

8 February 2018

Submission to: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Re: the *Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement*

The draft *Localised Planning Statement* developed by the State Government for the Macedon Ranges area is alarming and a great disappointment. Given the unanimity of community views about the need for protection, and the self evidence of this to any visitor, the LPS does not provide these needed and promised protections.

The area is unique, is of outstanding natural beauty and so far largely unspoilt as a result of planning decisions and the Policy No 8 of the past. We owe it to our children and their children into the future to protect this region. This policy encourages development and goes against all previous extensive work related to land supply and population growth.

It is foolhardy and short sighted to allow further development in the rural and environmental areas, and to expand towns to incorporate urban sprawl, instead of infill to cater for population growth.

Specifically my objection to the LPS is for the following reasons. It:

1. Ignores and does not incorporate the recommendations of the Minister's own advisory committee, to which many residents made submissions.
2. ignores the previous Statement of Planning Policy No 8 which has guided development in the Macedon Ranges and been responsible for the beautiful landscapes that are enjoyed today.
3. does not protect places of regional significance (only State and national significance).
4. expands the boundaries of all the towns in the Shire substantially thus severely compromising the unique nature of the towns. That is: having a hard edge to the countryside like European towns, rather than urban sprawl. Increasing town boundaries will turn these unique towns into sprawling commuter belts with ever expanding urban sprawl around them. The government appears to be working on behalf of property developers rather than working to protect the character of rural towns. This focus on giving developers what they want can be seen throughout all peri urban areas in Victoria.

5. ignores recent and State approved, town plans and Settlement Strategy. Why are these plans now no longer acceptable when they were relatively recently accepted by the State into the local Planning Scheme?
6. expands growth scenarios that are well beyond the needs for land under growth scenarios recently previously developed with the community until at least 2036 - and expanding them without going through the proper planning processes that the above plans did.
7. fails to control development in rural areas. It leaves the door open to further subdivision and increased density of houses and associated infrastructure on farm and environmental zoned land in the Shire.
8. fails to protect the fact that the Macedon Ranges is an area of outstanding beauty which for that reason alone, must be preserved for present and future generations.
9. fails to make binding commitments.
10. fails to set priorities and does not state specifically how priorities will be implemented at the lower levels of planning regulation

I don't think this Policy can be amended. There is a need to completely re write it. It does not protect the Macedon Ranges as it purports, is full of weasel words that are open to interpretation and so ambiguous they open the door to considerable new development and activity in this currently beautiful rural area.

Simply adding a renewed date onto Policy No 8 would be a much better alternative than this policy. Policy number 8 provided strong protections to the Macedon Ranges and it was promised that these protections would be reinstated with an updated version. Instead we have this policy and are simply told it provides protection when from a closer look it clearly doesn't. Words are cheap and they are very cheap in this LPS. It promises one thing and delivers the opposite.