



Macedon Ranges Localised Planning
Statement consultation draft

Consultation findings report

August 2018



Hyperlinks

This statement contains references to other documents, including legislation. If you are reading this statement on a screen, click on the underlined, purple words to hyperlink to the relevant document.

Acknowledgement

The Victorian Government proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their continuing connection to Country. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

DELWP would like to acknowledge and thank all groups and individuals who gave their time to review and comment on the *Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement Consultation Draft*.

Note

Quotations have been edited for grammar and syntax, but their meaning is unchanged.

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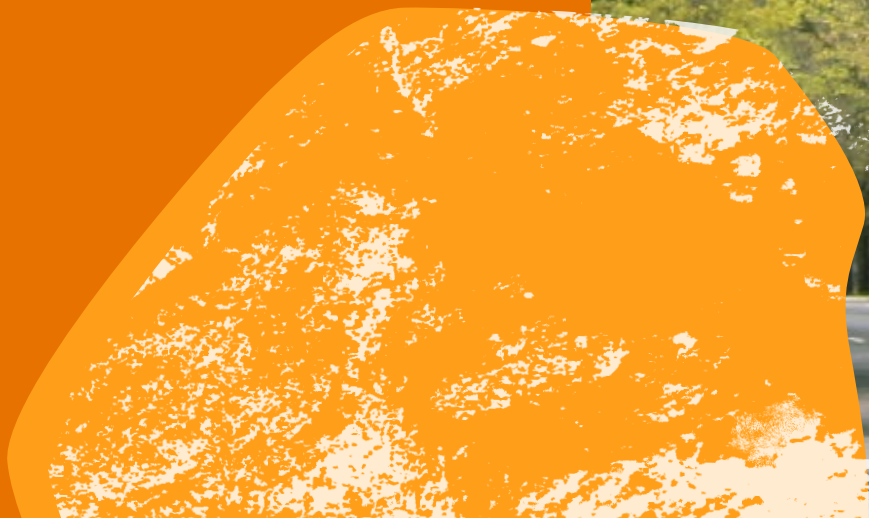
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Summary





Summary

About the localised planning statement

The Macedon Ranges region's environmental and cultural values and its proximity to Melbourne and Bendigo make it a popular place for Victorians to live, work and visit. The region has long been recognised for its natural beauty and high-quality natural landscapes.

The Victorian Government, delivering its election commitment to protect the iconic and historic Macedon Ranges region from inappropriate development, released the *Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement Consultation Draft* (the 'draft LPS') in December 2017 for community consultation. This report summarises the feedback received, which will help the government determine policies and actions to protect and enhance the significant values of the Macedon Ranges region for current and future generations.

The draft LPS results from the Minister for Planning appointing the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee in December 2015 to provide independent advice 'on an appropriate policy to achieve protection of the significant values, attributes and character of the Macedon Ranges and support changes to the legislative framework'. In February 2017, the Minister accepted all the committee's recommendations and announced:

- new legislation – the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Bill 2017* — to enshrine the significance of values and provide state-level protection against inappropriate development and other threats in declared distinctive areas and landscapes (with the Macedon Ranges region the first area it will protect)
- a new localised planning statement (LPS), to strengthen the importance of the Macedon

Ranges region in state planning policy by having a clear vision and settlement structure for the Macedon Ranges Shire including long-term settlement boundaries for townships

- local planning controls, to give statutory effect to the LPS, including potential changes to the Vegetation Protection and Significant Landscape overlays.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is leading delivery of these reforms in partnership with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the recognised Traditional Owner groups of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri people and the Victorian Planning Authority.

The consultation process

The whole of the Victorian community including people of the Macedon Ranges were invited to provide their views on the development of the Localised Planning Statement.

The consultation process comprised:

- receipt of 207 written submissions, mostly from Macedon Ranges residents
- an online survey, which 134 people completed
- four community drop-in sessions, which 146 people registered to attend.

The consultation period ran for almost 12 weeks, from 15 December 2017 to the week of 5 March 2018.

The process gathered feedback on key elements of the draft LPS: the vision, objectives and strategies under each of nine policy domains, and the framework plan (including proposed settlement boundaries) to implement the vision.



Table 1 shows the main response statistics, which are explained in the report.

Table 1: Response statistics at a glance

Item	All written comments, % of total comments ¹	Drop-in session participants, % of total votes ²	Online survey submitters, rating (1 [not supportive] – 5 [fully supportive]) ³	
Vision			3.3	
Policy domain			Objectives	Strategies
Aboriginal cultural heritage	4%	6%	3.8	3.1
Agriculture and rural land	9%	10%	3.8	3.1
Biodiversity and environmental values	9%	8%	3.7	2.9
European cultural heritage	6%	6%	3.9	3.3
Landscape	8%	14%	4.0	3.0
Settlements	35%	28%	3.5	2.7
Tourism and recreation	8%	6%	4.1	3.5
Transport and infrastructure	12%	6%	4.1	3.5
Water catchments and supply	6%	18%	4.1	3.4
Other issues	3%	-	-	-
All domains			3.9	3.1

Notes

1. This is all comments made about all policy domains in written submissions, in written responses — post-it notes placed against the various domains — from the drop-in sessions and by online survey respondents. See Figure 1 and its accompanying text for more information.
2. See Figure 5 and its accompanying text for more information.
3. See Figures 6 and 7 and their accompanying text for more information.

What people told us

- The new legislation — the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Bill 2017* — is welcome: it will better protect the significant values of the Macedon Ranges.
- A vision statement is an essential foundation for the draft LPS: such a statement articulates what a well-protected Macedon Ranges region will be like. However, the draft vision needs to be stronger and tailored to the region's unique values, and it needs to achieve a balance between environmental and human elements.
- The landscape of the Macedon Ranges region is unique in its natural beauty and historic features, and it must be preserved and enhanced for current and future generations. A holistic approach must be taken that recognises that settlements, biodiversity and heritage are interconnected, and which preserves local, significant values alongside state-significant values.
- Preserving the region's biodiversity, biolinks and environmental values must be a high priority. Better biodiversity linkages and open space connections between developments and townships are needed. It would be good to educate property owners and occupiers about how best to protect and enhance native bushland and significant environmental assets.
- The region's water-supply catchments, water sources and waterways above and below ground, provide drinking water for urban and rural households and businesses, water for the environment and other benefits for Victorians. We must protect these unique catchments and sources, particularly from the impacts of severe weather events resulting from climate change.
- The knowledge and wisdom of Traditional Owner groups is invaluable for protecting and enhancing the region's values. More should be known about the Aboriginal culture and history of the area, and it should be more strongly represented in the draft LPS.
- More needs to be done to protect the region's historic buildings and streetscapes, and to ensure new developments are sympathetic with the region's character. The contributions of non-Europeans to the region must also be acknowledged, respected and recognised.
- It is important to have long-term settlement boundaries to plan and manage the sustainable growth of Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey, Riddells Creek, Lancefield and Woodend, but views differ about the location of the boundaries. People say growth of some townships would destroy their rural setting and character, which is essential for attracting the tourists and visitors on which their economies rely. Others want their townships to grow so there is sufficient, affordable housing for future generations.
- The region's natural beauty, rural landscapes, cultural heritage, events and accessibility to Melbourne and Bendigo make it a major drawcard for tourists. A better balance is needed between tourism, environmental protection, cultural heritage values, population growth and employment opportunities. Some want tourist numbers to be limited to better protect the environment. Others want tourism opportunities in the region to be encouraged and for tourism to grow as much as possible.
- There must be more, safe, active transport — walking and cycling — options in and around towns, better transport links between towns, less car traffic and better public transport.
- We should protect and enhance locally significant features as well as state-significant features.
- More strategies are needed to enable the region to be at the forefront of adapting to climate change, rather than just to mitigate it.
- The draft LPS' language must support decision-making: the language of the strategies is too vague and open to interpretation. Some want the policy statement to be drafted like Statement of planning policy No.8: Macedon Ranges and surrounds 1975, known as SPP8.
- More information is needed about how the draft LPS will be implemented and how it delivers on the recommendations of the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee.

What we intend to do

DELWP and its partners have listened carefully to what people said about the draft LPS, and we want to ensure the new policy statement provides a clear direction for future protect and enhance the Macedon Ranges region's uniqueness. This is what we intend to do.

- Re-define the settlement boundary for Woodend so it aligns with the current township boundary, rather than with the boundaries of the investigation areas in the draft LPS. This will ensure the highly valued rural character of Woodend is protected from inappropriate development.
- Explain the detailed planning assessment required for investigation areas and the rigorous planning steps required to change a settlement boundary.
- Ensure the proposed settlement boundaries for Kyneton, Riddells Creek and Lancefield adequately reflect the detailed, strategic planning undertaken.
- Ensure the planning required to set settlement boundaries for Gisborne and Romsey is prioritised.
- Strengthen the vision statement by making stronger links between it and the statement of state significance and the objectives and strategies of each policy domain, and tailor the vision statement to the region's unique values.
- Give higher priority to protecting the region's landscapes, biodiversity, environmental values and cultural heritage, and to conserving the region's catchments and waterways.
- Promote the region as a living organism, recognising the interconnections between different policy domains.
- More clearly recognise the importance of agriculture and of approaches that enable agriculture to thrive in an ecologically sensitive and sustainable way.
- Better address climate change and environmental risks (such as bushfire and flooding) and how to make communities more resilient.
- Tighten up the wording of the statement, to provide better guidance for decision-making.
- Revise the draft LPS as a statement of planning policy under the amended *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.



Introduction





Introduction

Purpose of this report

This report summarises the feedback received on the *Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement Consultation Draft* (the 'draft LPS') the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) released in December 2017. It includes information about the extent of community and key stakeholder support for the draft LPS, opportunities to improve it and issues to consider when implementing it. The quotes featured throughout this report were obtained during the consultation process from residents, local business owners, organisations and community groups. The feedback will help the government determine the right policies and actions to protect and enhance the significant values of the Macedon Ranges region for current and future generations.

Context

The Victorian Government is delivering on its promise to protect the iconic and historic Macedon Ranges region from inappropriate development.

The Macedon Ranges region's environmental and cultural values and its proximity to Melbourne and Bendigo make it a popular place for Victorians to live, work and visit. The region has long been recognised for its natural beauty and high-quality natural landscapes (such as the Macedon Regional Park, Hanging Rock, Cobaw Ranges, Wombat State Forest and historic townships), and for its significant Aboriginal and post-contact cultural heritage.

As a peri-urban area of both Melbourne and Bendigo, with declared growth areas to its immediate south, the Macedon Ranges region faces pressures from population growth and urban expansion. These pressures could potentially

threaten the region's significant values. Climate change could also potentially increase the risk of fire and flood in the region.

To ensure the region's long-term sustainability, the Minister for Planning appointed the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee in 2015 to provide independent advice 'on an appropriate policy to achieve protection of the significant values, attributes and character of the Macedon Ranges and support changes to the legislative framework'.

In 2016, the advisory committee held a public consultation process, including public hearings, based on an issues paper. The committee also considered Victoria's existing legislative and policy frameworks. In its final report, the committee concluded that 'the Macedon Ranges is a significant area worthy of specific protection, due to its appeal to settlers and visitors, and the finite nature of the very aspects which create its appeal. A combination of policy and legislative mechanisms is warranted to provide the appropriate protection of these significant values and attributes'.

In February 2017, the Minister for Planning accepted all the advisory committee's recommendations and committed to reforms to protect the significant values, attributes and character of the Macedon Ranges region for current and future generations. These reforms include:

- a new localised planning statement (LPS), to strengthen the importance of the Macedon Ranges region in state planning policy by having a clear vision and settlement structure for the Macedon Ranges Shire including long-term settlement boundaries for townships
- new legislation to enshrine the significance values of the Macedon Ranges region in Victorian law

- local planning controls to give statutory effect to the LPS, including potential changes to the Vegetation Protection and Significant Landscape overlays.

