



THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD REGION  
LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT STUDY

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

PRECINCT PACKAGE

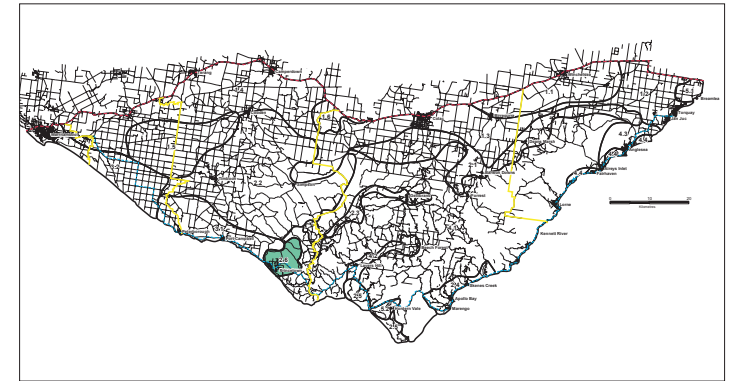
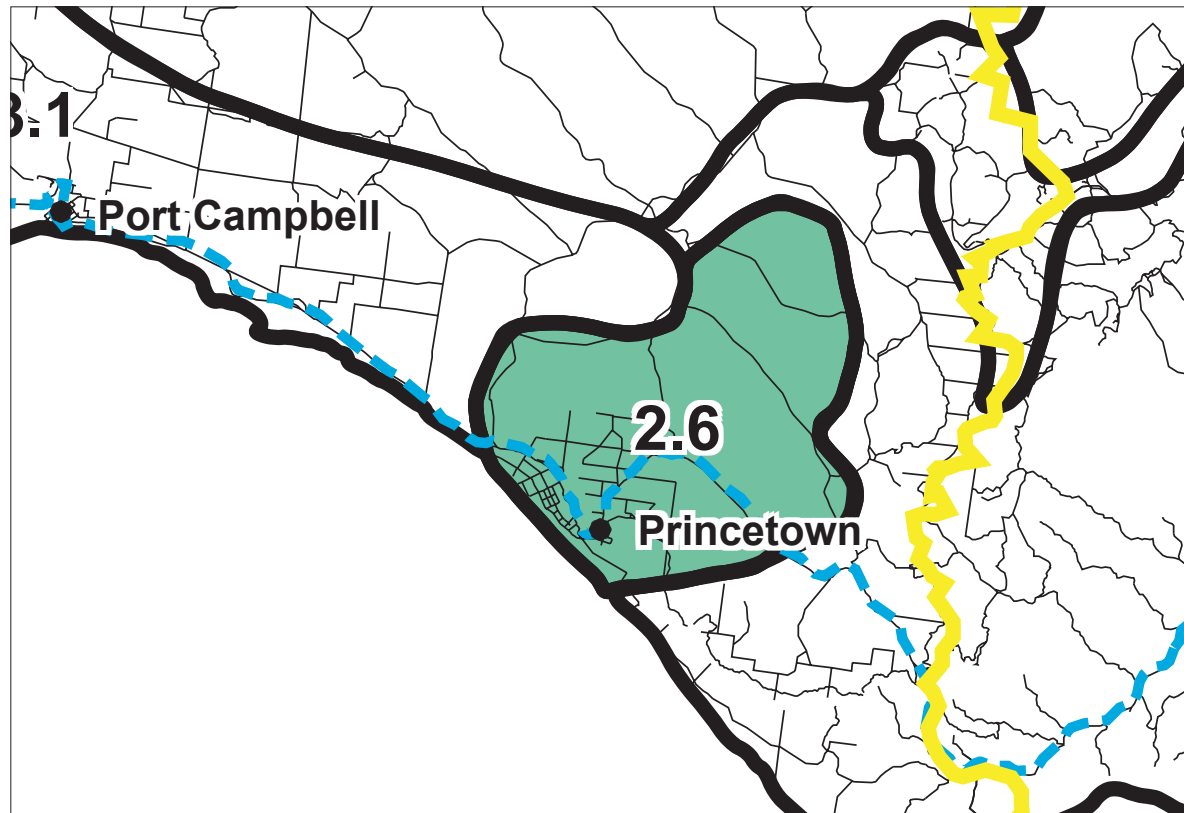
PRECINCT 2.6 | PRINCETOWN COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT | SEPTEMBER 2003



