



THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD REGION
LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT STUDY

plān i'sphēre [// urban strategy planners]

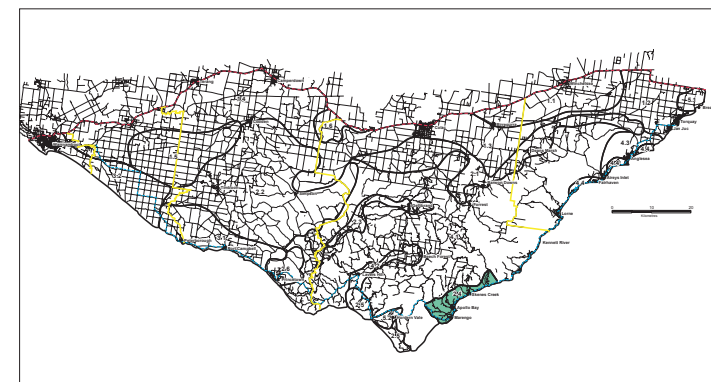
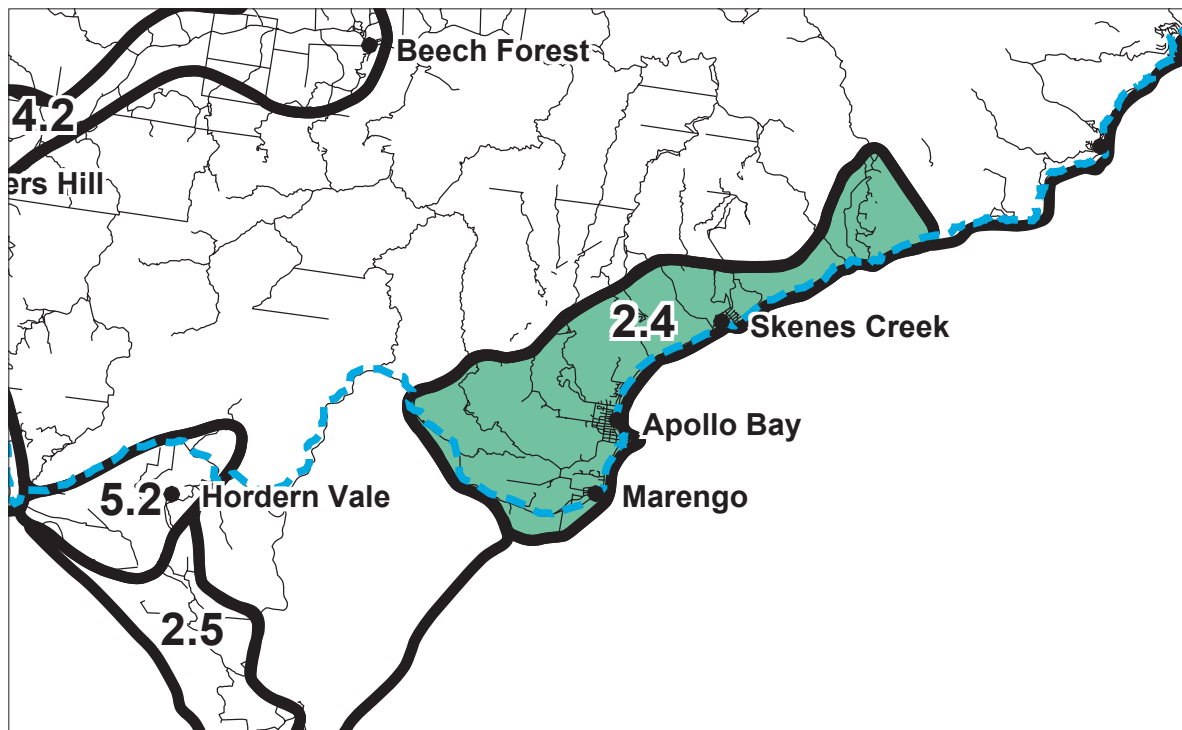
PRECINCT PACKAGE

PRECINCT 2.4 | APOLLO BAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT | SEPTEMBER 2003

