



OPEN LETTER TO HERITAGE ADVISORS – INDICATIVE SPATIAL LAYERS DO NOT SHOW THE LEGISLATED EXTENT OF ABORIGINAL PLACES

I have become aware that some Heritage Advisors have provided incorrect advice to clients about the extent of Aboriginal places, because they have failed to check the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (the Register) records in relation to an Aboriginal place.

When undertaking your work:

- all relevant information available on the Register must be examined when obtaining the registered extent of an Aboriginal place
- do not rely solely on point data included in various indicative spatial layers.

Spatial layers do not necessarily reflect the full extent of the Aboriginal place recorded on the Register. This is because the requirement for data recording the digital polygon extent of Aboriginal places has only been a part of the registration process since 2010. Many Aboriginal places (particularly older recordings) are represented on spatial layers by coordinates only. For example, the registration of a shell midden may extend over several hundreds of meters but only be shown as a point on screen.

For clarity, the registered extent of an Aboriginal place is set out within a place's registration records. These are readily accessible to Heritage Advisors when accessing the Register through ACHRIS, and it is incumbent on Heritage Advisors to check. Failure to do so may result in harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage or a Cultural Heritage Management Plan not being prepared when required.

Any enquiries about this matter should be addressed to Ms Sarah Burger, Senior Heritage Policy Officer on 0459 918 809.

Yours sincerely

Harry Webber

Director Heritage Services, First Peoples – State Relations

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