



Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan



APRIL 2021

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Council acknowledges the Eastern Maar Nation as the original custodians of the lands of this general area. Council also acknowledges the descendants of the ancestors of Aboriginal nations within the lands forming the Great South Coast and particularly the elders of the indigenous communities within both Warrnambool and this region.

Warrnambool City Council is honoured to have an important custodian role in partnership with Eastern Maar Citizens in looking after Country. Warrnambool City Council is proud of our Maar heritage and story. We acknowledge the Maar people and celebrate their rich, diverse and ongoing contribution to us all.

Thank you to all community members who provided feedback through the community survey. A number of groups and individuals have contributed to the information contained in this document, including staff of Warrnambool City Council, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Eastern Maar, Parks Victoria and various community organisations.

ACRONYMS

BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay
CoM	Committee of Management
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
DELWP	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning
ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay
EVC	Ecological Vegetation Class
FO	Floodway Overlay
FZ	Farming Zone
PCRZ	Public Conservation and Resource Zone
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
SCO	Specific Controls Overlay
SLO	Significant Landscape Overlay
WCC	Warrnambool City Council
WCMP	Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wild Coast Precinct is a unique place of beauty. The Precinct is culturally significant and ecologically interesting and it forms part of a broader area known as the Belfast Coastal Reserve.

This area has been home to the Traditional Owners for thousands of years and their connection to Country remains unbroken. This connection can be seen across the landscape in the form of shell middens and stone artefacts. There are also important ceremonial places throughout the Precinct. Local Dreaming stories reference this strong connection to Country by the Eastern Maar Peoples.

The Precinct is home to a rich array of flora and fauna and provides important habitat for a number of rare and threatened species with regional, State and international significance. The Precinct provides habitat for the vulnerable Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*) and is home to significant vegetation, including Coast Ballart (*Exocarpus syrticola*), which is of State significance.

The Precinct also provides a range of recreational activities for local Warrnambool residents and visitors, including walking, cycling, fishing, horse riding, surfing, photography and conservation activities such as bird and wildlife watching. The Precinct is also a special and quiet place of contemplation for many.

In future, significant changes are likely to place additional pressure on Warrnambool's coastline, including the Wild Coast. These pressures include growth in residential population as new growth areas are developed, increased tourism to Warrnambool as the Victorian population increases and more people travel to the region and climate change. The impacts of climate change are expected to bring a warmer year-round climate, more frequent storm surges with increased wave height as well as sea level rises. These forecast changes will cause significant impact on the coastline, including its fragile dune system, and it is important that careful planning occurs now to help identify, protect and enhance the existing environmental and cultural heritage values of the coast from the potentially damaging impacts of visitors and climate change. It is important that visitors and residents can enjoy and contribute to the protection of this special place.

This Master Plan expands on previous studies which have identified the need to protect the cultural and environmental values of the Precinct and ensure recreation, tourism and land uses are carried out in a respectful manner to prevent damage.

1.1 THE STUDY AREA

The Wild Coast Precinct is located at the western edge of Warrnambool. The Precinct stretches approximately 3 kilometres in length along the coast and is approximately 230 hectares in area. The Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan applies to the Crown Land areas known as Levys Point Coastal Reserve and part of Thunder Point Coastal Reserve. The Precinct extends from the western edge of the Warrnambool City Council boundary, near the Spookys Beach access track, to the western edge of the Warrnambool Golf Club.

The Precinct is within 3 kilometres of Warrnambool's central business district (CBD). The Levys Point Car Park is approximately 4 kilometres walking distance from Warrnambool's CBD. The Precinct is accessible by vehicle from Swinton Street. The Port Fairy - Warrnambool Rail Trail provides convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists. The Precinct is also accessible to pedestrians from Shelly Beach, Levys Beach and Spookys Beach.

1.2 THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF A MASTER PLAN

Master Plans are often prepared to guide future development of an area. In this instance, one of the key drivers is protection and enhancement of the significant biodiversity, landscape features and cultural heritage of the Wild Coast. Therefore, this Master Plan recommends against any intrusive development and instead provides suggestions for the future protection of the Wild Coast Precinct, including revegetation works and minor infrastructure.

The principles, objectives and recommendations of the Master Plan are based on findings from site visits and site analysis, findings of previous studies and plans and insights and suggestions from the community and stakeholders.

The implementation of the Master Plan will help to ensure beneficial long-term ecological and cultural outcomes can be achieved, whilst retaining the Precinct's role as a recreation destination. The Plan will serve as a guide for Warrnambool City Council, the Department of Land Water and Planning, as well as other organisations, corporations and volunteers who have input or are involved in its management, including Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, who are also the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for this area.

The recommendations of the Master Plan are intended to provide guidance for the Precinct over a 13 year timeframe, which coincides with the anticipated completion of the Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan which is a 15-year plan that was prepared in 2018.

1.3 MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW

The vision for the Wild Coast Precinct is to create a space that conserves and protects its environmental and cultural values, increases its biodiversity, references the important connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples and helps to keep the area as a recreation and tourism destination for residents and visitors.

The principles, objectives and recommendations of the Master Plan are based on findings from site visits and site analysis, findings of previous studies and plans and insights and suggestions from the community and stakeholders.

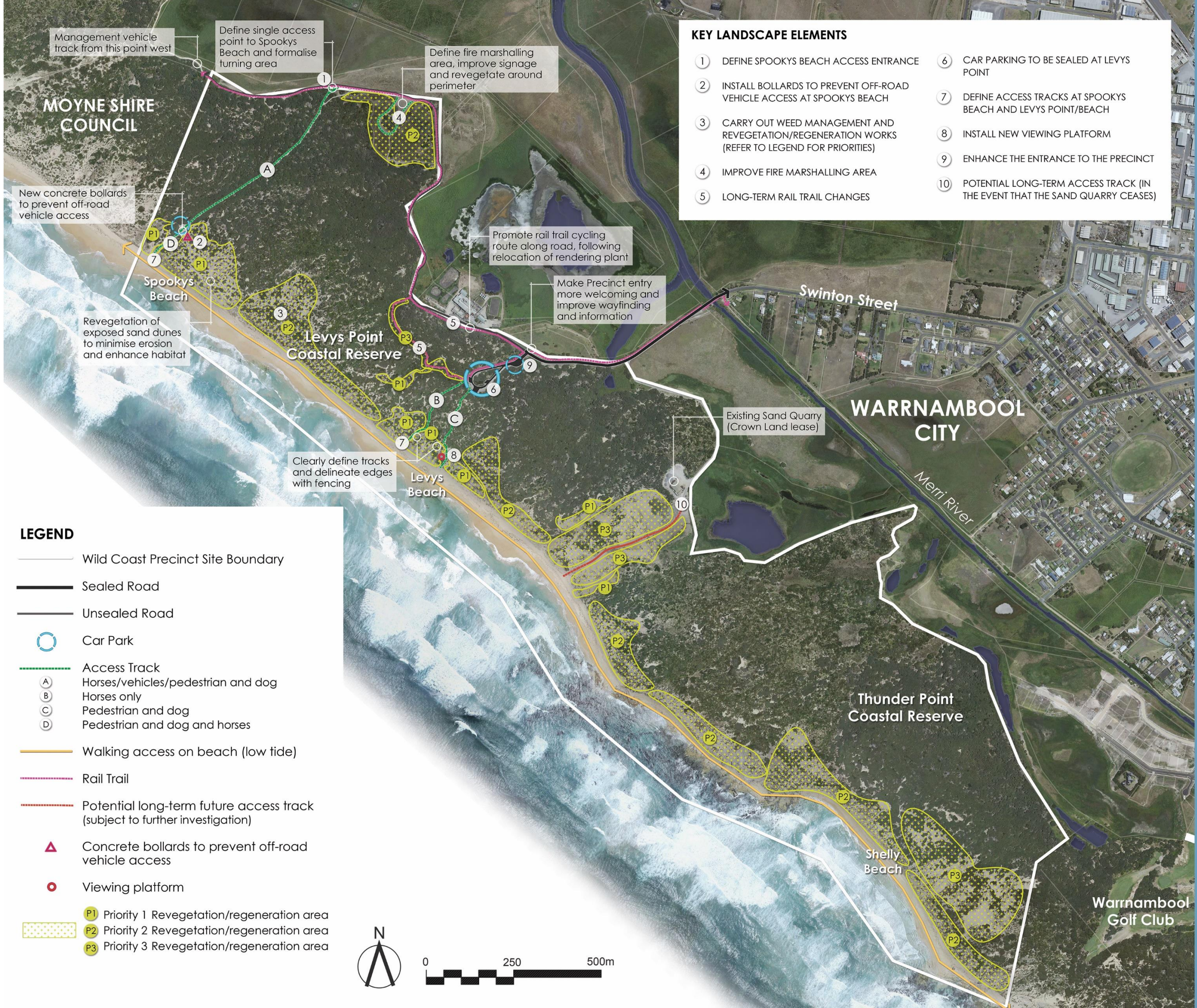
1.4 PLACE PRINCIPLES

- A. *Celebrate and respect culture and connection to Country*
- B. *Embrace and conserve nature*
- C. *Enrich biodiversity values*
- D. *Enjoy and promote recreation*
- E. *Create a unique visitor experience*
- F. *Improve safety for visitors*
- G. *Maintain the 'sense of place' with minimal development*

1.5 OBJECTIVES

- OBJECTIVE 1:** *Acknowledge and respect cultural heritage and connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples. Conserve and protect these values through careful landscaping measures. (Principles A, E and G)*
- OBJECTIVE 2:** *Enhance and restore native habitat for biodiversity, through revegetation, weed reduction measures and improved protection of habitat. (Principles B, C and G)*
- OBJECTIVE 3:** *Ensure new structures, built works, landscaping and signage are designed and constructed in a sensitive way that is respectful to cultural heritage and environmental values, including habitat and native vegetation. (Principles A, B, E and G)*
- OBJECTIVE 4:** *Recognise the role of the Precinct in providing for recreation opportunities, including walking, bird and nature observation, cycling, horse riding, fishing and surfing. (Principle D)*
- OBJECTIVE 5:** *Respect nature, acknowledging the risks associated with flood function, bushfire, climate change, sand shifts and dune erosion. Engage climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. (All Principles)*
- OBJECTIVE 6:** *Improve the safety of visitors, particularly walkers and cyclists. (Principle F)*
- OBJECTIVE 7:** *Enhance visitor's experience of the Precinct, through infrastructure improvements and improved wayfinding and information signage. (Principles E and F)*
- OBJECTIVE 8:** *Clearly define authorised access trails and tracks and formalise car parking to help prevent visitors from going off-track and causing damage to vegetation, bird and wildlife habitat, sand dunes and cultural heritage sites. (Principles A, B, C and G)*
- OBJECTIVE 9:** *Recognise the role of cultural heritage and the natural environment as a driver of tourism and encourage visitation to the Precinct in the form of sustainable tourism. (Principles A, B and E)*
- OBJECTIVE 10:** *Provide opportunities for education and interpretation. Share information with visitors about the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and connection of the Eastern Maar Peoples to this area and the significant environmental values of the Precinct. (Principles A and E)*
- OBJECTIVE 11:** *Encourage and enforce rules and regulations, and discourage the use of the Precinct as a destination for off-road vehicles and motorbikes. (Principles A, B and F)*
- OBJECTIVE 12:** *Work in collaboration and support partnerships with local groups and individuals, volunteers, government organisations and Eastern Maar Peoples to see the plan implemented. (All Principles)*

Key recommendations to achieve the objectives are detailed at Section 7.



2.INTRODUCTION

The Wild Coast Precinct is a unique place of beauty. The Precinct is culturally significant and ecologically interesting and it forms part of a broader area known as the Belfast Coastal Reserve.

This area has been home to the Traditional Owners for thousands of years and their connection to Country remains unbroken. This connection can be seen across the landscape in the form of middens and stone artefacts. There are also important ceremonial places throughout the Precinct. Local Dreaming stories reference this strong connection to Country by the Eastern Maar Peoples.

The Precinct is home to a rich array of flora and fauna and provides important habitat for a number of rare and threatened species with regional, State and international significance. The Precinct provides habitat for the vulnerable Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*) and is home to significant vegetation, including Coast Ballart (*Exocarpus syrticola*), which is of State significance.

The Precinct also provides a range of recreational activities for local Warrnambool residents and visitors, including walking, cycling, fishing, horse riding, surfing, photography and conservation activities such as bird and wildlife watching. The Precinct is also a special and quiet place of contemplation for many people.

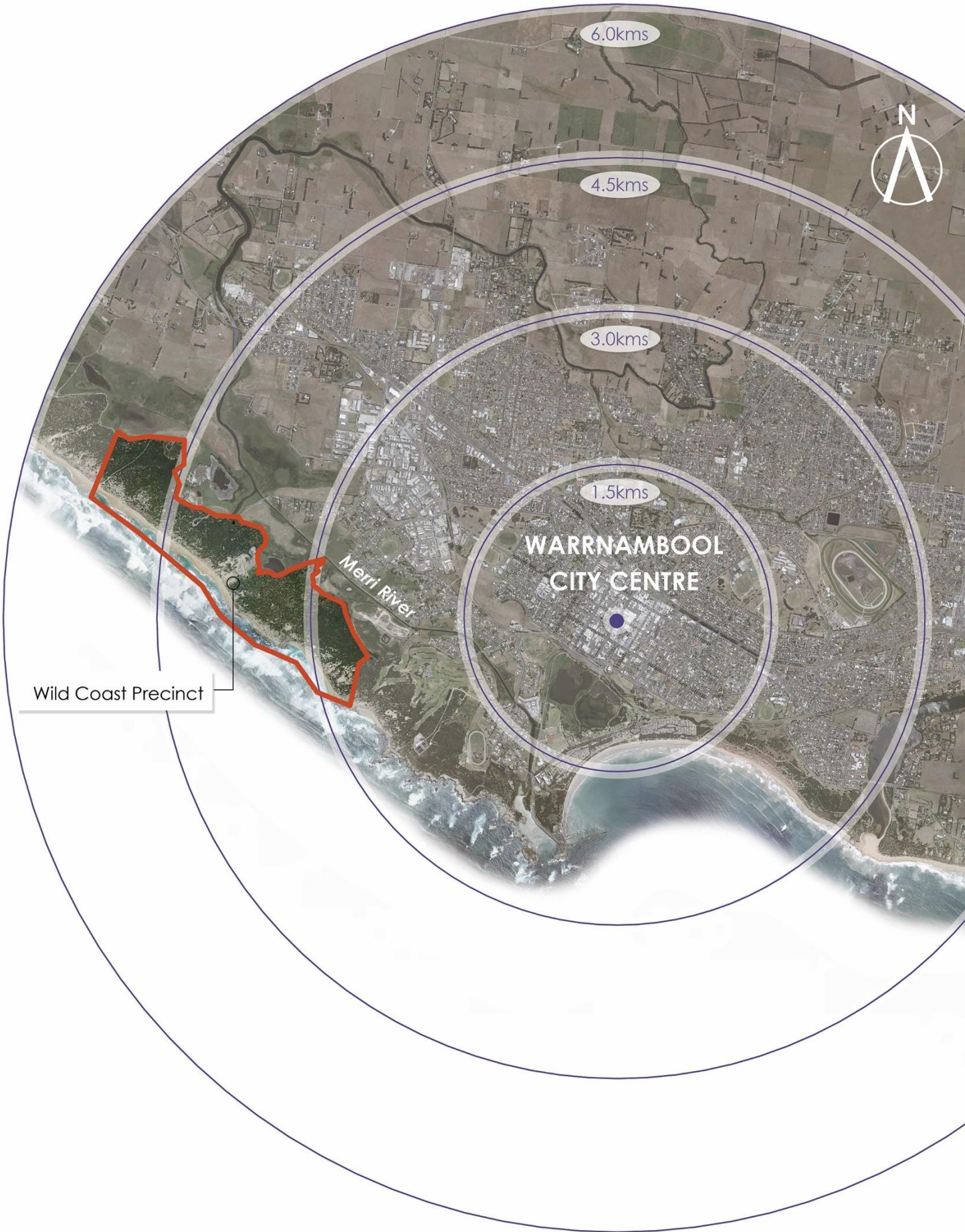
In future, significant changes are likely to place additional pressure on Warrnambool's coastline, including the Wild Coast. These pressures include growth in residential population as new growth areas are developed, increased tourism to Warrnambool as the Victorian population increases and more people travel to the region and climate change. The impacts of climate change are expected to bring a warmer year-round climate, more frequent storm surges with increased wave height as well as sea level rises. These forecast changes will cause significant impact on the coastline, including its fragile dune system, and it is important that careful planning occurs now to help identify, protect and enhance the existing environmental and cultural heritage values of the coast from the potentially damaging impacts of visitors and climate change. It is important that visitors and residents can enjoy and contribute to the protection of this special place.

