

Submission [REDACTED] (resident)
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Victorian Planning Authority, Draft Amendment C107 to GPS Planning Scheme and Draft Bannockburn South East Development Contributions Plan (DCP) and schedule to UGZ1.

Following VPA public meeting/consultation meeting held 22nd May at GPS offices, I make the following comments with respect to my concerns with this proposal.

Golden Plains Shire is primarily a rural area and due to its proximity to Geelong has in recent years become a focus for urban growth. However to date this type of development and expansion has still been larger rural lots of land with exception of Somerset Estate within Bannockburn which residential subdivisions typically 650m² or greater.

I am therefore greatly concerned that the adoption of Small Lot Housing Code VPA 2024 will result in developers reducing residential allotments to the permissible 300m² to maximise building densities and return on investments. This will consequently result in housing being built literally boundary to boundary with little private open space on the residential allotments for individual gardens or secure private open spaces for families with children etc (who are the most likely to purchase such residences). This results in a hard landscape purely reliant upon street plantings and allocated public open spaces. This can be exemplified by the types of current developments/densities at Armstrong Creek and surrounds. This may be suitable in limited applications such as for independent age care but is totally unnecessary to impose such high density living on the existing township, and will consequently impact upon the town's rural ambience and aesthetics.

This should also be viewed in context that data from the 2021 census documented Bannockburn and district GPS had 2,652 dwellings and population (2024) of appx 8500 people!!

Therefore the proposal to develop the Bannockburn SE area (appx 524Ha) to contain 4,685 dwellings and population of 13,820 residents for "Short Term" is not a suitable solution for the overall ambience and amenity of the rural township of Bannockburn.

Impacts of increased Traffic resulting from this development both during and after completion are also a major issue of concern.

A development of 4685 dwellings as well as additional schools and commercial precinct will result in a massive increase in traffic/vehicle movements both during construction and when it's completed.

Currently the development area can only be accessed via the north by High Street/Burnside Road or the south by Burnside Road/Hamilton Highway. Both of these areas as well as Burnside Road itself will require substantial upgrades. The development plan incorporates the inclusion of a new double lane divided east/west road (previous proposed truck bypass) running parallel with the existing H.V. Power easement. The development proposal does not detail the extension to either the east nor west of this new road. This new road will require bridges both over Bruce Creek and also over the Ballarat/Geelong rail line and construction of a major intersection with the Hamilton Highway.

It is critical that this infrastructure is staged so it is priority programmed as early works as a precursor to the Bannockburn SE development precinct as it will be needed from the start to manage plant/truck movements in/out of the development area as well as the increased traffic coming from the precinct once people commence occupying the new residences.

[REDACTED] (resident)

No doubt demographic assessments and forecasts have been undertaken that have determined the need for additional schools and commercial/retail precincts. However based off current existing schools and commercial precincts why wouldn't these be utilised or further developed to accommodate the much larger proposed population growth? Surely this would be beneficial to established business's and institutions and utilise and maximise existing facilities/infrastructure.

Another issue of prime concern is the provision access links both within the development precinct to the greater area of Bannockburn township. This is primarily the provision of a network of shared pathways for pedestrians and bicycles to safely access the township heart for community facilities, shopping outlets and schools. Bannockburn itself is already broken into areas/zones by the Ballarat/Geelong rail line, High Street, Bruce's Creek and what will become the new busy east/west road. Traffic volumes/impacts need to be considered across the town in general resulting from this development.

Transport links from across the township of Bannockburn and especially connectivity to Geelong is of paramount importance. The Bannockburn residents are currently highly reliant upon use of personal vehicles as the only reliable current available transport to/from Geelong. Acknowledging that there is a PTV bus service, and I believe McHarry's also provide a bus, however both of these have a very limited timetables resulting in their use by residents being minimal.

Private Bus companies obviously will only provide a service if it is profitable, this may happen overtime with the increased population, however until that time the government must provide and improve public transport/buses. Connectivity is a prime service requirement for areas of development a reliable and frequent service is necessary for both current Bannockburn residents and for those in the new precinct. Noting again as example such as Armstrong Creek where the small lot subdivision results in increased numbers of on street car parking due to limited spaces on the lots and lack of supported public transport. Realistically noting that in today's economic environment most families need more than one vehicle to fulfil daily routines of going to work or schools/shopping etc.

As discussed at the time of the community meeting, the current landscape design incorporates stormwater/drainage runoff management with some retention/retarding basins/ponds.

There are currently a couple of dams located to the west side of Burnside Road south of the HV power lines. This area is seasonally inundated and becomes a swamp, this is in-turn then frequented by many birds (water hens, ducks, egrets and occasional Ibis). The point being that the Turi Chicken farms are located on Burnside Rd, south of the Hamilton rail line. This is a designated Bio security zone and clear zones already exist, the current development plan indicates a stormwater retention basin to be constructed on the east side of Burnside Rd north of the Hamilton rail line, this is likely to be within the biosecurity setback zone. This water structure will attract wild birds including migratory birds (potential source of avian influenza) especially with the removal of the existing ponds.