

# Victorian Government Response to Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's Angahook-Otway Investigation Final Report



June 2005



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**Victorian Government Response to**  
**Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's**  
***Angahook-Otway Investigation Final Report* November 2004**

**FOREWORD**

I am very pleased to present the Victorian Government's response to the *Angahook-Otway Investigation Final Report* from the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC).

To help deliver a key Bracks Government election commitment, VEAC was asked to investigate the creation of a single national park in the Otway Ranges and to identify additional public land that should be added to the parks and reserve system.

The Otways include a unique blend of features that have helped to make the region one of the most popular destinations in Victoria. The area contains majestic tall forests and waterfalls, beaches and coastal towns linked by the renowned Great Ocean Road. In the hinterland are thriving towns and highly productive agricultural land. The Great Ocean Road region attracted an estimated nine million visitors in 2000, demonstrating its strong appeal, and making a significant contribution to the regional economy.

During two years of extensive investigation, more than 1,800 submissions were received from the public, helping to shape VEAC's recommendations for the future of this precious part of our State. VEAC was required to take into account the environmental, economic and social consequences of any recommendations and I am satisfied that they have done this, with several changes being made to recommendations between the draft and final stages of VEAC's final report.

The Government wishes to thank VEAC for its thorough investigation. The Government has accepted the overarching vision for public land in the Otways outlined in their final report. The new expanded National Park, to be known as the Great Otway National Park will be established this year. This national park will cover more than 100,000 hectares, more than doubling the area currently in parks.

This Great Otway National Park will be complemented by adjoining areas of the new Otway Forest Park. As recommended by VEAC, the forest park will cover nearly 40,000 hectares and will allow for a range of recreational and other uses that need to be catered for, whilst improving forest conservation.

This change in public land use in the Otways results from the decision of the Bracks Government to phase-out timber harvesting in the native forests of the Otway Ranges. Instead, it is recognised that the sustainable future of these forests lies with their tourism value. Sawlog and pulpwood harvesting has already ended in the areas of State forest that will be included in the new national park and will end in the area to become the forest park by 2008. A new era for the Otway forests will begin.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment will work closely with Parks Victoria, stakeholders and the community to ensure effective and coordinated implementation of the new parks.

This increased protection of public land in the Otways, complements a range of other important Government initiatives in the region including:

- *A New Future for the Otways* tourism initiative that will stimulate and coordinate the development and marketing of tourism on public land in the Otways hinterland and support the region to make the most of its tourism potential and develop new job opportunities;
- The *Great Ocean Road Regional Strategy*; and

- Establishment of significant Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries to provide high levels of protection for representative marine ecosystems in the area.

In combination these initiatives will protect and enhance the natural environment and guarantee sustainable management of our natural assets. It is these assets that underpin the social and economic well being of our community and provide for vibrant regional communities.

In better protecting the Otways, we are creating the healthy environment Victorians expect and depend on and recognising the intimate connection between our environment, economic and social wellbeing.

**JOHN THWAITES**  
**Minister for Environment**

## Introduction

In the following document, each recommendation made by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) in the *Angahook-Otway Investigation Final Report* is addressed as required in the *Victorian Environmental Council Act 2001*. Where comments refer to specific sections, the recommendation number and subsection are provided in brackets.

### **R1: PUBLIC LAND-USE**

That

- (a) the public lands of the Otways be generally allocated to two main land-use categories, to be known as:
  - (i) the Otway Ranges National Park (see Chapter 3, Recommendation A1); and
  - (ii) the Otway Forest Park (see Chapter 4, Recommendation B1);
- (b) the Great Ocean Road not be included within the Otway Ranges National Park; and
- (c) existing management coordination mechanisms be retained and where necessary improved or supplemented, and opportunities for community involvement enhanced (see also Recommendations R10-11 below and Recommendation A2).

Notes:

1. Smaller more isolated areas with particular values or functions have been recommended to be retained or created as separate reserves - see Chapter 5.
2. Existing management coordination mechanisms include the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy, regional catchment management strategies, regional fire plans, regional tourism plans, and the Great Ocean Road Roadside Management Plan.

The Government broadly supports this recommendation, with more specific comment provided in the response to the detailed recommendations below.

### **LAND-USE OVERLAY RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **R2: DECLARED WATER SUPPLY CATCHMENTS**

That:

- (a) if the proposed relocation of the Apollo Bay water supply off-take to downstream of the confluence of the west and east branches of the Barham River proceeds, the whole catchment of the Barham River be considered for listing on Schedule 5 of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* as a declared water supply catchment;
- (b) declarations of the following water supply catchments which are no longer used for water production be revoked and removed from Schedule 5 of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*:
  - (i) Erskine River (a sub-catchment of the Lorne declared water supply catchment);
  - (ii) Gosling Creek (a sub-catchment of the Pennyroyal, Matthews and Gosling Creeks declared water supply catchment); and
  - (iii) Skenes Creek;
- (c) special area plans be prepared under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* for all declared water supply catchments in the Otways used for water production and, once approved, incorporated into management plans and planning schemes.

Note: Special area plans have not been prepared for the following declared water supply catchments: Barwon Downs Wellfield Intake Area, Lorne (St Georges River) and Pennyroyal and Matthews Creeks.

The Government broadly supports this recommendation regarding declared water supply catchments and the revocation of some declared water catchments that are no longer required for water production purposes.

In particular the Government notes the recommendation for the establishment of a declared water supply catchment area for the Barham River and the preparation of a Special Area Plan for that catchment (Rec R2 (a)). The matter will be considered further, particularly as water supply options for Apollo Bay are further developed, including consideration of alternative methods of achieving secure protection of the catchment for water supply purposes.

Noting the requirements of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (ss.27 - 32) concerning Special Area Plans, further consideration will be given to mechanisms for protecting water catchments across both public and private land in the region, in consultation with water authorities, the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and other relevant stakeholders.

