Planisphere pioneered a methodology for landscape character and significance assessment that has become the accepted standard in Victoria. The State government commissioned Planisphere to prepare a major landscape assessment of most of Victoria’s coast, as part of a project to control coastal sprawl and protect the most valued landscapes. More recently, we have undertaken another study of Victoria’s South-West region.

Several of Planisphere’s innovative projects in landscape assessment have been recognised with state and national awards for excellence. We have undertaken projects for the metro-fringe Shires of Baw Baw and Murrindindi, the Green Wedge landscapes of Nillumbik, broad assessments of the rural landscapes of Wangaratta and detailed investigation into the local significance of landscapes outside the city of Bendigo.

The projects delineate landscape character areas, recommend planning scheme-ready development principles, identify areas of landscape significance, and include detailed statutory implementation recommendations. Many, including the coastal projects, have progressed to planning scheme amendments in local schemes, prepared or supported by Planisphere.

**EXAMPLE PROJECTS**

- South West Victoria Landscape Assessment (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2013)
- Bendigo Landscape Assessment: Big Hill and Mandurang Valley (Greater Bendigo, 2012)
- Corangamite Significant Landscape Implementation (Corangamite Shire Council, 2010)
- Nillumbik Landscape Character Assessment (Nillumbik Shire Council, 2009)
- Wangaratta Rural Landscape Assessment (Wangaratta Rural City Council, 2009)
- Williamstown Foreshore Landscape and Visual Assessment (Parks Victoria, 2008)
- Windfarms and Landscape Values: National Assessment Methodology (Auswind and Acrnt, 2007)
- Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2007)
- Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2005)
- Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2003)
We believe that landscape architecture is based on an understanding of how our environment works and what makes each place unique. At Planisphere we combine our skills in landscape character assessment, strategic planning and urban design into the technicalities of landscape architecture. It is a blend of science and art, vision and thought.

We excel in strategic planning, delivery and management of projects and bring knowledge of natural sciences, environmental law and planning policy. We believe that great landscape design can deliver successful places that are loved by the community, drive sustainability, deliver innovation and commercial value while standing the test of time.

The team at Planisphere have skills in all facets of landscape architecture including 3D modelling, detail design, planting design and documentation.

**EXAMPLE PROJECTS**

- Anglesea Streetscape Detail Design. (Surf Coast Shire Council, 2014)
- Healesville Freeway Reservation Renewal. (VicRoads, 2014)
- Glen Waverley Masterplan. (City of Monash, 2013)
- Horsley Park Masterplan Mapping and Urban Design. (Western Sydney Parklands Trust, 2012)
- Chelsea Flower Show Entry/ Winner Kate Dundas. (United Kingdom, 2010 and 2011)
- Portland Integrated Plan. (Glenelg Shire Council, 2011)
- Colac CBD and Entrances Project. (Otway Shire Council, 2011)
- Ballarat CBD Strategy. (City of Ballarat, 2010)
Masterplans or outline development plans provide a vital tool for controlling the direction and staging of growth. Suited to public parks and recreation areas, greenfield development sites, schools and tertiary precincts, government facilities, housing developments and waterfronts, a masterplan will produce a clear vision of how a particular area may develop over time. Layers of interest, involving a number of stakeholders, can be incorporated into comprehensive plans, while effective communication and consultation strategies ensure that the process remains transparent, and that any issues which may arise are considered appropriately.

