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5 March 2018

The Hon. Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Level 16
8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Minister

Consultation on the Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement - Impact on [REDACTED]

We refer to the consultation draft of the Macedon Ranges localised planning statement and write to you with a particular concern about the proposed settlement boundary for the Riddells Creek Township.

We are the owners of the property at [REDACTED]. Our property is a [REDACTED] site bounded on the north by [REDACTED] and on the west by [REDACTED]. We **attach** a copy of Map 7 from the Macedon Ranges localised planning statement on which we have marked by hand the location of our property.

Having built our own house there, we have lived on the property for over [REDACTED] years serving as [REDACTED] locally and in [REDACTED] and have a young family.

Inappropriate zoning for our property – the anomaly

Until recently the area has been predominantly rural and semi-rural in character and an ideal environment to raise our family. Our property is the only one [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

Also until recently, our intention was to remain in our property indefinitely. However, our circumstances have changed and due to our enjoyment of the rural lifestyle, we decided we would like to relocate to a larger holding in the shire – most likely the size of a viable farm. However, our plans have been adversely affected by recent changes to the zoning of a large area on [REDACTED].

As you know, last year changes were gazetted to the Macedon Ranges Shire Planning Scheme rezoning the area [REDACTED] to Urban Growth Zone and we now understand that the plans for the land will involve relatively high density development with likely lot sizes potentially as low as 400 square metres. As you can appreciate, this will radically change the character of the area with the outlook from our property going from that of rural to relatively dense residential on the [REDACTED] side.

[REDACTED]

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This has a current and future adverse affect on our property and its value in a range of respects including:

- 1 The loss of rural character and views.
- 2 The potential and perceived security risks to our property being so close to a more highly developed precinct but being seen to be open and accessible because of its different size and character to that development. In effect, our property will be a [REDACTED] island almost immediately adjacent to a sea of development.
- 3 Given the nature and size of our property, any potential purchasers of the property would be those looking for a quiet rural location. However, the adjacent development means the property no longer can be seen as offering that – at least in the future.

Our advice from a range of sources indicates that the change in zoning of the land [REDACTED] and the proposed development there has had a major adverse impact on the value of our property. Obviously, this jeopardises our plans for a relocation and has had an adverse impact on our financial situation. While we appreciate that these impacts were probably not intended when the rezoning was approved, we expect any reasonable assessment of the situation would show that they were predictable.

In view of this, we recently approached the Macedon Ranges Shire Council requesting the Council to consider rezoning our property (currently Farming Zone) to a zone which would allow for residential subdivision similar to that planned for the land [REDACTED]. We see this as the only viable solution to the issues created by the Riddells Creek east rezoning. By allowing for subdivision of our property, we would be able to recoup some of the loss in value and either find a suitable purchaser for our land or be able to develop it ourselves in a way which is complimentary to the adjacent development.

Quite apart from addressing the adverse impact on our family, we also see allowing subdivision of our property as consistent with good town planning principles. Our property is the only relatively small acreage holding on the [REDACTED] in close proximity to the new higher density development and it seems to us that allowing it to be developed in a way more consistent with the adjacent development is both good town planning and in the interests of all affected.

We appreciate that the properties to the [REDACTED] of our property on the other side of [REDACTED] are predominantly small holdings similar in size to our property. This might lead to the assertion that there should be no distinction made between the zoning of our property and those properties. However, an inspection of the area will quickly demonstrate that there is a major difference in the character of our property and its surroundings and those on the [REDACTED] side of [REDACTED]. We also note that those properties are within [REDACTED] township boundary.

As a major connecting road between [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED], [REDACTED] creates a significant barrier between the [REDACTED] precincts and this and other factors have over time resulted in them being significantly different in character. We mention this out to make the point that the nature of our property, based on its location, the

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surrounding properties and the proposed development [REDACTED], makes our situation and the status of our property unique and deserving of a more appropriate zoning.

On 6 February 2018, we attended the Council's information evening on planning scheme changes and happened to discuss the situation with Ms Fiona DePreu who I understand is an officer in the Department of Planning. She indicated that, in principle (based on our description of the matter), there appeared to be a merit in considering a rezoning for our property.

Communication with Council

On 7 February 2018 we wrote to Macedon Ranges Shire Council formally requesting that the Council consider a potential rezoning of our property to a zone that would allow subdivision to take place. The Council's Coordinator of Strategic Planning responded on 23 February 2018 making the following points:

- Although he acknowledged the ultimate likely impact on the township character near our property, he said it is unlikely that Council would support the rezoning of our property.
- He indicated that the application of the Urban Growth Zone to the land immediately to the [REDACTED] of our property *"does not infer that these areas will be immediately available for development. As noted by the planning panel, extensive analysis and planning will be necessary before any lots could be created and put on the market."*
- Through the amendment C100 process, all affected land owners were informed of the proposed zoning of the land to the west of our property and invited to make a submission and *"...the expansion of the proposed urban growth zone area was not raised at any point during that process..."*.
- He did not recommend that we pursue the rezoning of our property.

Respectfully, we were somewhat surprised by the comments made by the Council's Coordinator of Strategic Planning in that:

- He seemed to take no account of the unique and, we would submit, anomalous situation the adjacent rezoning has created for our property.
- It is stating the obvious that further work will be needed before the adjacent area is put to market. However, the area would not have been rezoned if there was not an expectation that it would be developed in the relatively short to medium term future and the comment made ignores the obvious fact that the rezoning has had an immediate impact on perceptions in relation to our property - whether or not it takes some time before the area is developed.
- As "affected landowners" we do not believe we were ever informed of the proposed Amendment C100 or invited to make a submission - having only become aware of it after it was put into operation as a result of consultations concerning the localised planning statement.

In summary, we do not believe that the Council has properly considered the anomalous impact on our property (and ourselves personally) of Amendment C100 or that an isolated island site like ours should, consistent with good planning principles, be zoned similarly to the land to the [REDACTED] of [REDACTED].

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We are now concerned that our property will be effectively locked out of a change in zoning by the location of the proposed settlement boundary for Riddells Creek. In all the circumstances, this would make no sense from a planning perspective and would cause enormous hardship to our family - effectively through an administrative oversight and lack of proper consideration of the matter.

Request to be included within [REDACTED] township boundary

In view of this, we formally request that our property be included within the proposed settlement boundary for [REDACTED] and that it be zoned to allow for subdivision.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with officers of your Department to brief them fully on all of the matters relevant to the impact on our property and the reasons why it should be included within the proposed settlement boundary.

We look forward to hearing from you and can be contacted on the number below or by email.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]