22.02 ENVIRONMENT

04/02/2016
VC127

22.02-1 Land Management and Protection

19/01/2006
VC37

This policy applies to all proposed uses and developments in the rural zones and the Low Density Residential Zone.

Policy Basis

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

Objectives

- To adopt the principles of Landcare when considering applications to use and develop land.
- To have regard to the regional catchment strategy as prepared by the Glenelg Regional Catchment and Land Protection Board.
- To facilitate the rectification of land degradation and the improvement of the Shire's rural land.
- To support and encourage an integrated total catchment management approach.
- To encourage the preparation of whole farm management plans.

Implementation

It is policy that:

- Use and development of land within rural zones should take into account relevant Landcare plans, any catchment management strategy and relevant Salinity Land Management Plans.
- The importance of existing stands of native vegetation should be considered.
- Conditions on permits should be applied to prevent the degradation of land or to rectify current land degradation problems.
- Council shall seek to assist the implementation of land management plans.
- Comments from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment should be considered where sites have demonstrated land degradation problems.

22.02-2 Wetland Areas

19/01/2006
VC37

This policy applies to land identified as areas of significant wetlands and waterways and included within Schedule 2 to the Environmental Significance Overlay.

Policy Basis

Wetland areas are important flora and fauna habitat and contribute to the Shire's biodiversity. They are a major environmental asset which needs to be protected.

Objectives

To recognise that wetland areas comprising wetlands, remnant swamplands, intertidal areas and lagoons and significant waterways provide important functions including:-

- flora and fauna habitat;
- drainage;
- recreation areas;
- landscape features;
- water storage.

Implementation

It is policy that:

The role and function of wetland areas will be taken into account, in a local or regional setting in respect to any proposed use or development on or adjacent to an identified wetland.

22.02-3 Fire Hazard

19/01/2006
VC37

This policy applies to developments throughout the Shire.

Policy Basis

It is important that land use planning and development considerations include the need to minimise the impact of fire.

Objectives

- To ensure that new land use and development does not increase the level of fire risk.
- To ensure that new land use and development includes adequate fire protection measures.

Implementation

Fire Protection measures:

It is policy that:

- Buildings and access roads be sited and subdivisions designed to minimise the impact of fire and the emergency conditions which arise from fire.
- Development associated with residential or public use incorporate fire prevention measures where appropriate in accordance with the relevant fire prevention guidelines.
- Access, fencing and the location of dams and tanks maximise fire fighting potential and minimise interference with fire fighting measures where appropriate.

22.02-4 Coastal Areas

19/01/2006
VC37

This policy applies to land included in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Significance Overlay

Policy Basis

The coastal areas of the Shire are a major natural, economic and environmental resource which need to be protected, conserved, managed and developed in a sustainable manner.

The Coastal Policy applies to the following primary elements:-

- the seabed, tidal waters and foreshore;
- dunes, beaches, sea cliffs, wave cut platforms and hard rock areas;
- the water, plants and animals;
- the atmosphere above;
- wetlands, marshes, lagoons and swamps along, and immediately adjacent to the coast;
- associated areas of vegetation;
- associated areas of animal habitat; and
- associated areas of human activity.

The policy area extends inland to embrace uses and developments which may have a significant effect upon the amenity and environment of the coast as constituted by the primary elements listed above and includes the Bridgewater Bay area and the area between Portland and Narrawong township.

Objectives

- To protect the natural and cultural values of the coast.
- To use and develop the coast in a sustainable manner.
- To ensure the integrated management and protection of the coastal zone.

Natural and cultural values of the coast are to be protected

This objective recognises:-

- that the natural character of the coastal area is of special cultural value to the Shire and to visitors;
- the importance of the coastal zone to Aboriginal people, in particular traditional uses and Aboriginal culture;
- the dynamic, complex and interconnected nature of biological and physical processes in the coastal zone;
- the susceptibility of the coast to the effects of natural events, including sea-level rise;
- the importance of good water quality to marine ecosystems;
- the importance of maintaining representative or significant natural ecosystems and sites of biological importance, biodiversity and indigenous coastal flora and fauna; and
- the need to protect coastal sites and features of cultural and historic value.

