

1.1 SOUTHERN CONES

Significant Landscape

Character Type	1	Western Volcanic Plain
Character Area	1.1	Paddocks and Cones
	1.4	Lava Flows

This significance area, shown on the map opposite, is focussed on the high concentration of volcanic cones found rising out of the open plain, including:

- Mount Elephant
- Mount Shadwell
- Mount Noorat
- Mount Wiridgil
- Mount Porndon
- Mount Koang & Cloven Hills

Notable viewing locations within this landscape include:

- Mount Elephant Summit
- Mount Noorat Summit

Major viewing corridors:

- Hamilton Highway
- Mortlake Ararat Road
- Terang Mortlake Road
- Terang Darlington Road
- Glenormiston Road
- Kurweeton Road
- Lloyds Road
- Wiridgil Road
- Princes Highway
- Darlington Road

Overall Landscape Significance Rating: State



Mount Elephant



Mount Noorat

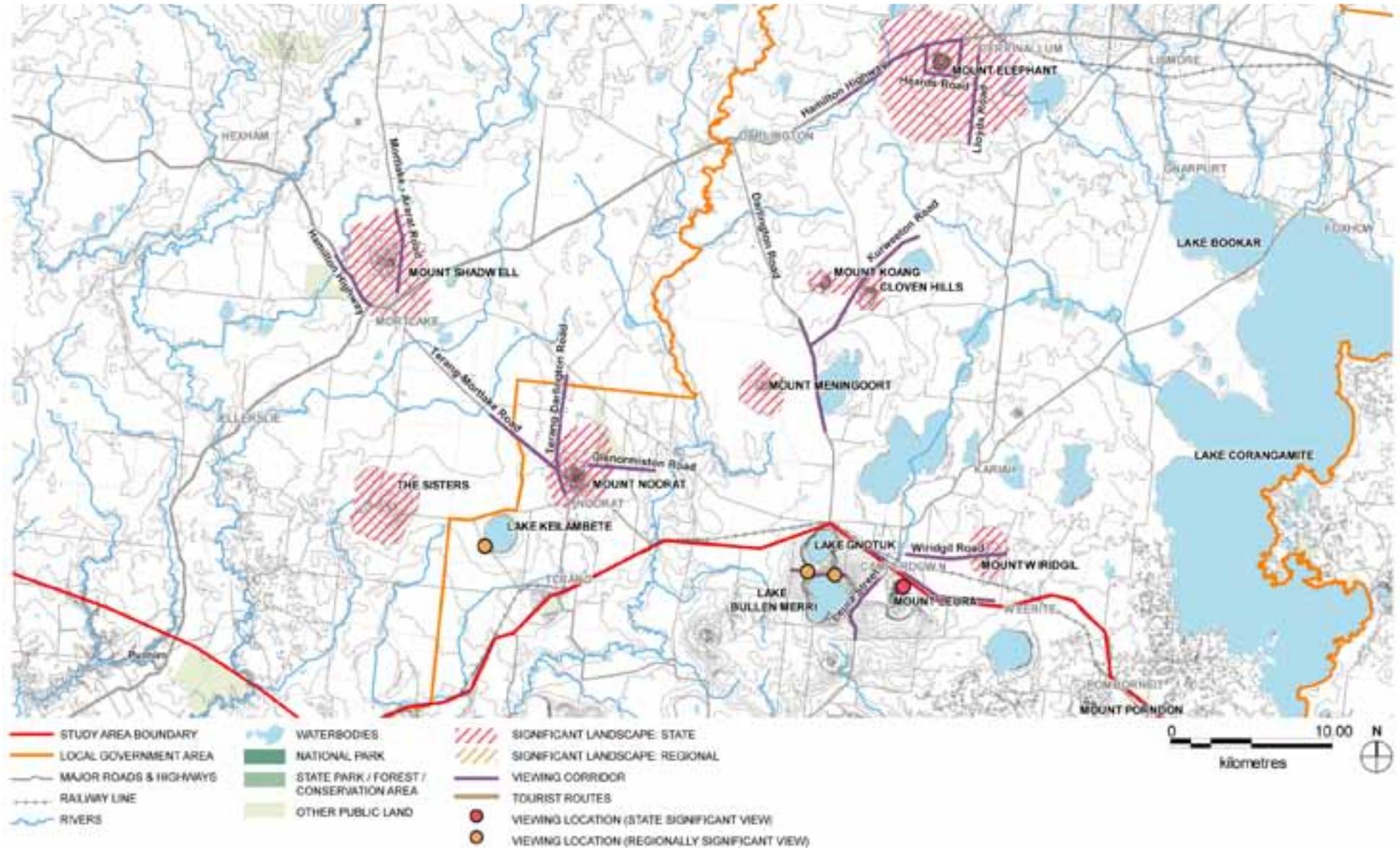


The twin formations of Cloven Hills and Mount Koang



The rambling form of Mount Shadwell

Landscape Significance Map



Aesthetic Values

AESTHETIC VALUES				
	Source	Description	Aesthetic Values Rating Considerations (i.e. exemplary, iconic, scarce)	Level of Significance
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Survey	This landscape contains some of the most significant and iconic volcanic rises to be found in Western Victoria, including Mount Elephant, Mount Noorat, Mount Shadwell, Mount Koang, Cloven Hills, Mount Wiridgill and Mount Porndon. 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).	The western plain is the most extensive volcanic area in Australia, and this region has the highest concentration of impressive volcanic features, which makes it scarce on a national scale.	Exceptional (State)
EDGES OR CONTRASTS	Survey	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.	These rises are outstanding examples of volcanic features on the western plain, both collectively and individually.	High (Regional)
COMPOSITION	Survey	<p>The volcanic features vary in size and form, some are classical, rounded or lopsided dome shapes others have a more lumpy, dispersed formation. Most have a clutter of telecommunications towers on the high points. Scoria mining has also left deep, dark scarring on the edges of some of the rises. Most of the volcanic rises are denuded of vegetation, however many have pine shelterbelt planting that is characteristic in the area creeping up or across their sides.</p> <p>Mount Shadwell provides a stunning backdrop for the town of Mortlake. Mount Koang and Cloven Hills are two comparatively low rises, though the journey through them along Kurweeton Road is an excellent volcanic viewing experience (partially blocked by insensitive shelterbelt planting). Mount Elephant is one of the highest and most uniform cones, and is easily distinguished on the horizon from long distances. Mount Noorat also has a dramatic formation when viewed from the ground, and is also well known for its almost perfectly circular crater. Mount Porndon sits low on the landscape and is responsible for much of the rugged and explosive landscape of stony rises to the south of Lake Corangamite. There are numerous locations where expansive and intact dry stone walls line the foreground of views to the features.</p>	The volcanic rises of this region of Victoria are some of the highest and most impressive in scale and form. They are iconic features of this part of Victoria, and have been the subject of much art and photography.	Exceptional (State)
OVERALL AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE RATING				State

Other Cultural Landscape Values

HISTORIC	
Source	
Desktop Research	Aboriginal artefact scatters, earth mounds and scarred trees occur throughout the area. Many of the cones were important meeting and bartering places for Aboriginal tribes.
Victorian Heritage Register	Meningoort Homestead is an example of early pastoralist life in the area and protected under the Victorian Heritage Register.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

ENVIRONMENTAL / SCIENTIFIC	
Source	
National Trust Landscape	The Newer Volcanics Province is the largest homogeneous volcanic plain on earth. Mount Elephant has scientific, landscape and historic significance as a major scoria cone and one of the highest within the region.
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).
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

SOCIAL	
Source	
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	The Southern Cones are the traditional country of the Girai wurrung, Wathaurung and Djargurd wurrung people to whom it holds social, cultural and spiritual significance. The waterbodies, distinctive natural features and places of ecological value within this area are likely to have high Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity. Mount Elephant (Tyrrinallum) and Mount Buninyong (Boyningyong) form part of the same Dreaming for Wathaurung people.
Kanawinka Geopark Tourist Information	Mount Elephant, and the other volcanic sites, are popular visitor attractions for the region.
Desktop Research	Mount Noorat includes visitor and interpretive information and features as part of the Alan Marshall Walking Track.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

