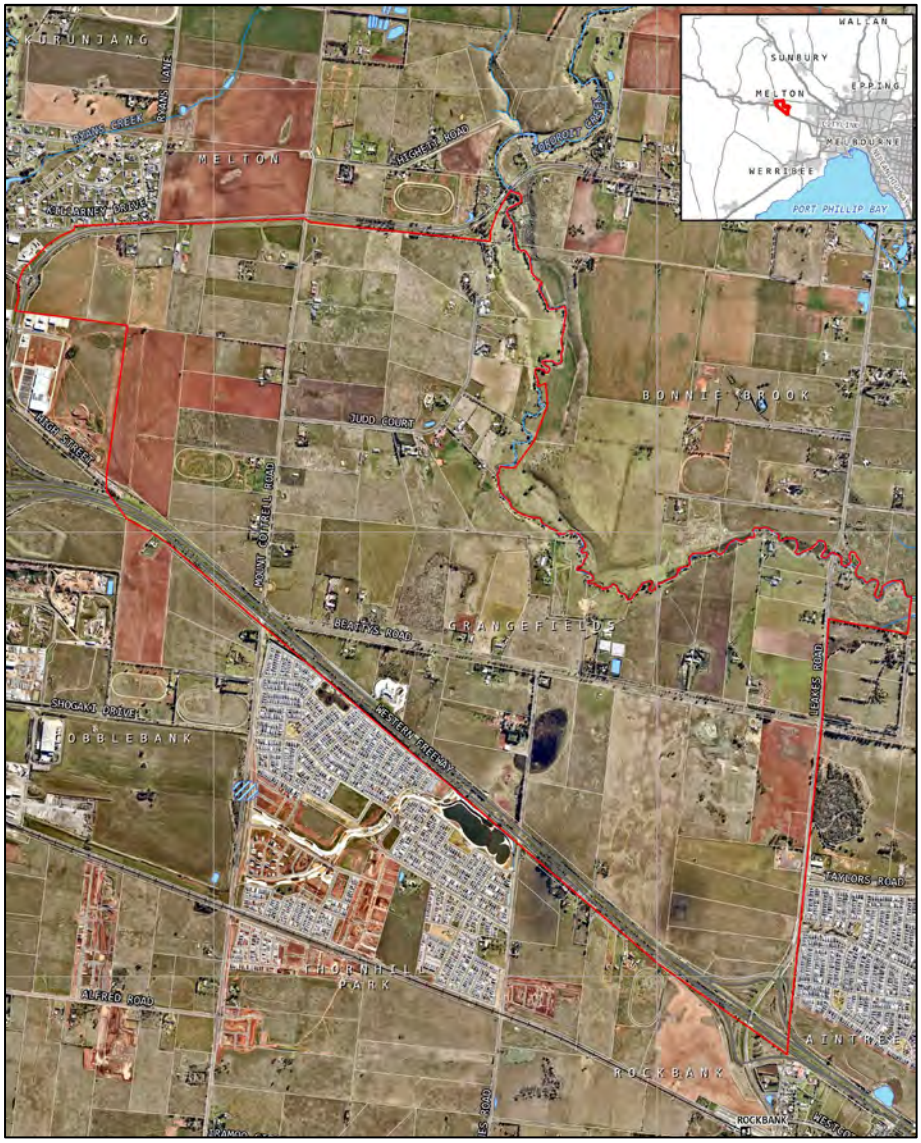
Melton East

Precinct Structure Plan

Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment

Note: Redacted Version



Authors: Anna Light, David Mathews, Dr Peter Mathews, and Joseph Brooke
Date of completion: 18 December 2024
Report prepared for: Victorian Planning Authority
Registered Aboriginal Party: Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

UNEARTHED HERITAGE

Revision History:

Revision	Revision Date	Details	Authorised	Comments
Draft 1	4 January 2024	Draft	DM	
Draft 2	29 April 2024	Draft – updated in response to preliminary RAP comments	DM	
Draft 3	7 November 2024	Draft – updated in response to RAP comments	DM	
Final	8 November 2024	Minor updates to comments provided by RAP	DM	
Final	18 December 2024	Final – Redacted Version	DM	Note: Additional research re: appendices and language may be done in the future.

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Statement of Significance

Aboriginal Places and areas of land under the custodianship of the Wurundjeri have a special significance for the Wurundjeri people. All Aboriginal Places in the activity area are considered to have cultural significance to the Wurundjeri. In addition, many Aboriginal Places in the greater Melbourne area have been destroyed by land clearance and land use practices in the historic period that continue to this day. As a result, all Aboriginal Places in the greater Melbourne region are a diminishing resource and the Wurundjeri feel strongly that these should all be protected as much as is practicable.

For the Wurundjeri community there is no separation between "nature" and "culture"- the natural world is a cultural world; therefore the Wurundjeri people have a special interest in preserving not just their cultural objects, but the natural landscapes of cultural importance. The acknowledgement of broader attributes of the landscape as Cultural Values that require protection (encompassing, among other things, a variety of landforms, ecological niches and habitats as well as continuing cultural practices) is essential to the identity and wellbeing of the Wurundjeri people. For a holistic approach to assessing a landscape for Aboriginal heritage potential, it is not only imperative to conduct archaeological investigations, but to also ascertain cultural perceptions of the landscape or places held by Aboriginal people. The statement below is a general statement of cultural significance for the Melton East area:

For Aboriginal people, there are many different kinds of Cultural Values associated with the landscapes that were once lived in by their Ancestors who knew how to look after Country. These include the tangible values normally recorded during archaeological investigations, such as artefact scatters and scarred trees or other places discovered in the area known as Melton East. These places are physical reminders of the cultural lives of the Wurundjeri Ancestors and a special connection therefore exists between those places and contemporary Wurundjeri people. This special connection underpins the high significance of these places.

There are other values that the Wurundjeri people connect to in landscapes such as the activity area and surrounding area. The waterways, stony escarpments, land and vegetation in / near the area known as the Melton East area provided a resource base including food, materials and possibly stone quarries for traditional Woi-wurrung speaking people. The natural values, such as remnant vegetation, eucalypts, and the landscape views from the activity area are all integral to the cultural landscape in which Woi-wurrung Ancestors lived for many thousands of years. These landscape characteristics are therefore significant in accordance with Aboriginal tradition. Best practice heritage management, in terms of avoidance of harm to cultural heritage and where harm cannot be avoided, proper management of the disturbance of those values, and the protection and revitalisation of those values is integral in the management of these significant cultural places.

Acknowledgement of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Traditional Owners

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, waters, seas and skies considered in this report, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, whose Ancestors are described and mentioned, and we pay our respects to all their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this report contains names and words of deceased persons.

In addition, some quotations and references contain terms or views that should not have been acceptable in the times when they were written, and certainly are not appropriate now.

Cover photo: Aerial image courtesy Nearmap

Abbreviations/Acronyms

ACHRIS	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System
CVA	Cultural Values Assessment
FP-SR	First Peoples – State Relations
HA	Heritage Advisor
LDAD	Low Density Artefact Distribution
PSP	Precinct Structure Plan
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
UHA	Unearthed Heritage Australia
VPA	Victorian Planning Authority
WWCHAC	Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

Orthographic Notes: Aboriginal culture was not a written culture or written language, rather it was passed on through song, story and action. When Europeans began recording Aboriginal languages in Australia this relied on correct hearing, choice of spelling and specificity around which Country the language should be associated with – all things which were inconsistent across the non-linguistically-trained recorders. Additionally, this does not account for more than one word to describe a single thing/event based on specific variations. The words chosen for use in this report are those that have been vetted by WWCHAC, with some other words or spellings discussed in relation to ethnographic sources but not selected for utilisation.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) has been prepared for the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) to inform and support planning for the Melton East Precinct Structure Plan (PSP), that incorporates Aboriginal cultural heritage values into design considerations. An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in parallel to this assessment.

The Study Area encompasses *c*. 1,005.85 hectares (ha) of land (Figure 1-1 & Figure 1-2). The Study Area extends from the Western Freeway in the south to the Melton Highway and Kororoit Creek in the north and from Aintree in the east to the eastern outskirts of Melton in the west.

The primary purpose of this CVA is to document the known past, contemporary and ongoing cultural values associated with the Study Area through collection and collation of information provided by Wurundjeri Elders regarding this part of their broad Country in order to assist in planning work and development designs within the study area. Post-contact/non-Indigenous historical heritage is not considered within this report.

The study area is located within the City of Melton local government area. The VPA has provided the following description of the PSP:

Melton East will be a largely residential precinct which will deliver around 11,000 new homes and 2,000 jobs to the Melton area. The precinct will look to integrate a strong focus on environmental sustainability and cultural heritage outcomes, which will underpin the planning for communities within the Melton East PSP, making it an exemplar of practicable sustainable precinct structure planning for greenfields Melbourne.

1.2 Proponent

The proponent of this Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment is the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA).

1.3 Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP)

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* establishes a system of Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) that are given the responsibility of most Aboriginal heritage matters within their current registered area. Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Council (WWCHAC) is the RAP for the Study Area. Pursuant to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Victoria) (Figure 1-3).

1.4 Authors

This report was prepared by Unearthed Heritage Australia Pty Ltd. Anna Light, David Mathews, Dr Peter Mathews and Joseph Brooke, are the authors of this report.

David Mathews[1] has over 15 years of experience in heritage management and archaeology and is qualified as both a heritage advisor and an archaeologist and is on the FP-SR list of approved Victorian heritage advisors. David's previous archaeological experience also includes archaeological investigations of a similar scope and scale as this CHMP.

Anna Light is a Heritage Advisor in accordance with heritage advisor qualification requirements under Section 189 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act* 2006. Anna gained a Bachelor of Arts (Archaeology,

[1] Bachelor of Archaeology (Honours – first class) 2005, University of Calgary, Canada.

Honours, first class) from La Trobe University in 2001 and has provided heritage advice and services for over 20 years.

Peter Mathews[2] is an Emeritus Professor of archaeology and a MacArthur Fellow with extensive experience in archaeology, linguistics and ethnohistory.

Joseph Brooke[3] has over 14 years of experience in cultural heritage management and archaeology and is qualified as a heritage advisor and an archaeologist, and is on the FP-SR list of approved Victorian heritage advisors. Joseph is a full member of the Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists Inc. Joseph's previous archaeological experience includes archaeological investigation of a similar scope and scale as this assessment.

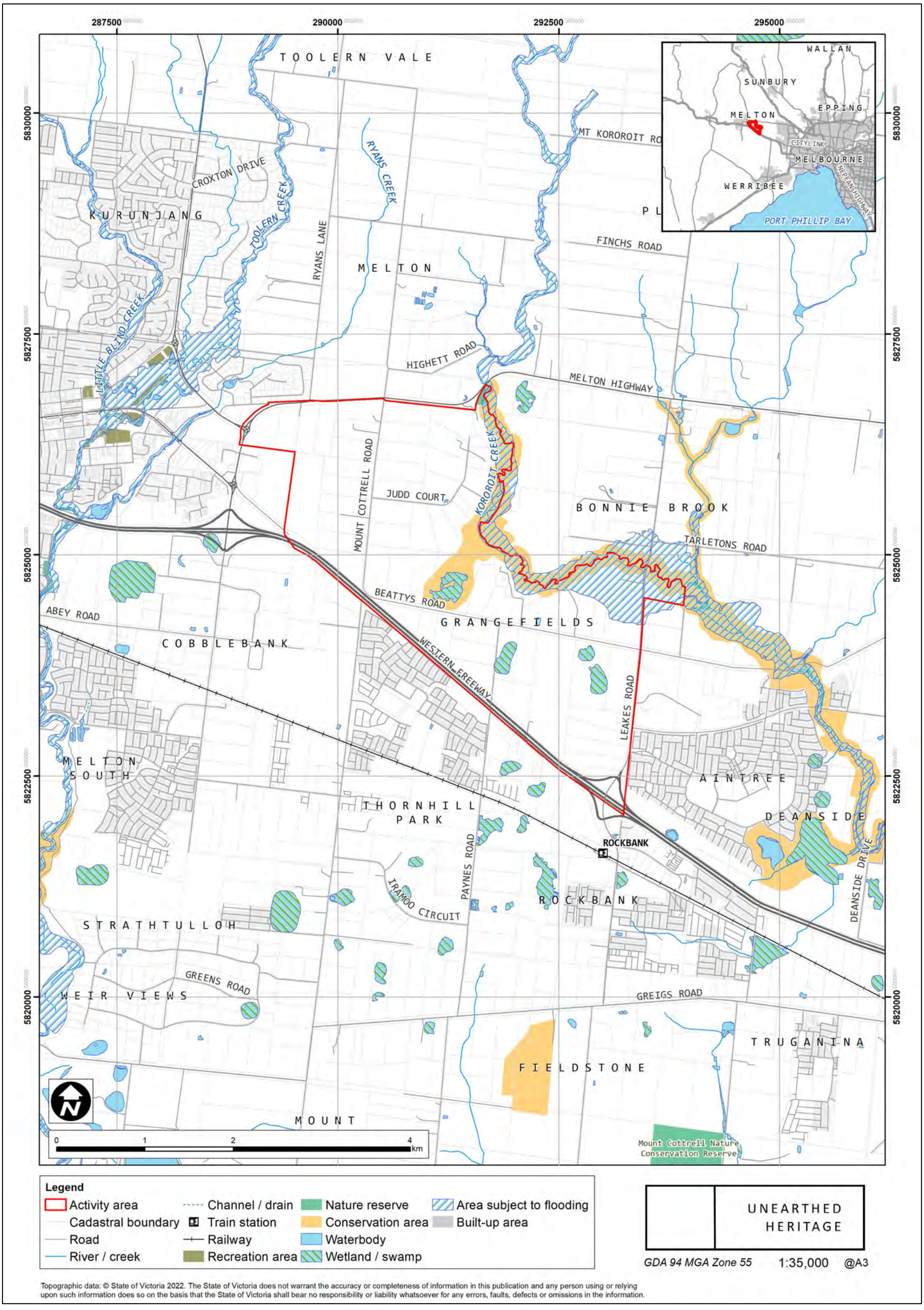
This report focusses on Aboriginal heritage and has been prepared with consideration for requirements of the Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

1.5 Report Distribution

This report is not for external distribution as it contains sensitive information. WWCHAC and VPA must be consulted regarding the review and preparation of both the sensitive and public version of the report.

[2] Bachelor of Arts, Honours - first class (1975), University of Calgary, Canada.
MPhil (1979), Yale
PhD (1988), Yale

[3] Bachelor of Archaeology (Honours – first class) 2006, La Trobe University.



Topographic data: © State of Victoria 2022. The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.

Figure 1-1 Location of the Study Area

Figure 1-2 Photomap of the Study Area

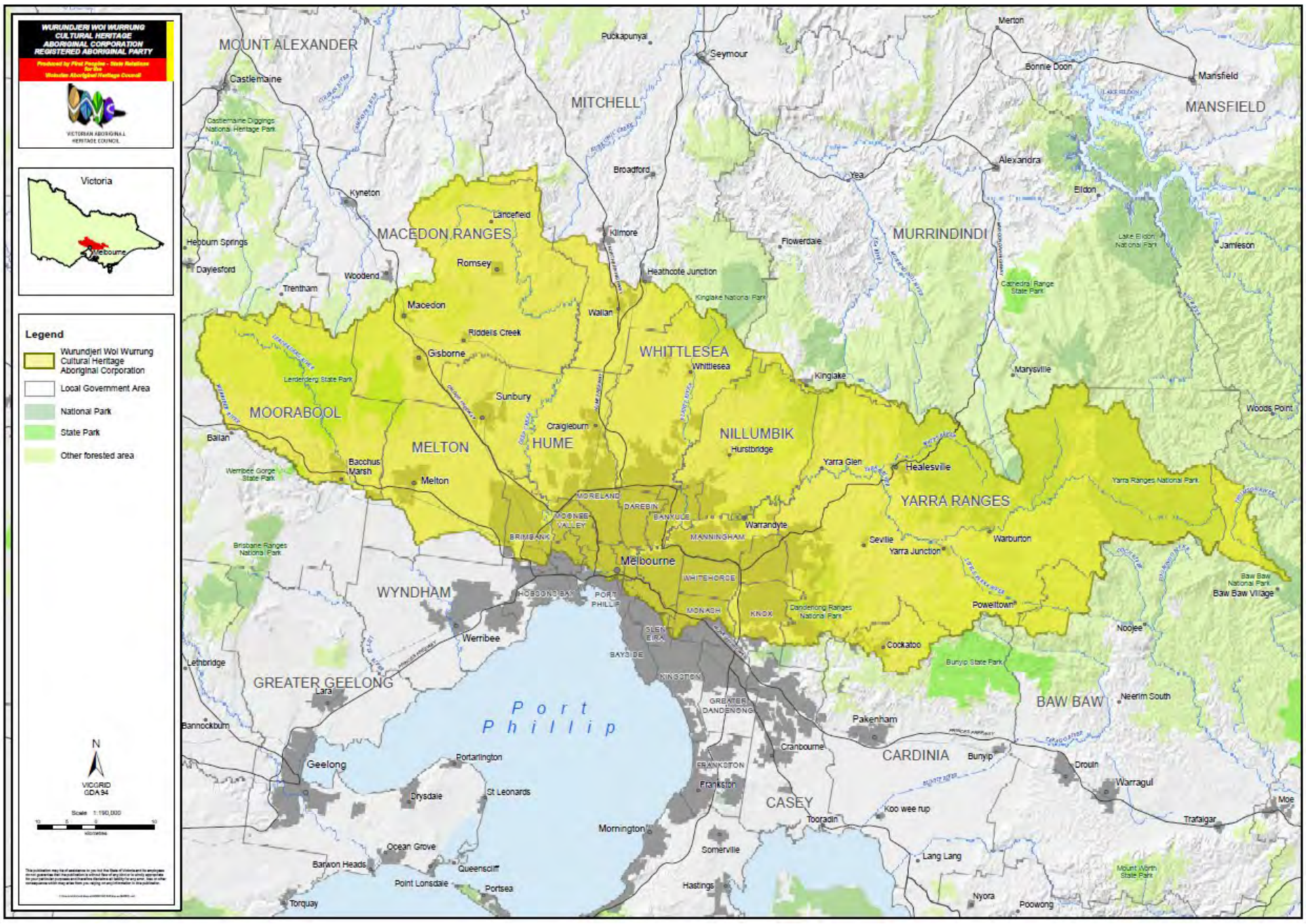


Figure 1-3 Map showing WWCHAC RAP Area

2 Methodology

A process for the collection of information regarding both tangible and intangible Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values associated with the study area was determined through discussions between the VPA, WWCHAC and the Heritage Advisor.

2.1 Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Knowledge Recording

Two on-Country visits were undertaken (12 October & 22 November 2023), attended by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders, development stakeholders and heritage advisors. An additional videolink interview was conducted with Ron Jones (Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder, WWCHAC) who was unable to attend the on-Country visits.

VPA and WWCHAC worked together to develop the broad scope of the Cultural Values Assessment. This included agreeing to a format which involved on-Country visits with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders and staff anthropologist. Prior to the cultural values site visit, a draft desktop assessment detailing background research of the study area and geographic region was provided to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung for review. Informed by this desktop assessment and development plans, it was agreed that the cultural values site visit would include a general drive of the study area and geographic region to help frame the landform context and also include targeted site visits to key landform / location features within the study area and geographic region. During the on-Country visits specific locations were selected for visitation based on landscape representation and development proposals. Preceding these visits all attendees met to discuss the proposed visits, the background information already gathered and the proposed processes for information collection. During the visits information provided by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders was recorded for transcription by Catherine Keneley (WWCHAC, Cultural Values Advisor) and notes were taken by Anna Light (UHA). Additionally, a videoconference interview was conducted with Ron Jones (Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder, WWCHAC) who was unable to attend the on-Country visits and information provided was included in this report. All recordings were provided to WWCHAC for review and approval prior to inclusion in the final report.

3 Desktop Assessment

This section provides background information on the study area and the surrounding region. This information is presented to provide an understanding of the physical, historical, cultural and archaeological setting in which the study area is located. This information is useful in developing archaeological place prediction models. Anna Light, David Mathews, Peter Mathews and Joseph Brooke undertook the background research for the desktop assessment. There were no obstacles encountered to undertaking the desktop assessment.

3.1 Aims of the Assessment

The aims of the desktop assessment were:

- To determine the level of previous Aboriginal heritage investigation of the study area and the surrounding region;
- To determine the presence of registered Aboriginal heritage places within the study area and the surrounding region;
- To determine the environmental context of the study area; and
- Review the historical and cultural setting of the study area and surrounding region.

The methods used to undertake the desktop assessment included:

- Reviewing appropriate sources, including Victorian government on-line information, and summarising relevant environmental background;
- Searching the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) and other research sources (for example, consultancy reports and academic research) for information relating to the study area and the geographic region
    - A VAHR search was undertaken
- Reviewing this information to identify and characterise Aboriginal site types likely to be present within the study area and to obtain relevant information to inform the assessment.

3.2 Environmental Context

This section provides an overview of the environmental context of the study area, with particular focus on factors that may have influenced past human behaviour and hence archaeological place formation processes and the distribution of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung living cultural heritage places. The land-use history of the activity area is also reviewed as it assists in identifying any site formation processes that may have impacted the occurrence and/or location of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung living cultural material and values.

