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## SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPES OF SOUTH WEST VICTORIA

# DETERMINING LANDSCAPE SIGNIFICANCE

Landscape significance is the designation of a particular landscape as special or important arising from its cultural landscape values, including aesthetic values (both visual and non-visual) historic, environmental, scientific, social or other values.

Landscapes are significant to different people for different reasons. These reasons may include their scenic beauty, historic value, environmental qualities, or less tangible values associated with the place, such as memories or associations. The fact that landscape values are held both by individuals and communities, and that many values exist in the subjective territory of human perceptions is what makes the assessment of landscape significance so challenging and often contentious.

For every landscape, a range of factors will combine to create an overall illustration of its value. In some instances, a landscape with many identified values will be considered to have a high level of significance that may warrant a specific approach to its management.

In this study, three sources of information have been used to provide a holistic understanding of the landscapes of South Western Victoria, and to identify their values:

- Detailed **field surveys** undertaken by the study team focussing mainly on the aesthetic values of the study area;
- review of **secondary sources** (existing information as opposed to new research), including historic, environmental, scientific, social and other information or research material; and,
- **community consultation**, which has helped to understand the number of different ways that local people or visitors to the area appreciate and value the landscapes.

## LANDSCAPE VALUES

Five cultural landscape values are included in the definition of 'landscape significance' and an assessment of these values has been used to determine the significance of various landscapes throughout the study area.

### 1. Aesthetic Values

Aesthetic value relates to the 'sense of the beautiful' and includes both visual and non-visual aspects of landscape, i.e. consideration of the landscape from the point of view of all human senses (sight, touch, sound, taste and smell). An indicator of aesthetic value may also include depiction of the landscape in artwork, photography, or another cultural art.

#### Landscape Components

In order to determine the overall aesthetic value of landscape, three 'landscape components' have been assessed:

##### *Landscape Features*

A landscape feature is a topographic feature or prominent landmark such as a headland, mountain range or volcanic cone that is visually dramatic and provides the landscape with its 'wow' factor. The prevalence or concentration of a particular landscape element or vegetation type e.g. River Red Gums, rocky outcrops, dry stone walls etc., may also be classified as a landscape feature.

In relation to landscape features, the following criterion has been developed, which informs the determination and level of significance:

*The landscape is distinctive or inspirational for its landscape feature or features that attract the viewer and may evoke an emotional response.*

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### **Edges or Contrasts**

Edges or contrasts include the point of intersection between two landscape elements e.g. the coastline (the boundary between sea and land); the edge of a forest or a lake; the boundary between vegetation types or different landform types; the intersection between a mountain range and a plain; or an incised valley etc. The existence of edges or contrasts in the landscape provides visual diversity, a quality associated with scenic value.

In relation to edges or contrasts, the following criterion has been developed:

*The landscape is aesthetically compelling for its edges or contrasts that provide visual variety and interest.*

### **Composition**

The composition of a landscape is its make-up or constitution, including arrangements or patterns of colour, textures, features etc. and the form, scale and unity of these and other elements.

In relation to composition, the following criterion has been developed:

*The landscape has outstanding compositional qualities, the combination of which achieve a unified whole, and provide the setting or subject of notable views.*

## **2. Historic Values**

Historic value encompasses the history of the landscape both pre and post contact, and often underpins other cultural landscape values. It may be that the landscape is associated with an important historical event, figure or theme in history, and evidence of that historic value may or may not be visible.

For the purposes of this study, no primary research was undertaken to determine historic value. Rather, it was concluded from existing documentation or secondary sources such as the Aboriginal Affairs Victoria Register, the Victorian Heritage Register, the National Heritage List, the existence of Heritage Overlays in local planning schemes, and other material such as historic photographs and maps etc.

## **3. Environmental & Scientific Values**

Environmental and/or scientific value relates to the biological conditions or 'natural' attributes of the landscape, including flora and fauna habitats, archaeological or geological attributes etc.

Secondary sources used to determine environmental and/or scientific value included the Ramsar Convention, the existence of Environmental Significance Overlays in local planning schemes, the existence of National or State Parks, or Geoparks etc.

## **4. Social Values**

Social value encompasses those aspects of the landscape that are associated with a community or cultural group, and may cross over with historic value. A landscape may have social value as an important local landmark, or because it relates to the identity of a community, or it may have spiritual meaning to a particular group. Determination of social value also includes consideration of the landscape as a tourism destination.

Secondary sources used to determine social value include Tourism Australia and Tourism Victoria information and publications, various heritage registers etc.

## **5. Other Value**

The fifth category of cultural landscape values encompasses any other value that is relevant to the significance of the landscape and may include economic value, for example.

Consideration of these values and their 'weightings' has evolved somewhat from when the Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study was undertaken in 2003, and the Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study in 2006. While the briefs for those projects emphasised the consideration of visual values, this study has adopted a more holistic approach to landscape significance (by elevating the consideration of other cultural landscape values), while necessarily retaining an emphasis on the aesthetic. This emphasis on the aesthetic value of landscape is required because the starting point for the study is the visual characterisation of landscape (as required by the purpose and content of the Significant Landscape Overlay). In addition, recommendations are based on the protection and management of that character, and primary research and field surveys are centred on the collection of physical characteristics and aesthetic value.

## LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

### AESTHETIC VALUE

#### RATING CONSIDERATIONS

In order to determine a level of aesthetic significance for each landscape component, and ultimately each landscape, the following 'rating considerations' are applied:

- **EXEMPLARY**

How representative or illustrative is the landscape (and its features, edges or contrasts, and composition)? Is it 'the best' of its type? Is it exemplary within the local, regional or state context?

- **ICONIC**

Is the landscape (and its features, edges or contrasts, and composition) 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, rare or endangered is the landscape (and its features, edges or contrasts, and composition)? Is it scarce within the local, regional or state context?

### SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS

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

**Moderate** = local significance

**High** = regional significance

**Exceptional** = State significance or higher

The final determination of significance level for aesthetic value is not a matter of adding up the number of 'moderate' or 'high' ratings. Rather, if a landscape rates 'high' for example in one or more of the landscape components, that level is the overall significance rating attributed to the aesthetic values of that landscape. (Just as the usual standard for listing a place on a heritage register, for instance, is that a place meets one or more criteria.)

### OTHER CULTURAL LANDSCAPE VALUES

Levels of significance are attributed to other cultural landscape values 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 e.g. a landscape that forms part of the Victorian Heritage Register is logically of State significance.

For the purpose of this study, a landscape cannot be classified as significant for its historic, environmental and/or scientific, social or other values alone, as primary research has not been undertaken, and as such a designation could not be justified at a panel hearing. In order for a landscape to be classified as significant, it must have aesthetic value.



*Mt Elephant, image courtesy of Andrew Miller*

# LANDSCAPES OF STATE & REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

At the outset of this stage broad landscape investigation areas were examined in detail and an assessment of their cultural landscape values was undertaken (refer to the methodology outlined on the previous page). These detailed assessments led to the designation of some landscapes as regionally significant, and others of state significance (or higher, though a rating of 'national' significance has not been attributed due to the scale/context of the study, and the inability to justify such a rating through comparative analysis.)

## 1. Western Volcanic Plain

1.1	Southern Cones	State
1.2	Lakeside Stony Rises	State
1.3	Volcanic Lakes	State
1.4	Inland Lakes	State
1.5	Mount Leura Complex	State
1.6	Red Rock Volcanic Complex	State
1.7	Mount Rouse	State
1.8	Mount Eccles (Budj Bim) & Tyrendarra Lava Flow	State
1.9	Mount Napier & Harmans Valley Lava Flow	State
1.10	Hepburn Gold Mines & Volcanic District	State
1.11	Mount Buninyong & Mount Warrenheip	Regional
1.12	Mount Emu	Regional
1.13	Barrabool Hills	Regional

## 2. The Uplands

2.1	Lerderderg Gorge & State Park	State
2.2	Wombat State Forest & Hepburn Regional Park	Regional
2.3	Werribee Gorge	State
2.4	Bacchus Marsh Agricultural Valley	Regional
2.5	Parwan Valley	State
2.6	Brisbane Ranges & Rowsley Scarp	State
2.7	Anakie Hills	Regional
2.8	You Yangs	State
2.9	Lal Lal Gorge	State
2.10	Enfield State Park	Regional
2.11	Devils Kitchen	Regional
2.12	Island Uplands	Regional
2.13	Lower Pyrenees	Regional

## 3. Goldfields

3.1	Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park	Regional
3.2	Ararat Hills & Ridges	Regional

## 4. The Rolling Tablelands

4.1	Wannon & Nigretta Falls	State
4.2	The Hummocks, Wando Vale	Regional
4.3	Dergholm State Park	Regional
4.4	Merino Tablelands	Regional

