



## THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD REGION LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT STUDY

**plān|ī'sphēre** [ // urban strategy planners ]

## MUNICIPAL TOOLKIT CORANGAMITE SHIRE COUNCIL

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT | SEPTEMBER 2003





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## 1. Introduction

Planisphere was commissioned by the Department of Sustainability and Environment to undertake a landscape character assessment of the Great Ocean Road Region.

*Landscape character is the interplay of geology, topography, vegetation, water bodies and other natural features, combined with the effects of land use and built development, which makes one landscape different from another.*

The landscape character assessment was undertaken as part of the overall Great Ocean Road Region Strategy, and has devised a sound and consistent methodology for assessing the character of landscapes and the way in which various types of development can be managed in different landscape types.

This document, the 'Corangamite Municipal Toolkit', contains a synopsis of the landscape character types and precincts within the Shire, an explanation of landscape elements, a summary of key landscape character issues, and proposed recommendations, including the best method of implementing the findings of the Study through the Corangamite Planning Scheme. It is intended that the relevant 'Precinct Packages' be appended to the Corangamite Municipal Toolkit for a complete picture of landscape character within the Shire.

The Municipal Toolkits are one of four components that make up the contents of the Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study. An outline of the full contents of the Study is included on page 3 of this Toolkit.

## 2. Study Contents

### Regional Toolkit

How the Study can be implemented in the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy and State Planning Policy

#### *Regional Toolkit Contents:*

Methodology  
Regional Landscape Types  
Regional Landscape Elements  
Landscape Significance  
Summary of Regional Issues  
Regional Recommendations

*Precinct Package Contents:*  
Precinct Qualities & Objectives  
Precinct Development Principles  
Precinct Landscape Elements  
Precinct Analysis Maps  
Planning Scheme Analysis & Recommendations

### Precinct Packages

Descriptions, photos, development principles and recommendations for each of the 20 landscape precincts delineated across the region

#### *Precinct Packages (20):*

- 1.1 Winchelsea Western Plains
- 1.2 Undulating Mixed Farming
- 1.3 Undulating Grazing
- 1.4 Paddocks & Cones
- 1.5 Partially Wooded Plain
- 1.6 Stony Rises
- 2.1 Northern Foothills
- 2.2 Dairying Hills & Vales
- 2.3 Gellibrand River Valley
- 2.4 Apollo Bay Coastal Valleys and Hills
- 2.5 Johanna Coast to Cape Otway Coastal Valleys and Hills
- 2.6 Princetown Coastal Valleys and Hills
- 3.1 Port Campbell Coast and Hinterland
- 3.2 Nirranda Coast and Hinterland
- 4.1 Otway Ranges Forest and Coast
- 4.2 Cleared Uplands and Hilltops
- 4.3 Dry Coastal Woodland and Heath
- 4.4 Low Coastal Heath
- 5.1 Lakes and Saltmarshes
- 5.2 Aire Valley Marshes

### Municipal Toolkits

How the Study can be implemented by local Councils

#### *Municipal Toolkits (5):*

Colac Otway Shire  
Corangamite Shire  
Moyne Shire  
Surf Coast Shire  
Warrnambool City

#### *Municipal Toolkit Contents:*

Landscape Types & Precincts  
Landscape Elements  
Summary of Issues  
Recommendations

### About the Study

The study's background report (brief, method, process and context)

#### *About the Study Contents:*

Brief & Method  
Policy & Context Analysis  
Study Process  
Next Steps



### 3. Landscape Types and Precincts in Corangamite

The Corangamite Shire is located towards the western end of the Study Area and is bounded by the Princes Highway to the north and the Great Ocean Road coastline to the south.

The landscape of the Shire within the Study area is characterised by a large area of an undulating topography through the centre, characterised by rolling hills and vales, and incised with creeks and rivers. The township of Timboon is sited within this pastoral landscape. To the north of the Study Area is the Western Plains landscape type, associated with relatively flat topography and punctuated by cones and lakes in the Camperdown and Terang district. The coastal area of the Shire is characterised by low coastal scrub and low to highly dramatic sea cliffs, including iconic off shore rock formations such as the Twelve Apostles.

The following landscape character types and precincts exist within the Shire and are shown on the Corangamite [Landscape Character Types and Precinct Map](#) on page 5.

