



## Sustainable Communities Initiative Apollo Bay report

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Prepared for Regional Development Victoria and Colac Otway Shire

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings from the Sustainable Communities Initiative Apollo Bay Project case study. The project was guided by a Project Steering Group consisting of Apollo Bay community leaders along with project partners Regional Development Victoria and Colac Otway Shire. The main features of the project were two workshops with an extended stakeholder group involving representation from across the Apollo Bay communities.

The purpose of the research was to generate dialogue on the likely and preferred futures of Apollo Bay, and to consider what defines a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable community for this location. The workshops employed a twin axis scenario planning technique, originally developed by the Royal Dutch Shell company, and subsequently adapted for use in a wide range of contexts.

Community residents identified four potential scenarios which are described in this report. The role of CSIRO was to facilitate the workshop process and then to conduct a feasibility analysis on each of the scenarios identified by community residents. This analysis was based on secondary data which was collated and synthesised then provided as feedback to residents at a second extended stakeholder group workshop. Importantly, this feedback workshop was a discursive process and queries by workshop participants, and group based learning were part of the design.

The analysis conducted by the CSIRO research team mostly related to broad social and economic trends which are mostly beyond the control of individuals and local communities. However, it is possible to identify these trends and position oneself within them in order to understand the challenges faced by a community and make the most of the opportunities that are available.

There are three key issues that stand out from the scenario workshops.

1. No participants wanted to stay the same in terms of population size and tourism focus. The reason for this is that retaining the same population size and economy will change the character of the town over time.

2. Diversification is the strongest community preference, voted for by all workshop participants. This was because diversification was thought to lead to a more vibrant community.

3. Population increase is attractive, but not by itself. Simply increasing the population without more diversity is not seen as providing a more vibrant community.

Apollo Bay is clearly an amenity oriented region. This means that diversification needs to be *consistent* with tourism, which will continue to dominate the economy for the foreseeable future.

The workshop process which was at the heart of research brought together a diverse range of interests and triggered new ways of thinking about the future. In so doing, the

process assisted participants to identify common ground and consider what it means to be a sustainable community in Apollo Bay.

## **2. PROJECT PROCESS**

### **2.1 Community Engagement**

The basis of the Sustainable Communities Initiative is a partnership approach between researchers and communities. In Apollo Bay, the partnership was between local residents, Colac Otway Shire, Regional Development Victoria and CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems. The rationale for this partnership was to facilitate community engagement and to develop community ownership of the research process, and to ensure that the research was sensitive to local issues.

### **2.2 Project Steering Group**

The project was guided by a Project Steering Group comprising community leaders from key interest groups including the Chamber of Commerce, retail owners, Councillors, Otway Ratepayers Forum, environmental groups, the local school and the Tourism Board. The steering group played a key role in identifying local issues and defining the boundaries of the Apollo Bay community. Furthermore, the steering group was instrumental in nominating community representatives to take part in the subsequent stakeholder workshops to ensure representation from across the Apollo Bay community. Following each of the stakeholder workshops, the steering group met with the research team to provide feedback on the workshop and to make suggestions for the best way to proceed with the next phase of the project.

### **2.3 Stakeholder workshops**

#### **2.3.1 First workshop**

In line with the Sustainable Communities Initiative program design, two workshops were conducted with an extended group of community stakeholders. The participants were invited by the project steering group to represent to reflect a full spectrum of interests and positions in the Apollo Bay community and included (in addition to the project steering group interests already described) the following:

- Retail traders
- Tourism businesses
- Families
- Retirees
- Environment interest groups
- Landcare
- Permaculture interests

- Fishermen
- Surf club
- Sports clubs
- School council
- School students
- Building industry
- Non-permanent residents

In the first workshop, 23 participants took part and were divided into four table groups. In a facilitated process, the groups were asked to address the following questions:

- 1) What do you like most about living in Apollo Bay?
- 2) What are the threats and opportunities for Apollo Bay?
- 3) What trends do you see affecting Apollo Bay?

Each group recorded the responses on butchers' paper and reported their responses to the other tables. The research team conducted a rapid appraisal of common themes and distilled three cross-cutting dimensions which formed both axes of a four quadrant scenario grid in the style of the scenario development procedures developed originally by Royal Dutch Shell and subsequently applied in a wide range of contexts. This scenario planning process was used by Shell to consider future trends and to develop a culture of learning and adaptation rather than a mechanistic approach to change (De Geus 1988).

At the workshop, each of the four groups developed one of the four scenarios by considering the following questions:

- 1) What does the scenario look like?
- 2) What are the consequences for lifestyle, environment and the economy?
- 3) What name do you give the scenario?
- 4) How desirable is this scenario?

Each group recorded their responses on butchers' paper and then reported back to the full group. At the end of this process, a vote was taken by all in the room to define which scenario was the most attractive for Apollo Bay.

### **2.3.2 Second workshop**

At the second workshop, CSIRO staff presented the outcome of the feasibility assessment (described below). This presentation was conducted as an interactive process, involving questions from the workshop participants to query and clarify the research analysis.

Following the feedback presentation and interactive discussion on the feasibility analysis, participants divided into two groups for two related activities. The first was to reconsider and refine the more plausible and preferable scenarios, of which there were two. The second activity was to identify concrete actions to work towards preferable scenarios. The specific questions were:

- 1) To bring about this scenario, what three actions would you take:  
For yourself?

