

I am opposed to the Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement (LPS). The LPS is not reconcilable with the State Government's commitment to protection and is not acceptable.

The LPS is not a protection document, it is a mega growth plan that will destroy the identity and amenity of the towns of the Macedon Ranges.

Macedon Ranges is too beautiful to lose. The LPS shows a lack of understanding of this region, it provides no protection for our towns, and is not doing what the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee said it should do. Even though endorsed by the Minister for Planning and Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the LPS ignores the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee's recommendations. It erodes the legacy of planning protection in this area.

Macedon Ranges is a region of State and national significance, so why has the State Government aligned it with the Goldfields Shire instead of the Yarra Ranges and Mornington Peninsula who are also considered of State significance? Even though protection of environment, heritage, landscapes, townships and rural land is supposed to be the priority, the LPS puts protection second and promotes growth and development.

The LPS doesn't make it a priority to protect rural town character, landscapes, rural land, heritage, biodiversity and environment. It doesn't include implementation, and doesn't say it is binding on public entities. It's framework plan is meaningless, and cannot assist with decision making.

The State Government promised protection based on Statement of Planning Policy Number 8, which has been the cornerstone of planning and protection in the Macedon Ranges since 1975, yet the LPS deletes it. It isn't policy, or integrated policy, and it isn't a Statement of Planning Policy.

I am also specifically opposing the new settlement boundaries for our townships. How can the LPS be introduced but settlement boundaries for the townships of Gisborne and Romsey not be defined for another 18 months? Macedon Ranges Shire has already planned for growth in the Shire until 2036. Are the increased populations associated with these new LPS settlement boundaries additional to the Shire's planned 2036 growth?

Hundreds, even thousands of hectares of rural land will be added to expand, and even double, town boundaries such as Woodend, Gisborne, Kyneton, Riddells Creek and Romsey turning them into Melbourne's next urban growth suburbs. It's an urban growth plan of epic proportions pushing Sunbury-scale urban development into Macedon Ranges on an unprecedented scale.

Although Macedon Ranges needs more protection, the LPS provides even less than now. It weakens and removes protections in place today, including the 40- year embargo on subdivision at Mount Macedon and Macedon.

There's no win or protection for Macedon Ranges in this LPS. It's just a growth plan masquerading as protection and it will doom the Macedon Ranges as we know it to extinction.