

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC
PO BOX 548 COWES 3922
PRESIDENT: Jeff Nottle 0419 158 232
SECRETARY: Christine Grayden M 0400 900 612
E: phillipislandconservation@gmail.com
Website: www.picsvictoria.org.au
Facebook: www.facebook.com/picsvictoria

Distinctive Areas & Landscapes - Bass Coast Shire Submission by Phillip Island Conservation Society Inc 12.8.19

This submission concentrates on Phillip Island as that is the area of our expertise. That does not mean that we don't value other areas of Bass Coast. We would welcome their inclusion into the DAL process and will leave others more familiar with those areas to comment. We have used the questions on the website as a guide to our points.

1. The Bass Coast is known for its pristine natural environments such as rich coastal areas and wetlands.

a) What natural environmental features do you value the most?

- Beaches and foreshores
- Coastlines
- Cliffs and rock formations
- Sand dunes
- Wetlands
- Bass Strait coast and sea
- Western Port, including Western Port's Ramsar listed wetlands
- Habitat (including trees, coastal vegetation, grassland)
- Wildlife
- Birdlife including migratory and endangered (Hooded Plovers)
- Rural landscapes and roadsides, especially those containing Wildlife Corridors and Biolinks
- Remnant indigenous vegetation
- Sites of geological and geomorphological significance (see Appendix A)
- The peacefulness and quietness of the coastal, rural and bush environments

b) Do you think there are any threats to these natural environmental features?

- Erosion
- People – increased cars, rubbish, foot traffic
- 'Overtourism' in peak periods

- Large cruise ships anchoring off delicate and environmentally sensitive coast - Observation Point - with associated disturbance to migratory bird-roosting spit caused by wave wash and sightseeing leisure craft.
- Climate Change and coastal inundation
- Loss of habitat, especially of larger &/or older trees, and especially through landowners using Bushfire Management Overlay regulations not appropriate in Bass Coast to remove trees within 10 metres of a house.
- Removal of coastal vegetation, especially by private landowners for a view
- Inappropriate development, including proposal for caravan/camping park adjacent to dangerous and environmentally sensitive Forrest Caves beach.
- Industrialisation of Western Port
- illegal shellfish harvesting, e.g. McHaffies Reef, Rhyll Inlet, etc

c) How can we better protect these natural environmental features?

- Maintain existing town boundaries
- Maintain and improve wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors
- More planting of indigenous species of plants
- Enforce environmental laws
- Enforce Marine Protection Laws
- EPA and Bass Coast Shire to work together to formulate noise control regulations, and for these to be enforced - jet skis, drones, race track noise, helicopters, etc.
- Monitor erosion and take action to remediate
- Remove Bushfire Management Overlay from Bass Coast Shire planning scheme
- Education of the public to value indigenous vegetation and large trees
- All levels of government to support Landcare and Coastcare financially and with administrative support to continue their work involving volunteers, staff and contractors in large-scale planting, weeding, etc.

2. The Bass Coast is known for its quality landscapes and scenic views such as the Bass Hills and Bunurong coastline.

a) What landscapes or scenic views do you value the most?

All natural landscapes and scenic coastal views on Phillip Island including:

- Nobbies/Point Grant, both to and from
- Cape Woolamai along the walking trail and from the top at the light in all directions
- Forrest Caves in all directions. View north across rural land, Scenic Estate Reserve and Swan Bay to Churchill and French Islands from top of Forrest Caves staircase
- To Pyramid Rock and from the adjacent look out
- Berry's Beach,
- Kitty Miller's Beach
- Rhyll Inlet
- Views of Western Port and French Island from the top of Conservation Hill and along Rhyll Inlet walking trail
- Views from Grossard Point, Ventnor, north, south and west
- Churchill Island, both to and from

- To French Island from various points
- Sites along Phillip Island's coast from which whales can be viewed
- Rural and bay view from Phillip Island Rd west of Five Ways
- Views received when driving along Phillip Island Rd, containing all Reserve and rural land from Samuel Amess Drive to Cowes. This includes National Trust listed landscape along Swan Bay.
- South coast from Point Grant to tip of Cape Woolamai, including National Trust listed landscape.
- Exclusively rural views on the island
- View of Western Port, French Island and Bass Hills from end of Cowes jetty and various points along Cowes foreshore
- View of Cowes when arriving at the jetty by ferry or other boat
- View of Swan Lake, farmland and Quoin Hill from Swan Lake bird hides

b) Do you think there are any threats to these landscapes and scenic views?

