# MACEDON RANGES HERITAGE STRATEGY
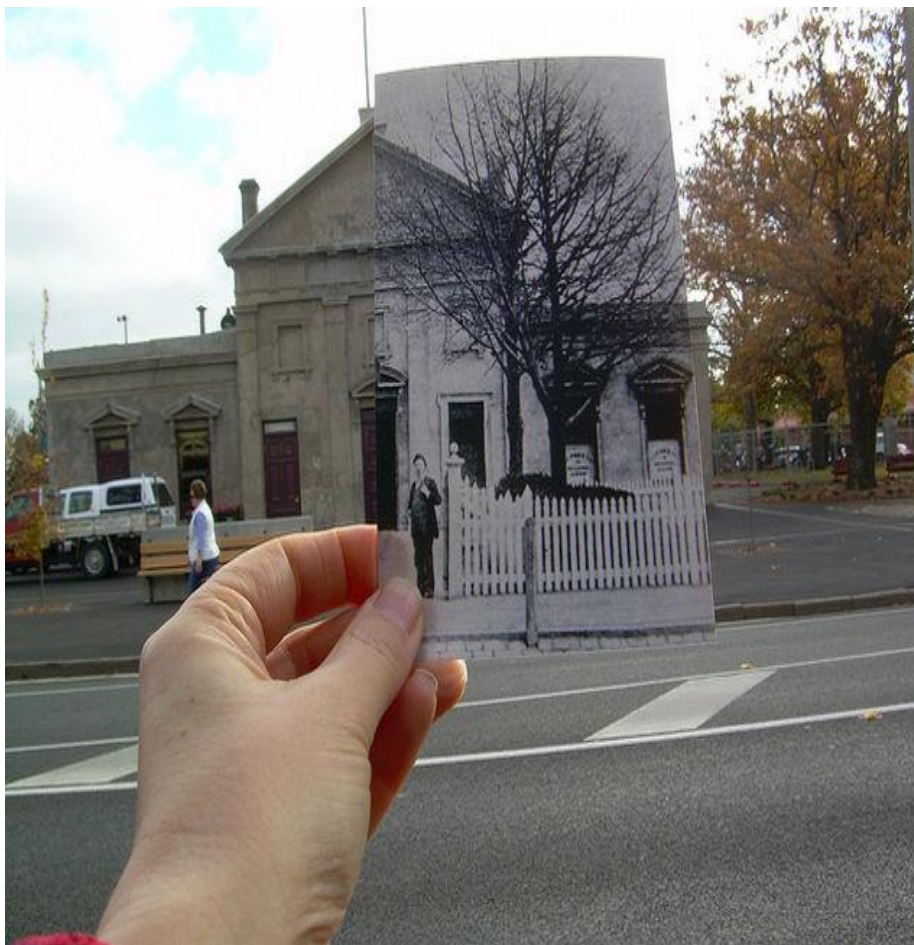
# 2014 - 2018

## June 2014

# Contents

# Executive Summary

The Shire of Macedon Ranges is home to a wealth of natural and built heritage and Macedon Ranges Shire Council plays an important role in identifying, conserving and protecting these heritage assets.

Council owns and manages a large number of heritage buildings, places and collections of both State and local significance and also provides guidance and support to owners and managers of heritage buildings to appropriately maintain and conserve those assets on behalf of the broader community. Council also provides support to the various heritage and cultural groups who are actively working across the Shire to enhance our heritage assets.

The strategy will assist Council to:

- Identify positive heritage measures already in place;
- Assess and prioritise work that still needs to be done;
- Manage and monitor the heritage assets in its municipality;
- Report on and celebrate achievements.

Kyneton Mechanics Institute

# Heritage in the Shire of Macedon Ranges

Heritage features and assets are fundamental to the character and charm of the Macedon Ranges Shire. The Macedon Ranges Shire remains a picturesque part of central Victoria comprising pastoral farmland, intact heritage towns and extensive woodland and natural features. Together with the local community, Council plays a vital role in preserving, celebrating and enhancing this beautiful and unique part of Victoria.

