

HERITAGE
COUNCIL
VICTORIA
HERITAGE
COUNCIL
VICTORIA

Heritage Council of Victoria
PO Box 2392
Melbourne, Victoria 3001
1 Spring Street
Melbourne, Victoria 3000
Telephone (03) 9208 3666
www.heritage.vic.gov.au

eDocs: 2527506
File: 09/005970

Dr Greg Gardiner
Executive Officer
Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Dr Gardiner

INQUIRY INTO HERITAGE TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM

I am writing to provide further information to support the Environment and Natural Resources Committee's inquiry into heritage tourism and ecotourism in Victoria.

It should be noted that this submission is supplementary to that provided by the Heritage Council of Victoria on 1 August 2013 which specifically addressed the terms of reference to the inquiry. In addition it is understood that the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council is making a separate submission to the inquiry.

Copies of reports and other material mentioned in this submission are attached for the information of the Committee.

High Demand for Heritage Tourism in Victoria

Victoria has a distinctive history and the legacy of this is evident in the rich collection of heritage buildings, monuments, parks and gardens across the State, many of which provide — or have the potential to provide — a unique tourism experience. Currently there are over 2,285 places and objects listed in the Victorian Heritage Register, 644 shipwrecks and more than 160,000 places recorded on local government heritage overlays.

Heritage is one of the most rapidly expanding tourism segments in terms of visitor numbers globally, and is a major attraction for both Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Heritage places, objects and events feature prominently on Tourism Victoria's 'Visit Victoria' website and include, for example: Cape Otway Lighthouse, Maryborough Railway Station, Bendigo Shamrock Hotel, the Eureka Flag, the Loong Imperial Dragon in Bendigo, and the Ned Kelly Trail.

In 2007-08, Victoria's heritage buildings, sites and monuments ('heritage places') were visited by over 1.9 million people, comprising 826,000 international visitors (56% of total international visitors), 592,000 domestic overnight visitors and 529,000 domestic day visitors¹. Tourists visiting Victorian heritage places spent approximately \$2.4 billion (15% of total tourist expenditure in Victoria) and supported 184,800 jobs.

In 2010 the *Melbourne and Victoria Brand Health Survey* found that Victoria held equal second place with New South Wales as a destination perceived to offer opportunities to

discover unique history and heritageⁱⁱ. Heritage tourism was forecast to increase by 1.7% per year on average between 2006 and 2020ⁱⁱⁱ.

Importance of Heritage Tourism to Regional Victoria

Heritage is particularly important in attracting visitors to regional Victoria. In 2007-08, there were 251,000 international visitors and 429,000 domestic overnight visitors to heritage places in regional Victoria^{iv}. Studies have also shown that 'cultural tourists' — which include those visiting historic and heritage places — tend to stay for longer and spend more than 'non-cultural tourists'^v.

A study of the Goldfields region calculated that there are a total of 39,334 jobs (23.95% of all jobs) in the tourism sector attracting 5.6 million domestic day visitors and 2.1 million domestic overnight visitors, who stayed 5.4 million nights in 2010-11^{vi}. It identified that a one per cent increase in visitors to the region would inject an additional \$11 million annually into the regional economy.

Similarly a survey undertaken on behalf of the National Trust of Australia in Mt Alexander Shire found that business operators attributed 31% of turnover to visitors from outside the Shire and suggested that probably half of this amount was due to heritage attractions^{vii}.

In 2012 a plan to further develop the heritage tourism potential of the Goldfields region recommended improving streetscapes and civic precincts; information, interpretation and promotion, the restoration and creative reuse of goldfields related buildings; tourism infrastructure such as accommodation, tracks and attractions; the use of new technologies to help attract and inform visitors; and exploring World Heritage listing for the Castlemaine Diggings National Park to anchor the region as an international tourist destination^{viii}.

Indirect Benefits of Heritage Tourism

By attracting tourists, heritage places and precincts benefit a range of businesses. Research undertaken at Maldon and Castlemaine in the Goldfields, for example, found that visitors were attracted by a combination of specific heritage attractions, the ambience of heritage streetscapes, and opportunities for eating and shopping^{ix}. It also found that while heritage attractions earned limited revenue from tourists, privately run cafes, restaurants and shops were capturing the economic benefits.