In relation to council  
In relation to State/Federal Government  
In relation to the local business community

2) How would you keep the discussion going beyond this workshop?

Each group recorded their findings and reported them back. Finally, the group discussed the common factors of both plausible, desirable scenarios and agreed on steps forward to maintain the discussion at the conclusion of the research process.

## **2.4 Research Analysis**

Following the first workshop, CSIRO conducted a feasibility assessment on the four scenarios. This analysis involved two steps, both desk based. The first was to distil the workshop outputs into a discrete set of elements, i.e. particular trends and community aspirations. The second was a probabilistic assessment in regards to the various ways in which workshop participants expressed and developed the scenarios in terms of potential new industries, expansion of existing economic activities, alternative energy sources, educational opportunities and demographic trends. The analysis was supported by available secondary data and was expressed in simple relative terms (i.e. more or less likely). As such no single aspect of the scenarios was definitely excluded or included, but instead seen as more or less feasible.

### **3. ISSUES**

From the initial project steering group meeting, a set of important contextual factors were identified, and these were later discussed and expanded during the workshop process. Importantly, none of the issues were prompted by CSIRO staff, or by the project steering group when it came to the workshop process.

#### **3.1 Change from resource to service economy**

The Apollo Bay community has gone through substantial change over the last three to four decades, as the community shifted from a resource based economy to a service based economy. Agriculture, fisheries and forestry had declined substantially over this time frame, with very little retained today. In particular it was noted that the dairy industry declined rapidly from once being widespread in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

#### **3.2 Sense of community**

Despite these economic changes, the community has retained a unique and positive character which is part of what attracts tourists today along with the aesthetic qualities of the region. Apollo Bay was described as a small, friendly, relaxed and tolerant town surrounded by a beautiful landscape of hills, forests and beaches. This theme was echoed and repeated during the stakeholder workshop, with participants describing the appeal of Apollo Bay in terms of strong sense of community, strong families, respect for the elderly and a clean, attractive environment.

#### **3.3 Population size**

Given the strong sense of community and the clean and attractive environment, an important issue raised from the first meeting was the size of the town, and in particular what size of population is required to sustain the town in the future. At the first project meeting it was discussed if the town should expand from around 1200 in 2009 to around 3000, which was thought to be a more viable population by some steering group members. Other group members were resistant to the idea of population expansion for fear of changing the town's appealing character and concern for the environmental implications of a larger population.

#### **3.4 Housing affordability**

Another issue identified was housing affordability. There are many second homes located in Apollo Bay which are owned by residents of larger centres such as Melbourne. Indeed, it was pointed out by the steering group at the first meeting that there were twice as many dwellings as residents due to second home ownership. While second home owners are welcome and contribute to community spirit, it was pointed out at the first stakeholder workshop that high land prices mean people cannot

## SCENARIOS

afford to buy, and this restricts the ability of people to move into the area. In addition, it was thought that the planning regulations which limit subdivision had a compounding effect. Many longer term residents were seeking to fund their retirement by selling their blocks and moving to something smaller which would allow them to stay in the community.

### **3.5 Employment**

Another issue raised by the project steering committee was employment. The economy is affected by tourism seasons, such that there is an overall lack of permanent employment throughout the year. In the first workshop it was noted that there is insufficient economic activity to support a wider range of service industry jobs, or to retain apprentices. The other side of the coin was that there was an abundance of seasonal work and it was difficult to fill positions at peak times. In addition, it could be difficult to attract professionals to roles in the education and medical sectors. However it was also pointed out that from the point of view of existing staff and established business owners, working conditions in Apollo Bay can be very favourable.

### **3.6 Other issues**

Other issues mentioned included relatively poor broadband internet access and water restrictions. In the case of water restrictions it was pointed out that the problem lies in the state of the infrastructure rather than a lack of rainfall. Indeed the relatively high rainfall was noted as an advantage of the region and could be harnessed, such as for niche agricultural products.

## **4. SCENARIOS**

The three main cross-cutting issues that were identified in the first workshop were

- 1) Population expansion
- 2) Diversification of the economy
- 3) Extrinsic or intrinsic community identity

The workshop participants elected the first two (i.e population expansion and diversification) for organising the remaining issues into four scenarios. The scenarios are described in the next section and summarised in Figures 1 and 2.

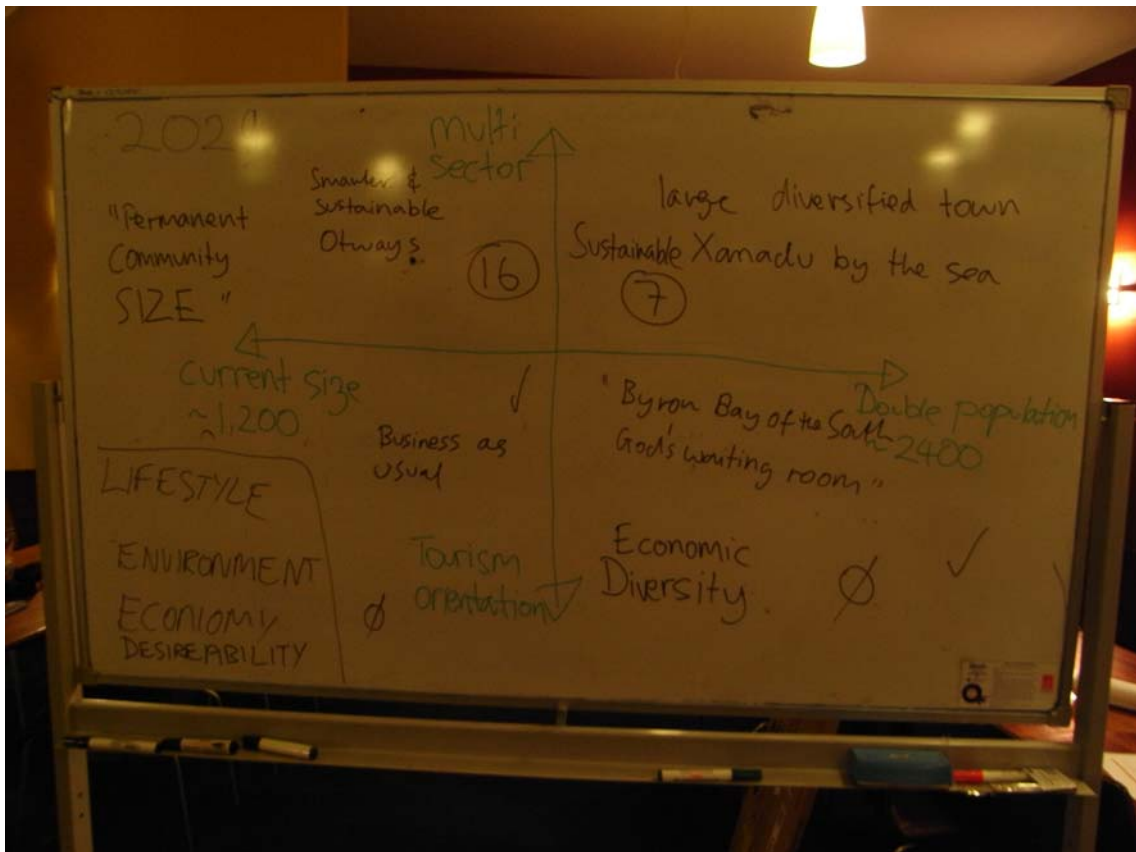


Figure 1. Photo of whiteboard with scenarios developed in workshop 1

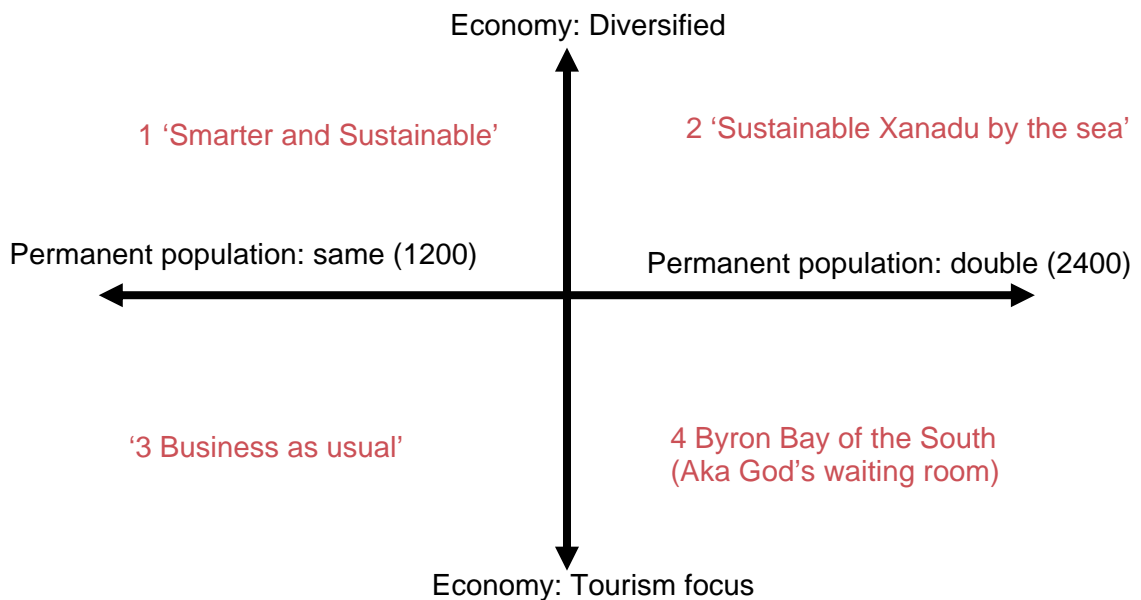


Figure 2. Graphic of the four scenarios: potential futures for Apollo Bay Community

