



Draft San Remo  
Structure Plan

# Background Report



February 2025

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## Acknowledgement of Country

Bass Coast Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and lore. Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the opportunity to embrace and empower the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island Communities in their diversity. Bass Coast Shire Council will create opportunities for future recognition and respectful partnerships that will honour the Traditional Owners and Custodians, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

## Diversity and Inclusion

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to providing communications and engagement that is welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive for our community including First Nations, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) peoples, people with disability and of all ages.



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## 1 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Purpose

The San Remo Structure Plan Background Report supports the Draft San Remo Structure Plan by detailing current conditions, summarising relevant background information, and outlining stakeholder engagement.

### 1.2 Structure planning

A Structure Plan is a long-term strategic planning tool used to guide development and planning outcomes, generally for a large area, or on a township basis.

Structure Plans outline areas for future growth and development and detail how growth will be managed by considering population, demographics and economic forecasting. Structure Plans also seek to accommodate the unique characteristics of the area.

Generally, Structure Plans set out to address multiple issues in an overarching strategic plan in collaboration with local communities and stakeholders. This process of forming a Structure Plan, ensures the needs of residents and broader planning objectives are met.

For Bass Coast, structure planning has been used historically to master plan townships to provide guidance surrounding the long-term planning objectives. Once prepared, a Structure Plan informs how the planning controls in the Planning Scheme will change, or how non-statutory actions, such as capital works, will be implemented.

### 1.3 San Remo Structure Plan

The preparation of the San Remo Structure Plan is a major initiative of the Council Plan 2021-2025, that seeks to strengthen the connection between people and place, as well as manage growth across the Shire.

San Remo is identified as a 'District Town', as it provides suitable services and infrastructure for a growing residential population, for the town and within the surrounding area. The Structure Plan will identify the location and provision for adequate housing, commercial, community services, transport, open space, infrastructure and built form. All the while protecting and conserving the natural environment and cultural elements that define San Remo.

The Structure Plan will provide a clear vision to manage change in San Remo



**Figure 1.** Study area of the San Remo Structure Plan which extends north of Phillip Island Road to the coastline along Westernport Bay, and to the east past Punchbowl Road.

for the next 20 years. The Structure Plan, once completed, will assist Council in determining planning decision-making, infrastructure upgrades, and inform planning scheme amendments to realise its implementation.

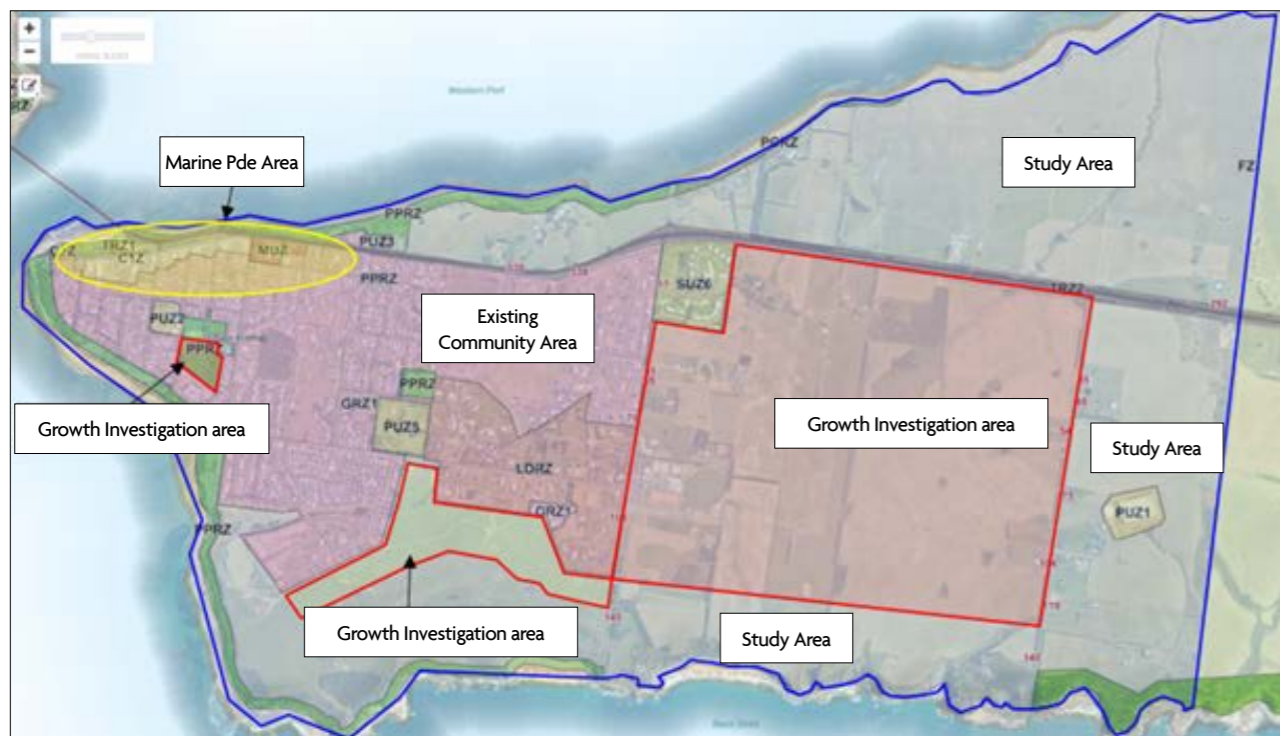
#### 1.3.1 Study Area

The Structure Plan's study area takes in the existing San Remo township, extending from the coast to the existing settlement boundary along Potters Hill Road.

The study area encapsulates the broader extent of land for San Remo's potential growth front, extending to Punch Bowl Road to the east (refer Figure 1).

The Structure Plan will deliver planning outcomes for three distinct areas (refer Figure 2):

- the main commercial and activity centre area along Marine Parade
- the existing, and well-established residential and community areas
- the growth areas to the east of the established areas



**Figure 2.** Study area of the San Remo Structure Plan depicting the various investigation areas.

### 1.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the San Remo Structure Plan:

- To develop a shared vision for managing change and facilitating growth in San Remo.
- To outline a framework to manage, influence, and facilitate change in accordance with policy.
- To identify and define different areas of San Remo with direction on their individual function.
- To ensure neighbourhood character is defined and preferred character is preserved.
- To facilitate provision and longevity of public utilities, services and infrastructure in San Remo.
- To realise the full potential of underutilised land, including government land in San Remo.
- To outline appropriate urban design and built form outcomes, particularly the Town Centre.

- To identify, protect and enhance Aboriginal cultural heritage values and assets.
- To ensure biodiversity, natural environment and landscapes are valued, protected and enhanced.
- To address and identify public realm and capital improvement opportunities.
- To outline implementation of initiatives, advocacy, actions and scheme amendments.
- To identify local characteristics, needs, opportunities and constraints specific for San Remo.
- To investigate and facilitate provision of stormwater management assets and integrated water.

### 1.3.3 Future implementation

The Structure Plan is a strategic planning tool to be used by Council for San Remo, which will guide future land use and development in a coordinated and orderly manner, forming a master plan.

Formal implementation of the Structure Plan into the Planning Scheme could include:

- Amending existing or introducing new policy to relevant sections of local policy for San Remo
- Amending existing planning zones (zone type or location), or introducing new planning zones
- Amending existing planning overlays (overlay type or location), or introducing new planning overlays
- Reference as a background document

within the Planning Scheme to guide the planning of future infrastructure and services

The completed Structure Plan will provide a basis for advocacy for funding to implement physical improvements around San Remo.

## 1.4 About San Remo

### 1.4.1 Bunurong Country

San Remo is part of Yallock Bulluk Country, one of seven identified Bunurong (Boonwurrung) clan groups.

The Yallock Bulluk peoples are the custodians of a large stretch of Bunurong Country, from Tooradin in the west to Tarwin River in the east. This includes the barribarrip (salt waters) of Warn-mar-in (Western Port Bay) and the freshwaters of Koo-Wee-Rup (Koo Wee Rup Swamp) and Weandon (Bass River). Also, the islands of Millow (Phillip Island) and Bel-lar-mar-in (French Island).

Bunurong Country is made up of Land Country, Sea Country and Sky Country.

Country has preserved the actions of Yalluk Bulluk ancestors, as seen in the layers of middens found in the beach dunes, and scatters of stone artefacts. Archaeologists have determined Bunurong people have lived on Country for 35,000 years. It is likely that the community thrived on Country for more than 60,000 years. At the time of colonisation there is known to have been a large Bunurong camping place at San Remo.



The camping grounds large scale suggests that it was very important to Bunurong peoples and likely a meeting or ceremonial grounds attended by a large group of people.

The rich bio-cultural landscape of San Remo, and wider Yallock Bulluk Country, has supported the physical, cultural, spiritual, social and economic lives of Bunurong people for generations. The relationship with Country is symbiotic and essential, as each relies upon the other for health and well-being. By keeping Country budap (healthy) and in balance, Country in turn cares for the people who live and spend time there. However, European land use and development practices have disrupted this balance.

Therefore, future development of San Remo should be sustainable and should not harm Bunurong cultural (tangible and intangible) and biocultural values. This will

ensure the rich connection to Country continues to sustain Bunurong culture and community today, despite the ongoing devastation of colonisation.

#### 1.4.2 San Remo

Initially known as Griffiths Point, San Remo was first surveyed in 1850 by Robert Mason, Assistant Government Surveyor. Mason laid out an area of 650 acres for a township. Following a public petition, the name of was changed to San Remo in 1888.

Located approximately 125 kilometres south-east of metropolitan Melbourne, San Remo originally developed as a tourist town benefitting from its proximity to Phillip Island. The town supported a large fishing industry given its location between Westernport Bay and Bass Strait. Nowadays, San Remo is one of the main residential and holiday towns in the Shire, as the gateway to Phillip Island (refer Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Location of San Remo in relation to metropolitan Melbourne and surrounding areas.

In the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021 Census, San Remo had a permanent residential population of 1,700 people with a median age of 52 years. In recent times, San Remo has experienced a high level of growth with an increase of 4.6% annually since 2011. Evident by the degree of greenfield residential development which has occurred to the east of the original township.

San Remo is experiencing renewed interest in other ways, including the establishment of Bass Coast Secondary College, the proposed head of the Yallock Bulluk Coastal Trail, a 32km coastal trail ending at Cape Paterson, and as a key location in the Bass Coast Dinosaurs Trail, incorporating at least one key site.

The San Remo foreshore is a sensitive environment for local flora and fauna and is in proximity to high-value sea slug habitat and wetlands. This results in a delicate balance between human impacts and environmental values.

#### 1.5 San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Structure Plan

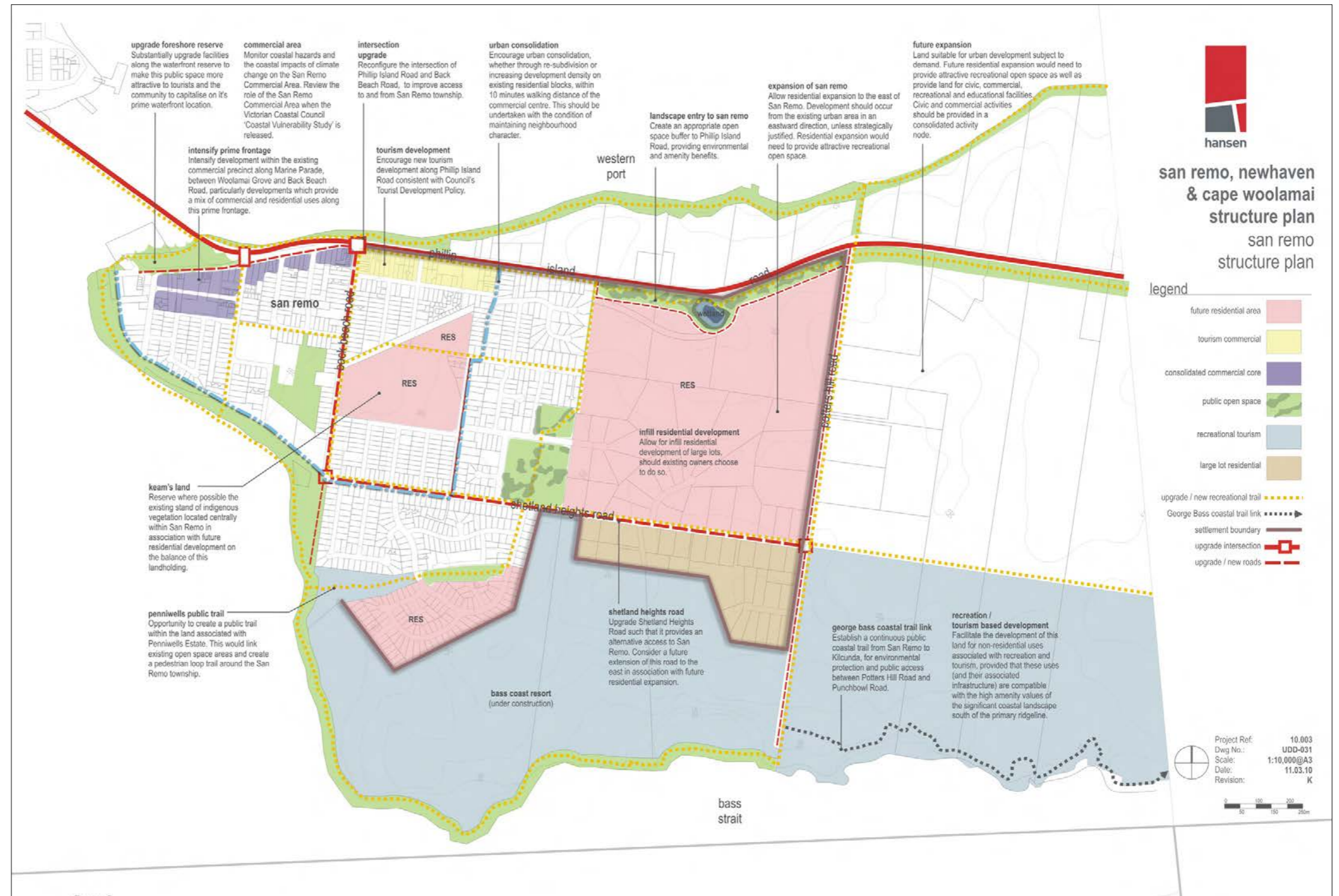
The San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Structure Plan (refer Figure 4) is a strategic plan for future growth and development of the three towns: San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai.

The purpose of the San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Structure Plan was to identify the strategic planning issues facing the towns, including community needs and

aspirations, and to articulate the preferred future directions for growth, whilst protecting and enhancing the very elements which make the towns distinctive and functional as urban areas and tourist destinations.

The San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Structure Plan was adopted by Council in March 2008. Following Council adoption, the Structure Plan was subject to a Planning Panels process as part of the planning scheme amendment and was amended in early 2010. The Structure Plan was then subsequently implemented through Planning Scheme Amendment C90 which was gazetted on 8 July 2010. Amendment C90 inserted policies into the Municipal Strategic Statement and including the Plan as a reference document into the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.

The San Remo Structure Plan will succeed the structure planning work for San Remo as undertaken and implemented through the San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Structure Plan. Given San Remo's level of growth and change over recent years, specific strategic planning for the township was required separate to Newhaven and Cape Woolamai.



**Figure 4.** The San Remo Structure Plan map from the San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Structure Plan.

## 1.6 Bass Coast Planning Scheme

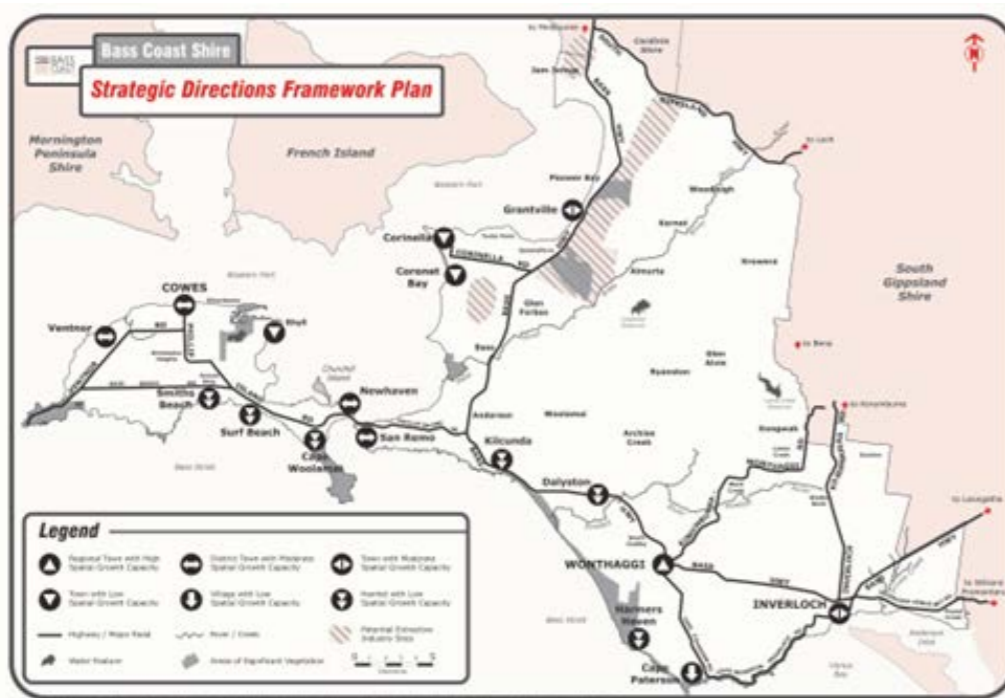
The Bass Coast Planning Scheme provides the planning controls such as zones, overlays, and policies specific to the Bass Coast Shire region. It is set out into two main sections, the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and the Planning Policy Framework (PPF).

The Scheme is set up under the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs) which provide a basis for State planning policy in the Planning Scheme and must be considered for proposals.

### 1.6.1 Municipal Planning Strategy

San Remo is identified as a major population centre (Clause 02.01 Context) along with Wonthaggi, Cowes, Inverloch and Grantville. The Shire's current settlement hierarchy (Clause 02.03-1 Settlement) identifies San Remo as a District Town, grouped with Newhaven which will experience moderate spatial growth with 'significant residential expansion' (Clause 02.03 Strategic Direction) (refer Figure 5).

Clause 02.03-1 Settlement describes San Remo as one the main residential and holiday towns within the Shire, historically being based around fishing but recently transitioning to tourist-related uses supporting its aging population. San Remo acts as a community hub for surrounding areas.



**Figure 5.** The Bass Coast Strategic Direction Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 of the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.

The economic development strategic directions listed under Clause 02.03-7 Economic Development, identify San Remo's role as providing 'retail and community facilities for local and wider population'. San Remo is a key tourist area in Bass Coast with strategic directions for tourism:

- Support well-designed tourist development in identified locations, that respond to market demand, coastal and landscape character, and environmental significance of the area.
- Support tourism in rural areas provided it does not come at the expense of landscape, amenity, liveability, environmental, social and agricultural values.
- Encourage diversity in tourist accommodation and attractions.

In terms of infrastructure at Clause 02.03-9 Infrastructure, San Remo is encouraged to provide district and regional facilities and services, much like Wonthaggi, Inverloch, Cowes and Grantville.

### 1.6.2 Planning Policy Framework

The Clauses relevant to San Remo include:

- **Clause 11.01-R Settlement – Gippsland**
  - Support urban growth in Latrobe City, Bairnsdale, Leongatha, Sale, Warragul/Drouin and Wonthaggi as regional centres, and in sub-regional networks of towns.
  - Support new urban growth fronts in regional centres where natural environmental hazards and risks can be avoided or managed.

- Support role of towns and small settlements in providing services to their districts, recognising their relationships and dependencies with larger towns.
- Create vibrant and prosperous town centres that are clearly defined and provide commercial services and activities that respond to populations and market conditions.
- Provide regional social infrastructure in the regional city and regional centres.
- Plan for seasonal demand in towns with high holiday home ownership.

The Gippsland Regional Growth Plan identifies San Remo as a small town where growth is supported as the town is within 100km from central Melbourne.

### - Clause 11.01-1L-01 Settlement

- Discourage urban growth beyond existing settlement boundaries unless identified.
- Minimise impacts of use and development on significant environmental features.
- Ensure residential development minimises impacts on road networks and areas. Identified by the Settlement Hierarchy as a district town with moderate spatial growth capacity, San Remo has identified potential for some growth beyond the urban zoned land and infill development provided it is within the existing settlement boundary.

**Clause 11.01-1L-05 San Remo**

**Growth area strategies**

- Accommodate majority of residential growth within the eastern development corridor of San Remo between Phillip Island Road, Shetland Heights Road and Potters Hill Road.
- Facilitate future neighbourhood centre for commercial and community purposes within residential growth area.
- Retain rural land uses outside of designated settlement boundaries and allow for non-residential recreational tourist use and development to the south, provided it is sympathetic to the significance of surrounding landscapes.

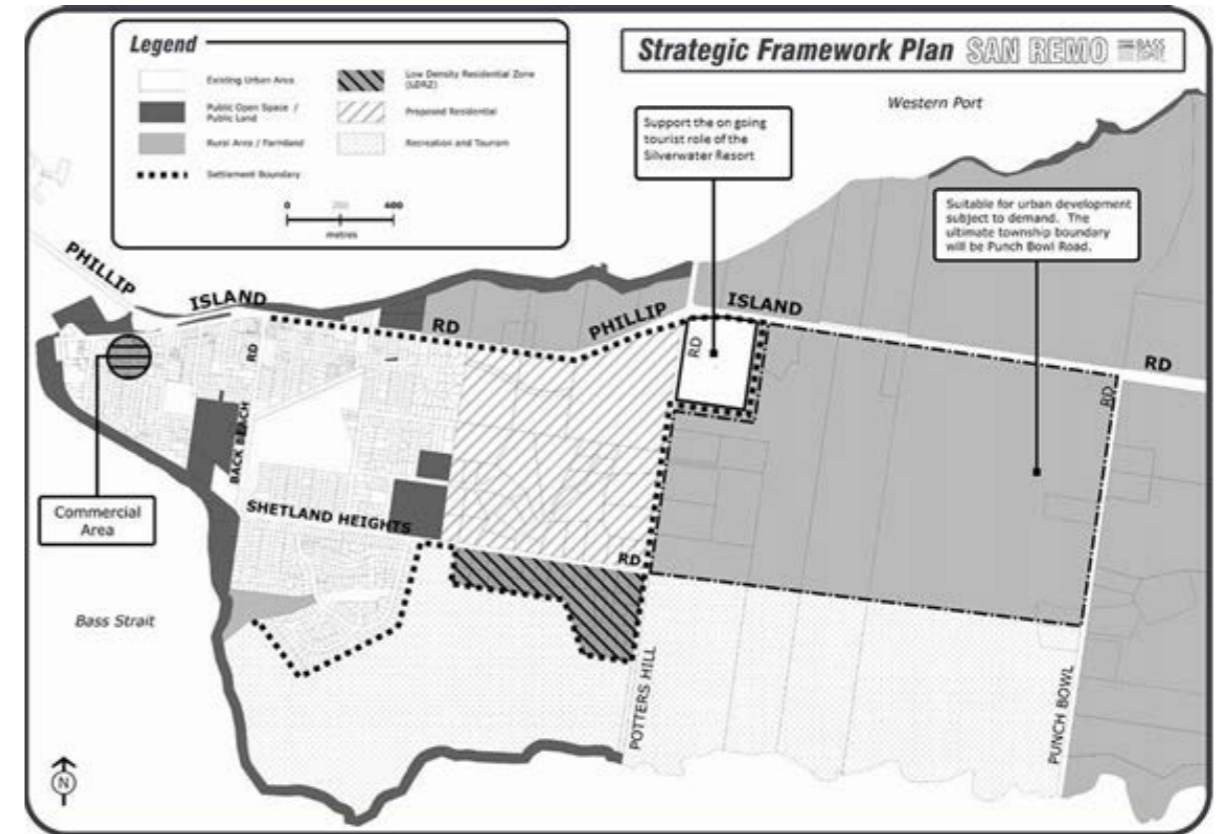
**Commercial strategies**

- Limit the San Remo commercial area to the southern edge of Marine Parade.
- Facilitate development of tourism related activities by supporting:
  - Commercial tourism at identified locations with main road frontage.
  - Recreational tourism to the south of the Anderson Peninsula ridgeline.
  - Leisure and hospitality related retail in the commercial centre.
  - Cafes, hotels, restaurants and open space on Marine Parade between Bergin Grove and Woolamai Grove.
- Encourage tourist development in MUZ along Phillip Island Road east of town centre.
- Encourage location and development of

- motels, restaurants and retail outlets on larger commercial lots.
- Support residential use and development for permanent and short-term accommodation above retail premises in the commercial area, on Marine Parade, west of Bergin Grove.
- Encourage redevelopment of commercial area to improve its design and integration with the foreshore and provide for a wide variety of retail uses.
- Support the ongoing tourist role of the Silverwater Resort.

**Infrastructure strategies**

- Facilitate access to future residential development east of Potters Hill Road by providing alternative road access into San Remo.
- Facilitate upgrade Shetland Heights Road to provides an alternate access to San Remo.
- Ensure any future opportunity to duplicate the Phillip Island Bridge is not precluded by any incompatible development in the vicinity of the existing bridge.
- The San Remo Strategic Framework Plan (refer Figure 6) is included at Clause 11.01-1L-05. The Plan depicts the existing settlement boundary to Potters Hill Road and a large area east of Potters Hill Road designated suitable for urban development subject to demand. The Plan shows the ultimate township boundary extending to Punch Bowl Road.



**Figure 6.** The San Remo Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 11.01L-05 in the Planning Scheme.

**Clause 19.02-1L Health facilities**

Of relevance to San Remo, Clause 19.02-1L encourages district and regional facilities and services to locate in large townships such as San Remo. Clause 19.02-1L highlights San Remo as a district town to provide health facilities to the broader area.

**Clause 18.01-3L Sustainable personal transport**

For San Remo, establishing a safe bicycle-pedestrian path network is required. Such infrastructure would connect the Foreshore, commercial centre, public open space and existing trails, including the George Bass Coastal Walk and Phillip Island trail.

**Clause 16.01-1L Housing supply**

- Encourage residential use and development above retail premises within the commercial town centre to facilitate activity at street level and activate the street at night time.
- Encourage increased housing density in area of San Remo close to activity centres, community facilities and services or nominated in structure plans or design frameworks.
- Provide retirement villages and nursing homes close to commercial, community and recreational facilities in San Remo.

Clause 16.01-1L seeks to encourage higher density residential development in San Remo's town centre, whilst accommodating tourism.



- **Clause 17.01-1R Diversified economy – Gippsland**

Recognises San Remo’s relationship to the fishing industry, as policy states, support Gippsland’s fishing industry by maintaining ports and enabling development of fishing operations at Lakes Entrance, Mallacoota, Port Welshpool, San Remo, Port Franklin and Port Albert.

- **Clause 17.04-1L Facilitating tourism**

- Encourage development of short-term tourist accommodation such as holiday units and cabins.
- Encourage a diverse range of restaurants and entertainment facilities.

- **Clause 15.01-5L Neighbourhood character**

Provides specific direction about the character, built form and urban design of San Remo by:

- Encourage development to respect and complement fishing village scale and character.
- Maintain views over the bay from Phillip Island Road.

- Avoid unarticulated big-box built form, especially on undulating land and hillsides.
- Encourage low front fencing to allow visual permeability between public and private realm.
- In the town centre along Marine Parade, design should enhance amenity and coastal character:
  - Street activation and integration.
  - Articulation and contemporary design treatments.
  - Reduced building bulk.
  - Streetscape integration.
- Within the commercial area - Marine Parade, west of Bergin Grove:
  - Design buildings to provide a consistent streetscape.
  - Provide verandahs and awnings with articulated facades for cohesive streetscape.
  - Encourage active street frontages with retail, cafes, galleries, restaurants at street level.
- Within the commercial area - Marine Parade, Bergin Grove to Back Beach Road:

- Encourage redevelopment (Back Beach Rd & Marine Pde) with landmark building.
- Provide verandahs and awnings with articulated facades for cohesive streetscape.
- Within the commercial area - Phillip Island Road, east of Back Beach Road
  - Achieve a consistent setback of new buildings with the existing streetscape.

The San Remo policy guidelines should be considered in planning decision-making as necessary:

- In the San Remo town centre:
  - Limiting building height to three storeys and recessing third levels.
  - Avoiding high-pitch roofs and designing roof forms with visual interest.
- In the commercial area - Marine Parade, west of Bergin Grove:
  - Apply a 0m street setback for all new buildings.
  - Use combination of materials on new buildings.
  - Minimise highly reflective surfaces.
  - Provide pitched roofs.

- Outside the town centre – limit residential development to maximum of two storeys (7m).

Clause 15.01-5L references the Phillip Island and San Remo Design Framework.

**1.7 Planning Policy Context**

There are various State, Regional and local policies, strategies, and plans which inform Structure Plan. The prominent policies and strategies are discussed below.

**1.7.1 Plan Melbourne 2017-2050**

Plan Melbourne is the overarching planning strategy for Victoria. Plan Melbourne objectives are listed in Planning Schemes, which responds to the State government’s planning intentions over a 35-year period. Plan Melbourne incorporates land use, infrastructure, transport planning, growth, liveability and sustainability.

For Melbourne’s peri-urban areas, advocating for better planning and infrastructure to ensure local character, attractiveness and amenity is maintained is crucial, this applies for San Remo.

The Distinctive Areas & Landscapes program is an action of Plan Melbourne, this is discussed next page.



### 1.7.2 Victoria's Housing Statement – the decade ahead 2024-2034

Prepared in 2023 by State Government, the Victorian Housing Statement is aimed at addressing housing supply by building an additional 800,000 over the next decade throughout Victoria, to:

- Reform the planning system to enable quicker planning decisions and streamlined processes
- Unlock new land to develop which does not contribute to urban sprawl
- Deliver modern, comfortable and energy efficient social and affordable housing

Draft housing targets announced in 2024 guide the location of future homes. As of 2023, Bass Coast had 30,100 dwellings, however, the draft housing targets require an additional 18,500 dwellings in the Shire.

