

Mitchell Shire Councillors

113 High Street

Broadford Vic 3658

10 July 2024

Dear Councillor,

Re: Landscape Assessment Study

In reference to the proposed Significant Landscape Overlay Tallarook Ranges, Cherry Tree Ranges and Trawool Valley (SLO) and in the context of our farming operation at [REDACTED] Road Tallarook, the proposed permit requirement that 'a permit is required to remove, destroy, or lop **any native vegetation**' is **completely unreasonable and unrealistic**.

Our farm is our livelihood and what is being proposed will directly impact our ability to make a living from our farming land.

WE URGE YOU TO VOTE AGAINST THIS DRACONIAN MEASURE.

As a tertiary qualified forestry graduate, [REDACTED] has a keen understanding of the need to sensitively and actively manage native vegetation and this sometimes requires removal of trees, branches etc. In actual fact, in order to enhance the environment, whilst annually removing regrowth vegetation, we have planted thousands of native plants on our property, including trees that koalas inhabit.

Whilst we recognise the need to preserve **significant native vegetation**, **there are numerous occasions when we need to remove native vegetation so that we can operate our farm**. This especially applies to regrowth eucalypts that seed in our pastures every year. It also applies to mature trees that may be unsafe following natural decay, storm or flood damage.

Native vegetation near farm infrastructure also needs to be regularly removed to reduce the risk of bushfire and other Health and Safety concerns.

Our property contains numerous historic buildings and other remains, some of which were built during the Second World War. We wish to preserve this heritage for future generations and in order to do this, we need to regularly remove native trees that are near these buildings and remains.

In many cases such as after a storm, floods, landslides etc there is not sufficient time to seek and be granted a permit to clean up fallen trees across roads, tracks, farm

buildings and infrastructure. The practical reality of operating a farming enterprise frequently requires immediate action, such as tree removal, in order to continue to operate the farm.

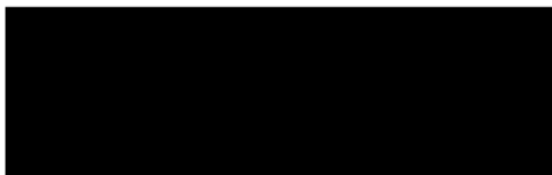
██████ has met with Justin Harding recently to urge the Planning Department to discuss the rewording of the proposed phrase. Justin tried to explain that the complicated web of Planning Scheme Overlays means that what is currently being proposed, actually allows farmers to remove vegetation in order to operate their farms. **If this is the case, why on earth does the proposed wording not explicitly say this?**

The consultation was civil but absolutely nothing has changed in the proposed wording following the meeting (and the promised written response did not occur). This makes a mockery of the Planning Department's consultation process. Consultation requires active listening, trying to find acceptable compromises and commitment to agreed follow up.

It is ironic that our farm has operated commercially for almost 200 years (since Joseph Hawdon in 1837) in a beautiful landscape and yet now we need to be told by the Planning Department how we should care for our farm.

We urge Council to amend the proposed permit requirements in the SLO, to explicitly state the rights of the farmers to manage the vegetation on their property, as they have done for centuries, without unnecessary bureaucracy and in order for them to make a living.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Tallarook Vic 3659