

SHIPWRECK COAST  
MASTER PLAN  
MASTER PLAN REPORT



in association with





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- VicRoads
- The Department of Regional Development
- The Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP)
- The Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The master plan study area is within the Country of the Kirrae-Whurrong people. Parks Victoria on behalf of the Victorian Government acknowledges the significance of the study area, the Kirrae-Whurrong people and seeks to reflect the views, interests and aspirations of the Traditional Owners in managing the park.



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## Minister's Foreword



The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan is a bold and visionary document which aims to protect, enhance and celebrate one of Australia's most recognisable and visited natural attractions – Victoria's Shipwreck Coast.

The Master Plan will guide investment in facilities and infrastructure over the next 20 years to enhance the liveability of local communities, develop international quality visitor opportunities, and conserve and restore the region's biodiversity and landscape character. It is the culmination of a five-stage consultation program with local and regional communities, and representatives of the conservation, industry and transport sectors as well as Traditional Owners.

The environment and the economy go hand in hand in this Master Plan. Global evidence demonstrates that social and economic wellbeing are directly linked to the health of our natural environment. The Victorian Government's report *Valuing Victoria's Parks (2015)* indicates that visitors to our parks system contribute \$1.4 billion in annual spending to the visitor economy, and create 14,000 jobs while underpinning clean air, water supply and other environmental services. The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan will protect the region's natural and cultural assets and provide a framework for the development of vibrant, rich and engaging tourism experiences and services. It will boost the State economy by an estimated \$97 million per annum.

The Victorian Government will deliver the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan through a series of initiatives which focus on creating jobs, improving the liveability of regional towns and building critical infrastructure to support new and emerging industries that unlock Victoria's regional growth potential. The recent establishment of the new organisation, Visit Victoria, will support implementation and delivery of the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan by bringing together a number of government agencies as one, working collaboratively to promote our State's strengths. This new entity will be a world-leading body responsible for growing regional Victoria's \$11 billion visitor economy.

I commend all those organisations and individuals who have contributed to this exciting plan and the long-term program to implement it.

Lisa Neville

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Neville', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water





Shipwreck Coast looking west from Loch Ard Gorge.



An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. The foreground is dominated by dense green vegetation. A winding road cuts through the landscape, leading towards the coast. In the bottom right corner, a straight road runs diagonally, with a single car visible. The coastline features rugged cliffs and a blue sea. The sky is clear and blue.

## **Welcome to Our Country**

*Ngatanwarr Wardee (Greetings to our Friends)*

*We the Traditional Owners have a long history that extends for thousands of years before the arrival of the tall ships. Along this 'Shipwreck Coast', our heritage can be seen in the form of coastal shell middens, stone artefacts and locality names given by our ancestors.*

*The Limestone Cliffs Sea Country is a very important ecosystem within our traditional territory and has served to inspire, influence and determine our relationship with the land and water, our language, diet, Dreaming Stories, economy and social constructs.*

*Today we continue to possess a diverse, rich and strong living cultural heritage and take this opportunity to share our Values and aspirations with you through this Master Plan. We have a role in the sustainability of our natural and cultural landscapes for the benefit of all and welcome this master plan and the opportunity it provides for a holistic approach to Caring For Country.*

*We welcome you all to be part of this conversation and to be part of that discussion as we are.*

*Ngootjoon Ngootjoon (All is Good, All is Healthy)*





View south-east to the Twelve Apostles from Two Mile Bay West.





## *1.0 Executive Summary*



1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 THE STUDY AREA

The 28 kilometre Shipwreck Coast study area, from Princetown to the Bay of Islands, is a magical place. The spectacular limestone stacks and coastal formations, including the Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge, are among Australia’s best-known features, drawing millions of visitors each year.

This narrow, fragile environment encompassing the Port Campbell National Park, the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park, The Arches Marine Sanctuary and the Bay of Islands Coastal Park is also home to a rich and diverse natural and cultural heritage, townships and their communities.

For thousands of years, the subject area of this master plan has been the home of Traditional Owners living on the coastal and connected hinterland areas that make up this rich and world-class landscape. This connection remains unbroken.

Traditional Owners note that this unbroken connection and cultural heritage can be seen across the subject area in the form of coastal middens, stone artefacts, names of local places and sites given by ancestors and through many more features of Country.

This master plan provides an important opportunity for Traditional Owners to express their connection to Country, and the significance and meaning of particular sites, places and events within Maar Territory.

The master plan captures the opportunity for Traditional Owners to work in partnership with government and investors to protect important cultural and natural assets while building economic and employment opportunities through sustainable tourism and other business. This includes gathering and sharing the Traditional Owners’ experience and knowledge of the subject area to ensure a richer, deeper tourism experience.

This master plan also provides an important opportunity for Traditional Owners to express the significance and meaning of their Country. A process of continuing consultation is necessary to ensure that Traditional Owners’ aspirations for their Country, their interpretation and opportunities for Aboriginal employment and businesses are understood.

While its intrinsic nature and character have made it a much-visited attraction, it is generally accepted that the current approach to visitation, management and engagement in the parks is not sustainable and a new approach is required. A fully resolved master plan will enable the area to evolve and become a world-class destination that is united and fused with local sensibility.

The Shipwreck Coast and its soft limestone are constantly changing and undergoing erosion by the elements. The consuming nature of wind and water is causing stacks of limestone or entire cliff faces to break down. This has caused realignments of the Great Ocean Road in the past and is likely to do so in the future. The erosion of the national and coastal parks has already reduced some sections to 6 and 20 metres in width. This natural process could be hastened with the impacts associated with climate change. Potential consequences include a rise in sea levels and warmer ocean temperatures. These factors can heighten risks of erosion through increased wave action and ocean acidification interacting with the area’s underlying fragile limestone geology.

While many wonderful opportunities and experiences exist along the Shipwreck Coast, its hinterland and its towns, they are not universally promoted. Experiences include surfing, fishing, walking, bird-watching and sampling local produce. The primary experience that currently attracts the vast majority of visitors is the area’s geology, escarpments and rock stacks.

The Shipwreck Coast suffers from low economic yield from the considerable number of visitors each year. Length of stay is short and spend per visit is low. People visiting the area place significant demands on infrastructure and the environment, but leave little in the way of a contribution to the regional economy. Part of the master plan’s role is to arrest this trend and position the project to provide reasons for people to stay longer in the region, spend more in the local economy and reduce visitor pressure on the environment and park infrastructure.



New lookout at the Loch Ard blow hole – a walkway which will become a bridge over time.



1.2 THE MASTER PLAN

The future of this unique region for tourism, local communities and the environment is at a point of reinvention and necessary change. To do nothing is not an option. Increased visitor pressure, evolving tourism trends and aging visitor infrastructure are issues requiring a new approach. In response, this master plan has looked to the coastal hinterland to transform the region in a bold but clear strategic move.

From a visitor's perspective, the Shipwreck Coast, while clearly a world-class attraction, currently over promises and under delivers. There is a stark and widening gap between what people are looking for as a world-class experience and what is currently being offered by way of park infrastructure, accommodation, access to local produce, the logistics of getting to the coast, navigating and interpreting it. This leads to a low return for the local and regional economy and little benefit for the local communities.

In the short-term, there is an immediate need to fund priority projects that are crucial to sustaining a quality visitor experience at sites such as the Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge. Without this investment in critical locations, there is a real risk that a discerning international tourist market will vote with their feet, overlooking the Shipwreck Coast in favour of new, world-class opportunities and experiences elsewhere.

This master plan presents a bold, innovative and visionary plan for the future of this world-class landscape. It aims to help protect the region's extensive natural and cultural assets and provide rich and engaging visitor experiences to support a sustainable tourism industry and the regional economy. It contains a cohesive package of initiatives that will initiate fundamental change in the quality of the environment and tourism experience. A strong link between conservation objectives, the towns and tourism is required to:

- Begin to repair and heal the fragile natural landscape;
- Strengthen the character of the local townships and their relationship to the parks; and
- Increase the economic return and associated benefits to the region and the State of Victoria.

Where previous plans have looked at single sites or considered tourism as distinct from environmental protection, the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan considers the relationship differently. Sites, facilities, townships and the coastal hinterland are integrated and developed cohesively in order to enhance the visitor experience and support long-term sustainable economic growth.

The master plan is a program of 72 project initiatives which can be progressively implemented over time by Federal, State and Local government, the private sector and community. The measures contained in this master plan do not try to change visitation patterns in one go. Rather, they fill identified gaps in the tourism offer and build on the area's comparative advantages. This plan can be implemented over time and in a cost effective manner.

This master plan proposes a total estimated nominal investment of \$178 million over a 20-year period spanning both the public and private sectors. This investment will require a whole-of-government approach to funding and implementation. Private sector investment in the area is central to developing world-class visitor facilities that invite people to stay longer. This can underpin and drive the increase in spending in the region that supports the local and Victorian economy.

While visitor numbers to the Twelve Apostles site are expected to increase over time, official forecasts point to an overall drop in visitor numbers for the wider region. Without investment this is expected to have a significant adverse effect on the regional economy including local jobs. This master plan, when implemented, is expected to turn this downward trend in tourist visitation around by creating opportunities for growth through public and private sector investors. This is achieved through the suite of complimentary initiatives which reposition the region as a "must see" destination on the world stage.

Fully implemented, this master plan will facilitate private sector investment to fill known gaps in the existing offer, including a range of visitor services (tours, information, transport, accommodation and dining). In turn, this will generate a number of direct and indirect economic benefits. Increased visitor spending in the region will add value in the economy and assist in creating jobs. There is direct value added to the economy and indirect value added through multiplier effects.

This master plan will bring about a fundamental change in the quality of the environment and tourism experience over time. There will be clear economic, social and environmental benefits derived from additional spending. Combined, the total present value of economic benefits is nominally \$527 million. When divided by the present value of the nominal cost of \$178 million this equates to a benefit to cost ratio of nominally 2.7:1 indicating that the project is beneficial and worth doing.

THE POTENTIAL

By 2034 the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan will contribute to:





1.3 MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW

The preparation of this master plan has been undertaken through a rigorous five-stage process that included extensive consultation and engagement with the community and stakeholders through face-to-face workshops, briefings and a dedicated online consultation tool: [www.shipwreckcoastyourplan.com.au](http://www.shipwreckcoastyourplan.com.au)

The research, analysis, discussions and feedback from Stage One of the project were developed into a shared vision and supporting objectives in Stage Two to become the foundation for this master plan. A range of different initiatives, uses and ideas to deliver the vision were presented during Stage Three of the master plan process and summarised in five key concepts. The vision, objectives and key concepts are summarised below.

VISION

*“Enhance the Shipwreck Coast as a distinctive, cultural and remarkable world-class destination, underpinned by the character of its hinterland and local towns coupled with the conservation and protection of its national, coastal and marine parks.”*

OBJECTIVES

*“Conserve and protect the national, coastal and marine parks”*

The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan study area is a linear, fragile and vulnerable cultural landscape. A priority of the master plan is to protect and conserve this fragile coastal ecology in response to visitor usage and ongoing erosive natural processes.

*“Support and enrich the coast’s local and hinterland communities”*

The Shipwreck Coast’s hinterland, its Traditional Owners and farming communities boast delicious produce, beautiful landscapes, and understated and relaxed townships, which for many are unknown and undiscovered.

*“Create a distinctive visitor experience for a world-class destination”*

As a breathtaking coastline and an iconic Australian ‘postcard’ destination, the Shipwreck Coast attracts 2.6 million visitors to Maar Territory each year. A world-class destination deserves a world-class visitor experience.

*“Benefit from tourism”*

There is an opportunity to improve the benefits, both direct and indirect, associated with tourism for local communities, Victoria’s south-west region and the state.

*“Create long-term value for Victoria, its south-west region and the local communities”*

The legacy of the master plan, the built environment and the associated experiences that it will guide can transcend immediate and local benefits to provide long-term advantages for Victoria and the south-west region. To realise this will take a coordinated implementation strategy with a long-term view.

KEY CONCEPTS

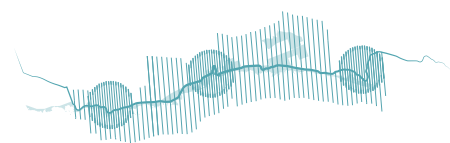
Access and circulation

A new approach to access and circulation is proposed to diversify choice and routes into and through the region. This includes a Coastal Hinterland Touring Route and the opportunity to reposition the Great Ocean Road through the study area as a ‘Parkway’ supported by ‘Park & Ride’ hubs. Each of these connect to the 12 Apostles Trail and the Great Ocean Walk in the towns and key visitor precincts.



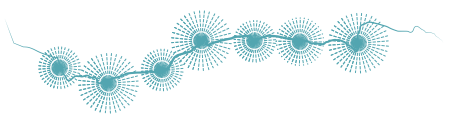
National park towns as visitor hubs

The master plan proposes a suite of design initiatives to improve the interface of each town with the parks. This seeks to reinforce each town’s distinctive characteristics and enhance their role as hubs for visitors to experience the parks, coast and hinterland region.



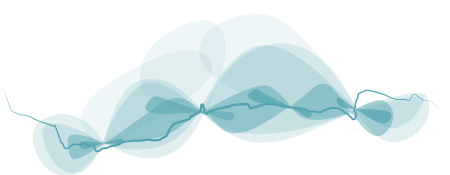
New structure for visitor experiences

A new structure for how visitors experience the area is proposed. Supporting each township’s role as a visitor hub is a decentralised and dispersed approach to information and interpretation services that provide choice and draw people along the coast rather than concentrating all visitors into one area. The plan recommends that development of the highest quality visitor facilities of a world-class standard are essential.



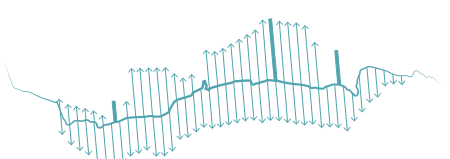
Links, loops and journeys

When combined, the concepts regarding access and circulation, town and visitor hubs and a decentralised approach to experience establish a framework of different loops, trails and journeys that are linked together. This provides locals and visitors with a variety of ways to experience the area by mixing and matching options of walking, cycling or catching a shuttle bus service.



Environmental framework

By rethinking the way people access and move through the area and introducing the idea of a ‘Park Interface’, a new environmental and landscape management framework is established spanning both public and private land. The plan proposes net biodiversity gains through removal of redundant park infrastructure and a regional-scale approach to Landcare revegetation on adjacent private and public land to strengthen habitat and augment the parks





STRATEGIES

The key concepts have been developed and applied along the coast in four precincts (Bay of Islands, London Bridge, Loch Ard and Twelve Apostles Glenample) and to its three townships (Peterborough, Port Campbell and Princetown) through the three key strategies below. Each strategy is explored in detail in part 5.0 of this report.

Heritage and Environment

The environment strategy takes a “whole-of-landscape” approach to repair the parks, improve habitat, increase biodiversity and raise environmental awareness.

Access and Movement

To help protect the parks, improve regional movement and diversify access to experience, this strategy restructures how people move through the coast and its hinterland.

Experience and Wayfinding

The experience and wayfinding strategy enables people choice to tailor their visits for a deeper, richer experience focused on the coast’s natural and cultural values and towns.

BENEFITS

Environment

Investment in the protection and conservation of the coast's natural values are a primary objective of the master plan.

- Revegetation of between 45% and 65% of disturbed land currently occupied by carparks, roads or other redundant facilities = net gain to biodiversity and habitat values.
- A substantial package of pest plant and animal control and revegetation programs.
- A sustainable investment and revenue model to ensure sufficient ongoing resources for park management.
- A sustainable transport model, promoting walking and cycling = reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Less roadkill by reducing the volume of vehicles and speeds on the Great Ocean Road.
- A Regional Landcare program on private land to augment and buffer the park.
- Better visitor containment will reduce the trampling of vegetation.
- Improved interpretation of the natural and cultural environment, including information about the rich biodiversity of the Southern Ocean and the cultural landscape.

Social

A new regional trail network and better walking and cycling connectivity between townships and the parks. Investment in township streetscapes foreshores and open space.

- The creation of 1000 new jobs in the master plan study area and more than 2300 in the Great Ocean Road region. Of these 884 will be new jobs for Victoria, and not jobs relocated from elsewhere in the state. An additional 1500 jobs will be created through construction.
- Improved opportunities for Aboriginal employment and business development.
- Better long-term, seasonally stable, opportunities for small business.
- A focus on the future of townships as service centres for the region.
- A sustainable model for managing tourism.
- Better telecommunications.
- Improved local roads for tourism, commuter and freight movement.

Economic

By 2035 the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan will provide:

- Increases in visitor spending along the Great Ocean Road of \$254 million per annum. Of this \$66 million will be new (net) spending in Victoria drawn from interstate or overseas visitors rather than from other parts of the state.
- \$214 million per annum added to the regional economy. Of this \$97 million will be new (net) value added to the Victorian economy from interstate or overseas visitors rather than from other parts of the state.
- The need for an additional 2,100 new beds in the region (900 within the Shipwreck Coast).
- A benefit-cost ratio of 2.7:1 on government investment.



The Bay of Islands



MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW

Experience and Wayfinding

The experience and wayfinding strategy enables people to tailor their visits for a deeper, richer experience focused on the coast's natural and cultural values and towns.

Access and Movement

To help protect the parks, improve regional movement and diversify access to experience, this strategy restructures how people move through the coast and its hinterland.



Bay of Islands

Precinct

Experience sinkholes, wetlands and a bay full of islands.

Initiatives incorporated

- A A<sup>2</sup> B D E
- G J
- L M N O P

Peterborough

Park Interface

Meet your family in a quiet coastal town.

Initiatives incorporated

- A A<sup>1</sup> A<sup>2</sup> B C
- G I J
- M O P

London Bridge

Precinct

See surfing penguins and view the Twelve Apostles through the Arch.

Initiatives incorporated

- A A<sup>2</sup> B D E
- G J
- L M N O P

Port Campbell

Park Interface

Centre yourself in the heart of the coast.

Initiatives incorporated

- A A<sup>1</sup> B C D E
- G H<sup>1</sup> I J
- M N O P

NOTE: Not all initiatives appear on the map above.



Heritage and Environment

The environment strategy takes a “whole-of-landscape” approach to repair the parks, improve habitat, increase biodiversity and raise environmental awareness.

