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STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Settlement

Managing growth



The Glenelg Shire Council Strategic Framework Plan (at Clause 02.04) illustrates the hierarchy of towns in the Shire.

Towns within the Glenelg Shire have the capacity to accommodate additional residential development. Some small towns have existing infrastructure to support a larger population but are experiencing limited population growth.

The Shire seeks to achieve growth by:

- Consolidating development within regional and district towns where there is reticulated infrastructure such as water, sewerage and stormwater drainage.
- Securing the economic future of Portland, Heywood, Casterton, Dartmoor and Nelson by broadening their employment base.
- Facilitating urban growth in and around existing towns and settlements.
- Supporting rural residential development only where it is linked to an existing urban area, where it does not impact on land capability, productive agricultural land use or water quality and where it can be serviced by infrastructure.
- Encouraging land within existing towns to be developed before new land is considered for rezoning to provide housing.
- Supporting rural living housing generally in areas surrounding existing towns.
- Managing urban growth to minimise conflict with surrounding rural areas.
- Managing the interface of rural living areas and agricultural areas to minimise conflict with commercial agricultural operations.

Regional Centre

Portland is the Shire's main population, business and administrative centre. The immediately surrounding areas of Bolwarra, Cashmore, Dutton Way, Gorae and Portland West provide pockets of rural living.

Portland has a number of important industrial areas including the North Portland Industrial Precinct, the Central Portland Employment Precinct, the Madeira Packet Employment Precinct and the Smelter Industrial Precinct. In addition, the Port of Portland is one of four major commercial ports in Victoria and is a major economic driver for the regional centre.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Portland by:

- Building on the significance of the Portland aluminium smelter as the one remaining aluminium smelter in the State.
- Supporting Portland's central business district as the primary commercial, community, civic and cultural centre of the Glenelg Shire.
- Improving linkages between the central business district and the Portland foreshore.
- Encouraging re-subdivision of existing rural residential areas within Portland to facilitate better utilisation of infrastructure.
- Retaining Wattle Hill Creek linked to the Fawthrop Lagoon as an open space corridor and buffer between industrial uses and long-term residential uses.

- Encouraging medium density residential development in the central business district.
- Improving pedestrian links between Portland and Lee Breakwater to maximise its features as a major scenic attraction.

District towns

Heywood is located approximately 30 kilometres north of Portland on the Fitzroy River. The town is an important service centre for the surrounding agricultural land and a commuter town of Portland, with a local commercial and industrial base.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Heywood by:

- Encouraging residential growth to the north of the Fitzroy River (in the vicinity of the Princes Highway) and west of Beavis Street.
- Improving the landscape setting and presentation of private property along Henty Highway.
- Consolidating industrial development adjoining the Princes Highway and Catons Flat Road and north of the town on the south east corner of the Princes Highway and Danger Lane.
- Encouraging industrial development to locate within existing industrial areas along the Princes Highway and the railway other than on isolated sites that can meet buffer distance requirements.

Casterton is located along the Glenelg Highway and is the largest settlement in the northern portion of the Shire. The town is an important regional service centre, supporting a range of health, education, recreation, civic and community facilities.

Casterton's built form is characterised by low density, single-storey development supported by a network of wide linear streets. The town features the Stock Selling Ring historic building and former Railway Station heritage precinct. The Henty Street commercial shopping strip comprises one of the most intact heritage streetscapes in the region.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Casterton by:

- Strengthening its role as a key service, freight and logistics location.
- Protecting buildings and streetscapes with heritage value or local significance.
- Encouraging tourism and hospitality opportunities to complement accommodation land uses around McPherson Street.
- Encouraging civic and community uses to co-locate on Jackson Street to the east of the railway.
- Strengthening Jackson and Henty Streets as key pedestrian, cycling and community-oriented spines.
- Encouraging development and intensification of the industrial precinct.
- Encouraging residential growth to locate within the residential corridor between Mitchell Street and the Old Mount Gambier Road to the west of town.
- Encouraging housing diversity close to the town centre.
- Limiting housing growth in flood prone affected areas.
- Encouraging medical and aged care facilities, and smaller housing sizes on accessible land within walking distance to community facilities, particularly within the town centre.
- Improving connectivity between the river, recreation areas, residential areas and the town centre.
- Encouraging visual and landscaped connections between Ess Lagoon, Glenelg River and the Railway Reserve Precinct.
- Supporting development of the Railway Reserve in conjunction with the Australian Kelpie Centre for community use, including open space facilities.

