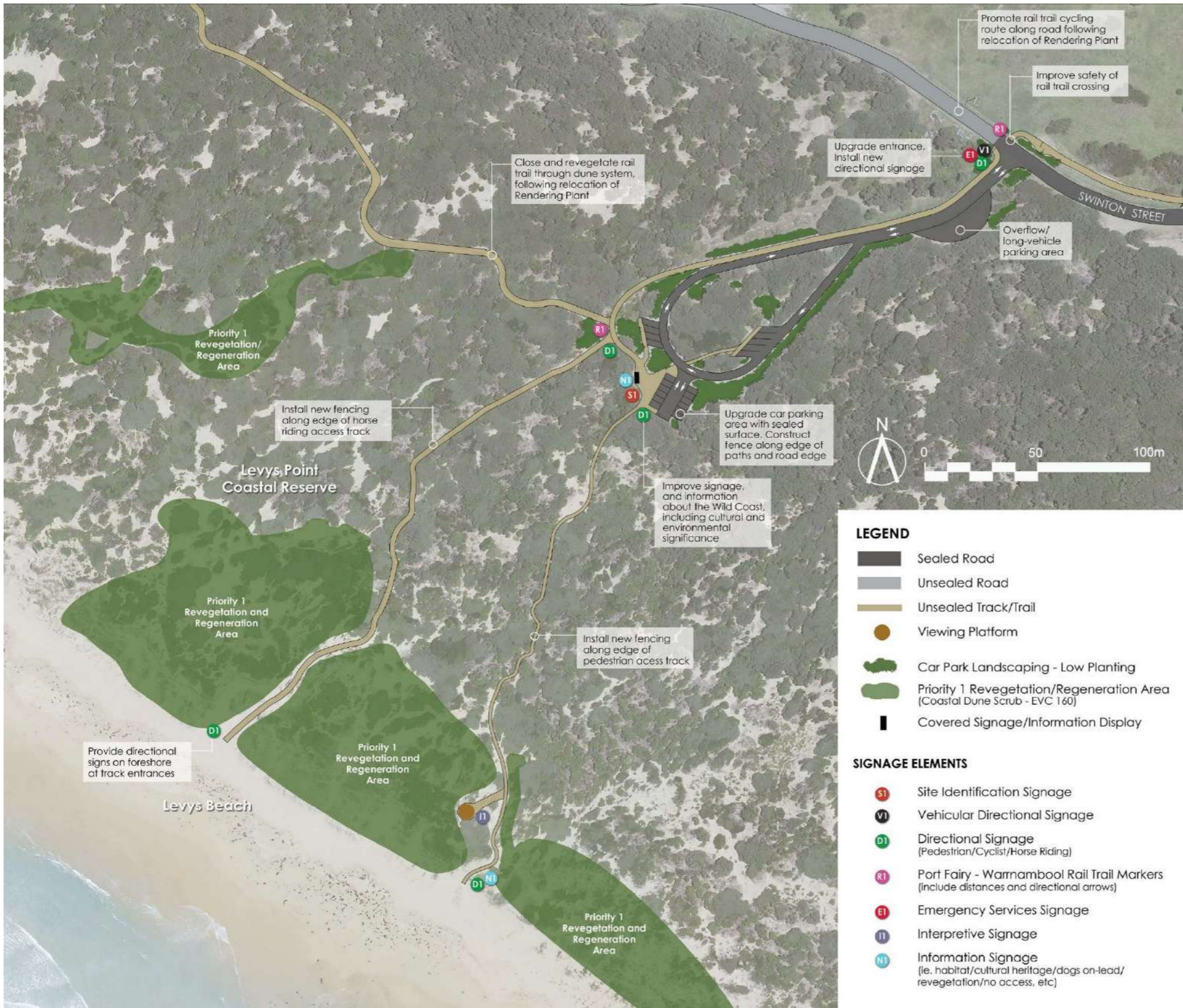
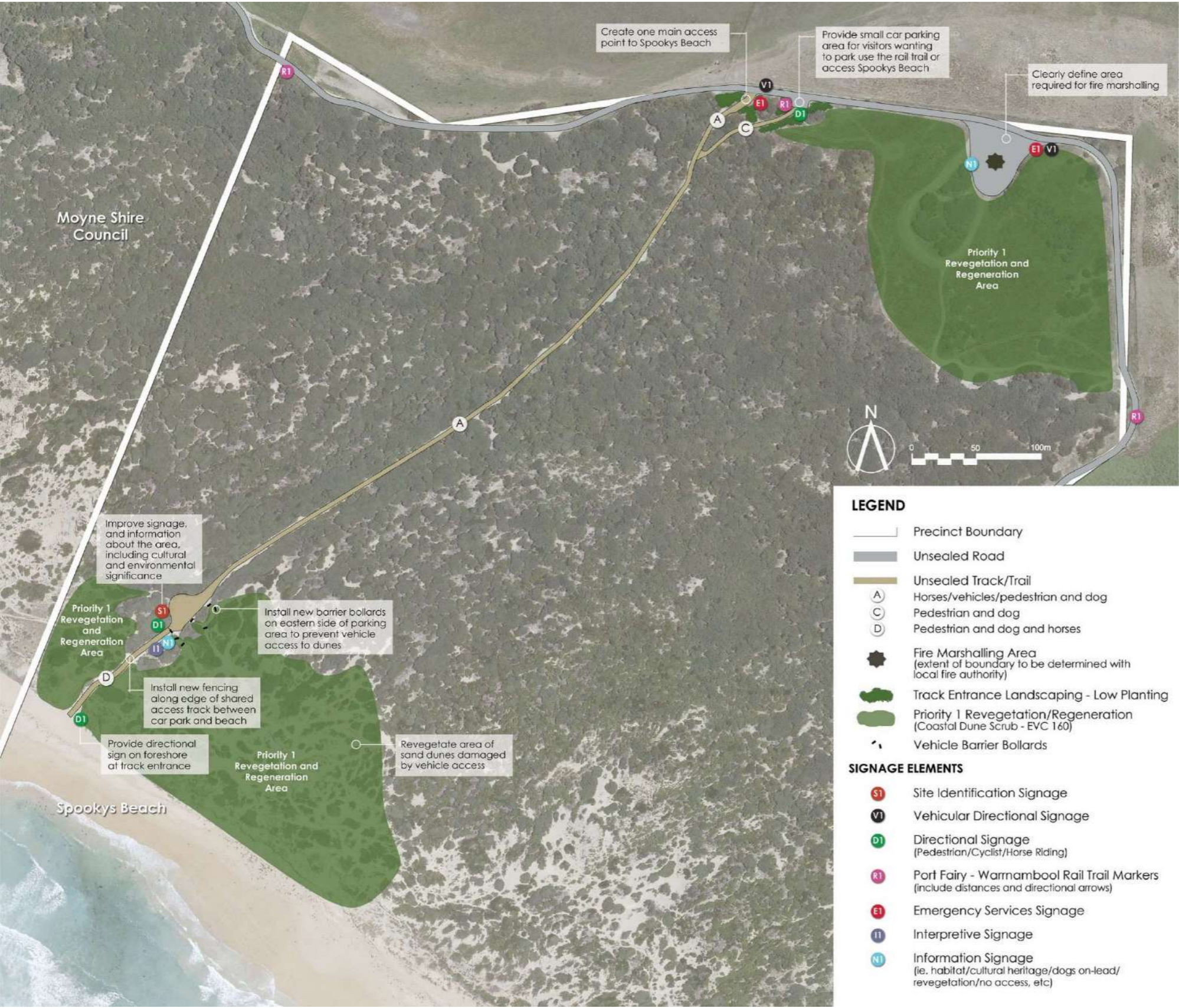


Figure 14: Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan (Spookys Beach Recommendations)



## WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

The Council Plan sets Warrnambool’s Vision as ‘A thriving city at the heart of coast and country’. The Plan sets the strategic direction for the City to 2025. The goals of the Plan include:

- *A healthy community*
- *A sustainable environment*
- *A strong economy*
- *A connected, inclusive place*
- *An effective Council*

Objectives relevant to the development of the Beach Access Strategy include:

*1.4 An accessible city: Council will improve physical and social accessibility to community services, facilities, places and precincts.*

*1.4.7 Increased access for people with disabilities by upgrading Council infrastructure through recurrent capital funding.*

*2.2 Water and coastal management: Council will protect and enhance the health of Warrnambool’s coastline and inland waterways to protect and improve biodiversity*

*2.2.3 Implement the Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan to guide the future use, development and management of Warrnambool’s coastline.*

*2.2.4 Implement the Moyjil- Point Ritchie Conservation Management Plan*

## WARRNAMBOOL 2040, COMMUNITY PLAN 2019

Warrnambool 2040 (W2040) is a community plan for Warrnambool.

There are a number of ‘people’, ‘place’ and ‘environment’ goals which relate to public land. These goals (grouped by theme) include:

### OUR PEOPLE

- *Warrnambool acknowledges respects and celebrates the diverse cultures, beliefs and history which makes up our community.*
- *Warrnambool’s community acknowledges local Aboriginal history and respects and celebrates Aboriginal culture.*

### OUR PLACE

- *Warrnambool is a great place to walk and cycle, with a compact, attractive and safe built environment.*
- *The road network safely accommodates all users and footpaths and shared paths along all waterways and the coast, provide off road options for active transport users.*
- *Warrnambool is memorable for its unique places, public art and sense of identity.*

### OUR ENVIRONMENT

- *We will be innovative and bold, working collaboratively on smart solutions.*
- *We will be prepared, adept and resilient in the face of climate change challenges.*
- *Our infrastructure and open space will be designed effectively and our community will have the knowledge to mitigate climate change impacts and thrive in a changing climate.*
- *Warrnambool will restore maintain and enhance its natural environment drawing on the best scientific and Traditional Owner knowledge.*

- *We will build our knowledge, skills and involvement in protecting biodiversity, waterways and the coast for the benefit of current and future generations of people, flora and fauna.*
- *We will reduce the impacts of pest plants and animals and decrease damaging land uses and practices.*
- *We will care for and regenerate our waterways our coast and marine environment and support a natural water cycle.*

## WARRNAMBOOL COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN, WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL 2013

The Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan (WCMP) was prepared by URS Australia Pty Ltd and Warrnambool City Council. The Plan guides the future use, development and management of Warrnambool’s coastline.