DELWP is leading delivery of these reforms in partnership with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the recognised Traditional Owner groups of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri people and the Victorian Planning Authority. Other relevant state agencies and authorities are also involved.

In December 2017, the Minister for Planning introduced landmark legislation – the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Bill 2017* — into the Victorian Parliament. The Bill was passed by Parliament in May 2018 and the amended Act will provide state-level protection against inappropriate development in declared distinctive areas and landscapes. The Macedon Ranges region will be the first area the amended Act will protect.

In December 2017, the draft LPS was also released for public feedback. The draft LPS builds on the advisory committee's preferred version of a LPS, based on the public consultation process in 2016.

Figure 1 shows the timeline for the Macedon Ranges LPS/Statement of Planning Policy process.

Figure 1: Macedon Ranges LPS timeline



How we consulted





How we consulted

Consultation purpose

The consultation process sought to:

- hear the views of Macedon Ranges residents, businesses and interest groups, Traditional Owner groups and the wider Victorian community about the draft LPS, to ensure the final statement reflects the community's vision for the region's future
- demonstrate that the advisory committee's findings and recommendations were considered when the draft LPS was prepared
- inform people that the government is delivering its election commitment to protect the Macedon Ranges from inappropriate development
- provide people with engagement opportunities that are easy to access, understand and take part in

- keep people updated about the project's progress and opportunities for engagement, with communications that are consistent, accurate and accessible
- encourage people to make a submission and facilitate them to do so.

Consultation approach

The consultation process built on previous consultations by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and the advisory committee about planning for the future of the shire. The project team was guided by the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2's) Public Participation Spectrum when deciding the most suitable means for engaging with local communities and other stakeholders. Table 2 shows the spectrum.

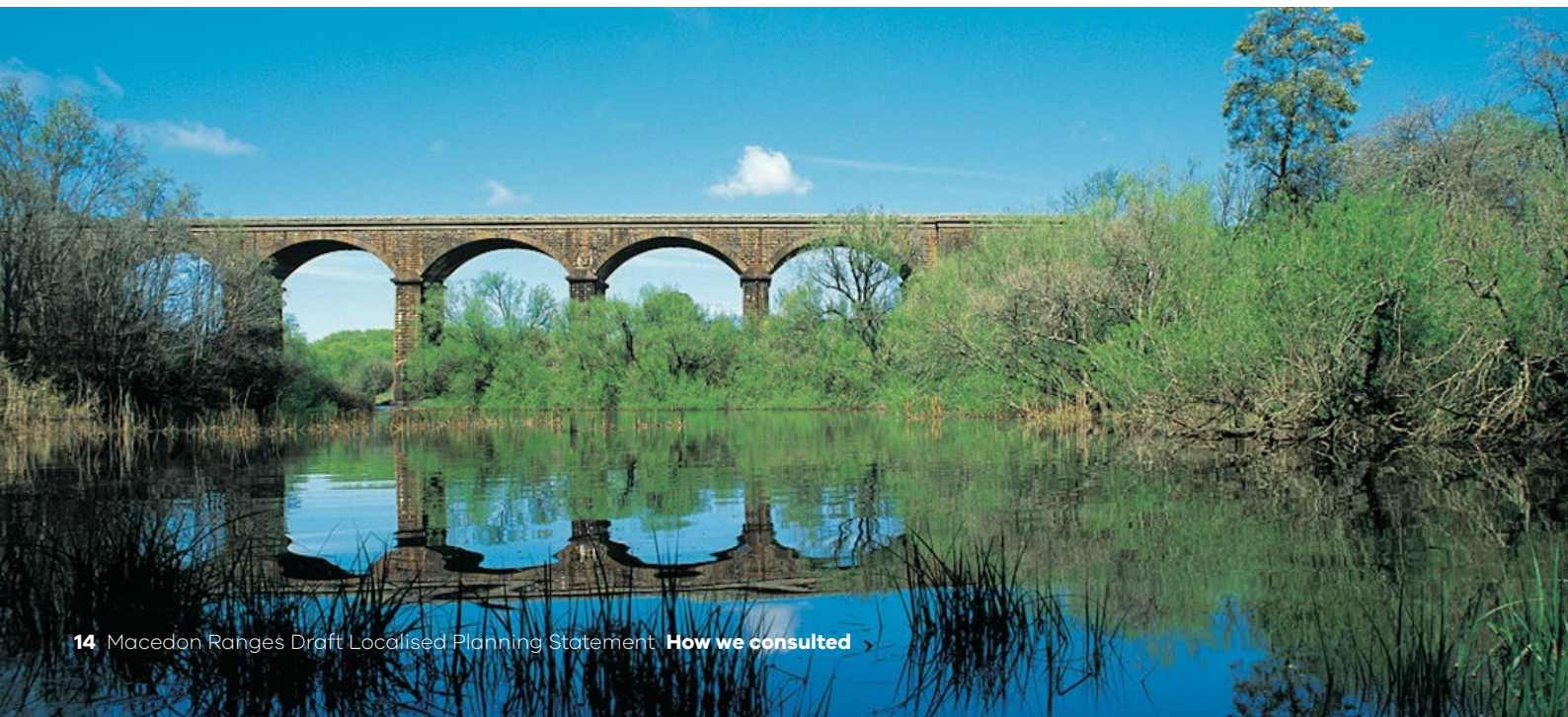


Table 2: IAP2's public participation spectrum

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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The process comprised an invitation to prepare a written submission in response to the draft LPS, an online survey, community drop-in sessions and meetings with key people and organisations.

The project's page on the Victorian Government's Engage Victoria website provided people with an online opportunity to give feedback about the draft LPS. Submitters visited the project page to view or download the draft LPS and a summary brochure and to read frequently asked questions with answers about the draft LPS and the consultation process.

To reach a broad range of people and encourage them to provide feedback about the draft LPS, the consultation process and how to provide feedback was explained through the DELWP website, the department's Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages, the Planning website, the Macedon Ranges Shire Council website, advertising in the *Sunbury & Macedon Ranges Star Weekly* and *Sunbury/ Macedon Ranges Leader* newspapers and by email and mail. People who attended the Macedon

Ranges Community Forum with the Hon. Richard Wynne, Minister for Planning in February 2017 and expressed interest were posted a copy of the summary brochure. DEWLP also wrote to all land owners and occupiers potentially affected by the proposed settlement boundaries.

The consultation process started on 15 December 2017 with the release of the draft LPS, which called for feedback about the proposed:

- vision statement for the region
- planning policies for protecting and enhancing the region's state-significant features, based around nine policy domains
- long-term settlement boundaries for Kyneton, Lancefield, Riddells Creek and Woodend.

The feedback period was originally set to end on 19 February 2018, and it was extended to the week of 5 March 2018 in response to the great community interest: in all, to almost 12 weeks.

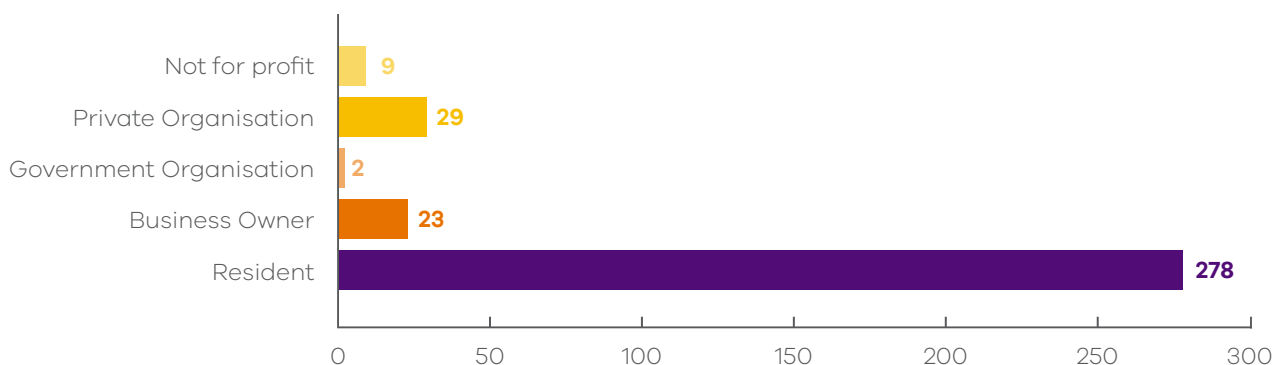
Written submissions

Written submissions from the public were an important contribution to the consultation process and the project team actively encouraged them. The DELWP website had information about how to make a submission, and this information

was also provided at the community drop-in sessions. Submitters were encouraged to upload their submissions to the Engage Victoria project webpage, or to email or post them.

We received 207 written submissions.

Figure 2: Submissions by type of submitter (online survey and written submissions)



Online survey

The Engage Victoria project webpage included a survey in which people were asked to rate on a scale from one star to five (one being not supportive and five being fully supportive) their support for the proposed vision statement and objectives and strategies for each of the nine policy domains, and their view about the importance of introducing long-term settlement boundaries for Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey, Riddells Creek, Lancefield and Woodend. They were also invited to make comments about any of the topics they had rated or to make any further comments. The online feedback page is in Appendix A.

In all, 134 people completed the online survey.

Community drop-in sessions

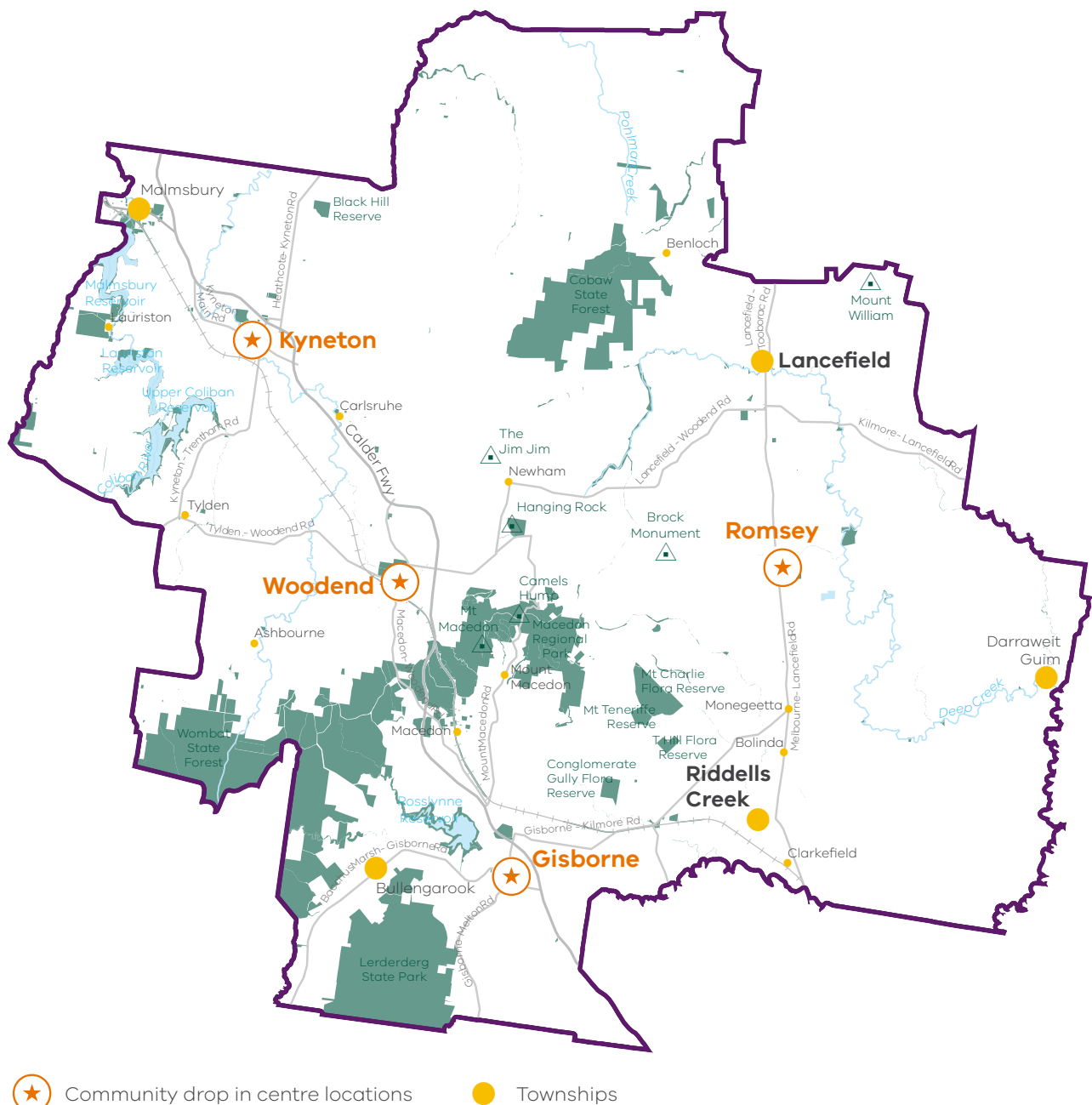
From 30 January to 8 February 2018, DELWP held four community drop-in sessions in the Macedon Ranges Shire. Table 3 shows where they were, the session date and the number of people registered. It shows that the Woodend session had the highest number of people registered and that 146 people registered to attend a community drop-in session.

