

12 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage places and objects are a tangible link to the past. They illustrate Victoria's written and verbal history. These irreplaceable resources evoke a strong spiritual connection to the past for many people. The landscape itself forms a spiritual and cultural heritage place for many Indigenous peoples and reflects deep spiritual connections to traditional lands or country.

This chapter focuses on the management and protection of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage on public land within the River Red Gum Forests study area.

Aboriginal cultural heritage places and sites exist throughout the landscape of Victoria and are often only identified or clarified after disturbance such as infrastructure works. As such, many sites have been lost and the landscape has changed significantly since the arrival of Europeans. The connection and relationship that many Indigenous people have to traditional lands is profound and deeply spiritual after 50,000 years of occupation (see chapter 6).

During the 200 years of European settlement, major changes in technology and patterns of land use have occurred. Initially people were attracted by the promise of vast grazing lands, while other waves of settlement were associated with the discovery of gold and exploitation of natural resources, which underpinned the economy of the state. Over time, many people have grown to appreciate the land and feel a strong connection to many places, particularly along the River Murray, despite or perhaps because of the often harsh and variable environment. Visiting cultural heritage places or objects provides an opportunity for visitors and residents alike to connect to the past. A thematic non-Indigenous history of the River Red Gum Forests study area is presented in chapter 7.

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE

Pre-European Contact

Aboriginal people have occupied the Australian continent for many thousands of years, and there is ample physical and oral evidence that the areas within the Murray Valley supported a rich culture for much of the last 50,000 years.

Archaeological sites from the Willandra Lakes (Lake Mungo)—about 100 km to the north of the River Murray—have yielded remains of some 135 individuals and provide evidence of Australia's oldest human remains dated at between 45-50,000 years before present (BP) utilising new techniques that reach beyond the reliable range of radiocarbon dating (Bowler et al. 2003).

The Murray Valley region contains numerous burial sites, including the unique occurrence of extensive cemeteries. Human remains in the area have been found to date to the late Pleistocene-early Holocene times. More recently, Indigenous groups have reburied ancestral remains within the study area. Sites such as Kow Swamp

(Thorne & Macumber 1972; Stone & Cupper 2003) and near Robinvale (Bowler 1983) show evidence of occupation continuing intermittently through to recent times, and an apparent continuity in cultural practices including complex burial rituals and rights. The Kow Swamp site in particular is one of the largest collections of late Pleistocene human burials at one site. Dating of the site has yielded ages in the range 13,000 to 9500 years before present (BP). Of particular importance is the complex range of human physical characteristics observed across approximately 40 individuals. The site includes men, women, juveniles and infants with some individuals being anatomically quite distinct from both other ancient people—such as those at Lake Mungo—and modern humans, leading to theories regarding multiple waves of occupation of the Australian continent over time by discrete populations (see Flood 2004). Much debate has continued over the description of the rugged or robust characteristics of some Kow Swamp skeletal remains. A similar robust individual from about 6500 years ago recovered from northwestern WA indicates that this physique was not specific to a single population located on the east coast of Australia (Freedman & Lofgren 1979). The Kow Swamp remains were re-buried several years ago at the request of Aboriginal communities in northern Victoria and the full description of the materials has not been published, although documentation and casts exist within museum and research collections (see Flood 2004).

Freshwater shell middens also attest to early and extended Aboriginal use of food resources along the River Murray and its tributaries (see Box 12.1; Figure 12.1). Aboriginal mounds, some of which also contain human remains, are common. Likewise, Aboriginal scarred trees are common, including the largest Victorian concentration of these trees on Bumbang Island near Robinvale. Other types of Aboriginal sites in the study area include hearths, kitchen mounds and artefact scatters. Aboriginal cultural heritage places are often located close to resources required for their way of life. This is of particular interest in the study area given the generally poor preservation of remnant landscapes, such as prior and ancestral streams (see chapter 2 and 3), which may have contained cultural heritage sites. Much of the landscape of the Murray valley has been substantially modified by water management and agricultural practices, particularly on freehold land.