K Park Interface Area

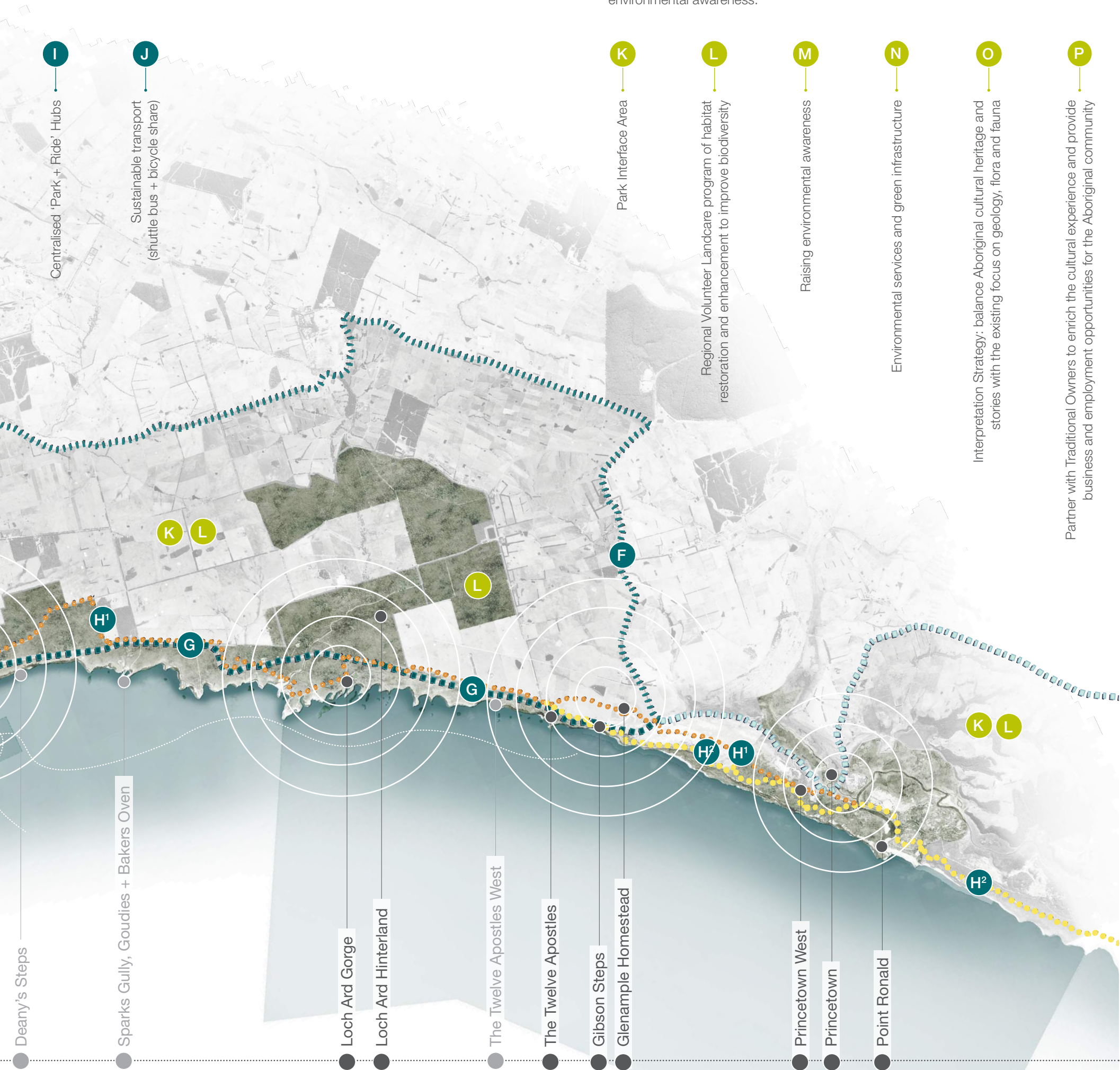
L Regional Volunteer Landcare program of habitat restoration and enhancement to improve biodiversity

M Raising environmental awareness

N Environmental services and green infrastructure

O Interpretation Strategy: balance Aboriginal cultural heritage and stories with the existing focus on geology, flora and fauna

P Partner with Traditional Owners to enrich the cultural experience and provide business and employment opportunities for the Aboriginal community



Loch Ard Gorge Precinct

Explore adventure and history.

Initiatives incorporated

- A A² B D E
- G H¹ J
- L M N O P

The Twelve Apostles Glenample Precinct

Slow down, feel Country and experience forces of nature.

Initiatives incorporated

- A A¹ B C D E
- G H¹ H² I J
- L M N O P

Princetown Park Interface

Immerse yourself in adventure and nature.

Initiatives incorporated

- A A² B D E
- H¹ H² J
- M N O P

Legend

- Marine access
- Great Ocean Road
- Great Ocean Road 'Parkway'
- Coastal Hinterland Touring Route
- 12 Apostles Trail
- Great Ocean Walk
- Existing visitor sites located inside of Precinct Plan / Township Interface Plan
- Existing visitor sites located outside of Precinct Plan / Township Interface Plan
- Precinct Plan / Township Interface Plan Zone of Influence





Conceptual Vision: Bay of Islands Wetland Walk





2.0 Introduction



2.0 Introduction

2.1 THE STUDY AREA

The Shipwreck Coast is located within the Corangamite and Moyne Shire Councils, on the Great Ocean Road in south-west Victoria, about 230 km west of Melbourne by road. It includes the Port Campbell National Park, the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park, The Arches Marine Sanctuary and the Bay of Islands Coastal Park.

The Shipwreck Coast extends from Cape Otway to Port Fairy spanning a distance of 180 km. The subject of this master plan is the 28 km segment of the coast between Princetown and Boat Bay near Peterborough. The study area also includes some public land such as recreation reserves within the townships of Princetown, Port Campbell and Peterborough.

While focused on public land the study takes a whole-of-landscape approach to consider the planning and economic opportunities that interface with the parks. The sponsors of this master plan are the three public land managers comprising Parks Victoria, Corangamite and Moyne Shire Councils. Tourism Victoria is assisting the project sponsors due to the coast's profile as an international attraction.

The Office of the Victorian Government Architects (OVGA) also assisted the project sponsors through advocacy for great design and review, and input into the master plan at key stages. The Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board is also an important stakeholder with a strategic role in tourism development within the region.

The coastal parks and reserves in the Shipwreck Coast were first reserved late last century in recognition of the outstanding scenic attractions of the coastline. Port Campbell National Park was proclaimed on 5 May 1964 and was extended in 1981 to include a water reserve, bushland areas in the Sherbrook River Valley, sand dune systems between Castle Rock and Princetown, and part of the Sherbrook River Valley as an education area.

Most of the Bay of Islands Coastal Park was temporarily reserved for public purposes in 1873. It was reserved as the Bay of Islands Coastal Reserve in 1982 and proclaimed as the Bay of Islands Coastal Park in 1997 as a result of the National Parks (Amendment) Act.

The master plan's role

The master plan for the Shipwreck Coast builds on numerous strategies, plans, studies and concepts prepared over recent years. There is a need for an agreed, overall plan which brings together the ideas for different sites and looks at the relationships between them.

The 12 Apostles (walking and cycling) Trail, which is proposed between Timboon and Princetown, is an important and complimentary project.

The role of the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan is to provide a strategic framework and design recommendations for the study area that are supported by a program of potential uses, initiatives and strategies. The master plan will guide implementation by Parks Victoria, federal, state and local government agencies across the parks and Crown land while identifying opportunities for commercial investment on adjacent private land.

The master plan is not a Management Plan. The Port Campbell National Park and Bay of Islands Coastal Park Management Plan 1998 provided the background policy and management context for the development of this master plan. This management plan is now 14 years old and will be updated by a landscape-scale management plan that will reference the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan.



Selected travel destinations within Victoria and distances



2.2 THE BRIEF

This master plan is intended to be enabling rather than prescriptive, allowing for flexibility, adaptability and modification over time, should the need or opportunity arise. This master plan consists of the following four interrelated components.

- 1. A master plan for the whole study area that:
  - Provides a strong, innovative and creative vision and supporting principles which captures and creatively interprets the essence, history and future of the Shipwreck Coast;
  - Enables opportunities for locals and visitors to have access to diverse experiences and potential new and engaging nature-based recreation and tourism;
  - Defines key orientation points for experiences, services and facilities and enables navigation into and through the area for vehicular, cycling and pedestrian circulation while improving connections and accessibility between destinations; and
  - Integrates the planning of existing initiatives and projects underway such as the Great Ocean Walk and the 12 Apostles Trail.
- 2. Township interface plans for Princetown, Port Campbell and Peterborough to:
  - Establish connections and interfaces between the townships, their open space networks and recreation reserves and the national parks;
  - Explore opportunities for the establishment of settings, facilities and services which support recreation and tourism and complement those provided within the national and coastal parks; and
  - Respect and build on the existing adopted Urban Design Frameworks for the townships.
- 3. Site plans for selected visitor precincts that:
  - Consider the role of each precinct and visitor site in the coast's overall positioning offer with projected visitation;
  - Recommend pedestrian and vehicular circulation through each site as well as asset design, styles, types and locations; and
  - Provide a framework for sustainable, resilient and safe infrastructure of world-class standards.
- 4. A Business and Implementation Plan including:
  - A high-level cost plan and supporting rationale for appropriate investment in infrastructure and services to support outstanding visitor experiences in the region and the local communities.

2.3 PROJECT APPROACH

The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan has been prepared through a five-stage process comprising:

01: Issues & Opportunities Analysis – June 2013

The purpose of Stage 01 was to listen to the community and stakeholders to understand the Shipwreck Coast's issues and opportunities. The issues identified helped inform the project analysis while the opportunities identified were referenced in future stages.

02: Project Vision & Place Principles – August 2013

The project vision, place principles and key directions were developed during Stage 02. This information provided a foundation for the master plan moving forward.

03: Draft Concepts – October 2013

Draft concepts were prepared in Stage 03 to capture all the key moves proposed for the Shipwreck Coast. The concepts repositioned the coast, its hinterland and each township interface, the 12 Apostles Trail and the six visitor sites in a high-level illustrative plan. It illustrated how the vision and place principles could emerge as specific and tangible outcomes.

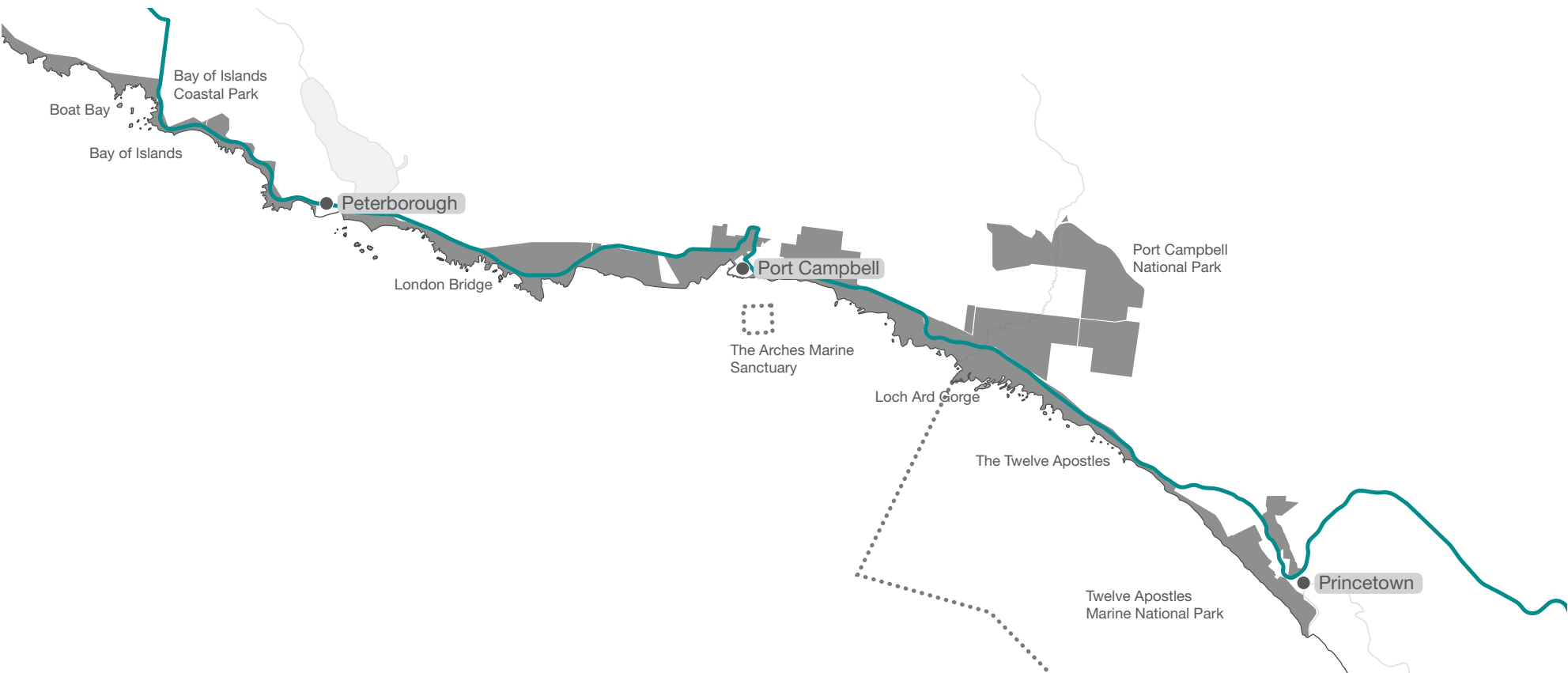
04: Preliminary Master Plan – April 2014

The conclusions from Stage 03 were refined and developed into a preliminary master plan that included the three strategies that span the study area. Recommendations for how each township can be better connected and interfaced with the parks and the draft site plans for the priority visitor sites were also prepared.

05: Draft Master Plan – October 2014

Recommendations tested in Stage 04 were further refined ahead of the master plan exhibition and the government review and approval processes. Refinements to the cost plan and the business and implementation plan were prepared and regional economic impacts modelled.

The Project Working Group (PWG) and Project Control Group (PCG) comprising senior and executive officers from Moyne Shire, Corangamite Shire, Parks Victoria and Tourism Victoria approved each phase of the project as it progressed.



The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan study area













2.4 PROJECT PARTNERS

The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan has been prepared by Parks Victoria in partnership with Corangamite and Moyne Shires and Tourism Victoria. The Office of the Victorian Government Architect assisted in the development of the project brief and in the review of the master plan. For information about any of the project partners, please visit their website:

	<b>Parks Victoria</b> Project Partner <a href="http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au">http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au</a>
	<b>Corangamite Shire</b> Project Partner <a href="http://www.corangamite.vic.gov.au">http://www.corangamite.vic.gov.au</a>
	<b>Moyne Shire</b> Project Partner <a href="http://www.moyne.vic.gov.au">http://www.moyne.vic.gov.au</a>
	<b>Tourism Victoria</b> Project Partner <a href="http://www.tourism.vic.gov.au">http://www.tourism.vic.gov.au</a>

2.5 PROJECT TEAM

Parks Victoria engaged McGregor Coxall to lead a multidisciplinary team to develop the master plan for the Shipwreck Coast. Working with the community and collaborating with the project partners, the McGregor Coxall team comprises Denton Corker Marshall, Baird Borrack Design, Elton Consulting, SGS Economics and Planning, Roger Gibbins, Binary Studio, Buro North, Design Flow, Slattery Australia and Movendo. The roles of each team member is outlined below.

	<b>McGregor Coxall</b> Urban Design, Landscape Architect and Project Management <a href="http://www.mcgregorcoxall.com">http://www.mcgregorcoxall.com</a>
	<b>Denton Corker Marshall</b> Architecture and Urban Design <a href="http://www.dentoncorkermarshall.com">http://www.dentoncorkermarshall.com</a>
	<b>Baird Borrack Design</b> incorporating Story International Design and Interpretation <a href="http://www.storyinternational.com.au">http://www.storyinternational.com.au</a>
	<b>Elton Consulting</b> Consultation and Engagement <a href="http://www.eltonconsulting.com.au">http://www.eltonconsulting.com.au</a>
	<b>Roger Gibbins + SGS Economics &amp; Planning</b> Economic, Tourism, Business and implementation planning <a href="http://www.sgsep.com.au">http://www.sgsep.com.au</a>
	<b>Binary Studio</b> Web Development and Design <a href="http://www.binarystudio.com.au">http://www.binarystudio.com.au</a>
	<b>Buro North</b> Interpretation and Wayfinding <a href="http://www.buronorth.com">http://www.buronorth.com</a>
	<b>Design Flow</b> Water Sensitive Design <a href="http://www.designflow.net.au">http://www.designflow.net.au</a>
	<b>Slattery Australia</b> Cost Planning <a href="http://www.slattery.com.au">http://www.slattery.com.au</a>
	<b>Movendo</b> Sustainable Transport <a href="http://www.movendo.com.au">http://www.movendo.com.au</a>



2.6 CONTEXTUAL POSITIONING

Australia's and Victoria's position within the global and regional context continues to undergo significant change. As our relationship with growing economies in Asia and elsewhere expands, so does its influence in all aspects of Australian life, including our economy and tourism market.

Nature-based tourism is one of the fastest growing tourism sectors internationally. In Victoria alone, the tourism industry is worth an estimated \$10.9 billion, and accounts for almost 160,000 jobs. With an increasing number of international visitors, particularly from China, there is a strong need to conserve national parks while enhancing the visitor experience within them to increase yield for the local and state economy.

The increasing size of the middle class in countries like India and China is expected to influence the Australian tourism market over the next 20 years. This is likely to include the Great Ocean Road and Shipwreck Coast. The Australia in the Asian Century White Paper states that “an increasingly wealthy and

mobile middle class is emerging in the region, creating new opportunities. They are demanding a diverse range of goods and services, from health and aged care to education to household goods, and tourism, banking and financial services, as well as high quality food products.”

This large emerging visitor market is centrally located between several of the world's most popular destinations including Europe and North America. Australia will need to draw on its distinct characteristics to present an attractive and different offer to potential visitors that meets or exceeds the experiences being offered elsewhere in the world.

Australia's national parks are an important part of this offer. They are a key factor in the image that we present to the world and a powerful part of our national identity. Our national parks, including those that comprise the Shipwreck Coast, support a remarkable and distinctive visitor attraction of a world-class calibre and in turn make a great contribution to Australia's tourism offer and its role in our economy.



International flight times and destinations



2.7 PROJECT POSITIONING

Australia’s national parks are large areas of nationwide significance because of their outstanding natural values and/ or Aboriginal and European heritage. They are managed to protect and conserve natural and cultural values whilst also enabling Australians and foreign visitors to enjoy, explore and learn about our distinctive environment, heritage and culture.

Australia has more than 500 national parks covering over 28 million hectares of land. This accounts for almost four per cent of Australia’s land area. In addition, a further six per cent of Australia is protected and includes state forests, nature parks and conservation reserves. Parks Victoria manages 4 million hectares of parks and reserve which equates to 18% of the State of Victoria.

The Port Campbell National Park, the Great Otway National Park, the Bay of Islands Coastal Park, the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park and The Arches Marine Sanctuary, when considered together, form one of Australia’s most recognisable landscapes and are a part of one of Australia’s 16 iconic national landscapes. On a state-based scale, the Shipwreck Coast makes a key contribution to Victoria’s portfolio of national parks.

The Shipwreck Coast is very well positioned to leverage existing and emerging tourism markets by playing to its strengths. Its natural and cultural values, rich landscape, coastal hinterland, Aboriginal culture and small village-scale townships provide a basis to develop a wonderful visitor experience that in turn can support resilient local communities and benefit more broadly the State of Victoria.

The 28 kilometres of the Shipwreck Coast spanning from Princetown to the Bay of Islands is a wonderful place. While its intrinsic nature and character have made it a much-visited attraction, some people consider it over promises and under delivers

Information presented in the Great Ocean Road World Class Tourism Investment Study by Urban Enterprise for the Australian Government suggests that there is a widening gap

between what people are looking for in their visitor experiences and what is currently being offered by way of accommodation, local ‘place’ and produce and the logistics of simply getting to the coast, navigating and interpreting it.

The conditions contributing to this tourism offer can also be some of the very factors that people living in local communities find attractive. The area’s quiet, relaxed and laid back attitude are defining elements of its nature and character and the reasons why many locals call the region and its townships home. Another contributing viewpoint comes from many people who would like to see national parks untouched and feel that any development of parks is detrimental.