### **R3: REFERENCE AREAS**

That:

- (a) existing proclaimed reference areas be retained and continue to be managed under the auspices of the *Reference Areas Act 1978*;
- (b) the following area totalling 977.6 ha, indicated on Map A, be used as reference areas and proclaimed under the *Reference Areas Act 1978* and managed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment:
  - (i) Porcupine Creek (particularly representing wet heath and sedgy riparian woodland ecological vegetation classes);
  - (ii) Aquila Creek (particularly representing herb-rich foothill forest/shrubby foothill forest and shrubby wet forest ecological vegetation classes); and
  - (iii) Painkalac Creek (particularly representing shrubby foothill forest, and shrubby dry forest ecological vegetation classes).

The Government supports this recommendation.

### **R4: HERITAGE RIVERS**

That:

- (a) the Aire River Heritage River be retained and, together with a 100 metre wide addition on either side of the existing heritage river between the Aire River Gorge and public land plantations vested in the Victorian Plantation Corporation as indicated on Map A, continue to be managed under the *Heritage Rivers Act 1992*.<sup>1</sup>

The Government supports this recommendation and will implement the addition to the Aire River Heritage River in the current sittings of Parliament.

### **ROAD RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **R5: GREAT OCEAN ROAD AND OTHER KEY ROADS**

That:

- (a) the Great Ocean Road be managed principally as a tourist road, whilst also servicing an arterial road function;
- (b) where the Great Ocean Road or other declared arterial road, or a declared municipal road, passes through or adjoins the recommended Otway Ranges National Park or other public lands, it remain or be included within a defined road reserve (thereby excluding the road from the adjoining park or reserve);
- (c) where a road reserve is created in accordance with (b) above that, other than where the road is within a township, the road reserve be generally no greater than 20 metres in width;
- (d) where works are necessary on adjoining public land outside the road reserve to maintain the stability of the road pavement, such works be permitted subject to the consent of the land manager and in accordance with any conditions that the land manager may determine; and
- (e) roadside management plans be prepared by the responsible road authority in consultation with the adjoining land manager, to define roadside management goals, outline management prescriptions and apply relevant codes of practice.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

<sup>2</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

The Government supports the recommendations in regard to the Great Ocean Road and other arterial roads within the park. The Government recognises that the Great Ocean Road has a vital role in Victoria's domestic and international tourism industry as well as providing access to the new National Park and proposed forest park. The Government supports the management of the road as both a tourism route and a commuter route. Implementation of this recommendation will be undertaken in conjunction with the Government's Great Ocean Road Region Strategy.

The Great Ocean Road will be managed by VicRoads and a joint management agreement will be developed between VicRoads and DSE to ensure implementation of a road reserve generally no greater than 20 metres in width (Rec R5 (c)). In selected areas the road reservation may need to be wider where necessary to encompass the roadway, including any turning lanes, the road shoulder and any associated pathway or ancillary areas.

Implementation of this recommendation will be undertaken in consultation with other key stakeholders including Parks Victoria, Heritage Victoria, Tourism Victoria, Local Government, the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and local Committees of Management to ensure a coordinated approach (Rec R5 (e)).

## **IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **R6: IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES**

That the Government allocate adequate resources for implementation of the recommendations of the Final Report to ensure that the objectives of the report and recommendations are achieved.

The Government supports this recommendation. Additional funding required to implement recommendations of the Final Report is sought through the normal budget process and considered against other government priorities. A specific allocation of \$13.1 million over the next four years and \$3.4 million per annum thereafter has been provided for the establishment and ongoing management of the Otways parks.

### **R7: LAND MANAGEMENT RESOURCES**

That the Government allocates additional resources to address the current and future public land management needs across the region, with priority given to fire protection, pest plant and animal control, track maintenance, on-ground presence, and provision and serving of recreation and tourist facilities.

The Government supports this recommendation. Any additional funding for public land management is sought through the normal budget process, and considered against other government priorities. The Victorian Government has already committed a significant increase in funding of \$153 million over four years, for enhanced fire protection on public land in the 2004-05 Budget.

### **R8: ASSISTANCE**

That where individuals or local communities are directly or adversely affected as a result of the implementation of approved final recommendations in this report, Government establishes a process to evaluate mechanisms and levels of assistance that may be required.

The Government notes this recommendation. A number of existing government programs are available to provide assistance.



## **R9: INTERIM MANAGEMENT AND MINOR BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS**

That, upon Government approval of VEAC recommendations:

- (a) relevant land be managed in accordance with those recommendations; and
- (b) subsequent implementation of recommendations and land management allow flexibility for minor boundary adjustments.

The Government supports this recommendation. Minor adjustments to national park boundaries will be required to exclude small areas such as a pine plantation and other boundary anomalies. Certain areas excluded as a result of survey investigation, may be redesignated as natural features reserves or as uncategorised public land. Discussions with water authorities are likely to result in minor boundary changes to better protect water supply infrastructure.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **R10: COORDINATED MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

That:

- (a) management plans be prepared for the Otway Ranges National Park and Otway Forest Park within three years of the acceptance of these recommendations; and
- (b) management plans for the Otway Ranges National Park and the Otways Forest Park be prepared as part of a single coordinated process.

Note: Other VEAC recommendations promoting coordinated management planning include Recommendations R2 and R11 and Recommendation A2.

This recommendation for integrated management planning in the Otways is supported. The Government will pursue coordinated management planning for the Otways landscape that recognises current legislation, policy and endorsed plans and regional strategies.

Development of the framework and management plans will involve and apply to all relevant public land management agencies and will be undertaken in consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders.

### **R11: ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

That an advisory committee or committees, representing community needs and expectations, be established to provide input into decision-making within the Otways public land management framework.

The Government supports this recommendation as a component of an enhanced approach to community involvement in decision-making for public land in the Otways. Implementation of this recommendation will occur within the broader context of community engagement and strategic and operational planning of the land management agencies and will need to consider issues related to the interface with private land.

The most appropriate structures and processes to ensure effective community input into decision making within the Otways land management framework will be determined.

### **R12: ENHANCING ABORIGINAL INVOLVEMENT**

That:

- (a) planning and management relating to traditional interests and uses acknowledge the unique relationship of Aboriginal people with country and be based on recognition and respect for the traditional and contemporary relationship of Aboriginal peoples with the land.