### 1.7.3 Gippsland Regional Growth Plan 2014

The Gippsland Regional Growth Plan (GRGP) provides land use planning directions for Gippsland's local governments, including Bass Coast. The GRGP details delivery of infrastructure to meet needs for transport, utilities and community facilities.

Referenced in the Planning Scheme, the GRGP identifies San Remo as supporting growth (refer Figure 7).

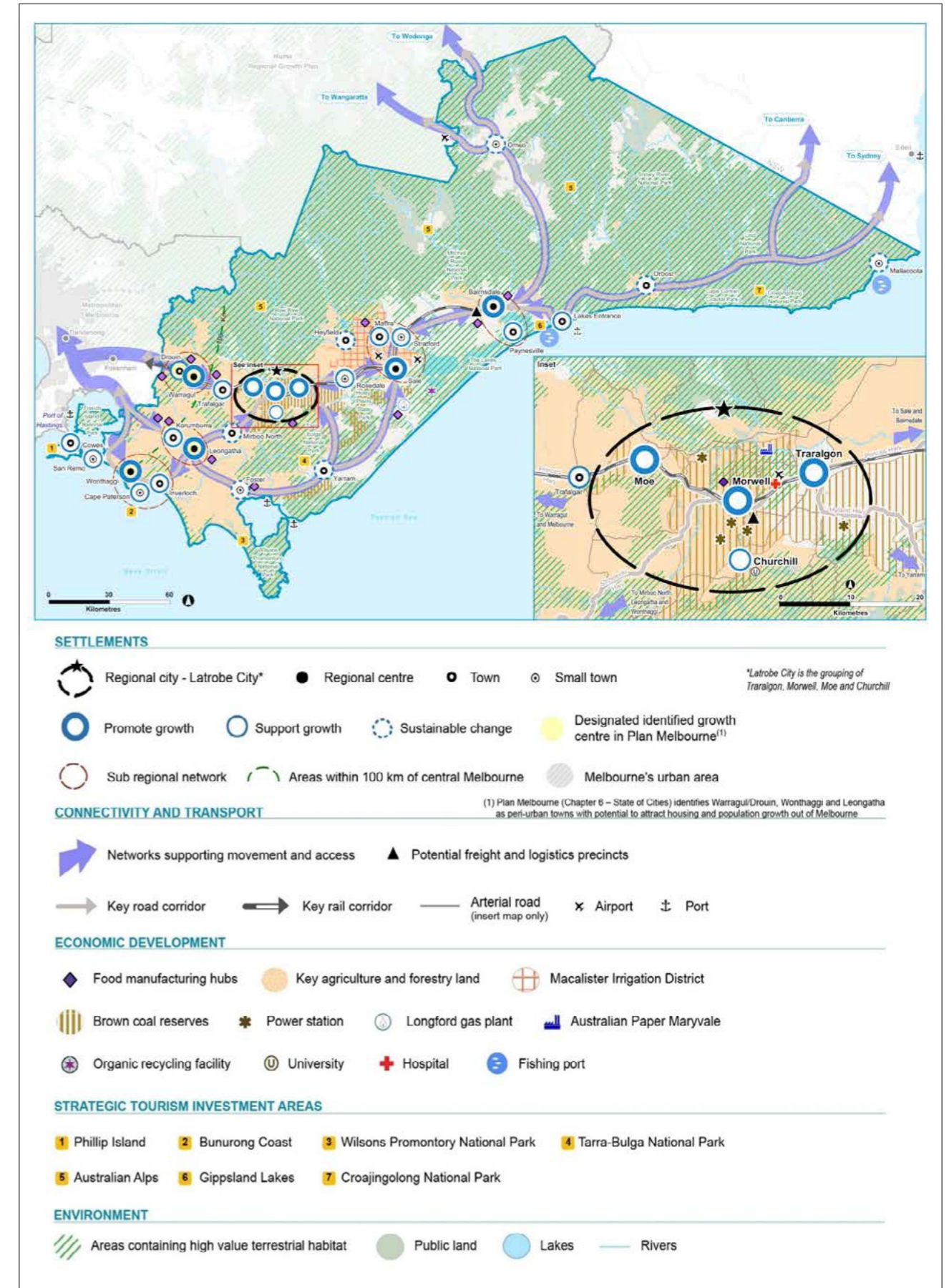


Figure 7. Gippsland Regional Growth Plan.

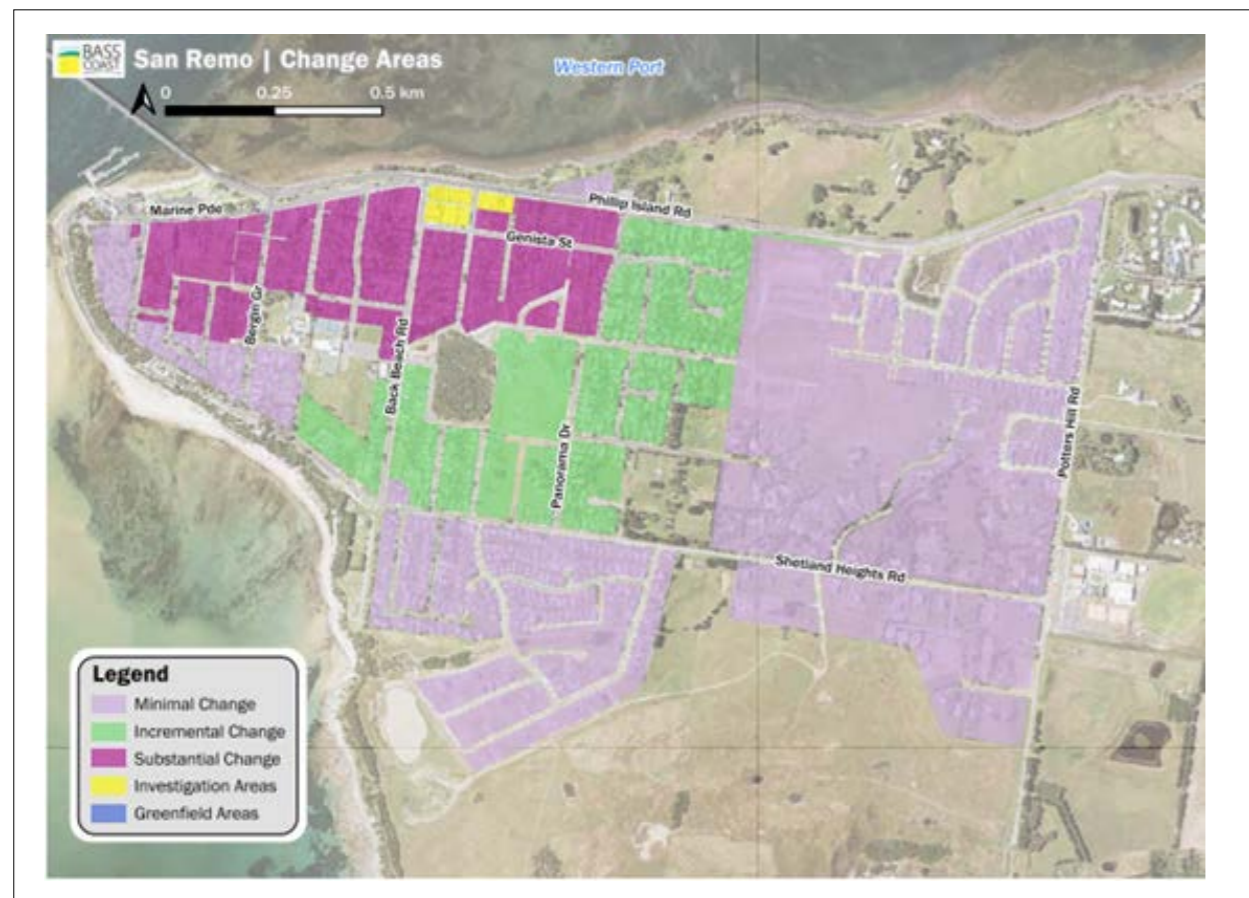
### 1.7.4 Bass Coast Shire Council Plan 2021-2025

The development of the San Remo Structure Plan is an action from the Council Plan Annual Action Plan 2023-2024.

### 1.7.5 Bass Coast Housing Strategy 2024

The Bass Coast Housing Strategy outlines a framework for managing housing growth for the next 15 years, by ensuring sufficient land and housing diversity for future community needs. The Strategy guides housing change across the Shire and informs the appropriate location and application of residential zones.

The Housing Strategy's 'Change Areas' for San Remo are shown in Figure 8.



**Figure 8.** Bass Coast Housing Strategy Change Areas throughout San Remo.

### 1.7.6 Bass Coast Neighbourhood Character Strategy 2024

The Bass Coast Neighbourhood Character Strategy informs proposed neighbourhood character areas for settlements throughout the Shire, to formalise character areas into the Planning Scheme.

The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure built form outcomes respect and respond to the unique landscapes throughout Bass Coast. In doing this, the Strategy sets out neighbourhood character profiles and definitions, the methodology, key issues, and they will be implemented.

Within the Strategy, San Remo has the following neighbourhood character types:

- Coastal contemporary - areas characterised by consistently sited dwellings in private garden settings & grid layout. Modern dwelling types, interspersed by heritage dwellings with contemporary infill development (refer Figure 9).



**Figure 9.** San Remo's 'Coastal Contemporary' character areas in the Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

- Coastal residential - areas characterised by higher density development & grid layout in coastal locations. Modern & contemporary dwelling types dominate interspersed by heritage dwellings (refer Figure 10).



**Figure 10.** San Remo's 'Coastal Residential' character areas in the Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

- Rural residential - primarily consists of contemporary dwellings, interspersed with inter & post-war dwellings, sited on large residential lots within rural settings at edges of settlements. Large dwellings in vegetated setting surrounded by a mix of sealed & unsealed roads (refer Figure 11).



**Figure 11.** San Remo's 'Rural Residential' character areas in the Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

### 1.8 Bass Coast Distinctive Area and Landscapes program

Since 2019, the entire Bass Coast Shire was declared as a Distinctive Area and Landscape (DAL) under Part 3AAB of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The DAL declaration identifies Bass Coast as having outstanding environmental, geographical, cultural, natural resources or productive land, strategic infrastructure or built form significance.

The DAL declaration required and introduced the following:

- Preparation of Statement of Planning Policy (SPP) in partnership with local government and Traditional Owners.
- Development of a long-term vision and strategies to protect distinctive areas in consultation with local communities.
- Provides opportunity for protected settlement boundaries for townships – like Melbourne's urban growth boundary.

A draft SPP was prepared by the former Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), now Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), in collaboration with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Council, and other government agencies.

Public consultation of the draft SPP was undertaken from 3 March to 29 April 2022, with 747 submissions received on a range of matters. Following this, a DAL Standing Advisory Committee (DAL SAC) was established to further address submissions on the draft SPP with hearings taking place from 6 March to 27 April 2023.

In January 2024, DTP released a further landscape assessment of San Remo to address matters raised in the 2023 DAL SAC hearings. The main purpose of the San Remo further landscape assessment was to ascertain the appropriateness and extent of eastern urban development. The recommendations of the San Remo Further Landscape Assessment were:

- Recommends the extent of the settlement boundary to the east of San Remo through the natural topography of the landscape.
- Recommended planning controls to be implemented which include Significant Landscape Overlays (SLOs) (refer Figure 12):
  - Proposed SLO1 – Bass Hills, Bass River Valley and Coastal Plans
  - Proposed SLO6 – San Remo to Kilcunda Coast

Along with the San Remo Further Landscape Assessment, the same assessments were undertaken for both Ventnor and Cape Paterson. Following the release of the further landscape assessments for San Remo, Cape Paterson and Ventnor, Council submitted to the State Government in February 2024 with their position.

Given that no further decision has been made on the Bass Coast DAL as of January 2025, the Structure Plan will identify high level objectives for the San Remo growth-front area.



**Figure 12.** The proposed Protected Settlement Boundary for San Remo, with the plan also showing the proposed SLO1 (yellow) and SLO6 (purple).

## 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section of the report details the existing conditions in San Remo. It covers information on the current population, land uses, development and built form, public open space, the natural environment, transport systems and the economy.

This information provides further context for the Structure Plan.

### 2.1 Population and demographic

At the time of the ABS 2021 Census, San Remo's population was 1700 people made up of 463 separate families. The estimated 2023 population of San Remo was 1760 people.

The average age of San Remo residents is 52 years, reasonably consistent with other areas of Bass Coast.

San Remo's residential density and dwelling make-up includes:

- Average of 2.2 people per dwelling
- 114 persons per square kilometre based on a size of 15.3 square metres

There are 77% of San Remo households which consist only of couples with no children, non-family households or are unoccupied private dwellings.

### 2.2 Heritage

In accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, a number of culturally significant places and artefacts, are registered as being located in San Remo.

Originally known as Griffiths Point, San Remo was first surveyed in 1850 as a 650-acre coastal township. The town developed from the 1870s onwards. This included the construction of a jetty to transport coal from Kilcunda, the establishment of a local school, and the completion of the Pier Hotel and San Remo Hotel.

In 1888, following a successful petition by residents, the town's name was officially changed to San Remo, after the Italian Riviera town. From the early 20th century, San Remo developed as both a tourist and fishing town, capitalising on its proximity to Phillip Island and direct access to commercial fishing waters in Bass Strait and Westernport Bay.

After years of campaigning, a suspension bridge was commissioned by the State Government in 1938. Due to engineering difficulties the Phillip Island Bridge wasn't opened until 1940, where it had an immediate impact, increasing both tourism and commercial productivity. Over time the Bridge's weight limit proved a significant

constraint, and as such, a new reinforced concrete bridge was opened in 1969 with the original suspension bridge demolished in 1970.

Currently, there are three heritage places included in the Heritage Overlay (HO) in San Remo. Two places within the activity centre and one in the established area (refer Figure 13).

The three HO places are:

- HO Schedule 137 (HO137) – St Augustine's Anglican Church at 111 Marine Parade, San Remo
- HO Schedule 138 (HO138) – Westernport Hotel located at 161 Marine Parade, San Remo
- HO Schedule 139 (HO139) – San Remo House at 11 Phillip Island Road, San Remo



**Figure 13.** Locations of Heritage Overlay (HO137, HO138 and HO139) properties in San Remo.

Through the Bass Coast Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework project, there was 21 potential heritage places identified in San Remo. These places are recommended to be further investigated, with 19 listed as very-high priority with the remaining two as high priority.

### 2.3 Land use

There are various land use zones, areas and development throughout San Remo. This section details the zoning, location and development of different types of land use in San Remo.

#### 2.3.1 Residential

##### General Residential Zone

The General Residential Zone – Schedule 1 (GRZ1) makes up most of San Remo’s traditional residential areas. The GRZ1 throughout San Remo does not apply any specific conditions, guidelines or requirements through the Schedule to the zone.

The GRZ1 in San Remo can be described as:

- Moderate to generous sized lots ranging from approximately 300 – 1000 square metres.
- Generally single dwellings on lots throughout the established and newer areas.
- Increasing levels of infill development, multi-unit development and re-subdivision through the established areas.

