YORKE PENINSULA COUNCIL

COASTAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2022

YORKE PENINSULA COUNCIL

Agriculturally rich~Naturally beautiful

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Our coastal environment is extremely valued by our community. As such Council's '**Strategic Plan 2016-2020**' consists of *Goal 3 – Valued and Restored Environment*, with a particular focus on coast:

"Council will be an investor, activator and custodian of our spectacular coastline and pristine environment".

As a result coastal management was included in the Strategic Plan under:

Strategy 3.7 Develop and Implement a Coastal Management Strategy.

The coastal environment is a major feature of the Council area, with 485 kilometres of coastline encompassing stunning cliffs, surf beaches, estuaries, rocky reefs, long low-energy beaches, mangroves and samphire flats, to name a few. It supports a very diverse range of marine and terrestrial flora and fauna, some of which are nationally and internationally significant.

Council's coastline is considered its biggest asset by some – it is a tourism drawcard, attracting visitors that boost the local economy. A large percentage of ratepayers occupy their dwellings as holiday homes. Visitors, holiday home owners and residents are all attracted to the coastal environment, which provides a haven for many including families, anglers, surfers, divers, boat users, kayakers, bushwalkers, cyclists and campers. Yorke Peninsula offers a pinnacle in nature-based tourism.

However, the coastline of Yorke Peninsula is a sensitive system and there are increasing pressures from development, agriculture, tourism, fishing and recreation. There are many management issues that Council are required and wish to address. A Coastal Management Strategy (Strategy) will provide direction to Council and other land managers/stakeholders, by developing a framework for the future management of coastal Council land.

The Strategy is to be used as a basis for assigning and applying for funding to undertake priority works over Council land and infrastructure, so as to address coastal management issues.

1.1. Mission Statement

The Coastal Management Strategy provides community-supported directions and actions for coastal open space (either owned by or under the care, control and management of Council), providing guidance on the most appropriate ways to enhance opportunities for coastal access and recreation, in balance with landscape, heritage and biodiversity protection.

1.2. Objectives and outcomes

The objective of the Strategy is to provide Council with the ability to undertake a considered and coordinated approach to managing coastal issues. Council wishes to maintain the natural beauty of the coast whilst allowing people to enjoy and value this landscape. The coastline is a key attribute of the Yorke Peninsula identity and thoughtful development and use of the coast, that does not lead to degradation but rather sustains ecosystem functioning, is of utmost importance.

As a consequence, it is expected the Strategy will deliver the following desired outcomes:

- review the state of the natural coastal asset;
- draw together the findings and recommendations of previous key studies;
- identify issues to be addressed and management options,

including prioritisation of works;

- provide recommendations that have broad community support/ endorsement (see **3.0 Consultation**); and

- determine monitoring and evaluation strategies for each general management issue.

The Strategy has been designed to complement other Council plans and strategies, and particular issues that Council can address but do not fall under the scope of the Strategy will be included in these documents (see **4.2 Issues excluded from the Strategy**).

1.3. Study Area

Coastal land is often considered to include land above the low water mark, including the offshore islands. This includes land that is held in a range of tenures such as:

- Crown land under custodianship or perpetual lease to Council (Council care and control);

- unalienated Crown land (usually a coastal strip not allocated for agriculture or other purposes but also not being actively managed for conservation purposes);

- Crown land protected as Conservation or other Park;

- freehold agricultural land;

- perpetual lease;

- residences and shacks on freehold titles; and

- private properties managed under Heritage Agreements.

Whilst all of this land should be considered for coastal management, the focus of the Strategy is all open space land either owned by, or under the care control and management of, Council (Council land),

within the coastal zone. The coastal zone is any open space Council land parcel that is either fully contained within, or is partly within, 100 metres of the high tide mark or contains coastal features and/or is subject to coastal hazards. Within defined towns, some of this land is addressed under pre-existing plans or other documents, and is noted as this.

In some areas the foreshore Council land forms the only boundary between private property and the waters of the coastline of the Peninsula. In other areas the foreshore Council land is easily accessible and subject to intense recreational use.

To enable ease of delivery in preparing a Strategy for such an expansive geographical area (the coastline within the Council area is over 485 kilometres long), the Council land has been distinguished into three sections (see Figure 1):

- Council border (Federation Park) to Hickeys Point;

- Hickeys Point to Corny Point (Lighthouse); and

- Corny Point to Council border (Cape Elizabeth).