#### Western Plains, Cones and Lakes (1.1 – 1.6)

##### 1.4 Paddocks & Cones (part)

##### 1.5 Partially Wooded Plain (part)

##### 1.6 Stony Rises (part)

#### Otway Foothills, Valleys and Uplands (2.1 – 2.6)

##### 2.2 Dairying Hills & Vales

##### 2.3 Gellibrand River Valley (part)

##### 2.6 Princetown Coastal Valleys and Hills

#### Western Coastal Cliffs (3.1 – 3.2)

##### 3.1 Port Campbell Coast and Hinterland

#### Otway Forests and Coast (4.1 – 4.4)

##### 4.1 Otway Ranges Forest and Coast (part)

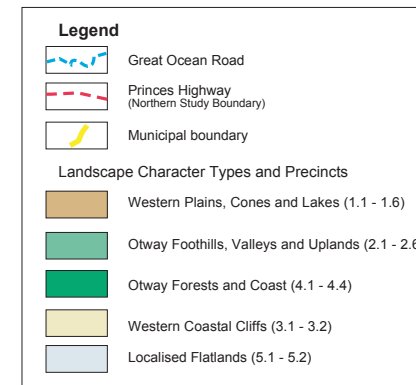
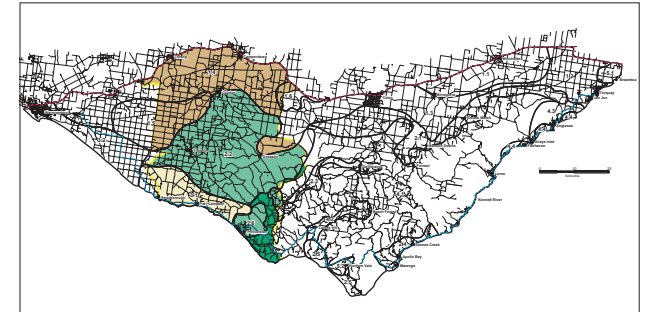
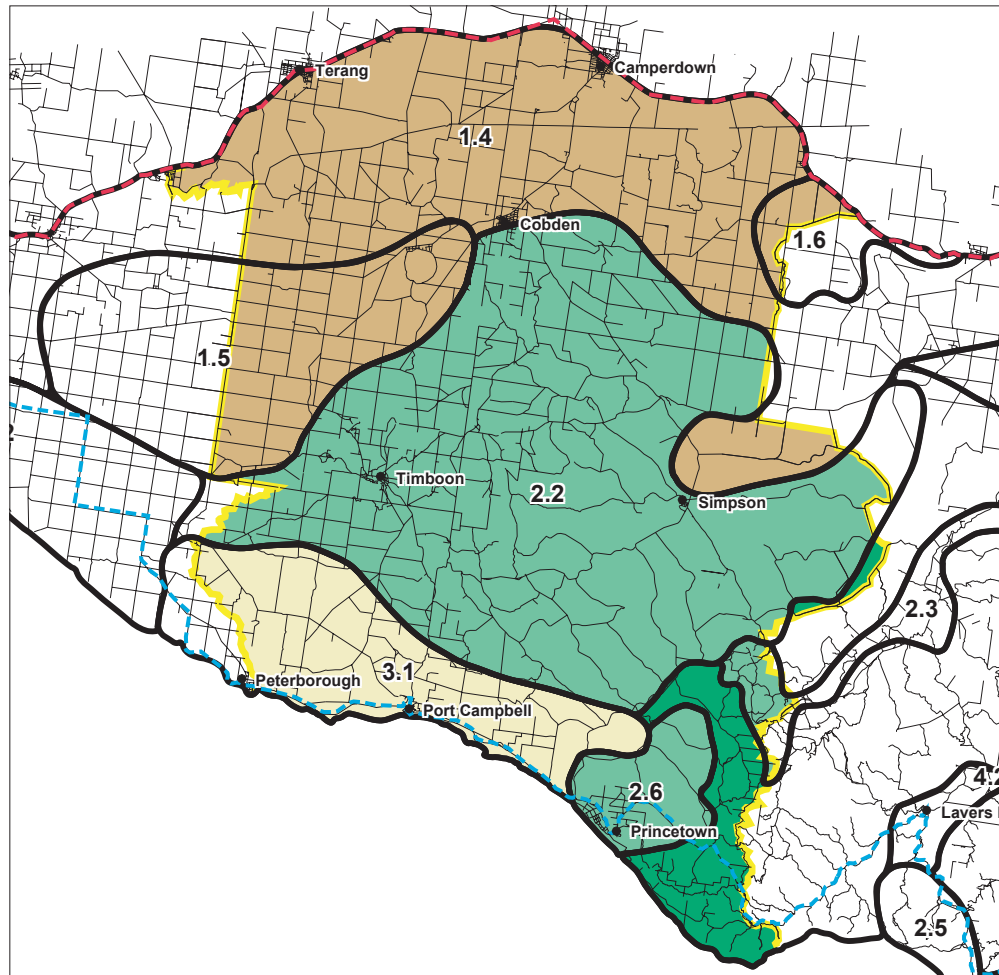
### Implications for Local Policy

It is recommended that the Precinct Descriptions, Distinctive Qualities and Development Principles (including Landscape Objectives) relating to the precincts in the Shire be included as Local Policy in the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. (Refer to relevant [Precinct Packages](#) for details).





## Landscape Types and Precincts





## 4. Landscape Elements in Corangamite

### Townships

Townships within the Corangamite Shire vary in their settings and landscape character. Timboon for example is located in a landscape where incised creeks and valleys are a particular feature, and the topography has defined the layout of the town. By way of contrast, Port Campbell is defined by its setting on a bay and is surrounded and contained by a coastal National Park. Camperdown on the other hand occupies a distinctive setting below Mount Leura, a comparatively large and prominent volcanic crater in the Western Plains landscape.

The landscape character of the following Corangamite townships is described in the Precinct Landscape Elements section of the relevant Precinct Packages:

- Princetown (Precinct 2.6)
- Simpson (Precinct 2.2)
- Timboon (Precinct 2.2)
- Camperdown (Precinct 1.4)
- Cobden (Precinct 1.4)
- Terang (Precinct 1.4)
- Port Campbell (Precinct 3.1)

Key issues in Corangamite townships include ribbon development between settlements, particularly in coastal areas along the Great Ocean Road and in towns to the north of the Study Area along the Princes Highway. It is important to contain the urban form of townships, and for the natural landscape to dominate beyond the township edge. Township edges may vary in the way they interface with the natural landscape. It may be appropriate that the built form edges of some townships are clearly demarcated, while others are 'softer' comprising a combination of buildings and vegetation. If not appropriately designed and integrated with the landscape, development on the periphery of settlements, often in low density residential areas,

can 'blur' the urban boundary of townships with development spilling into the natural landscape. Signage clutter and bulky industrial development along the main road into a township and can have a similar negative visual effect.

Another key issue is the emergence of 'heavy' urban or suburban building forms that have no relationship to the landscape setting, particularly in coastal towns. This is partly a result of increasing tourism pressure and has the potential to detract from these townships that were previously defined by a casual, 'beachside' character derived from light, simple buildings with articulated forms and a mix of materials.

