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*Urban Design Framework
Settlement Background Paper
Sandy Point*

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

South Gippsland Shire Council has engaged Connell Wagner to develop Urban Design Frameworks (UDFs) for the townships of Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower, Sandy Point and Waratah Bay. The UDFs will provide a vision for the future form and function of these townships and give greater certainty to the community and investors about what development is possible and appropriate.

This Settlement Background and Issues Paper forms part of the Sandy Point UDF and will address the following matters including:

- The approach undertaken to develop a UDF;
- The strategic regional context;
- The role and functions of the surrounding townships in relation to Sandy Point;
- The existing conditions; and
- The emerging issues and themes that will inform the town vision, objectives and design principles.

1.2 Background

Recent research undertaken by Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), *Basic Demographic Analysis of Coastal Towns from Towns in Time 2001 database*, May 2005 indicates:

"Australia's coastal regions are experiencing growth and pressure for development. The cause of this varies, but in Victoria it reflects an overall increase in population through migration and natural growth, changes in household types which has led to an increase in demand for housing stock, and a general trend to retire to coastal centres. Added to this has been a buoyant property market with greater investment in coastal areas as a lifestyle choice or simply as a financial investment."

"As a result of these trends, many coastal settlements, particularly those outside of metropolitan Melbourne, are experiencing unprecedented levels of development related to the uptake of existing residential land, a rapid transformation in the form of building stock through redevelopment, and increasing use of rural allotments for residential living."

Within this current environment it is anticipated that some coastal settlements will expand significantly, whilst other coastal settlements are likely to remain small. Given this is the case, strategic planning is required, through State and Local Government to enable sustainable development to occur.

The State Government is planning through DSE's Coastal Spaces Study (2004). This comprises a number of strategic projects with the objective to clarify the strategic outlooks for settlements, protection of spaces between settlements, management of hotspot development areas and the capacity to manage change.

South Gippsland Shire Council is undertaking the development of UDFs for the townships of Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower, Sandy Point and Waratah Bay, with support funding from DSE. In managing this development a Project Control Group has been formed consisting of representatives from South Gippsland Shire Council, DSE Gippsland Region and the Gippsland Coastal Board. The role of the Project Control Group is to ensure the vision for Gippsland is achieved, as defined in *The Victorian Coastal Strategy, 2002 (VCS)* and the *Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland – Coastal Action Plan (CAP)*.

"In 50 years the Gippsland coast will still be recognised as an area of outstanding beauty and ecological diversity, offering a range of recreational lifestyle and economic opportunities for both local residents and tourists. Areas of natural and cultural significance will be identified, widely appreciated and protected. Coastal development and land use decisions will adopt an integrated approach founded on the principles of ecological sustainability and will be based on consistent municipal coastal planning policies across the entire Gippsland coast" (GCB, 2002).

1.3 Objective

The Background Settlement Paper will form part of the Sandy Point UDF and will aim to direct development pressure and infrastructure provision to appropriate areas and manage them in defined settlement activity nodes, so as to ensure that development is respectful of the surrounding environment. The UDFs will provide a vision for the future form and function of the coastal settlements and give greater certainty to the community and investors about what development is possible and appropriate.

2. Urban Design Frameworks

An Urban Design Framework is a strategic planning document, prepared with input from the local community that presents a vision and future-planning framework for the development of a town. The process should produce both a framework articulating how the town will develop, and the actions needed to realise that framework.

The UDFs for the coastal towns of South Gippsland will:

- Identify the capacity of each settlement in relation to its environment and capacity to sustain growth;
- Direct and manage development and infrastructure pressures into defined settlement areas;
- Develop broad planning principles of areas between defined settlements; and
- Implement a coordinated planning and design approach.

Actions undertaken to achieve this include:

- Identifying existing and projected socio-economic trends;
- Identifying areas of significance (ie. landscape, buildings, historical or cultural features, natural features);
- Identifying major opportunities and constraints for future development;
- Identifying preferred land use and development options;
- Identifying improvements to the visual quality of entrances and thoroughfares in the town; and
- Identifying improvements to vehicular and pedestrian traffic routes and linkages.

2.1 Urban Design Framework

As a final product, a UDF is a package of documents and plans. The UDFs for the coastal towns of South Gippsland will be made up of four documents and two plans. These include:

1. Strategic Regional Background Paper (document)
2. Settlement Background Paper (document)
3. Structure Plan (plan)
4. Master Plan/s (plan)
5. Principles for areas in between settlements (document)
6. Implementation plan (document)

A brief explanation of each of these sections is detailed below.

Strategic Regional Background Paper

This is a concise paper that provides an assessment of how existing policies, plans and local issues relate to the future planning of the project towns. The Strategic Regional Background Paper is delivered as an individual document as well as being incorporated into the initial section of the Settlement Background Papers.

Settlement Background Paper

This is a background paper that looks at existing conditions, future trends and current issues within each of the identified settlements and the surrounding environments.

Structure Plan

A structure plan is broad plan identifying township boundaries, land use types, environmentally sensitive areas, development or tourism opportunities, open space locations and connections, infrastructure and vehicular and pedestrian movement.

Master Plan

Master plans are prepared for key priority areas within the townships and provide detail for areas that have a specific function, such as a gateway entry point or tourism focus.

Principles for Areas in Between Settlements

This is a concise document detailing broad land use planning principles to guide future uses and development in areas between settlements.

Implementation Plan

Once the framework plan has been finalised, an implementation plan is prepared. An implementation plan outlines the actions that are required to implement the framework/guidelines, priority works, timing and responsibilities.

2.2 Project Approach

The State Government, Agencies, Council, investors and the community will use the UDFs for future planning. To gain ownership of the project from these groups and utilise their local knowledge the following approach has been applied.

Desktop study and literature review

A review of background literature and previous studies is required to gain an understanding of the history and key issues relevant to the study area.

Site inspections

Site visits to the project towns and surrounding areas. This provides an opportunity to detail the town layout, structure, character and surrounding environment.

Agency Workshop

A workshop will be coordinated with project officers and staff from organisations such as:

- Gippsland Coastal Board;
- South Gippsland Shire Council;
- Department of Sustainability and Environment;
- South Gippsland Water;
- West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority;
- Parks Victoria; and
- VicRoads.

The benefit of the workshop is to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, (SWOT), for each town, explore strategic issues in the region, and identify which current or proposed projects may impact on the development of the UDF.

Community Consultation and Participation

Community consultation and participation occurs throughout the project in the form of community workshops focussed on information collection, information displayed on Council's web site, 24 hour phone access to the Connell Wagner project team, community workshops focussed on the draft documents and plans and a formal exhibition period of the UDFs.

A summary of the information and views of the community is detailed in Section 5.3 Community and Agency Views.

3. Regional Context

Coastal councils around Australia, including many in Victoria, have been heavily impacted on in recent years as a greater number of people migrate to the coast for holidays or to live. This shift in population creates challenges for councils in how to meet lifestyle and housing demands, provide sufficient infrastructure and ensure there is adequate council planning capacity.

In terms of strategic planning, *Melbourne 2030* sets future land use directions for metropolitan Melbourne and specifically designates urban growth boundaries for settlements. With this 'sea change' phenomenon occurring across Victoria there is now a need to replicate this planning process in coastal towns.

3.1 Future Trends

Victoria

Victoria boasts 2,000 kilometres of coastline with a wide range of natural and cultural values. Most Victorians use the coast, with an estimated 70 million recreational visits being made per year (DSE 2004). The Victorian coast contributes significantly to regional economies through tourism and related services.

Trends

Victoria in Future 2004 (DSE 2004), indicates that the future overall population growth rate in Victoria is declining and that our society is generally ageing with the 'Baby Boomers' generation close to retirement. However, even though the growth rate will be slower, the population will continue to increase with the majority of the population growth occurring in Melbourne. Regional areas will also continue to grow but at a slower rate than Melbourne.

The population of coastal Victoria increased by at least 10% between 1991 and 2001 (VCC 2002). This was consistently higher than Victoria as a whole. As the baby boomers retire and choose lifestyles away from Melbourne, and as the housing prices in Melbourne continue to increase, there will be a demand for affordable rural/coastal lifestyle opportunities within one or two hours of Melbourne. The main coastal municipalities this affects includes, Surf Coast, Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast. However, these municipalities are 'filling up' causing the growth to spread further along the coast to the next layer of municipalities, such as Colac/Otway and South Gippsland, although, a limiting factor to this growth is likely to be travel distance to Melbourne of no more than two hours.

In terms of coastal population trends the VCS predicts we can expect:

- Increased housing density, particularly in key holiday areas, such as Mornington Peninsula, Surf Coast and Bass Coast;
- Coastal areas to increase in population not related to dwelling construction, but through conversion of holiday homes to permanent residencies; and
- Visitor numbers to coastal areas to continue to grow with improved mobility and regional access.



Map 1. Victorian Coastline. Source: Victorian Coastal Council, 2002.

3.1.1 Gippsland Region

The Gippsland region is located in southeast Victoria, extending from the edge of Melbourne's outskirts to the NSW/Victorian border. The coastline includes Phillip Island, Wilsons Promontory, the Gippsland Lakes, Ninety-Mile Beach and Croajingalong National Park. The region supports a population of a quarter of a million people working in a diverse number of industries including, education, farming, forestry and fishing. There are four major coastal councils across Gippsland - Bass Coast Shire, South Gippsland Shire, Wellington Shire and East Gippsland Shire.



Map 2. Gippsland Coastal Region. Source: Victorian Coastal Council, 2002.

Trends

The nominated southmost growth corridor of Melbourne (eg: Cranbourne, Pakenham and Dandenong) feed into the Gippsland region through the Shires of Cardinia, Bass Coast and Casey. The total population in the Gippsland Coastal region grew at an annual rate of 0.3% between 1991 and 2001, with an increase in total number of households of 1.1% per annum (DSE 2005). For population growth and future development, Bass Coast Shire is identified as having a growth rate well above the average for Victoria. The duplication of the South Gippsland Highway and the increased ease of access to coastal areas from Melbourne (approx 1.5 hours) have assisted this. Bass Coast Shire has recently developed the Bass Coast Strategic Coastal Planning Framework, which provides Council and the community with direction and advice on future development of coastal areas throughout the Shire. East Gippsland and Wellington Shire have also recently engaged consultants to develop UDFs for 16 coastal towns across their municipalities.

3.1.2 South Gippsland

This study is focused on the municipality of South Gippsland Shire. Located approximately 130km southeast of Melbourne the Shire stretches from Venus Bay in the west to Port Welshpool in the east. It covers approximately 3,297 square kilometres and has a population of 26,159 (DSE 2004). It is an important beef production and dairying region and the coastline is a popular holiday and retirement area.

South Gippsland abuts five municipalities: the Shires of Baw Baw and La Trobe to the north; Wellington to the east; Bass Coast to the southwest and Cardinia to the west. The Strzelecki Ranges form most of the northern boundary with the coast forming the southern boundary. The major towns include Leongatha, Korumburra, Mirboo North and Foster with other significant settlements being Nyora, Toora, Welshpool, Sandy Point and Venus Bay. Most of the towns in the municipality serve the surrounding rural communities, however Venus Bay, Sandy Point, Waratah Bay and some of the other small coastal towns are predominantly tourist destinations with holiday homes.



Map 3. South Gippsland Coastal Towns. Source: RACV, 2005

Trends

Over the past two decades, most towns in South Gippsland have experienced population decline (DSE 2005). However, South Gippsland is projected to experience moderate population and household growth over the next 30 years (DSE 2004). Growth is likely to occur in the west of the Shire with the driver being urban growth from Melbourne and the central coastal areas. To support this growth, and assist Melburnians explore areas further afield, the South Gippsland Highway is being upgraded from Lang Lang to Sale.

Coastal towns also have a relationship to inland rural settlements. As with the sea change phenomenon there is also a 'tree change' trend occurring. In South Gippsland this is an increase in rural lifestyle living within proximity to the coast driven by increasing coastal housing prices and residents selling up, 'cashing in' and moving inland. This inland movement and growth creates development pressure in the large rural service centres and the smaller rural settlements. In South Gippsland this growth in rural areas is occurring in Nyora, Mirboo North, Foster, Fish Creek and Meeniyan.

Increased investment in the area is recognised as making a positive contribution to the long-term economic viability of the towns and providing increased employment opportunities. However, it is essential that any development and investment is undertaken within a defined framework and makes a significant contribution to the built form and natural environment of the area.

3.1.3 Coastal Settlements

UDFs are being developed for the settlements of Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower, Waratah Bay and Sandy Point. These settlements are predominantly coastal retreats and holiday destinations supported and serviced by Leongatha, Foster, Inverloch and Wonthaggi. The role and function of these settlements and how they relate to each other and the major centres in the region is detailed in Section 4 (*Settlement Role and Function*).



Map 4, Study Area as defined in the brief for Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay



Map 5, Study Area as defined in the brief for Sandy Point and Waratah Bay

3.2 Policy

Management of the coastal zone is a complex task shared by many authorities and levels of government. The Commonwealth, State and Local Governments all have a role to play, as does the community and industry. Coastal planning in Australia starts at broad level principles through Federal coastal policies down to day to day decisions made by the State Government and local councils. The Urban Design Frameworks are tools to help implement the state and regional coastal policies at a local level.

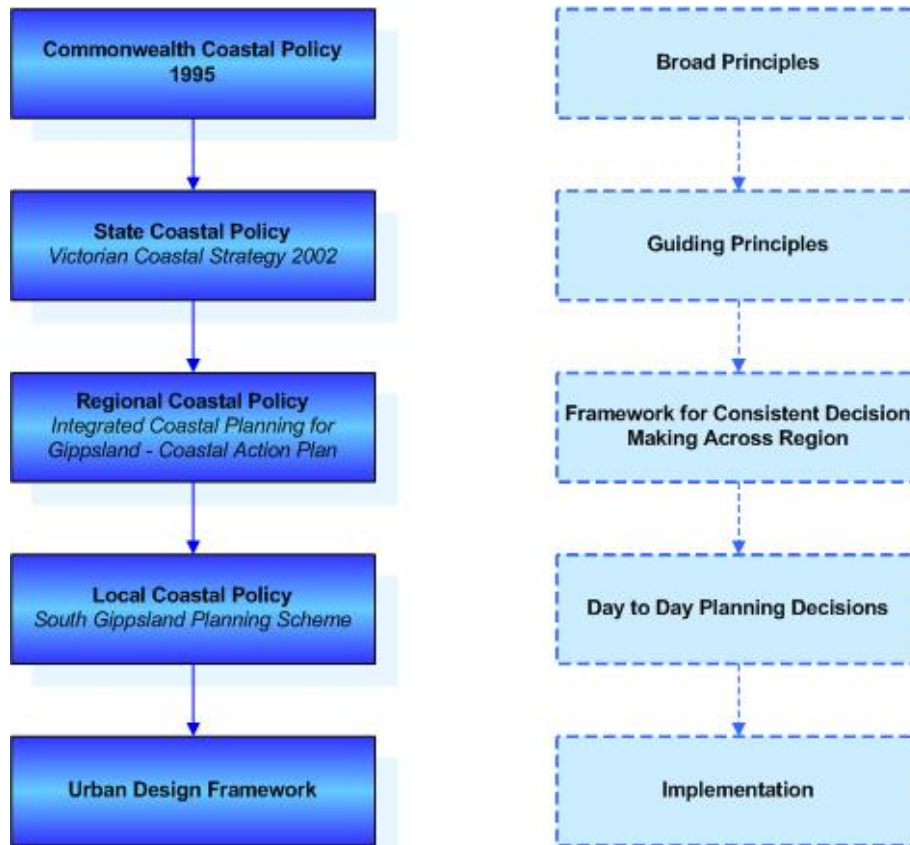


Figure 1. Integration of Australia's coastal policies and how they relate to the Urban Design Frameworks.

Federal

The **Commonwealth Coastal Policy** presents the Commonwealth's vision for a co-operative, integrated approach to coastal management. It provides both the means for the Commonwealth to manage its own coastal activities, and a range of initiatives whereby all Australian governments can work together to ensure best management of the coast.

The Policy aims to achieve specific practical improvements to coastal management through four broad fronts. These include:

- Increasing community involvement in coastal management.
- Addressing the most pressing coastal problems, such as coastal development and pollution.
- Enhancing awareness through promoting education and improving the knowledge, experience and information available to coastal managers, planners and users.
- Promoting Australian coastal management expertise in neighbouring regions.

State

The **Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS)** is the key policy and planning document for managing the use and development of coastal resources in Victoria. The VCS sets out a vision and hierarchy of principles for coastal planning that provide a pathway for decision making.

