

**WARBY RANGE
PROTECTION SOCIETY
1974B**

general
warby Range

LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE

AREA RECOMMENDED FOR CLASSIFICATION

(Issued with Agenda for Council Meeting 2nd September, 1974).

Name: Warby Range

Subject: Warby Range

Inventory No: L83

Location and Boundaries: The Warby Range extends in a north line from Glenrowan on the Hume Highway to Killawarra, a distance of about sixteen miles. It lies to the ^{west} east of Wangaratta and forms the divide between the Ovens River and the Broken River to the west, where streams drain into Lake Mokoan. See attached map.

The classified area is approximately 120 square miles in size. A considerable area of the Range south of the Thoona Road is freehold and uncleared. There are five separate Crown land areas totalling about 7,500 acres and a consolidated area, north of the Thoona Road, of 7,180 acres of Reserve Forest adjacent to the 6,870 Killawarra State Forest.

Citation: The Warby Range is a granite intrusion in the Murray Basin Plains and comprises steep to moderate escarpments with undulating plateau areas. The Killawarra - Boweya road marks the division between the granitic formation and the Ordovician sedimentary formation, which carries the Killawarra Forest, a typical open-forest of box-ironbark (Eucalyptus microcarpa, E.sideroxylon).

South of this, the Range is covered by an open forest of Hill Gum (E.blakelyi) Red Box (E.polyanthemos), Red Stringybark (E.macrorrhyncha) Long leaf Box (E.goniocalyx), White Box (E.albens) Grey Box (E.microcarpa), Yellow Box (E.melliodora) and scattered pockets of Red Ironbark (E.sideroxylon).

The Range being heavily dissected with a diverse woodland cover offers high scenic values in an area of cultivated plains. Mt. Glenrowan to the south is the highest peak at 1,686 feet above sea level. In contrast, on the Range there are small clearings with cherry orchards and small grazing areas. Bailey's vineyard and winery is located near Taminick Gap.

The area has historic values associated with the Kelly era at Glenrowan, as well as with nineteenth century pastoralism and viticulture.

Threats: Subdivision schemes in both the Benalla Shire, west of Glenrowan and in the Wangaratta Shire, extension of orcharding into uncleared area; unmanaged tourist access to vantage spots and viewpoints.

Notes: The eastern edge of the Warby Range near Wangaratta is a fault line scarp. In this district relatively soft Permian tillites were faulted down against the granites and old Palaeozoic rocks; the whole area was penneplained and later uplifted but the soft Permian capping was greatly eroded, leaving the more resistant granites upstanding to form the core of the

This eastern edge, especially north of the Taminick Gap, has many small "canyons" and waterfalls, such as the "Golden Staircase", which need better management as recreational/educational features.

The western slope of the Range has been encroached upon over the years for grazing and viticulture - the Bundarra vineyards being the most important. Orchards also surround many peripheral sections of the Range.

The dry sclerophyll woodland cover is most dense north of the Taminick Gap and on its eastern edge. In a steep rocky valley here, there is the only known individual surviving plant of the Northern Sandalwood species (Santalum lanceolatum).

The Range contains a number of interesting plant species. There are fourteen species of acacias, two of which and a sandalwood tree are not found elsewhere in Victoria - Acacia decora, Acacia triptera and Santalum lanceolatum. There are giant grasstrees (Xanthorrhoea australis), which attain a height of ten to fifteen feet, and a number of the fully skirted specimens which conceal the trunk to ground level.

Approximately thirty species of orchid have been recorded. The Range possesses a charm and an appeal which are expressed by the beautifully stunted and gnarled Hill Gums growing on shallow soils among the rock outcrops.

Some 140 species of birds have been recorded in the Range. The most rare species is the turquoise parrot, once thought to be on the verge of distinction.

The native fauna includes the grey kangaroo, black wallaby, echidna, possums, tuans, water rats and a number of reptile species.

18th August, 1974.

Second Meeting of Environment Protection Group.
held at A.R. Twitt's residence, Waller Street on
Tuesday 22nd October 1974 at 8 PM

MINUTES

PRESENT Parkings Chair.
Mesdames Rendmann, Twitt.
Messrs. English, Hodge, I King, Twitt

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING AUTHORITY

Discussion centred around the possibility
of objecting to the plan on view at the
City Offices

It was agreed that relevant objections
should be expanded and made available to
sympathetic parties with a view to
assisting them to lodge individual
objections

A list of objections were drawn up and
Hodge was requested to formulate
them and pass on to Parkings for
typing and distribution

MINISTER OF CONSERVATION

to be advised of the existence of this group
and its interest in the conservation
of the Warby Range and environs and
seeking assistance in ~~planning~~ expanding
its activities

Meeting concluded at 10 PM.