## 4.1 Scenario Descriptions and expectations

<b>•1.Smart &amp; Sustainable (diversified, same size)</b>	<b>•Aspirations and expectations for scenario 1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•New industries</li> <li>•art and craft</li> <li>•research</li> <li>•education</li> <li>•Solar and wind energy production</li> <li>•Design/building of renewable energy technologies</li> <li>•cottage industries</li> <li>•Small-scale agricultural and horticulture expansion</li> <li>•Local produced timber, apples, medicinal herbs &amp; mushrooms</li> <li>•Tourism focuses on education and local produce</li> <li>•(16/23 votes = 70% preferences)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Increased employment</li> <li>•More educational opportunities</li> <li>•Younger population</li> <li>•More workers, students</li> <li>•fewer retirees</li> <li>•People working from home</li> <li>•More constant income (i.e. less seasonal)</li> <li>•Environment is protected</li> <li>•people caring for land</li> </ul>
<b>•2. Sustainable Xanadu (larger, diversified)</b>	<b>•Aspirations and expectations for scenario 2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Larger population</li> <li>•Great diversity in service economy</li> <li>•More professional people</li> <li>•Build a TAFE on site of school</li> <li>•New industries:</li> <li>•Supply of renewable energy</li> <li>•Cottage industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Greater intellectual diversity</li> <li>•More permanent employment</li> <li>•Increased competition due to more service operators</li> <li>•Therefore lower cost of living</li> <li>•TAFE at school would:</li> <li>•attract students</li> <li>•retain trades in town</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Health and wellness – surgery recovery</li> <li>•(7/23 = 30% of preferences)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•More young people</li> <li>•Overall population increase would reduce social connectivity</li> <li>•i.e. bumping into friends in the street</li> <li>•More crime</li> <li>•More crowds (e.g. beach / car parking)</li> </ul>
<p><b>•3. Business as usual (same size, mainly tourism)</b></p>	<p><b>•Aspirations and expectations for Scenario 3</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Property values and rates increase</li> <li>•Only wealthy will be able to live here</li> <li>•Tourism industry will grow</li> <li>•The tourists will keep coming</li> <li>•Retail sector will grow</li> <li>•More second homes</li> <li>•‘Weekend town’ character</li> <li>•Service oriented economy</li> <li>•Housing affordability will be</li> <li>•workers won’t be able to live in town</li> <li>•(0/23 votes = 0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Natural environment protected</li> <li>•Businesses in service sector will benefit</li> <li>•Accommodation, pubs will do well</li> <li>•Workers in service sector will not benefit</li> <li>•Couldn’t afford to live in Apollo Bay</li> <li>•Construction industry will be fine</li> <li>•Population will be older</li> <li>•School vulnerable</li> <li>•Infrastructure will improve</li> <li>•Better roads</li> <li>•Cost of living will be higher</li> <li>•‘We’ll be rated out’</li> <li>•Sense of community lost</li> </ul>
<p><b>•4. Byron Bay of the South (bigger, mainly tourism)</b></p>	<p><b>•Aspirations and expectations for scenario 4</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•More tourism operators</li> <li>•More tourists</li> <li>•More infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•More options for sport and recreation</li> <li>•Some current businesses more viable</li> <li>•Higher cost of living due to increasing</li> </ul>

- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•E.g. Swimming pool</li> <li>•More of a party town character</li> <li>•Service industry focus for employment</li> <li>•But a wider range of service jobs within sector</li> <li>•Larger rate payer base</li> <li>•But also increasing rates</li> <li>•Increased economies of scale</li> <li>•Higher housing density</li> <li>•(0/23 votes = 0%)</li> </ul> | <p>rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Elderly and low paid workers can't afford to live here</li> <li>•More pressure on natural environment</li> <li>•More pressure on water, power and waste management</li> <li>•Increased congestion</li> <li>•Economy vulnerable to tourism down-turn</li> <li>•May be vulnerable to sea level rise</li> <li>•Employment mostly seasonal</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

## 5. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

The relative likelihood of each scenario has been assessed and summarised in Figure 3.

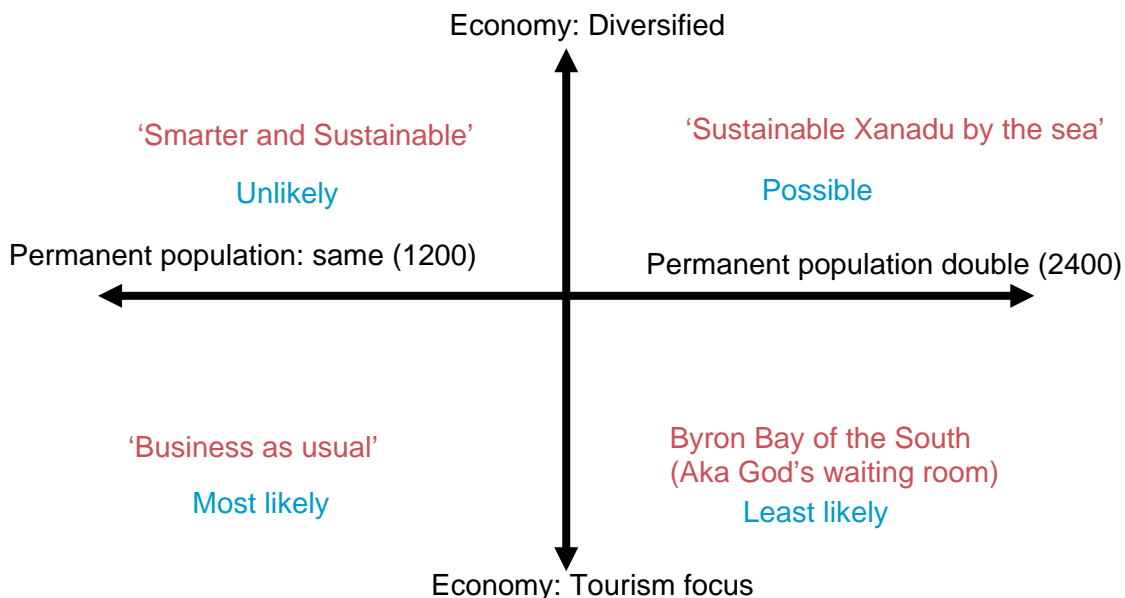


Figure 3. Likeliness of different scenarios

The secondary data available at the time of analysis points to business as usual being the most likely scenario, and a larger tourism focused town 'Byron Bay of the South' being the least likely scenario. A diversified community of the same size is unlikely and a larger, diversified community is possible, though not very likely. The features of the scenarios are considered in greater detail below.

