

11 Marlo

Marlo is a small town nestled on the shores of the Snowy River estuary, southeast of Orbost. Marlo has a range of amenities available such as caravan parks, camps, the Marlo Pub and Hotel, a boat ramp, and small convenience store.

The community thrives on access to the water and the iconic Snowy estuary landscape. The idyllic location and coastal surrounds allows for a range of activities and attracts an influx of visitors every year, despite maintaining a relatively small population. The Marlo community takes pride in its quiet and tranquil surroundings and embraces its small coastal town vibe.

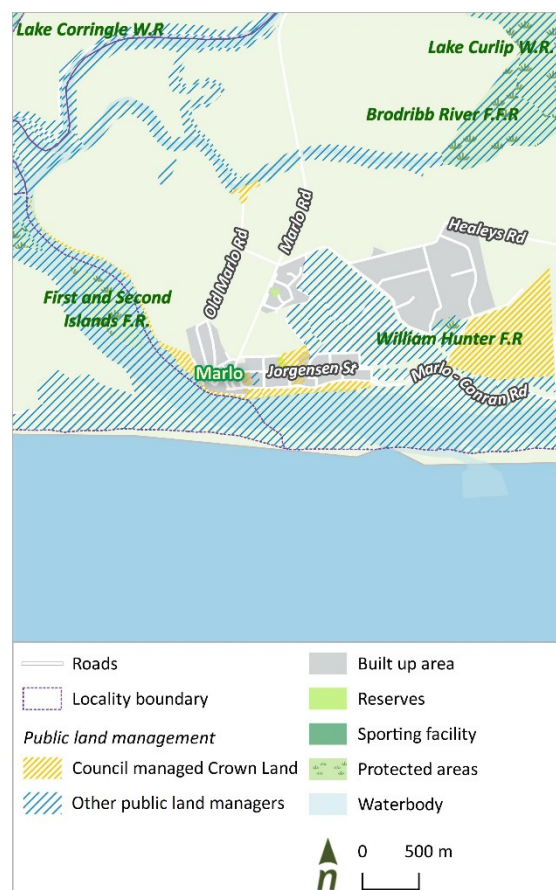


Figure 103. Marlo locality.

11.1 Community and connection to coast

Marlo currently has a population just over 600 people and is expected to undergo growth. During holidays, the town experiences substantial population influx. Only around 65% of private dwellings are occupied, indicating many holiday homes.

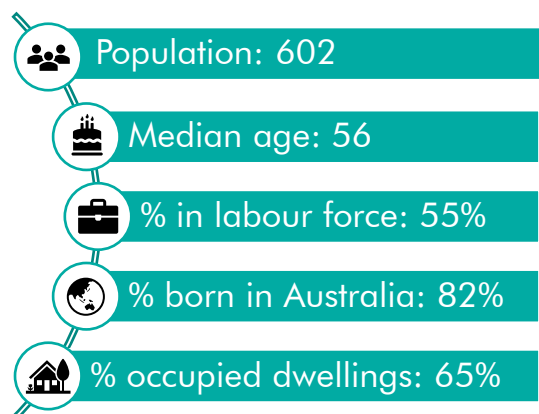


Figure 102. Key statistics for Marlo (ABS, 2021).

The Gunaikurnai people are the designated Traditional Owners west of the Snowy River, represented by GLaWAC. This area sits within Krauatungalung Country.

Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners and Parks Victoria jointly manage the Corringale Foreshore Reserve. This was an important meeting place. It was a plentiful food source and a place of connection — joining the ocean to the rivers, connecting along the coastline to Lake Tyers.

Today, many Gunaikurnai continue to use the reserve for camping, fishing and gathering natural resources. Key values are known to include large middens. Marlo was also an important source of ochre for ceremonies - *Marloo* means white clay.

While no formal designation currently exists for the area east of the Snowy River these areas are important to a number of the region's Traditional Owner groups



11.2 The coastal environment

Marlo sits on the Snowy River estuary, fed by the Snowy and Brodribb Rivers. Surrounding the town are numerous low-lying wildlife reserves - the French Narrows Coastal Walk, Corringale Slips Reserve, and Lake Corringale Wildlife Reserve.

