

GOR Action Plan – Submission July 2019

1. Visitation and international tourism

Many issues involving impact of visitors to Lorne:

- Rubbish – Ratepayers footing the bill - day trippers at public BBQs and Toilets – surcharge required either entry fees or charges on tourist and unregistered mini-van operators. Very few day trippers spend money in Lorne as the majority bring their own food and drinks and use public facilities.
- Beach and ocean safety – many visitors, especially internationals are not familiar with the ocean and unable to swim. This needs to be addressed by providing clear warnings and perhaps including in international airline carrier magazines and phone apps
- Congestion of foreshore by events and large groups from mid-sized tourist buses, unregistered tourist operators and other visitors. Requires additional designated parking areas in south Lorne foreshore area.
- There is available land in the South Lorne and Point Grey tourist precinct areas to accommodate buses and accommodate tourist activity to reduce the load on the town foreshore.
- Travellers sleeping in vans in foreshore and BBQ areas – not using caravan parks and designated areas particularly in North and South Lorne areas. GOR Standing Advisory Committee should address.
- Signage should not only be in English but other languages.
- Tourism on GOR is increasing but infrastructure not built to cope with influx and use – road safety particularly as many international tourists are unaware of road rules, have limited experience of driving on GOR, debatable whether they all carry international driver's licences. Many instances of failure to adhere to Victorian road rules, i.e. failure to obey speed limits, stopping in middle of road to take photos, unaware of passing lanes, having difficulty negotiating the GOR - driving on wrong side of road particularly on corners/bends etc. There have already been fatalities in the area as a result of ignorance on the part of international drivers. Signage should be in other languages and international tourists should have to sit driving/road rules test before driving in the state. If visitors cannot read English they cannot read any current road signs on the GOR.

2. Environmental Protection

- Protection of natural environment from urban sprawl and ribbon development in coastal areas along GOR, particularly from Big Hill to south Lorne
- Prevent development in the Otways National Park Areas for so called 'eco developments' and in townships i.e. Apollo Bay.
- Protection of hinterland of Lorne township from urban development and subdivision for lifestyle properties reducing available high-quality agricultural land in a high rainfall areas has implications for sustainable agriculture in relation to climate change impacts
- Set clear town boundaries to discourage urban creep on the edges of national park areas bordering Lorne township.
- Protect public/Crown Land in townships from development or being subsumed into development proposals i.e. Lorne Pool and associated foreshore development. The pool was a gift to Lorne Residents but is now leased as a commercial component of foreshore development.

- Reintroduce an updated (with community input) Surfcoast colours and style planning reference manual to prevent more new residential developments in prominent positions detracting from the public realm. Greater adherence to the SurfCoast planning scheme objectives in relation to visual bulk, design and replacement of vegetation to retain township character etc. Distinct urbanisation of residential dwelling design and lack of adherence to landscape plans approved as part of residential development permits is resulting in the cumulative erosion of the scenic township qualities valued by so many. If not addressed this will reduce the environmental and scenic attraction of Lorne as a destination, known as ‘the place where the mountains meet the sea’.

3. Climate Change events

3.1 Erosion

- An increasing issue along the GOR but does not seem to be regarded as a serious threat despite significant damage to the GOR and coastal infrastructure. Large areas in north Lorne close to the GOR have been lost to severe erosion and threaten the continued viability of access into Lorne. Mitigation measures to address this are urgently required. See North Lorne coastal erosion images



GOR erosion July 2019



North Lorne beach and walking track erosion 2019



Picnic area erosion July 2019



Beach erosion 2019

3.2 Bushfire/Wildfire

- Irresponsible to heavily promote visitation along the GOR when the ever-present threat of wildfire exists 5- 6 months of the year. The GOR is not designed to move traffic swiftly and townships such as Lorne are vulnerable to wildfire attack as is the annual Falls Festival held in bushland hinterland. As recently as 2015 the Lorne township received fire evacuation orders on Christmas Day. Incineration of residents and tourists in motor vehicles on the GOR is not an improbable event. Much more responsible and coordinated forward planning is required including input from GOR communities to address this issue and related climate change effects in the region. Limiting traffic numbers on high and extreme fire danger days may become necessary as a climate change adaption mechanism on the GOR in the future.