The team at Planisphere has the experience to guide the development of thorough and considered masterplans, from detailed site analysis and issues and opportunities identification, through to final drawings and publications. We work closely with a number of sub-consultants to ensure that relevant expertise is available for each task. Our project management, planning and design skills ensure that every masterplan is thoroughly developed and concluded with a clear set of achievable implementation strategies.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- Anglesea Urban Design Guidelines and Streetscape Masterplan (Surf Coast Shire Council, 2014)
- Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserves Plans (Borough of Queenscliffe, 2014)
- Glen Waverley Masterplan (City of Monash, 2013)
- Horsley Park Masterplan Mapping and Urban Design (Western Sydney Parklands Trust, 2012)
- Traralgon North Development Plan (Latrobe City Council, 2013)
- Highton Lane Development Plan (Mansfield Shire Council, 2013)
- Hampstead Road Framework Plan (Maribyrnong City Council, 2012)
- Ivanhoe Civic Precinct Masterplan (Banyule City Council, 2011)
- Stamford Park Masterplan Implementation (City of Knox, 2010)
- Euroa Structure Plan - Concept and Action Plans (Strathbogie Shire Council, 2010)
- Overnewton College Keilor Masterplan (Overnewton College, 2008)
- Hopkins Point Road Structure Plan, Warrnambool (Colac Otway Shire Council, 2008)
- Lilydale Urban Improvement Project (Yarra Ranges Shire Council, 2007)
As the density of our cities and towns increases the effective management of open spaces is increasingly becoming a priority. Communities place high value on their open spaces, whether they be small urban parks, recreation fields, coastal foreshores or vast rural vistas. The benefits of open spaces are many; they provide an active ground for ecological conservation, improving physical health, reducing the ‘heat island’ effect in cities, meeting and gathering, attracting tourism and protecting our cultural heritage. Despite this the integrity of our open spaces is often compromised by the pressures of development. Good planning can play a vital role in the protection and enhancement of valued open spaces.

Planisphere has a broad range of experience in the planning for and management of open spaces, with an award-winning methodology that has proven to be successful across a number of rural and coastal settings as well as urban areas.

Our team can assist with:

- Assessment of appropriate land use and development within public open space
- Public and private open space policy and guidelines
- The development of strategies capable of immediate implementation through planning schemes and other tools
- The provision of skills in crafting accurate, expressive and usable design policy
- Providing a full range of communication skills needed to deliver a project successfully, including community consultation and visual presentation.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- Greater Geelong Open Space Strategy (City of Greater Geelong, 2014) with Clouston Associates.
- Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserves Plans (Borough of Queenscliffe, 2014)
- Horsley Park Masterplan Mapping and Urban Design (Western Sydney Parklands Trust, 2012)
- Somerville Community Planning and Development Project (Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, 2011)
- A Plan For Stony Creek: Stony Creek Directions Plan 1999 Review (City of Maribyrnong, 2020)
- Hastings Coastal Management Plan (Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, 2010)
- Open Space for Residential Development (Bayside City Council, 2009)
- Schnapper Point Framework Plan (Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, 2009)
- Open Space Guidelines (Growth Areas Authority, 2009)
- Williamstown Foreshore and Landscape Visual Assessment (Hobsons Bay City Council, 2008)
- Venus Bay Coastal Management Project (South Gippsland Shire Council, 2005)
- Review of Policies and Controls for the Yarra River Corridor: Punt Road to Burke Road (DSE, 2005)
- Yarra River Guidelines (City of Yarra, 2005)
As urban densities increase and cities continue to expand, river corridors are becoming an increasingly important landscape and recreation resource. The landscape of Melbourne’s waterways is subtle and easily despoiled by development that is inappropriately sited or massed. The waterways themselves are deceptively narrow, and an apparently dramatic river bank may in reality be overwhelmed by a building only a few storeys high. From river bridges – the view seen by the majority of passers by – the glimpse may be of a continuous tree canopy, not the river itself.

Planisphere has developed a leading role in understanding the special landscape qualities of river valley corridors, and in developing policies and guidelines for built form siting and design. Much of this work has been successfully incorporated into the Planning Scheme, and successfully represented in VCAT and Panel Hearings. This includes recent projects covering the Lower Yarra River corridor.

**EXAMPLE PROJECTS**

- Middle Yarra River Corridor Strategy (DTPLI, 2014)
- Yarra River Corridor Strategy (City of Yarra, 2014)
- Yarra River Skyline DDO3 Review and Modelling. (Stonnington City Council, 2012)
- Amendment C124: Maribyrnong River Panel Hearing Expert Witness. (City of Melbourne, 2010)
- Stony Creek Directions Plan Review. (Maribyrnong City Council, 2010)
- Murray River Structure Plan: Stage 1. (DSE, 2009)
- Planning Application, Yarra River Corridor, Gardiners Creek: VCAT Expert Witness. (City of Yarra, 2012)
- Hopkins Point Rd Structure Plan (Warrnambool City Council, 2008)
- Williamstown Foreshore Landscape and Visual Assessment. (Parks Vic & Hobsons Bay City Council, 2008)
- Mildura CBD Urban Design Framework (Mildura Rural City Council, 2007)
- Cultural Heritage Sensitivity Mapping. (Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, 2008)
- Review of Policies and Controls for the Yarra River Corridor: Punt Road to Burke Road. (DSE, 2005)
- West Fyans Structure Plan (Greater Geelong City Council, 2002)
Streetscape design is a mix of urban design and landscape architecture that requires creative solutions that are also functional. Planisphere has a strong design team experienced at producing streetscape concepts, design guidelines, public consultation, and landscape documentation for both urban and rural roads.

