



KEEP THE VILLAGE FEEL

COMMUNITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PROPOSED VICTORIA STREET, MACEDON DEVELOPMENT

Community Meeting Outcomes - Jubilee Hall, June 1, 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the request of local residents, the Macedon/Mt. Macedon Community Planning Group facilitated a community meeting on Sunday June 1, 2014 to discuss the impacts and opportunities of the proposed development for 19 Victoria Street, Macedon. Attendees overwhelmingly reject the proposal.

Many who attended are not opposed to development, but view the development of the subject site as an opportunity to shape the streetscape of Victoria Street and consolidate Macedon's village status. Locals expect the proposed development to meet well-documented community values and aspirations, and respect the planning policies for Macedon. A significant reduction in the height and density of the proposed development was often raised.

There was opposition to the car park waiver, participants arguing increased pedestrian safety concerns, capacity constraints and loss of amenity to landowners, locals and businesses. The view is that appropriate car parking be made available within the site for new residents, and patrons of retail outlets. Among the community's concerns are:

- No green space and inadequate transition to adjoining properties
- Increased pedestrian safety concerns to an already complex intersection
- Restricted CFA access to rear dwellings in the event of a fire
- Loss of sun to neighbouring properties and valuable gardens
- Height and tower feature of proposed development is visually intrusive
- Loss of privacy where upper windows overlook existing properties
- Further impact on the already inadequate storm water drainage in and around the site.

Residents referenced the Macedon Ranges Shire Council's formally adopted 'no growth' policy for Macedon, which recommends '*no population growth*' and confines residential development to single dwelling infill on existing specific vacant allotments.

Attendees also debated levels of acceptable development at the site, highlighting opportunities for the proposed development to improve its current design. The opportunities for the proposal highlighted by the community include:

- A significant reduction in the number of dwellings (by more than 50%) to reflect the current density of Victoria Street and Margaret Street
- Appropriate landscaping at street frontage to retain a village atmosphere
- Incorporate single fronted buildings with any double storey dwellings to be located at the rear of the site (to reduce the visual bulk) and align buildings with Margaret Street residences
- Use a country cottage style and a pale colour palette
- Reduce building mass along southern boundary to not overshadow neighbouring gardens
- Mandatory onsite parking for all new residents of the proposed development
- Strategies for retaining parking spaces for existing residents
- Facilities to improve and ensure the safety for pedestrians (especially children)
- Better provision for bicycles
- Limit traffic flow in Margaret Street or loading access only from Victoria Street
- Construction of footpaths along Margaret and Heath Streets, and pedestrian crossings.

RESIDENTS: ‘The natural landscape, environmental values and country village feel must be protected’.

The township of Macedon is located at the foot of 1,011m high Mt. Macedon. It lies approximately 60 kilometres north west of Melbourne and covers an area of 5 square kilometres in gently sloping, heavily treed terrain.

Macedon is home to 1,864 residents, who are predominantly a population of commuters or local shire employees with a family. 50% are female and 50% are male. Most residents are married couples with families or couples without children.

It is a quiet, rural retreat treasured by residents and visitors alike. Victoria Street is characterised by a small, modest commercial centre surrounded by modest homes and surrounding gardens that transition to a street lined with mature trees.

Large-scale, high-density developments do not exist in Macedon. Double storey or loft conversion homes in Margaret Street add to the village character and do not impose on neighbouring properties.

People who live in Macedon have a strong interest in protecting the natural landscape; the environmental values and the country village feel experienced in this small village.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY MEETING

During the advertising period for the proposed 19 Victoria Street development in Macedon, residents approached the Macedon/Mt. Macedon Community Planning Group (CPG) wanting to know how and where they could talk about the impacts and opportunities of the proposal.

The CPG made the decision to facilitate a community meeting to respond to the local community's need to discuss the proposal.

The earliest that Jubilee Hall was available was on Sunday, 1 June 2014. The hall was booked on this date and paid for by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

The CPG designed the two-hour agenda, invited the community and guests, prepared the facilitation strategy and promoted the event with posters and via email for a ten-day period. A copy of the promotional poster is available in the Appendix (item 1).

THE AGENDA AND WHO ATTENDED

In the spirit of transparency, collaboration and community, the designer of the proposed development, Stephen Coleiro, Senior Town Planner from G2 Urban Planning joined the meeting.

Stephen introduced the concept and intent of the proposal and answered the community's questions. 118 people registered their attendance at the meeting, including five local councillors.

A copy of the community meeting agenda is available in the Appendix (item 2).

OBJECTIVE AND DESIRED OUTCOME OF THE MEETING

The objective of the community meeting was to:

- Gather specific community views about the key topics of interest associated with the proposed development, and
- Prepare a combined community response into a report to be delivered to G2 Urban Planning, the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and the Macedon community.

The report is designed to be a valuable reference document to the planning approval process and planning scheme reviews going forward.

The outcome of the meeting is to document a collection of ideas that reflect the community's views about how development should be shaped in Macedon.

KEY TOPICS OF INTEREST DISCUSSED

Five topics of interest, as described below, were presented to the community for discussion. The 118 attendees requested that fire be added as a sixth key topic of interest for discussion at the meeting.

Topics of interest	Description
DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look and feel/streetscape• Acoustics• Build materials• Mechanical/Plant & equipment
DENSITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allotments• Number of residents/visitors
CAR PARKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of spaces• Current parking facilities in the area• Consideration of increased parking requirements
WASTE MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Storage and disposal of waste
TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact of increased traffic at point of entry/flow on effects
FIRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extreme bushfire risk• Community impact

1. DENSITY

Summary

Meeting attendees strongly expressed that the proposed development incorporated too many dwellings for its site and location. A lack of open space for its residents with no appropriate green space to transition to adjacent properties was noted.

A significant reduction in the number of dwellings and appropriate landscaping at street frontage to retain a village atmosphere, were highlighted as opportunities.

Impacts

- Low growth planning overlay to be considered, particularly in the context of the RO10 Restructure Overlay that applies to all residential within the area. (The RO10 was under review a couple of months ago but a decision was made to leave it in place. This overlay restricts subdivisions and multiple dwellings. The result of the overlay is very restricted development.)
- Whole footprint is concrete – no green space.
- Not in keeping with local environment and neighbourhood character.
- All other properties are bigger blocks (even Victoria St small blocks).
- Township policy (clause 22.02.09) states: "To protect residential lifestyle by the protection of important landscape and environmental values".
- Concerns about removal of flora, the extent of proposed excavation and the proposed location of washing lines for new residences.
- Will the residents of the 18 flats have a right to complain about pub noise/exhaust smell?
- More people at risk in the event of a fire.
- Tiny rooms – small amount of natural light in rooms.
- Ghetto effect – we want much fewer units with more space on each unit.
- The proposal is in conflict with the objectives of Clause 15 of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme in its scale, density, massing and aesthetic.
- The Commercial Zone B1Z states the objectives "To create vibrant mixed use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses." The proposal offers very little in relation to these objectives.
- The Commercial Zone B1Z allows the provision of "residential uses at densities complementary to the role and scale of the commercial centre". We view this proposal as an overdevelopment of the site and see it to be in opposition to the objectives of the Zone.
- There is no precedent for buildings above single storey.
- No precedent for medium density development in Macedon.
- Inadequate parking for the level of density proposed.
- Macedon residents live an hour from Melbourne to live in a quiet, peaceful environment. This would change Macedon forever.
- An inner city development imposed on a semi rural village.

Opportunities

- Appropriate landscaping at street frontage consistent with country village aesthetic.
- Single storey dwellings accessible to elderly, disabled residents (e.g. Mews in New Gisborne).
- Preservation of openness and natural light.
- Green community space/gardens.
- Improvement to Ash Wednesday playground. If kids are living in this development, there is no green space for them to play in. (Safe crossing of Smith Street to be provided).
- Opportunity to provide commercial services such as a general medical practice, pharmacy, butcher and deli.

