



THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD REGION  
LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT STUDY

**plān i 'sphēre** [ // urban strategy planners ]

PRECINCT PACKAGE

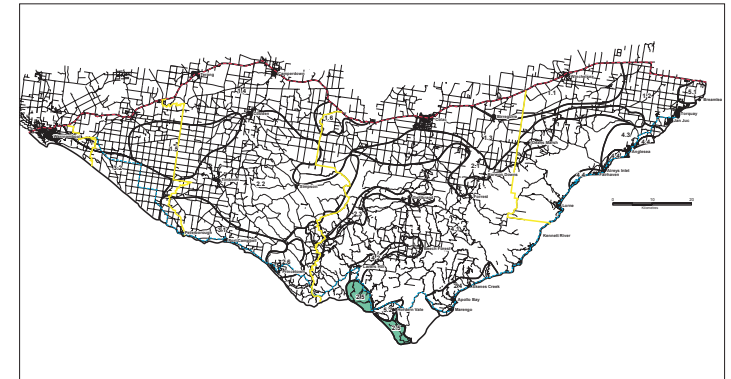
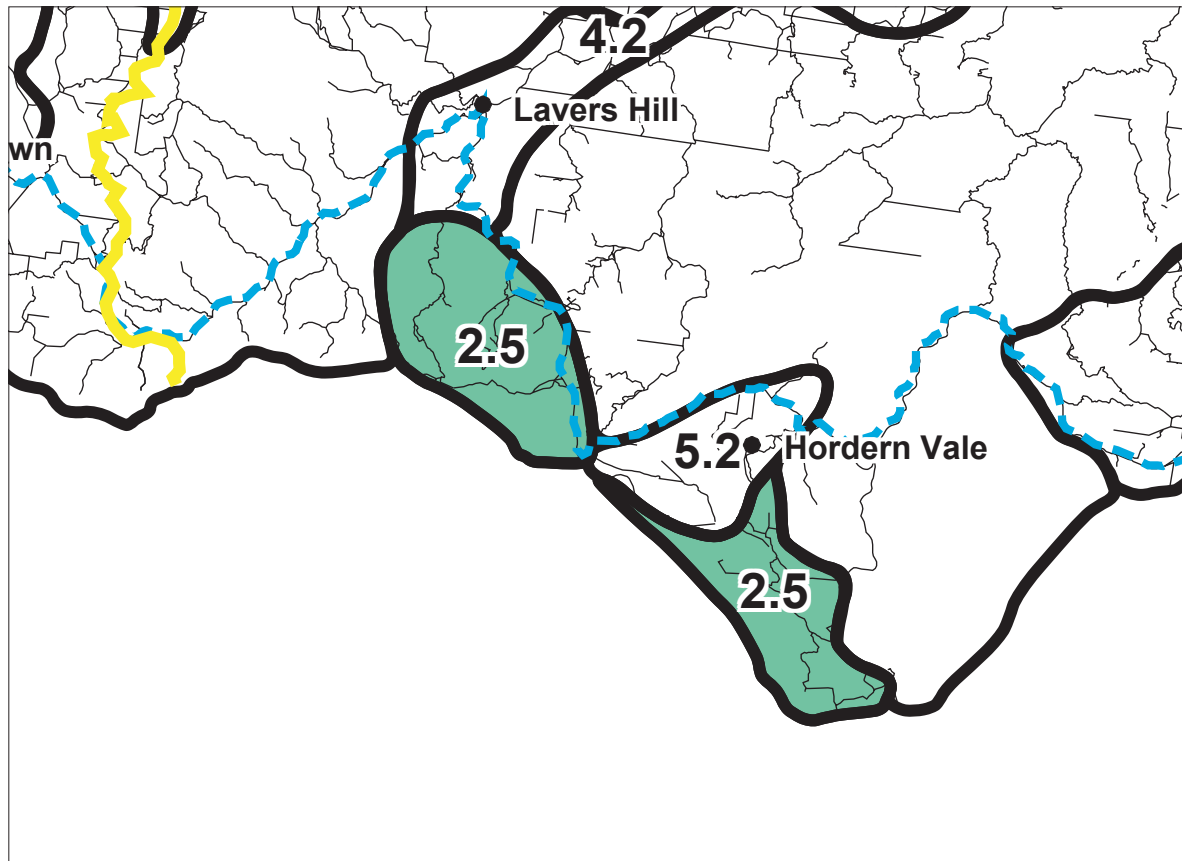
PRECINCT 2.5 | JOHANNA COAST TO CAPE OTWAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT | SEPTEMBER 2003



# LOCALITY MAP

PRECINCT 2.5 | JOHANNA COAST TO CAPE OTWAY 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 2.5 | JOHANNA COAST TO CAPE OTWAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



## PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

Precinct 2.5 is located in two areas stretching from the western side of Cape Otway to the Johanna Coast, excluding the Aire River estuary. The coastal landscape of this area is characterised by rugged cliffs and dune backed beaches with low heathland vegetation, while further inland are rolling hills and pastures. The coastal areas of this precinct are windswept and isolated, with long range views available across the cliffs to the ocean. Inland, the landscape becomes more serene, the green dairying pastures often dotted with remnant vegetation or shelter belts. Simple farm dwellings are nestled among the rolling hills inland, while the few structures that are located near the coast are highly visible due to the low scrubby heath.

## 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 2.5 is distinctive for the rugged, isolated cliffs and dune backed beaches that contrast with the rolling pastures inland. The coastal landscape has state significance with 'classic' Great Ocean Road scenery, accessible from popular viewing locations at Castle Cove, Johanna Beach and Cape Otway. Cape Otway itself, with its historic lighthouse, is a landscape of national significance.

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



## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Rugged, isolated cliffs contrasting with pastoral hinterland
- Clear views to the ocean
- Indigenous vegetation and shelter belts
- Rural qualities; rolling green pastures

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Presently, the few structures that are located in the coastal strip are dominant and highly visible. Future structures in coastal locations within the precinct have the potential to be more appropriately sited and designed, including the rehabilitation of indigenous coastal vegetation.

## LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES

- To protect indigenous and native vegetation.
- To maintain the rural qualities of the hinterland, including vegetation features such as shelter belts.
- To ensure that buildings and structures are scattered throughout the landscape in the hinterland.
- To retain the dominance of the natural landscape on hill faces and ridges throughout the precinct.
- To ensure that the coastal cliffs are kept free of bulky development with a large footprint.
- To retain the sense of isolation at the coastal cliffs and the clear views to the ocean from this area.
- To improve the outlook from road corridors by minimising the visibility of commercial timber plantations.



# PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

## PRECINCT 2.5 | JOHANNA COAST TO CAPE OTWAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
VEGETATION	To protect indigenous vegetation.	<p>Design and site structures to minimise the loss of canopy trees and understorey wherever possible.</p> <p>Replace any trees lost due to development with indigenous trees that will grow to a similar size.</p> <p>In coastal areas, design and site buildings to maximise retention of existing vegetation, and provide for the planting of new indigenous coastal vegetation wherever possible.</p>	<p><i>Clearing of heavily vegetated hill faces and gullies.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of indigenous trees.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of indigenous coastal vegetation.</i></p>
SHELTER BELTS	To maintain the rural qualities of the hinterland, including vegetation features such as shelter belts.	<p>Retain existing shelter belts wherever possible.</p> <p>Replace lost shelter belt trees with the same species or an alternative species, suitable to the local area.</p>	<p><i>Loss of shelter belts.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of rural qualities.</i></p>
SITING, FORM AND FINISHES	To ensure that buildings and structures are scattered throughout the landscape in the hinterland.	<p>Locate development sparsely in the hinterland landscape, maximising space available between buildings and structures for vegetation.</p> <p>Utilise materials and colours that complement those that occur naturally in the hinterland landscape, with consideration as to how the materials will weather over time.</p> <p>Set buildings well back from the Great Ocean Road and other designated Category 1 Roads in the precinct.</p>	<p><i>Visually dominant, bulky buildings.</i></p> <p><i>Buildings that have no relationship to landform.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of vegetation.</i></p>
SITING AND DESIGN INFRASTRUCTURE	To retain the dominance of the natural landscape on hill faces and ridges throughout the precinct, particularly when viewed from main roads and key viewing locations.	<p>In circumstances where development can not be avoided on hill faces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Locate development sparsely to avoid loss of vegetation.</li> <li>- Design buildings to follow the contours or step down the site.</li> <li>- Articulate buildings into separate elements, and avoid visually dominant elevations.</li> <li>- Use darker colours and finishes that are less prominent visually, particularly roofs.</li> </ul> <p>In circumstances where development can not be avoided on ridge tops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Locate development to avoid the loss of vegetation.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Visually dominant building forms.</i></p> <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>