Important ecological communities include:

- River-flat eucalypt forest on coastal floodplains (EPBC-listed)
- Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh (EPBC-listed)
- Warm Temperate Rainforest
- Coastal Lagoon Wetlands
- Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland

The ecosystems support a high number of threatened fauna species, including:

- Fairy, Little and Caspian Terns
- White-bellied Sea Eagles
- Hooded Plover
- Eastern Curlew
- Little and Eastern Great Egrets
- Curlew sandpiper

The nationally significant Snowy estuary supports native fish such as Australian bass. Floodplain wetlands of Lake Corringale, Lake Wat Wat, Lake Curlip, and Cabbage Tree Lagoon are also ecologically important.



11.3 Coastal processes and hazards

The Marlo area is influenced by riverine and coastal inundation. Surrounded by low-lying floodplain wetlands, inundation is an important natural process to support these ecosystems. With sea level rise, these areas may flood more frequently or become permanently inundated.

Most private, commercial and recreational properties and facilities are located on the historic coastal bluff, around 10-15 m above water levels. However, foreshore values such as boat ramps, pathways, jetties and roads could be subject to inundation and erosion.

The intermittently open-closed estuary is dynamic with sand bars and spits changing each day. A semi-permanent entrance is maintained through the dune. The entrance only closed around eight times in the last 20 years, generally in autumn. In recent years the entrance location has shifted back and forth across a 1 km stretch of the dune.

Intermittently closed-open estuaries

The region hosts several estuaries that naturally open and close. This is influenced by river flows, rainfall, sea, and wind conditions. Some estuaries close for months or years.

These naturally dynamic systems support varied ecological, cultural and social values. Artificial openings can impact on these values, with poor water quality and fish kills.



The EGCMA monitors estuary health – analysing water levels, water quality, and weather conditions for potential closures and re-openings. Protocols guide entrance management, with further information at: egcma.com.au/what-we-do/estuary-openings

Recent erosion has been reported across the Marlo foreshore. This is a result of both coastal processes and stormwater drainage arrangements. Erosion can mean reduced access and availability of a sandy beach. Council are currently assessing the erosion and stormwater arrangements to inform a management approach.



11.4 Coastal uses, reserves and facilities

As a popular holiday, fishing and boating destination, the Marlo foreshore holds a range of facilities to cater for visitors and residents. The towns hosts caravan parks, other accommodation, a general store, a bait shop and the Marlo Hotel.

The foreshore offers access to the water through beach access points, the Marlo boat ramp and jetty and Marlo Angling Club. Across the foreshore reserve there are also numerous trails, lookouts and signage. The Brodribb River Boat Ramp and Jetty are also located nearby.



The Marlo Foreshore Management Plan (2013) guides management, with management strategies covering:

- Erosion management
- Maintenance, upgrade or provision of recreational facilities
- Car and trailer parking, and roads;
- Improved pedestrian linkages
- Maintenance, upgrade or improvement of boating facilities;
- Management of natural values and native vegetation

The plan also outlines detailed foreshore zones and management objectives.

There are several recent or ongoing Council-led projects across Marlo:

- Town drainage and stormwater strategy, including erosion investigations
- Foreshore management plan implementation and landscape improvements
- Triangle Park upgrades

11.5 Coastal and marine management

Council manage the Marlo Coastal Reserve across the township east to Mills Street. Council also manage the Marlo Racecourse and Recreation Reserve and Brodribb River Boat Ramp. Gippsland Ports, EGCMA and Parks Victoria manage the Snowy and Brodribb Rivers and estuary. DEECA manage the Marlo State Forest. Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners and Parks Victoria jointly manage the Corringale Foreshore Reserve.

Table 20 summarises community values, challenges and opportunities across Marlo, with focus areas for future management. Figure 104 to Figure 112 map key features, values, and management arrangements across the foreshore.

Table 22. Values, challenges and opportunities for Marlo coastal and marine management, with focus areas for future management.