2. DESIGN

Summary

Residents discussed the height and positioning of the proposed development, describing it as a visual intrusion, that doesn't make the best use of natural sunlight.

The loss of sunlight to neighbouring properties and the lack of green space for private gardens are not consistent with Macedon's rural living lifestyle where many residents have plentiful open space and tend a landscaped garden.

Attendees at the meeting suggested changing elements of the design to incorporate single fronted buildings (to reduce the visual bulk) aligned with Margaret Street residences in a country cottage style using a natural/pale colour palette. Shade lines should avoid adjoining properties and their gardens.

Impacts

- Not solar passive, i.e. no northern sun on saw-tooth roofs.
- Inappropriate design for village. It will change the amenity.
- There is no green space – no gardens or landscaping.
- With reference to the Strategic Objectives submission, the answers by the applicant are ambiguous and do not address the planning policy as expressed in Clause 4.10.
- Loss of sunlight to residents in Margaret Street.
- Privacy concerns; upper windows and balconies overlooking neighbouring gardens.
- The design will impact adversely on tourists who leave the city to visit Macedon and Mt Macedon only to be confronted by a Fitzroy/St Kilda type development.
- Potential parking problems for the community. Streetscape already too narrow.
- Light pollution.
- Opposed to waiver proposed for loading zone and car parking.
- Car parks available in townhouses – only one per unit.
- Absence of visitor parking.
- Where are staff and customers from the shops going to park? Cannot get to post office now!
- Commuter township – 2 cars for most families – 1 car park per unit is not enough.

Opportunities

- Single storey along the street frontages.
- Building set back in alignment to other residences in Margaret Street.
- The existing mix of 'set back' shops is charming for Macedon.
- The Mews in New Gisborne is a good example of small density housing – sympathetic to the area and pale colours. The three cottages in Victoria Street between the post office and Bruce Street are also good examples.
- The development should offer housing opportunities for seniors, downsizing and 1st homebuyers. Commercial opportunities in modern shops.
- Use block out film on high windows to alleviate privacy concerns.
- The community wants lighter colours in the design to lessen the visual bulk.
- Mandatory onsite parking for all dwellings (with visitors parking).

3. CAR PARKING

Summary

Residents oppose the car park and loading bay waiver, expressing road user safety and capacity concerns.

Car parking is adequate for existing residents and visitors at current levels. Increasing demand on car spaces will cause a lack of available parking for short-term commercial use and for existing residents.

The community requests mandatory onsite parking for all new residents of the proposed development, strategies for retaining parking spaces for existing residents and facilities to improve and ensure the safety for pedestrians (especially children) at an already complicated intersection.

Impacts

- Present car parking in town already compromised and dangerous.
- Opposed to waiver proposed for loading zone and car parking.
- Our tourist industry will be compromised.
- Margaret Street is a very quiet, narrow street that cannot accommodate any extra parking.
- Children walk and ride bikes there – it would be very dangerous.
- Existing Margaret Street residents do not all have off street parking. These residents may be 'parked out' on weekends.
- Far fewer units in the proposed development.
- Smaller scale development more sensitive to local amenity.
- Emergency service vehicles will be unable to access the development.

Opportunities

- Designated resident parking outside small allotments in Margaret Street to prevent being 'parked out' on weekends.
- Change angle parking in Victoria Street opposite IGA supermarket to parallel parking – dangerous near intersection.

- Include designated disabled car parks.
- Limited time parking (for residents who do not have mail delivery) to be able to 'pop in' to the post office to collect mail. (Parking fines for overstaying 'timed limits'?)
- Pedestrian priority in mains streets to 20kph max speed.
- Smaller scale development.
- Encourage cycling around town to promote less use of cars. Install bike racks.
- All car parking for development should be contained within the development.
- Under ground car parking beneath the residential units.
- A waiver is not reasonable in this situation.

