

MOORABOOL HERITAGE STRATEGY 2024-2028

BACKGROUND REPORT

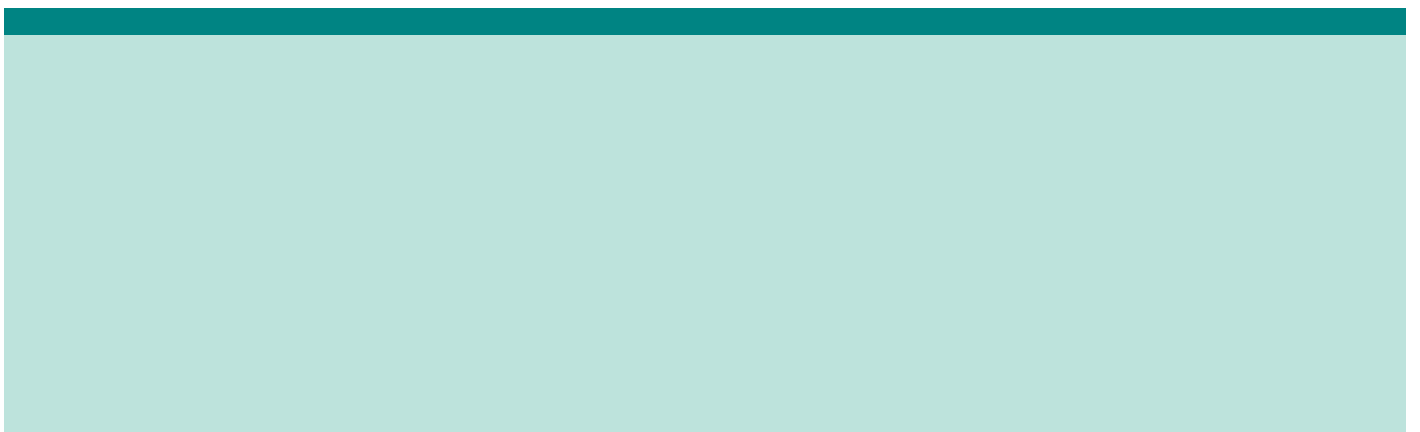


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I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 MOORABOOL SHIRE – BACKGROUND

History

Ancient Connections

First Peoples forged their connections with the area now known as Moorabool Shire deep in time, at least 40,000 years ago. Moorabool takes its name from the nocturnal Stone-curlew bird that lives by the river, meaning ‘Monster’ in Wadawurrung traditional language.¹ At nighttime, the bird lets out a high-pitched cry, which the Wadawurrung would use as a warning sign for children nearing too close to the river in the dark.

Prior to European settlement, the central portion of what is now the State of Victoria was occupied by five communities of Aboriginal peoples who shared some common language, as well as political, social, religious and economic affiliations. They identified themselves as members of the great Kulin Nation.

Three of these groups today make up Moorabool Shire’s Traditional Owners, being the Wurundjeri, Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples.² As part of the Kulin Nation, these communities moved seasonally across approximately two million hectares of land, forging important relationships between clans, landscapes, sites and resources.

Oral traditions provide that Kulin peoples and their lands, waterways, animals and plants were created by the all-powerful Bunjil spirit, which took the form of a wedge tail eagle.³ Of particular spiritual importance within Moorabool is Lal Lal Falls, known as ‘the resting place of Bunjil’.⁴

Pastoralism and agriculture

The arrival of European settlers on Australian shores brought with it dramatic change to the lives, traditions, food sources and social fabric of Aboriginal peoples. Some early pioneers engaged in productive communication and trade with Aboriginal peoples, while others clashed with Traditional Owners over the competing value systems of sedentary Europeans and nomadic Aboriginal societies.⁵

The earliest record of European settlement in the Moorabool Shire region is from 1837, when the upper reaches of the Leigh and Moorabool Rivers were formally surveyed by the Government. Settlers established grazing lands for sheep and cattle, in the form of large farms that lent

¹ ‘Moorabool River’, contributed by Wadawurrung for Corangamite Catchment Management Authority website

² Registered Aboriginal Parties representing these Traditional Owner groups are the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

³ Clark, ID, *Aboriginal Languages and Clans: An historical atlas of western and central Victoria*, Department of Geography and Environmental Science, Monash University, Melbourne, c1990.

⁴ Buninyong & District Historical Society Inc. Newsletter, June 2008.

⁵ ‘George Augustus Robinson’, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 2, 1967.

themselves to other agricultural activities, such as crops and dairying. In Bacchus Marsh, market gardens and orchards flourished amidst the fertile soils of the river plains and continue so today. Scattered across the Shire are former pastoral homesteads and farm complexes that remain as landmarks of the earliest days of European industry.

With pastoral and farming activities came small, rural settlements, which later developed into towns with services including post offices, churches, hotels and schools. Other trades and operations soon sprang up in support of the burgeoning agricultural community, including chaff and flour mills, breweries, blacksmiths, chicory and brickmaking.

Searching for gold

The discovery of gold in Moorabool Shire from the early-1850s saw a rapid increase in emigrants from all over the world, and in turn, a rapid demise in local Aboriginal populations. The Board for the Protection of Aborigines established large missions across what is now the State of Victoria, to forcibly separate Aboriginal peoples from goldmining areas and valuable pastoral land, disrupting ancient ways of life for generations.⁶

Gold was discovered in several locations across the Shire, including at Blackwood, Barrys Reef, Golden Point, Simmons Reef, Gordon, Mt Egerton, Mt Doran, Morrisons, and Elaine. Mines and other related industries proliferated the region, especially sawmilling, which provided integral timber supplies.

Bacchus Marsh and Ballan were mainstays on the route from Melbourne to Ballarat, travelled by many thousands of migrants in search of better fortunes on the Victorian goldfields. As such, their streets are filled with many commercial, public, and residential buildings that symbolise the wealth and social life of the period. Much of Moorabool's goldrush sites and material culture remains and is now considered part of the best-surviving gold mining landscape in the world.

While local gold production began to decline from the late-1850s, gold prospecting still occurs at a much smaller scale in some parts of the Shire. Calls to 'unlock' former goldmining land and once expansive pastoral runs saw settlement of Moorabool Shire intensify in the latter half of the 19th century. Agriculture, market produce, and extractive industries then re-asserted themselves as the dominant forms of commercial enterprise in the Shire and remain so today.

Rich in natural resources

Across the Shire's diverse mix of mountain and forested ranges, open volcanic plains and elevated landforms, run the branches and tributaries of the Moorabool, Werribee and Lerderderg Rivers. These waterways provide for rugged gorges, steep ravines and rocky outcrops in areas including the well-known Lal Lal and Moorabool Falls, which have been places of public recreation since the 19th century, and of spiritual significance to the Kulin Nation for thousands of years.⁷

The Shire's network of rivers, gorges, and sunk lands facilitated the construction of various water reservoirs, weirs, and irrigation dams that supported population expansion, many of which are still in use today. More than 74% of Moorabool Shire comprises water catchments, State Forests, State Parks and National Parks.

Below ground, Moorabool Shire contains deposits of geologically significant resources such as sand, iron ore, brown coal, and gold. Whilst coal mining is on the decline, the Shire's quarries continue to

⁶ Rowe, D & Jacobs, W, *Moorabool West Heritage Study*, Vol. 2, p. 11, 2016.

⁷ Rowe, D & Jacobs, W, *Moorabool West Heritage Study*, Vol. 2, p. 1, 2016.

produce aggregate resources which contribute significantly to Melbourne and Victoria's construction industries.

Traditional Owner connections to Moorabool Shire remain strong and part of a living cultural tradition, although transformed as a consequence of European settlement. Grazing, agriculture, and provision of infrastructure such as roads, railways and water reservoirs, and particularly gold mining and sawmilling, played important roles in this transformation.⁸ Forested areas were stripped for their timber, and gullies were pockmarked with mine shafts for several years after the goldrushes ended.⁹ Today, regenerated vegetation gives little hint as to the landscape's former looks, and the Shire's distinct natural assets remain a popular backdrop for public recreation.

Growing community

Moorabool Shire is one of Victoria's fastest growing regional municipalities. Over the next 20 years, the Shire's population is expected to almost double, from 40,339 people to 65,693. As directed by State and Local Policy, the majority of this growth is planned for Bacchus Marsh and Ballan.

As Moorabool Shire grows, it is important that heritage values remain front of mind, particularly as development progresses into previously rural areas. In the context of change, conservation can be achieved by using heritage values, whether natural, built or cultural, to inspire planning and design responses.

⁸ Rowe, D & Jacobs, W, *Moorabool West Heritage Study*, Volume 2, p. 81, 2016.

⁹ Dingle, T, *The Victorians – Settling*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, McMahons Point, 1984, p. 52.

I.2 PURPOSE OF THE BACKGROUND REPORT

The purpose of the background report is to assist Council in the preparation of the Moorabool Heritage Strategy 2024-2028. It is largely informed by a review of the existing Heritage Strategy 2016-2020 and consultation undertaken in 2022/23.

The review looks at the structure of the existing Heritage Strategy, as well as changes to legislation, policy and municipal context in the years since the Heritage Strategy was prepared, and considers the relevance of the challenges and opportunities identified. It also provides an audit of the action plan, noting the status of each action.

Consultation was undertaken with the community, internal Council departments, historical societies, and Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) to inform the preparation of the new Strategy.

The report outlines the review of the existing Heritage Strategy and outcomes of the consultation. Together these inform the recommendations within the background report, which will be used to prepare the new Heritage Strategy.

Figure 1 below shows the process undertaken in preparing the new Heritage Strategy.

Figure 1: Process flowchart for the preparation of the Heritage Strategy 2024-2028



2. REVIEW OF THE MOORABOOL HERITAGE STRATEGY 2016-2020

2.1 FORMAT OF THE STRATEGY

Heritage Victoria and the Department of Planning and Community Development (as it was named at the time of publication of the guidelines) have created a guide 'Municipal Heritage Strategies: A guide for Councils' (2012) to assist Councils in the preparation of Heritage Strategies.

The guide provides a template for heritage strategies, recommending a structure based on the following five sections:

- Council's Heritage Vision Statement
- Strategy Context – Local, State and National
- Heritage Challenges and Opportunities
- Heritage-related achievements
- Strategy Action Plan

The guide also recommends that heritage strategies have actions structured under these four themes:

- Knowing (i.e. identifying, assessing and documenting heritage places).
- Protecting (i.e. securing statutory protection for significant places, developing policy/guidelines to assist decision making, appropriate management).
- Supporting (i.e. incentives, advisory services, financial assistance).
- Communicating and Promoting (i.e. measures to raise awareness and appreciation of the heritage of the area)

The existing Heritage Strategy is structured based on this template. It also includes additional sections, being 'Council's Role in Heritage', the 'Municipal Strategic Statement' and 'Council Plan'. These sections, whilst relevant, are considered to best sit with the existing 'Strategy Context' section.

The existing Heritage Strategy also structures the action plan based on the four recommended themes. This approach is a logical way to group the actions.

The new Heritage Strategy will continue to follow the structure and themes set out in the guide.

2.2 REVIEW OF THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

A significant portion of the existing Heritage Strategy (6/20 of the pages) outlines the relevant legislative and policy context. A review of the content has found that some of this legislation is out of

date or redundant. In addition, new legislation or policy has been introduced. It is recommended that the new Strategy includes an updated legislative and policy section, and that this section is reduced in length as much as possible.

