

GLENELG sustainable settlement strategy

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Preamble: Building Opportunities

Capitalising on opportunity now and in the future

The hallmark of the settlement of this region has been an abundance of opportunity and resources. The Gunditjmara people realised the abundance of the Budj Bim area and established sustainable settlement for thousands of years based on the continual supply and harvesting of eels.

Early European settlers also saw the opportunity to create permanent communities based around the rich fertile agricultural land particularly around the Casterton region and from fishing resources close to the Portland coastline. Sealing, whaling and fishing provided the initial resources to establish permanent settlement, however the rich inland agricultural area around Casterton named the heart of the Australian Felix by Major Mitchell 1836 soon saw opportunities realised for wool production by the Henty Brothers at Merino and Henty around 1837.

Considerably later, around the 1950's, Mr K. S. Anderson in his promotion of the Portland Harbour project, had a vision for Portland and the region. He stated that with the development of a deep water port, new opportunities for export of produce will be realised and considerable economic growth will increase employment opportunities and population.

Over the past 175 years the region has certainly witnessed significant economic change. Wool exports underpinned early economic fortunes and currently sheep still play an important role in contributing to the economy. More recently broad acre cattle and sheep farming has given way in many areas to soft and hardwood plantations exported through the Port of Portland in the form of wood chips or logs. The Glenelg Sustainable Settlement Strategy responds to these changes and provides a roadmap for the strategic planning of Glenelg Shire settlement for the next 25 years.



Portland

Key Strategic Directions:

Climate and agriculture

Agricultural land use will continue to be influenced by climate change. Town planning strategies can assist in managing the inevitable changes to agriculture as the predictions of drier hotter conditions in the north with more extreme storm patterns in the southern areas. Examining the usefulness of the forty hectare minimum subdivision size required by the Glenelg Planning Scheme, will be necessary to address the emerging issue of food security. Areas of the shire may need larger lot sizes to remain productive extensive farming whilst others may require smaller lots to reflect the needs for more intensive horticultural activity.

Industrial activities

Fertiliser production and mineral sand exports also contribute to employment and the overall economy. Significantly, heavy industrial activity has assisted in the diversification of the Shire's recent economy with the development of Alcoa aluminium smelter and smaller industries such as

Keppel Prince manufacturing components for wind energy.

Emerging new renewable energy industries such as wind, wave, geothermal and solar combined with the continuation of the digital information era will provide important opportunities for the Shire.

Implications for growth

These industrial and agricultural changes have had major impacts on the Shire's pattern of settlement affecting:

- residential amenity, as residential areas have encroached around old industrial developments particularly in Portland and Casterton where improved management of interfaces is required;
- the changes in the role of smaller settlements throughout the shire, as a result of structural changes in the timber industry, creates the opportunity for a greater focus on recreation and tourism;
- improved environmental management requirements that will increase the quality of nearby settlements and towns.

Town planning strategies developed with the community will be useful in maximising the benefits of these changes and to capitalise on the wealth of opportunities on offer. By example, the Shire's small towns provide opportunities to take advantage of their unique and attractive locations and rapidly improving telecommunications.

These settlements offer lifestyle choice in terms of allotment size and pricing that doesn't provide the stress, commuter hassles and high costs of living in a large city. Strategies will provide variety in residential living opportunities in small settlements that are located within proximity to larger, well serviced towns with an increased range of entertainment, medical and other social services.



Casterton Racecourse

Where does Glenelg want to be in 2036?

A more distinctive and prosperous community

The key towns and settlements of Glenelg Shire are quite unique, as result of their cultural history and the topography of this region they are destined to grow in size and offer greater opportunity and quality of life for residents. This growth is to occur without the loss of high quality agricultural land, and with the maintenance of a range of accommodation and lifestyle options within and at the periphery of the towns. Certainly the increased quality of design anticipated in carefully targeted infill areas will become more appealing to older age residents seeking to “retire into the town.” Such developments, with accompanying high quality landscaped settings and attractive parkland, will also offer alternative living options for smaller families and the increasing number of sole occupants. Within the smaller settlements, there will also be a trend towards closely supported residential communities, that are reminiscent of their original pioneer traditions. These communities will be driven by the collective energy of the residents themselves, be resilient and independent.