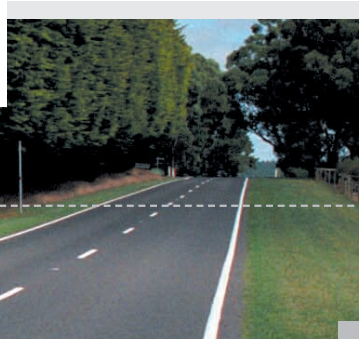
LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
SITING AND DESIGN INFRASTRUCTURE [Cont.]		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use lighter colours and finishes to minimise visibility against the sky.</li> <li>Locate and screen large buildings and structures (eg very large sheds, high tension transmission lines and associated cleared easements etc) to minimise visibility from Category 1 Roads and key viewing locations.</li> <li>Prepare a landscape plan utilising appropriate species and demonstrating how the affected area will be remediated after the development.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations.</i></p> <p><i>Landscape 'scarring'.</i></p>
SITING AND DESIGN	To ensure that the coastal cliffs are kept free of bulky development with a large footprint.	<p>Avoid development on the coastal side of the Great Ocean Road, wherever possible. If it cannot be avoided, site development to maximise retention of existing coastal vegetation and views to the ocean.</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>Design development to minimise need for earthworks on the site.</p>	<p><i>Excessive cut and fill.</i></p> <p><i>Buildings that have no relationship to the landform.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of coastal vegetation.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of openness.</i></p> <p><i>Domination of the coastal areas by built form.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of coastal views.</i></p>
SIGNAGE AND INFRASTRUCTURE	To retain the sense of isolation at the coastal cliffs and the clear views to the ocean from this area.	<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>In coastal areas, infrastructure such as powerlines and other utility services should be underground wherever possible.</p>	<p><i>Signage clutter.</i></p> <p><i>Visually dominating signage and infrastructure.</i></p>
TIMBER PLANTATIONS	To improve the outlook from main road corridors by minimising the visibility of commercial timber plantations.	Screen commercial timber plantations that are located adjacent to Category 1 Roads with a 20 metre wide (minimum) indigenous or native vegetation buffer, including understorey.	<p><i>Visibility of timber plantations from main road corridors.</i></p> <p><i>Landscape 'scarring'.</i></p>

# PRECINCT LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

PRECINCT 2.5 | JOHANNA COAST TO CAPE OTWAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



ABOVE | Shelterbelt planting along the Great Ocean Road



ABOVE | Contrast between low coastal heathland and pastoral hinterland

## EDGES

The following 'landscape edges' exist within the precinct:

- Contrast between low exposed heathland and rolling, pastoral hinterland
- Coastal / cliff edge
- Natural features such as incised valleys and stands of vegetation (including shelter belts) as edges within the landscape
- Interface of development and landscape with road corridors

## CORRIDORS

The following is a sequence description of the journey travelling south on Red Johanna Road to Johanna Beach:

... B&Bs among rural / agricultural setting - winding down through cleared hilly land - some remnant vegetation - beach and dunal system to south east hides views of beach - cottages set into dunes - arrival at beach - dune among paddocks...

The following, taken from field survey notes, is a description of the journey from Glenaire to the intersection of the Great Ocean Road and Lighthouse Road, then south on Lighthouse Road to Cape Otway lighthouse:

... Glenaire - Castle Cove - views to Cove / Bass Strait and over Aire Valley and Horden Vale - free of roadside tourist attractions apart from one farmhouse café - rainforest - through dry forests of tall eucalypts - farmland with houses and grazing on flatter land - then into scrubby stringy barks - open grassy pasture - cliff edge and hillocks - rolling pasture abutting heath at coastline - wind through to lighthouse and ticket office - lighthouse not visible from car park - lots of structures among coastal shrubs...

The following is a sequence description of the journey travelling north on the Great Ocean Road to where it intersects with Blue Johanna Road:

... Glenaire - hilly, steep agricultural land to tall timber - dry eucalypt forest - partially cleared and agricultural hilly paddocks - arcadian qualities near Red Johanna Road - abuts pine and blue gum plantations - rainforest section is mixed with agricultural land - continues along steep, hilly ridges to Lavers Hill...





ABOVE | View west from Johanna Beach

There are two key viewing locations frequented by visitors to the region: Castle Cove and Johanna Beach.