This concurs with research undertaken in England where it was found that investment in historic visitor attractions provided a range of benefits to the local community by attracting visitors to an area and increasing patronage in local hotels, pubs, shops and restaurants^x.

Balancing Heritage Conservation with Tourism

The *International Cultural Tourism Charter* produced by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) recognises that a major reason for undertaking any form of conservation to a heritage place is to make the significance of the place accessible to visitors and the host community^{xi}. It also stresses that the conservation community and the tourism industry must work cooperatively to protect and present heritage, given their mutual respect for it and their concern for the fragility of the resource.

The Charter is intended to be applied to a broad range of heritage places, and is designed to be used by a variety of conservation and tourism bodies. It identifies the symbiotic relationship between heritage and tourism, stating: "Tourism can capture the economic characteristics of the heritage and harness these for conservation by generating funding, educating the community and influencing policy". The Charter also recognises the risks to both tourism and heritage if heritage places and precincts are not well managed.

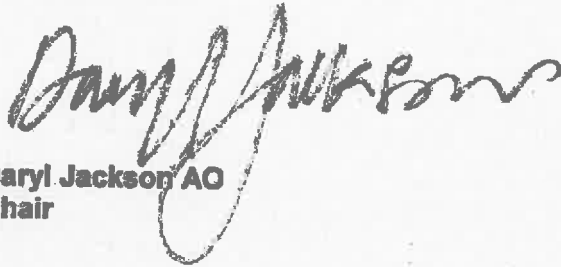
Developing a Coordinated Approach to Heritage Tourism

The submission provided by the Heritage Council addressing the terms of reference of the inquiry provided a number of recommendations to develop heritage tourism in Victoria. These included recognising the benefits of heritage tourism, and investment in heritage places, interpretation and product development.

The importance of heritage tourism has increasingly been recognised by governments across Australia, resulting in the development of a number of tourism strategies – for example in West Australia^{xii} and Tasmania^{xiii}.

Taking into account the considerable economic and other benefits of heritage tourism there is a need to develop a coordinated approach to influence its development and harness its potential. The Heritage Council would be pleased to be involved in future initiatives that will deliver an integrated approach to heritage and tourism.

Yours sincerely



Daryl Jackson AO
Chair

ⁱ Based on data from Tourism Research Australia and Tourism Victoria; see also Tourism Research Australia 2009 *Snapshots 2009 Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Australia*.

ⁱⁱ Tourism Victoria 2010 *Melbourne and Victoria Brand Health*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Tourism Research Australia 2008 *Through the Looking Glass: The future of domestic tourism in Australia*. A consultancy report for the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, Australian Government.

^{iv} Data supplied by Tourism Research Australia.

^v Bureau of Tourism Research 2003 *Economic Impact of Cultural Tourists in Australia*.

^{vi} Ray Tonkin, Sue Howard, Wayne Street and Megan Allen 2012 *Developing Victoria's Goldfields into Australia's Cultural Heritage Region*.

^{vii} National Institute of Economic and Industry Research 2012 *The contribution of Mount Alexander Shire built heritage assets to the Shire's economic activity in 2010-11* National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

^{viii} National Institute of Economic and Industry Research 2012 *The Plan: Developing Victoria's Goldfields into Australia's cultural heritage region – The benefits of implementation*. A report to the Victorian Department of Regional Development.

^{ix} Warwick Frost 2004 *Antiques, Crafts, Coffee and History: Shopping and Heritage Tourism in Australian Gold Rush Towns*. Monash University Working Paper Series.

^x English Heritage 2010 *Heritage Counts 2010 England*.

^{xi} International Council of Monuments and Sites 2002 *ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter: Principles and Guidelines for Managing Tourism at Places of Cultural and Heritage Significance*.

^{xii} Heritage Council of Western Australia and Tourism Western Australia 2006 *A Heritage Tourism Strategy for Western Australia*.

^{xiii} Tourism Tasmania *Historic Heritage Tourism Strategy 2012-2015*.

28 AUG 2013

