The Victorian Government is committed to protecting the distinctive Surf Coast’s environment, landscape and lifestyle.

The Surf Coast is renowned for its excellent beaches, coastal biodiversity and a wealth of recreation and tourism opportunities. It is the gateway to the Great Ocean Road, a national heritage site. The region has experienced increasing urban development pressure, particularly in Torquay-Jan Juc. To ensure the region’s long-term sustainability, the Victorian Government must effectively balance growth while ensuring the retention of unique features and characteristics.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has worked with the Surf Coast Shire Council, City of Greater Geelong Council, and Traditional Owners, the Wadawurrung, to declare the Surf Coast as a Distinctive Area and Landscape under the Planning and Environment Act (1987). The declared area includes parts of the Surf Coast Shire Council and City of Greater Geelong.

Now that the area has been declared, work has begun to develop a draft Statement of Planning Policy for the declared area.

The Surf Coast Distinctive Area and Landscapes Project coincides with the development of the Great Ocean Road Strategic Framework Plan, that seeks to provide further protection to the Great Ocean Road Region.

Statement of Planning Policy

To achieve a long-term vision for the region and guide future land use and development, a draft Statement of Planning Policy (SPP), including a Strategic Framework Plan, will be developed with:

• Surf Coast Shire Council
• City of Greater Geelong Council
• Traditional Owners, the Wadawurrung People
• The community.

This will be informed by strategic planning work that the Surf Coast Shire Council and City of Greater Geelong Council may have already undertaken.

The SPP will provide a framework to ensure the excellent beaches, coastal biodiversity, recreation and tourism attributes of the Surf Coast declared area continue to be of special significance. It will also celebrate Aboriginal Victorians connection to Country.

The SPP will consider height controls and identify protected settlement boundaries to ensure development does not inappropriately encroach into valued natural and rural landscapes. These will be subject to the same strong protections in place for Melbourne’s permanent Urban Growth Boundary, requiring parliamentary approval to amend them. Implementing these boundaries will safeguard valuable landscapes and protect them from overdevelopment and encroachment.

Some changes to local planning controls may be required in order to implement the SPP. These controls will ensure that the region’s environmental values – attributes loved by locals and Victorians – are protected.

engage.vic.gov.au/distinctive-areas-and-landscapes-program
More information
planning.implementation@delwp.vic.gov.au

Call 136 186 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm. Costs may vary - mobiles and public telephones may incur additional costs.

engage.vic.gov.au/distinctive-areas-and-landscapes-program

Have your say

We have heard your views and opinions throughout Phase one and two public engagement. There are further opportunities to provide input as the project progresses.

In the next stage of public engagement, you will be given an opportunity to provide a written submission on the draft Surf Coast Statement of Planning Policy.


Timeline

Stage 1: Initial project work
- Early 2019

Stage 2: Declaration of Surf Coast region as a Distinctive Area and Landscape
- Mid 2019

Stage 3: Development of the Draft Statement of Planning Policy
- Late 2019

Stage 4: Finalise Statement of Planning Policy
- Early 2020

Public Engagement
- The environment, landscape and lifestyle people want to protect
- Policy Direction
- The draft Statement of Planning Policy

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