



APRIL 2022

Board Communiqué

On behalf of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (the Authority) Board, I'm pleased to share our April 2022 Board Communiqué.

Our Board came together both virtually and in person on Tuesday 5 April 2022, at the Authority's new head office in Torquay on Wadawurrung land. It's fantastic to see the growing team settle into their new headquarters. The Board and I look forward to continuing to lead the work of the Authority as its significant portfolio expands along the Great Ocean Road.

In our April Board meeting we discussed a range of important strategic items regarding the protection and management of the iconic coast and parks of Victoria's Great Ocean Road. These included:

- An update on upcoming legislative changes from 1 September 2022
- Point Grey-Lorne Redevelopment project update following the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) decision
- The upcoming Strategic Framework Plan in partnership with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
- A draft Community Infrastructure Plan for the townships of Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek and Marengo
- The Great Ocean Road Coastal Trail project update
- Lease transfer of the Cape Otway Lightstation Precinct
- New Community Engagement Framework and Strategy draft
- Award of key tenders to support accommodation upgrades and opportunities along the Great Ocean Road.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

The Board was briefed by DELWP on the upcoming legislative changes following the passing of the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Amendment Act 2021*. These changes will be effective from 1 September 2022.

The legislative changes will give strength to the Authority as the lead agency for driving a coordinated approach to sustainable visitation along the Great Ocean Road.

POINT GREY - LORNE REDEVELOPMENT

Community engagement on the revised concept plan for the Lorne Fishing Cooperative building was conducted over February and March this year, with widespread support received for the new concept plan.

The Community Co-design process has proven to be an effective engagement model since its inception in the Point Grey – Lorne Redevelopment project, and an exemplar of what can be achieved through collaborative engagement.

In March, the Board received an update on the VCAT decision, which rejected the planning permit obtained for a previous project design in the Point Grey – Lorne Redevelopment.

Proposed options for next steps forward were discussed, noting the current proposal to build a restaurant, ensuring the project aligns with the objectives of the Authority and the expectations of the community.

As the project team progress through engagements with funding partners, stakeholders and approvals required for an amended proposal, the Board will receive a further update reflecting on works to date and how these align with the Authority's vision, principles and values.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Board received a briefing from DELWP on the impacts of the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Amendment Act 2021* (Amendment Act) that comes into operation on 1 September 2022 (or earlier by proclamation) as well as the requirements of the Great Ocean Road Region Strategic Framework Plan for the broader Great Ocean Road region.

The Strategic Framework Plan work is being led by DELWP and will cover an expansive area from the Princes Highway to the coast, from Torquay to Warrnambool (seen in the indicative map below).

The plan will consider:

- the protection of the environment and significant landscapes
- the liveability of local communities
- facilities and infrastructure to provide a great visitor experience, and
- economic development for a prosperous region.

The Strategic Framework Plan will provide direction on future land use, protection and development within the Great Ocean Road region and will be used by the Authority, other partners in the region and the local community as a guide on what is an appropriate use of the land, and in what locations.

The development of the Strategic Framework Plan work is being led by DELWP and will be consistent with the requirements of the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020* and *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. The Authority and other key stakeholders will work with

DELWP to inform the framework plan.

Once completed, this framework will bring together the unique identity of our region, our collective objectives and technical expertise to create a vision for the best possible uses of the iconic Great Ocean Road region.

The Board and I have committed to working with DELWP throughout this process.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

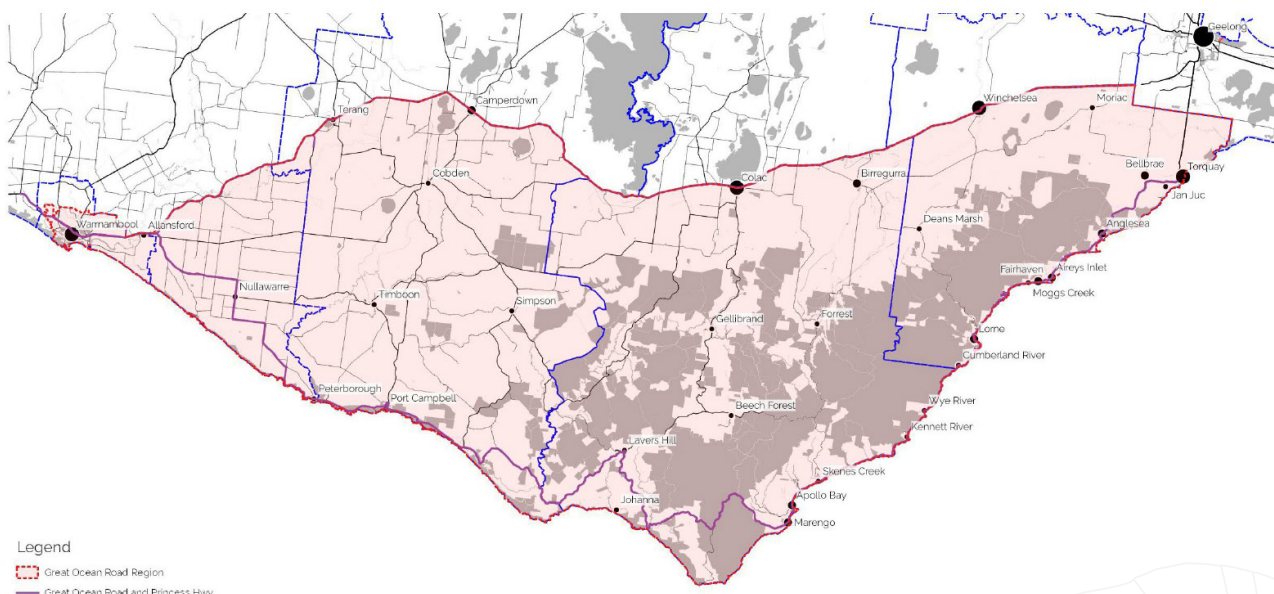
In 2019, the Colac Otway Shire Council, in partnership with the former Otway Coast Committee commenced a Community Infrastructure Plan for the townships of Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek and Marengo. Community Infrastructure Plans will provide the community, Colac Otway Shire Council and the Authority with high-level information to guide investment in the provision of community infrastructure, including active transport opportunities, visitor amenities and foreshore enhancements.