World Heritage

There is no world heritage policy section in the existing Heritage Strategy. It is timely to now incorporate this, recognising the significant progress being made in the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid, which includes Moorabool Shire. Moorabool may have one or more individual places that will form part of the bid's serial listing of representative sites, and this will likely be confirmed within the 2024-2028 period of the new Heritage Strategy. Understanding the legislative and policy context of managing a World Heritage site/s is therefore appropriate.

World Heritage Convention

The World Heritage Convention was adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) General Conference in 1972 and came into force in 1975. Australia was one of the first countries to ratify the Convention, which established the World Heritage List to enable cooperation among nations to conserve places of outstanding universal value. States that are parties to the Convention agree to identify, protect, conserve, and present World Heritage properties to the best of their ability with their own resources. The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 is Australia's main instrument for implementing its obligations under the World Heritage Convention.

National

There is no national policy listed in the existing Heritage Strategy. The following national policy applies to heritage and should be included in the new Heritage Strategy.

Burra Charter

Australia is a signatory to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). In 1979 Australia ICOMOS adopted the Burra Charter, which provides a best practice standard for managing cultural heritage places in Australia. It is designed for owners, managers and custodians of heritage places. The Charter highlights tangible and intangible heritage, including Aboriginal cultural heritage. It calls for consideration of fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records and related places and objects; and provides guidance for their interpretation. The current version of the Burra Charter was adopted in 2013.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 is Commonwealth legislation that can be used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to make applications to protect places and objects from injury or desecration. The places or objects in question must be of particular significance in accordance with Aboriginal traditional practices. The Act enables the Australian Government to protect important Indigenous areas and objects under immediate threat, if state or territory laws have not provided effective protection.

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) is the Australian Government's primary environment and heritage legislation. The provisions of the Act apply to places on the National Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List and World Heritage List. The EPBC Act protects certain nationally significant animals, plants, habitats or places, referred to as 'protected matters'.

The Commonwealth Heritage List, established under the EPBC Act, comprises natural, Indigenous and historic heritage places on Commonwealth lands and waters or under Australian Government control. Places on the List have been identified by the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources as having Commonwealth heritage values. Under the EPBC Act, there are penalties for anyone who takes an action that has or will have a significant impact on the national heritage values of a place.

State

There have been several changes to state and regional heritage policy since the existing Heritage Strategy was prepared, particularly for legislation. Further, some heritage legislation is not referenced in the existing Strategy and should be included in the new Heritage Strategy.

[Aboriginal Heritage Act 2016](#)

The Aboriginal Heritage Act 2016 is not referenced in the existing Heritage Strategy. The Act's purpose is for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. It provides for several organisations, bodies, functions and requirements, including establishment of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council, establishing Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs), establishing the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR), and setting out requirements for Cultural Heritage Management Plans.

[Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018](#)

The Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018 are not referenced in the existing Heritage Strategy. The Regulations give effect to the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2016. The Regulations prescribe standards and set out the circumstances in which a Cultural Heritage Management Plan should be prepared, including applicable fees and charges.

[Planning and Environment Act 1987](#)

The Planning and Environment Act Amendment 2021 (Feb 2021) brought into effect several changes to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. In relation to heritage, changes included to:

- Insert a new definition of “heritage building”, meaning a “...building which is a place, or forms part of a place, that has been given heritage protection under a planning scheme.”
- Introduce a new section 6B of the Act to enable a planning scheme to:
 - regulate or prohibit the development of land on which there is or was a heritage building that has been unlawfully demolished (in whole or in part) or fallen into disrepair; and
 - require that a permit must not be granted for the development of the land on which there is or was a heritage building that has been unlawfully demolished (in whole or in part) or fallen into disrepair, unless the development is for or includes the reconstruction or reinstatement of the heritage building, or the repair of the heritage building.
 - Allow a planning scheme to make provision for those matters for any one of the following specified purposes:
 - to further the objectives of planning in Victoria;
 - to deter persons from unlawfully demolishing heritage buildings, or allowing heritage buildings to fall into disrepair; or
 - to prevent persons from obtaining a benefit from unlawfully demolishing heritage buildings or allowing heritage buildings to fall into disrepair.
- Inserts a new section 131 of the Act, which enables the Governor in Council, to declare that land must not be developed or continue to be developed, and/or that land must not be used. Such an Order may only be made if a person has been found guilty of an offence in relation to unlawful demolition of a heritage building (or part thereof) on land that is the subject of the

Order. While an Order under section 131 is in effect, any permit and/or building permit that was issued prior to the Order taking effect in relation to the subject land is of no force or effect, and the responsible authority and relevant building surveyor (as applicable) must refuse to issue a permit and/or building permit in relation to that land.

Heritage Act 2017

The Heritage Act 2017 came into operation on 1 November 2017 and replaced the previous *Heritage Act 1995*. It introduces new streamlined processes and enforcement tools to ensure Victoria's significant heritage places and objects are appropriately protected. It applies to heritage places and objects of state significance, historical archaeological sites and maritime heritage. Key changes included:

- Updated fee structure for heritage approvals and appeals.
- A greater role of local government in permit processes to allow for local heritage concerns.
- Including sites aged 75 years or more on the Heritage Inventory rather than those 50 years or older.
- New compliance and enforcement tools that include stop orders, rectifications orders, and a liability offence to reduce the likelihood of works being undertaken without a permit.
- Changes to penalties including significant increases in maximum penalties for unauthorised works.

Heritage Amendment Bill 2023

The Victorian Parliament has passed the Heritage Amendment Bill 2023. Amendments to the Heritage Act 2017 came into effect on 1 February 2024. The amendments provide for:

- Online access to heritage documents, notices and hearings. These changes relate to issues that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic, in which documents held at Heritage Victoria and Heritage Council offices could not be provided for public access. The bill also enhances public access to Heritage Council hearings by providing for online hearings.
- Applications to exclude places and objects from the Victorian Heritage Register. The changes allow for applications to request that a place or object is excluded from the Victorian Heritage Register. If the place or object does not meet the required threshold, the exclusion will be granted. If it could meet the threshold, it will become a nomination for inclusion. The intent of this change is to allow potential state significance of a place or object to be established as quickly as possible, particularly in the early stages of a planning proposal where significance could be impacted.
- Several general amendments that improve the operation of the Heritage Act. These amendments include (not exhaustive list):
 - Requirement for permits to be issued in 45 business days rather than 60 days.
 - Allow Heritage Victoria to amend permit applications to get a better heritage outcome. Owner permission is required.
 - Allow applicants to make minor permit amendment requests without paying a fee.
 - Allow permit exemptions to be revoked if they do not reflect best heritage practice.
 - Allow the Heritage Council to use funds set aside as a security measure for a permit to ensure compliance with permit conditions.
 - Allow the Executive Director to remove archaeological sites from the Heritage Inventory where they are of low value or part of another listing.
 - Provide reasons for decisions by the Heritage Council's on whether to include a place or object in the Victorian Heritage Register.

[Heritage Regulations 2017](#)

New heritage regulations were introduced with the *Heritage Act 2017* which set out the requirements for the operation of the *Heritage Act 2017*. The regulations replaced the previous *Heritage Regulations 1996*. The *Heritage Regulations 2017* set fees, penalties and infringement offences, and establish document and form requirements.

[State Planning Policy](#)

There have been several VC Amendments that have made changes to State Planning Policy in relation to heritage, specifically VC141, VC148, VC155, VC160, VC226 and VC253.

VC141 (21 November 2017) made changes to reflect the new *Heritage Act 2017*. Specifically, it amended Clause 43.01 – Heritage Overlay, to ensure that an application to subdivide land for a place which is included in the Victorian Heritage Register is referred to the Executive Director under the *Heritage Act 2017*. It also amended Clause 66 – Referral and Notice Provisions, to include the Executive Director specified in the *Heritage Act 2017* as a determining referral authority for an application to subdivide a heritage place included in the Victorian Heritage Register

VC148 (31 July 2018) amended Clause 43.01 (Heritage Overlay) to require the schedule to the overlay to specify a statement of significance for each new heritage place included in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay (a three-month transition period applied). The statement of significance for a heritage place is an important document because it justifies the significance of the place as a basis for its inclusion in the Heritage Overlay and is required to be considered when deciding an application. The new requirement provides greater transparency and assists decision making because the statement form part of the planning scheme.

VC155 (26 October 2018) amended Clause 15.03-1S (Heritage Conservation) to include an additional strategy and policy guideline. This was added to address a gap in heritage conservation policy, to provide explicit policy support enabling decision-makers to consider whether it is appropriate to require the restoration or reconstruction of a heritage building in a Heritage Overlay that has been unlawfully or unintentionally demolished, to retain or interpret the cultural heritage significance of the building, streetscape or area.

VC160 (24 January 2020) amended Clause 43.01 (Heritage Overlay) to remove the requirement under Clause 43.01-5 to specify a statement of significance in the schedule to the overlay when the Heritage Overlay is applied on an interim basis. This allows a statement of significance to be prepared and included if the overlay is subsequently applied on a permanent basis.

VC226 (2 November 2022) made a number of changes to planning schemes to support solar energy systems. Specifically, it amended Clause 43.01 (Heritage Overlay) to only require a planning permit for visible solar energy systems where controls are specified to apply to a heritage place in a schedule to the overlay. It also amended Clause 59.07 (Applications under a Heritage Overlay) to introduce decision guidelines for solar energy systems and to update wording in information requirements and decision guidelines to ensure consistent terms are used.

VC253 (14 December 2023) amended Clause 43.01 (Heritage Overlay) to exempt a ‘small second dwelling’ from a planning permit if the building height does not exceed 5 metres, and the building is finished using muted tones and colours.

[Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay, DELWP \(August 2018\)](#)

Planning Practice Note 1 provides guidance on the use of the Heritage Overlay. Significant changes were made to this practice note in 2018 to reflect changes made by Amendment VC148. Changes to

the practice note include updated information on incorporating, saving and displaying statements of significance, inclusion of an example Statement of Significance, and expanded guidance on how to arrange listings of heritage places in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay

Local

There has been a number of changes to local policy and strategy in relation to heritage since the existing Heritage Strategy was prepared, in particular the adoption of new strategies. These strategies should be referenced in the new Heritage Strategy.

Moorabool Planning Scheme

C100 (gazetted on 9 February 2023) introduced the new Planning Policy Framework to the Moorabool Planning Scheme. Whilst translation of the old local policy framework to the new structure does not introduce any new policy (the translation is policy neutral) it does change the structure of the planning scheme. Local heritage policy content now sits within the municipal planning strategy (Clause 02.03.-5) in Clause 15.03 Heritage.

Clause 74.02 Further Strategic Work listed two actions related to heritage;

- *Undertake heritage studies for areas of the Shire not covered by the Bacchus Marsh or West Moorabool heritage studies, including a gaps assessment of existing heritage studies.*
- *Update the Heritage Overlay to reflect the findings of the West Moorabool heritage Study.*

These actions should be included in the Heritage Strategy 2024-2028.

Visitor Economy Strategy 2023-2027

Moorabool is known for its legacy of farming and Victorian Gold Rush history embedded in its villages, as well as a strong First Nations extending from deep time up till the present. These layers of time, however, are yet to have been intricately understood or celebrated and activated as tourism experiences. Recognising this, the Visitor Economy Strategy identifies arts, culture, and heritage as an emerging strength for Moorabool Shire, with a growing culture of local makers and artisans.

