

SUBMISSION ON CENTRAL HIGHLAND DRAFT LOCAL PROVISIONS SCHEDULE TASMANIAN PLANNING SCHEME

A Scenic Protection Area (SPA) is proposed for the Central Plateau along the Highland Lakes Road from the municipality boundary in the north to Bakers Tier in the south, and along the Waddamana Road to Hilltop, to protect the widely recognised scenic values of the Central Plateau along these tourist routes.

The scenic values are an integral part of Tourism Tasmania's Heartlands and Western Wilds tourism initiatives. Highlands Power Trail Road Trip, and Council's Highlands Tasmania brand. The Highland Lakes Road itself is a high-volume scenic tourist and a primary access route linking the south and north of the State. Protecting the scenic values of the Central Plateau for the tourism and recreation industries and residents from inappropriate development is essential for the economic and social wellbeing of the municipality.

The proposed Great Central Plateau SPA satisfies the Tasmanian Planning Commission Guideline SPC1 as having identified scenic values of local and regional importance; and presents a strong case response to Guideline SPC2 on why inappropriate development would diminish those values. It would only apply to land within the six applicable zones as per Guideline SPC3. The proposed SPA is also consistent with tourism policies of the current Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy.

The Great Central Plateau SPA should be created during the current Draft LPS assessment process as allowed by the State Planning Provisions and Guideline No 1. Similar landscape wide SPAs have been included in the Glenorchy, Burnie and Meander Valley LPSs during the current process. As affected landowners have not had the opportunity to comment on the proposed SPA during the exhibition period it would be appropriate for this proposal to be treated as a substantial modification under Section 35KB of the Act.

The proposed Great Highlands Scenic Protection Area is attached for your information.

Application of landscape wide TPS Scenic Protection Areas in other municipalities during the current process

Of the municipalities that have now transitioned to the Tasmanian Planning Scheme, many of them have applied Scenic Protection Areas and Scenic Road Corridors to protect important scenic values via the Scenic Protection Code. Other municipalities have also included Scenic Protection Areas and Scenic Road Corridors in their draft LPSs.

The three examples of LPSs now in effect are presented below. The Glenorchy Hinterland Scenic Protection Area covers more than 75% of the municipality and applies to both public and private land tenure. The other two Scenic Protection Areas are smaller but also apply to both public and private land tenure. There is clear precedent in these and other municipalities for the application of the Scenic Protection Areas during the current process.

Burnie Urban Settlement Scenic Protection Area



Glenorchy Hinterland Scenic Protection Area



Travellers rest Scenic Protection Area (Meander Valley)



Thank you for considering this representation. Please contact me if I can assist you in any way.

Yours sincerely

David Ridley

David Ridley

3 Monk St Shannon, Tas 7030

22nd October 2021

Contact: david.ridley1955@gmail.com;

ph 0467968488

CENTRAL PLATEAU SCENIC PROTECTION AREA (SPA), TASMANIA.



Barren Plains and Cider Gum, Central Plateau Tasmania. Photo Helen Ridley

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David Ridley
3 Monks St
Shannon, Tas 7030
24th October 2021

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Procedures that recognise the scenic values of the Central Plateau are largely missing in the draft LPS now on display by Central Highlands Council. CHI-Table C8.1 Scenic Protection Areas has not been used.

Community input has been sought on draft Local Provisions Schedule (LPS) for the Central Highland area under the new state-wide Tasmanian Planning Scheme. This Assessment considers scenic values of the Central Plateau, identifies a Scenic Protection Area under the LPS, and provides information for inclusion in LPS Table CHI C8.1 so Development Approvals and scenic landscape protection can both occur.

Better recognition of the scenic landscape features the Central Plateau is required because:

- The high scenic values of the Central Plateau are well recognised by international, Mainland visitors, and Tasmanians; and are a key element of any Central Plateau land-use proposal.
- The scenic values of the Central Plateau are central to the Highlands tourist and recreational initiatives as well as the economic health and well-being of the area.
- High scenic values exist at lookouts and key viewpoints along the Highlands Lake Road (A5) and Highlands Power Trail (C178).
- Recognition of scenic values is a core component of the Central Highland Council initiatives, was an integral component of the Interim Planning Scheme for the area and is essential for the Highland Brand, the Highland lifestyle, and Highland developments.
- The 'old' Planning Scheme recognised the scenic values. Translation from the old (Interim) Planning Scheme to the new (Tasmanian) Planning Scheme under the draft LPS has not adopted scenic values to the extent present in the old Scheme. There are no provisions within the Agriculture and Rural Zone to avoid impacting scenic values by building/works or vegetation destruction.
- The proposed Great Central Plateau SPA satisfies the Tasmanian Planning Commission Guideline SPC1 as having identified scenic values of local and regional importance; and is a strong case in response to Guideline SPC2 on why inappropriate development would diminish those values. The proposed SPA is also consistent with the tourism policies of the current Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy.

An analysis of areas surrounding key arterial and tourist roads that bisect the Central Plateau was undertaken to assess scenic values. It shows high scenic values exist. As a result, the Great Highland Plateau Scenic Protection Area (SPA) has been identified, mapped and the LPS Table populated (including Management Objects) so it can be included in the Central Highland LPS.

Specifically, the Assessment found a subsection of the Central Plateau character type had High Scenic Quality Class because of unique landforms, vegetation and wildlife forms, water forms and cultural heritage features. The Lakes Highway and associated Waddamana Road were assessed using the Guidelines from Supporting Documents to the LPS. As a result, the Great Highland Plateau SPA was identified which almost exclusively contains High Scenic Value Areas. This Great

Highland Plateau SPA only applies to Zones and Codes which are allowed under the Tasmanian Planning Scheme.

Recognition and maintenance of these unique scenic values of the Central Plateau that has been identified in this Assessment is needed as part of planning and Development Approval processes.

Hence the Tasmanian Planning Commission can include the Great Highland Plateau SPA in the LPS because of the known scenic values that are recognised by the community and confirmed by this Assessment so as to ensure scenic landscape values are considered up-front and developments proceed in a manner consistent with the Highland brand.