## 5.1 Tourism

The shift from a resource based economy to a service based economy is well developed in Apollo Bay and reflects major national trends.

Table 1. Overview of regions and characteristics

Type of Region	Features
Productive Agriculture	Away from cities land price tied to production Land prices set by production
<b>Rural amenity</b>	<b>Accessible</b> <b>Tourism focus</b> <b>Off farm income</b> <b>Land prices set by consumption*</b>
Small farm multi-activity	Mixed production and service economies Volatile land markets
Marginal agriculture	Remote, low value agriculture Economic and environmental stress

Source: Adapted from Holmes 2006

In regards to Central and Northern Australia, Holmes also identifies entire regions dedicated to nature conservation and Aboriginal Cultural values; however these have been excluded from the summary presented here.

\*Consumption in this case refers to the price that people will pay to access land for personal enjoyment. It is used in contrast to production values, by which land prices are tied to the income that is generated from them.

Apollo Bay is a strong example of a rural amenity region. It is an attractive and accessible area with a tourism focus. Because land prices are governed by consumption values, it is extremely difficult for productive land uses to compete. This also relates to the high level of second home ownership, with people based in other

locations willing to pay a premium to access the amenity of the area. For these reasons, tourism is highly likely to dominate the economy for the foreseeable future.

## 5.2 Population

Apollo Bay has maintained a stable population for decades. There is a relatively high rate of people moving into the area, such as ‘sea changers’ and new businesses; however this is matched by a similar rate of people leaving the town. When we look closely at the population forecast data, we see that the whole Barwon region is forecast to grow at around 1% to 1.5% per annum (similar to the State average). However, the region includes larger population centres which are more likely to soak up that growth. For example the area of greater Geelong, including nearby coastal settlements, already has a substantial population with better access to services and a relatively easy commuting distance to Melbourne. That portion of the Barwon region is much more likely to absorb increased population than Apollo Bay, which is less accessible and has fewer services.

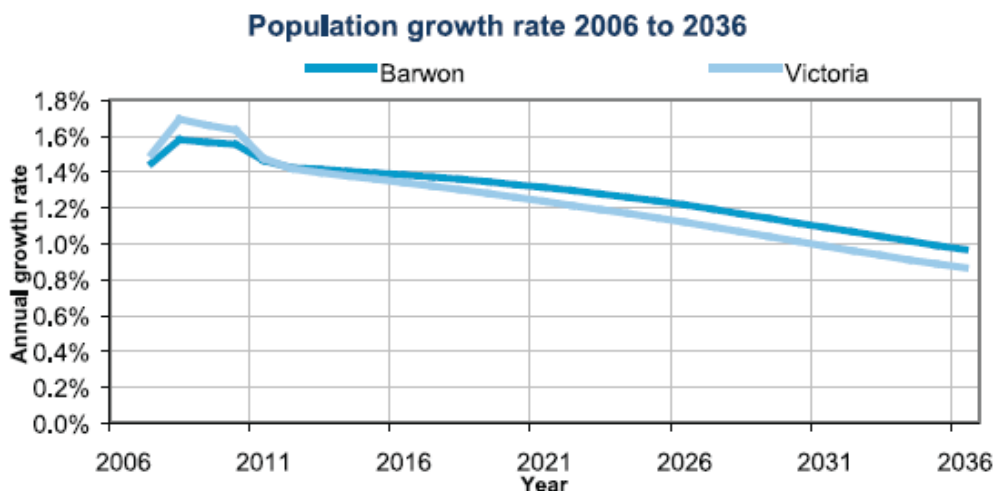


Figure 4. Population growth rate for Barwon region (Vic Dept Planning and Community Development)

The population forecasts which were produced for the Colac Otway Shire tell a similar story. If we look at the Great Ocean Road and Otways portion of the Shire, from Glenaire to Petticoat Creek and as far north as Beech Forest, then the combined population is forecast to increase from around 2700 in 2006 to around 3800 in 2031. However, given the size of the area, it is unlikely that it would all occur in Apollo Bay (Colac Otway Shire 2009). Considering the data available, Apollo Bay could have a small population increase but it is unlikely to double its population in the scenario timeframe.