# LOCALITY MAP

PRECINCT 2.6 | PRINCETOWN 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 2.6 | PRINCETOWN COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



## PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

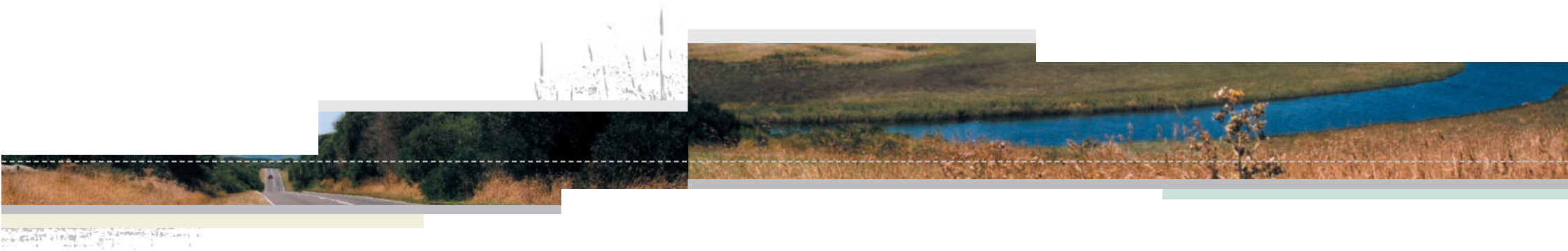
Precinct 2.6 is centred on the broad river estuary of the Gellibrand River. The serpentine river flows through the marshy floor of the inland valley, eventually running to a sandy beach, which is backed by dunes. South east of the river mouth are cliffs with small promontories and bays, in front of an ascending coastal ridge, which is backed by the river valley. The river corridor throughout the precinct is very broad and flat and is flanked by steep to moderate hills, which are mostly cleared for pastoral use. Small farm buildings and dwellings are scattered throughout the open landscape.

## 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 2.6 is distinctive for the Gellibrand River and wetland area. This coastal riverine landscape is the point of transition between the Otway Ranges and the western cliff coastlines of the Great Ocean Road, and is of state significance.

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



## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Marshy, broad river valley floor
- Landscape contrast with adjacent areas
- Structures scattered throughout the open landscape
- Small promontories and bays at the coastline

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Presently, development occurs mostly on hill faces, adjacent to the valley floor. The appearance of development in these locations has the potential to be improved, particularly when viewed from the Great Ocean Road. The natural features in the precinct could also be further emphasised through the planting of additional indigenous vegetation.

## LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES

- To increase the use of indigenous vegetation to emphasise the existence of natural features such as the river system.
- To protect the valley floor from development.
- To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape and vegetation on the hill faces and ridges.
- To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape from main road corridors outside townships.



# PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

## PRECINCT 2.6 | PRINCETOWN COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
VEGETATION	To increase the use of indigenous vegetation to emphasise the existence of natural features such as the river system.	Retain existing indigenous trees and understorey and provide for the planting of new indigenous vegetation wherever possible.  Replace any trees lost due to development with indigenous trees that will grow to a similar size.	<i>Loss of indigenous vegetation.</i>  <i>Loss of indigenous vegetation in or adjacent to landform features, such as the river system.</i>
FORM AND FINISHES	To protect the valley floor from development.	Where development on the valley floor cannot be avoided, site development to maximise retention of vegetation utilising appropriate finishes colours that complement those occurring naturally in the local area.	<i>Visually dominant development on the valley floor.</i>  <i>Large building footprints.</i>
SITING AND DESIGN INFRASTRUCTURE	To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape and vegetation on the hill faces and ridges, particularly when viewed from main roads and key viewing locations.	In circumstances where development can not be avoided on hill faces: <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> In circumstances where development can not be avoided on ridge tops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Locate development to avoid the loss of vegetation.</li> <li>– Use lighter colours and finishes to minimise visibility against the sky.</li> </ul> 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.	<i>Light colours or highly reflective finishes on hill faces.</i>  <i>Dark colours and finishes on ridge tops.</i>  <i>Excessive cut and fill.</i>  <i>Large building footprints.</i>  <i>Loss of vegetation in visually prominent locations.</i>  <i>Visually dominant infrastructure.</i>



LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
SITING AND DESIGN INFRASTRUCTURE [Cont.]		Prepare a landscape plan utilising appropriate species and demonstrating how the affected area will be remediated after the development.	
SITING TOWNSHIPS AND SETTLEMENTS SIGNAGE AND INFRASTRUCTURE	To maintain the dominance of the natural landscape from main road corridors outside townships.	<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 to maximise retention of existing 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>Set back development from the Great Ocean Road on the landward side.</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>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>Loss of openness.</i></p> <p><i>Domination of the coastal areas by built form.</i></p> <p><i>Visually dominant development in coastal areas, between townships.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of coastal views.</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.</i></p> <p><i>Visually dominating signage and infrastructure.</i></p>

# PRECINCT LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

PRECINCT 2.6 | PRINCETOWN COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS



ABOVE | Interface of coastal landscape and pastoral hinterland



ABOVE | Rolling pastoral land with remnant shelterbelts

## EDGES

The following 'landscape edges' exist within the precinct:

- Interface of the road corridor with the natural landscape, and of development adjacent to the road corridor
- Interface of the precinct with adjacent landscape types (Aire Valley Marshes and the Otway Ranges)
- Edge between coastal landscape and hinterland
- Natural features as edges in the landscape, such as the river valley and stands of vegetation
- The coastal edge and development at that edge
- Interface of development with the river edge / valley floor

## CORRIDORS

The following, taken from field survey notes, is a sequence description of the journey along the Great Ocean Road from Lower Gellibrand to Princeton:

... Drop down to Gellibrand River from plantation landscape - agricultural land - rolling to hilly - remnant 'shelter belts', some bush visible on distant hills - glimpses of Bass Strait - views to Princetown and the Gellibrand River inlet - its located on ridge overlooking the Gellibrand Estuary - broad landscape...





ABOVE | Signage at the entry junction to Princetown

The main township within the precinct is Princetown.

## PRINCETOWN

The small settlement of Princetown is located on the Great Ocean Road, inland and sitting within the undulating hills and low vegetation of the coast. While some buildings may have sea views, it is not a typical coastal town, rather a small farming settlement, surrounded by farming land and on the edge of the National Park.