## 5. The Wimmera Plains

5.1	Mount Arapiles	State
5.2	Natimuk - Douglas Wetland System	Regional

## 6. The Grampians (Gariwerd) & Surrounds

6.1	The Grampians (Gariwerd)	State (or higher)
6.2	Black Range (Burrunj) State Park	Regional

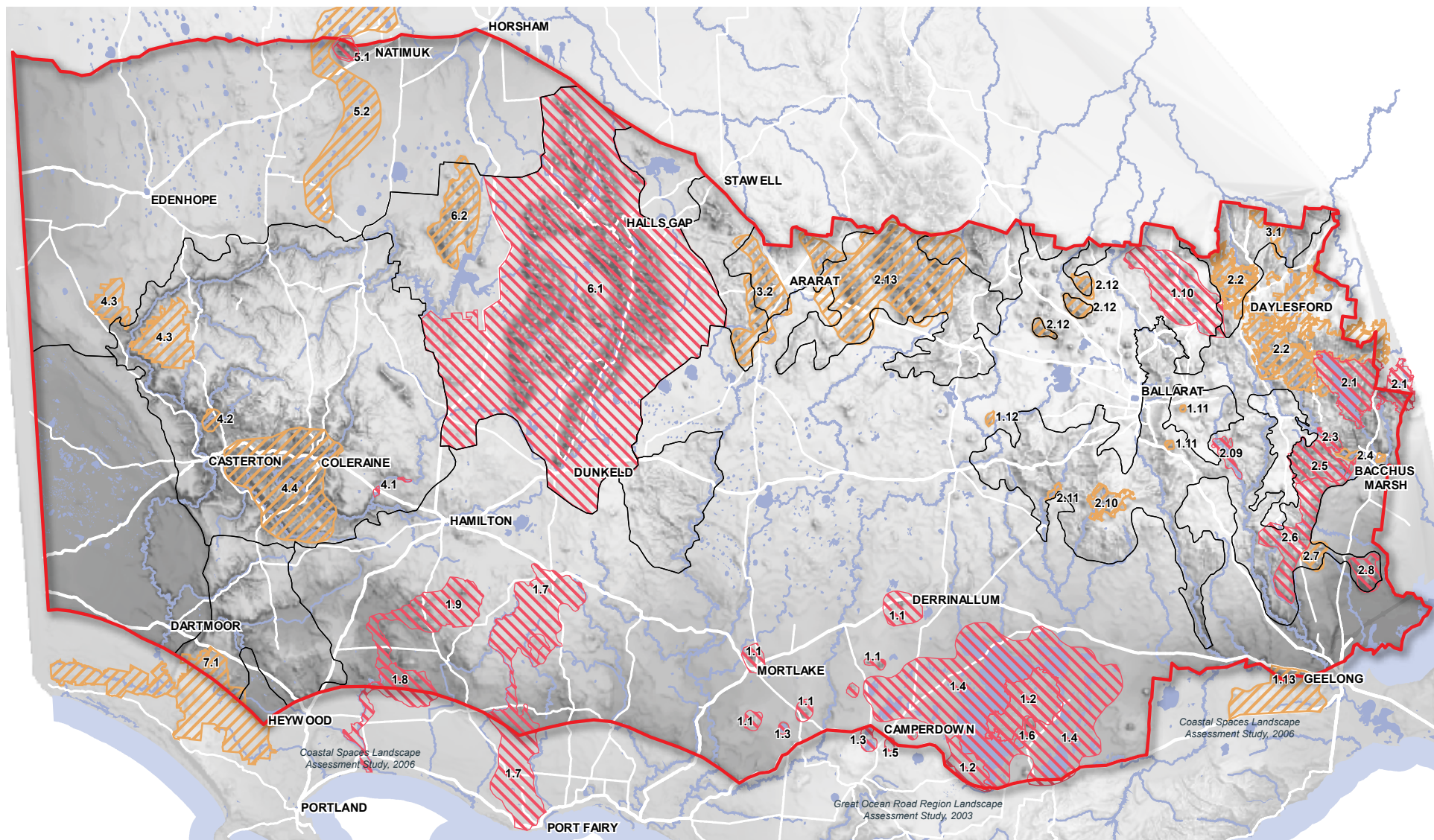
## 7. Vegetated Rises

7.1	Cobboboonee & Lower Glenelg National Parks	Regional
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## Map Legend

	STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
	LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE BOUNDARIES
	RIVERS
	WATERBODIES
	SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE: STATE
	SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE: REGIONAL





## 1.1 Southern Cones

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

This landscape contains some of the most significant and iconic volcanic rises to be found in Western Victoria. Spreading out across the landscape from many of these features are the low stony rises of their lava flows. Paddocks and roadsides are often lined with impressive and intact dry stone walls. The landscape is dispersed with numerous large bodies of water (discussed in the “Inland Lakes” Significance Paper.).

These volcanic features rise up dramatically from the open and slightly undulating agricultural plain. Many of them are visible on the horizon from long distances away, and create a high level of contrast and visual interest in the landscape. The lakes in the area provide additional wide, flat surfaces that further highlights the prominence of the cones. Geometric shapes of shelterbelts and property edges run at sharp angles to the features.

## 1.2 Lakeside Stony Rises

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

This landscape is composed of dense hummocks of stony rises that circle the southern and eastern sides of Lake Corangamite. These originated from the explosive volcanic activity that occurred at Mount Porndon and the Red Rocks Complex. Few roads cut through the stony rises, and where they exist, they take the form of weaving goat tracks with sharp crests that move around the obstacles in the landscape, rather than formally surveyed roads. Vegetation is low and scrubby, with a windswept, coastal appearance. There are beautifully formed and intact dry stone walls throughout the area.

There is a distinctive contrast between the rough, lumpy landscape and the smooth, flat waters of Lake Corangamite that are visible at high points. Among the rocks of the rises bracken, grasses and low, scrubby vegetation grows. In some parts the landscape is thick with remnant vegetation. This peters out to more open, cleared areas that remain dotted with rises. There is a stark contrast to areas clear of rocks, where pastures predominantly used for grazing open out. Nestled throughout the stony rises are a number of small lakes and seasonal wetland areas that provide additional visual interest.



1.1 Mount Elephant



1.2 Lakeside Stony Rises



## 1.3 Volcanic Lakes

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

These maars are volcanic lakes formed when rising magma hit the water table. They are shaped into almost perfect circles, with the exception of Bullen Merri which appears as though three circles have joined to make a clover leaf pattern. Lakes Gnotuk and Bullen Merri are twin lakes separated by a high saddle of land. The edges are surrounded by prominent scoria tuff rings, which slope down to form deep craters.

The edges of the lakes feature the grassy, pastoral landscape of the volcanic plain while the vast water bodies dominate the middle ground. The colour of the water in these lakes may vary from a stunning aqua to a deep blue, which is deeper and richer than many of the shallower lakes in the region. Saline lakes are striped with white lines of salt that are blown up the edges by the constant wind. Background views feature the distant rims of the lakes, and sweeping side to side panoramas across them highlight their circular formations. Mount Noorat rises in the background in the centre of Lake Keilambete when viewed from a gap in the roadside vegetation on the southern edge. Numerous volcanic rises are also visible in the background of views across Bullen Merri and Gnotuk, and the broad flat landscape of the volcanic plain that is broken by large inland lakes and volcanic features opens out at high points on the saddle between them.

## 1.4 Inland Lakes

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

This landscape features a high concentration of lakes and waterbodies in the flat to undulating landscape of the volcanic plain. This collection includes the expansive water of Lake Corangamite, and numerous other lakes including Lake Weeranganuk, Lake Gnarpurt, Lake Milangil, Lake Colongulac, Lake Martin, Lake Beeac and Lake Colac, as well as many seasonal wetlands and that occur.

The flat surfaces of the lakes stand out in stark contrast with the surrounding pastoral land. The shores are often lined with sedges and reedy water plants with broad sandy banks. Saline lakes often have a crust of white crystals around their edges.

The lakes sometimes appear as glints across broad paddocks, barely noticeable to the eye at ground level, while other times they open up to dominate from the foreground of a view well into the middle distance. They have a tendency to reflect the colours of the sky, sometimes shimmering bright blue or cloudy grey, or reflecting the colours in the sunset.



1.3 Lake Gnotuk



1.4 Lake Milangil

## 1.5 Mount Leura Complex

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

Mount Leura is a complex nested maar which includes a series of scoria cones and craters that covers an area of 2.5km by 1.7km. Mount Leura is the largest of these, rising to a height of over 300m and offering panoramic views over the surrounding landscape. Separated from Mount Leura by a deep crater is the distinctive Mount Sugarloaf, an unusually symmetrical volcanic rise with a conical shape and a spiralling path indented into the steep side.

The volcanic complex contrasts in texture with the surrounding flat pastoral plains. The undulating hills and crater depressions form a visually interesting, almost surreal landscape which is punctuated by the rising cones of Mount Leura and Mount Sugarloaf.

Cropping on the lower slopes of the hilly complex intensifies the contrast in colour and texture, with lower slopes seasonally enveloped in bright green and giving way to the lighter green steep rises.

