



SIGNIFICANT VIEWS OF SOUTH WEST VICTORIA

DETERMINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VIEWS

Views occur over distance and through 'view planes', and comprise a foreground, middle-ground and background. The qualities or components of the foreground, middle-ground and background help to define what is significant about a view, and changes within those 'planes' will alter the qualities and characteristics of a view. Views are sensitive to changes within the natural and built environment of a landscape and are affected by weather variations that contribute to the changing 'moods' of landscape features and skylines

Viewing distance is important in determining how change is perceived across a landscape. However, assigning specific distances to the 'view planes' that occur within a view is difficult, as the various planes are also defined according to the character of the viewed landscape i.e. the foreground of a view may terminate at a particular landform, as opposed to being defined by a distance in metres. Generally speaking however, the following view plane distances have been applied to this study¹:

Foreground: This zone begins at the viewer and extends to approximately 800m of the observer. Generally, the detail of the landscape is more pronounced within this view plane.

Middle ground: Alterations in landscape within this zone (800m to 6.5km) are less distinctive.

Background: This view plane extends from the middleground (6.5km minimum between the observer and the area being viewed) to infinity. Shape may remain evident beyond 16km, especially if it is consistent with the surrounding landform. Beyond 16km, alterations in landscape character become obscure.

¹[http://brekenridgepeak6.com/document/DEIS/Chapter 3D Scenery/](http://brekenridgepeak6.com/document/DEIS/Chapter%203D%20Scenery/)

SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

There are many places from where spectacular views are available across the study area, including the tops of volcanic rises and peaks within mountainous areas. These viewing locations also have various levels of accessibility, promotion and visitation. For the purpose of this study, viewing locations have been chosen because they feature a view of a regionally or state significant landscape, and they meet a minimum of two of the following selection considerations:

- The viewing location is accessible, preferably by vehicle;
- The viewing location is a designated lookout point with interpretive information;
- The viewing location is widely promoted;
- The viewing location is located on public land.

The views available from viewing locations that satisfy the selection considerations have been assessed against the 'components and values criteria' (refer p.4) in order to determine their significance.

OTHER NOTABLE VIEWING LOCATIONS

Views available from lesser known, not easily accessible and/or informal viewing locations that did not satisfy the selection considerations have not been assessed for their level of significance. These other notable viewing locations are, however, listed in the relevant landscape significance assessment papers.

Major viewing corridors that transect the landscape and from which the qualities of the landscape are best experienced, have also been listed in the landscape significance assessment papers.

VIEWSHED MAPPING

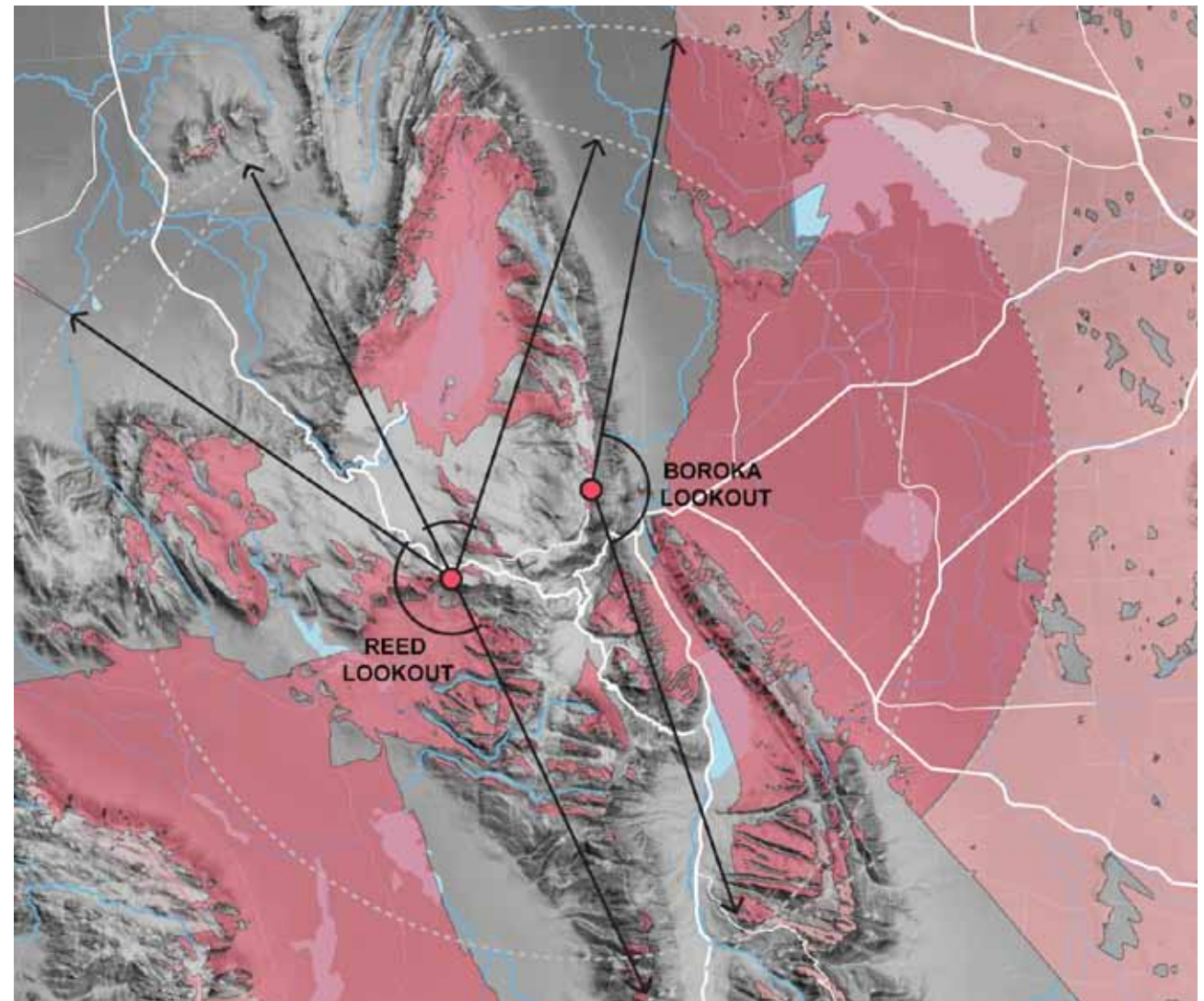
Views that have been assessed as being of state or regional significance have also been mapped as part of this study. The majority of the maps contain viewsheds over two distances: a 16km radius within which most detail in the landscape remains visible, and a 32km radius to illustrate the point at which alternations in the landscape become obscure. In some instances, the view may appear to be infinite, while others may terminate at a large landscape feature on the horizon or in the background of a view.

Viewsheds have been calculated based purely on topographical data and do not take into account any vegetation or built form that may obscure parts of the view.

Therefore, in addition to the viewshed, a view cone has been mapped that is more representative of the actual extents of view, as experienced at the viewing location. This takes into account elements that play a role in framing or defining a view such as vegetation or built form.

These maps are available in the *Regional Overview Report: Extended Version* and in the *Significant Views Assessment Papers*.

Example viewshed map:



VIEW COMPONENTS & VALUES CRITERIA

COMPOSITION (STRUCTURE)

In relation to the composition or structure of a view, the following criterion has been developed, which informs the determination and level of significance:

The view has outstanding compositional qualities, whether a classic vista, or a sweeping panorama. The view may be balanced, both horizontally and vertically; a 'picture postcard' view. The focal point of the view may be centred, and elements in the foreground, middle ground and background, equally weighted. The view may be framed by elements to the viewer's left and right.

COMPOSITION (QUALITIES)

In relation to the compositional qualities of a view, the following criterion has been developed:

The view is compelling or inspiring for its aesthetic qualities, including a landscape feature (that may be the focal point of the view), or a collection of landscape features; edges or contrasts; and other compositional elements such as colour and texture etc.

OTHER CULTURAL VALUES

This study also includes consideration of other cultural values that may contribute to the overall significance of a view.

SOCIAL VALUES

The following criterion has been used to determine social value:

The view is widely promoted, well known, and popular with tourists to the area. It is a view of note that is available from a publicly accessible location.

HISTORIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, SCIENTIFIC ETC. VALUES

Other cultural heritage values are taken into account where relevant:

The view or viewing location is important for its other cultural values, including historic, environmental, scientific or other values.

LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

RATING CONSIDERATIONS

In order to determine a level of significance for each view component or value, and ultimately each view, the following 'rating considerations' are applied.

Exemplary

How representative or illustrative is this view? Is it 'the best' of its type? Is it exemplary within the local, regional or state context?

Iconic

Is the view instantly recognisable? Is it symbolic for its visual qualities? Has it been represented in art, photography, literature etc.? Is it iconic within the local, regional or state context?

Scarce

How uncommon or rare is the view? Is the view a 'one off' that is not available nearby or elsewhere in the study area? Is it scarce within the local, regional or state context?

SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS

Levels of significance are attributed to each view component and value, and an overall significance level in relation to the view is determined. The significance levels are:

Moderate = Local significance

High = Regional significance

Exceptional = State significance

As per the determination of landscape significance, the final determination of a significance level for a view is not a matter of adding up the number of 'moderate' or 'high' ratings. Rather, if a view rates 'high' for example in one or more of the view components, that level is the overall significance rating attributed to that view.

Levels of significance are attributed to the other cultural values of the view i.e. historic, environmental and/or scientific, social and other values, based on the stated level of significance in the secondary source, or based on the source itself.

Again, as per the determination of landscape significance, a view cannot be classified as significant for its historic, environmental and/or scientific, social or other values alone. In order for a view to be classified as significant, it must substantially meet the composition (structure and qualities) criteria.



VIEWS OF STATE & REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

1. WESTERN VOLCANIC PLAIN

1.1	Mount Rouse	State
1.2	Harmans Valley	State
1.3	Lake Surprise	Regional
1.4	Lake Linlithgow	Regional
1.5	Mount Leura	State
1.6	Red Rocks	State
1.7	Lakes Gnotuk & Bullen Merri	State
1.8	Lake Keilambete	Regional
1.9	Berry Deep Lead Gold Mine Views	Regional
1.10	Mount Buninyong & Mount Warrenheip	Regional

2. THE UPLANDS

2.1	Mount Blackwood	State
2.2	Lal Lal Falls	State
2.3	Robertsons Hill	Regional

3. THE GOLDFIELDS

3.1	Pioneer Lookout (One Tree Hill)	State
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4. THE ROLLING TABLELANDS

4.1	Mickle Lookout, Casterton	Regional
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5. THE WIMMERA PLAINS

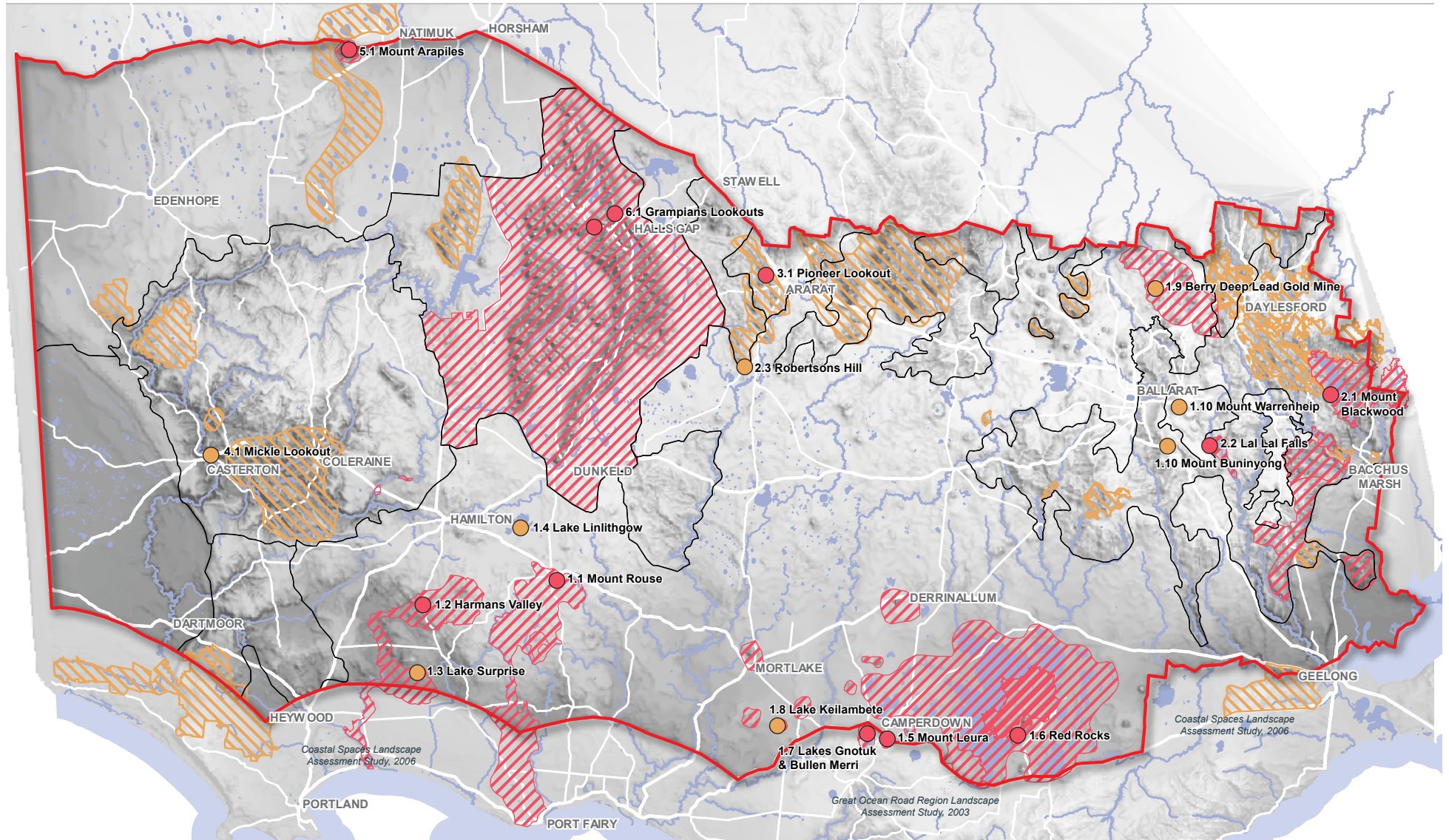
5.1	Mount Arapiles	State
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6. THE GRAMPIANS (GARIWERD) & SURROUNDS

6.1	Grampians Lookouts	State
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Map Legend

	STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
	LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE BOUNDARIES
	RIVERS
	WATERBODIES
	VIEWING LOCATION: STATE SIGNIFICANT VIEW
	VIEWING LOCATION: REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT VIEW
	SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE: STATE
	SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE: REGIONAL



1.1 Mount Rouse

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

State

The Mount Rouse Lookout provides almost 360° ‘picture postcard’ views across the roughly textured lava flow and surrounding district. These are available from a number of locations on the summit. The Grampians Ranges rise up from the horizon in the north, which provides a visual balance between foreground and background elements. Views terminate at the jagged peaks of the Ranges on the horizon which provide a strong visual contrast with the surrounding flat pastoral landscape.

Views from the summit of Mount Rouse are panoramic, with the foreground and middle ground stretching out across the lava plain towards a backdrop of the Grampians. Paddocks are criss-crossed with dark green shelterbelts and the nearby volcanic rises of Mount Napier and Mount Eccles (Budj Bim) can be seen. It is also possible to view the extent of the rocky lava flow as it makes its way south, creating a rough, lumpy texture across the agricultural field patterns.

1.2 Harmans Valley

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

State

This viewing location overlooks the Harmans Valley Lava Flow and includes designated viewing infrastructure and interpretive information. It is situated near the junction of Harmans Road (which runs through the Mount Napier State Park) and the Port Fairy - Hamilton Road.

The view is contained within the sweeping curve of the valley, with Mount Napier visible in the background. While other parts of the surrounding landscape are visible, the view cone describes the extent of the view that is dominated by the lava flow.

The open, cleared foreground and elevated position of the viewing location allows for excellent, uninterrupted views over the lava flow. There is a high contrast between the rough texture of the flow and the dark, scrubby bracken growing in its crevices, and the smooth, grassy slopes of the valley walls. The lava flow is a dramatic visual feature that twists across the middle ground. The central location of Mount Napier and the span of the landscape between it and the viewing location makes it easy to appreciate the distance that the river of lava travelled when the volcano was active. This is further highlighted by dark vegetation that frames the valley and directs the eye across the volcanic features.



1.1 Wide views to the south display the textured landscape of stony rises from the Mount Rouse lava flow



1.2 The classic cone formation of Mount Napier is a stand out feature on the horizon in this view

1.3 Lake Surprise Lookout

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

Regional

The Lake Surprise Lookout is located on the edge of the Mount Eccles crater rim and offers views over the Lake and surrounding volcanic features.

The photo to the right documents the extent of the viewshed from the Lake Surprise Lookout.

This view is largely contained within the deep crater of Mount Eccles (Budj Bim) which is filled with the waters of Lake Surprise. The crater is comprised of three smaller craters which have amalgamated over time and are now rimmed with dense vegetation. Geological features, including lava caves, scoria cones and the crater lake, can be viewed from the lookout point and crater walk. Lake Surprise sometimes displays a deep blue colour which is formed from lake sediments and by algae in the water.

1.4 Lake Linlithgow

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

Regional

Lake Linlithgow is situated outside landscapes of regional or state significance, however an excellent view is available across the Lake to the Grampian Ranges in the north.

Grassy, open shores frame the gently lapping waters of the lake. A history of alternating dry periods and flood are written in the layers of earth that have built up along the shore line. The edges of the lake are ringed in places by reedy banks that contrast with dry mud beds and the surface of the lake. Mount Sturgeon and Mount Abrupt provide distinctive visual contrast and a stunning focus for views across the lake. Their silhouettes are a distinctive feature of the landscape of the Southern Grampians region. Raised lunettes are visible on the eastern shore.



1.3 View from the Lake Surprise Lookout



1.4 View of Lake Linlithgow

1.5 Mount Leura

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

State

Mount Leura is a complex eruption point just outside Camperdown. A designated viewing location at the top is accessible by vehicle and includes interpretive signage.

Views from the summit of Mount Leura are panoramic, taking in much of the surrounding landscape for almost 360°, and occasionally framed by vegetation growing in the foreground.

The foreground features shrubby vegetation that occasionally frames views, before it drops down sharply to reveal the sweeping plain that surrounds Mount Leura. The spectacular conical formation of Mount Sugarloaf is a distinctive part of the view, as is the township of Camperdown nestled in Mount Leura's shadow.

Dark green shelterbelts create short geometric repeats across the landscape beyond, which contrast with the vast paddocks and organic outlines of the broad and reflective inland lakes. The scattered volcanic rises create a high level of visual interest for the viewer, displaying a variety of shapes and form.

1.6 Red Rock Lookout

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

State

The Red Rock Complex lies to the east of Lake Corangamite and contains a collection of volcanic features. The summit of the main volcanic rise has two viewing locations that look out to the east and the west. These are accessible by car and contain interpretive information.

The Red Rock area is one of the most complex eruption points in the Victorian Volcanic Plain. The fore and middle ground of views feature a textured landscape of scoria cones, tuff rings and volcanic maars. Exposed red rocks contrast against the grassed volcanic slopes. The landscape of hummocky stony rises around the southern edge of Lake Corangamite is visible as a rough texture in the topography.

The views stretch out across the flat agricultural plains that are interspersed with shelterbelts. These contrast against the reflective surface of the large inland lakes that include Lake Colac, Lake Beeac and the huge saltwater expanse of Lake Corangamite. Views take in the conical rises of nearby volcanos including Mount Elephant, Mount Porndon and Mount Leura.



1.5 Mount Sugarloaf



1.6 View from the eastern lookout

1.7 Lakes Gnotuk & Bullen Merri

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

State

Sadlers Road spans the high saddle of land that separates Lakes Gnotuk and Bullen Merri. While there are no designated viewpoints along the road, there are two opportunities to pull over and view the impressive craters filled by the lakes.

The south western extent of the view from Lake Gnotuk is visible over a small rise in the topography, and is not a dominant feature of the view across the lake.

High elevations of the tuff rings surrounding the water bodies allow for expansive views of the lakes. The foreground on either side of the road drops steeply down the crater wall before sweeping across the still waterbodies. Dark vegetation contrasts with the grassy pastoral land and the straight edges of shelterbelt planting highlights the form of the craters. Built form and rural development is visible within the crater rims, however these are recessive features of the views. The water in the lakes is a striking shade of deep blue.

1.8 Lake Keilambete

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

Regional

Lake Keilambete is an almost circular lake with startling blue waters that provides a stunning foreground for Mount Noorat on the horizon. A small interpretive sign denotes this significant viewing location. Views to the west and south/west are actually blocked by shelterbelt planting on site.

Lake Keilambete is not immediately discernible to the eye, as it nestles in a deep crater. Where Keilambete Road edges the lake, views are predominantly blocked by dense roadside vegetation. A break in the vegetation on the south western edge opens up to reveal the sparkling blue water of the lake. From this point cleared, grassy banks slope down to the water's edge and the almost perfectly circular formation of the lake is visible. The view is contained within this deep recession, with the raised sides (or 'tuff' ring) blocking outward views. Mount Noorat is centred in the view on the horizon.



1.7 Lake Gnotuk, view



1.8 Striking blue water

1.9 Berry Deep Lead Gold Mine

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

Regional

There are two components to this viewing location. The first is the roadside view of the Berry Deep Lead No1 Mine on the Daylesford - Clunes Road just west of Smeaton. This is a short range view, with cleared paddocks allowing for direct views towards the huge mullock heaps of the mine. The remains of the pump house nestled among the mullock heaps is an important part of the view that provides an attractive and historic focal point.

The second view is available a little further east along the Daylesford - Clunes Road, where the landscape opens up to reveal pastoral land punctuated with volcanic cones and remnant mullock heaps from a number of different mine sites. The eye is carried across the landscape, towards individual features, and an interpretive board is in place to assist in locating these within the landscape

1.10 Mount Buninyong & Mount Warrenheip

Landscape Character Type

1. Western Volcanic Plain

Significant View Rating

Regional

Mount Buninyong and Mount Warrenheip are located to the east of Ballarat and offer spectacular viewing locations of the agricultural landscape and volcanic plains surrounding Ballarat.

Roads wind up both of the rises so views are potentially available from numerous angles. Much of the surrounding landscape is visible due to the height of the volcanic rises and the relief of the surrounding terrain. The view cones describes what can actually be seen taking into account vegetation, which frames many views from the hills.

These views are open, expansive and varied, displaying the rich colours and textures of the agricultural patchwork that disappears into a distant horizon. The characteristic 'big skies' of western Victoria create a spectacular frame for the features of the surrounding landscape, and change distinctly in colour and mood with variations in the changeable weather and light.

The layers of history of the surrounding landscape are expressed in these views, from the volcanic activity that formed the landscape, to the agricultural activity that dominates it today.