Written descriptions of Indigenous culture, economy and society are generally restricted to those of early European explorers (e.g. Sturt, Mitchell), settlers (e.g. Curr, Krefft, Beveridge) and government-appointed officials such as G.A. Robinson, Aboriginal Chief Protector. These descriptions come from a specifically European perspective which is unlikely to reflect how Indigenous communities might describe themselves. The intimate relationship that Indigenous people had, and in many cases still have, with the landscape is only now becoming apparent to the wider community.

Aboriginal associations with the study area also include broader spiritual values and Aboriginal cultural heritage places associated with the post-contact period. The latter include campsites, meeting places, historic reserves, massacre sites and stations.

European Impact on Indigenous Communities

Recognition of the history of cultural contact, conflict or resistance, adaptation, adjustment, and an awareness of places reflecting that history, are important for understanding our shared, and at times, poorly documented or acknowledged past. These places also provide a historical reference to explore the changing and evolving culture and values of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies within Australia.

European settlement significantly disrupted the lives of Indigenous people in the River Red Gum Forests study area. Even before widespread European settlement, a wave of introduced diseases, perhaps from earlier explorers in other parts of the country, had already spread with devastating effects. Smallpox and influenza epidemics in particular are believed to have significantly reduced the Indigenous population prior to the first pastoral settlers reaching the Murray valley area in the 1830s and 1840s (Atkinson & Berryman 1983).

In 1838 Sturt commented that although the Indigenous people he saw at the junction of the Goulburn and Murray Rivers were good-looking, strong and active, "disease had been busy with them" and there were many burials in the sandhills, which appeared "to have been recently tenanted" (Sturt in Hibbins 1978). Curr (1883) commented that both the state of disuse and the number of cooking ovens indicated that the population of Indigenous people in the Barmah region was much greater prior to the arrival of white settlers.

The wave of European settlers that followed the early explorers saw a clash of cultures with very different technologies, attitudes to the land and concepts of ownership, social values and spiritualities. Dispossessed and forcibly removed, Aboriginal people were in many cases relocated to missions and reserves outside their traditional lands. Many deaths occurred, particularly when Indigenous people resisted the occupation or invasion of their country (Clark 1996).

Today, the places of these interactions between explorers, settlers, including massacre sites, mission stations and reserves are often especially significant to Indigenous people as they form part of their cultural heritage. At a more individual level, many people lost their families and ancestors at these places. The protection of these locations is therefore vitally important to some Aboriginal communities, even if there is no remaining physical evidence of such events.

Protection and Management of Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Identification and documentation of Aboriginal cultural heritage places, sites and objects are important for future management and protection. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria or AAV (Department of Victorian Communities) has prepared information sheets to help identify physical cultural heritage such as middens, scarred trees, grinding stones, artefact scatter sites, stone tools and burials. A description of freshwater middens is provided in Box 12.1. AAV also funds regional Aboriginal heritage officers throughout the state to work in partnership with land management agencies, investigate reports of potential sites, carry out community programs and provide advice to the public, developers, or other government agencies about Aboriginal cultural heritage.



Aboriginal cultural heritage places, sites and objects are protected through cultural heritage legislation (described below). Traditional owners and other relevant Aboriginal groups have an interest in the long term survival of their cultural inheritance and are actively involved in ongoing protection and management of these places, sites and objects.