## Natural

The Macedon Ranges Shire contains some of the most beautiful natural landscapes and land forms in Victoria. The Shire comprises woodland, grassland, native forests, mountain and rock formations, fertile soil and picturesque broad-acre farm land. The Shire is also an important water catchment area and an area of high bushfire risk. The Shire's close proximity to Melbourne and easy access via a major transport corridor means that protection of the Shire's natural and heritage assets has been an ongoing challenge over many decades and will remain so into the future.

The Shire's unique natural environment supports a rewarding lifestyle, creativity, culture and industry and attracts thousands of visitors every year to attractions such as Mount Macedon, Hanging Rock, Black Hill and Bald Hill are examples of significant geological features with remnant vegetation supporting native fauna. The Shire contains a number of threatened flora and fauna species such as the Black Gum in Woodend and the Powerful Owl. The sense of peace, tranquillity and beauty are highly valued by the people of the Macedon Ranges Shire.  It is a strong desire of the community and council that the natural environment, beauty of the area and significant landscapes remain protected for the enjoyment of residents and visitors and for future generations. It is very important that development and growth in the Shire is very carefully managed to achieve these goals.

## Indigenous

Aboriginal peoples have lived in the Macedon Ranges area for at least 26,000 years. Before European settlement the Shire was the location of indigenous habitation for more than 26,000 years with evidence of occupation still visible today. Indications of indigenous occupation include scarred trees, rock scatters, shell middens, axe quarries, grinding stones, ceremonial grounds and ochre pits. All Aboriginal cultural places and artefacts are protected by law in Victoria under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

The Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung communities are still active today and they work with council and throughout the community to manage and care for the land. Mount William in the Macedon Ranges Shire is one of the most important indigenous cultural sites in Victoria and was recently added to the National Heritage List in recognition of its national significance. In 2012 Council formally transferred the land title, ownership and management to the Wurundgeri people.

# Historic

The towns and countryside that comprise the present day Macedon Ranges Shire are among the earliest European settled areas of Victoria. The Shire still retains the landscapes and buildings that reflect the stages of history of more than 150 years ago. Significant features are the historic towns of Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey, Woodend, Macedon, Lancefield, Malmsbury and Riddells Creek which were established along historic transport and supply corridors linking Melbourne to central and northern Victoria and which were strengthened during the gold rush period of the 1850 and 60s.

A scattering of other small towns also developed in response to the needs of travellers along the goldfields roads, or to accommodate forestry workers, with the distances between the towns reflecting the 10 mile distances that travellers would walk each day in the 1850s. As a backdrop to the towns, agricultural areas play a significant role aesthetically and historically. With its high elevation and temperate climate, the Macedon Ranges Shire is one of the most picturesque parts of central Victoria with extensive pastoral farmland, historic mansions and gardens, intact heritage towns and extensive woodlands and natural features. Its close proximity to Melbourne ensures a constant stream of visitors, including for the many arts and cultural events.

Heritage does not stand still; each generation adds to tomorrow's heritage. Therefore, Council embraces the opportunity to encourage and recognise excellence in contemporary design, which compliments neighbourhood character. Council, together with the local community play a vital role in preserving, celebrating and enhancing this unique part of Victoria.

# Heritage Policy Context

## The Role of Council

Council plays an important role in identifying, conserving and protecting places of heritage significance in the Shire. Council identifies, conserves, protects and showcases places and objects of cultural heritage significance. Council owns and manages a large number of heritage assets and places of State and local significance. It also manages a number of heritage and culturally significant collections and provides assistance to private owners of heritage places.

Council protects and promotes the heritage of Macedon Ranges in a wide variety of ways including through:

- *Planning controls and building and permit decision-making;*
- *Maintaining council owned and managed heritage buildings;*
- *Managing an accredited museum;*
- *Providing spaces for exhibitions and curatorial work;*
- *Managing Tourism Information Centres;*
- *Supporting historical societies; and*
- *Providing heritage advice to private heritage property owners.*

The responsibility for managing heritage assets is shared by local, State and Federal government bodies and agencies, via a range of policy frameworks which guide and support owners and managers of heritage buildings, sites and collections to appropriately maintain and conserve those assets on behalf of the broader community. Management requirements for heritage assets will vary depending on the significance of that place or asset to its local, State or national heritage context.

Council's individual business units also undertake a range of actions that have consequences for heritage management and, as can be seen from the list of relevant council documents contained in Attachment 2, heritage is a factor in much of what council does.

# State Policy Context

Section 4 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 sets out objectives for planning in Victoria. These include, inter alia objectives to:

*Conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value.*

Clause 15.03-1 of the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) relates to heritage conservation. The objective of this Clause is to ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance. Strategies provided under this clause require Council to:

- *Identify, assess and document places of natural and cultural heritage significance as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.*
- *Provide for the protection of natural heritage sites and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and biological diversity.*
- *Provide for the conservation and enhancement of those places which are of aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, scientific, or social significance, or otherwise of special cultural value.*
- *Encourage appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values and creates a worthy legacy for future generations.*
- *Retain those elements that contribute to the importance of the heritage place.*
- *Encourage the conservation and restoration of contributory elements.*
- *Ensure an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced.*
- *Support adaptive reuse of heritage buildings whose use has become redundant.*

Clause 15.03-2 of the SPPF relates to Aboriginal cultural heritage. The objective of this Clause is to ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. Strategies provided under this clause seek to support:

- *The identification, assessment and documentation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, in consultation with relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties, as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.*
- *The protection and conservation of pre- and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage places.*
- *The alignment of permit approvals with recommendations of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan approved under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.*

The Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 provides protection for all Aboriginal places, objects and human remains in Victoria, regardless of their inclusion on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register or land tenure.

Some of the objectives of this Act are:

- *To recognise Aboriginal people as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage;*
- *To recognise, protect and conserve Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria in ways that are based on respect for Aboriginal knowledge and cultural and traditional practices;*
- *To promote the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage as an integral part of land and natural resource management;*
- *To establish an Aboriginal cultural heritage register to record Aboriginal cultural heritage; and*
- *To provide appropriate sanctions and penalties to prevent harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage.*

# Local Policy Context

Currently, clause 22.11 of Council's Local Planning Policy Framework provides additional guidance for Council in considering planning permit applications for development of land under the Heritage Overlay. This policy guidance is proposed to be relocated to Clauses 21.01-5 and 21.08 once Amendment C84 to the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme is approved. Places of heritage significance within the Shire are primarily protected by the application of the Heritage Overlay which is located in Clause 43.01 of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme. The Heritage Overlay is applied to both places of local significance as well as places included in the Victorian Heritage Register. The Overlay requires a planning permit to subdivide land, alter, construct or demolish buildings or otherwise impact on the significance of the heritage place.

There are currently 278 places of heritage significance included within the schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, including heritage precincts where multiple individual properties are grouped under one Heritage Overlay. The schedule to the Heritage Overlay allows for the identification of additional controls such as fence, external paint or internal controls, where they are justified. Places are included in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay once their heritage significance is established by the preparation and adoption of a heritage study.

# Council's Heritage Vision Statement

*Macedon Ranges Shire Council, in partnership with the community, will protect, enhance and celebrate the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the Shire of Macedon Ranges which is reflected in its buildings, landscapes, objects, collections, records, stories and traditions.*

# Heritage Achievements

- Council has built on the heritage studies conducted under the previous Shires of Kyneton and Gisborne and provided Heritage Overlay protection for 278 places, including precincts in the towns of Woodend, Romsey and Lancefield and numerous other individual sites.

