

Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement

Submission

In last week's local paper a woman who had recently moved to New Gisborne from Sunbury enthusiastically applauded the Council's plans for a sporting complex at New Gisborne, saying that "then we will be able to do our shopping there while our kids are playing sport". Couldn't she see that a shopping centre attached to the sporting complex would create unbelievable traffic congestion on top of all the traffic engendered by the sporting complex AND the existing Netball Complex and the three schools ? It only takes a minute's thought to see that the lovely tree and pretty cottage-lined street that makes New Gisborne so attractive would have to be modified to cope with the traffic. The trouble is that people want EVERYTHING - the pretty, quiet, friendly little country community as well as all the conveniences of the big, busy, unfriendly suburb. They are not prepared to recognize that the one negates the other, or to accept a small inconvenience to gain the benefits of the country life. And the developers and Council planners have their own reasons for accommodating these people's demands.

Now this week the Midland Express has an article in which VicRoads says it is planning for 10,000 extra houses in New Gisborne. 10,000? Imagine what New Gisborne is going to look like with 10,000 more houses! What is the reason for this mad push for more and more residents AND therefore, CARS in our lovely little towns and villages? This is killing the goose that laid the golden egg, loving our towns to death.

If we are to preserve the Macedon Ranges, it is not just a matter of protecting the flora and fauna. There are landscapes and views such as the view of the Macedon Ranges along the Kilmore Road between New Gisborne and Riddells Creek or the view along Hamilton Road in New Gisborne, which are integral to the "look" of the Macedon Ranges. If these roads become lined with houses or worse still, units, the Macedon Ranges becomes just another suburb. This will kill tourism and destroy the lifestyle that people move here for.

We also need to recognize that as the Macedon Ranges were settled within a few years of John Batman arriving in Victoria, they also embody the heritage of Victoria and the townships are full of this heritage. But it is not just a question of preserving historic buildings, we need to protect the look of the towns and villages - the grouping of the little cottages, the bluestone guttering, the narrow streets lined with 100 - 150 year old oaks and elms.

But more houses mean more cars - a lot more cars and this means widening roads to cope with the traffic. The result is: No more pretty towns and villages! Trees wiped out and vistas blocked by houses.

We cannot have protection of the Macedon Ranges AND more houses. The current boundaries of our towns MUST be set in concrete if we are to protect the Macedon Ranges. And it MUST be spelt out with words like "must" and "cannot" not useless words like "may" or "could".

Statement of Planning Policy no 8 said it all. Stick to that!

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