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) will work with the Surf Coast Shire Council and Traditional Owners, the Wadawurrung, to declare the Surf Coast a Distinctive Area and Landscape under the Planning and Environment Act (1987). The Distinctive Area and Landscape declaration will enable identification of long-term settlement boundaries to protect the unique Surf Coast for current and future generations.

The Surf Coast Distinctive Area and Landscapes Project will coincide with the development of the Great Ocean Road Strategic Framework Plan, which will 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 Statement of Planning Policy (the Statement) including a Strategic Framework Plan will be developed with:

- Surf Coast Shire Council
- Traditional Owners
- The community.

This will be informed by the strategic planning that the Council has already undertaken.

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

The Statement 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 Statement. 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
Have your say

Community consultation will open at key stages of the Surf Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Project.

These conversations will coincide with the development of the Great Ocean Road Strategic Framework Plan, which will provide further protection for the Great Ocean Road Region.


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.

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