LOCALITY MAP

PRECINCT 2.4 | APOLLO BAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



Legend

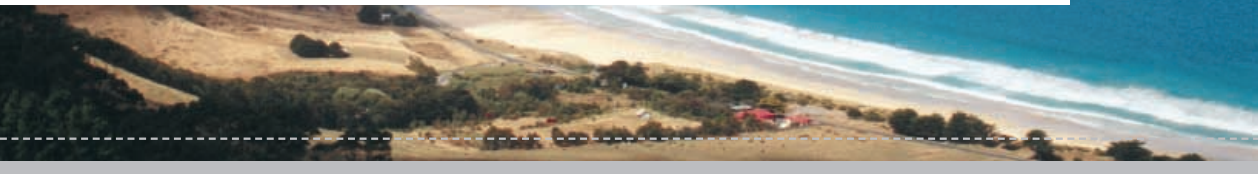
- This Precinct
- Great Ocean Road
- Princes Highway (Northern Study Boundary)
- Municipal boundary

Landscape Character Types and Precincts

- 1.1 - 1.6 Western Plains, Cones and Lakes
- 2.1 - 2.6 Otway Foothills, Valleys and Uplands
- 3.1 - 3.2 Western Coastal Cliffs
- 4.1 - 4.4 Otway Forests and Coast
- 5.1 - 5.2 Localised Flatlands

PRECINCT QUALITIES AND OBJECTIVES

PRECINCT 2.4 | APOLLO BAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

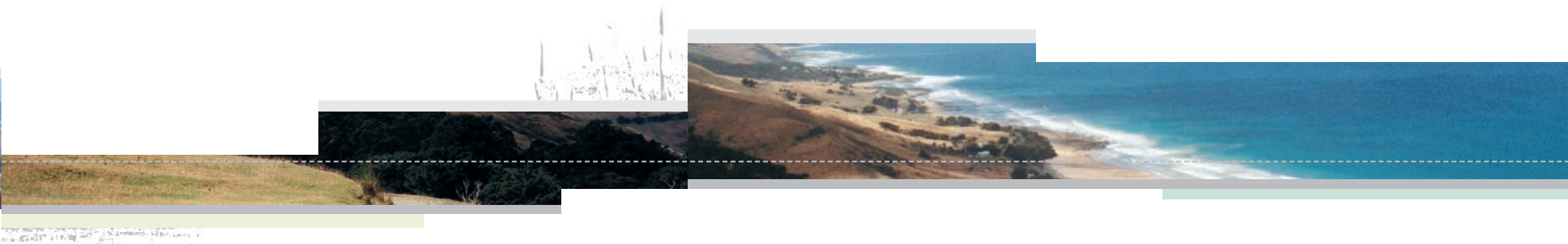
Precinct 2.4 is characterised by a backdrop of tall, steep rugged hills, at the foot of which is gently rolling land, sloping down to the coast. The wide sandy beach at Apollo Bay curves around to Wild Dog Creek, with grassy dunes and low bluffs behind. The hills that encase the precinct are predominantly cleared with some remnant shrubby foothill and riparian forest vegetation. Numerous rivers and creeks incise the hills and run to the bay, which is vegetated with remnant coastal heathland scrub. This largely open, cleared precinct is surrounded by dense, wet eucalypt forest, providing a stark character contrast.

DISTINCTIVE QUALITIES

The Otway Foothills, Valleys and Uplands landscape character type is located generally at the foothills of the Otway Forest, both inland and on the coast. It is characterised by hilly topography, varying from gentle to steep, and often incised with rivers, creeks and gullies. A patchwork of paddocks and shelter belts exists throughout this landscape character type, with some remnant vegetation in waterways and valleys.

Within this landscape character type, precinct 2.4 is distinctive as a location where a number of different landscape elements intersect in a dramatic manner: low sea coast, bayside townships, topographic edge of the Otway Ranges sweeping down to the narrow coastal strip, edge of the forest, and the incised, vegetated creek valleys. The edges and inter-relationships between these elements create a landscape setting of national significance.

A full explanation of the level of significance attributed to the landscape character is contained in the Regional Toolkit.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Stark landscape contrasts
- Landscape 'edges'
- The coastal aspect
- Coastal townships
- Clear views across rolling topography
- Indigenous vegetation emphasising landscape features

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The dramatic intersection of landscape 'edges' within the precinct should be retained and protected, and could be further emphasised by increasing indigenous planting for subtle emphasis. Ribbon development and inappropriate development on hill faces should be checked in the precinct, and township edges have the potential to be further defined.

LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES

- To increase the use of indigenous vegetation to highlight natural features within the precinct.
- To retain the contrasts between landscape elements within the precinct.
- To ensure that development that occurs on hill faces or in other prominent locations is not highly visible.
- To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly in coastal areas, hill faces and ridges.
- To protect the clear, sweeping views to the ocean available from the precinct.
- To retain the dominance of an indigenous natural landscape in coastal areas, between townships, particularly from the Great Ocean Road.

PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

PRECINCT 2.4 | APOLLO BAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
VEGETATION	<p>To increase the use of indigenous vegetation to highlight natural features within the precinct.</p> <p>To retain the dramatic contrasts between landscape elements within the precinct.</p>	<p>Retain existing indigenous and native trees and understorey wherever possible, and provide for the planting of new indigenous vegetation to highlight features such as waterways and creek valleys.</p>	<p><i>Loss of indigenous vegetation.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of indigenous vegetation in or adjacent to natural landscape features.</i></p>
SITING AND DESIGN	<p>To ensure that development that occurs on hill faces or in other prominent locations is not highly visible, particularly from main roads and key viewing locations.</p>	<p>In circumstances where development can not be avoided on hill faces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Locate development sparsely to avoid loss of vegetation, where it exists. – Design buildings to follow the contours or step down the site. – Articulate buildings into separate elements, and avoid visually dominant elevations. – Use darker colours and finishes that are less prominent visually, particularly roofs. <p>In circumstances where development can not be avoided on ridge tops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Locate development to avoid the loss of vegetation, where it exists. – Use lighter colours and finishes to minimise visibility against the sky. 	<p><i>Light colours or highly reflective finishes on hill faces.</i></p> <p><i>Dark colours and finishes on ridge tops.</i></p> <p><i>Excessive cut and fill.</i></p> <p><i>Large building footprints.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations, where it exists.</i></p> <p><i>Buildings that have no relationship to the landform.</i></p>
INFRASTRUCTURE AND SIGNAGE	<p>To minimise the visual impact of development in coastal areas, hill faces and ridges from main roads and key viewing locations.</p>	<p>On the coastal side of the Great Ocean Road, infrastructure such as powerlines and other utility services should be underground wherever possible.</p> <p>Locate and screen large buildings and structures (eg very large sheds, high tension transmission lines and associated cleared easements etc) to minimise visibility from Category 1 Roads and key viewing locations.</p>	<p><i>Loss of vegetation.</i></p> <p><i>Landscape ‘scarring’.</i></p> <p><i>Signage clutter.</i></p>

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
INFRASTRUCTURE AND SIGNAGE [Cont.]		<p>Prepare a landscape plan utilising appropriate species and demonstrating how the affected area will be remediated after the development.</p> <p>Avoid brightly coloured signage and infrastructure, particularly on the coastal side of the Great Ocean Road.</p> <p>Group signage at particular locations to minimise visual impact on large areas of the landscape, and to maintain views.</p>	<p><i>Visually dominating signage and infrastructure.</i></p>
TOWNSHIPS AND SETTLEMENTS	<p>To protect the clear, sweeping views to the ocean available from the precinct.</p> <p>To retain the dominance of an indigenous natural landscape in coastal areas, between townships, particularly from the Great Ocean Road.</p>	<p>Avoid development on the coastal side of the Great Ocean Road, and in coastal areas between townships wherever possible. If it cannot be avoided, site development sparsely to maximise retention of vegetation and views to the ocean.</p> <p>Between townships, locate development a substantial distance from the Great Ocean Road.</p> <p>New buildings should be designed to respond to the characteristics of the site and locality, demonstrating a high standard of contemporary expression and finish.</p> <p>Utilise colours and finishes that complement those occurring naturally in the local coastal environment.</p> <p>Ensure townships have a definite visual edge, delineating the boundary between urban development and the natural landscape beyond.</p> <p>Locate signage away from entrances and exits to townships wherever possible.</p>	<p><i>Loss of indigenous coastal vegetation.</i></p> <p><i>Buildings that have no relationship to the landform.</i></p> <p><i>Ribbon development.</i></p> <p><i>Unclear edges to townships.</i></p> <p><i>Signage clutter at entrances and exists to townships.</i></p>

PRECINCT LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

PRECINCT 2.4 | APOLLO BAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



ABOVE | Mostly cleared rolling hills visible from the Great Ocean Road.



ABOVE | Leaving Marengo, the road climbs into the Otway Forest.