4. WASTE / DRAINAGE / WATER

Summary

The community highlighted that the current storm water infrastructure is not sufficient to adequately drain the increased amount of water that would be captured by the roof of the proposed development. Residents suggest that an appropriate storm water solution be applied to avoid the risk of localised flooding.

The large increase in waste, the visibility of a large amount of rubbish bins on the kerb awaiting waste collection and the additional noise rubbish collection would create, are the main waste management concerns.

Residents see the proposed development as an opportunity to build to the highest environmental standards to reduce waste and make the best use of natural resources.

Impacts

- Approximately 50 rubbish bins to be collected plus large skip-style bins
- A large number of bins left out on the street for collection creates a safety issue in addition to potentially impacting on already inadequate parking facilities and results in excessive noise of large bin collection.
- Exhaust/smoke fumes from pub affecting development.
- An overall increase of rubbish and litter!
- Current storm water drains are insufficient.
- Increase of junk mail litter/local papers left on the ground, if not collected.
- Where would the bins be stored/emptied?
- How will the garbage trucks access the bins?
- Food waste may attract feral animals!
- Food waste should be stored in unit garages.
- Why remove so much soil and create soil waste in the first place?
- Macedon township policy (clause 22.02.9): "Prevent the loss of vegetation and soil disturbance".

Opportunities

- Reduce the size of the development and therefore the waste.
- Onsite storage of bins, screened from street.
- Private collection contract.
- Large green space provided for water drainage.
- Build to highest environmental standards to reduce waste/run off - e.g. water tanks and green roofs.

5. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Summary

The intersection at the corner of Victoria and Margaret Streets is already complicated. Angle reverse parking on the south side of the road, the IGA car park driveway that crosses over a footpath, a four-way intersection and road users proceeding at various speeds through the town centre as pedestrians and tourists meander from side to side visiting cafes, restaurants, the post office and the supermarket.

Residents are concerned about the safety of school children that frequent the area on foot and bike. The narrow width of Margaret Street may not be able to accommodate the increase in patronage. There are no footpaths that link Victoria Street to Margaret Street.

The practicalities of a loading bay in a reverse angle park on the south side of Victoria Street is questioned due to the lack of space to unload a delivery and allow sufficient clearance for passing traffic.

Impacts

- Inadequate parking – unsafe, e.g. reversing out.
- School buses currently stop outside supermarket.
- Excess traffic as parents drop off and collect students.
- No footpaths; students walk up Heath Street (gravel road), etc. to these buses.
- Local primary school encourages students, grade 4 and higher, to ride to school.
- Bike Ed programs use Heath & Margaret Streets.
- Council-imposed parking time limits with fines.
- Margaret Street and Victoria Street are narrow and not wide enough for heavy traffic.
- Loading docks? The letter suggests early and late deliveries therefore noise impact to nearby residents.
- At present children and families walk along Margaret and Heath Streets – great danger if this development proceeds.
- Degradation of roads. More hard surfaces are required to cope with increased traffic.
- Risk – increased pressure on existing road network.
- Increased noise leads to loss of amenity.
- Not enough parking for shop staff and visitors to units.

Solutions

- Better provision for bicycles.
- Limit traffic flow in Margaret Street or all loading access only from Victoria Street.
- Develop traffic counts re vehicle movements before and after development.
- Far fewer units in the development and more parking onsite.
- Construction of footpaths along Margaret and Heath Streets.
- Pedestrian crossings and signage.
- Roundabout at Margaret/Victoria Streets.
- Speed humps to slow traffic.
- Speed limits, e.g. 20kph limit outside shops – or pedestrians only!

6. FIRE & SAFETY

Summary

Attendees referred to the recommendations that came out of the Royal Commission from the Black Saturday fires and the independent panel report (C92) that endorsed the 'no growth' policy because of the *extreme* fire risk to Macedon.

Many residents that experienced the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires remember smoke over roads, traffic chaos and embers that travelled 5km. If the proposed complex burns, the group suggested that it would send embers further out and extend the impact of a bushfire. Radiant heat can kill from 300 metres.