OTHER	
Source	Description
Desktop Research	Quarrying of scoria has occurred, and in some instances continues today, on some of the cones, such as Mount Shadwell and Mount Wiridgil. This is a controversial issue.
Kanawinka Geopark Tourist Information	The various cones and volcanic features are visitor attractions for the area which contributes to the local economy. In addition to the attraction of the distinctive landscape, some of mounds offer recreation activities. Mount Shadwell has fossicking opportunities, and visitors can climb Mount Elephant.
Desktop Research	Some of the mounds support community infrastructure such as firewatch towers or telecommunications.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	Regional

Landscape Significance Map

Aesthetic Values

AESTHETIC VALUES				
	Source	Description	Aesthetic Values Rating Considerations (i.e. exemplary, iconic, scarce)	Level of Significance
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Survey	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.	This area is an exemplary and iconic landscape of stony rises that are unique on a national scale to the Volcanic Plain in Victoria.	Exceptional (State)
EDGES OR CONTRASTS	Survey	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 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.	This is an iconic, visually compelling landscape, of a unique and scarce terrain, within the regional context.	High (Regional)
COMPOSITION	Survey	There is an apocalyptic and eerie quality to this environment. The rocky terrain supports scrubby growth and a few canopy trees, but the rocks dominate and there is a noticeable lack of livestock in areas that have been cleared. The rocks are thick with lichen. It is a quiet, windswept and seemingly isolated area that feels as though it has been preserved in time. There are very few stony rise landscapes that can be traversed across the rises rather than around or between them. Eugene von Guerard depicted the distinctive landscape and Aboriginal life in the area in his painting <i>Lake Corangamite Stony Rises</i> (1857).	There are numerous landscapes dominated by stony rises across the Volcanic Plain, however examples as dense and unmodified as in the Pomorneit area are scarce within this region, and in Victoria.	Exceptional (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.
National Trust Landscape	This area is one of the first European/Aboriginal contact sites in the Corangamite Basin. Explorers of the area were assisted through the hummocky terrain by Aboriginal people. The citation assigns a State level of significance to this landscape.
Survey	Excellent and predominantly intact examples of dry stone wall craftsmanship are evident. The dry stone rabbit wall, Iletts Road, Dreeite, extends 3km, built 1880s-1990s, protected by Colac Otway HO183.
Colac Otway & Corangamite Planning Schemes	The dry stone Consumption Cairn, Iletts Road, Dreeite is a distinctive formation, protected by Colac Otway HO182.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

ENVIRONMENTAL / SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
National Trust	Because the rocky landscape inhibited farming practice, the vegetation in these areas remains almost as it was prior to European occupation. There are important remains of the Basalt Plains Woodland EVC which has been predominantly cleared from other areas on the Volcanic Plain.
Corangamite Planning Scheme	The area around Pomorneit is included within the Corangamite Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO1) as an area of significant remnant vegetation of high biodiversity and conservation significance, at a regional or State level.
Colac Otway Planning Scheme	The eastern edge of Lake Corangamite is included within various Environmental Significance Overlays due to its significance as a wetland area and habitat, at a State level. This includes the Warrion aquifer area (ESO1), The Basins wetland (ESO2) and the habitats of the spiny pepper cress at Pipe Clay Lake, listed as Vulnerable on the EPBC Act list (ESO4). The area is also included as a part of the Significant Landscape Overlay 'Valleys, Hills and Plains Precinct', which are of natural or geological significance (SLO1).

Ramsar List	This area, including Lake Corangamite, forms part of the Ramsar-listed Western District Lakes wetland site due to its high conservation significance.
IUCN	Protected under the IUCN list, Category IA (Strict Nature Reserve) are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Floating Islands Flora & Fauna Reserve – Dreeite Nature Conservation Reserve – Pomorneit North Nature Conservation Reserve.
Desktop Research	This area forms part of the Kanawinka Geo Park, nominated as an area of international geological significance.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE	
Source	Description
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	The Lakeside Stony Rises are the traditional country of the Djargurd wurrung and Gulidjan people to whom it holds social, cultural and spiritual significance. The waterbodies, distinctive natural features and places of ecological value within this area are likely to have high Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.
Tourist Information	Lake Corangamite, and the surrounding Stony Rises landscapes, are popular tourist destinations. The Dry Stone Wall heritage trail includes interpretive signage with historical information.
SIGNIFICANCE RATING	State