

SCHEDULE 4 TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as **ESO4**.

MOUNT ALEXANDER AND SURROUNDS**1.0 Statement of environmental significance**

Mount Alexander is a granitic intrusion that rises 350 metres above the surrounding plains. Its significance arises from:

- Its impact on the surrounding landscape,
- Its aboriginal history,
- Its connection with Major Mitchell and the discovery of gold and the settlement of the area,
- Its silvicultural history with the oak plantation, the sericulture site and the pine plantation,
- Its vegetation type not found at other locations in this area, the age of the dominant trees and some rare or threatened species,
- The richness of its fauna including rare or threatened species,
- Its geology and geomorphology.

Description

Mount Alexander is a granitic intrusion through sedimentary rock that dominates the surrounding landscape. The eastern and western slopes are steep with large rock outcrops and sheet of granitic rock. There are three sites of geological and geomorphological significance including one of National Significance. The Mount itself is of Regional Significance. The impact of the granite quarries on the tourist road and the Calder Highway is also being addressed.

An open forest of *Eucalyptus obliqua* and *E. viminalis* has developed on the granitic soils. This is a different type of vegetation to that found on the surrounding plains. The mature woodland has a significant number of senescent trees that, along with trees that died as a result of the 1982-3 drought, provide hollows for native fauna. The large area of the public land, the abundance of hollows and the particular vegetation type contribute to the Mount's rich habitat. There are a number of rare or threatened species that have been recorded on the Mount. They include *Ninox strenus* Powerful Owl, *Pomatostomus temporalis* Grey-crowned Babbler, and the *Phascogale tapotafa* Tuan. Rare or threatened plants include *Baliantinia antipoda*, *Diurus palustris* Swamp Diuris, *Epilobium pallidiorum* Showy willow herb, and *Glycine latrobeana* Clover glycine.

2.0 Environmental objective to be achieved

- To recognise and protect the landscape conservation and importance of Mount Alexander.
- To protect Mount Alexander and the surrounding landscape from inappropriate development and visual intrusion.
- To protect the area and the surrounding landscapes from visual intrusion and inappropriate development.
- To maintain the passive recreational value of the land for the enjoyment of all visitors.

3.0 Permit requirement

Applications of the kind listed below must be referred in accordance with Section 55 of the Act to the referral authority specified in Clause 66.04 or a schedule to that clause.

- Subdivision creating lots less than 40 hectares.
- Intensive agriculture, lot feeding, poultry farming and pig keeping or any other intensive land use.
- Any use or development which the responsible authority considers may not satisfy the environmental objective of this schedule.
- All applications for use and development of land within 100 metres of the Mount Alexander Regional Park.

A permit is not required for routine maintenance works on land managed by Department of Sustainability and Environment.

4.0 Decision guidelines

An applicant must demonstrate that the proposed development has considered the following issues, prior to the responsible authority deciding on an application:-

- the primary purpose for which the land is zoned
- the orderly and proper planning of the relevant zone
- the preservation of the amenity of the area and the need to prevent unnecessary intrusive development from occurring in visually exposed areas.
- the preservation of the natural environment and the prevention of erosion
- the necessity or otherwise of retaining a buffer strip of vegetation in the vicinity of water courses, roads and property boundaries or in visually prominent areas of the site.