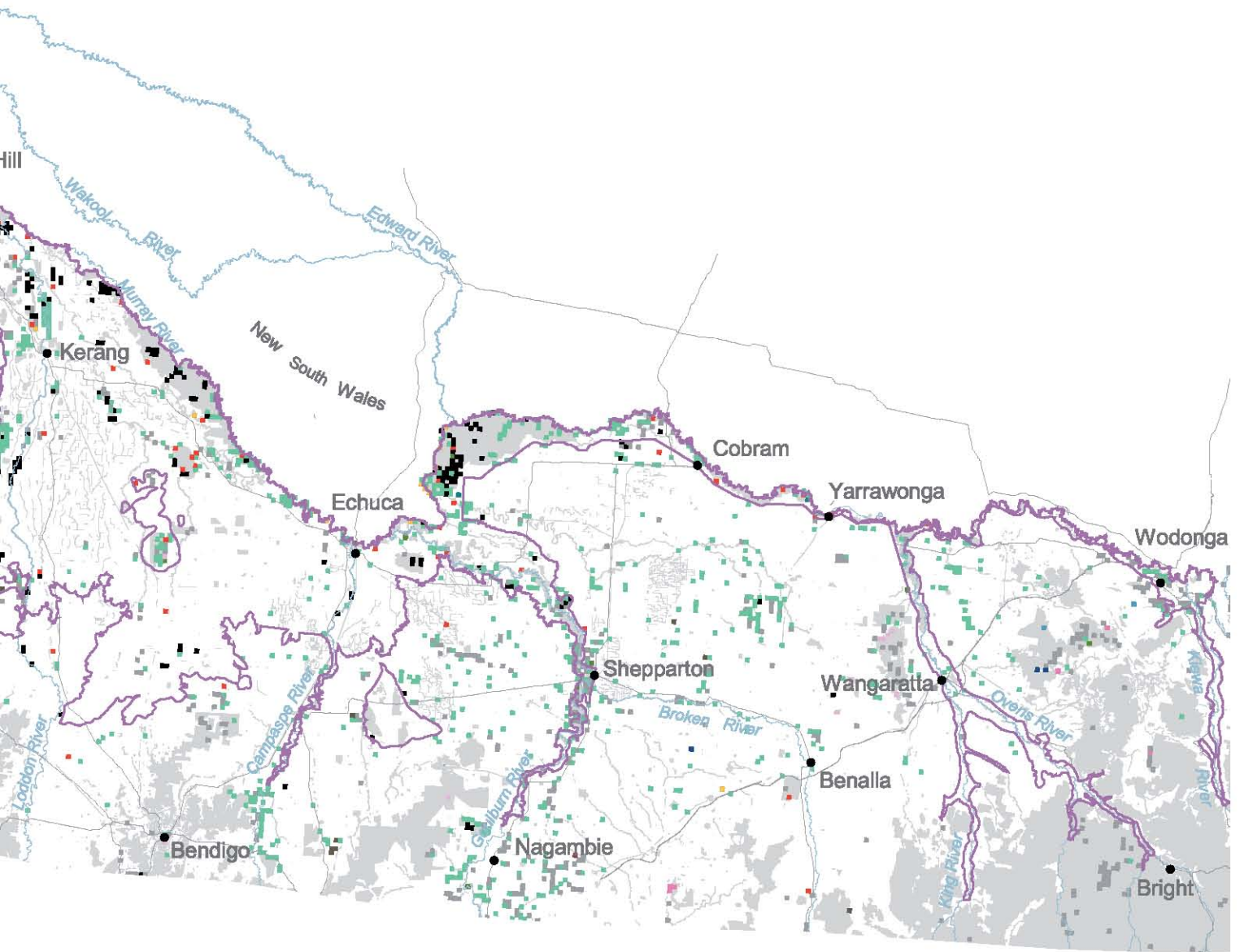
Identification of Sites and Survey Coverage

As described above, sites of Indigenous cultural heritage may have a material or physical nature (such as burials, middens, scarred trees, missions) or may be related to events or spirituality and have no tangible on-ground presence (meeting places, massacre sites, mythology). The documentation, identification, protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage places are the responsibilities of all land managers and land owners in Victoria. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) and other state government authorities work in partnership with traditional owners and other relevant groups in all Aboriginal cultural heritage investigations and assessments. This includes surveys to locate and record Aboriginal sites and places as well as assessments of the potential impact of proposed works on heritage values.

Only some sections of the study area have been systematically surveyed for Aboriginal cultural heritage places. Although the coverage is not comprehensive, a number of notable and important archaeological and cultural heritage sites are known, such as the unique cultural landscapes associated with the Murray Valley including the mound and cemetery complexes, evidence of old shell middens, Kow Swamp and the Robinvale burials, and Bumbang Island sites (Figures 12.1 and 12.2). Many systematic surveys have been associated with the planning and development of specific infrastructure works, such as the construction of roads and forestry activities (e.g. Presland 1981; TerraCulture 2005) while others have been more regional in approach (Bonhomme 1990; Craib 1992; Greenwood 2003; Johnston & Webber 2004).

