
From: _____@dpcd.vic.gov.au
Sent: Tuesday, 19 April 2011 3:56 PM
To:
Cc: _____@dpcd.vic.gov.au
Subject: Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy

Following the discussion with you and _____ (CPG Australia) this morning we offer the following comments in relation to the draft Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy.

DPCD supports the overall recommended future strategy for Macedon Ranges, which provides for growth to be directed to the existing main centres of Gisborne and Kyneton situated within the Melbourne - Bendigo corridor and limited growth in the northern corridor containing Romsey and Lancefield. The strategy recognises the significant environmental constraints affecting Macedon and Mt Macedon, particularly extreme bushfire risk.

The additional sections on future development proposals in the Clarkefield area are noted. It is important that the strategy recognise this rail community's long-term potential for consideration as an urban node.

With respect to Woodend, it is noted that the draft strategy seeks to constrain projected growth (VIF2008 - 2036 estimate 5,900) to 4,400 a difference of 1,500 (or 59% of the VIF projections). It is understood that community feedback in the engagement process indicated concerns about managing the town's growth to protect environmental features, manage bushfire risk and protect town character. Given Woodend's very central location within the Shire, and its position on the major rail and road corridors, the strategy to constrain growth to the level proposed has implications for the other surrounding settlements to which growth would need to be alternatively directed (i.e. Gisborne and Kyneton). It needs to be confirmed whether these towns have a sufficient land supply buffer to accommodate growth spillover. Further, under a constrained growth scenario it may prove difficult for Woodend to achieve the user levels required to guarantee viable delivery of new services and infrastructure, to maintain existing services and infrastructure, and to stimulate economic activity. These could be unintended consequences of a constrained approach to growth and could be further compounded by stronger demand for services and infrastructure created by communities in nearby towns designated for growth under the strategy. Other implications include housing becoming unaffordable in Woodend due to land scarcity and lack of a variety of housing types to meet the needs of all sectors of the community. The strategy should aim, therefore, to provide for a balance between some additional greenfield expansion and infill development to respond to a greater level of demand than currently proposed in the strategy. Reliance on infill opportunities alone would be an unsafe and inflexible option. DPCD recommends that consideration be given to making provision in the strategy for the growth of Woodend to reach at least 5,000 by 2036.

It is important that council recognises that the VIF projections are not Government population "targets" - they are predictions about probable population change brought about by a combination of factors including birth and death rates, migration, employment and lifestyle preferences. Population growth in regional towns can be accommodated sustainably, without irrevocable loss of character, through integrated planning of infrastructure and services, and site-responsive environmental planning and urban design.

Note that the Urban Development Program is proposed to be extended later in 2011 to include the councils in Melbourne's peri-urban area. The more detailed land supply and demand data contained in the UDP report will enable the proposed strategy to be tested and perhaps refined if necessary.

I trust these comments will be of assistance to you. Please contact me on _____ if you wish to discuss.

Kind regards,

| Manager, Regional Urban Settlement | Regional Policy

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