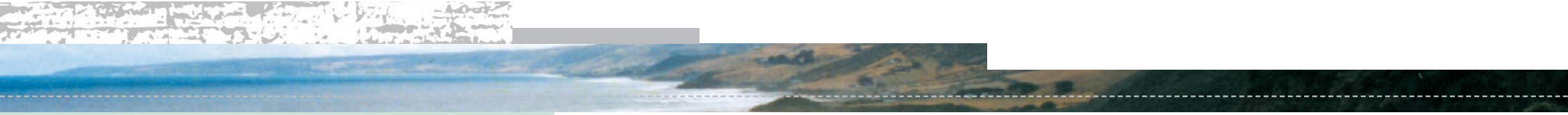


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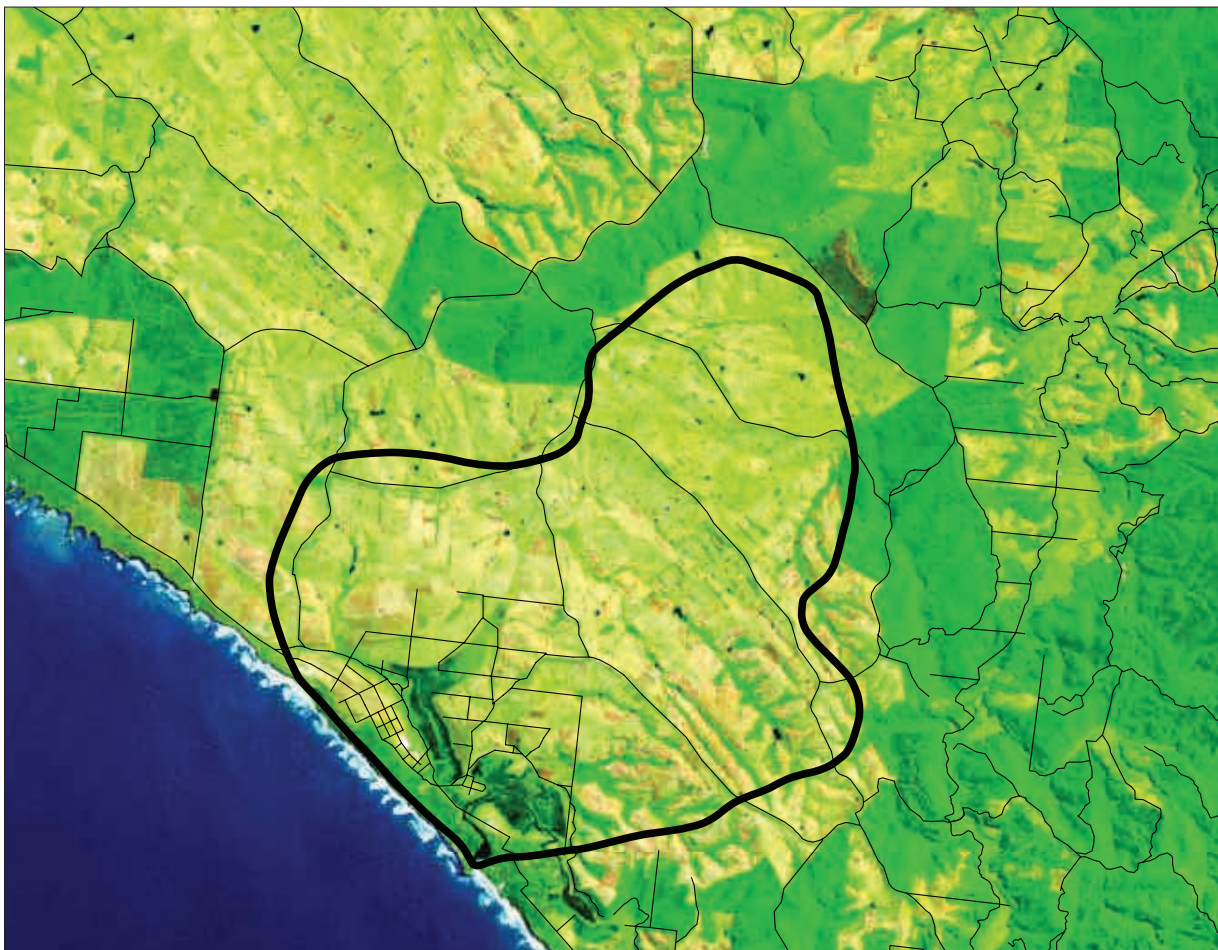
PRECINCT ANALYSIS  
PRECINCT 2.6 | PRINCETOWN COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

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## PRECINCT ANALYSIS MAPS

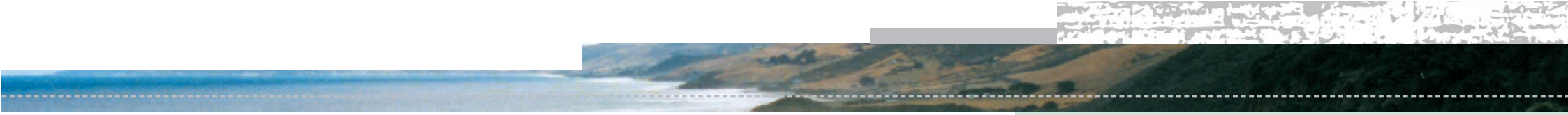
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### SATELLITE PHOTO

The satellite photo reveals the precinct as mostly cleared with dense vegetation following river and creek lines. A dominant feature is the Gellibrand River inlet, which widens in lush vegetation surrounds.

