

Enhancing the Aboriginal cultural heritage management system

The Victorian Government has announced a \$5 million package to improve how Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected and managed, following an internal review. The package will improve timeframes, deliver cost savings and protect Victoria's priceless cultural heritage.

The Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* recognises Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP) as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage management system empowers Traditional Owners to make decisions about cultural heritage through the state's RAPs.

There are currently twelve RAPs in Victoria, covering around 77 per cent of the state.

Their core functions include:

- evaluating Cultural Heritage Management Plans
- assessing Cultural Heritage Permit applications
- making decisions about Cultural Heritage Agreements
- providing advice on applications for interim or ongoing Protection Declarations
- entering into Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Land Management Agreements with public land managers
- nominating Aboriginal intangible heritage to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register and managing intangible heritage agreements.

Improving the state's nation-leading Aboriginal cultural heritage management system

High levels of building and development across Victoria have created pressures on construction and approval processes throughout the planning system, as well as significant demands for the expertise and services of the cultural heritage sector.

The government is continually looking at ways to streamline processes and better support RAPs to do their important work.

That's why the Victorian Government announced a \$5 million package to improve the state's Aboriginal cultural heritage management system.

The improvements will help facilitate crucial development including housing and renewable energy projects.

This package is part of a range of changes across government to ensure Victoria's planning system remains fit for purpose to meet the state's growing housing needs.

What does the \$5 million package include?

- An online mapping platform for strategic planning, showing areas of important Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Trialling a new role in government to serve as a 'front door,' providing guidance and assistance for developers using the cultural heritage system.
- Development of new guidelines promoting greater consistency and certainty for Traditional Owners, developers and heritage advisors on processes, standards and timelines in the preparation of Cultural Heritage Management Plans.
- New information packs clearly explaining cultural heritage processes for developers.

Review of the Aboriginal cultural heritage management system

The Department of Premier and Cabinet reviewed the cultural heritage management process in mid-2024, in response to rapidly changing land use in Victoria.

The review proposed improvements including making more information on cultural heritage available earlier in the planning process, promoting more consistent processes across Victoria, and increased support from government for developers and Traditional Owners engaging with the cultural management system.

The funding and improvements are in response to feedback received from Traditional Owners and industry during the review.

A robust Aboriginal cultural heritage management system is essential to support Aboriginal self-determination and protect irreplaceable heritage.

Improving the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) preparation and approval process is key to addressing delays in infrastructure delivery, particularly in priority sectors such as housing and renewable energy.

Online mapping platform for strategic planning

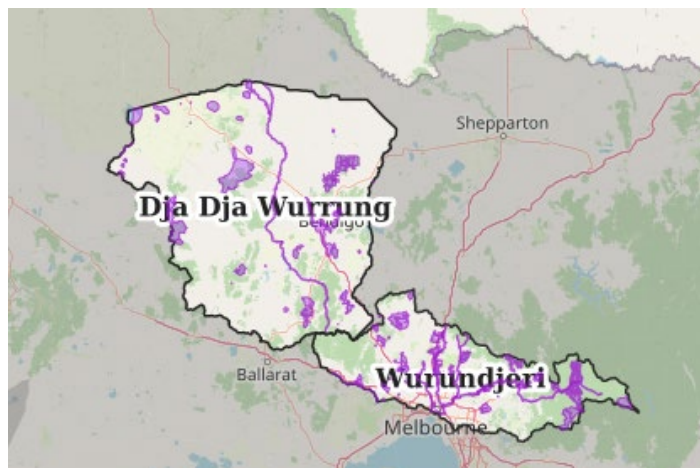
The Victorian Government has published a new online mapping platform for strategic planning, showing areas known to have important Aboriginal cultural heritage in key areas of Victoria.

The maps provide free, easily accessible information about Aboriginal cultural heritage in particular areas, allowing consideration of cultural heritage in the strategic planning of development projects for the first time.

Previously, there was no central source of easily accessible information on cultural heritage sensitivities across broad areas of the state.

These maps will help developers undertake early strategic consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage when planning projects, to avoid unintended harm and/or incorporate cultural heritage values into their projects.

Without early strategic consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage, developers increasingly run the risk of unexpected costs and delays as more areas of the state are developed.



Interactive pilot maps for planning have been developed with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA).

You can find the maps here: [xxxxxxlinkxxxxxx](#)

The \$5 million package to improve the state's cultural heritage Management system contains funding for mapping of other parts of the state with RAPs, to ensure better strategic planning information is increasingly available across all of Victoria.

Find out more

For more information, resources, and access to the strategic mapping platform, visit: firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-cultural-heritage

Or:

Scan the QR Code



We acknowledge Traditional Owners throughout Victoria and pay our respect to Elders, past and present.

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