

REGIONAL GROWTH PLANS

A VISION FOR VICTORIA

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

REGIONAL GROWTH PLAN

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT REPORT

September 2013

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1. Introduction

Eight regional growth plans have been developed in partnership between local and state government to plan for future growth, development and prosperity in regional Victoria.

The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan was developed between June 2011 and October 2013. Stakeholders and the broader community were involved at various stages of the plan's development. This document reports on the consultation and engagement undertaken and provides a summary of submissions and responses.

There were two stages of public consultation as part of the project. These were conducted as part of establishing the plan's strategic directions in July – August 2012 and as part of the preparation of the draft plan in June – July 2013. These stages provided an extensive range of feedback and suggestions which have assisted in the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan's development and refinement.

A framework for the project's approach to consultation was established through the development of a community engagement strategy guided by the IAP2 spectrum of public consultation. Consultation and engagement included a website, brochures, newsletters, face-to-face briefings, online questionnaires, hard-copy questionnaires, telephone interviews, and advertisements placed in locally circulating newspapers across the region.

Table 1 below shows project partners involved in developing the plan. The direction and content of the plan was guided by a Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group comprising the project partners indicated below. The project was managed by the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure's project team based in the Grampians Regional Office.

Table 1 Project partners

Organisation	Project Steering Committee (PSC)	Technical Working Group (TWG)		PSC	TWG
Ballarat City Council	✓	✓	Central Highlands Water		✓
Golden Plains Shire Council	✓	✓	Barwon Water		✓
Hepburn Shire Council	✓	✓	Wannon Water		✓
Pyrenees Shire Council	✓	✓	Coliban Water		✓
Ararat Rural City Council	✓	✓	Department of Premier and Cabinet		✓
Moorabool Shire Council	✓	✓	Department of State Development, Business and Innovation	✓	✓
Northern Grampians Shire Council	✓	✓	Department of Environment and Primary Industries (formerly Department of Primary Industries and Department of Sustainability and Environment)	✓	✓
Central Goldfields Shire Council	✓	✓	Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure (formerly Department of Transport and Department of Planning and Community Development)	✓	✓
Wimmera Catchment Management Authority		✓	Department of Justice		✓
Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority*	✓	✓	Department of Human Services		✓
Corangamite Catchment Management Authority		✓	Department of Health		✓
Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority		✓	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development		✓
North Central Catchment Management Authority		✓	VicRoads	✓	✓
Western Water		✓	Country Fire Authority		✓

* Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority was nominated to represent the interests of all catchment management authorities on the Project Steering Committee.

2. Overview of consultation and engagement

The plan was developed in five broad stages. Table 2 describes the plan's stages and timelines and includes an overview of engagement and consultation activities. For more detail on the consultation undertaken at each stage, refer to the detailed tables contained in the matching sections of the report.

Table 2 Consultation summary across the project

Project stage	Date	Stakeholders	Consultation	Summary of activity
1. Project establishment	June – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Steering Committee Technical Working group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with project partners to establish appropriate project governance and management arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project team consulted on membership of committees, governance structure, project management documents and the community engagement strategy. Inception meeting included a discussion about the project timeframes, expectations, roles and functions of stakeholders.
2. Preparing the issues paper	August 2011 – June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Working Group Project Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee during development of the draft issues paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project team compiled a draft issues paper based on the information provided by stakeholders. This included data collection (desk top analysis, meetings and research). Draft issues paper was provided for feedback. Newsletter for project partners.

Project stage	Date	Stakeholders	Consultation	Summary of activity
3. Establishing the plan's strategic directions	February 2012 – August 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies • General public • Regional stakeholders including farmers, small business owners, members of community organisations and environmental groups, tourism agencies and local economic development organisations • Councillors • Technical Working Group • Project Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a strategic directions brochure with the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. • Public consultation on the proposed strategic directions for the plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic directions development included a scenarios workshop and feedback from project partners. • Councillor briefings. • Newsletter. • Public consultation included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project website ▪ Phone interviews ▪ Mail out ▪ Advertisements in local newspapers.
4. Preparing the draft regional growth plan	October 2012 – July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies • General public • Regional stakeholders including farmers, small business owners, members of community organisations and environmental groups, tourism agencies and local economic development organisations • Councillors • Technical Working Group • Project Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the draft plan with the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. • Public consultation on the draft regional growth plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the plan included meetings and workshops with and feedback from the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. • Councillor briefings. • Newsletter. • Public consultation included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project website including online feedback form ▪ Documents available at council offices ▪ Mail out ▪ Advertisements in local newspapers.

Project stage	Date	Stakeholders	Consultation	Summary of activity
5. Preparing the final regional growth plan	July 2013 – October 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Working Group • Project Steering Committee • Councillors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with councillors and individual submitters and the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee, to finalise the plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings and discussions with project partners and submitters. • Councillor consideration of the plan.

3. Consultation and engagement detail and response

The following tables provide more detail about consultation undertaken at each stage of the project, describing the date on which it happened, what the consultation was and what outcomes were achieved from consultation.

3.1. Project establishment

This stage involved setting up the key project management and governance functions of the project.

The consultation and engagement during this stage of the project involved project partners in the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee. These groups provided feedback on the proposed project arrangements. Final endorsement of governance arrangements and documents was provided by the project steering committee.

Table 3 Project establishment – engagement activities

Date	Engagement activity	Details
June 2011	Dissemination of draft introductory material for consultation with councils.	Written material was provided to council officers as background and to provide an introduction to the regional growth plan project.

Date	Engagement activity	Details
August 2011	Inception meeting with senior council staff from across the region.	A meeting was held in Ballarat to give an overview of the project, describe governance structures and timelines and discuss project milestones and plans.
August - September 2011	Establishing the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group.	Project partners were requested to nominate representatives for the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. Chief executive officers were invited to be part of the Project Steering Committee, whilst the Technical Working Group comprised a range of directors, managers, planners or other technical staff.
September - December 2011	Establishing the project governance arrangements.	A project charter setting out the key project management arrangements was provided to the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group for comment and endorsement. Terms of reference which established the operational arrangements of the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group were provided to those two groups for comment and endorsement.
October 2011	Project newsletter 1.	The project team prepared a newsletter about project progress, upcoming activities and milestones. The newsletter was provided to project partners to distribute to members of their organisations. In particular, it was requested that the newsletter be distributed to councillors to help keep them informed about the project.
November - December 2011	Preparing the project's Community Engagement Strategy.	A Community Engagement Strategy was prepared to establish a framework for the project's consultation activities. The strategy was guided by the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, which is designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation. It defines the public's role along the scale of informing, consulting, involving, collaborating or empowering. The strategy detailed the type and the timing of the consultation and engagement program. The strategy was provided to the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group for comment and endorsement.

Consultation and engagement feedback

The Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group provided suggestions to help refine the project management and governance arrangements in relation to the project charter.

Response to feedback

The project charter was updated according to feedback and a revised version was circulated for further comment.

3.2. Preparing the issues paper

The project team prepared an issues paper to capture evidence which would inform the regional growth plan. The consultation and engagement in this stage included key stakeholders in the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee. Engagement activities included meetings with project partners and providing the draft issues paper for comment and feedback.

Table 4: Preparing the issues paper – engagement activities

Date	Engagement activity	Details
August 2011-June 2012	Preparing the draft issues paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project team initially sourced information from Project Steering Committee and Technical Working group members. Individual meetings were held with many project partners. As the paper matured, further information was gleaned from a range of sources including policy papers, positioning papers, desktop analysis, planning schemes and discussions with relevant agencies and authorities. The draft issues paper was provided to the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee for comment in November 2011. It was further updated and refined based on stakeholder feedback. A detailed response to comments paper was prepared by the project team and provided to the Technical Working Group. An opportunity for further comments was provided in April 2012. The Project Steering Committee endorsed the draft issues paper in March 2012. The draft issues paper was made available on the project website as background information during the strategic directions public consultation phase in June 2012.
December 2011	Mayors and CEOs Forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project team provided a briefing to local government mayors and CEOs about the regional growth plan.
February 2012	Project newsletter 2.	The project team prepared a newsletter about project progress, upcoming activities and milestones. The newsletter was provided to project partners to distribute to members of their organisations.

Consultation and engagement feedback

Comments on the draft issues paper were received from the former Department of Primary Industries (now the Department of Environment and Primary Industries), Department of Human Services, Ararat Rural City Council, Central Goldfields Shire Council, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, the former Department of Transport (now the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure), Department of Justice, and former Department of Sustainability and Environment (now the Department of Environment and Primary Industries), Golden Plains Shire Council, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water, Moorabool Shire Council, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority and Pyrenees Shire Council.

Feedback raised a wide range of matters, with suggestions about additional or revised content across all parts of the issues paper for the project team to consider.

Response to feedback

The issues paper was updated over its period of development to reflect comments and concerns and make improvements to content. Changes included:

- Factual corrections.
- Acknowledgements around limitations associated with dated census data.
- More emphasis on north-south corridors.
- Updates to reflect concerns that it was proposed to limit the types of agricultural uses which could occur on rural land.
- Updates to manage criticism that the paper was overly Ballarat-centric. Further balance was provided by identifying examples from other municipalities where possible and ensuring data generally covered all municipalities.
- Identifying that the regional strategic plan is a starting point for the regional growth plan, not a policy end point in itself.
- Including and then updating the settlement hierarchy, to reflect feedback.
- Greater environmental content such as discussion of erosion, flooding and the value of natural assets to the region.
- Adding relevant information about topics such as industrial land supply, heritage, Rail Revival Study, cultural heritage and the Advancing Country Towns project.
- More discussion around potential rural land use conflicts, including issues around water catchments and small towns.
- More discussion around settlement clusters and corridors.
- Greater coverage of peri-urban issues.
- Adding a map showing the transport network and providing references to various transport projects.
- Further references to local policies and projects from across the region.

3.3. Establishing the plan's strategic direction

This stage involved the project team working in partnership with a cross-section of stakeholders to identify opportunities and constraints, develop scenarios, and analyse the region's context, trends and issues. This was achieved through a scenarios workshop held in February 2012, involving the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. The evidence and ideas generated by the issues paper and the scenarios workshop led to the confirmation of the vision for the region, and identification of proposed principles for growth and change and strategic directions for the regional growth plan.

A strategic directions brochure was prepared to set out the proposed principles and directions for the plan and was made available for public comment from July – August 2012. The consultation and engagement during this stage was directed to key stakeholders, interested parties and individuals, who were informed and invited to provide feedback on the plan's strategic direction. The project team undertook a number of consultation activities including development of the project web site, telephone interviews and councillor briefings. The original consultation report prepared for this stage of the project, which contains full details of the consultation activities, feedback and responses, is reproduced in Appendix 1.

Table 5: Establishing the plan’s strategic direction – engagement activities

Date	Engagement activity	Details
Pre-public consultation engagement activities		
February 2012	Scenarios workshop in Beaufort.	<p>This workshop explored settlement networks, growth scenarios and the vision and principles for the region. It was attended by representatives of councils, government departments and agencies. The workshop comprised the following sessions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Testing and validating the understanding of settlement networks and relationships between settlements. 2. Discussion of the proposed vision, guiding principles and drivers of change for the regional growth plan. 3. Discussion of the pros and cons of four scenarios for regional growth. <p>The outputs of the workshop were then reflected in the development of the strategic directions brochure.</p>
February 2012 – June 2012	Councillor briefings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project team attended sessions at all Central Highlands’ councils to brief councillors about the project. • Participants were given the opportunity to make suggestions or ask questions about the project.
June 2012	Project newsletter 3.	<p>A newsletter was prepared outlining activities such as the scenarios workshop and preparation of the strategic directions brochure, as well proposed research activities to be undertaken. The newsletter was provided to the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee to distribute to members of their organisations, including councillors. It was also made available on the project web site once this was established in July 2012.</p>
March – June 2012	Strategic directions brochure development.	<p>The Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee provided feedback on the draft strategic directions brochure. The brochure was endorsed by the Project Steering Committee to be released for public consultation between July- August 2012.</p>
Public consultation engagement activities		
July 2012	Project website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project website was established in July 2012 for the public consultation. • The website provided a summary of the project, background information (including the issues paper) and a copy of the strategic directions brochure. • A total of about 1000 page views of the website were made during July- August 2012. • A feedback form was available to be downloaded and provided space for comments for particular

Date	Engagement activity	Details
July – August 2012	Mail out to stakeholders.	<p>sections of the information brochure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter was mailed or emailed to around 200 stakeholders informing them of the strategic directions brochure and web site and requesting feedback. • This included councils in the Central Highlands and neighbouring regions, government departments, utilities providers, catchment management authorities, community groups, businesses and business groups, farmers, not-for profit organisations and education providers. Non-government organisations or persons were suggested by members of the Technical Working Group to ensure a wide representation of the community. • A request was also made to Technical Working Group members to disseminate information about the consultation period to their contacts.
July-August 2012	Phone interviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project team conducted phone interviews which typically took around 20-25 minutes to complete. • The interview consisted of eight questions relating to matters such as: 1. What people like and dislike about the brochure? 2. What features of the region were valued and what would help realise its potential? 3. Whether the proposed concept plan was a reasonable representation of the region? • A total of 21 phone interviews were completed. • A broad range of people from a variety of locations were contacted, including people representing businesses, community organisations, environmental groups, economic development organisations and key regional institutions.
August 2012	Mayors and CEOs Forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project team provided a briefing to local government mayors and CEOs about the regional growth plan and strategic directions undergoing consultation.
July - August 2012	Other publicity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements were placed in 9 local newspapers across the region. • Other publicity included notices on websites of the region's councils. • Presentations about the regional growth plan were provided at a regional valuers forum and at a regional sustainable growth workshop.

