

Bellarine Peninsula Planning Proposal

As a long term resident of Leopold over 37 years I have been able to observe first hand, the changes that have taken place in that time. I have observed the area becoming increasingly popular as a place of residence and a tourist attraction.

We moved to Leopold in 1984 and were attracted to the area by its description as a 'Rural City'. At that time there was a covenant stating that the area would always be contained within the boundaries of Christies Road and Melaleuca Road. It would never grow bigger than that. This has obviously now been removed.

Leopold has seen vast areas of land being cleared for housing and commercial developments.

With this increase we have seen:

- Increased plastic rubbish, shopping trolleys, dog faeces etc along the Bellarine Rail Trail and in the waterways.
- Increased rubbish in Ocean Grove Nature Reserve mainly from Mac Donalds across the road.
- Increased road traffic and noise.
- Increased hoon behaviour such as bombs in letterboxes.
- Increased traffic on the Bellarine Rail Trail with

groups of cyclists monopolising the whole track and no consideration being given to sharing.

- Increased amounts of people and rubbish on the beaches especially in summer.
- Decreasing areas of natural beauty. Trees being cleared for housing developments and close to the Rail Trail.
- Removal of significant Redgum trees where the Leopold Plaza is located.
- Death and damage to hundreds-of-years-old Redgums beside the Rail Trail resulting from control being given to the developer. Should developers be given control over existing natural heritage areas?
- Destruction and removal of trees and farmland and waterways in order to build houses.

None of these changes are for the better.

I'm aware of the phenomenon of being a NIMBY and do not wish to be seen as such but where does this all end? Do we want to see the Bellarine Peninsula covered in houses from horizon to horizon?

I am greatly concerned about damage to the existing waterway at the proposed Sanctuary Springs housing development.

I am in favour of the management plan being

proposed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning.

Perhaps some suggestions for moving forward in addition to the measures being proposed would be to manage the increasing population.

- Limit any further growth.
- More cycle/walk paths to take some pressure off the Rail Trail. For example:
 - A trail around Lake Connewarre.
 - A cycle path along the bay to Geelong.
 - A trail linking Leopold to Ocean Grove. This would reduce the amount of vehicles on the road and promote health and fitness.
- Perhaps signage with stories from the Wadawurrung about cultural and natural heritage along the way.
- Better protection of our Ramsar wetland areas. Why is duck shooting allowed in a Ramsar area?
- Creation of more natural areas such as parks and bushland reserves similar to Ocean Grove Nature Reserve. (hardly any at present)

I am very heartened about the proposal of Department of Environment, Land, Water and planning to manage the Bellarine Peninsula into the future.

However, having seen what has been happening over

the last 37 years I wonder whether it will be possible to implement the plan or is it all empty promises?
I sincerely hope not for the sake of our beautiful Bellarine Peninsula.