The landscape is mostly cleared of vegetation with occasional stands of vegetation and low shrubs peppering the summit of Mount Sugarloaf. Dark green exotic shelterbelts feature in the landscape and scoria mining has scarred the slopes.

## 1.6 Red Rocks Complex

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

Red Rocks is one of the most complex eruption points in western Victoria and includes maars, tuff rings and scoria cones surrounded by a rocky lava flow from another source (probably Warrion Hill). The Red Rock formation contains two major cones with a horseshoe shaped ridge joining them, and a deep central crater. Surrounding and adjacent to this are nine entire craters up to 75m, some containing lakes including Lakes Purdiguluc, Werowrap and Coragulac.

In the foreground of the landscape the scoria cones and tuff rings surrounding the maars contrast against the flat agricultural plain to create a visually interesting layering of landscape elements.

The Red Rocks Complex displays exposed red rock, rolling hills and sunken depressions. Panoramic views from the peaks of the cones stretch out across the flat plains and vast inland lakes. The horizon is occasionally interrupted by the conical rises of distant volcanos. Milky white saline lakes reflect the sky and built development can be seen dotted around the flat volcanic plain.



1.5 Scoria cones in the Leura Maar



1.6 Exposed red rock

## 1.7 Mount Rouse

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

Mount Rouse is a massive accumulation of scoria rising 100m above the surrounding volcanic plain. Major quarrying has scarred the scoria cone on the eastern and southern edges. To the south of the main scoria cone is a deep circular crater with a small lake and a smaller shallow crater rimmed with basalt.

The lava flow from Mount Rouse is one of the most intact and visually prominent flows found on the Victorian Volcanic Plain. It is composed of large, hummocky stony rises that churn across the open paddocks. Some of these are quite prominent, rising to up to 10 metres, while in other areas the texture is more subtle.

The exposed geology evokes a sense of the explosive landscape of Victoria, exporting the viewer back in time as one imagines a scorching river of bubbling lava, hot, smoky and slowly flowing south. Senses are heightened as Australian volcanologists and seismologists now agree that the relative age of recent eruptions, along with renewed activities such as tremors and hot springs, imply the possibility of further activity.

## 1.8 Mount Eccles (Budj Bim) & Tyrendarra Lava Flow

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

The Mount Eccles (Budj Bim) and Tyrendarra Lava Flow comprises a wealth of diverse volcanic features including lava flows, cultural artifacts, eruption points, stony rises, lakes, and wetlands.

Mount Eccles is a dormant volcano which rises from the surrounding National Park. Scoria mining scars the edge of the volcano and is prominent when viewed from the east. The central feature of the volcano is Lake Surprise which lies deep within the crater rim surrounded by native vegetation.

Lava flowed from Mount Eccles creating the textured rocky valley floor and stony rises of the Tyrendarra lava flow. The lava flow also created lakes and wetlands including Lake Condah, which contains a complex network of stone structures that were used as fish creeks, ponds, weirs, traps and gates by the Gunditjmara people.



1.7 Looking east towards Mount Rouse



1.8 Mount Eccles (Budj Bim) the source of the Tyrendarra lava flow

## 1.9 Mount Napier & Harmans Valley Lava Flow

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

This volcanic precinct comprises a wealth of features including lava flows, lava caves, eruption points and stony rises.

The densely vegetated Mount Napier rises from the surrounding flat volcanic plain, offering visual relief and punctuating the horizon. The Harmans Valley lava flow forms an flowing expanse of rocky textured along the valley floor which interrupts the regular patterns of the surrounding paddocks. This has created a rugged, exposed landscape which twists and turns as it travels south.

The lava caves of the Byaduk area nad the Tumuli lava blisters are additional significant features. The caves display tubular crinkles, furrows and folds of lava while the lava blisters display ethereal mounds of sculptural stones.

## 1.10 Hepburn Gold Mines & Volcanic District

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

The Hepburn Gold Mines & Volcanic District features a dense cluster of rounded volcanic rises scattered across the rolling landscape.

Interspersed between the rises are numerous steep sided mullock heaps, leftovers from the era of deep lead gold mining. These mounds tower out of the paddocks and remain largely intact despite being exposed to weathering for over a century. In addition, the ruins of the mine buildings are highly evocative of the gold mining heritage that shaped this region, and had a wide-ranging impact upon Victoria's early development.

Birch Creek is evident as a dense line of vegetation that meanders through the middle ground of the landscape.

The surrounding pastoral land is typical of the volcanic regions in Victoria, dotted with occasional paddock trees, with lines of shelterbelts and vegetation marking property boundaries and paddock edges.

The various volcanic rises create numerous points of focus in the otherwise broad, sweeping pastoral land. Often they break the horizon with distinctive silhouettes. The mullock heaps provide an interesting level of detail that differs from, but complements, the form of the rises. topography reveal sweeping views with these features scattered throughout.



1.9 Mount Napier



1.10 Birch Hill, with gold mining evident on the lower slopes, and Forest Hill visible in the background



## 1.11 Mount Buninyong & Mount Warrenheip

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

Mount Buninyong and Mount Warrenheip are both distinctive steep sided volcanic features and examples of breached scoria cones. Neither feature has been quarried which is a rarity in Victoria. Both of these volcanic features have an elevation of over 700m above sea level and are two of the few scoria eruption points to retain a natural woodland cover.

Mount Buninyong and Mount Warrenheip are recognisable landmarks, their dark green rises visible from the Grampians, the Otways and the sea-cliffs at Barwon Heads. The volcanic cones punctuate the horizon creating interest for the viewer in an otherwise flat landscape.

Panoramic views are available from the summits of Mount Buninyong and Mount Warrenheip. The foreground and midground of these views are dominated by the landscape of agriculture of the volcanic plains, with cleared paddocks separated by shelterbelts with some areas of remnant vegetation, particularly along creek lines.

## 1.12 Mount Emu

### Landscape Character Type

#### 1. Western Volcanic Plain

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

Mount Emu is a prominent granitic hill that rises 160 metres from the flat volcanic plain. It is highly visible from a number of angles across the surrounding landscape.