This Master Plan expands on previous studies which have identified the need to protect the cultural and environmental values of the Precinct and ensure recreation, tourism and land uses are carried out in a respectful manner to prevent damaging this special place.

2.1 THE STUDY AREA

The Wild Coast Precinct is located at the western edge of Warrnambool. The Precinct stretches approximately 3 kilometres in length along the coast and is approximately 230 hectares in area. The Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan applies to the Crown Land areas known as Levys Point Coastal Reserve and part of Thunder Point Coastal Reserve. The Precinct extends from the western edge of the Warrnambool City Council boundary, near the Spookys Beach access track, to the western edge of the Warrnambool Golf Club. Please refer to Site Locality Plan (Map 1) and The Study Area (Map 2).

The Precinct is within 3 kilometres of Warrnambool's central business district (CBD). The Levys Point Car Park is approximately 4 kilometres walking distance from Warrnambool's CBD. The Precinct is accessible by vehicle from Swinton Street. The Port Fairy - Warrnambool Rail Trail provides convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists. The Precinct is also accessible to pedestrians from Shelly Beach, Levys Beach and Spookys Beach.



Map 1: Site Locality Plan



MAP 2: THE STUDY AREA

2.2 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Warrnambool City Council is the Committee of Management (CoM), established under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, who are responsible for managing most of the Wild Coast stretch of coastline. There are some pockets of land within the Precinct near the golf course which are managed by Department Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). There are opportunities for local groups, organisations and Traditional Owners to become more involved in the management of the Precinct in the future.

2.3 THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF A MASTER PLAN

Master Plans are often prepared to guide future development of an area. In this instance, one of the key drivers is protection and enhancement of the significant biodiversity, landscape features and cultural heritage of the Wild Coast. Therefore, this Master Plan recommends against any intrusive development and instead provides suggestions for the future protection of the Wild Coast Precinct, including revegetation works and minor infrastructure.

The principles, objectives and recommendations of the Master Plan are based on findings from site visits and site analysis, findings of previous studies and plans and insights and suggestions from the community and stakeholders.

The implementation of the Master Plan will help to ensure beneficial long-term ecological and cultural outcomes can be achieved, whilst retaining the Precinct's role as a recreation destination. The Plan will serve as a guide for Warrnambool City Council, the Department of Land Water and Planning, as well as other organisations, corporations and volunteers who have input or are involved in its management, including Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, who are also the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for this area.

The recommendations of the Master Plan are intended to provide guidance for the Precinct over a 13 year timeframe, which coincides with the anticipated completion of the Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan which is a 15-year plan that was prepared in 2018.

2.4 PROJECT APPROACH

The Landscape Master Plan has been developed with consideration of the objectives and recommendations of a number of adopted plans and strategies, including the *Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan 2018* and the *Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan 2013*. The Master Plan recommendations also respond to the findings of site visits and the information gathered from the community, local organisations and other stakeholders during Round 1 consultation in June/July 2020.

The Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan Background Report, details how these relevant plans and policies relate to future planning for the Precinct. Section 3 also provides a summary of the background and strategic framework which inform this Master Plan.

Council sought community feedback during consultation on the Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan in June/July 2020. The survey asked residents how they currently use the Precinct, what they value in the Precinct, what concerns they have about the Precinct and matters they would like to see addressed in the Landscape Master Plan. Feedback was sought on the Draft Plan in March 2021. The Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan Consultation Summary Report provides a summary of the feedback received during Round 1 and 2 consultation. A brief summary of the consultation findings are also provided at Section 4.

The project team conducted site visits in June and July 2020. An overview of the site analysis from these visits, and findings from previous studies, is provided at Section 5.

Figure 1 shows the stages in the development of the Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan.



3.BACKGROUND

3.2 STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Wild Coast Precinct is recognised as having significant cultural heritage and environmental values. These values are acknowledged by Aboriginal Victoria, the State Government of Victoria and Warrnambool City Council, and are reflected in regulations and planning policy.

CULTURAL HERITAGE SENSITIVITY

Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity are defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018* and relate to landforms and soil types where Aboriginal places are more likely to be located. The cultural sensitivity areas are identified on maps available from the Aboriginal Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System (ACHRIS). The entire Precinct is defined as an area of cultural heritage sensitivity. There are also sites of cultural heritage which have been mapped within the Precinct. (AV, 2020)

In a planning context, any land use and development activities likely to cause harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage must have a management plan prepared and approved before the development or activity can be carried out (AV, 2020).

PLANNING ZONES AND OVERLAYS

The Precinct is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) with farming zone at the edges. The Precinct is affected by the following overlays (as shown on Maps 3-8):

- 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 – Coastal Environs
- 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay – Schedule 1 – Coastal Hinterland Landscape Area
- 44.03 Floodway Overlay
- 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay
- 45.12 Specific Controls Overlay Schedule 1 – Racehorse Training on Levys Beach, December 2018

The Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan is informed by these existing planning zones and overlays and the various approved policies, strategies and plans that are relevant to coastal planning and specifically the Wild Coast Precinct.

SPECIFIC CONTROLS OVERLAY – HORSE TRAINING

The Minister for Planning amended the Warrnambool Planning Scheme in December 2018, which introduced specific controls and an incorporated document to provide for the use of part of the Belfast Coastal Reserve for horse training.

At this point in time, the commencement of horse training has not occurred. However, this Landscape Plan endeavours to provide guidance and direction on how to mitigate potential detrimental impacts on the landscape from various uses, including, but not limited to horse training and four wheel driving.

It is recognised that there is significant concern from the community in relation to the impact that horse training can potentially have on erosion, flora and fauna habitat, cultural heritage and amenity. However, the scope of this plan is unable to change the planning controls.

LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANS

Two of the most relevant strategic plans relating to the Wild Coast Precinct are the Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan (WCMP) (WCC, 2013) and the Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan (Parks Victoria 2018). These plans identified key values for the Wild Coast Precinct, including protection of cultural values and conservation of native flora and fauna, as well as management issues such as illegal activities and competing and conflicting uses.

The vision for the WCMP is:

'An environment where the natural and cultural values of Warrnambool's unique coastline are protected and enhanced and opportunities to access and enjoy the coastline are achieved in a sustainable way'.

The community feedback received in Round 1 of the Community Consultation for the Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan reiterated key values and the community concerns and interests for this Precinct, as previously detailed in these two strategic documents.

The Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan Background Report at provides a summary of the relevant zones, overlays, policies and strategic plans that have a direct impact on the Wild Coast Precinct. Figure 2 provides a summary of the approved plans and policy relevant to the landscape master planning for the area. Maps 3-8 show the zone and overlays applying to the Precinct.

Figure 2: Plans and policies applicable to the Wild Coast

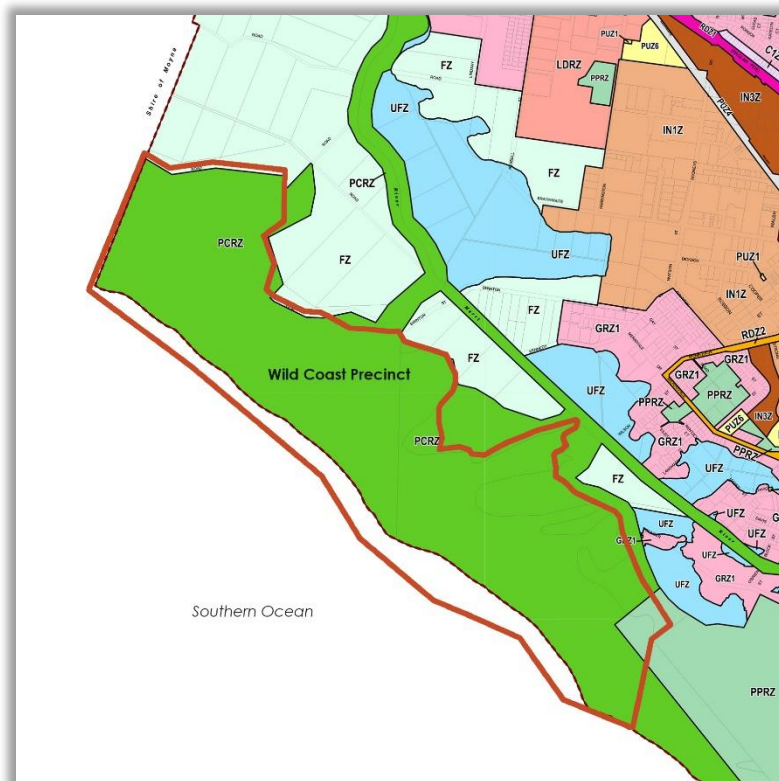
VICTORIAN STATE PLANS AND POLICY

- *State Planning Policy, Warrnambool Planning Scheme*
- *Marine and Coastal Policy, Victorian State Government 2020*
- *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014*
- *Victoria's Coast and Marine Environments Under Projected Climate Change: Impacts, research and priorities (Victoria State Government 2018)*
- *Interim Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast, 2019*
- *Protecting Victoria's Environment-Biodiversity 2037*

LOCAL PLANS AND POLICY

- *Local Planning Policy, Warrnambool Planning Scheme*
- *Warrnambool City Council Plan 2017-2021*
- *Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan, Warrnambool City Council 2013*
- *Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan, Parks Victoria 2018*
- *Warrnambool Coast Vegetation Management Plan 2012, Biosis Research Pty Ltd.*
- *Warrnambool 2040, Community Plan*
- *Green Warrnambool, Warrnambool City Council 2018*
- *Warrnambool Open Space Strategy, Warrnambool City Council 2014*

Map 3: Zoning



Map 4: Environmental Significance Overlay



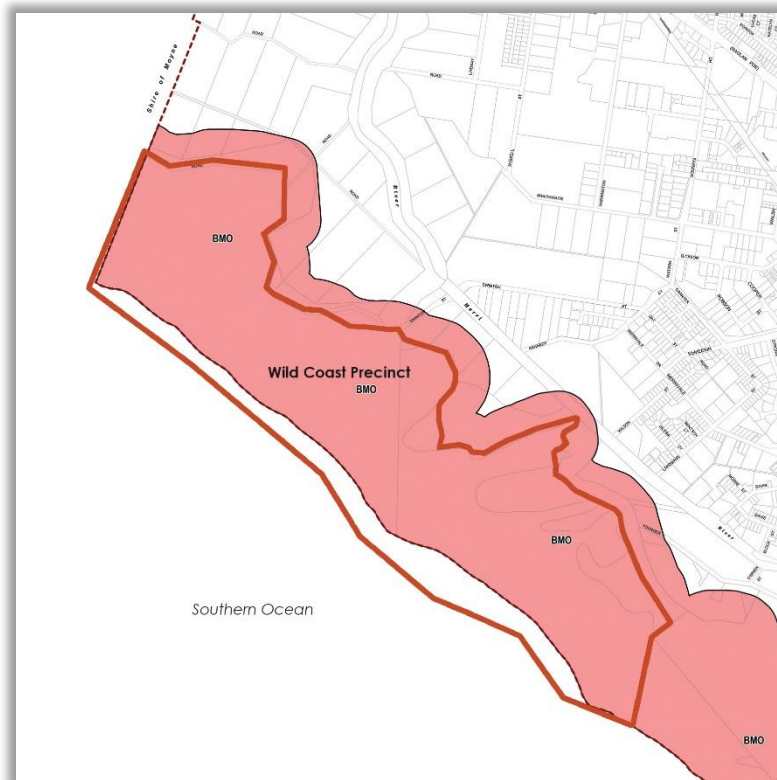
Map 5: Significant Landscape Overlay



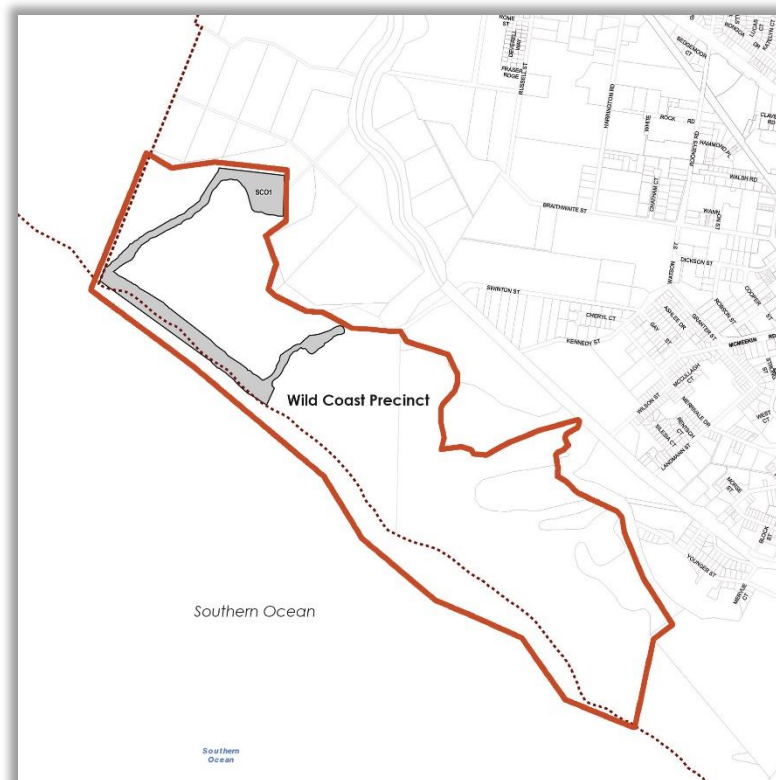
Map 6: Floodway Overlay



Map 7: Bushfire Management Overlay



Map 8: Specific Controls Overlay



Source: Base maps sourced from Planning Schemes Online

4. CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

4.1 CONSULTATION SUMMARY – ROUND 1

Council sought community feedback during consultation on the Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan in June/July 2020. An online survey asked residents how they currently use the Precinct, what they value in the Precinct (see Figure 3), what concerns they have about the Precinct and matters they would like to see addressed in the Landscape Master Plan. A number of community groups, stakeholders and adjacent landowners were directly contacted inviting them to participate and provide comment on the Wild Coast Precinct.

There was a strong response. The online survey received 113 responses. There were written submissions from three individuals and three community groups, organisations and volunteers with an interest in the area. The project team also had meetings with key stakeholders, including Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Aboriginal Victoria, Parks Victoria and internal Council Staff.

Figure 3 - 'Wordle' of frequently used words in response to 'what do you like about the Wild Coast Precinct?'



ACTIVITIES

The most popular activity in the Precinct is walking (57.29%), followed by surfing (9.38%) and bike riding (8.33%). Other activities included contemplation or observing wildlife, birdwatching, fishing and four-wheel driving.

ACCESS

The most common way of accessing the Precinct is by vehicle (50.52%), followed by walking (31.96%) and bike riding (10.31%). Other responses were from people who access the Precinct using multiple forms of transport, not just one, such as walking and vehicle.

VISITATION

There were a variety of responses to frequency of visits, with 27.55% visiting a handful of times each year, 26.53% visiting once or twice a month, 25.51% visiting weekly, 18.37% visiting more than once a week and 2.04% visiting once a year.

SAFETY CONCERNS

Of the 113 responses, 13 respondents (11.5%) had no safety concerns and 54 respondents (47.8%) listed specific safety concerns. The remaining 46 respondents (50.7%) did not provide an answer to this question. Some people had more than one concern. There were a range of comments relating to personal safety as well as safety for the environmental and cultural values of the Precinct.

A summary of features and values, risks and threats and opportunities are detailed at Figure 5. Further details of the consultation outcomes are provided in the Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan Consultation Summary Report.

