

# South Gippsland Heritage Study



## VOLUME 2

### KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS



**December 2004**



The front cover shows (from top):

- Railway viaduct on Great Southern Railway near Koonwarra.
- Leongatha Butter & Cheese Factory (side view).
- Shearing Shed at Berry's Creek.

# South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study

## **Volume 2**

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Key Findings

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Recommendations

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**2004**



# Preface

The first draft of this Key Findings & Recommendations Report was completed in 2000.

This revised edition was completed in 2004 and includes revisions to correct errors and omissions, and to reflect additional research carried out following the release of the initial draft.

It now includes an implementation chapter, which outlines how the recommendations of the Study have been implemented until now.

# Acknowledgements

The South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study – Stage 2 was prepared by Heritage Officer, David Helms. Architectural assessments and related historic research were undertaken by Trevor Westmore.

The contribution of the following people and organisations to the Study is gratefully acknowledged.

- The Council of South Gippsland Shire for their vision and foresight in undertaking the Study, and for their continued support and assistance throughout. Particular thanks are extended to Steering Committee Members, Cr. Jeanette Harding and Cr. Brian Dwyer.
- The owners and custodians of heritage places in South Gippsland for their interest, support, and cooperation throughout the preparation of the Study.
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The following local newspapers for allowing access to early editions of the newspaper:

- The staff at the Foster Mirror, particularly Kate Fooke.
- The Sentinel Times.

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# Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I present the South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study.

The Study, which was jointly funded by Council and Heritage Victoria, demonstrates the commitment of Council to conserving and enhancing our important cultural heritage for future generations as part of our Vision to continually improve our community's prosperity and quality of life.

The people of South Gippsland have always been justly proud of their rich and diverse cultural heritage and this Study will enable Council to continue to support the community in understanding, protecting, promoting and managing that heritage.

I therefore commend the Study to you.

Cr Mike Wrigley  
**Shire President (2000)**



# Executive Summary

## Key Findings

### Introduction

The key findings of Stage 2 of this Study are the assessments of the places and precincts of potential heritage significance and the review of the Thematic Environmental History.

In addition, the research and consultation undertaken by the Study has raised a number of related issues, which may be summarized as:

- Protection & Management
- Community Awareness
- Social, Cultural and Economic Opportunities

This Section provides a summary of the key findings and related issues, which are described in more detail in Section 3.

### Heritage places & precincts

The Study has assessed over 1,200 places of potential heritage significance throughout the Shire. The assessment of these places has found that:

- a. Eight places are considered by the Study to be of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria, and may also be of National significance.

These are places of outstanding heritage significance. They are important not only to the history of the Shire and the Gippsland region, but also to the State of Victoria.

Citations for all places of State significance are included in Volume 3.

- b. 335 places are considered by the Study to be of local significance to South Gippsland Shire. These are referred to by the Study as Local 1 significance.

Places of Local 1 significance are an integral part of the history of the Shire, and often make a significant individual contribution to its identity, character and amenity. They must therefore be conserved and enhanced.

Citations for all places of Local 1 significance are included in Volume 3.

- c. 205 places are considered by the Study to be of local significance to town or district where they are located. These places are referred to by the Study as Local 2 significance.

Places of Local 2 significance are an important part of the history of the Shire, and may also make an individual contribution to its identity, character and amenity.

The conservation and enhancement of these places is strongly encouraged, particularly if they are included in the Heritage Overlay either individually or as part of a heritage precinct identified by the Study.

Places of Local 2 significance are listed in Volume 4.

- d. 660 (approx.) places are considered by the Study to be of Local 3 Significance.
- Places of Local 3 significance are generally part of a group of similar or related places that contribute to the history of the Shire, and may also contribute to its identity, character and amenity.
- All places of Local 3 significance are listed in Volume 4.

- e. 12 heritage precincts have been identified that comprise a group of heritage places. Each precinct is considered to be of Local 1 significance.
- Heritage precincts are an integral part of the history of the Shire and all of the individual heritage places and other elements that contribute to their significance must be conserved and enhanced.
- Citations for each of the 12 heritage precincts are included in Volume 3.

In addition, the Study has identified the following places that require further specialist research to determine their heritage significance:

- Cultural landscapes such as those identified by the National Trust.
- Sites of potential archaeological significance, which are listed in Volume 4.
- Sites of post-contact aboriginal heritage significance.

None were identified by the Study; however, it is recommended that a comprehensive survey of pre and post contact aboriginal heritage places be undertaken in association with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

#### Review of Thematic Environmental History

The review of the Thematic Environmental History (the History) has found that the History adequately identifies and describes most of the key themes that were important in the post-contact settlement and development of the Shire.

However, it is considered that the History is inadequate in the following ways:

- It does not compare the different historic themes to identify those which were of most importance in determining the longer term pattern of development in the Shire.
- It does not properly analyse the way in which the key themes are expressed in the historic pattern of settlement or changes to the landscape. Specifically, it does not describe the connection between key historic themes and the development of settlements.

The further research and analysis carried out during Stage 2 has found that the most significant themes in relation to their long term influence upon the historic pattern of post-contact settlement and development of the Shire have been:

- The development of railways, particularly the South Eastern Railway in 1888-1892.
- The development of the dairying industry.
- The gold and coal industries also had significant influence upon the development of Korumburra and Foster and the districts surrounding these towns.

These key themes essentially determined the distinctive historic pattern of towns, villages and rural settlement in the Shire that can still be interpreted today despite the closure of railways, the changes in dairying, and the total disappearance of mining activity.

### **Protection & Management**

- Existing statutory protection is limited and there are few local policies or guidelines to assist in the exercise of discretion. This has led to the loss of heritage places entirely or detrimental effects upon the significance of places through inappropriate alterations and other works.
- As many buildings (if not more) are being lost through neglect or poor management as through active destruction.
- However, there are also many good examples of the conservation and maintenance of both public and private heritage places.
- It is important that the heritage places identified by the Study are adequately protected, and that assistance is made available to the owners and custodians of heritage places to enable them to be properly managed.

### **Community Awareness**

- The public response to the Study was very positive and invaluable information and support was also provided by the local historical societies, and other agencies such as the local newspapers.
- The consultation and research undertaken as part of Study did reveal that there is a good general awareness

of the importance of heritage to the Shire.

- Nonetheless, it was also found that there was still a tendency for many people to undervalue the history of this area. It was also interesting to note that some older people did not place much value on certain heritage places, particularly older houses.
- On the other hand, it was gratifying to see that many younger residents are, in the same way as their metropolitan counterparts, buying and restoring old properties.
- There is an opportunity to foster existing goodwill and encourage greater awareness and understanding of the importance of our heritage in the broader community.

### **Social, Cultural & Economic Opportunities**

- The heritage places in the Shire have great potential to enhance its image and attractiveness to tourists.
- It is, however, recognised that there are few, if any, places within the Shire that could be considered as “destinations” within themselves.
- It is considered that the greatest potential for our heritage places in terms of tourism is to further enhance our identity in a way that clearly distinguishes the Shire from surrounding areas in a similar way to the highly successful *Prom Country* promotion.
- In this context, Coal Creek has an important educative and interpretative role to play.

- Heritage places are already contributing to the social, cultural and economic well-being in the Shire. However, there is enormous potential for this to be improved and Council can play a key role in fostering and facilitating a more integrated and co-ordinated approach.

### Conclusion

If our cultural heritage is to be preserved and enhanced for the benefit of future generations then it will require careful management as part of a comprehensive **Conservation Strategy** by Council, which should include the following key components:

- Protection and Management
- Education
- Promotion
- Support

Section 1.2 contains a summary of the recommendations for how this could be achieved.

## Recommendations

### Introduction

This Section provides a summary of the recommendations of the Study that are discussed in detail in Section 4.

Core recommendations are shown in **bold**. These recommendations are considered to be fundamental to the achievement of an effective Conservation Strategy for the Shire.

It is recommended that Council adopt the *South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study 2004* including the following specific recommendations:

### Protection & Management

It is recommended that statutory protection be provided to specific heritage places by undertaking an Amendment to the South Gippsland Planning Scheme to:

- a. Include the *South Gippsland Heritage Study 2004* as an Incorporated Document in Clause 81 of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.
- b. Replace the existing Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the South Gippsland Planning Scheme with a new Schedule that includes all the heritage places listed in Table 1.1 in Appendix 1 in Volume 4.
- c. Replace the existing references to Cultural Heritage in the Municipal Strategic Statement with the new sections included as Appendix 2 in Volume 4.
- d. Add a new Heritage Local Policy to Clause 22 of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme, which is based on

the Heritage Policy included as Appendix 3.

- e. Amend the relevant South Gippsland Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay Maps, and add new Maps to include the new places included in the Schedule referred to by **b** above.

It is further recommended that:

- f. Places identified as being of potential State significance, be nominated for inclusion on the Victoria Heritage Register, where they are not currently included.
- g. Council adopt the Heritage Guidelines included as Appendix 4.
- h. A Heritage Reference Group be appointed to oversee the implementation of the Study.
- i. Council assist custodians of heritage places to prepare Conservation Management Plans, where this is a specific recommendation of the Study.
- j. Council prepare Management Plans for every Avenue of Honour in the Shire.
- k. Council undertake further studies to identify, document and assess places of cultural landscape, archaeological and aboriginal heritage significance.
- l. Council provide limited financial assistance for custodians of places of Local significance, and assist them to seek funding through other sources.

(See also Education & Support)

## **Education**

It is recommended that community awareness of the importance of heritage be raised by:

- a. Identifying key heritage places with signage or plaques.
- b. Identifying all of the extant Honour Avenues in association with their local communities and custodians.
- c. Placing heritage identity signage at the key entry points of historic towns.
- d. Placing interpretive signage at key heritage places throughout the Shire.
- e. Providing a copy of the Study to Shire Libraries and historical societies, as well as to every School in the Shire.
- f. **Distributing the Heritage Guidelines included as Appendix 4 to custodians of heritage places.**
- g. Hosting annual **Heritage Awards** to recognise outstanding community contributions to the heritage of the Shire.
- h. Including a regular item in Community Update and local newspapers about heritage issues in the Shire.
- i. Appointing a Heritage Reference Group to oversee the implementation of the Study.

### **Promotion**

It is recommended that the cultural heritage of the Shire be promoted by:

- a. Including references to heritage, where appropriate, in future tourism and marketing strategies for the Shire.
- b. Identifying key heritage places with signage or plaques.
- c. Placing heritage identity signage at the key entry points of historic towns.
- d. Placing interpretive signage at key heritage places throughout the Shire.
- e. Liaising with Tourism Victoria to update the existing *Heritage Trail* Brochure.
- f. Producing local heritage trail brochures for walking tours in key historic townships.

### **Support**

It is recommended that owners and custodians of heritage places be assisted in the conservation and management of these places by:

- a. Employing a Heritage Advisor to consider planning applications for heritage places, and to provide limited advice and assistance to custodians of heritage places.
- b. Providing limited financial assistance to owners and custodians of privately owned places of Local significance.
- c. Assisting the owners and custodians of places of State significance or that are publicly owned to seek funding through other sources.
- d. Distributing the Heritage Guidelines included as Appendix 4 to owners and custodians of heritage places.

# Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

The purpose of the South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study (the Study) is to:

*Identify, assess and document all post-contact places of cultural significance within the municipality and to make recommendations for their future conservation.*

The Study was prepared in two stages, over five years from 1998 to 2002 and comprises:

- Volume 1 - *Thematic Environmental History*
- Volume 2 - *Key Findings & Recommendations*
- Volume 3 - *Heritage Places & Precinct Citations*
- Volume 4 - *Appendices*

Stage 1 of the Study was undertaken by the *Australian Heritage Group* during 1998 and completed in November of that year.

Stage 2 commenced in January 2000 with the appointment by South Gippsland Shire of David Helms as Heritage Officer. Trevor Westmore was employed as consultant in February 2000 to provide expertise in architectural assessment.

The Study was guided by a Steering Committee that comprised:

**Council Staff** - Katy Spencer and David Young (during Stages 1 & 2), and David Helms, Lesley Ikin and David Young (Stage 2)

**Councillors** - Jeannette Harding and Bryan Dwyer (Stages 1 & 2)

**Consultants** - Australian Heritage Group (Stage 1), Trevor Westmore (Stage 2)

**Heritage Victoria** - Patrick Miller and Geoff Austin (Stage 1), Anita Brady (Stage 2)

The Study is the first of its kind to be undertaken in South Gippsland Shire and provides a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the extent and significance of heritage places within the Shire. This enables Council to make informed decisions in consultation with the community about how our heritage is to be conserved and managed for future generations.

The Study has been prepared with funding provided by the Department of Infrastructure's Public Heritage Program and South Gippsland Shire Council. Technical Assistance and advice was provided by Heritage Victoria.

## 1.2 Background

South Gippsland Shire was created by the amalgamation of the former Shire of Korumburra, Mirboo, South Gippsland and Woorayl in 1994. The need for a Heritage Study for South Gippsland Shire was recognised in 1997 during the preparation of the new format South Gippsland Planning Scheme.

The new format planning scheme was prepared in accordance with the Planning Reform process introduced by the State Government. All new format Planning Schemes in Victoria must have a sound strategic basis, and this requires heritage policy and controls to be based on a comprehensive Shire Heritage Study.