AAV maintains a Heritage Register of all known Aboriginal sites and places in Victoria, in accordance

- LEGEND**
ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE
PREDOMINANT FEATURE TYPE
- Aboriginal Place
 - Art Site
 - Artefact Scatter
 - Burial
 - Fish Trap
 - Grinding Grooves
 - Hearth
 - Mound
 - Quarry
 - Rock Wall
 - Scarred Tree
 - Shell Deposit
 - Stone Structures, Rings and Arrangements
 - Sub-surface Deposit
- Major Towns
 - Major Roads
 - Major Rivers
 - Study Area Boundary
 - Current Public Land



Box 12.1 Aboriginal Shell Middens.

Many freshwater shell midden sites occur along the major waterways and wetlands within the study area, including both relatively recent ones and those created many thousands of years ago when the climate was much wetter. The middens are accumulations of materials from cooking and eating freshwater mussels. Often middens contain charcoal, ash, fire-stones, burnt earth or clay, and animal bones or shells. Some contain stone tools or, occasionally, burials.

The shells may form a discrete layer or an extensive area associated with a range of activities and the remains of meals eaten over thousands of years at a popular campsite (Bonhomme 1990). The shells are typically the freshwater mussel (*Velesunio ambiguus*) and river mussel (*Alathyria jacksoni*).

Some particularly good examples of middens occur

along major waterways throughout the study area. As a consequence of this location, the meandering of rivers and erosion of river banks over time is a threat to some middens. Active conservation may be required to preserve the sites for future generations.

Freshwater shell middens provide valuable information about the past including Aboriginal economy and land-use, the local climate, as well as providing a record of events such as floods and droughts. The shells in middens provide information about the environment, and whether the shells were collected at the same time or at a number of different times. Dating techniques ascertain the time when Indigenous people occupied an area. Middens provide an important link to the past, and those that contain burials are particularly significant to Indigenous people (AAV 2003).

Figure 12.1 A stairway cut into a midden along the banks of the Murray River, Echuca Regional Park. It is against the law to disturb or destroy an Aboriginal cultural heritage site or object without written consent from the relevant local Aboriginal community.



with cultural heritage legislation. This includes detailed site information and historical information for some post-contact places. In addition, AAV holds copies of all reports relating to previous Aboriginal cultural heritage investigations throughout Victoria. Records for individual sites are generally subject to access restrictions. However maps of sites portrayed on a 1x1 km grid cell are available as an indicative tool to establish if sites have been registered and what general type of site is present. The distribution of these sites within the River Red Gum Forests study area is shown in

Map 12.1. More than one site or cultural heritage type may occur within a grid cell. The absence of grid cells in many areas does not mean that there are no Indigenous cultural heritage sites, but that the area may not have been surveyed or sites documented.

The Aboriginal Community Heritage Investigations Program in 2001-2002 provided opportunities for Aboriginal communities to increase their capacity and participation in cultural heritage management. The program involved a series of training and fieldwork

activities and included an oral history component—recording the stories and memories of community elders—extensive field surveys, archaeological excavations, training in cultural heritage management and administration procedures and site protection programs.

Some of the results have been the recording of over 400 new Aboriginal cultural heritage sites; participation of over 170 Aboriginal community members in the program from a diversity of backgrounds and the employment of seven program participants in cultural heritage management positions in various Victorian organisations. The success of this program has demonstrated an ongoing need for Indigenous communities to undertake cultural heritage field surveys and training exercises in partnership with land management agencies.

Another recent survey of Indigenous cultural heritage of the alpine area of Victoria following the 2002-03 alpine fires, has demonstrated extensive and widespread evidence of past Aboriginal occupation (DSE & Parks Victoria 2005). As a result of the fires, good ground surface visibility was provided through removal of dense vegetation, allowing many artefacts including flaked stone scatters, stone axes and rock shelters to be found. This survey revealed that identified individual sites are only point locations within a broader cultural landscape that contains not only artefacts but also places and associations of spiritual significance for Aboriginal people.