The coast is to be used and developed in a sustainable manner

This objective recognises:-

- that the coast is a major economic asset and contains the Shire's major concentrations of population and industry;

- that some activities such as the port at Portland are dependent on or gain an advantage from a coastal location;
- the economic and social values of sea ports, mineral and forest resources, agriculture, marine farming and fisheries to Glenelg Shire and the legitimate aspirations of individuals and communities for allocation of space and resources in the coastal area for these activities;
- the importance of protecting valuable fish nursery habitat for future fishing activities;
- the importance of good water quality to the Shire's marine-based food industries;
- the economic and social values of tourism and recreation in the coastal area;
- the importance of public access to and along the coast consistent with protection of natural coastal values, systems and processes; and
- that the coastal environment is being affected by activities, uses and development occurring outside the coastal area.

Integrated management and protection of the coastal zone is to be a shared responsibility.

This objectives recognises:-

- that government agencies should manage the coast to further sustainable development objectives;
- the need for integrated, co-ordinated and co-operative management of the coast;
- that management responsibility for the coast is shared between:-
  - communities, especially those who gain directly by the use and development of coastal resources and those who have traditionally used them;
  - Local Government;
  - the Regional Coastal Board;
  - State Government;
  - Commonwealth Government;
- the importance of sharing knowledge about coastal resources and processes;
- that governments at all levels acknowledge that there are responsibilities created by a number of international conventions and agreements relating to the coastal area;
- that planning authorities have a key role in sustainable development of the coastal area through planning schemes;
- that communities have an important role to play in coastal management through:-
  - participation in decision making;
  - input to policies and plans;
  - direct management.

Implementation

Tourism

It is policy that:

- Tourism in the coastal area including visitor accommodation and other facilities, will be directed to suitable locations based on the objectives, principles and outcomes of this policy.
- Tourism development proposals in the coastal area will be subject to environmental impact assessment where relevant.
- Tourism development will be located where there is environmental capacity and where it does not significantly conflict with the natural and aesthetic qualities of the coastal zone.

Urban and Residential Development

It is policy that:

- Care will be taken to minimise, or where possible totally avoid, any impact on environmentally sensitive areas from the expansion of urban and residential areas, including the provision of infrastructure for urban and residential areas.
- Urban and residential development in the coastal area will be based on existing towns and townships. Compact and contained development will be encouraged in order to avoid ribbon development and unrelated cluster developments along the coast.
- Any urban and residential development in the coastal area will be identified through designation of areas in planning schemes consistent with the objectives, principles and outcomes of this policy.
- Where applicable, new uses and development shall demonstrate how they are compatible with foreshore and management planning for the coast.

Transport

It is policy that:

- All transport infrastructure and associated services will be planned, developed and maintained consistent with this Policy.
- Significant scenic coastal transport routes and associated facilities will be identified, planned and managed to ensure sustainable benefits for tourism and recreation value and amenity.
- New coast hugging roads will be avoided where possible with vehicular access to the coast being provided by spur roads planned, developed and maintained consistent with this Policy.
- Marine structures will be designed, sited, constructed and managed in accordance with best practice environmental management and subject to environmental impact assessment having regard to statutory requirements.
- The multiple use of port areas will be encouraged.

Recreation

It is policy that:

- Suitable recreation opportunities will be identified through strategic planning and may be provided in appropriate locations where they do not adversely affect sensitive coastal ecosystems and landforms or in designated areas where such effects can be remedied or mitigated.

Bridgewater Bay Coastal Area

It is policy that:

- Future residential and commercial development shall be planned, designed and sited to ensure that the landscape features and qualities and the natural environmental of the area shall not be lessened. Applications for changes of use and new development will demonstrate how they are compatible with the role of the coast as an environmental, conservation, recreation, open space and tourist natural resource.