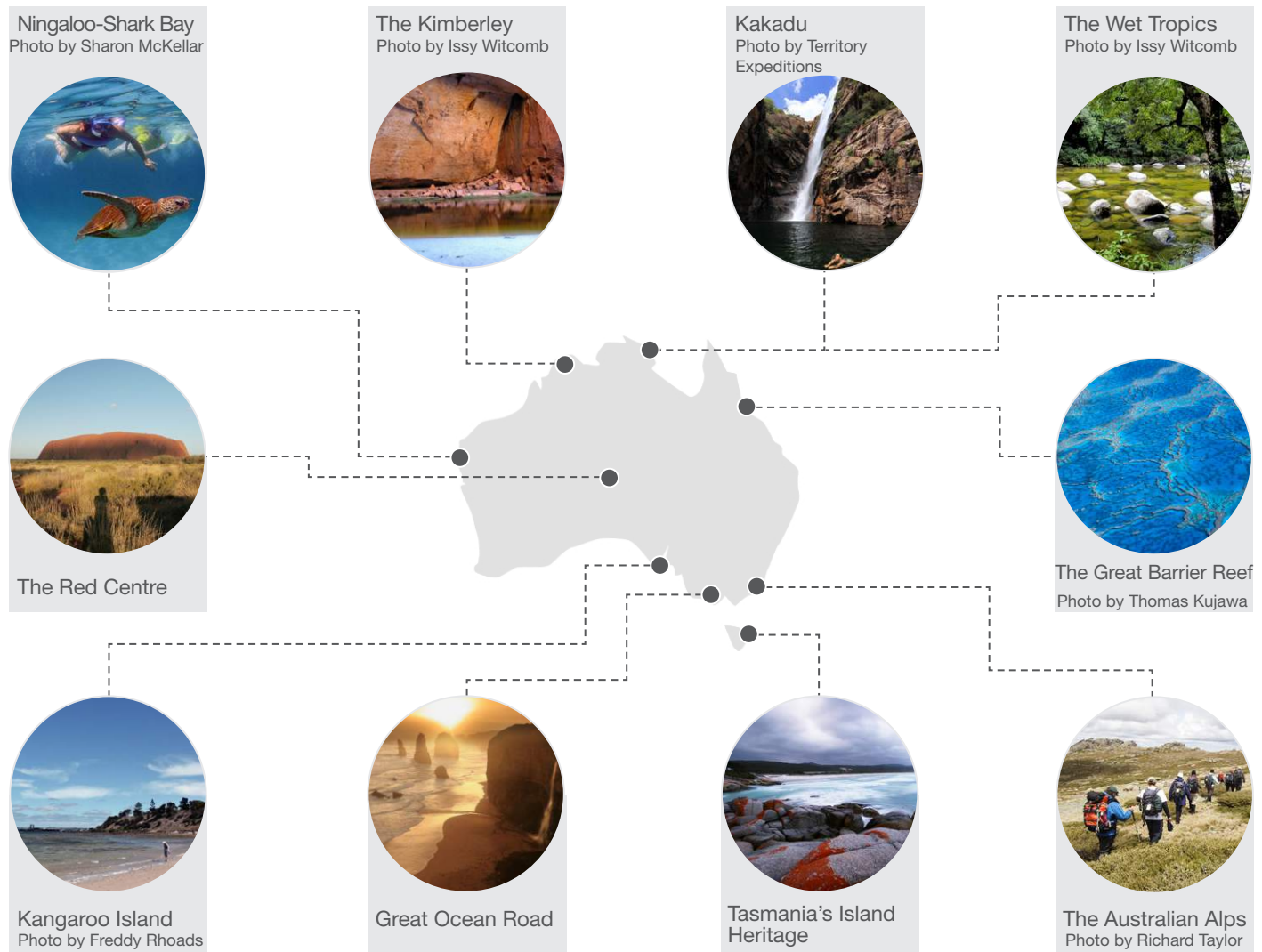
The Shipwreck Coast’s location and rural context is critical to deliver a bold, robust and broad vision for the coast. The hinterland towns such as Camperdown, Cobden and Timboon strategically anchor various routes that stem from Peterborough, Port Campbell and Princetown on the coast, through and into the hinterland. These routes make an important contribution to the way people connect to and experience the coast as well as how the coast and its communities are serviced. The master plan, by effect, is expected to influence the region in four respects:

First – it enables the Shipwreck Coast to be understood as not just a segment of the Great Ocean Road, but also as part of a regional wedge framed by Timboon in the north and the coastal towns along its southern edge;

Second – the diversity of experiences is increased to draw and hold people within the area for longer periods because of a broader platform of offers, multiple trails and journeys;

Third – The hinterland offers a different but complementary set of conditions to that of the coastal townships and natural attractions; and

Fourth – The hinterland towns such as Timboon provide some cues as to how locally-based small initiatives can be seeded and evolve to become rich visitor experiences.



Australia’s national landscapes



Tourism Visitation

The Shipwreck Coast suffers from low economic yield from the considerable number of visitors each year. Length of stay is short and spend per visit is low. People visiting the area place significant demands on infrastructure and the environment, but leave little in the way of a contribution to the regional economy. Part of the master plan’s role is to arrest this trend and position the project to provide reasons for people to stay longer in the region, spend more in the local economy and reduce visitor pressure on the environment and park infrastructure.

The target market for nature-based tourism is a broad-based group labelled “experience seekers”. They are adventurous and self motivated, ecologically minded and love the outdoors. As a group, their influence can position the study area as a “must-do” destination when travelling within or to Australia. Experience seekers are known to immerse themselves in the very activities and natural and cultural experiences that the Shipwreck Coast is rich in. Further discussion on the visitor market for the Shipwreck Coast is included section 8.0 of this master plan.

Climatic Conditions

Victoria’s south-west is known for its wild weather. The region is favoured by a wonderful fresh climate that supports a great natural environment. The coast’s dramatic nature attracts millions of people every year but many encounter what at times can be cold and inhospitable weather.

The coast’s weather significantly influences the way people experience, engage and perceive the region. This ranges from perfect sun-filled days with little wind through to cold, wet and windy days where it may be uncomfortable to take a quick picture. Positioning visitor facilities that contemplate the prevailing conditions and designing with the weather in mind is a key strategy for this master plan.

Many of the existing visitor sites are considered to under deliver on visitor’s expectations during poor weather. Many lookouts, by their nature, are located in coastal, elevated and exposed locations and have little or no protection from rain, wind or sun.

Walkways from parking areas are sometimes disconnected and exposed. Some connections present long walks to get to a view or a special locale, and people are not aware of how far the walk is or whether there will be seating or shelter provided.

Visitor perception is shaped by the prevailing wind conditions, the seasonal changes in temperature, the minimum and maximum range of temperatures, rainfall (including the number of days it rains as well as other factors such as ocean temperatures), relative humidity and the number of hours of sunlight. The prevailing conditions present:

- Relatively cool summers with long days, great sunrises and sunsets;
- Generally colder and wetter winters with less daylight;
- Prevailing winds from the north-west during the morning;
- Stronger westerly winds during afternoons with less frequent but strong south to south-west winds during cold changes; and
- Cool to cold ocean temperatures with a temperature lag running into and out of key high-peak visitation periods where some people look for beach swimming and surfing experiences.

By focusing visitor engagement on the narrow band of coastal parks and the existing portfolio of visitor sites, the visitor experience, and in turn their perception, is vulnerable to the weather. This need not be so. Part of the beauty of the coast is its weather. The master plan can respond to this in a positive way by playing to the coast’s strengths. Opportunities include:

- Providing alternative attractions and experiences for people to do on cold, wet and windy days;
- Positioning experiences to “welcome people in” out of the weather and experience the coast and its hinterland in a different way. This will enable visitors to wait for a break in the weather or to leave with a positive experience and wanting to come back for more;
- Designing a limited number of visitor sites in key locations to better cater for inhospitable conditions, including carefully considered shelter;
- Providing information to people:
  - Prior to and during visits for a memorable time during different weather situations;
  - To dress and equip themselves for the coast to feel and experience it at its most exciting and powerful weather periods; and
  - With alternative ways to learn about and interpret the coast’s stories via a dedicated centre or centres supported by online information at a ‘virtual information centre’.
- Promoting the coast as a year-round destination that provides a variety of attractions tailored to each season.



Wind swept ocean walk



Big swell on the Shipwreck Coast, photo by Lucinda Ormonde



Escaping the weather by an open fire, photo by ‘The Bull’ Village Pub





Conceptual vision: Twelve Apostles Amphitheatre and lookout and Great Ocean Road 'Parkway'





### *3.0 Vision and Objectives*



# 3.0 Vision and Objectives

## The Vision

***“Enhance the Shipwreck Coast as a distinctive, cultural and remarkable world-class destination, underpinned by the character of its hinterland and local towns coupled with the conservation and protection of its national, coastal and marine parks.”***

The vision for the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan forms the foundation for the project. It summarises the aspirations and objectives for the master plan area and presents a shared understanding of what it should achieve.

There are multiple stakeholders along the Shipwreck Coast who appreciate and perceive the coast in their own way. Each person’s relationship with the coast is special and helps to define the experiences of the coast, its towns and the hinterland. A shared understanding helps to establish a common ground to base the master plan on. Three layers of information inform the vision. They are:

## Objectives

The five objectives form the fundamental ‘tests of success’ for the master plan.

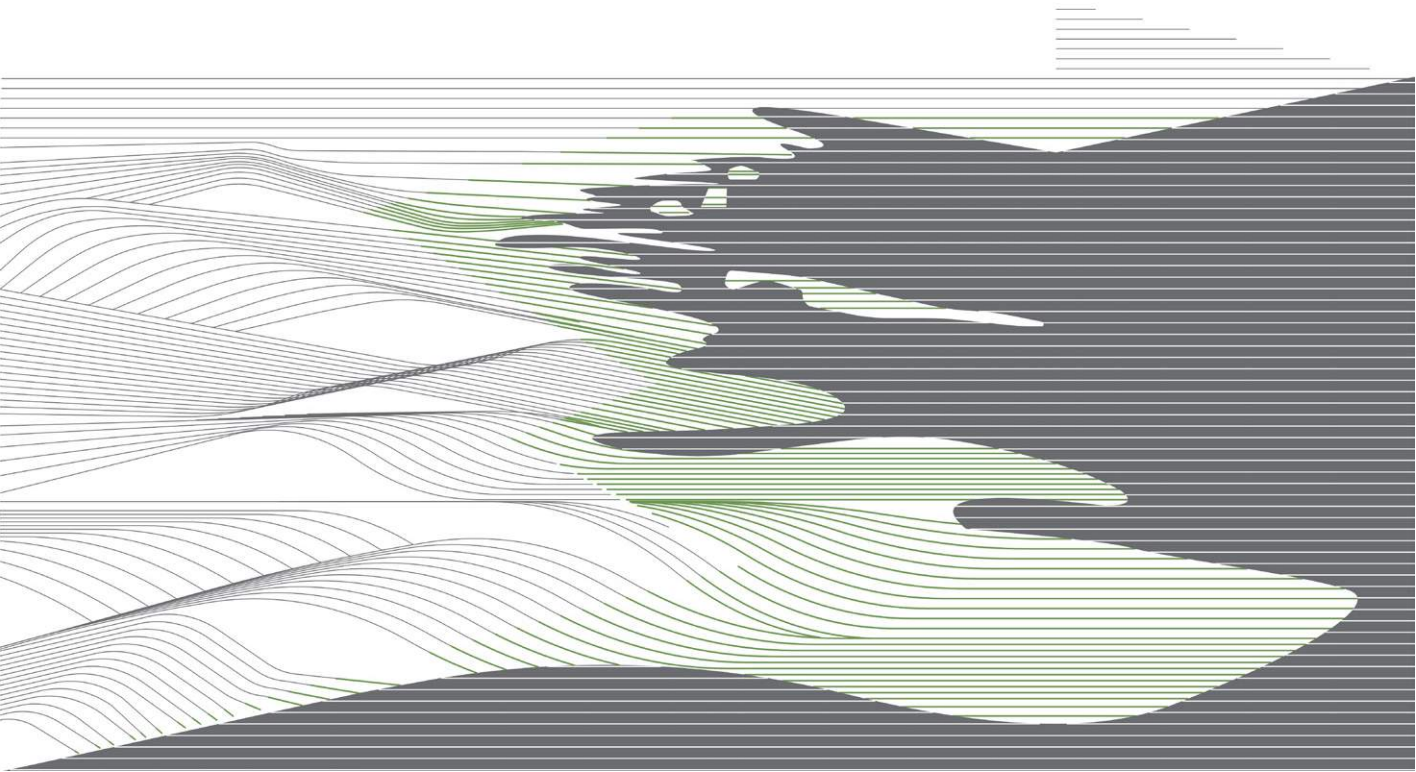
## Place Principles

Place principles reflect the type of characteristics envisaged under each objective.

## Key Directions

The key directions guide the numerous actions to deliver the vision.

The master plan’s five key concepts, along with the strategies proposed in this report to deliver them, underpin the vision and its objectives.



Vision illustration - Enhancing, conserving and repairing the parks through a whole of landscape approach. The hinterland, the coast and the ocean are considered as one cohesive landscape.



Objective One

“Conserve and protect the national, coastal and marine parks”

The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan study area is a linear, fragile and vulnerable cultural landscape. A priority of the master plan is to protect and conserve this fragile coastal ecology in response to visitor usage and ongoing erosive natural processes.

Place Principles

- Come to know an ancient place.
- Forces of nature.
- Share stories over time.
- Sea rocks change.

Key Directions

- Respect, protect and promote the parks’ fragile cultural landscape, marine environs and ecologies.
- Conserve culturally significant sites of Aboriginal and European heritage.
- Explain the coast’s significance and enable people to engage with the parks’ values.
- Establish a variety of contemporary methods for education and interpretation.
- Develop strategies for visitation which mitigate impacts on the parks’ ecology and cultural values.
- Recognise the hinterland and its coast as one integrated landscape and environmental system.



The limestone cliffs of Port Campbell National Park



Parks Victoria Ranger teaching a young boy about marine life

Objective Two

“Support and enrich the coast’s local and hinterland communities”

The Shipwreck Coast’s hinterland, its Traditional Owners and farming communities boast delicious produce, beautiful landscapes, and understated and relaxed townships, which for many are unknown and undiscovered.

Place Principles

- Be locally indulged.
- Breathe the ocean air.
- From ocean to paddock to plate.
- A cultural coast.
- If locals love it, visitors will too.
- Walk calm green farming hills.

Key Directions

- Recognise the communities as the ‘heart’ of the coast.
- Appreciate each town’s nature, character and identity through authentic local experiences.
- Strengthen each town’s physical connection and interface with the parks.
- Develop the rural and coastal land relationship to leverage benefits for townships.
- Promote the region’s distinctive attributes and interpret its Aboriginal cultural heritage as authentic and intimate experiences for visitors.
- Harness local pride and creativity.
- Promote the hinterland’s farming heritage, scenic values, landscape, ecologies and cultural landscape.
- Work cooperatively with farmers to manage the interface between the parks and agricultural land.
- Collaborate with local communities and Traditional Owners to reinforce the character and identity of the coast and its towns.



Pasture lands in the hinterland, photo by James Freemantle + Peter Reidy



Crayfish on the barbecue, photo from Newcastle Herald Newspaper



Objective Three

“Create a distinctive visitor experience for a world-class destination”

As a breathtaking coastline and an iconic Australian ‘postcard’ destination, the Shipwreck Coast attracts 2.6 million visitors to Maar Territory each year. A world-class destination deserves a world-class visitor experience.

Place Principles

- Welcome to Maar Country.
- Visit the edge.
- Feel and hear the “roaring forties”.
- Weave through a linear layered landscape.
- Walk and ride.
- Leave wanting more.
- Visit a blue park.
- Discover secrets.

Key Directions

- Support a bold world-class experience through design and promotion of the highest quality infrastructure.
- Recognise the Shipwreck Coast as a layered, cultural landscape on the edge of a rich hinterland and the western entry and one segment of the Great Ocean Road.
- Support a variety of journeys, destinations and experiences that draw people through the coast and its hinterland.
- Provide a stronger Aboriginal perspective on culture and landscape, alongside the existing shipwreck and geological stories.
- Propose a range of nature-based activities that enable visitors to have exciting, memorable experiences.
- Provide a range of transport, accommodation and dining choices.
- Present high-quality information which is easily accessible to all visitors prior to and during visits.
- Establish distinctive evening and night time experiences that celebrate the coast in new ways.



Hiking the Great Ocean Walk



Diving the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park

Objective Four

“Benefit from tourism”

There is an opportunity to improve the benefits, both direct and indirect, associated with tourism for local communities, Victoria’s south-west region and the state.

Place Principles

- Stay a day or three.
- Grow coastal commerce.
- Dance, dine and sleep on the coast.
- Come back soon.
- Slow down, feel country.

Key Directions

- Provide a range of accommodation options, activities, experiences and events that encourage people to stay for longer periods.
- Optimise the level and balance of visitation to increase yield and benefits for the local, regional and state economies.
- Tailor and diversify the tourism offer to cater for different existing and emerging visitor markets.
- Explore opportunities for increased private sector investment in tourism infrastructure and accommodation to diversify and enhance the visitor experience.
- Modernise visitor services including transport options and communication infrastructure.
- Leverage the relationship for mutual benefit between private and public land, and the national and coastal parks.
- Explore strategies to manage peak-period visitation that optimise benefits and minimise impacts.



Surf at Gibson Steps, photo by Vans Triple Crown of Surfing



The Southern Ocean Lodge, South Australia, photo by southernoceanlodge.com.au



Objective Five

“Create long-term value for Victoria, its south-west region and the local communities”

The legacy of the master plan, the built environment and the associated experiences that it will guide can transcend immediate and local benefits to provide long-term advantages for Victoria and the south-west region. To realise this will take a coordinated implementation strategy with a long-term view.

Place Principles

- A “contract” between conservation, towns and tourism.
- Enrich an Australian Postcard.

Key Directions

- Implement the master plan in a phased, managed and sustainable way that enables it to evolve.
- Develop a clear business case to support public infrastructure improvements and attract private investment.
- Develop a sustainable economic and management model for maintenance and operation of assets and activities.
- Design for the long-term and consider capital expenditure with ongoing maintenance and operations costs.
- Explore long-term land tenure and development models that utilise the relationship of the rural and coastal land adjacent to the linear parks.
- Develop a coordinated regional approach to positioning, marketing and communications for Victoria’s south-west region and the Great Ocean Road.



Port Fairy Folk Festival, photo from portfairyfolkfestival.com



A wallaby and her Joey, Beachcomber Holiday Park



A seafood paella to feed the masses – Harvest Picnic





Conceptual vision: Loch Ard Gorge stairs to the beach





#### *4.0 Strategic Response*



# 4.0 Strategic Response

## 4.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The master plan study area is located 230 km or 3 hours drive by inland routes from Melbourne and 680 km or 7.5 hours drive from Adelaide.

As part of the Great Ocean Road experience, the distance from Melbourne extends by a further 50 km to 280 km, in part due to the winding nature of the road which takes over 4 hours driving without a break. As one segment of the Great Ocean Road, the Shipwreck Coast is directly connected to some of Victoria’s most loved destinations, including coastal towns to the east on the Surf Coast like Lorne and Apollo Bay and places like Port Fairy in Moyne Shire to the west.

To address the fundamentals of the project brief, the strategic positioning of the study area and its relationship to the Great Ocean Road must be questioned and explored for new opportunities.

These relationships are considered to influence the coast in several ways:

- It affects the type, timing and routes of visitation, especially through day trips from Melbourne, with peak periods during summer;
- There is a relatively narrow and linear sequence of experiences centred around the Great Ocean Road that tend to concentrate visitation at some key visitor sites during peak periods. This in turn requires some infrastructure to be excessively sized to cope with heavy visitation for short periods of high demand;
- The linear approach to visitor experiences typically does not tend to draw on the complimentary opportunities associated with the coast’s hinterland but instead focuses on a relatively limited number of locations such as the Twelve Apostles / Gibsons Steps area;
- It is a largely packaged and ‘product’-based motor vehicle approach to visitation. People tend to use Melbourne as the base for day trips to the coast, attempt to achieve a lot in one day, and therefore miss out on a deeper and richer experience while on the coast;
- Due to the factors of distance and time, visitors tend not to stay overnight in local towns but instead take day trips or travel through the area on the way to another destination along the coast. Consequently, this influences the variety of lodging and types of dining available;
- The Great Ocean Road, in its strategic role, functions as both a key artery to service motor vehicle based visitation while also acting as a local access route servicing the parks and the local communities. It also caters for slower forms of transport including public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. This has led to pressures and some conflicts between the road’s different user groups;
- Visitor sites are relatively unconnected and exposed to prevailing environmental conditions, this impacts on people’s experience of the coast, especially if it is windy, cold or wet and they are only visiting for a day; and
- The three coastal communities of Peterborough, Port Campbell and Princetown are physically close, linked by the Great Ocean Road and have distinct complimentary characteristics, scales and relationships with the parks that they adjoin.