Additional surveys are likely to improve the existing level of knowledge and identification of cultural sites and places within the study area. Aboriginal people report that new sites are found regularly in the study area and there are likely to be many sites and places known to traditional owner groups that are not recorded on government registers. As part of the assessment of public land values throughout the study area, VEAC will commission a desktop study of available cultural heritage information, and where necessary, fill any data gaps revealed.

Legislation

Victorian and Australian legislation recognises the importance and value of identifying and protecting cultural heritage such as sacred sites, burial sites, places of significance and other important sites where there is evidence of Aboriginal occupation of country. Indigenous cultural heritage is protected specifically under two acts administered by AAV: the Victorian *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972* and the Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* Part II A. Under these acts it is an offence to wilfully deface, damage or otherwise interfere with an Aboriginal object or place without prior written consent from the relevant local Aboriginal community as listed in a schedule to the Commonwealth Act.

The Victorian Act protects sites and materials relating to Indigenous cultural heritage, with the exception of human remains interred after 1834. This includes artefacts, stone tools, rock art sites, ancient campsites, middens, burial sites, scar trees and ruins associated with Aboriginal missions or reserves. The Commonwealth Act

provides additional protection for cultural property in a broader sense including places, objects and mythology from pre-historical through to contemporary sites. The Commonwealth Act takes precedence over matters where there is conflict with the state legislation.

The Victorian government is in the process of updating Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation. The new *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* will come into effect fully in late 2006 or early 2007 and will replace both the State and Commonwealth Aboriginal heritage legislation and provide for more effective protection and broader involvement of Indigenous people in cultural heritage decision making processes. It is anticipated that the new legislation will result in a more integrated and streamlined process for dealing with cultural heritage management issues between land owners, developers, local governments and Indigenous traditional owner groups.

Significant changes under the new Act include clarity for protection of Indigenous heritage in planning and land developments, including developments that require Heritage Management Plans, cultural heritage audit and stop orders, and dispute resolution mechanisms through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). Additionally, a Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council will be established to consider applications and register Aboriginal organisations as cultural heritage decision-making bodies for specific areas. The composition of this Council will be broader than the existing cultural heritage 'communities' described under the schedule to Part II A of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* to include traditional owner groups. This Council will also provide advice relating to the protection of Aboriginal heritage to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Victoria).

Registered Aboriginal parties will advise on the cultural significance of heritage places/objects, participate in heritage investigations and assessment processes, evaluate and endorse Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plans and permits, and negotiate any Cultural Heritage Agreements. Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, a range of measures will be introduced to improve compliance and enforcement or penalties will be increased.

The Act builds upon the Regional Cultural Heritage Program established by AAV as a resource agency to advise on a range of planning, development and cultural heritage management. This program was staffed by Indigenous people with expertise in cultural heritage matters. Existing arrangements for the Regional Cultural Heritage Program will be wound up when the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* is fully enacted. Inspectors will be employed under Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004* and appointed by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* also applies to Aboriginal cultural heritage values including Planning scheme overlays (e.g. Kow Swamp is protected by a heritage overlay under the Campaspe Planning scheme). The Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* also applies to Indigenous cultural heritage.

Management of Indigenous Cultural Heritage Sites

Aboriginal cultural heritage places are frequently fragile and may be disturbed or destroyed as a result of numerous activities and natural processes, including timber harvesting, controlled burns and bushfires, grazing, road building, sand extraction, channel construction, bardy grub collection, trail-bike riding, camping, pest management, water and wind erosion. The survival of living sites, such as scarred trees, has been affected by fires, land clearing and timber harvesting over the last 150 years. In places where timber harvesting and land clearing have been minimal, a substantial number of scarred trees remain.

