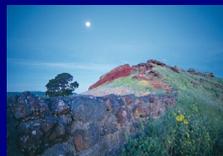


Department of
Sustainability and
Environment

Great Ocean Road Region

Towards a vision for the future



A land use and transport strategy

Draft Strategy October 2003

Community Consultation Overview

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1.0 INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 Community Forums	6
1.2 Submissions	7
2.0 COMMUNITY FORUMS	8
2.1 Comments by Major Issue	8
2.2 Comments by Forum Location	12
3.0 SUBMISSIONS	18
3.1 Comments by Strategy Theme	19

Executive Summary

FORUMS OVERVIEW

The Strategy was generally supported at all forums. One of the key messages raised consistently across all forums was the need for a firm government commitment to take leadership for ensuring the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy (GORRS) would be implemented.

Key elements of the draft Strategy which were consistently raised and strongly supported included the following:

- ♦ Encouraging greater use of the nominated north-south routes to relieve pressure from the Great Ocean Road with the caveat that the routes be upgraded progressively to cater for greater use.
- ♦ Improvements to signage within the region to educate and encourage drivers that alternative routes to destinations are available. This needs to be done both by VicRoads and Tourism Victoria.
- ♦ Support for encouraging development within the hinterland to absorb and prosper from the growth along the coast.
- ♦ Support for greater tourism opportunities within the hinterland.
- ♦ Mixed support for the establishment of a single national park subject to resourcing issues.
- ♦ Protecting the character of coastal towns and the areas between settlements.

The Landscape Character Assessment Study was released at the same time as the GORRS and received a number of statements of support. It was recognised as a helpful tool for regional planners when assessing planning development applications.

Whilst support for the study was evident, a number of issues were highlighted that also formed the focus of conversation and debate. These centred on the following elements of the Strategy:

- ♦ Implementation of both GORRS and the Landscape Character Assessment Study was seen to be a critical aspect to the success of both
- ♦ Management of development pressure within settlements including siting and design for development and local traffic management.
- ♦ Consistent planning decision making across the region.
- ♦ Mixed reactions to the inclusion of the Great Ocean Road into the expanded national park.
- ♦ The nomination of additional growth nodes including Winchelsea, Cobden, Deans Marsh etc.
- ♦ A critical balance needs to be reached in Apollo Bay relating to the to the character of the region and its capacity to accommodate growth.
- ♦ Development of wind farms in landscapes considered to be of high scenic and cultural value.

- ♦ The need to focus more broadly on industry development in relation to land-use and transport planning, rather than just tourism.
- ♦ Maintenance and upkeep of all roads, particularly the Great Ocean Road.
- ♦ Lack of association with the Strategy by hinterland residents due to the naming of the Strategy.
- ♦ Social and economic impact of coastal growth on issues such as affordable accommodation and employment opportunity.

The following overview presents a flavour of the discussion based on the geographic region and major issues raised.

SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY

SCOPE & PURPOSE

- ♦ Strong support for the Strategy as the basis for providing direction and coordination for the long-term management of growth and change in the region
- ♦ The draft Strategy focuses on transport and land use planning, however, it does not include social, community building and economic development issues
- ♦ It could also contain more references to other strategies and supporting work and an explanation as to why the hinterland was included

ENVIRONMENT

- ♦ Widespread and strong support for protecting the region's landscape values, particularly significant landscapes and surrounding environs in coastal areas such as the Bay of Islands
- ♦ Strong support for the landscape study with some specific concerns about the methodology for assessing scenic and landscape significance and considering heritage and cultural issues
- ♦ Queries about how the landscape study relates to the draft Strategy and how it will be applied in the planning system
- ♦ Strong and widespread support for more resourcing of park and public land management and support for local government planners
- ♦ Concern about lack of reference to biodiversity issues and a call for improved coordination between public land managers, catchment management authorities and local government

SETTLEMENT

- ♦ General support for direction to manage township growth across the region with designated inland and coastal growth nodes and additional nodes (eg Winchelsea)
- ♦ Qualified support for the designation of Apollo Bay as a preferred coastal township for growth
- ♦ Strong support for measures to protect township character and a call for improved planning tools

- ♦ Strong support for clear township boundaries, clear direction for protecting the areas between towns, and fire management measures
- ♦ Strong call for government purchase of private land in areas such as Urquhart Bluff Anglesea, to protect areas between towns

ACCESS

- ♦ Mixed views about including the Great Ocean Road in the expanded national park with a call for clearer and more effective management of the road
- ♦ Strong call for measures to address speed and safety along the Great Ocean Road and to improve signage
- ♦ Strong support for developing and promoting alternative north-south routes to the coast
- ♦ Strong support for improved public transport, particularly during peaks, and more cycling and walking opportunities

PROSPERITY

- ♦ Support for spreading tourism across the region and promoting it as a package that includes loop tourism routes for the Otways, the region's natural attractions and walking tracks
- ♦ Qualified support for high quality accommodation in key towns and suitable locations near visitor attractions
- ♦ Concern about the loss of privately-owned caravan parks for accommodation
- ♦ Support for further work to address the land use and transport needs of key industries in the region
- ♦ Strong concern about wind farm developments and their possible impact on the region's significant landscapes

IMPLEMENTATION

- ♦ An implementation plan is required with more detailed actions, priorities, and responsibilities and funding
- ♦ The Strategy should be included in the planning system
- ♦ A coordination mechanism is required for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the strategy

1.0 Introduction

The Hon. Mary Delahunty, Minister for Planning released the draft Great Ocean Road Region Strategy for public consultation and public comment in November 2003. A draft landscape study was released as a consultant's report with the draft Strategy. Feedback and written comments on the draft Strategy were invited up to 31 March 2004.

The purpose of the public consultation was to seek feedback on the draft Strategy's policies and initiatives and the consultant's report for the landscape study. In addition to inviting written public comments, a series of public information forums were held across the region and in Melbourne to provide information and seek comments from the public.

The following report provides a summary of comments made during the community forums and received through submissions to the draft Strategy. The following summary presents a flavour of the issues that attracted the highest response.

1.1 Community Forums

A public consultation program was undertaken within the Great Ocean Road Region between 1-13 December, 2003 and in February/March 2004. Community Forums were conducted within the following townships within the region:

Wednesday 1st December 2003
Location: **Lorne (Stakeholder Forum)**
Time: 2pm - 4pm
Venue: Erskine House

Saturday 13th December 2003
Location: **Anglesea**
Time: 2pm - 4pm
Venue: Anglesea Hotel

Wednesday 3rd December 2003
Location: **Warrnambool**
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: Warrnambool Surf Lifesaving Club

Saturday 13th December 2003
Location: **Anglesea**
Time: 2pm - 4pm
Venue: Anglesea Hotel

Thursday 4th December 2003
Location: **Port Campbell**
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: Port Campbell Surf Lifesaving Club

Monday 23rd February 2004
Location: **Lorne**
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: Grand Pacific Hotel

Monday 8th December 2003
Location: **Apollo Bay**
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: Apollo Bay Surf Lifesaving Club

Thursday 26th February 2004
Location: **Torquay**
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: The Rose Function Centre

Tuesday 9th December 2003
Location: **Colac**
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: Colac Otway Performing Arts Centre

Thursday 11th March 2004
Location: **Colac**
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: Colac Otway Performing Arts Centre

Wednesday 10th December 2003
Location: **Melbourne**
Time: 6.30pm - 9pm
Venue: Melbourne Town Hall, Yarra Room,

The purpose of the information forums was to provide an opportunity for interested parties to attend, listen to an overview of the draft Strategy and most importantly provide the opportunity for participants

to ask questions or make comments in relation to the Strategy. The process elicited a wide range of issues, comments and reactions relating to the draft Strategy.