- Council has implemented an updated asset management database that provides guidance for asset maintenance works by listing all council owned buildings included within Heritage Overlays.

- Council has successfully managed and supported the operation of a significant number of heritage buildings on behalf of the community, including the Kyneton Museum which provides a focal point for celebration of the Shire's history.

- Council has engaged a Heritage Advisor for the past 10 years to assist Councillors, Council staff and the public with heritage issues.

- Council supports the operation of the Macedon Ranges Heritage Council, which represents the various historical societies in the Shire and provides a dedicated Councillor as a representative.

# Heritage Challenges and Opportunities

- Further strengthen heritage protection for identified heritage assets across the Shire.

- Provide greater initial guidance for new development within the Shire's Heritage Precincts.

- Ensure the Heritage Overlay adequately represents the Shire's heritage assets.

- Assist economic development through appropriate use and conservation of heritage places and precincts.

- Explore ways to more comprehensively address Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management and the management of related heritage assets.

- Improve promotion of Indigenous Heritage in the Shire.

- Improve coordination of interpretative endeavours such as signage, brochures and guides.

# The Heritage Strategy

## What is a Heritage Strategy?

A heritage strategy is a document that outlines a council's broad strategic approach to managing its heritage and describes how a councils' Heritage Vision Statement will be realised. It also indicates how a council will meet its heritage obligations set out in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the State Planning Policy Framework and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

A heritage strategy includes actions that address the identification, protection, management and promotion of a municipality's heritage assets, although it is not intended to directly target specific assets or duplicate the role of a Heritage Study by assessing the value of any particular assets or recommending the application of a heritage overlay to any particular places.

The strategy will assist Council to:

- Identify positive heritage measures already in place;
- Assess and prioritise work that still needs to be done;
- Manage and monitor the heritage assets in its municipality
- Report on and celebrate achievements.

## Strategy Aims and Objectives

The aims of the Macedon Ranges Shire Heritage Strategy are to:

1. improve information, coordination and collaboration within Council on heritage issues;
2. improve conservation management and restoration of Council heritage buildings;
3. assist and guide property owners of heritage places;
4. ensure adequate protection is applied to sites of heritage significance in the Shire;
5. improve clarity and consistency of Council decision-making for building applications in heritage areas and streets;
6. enhance civic pride and sense of place;
7. enhance understanding of important indigenous landscapes, migration routes, food gathering sites and family stories connected to the Macedon Ranges landscape.

# Strategy Action Plan

This strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Heritage Victoria toolkit 'Municipal Heritage Strategies: A Guide for Councils' and the strategy actions are arranged under the four Heritage Victoria themes - Knowing, Protecting, Supporting and Communicating and Promoting.

(Items with a * next to them require a funding allocation and will be referred to Council's future budget considerations and/or external funding sources.)

## KNOWING

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Improve electronic linkages and cross organisation access to heritage data and information** | Current unit budgets | 2016 | Commenced | Engineering Planning & Environment Information & Communications |

**Action Details:**

1.1 Improve heritage information on GIS mapping and IntraMaps including inclusion of the 200+ heritage places as 'pending heritage overlay inclusion' and identified heritage significant trees.

1.2 Implement 'Our Landscape Profiles' project data via Council's website.

1.3 Digitise the Heritage Overlay citation statements to improve access & retrieval

1.4 Link VM2020 Property Management database to the Mydata assets management database to provide consistent identification of heritage significant sites across both databases.*

1.5 Add a heritage link in the 'asset matrix' to alert Council staff of historic, indigenous and natural heritage.

1.6 Ensure local heritage places, buildings and objects of State significance are entered in the State Government's HERMES database.