Public Land

Within the study area, reservation of public land has been undertaken in order to specifically or exclusively protect Indigenous cultural heritage at Bumbang Island Historic Area (LCC 1989a) and in 2005 the Wallpolla Island Archaeological and Natural Interest Reserve was declared under the *Forests Act 1958*. A committee of management has been formed to manage the latter forest reserve located in the western area of the existing Wallpolla Island State Forest. The committee consists of a partnership between Government agencies and Indigenous communities. Bucks Sandhill in Barmah forest is currently covered by a Declaration of Preservation enacted under provisions of Part II A of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (declared in 2001).

The Yorta Yorta Co-operative Management Agreement between the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and the State of Victoria, provides for traditional owners to have a voice in natural and cultural resource management within the public land of Barmah Forest, Kow Swamp water supply reserve, lower Goulburn State Forest and other designated areas. This management arrangement is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6.

In other places throughout Victoria and the River Red Gum Forests study area, specific Indigenous management bodies have acquired land—through various arrangements—to serve specific community needs such as housing and welfare (e.g. Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation centre, Wodonga; Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative, Mooropna). The land tenure and management arrangements in both Victoria and other states are described in chapter 6.

NON-INDIGENOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE

Sites of European historic significance are located throughout the study area and largely relate to the major historic themes identified in chapter 7 such as exploration and settlement, transport, water supply, and industries such as timber harvesting and agricultural development.

Significant periods of change—such as closer settlement

Figure 12.2 Aboriginal mound fenced and sign-posted at Nyah State Forest.



Figure 12.3 Big Lizzie, on display at Barclay Square, Red Cliffs.



and agricultural development—are closely linked to the establishment of transport and water irrigation infrastructure throughout the study area. Early European settlement is often described in waves associated with pastoralism, gold mining, selection and agricultural developments in closer settlements with intensive farming linked to Government funded irrigation schemes.

Timber harvesting has a history within the study area. Paddle-steamers, plying the rivers, used large quantities of wood in their boilers and stacks of wood were maintained for use on the banks. Logging of the red gum forests began in earnest in the 1860s and by 1877 all suitable timber in Barmah Forest and along the Murray bank was cut back for an average of 2 miles (3.2 km) and partly or entirely worked, sometimes for a second time (Fahey 1987). Forestry records indicate that areas were cut depending on size and age of the stand and, in some areas regeneration events were noted (King 1963). The timber was exported to England for building wharf piles and much of the timber from near Mathoura and Deniliquin in New South Wales was exported to India, for railway construction (Mulham 1994). It was also used extensively in Victoria for railway sleepers, mine supports, bridge culverts, for wharf and jetty construction and most of Melbourne's streets were paved with red gum bricks until the 1960s (Lawrence et al. 1979).

Some cultural heritage objects or artefacts can be relocated without compromising cultural heritage values. For example, Big Lizzie constructed in 1917, is on display at Barclay Square, Red Cliffs as a monument to technology and design development. Its dreadnought wheel was designed to overcome the difficulties experienced with clearing sandy soils and outback conditions (Figure 12.3).

Protection and Management of European Cultural Heritage

Heritage Site Documentation and Lists

Sites and places of cultural heritage are recorded on many lists and registers, although none of these are comprehensive. At the same time, many lists and registers overlap but generally have a confined scope

such as sites of national or state significance, or those of natural or historic values. Such registers include the following:

- Register of the National Estate, now maintained by the Australian Heritage Council, is a record of more than 13,000 places of natural, Indigenous and historic places throughout Australia.
- Sites of outstanding national heritage value listed on the National Heritage List are protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999*. These places are selected by the federal Minister for Environment and Heritage, protected by Australian laws and managed under special agreements with state or territory governments and with private land owners. Examples of such places are the Sydney Opera House, Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape (Tyrendarra, Mt Eccles-Lake Condah areas) and the Royal Exhibition Building (Melbourne).
- Places of state significance are listed in the Victorian Heritage Register which is maintained by the Victorian Heritage Council. This register is available to the public and may be searched on the internet. The register includes a range of significant places and objects including extensive land areas, gardens and trees, and archaeological sites.
- Historic archaeological sites and relics are documented on the Heritage Inventory maintained by Heritage Victoria (DSE). Sites listed are protected under the provisions of the *Heritage Act 1995*.
- Historic places on public land are listed in the Historic Places database (DSE).
- Sites of local or regional significance may be listed in a local municipal planning scheme and protected under provisions of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Sites older than 50 years may be recorded on the Heritage Inventory and those of state significance are recorded and assessed in greater detail for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. This includes both those sites that have been included on a register of cultural heritage places, relics and objects, and those previously unknown sites uncovered during excavations or works.