Small towns

Bolwarra is a rural area dominated by 2 to 4 hectare lots. It is located north of Portland and is bisected by the Henty Highway.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Bolwarra by supporting rural living development.

Narrawong is located at the mouth of the Surry River between the slopes of Mount Clay and northern end of Portland Bay.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Narrawong by supporting rural residential development in areas surrounding the town.

Dartmoor is situated on the banks and floodplain of the Glenelg River.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Dartmoor by:

- Encouraging large lot sizes to cater for rural residential development.
- Encouraging community services and activities, such as child care centres, maternal and child health centres and local medical facilities that link with existing services in Portland.
- Supporting the reuse of the Dartmoor sawmill site.

Merino is located on the Portland-Casterton Road that bisects the town.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Merino by:

- Encouraging the consolidation of allotments within and on the periphery of the existing settlement area.
- Encouraging development that complements the heritage values of the town.
- Promoting heritage-based tourism.
- Supporting small-scale agriculture or hobby farming as part of rural residential development.

Tyrendarra is located at the eastern gateway of the Shire and serves as the southern gateway to the World and National Heritage listed Budj Bim Cultural Landscape.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Tyrendarra by facilitating eco-based tourism.

Nelson is located on the mouth of the Glenelg River. The population significantly increases with seasonal visitors in summer and holiday periods.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Nelson by:

- Supporting holiday accommodation as part of the Great South West Walk.
- Supporting the establishment of community facilities for both aged and preschool needs.

Cape Bridgewater is located approximately 20 kilometres west of Portland. The small town attracts tourists to its picturesque coastal setting with the highest coastal cliffs in Victoria, towering sand dunes, wide beaches and the pristine waters of Bridgewater and Discovery Bays.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Cape Bridgewater by:

- Containing growth and development within the defined settlement boundary, with capacity to support modest-scale tourism and accommodation opportunities.
- Encouraging development to respond to the low-scale residential character of the town.
- Encouraging development and subdivision that responds to topography, the foreshore, the fragile coastal environment and views to the sea and landscape formations.
- Encouraging view sharing between developments.

Sandford is located 3.5 kilometres south-east of Casterton on the confluence of the Wannon and Glenelg Rivers.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of **StanfordSandford** by supporting the development of the town for tourist and rural residential development. 

Condah is located on the Hamilton to Portland rail line and is bisected by the Henty Highway.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Condah by encouraging tourism developments close to nearby national assets such as the Lake Condah Indigenous Protected Area and Budj Bim Cultural Landscape.

Digby is located 65 kilometres north of Portland on the Stokes River.

The Shire seeks to facilitate the development of Digby by encouraging the development of rural residential development outside the Township Zone through consolidation of fragmented rural lots on the periphery of the town.

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Environmental and landscape values

Biodiversity

Glenelg has a wealth of natural resources of regional, national and international significance including plant and animal species on land, waterways, wetlands and the sea.

The Shire's biodiversity is located across public land and is generally in good condition. Many reserves in the Shire, often wetlands, are known to have highly significant biodiversity levels.

The Shire seeks to manage biodiversity within the municipality by:

- Protecting and conserving Red Gum woodlands, waterways and wetlands, intertidal areas, lagoons and coastal areas.
- Protecting native vegetation and retaining habitats for native fauna.

Coastal areas

The Shire's coastal areas are major natural, economic and environmental resources that need to be managed to balance development opportunities while protecting the landscape and environment.

The Shire seeks to protect coastal areas by:

- Protecting the natural and cultural values of the coast.
- Managing the use and development of the coast in a sustainable manner.
- Protecting fish nursery habitats for future fishing activities.
- Supporting tourism and recreation in coastal areas.
- Encouraging coastal related development that responds to the landscape setting, character and desired future character directions.
- Maintaining locally significant views that contribute to the character of the coast and coastal hinterland region.