Narrawong to Portland Coastal Area

It is policy that:

- The Narrawong to Portland coastal area is a major gateway to the Portland region and provides a mix of residential and semi-rural settings. Future residential and commercial development shall be consistent with the capability of the land to manage and accommodate the development.
- Development proposals shall incorporate the revegetation of sites with predominantly indigenous species, land management practices, the siting and design of houses and buildings which blend into the landscape, the avoidance of linear development and the limiting of entry points from existing roads, particularly the highway.

22.02-5 High Quality Agricultural Land

02/02/2006
C28

This policy applies to high quality agricultural land within the Rural Conservation Zone to the north and north-west of Portland.

Policy Basis

The Shire has a number of areas of high quality agricultural land particularly north and west of Portland which have the opportunity to support highly productive agricultural and horticultural uses. Further work needs to be undertaken to identify all areas in the Shire.

Context

The Shire's high quality agricultural areas are a limited resource and offer substantial economic and tourist development potential. Council wishes to discourage uses which are non-soil based (such as residential development) or uses which do not depend on the high quality of the soil for their success. Timber production is discouraged because there is other land available which is suitable for timber production. If land is used for timber production, it will limit its availability for other uses, particularly because of the long term impact of pine plantations on soil structure.

Objectives

- To recognise the finite nature of high quality agricultural land.
- To protect high quality agricultural land because of its productivity and ability to sustain a wide range of agricultural uses.
- To encourage specialist agriculture on high quality agricultural land.
- To prevent the unsustainable use of high quality agricultural land which results in the loss of the quantity or quality of the soil and limits the realisation of its full productive potential.

- To prevent the conversion of high quality agricultural land to non-soil based use and development.
- To promote a range of niche markets to complement the Shire's diversity of agriculture.

Implementation

It is policy that:

- A proposed use or development, including subdivision will only be supported where it shows that it can maintain the productive potential of high quality agricultural land.
- Where buildings or works are essential they shall be sited to as to avoid or minimise loss of good quality agricultural land.
- The suitability of high quality agricultural land will be considered in the assessment of use and development proposals. Applications which make less than optimum use of the productive potential of the land will be discouraged.

22.02-6 Management of Coastal Landscapes

04/02/2016
VC127

Policy Basis

Victoria's coastal landscapes are some of the most spectacular in the country. These coastal landscapes and their hinterlands are highly valued by the community for their visual, environmental and cultural qualities, and as well as being productive agricultural land.

The State Planning Policy Framework seeks to protect coastal areas through the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014. The Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study 2006 aims to implement relevant objectives established within the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 and the Coastal Management Act 1995 by providing recommendations to manage and protect visually significant landscapes across most of the Victorian coastline.

This Local Policy seeks to ensure that land use and development responds to the landscape character and Future Directions as identified in the Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study 2006, and the MSS. This Policy provides guidance on how development in coastal areas should respond to the natural environment and rural and built form elements that make up the landscape character of the shire. These elements include vegetation, key views and vistas, settlements, coastal areas between settlements, hinterland areas between settlements and infrastructure.

Objectives

- To ensure that coastal related development responds appropriately to the landscape setting, character and desired future character directions.
- To maintain locally significant views and vistas that contribute to the character of the coastal and coastal hinterland region.
- To ensure that development is subordinate to the natural, visual and environmental landscape character and significance.

Refer to Map 1 on page 12 for delineation of the Landscape Character Types and Areas.

Future Character Directions

1.1 Far West Coastal Hills

The unique and diverse character of the landscape in this area will be protected and enhanced through careful management of built development and protection of indigenous vegetation. The settlement of Nelson will retain a small-scale village character and will

develop in a manner which protects the natural scenic values of the Glenelg River estuary and integrity of its natural edges. The undeveloped and open, wind swept character viewed from Portland-Nelson Road will be protected and indigenous vegetation retained and strengthened.

1.2 Discovery Bay Dunes & Hinterland

The coast and near-coastal hinterland of this Character Area will retain a wild, natural and undeveloped character free from intrusive built development or other landscape change. Scenic coastal areas including the Bridgewater Lakes and Discovery Bay dune system will be complemented by surrounding landscapes of native vegetation and absence of built form. The reintroduction of indigenous vegetation to roadsides and as buffers to development in inland areas will gradually improve the monotonous character of the inland parts of this Character Area.

