

21 MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC STATEMENT

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21.01 Introduction

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This Municipal Strategic Statement sets out the vision, objectives and strategies for managing land use change and development in Glenelg Shire Council. It provides the basis for the application of local policies, zones, overlays and other provisions in the Glenelg Planning Scheme.

The objectives and strategies for the municipality are set out under the themes of settlement, environmental and landscape values, environmental risks, natural resource management, built environment and heritage, housing, economic development, transport and infrastructure.

21.01-1 Municipal profile

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The Glenelg Shire is located in the far south west of Victoria adjoining the South Australia border 360 kilometres west of Melbourne and 548 kilometres south east of Adelaide.

The Traditional Owners of the region are the Gunditjmarra, Bunganditj and Jarwadjali people.

The Shire was proclaimed on 23 September 1994 with the amalgamation of the Shires of Glenelg, Heywood and the City of Portland. The Shire covers an area of 6,212 square kilometres, of which 45% (276,606 hectares) is public land. It is characterised by a diverse range of environments, including rugged coastline, dense native forests and woodlands, rolling rural plains and rivers, lakes and wetlands of significance. In the course of time, these features have contributed to creating distinctive communities with quite different expectations about how their area should develop.

Glenelg Shire acknowledges its unique geographical location and regional strengths. Its rich natural resources are the basis of these regional strengths, which include a natural deep sea port and links with road and rail networks, prosperous fishing and primary production industries in a high rainfall zone with fertile soils. A standout natural feature in the Shire is the Glenelg River and estuary, which together with its tributaries, flows through the Shire from the Grampians, carving deep gorges in the Dundas Tablelands and Glenelg Plain before reaching the Southern Ocean at Nelson. The spectacular landscape of Discovery Bay and three prominent headlands and bays of Cape Bridgewater, Cape Sir William Grant and Cape Nelson; the Budj Bim National Park and Tyrendarra lava flow at the eastern boundary are a National Heritage listed landscape, as rich in Indigenous cultural heritage as they are in biodiversity. Kanawinka Geopark, the first UNESCO Geopark of its kind in Australia, extends from Mortlake in the east to Mount Gambier in South Australia, and encompasses most of Glenelg Shire.

The Shire comprises four main land systems: the Warrnambool Plain, the Victoria Volcanic Plain, the Glenelg Plain and the Dundas Tablelands.

Primary production is the major land use in the Shire (45.2%). Timber plantations are also a major land use (15.7%) as well as conservation areas (15%), which include the Cobboboonee National Park, Lower Glenelg National Park, Mount Richmond National Park, Mount Clay State Forest, Discovery Bay Coastal Park and numerous coastal, flora and fauna reserves.

The Shire had a total population of 19,575 in 2011. Portland is the Shire's main regional centre, and housed around 55% (10,881) of the total population in 2011 (.id, 2015). The district towns of Casterton (1,764) and Heywood (1,725) comprise 9% and 8.8% of the total population, respectively. In 2011, the remaining balance of the total population (27.2%) were housed within the settlements of Bolwarra, Cape Bridgewater, Condah, Dartmoor, Digby, Dutton Way, Merino, Narrawong, Nelson, Sanford, Tyrendarra, and other smaller rural communities.

The Shire is projected to experience slow population growth throughout the next 25 years, with an estimated population of 21,047 by the year 2036.

Approximately 17% of the Shire's population were aged 65 years and over in 2011. This is expected to increase to 32.4% in 2031. Couples with no children comprise the largest household type within the Shire accounting for 28.7% of the population, followed by lone person households (28.6%) and couples with children (25.9%).

In 2016 the largest employers in the Shire were manufacturing (18.3%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (13.1%), health care and social assistance (13.1%), retail trade (10.4%), education and training (7.3%), accommodation and food services (7.2%), construction (5.5%), transport, postal and warehousing (5.1%) and public administration (5.1%).

The Shire's economy is based on productive rural land which supports agriculture and timber production. The fishing industry and the aluminium smelter at Portland are important sectors of the economy. Other important assets are the Portland Airport and Portland's port facilities, which is one of four deep-water bulk ports in Victoria. The Port of Portland is the international gateway for water-based freight for the Green Triangle Region as well as for select commodity producers beyond this region.

Glenelg Shire regional context

The Shire adjoins the Victorian municipalities of Moyne, Southern Grampians and West Wimmera, and the South Australian municipalities of Grant and Wattle Range, and is within a catchment managed by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority.

The Shire is serviced by three major centres (Portland, Heywood and Casterton) which link to all major centres in western and south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia. The Shire is serviced by passenger air services to Melbourne and other connecting flights from the Portland Airport. The Local Port of Portland Bay also services a large recreational boating fleet, luxury-liner cruise ships and is a major tourism asset.

