

# 1.3 VOLCANIC LAKES

## Significant Landscape

**Character Type**      1      Western Volcanic Plain

**Character Area**      1.1      Paddocks and Cones

The area defined as the “Lakes & Craters Precinct” in the Kanawinka Global Geopark guide is considered to be one of the most dramatic and exciting volcanic landscapes in Victoria.

Lakes Gnotuk , Bullen-Merri and Keilambete are impressive examples of maar volcanos in this region. Lake Purrumbete is a similar landscape to the south of the study area.

A map of the significant landscape area is shown opposite.

**Major viewing corridors:**

- Keilambete Road
- Sadlers Road

**Overall Landscape Significance Rating: State**

A detailed significance assessment is provided over the following pages.



*Lake Gnotuk*

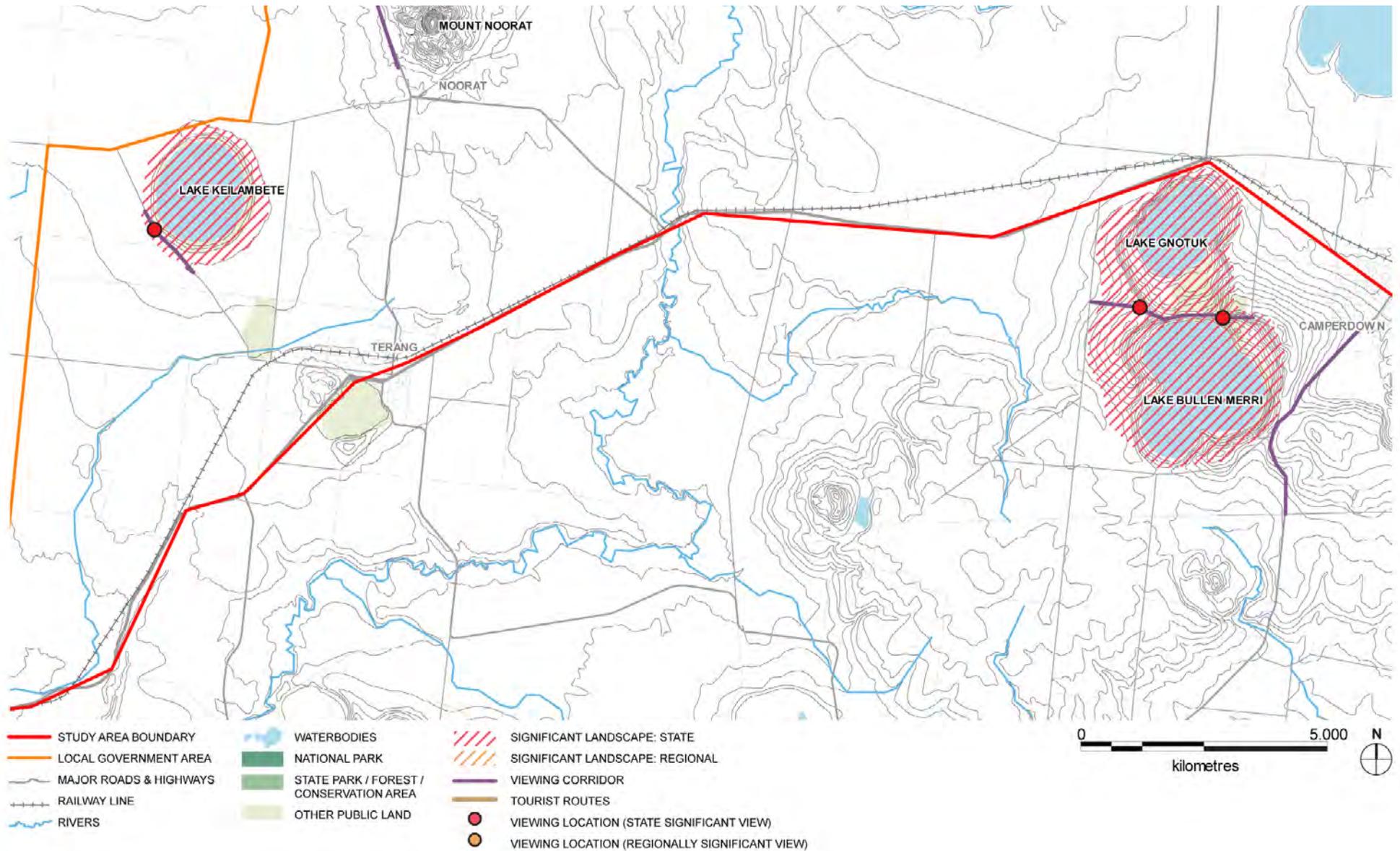


*Lake Bullen-Merri*



*Lake Keilambete*

# Landscape Significance Map



## Aesthetic Values

AESTHETIC VALUES				
	Source	Description	Aesthetic Values Rating Considerations (i.e. exemplary, iconic, scarce)	Level of Significance
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Survey	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. Lake Gnotuk and Keilambete are hyper saline (more than twice the salinity of the sea), while Bullen-Merri is brackish.	These lakes are exemplary examples of volcanic maars. Lake Keilambete in particular has a rare, almost perfectly circular formation.	State
EDGES OR CONTRASTS	Survey	The rise and fall of the steep tuff rings contrasts with the surrounding flat volcanic plain. The saline waters of Gnotuk and Bullen Merri reflect bright blue colouration. Quarrying has caused deep scarring on the edge of Keilambete. The inside rims of Lakes Bullen Merri and Gnotuk feature a mix of dense vegetation and open, pastoral land. Shelterbelt planting with shelterbelt planting creating straight lines long the edges the edges of paddocks and property boundaries.	The crater lakes are an iconic landscape feature of the region and contribute to the identity of the town of Camperdown.	Regional
COMPOSITION	Survey	<p>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.</p> <p>Views across Gnotuk and Bullen Merri are available from Sadlers Road, the Camperdown Botanic Gardens, the Lake Gnotuk Walking Trail and Camperdown Cemetery. The lakes have been the subject of many artworks, including works by Eugene von Guerard <i>Lake Gnotuk</i>, 1857 and Nicholas Chevalier. An exhibition of artwork inspired by Lake Gnotuk was curated and shown at the Geelong Art Gallery in 2005. In 2012 landscape artist Christine James donated her outstanding large triptych “Still Life at Lake Gnotuk” to the Shire of Corangamite where it is on permanent display in the Council meeting room.</p>	The lakes have outstanding visual qualities which are enhanced by the views to the nearby volcanic rises.	State
OVERALL AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE RATING				State