Each forum was conducted in a similar manner to ensure consistency throughout all the sessions. Each forum was individually facilitated to provide an unbiased and fairly managed process of engagement. Each individual received an information kit containing a copy of the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy and a copy of the Regional Toolkit component of the Landscape Character Assessment Study, along with an agenda outlining the process for the forum and a forum evaluation form.

Each forum was structured in the following manner:

- Welcome and introduction to attendees by relevant local government representative.
- An outline of the forum's purpose and process by the facilitator.
- Presentation of the draft Great Ocean Road Region Strategy and brief overview of the Landscape Character Assessment Study.
- Comments, feedback and questions sought on the draft Strategy from the attendees with the Study Team on hand to respond to questions.
- Comments session concluded with an overview of the main discussion points of the evening.
- Outlining of the next steps of the Strategy.

1.2 Submissions

A total of 69 submissions were received on the draft Strategy. Most of the submissions expressed general support for the Strategy's purpose and key directions, however, they sought more specific detail about the implementation of the strategy and initiatives.

Submissions were grouped as follows:

CATEGORY	TOTAL
Councils	7
Tourism bodies	6
Community & Interest Groups	21
Planning and Land Managers	7
Individuals	28
TOTAL	69

The written submissions ranged from comprehensive and lengthy submissions that addressed most components of the draft Strategy (eg council submissions) to short submissions from individuals that addressed specific issues and initiatives. A comprehensive data base has been created to record all the comments. It will provide important input to the development of the final Strategy and implementation plan.

2.0 Community Forums

2.1 Comments by major Issue

The following represents a collection of issues that attracted a significant number of comments across all the forums undertaken in the consultation. Each issue has been categorised to outline the essence of the discussion with an overview of the general comments against it. A collection of verbatim comments are also represented against each issue.

Implementation of the Strategy

A clear message consistently evident in every forum was the need for a strong commitment to the implementation of both the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy and the Landscape Character Assessment Study. It was felt that implementation and the corresponding funding and responsibility for actions needed to be better articulated for both pieces of work to achieve the desired strategic outcomes.

"Are councils throughout the region going to use the Strategy as there bible" - Apollo Bay Forum

"Most critical outcome of the Strategy is for Government and Ministers to implement recommendations. This needs to occur all the way along the coast." - Lorne Stakeholder Forum

"There is an emphasis on making the region bigger and better. Some areas have no capacity for growth." - Melbourne Forum

Consistency with other regional stakeholders work.

A consistent message received at all forums was the need for any finalised Strategy implemented to be endorsed by the relevant stakeholders, particularly local government. This view seemed to be enforced by the perception that any final Strategy may not help deliver local outcomes that are necessary to instigate change if local government planning is not engaged.

It was noted that a clear need for regional stakeholder cooperation was required so that the "mistakes of the past" would not be repeated. Greater agency/stakeholder integration was seen as a critical aspect in achieving the outcomes of the Strategy in a timely, coordinated fashion.

"Too many different groups with control over different areas exist within the region. Would be good to be able to go to a single authority on all issues. This would be more user friendly." - Melbourne Forum

"Catchment Management Authorities and other government projects such as the Rural Zones Review need better communication." - Torquay Forum

Recognition of demographic and economic change within the region.

It was recognised that employment opportunities for younger people in the hinterland region as well as along the coast are important to maintain a healthy vibrant population. However, there appeared to be a perception that growth in popularity along the coast was driving people out of the coast because of issues relating to affordability.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the tourism industry plays an important role in the region's economy and prosperity, a consistent message was that reliance on a single employment industry such as tourism could have an adverse effect on diversity and choice.

In recognising the need to provide a region that is accessible for all, low cost accommodation such as caravan parks need to be protected and encouraged to provide a more sustainable tourism industry.

"Need to ensure continued availability of affordable options for holiday makers" - Port Campbell Forum

"Accommodation in Colac is an issue both in terms of quantity and quality. Strengthening of words is important on this issue." - Colac Forum

"Caravan Parks are the main form of affordable accommodation in the region, but pressure on them to sell up is occurring." - Lorne Stakeholder Forum

Relationship between the VEAC inquiry and GOR Regional Strategy.

At a number of forums the establishment of a single national park was raised as a significant issue. Much of the discussion centred on the need to look at the establishment of the park in a wider context than just protection. Adding value to its establishment such as encouraging a World Heritage listing was seen as a mechanism for opening the value of the park up to a wider audience.

Considerable concern was raised about management and funding arrangements surrounding a proposed single national park. There appeared to be a perception that a single national park would be viewed as an amalgamated entity with negative effects on funding and management.

An issue raised at the Port Campbell forum was the inclusion of the Port Campbell National Park into the broader VEAC inquiry area. This was regarded as an oversight.

It was suggested that any outcome of VEAC was critical to the development of the GORR strategy with the VEAC findings and recommendations needing greater reflection within the final GORR strategy and vice versa.

"Does the creation of a single national park result in the reduction of resources to manage the park. This needs to be clarified." - Port Campbell Forum

"Park rationalisation in the past has been about Government budget cuts. The creation of a single national park will lead to further environmental degradation, impact on habitat diversity. Ecology is dynamic, not static" - Melbourne Forum

Improving the visitor experience and expectations

Throughout the information forums the issue of improvements to visitor information signage was clearly a priority to local residents. Whilst it was acknowledged that the Strategy identified this an issue and had initiatives to help rectify the problem it was viewed that a strengthening of these initiatives might be required.

It was generally acknowledged that continued road maintenance, and improvements to traffic management within townships and safety needed greater focus and commitment as each had a significant impact on the visitor experience.

The tourism industry, in particular, noted that iconic projects should be encouraged and developed. There should be a focus on the hinterland region in order to achieve greater numbers of visitors to the hinterland to relieve pressure from the coast.

"80km speed limit on Great Ocean Road. Will not remain a world class travel experience if speed limit controls aren't in place" - Apollo Bay Forum

"History of logging - needs to be explored, a lot of old mills (sites) have historical significance, could be developed further for tourism" - Apollo Bay Forum

"National Parks do not attract focus that World Heritage Areas do. Encourage exploration of potential for WHA listing" - Lorne Stakeholder Forum

"Signage is needed that shows the time taken to get to destinations. Unavailability of appropriate signage contributes to the number of accidents" - Warrnambool Forum

"Protection amounts to more development, for example, the Bay of Islands walking track is making the area more accessible to tourists. Higher visitation compromises environmental values." - Melbourne Forum

"Tourism should feedback something to the community other than more tourists." - Torquay Forum

Manage land-use and development better along coastal areas through the planning system and the Landscape Assessment Study

Whilst the Landscape Assessment Study was welcomed by the community, there was a clear indication that it needed urgent implementation into council planning schemes to help curtail the number of inappropriate developments which were being submitted to councils.

The Landscape Assessment Study was viewed as having strong links with council and the Government's ability to provide more consistent planning decisions.

Issues relating to plantation buffers not being adhered to were raised. It was noted that this issue needed further consideration in the broader planning system and should be further emphasised in the implementation of the Landscape Assessment Study.

"Planning is only as good as the people making decisions." - Melbourne Forum

"Freehold land exists on significant hill sides. Further development has the potential to diminish values that attract people to the area. Landscape work will be useful to managing future use and development. Landscape is at the core of why the GORRS region is special." - Warrnambool Forum

"Wind farms have negative impacts on tourism, visual amenity and the quality of our national parks." - Port Campbell Forum

"Landscape Assessment Study and roadside buffers are a huge problem where logging has occurred right up to the road side. Falling trees and debris on the road are common occurrences and is quite dangerous." - Colac Forum

"Concern about wind farms generally. There needs to be heavy weighting in favour of landscape values." - Warrnambool Forum

Access issues and arrangements

It was highlighted that the potential sealing of certain routes (Turtans Track & Bambara Road) needed to be considered within the broader strategy context both as alternative north-south routes and as tourist routes.

An important and consistent message at all forums was the upgrade, maintenance and capacity of the Great Ocean Road. It was felt that this required stronger emphasis within the final Strategy.

Whilst public transport should continue to be promoted, it was considered that the final Strategy not lose sight of the reliance on road travel within the region and that the Strategy be realistic about any increase to public transport patronage.

Viability of the promotion of air travel as an alternative travel option to the region needed to be considered while giving consideration to capacity and locational issues related to the Apollo Bay airfield.

A strong commitment to resourcing any future upgrade was noted as important to fulfil any commitment by government, given the region's reliance on roads for transport.

A consistent message that emerged was that different vehicle movements in the region needed to be acknowledged further in the final Strategy. The issues in the west of the region regarding traffic related to large vehicle movements such as tourist coaches and trucks along the Great Ocean Road, where as the pressure comes from peak visitation traffic congestion in the eastern part of the region.

"Log trucks have significant safety implications (due to size and the road they drive on), particularly during fire season" - Port Campbell Forum

"Birregurra to Apollo Bay Road is not considered safe and needs to be upgraded." Colac Community Forum

"Development of north/south routes is likely to increase pressure on the region through an increase in visitor numbers." - Melbourne Community Forum

"Signage is key to the region's identify. Accurate signage is a high priority." - Warrnambool Forum

"Detailed engineering standards for roads' surface and signage need to be looked at, signage is appalling for international visitors, standard and condition of road needs to be looked at urgently" - Apollo Bay Forum

Emergency management issues

Fire control and emergency management planning were key issues, particularly in the eastern portion of the region. Concern was raised that dangerous fuel levels existed within National Park boundaries that had the potential to ignite an uncontrollable fire.

A perceived lack of emergency management planning was seen as a major issue facing the region each summer. It was highlighted that more needed to be done to improve emergency management such as the up-keep of fire tracks and fire breaks, as well as the provision of alternative evacuation paths for communities reliant purely on the Great Ocean Road.

"Fire plan management needs to be addressed urgently so that another Ash Wednesday does not reoccur" - Angelsea Forum

"The region is a tinder box and a major fire is imminent " - Apollo Bay Forum

2.2 Comments by Forum Location

The following represents a collection of issues/comments and general discussion which was raised in each of the forums held within the region. The information below is a summary of the issues raised and does not represent a verbatim recollection of comments and events. The aim of this breakdown of information is to spatially show the diverse range of comments raised in relation to the Strategy.

Lorne Stakeholder Forum:

- The level of consistency between GORRS and other local regional strategies.
- The need for resources for such things as public infrastructure (toilets, park benches etc), the expanded single national park and for upgrading the key north-south access routes.
- The need for value-adding to occur with the establishment of the single national park.
- Signage and the relationships with traffic dispersal are important elements that need consideration.
- Alternative transport modes - rail, air and sea - need stronger representation
- Preference will always be car-based and as such the Strategy needs to be road rather than public transport-based.
- The most critical outcome of the Strategy is for Government and Ministers to implement recommendations. This needs to occur all the way along the coast.
- Concerns that councils are currently abdicating their planning decision-making responsibilities and allowing VCAT to make the decisions.

- ♦ Iconic projects of world standard are required by tourists who are willing to leave the Great Ocean Road for the hinterland.

Warrnambool Forum:

- ♦ Landscape values need to be put ahead of development, particularly wind farms.
- ♦ The community desires appropriate developments. Landscape Assessment Study provides a means of achieving this.
- ♦ Signage within the western part of the Great Ocean Road Region is poor and needs upgrading in a consistent manner. Signage is key to the region's identity and accurate signage is a high priority.
- ♦ Landscape work will be useful to managing future use and development. Landscape is at the core of why the GORRS region is special.
- ♦ Signage is needed that shows the time taken to get to destinations. The lack of appropriate signage contributes to the number of accidents ie trips take longer than expected.
- ♦ Warrnambool is an attractive activity node. The foreshore area is very important. Need dollars to develop this area fully, and to encourage people to visit and stay.
- ♦ Is it better to link the Great Ocean Road to Hopkins Point Road, to further the journey along the coast?
- ♦ Connecting Great Ocean Road to the centre of Warrnambool would be the best outcome for Warrnambool from a tourism perspective.
- ♦ Specific issues relating to landscape assessment and the impact of motels along the Princes Highway need further consideration.

Port Campbell Forum:

- ♦ The Strategy doesn't seem to address gas processing, timber production, etc. These aspects all have transport impacts and visual impacts.
- ♦ Log trucks have significant safety implications, particularly during fire season.
- ♦ Significant issues regarding safety along the proposed north-south routes. These need to be addressed before more traffic is encouraged along these routes.
- ♦ The siting and design of wind-farms in landscapes of high scenic value need to be given greater priority.
- ♦ Strong commitment to implementation is required as well as adequate resources to make the necessary improvements.
- ♦ Concern regarding the creation of a single national park and the potential for reduced resourcing to be associated with the process.
- ♦ Need to ensure that the GOR region is accessible to all and does not exclude/discourage those at the budget end of the market.

- ♦ Issues relating to the promotion and retention of caravan parks within the region are critical issues. Caravan Parks are seen as a source of accommodation for the budget end of the market.
- ♦ Helicopter noise is a concern given the number of scenic flights that occur over the 12 Apostles.

Apollo Bay Forum:

- ♦ Critical need to assess the role and location of Apollo Bay airfield given the potential increase in flights and the current inappropriate location of the field.
- ♦ Tourism should not be the only focus, other industries should be encouraged to diversify the local economy.
- ♦ More support to promote the history of logging in the region is necessary, if alternative tourism attractions are to be promoted.
- ♦ Maintenance and safety along the Great Ocean Road needs to be consistently maintained and monitored.
- ♦ More promotion of alternative routes to the region and Apollo Bay is necessary to educate drivers about travel times and distances.
- ♦ There is a need for infrastructure replacement/development to keep up with the high level of growth being experienced.
- ♦ Implementation of the Strategy is of critical importance otherwise it is meaningless.
- ♦ Issues relating to Apollo Bay golf course and possible redevelopment.
- ♦ The extent of growth within Apollo Bay needs to be managed and planned for appropriately in the context of its cultural heritage and character.
- ♦ Alternative forms of water storage mechanisms eg rain water tanks could help Apollo Bay manage its water needs more sustainably.

Colac Forums:

- ♦ Concern was raised over the appropriateness of the Strategy's title. A belief exists that the name does not relate to residents living in the hinterland. It was suggested that "Otways" be included into the title.
- ♦ Bambara Road from Aireys Inlet and Cape Otway Road should both be examined as potential alternative inland routes.
- ♦ Turttons Track requires upgrade to complete touring route. Topography and environmental issues affect the development of the road.
- ♦ Certain inland routes were not considered safe enough to encourage increased usage.
- ♦ Roadside buffers relating to plantation timber farming is an issue and should be addressed by the Landscape Assessment Study in more detail.
- ♦ There is a need to stop promoting the Great Ocean Road as a level of self-promotion already exists which is satisfactory, and focus more on promotional activities relating to the hinterland.

- ♦ The issue of fire management was not strong within the Strategy or the Landscape Assessment Study.
- ♦ Need to engage more people in the process to inform and educate about the Strategy, especially those in younger age groups who are most impacted by the Strategy.
- ♦ The value of rail trails should be encouraged and explored more within the Strategy.
- ♦ Concern about the perception that city-centric views are being forced on local people without their knowledge or consent.

Melbourne Forum:

- ♦ Implementation is critical to the success of the Strategy.
- ♦ Improved management of public assets within the region needs to occur.
- ♦ The proposal to create a single national park should be accompanied with adequate resourcing to cater for its increased size.
- ♦ Concern about the perception that city-centric views are being forced on local people without their knowledge or consent.
- ♦ Fire management within the region is both necessary to maintain fuel loads and for forest regeneration.
- ♦ Concern that the development and finalisation of the Strategy needs to be integrated in conjunction with VEAC and its processes. Limited awareness that the Strategy is more than just the Great Ocean Road. Better communication is necessary to promote this aspect.
- ♦ Better integration between work being undertaken across the whole region needs to occur.
- ♦ Issues relating to access to the Great Ocean Road in relation to congestion during peak periods and to the possible inclusion of the road into the expanded single national park (VEAC investigation).
- ♦ Juxtaposition of protection leading to more development is an issue. Example given of the Bay of Islands walking track which is encouraging more people to walk through its environment. Improvements to the key north-south routes are required if the routes are to be capable of taking some of the load from the Great Ocean Road.

Anglesea Forum:

- ♦ Fire management within the region requires urgent action. Fuel build up could potentially create another Ash Wednesday. Evacuation of Aireys Inlet and Anglesea is an issue if the Great Ocean Road is cut off as there are no alternative routes.
- ♦ Issues relating to Urqharts Bluff and land buy back as a potential for protecting and preserving landscapes.
- ♦ Affordable accommodation within Lorne is an issue. The relationship between the tourism industry and encouraging youth employment is made difficult if youth cannot afford to reside in Lorne.

- ♦ Road safety, along the Great Ocean Road and within townships, as well as police presence are priority issues given the relatively high number of deaths.
- ♦ Issues relating to the neighbourhood character assessment study for Anglesea and decisions being made at a local government and VCAT level.
- ♦ Town bypasses and additional North-South Routes such as Bambara Road and Cape Otway Road are important to relieve pressure from the Great Ocean Road. Feral animal issues within the region present a large threat to the ecological diversity currently present in the region. Support for Landscape Assessment Study overall, but direction is needed as to how it will be implemented.
- ♦ An integrated response between the VEAC enquiry and the Strategy is necessary.
- ♦ Congestion along the Great Ocean Road will happen regardless during peak periods.
- ♦ Need to link walking trails together eg, Great Ocean Walk with Surf Coast Walk.

Lorne Forum:

- ♦ Views from Lorne Pier and other parts should be considered as part of the Landscape Character Assessment Study.
- ♦ Proposed north-south access routes need upgrading urgently to cater for increased demand. Improved signage should also be considered within this issue.
- ♦ Signage prior to entry into the region needs attention.
- ♦ The western bypass of Geelong will have specific impacts on how people choose to traverse to the region.
- ♦ The expanded national park should be seen in the bigger picture as a positive boost to inland tourism.
- ♦ Issues relating to wildfires management overlay with the Victoria Planning Provisions. Confusion exists over what can/can't be done.
- ♦ Visitor infrastructure needs improving to keep up with increasing demand. The question of who pays needs to be addressed.
- ♦ Driver education needs improvement as it is the reckless actions of drivers that make it unsafe.

Torquay Forum:

- ♦ Issues relating to consistent decision making on planning applications at all levels including VCAT.
- ♦ Lack of communication between Catchment Management Authority and Rural Zones Review.
- ♦ Acceptance that growth will continue and that the critical issue in townships will become density.
- ♦ Local traffic management issues need to address safety eg pedestrian crossings of the Great Ocean Road at certain locations.

- ♦ Retention of the built form and character of Torquay should be a high priority given the growth pressures faced by Torquay. Growth node annotation in the draft Strategy is seen to compound this issue.
- ♦ General maintenance, upgrade and safety issues along all regional roads needs further investigation by VicRoads.
- ♦ Homogenous, “Melbourne” style subdivision and development is eroding the coastal character of townships. Need better design guidelines to cater for this.
- ♦ Public transport linkage between Grovedale Station and Torquay should be considered to reduce dependency on cars.
- ♦ The need for tourism to “give back” to the local community in equal proportion to community input. Encouragement of sustainable technologies within settlement to overcome the lack of infrastructure (water/sewer).

3.0 Submissions

Key Messages

- **Strong support for the Strategy as the basis for providing direction and coordination for the long-term management of growth and change in the region**
- **The draft Strategy focuses on transport and land use planning however it does not include social, community building and economic development issues**
- **The Strategy could also contain more references to other strategies and supporting work and an explanation of why the hinterland was included**

Most submitters welcomed the draft Strategy with many submissions suggesting that an integrated long-term strategy is required to provide direction and coordination for the management of growth and change in the region. This view was expressed in comments from a range of diverse groups and community members:

- Barwon Water supports the need for an overall land use strategy for the Great Ocean Road Region because planning in the quickly developing south-west region requires a coordinated approach stretching beyond municipal boundaries.
- Warrnambool City Council strongly supports the need to set a blue print for the future growth of the region.
- The Geelong Environment Council feels it is imperative a broad and long-term vision be taken and that all proposals and actions are viewed in the light of a long-term strategy to protect landscape and biodiversity values.
- The Western Coastal Board supports the effort to plan holistically for the Otways, coast and hinterland. Similarly the Victorian Landscape Guardians commended the Government for its concept of treating the whole area between the Great Ocean Road and the Princes Highway as a single region for strategic review of land use and transport issues.
- VicRoads supports the general thrust of the strategy.
- Your Heritage Coast feels that the 'principles in the strategy can deliver a model of development that will protect and enhance the Great Ocean Road for all'.
- The 'Apollo Bay-Kennett River Public Reserves Committee of Management welcomed the draft Strategy as it attempts to suggest a means for dispersing the effects of the region's popularity.

A number of submissions raised specific concerns about the scope and reference to supporting or related work.

- Surf Coast Council commented that it is a land use and transport strategy rather than a regional strategy and there was scant reference to the Victorian Coastal Strategy. It feels that existing social issues have not been addressed in the document, particularly the social implications of tourism growth, escalating property prices and the associated impacts on local communities. Individual submissions expressed concern about the impact of tourism on local communities.

- ♦ Colac Otway Council and Moyne Council feel that there was insufficient reference to regional development issues such as dairying and business.
- ♦ Heritage Victoria feels there could be more reference to supporting studies and related heritage studies. Community members also feel there could be better linkages to local strategies and initiatives.
- ♦ The Victorian National Parks Association feels that it should be renamed (eg include Otways) so that it relates more to people living in Colac or Camperdown. Heritage Council Victoria wants an explanation of why the hinterland and Otways were included in the strategy and suggested that the title was misleading.
- ♦ The City of Greater Geelong feels that the Strategy should include consideration of related land use and transport issues in its municipality (eg Geelong Ring Road, Grovedale Station, population growth for Geelong and Bellarine Peninsula) while the Glenelg Council feels that the Strategy should extend further towards South West Victoria and include the Discovery Coast.
- ♦ The Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Indigenous Flora and Fauna (ANGAIR), and Wye River Residents Action Group feel that the draft Strategy lacks sufficient detail and there is too much emphasis on development.
- ♦ Community members feel that tourist and coastal issues received most attention and hinterland and rural issues such as agricultural development could receive more attention. They also feel that the scope could be extended to include law and order and community building issues.

A number of submissions commented on the Strategy's vision on page 12 of the document. The comments varied:

- ♦ The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Western Coastal Board and community members feel that the vision should be less inspirational, more specific to the region and achievable.
- ♦ Other submissions commented that the region's environmental and scenic values warrant special designation, thereby flagging a more inspirational vision for the region. Geelong Otway Tourism wants an investigation into the region becoming a World Heritage Area. The the Geelong Environment Council has commissioned a nomination to be prepared for National Heritage listing for the Anglesea Heathlands, Great Ocean Road and coastline and the Otway ecosystems.

3.1 Comments by Strategy Theme

The following is a summary of comments about the policies and initiatives which received the most comments. The comments are summarised according to the four key strategy themes and the policies and initiatives:

Environment

Key Messages:

- ♦ **Widespread and strong support for protecting the Region's landscape values, particularly significant landscapes and surrounding environs in coastal areas such as the Bay of Islands**

- **Strong support for the landscape study with some specific concerns about the methodology for assessing scenic and landscape significance and considering heritage and cultural issues**
- **Query about how the landscape study relates to the draft Strategy and how it will be applied in the planning system**
- **Strong and widespread support for more resourcing of park and public land management and support for local government planners**
- **Concern about the lack of reference to biodiversity issues and a call for improved coordination between public land managers, catchment management authorities and local government**

Planning Protection for Significant Landscapes (Policy 1.2)

The policy and related initiatives were generally strongly supported by all categories of submitters. The following is a summary of more specific landscape protection issues that were raised in the submissions:

- Many submitters want stronger landscape protection for the area adjacent to Bay of Islands Coastal Park and other areas adjacent to significant landscapes and the Great Ocean Road. This was raised in submissions from the City of Warrnambool, Moyne Council, Shipwreck Tourism, Warrnambool Tourism Association, TTM Australia, Friends of Bay of Islands Coastal Park, Your Heritage Coast, Victorian Landscape Guardians, Geelong Otway Tourism, Glenelg Hopkins & Corangamite Catchment Management Authorities, Otway Environment Council and individual submissions.
- The region's councils and tourism bodies want firmer wording about providing opportunities for protecting significant landscapes through the planning system (initiative 1.2.1). Additionally, Surf Coast Council wants landscape protection extended to all parts of its municipality, while Geelong Otway Tourism wants a state-wide study of landscape protection, specifically in relation to wind farms
- Many submitters congratulated DSE on the study while some submissions expressed concerns about the methodology and other submitters want clarification of how it will be incorporated into the Strategy and planning system.
 - The region's councils, Western Coastal Board, National Trust and Victorian Coastal Council welcomed the landscape study and commended the Government for undertaking it.
 - Several submissions commented on the landscape study methodology. The National Parks Association, National Trust, Wye River Residents Action Group, ANGAIR, Geelong Environment Council & Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park questioned the methodology for assessing scenic quality and landscape significance. Heritage Council Victoria support the policy and initiatives, however, it feels that there is a insufficient reference to heritage, cultural and aboriginal issues in the landscape study. The Geelong Environment Council seeks a peer review of the landscape study.
 - Several submissions from individuals commented that the new rural zones should be recognised as a tool for protecting landscapes
 - The Aireys Inlet and District Association, Western Coastal Board the Victorian National Parks Association and Heritage Council Victoria want clarification of the relationship

between the landscape study and the Strategy and of the way the study will be incorporated into the strategy.

- The Victorian Landscape Guardians, National Trust and Heritage Council Victoria commented that tools in the planning system for protecting landscapes (eg significant landscape overlay) exist but they must be used more effectively. Individual submitters feel that the planning system could be used more effectively to protect landscapes.

Strengthen protection for public land and park (Policy 1.1)

There was a significant response to initiatives for the creation of a continuous park from Anglesea to Cape Otway (initiative 1.1.1). There was general support for the expanded national park and calls for more detail of its boundaries and early establishment. A number of submissions mentioned the current Victorian Environmental Assessment Council investigation into the park boundaries:

- The region's councils and Geelong Otway Tourism sought clarification or consideration of the different classifications of public land and were concerned about opportunities for recreation and tourism
- Community individuals, the Otway Environment Council, and ANGAIR want an expanded park linking with the marine parks. They also seek early implementation of the park

The provision of additional park rangers and resources for managing pests, plants and animals (initiative 1.1.4) was strongly supported.

- Councils support the initiative because they feel the levels of resourcing don't meet current needs. Tourism bodies strongly support this initiative and they want more details of the initiative. Community and interest groups and individuals strongly support the initiative.

More Effective Protection of Catchments and Coastal Areas (Policy 1.3)

Several submissions commented on the need for better coordination and integration between coastal park and public land managers, catchment management authorities and local government. Resourcing issues were raised in the context of improving information and education for planners. Several submissions wanted greater reference to biodiversity issues.

- Councils, Parks Victoria, and the Victorian National Parks Association want firmer wording and more specific detail about the initiative (1.3.1) to ensure coordination, consistency and stronger integration between coastal and catchment management strategies and local government planning schemes. Surf Coast Council commented that there should be better coordination between local government and other bodies. The Apollo Bay-Kennett River Public Reserve Committee of Management (ABKRPRC) indicated that rural councils that are politically centred in the agricultural hinterland have been reluctant to adopt State planning policies such as the Coastal Strategy. Heritage Council Victoria raised issues relating to limitations of planning schemes in the inter-tidal zone and heritage assets (piers, jetties) that may be outside local government boundaries.
- The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority seeks more explicit funding initiatives for councils and agencies to commit to the projects. It is willing to assist councils with information and data for inclusion into planning schemes and will continue to work with the municipal catchment coordinator (subject to funding). It recommends that partnership projects be developed that reflect priorities of both the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy implementation plan and investment plans for the Regional Catchment Management Strategies.

- Councils feel that Committees of Management need to better balance the coastal stewardship role with management of camping grounds & capital development responsibilities. They feel there should be clearer levels of responsibility for implementing plans and programs. The Apollo Bay-Kennett River Public Reserve Committee of Management wants more facilities such as toilets, safer and slower road use and better areas for stopping and getting off the Great Ocean Road, particularly for public land between Wye River and Apollo Bay.
- ANGAIR, Geelong Environment Council, Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park & Corangamite CMA want more reference to biodiversity. Parks Victoria and individuals want more effective native vegetation management, particularly for areas bordering the public estate. The Victorian Coast Council wants stronger reference to biodiversity and relevant DSE programs and plans.

Settlement

Key Messages

- **General support for direction to manage township growth across the region with designated inland and coastal growth nodes and additional nodes (eg Winchelsea)**
- **Qualified support for the designation of Apollo Bay as a preferred coastal township for growth**
- **Strong support for measures to protect township character and a call for improved planning tools**
- **Strong support for clear township boundaries, clear direction for protecting the areas between towns, and fire management measures**
- **Strong call for Government purchase of private land in areas such as Urquhart Bluff Anglesea, to protect areas between towns**

Direct urban growth to townships with suitable land that can be serviced adequately (Policy 2.1)

Submissions generally supported the designation of Torquay and Warrnambool as growth nodes (initiative 2.1.1). There was also general support for promoting inland centres (2.1.6) although submissions raised specific issues and nominated additional nodes.

- The City of Warrnambool agrees with the specific options for managing growth and feels that this approach is consistent with stated sustainability principles, although it commented that the traditional approach of augmenting utility services to follow zoning may not be valid in various existing coastal townships. The Victorian Coastal Council feels that the Strategy's strength is the directions given to manage the growth of towns in the region, with the focus on directing growth to Torquay and Warrnambool (with limited growth in Apollo Bay) and to the inland towns of Colac, Timboon and Camperdown. Barwon Water supports the Strategy's direction to control growth in small settlements, noting environmental problems occurring in unsewered areas. Geelong Otway Tourism wants examination of other important nodes in Otways and for this to be referred to as the Otway Tourism Plan. The City of Warrnambool, Shipwreck Coast & Warrnambool Tourism Associations support the role for Warrnambool Surf Coast Council and are also concerned about lack of reference to social issues and services, particularly in the context of demographic changes and increasing land values along the coast. The Western Coastal Board has similar concerns and suggests government agencies and larger business should provide housing.

- Victorian Landscape Guardians feel that a way must be found (carrot or stick) to divert development from popular scenic coastal areas. Corangamite Council advocates Terang and Cobden as nodes because they offer services and a destination for tourists. Surf Coast, Warrnambool, Colac Otway and Councils advocate Winchelsea as a node. Surf Coast is reviewing the Winchelsea structure plan. Barwon Water commented that it has commenced a process to construct a new water basin in Colac which will provide sufficient capacity to at least 2030. It is also upgrading the Colac sewerage and Colac Otway Council is considering the potential for a supply to Birregurra.
- Barwon Water commented that it supplies water to Torquay and it has a 10 year supply, but advances in water conservation would lead to a longer supply. At the same time, new water resource options for the Greater Geelong water system are being identified in its water resources development plan. It also indicated that sewerage planning will satisfy Torquay's requirements as identified in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. The Otway Environment Council supports carefully controlled expansion of Torquay.

There was qualified support for developing Apollo Bay as a preferred coastal township for growth (initiative 2.1.2).

- Several individual submissions expressed concern about the designation of Apollo Bay as a preferred coastal township for residential and visitor accommodation. The submissions referred to impact on the existing community and concern about the type of development that would occur. Colac Otway Council noted that the draft Strategy map for Apollo Bay requires rectification. Geelong Otway Tourism commented that that infrastructure is a concern and it may not be sustainable. Barwon Water referred to its water resources development plan and identification of a new water resource for Apollo Bay/Skenes Creek. The new water resource is expected to be operational by 2006. It is working on a sewerage scheme for Skenes Creek that will connect to Apollo Bay.

The initiative (2.2.1) to work with councils to establish town boundaries attracted comment from a number of submissions.

- Individual submissions supported township boundaries and strong regulatory action to ensure the long-term integrity of the boundaries. Colac Otway & Moyne Councils suggest that wording is changed to 'ribbon development will be discouraged and alternative uses of 'rural' land be identified'. Surf Coast Council commented that town boundaries exist in the planning scheme, however, unprecedented development means that they need to be established for Torquay. It feels that further discussions should occur with DSE staff. The City of Warrnambool supports hard edges, but feels the initiative should also look at rural zones to avoid minor 'tourism settlements'. Shipwreck Coast Tourism supports protection of open space between towns and allowing appropriate development within clear town boundaries. TTM Australia hopes that this will not lead to a situation where development away from existing centres is a prohibited activity. Glenelg Hopkins CMA wants clearer direction about more sustainable development in development areas outside towns. Friends of Lorne want stronger/clearer direction about containing the growth of Lorne.

Protect the special character of coastal towns and promote best-practice design in new development (Policy 2.2)

This policy and initiatives attracted comments from a wide range of submissions. There was general support for working with councils to undertake or finalise township character studies and using the planning system to protect the special character of towns (initiative 2.2.1). Most of the comments about these initiatives came from councils and resident groups

- Councils are undertaking studies with DSE assistance. Colac Otway Council commented that such studies are very expensive. Councils say that existing tools relating to 'coastal/rural township character' (eg Rescode) are relatively limited/restricted and apply to urban issues. The City of Warrnambool feel that case studies of good practice in analysis and methodology techniques (eg percentage of long distance views that are comprised of tree canopies) need to be developed. Moynes Council commented that that current planning system does not give adequately clear provisions to ensure effectiveness. Most policies in schemes are too general and vague to provide clear directions and decisions for land use/development.
- Individual submissions expressed concern about the impact of recent development on township character and conservation & heritage values. The Otway Environment Council wants protection of character of smaller settlements and action to stop increasing land values. Community interest groups and the Western Coastal Board are concerned about development in towns. They want stronger controls on block sizes, heights and design. They feel that metropolitan-based controls are not appropriate and support character studies such as Aireys Inlet Neighbourhood Character Study. They feel that bushfire risk is an additional concern and higher densities could lead to problems with sewerage treatment and disposal. ANGAIR and the Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park want stronger protection of indigenous vegetation; they support legislative measures for councils to follow. Heritage Council Victoria strongly supports the policy, and commented that identification and protection of cultural heritage places in each town is important. This should include heritage and archaeological places and important vegetation such as the Monterey Cypress in Apollo Bay
- Several submissions expressed concern about the implications of supporting and promoting examples of sustainable new development (initiative 2.4.2) would have on neighbourhood character. Colac Otway Council feels that it may conflict with Neighbourhood Character studies and these should have higher priority and precedence. Heritage Council Victoria commented that these policies should include retention and reuse of existing places of cultural heritage value and landscape protection and encouragement of solar use.

Protect the open areas between towns (Policy 2.3)

This policy attracted strong interest with comments from a number of submitters. A number of submissions commented on initiative 2.3.1 which recommends identifying significant landscapes and protecting these through the planning system.

- Councils support the initiative. The City of Warrnambool commented that the landscape study is important to achieve good planning outcomes. Moynes Council commented that the Landscape Study alone justifies time and effort in developing the Strategy. It also wants the Strategy to provide greater direction for resort/recreational developments (eg golf course, Moonlight Head) outside townships as the policy framework for such developments is vague and variable. Shipwreck Coast Tourism supports protection of open space between towns and concentrating appropriate development within clear town boundaries. Aireys Inlet and District Association, Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park, ANGAIR, Geelong Environment Council and Western Coastal Board want Government to purchase more land to protect areas between towns. Several individual submissions advocated purchase of private land and they supported the continuation of measures to protect towns from fires. Parks Victoria commented that there is a need for buffers around towns for pest and fire management. The Western Coastal Board suggested development trade-offs for public land ownership and access and covenanting of private land. The Geelong Environment Council wants the Government to purchase private land, particularly Schutz land at Urquhart Bluff.

Some submissions referred to the Rural Zones Review (initiative 2.3.4):

- Council and individual submissions commented on the Rural Zone Review in the context of this policy. Councils (Moynes, Warrnambool, and Colac Otway) feel that strategic work is required for the rural zones review and it needs funding. Colac Otway Council and Surf Coast Council feel that the landscape study may have the potential to conflict with rural zones.

Access

Key Messages:

- **Mixed view about including the Great Ocean Road in the expanded national park with a call for clearer and more effective management of the road**
- **Strong call for measures to address speed and safety along the Great Ocean Road and improve signage**
- **Strong support for developing and promoting alternative north-south routes to the coast**
- **Strong support for improved public transport, particularly during peaks, and increased cycling and walking opportunities**

Enhance the Great Ocean Road as a world-class travelling experience (Policy 3.1)

A large number of submissions commented on the initiative 3.1.1 to investigate inclusion of the Great Ocean Road in the National Park. There was a mixed response and the current Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) Inquiry into establishing the boundaries for the expanded national park was raised.

- Several submissions advocated the inclusion of the road in the park because it would better achieve environmental, cultural, heritage and tourism objectives. The Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Indigenous Flora & Fauna (ANGAIR) support inclusion of the Great Ocean Road in the national park. Heritage Council Victoria suggested a complementary initiative to include this linear heritage place with associated significant views and significant landscapes in the planning scheme to apply to both private and public land. It suggested possible inclusion of the road on the Victorian Heritage Register if it is assessed to be of State cultural heritage significance. The Geelong Environment Council wants the road (excluding sections in townships) included in the national park because it would add to the visitor experience and allow a level of management by Parks Victoria that would protect its scenic and environmental value. The Otway Environment Council wants the road to remain single lane with minimal modifications to protect ecological values.
- Several submissions advocated not including the road in the expanded national park because of its regional access role and traffic management issues. VicRoads has advised VEAC that it is not supportive of including the road in the expanded national park because it needs to be managed on the basis of other functions (freight public transport & township access) in addition to tourism. Corangamite Council does not favour inclusion, but wants a study of management options. It is concerned about the over-emphasis on the road's tourism role because this does not reflect mixed nature of users. ANGAIR wants greater recognition of its local and regional access role.
- A number of submitters feel that the management of the road is the most important issue rather than its designation. Councils' major concern is management and maintenance arrangements, and designation of responsibilities. Surf Coast Council feels that this needs to consider the VEAC decision. Vic Coastal Council wants effective approach to the management and delivery of strategic objectives for the length of the road irrespective of whether it is in the park area or

not. It believes this can be achieved best by not including it in the park reservation. Similarly, VicRoads wants a jointly agreed management plan for the Great Ocean Road with the establishment of a clear road reserve where it traverses public land and management responsibilities.

Many submissions commented on the initiatives to manage the road in a way that recognises its tourism role (3.1.2), improve its tourism function (3.1.3) and improve signage (initiative 3.1.6). There were a range of suggestions with an overriding concern about speed and safety along the Great Ocean Road and the need to improve signage.

- Individual submissions suggested a series of safety initiatives for the Great Ocean Road including reducing speed limits and requiring long vehicles to have a permit. A regional Great Ocean Road Road safety campaign was also suggested. One submitter suggested that road works along the Great Ocean Road should only occur in the 'off' season. Councils want management prioritised with road safety the first consideration, followed by stopping areas/interpretive information, parking and litter management. Western Coastal Board wants a speed policy for the Great Ocean Road north-south roads. Geelong Otway Tourism wants more specific detail including funding availability. Aireys Inlet & District Association wants 80km/hr speed limit on the Great Ocean Road and 50km/hr in towns. VicRoads refers to the current speed review for the Great Ocean Road that recommends a reduction from 100km/hr to 80km/hr from Anglesea to Apollo Bay, in conjunction with a package of long-term and short-term works. It commented that the recommendation is currently being considered. Heritage Council Victoria wants lower speed limits and broad consideration of road safety and emergency management options.
- Individual and council submissions generally supported improved signage. This was suggested as a means of encouraging better patronage of inland routes to relieve coastal congestion. Community interest groups and tourism bodies are concerned about signage clutter. ANGAIR suggests providing information sheets with driving tips, etc for car rental companies and new drivers and not providing insurance for drivers during peaks. Western Coastal Board wants tourism marketing to stop promoting Melbourne-Port Campbell as a day trip. Parks Victoria supports high profile and visible signage.

Develop and promote inland routes (Policy 3.2)

There was strong and widespread support for this policy and the specific initiatives (3.2.1, 3.2.3).

- Councils support initiatives to develop and promote inland routes, but want a clear and precise commitment to prioritise routes and timelines. Moyne and Warrnambool Councils see the upgrade of Princes Highway as the more important part of this strategy. Warrnambool Tourism Association supports the use of Princes Highway West and hinterland routes as alternatives to the Great Ocean Road. Surf Coast supports Winchelsea-Deans Marsh-Lorne as an immediate priority. Corangamite Council feels that the Port Campbell-Cobden-Camperdown route should be included. Geelong Otway Tourism and Shipwreck Coast Tourism strongly support this option and necessary funding. Otway Environment Council supports upgrading and traffic control measures for alternative routes for road users. Victorian Landscape Guardians is concerned that this may mean widening of routes and higher traffic speeds. ANGAIR and Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park want consideration of alternative north-south routes such as Bambra Road and Distillery Creek Road.
- VicRoads supports the initiative and is preparing funding proposals for projects such as north-south access to Apollo Bay via Skenes Creek. It supports proposals for the Timboon-Colac Road and Cobden Port Campbell Road and notes that the upgrade of the Colac Lavers Hill Road is generally supported but does not form part of current proposal. It noted that upgrade of Princes Highway would be undertaken in accordance with the Princes Highway A1 Corridor

Strategy. The Victorian Coastal Council commented that the initiative is consistent with the Coastal Strategy and supports it. Apollo Bay-Kennett River Public Reserve Committee of Management (ABKRPRC) supports improvements to north-south routes which will continue to carry heavy log traffic.

Many submissions commented on and supported the initiative (3.2.4) for working with regional tourism organisations to better promote the scenic, landscape and cultural values of the region along north-south routes.

- Councils generally support the initiative. Shipwreck Coast Tourism supports the initiative and suggests it requires regional tourism association consideration of funding and consideration of appropriate experiences & infrastructure. The Otway Environment Council supports the initiative and suggests Benwerrin -Mt Sabine Road as a route. It also suggests that tourism brochures should promote Colac as an entry point to Lavers Hill, Triplet Falls, Otway Fly & the western wing of Great Ocean Road. It also supports promotion of these routes and towns along routes as tourism centres (eg Forrest as an historic timber town). Victorian Landscape Guardians wants tourists to be encouraged to use hinterland routes. Parks Victoria supports diversion of traffic into hinterland areas to ease congestion and broaden the visitor experience.

Provide more travel choices to and within the region (Policy 3.4)

There was strong and widespread support for this policy and specific references to initiatives for public transport (3.4.1).

- Councils support policy. . Moynes, Colac Otway Councils & Warrnambool City want better public transport connectivity between the coast and hinterland, as well as improving public transport along the coast. Corangamite Council wants what it sees as a severe lack of public transport services along the Great Ocean Road and inland routes addressed as part of strategy. Tourism bodies want public transport services included as a major consideration in the strategy. Surf Coast Council, Victorian National Parks Association and Geelong Otway Tourism want more shuttle bus services in coastal towns during peak periods (eg. Surf Coasts Tourism service for Lorne and the Surf Coaster between Torquay & Lorne). Grampians Pyrenees Regional Development Board wants a bus service from Warrnambool to Ararat, a service to follow Great Southern Touring Route and better north-south connections such as a connection between the Great Ocean Road and the Grampians National Park...
- The Wye River and Separation Creek Progress Association wants better bus services, particularly along the Great Ocean Road in peak periods. Apollo Bay Kennett River Public Reserves Committee of Management (ABKRPRC) commented that the strategy has no real policy to enhance disabled access. Parks Victoria supports innovative ideas for alternative access to popular areas including shuttle buses, tourist/public bus approach, particularly for the national park.

Many submissions supported initiatives for improving and promoting walking and cycling opportunities (initiatives 3.4.4, 3.4.6 and 3.4.7).

- Councils strongly support improvements to walking opportunities. Glenelg Council feels that it should include linking to the Great South West Walk. Geelong Otway Tourism supports walking opportunities such as the Surf Coast Walk and commented that funding is required. The Otway Ranges Walking Track Association wants inclusion of a Trans Otway Walking Track. The Apollo Bay-Kennett River Public Reserve Committee of Management (ABKRPRC) supports improvements to paths such as the Old Beechy Rail Trail and Apollo Bay Skenes Creek Bicycle track project and adequate funding to create non-motorised circuit options through the Otways.

- Councils strongly support the initiative to make towns more walker-friendly and improve access to foreshores however they feel it should be broader than foreshore areas. Community interest groups strongly support the initiative, particularly safer crossing of the Great Ocean Road. The Aireys Inlet and District Association is developing a pedestrian policy. The Friends of Lorne suggested this initiative in relation to Lorne and has a particular concern about the Deans Marsh Road/Great Ocean Road intersection. (ABKRPRC) raised issues relating to car parking, suggesting that more on-site parking policy will reduce parking pressures on the foreshore.

Prosperity

Key Messages:

- **Support for spreading tourism across the region and promoting it as a package that includes loop tourism routes for the Otways, the region's natural attractions and walking tracks**
- **Qualified support for high quality accommodation in key towns and suitable locations near visitor attractions**
- **Concern about the loss of privately-owned caravan parks for accommodation**
- **Support for further work to address the land use and transport needs of key industries in the region**
- **Strong concern about wind farm developments and the possible impact on the Region's significant landscapes**

Present the whole region as a premier recreation and visitor destination (Policy 4.2)

Many submissions commented on and supported initiatives to promote the region as a package (4.2.1).