Continuing to build on the success of the agricultural and industrial sectors

The employment base for the Shire will continue to be focused on the regional agricultural and industrial sectors. In 2036 there will be further employment in these areas, as well as additional areas of value-adding, such as grain storage and distribution. Timber production will continue to act as a stimulus to long term growth within the forestry industry. The expansion of these enterprises will not occur at the expense of nearby residential communities, or the fragile environments in which they are sometimes located. Operators of key industries will recognize the role which they play in providing a safe and attractive environment that is appealing to residents and visitors to the region.

A broader economic base, to safeguard against changes in the industrial sector

Portland’s history as an industrial port will change over coming decades, to reflect a broader range of economic activities. While the working port will continue to expand its operation, the City of Portland will be recognised for a far wider range of activities

that build from its emerging role as a tourist destination, accessed by road, sea and air. This will also be accompanied by growth within the educational and health industries. As the population of Portland, Casterton and Heywood grows, there will be further demand for specialist medical services, and the potential for education related research and development. Casterton’s role as an important agricultural service centre is also recognised.

Increased sustainability within towns and settlements

Each of the main towns of Portland, Heywood and Casterton and the smaller settlements are discrete and identifiable centres. They have capability for more infill development and redevelopment that can create a compact and convenient layout, that exceed the expectations of many contemporary “sustainable communities”. This will be achieved by utilising existing infrastructure and services, and the established community networks. Ongoing enhancement of the business and community areas with an emphasis on the assets which exist, and improved connections with natural local amenities such as the foreshore and the

Glenelg River are essential to this outcome. Like the great cities and towns of the world, those that celebrate their relationship with their harbourside locations achieve even greater distinction. Heywood and Casterton are extremely well provided with commercial and community facilities to support further growth.

Improved access within and between settlements (Road, rail, air and sea)

The success of the regional airlines in providing a service to Melbourne and Adelaide, has supported the business and tourism development of the Glenelg Shire. This will continue to expand, and will support other activities such as car hire, and tour group operators. Following 2013, the visits by cruise ships will supplement the business activities within Portland, and foster new tourist related enterprises. Access within Glenelg Shire between the main towns and smaller settlements will also be improved by ongoing attention to the improvement of road and pedestrian links. Casterton airfield also provides for emergency access during major bushfires or flood events.

To be more attractive as a tourist destination – world class tourist experiences

Whale watching and other forms of nature-based tourism will provide tourist experiences that are of interest to international travelers. This is an activity which can be combined with the Great South West Walk, and the recreation activities along the Glenelg River, Fitzroy River, and within the Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape and National Parks. These locations have extremely attractive landscapes, rivers and creeks in pristine condition and significant flora and fauna that are accessible to the towns and



Regional airlines



Wind tower construction



Athena Cruise Ship to visit Portland in 2013

settlements of Glenelg. They also build on the demonstrated growth of the attractions along the Great Ocean Road, and its established international appeal.

A growing and regenerating population

Providing an increased range of employment opportunities, improved access to other regional towns with similar capabilities, and by reaching a threshold level of population at which additional facilities and services are supportable, there will be a widening of the demographic composition of the towns and settlements within Glenelg. This will address the overall maturing and balance



Casterton Kelpie and Sheep artwork

of the population nationally and particularly within rural and regional Victoria. Portland and Casterton, for example are extremely well positioned due to the availability of facilities and services for aged persons seeking to retire in high quality rural cities and towns.

Continued food production

The agricultural capability of the Shire will continue to be a primary source of economic development, and essential to the ongoing growth of Portland, Heywood and Casterton and the smaller settlements of the Shire. Planning strategies will continue to protect



Cattle at Lawsons Lane, Digby

the capability of areas of high quality agricultural land, and minimize any potential land use conflicts with other forms of land use. The tourism associated opportunities that build from the success of agricultural production are also to be promoted.



Heywood signpost advertising - Wood, Wine and Rose Festival

How can good planning assist in achieving this?

The Planning Challenges

The Shire is committed to providing high quality urban environments by making our settlements more attractive, vibrant, liveable and resilient.

Protection of the agricultural industry

A key element of this strategy is the need to maximise the protection and value of high quality agricultural land. Crucial issues include accommodating people within the main township areas where there is reticulated infrastructure such as water, sewerage and stormwater drainage and to minimise conflict with surrounding rural areas that need to be protected for their agricultural potential or environmental and landscape values.

Managing demographic change

Because of the maturing of the Shire's population, which is consistent with the national economy, planning needs to respond and prepare for the challenges of an ageing population and simultaneously strive for an alternative future. The former requires the continued development of

facilities for the aged and improving access to health, community and other services. These will continue to be priorities, and build on the important assets such as the aged care facilities in Portland and Casterton. An alternative future however involves attracting more tourism and new industries and facilitating access to diverse educational, employment, residential, cultural and recreational opportunities to help stimulate economic and population growth. It also involves developing better connectivity within and between settlements to help improve liveability, which are vital to attracting younger residents to help offset the shire's rapidly ageing population.

Providing lifestyle diversity

Rural living opportunities also need to be provided on the periphery of towns to help meet the demand for alternative residential lifestyle choices and to encourage regional growth. This is particularly relevant to Portland, Casterton & Heywood.

Embracing boldness and innovation by Council, industry and the community generally is necessary to help progress the development of new technologies and

skill sets that are required to meet the challenges and increasing costs associated with a water and energy constrained future. Aspiring to be at the forefront of striving for zero carbon emissions could also help to generate knowledge, skills, services and products that could help to broaden the shire's economic base in an increasingly competitive environment.



Upwelling Festival, Portland

Settlement Key Directions

For non- sewered townships, residential development must have regard to the capability of the land to sustain wastewater systems without degrading the environment, especially water tables. Whilst urban consolidation needs to be encouraged to help maximise the use of existing infrastructure, promote energy efficiency and to facilitate access to services, this alone will not act as a driver of growth. The shire's settlements will need to compete with other municipalities and regions for tourism, additional residents and new investment

in circumstances where the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan encourages solutions to be found to help re-invigorate growth within smaller settlements.

There are instances where patterns of tenure consist of multiple allotments that are more indicative of lifestyle choices and the prevailing open character of townships rather than an availability of vacant lots. A small horse paddock within a Township Zone could be seen more realistically as a yard associated with a dwelling on an adjoining lot rather than a potential additional urban dwelling lot; a point that is emphasised by

local progress associations such as the one in Dartmoor.

This pattern needs to be taken into account to help determine if consolidation and infill development can be realistically pursued or if alternatives need to be promoted as a means of stimulating growth.



Cape Bridgewater Township

What resources will be needed?

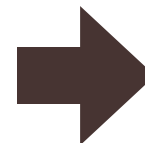
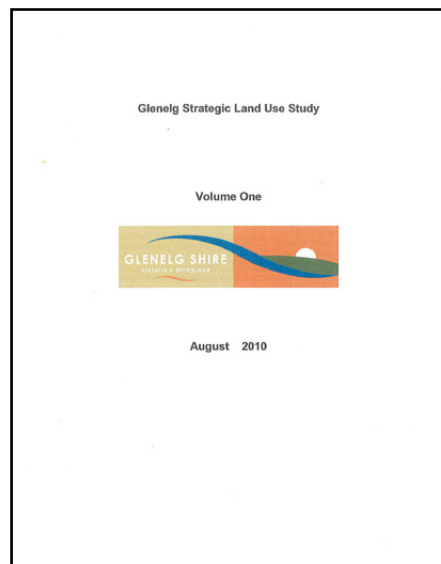
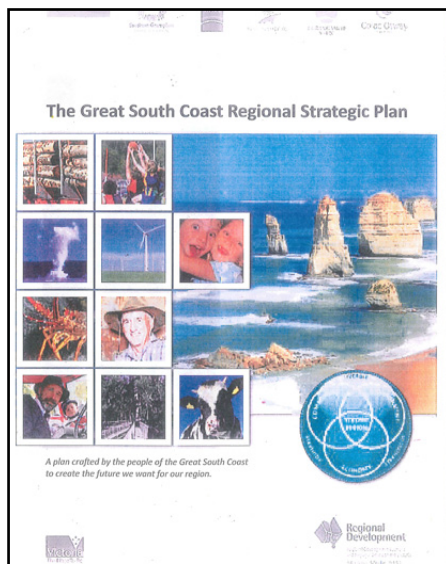
The strategic plan requires a highly integrated planning approach to meet the economic and community development needs of Glenelg. In the forecast planning period to 2036 there is also an imperative to use resources in a highly sustainable way. To achieve a sustainable future for Glenelg, there is a need to balance the requirements for growth of residential and employment land with the production of agricultural areas and protection of environmental resources. There is also a need to maximize the utility of available serviced land, such as “brownfields” sites that are to be