- (b) prior to implementation of VEAC recommendations for the parks and reserves, and changes in public land management, Government consult with traditional owners and Aboriginal groups regarding their native title rights and interests.
- (c) Government, in consultation with traditional owners and Aboriginal groups, investigate and report on a preferred model for joint management structures and arrangements between Government, and traditional owners and Aboriginal groups with regard to public land, water and resources in the Angahook-Otway study area, within 12 months of responding to these recommendations.
- (d) Government, in consultation with traditional owners and Aboriginal groups, establish mechanisms to improve indigenous participation in land and water management including:
  - (i) development of principles and protocols to improve the policy and planning processes of public land and water management agencies and the representation and participation of Aboriginal peoples in these processes;
  - (ii) preparation of a strategy to improve the participation of Aboriginal peoples in land, water and resource use decision-making and day-to-day management;
  - (iii) provision of information to assist the facilitation of land and water use agreements between agencies and local Aboriginal communities;
  - (iv) facilitation of surveys and site visits necessary for planning and development purposes;
  - (v) development of cross-cultural awareness programs for land, water and natural resources agency staff to improve knowledge and understanding of, and communication with, Aboriginal communities; and
  - (vi) assistance to provide Aboriginal communities with the capacity (including resources and skills) to fully participate in future consultation and management planning arrangements.
- (e) Government, in consultation with traditional owners and Aboriginal groups, assist in the establishment of one or more Indigenous cultural and interpretation centres in the Otways.
- (f) Government, in consultation with traditional owners and Aboriginal groups, develop and implement principles to provide appropriate access for Aboriginal cultural customs, and traditional practices.
- (g) Government more actively publicise existing notification and consultation processes, required under the *Native Title Act 1993* and other relevant legislation such as the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*, the *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972*.
- (h) Government stringently enforce and take action against breaches of legislation that protect Aboriginal cultural sites, places and objects.
- (i) Opportunities for increased employment and training for local Aboriginal people be encouraged in the implementation of Otway Forest Park and Otway Ranges National Park.

The Government supports this recommendation, which will be implemented through a range of mechanisms including the indigenous land management framework project, currently being developed within DSE. The Victorian Government has recognised Victoria's Aboriginal people as the original custodians of the land in Victoria and has stated that Victoria's indigenous communities should have a fundamental role in the management of our natural resources. The Government will continue to take steps to remove the barriers that in the past have largely locked indigenous communities out of this traditional role. The Government will actively pursue co-operative management arrangements for public land in the region, in partnership with traditional owners and Aboriginal groups.

The Government will consult with traditional owners and Aboriginal groups on options for improving Indigenous cultural and interpretation in the Otways (Rec R12 (e)).

The Government and its land and resource managers will continue to encourage increased employment and training opportunities for local Aboriginal people in the implementation of the recommended National Park and Forest Park (Rec R12 (i)).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### A1: OTWAY RANGES NATIONAL PARK

That the area of 102,470 ha indicated on Map A as the Otway Ranges National Park

(a) be used to:

- (i) conserve and protect biodiversity, natural landscapes and natural processes;
- (ii) protect significant cultural and historic sites and places, including Aboriginal cultural sites and places;
- (iii) provide opportunities for recreation and education associated with the enjoyment and understanding of natural environments and cultural heritage; and
- (iv) supply water and protect domestic water supply catchments;

(b) be managed to provide for, in particular, the following activities:

- (i) bushwalking, including the development and maintenance of walker-only tracks suitable for short and longer walks and walk-in campsites;
- (ii) car and motor bike touring, including the maintenance of formed vehicular tracks, roads and travel routes at four wheel drive standard as well as all-weather access for all vehicles;
- (iii) picnicking and camping, including designated areas with facilities and, at the manager's discretion, dispersed camping in appropriate locations where this will not adversely affect biodiversity values or water quality;
- (iv) the continuation of horseriding on formed vehicular tracks and roads and associated firebreaks, and designated beaches, subject to any necessary restrictions to avoid damage to tracks (including seasonal closures), the introduction of weeds and conflict with other users and natural values;
- (v) existing accommodation and associated facilities at the Cape Otway lighthouse precinct, with specific provision being made for their ongoing operation by way of long-term commercial leases under the provisions of the National Parks Act 1975;
- (vi) existing pipelines, aqueducts, cables, communication towers, navigation aids, weirs, dams and other minor service and utility infrastructure that are necessarily within the park, subject to the creation of formal agreements with the land manager, as well as additional service and utility infrastructure if alternative sites are unavailable and subject to environmental assessment and minimal impact; and
- (vii) the artificial opening of the mouths of the Aire and Gellibrand Rivers in consultation with Indigenous traditional owners and other relevant groups to take into account primarily the needs of wildlife, as well as fisheries and landowners affected by inundation;

(c) be regulated to exclude the following activities:

- (i) exploration and extraction of earth resources and minerals, other than the continuation of entitlements under existing licences or authorities, as approved;
- (ii) grazing by domestic stock, with existing grazing licences terminated as soon as possible, but no later than 2008;
- (iii) walking dogs, other than the walking of dogs on leads along a limited number of designated tracks and beaches, to be designated in management plans;
- (iv) apiculture;
- (v) hunting and the use or carrying of firearms;
- (vi) prospecting under miners right, other than for gemstone seeking along designated beaches at Moonlight Head using non-mechanical hand tools only; and
- (vii) commercial fishing, other than commercial eel fishing under existing entitlements which shall be subject to phase out within ten years and subject to continuing reductions in bycatch in accordance with the findings of current research;

(d) be managed in a manner that, amongst other things, gives particular emphasis to:

- (i) programs to conserve and enhance populations of spot-tailed quoll, ground parrot and other threatened species requiring active management;
- (ii) revegetation of previously harvested areas where the restoration of a natural mix of overstorey and understorey species has been unsuccessful;
- (iii) ensuring the quality and yield of the domestic water supply catchments especially in the Arkins Creek, West Gellibrand, Olangolah, St Georges River, and Painkalac Creek and water supply catchments where 'closed catchment' policies should continue or be applied other than for pedestrian access on designated tracks in the latter two catchments;
- (iv) fire protection especially for nearby towns and settlements;
- (v) joint programs with adjoining landowners for the control of declared pest species along the park boundary interface; and

- (vi) strategies to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of the dieback fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, including the restriction of vehicular or pedestrian access and/or the introduction of disinfectant procedures, especially in heathland areas;
- (e) be created by inclusion on a schedule to the *National Parks Act 1975*; with
  - (i) unused road reserves within or adjoining the park that are not required for legal or practical access to existing freehold allotments added to the park;
  - (ii) licensed or leased Crown land abutting or surrounded by the park be rehabilitated and added to the park when no longer required for their existing purposes; and
  - (iii) the seaward boundary of the park being low-water mark, other than to the extent that there is overlap with a proclaimed marine national park; and
- (f) be managed in consultation with the relevant water authorities within declared water supply catchments with respect to ensuring quality and yield of water supply.