Geographic Region

In order to allow for an understanding of broader environmental resources available to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung who utilised the study area, it is necessary to place geographical parameters on this desktop assessment to provide a meaningful context broad enough to capture regional environmental and Wurundjeri place distribution patterns, while remaining targeted so that these patterns are not missed. While the study area itself provides a large information sample given its size (1,005.85 ha), the geographic region used for this assessment covers an additional 4,852.24 ha surrounding the study area (as per Figure 3-1). This geographic region provides a view of immediately neighbouring accessible resources and variations regarding flora and fauna, geology, soils, geomorphology, the occupation by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people since deep time that may have led to the creation of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung places, living cultural heritage meanings and obligations to such places and

or corridors, whether today on the terrestrial surface of this study area and the post-contact land-use history and activities that may have disturbed Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung places.

3.2.1 Geology and Geomorphology

The study area and the geographic region are situated within the Victorian Volcanic Plan (VVP) bioregion (ACHRIS 2022). The study area is located on the Western Plains geomorphological unit (GMU), on the subunit of 'Plains with poorly developed drainage and shallow regolith' (GMU 6.1.3) (Table 3-2 & Figure 3-1). The geographic region, while dominated by this same GMU, also encompasses very small areas of other Western Plains subunits (Table 3-1 & Figure 3-1).

GMU 6.1.3 ('Plains with poorly developed drainage and shallow regolith') is described as (VRO 2022a):

> "*The plains developed on the older Newer Volcanic lavas that formed in the Late Pliocene and during the Pleistocene, from about two million year ago and up to one million years ago, are generally characterised by thin regolith development and poorly developed drainage. In these landscapes, flow boundaries are obvious, and corestones ('floaters') are often seen at the surface. Shallow drainage lines have developed, often along the boundaries of lava flows. Discontinuous drainage lines may end in ephemeral wetlands and swamps. Examples of this landform occur in the region from Warrambine to Armytage, with the best examples immediately north of the Wingeel Swamp. Associated soil types are sodic and non-sodic texture contrast (moderately deep to deep) soils (Sodosols) and some gradational (shallow to moderately deep) soils (Dermosols), and gilgai (mound and rise ground surfaces) due to swelling and shrinking clay soils can lead to road and building foundation problems*."

GMU 6.2.5 ('Terraces and floodplains, and coastal plains') is located on sedimentary plains associated with the Moolap Sunkland (a shallow seaway during the late interglacial, 125 kya, and during the Holocene maximum, 6 kya), comprising alluvium, alluvial terraces and floodplains (VRO 2022b). This GMU is located proximal to Toolern Creek and Ryans Creek at the northwest of the Geographic Region.

In terms of geology, both the Geographic Region and the Study Area are dominated by the Newer Volcanic Group basalt flows (Neo), dotted with numerous swamp and lake deposits (Qm1) and with linear stretches of colluvium (Qc1) associated with Kororoit Creek (Figure 3-2). The Geographic Region incorporates the colluvium (Qa1) and Darley Gravel (Nxr) associated with Ryans Creek and a very small amount of colluviam (Qc1) associated with pockets along Kororoit Creek and its tributaries in the north.

The Study Area slopes down from the higher elevations in the north (c. 160 m asl) to the lower and flatter plains in the south (c. 110 m asl) (Figure 3-3 shows the geographic region and study area overlain on a digital elevation model or DEM). Landforms within the geographic region can be divided into several useful analytical categories:

- Foothills;
- Flat to gently undulating volcanic plain;
- Stony rises;
- Swamps (former and ephemeral);
- Escarpment of Kororoit Creek;
- Creeks and tributaries, and
- Floodplain.

Table 3-1: Geomorphological units within the Geographic Region

Geomorphological Units (Tier 3)	GMU Tier 1 Description	GMU Tier 2 Description	GMU Tier 3 Description	Lithology	Area (ha)	Area (%)
6.1.1	Western Plains (WP)	Volcanic plains	Eruption points: maars, scoria cones and lava shields, including associated ash and scoria deposits (Lake Purrumbete, Mt. Elephant, Mt. Cottrell)	Volcanics	2.10	0.04%
6.1.2	Western Plains (WP)	Volcanic plains	Stony rises (Mt. Eccles, Pomborneit, Mt. Rouse)	Basalt	56.03	0.96%
6.1.3	Western Plains (WP)	Volcanic plains	Plains with poorly developed drainage and shallow regolith (Wingeel)	Basalt	5,397.40	92.15%
6.2.5	Western Plains (WP)	Sedimentary plains (Plains on unconsolidated (sedimentary) deposits	Terraces and floodplains, and coastal plains (Barwon River, Moolap sunklands, Cape Otway)	Alluvium	401.56	6.86%
Total					**5,857.09**	**100.00%**

Table 3-2: Geomorphological units within the Study Area

Geomorphological Units (Tier 3)	GMU Tier 1 Description	GMU Tier 2 Description	GMU Tier 3 Description	Lithology	Area (ha)	Area (%)
6.1.3	Western Plains (WP)	Volcanic plains	Plains with poorly developed drainage and shallow regolith (Wingeel)	Basalt	1,005.85	100.00%
Total					**1,005.85**	**100.00%**

Table 3-3: Geological units within the Geographic Region

ID	Name	Description	Lithology	Geological History	Area (ha)	Area (%)
Neo	Newer Volcanic Group - basalt flows (Neo): generic	Olivine tholeiite, quartz tholeiite, basanite, basaltic icelandite, hawaiite, mugearite, minor scoria and ash, fluvial sediments: tholeiitic to alkaline; includes sheet flows and valley flows and intercalated gravel, sand, clay	alkali basalt (major [proportion]); tholeiitic basalt (major [proportion]); tuff (minor [proportion]); scoria (minor [proportion]); alluvium (minor [proportion])	Miocene to Holocene (lava flow [process] - eruption centre [environment]; water [process] - fluvial [environment])	5,336.50	91.11%

ID	Name	Description	Lithology	Geological History	Area (ha)	Area (%)
Nxr	Darley Gravel (Nxr): generic	Gravel, sand, silt: gravel red to pale colours; rounding and sorting moderate to good; moderately consolidated; massive to trough cross-bedded; gravel clasts of vein quartz, sandstone, basalt, ironstone in proportions that reflect the local source	gravel [material] (significant); sand (significant); silt [material] (significant)	Neogene to Pleistocene (channelled stream flow - fluvial [environment])	138.05	2.36%
Qa1	Alluvium (Qa1): generic	Gravel, sand, silt: variably sorted and rounded; generally unconsolidated; includes deposits of low terraces; alluvial floodplain deposits	silt [material] (significant); sand (significant); gravel [material] (significant)	Pleistocene to Holocene (channelled stream flow-fluvial [environment])	301.99	5.16%
Qc1	Colluvium (Qc1): generic	Diamictite, gravel, sand, silt, clay, rubble: sorting variable, usually poor; generally poorly rounded; clasts locally sourced; includes channel deposits with better rounding and sorting	diamictite (dominant); rubble (significant); clay [lithology] (significant); silt [material] (significant); sand (significant); gravel [material] (significant)	Pliocene to Holocene (sheet flow - colluvial)	20.28	0.35%
Qm1	Swamp and lake deposits (Qm1): generic	Grey to black carbonaceous mud, silt, clay, minor peat: generally unconsolidated; rare dolomite	mud (major [proportion]); silt [material] (significant); clay [lithology] (significant); peat (minor [proportion]); dolostone (rare)	Pleistocene to Holocene (detrital deposition still water - swamp/marsh/bog)	60.26	1.03%
Total					**5,857.09**	**100.00%**

Table 3-4: Geological units within the Study Area

ID	Name	Description	Lithology	Geological History	Area (ha)	Area (%)
Neo	Newer Volcanic Group - basalt flows (Neo): generic	Olivine tholeiite, quartz tholeiite, basanite, basaltic icelandite, hawaiite, mugearite, minor scoria and ash, fluvial sediments: tholeiitic to alkaline; includes sheet flows and valley flows and intercalated gravel, sand, clay	alkali basalt (major [proportion]); tholeiitic basalt (major [proportion]); tuff (minor [proportion]); scoria (minor [proportion]); alluvium (minor [proportion])	Miocene to Holocene (lava flow [process] - eruption centre [environment]; water [process] - fluvial [environment])	908.61	90.42%

ID	Name	Description	Lithology	Geological History	Area (ha)	Area (%)
Qa1	Alluvium (Qa1): generic	Gravel, sand, silt: variably sorted and rounded; generally unconsolidated; includes deposits of low terraces; alluvial floodplain deposits	silt [material] (significant); sand (significant); gravel [material] (significant)	Pleistocene to Holocene (channelled stream flow-fluvial [environment])	78.80	7.84%
Qm1	Swamp and lake deposits (Qm1): generic	Grey to black carbonaceous mud, silt, clay, minor peat: generally unconsolidated; rare dolomite	mud (major [proportion]); silt [material] (significant); clay [lithology] (significant); peat (minor [proportion]); dolostone (rare)	Pleistocene to Holocene (detrital deposition still water - swamp/marsh/bog)	17.44	1.74%
Total					**1,005.85**	**100.00%**

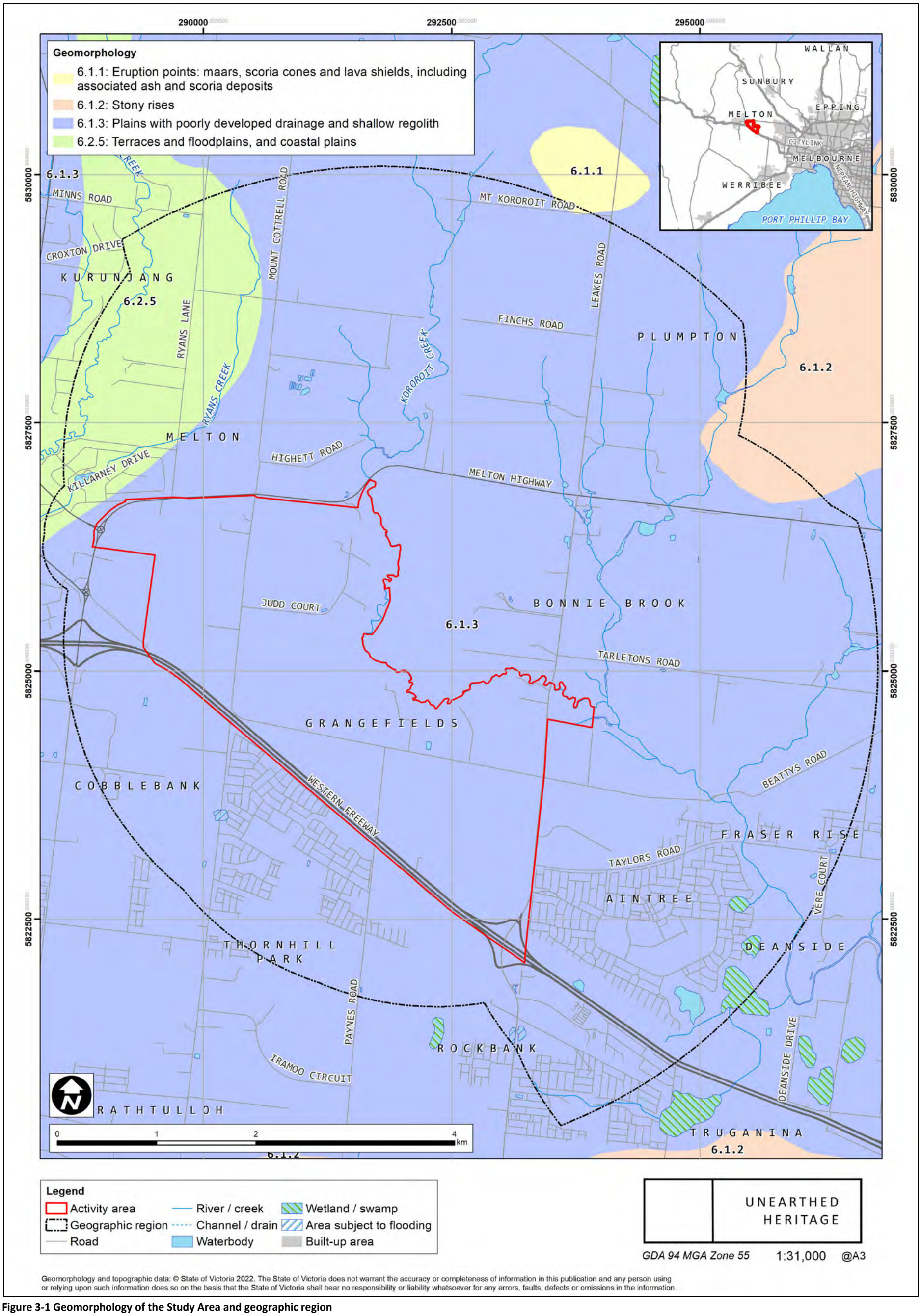
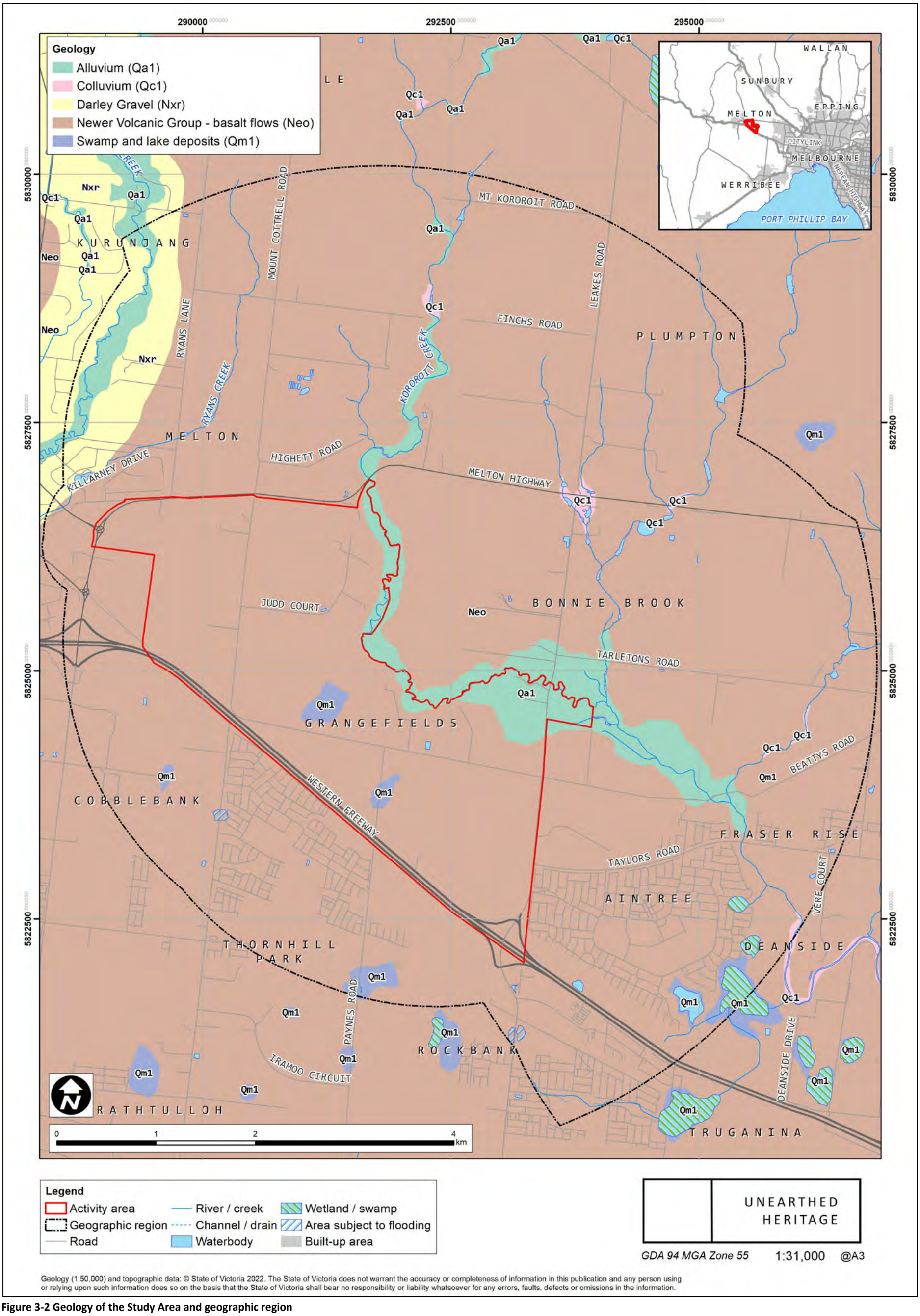


Figure 3-1 Geomorphology of the Study Area and geographic region



Geology (1:50,000) and topographic data: © State of Victoria 2022. The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.

Figure 3-2 Geology of the Study Area and geographic region

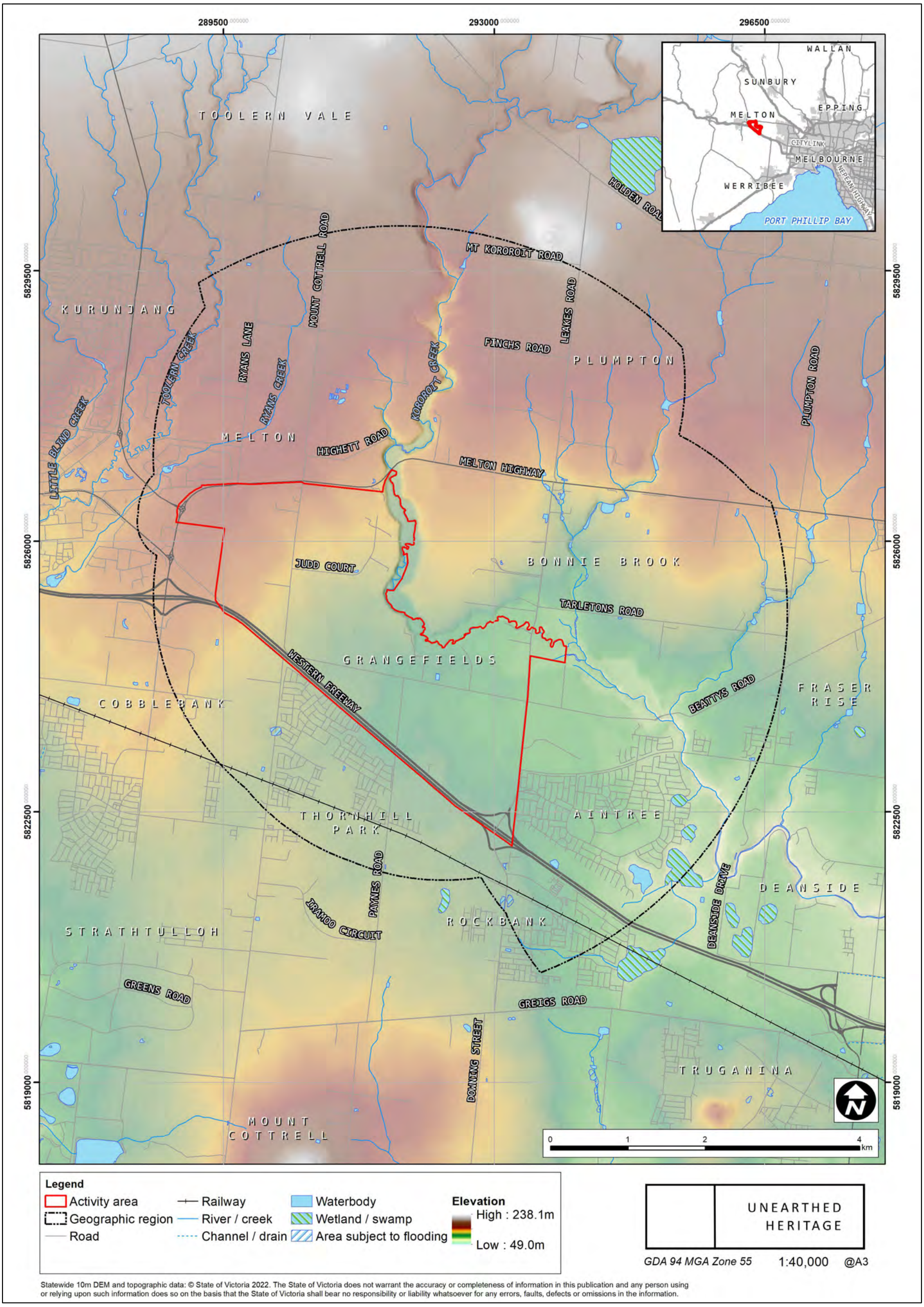


Figure 3-3 Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of the Study Area

3.2.2 Flora and Fauna

Prior to European colonisation and land-use, both the geographic region and the Study Area would have been dominated by Plains Grasslands and Chenopod Shrublands (Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) 132), with small areas of Wetlands (EVC 125) dotted throughout, Riverine Grassy Woodlands or Forests (EVC 68) and Plains Woodland/Plains Grassland Mosaic (EVC 693) associated with creek corridors (Figure 3-4, Table 3-5, Table 3-6).

Plains Grasslands and Chenopod Shrublands (EVC 132) is described as primarily treeless and dominated by grass and herb species and associated with cracking basalt soils prone to waterlogging (DELWP 2022).

Wetland environments would have been associated with treeless shrubland (EVC 125).

The broad range of vegetation in the region historically provided Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people in the area access to a range of plant and animal food resources, including swamp wallabies, eastern grey kangaroos, bandicoots, quolls, echidnas, amphibians and reptiles which would have populated the area (BWVP 2022). Waterways and swamp areas would have provided further food sources, such as eels, fish, birds and eggs. All of these have been noted by early explorers and settlers travelling or settling in the region as well as the collection of plant foods such as *Murnong*, grasses and seeds.