Table 3: Number of people registered at community drop-in sessions

Community drop-in session	Session date and time	Number of people registered
Kyneton Mechanic Institute, 81 Mollison Street, Kyneton	Tuesday 30 January 2018, 3.00 pm – 7.30 pm	33
Gisborne Community Centre, 8a Hamilton Street, Gisborne	Tuesday 1 February 2018, 3.00 pm – 7.30 pm	19
Woodend Community Centre, cnr Forest and High streets, Woodend	Tuesday 6 February 2018, 4.00 pm – 7.30 pm	56
Romsey Community Centre, 96–100 Main Street, Romsey	Thursday 8 February 2018, 3.00pm – 7.30pm	38
Total		146

Figure 3 shows the locations of the four community drop-in sessions.

Figure 3: Community drop-in session locations



At the community drop-in sessions, representatives of DELWP, the Victorian Planning Authority and the Macedon Ranges Shire Council explained the draft LPS to the community face-to-face and addressed their questions, to help prepare them to make a submission. Attendees also reviewed large-print versions of maps, and they could comment on the

proposed vision and objectives by using post-it notes, and they could indicate the three domains that were most important to them. The sessions were promoted through regional and metropolitan newspapers and through local government channels.

What people told us





What people told us

What people commented on

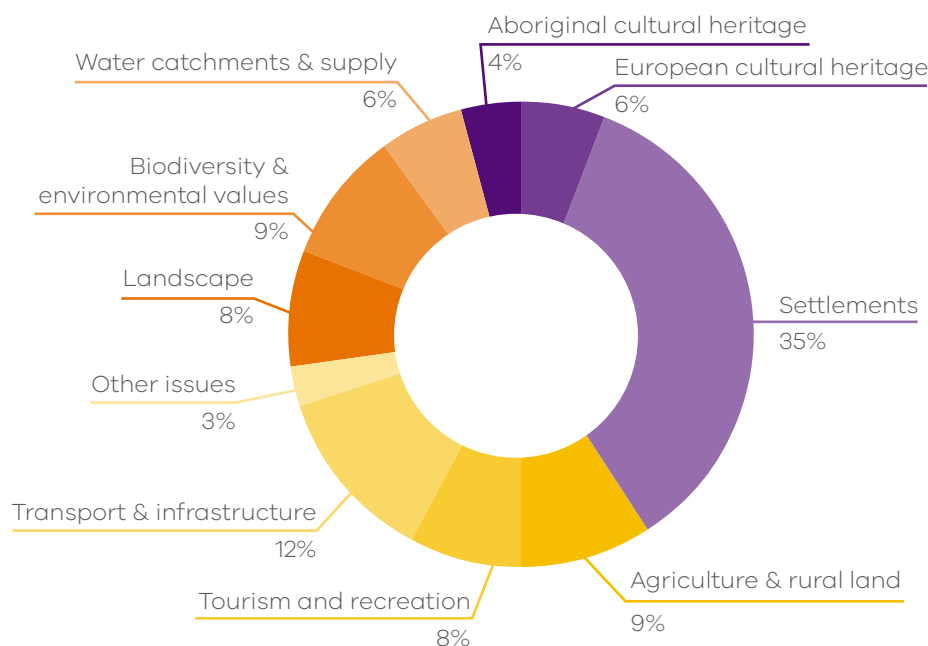
The consultation process gathered feedback about the proposed:

- vision statement for the region
- planning policies based around nine policy domains: Landscape, Biodiversity and environmental values, Water catchments and supply, Aboriginal cultural heritage, European cultural heritage, Settlements, Agriculture and rural land, Tourism and recreation and Transport infrastructure

- long-term settlement boundaries for Kyneton, Woodend, Riddells Creek and Lancefield.

Figure 4 shows the proportion of all written comments made about all policy domains. Comments were made in written submissions, in written comments — post-it notes placed against the various domains on a large display board — by community drop-in session attendees and by online survey respondents. Of the top five policy domains, it shows that 35% of comments were about Settlements, 12% about Transport and infrastructure, 9% about Biodiversity and environmental values, 9% about Agriculture and rural land and 8% about Landscape.

Figure 4: Percentage of all comments, by policy domain





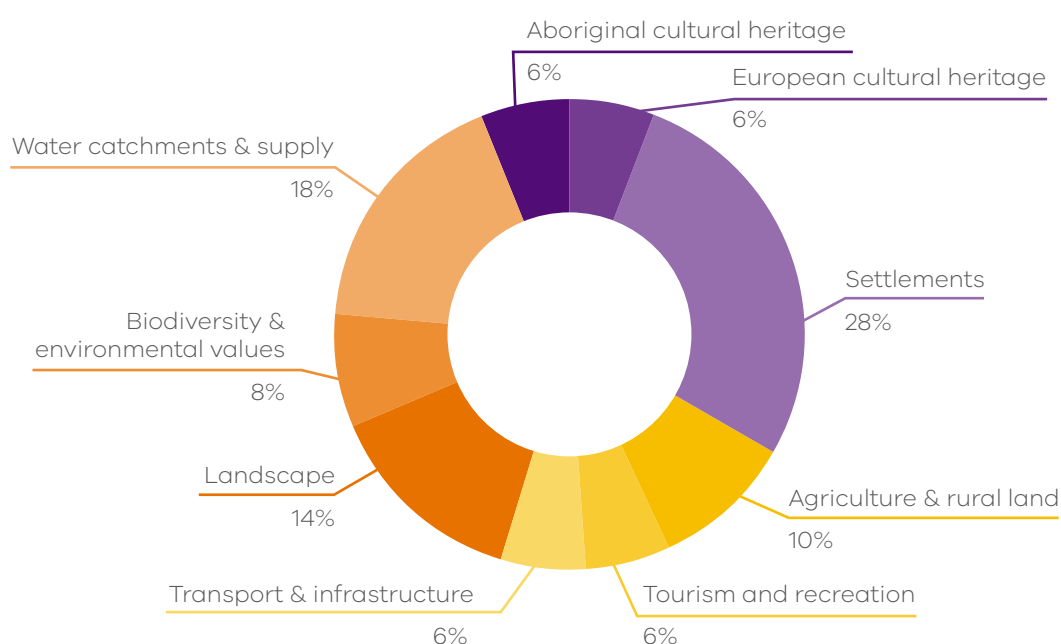
Written submissions

Of the 207 written submissions, most addressed the Settlement domain, which included maps showing proposed long-term settlement boundaries for Kyneton, Riddells Creek, Lancefield and Woodend and indicated future settlement boundaries for Gisborne and Romsey.

Community drop-in session participants

Community drop-in session participants were asked to vote for the three policy domains that were the most important to them, each vote being equal. As with those who made written submissions, the Settlement policy domain was voted the most important. Figure 5 shows that Settlements received 28% of the total votes cast, Water catchments and supply 12%, Landscape 14%, Agriculture and rural land 10% and Biodiversity and environmental values 8%.

Figure 5: Percentages of votes by community drop-in session participants, by policy domain





Online survey respondents

The survey required respondents to rate various proposals on a scale from one star to five, one being not supportive and five being fully supportive.

Respondents rated the vision statement 3.3 stars on average, indicating there was general support for the statement and that it could be improved.

Online survey respondents generally supported the intent of the policy domains, and they want improvements — more so to the strategies than to the objectives.

Respondents rated the objectives and strategies of all policy domains greater than 2.5 out of 5 on average. However, respondents overall gave greater support to the objectives, which averaged 3.9, than to the strategies, which averaged 3.1.

Figure 6 shows that the five policy domains the objectives of which were most supported were Tourism and recreation, Water catchments and supply and Transport and infrastructure, each of which were rated 4.1 on average; Landscape, rated 4.0; and European culture heritage, rated 3.9.

Figure 6: Average level of support for objectives, by survey respondents, by policy domain

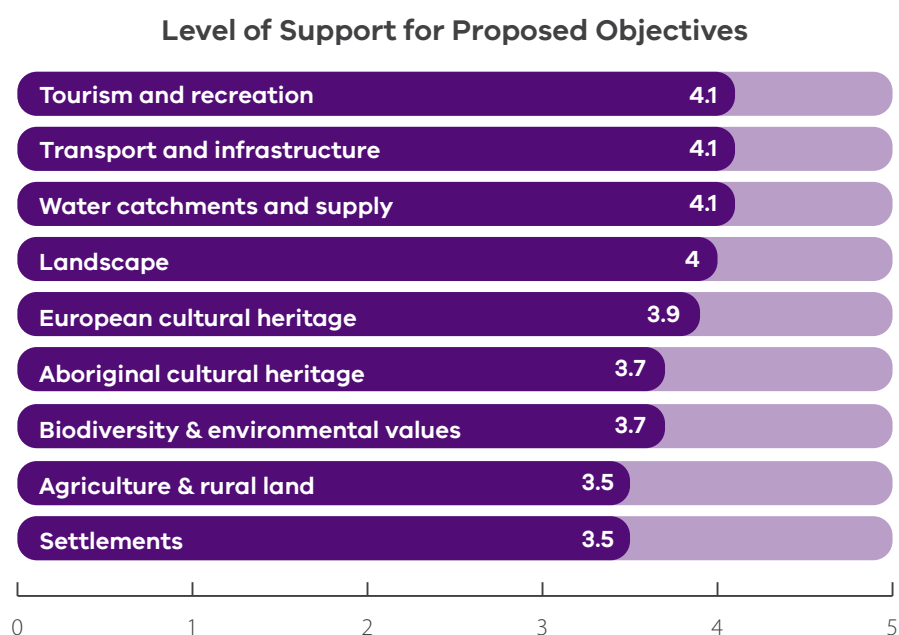
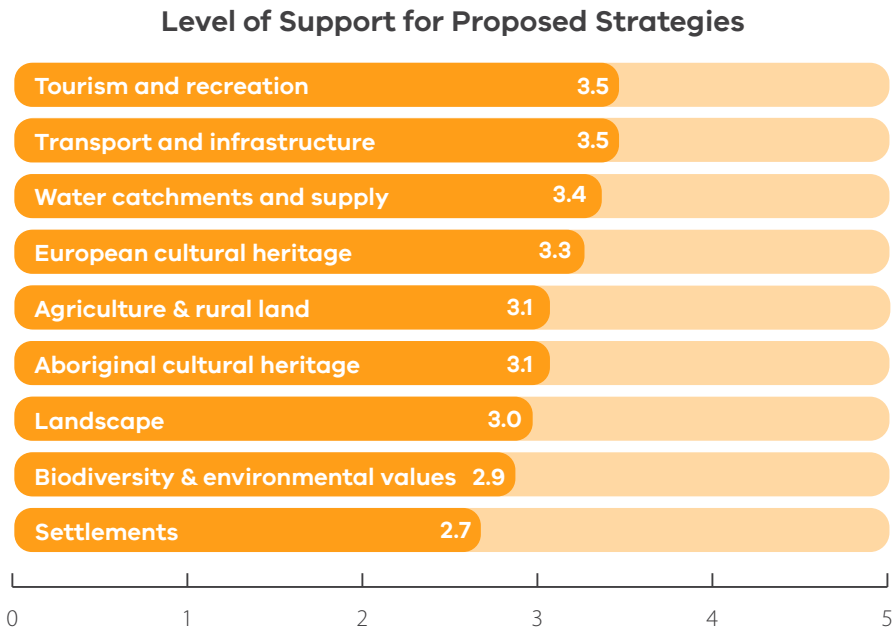




Figure 7 shows the top six policy domains the strategies of which were most supported were Tourism and recreation and Transport and infrastructure, each of which rated 3.5 on average; Water catchments and supply, rated 3.4; European cultural heritage, rated 3.3; and Aboriginal cultural heritage and Agriculture and rural land, each rated 3.1.