The Strategy is prepared in stages, with one section addressed per financial year, consecutively until all sections have been completed. Within each section, Council land parcels are grouped to form cells. Once all sections have been completed, all documents will be combined into the Final Strategy.
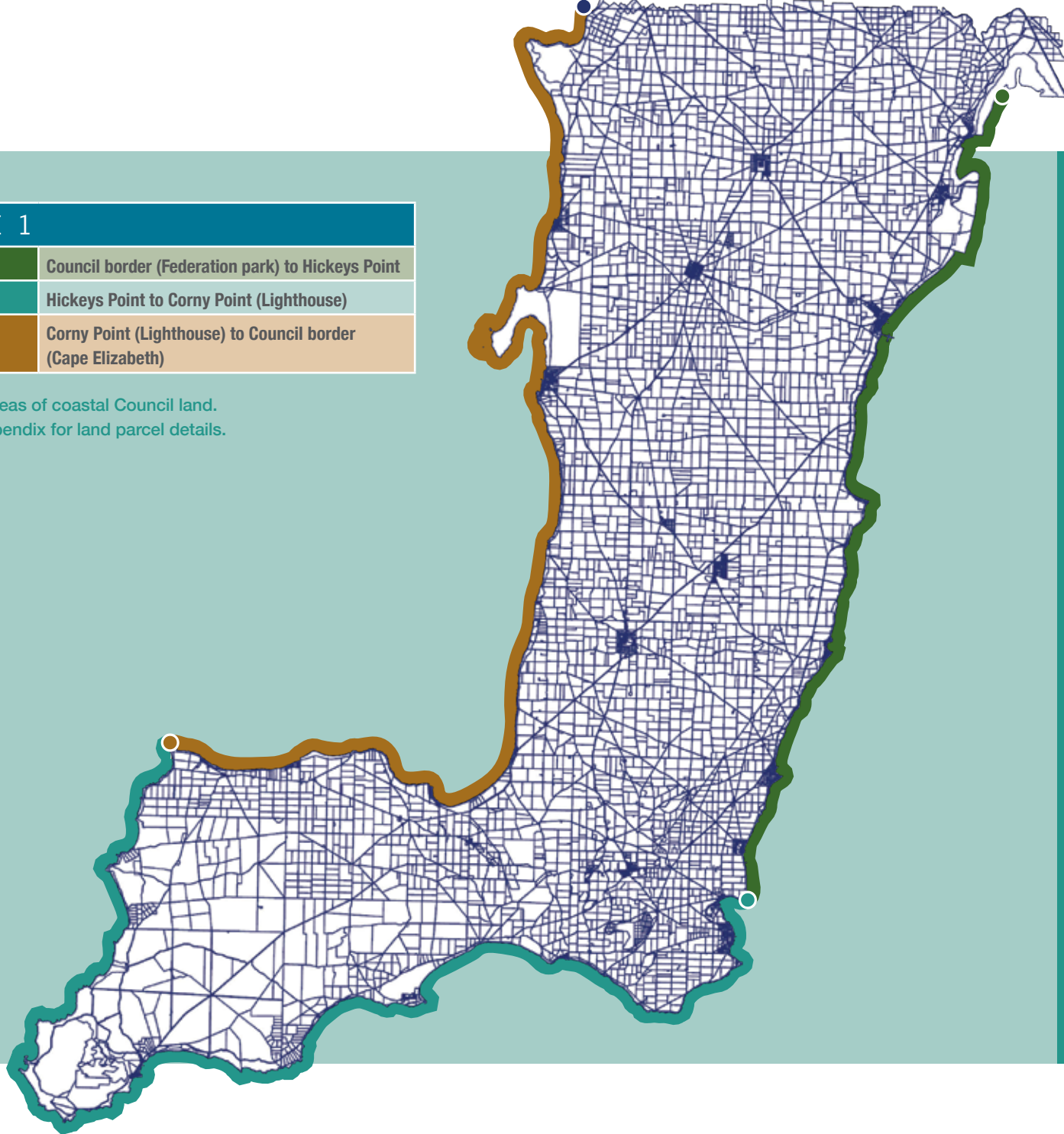
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INTRODUCTION

FIGURE 1

	Council border (Federation park) to Hickeys Point
	Hickeys Point to Corny Point (Lighthouse)
	Corny Point (Lighthouse) to Council border (Cape Elizabeth)

Indicative areas of coastal Council land.
Refer to Appendix for land parcel details.

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HOW THE STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

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HOW THE STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

The following process was undertaken to develop the Strategy:

- review of coastal Council land and their vested purposes (as per Community Land Management Plan classifications);

- review of existing policies and legislation that apply to the coastal zone;

- review of the state of the natural coastal asset on Council land, via:

    o a desktop literature review, including review of the *'Conservation Assessment of the Northern and Yorke Coast'*;

    o review of aerial photography to identify new issues and confirm the outcomes of the step above; and

    o gathering and collating of community knowledge of coastal assets and issues via community groups such as Progress Associations and environmental groups, supported by site visits for ground truthing when needed. Please note, ground truthing occurred for previously unidentified or debatable issues;

- drawing together the findings and recommendations of previous key studies not formally endorsed, which were reviewed and updated as necessary before incorporation into the Strategy. The key studies were:

    o Coastal Motor Vehicle Access Management Strategy for the Coastal Councils, Northern and Yorke NRM Region (2008);

    o Draft Coastal Assessment Report (2009);

    o Coastal Pest Plant Incursion Survey of the Yorke Peninsula (2010); and

    o Coastal Reserves Management Strategy (bush camping management) (2012);

- identification of the issues to be addressed with recommendations for each cell made. The following issues and management requirements were considered:

    o off-road vehicle management;

    o weed control;

    o camping;

    o dune erosion;

    o impact to threatened species/habitat;

    o vegetation damage/removal;

    o pest animals;

    o litter and waste;

    o cliff instability;

    o foreshore and beach access and use management;

    o community education; and/or

    o coastal viewscape and illegal activities.

- Narungga cultural heritage values were considered;

- preparation of a site description and mapping for each cell;

- provision of recommendations that have broad community support/endorsement (see **3.0 Consultation**); and

- determination of monitoring and evaluation strategies for each general management issue applicable to all cells.

The site descriptions have been prepared to be proactive and focus on the site-specific recommendations, as the impacts of the issues listed above (detailed further in **4.0 Threats and issues management**), when applicable, are the same regardless of the site location.

2.1 Legislation

The following pieces of legislation have reference to the Strategy:

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth);
- *Native Vegetation Act 1991* (SA);
- *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 Act* (SA);
- *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* (SA);
- *Coast Protection Act 1972* (SA);
- *Local Government Act 1999* (SA);
- *Development Act 1993 and Regulations (2008)* (SA);
- *Crown Land Management Act 2009* (SA); and
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* (SA).

2.2 Vegetation assessment

A desktop review was conducted to gain detail regarding previous vegetation assessments. In addition, the following field assessments were conducted.

The biodiversity value within the project area was assessed using the Bushland Rapid Assessment Technique (BushRAT). This method was developed by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) in conjunction with the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia (NCSSA). It scores a variety of bushland attributes, including the native species diversity, regeneration, weed threat, vegetation cover and evidence of disturbance.

Sonia Croft was engaged to conduct twenty-eight BushRAT field surveys throughout the project area and provide a report. This information was then reviewed by the Coastal Project Officer and incorporated into the site descriptions. The BushRAT reports are available upon request.

The Coastal Project Officer conducted additional site visits to assess weed presence and the quality of vegetation, to prioritise weed control. Weeds that are listed as Weeds of National Significance (WoNS); declared plants that are regulated under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*; weeds that posed a significant threat; and weeds that were easy and cost effective to address were categorised as high priority. Weeds that had little environmental impact were categorised as low priority, with monitoring requirements to ensure appropriate action can be taken if priorities change. Please note, an asterisk (*) adjacent a weed name denotes declared plants.

2.3 Threatened species

Threatened species were identified in the process of developing management strategies for each site. Data on national, state and regionally listed species was sourced from the South Australian DEW's Biological Database of South Australia. Greening Australia were engaged to review the data and identify threatened species within the project area. Additional data was sourced from BirdLife Australia's 2016 Beach-nesting Bird Biennial Count and reviewed by the Coastal Project Officer. The Yorke Peninsula coast provides important breeding habitat for the Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*), Sooty Oyster-catcher (*Haematopus fuliginosus*) and Australian Pied Oyster-catcher (*Haematopus longirostris*) which are listed species.

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2.4 Aboriginal cultural significance

The Narungga people have a deep and significant connection to Country, with cultural obligations, affiliations and responsibilities for all lands and waters. It is important that Narungga people have every opportunity to lead and be involved in coastal management. There are requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* (SA) (in particular not to damage, disturb or interfere with Aboriginal sites, objects or remains), the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), and formal agreements such as the Narungga Area Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) (which sets certain processes when Council proposes to undertake

a notifiable act on sensitive land [defined to include the coastal environment]). However, Council and its staff have the opportunity to proactively communicate and engage with Narungga people and their representative organisations and agencies, to ensure the Strategy is both culturally appropriate and compliant with relevant legislation

The Register of Aboriginal Sites and Objects has been referred to for preparation of this Strategy, though will require continuing review anytime works are planned to ensure information is current.

Once again it is important to emphasise that all sites addressed under the Strategy are on sensitive lands, and are culturally significant to the Narungga people.
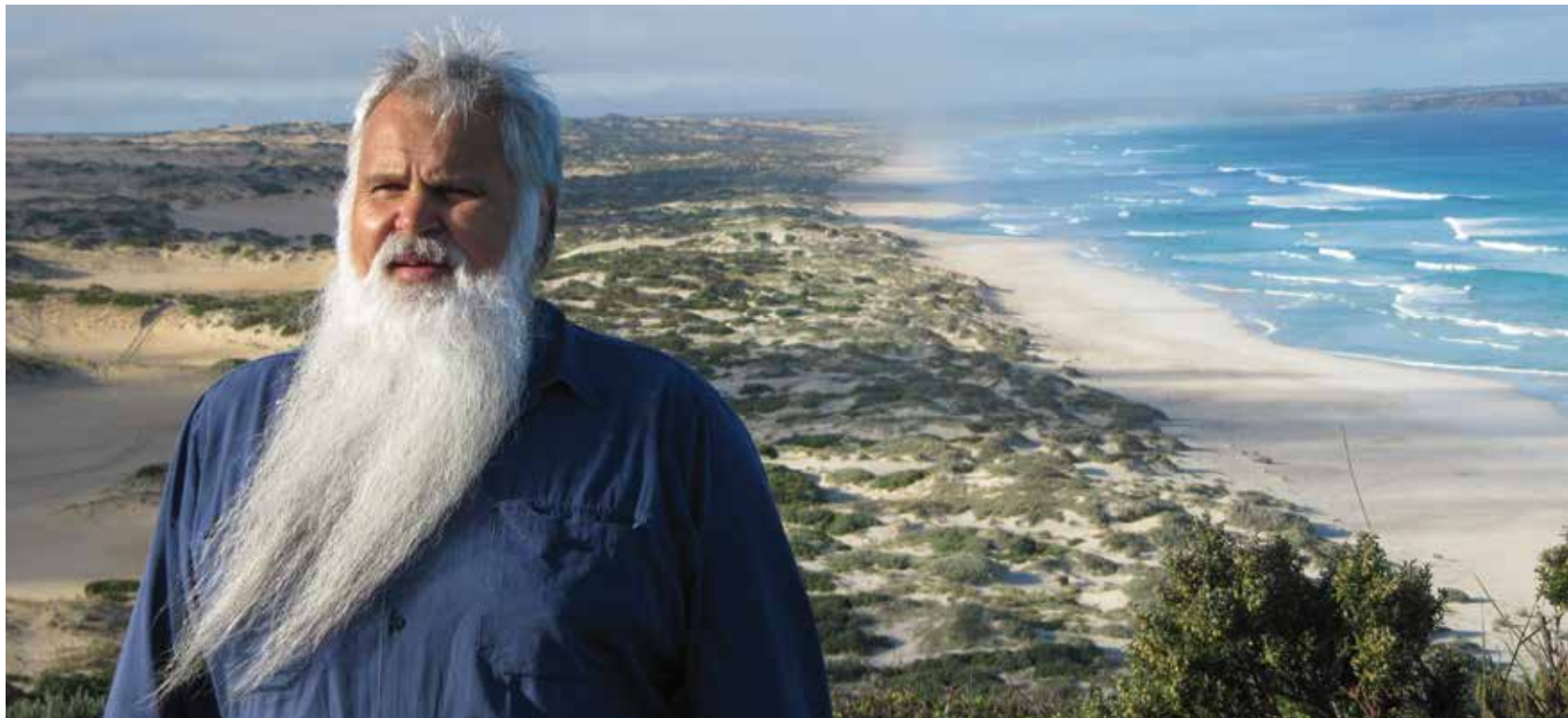
CONSULTATION

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CONSULTATION

It was a requirement to engage affected stakeholders and the local community in meaningful consultations during the preparation of the Strategy.