redeveloped for other uses. The Glenelg Sustainable Settlement Strategy is based on a comprehensive assessment of the current and projected population within the Shire, its available employment land, existing and planned infrastructure, and the effect of natural and environmental constraints, such as inundation and flooding and projected sea level change.

There have also been a wide range of investigations completed by Council, that have informed the Strategy, and the overall policies and strategic initiative and

these are provided in the appendix to this report. Glenelg Shire Council commenced a strategic planning program in 2006 that lead to the completion of a number of projects, including:

- Glenelg Strategic Futures Plan 2009 (GSFP);
- The Glenelg Strategic Land Use Study 2010;
- Glenelg Sustainable Settlement Strategy (GSSS)



The Five Main Themes Of The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan

The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan 2010 (GSCRSP) was also a key context setting document for this work and

the five main strategic themes of this Plan, important in providing continuity for regional and local strategies are as follows:

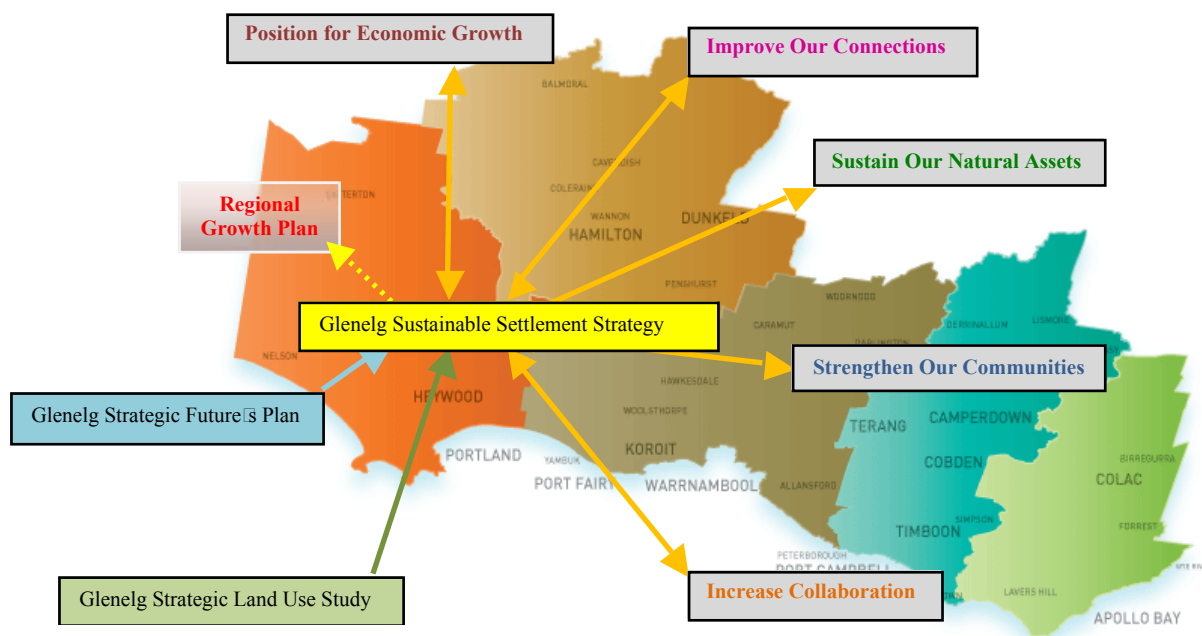


Source: The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan (2010) & Glenelg Shire Council (arrangement).

The overall relationship between the background studies completed by the Council and the directions of the Great South Coast Regional Plan are illustrated in the diagram which follows:

A series of actions have been mutually agreed by the six municipalities, which include the City of Warrnambool and the Shires of Glenelg, Southern Grampians, Moyne, Corangamite and Colac-Otway, for each strategic theme. These agreed actions that are relevant to settlements include

making them more liveable in order to attract more residents, especially younger people to counteract the general ageing of the region's and shire's workforce. This is vital to the long term viability of settlements. Improving liveability involves actions that are geared to achieving the following:



- providing an adequate supply of land for residential, recreational, educational, commercial and industrial uses that caters for a variety of needs and lifestyles over the longer term (e.g. twenty years);
- improving access to employment, services and social networks, which includes developing or encouraging physical linkages and public transport connections within and between settlements;
- promoting healthy lifestyles and community well-being by inviting engagement with the public realm, for example by providing open spaces and improving and/or developing pedestrian and cycling links between places of living, work, learning and recreation;

Source: The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan (2010) & Glenelg Shire Council (flow chart).



Tall Ship, Portland Harbour

- encouraging the use of pedestrian and cycling links and the places they connect by making them safe and inviting;
- improving the attractiveness of the public realm by applying place-making principles;
- arranging land uses in a manner that makes efficient use of infrastructure, for example by encouraging higher residential densities in central Portland without unnecessarily using up finite centrally located commercial land;
- avoiding land use conflicts, for example by applying buffers between industrial land and sensitive uses;
- setting directions for urban growth in a manner that does not unnecessarily encroach into the Shire's most productive agricultural land; and
- preserving the Shire's built heritage and natural assets that can be promoted to attract more visitors and residents, which would help to broaden the shire's economic base, especially in declining townships.

Each of the above aims has land use implications that need to be recognised and reflected in the controls under the planning scheme. The strategies for ensuring that this occurs are effectively expressed in the policies and structure plans for each of the Shire's main settlements, which include Portland, Heywood, Casterton, Sandford, Nelson, Dartmoor, Condah, Digby, Merino, Cape Bridgewater, Narrawong, and Tyrendarra.

Municipal Strategic Framework Map



The following map on page 16 provides an outline of the Glenelg Shires key assets both natural and economic including:

- Heritage
- Renewable Energy
- Regional tourism recreational link
- Coastal Landscapes
- Rail and road networks
- Settlement pattern and Natural Resources.

RURAL LIVING

Use the Rural Living Zone in the townships of Nelson, Dartmoor, Digby and Merino to provide diversity in lifestyle choices

GAS PIPELINE

Promote the route & encourage industry to consider utilising the natural gas opportunity within the shire

AGRICULTURE

Protect large scale rural properties to maximise their capability for agricultural land use as a key economic activity within the region

HERITAGE

Promote heritage based tourism to broaden the Shire's economic base and protect it's heritage assets (e.g. Warrook Station)

Proposed Land Allotment Size

Minimum 40 HA

Minimum 100 HA



WATER RESOURCES

Glenelg and Wannon Rivers to continue to be protected and subject of environmental management

TIMBER

Re-establish railway line to service timber freight movement

TIMBER FREIGHT

Important timber freight connector route between Myamynh woodchip mill.

WIND FARMS

Established wind farms to be recognised as important renewable energy source.

INDUSTRY

Direct large scale industries into designated corridor along key road/rail route

GREAT SOUTH WEST WALK

Promote important regional tourism recreational link

LANDSCAPE

Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape to be protected and together with local Aboriginal culture to be sensitively promoted

COASTAL LANDSCAPES

Promote and protect Significant Coastal Landscapes (Cape Bridgewater, Cape Nelson, Discovery Bay)

RAIL SERVICES

Re-establish passenger rail services from Portland to Warrambool to support settlement liveability, tourism and climatic change strategies

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

Encourage and promote cruise ships to visit Portland, and promote related landside tourism experiences

ECO TOURISM

Provide tourism infrastructure to support Whale Watch tourism from Portland Harbour



FISHING INDUSTRY

Provide recreational and commercial fishing infrastructure

NATIONAL PARK

Mt Richmond National Park to be recognised as an important environmental and tourism asset

LEGEND

City of Portland

Towns of Casterton and Heywood

Settlements

Gas Line



GLENELG SHIRE

Municipal Strategic Framework Map