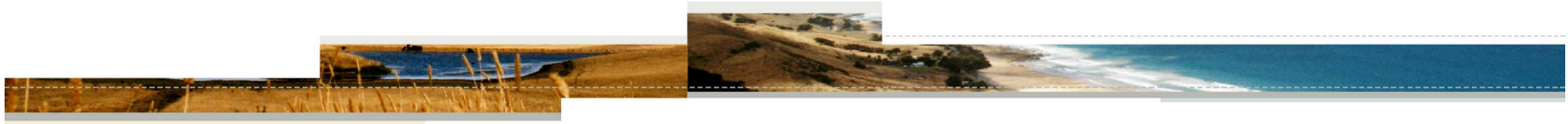
### Edges

'Edges' occur in the landscape when different landscape types or features intersect. They create complexity in the landscape and provide visual contrast and a point of interest. For any given landscape (eg the sea, a forest) it is often the edge (eg the coastline, a clearing in the forest) that attracts the most people and creates management issues.

There are many edges within the Corangamite landscape, including the following that are described in the Precinct Landscape Elements section of the Precinct Packages:

- Township / natural landscape edges
- Edges where landscape character types intersect
- Edges where landscape character precincts meet
- The coastline
- The forest edge
- National Park edges
- Topographical edges
- Features in the landscape creating edges ie incised valleys, stands of vegetation, rivers and other waterways, shelter belts, dry stone walls, volcanic craters and cones etc





- Road corridors creating edges

## Corridors

Main road corridors and key tourist routes that pass through the Study Area in Corangamite include the Great Ocean Road and the Princes Highway. There are a number of other key routes linking townships throughout the Study Area, including the Camperdown-Cobden Road. The road corridors throughout the Shire pass through different landscape types and precincts, resulting in a variety of landscape experiences and scenery throughout the journey. Some of these journeys are described in the [Precinct Landscape Elements](#) section of the [Precinct Packages](#).

Main road corridors throughout the Region are zoned Road Zone Category 1 and buildings within 100 metres of them require a planning permit in the Rural and Environmental Rural Zones. As a result most development adjacent to main roads can be assessed and managed. This is important because the impression and landscape character of an area is often confined to what is seen from the main road corridors, particularly the key tourist routes.

The assessment and management of development that can be seen from main road corridors is therefore an important issue in the Shire. Particular types of development for which Development Principles have been prepared in relation to this issue include timber plantations adjacent to main roads, development on highly visible hill faces and ridges, ribbon development and low density development on township fringes.

## Key Views

There are many key viewing locations within the Shire that are frequented by tourists and visitors to the Region, and feature on postcards from the Great Ocean Road. These include perhaps the most well known and highly visited spectacle in the Region in the Twelve Apostles, and other dramatic cliffs and rock formations along the Port Campbell Coastline.

Views from the following key locations in Corangamite are described in the [Precinct Landscape Elements](#) section of the relevant [Precinct Packages](#):

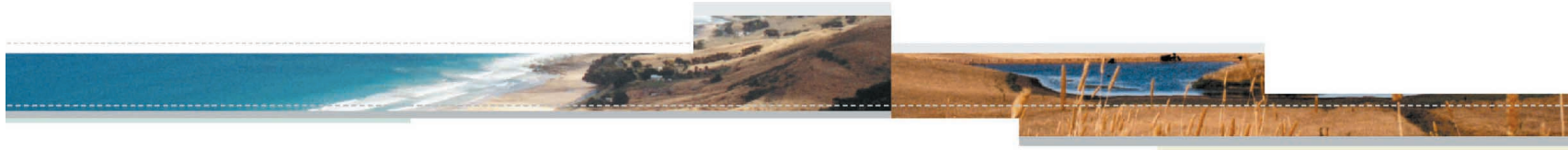
- Mount Leura, Camperdown (Precinct 1.4)
- The Twelve Apostles (Precinct 3.1)
- Loch Ard Gorge, the Arch and the Grotto (Precinct 3.1)
- Peterborough car park / golf course (Precinct 3.1)

These key viewing locations are shown on the Corangamite [Key Views Map](#) on page 8.

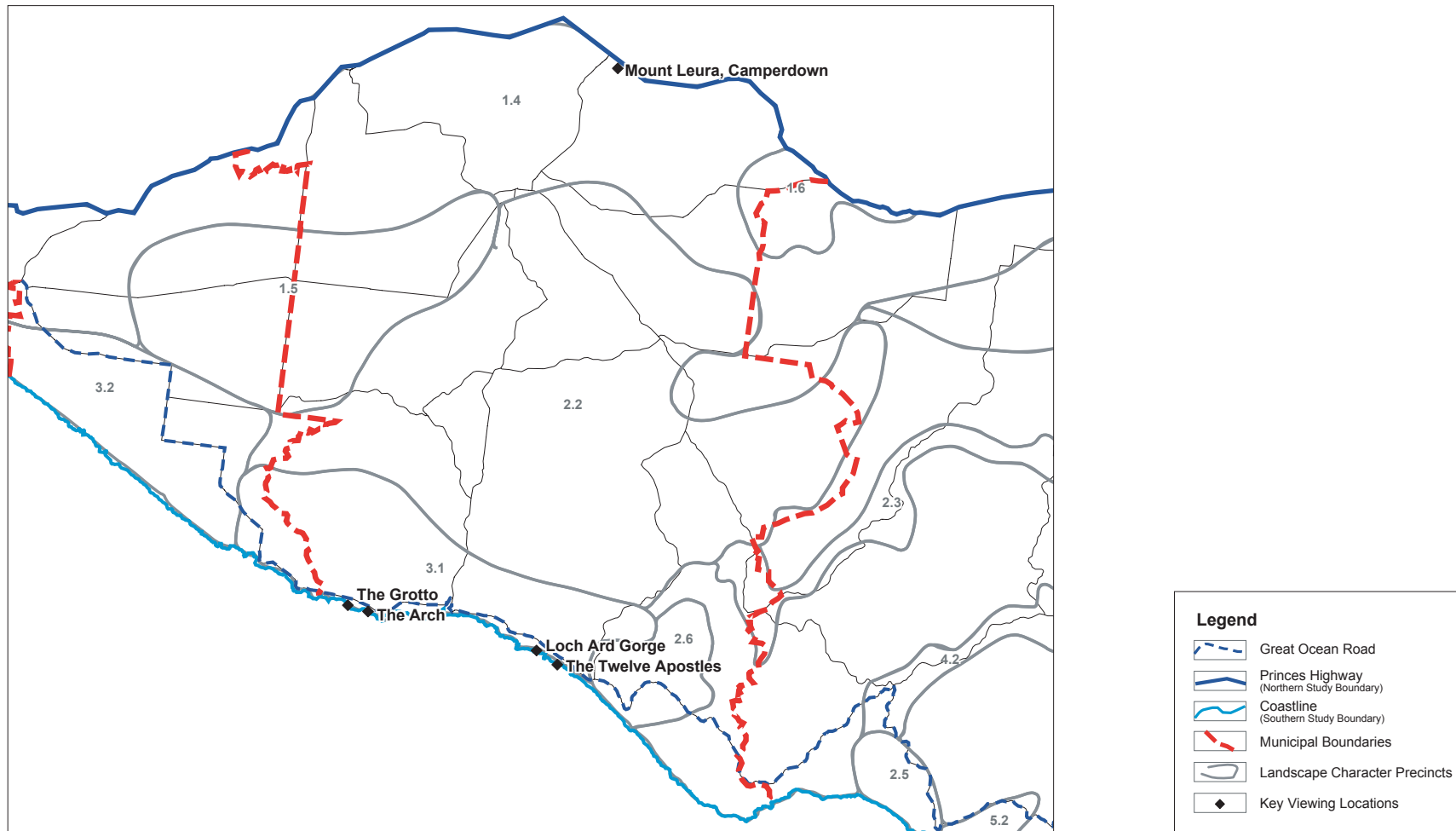
The protection and management of views from popular and established viewing locations is a key issue within the Shire. It is very important, in most instances, to retain the dominance of the natural landscape from these key viewing points, and to ensure that any new development is assessed for its impact on the character of the landscape.