The vegetation itself would have also provided many resources to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, such as wood and bark for tools, plant material for medicinal purposes, and fibres for netting and bags.

Table 3-5: EVC units within the geographic region (DELWP 2022)

EVC Code	Group Name	EVC Name	Sub-group	Area (ha)	Area (%)
0068	Riverine Grassy Woodlands or Forests	Creekline Grassy Woodland	Creekline and/or swampy	204.73	3.50%
0104	Wetlands	Lignum Swamp	Freshwater	17.31	0.30%
0125	Wetlands	Plains Grassy Wetland	Freshwater	43.72	0.75%
0132	Plains Grasslands and Chenopod Shrublands	Plains Grassland	Clay soils	5,453.58	93.11%
0693	Plains Woodlands or Forests	Plains Woodland/Plains Grassland Mosaic	Poorly-draining	137.75	2.35%
Total				**5,857.09**	**100.00%**

Table 3-6: EVC units within the Study Area (DELWP 2022)

EVC Code	Group Name	EVC Name	Sub-group	Area (ha)	Area (%)
0068	Riverine Grassy Woodlands or Forests	Creekline Grassy Woodland	Creekline and/or swampy	31.15	3.10%
0125	Wetlands	Plains Grassy Wetland	Freshwater	30.63	3.05%
0132	Plains Grasslands and Chenopod Shrublands	Plains Grassland	Clay soils	943.06	93.85%
Total				**1,005.85**	**100.00%**

3.2.3 Climate

In the study region, summer average maximum and minimum temperatures are *c*. 26.6° and 12.1° Celsius, respectively, while in winter the average maximum and minimum are 14.5° and 5.5° Celsius, respectively (BOM 2022). The average annual rainfall is *c*.537.5 mm (BOM 2022).

While these climatic conditions would have placed no strictures on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung custodianship, they would have clearly led to differential seasonal occupation across different parts of the landscape. Additionally, during the long period of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Kulin Nation custodianship of the broader region (at least *c*.37,000 years BP), climatic conditions have varied significantly, including colder and drier conditions that would have seen the drying up of Nerm / Port Phillip Bay, and warmer and wetter periods that would have provided different challenges and opportunities for occupation (Mulvaney & Kamminga 1999).

The current coastline of Nerm / Port Phillip Bay *c*. 6 kya after the sea settled to its current level (rising above current level then falling 1-2 m to contemporary level). During the Pleistocene ice age, low sea levels allowed a land mass to extend across what is now Nerm / Port Phillip Bay. Between *c*.18-6 kya as the climate warmed, this land mass was submerged and the current bay formed (Bird 2011: 4).

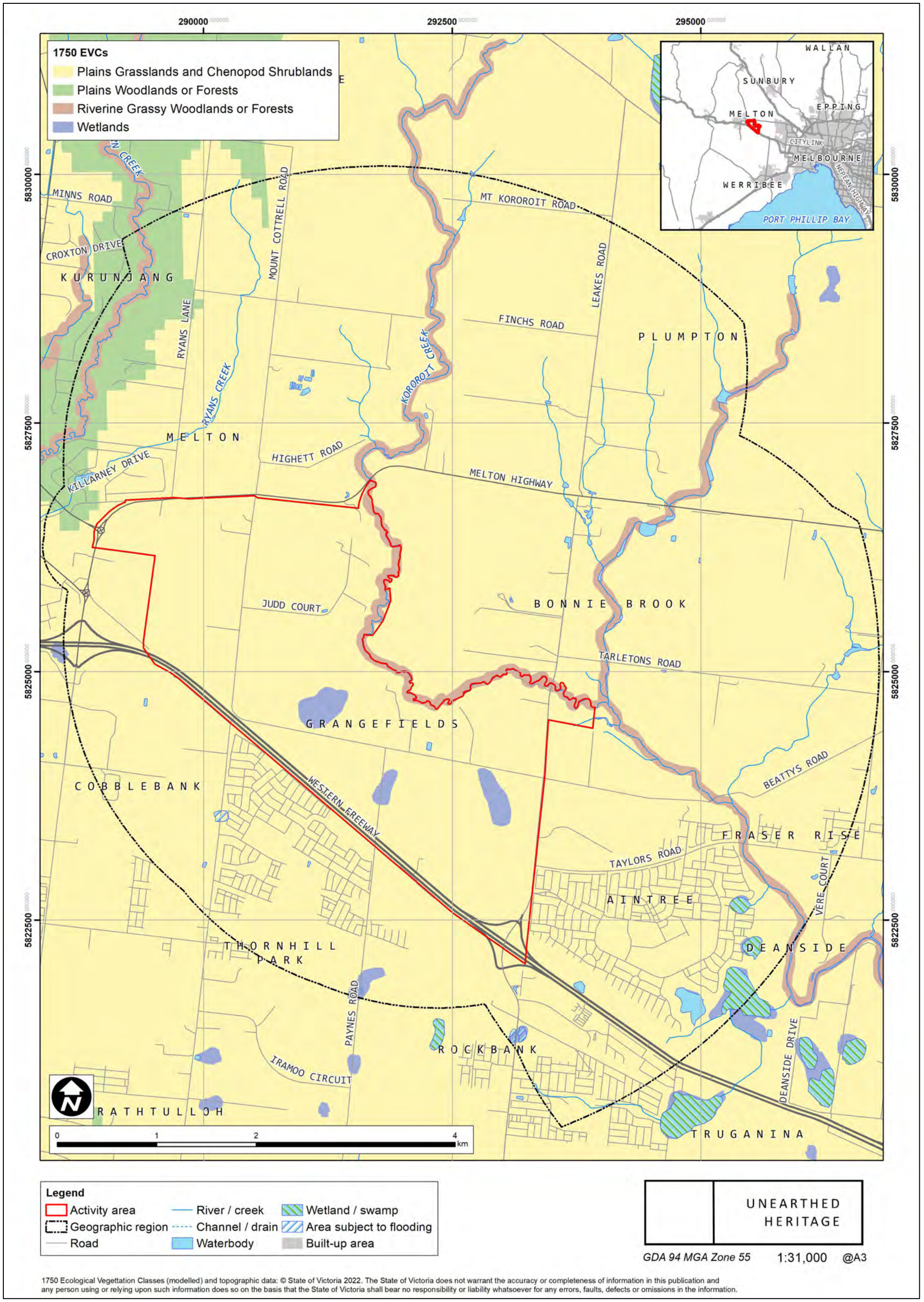


Figure 3-4 Modelled 1750s EVCs of the study area and the geographic region

3.3 Archaeological Background

Note: Redacted

3.4 Cultural Background

3.4.1 Introduction

Currently, information about Aboriginal occupation of the study region is predominantly derived from observations made by Europeans in the early years of contact, once Aboriginal life had already been disrupted. Two important factors need to be taken into account when considering this. Firstly, Aboriginal culture is an oral tradition with only certain members of groups holding particular stories and information and with the arrival of European explorers and settlers, disease and displacement meant disruption to this system with communities forcibly removed from Country or information holders succumbing to disease or European weapons. Secondly, in order to trust in the ethnographic records, those that recorded the information must be relied upon to have been told, and to have transcribed, correct information, to have no bias stemming from their own educations or colonial desires or from negative interactions – to be wholly neutral. Boucher (in Clark & Cahir 2016: 225) describes the foggy lens through which we must now view ethnographic records as being because '*the frontier was always an exercise in narrating and imagining colonisation rather than a reflection of its material progress…the stories explorers told about their frontier crossings could not help but reverberate with these politics*' with narratives around exploration used to support colonialsim '*at the expense of other forms of knowledge*'. Further, Pascoe (2018: 4-5) refers to imperialism as more than an 'economic and military exercise' but as an ideological act that requires otherness and reformation to colonial will. This is how, Pascoe (2018: 4) argues, European assumptions selectively filtered the information to create the required narrative that perpetuates today.

This does not mean that information from these sources should be disregarded, just treated with caution and the knowledge of all that came before the recording of the information, both for the informant and the recorder.

It is difficult to estimate the population size of Aboriginal Australia at the time of European invasion, but most recent estimates range from about 500,000 to 1,000,000. By 1901 there were only about 650 Aboriginal people in all of Victoria (Presland 2010: 90). Only now, almost 200 years after the first European colonisation, is the Aboriginal population of Victoria getting back to its pre-Invasion level. The catastrophic reduction of Indigenous populations in the face of European colonizers has been shared all over the world. It is due to the multiple effects of disease, warfare and massacres, loss of habitat and culture, and feeling of spiritual hopelessness.

3.4.2 Ethnohistorical Background

3.4.2.1 Social Organization

The study region is located within the traditional lands and waters of the *Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung* (also called *Wurundjeri*). (Clark 1990: 365). The *Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung* were part of the East Kulin language group (Clark 1990: 363). The East Kulin is made up of four language groups: *Woi-wurrung, Bun wurrung, Daung wurrung* (*Taungurong*) and *Ngaura-illam wurrung* (*Djadjawurung*) (the *Wada wurrung* to the west making up the fifth language group of the Kulin nation). The East Kulin share a closely related language and other kinship systems such as marriage, religion and trade (Eidelson 2014: 12). Marriage was always on an 'exogamous' basis (i.e. between members of different moiety clans) (Presland 2010: 33). All *Woi-wurrung* clans had their own 'head man' (*Ngurungaeta* in *Woi-wurrung* language, Barwick 1984: 107) who had authority over the group when in contact with other clans (Presland 1997: 52, 2010: 18). The *Woi-wurrung* are a patrilineal language group with local groups, or clans, associated with either the *Bunjil* (wedge-tailed eagle) or *Waa* (crow) moiety system (Clark 1990: 361, 379). It has been suggested that family groups, or 'bands', based on marriage and

offspring within a clan, foraged and travelled together and communication between these groups included other clans of the *Woi-wurrung* (and other East Kulin groups such as the *Bun wurrung*) moving into/through the area (Presland 1997: 6, 2001: 19-20 & 33-34, Howitt 2001: 72, Cahir et al. 2018). This is discussed by Barwick (1984: 106) as relating to connections remaining with the mother's birth clan.

Clark (1990: 365) lists seven *Woi-wurrung* clans with the closest to the study region being the *Tallin willam*, who were connected to Toolern Creek, the *Kurung jang balug* associated with Werribee River and Mt. Cottrell, and the *Marin balug*, with connections to Kororoit Creek. Howitt (2001: 70) lists five 'tribes' of the *Woëworung* language group, although notes it is a 'defective' list but provides a general idea (note that in this case the meaning of 'tribe' equates to the 'clan' reference -utilised in this report). Of Howitt's five groups, the *Kurung-jang-balluk* are the most relevant to the study region with 'Kurung-jang' suggested by (Howitt 2001: 70) to mean 'red ground'. Barwick (1984: 120-124) lists five clans associated with the *Woi-wurrung* language group, including: *Baluk-willam*, *Gunung-willam-balluk*, *Kurung-jang-balluk*, *Marin-balluk* and *Wurundjeri-balluk / Wurundjeri-willam* (these last two both listed as the fifth clan, being south and north of the Yarra River, respectively). The speakers of the four Eastern Kulin Nation language groups of central and northern Victoria formed the core of what has been called the Kulin 'nation' or 'confederacy': Woi-wurrung (today known as the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung), Boon wurrung / Bunurong), Daung wurrung (Taungurung), and Ngurai-illam wurrung. Two other groups were considered 'honorary' members of the Kulin 'nation': Wadawurrung and Djadja wurrung (Dja Dja Wurrung) (Barwick 1984: 105; Presland 1980).

The clan was the most important social group in Aboriginal society. It was the clan that cared for and was responsible for the lands, seas, skies and waters under their remit, and it was the clan with which the individual identified himself or herself (Presland 2010: 18). But all the members of a clan did not permanently live together. Smaller groups, comprising extended families made up the basic economic group. These are generally called 'bands' and would typically number 15-20 individuals – usually 1-2 families: men, their wives, sons, unmarried daughters, and a shifting population of other relatives (Presland 2010: 18). The band is the group that is most relevant to archaeological investigations, since it is most commonly their activities (hunting, fishing, gathering, camping) that are represented in the rather ephemeral archaeological record. While band membership could be rather fluid, clan membership was established at birth. Both one's moiety and one's clan were inherited from his or her father; this inheritance was retained for life (Barwick 1984: 106). Once born, a clan member identified deeply and spiritually with his or her land. The clan members' connection to their land defined their very existence: it was theirs since the Dreaming: "Wherever one is born, that is his or her Country" (William Thomas, cited in Cannon 1983: 624). This emphasis on Country and belonging as one and the same illustrates the degree of dispossession Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people endured: their suffering on this account cannot be overemphasized.

3.4.2.2 Land and Waters

The *Kurung-jang-balluk* were noted as associated with the study area region as the *Marin-balluk* area was suggested to extend between Kororoit Creek and Maribyrnong River, according to Barwick's mapping (Barwick 1984: 118, VACL 2022).

This Country included the land and the waterways and waterbodies, the sky and the stories.

3.4.2.3 Moiety Division

All the Kulin Nations had a patrilineal descent system (rare among Australian Aboriginal people) and an exogamous moiety system. Each clan belonged to either the *Bundjil* (or *Bunjil*, 'Eaglehawk', or 'Wedge-tailed Eagle') (Aquila audax) or *Waa* ('Crow') (*Corvus coronoides*) moiety; marriage had to be

with someone from the other moiety. Eastern Kulin Nation men sought "marriage partners from within the confederacy but outside of their own clan (Presland 2010) and marriages would often be to a member of a distant clan (such from different ecological regions), which would expand the possibilities for resource exploitation. Such marriages could cement alliances between far-flung groups of the confederacy (and beyond), but they could also cause tensions and enmities.

Clark (1990: 382-384) lists the following moiety associations with the Wurundjeri clans close to the study region: *Kurung jang balug* and *Marin balug* with Waa, and *Tallin willam* with Bunjil.

3.4.2.4 Cultural Events

The periodic gatherings between various language groups often occurred and involved a variety of purposes, such as: renewing family ties, trade, dance and song and story-telling, and initiation and ritual and ceremony, as well as the settling of disputes through fighting. Corroborees were a feature of these meetings, which occurred in many different places across Country. There was a formality to the meetings: different groups would camp in separate spaces determined by tradition near the corroboree ground. Some of the Kulin Nation confederacy corroboree grounds, for example, were in what is now inner Melbourne: near the present-day Botanical Gardens, Parliament Hill, and Royal Park. For these the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung would camp in places where the Melbourne Cricket Ground and Punt Road Oval are now (Eidelson 1997: 29). The Boon Wurrung / Bunerung had campsites in what are now the Botanical Gardens, and the Daung wurrung camped in today's Clifton Hill. The Wadawurrung camped in what was first the Old Melbourne Cemetery, later paved over as a car park for the Queen Victoria Market (Presland 1980). Other corroborees, such as ones described by Buckley, could involve different clans from within the same tribe or language group.

3.4.2.5 Belief systems

As the complex, and often secret, mythologies and belief structures associated with *Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung* culture are often very localised (i.e. spirit ancestors are associated with particular landscape features) it is difficult without the generationally-purveyed traditional knowledge to identify this information. Traditions and stories were passed on via myth and song (Cahir et al. 2018: 2). Particularly with the modification of the landscape by European land-use and the resultant removal of these markers. In relation to the evolution of belief systems due to this European impact on traditional life, Cahir et al. (2018: 33) explains: "*Much of Creation folklore formerly known by Aboriginal people has been lost or significantly altered since European settlement in the early 19th Century, but traditions concerning spirit beings have remained because they are part of a body of knowledge that is not only still relevant but is still being augmented*." These spirit Ancestors were simultaneously seen as landscape features (trees, hills, mountains and animals) and as stars and planets with the landscape and stories intertwined to form a narrative map both physical and historical. On a broad-scale, Creation stories can indicate a link to historical occurrences, such as stories surrounding the cause of the filling of Port Phillip Bay (Massola 1968: 58).

The skyworld and the earth landscape were reflections of each other (replications) with points of connection, easier to cross during the Creation period and with only specific people able to cross later. A widespread story involved the sky and the belief that it is supported on four poles (Howitt 1884: 186; Brumm 2010). If the poles were to collapse, the skies would crash down and their water would drown everyone. Howitt (2001 [1904]: 427) reported that the great *Ngurungaeta* (leader) of the Wurundjeri people Barak, told him that before the Invasion messages were sent far and wide that the poles were becoming rotten, and that axes were urgently needed to cut new ones.

Bunjil and *Waa* were the two main ancestral spirit figures of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and other Kulin Nation People, who honour them by dividing their clans into either *Bunjil* or *Waa* moieties:

> *Bunjil* taught the Kulin the arts of life, and one legend states that in that time the Kulin married without any regard for kinship. Two medicine-men (*Wirrarap*) went up to him in the *Tharangalk-bek*, and he said in reply to their request that the Kulin should divide themselves into two parts—"*Bunjil* on this side and *Waang* [*Waa*] on that side, and *Bunjil* should marry *Waang*, and *Waang* marry *Bunjil*" (Howitt 2001 [1904]: 491).

3.4.2.6 Water

Water played a major role in the practical and the traditional lives of Aboriginal people. As Cahir et al. (2018: 95, 96) state, at a basic level – access to an adequate amount of potable water is a "*fundamental human physiological imperative*". In sedentary contemporary society we have organised to have it on tap. Aboriginal people travelled when water was too great (flooding) or too little (dry creeks). Aboriginal myth narratives held maps to potable water locations (creeks, rivers, water holes, claypans, etc.) and knowledge (biocultural knowledge) regarding which birds and insects were 'waterfinders' as well as which vegetation provided water. Larger, more significant waterways and water sources often held totemic significance and were the localities for ceremony, trade and formed Country boundaries. In the case of the study area, Kororoit Creek has been suggested to represent a boundary between the *Kurung-jang-balluk* and the *Marin-balluk*.

3.4.3 The Aboriginal Protectorate, Missions and Reserves

The Port Phillip District came about in large part due to lobbying from the Aborigines Protection Society that had formed in 1837 in London, and in June of the same year a House of Commons Select Committee recommended that a Protectorate be established. George Augustus Robinson, who had gained a certain notoriety for his role in the 'conciliation' of the Van Diemen's Land Aborigines between 1829 and 1838, was appointed Chief Protector (Clark and Cahir, eds. 2016: 1). The assistant protectors were William Thomas, Charles Wightman Sievwright, Edward Stone Parker, and James Dredge. Parker and Dredge were Methodist preachers, Thomas a Methodist educator, and Sievwright a British Army Officer. In March 1839, Robinson allocated regions of the Port Phillip District to his assistants: Thomas was given the Central Protectorate District of Western Port, Sievwright the Western District, Parker was given the Loddon and Northwest District, and Dredge the Goulburn District (Clark 1995: 3).

In many ways the Protectorate was doomed from the start: the Protectors were unable to offer much assistance to the Aboriginal inhabitants, neither with supplies nor protection from squatters. The squatters in turn considered the Protectorate an obstacle to the running of their enterprises, and most of the squatters actively opposed and undermined the Protectors, whose work was increasingly difficult (Presland 2017: 101-105). The Aboriginal population continued to decline rapidly, and reserves and missions became more prominent.

In 1849 the Protectorate was abolished, and a period of government inaction and neglect followed. This situation was exacerbated when gold was found throughout much of Victoria, which marginalized the Aboriginal people even more – although they were largely 'marginalized' in settlements and in the goldfields. Their traditional hunting and plant harvesting estates had been taken over by sheep, and they survived as best they could (Cahir 2019: 220). In 1860 the 'Central Board Appointed to Watch Over the Interests of Aborigines' was established.

By the 1860s Aboriginal people were being encouraged to move to Coranderrk, on the Country of the *Wurundjeri-balluk* clan (William Barak's clan) near Healesville. In 1863 Wonga (son of Billibellary) and Barak (Wurundjeri *Ngurungaetas*) had led about 40 Aboriginal people

– Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, Boon wurrung and Daung wurrung – to a traditional camping ground place near Healesville Presland 2017: 111-112, where they camped and petitioned for ownership of the land (WWCHAC 2024). On 22 June 1863 land totalling 2,550 acres (1,032 ha) was granted to them as a temporary reserve; the settlement was called 'Coranderrk' (Victoria Government Gazette 24 July 1866). At first the settlement survived and even flourished, and by 1875 Coranderrk was virtually self-sufficient. Its produce won first prize at the Melbourne International Exhibition in February 1881 (Nanni & James 2013: 16).

Meanwhile, in 1869, the Aboriginal Protection Act 1869 was passed in the Victorian Parliament (Broome 2005: 130-131). It gave the Governor of Victoria power to dictate where Aboriginal people could reside, and what activities they could undertake on and off reserves; it also gave the authority to take charge of Aboriginal children. The Act also established the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines, which lasted from 1869 to 1900. From what we have already seen in how Colonial governments (and later, Australian governments) have treated Aboriginal people under the guise of 'protection', it should be no surprise that from 1874 the Board began to undermine the settlement at Coranderrk. By this time white neighbours were beginning to eye the settlement's land, and for the next dozen years the Coranderrk residents were continually fighting to keep their reserve (Barwick 1998: 1). They sent deputations to the Colonial government, while the government for its part held a Royal Commission (1877) and a Parliamentary Inquiry (1881) on the Aboriginal 'problem'. Bravely, the Aboriginal people of Coranderrk hung on.

In 1886 another Act was passed – the Aborigines' Protection Act 1886 – as an amendment to the 1869 Act. Under this Act, 'half-castes' were forbidden to live on reserves. All 'half-castes under the age of 35' were ordered to leave Coranderrk – presumably it was thought that with most of the younger residents gone, the rest would soon follow (Presland 2017: 113). About 60 Coranderrk 'half-castes' were evicted, and the settlement never really recovered. Only 15 able-bodied men were left. But still the surviving Aboriginal people of Coranderrk resisted: Barak, who had already led two protest marches to Parliament House, and others petitioned the government:

> "Could we get our freedom to go away Shearing and Harvesting and to come home when we wish and also to go for the good of our Health when we need it ... We should be free like the White Population there is only few Blacks now rem[a]ining in Victoria, we are all dying away now and we Blacks of Aboriginal Blood, wish to have now freedom for all our life time ... Why does the Board seek in these latter days more stronger authority over us Aborigines than it has yet been?" (Anonymous N.D.)

In 1893 almost half the remaining Coranderrk land was reclaimed by the colonial government, and the reserve was formally closed in 1924. Most of the surviving residents were forcibly moved to Lake Tyers in Gippsland, in Gunai Kurnai Country. A few elderly residents refused to leave; the last Aboriginal woman at Coranderrk, Elizabeth Davis, died at the age of 104 in 1957. In a final act of spite by the Victorian government, permission was refused for her to be buried alongside her husband and siblings at Coranderrk.

Today the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are represented by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC) serving on behalf of all Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and represents their interests.

3.4.4 Post-Contact Land Use History

3.4.4.1 Exploration, Government Survey and Colonisation

As early as 1824 reports on the attractiveness of the plains west of Melbourne for grazing were being relayed by Hume and Hovell. They were followed by John Batman who 'claimed' over 600,000 acres after which he and John Wedge, divided the land into fourteen lots for a 'lucky draw' for ownership by members of the Port Phillip Association (Figure 3-5). In an 1835 map of the Port Phillip District, Wedge described the land in the study region as 'extensive open grassy plains' (Figure 3-6).

In 1836 the 'purchase' of the entire area was deemed to be illegal and this led to an influx of sheep graziers for the establishment of large squatting runs, making use of the good pasture reported on by the initial scouts from the Port Phillip Association (Figure 3-9). The study area was located across three squatting runs, with the east within Yuille's large holding, the central section appears to possibly be associated with the large Exford Estate and the eastern section in Pyke's Station (Spreadborough & Anderson 1983: 262). An early map (Figure 3-8) indicates that the study region was partly within the Rockbank Station held by Yuille, purchased in 1853 as part of a 640 acre estate (Starr 1985: 15). After 1850 freehold titles became available via public auction and the district became settled. Place names in the region are derived from both European people of note (e.g. named after explorers and settlers) or European interpretations of Aboriginal.

Early maps of the wider region show both mid-19th Century landforms as well as early town plans (Figure 3-10, Figure 3-11, Figure 3-12) with swamps present and subdivisions detailed. Former swamps east of the Township of Melton (including the current study area), now dried up, once nearly 2 m deep and home to numerous water birds (Pollitt 1961: 27). In 1852 one large allotment was subdivided to form a village site, which became Melton (Starr 1985: 13). Nearly a decade earlier the Ballarat Road (now the Western Highway) had been surveyed, with very little change to its alignment in the time since (Starr 1985: 14). An 1837 surveyor's map (Figure 3-7) shows the alignment of the Ballarat Road and also a less formal track which extended to Ballarat, passing by Pyke's Station, and was the only access for numerous years (Pollitt 1961: 18). This old track extended through the current study area.

The town of Melton had grown rapidly to include numerous hotels, churches a school and shops, to form an epicentre for the pastoral and agricultural industries in the region. However, opposition to the large holdings in the region due to the limitations of township development saw the further subdivision of these estates, and in 1865 crown lands were opened for public selection (Pollitt 1961: 21).

After the initial pastoral period, mainly associated with sheep grazing, early industry was associated with grain cultivation and then, in the mid-1970s the focus shifted to grazing and dairying (Bacchus Marsh Express 1876: 1).

Gold discovery in Ballarat was a boon to the township, with travellers making use of the hotels and local suppliers providing for the gold fields (Pollitt 1961: 26). The loss of population to the goldfields, however, as well as impacts of bushfire and cattle diseases, saw the region suffer (Pollitt 1961: 27).

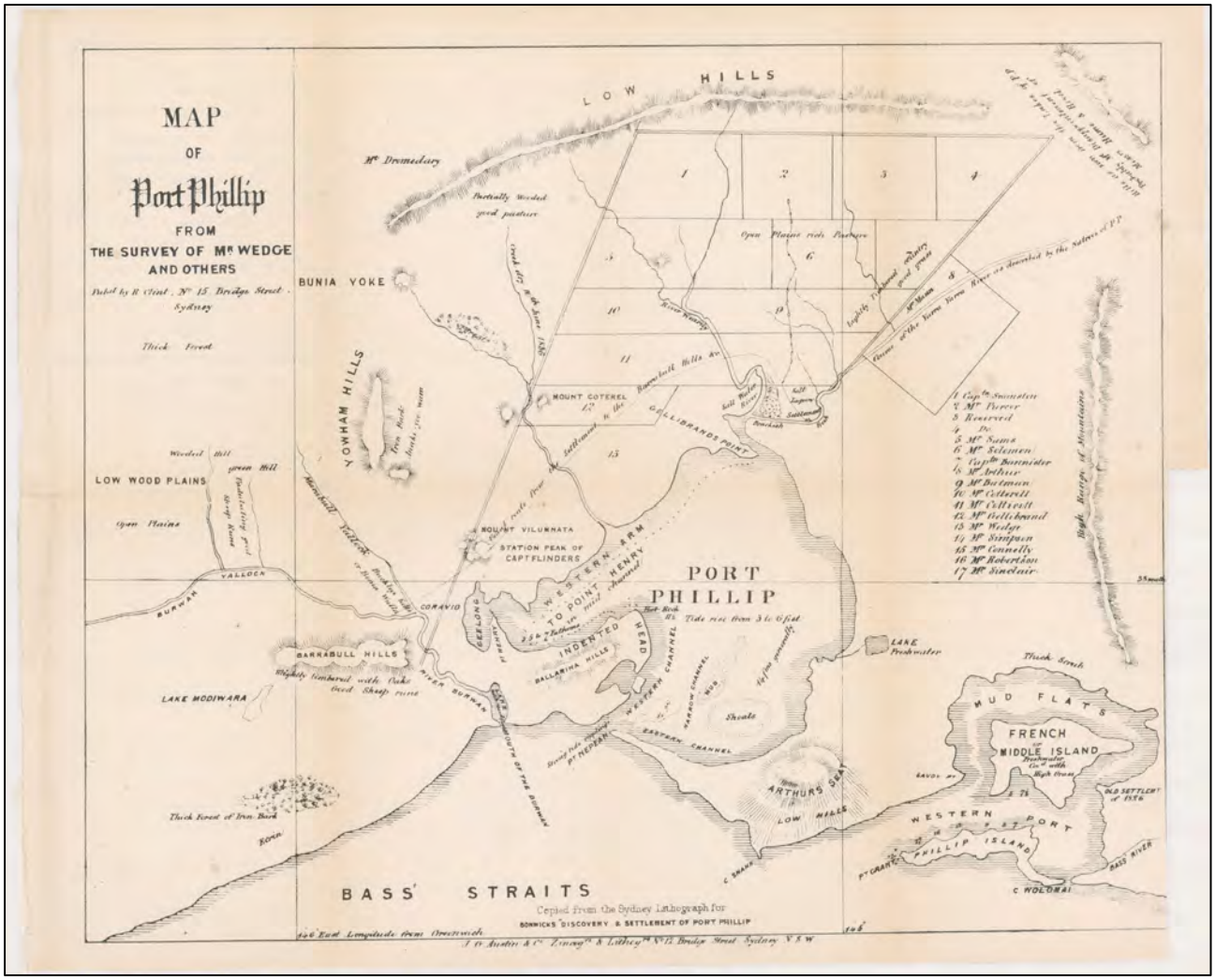


Figure 3-5 Map of the Allotments granted to The Port Phillip Association surveyed by Wedge (Source: http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-416707851)

Figure 3-6 1835 Map of the Port Phillip District, drawn by Wedge (Source: http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/)

The land within the study area has generally remained agricultural with clearing and ploughing as consistent broad impacts and with orcharding, equestrian tracks, and minor constructions associated with residences and farming, road construction and dams forming significant localised disturbance, with only minor changes, excepting the suburban creep in the geographic region surrounding the study area. This, as well as the locations of swamps, water courses and stony rises, can be seen in a series of aerial images between 1951 to today (Figure 3-13 - Figure 3-23), with aerials providing opportunities to identify current stony rise landforms (Figure 3-24).

Figure 3-7 1837 Surveyor's Map (Source: Pollitt 1961)

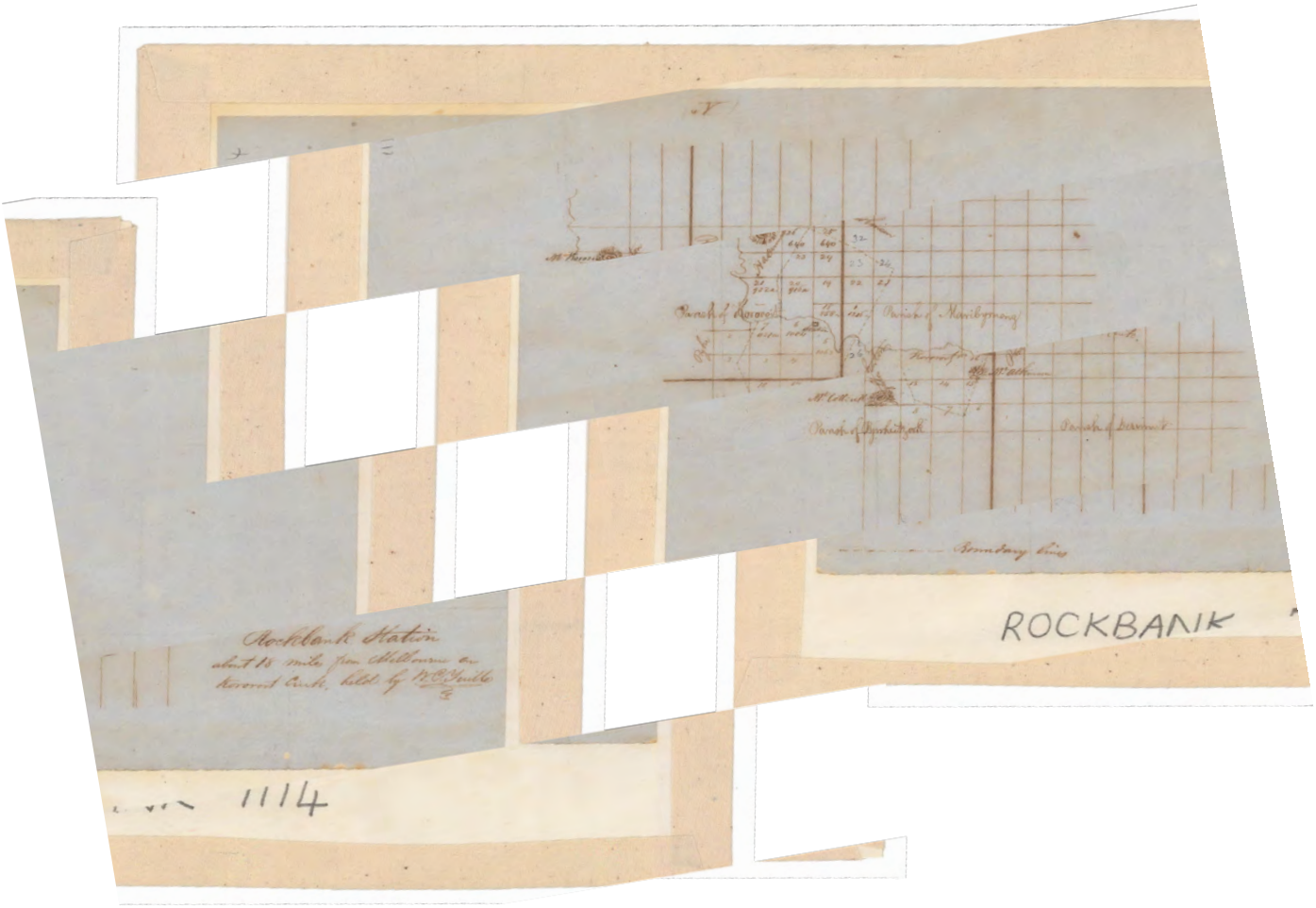


Figure 3-8 Pastoral runs (c. 1847) in the Rockbank region (Source: Public Records Office Victoria)

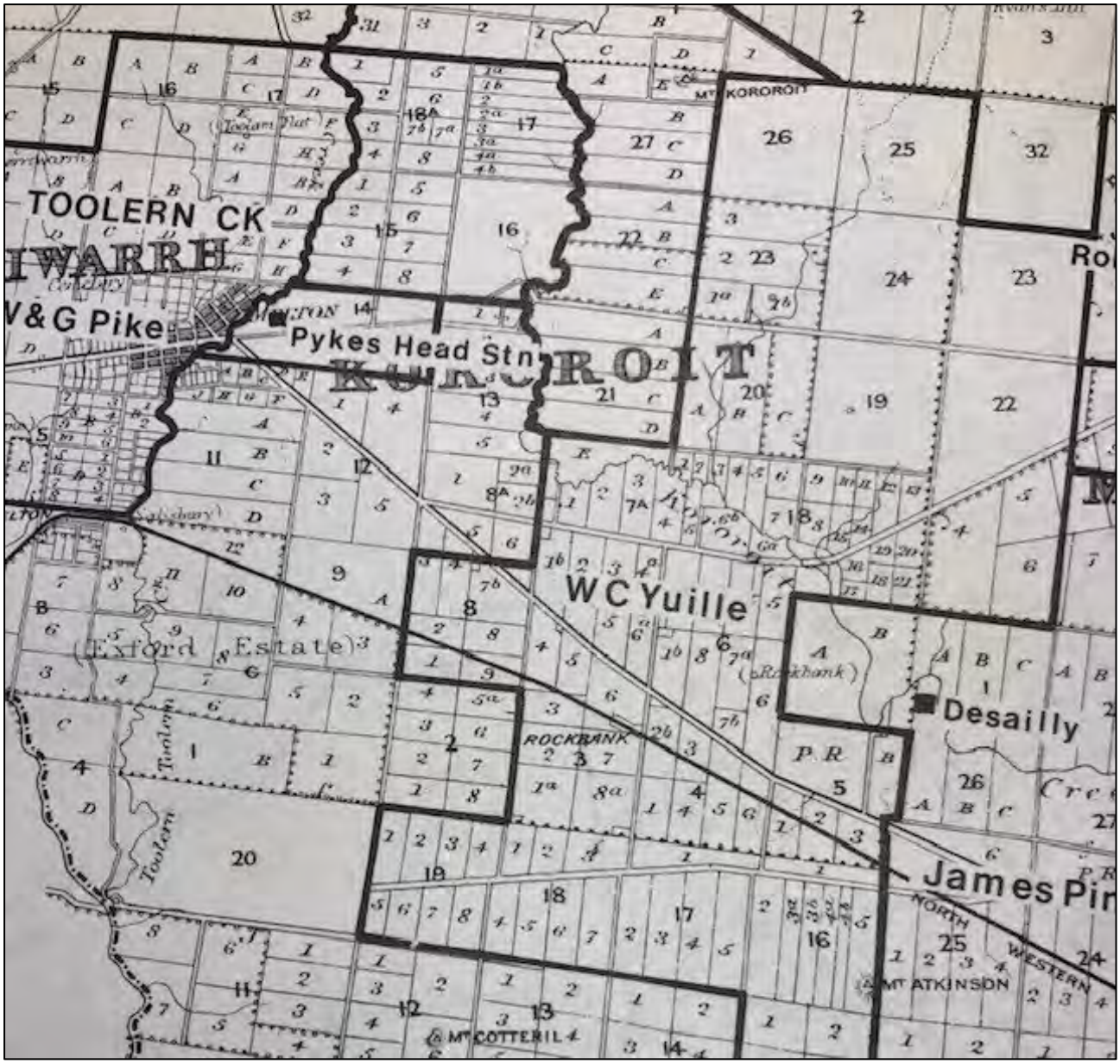


Figure 3-9 Squatting runs in the Settled Districts west of Melbourne (Source: Spreadborough & Anderson 1983)

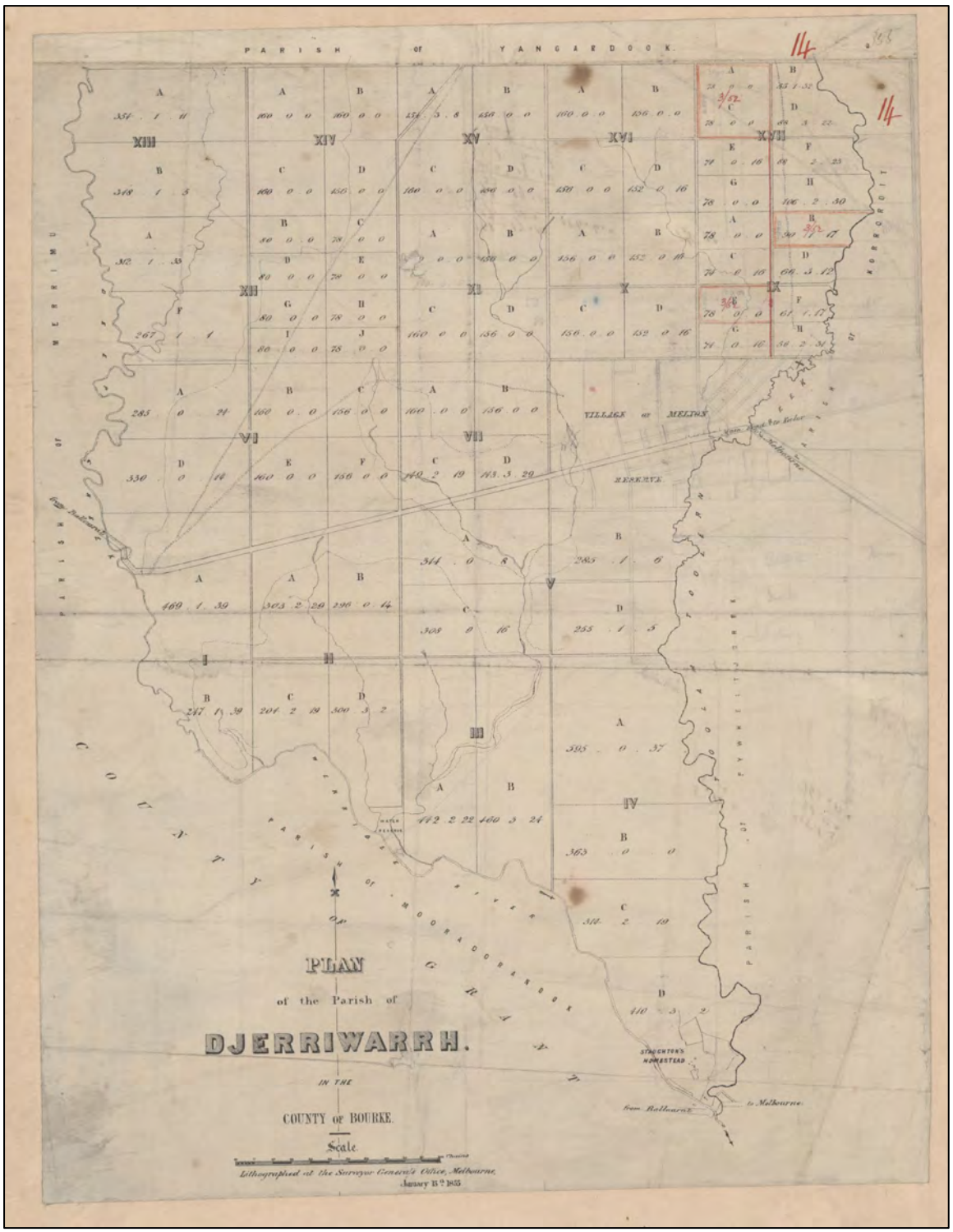


Figure 3-10 1855 Parish of Djerriwarrh map ((Source: https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-232489270/view)

