



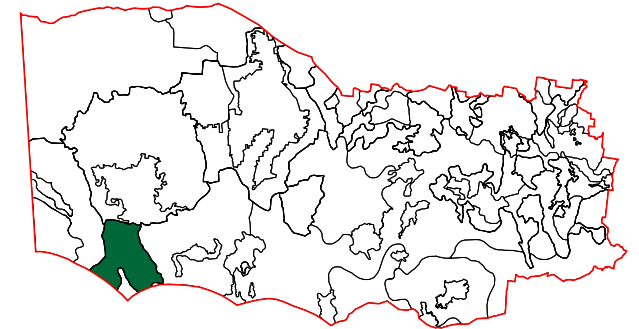
Character Type 7

Vegetated Rises

7 VEGETATED RISES

This Character Type is an interface area that exhibits qualities of the Western Volcanic and Glenelg Plains and the Rolling Tablelands to the north. It is unified by an undulating topography of low hills and river valleys that are for the most part densely vegetated with a combination of plantation forestry and large areas of state and national parks. These are interspersed with cleared pastoral areas that provide views over and across the terrain to hills cloaked by vegetation beyond.

The characteristics of this landscape are driven by alternating patterns of land use with a variety of outlooks and views, and it is this patchwork that unifies it to one Type. There are no distinctive Character Areas, however it merges to the south, extending to Portland and Mount Clay. This southern area is detailed in the Vegetated Rises Character Type within the *Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment* (DSE, Planisphere, 2006), which are generally separated by the Cobbobonee National Park.



Wide river valleys have shaped the topography (south of Digby)



Rolling topography cloaked in forests and plantations, with occasional cleared areas (south of Digby)

Figure 1 Vegetated Rises Location



Key Features

- Gently rolling topography
- Roads that bend and weave with the terrain
- Large areas of Pine and Blue Gum plantations
- State and National Parks
- Occasional patches of open pastoral land
- River valleys of the Crawford and Stokes Rivers
- Long range views from high points

Settlements

This area is sparsely populated. It contains the townships of:

- Digby
- Hotspur

Landscape Characteristics

Landform

A rolling topography incised by deep and wide river valleys that contrast dramatically with the surrounding plains. The southern edge features the volcanic rises of Red Hill (170m), found in the Cobboboonee south of Lyons, and Mount Eckersley (160m) north of Heywood.

Waterform

The topography of this area is largely dictated by the river valleys of the Crawford (sometimes referred to as “Smokey”) and Stokes rivers and their tributaries. A few swamps occur in low lying areas.

Vegetation

Large tracts of land within this landscape have been used for plantation forestry. There are also large continuous areas of land held in public reserves, including the Hotspur and Annya State Forests, Crawford Regional Park and Cobboboonee National Park to the south. There a number of smaller bushland and wildlife reserves within the state parks and surrounding areas.

Remnants of Grassy Plains Woodland communities are evident in the isolated River Red Gums left standing in areas of cleared pastoral land, and open grasslands are more prevalent in parts to the north.

Indigenous roadside vegetation is tall and dense alongside areas of native forest and in corridors through cleared pastoral areas and the edges of most plantations.

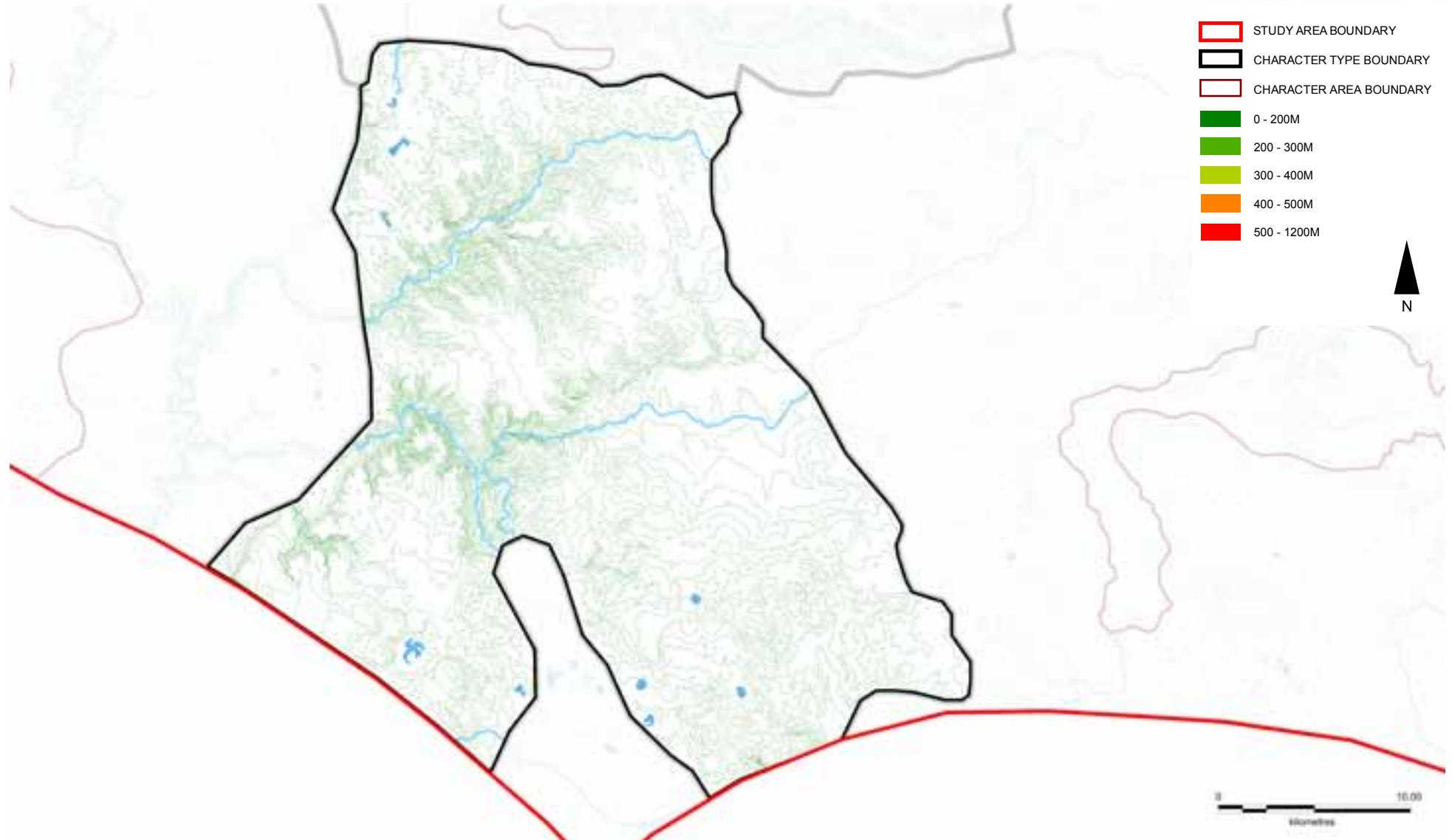
Land Use & Built Form

This landscape is being used primarily for plantation forestry and nature conservation, intermingled with cleared areas for sheep and cattle grazing. These occur predominantly around road corridors and small townships. Built form is minimal. There are occasional small scale sheds and farming infrastructure located close to the roadside, with homesteads set back out of sight into the vegetation. Residential development is largely contained within the boundaries of the small settlements.



Rolling topography cloaked in forests and plantations, with occasional cleared areas (south of Digby)

Figure 2 Vegetated Rises Landform & Waterform



PATTERN OF VIEWING

A varied pattern of viewing is created by the rolling topography. Dense patterns of plantation and forested vegetation channel views down the road corridor, then open out to patches of cleared pastoral land, often with a forested backdrop of plantations or bushland. Long range views to across cleared areas to the to more distant hillsides are available at high points in the topography and along the wide river valleys.

The main viewing corridors in this Character Type are:

- Portland-Casterton Road
- Digby-Dartmoor Road
- Princes Highway

The Princess Highway is an eventual extension of the Great Ocean Road to the south east, and a major tourist route through the area. It traverses large segments of forest through this Character Type. Views are narrowed by tall, native trees with a shrubby understory along the roadside and dense vegetation beyond.

The Portland-Casterton and Digby-Dartmoor Roads connect the townships of Merino, Digby and Hotspur to larger regional towns and major highways. These roads exhibit the varied viewing experience described above.



Hotspur State Forest: enclosed views with a towering canopy



Plantations with sparse roadside vegetation



Connecting roads wind with the topography and display a diversity of views that open and close through native forest, plantations and cleared pastoral areas



Wide views down the Crawford River valley south of Hotspur and the historic Hotspur Bridge

LANDSCAPE VALUES

Landscape values include aesthetic (visual and non-visual), historic, environmental, scientific, social and other values. It is acknowledged that many of the values overlap (i.e. a place or item may have historic and social value), but they are generally only listed once. A range of sources have been used to identify the landscape values of the Vegetated Rises, such as the field survey, existing studies and documentation, and community consultation.

Historic

- State significant Hotspur bridge, oldest surviving example of rural Victorian wrought-iron plate girder road bridge, has high degree of structural integrity, 1870, listed by National Trust
- Cobboboonee Forest, Gorae West to Drik Drik
 - identified in the Glenelg Shire Heritage Study Stage 1

Environmental/Scientific

- Cobboboonee National Park
 - protected area on the IUCN list Category II (National Park)
 - protected by National Parks Act 1975, Schedule 2
- Protected areas on the IUCN list
 - Stokes River Streamside Reserves, Category III (Natural Monument or Feature)
 - Annya, Digby H5, H31 & H32, Drumborg, Hotspur, Lyons H37 & Winyayung Bushland Reserves, Category IV (Habitat/Species Management Area)
 - Lake Crawford & Lake Sinclair Wildlife Reserves (Hunting), Category VI (Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources)

- Locally significant wetlands & waterways, protected by Glenelg ESO2
- Glenelg Ark, DSE project protecting native fauna, particularly Long-nosed Potoroos & Southern Brown Bandicoots, from fox predation on public land

Social

- Agriculture, also valued for economic reasons



Cobboboonee National Park



Plantation forestry is an economic driver for the area



Crawford River



Grazing to the base of trees threatens remnant specimens



CHANGE IN THE LANDSCAPE

Landscape Morphology

This landscape Character Type straddles three bioregions and its underlying geological structure has a number of influences as a result. It shares characteristics with the Glenelg Plain to the west, the Victorian Volcanic Plain to the east and the Tableland area to the north. Fingers of these weave together, forming a distinctive interface area.

The southern part has been formed through volcanic activity and includes the rise of Mount Eckersley, a scoria and tuff ring volcano. Lava flow from this diverted the course of the Crawford River, the valley of which spreads out to join the flat Glenelg Plain. To the north the rolling hills surrounding Digby that were formed by the valley of the Stokes River and its tributaries merge with the cleared, rolling topography of the adjacent Merino Tablelands.

It is believed that over 30,000 years ago Aborigines modified the landscape through hunting and their extensive use of fire. This controlled use of fire changed the appearance of the native bushland, with large areas of forest being replaced by open grasslands.

The Glenelg region was one of the first parts of Victoria to be settled by Europeans, with the Henty family establishing in the area around Portland in the 1830s. The townships of Digby and Hotspur grew from river crossings on the road between the fledgling township of Portland and the new squatter runs opened up by the Henty family during the 1830s and 1840s.

The inland region was opened up for pastoral purposes and gradually native grasses were replaced with exotic pasture species for cropping and grazing, and trees were felled.

Squatters initially took up large runs in the region and a more fine grained pattern of subdivision was introduced with Closer Settlement and Soldier Settlement strategies after the gold rush and World Wars respectively.

The region became the focus of intensive plantation establishment after World War II. This industry remains prolific in the area and has a heavy influence on the appearance of the landscape today.

Sensitivity to Change

This Character Type generally exhibits a low sensitivity to change as the rolling terrain and vegetation provides spaces for development to be nested in the landscape. Views are often blocked by the thick plantations and homesteads are set back from road sides. Areas to the north at the edge of the tablelands that have less vegetation are more prone to visual impact from built form and establishment of plantations, particularly along ridge lines and exposed hill sides (see image top right).

Harvesting of plantation timber has the potential to cause dramatic change to the landscape. It will open up views and cause areas of scarring that contrast sharply with the surrounds.

Anticipated Landscape Change

- Expansion of plantation forestry, including clearing and reestablishment of new trees
- Pine shelterbelts
- Increasing dry land salinity, pest plant and pest animal invasion, soil erosion, stream erosion, coastal

dune erosion, induced waterlogging, water quality deterioration and loss of flora and fauna diversity

- The burning of roadside vegetation as part of fire management measures could alter the appearance of roads and viewing corridors
- Due to the new bushfire management regulations views along fencelines could become more open
- Appearance of paddock network could alter if re-vegetation is set back from fences
- The State Governments planning zones review may lead to an increase in tourism, retail and accommodation uses in rural areas, a potential increase in rural living density and a potential increase in smaller lots and dwellings in the farming zone.



Cleared areas to the north, adjacent to the tablelands (Digby-Glenorchy Road)



Areas of pastoral land surrounded by forest and plantations at the edge of the Crawford River Regional Park



Vegetation assists to blend built form into the landscape

FUTURE CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

Dense vegetation will continue to drive the character of this landscape. Plantation design will respond to the topographical context by following the contours of the landscape and avoiding hard, straight edges that cut across the terrain. Roadside vegetation will be strengthened and maintained in areas with narrow viewing corridors to soften edges and reduce the visual impact of timber harvesting on the landscape.

Indigenous forests will continue to be havens for native flora and fauna, and promoted for their recreational value. Connections between these will be strengthened through protection of roadside vegetation and the establishment of biodiversity corridors. Views to landscape features such as Red Hill (found in the Cobboboonee south of Lyons) and Mount Eckersley, (located north of Heywood) particularly from identified significant viewing locations and road corridors, will be protected.

Opportunities

- Revegetation in areas prone to soil erosion
- Considered approach to plantation design that responds to the topography
- Promotion of agroforestry to diversify land use
- Maintain and strengthen biodiversity linkages between areas of forest
- Encourage land owners to maintain areas of native forest contained on private land
- Design new developments to integrate with the landscape

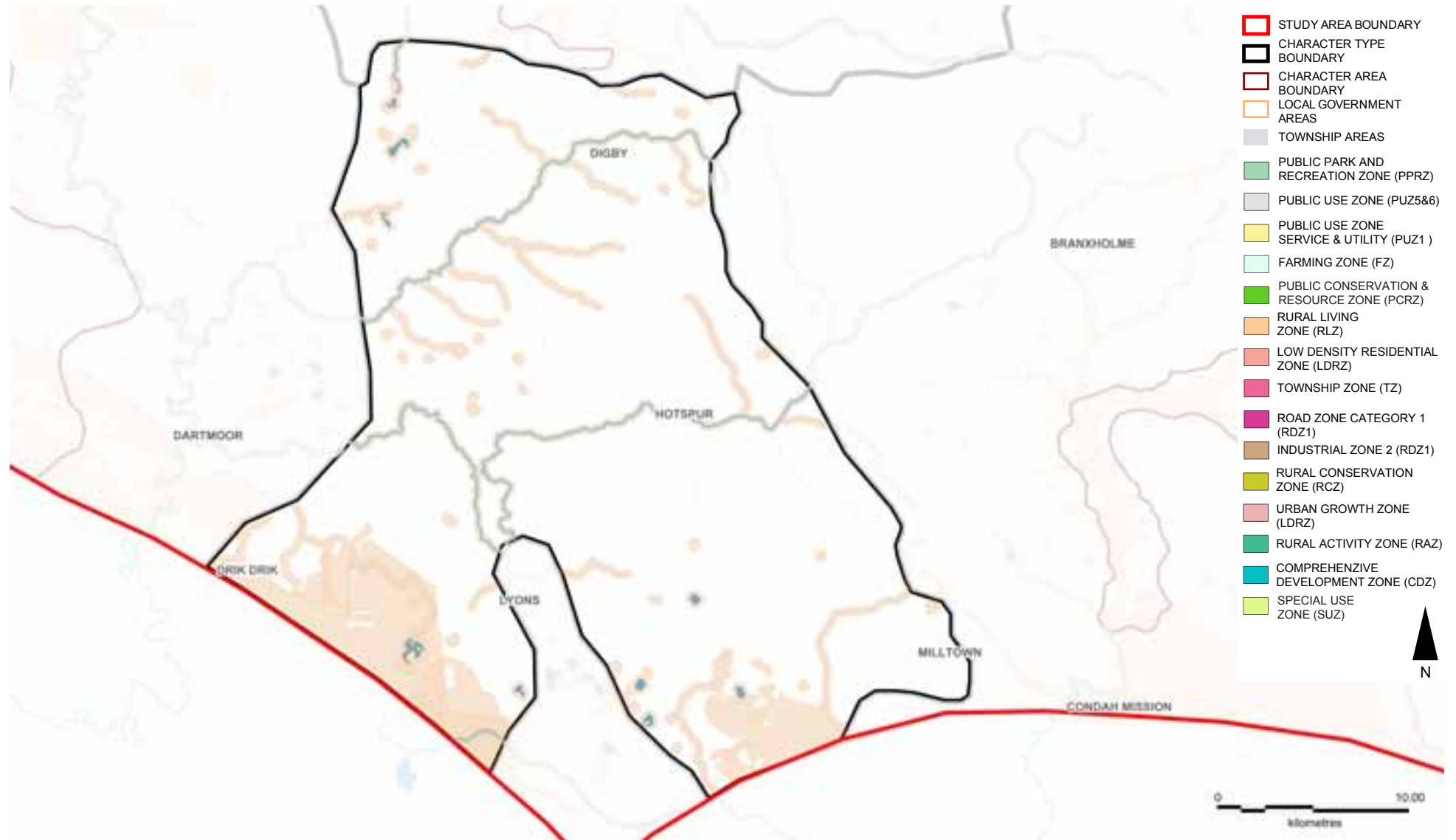
Threats

- Stock grazing to the base of remnant trees, accelerating senescence
- Timber harvesting scarring the landscape
- Erosion of creek lines and gullies impacting on the health of streams and rivers
- Timber plantations that do not respond to the topography and create 'hard lines' in the landscape
- Plantation species competing with endemic vegetation for water and nutrients
- Plantation species spreading into adjacent forested and conservation areas
- Logging activities causing damage to roads and roadside vegetation
- Spread of exotic weeds and pests
- Development that requires removal of large areas of existing vegetation
- Location of large buildings or infrastructure
- Conflict between the burning of roadside vegetation for fire management and the preservation/

enhancement of native vegetation in these roadside areas

- Allowing timber plantations without a permit could threaten significant landscape areas
- New bushfire management regulations may alter the character of the landscape through native vegetation clearance
- Channel modification (reference to rivers, estuaries and floodplains)
- Degradation of riparian vegetation
- Drainage of wetlands
- Uncontrolled stock access
- Sedimentation
- Habitat fragmentation/reduced connectivity
- Significant disturbance events (fire, flood, storms)

Figure 3 Vegetated Rises Cultural Heritage Sensitivity



LANDSCAPE PROTECTION & MANAGEMENT

Planning Scheme Policies & Controls

Only the Glenelg Planning Scheme applies to this Character Type.

Key Zones

- Farming Zone (FZ)
- Public Conservation & Recreation Zone (PCRZ)
- Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)

Key Overlays

- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)
 - ESO2: Significant Wetlands & Waterways
- Heritage Overlay (HO)
 - HO160: Hotspur Bridge, Hotspur
- Wildlife / Bushfire Management Overlay (WMO / BMO)

Proposed Overlays

- HO206: Rifle Downs, HO208: Drik Drik Avenue of Honour, HO209: Cemetery, HO211: Former Church, HO212: Former School, HO218: Native Police Barracks, HO220: Homestead, HO222: Cemetery, HO223: Former Hotel, HO224: Public Hall, HO225: Memorial Avenue of Honour & Cairn

Landscape Management Objectives

To achieve the future landscape character directions for the Vegetated Rises, the following landscape management objectives are recommended:

- To maintain the varied viewing experience within the Vegetated Rises landscape, including the channelled or framed views available down heavily vegetated road corridors.
 - To retain views to landscape features such as Red Hill and Mount Eckersley, particularly from identified significant viewing locations and road corridors.
 - To maintain the dominance of the heavy vegetated character of the hills and valleys throughout the landscape.
 - To retain existing indigenous vegetation and encourage natural regeneration where possible.
 - To establish biodiversity corridors between areas of native forest, along road corridors and through private property where possible.
 - To encourage the appropriate siting and design of commercial timber plantations throughout the Vegetated Rises landscape.
 - To improve outviews from road corridors and significant viewing locations, where available, by minimizing the visibility of plantations.
- To minimise the visual impact of buildings and structures on the Vegetated Rises landscape.
 - To ensure buildings and structures demonstrate a high standard of design and respond to the character and significance of the surrounding landscape.
 - To incorporate best practice environmental sustainability principles in building siting and design.
 - To minimise the visual impact of signage and infrastructure throughout the Vegetated Rises landscape.

Figure 4 Vegetated Rises Zones

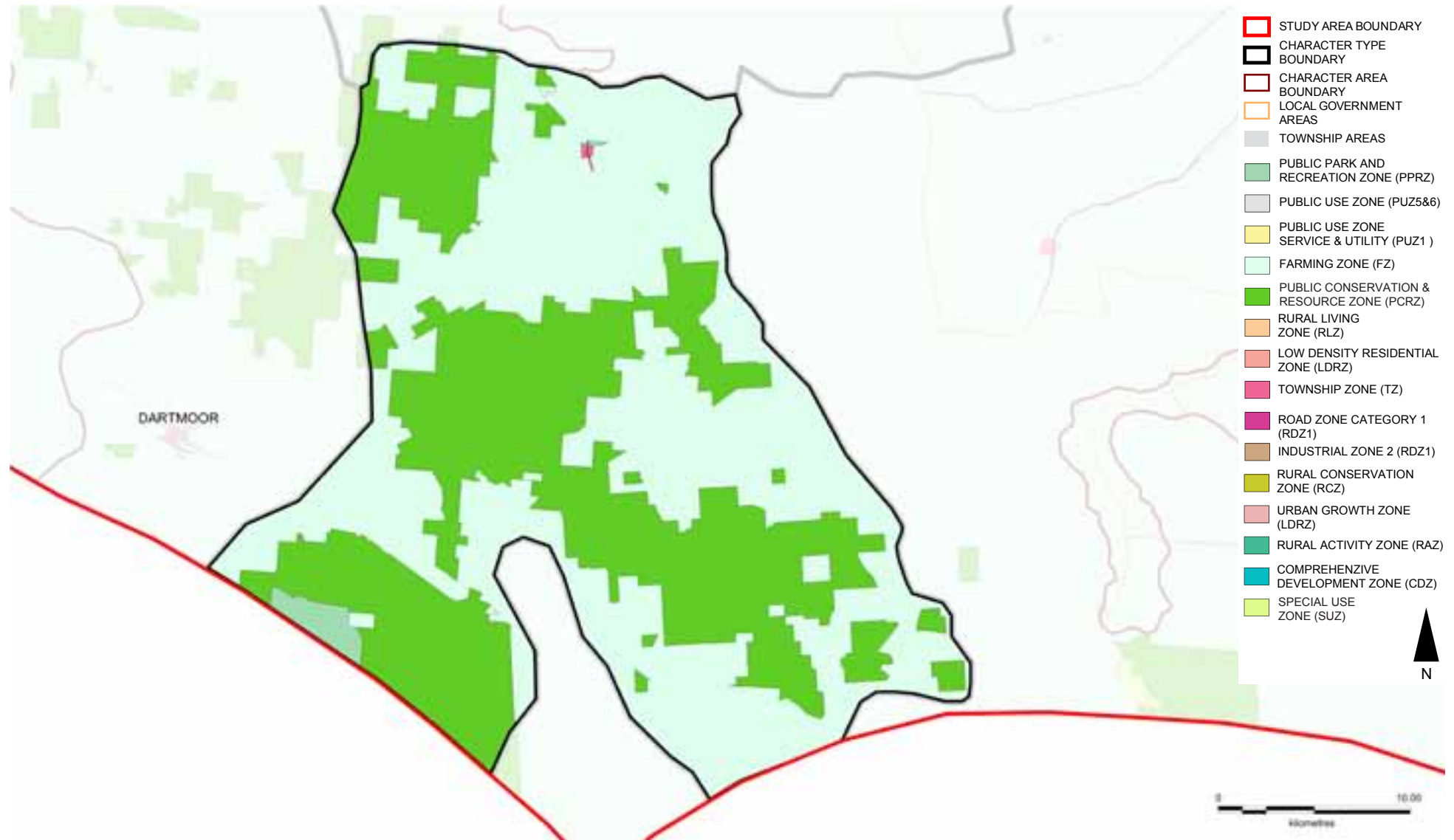
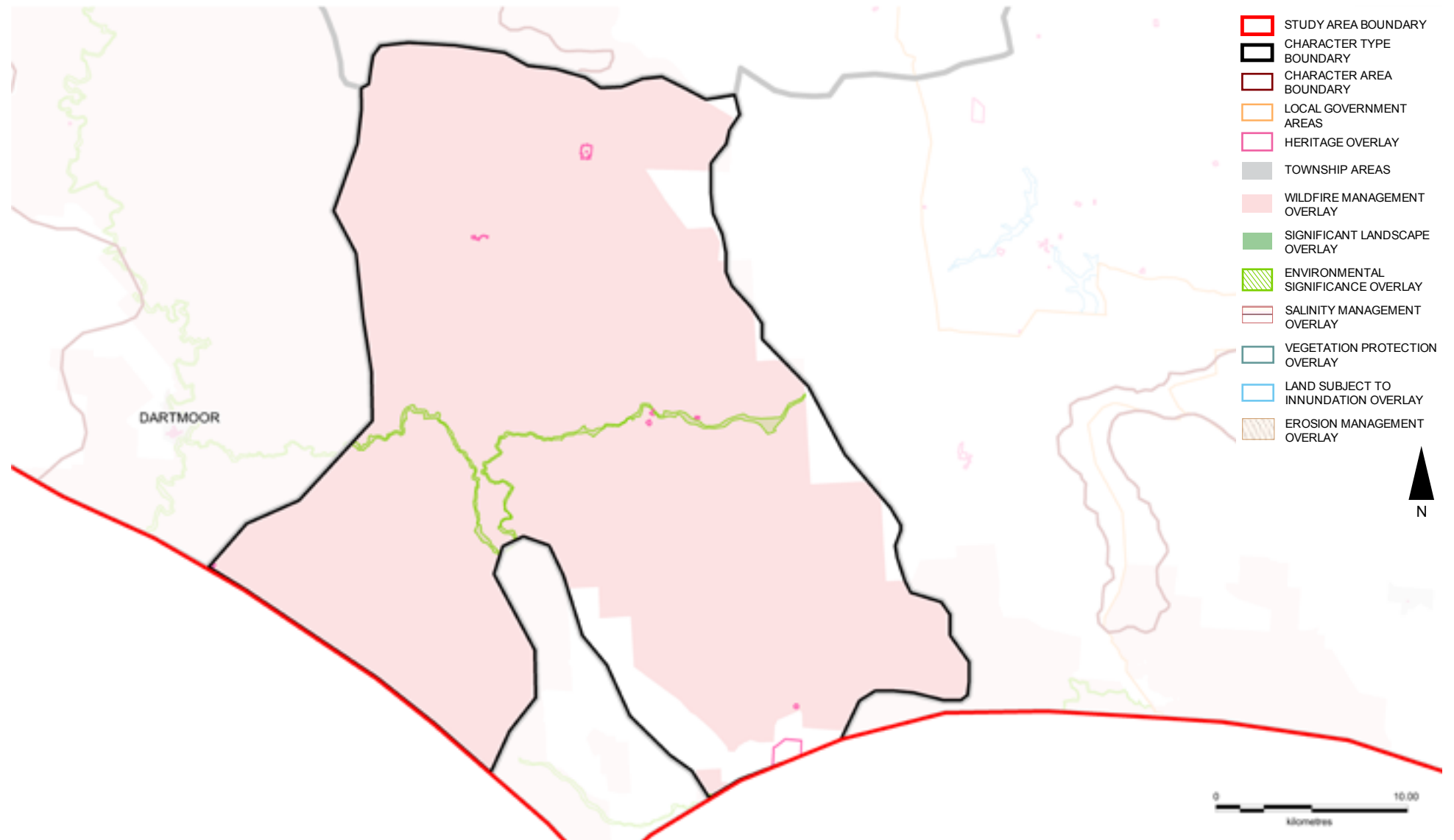