Figure 7: Average level of support for strategies, by survey respondents, by policy domain



Vision statement

What the consultation draft said

This statement sets a long-term vision for the iconic Macedon Ranges region policy area that governments and communities can work together to achieve.

The vision is that:

- future generations will continue to enjoy the outstanding natural beauty and views of the policy area's native vegetation, agricultural areas, hills and mountains, escarpments, ridgelines and riparian areas
- native plants and animals will flourish, with expanded areas for protecting biodiversity
- careful management of water catchments will secure the water supply for the benefit of local and regional communities
- the area's Aboriginal cultural heritage will be well-understood and celebrated, and the continuing contribution of Traditional Owners and custodians will be acknowledged
- the policy area's legacy of heritage architecture and its long-established public and private gardens will be conserved and enhanced
- development will be sustainably managed within township and settlement boundaries with rural landscapes maintained between township settlements and metropolitan Melbourne
- agriculture will continue to contribute to the policy area's economic vitality, helping to sustain its valued rural character and working landscapes
- the policy area's well-managed parks and reserves and natural and cultural treasures will provide active and passive recreation experiences for all to enjoy, improving the health and wellbeing of visitors and local communities
- a strong and sustainable visitor economy will provide locals and visitors with an increased variety of attractions and experiences to discover
- transport, community and essential services infrastructure will support liveable, well-connected rural communities that are more resilient to natural hazards and the effects of climate change.

Level of support



Survey respondents were reasonably supportive of the draft vision statement, rating it 3.3 out of 5 on average. However, they indicated there was room for improvement.

What you told us

A vision is an essential foundation for good policy. It articulates what a well-protected Macedon Ranges region will be like.

Most submitters saw the vision statement as an important section of the policy statement, articulating what a well-protected Macedon Ranges region will be like in the future. Submitters saw the statement as being an essential foundation for good policy.

'A vision statement is required so the opportunities presented by the Macedon Ranges can be understood at every level of government and by the private sector. So that people can be clear and confident about how they can best invest their money and time in businesses, infrastructure and services that can ensure a future for the Macedon Ranges as a place of state significance and a place that will continue to delight future generations and that will, at the same time, protect its environmental attributes.'

Submitters would prefer the vision statement to be stronger and to better encapsulate the draft LPS's objectives and strategies. They also want to see the vision as a representation of what the community sees as the future of the Macedon Ranges region, and they want it tailored to the region's unique values. Many said the statement was too generic and could apply equally to other areas in Victoria. Others said it was too long and wordy.

“‘Sustainably managed’ is vague. It needs to be defined.’

'What purports to be a “vision” is more a series of platitudes or at best “principles” that could be applied equally to, say, the Grampians or Kinglake.'

'Specific mention should be made of renewable energy, public transport, compact walkable developments and

strong biodiversity conservation zoning, rather than using the motherhood and meaningless “sustainable development” term. Waterway (i.e. streams, rivers and wetlands) health rather than / in addition to water assets should be emphasised.'

Many submitters said the vision needed to incorporate environmental and human elements (such as climate change, safety and liveability). Others said it needed to balance environmental protection and growth.

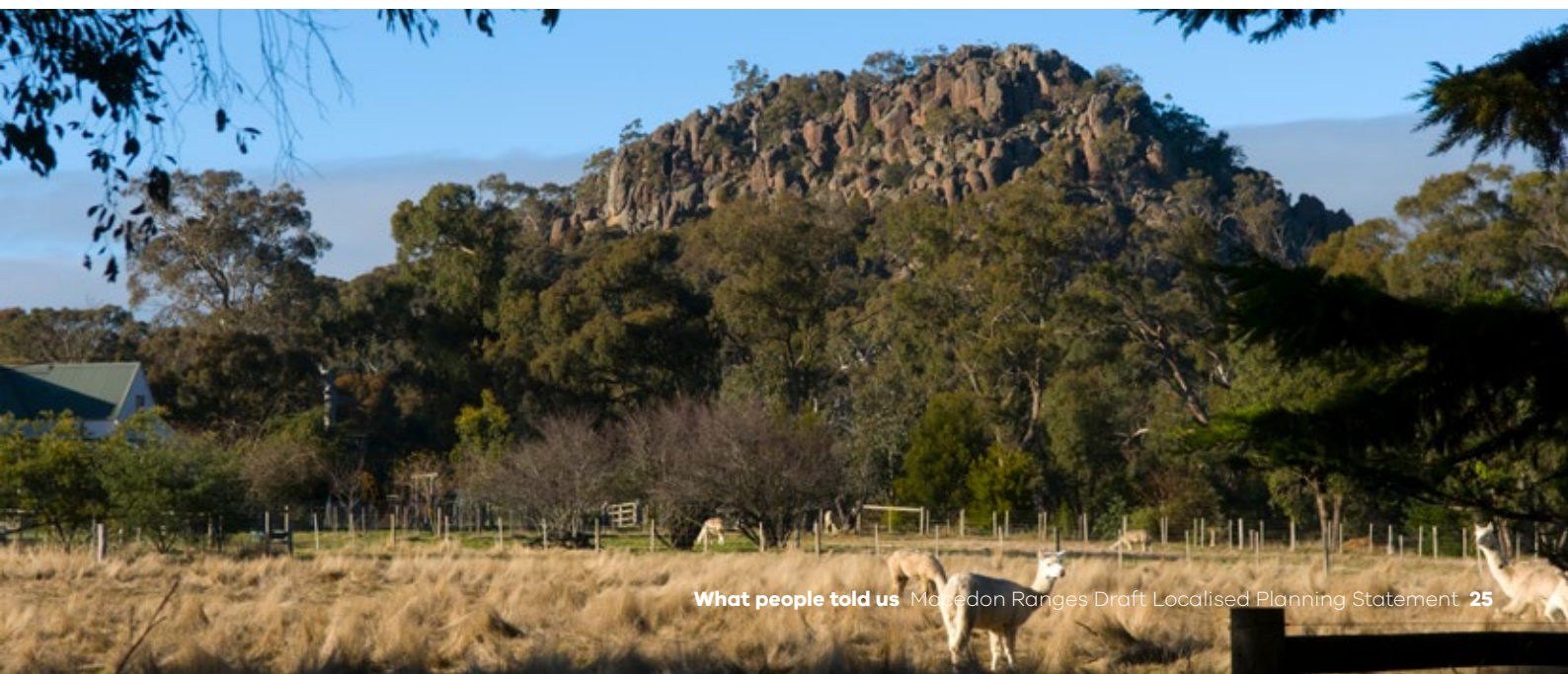
'Need to recognise the impacts of climate change in the strategies.'

'Global climate change will place huge pressure on natural resources such as groundwater, vegetation and wildlife resources in the future.'

'The vision statement is not of a wide spectrum. It portrays an environmental protection theme yet population growth is a dominating factor that needs to be addressed concurrently to environmental issues.'

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Tailor it to reflect the Macedon Ranges' unique values.
- Make it shorter and less-wordy.
- Incorporate environmental and human elements (such as climate change, safety and liveability).





Landscape

What the consultation draft said

Objective 1:

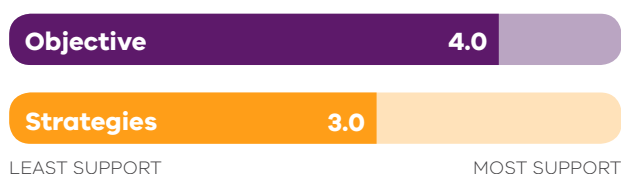
To ensure the policy area's landscape features are conserved and enhanced.

Strategies

- Manage land use, development and infrastructure to ensure that landscapes, views and vantage points of state significance are conserved and enhanced.
- Encourage revegetation that contributes to state-significant landscapes including on escarpments and ridgelines and along riparian areas.

- Manage development around state-significant landscapes of visual, scientific or education value, including along ridgelines and at vantage points.
- Recognise, manage and enhance state-significant areas and features between settlements.

Level of support



Survey respondents were quite-supportive of the draft objective, rating it 4 out of 5. It gained the second-highest level of support for an objective: objectives for two policy domains rated 4.1.

Survey respondents were less-supportive of the draft strategies than they were of the objective. They rated the draft strategies 3 out of 5 on average: that is, more than half the respondents were satisfied. However, they were less-supportive of the landscape strategies than they were of the draft strategies of all policy domains in total, which rated 3.1 on average. Also, the level of support for the strategies for this policy domain was the third-lowest: the Settlements strategies rated 2.7 and the Biodiversity and environmental values strategies 2.9.

What you told us

The landscape of the Macedon Ranges region is unique in its natural beauty, and it must be preserved and enhanced for current and future generations.

Submitters were passionate about safeguarding the natural and historic landscape of the Macedon Ranges region. Many attributed the uniqueness of the Macedon Ranges region to its natural landscape beauty, and they want to preserve and enhance it for future generations. They saw protecting the environment as the number-one priority, with landscape, biodiversity and water catchment values included in this.

'(We should) not only talk about protecting views of significant areas of natural beauty across the Macedon Ranges, but about protecting the areas of natural beauty and significance for generations to come.'

Submitters said the draft LPS adequately described the region's state- and nationally significant features. These include Mt Macedon, Camel's Hump, Hanging Rock, Brock Monument, the Jim Jim and Mt William, as well as the Cobaw State Forest, Wombat State Forest, Macedon Regional Park and Lerderderg State Park. However, many submitters want significant local landscape features to be included, too.

'While "state significance" is important, matters of regional or local significance must not be glossed over.'

Submitters want a holistic approach to landscape considerations, appreciating that settlements, biodiversity and heritage are interconnected features. They said the built environment must be developed in keeping with its surrounding natural environment and historic township characters, and they want built-form features to be referred to in the Landscape policy domain.

'This landscape is multi-dimensional ... a complex and integrated system ... and our planning processes must encompass this complexity.'

'The strategies focus on maintaining views and vantage points. This suggests the intent is to retain a mere facade of natural settings. It is important that even places that are not part of "the view" are maintained and protected from urbanisation. These provide space for animal movements and species growth. It would be a tragedy if the area became a series of camera-worthy views with no underlying wilderness.'

Submitters considered it essential to protect view lines, particularly views going into and out of towns (such as Kyneton): these views give towns their rural feel. Protecting views of the escarpment along the Campaspe River was also considered important.

'Discourage any development that may interrupt views to ridgelines, both within and outside of towns.'

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Describe local features as well as features of state and national significance.
- Take a holistic approach to the Landscape policy domain by incorporating settlements, biodiversity and heritage aspects.
- Include a strategy that requires the built environment to be developed in a way that allows for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and the historic character of towns.
- Include a strategy to protect view lines, particularly views going into and out of townships and other key places, including along major transport corridors.



Biodiversity and environmental values

What the consultation draft said

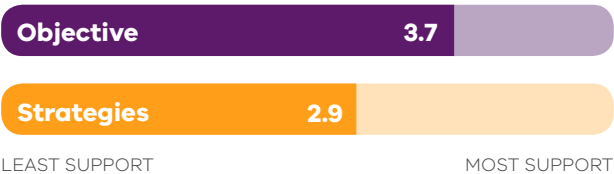
Objective 2:
To ensure the biodiversity, ecological and environmental values of state and/or national significance in the policy area are conserved and enhanced.

Strategies

- Enhance biodiversity and ecological integrity by careful environmental management, planning, procedures and practices.

- Maintain high-value vegetation to conserve and protect biodiversity.
- Encourage revegetation with native vegetation in areas of identified state-significant biodiversity value.
- Establish and improve biodiversity linkages to connect high-value ecological areas.
- Minimise the effects of weeds and pest animals on biodiversity values.

Level of support

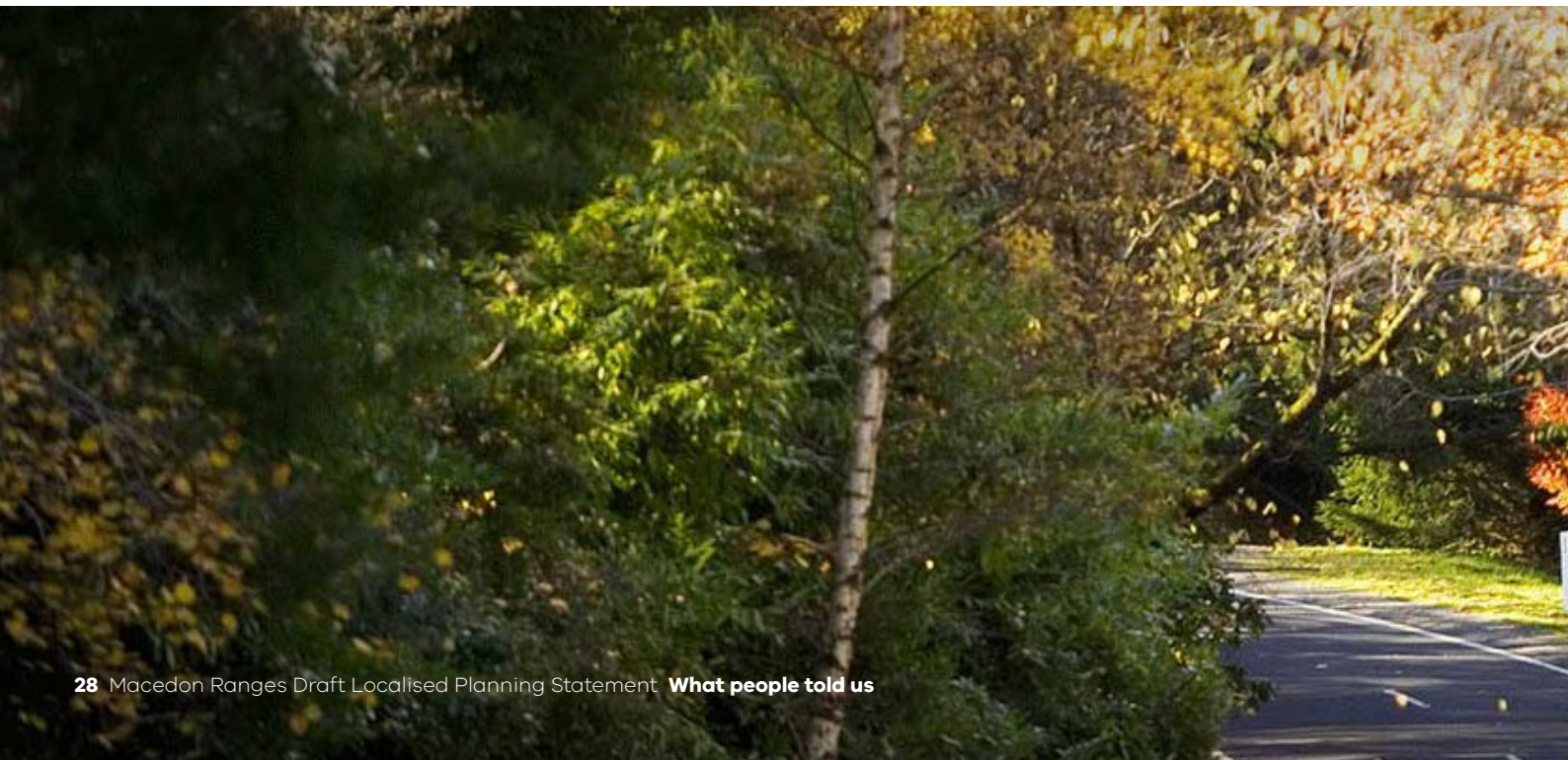


Survey respondents were reasonably supportive of the draft objective, rating it 3.7 out of 5 on average. However, they were less-supportive of the draft strategies, rating them 2.9 out of 5 on average.

What you told us

The region’s biodiversity and environmental values must be preserved for current and future generations.

Many submitters strongly supported preserving the region’s biodiversity and environmental values and saw doing so as a high priority. They said the region contains high-value biodiversity that should be protected. Others said the draft LPS overemphasised environmental values.



'As with landscape protection, strongly worded, specific overlays are needed if planning processes are to be used to halt the loss of indigenous flora and fauna and declining waterway health in the Macedon Ranges, particularly on private land. Current overlays fail to capture much of the high-value biodiversity in the Macedon Ranges and are often given little weight in planning decisions.'

Submitters want to see bio links for flora and fauna created and maintained. They want to see open space connected between developments and towns, so native animals could travel safely and native plants could thrive. They suggested there be greater emphasis on protecting and planting native vegetation than on exotic species.

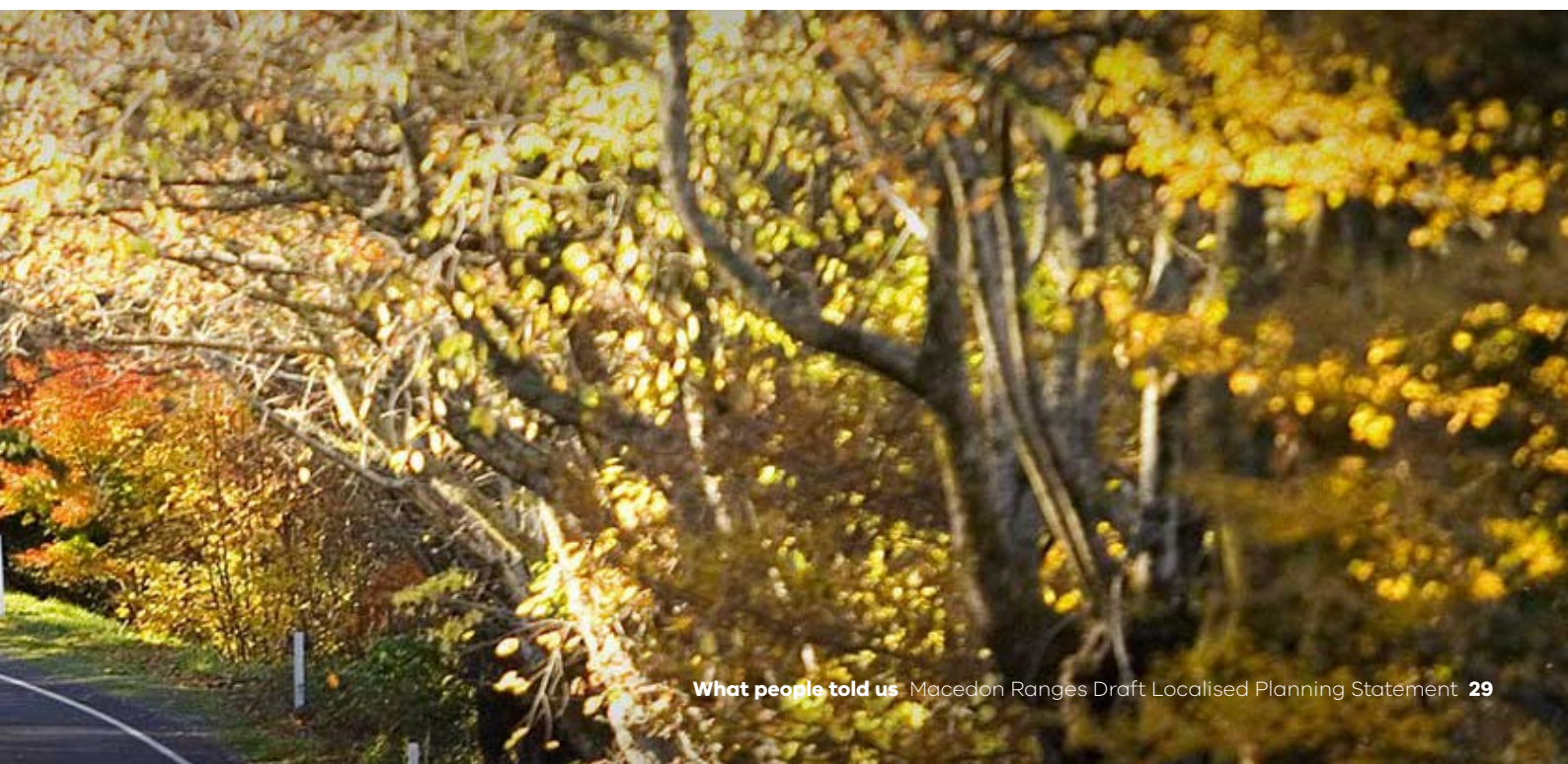
'While it is important to improve biodiversity linkages by connecting high-value ecological areas, fragmentation of these areas should be avoided in the first place. Threatened and endangered species have an increased chance of long-term survival in large areas of undisturbed habitat. Efforts should also be made to avoid the risk of common species becoming threatened species as a result of development.'

Many submitters want greater environmental protection from weeds and introduced pest species. They want people, particularly property owners and occupiers, to be more educated about how to best protect and enhance native bushland and significant environmental assets, and to be encouraged to do so.

'The council should be supported in its efforts to control weeds in the shire, and generally it is obvious that the council does not currently have the resources to fulfil its role in this field.'

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Give the biodiversity, biolinks and environmental values policy domain a higher priority in the LPS.
- Identify high-value biodiversity areas and take action to protect them.
- Include a strategy that encourages biodiversity linkages and open space corridors to be connected within and between towns.
- Put more emphasis on protecting native vegetation than on protecting exotic species.
- Include a strategy to better protect the environment from weeds and introduced pest species.
- Include a strategy to ensure best management practice approaches to enhance native bushland and significant environment assets in strong partnership with Traditional Owners.



Water catchments and supply

What the consultation draft said

Objective 3:

To prioritise the conservation and use of the policy area’s water catchments to ensure a healthy local, regional and state water supply.

Strategies

- Manage the effects of development and land use including dams in Declared Water Supply Catchments.
- Manage Declared Water Supply Catchments to support regional water needs and to increase system-wide capacity to respond to demand.

- Reinforce the role of waterways as biodiversity linkages and as corridors for native plants and animals.
- Ensure water supply and land use planning policies are integrated, to realise efficiencies in regional catchment management and best-practice, water-sensitive urban design.
- Manage development in Declared Water Supply Catchments to protect water quality and natural systems.

Level of support

Objective

4.1

Strategies

3.4

LEAST SUPPORT

MOST SUPPORT

Survey respondents were quite supportive of the draft objective, rating it 4.1 out of 5 on average. This made it the equal-highest-supported objective: the Tourism and recreation and Transport and infrastructure policy domains objectives also rated 4.1 on average.

Survey respondents were less-supportive of the draft strategies than they were of the objective: they rated the draft strategies 3.4 out of 5 on average. This was still a high level of support: only the strategies for Tourism and recreation and Transport and infrastructure had a higher rating, with both rating 3.5 on average.