### Victorian Coastal Strategy

In July 2014 the Victorian Coastal Council in partnership with the three regional Coastal Boards published the Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS) under the Coastal Management Act (1995). The VCS presents a long term vision for Victoria’s coasts and will assist in the development of localised Regional Coastal Plans and Coastal Management Plans. The VCS has a clear focus on five significant themes comprising:

- Managing population growth;
- Adapting to a changing climate;
- Managing coastal land and infrastructure;
- Valuing the natural environment; and
- Integrating marine planning.

The VCS is founded on a hierarchy of four principles grouped into three sections. They are:

#### Value & Protect

Principle 1: Ensure protection of significant environmental and cultural values.

- Valuing the coast;
- Marine environments;
- Wetlands and estuaries;
- Onshore environments;
- Catchments and water quality; and
- Heritage.

#### Plan & Act

Principle 2: Undertake integrated planning and provide clear direction for the future.

- Coastal hazards and processes;
- Coastal settlements and communities;
- Port precincts;
- Research and knowledge sharing; and
- Community participation.

#### Use & Enjoy

Principle 3: Ensure the sustainable use of natural coastal resources.

Principle 4: Ensure development on the coast is located within existing, modified and resilient environments where the demand for development is evident and any impacts can be managed sustainably.

- Coastal buildings, infrastructure and management;
- Visitation and tourism;
- Access to the coast;
- Boating and water-based activities;
- Fishing and aquaculture; and
- Coastal energy resources.

The Shipwreck Coast Master Plan has been reviewed and assessed against the VCS’s principles to ensure that the project vision, objectives, supporting strategies and its portfolio of design initiatives align with the VCS and support its long-term goals as they relate to the master plan study area and its strategic context.



The Journey and Destination

The development of the master plan has been informed by the question of ‘what makes a destination?’ This was in response to the high focus on the Twelve Apostles site and the various issues and impacts that follow from this focus. A destination begins with a journey.

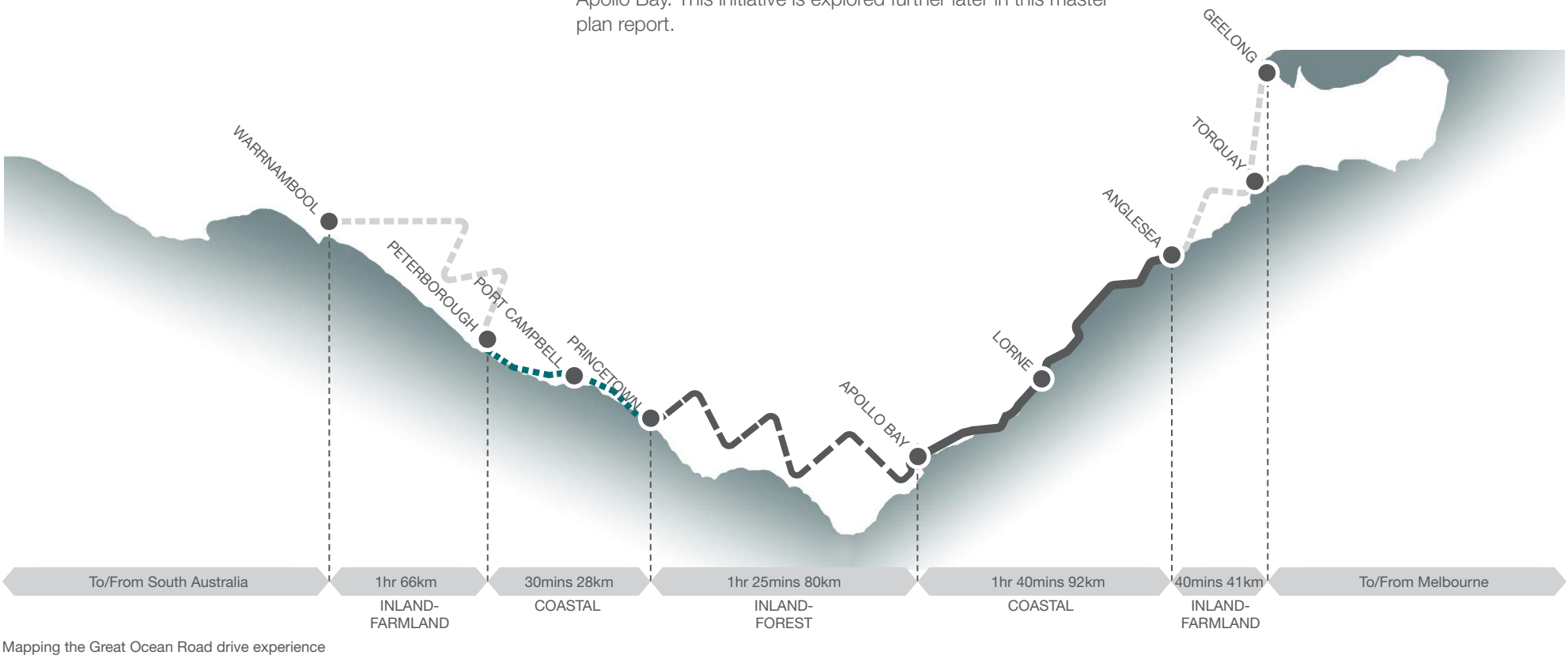
Many travellers take the Great Ocean Road route to reach the Shipwreck Coast. This route is commonly taken as it is a spectacular journey with effectively two basic experiences comprising:

- East of Apollo Bay – driving along the edge of the coast itself; and
- West of Apollo Bay – driving through a forested and farming hinterland that weaves its way down to the coast and then back inland again. The exception to this is the 28 kilometres of coast between Princetown and the Bay of Islands.

A major component of a great destination is the sense of arrival after having been on a journey. How is this 28 kilometre stretch of coast and its three townships positioned as a destination? How can the master plan move towards conserving and potentially enhancing the national, coastal and marine parks? How can the local towns benefit from this and how can the regional economy leverage the outcomes? How does this driving experience influence the coast as a destination? The sections below illustrate the different driving experiences along the Great Ocean Road.

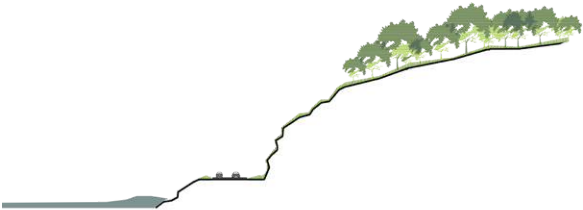
The current approach draws people through the coast, the park and the towns rather than using them as a destination. It is primarily a quick experience when it might best be experienced more slowly and thoroughly.

A key strategy in the development of this master plan has been the recommendation for a Coastal Hinterland Touring Route that knits into and complements the driving experience west of Apollo Bay. This initiative is explored further later in this master plan report.



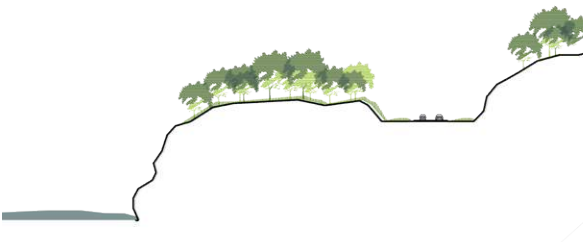
Anglesea to Apollo Bay

From Anglesea to Apollo Bay, the drive is on the edge of the coast, winding around hills and through townships with constant views of ocean and its rolling waves. Many stop at the townships along this stretch of the Great Ocean Road to explore the numerous surf beaches, eateries and accommodation available.



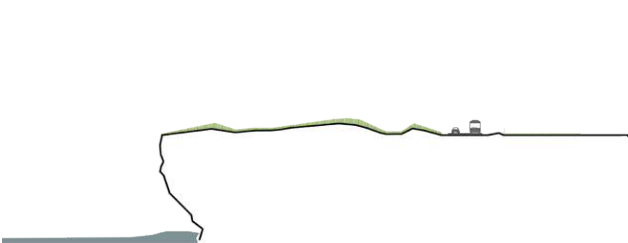
Apollo Bay to Princetown

From Apollo Bay to Princetown, the drive takes a turn inland and meanders through the Great Otway National Park. The drive is lined by large trees and offers opportunities to visit the Great Otway National Park, waterfalls and bush walking tracks.



Princetown to Bay of Islands

The vast bulk of the drive between Princetown and the Bay of Islands is not actually on the edge of the coast, nor in the hinterland. It sits just back from the edge occasionally opening up views to Bass Strait. At opportune moments, many visitors veer off the road and into a carpark, or road shoulder, to walk to the sights. The major tourist destination is the Twelve Apostles, with many people either fleetingly visiting the townships or not at all.





The Regional Offer

The study area spans the Shires of Corangamite and Moyne and edges an incredibly rich hinterland to the north that makes up some of Australia’s most renowned farming areas—specialising in dairy, wool, beef, lamb and grain crops —producing 25% of Australia’s dairy produce. The region is also favoured by a wonderful fresh climate with clean air, stable rain fall and consistent prevailing winds.

Currently along the Shipwreck Coast, there is a lack of ‘man-made’ attractions and products. Activities such as agritourism are key opportunities to retain visitors along the coast and improve yield for the region.

Products that make use of local produce, such as food, wine, and seafood could complement the natural attractions of the region, which will continue to act as the main draw card for tourists. Timboon and the surrounding area has benefited from this positioning in recent times.

Leveraging Timboon’s relationship and context to the study area is considered important. To do this will require upgraded access and connections from the coastal hinterland to its coast.

The short length of visitor stays in the region can be attributed to a lack of activities or tourism products within the area that would invite people to stay longer and spend more. Development of products relating to artisan produce could supplement the current draw card of coastal scenery and the natural environment, and entice visitors into staying within the region longer. Beechworth, Daylesford and the Yarra Valley, among others, are good examples of how this approach can benefit a region. Other local examples include the Wye River General Store and the Forrest Brewery.

The Coastal Hinterland Touring Route and the existing food trail are opportunities for the region to play to its strengths and natural advantages.

Traditional Owners’ connection to the ‘Shipwreck Coast’ and connected hinterland Country remains unbroken and strong. There is an opportunity for partnership with Traditional Owners to build the cultural tourism experience for visitors, including on parks, through an introduction to local bush foods, significant sites, events and interpretation of the landscape through the eyes of Traditional Owners. Connected cultural trails could enrich the visitor’s understanding of the natural and cultural values in the area while also preserving these values and heritage for future generations.

Traditional Owners have expressed a strong interest in business opportunities associated with cultural tourism and related services for visitors such as accommodation and tours. This includes the potential for Traditional Owners to build the capacity of future generations to own, deliver and manage these businesses.

The concept of a connected group of tourism operators – interpreters across the subject area – is also an opportunity. Interpreters could be developed and supported to deliver an ‘authentic cultural tourism product’ on-Country, either stand-alone or as a partnership with joint investors. This in time will lead to increased economy and jobs for Aboriginal people, improved regional economy through related service provision, while enhancing the visitor experience.

Traditional and contemporary uses of bush foods is an area Traditional Owners expressed strong interest in sharing as part of visitor experience and tourism development. This might include food tasting in potential ‘bush tucker vans’ or cafes



Micro-distillery, photo by Loic Le Guilly



Wye River General Store, photo from greatoceanroad.com



Forrest Brewery, photo by Christopher Yardin



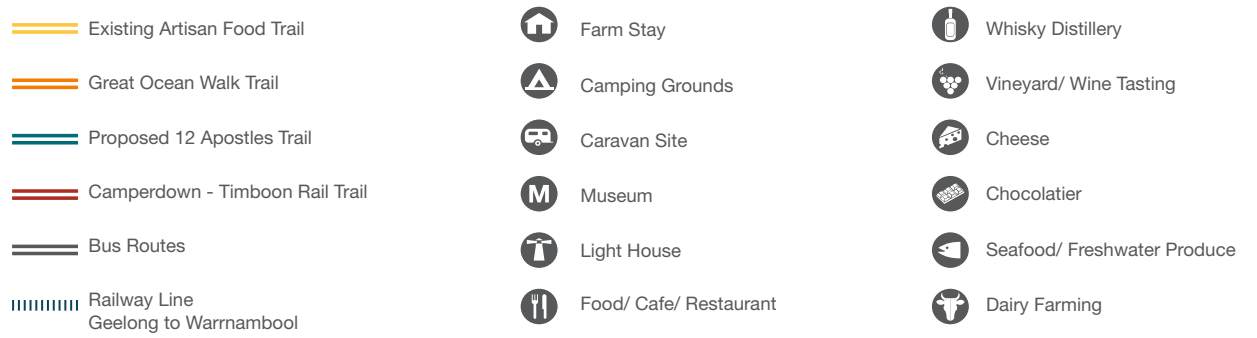
owned and operated by local people. There are many bush foods that hold strong cultural values and story about their uses not only as a food source, but for trade, ceremony and cultural uses. For example, foods like honey, harvested from both honey ants and bees, are seen as a prized bush food and often given as gifts. Nectar bearing flowers like bottlebrush, grevillea and banksias were sucked on regularly or immersed in water for their sweet flavour.

For the Wathaurong country, also known as Geelong to the Gunditjmara people of the west, the majority of bush tucker consists of a plant-based diet closely corresponding to tribe locations, seasons and traditions. Fished for at the full moon in Summer, eel was both a source of food and a valuable trade for hunting equipment such as razor-sharp flints or spears alongside nets woven from puunyuurt reed and hanging stockings stuffed with worms.

Traditionally, hunted meats were either eaten raw, cooked on an open fire, or often cured in Mallee gum smoke, served with an abundance of native fruits and berries, such as the Cherry bellart (orange berry) and Pig Face Fruit, native to the south-west region of Victoria. Not only do these plants serve as a source of food, but are still used today to make medicinal remedies such as sore throat gargles, skin lotions and gut detoxing.



Timboon Distillery's shelf of local produce, photo by Raymond Toh



The Shipwreck Coast Regional Offer

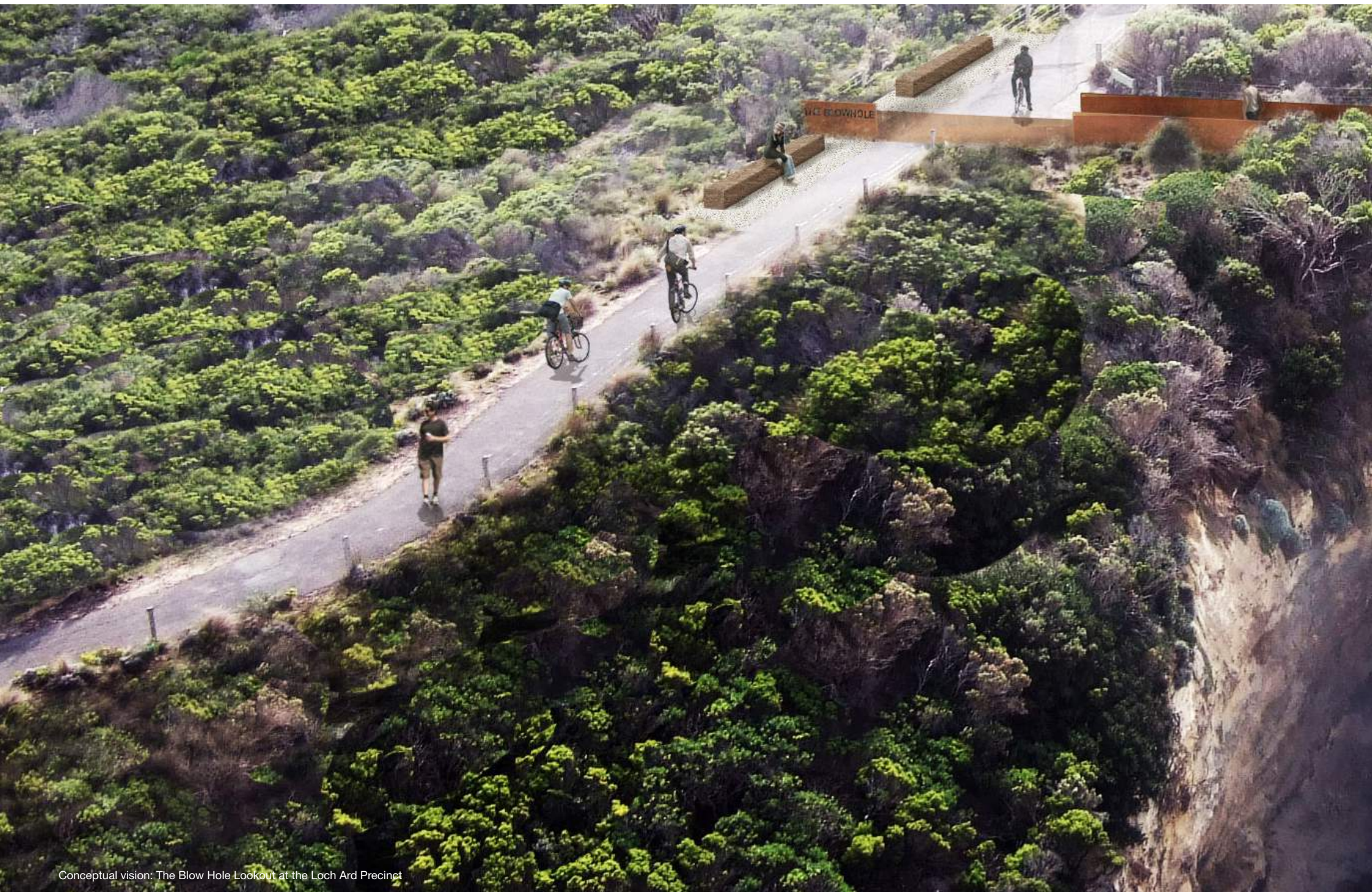


Cycling the Rail Trail, photo from visit12apostles.com.au



The Great Ocean Whey, photo by Rob Gunstone





Conceptual vision: The Blow Hole Lookout at the Loch Ard Precinct





## 5.0 Master Plan Strategies



# 5.0 Master Plan Strategies

Part 5.0 provides an overview of the three strategies developed to bring together the initiatives proposed for the master plan. Each of the three strategies have been applied to four precincts and the three townships in the study area.

## 5.1 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

### Strategic Overview

The access and movement strategy presents a new approach for people to access and engage with the coast, its hinterland and towns. A new Coastal Hinterland Touring Route (CHTR) on existing roads is proposed to draw people into and through a regional experience. In time this can take pressure off the Great Ocean Road which is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register as a place of cultural significance.

The CHTR is a strategic initiative requiring detailed studies to confirm its alignment. It enables the Great Ocean Road (GOR) to maintain its strategic role and be opened up to a broader range of users while also respecting the access needs of locals. Ongoing future management of the Coastal Hinterland Touring Route would require the support of VicRoads and the local shires.

Envisaged as a “Parkway”, the segment of the Great Ocean Road between Glenample and the Bay of Islands could over time become a dedicated park road serviced by sustainable transport. Park experience and safety will be improved and the impacts associated with motor vehicle infrastructure inside the parks will be reduced.

An integrated regional and local trail network comprising the 12 Apostles Trail, the Great Ocean Walk and local trails create a series of different-sized loops from each town and park precinct.

Planning for visitor sites is to be in accordance with the standards and principles of Parks Victoria’s Park Accessibility Evaluation Manual, April 2013. Different sites provide different levels of access. These are:

- Basic access, which ensures that most people with limited mobility, families with prams and pushers or those using a wheelchair can get to and/or inside a facility or feature. The Loch Ard precinct is an area which would likely provide ‘basic access’ to most lookouts;
- Intermediate access provides safe access throughout facilities and use of amenities for both people with mobility and visual impairments. Majority of wheelchair users, those using walking aids and prams and pushers can navigate trails. Areas such as the Twelve Apostle Lookout and main associated trails would cater for ‘intermediate access’; and
- Universal access ensures full access to all aspects of a facility or feature for those with both mobility and visual impairments. The Glenample visitor experience centre will need to be universally accessible.