## CASTLE COVE

Castle Cove viewing point is located at Castle Cove on the Ocean side of the Great Ocean Road. There is a short walk from a small gravel car park to an elevated timber viewing platform, located on the cliff edge. The cliffs at and adjacent to the viewing point are rugged vegetated and drop to an isolated sandy beach. The wild, ocean views to the south contrast with the distant rolling agricultural hinterland to the north east.



ABOVE | Castle Cove

## JOHANNA BEACH

Johanna Beach viewing platform is located at Johanna Beach, at the termination of a less popular tourist route. The sense of isolation is heightened by the lack of passing traffic. Views from the platform to the south are of an isolated beach and the ocean, with rocky cliffs to the west and rocky, vegetated escarpments to the east.



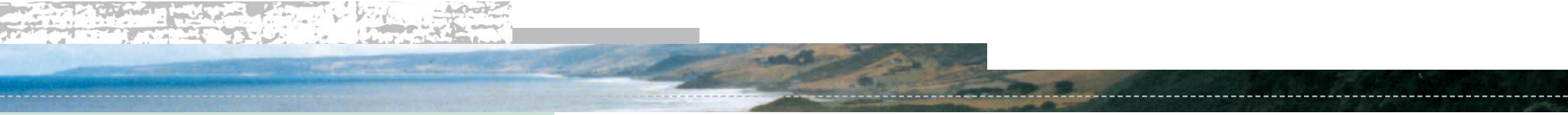


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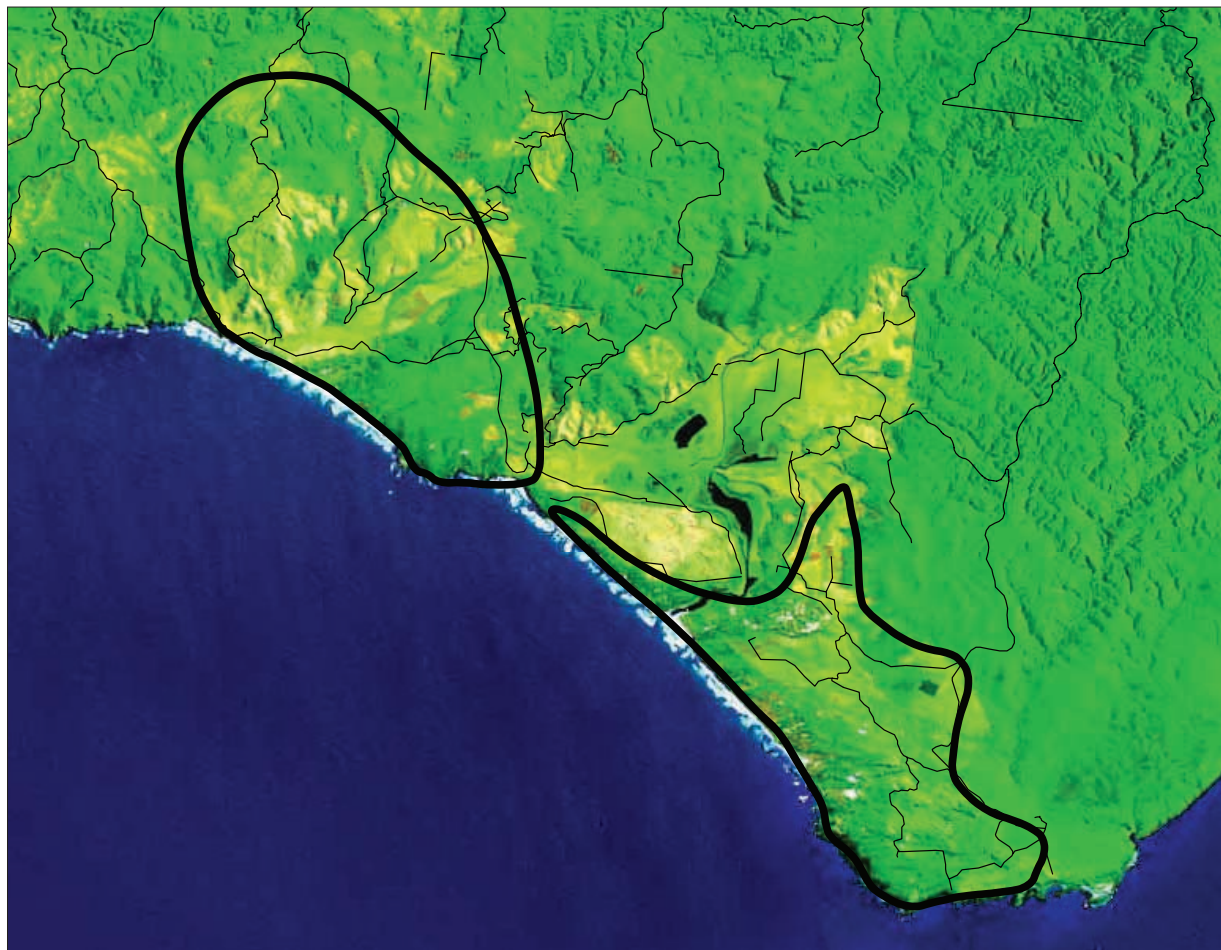
PRECINCT ANALYSIS  
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## PRECINCT ANALYSIS MAPS

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### SATELLITE PHOTO

The satellite photo highlights the densely vegetated ridgelines and large cleared valleys in the western section of the precinct, a less dramatic coastal dune landform is shown in the eastern section, again with cleared valleys.

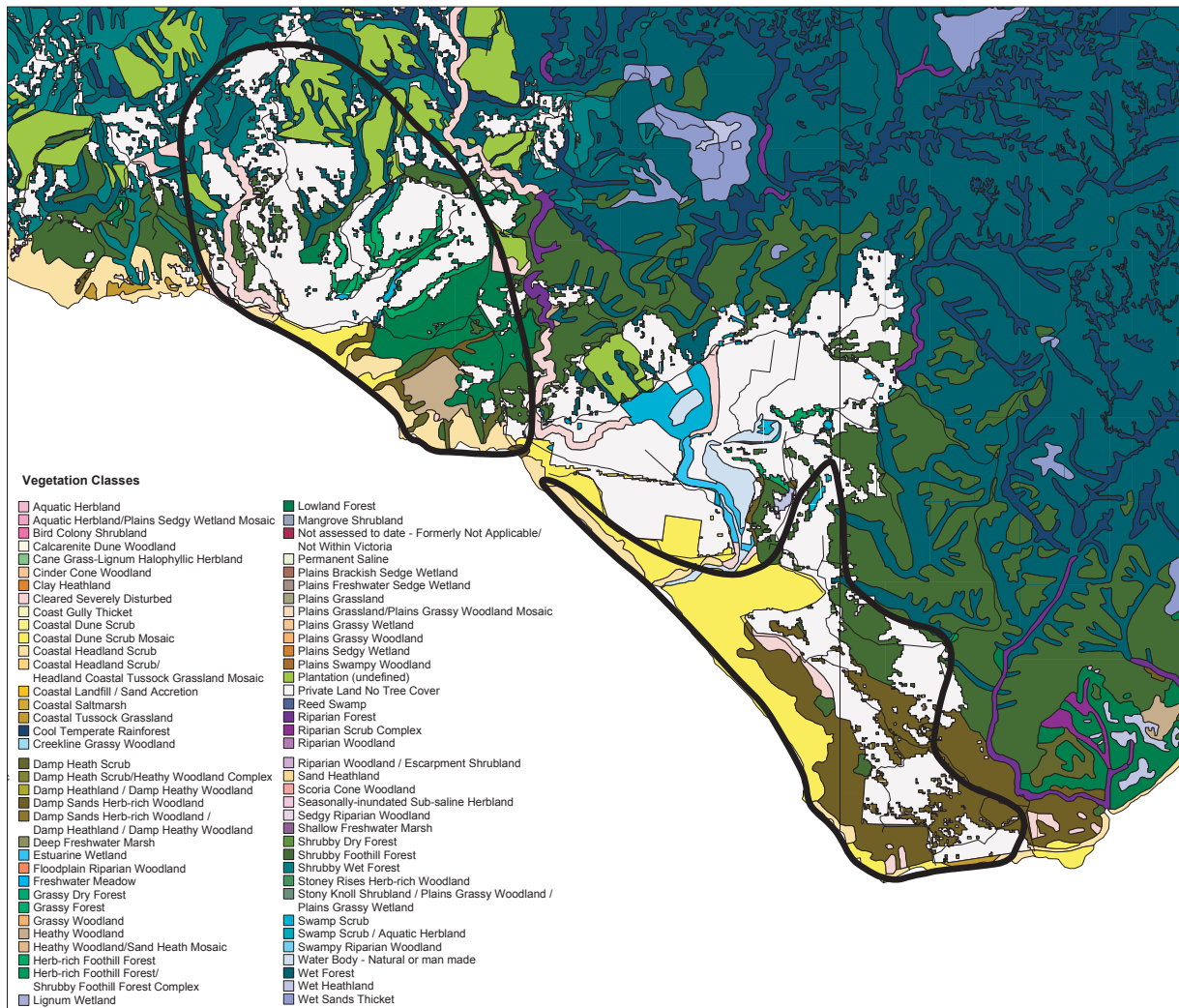