At closer range, large and bulbous granite outcrops that stud the surface of the rise create intense textural variation. These contrast with the surrounding pastoral land and provide a high level of visual interest.

The land surrounding Mount Emu is cleared pastoral land dotted with trees and occasional clumps of vegetation. The long, low formation of the hill is easily distinguished from long distances away. The granite chunks that protrude on the mid to upper slopes have a smooth, weathered appearance that marks their age as considerably older than the volcanic rises found on the plain. It is located in an open, windswept and sparsely populated area.



1.11 Mount Warrenheip



1.12 Mount Emu: Mount Emu, visible from Snake Valley area west of Ballarat



## 1.13 Barrabool Hills

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

The hills display a varied topography that gently rises from the surrounding flat volcanic plains. The steeply incised Barwon River Valley is visible as a drop in the landscape that is lined with vegetation.

A flat, grassy foreground and middle-ground is often punctuated with piles of rocks dug from paddocks and edged with low dry stone walls, which reveals the history of land use on the volcanic plain. Clear views are available across these paddocks towards the hills from the Hamilton Highway. While the Barwon River valley is not a dominant feature in the view, there is a distinctive drop in the landscape before it rises up to join the smooth, rolling Barrabool Hills. The hills area is a highly scenic aspect of the view, creating an undulating and interesting horizon line.

## 2.1 Lerderderg Gorge & State Park

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

State

A landscape of forested hills through which the Lerderderg River has cut through sandstone and slate to create a deep gorge with walls rising to 400m and exposed rocky cliffs. This gorge stretches south to the flat volcanic plains near Bacchus Marsh. The Lerderderg River weaves through this landscape past rocky boulders and sandy beaches.

Within the park the folding, hilly topography surrounding the Lerderderg Gorge is blanketed in thick vegetation with some exposed rocky outcrops. The landscape is wild and rugged, most of it accessible only by foot.

The Goodmans Creek Valley runs along the eastern edge of the State Park, dividing the park from the surrounding agricultural and rural residential land, and the cleared Pentland Hills skirt the southern edge.

The edges of the State Park to the north are undefined, merging with the surrounding Wombat State Forest to become part of a wider forested landscape to the north and west.

The edges of the Lerderderg Gorge are clearly defined through changes in topography and the dramatic shift in colour and texture. Dark green, heavily vegetated areas give way to steep sided rocky cliffs which plummet towards the valley floor.



1.13 Barrabool Hills: Views toward the Barrabool Hills from Hamilton Highway



2.1 View over the Lerderderg State Park from Mount Blackwood

## 2.2 Wombat State Forest & Hepburn Regional Park

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

This landscape is defined by areas within the Wombat State Forest and Hepburn Regional Parks around the towns of Daylesford and Hepburn Springs. It contains a number of features including Trentham Falls, Deep Creek, Loddon Falls and numerous mineral springs.

The Trentham Falls are the largest single drop falls in Victoria and create a dramatic contrast in texture and sound with the surrounding forest. Basalt columns and rushing water contrast with the vegetated bush setting to create a sensory experience.

The springs and falls are set within a forested backdrop and often feature dramatic rock formations and exposed bedrock which has been worn into sculptural shapes. Exposed quartz and granite features in worn river beds and pathways while damp moss and ferns give the vegetation a lush and earthy feel. Falls and springs can be viewed from above with a foreground of bushland and the rushing water featuring in the middle ground, or from below at close range, where the rushing water dominates the foreground with the bush setting creating the background to views.

## 2.3 Werribee Gorge

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

State

The formation of the Werribee Gorge slices through the surrounding cleared plateau, to the west of Bacchus Marsh. The gorge retains a rugged aesthetic of exposed craggy rock faces, native bushland, the Werribee river and steep sided valley walls.

Edges of this landscape are defined by topography and vegetation. Cleared plains give way suddenly to steep vegetated valley walls and exposed rock faces. Colours and textures deepen and become more exaggerated towards the base of the gorge.

Red and orange exposed rock faces contrast with the light and dark green vegetation which clings to the rock in some locations. The Werribee River winds along the base of the gorge rushing between rocks and boulders and creating another layer of texture and colour within the landscape.

Views across the gorge from the adjacent plateau are dramatic and expansive, sweeping and panoramic. They are generally composed of a foreground of flat to undulating agricultural plains with occasional scrub which give way to a middle ground of the cavernous, deep gorge, peppered with vegetation. In the far distance views terminate at the opposing flat plateau.



2.2 Deep Spring Reserve



2.3 The steep sided valley of the Werribee Gorge, as viewed from Ironbark Road

## 2.4 Bacchus Marsh Agricultural Valley

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

This landscape comprises the lush and colourful market gardens on the valley floors near Bacchus Marsh, in parts that are edged by steep valley walls of the surrounding gorges.

Views of it are filtered through the impressive Avenue of Honour that forms the main entrance to Bacchus Marsh from the Western Freeway, and along the Werribee Vale Road.

The man made regularity of the market gardens form a patchwork of colour and texture across the valley floor. Occasional vertical agricultural elements enhance the repetitive and ordered visual appearance of this landscape.

The valley walls have a more natural and organic character, in terms of their landform and vegetation, and create a defined edge and immediate visual contrast to the vibrant and regular patterns of the valley floor.

Vegetation along the base of the valley walls adds another layer of colour and texture to the landscape.

## 2.5 Parwan Valley

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

State

The Parwan Valley dissects the plateaus beyond the Rowsley Fault line, to the north of the Brisbane Ranges and to the southwest of Bacchus Marsh. It is a deeply incised valley with a basalt rock escarpment and edges that drops off sharply. The Parwan Creek meanders along the valley floor, fed by the Yaloak and Spring Creeks. “The Bluff” is a prominent volcanic ridge to the south of Glenmore Road, rising 150m from the valley floor.