Figure 4: Quotes from local residents

'The areas are magnificent, unique and to be admired, but in a more careful and respectful way. This area once damaged significantly, will be gone forever. There is significant cultural heritage to be protected and managed very carefully, as well as amazing and varied wildlife which require this area to be appropriately protected from damage and ruin. This area has the potential to be one of Warrnambool's greatest draw-cards for careful and extremely well managed eco tourism.' Warrnambool Resident

'It has been place of solitude and contemplation for my whole life. Its wild winds, dynamic high energy coastline, towering dunes and recovering flora and fauna are one of the wonders of the region. It's quite unique and remarkable that it's only 10 - 15 minutes from the City centre of Warrnambool.' Resident just outside Warrnambool

Figure 5 – Key features, values, risks, threats and opportunities for the Precinct identified during Round 1 Consultation

EXISTING FEATURES AND VALUES

- The site has a unique, beautiful and ‘wild’ environment.
- Home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, including rare and threatened species.
- Significant as a cultural landscape, with important connections to Country for the Traditional Owners.
- Popular for a variety of recreational activities, including walking, bike riding, horse riding, fishing, photography and surfing.
- Close to Warrnambool, within 4kms of the city centre, which is close enough for people to access by foot or bike, but has minimal development, making it a peaceful quiet place for people to visit.
- Local flora and fauna is highly valued by the community and there are a number of community members, groups who are involved in monitoring programs and protection measures on a voluntary basis.

RISKS, THREATS & ISSUES

- Feral animals and weed species pose significant threats to native fauna and flora and biodiversity.
- There are few fire breaks.
- There is limited signage.
- Shared access to some tracks, by cyclists, pedestrians, motorbikes, horses and vehicles, can pose safety risks, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The existing rendering plant poses amenity issues, both sight and smells.
- The alternative rail trail route that detours away from the rendering plant is not ideal for cyclists due to the slope.
- Some areas of dune have sparse vegetation coverage, making them prone to erosion.
- There are strong coastal winds, which cause significant sand shifts within and along the edge of the dune system. This can present erosion and safety risks.
- There are many informal walking, horse riding and vehicle tracks that been created, including in the dunes. These unauthorised tracks pose significant risks to cultural heritage and flora and fauna.
- Beach pollution is a threat to the pristine environment. There are concerns about rubbish thrown overboard and wreckages of ships and cargos as well as from the nearby wastewater outfall.
- Some visitors choose to walk their dogs off-lead. The Precinct is a dogs on-lead area. Community members may know and choose to ignore this, or may not realise this. There is minimal signage alerting dog owners that it is a dogs on-lead area, with only one sign at Levys Beach car park.

RISKS, THREATS & ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- The authorised tracks from Spookys and Levys Car Park to the beach are not clearly marked in some sections making it difficult for visitors to work out what route they should take.
- Undefined tracks pose a risk to sand dune stability, cultural heritage and flora and fauna, when visitors move off the authorised tracks.
- There are a number of unauthorised and illegal activities taking place in the Precinct, including off-road four-wheel driving, off-road motorbike riding, access to unauthorised areas, rubbish dumping and anti-social behaviour.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS

- Protection of natural environment and cultural heritage should be a priority, with low-impact recreation activities supported and promoted.
- Better protection of cultural heritage sites. Prevent harm and increase education around cultural significance of site.
- Better protection of the natural environment. Preventing harm, appropriate weed management and revegetation.
- Stop/reduce illegal activity through improved regulations and enforcement.
- Provide more information to let visitors know that the Precinct is of great importance to the Traditional Owners and has significant stories, ceremonial sites, sacred places, food gathering, cooking sites and intangible cultural heritage going beyond physical elements.
- Revegetation throughout the Precinct.
- Investigate whether additional authorised track/s accessing the beach to the east of Levys Point car park should be provided.
- Improve the rail trail, including surface improvements and signage.
- Stop/reduce illegal activity, including off-road four-wheel driving, through improved regulations and enforcement, including dogs on-lead.
- Minimise the harm that horse riding has on the natural environment and cultural heritage.
- Signage upgrades.
- Improve pest species eradication program.
- Opportunity for shared management arrangements/agreements, including the Traditional Owners.
- Consider need for emergency access and fire breaks.
- Promote education opportunities, in relation to cultural heritage and the natural environment.

4.2 CONSULTATION SUMMARY – ROUND 2

Round 2 consultation was undertaken in March 2021. This round of consultation sought feedback on the draft Landscape Master Plan. A number of community groups, stakeholders and adjacent landowners were directly contacted inviting them to participate and provide feedback.

An online survey was carried out to reach the broader community. A drop-in information session was held on the 17th of March 2021 and consultation with stakeholder groups occurred on the 18th of March 2021. A total of 24 people and two groups attended the drop-in and stakeholder sessions.

A total of 35 online submissions were received in response to the online survey. There were two written submissions from local organisations and individuals with an interest in the area.

Overall, there was good support for the Master Plan, with majority of respondents strongly agreeing/agreeing that the Landscape Master Plan reflects the aspirations of the community. At least 63.6% (21 respondents) or agreed/strongly agreed that each place principle accurately reflect the aspirations of the community. More than 72.7% (24 respondents) agreed/strongly agreed with each of the objectives of the Master Plan.

Majority of respondents support the overall intent of the Master Plan, with most respondents supporting the overall intent of the Master Plan, including the guiding place principles and objectives. Many of the comments made in the surveys and submissions reflect or support recommendations already included in the Master Plan. There were some new suggestions for inclusion in the Master Plan, which were not raised during Round 1. Suggestions relating to a key objective of the Plan were considered for inclusion. Some suggestions have been incorporated in this final version of the plan and other suggestions have been excluded as they conflicted with other objectives of the Plan.

Suggestions arising from Round 2 consultation, that have been incorporated into this version of the Master Plan, include:

- Removal of the proposed safety bollards from the plans. These will not be required by emergency services, as new methods for anchoring will be employed.
- Referencing the environmental weed Cape Beach Daisy (*Arctotheca populifolia*). This weed poses a significant risk to coastal habitat values and has been found in the Precinct. There is a need for close monitoring, with immediate removal if found.
- Reiterating the importance of temporary signage and fencing for Hooded Plover nesting sites.
- Giving further consideration to emergency vehicle access to the beach. Emergency vehicle and potential upgrades to track should be considered in consultation with Eastern Maar during detailed planning and design of the formal access tracks, following completion of the Cultural Heritage Desktop Assessment.
- Giving further consideration to environmental solutions to restrain sand movement on paths, such as staggered tracks and wind/sand barriers. This should be considered during detailed design of the formal track upgrades.
- Request for a commitment to a minimum number of patrolling hours enforcing the dog on-leash regulations, especially throughout the Hooded Plover breeding season.

A more detailed summary of Round 2 consultation feedback is provided in the Wild Coast Landscape Master Plan Consultation Summary Report.

5. PRECINCT ANALYSIS

5.1 ACCESS & JOURNEYS

The eastern edge of the Wild Coast Precinct is less than 3 kilometres walking distance to the Warrnambool City Centre. The Precinct is accessible by foot, bicycle and vehicle. Swinton Street provides vehicle access to the Precinct from Warrnambool.

The Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail is a 37.5km trail located between the Warrnambool Breakwater, Koroit and Port Fairy (Rail Trail 2016). The trail provides convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists to the Precinct. The rail trail runs along the northern edge of the Precinct, and deviates into the Precinct at Levys Point car park where it runs through a section of sand dune for a distance of approximately 400 metres. Much of the rail trail is off-road, but there are some sections at the Wild Coast Precinct, which are shared on-road with vehicles.

The Precinct is also accessible by pedestrians from Shelly Beach, Levys Beach and Spookys Beach during low tide. Map 9 shows access to and from the Precinct and authorised access tracks and trails within the Precinct.

There is an opportunity to better define the existing authorised access tracks through the dunes and make improvements to the existing rail trail, including surface improvements and additional signage to clarify the location of these authorised tracks and trails.

5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

There is minimal infrastructure within the Precinct. There are a small number of wayfinding and information signs scattered through the Precinct, there is a gravel car parking area at Levys Point (Figure 6) and one picnic table at the car park. The constructed road ends at the entry to Levys Point car park and most of the tracks and trail are informal, with sand/gravel surface.

There is minimal fencing, with some along road edges and around the perimeter of the Levys Point car park. Council will soon be installing new barriers at the Spookys Beach car park to help deter off-road vehicles from entering the sand dunes.

5.3 GEOLOGY

In a site visit report, Professor John Sherwood (2019, p. 1) stated that:

“The area forms part of a dune system which has been growing steadily westwards over the last 5000 or so years. This growth has steadily diverted the course of the Merri River, forming the extensive swamplands to the dune’s north. In places fossil soils are exposed in the dune, these are typically a thin grey immature soil reflecting their relatively young age (1000 years or so).” Calcarene dunes, which are formed from a type of limestone, are located within the Precinct”

In email correspondence dated 2 July 2020, Professor John Sherwood noted that:

“Research into the geology of the dunes has identified numerous examples of trackways left by animals walking over them while they were still unconsolidated. This work is currently being prepared for publication. The age of the dunes has been established by Optically Stimulated Luminescence and Thermoluminescence techniques as 80 – 90, 000 years. At Shelly Beach ash from the Tower Hill eruption 35,000 years ago is beautifully exposed at the beach.”

Professor John Sherwood (2020) also noted that ‘Cross bedding in the dunes can create dangerously thin ledges at cliff edges. These represent a significant public risk.’ This is potentially a risk along the foreshore and at track edges, particularly in locations where the sand is exposed with minimal stabilisation being provided by vegetation.



Figure 6: Levys Point Car Park

5.4 LAND USE

EXISTING LAND USES

Majority of the Precinct is utilised for public conservation. The Precinct plays an important role in protecting and conserving the natural environment, as well as providing limited facilities for the public to utilise.

The Precinct also provides a resource-based use, in the form of a sand mining quarry, which is a permitted use within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone. The sand mining quarry is located at the eastern end of the Precinct, between Levys Beach and Shelly Beach. This is the location of a ‘sand blowout’ where there was originally a connection from the Merri River to the sea. There is an opportunity to better define the edge of the sand mining quarry activities and ensure dune stabilization measures are employed up to its boundary, to prevent any further erosion east and west of the ‘blowout’ from occurring.

Other land uses which exist at the edges of the Precinct, but not within the Precinct itself, include the meat rendering plant, Warrnambool Golf Course, water treatment facility and residential development. Owners of the meat rendering plant have plans to relocate the facility and there is a current planning permit approved for the use and development of a new site in an industrial area away from the Precinct. This relocation will provide a positive outcome for the Precinct, as the current smells and sights of the rendering plant are sometimes unpleasant for recreation users and visitors, particularly from the neighbouring Port Fairy – Warrnambool Rail Trail.

There is residential development extending west of Warrnambool in Dennington, which is located within 350m walking distance of the Precinct. Neighbouring residential development can provide some positive benefits to the Precinct, including greater use and surveillance, but can also create additional risks, such as escaped pets, particularly cats entering the Precinct and predating on native fauna, as well as the risk of weed seed spread from residential gardens.

The Warrnambool Golf Course and water treatment plant are located outside the Precinct, between its eastern edge and the township. The community consultation feedback included concerns about the quality of water entering the ocean from the Wannon Waste Water Treatment Plant. This treatment plant is due to undergo an upgrade in the near future. This Plant is outside the boundary of the Wild Coast Precinct Landscape Master Plan and is not within the scope of this project.

Use of the Precinct for recreation is popular and this is described further at Section 5.4.

Map 9 and Figures 5 and 6 show land uses within and around the edge of the Precinct.

5.5 TOURISM AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

RECREATION

Recreational use of the Precinct is popular. Residents and visitors are involved in recreation activities including cycling, walking, photography, surfing, fishing and horse riding. Horse riding is permitted in specific locations between Levys and Spookys Beach. Unfortunately there some illegal recreational uses occurring within the Precinct, including off-road four-wheel driving and motorbike riding, which are causing damage to the coastal dune system and threatening cultural heritage. The ‘hot spots’ for illegal off-road driving/riding are near the fire marshalling area and to the east of the Spookys Beach car park. There are opportunities throughout the Precinct to ensure approved recreational activities can continue to occur in the Precinct in a respectful manner. There is also an opportunity to discourage illegal activities and prevent further damage to flora, fauna and cultural heritage from occurring.

The Wild Coast subject site falls into two Precincts in the *Open Space Strategy 2014* (WCC, 2014). The eastern portion of the Wild Coast is included in the Warrnambool (South/Merrivale) Precinct and the western portion of the Wild Coast is included in the Dennington Precinct. The Wild Coast fulfils an important recreation role in providing a place that protects a range of natural and cultural values, it provides opportunities for a wide array of passive and active recreation activities and it contributes positively to biodiversity. However, there is an opportunity to ensure the Precinct is enhanced to meet the needs of current and future residents and visitors, as visitor numbers are expected to rise in the future with increased residential development occurring in Warrnambool and a likely increase in tourism numbers.

WAYFINDING AND INFORMATION

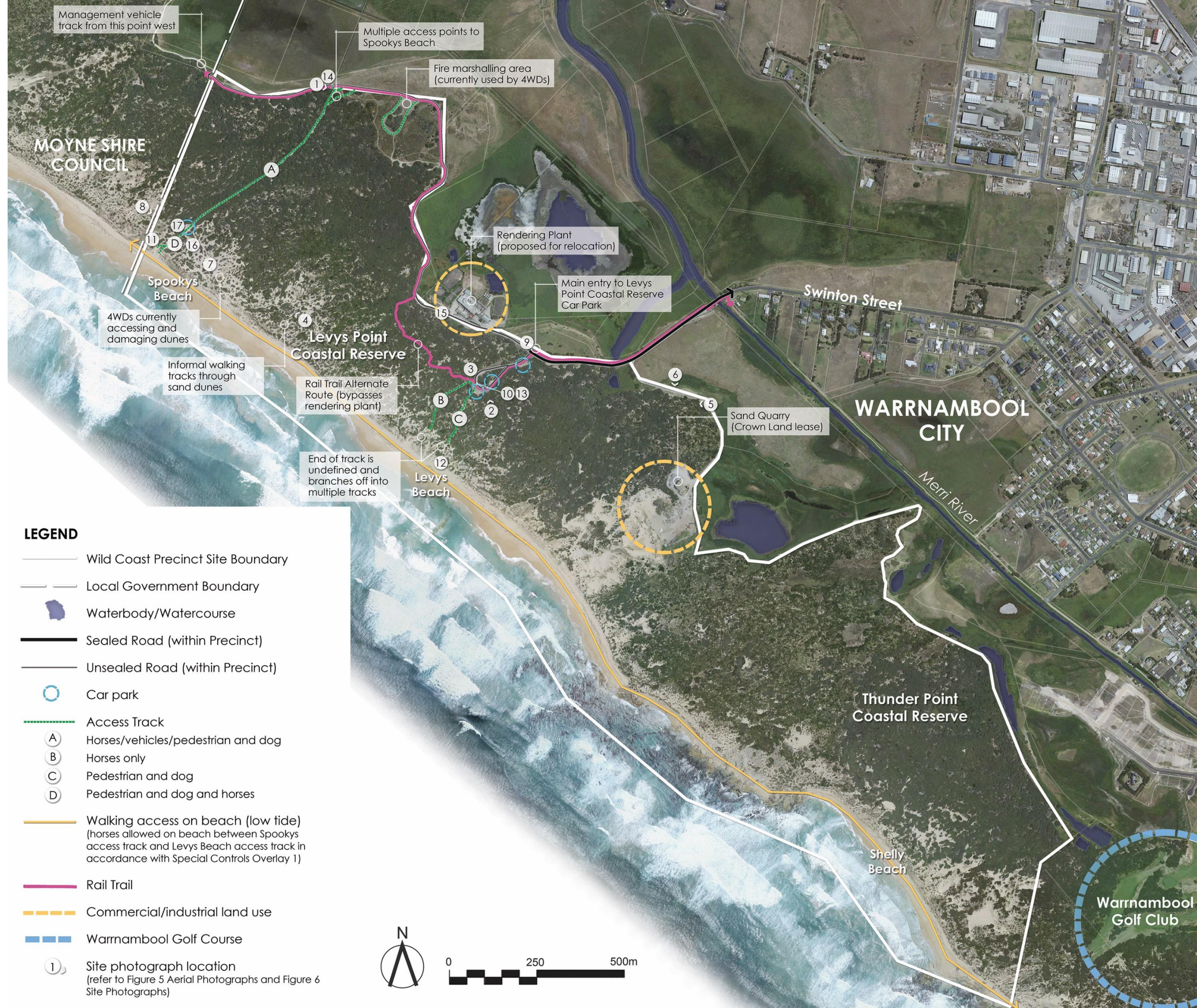
There is very little information in the Precinct in the form of signage/wayfinding. There is also limited signage to direct emergency services vehicles. Round 1 consultation posed the questions ‘Is the visitor information provided at the Precinct adequate?’. Of the 73 responses the question 58 (79.5%) said ‘no’.

There are opportunities to improve all forms of signage in the Precinct, including information about cultural heritage and environmental features and make track and trail routes easier to locate and navigate.

TOURISM

There is great opportunity to promote the Precinct as a place of important cultural and environmental significance, creating a stronger link between tourism and the conservation objectives for the Precinct. This opportunity should extend to broader information, including tourism information centres and online resources, including the Port-Fairy to Rail Trail website.

There were a number of suggestions from the community that organised tours and education will play an important role in the appreciation and protection of the Precinct in the future.



LEGEND

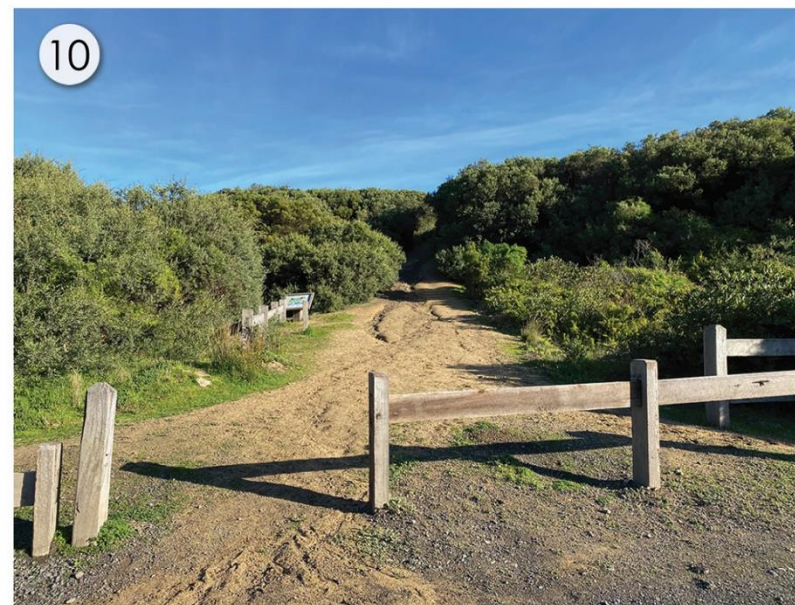
- Wild Coast Precinct Site Boundary
- Local Government Boundary
- Waterbody/Watercourse
- Sealed Road (within Precinct)
- Unsealed Road (within Precinct)
- Car park
- Access Track
 - A Horses/vehicles/pedestrian and dog
 - B Horses only
 - C Pedestrian and dog
 - D Pedestrian and dog and horses
- Walking access on beach (low tide)
(horses allowed on beach between Spookys access track and Levys Beach access track in accordance with Special Controls Overlay 1)
- Rail Trail
- Commercial/industrial land use
- Warrnambool Golf Course
- 1 Site photograph location
(refer to Figure 5 Aerial Photographs and Figure 6 Site Photographs)





PHOTOGRAPH DESCRIPTIONS

- 1 View of fire marshalling area and Spookys Beach track access. 4WDs using fire marshalling area.
- 2 Levys Reserve car park and the rendering plant
- 3 Levys Reserve car park
- 4 4WD access in sand dunes at Spookys Beach. Informal walking trail through dunes (possibly the former Mahogany Trail)
- 5 View of the precinct looking west
- 6 The sand quarry
- 7 4WD tracks created in the sand dunes at Spookys Beach
- 8 View of the precinct looking east near Spookys Beach



- PHOTOGRAPH DESCRIPTIONS**
- 9 Rail trail signage near Levy's Reserve car park entrance
 - 10 Rail trail alternative loop from Levy's Reserve car park (avoids rendering plant)
 - 11 Example of dune erosion
 - 12 Hooded Plover habitat sign
 - 13 Levys Point sign
 - 14 One of the three entrances to Spookys Beach track
 - 15 Information signs near the rendering plant
 - 16 Tracks created by 4WDs at Spookys Beach sand dunes
 - 17 Spookys Beach car park



5.6 CULTURAL HERITAGE

This area has been home to the Traditional Owners for thousands of years and their connection to Country remains unbroken. This connection can be seen across the landscape in the form of shell middens and stone artifacts. There are also important ceremonial places throughout the Precinct and local Dreaming stories reference this strong connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples.

Many activities within the Precinct pose a significant risk to cultural values. The Master Plan provides the chance to ensure activities within the Precinct are undertaken in a respectful manner and protect these values for future generations.

The Master Plan provides an opportunity for the Eastern Maar Peoples to express their connection to Country and for the broader community to understand the cultural significance of this special place. At present the naming of places, roads and beaches within the Precinct are of European origin. There is an opportunity for Maar language to be used in the renaming of places in the Precinct.

All land within the Precinct is identified within the Cultural Heritage Sensitivity mapping area (ACHRS, 2019), as shown on Map 10. Any future development of land considered to be a high impact activity and likely to have a significant impact on any Aboriginal cultural heritage will require the preparation and approval of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP).

5.1 EUROPEAN HISTORY

According to Snoekstra (2015, p. 115) the Armstrong Bay area, extending from Port Fairy to Pickering Point in Warrnambool, has been identified as the site of Mahogany Shipwreck sightings. *‘The Mahogany Ship is historically significant as one of Victoria’s oldest recorded shipwrecks, and for the mystery and legend that has made it one of Victoria’s and Australia’s maritime mysteries (Snoekstra, 2015, p. 115).’*

The strongest evidence of the existence of the Mahogany Shipwreck is from eyewitness accounts. There have been a number of artifacts located along this stretch of coastline, including pots, a jug and an amphora, which are believed by many to be from the Mahogany Ship (Snoekstra, 2015, p. 115). If future investigations are undertaken in an effort to locate the wreck/items from the wreck, these investigations have to be undertaken with the appropriate permits from relevant authorities, including research permits and consent to disturb coastal land.

There is an old trail through the sand dunes near Levys Beach which was referred to as the Mahogany Trail. However, access to this trail is closed and it is not an authorised trail. The trail was closed due to the significant risk it presented to cultural heritage artifacts, which were known to be located along the trail. (Parks Victoria, 2018)

Figure 7: Quotes from local residents

‘As part of the local Aboriginal community we have our connections to Country with this area and need to continue to be able to carry out our care and customs on this part of Country. This part of Country is significant with our stories, significant sites and connections.’ Survey Respondent

‘...A place where there is a real opportunity to restore the degraded dunes with local plants, control feral pests and see native animals and birds return. A showcase of turning around by a community from ignorance to caring.’ (Survey respondent)

‘These days it is more important than ever to safeguard our natural spaces - we should enhance the reserve in this regard. We should also promote the indigenous cultural values of the Wild Coast. These are important values to me and many of my friends.’ (Warrnambool Resident)

‘It is absolutely covered in cultural heritage that is being damaged daily by uncontrolled anti-social behaviours. It’s a disgrace and disrespectful.’ Warrnambool Resident

‘I’m aware of the connection to country our Indigenous community have. The presence of middens, burial grounds and stories relating to this wild space. Cultural heritage is everywhere but in this landscape it has been relatively undisturbed compared to our urban areas.’ Warrnambool Resident

‘Am aware that this area is of great cultural importance to indigenous Australians which has been deepened by recent research that indicates a much longer association than previously acknowledged. This will also be important to the broader history of Australia.’ Warrnambool Resident

‘Such a wild and naturally beautiful and cultural landscape, so close to the city centre, is a remarkable asset for a city and region that relies on tourism. This could be yet another gem for locals and visitors in the area. A viewing platform at Levys and cultural tours, conducted by EMAC [Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation], in partnership with Parks Vic are just a few opportunities that would create real employment opportunities and help the local community re-evaluate the importance of a place they may have learnt to take for granted.’ (Resident near Warrnambool)

5.2 ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

FLOODING

The wetlands and the Merri River immediately north of the subject site are prone to regular inundation, as shown on Map 6. This inundation extends into a few locations along the northern perimeter of the Precinct and inundation can affect the road extending from the end of Swinton Street, which provides the main vehicle access to the Precinct.

BUSHFIRE

According to the Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan (Parks Victoria, 2018, p. 55) 'The risk of fire within the Reserve is considered to be low. The Belfast Coastal Reserve is identified in the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan South Western (DELWP 2015) as a Land Management Zone, defined as an area where fuel is managed to reduce residual risk, improve ecosystem resilience, and for other purposes (such as to regenerate forests and protect water catchments). Planned burning may be used for risk reduction purposes within the Reserve but is most likely to be considered for specific ecological objectives. The vegetation of most of the Reserve is relatively resilient to fire frequencies between 5-20 years and does not need fire for regeneration.'

There is an existing fire marshalling area at the western end of the Precinct. This fire marshalling area provides a turning area for larger emergency services vehicles, including fire trucks. However, damage from four-wheel drive vehicles makes this turning area unusable on a regular basis. Council regularly grade this turning area to make it usable, but continued damage from four-wheel drive vehicles is an ongoing issue.

FAUNA

The Coastal Dune Scrub, particularly the higher quality scrub, is habitat for a range of species. Biosis Research conducted a Flora and Fauna survey of a portion of the Precinct west of the Golf Course in 1993. They found evidence (indirect and direct) of the following native species in the eastern section of the Precinct:

MAMMALS

- Swamp Wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*) (Figure 8)
- Common Ringtail Possum (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*)

REPTILES

- Lowland Copperhead (*Austrelaps superbus*)
- White's Skink (*Egernia whirii*)
- Blue-tongued Lizard (*Tiliqua scincoides*) and
- Blotched Blue-Tongue Lizard (*Tiliqua nigrolutea*)

AMPHIBIANS (located in neighbouring wetlands)

- Common Froglet (*Crinia signifera*)
- Striped Marsh Frog (*Limnodynastes peronii*)
- Southern Brown Tree Frog (*Litoria eqingii*)

(Biosis Research, 1993)

Local residents have also sighted Koalas (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) and Tiger Snakes (*Notechis scutatus*) in the area.



Figure 8: Swamp Wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*) (Image Source: Warrnambool City Council)

BIRDLIFE

The Precinct is home to a rich array of birdlife. The Precinct contains important habitat for a number of rare and threatened species with regional, State, national and international significance.

According to Birdlife Australia, in written correspondence dated 10 July 2020, the Belfast Coast is home to significant populations of EPBC-listed migratory shorebirds, '... including Sanderling (*internationally significant site*), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*internationally significant site*), Double-banded Plover (*nationally significant site*) and Ruddy Turnstone (*nationally significant site*).'

The critically endangered Orange-bellied Parrot (*Neophema chrysogaster*), which migrates between the Australian mainland and Tasmania, has been found in the Belfast Coastal Reserve, immediately west of the Wild Coast Precinct (Parks Victoria, 2018). Whilst they have not been recorded in the Wild Coast Precinct It is possible their habitat may extend into this area.

The endangered Australasian Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*) is also found in the nearby wetlands and may occupy areas of the Precinct. (Parks Victoria, 2018)

The area is home to nesting resident shorebirds, including the Red-capped Plover (*Charadrius ruicapillus*), Pied Oystercatcher (*Haematopus longirostris*) and Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*) (Figure 9) which is listed as vulnerable in Victoria.

Many of these bird species who nest on the shoreline are highly vulnerable to disturbance, including people, dogs, horses, vehicles, predators such as cats and foxes and weed infestation. Off-lead dogs have been known to chase adults and chicks, crush nests and eggs, eat eggs and kill the chicks who are particularly vulnerable before they have learnt to fly. (Maguire et al. 2014, p. 61)

Maguire et al. (2014, p.85) stated:

“A threat profile developed for 28 parks and reserves found that a higher frequency of off-leash dog use corresponded with the poorest breeding success [for Hooded Plovers] and that the location of poor breeding overlapped more closely with off-leash dogs than any other threat.”

Another threat to the Hooded Plovers is the presence of weed species, including Marram Grass and Sea Spurge, which are common in the Precinct. Hooded Plovers have been found to avoid Marram Grass vegetated dunes. Maguire et al. (2014, pp. 59-60) noted that:

“Weeds, such as Marram Grass (Ammophila arenaria; deliberately introduced from Europe for dune stabilization purposes), Sea Spurge (Euphorbia paralias; originating from Europe and presumably introduced in shipping ballast water), and Sea Wheat-grass (Thinopyrum junceiforme; native to Europe and deliberately introduced for dune stabilization purposes), have been identified as key species that change the structure of beach and foredune habitats (Cousens et al. 2013). These structural changes in turn alter the resources available (foraging, nesting etc) to Hooded Plovers, leading to either direct impacts (increased predation, mortality or abandonment of beaches) to more indirect impacts such as reduced breeding success in sub-optimal habitat.”

Birdlife Australia’s coastal bird team, along with partners such as the Friends of the Hooded Plover Far West Victoria, carry out monitoring programs on the beach-nesting birds and migratory shorebirds and are involved in the protection of Hooded Plover Nests, including the use of temporary signage and fencing during nesting periods. (Birdlife Australia, 2020)



Figure 9: Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*) (Image Source: Warrnambool City Council)

NATIVE VEGETATION

According to the State Government’s modelled data (DELWP, 2020), the most prominent ecological vegetation class (EVCs) likely to have been present prior to the 1750s was Coastal Dune Scrub (EVC 160). A recent field visit by Beacon Ecological (2020), confirmed this finding. Beacon Ecological (2020) categorised the Coastal Dune Scrub into four types/zones to reflect the quality of the vegetation. Coastal Dune Scrub 1 (CDS1) and 3 (CDS3) are located within the Precinct. CDS1 is described as the ‘Best quality Coastal Dune Scrub. Moderate level of species diversity, low (5-25%) weed cover, some recruitment and good litter cover (Beacon Ecological, 2020)’, whereas CDS3 is ‘Modified Coastal Dune Scrub. Dominated by dense scrub, particularly Coast Tea-tree* with high litter cover and little light reaching the soil, which has reduced species diversity (Beacon Ecological, 2020).’

The following species are typically found in Coastal Dune Scrub in the Warrnambool Plains Bioregion (DELWP, 2004):

- Seaberry Saltbush (*Rhagodia candolleana* ssp. *candolleana*)
- Coast Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* ssp. *sophorae*)**
- Coast Beard-heath (*Leucopogon parviflorus*)
- Coast Daisy-Bush (*Olearia axillaris*)
- Variable Groundsel (*Senecio pinnatifolius*)
- Coast Stackhousia (*Stackhousia spathulata*)
- Karkalla (*Carpobrotus rossii*)
- Sea Celery (*Apium prostratum* ssp. *prostratum*)
- Coast Bonefruit (*Threlkeldia diffusa*)
- Coast Blown-grass (*Lachnagrostis billardierei* ssp. *billardierei*)
- Knobby Club-sedge (*Ficinia nodosa*)
- Shiny Bog-sedge (*Schoenus nitens*)
- Bower Spinach (*Tetragonia implexicoma*); and
- Small-leaved Clematis (*Clematis microphylla* var. *microphylla*)

Coast Ballart (*Exocarpus syrticola*), which is found in ‘coastal dunes and cliffs between Wilsons Promontory and the South Australian Border (Biosis 1993, p. 12)’ has been located within the Precinct in small numbers. Coast Ballart is considered to be rare in Victoria (Biosis Research 1993, p.12).

Beacon Ecological (2020) also found that the Precinct contains two other habitat zones ‘with affinities to Coastal Dune Scrub (EVC 160)’. The habitat zones being Tall Marsh (EVC 821) and Estuarine Flats Grassland (EVC 914). Map 10 shows the locations of the habitat zones surveyed by Beacon Ecological in 2020. Appendix 3 provides a more detailed description of each EVC along with a photograph of the typical vegetation cover for these EVCs. (Beacon Ecological 2020)

Beacon Ecological have provided a description of Coastal Dune Scrub, Tall Marsh and Estuarine Flats Grassland, as provided at Figures 10 and 11.

Notes: *Coast Tea-tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) is an introduced species to this part of Victoria. (Biosis, 1993, p.10) In order to protect the Coastal Dune Scrub, it is recommended that the spread of Coast Tea-tree be contained and prevented from further invasion in the Precinct.