1.7 Identify the heritage information needs of Council staff and implement a program for staff briefings and staff induction.*

1.8 Investigate the heritage potential of roadsides and reserves within the Shire.*

1.9 Review Council's Heritage Tree Listing with the National Trust's tree list to ensure they are consistent.

1.10 Digitise the updated list of significant and heritage trees and link it to Council's Mydata asset management system.*

1.11 Prepare and maintain a register of Council owned heritage assets.

# PROTECTING

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strengthen statutory protections for heritage in the Shire | Council | 2017 | Commenced | Strategic Planning & Environment |

**Action Details:**

1.1      Introduce Heritage Overlays to additional identified places, including significant trees.*

1.2      Correct anomalies in heritage overlay maps and schedules.

1.3      Introduce town structure plans and character studies that ensure growth and development do not negatively impact towns' historic character and lifestyle.

1.4      Apply appropriate overlays as required to established and new urban areas to ensure built heritage is protected.

1.5      Apply appropriate overlays, as required to rural areas to protect natural heritage features and historic landscapes.

1.6      Review precinct and heritage places in Malmsbury.*

1.7      Review previous heritage studies and strategies to identify and collate outstanding actions from previous work.*

1.8      Identify gaps in previous heritage studies and strategies and prioritise the need for new and additional heritage studies.*

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Develop guidelines to protect 'visual amenity' and heritage character in towns and hamlets | Council | 2017 | Not commenced | Statutory Planning Strategic Planning & Environment |

**Action Details:**

2.1      Identify amenity and character elements and ensure these are reflected in Council policies and strategies.*

2.2      Develop guidelines which identify the important elements of the character of towns, villages and hamlets and provide specific guidance for new development within Heritage Overlay precincts.

2.3      Utilise where possible the 'Goldfield Streetscape Features Table' to assess significant trees in parks, streets and high traffic areas.*

2.4      Develop a tree protection policy requiring the protection of significant trees and the payment of valuations and penalties where trees are destroyed or compromised.*

2.5      Include criteria for disposal and purchase of Council owned heritage buildings in the 'Asset Conversion Policy'.

2.6　Identify any Council owned heritage buildings, places and objects that lack 'statements of significance' and develop a priority program to address this.

2.7　Develop 'Conservation Management Plans' for Council owned & managed heritage places.

2.8　Update the Malmsbury Botanical Garden Masterplan.

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | **Strengthen protection of heritage in maintenance, site assessment and contracting** | Council | 2014 Ongoing | Not commenced | Engineering Infrastructure & Projects, Building Projects |

**Action Details:**

3.1　Develop a policy and guidelines for the maintenance of items such as gutters, footpaths, street furniture, crossovers  and car parking in or near heritage places and precinct overlays.*

3.2　Develop 'maintenance protocols' for Council heritage infrastructure.*

3.3　Ensure site assessments include 'archaeological potential'.

3.4　Ensure that procedures for the discovery of heritage finds are consistent with Heritage Victoria's advice and directions.*

3.5　Require major works contractors to comply with preliminary heritage assessments and related permits prior to commencing works.

3.6　Incorporate policies for heritage lanes, roads, kerbs, street furniture and street trees in the Road Asset Management Plan.

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4** | **Enhance protection and cataloguing of arts and culture collections** | Council | 2014 ongoing | Not commenced | Engineering Infrastructure & Projects, Building Projects |

**Action Details:**

4.1　Develop a Council "Collections Management Policy" and dedicated space for Council's conservation work.*

4.2　Introduce a program of 'significance assessment' for objects and collections.*

4.3　Catalogue Council's Visual Arts Collection.*

4.4　Utilise the Macedon Ranges Heritage Council to improve cataloguing & uniformity of documenting collections.

# SUPPORTING

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Support heritage groups and community in heritage initiatives | Council | Ongoing | Commenced | Cultural Development |

**Action Details:**

1.1    Consult with the Macedon Ranges Heritage Council and relevant historical societies regarding heritage matters.

1.2    Investigate options for financial support of heritage groups.*

1.3    Survey and consult with owners of heritage buildings, places and trees to identify conservation challenges*

1.4    Identify opportunities to assist private owners with heritage responsibilities such as funding opportunities, fee waivers & other council supports for building works.*