The WCMP identified environmental, cultural and recreational values along the coastline and identified key management issues.

The vision for the WCMP is ‘An environment where the natural and cultural values of Warrnambool’s unique coastline are protected and enhanced and opportunities to access and enjoy the coastline are achieved in a sustainable way’.

A number of objectives are detailed in the plan to achieve this vision and manage The coastlines in the future.

The WCMP identified five management precincts along the Warrnambool Coastline. The 33 beach access points fall within 4 precincts, being the South West Coast, Lady Bay East, Lady Bay West and Logan Beach.

### KEY VALUES IDENTIFIED FOR THE LOGAN BEACH PRECINCT INCLUDE:

- *Logans Beach Southern Right Whale Nursery*
- *Site of Aboriginal cultural significance*
- *Significant area of Coastal Dune Scrub Area of locally endangered Coastal Dune Grassland*
- *Important estuarine habitat Nesting Hooded Plover populations*
- *Recreational fishing Mouth of the Hopkins River Estuary*

### KEY VALUES IDENTIFIED FOR THE LADY BAY EAST PRECINCT INCLUDE:

- *Important wildlife corridor*
- *Recreational opportunities such as walking and surfing*
- *Post settlement sites of significance*
- *Places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, including Point Ritchie (Moyjil Aboriginal Place)*

### KEY VALUES IDENTIFIED FOR THE LADY BAY WEST PRECINCT INCLUDE:

- *Significant strategic point of access to Warrnambool’s coastline*
- *Concentration of recreational opportunities*
- *Post settlement places of historical significance, e.g. the Victorian Heritage Registered Breakwater*
- *Important feeding and roosting habitat e.g. Middle Island (Little Penguin population, protected through the Maremma Guardian Dogs project)*
- *Highly valued by the community for the variety of recreational opportunities available*
- *Places of Aboriginal cultural significance Adjoins the Merri Marine Sanctuary*
- *Appropriate development within sensitive areas Mouth of Merri River Estuary*

#### KEY VALUES IDENTIFIED FOR THE SOUTH WEST COAST PRECINCT INCLUDE:

- *Places of Aboriginal cultural significance*
- *Highly scenic and wild landscape*
- *Valued for its remote nature and passive recreational use Geologically significant limestone cliff line Biodiversity value*
- *Sustainable release to the ocean of reclaimed water*

#### KEY MANAGEMENT ISSUES IDENTIFIED FOR THE COASTLINE INCLUDE:

- *Conservation management of native flora and fauna*
  - *Pest plant and animal management*
  - *Unauthorised vehicle, motorbike and pedestrian access*
  - *Dune instability*
  - *Non-compliance with the off-leash areas*
  - *Areas of soil and cliff instability accessible to the public*
  - *Dune system disturbance though uncontrolled beach and vantage points access*
  - *Impacts to and maintenance of infrastructure affected by coastal process*
  - *Impacts to places of cultural significance due to their fragile and accessible nature*
  - *Style and location of interpretive and directional signage*
  - *Conflicts between uses and activities*
  - *Conservation management of native flora and fauna*
  - *Pest plant and animal management.*
  - *Threats to environmental values from outside the management area*
  - *Provision of new infrastructure, including amenities*
  - *Silting of Lady Bay*
  - *Disposal of dredging spoil*
  - *Accumulation of seaweed on the foreshore*
  - *Degradation of the coastal environment*
  - *Commercial and recreational boating facilities, fishing and associated activities*
  - *Traffic congestion and car parking*
  - *Public safety along the Foreshore Promenade*
  - *Fire management*
  - *Competing uses*
  - *Development pressure*
  - *High seas and storm surge eroding the dune face*
  - *Artificial (illegal and authorised) Merri River mouth opening*
  - *Management of introduced plants and animals*
  - *Vegetation management*
  - *Coastal Acid Sulfate Soil hazard*
  - *Marine pests such as Undaria*
  - *Unauthorised bike and pedestrian access*
  - *Lease arrangements for facilities*
  - *Dumping of rubbish and littering*
- (WCC, 2013)

#### POINT RITCHIE/MOYJIL CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2013

This Management Plan includes four management areas, being Point Ritchie / Moyjil (Management Area 1), Western Dunes (Management Area 2), Hopkins River - West Bank (Management Area 3) and Hopkins River - East Bank (Management Area 4). The Point Ritchie / Moyjil Management Area, which includes the Point Ritchie / Moyjil car park, the mainland headland and the West and East rock stacks, was given the highest priority.

In accordance with the Conservation Management Plan, protection and control of access within the management area, including the Point Ritchie/Moyjil area, needs to be carefully considered.