Marlo					Focus for management
	Values	Challenges	Opportunities		
	Traditional Owners' rights, aspirations, and knowledge	- Unrecorded and unprotected sites and heritage - No Registered Aboriginal Party east of the Snowy River, with unclear arrangements of who can speak for Country. - Recreational use impacts on cultural values.	- Identify unrecorded Aboriginal Heritage sites and continue planning overlays and controls to protect - Initiatives to share Aboriginal stories and knowledge, where desired by Traditional Owners - Maintain reserves in good condition and low impacts from tourists and occupation - Support Gunaikurnai rangers and sole management of Corringale foreshore reserve - Strengthen understanding of and relationships with Far East groups and desire/capacity for involvement in coastal and marine management	- Implementation of Marlo Foreshore masterplan and associated facility upgrades, including "node" definition - Stormwater and erosion management across the foreshore, including stormwater upgrades and adaptation planning - Investigate and plan for estuary opening regime changes and coastal hazard impacts associated with climate change.	
	The marine and coastal environment	- Invasive species, weeds, pests and vegetation removal - Stormwater quality, sewage releases and pollution from urban, agricultural and industrial zones, including inappropriate drainage and outlets - Environmental pressures from increasing residential population growth - Increasing sediment delivery from the Snowy River to the estuary, and associated impacts on aquatic species - Fish waste dumping and littering - impacts on ecosystems and animal behaviour - Vegetation removal and habitat loss	- Vegetation protection and enhancement, including weed, pest and access management - Improved best-practice stormwater controls and water sensitive urban design - Continued estuary water quality monitoring	- Beach access replacement, facility upgrades and maintenance - Coastal hazard management to consider nature-based solutions - Managing impacts of population growth and pressures on stormwater drainage, facilities and open space - Investigate and increase understanding of cultural heritage and ensure protection.	
	Natural processes and climate change	- Existing coastal flooding and erosion impacts – loss of sandy beach, impacts on road, access, safety, facilities - Several private properties at risk in future - Aging coastal protection infrastructure - Informal stormwater drainage arrangements - Steep terrain and embankment stability issues - Increase in coastal hazard impacts - sea level rise - More frequent and longer duration estuary closures associated with climate changes and sea level rise	- Implement actions from foreshore erosion and stormwater studies - Review of coastal protection structures and investigation into replacement or alternatives - Beach access sensitive to natural coastal processes - Investigate nature-based solutions as alternative to engineered coastal protection - Investigate estuary dynamics and expected changes with climate change and sea level rise.		
	Sustainable use and development	- Lack of defined foreshore recreation areas - Insufficient/aging/outdated foreshore facilities - picnic shelters, toilets, BBQs, benches, open space - Limited pedestrian, space, safety and poor connectivity - Poor traffic flow and safety around Beach Road - Degraded beach access facilities and lighting - Poor stormwater management - Terrain constraints and limited space for facilities	- Maintenance and upgrade of foreshore facilities, beach access and define safe recreation areas - Improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow at Marlo foreshore and Brodribb River boat ramp - Stormwater management improvements - Recreation and activity "nodes" to promote Angling Club as a gathering place		
	Stewardship, knowledge, engagement and collaboration	- Outdated signage - Coordination of Council projects and implementation, with clear communication	- Signage updates, inclusion of environmental and cultural information, where appropriate - Improved coordination of Council activities		

Marlo mapping: Traditional Owners and cultural values



Traditional Owners and Cultural Values

- Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity
- Jointly managed parks and reserves (Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Parks Victoria)

Other Features

- Creeks and waterways

Inset map

Registered Aboriginal Parties

- Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
- Other Registered Aboriginal Parties

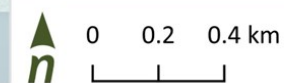
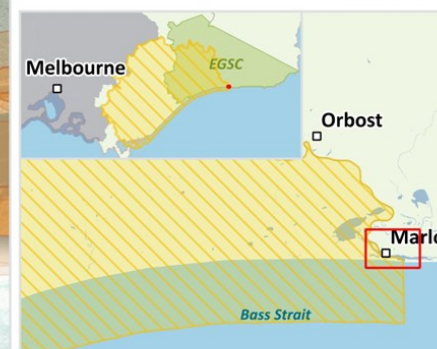


Figure 104. Registered Aboriginal Party areas, culturally sensitive areas and Joint Management areas for Marlo.

Marlo mapping: Environmental values

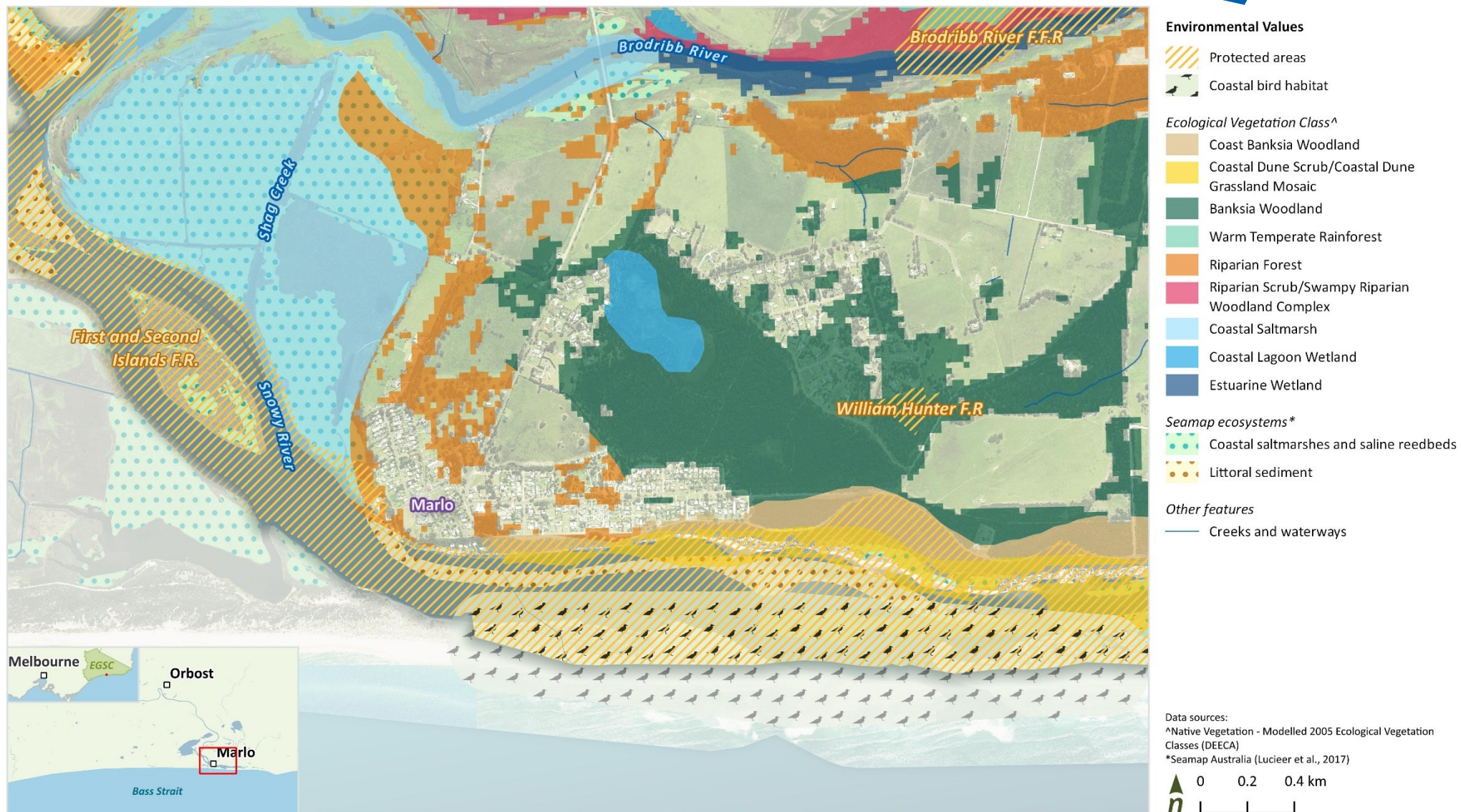