Consultation and engagement feedback from public consultation on the strategic directions

20 written submissions were received in response to the strategic directions.

The feedback received was generally positive regarding the concept plan for regional growth. It was suggested that the high-level planning principles be clarified to avoid misinterpretation in the implementation.

Valued aspects of the region included its natural environment, strong community and good access to services and Melbourne. However, key matters needing to be addressed included infrastructure and technology to support growth, a lack of public transport services, better promotion of the region as a place to do business and issues around skills and education to support local employment.

Rural residential development attracted a variety of comments with some submitters seeking to focus growth in existing development and other comments suggesting the draft plan should not prohibit such development and should promote a range of settlements of different sizes.

Key shortcomings identified with the strategic directions brochure included the lack of recognition of employment as a driver for growth, a need to clarify the extent of growth for various settlements and the need to better link the proposed planning principles with the directions in the draft plan.

Further details of the key issues raised by both phone interview and written submissions are summarised in Appendix 1.

Response to feedback

Recommendations arising from the consultation feedback were set out for the Project Steering Committee to establish how various issues should be managed in the subsequent preparation of the draft regional growth plan. These recommendations included:

- Ensuring that the draft plan focuses on land use matters of regional significance.
- Ensuring a clear link between the principles and detailed directions of the draft plan.
- Minor re-wording to some principles to pick up on issues raised by submitters, eg recognising heritage and landscapes as economic and community assets.
- In relation to rural land use:
 - Ensuring the draft regional growth plan sets out a spatial approach to economic development and rural land use.
 - Removing the policy distinction between Ballarat hinterland and peri-urban areas.
 - Limiting rural residential development, but further developing the approach through the preparation of the draft plan.
 - Including regional economic development opportunities such as heritage, tourism, timber industry and the university/technology park cluster.
- In relation to settlement planning:
 - Separating the extent of growth for settlements from their role and function.
 - Clarifying the extent of growth and promoting infill development.
 - Recognising the role of small towns.
 - Recognising cross-border relationships.
 - Informing settlement directions for individual towns with environmental and infrastructure constraints.
- Ensuring that the draft plan places sufficient emphasis on matters such as:

- Directing growth to environmentally sustainable locations.
- Regional economic development opportunities such as heritage, tourism, timber industry and the university/technology park cluster.
- Landscapes and environment as valued attributes.
- Managing rural and peri-urban land uses.
- Providing for sufficient social infrastructure, in accordance with demographic trends.
- Recognising any implications of climate change on the region.
- Improving transport connections.
- Minimising growth in areas at threat from bushfire, flood, erosion or salinity risks.

Full details of the recommendations arising from the strategic directions consultation phase are set out in Appendix 1.

3.4. Preparing the draft regional growth plan

Development of the draft regional growth plan involved the project team working in partnership with the Technical Working Group to prepare a plan which captured the expectations of stakeholders and build on the key issues, drivers of change and strategic directions identified through earlier work. This stage included meetings and workshops with Technical Working Group members, as well as opportunities to provide direct feedback on the content of the draft plan as it was developed. The Project Steering Committee ultimately endorsed the draft plan for consultation and councillors were briefed prior to the commencement of exhibition. A draft background report was also prepared and exhibited, that set out the evidence base for the draft regional growth plan.

Consultation on the draft plan occurred over a one month period between 3 June and 5 July 2013. The consultation and engagement during this stage was directed to councillors, key stakeholders, interested parties and individuals, who were informed and invited to provide feedback on the draft plan.

Table 6: Preparing the draft regional growth plan – engagement activities

Date	Engagement activity	Details
Pre-public consultation engagement activities		
October 2012	Rural land use workshop.	<p>Technical Working Group members attended a facilitated rural land use planning workshop in Ballarat which explored issues such as :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionally important areas for agriculture and tourism. • Infrastructure needed to support these areas. • How land use planning could support these areas. • Synergies and conflicts between economic land uses and regionally important natural resources and environmental values. <p>A report summarising the key findings of the workshop were provided to the Technical Working Group for further comment. One submission was received from a council.</p> <p>Ideas and feedback generated from the workshop and subsequent feedback contributed towards the development of the draft plan, particularly around rural land use and tourism.</p>
December 2012	Infrastructure workshop.	<p>One of the project’s research studies was an investigation into infrastructure availability and opportunities. As part of this study Technical Working Group members attended a presentation and workshop which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided an overview of the findings of the infrastructure study. • Included a discussion around key opportunities and priorities for the region. <p>Feedback was provided and contributed towards the development the draft regional growth plan and final version of the infrastructure study.</p>
January – June 2013	Councillor briefings on the draft regional growth plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A briefing about the regional growth plan was provided at an induction day for Central Highlands’ councillors, following local government elections, in January 2013. • The project team attended briefing sessions with councillors at Hepburn, Ararat and Pyrenees to enable feedback about the early draft of the regional growth plan. • The project team prepared briefing material for Council officers to brief councillors about the impending consultation on the draft regional growth plan in May/June.

Date	Engagement activity	Details
March 2013	Project newsletter 4.	A project newsletter was prepared outlining the outcomes from the strategic directions consultation, details of ongoing research and information on upcoming work on the draft regional growth plan. The newsletter was provided to the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee to distribute to members of their organisations, including councillors. It was also made available on the project website.
November – April 2013	Collaboration with the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee in the development of the draft regional growth plan.	<p>The project team worked with the Technical Working Group to develop the draft plan for consultation. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with council officers to discuss a detailed approach for key settlements. • Meetings with stakeholders such as Moorabool Shire and the Department of Human Services, where clarification of approach or content was required for particular topics. • Providing the draft plan and background report for feedback to the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee. <p>21 organisations from the Central Highlands Technical Working Group, and a number of organisations on the Statewide Technical Working Group provided feedback on the initial drafts of the plan. This led to significant updates to the draft plan and background report which were then re-circulated for further comment. The project team also provided a detailed response to these submissions.</p>
Public consultation engagement activities		
June - July 2013	Project website.	<p>The project web site was updated to provide information on the draft plan and opportunities to provide feedback. It included a copy of the draft regional growth plan, background report and an interactive form to input comments directly to the project team.</p> <p>Web site activity comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 933 page views and 628 visitors.

Date	Engagement activity	Details
June - July 2013	Mail out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter was mailed or emailed to around 430 stakeholders informing them of the draft regional growth plan and web site and requesting feedback. • This included councils in the Central Highlands region, government departments, community groups, businesses and business groups, farmers, not-for profit organisations, education providers and submitters from the previous round of consultation. Non-government organisations or persons were suggested by members of the Technical Working Group to ensure a wide representation of the community.
June 2013 – July 2013	Other publicity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements were included in eight local newspapers. • Hard copies of the draft plan, summary brochures and comments sheets were displayed at council offices and at the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure's regional office in Ballarat. • Notice of the exhibition period was included in the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure's weekly subscriber email 'Planning Matters'. • A presentation about the plan was provided to the Daylesford and Hepburn Business and Tourism Association.

Consultation and engagement feedback from public consultation on the draft plan

A total of 20 submissions were received from private individuals, community organisations, industry groups, councils and agencies.

Feedback is summarised in Appendix 2. Feedback covered a wide range of matters, generally focusing on specific wording or issues in the plan. There were a few themes that came through multiple submissions and these included:

- Queries around the robustness of the evidence base and whether some key trends and drivers of change (such as climate change) had been sufficiently analysed.
- Concerns about whether the plan had sufficient regard for environmental sustainability issues.
- The need to better represent mineral and stone resources in the plan.
- Requests for additional guidance or work on peri-urban issues.
- Giving weight to the knowledge economy across the region and emphasising the need to transform the regional economy.
- Suggestions about including additional tourism, heritage and environmental assets.

- Requests for more detail on water projects, initiatives and strategies.
- Calls for consistency between regional catchment strategies and the regional growth plan, particularly relating to identification of high value natural resources/assets.
- Opportunities for more freight hubs.
- Concern that the plan overly focused on a few towns, particularly Ballarat.
- The importance of planning for transport, particularly public transport, to service growth.
- The importance of considering the plan as a whole, not just the overarching directions in Part D.

The most common matter raised by submitters was about implementation. Queries included how the plan would be implemented and requests were made for more detail in relation to the approach, governance and monitoring.

There was support expressed for various aspects of the plan by a number of submitters. This included support for:

- The plan's tourism directions.
- The regional settlement framework.
- The role of Ballarat and various initiatives within that city.
- Maintaining a green break with Melbourne.
- Limiting the commuter role of Bacchus Marsh.
- Embracing the knowledge economy.
- Providing long term certainty regarding the primacy of agriculture in rural areas.
- Recognising the need for further local planning on some issues and the need for local characteristics to inform planning outcomes.
- Recognition of infrastructure needs around rural land use and small towns.

Response to feedback

See Section 3.5 and Appendix 2 for details.

3.5. Preparing the final regional growth plan

This stage involved updating the plan to take account of feedback received on the draft plan. The consultation and engagement associated with this stage of the plan's development again included project partners in the Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Group, as well as some individual submitters.

Table 7: Preparing the final regional growth plan – engagement activities

Date	Engagement activity	Details
July – August 2013	Review submissions and collaborating with stakeholders to prepare the final plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submissions were considered by the project team and the plan was updated as required. • Further research was undertaken where required to confirm detail from submissions. In some cases this included discussions with individual submitters to clarify the nature of the submission. • A document was prepared providing detailed feedback on the submissions by the project team and forwarded to the Technical Working Group and Project Steering Committee. • The Technical Working Group provided additional comments and feedback at its meeting. • The Project Steering Committee met to consider the project teams' response to submissions and had no further comments.
August 2013	Peri-urban information sharing workshop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure held a workshop with the peri-urban group of Rural Councils. • The workshop explored opportunities to improve the presentation of peri-urban issues in state planning policy and regional growth plans.
September – October 2013	Councillor consideration of final plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan was formally considered by all councils in the region.

Consultation and engagement feedback

See Section 3.4 and Appendix 2 for details.

Response to feedback

Various updates were made to the regional growth plan on the basis of submissions and engagement activities. These included:

- Updating content to clarify the intent of the plan.
- Providing better coverage of peri-urban matters, including a new specific chapter on the significance of the peri-urban region and other changes throughout the plan to better represent specific peri-urban needs and issues.
- Enhanced coverage of earth resources.
- Providing increased emphasis on some issues such as infill development, disadvantage and natural hazards.
- Improved wording to ensure the plan better captured opportunities across the region, including through additional local examples and emerging opportunities.
- Correcting mapping errors or updating maps to reflect submitter concerns.
- A new high level framework for how the plan will be implemented and reviewed.
- Editorial improvements.

Consequential changes and data updates were also made to the background report.

Suggestions that were not adopted generally included:

- Issues which were considered to be adequately covered by the draft plan, or the background report.
- Adding contextual information.
- Suggestions for which there was limited evidence to justify a change.
- Additions not relating to matters of regional significance.
- Suggestions contrary to government policy or subject to ongoing work.

Appendix 2 provides further details on the response to individual submissions.

Appendix 1 – Strategic directions consultation details, feedback and response

The following report was presented to the Project Steering Committee following public consultation on the strategic directions. It outlined consultation activities, feedback received and a proposed response as to how the feedback would be incorporated into the draft plan.

Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan

Strategic Directions Consultation Summary Paper

1. Purpose

This paper has been prepared for the project steering committee and provides a summary of the consultation undertaken during July and August 2012 following the public release of the strategic directions information brochure. Consultation on the brochure was the first phase of public consultation undertaken for the project.