What you told us

The region’s water-supply catchments, water sources and waterways, above and below ground, provide drinking water for urban and rural households and businesses, water for the environment and other benefits for Victorians. We must protect these unique catchments and sources, particularly from the impacts of severe weather events resulting from climate change as they are a vital water source for all Victorians.

Submitters supported the draft LPS’ acknowledgement that the region provides essential water for urban and rural use for the whole of Victoria.

‘The careful management of the water resources within the shire is of critical importance.’

‘Protect the waterways as biodiversity linkages.’

Some submitters felt the LPS should include all water sources (such as creeks and tributaries) in the policy area. This is because they believe that all water sources are important, not just the key waterways and Declared Water Supply Catchments identified in the draft. They want water sources above and below ground (such as bores) to be protected. Others want tighter controls on the use of bores and dams.

'There are many new dams but no research or policy into the impacts of this. Many smaller land holders can easily tap into groundwater, which reduces water in the lower catchment areas. If land is constantly subdivided and each new lot includes a dam or a bore, there is far less water in the streams for other users and the environment downstream.'

Submitters also want to see the quality and quantity of water supplies protected against the impacts of severe weather events resulting from climate change.

'Need to include a "quantity" factor in the objective, not just "healthy". We need to be able to deal with the increased variability due to climate change. There is no recognition of climate change, preparation for floods, droughts etc.'

'Protect the waterways as biodiversity linkages.'

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Include a strategy that regulates the use of dams and bores (or aquifers).
- Identify important above- and below-ground water sources that contribute to Declared Water Supply Catchments.
- Use contemporary planning and development principles to help protect the quality and quantity of water supplies against increased variability in weather resulting from climate change.



Aboriginal cultural heritage

What the consultation draft said

Objective 4:

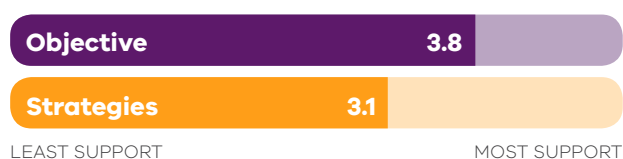
To recognise, conserve and enhance the policy area's Aboriginal cultural and spiritual heritage values.

Strategies

- With Traditional Owners, acknowledge, promote and interpret tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural values, heritage and knowledge when planning and managing land and water resources.

- With Traditional Owners, identify, conserve and enhance sites and landscapes of Aboriginal cultural significance, consistent with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Level of support



Survey respondents were quite supportive of the draft objective, rating it 3.8 out of 5 on average.

Survey respondents were less-supportive of the draft strategies than they were of the objective, rating them 3.1 out of 5 on average. This was lower than the average rating for the Tourism and recreation and Transport and infrastructure (3.5), Water catchments and supply (3.4) and European cultural heritage (3.3) strategies. This could indicate that respondents want more strategies in the Aboriginal cultural heritage policy domain.

What you told us

The knowledge and wisdom of the Traditional Owners is highly regarded and must be acknowledged.

While submitters appreciated that the draft LPS addressed Aboriginal cultural heritage, they want Traditional Owners to be more strongly represented and for their traditions and sacred places to be better-protected in the LPS.

'I am pleased to see that Aboriginal heritage is being acknowledged.'

'Not enough is being done in this space, and it would be good to see some further strategies around encouraging and enhancing cultural values in significant landscapes and places.'

People want to learn more about the Aboriginal culture and history of the area, including Aboriginal people's stories about how they manage land and resources in Country. This wisdom and knowledge was seen as invaluable for protecting and enhancing the region's values.

'Traditional owners should play an increasing role in the life of the area.'

Submitters said there is a need for people to be better-educated about protecting and enhancing Aboriginal cultural heritage values, and they want Aboriginal stories, words and sentiments to be incorporated more into the LPS. Some suggested putting signage about Traditional Owners' stories on walking trails around towns.

'Greater recognition, advertisement and education of all the area's Aboriginal heritage should be incorporated, rather than token gestures and mentions. Not one school in the area had any knowledge of any aspect of the Indigenous culture of the area, let alone locations of significance and why they are significant.'

'Indigenous culture and history should be more prominent in attracting visitors and in educating locals. This could be achieved with more interpretive signage in tourist areas and attractions. e.g. Hanging Rock, Mt Macedon, etc.'

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Give Traditional Owner groups more opportunities to contribute to the LPS.
- Include a strategy to educate people about Aboriginal history and culture in the region, including about how Traditional Owner groups manage Country (such as by erecting signage about Aboriginal stories on walking trails).
- Encourage the involvement of Traditional Owners to contribute to the protection and enhancement of the landscape, biodiversity and environmental values of the Macedon Ranges through Traditional Owner land management practices.



European cultural heritage

What the consultation draft said

Objective 5:

To recognise, conserve and enhance the policy area's significant European cultural heritage values.

Strategies

- Conserve and enhance the character of state- and/or nationally significant European cultural heritage values (including aesthetic, historic, scientific, social and spiritual values) in the policy area's heritage places, precincts and landscapes.

- Acknowledge, promote and interpret state-significant European cultural heritage values in the planning and management of land uses.

Level of support

Objective

3.9

Strategies

3.3

LEAST SUPPORT

MOST SUPPORT

Survey respondents were quite supportive of the draft objective, rating it 3.9 out of 5 on average.

They rated the draft strategies 3.3 out of 5 on average. This level of support was greater than that for the Aboriginal cultural heritage strategies, which rated 3.1 on average.

What you told us

We must preserve as much of the historical character of the region's small, rural towns as possible: it is a drawcard for both residents and visitors to the Macedon Ranges.

Submitters were passionate about preserving as much of the history of the region's small, rural towns as possible. They see this unique history as a drawcard for many visitors to the Macedon Ranges. They feel the character of towns derives from their rural setting and built-form heritage.



'It has long been recognised that with its climate, landscapes, biodiversity and rich soil, Macedon Ranges is a place to treasure. The heritage architecture tells a story of how the land was originally settled. The timber hewn from the local forests, the bluestone mined from nearby quarries, these provide a sense of place to the residents. We have our own local architecture which needs preserving and protecting. Like the old towns throughout Tasmania, this is now being treasured and restored, bringing a regional architectural identity to each township. We have our own architectural materials and style here. This is all our history, the land's history.'

They want more to be done to preserve historic buildings for the enjoyment and use of future visitors and residents. They are disappointed about the loss of some heritage (such as the brick kiln at Kyneton and bluestone buildings in and around Riddells Creek).

'Developers disregard regulations. They push over historical buildings and fell trees without permission. They then receive a token slap on the wrist, if that. Buildings of historical significance are left derelict until they are so bad that of course the only solution is to demolish them.'

Others said that policy gaps were undermining the heritage characters of towns, and they want new developments to be in keeping with the historic look and feel of the Macedon Ranges region. They said that if sympathetic and classic designs were encouraged, the uniqueness and appeal of the region's towns would increase.

'Preserving the "village feel" of the region's townships is particularly important. New development should be sympathetic to the existing structure and character of the townships.'

'Stop the demolition of old, historic properties. Provide financial assistance to help maintain historic properties. Have a vision and plan for the towns, which regulates poor urban design and encourages sympathetic, more classical design that will increase the uniqueness and appeal of these towns over time.'

Some submitters said *European* should be changed to *post-contact* or *historic* heritage so contributions to the region by non-Europeans are acknowledged, respected and protected.

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Take action to preserve historic buildings and streetscapes: too much heritage has been lost.
- Require a heritage review and township character study to be conducted.
- Change *European* to *post-contact* or *historic* heritage, to acknowledge contributions by non-Europeans.

Settlements

What the consultation draft said

Objective 6:

To plan and manage the sustainable, long-term growth of settlements in the policy area consistent with each settlement's unique character, role and function.

Strategies

- Direct urban development to a hierarchy of settlements identified for growth, through clearly defining long-term settlement boundaries.
- Direct rural residential development to rural-living-zoned land as provided for in the Macedon Ranges Shire Council's rural living

strategy: *In the Rural Living Zone – Strategic Direction* (2015).

- Encourage infill development that respects the townships' character.
- Limit the expansion of settlements in high-risk locations, actively reducing the risks associated with natural hazards.
- Ensure there is an adequate supply of residential land within settlement boundaries to support a diverse range of housing needs.
- Ensure there is an adequate supply of well-serviced employment land within settlement boundaries to support local and regional jobs and services.

Level of support

Objective

3.5

Strategies

2.7

LEAST SUPPORT

MOST SUPPORT

Survey respondents rated the draft objective 3.5 out of 5 on average. This could indicate respondents support the objective's intent and want it strengthened.

They showed the lowest level of support — 2.7 out of 5 on average — for any policy domain's strategies. This clearly indicates they want changes.

The survey also asked respondents, 'How important do you believe the introduction of long-term settlement boundaries are to plan and manage for the sustainable growth of' (each of) 'Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey, Riddells Creek, Lancefield and Woodend?' — these being the townships that are forecast to grow and change in role and function. Survey respondents considered it important, with a rating of 4 or more out of 5 across all townships. They considered it of highest importance for Woodend (4.2) followed by Romsey and Kyneton (4.1), then Lancefield and Gisborne (4.0).

What you told us

The design and development of settlements have a major effect on the Macedon Ranges landscape, and smart town planning principles should be used to retain the existing character of towns.

The draft Settlements policy domain was the most-discussed topic during the consultation period. Submitters said the design and development of settlements have a major effect on the Macedon Ranges landscape. They want to see the character of their historic rural townships protected and enhanced: it is a drawcard to the area for many people. They said smart town planning principles could be used to retain the existing character of towns.

'Please consider the complexity of planning for sustainable development and strive for very smart, very considered, very careful growth planning rather than simply "no more growth".'

Many submitters were concerned about the proposed location of the long-term settlement boundaries and investigation areas and the implications of setting them. Most want the existing township boundaries maintained and strengthened as 'protected settlement boundaries'. They said settlement growth could lead to overpopulation, and

that it could destroy the rural setting and character of their towns, which are essential for drawing the tourists and visitors on which their economies rely. In particular, many did not support the investigation area for Woodend: they considered it unnecessary, considering the forecast increase in population.

'When will it be understood that you can either have a state-significant, environmentally sensitive area or you can have suburban development of the rural land which is the cornerstone of Macedon Ranges' significance, but you can't have both?.'

'Identify existing township boundaries as protected settlement boundaries, and not include investigation areas or promote growth additional to that already planned for out to 2036.'

'The investigation areas identified in the Woodend structure plan come from the Planning Panel's recommendation that these be added. They are not all strategically justified or required. The projected population of Woodend, according to the settlement strategy, would never be able fill these areas.'

'Agree with strategies, as long as this doesn't mean expanding any existing boundaries to accommodate "an adequate supply" of residential or employment land. What is adequate and what happens when these towns reach capacity? I want to see the towns and surrounding land protected from future township boundary expansions.'

On the other hand, some submitters want their townships to grow, so there is sufficient, affordable housing for future generations. They want their children to grow up in the area and to have the same opportunities to enjoy the natural surrounds as they have.

'Macedon Ranges is really close to Melbourne and should be more able to embrace the positives in that situation, rather than trying to block growth at every turn.'

'Growth of settlements is most important, and not just growth but ongoing evolution and change. Not just in relation to population but in relation to household configuration, energy, transport and technology changes.'

'Some towns will grow, some will shrink: they all need to be able to respond to opportunity and constraints as they arise. Permanent boundaries are not particularly useful: they just give older people short-term certainty and will make it harder for people my age (23) to promote opportunities for change when those opportunities arise.'

Many submitters want to know the rationale for including the investigation areas and how the settlement boundaries were developed. They want clarified what would happen by setting settlement boundaries rather than the existing township boundaries. Some were wary of the additional boundaries, and they said towns only required the township boundaries. Submitters were also unclear what the term 'investigation area' meant: some said it created uncertainty about future growth.

'This is probably the worst part of this document. The document is not consistent within itself. For example, what is the difference between a "settlement boundary" and a "protected settlement boundary"? The boundaries presented in this document are inconsistent with those in the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme (or town structure plans) and lead the way to uncontrolled suburban-style developments. The point of the LPS is to create a 50-year settlement vision, not a settlement boundary. Many in the community are asking why the proposed areas of investigation line up so nicely with certain developer interests. The potential population explosion in the Macedon Ranges that would be permitted under this LPS is completely at odds with the objectives of the LPS. This inconsistency needs to be rectified by removing all maps with areas for investigation, or alternatively, keeping the maps consistent with what has already been developed in the town structure plans''.

Submitters also said the draft LPS prioritised development over protecting the natural environment, and they sought a better balance.

'This objective should be last priority of the policy domains, after all the different types of natural resources, agriculture and cultural heritage are dealt with. It should focus on the role of settlements rather than the role of development.'

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Require smart town planning principles to be used to retain the existing character of townships.
- Keep the existing township boundaries: settlement growth could lead to overpopulation and destroy the rural setting and character of towns.
- Keep the Woodend township boundary until a sufficient level of detailed strategic planning has been completed, with community input.
- Let townships grow, so future generations have sufficient, affordable housing and opportunities to enjoy the natural surrounds.
- More equally balance the policies for development and environmental protection.



Agriculture and rural land

What the consultation draft said

Objective 7:

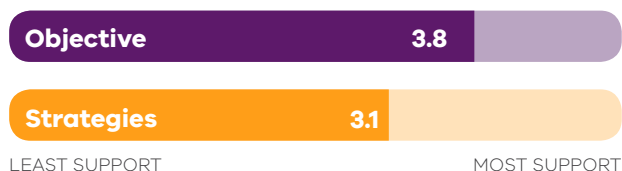
To support and encourage agricultural land uses which strengthen the policy area's economy and contribute to the rural landscape.

Strategies

- Encourage the use of rural-zoned land for agricultural purposes.
- Encourage and support innovations in agricultural practices (such as sustainable farming, improving technologies and responding to emerging and niche markets).

- Support agricultural practices that respond to and encourage adaptation to climate change.
- Encourage measures to ensure agricultural practices protect soil quality, water quality, biodiversity and native plants and animals.
- Manage the effects of rural land use and development on important environmental and cultural values.
- Provide a finite supply of rural-living-zoned land to conserve agricultural practices.

Level of support



Survey respondents were quite supportive of the draft objective, rating it 3.8 out of 5 on average.

They rated the strategies 3.1 out of 5 on average, less than the average ratings given to strategies for other policy domains: Tourism and recreation and Transport and infrastructure strategies rated on average 3.5; Water catchments and supply 3.4 and European cultural heritage 3.3. The rating for the Agriculture and rural land strategies — 3.1 — was equal to the rating for the Aboriginal cultural heritage strategies. This could indicate a desire to improve the draft strategies for this policy domain.

What you told us

We must protect and enhance the region's high-quality farmland, improve sustainability and reduce negative environmental impact.

Many submitters acknowledged the region's important contribution to Melbourne's food supply and the input of the region's food industry to its economy. They said that it contributed to an environmentally sustainable industry: the region's proximity to Melbourne reduces food miles.

'There is a need to protect the best farming land to be productive (i.e., to produce food, not to be swallowed up by town expansions and small, unproductive blocks).'

Submitters want to see rural land preserved for agricultural use, especially pockets considered high-quality, so agriculture can thrive.

'Whilst I support some growth, I do not support losing high-value agricultural land to subdivision. This needs further investigation. The wording in the strategy

sounds contradictory, where rural residential lots will continue, and this will erode the country feel of the area. These strategies appear to allow agricultural land to be further subdivided into a mixed land use which cannot support agriculture or accommodate future growth. It continues to support the status quo.'

'Some regions of the shire are not overly fertile, and whilst some farming will occur in the open spaces, it will always be difficult for farmers to prosper, compared to areas of higher rainfall and better soil properties.'

Submitters also acknowledged that the area is home to many organic, small and intensive farms that offer farm-gate sales, popular with many people.

'The opportunity to provide farm gate / cellar door sales not only provides a valuable source of income for small landholders / farmers but is a sought-after visitor experience. We recommend that farm gates and cellar door sales be supported throughout the shire.'

Other submitters want strategies that encourage more-sustainable farming practices and strategies that encourage farming practices to adapt with changing farming technology and techniques.

'No-one can make a living from farming these days unless they have a 1000+ ha land holding, so strategies need to include letting people do small-scale agriculture or experimental agriculture, and letting them also live on any size farming site.'

'It is important to promote sustainable agriculture and support local farms which provide food for the Macedon Ranges. Fresh food with low food miles should be encouraged, and what better way than supporting local farmers. However, the policy needs to be careful as to what it classifies as agriculture. It mentions the "equine industry" increasing in popularity ... whilst there is nothing wrong with landholders owning a few horses, it needs to be managed in a sustainable way.'

'There is no mention of forestry in the strategies. Forestry is a significant primary industry in the region, and should be encouraged so more trees are planted, whether they are native or introduced. Some fast-growing native species could be suitable to support cottage industries in furniture, woodwork and mature-tree production for nurseries. These types of alternative primary industries need to be encouraged, as they fit the character of the region.'

Some submitters said commercial agriculture is not viable in a Rural Living Zone, and they want any further expansion of the zone to be limited.

'Expansion of areas used for small, hobby farms used for aesthetic gardening or occasional food production will not encourage commercial agricultural production in the area.' — Anonymous

'Much Rural and Rural Living Zone land in the Macedon Ranges provides little or no agricultural productivity. This is primary because most rural living lots are too small to provide for financially viable agricultural enterprises. Most are hobby farms.'

Several submitters also said it is important to protect strategically located earth resources (such as mineral, stone and sand resources) in the region. They noted that *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* identifies these resources as an important feature of the peri-urban region.

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Limit further expansion of the Rural Living Zone, and do not subdivide prime agricultural land for housing developments.
- Include strategies that encourage more-sustainable farming practices and encourage farming practices to adapt to changing farming technology and techniques.
- Include an objective and strategies to protect the region's strategic earth resources (such as mineral, stone and sand resources).

Include an objective to grow end-to-end freight networks to serve the agricultural pursuits of the Shire.

Tourism and recreation

What the consultation draft said

Objective 8:

To provide for a diverse, sustainable range of recreational activities and a strong, resilient visitor economy in the policy area.

Strategies

- Support and facilitate tourism- and recreation-related land uses and developments (such as agritourism) in keeping with the policy area's state-significant landscape, environmental and cultural values.

- Facilitate tourism-related land use and development that encourages people to recognise and understand Aboriginal and European cultural heritage.
- Ensure the conservation and enhancement of Declared Water Supply Catchment Areas of regional or state significance in the planning of tourism and recreational land uses.

Level of support



Survey respondents were quite supportive of the draft objective, rating it 4.1 out of 5 on average. This made it the equal-highest-supported objective: The Transport and infrastructure and Water catchments and supply policy domain objectives also rated 4.1 on average.

Survey respondents rated the strategies lower than the objectives —3.5 out of 5 on average. This was still the highest level of support for strategies, with the Transport and infrastructure strategies rating the same.

What you told us

The region's natural beauty, rural landscapes, cultural heritage, events and accessibility to Melbourne and Bendigo make it a major drawcard for tourists.

Many submitters agreed the region's natural beauty, its rural landscapes, cultural heritage and events and its accessibility to Melbourne and Bendigo make it a major drawcard for international visitors, day trippers, weekenders and people interested in longer stays. It is a large part of the Daylesford and Macedon Ranges tourism region, and the tourism and recreation industries are essential pillars of the local economy.

'By destroying the uniqueness of the towns of Woodend and Kyneton, you will kill tourism to these towns, which is pretty much what keeps these towns' economies going.'

'People won't want to come here as a tourist if it becomes suburban sprawl.'

'Tourism and Recreation benefits from, and relies on, the appropriate management and insightful forward planning of all the domains outlined in the policy statement.'



Submitters made special mention of Hanging Rock, wanting to ensure it is adequately protected now and in the future.

'Don't tourist-up Hanging Rock Reserve: it's fine as it is.'

Many submitters want a better balance between tourism, environmental protection, cultural heritage values, population growth and employment opportunities. Some submitters said tourist numbers should be limited to better protect the environment and enable the Macedon Ranges to remain viable for tourism. Others said the Macedon Ranges could capitalise on its strengths, and tourism opportunities in the region should be encouraged and grown as much as possible.

'(The submitting organisation) regards the statement as a substantive step in the right direction to balance economic activity and development in the Macedon Ranges with protection of its unique character. Unfortunately, its delivery of desired outcomes is not a foregone conclusion.'

Submitters also said how important tourism is to the local economy, and they appreciated the industry's capacity to create jobs. Submitters acknowledged that much of the Macedon Ranges' appeal to tourists is due to the region's rural, small-town character. Many were concerned that if their towns were to grow, their character and tourism opportunities could be lost. Some other submitters said the region's infrastructure needed improvements before it was vigorously marketed to attract a greater number of visitors.

'The visitor economy is the shire's largest private sector economic contributor and this should be noted and strategies put in place to protect it.'

'I'd like to one day live in the Macedon Ranges again, and an active visitor economy is what would allow me to live and work in the area.'

'(I) would like to see more tourism-based businesses within the region, as it would help contribute to local employment and minimise the dependence on car travel to Melbourne.'

'...the attributes that attract residents and visitors to the shire will be lost by the end of the planning period (2050), possibly as early as 2036, if population growth and development follow the trend of recent years.'

'Having lived for many years in Hepburn Shire and seen Daylesford's character change to support tourists, and at the expense of local residents, I would not want to see that same expansion of tourism happen in Woodend and surrounds.'

'Some tourist activity has expanded to the extent that the existing infrastructure cannot support it, especially within the smaller townships, for example Macedon and Mount Macedon. The massive increase in popularity of the autumn displays in Macedon and Mt Macedon are an example of where tourism has started to impact the residents' quality of life due to a lack of capacity in the area to cater for these tourists.'

'Provide some infrastructure. People engage and protect beautiful environments when they can access them. There has been very little infrastructure in the way of pathways, boardwalks, plantings, seating, sculpture, signage or landscape architecture, which would enhance areas of beauty and engage the visitor.'

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Adequately protect and enhance Hanging Rock and other natural areas and features.
- Limit tourist numbers to better protect the environment and keep the Macedon Ranges viable for tourism.
- Expand tourism opportunities in the region in a way that respects the sensitive environment.
- Protect the rural, small-town character of the region that draws tourists who support the local economy and create jobs.
- Improve the region's infrastructure before conducting marketing campaigns.

Transport and infrastructure

What the consultation draft said

Objective 9:

To manage the provision of infrastructure that supports the social and economic needs of communities and increases resilience to climate change effects.

Strategies

- Provide infrastructure and services to support diverse community and business needs.
- Maintain transport connections that provide links between and within regional

communities and to major cities.

- Maintain view lines of state-significant landscape features from the main road and rail transport corridors.
- Ensure the future operation and development of the main road and rail corridors is considered when managing the growth of settlements.
- Ensure equitable access to community infrastructure.

Level of support

Objective

4.1

Strategies

3.5

LEAST SUPPORT

MOST SUPPORT

Survey respondents were quite supportive of the draft objective, rating it 4.1 out of 5 on average. This made it the equal-highest-supported objective: the Tourism and recreation and Water catchments and supply policy domain objectives also had an average rating of 4.1.

They were less-supportive of the draft strategies, rating them 3.5 out of 5 on average. This was still the highest level of support for strategies, with the Tourism and recreation strategies rating the same.

What you told us

There must be more, safe, active transport — walking and cycling — options in and around towns, better transport links between towns, less car traffic and better public transport.