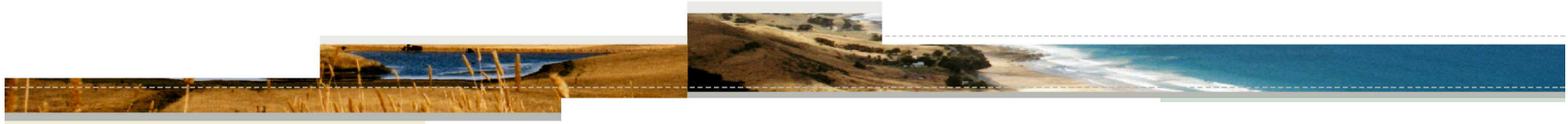
## Implications for Local Policy

It is recommended that brief policy statements about each of these Landscape Elements be included as Local Policy in the Corangamite Planning Scheme. It is envisaged that the policy statements would be incorporated into the relevant Local Policy for that landscape character precinct.



## Key Views





## 5. Summary of Corangamite Issues

### Development Pressures

Development pressure within the Corangamite Shire is focused along the coast and in the coastal hinterland. Within these areas it is centred on townships such as Port Campbell and along the Great Ocean Road, and comprises mainly residential and tourism development.

There is increasing pressure for farm stay and B&B style accommodation in the coastal and rural hinterland, with associated signage. Development proposals for gas processing plants, in the hinterland, and timber plantations around Gellibrand River and Moonlight Hill, are expected to continue.

### Planning Permit Controls

#### Zones

The vast majority of the Shire within the Study Area is zoned Rural. The key purpose of the Rural Zone is for dairying, grazing and crop raising.

A key issue throughout the Shire that has the potential to be managed through the provisions of the Rural Zone is the clear felling of plantation trees adjacent to main road corridors and tourist routes. This practice leaves large and often highly visible areas of the landscape scarred, detracting from the landscape character of the Region. The schedule to the Rural Zone provides the opportunity to require a permit for timber production over 40 hectares. It can also be specified that this requirement only relates to timber plantations abutting a Category 1 Road Zone. Introducing a permit trigger in the Corangamite Planning Scheme would provide the opportunity to require plantations to be screened from main road corridors by an indigenous and/or native

vegetation buffer including understorey (minimum width 20 metres to be stipulated in Local Policy), thus obscuring clear felled areas from key tourist routes and other main roads.

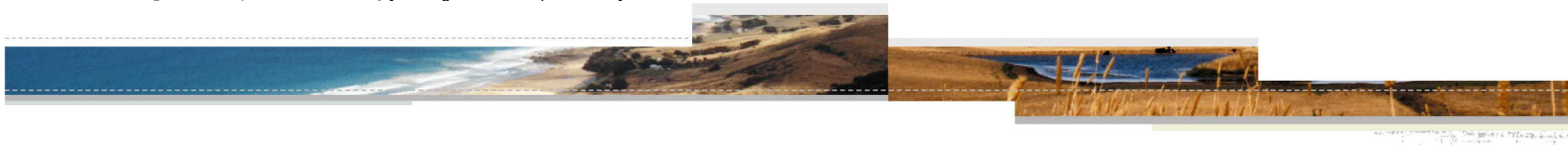
The majority of coastal hinterland within the Shire is zoned Environmental Rural. The Environmental Rural Zone requires a permit for more uses and development than the Rural Zone, with a key purpose of the zone being to conserve environmental sensitivity and bio-diversity. It is not specified in the schedule to the Environmental Rural Zone in the Corangamite Planning Scheme that a permit is required for earthworks on all land, and this should be rectified, given the nationally significant coast and hinterland to which this zone applies.

Both the Rural and Environmental Rural Zones are appropriately located within the Shire, and provide a permit trigger for buildings within 100 metres of a Category 1 Road Zone. However, the standard Victoria Planning Provision (VPPs) Decision Guidelines under both zones contain minimal reference to the protection and enhancement of landscape character. This gap in the VPPs will be improved through the provision of Local Policy containing the Precinct Principles (including Development Principles) prepared as part of this Study.