There is a sharp and dramatic contrast that occurs as the steep walls of the Parwan Valley drop away from the flat and relatively featureless plateau. Parts of the valley are heavily cloaked in vegetation, while others are completely devoid of it which accentuates the formation of the hills and ridges contained within. In many places, the valley walls are weathered away, revealing sculptural features and sharp, contrasting angles such as seen on The Bluff. Scarring from numerous landslips can also be seen on the slopes of this feature.



2.4 Hills rise abruptly from the valley floor, Werribee Vale Road



2.5 Views across the Parwan Valley from Glenmore Road



## 2.6 Brisbane Ranges & Rowsley Scarp

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

State

The Brisbane Ranges are a low range of mountains dissected by rugged rocky gullies and gorges, and blanketed in thick tree cover.

The Rowsley Scarp is a long ridgeline that rises to 230 metres above the sunken flat lands that border Port Phillip Bay. It sharply defines edge of the Victorian Uplands region that features flat plateaus and deeply incised gorges, and marks the eastern edge of the Brisbane Ranges.

The Scarp is a high protrusion that rises from the flat to undulating landscape. The eastern edge of the Brisbane Ranges National Park is heavily vegetated and this provides a contrast with the cleared land on the Volcanic Plain. Further north near Bacchus Marsh the slopes of the Brisbane Ranges are predominantly cleared, and the underlying structure of the landform (such as variations between sheer faces and more gentle rises) is more apparent.

In contrast to the eastern edge, the western edge of the Brisbane Ranges does not display visually strong edges, with low hills and vegetation cover which 'bleeds' into the surrounding landscape.

## 2.7 Anakie Hills

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

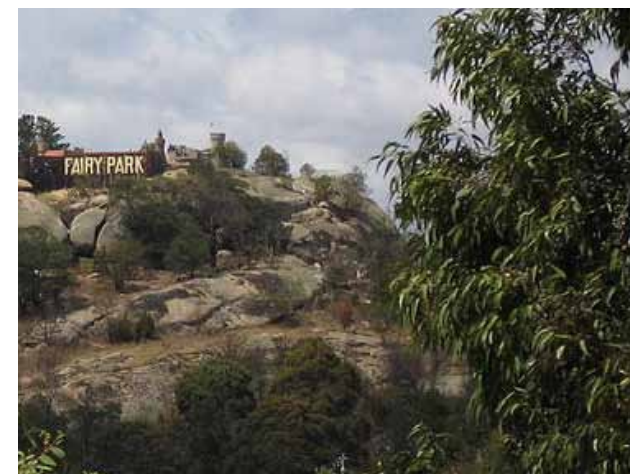
Near Anakie a small collection of volcanic cones known as the Anakie Hills abuts the edge of the Rowsley Scarp.

The Anakie Hills include Mount Anakie along with two other scoria cones and a volcanic depression which is likely to be a maar. The volcanos are adjacent to a landscape scattered with impressive granite tors and slabs, including the prominent hill that has the "Fairy Park" children's theme park located on it.

The Anakie Hills rise sharply from the plain, with distinct conical formations that provide highly scenic landscape variation before becoming engulfed in the vegetation of the Brisbane Ranges. In some areas sculptural granitic tors are scattered across the landscape which creates a high level of visual interest.



2.6 Brisbane Ranges



2.7 Exposed granite tors and slabs provide the setting for 'Fairy Park'

## 2.8 Wurdi Youang (You Yangs)

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

The You Yangs are a series of granite ranges that rise from the Werribee Plain between Melbourne and Geelong. Most of the rises are included in the You Yangs Regional Park. Flinders Peak is the highest point in the park, with an elevation of around 350 metres. From here views are available across the Brisbane Ranges, Geelong and Corio Bay, to Melbourne and as far away as Mount Macedon.

The triangular peaks of the You Yangs are a distinctive landscape feature that dominates the horizon from a number of viewing angles. Up close, weathered granite outcrops and tors on the faces of the hill slopes create intricate detail, and impressive sculptural forms. These often feature in the foreground and middle ground of views, with the dramatic backdrop of the ranges in the distance. The landscape surrounding the You Yangs often contains rough, textured surfaces of stony rises and lava flows that originated from volcanic activity at the nearby Anakie Hills.

## 2.9 Lal Lal Gorge

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

The Lal Lal Gorge is a steep sided basalt gorge carved out of a volcanic lava flow by the waters of Lal Lal Creek. The gorge is surrounded by gently undulating pastoral land and forested areas. It carves a deeply incised cleft that twists through the landscape before joining the broader waters of the Lal Lal Reservoir in the east.

Distinctive edges and contrasts are created as the grassland gives way to the textured, deep red and grey rock columns that line the walls of the gorge. The exposed rocks with undercut sides cast deep shadows on the rocky cliff faces which descend to a valley floor of crumbling basalt rocks, pools of water and tufts of vegetation.

Picture postcard views are available over this spectacular landscape. The basaltic gorge plummets dramatically into a deep, cavernous floor of textured rock and flowing water. The falls at one end create a scenic point of focus from the viewing platform. Surrounding the gorge, the gently undulating pastoral landscape is peppered with gum trees and in the distance the volcanic rises of Mounts Buninyong and Warrenheip are visible.



2.8 Granite rocks



2.9 Lal Lal Falls by Andrew Thomas



## 2.10 Enfield State Park

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

The Enfield State Park is a thickly vegetated area with visible signs of a history of gold mining and forestry. Nearly half of the park is available for fossicking or panning for gold along Misery Creek.

The thick vegetated cover of the Park contrasts with the cleared surrounding paddocks, however, the edges of the park are undefined as it merges into the surrounding State Forest. Rural residential development and small hobby farms on the periphery of the park are often set back into the bush which assists with blending development into the landscape.

## 2.11 Devils Kitchen

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

Open, rolling pastures are deeply incised by the steep-sided basalt gorge of the Woody Yalloak River, forming the Devils Kitchen.

The steep basaltic cliffs of the Devils Kitchen comprise highly distinctive formations of columnar ridges and stacked, box-like sculptural rocks. Scrubby vegetation clings to the edges of these cliffs, blending the exposed rocky faces into the cleared, grassy plains above.