Arts, Culture and Activation is represented in the Strategy as one of six themes, with the focus being to *'Improve the visitor experience through a focus on vibrant high amenity townships, art, culture and heritage'*. Priority projects relating to heritage include:

- Undertake a township activation strategy for Bacchus Marsh and Ballan with consideration of streetscaping, arts installations, lighting installations and placemaking improvements.
- Undertake an arts and cultural masterplan for Moorabool's small towns and villages. This will comprise:
 - An Lal Lal Arts Installation Series, which includes art installations, lighting and projections at a range of key sites including Lal Lal Historic Railway, Lal Lal Water Tower and Iron Mine and Blast Furnace.
 - An audit of disused and underutilised heritage buildings and develop a prospectus for commercial use and activation.
- Develop a concept plan and business case for the activation of the avenue of honour
- Work with Traditional Owners to identify cultural heritage assets that could be further activated

Arts and Culture Strategy 2021-2025

Heritage is intrinsically tied to arts and culture. Council's first Arts and Culture Strategy guides how Council and the community can work together to develop a creative scene across the Shire. It also outlines the role Council will play and eight focus areas for the Strategy. One of these focus areas is

‘Connect with your unique Heritage and Environment’. Council’s commitment under this focus area is to:

- Acknowledge and promote the histories and culture of First Nations peoples.
- Support the development of First Nations work.
- Use arts and culture to provide deeper engagement with our heritage and environment.
- Encourage a diversity of creative and cultural events and activities.
- Link creative opportunities to the Shire’s parks and natural environment.

[Our Community Vision for 2030 \(2021\)](#)

Provides a 10-year vision for the Shire and informs Council’s four-year Council Plan. The Community Vision is developed from community consultation that reflected five themes. The themes relating to heritage are ‘Maintaining our rural charm’ and ‘Well-planned neighbourhoods’. These themes note the importance of preserving the distinct rural character of Moorabool’s small towns, and the importance of planning for future growth whilst being sympathetic to heritage and the environment.

[Moorabool Urban Design Guidelines \(2020\)](#)

This is a non-statutory document that provides guidance for applicants and planners in relation to heritage streetscapes, places and neighbourhood character. It sets out guidance for urban design in infill and greenfield areas, as well as for areas adjacent to heritage places.

[Ballan Strategic Directions \(2018\)](#)

Historic buildings, built form and streetscapes are a key defining character of Ballan. There are a significant number of heritage sites in Ballan, with further sites identified in the West Moorabool Heritage Strategy, including two proposed heritage precincts.

The Ballan Strategic Directions sets out a clear framework to guide the growth of Ballan, whilst taking into consideration the existing character and charm of the town. This framework includes a vision, and key strategic directions each with key issues, objectives, strategies, and actions. The below relate specifically to heritage.

Key issues/Considerations

- Managing Ballan’s existing heritage character in context of growth pressures.
- Absence of Ballan specific planning controls to assist in protecting valued character and heritage elements of the town.
- Opportunities to revitalise the town centre through public realm improvements, recognition of heritage elements and other activation projects.

Strategies

- In Minimal Residential Growth Areas - Conserve and enhance those elements that contribute to the environmental significance, heritage values and the preferred neighbourhood character of the Precinct.
- Improve connectivity within and to the town through a series of wayfinding signage to key destinations and sites of cultural and heritage significance.
- Ensure any new development complements the character of the town centre core in particular in regard to its series of heritage places, predominately single storey shops, no setbacks from the street, materials, roof forms etc.

Actions

- Prepare a signage strategy to improve wayfinding within the town to key destinations but also through signage that promotes key heritage and cultural sites. The signage strategy should

also consider opportunities to promote tourism within the town and at key gateways to the town.

The preparation of a signage strategy is a broader Council wide strategy, that should consider a range of matters, including heritage. Whilst this action is not considered appropriate for inclusion in the new Heritage Strategy, it is noted that a Gateways Strategy is currently being prepared. The draft Gateways Strategy provides guidance relating to heritage, including avoiding placing signage in line of sight or near heritage sites, and the need to seek the advice of Council's Heritage Advisor where any new gateway elements, including planting, are proposed near heritage sites. It is considered appropriate that the Heritage Strategy provide some direction and action regarding heritage signage and interpretation.

[Housing Bacchus Marsh to 2041 \(2018\)](#)

The main street of Bacchus Marsh comprises of a number of historic buildings. Historical streetscapes incorporating heritage buildings and plantings are located within the inner areas of the town and along the Avenue of Honour.

The Bacchus Marsh Housing Strategy provides examines the Bacchus Marsh housing situation and assesses important issues such as supply and demand, housing mix, lot sizes, affordability and special housing needs. The Strategy also addresses neighbourhood character in Bacchus Marsh and identifies a framework (via 32 neighbourhood character precincts) for the introduction of a suite of new residential zones. The introduction of these zones and through Amendment C79 (gazetted 15 November 2018) will direct development to preferred locations and away from other sensitive locations that cannot support development for a range of reasons.

The Strategy identifies the existing character of each precinct followed by recommendation for the preferred character should be. Heritage is identified where it is a defining character of the precinct e.g. Precinct 20, Existing Character - this precinct covers Lerderberg Street as its own precinct, due to this street being identified as the most intact street within Bacchus Marsh with both strong heritage and character values. Dwellings exhibit varied styles, materials and eras, however there are several dwellings within the precinct that represent a specific housing era and style such as Edwardian and Californian bungalow style dwellings and therefore the precinct also contains a range of housing with heritage values, some of which have been included within a Heritage Overlay.

Preferred Character - Built form will be of a modest scale and be sympathetic to the existing heritage and character of the precinct, however innovative and unique built form that blends with the existing character will be encouraged.

[Bacchus Marsh Urban Growth Framework \(2018\)](#)

The Bacchus Marsh Urban Growth Framework (UGF) defines a settlement boundary and identifies future growth areas for Bacchus Marsh. Cultural and geological heritage, and built heritage were identified as issues within the UGF.

“Cultural and Geological Heritage – there are many sites of cultural heritage and/or geological significance across the district. In many cases these are of state or national significance, such as Parwan Lava Caves, and are on private land. More effective management and, in some cases, ensuring controlled public access (such as for geological research) are important outcomes.”

“Built Heritage - Bacchus Marsh is noted for its historic buildings and structures. Preservation and management of these assets is important to the local economy, tourism opportunities and

connection with place. The town centre also has heritage value as one of the first settlements in Victoria.”

There are a number of objectives and strategies in the UGF relating to heritage:

- Objective - Preserve and manage important heritage assets in the district including places of significance for Aboriginal people, the Avenue of Honour and town centre.
- Strategy - Ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage assets are protected.
- Strategy - Ensure other heritage assets in Bacchus Marsh are protected and included within Heritage Overlays under the Moorabool Planning Scheme.

Further to this, an action within the UGF is to update the heritage study for Bacchus Marsh.

2.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The existing Heritage Strategy identified 11 heritage challenges and opportunities. The review found that many of these challenges and opportunities still exist and should be carried forward to the new Heritage Strategy (Appendix 6.1). In addition, new challenges and opportunities were identified through other elements of the review and the consultation process.

One of the challenges addressed during the life of the existing Heritage Strategy was the need to establish a regular heritage advisory service. A heritage advisory service was established in February 2020 and is available one day per week. The service is available to anyone seeking advice in relation to a heritage site, including Council departments. The service is frequently used by:

- Landowners or prospective purchasers seeking to undertake works to a heritage property.
- Strategic and Statutory Planners who refer planning scheme amendments and permit applications for review.
- Assets, Capital Works and Engineering in relation to Council owned heritage sites, capital projects and streetscape improvements relating to heritage sites.

2.4 FOUR-YEAR ACTION PLAN

The existing Heritage Strategy contains a four-year action plan. The review identified that most of these actions have been completed (Appendix 6.2). Of the 18 actions, 14 have been completed, with two in progress, and a further two not yet commenced. The review also identified that many of the actions were unclear in their intent due to how they were worded or lack of wording. For example, some actions are simply listed without context, such as ‘Victorian Heritage Database’, or ‘Interpretation’. It was also identified that there was some duplication across actions.

Where actions are in progress or not commenced, the review considers whether these should be carried forward to the new Heritage Strategy. In addition, new actions may be identified through other elements of the review and through the consultation process.

2.5 OTHER STRATEGY CONTENT

The following sections of the existing Heritage Strategy were also reviewed.

Council’s Heritage Vision Statement

The content is generally appropriate, however needs to be re-written to provide a vision that is more concise, and to ensure consistency with the community consultation.

Council's Role in Heritage

The content is generally appropriate, however needs to be updated. Recommend this remains as a separate section.

Municipal Strategic Statement

The section is appropriate, however needs to be updated to reflect the current municipal strategic statement and moved to the local policy context section.

Council Plan

The section is appropriate, however needs to be updated to reflect the current Council Plan and moved to the local policy context section.

Heritage Related Achievements

This section is appropriate, however should be updated to reflect on Council's achievements since the existing Heritage Strategy was written. These achievements are:

- Appointment of Council Heritage Advisor.
- Establishment of the Heritage Advisory Service.
- Increase to Heritage Advisory Service Budget.
- Inclusion of Moorabool Shire Council in the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.
- Formalised a heritage check process for s29 applications (applications for demolition).
- Inclusion of a heritage page on Councils website.
- Refresh of the Bacchus Marsh Heritage Trail Brochure.
- Installation of Heritage Street Signs on 12 streets in Bacchus Marsh, Myrniong, and Ballan.
- Completion of the WMHS Stage 2A and commencement of its implementation via Planning Scheme Amendment C85.
- Ballan and Spargo Creek Mineral Springs Artwork and Interpretive Signs.
- New Terms of Reference for the Heritage Advisory Committee.

Achievements by others relating to heritage;

- National Trust 2020 Victorian Tree of the Year – Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour.
- Living Heritage Grant - Bacchus Marsh Chicory Kiln (Bacchus Marsh Lions Club).
- Restoring Community War Memorial and Avenue of Honour Grant - Barrys Reef Avenue (Ballan RSL).

These achievements are drawn from the review of the existing Heritage Strategy, and the consultation undertaken. It is noted that other achievements may be identified through further consultation.

3. CONSULTATION

3.1 CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation is important to assist in understanding the views of internal and external stakeholders and the community, and to ensure that the new Heritage Strategy accurately reflects this. Through the consultation process, feedback was sought in relation to the existing Heritage Strategy and to identify views on a range of heritage topics and themes to support the drafting of a new Heritage Strategy.

Consultation consisted of the following;

- Councillor Briefing.
- Community consultation consisting of a Have You Say webpage with survey, letters to property owners (subject to a heritage overlay).
- External meetings with the Moorabool Heritage Advisory Committee, Bacchus Marsh District Historical Society, Ballan Historical Society, Blackwood Historical Society, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, and Wurundjeri Aboriginal Corporation¹⁰.
- Internal meetings with Council's Heritage Advisor, Statutory Planning, Growth and Development, Assets, Economic Development and Arts, Parks and Gardens, and Capital Works

3.2 CONSULTATION RESULTS

The results of the consultation as outlined above are outlined in Appendix 3.

A summary of the consultation is provided across the following themes below:

Knowledge sharing

- Increased internal staff knowledge of Council heritage assets.
- Internal staff training and education.
- Develop interactive list/map of heritage places within the Shire.
- Low level of awareness of Council's Heritage Advisory Service.
- Improved heritage knowledge, including misconceptions.
- Proactively engaging with landowners e.g. heritage information kit, heritage guidelines.