1.9 Remains of the Pumphouse



1.10 View from Mount Buninyong

2.1 Mount Blackwood

Landscape Character Type

2. The Uplands

Significant View Rating

State

Mount Blackwood is a peak on the ranges at the edge of the Lerderderg State Park, with excellent views across the park and the volcanic plain to the south. There is no formal viewing infrastructure in this location, however there are access roads for telecommunications towers that provide public access to the views. The viewshed extends over the eastern edge of the study area, and the view cone describes the view which is predominantly visible to the east.

This is a high and windswept location, where the sharply defined ridges and deep valleys of the Lerderderg Gorge and surrounding ranges are clearly visible from above. There is a strong contrast between the forested areas of the State Park and the cleared, open pastoral land to the south. Here, properties and paddocks are divided by rows of shelterbelts and other clumps of vegetation. The Merrimu Reservoir glints within the landscape, and highlights the presence of the steep-sided gorges that are a dominant character of the landscapes to the south. The Macedon Ranges appear as a dark, mounded band on the horizon, while to the south, occasional rises of volcanic origin can be seen. Overall, this view encapsulates the interface of the uplands and the volcanic plains, and is composed of a great diversity of features that are associated with both of these landscapes.

2.2 Lal Lal Falls

Landscape Character Type

2. The Uplands

Significant View Rating

State

A viewing platform has been created to capture this view of the Lal Lal Gorge. The platform is situated on the edge of the Gorge, above a tumble of rocks below, and captures a sweeping horseshoe shaped bend in the deeply incised valley.

The image opposite shows the predominant extents of the view, which is short range.

The Falls at the south-western edge of the Gorge provide a visual focus, and the eye is drawn across the sweeping bend of the Gorge as it disappears out of sight around another twist. The flat surface of the surrounding plain is visible to either side of the Gorge. Mount Buninyong is present as a distinctive volcanic cone rising on the horizon.

The depth that the Gorge cuts into the surrounding landscape is an impressive feature, which is highlighted by the contrast between the surrounding flat, agricultural plain and the deep, weathered textures of the basalt columns that line the walls and edges of the Gorge. The tumbling waters of the Lal Lal Falls provide a picturesque focus for the view. These are subject to seasonal variation, from powerful flows that are dispersed over the rocky cliff face, to more sedate trickles that flow languidly through pools of water below.



2.1 Mount Blackwood



2.2 Lal Lal Falls by Andrew Thomas

2.3 Robertson Hill

Landscape Character Type

2. The Uplands

Significant View Rating

Regional

Robertson Hill is located on Watgania Road, just off the Pyrenees Highway between Ararat and Glenthompson. While it is not a formal or designated viewing point, a magnificent viewing opportunity is created at a rise in the landscape. This is part of the very southern tip of the Victorian Uplands.

The view to the south is visible from the road. Views to the north are blocked by roadside shelterbelt planting.

The climb up Robertson Hill is not particularly spectacular, until the crest is reached and the sweeping panorama suddenly opens out. To the south east the cleared landscape of the volcanic plain is revealed with its open pastures and shelterbelt planting. A volcanic cone rises on the distant horizon. The lakes shimmer with the reflections of the sky, and are revealed in glints through the surrounding vegetation, which contrast strongly with the dry, grassy pastoral landscape. The Gariwerd silhouette is deep blue and dramatic, with a faint haze softly rising. To the south, the towering turbines of the Glenthompson Wind Farm are visible in a portion of the view.

3.1 Pioneer Lookout, Ararat

Landscape Character Type

3. The Goldfields

Significant View Rating

State

Pioneer Lookout is a memorial viewing point on One Tree Hill in the Ararat Regional Park that captures stunning panoramic views.

