



Colac Otway Public Open Space Strategy

Final Report

Sykes Consulting / Urbis

October 2011



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Colac Otway Shire contains a rich diversity of public open space ranging from coastal foreshore and national park areas to volcanic geopark and inland lakes. Scattered throughout the communities of Colac Otway is a range of local parks, sporting reserves and linear corridors.

The development of the Colac Otway Public Open Space Strategy represents a commitment by Council and key stakeholders to carefully plan the future provision of open space and examine how the existing open space system can be improved. This Strategy will guide decision making for planning applications as new subdivisions are developed in the urban areas and for enhancements to open space in established communities throughout the Shire.

Open space has significant physical and mental health benefits for individuals and research continues to reinforce the importance of a good quality and diverse open space system.

Located in Victoria's south west and comprising the major urban centre of Colac, the coastal town of Apollo Bay, rural townships of Birregurra, Beeac, Cressy and Forrest and a large rural hinterland, development of the shire dates back to the 1850's. Colac experienced significant growth in first half of the 20th century as it became a major service centre for local agriculture and timber industries. Similarly Apollo Bay was established as a port to service the timber harvesting of some of the Otway ranges. In later years the Shire has catered for distinct housing markets; a relatively stable rural population in inland areas, emerging growth in the regional centre and a growing coastal population. Current and future demand for increased housing in the Colac and Elliminyt areas comes predominantly from new households forming within the shire whereas increased housing demand in coastal areas is expected from further afield, such as Geelong and Melbourne.

In preparing the Public Open Space Strategy, careful consideration has been given to the important elements of open space in growing and changing communities. As a result, the Colac Otway public open space network will:

Provide a widely varied and sustainable network of open spaces which meets the needs of a diverse community for recreation, sporting and social opportunities as well as protecting and enhancing important flora, fauna and landscape values.

The principles that underpin this Strategy emphasise that the public open space network will be:

- Environmentally sustainable and developed to respond to the challenges arising from climate change.
- Accessible to all members of the community whether they live in urban centres, smaller settlements, coastal towns or rural areas.
- Provided and improved to offer a balanced and diverse range of opportunities for passive recreation, children's play, social gatherings, informal active recreation, walking, cycling and organised sport.
- Managed, where appropriate, in partnership with other agencies, service organisations, sports clubs and other groups.

- Managed to protect and enhance areas with significant flora, fauna, geological, heritage, cultural and/or landscape values.
- Planned so that it contributes to the economic, health, social wellbeing and connectivity of the diverse communities in Colac Otway Shire.
- Sufficiently resourced to provide quality development and maintenance at appropriate standards.
- Expanded as opportunities arise such as in new subdivisions and along waterways.
- Preserved for future generations by ensuring that there is 'no net loss' of open space as land use and environments change over time.

For the purpose of this Strategy, the shire has been divided into four areas. These areas were defined based on location, settlement type, availability of demographic information and an understanding of the unique and similar qualities in each area. Three main criteria were used to analyse and assess the adequacy of the existing open space system in each area and these criteria are identified in the table below that summarises the results of the assessment of open space in Colac Otway.

Table 1: Public Open Space Analysis by Area

Area	Population	Access	Amount	Quality
Colac Otway Shire	↑	✓	✓✓	✓
Urban Colac	↑	✓	✓✓	✓
Rural North	=	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Rural South	=	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Great Ocean Road / Otways Area	↑!!	✓	✓✓	✓

Population: ↑: Population is expected to increase by more than 15% by 2031
 =: Population is expected to remain within 15% of the 2009 figure by 2031
 !!: Note that the population fluctuates with transient and visitor population at peak holiday seasons

Assessment: ✓: Basic Provision (opportunity for significant improvement)
 ✓✓: Satisfactory Provision (some opportunity for improvement)
 ✓✓✓: Excellent Provision (meets or exceeds criteria)

The strategic directions for Colac Otway public open space are summarised as follows:

Planning the Open Space Network:

- The open space network will be planned and developed to ensure that all residents will have access to recreation and sports facilities within a reasonable distance of where they live. The network will also include linkages and trails, and will be designed to protect significant flora, fauna and geological and heritage features.

- Through an analysis of the usage of all Colac Otway Council owned land, sites may be identified as offset sites under the requirements of the Native Vegetation Framework, or identified as sites that could be retired in favour of more suitably located land for open space.

Planning Scheme:

- The analysis of existing public open space provision throughout Colac Otway has clearly demonstrated a number of shortfalls in the ability of public open space to meet all community needs (see table 1 on page 2). With population growth expected, rezoning of areas of rural land to residential zoning and the development of new subdivisions, it usually follows that lot sizes will be smaller, residential density higher and less space in the average “backyard”. This typically places greater reliance on public open space. Other factors that are expected to increase demand for public open space are:
 - Changing demographic profile and an ageing population overall;
 - Changing trends in preference for recreation activities, with emerging popularity of casual walking, cycling and running;
 - Potential increase in tourism and visitor numbers; and
 - Increased popularity of coastal areas and natural features.

In order to meet these increasing community needs, the Public Open Space Strategy recommends the following open space contributions to be taken as either cash or land, depending on an analysis to be undertaken by Council of the specific area surrounding any subdivision:

- In Urban Colac, Apollo Bay, Marengo and Birregurra where land is zoned for residential subdivision, apply a minimum 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more and where the number of lots exceeds five, the contribution shall be an additional 1% per lot up to a maximum of 10%; and
- For all other areas throughout Colac Otway, apply a standard 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more.
- Council will ensure that the Local Planning Policy Framework of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme (Clause 21 – Municipal Strategy Statement and Clause 22 – Local Planning Policies) provides effective policy guidance for the provision of open space in all areas of the Shire. Council will set specific open space contribution percentage requirements in the Schedule to Clause 52.01, as indicated above.
- Council will consider the current zoning of all open space and commence preparation of amendments to re-zone all identified open space sites that currently have inappropriate zoning.

Providing open space in new urban neighbourhoods:

- In the larger new residential subdivisions especially in Colac, Elliminyt and Apollo Bay, the open space network, i.e. neighbourhood parkland, district sports and linear spaces, will be planned as a key component of the infrastructure in line with the provisions outlined in Clause 56.05-2 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme (although opportunities for new subdivisions in the Apollo Bay area are limited).
- In other coastal towns and in the rural settlements, the provision of new open space will take into account the existing provision of open space in the current urban area as well as through the provisions outlined in Clause 56.05-2 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme.

Partnerships:

- Council will liaise and work with other agencies that manage open space in the municipality.
- Council will liaise with all agencies that can provide expertise to assist Council in the management of its public open space.
- Council wherever possible will involve local community groups, service clubs and sporting organisations in the management of open space areas.

Environment:

- The planning and design of open space will take into account possible impacts of climate change especially the predicted changing rainfall patterns, viable opportunities to use alternative water sources for open space irrigation and the more frequent occurrence, and intensity of storm events.
- All Council managed open spaces will be planned and managed to protect and enhance their environmental values and degraded environmental areas will be rehabilitated wherever possible. Indigenous species of trees and shrubs will be planted in preference to introduced species except at sites with identified cultural or heritage significance.
- The design of facilities to be located in open space will consider the environmental life cycle of the materials proposed in the construction of the facilities.

Links and Corridors:

- Priority will be given to developing and enhancing linear links and corridors wherever possible (including along waterways) both in the Colac urban area and elsewhere in the Shire.
- Shared pathways and linked walking and bike routes providing access to key destinations will be promoted in order to increase the level of physical activity of all age groups and improve the overall health of the community.

Planning spaces:

- Master plans or reserve design plans will be prepared for high profile open spaces, those spaces where difficult issues or competing demands need to be resolved, and for sites where significant new developments are proposed. Simple concept design plans will generally be sufficient when required for neighbourhood open spaces and other spaces where usage patterns are relatively straight forward.

Developing and managing open space:

- A set of "Standards for Open Space Development", i.e. relating to the provision of infrastructure such as types of planting, play equipment, pathways, signage, picnic tables, seating, bins, sports facilities, etc. will be used to guide the provision of facilities in each open space area in line with area's position in the open space hierarchy and nature or category. These standards include the consideration of siting of public art in open space.
- Developers of new open spaces in new urban areas will be expected to meet these standards as a minimum requirement.
- Service level standards will be developed in consultation with the community to guide the maintenance levels of each open space in the network.
- Signage guidelines will be prepared to guide the installation of all future signage in open space areas.

The priorities for implementation of the Public Open Space Strategy are:

- To incorporate changes in the Colac Otway Planning Scheme through the statutory amendment process to request specific open space contributions based on the area and identified open space needs. This will work to achieve improved outcomes for open space provision as new communities / subdivisions are developed.
- To complete a comprehensive audit of open space infrastructure and upgrade open space for formalised and unstructured recreation. This will result in improved provision for existing activities and cater for future emerging activities and shared use arrangements.
- To provide good quality and well maintained neighbourhood parks in urban residential areas to offer a range of recreation opportunities for residents within their local community.
- To improve open space sites in smaller settlements to ensure that residents have access to a good range of informal and organised recreation activities.
- To improve linkages and connections throughout the shire to provide accessible pathways for walking and cycling.
- To acknowledge the importance of open space to enhance the health and wellbeing of the community and promote increased use of open space for family and individual recreation.
- To effectively plan for open space development and improvement through master planning and application of the standards for open space development.

It is recommended that the Public Open Space Strategy be implemented in two ways. Firstly the recommendations outlined in Section 9 (9.1 and 9.2) provide clear guidance about enhancements required to the public open space system. Secondly, through statutory planning outcomes summarised in Section 9.3, which will provide clear guidance for open space contributions through the planning scheme. These actions will result in improved open space in existing communities as well as assist with the identification of new open space which will be required as communities grow.

It is important to note that while Council will be able to obtain both land and cash as open space contributions from developers to fund improvements to the open space system, this source of funding will not be sufficient for all the improvements required. Council will commit projects to budget and seek external funding through government programs and/or community and stakeholder partnerships to ensure that adequate resources are secured to improve and sustain a high quality public open space system.



Apollo Bay Foreshore, Apollo Bay

Colac Otway Shire Public Open Space Strategy

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LINKAGES

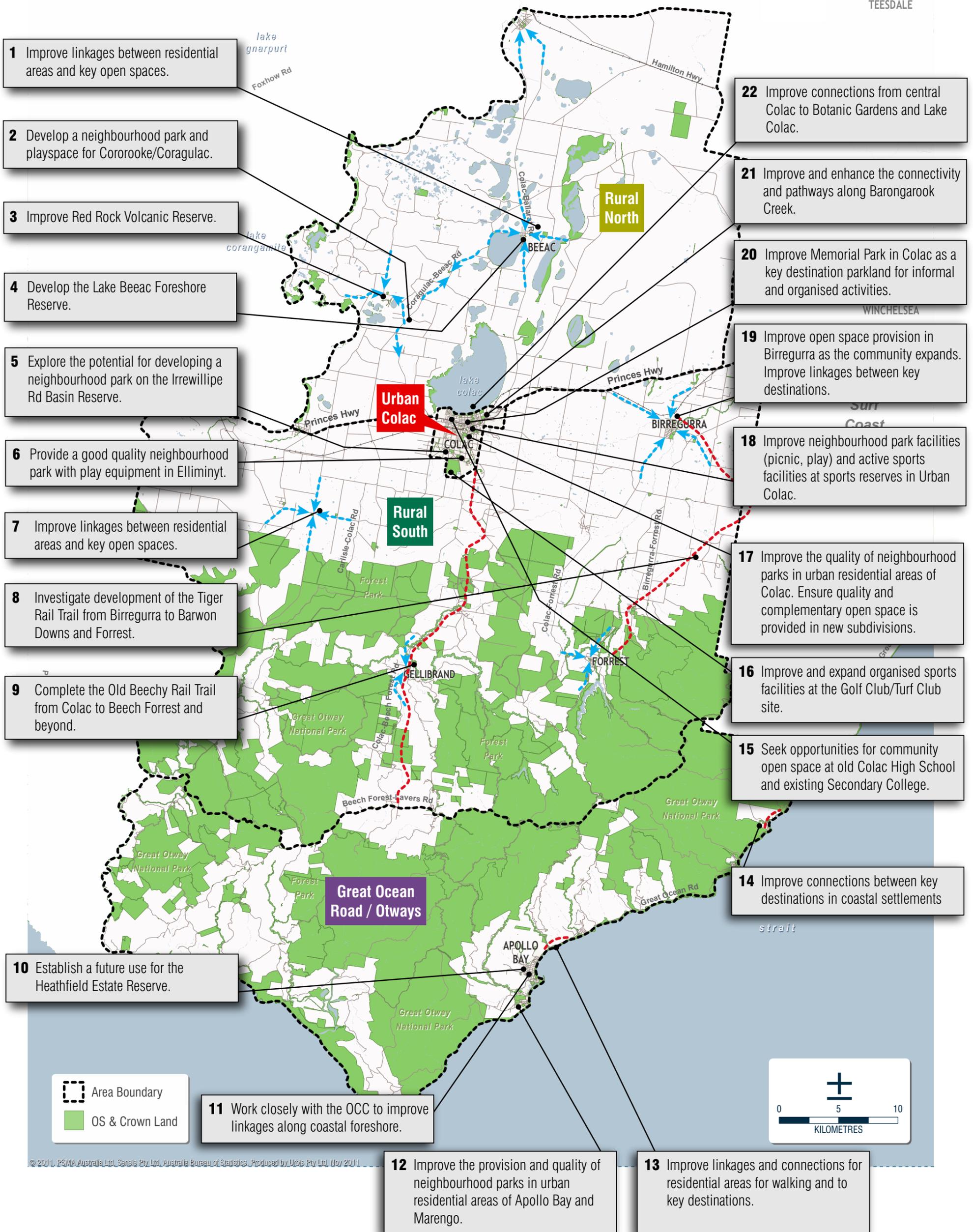


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1. Introduction

The Colac Otway Shire is located in the south west of Victoria about 160 kilometres from Melbourne. It has an area of 3,433 square kilometres, a forecast 2011 population of approximately 22,000 and is bounded by Golden Plains Shire on the north, the Surf Coast Shire on the east, Bass Strait on the south and the Corangamite Shire on the west.

The Shire includes agricultural land, urban areas, resorts, townships, small settlements and large areas of national park and forest park. It contains the significant Otway coastline with spectacular scenery and beaches, rainforest areas, waterfalls, lakes and major volcanic features. Much of the rural area, especially in the north, is used for farming with cropping and dairying being the main agricultural activities. Timber harvesting and fishing occur in the south. Tourism is important to the Shire especially along the Great Ocean Road.

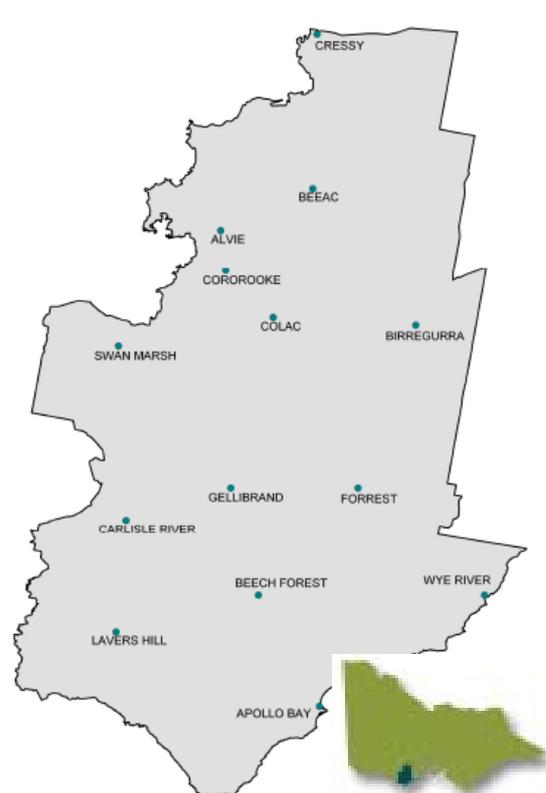
The two major townships in the Shire are Colac, the main commercial and service centre with a forecast 2011 population of 12,683 and Apollo Bay, a key tourist centre with a permanent population of approximately 1,000 rising to an estimated 10,000 in summer. The Shire contains a number of smaller rural settlements including Gellibrand, Cororooke, Birregurra, Beech Forest, Laver Hill, Forrest, Swan Marsh, Warrion, Cressy and Beeac. It also contains the coastal settlements of Wye River/Separation Creek, Kennett River, Skenes Creek and Marengo. New residential areas are being developed on the outskirts of Colac and pressure for new housing is occurring at Apollo Bay.

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

The Colac Otway Public Open Space Strategy has been prepared to provide a strategic framework for the planning and provision of open space within the municipality. It aims to guide Council in meeting the diverse open space needs of the community in both the short and long term.

The Strategy recognises and responds to the complex nature of the Shire, in particular the unique combination of small rural settlements and townships, coastal communities and well as the Colac regional centre.

The Strategy will inform Council on the planning, provision, development, management and protection of a diverse range of public open spaces which will strengthen the attractiveness and liveability of the Shire and contribute to building healthier, more sustainable and better connected communities.



1.2 Scope and Methodology

This Strategy considers all public open space including all Council owned land and Crown land managed as open space within Colac Otway Shire. It also considers the role of open spaces managed by other government authorities that are open to the public. This includes all neighbourhood spaces, public parks and gardens, sports reserves, foreshores, linear reserves, creek corridors, foreshore reserves, forest parks, national parks and other conservation reserves.

The Strategy considers the role that all publicly owned and managed land plays in meeting the wide range of recreation needs of the community and identifies the important links between public spaces in the Shire. The Great Otway National Park, forest parks and the West Barwon Reservoir are managed by State Government agencies - Parks Victoria, the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and Barwon Water – and are subject to their own planning processes. It is therefore not the role of this Public Open Space Strategy to address specific planning or management issues relating to these areas.

The Strategy has a particular focus on Council owned and/or managed open space. However in relation to the Otway Coastal Reserve which provides many recreation opportunities for the coastal towns and is managed by the Crown land Otway Coast Committee, the Strategy outlines specific recommendations to enhance the benefits of the Reserve to the coastal communities.

The methodology adopted to prepare this Strategy involved extensive community consultation and comprised three key steps:

(1) Preparation of an Issues and Opportunities Paper which outlined key issues and opportunities relating to open space that were identified from existing Council documents and other sources. This Paper was released for community consultation in March 2011.

The consultation involved meetings, organisation surveys, community survey on Council's website, drop-in sessions (including a morning in Memorial Square and a stall at the Apollo Bay Saturday Market) and written submissions.

(2) Preparation of a Public Open Space Strategy which took into account the community and other stakeholder feedback on the Issues and Opportunity Paper, Council policies, demographic information and existing provision of open space in the Shire as well as current and projected community needs for open space.

(3) The final Strategy has been prepared taking into account comment and feedback on the Strategy.

Following adoption by Council, it is the intention of Council to implement the Strategy (subject to annual work programs commitments and budget allocations) primarily through including the policy outcomes in the Planning Scheme and the annual capital and operations work programs.

1.3 Benefits of Open Space to the Colac Otway Community

The Colac Otway Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, 2010-2013 (draft) states that about one third of the residents of the Shire indicate they are physically inactive which is the highest level in Victoria as a whole and in rural Victoria in particular. Research indicates that high levels of inactivity lead to both community social and individual health issues. Providing a comprehensive, accessible and attractive open space network available to all residents and developing a culture of using the network, is fundamental to addressing social and health issues.

Accessible open space provides opportunities for physical activity by all age groups and is vital for community social wellbeing. It is important that the community has access to open space for walking, cycling, informal recreation, relaxation, children's play and organised sport. Benefits of open space include increasing physical activity, improving community health, increasing community cohesion and social interaction, reducing child obesity and enabling the balanced development of children. Open spaces provide desirable settings for activities that address the effects of sedentary lifestyles, such as obesity, high blood pressure and depression. They provide easily accessible opportunities for bringing friends and families together to have fun, to celebrate important events or just to relax.

The characteristics of local neighbourhoods influence physical and social development of individuals and safe liveable neighbourhoods with green spaces encouraging people to develop positive perceptions of their community. Well developed open spaces can increase the values of nearby properties and increase the overall amenities of the urban areas in which they are located.

An integrated network of pedestrian and cycling pathways that link open spaces to residential areas, schools, recreation and community facilities provides active healthy and safe transport opportunities. This can in turn lead to reduced car usage and resultant reduced greenhouse emissions.

Open spaces also have a role in cleaning air in urban areas through trees stabilising dust and adsorbing pollutants, and in cleaning stormwater by providing locations for water treatment areas.

Large natural areas of open space such as national parks are critical for the protection of indigenous biodiversity and provide important tourist destinations which provide economic benefits to local communities. Experiencing well managed natural areas encourages people to appreciate and learn about the natural environment and the need for its protection. Urban open spaces can provide important areas for the conservation of flora and fauna and habitat corridors on linear open spaces provide for the movement of indigenous species of fauna.

2. Vision and Guiding Principles

The Colac Otway open space network is very diverse ranging from mountain forests and rugged coastal areas to recreation reserves and neighbourhood parks in small settlements and urban areas. It is highly valued by the community and fulfils vital recreation and conservation needs which are reflected in the vision and guiding principles.

2.1 Vision

The Colac Otway public open space network will:

Provide a widely varied and sustainable network of open spaces which meets the needs of a diverse community for recreation, sporting and social opportunities as well as protecting and enhancing important flora, fauna and landscape values.

2.2 Guiding Principles

In line with the above vision and following community feedback based on the Issues and Opportunities Paper, the public open space network will be:

- Environmentally sustainable and developed to respond to the challenges arising from climate change.
- Accessible to all members of the community whether they live in urban centres, smaller settlements, coastal towns or rural areas.
- Provided and improved to offer a balanced and diverse range of opportunities for passive recreation, children's play, social gatherings, informal active recreation, walking, cycling and organised sport.
- Managed, where appropriate, in partnership with other agencies, service organisations, sports clubs and other groups.
- Managed to protect and enhance areas with significant flora, fauna, geological, heritage, cultural and/or landscape values.
- Planned so that it contributes to the economic, health, social wellbeing and connectivity of the diverse communities in Colac Otway Shire.
- Sufficiently resourced to provide quality development and maintenance at appropriate standards.
- Expanded as opportunities arise such as in new subdivisions and along waterways.
- Preserved for future generations by ensuring that there is 'no net loss' of open space as land use and environments change over time.

3. Strategic Context

This Strategy has been prepared within the framework of relevant State and regional policies and to be consistent with other policies and strategies of the Colac Otway Shire. Only a summary of these documents is presented here – for more information see the Literature Review in the accompanying Background Document.

3.1 State Planning Provisions

The framework for all land use planning in Victoria is provided by planning schemes prepared under the provisions of the Planning and Environment Act (1987). The Colac Otway Planning Scheme has been prepared specifically for the Colac Otway Shire and although this Scheme contains some provisions that apply specifically locally, it also contains provisions developed by the State Government that apply State-wide. Clauses 52.01 and 56.05 of the Victorian Planning Provisions (which form part of the Planning Scheme) provide objectives and standards for urban landscapes and provision of open space.

Clause 52.01 sets out the public open space contributions payable for subdivisions. At present the Planning Scheme does not specify an amount so the Subdivision Act applies instead (See Section 5.2 for a further discussion of this legislation).

In relation to open space, Clause 56.05-2 – Public open space provision objectives - provides the following guidance in relation to the provision of open space in residential subdivisions¹.

Objectives:

- To provide a network of quality, well distributed, multi-functional and cost-effective public open space that includes local parks, active open spaces, linear parks and trails and links to regional open space.
- To provide a network of public open space that caters for a broad range of users.
- To encourage healthy and active communities.
- To provide adequate unencumbered land for public open space and integrate any encumbered land within the open space network.
- To ensure land provided for public open space can be managed in an environmentally sustainable way and contributes to sustainable neighbourhoods.

Standard C13 - the provision of open space should:

- Implement any relevant objective, policy, strategy or plan (including any growth area precinct structure plan) for open space set out in this scheme.
- Provide a network of well-distributed neighbourhood public open space that includes:
 - Local parks within 400 metres safe walking distance of at least 95 per cent of all dwellings. Where not designed to include active open space, local parks should be generally 1 hectare in area and suitably dimensioned and designed to provide for their intended use and to allow easy adaption in response to changing community preferences.

¹ Please refer for full text to Victorian Planning Provisions Clause 56.05-2 (Amended Oct 2009)

- Additional small local parks or public squares in activity centres and higher density residential areas.
- Active open space of at least 8 hectares in area within 1 kilometre of 95 per cent of all dwellings that is:
 - Suitably dimensioned and designed to provide for the intended use, buffer areas around sporting fields and passive open space.
 - Sufficient to incorporate two football/cricket ovals.
 - Appropriate for the intended use in terms of quality and orientation.
 - Located on flat land (which can be cost effectively graded).
 - Located with access to, or making provision for, a recycled or sustainable water supply.
 - Adjoin schools and other community facilities where practical.
 - Designed to achieve sharing of space between sports.
- Linear parks and trails along waterways, vegetation corridors and road reserves within 1 kilometre of 95 per cent of all dwellings.

Public open space should:

- Be provided along foreshores, streams and permanent water bodies.
- Be linked to existing or proposed future public open spaces where appropriate.
- Be integrated with floodways and encumbered land that is accessible for public recreation.
- Be suitable for the intended use.
- Be of an area and dimensions to allow easy adaption to different uses in response to changing community active and passive recreational preferences.
- Maximise passive surveillance.
- Be integrated with urban water management systems, waterways and other water bodies.
- Incorporate natural and cultural features where appropriate.

3.2 Subdivision Act

Clause 18 of the Subdivision Act (1988) - Council may require public open space. This Clause has been widely used by councils across Victoria to achieve new open space in subdivisions (or as an alternative to obtain a monetary contribution to upgrade exiting open space). This Clause provides for up to 5% of the land area or site value of a residential, industrial or commercial subdivision to be provided to Council as open space or if a monetary contribution be used to purchase new open space or upgrade existing open space.

3.3 Other State and Regional Policies and Strategies

The following is a list of other State and regional documents that have been considered in preparing this Strategy.