Celebrating and storytelling

- Increase heritage signage and way finding.
- Prepare a thematic history for the Shire.
- Increased storytelling – Indigenous heritage, European settlement, goldrush.
- Increase information/promotion of heritage – website, booklets/factsheets, social media posts, brochures at visitor information centre, Moorabool News articles.
- Prepare book on the history of the Shire.

Heritage-based tourism

- Opportunities to highlight heritage in our towns through visitor information e.g. signage and stories.
- Events to celebrate tourism e.g. heritage tours/trails, history weekend, heritage festival.

¹⁰ Officers reached out to the following groups regarding engagement however no response was provided - Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, Bungaree Historical Society.

- Growing awareness and interest in nature-based heritage and First Nations tourism.
- Increase linkages between heritage and art.
- Increased celebration of heritage by businesses.
- Development of Shire wide historical trail.
- Establishment of a heritage museum.

First Nations people and stories

- Opportunities for increased Traditional Owner engagement.
- Increased Aboriginal cultural heritage celebration and recognition.
- Indigenous place naming.
- Improved understanding of shared Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage and values.
- Importance of early engagement.
- Increased First Nations' signage and storytelling, and sharing of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage together.
- Preparation of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Sense of place and identity

- Development pressure and ensuring heritage buildings are retained, and new development respects the existing heritage values.
- Recognition and interpretation of heritage in growth areas.
- Maintain existing identities of growth areas, whilst providing for development.
- Maintaining heritage streetscapes and character.
- First Nations involvement, in terms of interpretation, place naming and storytelling within growth precincts.

Protecting important places

- Identification of heritage places and protection via Heritage Overlay.
- Progress existing heritage studies through to Heritage Overlays.
- Development of heritage guidelines.
- Enforcement of heritage by neglect.
- Lack of storage and display for heritage artefacts held by historical societies.
- Management of Council-owned heritage assets, including conservation management plans.
- Review of sites without a citation/statement of significance and ensuring HERMES is up to date.
- Review of sites not considered significant in the Bacchus Marsh Heritage Study, 1995.
- Locating and mapping all sites identified in existing heritage studies.
- Increased support for owners of heritage buildings.
- Greater preservation of gold rush sites.

It is noted that some of the dot points may sit across multiple themes.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MOORABOOL HERITAGE STRATEGY 2024-2028

This section provides recommended actions and challenges and opportunities for the Moorabool Heritage Strategy 2024-2028. The recommendations consist of those that have been carried forward from the existing Heritage Strategy, along with additional challenges, opportunities and actions identified through other elements of the review and through consultation.

It is important in identifying actions that they are achievable, both in terms of budget, but also timeframes and staff resources, noting the four-year life of the new Heritage Strategy.

It should be noted that whilst some challenges, opportunities and actions, sit across multiple themes, they have been listed within the theme which they most closely align to.

Challenges
Knowing
Securing funding to progress further heritage studies on a staged basis for the balance of sites identified in the Stage 2 West Moorabool Heritage Study*
Absence of thematic history that covers the entire Shire
Significant amount of work and research required to progress heritage sites via heritage studies and planning scheme amendments
Ensuring all aspects of Moorabool’s heritage is identified, represented, documented, protected and promoted
Lack of awareness of significant Aboriginal cultural sites within the Shire
Understanding and respecting that the relationship Aboriginal people have to their heritage, does not always fit within traditional western ideas of heritage and heritage management
Protecting
Securing funding to undertake conservation management plans for Council owned/managed sites on the Victorian Heritage Register*
Ensuring existing sites on the Heritage Overlay are accurately listed, and have heritage citations, including statements of significance*
Time, cost and resources associated with protecting places of heritage significance
Facilitating growth and development of the Shire whilst protecting its heritage
Owners not maintaining heritage places through neglect and/or lack of resources
Identifying and protecting Aboriginal heritage places in collaboration with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung
Lack of guidance to demonstrate how heritage sites can be adaptively reused in new developments

Lack of space for storage and display for heritage artefacts held by historical societies
Supporting
Developing the ability to support owners of heritage places through a variety of mechanisms
Supporting Council asset managers in managing heritage places through policy development, funding and resourcing
Ensuring the Heritage Advisory Service can meet future demand
Lack of a dedicated heritage staff resource within Council
Communicating and Promoting
Low level of awareness of Council's Heritage Advisory Service
Information about the heritage and history of Moorabool can be hard to find online
Securing funding for Council projects that promote and celebrate heritage

* Challenges that have been carried forward.

Opportunities
Knowing
Increase engagement with Traditional Owners and Registered Aboriginal Parties*
Build heritage knowledge among Council staff
Locating and mapping heritages sites identified within existing heritage studies
Protecting
Improve knowledge and management of Council owned/managed heritage assets*
Development of heritage guidelines
Supporting
Improve community knowledge and management of heritage*
Increased support for owners of heritage properties
Retention and sensitive integration of heritage sites and features into new development and growth areas
Communicating and Promoting
Promote Moorabool's heritage to the community and visitors*
Build on existing linkages between art and heritage
Increased heritage signage and wayfinding
Leverage off existing regional tourism partnerships and heritage events to raise the profile of heritage within the Shire
Encourage heritage naming and interpretation within new developments and growth areas, including place naming in Traditional Aboriginal language
Increased storytelling – both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal
Increased Aboriginal cultural heritage celebration and recognition
Proposed Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid
Strong community interest in heritage and desire to see heritage protected

* Opportunities that have been carried forward.

Actions
Knowing
Seek funding to progress further heritage studies on a staged basis for the balance of sites identified in the Stage 2 West Moorabool Heritage Study.*
Prepare heritage citations for all 27 sites that do not currently have one. A review of the curtilage should be undertaken at the same time. A planning scheme amendment will be required to incorporate the Statements of Significance in the Planning Scheme, and make any changes to the curtilage*.

Review and correct any errors and omissions in HERMES entries for places within the heritage overlay.*
Undertake a gaps analysis of heritage places with and without heritage protection, to identify geographic and thematic gaps, as well as anomalies within existing heritage overlays, such as missing citations or incorrect curtilages.
Continue internal capacity building to increase staff knowledge and awareness of heritage places and processes, including for Aboriginal cultural heritage.
Investigate funding opportunities for research-based projects, such as a local history book, to enhance our knowledge of Moorabool Shire's heritage.
Protecting
Complete Amendment C85 West Moorabool Heritage Study 2A Review.*
Develop a set of heritage guidelines that provide clarity for community and stakeholders on best practice heritage management.*
Undertake an audit of all Council owned/managed heritage assets, to identify physical condition, and develop a conservation maintenance program (consistent with Victorian Government heritage asset audit toolkit).*
Develop a program for protecting places of heritage significance identified through the gaps analysis and ongoing research.
Maintain up to date links of Council's website to information by First Peoples State Relations, to assist property owners in understanding their obligations in protecting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites.
Supporting
Seek out funding and grant opportunities to progress heritage projects identified in this strategy, or in other Council strategies that include heritage outcomes.
Partner with local heritage groups and societies to deliver heritage projects identified in the strategy.
Work with internal and external stakeholders to best plan for and enable sustainable opportunities for the region from the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.
Communicating and Promoting
Expand existing and develop better tools (digital and physical) to share and promote Moorabool's heritage places and stories.
Explore options for developing a framework of experience and theme-based heritage trails across the Shire, including reviewing existing trails to renew content.
Actively contribute to, and advocate for, Moorabool's inclusion as part of the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.
Work with stakeholders to create tourism offerings and experiences, including opportunities to leverage off the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.
Increase awareness of Council's free heritage advisory service.
Continue to progress Aboriginal cultural heritage storytelling by Traditional Owners as an important heritage interpretation element, such as in arts, tourism, and public space activations.
Develop an information kit for heritage property owners, with advice on best practice conservation, understanding planning permit processes and accessing Council's free heritage advisory service.
Ensure local heritage documentation is publicly available in physical and digital form, including development of an interactive map portal.
Support, participate in and promote Moorabool's heritage in existing local activities and events, such as NAIDOC week, National Reconciliation Week, war commemorations, heritage festivals/weeks etc.
Use Council's existing website, publications and social media platforms to promote local heritage and heritage activities.

*Actions that have been carried forward.

5. APPENDICES

APPENDIX I – REVIEW OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES - MOORABOOL HERITAGE STRATEGY 2016-2020

Challenges and opportunities	Comments	Carried forward?
<p>Completing Stage 2 West Moorabool Heritage Study Funding has been allocated to complete Stage 2a of the West Moorabool Heritage Study. Future funding from Council will be required to ensure heritage study coverage for the whole of the Municipality which provides greater certainty to landholders as well as excellent documentation of the stories of Moorabool for use in interpretation, promotion and advocacy for controls which protect the character of our towns.</p>	<p>Stage 2A has been completed. There are approx. 500 sites within the West Moorabool Heritage Study that are not being progressed within Stage 2A. These will need to be progressed through a series of future heritage studies.</p>	<p>Yes (reworded challenge) – <i>Securing funding to progress further heritage studies on a staged basis for the balance of sites identified in the Stage 2 West Moorabool Heritage Study.</i></p>
<p>Management of Introduction of additional heritage sites into the planning scheme A long gap between completing a heritage study and undertaking a planning scheme amendment decreases knowledge of the study in the wider community, provides greater uncertainty regarding what planning controls will apply to an area and can lead to rework / reassessment of significance when processes change. The challenge will be to provide for the timely implementation of Stage 2A of the West Moorabool Heritage Study.</p>	<p>Implementation of WMHS Stage 2A is currently in progress via Amendment C85. Resourcing to undertake planning scheme amendments to implement these studies continues to be an ongoing challenge.</p>	<p>Yes (reworded challenge) – <i>Securing funding to progress further heritage studies on a staged basis for the balance of sites identified in the Stage 2 West Moorabool Heritage Study.</i></p>
<p>Management of State Heritage Listed Sites Council manages several sites which are included on the Victorian Heritage Register. This can be a challenge in order to fund appropriate management of these places. Seeking assistance to prepare conservation management plans for these places will help identify the most cost-efficient way to manage these places; will streamline approvals processes and provides a</p>	<p>Council manages three sites on the Victorian Heritage Register, two of which are also owned by Council. None of these sites have Conservation Management Plans. Conservation management plans are documents that guide the conservation and</p>	<p>Yes (reworded challenge) – <i>Securing funding to undertake conservation management plans for Council owned/managed</i></p>