None of the former Councils had prepared a Heritage Study, although all had published Shire Histories and the Heritage Victoria, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), and the Australian Heritage Commission had assessed the heritage significance of some individual places.

At the time of preparing the new Scheme, the Korumburra Railway Station was the only heritage place in

the Shire included on the Victoria Heritage Register. In addition, a number of places had been classified by the National Trust, or placed on the interim Register of the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission.

After consultation with the Department of Infrastructure it was decided, as an interim measure, to include the Korumburra Railway Station and those places that had been classified by the National Trust in the Heritage Overlay in the new format planning scheme. A total of 17 properties across the Shire were included on this basis.

In addition, Heritage was identified as a key issue by the Municipal Strategic Statement in the new format planning scheme and one of the recommended key actions was the completion of a Heritage Study for the Shire.

Consequently, Council obtained funding in November 1997 from the then "Pride of Place" program to undertake Stage 1 of the Study. The Australian Heritage Group were appointed as consultants in April 1998, and the Stage 1 Heritage Study was completed in November of that year.

Following the completion of Stage 1, Council successfully sought funding in April 1999 to undertake Stage 2 of the Study, which later commenced in January 2000 with the appointment of David Helms as Heritage Officer.

### 1.3 The Brief

The Study has been undertaken in two stages in accordance with a Brief, which was based on Heritage Victoria guidelines.

#### Stage 1

In accordance with the Brief, the purpose of Stage 1 was to:

- Prepare a thematic environmental history of post-contact settlement and development of the Study area. Post-contact refers to the period following the initial contact between local Aboriginal communities and European explorers and early settlers.
- Identify all post-contact places of potential cultural significance in the Study area. The focus of the Study is cultural heritage rather than natural heritage, however, natural heritage features that have a notable social or cultural value were also considered.
- Estimate the resources required to fully research document and assess all post contact places of potential cultural significance in the Study area. (as part of Stage 2)

The Brief required:

- The Study to be prepared in accordance with *The Burra Charter: The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* and its Guidelines.
- Places of cultural heritage significance to be identified using the Register of the National Estate (RNE) criteria<sup>1</sup>. It noted that the thresholds applied in the application of significance might include State significance and Local Significance.

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) criteria.



The key outcomes of Stage 1 were:

- A Thematic Environmental History of South Gippsland Shire, which is included as Volume 1.

In accordance with the Brief, the History is not a “comprehensive chronological history”, but rather provides:

*... an historical explanation of the existing physical fabric and land use patterns of the study area. These themes will be applied in the identification and evaluation of individual components of the study area’s heritage.*

- The identification of approximately 500 places of potential heritage significance.

## Stage 2

The purpose of Stage 2 was to:

- Assess and document the places of post-contact cultural significance identified by Stage 1.
- Provide recommendations for a heritage conservation program for the study area.

The tasks undertaken included:

- The preparation of a Project Management Plan.
- The research, documentation and assessment of places of post-contact cultural significance. The Brief specifically excluded the assessment of landscapes of cultural significance.
- A review of the Thematic Environmental History. The purpose of the review was to determine whether any particular themes needed to be amended in the light of the detailed research that was undertaken during this Stage.
- Recommendations for a Heritage Program for the Study Area. This was to comprise a comprehensive program of

statutory and non-statutory measures to assist in the conservation of the heritage of the Study area.

The key outcomes of Stage 2 are described in Section 2.4 under Final Report.

## 1.4 Study Method

The study method for Stage 1 is described in the Executive Summary in Volume 1. The study method for Stage 2 was based on the guidelines contained in a Brief and included the following key steps:

### Project Management Plan

A Project Management Plan (the Plan) was prepared in January 2000 in accordance with the Brief, and was amended and approved by the Steering Committee in February. It set out the course of action for the content and progress of Stage 2 of the Study including research, community consultation, timetable, budget, suggested meeting dates for the Steering Committee, and completion details.

It was agreed that potential heritage places within Wilson’s Promontory National Park would not be investigated in detail by the Study. It was noted that Parks Victoria and Heritage Victoria were investigating some of these places.

The Plan was based on the total of approximately 500 heritage places identified by Stage 1, and it was envisaged that a draft of the Study would be substantially completed by August 2000.

### Database

A database using the Microsoft Access program containing place records identified by Stage 1 was adapted and refined for use during Stage 2. This is referred to as the South Gippsland Heritage Database (SGHD)

### **Review of Shire Records**

A problem that was not foreseen at the time of the preparation of the Plan was the lack of many early records. For reasons that are unknown, the former Shire of Korumburra rates records do not exist before 1975, while the former Shire of Woorayl Rate Records prior to 1920 were destroyed in a fire at about that time. In addition, the Shire of Woorayl was the only former Council to have any significant building records prior to the Second World War.

### **Community Consultation**

The Plan included community consultation at the beginning of Stage 2, which involved sending the following information about the Study to each owner and occupier of an identified heritage place:

- A letter and information brochure to advise of the inclusion of their property in the list of potential heritage places and to explain the purpose of Stage 2.
- A questionnaire inviting them to provide any information about the history of their place.

The information provided by the questionnaires was not intended to replace rigorous historical research as required by the Brief, and certainly did not form the basis, on its own, for any decisions about the potential heritage significance of a place. However, it did provide useful information that, in the absence of many local records as described above, was to prove invaluable in undertaking further primary research.

This consultation also had a second, and perhaps more important, objective. It was intended to give people a sense of "ownership" and involvement in the Study, and was intended to allay, wherever possible, any potential apprehension about its intended purpose.

Finally, early notification of owners and occupiers was also necessary as in many cases detailed inspections of places could not simply be carried out from the roadside - as is the case with heritage places in urban areas. It therefore gave property owners and occupiers forewarning of site inspections as a matter of courtesy, and once again to prevent any perception that the Study was being undertaken in a clandestine manner.

In addition to this direct notification, regular articles were also placed in local newspapers and the Shire newsletter.

### **Field Surveys**

The identification of potential heritage places by field surveys is normally a requirement of Stage 1. However, the Stage 1 field surveys were limited and it was therefore necessary to undertake comprehensive field surveys of the entire Shire as part of Stage 2, including all the properties that had been identified by Stage 1.

As a consequence, many additional places as well as precincts of potential heritage significance were identified during Stage 2.

Although every effort has been made to ensure that the list of heritage places is complete, it should not be regarded as absolute or fixed. The difficulty of access to some properties and other factors means that some heritage places will remain, as yet, undiscovered. It is expected that the list of heritage places may continue to grow as new places are found.

### **Levels of Significance**

Once an initial visual assessment of a potential heritage place or area was carried out, a tentative level of significance was assigned. This level of significance was not fixed and was modified, as required, as further research and comparative analysis was undertaken. In accordance with Heritage Victoria guidelines, places

were initially deemed to be of either State or Local significance.

