

3.2 Climate, Vegetation, Physiography

The Sheffield area enjoys a temperate climate with the summer months between November and March recording temperatures rising to a mean of 22°C in February from a low of 6°C during the winter months.

Average rainfall is approximately 1140 mm and is in general higher in the elevated country of the south and south-western portions of the area. Wettest months are July and August which record a mean of 160 mm for the two months.

Thick eucalypt rain forest with myrtle and sassafras are restricted to areas of high rainfall. They are best developed on the flanks of the Gog Range and along the gorges of the Wilmot and Forth Rivers. In the central and over much of the northern margin of the area the rich basalt soils have been cleared for crop and dairy farming. Elsewhere stunted eucalypt forest with light undergrowth is common. Plantations of pines have been established within the Beulah and Gog Range areas.

The physiography of the E.L. is dominated along the south-eastern margin of the Licence boundary by the east-west trending Gog Range. It forms part of a prominent mountain range which extends to the west and of which Mt. Roland (1231 m a.s.l.) forms the highest elevation in the district. The land falls away to the north from the range where it is dissected by the north east and northerly flowing Wilmot, Forth and Mersey Rivers. These rivers have incised down through Tertiary basalt into Palaeozoic rocks to form rugged hill landforms adjacent to the rivers with the basalt now occupying the interfluvial areas.