Challenges and opportunities	Comments	Carried forward?
<p>basis for grants from State or Federal agencies. It allows Council to model best practice management to its local community.</p>	<p>management of a heritage place, however they are expensive to prepare. Seeking grant funding would assist in funding the preparation of these plans.</p>	<p><i>sites on the Victorian Heritage Register.</i></p>
<p>Reviewing sites without a statement of significance Many sites within the Moorabool Planning Scheme do not have a statement of significance. This makes it difficult for owners and Council to determine what is significant – a requirement of the permit application. Using opportunities such as the Heritage Advisory Service or Heritage Studies to ensure that statements of significance are prepared for all places within the heritage overlay.</p>	<p>An audit of the 182 sites within the Heritage Overlay, found that 27 do not have a heritage citation (statement of significance form part of the heritage citation).</p>	<p>Yes (reworded challenge) – <i>Ensuring existing sites on the Heritage Overlay are accurately listed, and have heritage citations, including statements of significance.</i></p>
<p>Establishing a regular Heritage Advisory Service Since the approval of C6 Council has not had access to a Heritage Advisory Service. Gaining access to a heritage advisor allows assistance to landowners in understanding how to best manage their property; provides referral and internal training opportunities for staff and allows for the documentation of undocumented places within the heritage overlay.</p>	<p>The Moorabool Heritage Advisory Service was established in February 2020.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Heritage Streetscapes The public realm is often integral to heritage streetscapes. Ensuring that changes to the physical appearance of our streets – gutters, tree planting, paths, street furniture – enhances the cultural landscape is a challenge and an opportunity.</p>	<p>Proposals affecting heritage streetscapes such as streetscape upgrades and township improvement plans are reviewed by Council’s heritage advisor.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Promoting the story of Moorabool and its heritage to the community and visitors Moorabool sits between metropolitan Melbourne and one of the Victoria’s primary destinations for cultural tourists. Identifying a cultural heritage trail (or trails) between Melbourne and Ballarat and developing an interpretation plan to tell the stories of these places is an opportunity to reach a tourism market with little cost to Council. Increased visitors increases economic opportunities within the towns. There are opportunities to celebrate success through Heritage Awards.</p>	<p>Council’s website has been updated to include a heritage webpage with copies of the Bacchus Marsh Heritage Trail, Ballan Heritage Block Walk, Heritage Walk through Ballan, and Tour of Moorabool Bicentennial Plaques maps. In addition the Bacchus Marsh Heritage Trail was updated to include new photos and a map of the sites.</p>	<p>Yes (reworded opportunity) – <i>Promote Moorabool’s heritage to the community and visitors.</i></p>

Challenges and opportunities	Comments	Carried forward?
<p>Incorporating heritage into asset management / procedures process Council is often a manager or owner of heritage assets. Ensuring that Council officers have access to information to protect heritage values in an efficient manner is a challenge to be addressed.</p>	<p>Council owned assets in an existing and proposed Heritage Overlays have been identified and confirmed by the Assets Team. A new action could be to undertake a heritage asset audit consistent with the Heritage Victoria guidelines.</p>	<p>Yes (reworded opportunity) – <i>Improve knowledge and management of Council owned/managed heritage assets.</i></p>
<p>Improving council and community knowledge and management of heritage With the increase in the number of properties within the heritage overlay comes a need to communicate why the control exists, what it means and the benefits protection of heritage brings to the property owner and the wider community. Busting heritage myths such as property devaluation and demonstrating that people choose to live, visit and invest in places with a recognisable character and identity is an opportunity to promote the social and economic benefits that heritage brings to Moorabool.</p>	<p>Council’s knowledge of heritage management has improved since the introduction of the heritage advisory service. A new action could be to provide heritage education for the community e.g. factsheet</p>	<p>Yes (reworded opportunity) – <i>Improve community knowledge and management of heritage.</i></p>
<p>Tree management The avenues of deciduous trees are part of our townships historic streetscape. These plantings may have heritage significance such as the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour and Maddingley Park. Since the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission new regimes have been established with impacts on canopy trees under powerlines which is a challenge for managing values. Trees, being living things, have a lifespan. Ensuring management practices which maintain tree health but also plan for replacement is a challenge facing Council.</p>	<p>Council manages a number of trees subject to Heritage Overlays, including the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour and Maddingley Park. Council adopted the Maddingley Park Master Plan (July 2023) which provides guidance around tree protection. Council has also adopted the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour Management Strategy and Preservation Plan (November 2023). The Strategy and Plan provide principles for the management of the Avenue, and methodology for strategically replacing the existing trees over time.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Shared values Many places within Moorabool have both historic and Indigenous heritage values. Ensuring opportunities to discuss significance and management</p>	<p>Traditional Owners have been engaged as part of the preparation of the Heritage Strategy. It is important to ensure continued engagement.</p>	<p>Yes (reworded opportunity) – <i>Increase engagement with Traditional Owners and</i></p>

Challenges and opportunities	Comments	Carried forward?
practices with Traditional Owners (Registered Aboriginal Parties) is an opportunity for Council.		<i>Registered Aboriginal Parties</i>

APPENDIX 2 – REVIEW OF FOUR-YEAR ACTION PLAN - MOORABOOL HERITAGE STRATEGY 2016-2020

Action	Status	Comments	Carried forward?
<i>KNOWING</i>			
Heritage Studies – West Moorabool Stage 2A	Completed	Adopted by Council – September 2017.	No
Heritage Studies – West Moorabool Stage 2B	Not commenced	There are approx. 500 sites within the West Moorabool Heritage Study that are not being progressed within Stage 2A. These will need to be progressed through a series of future amendments.	Yes (reworded) - <i>Seek funding to progress further heritage studies on a staged basis for the balance of sites identified in the Stage 2 West Moorabool Heritage Study.</i>
Existing heritage places without statements of significance	In progress	A review has been undertaken to determine which sites do not have a heritage citation (which includes a statement of significance). Of the 182 sites within the Heritage Overlay, 27 do not have a heritage citation, whilst many citations have a statement of significance that does not adequately identify the elements that are significant. Work has been progressed to create new citations where citations don't exist or are incorrect. Amendment C86 approved in 2020 included a new citation for HO24, and Amendment C101 approved in 2023 included a new citation and statement of significance for HO194. A consultant has been engaged to prepare a citation for an existing place within the heritage overlay, along with two places not currently in the heritage overlay.	Yes (reworded) – <i>Prepare heritage citations for all 27 sites that do not currently have one. A review of the curtilage should be undertaken at the same time. A planning scheme amendment will be required to incorporate the Statements of Significance in the Planning Scheme, and make any changes to the curtilage.</i>
HERMES – ensure all places searchable in database	Completed	HERMES is the State Governments heritage database. All places within the heritage overlay in Moorabool are searchable in HERMES, however some places are not entered correctly e.g. incorrect place names or addresses. A further action could be to correct the errors in HERMES.	Yes (reworded) – <i>Review and correct any errors in HERMES entries for Moorabool places within the Heritage Overlay.</i>

Council - owned assets assessment and register	Completed	Council owned assets in existing and proposed Heritage Overlays have been identified and confirmed by the Assets Team. As noted under opportunities new action could be to undertake a heritage asset audit consistent with the Heritage Victoria guidelines.	Yes (reworded) – <i>Undertake an audit of all Council owned/managed heritage assets, to identify physical condition, and develop a conservation maintenance program (consistent with Victorian Government heritage asset audit toolkit)</i>
PROTECTING			
Implementation of West Moorabool Heritage Study Stage 2A	In progress	Moorabool Planning Scheme Amendment C85 is being prepared to implement the West Moorabool Heritage Study Stage 2A	Yes (reworded) - <i>Complete Amendment C85 West Moorabool Heritage Study 2A Review</i>
Statements of significance for Register of the National Estate & National Trust Classified places	Completed	The Register of the National Estate was closed in 2007 and is no longer a statutory list. The National Trust Classified places list is now known as the National Trust Register. It is thought that the intent of this action was to review the list and consider whether any places on the list should be included in the heritage overlay. There are 105 places within Moorabool of the register. Of these 10 have been demolished (note all but one of the places demolished were demolished in the period from 1959-1986). Of the remaining 95 places, 59 are currently on the heritage overlay, 6 are proposed for inclusion the heritage overlay via Amendment, and 5 are identified in the balance of the West Moorabool Heritage Study. This leaves 25 places that are not picked up in any existing heritage studies. Of these 25 places, 17 are individual trees or landscapes which may be suited to alternative planning overlays (rather than the Heritage Overlay). These 25 places have been added to an existing list of potential heritage places, which would be assessed as part of a future heritage gaps assessment.	No
Staff awareness of places subject to heritage assessment	Completed	All places subject to the Heritage Overlay are mapped on VicPlan and on Councils GIS. In addition, Officers have mapped all places within Amendment C85, the balance of the West Moorabool Heritage Study (sites not included in	No

		2A), and the Bacchus Marsh Heritage Study. This mapping is available to Council staff via GIS.	
Heritage Policy and guidelines	Completed	Unclear exactly what policies or guidelines were intended by this action. Officers have prepared Heritage Archival Recording Guidelines. These were prepared in response to an absence of guidance for archival recording when demolishing all or part of a heritage structure. Opportunity for further heritage guidelines/	Yes (reworded) - <i>Develop a set of heritage guidelines that provide clarity for community and stakeholders on best practice heritage management.</i>
Heritage policy for Council managed infrastructure/Redundant assets policy/Assets transfer policy/Conservation Management Plans	Not commenced	As noted under challenges, conservation management plans for Council owned/managed sites should be included as a new action. Council owned assets in existing and proposed Heritage Overlays have been identified and confirmed by the Assets Team. As noted under opportunities new action could be to undertake a heritage asset audit consistent with the Heritage Victoria guidelines.	Yes (reworded) – <i>Undertake an audit of all Council owned/managed heritage assets, to identify physical condition, and develop a conservation maintenance program (consistent with Victorian Government heritage asset audit toolkit)</i>
SUPPORTING			
Heritage advisor/Council access to heritage expertise	Completed	Council has engaged a heritage advisor and has established a heritage advisory service.	No
Council support to local heritage organisations	Completed	Support has been provided via actions through the Moorabool Heritage Advisory Committee.	No
COMMUNICATING AND PROMOTING			
Victorian Heritage Database	Completed	All places on the heritage overlay are listed within the Victorian Heritage Database is maintained by Heritage Victoria.	No
Heritage Information /publications	Completed	Unclear exactly what was intended by this action. Council’s website has been updated to include a heritage webpage with content on heritage projects, the heritage advisory service, historical societies and groups and heritage trails and sites. Heritage information including advertising of the Heritage Advisory	No

		Service and articles by members of the Moorabool Heritage Advisory Committee have been published in Moorabool News.	
Interpretation	Completed	Unclear exactly what was intended by this action. The Bacchus Marsh Heritage Trail map has been updated and street heritage signs installed in Bacchus Marsh, Ballan and Myrniong. There is potential for further specific actions around heritage interpretation in the Heritage Strategy is an opportunity to provide Interpretation Guidelines in the Heritage Strategy.	No
Staff and Councillor training	Completed	Staff training has been provided by Council's heritage advisor. Councillor education was provided via a series of briefings associated with Amendment C85.	No
Heritage Chat and Heritage Victoria Workshops	Completed	Officers are attending the Heritage Victoria workshops. Officers are also subscribed to Heritage Chat.	No
Consideration of Heritage Awards with the National Trust	Completed	Discussion was held with National Trust and it was agreed to investigate the option of awards further after the progression of Amendment C85 and completion of the Heritage Strategy.	No

APPENDIX 3 – CONSULTATION REPORT

Councillor Briefing – 14 September 2022

Discussion at the Councillor briefing highlighted the difference between a Heritage Strategy and a Heritage Study. Further discussion was had on the status of the West Moorabool Heritage Study, and it was emphasised that whilst the study identifies places for potential inclusion in the Heritage Overlay, the Heritage Strategy did not identify places for inclusion in the Heritage Study.

Meeting with Arts and Economic Development– 13 October 2022

The following comments on the existing heritage strategy were identified:

- Missed opportunities around Traditional Owner engagement.
- Outdated information.

The following challenges for heritage were identified:

- The need to highlight heritage within our towns – e.g. signage, stories, connections.
- Continued operation of historical societies – many no longer active, aging members.
- How we look after heritage collections, display and exhibit these.
- Growth areas and how to maintain existing place identities.

The following opportunities for heritage were identified:

- Linkages between heritage and the Arts and Culture Strategy.
- Partnerships with Public Art.
- Increase heritage signage and way finding.
- Increasing interest from businesses to celebrate heritage.
- Ballarat Heritage Festival – opportunities for events within Moorabool Shire.
- Nature and Aboriginal cultural heritage-based experiences.