### Key Initiatives

There are five key initiatives that support this strategy.

#### Coastal Hinterland Touring Route

The plan proposes a new “Coastal Hinterland Touring Route” to provide access to the diverse gourmet and landscape experiences lying in the hills just behind the coast. Combined with lowered speed limits on the Great Ocean Road, the new touring route will take pressure off the iconic Great Ocean Road, making it safer and a more enjoyable visitor experience in itself and may include opportunities to walk and ride along the road corridor.

#### Great Ocean Road ‘Parkway’

The Great Ocean Road is, and will remain, one of the highlights of the parks. The Great Ocean Road within the study area, through progressive transitions over time, could be positioned as a ‘parkway’ and the movement spine of a slower national park experience catering for walkers, cyclists and a ‘green-powered’ shuttle bus. This can open up the Great Ocean Road further to a wider group of users and provide another complementary experience along its length while maintaining its strategic role.

#### The 12 Apostles Trail

The 12 Apostles Trail (cycling and walking) and the Great Ocean Walk will meet at Princetown. Local trails link to these two regional trails at key precincts and towns to create a network of loops and experiences. The master plan fully supports the 12 Apostle Trail’s alignment but proposes some refinements where the trail interfaces with key visitor sites.

#### Visitor Pods and Visitor Experience Centres

Visitor Pods on the Great Ocean Road and Visitor Experience Centres in the townships draw visitors along the 28 km coast rather than establishing a single large visitor centre in one location. The ‘pods’ and centres offer a range of different facilities including interpretative information, transport and bicycle share stops, toilets and shelter.

#### Park + Ride Hub

Park + Ride Hubs at the Twelve Apostles Glenample precinct, Port Campbell and Peterborough enable each visitor market, including day visitors, to tailor their visit to the time, tour or their personal travel itinerary. Each Park + Ride Hub is a key coordination point for parking private vehicles and tour buses and enabling visitors to engage in the park experience by foot, bicycle or shuttle bus.



Visitor Pod with bicycle and shuttle service



Day visitors

The two key sites that attract the vast bulk of visitors to the Shipwreck Coast are the Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge. Visitors to these sites primarily arrive by private motor vehicles and tour coaches as part of a day visit to the coast. While the master plan is deliberately framed to invite visitors to stay longer, the existing day visitor offer also needs to be provided for.

The day visitor is constrained by the time available to visit and experience these key sites. This is due to distances travelled, number of stops as well as the working hours, operational and safety needs for coach and private vehicle drivers travelling to and from the coast from Melbourne. Consultation with coach and coaster operators, Bus Association Victoria and tour operators has identified timing constraints for the day visitor market as a critical issue for implementing the master plan. The following diagram illustrates a typical break down of bus scheduling to key precincts within the eastern end of the master plan study area.



Shuttle service at Stonehenge, UK, photo by Denton Corker Marshall



Bus stopping time within the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan Study Area (Prepared with the Victorian Bus Association)

To fully resolve these issues, a detailed transport, services and logistics plan will need to be developed in consultation with relevant industry groups. However, by understanding the current time allowances and constraints, the master plan proposes a new framework to more efficiently distribute day visitors to key destinations.

Alternative visitation patterns and tour options may include, for example, combining the Gibson Steps, Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard stops together in the Twelve Apostles Glenample Precinct. This would enable:

- Longer time for visitation from one location, but with fewer stops that require multiple loading periods at each site;
- Longer driver rest periods and the chance for visitors to enjoy a slower, more in-depth experience for sampling local produce;
- Opportunities to curate information and interpretation for different visitors and their needs within a given period irrespective of what tour they are on; and
- Reduction of the impacts on the parks due to less movements and vehicular infrastructure.

This approach will require a highly effective and efficient ‘transporter’ or shuttle model operating with the potential for dedicated, pre-booked space in time slots that are coordinated/integrated with Great Ocean Road coach arrivals.

Successful examples elsewhere where this approach has been adapted include Cape Cod National Seashore and Yosemite National Park in the United States and the newly opened Stonehenge Visitor Centre in the UK.



Stopping for a break on the Great Ocean Road, Great Victorian Bike Ride



The Great Ocean Road as a cycleway



Coastal Hinterland Touring Route

The Coastal Hinterland Touring Route has been proposed to help establish a multilayered experience that draws visitors not only to the coast but also its hinterland. This can help support several positive outcomes that include:

- Adding a complementary experience that extends the characteristics of the Great Ocean Road drive west of Apollo Bay;
- Relieving traffic pressure on the coastal section of the Great Ocean Road (between Princetown and the Bay of Islands);
- Enhancing road safety in and around high visitor precincts in the parks by managing traffic flow more effectively;
- Increasing local town connectivity into the regional transport network, including diversifying route options for local needs, industry and emergency services; and
- Supporting objectives in VicRoads “Great Ocean Road Management Strategy” including improvements in north-south connectivity between the Great Ocean Road and the Princes Highway.

To ensure consistency with the direction outlined in existing strategic documents, this investigation was undertaken in accordance with the goals and objectives in the (former) Department of Sustainability and Environment (now Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP)) 2004 document entitled ‘The GOR Region: A Land Use and Transport Strategy’.

Strategy 3.3 of the transport strategy which relates to developing and promoting inland routes, states that “congestion and limited opportunities to improve the traffic carrying capacity of the Great Ocean Road mean that better use of inland routes is required to ease the burden on Victoria’s primary tourist route”.

The document identifies the role that the establishment of inland routes can play in spreading the traffic load in the region and introducing visitors to a variety of hinterland activities, and highlights the importance of improving/expanding north-south routes that connect the coast to the Princes Highway.

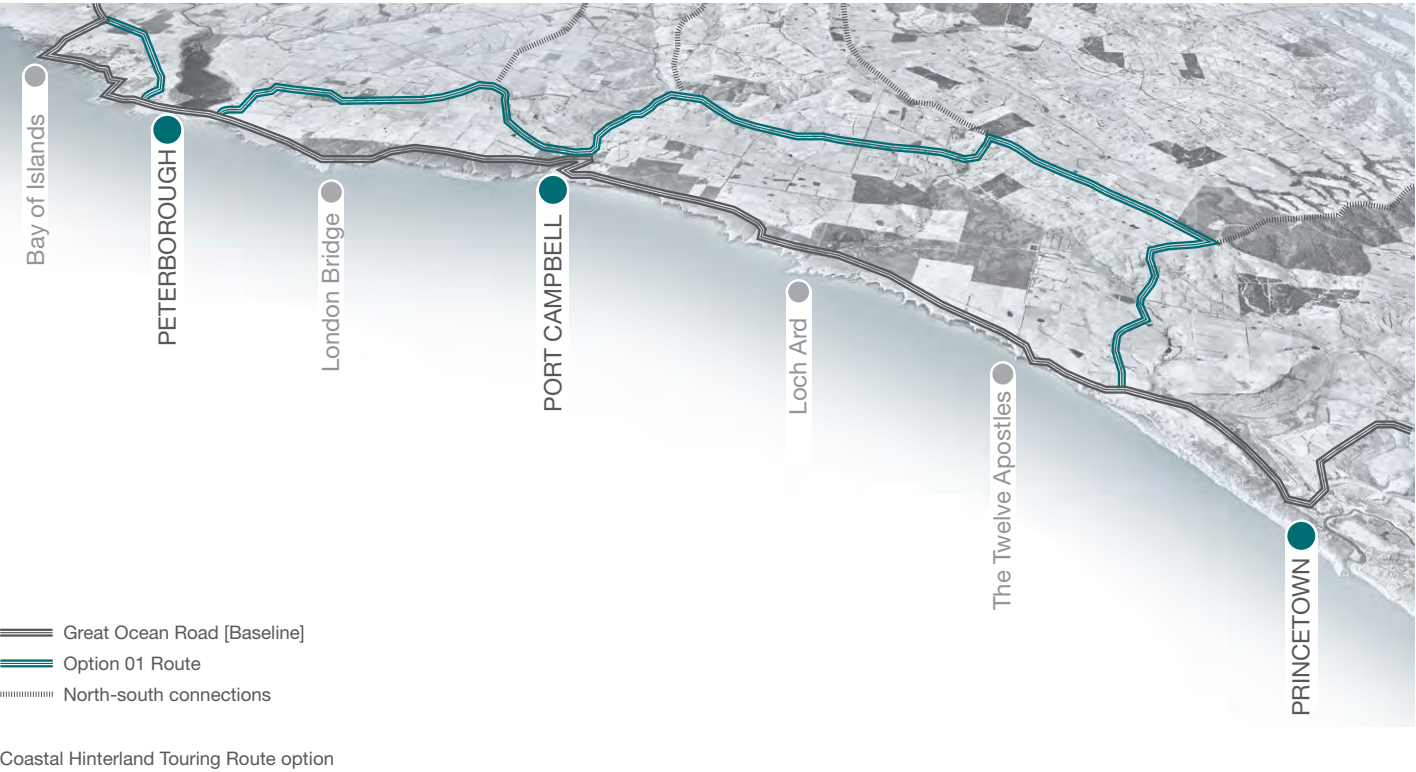
Within this context, the inland routes have been considered in terms of their traffic engineering and functional characteristics and also with regard to their broad consistency with the strategic objectives.

Preliminary evaluation of the Touring Route has been undertaken as part of the master plan to test the options between Princetown and the Bay of Islands. The map below shows the current coastal route and a conceptual inland route that would support and enhance additional north-south and east-west connections.

The establishment of a complementary inland route is feasible, as the range of inland options explored provides comparable travel times to the existing coastal route. It can be established entirely through utilisation of existing roads, and would generally require modest upgrade works. These roads are currently approved for use by bus operators.

More specifically, the route options address, to varying degrees, the different needs of tourist traffic, regional connectivity and agricultural (milk) freight and logistics for those living and working in the area. In doing so the route can make a positive and strategic contribution to the local and state economy through a more efficient platform for the distribution of dairy products and a wider tourism spend.

The Coastal Hinterland Touring Route was prepared as a parallel study to this master plan by McGregor Coxall in collaboration with Movendo and Alan Rae Consulting.





Addressing the objectives

How does the access and movement strategy address the master plan's five objectives?

Objective One

*“Conserve and protect the national, coastal and marine parks”*

- Changing the approach to access and movement helps to lower speeds on the Great Ocean Road, and disperse, relocate and consolidate infrastructure to reduce the ecological impact in parks.
- Dispersal of traffic and parking will reduce congestion, improve safety and amenity and minimise negative impacts on the parks.
- Helps to manage and control unauthorised camping in the parks.
- Reduces the need for in-park infrastructure, car parking and roads, allowing revegetation to repair damaged habitats and increase biodiversity.

Objective Two

*“Support and enrich the coast’s local and hinterland communities”*

- The touring route directly focuses each town as a destination, service centre and visitor information hub.
- Regional access is improved for communities, businesses and industry.
- Local communities can benefit from local shuttle bus transport linking each town on a regular timetable.
- Enhanced free local access to key locations potentially managed through a permit system.

Objective Three

*“Create a distinctive visitor experience for a world-class destination”*

- The Great Ocean Road’s function can be progressively enhanced for walkers, cyclists and local shuttle bus transport on a ‘parkway’ as a world-class experience.
- The Great Ocean Walk and 12 Apostles Trail directly link with local trails from towns and precincts to create a linked series of loops for walking and riding.
- A new circulation strategy addresses traffic congestion and parking issues within the parks that diminish visitor experience.
- It caters for different visitor segments and experiences, tailored to different lengths of stay – from 20 minutes to multi-day visits.

Objective Four

*“Benefit from tourism”*

- The touring route provides greater efficiency, access and permeability through the region to open up new business and private sector opportunities.
- An integrated regional/local trail network, including the 12 Apostles Trail, enhances the experience and provides increased activity and spending.
- Existing day visitor and tour markets are catered for through improved facilities at the Twelve Apostles Glenample precinct.
- Emerging markets and evolving needs of existing segments, including the changing demands of campervans, are catered for through diversification of the range of offers and accommodation types.

Objective Five

*“Create long-term value for Victoria, its south-west region and the local communities”*

- More efficient movement of goods and services to and within the region.
- Victoria benefits by shifting some visitation to a slower, extended experience to improve yield for the regional economy and improve the amenity for the day visitor market.
- Diversification of routes can assist emergency services during accidents or bushfires.
- The trail network can position Victoria’s southwest as a key walking, cycling and nature based “must see” tourism destination.
- Profiles local agriculture to emerging visitor markets.

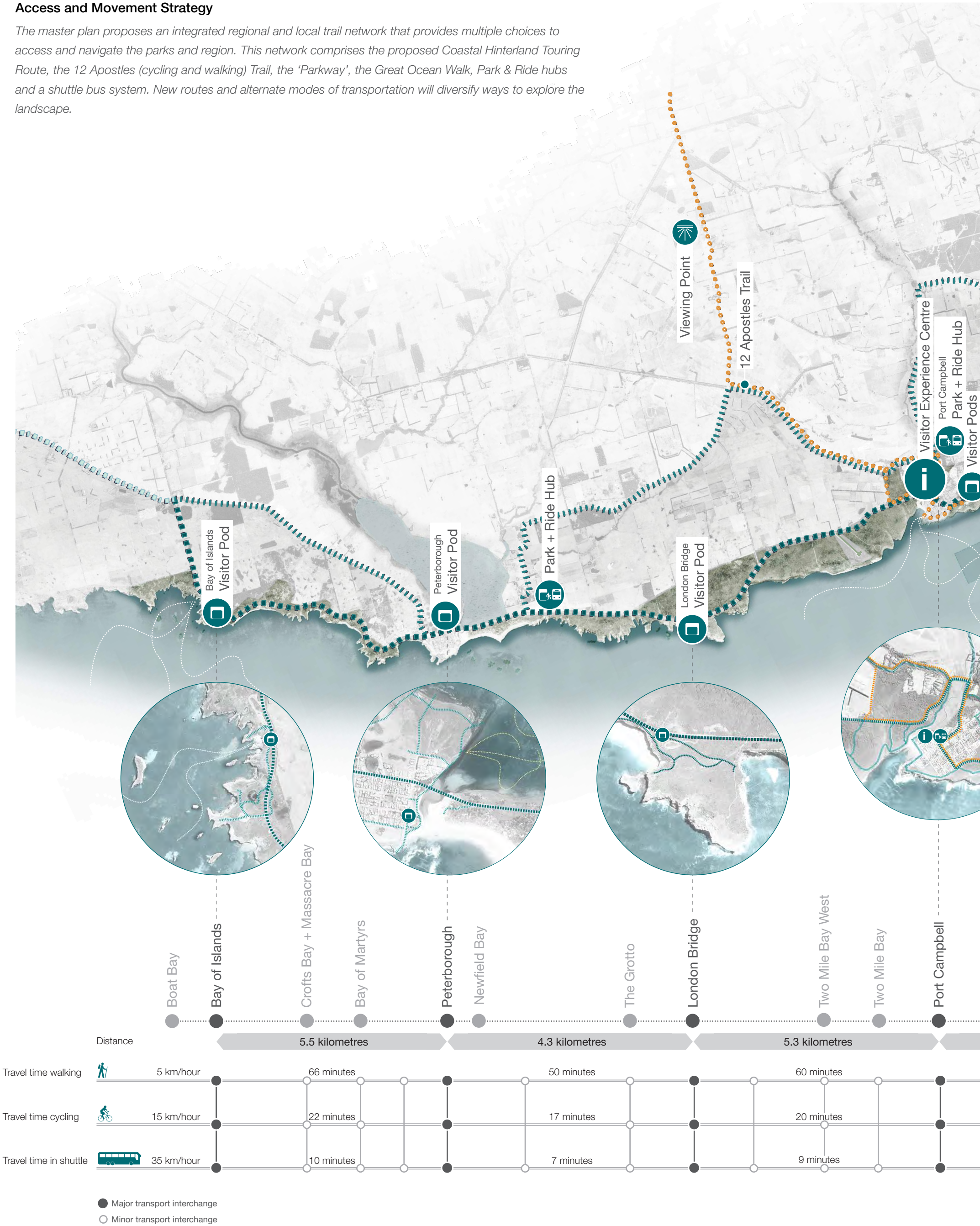


Views from the coastal hinterland

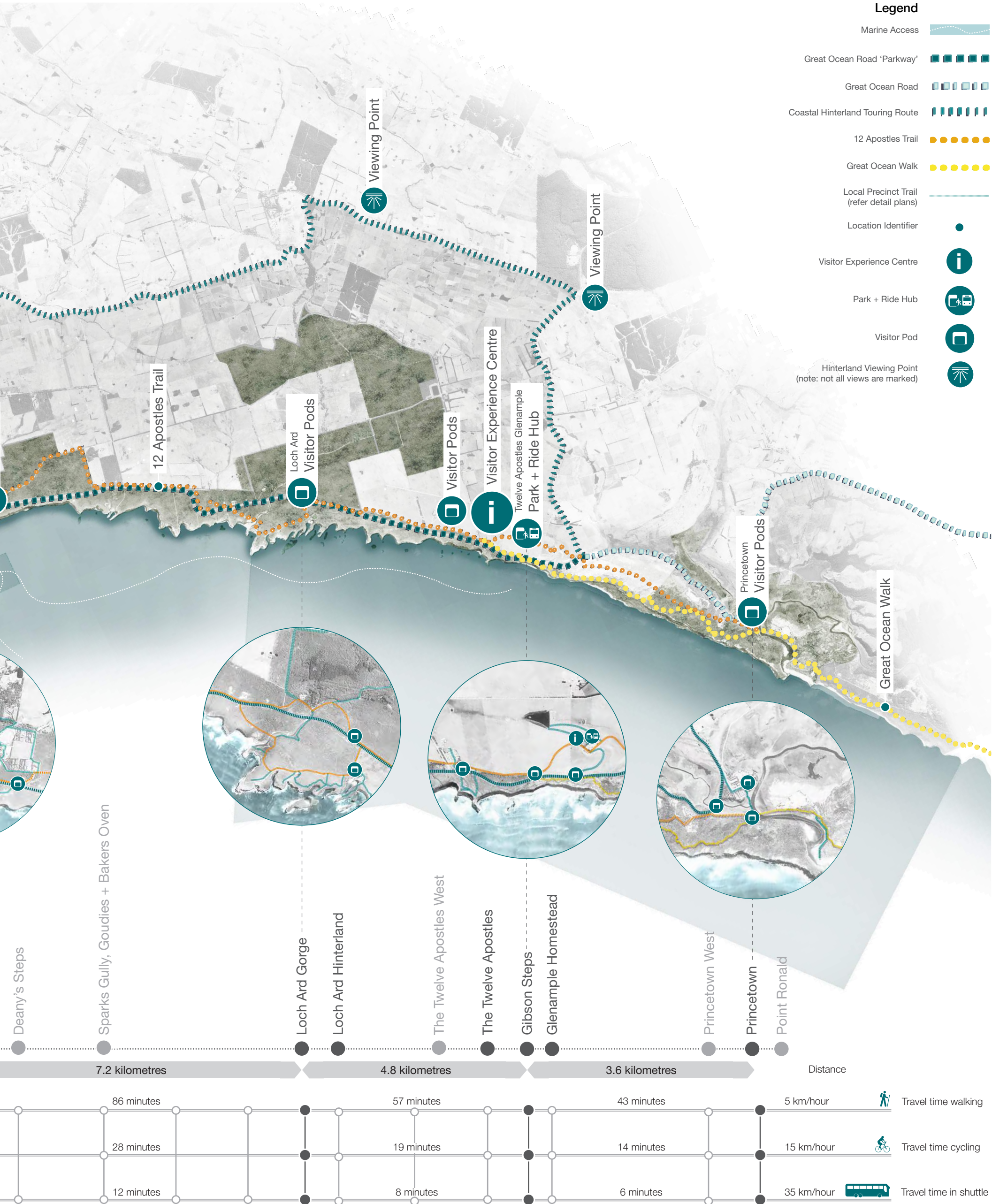


Access and Movement Strategy

The master plan proposes an integrated regional and local trail network that provides multiple choices to access and navigate the parks and region. This network comprises the proposed Coastal Hinterland Touring Route, the 12 Apostles (cycling and walking) Trail, the 'Parkway', the Great Ocean Walk, Park & Ride hubs and a shuttle bus system. New routes and alternate modes of transportation will diversify ways to explore the landscape.