## 5.3 Wind Energy

Apollo Bay has ample wind to make wind energy. As demonstrated in figure 5 the average wind speed in Apollo Bay is 7.5 meters per second. However there are multiple additional requirements for wind energy which make the industry unlikely in

Apollo Bay. These include:

- Economies of scale (transportation, installation and approval costs)
- Site specific factors are important (hills/road access etc)
- Turbines are big (around 100 metres including blades)
- Political support

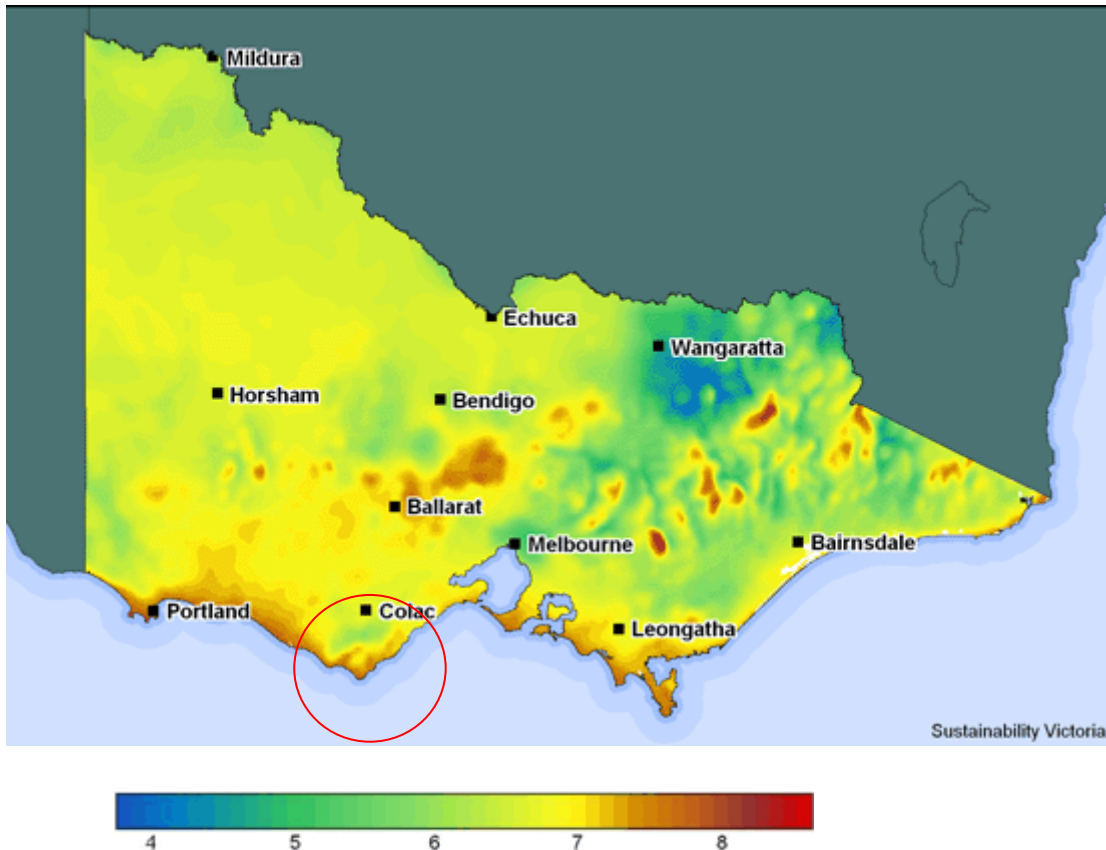


Figure 5. Wind speeds in Victoria (source: Sustainability Victoria 2009)

Political debates reflect interest in the potential for wind energy in south west Victoria, where a wind corridor has been acknowledged (Hansard 2009) and approval has been granted for one site near Colac. However, social acceptance of wind farms is a contentious issue and State guidelines recommend *avoiding* 'dominant topographical and/or cultural features, such as the coastline' (SEAV, 2003, 25). Nationally, there are multiple examples of resistance to wind farming (Gross 2007; Mercer 2003) due to:

- visual amenity (main concern)
- noise
- impact on endangered species

One suggestion raised by workshop participants was to move wind turbines out to sea, however this doesn't get around the main issue. Due to their size they would be visible from the Great Ocean Road. In addition, transmission cables are more complicated, installation and maintenance are much more expensive, and sea-based wind farms are not yet economically viable anywhere in Australia in 2009. Overall, wind energy

development or generation is unlikely to play a significant role in future scenarios for Apollo Bay.

## **5.4 Solar energy**

In terms of industrial generation, solar power has strong limitations in Apollo Bay. Aspect and sufficient land area are important for solar energy. Due to the town's position in a thin strip of land between the Otway ranges and the ocean, there are limited north facing areas, with the possible exception of one area south-west of the town centre.

Overall, the limited and visually appealing land of Apollo Bay is not well suited to industrial solar energy generation. However the domestic generation of solar energy is more viable for the town. Given the high number of dwellings compared to residents, there is potential for considerable solar energy panel installation and this could also support jobs in the services sector.

## **5.5 Cottage industries**

The cottage industries concept raised in the workshops can be conceptualised in terms of small scale, locally produced goods and services which fill a different niche to mass produced products. In particular, this was expressed in terms of fruit and vegetables to supply supermarkets and restaurants with local seasonal products. The concept has had some traction in other locations (e.g. Bright in Victoria), but in most cases there is limited success because this type of produce is consistently more expensive. In a similar way to ecologically sensitive or organic food, there is an additional cost to produce the food and limited numbers of people who will pay a premium for it. There are also additional quality control and auditing requirements for this type of food to consider (Francis 2005).