The hierarchy of principles are:

1. Protection of significant environmental features.
2. Sustainable use of natural coastal resources.
3. Direction for the future.
4. Suitable development on the coast.

In relation to coastal development, the vision states, *"....coastal villages will retain their seaside and village characters....townships will no longer grow like topsy, they will be recognisably coastal in character and grow within planning frameworks which respect the environment they are built in.Much of the coast between townships will be preserved undeveloped..."*.

The sections on suitable development and the description of activity nodes (existing settlements) and recreational nodes (outside of settlements) is also relevant to the UDFs. The VCS states, *"development pressure and infrastructure will be directed away from sensitive areas and managed within activity nodes and recreational nodes"*.

The four project townships are defined as existing settlements (activity nodes) and the objective of activity nodes is to provide for development within defined limits and protect areas between settlements from inappropriate development.

Coastal Spaces Project, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) 2004

To help guide the interpretation and implementation of the VCS in relation to coastal development, DSE is undertaking a project titled 'Coastal Spaces'. The aim is to improve and clarify strategic planning for sustainable growth in coastal Victoria, improve application of planning and environmental tools in coastal areas and develop new tools as appropriate, and build the capacity of practitioners to implement and apply Government policy for the coast.

The project will be undertaken from September 2004 to October 2005. The UDFs for the four coastal towns will be guided by the principles of the Coastal Spaces Project and shall become tools to assist Council with coastal planning decisions in the future.

Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report (DSE) April 2006

In May 2005, the Victorian Government released the Coastal Spaces Inception Report which identified a set of emerging issues to be addressed as part of the Coastal Spaces Initiative. The Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report follows on from the earlier Inception Report and provides a series of recommendations which seek to improve and clarify strategic planning tools for managing sustainable coastal development in non-metropolitan areas. One of the key recommendations of this report is to finalise and support implementation of Settlement Plans such as Urban Design Frameworks and Structure Plans in relevant Planning Schemes.

Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast 1998 (S & D Guidelines)

The S & D Guidelines were developed by the Victorian Coastal Council to assist coastal managers, and ensure that developments on the coast complement the surrounding landscape and result in excellent design. The guidelines are used at a site-specific level by councils, coastal managers and developers to achieve appropriately sited and designed structures on the foreshore.

As the UDFs move to detailed design with the master plans and design elements the S & D Guidelines will provide guiding principles to follow and apply. This will be particularly important for public foreshore land and the interface between public and private land.

The three key areas of the S & D Guidelines are:

1. Functional Guidelines
(Efficient use of space, consolidation of structures, availability of public access).
2. Cultural and Aesthetic Guidelines
(Structures maintain/enhance coastal landscape and character do not impair views to and from water).
3. Ecological Guidelines
(Structures result in minimal change to natural systems, native vegetation disturbed as little as possible, avoid locating structures in dunes, protection of marine biological values).

State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF)

The SPPF sets out general policies and principles for land use and development in Victoria. These policies and principles form part of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme and are grouped into six headings including settlement, environment, housing, economic development, infrastructure and particular use and development.

Key components that are relevant to the UDFs include:

Environment Clause 15.01

- Refers to the protection of catchments, waterways and groundwater. The objective of this clause is to assist the protection, and, where possible, restoration of catchments, waterways, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.

Coastal Areas Clause 15.08

- The objective of this clause is to, protect and enhance the natural ecosystems and landscapes of the coastal and marine environment, ensure sustainable use of natural and coastal resources and achieve development that provides an environmental, social and economic benefit enhancing the community's value of the coast.

Native Flora and Fauna Clause 15.09

- The objective of this clause is to assist in conserving native flora and fauna through protection and conservation of biodiversity, including native vegetation retention and provision of habitats for native plants and animals, and to control of pest plants and animals.

Open Space Clause 15.10

- The objective of this clause is to assist creation of a diverse and integrated network of open space in line with the needs of urban communities and rural areas.

General Implementation Clause 15.11.1

- This section of the State Planning Policy Framework identifies the need for responsible authorities to identify, conserve and protect places of natural or cultural value from inappropriate development.

This includes amongst other things:

- Places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance including historical and archeological sites.

Design and Built Form Clause 19.03

- The objective of this clause is to achieve high quality urban design and architecture that reflects the particular characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity of the community, enhances livability, diversity, amenity and safety of the public realm and promotes attractiveness of towns and cities within broader strategic contexts.

Regional

Implementation of the VCS at a regional level occurs through Coastal Action Plans (CAP). A CAP is a strategic planning document prepared by a Regional Coastal Board in accordance with the Coastal Management Act 1995. The Gippsland Coastal Board has prepared the *Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland (CAP) 2002*.

Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland (CAP) 2002

The CAP aims to provide an integrated approach to coastal planning for Councils in the Gippsland region. A key principle is the concept of 'activity nodes' and the need to avoid strip development along the coast. Implementation of this and other key principles occurs at a local level through the development of Coastal Management Plans and Urban Design Frameworks. The CAP encourages municipalities to identify town and settlement boundaries through new or revised local structure or framework plans with development to occur within these boundaries.

Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study 2005

The Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study aims to develop a comprehensive assessment of visually significant landscapes along the Victorian Coast. The study is now in its final stages and will provide an assessment of the existing distinctive landscapes, and assess the adequacy of current planning strategies and measures for landscapes along the Victorian coast and immediate hinterland. The study has local implications in relation to the UDF particularly in relation to the Tarwin floodplain, Venus Bay Dunes and the surrounding landscapes of Waratah Bay and Sandy Point.

Local

Local policies that relate to coastal planning and development include the South Gippsland Coastal Development Plan 2004 and sections of the Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) in the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.

The **South Gippsland Coastal Development Plan 2004**, is a strategic planning framework for the future development of towns along the coast. Some of the key features of this strategic planning document include:

- The use of a Coastal Policy Area as stated in the South Gippsland Rural Strategy 2001;
- Any growth to be concentrated in towns, not strip development;
- To promote compact or consolidated growth; and
- The development of eco towns with sustainability principles.

The LPPF provides policy guidance for the assessment of planning applications. It can provide a set of generic considerations that apply to all proposals for which a planning permit is required. To follow is a summary of the policies applicable to the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.

Sub Clause 21.04-1 Environment and Cultural Heritage

- Council aims to ensure that sustainable land use and development can occur. It highlights areas within the Shire, particularly coastal areas facing increasing environmental pressure from residential development. This pressure is likely to continue in the foreseeable future given the Shire's relatively close proximity to Melbourne.

Sub Clause 21.04-9 Venus Bay

- This objective is to maintain Venus Bay as a holiday settlement, allowing development to occur in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner that protects the delicate landforms and character of the area.

Sub Clause 21.04-10 Small Towns

- This sub clause aims to:
 - Maintain a network of small towns with a range of roles and services designed to cater for the needs of residents and visitors to the Shire.
 - Provide an attractive and safe residential environment and strengthen the economic future of the small towns within the Shire.
 - Promote Tarwin Lower as an important local centre serving the needs of the local community and tourists in the southern portion of the Shire.
 - Recommend the implementation of a townscape improvement program for Tarwin Lower aimed at revitalising the existing town centre and integrating the town with the Tarwin River;
 - Recommend restricting any further expansion of Sandy Point and Waratah Bay until reticulated sewerage becomes available.

3.3 Key Issues

Below is a summary of the key drivers of change and associated impacts and issues. The issues identified are discussed in the following section.

DRIVERS	IMPACT	ISSUE
Population Growth	Township growth, greater number of subdivisions and development within township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased pressure on infrastructure, eg: waste disposal, water and sewerage treatment, stormwater system Pressure on environment eg: if infrastructure is not adequate and causes seepage of septic systems into water ways and stormwater runoff into estuaries
	Greater development occurring outside of existing township boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of town structure through urban sprawl Loss of landscape value along the coast through strip development and incremental growth of homes Increased pressure on habitat values and biodiversity Misuse of 'Recreation Nodes' as described in VCS through branding of resort type developments eg: golf courses to justify their existence outside of existing settlements.
Urban Development	Loss of coastal character and township amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large package (house and land) development concepts imported from urban environments. Upgrade of infrastructure eg: dirt roads to sealed roads with kerb and channel, more formal landscaping Lack of strong planning controls to direct and maintain township character, eg: height controls, siting, materials, landscaping
Tourism	Continued focus on day visitors to the coast particularly over summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and management of foreshores and public infrastructure
	Increase in resident population of coastal towns by 2 to 3 times (or higher) during summer period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable accommodation on the coast for all Victorians Infrastructure pressure eg. car parking.
Management of Coastal Reserves	Interface of public and private land and the impact of the different activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of different uses, eg: invasion of garden weeds, fire fuel management, trampling of sand dunes through use of goat tracks from properties
Climate Change	Accelerated erosion from increased frequency of storms, storm surge (mixture high tide and water from rivers), rise in sea level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of existing infrastructure, future need for coastal protection infrastructure or strategies eg: groynes, seawalls. Appropriate siting for new infrastructure or relocation of existing infrastructure

3.3.1 Township Growth

As outlined in Section 2, there is an increase in the growth rate of the population in Victoria particularly in the coastal areas located within 1-2 hours of Melbourne. This population growth consists of a combination of retirees moving to the coast, people changing their coastal holiday homes into permanent dwellings, and families moving out of Melbourne to more affordable areas. The increase in population growth creates demand for the release of new greenfield sites for development. This in turn adds pressure to the existing infrastructure and the surrounding environment.

Infrastructure

In terms of township growth and the effect on infrastructure, there is the issue of the capacity of existing infrastructure to cope with holiday residents becoming permanent residents, and the issue of new infrastructure that may be required for new development and how this will effect the surrounding environment.

Roads

Roads in small coastal towns are often unsealed with grassed drains and channels to manage storm water. Gravel roads are cheap to administer and contribute to the rural low key amenity of a town. With an increase in traffic and road use, more maintenance is required to grade the gravel roads. Development of new buildings and hard surfaces will result in an increase in stormwater runoff, which can cause erosion, sediment deposition in vegetation, sediment runoff and excess nutrients leading into the waterways. As townships expand there may be a need to provide a hard surface treatment to roads and the installation of a more sophisticated stormwater drainage system.

Power

All of the coastal towns in this study area are connected to main power supplies. However, it has been noted from general community comments that power outages occur frequently. This issue needs to be addressed by the appropriate power supply authorities.

Another source of power that is creating community interest in coastal areas is the installation of wind turbines. There have been a few recent proposals in the South Gippsland area and there may be more in the future. However, the issue is not the service and use of power but rather the loss of landscape values and local amenity.

Sewerage

As the population of towns increase so does the pressure on the sewerage and water systems required. Currently in the areas where septic systems are used there is a minimum lot size needed for the filtration to work adequately. In towns such as Venus Bay there are already problems with seepage of septic systems into the ground water and nearby Anderson Inlet.

Telecommunications

Currently the mobile coverage in some of the coastal towns is very limited with reception only possible at various vantage points. As people come to live on the coast from areas that already have good coverage there is an expectation that adequate coverage should also be provided in their adopted town. However, the siting of mobile phone towers is an issue in coastal towns, as ideally they should be co-located with other infrastructure and not near the foreshore or close to the residential areas.

Environment

The towns in the study area are situated in fragile environments highly valued for their flora and fauna, biodiversity and recreational use.

Venus Bay and Tarwin Lower are situated between the open coast and Anderson Inlet. Anderson Inlet is a significant estuary with seagrass, mangroves, wetlands and a host of bird species, some of which are listed on international migratory bird agreements (JAMBA, CAMBA).

Waratah Bay and Sandy Point are situated on the open coast and are also in close proximity to Shallow Inlet, which has significant environmental values.

People choose to holiday and live in these areas for these environmental assets, however, there must be an awareness that as the population increases so does the pressure on the environment. Issues such as septic leakages into waterways and stormwater drains, sediment and nutrient run off into estuaries and the clearing of vegetation must be identified and addressed.

3.3.2 Development Outside of Townships

With an increase in population growth, impacts of development are occurring not only within existing township areas, but also in areas of land between towns in rural areas. The development between townships often occurs when the use of land for housing creates greater economic opportunity than traditional farming.

This type of development causes issues such as loss of township structure and urban sprawl, incremental strip development, isolated resort type developments, loss of landscape values along the coast, and increased pressure on habitat values and the threat of habitat fragmentation.

Strip development and township structure

Strip development occurs between coastal townships when development overflows from one town into another with the coast forming one continuous housing strip. This phenomenon is especially prominent on the NSW coast.

Isolated resort developments (hot spots in Coastal Spaces Project)

With an increase in activity occurring in and around the coast, developments are being proposed that are outside of township areas but are residential housing developments packaged as recreational resorts eg: golf courses. In cases such as these, developers apply to rezone land from rural to residential and mitigate opposition by proclaiming they are designing township buffer zones and creating Recreational Nodes as described in the VCS.

Loss of landscape values

Coastal landscapes across Victoria have many significant features and characteristics. In the South Gippsland area there are three landscape setting types as classified by the Landscape Settings Types of Victoria (VCC, 1998). The landscape types range from high cliffs with inlets, to flat areas with estuarine environments. In all cases there are areas of outstanding scenic quality requiring appropriate planning controls to ensure development does not impact on the landscape values.

Habitat loss and fragmentation

In areas between towns there is evidence of remnant vegetation and large stands of good quality vegetation. When new developments occur, vegetation is cleared for both construction and coastal views. This clearance can disrupt precious habitat corridors that exist between and around townships. Habitat and vegetation corridors are critical for the health and genetic integrity of flora and fauna species that occur in local coastal areas.

3.3.3 Loss of Town Character and Amenity

An increase in housing and urban development can create a loss of township character and coastal amenity. This can be caused by large areas of land being developed by one company, the house and land package concept and ad hoc development occurring without adequate planning controls to guide the town character and amenity.

An increase in development also leads to a need for more substantial infrastructure and landscaping such as sealed roads, kerbs and channelling. This can consequently change the coastal character and low key amenity of towns.

3.3.4 *Tourism*

The Victorian coast continues to remain an attraction for intrastate, interstate and overseas visitors. A key characteristic of tourism in coastal Victoria is the huge influx of visitors and beach users over the summer period with most coastal towns more than doubling in size. This tourism pressure creates issues such as:

- Planning and management of the foreshores and the need to provide convenience facilities to meet both the needs to day tripper and overnight visitors;
- The 'loving it to death' scenario and the ability of the environment to cope with so much use; and
- As housing prices increase, the use of camping facilities and affordability of holidays on the coast for all Victorians.

3.3.5 *Interface of Public and Private Land*

An obvious indicator of how we value our coast is property prices. Homes with a coastal view or backing onto the beach are measurably more expensive than those without these features. However, the coast and beach is Crown land which can be used and appreciated by all. Those with the luxury of abutting the beach or foreshore reserves have a responsibility to limit and control their impact on the coast.

Conflicting issues between freehold land and coastal Crown land include:

- Spreading of weeds from gardens;
- Expectation of clearing coastal vegetation for a fire break;
- Clearing of coastal vegetation for views;
- Creation of informal tracks from properties and trampling of nearby sand dunes; and
- Visual impact of development and homes on the foreshore.

3.3.6 *Climate Change*

Science tells us that we can expect climate change with certainty and that sea level rise and changing weather conditions will have the most significant impact on coastal planning and management. Direct impacts are likely to be increased and altered patterns of erosion of beach and dune systems, undercutting of cliffs, increased peak flows in coastal rivers and estuaries and damage to coastal infrastructure (piers, jetties, breakwaters and seawalls). In built environments volumes of stormwater reaching the coast are likely to increase which will have an impact on the water quality of coastal estuaries and the near shore environment.

There is a need in any future planning to take into consideration these impacts and provide for the maintenance of existing coastal structures, and appropriately site any new coastal structures or developments. Along these lines the Gippsland Coastal Board is currently involved in a project which studies sea level change and coastal subsidence and the implications for geomorphic aspects and physical assets along the Gippsland coast. The result of this study should be considered for all future coastal planning decisions in this area.