Significant environments and landscapes

The Shire's natural landscapes and their hinterlands are highly valued for their visual, environmental and cultural qualities.

In protecting environmental and landscape values, the Shire supports:

- Protecting the Shire's significant landscapes, waterways and wetlands and Red Gum woodlands.
- Encouraging development that is subordinate to the natural, visual and environmental landscape character and significance.

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Environmental risks and amenity

Bushfire

The most significant township interface to bushfire hazards are in the towns of Nelson, Cape Bridgewater, Narrawong, Bolwarra and Digby, all of which have been listed with an ‘extreme’ rating on the Victorian Fire Risk Register. Other areas close to bushfire hazards include Tyrendarra, Dartmoor and the interface areas of Portland and its surrounds.

The Shire seeks to manage bushfire risk by:

- Discouraging development in areas prone to bushfire risk.
- Supporting planning and development considerations that minimise the impact of fire.

Floodplains

Parts of Portland, Heywood, Narrawong, Casterton and Stanford are at the risk of flooding from rivers. Some areas are also vulnerable to flooding from storm surge and sea level rise. The proper management of floodplains protects the natural environment and properties located in areas subject to inundation.

The Shire seeks to address floodplain issues by applying the precautionary principle approach to assess development in areas prone to flooding, sea level rise and landslip.

Soil degradation

Limestone cliffs, steeper earth slopes and coastal dunes along the main rivers and coast are susceptible to erosion as a result of landslip. A significant problem is the existence of slopes in excess of 20 degrees where further development and vegetation removal would compromise land stability.

There are significant environmental risks with increased dry land salinity, pest plant and animal invasion, soil erosion, stream erosion, coastal dune erosion, induced waterlogging, water quality deterioration and loss of flora and fauna diversity throughout the Shire.

The Shire seeks to address soil degradation by:

- Managing soil degradation arising from contaminated land from industrial and agricultural activities and erosion.
- Ensuring the protection of land susceptible to land slip.

Noise and air quality management

The historical development of Portland has resulted in some industrial and residential areas being located adjacent to each other. As a result, land use conflicts exist throughout Portland’s industrial zones. Although greater care is now taken to ensure there are adequate separation distances between industrial and residential areas, protecting the community from the impacts of noise and air pollution, including dust and odour, is a high priority.

The Shire seeks to address noise and air quality issues by:

- Managing identified separation distances to ensure communities close to established industries and facilities are protected from off-site impacts such as noise, dust and odour.

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Natural resource management

Agriculture

Sustainable land use, land management and the protection of the natural resource asset base are essential to facilitate the continued economic performance of the primary industry sector.

The development of housing that does not relate to or supports agricultural production can conflict with agricultural practices. Proposals to excise dwellings or create lots for dwellings in areas where agriculture is the primary purpose need to minimise these types of conflicts.

The Shire seeks to protect the viability of agricultural land by:

- Supporting the sustainable land use, land management and protection of natural resource assets to build on the continued economic performance of the primary industry sector.
- Protecting large scale rural properties to maximise their capability for agricultural land use.
- Discouraging the development of dwellings, and the excision of existing dwellings, that do not relate to or support agricultural production.
- Ensuring dwellings that are excised, or constructed on an excised lot, are properly sited and designed.
- Minimising the impact of subdivision, use and development of land that will conflict with farming land.

Water

The Shire contains extensive ground water resources in deep and shallow aquifers that are used for stock and domestic supplies.

Council seeks to manage water by:

- Protecting the water quality and potable water supply from the Shire's groundwater sources.
- Protecting the Shire's waterways and wetlands from development.
- Retaining natural drainage corridors with vegetated buffer areas to function as drainage areas and habitat corridors.

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Built environment and heritage

Built environment

The Shire's built environment has been influenced by early settlement, soldier settlement and more recent industrial development. Protecting existing heritage values, and the presentation of the towns from highways and major roads assists in maintaining character.

Council seeks to improve the built environment by:

- Encouraging development at township entrances to be designed and landscaped in a manner that contributes to the appearance and character of the town.
- Supporting development that respects the existing character of towns.