3.1 The Three Capes

The rugged, dramatic and highly valued coastal landforms and undulating dune-field hinterland of this Character Area will be respected in the context of substantial landscape change. Long stretches of coast between the wind farm facilities will become natural landscape 'refuges' and provide scenic vistas to coastal landforms free of built development. Cleared landscapes (including the coastline at Cape Bridgewater) will become increasingly vegetated with indigenous coastal vegetation linking through to remnant vegetation in existing coastal reserves. Built form will be carefully sited away from prominent landforms and sparsely located throughout the area to avoid impacting on the scenic coastal landforms, minimise visual clutter of the undulating hinterland landscape and avoid duplication of the visual intrusion of wind energy facilities. Future large scale landscape changes should be avoided, or directed to already modified landscapes near Cape Sir William Grant.

4.2 Portland Coast and Hinterland

The landscape of this Character Area will develop a distinct rural character outside the settlement of Portland. Open and undeveloped landscapes surrounding Mount Richmond and viewed from Cape Bridgewater Road and Portland-Nelson Road will be carefully managed. Native vegetation will remain as an important landscape feature. New industrial and large scale development will be clustered in already modified areas closer to Portland, but urban development of the settlement will be planned in such a way as to create a clear visual break to surrounding undeveloped areas.

Policy

It is policy to:

Vegetation

- Protect and enhance indigenous vegetation, particularly:
  - at roadsides, in riparian strips and at the edge of waterways.
  - at the coastal edge and adjoining inland lakes.
  - on hill slopes viewed from main roads and settlements.
  - in cleared areas adjacent to Discovery Bay Coastal Park and Bridgewater Lakes, and
  - adjacent to roads and other viewing corridors.
- Protect indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the coastal landscape.
- Encourage the planting of indigenous vegetation for rehabilitation works.
- Use appropriate indigenous species or non-invasive native / exotic plantings that are already a feature of the area for landscaping around developments.

- Retain existing shelterbelts and exotic feature planting where it is a feature of the area.
- Where shelterbelts or exotic feature plantings are lost, old, degraded or incomplete, replace with the same species or an alternative non-invasive species.

Key Views and Vistas

- Protect locally significant views and vistas that contribute to the character of coastal and coastal hinterland areas, including:
  - scenic vistas from publicly accessible locations (e.g. 'gateway' views at topographic rises
  - along a road, roads that terminate at the coast, and formal scenic lookouts), and
  - views from important access corridors (e.g. main roads and tourist routes, walking tracks and recreation trails).
- Design and site structures to minimise the loss of canopy trees and understorey wherever possible and maximise the area on a lot able to support vegetation.
- Design and site buildings to minimise their visual intrusion. This may be achieved by;
  - low building heights;
  - appropriate colours and materials;
  - encouraging property boundary delineation by vegetation
  - encouraging open-style fencing
  - integrating or screening built form with vegetation.

Edges of Settlements

- Encourage the retainment of undeveloped breaks between settlements by focussing further development within existing township boundaries.
- Utilise existing landscape features, where they exist, (e.g. topography, vegetation coverage, vistas) to define edges to settlements, protecting the surrounding landscape character.
- Site development to minimise views of the buildings and structures from road corridors, with the exception of built form that has been traditionally located adjacent to the road (e.g. small dairying structures).

Coastal Edges of Settlements

- Scale the height and form of new development at the coastal edge of settlements to be sensitive to surrounding development, the surrounding landform and the visual setting of the settlement, particularly when viewed from the foreshore.
- Support a hierarchy of built form within coastal settlements, with lower buildings adjacent to the foreshore and higher buildings away from the foreshore.

Ridges and Hill Slopes

- Where development cannot be avoided in steep locations or prominent hill faces:
  - encourage the siting of development in the lower one third of the visible slope, wherever possible;
  - set buildings and structures among existing vegetation, and/or establish gardens of
  - locally appropriate species;
  - design buildings to follow the contours or step down the site to minimise
  - earthworks and;
  - articulate buildings into separate elements, and avoid visually dominant elevations.