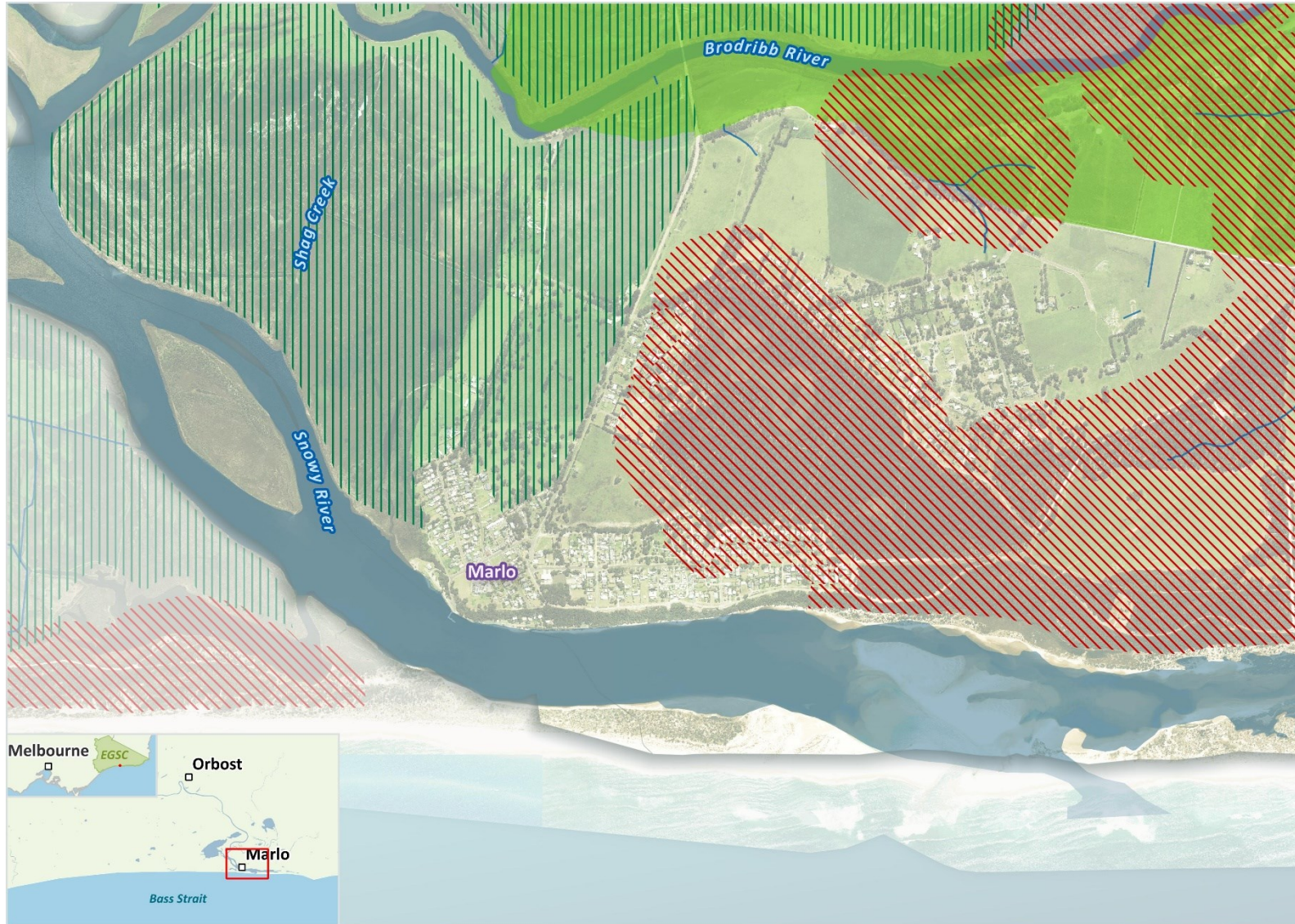