The brochure sets out:

- A set of regional planning principles to guide the preparation of the growth plan.
- A concept plan for regional growth (a suggested means by which the region could grow over the next 30 years – for discussion purposes).
- A summary of the ideas and issues explored which have informed the concept plan.

2. Consultation methods

The formal period of consultation ran over a 4 week period until 24 August 2012. Consultation on the information brochure has been undertaken through:

- A project website (<http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/planning/plansandpolicies/ruralandregionalplanning/regionalgrowthplans/centralhighlands>).
- A mail out to stakeholder contacts identified by Technical Working Group members.
- Phone interviews with selected stakeholders.
- Councillor briefing notes.
- Other publicity.

Project Website

A project website (see link above) was established in late July 2012 and provides a summary of the project, background reports and a copy of the information brochure. As of 5 September 2012 the website had received a total of 972 page views (or hits) from 761 visitors with peak visitation occurring in mid August. A total of 71 copies of the Stakeholder Update and 190 copies of the information brochure were downloaded.

An online feedback form was made available on the project website. The online feedback form provided space for comments on the Regional Planning Principles and the Concept Plan for Regional Growth.

Mail out

The Technical Working Group members nominated a total of approximately 200 individuals or organisations that may be interested in the plan, or provide links into other community, business or environment organisations. These contacts were invited to comment on the information brochure.

Phone Interviews

Phone calls were made to a selection of the contacts nominated by the Technical Working Group during August. Those contacted were from a broad range of backgrounds and locations. Where the party indicated a willingness to participate in a telephone interview an interview was conducted within 7 days, providing the opportunity for the interviewees to familiarise themselves with the content of the information brochure and the project.

The phone interviews typically took around 20 - 25 minutes to complete and consisted of eight questions relating to the content of the information brochure. A total of 21 phone interviews were completed, with around double this number contacted to ascertain interest in participating. Interviews were completed with a broad range of people including the directors of small and medium sized businesses, members of community organisations (including local economic development organisations such as progress associations) and environmental groups, representatives of tourism boards and government agencies. A copy of the survey is provided at Attachment 1.

Councillor briefings

The project team conducted information sessions at councillor briefings for all municipalities in the months leading up to the consultation. In addition, a briefing note was provided to council CEOs to advise councillors of the details of the consultation program prior to commencement of the formal consultation period.

Other publicity

Advertisements were included in eight local newspapers across all parts of the region, as well the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure's 'Planning Matters' weekly email to subscribers. Links to the project web site were also included on council web sites.

A project briefing was provided to a workshop on sustainable growth hosted by the Ballarat Environment Network as part of their Sustainability and Urban Wellbeing Project.

3. Consultation feedback

A total of 20 written submissions were received, from both agencies and private individuals.

The feedback received was generally positive regarding the legibility, content and structure of the strategic directions brochure. No significant or consistent objections were raised to the proposed overall approach, although a variety of issues were raised in relation to specific aspects of the principles or concept plan.

Some of the key issues raised by both phone interview and the online feedback respondents are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Regional planning principles

A number of respondents pointed out that the regional planning principles were generally very high level and that they look forward to reviewing more specific recommendations of the draft growth plan when this is released.

Support was received in relation to those principles which supported development being directed towards areas with infrastructure capacity and the protection of environmental assets. Various suggestions were made by respondents as to how the regional planning principles could be improved. Suggested improvements included:

- elevating principle 1 to a statement of purpose rather than a principle
- adding a new principle as follows: *Capitalise on the region's proximity to Melbourne*
- principle 9 should identify heritage assets as a key economic and community asset for the region
- promote the concept of sustainable growth in more principles
- include concepts such climate change and communities.

Aspects of the region most valued

- the natural environment
- strong sense of community which is caring and highly engaged
- a generally well informed and well educated community
- accessibility to Melbourne and regional centres – good freeway and rail access
- access to excellent services, particularly health and education
- the diversity and resilience of the local community, for example, innovative businesses making up for job losses in the manufacturing sector.

Matters needing to be addressed for region to realise its potential

- lack of regular public transport (bus and train) services from many of the smaller settlements to Ballarat and Melbourne places. These communities are at a significant disadvantage in terms of access to employment and services
- the region fails to market itself properly; the liveability that residents enjoy is not well promoted; the region is not promoted as a place for business (marketing is too tourism dominated); the region is a good place for business given excellent access to markets
- quality tourism product and the infrastructure to support it
- visionary long term planning to bring jobs to the region
- the need for infrastructure to keep up with existing growth, for example, strains on road network in the west of Ballarat
- need to be future proofed and have access to technology such as the National Broadband Network
- shortcomings in skills base, makes it difficult to fill jobs with locals in some sectors
- perception that businesses need to be located in Melbourne to succeed – this should be less important in the information era
- a more robust education system in the region to develop skills that will lead to employment within the region and reduce the loss of young people.

Feedback on proposed concept plan for regional growth

The draft concept plan for regional growth was viewed by most respondents as largely consistent with existing council planning policies. Respondents were generally comfortable with locations for growth in the region.

A number of respondents discussed the merits of identifying growth in some of the smaller settlements within the region (in Ballarat's hinterland area) and questioned the extent of growth planned for these settlements. The term 'medium growth' which was applied to these key hinterland towns was interpreted by some respondents as indicating significant growth in the population of some of these townships which was not supported by a number of respondents given the lack of infrastructure, services and employment in some of these locations.

Rural residential development attracted a variety of comments. Some respondents stated that growth should be focused in existing settlements given the inefficiencies associated with rural – residential development and the need to avoid development in water catchment areas. There was also a view expressed that the plan should not prohibit residential development in rural areas and should support the growth of a range of settlement sizes, not only large settlements.

General shortcomings identified in strategic directions

- lacks recognition of the importance of employment, with population growth needing to be supported by employment growth
- the regional planning principles are very high level
- not enough emphasis on creating jobs – creating dormitory towns where people need to commute to employment is detrimental to lifestyle and undermines community life – growth must be associated with employment
- the need to link the planning principles to the concept plan.

4. Recommended Responses

The project team made the following recommendations about how matters raised during consultation should be addressed in the draft regional growth plan:

Overall approach

- Ensure that the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan focuses on settlement, growth, economic development, environmental, infrastructure and rural land use matters of regional significance.
- Ensure a clear link between the principles and detailed directions of the plan.

Recommended principles

The following changes were suggested to principles:

1. Plan for population growth in sustainable locations throughout the region.
2. Plan for and strengthen the region's economy so that it is more diversified and resilient.
3. Capitalise on the region's access to the highways and railways.

4. Enhance the level of access to key services to support sustainable and vibrant communities.
5. Encourage land use patterns, developments and infrastructure which make the region more self-reliant and sustainable.
6. Integrate planning for growth with the provision of infrastructure.
7. Manage, protect and enhance the region's land, soil, water and biodiversity.
8. Support long term agricultural productivity.
9. Recognise the importance of heritage and landscapes as economic and community assets.

Recommended spatial approach to regional growth

Given that feedback generally supported the proposed concept plan, it was recommended these concepts form the basis of the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan, subject to the changes below. The concept plan for regional growth, as set out in the brochure, was not included in the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan. Its contents and ideas however were used to inform the key spatial directions and maps in the draft plan.

As a result of the feedback received the following changes are proposed to the approach for regional growth in the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan (numbers are linked to the concept plan below). Some matters identified as requiring ongoing consideration as the draft plan was developed included:

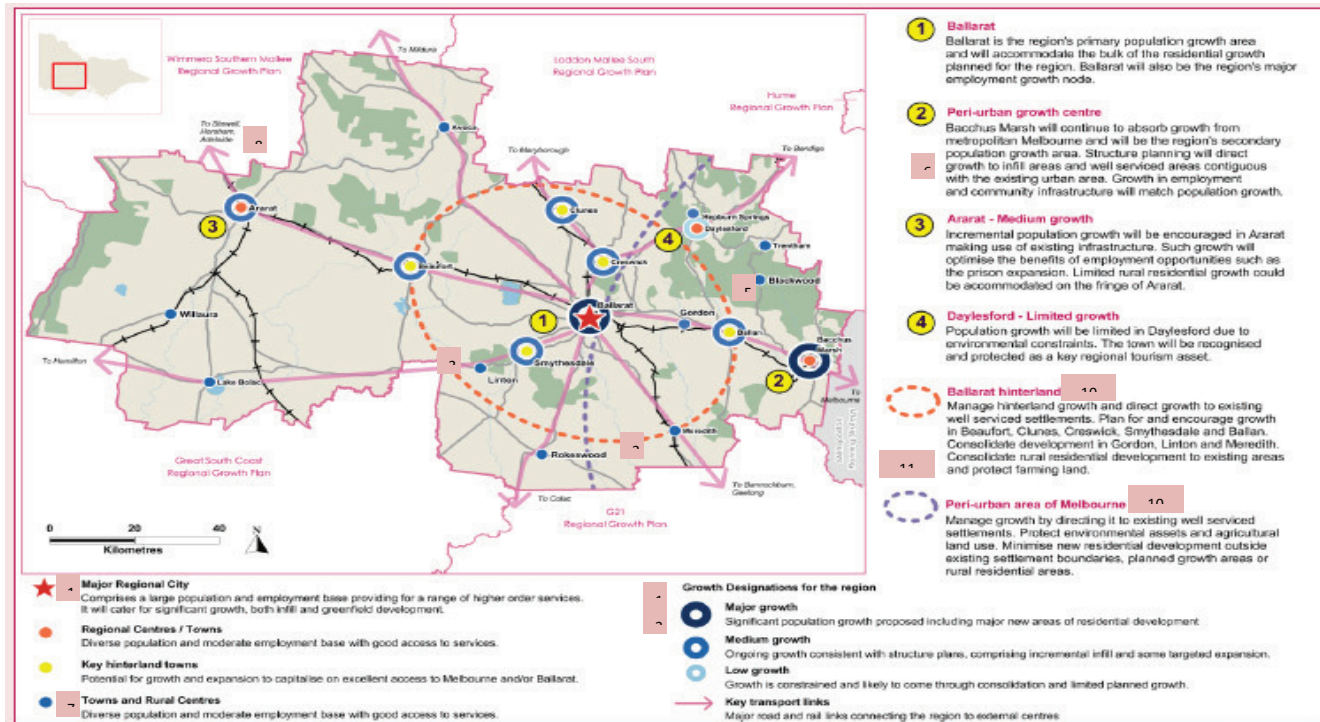
Settlements

1. Descriptions of the extent of growth, for example, high/low/medium growth, should be separated from the role/function hierarchy of settlements, for example, regional city/hinterland town. It is noted that the approach will be informed by descriptions being developed to ensure a consistent state wide approach.
2. The extent of growth proposed for settlements under each designation should be clarified. Descriptions of growth in the plan should promote infill development as well as greenfield expansion of settlements.
3. Infrastructure constraints should be considered in determining the regional growth plan's approach to the potential growth of small towns eg Meredith. (see also point 7)
4. More specific growth directions for major settlements should be informed by bushfire and other environmental hazards.
5. Constraints associated with further growth of Blackwood should inform the approach to this town.
6. The regional growth plan should note that there are limits to the growth of Bacchus Marsh in the medium to long term and there will be a need to manage the impacts of these constraints.

- Smaller towns, rural centres and rural settlements should continue to provide for growth of local housing and employment, commensurate with their infrastructure capacity and level of services. The regional growth plan should recognise that these towns may operate in networks to share services and that planning for small settlements will generally continue to be done through municipal planning processes, unless their growth is of regional significance. The approach to some small towns will require ongoing consideration as the plan is prepared.
- The plan should clearly recognise and illustrate the relationships between clusters of settlements. This should include close cross border relationships, such as Ararat-Stawell.

Rural and peri-urban land use

- The regional growth plan should set out a spatial approach to economic development and rural land use, in addition to settlement. The approach to these matters will require further consideration as the plan is developed and should recognise the different contexts across the region.
- The distinction in approach between Ballarat hinterland and Melbourne peri-urban areas should be removed.
- Rural residential development should be limited from a regional perspective to existing locations. The details of the regional growth plan’s approach to this should be considered further through the development of the plan.



Other issues

Ensure that the draft regional growth plan includes consideration of the following matters raised during consultation:

Environment

- The need to ensure that growth is sustainable, from an environmental perspective, by directing it to locations where it will not impact upon high value land, water or biodiversity assets.
- The need to avoid directing growth to locations affected by significant environmental risk factors, including bushfire risk, flooding, erosion and salinity.
- The regional implications of climate change and oil dependence for different land uses in the region.
- Landscapes and the environment as valued attributes of the region.

