



# Woodend plan in question

By Kylie Kitchen

May 29, 2014, midnight

Residents breathed a sigh of relief as a document planning to contain Woodend's growth within the town boundary was approved - but their allay may have come too soon.

The Woodend Town Structure Plan was adopted at Macedon Ranges Council's meeting this week, after years in the making.

The visionary document will guide Woodend's future character, environment and housing for the next 15 to 20 years.

Council voted 5 - 3 in favour of the plan, but opposing councillor John Letchford told the *Guardian* he had already lodged a rescission motion.

Cr Letchford said he was seeking to withdraw the vote and give council an extra month to review supporting document, the Woodend Land Supply Analysis.

"The land supply analysis is showing there is no greenfield sites that can be developed in the area. There are particular restrictions on the development of land that will fundamentally reduce the overall ability to grow. This is where we need to continue the investigation of where the boundary lies or give clear direction outside the boundary for residential variety," he said.

"I just want to ensure that we don't have the infill that detracts from the character of the town and creates battles within the community."

Cr Letchford said he would prefer to see the town boundary expanded to allow for a variety of housing options such as unit developments, without detracting from the existing town character.

His idea goes against the town structure plan's objective to contain Woodend's growth to the existing town boundary for the next 18 - 19 years.

Cr Jennifer Anderson disagreed with delaying approval of the plan.

"I think we have had a very sound process to come to this point," she said.

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Cr Anderson said the document will be a crucial guide at VCAT (Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal) when inappropriate development is proposed.

Mayor, Cr Roger Jukes, said the document addresses the challenges for Woodend's future and encouraged council to vote favourably.

"This document sets the scene for Woodend at least into the next 20 years," he said.

Cr Letchford's rescission motion is expected to come before council at the June ordinary meeting.