Distinctive Areas and Landscapes

Assessment of Bellarine Peninsula against the declaration requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose
This report provides an assessment of the Bellarine Peninsula against the declaration requirements outlined under Section 46AP of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. This includes:

- Identifying the distinctive attributes of the Bellarine Peninsula
- Identifying potential threats to the distinctive attributes of the Bellarine Peninsula

It will also assist in defining the scope of policies for a Statement of Planning Policy (SPP).

1.2 Distinctive Areas and Landscapes
Part 3AAB of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (‘the Act’) came into effect on 30 May 2018. The amended Act provides for the Governor in Council to declare an area of Victoria a ‘distinctive area and landscape’, which requires an enhanced level of planning protection and management.

The objectives of Part 3AAB of the Act are to:

- to recognise the importance of distinctive areas and landscapes to the people of Victoria and to protect and conserve the unique features and special characteristics of those areas and landscapes; and
- to enhance the conservation of the environment in declared areas including the unique habitats, ecosystems and biodiversity of declared areas; and
- to enable the integration of policy development, implementation and decision-making for declared areas under Statements of Planning Policy; and
- to recognise the connection and stewardship of Traditional Owners in relation to land in declared areas.

1.3 Pilot Project
The Macedon Ranges was the first area declared under the Act in August 2018. The Macedon Ranges SPP has been developed and is currently awaiting endorsement from the relevant responsible public entities. The Macedon Ranges Protection Project is a pilot project which will inform the development of the SPP for the Bellarine Peninsula.
2.0 Context

2.1 Study area

The Bellarine Peninsula is located south-west of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. The peninsula is generally considered to consist of all land from Point Lonsdale, Swan Bay, St Leonards, Indented Head in the East to Leopold and Breamlea inclusive of Reedy Lake to the west. Geographically, the Bellarine Peninsula is framed by Corio Bay, Port Phillip Bay, Bass Strait and a mix of rural and urban areas to the west. The boundary and immediate environs identified in the Localised Planning Statement has been nominated as the study area. The Localised Planning Statement is referenced in Clause 11.03-5S of the Victorian Planning Provisions which seeks to protect and enhance the valued attributes of identified distinctive areas and landscapes.

Figure 1 – Bellarine Peninsula Context
2.2 Regional Strategies

Several key regional strategies guide land use and development in the Bellarine Peninsula.

2.2.1 G21 Regional Growth Plan

The G21 Regional Growth Plan (G21) provides strategic direction for the region which includes Colac Otway Shire, Surf Coast Shire, City of Greater Geelong, the Borough of Queenscliffe and the southern part of the Golden Plains Shire and is contained within their relevant planning schemes at Clause 11.01-1R. G21 seeks to coordinate and plan for the anticipated high population growth across the region, especially in the Geelong, the Bellarine and Surf Coast regions.

2.2.2 Plan Melbourne

Plan Melbourne provides the high-level strategic planning for Melbourne and its peri-urban areas. Plan Melbourne recognises that peri-urban areas are of high economic, environmental and social value. Further, the plan recognises that these areas are under threat from competing land uses, urban encroachment and climate change. Plan Melbourne has a number of policy directions including direction 1.4 which aims to support productive land within peri-urban areas including agricultural land and extractive industries.
Specifically, policy 4.5.2 of Plan Melbourne recognises the Bellarine Peninsula as a high value area worthy of significant protection via a Localised Planning Statement which will be updated to a Statement of Planning Policy, in line with similar work done in Macedon Ranges. Policy 7.1.2 of Plan Melbourne also seeks to support regional towns which are experiencing growth pressures as they are an affordable and attractive alternative to metropolitan living. It is also recognised that strategies are needed to ensure delivery of infrastructure to support growth in peri-urban areas and that development must be in keeping with local character, significant amenity.
3.0 Distinctiveness criteria

3.1 The Legislation

Section 46AO(1) of the Act enables the Governor in Council to declare an area of Victoria to be a distinctive area and landscape upon recommendation by the minister. Before making the recommendation, the Minister must be satisfied that the area satisfies the distinctiveness requirements set out in section 46AP(1) as follows:

(1) The Minister must be satisfied that an area has a majority of the following attributes in order to recommend that the area be declared as a distinctive area and landscape—

(a) outstanding environmental significance;
(b) significant geographical features, including natural landforms;
(c) heritage and cultural significance;
(d) natural resources or productive land of significance;
(e) strategic infrastructure or built form of significance;
(f) an attribute prescribed for the purposes of this section.

3.2 Assessment of distinctiveness

The Act outlines five attributes, along with any attribute prescribed for the purpose of this section, which must be ‘of significance’ to be declared ‘a distinctive area and landscape’. To be declared, an area must have a majority of these attributes, with a count of three or more, indicating a majority or concentration of significant attributes.

Significance can be defined across a number of scales, including local, regional, state or national significance. For the Distinctive Area and Landscape assessment, it is considered the attributes should be of state or national significance to warrant the elevated planning protection at the State level. If an area does not meet the threshold of state or national significance, the local planning scheme and existing planning provisions are considered sufficient to manage the attributes and threats.

For each attribute, the quantity or distribution in the area will be categorised as ‘limited’ or ‘extensive’ and the value of the attribute will be categorised as ‘low’ or ‘high’.

Table 1 – Examples of what may be considered for each attribute of the legislation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding environmental values that are vulnerable under impact of irreversible change, or are rare and endangered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mix of ecosystem types (such as terrestrial, forest, mountain, grassland, catchment, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Critical aquifers and groundwater systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape and landform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The area contains landforms with striking aesthetic characteristics appreciated by the wider Victorian community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Objects of outstanding natural beauty (including natural and built-form features).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unique geological or geomorphic features, processes or landforms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic and cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Iconic places, precincts or landscapes of cultural heritage significance that are exemplars of Victoria’s past.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Places or objects that have particularly strong relationships to important historical events that have significance for the broader Victorian community.
• Clear association of historical importance in comparison to other places.
• Tangible association with Aboriginal living tradition (e.g., sites of Aboriginal value).
• Significant number or concentration of sites of Aboriginal cultural sensitivity.
• Intangible (for example, spiritual) association to a cultural tradition in the form of story or unique testimony.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural resources and productive land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Water catchment including dams and reservoirs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Timber production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State significant resources (for example, existing extractive industry resource areas, and other areas to be identified by DEDJTR as part of Victoria’s strategic extractive resource areas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Major tourism destination and recreational attractions including nature-based tourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Productive land supporting primary production (intensive agriculture, horticulture).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic infrastructure and built form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Strategic reservations for long term infrastructure needs, or existing infrastructure that provides a critical extractive resource transport network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Major infrastructure including ports, airports, transport corridors, energy transmission, windfarm and renewable energy generation, telecommunications and information infrastructure, that provide a State function beyond its immediate area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.0 Threat criteria