**Coast Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* ssp. *sophorae*) is an indigenous species found in Coastal Dune Scrub EVC 160, but it tends to take over and reduce available habitat for a range of other indigenous vegetation species. Therefore, in areas where revegetation occurs, it is not recommended for planting.

Figure 10: Coastal Dune Scrub description (Beacon Ecological, 2020)

Coastal Dune Scrub**EVC Number:** 160

Coastal Dune Scrub occupies the secondary dunes along ocean and bay beaches and lake shores. Closed scrub to three metres tall with occasional emergent trees on siliceous and calcareous sands that are subject to high levels of saltspray and continuous disturbance from onshore winds (DELWP 2020b).

Habitat Zone CDS1

Within the study area this vegetation type is dominated variously by Coast Beard-heath *Leucopogon parviflorus*, Coast Tea-tree *Leptospermum laevigatum* and Coast Wattle *Acacia longifolia* subsp. *sophorae* (Plate 1). Additional native groundcover species include Karkalla *Carpobrotus rossii*, Old Mans-beard *Clematis microphylla*, Thyme Rice-flower *Pimelea serpyllifolia*, Cushion Bush *Leucophyta brownii*, Bush Knobby Club-sedge *Ficinia nodosa*, Coast Sword-sedge *Lepidosperma gladiatum*, Coast Tussock-grass *Poa poiformis*, Seaberry Saltbush *Rhagodia candolleana* and Bower Spinach *Tetragonia implexicoma*. This vegetation type also supports isolated occurrences of the state significant Coast Ballart *Exocarpos syrticola* (listed as rare, DEPI 2014) and Coast Stackhousia *Stackhousia spathulata* (listed as poorly known, DEPI 2014).

Introduced species cover is generally low and includes isolated African Boxthorn *Lycium ferocissimum* and Mirror Bush *Coprosma repens* with a moderate cover of Marram Grass *Ammophila arenaria* and Sea Spurge *Euphorbia paralias* on foredunes.

**Plate 1.** Relatively intact Coastal Dune Scrub within the study area**Habitat Zone CDS3**

Habitat Zone CDS2 is generally dominated by a dense thicket of Coast Tea-tree with scattered Coast Beard Heath and Coast Wattle. Understorey diversity is generally low due to overshadowing and large amounts of leaf litter and restricted to scattered native groundcover species similar to those described in Habitat Zone CDS1, typically on path edges.

Introduced species is generally low (less than 5%) and restricted to isolated African Boxthorn and Panic Veldt-grass *Ehrharta erecta*.

**Plate 2.** Coastal Dune Scrub forming dense thickets of predominantly Coast Tea-tree within the study area.

Figure 11: Tall Marsh and Estuarine Flats Grassland description (Beacon Ecological, 2020)

Tall Marsh**EVC Number:** 821

Tall Marsh generally occurs on Quaternary sedimentary geology of mainly estuarine sands, soils are peaty, silty clays, and average annual rainfall is approximately 600 millimetres. Requires shallow water (to one metre deep) and low current-scour, and can only tolerate very low levels of salinity. Closed to open grassland/sedgeland to three metres tall, dominated by Common Reed and Cumbungi. Small aquatic and semiaquatic species occur amongst the reeds, however they are generally not visible during inundation (DELWP 2020b).

Within the study area Tall Marsh is generally dominated by Narrow-leaf Cumbungi *Typha domingensis* or Common Reed *Phragmites australis* with scattered River Club-sedge *Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani*, Austral Brooklime *Gratiola peruviana*, Angled Lobelia *Lobelia anceps*, Australian Gipsywort *Lycopus australis* and Greater Bindweed *Calystegia sepium* (Plate 3). Introduced species are generally absent.

**Plate 3.** Tall Marsh vegetation within the study area.**Estuarine Flats Grassland****EVC Number:** 914

Estuarine Flats Grasslands are described as closed to open grassland to 1.5 metres tall with occasional shrubs occurring on estuarine flats often associated with current or old beach berms or sand sheets that are occasionally inundated by high tides. Occupies areas on marginally higher ground inland from Coastal Saltmarsh (DELWP 202b).

Within the study area this vegetation type comprises the native species Coast Tussock-grass *Poa poiformis* and Knobby Club sedge (Plate 5). Introduced species provide a moderate cover and includes Buffalo Grass *Stenotaphrum secundatum*, Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, Hemlock *Conium maculatum* and African Boxthorn.

**Plate 4.** Estuarine Flats Grassland within the study area.**REFERENCES**

DELWP 2020a. *Nature Kit*. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website. www.delwp.vic.gov.au

DELWP 2020b. *Ecological Vegetation Class Benchmarks*. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website. www.delwp.vic.gov.au.



MAP 10: SITE ANALYSIS (FLORA, FAUNA AND CULTURAL HERITAGE)

6. VISION, PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

6.1 VISION

The vision for the Wild Coast Precinct is to create a space that conserves and protects its environmental and cultural values, increases its biodiversity, references the important connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples and helps to keep the area as a recreation and tourism destination for residents and visitors.

The principles, objectives and recommendations of the Master Plan are based on findings from site visits and site analysis, findings of previous studies and plans and insights and suggestions from the community and stakeholders.

6.2 PLACE PRINCIPLES

Seven place principles have been developed to reflect the important characteristics and features of the Precinct. They are:

- A. Celebrate and respect culture and connection to Country*
- B. Embrace and conserve nature*
- C. Enrich biodiversity values*
- D. Enjoy and promote recreation*
- E. Create a unique visitor experience*
- F. Improve safety for visitors*
- G. Maintain the 'sense of place' with minimal development*

6.3 OBJECTIVES

Key objectives have been developed to align with the place principles and guide the future direction of the Precinct. The 12 objectives are:

OBJECTIVE 1

Acknowledge and respect cultural heritage and connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples. Conserve and protect these values through careful landscaping measures. (Principles A, E and G)

OBJECTIVE 2

Enhance and restore native habitat for biodiversity, through revegetation, weed reduction measures and improved protection of habitat. (Principles B, C and G)

OBJECTIVE 3

Ensure new structures, built works, landscaping and signage are designed and constructed in a sensitive way that is respectful to cultural heritage and environmental values, including habitat and native vegetation. (Principles A, B, E and G)

OBJECTIVE 4

Recognise the role of the Precinct in providing for recreation opportunities, including walking, bird and nature observation, cycling, horse riding, fishing and surfing. (Principle D)

OBJECTIVE 5

Respect nature, acknowledging the risks associated with flood function, bushfire, climate change, sand shifts and dune erosion. Engage climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. (All Principles)

OBJECTIVE 6

Improve the safety of visitors, particularly walkers and cyclists. (Principle F)

OBJECTIVE 7

Enhance visitor's experience of the Precinct, through infrastructure improvements and improved wayfinding and information signage. (Principles E and F)

OBJECTIVE 8

Clearly define authorised access trails and tracks and formalise car parking to help prevent visitors from going off-track and causing damage to vegetation, bird and wildlife habitat, sand dunes and cultural heritage sites. (Principles A, B, C and G)

OBJECTIVE 9

Recognise the role of cultural heritage and the natural environment as a driver of tourism and encourage visitation to the Precinct in the form of sustainable tourism. (Principles A, B and E)

OBJECTIVE 10

Provide opportunities for education and interpretation. Share information with visitors about the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and connection of the Eastern Maar Peoples to this area and the significant environmental values of the Precinct. (Principles A and E)

OBJECTIVE 11

Encourage and enforce rules and regulations, and discourage the use of the Precinct as a destination for off-road vehicles and motorbikes. (Principles A, B and F)

OBJECTIVE 12

Work in collaboration and support partnerships with local groups and individuals, volunteers, government organisations and Eastern Maar Peoples to see the plan implemented. (All Principles)

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Landscape Master Plan recommendations seek to achieve the 12 key objectives. The design recommendations discussed below are illustrated in an overall Landscape Master Plan, refer to Plans 1-4. It should be noted that some recommendations will help to achieve more than one objective.

7.1 ACKNOWLEDGE AND RESPECT CULTURAL HERITAGE

OBJECTIVE 1: Acknowledge and respect cultural heritage and connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples. Conserve and protect these values through careful landscaping measures.

The Eastern Maar Peoples are the traditional custodians of the lands in the Precinct. There is a strong connection of the Eastern Maar to this coastline. The following opportunities have been identified for the Precinct:

- a) Protect and conserve cultural heritage by minimising unauthorised access within the Precinct.
- b) Foster respect for cultural heritage by providing visitors with information about cultural values of the Precinct and occupation of the site by Eastern Maar Peoples. Where appropriate, incorporate references through infrastructure, art/sculpture and/or cultural landscaping work at entry points to the Precinct and beaches.
- c) The Precinct has places that are currently named with references to European history, events and people providing no clues as to the cultural significance of this site to Eastern Maar Peoples. There is an opportunity to rename some places using Maar languages.
- d) Works to improve the Wild Coast Precinct will involve ongoing collaboration with Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to ensure works are sensitive to the cultural values of the area.
- e) There is potential for the Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to be more involved in the management of the Precinct, including, but not limited to, revegetation works and fire hazard risk management, to ensure landscaping practices respect cultural heritage and connection to Country.

The following actions will be required to ensure conservation and protection of cultural values:

- f) Ensure that any work undertaken in the Precinct, including revegetation activities, fencing, signage and construction activities, do not result in detrimental impacts to cultural heritage sites, including known and unknown sites.
- g) Any future development of land considered to be a high impact activity and likely to have a significant impact on any Aboriginal cultural heritage will require the preparation and approval of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) by the local Registered Aboriginal Party.
- h) Engage a suitably qualified heritage advisor to prepare a desktop cultural heritage assessment, to review existing data in relation to known places within the study area, determine likely locations for unknown heritage sites, the extent and probable levels of significance and provide recommendations for the preparation of Cultural Heritage Management Plans specific to the recommended works within the Precinct.
- i) Contractors and volunteers will need to be advised on the cultural significance of the site and cultural heritage sensitivity. Contractors and volunteers will need to be given instructions about what to do in the event that they uncover or come across a significant site, so as to avoid damaging it. They will also need to be provided with details of any approved Cultural Heritage Management Plan, so that works can be completed in accordance with the Plan.
- j) Council in partnership with Traditional Owners, should ‘develop a Cultural Landscapes and Heritage Strategy which integrates and reflects Traditional Owner knowledge and land management practices.’ This was a recommendation of the Green Warrnambool plan (2018, p. 21)

7.2 ENHANCE AND RESTORE NATIVE HABITAT

OBJECTIVE 2: Enhance and restore native habitat for biodiversity, through revegetation, weed reduction measures and improved protection of habitat.

The Wild Coast Precinct supports a range of flora and fauna, including a number of rare, threatened and vulnerable species. The following opportunities have been identified to help improve habitat and biodiversity in the Precinct:

- a) Minimise unauthorised access to dunes and firemarshalling area to help prevent further habitat damage and promote natural regeneration.
- b) Carry out revegetation and regeneration works in the Coastal Dune Scrub zone. In some locations, such as alongside tracks/trails, revegetation will achieve instant cover and will be more appropriate than regeneration. In other locations, works to promote regeneration will be more suitable, particularly in infill locations away from the exposed foredune area. The preferred method should be determined in consultation with Council’s Natural Environment team.
- c) Priorities for revegetation/regeneration should focus on areas of sand dune which have sparse vegetation cover and are more susceptible to erosion as well as areas which have been previously utilised for unauthorised access. Fencing will be required at the edges of some revegetation locations. The revegetation/regeneration area priorities are identified on Plan 1.
- d) When revegetating Coastal Dune Scrub (EVC 160), ensure a variety of local indigenous vegetation from the EVC are selected to increase plant biodiversity and enhance habitat for a variety of fauna species.
- e) Continue weed and pest species eradication programs and investigate how they can be improved in the future.
- f) Carry out weed monitoring on a regular basis and respond quickly to prevent establishment of new weeds, particularly encroachment from adjoining areas. Marram Grass (*Ammophila arenaria*) and Bridal Creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*) are particularly invasive weeds in the Precinct. The Cape Beach Daisy (*Arctotheca populifolia*) is an emerging weed that poses significant risk to coastal habitat values. Cape Beach Daisy has been found in the Levys Point area.

Inform local residents of ways in which they can help to prevent spread of weed species within the Precinct.

- g) Inform local residents of the importance of responsible pet ownership, including:
 - o keeping dogs on-lead when visiting the Precinct, to avoid damage or death to fauna, bird eggs and vegetation.
 - o ensuring pet cats are kept indoors as much as possible, particularly at night; and
 - o highlighting the benefits of having cats desexed so as to minimise the number of unwanted kittens being dumped.
- h) Ensure weed management and revegetation works along the foreshore near the base of the dunes are carried out in consultation with BirdLife Australia, whose volunteers play an important role in bird habitat protection, including Hooded Plover nesting habitat. It is important that habitat is maintained and enhanced in these areas in a way which promotes nesting and feeding, including careful species selection and placement of plants.
- i) The Coastal Dune Scrub vegetation provides an almost continuous biodiversity corridor along the coastline. There is an opportunity to revegetate the edges of the sand mining quarry to reduce the gap in the biodiversity corridor. This is a long-term goal which would only be able to occur if the sand quarry ceased operations.
- j) Remove derelict fencing, particularly within the eastern end of the study area, which pose a hazard to fauna.

7.3 PROVIDE SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPING

OBJECTIVE 3: *Ensure new structures, built works, landscaping and signage are designed and constructed in a sensitive way that is respectful to cultural heritage and environmental values, including habitat and native vegetation.*

There are opportunities to incorporate sensitively designed works and landscaping into planning for the Precinct, including:

- a) Ensure landscaping works are designed and situated to be low intervention, ie post/pier not concrete slab and permeable fences which allow sand movement and habitat movement to occur.
- b) Where possible, utilise natural materials and select materials which will have minimal contamination impacts on local geology.

7.4 PROVIDE FOR RECREATION

OBJECTIVE 4: *Recognise the role of the Precinct in providing for recreation opportunities, including walking, bird and nature observation, cycling, horse riding, fishing and surfing.*

The focus of the Wild Coast Precinct will be on experiencing the natural environment and encouraging informal recreation and opportunities for residents and visitors to have access to nature. Opportunities include:

- a) Protection of natural environment and cultural heritage should be a priority, with low-impact recreation activities supported and promoted.
- b) Encourage people to utilise the Precinct for recreation purposes, but ensure clear advice is provided on the importance of staying on the authorised tracks.

7.5 RESPECT NATURE

OBJECTIVE 5: *Respect nature, acknowledging the risks associated with flood function, bushfire, climate change, sand shifts and dune erosion. Engage climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.*

In the Southern Slopes (Victoria West), including Warrnambool, climate change projections include increasing average temperatures, more hot days and warm spells, generally less rainfall in the cool season and increased intensity of extreme rainfall events, increased storm surges, mean sea level will continue to rise and it is likely there will be a harsher fire-weather climate (CSIRO, 2016). These climatic changes and associated alterations to meteorological cycles may result in changes in plant communities and habitats for native fauna and encourage invasive weed species. The risks associated with climate change should be mitigated through careful planning and plant selection. Mitigation measures will include:

- a) Selecting local indigenous plants suited to the local environment will ensure habitat for native fauna exists in the future.
- b) Ensuring a good diversity of plant species are planted in revegetation areas which will tolerate the forecast weather changes. Revegetation along the foreshore will help to minimise the coastal erosion of the sand dunes caused by storm surges and extreme weather events.
- c) Considering the need for emergency access in response to emergencies and natural disasters.
- d) Selecting surfaces and finishes of constructed works to be weather resilient and designed with anticipated sea level changes in mind.
- e) Monitoring weed control methods and adapting weed control programs as weed species and distribution changes arise.



Figure 12: Typical Coastal Dune Scrub Vegetation in the Wild Coast Precinct

7.6 IMPROVE SAFETY FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

OBJECTIVE 6: Improve the safety of visitors, particularly walkers and cyclists.

- a) Minimise safety risk to visitors by prioritising and improving the Port Fairy–Warrnambool Rail Trail. This should include surface improvements, including fixing pot holes and improving drainage. Clear information and directional signage for trail and road users should also be provided, to reduce confusion and promote safety.
- b) The existing rail trail deviates into the Levys Point car park and through a section of sand dunes. This is poorly marked and the dune track is not ideal for cyclists due to its slope and surface. This track is difficult to access and maintain to an acceptable level. It is proposed that following relocation of the rendering plant, the rail trail should continue along the road, instead of deviating through the dune system. This section of trail through the dunes can be revegetated or allowed to regenerate.

7.7 ENHANCE VISITOR'S EXPERIENCE

OBJECTIVE 7: Enhance visitor's experience of the Precinct, through infrastructure improvements and improved wayfinding and information signage.

There is minimal signage throughout the Precinct. There is an opportunity to provide colourful and inviting signage to convey important messages, such as:

- a) Provide signage at the entrance to the Precinct near the Swinton Street bridge crossing the Merri River. Include a welcome message to the Precinct and provide a safety message to indicate that the roads are shared by walkers, cyclists and vehicles.
- b) Upgrade signage at Levys Point car park entrance and Levys Point car park and provide new signage at Spookys Beach track entrance and Spookys Beach car park to include maps showing authorised tracks, distance measurements to the beach, dog on-lead regulations, beach access and safety and 'take your rubbish home with you' messages.
- c) Provide interpretive information about cultural heritage and the natural environment, including important habitat areas, at Levys Beach and Spookys Beach.
- d) Provide clear directions for Port Fairy-Warrnambool Rail Trail users at regular intervals throughout the Precinct, with distance markers and directional signage to provide improved wayfinding.
- e) Provide new signage at Spookys Beach turn-off indicating that the track is a shared track and is suitable for walkers, horse riding and vehicles (only 4WD at present). Distance markers should also be provided to let visitors know what distance it is to the beach.
- f) Signs for emergency service vehicles to be provided at Levys Point turn-off and car park, Spookys Beach turn-off and car park and the fire marshalling area.
- g) Provide a new reflective space in the form of a raised platform to take in views of the Precinct, beautiful coastline and biodiversity. This could be positioned adjacent to the authorised walking track between Levys Point car park and Levys Beach. The detailed design and location of this viewing area should be determined in consultation with the Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to ensure it is located in a place that is respectful to cultural heritage and is designed to celebrate cultural heritage, not harm it. This reflective space could also provide a good location for education opportunities and a space for the Traditional Owners to share stories about the cultural values and connection to Country.
- h) Provide new information signage at eastern end of Precinct, including Shelly Beach, east of Shelly Beach and in new residential estate showing where access through the Precinct is available and where it is restricted.

A Signage Master Plan is provided at Plan 2 and a concept image of the raised platform is provided at Figure 13.



Figure 13: Potential site for new platform at Levys Beach (indicative concept)

7.8 DEFINE ACCESS TRAILS AND TRACKS

OBJECTIVE 8: *Clearly define authorised access trails and tracks and formalise car parking to help prevent visitors from going off-track and causing damage to vegetation, bird and wildlife habitat, sand dunes and cultural heritage sites.*

One of the biggest risks identified in the Precinct is the poorly defined access trails and tracks and presence of numerous unauthorised tracks. There are many opportunities to improve this situation and generally improve overall access, including:

- Clearly delineate authorised tracks through the use of maps, signs and fencing/marker posts. Clearly mark 'no access' for unauthorised areas.
- Minimise the harm that horse riding has on the natural environment and cultural heritage through clearer signage, better delineation of authorised tracks and improved enforcement.
- Install concrete bollards at Spookys Beach car park (in progress) to deter vehicles from going off-road and causing damage in the sand dune area to the east of the car park.
- Improve surface of inland access track and surface of car park to enable two-wheel drive and emergency vehicle access.
- In the event that the sand quarry ceases operations, investigate the potential for one additional authorised track to be created through the dunes system. This additional track would be accessed by the existing road that provides access to the quarry. This is a site which already has significant disturbance, therefore a new track is less likely to have any significant impacts on cultural heritage or vegetation. The potential impact of the new track would need to be assessed prior to its design and construction.**

****Note:** Some community members made suggestions during Round 1 consultation that additional authorised access tracks should be provided within the Precinct. Reasons for this request included providing better connectivity for residents, improvements to emergency service access routes and possible fire hazard reduction. Following consideration of advantages and disadvantages of creating new tracks, one additional access track has been identified in the Precinct at the site of the sand quarry. No other access points have been identified. Reasons for not including additional access tracks in the Master Plan include:

- A new access track between Levys Beach and Shelly Beach is likely to benefit a small number of residents in the nearby residential estate in Dennington and not the broader community of Warrnambool. The majority of residents visiting the Precinct currently access the site from Swinton Street or from the beach east of the Golf Course.
- The creation of new tracks is expensive. They require survey, CHMP, vegetation removal and offset, fencing, signage and maintenance. There is a cost benefit to the community by utilising available funding to upgrade and improve the existing authorised tracks rather than creating new ones.
- The bushfire risk of the Precinct is considered low and the Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan did not identify the need for any additional tracks. (Parks Victoria 2018)
- There would be a significant loss of native vegetation required to create a new track. This would also add to fragmentation of the Coastal Dune Scrub.
- The area of land between Levys Beach and Shelly Beach where the proposed access tracks were requested have poor passive surveillance, which doesn't promote pedestrian safety.
- Additional resources would also be required to ensure new tracks aren't being used illegally, ie. by motorbikes.

7.9 PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM RECOGNISING CULTURAL HERITAGE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE 9: *Recognise the role of cultural heritage and the natural environment as a driver of tourism and encourage visitation to the Precinct in the form of sustainable tourism.*

There is great opportunity to:

- Promote the Precinct as a place of important cultural and environmental significance, creating a stronger link between tourism and the conservation objectives for the Precinct. This opportunity should extend to broader information, including tourism information centres and online resources, including the Port-Fairy-Warrnambool Rail Trail website.
- Promote the Precinct as an ideal location for organised tours and education. Education will play an important role in the appreciation and protection of the Precinct in the future (refer to 7.10).

7.10 PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

OBJECTIVE 10: *Provide opportunities for education and interpretation. Share information with visitors about the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and connection of the Eastern Maar Peoples to this area and the significant environmental values of the Precinct.*

- Increase education around cultural significance of site. There is an opportunity to let visitors know that the Precinct is of great importance to the Traditional Owners and has significant stories, ceremonial sites, sacred places, evidence of food gathering, cooking sites and intangible cultural heritage going beyond physical elements.
- Increase education around natural environmental values of the site, such as threatened and endangered species. Incorporate environmental education such as information about Hooded Plover, Australasian Bittern and migratory shorebirds and the importance of staying away from habitat areas. Education will help visitors to gain a better appreciation of the local habitat and biodiversity corridors. Signage should also mention the importance of keeping dogs on leads at all times for the protection of local fauna, including Hooded Plover habitat areas. It is important that fenced temporary exclusion zones around Hooded Plover nesting areas are well signed.
- Incorporate interpretive signage/features which provide information and/or reminders and links to the cultural heritage and natural environment features of the Precinct. Refer to Plan 2 for suggested locations.
- Encourage/investigate opportunities for further studies to look at environmental and cultural significance of the area.

7.11 ENFORCE RULES AND REGULATIONS

OBJECTIVE 11: Encourage and enforce rules and regulations, and discourage the use of the Precinct as a destination for off-road vehicles and motorbikes.

Whilst the Precinct is valued for its remoteness, this remoteness also means that it is a place where illegal activities are more likely to occur. Visitation to the Precinct is likely to increase in the future due to forecast residential growth and tourism, and this is likely to have a positive impact in reducing illegal activities through increased passive surveillance of the area. In the short-term, the following measures can be implemented:

- Stop/reduce illegal activity through improved regulations and enforcement, including issuing of fines to those conducting illegal activities as a deterrent to others.
- Enforce dogs on-lead and provide more information about why dogs on-lead is important.
- Install CCTV cameras (in progress) to discourage illegal activities such as off-road four-wheel driving and illegal rubbish dumping.
- Warrnambool City Council to work closely with Parks Victoria and Victoria Police to ensure monitoring and enforcement is undertaken on a regular basis.
- Clearly define who is the responsible authority for each enforcement matter.

7.12 WORK IN COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

OBJECTIVE 12: Work in collaboration and support partnerships with local groups and individuals, volunteers, government organisations and Eastern Maar Peoples to see the plan implemented.

- Applying adaptive management processes, ie. in relation to bushfire management and revegetation, in consultation with the Traditional Owners. These processes will continue to develop and become more refined as they become more utilised throughout the region.
- Warrnambool City Council to work closely with Parks Victoria, DELWP, Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to discuss future management options, shared management arrangements/agreements and clarification of the role of each organisation.
- Land managers to support 'friends of' groups, other community groups and volunteers in continuing revegetation works, habitat protection projects and species monitoring.

Figure 14: Example of sign used to notify visitors of Hooded Plover habitat
(Source: Parks Vic. 2018, p.116)

During the breeding seasons for beach nesting birds, temporary exclusion fencing and signage may be erected on parts of the beach to protect nests and chicks:

- Dogs are not permitted to enter or remain within temporarily fenced bird nesting areas or within 20m of fenced nesting sites at any time.
- Dogs are not permitted within 5 m of the base of dunes.
- Dogs must not be walked in areas of the beach where this distance cannot be maintained such as during various stages of the tide.


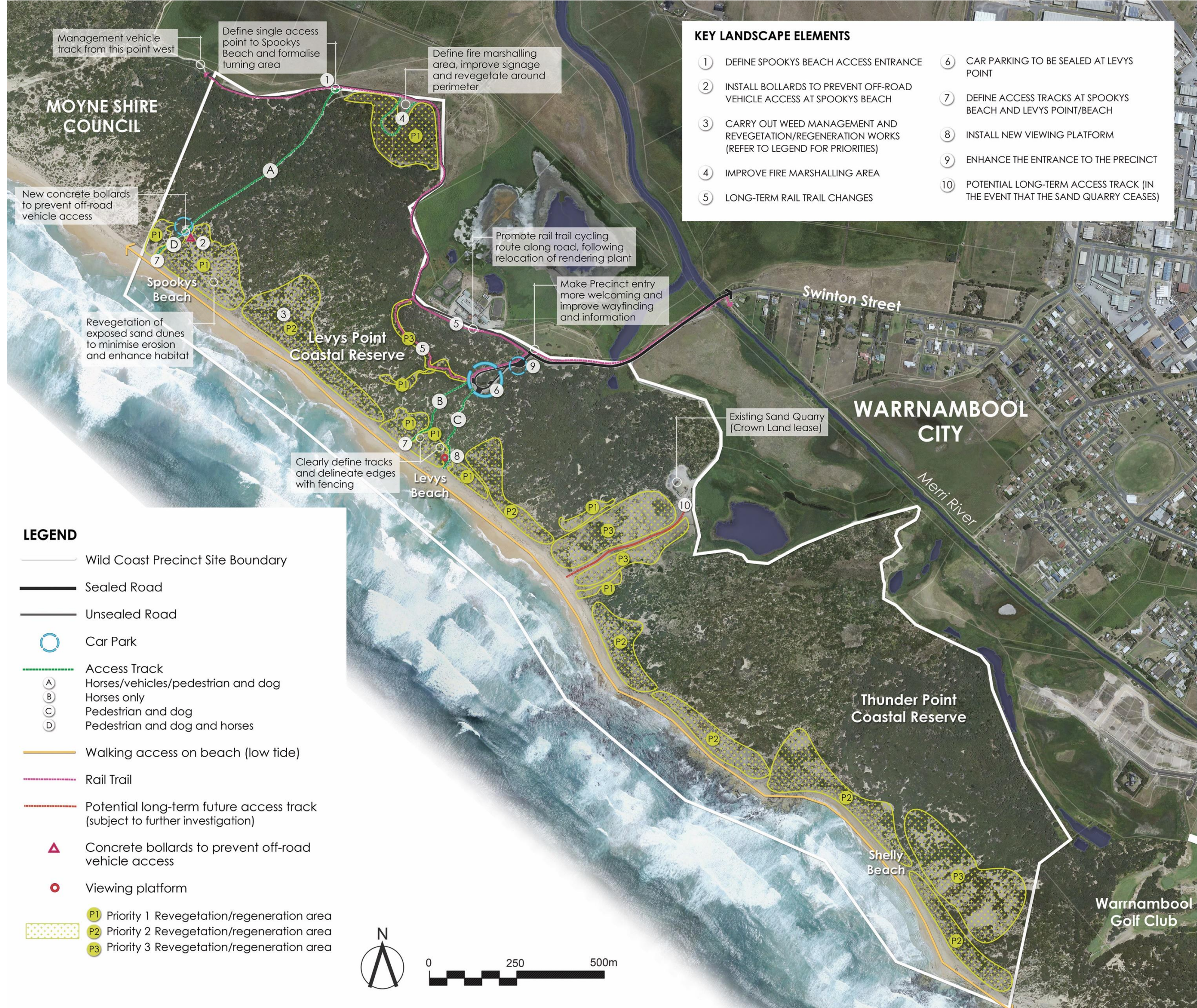
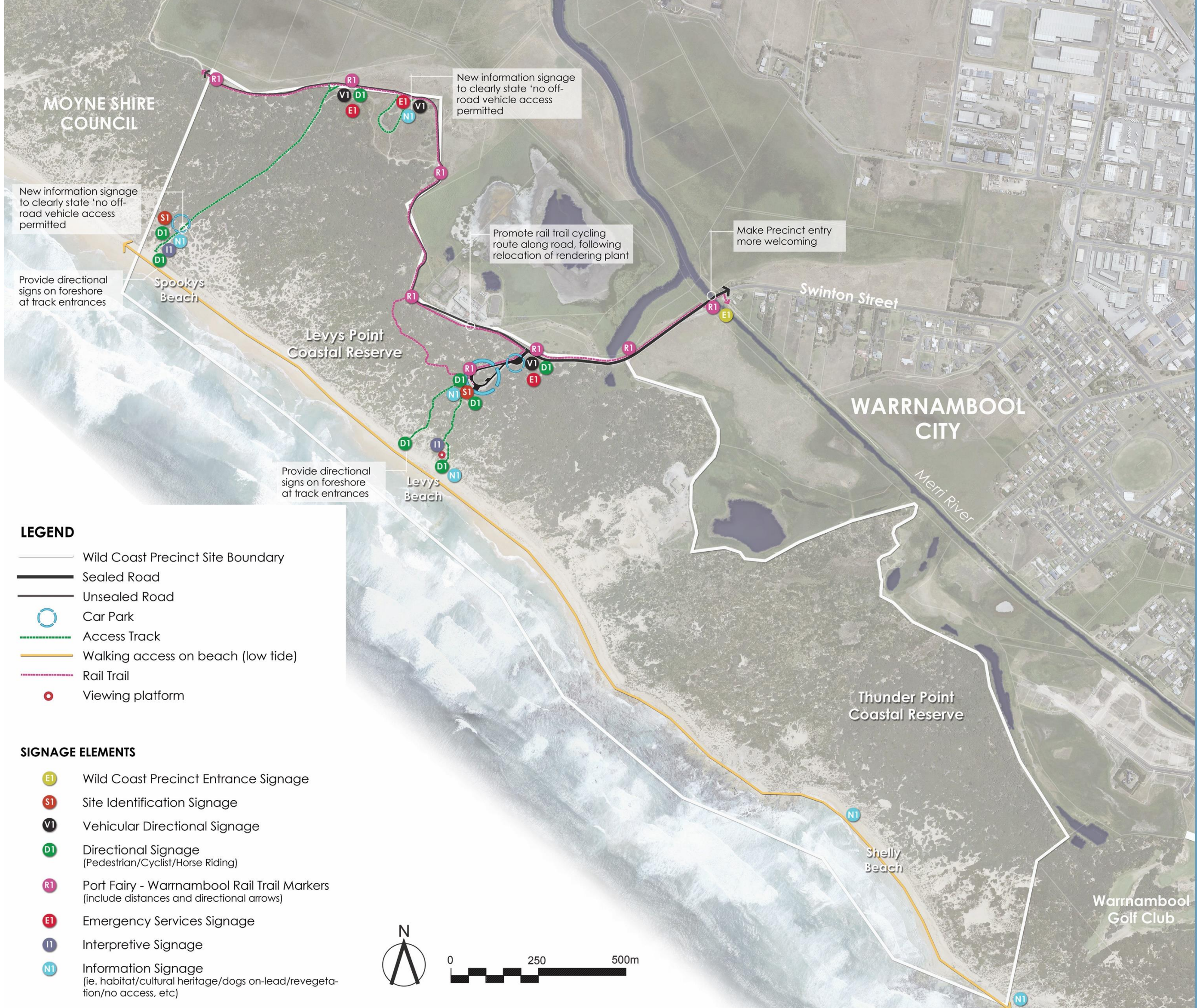