Economy

- Regional economic development and employment opportunities.
- The importance of tourism and the benefits that accrue to the region from investment in tourism facilities, with this sector having considerable growth potential.
- The opportunities associated with the region's heritage.
- The importance of the university and technology park cluster in Ballarat as a regional facility.
- The role of timber industry in the region.

Settlement and population

- The need to direct growth to locations where it will make best use of existing infrastructure, including reticulated sewerage and water services.
- Appropriate directions for growth in larger settlements.
- The importance of community development and social equity, including appropriate infrastructure in planning for growth.
- Demographic change, including ageing population and loss of population from smaller rural communities.
- Landscapes and the environment as valued attributes of the region.

Infrastructure

- Improved transport connections, including between Ballarat and Melbourne.

General

- The broad range of opportunities presented by the proximity of the region to Melbourne and its excellent road and rail links.
- Inclusion of an implementation plan.
- Coordination with other regional plans including the metropolitan strategy.

Appendix 2 – Draft plan consultation feedback and response

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
1	<p>The domestic wastewater management plans prepared by Council are not required to be considered under the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> (it only states they MAY) be considered. Goulburn Murray Water says that this undermines the value of the role of domestic wastewater management plans as prepared in line with DSE requirements.</p> <p>In addition, the submission is praiseworthy of the regional growth plan: ..”The Draft regional growth plan is a well balanced document and places importance appropriately.”</p>	<p>Within its scope, the regional growth plan adequately deals with the status of domestic wastewater management plans at Section 13.3 Catchment health by expressing the action for Councils to review domestic wastewater management plans particularly in areas subject to pressure for rural residential development. However, a sentence can be added at Section 15.3 in water supply to clarify the critical role of domestic wastewater management plans for the management of septic systems.</p>	<p>Update regional growth plan to emphasise the importance of domestic wastewater management plans in the management of septic systems.</p>
2	<p>The photo of Ararat on pages 16 and 17 is over 15 years old.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>Review photos for final version of the plan.</p>
3	<p>Map 6, page 29 (Environment and Heritage) does not mention Wombat State Forest.</p>	<p>Wombat State Forest is specifically mapped in the background report The regional growth plan is a regionally based document and does not mention all environmental assets.</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>
4a	<p>The plan suffers from any meaningful form of performance assessment, accountability or ways of measuring progress towards the vision. The plan needs to be more specific and helpful on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we know whether we are making progress towards the stated vision – <i>prosperity, sustainability and liveability</i>. • What indicators will be used to measure success. 	<p>The regional growth plan will include a high level framework describing key opportunities for implementation of the plan and review. It is intended that this approach be further developed once the plan is finalised and approved.</p>	<p>Update regional growth plan to include a framework for implementation and review in Part E.</p>

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will they be collected and used. What role different agencies and authorities have in collecting and disseminating data. <p>Recommendation is to document a set of key indicators that show how progress towards the stated vision of prosperity, sustainability and liveability will be measured, how this information will be collected and how it will be used to guide future planning and decision-making.</p>		
4b	<p>The plan has a 40-year outlook, yet provides a very incomplete description and analysis of the drivers for change. Poor strategic analysis means that strategic opportunities will be lost and strategic risks ignored. In the absence of a detailed strategic analysis it is hard to see how the strategic directions towards the plan's vision will be realised</p> <p>Recommendation: Revisit the drivers for change and conduct a much more thorough, realistic and comprehensive strategic analysis of the region's future.</p>	<p>The regional growth plan has been developed over 18 months and has included extensive research, analysis data collections, underpinned by two key supporting projects (the infrastructure study and the rural residential analysis). The regional growth plan is a partnership project with local government that has included CEO's of the partner councils, technical working groups and extensive consultation with key authorities, community groups, individuals and business owners. All parties have engaged with the development of the plan. The project team is comfortable it represents regional views of key opportunities and trends. A background report has been prepared which sets out this detailed evidence base.</p>	No change to regional growth plan.
4c	<p>Reference is made to climate change, but the analysis fails to fully consider the implications of climate change on land-use patterns, settlement options, changes to industry and the potential flow on impacts to this region from climate</p>	<p>The Victorian Government acknowledges there is risk posed by climate change and a need to support national and global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Following the review of the Victorian <i>Climate Change Act 2010</i> the</p>	No change to regional growth plan.

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	<p>change elsewhere in Australia and internationally. The plan understates the scale, speed and cost of adaptation challenges of climate change. This is a serious omission that could expose future councils, authorities and communities to increased risk, liability and expense that would undermine the aspirations of prosperity, sustainability and liveability.</p>	<p>government continues to support measures that focus on management of and adaptation to climate risks, and that helps increase the ability of individuals, businesses and communities to maximise opportunities arising from the national carbon price.</p> <p>Each regional growth plan acknowledges relevant risks posed by climate change to the future growth of that region, to assist in the management of and adaptation to climate risks posed to various land uses across Victoria. The regional growth plans align with the risks and actions identified in the Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Each plan also acknowledges the growth opportunities that arise from a changing climate and initiatives that support national and global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The regional growth plan addresses more detailed climate change adaptation planning that can occur in the region at section 13.4: <i>“Monitor, assess and act on the potential impacts and opportunities of climate change across the region and collaborate with other regional climate change adaptation planning activities to inform future land use planning decisions.”</i></p>	
4d	<p>A key consideration for future growth and prosperity is how we consider our structural reliance on oil and how we strategically position ourselves to minimise any potential risk and</p>	<p>The regional growth plan has been informed by recent studies/analysis as referenced in the background report: Paroissien Grant and Associates Pty Ltd (2012) Central Highlands</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	create new opportunities. Absence of this form of analysis undermines the utility of the regional growth plan to its intended audiences.	Infrastructure Study and Energy Futures and Vulnerability in the Grampians 2013. The issue of how the region strategically positions itself is addressed in the background report and manifested in the regional growth plan via the 10 key principles in achieving the visions. Each principle is addressed in the regional growth plan with specific policies, actions or strategies to implement. For example, the regional growth plan encourages population growth to be planned in sustainable locations closer, to employment and services. Transport services should be appropriate within the region (enable use for work, leisure, and education). The detail of how this will be done will be addressed via the implementation plan which will require interventions locally and regionally by all stakeholders to achieve	
4e	The regional growth plan must consider the strategic implications of how we are exceeding our carrying capacity and provide direction on how the region will grow within its means. A stronger framework for sustainability will provide a mechanism for how planners, decision-makers and communities can turn this risk into opportunity. There are considerable opportunities for this region to reduce our ecological footprint while increasing our prosperity, sustainability and liveability.	The regional growth plan encourages the further development of local planning schemes and projects that can advance the sustainability of the region. The regional growth plan addresses the need to reduce the ecological footprint by progressing the 10 key principles underpinning the plan. For example, adopting strategies that manage, protect and enhance the regions' land, soil, water and biodiversity will, among other things, provide an essential contribution to the long-term sustainability of the region. It will be up to the governance and leadership of the implementation plan to advance work/projects that will contribute to the longevity of the	No change to regional growth plan.

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
		<p>environment broadly. These are part of a suite of planning mechanisms that consider the future of the region.</p>	
4f	<p>Provide a stronger and more in-depth analysis of the technological trends, issues, opportunities and risks for the region. Technological innovation is mentioned, but only considers telecommunications. This is short sighted and ignores the other technological transformations that are changing the world.</p>	<p>The regional growth plan has been informed by recent studies/analysis as referenced in the background report, for example: <i>Paroissien Grant and Associates Pty Ltd (2012) Central Highlands Infrastructure Study and Energy Futures and Vulnerability in the Grampians 2013</i>. These reports recognise that the future will provide additional technological advances that should be taken advantage of. The regional growth plan has identified the potential impacts of technology throughout the plan. Section 14.3 Regional settlement strategy provides an action for monitoring the settlement framework with regard to advancements in technology and infrastructure. Similarly, Section 15.1 Transport, provides a future direction to consider technological advancements in the transport provision mix. Section 1453 Water, Energy and utilities makes reference to emerging bio technology in terms of waste and recycling provisions.</p> <p>Section 12.4 Industry and employment supports building a knowledge-based economy but this section can be further strengthened.</p>	<p>Update Section 12.4 to more strongly support the evolution of the economy towards skills, technology and innovation.</p>
4g	<p>The word ‘sustainability’ and its variants are not clearly defined. It is used loosely to cover economic growth, communities and urban form, creating contradictions and confusion.</p>	<p>The Ecologically Sustainable Development definition as adopted by the Council of Australia Governments is being used in the regional growth plan: Using, conserving and enhancing the</p>	<p>Update regional growth plan to include definition in glossary.</p>

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	Recommendation: Provide a coherent explanation or definition of 'sustainability' that is practical and provides a basis for effective planning and decision-making.	community's resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased.	
5a	The committee would like to see the word "innovative" included in the vision statement to accurately reflect the strategic direction and intent of the City of Ballarat.	The vision statement referred to is also that of the <i>Central Highlands Regional Strategic Plan</i> which was first published in 2010 and sets a framework to deliver on the collective aspirations of communities across the region. The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan supports innovation throughout the document, particularly in the topics of economic development and industry.	No change to regional growth plan.
5b	The set of regional planning principles established to guide growth and change in the Central Highlands region is supported by the Committee.	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
5c	The committee supports early activation of Ballarat West Employment Zone, especially the Bio-Technology Innovation Centre, waste to Energy Facility, Ballarat Intermodal Freight Hub.	Noted. The BWEZ site has recently been rezoned as the first 'phase' of activating the BWEZ site.	No change to regional growth plan.
5d	The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan has a unique opportunity to capitalise on the City of Ballarat's Airport Investment and Attraction strategy and advocate for the establishment of Victoria's Emergency Response Centre based at Ballarat Airport. This feasibility study should be included in the plan.	Agree that the regional growth plan will identify opportunities for supporting regional level infrastructure, providing an essential contribution to the long-term sustainability of the region. It is not the role of the regional growth plan to list all projects or possible investment opportunities. The governance arrangements for the implementation of the regional growth plan will be an important mechanism for pursuing such projects.	No change to regional growth plan.
5e	The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan remains silent in regards to investment in Regional	The regional growth plan will include a high level framework describing key opportunities for	Update regional growth plan to include a framework for

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	Leadership. Programs such as Leadership Ballarat and Western Region (LBWR) program, greatly assist in building the skills and talent of our local cadre of future leaders and decision makers.	implementation of the plan and review. It is intended that this approach be further developed once the plan is finalised and approved. An implementation plan will include actions, priorities, partners and responsibilities.	implementation and review in Part E.
5f	The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan acknowledges the future role tourism plays in promoting social and economic growth in the region. The linkage between regional activities and events is to be encouraged, such as Sovereign Hill, Kryal Castle, Pyrenees Wines, the Grampians / Halls Gap).	The regional growth plan will not list all events within the region. However, there is acknowledgement of the important role of tourism (and linkages) in the background report.	No change to regional growth plan.
5g	The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan should acknowledge and capture the need for the development of the Major Exhibition and Sports Precinct in Ballarat.	The regional growth plan will not list all infrastructure requirements within the region. However, there is acknowledgement of the need for such a project in the background report). The future directions for Ballarat in Section 14.4 refer to encouraging regionally significant services and investment.	No change to regional growth plan.
5h	The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan makes no reference to the current Living Ballarat project or the development of an Integrated Water Cycle Management Framework to address this issue.	The regional growth plan will not list all projects or strategic plans in regards to water (sustainability) that are local issues. However, there is acknowledgement of the Living Ballarat Project in the background report and the important role of water. The regional growth plan at Section 15.3 addresses the overarching principles for sustainable water use and provides for local actions to address this issue.	No change to regional growth plan.
5i	Transport provision needs to keep pace with the growth of Ballarat to ensure the city remains	The regional growth plan is very focused on inter and intra regional links and improving connectivity	No change to regional growth plan.

