

Low growth or moderate growth for Woodend? ACT NOW!

Earlier this year the Woodend community told the Macedon Ranges Shire that it supports the "low growth" town plan for Woodend. Under the Shire's exhibited Settlement Strategy, Woodend would grow from 3,700 people in 2006 to 4,400 people in 2036. This increase of 700 people is based on the town's historical growth record. There would be a need for 280 houses, and these could easily be accommodated within the existing residential zones.

There would be no need to rezone farmland to expand the town.

Although the Shire acknowledges that the "low growth" town plan received overwhelming community support, it has now modified the Settlement Strategy with these important changes:

- ♦ Woodend's future is characterised by "moderate growth" instead of "low growth".
- ♦ the 2036 population will increase from 4,400 people to 5,100. This is twice the growth rate we have historically experienced.
- ♦ the door has been opened to rezoning land outside of the current town boundaries.

Councillors will be considering these changes at its meeting this *Wednesday 25 May 2011 at 7 pm* at the Kyneton Town Hall.

Why the changes? The changes have been requested by a member of the Department of Planning and Community Development. The Council is deciding how to respond. Council staff have already modified the Settlement Strategy on the assumption that these changes will be approved by our Councillors.

The Department requested an increase in the 2036 Woodend population to at least 5,000 and that farmland be rezoned for Greenfield residential development well before the town is built out. This request flies in the face of the Department's own policy of using existing residential zoned land first.

However, even with a population of 5,000, Woodend's growth for the next 25 years can be accommodated within the existing zones.

There is no demonstrated need to expand the town boundaries or to rezone land for Woodend's future.

It's up to you... If you want a say in the future of Woodend, then act quickly.

Write/email/ring our Councillors, Planning Director and elected State officials to ask for a return to a "low growth" future for Woodend and the original Settlement Strategy recommendations that were exhibited earlier in the year and strongly supported by residents. Be sure to include the Minister for Planning (cc:).

- ♦ low growth is necessary to protect town character, Woodend's tourism industry, important landscapes and vegetation, and to minimise bushfire and flooding risks.
- ♦ low growth is overwhelmingly supported by the Woodend community.
- ♦ there is sufficient residential land already - there should be confirmation in the strategy that no additional rezoning is needed and that the current town boundaries will be retained.

Attend the Council meeting on 25 May 2011 at Kyneton Town Hall in Mollison Street, commencing at 7 pm. A show of community spirit is essential!

For more information, view the May 2011 Settlement Strategy at www.mrsc.vic.gov.au, go to <http://novillawoodend.info> or contact WRAP at info@wrap.ws.

If you would like to attend the Council meeting on Wednesday but can't get there, let your Councillors know you are an "apology" and your stated position.

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