To be viable, a significant issue for cottage industries is concerned with marketing and branding. The produce is more likely to attract a premium if it is integrated with a broader experience which attracts people to the region. For example, tourists from urban areas who are seeking a rural or regional experience might willingly pay a premium for local produce (food or crafts) if it is integrated into the broader tourism experience - such as through festivals, markets or cultural activities. Apollo Bay already has a local market so there is some potential. There may be some potential to expand this market however it is likely to be limited by location. Markets which tend to be larger, such as Red Hill in Victoria or Eumundi in Queensland tend to be nearer capital cities, which allows for day trips. One niche market product which may appeal to tourists is a micro-brewery – such as those found at Warrnambool or Barongarook.

## **5.6 Education / research focus**

A major theme of the 'Smart and Sustainable' and the 'Sustainable Xanadu' scenarios is education. However education is strongly dependent on critical mass. The importance of numbers is already a sensitive issue in the town, with some workshop participants concerned that the high school is vulnerable due to low numbers. The suggestion of building a TAFE in Apollo Bay is unlikely to be viable due to the social catchment of the town. A larger town, such as Colac (approx 12,000) is more viable to

provide TAFE courses. In the case of Universities, much larger populations are required (e.g. Geelong). So the TAFE idea in itself is unlikely to work, however there are options to host field visits and stays for institutions based in larger centres. An example of this is in the Atherton Tablelands (north Queensland) which hosts students from the University of Wisconsin in USA who come to study the rainforest for a few weeks as part of their course (AFS 2009).

An important issue to consider in terms of hosting field visits as part of education programs is what types of attractions would make Apollo Bay interesting to visiting students. When the CSIRO team researched this issue, it was noted that the shipwrecks of Apollo Bay are known to attract interest from Maritime Heritage Units (Heritage Victoria 2009). This may be because of the particular type of shipwreck or simply because they are more accessible and Apollo Bay is an attractive place to visit. Beside tertiary education, there is potential for youth development programs such as Outward Bound, which already has centres in Victoria (e.g. Buchan) and has a strong focus on outdoor education.

## 5.7 Sports and recreation sector

Amenity regions such as Apollo Bay are appealing to the sports and recreation sector. Analysis indicated that there is already a range of nearby activities including:

- Melbourne to Apollo Bay sailing race
- Great Ocean Road Marathon
- Great Victoria Bike Ride
- Great Ocean Sports Festival

While there is already a wide range of activities, it may still be possible to expand on these, such as by offering training programs and related activities at other times during the year.

## 5.8 Health and Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing sector was raised in one of the scenarios as a complimentary sector to tourism. In terms of analysis the research team did not identify any particular data which could help assess the viability of this sector for Apollo Bay. However the project team can make the following observations. Demands for healthcare are likely to increase as the population gets older. A clean and relaxed environment helps to promote wellbeing and this may help to attract people to Apollo Bay. In terms of impact on the town, we note that health services provide jobs not only for medical professionals but also for associated retail and support staff. However there may be potential downsides to an increasingly aged population with health difficulties, such as additional demands on services.

## 5.9 Climate change

In several scenarios, the potential for climate change impacts was raised. Apollo Bay is close to sea level and thus vulnerable to sea level rise. The research team searched for existing data on potential climate impacts on Apollo Bay but no studies had been published. In other parts of Victoria, research on potential climate change impacts (sea level rise and storm surge) has already been published (McInnes 2005). The research team found out that a climate change coastal impacts study is currently ongoing for the South West coast region of Victoria at the time of preparing this report. The results from this study are expected to be published in 2010.

## 6. REFINED SCENARIOS

Following the analysis presentation at the second stakeholder workshop, participants chose two scenarios to revise in small groups. The two most popular scenarios from the first workshop were chosen again for further development in two small groups, however one changed name from 'sustainable Xanadu' to 'Xanadu 2400'. The scenarios were defined by local residents participating in the workshop following feasibility assessment on the original scenarios from CSIRO. The scenarios below were developed entirely by residents after considering the feasibility analysis.

### 6.1 Revised Scenario 1: "Smart and Sustainable"

- 1) Develop a community owned energy cooperative to increase energy self-sufficiency including small scale wind and solar production
- 2) Look into tidal and wave power and associated research and education
- 3) Increase small scale industries for beer and truffles and sell through local markets
- 4) Develop an education centre with the following characteristics:
  - accredited environmental courses
  - Indigenous interpretive centre
  - Links to health and wellbeing services
  - Links other education institutes
- 5) Build on the Great Ocean walk

#### Action list for revised Scenario 1: Smart and Sustainable

The group identified five key steps for the Sustainability Education Centre and some broader actions.