## CONTOUR MAP

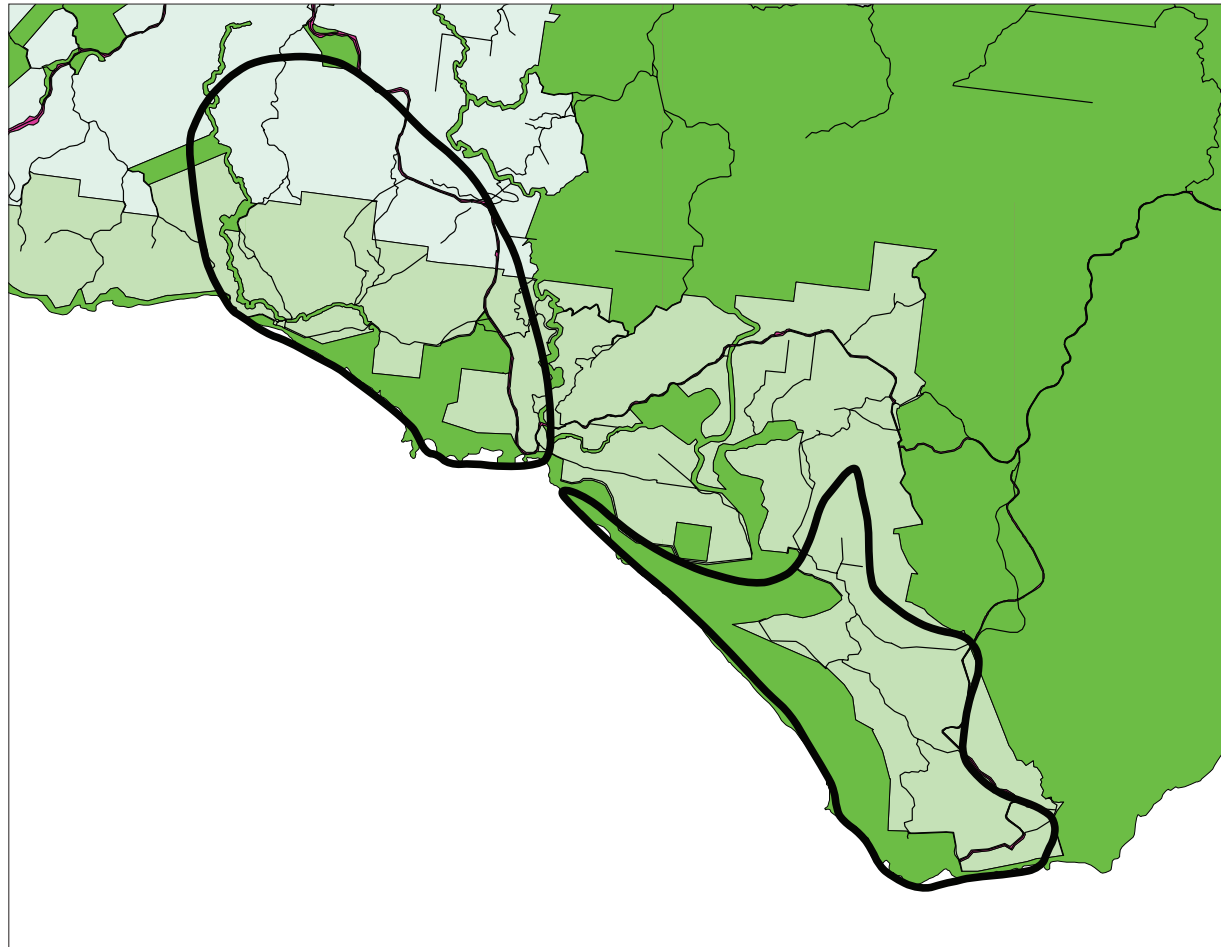
The contour map in the western section of the precinct indicates a series of steep hills and valleys surrounding a large opening of land that falls gently to the Coastline. The eastern section reveals an arrangement of coastal dunes with irregular form and slope.




