- Generally standardised single dwelling lot development throughout the newer areas.
- Range of landscaping features, setbacks and dwelling orientation.
- Mix of dwelling age and design of single and double storey dwellings to capture views to Bass Strait, Westernport Bay and Phillip Island.

There are some disconnected small lots of GRZ1 located north of Phillip Island Road (44 - 38 Phillip Island Road) adjacent the San Remo Police Station. This pocket of contains a mix of developed and vacant land.

In the southeastern corner of San Remo, off Shetland Heights Road, there is a small area of GRZ1 land, known as the Golf Club land due to a previous application for a golf course development. The land is developed with multi-storey apartment buildings, originally designed for accommodation purposes but now used as traditional, permanent dwellings. The Golf Club land was rezoned in 2021 (under Amendment C150) from Low Density Residential Zone to GRZ1 to accommodate the subdivision of the individual apartments.

##### Low Density Residential Zone

The south-eastern areas of San Remo are zoned Low Density Residential (LDRZ) which includes the areas of the southern end of Potters Hill Road, Shetland Heights Road and Small Court (refer Figure 14).

The LDRZ areas contain large allotments with single dwellings sited with sprawling gardens. Due to the topography of the land, dwellings benefit from view lines to the surrounding environment.

A large majority of the LDRZ land abuts the FZ land outside the San Remo settlement boundary.



**Figure 14.** Pocket of Low Density Residential Zone in San Remo in the south-eastern corner of the township.

### 2.3.2 Commercial

San Remo's commercial areas are made up of Mixed Use Zone and Commercial 1 Zone.

#### Mixed Use Zone

There is one small pocket of Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) in San Remo located between Back Beach Road and San Remo Parade south of Phillip Island Road (refer Figure 15).

The MUZ land extends south to Genista Street, with some of the lots having split zoning. This results in MUZ to the north and GRZ1 to the south. In the Bass Coast Housing Strategy 2024, the MUZ land was designated as an 'Investigation Area' with its role in housing supply to be determined.

The MUZ land contains a mix of land uses and development from a service station, warehouses, the Myli San Remo library and a car wash.



**Figure 15.** Mixed Use Zone in San Remo, set between the C1Z and GRZ1 zones adjacent to Phillip Island Road.

#### Commercial 1 Zone

The Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) applies to land along Marine Parade, considered San Remo's town centre or activity centre (refer Figure 16).

The C1Z applies to lots along Marine Parade to the south from Back Beach Road (east) to Woolamai Grove (west). The zoning extent and purpose of the C1Z has been unchanged since 1999 New Format Planning Scheme, when it was previously as Business 1 Zone.

The C1Z has two main purposes:

- To create vibrant mixed use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses.
- To provide for residential uses at densities complementary to the role and scale of the commercial centre.

The C1Z also applies to a small area of approximately 450 square metres of land in which the San Remo Fisherman's Co-Op is located. This area of C1Z is surrounded by PPRZ land as part of the Foreshore Reserve.

Most commercial and residential uses do not require a planning permit under the C1Z, but a permit is generally required for buildings and works (development). The C1Z allows office, and retail uses to have specific areas of maximum leasable floor areas within the zone schedule, which does not apply for the C1Z in San Remo.



**Figure 16.** Extent of C1Z in San Remo along Marine Parade surrounded by MUZ, PPRZ & GRZ1 land.



**2.3.3 Other uses**

Special Use Zone

There is one area of Special Use Zone – Schedule 6 (SUZ6) in San Remo which contains the Silverwater Resort on the northern corner of Potters Hill Road and Phillip Island Road. The SUZ6 was introduced in 2010 when the land was rezoned from Farming Zone under Amendment C135.

Specifically, SUZ6 was designed for the Resort, as the Schedule applied allows the development. SUZ6 includes a table of uses, subdivision, buildings and works and signage controls for the site. The Schedule also contains the Silverwater Master Plan which sets out the layout of the Resort development precincts (refer Figure 17).



**Figure 17.** The Silverwater Master Plan depicting the layout & functions of the Silverwater Resort in the SUZ6.

### Transport Zone

The Transport Zone (TRZ) covers the Phillip Island Road corridor through San Remo extending to Anderson (east) and onto Phillip Island further west (refer Figure 18).

Phillip Island Road is listed under TRZ Schedule 2 (TRZ2) with planning controls consistent throughout the State, as a road managed and maintained by the Department of Transport and Planning.



**Figure 18.** The Transport Zone (shown in grey) which extends through San Remo along Phillip Island Road.

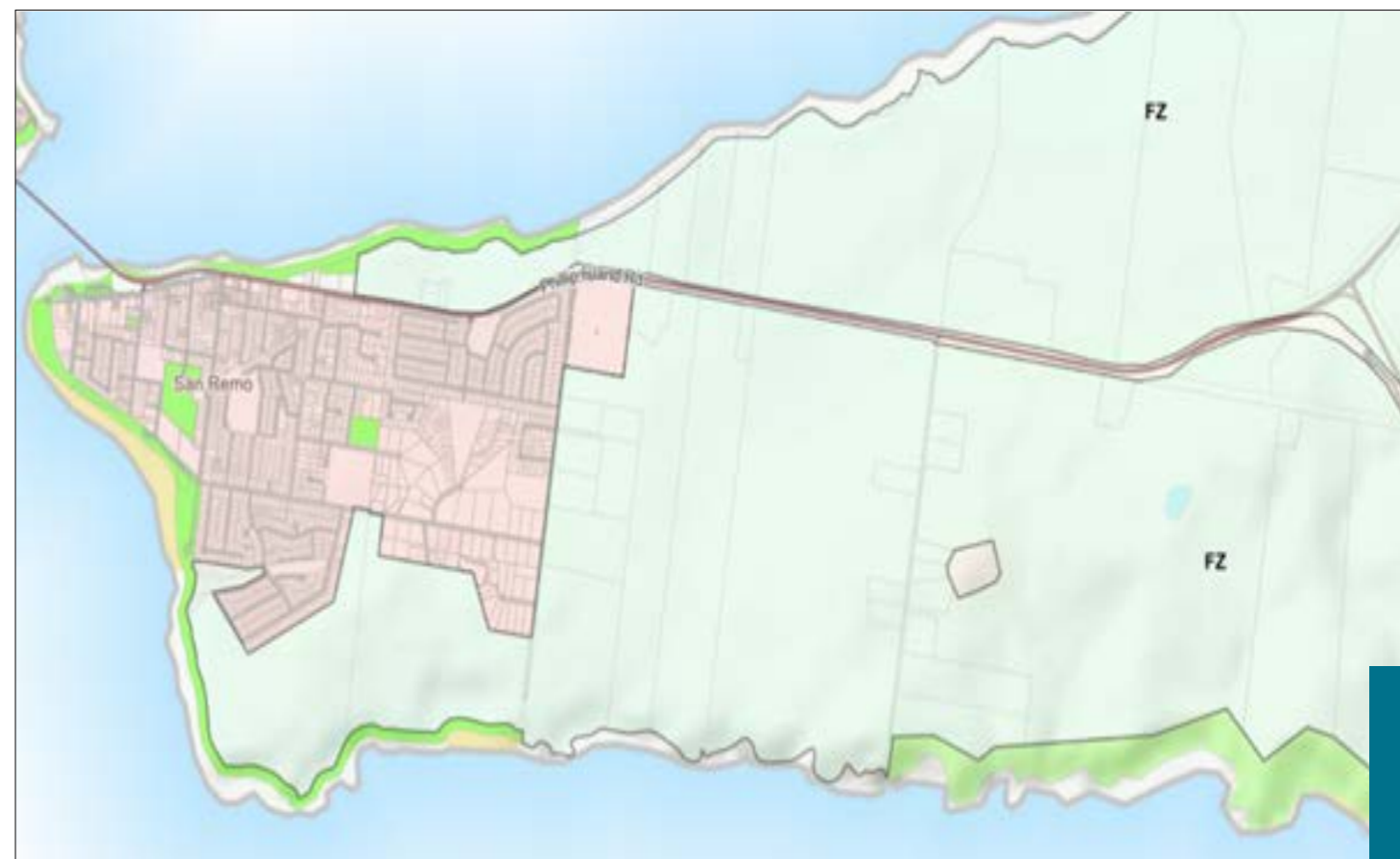
### Farming Zone

The land within the Structure Plan study area extending from Potters Hill Road to Punch Bowl Road, north of Phillip Island Road and south of Penniwells Estate to the Bass Strait coastline is within the Farming Zone (FZ) (refer Figure 19). There is no FZ land within the San Remo settlement boundary.

However, along Potters Hill Road there is some urban development which includes:

- Large lifestyle lots containing large dwellings, mostly single storey with surrounding gardens, dams or within farming (grazing) land.
- The Bass Coast College San Remo campus which was constructed in 2021 including school buildings, car parking areas and a full-sized playing oval. San Remo's Bass Coast College campus accommodates students from year 7 to year 9.

The FZ land between Potters Hill Road and Punch Bowl Road is made up of large agricultural holdings which are predominately used for cattle grazing, hay production and vineyards.



**Figure 19.** Map showing the various zones in San Remo, with the Farming Zone surrounding the township.

### Industrial Zone

There is no Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) or Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) in San Remo. There is nearby Industrial zoned land in Newhaven and Grantville.

### 2.3.4 Public land

#### Public Use Zone

##### Schedule 2

Public Use Zone Schedule 2 (PUZ2) contains the land for the San Remo Primary School, located on the corner of Bergin Grove and Thomas Grove (refer Figure 20).

The San Remo Primary School:

- Accommodates students from Prep to Grade 6.
- Utilises the Recreation Centre adjacent the school site for physical education & gatherings.
- Contains the original San Remo School building which was moved to the current site in 1948.
- Does not benefit from school bus services, but allows for many children that walk or ride.



Figure 20. The location of the PUZ2 land (yellow) is adjacent the Recreation Reserve.

##### Schedule 3

PUZ3 accommodates the San Remo Police Station on the northern side of Phillip Island Road on the entry into town (refer Figure 21).

The site is approximately 0.5 hectares and abuts the TRZ2 along Phillip Island for access, and PPRZ to the north along the coastline with Westernport Bay.



Figure 21. The location of PUZ3 land (yellow) on Phillip Island Road in San Remo.

##### Schedule 5

PUZ5 allows for, and accommodates the San Remo Cemetery, located between Anderson Street and Shetland Heights Road (refer Figure 22).

The San Remo Cemetery is surrounded by residential land both GRZ1 and LDRZ and is adjacent to the Anderson Street Reserve on the northern side of Anderson Street.



Figure 22. The location of the PUZ5 land (yellow) on Anderson Street in San Remo.

### Public Park and Recreation Zone

The extent of San Remo's Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) land includes the coastal foreshore reserve areas extending along the northern coast with Westernport Bay around Marine Parade and then south to Lion's Park and beyond.

The PPRZ land around the coastline contains valued vegetation, community infrastructure and beach access. The San Remo Beachfront Caravan Park, accessible from Ocean Grove and Davis Point Road, abuts the southern coastline. The caravan park land is leased on a long-term basis from the State Government and privately managed by the caravan park operators.

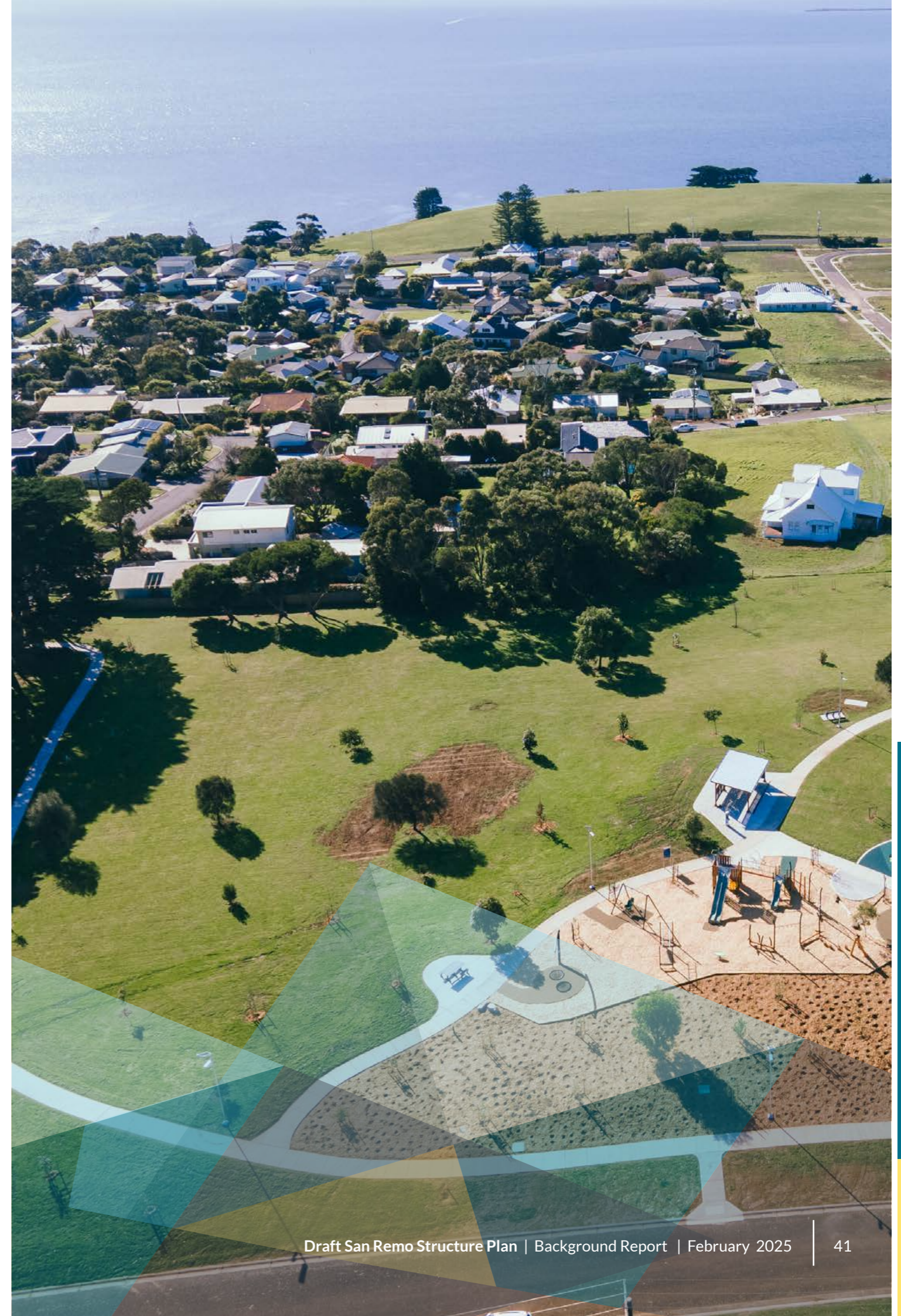
Within San Remo's established township, there are two pockets of PPRZ:

- San Remo Recreation Reserve - off Wynne Road, Ocean Grove, Davis Point & Back Beach Roads
- Anderson Street Reserve - off Anderson Street adjacent to the San Remo Cemetery

The San Remo Recreation Reserve (refer Figure 23) is approximately 3.8 hectares in size. The Reserve is mostly surrounded by GRZ1 land with the exception of the San Remo Primary School adjacent the site to the north-west, which is zoned PUZ2.