- 1) Develop local partnerships

- 2) Develop proposal
- 3) Council refines proposal
- 4) Conduct feasibility test by Council, consult community
  - Partner with education institutes (e.g. Universities and TAFE colleges from around Australia) and overseas exchange programs
- 5) Pilot project on a small scale

In addition, the following were suggested:

- Test the Sustainability Education Centre concept for community support
- Choose a site
- Request funds State and Federal Governments
- Collaborate with local business for recreation activities and accommodation

Participants recommended building on the dialogue from the SCI workshops with the following recommendations:

- Seek community feedback on ideas e.g. via survey
- Appoint a charismatic leader
- Create controversy to provide publicity
- Improve partnerships
- Work with Chamber of Commerce
- Drive the process via a key group
- Ask Council to support a community facilitator and help source funding
- Develop a pilot project

## 6.2 Revised Scenario 2: “Xanadu 2400”

The group asserted that a population of 2400 is achievable and revised the scenario name to reflect this. The revised scenario focuses on:

- 1) Services and amenities
- 2) Indoor gym and pool: health and wellbeing centre
- 3) Master plan
- 4) Better access : broadband and power
- 5) Events
  - Needs professional management
  - Establish a wedding venue
- 6) Goats cheese
- 7) Fun sports and slide activities

## DISCUSSION

- water sports and hire
- flying fox
- Provide workshops for kids e.g. school holidays for Geelong Grammar

### **Action list for revised Scenario 2: Xanadu 2400**

#### 1) Marketing through

- Chamber of Commerce
- Local Shire
- developing business plan

#### 2) Conduct visitor survey to inform new tourism options including

- Children's activities
- Flying fox
- Health and wellbeing centre
- Resort pool
- Cultural centre

#### 3) Engage with Colac Otway Shire

- Support to make things happen
- Funding for professional organiser staff
- Training

Participants recommended building on the dialogue of the SCI workshops with the following recommendations:

- Support open discussion nights with food and beverages
- Maintain the Steering Group beyond the SCI project
- Chamber of Commerce to drive the process
- Pinpoint projects - start with something small and feasible
- Build community confidence in the project
- Develop the comedy festival
- Need a strategic plan but keep it simple and fun for group to execute

## **7. DISCUSSION**

There are three key issues that stand out from the scenario workshops.

1) No participants wanted to stay the same (in terms of population size and tourism focus). This is because there is a concern that rate rises will force some people out of the town and probably increase second home ownership. This could make the school vulnerable to closure and also cause concern over loss of community character.

2) Diversification is the strongest community preference. All preference votes included diversification. This reflects an aspiration for a more vibrant community. It would also

have a more balanced demographic profile and the school would be more likely to stay open.

3) Population increase is attractive, but not by itself. Simply increasing the population without more diversity is not seen as providing a more vibrant community. The evidence of this is that there were no votes for a larger tourist focused town.

Finally it is important to emphasise that Apollo Bay is clearly an amenity oriented region. This means that diversification needs to be *consistent* with tourism, which will continue to dominate the economy for the foreseeable future. In addition, diversification needs to be consistent with the character of the town. The relaxed, friendly atmosphere of the town and the beautiful setting are what makes Apollo Bay a special place for locals and tourists alike. Any changes to increase the diversity of the town need to complement this character.

This emphasis from the analysis had the effect of participants making some revisions to the scenarios at the second workshop. In particular, the focus on producing renewable energy shifted from a commercial to a residential focus. In addition, the partnership approach to educational institutions was appreciated by participants when revising the scenarios. There was however one example of residents ignoring or rejecting the findings from the feasibility analysis. This came in the form of discussion around population increase, which participants from one table group asserted would occur and changed the name of their scenario to endorse the population change.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This research process has been driven by a local project steering committee and has helped Apollo Bay to consider plausible and attractive scenarios for the community. The workshop process, which was at the heart of the research, brought together a diverse range of interests and facilitated a discussion which extended previous community planning initiatives in a practical way. In particular, the workshops triggered new ways of thinking about the future and helped participants to see that staying the same in the future (in terms of town size and economic diversity) would be unattractive because the character of the town would change. In terms of achievements, this process has:

- 1) Brought together contrasting positions in the same workshop
- 2) Identified common ground across the community
- 3) Identified some plausible future scenarios to avoid
- 4) Defined, and refined, some attractive scenarios to work towards
- 5) Identified practical actions for moving forward, and
- 6) Defined ways to progress the dialogue towards a preferred scenario.

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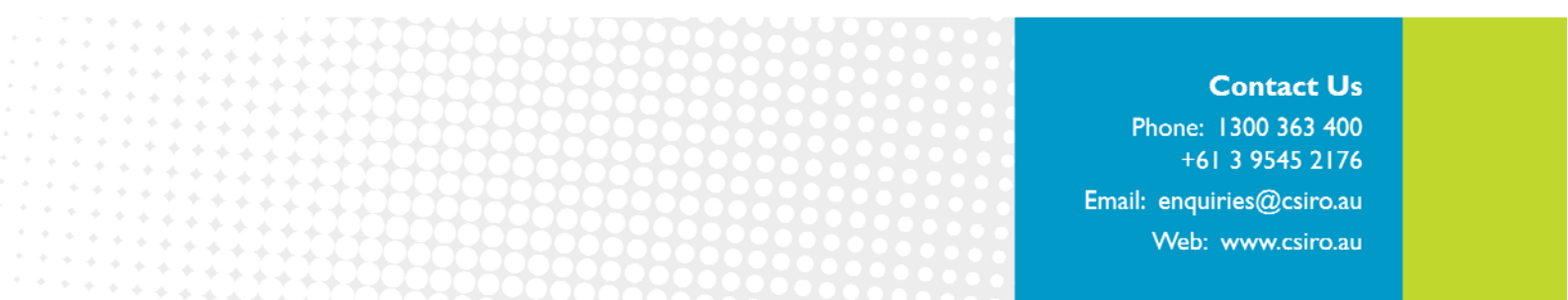
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