Sites are identified and then listed on the Heritage Inventory or Victorian Heritage Register. Those sites identified on the Victorian Heritage Register within the River Red Gum Forests study area are listed in Table 12.1. Management of cultural heritage sites is undertaken in a manner consistent with the Victorian Heritage Strategy 2000–2005 (Heritage Victoria 2000).

Identification of Sites and Survey Coverage

In addition to the resources described above for highly significant sites, many local municipal councils have conducted cultural heritage investigations, largely focussed on specific sites, townships and historic buildings or local or regional significance. Examples include Greater Shepparton Heritage study (Allom Lovell & Associates 2003), Indigo Shire Heritage study (Peter Freeman and Associates 2005), and the Mallee Area Review—Study of Historic Sites (Andrew C. Ward and Associates 1986). These studies typically identify historic places and recommend conservation actions to land managers. This information supports decisions made in regard to municipal planning schemes and overlays.

Historic Places section (DSE) has surveyed extant historic gold mining sites on public land across Victoria. Such sites vary in terms of the nature of materials and state of preservation and include mine workings, industrial machinery such as batteries, and habitation sites. However there are some major cultural themes that lack representation on the lists and registers and have not been systematically surveyed within the study area (i.e. forestry, and water management). As part of the assessment of public land values throughout the study area, VEAC will review available cultural heritage information, and where necessary, fieldwork and survey will be undertaken to fill any data gaps revealed.

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is a not-for-profit community organisation that owns and operates several historic buildings and museums throughout Victoria and maintains a register of sites. Sites listed on the National Trust Register provide an indication that the community values the attributes present, but does not afford any legal protection. The Trust has compiled a vast body of information since it was established in 1956, and is a strong advocate for nominating and protecting historic places on government registers.

Legislation

In Victoria, the *Victorian Heritage Act 1995* protects all non-Aboriginal archaeological sites older than 50 years. Anyone who damages or excavates an archaeological site without obtaining the appropriate permission, faces a penalty under the Act. Legal recognition and protection under this Act encompasses a range of places, objects, precincts or landscapes, gardens and trees, and archaeological sites. Specific protection measures apply to places listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* contains provisions for local municipalities to govern cultural heritage values through provisions of planning schemes and overlays. An example is a heritage overlay, or design and development overlay that informs decision making by local councils in response to planning applications and permits.

The Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* is administered by the federal Department of Environment and Heritage which implements programs and legislation to protect and conserve Australia's cultural and natural heritage.

Historic places on reserved Crown land are also recognised under the land management objectives and provisions of relevant acts. A number of historic sites and places are currently within parks and reserves and state forest throughout the study area and are protected under the provisions of each relevant act (see section below).

The Burra Charter

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous historic and cultural heritage places on public land are managed in accordance with principles of the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) 1999 which provides principles for the protection and conservation of cultural heritage places and sets a national standard for best practice adopted by many heritage organisations. The Charter can be

applied to all types of places of cultural significance including natural, Indigenous and historic places with cultural values. The Charter embodies seven basic tenets:

- Recognise that the place is important
- Understand the significance of the place
- Understand the fabric
- Let significance guide decisions
- Do as much as possible and as little as necessary
- Keep records
- Do everything in a logical order.

In general the principles embodied by the Charter are to manage and conserve sites of cultural significance *in situ* where possible with minimal intervention, alteration or disturbance. The degree to which this can be achieved, and to which management and conservation activities impact with cultural heritage values, is largely dependent upon the type of values present, such as rarity, age, condition, integrity, significance, and aesthetic values. In this context, conservation means that the values or meaning of a site are retained.

