

A strategy to reduce the light pollution on the Bellarine peninsula and a policy for the future developments should be included in the Bellarine Peninsula Statement of Planning Policy. The importance of reducing light pollution on the Bellarine meets key points as outlined in the selected United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 8,11,12,13, 14 and 15 as chosen as the foundation for this draft Bellarine Peninsula SPP's vision, objectives and strategies.

The light pollution created by new developments on the Bellarine Peninsula and the City of Greater Geelong has created so much light that our ability to clearly see the abundance of stars in the night sky has diminished dramatically. For example the lighting at the new roundabout at The Point on the Bellarine highway has no less than 12 lights illuminating this roundabout. Although there is a range of lighting that can be used to minimise light pollution it seems this has not been required as part of this infrastructure development. This appears to be the case for many developments the Bellarine Peninsula. The lights used does not minimise light spill.

Technological advances in lighting provide increased energy efficiencies, making bright lights cheaper and more accessible. As the technology advances, more light is being used to brighten our neighbourhoods, our streets, and in turn, our skies.

We can preserve and protect our night time environment and our heritage of dark skies through environmentally responsible outdoor lighting. A review of current street and building lighting is essential to ensure we minimise unnecessary lighting, light spillage and the resulting light pollution. Additionally, specific lighting requirements for future infrastructure and building developments can help to reduce light pollution now and into the future.

Although the City of Greater Geelong and the other Bellarine councils have policies on street lighting, these do not identify the requirements of lighting to reduce light pollution in their precincts.

The Bellarine Peninsula has a significant also tourist economy. It is smart policy and good business to improve the quality and effectiveness of outdoor lighting that preserves our view of the heavens for generations to come.

Protecting the night sky from light pollution is a critical. Dark skies are vitally important for our health. They are essential for the health of our ecosystems, wildlife habitats and natural environments. The negative impacts of light pollution, consistently confirmed by emerging evidence, affect not only our health and well-being and that of the environment, wildlife and its habitat, but impact on the loss of engagement in the stars and night skies for our children and greatly reduce our visual access to the cosmos.