EDGES

The following 'landscape edges' exist within the precinct:

- Dramatic intersection of landscape elements within the precinct: low sea coast, bayside townships, topographic edge of the Otway Ranges, edge of the forest, and the incised, vegetated creek valleys
- Interface of the precinct (a coastal clearing in the forest) with adjacent, heavily vegetated areas
- Interface of development with the coast
- Interface of development with the Great Ocean Road corridor and other roads
- Limit of development at edge of foothills; edge of townships in the 'natural' landscape

CORRIDORS

The following, taken from field survey notes, is a sequence description of the journey along the Great Ocean Road from Cape Patton to beyond Marengo:

... Cape Patton – Cape Patton Lookout provides a 'gateway' experience to the precinct – emerge from the bush to open views of cleared, grazing land – coastal scrub immediately adjacent to the road, with a rural character beyond – Skenes Creek – linear, ribbon development and signage – intermittent avenues of old Cypresses lining the road – elevation of road drops near beaches – Apollo Bay – glimpses of the beach through coastal scrub at the road side – marshy river flats where the Barham River meets the coast – Marengo – development takes advantage of views – road begins to climb steeply – enter tall timber forests and leave cleared paddocks behind...



ABOVE | Ribbon development along the Great Ocean Road at Skenes Creek.



ABOVE | Entrance to Marengo, with residential development in the foothills.

TOWNSHIPS

There are three main townships within the precinct: Skenes Creek, Apollo Bay and Marengo.

SKENES CREEK

Skenes Creek is a small residential settlement, comprising scattered buildings in a ribbon formation along the Great Ocean Road, and on the cleared hills above the road. Buildings are all residential, with some motels and B&B style accommodation on former pastoral land. Development is exposed due to a lack of vegetation along the roadside and on the hills faces. Where development in vegetated areas, it is less obtrusive and gives the impression of being tucked into the landscape.

APOLLO BAY

Apollo Bay is the largest settlement within the precinct and occurs in an open setting at the base of the cleared hills, with a frontage to the beach. The older part of the township is set on a modified grid, with new subdivision on the fringes being developed in cul-de-sac forms.

A mix of building types and styles exist, with older dwellings tending to be modest and small scale, and newer development being more colourful and largely two storey. The majority of built form could be described as light-weight, being constructed of timber, fibro or corrugated iron. Vegetation is sparse and low level, with some large cypresses featuring along the Great Ocean Road foreshore. The form of the landscape, particularly the bold, cleared hills, provides a dramatic backdrop to the town.

MARENGO

Marengo is a residential settlement located on Mounts Bay and is separated from the township of Apollo Bay by the Barham River. The flood plain of the river is a landscape feature of the township. Marengo is more recently developed than other settlements in the precinct, with much of the built form being constructed of heavier materials such as brick veneer. The layout of the town is centred on the Great Ocean Road, with some excavation and exposed development occurring on the hill faces.



ABOVE | View towards the west from Cape Patton Lookout.



ABOVE | View of Apollo Bay township from Mariner's Lookout.

KEY VIEWS

There are two well-known key viewing points within the precinct that are frequented by tourists and visitors to the region: Cape Patton Lookout and Mariner's Lookout.

CAPE PATTON LOOKOUT

Cape Patton Lookout is located at Cape Patton, on the coastal side of the Great Ocean Road. The lookout is signed and consists of a car parking bay adjacent to the road, defined by a grey stone wall. The car parking bay can accommodate approximately four to six cars, with the stone wall providing a formality to the viewing area and restricting the view from the car. As a result of needing to leave the car to see the view, the viewing experience is very dramatic. The open ocean view includes steep rocky cliffs immediately to the east. The longer view to the west is of partially cleared hills and Apollo Bay. Low coastal vegetation is present in the immediate surrounds, and houses in rural settings are visible in the close to medium range views.

MARINER'S LOOKOUT

Mariner's Lookout is located inland, north of Apollo Bay with access via a steep road. Pedestrian only access is available to the actual viewing area, and is informal and unmade. The viewing area is open, from a cleared paddock. The view is an expansive panorama to the east, south and west, across the cleared hills, over the settlement and out to Apollo Bay. The view stretches from Marengo and eastward along the scarp towards Cape Patton. The backdrop to the view is the hilly northern ridge.