4.1 The Legislation

Section 46AO(1) of the Act enables the Governor in Council to declare an area of Victoria to be a distinctive area and landscape upon recommendation by the minister. In addition to the distinctiveness requirements set out in 3.1, before making the recommendation, the Minister must be satisfied that the area satisfies the threat requirements set out in section 46AP(2) as follows:

(2) The Minister must be satisfied that an area is under threat of significant or irreversible land use change that would affect the environmental, social or economic value of the area in order to recommend that the area be declared as a distinctive area and landscape, whether that threat arises from—

(a) land use conflicts; or
(b) multiple land use changes over time; or
(c) any other land use threat prescribed for the purposes of this section.

4.2 Assessment of threats

In order to define and assess a significant threat, the nature, number and level of threats will be considered in relation to their impacts on each attribute identified for the area. To measure the significance of the threat, it will be categorised as a risk level of with the risk level of ‘low’ or ‘high’.

Categories for assessment of the nature of threats includes the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict between land uses (including intensity of uses)</th>
<th>Development encroaching on an existing quarry providing significant natural resources.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher risk of bushfire due to development in areas with significant concentrations of vegetation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stormwater and waterway impacts from development (such as runoff from increased impervious areas, or increased grazing or clearance).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cumulative impact of development and land use practice</th>
<th>Ad hoc development over time in townships and rural settlements leading to increased risks of bushfire and flooding.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuing future growth in an area leading to further fragmentation of biodiversity and impact on remnant, rare or endangered species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flow on impacts on the economy if areas of natural beauty are not protected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compounding (combination or additive) impacts</th>
<th>Impact from the combination of future growth, extensive tourism activity and recreation development.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual impacts due to the scale or footprint of infrastructure development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction of weeds and pests though increased visitation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Climate change impacts</th>
<th>Increased incidence of natural hazards including erosion, inundation and storm surge.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Climate related implications on agricultural productivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risks to infrastructure functioning efficiently in supporting future communities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.0 Decision Framework

Step 1
ASSESS DISTINCTIVENESS
Combination of unique features of extensiveness, quantity and value

- The area contains a combination of unique features of state and/or national significance
- The area does not contain a combination of unique features of state and/or national significance
  Manage through existing planning provisions

Step 2
ASSESS THREAT
Both range (single, multiple) and level of impact (low, high)

Step 3
APPLY DECISION RULES
In accordance with the following logic:

IF Extensive AND High Value AND High or Multiple Threat THEN **Declare**
IF Extensive AND High Value AND Low Threat THEN Manage
IF Extensive AND Low Value AND Low Threat THEN Manage
IF Extensive AND Low Value AND High Threat THEN Manage
IF Limited AND High Value AND High or Multiple Threat THEN **Declare**
IF Limited AND High Value AND Low Threat THEN Manage
IF Limited AND Low Value AND High Threat THEN Manage
IF Limited AND Low Value AND Low Threat THEN Manage

- High
  Majority of criteria (3 to 5)
- Medium
  (2 criteria)
- Low
  (0 to 1 criteria)

**Declare Area**
(and manage through planning provisions)

Prepare Statement of Planning Policy

Designate township settlement boundaries*

*Optional

Manage through existing planning provisions, strategies and action plans
6.0 Environmental Significance

6.1 Outstanding environmental significance

Summary

Attributes
- Creeks, wetlands, swamps, woodlands and beaches in the area provide habitat for numerous state and national threatened species.
- Areas of biodiversity significance include Swan Bay and surrounds, Lake Connewarre and wetlands, Ocean Grove Nature Reserve and Lonsdale Lakes Wildlife Reserve.
- Biodiversity in this region spans from coastal marine life, to wetland areas, and up to indigenous vegetation on the inland hills.
- Endangered native flora and fauna, including the Coastal Moonah Vegetation and the Orange-bellied Parrot, located in pockets of this area, particularly along river corridors. The Bellarine Yellow Gum is also listed as threatened under the Flora & Fauna Guarantee Act.
- The peninsula's wetlands are protected under the RAMSAR convention. These include: Lake Connewarre, Salt Lagoon, Swan Bay, Lonsdale Lakes, Reedy Lake and the lower Barwon River Estuary.

Threats
- Climate change resulting in sea level rise and changes to storm patterns are expected to increase the potential for erosion, damage to coastal infrastructure, and intensify pressure on biodiversity assets.
- Land use practices that negatively impact on environmental health, including habitat and water quality.
- Uncoordinated urban development which can undermine the appropriate provision and staging of key infrastructure.
- Urban development expansion, which can conflict with the distinctive features of the area directly and indirectly.

Distinctiveness/threat criteria below has been determined based on the decision framework (section 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantity</strong></td>
<td>Extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Significant Environmental Features