5.2 EXPERIENCE AND WAYFINDING

Strategic Overview

The experience and wayfinding strategy presents a new way for people to tailor their visit for a deeper, richer experience focused on the coast’s towns and its natural and cultural values.

While many wonderful opportunities and experiences exist along the Shipwreck Coast, its hinterland and its towns, they are not universally promoted. Experiences include surfing, fishing, walking, bird-watching or sampling local produce. The primary experience that currently attracts the vast bulk of visitors focuses on the area’s geology, escarpments and rock stacks.

A dispersed visitation approach based from Visitor Experience Centres and Visitor Pods connected to the Great Ocean Road enables a variety of experiences to suit different user groups and visitor segments by time, type, transport or special interests. This approach can support “snap and go”, partial-day, full-day, weekend and multi-day experiences.

Visitor research indicates that an authentic Aboriginal cultural experience, particularly contact with local Aboriginal people, is highly sought after. This is not currently provided for and should be developed in partnership with Traditional Owners.

Wayfinding and Interpretation

The experience and wayfinding strategy presents a new structure for locating, navigating and interpreting the Shipwreck Coast. It envisages one integrated process that enables visitors to make informed choices about how, when and why they visit the region through information available pre-visit, en-route, in precincts and at individual sites.

At the regional scale, clearly distinguishing the parks creates a sense of anticipation, arrival and departure. Structuring wayfinding along the Great Ocean Road, into precincts (via Visitor Pods) and then into individual sites (through interpretative information at lookouts and trails), creates a connection between precincts.

This approach supports multiple experiences that span the coast and each precinct. A variety of loops, trails and circuits cater to different needs, times of the day or duration of visit. Even if very short on time, one can get a taste of the other experiences on offer.

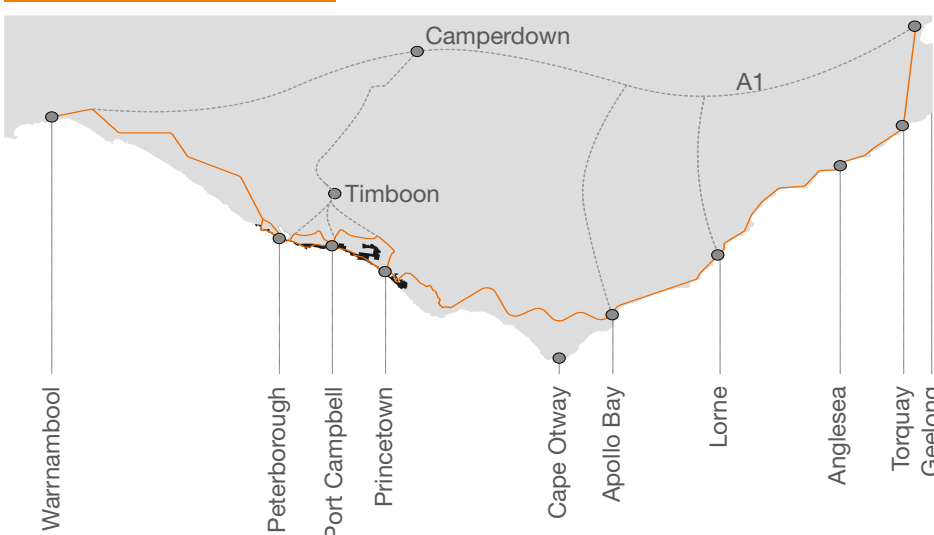
There are opportunities for enhanced visitor services in towns and key precincts that include expert staff providing information. Experiences and interpretation at each precinct can be tailored by each visitor to suit their needs and available time. This optimises the potential for each precinct’s yield through tours, transport, information, applications and other services.

To curate an authentic and enriching cultural experience and interpret the landscape fully it will be critical to work with Aboriginal guides. This also supports Aboriginal education and training to deliver those services.

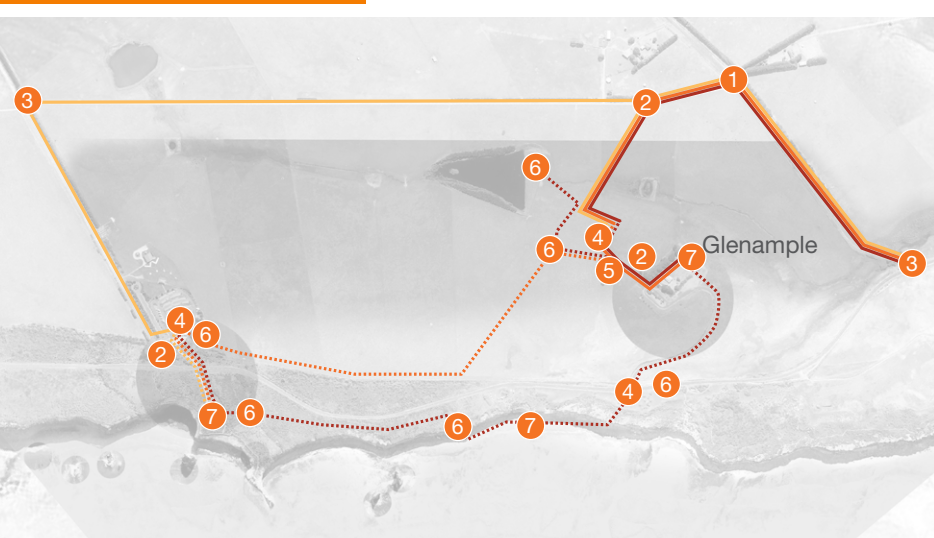
Pre-visit | Wayfinding



En-route | Wayfinding



Precinct | Wayfinding example



WAYFINDING ELEMENTS

- 1

Park Entrance Signage
- 2

Site Identification Signage
- 3

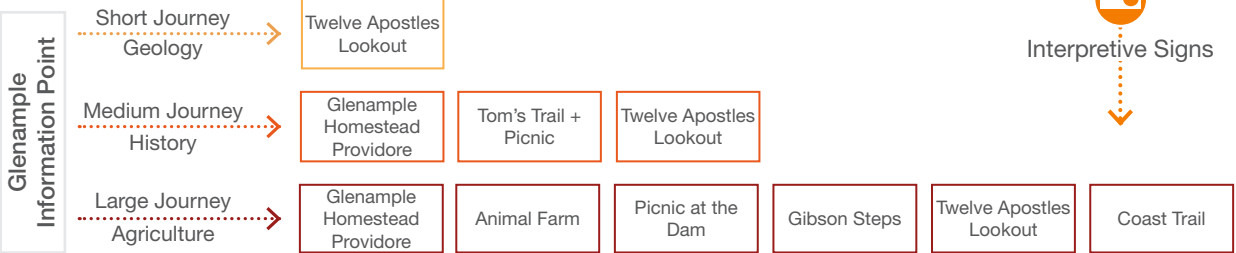
Vehicular Directional Signage
- 4

Information Point
- 5

Pedestrian Directional Signage
- 6

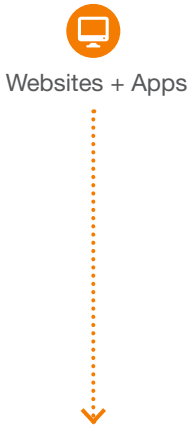
Trail Markers
- 7

Interpretive Signage

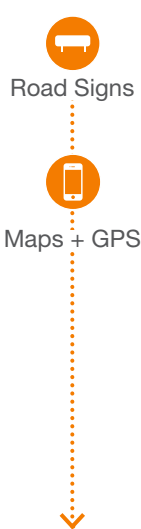


Wayfinding strategy and sequence

Pre-visit



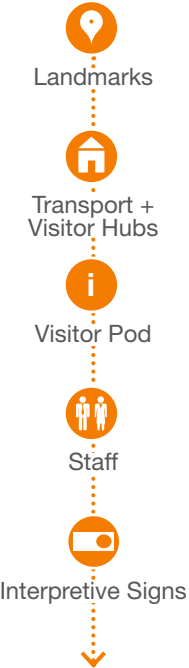
En-route



Park



Precinct





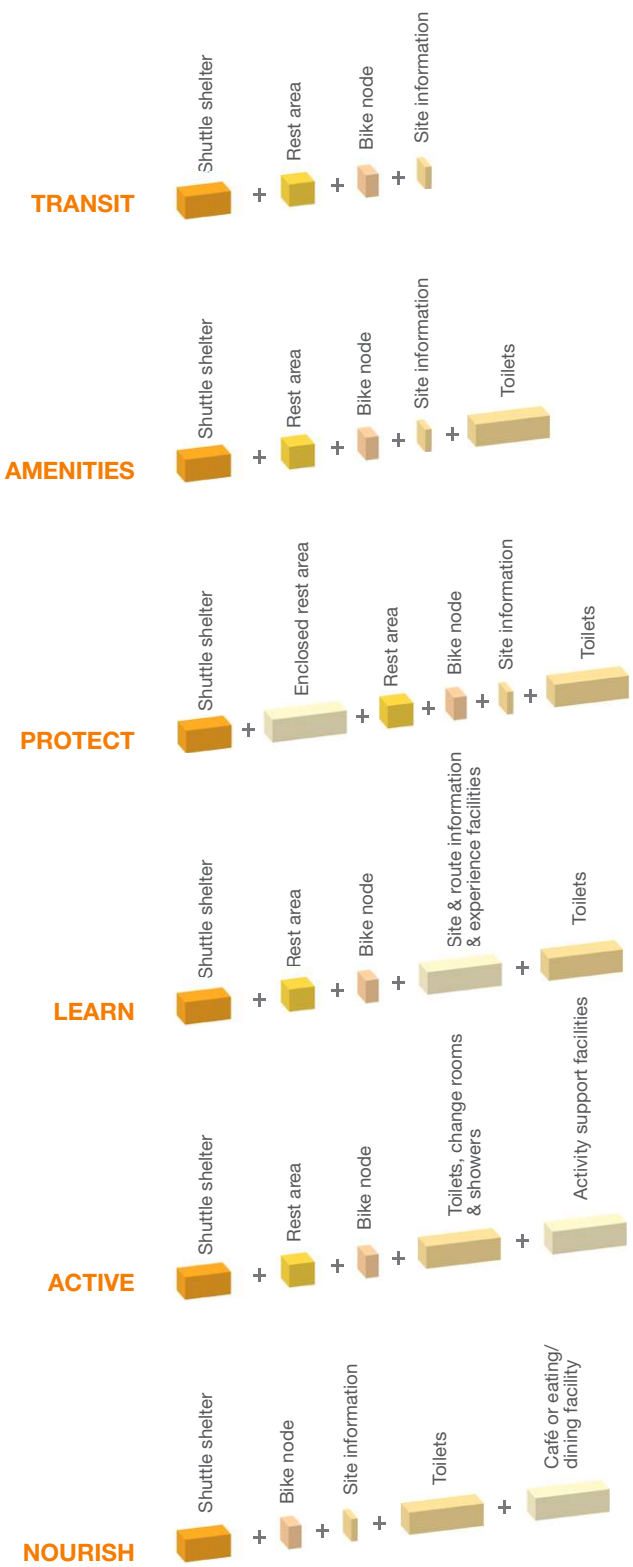
Visitor Experience Centres and Pods

Interpretation, transport, wayfinding and visitor services are proposed to be curated primarily through Visitor Experience Centres in townships and key Visitor Precincts. These primary locations are supported with Visitor Pods located along the Great Ocean Road “Parkway”. Specific visitor precincts are proposed to be centred around existing key attractions as the focal points. Each visitor precinct could be situated up to 5 km apart for comfortable hiking and cycling segments.

Each precinct is proposed to include a Visitor Pod with potential for further pods dispersed in between for shelter and information as other visitor sites and precincts are upgraded over time. Each can be tailored to fulfil the individual needs of each site by adding or subtracting functions.

It is envisaged that the Visitor Experience Centre at the Twelve Apostles Glenample Precinct and the Visitor Pod at the Loch Ard Precinct will be of sufficient size and capacity to accommodate the larger numbers of visitors that come to these sites.

Six primary configurations for Visitor Pods have been developed and are shown below. Other configurations are possible.



Visitor Facilities and Services

A world-class experience requires the support of world-class facilities and infrastructure. Existing visitor infrastructure is coming close to the end of its useful life and will need to be decommissioned and replaced or renewed over the coming years.

The ongoing natural processes that have, and will, continue to shape the coast are also likely to impact some areas where visitor infrastructure is currently located. The master plan has contemplated the question of what infrastructure and development means in the context of the study.

The word infrastructure means different things to different people. In the context of this master plan, the term infrastructure spans a broad spectrum ranging from boardwalks, trails and lightweight shelters at one end through to restaurants and resorts at the other end.

The spectrum of visitor facilities comprises a wide range of experiences and identifies potential public and private sector tourism development opportunities in the national and coastal parks, and in the public and private land holdings that abut them.

Three classes of visitor infrastructure have been identified comprising accommodation, experience and ancillary-based facilities. These include transport, parking and visitor information services, tours, education and recreation as well as accommodation and dining experiences at different scales and for different markets. Opportunities exist for the supporting tourism infrastructure to be developed by the private sector.

It is clear that any new development of infrastructure, public or private, must directly benefit the local towns and communities while enhancing the visitor experience and improving the protection and conservation of the parks.

The function and purpose of the master plan is not to provide prescriptive recommendations in relation to specific sites where private sector investment should occur. Currently, any investor initiated proposals for specific sites must be directed to the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) in accordance with Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks – Guidelines (DEPI 2013). Other planning requirements include the urban design frameworks for local towns and local planning schemes.

The master plan is a strategic document that provides a framework to identify opportunities and guide development including visitor facilities, accommodation, infrastructure and services. They will be provided by both the public and private sectors and will span both public land in and outside the parks as well as private land holdings outside the parks.



School children use iPads to interpret local history, photo by ipads4learning.global2.vic.edu.au



Setting Parameters for Visitor Infrastructure

Tourism is directly linked with the region's landscape and environment. Respecting and positively responding to this landscape in design and development of visitor facilities is essential to protect and conserve the landscape's setting and its relationship to the coast.

Local planning schemes have considered this through referencing Significant Landscape Overlays (SLO), which include directions to 'minimise the visual impact of buildings and structures, particularly along the coastline' as well as building heights and setbacks. As included in the relevant policies and guidelines including the Victorian Coastal Strategy, where specified heights and setbacks are not met, any proposal should demonstrate an equivalent or better outcome with regard to considerations such as the screening of the development and the impact on views.

A key opportunity that arises when renewing the existing visitor infrastructure will be how it is integrated into each site. A prefabricated/modulised approach is proposed where possible. This can minimise environmental disturbance and can be lifted into place, enabling relocation of assets over time should the need arise.

The following setting parameters have been drafted to inform the sighting and design approach for different built form and visitor facilities in each precinct and town/park interface for all infrastructure in the study area. Each site will have its own specific qualities and detailed context to respond to. A parameter suitable for one site may not be applicable for another. Each site should be evaluated on its own merits where siting is considered a critical part of the design process. These parameters are provided as a starting point.

Setting Parameters

Context + Scenic Values

- Built form will need to:
- Respect views to, from and within each setting.
  - Enhance each location's nature and character by the built element proposed.

Setting Types

- Depending on a particular context, three typologies guide the setting of any element proposed:
- Boldly + Contrasting [or]
  - Tread Lightly [or]
  - Merge with the landscape.

Environment

- All elements are required to be of world-class quality and best practice:
- Be the highest environmental rating.
  - Minimise their footprint.
  - Operate self-sufficiently.
  - Be highly durable, low maintenance and constructed from sustainable materials.

Build-ability

- To protect and conserve the parks and support local industry:
- Procure construction locally where possible.
  - Prefabricate and air lift into sites.
  - Enable, where possible, elements to be movable/relocatable.

Economic

- Any element must individually, or as part of an integrated strategy:
- Achieve a high yield.
  - Benefit local communities.
  - Support reinvestment and contribute positively to parks.
  - Deliver world-class quality.

Potential Visitor Infrastructure

The towns are the centres for visitors and services. The potential infrastructure plays on each site's strength.

ACCOMMODATION	Education / Seminar Centre						
	Up-market Accommodation						
	Eco-lodge						
	Affordable Accommodation						
	Self-contained Units						
	Caravan / Motor Homes						
	Hiker / Cycle Huts						
	Camping / "Glamping"						
EXPERIENCE	Visitor Pods / Interpretive & Information						
	Museum / Gallery						
	Food / Beverage						
	Hospitality / Entertainment / Restaurant						
	Lookouts & Hides						
	Health / Wellbeing Recreation / Spa						
	Boating / Kayak & Canoe Facilities						
	Guided Tours						
ANCILLARY	Seating / Decks / Boardwalks & Trails						
	Shuttle Bus Service & Bicycle Share						
	Parking - Tour buses, private vehicles						
	Trail Head / Rest Shelters / Picnic Areas						
	Change / Beach Showers						
	Toilet						
LOCATION							

Potential visitor infrastructure matrix



Addressing the objectives

How does the experience and wayfinding strategy address the master plan’s five objectives?

Objective One

“Conserve and protect the national, coastal and marine parks”

- Optimises the function of the Great Ocean Road for visitor access and experience of the parks.
- Reduces need for infrastructure in parks and disperses visitor pressure away from the parks.
- World-class infrastructure touches the ground lightly, requires less maintenance, energy and water.

Objective Two

“Support and enrich the coast’s local and hinterland communities”

- Draws people along the coast and positions each town as the centre for visitor information and support services.
- With more to do and see, it encourages people to spend more time at the parks and visit more often in non-peak periods.
- Great design enables people to experience the coast in all conditions, seasons and times of day.

Objective Three

“Create a distinctive visitor experience for a world-class destination”

- A distinctive visitor experience is achieved by drawing on the whole coast’s beauty and not just the Twelve Apostles.
- Information pre-visit, en-route and on site enable people to tailor their visit to personal interests and need.
- World-class infrastructure presents a world-class destination at its best.
- Day visitors and tours have improved amenity and access to the Twelve Apostles site.

Objective Four

“Benefit from tourism”

- Dispersing the experience and better interpretation invites people to slow down, spend time and stay longer.
- Wayfinding and interpretation services, including telecommunications, directly benefit local communities, business and emergency services.
- Increased spending improves local economy.

Objective Five

“Create long-term value for Victoria, its south-west region and the local communities”

- By developing and promoting a ‘must see’ destination in Australia, there will be a significant uplift in visitation and value added to the local economy through longer stays and increased visitor spending.
- The opportunities for private investment in accommodation and visitor facilities will be rapidly taken up as demand grows with multiplier effects in the regional economy including new jobs.
- A dispersed approach leads to a deeper, richer understanding of the south-west region, its lifestyle and industries.