19th November, 1974

The Secretary,
Town and Country Planning Board,
235 Queen Street,
MELBOURNE. 3000

Dear Sir,

I wish to object to the present plan in the following particulars.

A. The provision for 40 acre blocks.

This aspect is objectionable on numerous grounds.

There is overwhelming evidence that 40 acres is quite insufficient to provide for orderly and logical urban development. In Wangaratta we have the evidence of the result of 40 acre subdivisions and lack of overall planning.

Evidence available regarding subdivision in the metropolitan area suggests that there has been a considerable turnover in 5 and 20 acre lots. This has promoted speculation which has had socially damaging aspects in escalating the price of residential land.

It is demonstrably unsatisfactory for urban planning that less than 100 acre subdivisions occur. For instance, a demand is created for dispersal of water and sewerage services by the local authorities. It is obviously more economic and satisfactory overall if these services are provided in a planned logical order rather than as a result of series of disconnected and separate developments promoted by subdivisions of less than 100 acres.

Other public services suffer from the same disabilities. Fire Brigades for instance complain about the overgrown 5 acre blocks which are potential fire hazards. These small lots are a direct flow on from fixing of less than 100 acres as a minimum in rural zones. Certainly anything less is completely uneconomic for primary production and leads to demands for subdivision into small units, thus destroying the rural zones. The fixing of a minimum of 100 acres renders the land attractive only to the rural producer and hence maintains the possibility of its use as rural land for much longer periods.

A further objection to the provision of a 40 acre minimum subdivision in the rural zone is made on the grounds that experience has shown that local authorities are subjected to tremendous pressures to make similar provisions in their own planning scheme to those of an adjoining authority, particularly with regard to abutting land. This view is further strengthened by the fact that the Shire of Wangaratta has already included in its draft ordinance a 40 acre minimum subdivision in the rural zone covering the Warby Ranges. The rural economics of this land is such that pressure to reduce the minimum acreage in this area will be as great, if not greater than in the area immediately adjoining the Warby Ranges. Experience has also shown that in a very short space of time, the 40 acre minimum becomes a ~~30 acre minimum~~

nullified by the special provision enabling a person to subdivide off a house site providing the 2 lots so subdivided have a total minimum area of 40 acres. Once the home is built there is nothing to prevent both lots being sold individually so that presently 120 acres could be broken down into 6 lots averaging 20 acres whereas with a 100 acre minimum it would remain suitably sized for the rural pursuits for which it was properly zoned.

- B. There is no adequate provision for a buffer zone along the foothills of the Warby Ranges. If Wangaratta's population expands, the natural recreation area is the Warby Ranges. The plan does not appear to recognize the desirability of maintaining the approaches to the Warby Ranges for future recreational purposes. This criticism of lack of "green belt" provision applies to the plan overall since the access to the Pilot Ranges around Eldorado similarly is unprotected from small subdivisional development, but this fault is the more serious when the Warby Range is only a mere 3 or 4 miles from the City centre.

Again the plan makes no particular move to minimize the subdivision of the area between the City and the Warby Range in which the intrusion of urban development is particularly objectionable. The possibility of encouraging urban development away from the foothills to, say, north Wangaratta is not provided for in the plan. Yet other areas are equally available and free from some of the problems which will occur in using the Warby access areas. Septic sewerage in the area adjoining the Warbys is going to seriously affect other property holders because of the fall of the land and the type of subsoil prevalent.

Yours faithfully,

G.C. Hodge

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CONSERVATION GROUP
held at residence of A TWITT ~~Thursday~~
Tuesday ^{19th}/_{20th} November 1974 at 8 PM.

PRESENT Mr Parkings (Chair)
Mrs Twitt, Messrs W Englich Hodge Stinger

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

Mr Parkings reported on intentions of the
Albury Wodonga Growth Authority
to insist on 100 acre minimum
subdivisions within the area 55 kilometres
from the Union Bridge

PUBLIC MEETING.

Agreement was reached regarding a
public meeting to be held consequent to a
meeting of this committee in early February.

- that the Mayor of Wangaratta be invited
to convene same
- that the Wangaratta Shire President
be invited to chair the meeting
- that the Lower Town Hall be the
venue
- that the National Parks Division of the
Ministry of Conservation be asked
regarding their recent survey of the
Warby Range.
- that the Director of the Ministry of Conservation
be requested to speak at the proposed
public meeting or to nominate some
person of high standing within the
Department
- that a tentative form of the meeting be
Speaker

Adoption of draft constitution
Election of office bearers namely
President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
P.R.O.

who shall form the executive committee
a publicity sub-committee
a "statutory" sub-committee
a municipal sub-committee

meetings of the Society to be held 6 monthly

NEXT MEETING - Tuesday February 11th.