

Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement

Frequently asked questions

Context

What area is covered by the Draft Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement?

The draft statement applies to the whole Macedon Ranges Shire municipality.

What is significant and distinctive about this area?

The Macedon Ranges region is of special significance to Victoria because of its unique natural beauty, distinctive landscapes and rich cultural heritage. The area contains an attractive mix of natural and agricultural landscapes, forested areas, vineyards and rolling pastures. This iconic cultural landscape is enhanced by a wealth of built heritage, including many places of local, state and national heritage significance.

The Victorian Government is committed to protecting and enhancing the state significant social, environmental and economic values in the Macedon Ranges region. As outlined in the Victorian Government's plan for peri-urban areas in *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* and the *Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan*, these values are of strategic importance to Victoria and include native flora and fauna, rural landscapes, waterways, cultural heritage features, parks and other tourism assets.

What is the Draft Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement?

The Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement highlights the state significant attributes of the area and provides for coordinated management and protection. It aims to ensure that the state-significant landscapes and the environmental and cultural values of the Macedon Ranges region are protected and enhanced for current and future generations.

When finalised, the statement will strengthen the importance of the region in state planning policy and help coordinate decision-making across government agencies with responsibilities for land use and management in the area – including the Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

The draft statement has been prepared by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in partnership with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the Victorian Planning Authority and recognised Traditional Owner groups the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri.

What does the Draft Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement aim to protect?

The draft statement aims to ensure the state-significant landscapes and the environmental and cultural values of the Macedon Ranges region are protected and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations, while guiding population growth, promoting jobs and investment. It focusses on:

- landscape and geological features of scientific and educational value
- areas of biodiversity significance
- water resources and natural resources of significance
- significant Aboriginal cultural heritage values
- significant European cultural heritage values
- the role and function of settlements in managing population growth, employment, development and investment
- tourism and recreation
- transport and infrastructure.

Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme

How will the draft statement be considered through the planning system?

Once finalised the statement will become an incorporated document to the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme, with the policy embedded in the state policy section of the planning scheme. It will be used in conjunction with the existing state and local planning policies, zones, overlays and particular provisions found in the planning scheme to inform land use planning in the municipality.

Local and state authorities with responsibility for planning and managing land use and development in the municipality must have regard to and act consistently with the statement (including the Macedon Ranges Shire Council).

Why isn't the current Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme sufficient?

The purpose of the localised planning statement is to provide the highest level of planning protection through state legislation and policy.

The level of growth anticipated in the region presents a unique set of challenges that warrant stronger state-led planning policy that what the current planning scheme provides.

Settlement boundaries

What is a settlement boundary?

A settlement boundary is a long-term boundary designed to contain township growth. Implementing these boundaries will safeguard valuable landscapes on the outskirts of the towns, and protect them from overdevelopment and encroachment.

What towns will have settlement boundaries applied?

Townships that are expected to grow will have settlement boundaries applied. This includes Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey, Riddells Creek, Lancefield and Woodend.

Towns not identified for accommodating growth beyond existing boundaries (determined by zoning) will be contained within existing township boundaries. This includes Ashbourne, Ashbourne, Monegetta–Bolinda, Benloch, Bullengarook, Carlsruhe, Clarkefield, Darraweit Guim, Lauriston, Macedon, Malmsbury, Mount Macedon, Newham and Tylden.

How have settlement boundaries been determined?

The proposed settlement boundaries are based on approved long-term structure plans and approved planning scheme amendments, which have undergone extensive community and stakeholder engagement and form part of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.

Considerations for determining the boundaries included land constraints and opportunities, including an assessment of environmental, landscape and cultural features, natural resources, infrastructure and services.

Why have no proposed settlement boundaries been included for Gisborne and Romsey?

Settlement boundaries have not been identified for Gisborne or Romsey yet because further strategic work needs to be completed before boundaries for these towns can be set.

In the interim, the current Gisborne/New Gisborne Framework Plan and Romsey Structure Plan that form part of clause 21.13 – Local Areas and Small Settlements of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme will continue to guide long term planning.

It is proposed to determine settlement boundaries for Gisborne and Romsey within the next 18 months.

Can settlement boundaries be changed once they are in place?

Yes, but there must be strategic justification for the change and the council will be required to seek endorsement from the Minister for Planning.

An amendment to the planning scheme would be required to change the boundary, which would need the approval of the Minister and ratification from the Parliament.

What are 'investigation areas' and how will future township land uses be determined?

In determining an appropriate location for a settlement boundary, some land inside the boundary may be identified for 'future investigation' or proposed for 'medium to long-term growth'. These areas have been identified in approved structure plans for potential future growth, and require further rigorous assessment against land constraints and opportunities to determine their potential and suitability to accommodate growth.

The assessment will determine what land in the investigation area is suitable for urban uses such as housing, commercial and industrial uses, parks and community infrastructure. It is not anticipated that all land contained within these investigation areas will be suitable for housing, given potential site and servicing constraints.

Rezoning of areas identified for future investigation will not be considered until comprehensive planning and infrastructure assessments have been undertaken. A housing supply and demand assessment must also be undertaken to demonstrate the need for growth

What is the difference between a township boundary and a settlement boundary?

All townships within the Macedon Ranges Shire have existing township boundaries, which identify existing township areas referenced in clause 21.13 of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.

A settlement boundary is a long-term boundary designed to contain township growth, and is applied to towns identified for future growth

Community engagement

How can the community contribute to the finalisation of the Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement?

The Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement has been released for community consultation to ensure that it adequately reflects the Victorian community's vision for the Macedon Ranges region.

Visit www.planning.vic.gov.au/macedon-ranges-protection to learn more about the consultation, including community drop-in session.

Written submissions can be made through the Engage Victoria website at engage.vic.gov.au/macedon-ranges-localised-planning-statement until 19 February 2018.

What is the timetable for consulting on and finalising the Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement?

Date	Consultation phase
15 December 2017	Community consultation opens
Late January/early February 2018	Drop in centres at Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey and Woodend
19 February 2018	Public submission period closes
April 2018	Consultation report made available
Mid-2018	Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement finalised