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	<p>accessible and liveable. Ballarat's role as a regional city warrants high standard linkages within and beyond the region. This includes improving the connectivity of our region to the major capital city, Melbourne, by advocating for a 2nd entry point into Melbourne (vehicle access should not be reliant only on the West Gate Bridge) via development of the East-West Link.</p>	<p>(maps 3, 4, 7 11 and 12 express these links). Specifically principle 3 of the regional growth plan is to capitalise on close links with other regions and cities and it expresses key directions for achieving this. Section 14.2 Settlement and network relationships, essentially sets the framework for capitalising and improving on connectivity within the region and between regions. This section acknowledges the complexity of growth for this region being positioned within commuting distance to Ballarat's hinterland and to Melbourne.</p>	
5j	<p>The committee also endorses the development of an integrated freight hub facility to support the activation and commercialisation of the Ballarat West Employment Zone (BWEZ).</p>	<p>There is sufficient acknowledgement of the development of the BWEZ for a freight hub in the regional growth plan and in the background report.</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>
5k	<p>There is a real opportunity to promote regional lifestyle through urban planning. This includes the promotion of larger rural lots and diverse housing options, which are to be encouraged in the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan.</p>	<p>The issue of rural living is a local and regional issue. The background report states that in line with the <i>Central Highlands Regional Strategic Plan</i>, existing policy approaches will, in the medium to long-term, compromise the landscapes and productive values of the Central Highlands region. The plan recognises that detailed planning for rural residential development should be undertaken by councils. It identifies regionally significant environmental, landscape and agricultural assets with a view to ensuring these areas are protected from incompatible land use, including rural lifestyle development. The plan also identifies a number of regional considerations that should be taken into account when</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
		<p>considering locating rural residential development.</p> <p>There are potential benefits to the region of rural residential development, in terms of providing housing and lifestyle choice, attracting residents to the region and supporting the viability of smaller settlements.</p> <p>The challenge for land use planning is to ensure that rural residential development is consolidated to well planned locations where it will maximise benefits while avoiding potential impacts on productive rural land uses such as agriculture.</p> <p>Section14.8 of the regional growth plan adequately addresses this issue and recommends that future planning for rural residential lifestyle is planned on a regional basis.</p>	
5l	<p>Improved infrastructure will improve mobile phone reception, not just broadband access.</p> <p>The committee is strongly advocating for improved ICT/mobile coverage and connectivity for the entire region.</p>	<p>The regional growth plan addresses this at section 15.3 Water, Energy and utilities, “...Improved infrastructure which enables better connections in areas with poor reception is supported.”</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>
5m	<p>Agrees that the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan provides councils, government agencies and infrastructure providers in the region with a clearer regional land use context to inform and influence future decision-making and investment, strategic planning, planning scheme amendments and local decisions. More detailed</p>	<p>The regional growth plan will include a high level framework describing key opportunities for implementation of the plan and review. It is intended that this approach be further developed once the plan is finalised and approved.</p> <p>An implementation plan will include actions, priorities, partners and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Update regional growth plan to include a framework for implementation and review in Part E.</p>

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	planning will be required in collaborative partnership between local and state planning authorities.		
6a	The Executive Summary more useful if it provided a summary of each Section.	Noted. The format of the plan has been established for statewide consistency. The final format may be reviewed as part of the implementation and release of the plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
6b	Part D is the guts of the report and should be at the front, while most of the other preceding parts are background and should be relegated to referenced Appendices.	Noted. The format of the plan has been established for statewide consistency. The final format may be reviewed as part of the implementation and release of the plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
6c	Part C is an integral part of the Regional Growth Plan, not as headed "Towards the Regional Growth Plan" and should be melded into Part D.	It is agreed that Parts C and D need to be read in conjunction with each other given that Part C sets out the detailed policy intent that informs the overarching directions included in Part D.	No change to regional growth plan.
6d	The <i>Central Highlands Regional Strategic Plan</i> , should either also be included as an Appendix or further details of it should be provided so that we can see the extent to which the CHRGP builds upon it or deviates from it.	It is not useful to 'load up' the regional growth plan with appendices and attachments. The <i>Central Highlands Regional Strategic Plan</i> is publicly available and referenced on the background report.	No change to regional growth plan.
6e	Map 6, page 29 does not recognise the value of the terrestrial and aquatic habitat around Ballan.	The background report states that " <i>There are numerous individual threatened species that occur in the region, although they are too many and their locations too specific to be considered and mapped for a regionally focused growth plan, particularly when localised planning assessment should consider threatened species.</i> " Nature Print provides consistent statewide data of environmental significance but cannot provide local level detail. Map 6 however shows the river corridor running through Ballan.	No change to regional growth plan.

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
		<p>Regardless, the regional growth plan at Section 13.3 Environmental assets, includes a future direction to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct settlement growth and development to areas where it will avoid impacting on high value environmental assets including designated water supply catchment areas, strategically important terrestrial habitat, soil health, waterways and wetlands. <p>To ensure there is no apparent contradiction between the level of detail available via Nature Print and the broad principle of growth for Ballan (and other towns within the region) the regional growth plan states at Section 13.3 a direction to “Strategically plan for enhancements to environmental assets to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance land, water and biodiversity assets, including land critical for connecting areas of high value habitat, and • reduce threats to high value areas and assets.” 	
6f	Population growth within the shire is overly optimistic and the figures for Ballan are overstated in (Figure 2) on page 43 .	The level of growth set out in the regional settlement framework is taken from the government’s population projections. The most detailed population projection available through Victoria in Future (2012) identifies that the Moorabool – Ballan Statistical Local Area is projected to grow from 6708 to 8817 persons over 20 years, a 31% increase. This equates to an average annual change of 105 persons, or average annual growth rate of 1.57%. Most, but not all, of	No change to regional growth plan.

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
		<p>this growth would be expected to be in Ballan itself.</p> <p>The use of the term ‘typical’; to describe the growth projections in the regional settlement framework is because the figures will vary from town to town. The scale of population increase expected for the settlement is not determined (alone) by the population growth but also has the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistent annual rate of development of planned housing areas in cities, centres and towns and some new areas of subdivision to supply moderate local or external demand. ▪ Existing infrastructure can generally be augmented to meet demand without constraining land supply. More major works may be needed for some new areas. <p>It will be important for each council to monitor land supply/demand, building constructions etc and the State Government will continue to offer statistical analysis via the spatial analysis and research team to provide the most up to date advice on population projections. It is expected the regional growth plans will be reviewed periodically.</p>	
6g	Implementation is the most critical part of the regional growth plan.	The regional growth plan will include a high level framework describing key opportunities for implementation of the plan and review. It is intended that this approach be further developed once the plan is finalised and approved.	Update regional growth plan to include a framework for implementation and review in Part E.
6h	Potential conflicts between Ballan Structure Plan	The regional growth plan is intended to be	No change to regional growth

Submission number	Feedback summary	Project team comments	Proposed recommendation
	and Regional Growth Plan.	<p>implemented through the Moorabool Planning Scheme, in which case it will be important for Council to ensure that the future production of local plans are not in conflict with the regional growth plan. Regional Development Victoria will work with Moorabool as appropriate to offer advice on the content of the Ballan Structure Plan. The directions of the two plans are broadly consistent in supporting appropriate growth for the town. The structure plan should provide further local definition to this direction. Council is part of the technical working group and steering committee and there has been a significant exchange of information between council and the project team to help ensure broad consistency. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the data being utilised is up to date, the review processes (for both regional growth plan and the Ballan Structure Plan) will enable a (consistency) review of all detail in the plans.</p>	plan.
6i	Agree with the “Future directions” dot points on page 49, with the proviso that the scope of services to be provided to the surrounding areas should be recognised as being limited.	Words have been inserted to better describe the town’s role in service provision. The word limited is too narrow for Ballan’s status as a medium growth town in the regional growth plan.	Update Section 13.6, ‘Ballan’ of regional growth plan to include words: “Support Ballan as a town providing services consistent with its role in the peri urban area.”
7a	<p>Support for statements in the plan around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for local characteristics to inform planning. • Opportunities for economic development being indicative only. 	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moorabool's local settlement planning. • Infrastructure priorities to support small settlements and rural land use opportunities. • Transport implementation opportunities. • Inclusion of Bungaree over Blackwood on maps. • Principle 2 and encouraging economic self-sufficiency. 		
7b	The plan should note that further ground truthing is required for concepts mapped conceptually.	All maps are conceptual and set out broad strategic approaches and regional assets. The mapped assets are indicative and should not be taken as definitive representations of such features. Agree to add a further notation, similar to that on the environment framework map.	Include an additional notation on Map 5 stating that other significant agricultural assets may exist and finer scale planning will be required to determine the exact location of high quality farming areas.
7c	Section 12.5 Energy - Recognition of locational requirements being consistent with previous feedback from Council.	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
7d	Section 12.5 Energy – Include reference to physical infrastructure being able to support energy generation.	Agreed.	Amend Section 12.5 Energy to add references to local infrastructure.
7e	Support references to infrastructure investment in Bacchus Marsh Irrigation District but this should be identified as a regional priority.	The Bacchus Marsh Irrigation District has been identified as a regional infrastructure priority in Section 15.3 but wording should be updated to clarify this.	Include Bacchus Marsh Irrigation District as an example of a rural land use opportunity in list the of priority infrastructure in Section 15.3.
7f	Section 12.3 Rural land use - Second and third future directions are repetitive. Should reference enhancing local communities by making the most of physical and social infrastructure.	Agree that the two future directions are repetitive. Further references to making the most of existing infrastructure are unnecessary in this section as this is covered by other more appropriate parts of the plan, for example, Section	Amend rural land use future directions by compacting second and the third dot point into one future direction.

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		15.3.	
7g	Section 12.4 Industry and employment – Expand future directions to mention other opportunities for freight transport and employment outside of BWEZ. Potential of Parwan and Woodman Hill should be recognised.	The industry and employment future directions adequately support future employment opportunities across the region. It is agreed that Section 12.4 should reference the particular circumstances of the peri-urban area with its rapid population growth and need for employment to support this. A cross reference to Parwan should be included by way of example. A specific reference to Woodmans Hill is considered premature without further strategic work and investigation.	Include a reference to the need for employment areas to support peri-urban growth, including Parwan, in Section 12.4.
7h	Section 12.4 Industry and employment – Refer to “20 minute city” and peri-urban employment links to Melbourne and Geelong.	The key direction of the plan for employment is to support more local employment opportunities to reduce reliance on commuting and achieve the same aim as the “20 minute city” concept. Issues around the reliance on commuting are covered extensively in the background report.	No change to regional growth plan.
7i	Section 12.7 and Map 5 fail to recognise Moorabool’s tourism assets.	The strategic directions and actions in Section 12.7 have been drafted to support tourism development across the region, including assets identified in the submission. This section and map cannot provide a comprehensive list of all the region’s numerous tourism assets and so focuses on a few key strategic clusters. Various important Moorabool assets such as Lerderderg State Park, Avenue of Honour and Lal Lal Falls have been identified in either the regional growth plan or background report. However, it is considered that further wording should be added to the plan to recognise that emerging tourism assets should	Update Section 12.7 to note the need for ongoing planning and investment to develop further regionally significant tourism assets and precincts.

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		also be planned for, to better develop the region's tourism offer.	
7j	Clarification is sought in relation to the implementation of the South West Landscape Assessment Study.	The wording at Section 12.2 provides general support for the implementation of the study, but does not prescribe how this will occur. It will be up to councils to consider the recommendations and work with the department and neighbouring municipalities to further the study. It may be further investigated through the implementation of the regional growth plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
7k	Section 13.2 Cultural heritage – actions should support undertaking local heritage studies.	Agreed.	Update the Cultural heritage actions to include a reference to support local heritage studies.
7l	Section 13.1 Environment and heritage overview – should expand wording about national and state parks to include “amongst other state parks and forests.”	This point already makes it clear that the specific parks referred to are only part of a larger regional asset base. Some specific parks are shown on Map 6.	Add Lederderg State Park as another example in Section 13.1.
7m	Section 13.3 Environmental assets –include a reference to Lake Merrimu.	Agreed.	Add Lake Merrimu to list.
7n	Effect of growth pressure for Bacchus Marsh likely to be more onerous than Ballarat given gaps in physical and social infrastructure which should be recognised. Levels of planning policy support identified in Figure 2 should not result in infrastructure needs for Bacchus Marsh being downgraded. The priorities for social infrastructure on page 65 should expand on Ballarat to include other regional centres.	Map 9/regional settlement framework does not seek to identify levels of support for infrastructure – they relate to planning policy support for overall growth of settlements. Whilst the acute pressure on Bacchus Marsh's infrastructure provision is recognised , it is agreed that infrastructure needs associated with peri-urban growth pressure could be given more emphasis as a regional priority.	Update Section 15.2 Social infrastructure to recognise infrastructure needed to respond to peri-urban growth pressure and the higher order service role of regional centres.
7o	Map 9/Part D – It is unclear why the same	The regional settlement network has identified	No change to regional growth