As described Management Plan (2013, p. 10), *‘the site records unique evidence of early human occupation in the form of evidence of marine shells collected and transported from a shoreline up to 10-15 kilometres further south, and discoloured stones, now confirmed as resulting from the thermal effects of sustained fire, and a lenticular fire place in sands with charcoal fragments - evidence which is consistent with a human hearth. Preliminary OSL analyses suggests ages at or slightly beyond 60,000 years, 10,000 years older than previous evidence of occupation anywhere in Australia.’*

Of particular relevance to the Beach Access Strategy are the conservation policies for protection and control of access, contained in the Management Plan. These include the following objectives:

- *To support the continued public amenity use of the precinct in a way which does not compromise the identified cultural significance of the place.*
- *To guide efforts to protect significant components within the precinct.*

Policy basis:

*The precinct is, and should continue to be, an important public space for the local and wider community. However, the presence of highly significant cultural heritage deposits means that this use must be carefully monitored and managed. While decisions will need to be made in response to particular circumstances and management pressures, these decisions should be made within the framework provided by the following.*

##### 7.11 Supporting continued use of the precinct

*The continued use of the precinct as a public space will be encouraged and managed. Protection of highly significant cultural heritage deposits and associated cultural values however, remains of primary importance within the precinct (i.e. Point Ritchie / Moyjil Ongoing Protection Declaration area (Area 1))*

##### 7.12 Access restrictions

*Measures will be implemented to discourage visitors from deviating from established pathways and impacting significant sites (e.g. the headland and West Stack Deposits). The aesthetic values of the precinct and its various components are an important consideration when making decisions*

##### 7.13 Undertaking regular monitoring and interim protective measures

*Monitoring will be undertaken of the known cultural heritage sites in the precinct to assist with protection of heritage values. Appropriate measures should be taken to reduce the risk to significant deposits. Monitoring and artefact salvage will be undertaken by certified researchers with the correct approvals and qualifications. Salvage is to occur where artefacts are at immediate risk of being lost (e.g. through erosion). These measures could include temporarily restricting access to certain areas, clearing vegetation, deploying brush matting or geotextile to slow erosion or installing improved fencing and signage. Where possible, maintenance will be preventative rather than reactive. Care and due diligence must be taken so as not to disturb significant deposits in the course of these works.*

#### 7.14 Long term protective measures

*The highly significant Headland and West Stack Deposits (Area 1) are under threat from continued natural, and to a lesser extent human, erosion. The position of West Stack is at risk, and further deterioration could result in the loss of this structure, as has been confirmed by the Preliminary Geotechnical Assessment undertaken during preparation of the Background Report (Context Pty 2013). Further investigation on the risk of erosion and timing will be undertaken in consultation with the Traditional Owner Groups.*

#### 7.15 Development within the Precinct

*‘Development’ in this instance means any activity which will involve the disturbance or removal of physical fabric, or that will impinge on the setting of the precinct. Examples could include the construction of buildings or roads, which will require disturbance through preliminary groundworks, or coastal engineering works which require the disturbance or removal of material. Limited development should occur within the precinct. As visitor numbers increase, renewal and upgrade of existing facilities and public amenities may be required. The Coastal Management Act 1995 and Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014 provides important policy and guidance on development in coastal areas. Consent under the Coastal Management Act 1995 is required from DELWP for any proposed development.*

#### 7.16 Installation of services

*The installation of reticulated services within the precinct should be avoided. Should the installation of underground services within the precinct be unavoidable, they should be located to minimise negative impacts on heritage significance, and an archaeological assessment will be undertaken in advance of installation. Areas of previous disturbance, such as road corridors, will be employed wherever possible.*

Decisions made regarding beach access will be made within the framework of the Moyjil Conservation Management Plan.

### WARRNAMBOOL COAST VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2012, BIOSIS RESEARCH PTY LTD.

The Warrnambool Coast Vegetation Management Plan was prepared by Biosis to inform the Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan. The area of the Management Plan covers the full length of coastline included in the Beach Access Strategy.

Key findings of the vegetation management plan included:

- A diverse range of flora exists.
- A total of 98 indigenous and 105 introduced plant species were recorded with a total of fifteen ecological vegetation classes (EVCs) recorded in the study area. Within the Beach Access Strategy study area between Shelly Beach and Logans Beach, the following EVCs were recorded: Coastal Dune Scrub, Berm Grassy Headland, Spray-zone Coastal Shrub, Coastal Tussock Grassland, Coastal Headland Shrub Mosaic and Coastal Dune Grassland.
- Management issues noted in the study, included vegetation restoration, revegetation, rare species management, weed control, access and fencing, signage, pest animal management, horse riding, illegal vehicle access, fire management, public safety and planning and review.
- The plan provided a 10 year management schedule, including revegetation with indicative costings.

Further discussion about the ecology of the coastline will be included in the Beach Access Strategy, with reference to the findings of this Vegetation Management Plan.

### WARRNAMBOOL OPEN SPACE STRATEGY, WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL 2013

The Warrnambool Open Space Strategy provides an overarching framework for open space planning and management to the year 2026.

The overarching vision for open space in Warrnambool is:

‘Warrnambool will have a high quality, diverse, accessible open space network that reflects community needs and enhances social connection, environmental protection and economic benefit.’

The subject site falls into three precincts in the Open Space Strategy, being Warrnambool (South/Merrivale), Warrnambool Central and Warrnambool (South East/Hopkins). In the Open Space Strategy, the 33 access points are located on land classified as ‘existing open space’ (accessible to the public).

This Strategy refers to the Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan to provide direction on how the coastal Crown Land, which includes the study area, should be managed for its environmental and recreation values in this precinct.

GOALS INCLUDE:

- A planning scheme that acknowledges and contributes to the strategic priorities presented in this Strategy.
- A diversity of parks that everyone can access close to home
- A well-connected network of open spaces across the Municipality
- A network that protects a range of natural and cultural environments and contributes positively to biodiversity and water quality
- A more environmentally sustainable open space Network
- A management system that makes efficient use of available resources whilst maintaining quality of provision
- An open space network that meets the needs of current and future residents and visitors
- An increase in participation and use of open space
- Strong partnerships between Council and other stakeholders in delivering the recommendations outlined in the Open Space Strategy

### LAKE PERTOBE MASTER PLAN 2018

The Lake Pertobe Master Plan was prepared by Michael Smith and Associates and Warrnambool City Council. This Master Plan recommends a number of site-specific, general and management recommendations for the Lake Pertobe public open space area.

Whilst the Lake Pertobe Master Plan does not provide specific recommendations for beach access points, there are some relevant recommendations for nearby infrastructure, including the recommendation to ‘Construct a new toilet/change facility with showers and change rooms at McGennan’s Carpark to service all users of the foreshore area.’

The Master Plan contains relevant information to the Beach Access Strategy in the form of demand analysis, historic and projected population growth for Warrnambool, information regarding the history of the area and parking and transport near Pertobe Road,

## GREEN WARRNAMBOOL 2018

Green Warrnambool is a strategic plan prepared by Council which reflects the environmental aspirations set out in Warrnambool 2040.

The vision for Green Warrnambool is ‘*Warrnambool will be the most environmentally sustainable regional city in Australia*’.

This strategy identifies actions that Council and the community can do to achieve the vision and improve environmental sustainability. It includes six goals, under the headings Zero Warrnambool, Adaptable Warrnambool, Wise Warrnambool, Natural Warrnambool, Blue Warrnambool and Green Warrnambool.

### GOALS INCLUDE:

- Ensuring that infrastructure and open spaces mitigate the impacts of a warmer climate, decreased rainfall and increased severe weather events particularly in high risk areas such as on our coast and waterways
- All new development, renewal and upgrade works to consider the IDM Sustainable Infrastructure Guidelines (or its successor documents) by 2026
- 40% Reduction in plastic waste on our beaches by 2026. The Warrnambool Pollution Solution Plan and information program has been rolled out
- Plan 120,000 plants by 2026 and over 330,000 plants by 2040
- Increase flora and fauna biodiversity
- No new pest or weed species established
- No further extinctions of indigenous flora or fauna species
- Ensure protection and maintenance of existing established vegetation
- Traditional Owner Partnership in management of key cultural assets
- Implementation of Cultural Landscapes and Heritage Strategy
- Traditional owners oversee management of significant sites
- Research important stories associated with the region and identify the landscapes that best express these stories

## WARRNAMBOOL HARBOUR MASTER PLAN 2018

The Warrnambool Harbour Master Plan was prepared by Fitzgerald Frisby Landscape Architecture, Zinc and Warrnambool City Council.

The aim of this plan is to guide and coordinate future development of the harbour and adjacent foreshore.

The report describes some of the issues facing the maintenance of the harbour and foreshore, including the strong south-westerly winds. Issues and opportunities identified in the Master Plan that are relevant to the Beach Access Strategy include:

- *The northern boat ramp (near the Yacht Club) is relatively steep and experiences regular erosion at the base.*
- *Pedestrian access (north of the boat ramp) is poor especially in high pedestrian areas.*

Recommendations of the Master Plan relating to beach access include:

- *Upgrade beach access ramp (north of the boat ramp) that provides access to the beach for all users. Continue rock beaching and revegetation either side of ramp to prevent erosion.*
- *Retain existing beach launch (boat ramp). Explore potential upgrade to address erosion issues.*

- *Extend the northern car park including double length parking bays for horse floats and long vehicles. Realign the existing coastal trail to connect the path with the proposed car park and provide a wider coastal buffer to stabilise existing dunes.*

A staging and implementation plan, including indicative capital cost estimates from 2018, are also included in the Master Plan.

## DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY 2020

The Disability Access and Inclusion Policy was prepared by Warrnambool City Council in 2020.

*‘The purpose of the Warrnambool City Council Disability Access and Inclusion Policy is to outline Council’s commitment to access and inclusion for residents, employees and visitors that live with a disability. The policy is intended to assist Council to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the Disability Act 2006 and the relevant Australian Standards; and with the removal of barriers that prevent people living with disability from fully participating in community life.’*

The Warrnambool City Council Access and Inclusion Policy applies to the work of all areas across Council, to ensure a consistent, whole-of-Council approach to disability access and inclusion.