The Government broadly supports this recommendation and will move to establish the recommended national park in legislation that will be introduced in the current sittings of Parliament.

The Government reconfirms its policy, enshrined in legislation, that new exploration and mining is not permitted in national parks, State parks and reference areas. Exploration and mining proposals arising from applications covering the proposed national park that predate the Government's tabling of its response to VEAC recommendations, will be subject to the consent of the Minister pursuant to section 40 of the *National Parks Act 1975*. As is generally the case for terrestrial national parks, petroleum exploration and extraction operations under an authority granted under the *Petroleum Act 1998* may be permitted in the national park subject to consent of the Minister responsible for the *National Parks Act 1975*.

With regard to Rec A1(c)(vii)), existing entitlements will be allowed to continue, and the *Fisheries Act 1995* will be amended to prevent new commercial fishing entitlements in national, state or wilderness parks. Small areas subject to grazing licences will be confirmed until licences expire, with all grazing to cease by 2009.

## A2: JOINT MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS

That within two years of the acceptance of this recommendation, agreements be entered into by the park manager and the relevant water authority or road authority:

- (a) to ensure coordinated management in line with the principles outlined in the accompanying text above (for the water supply catchments listed above within the park);
- (b) the buffer areas of the Arkins Creek weirs, West Gellibrand Reservoir, Olangolah Reservoir, West Barwon Reservoir, Painkalac Reservoir and, when defined, of the Allen Reservoir, adjoining the park, together with the land exposed at any time below full supply level, to ensure coordinated consistent management that provides for both the protection of water quality and appropriate use of the adjoining areas of national park; and
- (c) for the management of the road reserves of declared arterial roads (formerly known as main roads), including the Great Ocean Road and Turtons Track, and municipal roads where they pass through the park, to ensure that they are managed in a coordinated manner that provides for the safety, trafficability and scenic amenity of the road and roadside and the appropriate use and protection of the adjoining areas of national park.

### Notes:

1. The park encompasses nine existing and proposed reference areas. Reference areas must be managed in accordance with the *Reference Areas Act 1978*.
2. The Bambra Road quarry has pre-existing rights of operation that precede the creation of the Angahook-Lorne State Park. Its occupation has not, to date, been formalised under the *National Parks Act 1975*. It is subject to a current work authority application under the *Extractive Industries Development Act 1995*.
3. Practical access should continue to be provided to existing private land holdings surrounded by the park.
4. Inclusion of the Arkins Creek, West Gellibrand, Olangolah and West Barwon water supply catchments in the park will involve transfer of land from South West Water and Barwon Water to the Crown.
5. The buffer areas of the Arkins Creek weirs, West Gellibrand Reservoir, Olangolah Reservoir, West Barwon Reservoir and Painkalac Reservoir are defined and subject to special area plans (previously known as land use determinations or LUDs) made under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*. Where the boundaries of a buffer area are amended arising from the gazettal of a revised or new plan, the boundaries of the national park, and abutting water production area, should be amended accordingly.

6. The Council supports the continuance of land-acquisition programs by opportunistic purchase to consolidate park boundaries. Boundary rationalisation, perhaps by way of land exchange, could also be explored. Implementation of the park is intended to allow flexibility for minor boundary adjustments.
7. Where appropriate, the land manager may enter into formal agreements with private operators to build and/or operate facilities in accordance with approved management plans. Similar arrangements may apply for relevant park activity programs.
8. Council supports negotiations between DSE and the Surf Coast Shire Council with a view to ensuring the complementary management of the municipal land known as the Ironbark Basin and possible transfer of the land for inclusion into the park.
9. Council has included areas to the east of the Alcoa leasehold within the park on the presumption that the significant vegetation of the Anglesea heath lying within the Alcoa leasehold continues to be subject to a cooperative management agreement between the State government and Alcoa of Australia Limited. When the current lease comes up for renewal in 2011, consideration should be given to amending the boundaries of the lease to enable areas of high conservation value to be added to the park.
10. Licensed or leased Crown land suitable for inclusion in the park when no longer required for the existing purposes, include the Tallawalla Guide Camp at Moggs Creek and the Belmont High School camp at Tanybryn (an unused part of the current licensed area is included in the park) .
11. The Cape Otway cemetery is closed for further burials.
12. A number of small parcels of cleared Crown land adjacent to the park between Castle Cove and Aire River have not been included in the park, but allocated to uncategorised public land. It is intended that they be available for exchange with neighbouring freehold land with higher conservation values, at which time the latter areas should be added to the park.
13. Restrictions on the carrying in of pets or firearms in the national park do not apply to those passing through the park on declared arterial, municipal or other roads excluded from the park.
14. Council is aware that the cessation of commercial fishing in the national park may require amendment to the *Fisheries Act 1995* and/or *Fisheries Regulations 1998* and/or relevant fishery plan.
15. The artificial opening of river mouth entrances is to be also consistent with estuary management guidelines defined in relevant coastal action plans as adopted under the *Coastal Management Act 1995*.
16. The 102,470 ha recommended national park does not include two immediately adjacent areas (37 ha south of Aireys Inlet Sewerage Treatment Plant and 15 ha of the existing Forest Road Flora Reserve near Anglesea) that are outside the study area and are suggested as logical Government additions to the national park.

The Government supports the recommendation to establish joint management agreements with the relevant water authority or road authority for areas within the park boundaries where required. Discussions are being undertaken with water authorities and road authorities regarding implementation of this recommendation.

The Great Ocean Road, Cape Otway Lighthouse Road and Turton's Track were all previously designated declared tourist roads. Under the *Road Management Act 2004* these roads are now designated as arterial roads. The management and planning for these roads will continue to recognise the important role they play in regional tourism through acknowledging the need to provide a consistent, high quality experience for visitors to the region.