Amongst the surrounding rolling hills of the Central Forested Uplands Area, the Devils Kitchen is a unique and distinctive feature.



2.10 Enfield State Park



2.11 Devils Kitchen

## 2.12 Island Uplands

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

The Island Uplands rise as three individual landforms (Mount Beckworth, Mount Bolton and Mount Ercildoune) from the northern edges of the Western Volcanic Plain. Their prominence is visible from long distances away. The Waubra wind farm is sited to the east of the rises, and the tops of turbines are a visible feature in many parts of this landscape.

The granitic outcrops and tors on the slopes of the Island Uplands are an outstanding feature that provides additional visual interest. Edges of pine plantation also provide a contrast, though this has resulted in ugly scarring on the landscape where they have been felled in a number of places.

The steep slopes are partially vegetated which has left the rock-strewn faces and bulging granitic outcrops exposed. These rugged features differentiate the Island Uplands from the smooth, rounded volcanic rises found in the adjacent area east of Clunes.

## 2.13 Lower Pyrenees

### Landscape Character Type

#### 2. The Uplands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

This landscape includes the forested areas and steep escarpments of Mount Buangor, Mount Cole, Mount Lonarch and Mount Langhi Ghiran and the cleared undulating valleys in between. Rugged granite peaks and gentle sloping woodlands rise from the surrounding plains which are peppered with ancient Red Gums. To the east towards Amphitheatre, ridge landforms are visible, some of which are cleared allowing open views of the topography.

The striking silhouettes are, in places, surrounded by the regular pattern of a productive landscape as vines and orchards follow the contours of the land.

The dark green forested rises contrast in colour and texture with the cleared yellowish pastoral plains from which they rise. Native vegetation occasionally gives way to the regular texture and colour of pine plantations. In some places, plantations create geometrical scars across the steep sided rises as they have been partially cleared.



2.12 Exposed granite outcrops



2.13 Mount Buangor

### 3.1 Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park

#### Landscape Character Type

#### 3. The Goldfields

#### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

Australia's first national heritage park displays a landscape of hills, ridges, gullies, creeks and rivers. The Park retains numerous visual reminders of Victoria's gold mining history including miners' huts, Chinese market gardens, stone footings, shallow shafts and the Garfield Water Wheel in a bush environment. Castlemaine Diggings possesses sites and landscapes which reflect the whole period of gold mining in Australia.

The Park generally forms the wooded background to views, with the foreground and midground being composed of undulating cleared pastoral land with scattered remnant vegetation.

Situated within regenerating box-ironbark forest, the mining remains and habitation sites immediately convey to the visitor a feeling of passed ways of working and living. The degree of alteration of, and intervention in, the natural landscape makes a strong impression on visitors.

### 3.2 Ararat Hills & Ridges

#### Landscape Character Type

#### 3. The Goldfields

#### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

Dramatic, high ridge landforms rise from the undulating paddocks. These landforms create four parallel linear ridges that extend across the landscape from near Great Western to Mount Chalambar. The highest peaks are Mount Ararat (618 m) and One Tree Hill (579 m). Exposed granitic boulders are occasionally visible on the cleared hillslopes.

The sharp topographical rise of the Ararat Hills contrasts strongly with the surrounding undulating agricultural paddocks. Single trees pepper the hillslopes with patches of remnant vegetation creating a dark green textural contrast at the base of the cleared hills and ridges.

The ability to view the Ararat Hills from a number of angles, including from Pioneer / One Tree Hill Lookout, unifies the feature with the surrounding landscape. The hills and ridges create a scenic backdrop to Ararat and visual interest within the cleared, undulating surrounding landscape.



3.1 Forrest Creek diggings, part of the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park



3.2 Ararat Hills



## 4.1 Wannon & Nigretta Falls

### Landscape Character Type

#### 4. The Rolling Tablelands

### Landscape Significance Rating

State

The Wannon and Nigretta Falls are stunning waterfalls located within 10km of each other on the Wannon River. At the Wannon Falls, the water drops 30m down in a steady stream to a deep, circular pool below. The movement of water over time has eroded away a deep cavern behind the drop. These Falls were created by lava flows that travelled up valley of the present day Wannon River. The Nigretta Falls cascade from a hard rock outcrop, streams of water are divided by clefts in the rock and dispersed in a more widespread pattern with various tributaries sprouting from the sides to fall down a series of rocky terraces.

The placid, flowing waters of the Wannon River are abruptly interrupted by the steep drops of the waterfalls. The constant movement and churning of water as it cascades over the edge of the rocky precipices is an eye catching and scenic feature of both Falls. The narrow river valleys lined with chunky, rock outcrops have created deep incisions in the undulating plain that surrounds. The undercutting of the cavernous space behind the Wannon Falls and the circular formation of the pool below is a spectacular natural feature.

## 4.2 The Hummocks, Wando Vale

### Landscape Character Type

#### 4. The Rolling Tablelands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

The Hummocks are a distinctive geological feature among the cleared rolling hills and gently sloping river valleys of the Tablelands region. A deep, V-shaped cleft splits a hillside in two, leaving granitic outcrops and underlying bedrock exposed. The Wando River winds through the narrow gorge before joining with MacPherson Creek in the west.

There is a strong contrast between the undulating valley floor and the steep hillsides that slope up on either side. This join is often marked by lines of trees that follow creeks and waterways. Granitic protrusions are common in the area.

The outcrops visible in the cleft of the Hummocks create a sculptural landscape element that stands out from the smooth and rounded textures of the surrounding hills. The sharp lines and angles that the feature cuts into the ridge make it appear to be a man-made intrusion, however closer inspection reveals it to be the result of natural processes.



4.1 Wannon Falls



4.2 The Hummocks viewed from the eastern side on Hummocks-Retreat Road

## 4.3 Dergholm State Park

### Landscape Character Type

#### 4. The Rolling Tablelands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

The Dergholm State Park is a thickly vegetated area set amongst rolling hills on the border of the Tablelands and the Wimmera Plain. The Park is traversed by the Glenelg River.