Other comments in relation to the heritage strategy included:

- Heritage has ties with the Visitor Economy Strategy.
- First Nations tourism – increasing interest and awareness.
- Potential synergies and opportunities with 2026 Commonwealth Games¹¹.

Meeting with Moorabool Heritage Advisory Committee – 19 October 2022

The Committee identified the following challenges:

- Difficulties in trying to maintain our heritage streetscape and character.
- A lot of heritage places need to be identified, documented and protected.
- Lack of incentives to support heritage (grants, funding, guidelines, conservation action, colour schemes – could be included as part of guidelines).
- Lack of strong heritage policy and guidance.
- Enforcement of heritage by neglect.

The Committee identified the following opportunities:

- Support Australian Gliding Museum - tourist attraction.
- Education – public perception of heritage is still a challenge – turn this into an opportunity.

¹¹ The Victorian State Government announced that it had cancelled plans to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games in July 2023.

- Development of Shire wide historical trail - would bring tourists in the Shire and promote heritage.
- Museum in the Shire - repository for historical items - dairy, manufacturing, irrigation, historical items.
- Guidelines could be created and provided to owners looking to undertake works on places with heritage overlays.
- Growth of the Shire and opportunities to recognise heritage within new growth precincts.
- Increased recognition of Aboriginal history.

Meeting with Internal Departments - Statutory Planning and Assets – 27 October 2022

The above teams identified the following challenges:

- Difficulty finding suitably qualified contractors to work on Council owned/managed heritage assets.
- Lack of knowledge of which Council assets are covered by a Heritage Overlay and/or have been identified in a heritage study.

The above teams identified the following opportunities:

- Inclusion of a layer in Council's GIS which identifies properties that are under consideration for heritage protection.
- Promotion of Council-owned heritage buildings.

Meeting with Bacchus Marsh District Historical Society, Ballan Historical Society, Blackwood Historical Society – 2 November 2022

The societies identified a number of challenges including:

- Lack of storage and display for heritage artefacts are held by the various historical societies.
- Heritage gaps – including identification of a number of sites not captured.

The societies identified a number of opportunities including:

- Use of Indigenous traditional names of landmarks around the Shire e.g. Bald Hill.
- Exploration of opportunities to integrate arts and heritage.
- Establishment of a Heritage Festival similar to that run by other Councils.
- More signage and recognition for historical buildings in Blackwood.
- Creation of a heritage trail in Blackwood.
- Celebrate people who do the 'right thing' for heritage buildings e.g. heritage awards.
- Consideration of rates reduction for owners of heritage buildings, as an incentive to preserve and restore buildings.
- Storytelling – including Indigenous heritage, European settlement, gold rush.

Meeting with Council's Heritage Advisor – 17 October 2022

Council's Heritage Advisor provided the following comments around the structure/content:

- Action plan is important.
- Acknowledge previous strategy and what was achieved in the action plan, and anything that needs to be carried forward.
- Explain the strategy, why it is there and what its purpose is.

Council's Heritage Advisor identified the following challenges:

- Progressing the balance of sites identified in the West Moorabool Heritage Study (multiple stages e.g. 2B, 2C etc), existing heritage gaps and strategic program for gaps.

- Additional funds needed to progress the balance of sites identified in the West Moorabool Heritage Study.
- Council-owned heritage sites – managing these assets, and also preparing conservation management plans.
- Improving Councillor and Community knowledge of heritage – numerous avenues including website, Heritage Advisory Committee, flyer or education fact sheets, community workshops, how to guides, management guidelines etc.
- Review of heritage sites without a citation/statement of significance, and ensuring HERMES is up to date.

Councils Heritage Advisor identified the following opportunities:

- Updating HERMES and cleaning up existing entries.
- Progression of the balance of sites identified in the West Moorabool Heritage Study – needs to be done in manageable packages.
- Further staff training, including Councillor training.
- Opportunity to partner with neighbouring Councils as part of their existing Heritage Festivals.
- Improve existing assessment and management of Council-owned heritage assets.
- Heritage guidelines/policy – in particular guidance for heritage streetscapes.
- Ongoing program of preparing citations/statements of significance for places without them.
- Promoting story of Moorabool – connecting with nearby municipalities re cultural routes e.g. Ballarat, Melton, Golden Plains. Supporting and assisting local historical societies in their work e.g. grant applications.
- Shared values – relationships and connections with RAPs.
- Thematical history for the whole Shire.

Meeting with Internal Departments – Growth and Development – 28 March 2023

The following comments on the existing heritage strategy were identified:

- The length of the strategy was liked, in that it was concise.
- Lack of any strategic or policy guidance for planners.

The Growth and Development team identified the following challenges:

- Lack of support for heritage.
- Community education and misunderstanding re Heritage Overlay and controls.
- Heritage evolves – what was not of heritage significance in 1995, might be significant now.
- Lack of understanding of new heritage – 1970s onwards.
- Existing heritage studies – some places are only identified by the street. Significant work required to accurately identify these properties.
- Aboriginal cultural heritage not well recognised, celebrated, or acknowledged.
- Resourcing and timing to progress existing heritage studies into heritage amendments.
- Heritage advisory service only being available one day a week.

The Growth and Development team identified the following opportunities:

- Greater celebration and acknowledgement of First Nations' heritage.
- Increased awareness and celebration of heritage.
- Improved heritage outcomes, particular in heritage precincts.
- First Nations' involvement, such as in interpretation, place naming, storytelling within the growth precincts.

Meeting with Wurundjeri Aboriginal Corporation – 28 July 2022

The following provides a summary of the matters discussed during the meeting:

- Highlighted the value of working with Council from the beginning of projects. Used the Precinct Structure Plans as an example of early engagement that has occurred.
- Provided support for more interpretative signage, in particular around Bacchus Marsh.
- Highlighted the importance of storytelling and noted that Cloverton Estate in Kalkallo has some good interpretation, utilising an inclusive approach.
- Noted that Aboriginal history and European history shouldn't be segregated, but that story is told together.
- Suggested that Council could prepare a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Meeting with Internal Departments - Parks and Gardens and Capital Works – 29 March 2023

The above teams identified the following challenges:

- Lack of knowledge and staff awareness.
- Lack of awareness of post-contact and Aboriginal cultural heritage and heritage assets.
- Absence of key contact person to go to re heritage processes.
- Lack of knowledge of sites – need this included in Assets GIS workspace.

The above teams identified the following opportunities:

- Review of the capital works program each financial year prior to finalisation. Opportunity to identify any heritage issues early, and ensure discussion/site visit and involvement in early design stage.
- Information workshop for team leaders and coordinators explaining heritage principles and things to think about when scoping/designing projects.

Other comments in relation to the heritage strategy included:

- Important to have good management practices in place, including identification of heritage assets.

Meeting with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation – 12 October 2022

The following provides a summary of the matters discussed during the meeting:

- Indigenous themes should be incorporated throughout the document, rather than just providing a specific section or chapter. Cited City of Greater Geelong as having a recent and good example of a heritage strategy that does this.
- Discussed that European heritage often revolves around physical buildings and spaces, whilst indigenous heritage can focus on places, landscapes, storytelling and names.

Further matters advised via email (18 May 2023):

Comments re existing Heritage Strategy

- Content of this strategy is focused on heritage in the context of the Victorian Heritage Register and the Heritage Overlay.
- Need to acknowledge that heritage should include Cultural Heritage (both tangible and intangible). Heritage did not begin with European settlement.

Comments regarding new Heritage Strategy (and other general comments)

- Have an acknowledgement of Country - Moorabool Shire sits across Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

- Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan for the entire council.
- Take the learnings from the previous Heritage Strategy to inform what else can be done and where Council's knowledge, resource and communication gaps are. For example, your shared values from the 2016-2020 Heritage Strategy states *"Many places within Moorabool have both historic and Indigenous heritage values. Ensuring opportunities to discuss significance and management practices with Traditional Owners (Registered Aboriginal Parties) is an opportunity for Council"*. Have there been any regular consultations with RAPs in this period? If so, consider using the learnings and outcomes of those interactions to help inform your new Heritage Study. If there haven't been many or any ongoing discussions, then your goal should be to start having these.
- Be the sponsor for Cultural Values Assessments or Cultural Values Statements to be conducted in areas with a high number of 'heritage' listings so that First Nations values are represented and documented, not just post-settlement buildings and sculptures etc.
- Create a policy for any new large-scale developments that mandates CVAs must be done in addition to CHMPs (where required).
- Encourage dual-naming or renaming of sites or areas to have Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Wadawurrung or Dja Dja Wurrung Language.
- Cultural awareness training for all staff in particular the staff involved in policy making.

Community Survey

A community survey was undertaken from 11 October to 11 November 2022 via Council's Have your Say Page. This was promoted through Social Media Posts, Newspaper advertisements, letters to owners of properties listed with a Heritage Overlay and posters throughout the community.

Survey Response Statistics

86 completed survey responses were received.

- 57% have lived in the Shire for 20+ years
- 92% are property owners
- 75% live in a town or suburb
- 45% were 50-65 years old

Survey Responses

The following provides the details of responses received to the online survey. It should be noted that questions 17, 18, 21 and 22 are demographic data questions included in the data above and are not heritage specific.

Question 1: Are you aware of the existing Moorabool Heritage Strategy 2016-2020?

- Yes (35%)
- No (65%)

Question 2: What does heritage mean to you?

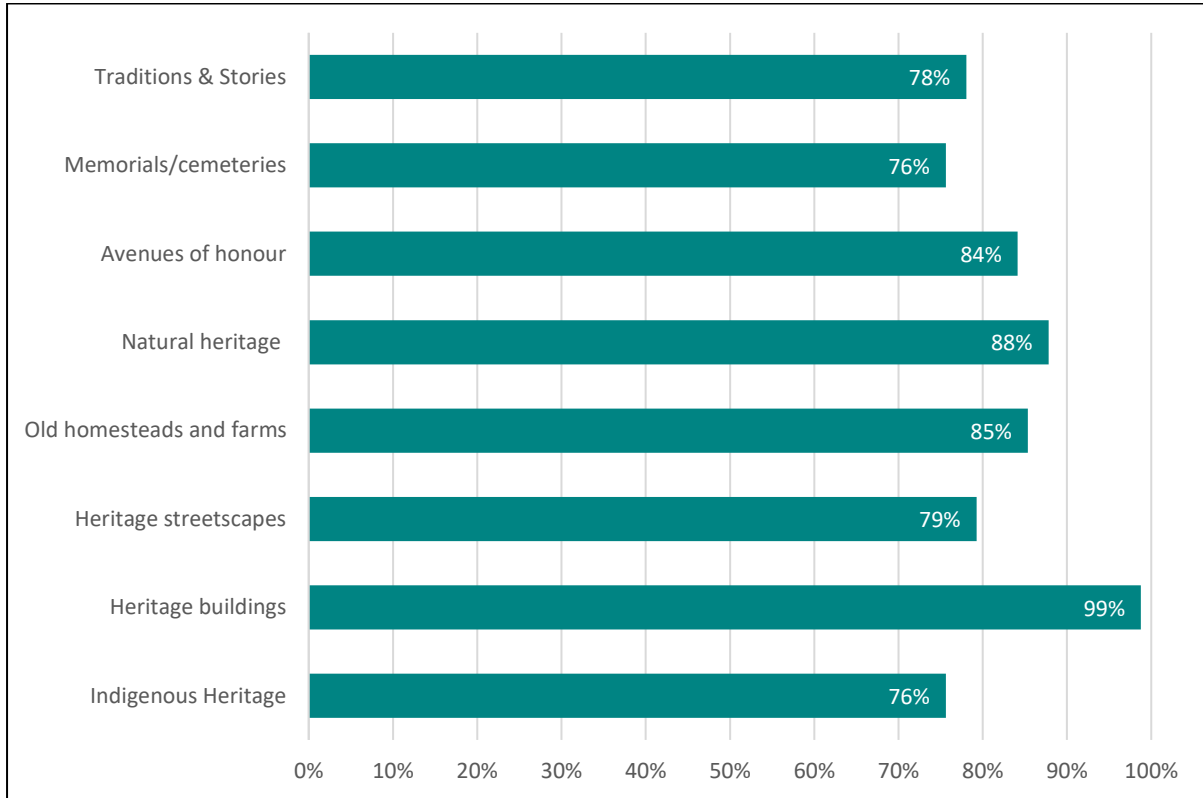
The key themes emerging from these free text responses were:

- The preservation of cultural history
- Showing respect to Traditional Owners of the land
- Preservation of historical stories
- Maintaining township feel
- Preserving heritage trees & landscapes
- Preserving heritage buildings
- Promoting the link between the past and future

- Education/ Knowledge
- Enabling visitor attraction

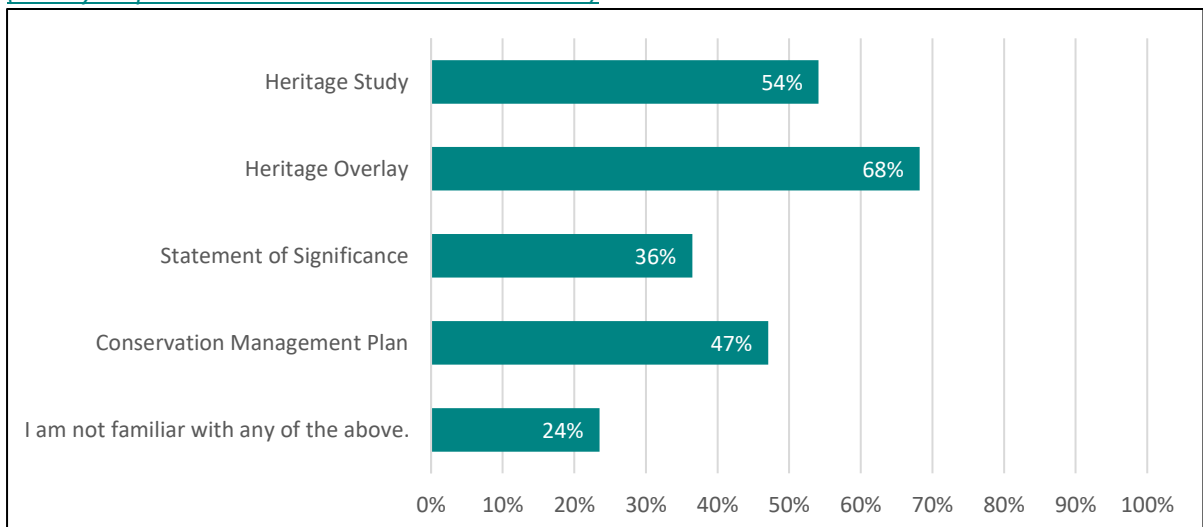
Question 3: Please indicate which of the following heritage features are important to you.

(Survey respondents could choose more than one)



Question 4: Which of the following heritage terms are you familiar with?

(Survey respondents could choose more than one)



Question 5: Are you aware that both the Council and the State of Victoria play a role in protecting heritage places by applying the Heritage Overlay (Council) and including places on the Victorian Heritage Registry (State)?

- Yes (85%)
- No (15%)

Question 6: Do you think Council provides adequate protection for heritage places?

- Yes (2%)
- No (73%)
- Unsure (25%)

Question 7: Which of the following reflect your concerns regarding preservation of heritage places in Moorabool?

(Survey respondents could choose more than one)



Question 8: Are you aware that Council provides a free heritage advisory service for the community?

- Yes (25%)
- No (75%)

Question 9: Do you think heritage is well promoted in the Shire?

- Yes (9%)
- No (91%)

Respondents were prompted to provide further comments to question 9.

The below represents a summary of comments received;

- Concerns regarding development pressure
- Concerns regarding demolition of heritage buildings

- Lack of knowledge of the Heritage Advisory Service
- Lack of heritage information available online
- Lack of heritage signage, and maintenance of existing signage
- Opportunity to link heritage and tourism

Note: All those that provided further comments responded No to question 9

Question 10a: In your mind, does Council provide adequate support and education for the owners of heritage places?

- Yes (0%)
- No (44%)
- I am not sure (56%)

Question 10b: Are there any other opportunities that could expand on support and heritage education?

Below is a summary of the responses received;

- Increased heritage signage
- Increased heritage information online
- Increase knowledge of heritage overlay for owners of heritage buildings
- Increased support of owners of heritage buildings e.g. heritage approved tradespeople and contacts for heritage advice.
- Heritage naming of parks
- Increased heritage education for landowners, public and schools
- Regular Moorabool News articles
- Make heritage information more readily available

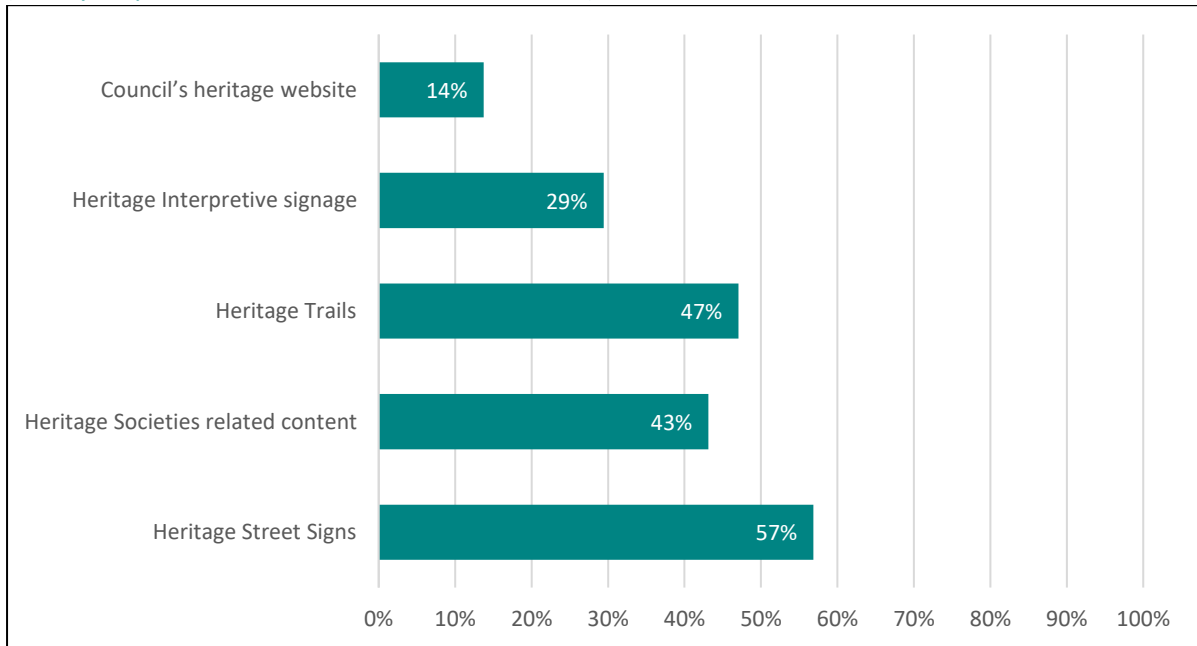
Question 11: How can heritage be better promoted and protected in Moorabool Shire?

Below is a summary of the free text responses received;

- Increased heritage signage
- Promotion of heritage e.g. information on websites, stories in location paper, booklets/factsheets, social media posts
- Provide heritage trails (linking heritage sites)
- Provide funding or rate concessions for owners of heritage buildings
- Increase publicly available information
- Greater identification of heritage buildings and places
- Providing assistance and support to maintain heritage buildings
- Develop interactive map/list of all heritage places within the Shire
- Proactively engaging with landowners e.g. create heritage information kit to all new ratepayers, advise landowners that they have a heritage overlay on their property
- Increased recognition of Indigenous heritage
- Better consideration of impact of new development and signage on heritage buildings
- Prevent demolition of heritage buildings, trees
- Enforcement/penalties to those that damage heritage properties
- Identification and protection of heritage sites

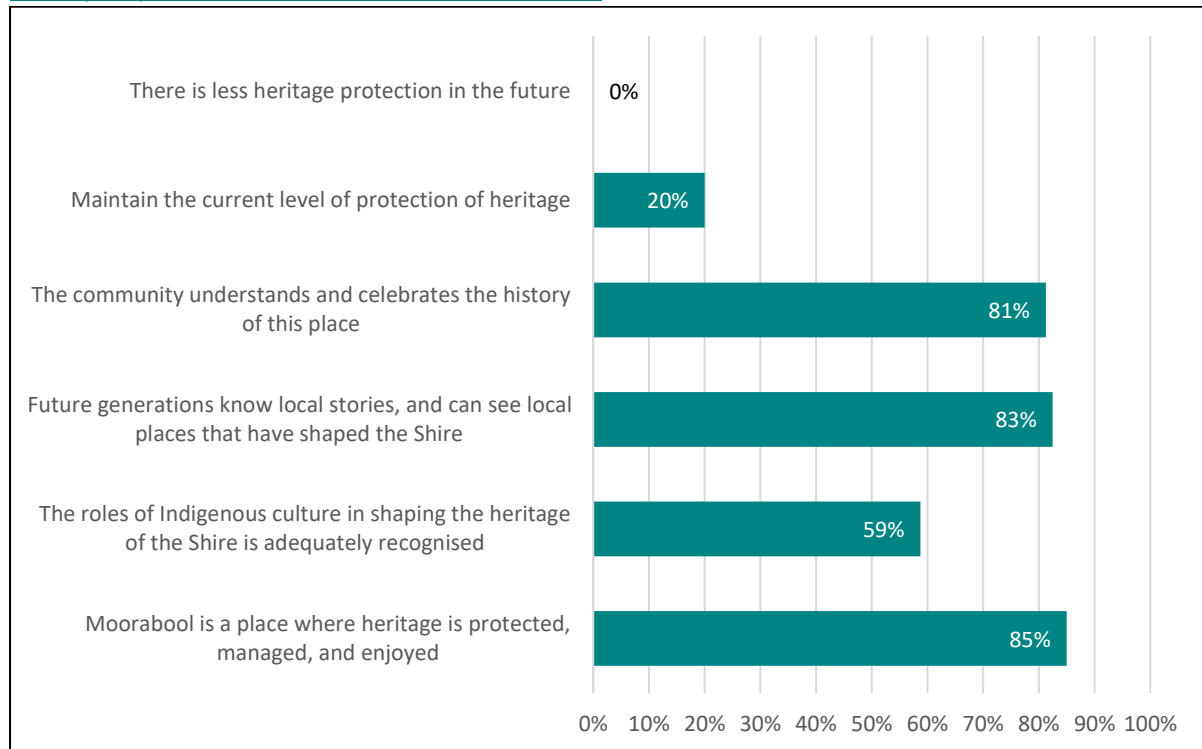
- Provide events/increase heritage tourism e.g. history tours, annual history weekend, museum
- Greater preservation of gold rush sites
- Increase heritage education and awareness e.g. heritage walks, storytelling, visit schools.
- Work with, and provide support to, local historical societies and heritage groups