4. Settlement Role and Function

4.1 Settlement Categories

When planning for growth and development it is important to explore the role and function of settlements in the region. For a consistent approach in describing the role and function of settlements along the coast of Victoria, the Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report (DSE April 2006) defines the status of existing coastal settlements into six categories. The categories are based on information relating to population size, land use zoning, utilities infrastructure, health, education and other general service provision and accommodation facilities. The six categories are:

<i>Regional Centre</i>	A diverse population base which is over 10,000 people. All essential services are connected. These centres serve the role as a major interchange point for rail, bus, sea and air, and access is available to large hospitals. Regional centres also provide for a large diverse employment base.
<i>District Town</i>	A large population base of 2,000 to 10,000, with a diverse housing stock. Connection to all essential services with numerous accommodation stocks including motel/hotel and multiple Caravan Parks. These towns provide for a large business district with moderate employment base. Hinterland settlements of this type provide an important service support role for coastal settlements and other rural activities.
<i>Town</i>	Population of 500 to 2000. Connection is available to all essential services with a small business and /or industrial area. Coastal settlements of this type have moderate to high levels of home ownership. These settlements usually have strong employment relationships with larger settlements nearby.
<i>Village</i>	A small population base between 200 to 500. Access to services may include a general store and some form of accommodation, primarily through a Caravan Park or small establishment. There is connection to water but sewer connections can vary. Villages have moderate to high levels of holiday home ownership in settlements closer to Metropolitan Melbourne.
<i>Hamlet</i>	A very small population between 100-200, with the settlement being located in a singular urban zone. Limited access is available to reticulated water and sewerage. Generally there are no services within settlements. Some accommodation is available in the form of a small Caravan Park.
<i>Rural District</i>	Population 100 or less located in dispersed housing on smaller than average rural allotment sizes. No access to reticulated water or sewer or services generally within the settlement.

More detail about the settlement categories can be found in the *Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report, April 2006*.

This categorisation lays a foundation for defining what role settlements fulfil in a regional context and what role settlements may play in the future. In relation to the South Gippsland area, within the Bass Coast Shire region, Wonthaggi is categorised as a *Regional Centre* and Inverloch is a *Town*. Within the South Gippsland Shire region Leongatha, Korumburra and Foster are categorised as *District Towns*, Toora is categorised as a *town* and *Sandy Point* is classified as a *Village*. Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower and Waratah Bay are categorised as *Hamlets*.

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Role of Settlements

Tarwin Lower

- It plays the role of a small country hamlet with a permanent population;
- It provides lower order services to surrounding rural areas including Venus Bay; and
- Is an entry point for tourists to access Anderson Inlet.

Venus Bay is situated 4km east of Tarwin Lower and 35km south of Leongatha. This village was created from the donation of land by a local farmer and established in three parts, commonly known as the first, second and third estates. All the estates are situated between large sand dunes and Anderson Inlet. Venus Bay's enumerated population in 2001 was 405 based on data from the 2001 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics). This figure is said to triple during holiday periods. Venus Bay contains a limited number of shops with the settlement reliant on tank water and on-site waste-water disposal systems. Venus Bay as a small coastal hamlet has three roles.

- Primarily it is a holiday destination for people from Melbourne and the surrounding district;
- Secondly it plays the role of a small hamlet for a permanent year round population; and
- Is a destination for day-trippers to Anderson Inlet and Cape Liptrap Coastal Park.

Waratah Bay

Waratah Bay is situated 40 kilometres south east of Leongatha, 10km west of Sandy Point and adjoins Cape Liptrap Coastal Park. It is a holiday hamlet with a small permanent population (approximately 47 in 2005, based on the Shire's rates database). Waratah Bay has one Caravan Park and long flat sandy beaches that are used for swimming and fishing. The town has few services with most people relying on the Caravan Park for incidental supplies, and Sandy Point and Foster for more convenience goods. Reticulated sewerage has recently become available and it is planned to construct a waste-water treatment plant near the town. Waratah Bay's primary role is as:

- A holiday destination for Melbourne and the surrounding rural areas;
- It also plays a minor role supporting a small permanent year round population; and
- Is an entry point for tourists to the beach and Cape Liptrap Coastal Park.

Sandy Point

Sandy Point is located 201km south east of Melbourne, 40km south of Leongatha, 5 minutes from Shallow Inlet with Wilson's Promontory National Park to the east. Sandy Point was developed as a small holiday coastal hamlet in the 1950s and has remained a popular destination for surfing, fishing and boating. There is a surf club, tennis court, local hall, Caravan Park and shopping strip with a cafe/restaurant, general store, and mini golf facilities. The estimated population is approximately 130 (based on the Shire of South Gippsland rate database). The township has a lack of infrastructure and a limited range of commercial services and community facilities. Sandy Point as a small coastal hamlet has three roles:

- Primarily it is a holiday destination for people from Melbourne and the surrounding district;
- It is also a settlement for a small permanent year round population; and
- Is a destination for tourists to Shallow Inlet and the surrounding Coastal Parks.

4.2 Coastal Development Infrastructure

An essential component of township categorisation is the consideration of existing or potential infrastructure, this is particularly important in regards to regional planning to direct where growth should occur along the coast.

As a guiding principal urban growth should only occur in areas which have capacity to accommodate all necessary infrastructure. In regards to the South Gippsland region the Integrated Coastal Planning for the Gippsland CAP contains guidelines to assess the capacity of coastal settlements for further development. The CAP contains an 'Infrastructure Development Rating' for Gippsland coastal settlements which gives an indication of development potential based on existing infrastructure capacity and potential for infrastructure upgrade and expansion.

Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower, Waratah Bay and Sandy Point have been assessed as having an infrastructure rating of 3. This signifies that the available infrastructure is a major impediment to any further development and that even if land is identified for growth this should only occur if adequate infrastructure is provided.

4.3 Future Growth and Development

Future growth across a region should occur in a cohesive and strategic manner. The Victorian Coastal Strategy is the guiding policy document; which states that development on the coast will be;

- directed away from sensitive areas;
- managed within defined existing settlements; and
- strategically planned so that inappropriate development between settlements can be avoided.

The ability for coastal settlements to accommodate further growth is a function of the physical, environmental, cultural and landscape characteristics and the availability and capacity of infrastructure (power, water, sewer and access).

In the South Gippsland region, there are environmental, cultural and landscape constraints which will affect growth in all four towns.

- Tarwin Lower is close to the river and associated river flood plains. It is also affected by acid sulfate soils.
- Venus Bay is surrounded by sand dunes Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, Anderson Inlet, the Tarwin River flood plains and land affected by Acid Sulfate Soils. The town has also been identified as containing areas of cultural heritage significance.
- Waratah Bay adjoins Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, significant flora and fauna, the ocean beach and floodplains.
- Sandy Point adjoins a beach reserve and is in close proximity to Shallow Inlet. Floodplains are identified to the east and west of the town, however anecdotal evidence suggests that rural land between the north boundary of the town and Sandy Point Road is also affected by poor drainage which is contributing to flooding in that area.

Therefore, taking into consideration both infrastructure capacity and environmental constraints, future growth on the coast in the South Gippsland region should be limited and apportioned across the four towns within defined settlement boundaries.

4.4 Future Settlement Roles

Based on the above assumptions of where future growth should occur along the coast the future roles of the settlements is envisaged as follows:

- Leongatha will continue to be a higher order service centre for the region and will provide ongoing urban development opportunities.
- Tarwin Lower will act as a permanent rural hamlet and lower-order service centre for Venus Bay and surrounding rural areas.
- Venus Bay, Sandy Point and Waratah Bay will continue to primarily be holiday destinations and recreational based seasonal settlements. Their secondary role will be to accommodate a small permanent population consisting of predominantly retirees who wish to enjoy the benefits of a sea change lifestyle.

5. Sandy Point

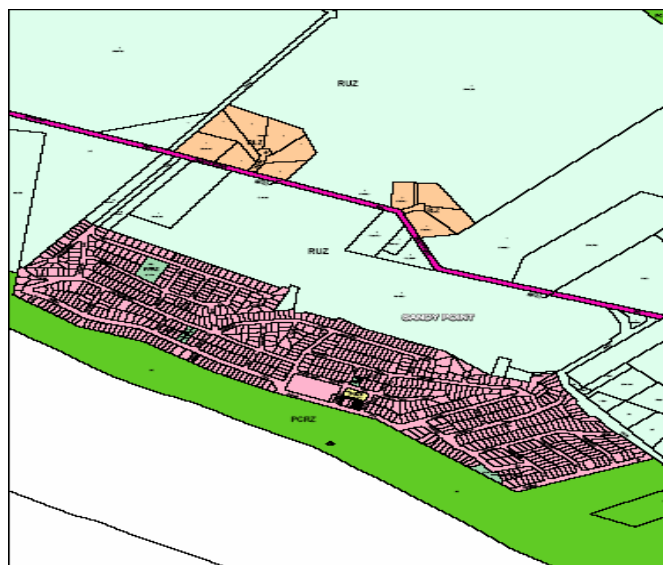
This Settlement Background Paper explores the existing conditions of Sandy Point and provides an analysis of the information to guide future growth and development. The existing conditions detail population, town character, environment, lot supply and demand and infrastructure.

Sandy Point is a village that is located 201 kilometres southeast of Melbourne, five minutes from Shallow Inlet with Wilson's Promontory National Park located to the east. Sandy Point was developed as a small coastal holiday village in the 1950's and has remained a popular place for surfing, fishing and boating. The village includes a surf club, tennis court, local hall, Caravan Park and shopping strip with cafe/restaurant, general store, and mini golf facilities near the centre of the village. There is limited infrastructure and the village is reliant on tank water and on-site waste-water disposal systems. In context of its location in relation to other settlements Sandy Point is located approximately:

- 15 kilometres from Tarwin Lower;
- 10 Kilometres from Waratah Bay ;
- 55 Kilometres from Venus Bay
- 40 Kilometres from Leongatha (40 minutes north)
- 201 kilometres from Melbourne (2.5 hours)



Map 6. Sandy Point in the region
Source: www.promcountry.com.au



Map 7. Sandy Point Township
Source: DSE, www.dse.vic.gov.au

5.1 Existing Conditions

Population

Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd was engaged to analyse demographic trends within Sandy Point. There were limitations on the availability of demographic data due to the small size of the Township. The demographic information and trends are based on data from the 2001 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics) at the collection district level (CD 2200507). This Collection District encompasses not only the village but also the rural and rural residential areas immediately surrounding the settlement. Therefore, the actual population numbers for the village will be less than identified for the Collection District.

The total population for the Collection District encompassing Sandy Point is 227 persons (as at 2001) of which 46% are male and 54% are female. The Shire of South Gippsland rates database indicates that people living in Sandy Point own 64 properties within the village. If it is assumed that this represents the permanent population with an average household size of 2.07 persons, then the population of the village is likely to be approximately 130. This is the population estimate used for the purposes of this report.

The age profile shows that a significant proportion of the population is aged 60 years or more. This is likely to reflect the attractiveness of Sandy Point for retirees.

Age	% of Total Population
0-19	22%
20-34	16%
35-59	32%
60+	30%

Source: ABS CDATA 2001

Household Structure

The majority of people living within the Collection District encompassing Sandy Point are couples without children (45%) followed by families with children (40%). This is reflected in the average household size, which is 2.07 persons.

Family Type	% of Families
Couple family	40%
Couple family without children	45%
One parent family	15%
Other family	0%
Total	100 %

Source: ABS CDATA 2001

Trends

Based on the historical growth of dwellings in Sandy Point and the current proportion of resident ratepayers the resident population is expected to grow only very slowly in the foreseeable future.

The permanent population is a mix of retirees and young families. This trend is likely to continue in the short to medium term, providing that young adults are retained in the community once they have completed their schooling. If this does not occur the population is likely to age more dramatically in the medium to long term.

Population Fluctuations through Tourism

The South Gippsland Shire attracts an estimated 1.1 million visitors annually, composing of approximately 577,000 daytrip visitors, and 573,000 overnight visitors. Almost half of all overnight visitors stay in holiday homes, 18% are staying in caravans and camping grounds and 16% stay in cabin accommodation. Of the 2,458 holiday homes in South Gippsland Shire, 18% are in Sandy Point. (Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in Prom Country-Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd).

The Phillip Island and Gippsland Discovery Region, which includes the Local Government Areas of South Gippsland, Bass Coast, Wellington, La Trobe and Baw Baw, had an estimated 1.92 million overnight visitors for the year ending March 2004. Since 2000 the rate of overnight visitors to the region has increased steadily at a rate of 4.4 % per annum compared to the average of 1.4 % for Victoria.

The population of Sandy Point fluctuates throughout the year due to the holiday home sector. Holiday homes are characterised by a seasonal form of occupancy and have distinctive visitation patterns throughout the year. For example, holiday homes within South Gippsland Shire are occupied 42% of the time on average during the summer season. This is more than double the occupancy experienced during the winter season (Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in Prom Country – Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd).

This data assists in developing a range of estimates as to the “actual” population of Sandy Point at any given time throughout the year. For example, during the summer months (December to February), it is estimated that the population of Sandy Point swells to around 953 persons (Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in Prom Country – Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd).

Town Character

Describing a sense of a place or character of a town is done through an analysis of various attributes including land form; physical boundaries; town entries; roads and streets; building character, town landmarks and focal points.

Land Form

The landform of Sandy Point consists of a 400 metre wide strip of stable undulating sand dune system which extends approximately two kilometres inland from the beach behind a line of Tea-Trees. A significant portion of the dune system is made up of the Waratah Bay Coastal Foreshore Reserve which forms the southern boundary of the settlement, separating the town from Bass Strait with a physical and visual barrier.

Physical Boundaries

Sandy Point has four boundaries which are referred to in Figure 2, **Appendix D**.

- The beach and foreshore reserve to the south;
- Wattle Court Road and rural land to the west;
- Sandy Point Road to the east; and
- Rural land beyond Ash Avenue, Harbour View Road and Sunshine Rise to the north.

Town Entries

The main approach to the settlement is along Sandy Point Road which links Telopea Drive and Beach Parade with the commercial centre. The route into the centre of the village is not direct as it winds along quiet streets bordered by roadside vegetation. This low-key entry contributes to the calm and relaxed atmosphere within the surrounding coastal landscape.

Roads and Streets

The principal roads leading into Sandy Point are fully constructed and asphalt-sealed with grassed swale drains. Maintaining the informality of local roads is important to the community as it contributes to the relaxed ambience of the town.



Photos 1 & 2: Sandy Point Road and Beach Road with view to Caravan Park

Built Character

Housing stock in Sandy Point is generally low key in terms of design and built form. Traditional small cottages and kit houses have formed the basis of the character of the current housing stock in the settlement since the 1960's. This combined with the fact that the visual character of the town is dominated by native Tea-Trees is a key to the formation of the relaxed character of the settlement.

Recent trends are showing that dwelling stock has evolved from typical single storey dwellings to multi level buildings including a mix of two and three storey dwellings which have been designed to take full advantage of the views of the coastline. This is particularly evident along the eastern side of the town where a number of multi-storey buildings and some medium density housing have been established along the ridge. While there needs to be recognition of this form of development occurring, there is a strong possibility that planning and building controls may continue to be exploited to achieve outcomes that are not consistent with the preferred vision for the settlement.



Photos 3 & 4: Varied housing types within Sandy Point



Photos 5& 6: Commercial area and public facilities adjoining the foreshore and main beach access

Township Focus

The focus of Sandy Point is the coastal foreshore and commercial area. The shops and stores are all located along Beach Parade and consist of 9 narrow lots which are generally accessible by foot for most of the local residents. Directly behind this small group of shops is the town hall and a reserve with additional recreation facilities located opposite the town hall on Ocean View Parade. The Caravan Park is also located on Beach Parade immediately east of the shops. Although the Caravan Park remains an integral part of the town centre, its future is uncertain due to a recent planning approval that was issued for 10 dwellings near the north-east corner of the site.

While the community enjoys the conveniences of the Caravan Park and shops, the town centre lacks functionality and could be improved through some integrated master planning. The importance of the town centre has been emphasised in a document entitled *"Planning Sandy Point: A Discussion Paper-February 2004"*, prepared by the Sandy Point Community Group-Planning Sub-committee. This document identifies the need to better define the boundaries of the town centre which will be examined in further detail in the later sections of this report.

Overall Town Character

In summary the key character elements of the village including its landscape setting and built form collectively creates a small village which integrates with the surrounding coastal environment.

Environment

The condition of the natural environment has important implications for the use and future growth of an area. This section provides an analysis of the environmental values including, landscape, flora and fauna, cultural heritage, features of significance and constraints such as flooding and acid sulfate soils.

Landscape

Sandy Point is bounded by open coastline and beach to the south, rural farm land to the north and west and Shallow Inlet to the east. The coastline contains long, wide sandy beaches and sand dunes which stretch along the southern perimeter of the village. The beach is the primary attraction of Sandy Point and its natural beauty is protected by the large ridge of sand dunes and coastal vegetation which form a barrier to the urban edge of the village.