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PRECINCT ANALYSIS

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PRECINCT ANALYSIS MAPS

PRECINCT 2.4 | APOLLO BAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



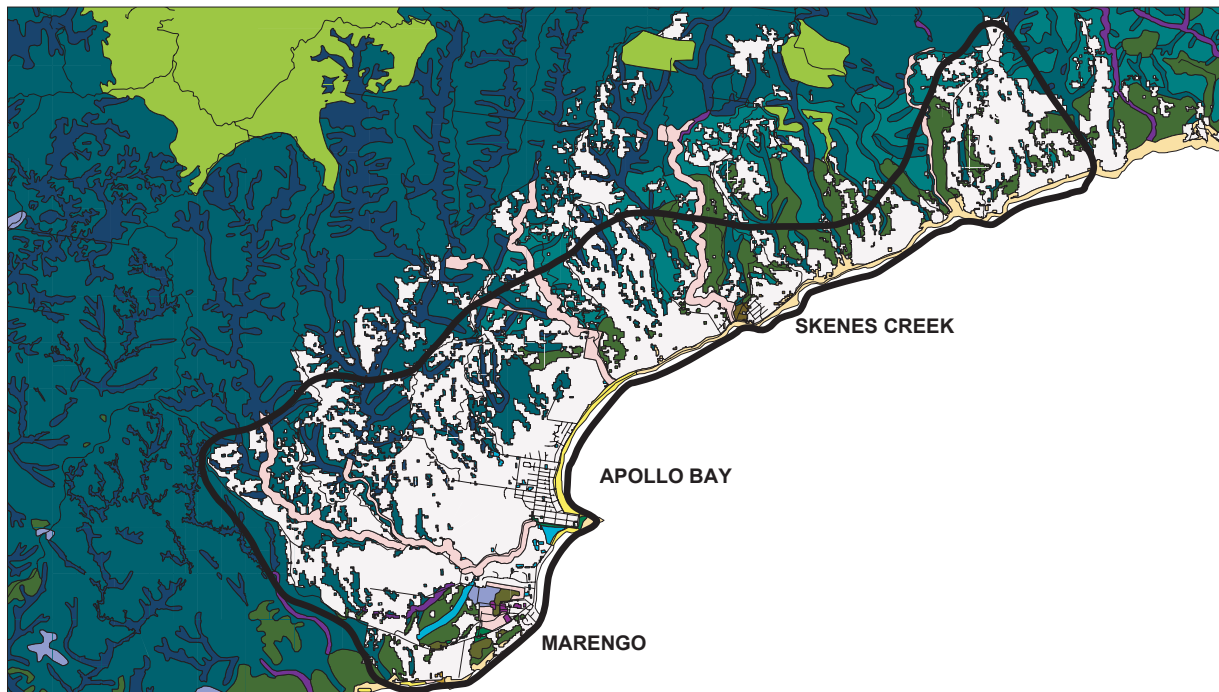
SATELLITE PHOTO

The satellite photo highlights the topography and vegetation cover of the precinct. The ridges of the hills which encase the precinct are clearly visible as are the cleared hills faces and drop to the gently sloping land adjacent to the coast.



