

Response of [REDACTED] to the Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement

All about Woodend. The "Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement" ("the statement") would better be entitled "A Plan to Focus Growth in the Macedon Ranges at Woodend" because Woodend is to almost double in size while other towns are to have minimal or no growth. This is a proposal to change the hierarchy of towns in the Shire.

Consultation. Most of residents of the Shire including Woodend would be unaware of this intention. There is no community consultation without awareness. There has recently been community consultation including public meetings, (as part of the C98? process). That process was largely highjacked by developers by nevertheless still concluded with the view that extensive expansion was not wanted. The community is doubtless labouring under the belief that the matter is settled for the present. The proposal makes a joke of that consultation. That should be enough reason in itself to not to expand the town's boundaries. Here are reasons why the boundaries of Woodend should be **FIXED AS THEY ARE**.

Hierarchy of Towns. There are already two larger towns in the shire flanking Woodend on the Calder Fwy/Bendigo railway line: one, Kyneton, closer to Bendigo and the other, Gisborne, closer to Melbourne. Shire and State facilities and services would need to be spread over 3 larger towns rather than focussed on 2. The police station in Woodend is seldom manned. There is no hospital. There is no State secondary school. There is no swimming pool/fitness centre such as in Kyneton and Gisborne. The shire needs **not** to have another large town.

Dormitory for Melbourne. Residents of Woodend tend to work outside the town. There is no local industry requiring an influx of workers. Residents in the proposed suburbs will either be unemployed or work in Melbourne. Woodend is unreasonably distant from Melbourne to be its dormitory. For those who need to live in the town, there is a constant supply of houses for sale and resale. There are also houses for rent. Several Real Estate Agents in town apparently make a good living off this high turnover. There is also plenty of room for infill.

Inaccessibility. The proposed new suburbs would be well out of walking distance from the shopping centre and railway station. The only escape would be by car. Parking at the railway station is already full. Parking at the shopping centre is approaching that. If suburbia is to be pushed towards Carlsruhe it makes more sense that a separate shopping centre be established to the north, perhaps even at Carlsruhe.

Different. Woodend is different. It is near Hanging Rock and Mt Macedon. It is largely visually interesting and appealing. Wildlife comes to the edges of, and even into the town. The statement goes on about tourism. This plan to vastly increase the size of Woodend will proportionally decrease its appeal as a destination. People from the suburbs of Melbourne are not going to be attracted to the suburbs of Woodend.

No Vision. Planning is the art putting things in the right place for good reason. There needs to be some understanding of or even empathy with Woodend. A document proposing a doubling in size of a town should set out the characteristics of the town, its location and function in its shire. It should state a vision for the town. The only vision to be found in the statement is to turn Woodend into suburbia.

Conclusion. The statement is a document of the lowest calibre:

- it proposes a plan **without giving any reasons**;
- it completely disregards the wishes of the community; and
- it completely satisfies the desires of those who wish to profit by making a mess of Woodend.

This is untoward. It raises questions about the mechanism by which this comes about and the toxic culture

in planning that accepts this cynical and sneering approach. Certainly Woodend's interests are not being effectively championed by the Shire if at all. It would appear that whoever is responsible for the document is too embarrassed to put his/her name to it.

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