Figure 105. Key coastal and marine environmental values, including protected areas, ecological vegetation classes (EVCs) and biotypes for Marlo.

Marlo mapping: Environmental overlays



Environmental Overlays

Planning Scheme Overlays

-  Bushfire Management Overlay
-  Environmental Significance Overlay
-  Significant Landscape Overlay

Other features

-  Creeks and waterways

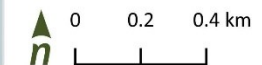


Figure 106. Environmental and land management planning overlays for Marlo.



Figure 107. Coastal hazard mapping of Statewide coastal hazard data as part of the Victorian Governments Future Coasts Project and Victorian Coastal Hazard Assessment for Marlo.

Marlo mapping: Coastal protection and drainage infrastructure



Figure 108. Coastal protection and drainage infrastructure for Marlo.

Marlo mapping: Recreation and transport



Figure 109. Recreation facilities and transport networks for Marlo.

Marlo mapping: Planning scheme zones

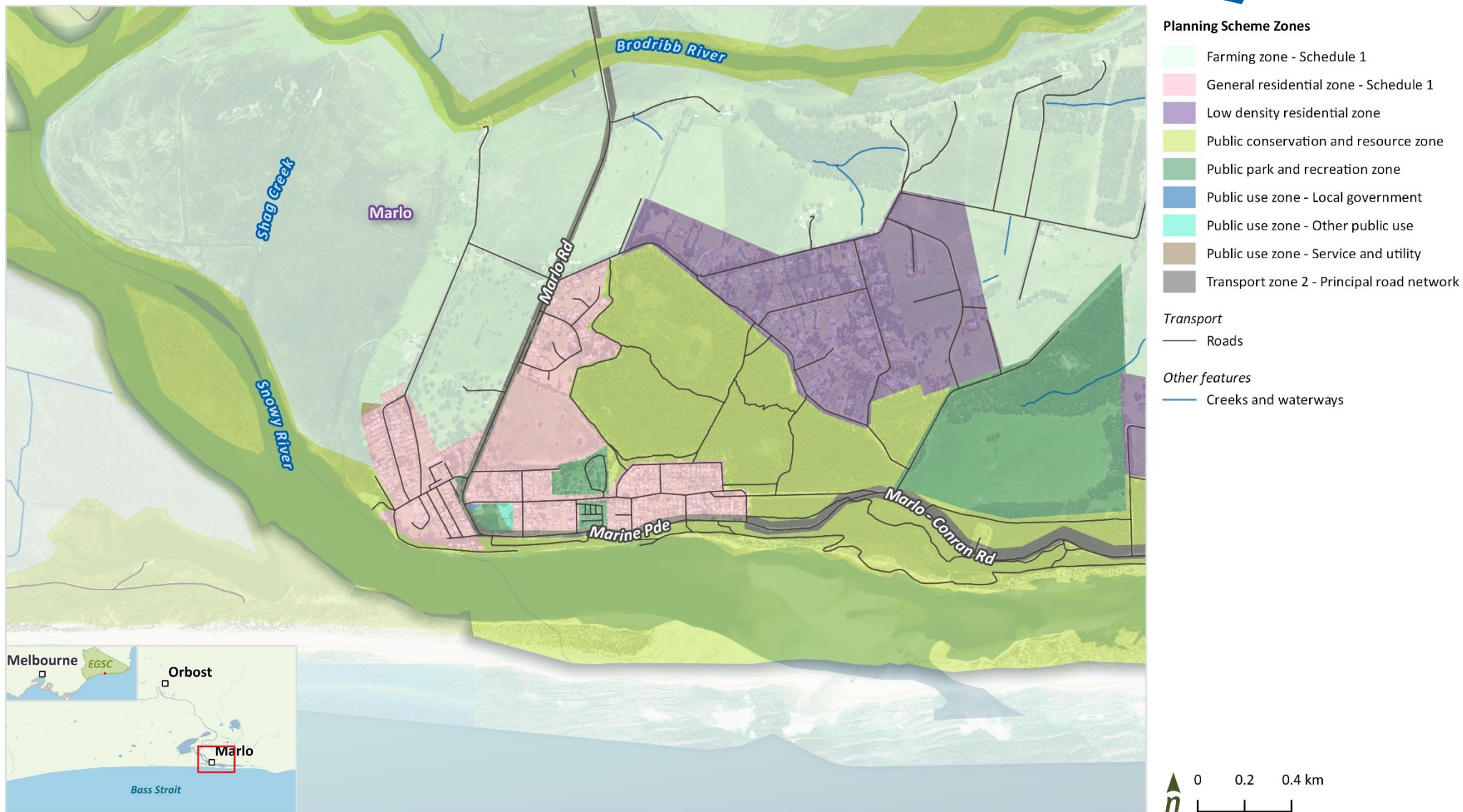


Figure 110. Planning scheme zones for Marlo.

Marlo mapping: Planning overlays



Figure 111. Other planning scheme overlays for Marlo.