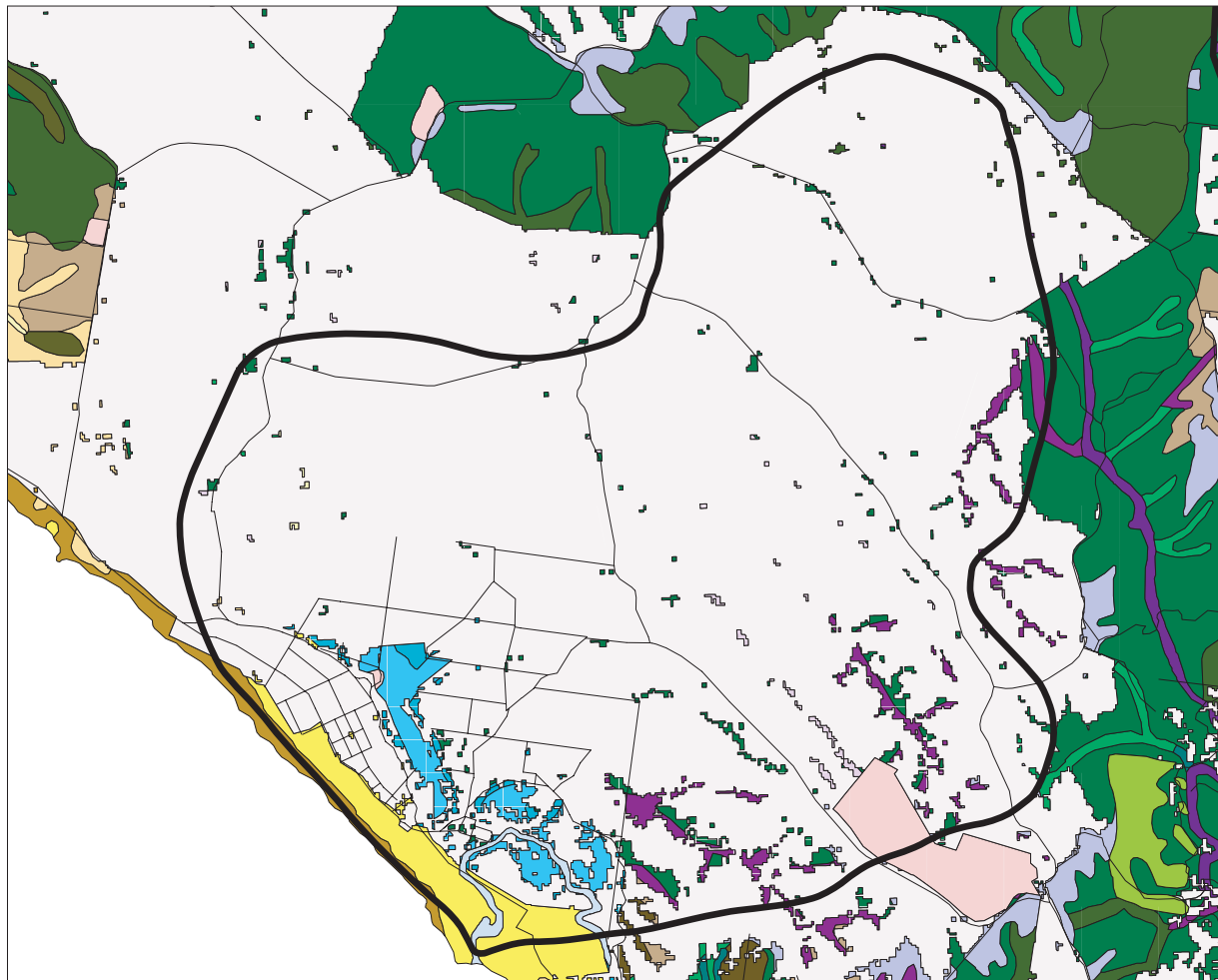




## CONTOUR MAP

The contour map shows a flat river valley that cuts through a moderately sloped landscape. At the coastline the topography varies between irregularly shaped coastal dunes and steep cliff faces.