Government endorses Note 9 and confirms that Alcoa is entitled to seek a renewal of the lease encompassing the current leasehold boundary in 2011.

## **OTWAY FOREST PARK** **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **B1: OTWAY FOREST PARK**

That the area of 39,265 ha indicated on Map A as the Otway Forest Park

(a) be used to:

- (i) provide opportunities for informal recreation associated with the enjoyment of natural surroundings;
- (ii) protect and conserve biodiversity, natural and cultural features and water supply catchments; and
- (iii) supply a limited range of natural resource products;

(b) be managed sustainably to provide for, in particular, the following activities:

- (i) horseriding, trail bike riding and four wheel driving on formed vehicular tracks and roads;
- (ii) camping at designated sites and dispersed camping, including overnight camps for horse riders;
- (iii) hunting of deer, with an emphasis on controlling animal numbers;
- (iv) low-intensity grazing of domestic stock where pre-existing and consistent with recreation and conservation management objectives;
- (v) apiculture;
- (vi) low-intensity harvesting of selected trees for firewood up to current levels, posts and poles, woodchop blocks, stakes, hobby wood or specialty applications and the low intensity

- harvesting of other vegetative material (such as seeds for revegetation and foliage for decorative products), where such harvesting is demonstrably sustainable; and
- (vii) exploration and extraction of earth resources and minerals where consistent with recreation and conservation management objectives, and subject to the approval of the Minister for the Environment;
- (c) be regulated to exclude the following activities:
  - (i) timber harvesting for sawlog and pulpwood production, other than for harvesting in accordance with approved Wood Utilisation Plans to meet existing timber licence obligations up to 2008;
- (d) be managed in a manner that gives particular emphasis to:
  - (i) strategies to reduce the risk of soil erosion from vehicular use, especially on steep forest vehicular tracks;
  - (ii) providing for the safety of riders and drivers, especially on narrow, undulating vehicular tracks—including the development of a track classification system;
  - (iii) providing for the quality and yield of the domestic water supply catchments;
  - (iv) fire protection in water supply catchments and in the vicinity of rural settlements;
  - (v) pest plant and animal control, especially on public land margins;
  - (vi) revegetation of previously harvested areas where the restoration of a natural mix of overstorey and understorey species has been unsuccessful;
  - (vii) maintaining opportunities for environmental education and research in mountain ash forest and foothill forest at, respectively, Barramunga and Bamba; and
  - (viii) protecting the special features listed in the schedule below;
- (e) be permanently protected as a forest park under the *Forests Act 1958* with explicit legislative recognition given to the three management objectives for forest parks listed in Recommendation B1(a) above.<sup>3</sup>

#### Schedule Of Special Features To Be Protected

These have been grouped by geographic regions to assist managers and others to locate the sites.

##### *Ferguson Hill*

##### Recreation Sites and Landscape

- horseriding trails.

##### Nature Conservation

- Stands of senescent forest.

##### *Western Otways*

##### Nature Conservation

- Stands of old growth and senescent forest.
- Threatened fauna including the spot-tailed quoll and the Otway black snail.

##### Historical Sites

- Features and relics of two early 20th century sawmills: Northern Timber Co sawmill (and associated snig tracks, winch sites and tramline) and the Robins and Kincaid sawmills and tramways.

##### *Ford River*

##### Recreation Sites and Landscape

- Network of four wheel drive tracks.

##### Nature Conservation

- Threatened fauna, including the powerful owl, masked owl, grey goshawk, and Otway black snail.
- Threatened plants, including slender tree fern, skirted tree fern, and slender fork-fern.

##### *Head of Aire*

##### Recreation Sites and Landscape

- Beauchamp Falls and associated picnic area, camping ground, walking tracks and forest environs.
- Natural values of Eberwaldt Falls

##### *Tomahawk Creek–Wonga Forest*

##### Nature Conservation

- Stands of old growth and senescent forest.
- Threatened fauna including the swamp skink.
- Habitat of ground-dwelling mammals such as the long-nosed bandicoot.

<sup>3</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

### ***Kawarren–Barongarook Block***

#### **Recreation Sites and Landscape**

- Birnum Station Ground picnic area and associated rail trail walking and cycling path.
- Loves Creek picnic ground and associated forest environs.

#### **Nature Conservation**

- Stands of old growth and senescent forest.
- Threatened fauna including the long-nosed potoroo and southern toadlet.
- Habitat for ground-dwelling mammals such as the swamp antechinus.

#### **Historical Sites**

- Site of the Birnum Station and associated track formation of the former narrow gauge Colac to Beach Forest railway line.

### ***Upper Gellibrand Forests***

#### **Recreation Sites and Landscape**

- Stevensons Falls picnic area, camping ground and walking tracks, together with associated historic tree plantings and waterfall.
- Dandos picnic and camping ground and associated forest environs.
- Network of four wheel drive tracks.

#### **Nature Conservation**

- Stands of old growth and senescent forest.
- Threatened fauna including the white-footed dunnart, long-nosed potoroo, grey goshawk, powerful owl, Otway black snail.
- The habitat of the spot-tailed quoll, especially in the vicinity of recent records near the Charlies Creek forest.
- Geomorphological features of Stevensons falls.

#### **Historical Sites**

- Historic sawmill sites and associated log lines, tramways and water races including Hitt No 4, Seebeck/Henry, Henry, Kincaid and Devitt sawmills and the historic (1920s) tramway known as McDonald's tramway.

### ***Yaugher Forest***

#### **Nature Conservation**

- Stands of old growth and senescent forest.
- Habitat for ground dwelling mammals such as the long-nosed potoroo and southern brown bandicoot.

### ***Barwon Downs***

#### **Recreation Sites and Landscape**

- Network of four wheel drive tracks.

#### **Nature Conservation**

- Stands of old growth and senescent forest, especially in Dewings Creek catchment.
- Threatened fauna including the grey goshawk.
- Habitat for ground dwelling mammals such as the long-nosed potoroo, broad-toothed rat and southern brown bandicoot as well as the yellow-bellied glider.