1. Background

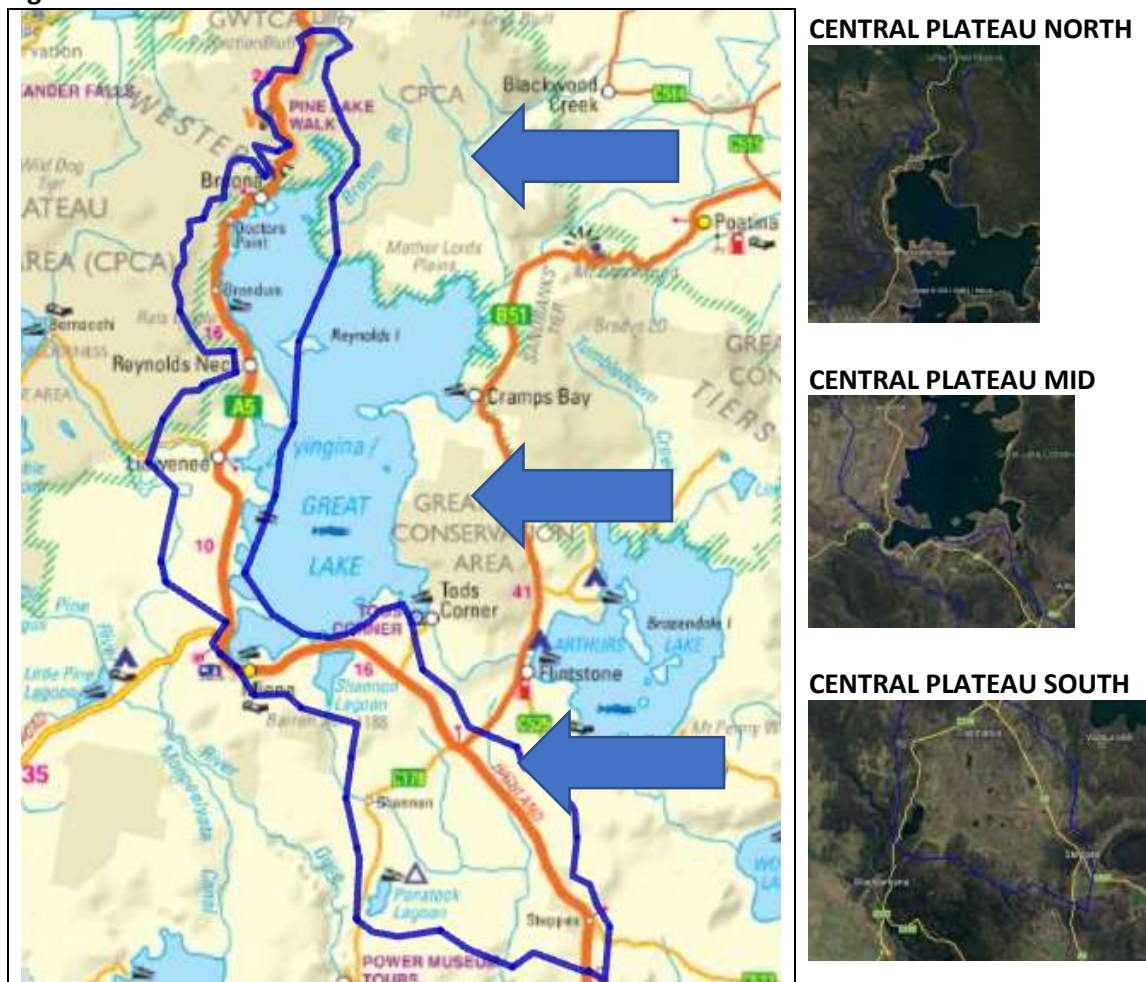
1.1. Context: Central Plateau and scenic values

This Assessment considers a section of the Central Plateau in the Heart of Tasmania.

Scenic landscape values seem to be the forgotten value in the draft Central Highlands Local Provision Schedule. This report provides an assessment of the scenic values for part of the Central Plateau area of the Central Highlands of Tasmania. It includes areas planned to be zoned as Rural Resource Zone, Agriculture Zone and Environmental Management Zone under the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme. It is based on two of the six primary access roads of the Central Plateau – Lakes Highway (A5) and Waddamana Road (C178) which are not only primary access roads but are also well used tourist and shack owner roads.

The Assessment Area is shown in Figure 1. For convenience, the Assessment Area has been recognised as Central Plateau North, Central Plateau Mid and Central Plateau South. The Assessment area covers roughly 60km in length and about 25000ha in size.

Figure 1: Overview of the Assessment Area



As indicated above, this assessment focusses on a subsection of the Central Plateau. It considers the scenic values associated of the A5 and B178 roads and their hinterlands rather than the whole of the Central Plateau area. This occurred because the A5 is the primary feeder road covering the full-length of the Plateau, and because these routes are the highest

priority for scenic assessment. They are the gateway roads into and through the Central Plateau area and are well used tourist roads. The C178 road environs are also an integral part of the vista of the southern part of the A5. This report does not consider the scenic values of more inaccessible areas of Central Plateau frequented by bushwalkers and fishers.

The Central Plateau is special. Figure 2 gives a longitudinal view of the Tiers and Plateau. Access is via a series of Tiers that emerge onto a relatively flat alpine and subalpine landscape formed by the eastern movement of glaciers of the Central Plateau Ice Cap. It has produced a glacial dominated and barren landscape along with its associated alpine and subalpine ecological elements. All who visit feel as if they have entered another world. The climate is harsh – being 900m to 1200m – with regular snow fall and some of Tasmania's coldest temperature (e.g. minus 17.3 °C at Shannon). Nevertheless it is home to mirids of threatened flora and fauna including Australia's largest raptor (Tasmanian wedge-tailed eagle) which is frequently seen as well as Tasmanian devils. Low intensity summer grazing by lowland landholders has been a historical feature of the Plateau. However the area is fragile and requires sensitive land use - overgrazing and inappropriate fire regimes have led to extensive areas of degradation in the past¹ and indicates appropriate land use of the area is required. It is the birthplace of Tasmania's Hydro scheme which also contributes to historic scenic values of the area. This Highland lakes area is a product of past glacial action, alpine and subalpine environments, high rainfall events and Hydro developments.