## Other Cultural Landscape Values

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Desktop Research	Aboriginal artefact scatters, earth mounds and scarred trees occur throughout the area. Aboriginal people made use of the stones from the lava flow to construct channels linking the wetlands, weirs, fish-traps, wind breaks and stone huts.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

ENVIRONMENTAL / SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Ramsar List Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia	A number of the lakes are included on the Ramsar List or listed as nationally significant wetlands.
National Trust Landscape	The Newer Volcanics Province is the largest homogeneous volcanic plain on earth.
Kanawinka Geopark	The features of this area are listed as significant sites within the Kanawinka Geopark, as a part of the 'Lakes & Craters Precinct'. It is described as one of the most dramatic and exciting volcanic landscapes in Victoria.
Corangamite Planning Scheme	The volcanic features, lakes and wetlands of this area are protected under the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO1) and Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO1).
Desktop Research Community Feedback	The rising and falling waters of Lake Bullen-Merri and Lake Gnotuk act as rain gauges, measuring levels of precipitation and evaporation. Analysis of pollens and microscopic lake life forms has revealed clues of past climate change, which may be useful in predicting future patterns.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	The Volcanic Lakes are the traditional country of the Girai wurrung people to whom it holds social, cultural and spiritual significance. Having inhabited this region for up to 45,000 years, their ancestors would have witnessed the eruptions and as a result they feature prominently in stories of the Dreaming.  The waterbodies, distinctive natural features and places of ecological value within this area are likely to have high Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.
Desktop Research	The lakes are an important part of the identity of the local region. As noted, they have been the inspiration for many artworks. Alan Marshall told stories of learning to swim in Lake Keilambete in his 1955 novel "I Can Jump Puddles."
Kanawinka Geopark Tourist Information	The lakes offer a range of visitor attractions such as enjoyment of views, picnicking, bushwalking, fishing, sailing, appreciation of birdlife, photography, boating and swimming. The abundant wetlands also have an educational value.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

OTHER SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Kanawinka Geopark Tourist Information	The lakes, as visitor attractions for the area, are important contributors to the local economy.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional