

BCNT NEWS



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Annual General Meeting

The 2019 AGM will be held at 2.00pm on Sun 15th September at St Augustine's Anglican Church, 111 Marine Parade San Remo

This will be a great opportunity for members of Bass Coast National Trust to get together. It will also be the first time we've opened up our regular meeting to all members. The ordinary meeting will follow the formalities of the AGM and we'll finish with afternoon tea.

Invitation to Nominate

Our small committee needs some new members to bring fresh ideas and to assist with the important tasks of protecting and promoting heritage across Bass Coast Shire. If you are interested and would like to know more, we'd love to hear from you. A nomination form with contact details is attached.

DAL Engagement Process

BCNT and NT have prepared an excellent joint submission to DELWP as our response to the project to declare Bass Coast a Distinctive Area and Landscape. P. 3 has extracts.



Former Boys Home Newhaven

On July 12th Bass Coast Branch wrote to the Mayor and the CEO of Bass Coast Council seeking an update on their plans to address the dilapidation issue. We are presently awaiting a response. This follows three years of advocacy for action on the buildings' deterioration.

A recent visit to the site shows the obvious neglect and the vandalism that is continuing step by step to destroy the buildings. The safety fencing that Council required is now full of openings so public safety is also still an issue. We query the point of Council having a heritage overlay on the site with strong controls under the Planning Scheme if this does not ensure protection of the buildings.



Heritage Victoria

Recently Heritage Victoria, the government's main heritage body and a unit within the Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), released a brochure clarifying its role. It confirms that it has very little involvement in the state's heritage apart from the 2,358 places that are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. All of the areas covered by a Council Heritage Overlay are under the sole jurisdiction of local councils. This includes sites like the Newhaven Boys Home which is not on the State Heritage Register but is covered by a Bass Coast planning scheme heritage overlay.

The brochure points out that Heritage Victoria reports to the state's Heritage Council which has powers and responsibilities under the Heritage Act 2017 to advise municipal councils on heritage matters and on proposed planning scheme amendments. However this does not provide a wide agenda and interventionist or guiding approach with Councils and is limited by current staffing and funding.



We are aware that Council has made polite attempts through the landowner to improve the situation and has used Building Control Act powers re fencing and safety. without any sustained results. We therefore believe there is an urgent need for Council to review its approach and to strongly advocate at state government level for assistance, and, if necessary, additional legal power to protect this significant heritage asset

Significant Trees

The Bass Coast Branch of the National Trust has joined with the Phillip Island Conservation Society to compile a Significant Tree Register for Phillip Island and Churchill Island. The purpose of the register will be to recognise and document the most significant trees and ensure they are protected into the future; much like an 'A' Grade Heritage building would be protected. The pilot project hopes to set a template for the Bass Coast Shire Council to establish a shire wide significant tree register for inclusion in the Planning Scheme.

Phillip Island and Churchill Island have many individual native and exotic trees and groups of trees, including roadside vegetation, with special significance. Collectively these trees add to the diversity of vegetation across the islands and have ecological significance, while on an individual level they contribute to the character of the local area and may have particular cultural and or heritage value.



Heritage Victoria

In the case of the Newhaven Boys Home we think it is time for the Bass Coast Council to test the resolve of the government on heritage and engage with Heritage Victoria to seek further assistance, legislative and otherwise, to avoid the progressive decline of this heritage site



It appears that local councils are being asked to take on the lion's share of protecting the state's heritage while Heritage Victoria and the Heritage Council seem to have a more narrow focus on the state's significant sites rather than those of regional and local significance. This imbalance or weighting of interest, function and resources surely needs to be addressed.



Distinctive Areas and Landscapes

July and August have seen the first phase of public engagement in the DAL process. Bass Coast Branch's President Greg Buchanan and Past President Ross Lloyd have worked with National Trust staff to prepare a joint submission. We're really pleased with the result which includes a full list of all National Trust Bass Coast classified landscapes. Below are some extracts. Copies of the full submission will be available at the AGM.

"We strongly support the declaration of the Bass Coast as a Distinctive Area and Landscape under the Planning and Environment Act 1987, and the preparation of a Statement of Planning Policy. This process will be important to guide the future of this region, which is valued locally, nationally, and internationally, for its natural, cultural, social, scientific and Indigenous values.



We strongly support permanent designated township boundaries to guide urban development and protect coastal and landscape values between settlements. Height and density limits within those township boundaries are also a key to protecting the character of the townships, including heritage, architectural and vegetation character. We note that the Bass Coast Planning Scheme presently includes a clear strategic framework and settlement strategy .

We also note that the Legislation requires that a Statement of Planning Policy set a vision for at least 50 years that includes preferences for future land use, protection and development. We question whether this may involve projecting additional population growth and development that may be in conflict with the present settlement policies in the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.

Having regard to the above, we believe it is important to clarify how the Statement of Planning Policy will interact with Council's planning scheme and ensure a clear and consistent planning regime remains in place—and the appearance of duplication and overlap is avoided.

The marine environment of Western Port and Bass Strait and the coastline beaches and distinctive landscapes of the Bass Coast are sensitive to the impact of high population growth and seasonal visitor numbers. An important measure of the new Statement of Planning Policy should be to strike the appropriate balance between tourism/development and environmental values and ensure that future measures such as road duplications, car ferries, siting of industrial facilities and infrastructure are carefully considered against sound strategic policy objectives. This should be strongly weighted in favour of protecting the natural beauty, flora and fauna and landscape significance of the area and respecting heritage and cultural values for the benefit of future generations.

The recent announcement by the government to create a state park along the Kilcunda- Inverloch coastline is an important initiative that further reinforces the significance of this area for its scenic qualities, recreational value and Indigenous heritage and cultural significance. We believe the Statement of Planning Policy should carefully integrate this initiative in the policies and objectives put forward.

In conclusion, the National Trust, including our Bass Coast Branch, strongly supports the declaration of the Bass Coast as a Distinctive Area and Landscape. "



Bass Coast Branch Committee 2019.

Greg Buchanan (President)

Mary-Lu Burt (Secretary)

Eric Burt (Treasurer)

Ross Lloyd | Gaye Cleeland | Margaret Hancock | John Jansson | Julie Box | Cheryl Overton

Contact: mlburt@melbpc.org.au