Question 12: Have you noticed the following heritage related items throughout the Shire and online?
(Survey respondents could choose more than one)



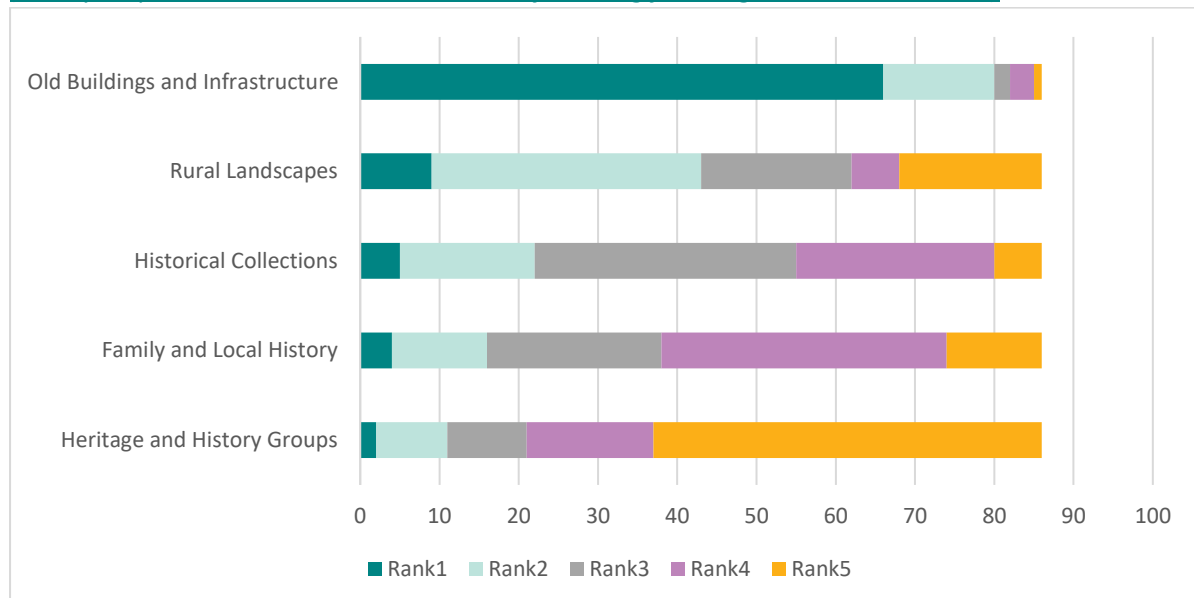
Question 13: What is your vision for heritage in Moorabool Shire in the future?

(Survey respondents could choose more than one)



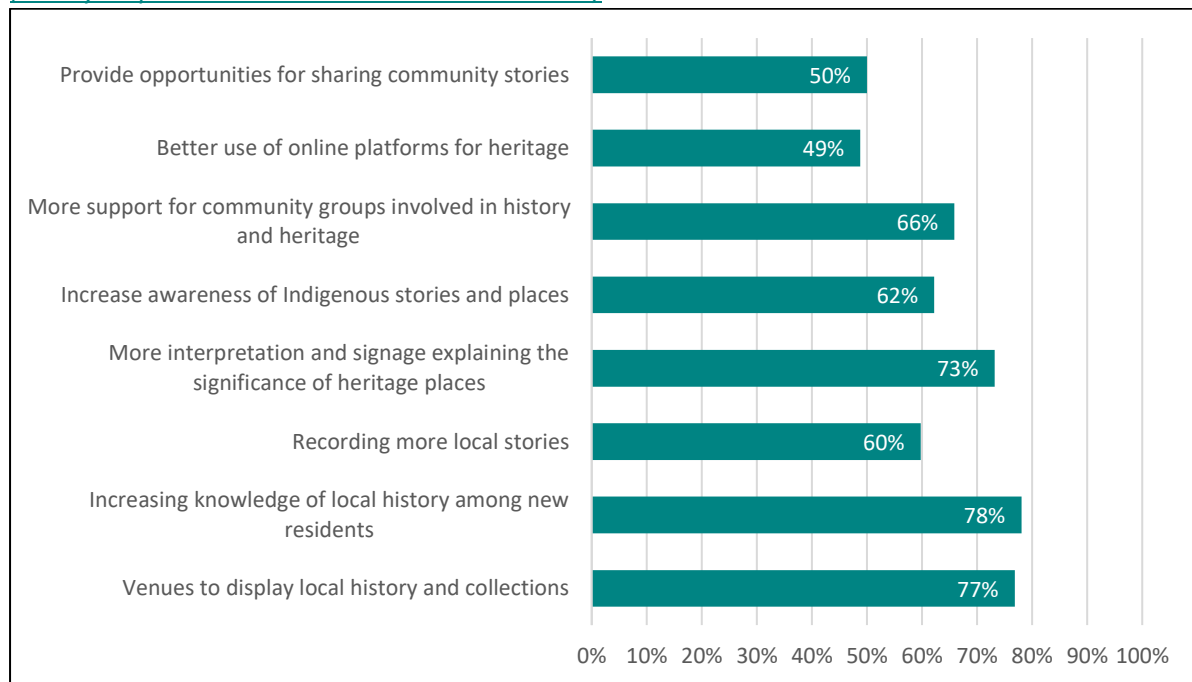
Question 14: Which of the following aspects of heritage do you value most?

(Survey respondents were asked to rank the following from highest to lowest value)



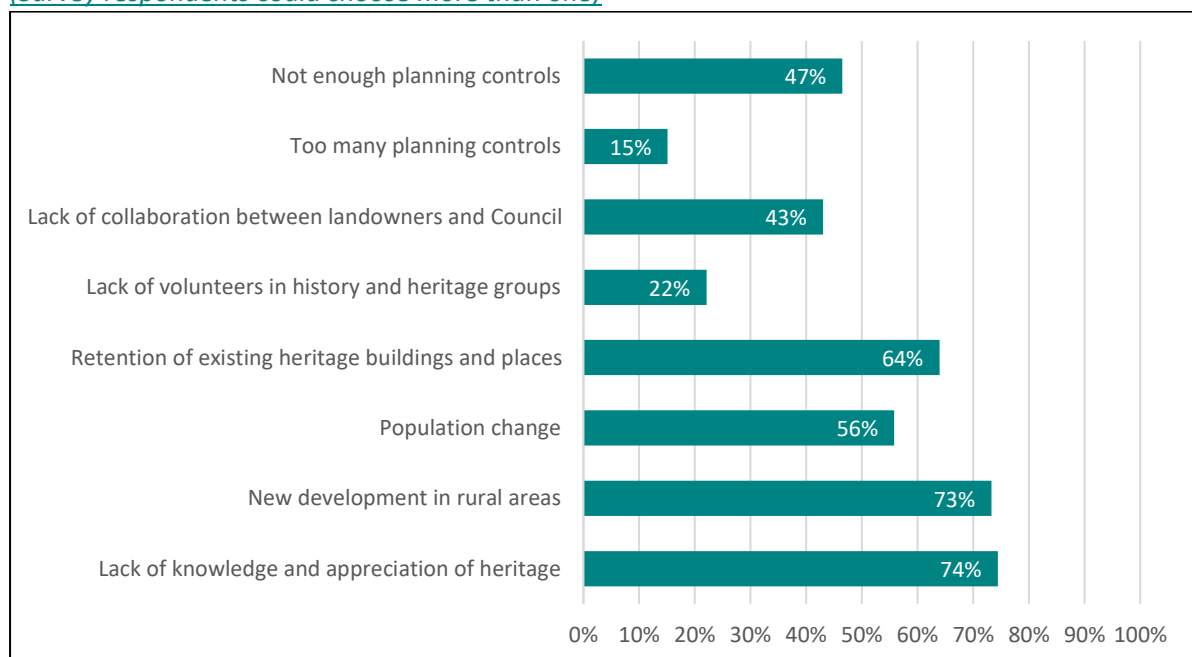
Question 15: Which of the following would most improve heritage in the community?

(Survey respondents could choose more than one)



Question 16: What do you consider to be the biggest challenges to heritage?

(Survey respondents could choose more than one)

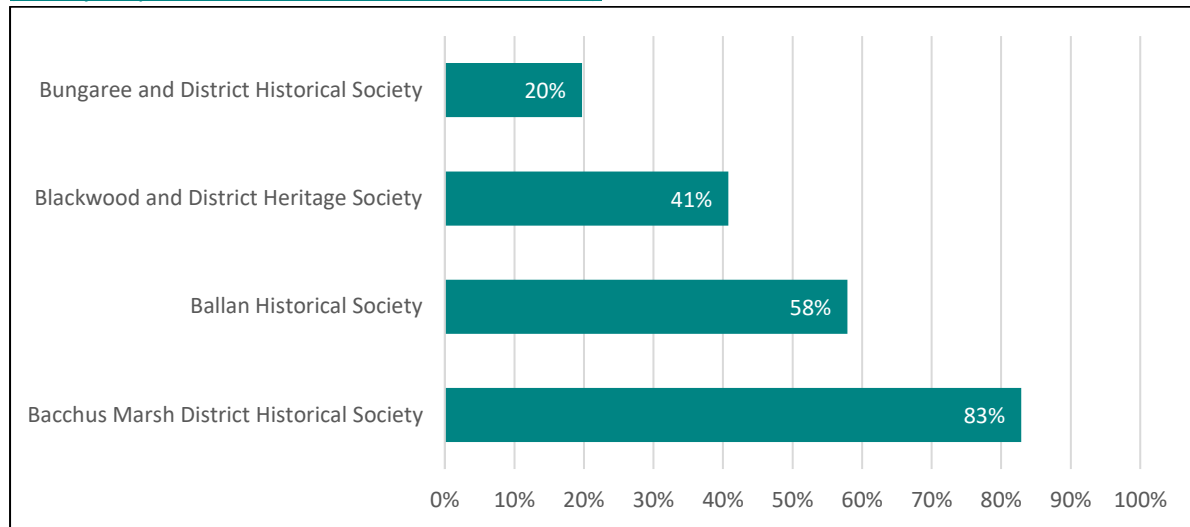


Question 19: Are you aware of Council's Heritage Advisory Committee?

- Yes (33%)
- No (67%)

Question 20: Are you aware of any of the following?

(Survey respondents could choose more than one)



Question 23: Please provide any other comments, feedback or questions related to heritage in Moorabool Shire you'd like to share?

- A snapshot of final comments included the following,
- Heritage is important, it defines an area and gives a sense of belonging
- The charm of Moorabools towns is their heritage
- Prevent demolition of heritage buildings
- Update the Bacchus Marsh Heritage Study 1995
- Encourage a heritage streetscape for Main Street, Bacchus Marsh
- Increase heritage fines to prevent demolition by neglect
- Maddingley Park – would like to see lake reinstated, park restored, and roses retained
- Blacksmiths Cottage needs restoring
- Need to ensure the heritage strategy actions are achievable, progressed and tracked
- Reinstatate missing trees on Crook, Pearce and Young Streets.
- Increased awareness, discussion, and protection of gold rush sites
- Concerns re level of development (overdevelopment) and appearance of new developments (not considerate of heritage impacts)
- Provide more heritage stories in the paper (not everyone reads online)
- Make more historical information available e.g. brochures at the visitor information centre