South Gippsland
Shire Council

South Gippsland Coastal Strategy
OVERVIEW
December 2019

Why a Coastal Strategy?

The South Gippsland Coastal Strategy project is a proactive step to prepare our coast for future challenges.

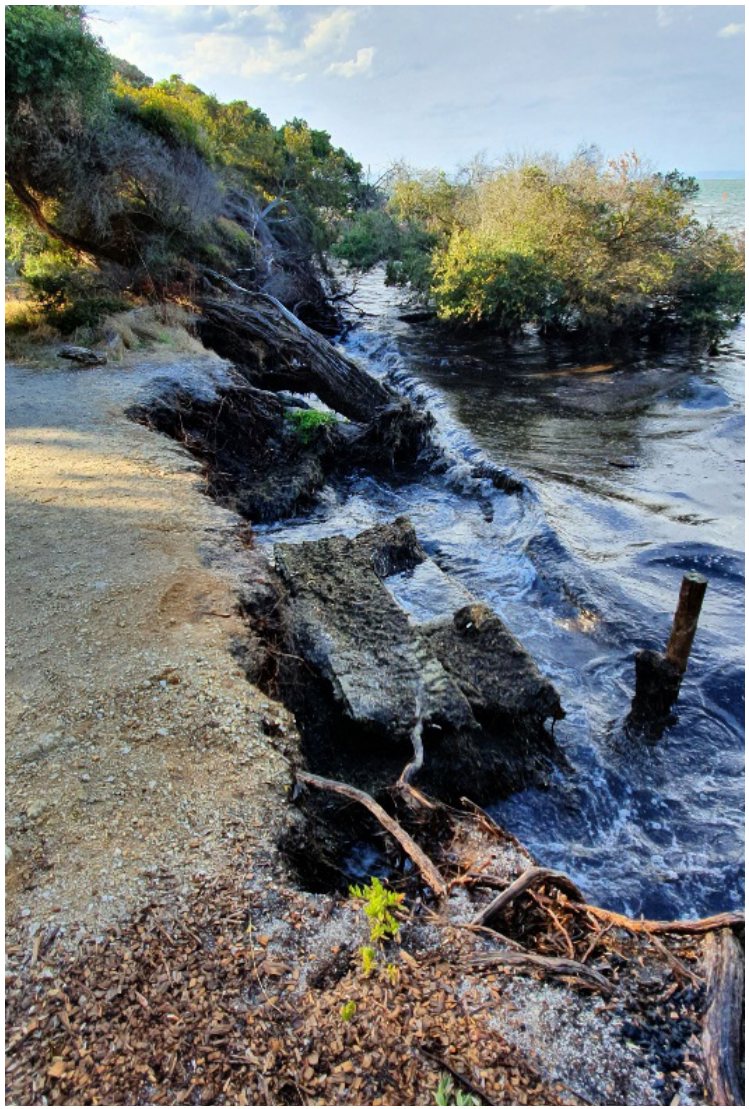
Our coast is a beautiful natural asset - highly valued by our local community and the many visitors it attracts. It comprises significant landscape and environmental areas including Wilsons Promontory, Corner Inlet, Andersons Inlet and Shallow Inlet Marine and Coastal Park. It also underpins many economic activities in the region including tourism, fishing, agriculture, freight and resource extraction activities (e.g. oil rigs).

However, our prized asset is constantly under threat due to a range of issues including coastal hazards, environmental pressure and health and safety concerns. Many of these issues are already being experienced by other municipalities and have threatened important community assets. Significant erosion impacts have recently been experienced in Inverloch (Bass Coast) and Port Fairy (Moyne).

This Consultation

Council has identified a number of key issues experienced by South Gippsland's coastal areas and possible options for the future. Many of these issues fall outside of the Council's powers and responsibility and, as such, many options will require Council to act as an advocate.

A detailed Background Paper has been prepared which provides specific details about the existing context, opportunities and key issues facing our coastal areas. This Overview summarises the complex matters identified in the Background Paper. The Background Paper should be referred to for anyone seeking further information regarding any of the key issues.



Coastal erosion at Yanakie, Corner Inlet.

Facts about our Coast

There is around 300km of coastline in the municipality

South Gippsland Shire is a Committee of Management for around 25km of coastline

Wilsons Promontory Marine and National Park is Victoria's largest Marine Protected Area

Corner Inlet is a Ramsar site and its importance is recognised internationally

Key Issues

- Immediate risk of road access being cut to Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower, Waratah Bay, Sandy Point and Port Welshpool during current flood events*.
- Immediate risk of a majority of Port Welshpool and smaller portions of other towns such as Sandy Point, Venus Bay and Tawrin Lower being inundated by flood water during current flood events**.
- Increase in future risk of damage to infrastructure and houses due to climate change and sea level rise as early as 2040. The severity and frequency of such inundation is likely to increase over current standards.
- Increase in potential public health risks due to failure of waste water (septic) systems affected by rising water tables or inundation.
- Increased burden on emergency services due to population increases, changing climate and extreme weather events (e.g. in response to flood and fire).
- Population increases in coastal areas putting more people and infrastructure at risk of coastal hazards.
- Coastal activities at risk of inundation with 10,000ha of Farming Zoned land estimated to be inundated by 2100.
- Numerous coastal assets such as roads, jetties, boat ramps and sea levees forecast to be impacted by coastal hazards.

* Current flood event based on modelled 1% Average Exceedence Probability (AEP) flood level used for planning purposes within current planning system in Victoria. Note larger floods can and will occur.

** Future risk of inundation is based on best available science from current modelling of 0.82m sea level rise by 2100. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a special report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in September 2019 that suggests it will worsen.

Options

Options to address key issues in South Gippsland's coastal areas include:

	Implementation Cost Estimate
• Investigate different human-made adaptive engineering solutions and feasibility. This may involve:	
- Advocating to State Government to raise coastal roads to communities that may be impacted by rising sea levels.	**$ Millions**
- Establishing funding options to facilitate maintenance and improvements to coastal sea levees.	**$ Tens of Millions**
• Consider the potential long-term need for settlement relocation where inundation is expected to occur and wastewater systems and other infrastructure will no longer be effective. This may involve:	
- Advocating to State Government to plan for coastal communities to retreat.	**$ Hundreds of Millions**
• Update planning controls, particularly in coastal towns, to better reflect existing constraints and manage risk.	
• Advocate for improvements to the existing legislative framework in regards to potable water, bores, septic systems and their impact on development.	
• Advocate to State Government to introduce a coastal adaptation levy (similar to the existing fire levy) to fund engineering solutions.	

Implications

- A proactive approach will help protect and enhance the South Gippsland coast as an important regional asset into the future.
- There is a risk of incrementally undertaking significant investment in adaptation measures only to incur great losses and costs over time.
- Forecasts for climate change and extreme weather events have been increasing in severity, making engineering solutions more difficult to design and fund.
- Engineering solutions are very costly, difficult to fund, coordinate and maintain and may fail before their expected life cycle is complete.
- If more Council funds are allocated to the coast to address coastal issues, then there will be less funds available for other areas in the municipality (such as less money for road maintenance).

Shape the future of South Gippsland's coastal areas

Tell us your views....

What do you see as the key issues?
What forms of adaptation actions should we explore to manage coastal hazard risks?

Join the discussion at oursay.org/southgippsland/coastalstrategy and provide your input by **Friday 28 February 2020**.