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	strategies apply to Bacchus Marsh as other settlements such as Ararat. In Section 14.3 Regional settlement strategy, Bacchus Marsh should be in its own peri-urban category in the regional settlement framework.	Bacchus Marsh and Ararat as being key centres, with a mid-level population base providing a wide range of services and employment to their hinterland. Across the state it is acknowledged that regional centres will have different roles depending on their context. To this end the plan clearly identifies that Bacchus Marsh will grow significantly more than Ararat and tailors its specific policies for the two centres accordingly in Section 14.5. It is also noted that Ararat is currently given a higher order role than Bacchus Marsh in state planning policy, whereas the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan proposes to elevate Bacchus Marsh's role and treats the two as important regional centres.	plan.
7p	Consideration of rural residential development at a regional level may result in supply not being located where demand is. An over supply of rural residential land in a municipality may not be an over supply in the region.	Noted. The plan does not state that supply in one municipality in the region means no rural residential should be supplied in other parts of the region. Rather, a regional approach to land use planning means that consideration should be given to land use patterns across municipal borders.	No change to regional growth plan.
7q	Section 13.3 Regional settlement strategy – Recognise small towns in the future directions.	Small towns are already specifically recognised in the future directions of Section 14.7 Small towns and rural settlements. Section 14.3 pertains to the larger centres included in the regional settlement framework, but still recognises the role of small towns in this context in the text.	No change to regional growth plan.
7r	Support for references to improving north south access around Bacchus Marsh. Would like	Agree to strengthen wording.	Update wording in Section 15.1 Transport networks to state that

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	stronger wording around this issue in transport section.		improving north-south access is “important to improve network capacity.”
7s	Infrastructure section should recognise research associated with the Timber Industry Roads Evaluation Strategy.	Strategy focuses on a relatively short term period of 2011-2015. Nevertheless the contents of the strategy are noted. The plan has already recognised some of the key regional trends and issues identified in the sections on rural land use and transport.	No change to regional growth plan.
7t	Map 11 Future directions for transport – Suggested changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should recognise links to neighbouring regions. • Note Bacchus Marsh capacity issues. • Inconsistencies in airports with Map 5. 	Map 11 provides an accurate representation of the railway and arterial road network (in comparison to some other maps which provide a more conceptual representation of key links). It is agreed the map should be updated to specifically reference peri-urban transport issues and ensure airports are consistently represented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Map 11 to reference peri-urban transport issues, especially for Bacchus Marsh. • Ensure airport icons and links to neighbouring regions are consistent across maps.
7u	Section 15.1 Transport networks – Reference Bacchus Marsh Airport under the freight precincts topic.	Agreed.	Add Bacchus Marsh Airport as an example of a regional airport that could be the basis for a freight hub.
7v	Section 15.3 Water, energy and utilities – Add a reference to water catchments largely being on private land.	Agreed.	Add a reference to Section 15.3 about the nature of land uses in declared water supply catchments.
7w	Support for the development of a new Regional Waste Management Plan.	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
7x	Part D – Council seeks reassurances that there will not be an over reliance on this section in future decision making as there are important elements of the plan not included in this section.	It is agreed that Parts C and D need to be read in conjunction with each other given that Part C sets out the detailed policy intent that informs the overarching directions included in Part D.	No change to regional growth plan.
7y	Part D – Revise wording of action around support	Proposed wording is unnecessary as the current	No change to regional growth

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	for development of the knowledge economy to include a reference to the regional city and regional centres.	wording covers the regional city and regional centres already.	plan.
7z	Part D – Revise wording of action around providing good transport links to Ballarat Central Business District to include regional centres.	Agreed.	Update wording of action pertaining to transport links to Ballarat Central Business District under Principle 3 to include a reference to regional centres.
7aa	Map 12 – Update regional centres notation to “support anticipated population growth....”.	Agreed.	Revise wording of regional centre notation on Map 12 to differentiate between population growth circumstances for Ararat and Bacchus Marsh.
7bb	Map 12 – Add a reference to Parwan as an employment opportunity.	It is agreed that the current text accompanying Map 12 should also identify the need for peri-urban employment opportunities to support rapid population growth.	Update wording of employment notation on Map 12 to acknowledge the need to pursue further employment opportunities in Melbourne’s peri-urban area.
7cc	Map 12 – Designate Bacchus Marsh as a key tourism precinct.	It is acknowledged there are a range of tourism opportunities and features in and around Bacchus Marsh. Map 12 sets out key regional clusters of tourism assets and cannot capture all tourism opportunities. Nevertheless it is considered that the wording associated with the tourism precincts should be modified to clarify that development of the tourism sector is not limited to iconic locations. Other new wording in the Tourism section (as discussed above) will also further clarify about the need to continue to plan for emerging tourism precincts to support the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise wording of ‘Key tourism precinct’ notation on Map 12 and the tourism action under Principle 2 in Part D to clarify intent that tourism is supported across the region, whilst further building on the key precincts as regional drawcards. • Update Section 12.7 to note the need for ongoing planning and investment to

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		ongoing development of Bacchus Marsh's (and other areas') tourism products.	develop further regionally significant tourism assets and precincts.
7dd	Part E – Council seeks further clarification round the nature and content of the implementation plan, governance arrangements, opportunities for input and how planning for growth will be integrated with infrastructure provision through implementation.	The regional growth plan will include a high level framework describing key opportunities for implementation of the plan and review. It is intended that this approach be further developed once the plan is finalised and approved.	Update regional growth plan to include a framework for implementation and review in Part E.
7ee	Council does not want a Ballarat-centric document and should take a balanced approach to ensure all the region's opportunities and constraints are considered. More local examples should be included from throughout the region.	<p>Noted. The formulation of the plan has sought to take this approach in both governance and content. Wording of the plan has been tailored to allow for opportunities across the region to be pursued. A range of regional assets and opportunities related to Moorabool Shire and other parts of the region are included throughout the plan and background report. However, it is not the role of the regional growth plan to be an audit of regional assets.</p> <p>Further local examples particular to Moorabool have been added in some cases as identified throughout this table.</p>	Further examples and references added to the plan and background report where appropriate as noted elsewhere in this table.
7ff	Clarification is sought around whether there will be a hierarchy of policies.	The regional growth plan should be used in the same way as other planning policy where decision makers must balance competing objectives, including in the SPPF and LPPFs.	No change to regional growth plan.

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7gg	There is a lack of direction for peri-urban areas and lack of merging with neighbouring regions.	Noted. Further work on peri-urban areas and cross-border approaches is likely to come out of the implementation of regional growth plans and the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy. In response to discussions with the Peri-urban Group of Rural Councils, additional text will be added to the regional growth plan to give clear expression to the peri urban areas.	Update the regional growth plan to include additional peri-urban section.
7hh	Small farm sizes are likely to remain in Moorabool.	Noted. This has been reflected in the development of the plan's rural land use directions.	No change to regional growth plan.
7ii	The plan should recognise interface issues between Ballarat and Moorabool.	Agreed. This is already reflected in the text of Section 14.4 , but could be further emphasised.	Provide a further land use policy for Section 14.4 Regional city – Ballarat to emphasise the need for strategic planning around Ballarat's interfaces.
7jj	There should be specific references to timber production in the regional growth plan.	There is reference to the importance of this industry in Section 12.3 Rural land use and throughout the background report. It is not intended that the plan will provide locational criteria for this specific use given existing planning scheme provisions.	No change to regional growth plan.
7kk	A specific reference to the relationship between Melbourne and its peri-urban surrounds should be included in Figure 2 or Section 16. This should include a need for peri-urban strategy work.	Noted. Further work on peri-urban areas and cross-border approaches is likely to come out of the implementation of regional growth plans and the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy. In response to discussions with the Peri-urban Group of Rural Councils, additional text will be added to the regional growth plan to give clear expression to the peri urban areas.	Update the regional growth plan to include additional peri-urban section.
8a	Include the minerals industry as an industry to be	Agree about recognising the minerals industry.	Update Section 12.1 to add a

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	supported by the plan. Include minerals industry to list of industries listed in Section 12.1 and explain renewable energy in detail.	There is not a need to explain renewable energy. The Victoria Planning Provisions define the planning land use of renewable energy as land used to generate energy using resources that can be rapidly replaced by an ongoing natural process. Renewable energy resources include the sun, wind, the ocean, water flows, organic matter and the earth's heat.	reference to the minerals industry as one of the diverse industries in the region.
8b	Recognise minerals industry's role in attracting skilled labour in Section 12.1 (page 18)	The text in this section does not identify specific industries but rather notes a variety of ways to attract skilled labour, including "jobs and services". This would include the mining sector.	No change to regional growth plan.
8c	Include minerals activities on map 5 (page 19).	Extractive Industry Interest Areas and areas of minerals activity should be added to the background report. Text in Section 12.6 identifies significant mineral activities in the region, such as Ballarat Gold Mine.	Update mapping of extractive industries in the background report.
8d	Recognise possibility of multiple and sequential land use by different users (page 21 and 22).	Multiple and sequential land uses already take place in rural areas. Current text refers to retaining rural land for productive uses, which could also include a range of natural resource uses. Flexibility in land use planning and specifically the rural zones has been the subject of a state-wide rural zones review.	No change to regional growth plan.
8e	Update page 25 to indicate that Ballarat Gold Mine is operational.	Agreed.	Update status of Ballarat Gold Mine.
8f	Have the plan acknowledge that earth resource developments are exempt from planning scheme controls (page 25, and section 14) and acknowledge planning schemes can not impose conditions inconsistent with Mineral Resources	It is not appropriate that the regional growth plan repeat provisions from planning schemes. This is too detailed for the regional growth plan.	No change to regional growth plan.

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	(Sustainable Development) Act 1990.		
8g	Greater weight should be given to freight transport infrastructure in the plan (section 15).	Freight transport is already mentioned in section 15.	No change to regional growth plan.
8h	Fails to acknowledge the symbiotic relationship between a vibrant minerals industry and effective regional infrastructure. Industry can play a key role in garnering support for infrastructure projects by affirming the project viability through being a major user, conversely without some critical infrastructure elements minerals projects may not be viable due to logistical hurdles.	Freight transport is important for a wide range of economic activities and so not necessary to single out minerals. Freight transport issues are already dealt with in section 15.	No change to regional growth plan.
8i	The plan should mention potential for the extraction of natural gas from the coal seams around Bacchus Marsh.	The <i>National Harmonised Regulatory Framework for Natural Gas from Coal Seams</i> (May 2013), will benefit the community, farmers, other land users, and industry by providing increased levels of consistency, certainty, and transparency in the management of natural gas from coal seams in Australia.	Update the regional growth plan to include the <i>National Harmonised Regulatory Framework for Natural Gas from Coal Seams</i> (May 2013), as an important framework for guidance on coal seam gas.
8j	There are three "short-term implementation priorities" which will assist in implementing the plan (generic regional growth plan text). Recommends that these be fleshed out in greater detail and refocused to provide a clearer indication of how the different elements of the plan will be prioritised for action	The regional growth plan will include a high level framework describing key opportunities for implementation of the plan and review. It is intended that this approach be further developed once the plan is finalised and approved. An implementation plan will include actions, priorities, partners and responsibilities.	Update regional growth plan to include a framework for implementation and review in Part E.
8k	Plan be amended to ensure that the minerals industry receives the same consistent consideration and attention as other major industries.	Agreed. Review text.	Update Section 12.1 to reference minerals industry and Section 16 to provide greater recognition of natural and earth resources.
8l	Clarify what a "diversified regional economy" is, as the phrase is generally used in this plan in relation	Principle 8 relates to agriculture specifically and responding to pressure on the specific industry. It	Insert additional action under Principle 2 in the table at Section

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	to farming. Although Principle 2 states that the region's economy should be strengthened to be more resilient and diversified, the only industry that is identified to be supported in the principles is agriculture (Principle 8). Recommend that the minerals industry also be included as an industry to be supported by the plan - excelled economic diversification opportunities.	is agreed the region's natural resources could be referenced as an opportunity in the Section 16 table under Principle 2.	16 related to the region's natural resources.
9a	Identify sand and stone resources and buffers required to prevent encroachment (page. 25).	Agree in part. A new action should be added to the Earth resources section addresses this. This new action addresses the point to some extent.	Update actions in Section 12.6 to state: "Identify, manage and facilitate access to natural resources where appropriate, including sand and stone, minerals, timber and renewable energy potential".
9b	Refer to sand and stone resources in Bacchus March needing protection from encroachment (page.48).	Agree in part. Section 12.6 states the need for resources to be protected from incompatible development. The new action added above touches on this point to some extent also. Bacchus Marsh text in Section 14.5 already generally references constraints to development of the town and the need to identify key assets. Section 12.6 references the regionally significant earth resources around Bacchus Marsh.	No change to regional growth plan.
9c	Include in dot point 5, "current and future sand and stone assets" (page 73).	Agreed.	Update table in Section 16 to include "and earth resources" to end of dot-point 5 under Principle 5.
9d	Current quarries and significant sand and stone resources should be included on Map 12 (Regional land use strategy)	The map should not include this level of detail. Local planning schemes can satisfactorily recognise these issues.	No change to regional growth plan.



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10a	A definition of “regionally significant environmental assets” should be placed in the glossary.	Regionally significant environmental assets are defined in a footnote.	No change to regional growth plan.
10b	Question about whether a distinction is drawn between food production and other agriculture.	Noted. Future Directions of regional growth plan (Part D) notes the need for long term agricultural productivity to be supported to, amongst other things, protect food security.	No change to regional growth plan.
10c	The regional growth plan should split the relationship between population growth and economic growth.	Agreed. The regional growth plan should make a stronger point that it is not an increase in population alone that will bring about a strong economy or successful community.	Update Section 12.1 to note the benefits of transitioning the economy to sectors not reliant on population growth. Update Section 5.1 of the background report to emphasise other opportunities for economic growth .
10d	References to maps should include a page number as well.	Noted. As with standard practice, map references will remain without page numbers. Maps are located in close proximity to text references and there is an overall list of maps and page numbers at the front of the document.	No change to regional growth plan.
10e	Along with the feedback raised above, the submitter also included a more extensive submission which included content that was prepared for the Ballarat Image Discussion Paper (City of Ballarat) which the submitter considered to have relevance to the regional growth plan. This detailed submission contained a number of supporting documents including Sustainability and Urban Wellbeing Project reports and other research papers. The Sustainability and Urban Wellbeing Project was undertaken in 2012 to	Noted. The regional growth plan has been developed with the vision to provide a productive, sustainable and liveable region for its people. The plan identifies a number of principles and directions for regional growth which embody sustainability. Specifically; population growth should be planned in sustainable locations; Land use patterns, developments and infrastructure should make the region more self-reliant and sustainable; and The region’s land, soil water and biodiversity should be managed, protected and	No change to regional growth plan.

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	<p>consider a range of serious issues impacting communities globally, nationally and locally. The submitter discusses the importance of decision makers/making and triple-bottom line thinking (society, economy and environment) and how this can be represented in the Five Capitals Framework (an interrelated relationship model of natural, social, human, financial and manufactured capital). It discusses a hierarchy of nature, society and economy and recognises drivers of change (water, climate, energy, air quality, devastated commons, food security and soil resilience, excess and waste, anti-future contagions and population. Through the Sustainability and Urban Wellbeing Project three scenarios were identified for the future; business as usual, smart carbon and post carbon. The submitter considers a post carbon future desirable and necessary to address capital creation and respond to peak oil and climate change. It also notes the opportunity for regions to reposition themselves as genuine leaders in sustainable practices. The remainder of the submission was specifically directed at the City of Ballarat in response to the Ballarat Imagine Discussion Paper and its recommendations to council.</p>	<p>enhanced.</p> <p>The plan identifies various opportunities to promote sustainable growth and transform the economy. The plan also addresses environmental assets in a changing climate and managing associated risks.</p>	
11a	<p>A wider partnership of people developing the plan would enable a more detailed framework. It should include all levels of government and urban and development economists.</p>	<p>The development of the regional growth plan has included a wide range of representations from government, agencies and interested parties. This has included advice provided by Regional Development Victoria about economic</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>

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		development opportunities.	
11b	Higher education opportunities in the regions should be explored further.	Agreed. Section 15.2 of the regional growth plan addresses the challenges and opportunities of the region's education and training networks.	No change to regional growth plan.
11c	Taxation or other concessions, or an "enterprise hub approach" for major plant investments, capital works and upgrades should be considered, to soften the impact of costs in the early years of development.	Noted. This is outside of the scope of a land use plan such as the regional growth plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
12a	<p>Challenge of adapting to climate change and managing exposure to bushfire should be explicitly addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Executive summary – add a statement that the plan identifies the impacts of climate change and exposure to natural hazards. ii. Drivers of change – add further detail about the cause of increased risks. iii. Challenges for growth – add a statement that development should be located in areas that avoids hazards. iv. Section 14.1 – add a statement that natural hazards must be considered when planning for rural residential development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. This is considered an overly specific item for this broad list and so a more generic statement capturing the fact that plan deals with broad changes and opportunities and challenges may be more appropriate. ii. Agreed. iii. This section is a description of challenges for growth and does not set out policy positions. This approach is covered in Section 13.4. iv. This section is not a policy statement but a contextual reference to natural hazards is appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add statement to Executive Summary that the plan identifies how the region can respond to opportunities, challenges and drivers of change. • Add "due to impacts of climatic conditions such as long-term droughts, wide spread floods and an increase in the number of days of extreme heat and fire danger" to 'Environmental assets in a changing climate' sub-section. • No change to regional growth plan. • Add a reference to natural hazards in Section 14.1 Overview.
12b	Section 14.9 Housing diversity and affordability – recognise that housing affordability will be	This is a very specific consideration and should not be a focus for discussions on regional housing	No change to regional growth plan.

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	impacted by incorporating bushfire considerations during the planning phase. Add natural hazards as a consideration that planning schemes should recognise in planning for affordable housing.	affordability.	
12c	Bacchus Marsh – amend text to add more detail on bushfire hazards.	It is reasonable to reference natural hazards as one of the general limitations for the town’s growth. However, further detail would be inconsistent with rest of the paragraph as it is not the role of the plan to provide detailed description of individual assets, constraints and risks.	Amend Bacchus Marsh text to recognise that natural hazards will limit growth options.
12d	Smythesdale – delete references to Yellowglen winery site as a development site.	This site is already included in the Golden Plains MSS as a key growth opportunity. It is agreed that the wording should be broadened to refer to any identified growth opportunity.	Amend Smythesdale text to remove site specific references to growth opportunities.
12e	Map 6 Strategic environment framework – add Greendale, Dales Creek, Enfield and Mount Egerton as settlements that have urban bushfire considerations.	Maps are not designed to show all settlements at risk from bushfire, only settlements included as standard across all maps. In this regard it is noted there is some inconsistency in the settlements shown and this should be ameliorated.	Update maps to ensure the same settlements are shown consistently.
12f	Map 6 Strategic environment framework – add a notation that natural hazards should be considered through finer scale planning as not all areas of hazard are identified on the map.	Agreed.	Update notation on Map 6 to reference finer scale investigation of natural hazards.
12g	Consider an additional principle related to risk management: “Adopt a risk management approach in planning for population growth.” Consequential changes are suggested to Part D – Future directions for regional growth.	Principle 1 – “Population growth should be planned in sustainable locations throughout the region” – is intended to cover natural hazards, as shown by the text already included under Principle 1 in the table at Part D. This refers to directing settlement growth away from areas of natural hazards. To ensure this is more explicit, an additional direction and rationale can be added to	Update the Future directions for regional growth table in Part D to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an additional key direction around risk management. • Update the rationale text to cover natural hazards.

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		the Principle 1 section in Part D.	
13a	The submitter commends the linkages made by the regional growth plan between Trentham and Kyneton and Woodend. It is suggested that cross-regional studies (particularly in 'the outer peri-urban' arc) of communities of interest be undertaken to identify the linkages and resolutions that might better manage future regional growth. This could help protect and enhance social and environmental values such as water catchments.	Noted. Further work on peri-urban areas and cross-border approaches is likely to come out of the implementation of regional growth plans and the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy. In response to discussions with the Peri-urban Group of Rural Councils, additional text will be added to the regional growth plan to give clear expression to the peri urban areas.	Update the regional growth plan to include additional peri-urban section.
13b	Cross-regional studies should be 'town and community-based' rather than just municipality-based, consistent with principles of communities of (common) interest to better understand the imperatives, opportunities and resolutions for managing growth.	Noted. Further work on peri-urban areas and cross-border approaches is likely to come out of the implementation of regional growth plans and the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy. The regional growth plan supports the concept of communities of common interest with its direction to plan for development of shared resources around clusters of linked settlements , and its recognition that small towns be planned for in clusters . Councils may also choose to undertake further strategic work with neighbouring municipalities.	No change to regional growth plan.
13c	High quality and versatile farming areas in the Trentham district should be shown on Map 5.	Agreed. Map should be altered.	Update Map 5 to show high quality farming area near Trentham.
13d	DPCD, in consultation with the Trentham community and Hepburn Council, should review Trentham's growth and ensure that adequate support, including an urgent review of the Town Structure Plan, is in place to cope with current	Noted. The department will be happy to support council's review of its town structure plan, but the review is outside of the regional growth plan's scope.	No change to regional growth plan.

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	rates of growth.		
14a	Include reference to Extractive Industry Interest Areas as per Government commitment.	Agreed. Changes to Section 12.6 Earth resources are appropriate. A consistent state-wide response is proposed to this issue.	Insert new text and action in Section 12.6 Earth resources.
14b	Planning protection be specified for key areas and incompatible uses be directed away.	This is a matter for local (Council) planning policy.	No change to regional growth plan.
14c	Streamlined planning approvals should be allowed for extractive industries in Extractive Industry Interest Areas (EIIA).	This is addressed partially in new paragraph added to Section 12.6. which recognises that activities in Extractive Industry Interest Areas s may have future planning implications.	Insert new text and action in 12.6 Earth resources.
14d	Support supply of resources such as heavy construction materials to support settlement growth. Section 9, Challenges for Growth, add: "Ensuring sustainable and affordable supply of resources, including heavy construction materials, to support settlement growth, economic development and the provision of cost effective infrastructure."	Agree to update Section 9 Challenges for growth to recognise that access to earth resources is necessary for development of infrastructure. Further, a new action is suggested for the Earth resources section about identifying and managing access to natural resources addresses this.	Update Section 9 Challenges for growth to recognise construction materials needed for infrastructure.
14e	Principle 6, add: "Foster a sustainable and affordable supply chain, including heavy construction materials, to support the provision of cost effective infrastructure."	Whilst transport supply chains are covered already in Section 15.1 Transport networks, some additional text may help clarify that this also applies to extractive industries.	Update supply chains text in Section 15.1.
14f	Further mention need to protect earth resources. Section 16; Principle 2, add: "Identify and protect regionally important sand and rock resources."	Map 12 or text should not show further 'protection' of resources. This is pre-empting outcomes of other government work. However, a reference to natural resources as an economic development opportunity should be added to Principle 2.	Update 'How' column in 16, Principle 2 to reference natural resource opportunities.
14g	Section 16; Principle 5, add manage residential development and encourage investment to provide for the long term availability of key	Agree in part. Inclusion of reference to earth resources as a regional asset at the end of dot-point 5 under the 'How' column for Principle 5 is	Update map 5 to show EIIA. Update text next to Principle 5 in Section 16 to include earth

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	regional assets, including valuable earth resources and agricultural assets nominated in Map 12.	appropriate. Should not show earth resource areas on Map 12. Map 5 is being updated to show EIIA only.	resources.
14h	Industry and Government should work together to refine and improve Extractive Industry Interest Areas s, identifying key resource areas of quality construction material resource areas close to potential markets; Should add as an action to Section 16, against relevant Principles.	New paragraph added to Earth resources section as discussed above.	Update Section 12.6 to recognise the EDIC inquiry, government response and EIAs.
15a	Supports economic caution and infrastructure improvement. Economic diversification should not be embraced just for the sake of it.	Agreed. The regional growth plan advocates economic diversification primarily building on existing strengths.	No change to regional growth plan.
15b	Suggests population growth be directed to where there is existing infrastructure.	Agreed. The regional growth plan urban growth be directed to settlements which offer good access to services and transport (13.3).	No change to regional growth plan.
15c	Suggests farmers should be consulted in every land, soil, water and cultural heritage matter.	Noted. This is outside of the scope of the regional growth plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
15d	Population growth is not sustainable as the driver of economic growth.	Agreed. The regional growth plan should make a stronger point that it is not an increase in population alone that will bring about a strong economy or successful community.	Update Section 12.1 to note the benefits of transitioning the economy to sectors not reliant on population growth.
15e	The prison expansion is not a positive step.	Noted. This is outside of the scope of the regional growth plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
15f	Manufacturing is a leading sector in the region, but its global competitiveness is hampered by government policy.	Noted. Manufacturing policy is outside of the scope of the regional growth plan. The need to provide industrial land across the region is supported by the plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
15g	Australia must be cautious of foreign investment in agricultural resources.	Noted. This is outside the scope of the regional growth plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
15h	Map 4 and Map 5 do not show the road from Ararat to Lake Bolac, as a "Key Road Corridor".	Agreed. Maps should be altered.	Update relevant maps to show this as a key road corridor.

