



DAVID MORRIS MP
Member for Mornington

Planning Changes a Fundamental Threat to the Peninsula

Posted on 20 June 2017

For most of the second half of the 20th century there was bipartisan support for sensible planning on the Mornington Peninsula.

Successive generations recognised that growth was both welcome and inevitable but that if it was to occur, it had to be managed properly to ensure that the special character of the peninsula was retained for the benefit and pleasure of all Victorians. As Melbourne's population continues to grow, particularly to the south-east, so too does the need for access to all the pleasures that the peninsula provides.

Maintaining our green wedges and non-urban areas and the individual characters of our towns and villages is a crucial part of that equation, but unfortunately in recent years the bipartisan commitment to properly manage growth has been lost.

First the Bracks government decided the peninsula was really nothing more than an extension of the metropolitan area and applied Melbourne 2030 controls to local development. The council and the community fought those changes and were largely successful in rejecting the bulk of the measures imposed.

In 2013 the Mornington Peninsula Localised Planning Statement was inserted into the planning scheme as state policy, recognising that the peninsula should be planned as an area of special character and importance with a role clearly distinct from but complementary to metropolitan Melbourne and designated areas.

Unfortunately the current Minister for Planning, while not removing the statement from the planning scheme, has sought to diminish its role and effectiveness through the introduction of the new general residential zone.

This zone will permit not only dramatically increased density but also the construction of 11-metre-high dwellings without a permit. These changes are fundamental threats to the character, particularly the coastal character, of the Mornington Peninsula.

If this new policy is not reversed, the low-key residential nature of our towns and villages will be devastated.