

## **Inquiry into the Protections within the Victorian Planning Framework Submission responding to (4) Protecting heritage in Victoria**

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### **(b) possible federal involvement in heritage protection**

The federal involvement in heritage protection should be in providing the big picture education of the community on the value of heritage in general - at a local, state and Commonwealth level. The federal government should be leading by example in protection of government assets and in the promotion of the importance of heritage to communities, economies, social well-being and climate action. Federal funding and support for incentive schemes distributed to state government for the care and protection of heritage places of local significance would also be beneficial.

Awareness and education about the value of heritage as well as incentive schemes for heritage property owners and managers need to sit alongside heritage protection and planning controls and these are the areas that federal government can be involved.

There are a lot of heritage custodians out there – lets support them better! The planning system in relation to heritage would work better if heritage owners and managers feel like they are better supported and valued at all levels of government, but particularly at a federal level.

### **(c) separating heritage protection from planning administration**

Heritage protection should retained as part of planning administration, but it should not be limited to planning administration. Other Council and state departments need to support and play a role in heritage protection – economic teams, arts teams, community engagement teams, cultural project teams. For heritage to protection to be successful, there needs to be a more holistic and diverse understanding of its value and purpose.

### **(e) the appointment of independent local and state heritage advisers**

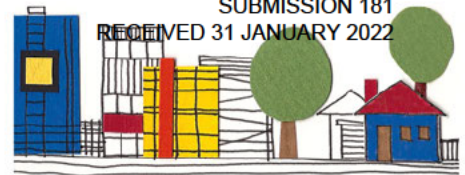
Inconsistent heritage advice and differing levels of resources focussed on heritage within Councils causes major issues in relation to the protection and management of heritage in Victoria. This has greatly contributed to the negative perceptions of heritage in the community and particularly of heritage property owners and managers trying to navigate the heritage planning system.

The implementation of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 in relation to heritage would benefit greatly from the establishment of a well-resourced state heritage planning team (heritage advisers and heritage planners) in the Planning Department. This team could provide consistent advice and support, analyse and resolve issues occurring across Councils, prepare overarching policies and guidelines to be used across all Councils and disseminate consistent information in relation to local heritage protection and planning issues across the state.

The appointment of independent heritage advisers within Council to provide advice and support across all Council Departments with at least some element of resourcing by the state government would also go a long way in assisting Councils to address consistency issues, gaps in heritage protection, documentation backlog and ongoing education of Council staff in heritage processes and practice. The state planning heritage team mentioned above should have some oversight over the appointment of these heritage advisers and their required expertise, role and code of conduct to help address the inconsistent and ad-hoc nature of this service that is currently provided across the State.

### **(f) the role of Councils in heritage protection**

The role of Councils in heritage protection is fundamental – it needs to happen at a local level to be meaningful for the community. Most of Victoria's important heritage is protected at a local level, but this is not reflected in the support provided to Council, by state or federal government, to undertake this role.



A broader understanding and application of heritage principles across Council is required in areas other than just planning. There is a role for Council in heritage protection relating to heritage asset management, leading by example, understanding the history of the area, educating on why we protect heritage and the value of heritage, celebrating heritage, providing incentives to heritage property owners and interpreting heritage. All of these processes undertaken by Council, but not necessarily in the planning team, will help to help foster positive perceptions towards heritage in the community and support the planning department in their administration of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* in relation to heritage.



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