**Figure 23.** The location of PPRZ (green) of the San Remo Recreation Reserve, off Wynne Road in San Remo.





### 2.3.5 Public open space

There is approximately 57 hectares of public open space (POS) throughout San Remo. This includes 12.64 hectares of sporting and recreation areas and infrastructure.

Public open space for the purposes of the Structure Plan, is defined as an area of land which has public access. POS can have different management or ownership status' and refers to:

- Public parks
- Recreation reserves & centres
- A nature or vegetation reserve
- A town square
- A green link or corridor which is public land which intersects private land
- Road reserves

Some examples of POS in San Remo include:

- San Remo Foreshore Reserve – playground, shelter, public toilets, seating, drinking fountains, walking tracks/ paths.
- Lion's Park – playground, shelters, BBQs, public toilets, seating and labyrinth area.
- Anderson Street Reserve – playground, seating, shelter and exercise equipment.
- San Remo Recreation Reserve – recreation centre, tennis courts and bowling green rink.

As Council maintains a majority of POS in San Remo, there are different service levels allocated to the different areas based on individual requirements. The maintenance level is determined by a POS hierarchy and the aesthetic impact of each area (refer Table 1).

San Remo relies on surrounding townships for POS and recreation facilities such as Newhaven, Cape Woolamai, Bass and Kilcunda.

**Table 1:** The POS service levels for land managed by Council, including San Remo examples.

Maintenance Level	Definition	Examples
Very High	Locations requiring very high levels of regular maintenance due to their community significance, high public visibility &/or type of gardens & plants.	Marine Parade playground and Foreshore Reserve
High	Locations requiring high levels of regular maintenance due to level of community use &/or public visibility.	Lion's Park
Medium	Locations requiring maintenance at regular intervals.	Penniwells Estate drainage reserve and recreation corridor
Low	Locations where extended maintenance intervals are acceptable due to low levels of use	Island View Estate water sensitive urban design drainage reserve

## 2.4 Public land management

The public (Crown) land throughout San Remo is managed under various agreements, predominately between land managers and DEECA.

### 2.4.1 San Remo Foreshore Reserve including Lion's Park

The San Remo Foreshore Reserve extends from the northern coast around Potters Hill Road to the west around the peninsula capturing the Marine Parade Foreshore then around the southern coastline to Lion's Park.

The land within the Foreshore Reserve depicts the area which was previously managed by the San Remo Foreshore Reserve Committee of Management (SRFRCOM) who disbanded in 2019. Since this time, the Committee of Management's responsibilities have been undertaken by officers at DEECA.

At the time of the SRFRCOM's management of the Foreshore, there was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) put in place between the SRFRCOM and Bass Coast Shire Council for the maintenance of specific sections and aspects of the Foreshore Reserve.

### 2.4.2 San Remo Recreation Reserve

The San Remo Recreation Reserve and Centre is managed by a community volunteer-led Committee of Management (COM). The COM is administered under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) on behalf of the Crown.

The COM are appointed on a 3-year term (as of December 2024) and are responsible for the management, procurement and maintenance of the Recreation Reserve and Centre.

The San Remo Bowls Club and the Westernport Tennis Club both operate and use the Reserve through an annual lease agreement.

### 2.4.3 San Remo Cemetery

As of 1 February 2025, the Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (SMCT) will commence the management of the San Remo Cemetery under Section 8 of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003*.

SMCT will take on all San Remo Cemetery's assets, liabilities, duties and obligations.

The change of management for the San Remo and Wonthaggi Cemeteries will mean the San Remo Cemetery Trust is abolished, which was administered by Council.

## 2.5 Biodiversity

San Remo features a mix of coastal and rural landscapes that support diverse ecological systems.

Bordered by Westernport Bay to the north and Bass Strait to the south, San Remo includes significant environmental sites such as the San Remo Coastal Reserve, Punch Bowl Coast Reserve, and Yallock-Bulluk Nature & Coastal Park. All these areas have varying degrees of native coastal vegetation, providing critical habitat for native species.

Historically cleared for grazing, much of the landscape surrounding San Remo is dominated by exotic pasture, planted trees, urban development, and small patches of remnant native vegetation. While some reserves such as the San Remo Recreation Reserve, Anderson Street Reserve, and Hilltop Park provide public open space, their ecological value is limited due to planted vegetation, stormwater drainage infrastructure and maintained lawn.

Westernport Bay has international ecological significance, listed under the Ramsar Convention for its importance to migratory shorebirds, it forms part of the East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network, supporting over 10,000 shorebirds from 37 species. These coastal wetlands and shorelines such as the ones in and surrounding San Remo provide vital habitat for birds during their non-breeding season, highlighting the town's small but important role in global biodiversity conservation.

The marine community in the intertidal and subtidal coastal areas are rich with marine life. A small area of 600 by 300 metres off the coast has high invertebrate diversity and the only Australian record of the *Rhodope nudibranch* (sea slug) genus can be found in this area.

The management plan for the Westernport Ramsar Site also identifies the high diversity of opisthobranchs, which is a group that includes both sea-slugs and sea-hares and are listed as a threatened community under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. The high level of biodiversity in this area is specifically noted in the management plan as contributing to the identification of Westernport as a Ramsar site and therefore its international significance.

The Rhodolith bed north of San Remo that forms part of this habitat is noted as likely to be particularly vulnerable to sedimentation and increased turbidity. The quality of water expelled into Westernport Bay by the San Remo settlement therefore must be a consideration of any future change.

## 2.6 Landscape features

The landscape of San Remo is varied and unique, and highly valued by the Bunrong people, locals and visitors. The coastline and hinterland between San Remo and Inverloch has State and regional significance.

San Remo is described as a coastal township with a landscape character mix between established areas of the town with varied built form set amongst vegetation. Whereas San Remo's eastern area is unique in its own way whereby any further development would have to accommodate any impacts on the natural landscape.

The landscape character for San Remo is categorised under the Bass Hills and Kilcunda Coast (as per the SLO1), but San Remo's landscape represents:

- The connection from the mainland to Phillip Island at the crossing of the 'The Narrows' and the Phillip Island Road Bridge between San Remo and Newhaven
- Exposure to the dramatic coastline and sea cliffs along Westernport Bay and Bass Strait
- Increasing residential development at the eastern edge of San Remo

## 2.7 Climate change impacts

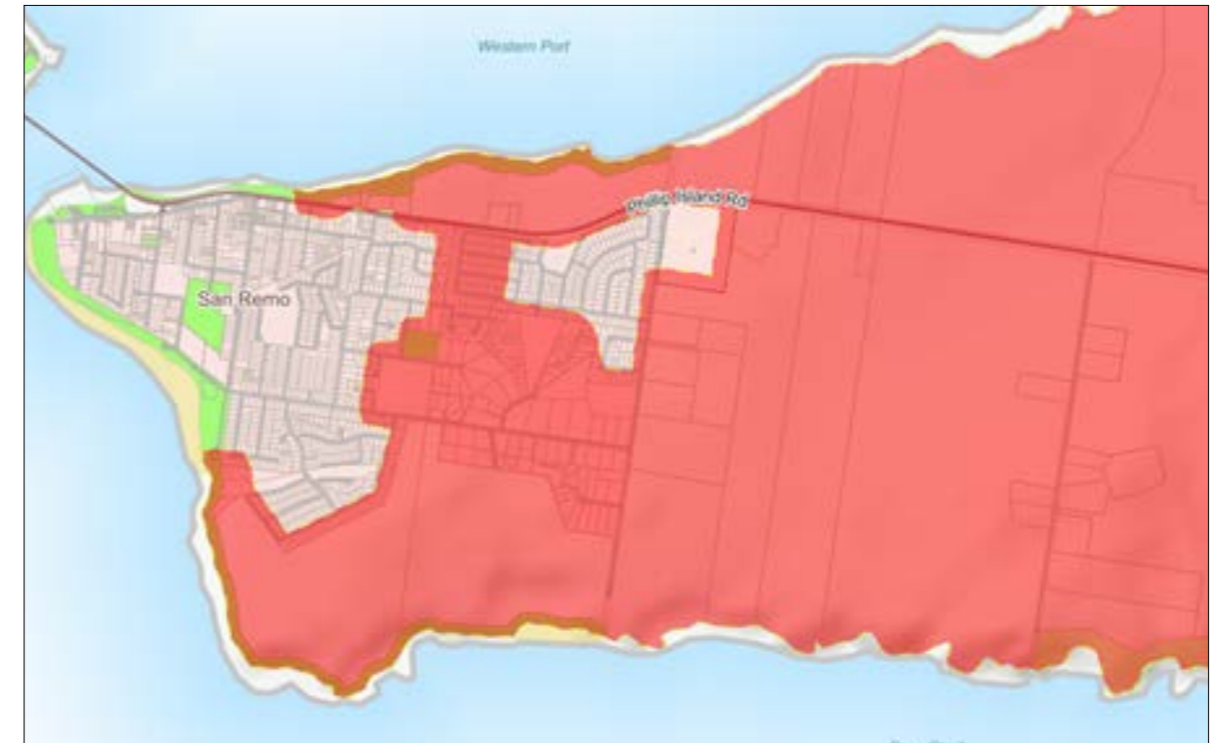
### 2.7.1 Bushfire

When compared to other townships in the Shire, San Remo is considered relatively lower-risk in terms of bushfire.

The Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) covers the land surrounding San Remo highlighting the potential risk for bushfire exists around the township (refer Figure 24). The higher order planning control for bushfire, the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) does not cover San Remo.

Currently, San Remo is most likely to be impacted by fires through small grassfires occurring in the agricultural land in Eastern San Remo or indirectly by larger bushfires elsewhere in the shire causing road closures and reducing air quality.

Increasing climatic variability will likely enhance bushfire intensity and occurrence over coming years. While it is unlikely that San Remo itself would be subject to direct burning, the impacts of nearby towns being either cut off via road closures or by direct burning should be considered as it has been established that San Remo's residents are reliant on the services that nearby towns provide.



**Figure 24.** Bushfire Prone Areas of San Remo.

### 2.7.2 Heat

Increasing urbanisation in San Remo combined with rising global average temperatures will likely contribute to localised urban heat increases into the future.

Urban areas like San Remo that lack significant tree cover, absorb and retain heat through hard surfaces such as roads and buildings (refer Figure 25). This process whereby urban areas retain heat in the built environment is known as the heat island effect.

As climate change leads to more frequent extreme heat events, the risk of heat stress will rise, particularly for vulnerable populations. In San Remo, the town's ageing demographic makes residents especially susceptible to the urban heat effect and the increasing intensity and frequency of heatwaves.



**Figure 25.** The location and extent of urban canopy cover throughout San Remo, which is sparse, and therefore, impacts on increased heat retained in the environment.

### 2.7.3 Coastal impacts

San Remo's location, surrounded by extensive coastline makes it vulnerable to coastal impacts, such as erosion, storm surges, and tidal forces. As well, winds gradually erode beaches, coastal cliffs and coastal vegetation overtime, which is becoming more prevalent, and therefore, will exacerbate impacts to public and private spaces.

The impacts of coastal erosion can be mitigated through a variety of measures such as dune restoration, sea walls and beach nourishment. Planning proactively for the coastal impacts of climate change can help protect coastal infrastructure while also preserving the Shire's environmental assets.

### 2.7.4 Extreme weather events and change

San Remo's unique positioning makes it particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events. With coastlines to the north, south and west, the township boundaries are vulnerable to coastal inundation via storm surge during extreme weather events.

As climate change is anticipated to increase the frequency of extreme weather events, it should be expected that the Shire's coastal townships, like San Remo, will be increasingly impacted by severe storms and therefore, proactive planning will be needed to minimise the impact of climate change on local communities.

## 2.8 Township and neighbourhood character

San Remo is often referred to as the gateway to Philip Island as it provides the point at which you arrive and depart from the Island. San Remo is a coastal settlement set within regionally significant landscapes between Westernport Bay and Bass Strait.

The town provides conventional residential land use and development which transitions to lower density around its southern and eastern edges due to the natural landscape, current settlement boundary and surrounding farmland. The established areas of San Remo differ to the newer growth-front area in terms of road layout, landscaping, development design and form and lot sizes.

Located on the Anderson Peninsula, the town is restricted in terms of growth due to its surrounding environment, geography and topography. However, this affords the town and its development to valued outlooks to the Bass Hills, Phillip Island, Westernport Bay and Bass Strait (refer Figure 26).



**Figure 26.** San Remo's residential areas.

A vibrant but aged town centre along Marine Parade, the San Remo Foreshore and surrounding streets provides for meeting points for locals and visitors. Particularly to gain access to services or attend the popular pelican feeding on the Foreshore at the San Remo Fishermens' Co-Op which occurs daily (refer Figure 27).



**Figure 27.** San Remo's view to Newhaven on Phillip Island (top) and commercial development along Marine Parade (bottom).

## 2.9 Built form and layout

There are various types of built form throughout San Remo, controlled by different planning overlays, there are discussed and detailed in this section of the Report.

### 2.9.1 Heritage Overlay

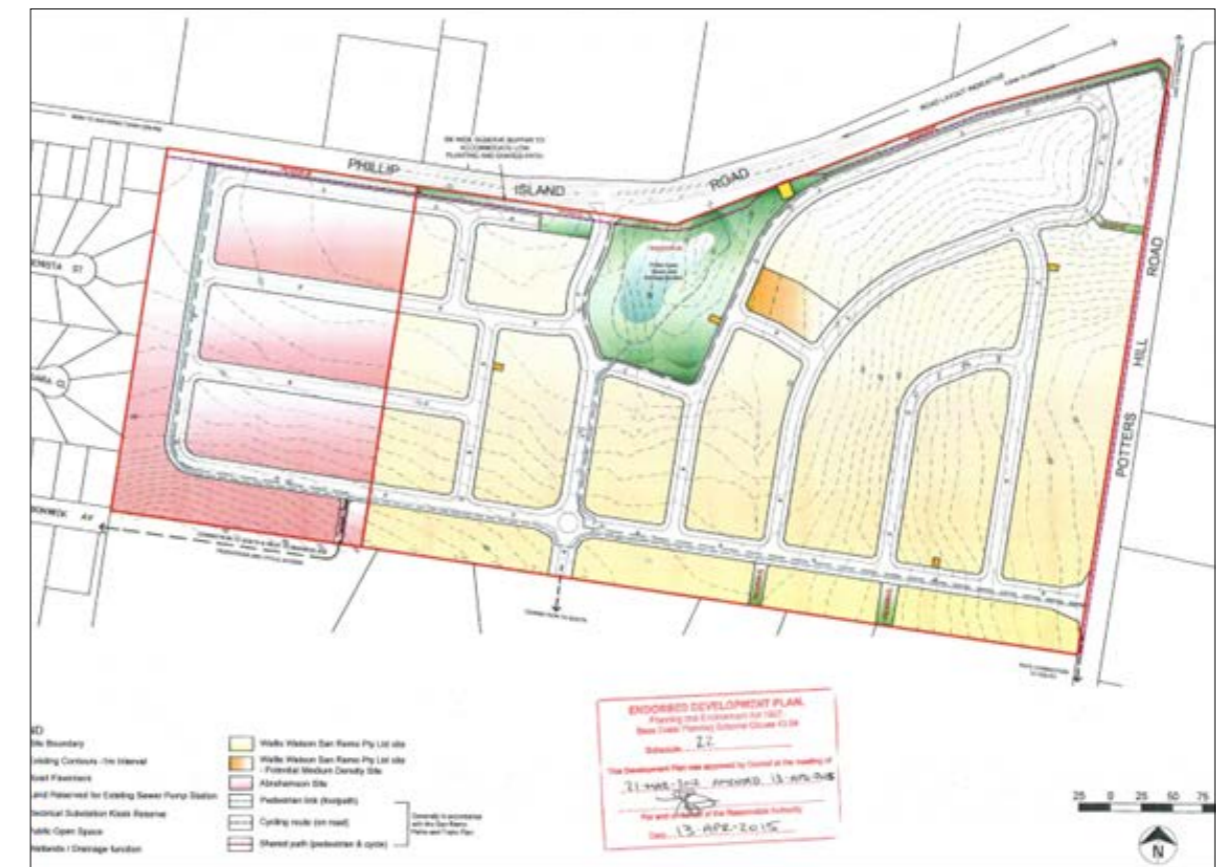
The Heritage Overlay Schedules in San Remo are discussed above.