Heritage

The Shire contains natural and cultural heritage which defines its character and contributes to the attraction of the Shire as a desirable place to live, invest and visit. This includes an array of European and Aboriginal heritage features, including some of the State's most important places of cultural and historic significance such as the World Heritage listed Budj Bim Cultural Landscape.

Council seeks to respond to its heritage by protecting places and areas of natural and cultural heritage.

Economic development

Employment and industry

Key industry sectors in the Shire include the Port of Portland, the Portland Aluminium Smelter, renewable energy, timber production and processing, commercial fishing, agribusiness and tourism. The major concentrations of jobs are in manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and fishing, retail, education and training, accommodation and food services.

Industrial development, in particular, is critical to the long-term economic future of the Shire. There is a significant opportunity to reposition Portland's industrial areas to attract new investment and employment. As part of this, the Portland Industrial Land Strategy (2016) (PILS) provides a framework for the future planning of Portland's industrial precincts and environs. The key industrial precincts are: the North Portland Industrial Precinct, the Central Portland Employment Precinct, and the Madeira Packet Employment Precinct.

The **North Portland Industrial Precinct** can support large-scale industries on large allotments. It will encourage industries that have links to the regional economy and cater for industries that require buffer areas to minimise adverse amenity impacts.

The **Central Portland Employment Precinct** provides for light industries to the west of the railway spur and is to provide for a transition to a mix of commercial and residential to the east of the railway spur.

The **Madeira Packet Employment Precinct** provides for light industries and lower-scale commercial uses. The northern area of the precinct is close to the Port and provides an opportunity for existing port-related industries to be retained and future industries to develop. The southern area of the precinct has a number of service industries and lower-scale commercial uses that should be encouraged to remain.

The Shire will promote employment and industrial growth by:

- Supporting use and development that increases employment in the Shire particularly in Glenelg's key employment/industry sectors.
- Supporting Portland's role as a regional centre that provides State significant industry including the Port of Portland, the Portland aluminium smelter and Industrial 2 zoned land.
- Facilitating the future growth, planning and development of Portland's industrial precincts.

Tourism

Tourism plays a significant role in the local economy. The Shire has a range of attractions including recreational fishing, heritage, eco-tourism, beaches, surfing, trails, national parks, and a series of festivals throughout the year. Portland is developing as a tourism destination and is now seen as the western gateway to the Great Ocean Road and the eastern gateway for the Limestone Coast.

Council seeks to facilitate tourism by:

- Supporting the development of tourism based on attractions including natural features, fishing, local produce, cultural and built heritage, eco-tourism, beaches, surfing, trails and national parks.
- Encouraging development of tourist accommodation.
- Maximising opportunities in niche markets, including fishing and boating, bird watching, adventure groups and cruise ship visitors.
- Supporting opportunities for coastal tourism.

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Transport

Integrated transport

Transport links, particularly to and from Portland, provide much of the basis of the Shire's future economic development opportunities.

Council seeks to improve integrated transport by:

- Supporting bicycle and walking paths to encourage an alternative to private motor vehicle use and promote healthy communities.
- Facilitating road infrastructure for development in rural areas to allow access.
- Preserving disused railway corridors as future options for the re-introduction of passenger rail services.

Ports

The Port of Portland is a deep-water bulk-handling port that is of state and national significance. It handles increasing volumes of commodity exports and is a potential future entry point for tourists.

The Port of Portland will continue to expand its operations and will rely upon links to other transport modes.

Development of the port and related infrastructure will be facilitated by:

- Supporting the Port of Portland to be a national and international gateway for exports.
- Supporting access to the port and its linkages to Heywood.
- Encouraging efficient and safe road and rail access.
- Providing effective land use buffers to the Port of Portland.

Airports

Glenelg has airports at Portland and Casterton and a private airfield at Nelson. The Portland Airport is of strategic importance for the Shire because of its potential to facilitate economic growth and tourism.

The Shire seeks to manage and develop airports by:

- Encouraging the growth of airports.
- Protecting flight paths around the airports.

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Infrastructure

Open space

Passive recreation is important for the Shire, including camping, nature-based walking and fishing.

The Shire seeks to improve its open space and recreational opportunities by:

- Supporting the provision of open space and recreation facilities that are able to cater for a wide range of recreational activities.