## ECOLOGICAL VEGETATION CLASSES

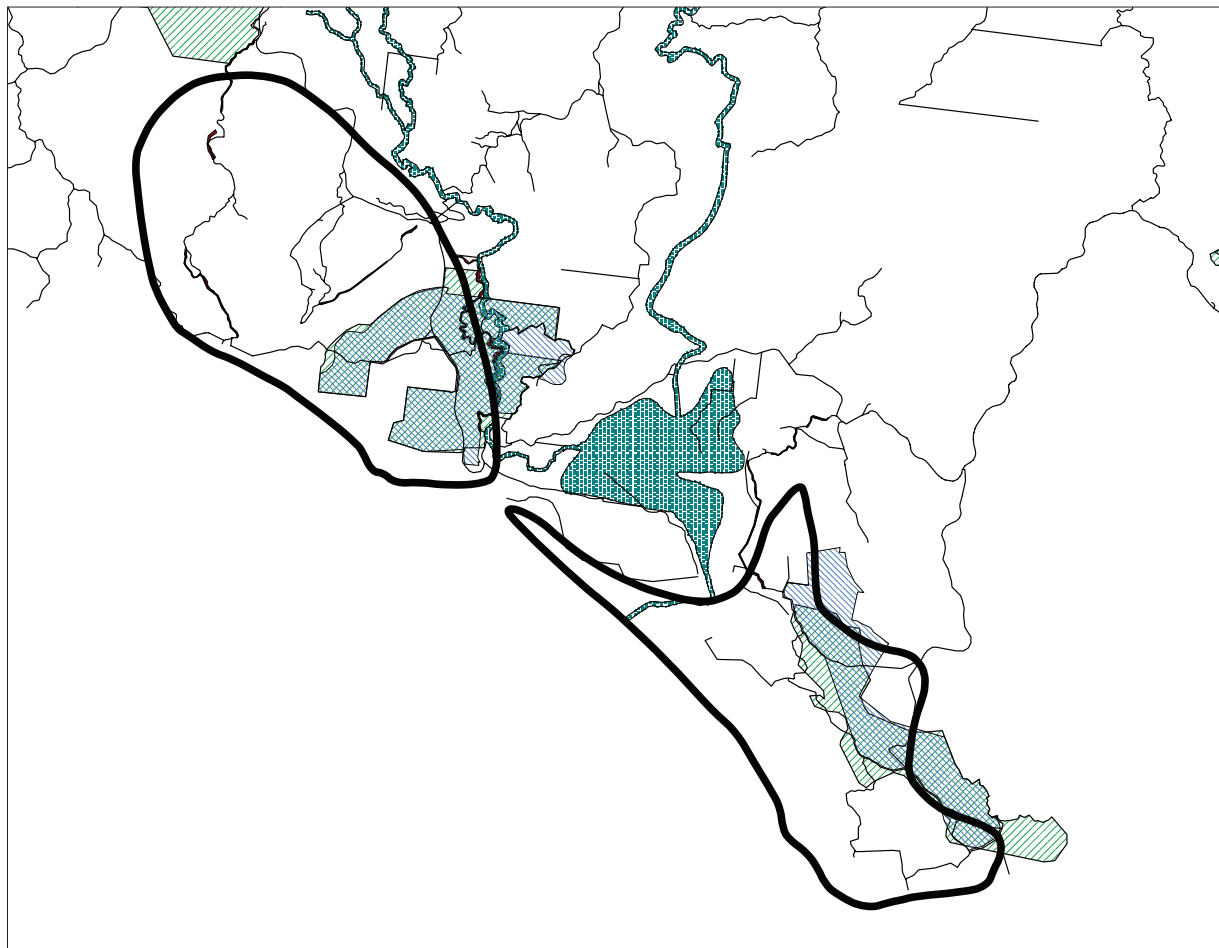
The map shows a diversity of Ecological Vegetation Classes in the western section of the precinct, particularly inland, with Lowland Forest, Shrubby Foothill Forest, Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, Heathy Woodland and Plantations incising large parcels of land with no tree cover. Closer to the coastline, Vegetation Classes progress to Coastal Dune Scrub and Coastal Headland Scrub. The eastern section of the precinct has a similar proportion of land with no tree cover but has a stronger presence of the coastal Vegetation classes.



## ZONING MAP

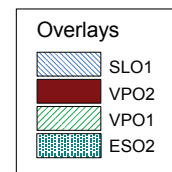
The precinct is zoned Public Conservation and Resource closest to the coast, Environmental Rural more inland, and Rural in the northern part of the precinct.

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



## RELEVANT OVERLAYS MAP

Overlays relevant to landscape character include the Significant Landscape Overlay for the Protection and enhancement of the landscape character of Otway Ranges Foothills and coastal areas, and the Environmental Significance Overlay for the protection of the lakes, wetlands, and streams. Vegetation Protection Overlays for Significant and Remnant Vegetation and also Roadside Vegetation apply.



# PLANNING SCHEME ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PRECINCT 2.5 | JOHANNA COAST TO CAPE OTWAY COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

Precinct	Municipality	Landscape Character Significance	Development Pressures	Relevant Planning Controls	Local Policies	Issues and Priority Areas	Key Planning Scheme Recommendations
2.5  Proposed SLO and SLO extension	Colac Otway	<p><u>National significance: Cape Otway landscape</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A coastal cape landmark</li> <li>Not visible, but accessible from GOR</li> <li>GOR landmark destination (Cape Otway)</li> <li>Low-moderate visitation</li> </ul> <p><u>State significance: Remainder of coastal landscape</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprises rugged cliffs and dune backed beaches, with pastoral hinterland</li> <li>Not visible, but accessible in part from GOR</li> <li>Low visitation</li> </ul>	<p>Development Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism accommodation on the coast and inland</li> <li>Residential development, including holiday homes</li> <li>Tourism signage and infrastructure</li> <li>Plantations</li> </ul> <p>Potential Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bulky development with a large footprint along the coast</li> <li>Loss of sense of isolation at the coast</li> <li>Loss of coastal vegetation</li> <li>Domination of heavy clusters of buildings inland</li> </ul>	<p>Zoning:</p> <p>PCRZ</p> <p>ERZ</p> <p>RUZ</p> <p>Overlays:</p> <p>SL01 Coastal, Otway and Plains Landscapes</p> <p>VPO1 Significant and Remnant Vegetation</p> <p>VPO2 Roadside Vegetation</p> <p>ES02 Lakes, Wetlands and Streams</p>	<p>22.01 Main Roads / Scenic Routes</p> <p>22.02 Ridgelines</p> <p>22.04 House Lot Excision in the Rural and Environmental Rural Zones</p>	<p>ERZ provides permit trigger for most development – decision guidelines lacking</p> <p>Small area of RUZ adjacent to Great Ocean Road – plantation trigger required</p> <p>SLO1 in place in both areas of the Precinct (Johanna to Glenaire and Cape Otway)</p> <p>Existing SLO1 covers three different landscape types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule requires re-structuring</li> <li>Landscape character is not really defined</li> <li>Permit Requirements contain statements more like Decision Guidelines</li> <li>Decision Guidelines are too broad</li> <li>Separate detailed Schedules required for each landscape type</li> </ul> <p>Existing SLO1 Schedule particularly requires strengthening in relation to the coastal landscape, the Glenaire landscape and the Cape Otway landscape</p> <p>Not clear why the existing 'Cape Otway' SLO does not cover the existing ERZ area immediately to the west</p> <p>Priority area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johanna to the coastal area of Precinct 4.1</li> </ul> <p>Refer also Precinct 4.1 Colac Otway</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/strengthen all Local Policies</p> <p>Introduce new Local Policy including Development Principles for Precinct 2.5</p> <p>Rural Zone Schedule amended to require permit for timber production 40 hectares adjacent to RDZ1</p> <p>Local Policy to include indigenous buffer requirement for plantations adjacent to RDZ1</p> <p>Restructure and rewrite SLO1 for each landscape type in Colac Otway</p> <p>Review Local Policy 22.01</p> <p>Extend existing 'Cape Otway' SLO1 into the private ERZ land immediately to the west</p> <p>Apply the SLO to private land within the coastal landscape of the precinct [proposed SLO extends from coastal area of Precinct 4.1]</p> <p>[Also refer to Municipal Toolkit for description / discussion]</p>