Figure 3 - Map showing significant environmental features in the Bellarine Peninsula.
(Green dots represent environmental features discussed in the Table 3 below)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swan Bay &amp; Surrounds</strong></td>
<td>• Swan Bay is a 3,000-hectare Ramsar-listed site with an extensive shallow bay and islands fringed by mud flats, mangroves and salt marsh. • Islands bordering the east of the bay are largely undeveloped and provide important habitats for protected flora and fauna. They contain marine and terrestrial ecosystems, foreshore areas and islands protected by international treaties. It is a wetland habitat for wading birds, including endangered species (Orange-bellied Parrot). There is only 3% of indigenous vegetation remaining in the Swan Bay catchment, with many species being endangered, rare or vulnerable.</td>
<td>• Vegetation loss • Erosion runoff, stormwater runoff and sewerage management as activity increases in Queenscliff and St Leonards. • Other risks include flooding and wildfire, sea level rise and storm surge.</td>
<td>• Coastal Spaces – Recommendations Report (April 2006) p32 map • Port Phillip Bay Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan (July 2017) p6 • Queenscliff Planning Scheme 21.01-1 Snapshot of the Borough of Queenscliffe p1 • Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barwon Heads Park</strong></td>
<td>• The Bluff contributes to marine education and hosts more than 80 indigenous species of fauna including many that are locally rare and threatened. There are also two separate reefs at the foot of the Bluff.</td>
<td>• Urban expansion into the park due to high coastal property value. • Coastal erosion to foreshore and beach assets caused by coastal storms and human disturbance.</td>
<td>• Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p56 • Barwon Heads Structure Plan (August 2017) p41, 45, 67 • Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary (April 2007) p10, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lower Barwon River Estuary</strong></td>
<td>• The estuary supports remnant in-stream vegetation of high conservation significance including mangroves. The waters experience greater turbidity due to a greater tidal range which is putting native species at increasing risk as sea levels rise.</td>
<td>• Altered water regimes, dredging, pest plants and animals, pollution, low nutrient levels, sediment and salinity. • Increased number of dams and development within the catchment associated with rural living. • Urban and agricultural runoff.</td>
<td>• Barwon Heads Structure Plan (August 2017) p46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salt Lagoon Wildlife Reserve</strong></td>
<td>• The Salt Lagoon Wildlife Reserve is a Ramsar-listed wetland area which borders the coast immediately north of St Leonards. The reserve is bordered on the</td>
<td>• There is already urban development between St Leonards up to Indented Head. Further development</td>
<td>• Bellarine Peninsula LPP 22.14, p2, 10 • Port Phillip Bay Ramsar Site Strategic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
coastal side with a strip of urban development. The salt lagoon hosts a number of significant flora and fauna and is managed by Parks Victoria.
into the area would be detrimental to the ecosystem which is currently being rehabilitated.

| Ocean Grove Nature Reserve | • This is a nature reserve on the northern edge of Ocean Grove. Includes walking trails, picnic areas and an information centre. It hosts a variety of native flora and fauna and is one of the largest remaining bushland areas within the Bellarine Peninsula, and as such is listed by the National Trust as a significant area. | • Pollution and contaminated runoff due to changing land use nearby.  
• Pressure for urban expansion.  
• Increased fire risk from climate change.  
• Pests (both plants and animals) given the proximity of and potential encroachment of urban development. | • Bellarine Peninsula LPP 21.14-2 Objectives, p3, 12  
• Bellarine Peninsula LPP (September 2015) p8 |
| Lake Connewarre & Wetlands | • Largest area of remnant indigenous vegetation on the Bellarine Peninsula. Seagrass/ coastal saltmarsh are important components of the ecological character.  
• Ecologically significant as a chain of Ramsar-listed wetlands incorporating waterbodies such as Lake Connewarre, Reedy Lake, Hospital Lake and Murtough Lagoon.  
• Characterised by intact natural vegetation systems, the wetland area provides habitat for a number of migratory birds, including nationally and internationally threatened species. It is valued by the community for the absence of development and as an internationally recognised location for migratory birds.  
• Hydrology: Connectivity between freshwater and estuarine areas and estuaries and the marine environment to facilitate ecosystem functioning for migratory fish.  
• Recreational/commercial fishing, water-based recreation, game hunting, tourism and education. | • Localised development pressure for housing and farming. Overdevelopment of land in the catchment and poor water management.  
• Recreational boating activities impact on shorebirds and nesting birds.  
• Human disturbance at waterbird and seabird breeding colonies during breeding season.  
• Climate change. Hydrological and water quality changes due to catchment processes and land use.  
• Pest species causing threat to ecosystem and biodiversity.  
• Increasing levels of siltation.  
• Hospital Lake/Swamp – human disturbance and hunting disrupting migratory birdlife. Pest species causing threat | • Coastal Spaces – Recommendations Report (April 2006) p32 map  
• Rural Land Use Strategy (May 2007) p39  
• Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p33  
• Bellarine Peninsula LPP, 21.14-2 Objectives, p3  
• Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula, Ramsar Site Management Plan Summary, p8-10 |
| **Mangroves** | The mangrove areas of the Bellarine Peninsula comprise a single species *Avicennia marina* and there are small areas of mangrove in Limeburner’s Bay (four hectares) and the Barwon Estuary (40 hectares).  
- The inundated roots and pneumatophores of mangroves provide good habitat for fish and invertebrates and play a role in stabilising the soft sediments in the site. | Human disturbance at waterbird and seabird breeding colonies during breeding season.  
- Increasing levels of soil salinity.  
- Disturbance of migratory shorebirds and nesting birds as a result of four-wheel driving on beaches, saltmarsh, intertidal areas; recreational fishing or boating activities. | Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula, Ramsar Site Management Plan Summary, p8-10 |
| **Coastal Moonah Woodland Community Areas** | The Barwon Heads Structure Plan identifies the state-significant Coastal Moonah habitat as having critical environmental value. There are residential areas with large property boundaries covered with indigenous Coastal Moonah vegetation. There are also stands of Coastal Moonah along the banks of the Barwon River Estuary, which is protected under a Supreme Court decision. | Subdivision and development of properties within residential areas threatens the preservation of the woodlands as land-holders seek to capitalise on increasing property value.  
- Pollution and runoff associated with changing land use nearby. | Barwon Heads Structure Plan (August 2017) p21-22 |
| **Lonsdale Lakes Wildlife Reserve** | A biodiverse and seasonally inundated landscape is found between Point Lonsdale and Ocean Grove in the Swan Bay catchment. The area is defined by waterbodies and wetlands, including Lake Victoria, and is mostly pastoral in the remainder.  
- These wetlands are Ramsar-listed. High, vegetated sand dunes at the coastal edge and prominent slopes inland are important topographic features that provide a backdrop to open views, and a non-urban break between Point Lonsdale and Ocean Grove. | Development of properties in catchment and nearby proximity.  
- Pest species causing threat to ecological character.  
- Urban runoff. | Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p34  
- Bellarine Peninsula LPP 21.14-2 Objectives, p3, 12 |
### Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve
- Edwards Point is a 4km long sand spit extending from Swan Bay to Port Phillip Bay at the eastern end of the Bellarine Peninsula. The reserve was established in March 1971 to conserve and protect vegetation and fauna of the area.
- Development of properties in catchment and nearby proximity.
- Pest species causing threat to ecological character.
- Urban runoff.
- Parks Victoria Edwards Point Nature Conservation Reserve

### Portarlington (Point Richards) Flora and Fauna
- Conservation reserve for wildlife and native vegetation around the wetlands on the western edge of town.
- Development of properties in catchment and nearby proximity.
- Pest species causing threat to ecological character.
- City of Greater Geelong, Portarlington Flora and Fauna Reserve

### Buckley Park Reserve
- Foreshore reserve stretching between Ocean Grove and Point Lonsdale. There are more than 90 shell middens within the reserve, indication a long Indigenous history.
- The reserve is an important habitat for local and migratory birds.
- Human disturbance at nesting and breeding times.
- Pest species causing threat to ecosystem and biodiversity.
- Recreational boating activities impact on shorebirds, nesting birds and local vegetation.
- City of Greater Geelong, Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve

### 6.3 General Threats to Significant Environmental Features in the Study Area
The following have been identified as general threats to the environmental values of the Bellarine Peninsula.