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	This road is used by freight trucks carrying hay and grain sourced as stock feed from the Wimmera, Ararat and Lake Bolac districts to the dairying areas in the state's south west. It is suggested that the road, which carries up to 400 trucks a day, should be flagged for improvement for its value to industry and to tourism (linking Great Ocean Road with Grampians).		
15i	The regional growth plan focuses on development of only a few towns at the expense of small towns.	Noted. The regional growth plan includes support for plans to further strengthen small settlements and encourage them to be part of a cluster of towns to improve access to key services.	No change to regional growth plan.
15j	Lake Bolac should be marked on Map 11 (Future Directions for transport) as a freight hub.	An arrow "To Warrnambool" should be added, pointing south from the road that comes through Lake Bolac.	Update Map 11 to illustrate links from Lake Bolac more clearly.
15k	Agriculture and food security is paramount. The region is in a prime position to benefit from the government's goal of doubling food and fibre production.	Key agricultural assets have been identified in the plan, including the region around Lake Bolac.	No change to regional growth plan.
15l	The Lake Bolac Development Association has not previously been consulted in the development of the plan.	The project has included two opportunities for public consultation on the development of the plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
15m	Identified alternative income streams for farmers are unrealistic (page 21).	Noted. The alternative income streams are suggestions only.	No change to regional growth plan.
15n	The regional growth plan's statement that: "broadacre grazing may be replaced with cropping in some areas as they become drier" is incorrect. The submitter claims that the opposite may be true (page 21).	Wording should be modified to reflect the findings of the <i>Victorian climate change adaptation plan</i> (May 2013).	Update Section 12.3 to clarify wording around the impacts of climate change on agricultural activities.
16a	The regional growth plan should refer to the Port Phillip and Westernport Regional Catchment	The plan already refers to regional catchment strategies being "the primary strategies for	Update 13.1 to clarify role of regional catchment strategies.

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	Strategy” as a clear guide to native vegetation conservation and management”.	achieving improved environmental outcomes in the region”. It would be satisfactory to add “...including native vegetation conservation and management”.	
16b	Areas of high value terrestrial habitat in the regional growth plan should be consistent with the mapping in the regional catchment strategy.	NaturePrint has been used to ensure statewide consistency of mapping.	No change to regional growth plan.
16c	The Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority strongly supports the regional growth plan’s strategic direction to retain the non-urban break between Bacchus Marsh and Melbourne and limit the town’s role as a commuter town.	Agreed and noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
17a	Minor changes should be made to the list of strategic directions for <i>Regional Strategic Plan (2010)</i> (page 2).	This list is a summary of a completed plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
17b	Discussion of “environmental assets in a changing climate” (page 13) should refer to the high value of natural resources in region.	High-value natural resources are referred to throughout plan, particularly in Map 6, in context of environmental assets.	No change to regional growth plan.
17c	The discussion about water (page 13) use should refer to water strategies/initiatives.	Detail about water programs such as Living Victoria is included in the background paper.	No change to regional growth plan. .
17d	Support for principles 7 (page 15).	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
17e	A category for natural assets with economic value, such as recreation, tourism and wider ecosystem services etc should be added to Map 5 (page 19).	Features of a <i>regional</i> scale are already included (Grampians, Mineral Springs) on this map. Natural assets are shown on Map 6.	No change to regional growth plan.
17f	Add a new policy in the tourism section: Provide appropriate protection in planning schemes for natural and biodiversity assets which underpin ecotourism or recreational opportunities or which attract tourists to the region.	Agreed.	Insert new action to 12.7 Tourism.

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17g	Suggested rewrite of a sentence to clarify catchment management authority roles (page 28).	Agreed.	Update Section 13.1 to clarify role of catchment management authority.
17h	Section 13.1 should include further description of natural assets.	Such information is given in the background report.	No change to regional growth plan.
17i	The regional growth plan refer to NaturePrint of habitat values model (pages28, 29).	Map 6 and the background report already identify the use of NaturePrint.	No change to regional growth plan.
17j	NaturePrint should be used on Map 6, and in the text.	NaturePrint is already in use on the map to show broad areas of high value habitat.	No change to regional growth plan.
17k	Map 6 should include a classification of “regionally significant wetlands and reaches” and recognise new Regional Waterway Strategies in the regional growth plan.	This level of detail is not appropriate for the regional growth plan. Significant waterways are identified in the background report.	No change to regional growth plan.
17l	Regionally significant water bodies should be named (such as Lake Wendouree) on Map 6.	Noted. Regionally significant water bodies are identified on Map 4.	No change to regional growth plan.
17m	Yarrowee Creek should be corrected to Yarrowee/Leigh River on Map 6.	Agreed.	Update river name on Map 6.
17n	The discussion about waterways (page 31) use should refer to water strategies/initiatives.	Detail about water programs such as Living Victoria is included in the background paper.	No change to regional growth plan.
17o	The title “Water supply catchments” more appropriately matches text on page 32 than “Catchment health”.	Agreed.	Update sub-heading in Section 13.3 to “Catchment health”.
17p	The policies, strategies and actions on page 32 should link with objectives in the regional catchment strategies for Corangamite, North Central and Glenelg Hopkins areas.	The content in the regional catchment strategies is more detailed than required for the regional growth plan. There is already reference at section 13.1 of the regional growth plan to supporting catchment management authority activities through appropriate land use planning.	No change to regional growth plan.
17q	The Canadian Creek should be included in paragraph 4 of flood section.	Agreed.	Update Section 13.4 to include creek reference.
17r	A reference to flood reviews and studies should	Update to the background paper is appropriate.	No change to regional growth

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	be included in flood section	The regional growth plan also references various flood investigations in Section 13.4.	plan. Update background report to provide additional detail around flood investigations.
17s	A reference to water initiatives should be included in water supply section.	Detail about water programs such as Living Victoria is included in the background paper.	No change to regional growth plan.
18a	<p>Makes a range of suggestions around more explicitly recognising buses and planning for public transport in the plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road based public transport makes an important contribution to regional communities and the economy and should be given status as a priority direction in future planning frameworks. • Buses are essential in giving effect to the vision and principles of the regional growth plan. This should be explicitly discussed. • The regional growth plan does not go far enough in setting requirements for the public transport network to be improved. • The future directions references to strengthening transport connections or access to services are too broad and general. There is a lack of emphasis on network development and the requirement for PTV to develop a plan. Under Section 14.9 Housing diversity and affordability actions should include improving public transport services that will form part of Network Development Plans. 	The project team has worked closely with Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure and Public Transport Victoria in developing the regional growth plan. Whilst recognising specific elements such as social inclusion and access to employment, the plan already acknowledges it is important to understand the need and requirement for public transport provision into the future. The transport framework developed for the regional growth plans provides a basis for planning for transport provision across the State.	No change to regional growth plan.
18b	The plan does not adequately highlight the impacts of social exclusion in the region. The	Issues around health and well being and disadvantage in the region are given extensive	Update Section 15.2 to include a reference as to how land use

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	<p>regional growth plan should recognise that road based transport be given priority as critical infrastructure because of its capacity to improve lives. Vulnerable persons living in remote locations have impacts on the economy, community and health.</p>	<p>consideration in the background report. In so far as a land use plan can address these matters, these considerations have been built into the strategic approach of the regional growth plan. For example: focusing growth into major settlements; supporting local employment opportunities. Section 15.2 Social infrastructure identifies that access and connectivity are important in lining people to appropriate services and infrastructure. It is noted that the plan does not explicitly refer to disadvantage and this may be remedied to capture this issue for the region.</p>	<p>planning can help in reducing the impacts of social disadvantage.</p>
18c	<p>In attracting people to the region it should be a strong focus of the regional growth plan to ensure that access and amenity is delivered at higher standards. This is so that future residents can envisage a lifestyle and community which is equivalent to or better than other regions especially the metropolitan region. The implementation of the regional growth plan should focus on developing the conditions that give people a reason to choose this region over another competing region.</p>	<p>The regional growth plan seeks to take advantage of the opportunities of the Central Highlands region and uses them to promote appropriate growth and protect attributes of the region which make it desirable. It supports a wide range of lifestyle opportunities and good access to services, infrastructure and employment.</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>
18d	<p>The future regional settlement framework is supported on the basis that it seeks to direct growth towards centres with the greatest capacity and ability to build on existing agglomerations in a way that also supports the sustainability of smaller rural settlements.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>No change to regional growth plan.</p>
18e	<p>More emphasis should be placed on urban infill and renewal with less reliance on broad hectare</p>	<p>Section 14.9 of the plan strongly supports the development of housing which meets the</p>	<p>Add a new future direction to Section 14.9 to provide greater</p>

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	land supply. The regional growth plan should set housing targets that deliver housing in locations that meet demographic needs. Regional growth plans should focus on quality and diversity of housing rather than quantum of land supply which will only deliver standard suburban blocks.	demographic needs of the region and increases housing densities. It also recognises that a housing strategy for the region would help better inform planning schemes and other strategic mechanisms. It is agreed this section would benefit from an explicit recognition of infill development.	recognition of infill development as a means to provide good access to services and encourage affordability.
18f	The regional growth plan has an insufficient implementation plan.	The regional growth plan will include a high level framework describing key opportunities for implementation of the plan and review. It is intended that this approach be further developed once the plan is finalised and approved. An implementation plan will include actions, priorities, partners and responsibilities.	Update regional growth plan to include a framework for implementation and review in Part E.
19a	Supports the plan as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of Ballarat's role in region and the importance of BWEZ and economic investment. • Leader in knowledge economy. • Focusing on retaining high quality agriculture. • Recognition of environmental risks. 	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
19b	There is scope for broader policy discussion on how to acknowledge transition towards a diversified knowledge-based economy and accelerate economic growth in the region.	The regional growth plan future directions in relation to industry and employment already capture the need to leverage strengths of the region and to expand industries and establish new ones. It is a principle of the regional growth plan that 'The region's economy should be strengthened to that it is more diversified and resilient'. The Future directions table in Part D identifies how to achieve this principle, including "Facilitate the	Amend Section 12.4 to more strongly support evolution of the economy towards skills, technology and innovation.

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		<p>development of higher education, technology and research uses which contribute to a knowledge economy”.</p> <p>It is agreed that there could be further acknowledgement and that opportunities will be created through infrastructure, innovation and technologies, such as the National Broadband Network.</p>	
19c	Investment in infrastructure at all levels of government is important to maintain the competitiveness of Ballarat. The plan should explore opportunities to provide future integrated emergency response infrastructure in Ballarat.	Noted. The regional growth plan will not list specific projects for future funding. The regional growth plan will help councils to make investment decisions (infrastructure) decisions and provide priority for further investigations of regionally significant infrastructure. The proposed helipad at Ballarat Base hospital has recently been announced for \$46million by the Health Minister. It is also noted that the plan is for the competitive strength of the region, not just Ballarat.	No change to regional growth plan.
19d	City of Ballarat has commenced a city wide strategy which will inform Council’s planning to 2040. It will knit together a range of planning, infrastructure, community development and service planning issues. City of Ballarat notes the strong alignment between their city-wide planning and the regional growth plan.	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
20a	Supports the plan and specifically the tourism directions in section 12.7 and alignment with Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive Inc. and Tourism Victoria objectives for the Goldfields region.	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.

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20b	<p>Welcomes the opportunity to have peak tourism bodies in the region engaged to implement objectives of the plan along with statewide policy commitment.</p> <p>Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive Inc. offer support and partnership to implement the plan.</p>	Noted.	No change to regional growth plan.
21a	The plan must provide for tourism developments which enhance the economic base of the region and open up new job opportunities.	The tourism future directions of the plan already state 'recognise the economic benefits of tourism and promote opportunities across the region'. Further, the role of the tourism industry has been considered throughout the regional growth plan.	No change to regional growth plan.
21b	The plan should take into account demand for future requirements of accommodation, signage and service support.	The tourism land use policies, strategies and actions already include: 'assess the infrastructure required to support identified tourism opportunities'.	No change to regional growth plan.
21c	Should specifically refer to Sovereign Hill's unique situation as a world-class tourism attraction and museum of international standing unlike anything else in regional Victoria.	Ballarat has been identified on Map 5 as a key regional tourism precinct to account for major attractions such as Sovereign Hill. Sovereign Hill is addressed numerous times in the background report and its role in the region, especially in section 3.5 Liveability and section 4.6 Cultural heritage. It is also identified as a competitive drawcard in economic prosperity section and as a key tourism asset in the tourism section. Ballarat is supported in the plan as one of the region's iconic tourism precincts. Specific attractions, such as Sovereign Hill, do not require individual listing in the regional growth plan itself.	No change to regional growth plan.