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Enhance opportunities for staff and volunteers to build heritage skills. | Council | Ongoing | Commenced | Cultural Development |

**Action Details:**

2.1    Support council staff and historical society members in professional development.*

2.2    Support staff and historical society members to attend indigenous 'cross cultural' professional development.*

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Continue Heritage Advisory Service subject to continued support from Heritage Victoria | Heritage Victoria / Council | Ongoing | Ongoing | Planning & Development |

# COMMUNICATING AND PROMOTING

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Promote knowledge of local Aboriginal history** | Council | 2015 ongoing | Commenced | Cultural Development Economic Development |

**Action Details:**

1.1    Develop fact sheets for information centres and information on Council's website.

1.2    Investigate opportunities for joint projects, partnerships and access to resources with the Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung organisations.*

1.3    Include indigenous place names in Council's 'street and place naming policy'.

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | **Enhance accessibility of heritage information to public and Council officers** | Council | 2014 ongoing | Commenced | Statutory Planning Strategic Planning |

**Action Details:**

2.1    Ensure that all local places of State level significance are on the Victoria Heritage Database to ensure 'address searchable' access for the public.

2.2    Link to Heritage Victoria guidelines and database from Council's web site.

2.3    Develop an online repository of publications, guidelines and other material for heritage conservation including:*

    a.    Develop a catalogue of Council owned objects and collections with expanded detail on Council's web site;

    b.    a heritage e-library with links from Council's web site;

    c.    'Stories of the Region' based on key items and collections for use in promotions;

2.5    Include heritage information in Council's business and 'new ratepayer' package.*

2.6    Highlight achievements and enhance public profile of heritage assets within the Shire.*

| | Action | Resourcing | Target Date Completion | Progress Outcome | Area Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | **Enhance civic pride and visitor experience and promote positive aspects of heritage conservation** | Council | 2014 ongoing | Commenced | Cultural Development Statutory Planning Economic Development |

**Action Details:**

3.1    Investigate in conjunction with local heritage groups, the potential to develop a programme for promoting heritage, heritage walks and interpretative signage*.

3.2    Develop Shire wide formats for interpretative signage, brochures and guides.*

3.3    Enhance opportunities for celebrating heritage in the Shire, particularly participation in State and National Trust heritage celebrations.*

# Attachment 1:
# Council Documents that Include Heritage Related Content

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Arts and Culture Study | 19. Leisure Strategy |
| 2. Asset conversion Policy | 20. Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme |
| 3. Asset Protection Policy | 21. Municipal Strategic Statement |
| 4. Asset Management Policy | 22. Natural Environment Strategy |
| 5. Asset Management Strategy | 23. Open Space Strategy |
| 6. Botanic Garden Master Plan Kyneton | 24. Public Arts Policy |
| 7. Botanic Garden Master Plan Malmsbury | 25. Redundant Assets Policy |
| 8. Building Maintenance Plan, | 26. Road Asset Management Plan |
| 9. Building Maintenance Program | 27. Roadside Management Plan |
| 10. Building Asset Management Plan | 28. Settlement Strategy |
| 11. Capital Works Budget | 29. Strategic Resource Plan |
| 12. Council Budget | 30. Street Tree Policy |
| 13. Council Long Term Financial Plan | 31. Tourism Strategy |
| 14. Council Plan | 32. Macedon Ranges Shire Council Stage 1 - Heritage Review Citations |
| 15. Cultural Heritage Report | 33. Shire of Kyneton Conservation (Heritage) Study |
| 16. Engineering Requirements for Infrastructure Construction | 34. Macedon Ranges Cultural Heritage and Landscapes Study |
| 17. Footpath Policy | |
| 18. Guidelines for Working Near Trees | |