CONTOUR MAP

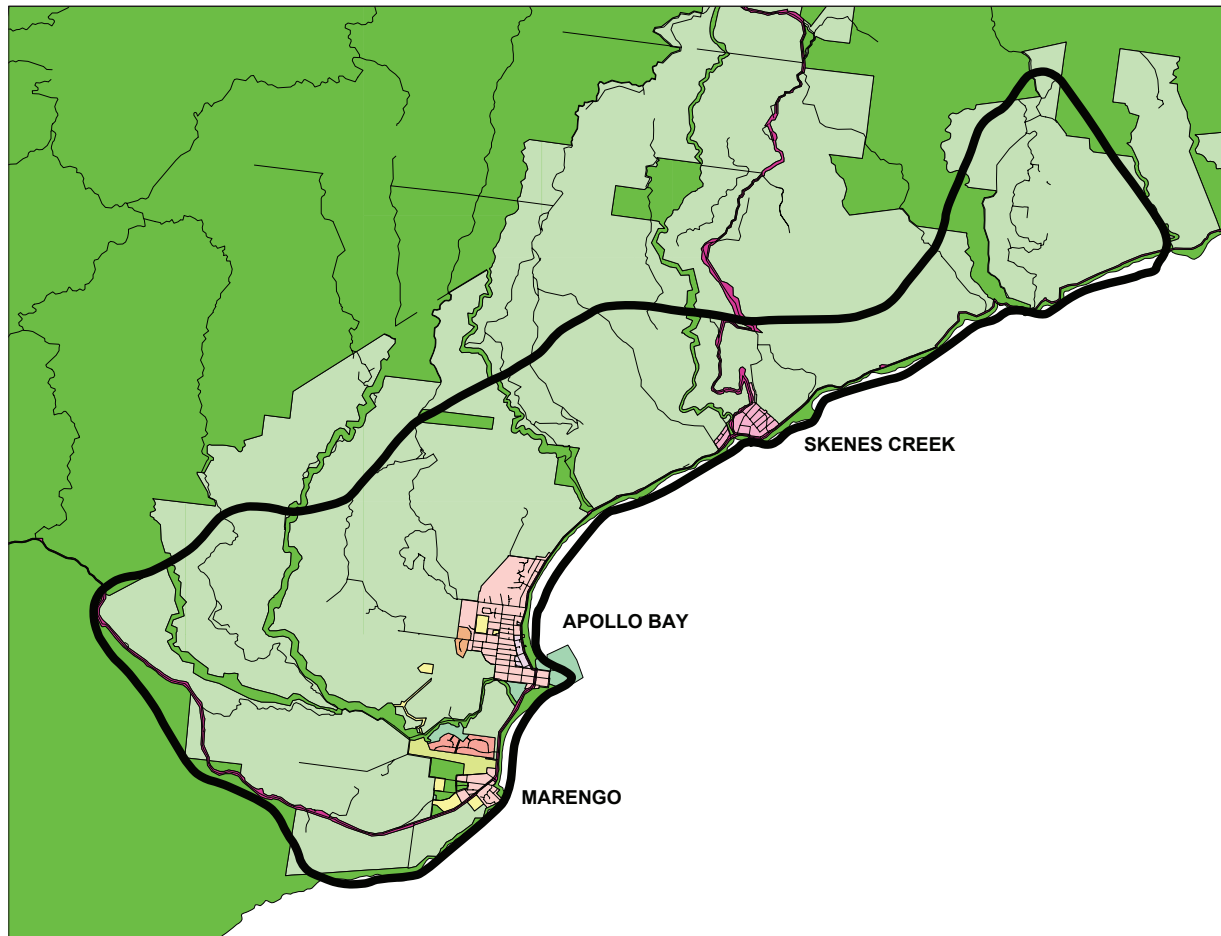
The contour map further highlights the dramatic landform of the precinct, with river and creek gullies incising the hills and the settlements of Skenes Creek, Apollo Bay and Marengo located on the less undulating topography at the base of the foothills.



ECOLOGICAL VEGETATION CLASSES
















The following map shows ecological vegetation classes within the precinct. Riparian Forest and Shrubby Foothill Forest are evident on the hill tops surrounding the precinct, while below this much of the land has been cleared. Coastal Headland Scrub is evident in a linear formation along the coastline, with vegetation akin to floodplain areas evident at the mouth of the Barham River.