#### **Historical Sites**

- Historic sawmill sites and associated landings, log lines, snig tracks, cuttings, dams and tramways including Haydens No 2 and No 3, Mackie No 4, No 5 and No 6, Hayden No 4 and No 5 and Royle sawmills.

### ***Boonah–Wormbete Forest***

#### **Nature Conservation**

- Stands of old growth and senescent forest.
- Threatened fauna including the grey goshawk.
- Threatened flora including the Anglesea grevillea.
- Habitat for ground-dwelling mammals such as the swamp antechinus and southern brown bandicoot.

• *The large untracked area of the Anglesea River headwaters block.* **Forest Park-wide Features**

- **Archaeological sites and other sites and places of Aboriginal cultural significance.**<sup>4</sup>

The Government supports the objectives and uses recommended for the area proposed as a forest park. The Government will ensure appropriate legislative protection and management to provide for the recommended range of community recreation and other low intensity uses.

<sup>4</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

The Government will ensure there is no further native forest sawlog and pulpwood harvesting in the Otways after 2008. The Government will direct DSE to prepare a timber harvesting plan indicating all areas of the park that will be subject to timber harvesting to meet remaining licence commitments until their expiry in 2008. This plan will ensure important conservation values in the proposed park are protected and will ensure harvesting operations are not excessively concentrated within the park. Consistent with current practice, there will be opportunities for public comment on drafts of the plan and other land and water management agencies will be consulted. The plan will also identify areas in which low-intensity harvesting will occur to meet firewood and other wood product needs.

An annual roading program, for roads managed by DSE, will consider access requirements for management purposes and users of the park.

An annual fire management program will be developed by DSE to protect assets in and around the proposed park and to protect values within the park.

Associated with this recommendation is a list of special features to be protected. DSE will consider the various features identified in the recommendations in the development of management plans and provide appropriate protection, as necessary. Special Protection Zones (SPZs), identified as part of the West Victoria Regional Forest Agreement, will continue to be managed for the primary purpose of nature conservation. Timber or firewood removal, and other activities which may impact on the conservation values of these SPZs will not be permitted. Any necessary amendments to establish SPZs will follow the procedures outlined in the West Victoria Regional Forest Agreement.

## **OTHER PUBLIC LAND**

### **NATURE CONSERVATION RESERVE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

These areas are used to:

- (a) conserve and protect species, communities or habitats of indigenous animals and plants;
  - (b) provide for educational and scientific study if consistent with (a) above, and in ways that minimally affect the area;
- and
- (c) provide for passive recreation such as nature study and picnicking by small numbers of people, where consistent with (a) above or as otherwise provided; and
  - (d) grazing, harvesting of forest products, hunting and the use of firearms is not permitted;
  - (e) apiculture is not be permitted except on traditionally licensed sites subject to conditions; and
  - (f) low impact exploration and mining for minerals may be permitted subject to consent of the Minister of Environment.

Note: The above management objectives and summary land-use recommendations are those that generally apply for the land-use category. Exceptions to these may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.

The Government supports the recommended management objectives for nature conservation reserves.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **C1-C5 NATURE CONSERVATION RESERVES**

That the following existing, enlarged or new nature conservation reserves as indicated on Map A and described above and listed below be used as nature conservation reserves:

- C1 Jancourt Nature Conservation Reserve (3385 ha)—new reserve
- C2 Coradjil Nature Conservation Reserve (1612 ha)—new reserve
- C3 Bungador Stony Rises Nature Conservation Reserve (16.2 ha)—existing reserve with additions
- C4 Marengo Nature Conservation Reserve (26.7 ha)—existing reserve with additions
- C5 Edna Bowman Nature Conservation Reserve (0.8 ha)—existing reserve<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation



The Government supports these recommendations.

## **C6 SPECIAL ARRANGMENTS FOR JANCOURT NATURE CONSERVATION RESERVE**

**That, in the western portion of the recommended Jancourt Nature Conservation Reserve, a range of recreational use, including horseriding, be provided for, and firewood collection be permitted subject to phase out of collection within 5 years of the acceptance of this recommendation.**

The Government supports this recommendation as it recognises the role that the western portion of this block plays in the provision of recreational experiences for the local community. Where robust site conditions exist, appropriate recreation activities can be accommodated and managed to make the most of this community asset. DSE will determine the areas available for firewood collection during the five-year phase-out of this activity in the western portion of the reserve. Emphasis will be in the protection of large old tree sites, threatened species and significant vegetation.

## **NATURAL FEATURES RESERVE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

These areas, according to the specific characteristics of the individual reserve, are used to:

- (a) protect natural features and values;
  - (b) provide opportunities for:
    - (i) education and passive recreation such as picnicking, walking and, where relevant, fishing;
    - (ii) hunting on wetlands, where specified and subject to other relevant limitations; and
    - (iii) more intensive recreation such as camping where specified;
  - (c) protect areas with remnant vegetation or habitat value and conserve indigenous flora and fauna;
  - (d) maintain scenic features and the character and quality of the local landscapes; and
  - (e) preserve features of geological or geomorphological interest;
- and:
- (f) commercial timber harvesting is not permitted;
  - (g) exploration of minerals and mining may be permitted, subject to consent of the Minister of Environment;
  - (h) prospecting and apiculture generally is permitted; and
  - (i) grazing generally is not permitted (unless required for management purposes) other than on water frontage reserves where currently licensed.

Note: The above management objectives and summary land-use recommendations are those that generally apply for the land-use category. Exceptions to these may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances

The Government supports the recommended management objectives for natural features reserves.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **D1-D26 NATURAL FEATURES RESERVES**

That the following existing, enlarged or new natural features reserves as indicated on Map A and listed below be used as natural features reserves:

**D1 Latrobe Bushland Reserve (299 ha)—existing reserve**

**D2 Coradjil Bushland Reserve (166.2 ha)—existing reserve with addition**

**D3 Carpendeit Bushland Reserve (11.2 ha)—new reserve**

**D4 Irrewillipe Bushland Reserve (26.1 ha)—new reserve**

Note: Part of this reserve has been cleared and requires revegetation.

**D5 Barongarook West Bushland Reserve (0.7 ha)—new reserve**

Note: This reserve was previously classified as a flora and fauna reserve.

