

# Great Ocean Road Memorial Arch Master Plan Eastern View, Victoria



## Issues and Opportunities Paper

November 2015



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prepared for:



consultant team:



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Memorial Arch (the Arch) is located at Eastern View on the Great Ocean Road, and was erected in 1932 as a tribute to the World War One servicemen who built the Great Ocean Road. One of the area's best recognised historic landmarks, the Arch precinct is a popular tourist destination. Many tourist coaches (small and large) and private tourist vehicles access the site each day, predominately in a southbound direction. The coaches generally stop for around 10 minutes for a photo opportunity for their passengers. A sizeable population of local residents, both permanent and part time, reside on the landward side of the Arch and use the precinct including for beach access.

## 1.2 Project rationale

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) has commissioned a master plan for the Great Ocean Road Memorial Arch precinct. The project needs to assess the area and facilities, current site uses, stakeholders and all associated issues. The project will produce a master plan document that provides GORCC and the general community with a vision and plan for the future. It will incorporate community and stakeholder feedback and identify future opportunities for the site, including actions that mitigate the identified issues.

## 1.3 Project objectives

The main objectives of the Great Ocean Road Memorial Arch Master Plan are to:

- Develop a master plan that improves use and management of the Arch precinct, and provides a vision and plan for the future.
- Analyse projected levels of climate change and coastal process impacts to determine a strategy that accommodates these impacts.
- Develop a stakeholder management strategy that addresses the Arch issues now and into the future.
- Determine a preferred option to address the issue of toileting.
- Identify appropriate works to upgrade and enhance the area while considering people's accessibility, use and enjoyment of it, which are also in line with other key documents and strategies.
- Consolidate community and stakeholder feedback, and incorporate appropriate elements into a final master plan design.
- Determine whether any additional opportunities for future use and development exist.



## 1.5 Study area

The Memorial Arch (the Arch) is located at Eastern View on the Great Ocean Road. The study area includes the roadside stop and parking area with interpretive memorials to the Arch, as well as the coastal dune system adjoining. We recognise that some relevant issues and opportunities are outside the defined study area, and these will be explored or addressed as required.

## 1.4 Key issues and considerations

The Arch precinct is located between the road and a narrow strip of dune coastal habitat. This habitat is inherently and sensitive dynamic, with wave action and coastal processes impacting the site. In line with predicted sea level rise and shoreline recession rates, erosion has the greatest potential to impact the Arch precinct, particularly regarding the amount of space that can support facilities and infrastructure into the future.

There are a number significant issues associated with the use of the site which now require further consideration. These include:

- Overcrowding during peak visitation times.
- Safety concerns associated with undefined parking areas.
- Toileting in the nearby dunes and residential areas.
- Littering.
- Unsafe pedestrian practices. (standing on the road to take pictures)
- Inappropriate beach access.

In addition, the area experiences significant beach use and access over summer months, creating further issues for roadside and residential street parking. These and others are discussed in more detail within this paper.



# Introduction (continued)

## 1.6 Roles and responsibilities

The project will be led by GORCC and aims to evaluate the precinct as a whole; however GORCC cannot act on behalf of, or make commitments for other agencies. As a multi-stakeholder project, it aims to facilitate a streamlined approvals process.

GORCC is a Committee of Management (CoM) established in 2004 under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 to manage 37 kilometres of coastal Crown land reserves along the heritage listed Great Ocean Road, from Point Impossible east of Torquay to the Cumberland River southwest of Lorne in Victoria, Australia.

Several organisations are responsible for the management and maintenance of various components of the Memorial Arch precinct including:

- **Surf Coast Shire.** Responsible for the parcel of land on the landward side of the road containing the cypress trees under a management agreement made with VicRoads.
- **VicRoads.** Responsible for the Great Ocean Road and Arch structure.
- **GORCC.** Responsible for the Foreshore area.
- **Parks Victoria.** Responsible for area further west of the Surf Coast Shire managed roadside.

The delineation of these zones is shown within chapter 7, Management and Broader Strategic Context.

## 1.7 Community and stakeholder engagement

A large range and number of stakeholders have an interest in the project, ranging from the local community (including residents, holiday home owners and businesses), through to local community groups and organisations, state government representatives and many others in-between.

Input from these stakeholders is critical to the success of the project and the final plan needs to reflect their desires for the precinct. The plan will be developed through a process which acknowledges their interests and concerns, is transparent and respects competing priorities.

A comprehensive consultation process that appropriately engages all relevant stakeholders, provides all interested parties information about the plan, and offers opportunities to contribute ideas and feedback to the process will take place. This may include (but will not be limited to) mechanisms such as surveys and submissions processes over several phases of the plan's development.

In addition to opportunities for the involvement of the broad public in the planning process, two separate groups of stakeholders are to be formed to provide a formal mechanism for the participation of key groups and individuals:

- Community Reference Group – comprising representatives from the local community, including residents, visitors, businesses, community groups, etc.
- Agency Working Group – comprising representatives from the main government bodies with a role in the project.

## 1.8 Purpose of this paper

This paper presents issues and opportunities that have been identified through site investigations, background research, information from past studies and previous material, and from initial consultation with the CRG and AWG. The paper is being used to gain feedback from stakeholders and the community and identify any areas that haven't been addressed. This feedback will then help in developing a draft plan for the Memorial Arch precinct.

## 1.9 Anticipated project timeline

Task	Anticipated dates*
Preliminary consultation on issues and opportunities, first Community Reference Group (CRG) and Agency Working Group (AWG) meetings	November 2015
Issues and opportunities paper development	November 2015
GORC Committee consideration/approval	4 December 2015
Consultation on issues and opportunities paper	January-February 2016
Meetings held with CRG and AWG	March 2016
Agency approvals process	TBC
Development of draft master plan	TBC
GORC Committee consideration/approval	TBC
Consultation on draft master plan	TBC
Third CRG and AWG meetings for feedback on the draft	TBC
Development of final master plan	TBC
GORC Committee consideration/approval	TBC
Fourth CRG and AWG meetings prior to finalisation of final design	TBC
Amendments to final design	TBC
GORC Committee consideration/approval	TBC
Submitted for Coastal Management Act consent (DELWP approval)	TBC

*\*Subject to change*



## 2.0 Broader Strategic Context

Whilst there are clear physical issues associated with the functionality of the Memorial Arch Precinct, which are discussed in this paper, there are also broader issues around the inherent meaning, value and function of the Arch. These will be explored through the issues and opportunities process and established through the master planning stage.

It is important to understand where the Memorial Arch 'fits' within the overall journey and experience of the Great Ocean Road.

There needs to be an understanding of how the Arch is generally recognised. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many visitors perceive the Arch to be a marker that signifies the 'entrance' or gateway to the Great Ocean Road. While the Arch is not the official entry point to the Great Ocean Road, it is located on the first stretch of ocean front road vantage, and therefore gains this perception. Uses and experiences such as climbing the dues, putting feet in the sand and sea have become part of the experience.

Within the above context, opportunities may exist for the historical narrative around the construction of the Great Ocean Road to be told and provided in other locations with more space, facilities and without safety and environmental issues.

Feedback and advice received to date suggest that the current function of the Arch has limited economic benefit to the region, nearby towns, local economy or the authorities responsible for management and investment. Opportunities need to be explored that look at ways this can be mitigated, or benefits derived.



# 3.0 Access and Mobility

## 3.1 Overview

Issues and opportunities associated with **Access and Mobility** will focus on pedestrian routes and movements through out the site. The analysis undertaken has identified significant issues around safety, conflicts with the road and vehicle movements, as well as people moving through the dune system causing environmental damage. It will also consider parking and vehicle movements, which is clearly a key issue in relation to access, turning, safety and overall capacity. Parking pressures and limited capacity during busy times has been identified, as well as the need to consider buses and larger articulated vehicles.

## 3.2 Issues and opportunities identified

**A.** There are no formal parking areas or roadside stopping points on the northbound side of the road. Whilst the volume of vehicles stopping to view or visit the Arch is considerably less than the southbound, there are nonetheless an amount of vehicles that stop in unsafe areas on the road shoulder. Compounding this issue is the propensity for these visitors to cross the road to reach the main viewing area and memorials – creating a hazardous situation for pedestrians and motorists.



**B.** The right-hand turn northbound into the parking area has a short lead-in and relatively small length. Vehicles stop quickly or unexpectedly to make this turn, and this raises a risk to following vehicles. Anecdotal evidence suggests that following vehicles need to make a sudden merge left into the shoulder to pass the propping / turning vehicle.



**Opportunity:** Re-configuration of road markings creating a longer and safer turning movement could be explored, as could additional signage to alert vehicles to the manoeuver.



**C.** Buses and larger articulated vehicles park in the southernmost space. This results in congestion and unsafe movements including reversing into the carpark and being an obstacle to vehicles using the 90 degree parking opposite.

**Opportunity:** There may be ways to re-organise the space - to separate and re-route pedestrians off the road and away from traffic.

Another initiative may be to de-mark this and other specific areas as 'no long vehicle parking', introducing a management mechanism to control access. Re-arrangements of parking bays including one-way in and out, or full separation of cars and buses may be devised.





# Access and Mobility (continued)

## 3.2 Issues and opportunities identified (continued)

**D.** Buses and larger / articulated vehicles stop in when bus parking areas are full, either on the road shoulder or within the carpark.



**E.** Visitors walk onto the road in order to obtain photos of themselves and the Arch, creating a risk. This occurs across the road (northbound side) and along the road edge on the southern section when used as overflow parking.



**F.** There are no designated crossing points for locals to access the beach, nor any warning signs or devices to alert or slow traffic.

**Opportunity:** Consider ways to improve legibility and safety via signage or physical delineation of a crossing point.

**G.** The existing beach access path is not coping with existing demands and showing signs of erosion and dune damage.

**Opportunity:** Fencing or other physical barriers may be used to control and limit this access.



**H.** There are currently no speed reductions (from the current 80kmh) through the Arch Precinct. In addition to speed, there are limited signs to alerts vehicles or users to the Arch, and the precinct generally.

**Opportunity:** Investigate speed reductions through the precinct and more effective signage. (In consultation with approving authority VicRoads.)



**I.** There is general congestion and overcrowding within the parking area, particularly at peak and summer holiday times.

**Opportunity:** A range of parking management options could be considered as a way to alleviate parking issues on the site. Management options that could be investigated in consultation with the community and key stakeholders might include a user-pays arrangement for buses and tour operators, time restrictions to reduce congestion, and increased policing of illegal parking to reduce illegal or unsafe practices.



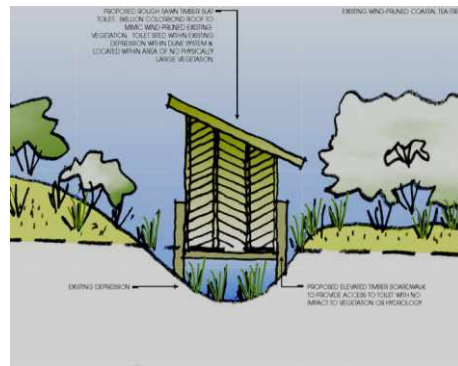
# 4.0 Facilities and Amenity

## 4.1 Overview

Issues and opportunities associated with **Facilities and Amenity** include the provision of public facilities for visitors. The key discussion issue based on feedback received to date appears to be around the issue of visitors going to the toilet in/around the precinct (i.e. using dunes and roadside areas) as currently no facility is available. Rubbish bin provision as well as management / collection has been identified as an issue.

## 4.2 Issues and opportunities identified

**J.** Visitors require toilet facilities and use the dune and roadside areas – leading to obvious issues with litter and hygiene. There is little infrastructure or capacity to support a toilet, as the primary dune is a fragile and dynamic system. This is combined with wave action and coastal processes affecting the site, and a seasonal cycle that typically causes beach accretion in summer. However, significant weather events can cause change at any time of the year. In line with predicted sea level rise and shoreline recession rates, erosion has the greatest potential to impact the Arch precinct, particularly regarding the amount of space that can support facilities and infrastructure into the future.

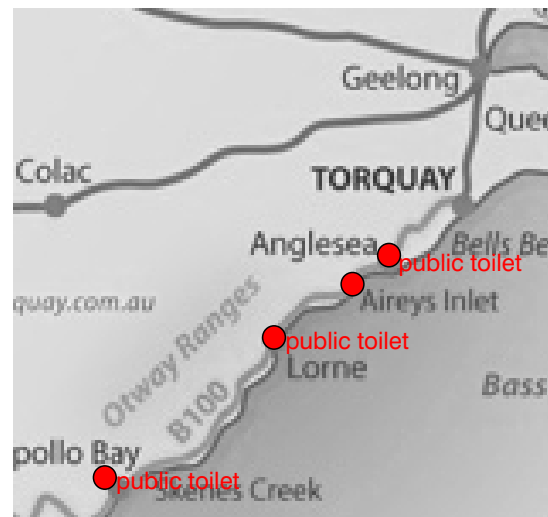


There are environmental issues associated with a toilet proposal within the primary dune.

A toilet location on the west of the road may have lesser coastal impacts, however would raise other issues including proximity to residences, lack of space and the issue of visitors crossing to and from the viewing area and memorials.

**Opportunity:** Further investigate the suitability of a facility on/near the site, and assess the options and alternatives, exploring environmentally sensitive siting options and eco-friendly designs to weigh up appropriateness.

Consider how other existing toilet facilities along the Great Ocean Road may be utilised – Anglesea and/or Aireys Inlet for example. This opportunity includes signage, information and other ways to educate visitors that there are no toilet facilities at the Arch prior to stopping there.

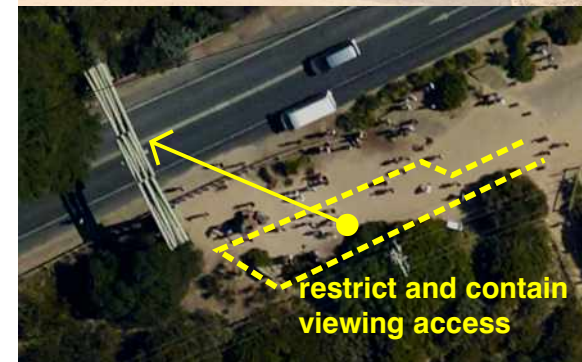


Maps or information about the Great Ocean Road route would highlight the potential opportunities for toilet stops - alleviating the need at the Memorial Arch.



**K.** The existing timber viewing decks do appear to be positively contributing to the organisation of the site – encouraging defined viewing and photo locations that ultimately protect broader areas and vegetation as well as keeping visitors from the road.

**Opportunity:** The approach of defining and containing access and viewing to specific areas may be considered. The viewing space could be re-organised to restrict any direct access to the Arch (and therefore onto the road), as well as protecting dune areas.



**L.** There appears to be a limited and insufficient provision of rubbish bins and associated collection regime.

**Opportunity:** Orchestrate a more efficient and improved management system and provide integrated receptacles more sympathetic to the site.





# 5.0 Cultural Heritage

## 5.1 Overview

Clearly the Arch is an iconic and historically significant element associated with the Great Ocean Road - both the history associated with its construction and as a war memorial, and the journey experience for visitors. The following issues and opportunities focus on this **Cultural Heritage** context.

## 5.2 Issues and opportunities identified

**M.** Physically and aesthetically, the existing memorials are not sited, arranged and integrated in a coordinated way. Multiple memorials describe many of the same information and events.

**Opportunity:** There may be ways to coordinate and integrate (and potentially re-locate) the memorials and interpretation into a single unified story.

A further opportunity, in consultation with the community and stakeholders may be to consider other off-site locations for memorials and interpretation such as information centres or within townships that may be more suitable.



**N.** There is a contextual relationship and association between the Arch Structure and adjoining cypress trees. Both are heritage listed and this will need to be investigated and considered should the trees require removal (see ecology and environment).





# 6.0 Ecology and Environment

## 6.1 Overview

Discussions and proposals around **ecology and environment** will focus on the ecology of the foreshore edge and dune system - which are likely to face long term challenges from sea level rises and storm events. Vegetation, particularly the balance and provision of indigenous vs exotic species is a key issue and requires a sensitive approach. The future of the existing cypress trees on the north of the Arch will also be considered.

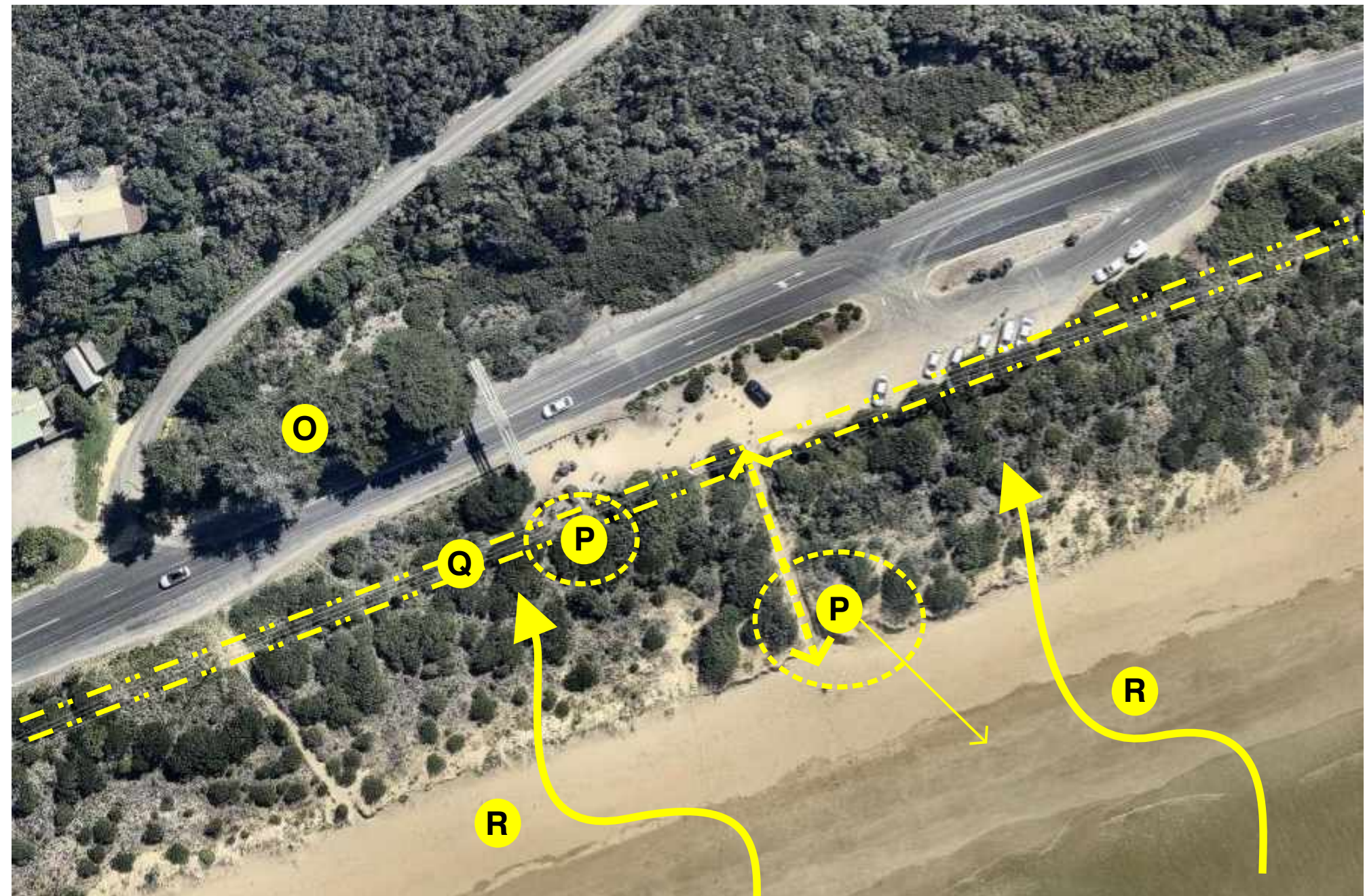
## 6.2 Issues and opportunities identified

**O.** The existing cypress trees flanking the Memorial Arch on the west side of the road create management issues. The trees are in decline and require significant maintenance, as well as posing a risk for limb drop or fall. The location of the trees also makes access to this parcel of land difficult local environmental volunteers attempting to rehabilitate the area. The species are introduced, and therefore not indigenous to the coastal environment. The cultural heritage / significance of the trees being associated with the character and experience of the Arch needs to be considered, as does the fact that pre-existing trees have already been removed, including on the east side of the road.



**Opportunity:** Removal of the trees may help facilitate environmental upgrades such as native re-vegetation and habitat creation, drainage, signage, access and other improvements to the roadside space.

PLEASE NOTE: While cypress trees are located on land technically under VicRoad's jurisdiction, an agreement made with the Surf Coast Shire means that the Surf Coast Shire manages the trees and other assets on this land. The Surf Coast Shire's Draft Open Space Strategy identifies the trees as requiring further assessment/investigation. See also section 7.2.



**P.** Being at the northern end of the Great Ocean Road, and often a first or early stop in the journey, visitors to the Memorial Arch appear to be visiting the beach for the experience of seeing the sea and sand. In the case of larger groups and tour buses this appears to extend the duration of stops at the Memorial Arch.

This causes damage to the dune which is regularly used as a vantage point for photographs. General pedestrian movements through the dunes (including informal 'toilet' use) contribute to this issue.



**Q.** Existing overhead power lines detract from the visual aesthetic of the site.

**Opportunity:** The opportunity of undergrounding powerlines could be explored, however this action would be under the jurisdiction of Powercor, and is not directly GORCC's responsibility. While this action could be investigated, it is likely to come at a high cost.



**R.** The existing coastal system adjoining the Arch is fragile and dynamic. Issues and potential impacts on the foreshore, including dune erosion and changes to beach width, are present as a result of long term coastal processes and cyclical wave action and storm events.

This issue should guide the level of physical intervention and proposals at the foreshore edge, including previously proposed siting for a toilet facility.





## 7.0 Management and Broader Context

### 7.1 Overview

Discussions around wider responsibilities for management of the site (currently under multiple jurisdictions) as well as where the Arch 'fits' in the context of the Great Ocean Road journey and experience will form the basis for issues and opportunities around management and broader context.

### 7.2 Issues and opportunities identified

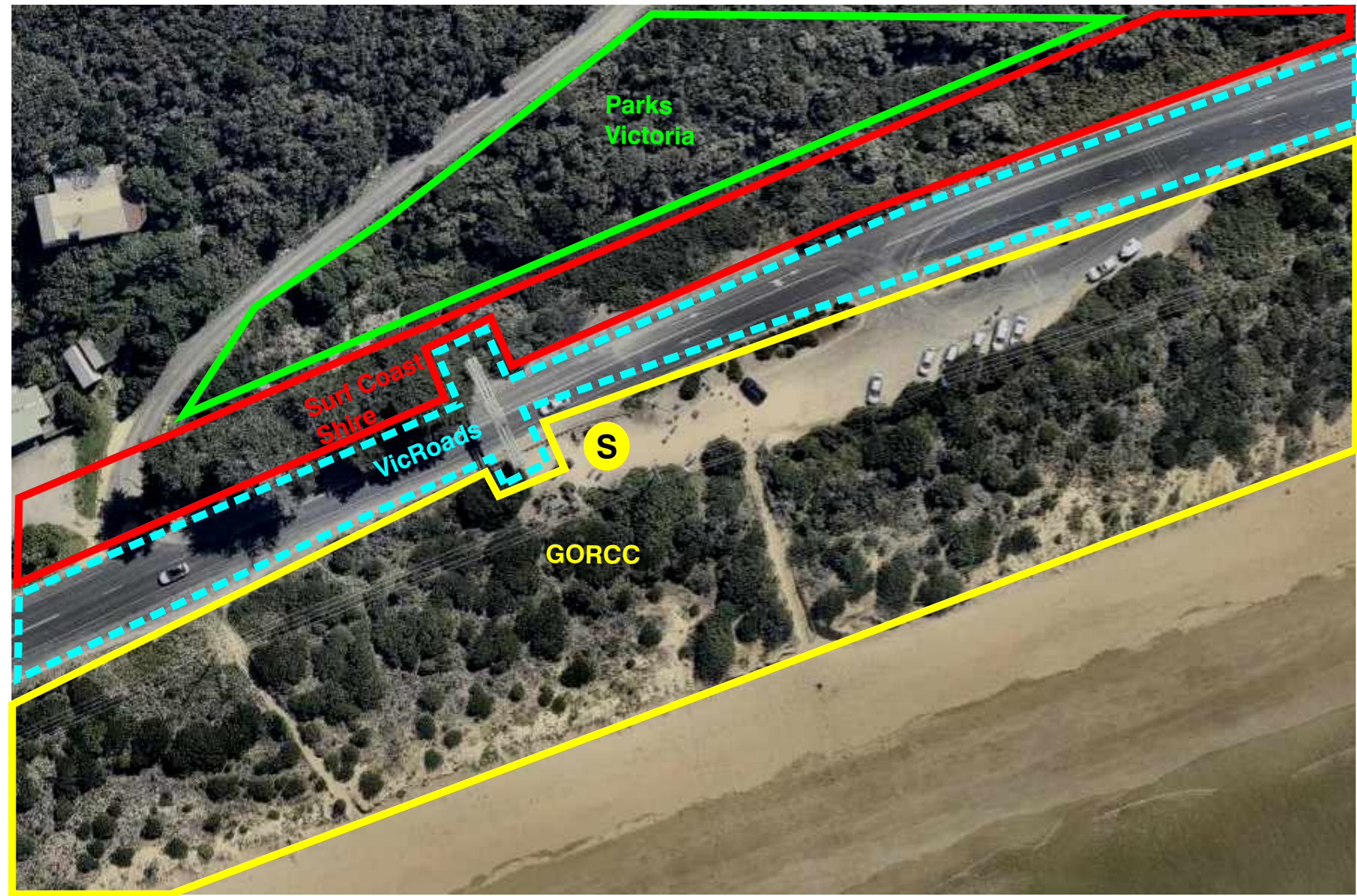
**S.** Currently there are multiple agencies responsible for the maintenance and management of the precinct. These include:

- **Surf Coast Shire.** Responsible for the parcel of land on the landward side of the road containing the cypress trees under a management agreement made with VicRoads.
- **VicRoads.** Responsible for the Great Ocean Road and Arch structure.
- **GORCC.** Responsible for the Foreshore area.
- **Parks Victoria.** Responsible for area further west of the Surf Coast Shire managed roadside.

The delineation of these zones is shown opposite.

It is worth noting that the parcel of land on the landward side of the road containing the cypress trees is technically road reserve managed by VicRoads, however in 2012, the area was reclassified as 'urban' and an agreement between Surf Coast Shire (SCS) VicRoads made to transfer all management responsibilities to the SCS. Roadside land and vegetation is therefore the responsibility of SCS.

**Opportunity:** Consolidate and streamline this and provide a more efficient and cohesive approach to management and maintenance.



**T.** The need to agree a broader shared vision for the Memorial Arch is a key issue. There needs to be a shared understanding of where it 'fits' within the overall journey and experience of the Great Ocean Road and agreement on what its key function, value and identity is. The current function of the Arch has limited economic benefit to the region, nearby towns, local economy or the authorities responsible for management and investment.

**Opportunity:** Develop and agree an overall strategic vision statement and key principles that define the values and function of the Memorial Arch.

Consider ways that the historical narrative around the construction of the Great Ocean Road could be told and provided in other locations with more space and facilities, and without safety and environmental issues.



## 8.0 Next Steps

### 8.1 How to have your say

GORCC is currently seeking your feedback on the issues and opportunities identified in this paper.

To have your say, fill out the survey which can be found:

- Online at [www.gorcc.com.au](http://www.gorcc.com.au) (Follow the links from the homepage)
- In hard copy at:
  - The GORCC Office (23 Bell Street, Torquay)
  - The Aireys Inlet Post Office (Shop 1/44 Great Ocean Road, Aireys Inlet)

**Survey closes 5pm Friday 26th February 2016.**

### 8.2 Next steps

The release of this Issues and Opportunities Paper is an important milestone in the development of a Master Plan for the Memorial Arch Precinct at Eastern View, and is part of the first stage of consultation for the planning process.

Consultation on this Issues and Opportunities Paper will occur over January/February 2016. Following this consultation period, all comments will be consolidated into a consultation report.

The report (summarising all feedback received) will then be considered in the development of a vision and guiding principles for the precinct and the subsequent development of a Draft Plan, which will be released for consultation later in 2016 (Dates TBC).