Many submitters claimed the region needed more, safe, active transport — walking and cycling — options in and around towns and better transport links between towns. Many submitters expressed a strong desire to be able to cycle to destinations. Some also want to see more passive and sustainable transport modes encouraged, especially around schools at school drop-off and peak hour times. They said that if there were more-sustainable, easily accessible ways of getting to destinations, there would be less traffic on the roads.

'Public and people-powered transport (feet, bicycles, scooters, etc.) should be given first priority.'

'Take the emphasis off road and onto rail. Emphasise walking and cycling. Re-imagine a shire that is not car-dependent. Land use planning and compact settlements are at the core of this.'

'The Western Ring Road is putting daily pressure on our local roads. Trucks are using the network within the shire (not the freeways) as a rabbit run to get out of the

WWR traffic jam and 25 minute one-way delay. This needs to be addressed as well as getting “frequency of service” by train into the city and to Bendigo. Get commuters out of their cars.’

Others said the infrastructure of towns is inadequate, and many said the amount of car traffic is unreasonable and unacceptable. Submitters want to see new infrastructure provision sequenced with development, and they want existing infrastructure upgraded as the population increases.

‘There is no mention of community safety. There are many safety issues around traffic management, school transport safety, pedestrian safety within the towns and communities that will be impacted by concentrating people within town boundaries.’

‘Creation of improved transport links and improvements to existing infrastructure will only be beneficial to the growth of local areas. For transport links to become a reality, there needs to be a clear vision that connects all areas to public transport and ensures unimpeded access to key private transport links such as the Calder Freeway.’

Many submitters are fed up with the current public transport options. They said rail services in and out of the Macedon Ranges region were becoming overcrowded and uncomfortable. They said their train stations did not have enough parking to accommodate the growing numbers of commuters, and they want improvements in public transport (such as an increase in bus and train services).

‘Regular and increased public transport services need to be provided to the towns in the east of the shire, such as Romsey, Lancefield, Riddells Creek and Clarkefield.’

‘More focus is required on improving and expanding public transport in the area, for example rail and bus.’

‘We need added transport links, not just to maintain what we currently have. If the region is to grow, we need better public transport links as at the moment we rely heavily on private vehicles. Bus and train services are not adequate.’

‘Creation of improved transport links and improvements to existing infrastructure will only be beneficial to the growth of local areas. For transport links to become a reality, there needs to be a clear vision that connects all areas to public transport and ensures unimpeded access to key private transport links, such as the Calder Freeway.’

Some submitters liked that the proposed settlement boundary for Kyneton could result in a new bridge for a second river crossing, which they saw as important for easing traffic congestion in and around Kyneton.

‘I would like to reiterate my support for the planned growth in Kyneton and see the extension of Edgecombe Street and the bridge over the Campaspe River as critical in encouraging growth, which would be good for all businesses in the town.’

‘I would strongly support a second crossing (bridge) over the Campaspe River at the southern end of Edgecombe Road. This would give current and future residents of the southern area better access to the town by foot, bike and car.’

Your ideas for improving the draft

- Include a strategy to improve bus and rail services (such as by increasing the frequency of services to meet growing demand and by providing sufficient parking at train stations).
- Ease traffic congestion in and around Kyneton with a second river crossing.
- Include a strategy that requires new infrastructure to be provided and existing infrastructure to be upgraded as the population increases.
- Include a strategy that encourages urban planning for alternative transport options such as walkable communities.
- Include a strategy that improves end-to-end freight routes in and across the shire to support agricultural pursuits.
- Include a strategy that highlights walking and cycling as a high priority across the state.

Other issues

Submitters also raised other issues that go beyond the draft LPS policy domains and content.

New legislation

Many submitters strongly supported the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Bill 2017*. They said the new legislation would better protect the significant values of the Macedon Ranges.

Climate change

Many submitters want more strategies to address the effects of climate change – severe weather events resulting in natural disasters (such as flooding and bushfires) are expected to increase. Noting the precautionary principle, they want steps taken to enable the region to adapt to climate change, rather than just to mitigate it. Submitters want to be at the forefront of responding to climate change, anticipating and implementing adaptations before climate change occurs, rather than acting only during or after the effects of climate change become evident.

Language used

Submitters want to know how the LPS will support decision-making. Many said the language of the strategies was too vague and open to interpretation. Some want to see more prescriptive language and for the policy statement to be drafted like *Statement of planning policy No.8: Macedon Ranges and surrounds 1975*, known as SPP8.

'I have read the vision and supporting objectives. While most are aspirational, to be able to manage development pressures and enable more clarity in the planning scheme, I respectfully suggest that many of the current VPP provisions are not well-suited to enable the objectives to be achieved, and at the very least will need the status of the LPS to be supported by a range of prescriptive measures that are distinctive to the Macedon Ranges.'

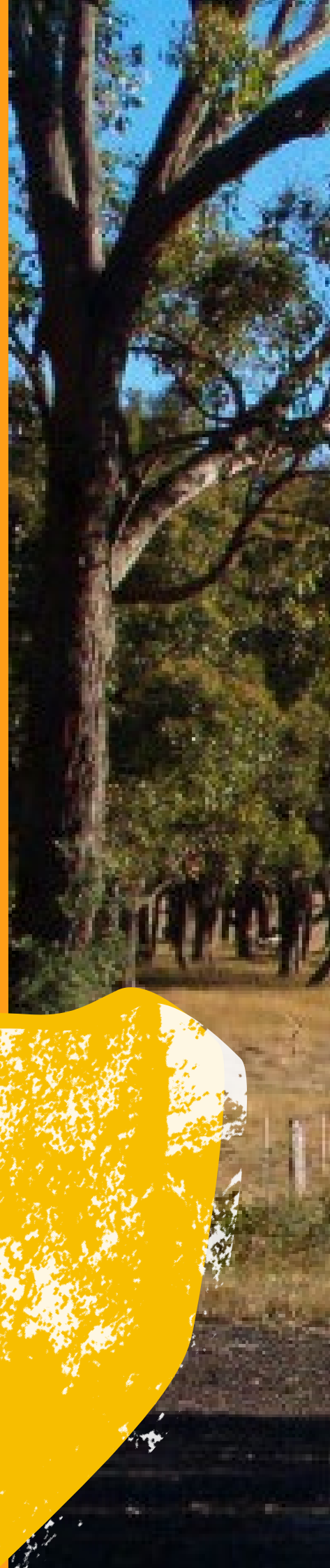
Advisory committee recommendations

Submitters questioned the extent to which the draft LPS implemented the recommendations of the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee, and they said it lacked detail about how the draft LPS would be implemented.

'The LPS doesn't make it a priority to protect rural town character, landscapes, rural land, heritage, biodiversity and the environment. It doesn't include implementation, and it doesn't say it is binding on public entities. Its framework plan is meaningless and cannot assist with decision making.'

'The legislation is great, but the LPS on exhibition is not what the legislation says it should be, not what the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee recommended, not based on Statement of Planning Policy No. 8 – and it's not the protection we were promised.'

Next steps





Next steps

As we work to finalise the draft LPS as a statement of planning policy, DELWP will continue to work in partnership with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the Victorian Planning Authority and the Traditional Owner groups of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri peoples to ensure we get the right balance between preserving the environment and providing certainty for some growth and development.

The final steps in this project to deliver on the Victorian Government's promise to protect the iconic and historic Macedon Ranges region from inappropriate development are to:

- declare the Macedon Ranges region as the first distinctive area and landscape in Victoria under the amended *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- work with Traditional Owner groups to ensure Aboriginal cultural stories, land management knowledge and history are fully embraced in the policy statement
- revise the draft LPS as a new statement of planning policy to fit with the intent of the amended Act, address the consultation process feedback and incorporate further technical information (such as the whole-of-shire landscape assessment including Hanging Rock)
- ask Macedon Ranges Shire Council and relevant government agencies to endorse the new statement of planning policy, before seeking whole-of-government approval
- amend the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme to give statutory effect to the new statement of planning policy.



Appendix A:

Online feedback page

Make an online submission

First Name

Last Name

Email address

Organisation

Is your submission being made on behalf of your organisation? (Required)

☐ Yes (government organisation)

☐ Yes (private organisation)

☐ Yes (not-for-profit organisation)

☐ No

☐ **I agree to the privacy statement** Required

Are you...

☐ A local resident

☐ A local business owner

☐ A visitor to the region

☐ Other (please specify)

Please specify

Did you provide feedback to the Macedon Ranges Protection Advisory Committee's Issues Paper in 2016?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Vision statement

To what extent do you support the Vision Statement? (located on page 10 of the draft planning statement)

Please rate your level of support from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support).



If you could make a change to the Vision Statement, what would it be?

.....

Objectives and strategies

Landscape

Objective 1: To ensure the policy area's landscape features are conserved and enhanced. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

.....

Biodiversity and environmental values

Objective 2: To ensure the biodiversity, ecological and environmental values of state and/or national significance in the policy area are conserved and enhanced. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

Water catchments and supply

Objective 3: To prioritise the conservation and use of the policy area's water catchments to ensure a healthy, local, regional and state water supply. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

Aboriginal cultural heritage

Objective 4: To recognise, conserve and enhance the policy area's Aboriginal cultural and spiritual heritage values. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

European cultural heritage

Objective 5: To recognise, conserve and enhance the policy area's significant European cultural heritage values. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

Settlements

Objective 6: To plan and manage the sustainable, long-term growth of settlements in the policy area consistent with each settlement's unique character, role and function. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

Agriculture and rural land

Objective 7: To support and encourage agricultural land uses which strengthen the policy area's economy and contribute to the rural landscape. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

Tourism and recreation

Objective 8: To provide for a diverse, sustainable range of recreational activities and a strong, resilient visitor economy in the policy area. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

Transport and infrastructure

Objective 9: To manage the provision of infrastructure that supports the social and economic needs of communities and increases resilience to climate change effects. To what extent do you support this objective?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



To what extent do you support the strategies aligned with this objective?



Further comments

Settlement boundaries

Gisborne

How important do you believe the introduction of long-term settlement boundaries are to plan and manage for the sustainable growth of Gisborne?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



Kyneton

How important do you believe the introduction of long-term settlement boundaries are to plan and manage for the sustainable growth of Kyneton?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



Romsey

How important do you believe the introduction of long-term settlement boundaries are to plan and manage for the sustainable growth of Romsey?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



Riddells Creek

How important do you believe the introduction of long-term settlement boundaries are to plan and manage for the sustainable growth of Riddells Creek?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



Lancefield

How important do you believe the introduction of long-term settlement boundaries are to plan and manage for the sustainable growth of Lancefield?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



Woodend

How important do you believe the introduction of long-term settlement boundaries are to plan and manage for the sustainable growth of Woodend?

Please rate from one star (do not support) to five stars (fully support)



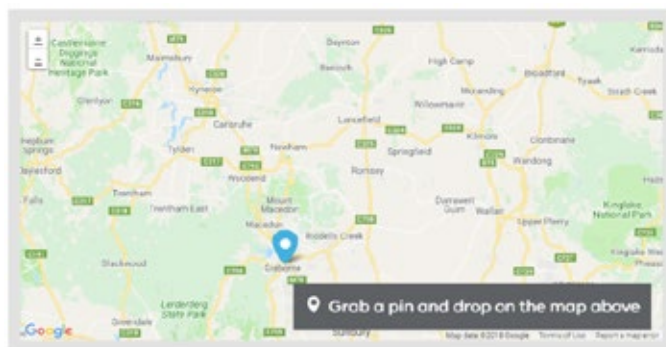
Further comments in relation to settlement boundaries

Do you have any further comments or feedback that you would like to share in relation to the Macedon Ranges Draft Localised Planning Statement?

Upload a submission

You can attach your submission below (Word and PDF formats accepted).

Interactive map – map what’s important to you about the Macedon Ranges



Add a pin to the map below and share your views on what the draft Macedon Ranges Localised Planning Statement needs to address, and why. Alternatively, click on a marked pin to read what others have to say.