The Park contains Bilston's Tree, which is Australia's largest River Red Gum and Bailey's Rocks which are a series of enormous and unusual green-coloured granite boulders in a dry creek bed within the northern section of the Park.

The thickly vegetated cover of the Park contrasts with the cleared surrounding paddocks. Defined areas of plantation create a textural contrast and introduce a regular geometry into this natural landscape.

## 4.4 Merino Tablelands

### Landscape Character Type

#### 4. The Rolling Tablelands

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

The landscape comprises open, weathered, rolling topography of cleared pastures or grasslands. There are occasional shelterbelts and scattered Red Gum woodland. The topography is deeply dissected by river valleys which are highly visible and exposed due to the cleared nature of the landscape. The open nature of the landscape creates a sense of 'big skies'.

The open nature of this landscape, of grasslands and cleared pastures, lends itself to long range views that often form continuous corridors.

The roads that meander through the topography are mostly rural access roads, and while not heavily travelled they are highly scenic and provide an excellent viewing experience.

Lookout points in Casterton demonstrate how the town is nestled into the landscape, encircled by the riling hills and a bend of the Glenelg River.



4.3 Bailey's rocks



4.4 Merino Tablelands



## 5.1 Mount Arapiles

### Landscape Character Type

#### 5. The Wimmera Plains

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### State

Mount Arapiles is situated to the west of Horsham within the flat agricultural plains of the Wimmera.

The jagged, craggy landform rises dramatically from the surrounding plain to a height of around 320m and is visible for many miles, its distinctive silhouette a striking feature on the horizon. The base of Mount Arapiles is tree covered, dark green and textural, gradually blending upwards to the craggy outcrops of red sandstone.

During springtime the rock and surrounding plain are covered in wildflowers, adding an array of colour to the viewed landscape. The often saline lakes and wetlands of the Wimmera form the foreground to many views of Mount Arapiles, creating another layer of interest within the composition.

## 5.2 Natimuk - Douglas Wetland System

### Landscape Character Type

#### 5. The Wimmera Plains

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### Regional

A natural depression has created a distinctive and plentiful series of lakes and wetlands (or chain of ponds), that weaves across the landscape from Natimuk in the north to south of Douglas. These are predominantly fed from groundwater, and contain a mix of saline and fresh water systems. This has resulted in a complex and rare ecological system which is reflected in the visual variety they display. They vary greatly in size - some are minor depressions that subtly texture the landscape, while others form quite significant bodies of water.

Due to high salt content of many of the lakes, light is reflected off the sheer white surfaces and edges of the lakes which makes them stand out visually from the golden, pastoral paddocks. The edges are often exaggerated by concentrations of vegetation, or sandy shorelines. Where water is abundant, light reflects from the surfaces, and a variety of aquatic plant life is present that contrasts with the surroundings fields of pasture or crops.

The lakes and wetlands predominantly sit in the foreground or middle ground of views, and provide the setting for more dominant landscape features such as Mount Arapiles.



5.1 Exposed sandstone faces



5.2 Wetlands provide the setting for other regional landscape features such as Mount Arapiles

## 6.1 The Grampians (Gariwerd) & Surrounds

### Landscape Character Type

#### 6. The Grampians (Gariwerd) & Surrounds

### Landscape Significance Rating

State (or higher)

The Grampians (Gariwerd) are a visually dramatic landform that comprises the southern-most arm of the Great Dividing Range. The jagged escarpments of the Grampians rise sharply from the surrounding pastoral plain.

Other landscape elements that make up the ranges include the sweeping western slopes, the craggy eastern peaks, massive sandstone cliffs, forests, water bodies, rocky outcrops and weather-sculpted rocks.

In the context of Victoria, a visually stunning mountainous landscape of this kind, rising sharply from the surrounding flat landscape, is a rare and iconic feature. For this reason, the Grampians are so often termed 'dramatic', and evoke a strong emotional response for many viewers.

The surrounding landscape is significant as the setting for the Grampians. The flat topography exacerbates the visual presence of the peaks of the Grampians, creating a stark and dramatic contrast between these two landscape elements. Remnant stands of vegetation, particularly the River Red Gums, filter views to the mountains.

## 6.2 The Black Range (Burrunj) State Park

### Landscape Character Type

#### 6. The Grampians (Gariwerd) & Surrounds

### Landscape Significance Rating

Regional

The Black Range is a broken ridgeline that sits independently to the west of the northern arm of the Grampians Ranges. The topographical relief is much lower than the Grampians, with Mount Byron rising to 500 metres. The landscape is blanketed in vegetation.

The thick vegetated cover of the Black Range contrasts with the cleared surrounding paddocks. There are a large number of scattered River Red Gums and dense remnant roadside vegetation in the periphery of the ranges which creates further textural contrast within the landscape.

The Black Range sits low on the horizon and generally forms a low backdrop to views, with the foreground being composed of cleared pastoral land containing scattered Red Gums.



6.1 View of the Grampians



6.2 Views from within the Black Range extend over the low hills and are punctuated with craggy sandstone outcrops

## 7.1 Cobboboonee & Lower Glenelg National Parks

### Landscape Character Type

#### 7. Vegetated Rises

### Landscape Significance Rating

#### Regional

The Cobboboonee and Lower Glenelg National Parks are thickly forested landscapes that have been preserved for conservation in an area where plantation forestry is prevalent. They contain lowlands forests, heathlands and wetlands.

The National Parks are adjacent to areas of pine plantation and conservation reserves. There is a strong contrast in the patterns of vegetation where the park is bordered by pine plantations. It blends seamlessly with the Lower Glenelg National Park to the west.

The park contains mostly thick bush that is divided by dirt tracks and roads that allow access through it. This is a relatively low-lying landscape with few long range or outwards views, which allows for an intimate, enclosed viewing experience. Tree with tall, straight trunks dominate and a high canopy are prevalent, with a low understory of bracken, grasses and small shrubs.



7.1 Cobboboonee National Park