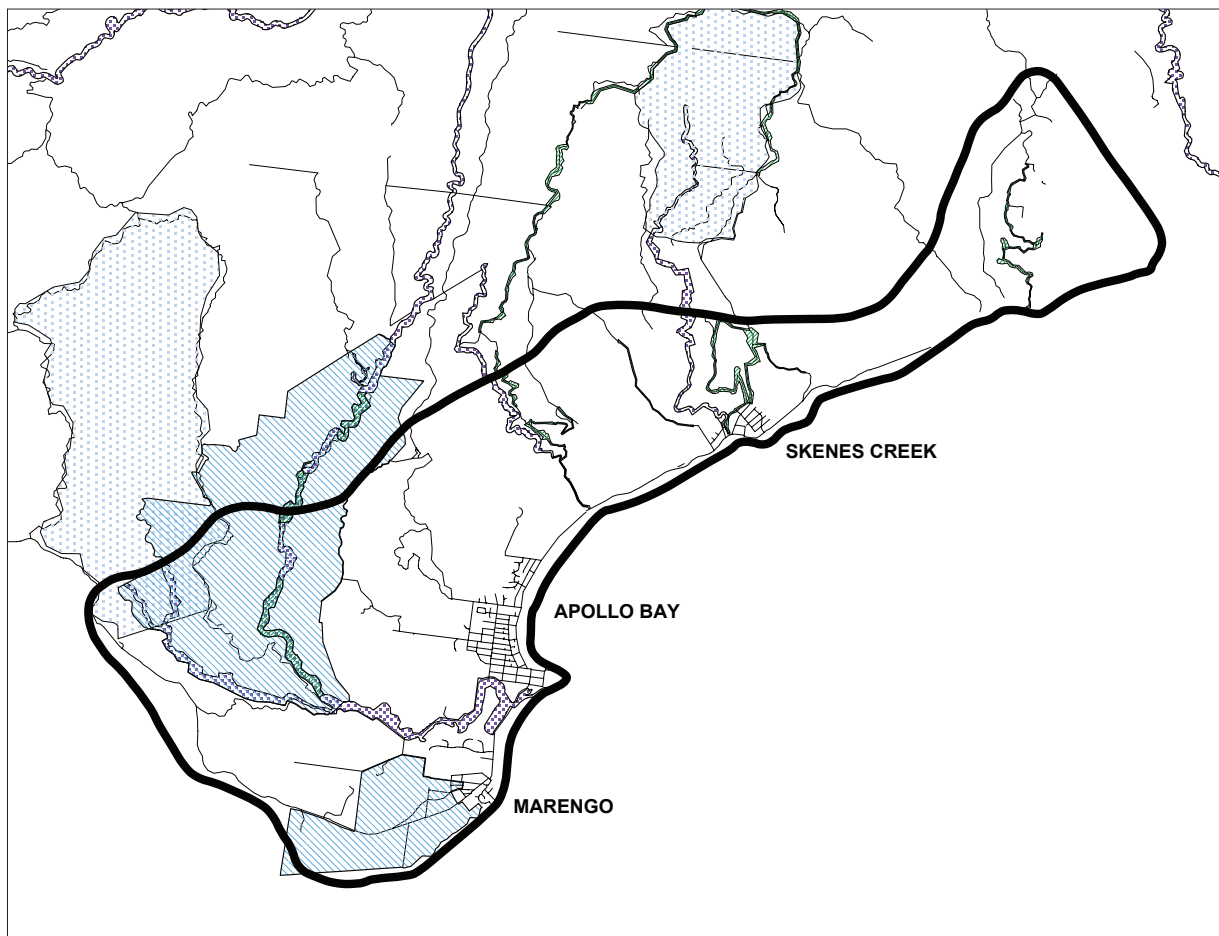
Vegetation Classes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic Hermland Aquatic Hermland/Plains Sedge Wetland Mosaic Bird Colony Shrubland Calcarenite Dune Woodland Cane Grass-Lignum Halophytic Hermland Cinder Cone Woodland Clay Heathland Cleared Severely Disturbed Coast Gully Thicket Coastal Dune Scrub Coastal Dune Scrub Mosaic Coastal Headland Scrub Coastal Headland Scrub/ Headland Coastal Tussock Grassland Mosaic Coastal Landfill / Sand Accretion Coastal Saltmarsh Coastal Tussock Grassland Cool Temperate Rainforest Creekline Grassy Woodland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damp Heath Scrub Damp Heath Scrub/Heathy Woodland Complex Damp Heathland / Damp Heathy Woodland Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland / Damp Heathland / Damp Heathy Woodland Deep Freshwater Marsh Estuarine Wetland Floodplain Riparian Woodland Freshwater Meadow Grassy Dry Forest Grassy Forest Grassy Woodland Heathy Woodland Heathy Woodland/Sand Heath Mosaic Herb-rich Foothill Forest Herb-rich Foothill Forest/ Shrubby Foothill Forest Complex Lignum Wetland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowland Forest Mangrove Shrubland Not assessed to date - Formerly Not Applicable/ Not Within Victoria Permanent Saline Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland Plains Freshwater Sedge Wetland Plains Grassland Plains Grassland/Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic Plains Grassy Wetland Plains Grassy Woodland Plains Sedge Wetland Plains Swampy Woodland Plains Woodland (undefined) Private Land No Tree Cover Reed Swamp Riparian Forest Riparian Scrub Complex Riparian Woodland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riparian Woodland / Escarpment Shrubland Sand Heathland Scoria Cone Woodland Seasonally-inundated Sub-saline Hermland Sedge Riparian Woodland Shallow Freshwater Marsh Shrubby Dry Forest Shrubby Foothill Forest Shrubby Wet Forest Stoney Rises Herb-rich Woodland Stony Knoll Shrubland / Plains Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassy Wetland Swamp Scrub Swamp Scrub / Aquatic Hermland Swampy Riparian Woodland Water Body - Natural or man made Wet Forest Wet Heathland Wet Sands Thicket



ZONING MAP

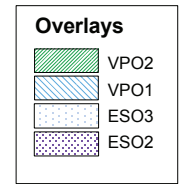
The following map depicts the zones in the precinct, with the majority of the area being zoned Environmental Rural. The townships are largely zoned Residential 1, with the Public Conservation and Resource Zone along the foreshore and in river corridors.