For places of Local significance, this was further refined to include the following sub-categories:

- Places or precincts of individual local significance to South Gippsland Shire. For ease of reference, these are referred to by the Study as Local 1.
- Places of individual local significance to a town or district within the Shire. (Local 2)
- Places of contributory significance to a town or district as part of a group of similar or related places. (Local 3)

The basis of each of these sub-categories is described further in Section 2.2.

### **Revision of Project Management Plan**

The need to undertake additional field surveys had two significant impacts upon the completion of Stage 2 as originally envisaged by the Project Management Plan:

- It reduced the amount of time that could have otherwise been spent in research and further consultation.
- It significantly increased the potential number of places that would potentially require detailed investigation.

It became evident that these impacts had the potential to jeopardize the successful completion of the Study in accordance with the original Project Management Plan. A Contingency Plan was therefore prepared in August 2000 for the consideration of the Steering Committee, which identified that:

- Stage 1 identified about 500 places of potential heritage significance and Stage 2 had identified over 400 additional places at the time that the Contingency Plan was considered by the Committee.

(A further 300 places were subsequently identified at the completion of the field surveys in September 2000)

- Of the 400 additional properties initially identified, approximately half were considered to be of State or Local 1 significance and would require detailed investigation. In the former Woorayl Shire alone, the number of places increased threefold from 51 to 168.

On this basis, the Steering Committee considered that the most desirable outcome would be properly complete the Study, which would include detailed assessments of all places considered to be of State or Local 1 significance. However, it was recognised that this may not be feasible given that the existing funding did not allow for such a significant increase in the number of places to be assessed.

After discussing options, the Steering Committee agreed that Additional funding should be sought from the Public Heritage Program. Until the outcome of the application was known it was agreed that:

- As many places of State or Local 1 significance would be assessed in detail until the outcome of the new funding application was known. All other places would be identified for inclusion in the database, but would not be investigated further, although photographs would be taken of places considered to be of Local 2 significance to avoid the need to undertake further site visits at a future date.
- The Study timetable would be amended to allow extra time for the completion of assessments for the places of State or Local 1 significance.

Accordingly, an application was made to Heritage Victoria for additional funding in July 2000. This was successful and allowed for the detailed assessment of all places of State or Local 1 significance, and for the

documentation of places of Local 2 or 3 significance.

### **Site Inspection and Further Research**

Detailed assessment was undertaken of each place or area considered to be of State or Local 1 significance. This included:

- A further and longer site visit, which included undertaking a detailed survey of significant elements of the place, and a photographic record as the basis for preparing a physical description for each place.
- Detailed historic research into the potential significance of places, with particular regard to the key themes for the area, as the basis of preparing a history of each place.

The information gathered as part of the above process formed the basis of establishing the cultural importance of each heritage place as described in the Statement of Significance in the citation for the place entered into the database.

As previously mentioned, the initially ascribed levels of significance were only preliminary and further detailed research sometimes meant that places were found to be of comparatively lesser significance, while, on the other hand, other places were sometimes found to be more important in terms of illustrating key historic themes. Levels of significance were therefore amended accordingly as the Study progressed.

### **Final Report**

The Final Report for Stage 2 comprises Volumes 2, 3, and 4 of the Study and includes:

- *Key Findings*  
(Section 3 of Volume 2)
- *Recommendations*  
(Section 4 of Volume 2)
- *Citations for Heritage places & precincts of Local 1 or State significance*  
(Volume 3)
- *Appendices*  
(Volume 4)

# Key Findings

## 2.1 Introduction

The key findings of Stage 2 of the Study are the assessments of the places and areas of potential heritage significance and the review of the Thematic Environmental History.

In addition, the research and consultation undertaken by the Study has raised a number of related issues, which may be summarized as:

- Protection & Management
- Community Awareness
- Social, Cultural and Economic Opportunities

This Section provides a detailed description of the key findings of the Study and the related issues.

## 2.2 Heritage Places and Precincts

### State Significance

A total of eight places in the Shire are either already on the Victorian Heritage Register, or have been identified by the Study to be of possible State significance with potential for inclusion on the Register. If the latter places are included on the Register they will be subject to the application of the Heritage Act 1995.

Places of State significance satisfy one or more of the criteria listed below, in accordance with the requirements of the *Heritage Act* 1995. They will:

- Have an association with or relationship to the history of the State of Victoria. (Criterion A)

- Demonstrate rarity or uniqueness in the Victorian context. (Criterion B)
- Have the potential to educate, illustrate or provide for further investigation of Victoria's cultural heritage. (Criterion C)
- Exhibit the principal characteristics or the representative nature of the class or type of place or object to which it belongs. (Criterion D)
- Exhibit good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or exhibit a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features. (Criterion E)
- Demonstrate or be associated with significant scientific or technical innovations or achievements.
- Demonstrate significant social or cultural associations in the Victorian context. (Criterion F)
- Demonstrate other relevant matters. (Criterion G)

The places on the Victorian Heritage Register at the commencement of the Study in 2000 were:

- The Korumburra Railway Station complex
- The Wilson's Promontory Light station

The places that have been assessed in accordance with the above criteria and are considered to be of potential State significance are:

**Table 3.1**

Site ID	Name of Place
KOO-RW-BR	Koonwarra Railway Bridges
LE-NE-530	Knox's Rockhill Farm
ME-RW-BR	Meeniyon Railway Bridge
MI-MISO-HA	Mirboo-on-Tarwin Hall (Former)
PO-NY-920	'Chock & Log' Cottage
WA-LIME	Walkerville Lime Kilns (Former)

These places are of outstanding heritage significance not only to the Shire and the Gippsland region, but also to the State of Victoria.

Citations for all places of State significance are included in Volume 3.

### Local 1 significance

A total of 335 places of Local 1 significance have been identified by the Study. These are places that are significant to the Shire as a whole, and possibly to the wider Gippsland region. With the exception of the places of State significance, they are the most outstanding examples in the Shire of their style or type, and may also demonstrate the important themes of the Shire's history.

These places have been assessed using the same criteria as for places of State significance, but using the context of the Shire, rather than the State. Some examples are:

- Places that illustrate key historic themes include the *Kongwak Butter Factory* (Dairying) and the *Jeetho Public Hall*. (Government & Community Institutions)
- Places that are rare include the relatively small number of buildings that survived the devastating 1898 bushfires such as the *Campbell homesteads* at Mardan.
- Places that have the ability to educate or illustrate include *Mossvale Park*, and the *Leongatha Avenue of Honour*.
- Places that demonstrate uniqueness include *Dorfstedt* at Poowong East, and the *Inglis farm complex* at Dumbalk East.
- Places of outstanding aesthetic qualities include *Glenorchy* at Jeetho, and *Ambleside* at Toora.
- Places that demonstrate technical innovations include the former *Aberdeen Shearing Shed* at Berry's Creek.

