

**Macedon Ranges Shire Council – Council Submission  
Exploration Licence Application No. EL007260 (Lancefield)**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council wishes to highlight the following planning and environment matters in response to Exploration Licence Application EL007260 (Lancefield) from Syndicate Minerals Pty Ltd provided to Council by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions for comment. We trust that this submission will be considered by Earth Resources Victoria in making its assessment regarding potential approval of the exploration licence in this location.

### **1. Statement of Planning Policy**

In 2018 Macedon Ranges was declared a distinctive area and landscape under the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Act 2018* – Distinctive areas and landscapes. The declaration in relation to Macedon Ranges Shire was published in the Government Gazette on 16 August 2018.

The Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy (SPP) was prepared in accordance with this declaration.

The purpose of the SPP as set out in the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Act 2018* is to create a framework for the future use and development of land in the declared area to ensure the protection and conservation of the distinctive attributes of the declared area.

The SPP sets out broad objectives for land use and development in Macedon Ranges Shire and involves:

- a vision for the area
- objectives and strategies for eleven policy domains
- settlement boundary maps for towns planned to accommodate managed growth.

The eleven (11) policy domains are:

1. Landscape
2. Biodiversity and environmental values
3. Water catchments and supply
4. Aboriginal culture, heritage and caring for Country (previously titled Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in consultation draft)
5. Post –contact cultural heritage (previously titled European Cultural Heritage in consultation draft)
6. Agriculture and natural resources
7. Tourism and Recreation

8. Settlements
9. Transport and Infrastructure
10. Risk and resilience (new domain post consultation)
11. Settlement boundary maps (new domain, previously these maps were referenced in Framework Plan section of the consultation draft)

The Statement of Planning Policy was approved by the Minister for Planning on 10 December 2019 via an Order in Council gazetted on 12 December 2019.

**Any proposed licence approval would need to have regard to the objectives and strategies of this statement having regard to the need to protect significant landscapes and areas of biodiversity.**

## **2. Significant Landscape Assessment**

In response to the declaration and the preparation of the SPP the state government funded the Macedon Ranges Significant Landscape Assessment (2019). The Study was undertaken to assess the visual significance of landscapes within the shire. The Study identified locations of significant landscape value and outlined recommended policies and controls to manage development within these landscapes and to protect significant view lines. This Licence application is proposed in locations where the significant landscape overlay is proposed.

**Council strongly recommends that any exploration activities be very mindful of the area's significant landscapes and views which should not be impacted upon in the exploration licence area.**

## **3. Biodiversity Strategy**

Council adopted the *Macedon Ranges Biodiversity Strategy* in December 2018. Community consultation and environmental analysis conducted during the preparation of this strategy has highlighted important biodiversity values within the area being considered for the mineral exploration licence. The strategy identifies that the exploration area proposed under Exploration Licence Application EL007260 (Lancefield) is located in part over the Kyneton Woodlands and Cobaw Biolinks.

These Biolink areas contain areas of significant vegetation and support a range of threatened/endangered species.

**Council strongly recommends that any exploration activities be very mindful of the area's significant waterways and areas of biodiversity which should be avoided in the exploration licence area.**

Roadside vegetation:

Many stretches of roadside vegetation in the Shire are noted for their significant vegetation species, including some roadsides in the proposed exploration area. Council recognises the importance of vegetation corridors along roadsides and a Roadside Management Plan is currently in development which will apply to Council managed roads.

**Any exploration activities should be very mindful of protecting significant roadside vegetation and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation that protects roadside native vegetation.**

#### **4. Cultural Considerations**

Waterways and significant landscapes within the proposed exploration licence area form an important cultural identity to the Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people.

**DEDJTR must engage with the Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Traditional Owner groups as part of any proposed application to identify areas of importance. These areas should be excluded from the application licence area.**

#### **5. Strategic agricultural land**

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has developed draft criteria to identify strategic agricultural land and identified potential locations of strategic agricultural land. Land in Macedon Ranges that is being considered for the exploration licence has been included in the investigation areas for Potential Strategic Agricultural Land.

**Any exploration activities would have to be very mindful of the economic asset that agricultural land is to the shire, and have regard to the legislative requirements to ensure its protection.**