The Policy seeks to ensure all people in the community have equal access to services, facilities and involvement in decision making.

The Policy will need to be adhered to in the development of any future plans for beach access upgrades, renewal and replacement.

## ACTIVE WARRNAMBOOL STRATEGY 2019-30

The purpose of the Strategy is to increase regular participation in sport, active recreation and physical activity by the community, with benefits being physical fitness, reduced risk of chronic illnesses and improved mental wellbeing.

The Strategy aims to deliver the following outcomes for sport, recreation and physical activity in Warrnambool:

- *Increased participation opportunities for everyone*
- *Sustainable clubs and organisations*
- *Increased participation by females, and other under-represented groups, in all aspects of sport, recreation and physical activity*
- *Maximised and best use of facilities, places and spaces*
- *Improved connectivity between facilities, places and spaces*
- *Renewed and redeveloped existing facilities, places and spaces to maximise physical activity opportunities*
- *Increased evidence base for decision making, investment and to maximise efficiencies (through the review and development of plans, policies and management practices/systems).*
- *Adequate resources secured to effectively managing resources including staff, funds and assets*

## WARRNAMBOOL PUBLIC AMENITIES STRATEGY 2013

The Warrnambool Public Amenities Strategy 2013 aims to ensure public toilets are convenient, safe, clean and accessible and identifies short, medium and long term provision and maintenance of Warrnambool’s public amenities.

Overall, the purpose of the strategy was to:

- *Best service the Warrnambool community with public amenities*
- *Determine community needs in relation to public toilets*
- *Improve the quality of public toilets available within Warrnambool*

In 2013, when this Strategy was prepared, the Warrnambool community, visitors and tourists had access to 28 separate public amenities located along the foreshore, at shopping centres, attached to recreation and sporting facilities or free standing in gardens, parks and reserves.

In 2013, there were nine (9) public toilets located along the foreshore and river precinct enhancing the enjoyment of the beach, lake and river for the community, visitors and tourists.

The challenges of managing these toilets are many and include:

- *Peak demand over the summer period places stress on public toilet facilities*
- *High number of children during the summer period in the Lake Pertobe and beach areas*
- *Some incorporate change rooms for beach users*
- *Illegal campers wanting use of the amenities*
- *Fisherpeople requiring late and early access to the amenities*
- *Selection of the number of cubicles for new or refurbished toilets*
- *Some are older traditional type amenities, which do not meet today’s needs and require replacement*

There were 42 actions recommended in the strategy including capital works improvements to the following public toilet facilities near the beach and foreshore and river precinct:

- Hopkins River East (Blue Hole) - Refurbish and reconfigure to accommodate maximum cubicles incorporating at least one clothes change cubicle each for male and female and improve external lighting.
- McGennans Road Car Park - Demolish existing toilet and build new 5/6 cubicle facility nearer the beach (site to be determined).
- Viaduct Road - Refurbish and include clothes change size cubicles (male and female), one unisex indoor shower and unisex disabled accessible cubicle with baby change and child toilet.
- Point Ritchie / Moyjil (Hopkins River West) - refurbish and alter access ramp.

The Beach Access Strategy will review what works have occurred to public toilets in the foreshore and river precinct since 2013.

### 3.SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As revealed through the strategy, plan and policy review, the strengths, and challenges relating to the study area and its 33 coastal access point, are listed in Figures 15 and 16. A list of opportunities to be considered through the Beach Access Strategy are summarised at Figure 17.

Figure 15: Existing Features and Values

#### STRENGTHS

- Significant as a cultural landscape, with important connections to Country for the Traditional Owners and sites of significance, including Moyjil Aboriginal Place.
- Highly scenic and significant coastal landscape
- Appealing beaches and swimming areas, including home of the Warrnambool Surf Life Saving club
- Logans Beach Southern Right Whale Nursery
- Home to a wide variety of flora with a wide variety of ecological vegetation classes, including the locally endangered Coastal Dune Grassland
- Mouth of the Hopkins River and Merri River Estuaries
- Adjacent the Merri Marine Sanctuary and Middle Island
- Home to a wide variety of fauna, including rare and threatened species, including nesting Hooded Plover (*Thinornis cucullatus*).
- Popular for a variety of recreational activities, including walking, bike riding, horse riding, fishing, photography and surfing.
- Close to the city centre and tourist attractions with convenient access to tourist resorts/parks
- Recreational opportunities such as walking, running, yachting, swimming and other water sports
- Post settlement sites of significance, including Victorian Registered sites such as the breakwater
- Foreshore and foreshore promenade are high use areas next to the popular Lake Pertobe
- Concentration of recreational opportunities
- Highly valued by the community for the variety of recreational opportunities available