Photo 7. View looking toward Wilson's Promontory National Park from the boardwalk leading toward the beach

Flora and Fauna

The dune area in Sandy Point is a typical representation of coastal vegetation in Victoria including Coastal Tea-Tree, Coast Banksia, Coast Wattle, Coast Beard-heath, Spinifex and Marrum Grass. Shallow Inlet and adjacent beaches are significant breeding habitats for shorebirds, particularly for Pied Oyster Catchers, Red Capped Plovers and Hooded Plovers. A diverse range of mammals, such as koalas, possums, wombats, and echidnas can be found in and around the local area (Parks Vic, 2005). Observational evidence as reported by community members note the presence of Cape Barren Geese found in the area between the northern boundary of the hamlet and Sandy Point Road (Refer to **Appendix A** for EVC Map).

The Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) around Sandy Point include:

- Weedy Coastal Banksia Woodland;
- Weedy Coastal Dune Scrub Mosaic;
- Coastal Dune Scrub Mosaic; and
- Railway/Roadway /Fenceline Vegetation (SGSC, 2004).

The Bioregional Conservation status of the majority of the EVCs noted in the South Gippsland Coastal Development Plan are classified as of 'least concern'. Threats to the flora and fauna in the area come from domestic pets, weeds and disturbance to the coastal vegetation.

(Refer to **Appendix A** for EVC Map)



Photos 8 & 9: Foreshore Vegetation

Features of Significance - Shallow Inlet

The sheltered waters of Shallow Inlet nestled between Waratah Bay and the peaks of Wilson's Promontory, provide a secluded and peaceful setting for a range of water based activities (Parks Victoria, 2005).

Shallow Inlet can be reached from Sandy Point along the Sandy Point Road. Shallow Inlet is a large tidal embayment enclosed from the sea by a sand barrier complex of spits, bars and mobile dunes. This shelters the shoreline on the western side of the inlet which is dominated by a salt marsh terrace.

Flooding data

Historical flooding data provided by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (CMA) shows land affected by a 1 in 100-year flood event (Refer to Figure 1 **Appendix D**). There is no historical evidence of flooding in the village itself however areas prone to flooding have been identified to the east and west beyond the township boundaries. The CMA has initiated work to determine the extent of any likely flooding near the village but the outcomes of this work are unlikely to be available for several years.

Acid Sulfate Soils

Acid sulfate soils are wide spread throughout Australia with an estimated 40,000 km² of coastal soils being considered acid sulfate prone. Acid sulfate soils are initially formed under marine conditions and therefore often found in coastal areas. The soils contain iron sulfide layers which if disturbed can cause oxidation of the iron sulphate to form sulfuric acid. The mobilisation of sulfuric acid into the ground water has many impacts including:

- Reducing the water quality of surrounding waterways;
- Toxicity to fish and marine organisms;
- Reduction in biodiversity of surrounding wetland;
- Reduced agricultural productivity;
- Threats to human and animal health; and
- Corrosive impacts on buildings and infrastructure (SGSC, 2004).

The Acid Sulfate Soils Hazard Map Guidelines for Coastal Victoria shows that the estimated extent of probable acid sulfate soils covers an area in and around the western shore of Shallow Inlet. (Refer **Appendix B**). In addition some small areas north of the town boundary and between Sandy Point and Waratah Bay have been identified (Refer to Figure 1 **Appendix D**). This information has been designed to indicate where caution may be needed, or further investigations and analysis required before any land is disturbed.

Cultural Heritage

The Gunai / Kurnai and the Boonwurrung Aboriginal peoples have a strong traditional association with the South Gippsland coast. Many examples of prior occupation by these Aboriginal groups have been identified as a result of regular survey and investigation. These include coastal shell middens, flaked stone artefact scatters, burial sites and other camp sites. This evidence continues to increase as further heritage assessments are undertaken.

In Victoria, all heritage places, sites and objects are protected under State (*Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972*) and Commonwealth (*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*) legislation. Development of Victoria's coastal fringe that does not consider Aboriginal heritage at the planning stage has the potential to adversely affect these values.

The Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Housing Co-operative Limited (CGAHHHC) in Morwell is the organisation with statutory authority for Aboriginal heritage. The CGAHHHC and the Gippsland Regional Cultural Heritage Unit provide advice on any Aboriginal heritage matters.

A new State Aboriginal Heritage Act has been developed and will be introduced in the near future (possibly early 2007). Broad protection of Aboriginal heritage places, sites and objects will remain although some other statutory arrangements across Victoria will be different. It will be necessary to review this section when this Act is in place. Details of the new Aboriginal Heritage Act are available at www.heritage.gov.au.

Lot Supply and Demand

Residential

The table below outlines the numbers of vacant and improved residential properties in the village. There is a substantial supply of vacant residential land available in Sandy Point (139 lots). Of the vacant residential land available, 90 % is in ownership of non-resident ratepayers (ie people living outside of the South Gippsland Shire).

Commercial

There are 6 commercial properties in Sandy Point with a limited supply of vacant commercial land available (3 properties).

Land Use	Number of property owners	% of total property
Residential Dwellings	580	80%
Vacant Residential	139	19%
Commercial Properties	6	1%
Vacant Commercial	3	0%
Land Owners	728	100%

Source: South Gippsland Shire, Rates Database 2005

Dwelling Approvals

There are 580 private dwellings in Sandy Point of which 516 (89%) are owned by people living outside the town. These are assumed to be holiday homes.

There has been a decrease in dwelling approvals in Sandy Point between 2002 and 2004. Like Venus Bay, Sandy Point is primarily a holiday destination with a significant proportion of the dwelling stock owned by non-resident ratepayers. This trend is likely to continue with a high proportion (90%) of vacant land stock owned by non-residents. At current rates of development the supply of residential land is likely to be exhausted in approximately 15 years.

Dwellings Completed

Council's building register indicates that there were building approvals issued for 27 dwellings in the village in the period between January 2002 and January 2005.

Urban Development Proposals

Planning approval was issued in May 2005 for the construction of 10 dwellings in the north east corner of the Caravan Park site. Three of these units have so far been constructed.

Infrastructure

A preliminary investigation has been undertaken of the current infrastructure capacity of Sandy Point and the requirements for future upgrading.

Water Service Infrastructure

There is currently no water supply service provided by South Gippsland Water. Based on the current developed lot numbers of approximately 590, the estimated current potable water demand is approximately 151 ML/year. It is expected that demand will increase to approximately 167 ML/year based on forecast growth over the next 20 years.

There is potential for South Gippsland Water to service Sandy Point by transferring some flow from Hoddle Creek and/or Battery Creek (by raising the dam wall) through the construction of a transfer pipeline. Funding for these works would need to be identified.

South Gippsland Water provides no waste-water service to Sandy Point. Waste-water in Sandy Point is managed through on-site waste water disposal systems, the majority being septic systems. Investigations by South Gippsland Shire Council identified ground water contamination from septic tanks in Venus Bay and Sandy Point. In response to this and to help address this issue the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has introduced interim guidelines on the protection of groundwater in townships with sandy soils.

In response to issues related to waste water disposal Council has developed Waste Water Management Plans for the townships of Nyora, Poowong, Loch and Meeniyan. Following direction from the State Government, this process has now evolved into the development of a Municipal Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) that has recently been exhibited in draft form. The DWMP incorporates Sandy Point and sets out a future action plan to assess and address issues relating to wastewater management.

Council also has an adopted list of townships prioritised to reflect their need for reticulated sewerage infrastructure. Sandy Point is high on that list of Council's preferred townships for sewerage infrastructure. It is also understood that South Gippsland Water has investigated the options for installing reticulated sewerage for Sandy Point, however, no funding has been identified for future implementation.

Services and Roads

Current power and telecommunications services are reported to be unreliable in the village and upgrades to improve this infrastructure are considered to be of a high priority to the community. Recent improvements were implemented in 2004 by TXU including upgrades to conductors to improve voltage levels and transformer performance during peak demand periods.

All primary roads within the village are bitumen sealed with unmade shoulders. These roads are generally in a satisfactory condition and in no need of immediate improvements.

Sandy soils provide a natural means of filtration for stormwater runoff from hard surfaces. The use of grassed swales as the major form of conveyance of storm flow is preferred as it assists in maintaining the informal ambience of the village, and serves to provide a secondary level of treatment to the stormwater before discharging to adjoining waterways. Anecdotal evidence of flooding in and around the commercial centre, and beyond the northern boundary of the village would suggest that the existing drainage infrastructure may be inadequate and in need of further investigation to determine if improvements are required to manage stormwater discharge.



Photos 10 & 11: Example of low key roads border by vegetation in Sandy Point

Community Infrastructure

There are several community infrastructure elements in Sandy Point.

- The surf lifesaving club which can be accessed from Beach Parade just south of the Caravan Park. This facility includes some purpose built meeting rooms for social events and dedicated areas for monitoring patrolled areas along the beach.
- The commercial centre which is located on Beach Parade. This area includes a cafe and general store with some out door seating available at the café. This centre forms the focus of the town not only as a location from which convenience goods can be purchased but also as a meeting place for local residents and visitors to meet and socialise.
- The Caravan Park which shares an important focus along with the commercial centre as an important physical and social element of the town, particularly for non permanent residents.
- The community hall and tennis courts which reinforce the mix of community facilities in this location.



Photo 12: Public facilities



Photo 13: Sandy Point Surf Club

5.2 Planning and Land Use

Management of land use is achieved primarily through the application of State Policies and Planning Schemes, in this case the South Gippsland Planning Scheme (Refer Section 3.2 of Regional Context). The use of land is controlled to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on the environment so townships can evolve and develop in a sustainable manner. Planning schemes provide specific controls with regard to the preferred land use for each parcel of land.

Through the application of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme controls, Sandy Point has developed into a quiet and relaxed coastal village. Conventional housing is concentrated around the centre of the town. Low-density development is located on the northern and western outskirts of the settlement providing a transition to the surrounding rural environment.

To follow is a description of the Planning Scheme policies and controls that apply to Sandy Point. An analysis of the application of these controls in Sandy Point is also provided.

Local Planning Policy Framework

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) sets the broad strategic framework and direction for the South Gippsland Municipality and identifies key issues and areas to be addressed. Within the South Gippsland MSS particular areas that relate to Sandy Point include:

- Environment and Cultural Heritage
- Settlement ; and
- Small Towns.

Sub Clause 21.04-1 Environment and Cultural Heritage

- Council aims to ensure that sustainable land use and development occurs. It highlights areas within the Shire, particularly coastal areas that face increasing environmental pressure from residential development. This pressure is likely to continue in the foreseeable future, given the Shire's natural beauty and relatively close proximity to Melbourne.

Sub Clause 21.04-3-Settlement

- This sub clause identifies the pressures placed on services when there is an influx of people visiting Sandy Point during peak holiday periods. It has also been forecast that over the years to come there will be a slightly higher permanent population as people retire to their holiday home location. Through this the need for adequate services to be in place to meet demand becomes increasingly important.

Sub-Clause 21.04-10 Small Towns

- This sub-clause aims to maintain a network of small towns with a range of roles and services designed to cater for the needs of residents and visitors to the Shire. Additionally, it aims to provide an attractive and safe residential environment and strengthen the economic future of the small towns within the Shire.

These sub clauses will guide the objectives and strategies developed as part of the UDF.

Zoning

A key element of planning controls is the application of zones which guide land use and development within appropriate areas of the municipality (Refer to Figure 3 Page 35). Zones control the uses that can occur on particular parcels of land and there are six different zones within Sandy Point. These include:

- Township Zone;
- Public Conservation and Resource Zone;
- Public Park and Recreation Zone;
- Public Use Zone (1& 6);
- Rural Living Zone; and
- Rural Zone.

Sandy Point is zoned predominantly **Township**, which allows for a variety of uses including residential, commercial and industrial. This zone requires that services must be provided to new subdivisions and development, and a strong emphasis is placed on the established neighbourhood and township character when deciding on applications for new developments.

The **Public Conservation and Resource Zone** applies to all land along the foreshore and extends further inland beyond the south east end of the village. The intent of this zone is primarily to protect and conserve the natural environment, and provide facilities for educating the public on the natural environment, whilst allowing for appropriate resource based uses. This zone effectively prohibits uses that are not carried out by or on behalf of the public land manager.

There are also a number of sites designated as Council Reserves zoned **Public Park and Recreation**. These sites are seen both by the Council and local residents as important assets that need to be retained as local pockets of open space.

There are two small parcels of land (containing 11 allotments) zoned **Rural Living** situated on the northern side of Sandy Point Road in Tilikum Court and Aqua Court. This zone allows for low -density residential development in a rural setting and low scale agricultural uses which are conducted in a sustainable manner.

The **Rural Zone** applies to the land on the north and west sides of the village. The purpose of the Rural Zone is for agricultural and horticultural uses. It also permits limited residential and commercial uses in appropriate areas.

The **Public Use Zone 1- Service and Utility** and **Public Use Zone 6- Local Government** applies to two sites within the village. The Public Use Zone 1 applies to the CFA site, and the Public Use Zone 6 applies to the community hall area. Any use or development within these zones must be consistent with the primary purpose for which the land is designated.

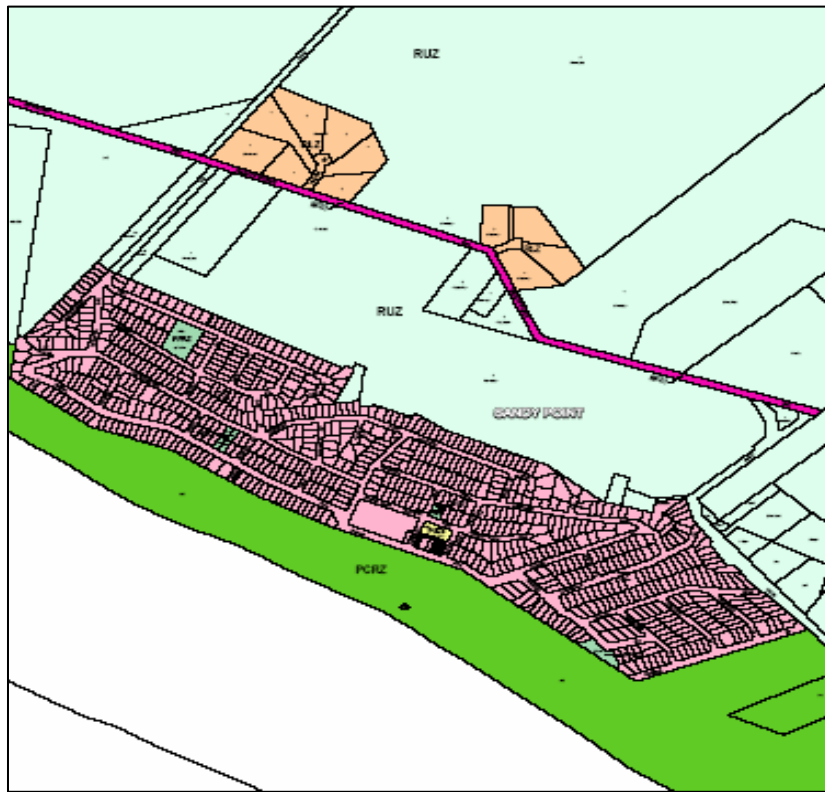


Figure 3. Zoning map of Sandy Point and surrounds

Overlays

Overlays are additional controls over land that offer a further level of direction to areas that have a particular sensitivity or unique circumstance. There are three overlays that apply to Sandy Point, and these include:

- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 3 - Coastal Areas (ESO3)
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 5 - Areas Susceptible to Erosion (ESO5)
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.

The **Environmental Significance Overlay 3** applies to the entire village and surrounding area. This overlay is applicable to coastal areas, and contains objectives relating to the protection of the coast to retain important environmental features. Development controls in this overlay have been implemented to assist in minimising erosion, pollution and destruction of the natural environment. Most development in this overlay area requires a planning permit. (Refer Figure 4 Page 36).

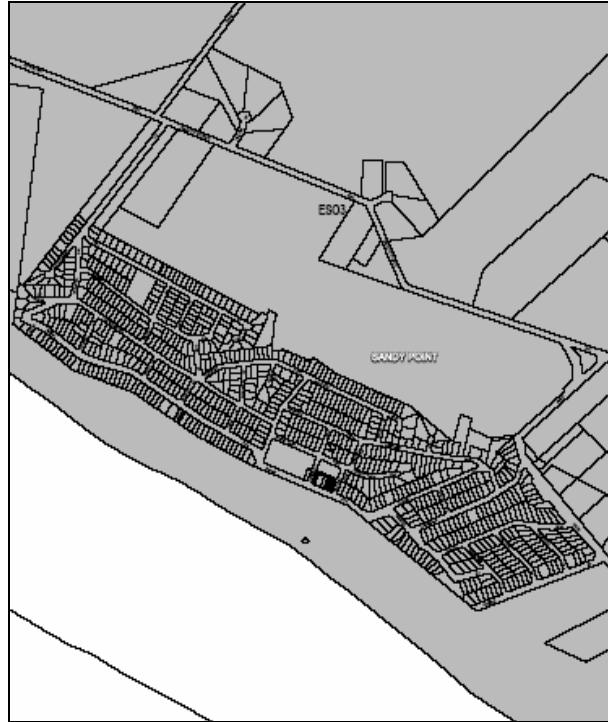


Figure 4. Environmental Significance Overlay 3

The **Environmental Significance Overlay 5** applies to areas susceptible to erosion, and affects land to the north-west of Waratah Road. The objectives of this overlay are to:

- ♦ Protect areas prone to erosion by minimising land disturbance and vegetation loss; and
- ♦ Prevent increased surface runoff or concentration of surface water runoff leading to erosion or siltation of watercourses.

