Otway Exploration

Cultural heritage desktop assessment

Prepared for ConocoPhillips Australia Pty Ltd

1 September 2023

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Executive summary

Biosis Pty Ltd was commissioned by Conoco Phillips to undertake a cultural heritage desktop assessment for the proposed resource exploration in Bass Strait.

The purpose of this report is to explore cultural heritage and cultural heritage landscapes to understand Country, and Sea Country within and surrounding the project area in order to provide the project a grounding in Aboriginal cultural heritage. This short report will describe the known cultural environment, include a brief ethnohistory and history, and detail results of register searches.
The study area includes the proposed permit areas (the location of the exploration zone(s)), where seabed surveys and drilling exploration may occur. In general, the permit areas are located south of Port Fairy and the Great Otway National Park, and west of King Island.

The study area consists of a large geographical area noted as the 'Investigation Area for the Identification of Values and Sensitivities' which is based on stochastic modelling of oil spills, generating a statistical area where impacts may occur under many eventualities. This modelling predicts potential oil spill outcomes over many different variables to generate an investigation area for potential impacts.

Due to the significant size of the study area, it is broken into three areas for discussion in parts of this report and for the Communication Plan (CP), this includes:

1. Primary Stakeholder area (Victoria) – the area directly surrounding the proposed permit areas and adjacent coastlines
2. Secondary Stakeholder area – the wider area affected by the modelling of oil spills
3. Primary Stakeholder area (Tasmania) – North and Northwest Tasmania and the Bass Strait islands

Within the study area, along the Victorian coast, there are 5636 registered Aboriginal places with the most common site types being shell middens, artefact scatters and LDADs. Shell middens are typically found along the coastline, whereas artefact scatters, while also being found along the coast, are varied and move inland following freshwater sources, likely to be indicative of past inland-coastal travel routes. LDADs are also typically found further inland than shell middens and artefact scatters, indicative of widespread use of the landscape in the past, rather than concentrations and repeated patterning.

In light of a review of Aboriginal places within the study area, there is a high likelihood for Aboriginal cultural heritage material to be present within the areas subject to potential impact.

Within Tasmania and the Bass Strait Islands, there are no recent published figures of sites located on the coastal margins. Access to this data is restricted, and permission will need to be sought by the Aboriginal Heritage Council to access the Aboriginal Heritage Register via Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania. However, from the assessment of available regional data, Aboriginal heritage should be expected in any area of low-lying coastal areas, shelter sites, and sources of food, water and raw materials. These coastal margins contain all Tasmanian Aboriginal site types. It is also known on the West Coast of Tasmania, that a number of rock art sites are located on the coast, many either close or in tidal margins (Dix pers. obs.). Large midden sites are also located very close to the waters edge, as well as some stone quarry sites within tidal margins (Dix pers .obs.).

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1 Introduction

1.1 Acknowledgement

Biosis acknowledges that the authors of this assessment identify as non-Aboriginal Australians living on Bunurong and Wurundjeri Countries. We acknowledge that they interpret, present and understand the past through their own cultural lens. In writing this report about Aboriginal living culture including their cultural heritage and the events following the commencement of colonisation, we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and recognise that Country is unceded.

The authors acknowledge the inherent racism, cultural ignorance and political agendas imbedded within ethnographic sources at the time of, and following, colonisation.

Traditional Owners are the owners of all Traditional knowledge. Traditional knowledge and cultural values remain the intellectual property of the Traditional Owners and the interpretation and understanding of cultural values must be undertaken in genuine consultation with Aboriginal people.

1.2 Scope of works

Biosis Pty Ltd was commissioned by Conoco Phillips to undertake a cultural heritage desktop assessment for the proposed resource exploration in Bass Strait.

It must be emphasised, that this report is not intended to meet the requirements of a formal assessment under First Peoples – State Relations, Heritage Victoria, Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania or Heritage Tasmania guidelines.

The purpose of this report is to explore cultural heritage and cultural heritage landscapes to understand Country, and Sea Country within and surrounding the project area in order to provide the project a grounding in Aboriginal cultural heritage. This short report will describe the known cultural environment, include a brief ethnohistory and history, and detail results of register searches.

1.3 Study area

The extent of the study area is shown in Figure 1.

The study area includes the proposed permit areas (the location of the exploration zone(s)), where seabed surveys and drilling exploration may occur. In general, the permit areas are located south of Port Fairy and the Great Otway National Park, and west of King Island.

The study area consists of a large geographical area noted as the 'Investigation Area for the Identification of Values and Sensitivities' which is based on stochastic modelling of oil spills, generating a statistical area where impacts may occur under many eventualities. This modelling predicts potential oil spill outcomes over many different variables to generate an investigation area for potential impacts.

Due to the significant size of the study area, it is broken into three areas for discussion in parts of this report and for the Communication Plan (CP), this includes:

4. Primary Stakeholder area (Victoria) – the area directly surrounding the proposed permit areas and adjacent coastlines
5. Secondary Stakeholder area – the wider area affected by the modelling of oil spills

6. Primary Stakeholder area (Tasmania) – North and Northwest Tasmania and the Bass Strait islands

1.4 Heritage Advisor/Authorship

Emily Ward BArch

Emily has recently started her career in the Heritage Industry by initially interning at Biosis from August 2022 to September 2022, to her current role as a Graduate Heritage Consultant. Within her internship, Emily learnt and completed many techniques and processes such as aiding in background research to Cultural Heritage Management Plans, illustrating stratigraphic contexts and subsurface field testing. Emily also gained experience in field photography, rock art and heritage building surveys. Emily has been a part of several projects since she was an intern, gaining knowledge of several systems, such as HERMES and ACHRIS.

Emily completed her Bachelor of Archaeology at LaTrobe University at the end of 2022 and will start further study in 2024.

Erica Walther BArch(Hons)

Erica (B Arch Hons (2007)) is an Archaeologist and Heritage Advisor, with over 15 years' experience as a heritage consultant. Erica is the Technical Director for heritage in Victoria and specialises in project management, community liaison and the resolution of complex cultural heritage issues in varying situations. Erica provides specialist cultural heritage legislative advice and completes technical reports to meet the requirements of heritage legislation. Erica has broad experience completing various heritage assessments, including over 60 Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs). Erica carries out cultural heritage inductions, salvages, and other compliance requirements for completed CHMPs. Erica has also completed Due Diligence Assessments, Heritage Impact Assessments, "Consents to Disturb" and other permit applications, conservation management plans, and heritage reports. Erica has also assisted on a wide variety of other heritage projects, including as an expert witness and with planning and overlay applications, strategic advice, and continues to work towards completing projects to best practice standards.

Erica is a full member of the Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists and is a listed heritage advisor under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Dr Samuel Dix BA(Hons), PhD, MCIfA

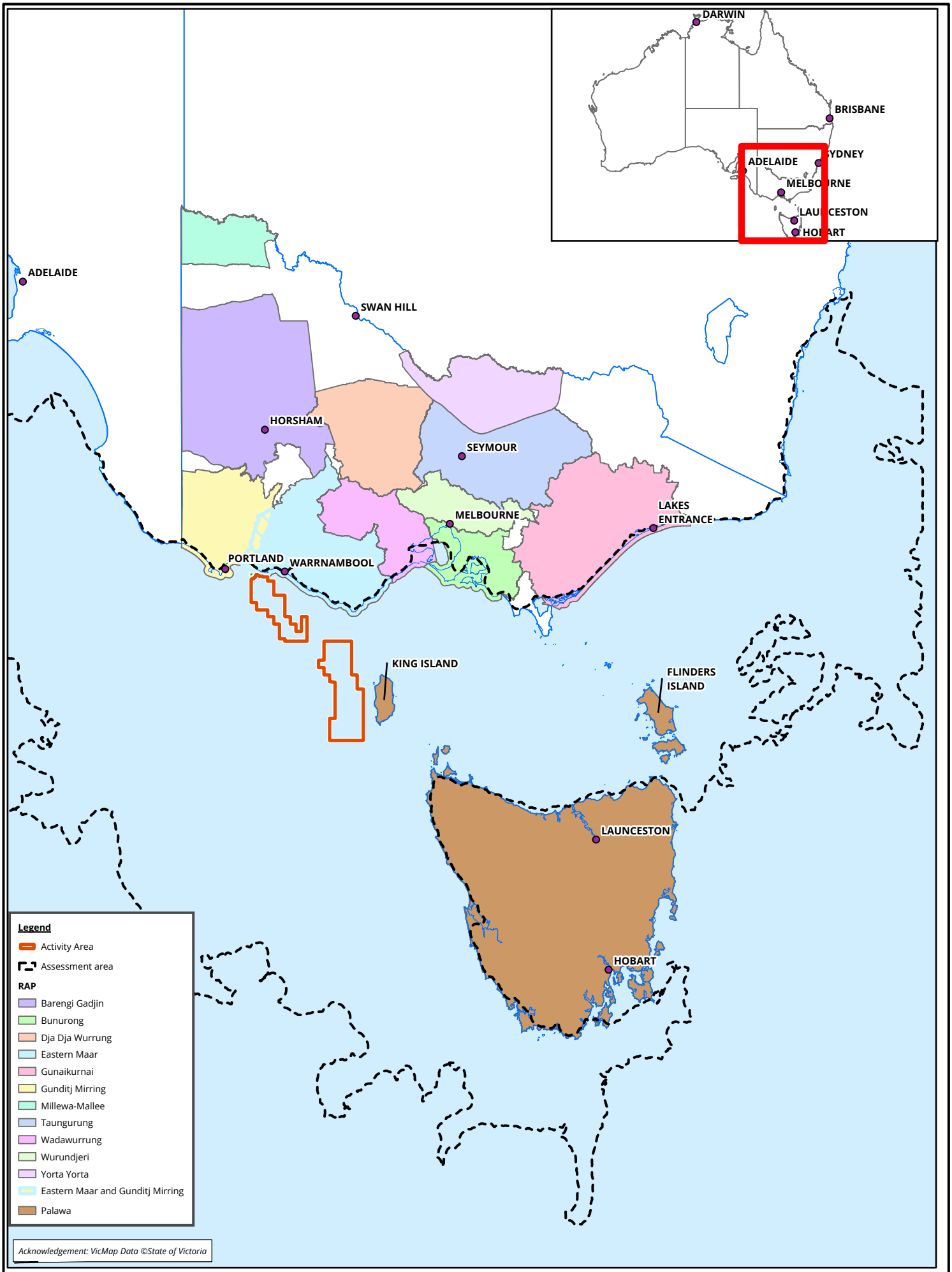
Samuel has worked in archaeology and heritage management since 2007. Samuel has undertaken numerous archaeological projects around Australia and has worked in consulting, government, teaching and museums in Victoria, Tasmania, Northern Territory, Western Australia, the United Kindom, Middle East, and South Africa. Samuel completed his Bacheor of Arts with First Class Honours where his thesis focussed on hand stencil rock art. After a break from university to undertake consulting, government and teaching based archaeological work, Samuel returned to complete his PhD at Griffith University where he was the recipient of the Australian Research Council Laureate Scholarship in 2016. His thesis explored contact archaeology in Arnhem Land, and how people reacted to change through what was depicted in rock art.

Samuel is a registered heritage advisor under the Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.*

1.5 Stakeholders

It is not within the remit of this report to undertake consultation with Traditional Owner groups, industry bodies or other stakeholders. No consultation was undertaken. Stakeholder engagement is considered in the Communication Plan (CP). In Victoria, Traditional Owner groups are represented by the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP). There are five RAPs registered in the study area, including the Gunditjmara, Eastern Maar, Wadawurrung, Bunurong, and Gunaikurnai.

In Tasmania, the Traditional Owner group is referred to collectively as the Palawa, and are not represented by a representative or governing body.



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Figure 1 Location of the Activity Area

Matter: 38331,
Date: 07 February 2023,
Prepared for: GA, Prepared by: GO, Last edited by: mknudsen
Location:P:\38300s\38331\Mapping\38331_OtwayExploratoryDrilling

0 50 100 150 200 250
Kilometers

N

Scale 1:8,000,000 @ A4, WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere

2 Background review

2.1 Geology and geomorphology

The Bass Strait is the stretch between the south of the Australian mainland and north of the Tasmanian state. The Bass Strait formed during the last glacial period, also known as the Last Ice Age, which occurred between 110,000 and 12,000 years ago (Williams et al. 2018, p. 149). During this time, the Earth's climate was much cooler and global sea levels were much lower due to the large amount of water that was locked up in glaciers and ice sheets.

As the climate began to warm and the glaciers began to melt, sea levels began to rise. This process caused the land bridge that connected Tasmania to mainland Australia to be gradually flooded eventually forming the Bass Strait as we know it today.

This gradual flooding is therefore known to have occurred within the period of human occupation in southeastern Australia – the diaspora of people from Victoria to Tasmania occurred prior to the total flooding of the strait, across a land bridge for which archaeological evidence may be buried deep below the ocean (Lourandos 1997, p. 244). Evidence for this indicates people crossed the land bridge from Victoria to Tasmania at 35,000 years ago (Lourandos 1997, p. 254). In addition, dreaming stories of both Victorian and Tasmanian Aboriginal communities further reinforce the memories and songlines relating to the flooding and connection to Sea Country of coastal communities (Nunn & Reid 2016).

2.1.1 Bass Strait, Islands and the land bridge

The Bass Strait is bordered on the west by King Island and the King Island Rise and on the east by Flinders Island and the Bassian Rise, with an approximated depth of between 60 and 80 metres (Harris & Heap 2009, Robinson 1974). The predominant deposits within the Bass Strait consist of Tertiary sediments overlaid on early Cretaceous deposits. The sediments in the early Cretaceous period contained combinations of shale, siltstone, sandstone, while a variety of marl, mudstone, limestone and shale can be seen in the later deposits (Robinson 1974).

Phillip Island's geomorphology is centred around Quaternary limestone dunes with higher-level shore platforms that were formed by Quaternary sea levels (Birch 2003). French Island is boarded by sandy sheets, similar to Western Port Sunkland. Port Phillip Bay is the lowest part of the Sunklands and is currently flooded due to Quaternary sea-level fluctuations in the Last Glacial Maximum (Birch 2003, p. 556). Also during this period the Yarra River water levels had risen and spilled over the coastal plain, forming what is now known as the Bass Strait (Birch 2003, p. 556).

2.1.2 The Victorian Coast

The coastal plains of southwest Victoria are made up of both Tertiary and Quaternary marine and nonmarine sediments, formed on calcareous sands and sandy limestones, overlaid with dune ridges and beaches that were formed during the last 800 000 years. The dune ridges closer to the coast are younger than those further inland and are comprised of calcareous sands. Caves are common in ridges of the limestone sands (Birch 2003, p. 545).

The coastline of western Victoria is seen to have several layers of sedimentary deposits, as evident in the cliffs often found, containing stratigraphic sections of basalt, limestone and clay (Birch 2003, p. 555).

The geomorphic evolution of southeast coastal plains of Victoria is varied, with Tertiary overlaying early Cretaceous sediments on the Otway coast as well as Quaternary sand and limestone dunes in Mornington

Peninsula and Phillip Island (Birch 2003, pp. 547,556). The coast of East Gippsland is covered extensively in coastal dunes, with intermittent pockets of Pleistocene deposits. Parabolic dunes formed from Pleistocene and Holocene age deposits are also located in this area (Birch 2003, p. 557).

2.1.3 The Tasmanian Coast

The Tasmanian coast consists of varying deposits making up its rugged nature. Geological formations include Dolerite, Sandstone, Mudstone, Granite, Limestone, and other Volcanic rocks. These varying geologies are reflected in high cliffs and outcrops, dune-backed beaches, sea stacks and arches. The Tasmanian geological makeup is complex and varies. Along the coastal regions detailed in the study area, these consist of Devonian granites, Tertiary Basalt, Neoproterozoic dolomite, Cambrian bonitite, Cambrian Sediment, and Mesoproterozoic quartzite (MRT: 2022).

Tasmania is known to have been one of the few areas in the southern hemisphere that was glaciated during the Pleistocene (MRT 2002). This generally occurred in higher regions of the state and influenced many of the earlier Pleistocene sites recorded in Tasmania (MRT 2022).

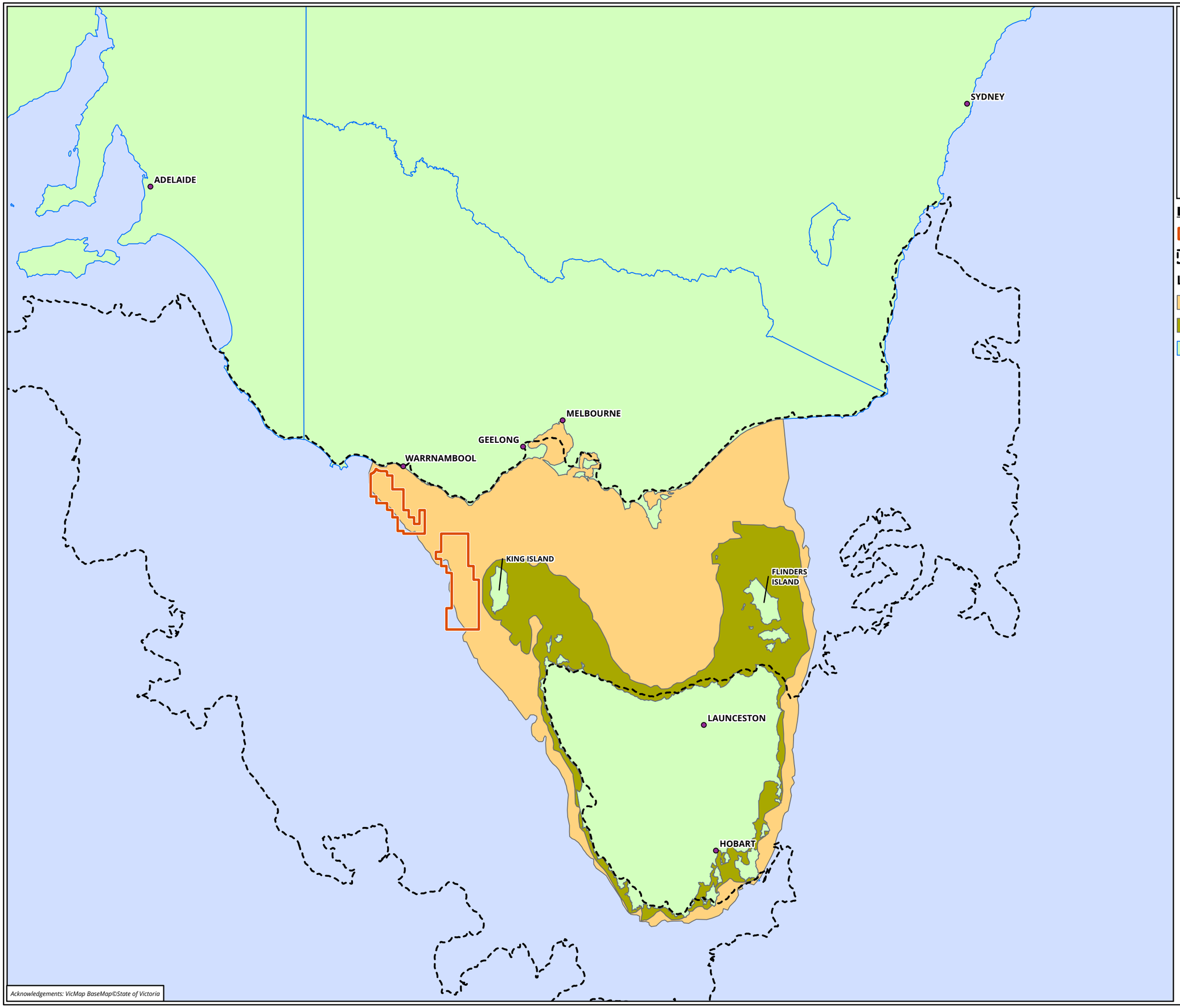
2.1.4 Archaeology of the Sea Floor

Archaeology of the sea floor is an emerging aspect of archaeological science. Throughout the world, archaeological investigations have shown that there is evidence for human occupation to be recovered below current sea levels. Investigations in the Sunda Shelf, Southeast Asia demonstrates the impact of sea level rise at approximately 12,000 years ago, with the investigation of settlements, fish traps, and other structures. Other investigations have occurred in India (Kumar et al. 2021), and the Black Sea (Ryan et al. 1996), investigating more recent sea level change, around 7,500 years ago. In the UK and US, the offshore wind industry is required to complete offshore archaeological investigations including desk-based studies and field survey.

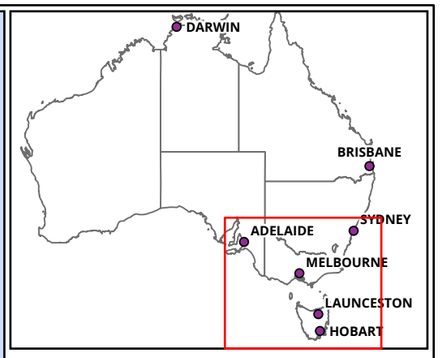
In comparison, Bass Strait is comparable to the vanished landscape of Doggerland that was submerged similarly in rising sea levels during the Mesolithic Period. Like the Bassian Plain, Doggerland formed a land bridge between the United Kingdom and Europe. Works by marine archaeologists have found that many artefacts and environmental sediments still remain form this now vanished ancient landscape (Gaffney et al. 2007). It is even suggested by Weninger et al (2008) that this was caused by a catastrophic flood. However, such ideas are not believed in the example of Bass Strait, and that this was a more gradual separation (see Davidson and Roberts 2008:20)

In Victoria, limited investigations have been completed, however the use of LiDAR and shoreline mapping has occurred. In particular, Gunditjmara have worked with Extent Heritage in partnership with Wessex University in determining the location of prior shorelines with the use of remote sensing. Should archaeological evidence survive, it is likely that the previous shorelines would provide the most likely locations for this. Physical investigations are likely to be difficult, complex, and costly.

Following deposition, archaeological evidence of human occupation along the Bass Strait has flooded. Since flooding, sedimentation has also occurred, capping any archaeological evidence deep below the current sea floor. The depth of sedimentation varies throughout the strait, however combined with deep waters (400 to 5,500 metres) and harsh conditions, exploration of sea floor archaeology utilising physical methods in this area is currently unlikely.



Acknowledgements: VicMap BaseMap©State of Victoria



Legend

- Activity Area
- Assessment area

Land coverage

- 18000 years ago
- 14000 years ago
- Current land extent

Figure 2 Extent of historic land bridge

0 40 80 120 160 200

Kilometers

N

Scale: 1:6,000,000 @ A3

Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere

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Matter: 38331,
Date: 07 February 2023 ,
Prepared for: EW, Prepared by: MK, Last edited by: mknudsen
Layout: 38331_F2_LandBridge
Project: P:\38300s\38331\Mapping\
38331_OtwayExploratoryDrilling.aprx

2.2 Land use history

Permanent European colonisation of Victoria and Tasmania occurred first in Tasmania, in 1803, and Victoria in 1835. Earlier exploration and transitory, temporary or failed settlements occurred in the two states. Early settlements in Tasmania were penal, with free settlement commencing following. The Gold Rush in Victoria in the 1850s resulted in the rapid expansion of population and the establishment of towns throughout the state. Agriculture and Industry heavily influenced the growth of the population of Tasmania.

Settlement, population growth and utilisation of land for agricultural purposes has resulted in the spread of disease, displacement, and violence to Indigenous communities, leading to a significant decline in population and disruption to traditional cultural practice. Aboriginal people were subject to forced displacement and assimilation, including the forced removal of Aboriginal children, from the 1800s up until the 1970s. Overall the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal people has been devastating.

In regard to the remains of physical cultural heritage (such as sites and places), the practice of archaeology has increased the knowledge of Aboriginal occupation of the land in the past. The potential for archaeology to shed light on Aboriginal connections to Country has been realised with increasing frequency due to relatively recent legislative requirements.. Archaeology is, however, a finite resource which has also been impacted by the effects of population growth, construction, land clearance, resource extraction, and climate change. Self-determination for Aboriginal people in regard to ownership of cultural heritage and knowledge has resulted in increased investigations led by Aboriginal people supported by technical experts, following research pathways set by the communities themselves.

Archaeological sites are located throughout the land and adjacent seascape and consist of the physical remains of the way people used the land in the past. Places may reflect resource extraction (such as scarred trees, stone quarries); be evidence of settlement (such as stone huts), manufacture (stone artefact scatters) and cultural practices (such as painting, etchings, and stone arrangements); food consumption (shell middens, earth mounds and hearths); and ritual practice (such as burials). Other cultural values can take the form of intangible places or be recorded in historic (ethnographic) references.

Whilst long-lasting, archaeological sites are heavily affected, and frequently destroyed, by the effects of modern, and past, impacts. Land clearance and increasingly intense bushfires result in the removal of old growth trees, including those showing cultural scarring, and also increases the effects of erosion. Ploughing for agricultural practices displace artefact scatters and deflate earth mounds. Coastal erosion, coastal change and increased storm surges destroys shell middens and artefact scatters located in coastal and offshore landforms. The practice of archaeology itself is destructive and results in the loss of archaeological places. Alteration of the natural environment also affects intangible values, affecting connections between the Dreamtime and the landscape, for example, by interrupting songlines. As Aboriginal people have strong connections to Country, effects on the natural environment, the land, sea, and animals, also have strong effects on Aboriginal people.

2.3 Aboriginal heritage – registered archaeological places in the study area

A search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) was undertaken by Emily Ward, Biosis Pty Ltd on the 21 of December 2022 utilising access number 11456. The search area was set by the study area and consists of the entire Victorian coastline.

The search identified 5636 recorded Aboriginal places within the study area (Table 1).

The dominant Aboriginal place types in the study area are shell middens (n=2639, 46.82%), artefact scatters (n=2210, 39.21%) and low density artefact distribution also known as LDADs (n=321, 5.70%). Other place types include earth features (n=181, 3.21%), object collections (n=160, 2.84%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains (Burial) (n=51, 0.90%), scarred trees (n=42, 0.75%), stone features (n-12, 0.21%), quarries (n=9, 0.16%), Aboriginal historical places (n=8, 0.14%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Reinterments (n=2, 0.04%) and rock art (n=1, 0.012%).

Object Collections represent places that have been removed from the context in which they were originally recorded. More specifically, they represent the location of stored artefacts (i.e. heritage consultancies, museums, private collections) or places where artefacts have been repatriated; therefore, Object Collections are not necessarily representative of the archaeological character of the region

Due to most of the search area being coastal, the dominance of shell middens in the study area is not surprising. Middens represent the repeated consumption of coastal resources (predominantly shells of rocky or sandy shore types, such as mussel, pipi, oyster, turban) and consist of the discarded shell. Other objects may be discarded within the midden, such as bones (seal and bird are common), and artefacts. The shells and other items were discarded in discrete areas over time, some middens are small consisting of a smaller number of meals or individuals, others are larger, indicating multiple meals, some revisited over many hundreds, or thousands, of years (Frankel 2017, p.38).

> *'Archaeological evidence from Victoria indicates that occupation of coastal areas is as old as the present coastline – about 6000 years. Most coastal occupation sites in Victoria, however, are 4000 years old or younger' (National Oceans Office, 2002:80)*

Within the study area the Traditional Owner group with the most registered Aboriginal places is Bunurong with 1486 place registrations, with 26.37% of the total registered sites in the study area. This is then followed by Gunditjmara with 853 registered sites (15.77%), then Eastern Maar with 853 registered sites (15.13%), Wadawurrung with 798 registered sites (14.16%), Gunaikurnai with 700 registered sites (12.42%) and the area of overlap of Gunditjmara and Eastern Maar has 88 registered sites (1.56). The area within the study area that has no registered RAP group has a total of 822 registered sites (14.16%). The specifics of each group are discussed below.

The areas of Bellarine Peninsula, Mornington Peninsula and French Island and Wilson's Promontory have been searched specifically on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) as they are distinctive landforms on the coastline of Victoria and hold distinct cultural patterning, regarding both tangible and intangible cultural heritage values. These three areas contribute 1775 of the registered sites (31.5%), out of the 5636 total registered sites in the study area; The Bellarine Peninsula has 578 registered sites, Mornington Peninsula and French Island have 813 registered sites and Wilson's Promontory has 384 registered sites.

Table 1 – Aboriginal places within the study area (Victoria)

Aboriginal Place Type	Total number of sites	Percentage of sites
Aboriginal Ancestral Remains (Burial)	51	0.90%
Aboriginal Ancestral Remains (Reinternment)	2	0.04%
Aboriginal Historical Place	8	0.14%
Artefact Scatter	2210	39.21%
Earth Feature	181	3.21%
LDAD	321	5.70%
Object Collection	160	2.84%
Quarry	9	0.16%
Rock Art	1	0.012%
Scarred Tree	42	0.75%
Shell Midden	2639	46.82%
Stone Feature	12	0.21%
Total	5636	100%

2.3.1 Primary Stakeholder Area - Gunditjmara Aboriginal places

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 889 recorded Aboriginal places within the Gunditjmara RAP area. The dominant Aboriginal place types in the study area are artefact scatters (47.36%), shell middens (38.81%) and LDADs (6.3%).

Artefact scatters have been registered throughout the search area, with notable clusters of artefact scatters south of Portland, around Point Danger. Low Density Artefact Distributions (LDADs) consisting of fewer artefacts less densely present than artefact scatters, are most often found further inland, compared to artefact scatters and shell middens which are located close to the shoreline. This suggests concentration of activity close to the coast, and increased transitory movement to and from the coast, as material is being discarded when people are moving across the landscape.

Other registered place types include earth features (6.3%), object collection (0.56%), Aboriginal historic places (0.34%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Burial (0.11%), quarry (0.11%) and scarred trees (0.11%) There are no registered sites in the western most area of the Gunditj Mara RAP group, within the study area. This area is along the southern most point of the Fitzroy River and west of Narrawong.

2.3.2 Primary Stakeholder Area - Eastern Maar Aboriginal places

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 853 recorded Aboriginal places within the Eastern Maar RAP area. The dominant Aboriginal place types in the study area are shell middens (53.81%), artefact scatters (34.11%) and earth features (5.39%)

Shell midden sites on in coastal landforms have been frequently registered. The artefact scatters with the study area tend to follow natural paths inland. This suggests movement to and from the coast, with people utilising land resources. This may indicate some form of land use patterning (Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016).

Other registered place types include LDADs (3.99%), object collection (1.52%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Burial (0.94%), quarry (0.12%) and stone features (0.12%)

2.3.3 Primary Stakeholder Area – Shared Gunditjmara and Eastern Maar Aboriginal places

In this area, the two RAP groups overlap. The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 88 recorded Aboriginal places within the shared Gunditjmara and Eastern Maar RAP area. The dominant Aboriginal place types in the study area are shell middens (52.27%) artefact scatters (34.09%) and stone features (7.95%).

Majority of the artefact scatters and shell midden sites with the study area are located between the coast and Eumerella River. This suggests the use of both fresh and sea water sources for material and resources. Shell midden sites can be found along the coastline while the artefact scatters tend to be closer to fresh water sources. This may indicate some form of land use patterning (Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016).

Other registered place types include earth features (4.55%) and Aboriginal historic places (1.14%).

2.3.4 Secondary Stakeholder Area - Wadawurrung Aboriginal places

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 798 recorded Aboriginal places within the Wadawurrung RAP area. The predominate Aboriginal place types in the study area are artefact scatters (46.12%), shell middens (33.83%) and LDADs (9.27%).

Within the study area, artefact scatters tend to follow freshwater sources inland and cluster around headlands (such as the Queenscliff and the Indented Heads area). This may indicate some form of land use patterning (Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016), with groups using freshwater sources as occupation sites and opportunities for resource gathering, as well as using the headlands as vantage points across the bay or out to sea. LDADs are most often found further inland, compared to shell middens which are located closer to the shoreline. This suggests movement to and from the coast, as material is being discarded when people are moving across the landscape

Other registered place types include object collection (5.64%), earth features (2.88%), scarred trees (0.88%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Burial (0.75%) Aboriginal historic places (0.25%), stone features (0.25%) and quarry (0.13%)

Bellarine Aboriginal Places

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 578 recorded Aboriginal places within the Bellarine Peninsula. The predominate Aboriginal place types found on the Bellarine Peninsula are artefacts scatters (48.44%), shell middens (29.41%) and LDADs (10.03%).

Within the study area, artefact scatters tend to follow freshwater sources inland and cluster around headlands (such as Queenscliff and Barwon Heads). This may indicate some form of land use patterning (Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016), with groups using freshwater sources as occupation sites and opportunities for resource gathering, as well as using the headlands as vantage points across the bay or out to sea. LDADs are most often found further inland, compared to shell middens which are located closer to the shoreline. This suggests movement to and from the coast, as material is being discarded when people are moving across the landscape

Other site types include object collection (6.75%), earth features (3.29%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Burial (0.87%), scarred trees (0.69%), Aboriginal historical places (0.35%) and stone features (0.17%).

2.3.5 Secondary Stakeholder Area - Bunurong Aboriginal places

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 1486 recorded Aboriginal places within the Bunurong RAP area. The predominate Aboriginal place types in the study area are shell middens (45.56%), artefact scatters (38.36%) and LDADs (8.28%).

Within the study area, artefact scatters on French Island and Phillip Island are found further inland, compared to shell middens. Some of the shell middens within the study area can be found in clusters around headlands (such as the Portsea and Sorrento area). This may indicate some form of land use patterning (Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016), with groups using freshwater sources as occupation sites and opportunities for resource gathering, as well as using the headlands as vantage points across the bay or out to sea.

Other registered place types include object collection (5.79%), earth features (1.28%), scarred trees (0.20%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Burial (0.20%), quarry (0.13%). Aboriginal historic place (0.07%), rock art (0.07%) and stone features (0.07%)

Mornington Peninsula and French Island Aboriginal Places

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 813 recorded Aboriginal places within the Mornington Peninsula and French Island area. The dominant Aboriginal place types in the study area are shell middens (50.43%), artefact scatters (31.12%) and LDADs (11.69%).

Along the coast of the Mornington Peninsula there is a significant increase in shell midden sites from Sorrento to Cape Schanck. This could indicate targeted gathering of resources specific to this area and purposeful occupation of the coastline. From Cape Schanck, moving east, there is a noticeable decrease in the number of registered sites along the coast. Shell middens can be found along the coast, either along the shore or along creeks close to the coast (such as Merricks Creek). Artefact scatters can be found intermittently along the coast but can also be seen following water sources inland. This may indicate some form of land use patterning (Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016), with groups using freshwater sources and coastal sites as occupation sites and opportunities for variety in resource gathering. LDADs are an inland site type within the locality. This suggests movement to and from the coast, as material is being discarded when people are moving across the landscape.

There are 50 registered sites on French Island. Only 9 of these sites are located along its coast, the other 41 are inland sites, with the majority of the sites being artefact scatters. The inland artefact scatters are located along paths of water, suggesting targeted use of the landscape (land use patterning).

Other registered place types include object collection (4.31%), earth features (1.72%), scarred trees (0.37%), Aboriginal historic places (0.12%), quarry (0.12%) and rock art (0.12%).

2.3.6 Secondary Stakeholder Area - Gunaikurnai Aboriginal places

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified 700 recorded Aboriginal places within the Gunaikurnai RAP area. The predominate Aboriginal place types in the study area are shell middens (46.29%), artefact scatters (43.14%) and scarred trees (4.29%).

Clusters of artefact scatter sites can be found on the eastern coast of the Corner Inlet Marine and Coastal Park. These artefact scatters ten to follow sources of freshwater inland. This may indicate some form of land use patterning (Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016), with groups using freshwater sources as occupation sites and opportunities for resource gathering, as well as using the headlands as vantage points across the bay or out to sea.

Other registered place types include LDADs (2.14%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Burial (2.14%), earth features (1%), object collection (0.57%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Reinternment (0.14%), Aboriginal historic places (0.14%) and stone features (0.14%).

Wilson's Promontory Aboriginal Places

The Traditional Owners of Wilson's Promontory come from two recognised RAP groups: Bunurong and Gunaikurnai.

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) identified recorded 384 Aboriginal places within the Wilson's Promontory area. The predominate Aboriginal place types in the study area are shell middens (72.40%), artefact scatters (21.61%) and earth features (2.08%)

Clusters of shell midden sites can be found both inland and around the coast of Wilson's Promontory. A large shell midden cluster can be found along the western coast of the Promontory with a total of 163 shell midden registered sites. Another two clusters have been recorded around the opening of Wilson's Promontory, with a total of 18 registered sites between them. All 18 shell midden sites are in close proximity to either the coast or moving water. Majority of the artefact scatter register sites recorded at Wilson's Promontory follow water sources inland. The strategic locations of both shell midden and artefact scatter sites demonstrate land use patterning.

Other registered place types include LDADs (1.56%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Burial (1.3%), object collection (0.52%), Aboriginal Ancestral Remains Reinternment (0.26%) and scarred trees (0.26%)

2.4 Aboriginal heritage – archaeological places in Tasmania

2.4.1 Primary Stakeholder Area – Bass Strait Island Aboriginal places

Mackay (1946) was the first to identify archaeological evidence of past Aboriginal use of the Bass Strait Islands in the 1930s (see also Sim 1991:6). Earlier thoughts were that these were stone artefacts left behind when the Tasmanians were moved to Flinders Island by George Augustus Robinson in the 1830s. It was not until Rhys Jones' work in the 1960s that attention to the Bass Strait islands was made. Sandra Bowdler (1979) excavated at Cave Bay Cave on Hunter Island that provided the first evidence of Pleistocene occupation, dating from 23,000 years. At this time, this was the oldest recorded date of Aboriginal occupation in Tasmania. This was also archaeological proof of the Bassian Land Bridge that once connected Tasmania to Mainland Australia (Sim 1991).

Further work was carried out on Flinders Island and several other smaller islands in Bass Strait showed signs of earlier occupation, including stone artefacts, middens and burials. It was believed at the time that the absence of middens on some islands, but the presence of stone artefacts meant that the midden sites were once closer to the original pre-Ice Age coast, which is now under water (Orchiston and Glenie 1978). The first middens excavated in Bass Strait was by Orchistone (Orchiston and Glenie 1978, Orchiston 1979a, 1979b, 1984), however, the full details of the report have not been published. Sim (1991:12) recorded a number of middens on Flinders Island in 1989 and noted that many of the remaining midden sites were found where the sea floor drops away abruptly, further suggesting that many of the midden sites were possibly found on ground level now under water due to rising waters after the Ice Age. Sim (1991) argued that the Bass Strait islands were abandoned before the last remnants of the Bassian Plain land bridge between Mainland Australia and Tasmania disappeared. Davidson and Roberts (2008:20) state:

> *For a while, perhaps, it was possible to use watercraft to maintain contact with families and friends on the other side but eventually this became more difficult. Boats sank sometimes, or storms and rough seas would have made the crossing perilous. When the sea barrier became too wide, those left on the Tasmanian side turned their backs and never saw their friends and families again. It proved to be a monumental turning point, leading to an independent evolution in their technology, economy, society and culture. They were alone for five hundred generations, knowing no other people in the world, living with the knowledge and beliefs derived from those they had known before the sea surrounded them. They remained isolated from the rest of*

humanity until that same sea brought the first Europeans in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries

Brown (1990) conducted excavations on Flinders Island that again proved the antiquity of the Bass Strait Islands, where sporadic occupation from 20,000 years to 8,500 years was found at Mannalargenna Cave on Prime Seal Island. Again, it was hypothesised that the islands were abandoned after 8,500 years due to the rising sea levels (see Sim 1991:11). Early thoughts at the time state that water craft between the islands would have been possible, and the sea level rise was gradual and would have been shallower. However, with the rise of waters, also meant that the distance between land masses increased, therefore making travel much harder and dangerous. It is thus why many believe that the islands were abandoned around 6,000 years ago when the seas reached their current levels (Sim 1991:12).

The flooding of the Bassian Plain meant that the people who chose to remain in Tasmania would soon be Isolated for generations. Jones (1977) states '… no other human society, which survived until modern times, had been isolated so completely and for so long'.

2.4.2 Secondary Area – Tasmanian coastal Aboriginal places

Archaeological evidence of occupation in Tasmania range between 34,000 – 40,000 BP. The most accurate date for occupation is from the Parmerpar Rockshelter close to Cradle Mountain that was excavated by archaeologist Richard Cosgrove (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999:189). This was a time when Tasmania was still a part of the landmass of Australia before it was disconnected with the flooding of the Bassian Plain after the last Ice Age. Further excavations of Kutukina Cave (formally Frasier Cave) in southwest Tasmania established Pleistocene settlement of Tasmania with radio carbon dates ranging from 15,000 to 20,000 years BP (Kiernan 1983; Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999:182).

By the end of the last Ice Age (12,000 BP) the rising temperatures and subsequent rising sea levels flooded the Bassian Plain and separated Tasmania from the mainland of Australia (Kee 1987:12; Taylor 2003). The formation of what is now known at the Bass Strait ultimately led to the isolation of the Tasmanians from their groups on the mainland of Australia. The resulting 10,000 years of isolation crafted a unique culture and economy that was independent from any mainland Australia influence (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999:339). A series of environmental and climatic changes started to occur in Tasmania as a result of this separation with a reduction in rainfall, lower than normal temperatures, some reduction in the seeding of vegetation, as well as the formation of sand dune systems that were to become a prime area for the discovery of Aboriginal remains. Kee (1987:14) stated that these dunes formulated a new abundance of resources available to the Tasmanian's, which is reflected in much of the early archaeology of this period. These climatic changes started to stabilise around 6,000 years ago. This has been noted by radiocarbon dating at Carlton Bluff, where dates ranged from 8,000 to 6,000 BP (Dix 2015:147-148; Key 1987:12 Neil 1981; Reber1965), and therefore the range of sites found on the coast are more than likely representative of this 6,000 year figure.

Regionally, sites vary in Tasmania. As such, the state has been divided into three geographic regions. Various studies were conducted in the 1980s and 1990s to understand these regional differences in sites, and to understand more broadly Tasmanian Aboriginal archaeology (Brown 1991; Cane 1980; Cosgrove 1985; 1990; Gaughwin 1985: 52; Jones 1965; 1966; 1967; Key 1991; Lourandos 1968; 1970; 1977; MacFarlane 1993; Stockton 1977a, 1977b; 1982). Many of these were published as part of the Parks and Wildlife section of the Tasmanian government. More recent and accurate data is available at Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania, however prior approval from the Aboriginal Heritage Council will be required to access this data.

- East/South East Tasmania
  - Middens formulate 90% of all site types on the east coat with a range of shell from turbo, oyster, limpet, abalone and mussel. Brown (1991:46) determined that turbo middens dominated areas behind rock platforms where oysters were mostly predominant behind sandy beaches, where shell fish consumption generally took place within the immediate proximity of where it was procured from;
  - 50m within the coastline appears to be the limit of the majority of the larger sites in the area;
  - Sites are generally situated on well drained more inland areas;
  - That 81% of sites recorded contained some level of stone artefacts, and generally consist of hornfels, cert, quartzite and chalcedony flakes.
  - Stone artefact scatters were generally located on flat or gently inclined landscapes where they were close to a water source;
  - The underlying geology of the inland area suggests that areas where the underlying rock was sandstone was more favourable over those areas that contain dolerite;
  - Sandstone rock shelters located close to water often contain signs of occupation.
  - Rock art can occasionally be found on sandstone rock shelters, and is generally executed in ochre.
- Archaeological Sites – North/ North East Tasmania
  - Sites generally occur on high energy coastlines;
  - Approximately 78% of sites occur within 50m from a water source;
  - Sand dune areas most commonly have sites located on them;
  - The main stone typology noted in these assemblages include hornfels, chert, and quartz.
  - Rock art can be found pecked in stone on coastal margins
- Archaeological sites North West/ West/ South West
  - Majority of sites can be found on sand dunes close to rock platforms;
  - Middens are generally smaller and lower on sandy shores.
  - Middens are generally absent along rocky granite shorelines.
  - Site types include artefact scatters, isolated artefacts, stone and ochre quarry sites and rock shelters.

- The main stone types used in the area include spongolite, quartzite, quartz, silcrete and hornfels.
- Artefact scatters and isolated artefacts are generally located on the forest plain.
- Stone artefacts will be varies in material type, which reflects the opportunistic nature of collecting material.
- Areas within 500m of major water courses and creeks will generally contain Aboriginal sites.
- Sites that contain stone artefacts made from spongolite artefacts will no predate 2,500BP.
- Generally, sites are 70 to 100 artefacts per km^2. Densities are approximately 1.7 artefacts per site in places away from major rivers and quarry sites, whereas there will be approximately 6.5 artefacts per site in areas close to these resources.
- Sites will generally be located near the transition of inland heath plains and forest margins.
- Large artefact scatters will be located close to major creeks or rivers especially where flat grounds are associated with the area;
- Hut depression occur on coastal margins, generally close to food sources
- Rock art is found on coastal margins, and is generally pecked or engraved on large sandstone faces, or where creeks exit to the sea.

2.5 Archaeological summary

Within the study area, along the Victorian coast, there are 5636 registered Aboriginal places with the most common site types being shell middens, artefact scatters and LDADs. Shell middens are typically found along the coastline, whereas artefact scatters, while also being found along the coast, are varied and move inland following freshwater sources, likely to be indicative of past inland-coastal travel routes. LDADs are also typically found further inland than shell middens and artefact scatters, indicative of widespread use of the landscape in the past, rather than concentrations and repeated patterning.

In light of a review of Aboriginal places within the study area, there is a high likelihood for Aboriginal cultural heritage material to be present within the areas subject to potential impact.

Within Tasmania and the Bass Strait Islands, there are no recent published figures of sites located on the coastal margins. Access to this data is restricted, and permission will need to be sought by the Aboriginal Heritage Council to access the Aboriginal Heritage Register via Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania. However, from the assessment of available regional data, Aboriginal heritage should be expected in any area of low-lying coastal areas, shelter sites, and sources of food, water and raw materials. These coastal margins contain all Tasmanian Aboriginal site types. It is also known on the West Coast of Tasmania, that a number of rock art sites are located on the coast, many either close or in tidal margins (Dix pers. obs.). Large midden sites are also located very close to the waters edge, as well as some stone quarry sites within tidal margins (Dix pers .obs.).

2.6 Traditional Owner groups and ethnohistory

For the purposes of this assessment, information about Aboriginal Victorian pre and post contact history has been sourced from nineteenth and twentieth century primary and secondary ethnographic/historical records.

2.6.1 Primary Stakeholder Area - Gunditjmara

The Gunditjmara RAP group covers the area boarding the South Australia border with Victoria and the Southern Grampians. This area includes Harrow and Horsham, south to Dunkeld and MacArthur, and southwest to Portland and Cape Nelson. The Gunditjmara RAP area also includes many state and national parks such as Discovery Coastal Park, Mount Richmond National Park, Cape Nelson State Park and the Grampians National Park.

The area between the Shaw and Eumerella Rivers in the south-west to Lake Linlithgow in the north and Yambuk in the south, are shared by both the Gunditjmara RAP and the Eastern Maar RAP groups.

There are many landscapes within Gunditjmara Country – Nyamat Mirring (Sea Country), Tungatt Mirring (Stone Country), Bocara Mirring (River Country) and Woorrowarook Mirring (Forest Country) (Glenelg-Hopkins Regional Catchment Strategy 2023).

It can be noted that the Gunditj Mara view water as part of their traditional lands and should be recognised and protected as such (Clark 1990, RNTBC 2023)

Evidence of Gunditj Mara knowledge of water is found in the eel trapping and the redirecting of waterways at Lake Condah and in the larger Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape. The Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape had been managed by Traditional Owners to form waterways and channels to bring eels down from Darlots Creek into Lake Condah for fishing and resource gathering (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water 2021). This practice can be dated to approximately 6600 years old, with one of five of the eel trap systems around the lake's edge being carbon dated. The relocating and breeding of eels became a sustainable husbandry practice that sustained the Gunditj Mara through every season, providing food stuffs and sources of trade. There are plans currently being made with VicWater and Wannon Water to reestablish traditional eel farming in the Budj Bim area (VicWater 2022)Another plan devised to aid in the management of Indigenous water landscapes is the Sea Country IPA Program. The Sea Country IPA (Indigenous Protected Areas) Program was developed at the beginning of 2021 to aid in the conservation and protection of Indigenous marine and coastal environments. The IPA program covers the Gunditj Mara area from the Convincing Ground to the Yambuk Lakes and provides further protection of the Budj Bim landscape as well as opportunities for Indigenous employment, documentation of traditional knowledge and sea management (DCCEEW n.d.)

The Lake Condah mission was opened in 1867 in response to the displaced Gunditj Mara after the Eumerella wars (Budj Bim Cultural Landscape 2023). The Eumerella wars lasted over 20 years, beginning in the mid 1830's to the 1860's, starting over disagreements in ownership of land in southwest Victoria. The Dhauwurd wurrung people (apart of Eastern Maar country) refused to settle at the mission in Framlingham, so the Lake Condah mission was established, where they farmed and learnt to read and write English. The mission was strategically position to both house eel trapping facilities and have a view of the Budj Bim Reserve. In 1918, the mission was formally closed, and some of the Gunditj Mara were moved to other missions, such as the Lake Tyers Mission, while others refused to leave country. In 1987, the land on which the mission was situated on was given back to the Gunditj Mara (Budj Bim Cultural Landscape 2023).

Gunditj Mara hold strong cultural connections to sea country (Nyamat Mirring), and Nyamat Mirring features heavily in the Dreaming and creation stories of the Gunditj Mara. The Gunditj Mara believe that after the initial eruption of the creator spirit, Budj Bim, out of a volcano, the spirits movement throughout the landscape created the surrounding landscapes and their features. The lava

flow from this eruption caused the creation of the wetlands found within the Gunditj Mara landscape. In the traditional funeral rites of the Gunditj Mara people, bodies are bundled in grass and laid into the ground with their heads pointing towards Deen Maar (Lady Julia Percy Island). This is due to Deen Maar having a cave called Tarn Wirrung, which is thought to be the beginning of the passage towards the afterlife. Once the bodies were buried, if grass grew at the mouth of the cave, it was thought that the spirit had made it to the island, and into the realm of the clouds

Deen Maar (Lady Julia Percy Island) is the point where two creator deities, Punjil and Pallian left this earth. Pallian was the creator deity of the sea and fish and the governor of the oceans (after William Thomas, Letters from Victorian Pioneers, in National Oceans Office 2003:12). This island holds and creation story holds significance for both the Gunditj Mara and Eastern Maar.

Significant locations of conflict are also located on the coast, including the massacre of Gunditj Mara at Convincing Ground, east of Portland. The Convincing Ground Massacre occurred at Allestree, approximately 10km from Portland, where Kilcarer Gundidj, Gundtij Mara people were killed by whalers over a disagreement about the ownership of a beached whale(VHR n.d.). The suggested dates for this massacre are between 1833 and 1834, with an unknown number of Indigenous peoples being killed(VHR n.d.).

2.6.2 Primary Stakeholder Area - Eastern Maar

The Eastern Maar RAP group covers the area including Port Fairy and Warrnambool, down to Apollo Bay, east to Lorne and northwest towards Ararat. The RAP area of Eastern Maar also extends 100 meters off the coast and therefore encompasses the Twelve Apostles.

Eastern Maar is an umbrella term, used to describe a large area of land containing many, smaller traditional owner groups, such as Maar, Eastern Gunditgimara, Tjap Wurrung, Peek Whurrong, Kirraw Whurrung, Kuurn Kopan Noot. Yarro waetch and many others.(Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation 2020)

In 1865 the first Aboriginal mission was formed in the Western District at Framlingham in Girai wurrung country, north-east of Warrnambool. Aside from the Dhauwurd wurrung clans who moved to the Lake Condah mission in the 1860s, other Indigenous people were removed to the Framlingham Aboriginal Mission, which was gazetted as a "temporary reservation for the use of Aborigines" (Barwick 1979: 4).In this mission the Eastern Maar people continued both cultural and spiritual traditional practices. In 1867 and 1899 the mission was meant to close down, and the Eastern Maar people were expected to move into the Lake Condah mission. Again, in 1916, the Eastern Maar people were expected to move into missions within Gippsland Victoria. All three times, the people refused to move and were successful in staying on country. During the 1970's, Eastern Maar were granted ownership of the land, including 586 acres of the original mission(Lawler, Oataway, & Berelov 2016).

Eastern Maar's connection to water relies heavily in the marine resources, abundant around the area. Fishing practices are still used today with the fishing and collection of eels, perch, blackfish, yabbies, abalone, cockles and crayfish (Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation 2015, pp. 9). The techniques used in eeling have been passed down for generations, meaning the practices used today are techniques and skills traditional owners were using to eat and to trade (Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation 2015, pp. 9). Shell middens are an important archaeological site to the Eastern Maar, where they take time to teach others about the importance of culture and preservation and management of sea resources (Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation 2015, pp. 9).

> *When Maar citizens visit places with archaeological sites, we take time to teach our young ones about what they mean in terms of our history and culture. For example, our ancestors left many ancient middens along the coast which continue to tell a story about our Country - how the coastline and estuaries fluctuated, how and when our ancestors used the resources along the coast, what was harvested from out in the open ocean, how climatic conditions changed over time, where the meeting places were and ceremonies took place. This type of cultural*

learning helps develop empathy for Country; a deeper understanding on a societal scale of what Country means to us as a nation. We always pay our respects…(Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation 2015, pp. 9)

Through Country, Eastern Maar People connect with their ancestors who are associated with different water systems within the landscape (Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation 2015, pp. 9):

> *We believe that the spirits of our dead reside in our waterways and water bodies, and that they use animate and inanimate objects to move through Country. The signs they reveal to us are an important part of the interaction with our Ancestors – engaging, guiding, informing and warning us. When our citizens die, they are often buried with their bodies facing towards Deen Maar (Island). A story associated with Deen Maar Island is that the spirits go first to Deen Maar and then up to the stars, as Bunjil had done. A star falling or lights flying through the sky is a sign that the spirit is going over.*
>
> *Sea Country Maar citizens have always had a close connection with the sea and its resources, which were central to our culture, economy and survival. The ocean nourished our Ancestors and we still rely on it for our survival. Abundant middens along the coastline tell a rich story of our past. The coastline is home to sites that are important for our Dreaming - Three Sisters Rocks and Deen Maar (Lady Julia Percy Island) where our Ancestors leave the earth. Our connection with our Sea Country extends well beyond the current shoreline to the edge of the continental shelf. While this area is under the sea today, we occupied it for thousands of years and rising sea levels have not washed away the history, physical evidence or our connection.*(Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation 2015, pp. 13)

2.6.3 Secondary Stakeholder Area - Wadawurrung

Aboriginal groups mapped natural features as boundaries for their ranges, estates and economic territories. The Wadawurrung held land along the coast from Painkalac Creek at Aireys Inlet, east into Port Phillip Bay and to the Werribee River and to the north as far as Mt Emu and Fiery Creeks (Clark 1990).

Little is known about the Wadawurrung and their social organisation as they were one of the first Aboriginal groups within the region to be affected by European settlement in the area (Clark 1990). However, the Wadawurrung RAP organisation has traced its people's lineage to that of the seven families of John Robinson who was born in 1846 and passed in 1919 (WTOAC 2019).

During the summertime months, Wadawurrung along with Djab wurrung, Dhauwurd wurrung and girai wurrung language groups gathered at Mirraewuae swamp for ceremony and hunting. In early autumn the *Wada wurrung* would meet with Girai wurrung at Lake Bolac with local Djab wurrung named groups to take advantage of the migratory eels. The Wadawurrung participated in trade meetings at Terang, trading axe's and adhesive gum.

The coastal Wadawurrung first came into contact with settlers around the early 1800s when John Murray and William Flinders surveyed part of Indented Head. By the end of 1836 sheep runs were endemic around Geelong for an approximate 40.2 kilometre radius. The following year, settlers began to spread westward towards the Colac district.

An important figure in the history of Wadawurrung country was an escaped convict named William Buckley. The Wadawurrung balug first encountered Europeans in 1832 when William Buckley, escaped from the failed Sorrento settlement in 1803. Buckley was adopted by the Wadawurrung balug and spent the next 32 years with them; taking part in their customs, learning the language as well as hunting gathering techniques (Clark 1990). Buckley's story was recorded by John Morgan in 1852. From Buckley's accounts it was recorded that the Wadawurrung balug would catch eels at Lake Modewarre and would spend time on the hunting ground of the neighbouring Bengalat bulluck. According to Buckley the clan was at odds with the Bun wurrung, Woi wurrung and Daung wurrung clans (Clark 1990).

2.6.4 Secondary Stakeholder Area - Bunurong

The land encompassing the eastern side of the study area, as mapped by Clark (Clark 1990), is held by the Boon Wurrung language group, commonly associated with the Bunurong people. Boon Wurrung land occupied the coastal area from the Werribee River to Anderson Inlet, Phillip Island and probably beyond to Wilsons Promontory(Horton & Morris 1983, pp. 44). The Bunurong RAP group covers the Mornington Peninsula (such as Rosebud and Frankston), Western Port (French Island, Phillip Island and San Remo) and the eastern most part of South Gippsland (Warragul down to Leongatha)(BLCAC 2023).

The Bunurong group is loosely divided into smaller clan or family groups, named for the area they associated with (Gaughwin & Sullivan 1984, pp. 85). Barwick (1984, pp. 117–118) identified six clans: the *Burinyung-balluk* from Point Nepean and Cape Schanck, the *Mayone-bulluk* associated with the Carrum swamp, Cranbourne and the northern part of the Mornington Peninsula, the *Ngaruk-willam* associated with the Brighton area and Mordialloc, the *Yallock-bulluk* (most relevant to the study area) associated with the eastern side of Bass River and Tooradin, the *Yallukit-willam* associated with the area now called St Kilda and a broader region from the Werribee River to Mordialloc, the *Yowengherra* occupying the Tarwin River area. Thomas distinguished between the Bunurong people from Port Phillip and those of Western Port, though he rarely had contact with the Bunurong people on the eastern side of Western Port Bay (Sullivan 1981, pp. 16–19, Clark 1990). The Yallock-Bulluk Bunurong group are the most likely to have lived and associated with San Remo and Phillip Island area. The moiety of the Yallock-Bulluk named group is Bunjil, commonly associated with the Phillip Island area.

People were likely to have moved between the interior in winter and the coast in the summer. Movement was made up of many small distances (c. 10 km per day) punctuated by camps of one to three nights and occasionally longer stays of eight to ten days (Sullivan 1981). Social activity involving neighbouring named or socio-dialectical groups was usually held in warmer periods, held at the intersection of group boundary's and arranged by a person assigned of the responsibility of travelling between groups to organise the time, place, and events of the meeting.

An important figure in the history of Bunuroung country was an Indigenous man named Derrimut. Derrimut was the *arweet* the *Yalukit Willam* group at the time of European settlement of the region (Clark 1990, pp. 368–369). His name, Derrimut (derrimart/derremot), is believed to mean 'to hunt' or 'to pursue' in the language of the *Yalukit Willam* (Clark 2005, p. 1), Derrimut was a prominent figure in both the Indigenous and European histories of early Melbourne, and historical and contemporary views of his status vary. William Buckley, an escaped convict who lived with the Wadawurrung people of the Geelong region, considered him a 'traitor' who should be speared for divulging impending attacks to European colonists (Clark 2005, pp. 109). Clark (2005) considers Derrimut a "culture-broker" who sought to navigate the newly imposed political context of colonial Victoria by forging relationships with prominent early European Melbournians including John Pascoe Fawkner and William Thomas, who held Derrimut in high regard (Clark 2005, pp. 111). In 1849, Derrimut and other members of the *Yalukit-Willam* agitated for the establishment of the Mordialloc Reserve, and when it was later divided for sale in 1863, Derrimut used his European connections to angrily protest its sale (Clark 2005, pp. 116).

Bunurongs use of water-based resources is evident in the quantity of shell midden sites found along the coastline. Within the study area and the bounds of the Bunurong RAP group, there are a total of 677 registered shell midden sites, within two hundred meters of the shoreline. This suggests knowledgeable exploitation of marine resources as practiced techniques and an understanding of the ocean would be needed to accumulate the amount of shell middens listed on Bunurong country.

2.6.5 Secondary Stakeholder Area - Gunaikurnai

The Gunaikurnai RAP group covers most of the Gippsland Area, spanning from Warragul and Noojee, down to Port Albert and Port Welshpool, eastward towards Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance and Marlo, and north towards Omeo and Hotham Heights

The Gunaikurnai believe in strong connections between land (Wurruk), water (Yarnda) and air (Watpootjan) and how these connections support living things. The Gunaikurnai see no separation of land and water, combining the two to represent whole country and therefore, demonstrate the same levels of importance to both land and sea. Due to this definition of country, both land and ocean receive the same amount of protection and management(GLWAC 2023a).

Throughout Gunaikurnai country, there are multiple sites that detail indigenous relation to country and resource exploitation. One site that displays local resource exploitation is the recently excavated cave near Mitchell River, Raymond Creek 2 Rock Shelter, that provides evidence of using mussel shell tools and localised resource gathered through fishing(Monash University & GLWAC 2019).

The Buchan Caves Reserve is an example of the spiritual and physical relation to country that the Gunaikurnai people share. At this site in Eastern Victoria there are registered indigenous burials located in and around the cave system, creating a spiritual space within the landscape. In conjunction to the sacred burials, the site was already known to be a great place of connection as it played an integral role in the migrating patterns of the Gunaikurnai travelling through the mountains(GLWAC 2023b).

The area surrounding Buchan Caves Reserve is also considered special to country, with several other caves being recognized as having cultural meaning One such cave is Cloggs Cave, located southeast of Buchan Caves Reserve, having an undisturbed cultural sequence, that could prove indigenous settlement in the Late Holocene and holds evidence of megafauna that challenge the idea of megafaunal extinction being caused by the LGM(GLWAC 2023a, David et al. 2021, GLWAC 2023b)

2.6.6 Primary Stakeholder Area – Palawa (Tasmania)

According to Jones (1974), Tasmanian Aboriginal society consisted of three social units: hearth group, the band and the Tribe. The hearth group was described as being the family unit, and consisted of a man, woman, their children, aged relatives, and ranged from 2-8 people (Jones 1974: Plomley 1983).

> *There were nine individuals in this family, and clearly they represented a hearth group, because Peron visited their campsite with its single hut. The group comprised an older man and wife, a younger man and wife, and five children, one a daughter (Oure-Oure) of the older man and wife, and the other four the children of the younger man and wife. (Plomley 1983:168).*

The band was more similar to a social unit, comprising of a number of hearth groups, and this was defined by land owned and the boundaries within this territory being lined with defined geographic boundaries (Jones 1974:324-325). Brown (1986:21) further notes that the band was generally led by an older man who had a reputation as a successful hunter and fighter. Brown (1986:21) also believes that the band was exogamous, with the wife generally moving to her husband's band and hearth group. Each of these bands were then further associated with a 'political' unit, as termed by Jones (1974:328-329) as a tribe. Jones (1974:328-329) describes:

> *...that agglomeration of bands which lived in contiguous regions, spoke the same language or dialect, shared the same cultural traits, usually intermarried, had a similar pattern of seasonal movement, habitually met together for economic and other reasons, the pattern of whose peaceful relations were within the agglomeration and of whose enmities and military adventures were directed outside it. Such a tribe had a territory, consisting of the sum of the land owned by its constituent bands ... The borders of a territory ranged from a sharp well defined line associated with a prominent geographic feature to a broad transition zone.*

Ryan (2012:14) hypothesises that the population of Tasmania was associated with a broad network of nine Tribes, each consisting of six to 15 bands. Ryan (2012:14) estimates that at by the time of European colonisation, the population of each tribe was around 350 and 800 people, where the overall population of Tasmania is estimated at being 3000-8000 people.

Coastal sites generally consist of midden sites, however, significant stone quarries, rock art, and former hut depressions and camp site can still be located. These sites show a seasonal exploitation of the coastal areas (Brown 1991; Jones 1977). The recording of bark canoes by early explorers shows that the Tasmanians did have a rich maritime tradition, however, many of these were used to access smaller off shore islands, not the larger islands of Bass Strait, or to the main land of Australia (Jones 1977).

With the removal of the Tasmanians to Flinders Island, population decreases, and associations with different geographical areas of Tasmania were lost. When the Tasmanian's returned to the mainland to Oyster Cove, many of these survivors were not allowed back into their traditional areas where they were born, or where their family had resided for generations.

2.7 Conclusion

Aboriginal communities in Victoria and Tasmania continue to be present and vibrant, and maintain strong connections to their traditional lands, waters, and their cultures. Each group is distinct and hold different systems of belief, connection, ceremony, language and lore and cultural practice. Each group hold traditional ecological knowledge of plants, animals and land management passed down through generations.

Aboriginal communities continue to practice traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering, and have a deep understanding of the environment around them. They also have a spiritual connection to the land and sea. Aboriginal people and representative bodies in Victoria and Tasmania have become more active in conservation, land and heritage management, working to protect and restore their traditional lands and waters, and to ensure that their cultural heritage is respected and protected.

> *Coastal environments in south-eastern Australia are rich in cultural sites. These include archaeological sites, such as shell middens and stone quarries, as well as "natural" sites, such as headlands, river mouths, reefs and islands. These sites have continuing cultural meaning because of their connection with Creation Stories, Dreaming Tracks, ceremonial places, camping places and massacre sites. Many of these places are listed on the Register of the National Estate, others are recorded in State-based heritage registers, while many others are known only to Indigenous people themselves and are not formally recorded...*
>
> *Protecting this cultural heritage is a major concern for Indigenous people. (National Oceans Office 2002:4).*

This Cultural Heritage Desktop Assessment explores the cultural heritage background for the region, provides a summary of available information in order to provide the project with a grounding in the cultural heritage of Aboriginal people in the study area.

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4 Glossary of Terms

The glossary provides definitions of various archaeological and heritage related terms.

Heritage place: A place that has aesthetic, historic, scientific or social values for past, present or future generations – ' ...this definition encompasses all cultural places with any potential present or future value as defined above' (Pearson & Sullivan, 1995, p. 7).

Aboriginal place: Aboriginal place is defined under Section 5 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act* 2006 as follows:

5 What is an Aboriginal place?

(1) For the purposes of this Act, an Aboriginal place is an area in Victoria or the coastal waters of Victoria that is of cultural heritage significance to the Aboriginal people of Victoria.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), *area* includes any one or more of the following—

(a) an area of land;

(b) an expanse of water;

(c) a natural feature, formation or landscape;

(d) an archaeological place, feature or deposit;

(e) the area immediately surrounding anything referred to in paragraphs (c) and (d), to the extent that it cannot be separated from the thing without diminishing or destroying the cultural heritage significance attached to the thing by Aboriginal people;

(f) land set aside for the purpose of enabling Aboriginal human remains to be re-interred or otherwise deposited on a permanent basis;

(g) a building or structure.

Alluvial terrace: a platform created from deposits of alluvial material along river banks.

Angular fragment: a piece of stone that is blocky or angular, not flake-like.

Archaeology: the study of the remains of past human activity.

Artefact scatter: a surface scatter of cultural material. Aboriginal artefact scatters are defined as being the occurrence of five or more items of cultural material within an area of about 100 square metres. Artefact scatters are often the only physical remains of places where people have lived camped, prepared and eaten meals and worked.

Backed piece: a flake or blade that has been abruptly retouched along one or more margins opposite an acute (sharp) edge. Backed pieces include backed blades and geometric microliths. They are thought to have been hafted onto wooden handles to produce composite cutting tools. Backed pieces are a feature of the 'Australian small tool tradition', dating from between 5,000 and 1,000 BP in southern Australia (Holdaway & Stern, 2004).

Blade: a flake at least twice as long as it is wide.

Burial place: usually a sub-surface pit containing human remains and sometimes associated artefacts.

Contact place: see 'Aboriginal historical archaeological place'.

Core: an artefact from which flakes have been detached using a hammerstone. Core types include single platform, multi-platform and bipolar forms.

Cortex: original or natural (unflaked) surface of a stone.

Cortical: refers to the cortex.

Flake: a stone piece removed from a core by percussion (striking it) or pressure. It is identified by the presence of a striking platform and bulb of percussion, not usually found on a naturally shattered stone.

Flaked piece: a piece of stone with definite flake surfaces, which cannot be classified as a flake or core.

Formal tool: an artefact that has been shaped by flaking, including retouch, or grinding to a predetermined form for use as a tool. Formal tools include scrapers, backed pieces and axes.

Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94): a system of latitudes and longitudes, or east and north coordinates, centred at the centre of the earth's mass. GDA94 is compatible with modern positioning techniques such as the Global Positioning System (GPS). It supersedes older coordinate systems (AGD66, AGD84). GDA94 is based on a global framework, the IERS Terrestrial Reference Frame (ITRF), but is fixed to a number of reference points in Australia. GDA94 is the Victorian Government Standard and spatial coordinates for excavations, transects and places in CHMP documents.

Geometric microlith: a small tool that has been fashioned from breaking apart a microblade. The piece is then retouched or backed and a small tool formed.

Grindstones: upper (handstone) and lower (basal) stones used to grind plants for food and medicine and/or ochre for painting. A handstone sometimes doubles as a hammerstone and/or anvil.

Hearth: usually a sub-surface feature found eroding from a river or creek bank or a sand dune - it indicates a place where Aboriginal people cooked food. The remains of a hearth are usually identifiable by the presence of charcoal and sometimes clay balls (like brick fragments) and hearth stones. Remains of burnt bone or shell are sometimes preserved within a hearth.

Isolated artefact: the occurrence of less than five items of cultural material within an area of about 100 square metres. It/they can be evidence of a short-lived (or one-off) activity location, the result of an artefact being lost or discarded during travel, or evidence of an artefact scatter that is otherwise obscured by poor ground visibility.

Manuport: foreign fragment**,** chunk or lump of stone that shows no clear signs of flaking but is out of geological context and must have been transported to the place by people.

Map Grid of Australia (MGA): The official coordinate projection for use with the Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94).

Mound: these places, often appearing as raised areas of darker soil, are found most commonly in the volcanic plains of western Victoria or on higher ground near bodies of water. The majority were probably formed by a slow build-up of debris resulting from earth-oven cooking; although some may have been formed by the collapse of sod or turf structures.

Percussion: the act of hitting a core with a hammerstone to strike off flakes.

Platform preparation: removal of small flake scars on the dorsal edge of a flake, opposite the bulb of percussion. These overhang removal scars are produced to prevent a platform from shattering.

Pre-contact: before contact with non-Aboriginal people.

Post-contact: after contact with non-Aboriginal people.

Quarry (stone/ochre source): a place where stone or ochre is exposed and has been extracted by Aboriginal people. The rock types most commonly quarried for artefact manufacture in Victoria include silcrete, quartz, quartzite, chert and fine-grained volcanics such as greenstone.

Rejuvenation flake: a flake that has been knapped from a core solely for the purpose of preparing a new platform and making it easier to get flakes off a core, as it reduces the angle between platform and core surface.

Retouch: a flake, flaked piece or core with intentional secondary flaking along one or more edges.

Rock art: 'paintings, engravings and shallow relief work on natural rock surfaces' (Rosenfeld, 1988, p. 1). Paintings were often produced by mineral pigments, such as ochre, combined with clay and usually mixed with water to form a paste or liquid that was applied to an unprepared rock surface. Rock engravings were made by incising, pounding, pecking or chiselling a design into a rock surface. Rare examples of carved trees occasionally survive.

Rock shelter: may contain the physical remains of camping places where people prepared meals, flaked stone, etc. They are often classed as a different type of place due to their fixed boundaries and greater likelihood of containing sub-surface deposits. Rock shelters may also contain rock art.

Scarred tree: scars on trees may be the result of removal of strips of bark by Aboriginal people e.g. for the manufacture of utensils, canoes or for shelter; or resulting from small notches chopped into the bark to provide hand and toe holds for hunting possums and koalas. Some scars may be the result of non-Aboriginal activity, such as surveyors' marks.

Scraper: a flake, flaked piece or core with systematic retouch on one or more margins.

Shell midden: a surface scatter and/or deposit comprised mainly of shell, sometimes containing stone artefacts, charcoal, bone and manuports. These place types are normally found in association with coastlines, rivers, creeks and swamps – wherever coastal, riverine or estuarine shellfish resources were accessed and exploited.

Significance: the importance of a heritage place or place for aesthetic, historic, scientific or social values for past, present or future generations.

Striking platform: the surface of a core, which is struck by a hammerstone to remove flakes.

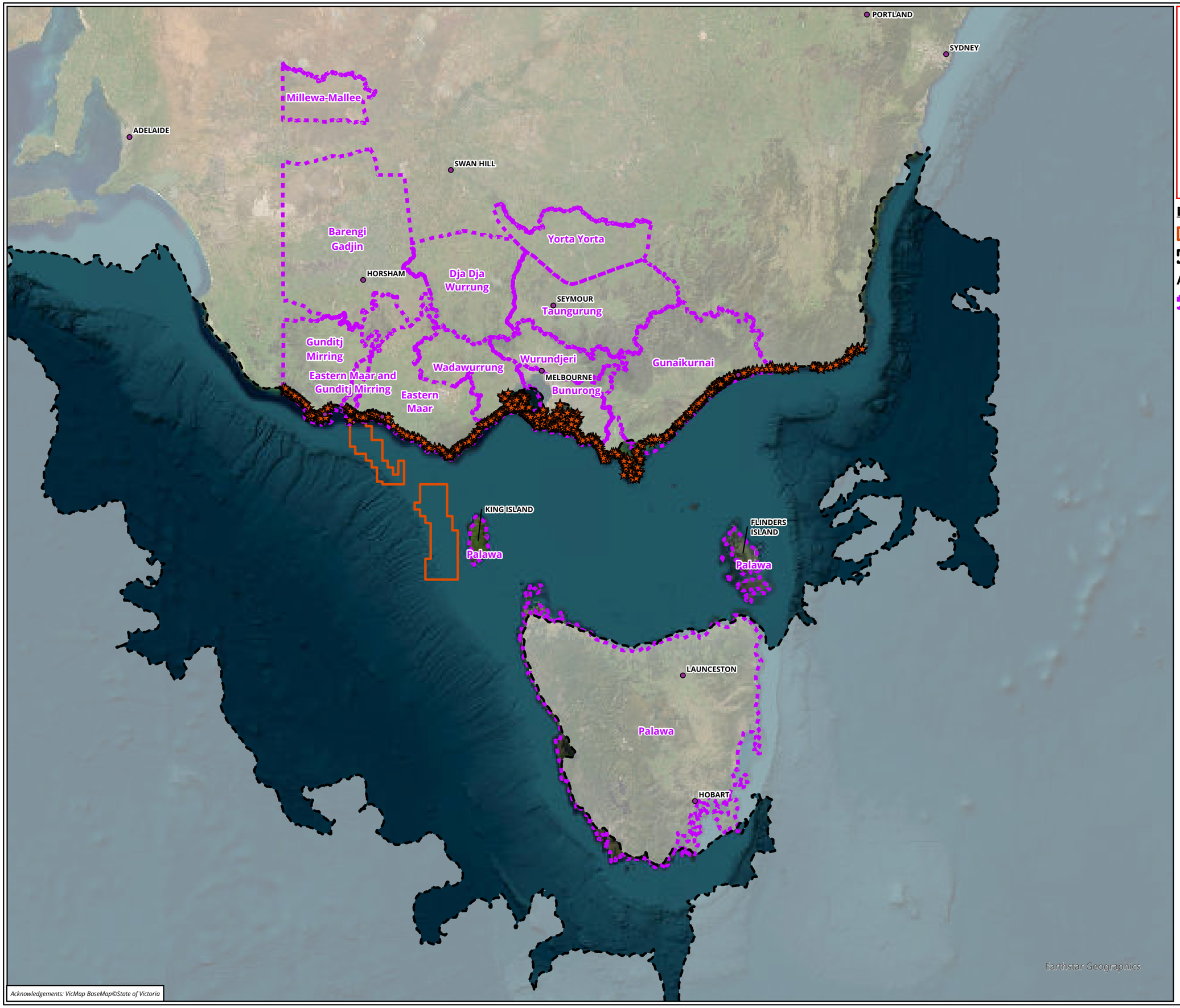
Structures (Aboriginal): can refer to a number of different place types, grouped here only because of their relative rarity and their status as built structures. Most structures tend to be made of locally available rock, such as rock arrangements (ceremonial and domestic), fishtraps, dams and cairns, or of earth, such as mounds or some fishtraps.

Stratified deposit: material that has been laid down, over time, in distinguishable layers.

Transect: A fixed path along which one records archaeological remains.

Utilised artefact: a flake, flaked piece or core that has irregular small flake scarring along one or more margins that does not represent platform preparation.

5 Appendix A – Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Search Results





Legend

- Activity Area
- Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

- RAP groups
- VAHR Place

Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

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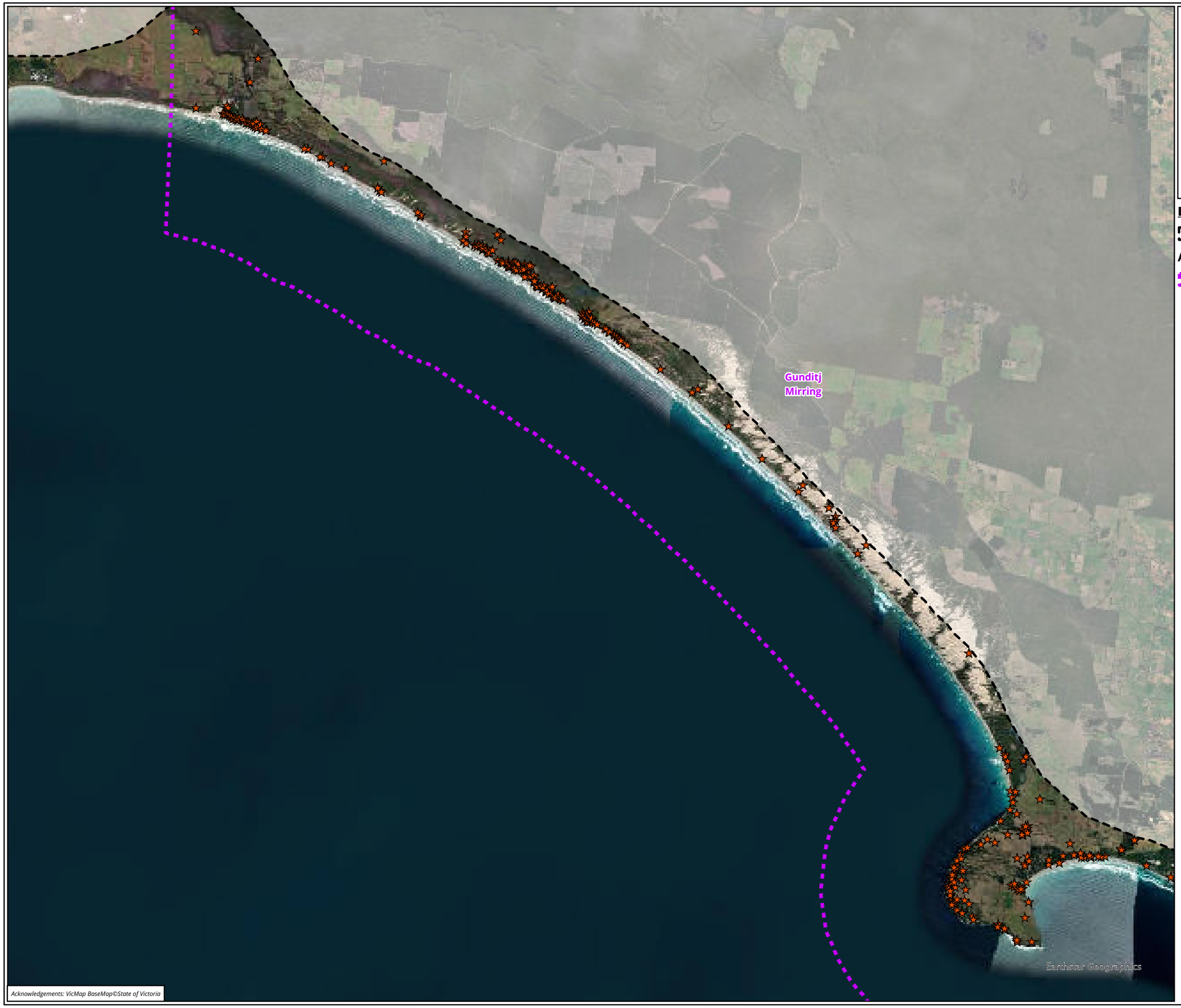
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Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

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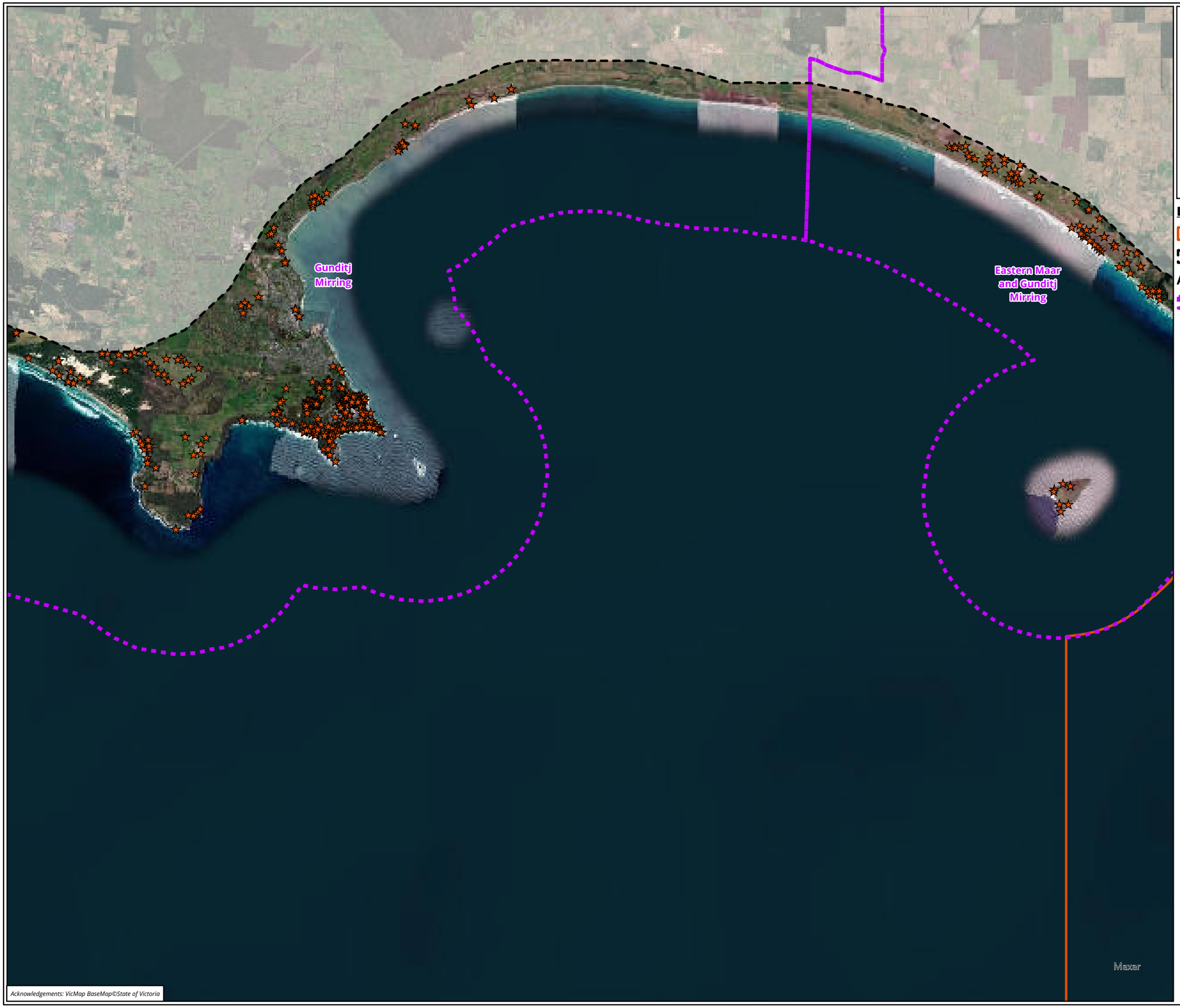
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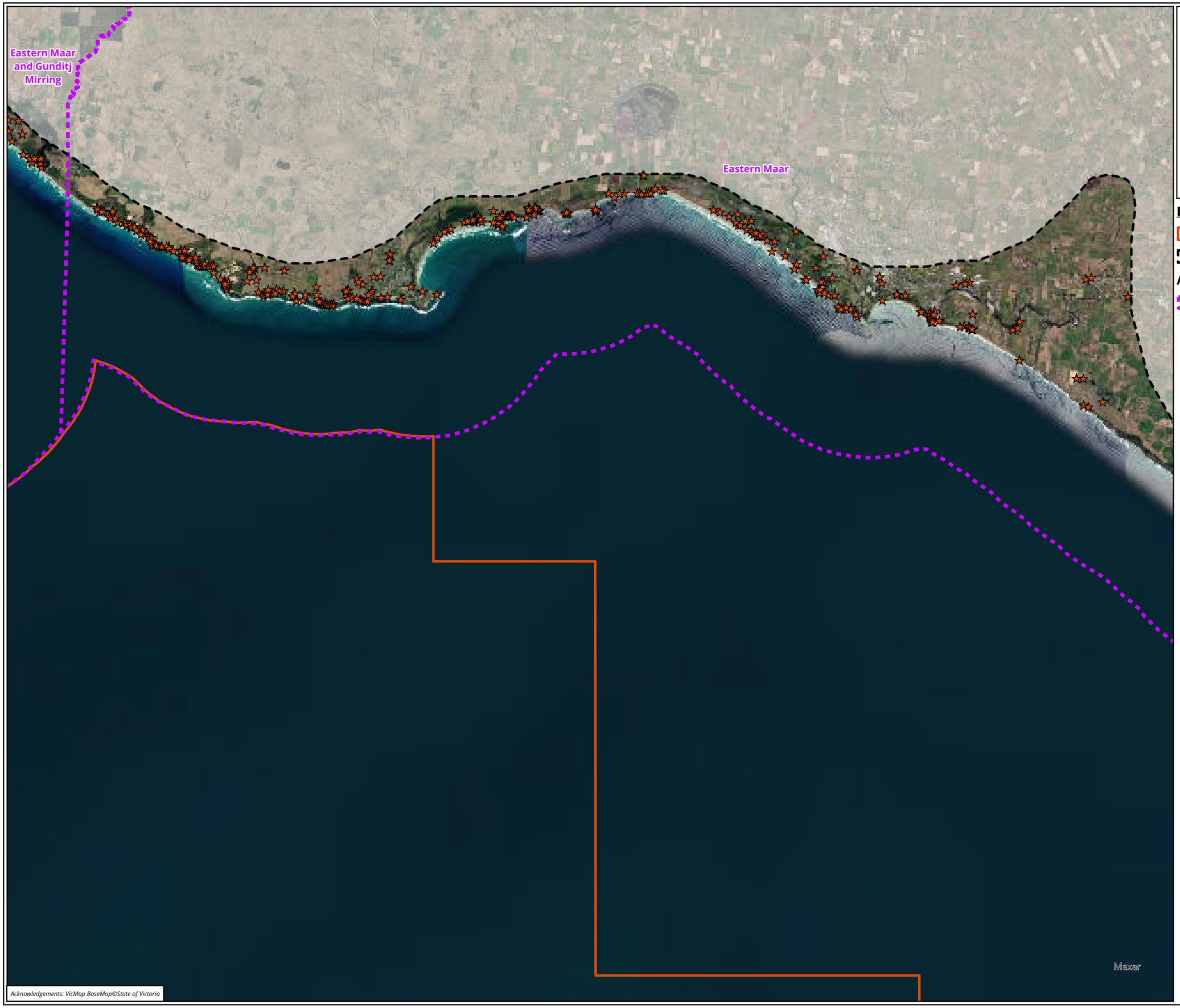
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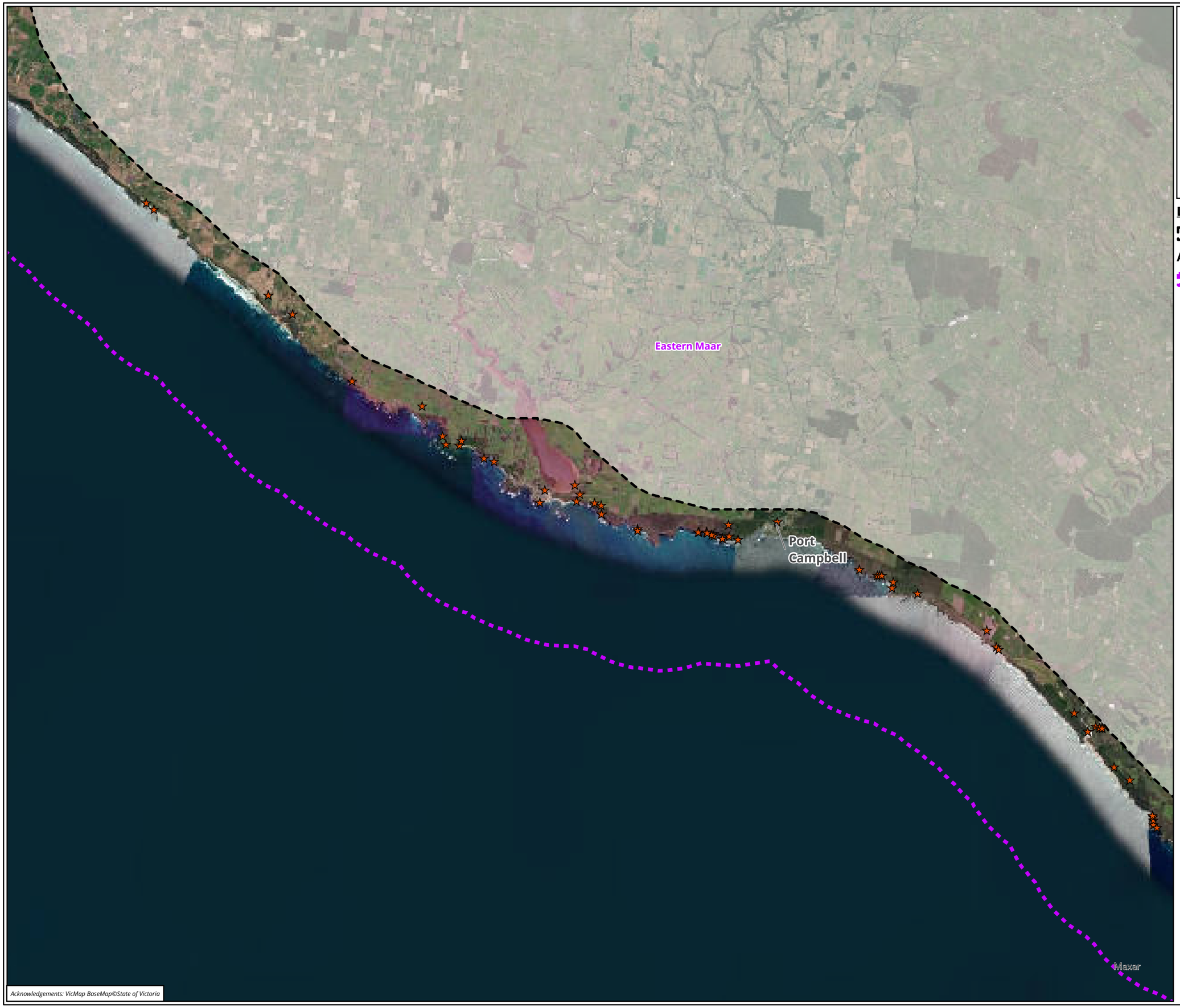
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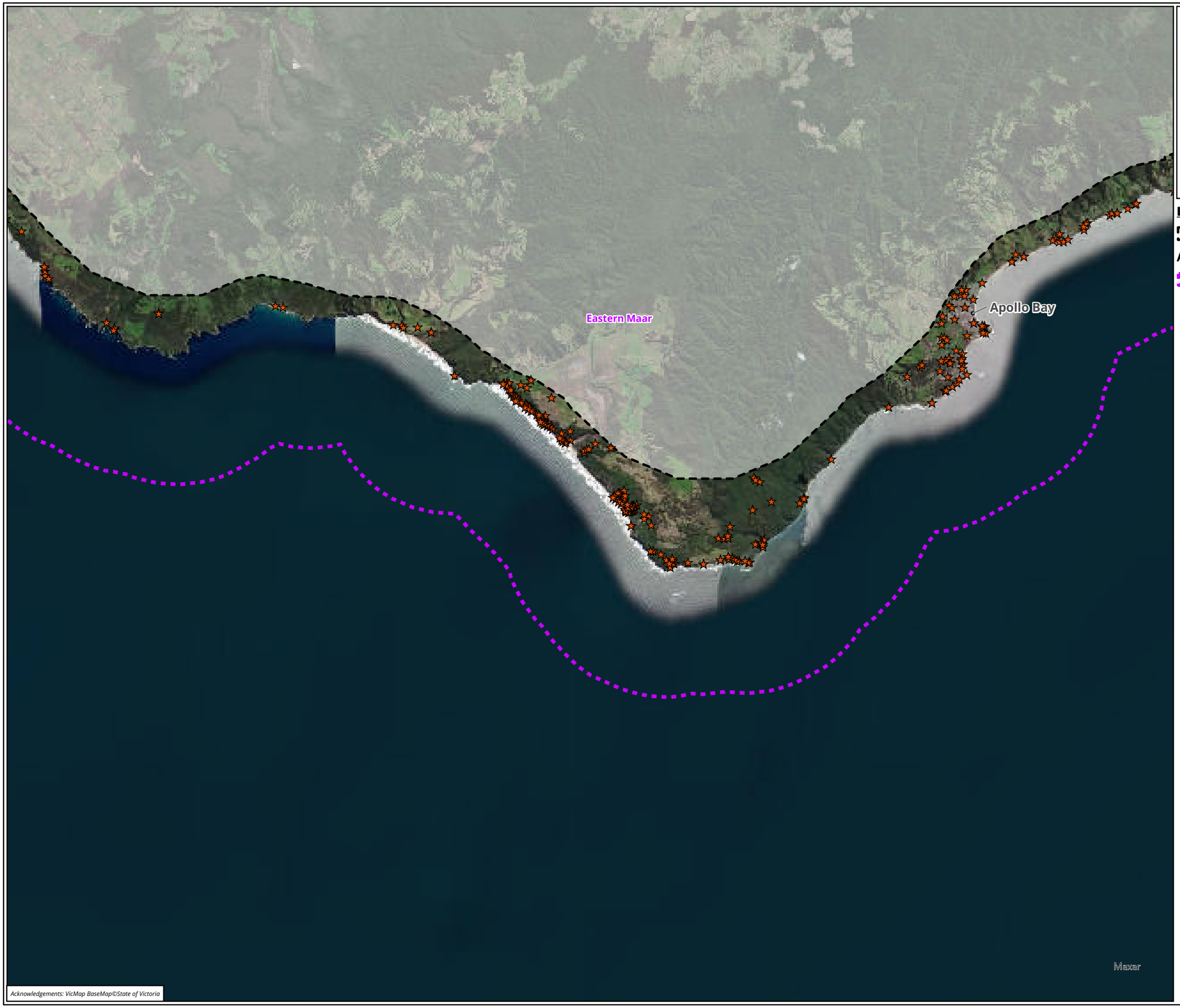
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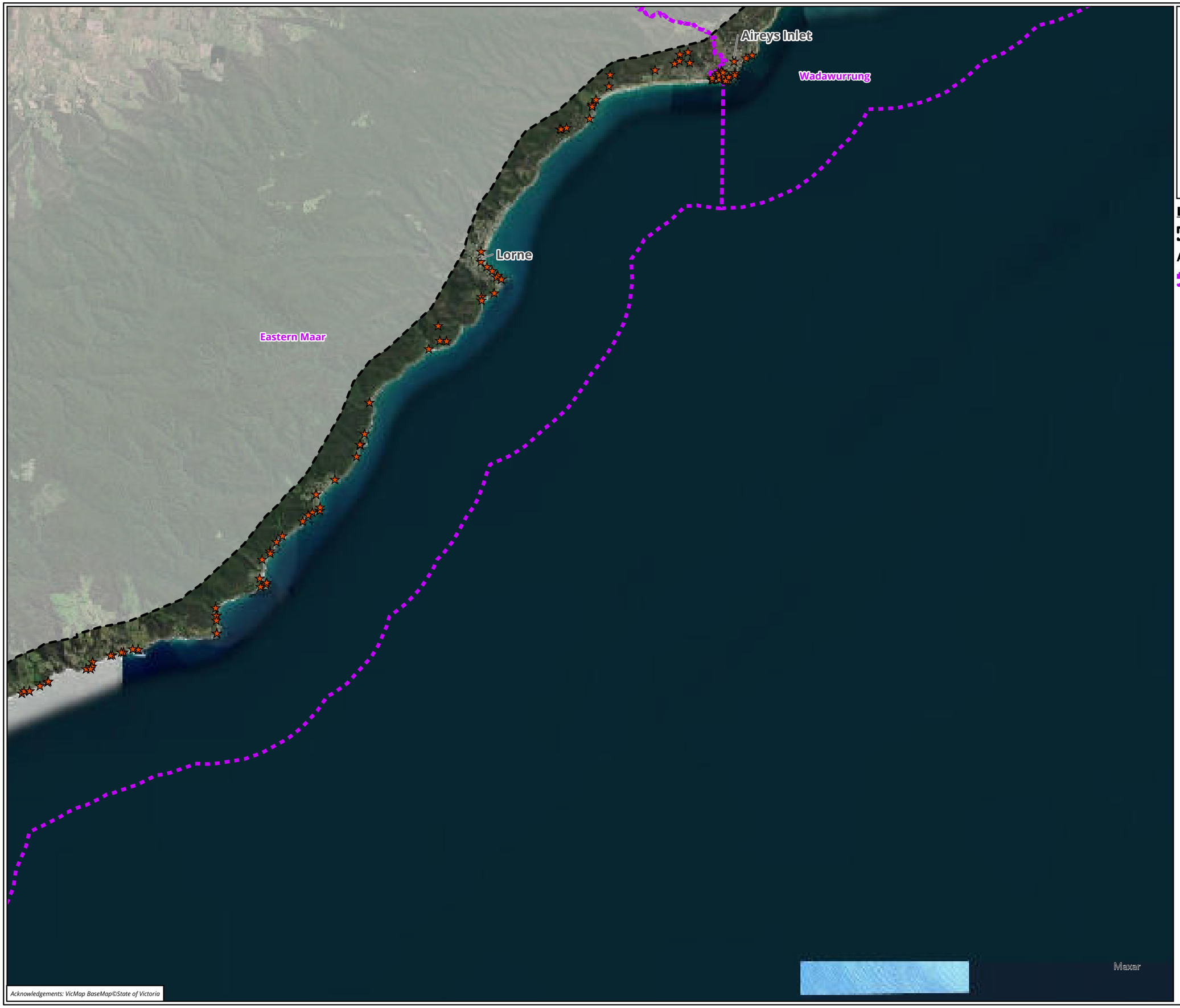
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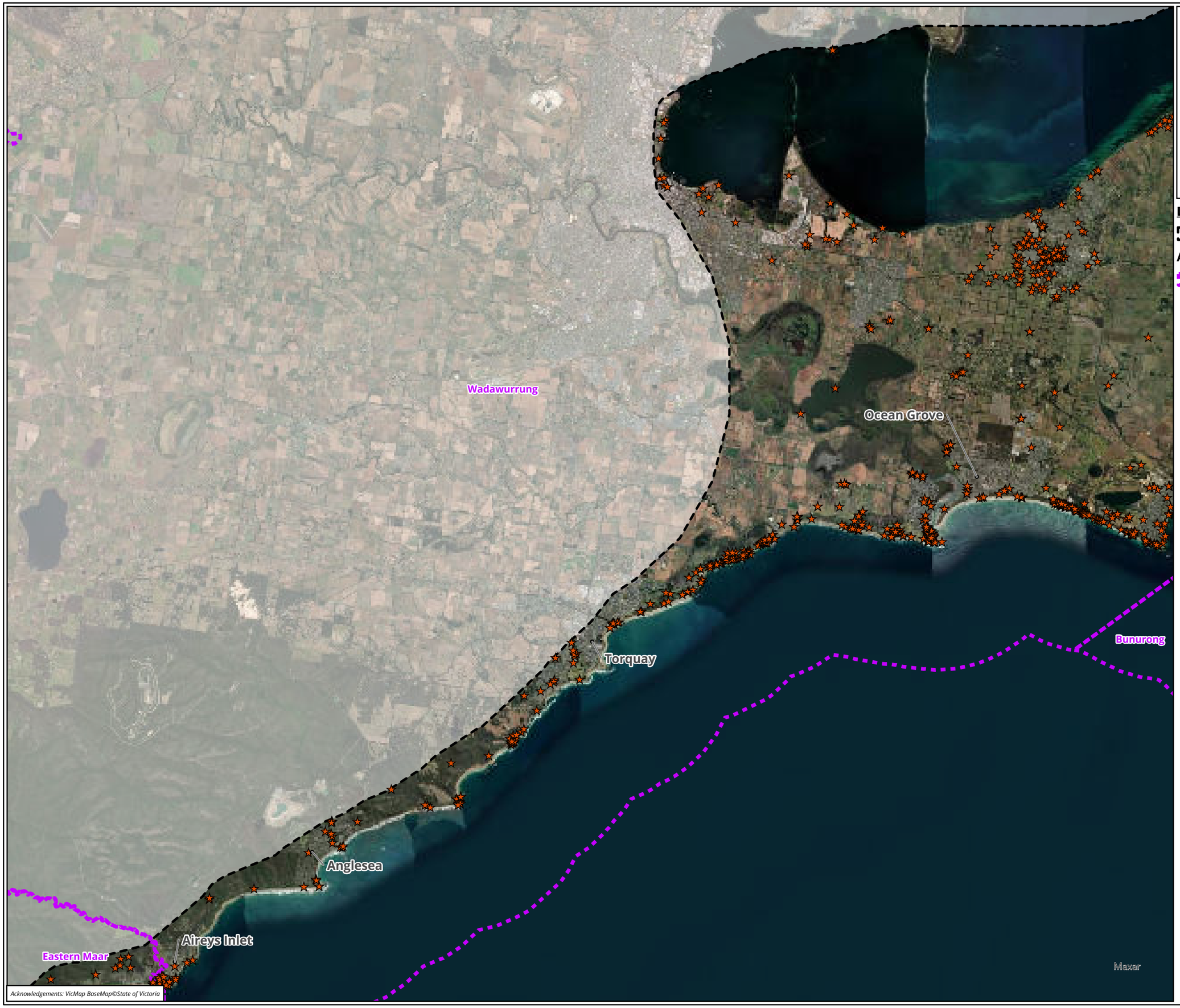
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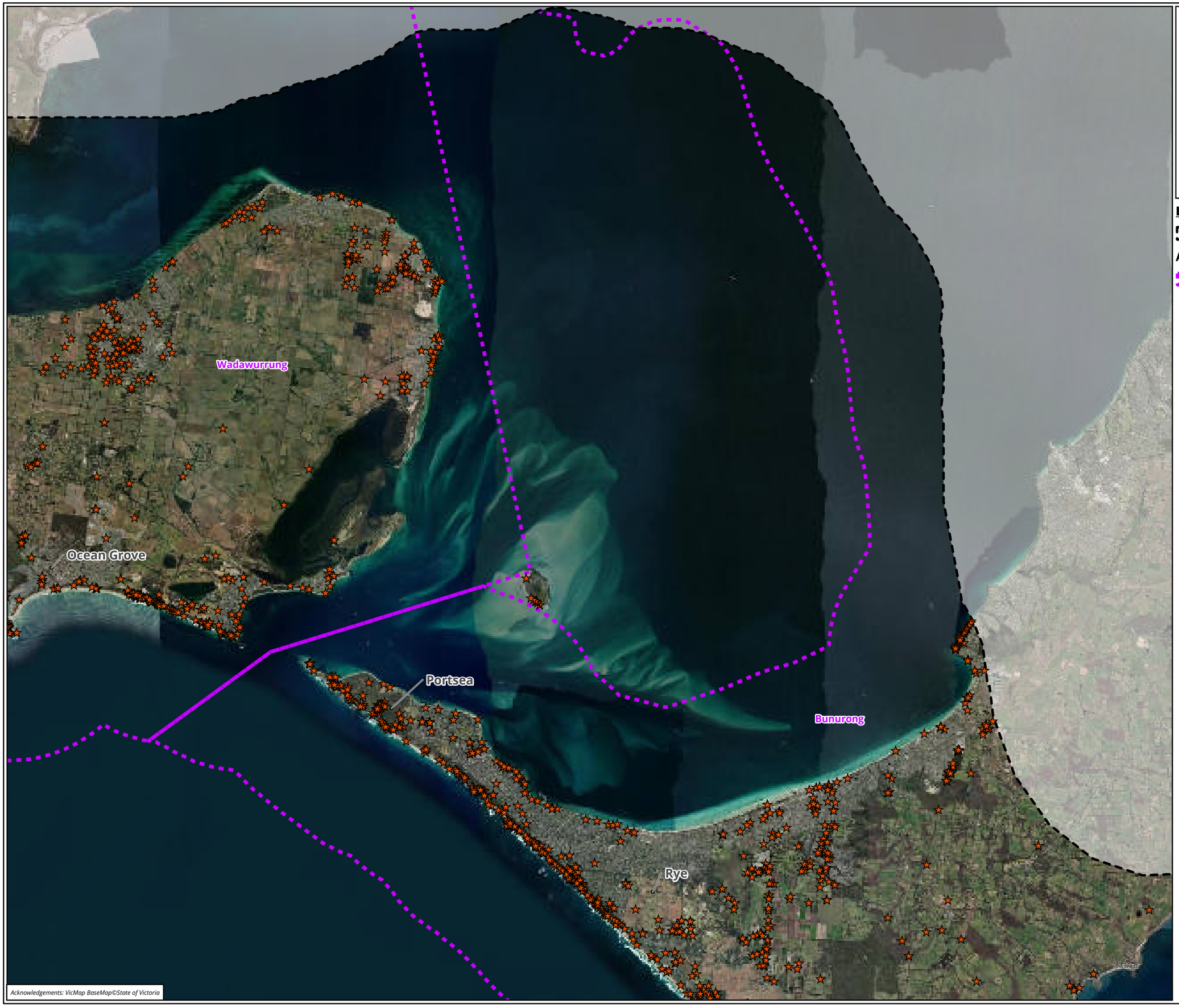
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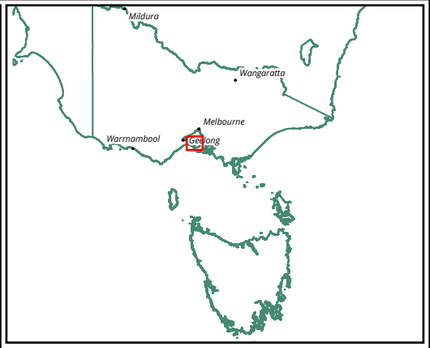
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Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere

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Date: 08 February 2023 ,
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Legend

Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

VAHR Place

Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

0 2 4 6 8 10

Kilometers

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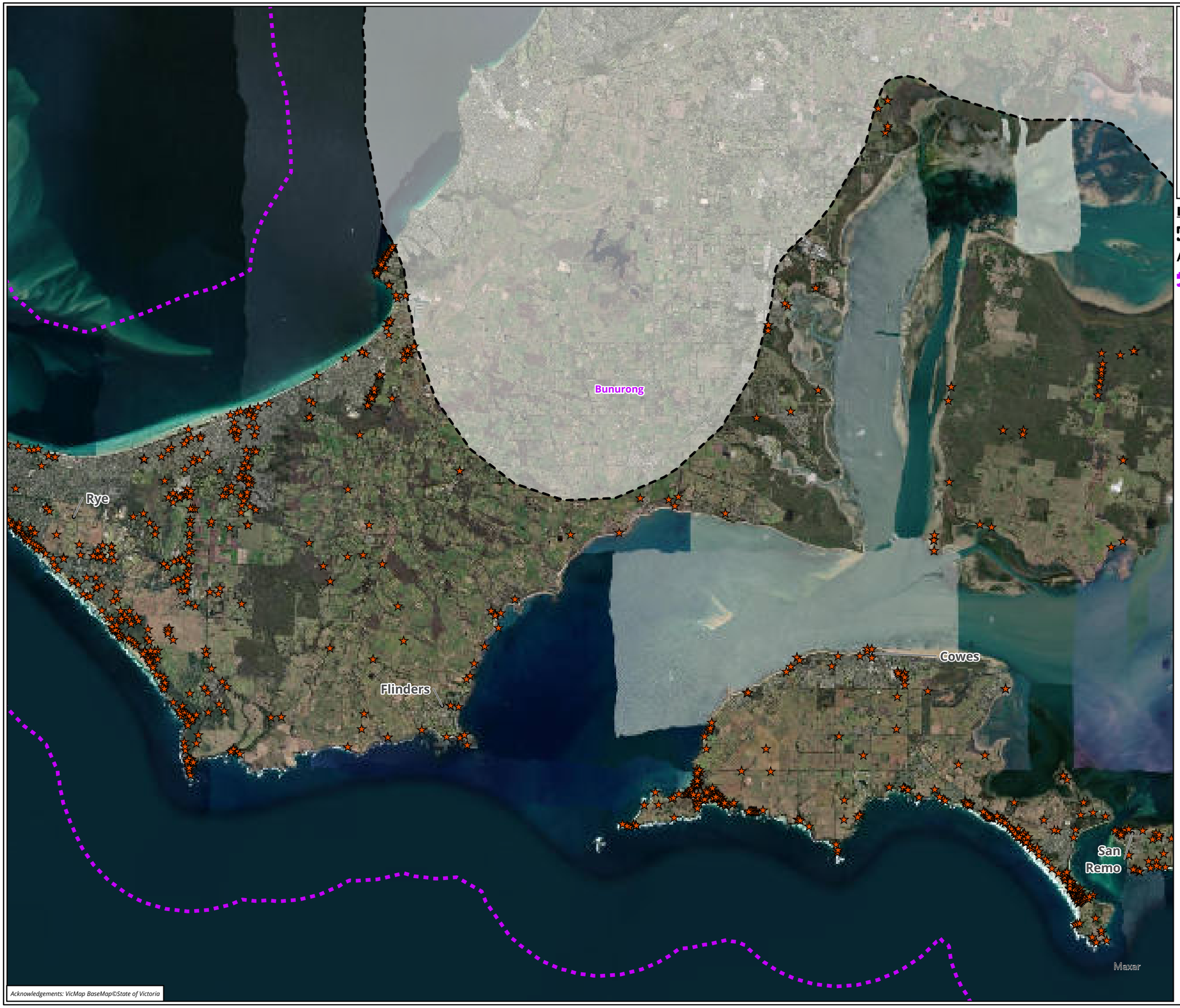
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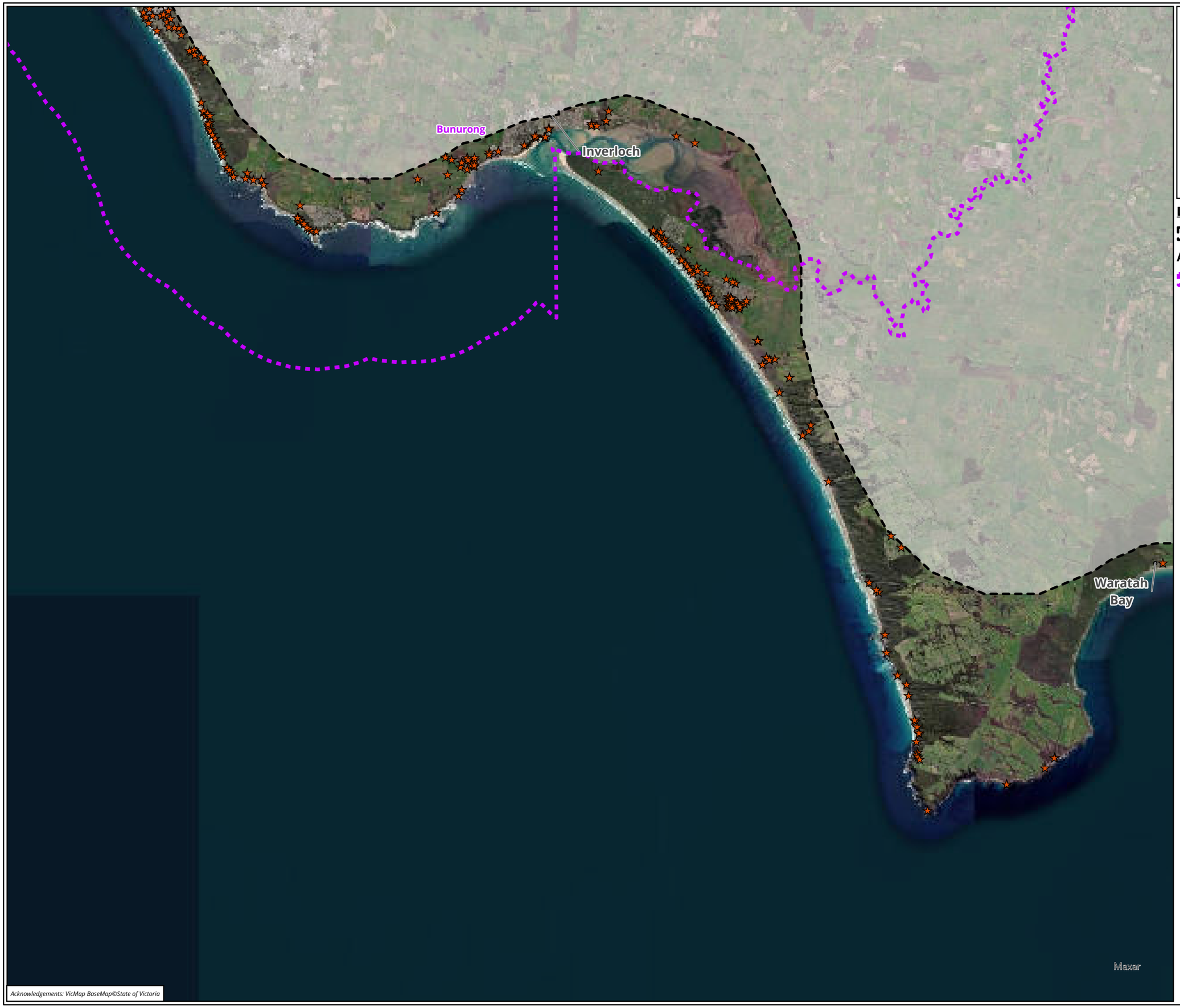
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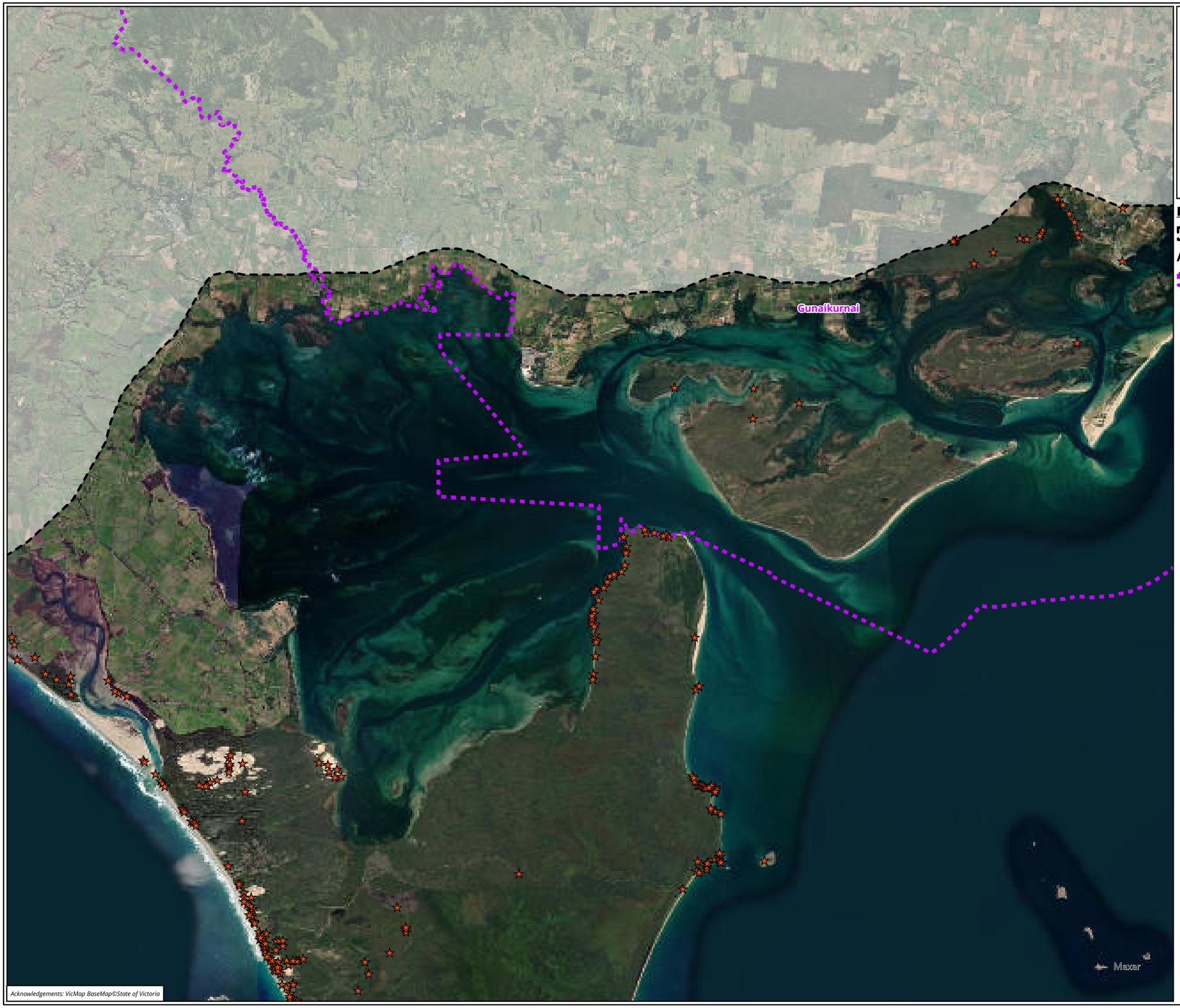
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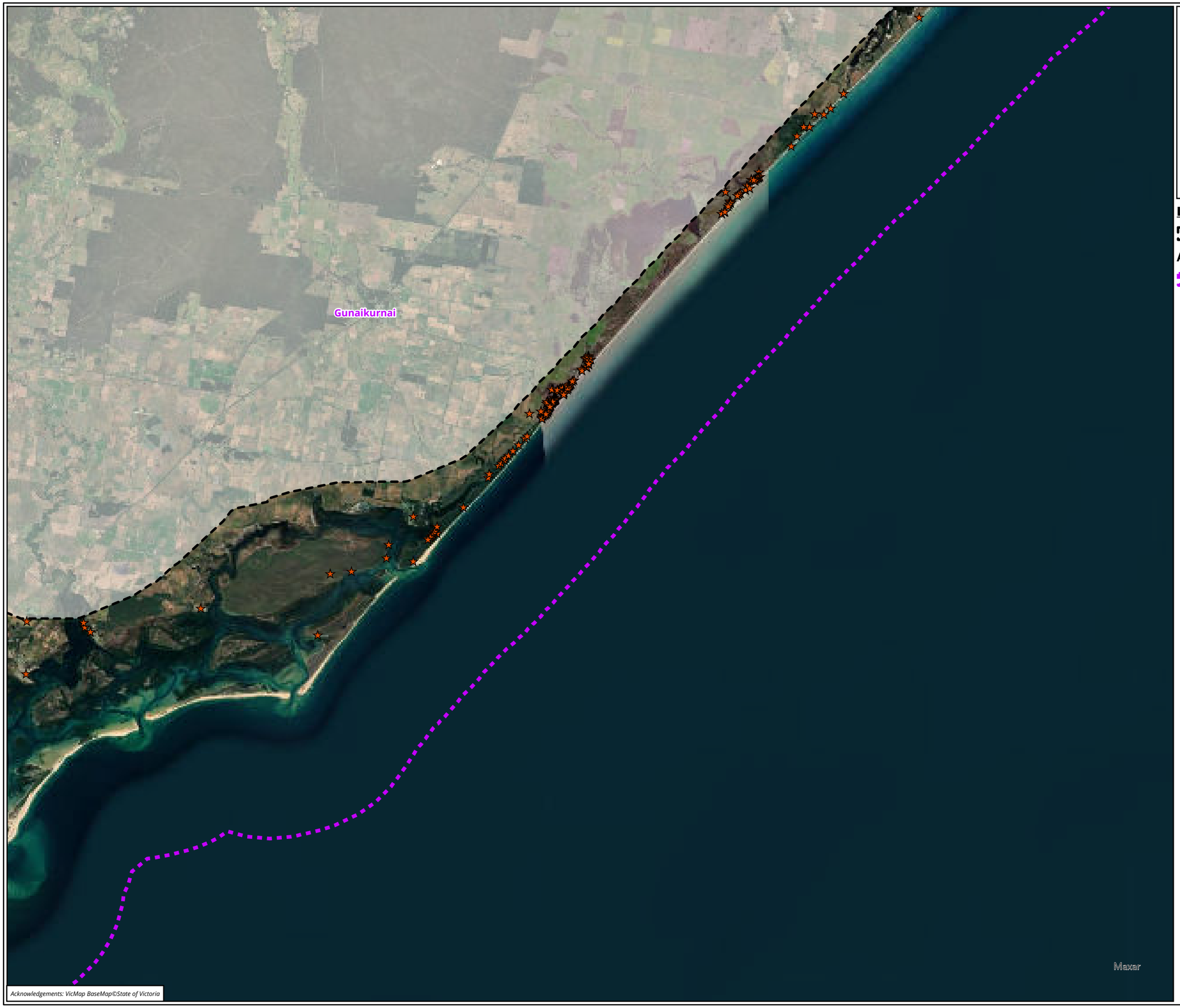
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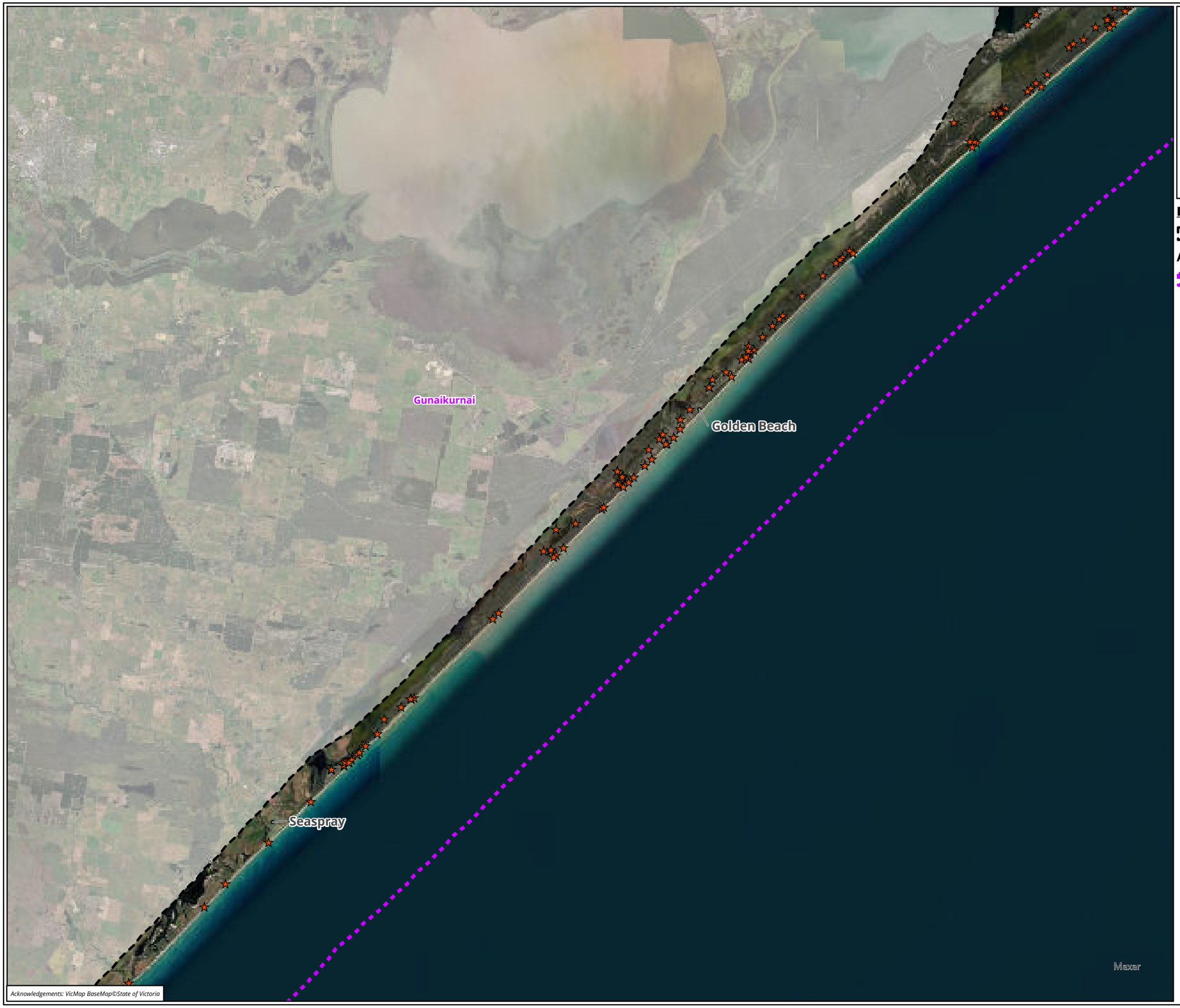
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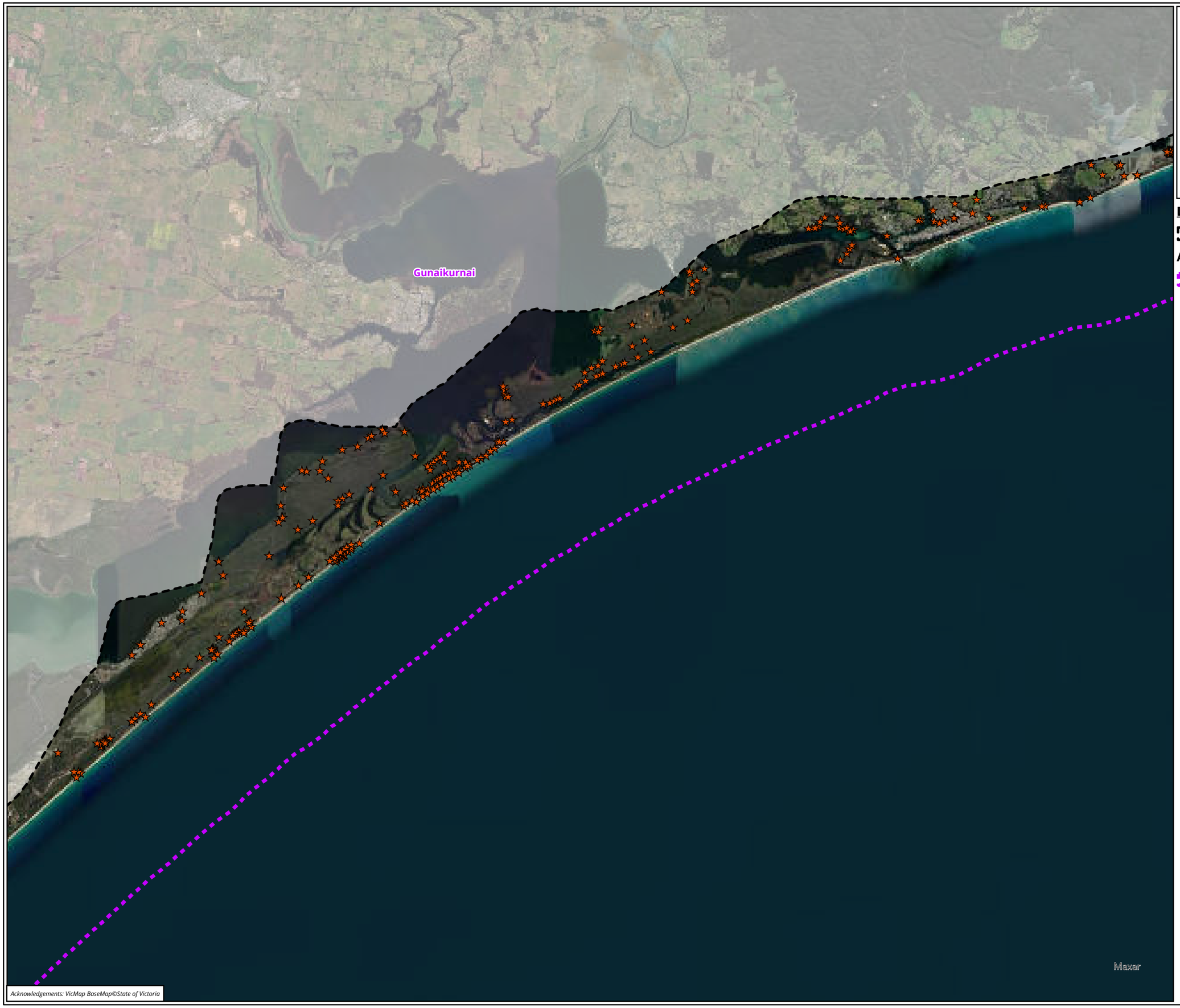
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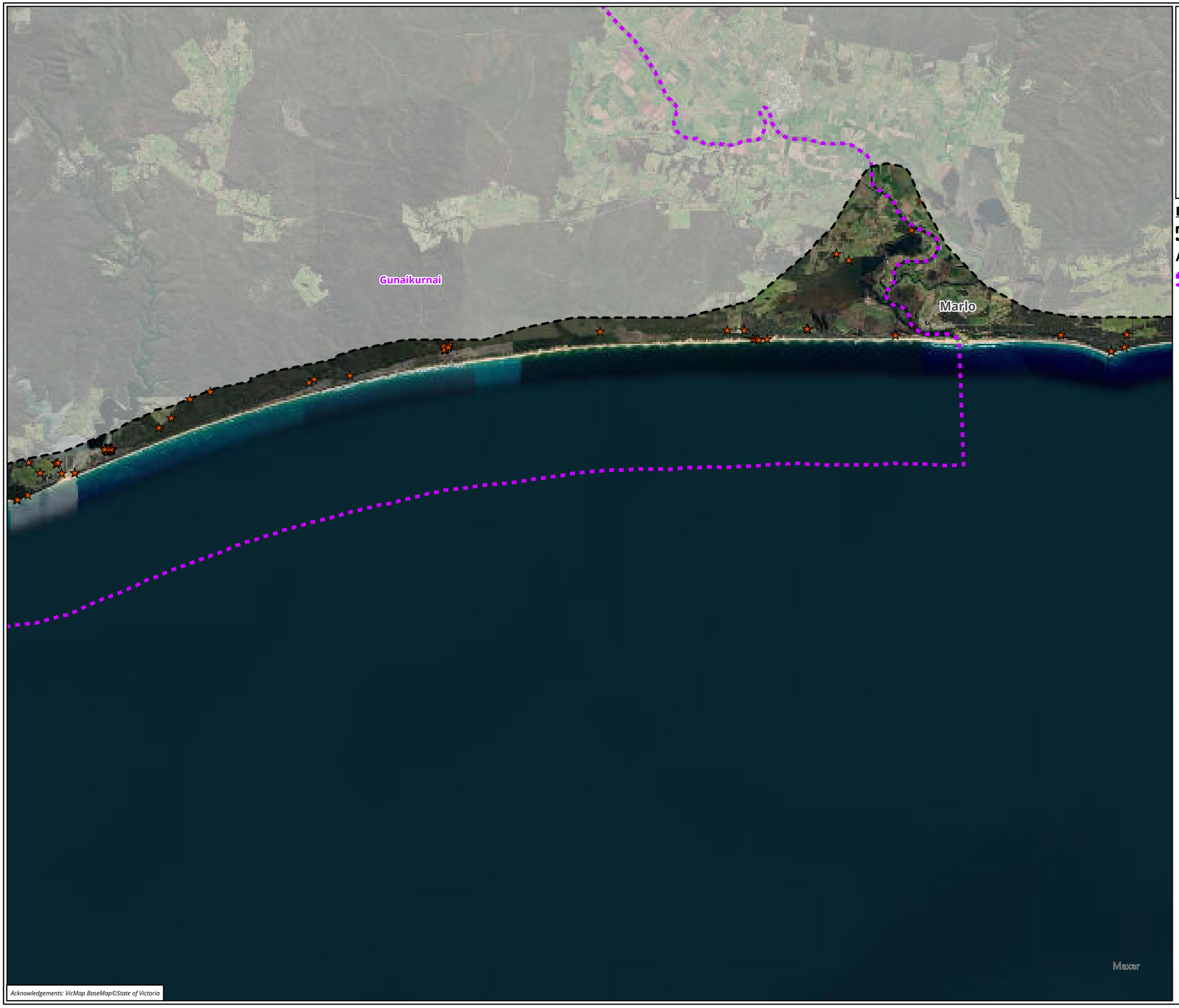
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Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

VAHR Place

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Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

VAHR Place

Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

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Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

VAHR Place

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Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

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Kilometers

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Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

VAHR Place

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Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

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Kilometers

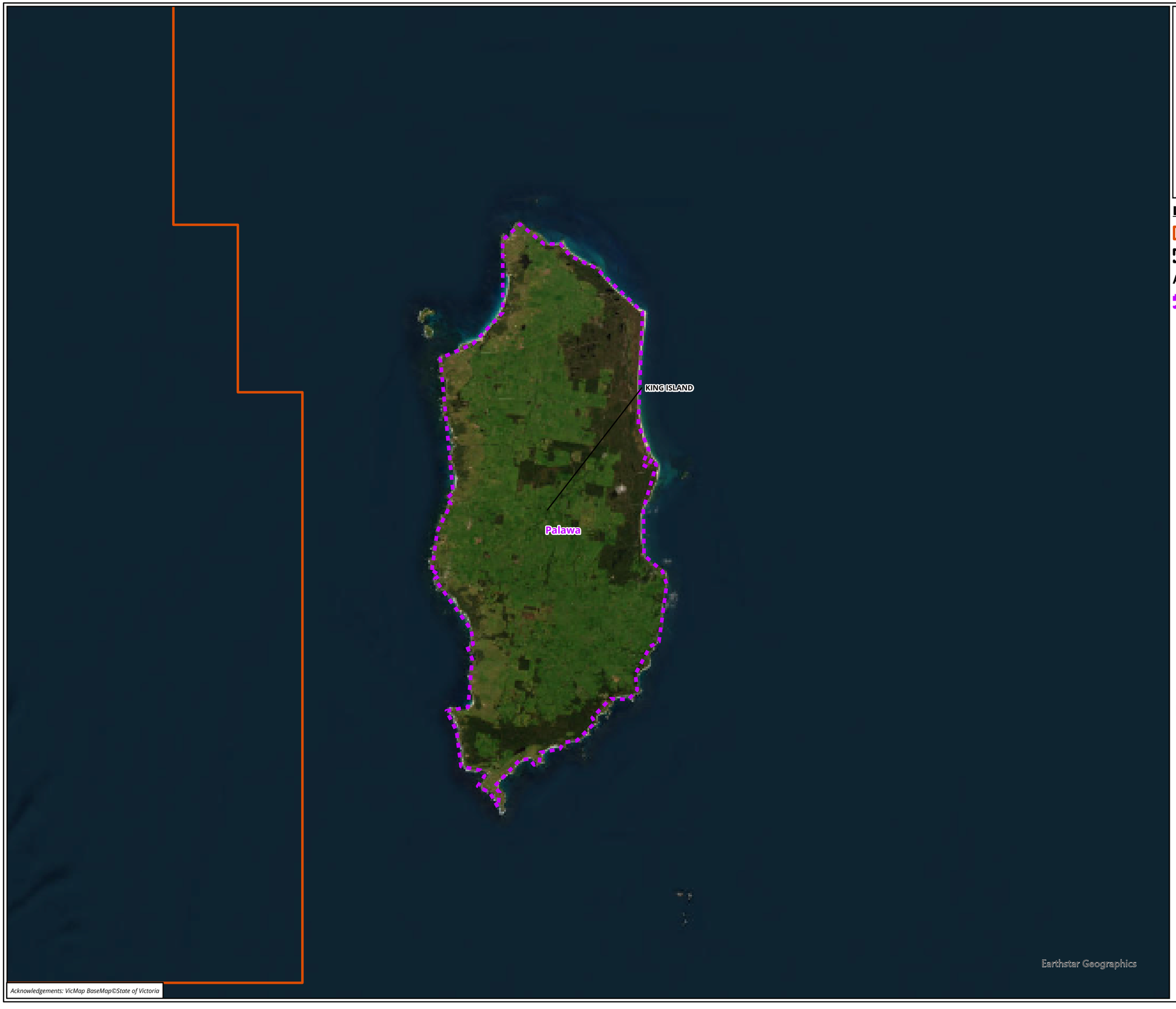
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Legend

- Activity Area
- Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

- RAP groups
- VAHR Place

Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

0 5 10 15 20 25

Kilometers

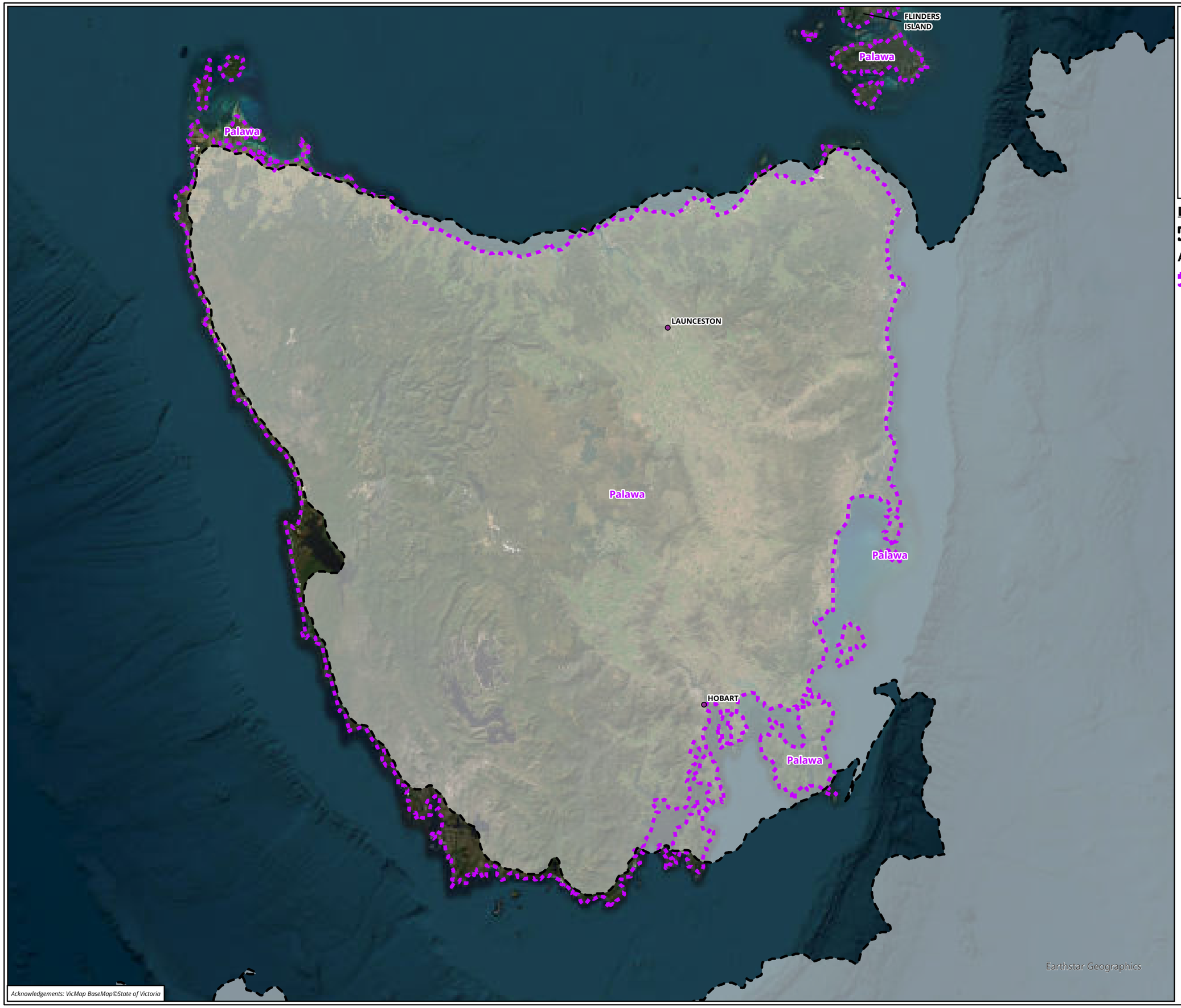
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Legend

Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

VAHR Place

Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

0 20 40 60 80 100

Kilometers

N

Scale: 1:2,000,000 @ A3

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Assessment area

Aborignal Cultural Heritage

RAP groups

VAHR Place

Figure x Location of Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register places in the Assessment area

0 5 10 15 20 25

Kilometers

N

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