- Colac Otway Planning Scheme - State wide policy framework and other State Contents (see also local provisions below)
- Victorian Native Vegetation Framework
- Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008
- Caravan & Camping Parks on Coastal Crown Land Reference Group Report 2000
- Improving Equity of Access of Crown Land Caravan & Camping Parks, 2011

- Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan 2009
- Central West Estuaries Action Plan 2005
- Great Otway National Park and Forest Park Management Plan 2009
- Corangamite Regional Catchment Management Strategy 2003-2008
- Corangamite Native Vegetation Plan 2000
- Central West Victoria Regional Coastal Action Plan 2003

3.4 Local Policies and Strategies

To ensure compatibility with the policy framework of the Colac Otway Shire, the following documents were reviewed in the preparation of the Strategy.

- Colac Otway Planning Scheme - Local contents including the Municipal Strategic Statement (see also State-wide provisions above)
- Council Plan 2009-2013
- Arts and Culture Strategy 2007-2011
- Old Beechy Line Concept Plan 1999 – Council report
- Old Beechy Rail Trail Review and Strategic Action Plan 2009 – 2014
- Colac Otway Bicycle Strategy 1999
- Playground Maintenance Schedule and Improvement Program – Colac Otway Shire 2006
- Colac Otway Recreation Strategy 2006-2010
- Regional Recreation Reserve Master Plans 2007
- Central Reserve Master Plan 2000 & 2011
- Colac Otway Festival and Events Strategy 2007-2011
- Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct Master Plan 2008
- Apollo Bay Foreshore Master Plan
- Lake Colac Foreshore Master Plan 2002
- Lake Colac Management Plan 2002
- Township Master Plans for Barwon Downs (2006), Beeac (2002), Beech Forest (2004), Birregurra (2003), Cressy (2002), Forrest (2007), Gellibrand (2005), Lavers Hill (2006), Carlisle River (2004), Swan Marsh (2002 – revised 2008)
- Environmental Strategy 2010-2018
- Colac Bird Reserve Plan
- Botanic Gardens Master Plan
- Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (undated)
- Structure Plans for Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek 2008
- Heritage Study 2003
- Three Towns Study (Wye River, Kennett River and Separation Creek)
- Colac Structure Plan 2007
- Apollo Bay Structure Plan 2007
- Rural Living Strategy, Volume 1&2 (draft) 2010
- Birregurra Structure Plan (draft) 2010
- Forrest Structure Plan 2011
- Apollo Bay Settlement Boundary and Urban Design Review (Issues Analysis March 2011)
- Colac CBD and Entrances Project (Draft Report September 2011)

The chart indicated below illustrates how this Strategy relates to other relevant Council policies and strategies.



4. Open Space Planning Framework

A well distributed network of open spaces provided with recreation opportunities and sporting facilities providing for the needs of all members of the community is essential for strong and vibrant communities. These assets are just as important and should be provided together with other forms of community infrastructure such as schools, community centres and roads. In addition open space areas set aside primarily for the protection of the natural environment are essential for the long term survival of Victoria's native flora and fauna.

Analysing and comparing the current provision of open space with that which could reasonably be expected to meet community expectations is a method of ensuring that Colac Otway Shire will have an effective and equitable open space network.

The analysis used in this Strategy is based on using the two techniques generally used to classify open space i.e. the hierarchy and the category of each open space. The criteria of access, amount and quality are then applied to complete the analysis of the current open space network.

4.1 Hierarchy of Open Spaces

Different access criteria are usually applied in relation to the different types (i.e. place in the hierarchy) of spaces. Based on experience gained from researching the planning of other municipal open space networks, the Colac Otway Open Space Strategy analyses and plans the open space network in accordance with the following hierarchy of spaces:

- Neighbourhood (or township) parkland provided with facilities such as playgrounds, relaxation areas and picnic facilities, often also with limited informal sport facilities such as a half ball court. An example of a neighbourhood open space is Beeac Park.
- District or Township sports reserve provided with facilities for sports i.e. football, cricket, netball, etc. and a pavilion and often also with a public toilet. An example of a district sports reserve is Colac Cricket Ground. This type of reserve could also include a small site in a settlement that only has tennis courts.
- Regional open space, i.e. open space that might attract users from within municipal wide catchment and potentially also visitors from outside the area. Examples of regional level open space are the Colac Botanic Gardens and the Memorial Square.
- State level open space, i.e. areas with significant cultural, recreation or environmental values generally managed by State Government agencies. Examples of State level space are the Red Rock Lookout and BBQ Area or the Great Otway National Park.

The application of the hierarchy is useful in giving guidance on the provision of size of land, levels of development of facilities and maintenance requirements, i.e. facilities provided in neighbourhood open spaces would generally be those needed by the local community such as playgrounds, whereas those provided in state level open spaces would be those needed by visitors from outside the local area such as car parking and toilets.

It should be noted that in some cases facilities usually provided in an open space at one level in the hierarchy could be provided in an open space at a higher level in the hierarchy, i.e. neighbourhood park facilities such as a playground or picnic facility could be provided in a district sports reserve or in a regional open space.

4.2 Categories of Open Space

The community should be provided with an agreed suite of facilities and enjoy a reasonable range of recreation opportunities at each open space site depending on its nature or category. The Planning Scheme does not currently include any detailed categories for Open Space.

The Strategy analyses the Colac Otway open space network according to the nature or category of each open space defined as indicated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Definition of Categories of Open Space

Category	Description
<i>Open Space Categories that provide accessible and useable open space for a range of recreation activities and opportunities.</i>	
Parkland	Open space that provides for a range of informal recreation experiences / uses (i.e. playgrounds, open space areas for informal play, walking, picnic facilities, relaxation). Examples of parkland are Birregurra Park in Birregurra, Selwyn Brown Park in Colac and the Apollo Bay Foreshore.
Formal Garden	Open space with significant plantings (often exotic and/or with heritage values), structures (often heritage) and landscape features. Often formally designed and of a high standard usually with mown and irrigated lawns or grass, paving, sculpture, shrub or flower beds. Often subject to intensive use and may host special events. Provides a range of informal recreation opportunities. An example of a formal garden is the Colac Botanic Gardens.
Linear Open Space and Corridor	Long, relatively narrow, interconnected open space areas which can serve a variety of purposes including drainage and flood ways, visual buffers, movement corridors (for pedestrians, cyclists, etc. where appropriate) or flora and fauna linkages. Generally, the most significant corridors will be located along waterways or disused railways, but also include many drainage reserves. Examples of linear open space are the Old Beechy Rail Trail and Barongarook Creek.
Sports Reserve	Open space primarily developed and managed for the playing of organised sports in an outdoor setting. Facilities within the reserve would generally include grassed and/or synthetic playing fields and courts, car parking, pavilions and toilets. This category often contains facilities which by their nature are exclusively used by one sports or other club, such as a bowling club. Perimeter areas could be developed as parkland with playgrounds, picnic areas and walking paths to provide informal recreation opportunities. Examples of sports reserves are Central Reserve and the Birregurra Recreation Reserve.

Category	Description
<i>Open Space Categories that provide valuable and significant benefits, however, due to their primary function and purpose, they have management priorities that may impact on their availability for some recreation uses. These categories of open space are therefore not used in the analysis of the open space network.</i>	
Natural Area	Open space including remnant vegetation, wildlife habitat and previously disturbed land which has been developed to provide a bushland like setting to help maintain biological diversity. These areas are conserved and protected primarily for their natural values and recreation activities are therefore limited to low key activities. Facilities may include pathways, rest areas, interpretive trails and nature based facilities such as bird hides. In some cases shared trails may transverse this parkland. Examples of natural areas are the Great Otway National Park and the Marengo Flora Reserve.
Drainage Reserve	Space set aside primarily for drainage or stormwater retention purposes. These areas in some cases can provide a range of community open space opportunities depending on specific site analysis, but should not be considered a substitute for community open space.
Road Reserve	Long narrow areas of vegetation along roadsides throughout the Shire. These open space areas often have high environmental values and are prioritised for conservation management, even though they are not accessible for recreation activity.
Water body or Wetlands	Water in the form of creeks, lakes, wetlands and harbours can provide diverse recreation activity, usually associated with valued open space parkland on the shores/edges and have specific management requirements. Examples of water bodies are Lake Colac, Barongarook Creek and the Apollo Bay Harbour.

It should be noted that in some cases, an area of open space defined as one category could also contain an area of another category of open space. For example an area classified as 'linear corridor' because of the overall nature of the open space could contain an area classified as 'natural area' or a 'sports reserve' could contain an area of 'parkland'.

4.3 Open Space Planning Criteria

Complementary to the classification based on the hierarchy and categories considered above, the criteria that are used in the Strategy to analyse open space provision and provide a basis for planning future needs in Colac Otway relate to access, amount and quality as outlined below.

A useful benchmark of open space provision often used is the overall area available to the community, usually expressed as hectare of open space per 1000 residents. Given the nature of the population distribution in the Colac Otway Shire (one regional centre, numerous smaller settlements and a broadly dispersed rural population), analysis on this basis is be considered to be useful only at the Shire-wide level and for the two main urban centres of Colac and Apollo Bay.

The Planning Scheme provisions (see Section 3.1 for details) have been applied in relation to access distance to and the size of individual open spaces when analysing the Colac Otway open space network. However this application has been subject to two provisos:

- As there is a mixture of urban and rural areas, the distances to access neighbourhood and district sports facilities necessarily varies between the residents of the large urban centre i.e. Colac and the smaller settlements, and the residents living in rural areas of the Shire (who may need to travel some distance to the nearest settlement to access such facilities).
- The existing physical form of the developed urban part of Colac-Elliminyt may make the 400 metre access distance requirement difficult to achieve in all cases.

In addition, criteria relating to the quality of each open space have been applied in this Strategy. These criteria relate to usability, presentation standard and provision of facilities in compared with agreed standards for provision of facilities in open space area (see Table 7.1 – Standards for Open Space Development for details of these standards).

In summary the criteria, underpinned by the guiding principles and applied to the current provision and to future planning of open space in Colac Otway Shire are indicated below.

Criteria	Measure / Comment
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the residential areas of Colac and Apollo Bay: catchment and distribution of useable public open space to be within 400m of 95% of households. • For small rural settlements, useable public open space to be centralised and able to service surrounding rural communities.
Amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the whole shire and the residential areas of Colac and Apollo Bay, the overall total area of useable public open space will be expressed as a ratio of the population. • For small rural settlements, the sizes of useable open spaces will be compared to the hierarchical level of each open space category.
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useability / 'fit-for-purpose' of open space • Quality and presentation • Consistency with agreed facility provision standards

5. Colac Otway Communities and Existing Open Space

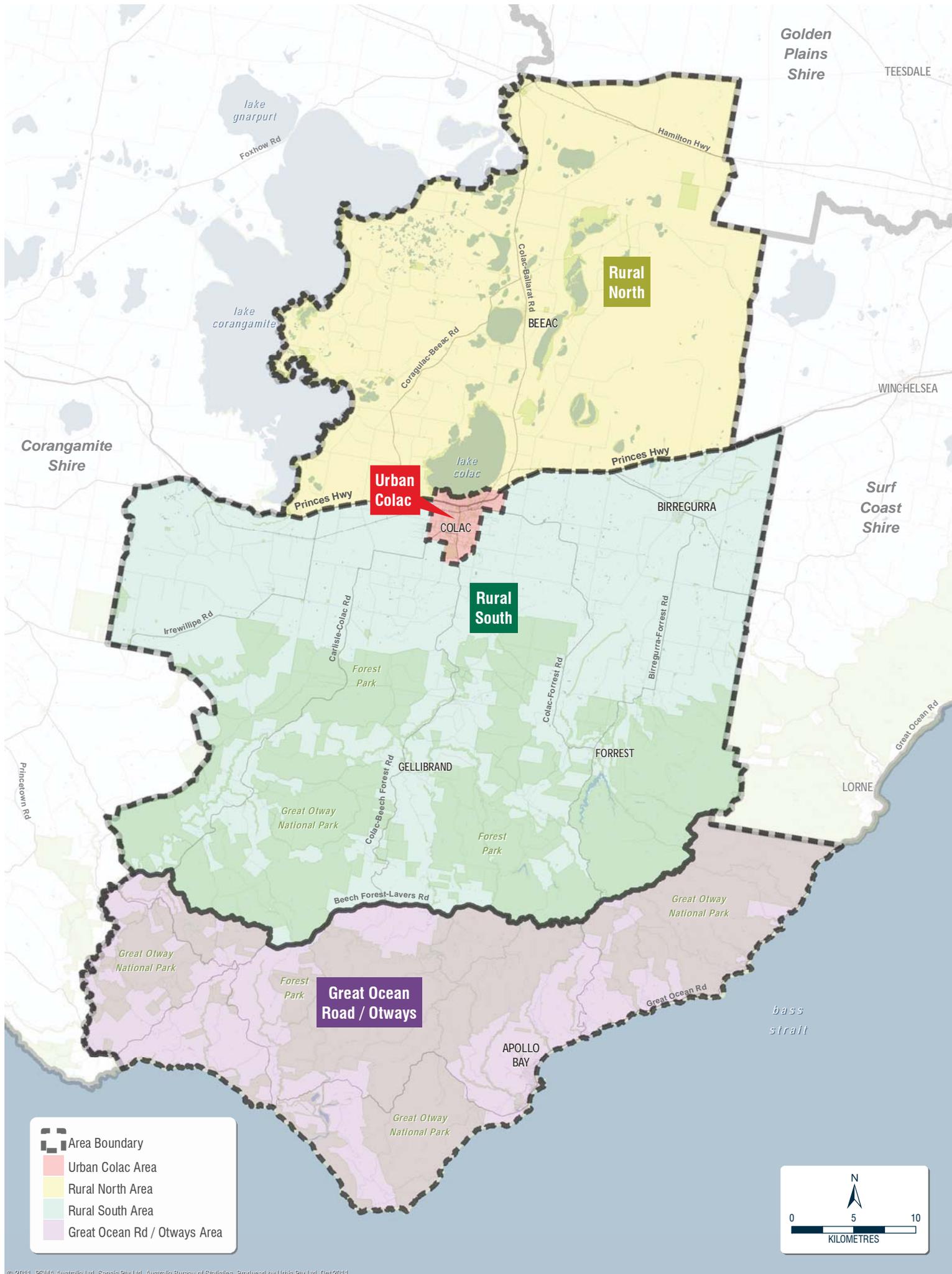
5.1 Planning Areas

In considering the current distribution of open space and for planning future provision, it is useful to consider the Shire as comprising four geographical areas. As information on population (both current levels and future projections) is available for these areas, their use will enable planning to be directly related to population trends. The analysis of current open space provision is undertaken both for the Shire as a whole as well as for each of these areas. The Strategy outlines both strategic Shire-wide recommendations and specific recommendations for each area.

The four key geographic areas that the Shire of Colac Otway has been divided into are outlined in the following table and illustrated on the subsequent map. It is noted that the areas are based on population and statistical areas and not planning and development areas. So for example, the Urban Colac area in this strategy does not reflect residential zoning or the urban Colac boundary as identified in the planning scheme framework – in this strategy, Urban Colac is a population statistical area and represents a range of zonings including rural living and low density.

Table 5.1: Definition of Areas and Population Totals (2006 census)

Area	Name of Area, size and population	Townships and localities within the Area
Area 1	Urban Colac Area: 4,932ha Population: 11,080 (2006)	Colac, Colac East and Elliminyt.
Area 2	Rural North Area Area: 107,742ha Population: 3,272 (2006)	Alvie, Beeac, Cororooke, Cressy, Irrewarra and Warrion, and the localities of Balintore, Barunah Plains, Colac (part), Coragulac, Corunnun, Cundare, Cundare North (part), Dreeite (part), Dreeite South, Eurack, Ombersley (part), Ondit, Weering, Whoorel (part), Winchelsea (part), Wingeel (part) and Wool Wool (part).
Area 3	Rural South Area Area: 129,413ha Population: 2,851 (2006)	Barongarook, Birregurra, Carlisle River, Forrest, Beech Forest, Gellibrand, Larpent, Pirron Yallock and Swan Marsh, and the localities of Barongarook West, Barramunga, Barwon Downs, Bungador, Carpendeit (part), Colac West, Gerangamete, Irrewillipe, Irrewillipe East, Jancourt East (part), Kawarren, Murroon, Nalangil, Pennyroyal (part), Simpson (part), Stonyford (part), Warncoort, Yeo and Yeodene.
Area 4	Great Ocean Road / Otways Area Area: 101,244ha Population: 2,655 (2006). This area also caters for high numbers of visitors to the coastal towns and natural areas especially in holiday seasons	Apollo Bay, Glenaire, Johanna, Kennett River, Lavers Hill, Marengo, Skenes Creek, Wongarra and Wye River, and the localities of Aire Valley, Cape Otway, Chapple Vale, Ferguson, Gellibrand Lower (part), Grey River, Hordern Vale, Mount Sabine, Petticoat Creek, Separation Creek, Skenes Creek North, Sugarloaf, Tanybryn, Weeaprounah, Wyelangta and Yuulong.



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Colac Otway Shire Public Open Space Strategy

5.2 Demographic Profile of Colac Otway

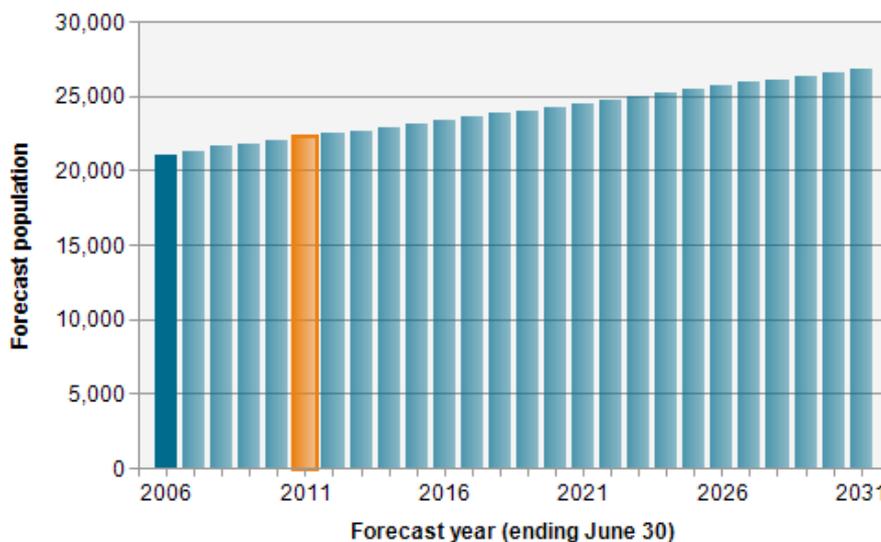
It is important to understand the nature of the residential population that comprises the Colac Otway Shire when analysing provision of open space to cater for current and future community needs. The following summary is based on the 2006 census as it was the last formal data gathered by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Colac Otway Shire is a rural, residential and resort area. The Shire encompasses a total land area of 3,433 square kilometres, of which a large proportion is Forest Park and National Park, including beaches, coastline, rainforests, waterfalls, lakes and craters. Much of the rural area is used for timber and agriculture - agricultural activity is concentrated in the northern part of the Shire, while timber and fishing are prevalent in the south. Tourism is an important industry, especially in the southern section along the Great Ocean Road.

The Shire has two main townships, with many small villages and localities. The largest town is Colac, which serves as an administrative and retail centre and a commercial centre for the region's wide range of industry (timber manufacturing and service, construction, retail and wholesale, food processing and tourism) and primary producers (dairy, beef, sheep, crops, pastures, horticulture and organic farming). Colac is also the largest city in the region, has a large public sector including health, education and local government and is considered to be the gateway to the Great Otway National Park and Western Plains. The other major township is Apollo Bay, which serves as the major tourism centre.

The resident population of the Colac Otway Shire is 20,294 (at the time of the 2006 census) indicating a stable population when compared to the 2001 census. According to population projections prepared for Council in ID Consulting and based on the 2006 census data produced by the ABS, the population is projected to increase to 26,797 by 2031, representing an overall increase of just under 21% (from 2006 to 2031). The following table illustrates how this growth is likely to occur.

Forecast population, Colac Otway Shire



A summary of key population statistics for the Colac Otway Shire is shown below, indicating the change from 2001 to 2006 as recorded by the ABS and collated for Council by Profile id.

	Number	%	G21 %
Total Population	20,294		
Females	10,179	50.2	51.0
Males	10,115	49.8	49.0
Indigenous	141	0.7	0.7
Australian Born	17,721	87.3	80.4
Overseas Born	1,366	6.7	14.2
0-4 yrs	1,203	5.9	6.1
5-17 yrs	3,843	18.9	18.0
18-64 yrs	11,799	58.1	60.1
65-84 yrs	3,009	14.8	13.8
85 yrs+	439	2.2	2.0
Household Size	2.42		2.51

(Source: Usual residence data as reported on Council's website – COS Community Profile)

Observations about the above data as it relates to Colac Otway Shire include:

- Generally most population data reflects average figures in the G21 region – while most percentages are similar, Colac Otway Shire has a higher percentage of Australian born residents and lower proportion of residents born overseas.
- When compared to the 2001 census data, the older age groups (65 yrs+) and the adult age range from 18-64 yrs were the key groups experiencing population increase as a percentage of the total Shire population.

The following table summarises the age proportions within each of the areas of Colac Otway and the rating that reflects the level of social-economic disadvantage (a lower SEIFA score represents more low income families and people with little training and in unskilled occupations).

Table 5.2: Age Proportions Within Each Area

Age	Colac Otway Shire (G21 area)	Area 1 Urban Colac	Area 2 Rural Nth	Area 3 Rural Sth	Area 4 Great Ocean Rd / Otways
0-4 yrs	1,219 6.1% (6.2%)	736 6.6%	188 5.7%	189 6.6%	154 5.8%
5-17 yrs	3,806 19.2% (18.3%)	2,088 18.8%	693 21.2%	609 21.3%	407 15.3%
18-64 yrs	11,632 58.6% (60.3%)	6,173 55.7%	1,972 60.3%	1,771 62.1%	1,714 64.6%
65-84 yrs	2,790 14% (13.2%)	1,758 15.9%	399 12.2%	287 10.1%	335 12.6%
85 yrs+	420 2.1% (2%)	323 2.9%	23 0.7%	7 0.2%	46 1.7%
SEIFA Index	967.3	939.7	983.1	1002.9	1007.2

(SEIFA : Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas)

5.3 Implications of Demographics for Open Space Provision

The demographic profile of the Colac Otway Shire has a number of implications for the provision of open space. These include that:

- There is a need to ensure that a good diversity of open space, ranging from small neighbourhood parks to linear trails and natural areas, will be provided to cater for a growing and ageing population.
- A range of open space settings should acknowledge and celebrate the rural, regional, coastal and urban diversity of the Shire's communities.
- Family recreation areas in open space are important to encourage greater use of parks and participation which will improve the health and wellbeing of Colac Otway communities.
- Open space is a vital part of community infrastructure especially for those communities with a lower SEIFA index. This applies particularly to Urban Colac neighbourhood renewal areas, where use of open space for activity and socialising improves the health and wellbeing of individuals and the overall community.
- New residents settling in the Shire, mainly in the coastal settlements, from the Geelong and Melbourne areas, are likely to have high expectations of open space that are typical of urbanised communities.

5.4 Colac Otway Open Space

The Colac Otway Shire contains a wide range of open space including the large Great Otway National Park of state conservation and recreation significance and the Forest Park areas with major recreation opportunities. It also includes the significant Otway Coast Foreshore Reserve and many other types of open space including public gardens, sports reserves, water bodies, linear reserves, creek corridors and other conservation reserves. It contains many local neighbourhood parks which provide important recreation and social opportunities for local communities.

The following table summarises the public open space in the Colac Otway Shire with a brief description of each site (excluding the Great Otway National Park, forest parks, conservation reserves and other land managed by Parks Victoria DSE and Barwon Water).