This Overlay also contains additional permit triggers to ensure inappropriate development is not constructed on land affected by the overlay (Refer Figure 5 Page 37).

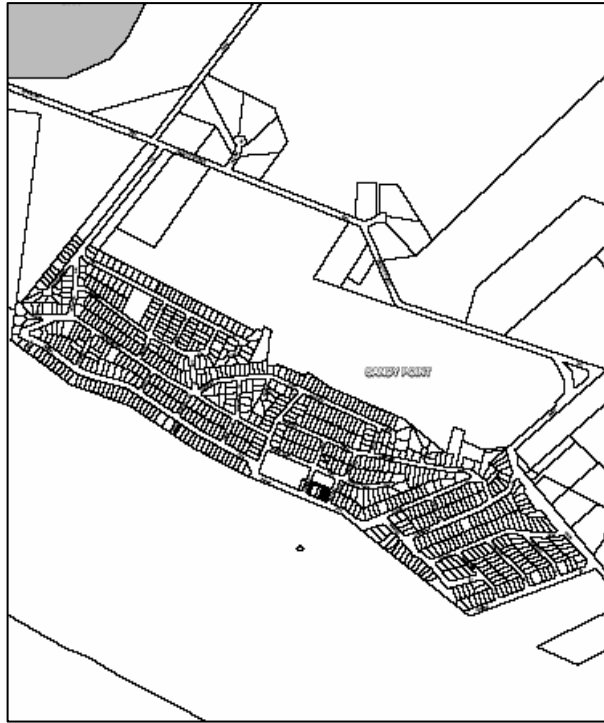


Figure 5. Environmental Significance Overlay 5

The **Land Subject to Inundation Overlay** applies to an area of land to the north-west of the village. The purpose of this overlay is to prevent inappropriate development in flood-prone areas, and also to protect the water quality of nearby waterways. (Refer Figure 6).

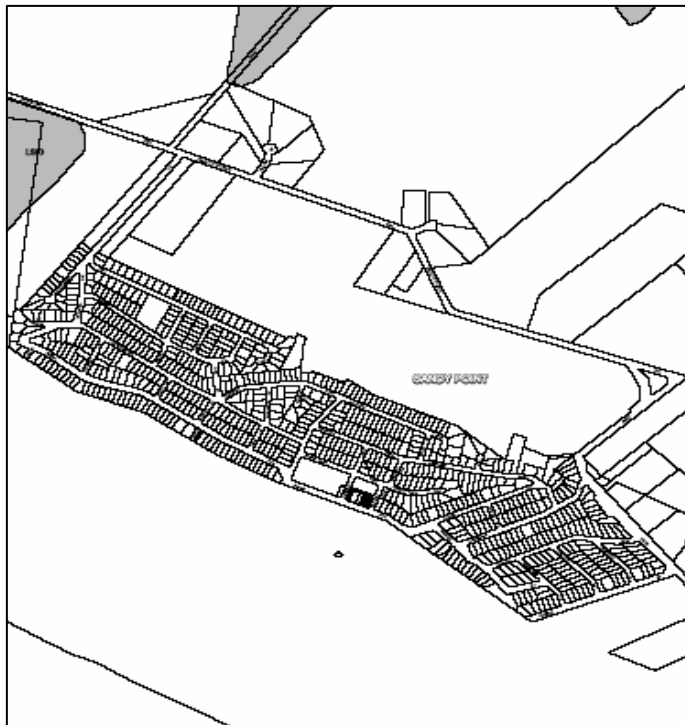


Figure 6. Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

Adequacy of Current Planning Controls

Currently there are shortcomings with the South Gippsland Planning Scheme. These include:

- A lack of “vision” or policy for Sandy Point in the Local Planning Policy Framework;
- A lack of overlay controls relating to design and built form;
- Absence of controls within environmental overlays; and
- Absence of controls which discourage inappropriate land use within the village, particularly commercial uses which may develop around the commercial centre.

Notably absent within the current MSS are specific strategies and actions which deal with design and built form within the village, flooding and/or acid sulfate soils. This is further reflected in the absence of appropriate planning controls that can be applied through a series of overlays and local planning policies.

Local Planning Policy Framework

Clause 21 and 22 of the LPPF has limited relevance to Sandy Point. The Local Planning Policy therefore clearly needs to be expanded upon to include a set of objectives and design guidelines that will reinforce the preferred vision for the town and that reinforce protection of land likely to be exposed to flooding and/or acid sulfate soils.

Township Zone

The Township Zone provides flexibility for a wide variety of uses that may be required in small towns. In the case of Sandy Point the Township Zone appears to be appropriate given that its size and land use mix comfortably fits within the description of the purpose of the zone. Despite this, further consideration of supporting planning controls needs to be considered to prevent inappropriate development from occurring within the village, particularly incremental growth of commercial uses which may establish outside the commercial centre.

New Rural Zones

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) has introduced new zones into the Victorian Planning Provisions that guide the function and use of rural zoned land. The new zones include:

- A *Farming Zone* which replaces the Rural Zone. This will be the new zone for agricultural areas.
- A *Rural Activity Zone*. This is a new zone providing flexibility for agriculture and other land uses to co-exist.
- A *Rural Living Zone*. This upgrades the existing zone and will be the new zone for rural residential areas.
- A *Rural Conservation Zone*. This replaces the Environmental Rural Zone and will be the new zone for areas with significant environmental considerations.

The application of new Rural Zones to rural land surrounding Sandy Point will be considered by the South Gippsland Shire Council as part of a separate project and does not form part of this study.

Rural Living Zone

This zone applies to two small subdivisions north of Sandy Point Road. It is considered that the current zone is appropriate and should be retained until further consideration is given in relation to the application of the new Rural Zones, including the amended version of the Rural Living Zone.

Overlays

There are currently no overlays that reinforce town character and visions for suitable design outcomes in Sandy Point. The existing overlays emphasise the importance of coastal areas (ESO3), erosion (ESO5) and areas of land susceptible to flooding (LSIO). There is no specific overlay control to support and encourage desired urban design outcomes for the town. To follow is a more detailed assessment of the individual overlays.

Environmental Significance Overlay 3 –Coastal Areas

The main purpose of the Environmental Significance Overlay 3 is to protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coastal areas of Sandy Point and to ensure that development adjacent to coastal areas is compatible with the environment and does not result in adverse impacts on coastal processes. The ESO3 affects the entire village however there is no reference to siting and design controls for new development or protection of the significant beach landscapes. In this case it is considered that the village would be better served by a Design Development Overlay (DDO) which would provide more definitive controls in relation to design and built form and would be more effective in achieving the desired vision for the village.

In considering an alternative overlay that would best preserve the landscape characteristics of the village, reference should be made to the findings of the Coastal Spaces- Recommendations Report (April 2006) and the Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (CSLAS). Both documents recognise the value of this area which forms part of Corner Inlet Amphitheatre. This area is noted for its landscape values, including the coastal plains and sandy beaches which provide a scenic backdrop to Wilson's Promontory and hinterland area.

In accordance with the CSLAS it is recommended that the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) should be applied across the Rural Zone beyond the northern and western boundaries of the village. The introduction of this overlay will require a specific schedule which recognises the particular landscape characteristics that warrant protection, including the key elements of the landscape, landscape character objectives, permit requirements and decision guidelines.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

This overlay applies to a small area to the west of the village. Questions have been raised in relation to the reliability of flood mapping and anecdotal evidence suggests that flooding has occurred in a wider area that extends within the boundaries of the village. To address this issue it is essential that further investigations are undertaken to improve the reliability of flood data which can then determine whether the boundaries of the existing overlay should be amended.

In addition to reinforcing the importance of flood data, there is also a clear absence of guiding controls that would assist in addressing areas of land affected by acid sulfate soils. In the absence of an appropriate overlay that could be used to address this issue it is considered appropriate that guidelines be introduced into the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS), which can provide guidance in relation to development on or near sites which may be affected by ASS. In preparing new guidelines careful consideration should be given to the recommendations of the Coastal Spaces-Recommendations Report (April 2006), which reinforces commitment to the objectives of a National Strategy for the management of coastal acid sulfate soils.

5.3 Community and Agency Views

As detailed in the Project Approach, actions undertaken to develop ownership of the project and collection of information were the completion of an Agency Workshop and three community workshops. A summary of this consultation is detailed below. The complete summary of the Sandy Point community workshops can be found in **Appendix C**.

Agency Workshop

The Agency workshop was undertaken in a SWOT analysis format.

The main strengths and opportunities seen by the agencies include:

- The role of Sandy Point as a service town;
- The role of Sandy Point as a centralised service node where all facilities can be accessed;
- The safeness and accessibility of the beach ;
- Potential for investigations to take place to sewer Sandy Point;
- Extensive vegetation cover;
- Strong support for community programs; and
- The need for a community transport program for vulnerable people.

The main weakness and constraints seen by the agencies include:

- Ground water pollution from septic systems;
- Difficulties in maintaining controlled public access near Shallow Inlet ;
- The potential loss of the Caravan Park;
- Progressive road deterioration;
- Lack of parking to meet demand particularly in summer; and
- No emergency services such as police, fire brigade and ambulance.

Community Workshop

Three community workshops were held to capture the views of the permanent and non-permanent residents of the community.

Information collected at the workshops was focussed on:

- What the community valued about Sandy Point;
- The community's vision for the future; and
- The issues that may prevent the vision being realised.

It was determined that Sandy Point community values:

- The compact nature of the village which operates on a principle of 'walkability';
- The low rise and low visibility of buildings;
- The community spirit and family friendly atmosphere;
- The treed character of the area;
- The access to the pristine beaches, fishing and Shallow Inlet.

Other outcomes from the workshop included the development of master plans for various areas in the Township including:

- The commercial precinct;
- Pedestrian and cycling tracks linking various activity nodes in and around the village; and
- Traffic measures and parking infrastructure.

Exhibition of draft documents

The draft Settlement Background Papers and Structure Plans for the UDF project were exhibited for public comment over a six week period between 23 January and 11 March 2006. A total of 170 submissions were received, of which 113 related to Sandy Point. A summary of the information and concerns in the submissions is detailed below.

- Further growth beyond the boundary of the village cannot be justified given the number of existing available vacant lots within the village. Several respondents noted this as a concern, expressing the view that the proposed growth areas would be unsustainable. The expansion would also alter the character of Sandy Point which is currently defined by sand dunes.
- Alternatively, the proposed village boundary is generally accepted and considered to be appropriate by some. However, it is felt that strict guidelines need to be set in place in order to ensure that development is consistent with the township character.
- A significant proportion of respondents stated that they are not opposed to the development of Sandy Point. Concerns have been raised however over the direction of this development and the principles on which it is based. It is felt that a greater focus needs to be placed on accommodating short-term residents and visitors to Sandy Point, as opposed to planning for a growing permanent demographic.
- A number of respondents questioned the need for reticulated sewerage as a means of overcoming groundwater contamination. This point was reiterated through results submitted by private landholders who had undertaken testing of bore holes on their properties. The results of this testing indicated that there was no contamination of ground water.
- The extent of town development that has been proposed does not take into account environmental effects that will result from expansion. This is particularly highlighted with regard to Shallow Inlet. The importance of this area for fish breeding has not been considered as a significant environmental effect of the Structure Plan. Other species such as the Hooded Plover and Cape Barren Geese also stand to be affected by potential loss of habitat. It has been suggested that an environmental impact study should be carried out on areas such as Shallow Inlet.
- The relocation of the Caravan Park has been objected to by several residents. The proposed location will place the Caravan Park within direct view of several residents which is considered inappropriate and unwelcome. Suggestions have been raised in locating the Caravan Park at the northern end of Telopea Street or near Ennisvale Avenue. The Caravan Park needs to be in proximity to the beach, ensuring safe access.
- The adopted population figures are not considered to be accurate and do not reflect the population of Sandy Point. While base population calculations may be correct, peak season figures (December– January) are vastly different.
- Criticism has been raised over the insufficient supply of information at the Community Information Session held in Sandy Point. The consultation process is considered to be flawed and failed to grasp community census. There was not enough notice given to the community in relation to when the consultation sessions were to be held. In addition it was considered that insufficient response times were allocated for submissions to the draft documents.
- A defining element of Sandy Point is the high level of walkability within the town. The proposed expansion will reduce this, forcing residents to become more car dependent.

- Issues pertaining to flooding have not been addressed despite numerous comments from residents. The land designated for future growth and the proposed Caravan Park relocation is low-lying and flood prone.
- Sandy Point has potential for development and this has been acknowledged by a range of submitters. However, it is important to ensure that this development is planned from an informed stance that will preserve the character of Sandy Point and strike the preferred balance between environmental concerns and development directives.
- A number of respondents noted that there is poor justification for expanding the commercial centre given that there are currently vacant lots suitable for development. The directive to expand this area has not been embraced by the wider community.
- A few concerns have been raised in relation to emergency access and the lack of consultation with the CFA. Emergency vehicle access is a fundamental need and has to be suitably acknowledged in town development.

5.4 Settlement Analysis

This section identifies issues that have the potential to impact on the future use and development of Sandy Point. The rationale for any future change or development in Sandy Point is demonstrated by addressing these issues through a vision, objectives and strategies. The vision, objectives and strategies that provide the future strategic direction for Sandy Point are outlined in section 5.5.

A general SWOT analysis was undertaken to guide the issues investigation. The diagram below provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Sandy Point in relation to planning, land use and development.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural environment including beach and bush reserves. Lack of light pollution at night. Quiet small town feel. Lack of traffic. Wildlife presence. Small building footprints and good vegetation cover An active and passionate community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of adequate infrastructure including power, sewerage and telecommunications. Lack of services for green waste. Lack of community focal points. Small permanent population. Limited services. Few activities for young people. Lack of public transport opportunities.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town centre improvements. Establish design controls. Traffic control measures. Infrastructure improvements. Town entry statements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No official town boundary. Loss of town character through a lack of height restrictions and building design controls. Fire hazards created through poor breaks. Pollution from poorly maintained septic systems.

Key Issues

Loss of town character through urban development

The character elements of Sandy Point are dominated by the modest single storey housing which has formed the basis of development within the settlement since the 1950's. Coupled with this is the presence of dense native Tea-Trees which have almost obscured existing dwellings and other man made structures from view over time. What we are now observing is that this trend may be changing in favour of a preference for larger dwellings designed to take advantage of the beach views. As such there is potential for the recognised character of the village to be affected by the proliferation of larger buildings in unsuitable locations unless suitable controls are introduced that can maintain a balance of housing mix within the settlement.

Enhancement of town character through tighter design and control of the commercial area

The commercial centre of Sandy Point is situated along Beach Parade and consists of a café, general store, petrol station, and other commercial uses. In the *Sandy Point Discussion Paper* it was recommended that a specified area on the eastern side of Caravan Park be earmarked for further expansion with a focus on providing better defined areas of commercial and public spaces. It is considered that in terms of town character there is a threat that the existing commercial centre may continue to develop in an ad-hoc fashion unless a boundary is established which clearly defines the commercial precinct and design guidelines are introduced to create a cohesive and attractive character for the commercial strip.

Enhancement of town character through improvements to town entries and traffic circulation including bike paths and walking tracks

Town character usually stems from the established layout, access and circulation routes of a town. Currently Sandy Point has one major entry point from Sandy Point Road through to Beach Parade. This entry can be enhanced through signs and landscaping to create a real sense of arrival to the town. *The Sandy Point Discussion Paper* highlights one of the strengths of the village as being the ability to walk and cycle to various destination points in a short space of time. The weaker element in regard to this is the non-existence of formal walking and cycling paths that would make access a safer and more attractive way to move within the village.

Threat to the identified town character through an increase in housing density

Based on current and forecast trends in both population and dwelling approvals it is unlikely that dwelling densities will increase beyond one dwelling per lot within the foreseeable future.