Figure 16: Challenges

#### CHALLENGES

- Increase in visitor numbers may create additional pressure on the coastline, its landscape and cultural values and existing infrastructure , including access structures
- Ageing infrastructure reaching the end of its useful life
- Natural and marine processes, such as storms and storm surges, can impact on the integrity of heritage sites and also contribute to dune erosion and damage to infrastructure.
- Climate change impacts such as rising sea levels and increased frequency and severity of storms are a threat.
- Limited knowledge of the effects climate change will have on the coast.
- Conservation management of native flora and fauna
- Threats to environmental values from urban areas
- Pest plant and animal management
- Unauthorised pedestrian and bicycle access
- Dune instability and impacts of sand shifting onto access structures and paths
- Non-compliance with the off-leash areas
- Areas of soil and cliff instability
- Impacts to places of cultural significance due to their fragile and accessible nature
- Access and inclusion to beach access for those with a disability and/or special access requirements
- Provision of new infrastructure, including amenities
- Silting of Lady Bay
- Disposal of dredging spoil
- Seaweed accumulation on the foreshore
- Public safety and risks to users of beach access structures
- Fire management
- Coastal Acid Sulfate Soil hazard
- Dumping of rubbish and littering
- Financial costs associated with providing new infrastructure and maintaining existing infrastructure

Figure 17: Opportunities

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Improving access and inclusion to those with a disability and/or special access requirements through upgrades to beach access infrastructure.
- Reducing safety risks to visitors through improved beach access infrastructure.
- Enhancing Warrnambool’s tourism and event offerings through improved beach access.
- Protecting cultural heritage landscapes and sites along the coastline through changes and/or improvements to beach access infrastructure. The means by which this can be achieved will be discussed with the Traditional Owners.
- Improving coastal dune stability through revegetation and installation of physical barriers, preventing pedestrian and cyclist access off designated beach access paths.
- Adopting a consistent approach to design and construction materials used for beach access points. This may result in long-term cost savings for renewal and capital works budgets.
- Implementing climate change mitigation measures to help protect the coastline’s values and ensure beach access structures are design and constructed to tolerate climate changes and extreme weather events.
- Developing a hierarchy of most to least used beach access points to help better determine access requirements for each point and appropriately direct funding.
- Developing a matrix to help determine a works priority list for renewal and capital works on the 33 existing beach access points.
- Applying adaptive management to inform approaches and changes to management of the coastline over time.

