

# Achieving Lorne's Aspirations



*A place of natural beauty and special significance.*

As gazetted by the Victorian Government



# Foreword

It is with a great sense of pride that the Executive of the Committee of Lorne (CfL) and I reflect upon what we have achieved in the past 2 years. Perhaps the greatest achievement is to deliver on a promise we made to the community of Lorne at the very start; that we would develop a Vision for how we saw our future. I have much pleasure in presenting to you Lorne's first official visioning document by our community – *Achieving Lorne's Aspirations!*

To many residents, our town has sat dormant for a generation and our population has slumped to 1047 as per the 2011 census. Without reference to any specific data, but having grown up with a permanent population of just under 1500 people, where fishing and timber were the backbone of the local economy, Lorne had a more vibrant year-round feel than it does today. A return to the population numbers of Lorne's magic era of the 70's and 80's, is a goal we would all like to achieve.

It's taken me just over 50 years for the "penny to drop" as to how I can best describe my passion and underlying love of the town where I was born. I was tagged with the title of the third baby born at the official Lorne Hospital and this town has been an integral part of my family for the past five generations. The township of Lorne has an overwhelming "sense of place" – a phrase that until the middle of this year was foreign to me, a statement that when researched, finally put my mind at ease – I said to myself – "this is Lorne".

When the CfL was inaugurated in August 2012, we had a vision to tackle the challenges and opportunities for Lorne that were too important or too large for any single community group to successfully address on its own. The CfL is a community

organisation that connects and unites a cross-section of the Lorne Ward's leaders, businesses, community groups, residents and home owners to work together to ensure a sustainable future for the Lorne Ward: economically, environmentally and socially.

One of Lorne's greatest strengths over many generations has been the "power and the passion" of our people, whether it be the creators of the original Lorne Hospital Auxiliary, Lorne Planning and Preservation League, Lorne Chamber of Commerce or any one of the many sporting and special interest clubs. As our community organizations have continued to evolve and the challenge has been to unite and implement the vision of all.

Now that our visioning document is complete it is fair to ask: "where to from here?" This is where the strength of our grass root organisations, clubs and individuals, under the strategic guidance of the CfL, begin to work on the actions to make our aspirations become reality. This second phase is already underway and your feedback and input from the information sessions and surveys has led to the creation of an appendix to our vision.

For the first time in our history we now have a guiding document to ensure that our "sense of place" is maintained and enhanced for generations to come.

**Ian Stewart**  
Chairman

**COMMITTEE  
FOR LORNE**









## Vision

Lorne: Sustainable living amongst natural beauty.

## Mission

We will achieve our vision by promoting and enhancing Lorne's community, cultural and economic assets, while conserving Lorne's unique environment.

## Lorne's Defining Features

While we strive to achieve our vision and mission, we will not lose sight of the qualities which make Lorne such a special place. We have therefore established a set of Defining Features of Lorne which are the important characteristics that we want to maintain, enhance and promote, no matter what else we do.

### 1. Environment

- A place of natural beauty
- Where the bush meets the beach
- Heart of the Great Ocean Road
- Australian wildlife - land, air and aquatic
- Healthy forest, coastal land and animal habitat

### 2. Community

- Sense of community and sense of place
- Volunteer groups and community clubs
- Community infrastructure (e.g. school, hospital, op shop, fire station, community house)
- Diverse, unique and independent retail sector

### 3. Arts, culture and heritage

- Aboriginal and Victorian heritage
- Arts events and festivals (e.g. Performing Arts Festival, Lorne Sculpture Biennale, Lorne Film)
- Cafes and restaurants
- Local boutique farms and vineyards

### 4. Lifestyle

- Outdoor activities (e.g. surfing, swimming, walking, hiking, cycling, golf)
- Sporting events (e.g. Pier to Pub, Amy's Gran Fondo, GOR Marathon)
- Walking tracks
- Local sporting teams and sporting facilities
- Fitness, health and recreation









# Lorne's Aspirational Strategies

These strategies are the main areas on which we need to focus to carry out our Mission. For each strategy, a number of specific objectives are listed.

