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MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Jobs Funding for the National Trust (Vic)

The National Trust of Australia (Vic) today confirmed that staff and supporters are delighted to have been awarded over \$2.3m from the Federal Jobs Fund for restoration works at five of its properties across the state including three grants announced today for Barwon Park (Winchelsea), Gulf Station (Yarra Valley) and La Trobe's Cottage (Melbourne) added to two for Rippon Lea House and Garden, (Elsternwick) and Mulberry Hill, (Baxter) already released. The most recent Jobs Funding grants were announced today in Melbourne by the Federal Minister for the *Environment, Heritage and the Arts*, the Hon. Peter Garrett MP.

National Trust (VIC) Chairman Dr Graeme Blackman warmly welcomed the grant funding which would enable the Victorian Trust, a not for profit organisation looking after 42 heritage sites for the people of Victoria, to undertake significant restoration and development at these properties to improve access and the visitor experience and present them in future as exciting tourist attractions. He also hoped that government would take note of the number of applications to the fund which was significantly oversubscribed, as an indication of the need for additional ongoing funding for our cultural heritage."

National Trust CEO Martin Purslow said: "As the current recipient of the Qantas Tourism Award for the Best Cultural Heritage Attraction in Australia at Old Melbourne Gaol, we know how exciting targeted investment in heritage can make a visit to our properties. These grants will significantly enhance the tourist experience at many of our sites whilst benefiting our local communities with the increased employment opportunities the projects delivery will bring".

The Federal monies will go towards supporting shovel-ready projects in areas of need in Victoria, particularly Yarra Glen, Winchelsea and Frankston (Baxter) area.

At Barwon Park, the funding will be used for repairs to the roof and interior plasterwork, upgrades to the facilities and amenities at the property and the provision of dedicated coach parking. At Gulf Station, the funds will help restore the original homestead and contribute towards a new visitor and education centre to accommodate the expected increase in tourism to the site. The funding for La Trobe's Cottage will enhance the recently announced partnership with the community supported by the Latrobe Society for one of oldest and most important Melbourne buildings and go towards conservation works to the building and site and upgrading of interpretation in the Cottage and increased public opening. At Baxter the grant is to restore the former studio of artist Rick Amor for artist residency projects and provide a new reception and retail space and improved public access and paths for a new park being developed on the site by the Trust. At Rippon Lea, Victoria's oldest surviving garden grotto will be restored and bought back into public access for the first time in over 22 years.

As the economy recovers, these National Trust projects will assist in encouraging further tourist visitation to the Yarra Valley as it recovers from the effects of the bush fires, the inland area of the Surf Coast regions and the area to the east of Frankston and two of our most historically significant city properties. The restored sites themselves will provide increased and ongoing employment in their local areas.

The National Trust of Australia (Vic) is a non-government, community-funded organisation that is dedicated to preserving Victoria's heritage.

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