- Places that have significant social or cultural connections include the Shire halls at Leongatha and Mirboo North.

Places of Local 1 significance are an integral part of the history of the Shire, and often make a significant individual contribution to its identity, character and amenity. They should therefore be conserved and enhanced.

Citations for all places of Local 1 significance are included in Volume 3.

### Local 2 significance

A total of 205 places of Local 2 significance have been identified by the Study. These places are of individual significance to a town or locality. They are superior examples of their style or type, and may also be an important in understanding the history of a township or district.

In addition, the Study identified some places that were considered to be of Local 2 significance purely on the basis of their social or cultural associations alone.

These places are often unique to rural areas, as they usually possess the following particular characteristics:

- They performed a number of different functions and were of particular importance in the development of a small (and often isolated) community. (e.g. halls were sometimes used as both schools and churches – and vice versa)
- They are the only surviving public building in a township or district and so is an essential part of the identity of that area.

Places of Local 2 significance are an important part of the history of the Shire, and may also make an individual contribution to its identity, character and amenity.

The conservation and enhancement of these places is strongly encouraged, particularly if they are included in the Heritage Overlay either individually or

as part of a heritage precinct identified by the Study.

Citations are included in Volume 3 for places of Local 2 significance included in a heritage precinct, or that have particular social significance. All other places are included in the list of Places of Local significance in Volume 4.

### Local 3 significance

Approximately 660 places of Local 3 significance have been identified by the Study. These places are generally of contributory significance as a part of a group to a town or district.

They are representative examples of their type, and may also contribute to understanding the history of a town or district. They also include places that could have been of higher significance but have deteriorated or have been so significantly altered that little recognisable original fabric remains.

Typical examples include:

- The many early dwellings and homesteads that demonstrate the pattern of settlement both in towns and rural areas.
- Ruined buildings and sites of former buildings where there is no obvious visual remains, particularly where there is archaeological potential.

Places of Local 3 significance are generally part of a group of similar or related places that contribute to the history of the Shire, and may also contribute to its identity, character and amenity.

The conservation and enhancement of these places is supported, particularly if they form part of a heritage precinct identified by the Study.

All places of Local 3 significance are listed in Volume 4.

### Heritage Precincts

As the Study progressed, it became evident that in addition to places of individual significance, there were groups of places that formed identifiable heritage precincts.

These precincts were found to usually possess one or more of the following characteristics:

- They contain heritage places that individually or as a group illustrate important themes as described in the *Thematic Environmental History*.
- They have largely intact or visually cohesive streetscapes that create precincts of aesthetic or historic integrity.
- They contain a high proportion of substantially intact heritage places.

On this basis, the following heritage precincts have been identified:

- Korumburra – Bridge and Commercial Streets Commercial and Residential
- Korumburra – Radovick Street and Environs Residential
- Korumburra – Bridge Street, Guys Road and Environs Church and Residential
- Leongatha – Bair and McCartin Streets Civic and Commercial
- Leongatha – Bair Street Interwar Commercial
- Leongatha – Long and Ogilvy Streets Railway and Residential
- Leongatha – Ogilvy Street Catholic Church and Residential
- Loch Village
- Meeniyan – Whitelaw Street Commercial
- Mirboo North – Ridgway Commercial and Residential
- Stony Creek Village
- Toora – Stanley Street Commercial and Residential

Heritage precincts are integral to the history of the Shire and all of the individual heritage places and other elements that contribute to their

significance must be conserved and enhanced.

Citations for each heritage precinct are included in Volume 3.

## 2.3 Review of Thematic Environmental History

The Thematic Environmental History (the History) has been reviewed on the basis of further research and investigation carried out as part of Stage 2. This review has found that the History adequately identifies and describes most of the key themes that were important in the post contact settlement and development of the Shire.

However, it is considered that the History tends to be inadequate in the analysis of the key historic themes for the following reasons:

**a. It does not compare the different historic themes to identify those which were of most importance in determining the longer term pattern of development in the Shire.**

The lack of comparative analysis tends to give the impression that all major themes were of the same or similar importance in the post-contact history of the Shire, when in fact they were important for different reasons.

For example, although the early phases of exploration and settlement of the Shire were undoubtedly important in the initial opening up of the Shire and demonstrating its potential for future development, they had a more limited impact in relation to the long-term pattern of development, whereas the development of railways had a far more lasting impact.

**b. It does not explore or describe the connection between key historic themes and the building of settlements.**

The building of settlements as a sub-theme is inadequately described in the History. For example, the History contains important factual information about the development of railways and the dairying industry and notes that they were both very important in terms of providing economic stimulus in the Shire.

However, in terms of illustrating their influence, the History confines itself to listing only the stations, and butter factories directly associated with these themes and tends to overlook the direct connection between the opening of a railway or a butter factory and the consequent development of towns and districts.

On this basis, the further research and analysis carried out during Stage 2 has found that the most significant themes in terms of their long term influence upon the historic pattern of post-contact settlement and development of the Shire have been:

- The development of Railways, particularly the South Eastern Railway in 1888-1892.
- The development of the Dairying industry.
- The gold and coal industries also had significant, albeit limited (in terms of the towns it affected) influence upon the development of Korumburra and Foster.

The following examples demonstrate the pervasive influence of these themes upon the distinctive historic pattern of towns, villages and rural settlement in the Shire, which can still be clearly interpreted today despite the closure of railways, the changes to dairying, and the almost total disappearance of mining activity:



Almost every permanent town, village or settlement in the Shire today developed as a result of being located around a railway station or a butter factory, and sometimes both. Other districts that did not have these advantages would often have a school, church or public hall, but did not develop beyond this extent.

The only exceptions to this rule are the fishing villages of Port Welshpool and Port Franklin, which were of importance in the early development of the southeastern parts of the Shire. However, the development of these towns was essentially halted by the opening of the *South Eastern Railway* and, despite further attempts to develop the Port of Welshpool including the construction of the extraordinary *Long Jetty* in 1938, these areas have never developed to the extent that was originally imagined.

In Korumburra, the many fine nineteenth century commercial and residential buildings demonstrate the extraordinary growth and prosperity associated with the coal mining industry in the period after the first land sales, particularly when compared with other towns such as Leongatha.

The early development of Foster due to the gold rush is demonstrated by the surviving early public buildings such as the Court House and Post Office.

The important influence of butter factories is reflected by the commercial, residential and civic development that occurred in towns following their establishment.

For example, the development of the Townships of Kongwak and Dumbalk was essentially linked to the development of the butter factories in these townships, which built co-operative stores and, in the case of Dumbalk, housing for workers.

## 2.4 Related Issues

### Protection & Management

As previously mentioned, only 17 places throughout the Shire are included in the Heritage Overlay of the Planning Scheme and there are no local policies or guidelines to assist in the exercise of discretion, other than the general objectives in the Municipal Strategic Statement.

This has contributed to the loss of heritage places entirely or detrimental effects upon the significance of places through inappropriate alterations or other works.

Examples of this include the demolition of the former *Union Bank* in Bridge Street, Korumburra, and the equally important *Victoria Hotel* at the lower end of Commercial Street. In Leongatha, the renovation of *Bair's Otago Hotel* only a few years ago resulted in the loss of a number of significant elements, while there are many examples of the replacement of original elements of buildings with inappropriate modern substitutes (eg. windows and hardiplank cladding) that detract from their appearance and significance. It is important to understand that suitable alternatives usually exist.

However, as many buildings (if not more) are being lost through neglect or poor management as through active destruction. Some parts of *Knox's Rockhill farm* are in a perilous state and require immediate remedial conservation works.

On the other hand, there is also much evidence of the conservation and maintenance of many public and private places. Examples include the *Pioneer Church* in Poowong, the former *Mardan South Presbyterian (Scots) Church* (now in private ownership), and private homesteads such as *Dorstedt* at Poowong East, and the *Peter Campbell homestead* at Mardan.

It is important that the heritage places identified by the Study are adequately protected and that assistance is made available to the owners and custodians of heritage places to enable them to be properly managed.

### **Community Awareness**

The initial public response to the Study was very positive. The community, through formal consultation sessions, nominated the majority of properties identified by Stage 1.

As part of Stage 2, over 700 property owners and occupiers were notified as part of the community consultation phase and over 400 properties were the subject of a detailed site visit by Trevor Westmore. Most people were more than happy to cooperate in the Study and only one person specifically refused to allow a site inspection (as it turned out, the property was finally considered to be of Local 3 significance and therefore an inspection was not warranted).

A further indication of support for the Study is that over 200 questionnaires, or more than 25%, were returned, many of which contained highly useful information. Invaluable information and support was also provided by the local historical societies, and other agencies such as the local newspapers.

The consultation and research undertaken as part of Stage 2 did reveal that there is a good general awareness of the importance of heritage, and much of the credit for this must lie with the excellent work done by the local historical societies, historians and other interested people.

Nonetheless, it was also found that there was still a tendency for many people to undervalue the history of this area. It is possible that this may be due to the fact that the history of

post-contact settlement and development in this area was generally later than that in the rest of the State and was not marked by periods of great wealth that resulted in the impressive gold rush buildings of, for example, Ballarat, or the great homes of the Western District, which many people perceive to represent "real" heritage.

It was also interesting to note that some older people did not place much value on certain heritage places, particularly older houses. Presumably this is because they were part of the generation that worked hard to improve their standard of living and perceived these buildings to be part of a way of life that they wished to leave behind. On the other hand, it was gratifying to see that many younger residents are, in the same way as their metropolitan counterparts, buying and restoring heritage places.

There is an opportunity to foster existing goodwill and encourage greater awareness and understanding of the importance of our heritage in the broader community.

### **Social, Cultural & Economic Benefits**

The heritage places in the Shire have great potential to enhance its image and attractiveness to tourists. However, with the exception of Coal Creek, the local museums at Foster, Port Welshpool and Leongatha, some private tourism accommodation, and to a lesser extent in towns such as Loch, the potential of our heritage places to enhance the visitor experience in Gippsland has not been fully realised.

It is, however, recognised that there are few, if any, places within the Shire that could be considered as "destinations" within themselves, that is, places that the tourists could be specifically directed to as examples of the heritage places within the Shire, in the way that people visit properties such as *Como* or *Rippon Lea*.

Although there are possible individual exceptions such as the *Walkerville Lime Kilns* or *Knox's Rockhill Farm*, it is

considered that the greatest potential for our heritage places in terms of tourism is to further enhance the identity of the Shire in a way that clearly distinguishes it from surrounding areas in the same way that the successful *Prom Country* promotion has done.

Rather than be a reason to visit the Shire in itself, our heritage would simply “add value” to the image of the Shire as a place of historic interest as well as great natural beauty. In most cases, this would be as simple as preparing information brochures for key historic townships and tourist destinations that explain their history.

In this context, Coal Creek has an important educative and interpretative role to play. However, it needs to be more clearly defined in the broader context of the heritage of the Shire as a whole, and it is important to avoid the perception that Coal Creek contains the only important heritage places in the Shire. Clear links need to be established between Coal Creek and the heritage of a wider region.

Heritage places in the Shire are already contributing to the social, cultural and economic well being of the Shire. However, there is enormous potential for this to be improved and Council can play a key role in fostering and, in particular, facilitating a more integrated and co-ordinated approach.

## 2.5 Conclusions

The Shire has a rich and diverse heritage, which is highly important in illustrating the unique story of the post-contact development of South Gippsland and has considerable potential to provide significant additional social, cultural and economic benefits. However, the significance of many places is being adversely affected as a result of inadequate levels of protection, or poor management.

If the cultural heritage of the Shire is to be preserved and enhanced for the benefit of future generations then it will require careful management as part of a comprehensive **Conservation Strategy** by Council, which should include the following key components:

- **Protection and Management** of heritage places to conserve and enhance their significance.
- **Education** of the community about the value and importance of heritage places.
- **Marketing** of cultural heritage as an integral part of tourism promotion of the Shire.
- **Support**, advice and assistance for custodians of heritage places to conserve and maintain these places.

Specific recommendations for how this could be achieved are made in Section 4.

# Recommendations

## 3.1 Introduction

This Section contains the key recommendations of the Study. Core recommendations are shown in **bold**. These recommendations are considered to be fundamental to the achievement of an effective **Conservation Strategy** for the Shire.

It is recommended that Council adopt the **South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study 2004** including the following specific recommendations:

## 3.2 Protection & Management

It is recommended that statutory protection be provided to specific heritage places by undertaking an Amendment to the South Gippsland Planning Scheme that would:

**a. Include the South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study as an Incorporated Document in Clause 81 of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.**

This is a statutory requirement to ensure that the Study and its findings can be used when determining planning applications in accordance with the requirements of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.

**b. Replace the existing Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the South Gippsland Planning Scheme with a new Schedule that includes all the heritage places listed in Appendix 1.**

This Schedule lists the places that would be included in the Heritage Overlay of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme and would therefore be subject to the requirements of this control. It

proposes to include about 350 places either individually or as part of Heritage precincts.

The places include:

- All heritage places identified by the Study as being of State, or Local 1 significance.
- Places of Local 2 or Local 3 significance that are within a Heritage Precinct recommended for inclusion in the HO.
- Some places not of heritage significance that are within Heritage Precincts. In most cases, these places are immediately adjacent to heritage places on one or more sides and are therefore included as development on this property could affect the adjacent heritage place.

It is also recommended that:

- Except for places of State significance, external paint colours should not apply so that a planning permit would not be required to paint a building.
- Tree controls should apply to all Honour Avenues, as well as to those places where significant trees have been identified. This would require a planning permit to remove, damage or destroy a tree identified as contributing to the significance of a place. A permit would not be required for routine maintenance, such as pruning, that was necessary to maintain the health of the tree.
- c. Replace the existing references Heritage in the Municipal Strategic Statement with the new sections included as Appendix 2.**

This has been amended to reflect the findings of the Study, and written to be consistent with the review of the MSS being undertaken by Council at the same time as the Study.

- d. That a new Heritage Local Policy be added to Clause 22 of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme, which is based on the Heritage Policy included as Appendix 3.**

This Local Policy will assist Council in determining planning applications for places that are recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme. It would not apply to any other place identified by the Study that is not recommended for inclusion in this Overlay.

(see also Recommendation g)

- e. Amend the relevant South Gippsland Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay Maps, and add new Maps to include all the heritage places listed in Appendix 1.**

This will update the South Gippsland Planning Scheme Maps in accordance with the recommendations of the Study. It will ensure that all the properties listed in the Schedule are shown on the correct Heritage Overlay map.

It is further recommended that:

- f. Places identified as being of potential State significance in Table 3.1 be nominated for inclusion on the Victoria Heritage Register, where they are not currently included.**

If a nomination for a place is successful, then it would be subject to the requirements of the Heritage Act 1995, and a planning permit would not be required from Council on the basis of the Heritage Overlay. Buildings included on the Register become eligible to apply for financial assistance to undertake conservation works through the Public Heritage Program.

- g. Council adopt the Heritage Guidelines included as Appendix 4.**

These Guidelines will apply to heritage places that are **not recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay**. They will have no statutory power, but will be used to encourage people to manage their property in a way that will conserve and enhance its significance. The Guidelines also make it clear that Council will not oppose an application to demolish a heritage place in accordance with the Building Act 1993, but that every effort will be made to encourage applicants to consider retention of the place.

- h. A Heritage Reference Group is appointed to oversee the implementation of the Study.**

The Heritage Reference Group (HRG) could comprise Council and community representatives (and may include representatives from Heritage Victoria and the National Trust). It would oversee the implementation of the key recommendations of the Study, and in this way could play an important educative role.

In addition, while planning applications involving heritage issues will be considered under delegated authority in a manner consistent with other applications, the HRG could also provide advice on planning applications that raise significant heritage issues. For example, where it is proposed to demolish a building included in the Heritage Overlay.

- i. Council assist custodians of heritage places to prepare Conservation Management Plans, where this is a specific recommendation of the Study.**

The citations in Volume 3 make recommendations for the conservation of each heritage place. This includes identifying places that

may require a Conservation Management Plan, usually when the significance of a place is threatened by its poor or deteriorating condition or when it requires significant maintenance or repair.

While the preparation of a Plan is not mandatory it is desirable. It would include a comprehensive assessment of the condition of the place and would make recommendations for its future conservation and enhancement. In addition, a Conservation Management Plan is often useful when applying for funding through the Public Heritage Program or other sources.

**j. Council prepare Management Plans for every Avenue of Honour in the Shire.**

The Honour Avenues are among our most important and evocative memorials, yet many are now neglected and forgotten. Many people are not even aware of the existence of the largest and most historically important avenue in the Shire at Leongatha.

Many of the Avenues have been poorly managed, and some are in serious decline. The purpose of the Management Plans would be to assess the condition of each Avenue and make recommendations for retention, replacement and on-going maintenance. Consultation with the local community and custodians would play an important role.

(See also recommendation **b – Education**)

**k. Council undertake further studies to identify, document and assess places of cultural landscape, archaeological and aboriginal heritage significance.**

The assessment of cultural landscapes by the Study during Stage 2 was specifically excluded by the Brief. However, a number of cultural landscapes of potential heritage significance including the landscapes classified by the National Trust and Mossvale Park have been identified and should be assessed.

The Study has identified a number of places with archaeological potential. These include former homestead sites, mining sites, and the former Outtrim township. An initial survey could determine the sites that are likely to be of most importance, which should then be the subject of detailed investigation.

No sites of post-contact aboriginal significance were identified by the Study, however it is possible that some may exist. Further research should be carried out in relation to both pre and post contact aboriginal heritage sites in association with local custodians and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

**l. Council provide limited financial and technical assistance for the custodians of places of Local significance, and assist custodians to seek funding through other sources.**

(See also recommendations **b** and **c – Support**)

**Protection and Management** of heritage places can also be achieved by some of the recommendations for **Education** and **Support**.

### 3.3 Education

It is recommended that community awareness of the importance of heritage be raised by:

**a. Providing a copy of the Study to Shire Libraries and historical societies, as well as to every School in the Shire.**

This would assist in raising awareness of the importance of our heritage places among its future custodians.

**b. Identifying heritage places with signage or plaques where the permission of the custodian or owner has been provided.**

This identification could be similar to the small plaques produced by Heritage Victoria and the National Trust to identify places on their respective registers. Each plaque could have simple wording such as –

*South Gippsland Shire  
Heritage Study 2004*

*(Name of Place)*

*Local/State (as appropriate)  
Significance*

It is envisaged that this identification would be most appropriate for public buildings, however, with the agreement of the owner or occupier they could identify private properties as well.

**c. Identifying all of the extant Honour Avenues in association with their local communities and custodians.**

The Honour Avenues are among our most important and evocative memorials, yet many are now neglected and forgotten. Many people are not even aware of the existence of the largest avenue in the Shire at Leongatha

The identification of each avenue with a simple sign is therefore

highly important and could be undertaken with a re-dedication ceremony with the local custodians and the community, who should also determine appropriate wording for the sign.

The following wording is suggested as a guide:

*(Insert Name)*

*Honour Avenue/Avenue of Honour*

*Local residents who served in the*

*Great War 1914-18*

*Rededicated on (Insert Date)*

**d. Placing heritage identity signage at the key entry points of historic towns.**

Loch is a good example of a town that has used heritage to enhance its appeal to tourists, which is announced the heritage signs at the entrance to the township. Similar signs have been erected at Korumburra and Mirboo North, and could also be erected at other historic towns throughout the Shire including Leongatha, Meeniyan, Poowong, Stony Creek and Toora.