## 1. Leading through cooperation and collaboration

- We will encourage and facilitate cooperation and collaboration between local groups, government agencies and other organisations with an interest in Lorne, so that Lorne will operate efficiently and effectively.

## 2. Creating a community for everyone

- We will implement actions to make Lorne a more attractive place in which to live by addressing the needs of the working population, young people, young families and by engaging more effectively with non-permanent residents.

## 3. Generating a local economic advantage

- We will implement actions that reflect Lorne's Defining Features and so create a real economic advantage that will result in business opportunities and local jobs.

## 4. Accommodating Lorne's future

- With our goal of a permanent population of 1500 more evenly spread across all age groups, we will take steps to address the lack of affordable housing that is a significant barrier to achieving the long-term viability and ongoing sustainability of Lorne.

## 5. Encouraging visitors to stay longer

- We will encourage ways of promoting Lorne's year-round attractions to provide a greater demand-spread which will benefit Lorne's tourism and retail sectors and so address the extreme summer highs and winter lows which cause significant business stress.







# Aspirational Strategy I

## Leading through cooperation and collaboration

We will encourage and facilitate cooperation and collaboration between local groups, government agencies and other organisations with an interest in Lorne, so that Lorne will operate efficiently and effectively.

**Under this Strategy, the objectives are to:**

1. Improve cooperation between various government departments and agencies operating in Lorne by undertaking regular meetings to:
  - Identify and plan strategic issues.
  - Review the current operational aspects within the Lorne community by all government departments and agencies, to improve productivity and efficiencies in delivering services.
2. Identify and participate in demonstration projects or funding opportunities that contribute to the aspirational strategies for Lorne.
3. Work with all stakeholders to improve the amenity and accessibility of public reserves, scenic attractions, caravan parks and other foreshore areas in Lorne to support longer visitor stays.
4. Support cooperative public/private projects that contribute to accommodation, affordable holidays and the aspirational goals of Lorne.







# Aspirational Strategy II

## Creating a community for everyone

We will implement actions to make Lorne a more attractive place in which to live by addressing the needs of the working population, young people, young families and by engaging more effectively with non-permanent residents.

**Under this Strategy, the objectives are to:**

1. Encourage community groups to share resources and information to more effectively and efficiently achieve each group's aims.
2. Create opportunities for non-permanent residents to be more connected to Lorne, improve communication with them and find ways to better engage with them.
3. Ensure that child care and education facilities are of a sufficiently high standard to act as a positive influence in attracting young families to live in Lorne and to educate their children here.
4. Work with resident and non-resident young people to identify and then generate an array of activities and opportunities that support and enrich a young person's lifestyle in Lorne.
5. Investigate and institute opportunities, programs and services to support the needs of the working population.





## Aspirational Strategy III

### Generating a local economic advantage

We will implement actions that reflect Lorne's Defining Features and so create a real economic advantage that will result in business opportunities and local jobs.

**Under this Strategy, the objectives are to:**

1. Take advantage of the programs, services and facilities at the Lorne hospital.
2. Promote the ability to have a work/lifestyle balance.
3. Ensure that transport and communications infrastructure offers competitive advantage.
4. Support, promote and take advantage of all of Lorne's Defining Features, including Lorne's emerging arts culture.





# Aspirational Strategy IV

## Accommodating Lorne's future

With our goal of a permanent population of 1500 more evenly spread across all age groups, we will take steps to address the lack of affordable housing that is a significant barrier to achieving the long-term viability and ongoing sustainability of Lorne.

**Under this Strategy, the objectives are to:**

1. Support the current and ongoing research into how to accommodate 500 more permanent residents, most of which are to be of working age and under.
2. Investigate the establishment of some sort of community land and/or housing model for Lorne.
3. Consider alternative locations outside of Lorne where housing can be provided to support the Lorne community as its activities and economy grows.
4. Identify ways to encourage non-permanent residents to spend more time in Lorne.
5. Provide accommodation for seasonal workers at suitable location(s).