**Table 4 – Land Use Conflict**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Climate Change**   | • Work currently being undertaken by the “Our Coast” project to increase understanding of these effects has identified a high probability of more storm surges associated with increasing volatile weather conditions in the future. | • Climate change. The rising of sea levels, combined with rising temperatures and changes to wind and storm patterns are expected to increase the potential for erosion and damage to coastal infrastructure, and intensify pressure on biodiversity assets. | • Bellarine Peninsula – Corio Bay Local Coastal Hazard Assessment Inundation Report (July 2016)  
• “Our Coast” – G21 Geelong Region Alliance |
| **Population Increase** | • Strong residential growth. Improved access to Geelong and Melbourne | • Population growth along Victoria’s coast,                                                                                           | • Coastal Spaces – Recommendations                                                             |
has enhanced the Bellarine Peninsula's attraction as a residential commuter location. As a result, the Bellarine Peninsula has become a new centre for concentration of coastal population in the state and this trend is expected to continue.

- ABS Census data indicates that in 2001 the population of the Bellarine Peninsula was just over 40,100. This increased to just under 51,700 by 2011 representing a 28% growth rate over a 10-year period, or 2.8% per year.
- The unique and distinctive character of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale are important to the offer of the Bellarine Peninsula.

Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils
- Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils underlie large areas of Australia's coastline. Undisturbed, these soils are relatively harmless but when they are disturbed and exposed to oxygen through drainage and excavation, they produce sulfuric acid.
- Acid run-off damages habitats, depletes fish resources, can sterilise agricultural land, and in some instances direct human impacts have been reported.
- Impact on construction.

Accompanied by subdivision and development pressure.
- Activities and infrastructure within the catchment, adjoining onshore environments & within the wetlands and estuaries, can affect the ecological health. This can compromise the ability of wetlands and estuaries to provide healthy ecosystems.
- Adversely affect water quality and the environmental condition of wetlands and estuaries.
- Increasing use and development pressures, pests and weeds, altered fire regimes and a changing climate increase the risk that natural coastal habitats will be fragmented or lost.
- Urban expansion on the fringe of the Borough of Queenscliffe has the potential to negatively impact on the visual amenity, tourism quality and environmental quality (stormwater) of the area.
7.0 Geographical features & natural landforms

7.1 Summary

**Attributes**
- The Bellarine Peninsula's landscape includes areas of state and national significance, particularly along the coastline between Ocean Grove and Point Lonsdale.
- The Heads at Point Lonsdale and Thirteenth Beach Coast as well as their surrounding rugged coastline and hinterland offers scenic views from landmark cliffs, points and lookouts that define the character of the area.
- Landscape character is highly visible from main road corridors.
- The southern edge of the Bellarine Peninsula has a varied landscape of sandy beaches, high dunes, low cliffs and rocky headlands. Point Lonsdale Heads and The Bluff at Barwon Heads are landmark features along the coast.
- The Thirteenth Beach Coast is a defining feature of the coast both environmentally and aesthetically.
- Murradoc Hill is the highest point on the Bellarine Peninsula and is of regional significance as a scenic and undeveloped backdrop to coastal townships and Corio and Port Phillip Bays.
- A number of historic waterholes and mineral spas are situated in Clifton Springs and Drysdale.

**Threats**
- Key issues included visual impact on view lines and topography from development and loss of vegetation.
- Climate change risks of coastal erosion and rising sea levels.
- Conflicting land uses with cumulative impacts over time from ad hoc encroachment from settlements.
- Compounding impacts from extensive tourism and urban development.

Distinctiveness and threat criteria below has been determined based on the decision framework (section 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7.2 Significant Geographical Features including Natural Landforms

The Bellarine Peninsula has many significant geographical features, including natural landforms, as identified below in Table 5.

Table 5 – Significant Geographical Features including Natural Landforms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **The Bluff at Barwon Heads** | • Also known as Point Flinders, the lookout on Bluff Road gives distinctive panoramic views of Port Botany, where the Barwon River enters Bass Strait. The Bluff was a particularly significant site for the local Wathaurong people in the summer months.  
• There are also two separate reefs lying beneath the Bluff which are of geological and geomorphological significance at the regional and local level.  
• The Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary has species and communities of conservation significance including petrels, albatross, knot, egrets, terns and bull keep. | • Loss of Indigenous Cultural Heritage.  
• Urban growth.  
• Coastal erosion.  
• Serious threats for this sanctuary include illegal fishing, trampling and disturbance, increased nutrients from shore and marine pollution, and marine pests.  
• A number of introduced marine pests have the potential to colonise within the sanctuary, from nearby waters in Port Phillip Bay and the ocean waters of Bass Strait.  
• Climate change poses a serious medium to long term threat to natural values. | • Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p56  
• Barwon Heads Structure Plan (August 2017) p41, 45, 67  
• Marine Natural Values Study Summary Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary (2007)  
• Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary Management Plan (April 2007) |
| **Murradoc Hill** | • Murradoc Hill is the highest point on the Bellarine Peninsula and is of local significance as a scenic backdrop with planted wind brakes, vineyards and olive groves on hilly topography. This gently undulating area covers much of the central and northern Bellarine Peninsula. As the major topographic feature of the peninsula, this hill-scape forms a significant landscape backdrop to many towns and viewing locations and offers expansive outward views. | • Spur-line development that affects visual qualities of the area. | • Coastal Spaces – Recommendations Report (April 2006) p32 map |
| **Thirteenth Beach Coast** | • As an attractive tourist destination, this coast has sweeping landscape of wide, sandy beaches and vast ocean views interspersed | • A combination of urban population growth and climate change generates a complex mix of threats to tourism and recreation, including | • Coastal Spaces – Recommendations Report (April 2006) p32 map |
with landmark features such as high dunes and rocky cliffs. It is characterised by coverage of indigenous coastal vegetation such as Moonah and Acacia.

overcrowding, conflict between users, loss of beaches and degradation of built assets (e.g. piers and jetties) and decreased water quality.