- Road expansion proposal for 5 lanes on Phillip Island Road at Surf Beach, slicing through a beautiful Reserve, bay and rural view. This would encourage increased car traffic, especially in peak periods when not needed
- Inappropriate development, including caravan and camping parks on coastline, which should no longer be encouraged
- Industrialisation of Western Port leading to increased large industrial shipping traffic in the bay intruding on otherwise unspoiled bay views
- Intrusion of poorly located and unsympathetically designed housing and other buildings and storage facilities (e.g. shipping containers) onto coastal and rural views
- Legal and illegal vegetation removal
- Unsympathetic roadside planting or on adjacent private land such as pine and cypress trees which block off the view for little habitat value
- Inappropriate roadside vegetation management techniques such as vertical slashing which are visually abhorrent and bad for vegetation
- Development of a car ferry terminal and all required infrastructure on the Cowes coast

c) How can we better protect these landscapes and scenic views?

- Maintain settlement boundaries
- Regulate against unsympathetic buildings being sited on viewsapes
- Wildlife corridors
- Reduce car use
- Marine and Coastal Parks
- Transport management - "Park and Ride" services in peak times e.g. bus to Nobbies and Penguin Parade
- Declare Western Port a marine sanctuary and not allow industrial uses
- Have arborists correctly maintain roadside vegetation, especially when cutting back is required

3. The Bass Coast is known for its cultural heritage significance, including Aboriginal cultural heritage and paleontological heritage.

a) What cultural and/or heritage sites do you value the most?

- Aboriginal cultural heritage sites such as all the identified middens and rock tool sites yet to be discovered similar to that discovered recently at the site of the Cape Woolamai roundabout
- Sites of European heritage such as chicory kilns and historic buildings such as remaining early homes, St Paul's Boys' Home and the Cowes Band Rotunda
- Historic trees associated with pre-settlement such as old growth Banksias at eastern Red Rocks near McRae Avenue, Silverleaves, Toscana Rise. Eucalypts at Oswin Roberts Reserve, Phillip Island Rd near Cowes, Steele Street, Harbison Rd, Coghlan Rd, Five Ways and the Koala Reserve.
- Historic trees associated with settlement such as Norfolk Island Pines, Hoop Pine and Moreton Bay Fig on Isle of Wight site and Ventnor Beach Rd, Thompson Avenue Cypress trees, Cape Woolamai homestead, Glen Isle homestead, Rhyllston Park homestead, Mulberry tree at Pleasant Point and historic garden trees and Moonahs on Churchill Island.
- Shipwreck sites

b) Do you think there are any threats to these cultural and/or heritage sites?

- Ignorance and lack of knowledge of where and what significant sites are in the area
- development proposals threatening historic tree removal
- development proposals threatening historic houses
- lack of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plans being undertaken on pre-settlement trees before removal
- Pilfering of midden sites by people
- Lack of funds by landowners to maintain/restore chicory kilns
- Lack of protection of historic trees

c) How can we better protect these cultural and/or heritage sites?

- Bass Coast Shire, Phillip Island Nature Parks and other agencies and community groups working with Bunurong Land Council Corporation to identify and protect pre-settlement sites and trees
- Significant Tree Register including financially valuing pre-settlement and early settlement trees to afford them legal protection
- Education of the community of the value of cultural and heritage sites
- More studies into cultural and heritage significance in the area
- It is vital that these sites be respected and maintained once identified. Budget funds for this annually
- Marine and Coastal park
- Adhering to existing cultural guidelines
- State and local government provides financial assistance to landowners to maintain or restore heritage buildings such as chicory kilns

4. The Bass Coast is known to have distinctive township character including a relaxed coastal feel and renowned beaches.

a) What township characteristics do you value the most?

- Sympathetically designed access to nearby Beaches
- Roadside vegetation
- gardens, especially of indigenous vegetation
- low to medium density in coastal and inland towns, rather than intensive unit developments as

seen in Cowes

- building heights no higher than two storeys
- Sustainable housing design which includes designing for climate change - e.g. pitched roofs to withstand collapse during heavy hail storms
- Thompson Avenue Cypress avenue
- roads in settlements designed to slow traffic
- walking/cycling paths
- local general stores within walking distance of houses
- parks with playgrounds and landscaping
- meeting venues such as halls and pavillions which act as Third Places for their communities
- Evidence of connection to the sea, such as boating, jetties, and yacht clubs and fishing clubs provided they are sensitively designed community facilities and not located on coast likely to be inundated
- For Cowes specifically - attractive, car-free 'jetty triangle' at northern end of town's main street
- for coastal towns - passive use of beaches for bird and sea creature watching

b) Do you think there are any threats to these township characteristics?

- Road expansion proposal for 5 lanes on Phillip Island Road in Surf Beach vicinity
- Inappropriate development such as large blocks of units and intrusive homes
- Increased number of people and cars
- Lack of state and government control over level of sustainable housing design required - ugly, unsustainable housing is evident in many towns.
- Lack of investment by council into walking/cycling paths and recreation facilities
- Large houses on small blocks leaving no room for indigenous gardens, and sometimes even with surrounds consisting only of pebbles and concrete
- Some townships have no community meeting places
- A car ferry terminal along the Cowes coast with associated infrastructure and vehicle parking and lanes would seriously impact the unbroken stretch of golden sandy beaches
- Beaches are degraded by use of noisy water craft such as jet skiis and outboard motor powered boats near the shore

c) How can we better protect these township characteristics?

- Maintain settlement boundaries
- Wildlife corridors through or near townships as well as rural and reserve land
- Reduce car use by providing walking/cycling tracks to focal points such as general stores, community meeting places and parks
- Improve public transport
- More building regulation to require sustainable housing
- Not permit buildings over 8m in height in townships
- Put appropriate barriers, speed humps, narrow sections of road, etc, to reduce vehicle speed through townships
- All new housing developments should be required to contain a landscaped park and not just a retarding basin as their Public Open Space

5. The Bass Coast economy is supported by diverse sectors including agriculture, tourism, construction, and infrastructure.

a) What economic sectors do you value the most?

- Diversity of Service provision e.g.
 - Medical services
 - Public transport
 - Educational services
 - Trades
- Renewable energy
- Sustainable housing
- Rural community
- Nature-based tourism
- Environmentally sustainable infrastructure (low impact)

b) Do you think there are any threats to these economic sectors?

- Overdevelopment
- Increasing tourism visitation, especially during peak periods resulting in overtourism and poor visitor experience, and unacceptable pressure on natural environments.
- Excessive vehicle movement and speed
- Climate change
- Coastal erosion
- Lack of government support of and policy to develop the renewable energy sector
- Lack of user pays by visitors who contribute little to the economy but use all the infrastructure which ratepayers have to pay to maintain
- Rural landholders who are protecting land of high habitat and landscape value should receive rate rebates or other incentives
- Crowded roads and high speeds mean visitors do not get to appreciate the viewsapes on offer from our roads
- High wildlife road kills in 'hot spots' provides a bad experience for visitors, both those who hit the wildlife and those who come after and see it dead on the side of the road.

c) How can we better protect these economic sectors?

- Acknowledging that “the environment is the economy” and preserving the environment
- Education
- Reduction of speed limits on Phillip Island. No 100 kph sections of road are appropriate on a wildlife island
- A significant investment in public transport both to and from the island, and within the island road network, with comfortable bus shelters, could alleviate part of the problem of too many cars on our roads. A high level of publicity given to this system and incentives such a ticket reductions in peak periods would attract usage.
- The system of a combination of flashing lights and warning sounds as vehicles approach a wildlife hot spot should be introduced to warn crossing wildlife and prevent them being hit on the road. This system has been trialed in Tasmania with good success.

7. What do you want the Bass Coast to be like in the future? Consider what you love most about this place, what it looks and feels like.

What we most love about Phillip Island are its natural values, including landscapes and vistas, flora, fauna and habitat, both terrestrial and marine. As recognised in the Phillip Island and San Remo Visitor Economy Strategy 2035, our community, natural environment and economy are interdependent. The environment is the economy, and our natural assets must not only be preserved, but enhanced, through sustainable development and management practices. PICS believes this will be as necessary in the future as it is now.

PICS wants Bass Coast to be a place where the natural environment is protected, valued and enhanced going into the future so it can be experienced by future generations. We want Bass Coast to be leaders in action on climate change and preservation and protection of natural assets and for people, visitors and residents, and to respect and educate others about the unique environment of Bass Coast. PICS also believes that the coastal and rural landscapes must be protected and valued. We want Bass Coast to retain its rural communities.

Keeping in touch with us: by email please - phillipislandconservation@gmail.com

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Grayden', is written over a light green rectangular background.

Christine Grayden, PICS secretary.

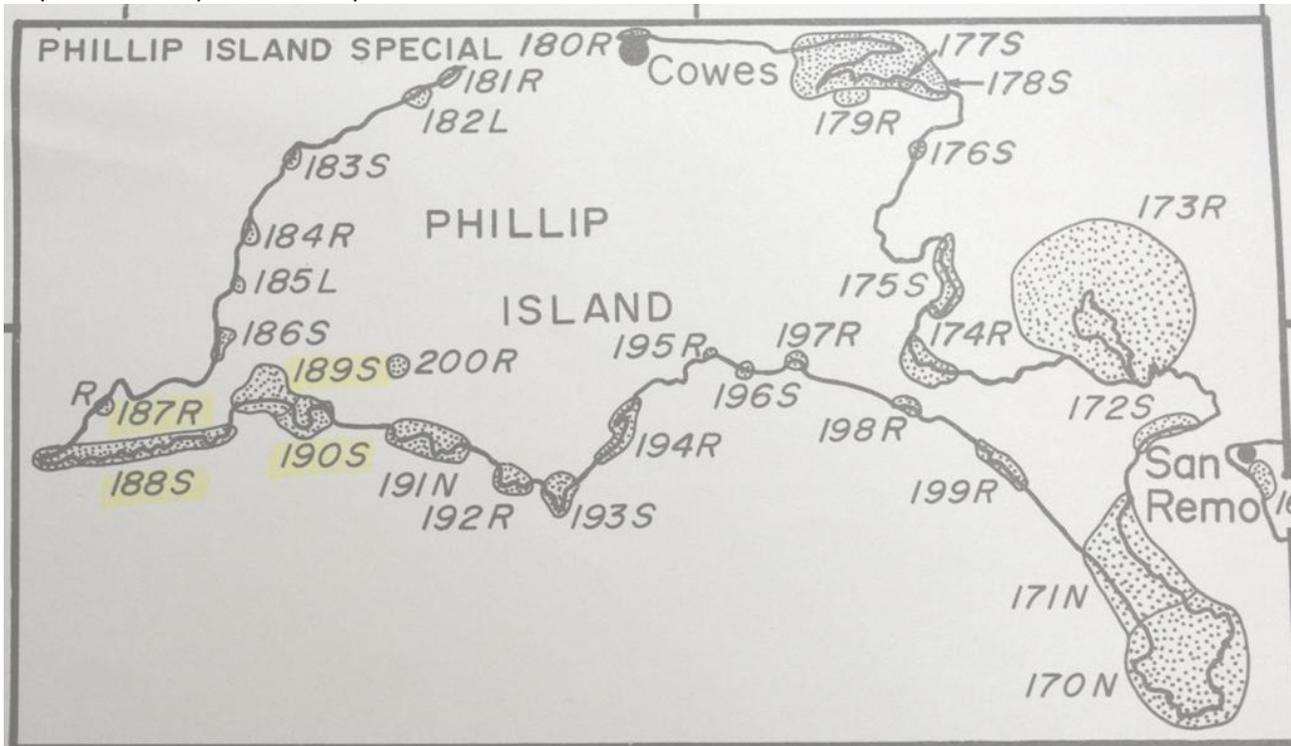
APPENDIX A

Sites of Geological and Geomorphological Significance on Phillip Island

Taken from:

Rosengren, N.J. (1984) "Sites of Geological and Geomorphological Significance in the Westernport Bay Catchment. " Dept of Conservation, Forests and Lands, Melbourne

Map that accompanies the report:



Site Number	Location and Features
170	Cape Woolamai - Granite Tombolo
171	Woolamai Beach and Tie-Bar
172	Homestead Point - Prograding Beach Ridges
173	Churchill Island
174	Swan Corner - Cliffs and Bluffs
175	Chambers Point to Long Point - Raised Beaches
176	Koolyns - Silurian Outcrop
177	Rhyll Quarry - Rhyll Arkose
178	Rhyll Inlet (the Nits)
179	Rhyll Swamp
Site Number	Location and Features
180	Erehwon Point, Mussell Rocks - Older Volcanics
181	Penguin Point and Red Rocks Point - Dipping Tuff Beds

182	Saltwater Creek - Incised Floodplain
183	McHaffies Point - Dipping Tuff Beds
184	McHaffies Lagoon
185	Flynns Lagoon
186	Green Lake - Swamp and Cliff-top Dunes
187	Cowrie Beach - Higher Level Gravel Beach Terrace
188	Point Grant and The Nobbies to Phelan Bluff
189	Swan Lake - Tombolo and Dunes
190	Kitty Miller Bay
191	Native Dog Creek to Thorny Beach
192	Redcliff Head - Tuff Beds
193	Pyramid Rock - Unconformity
194	Cunningham Bay, Jessie Island
195	Smith Point - Hanging Valley
196	Smiths Beach - Quartzite
197	Sunderland Bay - Cliff Stack and Slump Bluffs
198	Surfies Point - Cliff-top Dunes
199	Forrest Bluff and Forrest Caves
200	Quoin Hill - Volcanic Plug

Note that the Significance Level of each site is shown on the map with a letter after the site number, i.e. L = Local, R = Regional, S = State, N = National