Key elements which need to be considered include sunlight access, landscaping, pedestrian crossings, signage, seating, street furniture, toilet facilities, car parking, pavement material, lighting and public art. Guidelines provide more definitive design guidance regarding the look and feel of new buildings located along the street.

Landscape construction documentation can be provided showing the paving, landscape and furniture layout, kerbing details and materials, plant selection and specifications that carry the project forward all the way to tender.

**EXAMPLE PROJECTS**

- Anglesea Urban Design Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan (Surf Coast Shire Council, 2013/14)
- Melbourne City Council Built Form Review (Melbourne City Council, 2011)
- Portland Integrated Plan (Glenelg Shire Council, 2011)
- Glenferrie Road Structure Plan (City of Boroondara, 2012)
- Colac CBD and Entrances Project (Colac Otway Shire Council, 2011)
- Ballarat CBD Strategy (City of Ballarat, 2010)
The visual impact of a development in the landscape or surrounding urban context is one of the most contentious and publicised issues in planning and urban design. Councils, VCAT and developers need assurance that any depictions of a development proposal are accurate, and represented in a manner that is truthful to the final development. Planisphere has extensive experience in preparing visual impact assessment relating to proposed development and viewshed mapping.

Our method of development assessment follows all requirements set by VCAT for the use of photomontages as evidence in hearings. It involves the preparation of detailed three dimensional topographic maps created from GIS data, and development proposals modelled from architectural construction and design drawings. Depending on the requirements of the task, these may vary from ‘boxy’ greyscale shapes with minimal articulation, such as building envelopes, to detailed renders featuring a variety of colours, materials and finishes. We can depict landscape and vegetation details as well as built form.

In addition to visualisation of design proposals, Planisphere has extensive experience in the identification and analysis of the significant views, vistas and settings located within rural or urban environments. Landscape visual impact assessment ascertains a proposal’s impact on the wider landscape or the identification and analysis of the significant views, vistas and settings located within rural or urban environments. Projects have included viewshed mapping and analysis, the development of design guidelines and principles to minimise visual impact and planning scheme recommendations to protect significant views. The analysis can be clearly and simply presented, ready for a Planning Scheme inclusion.

**EXAMPLE PROJECTS**

- Middle Yarra River Corridor Strategy. (Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure, 2014)
- Yarra River Corridor Strategy. (City of Yarra, 2014)
- Landscape Unit Mapping. (Macedon Ranges Shire Council, 2013)
- South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study. (Views Analysis) (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2013)
- Paramatta Old Government House Heritage Advice. (Parramatta City Council, 2013)
- Yarra River Corridor Strategy. (City of Yarra, 2013)
- Landscape Unit Mapping. (Macedon Ranges Shire Council, 2013)
- Old Government House and Domain, Parramatta: Recreation Facilities Parameters. (Parramatta City Council, 2013)
- Apollo Bay Settlement Boundary and Urban Design Review. (Colac Otway Shire Council, 2012)
- Old Government House Views and Settings. (Paramatta City Council, 2012)
- Telecommunication Tower Photomontages. (Middletons, 2012)
- Canberra Views, Vistas and Settings (Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations & Communities, 2012)
- Yarra River Skyline DDO3 Review and Modelling. (Stonnington City Council, 2012)
- Port Corporation Visual Amenity Monitoring Framework. (Port Corporation, 2011)
- Williamstown Foreshore Landscape and Visual Assessment. (Parks Victoria, 2008)
- Doveton Ridge Visibility Study. (City of Casey, 2006)
- Yarra River Guidelines. (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2005)