- Increasing sea levels and storm intensities will intensify coastal hazards such as coastal flooding, storm erosion and long-term shoreline recession.
- Sea level rise will lead to more frequent inundation of low-lying areas, loss of coastal habitat, cliff, beach and foreshore erosion.
- Potential for water degradation, salinity, native vegetation loss and degradation.

### Coast between Ocean Grove and Point Lonsdale

- This fronts the high energy Bass Strait landscape with wide, sandy surf beaches and extensive ocean views, backed by a natural and intact dune system. This coastline supports intact indigenous vegetation, Indigenous cultural heritage, and offshore shipwrecks. The surf beach along this stretch of coast is identified by the community as the most important natural asset and the need to enhance the coastal environment is important.

- Increasing sea levels and storm intensities will intensify coastal hazards such as coastal flooding, storm erosion and long-term shoreline recession.
- Sea level rise will lead to more frequent inundation of low-lying areas, loss of coastal habitat, cliff, beach and foreshore erosion.
- Potential for water degradation, salinity, native vegetation loss and degradation.

### The Heads at Point Lonsdale

- The Heads at Point Lonsdale is a landform of state significance at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay. The Heads is a well-known landscape throughout Victoria and features on numerous early artworks. It is part of a Marine National Park that includes high sand dunes, limestone cliffs, and a vast intertidal rock platform that stretches across to Point Nepean. There are attractive views from the foreshore and the lighthouse across the heads.

- A combination of urban population growth and climate change generates a complex mix of threats to tourism and recreation, including overcrowding, conflict between users, loss of beaches and degradation of built assets,
- Increasing sea levels and storm intensities will intensify coastal hazards such as coastal flooding, storm erosion and long-term shoreline recession.
- Sea level rise will lead to more frequent inundation of low-lying areas, loss of coastal habitat,

- Assessment of the Values of Victoria’s Marine Environment (May 2019)

- Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement (September 2015)
- Assessment of the Values of Victoria’s Marine Environment (May 2019)

- Bellarine Peninsula Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p76
- Assessment of the Values of Victoria’s Marine Environment (May 2019)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>cliff, beach and foreshore erosion.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8.0 Heritage and cultural significance

8.1 Summary

Attributes

- The Bellarine Peninsula region has extensive heritage and cultural value, ranging from areas of Indigenous heritage significance, renowned surfing locations and numerous shipwrecks along the coastline.
- There is a long history of State-significant maritime heritage on the coast of the peninsula, including Victorian architecture. High numbers of heritage listings are clustered in Queenscliff, the Flinders Area of Barwon Heads, and Point Lonsdale.
- Queenscliff has a rich maritime and military history, which is characterised by Victorian and early twentieth Century architecture.
- There are a number of significant homesteads and buildings related to the agricultural history of the area, including Coryule, Suma Park, Spray Farm and Portarlington Mill.
- The Geelong-Queenscliff Railway Line (now Bellarine Rail Trail) is a significant example of nineteenth century railway infrastructure to the local Bellarine community and the Greater City of Geelong.
- The Drysdale weighbridge - a structure indicating the importance of the railway to pastoral and agricultural industry in the Bellarine peninsula - has historic, scientific and social value to the Drysdale district and Bellarine peninsula.
- The Flinders Area of Barwon Heads is significant for its seaside character in large, medium and small scale Late Victorian, Edwardian, Federation and interwar bungalow houses.
- Many significant Indigenous cultural sites exist in the region including The Bluff at Barwon Heads which is a significant Indigenous cultural site for the Wathaurong people.
- The Point Lonsdale Lighthouse is a defining architectural feature of the township.

Threats

- Compounding impacts from extensive tourism activity and urban development resulting in congestion of areas of heritage and cultural heritage.
- Risks of climate change impacts.

Distinctiveness and threat criteria below has been determined based on the decision framework (section 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantity</strong></td>
<td>Extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nature</strong></td>
<td>Compounding and climate change impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.2 Indigenous Significance

Traditional Owners do not separate marine from coastal or associated catchment values – Sea Country is considered inclusive of sentient and non-sentient parts of the natural world and the interactions between them.

The Bellarine Peninsula and surrounding area has significance to the Wadawurrung People. Wadawurrung (Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation) has expressed this significance in the following statement:

We deeply respect our people of the past. Elders, children, men, women. We deeply respect their knowledge of country, water, life, their care of the traditions and of each other, we stand with their spirit.

Great spirit Bundjil told us to take care of the great life within the land. To only take what you need without selfishness. Wadawurrung shared their knowledge of singing, dance, trade, camps, fishing, hunting, paintings, and homes to us to protect for our future generations.

We all need to help.

Our Wadawurrung family group lived within Barwon River and Bass Strait, with a large land of forested areas and wonderful banks of the ocean, near many water bodies. The Bengali family were the caretakers of the Bellarine land Beangala, Nerm, Lake Connewarre, Barwon River all provide ideal life to birds and fish, eels. Reeds turned into our baskets. Life in the forest gave resources like food and lots of tools to use for trade, building, journey. If there was lots to trade, we would share with our families and celebrate. We would name our country, by what we could see. Yeraioo, Perweit, Wooranalyook, Boronggook. Home of Wadawurrung. Our country is remembered by Wadawurrung, our proud spirit walks to tomorrow to teach others the care of our earth.
8.3 Post Contact Heritage Significance

The Bellarine Peninsula has many post-contact heritage sites of significance, as identified below in Table 6.

8.3.1 Shipwrecks

There are several notable shipwrecks of historical significance along Bellarine Peninsula as shown in Figure 5 below, including:

- **Earl of Charlemont** - sunk off the coast of Barwon Heads in (1853)
- **Mountain Maid** - sunk off Swan Island after a collision with the SS Queen (1856)
- **Ozone** - scuttled off Indented Head (1925)
- **HMAS J3** - scuttled in Swan Bay (1926)

![Figure 5 - Notable Shipwrecks in Bellarine Peninsula (documented using Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database)](image)

(Purple dots represent relevant shipwrecks as marked)

The preservation of their heritage significance is achieved by the protections provided by the *Heritage Act 2017* and the *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018*, which automatically protect shipwrecks 75 years or older. These protections include measures to control potentially damaging activities on and near shipwrecks and other underwater cultural heritage sites. However, the majority of sites are not subject to active conservation intervention.
### 8.4 Heritage and Cultural Significance

Table 6 – Heritage and Cultural Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-contact Cultural Heritage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Queenscliff’s Historical Buildings</strong></td>
<td>Queenscliff has a rich military and maritime history, which complements its foreshore reserve, parkland and sporting venues which brings environmental and tourism value. Prominent structures include the Ozone Hotel, Queenscliff Pier and lifeboat complex, and railway station. A large proportion of the Queenscliff town is under a heritage overlay, or is heritage-listed, which indicates its state significance.</td>
<td>Disturbance to beach, impact of development on natural environment. Erosion, natural processes and farming practices are a threat to Indigenous sites.</td>
<td>Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 21.01-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fort Queenscliff</strong></td>
<td>Fort Queenscliff was built in 1861 to defend the entrance to Port Phillip and house a garrison of 200. It is a heritage-listed tourist attraction for the region.</td>
<td>Urban population growth leading to potential impact of urban development on the environment, conflict between users. Need to manage and support tourism and urban growth.</td>
<td>Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 21.01-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clifton Springs Mineral Spa Complex</strong></td>
<td>Giving the township its name, these springs were established in the early 1870’s, following the discovery of mineral springs along the foreshore. The site has the potential to provide a wealth of information through maritime, historical and archaeological investigation, and therefore has scientific significance.</td>
<td>Impact on heritage values, landscape features and rural land. Urban expansion due to high coastal property value. Impact on the visual amenity, tourism quality and environmental quality (stormwater) of the area.</td>
<td>Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 22.10 p1, Drysdale - Clifton springs structure plan; Prepared by the City of Greater Geelong (September 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>McLeods Waterholes Heritage Area</strong></td>
<td>Large expanse of water known as McLeods Waterholes and the recreation reserve that surrounds it. The site has historical significance as the early natural water supply for the area and the site of a racecourse.</td>
<td>Urban growth from increasing land value. Impact from urban development and ground disturbance. Need to retain, protect and enhance historic integrity of the area.</td>
<td>Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 22.11 p1, Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 22.22, Victorian Heritage Database (McLeods)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>Development Impacts</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Holes Heritage Area (McLeods Waterholes)</td>
<td>It has aesthetic significance as a place of natural beauty derived from the relationship of the water to the banks, vegetation and contours of the land surrounding the water holes. It has scientific interest as a place with a high probability of both pre and post contact remnants suitable for archaeological investigation.</td>
<td>Need to retain land form, local vegetation and maintaining relationship of water to the banks/contours of the land.</td>
<td>Water Holes Heritage Area, McLeods Waterholes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drysdale Commercial Heritage Area</td>
<td>These streets are part of the early subdivision pattern of urban Drysdale and include both the civic and the domestic heritage of Drysdale. Drysdale has diverse historic and architectural significance of the area and the mixture of domestic, commercial, public, religious and civic buildings which form the centre of the town.</td>
<td>Urban growth from increasing land value. Urban growth from increasing land value.</td>
<td>Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 22.14 p1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flinders Heritage Area</td>
<td>Significant for its seaside character, formed by the strong visual connections with the Barwon River, ocean, bridge, and jetties. The precinct also has a combination of large, medium and small scale Late Victorian, Edwardian, Federation and interwar Bungalow houses.</td>
<td>Urban growth from increasing land value. Impact from urban development and ground disturbance Need to retain, protect and enhance historic integrity of the area.</td>
<td>Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 22.36 p1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Links Heritage Area</td>
<td>The precinct is significant for its intact ‘links’ type golf course dated back to 1920-22 with a small number of large-medium scale, interwar Bungalow houses developed on the Golf Links. The view of the bungalows along Stephens Parade is an important part of heritage in the area.</td>
<td>Urban growth from increasing land value. Impact from urban development and ground disturbance Need to retain, protect and enhance historic integrity of the area.</td>
<td>Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement 22.37, p1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastline between Clifton Springs and Portarlington (including Spray Farm)</td>
<td>Picturesque farms with historic homesteads and vineyards along this coast are listed by the National Trust as a prominent site with extensive views. The Spray Farm is of architectural significance.</td>
<td>Urban development on the natural environment. Managing seasonally fluctuating population from tourists and part-time residents.</td>
<td>Coastal Spaces – Recommendations Report (April 2006) p32 map Borough of Queenscliffe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point Lonsdale Lighthouse</strong></td>
<td>one of the oldest pastoral properties on the Bellarine Peninsula.</td>
<td>Planning Scheme 21.01-3, Key Issues and Strategic Visions p2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **• A number of buildings in the township are of heritage value, most notably the Point Lonsdale lighthouse which was constructed in 1902 and is a defining feature of this coastal town. Within the lighthouse precinct is Buckley’s Cave, a natural feature associated with William Buckley.** | **• Urban development on the natural environment. Managing seasonally fluctuating population from tourists and part-time residents.** | **• Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p34**
|                             | **• Bellarine Peninsula Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p76** |
9.0 Natural resources and productive land

9.1 Summary

Attributes

- Extractive Industry Interest Areas in the Bellarine Peninsula are of importance to the supply of Victoria’s supply of limestone, hard rock and sand up to 2050. These include the Murradoc Hill to Portarlington area, the Lonsdale Lake surrounds and the area south of the Lake Connewarre wetlands.
- Land between urban settlements contains broad acre and specialty farms, an important part of the tourism attraction of the area.
- Certain areas have been nominated in the Regional Growth Plan as strategic agricultural land due to high-quality soil and environmental qualities. These include: Wallington, Drysdale, and Armstrong Creek Agricultural production properties.
- A cluster of wineries spanning from Wallington to Portarlington are an important and growing tourism asset for the region.
- A growing aquaculture industry supporting local and export markets.