**D6 Six Mile Dam Lake Reserve (5.4 ha)—existing reserve**

**D7 Gellibrand Bushland Reserve (114.9 ha) - existing reserve with addition**

**D8 Yaughner Bushland Reserve (5.6 ha) - existing reserve with additions**

**D9 Johanna Falls Scenic Reserve (14.6 ha) - existing reserve**

**D10 Aire River Wildlife Reserve (279.2 ha)—existing reserve with additions**

Note: Fencing will be required to exclude grazing from the wetland areas and connecting watercourses.

**D11 Barham Paradise Scenic Reserve (118 ha)—part existing reserve and addition**

**D12 Wild Dog Bushland Reserve (26 ha)—new reserve**

**D13 Wild Dog Creek Streamside Reserve (22.5 ha)—existing reserve**

Note: There has been encroachment over this reserve; its boundaries need defining and restoration works undertaken.

**D14 Wongarra Bushland Reserve (1.3 ha)—existing reserve**

**D15 Barwon Downs Bushland Reserve (23.8 ha)—existing reserve with additions**

Note: Part of the addition includes the site of the former Barwon Downs tip; this requires revegetation.

**D16 Yeo Streamside Reserve (5.8 ha)—existing reserve**

Note: As a readily accessible and only block of public land on the Barwon River between Birregurra and the Otway Ranges, this reserve may be a suitable site to commemorate the final ill-fated journey of the explorer Gellibrand.

**D17 Murroon Bushland Reserve (2.1 ha)—existing reserve**

**D18 Pennyroyal Creek Bushland Reserve (11.1 ha)—existing reserve**

**D19 Lily Pond Bushland Reserve (2.6 ha)—new reserve**

**D20 Parkers Road (Bambra) Bushland Reserve (2 ha)—existing reserve**

**D21 Retreat Creek Streamside Reserve (8 ha)—new reserve**

**D22 Bamba Bushland Reserve (37.1 ha)—existing reserve with additions**

**D23 Wensleydale Bushland Reserve (11.2 ha)—existing reserve**

**D24 Gherang Gherang Bushland Reserve (108.7 ha)—existing reserve**

**D25 Aireys Inlet Bushland Reserve (2.4 ha)—existing reserve**

Note: As this is an existing reserve with high quality remnant vegetation on a hillside, and of small size, VEAC does not believe that this is an appropriate location for a sports ground.

**D26 Anglesea Bushland Reserve (10.5 ha)—new reserve**

Note: This reserve consists of two currently unreserved blocks of land; the western block is known locally as the Elizabeth Street Flora Reserve, the eastern block has no current name.

The Government supports recommendations D1 – D24 and D26, and will further consider D25.

## **D27 NATURAL FEATURES RESERVES - WATER FRONTAGES AND STREAM BEDS AND BANKS**

That:

(a) The following water frontages as indicated on Map A and listed below, and stream beds and banks other than where included in another reserve or park, be used as natural features reserves:

Lake Corangamite Catchment

- Pirron Yallock Creek Water Frontage Reserve

Gellibrand River Catchment

- Gellibrand River Water Frontage Reserve
- Kennedy Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Chapple Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Carlisle River Water Frontage Reserve
- Love Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Lardner Creek Water Frontage Reserve

Johanna Catchment

- Johanna River Water Frontage Reserve

Aire River Catchment

- Ford River Water Frontage Reserve

Apollo Bay Catchments

- Barham River Water Frontage Reserve
- Milford Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Wild Dog Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Skenes Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Sugarloaf Creek Water Frontage Reserve

Barwon River Catchment

- Barwon River (West Branch) Water Frontage Reserve

Note: Includes lower reaches of Roadknight Creek

- Barwon River (East Branch) Water Frontage Reserve
- Matthews Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Pennyroyal Creek Water Frontage Reserve
- Wormbete Creek (West Branch) Water Frontage Reserve

Lorne to Anglesea Catchments

- Painkalac Creek Water Frontage Reserve

Note: Includes a tributary. Complementary management with the adjoining municipal council freehold land is desirable.

- (b) the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, in cooperation with adjoining landowners, implement programs, including fencing, in accordance with priorities set down in the regional catchment strategy to restore frontages, protect remnant vegetation and encourage regeneration—in particular where there is uncontrolled stock access to streams and where stream-bank or frontage vegetation is degraded, frontage vegetation not regenerating, stream banks eroding or salt-affected, or to protect natural, cultural, recreational and scenic values or water quality; and
- (c) where a water frontage or grazing licence has been issued, recreation use and access by the public for activities such as walking, nature observation or fishing be facilitated.<sup>6</sup>

The Government supports these recommendations. Management of watercourses and stream frontages will be guided by the Victorian River Health Strategy and the supporting Corangamite River Health Strategy, prepared by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority.

## **WATER PRODUCTION AREA MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

Water storage areas, diversion works and associated facilities and protective buffer zones around diversion works and storages where defined in a special area plan or land-use determination; and any other public land considered necessary for water production are used for :

- (a) water supply purposes; and
- (b) other activities may be permitted by the water supply authority after consultation with the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Environment Protection Authority, as appropriate; and
- (c) biodiversity and historic values as specified are protected.

Note: The above management objectives and summary land-use recommendations are those that generally apply for the land-use category. Exceptions to these may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.

The Government supports the recommended management objectives for water area management.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **E1-E15 WATER PRODUCTION AREAS**

That the following water production areas as indicated on Map A and listed below be, or continue to be, used for water supply purposes:

- E1 South Otway Offtake (and pumping stations)
- E2 Gellibrand River Offtake (and pumping stations)
- E3 Arkins Creek diversion weirs and buffer
- E4 Lardner Creek Offtake (and pumping station)
- E5 West Barham Weir<sup>7</sup>
- E6 West Gellibrand Reservoir and buffer
- E7 Olangolah Reservoir and buffer
- E8 West Barwon Reservoir and buffer
- E9 East Barwon River Diversion Weir
- E10 Callahan Creek Diversion Weir and buffer
- E11 Barwon Downs Groundwater Bore
- E12 Matthews Creek Diversion Weir
- E13 Pennyroyal Creek Diversion Weir
- E14 Allen Reservoir and buffer
- E15 Painkalac Reservoir and buffer

The Government supports these recommendations. Discussions are being held with the relevant water authorities to determine the boundaries of these areas.