Parks Victoria Junior Ranger program providing opportunities to learn about the parks’ natural and cultural values

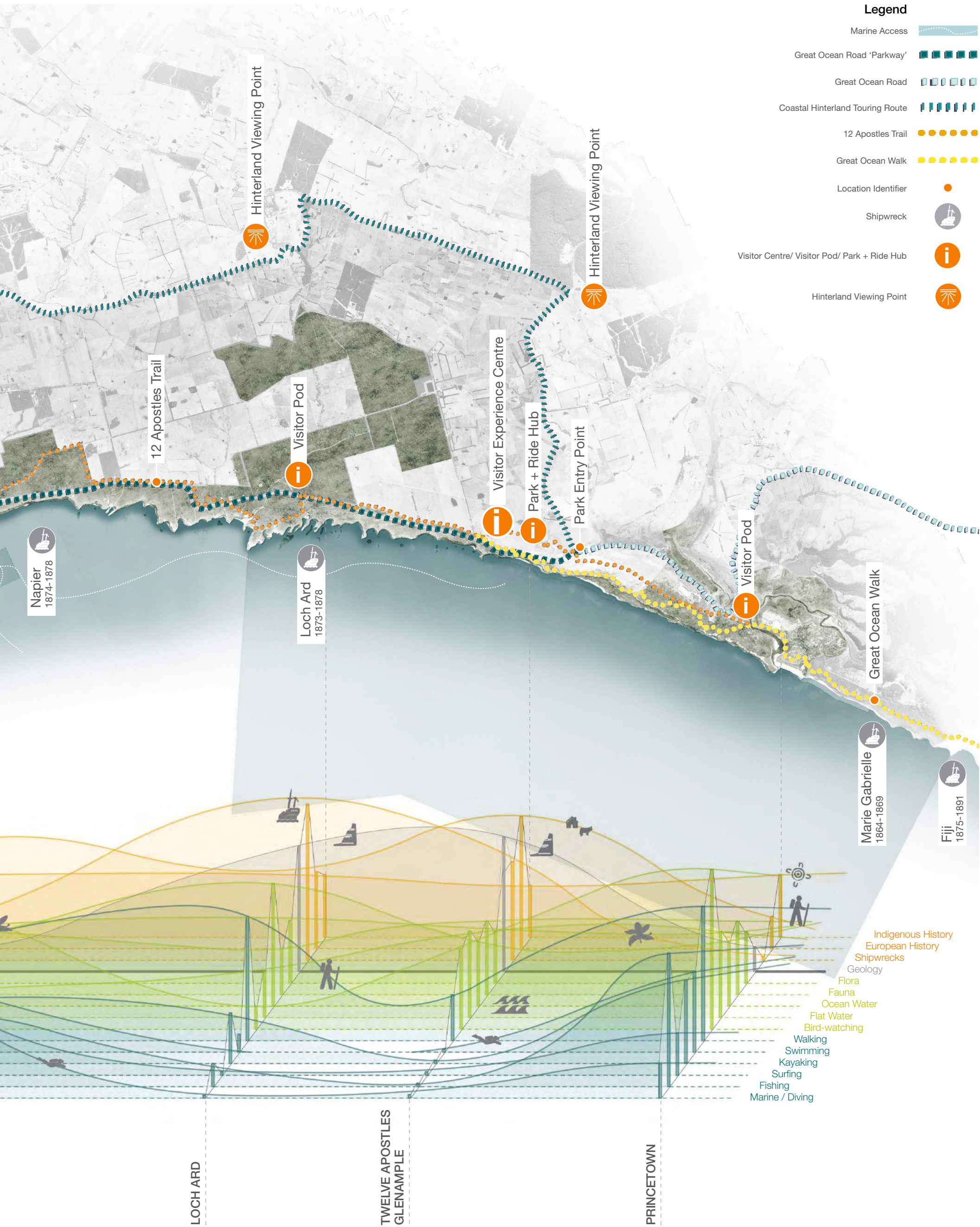


Experience and Wayfinding Strategy

Disperse visitation and develop attractions to increase the length of stay by encouraging visitors to explore the full length and breadth of the coast and hinterland. Rather than create a single large visitor centre, the plan proposes new Visitor Experience Centres on land adjacent to the park or within the townships and a series of visitor pods at existing attractions including the Twelve Apostles, London Bridge, Bay of Islands and Loch Ard. Each pod will provide state-of-the-art facilities, services and interpretation of a different aspect of the coast including the marine life; historic shipwrecks; natural coastal formations; the flora and fauna; and Indigenous history.









Potential Experience Scenarios

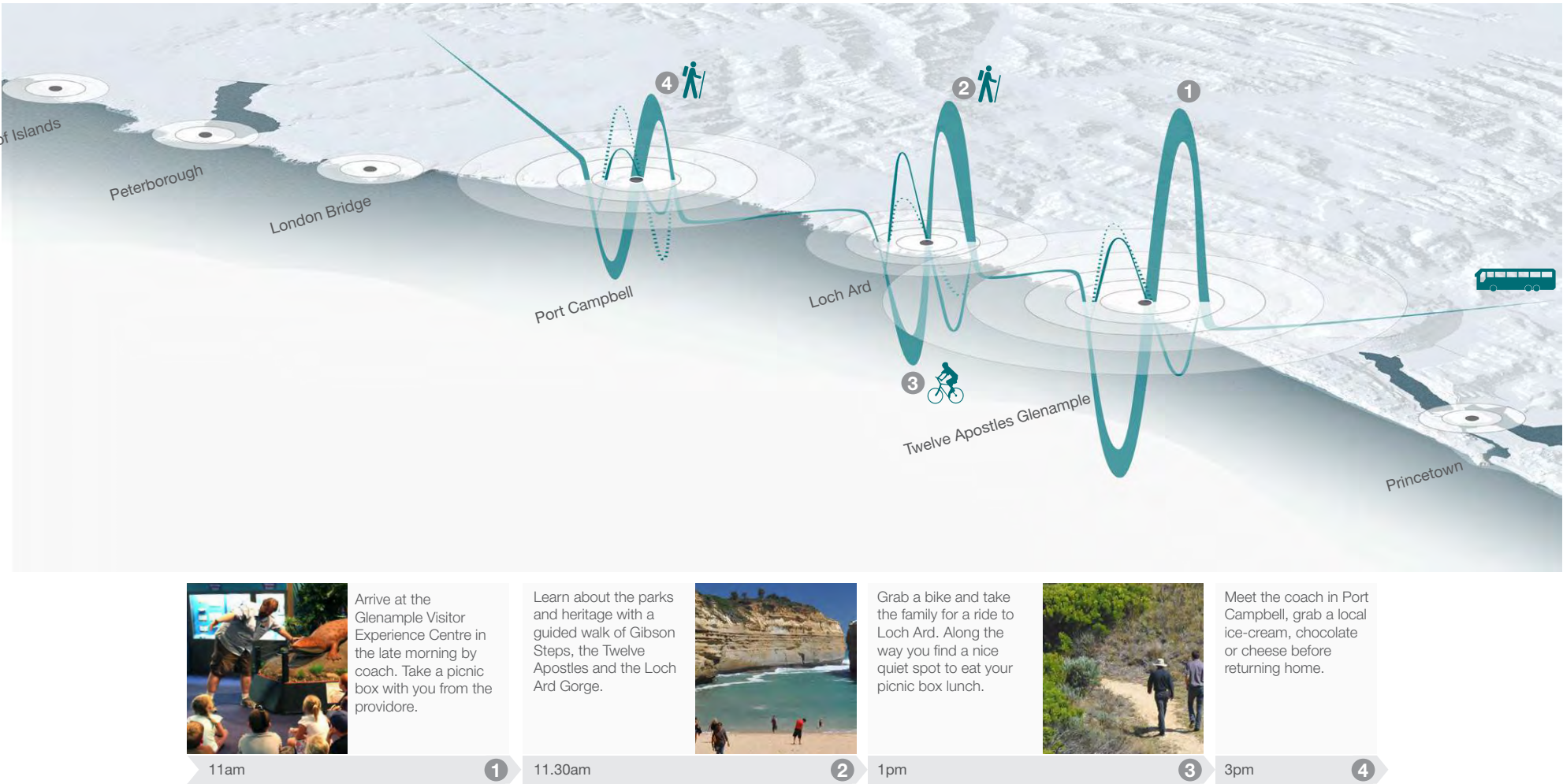
The dispersed approach to visitation refocuses the various attractions, activities and settings in the study area and how they can be experienced. Multiple options are provided to visitors and locals alike to engage with what is on offer. This approach enables people choice and the opportunity to tailor their visit to their interests and available time. Four scenarios are illustrated below. Each illustrates a different sequence of experiences and opportunities to navigate the parks, towns and coastal hinterland. There are many other possible combinations of experience available to suit short stay, half day, one day or multi-day itineraries.

Scenario One: A brief visit during day tour



Brief visit to the Twelve Apostles Glenample Precinct as part of a day tour along the Great Ocean Road.

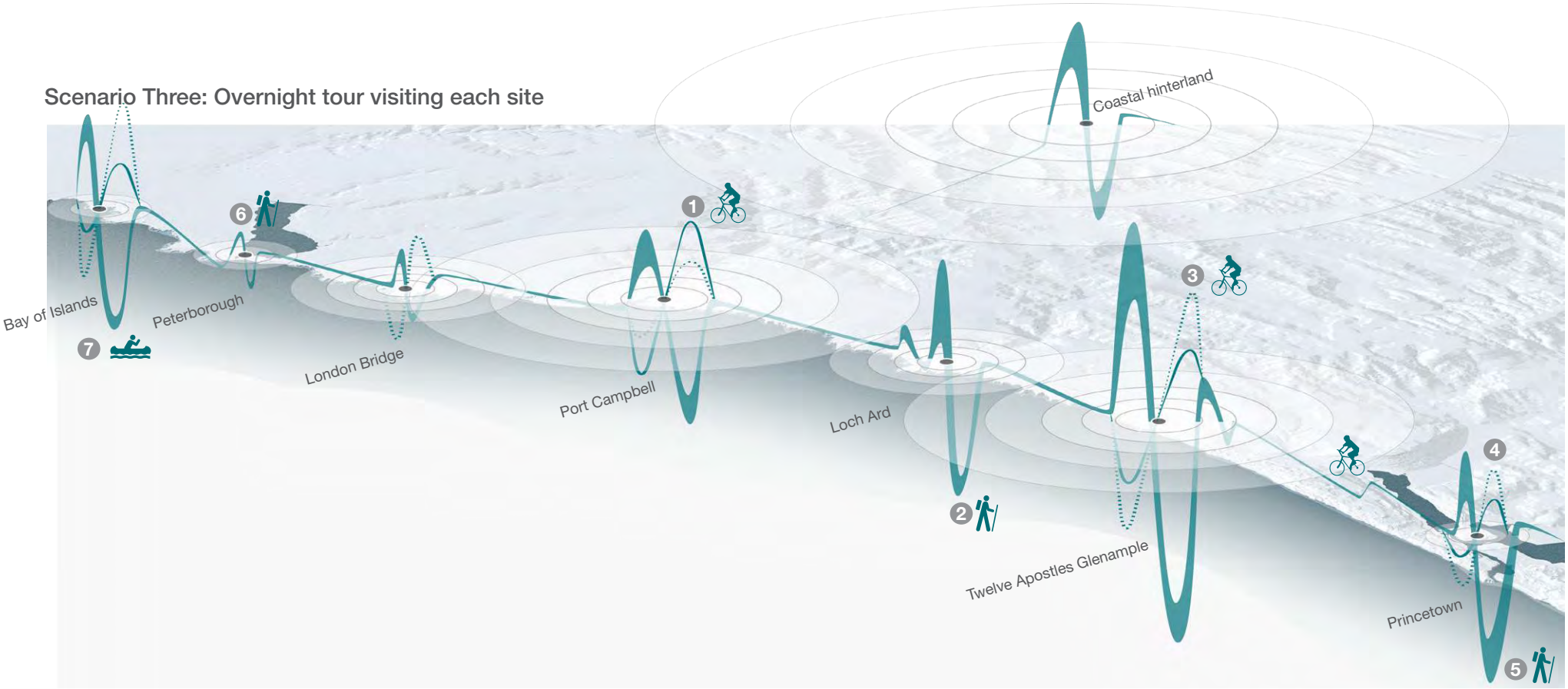
Scenario Two: Half-day tour





Half-day tour to the Shipwreck Coast



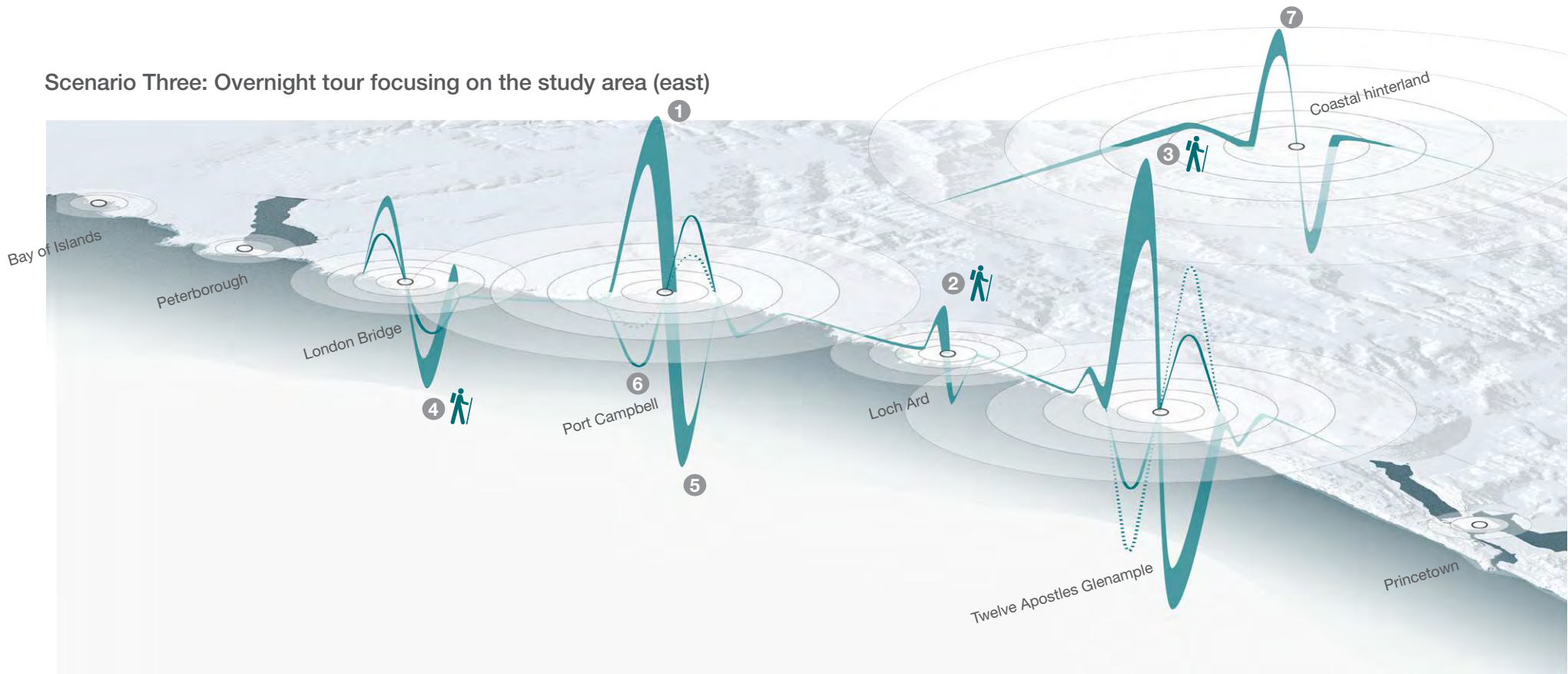
Scenario Three: Overnight tour visiting each site



Arrive in Port Campbell for lunch and a rest after cycling the 12 Apostles Trail from Timboon.	Stop at Loch Ard Gorge for a guided walk to Sherbrook River and learn about the history of the site.		The next stop on your cycle is the Twelve Apostles Glenample precinct to take in the breathtaking views and pick up some delicious local produce from the providore for afternoon tea.	Finish your cycle in Princetown where you spend the night 'Glamping' by Gellibrand River and relax with a glass of wine.	You wake early the next morning and take a stroll along the boardwalks of Gellibrand River before boarding the shuttle bus for Peterborough.	You hop off the shuttle in Peterborough and meander the boardwalks of Curdies Inlet and have a quiet lunch before hiking to the Bay of Islands.		Here you rent a kayak and explore the island stacks by sea, take a swim and relax for the afternoon.
12.30pm	2pm		3pm	5pm	9am	11.30am	3pm	
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	

Overnight tour to the Shipwreck Coast

Scenario Three: Overnight tour focusing on the study area (east)



Arrive in Port Campbell in the late morning, check in at your accommodation and drop off the car.	Board a shuttle bus to Loch Ard and explore the site by foot, taking in the geological and Aboriginal history of the site. Continue your walk to Glenample by foot, bike or shuttle bus.	Have a delicious lunch at the providore, sampling local delights.	End the day watching the penguins coming home to London Bridge at sunset, before returning to your accommodation at Port Campbell.		Wake early and walk to the Rifle Range lookout to watch a spectacular sunrise over the Shipwreck Coast.	Book in for a spa treatment and enjoy a relaxing lunch by the water.	Take the car on a gourmet food trail through the hinterland, tasting whisky, chocolates, ice-cream and cheese, and buying a bundle of delicious local foods to take home.	
10.30am	11am	1pm	6.30pm		6am	9.30am	1.30pm	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

Overnight tour to the Shipwreck Coast



5.3 HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT

Natural values

Port Campbell National Park and Bay of Islands Coastal Park are designated in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as Category II (National Parks) and III (Natural Monuments), and are managed accordingly for ecosystem conservation and because of their outstanding natural features. The Shipwreck Coast study area includes two significant marine environments, The Twelve Apostles Marine National Park and The Arches Marine Sanctuary.

The landscape contains significant examples of remnant coastal environments, including diverse heathlands, which are a refuge for a wide range of plants and animals. Wetlands, coastal cliffs, off shore islands and rock stacks provide habitat for many bird species.

Numerous waterways, including the Gellibrand River, Campbells Creek and Curdies Inlet, reach the coast within the landscape and provide valuable links from the marine environs into the coastal hinterland.

The master plan study area also includes important Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) and six flora species of National significance including the Metallic Sun Orchid and Clover Glycene (both listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988(FFG)), the Scented Spider Orchid, Swamp Greenhood, Square Raspwort, Lime Fern and eight other species of state significance.

The public land within the conservation estate plays a vital role in fauna conservation in the region. It supports small populations of one nationally threatened species, the Hooded Plover (FFG listed), and 12 species of state significance, including populations of Rufous Bristlebird (FFG listed), Southern Brown Bandicoot, Swamp Antechinus, Swamp Skink and Glossy Grass Skink.

As well as these threatened species, the parks and reserves support fauna that is regionally important as a major contributor to the conservation of biodiversity in south-west Victoria. Although relatively small, the parks and reserves represent a major area of remnant habitat within a region that has been largely cleared of native vegetation.

The parks comprise a narrow, fragile environment that is increasingly at risk of erosion and fragmentation which can further isolate and threaten pockets of important vegetation and habitat. Climate change may compound this issue through increased wave action and higher levels of acidification of coastal waters that interact and erode the coast's limestone-based geology.

The purpose of this master plan is not to provide detailed conservation management strategies. This is undertaken by Parks Victoria as part of 'normal business' and includes Conservation Action Planning under an Adaptive Management Framework, which aims to direct scarce resources to the highest priorities and where the greatest benefits can be achieved.

However, a key initiative of the master plan is to "augment" the parks over time through an extensive revegetation program spanning public land and private land adjacent to the parks. This initiative can help address climate change and make parks more resilient to further fragmentation.

The heritage and environment strategy proposes a new approach to repair the parks, improve habitat, increase biodiversity and raise environmental awareness. This approach is supported through the net gain achieved when existing areas dedicated to vehicular infrastructure are absorbed back into the parks for vegetation, habitat and biodiversity.

The total area of the parks is 2,580 ha. Less than 1% of this space is dedicated to vehicular infrastructure within the parks. It comprises access roads and car parking totalling 13 km in length and 17.5 ha in area (excluding the Great Ocean Road). While considered a relatively small percentage in overall terms, the alignment and associated fragmentation impacts of the infrastructure is profound given the parks' narrow, linear shape.

