

# **BELLARINE PENINSULA DISTINCTIVE AREA & LANDSCAPE**

## **RESPONSE AND SUBMISSION TO THE DRAFT STATEMENT OF PLANNING POLICY (June 2021)**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Statement of Planning Policy. I have just two comments to make:

1. The Settlement boundaries must be enshrined in legislation, so that development creep is contained. Future housing developments (subdivisions) must be constrained to the existing, defined settlement boundaries;
2. A buffer zone of low density residential development be employed to a depth of at least 300 metres along settlement boundaries allowing for the retention of the distinctive landscape views as the settlement is approached.

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## **1. PROTECT SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES**

The distinctive area of the Bellarine Peninsula is under threat from expansive housing development, and if left unchecked, the peninsula will take on more of the attributes of the Mornington Peninsula where the casual visitor only sees miles and miles of ‘urban sprawl’. The prevention of this is, of course the rationale behind the Bellarine Peninsula Distinctive Area & Landscape process.

But the settlement boundaries continue to be under threat, even while this process is ongoing. The front page of the Bellarine Times of Thursday 22 July 2021 (<https://timesnewsgroup.com.au/bellarinetimes/print-editions/bt-digital-edition-22-july/>), in an article headlined Estate Appeal reported that a local developer wished to replicate the Oakdene Estate’s quality on the west side of Grubb Road, which is clearly outside the declared settlement boundary of Ocean Grove. No doubt the Ocean Grove Community Association will make a submission to the SPP covering this issue.

This case illustrates the point that the threat of housing creep into the protected landscape is real, and ongoing. While the current City of Greater Geelong supports the present Settlement Boundaries, future councils may succumb to developer demands.

Settlement boundaries within the Bellarine Peninsula must be clearly defined, and protected by legislation.

## 2. CREATE BUFFER ZONES OF LOW DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

Objective 2 in the Draft SPP states that the following is to be binding on Responsible Public Entities: *To protect and enhance the identified landscape character, physical features, view corridors and natural and cultural values of the declared area's significant landscapes.*

It is the concept of View Corridors that this part addresses.

The map of Drysdale on Page 60 of the Draft SPP shows Growth Areas along the west and south-west of the settlement. The western Growth area is currently gazetted Farming Zone (FZ) and the south-west Growth Area is gazetted as Rural Living (RLZ). Under the 2010 Drysdale-Clifton Springs Structure Plan, these areas are also declared future growth areas.

If these areas are to be rezoned to General Residential, then approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the lot sizes thus developed will fall in the range of 400 to 600 sq m per lot, which is the case for the Jetty Road Growth Area at the present time. While this development is commendable within the settlement boundary, unconstrained subdivision will result in any visitor approaching Drysdale being visually hit with a wall of Colourbond fences along the township limits.

To protect the view corridors on the approaches to Drysdale, I urge that the declared Growth Areas be zoned Low Density Residential (LDRZ1) to a depth of at least 300 metres from the settlement boundary. This will have the effect of limiting block sizes to 0.4 Ha without sewerage, or 0.2 Ha with sewerage. Alternatively, some areas currently designated Rural Living to be retained as such.

The Draft SPP mentions buffer zones between residential lots and rural farmland. The Drysdale Clifton Springs Structure Plan (2010) also mentions buffer zones to the residential interface, in stating that the land south of Lake Lorne and McLeod's Waterholes be retained as Rural Living (RLZ1).