Table 5.3: List of Public Open Space in Colac Otway Shire²

Reserve name	Town	Size	Hierarchy	Category ³
Alvie Recreation Reserve	Alvie	2.8ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Red Rock BBQ Area	Alvie	1.0ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Red Rock Lookout	Alvie	3.0ha	State	Natural Area
Anderson Creek	Apollo Bay	0.8ha	Neighbourhood	Natural Area
Apollo Bay Foreshore (natural)	Apollo Bay	61.1ha	Regional	Natural Area
Apollo Bay Foreshore (Golf Club)	Apollo Bay	10.3ha	Regional	Sports Reserve
Apollo Bay Foreshore (parkland)	Apollo Bay	10.3ha	Regional	Parkland
Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve	Apollo Bay	9.3ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Marriners Lookout	Apollo Bay		Neighbourhood	Linear
Milford Creek	Apollo Bay	1.1 ha	Neighbourhood	Linear
Paradise Reserve	Apollo Bay	70ha	Regional	Natural Area
Park Avenue	Apollo Bay	1ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Seaview Drive 1	Apollo Bay	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage Reserve
Seaview Drive 2	Apollo Bay	0.2ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage Reserve
Balintore Foreshore Reserve	Balintore	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Six Mile Dam	Barongarook West	5.4ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage Reserve
Barwon Downs Town Park	Barwon Downs	0.8ha	Township	Parkland
Beeac Crown Land (Foreshore)	Beeac	0.8ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Beeac Park	Beeac	1022m2	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Beeac Recreation Reserve	Beeac	3ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Windmill Park	Beeac	0.15ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Beech Forest Recreation Reserve	Beech Forest	2.4ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Cliff Young Reserve	Beech Forest	0.1ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Council Land	Beech Forest	3.6ha	Neighbourhood	Natural Area
John Gardner Park	Beech Forest	0.9ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Rail Trail	Beech Forest	1.1ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Birregurra Golf Course	Birregurra	16ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Birregurra Park	Birregurra	1ha	Township	Parkland
Birregurra Recreation Reserve	Birregurra	3.1ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Skateboard Park	Birregurra	0.8ha	Township	Parkland
Carlisle River Recreation Reserve	Carlisle River	3.7ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Ball Street Park	Colac	0.3ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Barongarook Creek	Colac	2.9ha	Township	Linear
Bird Reserve	Colac	4.5ha	Regional	Natural Area
Botanic Gardens	Colac	14ha	Regional	Formal Garden
Bruce Street Open Space 1	Colac	1ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Bruce Street Open Space 2 (Old Tip Site)	Colac	8.3ha		
Central Bowls Club	Colac	1.2ha	Township	Sports Reserve

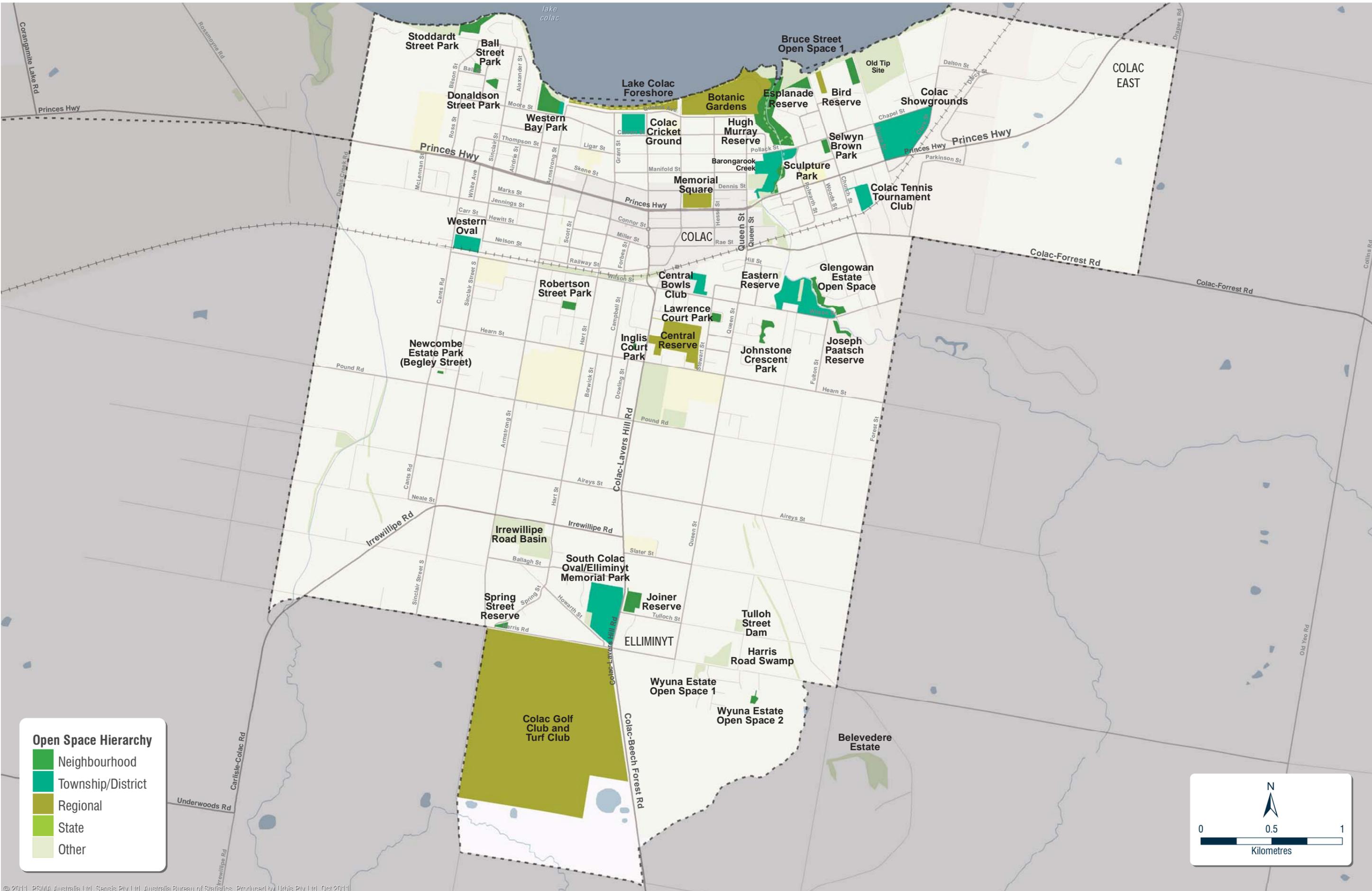
² This table lists information relevant to the Open Space Strategy and more comprehensive information is available in Council's data base

³ Although only one category is listed, substantial areas of some reserves are also used for other purposes so the size indicated may not reflect the area available for the listed category.

Reserve name	Town	Size	Hierarchy	Category ³
Central Reserve	Colac	6.9ha	Regional	Sports Reserve
Colac Cricket Ground	Colac	2.3ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Colac Showgrounds	Colac	8.2ha	Regional or Township	Sports Reserve
Colac Tennis Tournament Club	Colac	1.8ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Donaldson Street Park	Colac	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Eastern Reserve	Colac	7.6ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Esplanade Reserve	Colac	0.7ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Glengowan Estate Open Space	Colac	1.2ha	Neighbourhood	Linear
Hugh Murray Reserve	Colac	5.9ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Inglis Court Park	Colac	0.1ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Johnstone Crescent Park	Colac	0.8ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Joseph Paatsch Reserve	Colac	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Linear
Lake Colac Foreshore	Colac	13.5ha	Regional	Parkland
Lawrence Court Park	Colac	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Memorial Square	Colac	2ha	Regional	Formal Garden
Newcombe Estate Park (Begley Street)	Colac	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Robertson Street Park	Colac	0.5ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Sculpture Park	Colac	2.2ha	Neighbourhood	Linear
Selwyn Brown Park	Colac	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Stoddart Street Park	Colac	1.5ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Western Bay Park	Colac	1.35ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Western Bay Park	Colac	1ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Western Oval	Colac	3.6ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Corunnun Foreshore Reserve	Corunnun	4.2ha	Township	Parkland
Cressy Park	Cressy	0.04ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Cressy Recreation Reserve (inc Bowling Club)	Cressy	6.7ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Belevedere Estate	Elliminyt	4ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage Reserve
Colac Golf Club and Turf Club	Elliminyt	119.2ha	Regional	Sports Reserve
Harris Road Swamp	Elliminyt	1.6ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage Reserve
Irrewillipe Road Basin	Elliminyt	7.7ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage Reserve
Joiner Reserve	Elliminyt	1.4ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
South Colac Oval/Elliminyt Memorial Park	Elliminyt	7.7ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Spring Street Reserve	Elliminyt	0.2ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Tulloh Street Dam	Elliminyt	0.5ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage Reserve
Wyuna Estate Open Space 1	Elliminyt	0.5ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage
Wyuna Estate Open Space 2	Elliminyt	0.3ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Forrest Park	Forrest	1.5ha	Township	Parkland
Forrest Recreation Reserve	Forrest	4.8ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Gellibrand Recreation Reserve	Gellibrand	3.2ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Rail Trail	Gellibrand	2.6ha	Regional	Linear
Rex Norman Reserve	Gellibrand	0.6ha	Township	Parkland
Irrewarra Recreation Reserve	Irrewarra	3.2ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Meredith Park	Irrewarra	6ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland

Reserve name	Town	Size	Hierarchy	Category ³
Irrewillipe Recreation Reserve	Irrewillipe	4ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Loves Creek Reserve	Kawarren	7ha	Township	Natural Area
Kennett River Foreshore Reserve	Kennett River	2.0ha	Regional	Natural Area
Kennett River Reserve 1	Kennett River	0.5ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Kennett River Reserve 2	Kennett River	0.5ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Lavers Hill Reserve	Lavers Hill	0.5ha	Neighbourhood	Waterway
Heathfield Estate Reserve	Marengo	11.5ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage
Heathfield Estate Road Reserve	Marengo	1.6ha	Neighbourhood	Drainage
Tramway Reserve	Marengo		Neighbourhood	Parkland
Murroon Wetland	Murroon	3.3ha	Neighbourhood	Waterway
Pirron Yallock Creek Reserve	Pirron Yallock	2ha	Neighbourhood	Waterway
Separation Creek Reserve 1	Separation Creek	0.4ha	Neighbourhood	Natural Area
Separation Creek Reserve 2	Separation Creek	0.2ha	Neighbourhood	Natural Area
Separation Creek Reserve 3	Separation Creek	0.1ha	Neighbourhood	Natural Area
Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve	Swan Marsh	2.7ha	Township	Sports Reserve
Warrion Recreation Reserve	Warrion	2.5ha	Township	Sports Reserve
West Barwon Reservoir	Forrest	15ha	Regional	Parkland
Wye River Foreshore	Wye River	4.0ha	Regional	Natural Area
Harrington Memorial Park	Wye River	0.9ha	Neighbourhood	Parkland
Wye River Reserves 2,3,4,5 & 6	Wye River	0.5ha	Neighbourhood	Natural Area

In addition to the open space sites identified in the above table a number of stand-alone tennis courts that are not part of open space parks or reserves exist throughout the Shire. These courts are noted in the listing of open space for each area of the Shire in Section 8 of this report.



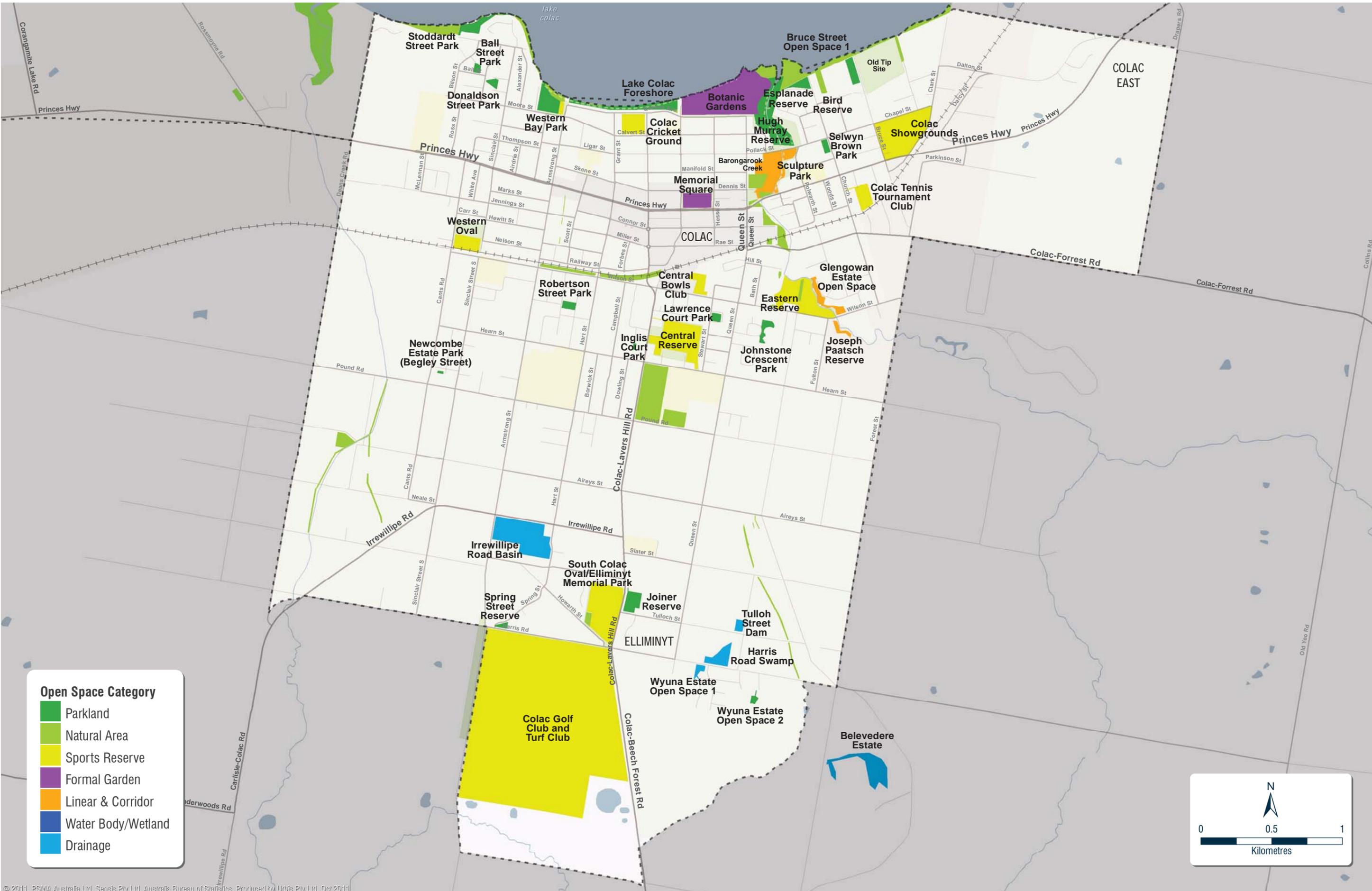
Open Space Hierarchy

- Neighbourhood
- Township/District
- Regional
- State
- Other

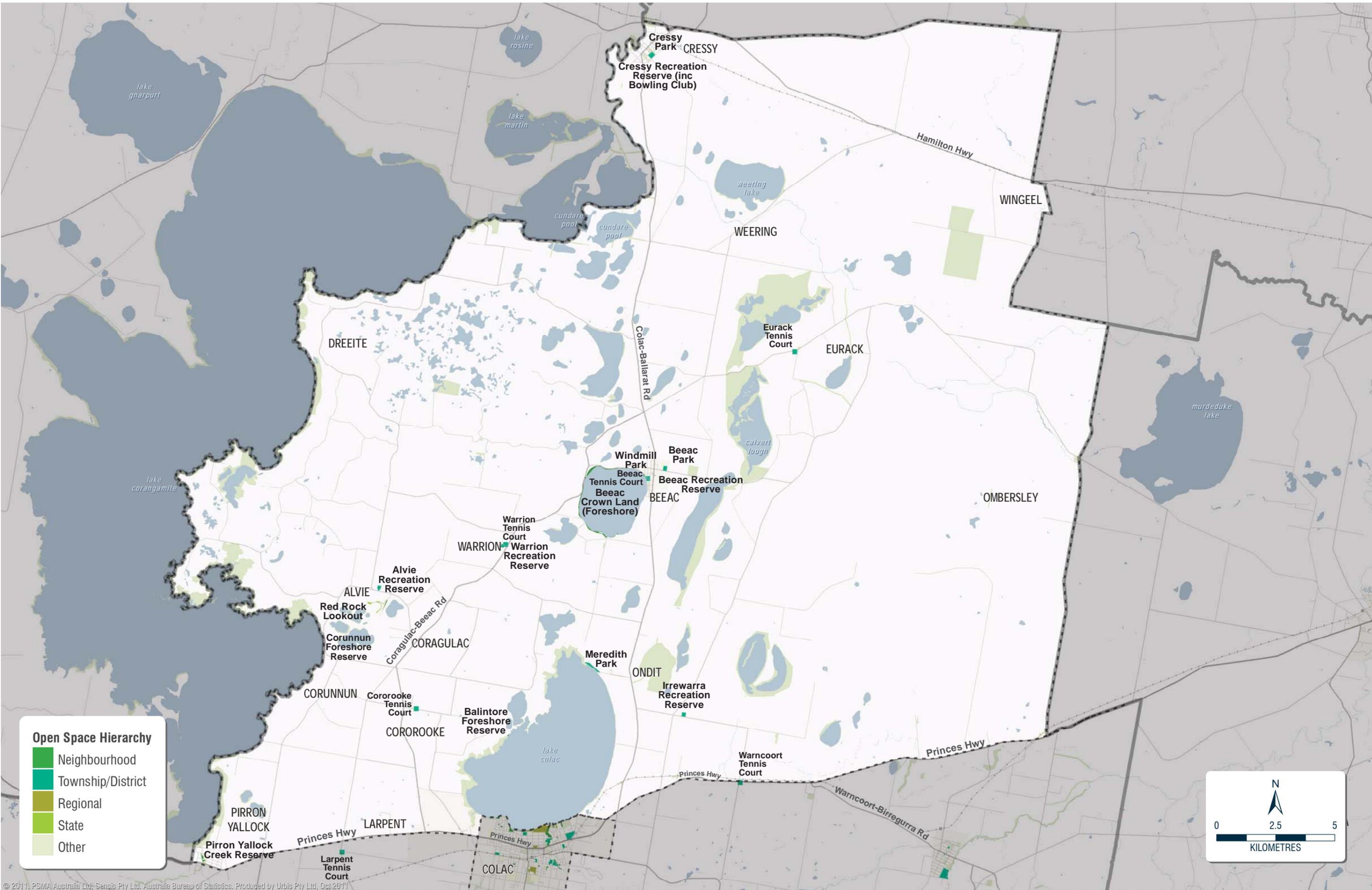
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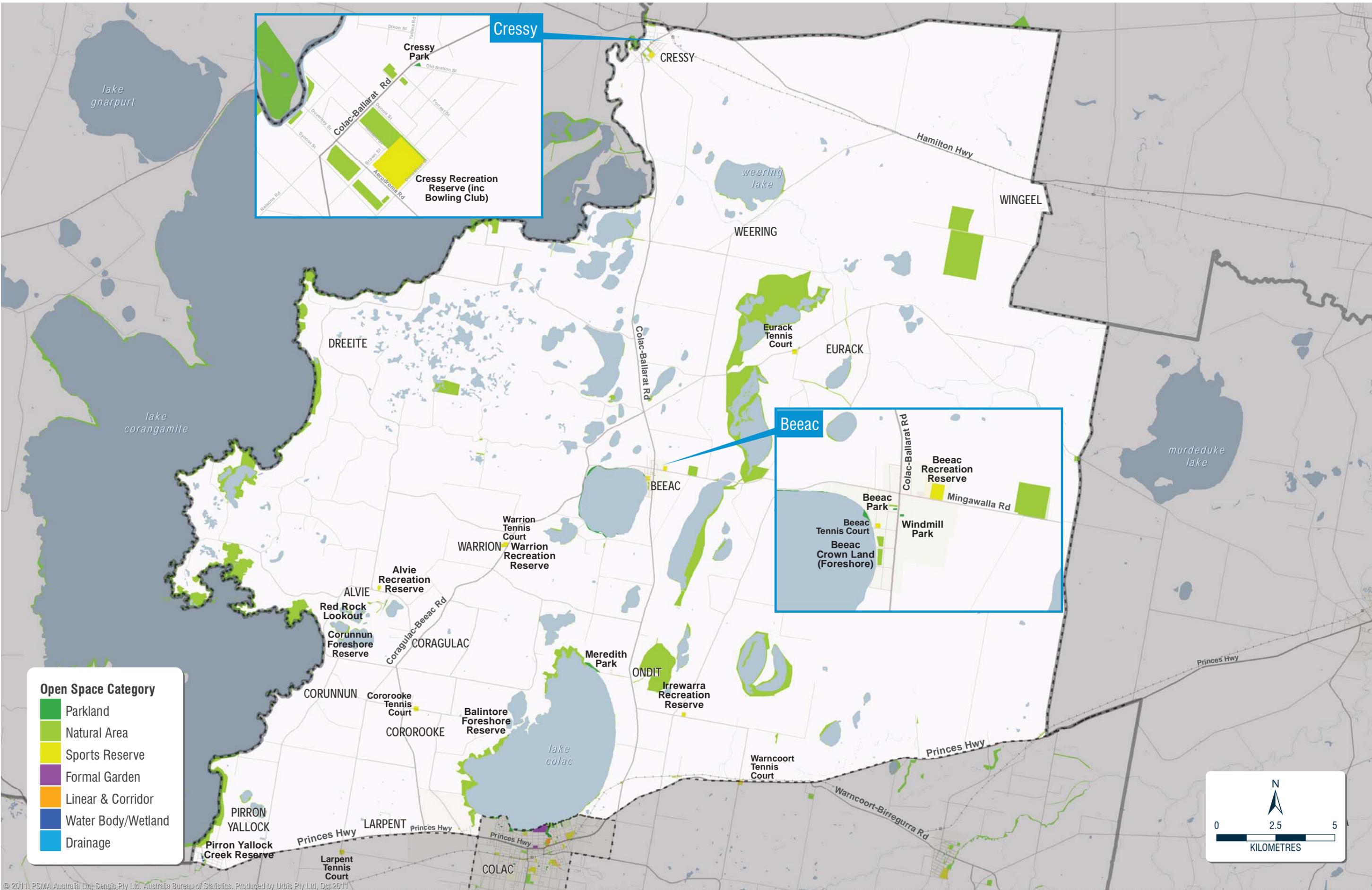
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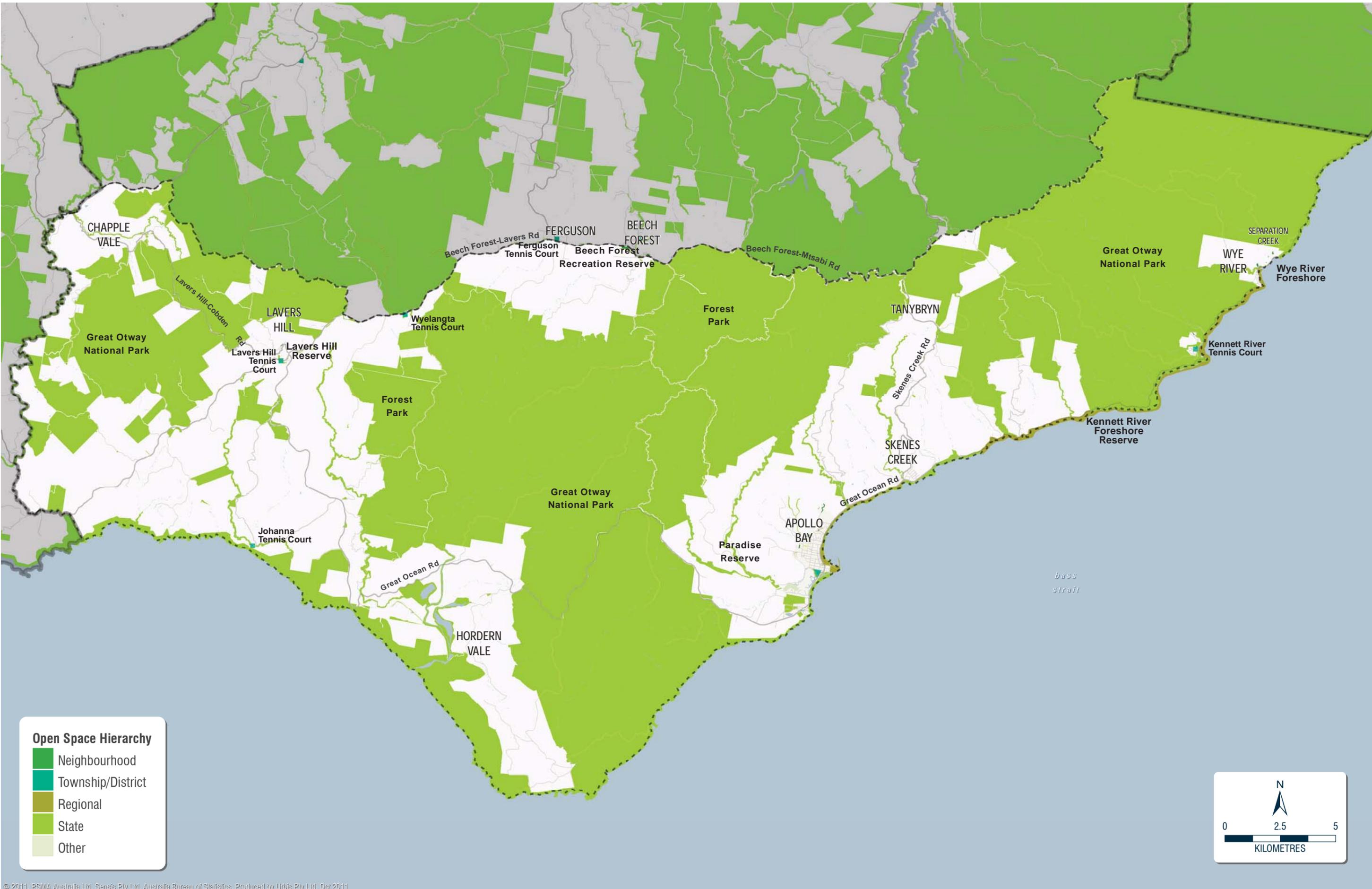
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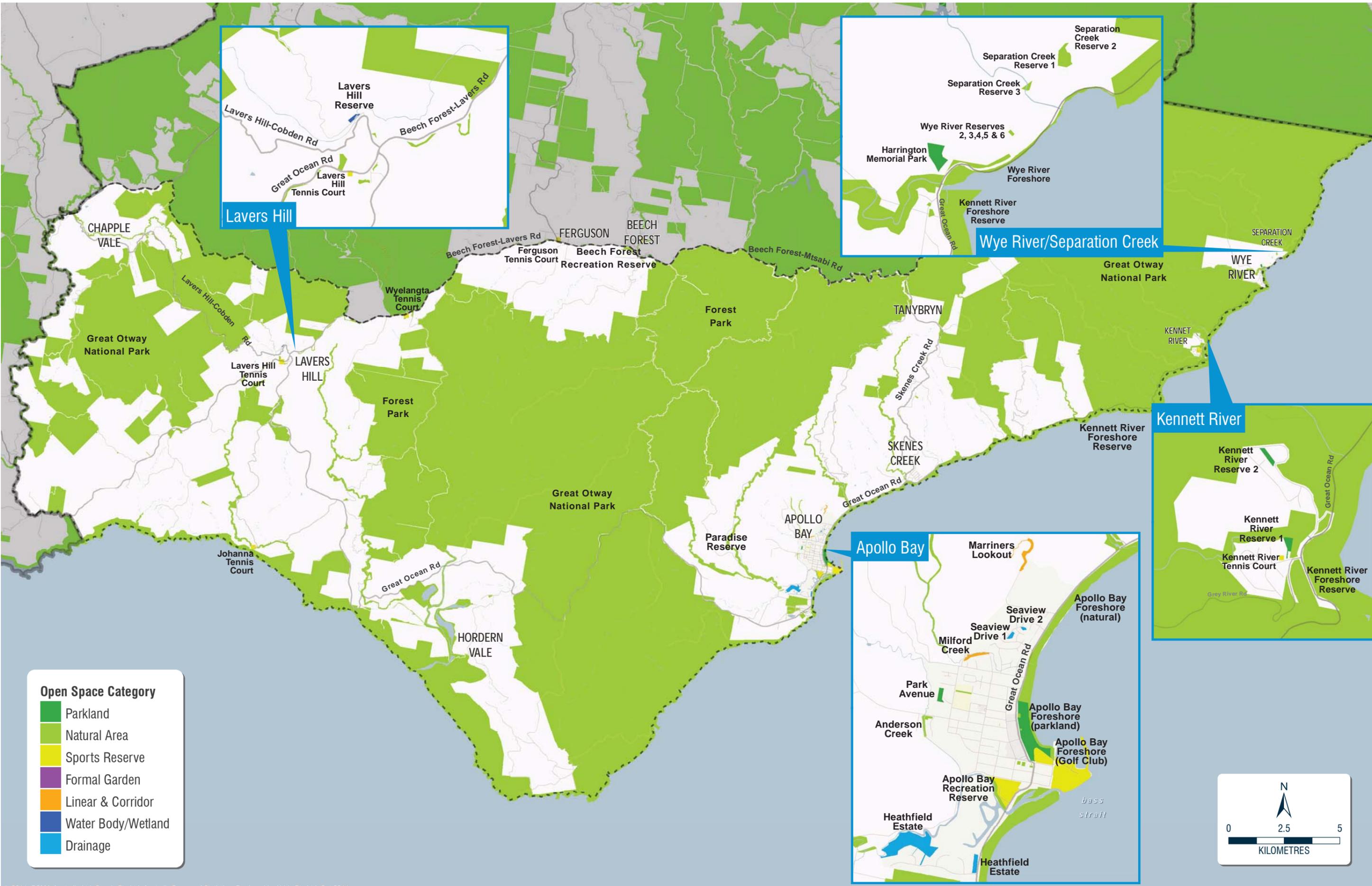


Open Space Hierarchy

- Neighbourhood
- Township/District
- Regional
- State
- Other



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6. Community Views and Key Issues

The Colac Otway Shire is facing many issues relating to the provision of an open space network that meets the needs of its community. These issues include some that are inherited, i.e. the limited spaces available in the older areas of Colac, some that are environmental, i.e. the impact of climate change and the challenge of weed control, some that arise from the development of new residential areas and some that relate to management, i.e. the availability of resources to manage open space areas.

6.1 Community and Stakeholder Feedback

A series of consultation methods were used to gather community feedback about open space in Colac Otway Shire. A summary of the consultation process and key results are provided in the following table. A detailed Consultation Report is provided in the Background Document.

Consultation Type	Key Results
Organisation Survey 39 surveys completed	Overall membership numbers have increased. Volunteer numbers have increased and are expected to continue to do so. Most open space facilities are shared between organisations. In general, the majority of facilities are suitable for club / organisations' needs, however a range of improvements have been identified. Organisations are generally proactive with the management, maintenance and upgrade of their facilities and in the operation of their club / organisation.
Meetings 6 internal / stakeholder meetings held	Policy guidance on developer contributions, open space acquisition etc. Connections between open spaces, paths and trails. Understanding of maintenance / resource implications. Importance of partnerships.
Focus Groups / Drop-ins Approx. 80 attendees	Safe pathways linking community facilities and open space. More parks and playgrounds needed. Improvements to open space facilities to encourage greater participation and social interaction. Potential to capitalise on key attractions / open space areas.
Feedback Forms 23 completed	High emphasis on linear linkages / shared pathways. Identification of opportunities for trails along creek / river corridors, within reserves and linking open spaces. Apollo Bay foreshore is highly valued, however more accessible parks are needed away from / in addition to the foreshore. Lack of playgrounds / facilities for children and families. Concern about dangers of walking on roadsides. Importance of supporting infrastructure to enable key open space areas to better cater for locals and visitors (i.e. picnic

	<p>facilities, public toilets, car parking etc.)</p> <p>Opportunities for increased tourism through improvements to key open space areas / attractions.</p> <p>Improvements required to some sporting facilities / ground surfaces.</p>
<p>Survey Monkey:</p> <p>249 responses</p>	<p>High use of open space.</p> <p>Access to open space via driving and walking.</p> <p>High frequency of use and most commonly with two or more people.</p> <p>Emphasis on local provision / close to home.</p> <p>Improved walking / cycling paths, improved maintenance and more facilities would promote greater use.</p> <p>Agreement that open space is valuable, and encourages people to be healthy and active.</p> <p>Mixed views about the quality of open space.</p> <p>Improved access to and within open space, more playgrounds and more information is needed.</p>
<p>Submissions:</p> <p>7 received (Residents x 4, Colac Area Health, Apollo Bay Pony Club, Friends of Botanic Gardens)</p>	<p>Emphasis on high quality fenced playgrounds.</p> <p>Proposed development of a community playground in Elliminyt, and more / higher quality playgrounds in Colac.</p> <p>Provision of open space close to homes.</p> <p>Concern about poor condition of sports playing surfaces, and maintenance standards of parks and gardens.</p> <p>Preservation and maintenance of Botanic Gardens in accordance with master plan and Heritage Victoria.</p> <p>Proposed relocation of the Pony Club to Heathfield Estate.</p> <p>Paths to connect all open spaces in Apollo Bay.</p> <p>Proposed use of Community Indicators due to the implications of open space on public health.</p> <p>Support for the inclusion of the Open Space Strategy in the Planning Scheme and for urban planning in the strategic framework.</p>
<p>Beeac Progress Association Consultation Township Meeting</p>	<p>Improvements to tennis courts.</p> <p>Development of sporting precinct with a range of recreation facilities.</p> <p>Footpaths and shared pathways.</p>
<p>Neighbourhood Renewal Survey Results</p>	<p>Lower rating / perception of the physical environment and health and wellbeing in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.</p> <p>'No additional sport and recreation facilities needed', and 'swimming pools' were the most common responses.</p>
<p>Colac High School Site Survey by Cr Russell</p>	<p>Education Facilities.</p> <p>Community Use – open space, community gardens, playground.</p>
<p>Issues and Opportunities Paper</p>	<p>Delivered to numerous locations including Community Centres, Libraries, Blue Water Fitness Centre, Colac Secondary College, Neighbourhood Action Groups and Neighbourhood Houses.</p>

Following release of the draft Public Open Space Strategy in July 2011 for a public exhibition period of six weeks, a number of consultation sessions (nine interviews and five forums) were conducted across the Shire (in Colac, Apollo Bay, Forrest and Beeac). This resulted in some direct feedback being provided and a total of 13 submissions being received by Council.

The following table summarises the feedback received. All comments were considered by the project Steering Committee and some amendments were made to the report before it was considered by Council for adoption.

Issue	Details / Comments
Implementation of the Strategy	It was highlighted that a number of the actions will need to be implemented in close consultation with community stakeholders / agencies / committees.
Forrest Community Public Open Space	Following comments from the Forrest community, it is clarified that the Forrest Town Park, Forrest Recreation Reserve and the Forrest Mountain Bike Facility/Trail are important open space assets. Other sites in Forrest should be considered for the development of any other community infrastructure.
Barongarook Creek Corridor	Consideration of this corridor being considered as an exercise precinct is supported by the Strategy.
Apollo Bay Pony Club	The challenges of access to the Heathfield Estate Reserve have been highlighted in the Strategy. Council will establish an advisory committee to consider the future of the site.
Swan Marsh community	Clarification was provided about the relocation of the tennis court to the Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve and development of casual open space at Swan Marsh
Great Ocean Road / Otways Area	The Wye River and Separation Creek Progress Association and Otway Coastal Committee provided comments about open space and opportunities throughout this area that have fine-tuned the Strategy. These include: improving pedestrian access in Separation Creek; acknowledging recreational cycling on the Great Ocean Road; more detail about implementation priorities; further comment about the impact of visitors to the coastal settlements; recognising the limitations for population growth in Apollo Bay, providing further explanation about the primary use of public open space sites; and listing of coastal planning documents that will influence development and enhancements of crown land.
Beeac	Community support for the development of improved open space along the foreshore of Lake Beeac.

Other amendments included corrections to the public open space database and the mapping to further refine Council's records of existing open spaces throughout the Shire.

6.2 Key Issues

The following issues and opportunities have been summarised from those that were identified in previous studies, those that were indicated by Council staff, those that have been observed by the project team and those provided by feedback received in the consultation.

Meeting Community Needs

- The opportunities for providing open space facilities to the residents differs between urban Colac, Apollo Bay, the smaller settlements, the coastal towns and the rural areas in the Shire. A key issue is how to provide appropriate facilities in the different areas while maintaining consistency and equality across the Shire.
- There is potential for improved facilities at many parks / open space areas to encourage greater visitation, participation and community interaction. Such facilities include new / improved playgrounds for children and families, and supporting infrastructure including BBQ and picnic facilities, public toilets, car parking etc.
- Some parks / reserves are underdeveloped and do not adequately cater for the community in which they are located. There is also some concern about the quality / standard of open spaces and associated infrastructure.
- Improvements are needed to some sporting facilities, including upgrades to playing field surfaces.

Providing New Open Space

- The opportunities to provide best practice and high standard open space networks, including neighbourhood parks and new links and corridors, in new residential subdivisions at no cost to Council have not always been pursued in the past. A key issue is how to achieve the best outcomes in the future.
- Not all existing urban areas of Colac and Apollo Bay have good access to local open space. A key issue is how to provide new open space opportunities in developed urban areas.
- The Colac and Apollo Bay Structure Plans encourage infill development which will result in an increased concentration of demand for open space in these settlements.
- Clearly expressed best practice standards for open space contributions are required to ensure sites transferred to Council are appropriate to meet long term community needs.

Partnerships

- Much of the open space, especially the Great Otway National Park and forest park in the southern part of the Shire is managed by State agencies i.e. not the Colac Otway Shire. Coordination of planning and management of the whole open space network regardless of the management agency is a key issue for both Council and the State agencies.
- The coastal reserve managed by the Otway Coast Committee provides for overseas, interstate and other visitors as well as providing most of the recreation opportunities for the local communities of Separation Creek, Wye River, Kennett River, Skenes Creek, Apollo Bay and Marengo. Significant

feedback on the Issues and Opportunities Paper related to issues associated with the coastal reserve serving these communities. A key issue is how Council can work effectively with the Committee to provide recreation opportunities for these settlements while providing for visitor and tourist demands.

- Many sports organisations and community groups such as Rotary and Lions clubs assist Council with the management of open space areas. A key issue is how to ensure that these arrangements are efficient and effective.

Links and Corridors

- Links are important components of the open space network and corridors are important for protecting natural values of waterways as well as providing for the movement of wildlife. The provision of links and corridors where they are missing and extensions (especially along waterways), and the need for high standard management of the corridors and shared pathways are key issues.
- Most of the Old Beechy Rail Trail lies on the land of the former rail line but some sections of the former rail line are not available, i.e. in the Colac urban area. Completing the Trail through the missing sections, extending the Trail to connect to other destinations and managing the Trail to a high standard are key issues.
- Pathways / footpaths are lacking in some areas, particularly between key community facilities and open space areas, discouraging residents from walking / riding and presenting risks to those residents using road verges.

Environment

- Impacts arising from climate change are predicted to be changing rainfall patterns, predicted more frequent storm events and sea level rises. Planning response to these challenges are key issues.
- The management of natural areas requires specialist skills and ongoing consistent programs. Providing and resourcing these programs are key issues.
- The management of open space requires effective control of weeds, vermin and fire. Implementing effective programs to manage these threats is a key issue.

Management Challenges

- The current standard of development and management varies considerably between different open space areas in the Shire. Some sports reserves have limited facilities other than playing spaces and some playgrounds appear to provide only for limited age groups. Passive recreation facilities are often poor quality or absent in the smaller open spaces. How to provide high development of a wide range of facilities is a key issue.
- The current level of Council resourcing available to manage open space is limited and high standard maintenance does not occur at all open spaces in the Shire. A key issue is how to increase the level of resourcing for open space management and assuming that there will always be constraints, how to establish management priorities across diverse sites.
- Management of risks such as arising from dangerous trees and unsafe playgrounds requires constant attention. Providing and maintaining a risk management program is a key issue.

- Greater policy direction and improved internal processes are required for the establishment of new open spaces within the Shire.

Community Engagement

- The community must be fully involved in any significant decisions relating to the planning, development or management of open space. A key issue is how to achieve this efficiently and effectively.
- The community highly values open space within their local area and the broader region, which contributes to the physical environment in which they live. The community has strong views (some conflicting) about ways to improve open space to better cater for their needs.
- There is potential for more information / greater promotion of open space areas and the associated recreation opportunities that are available for the community and visitors to the area.



Beeac Recreation Reserve, Beeac

7. Key Strategic Directions

The following key strategic directions have been developed after considering the key issues and future requirements for open space in the Shire. They are based on the principles outlined in Section 2.2 and have been developed taking into account the community feedback on the Issues and Opportunities paper and the draft Strategy.

These directions are designed to provide guidance for Council's decision making in relation to open spaces and to assist it to address the challenges relating to the planning and managing of open space. The directions underpin the recommendations and actions outlined in Section 9 and priorities outlined in Section 10.

An important consideration that will assist effective implementation of the Strategy is a well-integrated approach across the organisation and with key partners. A good referral system within Council and between Council departments will be crucial to ensure that the key directions of this Strategy are taken into account in decision making.

7.1 Planning the Open Space Network

All residents of the Shire should have the opportunity to access a broad range of open spaces with recreation and sports facilities located within a reasonable distance from where they live. The community should also have access to a network of linkages and trails, as well as a network of conservation reserves. Good access to open space, i.e. being close to home and within walking distance was given as a very important factor for visiting open space in the community feedback.

However different approaches may need to be applied to providing open space opportunities in different areas of the Shire. For example, open space opportunities may be provided differently in the smaller rural and coastal settlements compared with urban Colac and Apollo Bay. Also approaches to accessing open space in the rural areas of the Shire may differ from those in both the larger and smaller settlements.

Open space requirements may also vary in response to the varying growth patterns between different small rural communities that may emerge from the Rural Living Strategy. Some settlements where the population may grow i.e. Birregurra, Beecac and Forrest may have different needs to other settlements, where any growth will be more limited, i.e. Carlisle River, Pirron Yallock, etc.

The evaluation of open space in the Shire involves a range of criteria (analysing access, amount and quality as outlined in section 4.3) to ensure that a balanced and well-connected open space system is provided for the benefit of the community now and for future generations. These criteria are important planning tools for Council to use when considering any open space for the future and this evaluation process will be ongoing as new residential areas are developed. It should be noted that while Council has full responsibility for open space land that it owns, any substantial change of land use on Crown land requires the involvement of DSE.

It is possible that some sites may be deemed unsuitable as open space areas. A process is required to address such sites to determine the future of the land and this may include:

- Analysis of the open space provision across the immediate and broader area to check how valuable the site is, in terms of its role in the open space system.
- An assessment of the size, location and useability of this site.
- Consideration of the ability of nearby open space to offer appropriate, safe and sufficient open space to meet long term needs.
- Assessment of the existing and potential values and attributes of the site.
- The nature of the original acquisition of the site as public open space and any statutory or legal obligations in relation to the site.
- Investigation of planning status, environmental values, potential for native vegetation offset, and any other issues that may emerge from investigations.

After an extensive assessment, a recommendation might be made about the future of a site that might involve: its future as open space, re-allocation to another public use, lease, sale or even splitting the site into various uses. An important part of the process is extensive community consultation to understand how residents may relate to a site and what the general view is about potential change of use or disposal of land. The community has an opportunity to comment early in the process as well as through any statutory process that may occur to formalise a decision.

Should any sites be sold as an outcome of the above process, proceeds will be considered for open space acquisition (of more suitable land), and development and/or enhancement of existing open space sites.

Strategic Directions – Planning the Network

The open space network will be planned and developed to ensure that all residents will have access to recreation and sports facilities within a reasonable distance of where they live. The network will also include linkages and trails, and will be designed to protect significant flora, fauna and geological and heritage features.

Through an analysis of the usage of all Colac Otway Council owned land, sites may be identified as offset sites under the requirements of the Native Vegetation Framework, or identified as sites that could be retired in favour of more suitably located land for open space.

7.2 Planning Scheme

As the Colac Otway Planning Scheme provides the basis for all land use and development in the Shire, it is essential the Planning Scheme provisions provide the framework for protecting as well as expanding and enhancing the open space network. It is also important that primary land uses align with the objectives of the zone, with rezoning as required.

Key policy provisions in the Planning Scheme relating to open space are outlined in Clause 11.03 of the State Planning Policy Framework, Clause 21 of the Municipal Strategic Statement in the Local Planning Policy Framework, and the Particular Provisions (Clauses 52 and 56).

The approach being recommended for Colac Otway Shire for open space contributions is similar to an approach adopted by Surf Coast Shire in its Open Space Contributions Strategy (2009), (which is currently the subject of a planning scheme amendment). This approach for Colac Otway Shire provides a sliding scale of open space contributions for subdivisions of 3 lots or more as follows:

- In Urban Colac, Apollo Bay, Marengo and Birregurra where land is zoned for residential subdivision, apply a minimum 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more and where the number of lots exceeds five, the contribution shall be an additional 1% per lot up to a maximum of 10%; and
- For all other areas throughout Colac Otway, apply a standard 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more.

The percentages included above have precedence in the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines for residential areas – 10% (Growth Areas Authority 2009) and the Subdivision Act 1988 – up to 5%.

The open space analysis in the residential areas of Urban Colac, Apollo Bay and Marengo suggest a shortfall of open space in meeting the walkability distribution and quality standards. In addition, smaller lot sizes are characteristic of new subdivisions, increasing residential density and resulting in smaller “private backyard” open space. This logically leads to a greater reliance on public open space for residents to socialise with neighbours, meet friends and undertake various physical activities. Improvements would include land acquisition for new open space as well as improvements to the existing open space system. With the emerging growth evident in Birregurra, either new open space areas will be required or improvements to existing parks will be appropriate depending on extent and location of residential growth. In rural townships and outlying rural settlements improvements to linkages and enhancements to existing open space would be priority for open space contributions in the event of future subdivision.

Whether the open space contribution is requested as land or cash-in-lieu depends on the location of the subdivision and analysis of the existing open space system (open space in the vicinity of the subdivision, etc.) with each application considered on a case-by-case basis. This Strategy will be an important tool for Council to use in determining appropriate open space requirements.

The Public Park and Recreation and Public Conservation and Resource Zones in Clause 30 are commonly used to control the land use of public open space. However, as discussed in later sections of this report, open space sites also sit within a range of other zones such as Township and Residential.

Other planning scheme provisions that can be used to address public open space are as follows:

- Council can amend the Local Policy Framework to reflect local open space needs and requirements (including through the use of specific policies in Clause 22 and through the inclusion of reference documents such as an Open Space Strategy).
- In addition to the Public Park and Recreation and Public Conservation and Resource Zones, the Urban Floodway Zone (Clause 30) is also used to control the land use of public open space (up to the 1:100 ARI flood level).

- The Public Acquisition Overlay (Clause 40) can be used where there are specific areas of land that Council wish to acquire for public open space.
- The Development Contributions Overlay (Clause 40) can be used to set out public open space contributions, although this requires significant financial modelling (including models for apportionment of contributions) to be undertaken.

It should be noted that the State Planning Policy Framework and the suite of zones and many other elements of the Planning Scheme are set by the State Government and apply state-wide. It is typically the schedules to the zones and overlays that can be customised.

Strategic Directions – Planning Scheme

Council will ensure that the Local Planning Policy Framework of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme (Clause 21 – Municipal Strategy Statement and Clause 22 – Local Planning Policies) provides effective policy guidance for the provision of open space in all areas of the Shire. Council will set specific open space contribution percentage requirements in the Schedule to Clause 52.01.

Council will consider the current zoning of all open space and commence preparation of amendments to re-zone all identified open space sites that currently have inappropriate zoning.

7.3 Providing Open Space in New Urban Neighbourhoods

The planning of new urban areas, especially in the Colac, Elliminyt and Apollo Bay areas, presents an opportunity to create and develop new spaces as part of the development and generally at no initial cost to Council (although the opportunities for new large subdivisions in the Apollo Bay area are limited). Provisions in the Planning Scheme should provide clarity to the community and developers on the open space that will be required in these areas and whether contributions will be requested as land or cash in lieu.

The objective is to achieve a network of open spaces which will meet the community's long term requirements for passive and active recreation (including sporting needs) and should be planned in line with the criteria indicated in Section 4. In some cases there may be sites that cannot be developed due to their physical form or are required to be set aside for storm water management or to protect natural values. These areas should only be considered to be meeting the requirements for community open space if they can provide the required recreation functions in addition to their primary purpose. For example a site set aside to protect native grassland cannot provide a site for a neighbourhood park as these two uses are incompatible. However an area set aside for stormwater retention may be able to provide for some recreation activities depending on the frequency and severity of storm events the design of the area and the recreation activities proposed.

New open spaces created should reflect the different circumstances of different areas within the Shire, i.e. small lot subdivisions may have different requirements and constraints compared with larger growth areas and Colac may have different requirements compared with Apollo Bay.

To ensure that the residents of new areas have immediate access to recreation opportunities and the Council is not exposed to financial commitments, it is important that open space in new areas be handed over from the developers to Council with the agreed suite of facilities developed to an appropriate standard.

The Colac Otway Planning Scheme contains the following Particular Provisions set by the State Government and apply State wide:

- Clause 52.01 – Public Open Space contribution and Subdivision – A person who proposes to subdivide land must make a contribution to the Council for public open space in an amount specified in the schedule to this clause (being a percentage of the land intended to be used for residential, industrial or commercial purposes, or a percentage of the site value of such land, or a combination of both). If no amount is specified, a contribution for public open space may still be required under Section 18 of the Subdivision Act 1988 which is up to 5%. As no amount is currently specified in the schedule to Clause 52.01 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme, Council currently has to negotiate agreed outcomes with developers or rely on the provisions of the Subdivision Act.
- Clause 56 includes requirements for residential subdivision and provides a framework for provision of open space.
- Clause 56.05-2 Public open space provision objectives:
 - To provide a network of quality, well-distributed, multi-functional and cost-effective public open space that includes local parks, active open space, linear parks and trails, and links to regional open space.
 - To provide a network of public open space that caters for a broad range of users.
 - To encourage healthy and active communities.
 - To provide adequate unencumbered land for public open space and integrate any encumbered land with the open space network.
 - To ensure land provided for public open space can be managed in an environmentally sustainable way and contributes to the development of sustainable neighbourhoods.

Developers will be required to provide suitable land that has been developed in accordance with Clause 56.05-2 and Council's standards and requirements.

Documentation that must be submitted for approval as part of planning applications will include:

- Detailed plans showing all asset provision and locations.
- Asset and planting schedules.
- Maintenance schedules and suggested time period for maintenance prior to handover (suggested 1-2 years).

At practical/final completion, documentation should include:

- As constructed plans.
- Asset/technical/product manuals and specifications.
- Specialist information/knowledge sources/equipment requirements for special treatments.

It should be noted that this framework would be most appropriate for planning open space in the new residential growth areas in Colac, Elliminyt and Apollo Bay. More site specific approaches taking into account the existing provision (or lack) of open space may be more appropriate for planning open space in any new urban areas in other coastal towns or rural settlements.

Strategic Directions – Providing Open Space in New Urban Neighbourhoods

In the larger new residential subdivisions especially in Colac, Elliminyt and Apollo Bay, the open space network, i.e. neighbourhood parkland, district sports and linear spaces, will be planned as a key component of the infrastructure in line with the provisions outlined in Clause 56.05-2 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme (although opportunities for new subdivisions in the Apollo Bay area are limited).

In other coastal towns and in the rural settlements, the provision of new open space will take into account the existing provision of open space in the current urban area as well as through the provisions outlined in Clause 56.05-2 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme.

7.4 Partnerships

Many of the larger areas of open space in the Shire are managed by agencies other than the Colac Otway Shire. These areas include National Park managed by Parks Victoria and Forest Park managed by DSE. These areas protect significant natural values as well as providing recreation opportunities both for residents of the Colac Otway Shire and the wider Victorian population. All the open space with conservation or recreation values of State significance lies within the areas managed by these agencies. It is important that the planning and management of all open space areas within the Shire is coordinated across the management boundaries.

The reserve along the coastline provides the setting for the internationally recognised Great Ocean Road and caters for visitors from overseas, interstate and state-wide. This Reserve managed by the Otway Coast Committee, includes most of the local recreation land used by the local communities at Separation Creek, Wye River, Kennett River, Skenes Creek, Apollo Bay and Marengo. It is important the Council and the Committee work together to provide open space opportunities for both residents and visitors to these settlements.

State or other agencies have expertise that could assist Council in the management or some open space i.e. DSE could assist with natural area management and the CFA could assist with fire management in open space areas.

Council works with many community based and sports organisations in the management of open space areas. Community groups such as Rotary and Lions clubs have an important role in providing community involvement in the management of local spaces. Also small settlement communities can play a key role in maintaining local reserves and some sporting clubs are responsible for maintaining sports reserves. Other community groups with important roles in the management of open space are the Friends of Colac Botanic Gardens and the Old Beechy Rail Trail Management Committee.

Strategic Direction – Partnerships

Council will liaise and work with other agencies that manage open space in the municipality.

Council will liaise with all agencies that can provide expertise to assist Council in the management of its public open space.

Council wherever possible will involve local community groups, service clubs and sporting organisations in the management of open space areas.

7.5 Environment

The consideration of environmental factors is important in the planning and management of open space and the community is expecting more environmentally sustainable management of open space. Climate change is leading to changing rainfall patterns and possibly more frequent severe weather events. Also the protection and good management of remnant vegetation, habitat areas, wetlands and water bodies is essential for the long term survival of indigenous species of flora and fauna.

Council's Environment Strategy has as one of its targets an emphasis on the consideration of environmental values when acquisition of open space in new residential areas and/or in any location is negotiated. This is an important consideration to ensure that important values are preserved and that critical management priorities are developed.

Planting using drought tolerant species generally assists in responding to the challenges arising from climate change as well as assisting in reducing ongoing maintenance requirements.

Although the large areas of public land with high conservation values such as the Great Otway National Park and the Otway Coastal Reserve are not managed by Council, many smaller areas managed by Council have conservation values of significance. Also many of the waterways provide green links providing movement corridors for wildlife.

The planting of indigenous species of flora contributes to increased abundance of indigenous wildlife species especially birdlife. Open space can also provide sites for the location of attractive multi-purpose water features and opportunities for applying water sensitive urban design principles for the treatment, storage and harvesting of stormwater.

Environmentally responsible design of open space facilities should take into account the environmental and social impacts of the origin and full life cycle of the materials used. Responsible use of water and investigation of alternative water sources is also an important priority for Council and the community. Solar lighting should be considered where appropriate.