Threats

- Urban development poses a threat as a conflicting land use with cumulative impacts over time from ad hoc encroachment from settlements.
- Climate change impacts present a risk for agricultural productivity and nature-based tourism.
- Compounding impacts from extensive tourism activity and urban development.

Distinctiveness and threat criteria below has been determined based on the decision framework (section 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Conflict between land uses, cumulative, compounding and climate change impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


9.2 Natural Resources or Productive Land of Significance

The Bellarine Peninsula has many Natural Resources or Productive Land of Significance, as identified below in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bellarine Winery Area     | • The Bellarine Peninsula has around twenty wineries. This brings leisure activity to the region to compliment other tourist attractions nearby.                                                             | • Dependence on fluctuating visitor seasons  
• Urban development encroaching nearby.  
• Water scarcity and high cost.                                                                                                           | Rural Land Use Strategy May 2007, p43                                                     |
| Extractive Industry Interest Area | • Designated by the state government’s resource division as valuable areas for the future of Victoria’s extractive industry. They include the Bellarine and Murradoc Hill area to Portarlington, the Lonsdale Lake surrounds and the area south of the Lake Connewarre wetlands. Greater Geelong is of critical importance to the state’s supply of limestone, hard rock, sand and gravel up to 2050.  
• These are a series of quarries whose operation is essential over their course of investment in order to meet the demand for quarry material. They require buffering, and access needs to be maintained to the area. They are located west of Indented Head, and on the southern edge of Lake Victoria. | • Competing land use, operational restrictions due to population growth.  
• Operational restrictions.                                                                                                                  | Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (Consultation, 2018) |
| Soil                      | • Land in the Bellarine Peninsula is ranked at Class 3 – 4 with some capability for soil-based agriculture at moderate to high intensity.                                                                     | • Shallow watertable and soil salinity. Shallow watertable can impede farming through soil degradation due to waterlogging, or soil salinity. This impacts plan productivity and degrade soil structure. | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; Agriculture Victoria Land Capability Research (2019) |
| Strategic Agricultural Land | • The Victorian Government is committed to protecting the long-term future of agricultural land in Melbourne’s green wedge and peri-urban areas.  
• Protecting the significant features and assets in the Bellarine                                                                  | • The Bellarine Peninsula is beautiful and scenic, and therefore an attractive location for urban development. These urban uses compete with agriculture, resulting in the permanent loss of | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; Strategic Agricultural Land (2019) |
Peninsula is important for ongoing environmental, economic, cultural and wellbeing outcomes.

agricultural land/businesses.
10.0 Strategic infrastructure or built form significance

10.1 Summary

Attributes
- Water transport links are important in this area. The Queenscliff passenger ferry and barge to Sorrento is a state-significant transport and tourism link.
- The Portarlington Safe Harbour connects the Bellarine Peninsula to Docklands, Melbourne. The harbour is undergoing an upgrade funded by the State Government.
- Major arterial roads in the Bellarine Peninsula are subject to growing residential and tourism traffic. There are plans for expansion. These include Barwon Heads Road (duplication), and Bellarine link (an extension of the Geelong Ring Road to the Portarlington Road).
- Preliminary works have commenced for the Drysdale Bypass which will be approximately six kilometres long from Jetty Road to north of Whitcombes Road when completed (mid-2020).

Threats
- Localised routes of transport.
- High and increasing traffic volumes causing congestion.
- Lack of maintenance of assets.
- Threats from the cumulative impacts of urban development as well as compounding impacts from extensive tourism activity and urban development.

Distinctiveness and threat criteria below has been determined based on the decision framework (section 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Extensive</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Conflict between land uses, cumulative, compounding and climate change impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.2 Strategic Infrastructure or Built Form Significance

Figure 7 - Map showing strategic infrastructure or built form significance in the Bellarine Peninsula (Blue dots/shapes represent features discussed in the Table 8 below)
### Table 8 – Strategic Infrastructure or Built Form Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Barwon Heads Road**   | • Major transport corridor that is of state significance and may require protection from urban encroachment.  
• This two-lane road has a high traffic volume, which continues to rise as land development continues to the south of Geelong in Armstrong Creek. | • Road reservation may be lost to development, jeopardizing potential road duplication.  
• High and increasing traffic volumes; a VicRoads desired four-lane, two-way duplicated road cannot fit in the current reservation; acquisition of land (including recently constructed properties and retail) may be required. | • Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (Consultation, 2018)                                                                                                               |
| **Geelong Ring Road extension Bellarine Link** | • Major transport corridor that is of state significance and may require protection from urban encroachment.  
• As a continuation of the Geelong Ring Road, this proposed road would allow freight, tourist and residential traffic better access to the peninsula.  
This road passes through a Ramsar-listed wetland area. | • Different possible alignments adjusting to land acquisition and environmental concerns.  
• A planning study is underway to determine the preferred alignment connecting to Geelong-Portarlington Road at Point Henry; the proposed alignment passes through a Ramsar wetland and will require acquisition of properties. | • Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (Consultation, 2018)                                                                                                               |
| **Drysdales Bypass**    | • Providing an alternate route for heavy vehicles and trucks, easing congestion and allowing for safer pedestrian and cyclist traffic. | • High and increasing traffic volumes, impacting on commuters and tourists. | • Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (Consultation, 2018)                                                                                                               |

### 10.3 Other Strategic Infrastructure or Built Form Significance in the Study Area

The following items are distinctive attributes for the purposes of assessing an area under the declaration requirements of the Act, however occur in isolation or with one other attribute present.

These features do not meet the criteria of possessing a ‘majority of attributes’ as required for the declaration of an area.

### Table 9 – Other Strategic Infrastructure or Built Form Significance in the Study Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Queenscliff – Sorrento Ferry</strong></td>
<td>• Operating since 1987, the ferry links Sorrento and Queenscliff and enables tourists to travel between the heads and Port Phillip.</td>
<td>• Not currently under direct threat but will likely need management in the future.</td>
<td>• Draft Economic Development Strategy Borough of Queenscliffe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portarlington Safe Harbour</strong></td>
<td>• The $58 million Portarlington Safe Harbour project will be a high-quality precinct incorporating commercial activities.</td>
<td>• Not currently under direct threat but will likely need management in the future.</td>
<td>• G21 Regional Growth Plan Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aquaculture and recreational fishing, boating, passive and active recreation and tourism activities. It will provide additional jobs in the tourism, aquaculture, construction and service industries.</td>
<td>management in the future.</td>
<td>Report, August 2012, p54, 62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.0 Recommendation

Based on an assessment of the distinctive attributes and threats on the Bellarine Peninsula, it is recommended that the Bellarine Peninsula be declared a distinctive area and landscape under section 46(A)(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as the Bellarine Peninsula has:

- A majority of the attributes prescribed under section 46AP(1).
- Those attributes are under threat from significant land use change, in accordance with section 46AP(2).