- Councils strongly support initiative 4.2.1 and referred to its relevance to promoting inland access routes. Shipwreck Coast Tourism, The City of Warrnambool and Warrnambool Tourism Association want an extension of the Great Ocean Road to Warrnambool along the coast as a means of improving tourism role of the Great Ocean Road at the western entrance. Moyne Council identifies Childers Cove as an opportunity to reinforce the western gateway and tourism role of Warrnambool. Individual submissions commented that physical attractions were the major drawcard for the region as these offered the capacity for further tourism and economic development. Some of the submissions suggested the development of food and wine trails and the further development of the cross-regional Volcanoes Discovery Trail.

A number of submissions commented on the initiative to develop and market a touring route through the Otway hinterland that links the region's natural attractions, heritage and produce (4.2.2.)

- TTM Australia commented that from a tourism perspective 'loop routes' with the flow of traffic predominantly in one direction should be encouraged over point-to-point and return routes. Geelong Otway Tourism suggested reference to the Otways Tourism Strategy Plan and advocated funding for Turtons Track as a priority. Parks Victoria supports sealed tourism routes within the region, access to Cape Otway light station and enhancement of the koala spotting area and waterfall facilities at Grey River. Geelong Environment Council wants a one way tourism loop along the Ridge Road, possibly providing a 'ferns and forest' tour, as well as coastal scenery tours for tourists.

Many submissions supported the development of strategic walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure (initiative 4.2.5)

- Councils strongly support this initiative. The Otway Ranges Walking Track Association supports the inclusion of Trans Otway Walking Track. The Victorian National Parks Association supports the initiative and wants more resources for walks such as a Koori Walk part of the Surf Coast walk. The Geelong Bush Walking Club wants shorter day walks at Distillery Creek, Moggs Creek, Lorne, and Apollo Bay linked to the Great Ocean Walk and Surf Coast Walk. It feels that mountain bike trails in suitable locations will help reduce traffic flows and improve safety. The Geelong Environment Council wants a walk between Anglesea and Port Campbell as a priority, as an iconic long walk will serve as a draw for significant tourism. Submissions from individuals supported linking the Great Ocean Walk and Surf Coast Walk.

Encourage longer stays and greater satisfaction for visitors (Policy 4.3)

Submissions commented on initiative (4.3.1) to encourage and facilitate higher quality accommodation in suitable locations in key towns and suitable locations near visitor attractions such as national parks.

- Colac Otway and Moyne Council feel the initiative relating to high quality accommodation needs to be clarified to ensure that it does not conflict with controlling ribbon development and containing development within town boundaries. Surf Coast commented that this should be considered as part of VEAC national park enquiry. Tourism bodies support the initiative. Corangamite Council feels that backpacker accommodation does not gain adequate attention and backpacker accommodation opportunities should be identified in the strategy. Parks Victoria wants 'national parks' dropped from the current wording in the initiative.

Councils and tourism bodies are concerned about the loss of privately-owned caravan parks (initiative 4.3.2).

- Councils raised concern about the loss of privately-owned caravan parks in coastal areas (eg Zeally Bay Caravan Park in Torquay) because of land tax. The councils seek a review of land tax and possible concessions via land tax or council rates. Geelong Otway Tourism raised the review of land tax as a key issue for the Strategy to address this issue

Support land use and transport needs of key regional industries (Policy 4.5)

Several submissions commented on initiative (4.5.1) for supporting council initiatives to provide adequate land for residential and industrial development.

- Surf Coast Council supports the initiative and referred to its Lorne and Winchelsea structure plans. The City of Warrnambool feels 'adequate' should be replaced by 'available' and reiterated its concern about conflict between Rescode and coastal township character and the need for well-defined town boundaries and the avoidance of a coastal sprawl. Colac Otway and Moyne Councils queried the nature of support would be provided. The Aireys Inlet District Association wants provision of more public housing to address social and economic costs of the increasing land value along the coast. The Victorian Coastal Council suggested adopting a hierarchy of sustainability principles similar to those in the Victorian Coastal Strategy for this initiative, so that it is not seen as contradicting settlement and environment initiatives.

Council and other submissions referred to the South West Victoria Dairy Industry Project (Initiative 5.5.2).

- The Region's five councils referred to the South West Dairy Industry project and suggested that the wording for the initiative should be changed, so that it suggests commencing the

implementation of the project. VicRoads referred to the truck traffic along Colac Port Campbell Road associated with development of the gas industry that will increase traffic significantly. It commented that the Minister for Planning has determined that a range of works (intersection safety improvements) will be undertaken to maintain road safety along route.

Use natural resources with care (Policy 4.6)

Many submissions expressed concern about wind farms and the impact on landscapes (Initiatives 4.6.1, 4.6.3)

- Surf Coast referred to the release of the Victorian Wind Atlas to inform decisions about suitable locations for wind farms. The City of Warrnambool referred to its policy on wind farms. Geelong Otway Tourism wants clarification of suitable locations for wind farms. Community and interest groups oppose wind farms in sensitive locations. The Victorian National Parks Association wants initiative 4.6.1 re-written. ANGAIR, Friends of Bay of Islands Coastal Park and Your Heritage Coast want the wind farm guidelines improved to ensure protection of landscapes from wind farms. Environment Victoria urges the Government to adopt a more consultative approach toward protection of Victoria's favourite landscapes, referring to recent changes to the planning approval process for wind farms. It commented that the changes do not provide certainty to the public about our most well known and best loved landscapes. It believes there would be broad community support for 'no go' areas for wind farms and other visually intrusive developments in the immediate vicinity of iconic landscapes, such as the significant landscapes identified in GORRS.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Key Messages

- **An implementation plan is required with more detailed actions, priorities, and responsibilities and funding**
- **The Strategy should be included in the planning system**
- **A coordination mechanism is required for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the strategy**

Many submitters commented on the implementation of the strategy. There was a strong call for a detailed implementation plan and inclusion of the Strategy into the planning system.

- The Victorian Coastal Council commented that the lack of commitment behind initiatives is a weakness of the study and the final implementation plan needs to provide detail. The Wye River and Separation Creek Progress Association feels that at this stage the Strategy is vague and lacks detail. The Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Indigenous Flora & Fauna (ANGAIR), Friends of Angahook-Lorne State Park and Geelong Otway Tourism commented that some initiatives have been developed elsewhere or have already commenced and that these should be included in the Strategy as recommendations.
- Councils want a final implementation plan with specific detail. Colac Otway and Moyne Council want the implementation in chart form and that it should have priorities listed with achievable short and medium priorities. The detail should be 'fleshed out' and included in the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF). Similarly, community interest groups (eg Wye River & Separation Creek Progress Association and the Aireys Inlet & District Association) see quick implementation of the Strategy in the planning system as essential, to ensure it is made

'operational'. Heritage Council Victoria supports the inclusion of the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy into the SPPF and the Landscape Assessment Study as a Reference Document.

- Tourism bodies (Geelong Otway Tourism, TTF Australia and Grampians Pyrenees Regional Development Board) and the Corangamite CMA are concerned about the implementation and funding for the Strategy. These groups have a specific concern about infrastructure funding, and responsibility for implementation. They suggest joint public/private sector partnerships for infrastructure development. Corangamite Council wants specific funding from State and Federal levels.

The on-going coordination and monitoring of the Strategy was raised in several submissions.

- The City of Warrnambool proposes a non-statutory coordinating committee with details set out in a Memorandum of Understanding. Parks Victoria supports the approach of using the existing reporting systems rather than duplicating systems to report on implementation.

Corangamite CMA looks forward to involvement in the development of the implementation plan. It wants a 'triple bottom line' outcomes' approach and is concerned that the document does not specify targets, has no measurable outcomes and makes no attempt to set priorities. It recommends that partnership projects be developed with its Regional Catchment Management Strategy. Geelong Otway Tourism refers to its Sustainable Tourism Strategy and work with Surf Coast Council as a source of social and township indicators.