



THE Grand Union Tramway Junction at the intersection of Balaclava and Hawthorn roads has national significance.

## NEWS

# Wired up for history

by DARREN LUNNY

IT'S official! The Grand Union Tramway Junction at the intersection of Balaclava and Hawthorn roads is not only one of Victoria's historic icons, but it also has "national significance".

A National Trust classification report lists the intersection — which was built in 1913 and features a conglomeration of overhead wires — as the last example of its type in Australia.

A letter from the National Trust to the Public Transport Minister Alan Brown discussing "imminent works" on the crossing, has asked the department to ensure that the complex elements of the tramway structure be retained.

Public Transport Corporation (PTC) spokesman Ray Wilson said the department knew of the crossing's historical significance and work on the intersection would be limited to ongoing maintenance.

"We will be retaining the configuration so the existing track work and aesthetics will remain the same," Mr Wilson said.

"We are aware of the crossing's historical significance and as part of that we will provide ongoing maintenance to ensure its smooth operation and to eliminate any delay."

Glen Eira Council's planning and development manager Jeff Akehurst said the intersection's historical significance had re-

ceived an A rating in in the former City of Caulfield's conservation study.

National Trust conservation officer Rohan Storey said the intersection was a unique and remarkable element of Melbourne's tram system.

"We would prefer that it remains in its present form," Mr Storey said.

"The conservation study gives the intersection planning protection which means the council must approve any works proposed for the crossing."

Mr Storey said the conservation study also recommended that the intersection be placed on the Historic Buildings Council's (HBC) register.