Figure 2. Features of Central Plateau

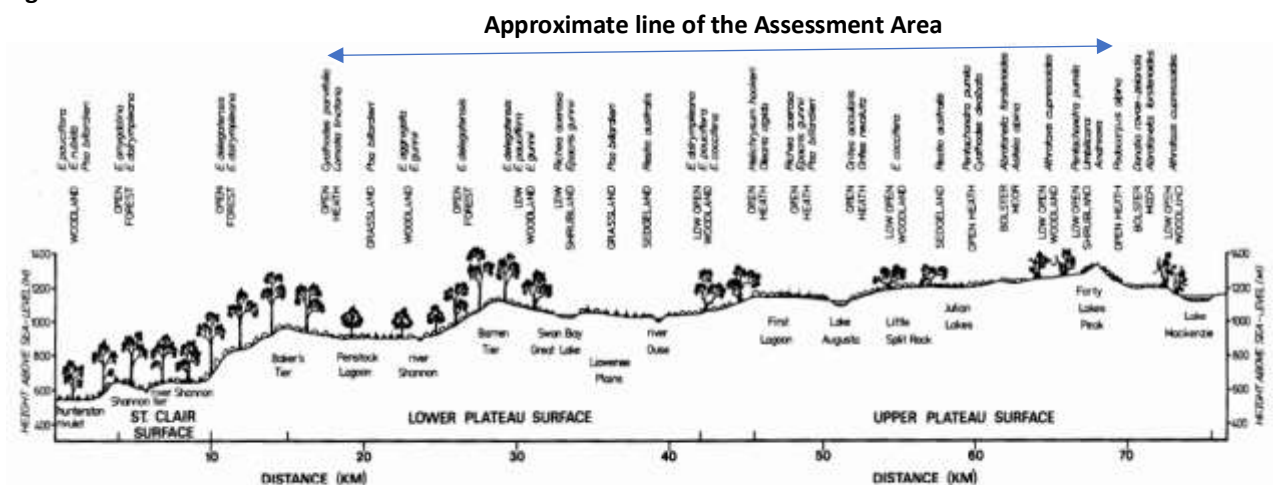


FIGURE 6 - Section of the Central Plateau from Hunterston Rivulet (540m) to Lake Mackenzie (1120m) showing vegetation profile and the three main surfaces of the "stepped" landform.

Source: Shepherd R, 1974 p18A in "The Central Plateau of Tasmania: A Resource Survey and Management Plan

The scenic values of the Area are well known. A sense of isolation, remoteness and unspoilt landscapes have made the Central Plateau iconic for passive recreation, bushwalking and Tasmania's unique shack ownership practice with many hundreds of shacks present. These scenic values are complemented by low intensity grazing and the absence of modern industrialisation. It is world renown as an unspoilt fishing destination and hosted the 2019 World Fly Fishing Championship where the Government championed the unspoilt landscape

¹ Shepherd R, 1974 "The Central Plateau of Tasmania: A Resource Survey and Management Plan

for three years in the leadup to the event. Following completion of sealing of the Lakes Highway, the Central Plateau now provides the preferred travel route from Spirit of Tasmania (Devonport) to Hobart. It is the 'Great Highland Drive' of Australia and is part of the Western Wilds and Heartland drive adventures. The Central Plateau area is at the pinnacle of Tasmania's "generally high level of scenic quality (that) differentiates it from other Australian and global destinations".² The Central Plateau scenic landscape abounds in outstanding landform, vegetation, frequent native wildlife, water and cultural heritage elements. This scenic landscape is central to the Highlands Brand.

Central Highlands Council itself states "The Central Highlands boasts glorious scenery and dramatic built heritage dating back to the early 19th century. It is the birthplace of Tasmania's Hydro Electric power system and home to the best trout fishing in the southern hemisphere. Our region is host to a World Heritage Area, two national parks and other Wilderness Conservation Areas, to Tasmania's recreational fly fishing, hunting and bushwalking communities, and has strong agricultural, horticultural and tourism industries" and "tourism in the Central Highlands now has its own regional brand in a significant, and bold, initiative telling the World it is the place to be."³ Highlands Tasmania branding aims to "steady and grow tourism with an inter-state and international focus." Visitation to the nearby Bothwell in 2016 (day and night) totalled 38,172.⁴

Tasmania's scenery is key to tourism marketing and promotion programs. Central Plateau is part of the Western Wilds promotion by Tourism Tasmania which promotes "Inspiring Landscape, Unique Wildlife & Nature (Flora & Fauna), Rich Aboriginal Heritage & Culture, Early Explorers & Pioneering, Industry (Hydro, Mining and Railway), and Conservation & the Environment."⁵ A nine-day tour as part of the Western Wilds initiative visits the land of a thousand lakes "with its impressive glacial and alpine landscape" via the A5 Highway and then goes to the Thousand Lakes Lodge and to Devonport along the northern section of the Assessment Area.⁶ A seven-day Heartlands Tour on Day 2 goes from Deloraine to Bothwell and includes the self-guided Highlands Power Trail along Waddamana Road in the southern section of the Assessment Area. A tour the Highlands Power Trail for "a unique experience in the rugged Central Highlands of Tasmania."⁷

Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy says Regional Policies are needed to provide innovative and sustainable tourism by: (1) protecting and enhancing authentic and distinctive local features and landscapes throughout the region; and by (2) identifying and protecting regional landscapes, which contribute to the region's sense of place, through planning schemes.⁸ Furthermore, the Strategy highlights the attractiveness of the Central Plateau to Tasmanian residents and visitors by indicating "there is also evidence of settlements experiencing significant growth pressures for holiday homes for the region's residents as well

² Inspiring Places Pty Ltd, 2018 "Guidelines for Scenic Values Assessment Methodology and Local Provisions schedules to Assist Southern Tasmanian Councils with the Scenic protection Code".

³ See centralhighlands.tas.gov.au (accessed 181021)

⁴ See Central Highlands Destination Action Plan 2016-2019 p4

⁵ See Western Wilds - Destination Southern Tasmania. <http://southerntasmania.com.au>

⁶ See <https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/the-best-road-trips-start-at-sea/western-wilds>

⁷ See <https://www.hydro.com.au/things-to-do/highlands-power-trail>

⁸ See p70 Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy 2010-2035. <https://planningreform.tas.gov.au/>

as visitor accommodation. These growth pressures are **particularly evident in the Central Highlands**, Glamorgan Spring Bay and Tasman municipal areas **where natural, cultural and recreational assets strongly underpin their attractiveness.**"⁹ The LPS needs to be consistent with these objectives.

1.2. Context: Scenic Protection Code and the Central Highlands Local Provisions Schedule

The 'old' Interim Planning Scheme for Central Highlands recognised scenic landscape values as an integral component of Rural Resource Zone so adverse impacts on the rural landscape were minimised - through controls on building height, location of structures on skylines and clearing of native vegetation.

Consideration of scenic values of the Central Plateau does not occur overtly under the 'new' Tasmanian Planning Scheme planned for the Central Highlands. The draft Local Provisions Schedule has not adopted a Scenic Protection Code. What was previously called Rural Resource Zone (with scenic landscape considerations) is now called Rural or Agriculture Zones and does not have the same planning controls. The translation of Rural Resource Zoning from the 'old' to the 'new' has not maintained these the planning controls and therefore unintended impacts on the scenic rural landscape will occur.

Advice to the Southern Tasmania Councils has been "the transition of the previous Rural Resource Zone from within the interim planning schemes to the TPS is considered to be either a Rural Zone or Agriculture Zone. There are no provisions within these two Zones to help reduce impacts of building/works or vegetation destruction on scenic values. Agricultural buildings and works are exempt from these two zones but there remains potential for large scale or poorly located buildings to adversely impact on scenic values."¹⁰

However, this shortcoming can be addressed. The TPS allows scenic landscape areas to be defined as Scenic Protection Areas. The LPS process gives Councils the opportunity to prepare descriptions of these areas and to outline of the scenic values and management objectives for such areas.

This Assessment uses this opportunity to develop a Central Plateau Scenic Protection Area as an overlay for the Scenic Protection Code to allow proper consideration of landscape values is part of the development approval process.

2. Scenic Protection Assessment and the Central Plateau

2.1. Overview and limitations

As indicated above, entry onto the Central Plateau is only possible by four (4) roads all linked to the Lakes Highway (A5) - Marlborough Road (B11), Poatina Road (B51), Waddamana Road (C178) and Interlaken Road (C527). Another road (Lake Augusta Road) is the gateway to the Western Wilderness, Central Plateau's World Heritage Area and Thousand Lakes Wilderness

⁹ See p95 Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy 2010-2035. <https://planningreform.tas.gov.au/>

¹⁰ Inspiring Places Pty Ltd, 2018 p 18 of "Guidelines for Scenic Values Assessment Methodology and Local Provisions schedules to Assist Southern Tasmanian Councils with the Scenic protection Code".

Lodge and comes from the Lakes Highway. It is used by a myriad of tourists, bushwalkers and fishers.

This assessment only considers the Lakes Highway and the associated Waddamana Road which form part of the Western Wilds Trail and Hydro's Highland Power Trail respectively.

The methodology outlined to Southern Councils on Scenic Values Assessment Methodology has been followed for this Assessment.¹¹

2.2. Baseline assessments for Central Plateau area

2.2.1. Landscape character type.

The Assessment Area is part of the Central Plateau landscape character type. It is a plateau in the heart of Tasmania, sculptured by glaciers, and bounded by steep tiers that quickly drop away to lowlands. This Assessment considers a subsection of this landscape character type.

2.2.2. System Quality Frame of Reference

Landscape features that need to be considered as part of any scenic assessment include landform, vegetation, water features, visual cultural/heritage, and visual wildlife features. The Scenic Quality Classes for the Assessment Areas (Central Plateau North, Mid and South) are outlined below. In places with widespread high value elements, the area is mapped as an overall High Scenic Quality Classification. Few Moderate or Low Scenic Quality Classes occur in the Assessment area as the goal was to identify a SPA that predominantly contain High Quality Class values.

Table 1: Scenic Quality Classes and Landscape features

Landscape Features	Elements that may be present in High Scenic Quality Class	Elements that may be present in Moderate Scenic Quality Class Moderate	Elements that maybe present in Low Scenic Quality Class
Landform	<p>Well defined and visually distinctive mountain and hill ridges or glacial elements elevated above adjacent landforms.</p> <p>Isolated peaks or peaks with distinctive form that become focal points.</p> <p>Steep, complex hill systems.</p> <p>Large cliffs, rock faces, rock outcrops, boulder fields or scree slopes that are visually prominent or dominate the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Isolated peaks or peaks with distinctive form and colour contrast that become focal points.</p>	<p>Undulating and/or rounded and rolling terrain and gently sloping sugarloaves that are not visually distinctive in the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Visually evident, but not distinctive or dominant rock outcrops, rock slabs and cliffs of moderate size.</p> <p>Small areas of glacial features.</p>	<p>Significant expanses of rolling hills or flat plains with indistinct dissection by rivers and streams and not dramatically defined by adjacent landforms.</p> <p>Common and indistinct landforms.</p> <p>High and Moderate landform elements not present.</p>
Vegetation	<p>Strongly defined native vegetation communities such as stands of or combinations of open grasslands, sedge, alpine heath, wet sclerophyll and dry sclerophyll plant communities, or native pine – seen as distinctive vegetation patterns, colours or textures across the landscape.</p>	<p>Moderate sized open and/or scattered eucalypt forest combined with natural openings and species mix - in patterns that offer some visual diversity and irregular, natural-appearing or blended edges (not sharp or straight).</p>	<p>Extensive areas of monoculture or similar vegetation with infrequent patterns or forest openings.</p> <p>Large forest clearings with straight or unnatural appearing shapes and edges.</p>

¹¹ p18, Inspiring Places Pty Ltd, 2018 of "Guidelines for Scenic Values Assessment Methodology and Local Provisions schedules to Assist Southern Tasmanian Councils with the Scenic protection Code".

			High and Moderate vegetation elements not present.
Waterform	<p>Large 1st and 2nd Order streams, rivers and estuaries with permanent flow.</p> <p>Large to medium waterfalls.</p> <p>Large or moderate sized natural lakes, ponds and wetlands and large to medium reservoirs.</p>	<p>Small or intermittent streams without year-round flow.</p> <p>Small natural lakes, ponds, waterfalls and wetlands.</p> <p>Small sized reservoirs</p>	<p>No natural waterforms.</p> <p>Small farm dams and reservoirs.</p> <p>High and Moderate waterform elements not present.</p>
Visual Cultural/ Heritage	Prominent, unique or extensive visual influence of cultural heritage features reflecting local history (including built forms and structures such as farm buildings, kilns, stone walls, fences with traditional/historic architecture styles that visually enhance the landscape) and visual heritage practices.	Moderate visual presence and influence of cultural heritage features reflecting local history including built forms and structures such as farm buildings of architectural styles not particularly unique or notably positive within the surrounding landscape.	<p>Little to no visual presence and influence of cultural heritage features.</p> <p>Areas with low density residential, urban, industrial, mining, or utilities land use with visually dominant structures.</p> <p>High and Moderate Visual Cultural/Heritage elements not present.</p>
Visual Native Wildlife	Areas with a high and consistent (year around or seasonally) visual presence of native fauna (e.g., kangaroos, quolls, wombats, quolls, wallabies, eagles, hawks, and other raptor, reptiles and amphibians, waterfowl and native birds).	Areas with a moderate or occasional visual presence of native fauna.	Areas with a low or infrequent and irregular visual presence of native fauna.
Comments: Central Plateau North	<p>Contains formal Reserve and its elements. Dramatic cliff faces (Projection Bluff)</p> <p>Fagus forest, Pencil Pine</p> <p>Dramatic wet/dry sclerophyll forests. Extensive bolder fields.</p> <p>Large artificial and smaller natural water forms e.g. Pine Lake.</p> <p>Great Lake dominant from many viewpoints.</p> <p>Frequent native fauna presence including eagles; Devils at dusk</p> <p>Main arterial road in Plateau (Deloraine to Bothwell)</p> <p>Projection Bluff trail and lookout.</p> <p>Split Rock trail and lookout.</p> <p>Part of Heartland Drive</p>	<p>Small pockets of moderate scenic quality exist but are surrounded by (and incorporated into high Quality Scenic class)</p> <p>Areas of visual but indistinct landform (hidden saddles)</p>	<p>Residential areas (Breona, Doctors Point, Brandum, Reynolds Neck)</p> <p>Indistinct 'flat' landform</p>
Comments: Central Plateau Mid	<p>Contains Great Lake & Shannon Lagoon. Waterforms dominate.</p> <p>Extensive endangered Highland Poa and Sedge grasslands present. Historic summer grazing landscape.</p> <p>Treeless Liawenee Moorland sculptured by glacial actions.</p> <p>'Treeless' Ellis Plains and Barren Pains with visual remnant endangered Cider Gum elements. Extensive alpine plain with dramatic presence of endangered Cider Gum (dead & living)</p> <p>Backdrop of World Heritage Areas</p> <p>Backdrop of Barren Tier skyline.</p> <p>Contains Barren Tier lookout</p> <p>High presence of fauna including wallabies, wombat, eagles, Devils, water avifauna.</p> <p>Part of Western Wilds tourist adventure and Heartlands Drive.</p>	<p>Small pockets of moderate scenic quality exist but are surrounded by (and incorporated into high Quality Scenic class)</p> <p>Areas of visual but indistinct landform</p>	Contains residential areas (Miena/Todds Corner) and Hydro utilities.
Comments: Central Plateau South	<p>Plateau area dominated by treeless area of St Patricks Plains.</p> <p>Extensive Highland Poa and Sedge grasslands (with Cider Gum)</p> <p>Summer and year-round low intensity grazing areas.</p>	<p>Small pockets of moderate scenic quality exist but are surrounded by (and incorporated into high Quality Scenic class)</p> <p>Areas of visual but indistinct landforms</p>	<p>Shannon village area present.</p> <p>Hydro utilities/powerlines present.</p> <p>Extensive monoculture (plantations) with even patterns and distinct edges/clearings</p>

	<p>Extensive heritage dating from 1830's - Steppes Historic site, old Wiharaja homestead. Strong historic Hydro footprints and infrastructure</p> <p>Iconic waterforms including wetlands and Penstock Lagoon.</p> <p>High presence of fauna especially Wedge-tailed eagles, wombats, echidnas, water avifauna</p> <p>Steppes Sculptures of local fauna.</p> <p>Part of Heartlands Drive.</p> <p>Part of Highlands Power Trail including viewing/information sites.</p> <p>Main access route Bothwell - Plateau (Lakes Highway or Waddamana Rd).</p>		
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It should be noted that the Assessment Areas include high quality threatened vegetation communities. Bell (2021) considered the vegetation values present on the proposed 'new' Agriculture Zones of Liawenee, Todds Corner and St Patricks Plains and found a high proportion of the areas mapped as montane grassy communities – Highland *Poa* Grassland and Highland grassy sedgeland, both of which are Threatened Native Vegetation Communities.¹² They are an integral part of the unique Central Plateau scenic and unique vegetation landscape. It should also be noted the Assessment Area includes key viewpoints which are accessible as part of the tourism and bushwalking experience – Projection Bluff Trail and Lookout, Leafy Bluff viewing area, Great Lake Lookout and Split Rock Trail and Lookout (Central Plateau North), and Barren Tier Trig Site (Central Plateau Mid / Central Plateau South). As well as giving intimate views of the Assessment Area, they provide spectacular views of the Plateau landscape and World Heritage Areas. The Assessment Area also includes three viewing / information sites that are part of the self-guided Highlands Power Trail, and walking trails such as Pine Lake Walk and Liffey River Track (see Appendix 2).

The assessment of the area for Scenic Quality classes High, Moderate and Low was supplemented by ground-based photo points. Appendix 2 provides some examples. Mapping of Scenic Quality Classes using the frames of reference above and sample photo interpretations is shown in Figure 4 below.

2.2.3. Viewer Sensitivity Levels and key viewpoints for travel routes and lookouts.

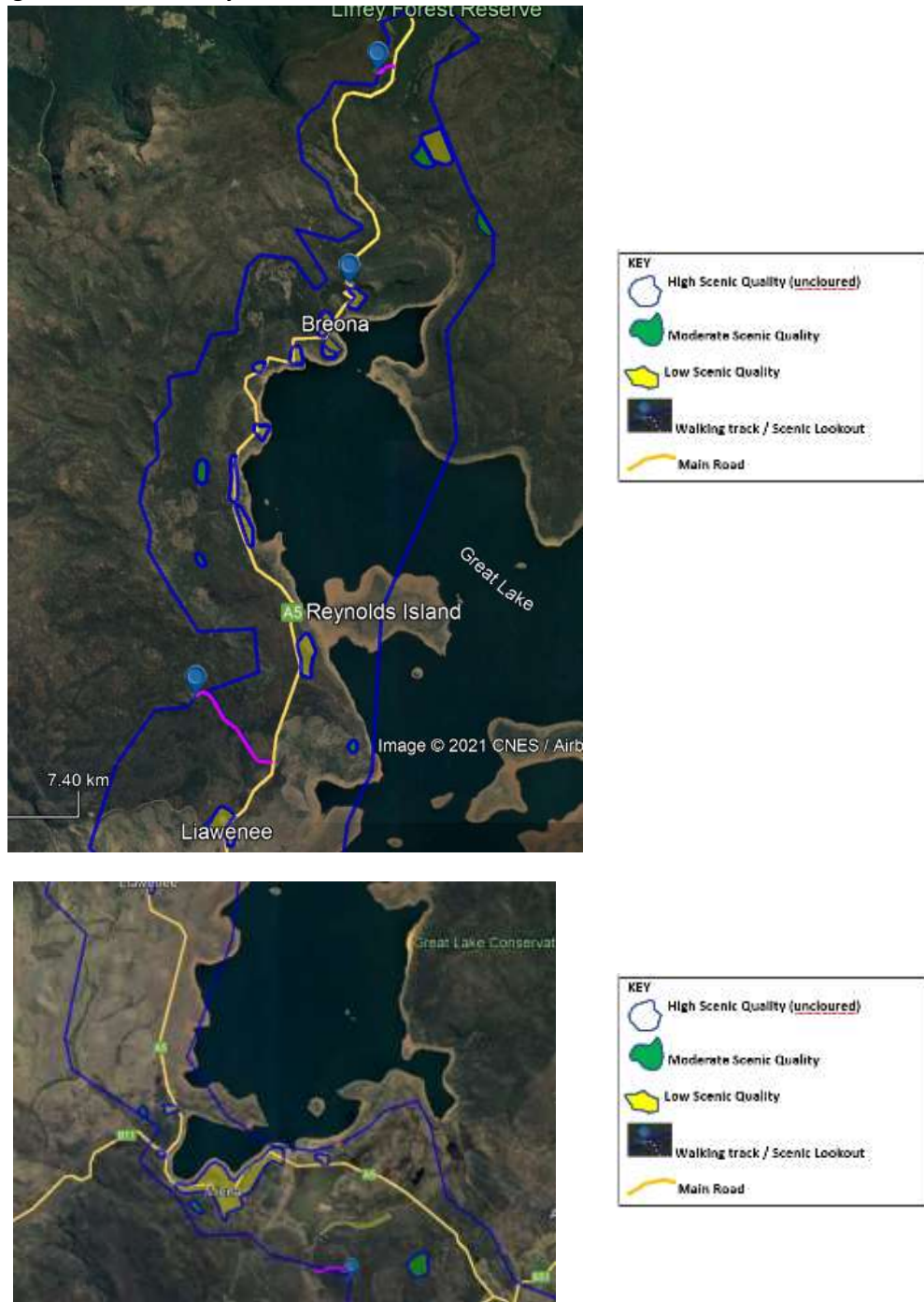
Viewer concerns and visitor numbers were assessed according to Table 3.2 of "Guidelines for Scenic Values Assessment – Southern Tasmania Councils." ¹³ Lakes Highway and Waddamana Road are Viewer Sensitivity Level 1 as a result of having either/or: a State Highway with <500 vehicles per day, Tourist Roads (Western Wilds/Heartlands/Highlands Power Trail), have viewpoints to national reserve system (World Heritage Area), involve Historic Rural Homestead Residences (Steppes), and lead to Rural 'residences' with associated Tourist Businesses (such as Thousand Lakes Lodge and Herne Lodge "on St

¹² Bell P, 2021 "Desktop assessment of the biodiversity values of areas in vicinity of Liawenee, Todds Corner and St Patricks Plains proposed for 'Agriculture Zone' on the Central Highlands draft Local Provisions Schedule."

¹³ Guidelines etc

Patricks Plains at the Steppes in the heart of the wilderness of the Central Highlands of Tasmania” and in easy distance of renowned fly fishing waters & World Heritage Areas¹⁴).

Figure 4: Scenic Quality Classes of the Assessment Area



¹⁴ See <http://fishhuntplaces.com/?fh=5&lng=1&id=23>



2.2.4. Visibility Distance Ranges

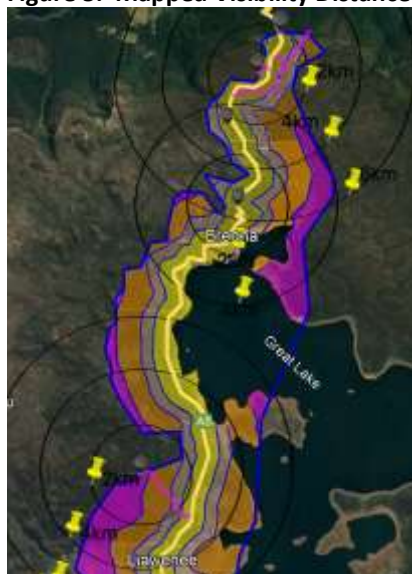
Central Plateau North, Mid and South were assessed for the range of viewing distance as indicated in Table 2.

Table2: Viewing Distance Ranges for Central Plateau North, Mid and South

View distance	Distance range	Relative visual influence +++++ great +++ less + least	Central Plateau North	Central Plateau Mid	Central Plateau South
0-500m	Near foreground NF	+++++	Present	Present	Present
500m-1km	Mid Foreground MF	++++	Present	Present	Present
1-2km	Far Foreground FF	++++	Present	Present	Present
2-4km	Near Middleground NM	+++	Present	Present	Present
4-8km	Far Middleground FM	++			Present
8-12km	Near background NB	+			

The viewsheds for each Assessment Area are shown in Figure 5 and are based on the travel route for A5 and C178 and key viewpoints (see Appendix 2). Viewing distances from roads and/or lookouts of up to 8km achieve areas of high or moderate Scenic Value being identified as discussed in 2.3 below.

Figure 5: Mapped Visibility Distance Range



KEY

Yellow	Near Foreground 0-500m (NF)
Orange	Mid Foreground 500m – 1km (MF)
Red	Far Foreground 1 – 2km (FF)
Pink	Near Middleground 2 – 4km (NM)



Lookout site & distance

**Viewshed
Central Plateau North**



KEY

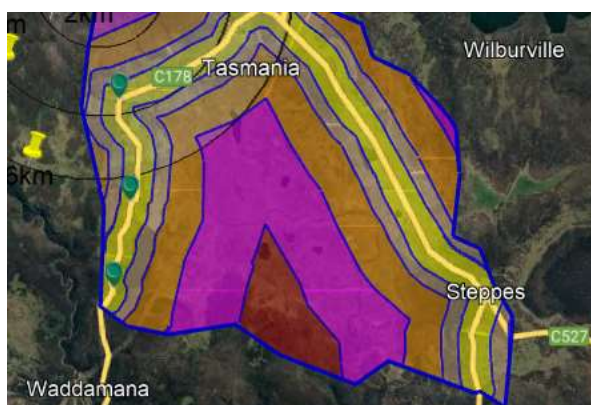
Yellow	Near Foreground 0-500m (NF)
Orange	Mid Foreground 500m – 1km (MF)
Light Orange	Far Foreground 1 – 2km (FF)
Pink	Near Middleground 2 – 4km (NM)



