

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

28 February 2018

The Hon. Richard Wynne
Minister for Planning
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Dear Minister

Re Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement

I am writing on behalf of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both of which organisations represent nearly [REDACTED], living within or adjacent to the existing and proposed “Woodend settlement boundary” envisaged by the Localised Planning Statement (LPS) released by your Department in December 2017.

Both [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which has [REDACTED] most of which are in the Macedon Ranges Shire with similar objectives to our own. The [REDACTED] is aware and supportive of this communication which has been discussed and endorsed by our respective Committees.

The purpose of this letter is to express our groups’ concerns at the LPS.

[REDACTED] groups’ objectives include the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. Our groups and members have worked tirelessly for more than [REDACTED] years to [REDACTED].

The [REDACTED] are, therefore, extremely concerned to learn that, far from supporting these objectives, the LPS will have the effect of outrightly threatening the improvements that we have achieved as well as threatening present and future endeavours. We note that [REDACTED] groups have received funding from the State Government from time to time to support initiatives that now appear to be directly contrary to the practical effect of the current LPS.

In short, we request that the following matters are addressed without further delay:

1. The replacement of the December 2017 LPS with one that incorporates the outcomes envisaged by Statement of Planning Policy No. 8: the current LPS demonstrates a complete disregard for the work done by and the recommendations of the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee, does not envisage a need for protective legislation and, far from recognising the relevance of Statement of Planning Policy No. 8, outrightly disregards it.
2. The declaration of the existing Woodend settlement boundary as a “protected settlement boundary” under the new legislation to ensure protection of our natural resources, biodiversity and landscapes. Based on sound growth projections, the existing settlement boundary was recognised by the Settlement Strategy 2011 as providing for adequate housing and employment growth to at least 2036. It was also recognised by the Woodend Town Structure Plan of 2015 and adopted with Amendment C98. The current LPS, on the other hand, in complete disregard for this research, more than doubles the existing Woodend settlement boundary by earmarking large tracts of currently-designated rural land for urban development.
3. Transparent and honest communication with affected community members to ensure that they are properly cognizant of the proposed changes and how these will affect them. The process that has been adopted to date has been marked by a complete disregard for the extensive work done by residents with the Shire to develop the Woodend Town Structure Plan 2015 which confirmed the Settlement Strategy’s 2011 conclusions referred to above. This work also revealed extremely serious development constraints that appear to have been completely overlooked (or blatantly disregarded) by the current LPS.
4. An explanation of how the current LPS will support both previous and current extensive on-ground biolink works; re-vegetation projects; improved water catchment works; weed eradication programs and, presumably, the Macedon Ranges Shire’s recently-touted Biodiversity Strategy instead of encouraging irresponsible and speculative development and leading to a loss of proper and orderly planning.

We expect that you will give serious consideration to our concerns for the protection of the unique features and special characteristics of the area.

We look forward to communicating your response to our members in a timely manner.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]
For and on behalf of the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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