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**APPENDIX 1 – BEACH ACCESS POINTS SITE PHOTOGRAPHS**

BEACH ACCESS - SHELLY BEACH



BEACH ACCESS POINTS - PICKERING POINT LOOKOUT/MERRI RIVER/STINGRAY BAY/WORM BAY

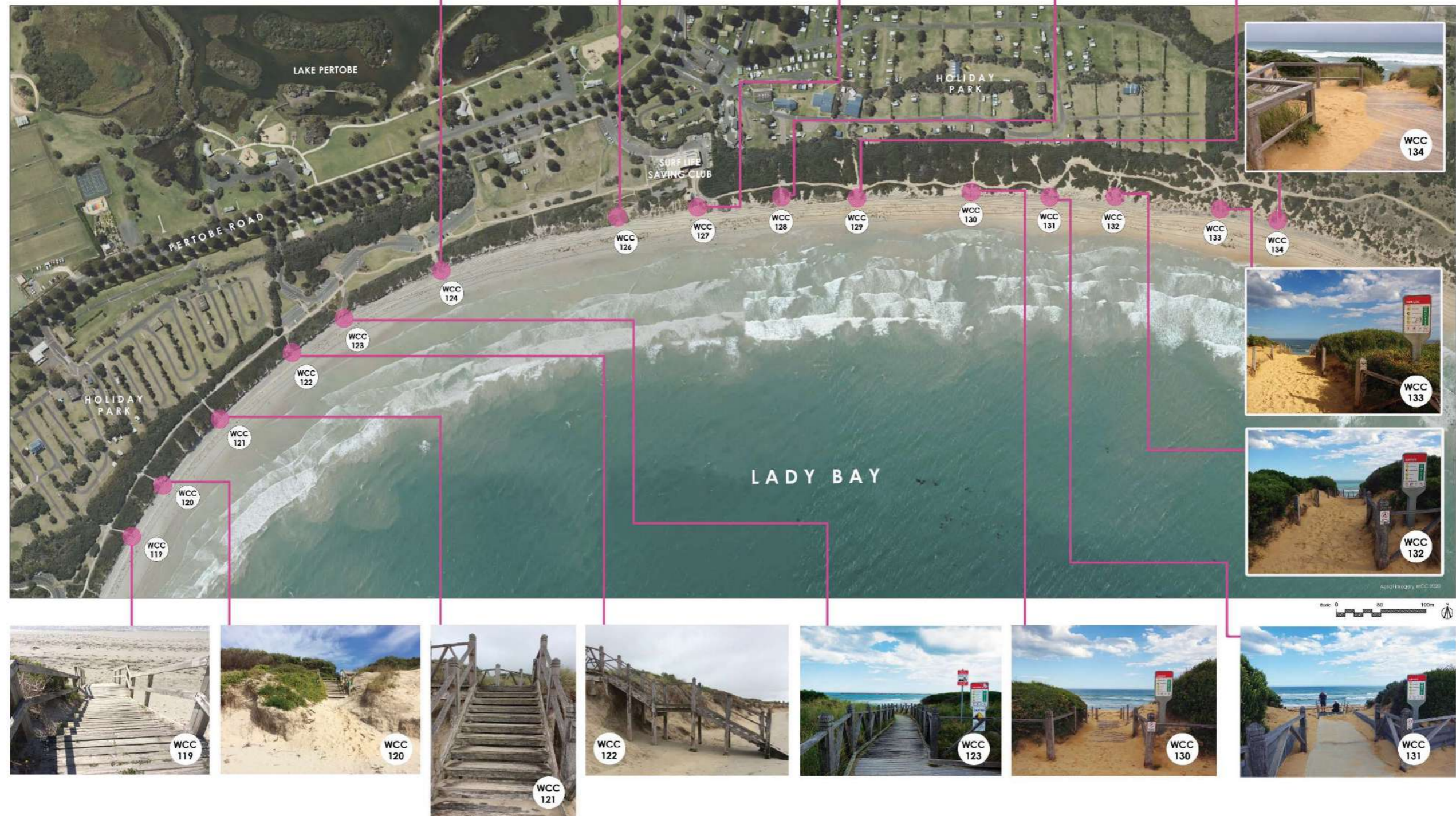


## WARRNAMBOOL BEACH ACCESS STRATEGY

ACCESS POINT LOCATIONS  
SHELLY BEACH TO WORM BAY

# WARRNAMBOOL BEACH ACCESS STRATEGY

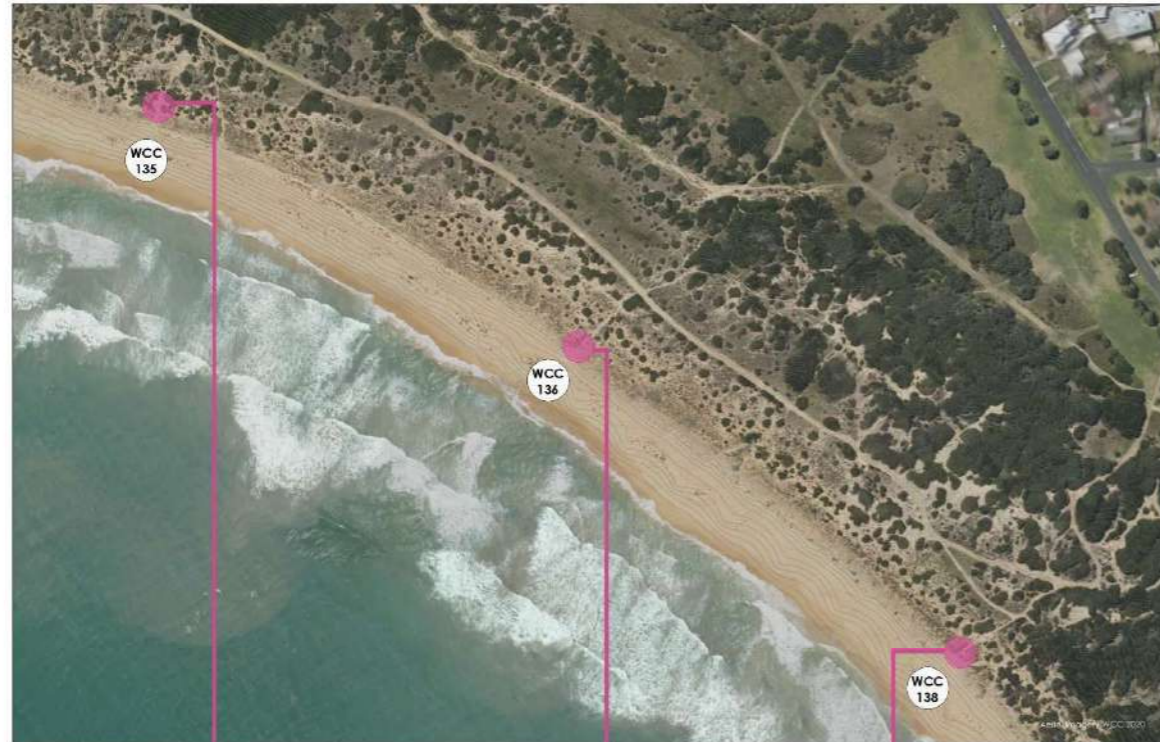
## ACCESS POINT LOCATIONS LADY BAY WEST



# WARRNAMBOOL BEACH ACCESS STRATEGY

## ACCESS POINT LOCATIONS LADY BAY EAST TO POINT RITCHIE / MOYJIL

BEACH ACCESS - LADY BAY EAST



BEACH ACCESS - POINT RITCHIE / MOYJIL



WARRNAMBOOL BEACH  
ACCESS STRATEGY

ACCESS POINT LOCATIONS  
HOPKINS RIVER ESTUARY  
TO LOGANS BEACH



BEACH ACCESS - HOPKINS RIVER



BEACH ACCESS - LOGANS BEACH