# Aspirational Strategy V

## Encouraging visitors to stay longer

We will encourage ways of promoting Lorne's year-round attractions to provide a greater demand-spread which will benefit Lorne's tourism and retail sectors and so address the extreme summer highs and winter lows which cause significant business stress.

**Under this Strategy, the objectives are to:**

1. Work with agencies, in particular Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, to ensure that the Destination Plan for Lorne offers real attraction and benefit to visitors, while meeting our vision and mission.
2. Work with the business and tourism associations and operators to improve the quality of the visitor experience in Lorne so that it is consistently high.
3. Utilise all of Lorne's Defining Features to attract off-peak visitors in particular, and to encourage visitors to stay a little longer.
4. Work with relevant organisations to create a range of experiences which will help to make Lorne an attractive destination in all seasons.





# Lorne – A Brief History



Gadubanud or King Parrot people of the Cape Otway Coast were the original users of the land around Lorne before Europeans started moving into the area in the mid 1850's.

Lorne is situated on a bay named after Captain Louttit, who sought shelter there in 1841 while supervising the retrieval of cargo from a nearby shipwreck. It was another five years before the coast was surveyed and couple more years before William Lindsay started timber logging. J Herd built a large station and introduced cattle to the area. That station was eventually sold to the Mountjoy brothers after whom the main street of Lorne is named.

The Mountjoys built a house that stood where the Erskine House Guesthouse was built, which is now within Mantra Resort. They gave up the cattle run in late 1860's and ventured into other businesses in the area. Subdivision followed in about 1869 and the town's name was changed to Lorne in honour of the Marquis of Lorne who married the daughter of Queen Victoria in 1870.

The town expanded rapidly with a school, hotel, hall and library being built between 1870 and 1890. Camping and tourism gained popularity with improved access to the town following the opening of Great Ocean Road in 1924.

Early industries in the area included fishing and logging. In its heyday, Lorne had a permanent population in excess of 1,500 people. Tourism grew and grew after World War II and large hotels and guesthouse were built in the town to accommodate this growing demand.

By the 1950's Lorne had become one of Victoria's favourite holiday destinations with campers; tents and plywood caravans and the like all making a home in the township over summer. Fishing, enjoying the sun and the new found sport of surfing made this town the place to be. Cafes and restaurants soon followed and the town has never looked back.

During the 1980's, large scale developments came to Lorne for the first time with the Cumberland Resort being built; sadly the beautiful Cumberland Hotel had to make way for its construction, but nearly 30 years on, people have accepted change. Several new developments have since sprung up helping to make Lorne a vibrant seaside town that offers quality accommodation for the growing number of visitors.

Fire has impact the surrounds of Lorne many times over its existence but none will be remembered quite like the events of 1983. Like much of the Great Ocean Road, dozens of houses were destroyed in the Lorne area during the horrific Ash Wednesday bush fires.

Today the town is a very cosmopolitan place but although things have changed, the charm of Lorne has remained and with its natural beauty, beautiful beaches and an incredible array of activities, it will continue to be the jewel of the Great Ocean Road for a long time to come.

Thanks to local Historian, Doug Stirling and the Lorne Historical Society.





# Appendix: Suggested Actions and Ideas

The Committee of Lorne released the draft version of its Visioning Document for Lorne, “Achieving Lorne’s Aspirations”, in December 2013 and we asked the community to provide feedback. We prepared a survey for people to complete and many people did so. However, just as many provided their own comments and suggestions in their own words. We have been overwhelmed by the response we received and that feedback, together with the Visioning Group’s own discussions, has resulted in a series of potential actions related to each strategy.

Whilst the Visioning Document outlines the Committee’s Vision, Mission, Strategies and Objectives, we have also recorded the Actions and Ideas so that they are not overlooked. They are not in any order of priority, nor does their inclusion necessarily mean that they have each been considered and endorsed by the Committee. Some could well be actioned directly by the Committee in the future and others may need to be actioned by the responsible authorities.

They do provide an indication of the way the Community has got behind the Committee’s Visioning Document and are indicative of a belief that the Committee for Lorne is indeed working for our Community.

Specific actions and ideas that support each Aspirational Strategy are listed under each Strategy below:

## **Aspirational Strategy I** **Leading through cooperation and collaboration**

1. Ensure the Lorne community has a say in the use of Crown land, reserves and open spaces within and around Lorne.

## **Aspirational Strategy II** **Creating a community for everyone**

1. Conduct surveys and focus groups to ascertain ways in which the non-permanent residents and regular holiday makers can participate in, and contribute to, the year-round community life of Lorne.

2. Develop a centralised and coordinated website for Lorne that provides an opportunity for all the information on Lorne to be managed and accessed in a coherent way, including a community calendar.
3. Establish family-friendly cafes and restaurants with indoor play spaces, and other indoor activities and entertainment for children.
4. Set up a long day care centre that incorporates kindergarten.
5. Create ways to help new residents “break into” the community more easily particularly for those who aren’t able to join community groups.
6. Implement a system of loyalty cards (or similar) to enable the opportunity for lower prices for permanent and non-permanent residents who spend a lot of time in Lorne.
7. Explore options for renewable energy sources.

## **Aspirational Strategy III** **Generating a local economic advantage**

1. Encourage light industry to set up here (e.g. surfboard manufacturing, cabinet making).
2. Establish Lorne as a Centre for Hiking especially during the off-peak season.
3. Attract and support businesses associated with training and education; rehabilitation, health and wellbeing; and recreation and leisure, as businesses of this type will harmonise well with the profile of Lorne and support all its endemic strengths and features.
4. Explore the possibility of making Lorne a regional university or higher education town by offering land such as the “slaughterhouse site” for development by higher educational institutions.

# Appendix: Suggested Actions and Ideas

5. Investigate the development of state-of-the-art boutique serviced offices with superior technology and communication which allow employed residents to live permanently in Lorne through opportunities such as telework.

## **Aspirational Strategy IV** **Accommodating Lorne's future**

1. Explore ways to increase the utilisation of the existing housing stock.
2. Investigate possibilities for how the old quarry site could be potentially be used for affordable housing, such as building a school camp facility there which could be used for seasonal accommodation in the school holidays.
3. Investigate the possibility of developing quality temporary and/or permanent affordable accommodation at sites such as the Queens Park Caravan Park.
4. Establish processes that would allow empty houses to be used for permanent rental.
5. Explore the potential for second dwellings to be built on existing sites.

## **Aspirational Strategy V** **Encouraging visitors to stay longer**

1. Promote Lorne as the "heart of the Great Ocean Road" due to its quality of life and location on the Great Ocean Road.
2. Use Lorne as a base to explore the entire region.
3. Market Lorne (and the Great Ocean Road)'s competitive advantage of the proximity of the bush and the beach
4. Reinvigorate the walking trails in the national parks and seek support from State Government to maintain these trails despite the concern related to the issue of liability.

5. Upgrade the maps, signposting, river crossings and pathways of the entire network of walking tracks around Lorne.
6. Utilise arts and cultural events to draw visitors to Lorne outside normal peak periods and also to encourage them to stay longer.
7. Support existing and potential arts and culture initiatives to transform Lorne into one of Australia's top Regional Arts and Cultural Centres with international renown.
8. Promote and extend the use of the parks for adventure activities, possibly including BMX and 4WD trails.
9. Focus on well-being and health to promote Lorne as a place to rest, recuperate and/or have health support.
10. Develop learning and lifestyle projects such as food, appreciation classes and other training/education programs.
11. Retain Point Grey as an important component of the heritage, environmental, recreational and commercial values and activities of the Lorne community.
12. Capitalise on the international standing and historical aspect of the Great Ocean Road.
13. Recognise and interpret the indigenous population history within the Lorne region.
14. Capitalise on the natural wild life which could in itself become Lorne's biggest attraction as a tourist destination.
15. Be more welcoming to visitors who stay for a few days or a few months.





If you would like to be involved in discussions about creating a sustainable future for Lorne, or would simply like to be kept up to date with how our plans for Achieving Lorne's Aspirations progress, please email us at **[info@committeeforlorne.org.au](mailto:info@committeeforlorne.org.au)**



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