



9 February 2018

Victorian Minister of Planning
Hon. Richard Wynne
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

Regarding the Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement
[https://engage.vic.gov.au/application/files/4015/1331/4799/
Macedon_Ranges_Localised_Planning_Statement_Consultation_Draft.pdf](https://engage.vic.gov.au/application/files/4015/1331/4799/Macedon_Ranges_Localised_Planning_Statement_Consultation_Draft.pdf)

Vision Statement

I would amend the current Vision Statement to include:
'development will be sustainably managed within township and ***EXISTING*** settlement boundaries with rural landscapes maintained between township settlements and metropolitan Melbourne'

We do not need to 'grow' our significant areas to appease developers. There are empty residences and lots of land within existing boundaries. We need clever design within existing boundaries. High density solutions close to existing infrastructure. Urban sprawl destroys all that makes these rural towns special. Suburban type developments need to stop and a rural township aesthetic adopted.

Landscape

People are yearning for a connection with nature. The therapeutic benefits are well known in other cultures. The landscape of the Macedon Ranges has a long history of providing wellness for day-trippers from Melbourne. We need awe. We need our wild spaces. Other cultures know this. Japan has had a vast population since before the industrial revolution yet their wild spaces are protected and preserved. The townships are forbidden to encroach into their sacred spaces.

Biodiversity and environmental values

Provide funding to local Landcare groups who are solely reliant on an ageing volunteer base.

Weed eradication programs, signage provided for significant vegetation.

Implement protection and conservation of Hanging Rock.

Water catchments and supply

Protect the waterways as biodiversity linkages. Dogs on leashes at all times, koalas get mauled, kangaroos, ducks chased, echidnas attacked and platypus scared away.

Provide off leach parkland for dogs away from precious riparian strips.

Stop the urban sprawl into water catchment areas. Houses means slashing grassland, tree removal, leading to desertification of formerly rich forests. The alluvial soils associated with the riparian strips should be preserved never to be built on. It is in these areas that the most Aboriginal artefacts and history is found. New proposed development along waterways proposed in Woodend, Kyneton and Riddells Creek is not protection.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The first Australians have long held this land sacred for reasons we are only now discovering. With climate change upon us the intrinsic value of the Macedon Ranges will only increase. Rich volcanic soils and mountain rain sustain the incredible biodiversity. The landforms are wonderful landmarks and our climate is unique in extreme range of temperatures not experienced in other areas of Australia. We could attempt to restore some of the awe experienced within this landscape by turning off lights, camping under stars and revering this landscape as the first Australians have. A connection to the land is how people protect it. We need to encourage ties and learn from the people who were here before us.

European Cultural Heritage

It has long been recognised that with the climate, landscapes, biodiversity, rich soil Macedon Ranges is a place to treasure. The heritage architecture tells a story of how the land was originally settled. The timber hewn from the local forests the bluestone mined from nearby quarries provides a sense of place to the residences. We have our own local Architecture which need preserving and protecting. Like the old towns throughout Tasmania are now being treasured and restored bring a regional architectural identity to each township. We have our own architectural materials and style here. This is all our history, the lands history. Knocking down old houses, destroying streetscapes to appease the developers need to make a quick buck, building poorly design, shoddy built suburbia type house blocks, destroys the very fabric of these townships.

Settlements

The proposed settlement boundary proposed for Woodend is appalling. Majority on low-lying riparian land. What of water catchment and biodiversity corridors? The townships are the first port of call. They dictate how an area is engaged with and feels.

Travelling along the freeway toward Woodend you are immersed in big views and countryside in stark contrast to Taylors Lakes, Sunbury and now Gisborne. Turn off the freeway into Woodend and you enter a country township. The gateway being paddocks, trees and the 5 Mile Creek.

The proposed ballooning of the existing settlement boundary to flank the freeway and the main entrance into the township with new house lots destroys any illusion that Woodend is a country town. No heritage, no landscape appreciation. It joins all the other suburban metropolises with very little reason not to just keep developing and join into Gisborne. There is no protection or thought to long term sustainable growth just a carve up of precious rural land and township vistas. No more will Woodend be a retreat in the valley surrounded by forests. There is a need for high density housing within the township to accommodate single person households, elderly, students; near existing infrastructure. Look to overseas planning and stop the urban sprawl.

Agriculture and Rural Land

The soil in the Macedon Ranges is unique. High mineral content of the clays and volcanic soils provide very rich fertile soil. The forests catchments and nearby mountains provide rainfall and cooling in the Summer months. The intense cold winter freeze allow cropping of produce that can not be grown elsewhere. We have a unique climate distinct from elsewhere in Australia and we should be taking full advantage of this in the local food producing industry. We have to protect these soils from poor farming practices. Encourage sustainable practices as protection of the soil is paramount. Equine industry would be better supported by regions with poor soil. Horses and the environment do not mix. Supporting residents ownership of private horses is very different to supporting business running horses as 'agriculture'.

Tourism and Recreation

Provide some infrastructure. People engage and protect beautiful environment when they can access them. There has been very little infrastructure in the way of pathways, boardwalks, plantings, seating, sculpture, signage, landscape architecture which would enhance areas of beauty and engage the visitor.

Hanging Rock is a beautiful park with very tired infrastructure detracting from the experience.

Macedon reservoir could have rubbish collection, a walking track, signage of heritage significance, biodiversity etc.

Transport and Infrastructure

Car centric planning turns its back on the rest of the world who are moving toward alternative transport.

We need much better connections between townships. Public transport, and cycling infrastructure. The townships are close by, 15kms is not far on a bicycle. The Mayor cycles frequently between townships.

We need urgent safe cycling infrastructure between townships. recent injuries and deaths of cyclist on Black Forest Drive highlight this.

We need urgent safe cycling to school for every child within a 5km radius. Townships such as Gisborne are crippled at peak hour solely due to school drop offs and after school activities. I grew up in Gisborne, I cycled everywhere. Putting in more roads makes our townships less pedestrian friendly.

We need public transport links between townships.

Support the growth industry of cycle tourism. Have a look at Bright for an example. Designate shared roads

Settlement Boundaries

No comment for Gisborne and Romsey as maps are yet to be provided.

Lancefield is the only acceptable plan as existing township boundaries are being adhered to.

Kyneton, Woodend and Riddells Creek all extend of town boundaries along protected watercourses which negates efforts to preserve water catchment and biodiversity corridors.

Woodend adds 500ha doubling the size of the Township and destroying the entry by flanking the freeway and entry with housing developments. The Township has a long history of objecting to developer driven planning. The rural land earmarked for development are some of the richest best farmland in the Macedon Ranges. They also provide a buffer to the freeway preserving the nature of a quiet country town at the Woodend end. The very soul will be destroyed.

Localised Planning Statement

It is inconsistent with the intent of the legislation.

It is inconsistent with the 12 recommendations of the Macedon ranges Protection Advisory Committee accepted by the Minister.

It is not based on the Statement of Planning Policy No.8

It is inconsistent with the protections within Amendment C98 to maintain the character of the rural Woodend Township

Therefore it does not protect in any sense and is inconsistent with the expectations of the community.