

2 March 2018

Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement Review
<https://engage.vic.gov.au/macedon-ranges-localised-planning-statement>

Dear Sir/Madam,

This submission to the draft LPS is made on behalf of the [REDACTED].

While [REDACTED] supports the draft LPS in principle, it is concerned that it is not strong enough in establishing the farmers right to farm in all agricultural areas of the shire. We refer to the Bellarine Peninsula LPS by way of example which states the following:

Farming activity on the Bellarine Peninsula shapes the landscape which is so valued by the community. Elements such as the agricultural use of rural land, the layout of properties, fences, rural road patterns including that most buildings are well setback from roads, tree planting on rural properties in rows or clumps are all important because of their high form and visibility. These landscape elements should be retained.

The vision for the rural areas of the Bellarine Peninsula is for the continuation of a working farmed landscape where the "right to farm" is respected and the key features of this open farmed landscape and values of the environmental assets are retained. This Statement supports the continuing use of the area for agriculture, in particular viticulture, horticulture, cropping and grazing as the main land use in rural areas on the Bellarine Peninsula and as an integral part of the rural economy and character of the area and the region. Intensive agricultural activities which could change the appearance of this open farmed landscape are encouraged to locate in other more suitable rural areas beyond the Bellarine Peninsula. (Page 6)

The draft LPS makes only a passing reference to the agriculture in the context of landscapes and does not clearly espouse a vision for its continued growth in the region into the future. The Forum is strongly of the view that a passage similar to the Bellarine Peninsula example must be included in the MRLPS to not only acknowledge the importance of agriculture to the local economy but to ensure and enshrine its ability to continue to grow and adapt to an ever-changing climate and economy.

In this context we submit that the strategies need to make a firm and strong expression of this support. By way of example we propose the following amendments to the strategies as drafted in the LPS (our changes emphasized):

- Encourage **and facilitate the continued and expanded** use and of rural zoned land for agricultural purposes.
- Encourage and support innovations in agricultural practices such as sustainable farming and improving technologies to **enable farming to survive, adapt and respond** to emerging and niche markets.
- Support agricultural practices **as it responds and adapts to** climate change

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- Encourage measures to ensure that agricultural practices **contributes to the protection** of soil quality, water quality, biodiversity and native plants and animals.
- **The importance of** rural land use and development **must be viewed on balance with** important environmental and cultural values.
- **Restrict** the supply of rural-living zoned land to conserve **and protect** agricultural practices

While it is important that the LPS promotes the preservation and protection of those significant landscapes and environmental features that make the Shire a special place, There must be recognition that the continued production of food from agriculture is of equal importance of must continue to be strongly supported by policy for this reason. The LPS as drafted does not achieve that recognition and should be amended accordingly.

 thanks you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours faithfully,