The current dwelling density is in keeping with the coastal town character and it is likely that this will remain. If however, there were proposals to increase housing density, it should only occur within close proximity to the commercial centre and designed in a form that will not compromise the character of the village.

The impact of failed septic systems and effluent discharged into the environment

Many people are generally unaware that many existing septic tank systems are not adequately sized for permanent wastewater treatment. As these systems age, ongoing 'decay' may cause eventual failure. When this occurs raw or partly treated sewerage may be discharged into the environment. Septic system failures can also occur through irregular usage, increasing the potential for transmission of disease and environmental degradation. Additionally, due to the nature of the sandy soils there is an issue with managing rapid seepage into the soils and ground water. Seepage from septic tanks may contain heavy metals, toxic organisms, nutrients and micro-organisms which are considered a source of groundwater pollution. The impacts of septic systems on the surrounding environment may include alga blooms, toxicity to native flora and fauna, and contamination of groundwater.

Lack of suitable Infrastructure

Clearly the absence of reticulated water and sewerage is seen as the critical component of the infrastructure problems experienced in Sandy Point. The introduction of reticulated water and sewerage while not desirable to a number of stakeholders is likely to be a necessity if ongoing environmental problems relating to groundwater pollution continue to occur. In the absence of immediate funding for the implementation of such services, consideration may be given to examining alternative sustainable design solutions through the implementation of Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Plan.

Power drop outs and poor mobile phone reception are also noted as current constraints. Mobile phone coverage could be addressed through the installation of a mobile phone tower in a defined location which may in itself attract objections from the local community. A balance therefore needs to be found between providing an adequate mobile phone service without compromising town character.

Exposure of Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils

Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils (ASS) has been identified in a small pocket of land to the north of the village. The primary objective of managing acid sulfate soils is to avoid disturbance which would otherwise create potential for environmental damage including the creation of sulphuric acid and the impact of this on nearby land and water. Activities likely to disturb CASS may include excavation for buildings and works and drainage of coastal swamp areas.

The extent of flooding in Sandy Point

Anecdotal evidence of flooding has been identified in certain locations within proximity of the commercial centre and within the rural areas beyond the northern boundary of the village. It is unclear as to whether this problem is a direct cause of flooding or as a consequence of poor drainage. Further investigation is therefore required to determine the cause of this problem, and appropriate action taken to deal with the issue.

Potential fire hazards caused through inadequate landscape management practices.

The community have identified the need to preserve a balance between maintaining landscape character values while ensuring that consideration is given to protecting the town from potential wildfire events.

Impact of population growth on Sandy Point

It is predicted that with the general Victorian population increase and the boost of the 'sea change' phenomena, the population of Sandy Point and other surrounding coastal areas is also expected to increase, although it is expected that this growth will be slow. With the influx of holiday residents it is likely that a proportion of vacant sites owned by non permanent residents will continue to be developed as holiday homes. This indicates there will not be a dramatic shift in the ratio of permanent residents to holiday residents and therefore Sandy Point should continue to be planned primarily as a holiday destination. With this trend likely to continue in the foreseeable future, responsible planning needs to be implemented to ensure that potential environmental impacts are minimised within the village itself and in areas around Shallow Inlet.

Lack of Community facilities

The absence of community facilities including the availability of public transport is seen as an important issue. Although this problem is acknowledged, the issues associated with the availability and efficiency of local public transport cannot be addressed as part of this study.

Impact of development on sites of cultural heritage significance

Through AAV, the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) has responsibility for administering cultural heritage legislation which includes the Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* and the *Victorian Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972*. Section 5 refers to the importance of South Gippsland to the Gunai/ Kurnai and Boonwurrung Aboriginal peoples as a place of cultural heritage importance. As such there is a need to protect Aboriginal heritage places that may be identified within the Shire and which need to be managed through a series of appropriate guidelines. A new State Aboriginal Heritage Act has been developed which is likely to be introduced in 2007, and which will require a review of current statutory arrangements. It is expected that this legislation will establish clear guidelines for the preservation and management of sites considered to be of cultural heritage significance.

5.5 Strategic Directions

For Sandy Point to evolve and develop in line with policy, legislation and government and community aspirations there is a need for a common vision and objectives and strategies to realise such a vision.

Vision

This vision has been developed from the values expressed by the community, planning policy and other relevant influences. In the future Sandy Point will be known as:

- *A small coastal village with a vibrant and supportive community that is an attractive holiday destination for residents of Melbourne regional Victoria and visitors from other states and overseas.*
- *A village that will retain a relaxed holiday atmosphere reinforced by simple urban form and land use activity.*
- *A village that will display a distinct character built upon a functional commercial centre surrounded by predominantly low-rise development.*
- *A village where future population growth will be promoted within the existing township boundaries, and clearly defined growth areas when required.*
- *A place where environmentally sustainable practices are promoted and widely used.*
- *A place for day tourists as well as being a place where residents will have convenient access by foot or bicycle to all its features and facilities.*

With regard to its regional context, the role of Sandy Point will be as a small coastal village supporting a small permanent population as well as non-permanent residents. It will provide low end daily convenience facilities and rely on Leongatha and Foster for access to major retail, industrial and commercial facilities.

Objectives

To realise this vision the following broad level objectives are required:

Managing Growth

- Maintain the low key holiday character of the village and enhance the character of the commercial precinct. (Refer to strategies 1,2, 4 & 7).
- Promote development that will respect and enhance the coastal character of the village (refer to strategies (Refer to strategies 2& 7).
- Where demand can be demonstrated, facilitate development within the existing boundary of the village and long term development areas when required. (Refer to strategies 5 & 6).
- Promote long term development areas in locations which maintain pedestrian accessibility to the nearby foreshore and commercial centre (Refer to strategies 4 & 6)

Enhancing Environmental Benefits

- Protect the environmental values of Shallow Inlet and the nearby foreshore reserve (Refer to strategies 2,12 & 13).
- Promote environmental sustainable principles within the village (Refer to strategies 1, 3, 8, 9,10,11, 12 & 13).
- Protect the identified landscape values of the area (Refer to strategy 12).

Balancing Service Provision

- Provide infrastructure services that address the ongoing needs of the community while protecting the environmental values of the area (Refer to strategies 4, 10,11,12 and 14).

Strategies

To implement and achieve these objectives a range of detailed strategies are required. These include:

Managing Growth

1. Develop appropriate planning controls and policy provisions to reinforce siting and design aspects including built form, site coverage, materials, colours, siting, fencing, landscaping treatments and soil disturbance.
2. Develop a series of character prerequisites for defined growth areas which reflect existing topography, vegetation and township character.
3. Develop a series of development prerequisites which assess the potential impact associated with flooding, acid sulfate soils, sites of cultural heritage significance and sites of environmental significance.
4. Develop a Master Plan for the village which focuses on creating a cohesive commercial precinct, defined open space linkages to the foreshore reserve and beach, and pedestrian and cycling links which provide convenient and safe access in and around the village and defined growth areas.
5. Infill lots where appropriate prior to allowing outward expansion to defined growth areas.
6. Define the village boundary through the implementation of a Structure Plan and limit projected residential growth to long term growth areas.
7. Maintain current housing density through recognition within identified planning controls.
8. Maintain the rural buffer between Sandy Point and Waratah Bay and develop a series of development prerequisites for the areas between these settlements.
9. Undertake a flood study for Sandy Point and translate the findings into a Local Policy or overlay control within the Planning Scheme. The study must include a reference to climate change impacts.

Enhancing Environmental Benefits

10. Continue the development of the Municipal Domestic Wastewater Management Plan to comprise assessment of wastewater management issues for Sandy Point and devise strategies and action plans as appropriate.
11. Use best practice water sensitive urban design measures for new developments
12. Review the suitability of ESO3 control and develop amended or new controls which focus on built form and character as appropriate.
13. Review the suitability of planning controls relating to land potentially affected by flooding, acid sulfate soils, sites of known cultural heritage significance and sites of environmental significance. Develop amended or new controls as appropriate.

Balancing Service Provision

14. Investigate opportunities to improve the availability and configuration of car parking in and around the commercial centre.

5.6 Managing Growth

A key element of the UDF is the relationship between growth and available land that is suitable for development. In Sandy Point there is an expectation that the proportion of permanent residents to non-residents will remain steady at 10%.

Figure 2.0 in **Appendix D** shows the key features that constrain the land available for development in the future. These constraints include:

- The foreshore reserve to the south.
- The extent of existing and potential acid sulfate soils to the north.
- The extent of potential flooding to the north, east and west of the village.

Figure 3.0 in **Appendix D** outlines details of Initial investigation areas, which were selected for the following reasons:

1. Area 1 on the east side of Telopea Drive between Sandy Point Road and the northern boundary of the village could provide opportunities for future expansion to the village subject to a series of development prerequisites. Its location adjacent to Telopea Drive, lack of established vegetation and flat topography would suggest that consideration could be given to some form of residential development that reflects the existing character of the settlement.
2. Area 2 on the eastern side of the village could provide an alternative to Area 1 as a preferred location for long term development. This area experiences much of the same benefits as Area 1, however anecdotal evidence of flooding and drainage problems will need further investigation to determine if the land is capable of accommodating any future growth.
3. Area 3 to the north east of Sandy Point Road has been nominated by some stakeholders as an opportunity for expansion to the village. It is envisaged that this area could evolve into a secluded precinct defined by natural barriers that would prevent incremental expansion of the village.

Following further detailed examination of the Initial Investigation Areas it was determined that Area 1 as noted on Figure 4.0 in **Appendix D** would best accommodate any future growth beyond the current boundaries of the village. The reasons for this are listed as follows:

1. Area 1 benefits from more direct and convenient access from the primary traffic routes leading into and out of the settlement. Its location at the western end of the village provides a logical starting point for any future growth areas which could be accommodated, providing that the development prerequisites outlined in the structure plan are adhered to. An opportunity exists to form a boundary to the eastern edge of this growth area by retaining the existing row of established trees which could provide a buffer between this site and the balance of the Rural Zone further to the east. Opportunities also exist to provide safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling routes to the beach and the commercial centre from this location.

2. The land designated in Area 2 shares many of the same advantages as Area 1, however its location away from the primary entry points at the opposite side of the settlement make this site less desirable in terms of a future growth area.
3. Area 3 on the north east side of Sandy Point Road if supported will encourage incremental growth beyond the boundary of the village to the detriment of nearby Shallow Inlet. This area is also more likely to be exposed to areas or known flooding as indicated in the context analysis plan.

Growth Scenarios

In the next 15 years Sandy Point is expected to experience slow growth. The brief for this project was to investigate available land for development for the next 15 to 20 years. However, it is worth noting that the Planning Scheme requires investigation of potential growth areas to be identified for the next 10 years.

To manage this future growth in line with the vision for Sandy Point it is important to develop a growth program. This program is based on reticulated sewerage being installed in the village to respond to the existing problem of contamination from septic systems. Regardless of any future increase in population the problem of contamination needs to be addressed. However, if no reticulated sewerage is to be installed then no further expansion or growth of the village should occur beyond its current boundaries.

The growth program designates what land is available for development, how many lots this equates to, an estimate of how many people this will accommodate and the timeframe in which it will occur. The following assumptions have been made in developing the growth program:

1. That the current average household size remains unchanged (2.07 persons per household); and
2. That the current proportion of permanent dwellings to holiday homes remains unchanged (10%).
3. The growth scenarios include estimates on the following:
 - Permanent population.
 - Peak population of non permanent residents occupying holiday homes during summer.
 - Total population during the peak summer period.

Land Available for Development

There are currently 139 vacant residential lots within the township. In addition, there are 10 house sites that have been approved within the Caravan Park site.

The growth scenario assumes that the existing 139 vacant lots plus the 10 house sites in the Caravan Park site will be developed. The full development of these existing lots will lead to an estimated permanent population of 160 persons with a further 1023 persons occupying holiday homes at any one time during the peak summer period. Hence the estimated total population in the peak summer period is expected to be 1183 persons. With these assumptions it is estimated that the available land supply will be adequate to meet demand for the next 15 years.

Despite these forecast growth rates further consideration should be given to unforeseen changes in population trends which may require the release of new land within defined growth areas in advance of the forecast period. The following section of this report provides guidance on this issue with a series of prerequisites that will ultimately determine where and when newly defined growth areas should be released.

6. Structure Plan

The structure plan for Sandy Point aims to reflect the community's vision for the town and cater for expected growth as highlighted in Section 5 of this Settlement Paper. *It is important to note that the structure plan does not identify all of the planning scheme and related controls that will be used to address matters relating to building design, vegetation control, and other matters.* This will be addressed in the Implementation Phase of the UDF process.

In essence the Structure Plan identifies the key strategies within the Settlement Paper noting in particular:

- *The current and preferred future extent of the settlement, which reflects (where appropriate) a 15 year period having regard to population and develop forecasts, infrastructure capacity, settlement role, environment and heritage considerations.*
- *Identification of the relationship between the settlement and its public land surroundings assets and values.*
- *Identification of preferred locations for the land use types required to achieve the vision.*
- *Connectivity of open spaces.*

To follow is a summary of the preferred land patterns which have been set out in Figure 4 of **Appendix D**. It is envisaged that the format of the Structure Plan will form the basis of the final implementation of the Urban Design Framework for Sandy Point.

Proposed Township Boundary

The Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report dated April 2006 advocates the use and establishment of settlement boundaries to:

- Establish a town edge so that the coastal and landscape values of non-urban areas are protected;
- Protect areas of environmental and landscape significance and productive agricultural activity;
- Optimise the use of existing infrastructure and services within settlements to minimise resource use and cost;
- Meet community desires to have separate, clearly identifiable settlements; and
- Provide clarity of what is considered urban and non-urban.

The proposed boundary of the settlement is shown on the Structure Plan in Figure 4.0 in **Appendix D**.

- The northern boundary is defined by the urban edge of the village between the Township Zone and the Rural Zone.
- The eastern and southern boundaries are defined by the edge of the Township Zone and the Public Conservation and Resource Zone which forms part of the Waratah Bay Coastal Reserve.
- The western boundary is defined by the edge of the Township Zone and the Rural Zone.

Development Prerequisites

In the context of the population forecasts that have been assumed for the village, caution needs to be applied when considering the release of new land parcels for residential development.

It is acknowledged that there has been slow growth within the village indicated by a decrease in the number of dwelling approvals. There also remains a significant proportion of vacant lots which have yet to be developed. On the basis of forecast infill rates, the supply of vacant lots is unlikely to be exhausted for 15 years. However, It is also recognised that these areas may experience unforeseen changes in current trends with more retirees moving to the coast as a result of the sea change phenomenon.

In considering these factors, the Structure Plan recognises that allowance needs to be made for additional growth areas that can support suitable residential densities in appropriate locations. However, any immediate expansion into the long term development areas identified on the Structure Plan should not occur until the following prerequisites have been met:

- *That any immediate rezoning should be delayed until a significant proportion of the available remaining vacant lots within the Township Zone has been developed;*
- *Reticulated water and sewerage is available;*
- *Further investigation is undertaken to confirm the extent of potential problems associated with acid sulfate soils and flooding;*
- *Further investigation is undertaken to confirm the location of sites of recognised cultural and heritage significance.*
- *Further investigation is undertaken to confirm the location of sites of recognised environmental significance.*

As part of these prerequisites, prospective developers should document findings of their investigations, and in consultation with Council officers confirm whether any specific development guidelines need to be established before development occurs.

As a guiding mechanism for determining when land should be released Council should monitor demand trends to assess the progress of the town's infill expansion, particularly after the introduction of reticulated sewerage. If development pressure is such that demand exceeds the available supply, then Council should apply discretion and release land in stages within the long term development area identified in the Structure Plan. The implementation of a 3-5 year review process should form part of a guiding mechanism with the Municipal Strategic Statement to inform Council of when to exercise such discretion.

Township Zone

In context of the population forecasts that have been assumed for the town it is clear that the existing vacant lots within this zone will be sufficient to sustain growth within the village at least in the medium term. The Structure Plan for Sandy Point recommends retention of the Township Zone, primarily due to its limited size, which is considered in line with the purpose of the zone.

Rural Zone

The implementation of the new rural zones for Victoria has resulted in the introduction of new zones into the Victoria Planning Provisions and the revision of existing zones. The Structure Plan recommends retention of the land between the northern edge of the Township Zone and Sandy Point Road in a Rural Zone until further consideration is given to the future zoning of this area.

Commercial Precinct

Consideration has been given to defining the extent of the commercial precinct; however the Structure Plan does not recommend any rezoning of the Commercial Centre to Business 1 given its size and limited services it provides to the local community. However, the Structure Plan does recommend design control measures which will be implemented through appropriate master planning of the town centre. These controls can be used to define the boundaries of the commercial precinct and set design guidelines that can reinforce the recommendations of the Master Plan. Such measures may include controls on building heights and setbacks, materials, signage and landscaping. The actions associated with the Master Plan will develop some of the ideas put forward in the *Sandy Point Discussion Paper* including identification of preferred locations for medium density housing within close proximity to the commercial centre.

Design Controls and Township Character

It is acknowledged from a review of Section 5 of this report that the village has no definitive controls that can guide design and built form. In this regard a Design Development Overlay (DDO) is considered to be the best tool to manage future development within the existing Township Zone. The DDO should replace the existing ESO3 to better guide the future design and built form of dwellings and commercial buildings within the village. The use of appropriate schedules for the DDO will provide more definitive development guidelines that will assist developers and Council officers in making better informed decisions in relation to planning applications in the future.

Design Controls for the Protection of Landscapes.

The Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study recommends inclusion of a Significant Landscape Overlay along the area defined as *Corner Inlet Amphitheatre*. Included within this area is the Rural Zone which stretches between the edge of the north boundary of the Township Zone and Sandy Point Road. Although the application of this overlay would be consistent with the findings of the CSLAS, any future release of land for residential development within the long term development area will require consideration of an alternative overlay as a replacement for the SLO to better control the use and development of land within this area and seek to retain its landscape values.

Design Controls for the Protection of Native Vegetation

There is a lack of data available in relation to the extent and importance of local native vegetation within Sandy Point. Concerns have been raised over the potential loss of vegetation through clearing to accommodate reticulated sewerage when it becomes available and the possible affects of wildfire events. Given the substantial number of remaining vacant lots within the settlement there is a possibility that a significant area of native vegetation could be cleared over time unless a strategy is developed to identify whether or not vegetation should be protected in certain locations. In this case it is recommended that Council undertake a vegetation survey to confirm the extent of native vegetation worthy of protection, and then decide whether to implement planning controls to manage the removal of native vegetation in the village. Such a strategy should be consistent with the DSE Practice Note for Vegetation Protection in Urban Areas and should be prepared in consultation with the relevant authorities of the Department of Sustainability and Environment, South Gippsland Water and the CFA.

Design Controls for Areas Susceptible to Flooding

It is recognised that reliable flooding data is unavailable which would otherwise assist in determining the extent of the areas susceptible to flooding in and surrounding the village, particularly to the north of the settlement and in locations near the commercial precinct. On this basis it is recommended that further investigation be undertaken to determine the extent of the areas affected by flooding, so that the existing ESO6 can either be amended or replaced with a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). Supporting mapping and definitive controls should then be established to better inform Council officers when assessing particular applications within these affected areas.

Design Controls for Areas affected by Acid Sulfate Soils.

Information available on the location of acid sulfate soils is still lacking in terms of what can be readily translated as guidelines into the Planning Scheme. The Coastal Spaces-Recommendations Report (April 2006), will provide guidance in relation to managing areas affected by ASS. In the absence of suitable overlay controls that could be used to control the use and development of land in areas affected by ASS, it is recommended that the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) be amended to incorporate a series of development guidelines. In preparing amendments to the MSS, it is recommended that dialogue commence with appropriate officers from the Department of Sustainability and Environment to determine best practice guidelines which are consistent with the National Strategy for the management of coastal acid sulfate soils.

Reticulated Water and Sewerage

In terms of reticulated services the Settlement Background Paper clearly identifies the issues associated with poor septic systems and the need to control development until reticulated water and sewerage is made available to the town. At this stage Sandy Point is identified as being high on the Council priority list of townships where reticulated sewerage is required. South Gippsland Water has developed concepts for reticulation systems, however funding has not been identified and implementation is uncertain.

To reinforce the importance of the issues surrounding current wastewater management within Sandy Point, the structure plan recommends that stronger reference be made to Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2006-2010 within the Municipal Strategic Statement. In this regard actions such as the identification of Smart Septic Systems will assist in addressing gaps in the performance of existing wastewater management within the village if the implementation of a reticulated sewerage system is delayed.

Car parking

The structure plan recognises the need to investigate opportunities to improve parking availability and access within the vicinity of the commercial centre. This will be considered as part of the Master Plan process.

Transport Movement / Linkages

Key entrance nodes and vehicular, pedestrian and cycling links have been delineated on Figure 4.0 and traffic calming should be investigated for the village to ensure pedestrian, cyclist and motor safety is not compromised.

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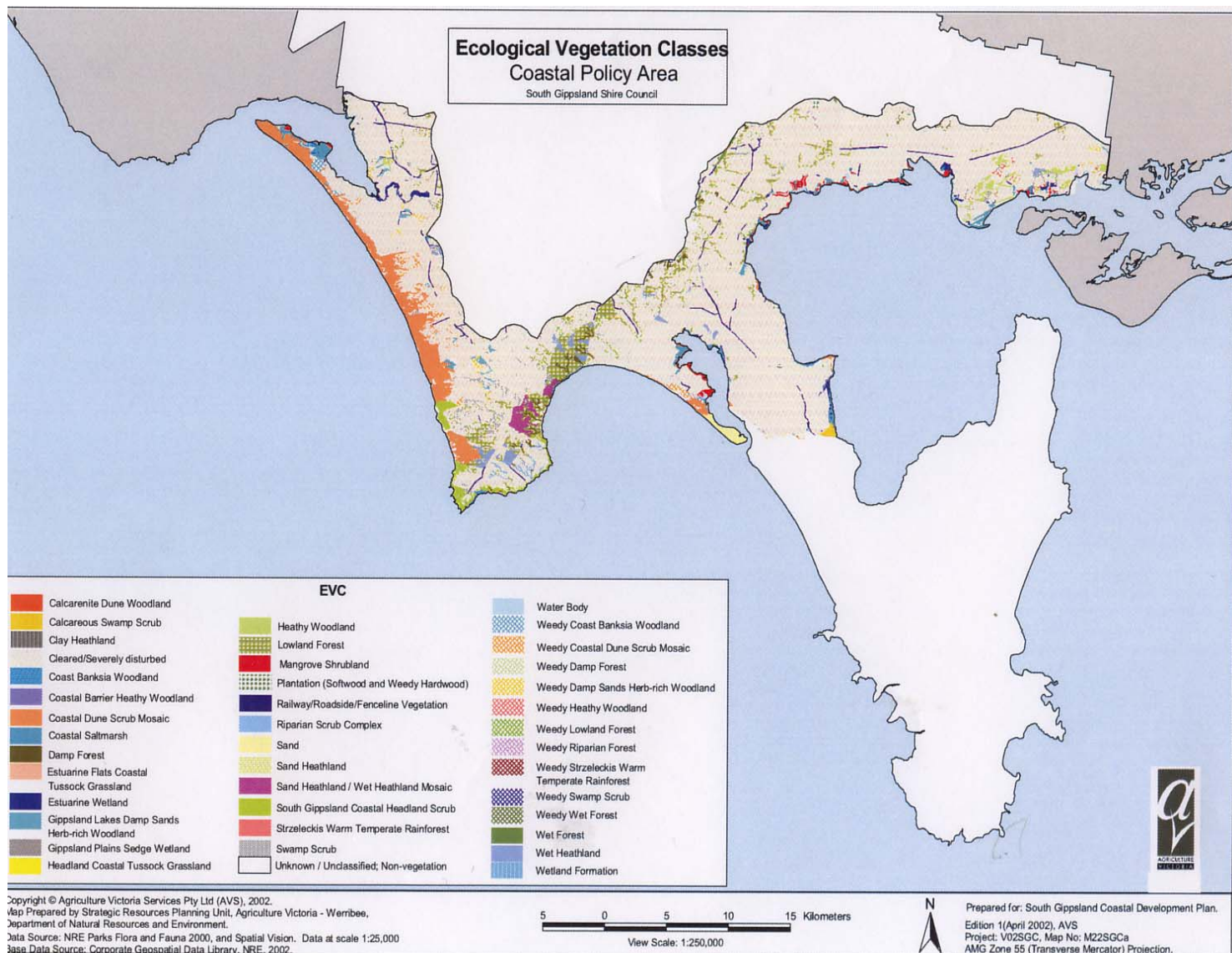
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Appendix A

Ecological Vegetation Class Map



Appendix B

Acid Sulfate Soils Hazard Map

Appendix C

Summary of Community Workshops

SOUTH GIPPSLAND

COASTAL URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORKS

Community Workshops January/February 2005

Summary of Workshop Outcomes for Sandy Point

South Gippsland Shire Council has engaged Connell Wagner to develop Urban Design Frameworks (UDFs) for the townships of Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower, Sandy Point and Waratah Bay.

The UDFs will aim to:

- Provide a vision for the towns for the next 15 years.
- Identify town character and actions to retain and enhance the character.
- Provide a structure for the growth of the towns.
- Develop planning principles for areas in between towns.
- Develop Master Plans for certain areas.

A key part of the project is consulting with community, seeking their input on issues relating to the future planning, development and design in each town.

The local community has local knowledge and a history of the area, which needs to be collected as part of the information gathering stage. The community is the future of the area and needs to be involved in the project and listen to other community member's ideas. To this end community workshops have been undertaken.

Below is a summary of the outcomes of the Community Workshops held in Sandy Point on January 17th 2005 and at the Malvern Town Hall on Thursday 17th February 2005. Interested parties were also given the opportunity to submit comments in writing. A summary of the outcomes is provided below. More detail regarding responses to the workshop questions are available in the attachment to this summary.

The questions raised at the workshops required the community to outline their vision for their town, highlight areas suitable for a master plan and respond to issues of town character, growth and the environment.

The Sandy Point community values the beauty, space, walkability and quietness of the Township as well as the surrounding beach, wilderness and flora and fauna. The bush reserve along the beach and the fact no houses are visible from the beach is also valued. The community likes the low density and low rise of housing and the family focus of the Township. They also value the compact nature of the town, which encourages walking and cycling and would prefer the Township retained these qualities.

Sandy Point is seen as a holiday destination with some semi-permanent/permanent residents and has limited commercial activity. Sandy Point is characterised by small blocks with small houses, low key infrastructure such as minimal street lights, shared roads with little traffic, a landscape that is dominant over the built form and buffer zone of coastal trees along streetscapes. The community would like to see a town boundary established, the redevelopment of the community centre, a two storey height limit imposed, fences to remain absent and for the town to retain its residential nature.

It was recommended that some multi-unit development could occur in the town centre and possibly incorporate shop-top housing for short term tourism accommodation. Other development should be of low densities with buildings taking up a small 'footprint' on blocks that retain and enhance their native vegetation while removing weeds. Such dwellings should be made of non-combustible materials and utilise colours drawn from the landscape. New development should not be visible from the beach.

The community has some concerns regarding fire hazards, ground water contamination, inappropriate developments, lack of reliable power, mobile phone and internet services and possible health issues with old septic tanks.

Master Plans are recommended for the following areas:

- Town Centre – community centre, shops, tennis court, playground
- Old tip to Manucka St – park
- Rear of the shops
- Playground near second avenue on Beach Pde
- Upgrade beach access and lookouts
- Leisure Activity master plan

ATTACHMENT – SUMMARY DATA FROM WORKSHOP

1. What do you value about your town

Space	beach and inlet
Beauty	safe swimming (patrolled beach)
Wilderness	quiet
Natural Sky at Night	bush reserve along beach visually nice
Quiet Beach and Town	Wildlife able to access and move around town
Still water and beach	Township well defined
Ease of movement	no houses visible from beach
Lack of crowds and sophistication	low density housing
Walkability.	minimal development
No high rise	no paths, no gutters
Casual atmosphere	bush hiding houses
Community is intelligent, strong in their views and willing to undertake work to improve their environment	Coastal vegetation
slow traffic	scarcity, unique, endangered, screened homes, privacy
bush environment	Lack of fencing (no kerb & channel, clean air)
family focus	Low key commercial development
native flora and fauna	No housing/habitation visible from beach
Compact nature of town minimises vehicle use (and we like that!) and minimises speed	The Prom/Liptrap/Waratah Bay views

Low density:

- Gives different environment to Melbourne
- Rural feel, not suburban

2. How does your town relate to the surrounding communities and what role does it play in the region?

Holiday Destination
Semi-permanents
Access to inlet – road, bikes
Residents working 'locally'
Has physical constraints (reserves, etc) not a regional centre potential – holiday hamlet focus

3. Describe your vision for the town for the next 15 years

Establish town boundary -Control to growth
Keep similar environment
No channel/kerb streets
Provision for camping/caravanning

Community centre

- Community focused on relaxation and more natural environment – this development process should be driven by this community (and their values) not by hypothetical future community

Two storey maximum throughout

Walkability/Walking & cycle tracks

Limited commercial activity – keep more intense shopping to larger centres (Foster/Leongatha)

Need more tree-planting on Government land

Trees and vegetated nature needs to be retained

Change should be incremental rather than significant

4. Nominate a specific area where a Master Plan could be prepared and what improvements would be gained?

Close Church Pde

Education plan for or about flora and fauna

Shallow inlet – can and can't, do's

Town centre – re-design for functionality

Native plant landscape plan for commercial centre

Caravan Park near beach

Parking as a whole issue

Landscape: ie indigenous plants, garden as a guide for householders

Town centre – Community centre, More viable shops

Leisure activity master plan

Bus from Fish Ck / Leongatha

Commercial precinct master plan

Old tip to Manucka St – Park

Upgrade beach access/lookouts

Signage and advertising of shared road theme

Rear of the shops

Shop area/tennis court/playground:

Playground near second avenue on Beach Parade

- Upgrade
- Keep high density
- Encourage as open-area meeting place for community
- More canopy trees (not bush)
- Seats

- Seats, picnic tables
- Canopy trees

5. How would you describe the town character and what do you most value about it?

Small blocks, small houses – but trending to large houses

Low-key infrastructure (minimal street lights, very limited footpaths)

Landscape predominant over built form

Car parking in common public areas

Canopy of trees dormant, not roofs

Shared roadway, low traffic volumes

Non-pretentious, relaxed, a little unstructured (nice!)

Limited commercial development

Like shared-roadway, slower traffic

Fishing hamlet

Clearly defined border

Lack of kerbs and channels

Formal street network and informal path network - permeability

Buffer zone of coastal trees in the street

Humble footprints – coverage of less than 30%

Fences generally absent

6. Are there particular town character elements that should be maintained and improved and, if so how?

Expansion of town to S.K. Rd

Building height – 9 metres

No development visible from beach, not higher than two storeys

Retain relaxed, camping, walkability throughout town centre & Caravan Park (need special consideration)

Protect shallow inlet from degradation/overuse

No monopoly land ownership

Tree cover / seclusion

Consider alternative entry to town to reduce traffic in residential areas

Security

See 'Planning Sandy Pt' discussion paper

Absence of fences should continue

Landscapes to be retained and vegetation replaced where development occurs

Retain sustainable buffer zone of coastal trees

Development should not break the tree line

Fencing to be height restricted and sympathetic

Revegetate streetscapes

Retain walkability of town

Retain Caravan Park at centre to minimise traffic and support commercial centre

Houses not taking over whole block – maintain a % of vegetation, protect from multi density, can't see houses

7. What style of future development should be encouraged and where?

Multi-unit development pressure to be absorbed only in town centre – but this is short term solution which starts a process of multi-unit development? Conversely – no future development

The closer everything is to town, the less use of vehicles. Extension of the town violates principle of "Walkability"

Low-rise residential

Enforce 9m limit and maintain this limit

Footprint of buildings to be restricted to maintain vegetation cover (no boundary-to-boundary houses)

Maintain house separation

Maintain residential nature , no hotels etc

Prefer style of existing, flexible accommodation options

No development or construction visible from the beach (except existing surfclub) (very important)

New dwellings to be made of non-combustible materials and 'touch the earth lightly'

Colours of buildings should be drawn from the natural landscape and blend with the setting

Short to medium term growth in undeveloped blocks and blocks where houses are nearing the end of their life.

Shop top housing at commercial centre for short term tourism related accommodation

8. What are the key environmental features and values of the area?

Koalas and Echidnas

Habitat corridors

Flora and Fauna – native growth

enhance whole area

Native dunes

Wildlife access through properties should be retained to maintain habitat connectivity

Wilderness and vista values

Wonderful dune vegetation, little erosion

Beach loss is increasing over years, retain foreshore

Wildlife and birds are major bonus of Sandy Point

Beach reserve must be retained

Don't encroach on any reserves with development

9. What are the main environmental issues and threats in and around the town?

20-30 years ago ti tree vs acacia

Reintroduce 'true natives', not just ti tree

Fire hazards (in ti tree) signage for fire safe zones

Educate re: fast growing plants to 'close in' houses without ti tree

Overgrown old ti tree – often fall in heavy wind

Loss of natural vegetation/weed invasion due to habitation

Lack of fire safety/policing of policy, clearing and reduction

Ground water contamination – impact on shallow inlet

Misuse of facilities. Expansion of Sandy Point. Provide boat-launching facilities to help shallow inlet.