A review of existing VPPs rural zones has recently been completed, which may have implications for the detailed implementation of the above recommendations. However, it is recommended that the proposed changes be adapted as necessary and accommodated within any changes to the structure of the rural zones.

Towns within the Shire are primarily zoned Township or Residential 1, with some Low Density Residential or Rural Living zoned areas on the outskirts. As discussed, it is often the low density fringes of townships that 'spill' into the natural landscape as opposed to being contained, and result in an erosion of the landscape character.

The narrow coastal strip and other public parks throughout the Shire's Study Area are zoned Public Conservation and Resource. Under the requirements of the zone, a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works unless it is shown on an Incorporated Plan which

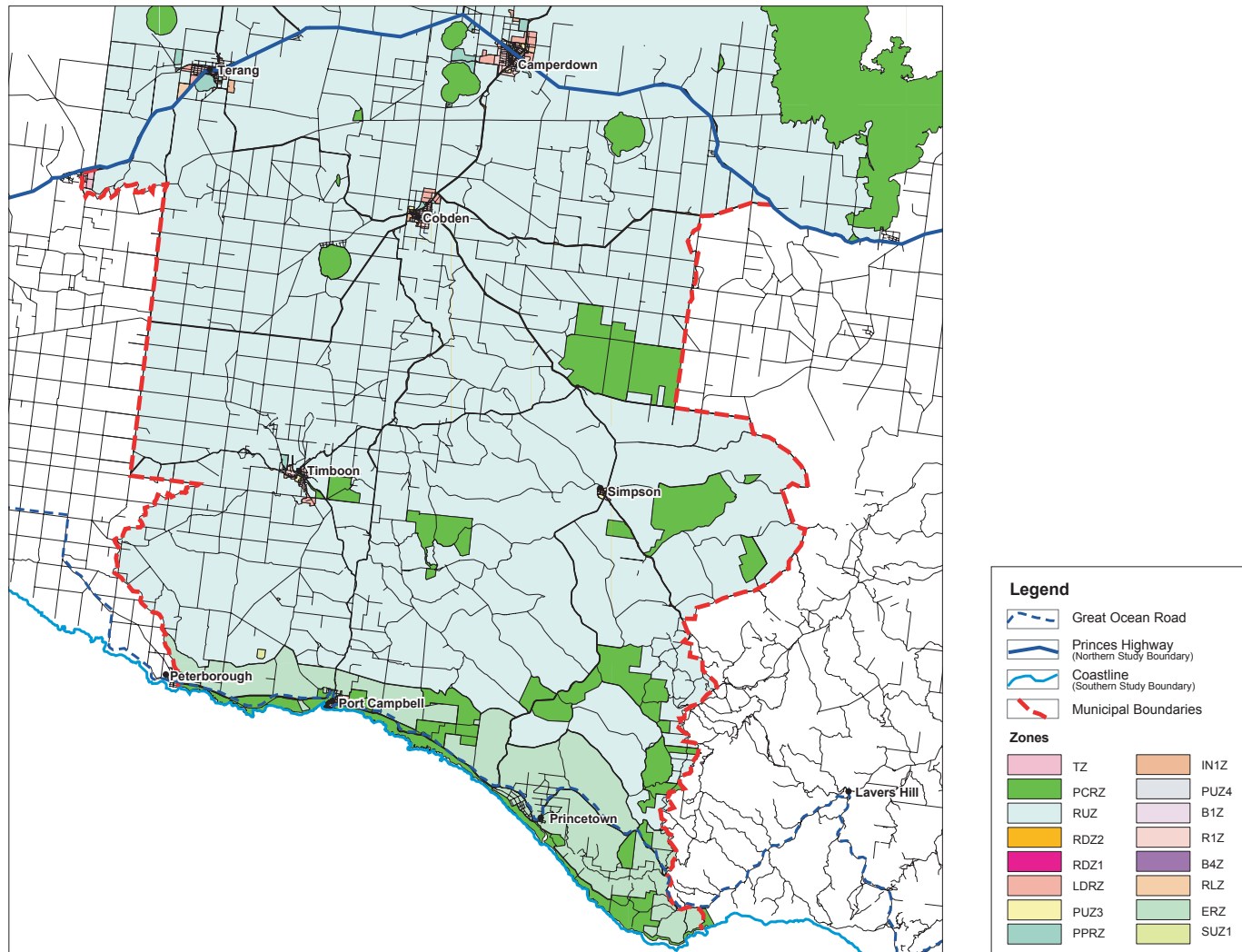


applies to the land, or is carried out by or on behalf of the public land manager.

The zones in place within the Study Area of the Shire are shown on the Corangamite Zoning Map on page 11.



## Zoning







## Overlays

### Existing Significant Landscape Overlays

The Significant Landscape Overlay is used in two parts of the Study Area within the Corangamite Shire. The overlay areas are located within the volcanic landscape in the north of the Study Area (part Precincts 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6) and adjacent to the Great Ocean Road along the Twelve Apostles coastline (part Precinct 3.1).

The schedules to the Volcanic Landscape Area (SLO1) and the Great Ocean Road Landscape Area (SLO3) are generic and could be better tailored to the landscape. Also, in both schedules, the Permit Requirements contain statements better framed as Decision Guidelines, and the Decision Guidelines could be strengthened.

It is therefore recommended that the schedules to the Significant Landscape Overlay be better tailored to the landscape types based on the findings of the precinct analysis undertaken as part of this Study (ie re-write Statement of Nature and Key Elements of the Landscape and Landscape Character Objectives). It is also recommended that the Permit Requirements and Decision Guidelines be reviewed with reference to the Development Principles prepared as part of this Study, for the relevant precincts.

### Other Existing Relevant Overlays

The Environmental Significance and Vegetation Protection Overlays are also applied in the Study Area within the Shire. The Environmental Significance Overlay, for example, is in place near Princetown to protect and manage that part of the Gellibrand River (ESO1). It is partly due to the existence of this overlay (and the permit trigger provided by the Environmental Rural Zone) that a Significant Landscape Overlay is not recommended in this area. Another consideration is the marshy nature of the landscape, which results in this area experiencing minimal development pressure.