Figure 5 Vegetated Rises Overlays





Landscape Management Guidelines

Vegetated Rises

Landscape Management Guidelines

Landscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
INDIGENOUS VEGETATION	<p>To maintain the dominance of the heavy vegetated character of the hills and valleys throughout the landscape.</p> <p>To retain existing indigenous vegetation and encourage natural regeneration where possible.</p> <p>To establish biodiversity corridors between areas of native forest, along road corridors and through private property where possible.</p>	<p>Where practical, protect and rehabilitate significant stands of remnant indigenous vegetation, particularly at roadsides, throughout paddocks, on hill faces and ridges, and along river and creek corridors, subject to considerations such as farming requirements, fire protection and safety.</p> <p>Encourage farmers to protect and manage original stands of indigenous vegetation by fencing around old trees, trimming diseased or shattered branches, leaving dead trees standing for wildlife habitat (where practical), and planting new trees, particularly in bare paddocks.</p> <p>Minimise indigenous vegetation removal in new development.</p> <p>Where vegetation loss cannot be avoided, balance the loss of vegetation with rehabilitation on the site or nearby areas, and replace any native or indigenous trees lost with indigenous trees that will grow to a similar size.</p> <p>Screen buildings, structures and large areas of hard surfaces with appropriately scaled indigenous vegetation that is appropriate to the landscape character of the area.</p> <p>Encourage the removal of environmental weeds and their replacement with local indigenous species.</p>	<p>Loss of significant stands of indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Loss of roadside vegetation corridors.</p> <p>Ad hoc clearing and removal of vegetation.</p> <p>Development which requires permanent clearing of vegetation.</p> <p>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation in new development.</p> <p>Landscaping that provides little connection to the surrounding natural environment and existing landscape character.</p> <p>Hard surfaces and hard edges in landscaping.</p> <p>Continuous spreading / planting of environmental weeds.</p> <p>Degradation of significant flora.</p>

Landscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
<p>PLANTATION FORESTRY</p>	<p>To encourage the appropriate siting and design of commercial timber plantations throughout the Vegetated Rises landscape.</p> <p>To improve outviews from road corridors and significant viewing locations, where available, by minimizing the visibility of plantations.</p>	<p>Encourage agro forestry (integration of forestry trees with grazing stock or other crops) as an alternative to tree plantations in areas of identified landscape significance.</p> <p>Soften the boundaries of plantations using sympathetic boundary lines (i.e. not incongruous to the surrounding landscape), gradual changes in density or age class, or with use of a species of different form, colour and texture.</p> <p>Where possible, ensure that plantation design follows existing landscape lines such as gullies, spurs, ridges, other contour lines, tree lines, creek lines etc., and avoids lines that are incongruous to the surrounding landscape e.g. property or fence lines that are geometric in nature rather than free flowing.</p> <p>Minimise the visual impact of plantations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating small, curvilinear coupes that blend with the landscape. ▪ Avoiding geometrically shaped harvest areas that contrast with the natural forms and lines of the landscape. ▪ Sequencing operations over time. ▪ Avoiding harvest areas that breach the skyline in middle or background views. ▪ Including vegetative screening, particularly adjacent to roadsides (to minimize the visual impact when cleared) preferably using indigenous species, including understory. <p>Ensure that proposed timber plantations are accurately depicted and executed through a 'Timber Management Plan' as required within the Code of Practice for Timber Production.</p>	<p>Plantation forestry that is solid at the roadside and blocks outviews, particularly those from identified significant viewing corridors.</p> <p>Plantations in prominent locations that will create visual scars with periodic harvesting.</p> <p>Loss of scenic outviews from roads and lookouts.</p> <p>Plantation design that is incongruous to the surrounding landscape.</p>

Landscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
VIEWS & VISTAS	<p>To maintain the varied viewing experience within the Vegetated Rises landscape, including the channelled or framed views available down heavily vegetated road corridors.</p> <p>To retain views to landscape features such as Red Hill and Mount Eckersley, particularly from identified significant viewing locations and road corridors.</p>	<p>Development should be avoided in the foreground (up to 500 metres from the viewing location) of identified significant views, or designed and sited to retain the character and scenic qualities of the views from that location.</p> <p>Built form and other development should be set back from identified viewing corridors, and designed and sited to minimise visual intrusion (e.g. low building heights, minimal building footprints, appropriate colours and materials to the setting, and integration with vegetation).</p> <p>Consider the cumulative impact of developments visible from identified significant viewing corridors, other roads and key viewing locations, on the character and views of the surrounding landscapes.</p>	<p>Unsympathetic / intrusive buildings and structures that obscure prominent views.</p> <p>Conspicuous or incongruous (out of place) buildings, structures or infrastructure visible in the foreground of views to notable landscape features.</p>

Landscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
<p>BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES: SITING</p>	<p>To minimise the visual impact of buildings and structures on the Vegetated Rises landscape.</p>	<p>Ensure that buildings, structures and other infrastructure are sited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Within existing clusters of buildings where possible. ▪ Away from visually prominent locations such as ridge lines and hill faces. ▪ Away from landscape features such as river and creek corridors. ▪ Among established vegetation and/or screened with substantial landscaping of locally appropriate species. ▪ To follow the contours and/or natural form of the landscape. ▪ To minimise visibility from identified significant viewing corridors and other main roads. <p>Where development cannot be avoided on prominent hill faces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Site development in the lower one third of the visible slope, wherever possible. ▪ Integrate buildings and structures with existing vegetation, and/or establish settings of indigenous vegetation. ▪ Design buildings to follow the contours or step down the slope to minimize earthworks. ▪ Articulate buildings into separate elements, and avoid visually dominant elevations. <p>Prevent ribbon development along identified significant viewing corridors and other main roads, including the outskirts of settlements.</p> <p>Minimise the number and floor area of storage areas, outbuildings and ancillary structures, wherever possible.</p>	<p>Buildings and structures that are visually dominant or located in prominent locations.</p> <p>Buildings and structures that break the ridgeline silhouette.</p> <p>Development of residences and other buildings not traditionally sited adjacent to the road, located at the roadside.</p> <p>Buildings and structures that impact on the character and environmental quality of watercourses.</p> <p>Buildings and structures that do not have sufficient vegetative screening.</p> <p>Buildings that do not follow the natural contours of the site, and require excessive cut and fill.</p> <p>Conspicuous or intrusive developments on prominent hill faces.</p> <p>Numerous storage areas / outbuildings on a site.</p> <p>Scattering of buildings and structures across a site.</p> <p>Visual clutter.</p> <p>Buildings and structures that protrude above the dominant tree height of the vegetated (or proposed vegetated) backdrop.</p>

Landscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
<p>BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES: DESIGN</p>	<p>To ensure buildings and structures demonstrate a high standard of design and respond to the character and significance of the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>To incorporate best practice environmental sustainability principles in building siting and design.</p>	<p>Ensure that the design and external appearance of buildings and structures complement the surrounding landscape by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using simple, pared-back building forms and design detailing, with consideration of the Australian rural architectural vernacular. ▪ Utilising colours and finishes that best immerse the building within the landscape and minimise contrast with the surrounds (such as muted colours and matte finishes, or corrugated iron or timber that will weather over time). ▪ Using a mix of contemporary and traditional rural materials, textures and finishes including timber, stone, brick and corrugated iron. ▪ Making use of building materials with minimal environmental impact and encouraging the use of recycled materials where possible. ▪ Utilising materials and finishes that reduce distant visibility (e.g. darker colours on hill slopes, and lighter colours on sky lines.) <p>Ensure that development does not visually overwhelm the landscape setting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designing building and structures of a scale that does not dominate the surroundings. ▪ Achieving a minimal building footprint, and ensuring that adequate space is available on the site for the retention of existing vegetation and/or new landscaping. ▪ Using building forms and heights that sit beneath the existing or future tree canopy height. <p>Utilise open style fencing that is not visually obtrusive and is traditionally used in rural areas, such as post and wire or post and rail fencing.</p> <p>Incorporate best practice environmental sustainability principles into the design and construction of all new buildings.</p>	<p>Buildings or structures that do not harmonise with the character of the surrounding natural / rural environment.</p> <p>Ad hoc or large scale urban development outside of settlements.</p> <p>Large, bulky building masses / footprints that are conspicuous elements within the spacious landscape setting.</p> <p>Sheer, visually dominant elevations.</p> <p>Mock historical style buildings with excessive use of 'reproduction' or decorative detailing.</p> <p>Highly colourful materials and finishes.</p> <p>Building design that has little or no regard to environmentally sustainable design practices, such as residential buildings with excessive western or southern orientation.</p> <p>High, solid or non-permeable fencing.</p>

Landscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
SIGNAGE & INFRASTRUCTURE	To minimise the visual impact of signage and infrastructure throughout the Vegetated Rises landscape.	<p>Roads and driveways should be built to conform to topography, avoiding steep, visually prominent hillsides wherever possible.</p> <p>Group signage, including tourism signage, at particular locations to minimise visual impact, avoid signage clutter, and to maintain scenic outlooks.</p> <p>Infrastructure should be sited to avoid highly scenic locations, particularly identified significant views, and in the case of powerlines and other utility services, be underground wherever possible.</p> <p>Locate powerlines, access tracks and other infrastructure in areas of low visibility, preferably in previously cleared locations.</p> <p>Use materials and colours that minimise contrast with the surrounding landscape and distant visibility, and use vegetation to screen infrastructure from identified significant viewing corridors, viewing locations and other main roads.</p> <p>All new infrastructure development should be accompanied by a landscape plan utilising appropriate indigenous plant species and demonstrating how the affected area will be screened and remediated after development.</p>	<p>Signage clutter in the landscape.</p> <p>Visually obtrusive and/or colourful signage in natural landscape settings.</p> <p>Highly visible infrastructure.</p> <p>Infrastructure that dominates views, particularly from identified significant viewing corridors or locations.</p> <p>Landscape scarring as a result of vegetation removal.</p> <p>No consideration of siting, design, vegetation or remediation in association with the development of infrastructure.</p>