Glenelg Shire is an important part of the Green Triangle Economic Region. The Green Triangle spans the border area between South Australia and Victoria, and covers southwest Victoria and the south-east of South Australia. It includes: Warrnambool, Horsham, Mount Gambier, Portland, Hamilton, Naracoorte, Bordertown, Millicent and Penola.

The Shire is well positioned to support an economic region which is much larger than its municipal boundaries and population. It has direct road and rail transport links to the deep water port at Portland, and is connected to the south-east of South Australia with its strong focus on timber, horticulture and viticulture, and to grain, mineral sands and dry land products of the Wimmera and Mallee (via Hamilton) to the north via the Henty and Hamilton highways, and to the dairy producing regions to the east via the Princes Highway.

The Great South Coast Regional Growth Plan (May 2014) provides a long-term view of the region to 2041 and seeks to provide a framework for economic growth, transport connections, protecting natural assets, strengthening communities and increasing collaboration in the Great South Coast.

The Glenelg Shire is renowned for its cultural landscapes, which include the Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape, events such as the Australian Kelpie Muster and its manufacturing, agricultural, fishing and forestry commodities.

21.01-2 Key issues and influences

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The key influences in the municipal area:

- The total value added by the Glenelg economy is estimated at \$947.516 million. Glenelg represents 15.57 % of the \$6.087 billion value added in the Great South Coast, 0.28 % of the \$337.351 billion value added in Victoria and 0.06 % of the \$1.510 trillion value added in Australia.
- Manufacturing contributes to approximately \$1.271m to output, followed by Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (\$213m).
- The significance of the Portland Aluminium Smelter as the one remaining aluminium smelter in the State.

- Timber production, fishing, tourism, services and value-added processing are continuing to increase within the Shire where growth in these sectors is outweighing traditional agriculture in cropping and grazing.
- The dairy industry continues to play an important role in the region.
- The increasing role of the Port in relation to western Victoria and south-east South Australia, with the potential for the Port to act as a major maritime industry service centre.
- The greater recognition of cultural heritage and the role of Portland and the south-west of the State as the first permanent European settlement in Victoria.
- The growing significance of tourism, including the establishment of a maritime museum at Portland, and the better marketing of the entry points to the Shire from South Australia.
- The greater awareness of, and concern for, the environment, sustainable land management, cultural heritage, the arts, education and training.
- Significant environmental risks with increased dry land salinity, pest plant and pest animal invasion, soil erosion, stream erosion, coastal dune erosion, induced waterlogging, water quality deterioration and loss of flora and fauna diversity throughout the Shire.
- Population loss is occurring in many rural areas and small towns, and slow population growth is occurring in Portland.
- The significant range and quality of the Shire's ecosystems including Red Gum woodlands, wetlands and waterways, intertidal areas and coastal environments.
- Potential development of natural resources, particularly ground water, geothermal energy, timber, wind energy and gas and oil potential.
- Existing transport infrastructure such as State Highways, standard gauge rail and the development of international links from the airport.
- The possibility of major development proposals, such as industrial developments, requiring major tracts of land.

The key planning issues facing Glenelg are focused around nine strategic themes and link to other Clauses within the Municipal Strategic Statement:

Settlement

- Facilitating urban growth in and around existing towns and settlements in order to ensure:
 - Use of growth boundaries which encompass existing and projected residential, industrial and rural residential development for the next 10 to 15 years.
 - Enhancing the approaches to towns and main street presentation so as to improve presentation and to facilitate tourism.
 - Protecting heritage buildings, precincts, landscapes and areas of cultural significance through the consistent application of conservation policies.
 - Strengthening the network of towns and services and the diversification of land uses as a basis for local wealth creation.
 - The provision of rural residential development only where it is linked to an existing urban area, where it does not impact on land capability, productive agricultural land use or water quality and where it can be serviced by infrastructure and make a positive contribution to the use of facilities and services within nearby towns.
- Setting aside land for long term residential, industrial and port-related needs and ensuring that incompatible uses and developments are effectively buffered from each other and that their potential impacts are managed.

- Protecting residential amenity and providing land for future residential areas taking into account the need for housing choice.
- Identifying and enhancing Portland’s industrial precincts and preparing Development Plans for three major precincts, including:
 - Precinct 1 – North Portland Industrial Precinct
 - Precinct 2 – Central Portland Employment Precinct
 - Precinct 3 – Madeira Packet Road Employment Precinct.

Environmental and Landscape Values

- Protecting the Shire’s significant coastal landscapes, rural landscapes, significant waterways and wetlands and Red Gum woodlands.
- Protecting and conserving the Shire’s biodiversity including the Red Gum woodlands, waterways and wetlands, intertidal areas and lagoons and coastal areas.
- Improving the presentation of the Shire, particularly its coastal, rural landscape and heritage assets.
- Protecting and enhancing items, places and areas of natural and cultural heritage.

Environmental Risks

- Managing the risk from bushfire.
- Managing risk from flooding to property and buildings due to high rainfall events, storm surges along coastal areas and sea level rise.
- Managing risks from climate change impacts such as hotter and drier conditions, storm surge and inundation through sea level rise.
- Soil degradation arising from contaminated land from industrial and agricultural activities and erosion and landslip.
- Ensuring industrial uses, particularly industrial uses in Portland, meet State Environment Protection Policies on air quality, odour and noise.
- Decreasing the spread of dry land salinity and preventing its spread southward as the Shire experiences drier conditions in the future.

Natural Resource Management

- Sustainable land use, land management and the protection of natural resource assets to ensure the continued economic performance of the primary industry sector.
- Realising the potential of the Shire to support and develop the timber industry for employment and sustainable land management.
- Protecting the Shire’s waterways and wetlands from inappropriate development and retaining natural drainage corridors with vegetated buffer areas in order to perform their long term function as drainage areas, and stream habitat wildlife corridors.

Built Environment and Heritage

- Enhancing the unique built environment and heritage of individual towns and settlements through entrance treatments, streetscape works, street tree planting and development that contributes to neighbourhood character.
- Improving Portland’s industrial areas with higher quality built form.
- Conserving, managing, and marketing the Shire’s outstanding built and natural heritage and capitalising on Portland’s role as the first permanent European settlement in Victoria.
- The need to protect and conserve places of cultural heritage significance.

Housing

- Encouraging a diversity of housing stock in urban settlements to meet the changing needs of the population.
- Preventing the development of dwellings, and the excision of existing dwellings, which do not relate to, or support continued agricultural production.

Economic Development

- Supporting economic development based on the Shire's natural and locational assets.
- Supporting quality tourism development.
- Realising the potential of Portland as a major regional deep water port with associated industries, employment opportunities, exporting of local products and value-added processing.
- Recognising Portland's role as a regional centre that provides State significant industry including the Port of Portland, the Portland aluminium smelter and Industrial 2 zoned land.
- Encouraging investment in Portland's industrial areas to increase employment.
- Identifying opportunities for value-adding to and processing of local and regional products.
- Facilitating urban growth in and around existing urban areas in order to ensure:
 - Focusing new retail facilities within existing commercial precincts.
 - Securing more local jobs through supporting local service industries, processing and value adding of local product in Portland and elsewhere.
- The need to identify areas in and around Portland, Heywood and Casterton suitable for long term industrial use including port needs, storage, service industries, processing, the management of off-site effects and the creation of buffer areas.

Transport

- Future capacity upgrades and enhancements to the main road network to meet growing demands for local, regional and interstate transport movements.
- Need for investment to adequately maintain the freight rail network and to enhance rail capacity, for example, track duplication, signalling, and larger rolling stock.
- Ensuring that the Port of Portland has sufficient, strategically located and appropriately designated land to meet forecast demand for port related storage and ensuring adequate integration of the Port to the rest of the Victorian and South Australian freight and logistics network.
- Ensuring the Portland and Casterton Airports are planned to accommodate future growth, which includes the protection of flight paths.
- Upkeep of maintenance of local roads that have deteriorated as a result of increased size and volume of heavy vehicles.

Infrastructure

- Facilitating urban growth within existing urban areas in order to ensure efficient use of land, maximisation of existing infrastructure and investment and access to services and facilities.
- The need to make efficient use of the existing infrastructure including road networks, community services and facilities, recreational facilities, reticulated water and sewerage and major trunk sewers, and improving energy supply and telecommunication facilities (including access to the NBN network).

21.01-3 Vision and strategic framework plan

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The Glenelg Shire Council Plan 2013-2017 describes the following vision for the municipality:

“The Glenelg Shire is a vibrant, inclusive, regional community built for the sustainable and long-term best interest of the Glenelg Shire community and through responsive and responsible leadership.”

The mission of Council, which seeks to complete this vision, is:

“To work in partnership with our community to develop a proud and thriving Shire that takes advantage of every opportunity to become the community we want.”