Marlo mapping: Land management arrangements

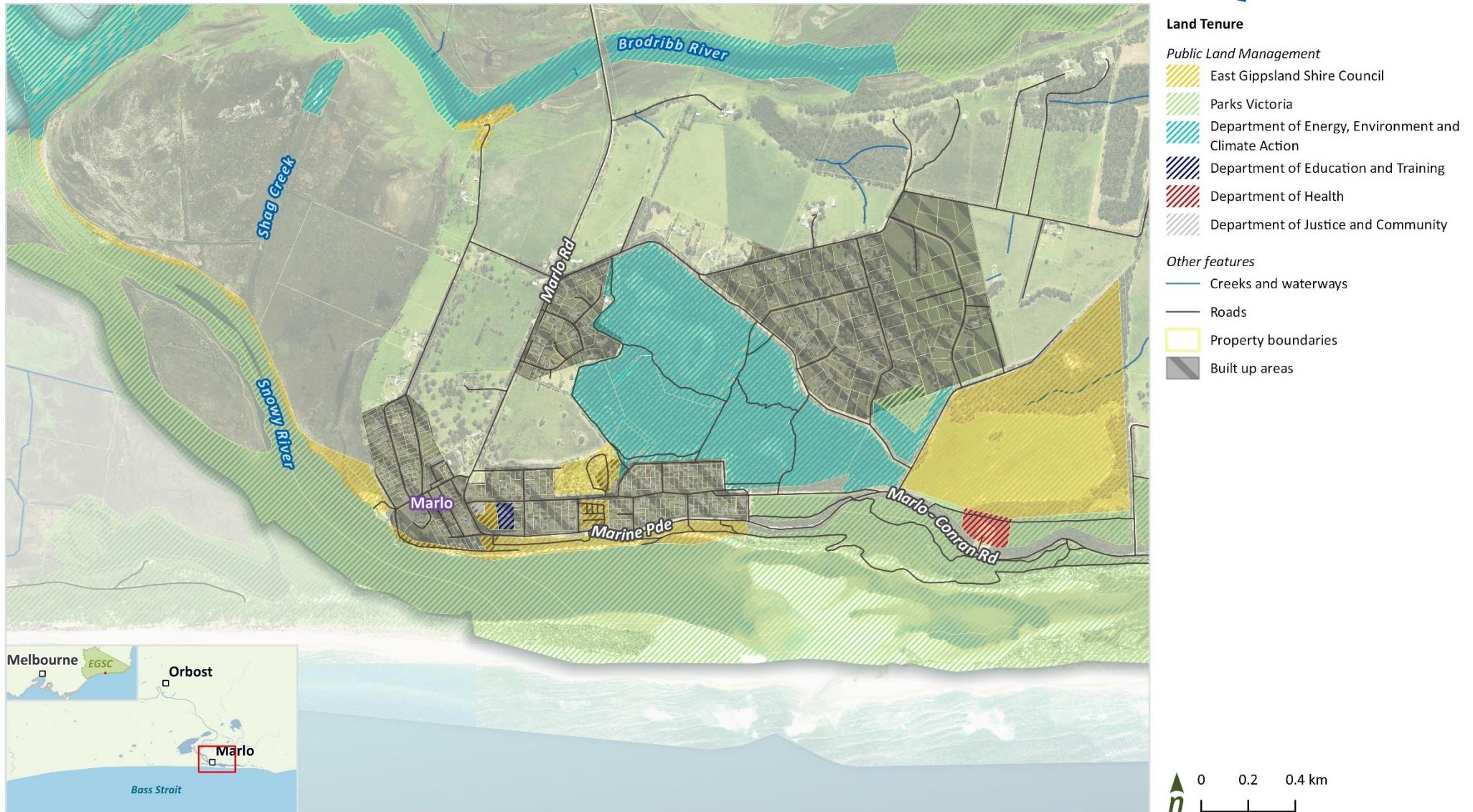


Figure 112. Public land management arrangements for Marlo.



11.6 Management actions

Table 23 details the CMMP management actions for Marlo.

Figure 113 presents site-specific management actions and maps activity and recreation nodes.

Table 23. Marlo management actions

Long-term objective	No.	Action	Timeframe	Council role	Partners
Objective 1: Acknowledge Traditional Owners' rights, aspirations and knowledge	MR1.1	Guided by GLaWAC and Far East Groups, support identification, management and protection of cultural heritage values across Marlo coastal areas. In alignment with Shire Wide actions, this includes: - Supporting GLaWAC and Far East Groups to identify unrecorded cultural heritage sites. - Continuing to implement appropriate planning overlays and controls such as Cultural Heritage Management Plans to protect cultural heritage. - Collaborating with GLaWAC and Far East Groups to better understand cultural values and inform future protection, in alignment with Action MR1.2. - Incorporating culturally-sensitive design into all works across Council-managed coastal reserves.	Ongoing	Participate	GLaWAC, Far East Traditional Owner Groups
	MR1.2	Continue to advance relationships with Far East Groups, including Bidwell, Yuin, and Ngarigo Monero peoples, and strengthen EGSC understanding of desire and capacity among Far East Groups for collaboration in coastal and marine management across Marlo (east of the Snowy River).	0-3 years, then ongoing	Lead	Far East Traditional Owner Groups
	MR1.3	Support GLaWAC and other Traditional Owner groups in management of Corringale Foreshore Reserve by Gunaikurnai rangers and GLaWAC natural resource management staff of GLaWAC. Support GLaWAC, where possible, in seeking funding opportunities for increased involvement in coastal and marine management and Gunaikurnai rangers. Support GLaWAC enhancement of the Reserve as a coastal camping, boating and fishing destination, and ensuring the natural and cultural values of the Reserve are protected, and conserved for all.	Ongoing	Participate	GLaWAC
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the marine and coastal environment	MR2.1	Continue to support EGCMA and citizen science programs to monitor estuary water quality and levels to inform opening arrangements of Snowy River estuary. Communicate management roles and responsibilities with reference to EGCMA entrance management protocols. Aligns with Shire wide Action EG5.2.	Ongoing	Participate	EGCMA, Parks Victoria, citizen science programs
Objective 3: Respect natural processes and strengthen resilience to climate change	MR3.1	Investigate options to manage emerging coastal hazard risks across Marlo, including measures to avoid risk, the use of nature-based solutions and ways to accommodate coastal hazards. Undertake a review of aging coastal protection structures and investigate upgrade options, including replacement with alternatives e.g. nature-based coastal protection or incorporating living seawalls to improve ecological outcomes. Align measures with recent foreshore Erosion Assessment Report, considering known issues of steep terrain, embankment instability, and sand loss.	3-5 years	Lead	GLaWAC, Parks Victoria, DEECA, EGCMA, research institutes