Strategic Directions – Environment

The planning and design of open space will take into account possible impacts of climate change especially the predicted changing rainfall patterns, viable opportunities to use alternative water sources for open space irrigation and the more frequent occurrence, and intensity of storm events.

All Council managed open spaces will be planned and managed to protect and enhance their environmental values and degraded environmental areas will be rehabilitated wherever possible. Indigenous species of trees and shrubs will be planted in preference to introduced species except at sites with identified cultural or heritage significance.

The design of facilities to be located in open space will consider the environmental life cycle of the materials proposed in the construction of the facilities.

7.6 Links and Corridors

Links and corridors are important components of the open space network and the Colac Otway Shire currently has both valuable existing links and the potential for additional links. Corridors are important for protecting natural and aesthetic values of waterways as well as providing for the movement of wildlife.

Links can provide diverse recreation opportunities including attractive dedicated cycling and walking routes located away from roads. If well developed, managed to a high standard, connected to key destinations and widely promoted, walking/cycling links can provide alternatives to car use and can contribute to increased physical activity and improved health of the community. The improvement of walking and cycling paths was the most common reason given by the community in the feedback on the Issues and Opportunities Paper that would encourage more use of open space.

Many rivers and streams have public land frontages which may be licensed to adjoining land owners. Although these frontages are available for public access, they may be fenced in and indistinguishable from the adjoining freehold land. However they can provide valuable linear links and especially opportunities for development of habitat corridors.

The Old Beechy Rail Trail, developed following the route of the former narrow gauge rail line from Colac to Beech Forest, is one of Victoria's important rail trails. Most of the trail lies on the land of the former rail line, but as some sections of the former rail line are not available, parts of the trail have been developed on nearby roads. Although the trail currently has significant usage, it has the potential to become an even more important recreation and tourist facility.

Strategic Directions – Links and Corridors

Priority will be given to developing and enhancing linear links and corridors wherever possible (including along waterways) both in the Colac urban area and elsewhere in the Shire.

Shared pathways and linked walking and bike routes providing access to key destinations will be promoted in order to increase the level of physical activity of all age groups and improve the overall health of the community.

7.7 Planning of Existing Spaces

Sound planning of individual open spaces is essential for providing a basis for good management of the spaces and an effective mechanism for the community to be involved in their future development. Such planning should take into account the role of each individual space within the overall open space network to ensure each space is complementary to other spaces and scarce resources are used efficiently across the network.

Planning of specific sites allows for the requirements of the existing community to be met as well as providing for the needs of future communities. It also provides an opportunity for the community to be made aware of management challenges and provides a process for resolving any conflicts with usage of the space. It can assist in resolving any issues that the neighbours may have in relation to open space areas.

Planning should consider the needs of the existing community, accommodate the requirements of any projected increase or change in the population. It should ensure that the spaces cater for all sections of the community including women, children, different cultural groups and the elderly. The range of facilities should be appropriate to each type and category of park and developed to a standard suitable to cater for the use of the open space. All major development or significant changes should be preceded by a comprehensive program of engagement of the community.

Planning needs to take into account the differences between communities and the challenges facing coastal and the smaller settlements compared with the urban areas in the municipality.

Strategic Directions – Planning of Existing Spaces

Master plans or reserve design plans will be prepared for high profile open spaces, those spaces where difficult issues or competing demands need to be resolved, and for sites where significant new developments are proposed. Simple concept design plans will generally be sufficient when required for neighbourhood open spaces and other spaces where usage patterns are relatively straight forward.

7.8 Developing and Managing Open Space

The current standard of development and management varies considerably across different open space areas in the Shire. For example many of the sports playing fields and pavilions in the Colac area appear to be “fit for purpose” although the surroundings in many cases are poorly developed, the landscaping is usually limited and informal recreation facilities are generally not provided. Playgrounds appear to provide only for limited age group ranges and passive recreation facilities are often poor quality or absent in the smaller open spaces.

In order to give the community a realistic idea of what facilities could reasonably be expected in any specific space, provide equity of open space opportunities, and effectively and efficiently use available resources, a systematic approach to the provision of facilities in open space areas is required. This can be achieved by outlining a set of standards called “Standards for Open Space Development” relating to both the type of each open space area i.e. its position in the hierarchy and the

nature or category of each space. The standards are outlined in Table 7.1 at the end of this section.

Application of these standards would provide all communities with equitable and appropriate open space opportunities. However given limited resources it is unlikely that full implementation of the standards will be achieved in the short term.

The community should also have a realistic understanding of the standard of management or maintenance that applies to each open space. This can be achieved by developing levels of maintenance service based on the level of each open space in the hierarchy i.e. the specified level of maintenance for a township/district sports reserve may vary from the level specified for a regional sports reserve. A review of parks and gardens services undertaken in 2010 identified the need to undertake a critical review of the service levels, previously documented in 1996. This review would include such elements as: defining the scope of assets that are maintained, defining what is delivered in existing budgets and establishing unit costs for maintenance. Once gaps in service delivery are identified, new service levels can be prepared. As service level standards could have resource implications for Council, they should be developed through an interactive process with the community.

The overall presentation of the open space network and clarity of information on sites would be enhanced by well-designed and presented signage, which could be achieved by the development and implementation of signage guidelines. Such guidelines should also make it more efficient for Council to design and install signage.

Additional walking and cycling paths and toilet facilities and improved maintenance were the four most important reasons given in the community feedback on the Issues and Opportunities Paper that would encourage more use of open space.

When managing the development and use of open space, the principles of multi-use and sharing are critical to ensure that maximum community benefit is achieved from the resources that are invested in public open space and its infrastructure.

Strategic Directions – Developing and Managing Open Space

A set of “Standards for Open Space Development”, i.e. relating to the provision of infrastructure such as types of planting, play equipment, pathways, signage, picnic tables, seating, bins, sports facilities, etc. will be used to guide the provision of facilities in each open space area in line with area’s position in the open space hierarchy and nature or category. These standards include the consideration of siting of public art in open space.

Developers of new open spaces in new urban areas will be expected to meet these standards as a minimum requirement.

Service level standards will be developed in consultation with the community to guide the maintenance levels of each open space in the network.

Signage guidelines will be prepared to guide the installation of all future signage in open space areas.

Table 7.1 Standards for Open Space Development

The following page outlines the standards that will guide development of open space for both new construction and enhancements to existing open spaces. A graded rating is applied to all levels of infrastructure to provide guidance about features which are required in specific types of open space, those which are optional and those which are undesirable. The rating legend is as follows:

√√	Must have	These are the basic requirements for the specified open space types and define Council's initial position for development and enhancement. Should any of the elements with this rating not be suitable in a specific case, Council will negotiate an appropriate outcome.
√	Might have	These are optional elements that may be included if they are suitable for the specific open space setting.
x	Should not have	These are elements that in most cases will not be suitable for the open space setting although there may be some exceptions. Any of these elements would be the subject of discussion and negotiation.
xx	Must not have	As a general rule, these elements are unsuitable and must not be included in the development design. If exceptions are to be proposed, Council approval will be required.

It is also noted that for play spaces and play equipment, detailed design and concepts will be required for Council review. This is important given the significance of safety standards for playgrounds and the long term investment in play space assets required by Council.

In addition to the tables outlining standards for the various types of open space, the following industry resources will be useful when plans and concepts are being developed for open space improvements.

- Heart Foundation: "Healthy by design – A planners' Guide to Environments for Active Living" 2004
- Department of Sustainability and Environment / Crime Prevention Victoria – "Safer Design Guidelines for Victoria" 2005
- City of Greater Geelong "Sustainable Communities" – Infrastructure Development Guidelines 2010
- Growth Area Authority – Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines 2009
- The Good Play Space Guide "I Can Play Too" PRAV / DPCD 2007
- Infrastructure Design Manual – Colac Otway Shire
- Relevant DSE guidelines and policy documents for crown land sites, particularly coastal areas where additional restrictions and conditions may apply

Table 7.1: Standards for Open Space Development

Infrastructure	Parkland			Formal Garden		Linear Open Space and Corridor			Sports Reserve			Natural Areas			
	Neighbourhood	Township / District	Regional	Township / District	Regional	Neighbourhood	Township / District	Regional	Neighbourhood Might apply to school ovals	Township / District	Regional	Neighbourhood	Township / District	Regional	State
PLANTING / LANDSCAPE															
Shade planting	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Landscape planting	x	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Drought tolerant planting	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indigenous planting	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Heritage (values) planting	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx
Formal planting incl garden beds	xx	xx	x	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	xx
Compatible plantings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
Barrier/fencing - safety	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fencing - environmental areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
PLAY/SPORT															
Open areas (informal play)	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	x	✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Natural play elements	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Play equipment	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	x	✓	✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Basketball ring/hitting wall	x	✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Kick around area	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x	xx	xx	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Skateboard area	x	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Fitness equipment	x	✓	✓✓	xx	xx	✓	✓	✓	xx	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Sports playing areas	xx	x	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Training fields/cricket practice nets	xx	x	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Courts - tennis/netball/multi-use	x	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
ACCESS															
Disability / wheel access	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x	x	x
Provision for a range of abilities	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Shared pedestrian/bike pathways	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓✓	x	x	x	x
Pathways - possible circuit	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pathways - linkages to other open space	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bicycle/pedestrian linkages	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x	x	x
Car parking - on road	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Car parking - off road	xx	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	✓	✓
Disabled car parking	x	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓✓	x	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	✓	✓
PARK FURNITURE															
Seating	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Picnic tables	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Rubbish bin	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Bike racks	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Barbecues	xx	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	✓	xx	✓	✓✓	xx	xx	✓	✓
Shade structure/shelter	x	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Drinking fountain	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	xx	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
SIGNAGE															
Information signage	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Directional signage	x	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Interpretive signage	x	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN															
Access to water	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Water sensitive urban design (WSUD)	x	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x	x	x
Irrigation/irrigation system	xx	✓	✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x	x	x
Alternate water sources	xx	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	xx	x	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Alternate energy sources	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
STRUCTURES/FEATURES															
Pavilion/change rooms	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Coastal structures - surf lifesaving club	x	x	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx
Water feature - formal	x	x	✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	xx
Water feature - informal	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public toilets	xx	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Lighting	xx	xx	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	xx	xx	xx	xx
Artworks/sculptures	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	xx	xx	✓	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	xx

✓✓ = must have ✓ = might have x = should not have xx = must not have

8. Open Space Provision and Analysis

This section of the Strategy provides an analysis and assessment of the current provision of public open space throughout the Shire. The focus is on the provision of accessible and useable open space that provides for structured and informal recreation opportunities. However, other types of open space that offer environmental, amenity and other benefits are also recognised as important in the overall system.

This analysis is presented initially as a summary for the whole municipality then in greater detail for each of the four areas that have been defined as zones in Council Plan and key areas for this project: Urban Colac, Rural North, Rural South and Great Ocean Road / Otways. It should be noted that these areas reflect population/statistic areas and not planning/development areas.

A rating system has been used to summarise the assessment of open space and is defined as follows.

For population:

↑	Population is expected to increase by more than 15% by 2031
=	Population is expected to remain within 15% of the 2009 figure by 2031
!!	Population fluctuates with transient and visitor population at peak holiday seasons

For the assessment by each of the three criteria (access, amount and quality):

✓	Basic Provision (opportunity for significant improvement)
✓✓	Satisfactory Provision (some opportunity for improvement)
✓✓✓	Excellent Provision (meets or exceeds criteria)

8.1 Municipal Open Space Provision

The Colac Otway municipality has a vast diversity of public open space. It is characterised by significant natural areas with a significant percentage of the Shire being national park or forest park and a range of open space sites that are used for recreation and sport by residents and visitors.

The following table presents a summary of the amount of open space within Shire by category and hierarchy.

Table 8.1: Area of Open Space within the Shire listed by Category and Hierarchy

Category	State (ha)	Regional (ha)	District / Township (ha)	Neighbourhood (ha)	Total (ha)
Parkland	-	15	4.7	29.54	49.24
Formal Garden	-	16	-	-	16
Sports Reserve	-	134.3	92.6 [5.6]	-	226.9 [5.6]
Linear OS / Corridor	-	2.6	-	5.7	8.3
Foreshore		6	4.2	1.2	11.4
Sub-Total: Open Space considered in the assessment as useable and accessible open space for recreation opportunities					311.84 [5.6]
Natural Area	3++	74.5	7	5.7	90+
Drainage			N/A		31.8
Road Reserve			N/A		-
Water Body / Wetlands			N/A		5.8
Sub-Total: Other Open Space					127.6+
Total: All Open Space (approximate)					440+

+ denotes additional public open space to be included when the national park / forest park areas are added into the totals.

[5.6] denotes land area (not open space) containing tennis court facilities.

Table 8.2: Current and Projected Population in the Shire

Population		↑
2006 population:		21,044
2009 forecast population:		21,822
2011 forecast population:		22,263
Projected 2031 population		26,797
Change between 2006 and 2031:		+5,573
SEIFA Index		967.3
Age Groups: 0-17 years	5,199 in 2006 increasing to 6,226 by 2031	+1,027
Age Groups: 70 years+	2,533 in 2006 increasing to 3,711 by 2031	+1,178
Comment: The population across the whole shire is projected to increase between 2006 and 2031 by just under 21%.		

Source of population data: Population Forecasts for Colac Otway Shire, forecast id, id consulting p/l, updated Jan 2011

The following open space analysis is a general assessment across the Shire, drawing broad observations of general provision in the Colac Otway municipality as a whole.

Access	
Distribution of Open Space	✓✓
Location and connections to open space	✓
Comment:	
<p>While Colac Otway Shire is well provided for open space, the distribution of the open space sites is not always consistent with settlement areas. The assessment of the distribution of open space in the urban areas of the Shire (Colac, Apollo Bay) considers walking distance from households, whereas in the rural areas the assessment considers whether public open space is provided in centralised locations that are focal points for townships and surrounding communities.</p> <p>Access also considers the connectedness of the open space system – in Colac Otway Shire, linkages and connections between open space sites and between communities is poor. There is very good potential to improve these connections using creek corridors, road reserves, the Old Beechy Rail Trail and other open space areas.</p>	

Amount	
Amount of open space: 297 ha for the 2011 population (22,263) = 13.34 ha/1000 people Assuming 297 ha for the 2031 projected population (26,797) = Projected future open space provision of 11.1 ha/1000 people	✓✓✓
Sizes of open space compared to hierarchy	✓✓
Comment:	
<p>Colac Otway Shire is very well provided for when the total quantity of open space is considered. The above total of 297ha does not include the significant national park and forest park that covers a large part of the southern portion of the Shire. The figure of 13ha per 1000 people and future 11ha per 1000 people taking population growth into account exceeds industry standards that are often used of 6ha per 1000 people. So with the quantity of open space providing well for current and future needs, the other criteria become important considerations.</p> <p>The sizes of open space sites when compared to the hierarchy classification falls short of targets in some cases. Where there is a good quantity of open space this may not require any action provided the facilities and activities available within the open space sites meet community demand. However there are some areas in the Shire where it may be desirable to increase the size of sites or seek opportunities to acquire other larger sites for development of specific open space types.</p>	

Quality	
Useability – “Fit for purpose”	✓
Quality and Presentation	✓
Consistency with Standards for Open Space Development	✓
Comment:	
<p>The open space system throughout Colac Otway is generally in a fair condition, with improvements required to ensure the standards for open space development are met and that the presentation, quality and useability of sites matches the needs and demands of the community into the future.</p>	

8.2 Area Open Space Provision

Urban Colac Area

The Urban Colac area is the main regional centre of the Colac Otway Shire. Being based on statistical population areas and covering Colac, Colac East and Elliminyt, this area is experiencing growth through rezoning of rural land and residential subdivision. Colac is the principal town for the shire and provides commercial, community facilities and services, recreation and transport infrastructure of a regional nature. (Source: Draft Colac Otway Rural Living Strategy, 2011). Elliminyt has become effectively a suburb of Colac, located to the south of the main centre.

The Urban Colac area services the broader region with its key open space sites, including a number of sporting facilities, the Botanic Gardens, Memorial Square and Colac Lake Foreshore. Future population growth and an ageing community suggests that open space will become even more significant for residents in this area.

Table 8.3: Open Space Sites in the Colac Urban Area

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
Lake Colac Foreshore	Colac	Regional	Parkland	PPRZ	Crown Council	13.5
Barongarook Creek	Colac	District	Linear OS / Corridor	PPRZ	Crown Council	2.9
Botanic Gardens	Colac	Regional	Formal Garden	PPRZ	Crown Council	14.0
Memorial Square	Colac	Regional	Formal Garden	PPRZ	Crown Council	2.0
Central Bowls Club	Colac	District	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council CoM	1.2
Central Reserve	Colac	Regional	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council Council	6.9
Colac Cricket Ground	Colac	District	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown Council	2.3
Colac Showgrounds	Colac	District	Sports Reserve	PPRZ PUZ	Crown DSE CoM	8.2
Colac Tennis Tournament Club	Colac	District	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council CoM	1.8
Eastern Reserve	Colac	District	Sports Reserve	R1Z	Council Council	7.6
Western Bay Park	Colac	District	Sports Reserve	PPRZ		1.0
Western Oval	Colac	District	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council Council	3.6
Colac Golf Club and Turf Club	Elliminyt	Regional	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown Numerous	119.2
South Colac Oval / Elliminyt Memorial Park	Elliminyt	District	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown Council	7.7
Esplanade Reserve	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.7
Ball Street Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.3
Bruce St OS 1	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	1.0

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
Donaldson St Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.4
Hugh Murray Reserve	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	5.9
Inglis Crt Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	R1Z	Council Council	1.0
Johnstone Cres Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.7
Lawrence Crt Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.4
Newcombe Estate Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	R1Z	Council Council	0.4
Robertson St Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.5
Selwyn Brown Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.4
Stoddart St Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	1.5
Western Bay Park	Colac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Crown Council	1.35ha
Joiner Reserve	Elliminyt	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	1.4
Spring St Reserve	Elliminyt	N'hood	Parkland	R1Z	Council Council	0.2
Wyuna Estate OS 2	Elliminyt	N'hood	Parkland	R1Z	Council Council	0.3
Glengowan Estate OS	Colac	N'hood	Linear OS / Corridor	PPRZ	Council Council	1.2
Joseph Paatsch	Colac	N'hood	Linear OS / Corridor	PPRZ	Council Council	0.4
Sculpture Park	Colac	N'hood	Linear OS / Corridor	PPRZ	Crown Council	2.2
Sub-Total						212.15
Other Open Space:						
Bird Reserve	Colac	Regional	Natural	PPRZ	Council Council	4.5
Belvedere Estate	Elliminyt	n/a	Drainage	LDRZ	Private ⁽¹⁾	4.0
Harris Road Swamp	Elliminyt	n/a	Drainage	R1Z	Council Council	1.6
Irrewillipe Road Basin	Elliminyt	n/a	Drainage	RLZ	Council Council	7.7
Tulloh Street Dam	Elliminyt	n/a	Drainage	RLZ	Council Council	0.5
Wyuna Estate OS 1	Elliminyt	n/a	Drainage	R1Z	Council Council	0.5
Bruce St OS 2 (Old Tip)	Colac	Former Tip Site		PPRZ	Council Council	8.3

Schools:		
Name of School	Town	Comment about level of community access to open space
Colac Secondary College	Colac	
Trinity College	Colac	Sports oval used for cricket
St Marys Primary School	Colac	
Colac Primary School	Colac East	
Colac South West Primary School	Colac	
Colac Specialist School	Colac	
Colac West Primary School	Colac	
Elliminyt Primary School	Elliminyt	
Sacred Heart Primary School	Elliminyt	

(1) = land is not yet handed over to Council, so is still in private ownership and management

Table 8.4: Current and Projected Population in the Colac Urban Area

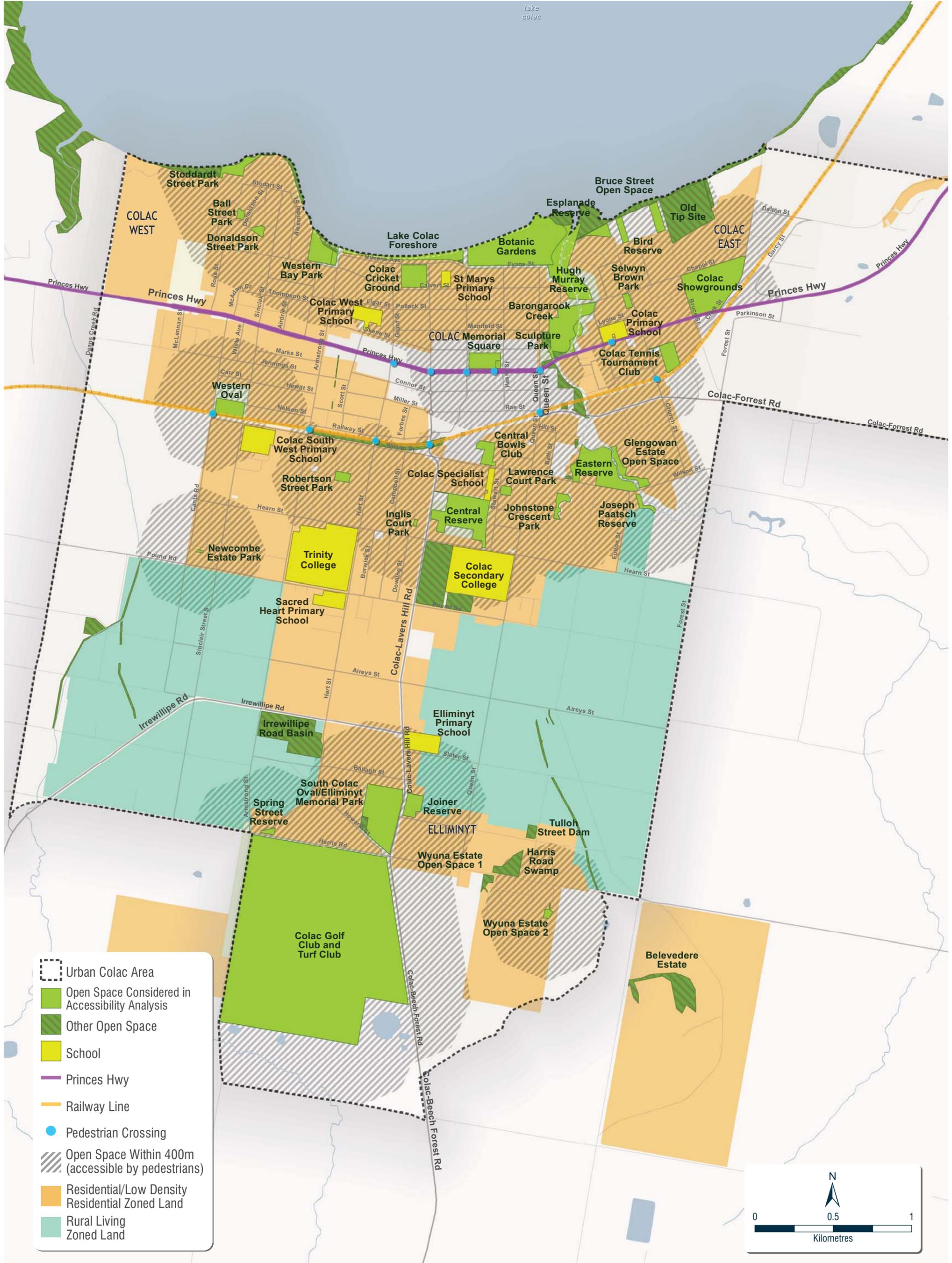
Population		↑
2006 population:		11,810
2009 forecast population:		12,386
2011 forecast population:		12,683
Projected 2031 population:		15,781
Change between 2006 and 2031:		+3971
SEIFA Index:		939.7
Age Groups: 0-17 years	2,900 in 2006 increasing to 3,795 by 2031	+895
Age Groups: 70 years+	1,740 in 2006 increasing to 2,195 by 2031	+455
Comment:		
The population is projected to increase by more than 15% with growth expected in children and young people as well as the older age groups. This area has the lowest SEIFA score, represents more low income families and people with little training and in unskilled occupations. The considerations for open space provision are that the demands for well distributed and good quality open spaces are likely to increase.		

Source of population data: Population Forecasts for Colac Otway Shire, forecast id, id consulting p/l, updated Jan 2011

Access	
Distribution of Open Space	✓✓
Location and connections to open space	✓
Comment:	
While there are gaps in the open space network as indicated by the unshaded areas in the mapping (at the end of this section), much of this area is currently zoned Rural Living Zone where allotments are larger and residential density is very low. As these areas are put forward for subdivision, the provisions for open space contribution will apply, ensuring that adequate open space is provided as residential density increases.	
Some gaps in the residential areas of Urban Colac are evident and the neighbourhood park network could be more comprehensive if some neighbourhood parkland facilities were developed on sports reserves in the Urban Colac area. The site (or part of the site) of the old Colac High School could be converted to open space which would provide access to an area that currently does not have good access to open space (and as there are neighbourhood renewal areas in this vicinity, the need for open space is well documented). The area also has a lack of connections and lack of footpaths that restrict walking access around Colac and Elliminyt.	

Amount	
# of ha of types of open space 212.15 ha for the 2011 population (12,683) = 16.7 ha/1000 people Assuming 212.15 ha for the 2031 projected population (15,781) = Projected future open space provision of 13.4 ha/1000	✓✓✓
Sizes of open space compared to hierarchy	✓✓
Comment: The amount of open space in the Urban Colac Area is easily sufficient to meet current and future demands, however the need for well distributed open space (as discussed in the section above – Access) indicates the priority in acquiring open space in strategic locations. When the sizes of open space sites are examined against the hierarchy, many of the neighbourhood parks are small when compared to the 1ha benchmark as outlined in planning standards (clause 56.05-2). Many of the sports grounds are also on the small side of the standard of 8ha, however there is sufficient quantity of sporting open space when compared to the 2ha/1000 people that has been supported by Sport and Recreation Victoria. An additional future need for active sport open space is in the area of rectangular playing fields to cater for the increasing demand of soccer and other future sports that require fields. It is suggested that either the former Colac High School site, the Colac Secondary College or the Turf Club / Golf Club site could be developed into sports reserves containing rectangular playing fields.	

Quality	
Useability – “Fit for purpose”	✓✓
Quality and Presentation	✓
Consistency with Standards for Open Space Development	✓
Comment: The Urban Colac Area falls short in the assessment of quality of open space. There is generally a poor level of infrastructure across open space, although this needs to be more thoroughly assessed in the audit of open space infrastructure (that is partially complete). Maintenance of open space is not well resourced so there needs to be careful consideration of increasing the level of infrastructure to ensure that any improvements can be sustained into the future. In addition to the existing open space, there is a concern about some of the land that is being offered by developers as open space – often it is drainage or other type of encumbered land. If the purpose for which the land is designated cannot be met, (i.e. as neighbourhood parkland open space), then alternative sites should be considered. The “fit for purpose” analysis is an important one and an example is the Irrewillipe Road Basin in Elliminyt. While a large portion of the site is a retarding basin (and its primary purpose is for drainage) there is sufficient land around the outside to create a walking track and parkland for the local community that addresses one of the identified gaps in the Urban Colac Area for neighbourhood parkland. Consideration also needs to be given to play spaces in the Elliminyt area as there are currently no local play opportunities.	



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Urban Colac Area

WALKABLE OPEN SPACE ACCESS - RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Area Analysis of Open Space: Rural North Area

The Rural North Area extends from the northern boundary of Colac to the municipal border at Cressy where Colac Otway Shire meets the Hamilton Highway. The state significant Red Rock area of volcanic lakes and craters is located in Alvie, a small rural community of 20 dwellings, a primary school and recreation reserve. Beeac, situated centrally in the Rural North Area is located on the edge of Lake Beeac. With just over 70 dwellings and a permanent population of approximately 200, this community is serviced by a primary school, rural service centre, recreation reserve and a few other key services. Cressy is a community that has experienced population decline over recent years with closure of RAAF and commercial activities, and is well serviced by a recreation reserve, park, church, hall and other key services. The Rural North Area also has numerous localities with small numbers of dwellings and limited services – access to the larger settlements and the central area of Colac provides a range of opportunities for residents across this area. (Source: Draft Colac Otway Rural Living Strategy, 2011)

Table 8.5: Open Space Sites in the Rural North Area

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
Balintore Foreshore Reserve	Balintore	N'hood	Parkland	PCRZ	Council Council	0.4
Beeac Crown Land	Beeac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Crown Licencee	0.8
Corunnun Foreshore Reserve	Corunnun	Township	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	4.2
Beeac Park	Beeac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	1.0
Windmill Park	Beeac	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.15
Cressy Park	Cressy	N'hood	Parkland	TZ	Council Council	0.04
Meredith Park	Irrewarra	Township	Parkland	PCRZ	Crown Council	6.0
Alvie Recreation Reserve	Alvie	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council CoM	2.8
Beeac Recreation Reserve	Beeac	Township	Sports Reserve	PCRZ	Crown DSE CoM	3.0
Cressy Recreation Reserve	Cressy	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown DSE CoM	6.7
Irrewarra Recreation Reserve	Irrewarra	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council CoM	3.2
Warrion Recreation Reserve	Warrion	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council CoM	2.5
Beeac Tennis Courts	Beeac	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council Club	0.25
Cororooke Tennis Courts	Cororooke	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council Club	0.2
Eurack Tennis Courts	Eurack	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council Club	0.2
Warrion Tennis Courts	Warrion	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council	0.2
Sub-Total (not counting stand-alone tennis courts)						30.79

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
Other Open Space						
Red Rock Lookout and BBQ Area	Alvie	State	Natural	PCRZ	Crown Council	4.0
Pirron Yallock Creek Reserve	Pirron Yallock	n/a	Waterbody / wetlands	PCRZ	Crown Council	2.0

Schools:		
Name of School	Town	Comment about level of community access to open space
Alvie Consolidation Primary School	Alvie	Oval used for cricket
Beeac Primary School	Beeac	Used for tennis
St Brendans Primary School	Coragulac	

Table 8.6: Current and Projected Population in the Rural North Area

Population		=
2006 population:		3,456
2009 forecast population:		3,473
2011 forecast population:		3,480
Projected 2031 population:		3,605
Change between 2006 and 2031:		+149
SEIFA Index:		983.1
Age Groups: 0-17 years	930 in 2006 decreasing to 855 by 2031	-75
Age Groups: 70 years+	288 in 2006 increasing to 494 by 2031	+206
Comment:		
The population in the Rural North Area is expected to remain relatively stable with a slight increase, mainly reflected in an ageing population. Factors influencing open space provision include the 'isolation' of many residential communities and the need for well connected open space.		

Source of population data: Population Forecasts for Colac Otway Shire, forecast id, id consulting p/l, updated Jan 2011

Access	
Distribution of Open Space	✓✓✓
Location and connections to open space	✓
Comment:	
The Rural North Area has well distributed open space in the key townships that are spread well throughout the area and pick up the main population centres in this rural settlement area. The challenge is that the small townships and localities are not well connected, making cycling and walking access for residents difficult. In many cases it is accepted by residents that they will drive to towns where open space is located, but if opportunities for off-road connections were explored, this could encourage more physical activity options, as expressed during the community consultation.	

Amount	
# of ha of types of open space	✓✓
Sizes of open space compared to hierarchy	✓✓
Comment:	
There is a good diversity of open space representing the various types, except for linear open space and corridors. The parks throughout the rural areas are small especially for the catchment they are required to service. However, given that the population of this area is projected to remain relatively stable, if connections to key open space sites were improved and these small communities continue to use more significant open space in Urban Colac, then the provision (amount) is probably adequate for the foreseeable future.	

Quality	
Useability – “Fit for purpose”	✓✓
Quality and Presentation	✓✓
Consistency with Standards for Open Space Development	✓✓
Comment:	
Enhancements are recommended to improve the quality of open space and the range of activities available for the communities of the Rural North Area. The detailed audit of each open space site still requires completion to be able to clearly define where existing open space falls short of the standards for open space development, however improvements will assist with the useability of open space throughout this area. Opportunities should also be explored to upgrade existing undeveloped open space – for example, open space alongside public halls, where other community infrastructure would complement open space development.	

Area Analysis of Open Space: Rural South Area

The Rural South area extends from the southern boundary of Urban Colac / Elliminyt into the rural area between the Princes Highway and the Great Ocean Road. To the east and west of Colac, the rural north area meets the rural south area at the Princes Highway. Birregurra is situated east of Colac, has a population of 463 people and is well serviced by a range of amenities and open space sites. This town has potential to grow in population through both infill development and residential expansion. Forrest is an established township comprising 142 properties and well serviced by a range of community facilities, recreation reserve and park. This town is in a transition phase as the timber industry ceases in the area and the town provides a greater focus for tourism and the natural beauty of the Otways. It has good access to the large areas of national and forest park which provide many recreational opportunities. Gellibrand is also an established town in this area with 60 properties and access to some services and a recreation reserve. The Old Beechy Rail Trail runs through the township which is located on the Gellibrand River and surrounded on three sides by the Great Otway National Park. The Rural South Area also has numerous localities with small numbers of dwellings and limited services – access to the larger settlements, the central area of Colac and coastal area of Apollo Bay provides a range of opportunities for residents across this area. (Source: Draft Colac Otway Rural Living Strategy, 2011)

Table 8.7: Open Space Sites in the Rural South Area

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
West Barwon Reservoir	Forrest	Regional	Parkland	FZ / PCRZ	Crown / Barwon Water	15
Old Beechy Rail Trail (part)	Gellibrand	Regional	Linear OS / Corridor	TZ	Council Council	2.6
Barwon Downs Town Park	Barwon Downs	Township	Parkland	PUZ7	Council Council	0.8
Birregurra Park	Birregurra	Township	Parkland	TZ	Council Council	1.0
Skateboard Park	Birregurra	Township	Parkland	TZ	Council Council	0.8
Forrest Park	Forrest	Township	Parkland	TZ	Council Council	1.5
Rex Norman Reserve	Gellibrand	Township	Parkland	FZ	Council Council	0.6
Birregurra Golf Course	Birregurra	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown Council	16
Birregurra Recreation Reserve	Birregurra	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown DSE CoM	3.1
Carlisle River Recreation Reserve	Carlisle River	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council CoM	3.7
Forrest Recreation Reserve	Forrest	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Crown DSE CoM	4.8
Gellibrand Recreation Reserve	Gellibrand	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown DSE CoM	3.2
Irrewillipe Recreation Reserve	Irrewillipe	Township	Sports Reserve	PCRZ	Council CoM	4.0

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve	Swan Marsh	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council CoM	2.7
Barongarook Tennis Courts	Barongarook	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council Club	0.2
Gerangamete Tennis Courts	Gerangamete	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	DSE CoM	0.25
Kawarren Tennis Courts	Kawarren	Township	Sports Reserve	PCRZ	DSE CoM	1.1
Larpen Tennis Courts	Larpen	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council CoM	0.3
Pennyroyal Tennis Courts	Pennyroyal	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Private Council/Club	Part of larger site
Swan Marsh Tennis Courts	Swan Marsh	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ / PUZ1	Council CoM	0.1
Warncourt Tennis Courts	Warncourt	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council Club	0.9
Yeo Tennis Courts	Yeo	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Council Club	0.3
Yeodene Tennis Courts	Yeodene	Township	Sports Reserve	PCRZ	DSE DSE	0.2
Sub-Total (not counting stand-alone tennis courts)						59.8
Other Open Space						
Six Mile Dam	Barongarook West	n/a	Drainage	PCRZ	Crown Council	5.4
Great Otway National Park						
Otway Forest Park						
Loves Creek Reserve	Kawarren	Township	Natural	PCRZ	Crown DSE CoM	7.0
Murroon Wetland	Murroon	n/a	Waterbody / Wetlands	FZ	Council Council	3.3

Schools:

Name of School	Town	Comment about level of community access to open space
Birregurra Primary School	Birregurra	
Carlisle River Primary School	Carlisle River	
Forrest Primary School	Forrest	

Table 8.8: Current and Projected Population in the Rural South Area

Population		=
2006 population:		3,087
2009 forecast population:		3,123
2011 forecast population:		3,189
Projected 2031 population:		3,646
Change between 2006 and 2031:		+559
SEIFA Index:		1002.9
Age Groups: 0-17 years	826 in 2006 increasing to 900 by 2031	+74
Age Groups: 70 years+	200 in 2006 increasing to 417 by 2031	+217

Comment:

The population in the Rural South Area is projected to remain generally stable with small increases in the numbers of children and young people, and older adults. Open space provision needs to respond to many small and relatively isolated communities. The population of Birregurra township may increase more rapidly than the rest of the Rural South Area with expected increases in residential development.

Source of population data: Population Forecasts for Colac Otway Shire, forecast id, id consulting p/l, updated Jan 2011

Access

Distribution of Open Space	✓✓✓
Location and connections to open space	✓✓

Comment:

The Rural South Area has well distributed open space in the key townships that are spread well throughout the area and pick up the main population centres. There is a need for improved connections where this is possible to link localities and outlying areas with the key open space sites. This area also benefits from the visitor facilities in the national park and forest park and there is good road access to these destinations.

Amount

# of ha of types of open space	✓✓✓
Sizes of open space compared to hierarchy	✓✓

Comment:

There is a good variety of the different types of open space that meet a range of community needs across this area. As stated above, the national park and forest park also play a role in providing open space opportunities for local residents that meet a range of needs. Even though some of the sites fall short of benchmark sizes, many sites are large and overall the network of open space performs well to offer diverse opportunities.

Quality

Useability – “Fit for purpose”	✓✓
Quality and Presentation	✓✓
Consistency with Standards for Open Space Development	✓✓

Comment:

When the open space sites are generally compared to the standards for open space development, some opportunities for enhancements of open space emerge. While this needs to be verified through a detailed audit of open space, improvements to open space would increase amenity and the useability of open space.

Area Analysis of Open Space: Great Ocean Road / Otways Area

The Great Ocean Road / Otways area, situated in the southern portion of the Colac Otway Shire, consists of the main coastal towns of Apollo Bay, Kennett River and Wye River/Separation Creek and the main inland townships of Beech Forest and Lavers Hill. There are numerous other small settlements and localities throughout this area that access services and open space at Apollo Bay in the south, Colac in the north and key destinations such as national park and forest park throughout the Otways. Apollo Bay is a major coastal town along the Great Ocean Road and is identified as one of the district towns in the Victorian Coastal Strategy (2008). It is the second largest town in the Shire and provides a range of regional services and community facilities, including recreation infrastructure. Future limited residential growth is being planned as infill development in existing areas and urban expansion within existing zoned land. Marengo, Separation Creek, Wye River / Separation Creek and Kennett River have stable small populations with little additional growth expected. All these coastal settlements experience significant visitation during the summer holiday seasons with key attractors being the foreshore areas. (Source: Draft Colac Otway Rural Living Strategy, 2011).

It is noted that the Apollo Bay township that is defined in the map on page 71 is based on population and main residential zoning and may not accurately reflect the township boundary that may be defined in other Colac Otway strategic documents.

Table 8.9: Open Space Sites in the Great Ocean Road/Otways Area

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
Marriners Lookout	Apollo Bay	Regional	Linear OS / Corridor	RCZ	Private Private	
Milford Creek	Apollo Bay	N'hood	Linear OS / Corridor	R1Z	Council Council	1.1
Park Avenue	Apollo Bay	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	1.0
Cliff Young Reserve	Beech Forest	N'hood	Parkland	PPRZ	Council Council	0.1
John Gardner Park	Beech Forest	N'hood	Parkland	TZ	Council Council	0.9
Rail Trail	Beech Forest	N'hood	Parkland	TZ	Council Council	1.1
Tramway Reserve	Marengo	N'hood	Parkland		Crown OCC	
Harrington Memorial Park	Wye River	N'hood	Parkland	RCZ	Council Council	0.9
Beech Forest Recreation Reserve	Beech Forest	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council CoM	2.4
Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve	Apollo Bay	Township	Sports Reserve	PPRZ	Crown OCC ⁽¹⁾	9.3
Apollo Bay Foreshore	Apollo Bay	Regional	Parkland	PCRZ	Crown OCC ⁽¹⁾	10.3
Apollo Bay Foreshore Golf Club	Apollo Bay	Regional	Sports Reserve	PCRZ	Crown / OCC ⁽¹⁾ Licencee	10.3
Ferguson Tennis Courts	Ferguson	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	Council CoM	0.5

Name	Town	Hierarchy	Category	Zoning	Ownership Management	Area (ha)
Johanna Tennis Courts	Johanna	Township	Sports Reserve	PCRZ	DSE CoM	Part of larger site
Kennett River Tennis Courts	Kennett River	Township	Sports Reserve	TZ	Council Council	0.1
Lavers Hill Tennis Courts	Lavers Hill	Township	Sports Reserve	PUZ6	Council CoM	0.3
Wyelangta Tennis Courts	Wyelangta	Township	Sports Reserve	FZ	DSE DSE	0.5
Sub-Total(not counting stand-alone tennis courts)						37.4
Other Open Space						
Heathfield Estate Reserve	Marengo	n/a	Drainage	PPRZ	Council Council	11.5
Heathfield Estate Road Reserve	Marengo	N'hood	Drainage	RCZ	Council Council	1.6
Seaview Dve 1	Apollo Bay	n/a	Drainage	R1Z	Council Council	0.4
Seaview Dve 2	Apollo Bay	n/a	Drainage	R1Z	Council Council	0.2
Great Otway National Park						
Otway Forest Park						
Apollo Bay Foreshore	Apollo Bay	Regional	Natural	Numerous	Crown OCC ⁽¹⁾	61.1
Anderson Creek	Apollo Bay	N'hood	Natural	PCRZ	Council Council	0.8
Paradise Reserve	Apollo Bay	Regional	Natural	PCRZ	Crown Council	70
Council land	Beech Forest	N'hood	Natural	TZ	Council Council	3.6
Kennett River Reserve 2	Kennett River	N'hood	Natural	TZ	Council Council	0.5
Separation Creek Reserve 1	Separation Creek	N'hood	Natural	TZ	Council Council	0.4
Separation Creek Reserve 2	Separation Creek	N'hood	Natural	TZ	Council Council	0.2
Separation Creek Reserve 3	Separation Creek	N'hood	Natural	TZ		0.1
Wye River Foreshore	Wye River	Regional	Natural	PCRZ	Crown OCC ⁽¹⁾	4.0
Wye River reserves 2,3,4,5,6	Wye River	N'hood	Natural	TZ	Council Council	0.5
Marengo Flora Reserve	Marengo	Township	Natural	PCRZ		16.4
Kennett River Reserve 1	Kennett River	n/a	Water Body / Wetland	TZ	Council Council	0.5
Kennett River Foreshore Reserve	Kennett River	Regional	Natural	PCRZ	Crown OCC ⁽¹⁾	2.0
Lavers Hill Water Hole	Lavers Hill	n/a	Water Body / Wetland	FZ	Crown Council	0.5

Schools:		
Name of School	Town	Comment about level of community access to open space
Apollo Bay P-12 School	Apollo Bay	
Lavers Hill P-12 College	Lavers Hill	

= Otway Coastal Committee (appointed by DSE to manage Otway Coastal Areas)

Table 8.10: Current and Projected Population in the Great Ocean Road/Otways Area

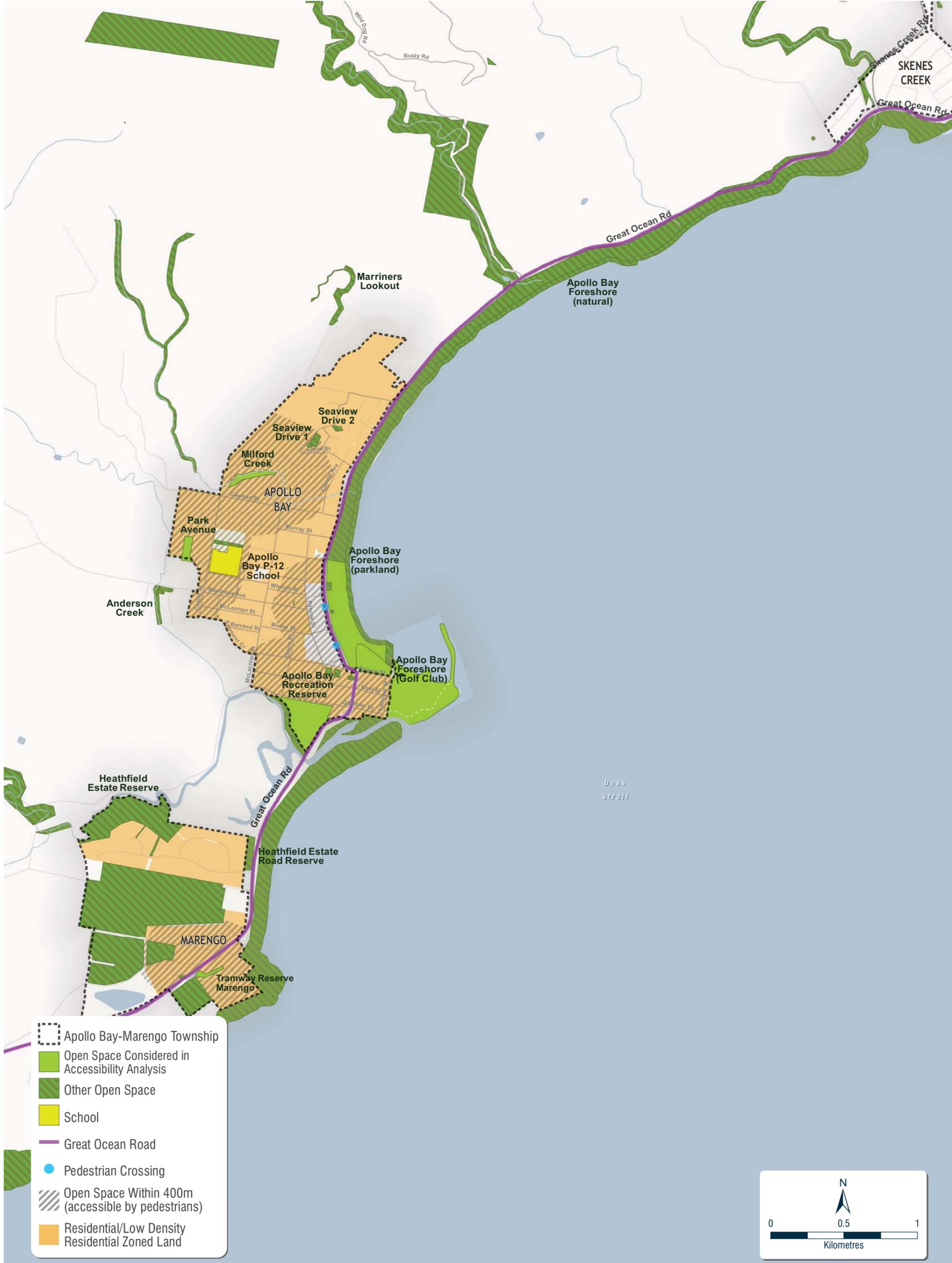
Population		↑!!
2006 population:		2,693
2009 forecast population:		2,837
2011 forecast population:		2,916
Projected 2031 population:		3,765
Change between 2006 and 2031:		+1,072
SEIFA Index:		1007.2
Age Groups: 0-17 years	542 in 2006 increasing to 676 by 2031	+134
Age Groups: 70 years+	305 in 2006 increasing to 607 by 2031	+302
Comment:		
<p>The population of this area is projected to increase by 28% by 2031 and the numbers of children / young people and older people account for nearly half of the total increase. Implications for provision of open space include safe access to neighbourhood open space for families and good provision of linear open space to encourage walking and physical activity for an ageing population.</p> <p>(!!) - It is also noted that the population of this area substantially increases during holiday periods and the peak summer season. The impact on open space for this area is that the coastal foreshore areas maintained by the Otway Coastal Committee on behalf of DSE are heavily utilised by visitors and transient residents. There will be an increasing reliance on other open space for residents as the population continues to rise and the Otway region continues to be a popular tourist and seasonal destination.</p>		

Source of population data: Population Forecasts for Colac Otway Shire, forecast id, id consulting p/l, updated Jan 2011

Access	
Distribution of Open Space	✓
Location and connections to open space	✓
Comment:	
<p>The distribution of open space falls short of being adequate across the coastal towns, as there has been a past reliance on the crown land along the foreshore areas (managed by the Otway Coastal Committee – OCC). As a result, open space development has not been a priority in the residential streets of the coastal areas. For example, in Apollo Bay and Marengo land is either partially 'land locked' and undeveloped or a drainage basin with no parkland infrastructure. In Wye River, Kennett River and Separation Creek any open space is often bushland blocks that are steep or have not been developed as parkland. As a consequence, the list of open space for this area has many sites categorised as 'other' open space – of value, but not generally useable as recreation sites and with other primary purposes. Like the Rural South Area, residents in this area have good road access to the visitor facilities provided by the national park and forest park. In addition, the foreshore area does offer a valuable recreation benefit for residents even though it may at times be difficult to access across the Great Ocean Road and when peak visitor times create congestion.</p>	

Amount	
# of ha of types of open space: Considering Apollo Bay residential area: Open space in the Apollo Bay area (not counting the foreshore area but including rec reserve) is 12.2 ha. Population of Apollo Bay in 2006 census was 1,164. Total provision based on these figures = 10.5 ha of open space per 1000 people.	✓✓
Sizes of open space compared to hierarchy	✓✓
Comment: Additional open space is required in this area even though the quantity may appear to be adequate for the Apollo Bay township (much of the recreation reserve is managed as natural area or used for camping and is not available as community open space . And while the national park and forest park provide good access to natural areas and associated visitor facilities, there is still a requirement for good quality neighbourhood parkland that is accessible within the townships of this area. This is evident in Apollo Bay, Kennett River and Wye River, with Separation Creek being well serviced for open space if a good linear open space connection to Wye River was established. Some sizes of open space sites fall short of benchmarks so any future open space acquisition should seek to provide more appropriate dimensioned open space to enhance community benefit.	

Quality	
Useability – “Fit for purpose”	✓✓
Quality and Presentation	✓
Consistency with Standards for Open Space Development	✓
Comment: The infrastructure and presentation of open space falls short of meeting community needs with many sites undeveloped and some unable to be developed because their primary purpose is not compatible with recreation use and activity. While the detailed audit will identify specific issues that need to be rectified, the open space in this area will benefit from investment in the enhancement of open space.	



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Apollo Bay

9. Recommendations and Actions

This section outlines recommendations and actions proposed to achieve the implementation of the Strategy. These recommendations and actions follow on from the strategic directions outlined in Section 7 – Key Strategic Directions and the analysis of current open space network indicated in Section 8. The recommendations are presented in two parts, firstly those that are key strategic or apply municipality wide and secondly those that apply to specific areas.

9.1 Key Strategic Recommendations and Actions

The following key recommendations and actions apply generally or municipality wide. This Section should be read in conjunction with the more specific area based recommendations and actions which are outlined in Section 9.2 - Area Specific Recommendations and Actions.

Planning the Open Space Network

The recommendations and actions to enhance the overall open space network in the Colac Otway Shire are that:

- Priority will be given to addressing the gaps identified in the analysis of the current provision of open space network (see Section 8) to ensure that all residents have access to neighbourhood recreation opportunities and sports facilities within a reasonable distance from where they live. However approaches to providing these opportunities may vary in different areas of the Shire depending on local circumstances.
- A comprehensive audit of all existing open space will underpin determination of priorities for enhancements to open space sites.

Planning Scheme

The recommendations and actions to enhance the Planning Scheme in relation to open space provision include the following:

- Review and amend the Local Provisions of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme (Clause 21 Municipal Strategic Statement) to ensure that they provide effective policy guidance for the provision of open space in all areas of the Shire, i.e. Colac urban area, Apollo Bay, other coastal towns, rural settlements and the rural area of the Shire. This review will include the following clauses:
 - Clause 21.03-2 (Colac) refers to the 2007 Colac Structure Plan and includes the following relevant strategy: “Support an increase in the amount of useable public open space (both linear and non-linear) to support recreation land uses and linkages between activities”. The Colac Framework Plan contained in the clause includes two new linear open space linkages.
 - Clause 21.03-3 (Apollo Bay and Marengo) refers to the 2007 Apollo Bay Structure Plan, and includes the following relevant strategies:
 - Encourage *future recreation facilities to be located together with other community facilities in a central and accessible location.*
 - Ensure *that...recreation facilities are provided to meet the needs of current and projected future residents and visitors to the area.*

- Clause 21.06 (General Implementation) includes the following relevant actions:
 - Undertake *enhanced recreation and pathway connections particularly around Lake Colac and in relation to the proposed Education, Recreation and Community Precinct.*

Further details of the nature of the amendments recommended to the planning scheme are discussed in Section 9.3, which outlines the statutory implementation of the Public Open Space Strategy.

Planning Open Space in New Urban Neighbourhoods

The recommendations and actions to provide for the needs of new residential areas for open space provision are to:

- Plan new open space land in all new residential areas in the Shire separately from the land required for drainage or other environmental purposes (although in some cases there may be overlap between the two purposes).
- Plan new open spaces so that their location and layout provides for public safety i.e. maximises passive surveillance by ensuring street frontages on as many sides of the open space as possible.
- Require developers involved in the creation to ensure that the new open space is “fit for purpose”, i.e. not constrained by other objectives such as drainage functions. Council will not accept hand over until short, medium and long term actions indicated in a site management plan are completed. Any ongoing management arrangements will be documented formally in writing.
- Ensure that the ongoing additional resources required to manage these new open space areas are built into Council’s budget processes.
- Consider the preparation of a schedule to Clause 52.01 – Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme for specific proposed new urban areas in order to reflect the requirements for open space contributions.
- Negotiate with developers to achieve new open space areas in line with Standard C13 of Clause 56.05-2 – Public Open Space Provision Objectives of the Planning Scheme.⁴ These provide for a network of well-distributed neighbourhood public open space which includes:
 - Local parks within 400 metres safe walking distance of at least 95 percent of all dwellings. Where not designed to include active open space, local parks should be generally 1 hectare in area and suitably dimensioned and designed to provide for their intended use and to allow easy adaptation in response to changing community preferences.
 - Active open space of at least 8 hectares in area within 1 kilometre of all 95 percent of dwellings⁵.
 - Linear parks and trails along waterways, vegetation corridors and road reserves within 1 kilometre of 95 percent of all dwellings.
 - The open space should be:
 - Provided along streams and permanent water bodies.
 - Linked to existing or proposed future public open spaces where appropriate.

⁴ It should be noted that there may be difficulties in applying this approach to some of the smaller subdivision proposal in the Colac Otway Shire

⁵ This objective may not be achievable in all new subdivisions

- Integrated with floodways and encumbered land that is accessible for public recreation.
- Suitable for the intended use.
- Of an area and dimensions to allow easy adaptation to different uses in response to changing community active and passive recreation preferences.
- Located and designed to maximise passive surveillance.
- Integrated with urban water management systems, waterways and other water bodies.
- Incorporate natural and cultural features where appropriate.

Partnerships

The recommendations and actions to enhance partnership in relation to open space management are to:

- Enhance partnerships with Parks Victoria, DSE and other agencies to ensure that the recreation opportunities provided on the land managed by these agencies are complementary to those provided by Council.
- Work closely with the Otway Coast Committee of Management especially in developing management proposals for the coastal reserve serving the needs of the local communities at Separation Creek, Wye River, Kennett River, Skenes Creek, Apollo Bay and Marengo (see Section 9.2.4 Specific Actions Great Ocean Road/Otway Area for details).
- Maintain cooperative working arrangements with agencies with expertise that could assist with management expertise i.e. DSE for natural area management (Bird Reserve and Lake Colac, etc.), CFA for fire management and Corangamite Catchment Management Authority in relation to land and catchment protection.
- Encourage partnerships with service organisations such as the Lions and Rotary clubs, community groups, township committees and sporting clubs to assist with the management of selected open spaces. Arrangements such as “Stewardship Agreements’ will be negotiated to ensure that:
 - The responsibility for developing and maintaining the land and facilities is clearly defined and documented.
 - The risks arising from the agreed arrangements are defined and documented.
 - All facilities and structures provided are fit for purpose and are maintained to a high standard.
 - Signage is provided indicating the role of Council and the role of the local organisation.
 - Periodic inspections are undertaken of the specified open spaces to ensure that the commitments of all parties are being met.

Environment

The recommendations and actions to enhance environmental planning and respond to the challenges arising from climate change are to:

- Use drought tolerant species (especially trees) in planting programs wherever possible.
- Explore sources of recycled water for open space usage and document clear strategies and costs for achieving this in management plans for open space.
- Reduce the use of water on sports grounds by increasing the use of drought tolerant grasses on playing field and consider the use of synthetic surfaces for sports facilities where appropriate.
- Plan open space to take into account the projected increase in the frequency of major storm / fire / flood / weather events.
- Use indigenous plants for all open space planting programs except where exotic species are required for specific cultural or heritage reasons, to encourage native animals especially birdlife.
- Protect and enhance existing habitat areas on open space and corridors and re-establish areas where they have been lost.
- Apply water sensitive urban design objectives in the design of open space to improve the quality of stormwater runoff.
- Explore sites for possible water habitat areas to treat, store and harvest stormwater.
- Design parks and gardens to reduce energy and chemical inputs required for their maintenance.
- Consider the environmental impact of the life cycle of the materials proposed for use, including their origin and ultimate disposal in the design of facilities to be located in open space.
- In the acquisition of any future Natural Areas, consider the selection criteria set out in the Environment Strategy before agreeing to accept suggested land.

Links and Corridors

The recommendations and actions to enhance open space links and corridors are to:

- Plan and develop open space corridors along waterways wherever opportunities arise to protect the natural values of the waterways and to provide locations for well-connected shared pathways (see Section 9.2 Specific Actions for specific proposals).
- Develop off road shared pathways to link key destinations wherever possible to encourage walking and cycling. These activities are a viable alternative to car transport for all age groups in the community and especially young people.
- Off road pathways will be linked to footpaths and bike lanes along roadways to ensure a seamless network which includes routes both along roadways and off roads.
- Develop links both at the local level for the local community as well as at the regional level to encourage tourism such as the Old Beechy Rail Trail (see Section 9.2.3 Specific Actions Rural South Area for details).
- Develop cycling routes both on road and off road to give access to district sports open spaces and to link to other open space sites.

- Manage all shared pathways to a high standard with high standard path surface, directional and informational signage and other supporting facilities such as seating and drinking fountains.
- Prepare maps of walking and cycling routes to promote the benefits of walking and cycling as a key way of increasing the level of physical activity of all age groups and improve the overall health of the community.
- Work with schools and parents to develop strategies to increase children's physical activity and reduce child obesity by increasing the numbers of school children who walk or cycle to school.

Planning of Existing Spaces

The recommendations and actions to enhance the planning of open spaces are to:

- Prepare strategic or master plans to outline long term development proposals for all regional open spaces.
- Prepare concept design plans (or where plans exist, review) for all district sports open spaces and all neighbourhood open spaces where key issues need to be addressed and/or significant upgrading is proposed.
- Ensure that the range of facilities planned for each open space area be in accordance with the standard for facilities provision (see Section 7.8 Developing and Managing Open Space).
- Ensure that all open spaces are planned to maximise user safety through good design of facilities and planting programs and the protection of sight lines.
- Involve the community in the preparation of all plans developed for open spaces, particularly taking into account that the needs of the coastal and more remote rural communities may differ from the needs of urban communities.
- Explore the creation of formal dog off leash areas in selected open space sites appropriate for this activity.

Developing and Managing Spaces

The recommendations and actions to enhance the development and management of open space are to:

- Use the Standards for Open Space Development as outlined in Table 7.1 to guide the provision of infrastructure in open space.
- Develop an ongoing program and funding bid based on these Standards to achieve the systematically upgrading of the open space network in the Shire. The priorities for actions in this program should be based on a matrix which considers the current provision of facilities compared with the level indicated in the development standards, the current condition of the facilities provided, the level of usage, both current and projected following the upgrading, the accessibility to facilities at an alternative site and the equitable distribution of facilities.
- Develop a funding strategy that utilises open space contributions for specific projects where the 'nexus' between developer cash open space contribution and expenditure (to enhance or acquire open space) is clearly demonstrated.
- Develop in consultation with the community and implement management/maintenance service level standards applicable to the nature of each space i.e. in line with its position in the hierarchy and the type (category) of space.
- Review the 2006 Playground Maintenance Schedule and Improvement Program and develop a new playground/play space strategy with the aim of

achieving an equitable distribution of play spaces to cater for a wide range of age groups across the open space network.

- Ensure that the resources required to maintain open space to appropriate standards will be made available taking into account Council's recent Best Value review of parks.
- Ensure that a long term commitment of both resources and expertise is made available for the management of natural areas which require specialist expertise and ongoing commitment to long term programs and provide excellent natural areas after weed control and revegetation works have been undertaken.
- Implement effective programs to manage the control of weeds, vermin and fire.
- Develop programs to manage risks such as those arising from dangerous trees and unsafe playgrounds.
- Develop and implement signage guidelines to achieve well designed and high standard signs at all open space sites.

9.2 Area Specific Recommendations and Actions

The following recommendations and actions relate to each of the areas adopted for the Strategy and used in the analysis of the current distribution and provision of open space. These areas are Urban Colac Area, Rural North, Rural South and Great Ocean Road/Otways Area. The recommendations and actions take into account the analysis of the open space network of each area as outlined in Section 8.2. Also many comments made by the community during development of the Strategy related to specific sites and these were considered in developing the recommendations and actions.

9.2.1 Urban Colac Area (Colac, Colac West and Elliminyt)

The Public Open Space analysis outcomes for Urban Colac are:

Population	Access	Amount	Quality
↑	✓	✓✓	✓

Population: ↑: Population is expected to increase by more than 15% by 2031
 Assessment: ✓: Basic Provision (opportunity for significant improvement)
 ✓✓: Satisfactory Provision (some opportunity for improvement)

As the principal urban centre in the Shire, the existing and developing area centred on Colac presents many challenges and opportunities for enhancing its open space network. As indicated in the analysis in Section 8.2, there are some gaps in the distribution of neighbourhood open spaces in the areas zoned R1 and Rural Living if the 400 metre walking distance benchmark is applied. Generally neighbourhood spaces are not well developed or well maintained. Playground facilities are limited both in distribution and provision for a range of age groups. There is a reasonable distribution of sports reserves but they generally have a limited range of facilities and often no facilities for sports that require a rectangular playing field such as soccer and rugby. The sports reserves also lack facilities for non-organised active or passive recreation. There is a lack of good connected walking and cycling linkages throughout the urban area.

Open Space Contributions for Urban Colac

An increase in demand for open space is likely to come from:

- Increasing population and changing demographic profile.
- Increasing residential growth with an expansion of the urban area (R1 zone).
- Decreased private “backyard” open space with higher residential density leading to smaller lot sizes. This can create greater reliance on public open space.
- Changing trends in preference for recreation activities, with emerging popularity of casual walking, cycling, running and rectangular sports (e.g. soccer, touch football, etc.).

Actions for addressing open space requirements are likely to include:

- Acquisition of land for new open space in new residential subdivisions.
- Changing the use of some (public) land to an open space use.
- Improving existing open space infrastructure and facilities in accordance with the Standards for Open Space Development.

Recommendation:

Apply a minimum 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more and where the number of lots exceeds five, the contribution shall be an additional 1% per lot up to a maximum of 10%.

For all open space contributions, the nature of the contributions being either cash or land is to be determined by Council after an assessment of the area.

New Urban Neighbourhoods

The development of proposed subdivisions in the Colac / Elliminyt area presents an opportunity to plan and negotiate with developers for new open spaces to meet the needs of the new residents. The recommendations in relation to creating open space in new subdivisions are to:

- Proposed Wyuna estate
 - Provide complementary neighbourhood parks of approximately one hectare, distributed to create walkable access within the proposed housing area of open space within 400m of all residents. This parkland should be fronted by streets on three sides and developed in accordance with the standards for open space development. It is noted that play spaces and planting of indigenous shade trees should be provided in this estate.
 - Consolidate existing (vacant) open space with adjoining land acquisition as part of next subdivision to create and develop an appropriate size and dimensioned neighbourhood park. This park should be developed to complement other open space in the Wyuna estate.
 - Provide a linear park on the east side of the subdivision along the route of the former Old Beechy rail line and fronting the creek. This park would provide a key missing link in the trail and would provide an off road connection for the residents of the new housing area for part of the way to central Colac.
- Other proposed subdivisions
 - Seek opportunities to provide complementary neighbourhood parks and linear corridors that connect open space within new subdivisions where there is an identified gap in open space provision. If subdivisions are small but a land contribution is required (as indicated by the analysis) then consider a land contribution on the edge of the subdivision that can be added to in future developments. This should be planned for in a broader planning document (e.g. structure / precinct plan / development overlay, etc.).

Existing Urban Area (Zoned R1)

Most of the developed urban land north and south of the Princes Highway, both east and west of the Colac Lavers Hill Road and in the Elliminyt area is zoned Residential (R1). The recommendations and actions to provide new open space opportunities in this area where they are currently deficient and enhance the existing open spaces are to:

- Neighbourhood spaces
 - Investigate whether new neighbourhood spaces could be created during the planning of sites proposed for redevelopment in areas where the analysis indicates that they are currently lacking including:
 - In the western area of Colac north and south of the Princes Highway, between Colac and Elliminyt – old high school site.
 - Between Colac and Elliminyt east and west of the Colac Lavers Hill Road.
 - Explore the potential for locating neighbourhood open space facilities on the Irrewillipe Road Basin Reserve.
 - Investigate the provision of a good quality neighbourhood park including the provision of a high standard play facility for a wide range of age groups to service the Elliminyt area, e.g. at Joiner Reserve.
 - Provide play experiences for a wider range of age groups, more informal recreation opportunities such as relaxation and picnicking and kick around areas in the existing neighbourhood spaces.
 - Develop or enhance neighbourhood park facilities such as picnic and play facilities on sports reserves including Western Oval, Central Reserve, Western Bay Park and Eastern Reserve.
 - Increase tree planting (especially indigenous species) to improve the appearance of the existing spaces and to provide shade.
 - Improve the maintenance and management practices of the spaces (see management/ maintenance service level standards - Section 7.8 Developing and Managing Spaces).
 - All new open space sites will be required to have an agreed master plan prepared (by the developer) that indicates clear actions, outcomes, roles and responsibilities.
- Sports reserves i.e. Western Oval, Colac Cricket Ground, Eastern Reserve and South Colac Oval/Elliminyt Memorial Park (excluding Central Reserve)
 - Explore opportunities to provide rectangular playing fields on the existing ovals to cater for sports such as soccer that are increasing in popularity according to participation trends.
 - Upgrade the existing pavilions and other facilities.
 - Explore opportunities for use of alternative water sources and drought tolerant grasses where applicable.
 - Landscape around the ovals.
 - Improve the car parking arrangements.
 - Provide informal recreation opportunities, for example: seating, picnic areas, play spaces, pathways, landscape features, etc. (see also neighbourhood spaces above).
 - Provide for non-organised active recreation such as kick around areas around the ovals.

- Central Reserve
 - Revisit the future objectives and revise the master plan for this Reserve.
 - Explore the coordinated use of this reserve with the nearby secondary college oval.
 - Consider the resourcing of the management/maintenance in the development of the management/ maintenance service level standards (see also Section 7.8 Developing and Managing Spaces).
 - Investigate bike paths to give safer access to the skate park in Central Reserve.
- Memorial Square
 - This central and well developed parkland in Colac is very well used by both visitors and residents. The CBD Master Plan, currently being prepared, acknowledged its value and popularity to the local community. Memorial Square should be retained and improved as a destination parkland for both casual use and organised events.
 - Explore the viability of a small well designed café/kiosk near the public toilets to cater for outdoor eating.
 - Improve the infrastructure such as power outlets to support the use of the Square for community events.
 - Review the disused water feature with the objective either to rehabilitate or remove it.
- Colac Golf Club and Turf Club and Show Grounds
 - Explore which would provide the best opportunity to establish a complex of playing fields and associated pavilion to respond to organised sports that are not currently well catered for and may emerge in the future such as soccer, hockey and/or rugby.
- Colac Secondary College redevelopment
 - In partnership with the Colac Secondary College explore avenues of funding to develop active sports fields for general community use through Stage 3 of the Colac Secondary College redevelopment.
- Linear corridors and linkages
 - Improve the overall connectivity of the network in the urban area to better connect residential areas to places of employment, education or recreation.
 - Develop a plan based on detailed site investigations to extend the corridors and trails upstream along Barongarook Creek and other waterways (in some cases this may require consideration of the purchase of land).
 - Improve the condition of the existing pathways and other infrastructure (especially pathways and signage) along the downstream section of Barongarook Creek.
 - Investigate off road trail options to connect the Old Beechy Rail Trail from the railway station to the Wyuna Estate.
 - Better link the trails to desirable destinations such as the Lake Colac foreshore and the central business area.
- Botanic Gardens/Lake Foreshore area
 - Improve the walking and cycling linkages to this area from the centre of Colac.
 - Consider the removal of cars from the Botanic Gardens to address the current conflict with pedestrian use of the Gardens in the proposed new master planning process for the Gardens.

- Improve pedestrian movement between the Botanic Gardens and Foreshore Reserve.
- Explore additional picnic facilities to cater for the high level of demand.
- Former Bruce Street landfill site
 - Investigate the potential and suitability of this site for tree planting and passive recreation (as a former landfill site, it is unsuitable for any form of structure).
 - Rezone the land from PPRZ to PCRZ to better reflect viable usage of the site.
- Sculpture Park
 - Review the management objectives for the sculpture park and consider whether they are being met. Subject to this review consider whether works of art with more interpretive material may be more effective.
- Former high school site
 - Explore options for new open space at this site (see also neighbourhood spaces above).

Rural Living Area (Zoned RLZ)

Substantial areas of land south west and south east of the Colac urban area are zoned Rural Living (RLZ) and are developed as low density residential areas. As the analysis indicates these areas currently have virtually no open space opportunities. However because the allotments are so large and the population density is low it is considered unrealistic to apply the 400 metre walkable distance bench mark to these areas. However it is important that residents of these areas should have good linkages to open space sites. It is also important that should these areas be rezoned and developed with higher density populations, then high standard open space networks be provided.

The recommendations and actions proposed in relation to open space in relation to the rural living area are to:

- Explore on and off road safe linkages providing access to open space areas with neighbourhood park facilities (playgrounds, etc. and sports reserves).
- Explore the creation of open space sites if and when these areas are rezoned for higher density development (e.g. low density residential).
- Explore the suitability of the Irrewillipe Road Basin Reserve for recreation use (see also neighbourhood spaces above).

Lake Colac

Although Lake Colac is largely located in the Rural North Area, it is included in the Urban Colac Area as the foreshore portion that has the highest usage and most opportunities for enhancement lies within this Area. Most of the Lake and foreshore is managed by Parks Victoria except the southern foreshore between Deans Creek in the west and the Treatment Works Road in the east, and Meredith Park in the north both latter areas being managed by Colac Otway Shire as the committee of management.

The recommendations and actions proposed to enhance the environmental and recreation values of Lake Colac are to:

- Ensure coordinated management arrangements between Council and Parks Victoria.

- Explore with Parks Victoria, the Environment Protection Authority and the Corangamite Regional Catchment Authority, ways to improve the quality of water flowing into the lake.
- Investigate with Park Victoria and the DSE, ways that foreshore habitats could be re-established and enhanced.
- Explore improving the walking, jogging and cycling connections between the town and the Lake (including along Barongarook Creek).
- Investigate with Parks Victoria long term options for developing both walking and cycling routes right around the Lake.
- Investigate with Parks Victoria the revegetation around the perimeter of the Lake.
- Review the recommendations of the 2004 Lake Colac Foreshore Master Plan especially in relation to achieving improvement of visitor facilities such as well-designed car parks, picnic areas, barbeques, toilets and lighting on the foreshore near Colac.
- Plant large indigenous trees and install seats on the foreshore between the Rowing Club and the Yacht Club to provide shade and seating along this highly utilised area.
- Provide in conjunction with Parks Victoria, interpretation information relating to natural environment, heritage and history of the Lake and in particular its significance to the Indigenous community.
- Explore opportunities for promoting Meredith Park at the northern end of the Lake as an attractive informal camping area.
- Investigate recreation activities that might be appropriate for Lake Colac in the event that the lake is dry (as per Lake Colac Management Statement).

9.2.2 Rural North Area

The Public Open Space analysis outcomes for Rural North are:

Population	Access	Amount	Quality
=	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓

Population: = : Population is expected to remain within 15% of the 2009 figure by 2031
 Assessment: ✓✓ : Satisfactory Provision (some opportunity for improvement)

Open Space Contributions for Rural North

An increase in demand for open space may emerge from:

- Changing recreation activity patterns of residents.
- Small increase in population and potential.
- Potential increase in tourist and visitor numbers.

Actions for addressing open space requirements are likely to include:

- Improve linkages and connections between communities and key open space sites.
- Improvements to existing open spaces in accordance with Standards for Open Space Development.

Recommendation:

Apply a standard 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more.

For all open space contributions, the nature of the contributions being either cash or land is to be determined by Council after an assessment of the area.

Smaller Settlements

The open space network in the rural north area comprises a number of sports reserves located at the smaller settlements particularly in the south of the area, other local spaces and some natural areas including the state significant Red Rock Reserve. In most cases the settlements have a single recreation reserve with fairly basic facilities which services both the settlements themselves as well as the surrounding community. Although some residents of the settlements can walk to the open spaces, car travel is required by most people living in the Area.

The need for good connectivity between the community and open space was highlighted in the community feedback during the development of the Strategy and therefore is very important.

Recommendations and actions proposed to improve the open space available in the settlements in the rural north area are to:

- All settlements
 - Improve the linkages between the residential areas and the key open space area, typically the sports reserve.
 - Explore opportunities for the central sports reserves to be developed to provide for more structured activities and better cater for informal recreation.

- Alvie
 - Consider the improvement of the facilities on the recreation reserve to increase its role in providing significant open space for the surrounding townships.
- Beeac
 - Develop the Lake Beeac Foreshore Reserve with facilities including a car park, picnic tables, paths and interpretive signage. Review existing signage.
 - Improve town pathway network and explore the potential of a heritage walk.
 - Renovate and upgrade the public toilets
 - Implement the tennis strategy in relation to Beeac
- Cressy
 - Enhance the recreation reserve by works including repairing the memorial gates, upgrading of the facilities for the sheep dog trial and tree planting.
 - Explore opportunities to utilise open space on Duverney Street.
- Irrewarra
 - Improve the pavilion on the recreation reserve.
- Warrion
 - Improve pavilion and remove disused tennis courts on the recreation reserve.
- Cororoake/Coragulac
 - Play space, neighbourhood park, off-road pathway – consult with the local township communities to identify the best site and most appropriate development.

Red Rock Volcanic Reserve

The Red Rock Reserves of State Significance lies within the Red Rock volcanic complex which has significant scenic, geological, geomorphic, faunal, social and tourist values, and is part of the newly formed Kanawinka Geopark. Improvements to the Reserve could enhance its tourist and other visitor potential.

Recommendations and actions proposed to improve this Reserve are to:

- Investigate the expansion of the Reserve by land purchase to enable better protection of the volcanic features and allow reinstatement of the natural flora and fauna habitat.
- Enhance the Reserve and the directional signage to the Reserve to enable it to become a major tourist feature as a component of the Kanawinka Geopark.
- Work with the managers of other components of the Kanawinka Geopark to develop overall interpretative material (including maps) for the whole Park.
- Prepare an overall plan for the different components of the Reserve i.e. the picnic area component, the upper car park and the lookout, to provide coordinated facilities for visitors. This plan could include the upgrading of the interpretive displays and the rationalising and upgrading of key visitor facilities.
- Upgrade the pathway to the lookout and the lookout itself.
- Work in partnership with local groups and other organisations to achieve better presentation and management of the site.

9.2.3 Rural South Area

The Public Open Space analysis outcomes for Rural South are:

Population	Access	Amount	Quality
=	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓

Population: = : Population is expected to remain within 15% of the 2009 figure by 2031
 Assessment: ✓✓ : Satisfactory Provision (some opportunity for improvement)

Open Space Contributions for Rural South

An increase in demand for open space may come from:

- Changing recreation patterns of residents with increasing popularity of walking, cycling and running.
- Potential increase in tourist and visitor numbers.
- Residential increase in Birregurra and potential higher residential density which may result in less private “backyard” open space resulting in greater demand for public open space.

Actions for addressing open space requirements are likely to include:

- Improve linkages and connections between communities and key open space sites.
- Improvements to existing open space infrastructure and facilities in accordance with Standards for Open Space Development.
- Possible acquisition of land for new open space in new residential subdivisions, subject to assessment.

Recommendation:

Apply a minimum 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more and where the number of lots exceeds five, the contribution shall be an additional 1% per lot up to a maximum of 10% within the Birregurra township and apply a standard 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more elsewhere.

For all open space contributions, the nature of the contributions being either cash or land is to be determined by Council after an assessment of the area.

Smaller Settlements

The rural south area contains extensive natural areas of open space comprising the Great Otway National Park and the Otway Forest Park managed by Parks Victoria and DSE respectively. These areas contain many sites with visitor facilities for activities such as enjoying the natural environment, picnicking, walking and in some cases, camping. These sites are used by local residents as well as visitors from across Victoria. A state significant mountain bike facility is located in the forest park near Forrest.

The open space network in the area also includes a number of sports reserves located at the smaller settlements and some other local spaces. In many cases the settlements have a single recreation reserve with fairly basic facilities which services both the settlements themselves as well as the surrounding community. Although some residents of the settlements can walk to the open spaces, car travel is required by most people living in the Area.

The need for good connectivity between the community and open space was highlighted in the community feedback during the development of the Strategy and therefore is very important.

Recommendations and actions proposed to improve the open space available in the settlements in the rural south area are to:

- All settlements
 - Improve the linkages between the residential areas and the key open space area, typically the sports reserve.
 - Explore opportunities for the central sports reserves to be developed to provide for a wider range of structured activities and better cater for informal recreation.
- Barwon Downs
 - Develop the Barwon Downs Flora and Fauna Reserve to facilitate increased community use including access tracks and interpretive signage.
 - Develop the Barwon Downs Town Park with additional picnic facilities, play equipment and plant with additional indigenous plants for shade and landscape amenity.
 - Improve the tennis club facilities with a new lockable building and resurfacing of existing tennis courts.
- Birregurra
 - Plan to meet the requirements for open space that will arise when Birregurra expands. This would include negotiating with developers on a site specific basis taking into account the existing provision of open space. If the existing provision fulfils the needs required by the new residents, then Council will require 1% per lot up to a maximum of 10% of the land value to be contributed as cash to be used to upgrade the existing open space.
 - Improve the playing and other facilities on the recreation reserve to better meet the requirements of sports users and other visitors.
 - Improve the linkages between the town, main street, school and open space.
 - Investigate further development of the Tiger Rail Trail from Birregurra to Barwon Downs and Forrest.
- Carlisle River
 - Approach VicRoads regarding the development of visitor facilities along the Carlisle River including a small car park, picnic table and seating.
 - Liaise with the Corangamite Regional Catchment Management Authority to achieve the restoration of the habitat and management of the Carlisle River.
 - Upgrade the tennis courts and incorporate line marking for other sports, such as netball and basketball.
 - Improve facilities for horse riding groups.
- Forrest
 - Improve the Forrest walking track network, including provision of seats and shelters.
 - Work with Barwon Water to develop a walking track to link the picnic area at the Barwon West dam wall to Forrest.
 - Work with the DSE to develop an integrated strategy for the management, development and investment in the Forrest mountain bike trails.
 - Retain the Forrest community park as open space and develop with a range of high standard user facilities.
 - Explore the old mill site and any other sites as locations for other community infrastructure.

- Investigate further development of the Tiger Rail Trail from Birregurra to Barwon Downs and Forrest.
- Work with Barwon Water to further develop the picnic areas on the West Barwon River and at the reservoir wall and link the two areas with a walking track.
- Gellibrand
 - Develop picnic facilities including a small car park, picnic table seating and interpretive signage.
 - Explore a pedestrian underpass under the Colac to Lavers Hill Road.
- Irrewillipe
 - Improve the pavilion, club rooms and water supply and netball facilities on the recreation reserve.
- Pirron Yallock
 - Continue to upgrade the recreation reserve in accordance with the master plan.
- Swan Marsh
 - Investigate whether the Pirron Yallock tennis facilities could provide for the needs of Swan Marsh residents.
 - Investigate whether the site of the existing courts at Swan Marsh could be redeveloped to provide for informal ball play, children's bike riding and picnic facilities.

Old Beechy Rail Trail

The Old Beechy Rail Trail extending from Colac to Beech Forest is one of Victoria's key rail trails and is managed by a Section 86 Committee of Management assisted by Council, and with the involvement of a friends group.

Recommendations and actions proposed to improve the Old Beechy Rail Trail are:

- Complete the Dinmont to Beech Forest section and extend the trail to Ferguson – it is noted that works are now underway.
- Create more off road links and improved integration of the rail trail with walking/cycling routes in Colac.
- Upgrade the trail surface, signage and vegetation management to a consistent high standard along the full length of the trail.
- Explore additional off road alignments for the trail north of Beech Forest.
- Improve the environmental management i.e. weeds control, of the trail surrounds.
- Investigate the extension of the trail including linkages to other trails and destinations such as the Otway Fly, and possibly eventually to Crowes near Lavers Hill and Apollo Bay. Many of these linkages may need to be on road reserves.

9.2.4 Great Ocean Road/Otways Area

The Public Open Space analysis outcomes for Great Ocean Road/Otways are:

Population	Access	Amount	Quality
↑!!	✓	✓✓	✓

Assessment: ✓ : Basic Provision (opportunity for significant improvement)
 ✓✓: Satisfactory Provision (some opportunity for improvement)
 Population: ↑: Population is expected to increase by more than 15% by 2031
 !! : Note that the population fluctuates with transient and visitor population at peak holiday seasons

The Great Ocean Road/Otways area includes the significant urban area of Apollo Bay, a number of smaller coastal settlements along the Great Ocean Road as well as a number of small settlements located inland from the coast. The coastal settlements have relatively small permanent residential populations which increase significantly with the influx of summer visitors and tourists travelling along the Great Ocean Road.

The area contains extensive natural areas of open space comprising the large Great Otway National Park, but also smaller areas of Otway Forest Park and the very significant Otway Coast Reserve. These areas are managed by Parks Victoria, DSE and the Otway Coast Committee respectively. The national park and forest park contain many significant natural features including coastal landforms and waterfalls and many sites with visitor facilities for activities such as enjoying the natural environment, picnicking, walking and in some cases, camping. The state significant Great Ocean Walk extends along the coast west from Apollo Bay. These sites are used by local residents as well as visitors from across Victoria.

The open space network in the area also includes a number of reserves located at the smaller settlements. At Apollo Bay and the other coastal settlements all or most of the open space opportunities lie on the coastal reserve. The need for good connectivity between the community and open space was highlighted in the community feedback on the Issues and Opportunities Paper and therefore is very important.

Open Space Contributions for Great Ocean Road/Otways Area

Additional demand for open space may come from:

- Any increase in residential population in Apollo Bay and Marengo and changing demographic patterns, particularly arising from the mix of permanent and transient residents.
- Decreased private “backyard” open space with higher residential density leading to smaller lot sizes. This can create greater reliance on public open space.
- Increased popularity of the coastal area and increase in tourists and visitors, particularly during peak holiday seasons.
- Changing trends in recreation activity preference with walking, cycling and running becoming more popular.

Actions for addressing open space requirements are likely to include:

- Improve linkages and connections between communities and key open space sites.
- Acquisition of land for new open space in new residential subdivisions particularly in Apollo Bay and Marengo.

- Improving existing open space infrastructure and facilities in accordance with the Standards for Open Space Development.
- Ensuring an open space system along coastal settlements where foreshore open space is complemented by parkland and linear connections in residential communities.

Recommendation:

For Apollo Bay and Marengo townships:

- Apply a minimum 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more and where the number of lots exceeds five, the contribution shall be an additional 1% per lot up to a maximum of 10%;

Elsewhere in the Great Ocean Road/Otways Area:

- Apply a standard 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more.

For all open space contributions, the nature of the contributions being either cash or land is to be determined by Council after an assessment of the area.

Apollo Bay Residential Area

Although the foreshore reserve and the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve, managed by the Otway Coastal Committee, provide very good recreation opportunities for both visitors and the residents of Apollo Bay, there are few useable open spaces within the Apollo Bay residential area. The Committee considers that its role of managing the coastal public land which provides important open space opportunities for the local communities, is a role which in many other areas in Victoria is undertaken by councils. The Committee considers that it is important that the Council and the Committee work together in planning and managing these areas. The Apollo Bay harbour is a working harbour that provides valuable recreation opportunities for visitors and residents. There are a number of linear open spaces in the Apollo Bay residential area but they are poorly designed and are of limited recreation use due to a range of site constraints.

Given the size of Apollo Bay it is considered appropriate to apply the 400 metre walkable accessibility benchmark to open space in the residential area. Given the current limited usable available areas, achieving this will require a multi pronged approach as outlined below.

Recommended actions proposed to enhance the open space opportunities in Apollo Bay are to:

- **New Residential Areas**
 - Negotiate with developers to obtain open space areas in new urban areas on a site specific basis, taking into account the provision (or lack) of open space in the existing urban area.
 - Consider incorporating provisions in the Planning Scheme to increase the open space contribution to overcome the lack of usable public open space in non-foreshore locations (refer to section 9.3 – Strategic Implementation).
 - Ensure good connectivity for pedestrian and cycling access through new residential subdivisions and to the centre of Apollo Bay.
- **Existing Urban Area**
 - Plan open space provision for Apollo Bay that takes into account the fluctuating population from 1000 up to 10,000 during peak times.
 - Review all the land owned by Council to determine whether some area may be appropriate to reassign as open space.

- Consider opportunities in future planning to locate new recreation facilities including a playground, and other community facilities at a central location in the residential area.
- Investigate the need for community parks away from the foreshore which can be windy and cold out of the summer season.
- Investigate opportunities for recreation facilities to meet the needs of the permanent youth population.
- Investigate the potential for walking tracks such as along the Barham River and along the rear of the township (as indicated in the Apollo Bay Structure Plan and investigated in the Apollo Bay Trails Feasibility Study).
- Develop the Park Avenue land as neighbourhood open space by resolving access issues, discontinuing the current grazing agreement on the site and developing the park with a range of recreation facilities. As an alternative, if a suitable land swap proposal is available as indicated in the draft Apollo Bay Settlement Boundary & Urban Design Review (2011), this should be considered.
- Explore whether the Milford Creek land could be redesigned to provide a broad range of open space opportunities.
- Explore whether the bowls club on the corner of Moore and Pascoe Streets could be relocated to another site to allow the redevelopment of this site as centrally located neighbourhood open space.
- Explore whether Moore and/or Pascoe Streets where they intersect (or any other roadway space) could be narrowed to allow conversion of some asphalt area to green open space.
- Explore whether the recreation facilities at the Apollo Bay P-12 College could be made more available for wider community use.
- Explore the Youth Club site as a possible location for a neighbourhood park.
- Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve

Although this is the only significant area of open space inland from the foreshore it is low lying and could be subject to inundation resulting from sea level rise. The reserve is the only public sporting space in Apollo Bay and although it is not physically part of the foreshore, it is managed by the Otway Coast Committee, not Council. It has been developed with significant tourist facilities such as camping sites and cabins, and contains an oval and netball and tennis courts. Overall it has been developed to provide a limited range of recreation opportunities designed to service the local community.

The proposed actions in relation to this reserve are to:

 - Advocate that the Committee minimise any impacts to the recreation reserve and open space in its master planning process and explore the provision of more sporting and other recreation opportunities for the local community.
 - Investigate another location for sporting facilities that is not threatened by the predicated sea level rise.
- Heathfield Estate Reserve

The Heathfield Estate Reserve on the Barham River has no direct street frontage and is largely located behind existing residential allotments in the Heathfield Estate. It is separated from the Barham River Road by the Barham River. The land is low lying, forms part of the floodplain (99% LSIO) and has no improvements on it. Pedestrian access can be gained from two access points between residential allotments on Barton Place and Costerman Terrace. A

drainage easement also exists from Ocean Park Drive into the site. Future use for the land has not been determined although it was proposed for inclusion in the Great Ocean Green development proposal which is now not proceeding. It is understood that there is wide support for the Pony Club to relocate to this site from its present site on the foreshore reserve. Any discussion about the use of the existing pedestrian and easement access from the Heathfield Estate subdivision for vehicle access must be carefully considered. Should the Pony Club relocate to this reserve and establish good facilities, membership growth and hosting of events is likely to follow. It is considered that vehicle and float traffic entering the reserve from Ocean Park Drive or the other residential streets would have an unreasonable impact on the residents of Heathfield Estate. An alternate access road should be identified. Part of the land has also been used for growing grain by the Otway & Coast Permaculture Group.

The proposed actions for this Reserve are to:

- Designate the Reserve for environmental protection and explore its potential value for recreation use (and possibly a community garden) through a community consultation process.
- Support the Pony Club moving from its current site on the Foreshore Reserve to this site subject to site issues (especially relating to access) being resolved.
- Establish an advisory committee to further investigate and resolve issues concerning the future use of the site. It is understood that safe and appropriate access is a significant issue that needs consideration, and whilst it will be difficult to resolve, this is an important hurdle to overcome before the Pony Club or any other agreed user is granted tenancy.

Apollo Bay Foreshore

The Apollo Bay Foreshore is a key coastal reserve well used by tourists as well as providing recreation opportunities for local residents. A wide range of facilities, not all dependent on the coast for their location and many which are visually intrusive are situated on the foreshore. The golf course occupies a large area and although it is not fenced and considered as potential accessible open space, it is not usable by the general public when in use or as may be specified in any tenancy agreement. As management of the foreshore is the responsibility of the Otway Coast Committee (OCC), recommendations for this area will be referred to the Coastal Management Plan, currently being prepared by the Committee. It is understood that this plan will be prepared taking into account the coastal planning hierarchy in Victoria and will consider key issues such as any public safety concerns arising from the location of the golf course. To achieve well coordinated planning and management of open space in Apollo Bay it is essential that close liaison is maintained between Council and the Committee on the planning and management of the Foreshore.

Recommendations for improving open space opportunities on the Apollo Bay Foreshore are to advocate to the OCC to:

- Explore developing a walking track on the coastal perimeter of the course.
- Ensure that the foreshore reserve is used primarily for coastal recreation related uses and any commercial uses of this area only be considered if they are dependent on a coastal location.
- Explore opportunities for new buildings and structures that could be designed and sited more appropriately to replace the existing structures that are highly visible and detract from the naturalness of the setting.

- Plant additional indigenous vegetation to provide shade to help screen prominent structures and would add to the naturalness of the reserve.
- Improve walking and cycling routes by providing a more consistent and coordinated pedestrian connections along the foreshore to link the harbour in the south to the town centre.
- Continue to investigate alternative sites (e.g. Heathfield Estate Reserve) for the relocation of the pony club and ensure the continued availability of this foreshore land for public open space purposes.
- Enhance surfers' needs by improving beach and parking access at Mothers Beach and Barham Beach.
- Ensure that if new camping areas are proposed on foreshore land, then they are only located in areas that have been significantly altered by former land uses and are designed for use only in peak seasons.

Apollo Bay Harbour

The Apollo Bay Harbour which is managed by Council, occupies an area of the foreshore east of the golf course. It is a working harbour with significant environmental, community and economic values and provides tourist and recreation benefits.

Recommendations for improving open space opportunities and recreation benefits at the Apollo Bay Harbour as noted in the 2008 Master Plan are to:

- Enhance the range of non-boating recreation facilities available for informal recreation such as fishing, walking over water, ocean views.
- Upgrade the public toilets and provide changing facilities.
- Provide interpretative facilities on Indigenous culture, history of the area, natural environment and the fishing/maritime industry.
- Explore a walkway on the eastern breakwater.
- Improve the traffic management and parking arrangements.
- Protect the Aboriginal middens near the harbour (which are disturbed) and at Point Bunbury.
- Develop new sailing club facilities.

Smaller Coastal Settlements

Wye River/Separation Creek, Kennett River, Skenes Creek and Marengo all lie on the Great Ocean Road, are popular summer recreation settlements and attract large numbers of tourists using the Great Ocean Road. Future major expansion of any of these settlements is unlikely due to topographical and environmental constraints. All have good access to the adjacent foreshore reserves managed by the Otway Coast Committee and the nearby Great Otway National Park. None of the settlements could justify a sports recreation reserve and this need would generally be satisfied by travelling to Apollo Bay or Lorne (in the Surf Coast Shire).

As the open space in these coastal communities is generally the responsibility of the Otway Coast Committee of Management, recommendations for these areas will be referred to the Coastal Management Plan, currently being prepared. To achieve well coordinated planning and management of the open space in these settlements it is essential that close liaison is maintained between Council and the Committee on the planning and management of the foreshore reserve.

Recommendations for improving open space opportunities of the foreshore reserves adjacent to the smaller coastal settlements and other open space are to:

- All Settlements
 - Ensure that the foreshore reserves adjacent to the settlements continue to be the principal community open spaces in the settlements.
 - Ensure that the activities on the foreshore are generally limited to those provided by the ocean and rivers, and passive activities such as walking.
 - Ensure that development works are limited to upgrading appropriate existing structures, improving the amenity / access to the foreshores.
 - Manage all the foreshore reserves in as near natural a condition as possible. Indigenous species should generally be used for tree planting with a possible exception being the replanting of trees with heritage significance.
 - Generally avoid the construction of any more cabins in any of the camping grounds on the foreshore reserves.

- Avoid the construction of any new car parks or expansion of existing car parks on the land between the Great Ocean Road and the coast.
- Explore with Vicroads opportunities for improving the Great Ocean Road (such as edge treatment) for cycling.
- Investigate options for dedicated pedestrian / bicycle pathways along the route of the Great Ocean Road or routes inland from the road. Specifically improve the pedestrian and cycling links between Marengo, Apollo Bay and Skenes Creek.
- Marengo
 - Investigate whether Tramway reserve could be developed as linkage or neighbourhood open space
 - Work with Parks Victoria in developing walking tracks and/or interpretive signage for the Marengo Flora Reserve.
- Skenes Creek
 - Further consider opportunities for creating open space to service this settlement.
- Wye River/Separation Creek
 - Address the water quality issues in Wye River while providing for ongoing access to the river by commercial / private properties and the development of walking tracks for the community.
 - Explore with VicRoads the construction of zebra crossings with pedestrian refuges on the Great Ocean Road opposite the general store (In accordance with Structure Plan recommendations).
 - Retain and maintain the small, centrally located Harrington Memorial Park bushland area in Wye River.
 - Extend the pedestrian path upstream along the Wye River reserve as far as practicable.
 - Commence discussions with owners of land containing the Separation Creek within the township zone with the long term aim of constructing a pedestrian path along the creek.
 - Upgrade Paddy's Path, a link between Wye River and Separation Creek, or another appropriate path.
 - Further investigate a neighbourhood park located on existing open space in Wye River for the Wye River / Separation Creek communities..
 - Ensure that the management (including weed control) of Council reserves in Wye River and Separation Creek takes into account the importance of these areas as habitat for the Bristle Bird.
 - Investigate improving pedestrian access over Separation Creek.
 - Address the Telstra building on the coast at the southern end of Wye River (Port Sturt) which is visually intrusive and should be relocated or if this is not possible, investigate measures to lessen its visual impact.
- Kennett River
 - Address the water quality issues in Kennett River while providing for ongoing access to the river by commercial / private properties and the development of walking tracks for the community.
 - Explore with VicRoads the construction of zebra crossings with pedestrian refuges on the Great Ocean Road opposite the middle foreshore car park at Kennett River (In accordance with Structure Plan recommendations).
 - Create a path / boardwalk from the car park and picnic area near the Great Ocean Road upstream along the river reserve as far as practicable.

Incorporate indigenous revegetation and rehabilitation of the creek corridor.

- Replace the existing Kennett River Surf Life Saving Club with a better located and designed new facility.
- Continue to investigate a new walking track possibly with a new bridge across Kennett River to connect the picnic area to Cassidy Drive north of the river.
- Formalise a neighbourhood park (including a playground) by redeveloping the existing open space inland of the Great Ocean Road and south of the River.
- Maintain the existing wetland as an efficient stormwater treatment facility.

Smaller Rural Settlements

The two key smaller inland rural settlements in the Great Ocean Road/Otway area are Beech Forest and Lavers Hill. Recommendations and actions that could be undertaken to enhance the reserves at these settlements to service their residents and their surrounding communities are to:

- Lavers Hill
 - Establish a Council committee of management for Morris Track Reserve (a water hole reserve).
- Beech Forest
 - Develop the John H. Gardner Reserve with a new car park, playground, lookout, picnic shelters, additional indigenous planting and an expanded historical display.
 - Improve signage within the former Beechy rail line turning circle and develop a display of relevant railway relics.
 - Provide directional signage between the John Gardner reserve and the Old Beechy Rail Trail.
 - Explore opportunities to develop the recreation reserve with facilities to cater for informal recreation.

9.3 Statutory Implementation

Many of the recommendations of this Strategy will be implemented as a statutory land use planning requirements by an amendment to the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. The existing planning provisions have been discussed in Section 3 of this report. The proposed scope of the planning scheme amendment(s) to implement the planning components of this Strategy is provided below.

Clause 21 – Municipal Strategic Statement

The provision of open space is already mentioned in Clause 21.03 – Settlement in relation to Colac (Clause 21.03-2) and Apollo Bay (Clause 21.03-3). Some minor wording changes may assist to ensure the Public Open Space Strategy recommendations have a strong policy basis in Clause 21.03-1 – General. It is anticipated that a planning scheme amendment will be undertaken to amend Clause 21.03-4 – Birregurra once the Birregurra Structure Plan is complete, and that this will include reference to public open space.

Clause 22 – Local Planning Policies

It is recommended that Council consider adopting the same policy approach as is found in the Whitehorse Planning Scheme, whereby a Public Open Space Contribution policy is included that summarises the Public Open Space Strategy. This should include the selection criteria for public open space to assist developers to understand Council's requirements.

As it is recommended that a differential approach be taken for each of the main urban areas and the rural area, brief descriptions of the boundaries of each precinct and the types of contributions taken for each (i.e. cash, land or both) should also be included. A sliding scale approach that is calculated according to the number of lots and is outlined in sections 7.2, 7.3 and throughout section 8 should be incorporated. This approach has been used recently by Surf Coast Shire in its Open Space Contributions Strategy.

The policy would include the Public Open Space Strategy as a reference document, ensuring that permit applicants must prove consistency with the same when preparing a development application. Including the strategy as a reference document would also provide for it to be updated without the need for further planning scheme amendments.

Zoning

As discussed in Section 7.2, the most commonly used zonings for areas of public open space are the Public Park and Recreation, Public Conservation and Resource and Urban Floodway zones. There are several existing areas of public open space in the municipality that have other zonings such as Township and Residential. It is recommended that Council consider rezoning these Public Park and Recreation as part of the planning scheme amendment process, as this will ensure that the planning provisions that relate to the sites are the most appropriate.

Going forward, as sites are developed, land set aside for public open space should be rezoned Public Park and Recreation once it is in Council ownership.

Overlays

The Public Acquisition Overlay can be used for land that Council intends to acquire, and could be applied to any specific sites where parks or pedestrian/cycle paths are proposed. If no specific areas have been identified at the time the main planning scheme amendment is sought, this could instead occur progressively. However, utilising this overlay will require Council to identify a timeframe for acquisition and to pay compensation to affected landowners.

It is not recommended that Council utilise the Development Contributions Plan Overlay unless detailed financial modelling and additional research are undertaken.

Clause 52.01 – Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision

The Schedule to Clause 52.01 should be amended to insert a new schedule that includes the % contributions required for each of the four areas (i.e. Urban Colac, Rural North, Rural South and Great Ocean Road / Otways). The analysis of existing public open space provision throughout Colac Otway has clearly demonstrated a number of shortfalls in the ability of public open space to meet all community needs. With population growth expected, rezoning of areas of rural land to residential zoning and the development of new subdivisions, it usually follows that lot sizes will be smaller, residential density higher and less space in the average “backyard”. This typically places greater reliance on public open space. Other factors that are expected to increase demand for public open space are:

- Changing demographic profile and an ageing population overall;
- Changing trends in preference for recreation activities, with emerging popularity of casual walking, cycling and running;
- Potential increase in tourism and visitor numbers; and
- Increased popularity of coastal areas and natural features.

In order to meet these increasing community needs, the Public Open Space Strategy recommends the following open space contributions to be taken as either cash or land, depending on an analysis to be undertaken by Council of the specific area surrounding any subdivision:

- In Urban Colac, Apollo Bay, Marengo and Birregurra where land is zoned for residential subdivision, apply a minimum 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more and where the number of lots exceeds five, the contribution shall be an additional 1% per lot up to a maximum of 10%; and
- For all other areas throughout Colac Otway, apply a standard 5% open space contribution for subdivisions of 3 lots or more.

The Public Open Space Strategy will be an important document as it will provide the rationale for the percentage contribution being sought from each individual development, as it should be noted that individual development applications may be appealed to VCAT.

Framework and structure plans

Council should continue to include sites where it is seeking public open space in its strategic planning documents, such as has occurred in the Colac Structure Plan. As these documents often form reference documents to the Planning Scheme, this will assist in negotiating open space contributions with permit applicants.

10. Strategic Implementation

The Colac Otway Public Open Space Strategy will be implemented by Council in a number of ways especially through its statutory and financial planning processes. In addition to key recommendations forming the basis for proposing amendments to the Colac Otway Planning Scheme, other recommendations will provide input into both Council's capital and operating financial programs, and form a basis for seeking external funding from State Government and other agency programs.

The following table summarises key strategic actions and outlines priorities for their implementation. Specific projects and actions relating to particular sites will be subject to further detailed consideration and community engagement by Council. Implementation of all actions will be dependent on the availability of resources.

Table 10.1: Summary of Strategic Actions and Priorities

Action No.	Work Area	Strategic Direction	Action	Priority
1.	Statutory Planning	7.2	Amend the Colac Otway Planning Scheme to specify Public Open Space Contribution requirements throughout the Shire (see 9.3 – Statutory Implementation).	High Priority: planning scheme amendment to be prepared in next 1-2 years.
2.	Statutory Planning	7.3	Acquire new open space to ensure provision of a quality open space system in accordance with the Public Open Space Strategy.	High Priority: as new subdivisions are planned and applications are submitted for approval.
3.	Open Space Planning	7.1, 7.8	Complete the audit of open space infrastructure throughout the Shire and compare existing provision to the Standards for Open Space Development.	High Priority: complete audit 2011/12. Preparation of open space improvement plans.
4.	Open Space Planning	7.8	Prepare a prioritised open space improvement plan in consultation with key stakeholders and residents.	High Priority
5.	Open Space Planning	7.8	Submit budget bids based on the open space improvement plan.	Ongoing
6.	Open Space Planning	7.3, 7.8	Allocate open space (cash) contributions to priority projects in accordance with statutory obligations	Ongoing
7.	Park Management	7.8	Ensure service level standards for maintenance of open space are consistent with hierarchy and intensity of use, level of development of open space and community expectations.	High Priority
8.	Park Management	7.5	Ensure that all spaces are managed to high environmental standards	Ongoing

Action No.	Work Area	Strategic Direction	Action	Priority
9.	Open Space Planning	7.6	Develop and enhance linear open space and corridors throughout the Shire, through detailed site investigations and stakeholder engagement.	Medium – High Priority: subject to availability of sites for connections and linear corridors.
10.	Statutory Planning	7.2	Re-zoning of all open space that currently does not have the correct zoning – preparation of planning scheme amendments.	Medium Priority: re-zoning amendments to be prepared over the next 2-3 years.
11.	Open Space Planning	7.7, 7.5	Prepare and/or review Master Plans for high profile open space areas. Prepare concept plans to develop and/or improve neighbourhood and other district/township open spaces. Ensure plans reflect best practice environmental planning.	Ongoing
12.	Open Space Planning	7.4, 7.8	Site specific recommendations involving agencies, community stakeholders and residents – engage with community to develop detailed actions to improve public open space facilities and infrastructure.	Ongoing
13.	Open Space Planning	7.1, 7.4	Liaise with other agencies including Parks Victoria, DSE, Barwon Water and the Otway Coastal Committee to ensure that all open space in the Shire is planning and managed to meet the needs of residents and visitors	Ongoing
14.	Open Space Planning	7.4	Work with local service and community group to develop partnerships to assist the management of open spaces	Ongoing