### 2.9.2 Development Plan Overlay

#### Schedule 22

Planning Scheme Amendment C103 introduced Development Plan Overlay - Schedule 22 (DPO22) in November 2011. The DPO22 was introduced to guide 26 hectares of development referred to as the Residential Growth Area.

The DPO22 is bound by Phillip Island Road (north), Potters Hill Road (east) and San Remo's existing residential areas (west) (refer Figure 28).



**Figure 28.** Endorsed Development Plan 22 (DPO22) in San Remo.

### Schedule 23

Planning Scheme Amendment C105 introduced DPO Schedule 23 (DPO23) in July 2012. DPO23 is bound by Potters Hill Road and Shetland Heights Road within San Remo and is immediately south of the area covered by DPO22 (refer Figure 29).

DPO23 was introduced to guide development occurring of approximately 15.5 hectares.

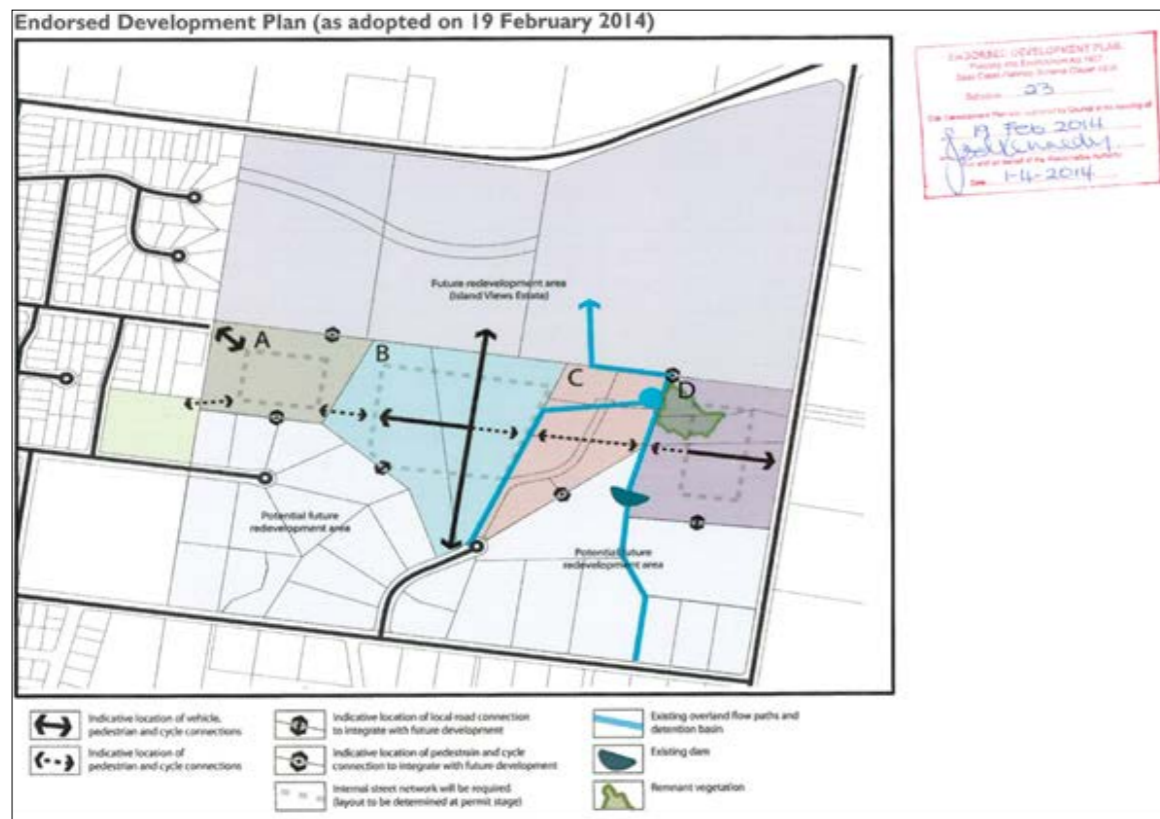


Figure 29. Endorsed Development Plan 22 (DPO22) in San Remo.

### 2.9.3 Design and Development Overlay

#### Schedule 1

The Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 (DDO1) applies to residential areas near the coast and applies to residential areas visible from the coastal edge. The DDO1 covers large sections of San Remo and aims to minimise impacts of development along the coastline and protect views to and from the coast (refer Figure 30).

A planning permit is triggered for development proposed to exceed 7m in height from the natural ground level.

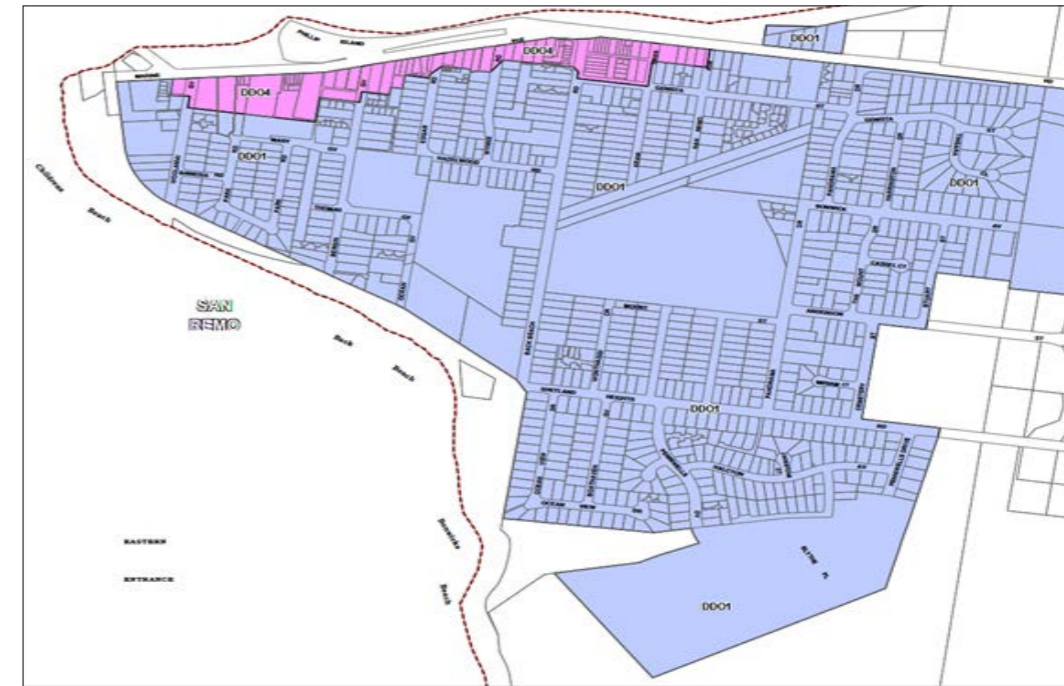


Figure 30. Location and extent of DDO1 (purple) in San Remo.

#### Schedule 4

The Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 4 (DDO4) covers the commercial and mixed use areas in San Remo's town centre (refer Figure 31).



Figure 31. DDO4 (pink) applied to the south of Marine Parade & Phillip Island Road.

The purpose of the DDO4 is to ensure new development respects the town's existing character and scale. It promotes high-quality design that enhances the coastal environment, streetscape, and architectural diversity.

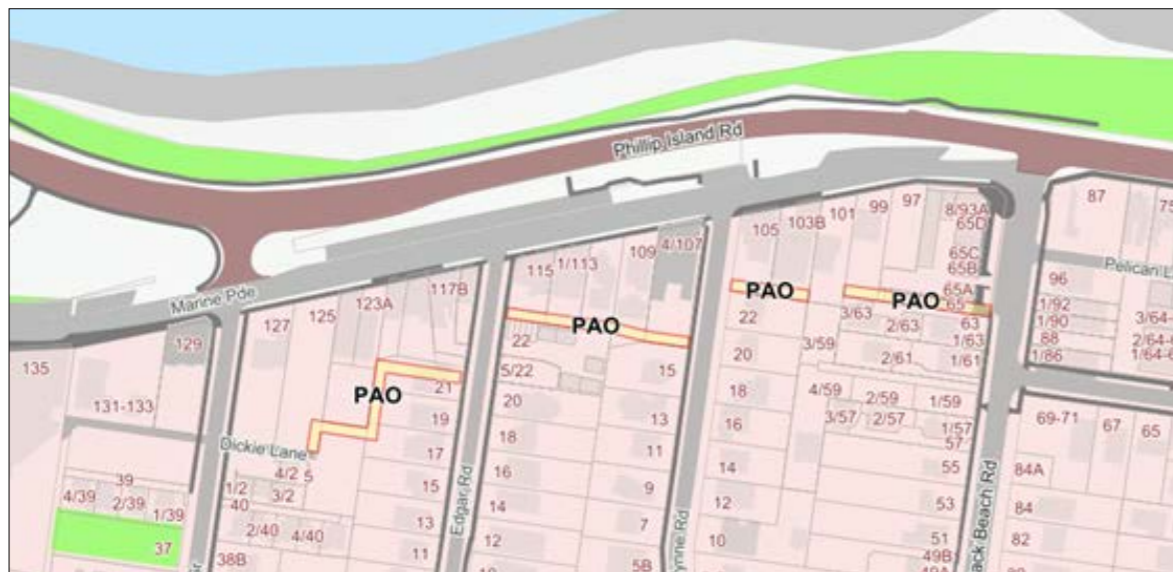
Protecting views from Westernport Bay and encouraging active street frontages are also key objectives. The DDO4 provides no planning permit exemptions for buildings, but some specific exemptions for specific structures.

Notably the DDO4 governs height controls on Marine Parade and Phillip Island Road.

### 2.9.4 Public Acquisition Overlay

There are some sections of land which are covered by the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO). The PAO identifies and highlights land to be publicly acquired by Council or another public entity.

The PAO in San Remo sets out 'back-of-block' laneways to the rear of development on Marine Parade between Bergin Grove and Back Beach Road (refer Figure 32). The PAOs were introduced prior to New Format Planning Schemes in 1999.



**Figure 32.** The location of the PAOs in San Remo.

### 2.9.5 Environmental Significance Overlay

The Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1) applies to coastal land around the Shire between settlements designating coastal wetland areas.

It applies to two areas of San Remo within the study area:

- North of Marine Parade between Wynne Road and the San Remo Fishermans' Co-Op car parking area
- Davis Point Road for its full extent between Ocean Grove and Back Beach Road

The ESO1 has been applied to these areas due to their proximity to the internationally significant wetlands of Westernport Bay.

The ESO1 Schedule includes a permit exemption for buildings and works approved under the *Coastal Management Act 1995* or part of a management plan approved by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. These outdated references to legislation and government departments are proposed to be updated by State Government imminently.

### 2.9.6 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) is applied to land that is subject to inundation from riverine and urban flooding, as well as coastal processes.

In San Remo, it applies along the coastline in areas of Crown Land managed by the State Government and some rural land between Potters Hill Road and Punch Bowl Road.

### 2.9.7 Significant Landscape Overlay

The Significant Landscape Overlay - Schedule 1 (SLO1) relates to the Strzelecki Foothills and Bass Valley in Bass Coast. The eastern edges of San Remo, land between Potters Hill Road and Punch Bowl Road and north and south of the Settlement Boundary are covered by the SLO1 (refer Figure 33).

A key objective of the SLO1 is to minimise visual impacts of development within the landscape which includes coastal areas, the valley, and on slopes visible from main roads and settlements.



**Figure 33.** The location and extent of the SLO1 on the outskirts of the existing San Remo township.

The Draft SPP prepared for the Bass Coast DAL program proposes to split the existing SLO1 applying to San Remo into two schedules:

- Revised SLO1 for Bass Hills, Bass River Valley and Coastal Plains
- A new SLO6 for San Remo to Kilcunda Coast

### 2.9.8 Environmental Audit Overlay

The Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) applies to seven properties in San Remo bound by Pelican Lane (north), Keam Crescent (east) and Genista Street (south) (refer Figure 34).

The EAO requires an environmental audit to be undertaken prior to a sensitive land use commencing.

The land covered by the EAO and surrounding properties west facing Back Beach Road and 57-87 Phillip Island Road are within the MUZ. Despite being in the MUZ, which encourages a mix of residential and commercial uses, the land is currently occupied by industrial uses such as a print shop, auto mechanic, building contractor and home energy consultants.

The EAO was applied through Planning Scheme Amendment C001 in August 2000 following a direction in the Planning Panel Report for the 1999 New Format Planning Scheme. As the land was previously zoned for industrial uses, the EAO was applied so no sensitive uses would be undertaken prior to the completion of an environmental audit. An environmental audit was completed at 64-66 Genista Street in 2006 (Reference No. 0008002093), and it found the land suitable for residential uses.



**Figure 34.** Location of the Environmental Audit Overlay in San Remo

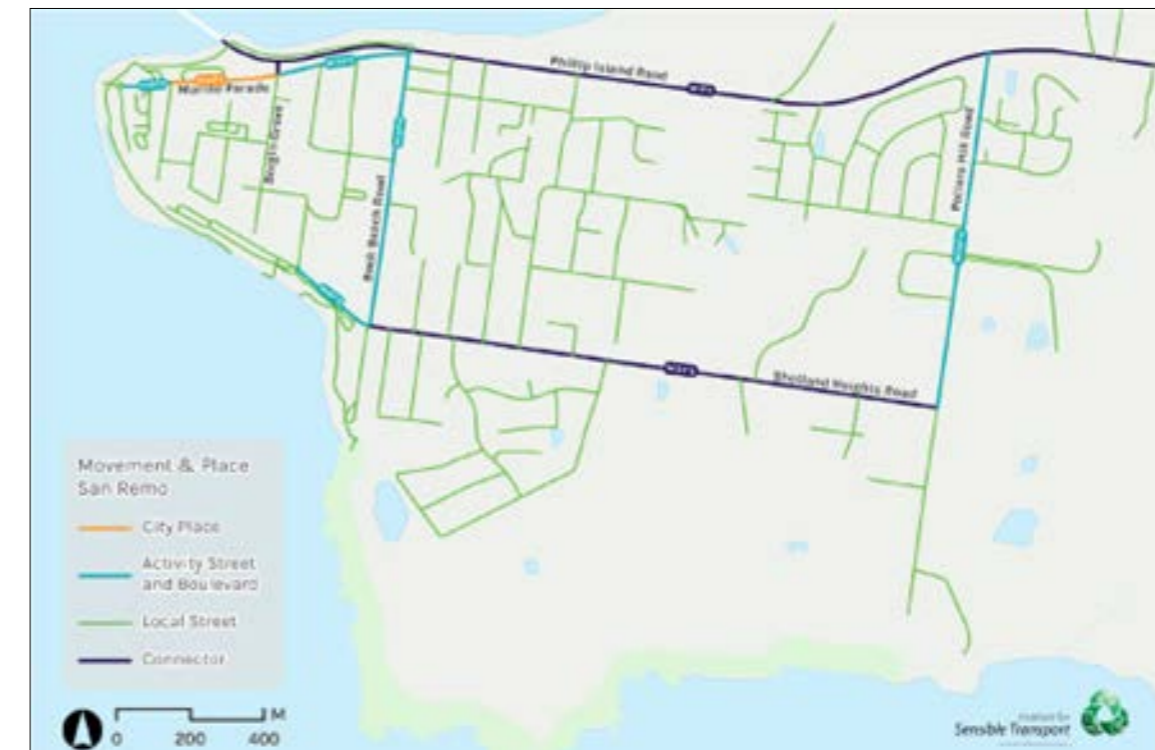
### 2.10 Transport network

Although dominated by private vehicles, San Remo has an integrated transport network including public transport routes, pedestrian networks and opportunities for cycling.

The road network consists primarily of local roads providing access to residential properties with more significant roads linking to the Marine Parade Activity Centre or to the arterial road through town, Phillip Island Road.

Phillip Island Road is a two-lane arterial road managed by the State Government and runs the length of the Structure Plan study area east to west. It provides access to Bergin Grove, Back Beach Road, Keam Crescent, San Remo Parade, Panorama Drive, Potters Hill Road and Punch Bowl Road.

Back Beach, Shetland Heights, and Potters Hill Roads as well as Bergin Grove act as key link roads in the township with Genista Street and Panorama Drive serving a tertiary function (refer Figure 35).



**Figure 35.** The Movement and Place Framework depicting the different function of streets in San Remo.



The only access to and from San Remo (by road) is via Phillip Island Road, which also serves as the only road access for the population of Phillip Island. Given this, there is pressure placed on Phillip Island Road and the local roads that access it. Phillip Island Road connects with Bass Highway to the east, providing access to both metropolitan Melbourne northbound or Wonthaggi, Inverloch and beyond southbound. To the west, Phillip Island Road terminates at Cowes, the district town on Phillip Island. These serve as major origins and destination of travel to and from San Remo.

Footpaths in San Remo, if provided along local streets, are often narrow and often are considered unsafe for pedestrians. An existing shared path runs along Phillip Island Road, connecting San Remo with the Bass Coast Rail Trail onwards to Wonthaggi. Pedestrian and bicycle access is provided on

the Phillip Island Road Bridge, connecting with the network on Phillip Island. Existing walking trails exist along the San Remo Foreshore and at the George Bass Coastal Trail which originates at the southern end of Punch Bowl Road and connects with the Bass Coast Rail Trail at Kilcunda.

San Remo has limited public transport services. There is a regional V/Line bus stop on Marine Parade which services the bus route travelling from Cowes - Dandenong with an interchange at Koo Wee Rup, providing alternative access to Southern Cross Station in Melbourne.

A local bus services San Remo 7 times per weekday to Cowes, and 6 times per weekday to Wonthaggi with 4 services each way on weekends. One local bus service operates once a day with 7 individual stops throughout San Remo's residential areas, along with the Marine Parade bus stop.

## 2.11 Parking

Current public car parking throughout San Remo is a mix of formalised and informal car parking areas. The majority of car parking is along Marine Parade and within the town centre, which includes:

- Along the south of Marine Parade, parallel on-street parking between Back Beach Road & Bergin Grove.
- Formalised car parking areas along the northern section of Marine Parade between Back Beach Road & Bergin Grove.
- Parallel on-street parking south along Bergin Grove, Back Beach Road, Woolamai Grove, Edgar Road & Wynne Road.
- Angled on-street parking on the western (norther end) of Back Beach Road.
- Parallel on-street parking south along Woolamai Grove.
- On the northern side of the Marine Parade Foreshore at the San Remo Fisherman's Co-Op and within the area between the playground and the toilet block. This is a combination of standard car parking bays and angled parking.
- Angled on-street car parking between Woolamai Grove & Bergin Grove on both (south & north) sides of Marine Parade.
- Parallel on-street parking on the southern side of Marine Parade at the intersection of Bergin Grove, Phillip Island Road & Marine Parade.
- Informal car parking area at the western end of Marine Parade at Davis Point, behind the San Remo Fishermans' Co-Op.

- Informal car parking on the northern side of Marine Parade opposite San Remo IGA at the intersection corner of Bergin Grove, Phillip Island Road & Marine Parade.

Throughout the year, almost daily, large buses and coaches arrive in San Remo for excursions and tours, often to watch the Pelican Feeding. However, there is currently no formalised bus or coach parking in San Remo's town centre.

### 2.12 Tourism

Over 2021 and 2022, tourism accounted for \$388 million (or 26.8%) of the Gross Regional Product for San Remo and Phillip Island. This results in San Remo and Phillip Island being the most tourism-reliant region in Victoria, and the fourth most tourism-reliant destination in Australia behind central Australia, Kangaroo Island (South Australia), and the east coast of Tasmania.

The top attractions in San Remo include:

- Daily pelican feeding watching at the San Remo Foreshore
- San Remo Fishermens' Co-Op
- George Bass Coastal Walk
- San Remo Foreshore
- Daily boat cruises (and whale watching cruises) from the San Remo Jetty

### 2.13 Events

The key events in San Remo include: San Remo TIDAL Festival (formerly known as the San Remo Fishing Festival), an event held over a weekend around mid-September annually. TIDAL includes cooking demonstrations and the 'Blessing of the Fleet' ceremony. TIDAL attracts between 5,000 - 6,500 attendees.

San Remo Channel Challenge, an annual event hosted by the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club. It involves participants swimming from the San Remo foreshore to Newhaven across 'The Narrows' and running back to San Remo over the Phillip Island Bridge. People can participate as individuals or in a team. The significant regional event which is held around February or March has strong attendance with approximately 700 participants and over 2,000 attendees.

Phillip Island Motorcycle Grand Prix (MotoGP) community and homecoming rides, meeting of motorcyclists in San Remo each year for the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix held on Phillip Island around October. The rides generally include about 200 attendees and involve motorcyclists riding as a group to or from the Grand Prix Track.

Walk for the Kids, involving more than 300 participants, the Walk for the Kids, is normally held on Good Friday and incorporates a walk around the foreshore trails and paths with post-event festivities at the San Remo Hotel. The Walk for the Kids is part of fundraising efforts for the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

### Other events

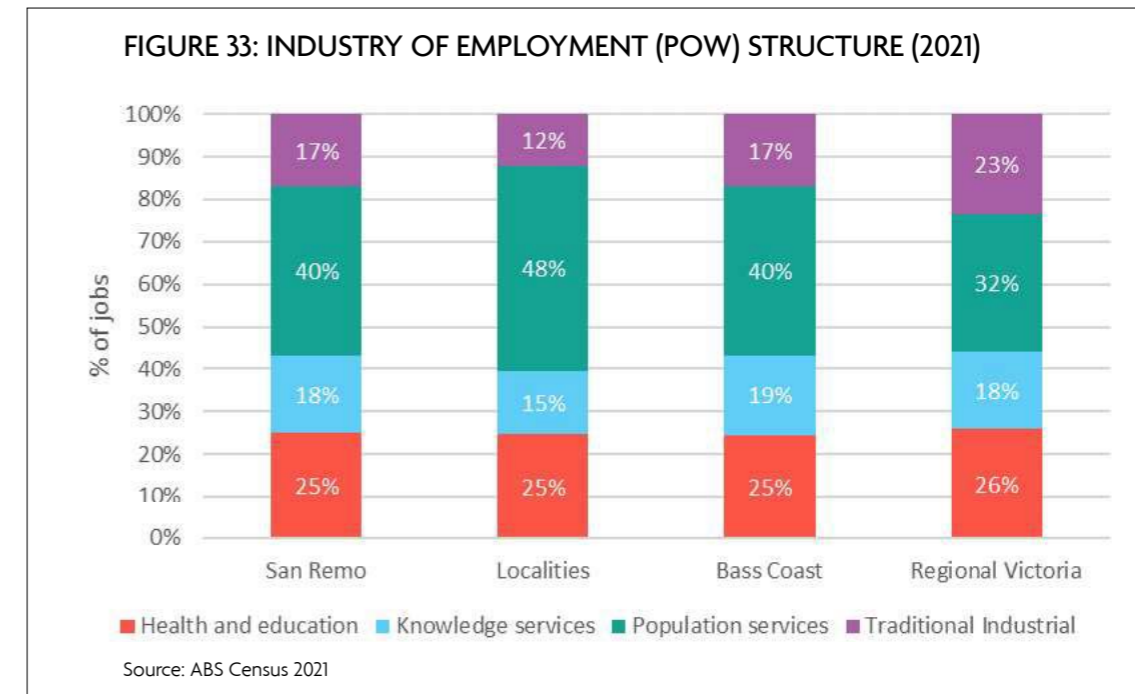
- ANZAC Day service which attracts 350 - 400 attendees, held at the San Remo Cenotaph on the Foreshore Reserve.
- San Remo Christmas Carols held on the Foreshore and have approximately 500 attendees.
- Normally held in October annually, car meets and displays in San Remo attract fans and require parking intervention and road closures.

### 2.14 Employment

Given the age demographic of San Remo, which has a large proportion of retired people, San Remo had 680 local jobs in 2021 (ABS Census, 2021). Of San Remo's residents, this reflects that 45% of the population are employed.

The make-up of employment industries in San Remo is similar to the broad Bass Coast area (refer Figure 36). The industry of employment structure for San Remo contains:

- 273 jobs (or 40% of the working population) of population-serving industries
- 172 jobs (or 25% of the working population) of health and education industries
- 123 jobs (or 18% of the working population) of knowledge-serving industries
- 116 jobs (or 17% of the working population) of traditional industrial industries



**Figure 36.** Depiction of the industry of employment for San Remo compared to Bass Coast & Regional Victoria.

The weekly personal income average for San Remo workers is \$1,059 which is significantly lower compared to the other areas of Bass Coast at \$1,109 per week, and Regional Victoria at \$1,214 per week.

For residents that work outside of San Remo, 25% of residents travel between 50km to more than 250km for their commute to work indicating the amount of important or varied jobs outside of San Remo or the Bass Coast area.

### 2.15 Local economy

Bass Coast has an estimated Gross Regional Product of \$4.03 billion supporting over 13,000 local jobs. Population serving sectors such as healthcare, accommodation, retail and hospitality are the top employing sectors in both San Remo and the broader Bass Coast region. While at only 6% of total economic output, the tourism sector supports over 1500 jobs in Bass Coast.

In 2021, approximately one-third of San Remo jobs are in accommodation, hospitality and retail with the Marine Parade Activity Centre integral to supporting local businesses and driving economy.

### 2.16 Stormwater infrastructure

San Remo's stormwater infrastructure is a combination. It varies from older infrastructure, either installed by Council or developers in past years, or newer infrastructure in response to recent residential growth which is installed and provided to Council through the subdivision process.

The stormwater infrastructure in established areas has many obstacles to overcome such as the natural topography and flow paths, coastal environment and generally low-laying areas, and the age and constraints due to the age of infrastructure. To add to this, the established areas are experiencing increased levels of infill development, multi-unit development and re-subdivision which places additional pressure on existing systems and catchments.

In San Remo's growth-front area, there is no major stormwater infrastructure at present. The land drains naturally from the north-east to the south-west with the topography of the land. Swale drains along Phillip Island Road contain some of the stormwater run-off along the roadside.

### 2.17 Waste

There is no local waste facility in San Remo. Residential and commercial landfill waste generated in San Remo is taken to Council's waste facility at the Grantville Transfer Station located off Stanley Road.

Generally private waste contractors servicing dwellings or businesses in San Remo are at liberty to use Council facilities such as the Grantville Transfer Station or take collected waste to other areas.

### 2.18 Recreation

San Remo currently has some formalised recreation infrastructure, most is located within the San Remo Recreation Reserve (refer Figure 37). The San Remo Recreation Reserve is home to:

- A recreation centre containing meeting rooms, a pavilion, three indoor squash courts and an indoor- multiuse stadium for sports such as basketball, volleyball etc.
- The Westernport Tennis Club which manages four outdoor tennis courts on the site.
- The San Remo Bowls Club which manages an individual Bowls pavilion & synthetic bowling green.
- Open space with no physical infrastructure which can be used for informal ball sports or athletics.



**Figure 37.** Map of the San Remo Recreation Reserve and its different areas & infrastructure.

San Remo relies on surrounding towns for additional recreational infrastructure and communities.

## 2.19 Utilities

San Remo is currently connected to:

- Potable water
- Sewerage (wastewater)
- Electricity (coal powered)
- Telecommunications

Various utility organisations and companies service San Remo such as Westernport Water (water & wastewater), AusNet for electricity and Telstra for telecommunications.

For Telecommunications, the NBN (National Broadband Network), will be implemented in San Remo.