Figure 15: Temporary sign for Hooded Plover habitat area



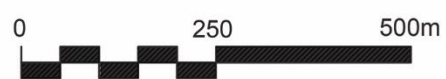


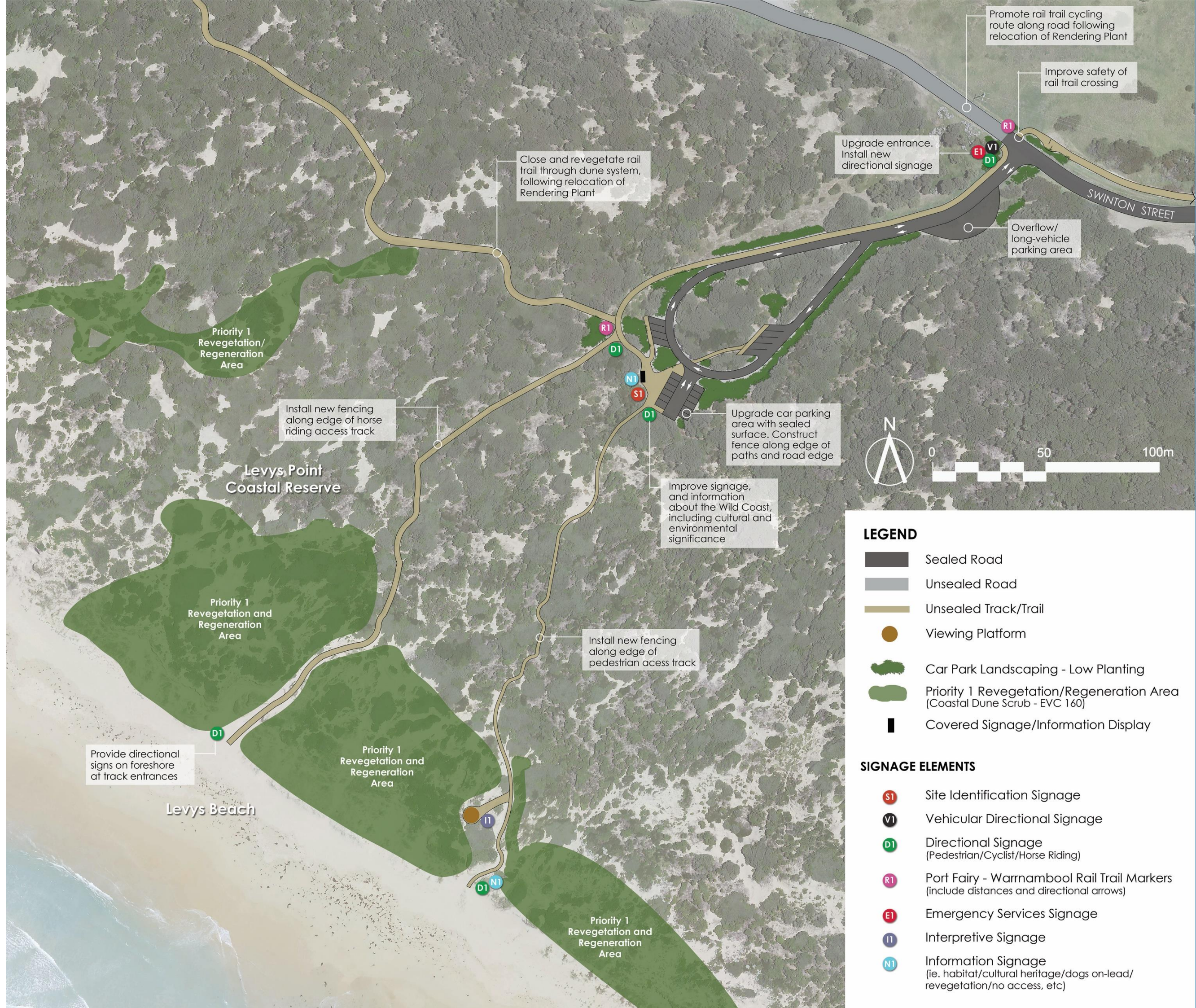
LEGEND

- Wild Coast Precinct Site Boundary
- Sealed Road
- Unsealed Road
- Car Park
- Access Track
- Walking access on beach (low tide)
- Rail Trail
- Viewing platform

SIGNAGE ELEMENTS

- E1** Wild Coast Precinct Entrance Signage
- S1** Site Identification Signage
- V1** Vehicular Directional Signage
- D1** Directional Signage (Pedestrian/Cyclist/Horse Riding)
- R1** Port Fairy - Warrnambool Rail Trail Markers (include distances and directional arrows)
- E1** Emergency Services Signage
- I1** Interpretive Signage
- N1** Information Signage (ie. habitat/cultural heritage/dogs on-lead/revegetation/no access, etc)



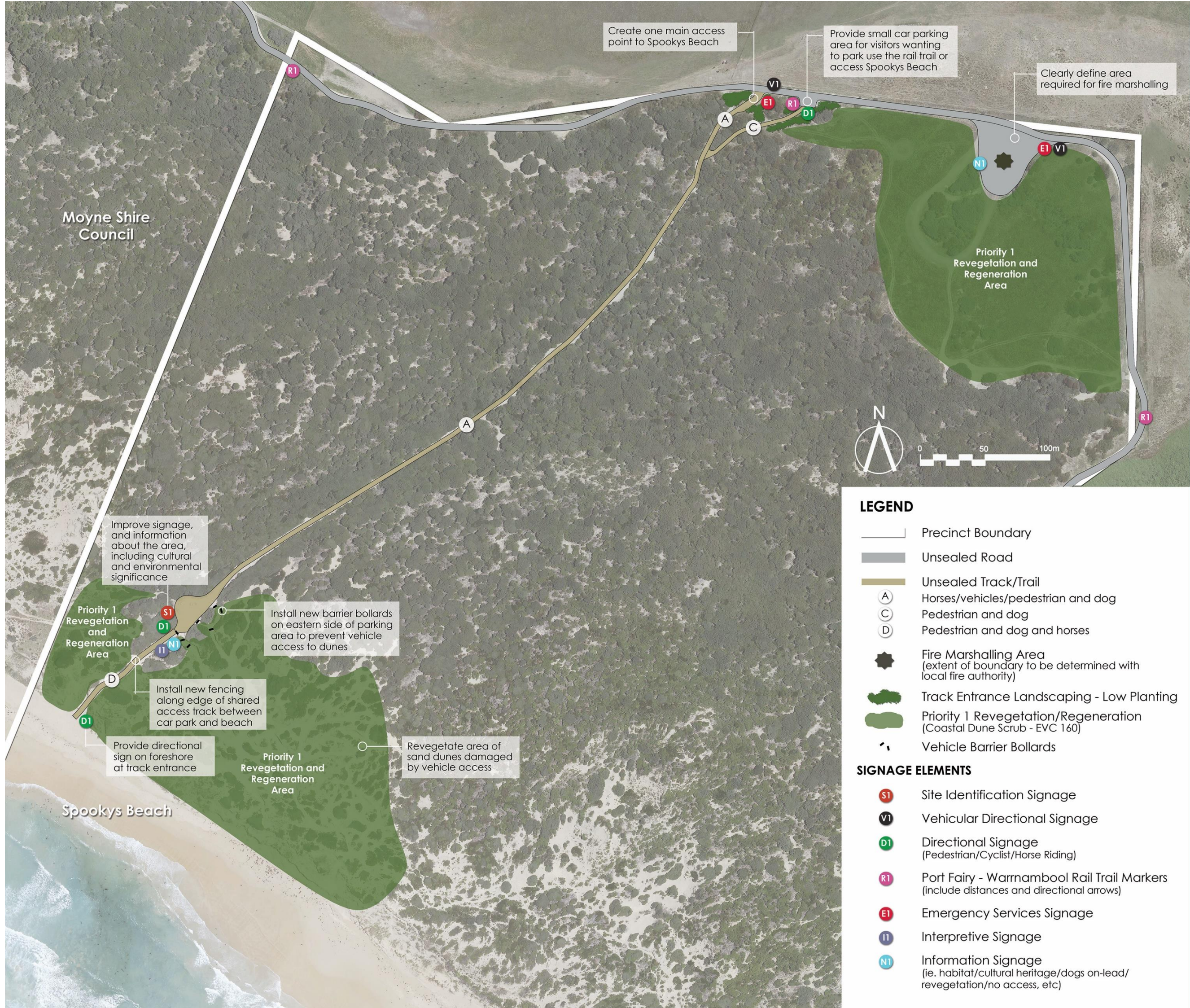


LEGEND

- Sealed Road
- Unsealed Road
- Unsealed Track/Trail
- Viewing Platform
- Car Park Landscaping - Low Planting
- Priority 1 Revegetation/Regeneration Area (Coastal Dune Scrub - EVC 160)
- Covered Signage/Information Display

SIGNAGE ELEMENTS

- S1 Site Identification Signage
- V1 Vehicular Directional Signage
- D1 Directional Signage (Pedestrian/Cyclist/Horse Riding)
- R1 Port Fairy - Warrnambool Rail Trail Markers (include distances and directional arrows)
- E1 Emergency Services Signage
- I1 Interpretive Signage
- N1 Information Signage (ie. habitat/cultural heritage/dogs on-lead/ revegetation/no access, etc)



8.IMPLEMENTATION

The Landscape Master Plan is intended to be implemented over the next 13 years. Whilst some of the Master Plan recommendations for new/upgraded infrastructure will fall into Council's annual maintenance program for management of the Precinct, others will require new budget allocations or funding from elsewhere, such as State or Federal grants in order to be completed. The timing for delivery of recommended infrastructure items, revegetation/regeneration works, tourism and recreation improvements, etc, will be dependent on:

- Council priorities and budget allocations.
- Availability of funding programs and grant opportunities.
- Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan priorities (as there is some cross-over between recommendations of the Landscape Master Plan and the works being undertaken to implement the Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan)

The following Implementation Plan at 8.1 provides suggested timeframes.

8.1 WILD COAST LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Priority Key: Immediate - Commence within 1 year, Short-term - 1-4 years, Medium, 5-8 years, Long-term - 8 years+, As required

1. ACKNOWLEDGE AND RESPECT CULTURAL HERITAGE

OBJECTIVE 1: Acknowledge and respect cultural heritage and connection to Country for the Eastern Maar Peoples. Conserve and protect these values through careful landscaping measures.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status/Provider <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
1a)	Provide visitors with information about cultural values of the Precinct and occupation of the site by Eastern Maar Peoples. Incorporate references through infrastructure, art/sculpture and/or cultural landscaping work at entry points to the Precinct and beaches.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	4.1 Geological features and 4.3 Aboriginal and colonial settlement history	Subject to Funding Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.	Medium
1b)	Investigate renaming places/roads within the Precinct using Maar languages.	Renaming to be in accordance with the guidelines for Geographic Names standard process	Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Community Groups	4.2 Cultural Landscape	N/A	Medium
1c)	Works to improve the Wild Coast Precinct will involve ongoing collaboration with Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to ensure works are sensitive to the cultural values of the area.	Work with Eastern Maar and Community Groups during the detailed design phase of recommended works.	Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Community Groups	4.2 Cultural Landscape	N/A	As required
1d)	There is potential for the Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to be more involved in the management of the Precinct, including, but not limited to, revegetation works and fire hazard risk management, to ensure landscaping practices respect cultural heritage and connection to Country.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	4.2 Cultural Landscape	Subject to Funding Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.	Medium-Long Term
1e)	Ensure that any work undertaken in the Precinct, including revegetation activities, fencing, signage and construction activities, do not result in detrimental impacts to cultural heritage sites, including known and unknown sites.		Land Managers	Aboriginal Victoria, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	4.4 Managing Aboriginal cultural heritage with Traditional Owners	N/A	Immediate
1f)	Any future development of land considered to be a high impact activity and likely to have a significant impact on any Aboriginal cultural heritage will require the preparation and approval of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) by the local Registered Aboriginal Party.		Land Managers	Aboriginal Victoria, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	4.4 Managing Aboriginal cultural heritage with Traditional Owners	As required. Further details will be known once desktop cultural heritage assessment has been completed as per 1g).	As required
1g)	Engage a suitably qualified heritage advisor to prepare a desktop cultural heritage assessment, to review existing data in relation to known places within the study area, determine likely locations for unknown heritage sites, the extent and probable levels of significance and provide recommendations for the preparation of Cultural Heritage Management Plans specific to the recommended works within the Precinct.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal Victoria	-	Subject to funding Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.	Immediate

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status/Provider <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
1h)	Contractors and volunteers will need to be advised on the cultural significance of the site and cultural heritage sensitivity. Contractors and volunteers will need to be given instructions about what to do in the event that they uncover or come across a significant site, so as to avoid damaging it. They will also need to be provided with details of any approved Cultural Heritage Management Plan, so that works can be completed in accordance with the Plan.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation</i>	-	<i>As required. Management obligation of land manager.</i>	<i>As required</i>
1l)	Council in partnership with Traditional Owners, should develop a Cultural Landscapes and Heritage Strategy which integrates and reflects Traditional Owner knowledge and land management practices.	This was a recommendation of the Green Warrnambool Plan 2018	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal Victoria</i>	<i>4.5 Cultural traditions and activities</i>	<i>Being developed through Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan implementation.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>

2. ENHANCE AND RESTORE NATIVE HABITAT

OBJECTIVE 2: Enhance and restore native habitat for biodiversity, through revegetation, weed reduction measures and improved protection of habitat.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
2a)	Minimise unauthorised access to dunes and firemarshalling area to help prevent further habitat damage and promote natural regeneration. (*Refer to Note 1 at end of table.)	Discuss design of fire marshalling area with Warrnambool Fire Brigade and Fire Rescue Victoria.	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Warrnambool Fire Brigade</i>	-	<i>Funding in-part from maintenance works program (ie. for minimising unauthorised access) Other works subject to funding. Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
2b)	Carry out revegetation and regeneration works in the Coastal Dune Scrub zone. In some locations, such as alongside tracks/trails, revegetation will achieve instant cover and will be more appropriate than regeneration. In other locations, works to promote regeneration will be more suitable, particularly in infill locations away from the exposed foredune area. The preferred method should be determined in consultation with Council's Natural Environment team. Refer to Landscape Master Plan (Plan 1) for priority areas.	Works to commence in the short-term, but will be a long-term project with revegetation works staged over a number of years. Fencing will be required at the edges of some revegetation locations.	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Volunteers and Community Organisations, Owner of Sand Mining Quarry</i>	<i>5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems</i>	<i>Subject to funding. Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
2c)	Priorities for revegetation/regeneration should focus on areas of sand dune which have sparse vegetation cover and are more susceptible to erosion as well as areas which have been previously utilised for unauthorised access. Fencing will be required at the edges of some revegetation locations. The revegetation/regeneration area priorities are identified on Plan 1.		<i>Land Managers</i>		<i>5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems</i>	<i>Subject to funding. Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>As required</i>

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status/Provider <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
2d)	When revegetating Coastal Dune Scrub (EVC 160), ensure a variety of local indigenous vegetation from the EVC are selected to increase plant biodiversity and enhance habitat for a variety of fauna species.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Volunteers and Community Organisations</i>	<i>5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>As required</i>
2e)	Continue weed and pest species eradication programs and investigate how they can be improved in the future.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Volunteers and Community Organisations</i>	<i>8.1 Research and monitoring</i>	<i>As required. Management obligation of land manager.</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
2f)	Carry out weed monitoring on a regular basis and respond quickly to prevent establishment of new weeds, particularly encroachment from adjoining areas. Marram Grass (<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>) and Bridal Creeper (<i>Asparagus asparagoides</i>) are particularly invasive weeds in the Precinct. Cape Beach Daisy (<i>Arctotheca populifolia</i>) is an emerging invasive weed which requires monitoring.				<i>8.1 Research and monitoring</i>	<i>As required. Management obligation of land manager.</i>	<i>As required</i>
2g)	Inform local residents of ways in which they can help to prevent spread of weed species within the Precinct.		<i>Land Managers</i>		-	<i>Incorporate into Council's natural environment program.</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
2h)	Inform local residents of the importance of responsible pet ownership, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> keeping dogs on-lead when visiting the Precinct, to avoid damage or death to fauna, bird eggs and vegetation. ensuring pet cats are kept indoors as much as possible, particularly at night; and highlighting the benefits of having cats desexed so as to minimise the number of unwanted kittens being dumped. 		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>BirdLife Australia</i>	-	<i>Incorporate into Council's natural environment program.</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
2i)	Ensure weed management and revegetation works along the foreshore near the base of the dunes are carried out in consultation with BirdLife Australia, whose volunteers play an important role in bird habitat protection, including Hooded Plover nesting habitat.	It is important that habitat is maintained and enhanced in these areas in a way which promotes nesting and feeding, including careful species selection and placement of plants.	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Volunteers and Community Organisations, including BirdLife Australia</i>	<i>5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
2j)	The Coastal Dune Scrub vegetation provides an almost continuous biodiversity corridor along the coastline. There is an opportunity to revegetate the edges of the sand mining quarry to reduce the gap in the biodiversity corridor.	This is a long-term goal which would only be able to occur if the sand quarry ceased operations.	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Owner of Sand Mining Quarry</i>	-	<i>Subject to funding. Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Long-term or as required</i>
2j)	Removal of derelict fencing, particularly within the eastern end of the Study Area, which pose a hazard to wildlife.		<i>Land Managers</i>			<i>Subject to funding. Where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Medium</i>

3. PROVIDE SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPING

OBJECTIVE 3: Ensure new structures, built works, landscaping and signage are designed and constructed in a sensitive way that is respectful to cultural heritage and environmental values, including habitat and native vegetation.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
3a)	Ensure landscaping works are designed and situated to be low intervention, ie post/pier not concrete slab and permeable fences which allow sand movement and habitat movement to occur.		<i>Land Managers</i>		-	<i>N/A</i>	<i>As required</i>
3b)	Where possible, utilise natural materials and select materials which will have minimal contamination impacts on local geology.		<i>Land Managers</i>		-	<i>N/A</i>	<i>As required</i>

4. PROVIDE FOR RECREATION

OBJECTIVE 4: Recognise the role of the Precinct in providing for recreation opportunities, including walking, bird and nature observation, cycling, horse riding, fishing and surfing.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
4a)	Protection of natural environment and cultural heritage should be a priority, with low-impact recreation activities supported and promoted.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation</i>	<i>4.4 Managing Aboriginal cultural heritage with Traditional Owners and 5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
4b)	Encourage people to utilise the Precinct for recreation purposes, but ensure clear advice is provided on the importance of staying on the authorised tracks.		<i>Land Managers</i>		-	<i>Incorporate into Council's recreation/tourism program.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>

5. RESPECT NATURE

OBJECTIVE 5: Respect nature, acknowledging the risks associated with flood function, bushfire, climate change, sand shifts and dune erosion. Engage climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
5a)	Selecting local indigenous plants suited to the local environment will ensure habitat for native fauna exists in the future.		<i>Land Managers</i>		5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems	N/A	<i>As required</i>
5b)	Ensuring a good diversity of plant species are planted in revegetation areas which will tolerate the forecast weather changes. Revegetation along the foreshore will help to minimise the coastal erosion of the sand dunes caused by storm surges and extreme weather events.		<i>Land Managers</i>		5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems	N/A	<i>As required</i>
5c)	Considering the need for emergency access in response to emergencies and natural disasters.	Work with emergency service authorities and EMAC to determine best locations for emergency service vehicle and staff to gain access to the beach in the event of an emergency. A 2.5m wide vehicle access is the preferred option by Fire Rescue Victoria, but this may not be feasible if it requires widening of formal tracks in the sand dune area. If cultural heritage impacts and/or engineering requirements prohibit vehicle access then Fire Rescue Victoria have stated they will utilise available access.	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Emergency Service Authorities, including Fire Rescue Victoria and Ambulance Victoria.</i>	5.4 Fire Management	N/A	Immediate
5d)	Selecting surfaces and finishes of constructed works to be weather resilient and designed with anticipated sea level changes in mind.		<i>Land Managers</i>		-	N/A	<i>As required</i>
5e)	Monitoring weed control methods and adapting weed control programs as weed species and distribution changes arise.		<i>Land Managers</i>		5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems	<i>As required. Management obligation of land manager.</i>	<i>As required</i>

6. IMPROVE SAFETY FOR PEDSTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

OBJECTIVE 6: Improve the safety of visitors, particularly walkers and cyclists.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
6a)	Minimise safety risk to visitors by prioritising and improving the Port Fairy–Warrnambool Rail Trail. This should include surface improvements, including fixing pot holes and improving drainage. Clear information and directional signage for trail and road users should also be provided, to reduce confusion and promote safety.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Friends of the Port-Fairy – Warrnambool Rail Trail, Moyne Shire Council</i>	-	<i>Funding for maintenance activities from recurrent Council budget. Asset improvements to be assessed as part of footpath and road renewal budgets along with internal budget bids and external funding applications.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
6b)	The existing rail trail deviates into the Levys Point car park and through a section of sand dunes. This is poorly marked and the track through the dunes is not ideal for cyclists due to its slope and surface. It is also difficult to access and maintain to an acceptable level. It is proposed that once the rendering plant relocates, the rail trail should continue along the road, instead of deviating through the dune system. The section of trail through the dunes does not lead to the beach and could be revegetated or allowed to regenerate.	This recommendation is dependent on timing of rendering plant relocation.	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Friends of the Port-Fairy – Warrnambool Rail Trail, Moyne Shire Council</i>	-	<i>Closing of this section of path can be accommodated under current Council budget provided alternate route past rendering plant can be established (subject to survey and design).</i>	<i>As required</i>

7. ENHANCE VISITOR'S EXPERIENCE

OBJECTIVE 7: Enhance visitor's experience of the Precinct, through infrastructure improvements and improved wayfinding and information signage.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
7a)	Provide signage at the entrance to the Precinct near the Swinton Street bridge crossing the Merri River. This signage could include a welcome message to the Precinct and provide a safety message to indicate that the roads are shared by walkers, cyclists and vehicles.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation</i>	-	<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
7b)	Upgrade signage at Levys Point car park entrance and Levys Point car park and provide new signage at Spookys Beach track entrance and Spookys Beach car park to include maps showing authorised tracks, distance measurements to the beach, dog on-lead regulations, beach access and safety and 'take your rubbish home with you' messages.	It is important that fenced temporary exclusion zones around Hooded Plover nesting areas are also well signed.	<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Surf Lifesaving Victoria, Emergency Service Authorities, Birdlife Australia</i>	-	<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
7c)	Provide interpretive information about cultural heritage and the natural environment, including important habitat areas, at Levys Beach and Spookys Beach.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation</i>	<i>4.3 Aboriginal and colonial settlement history</i>	<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
7d)	Provide clear directions for Port Fairy-Warrnambool Rail Trail users at regular intervals throughout the Precinct, with distance markers and directional signage to provide improved wayfinding.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Friends of the Port-Fairy – Warrnambool Rail Trail, Moyne Shire Council</i>	-	<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
7e)	Provide new signage at Spookys Beach turn-off indicating that the track is a shared track and is suitable for walkers, horse riding and vehicles (only 4WD at present). Distance markers should also be provided to let visitors know what distance it is to the beach.		<i>Land Managers</i>		-	<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
7f)	Signs for emergency service vehicles to be provided at Levys Point turn-off and car park, Spookys Beach turn-off and car park and the fire marshalling area.		<i>Land Managers</i>		<i>5.4 Fire Management</i>	<i>As required. Management obligation of land manager.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
7g)	Provide a new reflective space in the form of a raised platform to take in views of the Precinct, beautiful coastline and biodiversity. This could be positioned adjacent to the authorised walking track between Levys Point car park and Levys Beach. The detailed design and location of this viewing area should be determined in consultation with the Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to ensure it is located in a place that is respectful to cultural heritage and is designed to celebrate cultural heritage, not harm it. This reflective space could also provide a good location for education opportunities and a space for the Traditional Owners to share stories about the cultural values and connection to Country.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation</i>	<i>4.3 Aboriginal and colonial settlement history</i>	<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i> <i>Check current/future DELWP grants for eligibility.</i>	<i>Medium</i>
7h)	Provide new information signage at eastern end of Precinct, including Shelly Beach, east of Shelly Beach and in new residential estate showing where access through the Precinct is available and where it is restricted.		<i>Land Managers</i>			<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.</i>	<i>Short-term</i>

8. DEFINE ACCESS TRAILS AND TRACKS

OBJECTIVE 8: Clearly define authorised access trails and tracks and formalise car parking to help prevent visitors from going off-track and causing damage to vegetation, bird and wildlife habitat, sand dunes and cultural heritage sites. (*Refer to Note 1 at end of table)

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
8a)	Clearly delineate authorised tracks through the use of maps, signs and fencing/marker posts. Clearly mark 'no access' for unauthorised areas.	Fences similar to that between Thunder Point and Shelly Beach. Consider finishes/design features that will allow walkers to see posts in low light conditions. Consider environmental solutions to restrain sand movement on paths, such as staggered tracks and wind/sand barriers made from natural materials.	Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	4.1 Geological features, 4.4 Managing Aboriginal cultural heritage with Traditional Owners and 5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems	Management obligation of land manager. Funding in-part from maintenance budget. New signage and maps subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.	Immediate
8b)	Minimise the harm that horse riding has on the natural environment and cultural heritage through clearer signage, better delineation of authorised tracks and improved enforcement.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	6.2 Recreational Activities	Management obligation of land manager. Funding in-part from maintenance budget. New signage and maps subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.	Immediate
8c)	Install concrete bollards at Spookys Beach car park to deter vehicles from going off-road and causing damage in the sand dune area to the east of the car park.	Consider use of removable bollard/s at the beach access entrance, if emergency vehicle access is provided to the beach (see 5c)	Land Managers		-	Commenced	Immediate
8d)	Improve surface of inland access track and surface of car park to enable two-wheel drive and emergency vehicle access.		Land Managers		6.4 Site strategies	Partial funding may be available from Council's recurrent road and footpath renewal program for maintenance activities. Upgrade works would require Council budget bid or external funding arrangement.	Short-term
8e)	In the event that the sand quarry ceases operations, investigate the potential for one additional authorised track to be created through the dunes system. This additional track would be accessed by the existing road that provides access to the quarry. This is a site which already has significant disturbance, therefore a new track is less likely to have any significant impacts on cultural heritage or vegetation. The potential impact of the new track would need to be assessed prior to its design and construction.	Part of the site is managed by DELWP.	Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	-	Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme.	Long-term or as required

9. PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM RECOGNISING CULTURAL HERITAGE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE 9: Recognise the role of cultural heritage and the natural environment as a driver of tourism and encourage visitation to the Precinct in the form of sustainable tourism.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
9a)	Promote the Precinct as a place of important cultural and environmental significance, creating a stronger link between tourism and the conservation objectives for the Precinct. This opportunity should extend to broader information, including tourism information centres and online resources, including the Port-Fairy-Warrnambool Rail Trail website.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Local Tourism Industry and operators, Friends of Port-Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail	4.3 Aboriginal and colonial settlement history	Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme	Medium
9b)	Promote the Precinct as an ideal location for organised tours and education. Education will play an important role in the appreciation and protection of the Precinct in the future (refer to 7.10).		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, BirdLife Australia, Local Schools and Educational Institutions, Local Tourism Industry	4.3 Aboriginal and colonial settlement history	Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme	Medium

10. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

OBJECTIVE 10: Provide opportunities for education and interpretation. Share information with visitors about the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and connection of the Eastern Maar Peoples to this area and the significant environmental values of the Precinct.

Recommendations		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
10a)	Increase education around cultural significance of site. There is an opportunity to let visitors know that the Precinct is of great importance to the Traditional Owners and has significant stories, ceremonial sites, sacred places, evidence of food gathering, cooking sites and intangible cultural heritage going beyond physical elements.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	4.3 Aboriginal and colonial settlement history	Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme	Short-term
10b)	Increase education around natural environmental values of the site, such as threatened and endangered species. Incorporate environmental education such as information about Hooded Plover, Australasian Bittern and migratory shorebirds and the importance of staying away from habitat areas. Education will help visitors to gain a better appreciation of the local habitat and biodiversity corridors. Signage should also mention the importance of keeping dogs on leads at all times for the protection of local fauna, including Hooded Plover habitat areas.		Land Managers	Birdlife Australia	5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems	Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme	Short-term

Recommendations		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
10c)	Incorporate interpretive signage/features which provide information and/or reminders and links to the cultural heritage and natural environment features of the Precinct. Refer to Plan 2 for suggested locations.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation</i>	<i>4.3 Aboriginal and colonial settlement history and 5.1 Managing coastal ecosystems</i>	<i>Subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
10d)	Encourage/investigate opportunities for further studies to look at environmental and cultural significance of the area.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Local Groups and Organisations, Universities, Schools</i>	-	N/A	<i>Immediate</i>

11. ENFORCE RULES AND REGULATIONS

OBJECTIVE 11: Encourage and enforce rules and regulations, and discourage the use of the Precinct as a destination for off-road vehicles and motorbikes.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
11a)	Stop/reduce illegal activity through improved regulations and enforcement, including issuing of fines to those conducting illegal activities as a deterrent to others.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Victoria Police, Parks Victoria, DELWP, Aboriginal Victoria</i>	<i>6.4 Site strategies and 6.6 Risks and safety</i>	<i>Commenced</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
11b)	Enforce dogs on-lead and provide more information about why dogs on-lead is important.	Consider minimum number of patrolling hours enforcing the dog on-leash regulations, especially throughout the Hooded Plover breeding season.	<i>Land Managers</i>		<i>6.4 Site strategies and 6.6 Risks and safety</i>	<i>Management obligation of land manager. New signage is subject to funding where applicable, seek funding program/grant scheme</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
11c)	Install CCTV cameras (in progress) to discourage illegal activities such as off-road four-wheel driving and illegal rubbish dumping.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Victoria Police</i>	<i>6.4 Site strategies and 6.6 Risks and safety</i>	<i>Commenced</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
11d)	Warrnambool City Council to work closely with Parks Victoria and Victoria Police to ensure monitoring and enforcement is undertaken on a regular basis.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Victoria Police, Parks Victoria, DELWP, Aboriginal Victoria</i>	<i>6.4 Site strategies and 6.6 Risks and safety</i>	<i>Commenced</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
11e)	Clearly define who is the responsible authority for each enforcement matter.		<i>Land Managers</i>	<i>Victoria Police, Parks Victoria, DELWP, Aboriginal Victoria</i>	<i>6.4 Site strategies and 6.6 Risks and safety</i>	N/A	<i>Immediate</i>

12. WORK IN COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

OBJECTIVE 12: Work in collaboration and support partnerships with local groups and individuals, volunteers, government organisations and Eastern Maar Peoples to see the plan implemented.

Recommendation		Comments/Additional Information	Responsibility	Delivery Partners	Link to Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan	Funding Status <i>N/A = Not required</i>	Priority
12a)	Applying adaptive management processes, ie. in relation to bushfire management and revegetation, in consultation with the Traditional Owners. These processes will continue to develop and become more refined as they become more utilised throughout the region.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	-	N/A	Medium
12b)	Warrnambool City Council to work closely with Parks Victoria, DELWP, Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to discuss future management options, shared management arrangements/agreements and clarification of the role of each organisation.		Land Managers	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	-	N/A	Short-term
12c)	Land managers to support ‘friends of’ groups, other community groups and volunteers in continuing revegetation works, habitat protection projects and species monitoring.		Land Managers	Volunteers and Community Organisations, including BirdLife Australia, Schools	-	N/A	Short-term

***NOTE 1:**

A key risk to the natural environment and cultural values of the Wild Coast Precinct is unauthorised access from 4WDs, motorbikes, pedestrians, horse riders and dogs off-lead. It is necessary to apply an adaptive management approach to monitor the effects of unauthorised access and respond accordingly.

Land managers, including Council and DELWP, will need to undertake regular monitoring to determine if the recommended actions for defining authorised access trails and tracks and minimising the number of visitors going off-track is helping to reduce damage to vegetation, bird and wildlife habitat, sand dunes and cultural heritage sites. In the event that unauthorised access is still occurring and is not stopped/reduced sufficiently through the measures recommended in this Master Plan, including fencing, signage, revegetation and enforcement, etc, Council should investigate whether additional restrictions should be applied to access throughout the Precinct, ie. vehicle access to Spookys Beach.

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