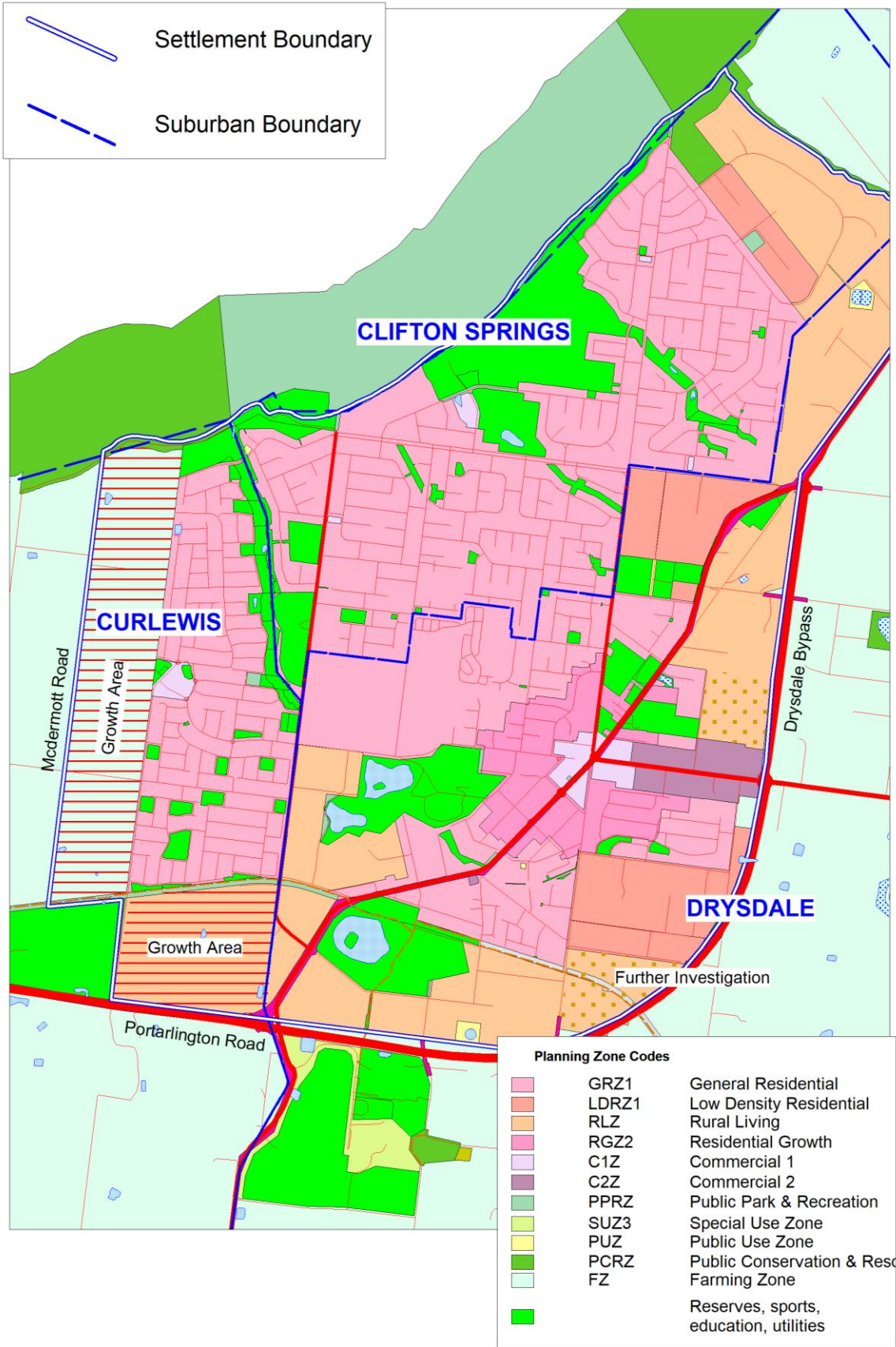
Rezoning the land adjacent to the Settlement Boundary along McDermott Road, Portarlinton Road, and the Drysdale Bypass to Low Density Residential (LDRZ1), or retaining the current Rural Living Zones would preserve the rural approaches to the township of Drysdale.

Similar conditions can be applied to all the Settlement boundaries within the Bellarine Peninsular – such conditions will preserve the visual landscape at the edges of each of the townships, as opposed to assaulting the viewer with an abrupt change of scenery from rural to medium density urban. While declaring Planning Zones across the peninsula is the responsibility of the City of Greater Geelong or Borough of Queenscliffe, the framework should be set in the DAL process.

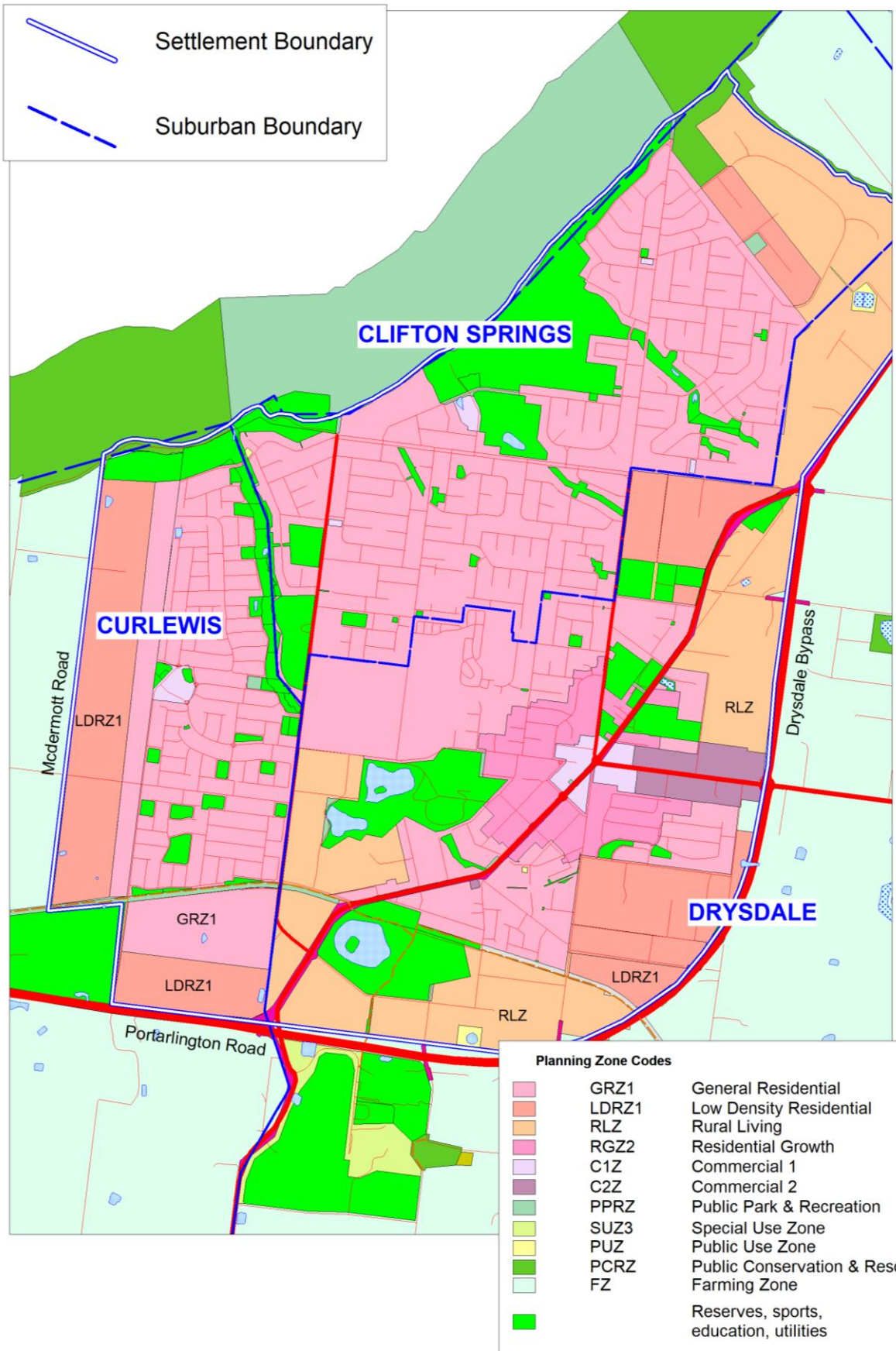
The existing Planning Zones for Drysdale are shown in Figure 1 on Page 3.

Suggested Planning Zones for Drysdale within the designated Growth Areas as defined in the map on Page 60 of the draft SPP, are shown in Figure 2 on Page 4.

12<sup>th</sup> August, 2021



**Figure 1 Drysdale – Existing Planning Zones**  
 Designated Growth Area adjacent to McDermott Road currently zoned Farming (FZ). Designated Growth Area north of Portarlinton Road and Drysdale Bypass currently zoned Rural Living (RLZ)



**Figure 2 Suggested Future Planning Zones**  
 Areas in Growth Areas along McDermott Road, Portarlington Road and Drysdale Bypass zoned Low Density Residential rather than General Residential