The foreground drops away sharply on all sides, and views are experienced over and through the forested canopy of the land below. To the north, the ridges and folds of the landscape that surrounds Ararat dominate, with the more distant shapes of the Pyrenees Ranges beyond. To the east, the urban areas of Ararat sit nestled within trees and the distinctive silhouettes of Mounts Langhi Ghiran and Buangor are layered on the horizon. To the south east, the landscape flattens out, and the turbines of Challicum Hills Wind Farm are visible before the closer hills of Mount Chalambar and Mount Ararat fill the middle ground. Past these, flatter land stretches out before the jagged formation of Gariwerd (the Grampian Ranges) rises up to dominate the western horizon.

This is a stunning view of textures, moods and colours. The Grampians have a blue tinge, and are often dramatically shrouded in cloud. The pastoral land in the middle ground is dotted with River Red Gums and areas of remnant vegetation create a patchwork that intensifies as it gets closer to the ranges. This contrasts with the cleared hills and ridges surrounding Ararat, making them stand out boldly.



2.3 View towards hills south of Ararat, which is blocked by pine shelterbelts along the north side of the road.



3.1 Panoramic views from Pioneer Lookout

4.1 Mickle Lookout, Casterton

Landscape Character Type

4. The Rolling Tablelands

Significant View Rating

Regional

The Mickle Lookout on a hill above Casterton is a well publicised and easily accessible viewing location.

The Lookout is located high on one of the ridge lines that surrounds the township of Casterton. The town is nestled into the vegetated valley of the Glenelg River in the middle ground, with views extending across to terminate on the distant rolling hills.

The main street of Casterton is the central feature of this view. The eye is drawn up the straight axis of the street, with built form spreading out on either side to merge with the surrounding landscape. The lush qualities of the river valley can be seen in contrast to the rolling, cleared agricultural land beyond. Slabs of plantation provide additional contrast within the gently undulating landscape.

5.1 Mount Arapiles

Landscape Character Type

5. The Wimmera Plains

Significant View Rating

State

As a prominent outcrop favoured by rock climbers, views are available from literally all over Mount Arapiles. The most readily available viewing location is at the end of Mount Arapiles Summit Road. The viewshed predominantly captures land to the north over Mitre Rock and Mitre Lake.

The view features a foreground of rugged, rocky slopes, covered with dense vegetation. The slope down dramatically, with a middle ground dominated by the smaller rocky outcrop of Mitre Rock and the expanse of Mitre Lake just beyond. The background of the view stretches over the Plains, with the Little Desert National Park discernible as a darker stretch of vegetation on the horizon.

The vast landscape of the Wimmera Plains is a dominant feature of views from other vantage points high on Mount Arapiles. These experience much seasonal variation, with grasses of deep green in during the cooler months, bright yellow canola crops in Spring and then drying out to a light golden colour over Summer. The plains are scattered with lakes and wetlands that also experience high levels of seasonal variation. The craggy formation of the Grampians Ranges is a striking feature on the eastern horizon, while to the west views seem to stretch infinitely out across the relatively flat land.



4.1 View over Casterton from Mickle Lookout



5.1 Looking out from Mount Arapiles

6.1 The Grampians Lookouts

Landscape Character Type

6. The Grampians (Gariwerd) & Surrounds

Significant View Rating

State (or higher)

The Grampians Ranges National Park (Gariwerd) offers numerous spectacular scenic lookout points which capture stunning, panoramic views to features within the ranges and out across the surrounding landscape. These are often located up high and feature dense bushland in the foreground with sweeping views across the vegetated valleys and craggy, rocky peaks of the ranges, to agricultural land beyond.

Reed Lookout provides sweeping, panoramic views over the interior of the Grampians landscape, from the Victoria Valley in the south to Lake Wartook and the Mount Difficult Range to the north. Reed lookout is accessible by car, while the Balconies involves a 2km return walk. Boroka Lookout is another highly visited location, accessible by a short walk from a car park. It looks outwards over the sweeping agricultural land to the east of the ranges that extends to the peaks and formations of the Southern Pyrenees and hills surrounding Ararat, as well as Halls Gap nestled between the juncture of the Mount Difficult and Mount William Ranges.



6.1 View from Mount William towards the Victoria Valley