Public Land

Many historic places or sites of cultural heritage significance are located on public land and typically those with the most outstanding values are within Crown land reserves. Some sites such as historic buildings may remain as functional institutions and entertain current community use. A number of land status and zoning mechanisms are applied to sites associated with European cultural heritage as described below.

Previous studies of public land in the study area have identified a number of historic places. The Land Conservation Council's 1997 special investigation into historic places across south-western Victoria overlaps slightly with the current River Red Gum Forests study area. In that study eleven historic sites of state significance were identified, as well as a range of other significant and notable historic places on public land. Other LCC studies undertaken as part of the North Central Investigation (LCC 1981a) and Mallee Review (LCC 1989a) identified a number of historic sites (Jacobs Lewis Vines & Architects and Conservation Planners 1979; Andrew C. Ward and Associates 1986). As a consequence, reserves were established to protect places with highly significant historical values that were not within other permanent reserves or parks.

National Parks

National Heritage Park is a relatively new public land category recommended by the ECC in the 2001 Box Ironbark Forests and Woodlands Investigation Final Report. The category was developed to recognise the outstanding and largely intact cultural heritage values present in the Castlemaine area from the gold mining era, whilst recognising that the natural values present did not warrant national park status. The Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park is reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* and listed under schedule 4 of the *National Parks Act 1975*. This park is the largest protected non-Indigenous cultural landscape in Australia and is registered on both the Victorian

Heritage Register and the National Heritage List. Places on the list are protected under the provisions of the EPBC Act 1999.

Historic and Cultural Features Reserves

As described in chapter 9 Public Land Use Categories and Management, areas of historic significance within the study area have been reserved and protected using existing legislation. These historic sites are reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* for protection of the identified historical values. Typically these reserves are small, often containing a single building or group of structures, or remains of structures (e.g. Murchison Waterworks Trust Historic Area, 1 ha). However, some reserves may be more extensive such as Kinipianial Creek Historic Area (61 ha) and Bumbang Island Historic Area (639 ha).

State Forest Historic Sites

In state forest, known historic places are listed in Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) forest management plans or regional inventories. In 2002 there were over 1400 historic places recorded in state forests throughout Victoria (DSE 2005h). Typically sites within state forests relate to resource use and include timber mills, railways, cattle muster yards, campsites and buildings. Statewide management procedures for Timber Harvesting Operations (DSE 2005h) apply management procedures for protection of historic heritage values. There are also requirements to

protect historic places in the Code of Forest Practice and the Code of Practice for Fire Management. Forest management plans specify management actions designed to protect each site from potentially damaging processes. Significant sites are also protected through forest management prescriptions or heritage management plans. Prescriptions may include buffers, which exclude various activities within a specified area, and filter strips, in which machinery entry and felling of trees may be only be permitted in certain circumstances and under specified conditions.

Information on the location and significance of historic places is incorporated into annual forest management operational plans including the Wood Utilisation Plans, fuel-reduction burning plans and road management plans. Conservation management plans for historic places, or groups of places, may also be developed for the most significant or vulnerable sites. These plans document the cultural heritage significance of the place and make recommendations that will ensure the place is conserved to protect and enhance its identified values. An example of such a site is the Barmah muster yards located at Goose Neck, in Barmah State Forest, or Murray's timber mill in Echuca.

New sites discovered in the course of forest management activities or as the result of further research are documented and assessed by DSE.

Table 12.1 Historic places list of sites of state or regional significance for public land in the study area.

HP No	Site Name	Significance
2969	Condidorio's Bridge	State
119	Echuca Courthouse	State
1626	Lake Hattah Regulator	State
1671	No 1 Flying Boat Repair Depot	State
1552	Pumping Station	State
140	Rochester Shire Hall	State
1711	Yelta Railway Station	State
3592	Dockendorff and Heach's Boorhaman Sawmill	Regional
1705	Lock 9 Lockmasters Residence & Former Post Office	Regional
1574	Locomotive Depot	Regional
6509	Porepunkah Area	Regional
1672	Railway Storage Shed	Regional
1674	Tresco Main Pumping Station	Regional

Source: DSE July 2006.