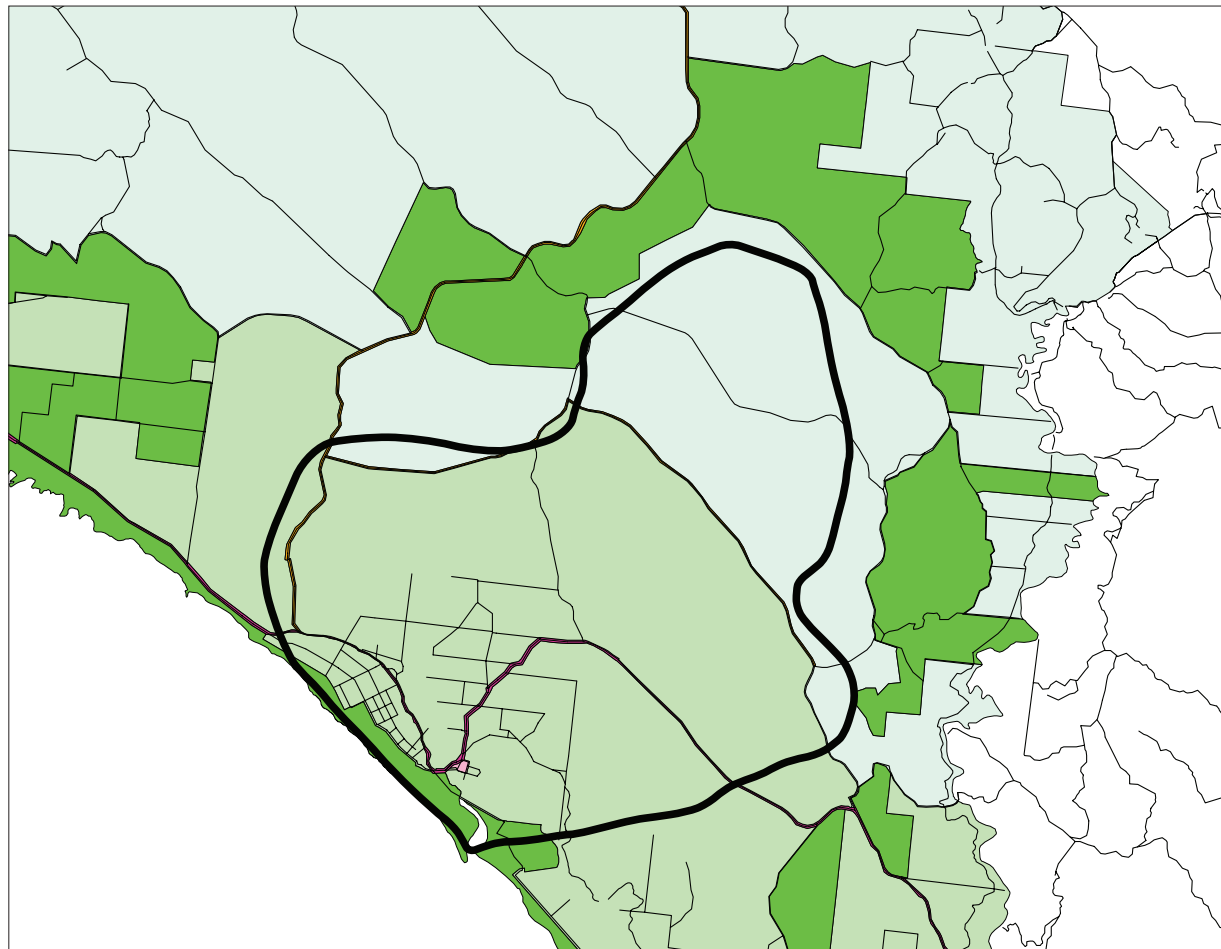




## ECOLOGICAL VEGETATION CLASSES

The ecological vegetation classes map shows most of the precinct as private land with no tree cover, the river inlet is classed as Estuarine Wetland with some Riparian Scrub Complex further east. The coastal edge comprises of mostly Coastal Dune Scrub with some Coastal Tussock Grassland.

