

21.02

27/04/2017
C110(Part 1)

KEY ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

The following key issues and influences inform the subsequent objectives, strategies and implementation in Clauses 21.04 – 21.13.

Statement of Planning Policy No. 8

The Statement of Planning Policy No. 8 was adopted as State planning policy in 1975 and has provided the basis of strategic planning in the Macedon Ranges area since. Its provisions are as essential and relevant to the planning of the Macedon Ranges area today as they were when the policy was introduced.

This statement of planning policy recognises the national and state significance of the Macedon Ranges, in particular, the environmental and landscape significance of the Macedon Ranges and its surrounds, and sets out a strategic planning policy context to ensure the values of the area are protected and enhanced. The statement of planning policy recognises the need for planning to comprehensively address these main themes: flora and fauna values; landscape protection; nature conservation; vegetation values; fire hazard; agriculture; population growth and water resources management.

The statement of planning policy is reflected in Clause 22.01 (Macedon Ranges and surrounds) local planning policy.

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Settlement

The key influences include:

- The natural beauty of the environment and proximity to Melbourne make the Shire increasingly attractive for urban and rural living development, presenting challenges for managing growth.
- The Calder Freeway and the Bendigo train service will influence the rates and location of urban growth.
- Preference for the maintenance of a non urban buffer at the edge of the Melbourne metropolitan area.
- In the southern part of the Shire flight paths to Tullamarine airport must be considered.
- The Calder corridor towns of Gisborne and Kyneton will continue to be the major population and employment centres within the municipality. Approximately 37% of the population resides within these towns and this is expected to increase to 42% by 2036.
- There are significant environmental constraints to urban growth in Woodend, Macedon and Mount Macedon.
- The population in the rural balance, being land not within a residential or Rural Living Zone, is approximately 12% (2006) of the population of the municipality. Ongoing demand for rural residential development can produce adverse effects and must be carefully managed.

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Environment and Landscape Values

The key influences include:

- The undulating topography, geological and geomorphological features and private and public forested and grassed areas contribute to the significant landscapes within the municipality.
- The presence of open potable water catchments in the Shire highlights the need for land use and development planning to address the important regional issue of maintenance of and improvement to water quality and quantity.
- Mount Macedon Regional Park, Black Forest, Cobaw Forest, Wombat Forest and bushland areas in the south of the Shire are highly significant natural resources with environmental (flora, fauna and habitat) values.

- Heritage buildings and streetscapes, particularly in Kyneton, Gisborne, Woodend, Romsey, Lancefield, Mount Macedon and Malmsbury contribute to the amenity and character of urban areas.
- Aboriginal cultural heritage is highly prevalent within the Shire creating the challenge and opportunity to respect and celebrate this heritage.

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Environmental Risk

The key influences include:

- Inappropriate subdivision and development of rural land, particularly native vegetation removal and development for rural living purposes, is the major cause of fragmentation and loss of landscape values.
- Much of the Shire is at risk from wildfire and has a history of severe bushfires. Land use and development planning in the Shire must minimise the level of fire risk and level of development in areas of fire risk, and recognise the potential conflict between protecting the natural environment and providing for appropriate fire protection measures.
- The incidence of pest plants and animals reduces agricultural productivity, competes with native flora and fauna, degrades landscapes and reduces the value of areas for recreation and tourism.

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Built Environment and Heritage

The key influences include:

- Consideration of the relationship between infrastructure provision and development needs.
- Significant and highly valued characteristics of each township area.
- There are significant heritage assets and buildings within the Shire. The community aspiration is that a village atmosphere within the Shire is retained and that individual settlements maintain their distinctive identity.
- Increasing development will place added pressure on the Shires heritage buildings and streetscapes.

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Housing

The key influences include:

- Requirement for enhanced housing diversity, affordability and proximity to town centres.
- Respect for landscape values, such that housing is submissive to the environment
- Sustainable development encompassing water and energy use minimisation, as well as proximity to existing infrastructure and services.
- Small household size (one or two people) is a large and growing proportion of all households in the Shire. Nearly half the Shire's 13,596 households were small households at the 2006 Census and this is expected to rise in the future as the population ages, people delay childbirth, form partnerships later in life, or divorce.

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Economic Development

The key influences include:

- Melbourne, and to a lesser extent Bendigo, provide significant employment opportunities to residents within the Shire.

- While retail trade is the largest employer by industry sector, work trips to Melbourne by residents in the south of the Shire are often combined with shopping which reduces overall local shopping demand. There is potential to reduce escape expenditure with further retail development, particularly for higher order goods.
- Local industrial areas are an important source of employment in some towns.
- There is a need to create local employment opportunities and reduce the reliance on commuting.
- Tourism is a growing industry in the Shire and will continue to provide employment opportunities. Tourism development draws on many aspects of the Shire including recreation, leisure activities, environment, wineries, heritage and landscape features.
- Agricultural land is an economically valuable resource that needs to be protected.

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Transport

The key influences include:

- Current inter and intra town public transport linkages are generally poor, other than on the Bendigo railway line.
- Population growth in the towns of the Calder corridor has been impacted by improvements to the Calder Freeway and the improvements to the Bendigo train service.

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Community Development and Infrastructure

The key influences include:

- By 2026 it is expected that the number of people over 64 in the Shire's population will more than double. Growth is particularly strong in the 70 years and over age group with many of these currently living in rural parts of the Shire.
- The provision of reticulated town water, gas and sewerage will provide increased opportunities for urban development.
- Population growth increases demand for infrastructure and services that require funding. The provision of services for new development should be assisted by Development Contributions.
- In the rural areas, early settlement and farming practices represent significant cultural associations and relationships for the community.
- Open space, recreation, leisure facilities, provision of aged care and youth services and a broad variety of housing are important to improving the health and wellbeing of the community.