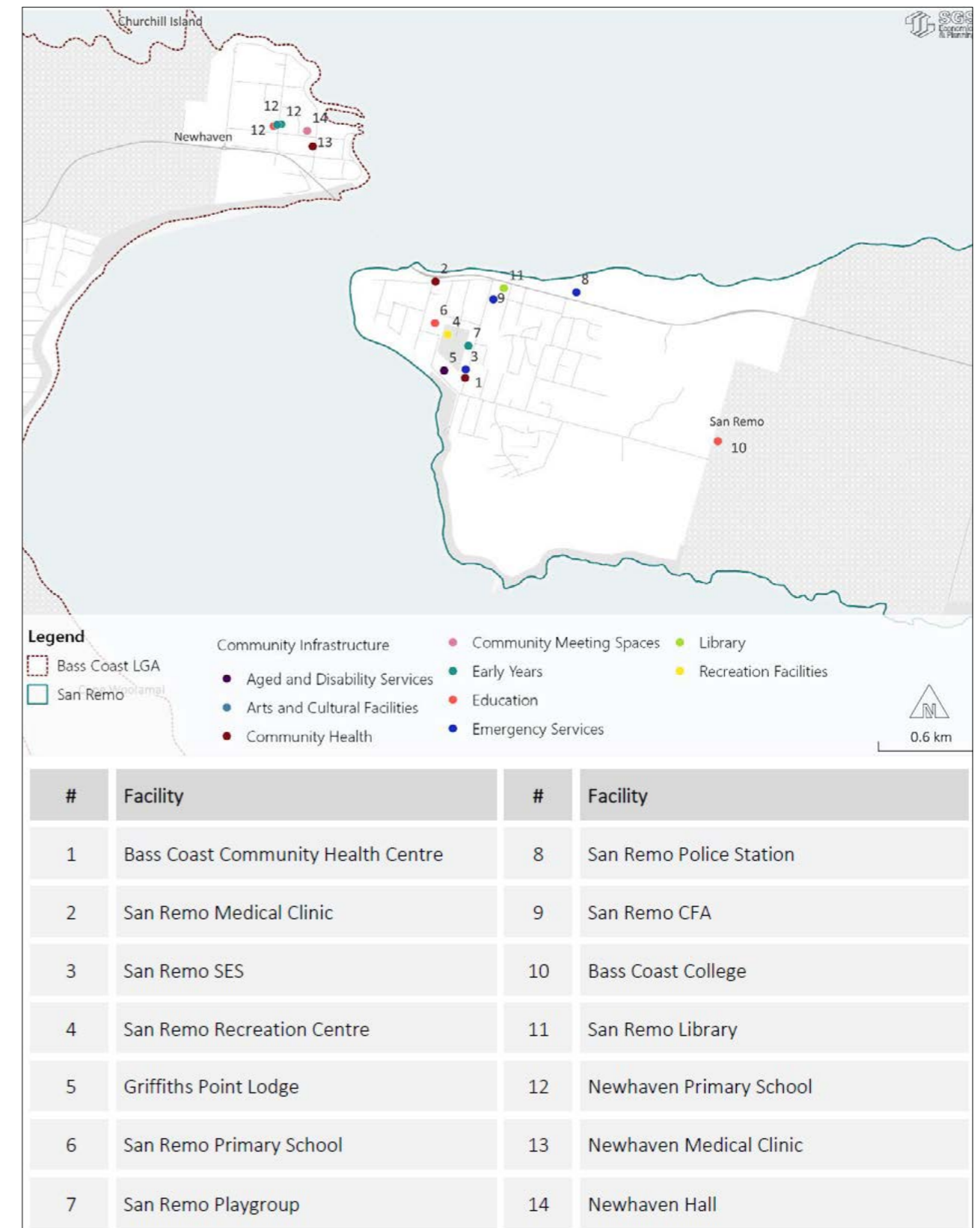
Throughout established areas, Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of stormwater management infrastructure as discussed in the section above.

## 2.20 Community infrastructure

Community infrastructure can be defined as the spaces and programs through which people socialise, learn, recreate, create, and celebrate culture. It is the sum of 'hard' infrastructure (buildings) and 'soft' infrastructure (support services and programs).

Community infrastructure in San Remo includes (refer Figure 38):

- Schools and kindergarten:
  - San Remo Primary School
  - Bass Coast College
  - San Remo kindergarten
- Maternal and child health services, located within the San Remo Kindergarten
- Residential aged care at Bass Coast Health Griffith Point Lodge
- Emergency services – San Remo Police Station, San Remo SES, San Remo CFA
- San Remo Myli Library
- Recreation facilities
  - indoor at the Recreation Centre
  - outdoor at the Recreation Reserve and throughout town



**Figure 38.** Location & type of community infrastructure throughout San Remo and Newhaven.



**In considering community infrastructure, the traditional methods, found throughout San Remo, are becoming more expensive to service communities. Community infrastructure integration and co-location is becoming more popular to allow for co-sharing, and multi-use and shared spaces.**

Community infrastructure can include the following; however, not present in San Remo currently:

- Non-Government schools at all levels
- TAFE
- Seniors and youth services and facilities
- Childcare including long daycare
- Toy library & Playgroup
- Court
- Hospital and ambulance station
- Community space which includes:
  - Multi-use community centre with meeting rooms
  - Neighbourhood house
  - Recreation centre which includes aquatic facilities, fitness centre, etc.
  - Arts facility or centre

In terms of soft community infrastructure in San Remo, there are few community groups for the various age and demographics for residents.

### 3 ENGAGEMENT

#### 3.1 Preliminary community consultation

Structure Plan preliminary community consultation was undertaken from 26 October to 8 December 2023. This consultation phase was undertaken to understand needs and wants of San Remo residents and visitors.

During consultation, 137 social mapping markers were submitted on various themes, with 21 nominations for the Structure Plan Community Reference Group received.

The majority of comments from the preliminary consultation were under the 'Transport & Roads' theme, with 'Community Places' and 'Natural Environment' closely following.

**Note:** The San Remo Structure Plan Community Consultation Summary Report provides further information on the consultation outcomes.

#### 3.2 Community Reference Group

In January 2024, 12 people were selected to be part of the Structure Plan CRG. The purpose of which was:

- To provide input, constructive criticism, information, personal experiences and feedback.

- To make decisions on, and present ideas for the Structure Plan as a resident, visitor, or business owner/work of San Remo.
- To represent the San Remo and Bass Coast community, and act as a champion for the project in all capacities.
- To participate respectfully in sessions with the project team or key stakeholders.
- To contribute ideas and opinions whilst also considering the needs of the community for future generations.

The CRG determined a vision, which is, our purpose is to provide a well-considered design for San Remo which focusses and balances various factors for the community's needs, growth and progress to ensure a liveable, sustainable and cohesive San Remo for the future.

There were four CRG sessions held over 2024 held at the Newhaven Visitor Information Centre, the sessions included:

##### Session 1. Introductory session

Held on 21 March 2024 from 5.30pm – 6.30pm, the session included CRG members and Council officers. It focussed on introducing the project, and setting expectations of the CRG.

##### Session 2. Project update and co-design workshop preparation

A hybrid session (online and in-person) was held on 23 May 2024 from 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM. Attendees included CRG members, Council officers, and consultants with technical expertise in traffic management, car parking, and urban design. The session provided a project update and additional context for the CRG, primarily in preparation for the CRG co-design workshop (Session 3).

##### Session 3. Co-design workshop

The third CRG session was held in-person on 30 May 2024 from 9am – 12pm with attendance including:

- CRG members
- Mayor and Council officers
- Consultants for traffic, car parking and urban design

Session 3 was dedicated to technical report workshopping of ideas and concepts. The session included a streetscape activity to consider the layout of Marine Parade as well as a presentation and discussion of the Draft UDF master concept plans for the three precincts.

##### Session 4. Follow-up session

The final CRG session for 2024 was held on 3 December from 5.30pm – 6.30pm. There was CRG members and Council officers in attendance. As a follow-up session, it covered:

- Update on the Structure Plan & technical reports including implementation
- Activity on the Draft Structure Plan Themes
- Next steps - Draft Structure Plan preparation, community consultation phase & following
- Discussion about continuing the San Remo Structure Plan CRG for 2025

### 3.3 Stakeholder engagement

Significant stakeholder engagement for the Structure Plan was undertaken throughout 2023 and 2024. The objective of this early and purposeful engagement was primarily to inform stakeholders about the San Remo Structure Plan, explain its necessity for the town, and understand their diverse needs.

Given this, Council made a concerted effort to meet with as many relevant stakeholders as possible. A significant, and rewarding and positive aspect of engagement was focussed on relationship-building with relevant stakeholders in the community.

**Note:** The San Remo Structure Plan Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report provides further information on engagement with the above stakeholders. The Report details how the stakeholder engagement informed the Structure Plan.

## 4 STRUCTURE PLAN THEMES AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The following themes and sub-themes were developed through a comprehensive process that included understanding existing conditions, reviewing background information, and incorporating community feedback, including being workshopped with the CRG. Importantly, the Structure Plan Themes aim to respond and link to the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs) as detailed in the Bass Coast Planning Scheme, specifically Clause 11 Settlement, Clause 12 Environmental and landscape values, Clause 13 Environmental risks and amenity, Clause 14 Natural resource management, Clause 15 Built environment and heritage, Clause 16 Housing, Clause 17 Economic Development, Clause 18 Transport, and Clause 19 Infrastructure.

Analysis of these factors revealed key considerations and areas of focus crucial for shaping a successful and sustainable vision for San Remo, encompassing the following draft themes and sub-themes (which may be altered in the Final Structure Plan):

**Community and Heritage:** Demographics and community profile, Post-contact European heritage, and Aboriginal cultural heritage.

- The importance of incorporating information and visual representations of Bunurong peoples, culture, and storylines into the urban fabric of San Remo.
- The need for improved pedestrian wayfinding in San Remo that communicates the town's history from both Indigenous and post-contact European perspectives.
- The potential benefits of establishing a centralised community hub or centre in San Remo to serve a multitude of purposes for residents.
- The necessity of upgrading and expanding the limited and aged recreation centre, facilities, and infrastructure in San Remo.
- The impact of the trend towards smaller household sizes residing in larger homes on housing needs and land use in San Remo.
- The significant population growth San Remo has experienced (4.06% annually over the past 10 years) and its implications for future planning.
- The demographic shift in San Remo, with growth across all age categories, particularly in Mature Adults and Retirees, and the need to address the significantly larger proportion of Mature Adults and Children.

- The implications of the demographics of the population on planning and service provision in San Remo.

**Land Use:** Residential, Commercial and mixed use, and Public land and public open space.

- The outcomes and timing of the Bass Coast DAL program and its implications for the eastern extent of the San Remo protected settlement boundary, as well as the introduction of new SLOs.
- The need to align with the Bass Coast Housing Strategy and Bass Coast Neighbourhood Character Study
- The capacity of the planning system to effectively manage the current degree of residential development and change, given the resulting inconsistencies and outdated nature of some planning controls.
- The limited delivery and implementation of the previous San Remo Structure Plan from 2010 and the lessons learned for future planning efforts.
- The lack of consistency in built form and design outcomes throughout San Remo, particularly in the newer eastern areas, and the importance of preventing this issue from extending into the new growth front.
- The increased growth in eastern San Remo and the need for comprehensive strategic planning to determine appropriate locations for supporting services like commercial development, public open space, and stormwater infrastructure.

- The ability to effectively control and manage urban encroachment onto nearby agricultural land.
- The varied and inconsistent public land management arrangements currently in place throughout San Remo.

**Environment:** Built environment, Natural environment and risks, and Climate change impacts.

- The range of climate change impacts affecting San Remo, including flooding/inundation, rising sea levels, heat island effect, bushfire risk, and extreme weather events.
- The displacement of native fauna species due to residential growth, particularly in eastern San Remo, and general urban activity.
- The impact of urban stormwater runoff on the sensitive marine environments surrounding San Remo, specifically within Westernport Bay.
- The effects of urban development on the surrounding, unique, and valued natural landscapes and coastlines.
- The limited opportunities for establishing wildlife corridors between built environments and open spaces (including the coastline) to create biodiversity linkages.
- The current disconnect between the Marine Parade development and the adjacent natural environment, a valuable asset for San Remo.

**Transport:** Parking, Road network, Public transport, and Active transport.

- The need to address the problematic intersection arrangements in San Remo at Phillip Island Road with Potters Hill Road, Back Beach Road, and Bergin Grove.
- The importance of improving public transport connections to, within, and from San Remo, particularly in response to the needs of the older-aged demographic.
- The necessity of mitigating disruptions and inconsistent traffic flows along Phillip Island Road (in both directions) during daily and seasonal peak periods.
- The opportunity to enhance and promote the use of alternative and more environmentally sensitive transport options for accessing San Remo.
- The importance of developing and expanding sufficient cycling infrastructure throughout residential streets in San Remo.
- The need for a comprehensive approach to managing the varied car parking demands throughout the year, considering both residential needs and tourism, including determining appropriate changes, locations, and amounts.
- The necessity of implementing better management strategies for on-street car

parking to address issues in San Remo's town centre, especially during busy periods.

- The opportunity to improve connectivity between existing trail and pedestrian connections and lookout areas within and around San Remo.
- The importance of increasing mature trees and landscaping throughout streetscapes and open space areas.

**Economy:** Tourism, Economic development, and Employment.

- The need to creating local employment opportunities by leveraging the area's assets and resources.
- Managing pressure on commercial uses as the population and visitor economy grow.
- Importance of balancing the town's dual role as both a community service centre and tourism destination.
- The provision of infrastructure to support further business activation and events in the San Remo foreshore area, such as outdoor dining, recreation, entertainment, and pop-up events

**Utilities and Services:** Asset management (infrastructure), Community infrastructure, Utilities, and Stormwater management.

- The aged infrastructure throughout San Remo and the lack of an entrance statement to the township on Phillip Island Road.

- The capacity of existing stormwater infrastructure to accommodate growth and climate change impacts.
- The limited ability of existing infrastructure to withstand residential growth and change on a haphazard or piecemeal basis.
- Funding limitations for infrastructure and development in public areas.
- The aged public infrastructure, such as playgrounds, shelters, and seating, throughout San Remo.
- The limited, safe, and all-abilities access to beaches and coastal areas around San Remo.
- The lack of safe and pedestrian-friendly spaces throughout streetscapes, particularly in eastern growth areas.
- The limited usable and attractive areas of public open space for all ages and abilities.

*\*These considerations are not ordered in terms of priority, and all are equally important.*

## 5 CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Draft San Remo Structure Plan

The Draft San Remo Structure Plan is informed by the findings of this background report. The information contained herein has provided a base for the plan's development, shaping its strategies, and proposed actions. This report serves as a crucial supporting document, offering context and justification for the recommendations put forth in the Draft Structure Plan.

### 5.2 Community Consultation

Community consultation on the Draft San Remo Structure Plan will occur from 1 March – 28 April 2025. Consultation period will capture residents and holiday makers taking in Easter, ANZAC Day and the 2025 Victorian April school holidays.

Community consultation will include, but not be limited to:

- In-person drop in sessions/ workshops in San Remo and surrounding locations
- Individual meetings between Council officers and stakeholders requested by appointment
- Letters to residents, ratepayers, businesses, Referral Authorities, stakeholders, etc.
- Website update for the Structure Plan (on Bass Coast Engage) with relevant information, etc.

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) addressing aspects of the Draft Structure Plan
- Articles and advertisements in local newspapers and news outlets – online and hard copy
- Social media posts and advertisements

### 5.3 Final San Remo Structure Plan

The preparation of the Final Structure Plan will be undertaken following the conclusion of the community consultation period in April 2025.

The Final Structure Plan will be formed through revising the Draft Structure Plan and addressing submissions received identifying further recommendations, changes, questions and ideas.

Once prepared, the Final San Remo Structure Plan will be presented to Council for determination.

If supported by Council, the Structure Plan will be adopted, and work will commence on the implementation. Implementation will include undertaking any physical short-term improvements immediately through capital works programs, and preparing a planning scheme amendment and relevant documentation to formalise the Structure Plan into the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.



## Draft San Remo Structure Plan **Background Report**

January 2025

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