Dogs: poo, roaming, koalas, possums

Rabbits: degradation of dunes, private gardens, vermin

Dunes: limit access humans dogs horses

Existing paths to be made more attractive (not like 10 mile beach fencing), boardwalks etc

Sewerage

As a health concern in the future

Need to know test readings

A long term sewer option for SP – cost for short term vs long term option

Old vs new septic tanks (new developments can use newer options)

If not for sewerage, cannot develop at all due to EPA concerns (sandy soil)

Development secondary to sewerage installation

Reticulated water – tank for drinking, bore for all else

Need to clearly state water usage eg tank water

Traffic Roads

Only three roads in to manage traffic in/through

Value shared roads

Parking options/restrictions – dedicated parking precinct

Education re: shared road ways

What about fire brigade/lifesavers (parking)

Bush areas pose risk for children on road

Footpaths – value street scape

Gas/petrol are near playground, safer storage

Parking and traffic management needs to be addressed speed limit 25km in built up zones (Caravan Park, shops) eg in South Australia Ayre Peninsula

Limit development on each block therefore limit numbers staying therefore limit traffic

Push bike hire to replace vehicle use

Roads – gradients, narrow roads danger for pedestrians but does slow traffic, speed - 50km speed limit too high, danger area – Western end beach parade with steep gradient bend in the road – lots of potential accidents especially as out of coastal access area

Visitor parking outside of local area eg Telopia St, locals observe slow speed/shared roadway

Access – should main vehicle entry be back road?

If more development, would those out of current settlement walk to beach? Probably if they have good access (direct to beach eg Second Ave, surf club, alternative beach access)

Power – not enough! TXU trying to increase substations

Mobile phone access and service – not enough

Internet too slow

Reliable Power Source

10. Are there opportunities to protect and promote the key environmental features? And what infrastructure would you like to see improved?

Legal Baiting	Reliable permanent electricity supply underground
Permanent rangers	
Limit development	No road upgrades maintain only
Sewerage	Set height limits for any development
Underground power	Consistency – character of development
DSE to clean up ground fuel in coastal parks	Consider alternative entrance to town (e.g. Park Street) and close off other entrances (Telopea, Ennisvale)
Education program with shire about noxious weeds (done needs redoing)	Add a bird hide
Weed eradication	Mobile phone coverage to be improved
Hard and greenwaste a major problem	Bike/pedestrian path (singular) to Shallow Inlet
DSE to use entrance fees to study and implement policy for shallow inlet	Maintain 3 public pay phones
Development network of verges or paths on main roads to protect pedestrians/cyclists	Enhancement of night sky through reduction of street lighting
Keep road conditions such that they encourage people to drive slowly	Improve reliability of electricity supply
Undertake an EIS prior to installing sewerage system	Look at alternatives to sewerage system

Redevelop community hall for more activities

Shop top development

11. Are there any other issues you would like to provide comment on?

Where should commercial precinct be?

What about playground? Develop with sports ground

New access to town via Pilkingtons?

Sea levels according to global climate change

Council planning takes no (?) account of long term problems as this occurs. Keep infrastructure and development of low-lying areas

Town growth is limited by water boundaries including water table. Northern properties are low-lying and not good option for development in long term

Previously development had for the most part not projected above the hill and tree line and this should form the basis of future decision making and Urban Design Guidelines.

Detailed development guidelines need to be developed that support retention of a valued landscaped character not dominated by urban form

The community is intelligent, strong in their views and not afraid to undertake work themselves to improve their community and environment – this energy should be harnessed to assist in implementation of the UDF.

Relocation of the Caravan Park to the perimeter of town would diminish social equity and increase disadvantage, increase vehicular movements and diminish revenues to the commercial facilities and lessen available car parking for day visitors.

Appendix D

Figure 1.0: Existing Conditions – Context Analysis; Figure 2.0: Site Analysis; Figure 3.0: Land Capability Analysis – Initial Investigation Areas; Figure 4.0: Structure Plan

Appendix D

Appendix E

Summary of Comments & Changes from Submissions

Appendix E

Summary of Comments & Suggested Changes from Submissions	Recommendation/ Response
Expansion in other towns General objection has been raised by a number of submitters in relation to the Settlement Background Paper which recommends that future growth should be directed to Sandy Point and to a lesser extent Venus Bay.	Section 4 of the Settlement Background Paper entitled <i>Settlement Role and Function</i> has been amended to reinforce that growth should be apportioned across all four towns in the study area within defined settlement boundaries.
Higher Density Comments have been raised in relation to the need for higher density low rise development in proximity to the commercial precinct, which may support the notion of mixed use/retail/residential development.	Section 6 titled <i>Structure Plan</i> has been amended to recognise the potential of medium density low rise development in and around the town centre. If appropriate, the Master Plan will also define this area in more detail.
Walkability Sandy Point is characterised by a high level of 'walkability' that can be enjoyed by all residents. Therefore no housing should be more than 500 metres from the beach so the principle of 'walkability' can be maintained. The roads are currently narrow and undulating, forcing people to drive slowly. The proposed expansion has given no thought to the consequential effects of traffic generated by people driving over a kilometre to the beach.	Section 5.5 titled <i>Vision / Objectives and Strategies</i> has been amended to reinforce the value of 'walkability' in Sandy Point and to encourage growth in areas within reasonable walking distance of the beach and commercial centre.
Dune system. The foreshore and dune system plays a significant role as breeding ground for hooded plovers. The pressures that will ultimately be created by development on fauna has not been considered within the Settlement Paper.	Section 5.1. <i>Environment</i> has been amended to expand on the importance of the foreshore and dune system for native flora and fauna.
Shallow Inlet Shallow Inlet is a significant breeding ground for fish stock and a haven for birds. Expansion of the town boundary would place pressure on the Inlet. These effects have not been raised within the paper.	Section 5.1. <i>Environment</i> has been amended to reinforce the role of Shallow Inlet as a haven for flora and fauna. Section 5.4 <i>Impact of population growth on Sandy Point</i> has been amended to reinforce the potential environmental impacts within the village and in areas around Shallow Inlet.
Sewerage system installation The impact of the proposed reticulated sewerage system on vegetation has not been addressed.	Section 6 <i>Structure Plan</i> . has been amended to recognise possible impacts on the removal of native vegetation as a consequence of the implementation of reticulated sewerage.
Need for sewerage system Questions over the need for a reticulated sewerage system have been raised. Many submitters advocate consideration of alternative systems to deal with the issue of wastewater management.	Section 5.5. <i>Strategies</i> , has been amended to include reference to Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Plan as an alternative to dealing with improvements to wastewater management.

Summary of Comments & Suggested Changes from Submissions	Recommendation/ Response
<p>South Gippsland Water cannot endorse Connell Wagner's claim that the township will be serviced by reticulated sewerage between 2008 and 2011.</p>	<p>Section 6 <i>Reticulated Water and Sewerage</i> has been amended to reflect the current position held by South Gippsland Water in relation to the implementation of reticulated water and sewerage.</p>
<p>Design guidelines and landscape The community believes the document would be stronger if it proposed urban design guidelines for built form and landscaping.</p>	<p>The Structure Plan includes recommendations for design controls for the protection of landscapes and built form as part of the future implementation plan.</p>
<p>Caravan Park relocation The relocation of the Caravan Park on land abutting properties in Harbour View has been widely rejected.</p> <p>The northern end of Telopea Drive has been suggested as a possible alternative location away from permanent residents, as well as land on the eastern side of Manuka Street which was formerly used as a refuse site.</p>	<p>The potential for relocation of the Caravan Park has been deleted from the structure plan.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that consideration of alternative options is warranted, however this should form part of a separate study.</p>
<p>Statistics A number of respondents indicated that the paper underestimates the number of residents in Sandy Point, particularly at peak periods. There is a general acceptance that the permanent population might be calculated on the basis of 2.07 person per residence, but this ratio is inappropriate in respect to holiday homes particularly during December and January. It appears the figure of 2.07 may have been used to calculate population estimates under a low growth scenario.</p>	<p>Section 5.1 has not been altered. The figures obtained from Urban Enterprises provide population statistics which reflect both permanent and non permanent residents. The figures are based on 2001 Census data at the collection district level (CD 2200507) which encompasses the village and rural areas immediately surrounding the village.</p>
<p>Growth Areas The Strategy Plan should restrict future development within the township boundary.</p> <p>The development of areas marked 1 and 2 and the land abutting Sandy Point Rd would result in Sandy Point being twice its present size. This presents a serious threat to the dune system and Inlet.</p> <p>The arrow indicators placed on the plan for proposed development for area 1 and 2 are not described. There is confusion over whether the boundary is definite or if expansion is proposed to continue beyond these areas.</p> <p>General community consensus is that if the town increased in size it would destroy the character of Sandy Point. There are currently vacant blocks already visible within the town. There has also been no reference to building height limits or site coverage.</p>	<p>The Structure Plan has been amended to include a new long term development area which is subject to a series of development prerequisites.</p> <p>Section 5.4. <i>Key Issues</i> recognises possible impacts from urban expansion on Shallow Inlet. Growth management is recognised in the Structure Plan.</p> <p>The Structure Plan defines a new long term development area. Future development within this area will need to satisfy a series of development prerequisites.</p> <p>The proposed planning controls have been included in the Structure Plan and will be formalised in more detail as part of the implementation plan.</p>

Summary of Comments & Suggested Changes from Submissions	Recommendation/ Response
<p>Figure 4 shows the growth boundary along Telopea Drive and not the western side of Lot 85.</p> <p>Submissions have urged inclusion of stronger protection of this area against inappropriate development such as large visually intrusive structures.</p> <p>There is a need to describe clear township boundaries.</p>	<p>The Structure Plan has been amended to show a new long term development area</p> <p>Section 5.5 <i>Managing Growth</i> includes reference to Planning Controls which will address building design.</p> <p>Section 6 of the report has been amended to accurately describe the boundaries of the village. This is reinforced on the Structure Plan</p>
<p>Flooding to the north of Sandy Point</p> <p>Over the past 30 years observations have indicated that almost the entire area north of the existing township floods each year unless winter is particularly dry. This is an attraction for the Cape Barren Geese.</p>	<p>Section 5.4. <i>Key Issues</i> has been amended to recognise the potential of flooding within the village.</p> <p>Section 5.5. <i>Objectives and Strategies</i> recognises the need for further investigation in relation to potential flooding within the village.</p> <p>Section 6 recognises the issue of flooding as part of the Structure Plan.</p>
<p>Local Waste Management</p> <p>Suggestions have been made towards the re-establishment of the local waste management centre.</p>	<p>This has been acknowledged however it is not considered as part of the project.</p>
<p>Planting and landscaping</p> <p>The community have suggested that increased planting and maintenance be encouraged to attract native animals and to minimise development impacts/footprints on the area.</p>	<p>Recognition of planting and landscaping will form part of the proposed planning controls for the village at the implementation stage.</p>
<p>Commercial area</p> <p>It is considered that the existing commercial centre is not being utilised to its best advantage. There are vacant blocks and shops already present within the commercial area. These do not currently service the population adequately.</p> <p>Some broad objectives have been suggested for the village including restricting development such as hotels, restaurants etc</p> <p>There has been confusion over what plans are proposed for the area within the dotted black line.</p> <p>The community feel that the town centre requires a vision and framework for its future.</p>	<p>The Structure Plan recommends retention of the Township Zone for the commercial centre. However, additional controls will assist in defining the boundary of this area more clearly.</p> <p>The Structure Plan and Master Plan will assist in controlling non residential activity outside of the commercial centre.</p> <p>The dotted black line has been amended to exclude the existing residential area. The new line defines the commercial area, Caravan Park community centre, and tennis courts.</p> <p>This is addressed in Section 6 of this report and will form part of the Implementation Plan.</p>

Summary of Comments & Suggested Changes from Submissions	Recommendation/ Response
<p>Ground water contamination and bore holes A community action group undertook testing on 13 bore sites which revealed there to be no health risk. Further testing needs to be carried out in order to disprove that Sandy Point residents are at risk.</p>	<p>The Structure Plan recommends that stronger reference be made to Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2006-2010. This will address gaps in the performance of existing wastewater management within the village.</p>
<p>Traffic problems Issues have been raised in relation to the change of traffic flow if expansion is implemented. There appears to be only one way in and out of the proposed development areas. Most people will be forced to drive to the beach. This will require upgraded car parking around the commercial centre.</p>	<p>The Master Plan proposes to investigate car parking opportunities along the beach front and near the commercial centre. Traffic management associated with the defined long term development area is considered to be premature and can only be fully addressed when the land is considered for rezoning.</p>
<p>Fire Risks No consideration has been given to potential fire risk in the area. The community feels that there has been no input from a local fire brigade.</p>	<p>Issues relating to fire risk have been addressed in Section 6 of this report under the heading of <i>Design Controls for the Protection of Native Vegetation</i>.</p>
<p>Power There has been no mention of power, which should be provided underground.</p>	<p>Power issues have been acknowledged under Section 5.4 <i>Key Issues</i>.</p>
<p>Roads The majority of roads in Sandy Point are sealed not just the major roads.</p>	<p>Section 5.1. <i>Infrastructure</i> has been altered to describe the nature of the road construction.</p>
<p>Planning Controls The community feels that the SPPF has not been considered when dealing with Sandy Point.</p>	<p>The State Planning Policy Framework has been referred to in the Regional Section of the Settlement Background Paper.</p>
<p>Growth Options 1. Other growth options suggested include infill development along Sandy Point Rd with large allotments. 2. New allotments off Sandy Point Rd opposite Ennisvale Avenue and Ryans Rise. 3. New allotments off Telopea Drive on the right hand side (limited by the flood plain).</p>	<p>Section 5.6 <i>Managing Growth</i> has been amended to discuss alternative locations for long term development including the land to the north-east of Sandy Point Road.</p>

Summary of Comments & Suggested Changes from Submissions	Recommendation/ Response
<p>The area on the north east side of Sandy Point Road which potentially adjoins the township through Ennisvale, Ryans Rise and Manuka Streets offers the opportunity for high quality and limited expansion of the township. Growth could be well integrated into the landscape and screened from Sandy Point Rd which helps to define a secluded precinct. It could be well connected to the existing township by walking and bike tracks. There are natural barriers to the area available so the issue of incremental expansion could be avoided.</p> <p>A concerned party currently owns land on the northeast side of Sandy Point Road which is zoned rural. A request has been made to include this land parcel within the new township boundary.</p>	<p>This area of land has been included in the assessment of the Initial Investigation Areas. Refer to Section 5.6 <i>Managing Growth</i>.</p>
<p>Beach Access The beach access track opposite 2nd Ave has not been shown on the plan</p>	<p>Plan details have been amended to address beach access.</p>
<p>Flora and Fauna The Settlement Background Paper has not considered EPBC or Atlas of Victorian Wildlife.</p> <p>The land earmarked as suitable for expansion is a haven for visiting Cape Barren Geese</p>	<p>Section 5.1 <i>Environment</i> refers to particular flora and fauna recognised in this region. However, a detailed analysis of flora and fauna does not form part of this study.</p> <p>The proposed development prerequisites identify the need to undertake further investigation to confirm the location of sites of recognised Environmental Significance.</p>
<p>Public Open Space The community feel that the Structure Plan does not give any thought to public open space.</p>	<p>The available public open space along the coastal foreshore reserve, including Shallow Inlet is considered to be adequate to meet the needs of the community. Five other existing reserves are located within the village.</p>
<p>Structure Plan The Plan needs to show greater detail including areas set aside for recreation, commercial development, housing and services.</p>	<p>The Structure Plan includes recommendations for a series of statutory controls which will be addressed as part of the future Implementation Plan.</p>
<p>Cultural and Heritage Issues The UDF has not taken into consideration the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972 (State) or the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Commonwealth).</p> <p>Community feeling is that the Draft Settlement Background Papers lacks detail on cultural heritage.</p>	<p>Section 5.4. has been altered to recognise the relevant cultural heritage legislation.</p> <p>Development prerequisites listed under Section 6 of the report recognise the need to undertake further assessment of sites of cultural heritage significance.</p>
<p>Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study Reference in relation to the Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study is required.</p>	<p>Section 6 refers to the CSLAS, and the Structure Plan endorses the recommendations of this study.</p>