

21 MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC STATEMENT

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21.01 Introduction

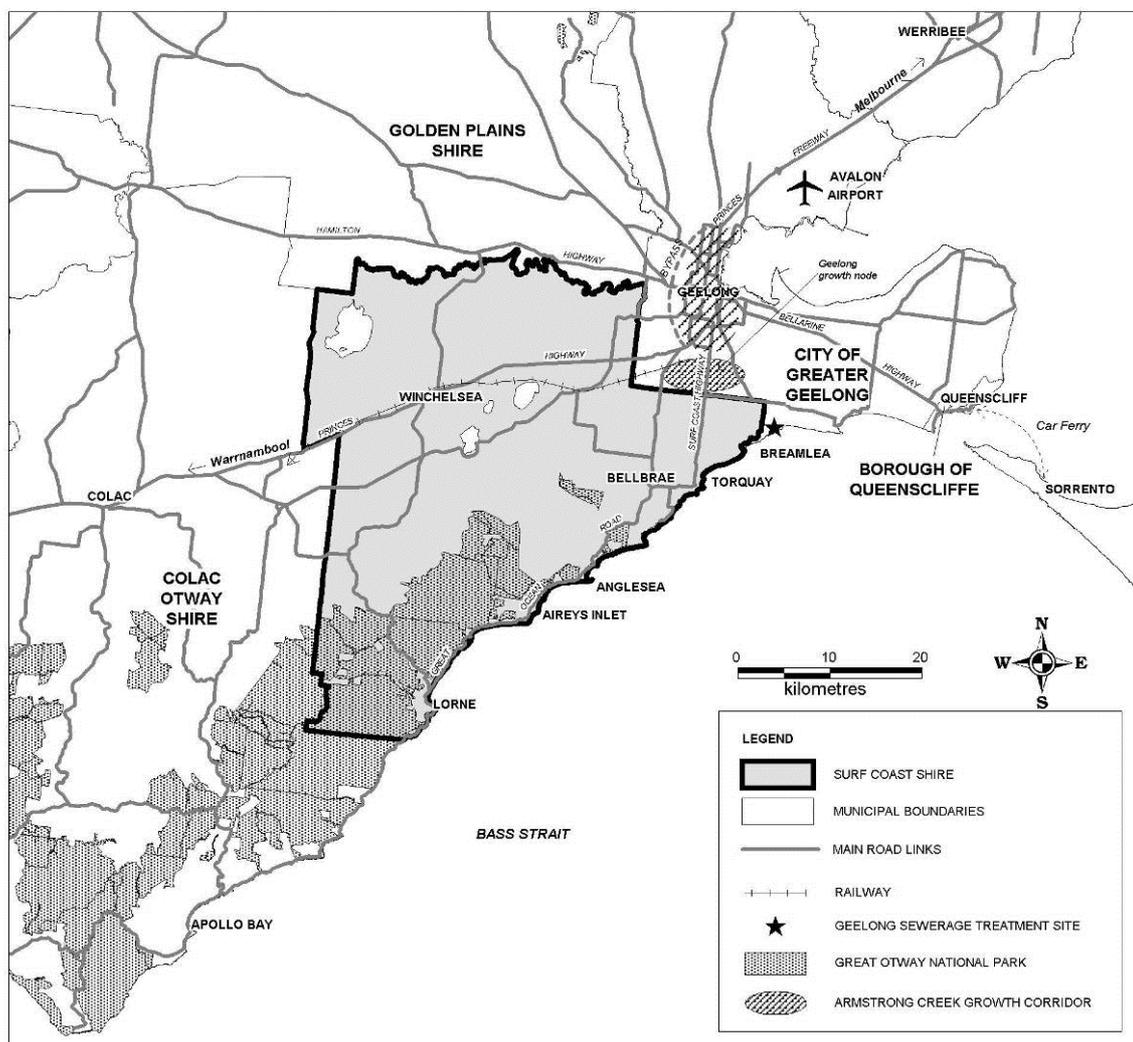
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21.01-1 Municipal profile

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The Surf Coast Shire is located in the Corangamite Region of south-west Victoria as shown in Map 1 to this Clause. Geographically positioned south-west of Geelong, the Shire has an area of 1,560 square kilometres with some 55 kilometres of coastline defining its south-eastern boundary.

Map 1 to Clause 21.01 – Regional Context Plan



The Shire contains rich and diverse environmental, cultural and scenic landscapes including rugged coastlines, native forests, rolling to flat rural plains and many rivers, lakes and wetlands. These landscapes contain significant heathlands, grassy woodlands and bushland areas and habitat for many threatened species, including the Orange Bellied Parrot, Hooded Plover, Rufous Bristlebird, Swamp Antechinus and New Holland Mouse. Features of environmental and cultural heritage significance include the Great Otway

National Park, indigenous sites, the Marine Park off Point Addis, the Great Ocean Road and the Split Point Lighthouse in Aireys Inlet.

Wetlands and waterways of environmental significance include Lake Murdeduke, listed under the *Ramsar* Convention and Directory of important wetlands, Lake Modewarre, Lake Dubin, Barwon River and the Karaaf saltmarsh (Breamlea) which all provide habitat for JAMBA and CAMBA listed species

Traditional occupation of the region was by three aboriginal language groups: the Wathaurong (Wada wurrung) in the north and east extending to Painkalac Creek in Aireys Inlet, the Gadubanud to the south of Painkalac Creek stretching past Lorne, and the Gulidjan west of the Barwon River in Winchelsea.

In the course of time these physical features and cultural influences have created distinctive communities with a diversity of values and expectations. The southern part of the Shire contains nodes of coastal townships dotted along the Great Ocean Road comprising Torquay-Jan Juc, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek and Lorne. Other than Torquay-Jan Juc, these towns are sited on the coastal edge of the Otway Ranges and are surrounded by the Great Otway National Park. Rural lands north of the Otways contain the townships of Winchelsea, Deans Marsh, Moriac and Bellbrae. Torquay-Jan Juc is the main administrative and population centre and is located at the eastern end of the Shire, linked to Geelong by a dual lane highway.

The Surf Coast Shire has considerable and extensive fire history with many of the settlements across the municipality at high risk from bushfire or grassfire. Large numbers of tourists visit these areas during the fire danger period and the Great Ocean Road provides the main access route into and out of the area during a major fire event.

The Surf Coast is a popular tourist and surfing area. Its economy is increasingly reliant on tourism. Employment is dominated by retail, tourism and hospitality, construction, and health and community services. Agriculture, once the dominant sector, is still growing in productive output and makes a significant contribution to the economy, but employs only a small proportion of the Shire's workforce.

The rural areas of the Shire are not only important for agriculture, but are increasingly valued, in terms of the environment and landscape, for their contribution to the amenity and liveability of the Shire and their tourism and recreation value.

21.01-2 Key Issues and Influences

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Key issues and influences impacting the Surf Coast Shire include:

- Increasing popularity of the coast and coastal towns as permanent, holiday and tourist destinations.
- Reconciling coastal growth with the fragile natural environment, traditional coastal town character and relaxed surfing culture.
- Changing rural industry and influx of lifestyle farms.
- Protection of significant wetlands, waterways and vegetation, habitats and scenic landscapes.
- Threat of bushfire on coastal and hinterland towns within close proximity to forested land.
- Rapid rate of growth in Torquay-Jan Juc and delivery of necessary infrastructure.
- High cost of urban land and consequent pressure to develop urban uses in rural areas.
- Increasing accessibility of the Shire to Geelong and Melbourne.

21.01-3 Vision and strategic framework plan

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The Surf Coast Shire Council Plan 2013-2017 describes the following vision for the Shire:

“Working towards an engaged, innovative and sustainable community.”

This vision is supported by five main themes and a number of strategic objectives and outcomes. The themes are:

Environment: We pursue innovative and sustainable practices that will preserve and enhance our natural environment for all, by being socially responsible and environmentally aware.

Governance: We are committed to delivering a transparent, high performing and sustainable organisation that engages with the community and adopts robust risk management practices.

Communities: We actively engage with our diverse and growing communities to establish quality services, healthy and safe environments and long term community partnerships.

Infrastructure: We are committed to understanding and meeting our community’s needs for accessible, well maintained and safe infrastructure.

Development and Growth: We foster healthy and sustainable communities by supporting tourism and rural businesses, and encouraging clean industries and development that respects the Surf Coast’s environment and lifestyle.

Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to creating sustainable communities, and by sustainable, meaning:

The principle of ensuring that our actions today do not limit the range of economic, social and environmental options open to future generations.

Municipal Framework Plan

The underlying principle that directs all local policy and strategies of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme is that **the natural environment is the single most important attribute and asset of the Surf Coast Shire**. The natural environment of the Surf Coast provides a lifestyle quality treasured by both the permanent and non-permanent population, and is the basis of a thriving tourist industry and broad agricultural base.

The Municipal Land Use Framework Plan (Map 2 to Clause 21.01) sets out the general pattern for land use and development to respond to the key issues and influences to achieve the strategic vision for the municipality.

The purpose of the framework plan is to provide an overview of land use in the Surf Coast Shire and to identify locations where specific land use outcomes will be supported and promoted.

The key strategic directions for sustainable land use and development as identified in the framework plan are:

Settlement Built Environment and Heritage

- To manage population and tourist growth and development in an ecologically sustainable manner.
- To protect the rural landscape and significant biodiversity assets from urban intrusion and to provide clear distinction between townships.
- To direct population growth and development to low bushfire risk locations.
- To concentrate urban growth in the towns of Torquay-Jan Juc and Winchelsea.
- To support and strengthen the individual character and role of the coastal and rural towns within the Shire that contributes to the diversity of experiences, and residential, commercial, recreational and employment opportunities.

Environmental Management

- To protect the fragile coastal and forest environments and scenic landscapes that separates the coastal townships, from urban sprawl and inappropriate development.

- To avoid development in areas of biodiversity and landscape significance where bushfire mitigation measures will compromise those assets.

Tourism

- To promote natural resource based tourism, at a scale and form that respects its setting, the surrounding land uses and the locale.
- To promote Lorne as a primary tourist destination on the Great Ocean Road while protecting and enhancing its highly vegetated coastal urban character, residential amenity and forest hinterland.

Agriculture

- To protect and enhance the rural areas of the Shire for their diverse agricultural, environmental and landscape values and opportunities.

Landscape

- To maintain a clear rural-landscape separation between Torquay-Jan Juc and the Armstrong Creek southern growth corridor of Geelong.
- To protect the undeveloped, natural landscape vista of the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve.
- To recognise that rural landscape vistas are highly valued for their contribution to the amenity and liveability of rural areas.

Rural Residential Living

- To limit the provision of rural residential / rural living lots outside settlement boundaries to prevent adverse impacts on agricultural, environmental and landscape values.

Map 2 to Clause 21.01 – Municipal Land Use Framework Plan

Key Principle: The single most important attribute and asset of the Surf Coast Shire is the natural environment and the lifestyle and values that it fosters

