



# Media release



The Hon Matthew Guy MLC  
Minister for Planning

Thursday 26 January 2012

## **Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour preserved for future generations**

The Avenue of Honour in Bacchus Marsh will be retained in its entirety, following a decision by Planning Minister Matthew Guy to refuse a permit for the removal of five mature Dutch elm trees for the construction of a roundabout.

"I have considered an independent report by the Heritage Council Permits Committee and believe it is critical to ensure the continuous and uninterrupted nature of this significant cultural heritage landmark," Mr Guy said.

Three kilometres in length with 281 elm trees, it is one of the most extensive Avenues of Honour and is widely recognised across the nation.

The Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour and its magnificent cathedral-like arching canopy is a living memorial to those who served our country," Mr Guy said.

Planted on the afternoon of the 10 August 1918 by local volunteers and workers from the Darley Firebrick Company, the community planting effort attracted over a thousand spectators.

At the conclusion of a bugle call 281 elms were planted in symphony, each representing an individual soldier, each with a name plaque, and all in alphabetical order with the intent of keeping families together.

"The preservation of the trees means the families and loved ones of fallen servicemen E.J. Morley, A. Martin, S. Minnett, W.G. Medling and G.S. Mitchelson, can continue to honour them for years to come," Mr Guy said.

"The Avenue of Honour is an impressive visual spectacle and I believe the removal of trees would have significantly and irreplaceably damaged this unique memorial.

"This decision also fulfills our election commitment to the people of Victoria to preserve the Avenue of Honour in Bacchus Marsh after the previous Labor Government advanced earlier plans to demolish part of the historic avenue.

"As we approach the Centenary of ANZAC Day it is fitting that the avenue's place in our history is assured by this decision to retain its continuous and unbroken character for future generations."

In April 2011 Mr Guy called in the matter from the Heritage Council under the Heritage Act, following appeals by VicRoads and Moorabool Shire Council to an earlier decision by Heritage Victoria to refuse a permit for the proposed roundabout.

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The Heritage Council heard from the parties and provided an independent report containing a dissenting view by one council member, with which the Minister agreed.

"There are other alternatives to the proposed roadwork by VicRoads which will now be examined to provide similar improvements for road transport," Mr Guy said.

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