Impacts

- Increase of elderly people in units – evacuation issues.
- Biggest impact of Black Saturday was on the elderly (and the young home alone).
- Research by the Bushfire Coop Research Centre, CSIRO, Monash & ANU shows that in an ember attack, only one window needs to be open to burn the entire development.
- Simulation done for Macedon concludes that another Black Saturday in Macedon will happen and nothing would be left.
- Fires could come in the middle of the night.
- More deaths in Macedon because of increased density. Teenage kids left alone at home.
- Fire truck may not fit into the proposed access road off Margaret Street.
- An escape route should be incorporated.

Solutions

- Reduce density.
- Make a greenbelt around the town.
- Lower elevation of buildings to single storey.
- Internal fire sprinkler system for shops and residential.
- Water tank for fires.
- BAL fire rating.
- Underground bunker for whole community (green belt on top).
- Provide a new fire truck, which wouldn't need ladders if development were single storey.

CONCLUSION

This report has been generated to document the views of a large number of Macedon residents and their attitudes to the approach to development in the township of Macedon.

The report will be accepted as a submission to the proposed development, but it will be a very strong submission because it is representative of 118 local residents that registered their attendance at the community meeting (i.e. a large group from within the community).

The community noted that the proposed development is contrary to the Statement of Planning Policy No. 8, which has been used extensively by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council on planning matters since 1975 to protect the environment, flora and fauna in the Macedon Ranges.

The proposal also contravenes point 3 under objective 4 in clause 21.13-6 of the Municipal Strategic Statement, which says to ensure that development of key sites on the corner of Victoria and Margaret Streets protects the rural village atmosphere through the use of appropriate scale, materials and building setbacks.

While the majority of meeting attendees opposed the design of the proposal, locals saw many opportunities to shape the development to align it with the values and principles upheld by the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme, the Bushfire Royal Commission report, independent panel reports (C92 & C84) which endorsed the council's '*no growth*' policy for Macedon, and the community generally (who have briefed consultants, council and community representatives on their views at workshops on many occasions over many years).

A two-year consultative process resulted in the 2012 Community Plan, which was acknowledged by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council. The plan highlighted planning controls and streetscape as top priorities for Macedon and Mt Macedon residents. The community values captured by the community plan two years ago are *still* consistent with today's community expectations.

Macedon residents would welcome a compliant development to fill the gap in the town centre of Macedon, however, there should be no huge visual intrusion to the natural landscape, amenity should be maintained, safety of all users of road space should be a priority and environmental values should be enhanced by any development on the site.

The proposed development should reflect the existing neighbourhood character, and should have a mix of commercial and residential premises appropriate to both the zoning overlays and needs of the community.

APPENDIX

1. Promotional poster

COMMUNITY MEETING SUNDAY 1 JUNE

JUBILEE HALL 3-5^{PM}

- Discuss the proposed development for Victoria St, Macedon
- Share your views
- Record your opinion
- Debate alternatives

Help develop a community response to be delivered to the Planning Applicant and Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

For the agenda and updates, visit:
www.ourcommunityplan.com

2. Meeting agenda

COMMUNITY MEETING AGENDA

Sunday June 1, 3pm – 5pm

JUBILEE HALL

3.00pm	Welcome <i>Mandi Mees, Chair</i> <i>Macedon/Mt. Macedon Community Planning Group</i>
3.10pm	The concept and intent of the proposed development <i>Stephen Coleiro, G2 Urban Planning</i> <i>Senior Town Planner</i>
3.25pm	The rules, planning process - and likely outcome <i>Cr John Letchford, Macedon Ranges Shire Council</i> <i>South Ward Councillor</i>
3.30pm	Questions
3.50pm	Interactive session: Topics of interest <i>Facilitator: Lori Turner</i>
4.00pm	Interactive table session: Discuss each topic of interest, the impacts and opportunities they present <i>Facilitators: Michiel Mees, Ben Bush, Lori Turner</i>
4.55pm	Next steps
5.00pm	Close

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