The drafting of the Strategy for each Section included meetings and discussions with known community groups and members who proactively undertake works at the sites. This engagement process guided the development of recommendations.

The Steering Committee reviewed the Draft Strategy prior to consultation with the Working Party. Once feedback was collated from the Working Party, the Draft Strategy was presented to Council elected members at an Elected Member Workshop and edited as appropriate based on the feedback received. The Community Engagement Plan, prepared as per Council's PO057 Community Engagement Policy and associated Strategy, was presented to Council for endorsement. This policy outlines the minimum standards of community engagement techniques used by Council and the circumstances of when and how each technique will be used. In this instance of development of the Strategy (that provides recommendations for the management of land), the level of engagement was Level Two (2). Rounds of public consultation were conducted via the following engagement techniques; workshops, public notices, media releases, posts to Council's website and social media, ability to appear before Council, signage and letters. Continuous review by the Steering Committee, Working Party, and elected members, between both rounds of public consultation and post-public consultation, resulted in the development of a Final Strategy, reported to Council and endorsed on xx-xx-xxxx (date).

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THREATS AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

With such a large coastline used for a multiple purposes, there are inherently threats to the local environment that may, or are, becoming issues that require management. These issues generally apply to all coastal environments and are summarised below:

THREAT	IMPACT
Loss of Narungga cultural heritage	Use of the coastal landscape poses a risk to Aboriginal sites, objects and possibly even remains, whereby activity can lead to unintentional discovery and degradation. The way people interact with the environment requires some management to minimise the risk of damage, interference or disturbance to Aboriginal sites, objects and remains.
Vehicle Use	Vehicle use on unauthorised tracks or access points results in the loss of vegetation. This loss of vegetation exposes the substrate, in particular sand, to the elements such as wind and rain, resulting in erosion. Often this sand drift smothers adjacent vegetation, resulting in further loss of cover. This results in a significant dune blow-out, which is costly and difficult to manage and restore. Loss of vegetation reduces habitat for, and causes disturbance to, fauna. Often multiple tracks and/or access points are formed that are not required, increasing the amount of degradation. Vehicles can also introduce weed species to an area, and pose a fire risk when conditions are suitable.

Vehicles on beaches disturb fauna such as beach-nesting birds and the invertebrate fauna within the sand. Vehicles pose potential risks to other users (pedestrian and vehicle conflicts, etc.), and are at risk of becoming bogged. If vehicles access the beach via unauthorised tracks or access points, the issues outlined above occur.

Vehicles driven on rocky areas or clifftops can decrease the stability of the area, if the area is already suffering the impacts of erosion (which may be caused from natural processes i.e. storm events). The weight of the vehicle and/or its use can contribute to crumbling. Vehicle drivers are also exposed to a greater risk of rock and/or cliff falls.

Any access or activity (regardless of its purpose) causes disturbance to native fauna. For some species (i.e. White-bellied Sea Eagles, Hooded Plovers) this disturbance can impact upon their regular habits and lead to species decline, especially if the impacts are to their breeding success. |
| **Non-vehicle access, including for recreational activities** | Accessing coastal environments via non-vehicle methods (i.e. walking, cycling, horse riding, etc.), regardless of the purpose (sight-seeing, wildlife watching, vegetation surveys, sand-boarding, surfing, fishing, etc.), also impacts ecosystem functioning, though the degradation generally occurs at a slower rate than if caused by vehicle access. As above, this access can result in a loss of vegetation cover causing erosion and loss of biodiversity. In sand dunes this may result in dune blow-outs. Of particular concern is when areas of particular significance or sensitivity are accessed or multiple tracks and/or access points are formed, all contributing to degradation, when only a few or one are needed. In rocky areas and clifftops it may increase instability (generally begun by natural processes) and expose the visitor to a greater risk of rock and/or cliff falls. |

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THREATS AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

THREAT	IMPACT
Non-vehicle access, including for recreational activities (cont.)	Any access or activity (regardless of its purpose) causes disturbance to native fauna. For some species (i.e. White-bellied Sea Eagles, Hooded Plovers) this disturbance can impact upon their regular habits and lead to species decline, especially if the impacts are to their breeding success.
Weeds	Weeds are plants that are not indigenous to the area. They compete with indigenous plants for nutrients, water, sunlight and space. They can form dense areas that shade and even smother the indigenous plants. Weeds reduce the abundance and diversity of the indigenous species, changing the balance of the natural ecosystem as the habitat changes and impacts upon fauna.
Pest and/or introduced animals	Pest and/or introduced animals compete with indigenous animals for resources, often leading to a decline in indigenous animal population. They may prey on indigenous animals, and can introduce disease. The loss of diversity of indigenous animal species can also impact on vegetation, particular if the declining species provides an ecosystem service for vegetation, such as pollinators. Pest and/or introduced animals can contribute to degrading vegetation by feeding, especially if their abundance begins to result in a reduction in density and diversity of plant species. They may also have negative interactions with humans, such as stealing food or being aggressive.
Camping	Camping outside of designated areas results in significant disturbance to coastal vegetation. Camping both outside and in designated areas can result in waste (including toilet waste) impacting both flora and fauna and is aesthetically unpleasant, can introduce weeds, and increases the risk of fire if camp fires are not managed appropriately. Over time the size of the camping space may enlarge and encroach on surrounding vegetation. Vehicle and pedestrian access increases the impacts outside of the camping footprint.
Unauthorised removal of vegetation	Unauthorised removal of vegetation may include the collection of firewood, increasing a camping space, creating access points, or to allow for views, amongst others. Whilst often it involves trimming rather than removal of a whole plant, it can affect plant health leading to a loss of vegetation. The activity of trimming can also disturb fauna and lead to trampling and loss of smaller plants. As stated previously, any loss of vegetation then has further consequences such as erosion and loss of biodiversity and ecosystem functioning.
Litter/illegal dumping	Waste is unsightly and aesthetically unpleasing in a coastal environment. Waste can pollute soils and waters, reducing their quality. It can smother vegetation and be ingested by animals, for both resulting in their decline. It can be a fire risk, and harbour pest animals such as mice and rabbits. At times it can be moved by natural processes such as wind and rain, causing degradation at other locations.

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THREATS
AND ISSUES
MANAGEMENT

The most common impact from activities in a coastal environment is degradation that results in sand drift and it requires special mention. Many activities lead to sand drift, as mentioned above. Vegetation keeps sand in place, and traps the small amounts of sand that naturally move around. Once a dune experiences loss of vegetative cover, the sand is easily moved by wind and rain and even animals and people, and is moved in larger quantities. The sand can move far, and in the process, smother more vegetation, resulting in larger exposed areas, and the cycle to continue.

Rehabilitating sand dune drift is very costly and difficult, as many resources are needed to try to prevent sand movement. It is therefore better to prevent the loss of vegetation cover, and allow the vegetation to keep the sand in place, than to rehabilitate an exposed dune.

4.1 Threats/considerations excluded from the Strategy

Other threats/risks and considerations, and the reasons why they are excluded from the scope of the Strategy, are as follows:

- vehicle speed – speeding vehicles and other acts non-compliant with the Australian Road Rules are addressed by police, with the setting of speed limits dictated by legislation administered by state government agencies;

- vehicle access via non-Council land (i.e. private properties, Crown Land, etc.) – Council can only undertake works to address vehicle access on land owned or under the care and control of Council;

- water activities – water activities such as boating and fishing are addressed under legislation administered by state government

agencies i.e. fish size limits, Marine Parks, etc.;

- dog control – effective dog control by an owner is addressed under legislation administered by Council's compliance team;

- Coastal hazards (eg. flooding and erosion) - assessments have been undertaken for a number of towns to determine the sea flood risk and adaptation options on behalf of Council. Investigations of coastal flooding and erosion hazards and appropriate adaptation measures will need to be undertaken and incorporated into coastal adaptation plans. Where infrastructure is recommended to protect coastal land, impacts of coastal hazards now and in the future will need to be considered. Sea water inundation and coastal erosion impacts on private properties or non-Council land are the responsibility of the land owner.

- jetty management – jetties are not land but are infrastructure. Jetties owned by the state government are administered under relevant legislation;

- boat ramps – boat ramps are not land but are infrastructure. Boat ramps are addressed under Council's operational requirements; and

- tourism - Yorke Peninsula Tourism (YPT) is the key organisation assigned the responsibility of communicating the benefits of visiting the region to achieve increased visitation and have associated plans to achieve this. However, the Strategy identifies works that will cater for people and tourism-related activities on Council land.

4.2 Monitoring and evaluation of common issues

Section 5 details the site descriptions and recommendations. Each site description lists the threats present
at the site, with their strategies/control measures and how progress will be measured detailed below.

THREAT	STRATEGIES/CONTROL MEASURES	HOW WILL PROGRESS BE MEASURED
Loss of Narungga cultural heritage	• Install/maintain/upgrade infrastructure for protection purposes • Use of revegetation for protection purposes • Installation of educational signage	• Ongoing monitoring of cultural sites to ensure protection strategies are being maintained • Ongoing monitoring of cultural sites to ensure protection strategies are effective • Avoidance of damage, disturbance and interference to Narungga cultural heritage sites
Vehicle use	• Install/maintain/upgrade infrastructure to restrict public access to sensitive and hazardous areas and promote designated access • Use of revegetation to restrict public access to sensitive and hazardous areas • Use of stabilising techniques, including revegetation and infrastructure to rehabilitate degraded areas • Consolidate number of tracks and/or access points • Monitor for weed introduction and undertake eradication measures • Setting of speed limits on Council land • Installation of signage • Install remote cameras in areas where illegal access and fence damage is an ongoing problem	• Ongoing monitoring to ensure protection measures are being maintained • Ongoing monitoring to ensure protection measures are effective • Ongoing monitoring to ensure track and/or access points are not increasing • Ongoing monitoring to ensure stabilisation techniques are effective • Weed assessments to determine weed presence and spread • Number of compliance activities
Weeds	• Undertake weed eradication and control measures (physical, mechanical and/or chemical) • Replace areas of weed infestation with indigenous species	• Field visits to assess weed existence and if present record density and coverage • Field visits to assess density and coverage of revegetation
Unauthorised removal of vegetation	• Installation of signage	• Number of compliance activities

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THREATS
AND ISSUES
MANAGEMENT

THREAT	STRATEGIES/CONTROL MEASURES	HOW WILL PROGRESS BE MEASURED
Non-vehicle access, including for recreational activities	• Install/maintain/upgrade infrastructure to restrict public access to sensitive and hazardous areas and promote designated access • Use of revegetation to restrict public access to sensitive and hazardous areas • Use of stabilising techniques, including revegetation and infrastructure to rehabilitate degraded areas • Consolidate number of tracks and/or access points • Monitor for weed introduction and undertake eradication measures • Installation of signage	• Ongoing monitoring to ensure protection measures are being maintained • Ongoing monitoring to ensure protection measures are effective • Ongoing monitoring to ensure track and/or access points are not increasing • Ongoing monitoring to ensure stabilisation techniques are effective • Weed assessments to determine weed presence and spread • Number of compliance activities
Camping	• Install/maintain/upgrade infrastructure to restrict public access to sensitive and hazardous areas and promote designated access • Use of revegetation to restrict public access to sensitive and hazardous areas • Use of stabilising techniques, including revegetation and infrastructure to rehabilitate degraded areas • Consolidate number of tracks and/or access points • Monitor for weed introduction and undertake eradication measures • Installation of signage • Install/maintain/upgrade infrastructure to manage waste • Conditions of camping listed on camping permits • Camping inspector undertakes regular patrols of the coast to monitor and educate	• Ongoing monitoring to ensure protection measures are being maintained • Ongoing monitoring to ensure protection measures are effective • Ongoing monitoring to ensure track and/or access points are not increasing • Ongoing monitoring to ensure stabilisation techniques are effective • Weed assessments to determine weed presence and spread • Number of compliance activities • Ongoing monitoring to ensure effectiveness of waste management • Regular review of booking system to determine if amendments are required e.g. must indicate location and no further bookings accepted once at capacity
Pest and/or introduced animals	• Undertake control and eradication measures • Installation of educational signage	• Field visits to assess presence and indicators of population
Litter/illegal dumping	• Install/maintain/upgrade infrastructure to manage waste • Installation of signage	• Ongoing monitoring to ensure effectiveness of waste management • Number of compliance activities