Existing overlays relevant to landscape character within the Study Area of the Shire are shown on the [Relevant Overlays Map](#) on page 14.

### Proposed Significant Landscape Overlays

There are areas of significant landscape character within the Shire that are not covered by sufficient Planning Scheme controls and are experiencing development pressure. In many of these areas, zone controls are relied upon to trigger a permit and comprehensive assessment guidelines are not available. The following 'formula' has been applied to all parts of the Shire within the Study Area to determine where these 'Priority Areas' are located:

*Significance + Pressure + Lack of Control = Priority Area (for additional control)*

The level of significance (Regional, State or National) was attributed to the landscapes through the application of a set of assessment criteria. The methodology and findings in relation to landscape character significance are outlined in the [Regional Toolkit](#).

The Priority Areas are recommended for protection and management through the application of the Significant Landscape Overlay.

The Significant Landscape Overlay is recommended for the following areas within the Shire of Corangamite:

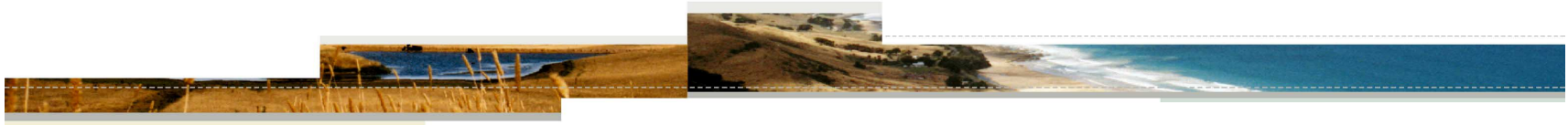
#### Moonlight Head Coastal Landscape

Private land in the Moonlight Head coastal area extending approximately from the Shire's eastern Municipal boundary to the boundary of Precinct 2.6 is recommended as a Significant Landscape Overlay area. (This area would extend eastward into the Colac Otway Shire.) The landscape and scenery of this coastal area is of State significance and is accessible, in part, from the Great Ocean Road. In addition, the area is experiencing development pressure focussed on the coast.

#### Princetown Estuarial Coastal Landscape (Corangamite Shire)

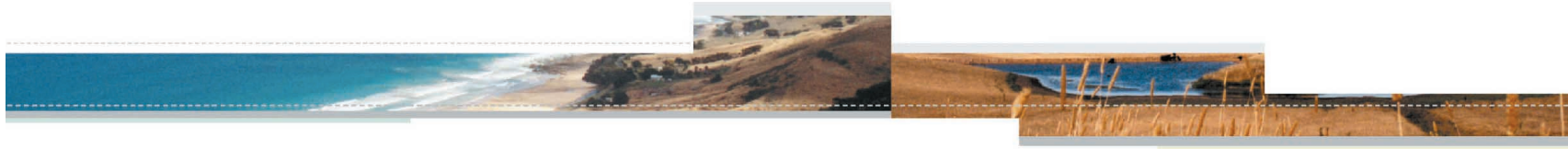
Private land within the coastal landscape of Precinct 2.6 is recommended as a Significant Landscape Overlay area. The landscape setting of the estuarial coastal area is of State significance