Zones	
	B1Z
	B2Z
	B4Z
	ERZ
	IN1Z
	LDRZ
	PCRZ
	PPRZ
	PUZ
	PUZ4
	R1Z
	RDZ1
	RUZ
	SUZ1
	TZ



RELEVANT OVERLAYS MAP

The following map depicts those overlays relevant to landscape character within the precinct. The Vegetation Protection Overlay is used in areas of significance remnant vegetation and adjacent to some roadsides. The Environmental Significance Overlay is used in lakes, wetlands and streams throughout the precinct and for proclaimed water catchment areas.



PLANNING SCHEME ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PRECINCT 2.4 | APOLLO BAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

Precinct	Municipality	Landscape Character Significance	Development Pressures	Relevant Planning Controls	Local Policies	Issues and Priority Areas	Key Planning Scheme Recommendations
2.4 Proposed SLO	Colac Otway	<p><i>National significance: Landscape setting of whole precinct</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprises bay, headland, edge of hills and forest, river flats and valley Intersection of landscape elements Visible and accessible from Great Ocean Road High visitation 	<p>Development Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism signage Tourism accommodation Residential development Pressure focussed along coast [Apollo Bay especially] Skenes Creek soon to be sewerred <p>Potential Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribbon development between towns Skyline development along ridges Excavation on hill faces 'Creep' of settlements along Great Ocean Road and up hill faces 	<p>Zoning:</p> <p>Majority of precinct ERZ</p> <p>PCRZ along river corridors and coast</p> <p>Settlements are primarily R1</p> <p>Apollo Bay has a small B1 zoned area and the harbour precinct is zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone</p> <p>Skenes Creek is TZ</p> <p>Marengo primarily R1Z with LDRZ on outskirts</p> <p>VP01 Significant and Remnant Vegetation eg Barham Valley and Marengo Heathlands</p> <p>Overlays:</p> <p>VP02 Roadside Vegetation</p> <p>ES02 Lakes, Wetlands and Streams eg Barham River</p> <p>ES03 Proclaimed Water Catchments eg West Barham and Skenes Creek</p>	<p>22.01 Main Roads / Scenic Routes</p> <p>22.02 Ridgelines</p> <p>22.03 Tourist Development – Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct</p> <p>22.04 House Lot Excision in the Rural and Environmental Rural Zones</p> <p>22.05 Coastal and Otway Ranges Townships</p>	<p>Township edges and development between towns is a key issue</p> <p>Residential development encroaching up hill faces outside townships also a key issue</p> <p>ERZ provides a permit trigger for most development, including dwellings and timber production</p> <p>Buildings and works permit also required for development within 100 metres of a RDZ1</p> <p>However, the landscape setting of the precinct outside townships is of National significance and warrants additional protection and management</p> <p>Assessment tools / development principles are also required in this area</p> <p>Retention / restoration of the natural landscape between towns a high priority</p> <p>Character study underway for Apollo Bay and Marengo [will include design principles for undeveloped R1Z land]</p>	<p>Review / strengthen MSS in relation to landscape generally, particularly 21.01-03 and 21.04-02 The Nature of the Land</p> <p>Review MSS in relation to townships in the landscape, particularly 21.01-04 and 21.04-03 Settlement Patterns and Rural Living</p> <p>Also review MSS Clause 21.04-10 in relation to Apollo Bay and smaller communities</p> <p>Review / strengthen all relevant local policies</p> <p>Apply SLO to private land [excluding townships] in the precinct</p> <p>[Also refer to Municipal Toolkit for description / discussion]</p> <p>Tailor SLO schedule to reflect the findings of this Study in relation to precinct 2.4, and the character of the landscape</p> <p>Introduce new local policy including development principles for precinct 2.4</p> <p>Local policy [perhaps amend 22.01] to include indigenous buffer requirement for plantations adjacent to RDZ1</p>