<sup>6</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

<sup>7</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

## COASTAL RESERVE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

These areas are used to:

- (a) provide opportunities for informal recreation for large numbers of people, and also for recreation related to enjoying and understanding nature;
- (b) protect and conserve natural coastal landscapes, ecosystems and significant geomorphological, archaeological and historical features for public enjoyment and inspiration and for education and scientific study;
- (c) ensure the protection and conservation of important aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora; and
- (d) provide opportunities for fishing and facilities for boating, together with the necessary navigation aids;

Note: The above management objectives and summary land-use recommendations are those that generally apply for the land-use category. Exceptions to these may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.

The Government supports the recommended management objectives for coastal reserves.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### F1-F2 COASTAL RESERVES

That the following coastal reserves as indicated on Map A and listed below be, or continue to be, used as coastal reserves.

#### F1 Apollo Bay Coastal Reserve

Note: This reserve includes existing coastal reserves, foreshore reserves and unreserved lands between Marengo and Carisbrook Creek and at Kennett River and Wye River.

#### F2 Lorne-Anglesea Coastal Reserve

Note: This reserve includes the existing coastal reserves, foreshore reserves and unreserved land at Cumberland River, Lorne, between Eastern View and Aireys Inlet and at Anglesea.

The Government supports the reservations of coastal, foreshore and unreserved lands for use as coastal reserves. The 'coastal protection' and 'coastal recreation' zones identified for coastal reserves recommended in the Environment Conservation Council's Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Final Recommendations and agreed to by Government in 2001, remain in place for the reserves.

## COMMUNITY USE AREA MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

These areas are used for:

- (a) education, recreation or other community purposes;
- and:
- (b) appropriate facilities are provided;
  - (c) where relevant, and where compatible with (a) above, features of cultural significance, natural surroundings, and the local character and quality of the landscape are maintained or restored;
- and
- (d) harvesting of forest products, hunting, and extraction of 'stone' is not permitted.

Note: The above management objectives and summary land-use recommendations are those that generally apply for the land-use category. Exceptions to these may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.

The Government supports the recommended management objectives for community use areas.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### G1-G7 COMMUNITY USE AREAS

That the following community use areas as listed below, and mostly indicated on Map A, be used as community use areas:

G1 Bamba Education Area (22 ha)— additional area

G2 Eumeralla Education Area (139.3 ha)—part of existing area

G3 Recreation reserves—existing areas in use

**G4 Parklands and gardens—existing areas and additions<sup>8</sup>**

**G5 Buildings in public use—existing areas in use**

**G6 Rail trails—existing areas and additions**

Note: Where remnant native vegetation occurs, this should be protected, as should remnant structures of the railway line operation.

**G7 Shooting ranges, golf courses, speedways, moto-cross complexes, and youth camps—existing areas<sup>9</sup>**

Recreation reserves have an important role in the social and physical well-being of communities, as well as being a valuable community asset. Therefore the Government supports the retention of existing recreation reserves that are in use.

The Government further supports the designation of sections of former railways to be Community Use Area – Rail trails, as it recognises the potential future use of these sites.

## **STONE AREA MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

These areas are used for :

- (a) the extraction of stone resources; and
- (b) extraction sites are preferably located on already cleared land; and
- (c) where no longer required for extraction, each site is considered uncategorised land and assessed for public land values and uses, and where appropriate assigned to another public land use category or made surplus.

The Government supports the recommended management objectives for stone areas.

## **SERVICES AND UTILITIES AREA MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

These reserves and easements are used for:

- (a) public services and utilities such as transport, electricity and gas, communications, cemeteries, water and sewerage;

and:

- (b) new services or utility sites and easements or lines not be sited in or across reference or wilderness areas, and wherever possible not be sited in or across national, state, regional or marine parks, marine reserves or nature conservation reserves;
- (c) railway lines and other service and utility sites be managed to protect remnant vegetation and habitat, as far as practicable; and
- (d) should a public land area or building and site used for service or utility purposes no longer be required for its primary designated use, it be assessed for its natural, recreational and cultural heritage values, and capability for other public uses, and where appropriate assigned to another public land use category or made surplus.

Note: The above management objectives and summary land-use recommendations are those that generally apply for these land-use categories. Exceptions to these may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.

The Government supports the recommended management objectives for services and utilities areas.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **H1 STONE AREAS**

That the following area as indicated on Map A and listed below be used as a stone reserve:

**H1 Gherang Gherang Stone Area (110.2 ha)—existing reserve<sup>10</sup>**

The Government supports this recommendation.

<sup>8</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

<sup>9</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

<sup>10</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation

## **H2 SERVICE AND UTILITY AREAS**

H2 That existing service and utility sites as indicated on Map A be used as service and utility areas.<sup>11</sup>

The Government supports this recommendation.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **I1-5 UNCATEGORISED PUBLIC LAND**

That public land as generally indicated on Map A and listed below:

- (a) be uncategorised public land and continue to be used in accordance with existing legal use and tenure; or
- (b) subject to assessment and consultation:
  - (i) be assigned to a specific public land-use category; or
  - (ii) subject to the protection of any identified cultural or natural heritage values, be exchanged or disposed of.

**I1** Aire River Valley lands—designated for possible land exchange to consolidate the boundaries of the adjoining national park and nearby natural feature reserve.

**I2** Little Aire block—designated for possible development to facilitate the tourist and/or educational use of the adjoining national park.

**I3** Dewings Creek—Barwon Water land designated as a possible water production area.

**I4** West Lorne—designated to allow for a detailed planning process to consider possible land exchange to consolidate the boundaries of the national park and/or creation of bushland areas and/or for township development.

**I5** Various other minor reserves, unreserved public lands or township land not otherwise recommended for specific uses elsewhere in this report.

The Government broadly supports these recommendations.

A study has been undertaken to investigate the site capacity of the Little Aire block (Rec I2). Further detailed study will be required prior to any development of the site for tourist and/or educational use of the adjoining national park.

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<sup>11</sup> See VEAC Final Report for notes relevant to this recommendation