Between Settlements – Coastal Locations

- Confine development to existing coastal settlements wherever possible and discourage any ribbon developments or development atop cliffs, coastal landforms visible from roads, beaches and recreation locations.
- Minimise the visual prominence and intrusion of developments in coastal locations.
- Encourage buildings or structures be set back from the foreshore, coast and natural coastal landforms.
- Where development within the coastal strip cannot be prevented (e.g. development for essential public purposes):
  - site developments on the inland slope of dunes so that buildings do not protrude
  - above the dune ridgeline;
  - set buildings and structures among existing vegetation, maximising the retention of coastal
  - vegetation;
  - utilise appropriate indigenous vegetation to further integrate the development with
  - the landscape;
  - design buildings to follow the contours or step down the site and avoid visually
  - dominant elevations;
  - limit the extent of overlooking of the foreshore; and
  - locate driveways and paths away from the foreshore.
- Discourage change to the vegetated character of coastal areas by:
  - siting developments away from vegetated areas and dunes;
  - siting developments in areas of low visibility (e.g. low in inland slopes) and
  - avoiding any locations on ridgelines; and
  - using darker colours (e.g. green, brown, black) and low-reflectivity materials.
- Encourage development be setback in flatter locations (e.g. adjoining inlets), to minimise visual intrusion and retain a dominant natural character within 500 metres of the edge of the coast.
- Ensure building design responds to the natural setting in relation to siting, materials and colours. Use materials durable in the coastal environment, and colours that complement the coastal environment and minimise contrast with the surrounding landscape.
- Locate site servicing and access away from landscape features and areas of high visibility, and avoid the loss of vegetation.

Between settlements – Hinterland Locations

- Retain the dominance of the pastoral landscape in the hinterland areas.
- Locate buildings to minimise visibility from main road corridors and key public use areas.
- Retain trees that form part of a continuous canopy beyond the property, and plant new trees in a position where they will add to such a continuous canopy.
- Encourage locally appropriate indigenous vegetation or native / exotic feature planting to delineate property boundaries, instead of fencing. If fencing is necessary, this should be of an open style and not visually obtrusive (e.g. post and wire style traditionally used in rural areas).

- Encourage building design strongly responds to the natural setting in relation to siting, materials and colours.
- In prominent and highly visible locations, construct buildings and structures of materials that reduce distant visibility and avoid the use of bright coloured and/or highly reflective materials.
- Strongly discourage ribbon development along main roads and key touring routes.

Strategies

- Protect locally significant views and vistas to the ocean,
- Protect the indigenous coastal vegetation and ensure that it is the dominant feature of the landscape when viewed from the foreshore.
- Retain the undeveloped and vegetated character of coastal dunes, waterways and estuaries near the coastal edge of this landscape.
- Minimise any increase in development visible above the dunes and coastal vegetation outside settlements, when viewed from the beach, foreshore or offshore.
- Discourage ridge tops and visually prominent hill faces are not visually dominated by buildings.
- Protect cultural vegetation patterns throughout the rural hinterland.
- Minimise visual clutter of the hinterland landscape with built development to retain open spaces that provide views to the coast, capes and hinterland.
- Retain natural landforms and indigenous vegetation as an essential component of the character of the rural hinterland.
- Preserve an appropriate landscape setting for features of cultural or heritage significance.
- To protect locally significant views and vistas, including long and extensive views of the coastal and hinterland landscape from main roads, and largely natural and unbuilt views of lakes and other waterbodies from their edges.

These strategies will be implemented by:-

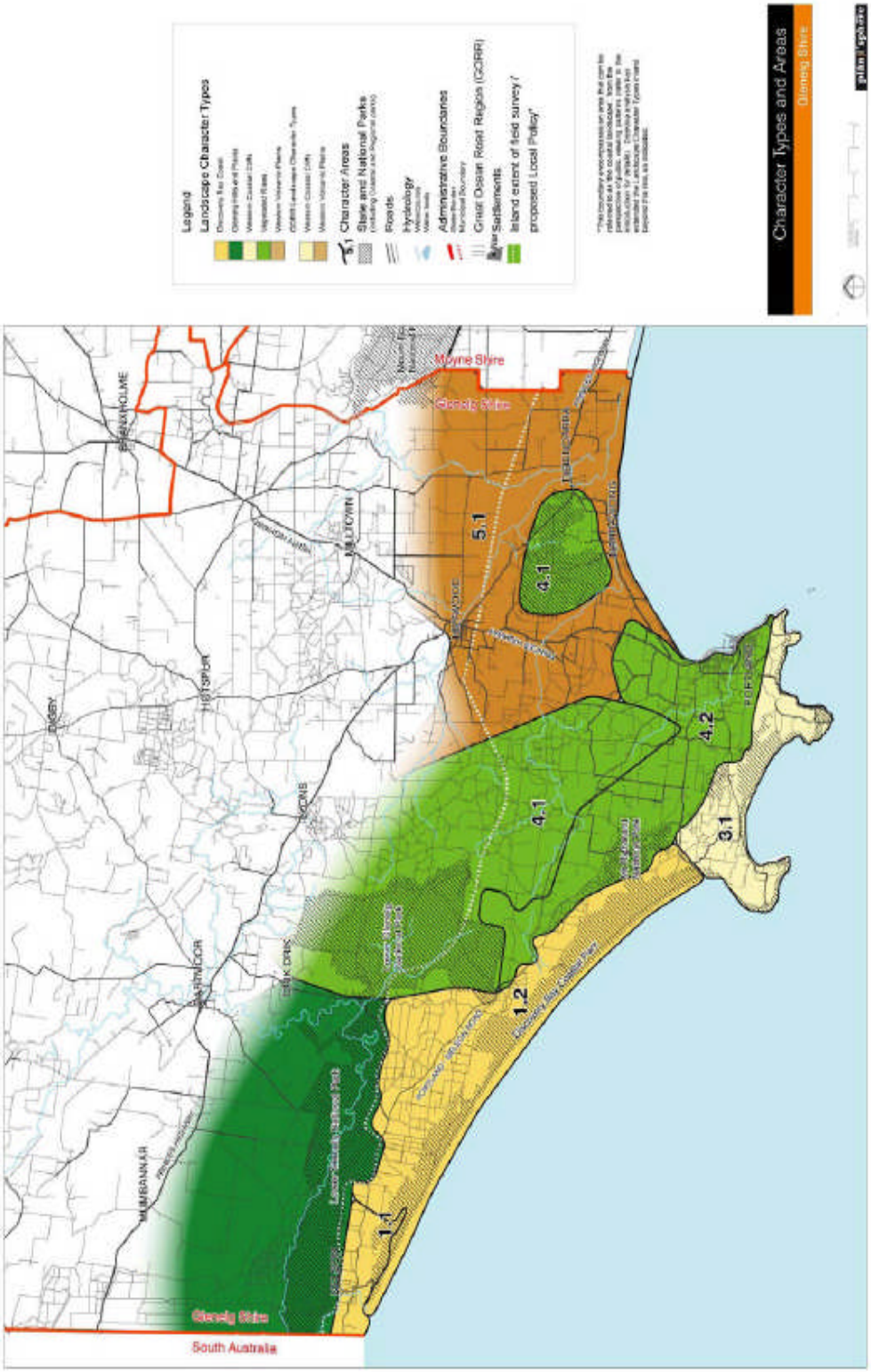
Applying the following overlay controls in determining permit applications on land to which each overlay is applicable:

- Significant Landscape Overlay for specific areas along the coast (SLO1, SLO2 and SL03).
- Using local policy to protect the natural and coastal values of the coast, in order to maintain these values, and to use and develop the coast in a sustainable manner.
- Using local policy to identify and protect significant hilltops and ridgelines.
- Using local policy to manage coastal landscapes.

References

State Overview Report, *Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study* (Planisphere, 2006)

Glenelg Shire Municipal Reference Document, *Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study* (Planisphere, 2006).

The Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast (Victorian Coastal Council, 1998).

Map 1: Glenelg Shire Coastal Landscape Character Types and Areas