Based on the assessment of the Bellarine Peninsula within the study area, the following declaration boundary is recommended.

11.1 Recommended boundary

Figure 8 below presents the recommended boundary.

Figure 8 – Recommended Bellarine Peninsula Declaration Boundary

Further information is provided below on how this boundary has been defined.

11.1.2 Northern, Eastern and Southern boundary

The northern, eastern and southern boundary follows the coastline of the Bellarine Peninsula and extend 600 metres seaward from the low tide water mark out into Port Phillip Bay and Bass Strait. The extension 600 metres into the Port Phillip Bay and Bass Strait recognises the distinctive attributes along the coastline and ensures consistency with the Greater Geelong and Queenscliffe Planning Schemes.
The northern and southern boundaries extend west up to Clifton Avenue and Breamlea respectively; further information on the western boundary is provided below.

11.1.3 Western Boundary

The western boundary identified in the Localised Planning Statement was used as a starting point in determining the declaration boundary. However, the Localised Planning Statement boundary has been reviewed to ensure currency with the objectives of the legislation. The following principles were used to guide development of the boundary:

- The boundary must recognise the identified distinctive attributes and threats of the Bellarine Peninsula.
- The boundary should follow parcels and roads alignments where possible for ease of identification and implementation of policy.

Overall, the western boundary identified in the Localised Planning Statement is considered to be a suitable western boundary as it encompasses all the distinctive attributes and threats identified in this assessment. However, the boundary was modified to:

- Include Reedy Lake and Lake Connewarre immediate environs rather than the edge of Reedy Lake as the Localised Planning Statement does.
- Remove Breamlea from the boundary, as this has been included in the Surf Coast DAL.
- Minor adjustments to ensure the boundary aligns with lot boundaries and roads.

Note that the Moolap Strategic Framework Plan (August 2019) is guiding development on the western side of Clifton Avenue (known as Point Henry). Point Henry was considered for inclusion in the boundary, however it was determined that the area did not warrant inclusion given the proposed residential development within the area west of Clifton Avenue. It is noted in the Moolap Strategic Framework Plan that development within this area must provide an appropriate buffer to the Bellarine Peninsula interfaces.

Table 10 below provides further description of the recommended western boundary.
Table 10 – Western boundary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Boundary Description</th>
<th>Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• From 600m seaward, the boundary follows the eastern side of Clifton Avenue from Port Phillip Bay down to Portarlington Road. It then heads west along the southern side of Port Arlington Road.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Boundary Description</td>
<td>Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Follows southern edge of Port Arlington Road up to Moolap Station Road, then head south</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>along the eastern side of Moolap Station Road up to the northern edge of the Bellarine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail Trail.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The Rural Living area to the east of the boundary has been included to recognise and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintain a green break between the urban development to the west and the Bellarine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsula.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- The boundary follows the northern edge of the Bellarine Rail Trail, before heading south along the eastern side of Grinter Reserve (following the lot boundary).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Boundary Description</th>
<th>Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The boundary then follows the interface of the residential development and the farming zone, up to Coppards Road to capture Reedy Lake and its environs.</td>
<td>![Map Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Boundary Description</td>
<td>Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The boundary then follows the eastern side of Coppards Road, up to Woods Roads. It then follows the southern edge side of Woods Roads, crossing the Barwon River until it meets the Armstrong Creek Growth Area.</td>
<td>![Map Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Western Boundary Description

- The boundary then follows the Armstrong Creek Growth Area boundary up to Lake Road.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Boundary Description</th>
<th>Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From Lake Road, it follows the eastern side of Barwon Heads Road, when it then follows the Surf Coast DAL boundary (denoted green)</td>
<td><img src="image-url" alt="Map Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Boundary Description</td>
<td>Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The boundary follows the Surf Coast DAL boundary up to the southern coastline and 600m seaward.</td>
<td>![Map Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12.0 Consultation

The following stakeholders have been consulted in the development of this report’s recommendations:

- City of Greater Geelong and Borough of Queenscliffe officers (Project Working Group)
- Wadawurrung Traditional Owners
- Premier and Treasurer, in accordance with section 46AO of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

In addition, the views gathered throughout Phase 1 public engagement have been used to inform the recommendation.
References

- ABS Regional Population Growth Australia (2011)
- Assessment of the Values of Victoria’s Marine Environment (May 2019)
- Barwon Heads Structure Plan (August 2017) p21-22, 41, 45, 46, 67
- Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary (April 2007) p10, 12
- Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement (September 2015) p1, 8
- Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement Clause 11.03-5S, 22.10, 22.11, 22.14, 22.22, 22.36, 22.37 of City of Greater Geelong and Borough of Queenscliffe Planning Schemes
- Borough of Queenscliffe, Key Issues and Strategic Visions, Clause 21.01-3, Queenscliffe Planning Scheme
- Queenscliff Planning Scheme, Clause 21.01-1 Snapshot of the Borough of Queenscliffe
- Queenscliff Planning Scheme, Clause 21.01-3 Key Issues
- Borough of Queenscliffe (Consultation, 2018)
- Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (September 2006) p33, 34, 56, 76
- Corio Bay Local Coastal Hazard Assessment Inundation Report (July 2016)
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (Consultation, 2018)
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (Consultation 2019)
- Drysdale - Clifton springs structure plan; Prepared by the City of Greater Geelong (September 2010)
- G21 Regional growth Plan background Report, August 2012, p54, 62
- Marine Natural Values Study Summary (2012), Parks Victoria, P 27
- Rural Land Use Strategy (May 2007), City of Greater Geelong, p34, 39, 43, 66
• The Bellarine Peninsula, Localised Planning Statement (September 2015), p2, 3, 12
• Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula, Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan (July 2003) p6
• Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula, Ramsar Site Management Plan Summary, 8-10
• Victorian Coastal Strategy (2014), Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
• Victorian Heritage Database (McLeods Water Holes Heritage Area, McLeods Waterholes)