

21.0121/05/2009
C81**INTRODUCTION**

This Municipal Strategic Statement outlines the vision for the future use and development of land in the Yarra Ranges Shire. It has been prepared in the context of State and regional planning objectives and should be read in conjunction with Vision 2020 – A Vision for the Yarra Ranges Community and other Council strategies including:

- Sustainability Framework and the Sustainability Principles
- Shire of Yarra Ranges Community Well-Being Plan
- Council Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- The Upper Yarra Valley and Regional Strategy Plan 1996 (Regional Strategy Plan)

21.01-121/05/2009
C81**THE UPPER YARRA VALLEY AND DANDENONG RANGES REGIONAL STRATEGY PLAN**

The Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority (established under the *Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority Act 1976*) prepared the Regional Strategy Plan to enable increased protection for the special features and character of the region including the former shires of Healesville, Lilydale, Sherbrooke and Upper Yarra.

The Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme was prepared following Council amalgamation. Those requirements of the Regional Strategy Plan that could not be readily implemented under the standard Victoria Planning Provisions were integrated into the Planning Scheme via Clause 53 - *Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Region*. This clause is unique to the Yarra Ranges Scheme and provides additional control to that found in the Victoria Planning Provisions.

The Regional Strategy Plan is currently administered under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. Section 46F of the Act prohibits the Minister for Planning from approving any amendment to this Scheme which is inconsistent with the Regional Strategy Plan.

Key policy directions from the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan include:

- There be no net increase in the total provision for residential development in the Dandenong Ranges, and no significant increase in the Yarra Valley and the southern foothills, beyond that provided for in proposals approved or exhibited at April 1979.
- Planning and management of resources in the region take account of the interests and views of the community, both within and beyond the region.
- Development be contained to ensure that it does not prejudice the conservation of natural resources and the amenity of those who live there and those who visit the area for recreation.
- Natural resources worthy of conservation include significant vegetation (both native and exotic) and wildlife habitats of importance.
- Planning that seeks to minimise fire risk.
- Planning for recreation that seeks to minimise any adverse effect of tourism and day-tripping on residents, existing land use and the environment, and ensures compatibility with the primary aims of the Policy.
- Systems of open space be retained and others developed, where appropriate, along the Yarra River and its main tributaries.

- Landscapes and scenic features be maintained, enhanced where appropriate, and rehabilitated where necessary.
- Agricultural land in non-urban zones generally be retained for rural and green wedge pursuits.

The key policy directions of the Regional Strategy Plan are consistent with current Victoria Planning Policy. The metropolitan strategy, *Melbourne 2030 – Planning for Sustainable Future*, supports ‘development in the green wedge that provides for environmental, economic and social benefits while protecting critically important flora and fauna habitat and important landscapes such as the ...Dandenong and Yarra Ranges, and the Yarra Valley.’

Both the Regional Strategy Plan and Melbourne 2030 represent a long history of support for urban containment and conservation protection. This will continue to require a sensitive and measured approach to land use and development, with some being either prohibited or strictly controlled so as to prevent environmental degradation.

The community strongly supports this position which is reinforced in this Municipal Strategic Statement.