Long-term objective	No.	Action	Timeframe	Council role	Partners
Objective 3: Respect natural processes and strengthen resilience to climate change (cont.)	MR3.2	Collaborate with land managers and EGCMA to investigate and plan for Snowy River estuary opening regime changes expected with climate change and sea level rise. Consider opportunities for accommodation and adaptation of surrounding built and natural environment, impacts of increased flooding associated with prolonged closures, and the reducing need for artificial estuary opening.	5+ years	Participate	EGCMA, land managers
	MR4.1	In alignment with Action EG4.1, utilise activity and recreation nodes to clearly delineate distinct purposes and uses within foreshore zones, and ensure efficient development through co-location, partnership use, and consolidation of community assets. Includes delineation of: Marlo Boat Ramp and Jetty, Angling Club, Beach Road 'turnaround' and Brodribb River Boat Ramp as recreation nodes, supporting parking, boat access, fishing facilities, toilets and other recreational facilities.	0-3 years	Lead	All other land managers
Objective 4: Use and develop sustainably	MR4.2	In alignment with East Gippsland Housing and Settlement Strategy (2023), continue to foster Town character through: - Maintenance of existing foreshore facilities and investment in facilities, based on assessment of need. - Sustainable growth within extent of existing urban zoning through infill development and subject to environmental risk (bushfire, flood, coastal hazard) constraints. - Promoting adherence to township boundaries, planning overlays and land use planning.	Ongoing	Lead	
	MR4.3	Progress and complete upgrade works to foreshore precincts and facilities in alignment with Marlo Foreshore Management Plan Implementation and that are currently underway including: - Angling Club upgrades - decking, BBQ facilities, parking improvements, landscaping, footpaths and boat launching. - Foreshore toilet, parking, footpath, signage, access and landscaping upgrades. Review designs and planning to ensure proposed works and upgrades align with CMMP objectives, principles, actions, State policy and recommendations from foreshore erosion and town drainage studies.	3-5 years	Lead	
	MR4.4	In collaboration with the East Gippsland Integrated Water Management Forum, continue to develop a Sustainable Stormwater Strategy for Marlo, promoting best-practice stormwater management.	0-3 years	Lead	DEECA, IWM Forum partners
	MR4.5	Support boating activities across the Marlo region by ensuring the ongoing maintenance and upgrade of a diversity of boating infrastructure, including: - Car parking (line painting) and lighting upgrades at Brodribb River boat ramp. - Maintenance and updates to smaller boat launching sites at Marlo foreshore (in alignment with Action MR4.3). Communicate purpose and preferred usage of boating facilities in alignment with Action MR4.1.	0-3 years, then ongoing	Lead	Gippsland Ports, Boating Vic, Better Boating Victoria



Long-term objective	No.	Action	Timeframe	Council role	Partners
Objective 5: Take a stewardship approach, build understanding and knowledge, engage and collaborate	MR5.1	Continue to support and collaborate with local volunteer community environment groups e.g. Marlo Landcare. Includes: - Promoting community group activities in the coastal and marine space. - Fostering open communication and engagement channels with community groups. - Continuing to seek opportunities to increase community involvement, including through community grants and Council partnerships. - Promoting and increasing citizen science opportunities (including environmental monitoring - Action MR2.2).	Ongoing	Lead	All other management agencies, environmental and community groups and organisations
	MR5.2	In alignment with Shire wide Action EG5.3, review, consolidate and update foreshore signage across Marlo to: - Ensure consistency. - Promote connectivity, wayfinding and safety (e.g. pedestrian safety across Beach Road). - Celebrate unique environments, history and culture. - Support implementation of activity and recreation nodes (Action MR4.1).	3-5 years	Lead	Other land managers, GLaWAC, Far East Traditional Owner groups



Figure 113. Marlo management actions and nodes