Lookout site and distance

Viewshed

Central Plateau Mid



KEY

Yellow	Near Foreground 0-500m (NF)
Orange	Mid Foreground 500m – 1km (MF)
Light Orange	Far Foreground 1 – 2km (FF)
Pink	Near Middleground 2 – 4km (NM)
Red	Far Middleground 4 – 8km (FM)



Lookout site and distance

Viewshed

Central Plateau South

2.3. Identification of Scenic Value Areas

A Scenic Value Area is a summary of a combination of features - Viewer Sensitivity Levels, Viewer Distance Ranges and Scenic Quality Classes which have been identified above. The Scenic Values Area rating can be identified as SVA1 (High), SVA2 (Moderate) or SVA3 (Low) according to the workings of Table 3 below. Viewer Sensitivity Levels (1, 2, 3) along with Visibility Distance Ranges (Near Foreground NF, Mid Foreground MF etc) and Scenic Quality Classes (High, Moderate, Low) are used to classify Scenic Value Areas.

For example, areas mapped with Viewer Sensitivity 1 (with high visitor numbers and high viewer concerns) and an 8-12km viewing distance (FB) and a Scenic Quality Class of High would, according to Table 3, be SVA2 i.e. Scenic Value Area 2.

Since Central Plateau North, Central Plateau Mid and Central Plateau South are mostly High Scenic Quality Class and have a Viewer Sensitivity Level of 1, the visibility distance (Visibility Distance Ranges) becomes important. Put simply, because Lakes Highway and Waddamana Roads are important traffic and tourist routes and because the landscape has high scenic values, the distance to a proposed development is important when considering scenic values and appropriate controls. The methodology used is an empirical assessment rather than a subjective assessment.

Table 3: Scenic Value Area Matrix

Viewer Sensitivity Level - Visibility Distance Ranges (refer to Table 3.3 for codes)	Scenic Quality Class		
	High	Moderate	Low
1NF	SVA1	SVA1	SVA2
1MF	SVA1	SVA1	SVA2
1FF	SVA1	SVA2	SVA2
1NM	SVA1	SVA2	SVA2
1FM	SVA1	SVA2	SVA2
2NF	SVA1	SVA2	SVA2
2MF	SVA1	SVA2	SVA2
2FF	SVA1	SVA2	SVA2
3NF	SVA2	SVA2	SVA2
1NB	SVA2	SVA2	SVA3
1MB	SVA2	SVA2	
1FB	SVA2	SVA2	SVA3
2NM	SVA2	SVA2	SVA3
2FM	SVA2	SVA2/SVA3	SVA3
3MF	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3
2NB	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3
2MB	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3
2FB	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3
3FF	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3
3NM	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3
3FM	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3
3NB, 3MB, & 3FB & Not Visible	SVA2	SVA3	SVA3

Source: p39, Inspiring Places Pty Ltd, 2018 of "Guidelines for Scenic Values Assessment Methodology and Local Provisions schedules to Assist Southern Tasmanian Councils with the Scenic protection Code".

The outcome of the Central Plateau assessment was SVA1 (High) with a few pockets of SVA 2. It is not surprising that the Assessment Area is mainly High Scenic Value as the first cut for the boundary of the Assessment Area deliberately included primary scenic features such as skyline and other landform and vegetation features.

2.4. Scenic Protection Area Assessment and documentation

A Scenic Protection Area considers areas wider than a Scenic Road Corridor. Scenic Protection Areas are used with the Scenic Protection Code as overlays within the Local Provisions Schedule. Management objectives and other information from LPS Tables are used with the Scenic Protection Area overlays. Therefore Scenic Protection Area maps and populating of LPS Tables are required so scenic values are appropriately considered.

Scenic Protection Area (SPA) maps for the Great Central Plateau SPA were derived by:

- (1) identifying new Planning Zones that are allowed to be used under the Scenic Protection Code. Guideline 1¹⁵ only allows Scenic Protection Areas to be shown on Rural Living, Rural, Agriculture, Landscape Conservation, Environmental Management, and Open Space Zones. A map of the new Planning Zones intended for the assessment area is outlined below (Figure 6).
- (2) Scenic Value Areas that within the allowable Zones for use under the SPC are relabelled – High Scenic Value (SVA1) as Scenic Protection Area 1 (SPA1 with High

¹⁵ Draft LPS Supporting Report Appendix G. Guideline Number 1 Local Provisions Schedule (LPS) Zones and Code Application, TPC (2018)

Scenic Value and Protection); Moderate Scenic Value (SV2) as Scenic Protection Area 2 (SPA2 with Moderate Scenic Value and Protection). A direct geographic transfer from the Scenic Value Area map occurs.

Figure 6: LPS Zoning for the Assessment Area



Source: <https://planning.discovercommunities.com.au/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=centralhighlands>

- (3) The Local Provisions Schedule Table then need to be populated with the Reference Number, Scenic Protection Area name, Description, Scenic Values, and Management Objectives. This is described in Appendix 1.

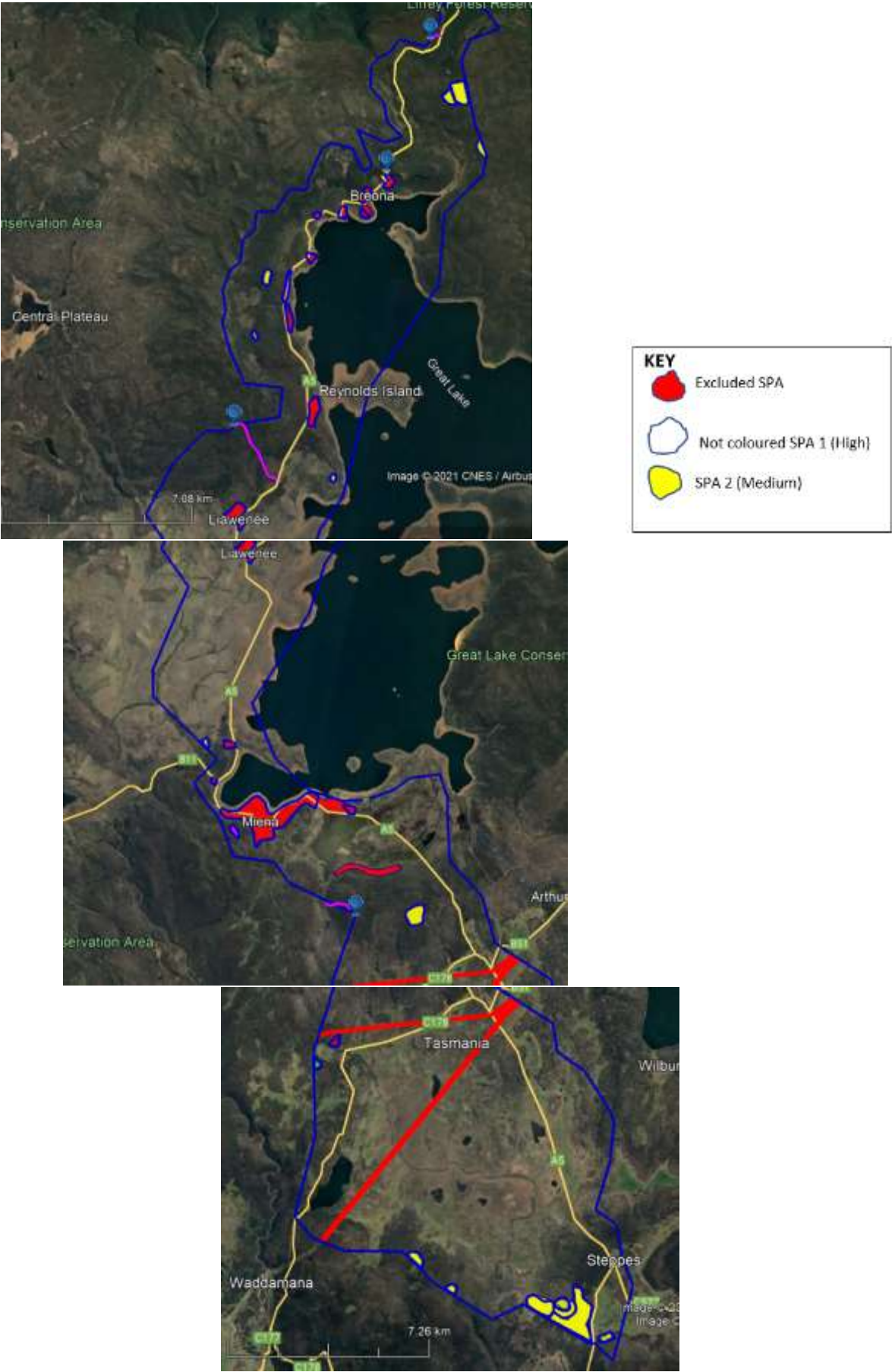
2.5. Conclusion

Appendix 1 provides a map of the Great Central Plateau Scenic Protection Area for the applicable Zones as well as the associated LPS Table for use with the Code overlay. The area has mainly high scenic values (SPA1) which is not surprising because of the scenic values present on the Plateau; and because the first cut for location of the boundary of the Assessment Area deliberately included primary scenic features such as skyline and other landform and vegetation features and excluded low value scenic features.

Appendix 2 provides sample photos from key viewpoints that support the assessment.

There is no reason to defer adoption of the Scenic Protection Area – the work has been done, values and areas identified, and management objectives described.

APPENDIX 1.
Great Central Plateau Scenic Protection Area.



Proposed CHI-Table C8.1 Scenic Protection Area

Reference Number	Scenic Protection Area Name	Description	Scenic Value	Management Objectives
To be determined	Great Central Plateau Scenic Protection Area	Central Plateau scenic landscape observed from main access roads, tourist drives and key viewpoints - including skylines, rock faces and boulder fields; alpine and subalpine vegetation; stark grasslands and plains; natural lakes, mountain streams, wetlands, and large reservoirs; early settler cultural heritage; and frequently seen Plateau native wildlife.	<p>Skyline and hill ridges elevated above adjacent landforms.</p> <p>Large cliffs, rock outcrops.</p> <p>Boulder fields that are prominent in the landscape.</p> <p>Distinctive grassland plains that include combinations of Sedges, Poa, and Alpine heath communities (either treeless or containing pockets of wet or dry sclerophyll forest or native pines), historically used for summer or low intensity grazing.</p> <p>Scenic waterform features such as permanent Highland streams and rivers, natural lakes, lagoons, wetlands, and 'aged' Hydro reservoirs.</p> <p>Unique visual cultural heritage features reflecting local history and pioneering way of life.</p> <p>Frequent visual presence of Plateau native fauna such as eagles, wombats, quolls, reptiles and native birds in a remote environment.</p> <p>Provide a unique experience for nature-based tourism (including bushwalking, fishing, shooting, and tourist drives) in a remote setting that plays a vital role to in the Central Highlands tourist-based economy.</p>	<p>Protect the scenic values of Great Central Plateau SPA by:</p> <p>(a) maintaining undisturbed native vegetation as a dominant landscape element when viewed from public roads and places.</p> <p>(b) maintaining skylines and escarpments and forested slopes free of visible development and fragmentation.</p> <p>(c) avoid locating visually dominant landscape alterations on or near the key natural or cultural landscape features or scenic values.</p> <p>(d) ensuring buildings, infrastructure and works are located and designed to blend with the landscape and not be obtrusive; and</p> <p>(e) maintain the scenic values as an attraction for the Central Highlands tourist and recreation economy.</p>

Appendix 2. Great Central Plateau SPA and supporting photos



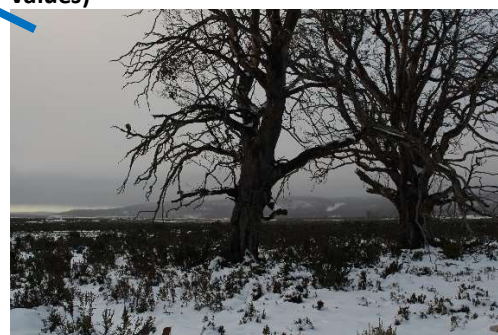
Assessment Area with SPV1 landscape –
landform and vegetation features



Liawenee Moor with Alpine and *Poa* Grassland and glacial landforms (SPV1)



Barren Plains, Shannon Lagoon and Cider Gum (SPA1 – landscape, vegetation and waterform values)



Highlands Power Trail Information/viewing sites

Lakes Highway A5 Bothwell view of Tiers and Southern boundary of SPA – landform values.



High (SPA1) area – strong grasslands, landscape and ridgeline values

Steppes Historic Site cc 1860's



SPA1 area -landscape

SPA2 area- landscape & vegetation

Frequent scenic wildlife – a feature of Central Plateau – the nationally endangered Tasmanian wedge-tailed eagle - Australia’s largest raptor.



Photo: Helen Ridley