

# BARWON COAST

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT INC.

A.B.N. 16 921 392 965



22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

Mr Phil Honeywood,  
Chairman,  
Victorian Environmental Assessment Council,  
Level 6, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne, 3002

Dear Mr Honeywood

## Re: Statewide Assessment of Public Land

The Barwon Coast Committee of Management Inc. (Barwon Coast) is the delegated manager for 13km of coastal public land fronting Bass Strait from Collendina to Blue Rocks including the foreshores adjoining the significant townships of Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads.

The Barwon Coast managed coastal public land combines barrier dunes and long beaches, the Barwon River mouth with broad tidal range, producing a landscape that includes important habitat with vegetation features of high environmental biodiversity and conservation value.

The coastal dunes system has great significance within local aboriginal culture, whilst in more recent times the recreational values of surf beaches, as well as safe "family beaches" have come to the fore.

These unique qualities lead to a range of pressures upon the environment, which must be addressed in the management of the coastal public land. These pressures occur at virtually all points along the Barwon Coast, and are particularly evident at the urban centres of Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove where the popular beaches, foreshore areas and caravan parks experience high and increasing demand in the holiday months.

Barwon Coast endorses the scope of the investigation being an assessment of the system of public land use categories with focus to provide information to assist management effectiveness.

Barwon Coast registers their ongoing interest in the program ahead being undertaken by VEAC in preparation of a discussion paper and draft proposals report with periods of public consultation before a final report is submitted to the Minister in February 2017.

Barwon Coast views the principal challenges for the long term management of public land as;

- Habitat and ecological diversity protection;
- The impacts of changing Climate;
- Population and growth.

Barwon Coast recognises that the present important role of the coastal public land,

- For habitat provision for biodiversity conservation and ecological values;
- For the protection of hinterland communities, from buffering by storm events in a changing climate; and the
- Important social health and well-being values through recreation opportunities and the 'knowing it is there';

needs to be fully recognised, these services protected and resourced into the future.

We look forward to an ongoing involvement in the investigation and its positive outcomes for the future protection and enhancement of the management of the values and uses of public land.

Yours faithfully,



**Gary McPike**  
**General Manager**