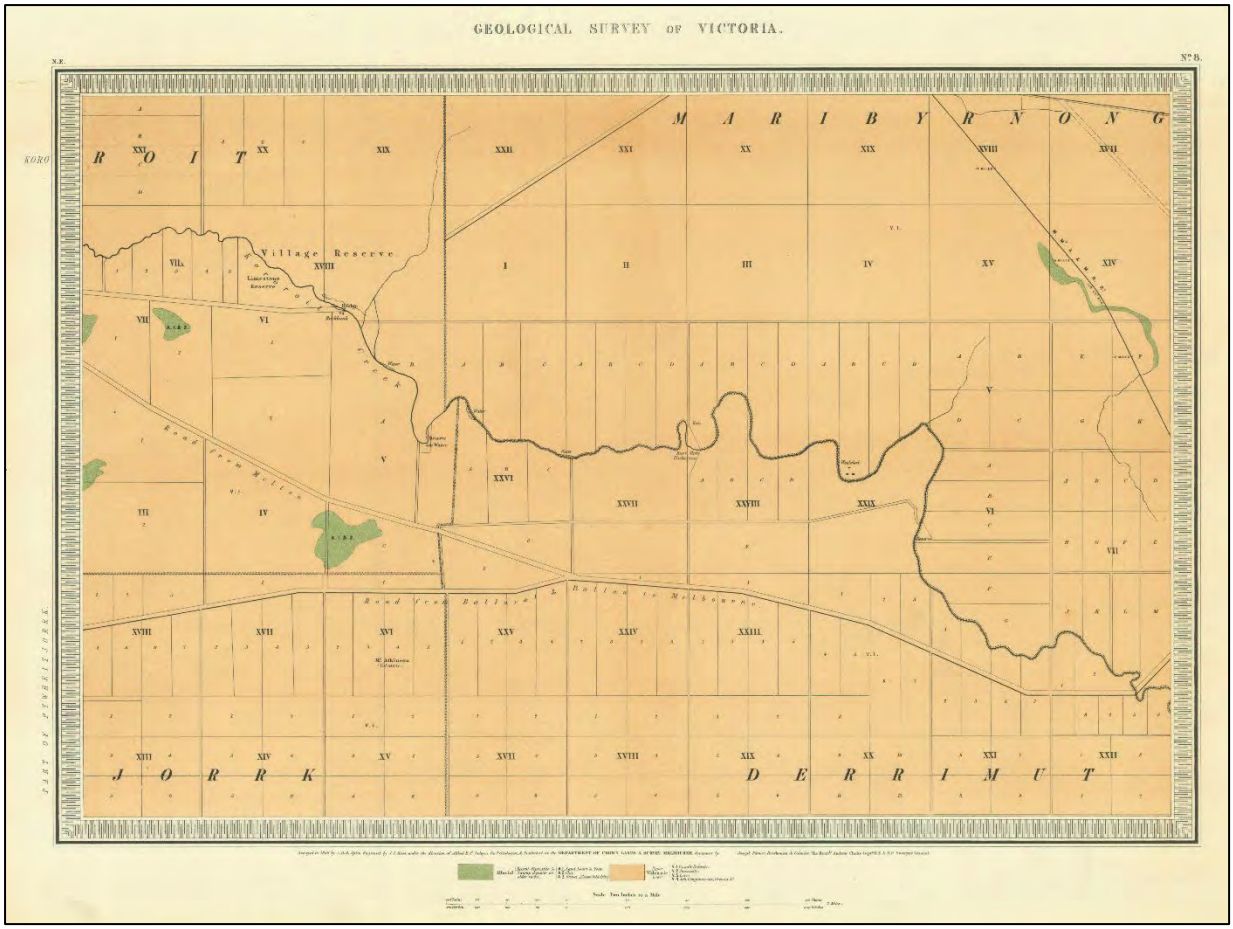


Figure 3-11 Department of Crown Lands and Survey Geological Map 1856 (source: State Library Victoria)

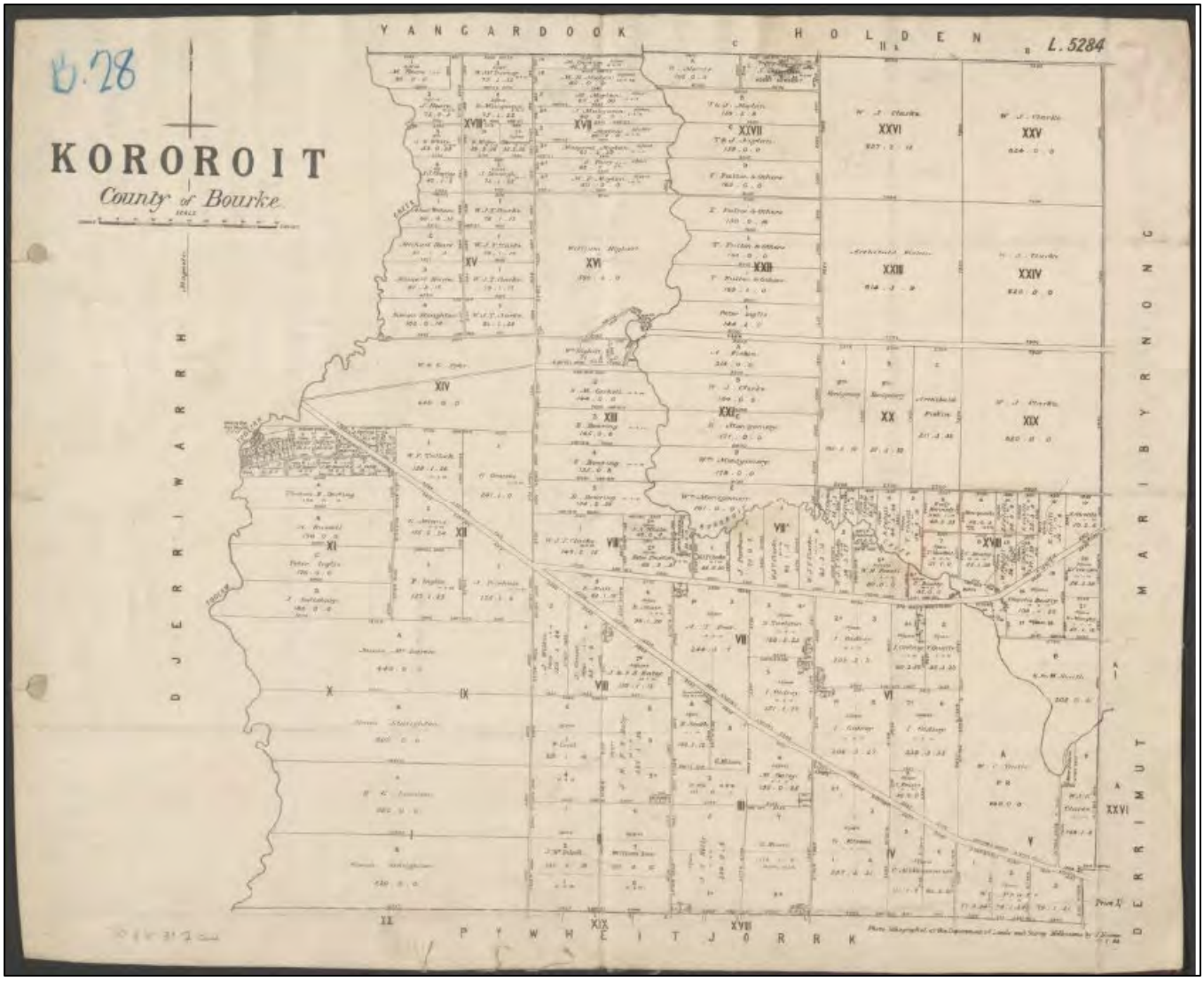


Figure 3-12 1888 Parish of Kororoit map (Source: https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-232024575/view)

Figure 3-13 1951 aerial image showing the eastern section of the study area (source: www.landata.vic.gov.au)

Figure 3-14 1951 aerial image showing the southeastern section of the study area (source: www.landata.vic.gov.au)

Figure 3-15 1970 aerial image showing the western section of the study area (source: www.landata.vic.gov.au)

Figure 3-16 1975 aerial image showing the eastern section of the study area (source: www.landata.vic.gov.au)

Figure 3-17 1975 aerial image showing the western section of the study area A(source: www.landata.vic.gov.au)

Figure 3-18 1975 aerial image showing the growth of the Township of Melton west of the study area (source: www.landata.vic.gov.au)

Figure 3-19 December 1995 aerial image of the study area (source: Google Earth Pro)

Figure 3-20 March 2010 aerial image of the study area (source: Google Earth Pro)

Figure 3-21 November 2017 aerial image of the study area (source: Google Earth Pro)

Figure 3-22 February 2019 aerial image of the study area (source: Google Earth Pro)

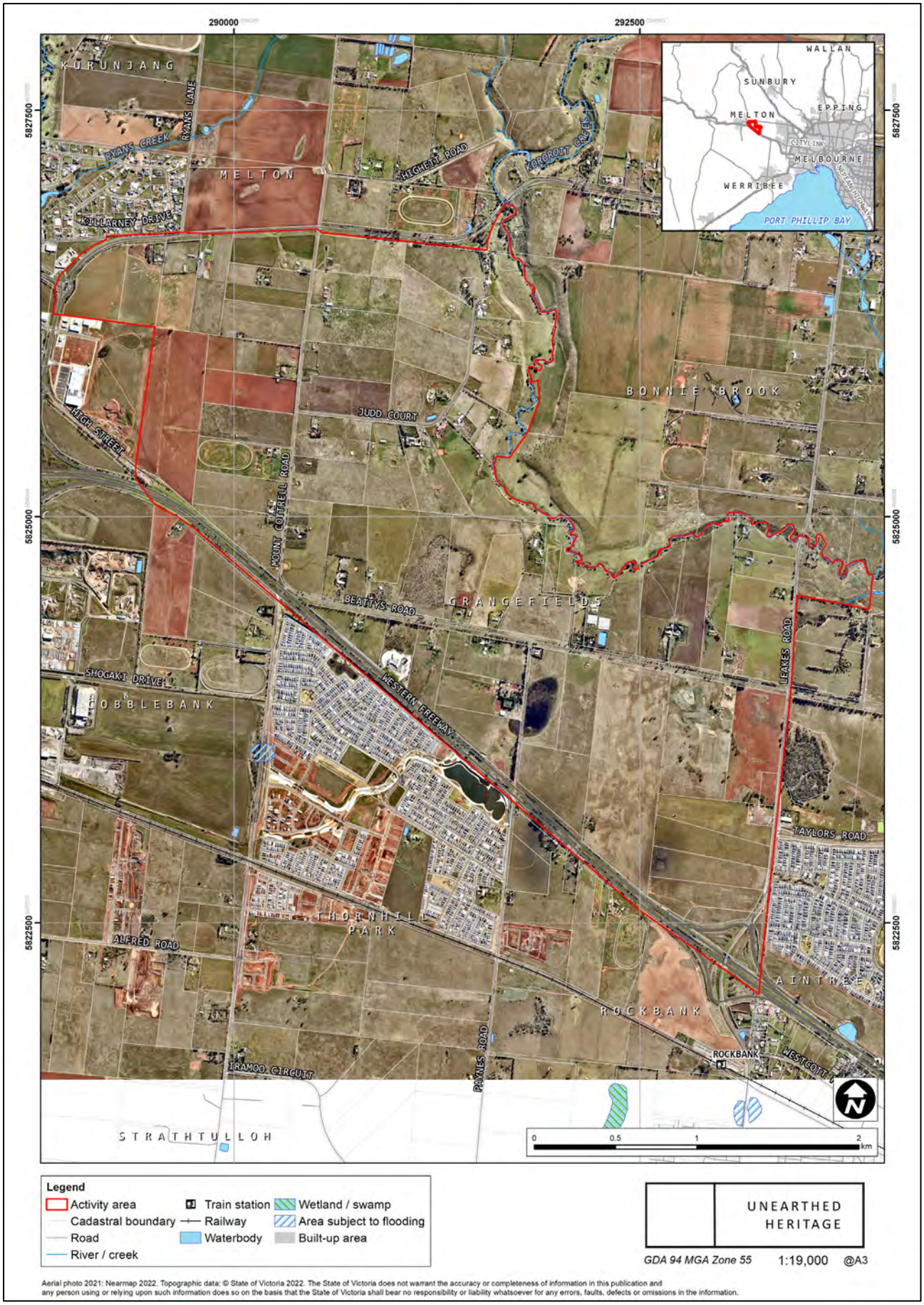


Figure 3-23 Existing conditions in the study area (source: Nearmap)

Figure 3-24 2010 aerial image of the study area showing visibility of stony rise landforms as unploughed (source: Google Earth Pro)

4 Cultural Values On-Country Visit

Two on-Country visits were undertaken, one on 12 October 2023 and one on 22 November 2023 for which details are presented below. Note that records were taken both by Anna Light (UHA) and Catherine Keneley (WWCHAC) as the group often had multiple conversations occurring at the same time. As such, the information presented below is a collation of information recorded by both Anna Light (UHA) and Catherine Keneley (WWCHAC) at which either one or both were present, with the information in italics collected by Catherine Keneley (WWCHAC). The information in quotation marks is verbatim from the relevant speaker.

4.1 Cultural Values Visit 1

4.1.1 Timing and Personnel

The on-Country visit was conducted on 12 October 2023.

Table 4-1 Personnel involved in the Cultural Values Visit 1

WWCHAC	UHA	MW	DTP	MCC	VPA
David Wandin (DW) (Traditional Owner, Elder)	David Mathews (DM)	Katy Marriott (KM)	Len Hall (LH)	Anastasia Badina (AB)	Genna Walkey (GW)
Karen Jones (KJ) (Traditional Owner, Elder)	Anna Light (AL)		John Tunn (JT)	Lucy Slater (LS)	Rion Casey (RC)
Catherine Keneley (CK) (Cultural Values Advisor)					Olivia Gauci (OG)

4.1.2 Pre-visit Discussion

All participants (Table 4-1) met at Culpa Espresso Café in Woodlea (Aintree) in order to discuss the project and the planned visit. The following provides information presented and collected during the course of the day.

ALL: Introductions

GW (VPA):

- Acknowledgement of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.
- Provided background of project and aim of integrating all elements of culture/environment and learning how to be sensitive to heritage as development planning phase begins.

DM (UHA):

- High-level recap of area, environment, registered places and previous on-Country broad level assessment.
- Escarpments, creeks and wetlands have been identified as areas of sensitivity in the past and the desktop research and on-Country survey confirmed to this pattern.
- In the 1,000 ha only six places had been registered and this is more a reflection of the lack of assessments undertaken.
- The land has been agricultural with very little larger scale development beyond farm infrastructure, drainage modifications and residential construction.
- Most places are surface identifications of stone artefacts with concentrations near water and a background of low-density occurrences across the volcanic plain.

Figure 4-1 Cultural Values Site Visit Locations

4.1.3 Location 1a: Leakes Road Wetland

Photo 4-1 At western edge of wetlands where drystone wall present

DW (WWCHAC):

- *Remnant environmental values have been sustainably managed and survived the impact of farming practices, it would have been much more across the landscape, more activity would have been happening*.
- Swamp has been subject to modification and drainage and the area with thistles now represent quicker draining areas.
- The areas at the margins where native Carex (Photo 4-2) is currently present shows this area is still wet while not necessarily part of the main wetland.

Photo 4-2 Facing west at western edge of wetland showing Carex grasses

- Growling Grass Frogs are unlikely to be here but more likely to be present in the large wetland to the west.
- Still used for 100 year flood event mitigation but still treatment plants elsewhere.
- The central section has been modified (excavated to form a deeper area) so queries planning around that as it is likely an ephemeral wetland modified by settlers to create a more permanent water-holding area.
- Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people were utilising the area in to the 1860s and would have managed and maintained it until they were denied access. Remnant environmental features

indicate activity and occupation with people designated to be here all year round to manage/maintain these features. *Kororoit Creek would have been home to encampments. Ancestors would have been there managing these whole areas 12 months of the year, decades, different family mobs.*

- Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works historical maps would be interesting to see and map changes on as would show previous holding and flooding of water and *to identify the road systems and the dams, irrigation systems that were set up and see which ones are no longer used and if they have been drained.*
- Core samples show plant life and silt layers of actual wetland extents and original vegetation conditions. This information can be used to rehabilitate with appropriate vegetation. For example at Bolin Bolin the cores showed that there used to be rainforest vegetation there and *identified the scientific evidence of the age of the river which supported Traditional Owner knowledge. Explanation of how it helps to strengthen Aboriginal occupation and build up a bigger story.* These scientific confirmations tie into creation stories. *"It is about understanding the depth of Australia way back before colonisation. The change in soil structure [shows] evidence of farming and an agricultural context from an Aboriginal perspective" Concern over careful planning needs to be considered in the storage of water and design of wetlands as prominent features of the village. The evidence captured from core samples of the history of land use would be very important in the planning stage.*
- *The project team should consider interpretation of the bigger story of the area in local council, neighbourhood house, for people and schools so people can connect to Country. "If they're actually taught that there's something much deeper, that it's not visual, that they actually have a bit more respect for. It's a deeper picture [showing] what else lived along the landscape alongside us"* Within residential estate contexts all this information as a visible tangible thing helps kids in the suburb to connect to the Country and invest in its care rather than get bored and destructive.
- Yarra River (*Birrarung*) is younger than the Maribyrnong River and Kororoit Creek is older than Yarra River and using core samples can support these stories.
- Ron Jones (Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder) is a mine of information regarding land in this area.
- Entirely different environment can show different uses and occupations and we need 'modern science' to help provide this information (like core sampling). *"It is about understanding the depth of Australia way back before colonisation."*
- Kororoit Creek was carved out of wetlands here as a long geological process. *The water that drained off the escarpments created the creek and changed the wetlands because the water drained faster. Wetlands would have occurred over most of the study area.*
- Stories explain the change of sea location and the absence of water and pedestrian access to places like Tasmania and the Great Barrier Reef and this is proved via science (e.g. tooth DNA in the reef area and core samples). Budj Bim dated to 100 kya via scientific methodologies. Retesting of repatriated material now with the improved scientific technologies shows older dates. *Explanation of the testing artefacts in situ in the study is a method for improved testing of soil residues and captures the scientific evidence in detail that backs up Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung oral history of this place*. Aboriginal people are the first scientists of the country and the first data collectors and information was passed to people who needed to know to be able to maintain the environment or to move to avoid floods, etc.

- *Explanation of the balance between the intangible heritage and changed to the and impacts on the tangible heritage. Soil residue testing beyond the district records reveals the impact of change on the tangible heritage. "If you can go back to at least before colonization and get a really good scientific picture of the vegetation that can use the ethno-biography of Aboriginal people, that if there's a particular type of a variety of plants and there's plenty of it, they can actually tell the picture of how often the place would have been used by what you find from the archaeological dig, stones and bones and the materials that are brought in, or that would be found here and found somewhere else. And you can build a story about how much movement there was. So therefore how much we're actually doing …"*.
- *Ancestors would have observed the changes to the land and read the land and vegetation like a book. "You don't need books to go to the library, it's all there if you know how to read it."*
- *Concern over the loss of native vegetation since 1750 and the rehabilitation of volcanic plains grassland in the study area. The project team should consider the design of public open spaces and vegetation endemic to the area in the planning of the development.*
- *Ancestors were land managers.*
- VPA should consider what the new public open spaces should be. Should they be based on original vegetation and landscape? Aboriginal people were land managers and did a great job over a huge area and know there are invasive species and stock destroying species and destroying native grasslands making them extinct. VPA project needs to look at landscape scale to assess best locations to establish revegetated areas for local community to manage and invest in and create their own childhood stories from (i.e. the new estate population). It will help to build a community (non-Indigenous) that maintains Indigenous values. *Explanation of the rehabilitation works by volunteer land care groups to restore seed banks in remnant vegetation areas in open grassy woodlands on Mount Cottrell Rd. Concerned about what percentage of funding goes into open space planning and the revegetation of native plant species. Explanation of the importance of native vegetation in open spaces for mental health benefits and soil quality.*
- *Concern over the future use of the land in the next 1000 years. What will be the future communities' intangible values be?*

KJ (WWCHAC):

- Bebejan Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (headman) managed Country here. Headquarters were at Mount Macedon and ethnohistorical material suggests the headmen were situated in the west and definitely around this area.
- Wetlands were more diverse and broader in the past. *Rain events turned the land into swamps. Concern over the difficulty to see the evidence of swamp lands because of development but it was swamp land all the way through.*
- *Explanation of the introduction of rabbits in Sunbury. Europeans brought the rabbits to the study area; they called it coursing and introduced the Greyhound to chase them. Before colonisation a lot of these sports have been introduced here because obviously they were introduced by the Europeans back then.*
- Where she grew up and access the area was very rocky and rain events would create a water sheeting layer over the land. Rain events would create larger swamp areas but now these areas are drained. Creek realignments have occurred and she remembers walking and horse-riding along Kororoit Creek over many years (she grew up around this broader area) and rain events created a very rapid flow of the creek and suggests the 100 year floods were actually much more frequent than that around Sunshine and Deer Park (her childhood areas) and she remembers creeks covering backyards and washing away bridges (e.g. in 1984). *Regular*

rain events transformed Kororoit Creek into a rapid flow and parts would flood up to people's fences, roads, bridges and footbridges. "The flow effects have changed now because of rapid development, and we don't see that rapid flow anymore." "You can imagine when our Ancestors were living on Country without any of that being disturbed, I'm sure that they would have seen that flows all the time".

- Lots of eels live in farm dams. Old water sources would have defined eel migration patterns.
- We know land clearing and sheep grazing has taken away information about landscape and vegetation and sometimes we need to rely on ethno sources.
- Can use native animal information to reconstruct/understand vegetation patterns.
- Stone walls have also changed the landscape because of their impact on waterflows and animal movement. *Concern over the greater protection of the cultural heritage of dry stone walls than Aboriginal cultural heritage*.
- *Wetlands are everywhere, not just in designated areas. This whole area going up to Caroline Springs, that's all being developed now but that's all wetland all the way through, water sitting everywhere.*
- *Ancestors would have used these areas as travel routes and knew which areas flooded the most and where to camp.*
- *Explanation of the high concentration of Aboriginal artefacts in the study area – some places are the old remnants of European houses, they because they would have looked around at the cultural heritage of Aboriginal people and what would have been viable for them to set up their homes and accessibility to fresh water.*
- This area was hit pretty hard by colonisation. She has been looking through ethnohistorical material over the last 15 years to research what the landscape used to be like. It is important to consider how the ethnohistorical materials fit in the landscape. *The land would have featured more open plains. The land would have been occupied by native animals that suited the environment. Explanation of the fact that the area is currently less developed than other areas provide more opportunities to understand the association with the ethnohistorical material of the Melton East area and the land.*

DM (UHA):

- Highlighted the interplay here between Kororoit Creek and the wetlands areas. Question regarding the balancing of tangible versus intangible values in a situation where the reinstatement of previous environment would require disturbance of tangible cultural heritage. What is the balance?
- Ploughing around this district in already shallow soils would also have destroyed grass/vegetation species.

JT (DTP):

- This was once an inland area so the idea of outflow toward the sea wasn't always relevant and need to consider different environments over time.

KM (MW):

- Pointed out a Wedge-tailed Eagle nest in a large gum to the south.

4.1.4 Location 1b: Paynes Road Wetland

RC (VPA):

- Described four lane road to extend through this area.

KM (MW):

- As no outlet for overflow, flooding has drowned all the native vegetation. There would be a high ecological community and seed bank here. Treatment plants on other side of road or within basin are the two options being considered.

DW (WWCHAC):

- Observed that there would be much more diversity at this wetland than at Location 1a but much less native vegetation is present.
- Doesn't like the idea of the in-wetland treatment plant as it would create a permanent water basin which will impact biodiversity levels as a wetland resource. Treatment plants should be separate from the wetlands.
- *Concern over the division of the wetlands in this study area.*
- *Discussion of the arterial road alignment. Will it be aligned with the seasonal wetlands?*
- *Discussion of native vegetation in the wetlands. Note of the limited native vegetation as the wetland has been inundated and drowned out.*
- *Concern over the flow of storm water from the freeway and the importance of careful planning to manage it before the development begins.*
- *Discussion of surface artefacts and assessment of the swamp. Dig completed prior to Unearthed Heritage's survey identified subsurface artefacts.*
- *Discussion of introduced plant species including English Boxthorn and Goji Berries*.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- Sunbury is littered with artefacts and would like to know how much has been cleared and where the travel routes would have been. Kororoit Creek extends into Sunbury. There's likely been so much cultural heritage lost vis land clearance, grazing, etc. Kororoit Creek is very diverse and different across many of its locations.
- *Discussion of large populations of eels in dams.*
- *Concern over the increase of pest plant species including English Boxthorn.*
- *Explanation of the trees adjacent to Paynes Road bark torn off the trees over time. Documented material by Alfred Howitt who spent a lot of time with Aboriginal informants particularly with William Barak. Howitt documented the clan areas. There is a reference to this area which is our clan area but also meaning Red Earth people. In areas around here they mined for scoria which is the red rock. Parts of old Rock Bank had a lot of red earth, the red soils.*

-

4.1.5 Location 2: Paynes Road Bridge

Photo 4-3 At escarpment edge overlooking Kororoit Creek showing trees growing at flat creek bed

Photo 4-4 Proposed bridge location

- **Victoria** (landholder) spoke to all and expressed her concern about the location of roads and bridges as her family have been here looking after the area from over 60 years and wants input into how the layout should be.
- Should maintain view and history.
- Named 'Water Reserve Road' as horses would be led here to drink on their travels.

DW (WWCHAC):

- The turning points of creeks – like at this location – are very important locations for women and children as they would be camping here with no threat and men could easily protect these locations.
- Public space is so important for community mental health and COVID really highlighted this and reflected the indigenous situation with the population being blocked from their usual places and from natural voluntary movement (reflective of fences, missions, etc.).
- He has never been on a CVA project before with so many different organisations represented together. We need to all work to find better solutions.
- The twisted, gnarly red gums reflect true red gum formation rather than those planted in straight lines and just growing upwards. Thinks these trees are likely to be around 400-500 years old.
- Ancestors would have collected the roots of the red gums were during dry periods when they were exposed and used them for boomerangs as they are better than wood from the limbs of the tree.
- Can see the prevalent wind direction from the way the trees grow.
- What Victoria (landholder) was saying about being a custodian of the land is important and there is a lack of communication between organisations and the people on the ground.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- Lava flows – the contours here could have been one of the main lava flows and this needs to be talked about more in terms of formation processes. Need a geologist out here to talk about assess and discuss.
- Melton City Council don't listen and don't care about cultural heritage. There is a new Indigenous councillor at MCC (Stolen Generation survivor) and hopefully will have more input.
- *Explanation of how Kororoit Creek is very diverse throughout. Differences between areas that have and haven't been disturbed identify remnants of the pre-contact land.*
- *The occupation of Aboriginal people of the land would have informed Europeans where to build, close to the fresh water to Kororoit Creek. The way that the land is, is the natural contours of the land and the different rises which flattens out around that area. And that would have informed Europeans where to build their houses.*
- *Flat areas that are lower lined than other areas and there would have been the vantage points to them, it might have been easily accessible to their food sources given the contours and the shape [of the land]. When the creek is in flood that would probably flood. So it could be also that this the water level will come up much higher into that flooded area.*
- *Ancestors would not have spent too much time up high because of the wind, the lower areas provided more protection from the different weather patterns. Discussion of the old River Red Gums which hold cultural significance.*
- *Discussion of the diversity of Kororoit Creek, there are areas that level out and other areas that drop down. The deepness of the creek being caused through floods and erosion it could have been that this whole area could have been a river flow – pointed to the flood plains.*
- *Explanation of how the lava flows would have formed the contours of the Kororoit Creek. The lower level of the creek would have been a very distinct lave flow coming through. Similar contours to Lake Condah, Budj Bim. The whole land is volcanic. Dormant volcanoes, like Mount Cottrell. Kororoit Creek flows into the bay. Basalt rock decays into soil which appears through the decay that has occurred over billions of years ago – the area is rich like the flow of the*

creek. "It was a shame the water doesn't flow anymore but you could have imagined in its natural form and flowing the depth of the creek increased over the years and the surrounding area would have been more floodplain, like the waterways". Noted evidence of erosion. Ancestors would have handed down knowledge of the Kororoit Creek and changes to the land.

- *Discussion of native vegetation and weeds.*
- *River Red Gums would have provided shelter for our Ancestors.*
- *Reflection of the Kororoit Creek and surrounding creek systems as always filled with water as a child. "It's a shame they're not flowing, don't have some water in them". Knowledge of the locations of creek crossings, narrow and shallow waterways and basalt arrangements to step through. Has the area been surveyed? DM - Surface survey but no excavation.*
- *Discussion of the different soil types in the study area. What are the different soils around the Melton area and does the red soil come up to a certain level because of different age or different way it was formed? DM – alluvium, darker colour and most of the study area is shallow black, volcanic-based soil and degradation of basalt evidence of red, silty, clay before degradation and finer soils.*
- *"Because of the material our Ancestors particularly in this part were referred to as the Red Earth people – this was documented by Alfred Howitt and William Barak was one of his main informants".*
- *Discussion of the location of the remainder of a mountain at Tulum where people mined scoria. The age of the mountain is recorded in the land and remainders of scoria pits – half the mountain was removed because of mining. Reference to the scoria remains and vantage point at Jacksons Hill, Sunbury.*
- *Ancestors would have had a lot of vantage points in the surrounding area at Melton East.*
- *Discussion of native animal species in the study area.*

DM (UHA):

- Archaeologically artefacts are known to be on the escarpment but also on these extended flats of the flood plain.
- *VPA suggestion is that the bridge crossing would be an extension of Paynes Road. Exact location isn't fixed. VPA / Unearthed Heritage to seek permit from WWCHAC for permit for pre-investigation for potential subsurface archaeology.*

4.1.6 Location 3: Tarleton Road Bridge

RC (VPA):

- This spot represents the shortest possible bridge span location.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- These areas are very sensitive.
- Hard to assess vantage point from here in terms of sensitivity. *Explanation of how it is difficult to tell from the viewpoint if the study area was a vantage point for Aboriginal people. It would be ideal to view it the landscape from the other side of the escarpment and looking at all the flat area as well. There was a lot of benefit for the use around this area.*
- *Discussion of low-lying ridges and thickened cactus bushes in this study area.*

DW (WWCHAC):

- *Discussion of an abandoned cactus farm in this study area.*

Unfortunately, the visit to this location was limited by an electric fence and an incoming storm and the area of escarpment and the flat adjacent to the creek couldn't be viewed.

4.1.7 Location 4: Leakes Road

DW (WWCHAC):

- Explanation of the similarities of the stone shelters at Budj Bim which housed up to six people and animals and the record of shelters identified along Kororoit Creek in European historical accounts.
- Discussion of the evidence of rock lines on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country. Ancestors would have used rock domes and designed the base of the dome with molten mud spread over branches. Robinson or Howitt refers to our Ancestors using rock domes, but they did not specify these locations. *"Dwellings of such solid construction that they could ride their horses over them."* (DW quoting from Pascoe 2014[4]).
- Concern that early Europeans destroyed much of the evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the study area to encourage European occupation and build the story that there were no people living on the land. Early explorers would have been told not to report on Aboriginal occupation and destroy all evidence.
- Rock walls (dry stone walls) would have been constructed because they were in the way of what Europeans wanted to do to the land, agriculture wise.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- Explanation of the extent of the floodplains in the study were a much greater extent than what is recorded today. Today, waterways are controlled. Wetlands would have featured right across the study area and all the way to the coast. *"What hasn't been developed is the last of the remnants". "Particularly in the winter months our Ancestors in Melbourne they must have retreated during those months because the streets of Melbourne it has also been documented as having different water flows go through them as well."*
- Ancestors would have travelled along main river systems and creek systems when the study area was in flood. Ancestors would have used the river and creek systems as places of shelter and for food.
- Explanation of the association with identified high density artefacts in particular knapping and quarries with sites of Aboriginal occupation.
- Ancestors would have travelled according to food sources and the seasons and accessibility to fresh water sources. How far up the coast did Ancestors have to come inland to find fresh water when the Bay flooded?
- The older chain of flood plains is not adequately documented in the older developed areas.
- Explanation of the impacts of manmade drainage and development on the realignment of significant waterways, drainage areas to drain flood water away from development areas and manage flood zones.
- Discussion of the 1835 Batman 'Treaty'. Ancestors would not have appeared on Country in the study area to a large extent in June 1835 when the 'Treaty' was signed because of exposure to coastal weathers. Batman's survey of much of Country was in the areas surrounding Melton East.
- Explanation of the name of the study are as the Imaru Plains, which translates to the open plains.
- Discussion of the importance of historical maps to identify lists plant species, trees and food sources for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. Discussion of William Thomas's maps which feature Woi-wurrung names. Cultural mapping in Woi-wurrung gives cultural identity as it was known to

[4] Pascoe, B. 2014. *Dark Emu: Black Seeds: Agriculture or Accident?*. Magabala Books, Broome, Western Australia

our Ancestors. It is an important tool for education for community and gives language back to the community.

- Discussion of the impacts of ploughing and road development on the study area. Roads have interrupted the form of the bigger wetlands. Farmers would have used the wetlands as dams and as a water source for livestock. Farms in the study area would have been homes to large livestock populations. Sheep populations were introduced in the early days, but beef livestock and horses dominated the land. Little livestock populations habit the study area today compared to many years ago. *"The farmers obviously had an idea of the behaviour of the wetlands as well, and the landscape when they do consider ploughing. That'd be the only reason why some of these wetlands are probably still intact, even after all these years of farming and colonisation."*
- Discussion of the early development of farms in the study area and the impact on native animals. Records identify before colonisation there were large populations of water birds and more species, which were impacted from European hunting practices. *"The way that they measured out land to produce farmland has an impact on our native animals, as it still does today."*
- Discussion of the land surrounding the wetlands. Roads and farming have impacted the form of one wetland surrounded by soft clay and pampas in the study area, but the adjacent wetland was left unaffected and surrounded by dirt edges and basalt rock. *"It essentially probably decreased the natural wetland from what it originally was".* There are no flat lying areas around the wetlands, the contours of the land were indicators for Europeans where to establish their homes. *"A lot of ones who came over here who colonised were experienced surveyors, they surveyed this Country. They came with experience from their original homelands. … they still took a lot of advice … observations they would have been attuned from areas camps and high occupation from our Ancestors to know where to set up camp*".
- Discussion of the land to the west beyond the study area. Identification of a paddock with potential remnants of an old wetland.

4.2 Cultural Values Visit 2

4.2.1 Timing and Personnel

The on-Country visit was conducted on 22 November 2023.

Table 4-2 Personnel involved in the Cultural Values Visit 2

WWCHAC	UHA	MW	DTP	MCC	VPA
David Wandin (DW) (Traditional Owner, Elder)	David Mathews (DM)	Katy Marriott (KM)	Daniel Zaslona (DZ)	Anastasia Badina (AB)	Genna Walkey (GW)
Karen Jones (KJ) (Traditional Owner, Elder)	Anna Light (AL)		Courtney Buchanan (CB)	Matthew Milbourne (MM)	Rion Casey (RC)
Tarlina Gardiner (TG) (Traditional Owner)					Olivia Gauci (OG)
Jala Rigby (JR) (Traditional Owner)					Mahdi Mirzai (MM)
Catherine Keneley (CK) (Cultural Values Advisor)					

4.2.2 Pre-visit Discussion

All participants (Table 4-2) met at Culpa Espresso Café in Woodlea (Aintree) in order to discuss the project and the planned visit. The following provides information presented and collected during the course of the day.

ALL: Introductions

DW (WWCHAC):

- Acknowledgement of Wurundjeri Country.

DM (UHA):

- High-level recap of area, environment, registered places and previous on-country broad level assessment (as per on-Country visit on 12/10/2023).

GW (VPA):

- Provided background of project (as per on-Country visit on 12/10/2023).

4.2.3 Location 5: Leakes Road Wetland (eastern side of wetland)

Observed kangaroos in the area around the wetland. Deeper dam area constructed within the central part of the natural wetland.

DW (WWCHAC):

- Reminded us of the presence of an eagle nest and the sighting of an eagle from our last visit (Bunjil).
- The vegetation suggests that there is more water in the wetland – likely a larger wetland extent with the longer lasting water present.
- Connecting of valuable vegetation across the landscape.
- Need flowing, meandering alignments (Rainbow Serpent) rather than manufactured straight lines to maintain healthy water and fauna/flora resources. Look at how we use/construct open spaces as this also impacts how fauna utilise the area – animals won't use the spaces/water areas if not a winding flow.
- Stagnancy (re: water) is a natural part of some water systems to a degree – such as Billabongs.
- Flood mitigation planned here to connect outflow – discussion of putting treatment plants outside of the wetland areas.
- *Concern regarding wetland health and the issue of the overabundance of contaminants*.
- Overabundance of a particular pollutant needs cleaning – sometimes this is a big project - and need to connect with future suburb populations who look after the land as they need to be informed of containment and history so that they support removal of contamination rather than oppose works.
- In terms of spiritual connections, these water areas (such as wetlands and other water sources – particularly confluences) are women's places. Women did the harvesting and both genders hunted. Women made the decisions around wetland maintenance (e.g. when firestick farming should occur, etc.). Women were great nutritionists and knew how to grow 'balanced diets' so they had control over the wetlands.
- Wetlands are also good places for managing/watching young children as the water is still.
- He is unaware of spiritual stories around the water here.
- Important to remove extant wall to reconnect the water systems.
- Wurundjeri don't want any contaminated waste entering the wetlands.
- Hybrid treatment plant option is the best choice so that the wetlands can take some of the burder during flood events.
- Wetland can be used to manage flora/fauna during drier times too – need to 'refresh' the wetlands during dry times.
- Need secular ecology.

- When needed, need to be able to divert water off the land into the wetlands.
- Most Wurundjeri knowledge is lost and need to collect knowledge from other groups – such as Yorta Yorta managing waterways in northern Victoria.
- *Reflection of the geological signature of flakes can tell you the location. " … through the amount of rock that you find that doesn't belong to the area, and you trace it back to where it comes from, you can actually start to work out movement patterns … you can build a picture, even looking at the tools".*
- *Reflection on the traditional use of silcrete for women's tools and men's tools. Ancestors would have used rock to readapt or re-engineer the types of tools that we use after the last ice age 15,000 years ago. "The young ones who are wanting to learn [Ancestors] were giving them the poorer quality rock until they get really good at it and they get a better quality, much better tools".*
- *Reflection on the high quality of traditional stone tools in regard to their durability and sustainability. "the reality is you can dig up that tool now, and it might be only 200 years old, but it could be up to 6000 years old. That's how long we've been quarrying it. You can probably up the ground from 6000 years ago. It'll still cut."*
- *Ancestors would have used cores from the rock outcrops in Kororoit Creek. Ancestors would have taken the cores to a working floor to knap the stone tools. "… From that, you can determine how big the group was actually doing it. And from that, you can tell when you work out on men's tools and female tools and then say, well, okay, this is kids' ones. And if you're roughly three kids, a couple, so you can start to work out the size of the tribe".*

TG (WWCHAC):

- Has learned from the women around Bright who manage the Ovens River area and this knowledge should be reflected here.
- *Wetlands would have been highly significant to Ancestors.*

TG & DW (WWCHAC):

- The Narrap team need to learn and build on the knowledge from elsewhere and keep working with stakeholders to enhance the application of these learnings.

DW (WWCHAC):

- Combining the two knowledge systems will have the best result. A balance for all types of flora and fauna.

KM (MW):

- Suggested that the water here is quite clean as salty groundwater is coming up and the water is clear and reeds are present and healthy.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- Kororoit Creek branches into north and west parts and is in hills in Sunbury on a less prominent basis.
- Clearing for farmland hit hard during colonisation and would be good to see situation between here and Sunbury surveyed to understand what still remains that should be here but has been impacted by post-colonial activities.
- *Concern over the impact farming activities and livestock of the soil surrounding the wetland. Fence lines would have cut through the wetlands and prevented the waterflow. Reflection on the recent history of the area when farmers had encouraged tippers to come and fill into*

their properties soil heaps and dirt to change the wetlands to take advantage of the financial value of their landholding and negatively impact Country.

- *Reflection on larger extent of the traditional wetland than what they visualised in its current form.*
- *Rock outcrops surrounding part of the perimeter of the current wetland would have been used to isolate the water to a smaller area.*
- *Reflection of lower areas surrounding wetland where there is no land fill and the distinct grasslands.*
- *Reflection on the grass species located in different areas are evidence of the extent of the traditional wetlands and gives it its distinct character. Note that the current wetland would be used as a dam for livestock.*
- *Identification of bullum bullum White Butterflies in the study area. Note the White Butterfly is the totem of her grandmother. "When I'm out on Country I'll see them everywhere. Sometimes they'll be one single butterfly and it's been very close or there's been a few times when it's almost landed … when they pop around Nan's around". "She's looking over us when the bullum bullums are out".*
- *Reflection of the importance of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung totems and their purpose including for healthy Country.*
- *Reflection on the provenance of the artefacts identified here.*
- *Reflection on the soil profile changes in the geological characteristics of the landscape. In particular, grassland types, wetlands. It is important to understand the changes in the landscape and the impacts of disturbance.*

DM (UHA):

- Explanation of part of the area of the traditional wetland had been dug out.
- Explanation of the flow of water in the wetland because of rainwater and movement of water to the natural low points in the wetland.
- Identification of red silcrete artefacts.

4.2.4 Location 6: Paynes Road Bridge Crossing

RC (VPA):

- Described proposed bridge alignment here which has been downgraded from four-lane to two-lane. The bridge location has been shifted.
- Planning on undertaking a Permit (excavation) here through WWCHAC in order to understand cultural heritage issues.
- *Discussion of location for proposed extension of Paynes Road bridge crossing. The investigation area reveals exposed areas at the headland marked for further archaeological sub-surface testing.*

DW & KJ (WWCHAC):

- This investigation prior to defining location is best practice so that they know if the location can't be utilised due to sensitivities.
- *Noted the importance of the CHMP process as a precursor for holistic planning.*

DM (UHA):

- Location and method of excavations are important to consider as more information gleaned at this stage can input into future planning.

- *Noted the importance of extensive data collection in the early stages of the planning for the PSP to ensure minimal impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage and the protection of cultural values.*

DW (WWCHAC):

- Queried structure type proposed.

RC (VPA):

- Proposed a raised structure utilising pylons.

DW (WWCHAC):

- Likes this structural option.
- During works the amount of auxiliary disturbance that will occur (not simply pylon locations) should be considered (such as access, set-down areas, spoil heap locations) – 'collateral damages'.
- Also – future access for maintenance should be considered.
- Continued access for water, flora and fauna is essential and a natural system should be maintained. Constructed access such as culverts don't work as, for instance, they can create hunting ground for foxes and place other species at risk. Pylons are the best option for maintaining open movement flow.
- Needs to be a focus on future thinking and giving the new local community ownership over maintenance, respect and involvement. If pedestrian access (bikes, walking trails, etc.) are created that can prevent the area becoming a dumping location (and other damaging issues).
- In terms of proposed testing methodologies for the permit: the closer to the water the more cultural material will be present.
- Landform based sampling and gridding is a usual recommendations via Cultural Heritage Unit at WWCHAC.
- What is needed doesn't always correlate with what Wurundjeri wants so the more informed WWCHAC area the better. It has to be a *need* not just a *want* in terms of destroying land to create infrastructure, particularly in a sensitive area (also not just an 'infrastructure spend').
- Need to make sure that all stakeholders have all the information – including across all the WWCHAC Units.
- Reiteration of waterways being women's places and need to be adaptable with knowledge from across other areas. This is important intangible evidence.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- *Concern over the impact of the proposed four-lane bridge crossing on the surrounding traffic from Melton Highway and the Western Freeway. Noted a four-lane bridge crossing would not solve the congestion of traffic flowing from the surrounding road network and only impact the landscape.*
- *Explanation of many areas of Kororoit Creek hold Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity. "The Bullum Bullum site that was found there in the 1980s, to where they changed the bridge … , just because you do not find as much in these areas it doesn't mean it's no less sensitive than them areas that there are more sensitive than the Kororoit Creek".*
- *A lot of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung headmen* ngurungaeta *occupied Country surrounding Melton East. "This side of Country was hit hard very, very quickly. But if you look at a lot of*

our significant sites, you know, Sunbury, Mount William, you know, we were also referred to as Mount Macedon tribe from our headquarters of the Gunung-willam-balluk".

- *Reflection of the concentration of artefacts recorded at Sunbury all connects to the story of the Mount Macedon tribe.*
- *Concern over the impact of farming activity and disturbance on the loss of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the last 200 years. "It doesn't make any area on Kororoit Creek less sensitive than other areas that they have found a high [sensitivity]".*
- *Reflection that archaeological excavations only record cultural heritage on the surface area to a specific historical range. "65,000 years or more is a long time to have sediment and sort of build up of what was already there."*
- *Concern over the need to identify ancestral remains. "We're forgetting about our ancestral remains too." Voluntary CHMPs should be considered in the planning process for undeveloped sites.*
- *Explanation that Kororoit Creek was a significant place for food resources for Ancestors. It is important to consider the prominent food sources that would have been available to Ancestors.*
- *Reflection of the importance of plant species along the Kororoit Creek. Ancestors would have utilised plant species according to the seven seasons.*
- *Reflection of the presence of black fish populations in the Kororoit Creek. "There was a lot of fish life, different types of fish life in the Kororoit Creek. It was [an] abundance".*
- *Reflection on the importance of analysing the ethnohistorical material as a reference to help understand the experiences of Ancestors.*
- *Reflection of the identification of ancestral remains near Toolern Creek, which were reinterred in an unmarked grave in Melton Cemetery.*

TG (WWCHAC):

- *Identification of magpie nest in the River Red Gum trees in the study area.*
- *Reflection on the layers of basalt volcanic rock and rocky outcrops along the Kororoit Creek in the study area. Noted there were a lot of volcanoes in the area surrounding Melton and Hanging Rock. Three key Ancestors came from the area near Mount Macedon.*
- *Identification of burnt ground located at the bottom of the Kororoit Creek. Noted it was a recent event.*
- *Reflection of the Water Reserve Road as an alternative access to the proposed development. Noted that Water Reserve Road is prone to flooding.*
- *Kororoit Creek in the study area would have been a resting place for Ancestors. Ancestors would have fished here, they would have food and supply. "As they were traveling while they were on Country going back to Coranderrk, you know, it would have been somewhere they rested and then keep moving."*
- *Concern over the loss of knowledge of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture and history because of colonisation.*
- *Reflection of the possibility of unrecorded ancestral remains in the study area surrounding Kororoit Creek.*

JR (WWCHAC):

- *Identification of Wedge-tailed Eagle in flight in the study area.*
- *Identification of Red Fox in the study area.*

4.2.5 Location 7: Tarletons Road Bridge

RC (VPA):

- The bridge span is c. 300 m from escarpment to escarpment across the creek. This is the narrowest area possible.
- Growling Grass Frog environmental wetlands will be constructed here.

DW (WWCHAC):

- Growling Grass Frog breed on dry land such as on the escarpment near water (not at water) with huge foraging areas – not in the water itself.
- Remnant grasslands have been preserved by accidental burnings.
- Should think about species that *should* be here and add to regeneration list, not just threatened species (e.g. echidna should be here).
- Particularly small mammals love the grasslands.
- Emus should also be here.
- Foxes eat eggs so any bird habitat regeneration plans should considered islands so nests are protects and population can be maintained.
- If trees need to be removed then an ecologist can reseed the trees in a nursery and bring back for nearby replanting.
- Other escarpment on opposite bank would be used more as closer to creek but this side has the rocky escarpment which would have been utilised as location for sittings (rocks being 'seats') for location of stone knapping, stone maintenance, etc. with protection from prevalent winds and as an observation/viewing point.
- MMBW maps should be used to see how often flooding would have occurred as more floods = less artefacts as artefacts likely redistributed by floodwaters.
- Maribyrnong/Brimbank Park many thousands of years ago was very wide and very shallowbut three climate events have carved out the current course as can be seen via the terraces.
- River is getting narrower within the original wide floodplain.
- Would have essentially been wetland for eleven months of the year.
- Old maps for waterway/swamp locations.
- Can take core samples across landscape to discover how often flooding occurred.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- *Concern over the removal of the River Red Gum trees located in the area of the proposed arterial road bridge crossing.*
- *Noted more lower points to store water in the section of Kororoit Creek in the study area.*
- *Concern over the disturbance of the landscape. Reflection on the importance of what grew up in the area and what has been disturbed and if there is any archaeology.*
- *Reflection on the importance of undertaking a cultural burn in the study area.*
- *"Fronted by low water, the low waters are not what they used to be".*
- *Reflection on the flat flood plain adjacent to Kororoit Creek. The water from Kororoit Creek would have dispersed right up to the flood plain.*
- *Reflection of the water flows in the study area and if the erosion along Kororoit Creek has occurred the bank over time.*
- *Were the contours of the landscape of Kororoit Creek created because of the lava flow? "This particular area it is quite unique compared to the rest of the creek".*

- *Explanation that the rocky outcrops have been pushed way back it doesn't seem where's the start and where's the end just all very flat.*
- *Reflection on the Kororoit Creek, flood plain and basalt outcrop as one integrated landscape. Note that the fence line would have been designed to distinguish between the rocky outcrops, the flood plain and Kororoit Creek.*

GW (VPA):

- *Explanation the removal of trees would be dependent on the height of the bridge and locations of the pylons. Noted opportunities for rejuvenation and regeneration of vegetation.*
- *Confirmation archaeological excavations would be up to the creek line and pits in the flood plain zone.*

TG (WWCHAC):

- *Noted the high level of water in Kororoit Creek and the winding contours of the creek in the study area.*
- *Clarification of the wildlife living along the section of the Kororoit Creek in the study area. Noted the presence of **Bullum Bullum**.*
- *Reflection of the environment surrounding the flood plain and creek escarpment was very windy. It would not have been a place where Ancestors rested.*
- *Noted if there was evidence of megafauna remains or Aboriginal cultural heritage in the study area.*
- *Reflection on the feeling of being on Country, it was similar to a sense of rejuvenation felt being at Coranderrk. "The feeling of being on Country you know your Ancestors have been there".*

JR (WWCHAC):

- *Reflection of island located within the section of the Kororoit and the connection with Ancestors. Ancestors would have travelled to this part of Kororoit Creek.*

DM (UHA):

- *Identification of artefacts including a core and a flake.*

4.2.6 Location 8: Mount Cottrell / Judd Court

DM (UHA):

- Explained that visit to this area was to provide an understanding of what the majority of the study area is like: flat, background volcanic plain away from water sources.
- *Discussion of flat, volcanic plains as the environmental vegetation class (EVC) for Mount Cottrell Road. This EVC representative of the majority of the study area.*
- *Discussion of approval of the advancement of the cultural values process per the cultural values recordings and locations visited. All agreed.*

DW (WWCHAC):

- *Identification of Blue-tongue lizard remains.*
- These areas could have been transition areas between higher value resource locations but if people didn't make it across they could have camped for a night and there are still resources here such as birds.

- *"Typically, particularly, you would follow the creeks. Yeah, but if you've got two creeks running a long distance, even though quite far apart, and eventually merge while you will have points to cross and depending on the season you were doing it.. It's not the shortest place, you know. Shortest line between two places. … this would probably be quite quick."*
- *Ancestors would have followed the creeks. Ancestors would have crossed at the confluence of creeks depending on the season. The shortest lines between two places would have been good and quite quick.*
- Would have camped at trees or other bird-rich locations.
- Discard of unneeded artefacts across this landscape.
- This area is flat but elevated and provides a view.
- Fire-stick farming at grassland areas around here would have been regular so activity would still have occurred and movement would have been necessary across this landscape.
- *Reflection of tangible Aboriginal cultural heritage in this study area. Would there be individual isolated artefacts as opposed to artefact scatters. More often potentially dropped or discarded as Ancestors were walking along. "It still tells that cultural values story of travel. Just because there's no road through the middle of the field and that field wasn't here of course it would've been probably quite a herb rich grassland. It's open, flat. It would still be a food source if you didn't make it across during the night. You'd probably have to carry your own fuel with you. Grass doesn't make much of a cooking fire."*
- *Identification of young trees in this study area. "I always try and read these as being representative of what potentially would … the volcanic grassland plains look like".*
- *Ancestors and bird species would have used trees as halfway points and places of protection. "You'd have birds using the grasslands, and birds who are prone to predators from birds of prey won't travel too far unless there are trees to hop to".*
- *Reflection of the study area as a flat landscape which would have been a vantage point for Ancestors.*
- *Discussion of land management practises in the study area. "When you look at land management practices, the more we know about our burning practices, fire stick farming. Yeah. Then grasslands were regularly if not easily burnt. And so you'd come along, you would say when it's time to burn, you burn it, you follow that fire or you'd walk behind it as you're going through. And then, of course, you come back and reassess seasonally to look at the recovery after the fire. So yeah, yeah, you can still have those kind of activities happening with you, but it'd be more specialized fire people to do that".*
- *Reflection on the recording of artefacts and the movement of artefacts from place to place.*

KJ (WWCHAC):

- Has been researching historical maps and European naming of hills and features particularly in this western part of Melbourne.
- Clan groups on this side of town were first impacted and expelled from their lands.
- *Concern over the dispossession of Ancestors from their Country and access to native foods and food supplies.*
- *Ancestors would have lived in cohorts where European missionaries including Edward Parker and William Thomas managed their respective traditional lands.*
- *Identified the proposed location of the Growling Grass Frog conservation zone on Beattys Road in the south-west section of the study area.*

KM (MW):

- *Identified the proposed location of the Growling Grass Frog conservation zone on Beattys Road in the south-west section of the study area.*

DW (WWCHAC):

- Adults would have walked with children across these areas and taught them in the grasslands – often using songs for learning as this is a better way to absorb and retain information. It strengthens the memory and also creates travel route memory.
- Through here there would have been the 'prairie hens'.
- A lot can happen in these grasslands but maybe just not intensive camping/occupation – so much activity but less tangible heritage remaining.

WWCHAC:

- Wurundjeri as represented here agree in the most simplest form that the bridge locations are fine for further permit assessment.

DW (WWCHAC):

- *Re: presence of JR for on-Country visit: It* is good/important for younger Wurundjeri to come through on these events, not just elders.
- Also important for the younger Wurundjeri to see all stages of processes – not just fieldwork – like pre-planning, construction and completion.

KJ (WWCHAC):

- When these opportunities come up and field work is quiet the younger Wurundjeri should be here learning.
- Continued engagement is important and also allows further understanding of the processes involved to better inform Wurundjeri decisions at the beginning of the assessment process.

4.3 Videolink Interview with Ron Jones

4.3.1 Introduction

As Ron Jones (Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder, WWCHAC) was unable to attend the on-Country visits, a separate interview was undertaken with him to enable him to input information and recommendations regarding the area and the proposed project. The interview was undertaken via a videolink on 8 December 2023. Attendees were:

- Ron Jones (Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder, WWCHAC)
- Catherine Keneley (Cultural Values Advisor, WWCHAC)
- David Mathews (Heritage Advisor, UHA)
- Olivia Gauci (VPA)

4.3.2 Videolink Discussion

The following is a summary of the interview, not a verbatim transcript.

RJ (WWCHAC): Need for excavation 0.5-1 m deeper than clay when on basalt plain due to potential for buried deposits. Clay should not be considered as an indicator of sterility.

DM (UHA): As per Toolern Creek example to the west of the study area where cultural deposits identified below 'sterile' clay.

RJ (WWCHAC): Western suburbs have hardly been investigated over the last 300 years.

Looking at what has been found in Aintree where investigations have occurred should be an indicator for the uninvestigated PSP area – should be one continuous site around all the wetlands.

We now know that so much of the developments shouldn't have gone ahead the way they did (e.g. Thornhills). Also, what isn't shown are all the glass and ceramic artefacts along the railway. Insulators were imported from England and Wurundjeri found the material to be useful without having to search for quarry sources so they just took them from the railways.

In the 1800s when the railways were being built bottle bases from workers were discarded and picked up and utilised by Wurundjeri too. Around Eynesbury and surrounds there will be glass artefacts and some glass artefacts were also identified recently in the Melbourne CBD.

In terms of contact places, people should know that on this side [Western area] the Staughtons imported a lot of Aboriginal people in the 1800s and hid them on their property near the weir and they [the Aboriginal people] were blamed for murders committed by the sheep farmers.

Most of our head men were all on the west side of the Yarra – in the western suburbs.

CK (WWCHAC): Do you know any stories about the head men traveling through Country in the Melton area or along the Kororoit Creek?

RJ (WWCHAC): When you look at sites along Kororoit Creek at Burnside and Woodlea and campsites around them – the ancient men would have been there and had travel routes from Mount Cottrell and Mount Aitken to see Wadawurrung and to set up fires on to know where your people were.

The high ground / visibility points are where the big camps would have been and where you'll find the artefacts.

Mount Cottrell offered significant site views. Ancestors looked down all the way to Port Phillip Bay and the Birrarung. You can see all the way across the Melton East Precinct Structure Plan area. And Ballarat and Bacchus Marsh to the west.

DM (UHA): Landforms: deeply incised creek valley, creek incised but more connected with the wetlands, volcanic plains, more elevated in northwest. Can be 2-3 m change of elevation across these landforms. Thoughts regarding these landform variations?

RJ (WWCHAC): Around old Rockbank hotel area you can see all the way to Melbourne. From Deer Park to Melton you are subtly climbing all the way and from Rockbank you suddenly notice the climb at the top. That shows how elevated it is. Doesn't get taken into consideration enough. From Mount Aitken you can see all the way to Frankston. Keeping an eye on the Wadawurrung from there.

From Great Divide you can virtually see all the way to Geelong and from there to Mount Aitken it would be a day and a half travel and then from there to You Yangs another day and a half so that's why we find a lot of sites along the basalt plains and along the ephemeral waterways.

DM (UHA): South and east of here the land is so flat so the elevations do provide these viewing opportunities. Camping was generally close to waterways? Wetlands impact?

RJ (WWCHAC): You have to consider that the wetlands this way and toward Gisborne were very brackish but our people knew how to filter those waterways and we still can filter brackish water

DM (UHA): So even a waterbody without much water would have been enough for camping and subsistence?

RJ (WWCHAC): Yes. And there would have been a lot more ephemeral waterways 300-400 years ago and that's why I'm so passionate about Kororoit Creek and Jacksons Creek – because that's where the major sites are. People wouldn't have wanted to walk up and down hills all day long so flat plain also important. You can view and pinpoint your travels.

CK (WWCHAC): Karen Jones (WWCHAC) pointed out that at a section of Kororoit Creek at a proposed bridge location area there were some key low points in the creek bed which held water, and these may hold returning populations of black fish and other wildlife. Do you think there would have been thriving animal populations along the creek around 300 years ago?

RJ (WWCHAC): Yes – it only became dirty when white people came – before that it was pristine. You need to imagine what it would have been like – the water would have been clear, the water would have been fresh, there would have been freshwater mussels which would have been the filtration for the water system but they have all died off via pollution. There were so many species. Our people travelled through the waterways and routes that followed the seasons – so six seasons of following the food bowl and they would have known which course to follow based on the seasons. Wouldn't have wanted to travel this way in the summertime. Autumn or other times better for travel.

In summer it would have been utilised because the temperature would have been different at that time due to the forests that were there. Don't know how much it's changed over the last 300 years – we didn't have tussock serrated grass which was imported from overseas and has killed off other local vegetation. Kills land and vegetation.

Ancestors had a deep knowledge of the seasons of the food bowl and made campsites that followed the seasons. Artefact scatters identified form an important part of the narrative of the food bowl and travel routes Ancestors followed.

DM (UHA): [showed photos of on-Country visit]

CK (WWCHAC): Discussed how Karen Jones (WWCHAC) described all the landforms as one entity, despite current fencing divisions, as when it would have flooded all the creek water would have gone all the way up to the rocky outcrop on top of the escarpment. A lot of significance felt by the Elders in the landscape around here during the visit.

RJ (WWCHAC): Yes – she is right. I lived along the Kororoit Creek in Deer Park and every couple of years the water would come right up to the ridgeline. Wintertime I don't think our people would have caped this side they would have been on the higher land on the other side.

You didn't camp down on the flat, you camped up out of the way of the water. Like the Maribyrnong River near the Anglers Hotel - every five or six years water would come right up to the second floor of the hotel, so that shows you how far but this has changed since they altered the waterways, with the dam at the racecourse. There might have been a larger flow coming through but we'll never know as everything's been dammed and channelised and even now there's a lot of illegal water taken out of the Koroit Creek by farmers.

Remnants of Grey Box Forest woodland exist from the historic Staughton and Pinkerton properties to Eynesbury and Tullamarine Airport. The landscape was heavily forested and the temperature was cooler. You can still see the evidence of where woodmen cut the old trees. Concern of the health of Country because of deforestation. The land would have lost its nutrition

DM (UHA): Waterways are sensitive and the movement of people with the waterway size – shrinking and swelling – so the high ground is a double spike of archaeological sensitivity The pressure on water systems post contact were very well documented and pretty sizable.

RJ (WWCHAC): Your population is far higher there too and if you travel along the Merri Creek and put the two together, you'll find far more. It would have completely flooded on the other side there [meaning in photo] and that's why Melton Council had to change the location of Melton which was at the golf course which used to flood during the wintertime as it was so low. They found a lot of artefacts along Blind Creek (and there's been a few artefacts fan at the back of Bunnings). There's a scatter where all the Sugar Gums area [outside PSP]. The reason why they find so many artifacts around places like Thornhill Park it would have been a camping spot up on the high part above the ancient wetlands.

CK (WWCHAC): In the previous image presented, in the background there is the floodplain section, and Karen JONES (WWCHAC) pointed out during our first walk on Country when we were on the opposite side of the Creek that we could see a distinction between the brown clay and the red clay soil and she shared a story that your clan is known as the Red Earth people, or the red soil people. Did you have any stories like that when you were growing up?

RJ (WWCHAC): No - because my grandmother and her family all spent their life around Healesville and Cummeragunja and when you when you go back and look at the full history of the Yarra, Yarra Tribe – we're not Wurundjeri. [William Barak was chief of the Yarra Yarra people]. – I've been brought up knowing we were Yarra Yarra and Wurundjeri only appeared in 1984 and they manipulated two words to create the word 'Wurundjeri'.

Nothing was ever done about collecting information about the western suburbs, being on the other side of town. There are only a few stories from somewhere in Bacchus Marsh, I think it was one of William Barak's uncles and it was the last meeting of the Chiefs and a Corroboree was done there. Now they call it 'Tanderrum' but back in my day this wasn't a word it was a Corroboree. The men were painted up, and most of Barak's stuff focuses on corroborees that were done. So 'Tanderrum' - I don't know who ever brought that word in but I'd never heard that word before.

Women were not allowed to watch it corroboree and vice versa – the men weren't allowed to watch the women dancing. The men were painted up, and most of Barak's stuff focuses on corroborees that were done. So 'Tanderrum' - I don't know who ever brought that word in but I'd never heard that word before.

I'm not a book Aboriginal. My grandmother and her brothers and sisters were forbidden pass on their culture and traditions when they were on Coranderrk. So, what we know is only a few stories like tickling fish, how to catch fish.

I heard she was taught how to make boomerangs, but that was never passed on. Uncle Frank Wandin taught the people who were born on Coranderrk how to make a boomerang and how to set a boomerang. A nulla-nulla resembles a boomerang but a boomerang is like a frisbee – designed to come back, but a nulla-nulla is designed for hunting/killing. Used for birds, kangaroos, possums – a variety.

Growing up on Coranderrk and Cummeragunja mum ate echinda (but we knew it as porcupine), possums, witchetty-grubs and eel, all those types of animals – but I couldn't eat those types of things because I'd been brought up in white society but my mother could eat it because as a very young child that's what she was fed on mission stations.

I can't even eat kangaroo as I believe it was William Barak's totem. People never ate their own totem. If you look at Barak's paintings and that letter he wrote to give to [***][5] before he went back to England. *[This painting was commissioned by Ann Bon].* It had kangaroos on it as a totem so I was always under the impression that the kangaroo was William Barak's totem.

CK (WWCHAC): In regard to totems, walking on Country with Karen Jones (WWCHAC) was very special when he saw the bullum-bullum [butterflies] flying around and especially listening to her stories of your mum [Ron's mum = Karen's grandmother] and that connection between totems and Country, and also about how important they are for caring for Country. That was something that we really felt was significant about this area.

RJ (WWCHAC): We don't talk of it much but through the Spirit I knew that we were going to win back the William Barak painting and shield regardless of what happen and that is how it turned out. I'm not sure if it's about a sense or the way we were brought up but my mother taught me to focus on the Spirit. I saw three apparitions of our Elders and I knew I was going to bring those items back home. We don't talk about it much as people think we're going a bit crazy.

The way we were brought up – if a Plover calls after midnight then there will be a death in the family, when there's a ring around the moon on a clear night you know it's a sign that there's going to be rain coming.

Also like how the sun was formed: Bunjil carried an Emu egg into the sky and as he was carrying it up it cracked and opened and the yolk fell out and formed the sun. And to wake people I the morning he Bunjil formed the Kookaburra and the people were told that if you laugh at the kookaburra in the morning then it stops laughing and the sun will go down and never come back up again and we'll be in darkness.

These are the stories that my mother told me. I'm so very fortunate that I've had two generations, my grandmother, my mother and her sister, that were brought up on Coranderrk the traditional way but only about a quarter of the traditional way as they were forbidden for it to be passed on to them by the Elders.

Now I try to pass it on to my kids, Karen and Kylie have it passed to them from me from what I was passed on.

When my mother used to dance, her and her cousin would dance completely differently. You would see her cousin, Mandy Nicholson (WWCHAC), dance and that's Top End stuff. The way my mother and her family used to dance when they got drunk at funerals, their skirts would be pulled up and tucked into their pants and the way they danced was completely different to what we see today. That's what they were taught as kids on mission stations. I wish we had movies of the traditional dances and that was real traditional dancing not like they do today.

Linda Jones (wife of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder Ron Jones): They would put their knees together like the Charleston and they would squat. It's hard to describe. I witnessed it when they would dance after a few drinks – they'd turn into traditional black women.

[5] The recipient of the letter is not known and the sourcing of this information remains a possibility for future research.

RJ (WWCHAC): Like at funerals. When my mother got married in the 1930s people said it wasn't true that she got married but it was in the newspaper so it was true as back then the papers didn't lie. People didn't lie, you know, not like today they manipulate that. My mother had a gum leaf band for music at her wedding. Frankie Nicholson (WWCHAC) also used to play the gum leaf - we had tapes of that but I don't know what happened to the tapes.

DM (UHA): During the on-Country visit we targeted a few areas so all landforms and areas could be represented. We visited a few of the wetlands south of Beatties Rd, a number of locations along Kororoit Creek, including the proposed bridge crossings that we are continuing to discuss, the broader volcanic plain. Ron, is there anything regarding those landscape features that you would like to share?

RJ (WWCHAC): Where that floodplain is and where you can see it straightens out a bit, I would leave that the bends of the creek alone because that would have been probably your deeper holes and fishing points. I would put the bridge there at the flat area [RJ indicated a location on the creek floodplain]. The floodplain is going to be more sensitive. If you look for artefacts here you always see that part shifts around because the water would have cut through there or flooded over all of that area. The problem is that they have already planned out where they are going to build the bridges. I would put the bridge at the straighter points of the creek but you need to be out on-Country to really get an understanding of the best locations. I would put the bridge where the least amount of artefacts are.

DM (UHA): Prior to the initiation of this project there had been discussions about building the bridge elsewhere and due to the landform it was redesigned. Focussing on the bridge location, it's likely that there will be artefacts to some level along the entire creek so are you suggesting to try and assess relative numbers?

RJ (WWCHAC): Yes.

DM (UHA): I think that lines up nicely with the permit approach too –going to that next step of assessing subsurface conditions, which is where so many of the artefacts will be, and to understand exactly that. It's good to hear how the multi-armed approach of the ACHIA, the CVA and now the permit provides a space that this can be explored. Ron, from your perspective, then one of the key aims is to accept that there likely will be artefacts but to be looking for areas where they're not in high concentrations and hot spots?

RJ (WWCHAC): Not high concentrations - yes.

If you can compare the Deer Park Hotel location and the back of the old ammunitions factory, we excavated to a couple of meters there at the back of the Deer Park Hotel and the amount of sites that were there I think is all the way through [along the creek]. Because just imagine that would have been a major travel route down to the Altona area and that so there could have been a lot of inland traveling with that waterway [Kororoit Creek]. I'm not too sure, but I think that's the way that Batman might have travelled to Sunbury. It would be interesting to work out his travel route. He could have travelled the Maribyrnong up to Jacksons Creek but no one has ever focussed on the Kororoit Creek.

DM (UHA): [map of other bridge location presented for discussion]

RJ (WWCHAC): I would focus on the rock escarpments. They can't be removed and damaged like they did in Bridge Rd, Melton South. They destroyed some beautiful landscape there that had been there for millions of years. If you can keep away from them, rock escarpments as well, it's not just for us [Wurundjeri] but also for the people that are going live around these areas. Once you start cutting and removing the rock escarpments and building bridges you are cutting access/movement along that creek area.

DM (UHA): Continued connection is really important, even if infrastructure develops around it?

RJ (WWCHAC): Yes. If you can have continuous connection along the creek line, that's for the people who are going to live there in the future. If you think about some of the rock escarpments destroyed out at Melton South, they would have been like permanent art – living art and sculpture.

DM (UHA): There are some beautiful formations and I know that VPA has done an extra step to map where some of those features and to be able to sight them. It's important to hear from you how important these features are for you and for Wurundjeri.

RJ (WWCHAC): It's for everyone. You know that housing estate near Bridge Road [Melton South], we tried to say 'protect that rock escarpment' and look what they've done there – they've blocked access to the creekline [Toolern Creek] and that that was a beautiful bit of landscape.

DM (UHA): It is an almost terraced creek in parts.

RJ (WWCHAC): There is a huge number of artefacts there – where they put the bridge through they destroyed a 7,000 year old site. All they needed to do to mitigate that was to build an arch bridge but they went for the cheapest construction option.

DM (UHA): This is a really important and multi-factorial discussion as there is the bridge itself as one aspect but the second is how it's actually constructed. The actual construction footprint - separate from the design footprint - in terms of the amount of impact and where it is can be anything from a few localized piers to an open trench that does considerable impact

RJ (WWCHAC): Some of those bridges put in already at places like Aintree have ruined some beautiful spots and have cut off access along the creekline.

DM (UHA): It is understandable why the bridge crossings are such a focus and particularly an early discussion focus of these types of assessments. It's useful to get the context from other projects and other experiences from Wurundjeri and it's important to understand that there is a history there as well.

CK (WWCHAC): Ron, did you have any other thoughts on what we've shown you this afternoon or did you have any questions?

RJ (WWCHAC): The landscape of that area and the values are more than just being what is determined as basalt plains. It must be understood that Kororoit Creek is very sensitive or was to our ancestors who roamed that whole area. People just don't know the significance of that whole area. I'd like to see more education undertaken and more dating done across that whole area, because the western suburbs is always completely left out.

CK (WWCHAC): It is so important. We will take this discussion back to the VPA team. David [David Mathews] and I have also discussed what outcomes might be designed through the CVA and into the planning, there would be opportunities for future cultural values research or in potential collaborations with the Cultural Heritage Unit to have the cultural values sitting alongside future CHMPs. That's definitely something that we take to heart and that's going to be included in the recommendations for this assessment as well.

GENERAL: Discussion of learning from Ron via inductions and importance of inductions, particularly when the inductees ask questions and can be seen to be learning.

DM (UHA): It seems that the opportunity for education and for sharing through projects like this do have that capacity to add to knowledge, but also provide an opportunity to communicate the known knowledge – a positive outcome of these projects.

RJ (WWCHAC): The other thing to think about is that these areas have a very high population of migrants moving in and they want to know more about the history and it makes them want to live in some of these areas where they know that there is thousands of years of history. I've pushed that to developers before too.

DM (UHA): There are so many opportunities to share knowledge and it only helps with build attachment to these areas because ultimately if and when land is rezoned there's potentially a lot of families that are going to be raising their families there.

RJ (WWCHAC): Do you know how pink diamonds were made? Bunjil got a fish and carried it up to the sky and because the fish had different coloured scales when the scales fell to the Earth they formed different coloured stones. I generally don't tell too much about the Dreamtime stories.

5 Cultural Values Map

Below is a map showing Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Values. Note that this map is based on information made available from WWCHAC of the Melton East PSP CVA investigation process including a pre-visit meeting, two on-site visits, an individual interview and post-visit meetings.

An ACHIA has been prepared in parallel with this CVA. **Cultural Values and Archaeological evidence are both needed to develop a holistic understanding of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural heritage**. The Aboriginal cultural values map (Figure 5-1) is informed by Traditional Owner knowledge of the study area and has mirrored the findings of the ACHIA archaeological sensitivity model.

Table 5-1 Cultural Values themes and landforms

Volcanic Plain	**Wetland and urban floodway zone**	**Kororoit Creek Corridor**
• Volcanic Plain • Vegetation • Fauna • Viewpoints – including elevated rocky escarpments / stony rises • Travel routes • Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung connections • Post-contact vales • Language	• Water sources such as creeks and wetlands • Vegetation • Fauna • Aesthetic values • Viewpoints – as important observation points and landscape markers • Travel routes • Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung connections	• Water sources such as creeks and wetlands • Vegetation • Fauna • Viewpoints – as important observation points and landscape markers • Travel routes • Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung connections • Aesthetic values • Language

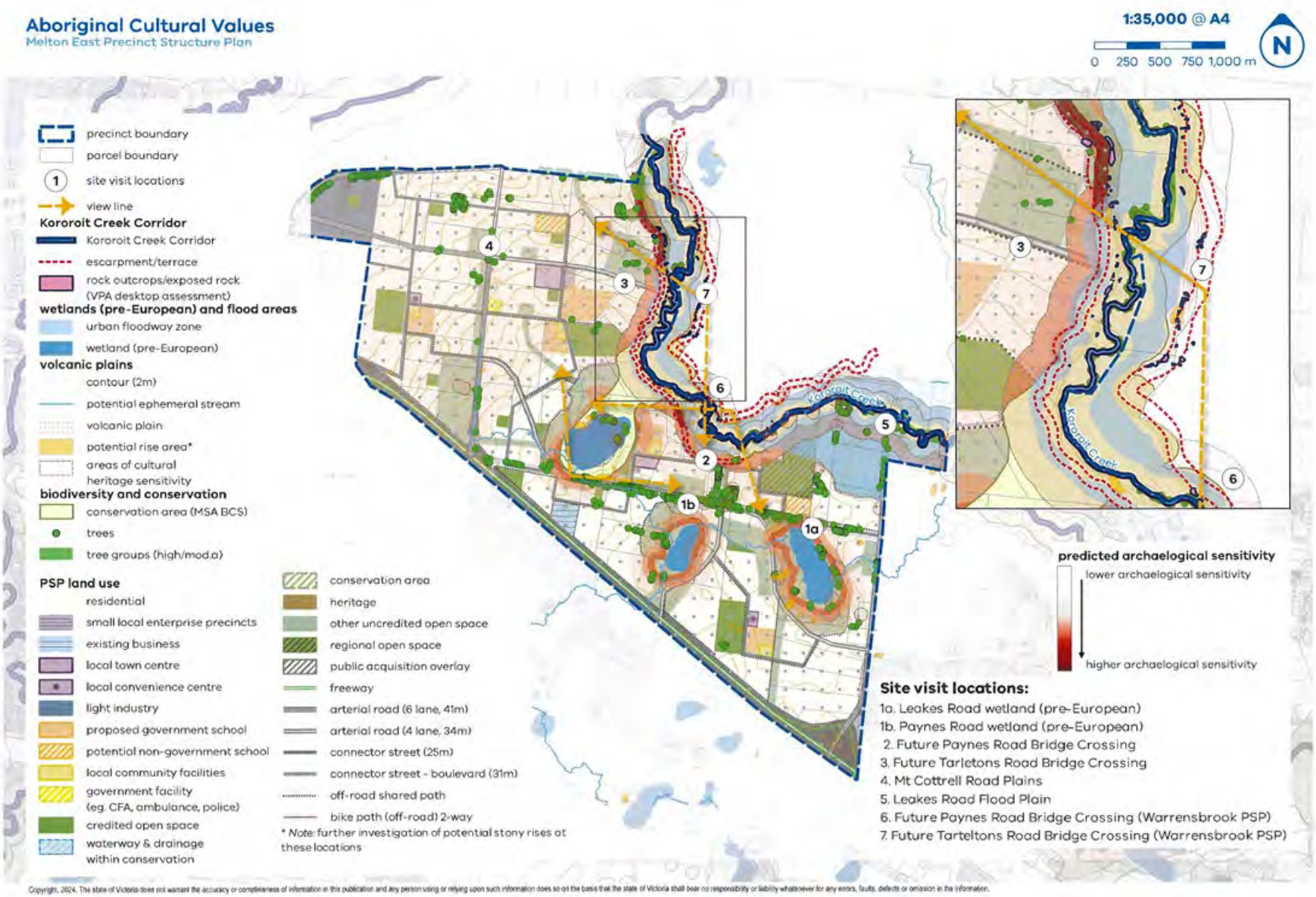


Figure 5-1: Cultural Values map

6 Cultural Values - Recommendations

Recommendation	Planning Stage/ Implementation Stage
Recommendation 1: Cultural Heritage Management and Protection • Preparation of mandatory and voluntary CHMPs. • Consistent engagement with WWCHAC to allow self-empowerment regarding management and protection on Country, including co-management with all stakeholders and future residential communities. • Ensure that development within 200m of a waterway avoids harm in accordance with a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) or, if no CHMP exists, where possible avoid development within 200 m of waterways • Ensure all subsurface investigations proceed through initial clay deposit to ensure sterility.	Both
Recommendation 2: Protect Aesthetic and Natural Attributes within Melton East Precinct Waterways: • Ensure flowing and meandering waterways as preference over straight sections. • Healthy water strategy implementation. • Improve and maintain health of Kororoit Creek and the wetlands. • Connection of the creek and the wetlands. • Protect bends of creeks. • Storage of water and design of wetlands should be prominent features. Rock escarpments: • Protection of rock escarpments. Landforms: • Where possible, protection of any potential rises and terraces/escarpments, in addition to rock escarpments and other prominent rises. Sightlines: • Protection of sightlines via open space allocations. Fauna: • Identification, reinstatement and protection of indigenous fauna populations. Flora: • Identification, reinstatement and protection of indigenous flora communities.	Both

Recommendation 3: Caring for Country • WWCHAC management and consultation inclusion. • Ongoing engagement opportunities such as employment (e.g. Narrap team, education sessions, etc.) • Utilising Narrap team to undertake cultural burns surrounding Kororoit Creek. o *GGF habitat in the Kororoit Creek*	Implementation stage, with the PSP providing guidance
Recommendation 4: Conservation of the Melton East Precinct: Planning Controls • Wetland protection and identification & design. • Protection of bends of creeks. • Preservation of all sensitive landscape types (such as: stony rises, escarpments, water sources) as well as representative areas of the flat, lower sections of the plain which often are overlooked. • Healthy waters: ensure water runoff from roads is appropriately managed, ensure storm water drainage sufficient to protect residences during flooding events and to avoid impact to healthy waterways. • Ongoing maintenance of the natural environmental systems. • Ongoing maintenance of remnant woodlands. • Ensure continued access and connectivity for water and plant and animal species as well as for future communities. • Establish ongoing flora and fauna rehabilitation programs. • Ensure that development within 200m of a waterway avoids harm in accordance with a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) or, if no CHMP exists, where possible avoid development within 200m of waterways. • Design and future protection of open spaces. • Protection of sightlines via planning controls (open space allocation, build height, etc.). • Minimal impact development methodologies should be utilised: such as pylon style bridge construction which is localised and allows connectivity beneath. • Minimal impact to cultural material: choose options with the least impact on sites.	Both
Recommendation 5: Supporting Cultural Practice in the Melton East Precinct **Ensure opportunities for WWCHAC to have continued connection to Country including:** • Ongoing access. • Naming. • Caring for Country groups.	Implementation stage, with the PSP providing guidance

Recommendation 6: Wetland Locations (alternative Growling Grass Frog Conservation Zone) • Further research of the population numbers of the Growling Grass Frog in the study area. Note that DEECA is currently planning for Growling Grass Frog protection plans but there is work with Australia Zoo to establish a search technique to find the 'earless dragon' and identify what their habitat would be for protection. This will be considered as will all species requiring protection in Kororoit Creek Corridor. • Engagement and connection with WWCHAC, particularly via Narrap. Note that feedback has suggested that more flexibility around this location is needed and this will be worded to 'be in consultation with WWCHAC'.	Both, with the PSP providing guidance
Recommendation 7: Interpretation • Wholistic and flexible and can encompass a large range of medium and formats (e.g. language) and signage and education for future communities. • Artwork design and execution input. • Ongoing education/communication opportunities for WWCHAC to engage with local community to pass on information about culture and to promote understanding of wetlands.	Implementation
Recommendation 8: Further research • Research into historical Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works materials identifying road systems, dams and irrigation systems that were set up to see which ones are no longer used and if they have been drained. • Research regarding how the landscape used to hold water and for long is required. • Undertake core samples to investigate the silt layers of the wetland areas and how far back they extend and to assess how often flooding occurred. • Research regarding the levels of red earth in the area and the soil profile in the study area is required. • Research regarding the extent of the clearance of the wetlands in the study area is required. • Research regarding the history of the land holder's house at the Water Reserve Road location is required. • Research regarding the ecological history of the River Red Gums at the section of the Koroit Creek at the Water Reserve Road location is required. • Research regarding the depth and history of Kororoit Creek 65,000 years ago is required. • Research regarding the associations with lava flow and Aboriginal cultural values of the study area including Kororoit Creek and hills is required. • Research regarding the survival of English boxthorns in flood zones. • Research regarding the movement of Aboriginal people inland when Port Phillip Bay flooded. • Research regarding the original chain of flood plains in the study area is required.	N/A

• Research regarding the Aboriginal encampments recorded in 1835 in the study area. • Investigation of historical maps of the study area which map Country with Woi-wurrung language. • Research regarding the population numbers of animal species, for example kangaroos, in the study area. • Investigation of ethnohistorical material and parish maps to identify the EVCs and the extent of the traditional wetlands. • Investigation of Aboriginal cultural heritage between the Melton East area and Sunbury should be undertaken by the heritage advisor to understand what still remains should be identified but have been impacted by post-colonial activities. • Research regarding the historical extent of the Leakes Road wetland and the distinct grasslands surrounding the location. • Research regarding Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung totems and native plant species in the study area • Research regarding the provenance of the red silcrete artefact identified at the Leakes Road Wetland • Research regarding the teachings of women Traditional Owners regarding the management of traditional lands across Victoria, for example Ovens River area. • Research regarding the freshwater and saltwater food sources Ancestors would have had access to in the study area. • Research regarding the history of the naming of Kororoit Creek. • Consider conducting further excavations and analysis of archaeological cultural heritage in the study area along Kororoit Creek. • Research regarding the history of floods in the study area surrounding the proposed Tarleton Road bridge crossing, specifically regarding the extent of the distribution of water across the flood plain. • Research regarding the water flows in Kororoit Creek in the study area surrounding the proposed Tarleton Road bridge crossing and the history of the erosion which has occurred in the bank over time. • Research regarding traditional and historical Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung connections to the Kororoit Creek in the area surrounding the proposed Tarleton Road bridge crossing. • Research regarding the dispossession of Ancestors from the western side of Country including the study area and the impacts of Europeans like Batman, Fawkner and Pascoe. • Research regarding Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders' totems including the kangaroo totem. • Research to enable mapping of areas where Batman tracked when they were traversing Country. • Investigation of western suburbs of Melbourne – a generally overlooked area of assessment, including conducting dating	

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Appendix A Glossary of terms

Activity Area: The area to be used or developed for an activity (CHMP)

Alluvium: Sediment laid down by flowing water

Chert: A fine-grained stone composed of cryptocrystalline silica. It exhibits a range of textures and colours. Chert is easy to work and retain a sharp edge for an extensive period of time before re-sharpening is required. It has a low to medium fracture toughness and is hence used for flaked stone artefacts.

Devonian: A geological period spanning from about 419 million years ago to about 359 million years ago.

Exposure: Refers to the percentage of the sub-surface exposed, through actions such as erosion or in excavated areas.

Flake: A stone piece removed from a core by percussion (striking it) or by pressure. It is generally identified by the presence of a striking platform, a bulb of percussion, and/or several other features not usually found on a naturally shattered stone.

Granite: Hard **i**gneous rock with that is granular in texture, mainly consisting of mica, feldspar and quartz.

Holocene: The Holocene epoch forms part of the late Quaternary period and extends from about 11,000 years ago to the present day.

Igneous: A rock of volcanic origin

In situ: A description of any cultural material that lies undisturbed in its original point of deposition.

Quartz: The second most abundant mineral on earth made up of a crystalline structure of SiO_4.

Scarred trees: Tree scars from Aboriginal cultural traditions are distinct from naturally occurring scars by their generally oval and/or symmetrical shape, and sometimes presence of steel or stone axe marks on the scar's surface. The size and shape of scars depends on the intended use of the bark removed. Bark was used for a variety of dishes and containers, shields, canoes, and construction of bark-slab huts.

Significant Ground Disturbance: Means disturbance of (a) the topsoil or surface rock layer of the ground; or (b) a waterway, by machinery in the course of grading, excavating, digging, dredging or deep ripping, but does not include ploughing other than deep ripping (to 60cm).

Silcrete: Soil, clay or sand sediments that have silicified under basalt through groundwater percolation. Silcrete ranges in texture from very fine grained, to quite coarse grained. At one extreme it is cryptocrystalline with very few clasts, with almost the appearance of chert. It is used for flaked stone artefact production, sometimes after heat treatment to increase the ease and predictability of its flaking.

Silurian: A geological period that spans between about 443 million years ago to 419 million years ago.

Study area: The area subject to this investigation – i.e. the Parwan Station PSP

Visibility: Refers to the degree to which the surface of the ground can be observed. This may be influenced by natural processes such as erosion, the character of the extant vegetation, and/or by land use practices, such as ploughing or grading. It is generally expressed in terms of the percentage of the ground surface visible for an observer on foot.