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Point Nepean  
Community Trust

An Australian Government Initiative



Press Release 16 June 2006

## National Heritage Listing for Point Nepean

Today is an historic day for Point Nepean with the announcement by the Federal Treasurer, Peter Costello, of its inclusion on the National Heritage List (NHL). Point Nepean's outstanding historic heritage values associated with Australia's quarantine history and the defence of Victoria have been recognised with its NHL addition.

Point Nepean becomes one of only 30 National Heritage Listed sites in Australia (and the Antarctic Territory) and is one of only six recognised national heritage sites in Victoria. The National Heritage Listing confirms Point Nepean's recognition as a national treasure based on the Australian Heritage Council's assessment of its heritage values and the Commonwealth Government's formal endorsement.

The Point Nepean Community Trust (PNCT) welcomes the announcement which applies both to the 90 hectare Commonwealth owned Quarantine Station/Norris Barracks site it manages, the State-owned Point Nepean National Park, and heritage buildings in the Mornington Peninsula Shire park at Police Point.

It is unusual for a National Heritage site to have as many buildings as are found at Point Nepean, which includes former defence fortifications and 43 heritage buildings in the Quarantine Station precinct, said Mr Simon McKeon, Chair of the PNCT.

"The listing underscores the exciting opportunities for the area to become a national tourist destination enjoyed by all Australians and international visitors. It is strongly endorsed by the Commonwealth's simultaneous announcement of \$27 million in additional funding, which will enable the Point Nepean Community Trust to refurbish the site and allow the community to realise its vision for the Quarantine Station."

The Australian Heritage Council assessed Point Nepean to have outstanding heritage values to the nation under five criteria, as follows:

- *because of the place's importance in the course of, or pattern of, Australia's natural or cultural history.*

This relates to Point Nepean's richly layered historic cultural landscape including over 100 years of evidence of quarantine processes and defensive fortifications and to the Quarantine Station's key role in the national quarantine system from colonial

times to the Commonwealth period of government; Cheviot Beach as the place of Prime Minister Harold Holt's disappearance; and Point Nepean's geo-political coastal defence role and the significant fortifications developed there from the 1870s to 1945.

- *because the place has uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history.*

This relates to the Point Nepean Quarantine Station (1852) being Australia's second oldest purpose built quarantine station, (after the recently National Heritage Listed North Head, Sydney (1832)), with the oldest remaining purpose built barrack style accommodation in Australia; and to Point Nepean as part of a strategic outer defence line of Melbourne's ports and harbours since the 1870s in conjunction with fortifications at South Channel Fort, Swan Island and Queenscliff.

- *because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history*

This relates to the Point Nepean Quarantine Station and surrounds, including archaeological sites associated with quarantine such as the cattle quarantine area and leper station, the planning and layout of buildings and the site's potential to add to our understanding of nineteenth century quarantine practices and procedures.

- *because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of Australia's natural or cultural places or natural or cultural environments*

This relates to how Point Nepean exemplifies the principal characteristics of nineteenth and early twentieth century quarantine stations, particularly during the significant 1850s to 1860s migration period; and to how it illustrates the characteristics of British military design and technology from the 1870s to early 1900s and related development during World War 1 and 2.

- *because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history*

This relates to John Monash's (later Sir John) strong association with Fort Nepean where he rose through the ranks of the (Melbourne) Garrison Artillery there to become commanding officer in 1897. Monash's biographer, Geoffrey Serle, saw this as crucial to his success as commander of Australian Forces in World War 1.

The National Heritage values at Point Nepean are protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999*. The Commonwealth Minister's approval is required before any action takes place at Point Nepean, which is likely to have a significant impact on these national heritage values.

Implications of the Point Nepean listing relate primarily to the Quarantine Station, which will remain under Commonwealth control until transfer to the State and integration into the Point Nepean National Park by mid June 2009. Heritage values in the National Park are protected by relevant State legislation and by the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme.

A shared planning team of PNCT and Parks Victoria staff has submitted a Draft Management Plan for the proposed integrated Point Nepean National Park for Commonwealth and State Government endorsement. This draft plan will now be amended to incorporate EPBC Act requirements for the National Heritage Listed values and released to the public in early July for public consultation and comment.

The PNCT will hold a series of community information briefings at the Quarantine Station in July on implications of the NHL and additional \$27 million Commonwealth funding. All interested parties are welcome. For details of dates and times refer to Events at [www.pointnepeantrust.org](http://www.pointnepeantrust.org)

*Further details of the National Heritage Listing for Point Nepean can be found at:  
<http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/national/index.html>*

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