This master plan looks at four visitor precincts. The potential for revegetation of car parking areas in the four visitor precincts proposed indicates a potential net benefit increase in vegetation, habitat and biodiversity of between 45% and 65% of park vehicular infrastructure within each of the four precincts studied. This, extrapolated on a whole-of-parks basis, when remaining sites and precincts not included in the master plan are considered, can effectively lead to a significant extent of land being rededicated back to core park values.

The various waterways spanning the coast are incredibly valuable assets that can act as the conduits and a framework for this program to link isolated and revegetated areas both within and adjacent to the parks. This, in turn, can increase the extent and links between habitat for threatened species.

The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has offered to partner and co-invest in this initiative which has also been well supported by the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP).



Diving the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park



Cultural values

Evidence of earliest human occupation of this coastal region tens of thousands of years ago, can be found in many places along the coast. The Kirrae-Whurrong (Girae Wurrung) people cared for this Country and continue to do so today.

The landscape provides extensive evidence of Aboriginal activities including shell middens, stone artefacts and staircases cut into the coastal cliffs, albeit many have been damaged as a result of erosion, colonisation and ongoing development and visitation in the area.

An example of the rich cultural heritage is shell middens that show the sea provided a rich and bountiful source of food for relatively large numbers of the Kirrae-Whurrong (literally meaning ‘blood lip’).

Many clans speaking the Kirrae-Whurrong language occupied the country along the coast from Warrnambool to Princetown and inland to Mount Shadwell, Timboon, Mount Hamilton and Lake Bolac. Today the descendants of the Kirrae-Whurrong still live on Country, their connection like other Traditional Owners across this area remains unbroken with this unique social, spiritual and physical landscape.

The Ngaragurd Gunditj people, a clan of the Kirrae-Whurrong, believed to be created by Bunjil (the creator), lived along this rugged coastline. Their hunting territories lie between the Curdies and Gellibrand Rivers. The Ngaragurd Gunditj people adapted their lifestyle as the climate and geographical environment changed over tens of thousands of years. Their diets changed as the landscape changed. They walked across land that has now been claimed by the sea.

Today descendants of the Kirrae-Whurrong maintain a strong connection to Country and have aspirations for land management and maintaining a healthy future for their communities. The master plan supports such opportunities.

The master plan study area also covers the ‘Shipwreck Coast’ — home to a dense population of shipwrecks, including the Loch Ard. Sections of Port Campbell National Park are listed on the Register of the National Estate, in recognition of the area’s outstanding cultural values, and its importance as part of our heritage.

Glenample Homestead, due to its pastoral history and relationship to the Loch Ard, has been registered on the National Trust. Places like Glenample Homestead have an important role in interpreting the significance of colonisation

while acknowledging its intersection with and significant impacts upon Aboriginal people and their homelands. Today, at best, interpretation and other activities linked to significant colonisation sites should strive to also heal and reconcile.

The Great Ocean Road has been listed on the Victorian Heritage Register as a place of cultural heritage significance as a war memorial and tangible reminder of the work undertaken from 1919 to 1932 by 3,000 repatriated ex-servicemen. Aboriginal men and women also served in all wars beside other Australians, including many from the Western districts of Victoria.

This effectively presents the entire coastline as a cultural landscape of high significance.

Implementation of the master plan will need to be informed by the preparation of a detailed interpretation plan developed with the coast’s Traditional Owners and historians. The interpretation plan will require comprehensive research in order to present a complete, accurate, balanced and integrated approach to Aboriginal and post-European cultural landscape themes and stories.

This interpretation plan is likely to reference and draw from the key themes and storylines from Parks Victoria’s ‘Great Ocean Walk Strategic Interpretation Framework’ report. These are:

- Elemental Forces - landform, wind & ocean
- Earth History
- Marine Environment
- Wildlife
- Flora
- People - Aboriginal Connections
- People - European History



Viewing and discussing the park’s erosion issues with Parks Victoria rangers



The Rufous Bristlebird, photo from Rob Drummond Photography



Key Initiatives

Marine Ecology

The coast’s marine environs include The Arches Marine Sanctuary and The Twelve Apostles Marine National Park. The Southern Ocean is one of the most diverse systems on the planet, and the quality of the coast’s water underpins many natural and cultural experiences including diving, fishing, swimming and surfing as well as the protection and conservation of the marine parks and their wildlife. The quality of experiences are directly linked to the quality of water flowing out of the coast’s waterways. Improving upstream catchment landscapes improves marine environs downstream.

Vegetation and Biodiversity

The parks accommodate more than 25 different Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC) that include Coastal Headland Scrub, Wet Heathland, Coastal Tussock Grassland, Riparian Forest, Heathy Woodland and Coast Gully Thicket. Augmenting these landscapes through revegetation of disturbed sites and on adjacent private land helps to increase their viability and improve regional biolinks.

Interpretation and Education

Broadening understanding of how the parks connect and relate to the coastal hinterland helps to grow appreciation for the regional landscape and its coast as one integrated environmental system. Augmenting this system and educating people about it can help explain the coast’s significance and enable people to engage with the parks’ values.

Fauna and Habitat

The coast’s parks are home to numerous endangered and/or very special species including the Southern Brown Bandicoot, White-footed Dunnart, Rufous Bristlebird, the Long-nosed Potoroo and Little Penguins to name a few. The opportunity to augment the parks and link environments together improves resilience for local fauna through increase in the available habitat.

Landcare

A regional approach to land management, including the potential to curate community-led Landcare programs, presents an opportunity to redefine the parks’ relationship with adjoining areas of private land and establish a park interface area. This can improve connections from the hinterland to park precincts and townships, and open opportunities for new trails, accommodation and businesses.

Augmenting the Parks

Augmenting the parks through an extensive revegetation program that spans public and private land can help link together fragmented areas of habitat. Regional corridors will be established along nominated waterways to help connect isolated EVCs to the parks.

Addressing the objectives

How does the heritage and environment strategy address the master plan’s five objectives?

Objective One

“Conserve and protect the national, coastal and marine parks”

- The Park Interface Zone, an informal domain, effectively expands habitat, biodiversity and environmental systems along waterway corridors. Over time, park protection, conservation and resilience can be improved.
- Removal of carparks to revegetate and begin to heal the parks.
- Better connections between isolated and dispersed marine, coastal and hinterland landscapes and habitats can be achieved through a regional approach to landscape management and restoration.

Objective Two

“Support and enrich the coast’s local and hinterland communities”

- Augmenting the parks’ habitat, biodiversity and landscape supports local communities by enriching and improving the region’s landscape and environment. This supports “liveability” in the region and provides high-quality amenity to each township.

Objective Three

“Create a distinctive visitor experience for a world-class destination”

- A distinctive and diverse visitor experience is enhanced by drawing together the rich pastoral hinterland, small-scale villages and the profoundly beautiful escarpments and rock stacks, world-class interpretation and landscape rich in flora and fauna.
- A stronger focus on environment enhances the national park experience.

Objective Four

“Benefit from tourism”

- Nature-based tourism can be leveraged by improving the connections between the parks and coastal hinterland to establish new services, accommodation and businesses.
- Regional parks and the Landcare investment program achieve multiple environmental, community and lifestyle benefits.

Objective Five

“Create long-term value for Victoria, its south-west region and the local communities”

- Investing in the region’s landscape improves its value and can provide multiple dividends for years to come through improved air and water quality and landscape that supports the region’s produce. There is intrinsic value in ecosystem health.
- New approaches to regional land management that leverage the relationship between public and private land holdings.



Environmental Strategy

Existing

The national parks along the Shipwreck Coast are confined and linear. With agricultural boundaries on one side and the ocean on the other, there appears to be little room for biodiversity expansion.

Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs)

Agricultural land surrounding the national parks has led to the fragmentation of other EVCs. It is important to create links between these fragmented areas to begin to improve biodiversity and corridors for both flora and fauna.

Waterways

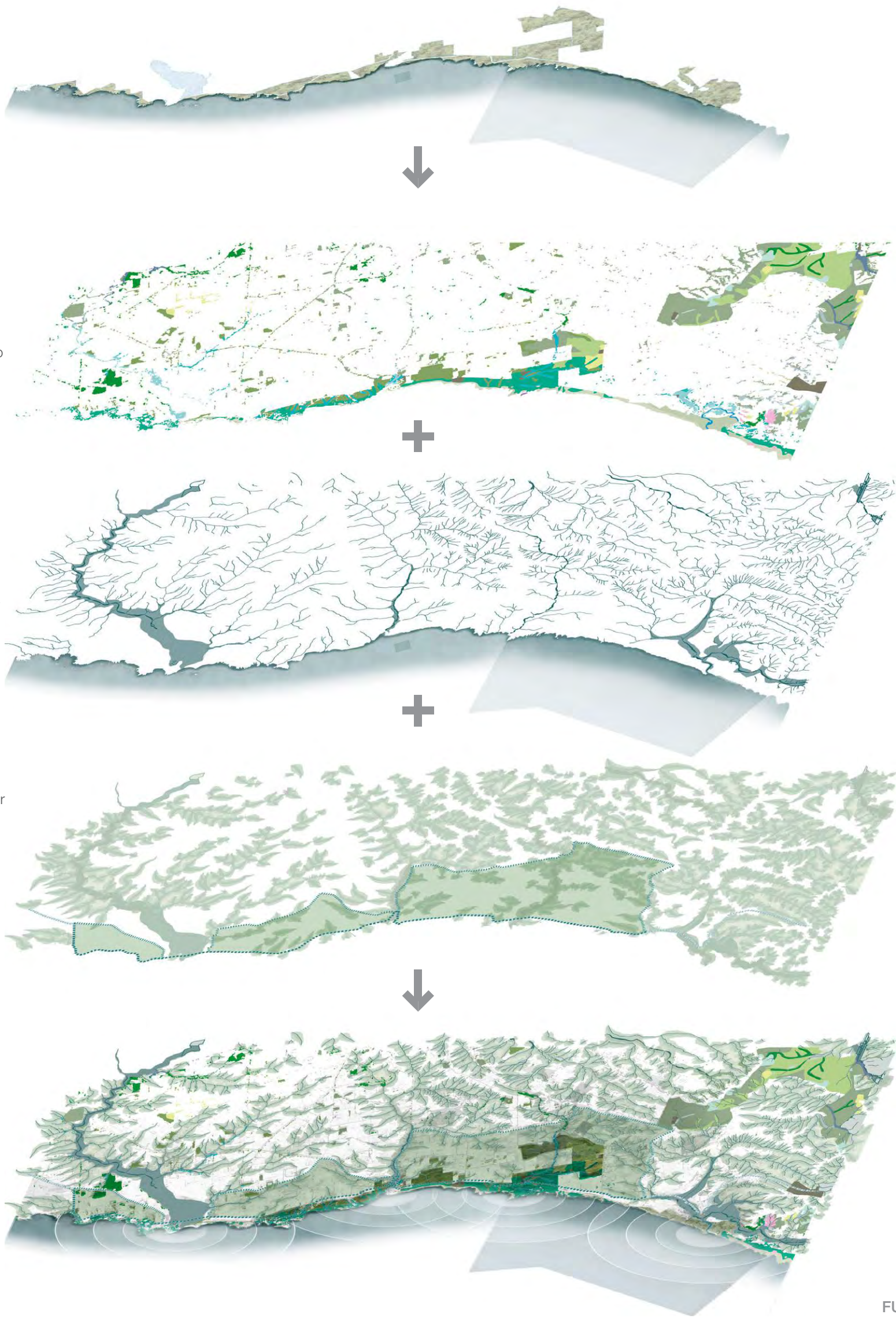
The waterways provide links between agricultural land, national parks, townships and the ocean. This network of streams, rivers and wetlands are integral to the expansion of biodiversity. Currently many of these waterways are in poor condition.

Park Interface Zone

Through future and existing landcare projects, working together with farmers and locals, and with the aid of the Park Interface Zone, revegetation and restoration of the waterways can expand to create healthier systems which benefit all environments.

Future potential

There is potential to create links throughout the region, connecting fragmented EVCs, restoring water quality and creating new biodiversity corridors. This benefits the entire region – agricultural land, the national parks, local flora and fauna, the ocean and marine national parks.

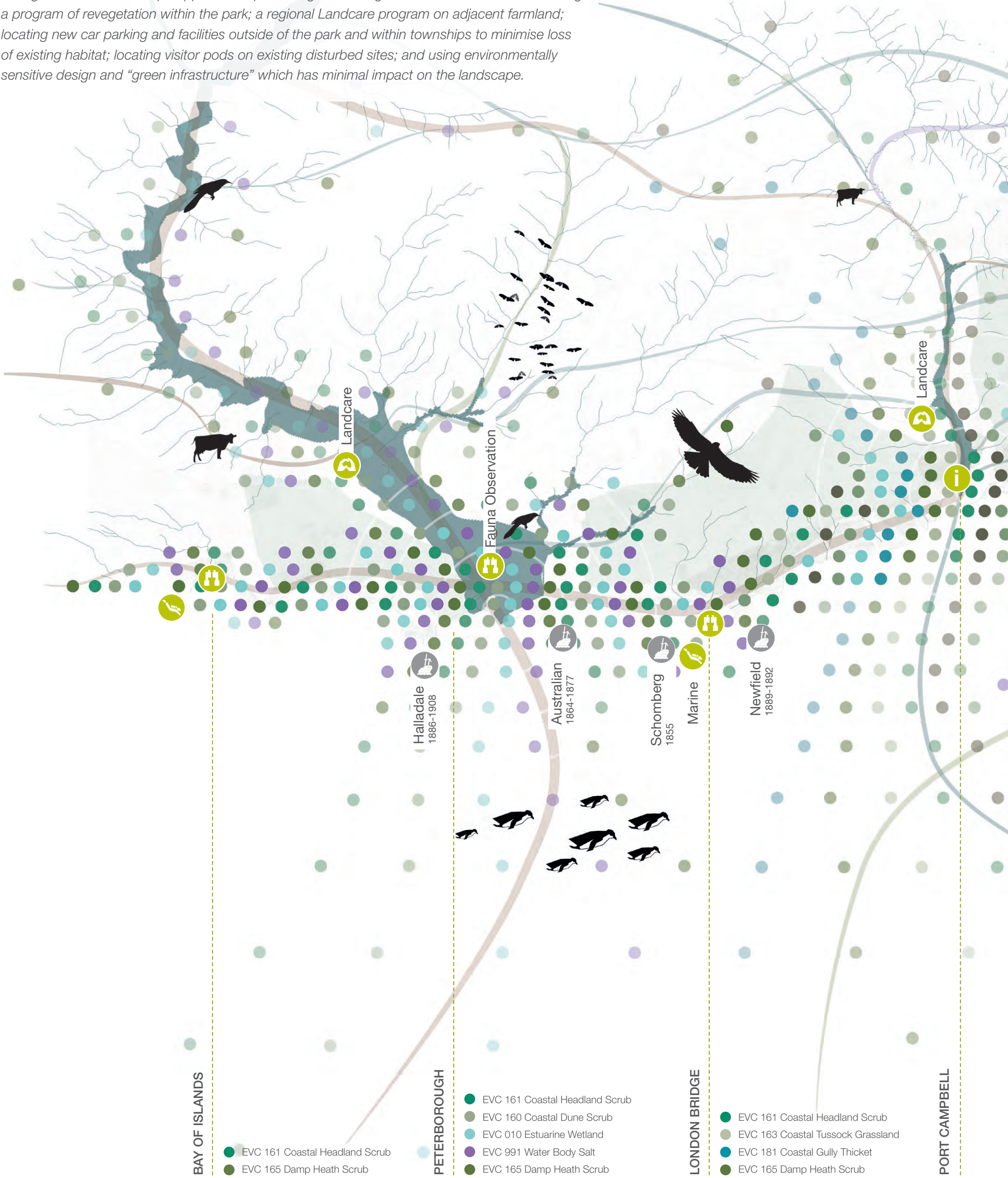


The environmental strategy unfolded

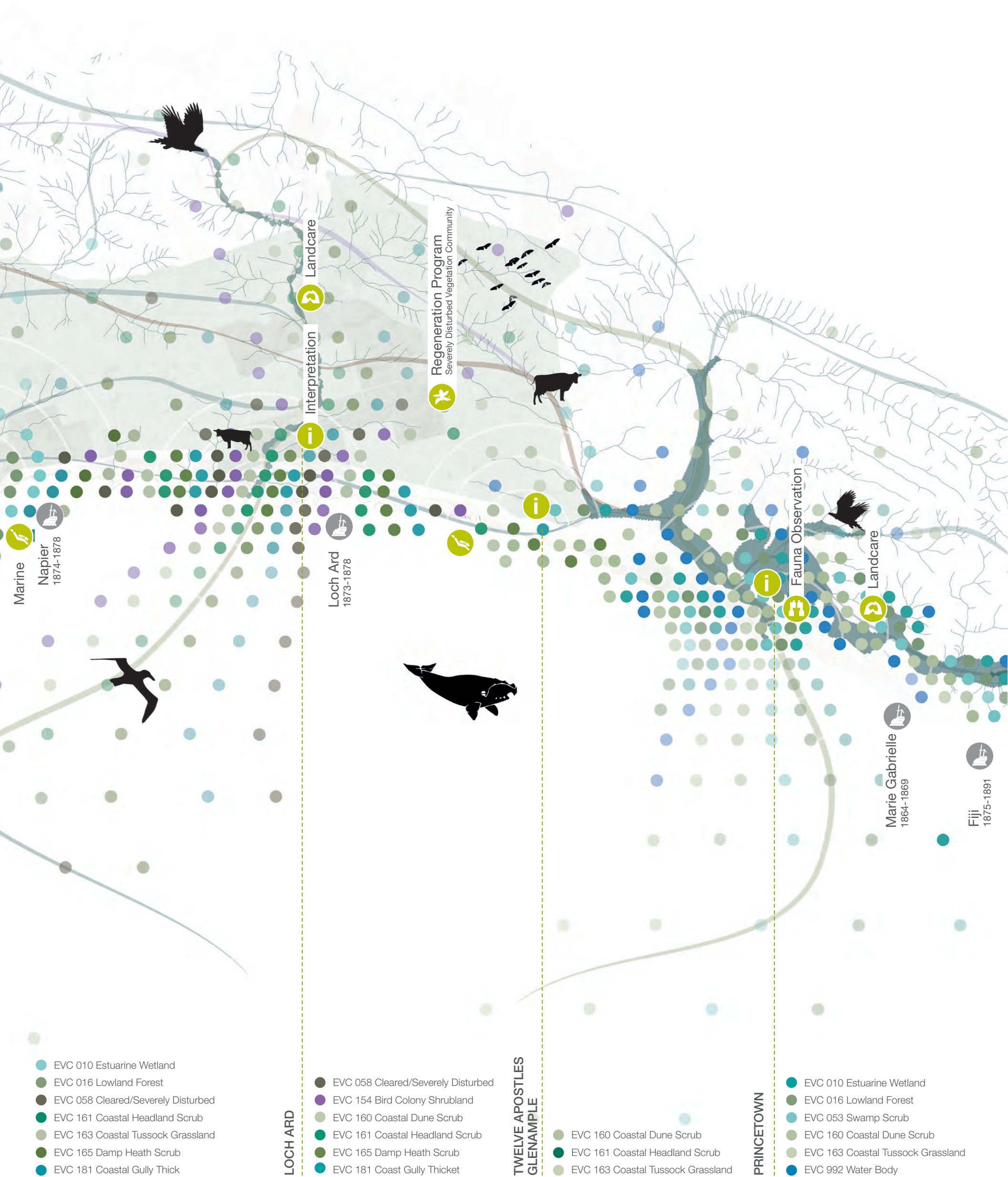


Heritage and Environment Strategy

Taking a whole-of-landscape approach to protecting the heritage and natural environment through a program of revegetation within the park; a regional Landcare program on adjacent farmland; locating new car parking and facilities outside of the park and within townships to minimise loss of existing habitat; locating visitor pods on existing disturbed sites; and using environmentally sensitive design and “green infrastructure” which has minimal impact on the landscape.











Conceptual vision: Port Campbell Town Green