A consistent approach should be used, perhaps using Loch as the example. Suggested wording could include:

*Welcome to historic (Name)*

*Pioneered/Settled (Date)*

*Slogan (eg. Poowong could be  
"First town in the hills")*

**d. Placing interpretive signage at key heritage places throughout the Shire.**

The Citations in Volume 3 include recommendations for places where interpretive signage would be desirable to assist in understanding how and why a heritage place or area is significant.

Examples include:

- *Knox's Rockhill Farm*
- *Mossvale Park*

- The Leongatha Civic & Commercial heritage precinct.
- f. Distributing the Heritage Guidelines included as Appendix 4 to custodians of heritage places.

(See also Recommendation **g** – **Protection & Management**)

- g. Hosting annual “Heritage Awards” to recognise outstanding community contributions to the heritage of the Shire.  

These awards could recognise anything from a good example of an addition to or use of a heritage place, to honouring people who have promoted awareness and understanding in the local community, perhaps by inducting them to a heritage *Hall of Fame*. The Heritage Reference Group could co-ordinate these awards.
- h. Including a regular item in Community Update and in local newspapers about heritage issues in the Shire.  

This should be done on a regular basis and would provide information and advice about heritage issues. (e.g. planning applications, funding, heritage trade fairs, National Trust, etc.)
- i. Appointing a Heritage Reference Group to oversee the implementation of the Study.

(See Recommendation **h** – **Protection & Management**)

### 3.4 Promotion

It is recommended that the cultural heritage of the Shire be promoted by:

- a. Including references to heritage, where appropriate, in future tourism and marketing strategies for the Shire.**

Examples where the Heritage of the Shire could be used to enhance tourism and marketing strategies include:

- The tourist railway from Nyora to Leongatha.
- The Great Southern Rail Trail.
- The sale of goods associated with traditional agricultural activities.
- b. Identifying key heritage places with signage or plaques where the permission of the owner or custodian has been provided.

(See Recommendation **a** – **Education**)

- c. Placing heritage identity signage at the key entry points to historic towns.

(See Recommendation **c** – **Education**)

- d. Placing interpretive signage at key heritage places throughout the Shire.

(See Recommendation **d** – **Education**)

- e. Liaising with Tourism Victoria to update the existing *Gippsland Heritage Trail Brochure*.

The existing brochure has limited detail about the actual heritage places in the Shire and should be amended to reflect the key findings and recommendations of the Study, particularly to identify places of State or Local 1 significance, where considered appropriate.

- f. Producing local heritage trail brochures for walking tours in key historic townships.

These could be produced for the heritage precincts identified in Section 3.3 and described in Volume 3. They would be produced



in conjunction with the interpretive signage described in Recommendation **d – Education**

### 3.5 Support

It is recommended that the owners and custodians of heritage places be assisted in the conservation and management of these places by:

**a. Employing a Heritage Advisor to assess planning applications for heritage places, and to provide limited advice and assistance to owners or custodians of heritage places.**

As discussed in detail in Appendix 5, Funding is available through the Public Heritage Program for the employment of a Heritage Advisor. Council would be required to make an equal contribution. It is envisaged that an officer would only be required for one or two days per month and so the funding required would be minimal.

The role of the Heritage Advisor would be to assess planning applications for places included (or proposed to be included) in the Heritage Overlay. They would not undertake strategic planning or large projects such as the preparation of Conservation Management Plans.

**b. Providing limited financial assistance to custodians of private properties of Local significance.**

As described in Appendix 5, Council could establish a heritage fund to provide limited financial grants (or alternatively low interest loans) to owners or custodians of heritage places that are not eligible for funding from other sources.

This fund could be established by an annual budget allocation by Council (in the same way as the existing Community Grants), and may be supplemented by other sources of income or assistance, which may include:

- Donations or ‘in-kind’ assistance from corporate sponsors, philanthropic organisations, local business people or traders.
  - Allocating part or all of planning fees to the Fund that is received from planning applications for places included in the Heritage Overlay.
  - Holding open days and guided tours at heritage places.
  - The sale of Heritage Calendars or other items.
- c. Assisting the owners or custodians of places of State or National significance or that are publicly owned to seek funding through other appropriate sources.**

The Public Heritage Program is administered by the Department of Sustainability & Environment through Heritage Victoria and provides funding for owners of publicly owned properties to undertake conservation work at their property. Various conditions apply.

Other sources of funding include the Federal Department of Environment and Heritage for owners of places of National or State significance.

**d. Distributing the Heritage Guidelines included as Appendix 4 to custodians of heritage places.**

(See Recommendation **f – Education**)

# Conclusion

The rich and diverse heritage places of the Shire are important because they tell the unique history of South Gippsland and are an important living memorial that connects us to that history.

Our heritage is fragile and can be easily lost, but it is also dynamic and is constantly evolving.

Protection of our heritage should not prevent this change, but requires careful management to minimise adverse impacts.

Heritage is one of the Shire's assets; our challenge is not only to ensure that our heritage is preserved for future generations, but also to realise the significant opportunities it presents to further enhance our quality of life.

# Implementation

Since the completion of the Study in 2002, the following recommendations have been implemented:

- a. The eight places of potential State significance were nominated for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. Of these, the following have now been added to the Register by the Heritage Council:

- Mirboo-on-Tarwin Hall
- 'Chock & Log Cottage', Poowong

The Heritage Council decided not to add the following places to the Register and instead recommended that they be added to the Heritage Overlay of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme:

- Railway bridges at Koonwarra & Meeniyan.
- Knox's Rockhill Farm (Note: already included in the HO)
- *Springdale*, 190 Gwyther's Siding Road, Leongatha South.

- b. A new heritage clause in the Municipal Strategic Statement and a new Heritage Local Policy at Clause 22.07 were added by Amendment C10 to the South Gippsland Planning Scheme, which was gazetted in September 2004.
- c. The review of the Thematic Environmental History was completed in December 2004.

- d. In October 2004, it was resolved to prepare and exhibit an Amendment to include public buildings of local significance in the Heritage Overlay of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme. It is anticipated that this amendment will be exhibited in 2005.

# References

- Australian Heritage Group, (1999)  
*South Gippsland Shire Thematic Environmental History*
- David Helms (2004) *South Gippsland Heritage Study Volume 1: Thematic Environmental History*
- David Helms (2004) *South Gippsland Heritage Study Volume 2: Key Findings & Recommendations*
- David Helms (2004) *South Gippsland Heritage Study Volume 4: Appendices*
- Department of Planning, (1991)  
*Local Government Heritage Guidelines*
- Department of Sustainability and Environment, (1999) *VPP Practice Note. Applying the Heritage Overlay*
- Department of Sustainability and Environment, (1999) *VPP Practice Note. Format of Municipal Strategic Statements*
- Department of Sustainability and Environment, (1999) *VPP Practice Note. Writing a Local Planning Policy*
- The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance (the Burra Charter)* (1999)