

Submission to independent Logical Inclusions Advisory Committee appointed by Minister for Planning

8th September 2011 on behalf of Cardinia Ratepayers & Residents Association Inc.

As stated in our earlier submission, we do not accept the premise on which this inquiry is based, i.e. that the urban growth boundary requires expansion to include more land for housing development which is in short supply. I would refer your attention to a report published on the website Property Observer which indicates there is currently a surplus of available housing and identifies a decrease in demand. Relevant details attached.

In 2010, realignment of the Urban Growth Boundary by the Labor government to encompass 43,600 hectares of farmland and green wedge was agreed to by the Liberal opposition, now in government. At that time, it was publicly stated and apparently agreed upon that there would be no need for any further land to be taken into UGB for many years to come. Yet we now see the domino effect of a “logical inclusions” process bringing forward thousands of hectares of green wedge farmland proposed by commercial interests and private land owners wishing to capitalise on land banking, speculation and investment, regardless of environmental values, economic or social repercussions for the communities involved.

Cardinia Shire Council is one of the submitters, proposing large areas of land to the north of Princes Highway and beyond the transmission lines (current boundary) and to the east of Ryan Road (current boundary). Questionably, the Council submission has included endorsement of a high profile property developer whose manager of development is a former Chief Executive Officer of Cardinia Shire and also who was also a member of the 2005 Smart Growth Committee responsible for the plan now put forward to the Logical Inclusions inquiry

As stated in our original submission, the current high level of development in the growth corridor of Cardinia Shire is producing an enormous quantity of housing, and there is extensive land still available for potential further building of dwellings.

The central business district of Pakenham is barely coping with the volume of traffic and demand for car parking spaces and we note the recently expressed concern of Vic Roads regarding traffic congestion on the Monash Freeway and at the exit points in Cardinia Shire. Contrary to information supplied by Parklea and Council, local experience confirms that the Princes Highway is now carrying a high volume of traffic which is almost at pre-bypass road level. This is due to new housing development north and south of the highway and commuters travelling through to access rail transport at Pakenham. McGregor Road and Racecourse Road are feeder roads to the freeway and carry heavy traffic volume to the suburban rail service which currently terminates at Pakenham. Additional traffic from further housing development east of Pakenham would certainly increase the current level of congestion.

The alternate proposal by Parklea for a relocation of the sewer line is not practical as there are residential properties to the west of Ryan Road requiring service which is the reason for the route proposed by South East Water.

The land encompassing the Pakenham golf course and land to the south is frequently inundated when there is heavy rain. It is zoned PPRZ public open space and a Masterplan has been prepared for wetlands, pathways and recreational purposes.

The area proposed for development, 3a is covered by a "significant vegetation" overlay.

Deep Creek supports Swampy Riparian Woodland vegetation classified as Endangered by DSE. There are remnant pockets of Grassy Forest classified as Vulnerable.

The Baillon's Crake (*Porzana pusilla palustris*) has been noted in 3b, and is listed as vulnerable in Victoria.

The Growling Grass Frog (*Litoria raniformis*) is noted several times in 3b, it is listed as vulnerable in Victoria.

It is considered unacceptable to rip out native flora and fauna, which is in the way of development and offer offset works which are often over 10 years and can never replace what is lost.

It is noted in the Parklea study for 3b that mention is made of varying extent of vegetation and quality e.g. Swampy Woodland, Swamp Scrub, Swampy Riparian Woodland. Also 18 free-standing water bodies are scattered across the study area, two of which support known populations of Growling Grass Frog, EPBC listed. Matted Flax Lily and River Swamp Wallaby-grass are also mentioned. The environmental significance of the land in question therefore should not be under-estimated.

Cardinia Shire is currently experiencing financial, social and environmental pressures. As residents and ratepayers and taxpayers, we do not need the added pressures of a further suburb to the east of Pakenham. The Logical Inclusions proposed by Cardinia Council and various developers and land owners cannot be supported.