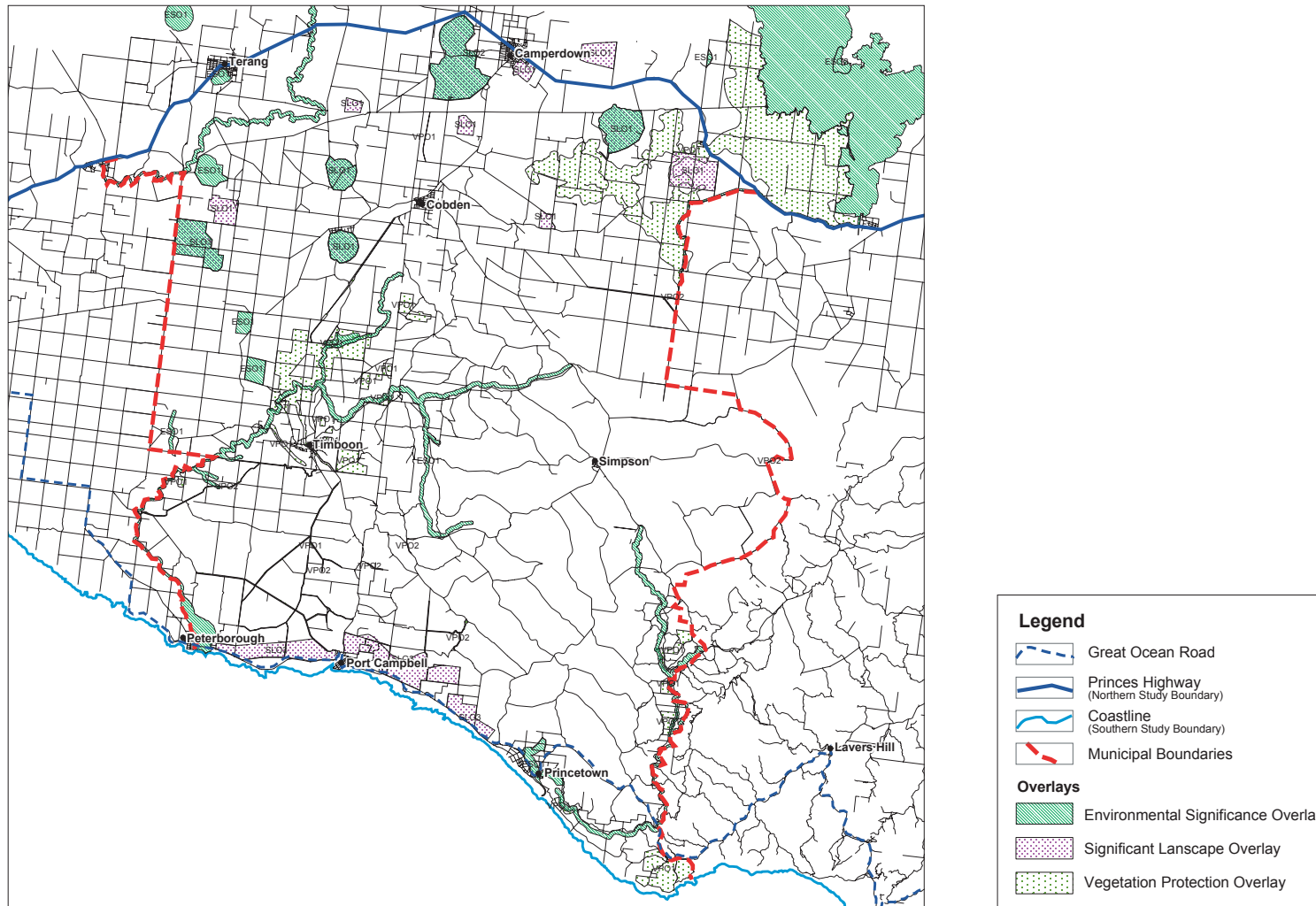


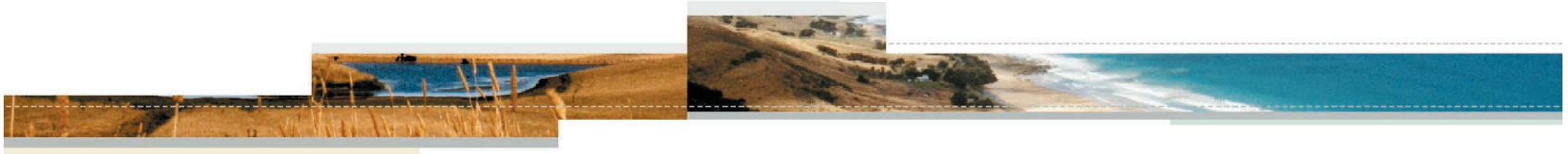
and differs in character from the adjacent coastline. The area is visible and accessible from the Great Ocean Road, and is experiencing high visitation and increasing development pressure.

The proposed Significant Landscape Overlay areas are depicted on the Existing and Proposed Significant Landscape Overlay Areas Map on page 15.

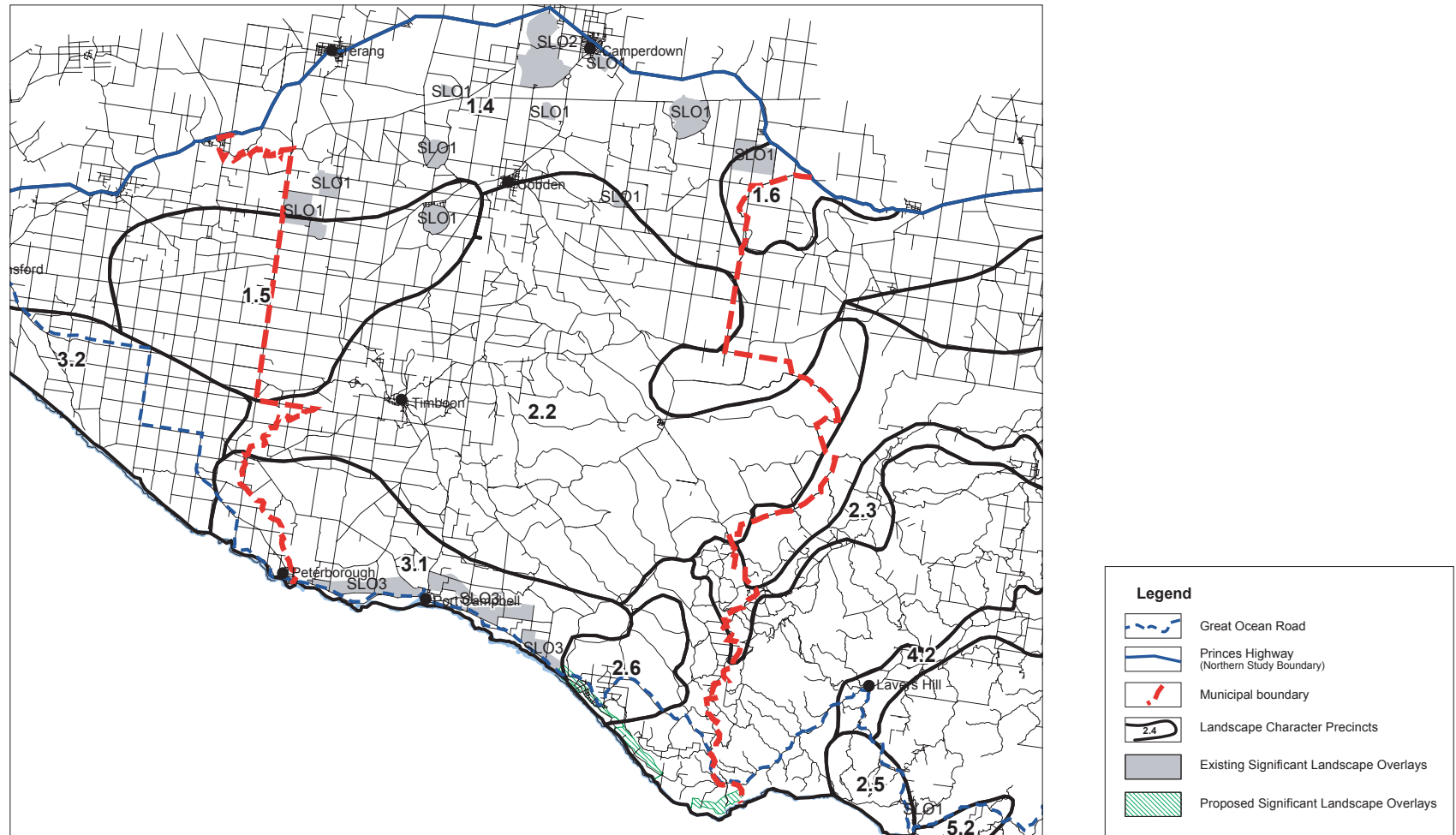


## Relevant Overlays





## Existing and Proposed Significant Landscape Overlay Areas





## Local Planning Policy Framework

The Corangamite Planning Scheme includes Strategic Directions to:

- Protect volcanic landscapes and lakes areas.
- Preserve and protect important landscape features.
- Locate agroforestry and timber plantation development in preferred areas.
- Protect the coastal and landscape environment along the Great Ocean Road.
- Protect the scenic values of coastal areas.
- Prevent linear development along the Great Ocean Road.
- Protect the coastal village character or Port Campbell

And includes the following Local Policies relevant to landscape character:

### 22.01 Settlement:

- 22.01-1 Urban Growth Boundary
- 22.01-2 House Lot Excision
- 22.01-3 Residential Infrastructure

### 22.02 Environment:

- 22.02-1 Catchment and Land Protection
- 22.02-2 Wildfire Management
- 22.02-5 Natural and Cultural Heritage

### 22.03 Economic Development:

- 22.03-2 Horticulture
- 22.03-3 Timber and Timber Processing Industries
- 22.03-4 Tourist Use and Development

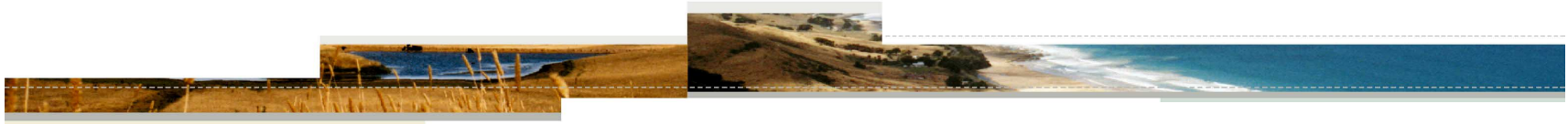
### 22.04 Particular Use and Development:

- 22.04-1 Building Lines and Height
- 22.04-3 Highway Development
- 22.04-6 Sheds and Outbuildings
- 22.04-7 Townscape

The Three Year MSS Review Report (Keaney Planning and Research Pty Ltd and Michael Kirsch, August 2002) recommends changes to the structure, format and content of the Municipal Strategic Statement, including the above Local Policies which are of some relevance to landscape character. The majority of these changes can be implemented without affecting the recommendations of this Study.

The Corangamite Planning Scheme does not contain Local Policy relating specifically to landscape character. Following the delineation of landscape character types and precincts, and the assessment of landscape character significance as part of this Study, it is recommended that this information be included as Local Policy in the Planning Scheme. It is important that Local Policy assists in exercising discretion within the Planning Scheme and it is therefore recommended that the Development Principles prepared as part of this Study also be included. (The Development Principles are contained in the relevant Precinct Packages).

The Local Policy, including Development Principles, will provide guidance in decision making in relation to landscape character that is currently lacking. Particular issues within the Corangamite Shire that will be covered include plantations adjacent to main road corridors, development visible from main road corridors, and containment of township edges.



## 6. Corangamite Recommendations

### Corangamite Planning Scheme

#### Municipal Strategic Statement

Review and strengthen the Municipal Strategic Statement in relation to landscape character generally, including the following Clauses:

- 21.04-2 Environment

Review and strengthen the Municipal Strategic Statement in relation to townships in the landscape, including the following Clauses:

- 21.04-1 Settlements

#### Local Policy

Introduce new Local Policy specific to the landscape character of Corangamite, including Precinct Descriptions, Distinctive Qualities and Development Principles (including Landscape Objectives) relating to the precincts in the Shire.

Include brief policy statements about each of the Landscape Elements in the new Local Policy. It is envisaged that the policy statements would be incorporated into the relevant Local Policy for that landscape character precinct.

Amend Local Policy 22.03-3 Timber and Timber Processing Industries to include a requirement for an indigenous or native vegetation buffer (minimum depth 20 metres) for timber plantations abutting a Road Zone Category 1.

Review and strengthen all relevant Local Policies.

#### Rural Zone

Amend the Schedule to the Rural Zone to require a permit for timber production over 40 hectares abutting a Road Zone Category 1.

### Significant Landscape Overlay

Review and rewrite existing Significant Landscape Overlay schedules (SLO1 and SLO3) taking into account the findings of this Study so that the schedules are better tailored to the landscape types.

Apply the Significant Landscape Overlay to the Moonlight Head coastal landscape (part Precincts 2.6 and 4.1). This overlay area will extend into the Colac Otway Shire.

*Detailed investigation is required to determine the exact cadastral boundaries of the above proposed overlay areas, as this was outside the scope of the brief.*

### Corangamite Community Education

Consider the need for community education programs to disseminate information about landscape sensitive development and the findings of this Study.

### Council Staff Skilling

It will take time to become familiar with the findings of this Study and its implementation through the planning system, and the Shire's planners will need support and skilling to get the most out of the Study's recommendations. Correct approaches to site analysis, knowledge about acceptable design solutions for particular landscape character types, and consistency are all important. Training sessions, workshops and a review of permit applications by appropriately qualified consultants may be useful techniques. Above all, the Council must send out the right message to the development community through consistent decision making as well as communication about the value of the landscape character to the Shire's image and economy.



## Council Statutory Support

The main products for statutory support, which will aid decision making are the proposed changes to the Corangamite Planning Scheme, including the Development Principles and Local Policy. However, there are other allied or associated measures that can be taken, including:

- Introduction of additional permit conditions
- Better enforcement of permit conditions
- Active monitoring of illegal works, and increased publicity regarding penalties
- Improved communication and coordination with public land managers to ensure that the desired landscape character outcomes are achieved