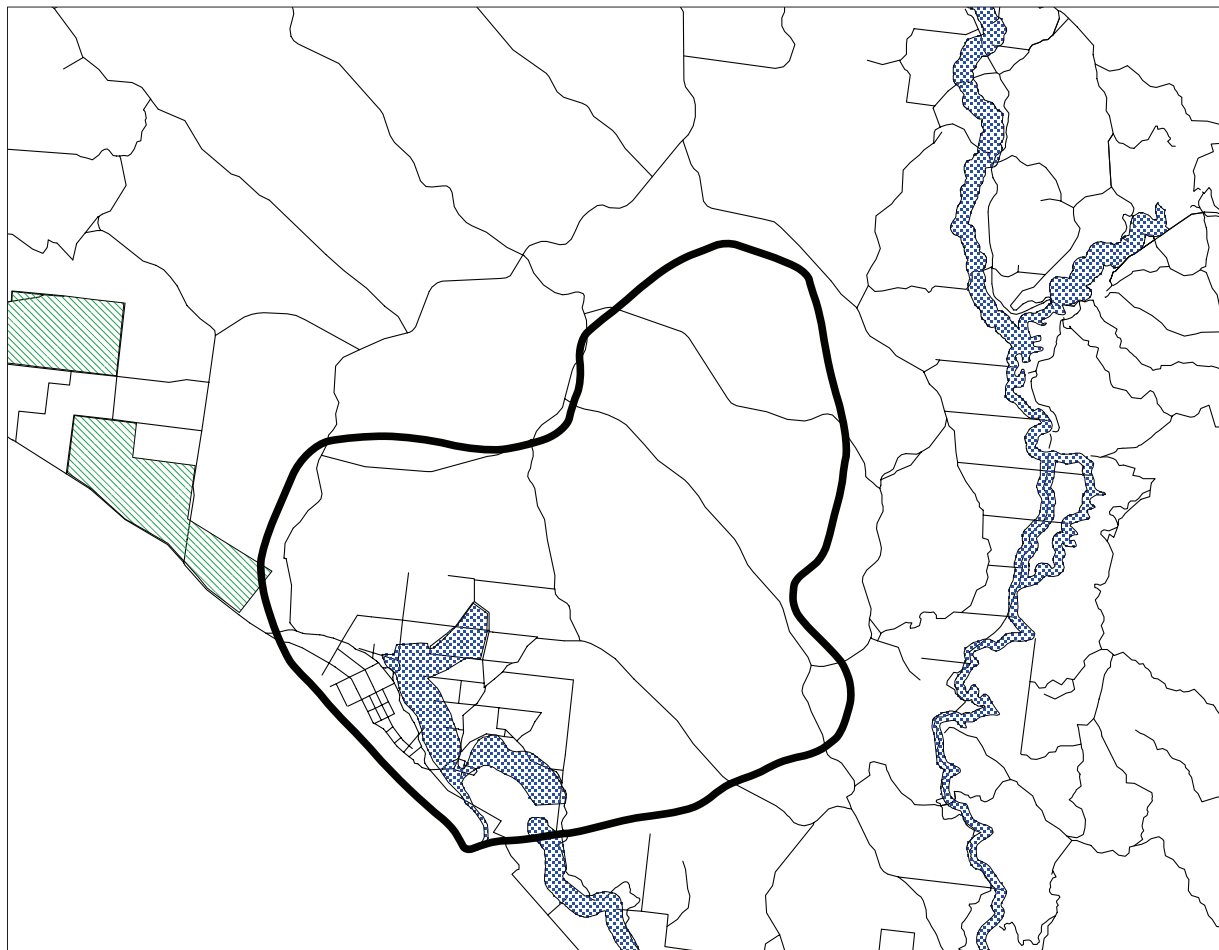
Vegetation Classes	
□ Aquatic Herbland	■ Lowland Forest
□ Aquatic Herbland/Plains Sedge Wetland Mosaic	■ Mangrove Shrubland
□ Bird Colony Shrubland	■ Not assessed to date - Formerly Not Applicable/ Not Within Victoria
□ Calcarenite Dune Woodland	□ Permanent Saline
□ Cane Grass-Lignum Halophyllic Herbland	■ Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland
□ Cinder Cone Woodland	■ Plains Freshwater Sedge Wetland
□ Clay Heathland	■ Plains Grassland
□ Cleared Severely Disturbed	■ Plains Grassland/Plains Grassy Woodland Mosaic
□ Coast Gully Thicket	■ Plains Grassy Wetland
□ Coastal Dune Scrub	■ Plains Grassy Woodland
□ Coastal Dune Scrub Mosaic	■ Plains Sedge Wetland
□ Coastal Headland Scrub	■ Plains Swampy Woodland
□ Coastal Headland Scrub/	■ Plantation (undefined)
Headland Coastal Tussock Grassland Mosaic	□ Private Land No Tree Cover
■ Coastal Landfill / Sand Accretion	■ Reed Swamp
■ Coastal Saltmarsh	■ Riparian Forest
■ Coastal Tussock Grassland	■ Riparian Forest
■ Cool Temperate Rainforest	■ Riparian Scrub Complex
■ Creekline Grassy Woodland	■ Riparian Woodland
■ Damp Heath Scrub	■ Riparian Woodland / Escarpment Shrubland
■ Damp Heath Scrub/Heathy Woodland Complex	■ Sand Heathland
■ Damp Heathland / Damp Heathy Woodland	■ Scoria Cone Woodland
■ Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland	■ Seasonally-inundated Sub-saline Herbland
■ Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland /	■ Sedge Riparian Woodland
Damp Heathland / Damp Heathy Woodland	■ Shallow Freshwater Marsh
■ Deep Freshwater Marsh	■ Shrubby Dry Forest
■ Estuarine Wetland	■ Shrubby Foothill Forest
■ Floodplain Riparian Woodland	■ Shrubby Wet Forest
■ Freshwater Meadow	■ Stony Rises Herb-rich Woodland
■ Grassy Dry Forest	■ Stony Knoll Shrubland / Plains Grassy Woodland / Plains Grassy Wetland
■ Grassy Forest	■ Swamp Scrub
■ Grassy Woodland	■ Swamp Scrub / Aquatic Herbland
■ Heathy Woodland	■ Swampy Riparian Woodland
■ Heathy Woodland/Sand Heath Mosaic	■ Water Body - Natural or man made
■ Herb-rich Foothill Forest	■ Wet Forest
■ Herb-rich Foothill Forest/	■ Wet Heathland
Shrubby Foothill Forest Complex	■ Wet Sands Thicket
■ Lignum Wetland	



## ZONING MAP

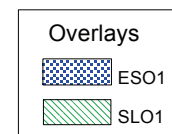
The precinct is zoned mostly Environmental Rural, and Rural, there is Public Conservation and Resource zoning close to the coast and in the northern part. There is some Residential zoning in the township of Princetown.

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 Environmental Significance Overlay for the protection of watercourses, water bodies, and wetlands. The significant landscape overlay aims to protect the landscape character of volcanic landscape areas and applies to a small section of land in the east of the precinct.



# PLANNING SCHEME ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PRECINCT 2.6 | PRINCETOWN COASTAL VALLEYS AND HILLS

Precinct	Municipality	Landscape Character Significance	Development Pressures	Relevant Planning Controls	Local Policies	Issues and Priority Areas	Key Planning Scheme Recommendations
2.6  Proposed SLO	Corangamite	<p><u>State significance:</u> <i>Coastal landscape</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Comprises estuarial coastline, with pastoral hinterland</i></li> <li>• <i>Visible and accessible from GOR</i></li> <li>• <i>High visitation</i></li> </ul>	<p>Development Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development in and around Princetown</li> <li>• Holiday homes in coastal locations</li> <li>• Tourism accommodation</li> <li>• Plantations</li> <li>• Structures associated with the rural use of the hinterland</li> </ul> <p>Potential Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development on valley floor [unlikely]</li> <li>• Large, dominant structures on coast and in hinterland</li> <li>• Removal of vegetation</li> <li>• Inappropriate development on hill faces eg large areas of excavation, removal of vegetation etc</li> </ul>	<p>Zoning;</p> <p>ERZ</p> <p>RUZ</p> <p>PCRZ</p> <p>TZ in the township of Princetown</p> <p>Overlays:</p> <p>ESO1 Watercourse, Waterbody and Wetland</p>	<p><u>22.01 Settlement:</u> 22.01-1 Urban Growth Boundary 22.01-2 House Lot Excision 22.01-3 Residential Infrastructure</p> <p><u>22.02 Environment:</u> 22.02-1 Catchment and Land Protection 22.02-2 Wildfire Management 22.02-5 Natural and Cultural Heritage</p> <p><u>22.03 Economic Development:</u> 22.03-2 Horticulture 22.03-3 Timber and Timber Processing Industries 22.03-4 Tourist Use and Development</p> <p><u>22.04 Particular Use and Development:</u> 22.04-1 Building Lines and Height 22.04-3 Highway Development 22.04-6 Sheds and Outbuildings 22.04-7 Townscape</p>	<p>Strategic direction requires strengthening</p> <p>Priority area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coastal estuarial landscape within precinct</li> <li>• Great Ocean Road travels through</li> <li>• Private land</li> <li>• Adjacent to SLOs in other Municipalities</li> <li>• Significant coastal location</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significance of Gellibrand River and the Princetown Nature Conservation Reserve is primarily environmental and is recognised by ESO</li> </ul> <p>This estuarial coastal landscape has a different character to the adjacent coastline.</p> <p>Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision guidelines required</li> <li>• Plantations adjacent to main roads could be an issue</li> <li>• Princetown township edges is a key issue</li> </ul>	<p>Review/strengthen MSS in relation to landscape generally, particularly 21.04-2 Environment</p> <p>Introduce new Local Policy including Development Principles for Precinct 2.6</p> <p>Rural Zone Schedule amended to require permit for timber production 40 hectares adjacent to RDZ1</p> <p>Local Policy [22.03-3] to include indigenous buffer requirement for plantations adjacent to RDZ1</p> <p>Review Local Policies, especially 22.01-1 and 22.04-7 in relation to Princetown</p> <p>Introduce the SLO to private land within the coastal landscape area</p> <p>Detailed investigation will be required as to the eastern boundary of the overlay located at the interface of precincts 2.6 and 4.1, approximately east of Princetown Beach</p>