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3 June 2016

Steve Kozlowski
Chief Executive Officer
Maroondah City Council
PO Box 156
RINGWOOD VIC 3134

Dear Steve,

RE: Community Concerns regarding heritage in the city of Maroondah

I write in regard to the current permit application for 5–7 Evelyn Road (M/2016/381) as well as wider issues in the City of Maroondah regarding heritage and conservation. The Trust has recently been approached by members of Ringwood & District Historical Society and the Jubilee Park Residential Heritage Group (JPRHG), who have expressed concerns about the identification and protection of heritage in the City of Maroondah, and particularly in Ringwood.

While Maroondah lacks the grand nineteenth-century mansions and terrace homes of other areas of Melbourne, its architecture has an important story to tell about Melbourne's suburban development, and about the unique history of the area. Maroondah's heritage also contributes to a distinctive character which provides amenity to those who live and work in the area, and should be viewed as an asset rather than an obstacle to progress.

It is our understanding that the last comprehensive heritage study, was completed in 1998, with a review completed in 2003. We note that through Planning Scheme Amendment C42, only 61 out of 180 places were approved for inclusion under the Heritage Overlay, and suggest that it may be timely for Council to progress the implementation of the Heritage Study through a further planning amendment.

The current sub-division permit for 5–7 Evelyn Road Ringwood (a property first identified in the 1998/2003 Heritage Study but not included in Amendment C42), highlights the urgent need for further work to be undertaken to ensure places of heritage significance are recognised within the planning scheme.

We note that properties in Ringwood, including places of recognised significance identified in the 1998/2003 heritage studies, and places of potential significance, face increasing development pressures following Ringwood's designation as a Metropolitan Activity Centre. We also note that there is currently no heritage policy in Clause 22 of the Maroondah Planning scheme. Given current development pressures, we believe it is timely for the City of Maroondah to reassess its strategic approach to heritage to ensure it can be considered in the decision-making process on future development.

We also note that the postwar period is not comprehensively explored in the existing 1998/2003 studies, and would like to flag this as warranting further investigation. Since the 1998/2003 studies were completed, the recognition and understanding of postwar architecture, particularly in middle and outer-ring suburbs, has progressed significantly. Neighbouring Whitehorse Council is currently in the final stages of implementing a comprehensive postwar heritage study, which we were pleased to support at a recent panel hearing, and we commend their approach to this important yet underrepresented period of architecture. One example of a postwar building which warrants further investigation by Maroondah Council is the Ringwood Uniting Church at 30–32 Station Street, which was identified in the 2003/1998 study.

Further implementation of Maroondah's heritage study is supported by the provisions in clause 15 of the Planning Scheme. The state planning policy for heritage at clause 15.03-1 seeks to ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance. To achieve this objective, it includes the following strategy:

Identify, assess and document places of natural and cultural heritage significance as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the City of Maroondah's approach to heritage in more detail. Please don't hesitate to contact Community Advocate Caitlin Mitropoulos on 9656 9837 to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'A. Foley'.

Anna Foley
Acting Manager, Advocacy & Conservation
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

CC: Cr Natalie Thomas, Mayor
Luci Johnston, Strategic Planner
Angela Kechich, Team Leader Statutory Planning