The vision and mission is supported by the four key themes of the Council Plan, which are to achieve the following:

- *“Engaged, healthy, connected and proud community: A community where we belong, we can actively participate and are positive about the future.”*
- *“Diverse Economic Base: A thriving economy full of opportunities and resilience.”*
- *“Manage and sustain our natural and built form assets: A Place where our livelihoods and quality of life complement our natural and built assets.”*
- *“Govern in a responsible and responsive way: A community that trusts us to deliver in their long term best interest.”*

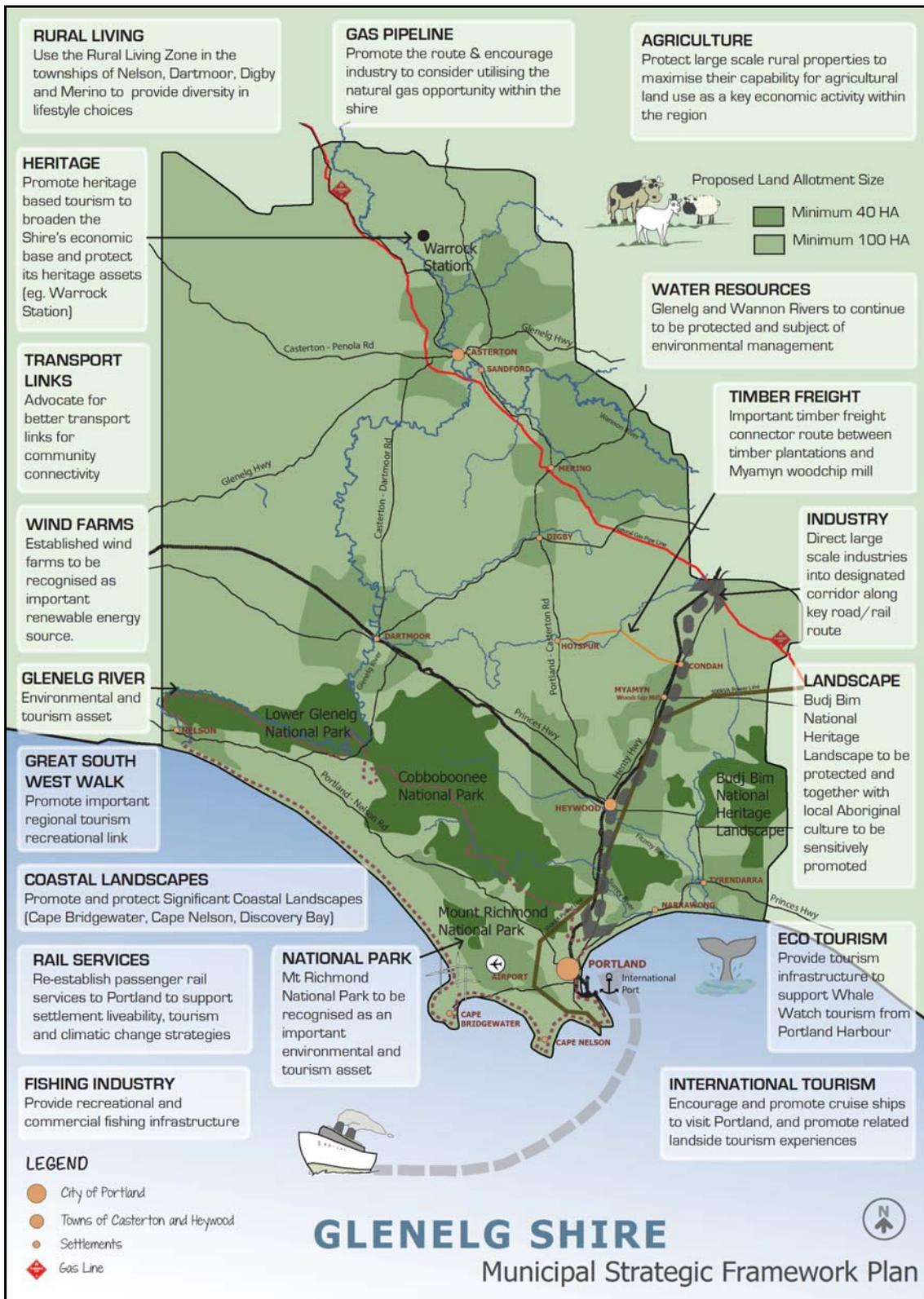


Figure 1: Glenelg Shire Municipal Strategic Framework Plan

The purpose of the framework plan is to provide an overview of land use in the Glenelg Shire and to identify locations where specific land use and development outcomes will be supported and promoted.

The major strategic directions identified in the Glenelg Shire Municipal Framework Plan include:

- Major landscape features, including:
 - Portland Harbour (international port)
 - Glenelg River
 - Wannon River
 - Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape
 - Mount Richmond National Park
 - Cobboboonee National Park
 - Lower Glenelg National Park.
- Rural areas where new minimum lots sizes are to be investigated.
- Strategic direction for future large scale industry.
- Areas identified as having environmental and landscape significance.
- Identification of major centres and towns.
- Major transport links.
- Major recreational and tourism infrastructure links.