The draft Plan has been informed by community and stakeholder feedback, technical studies, relevant State and Local Government legislation, strategies and policies as well as urban design and landscape research.

The Plan intentionally works across land management boundaries to ensure an integrated planning approach is adopted, and each agency is responsible for adopting and delivering the Plan's deliverables within their estate.

The Board was provided a draft of the Community Infrastructure Plan in our April meeting.

Image: Indicative coverage - Great Ocean Road region, Strategic Framework Plan.



GREAT OCEAN ROAD COASTAL TRAIL

The Great Ocean Road Coastal Trail project aims to link the existing Surf Coast Walk and Great Ocean Walk. This walk will provide a continuous, globally significant trail along the length of the Great Ocean Road, featuring suspension bridges, numerous new lookouts and day loop walks.

The Great Ocean Road Coastal Trail project is led by DELWP and supported by delivery partners including the Authority, Parks Victoria, and the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

Once completed, the new trail will become the management responsibility of the Authority, an exciting addition to the Authority's inherited projects. Operation of the trail will provide opportunities for the Authority to work with Traditional Owners, local communities and businesses. Together we will deliver a world-class visitor experience that showcases the Great Ocean Road's natural and cultural values.

In our April meeting, the Board was provided a project update, highlighting options for project management. While these project management options are under consideration, the Board and I are committed to working with local communities and project partners on project delivery.

CAPE OTWAY LIGHTSTATION LEASE TRANSFER

The Board was presented with an update on the transfer of the lease arrangements for the Cape Otway Lightstation Precinct. Negotiations for the lease transfer are currently underway with the existing land manager, Parks Victoria.

From 1 July 2022, the Authority will take up a new lease and run the Precinct ahead of a future land transfer.

Both the Authority and Parks Victoria will continue working closely with the current operator, Tourism Great Ocean Road, throughout the transfer to ensure the lease handover occurs with minimal disruptions to the Lightstation and its staff.

The Board and I are excited to see this iconic precinct continue to operate as a significant natural, cultural and visitor destination under new management of the Authority.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

As outlined in the Minister's Statement of Expectations, it is a requirement of our enabling legislation that the Authority engages with local communities and enables their input into decision making.

In our April meeting, the Board was presented with a draft Community Engagement Framework which will be used to guide the Authority's engagement with local communities.

By 15 April 2022, this draft along with a Statement of Commitment to the community will be published on the Authority's website and community feedback sought through a series of public webinars for community and roundtables for key stakeholders.

TENDER AWARDS

The Authority is undertaking a number of projects to upgrade and enhance accommodation options along the Great Ocean Road. To support these projects, the Board reviewed and approved three tenders during our April meeting, covering:

Supply of caravan park glamping tents

These will expand on the success of glamping experiences the Authority has previously offered, and be installed at new sites between Torquay and Apollo Bay.

This project is partially funded by:

- The Great Ocean Road Visitor Experience Uplift Grant from DELWP, and;
- The Victorian Tourism Recovery Package, part of the \$633 million Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan. The Plan is a whole-of-State strategy, with a goal of achieving \$35 billion in annual visitor expenditure supporting 300,000 jobs by June 2024.

Queens Park Camp Kitchen and Amenity Upgrades – Lorne Foreshore Caravan Park

This project will see major upgrades to Queens Park Caravan Park in Lorne, with a new outdoor camp kitchen and a major refurbishment of the toilet and amenity block. These works are fully funded by the Great Ocean Road Visitor Experience Uplift Grant from DELWP.

Supply of two demountable buildings for the Skenes Creek Foreshore Caravan Park

Building one will provide a camp kitchen, laundry, common room, showers and an accessible toilet for park guests. Building two will include an office, residence and kiosk space. These works are fully funded by the Great Ocean Road Visitor Experience Uplift Grant from DELWP.

Sincerely,



Libby Mears

Board Chair, Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority