

## RESPONSE TO PETITION

**Petition Number:** 556 and 563 (paper)  
**Petition Sponsored by:** Renee Heath  
**Directed to:** Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP  
**Tabled on:** 20 June 2024

**Petition Grievance:**

The petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council that hundreds of property owners in North Wonthaggi have unfairly and unreasonably been placed under severe stress, with their health and wellbeing severely and adversely impacted by the State Government's decision to blight their properties with the recent introduction of a new and retrospective Environmental Audit Overlay. The Wonthaggi North East Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) was approved by the Minister for Planning and gazetted on 18 January 2024 under Amendment C152. It will affect nearly 1,100 acres, an estimated 1,000 plus residents in over 500 properties and up to 5,000 blocks of land, including the estates of Parklands, Powlett Ridge, Summerfields and Northern Views. Landowners and residents will now be required to undertake an environmental assessment before they can build a new home or add structures to their blocks. At a minimum this will involve a preliminary risk screen assessment which can cost more than \$15,000 and, if an environmental audit is required, it is reported that this can cost as much as \$80,000.

**Petition Action:**

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council call on the Government to, as a matter of urgency, immediately rescind the decision to retrospectively blight the properties of hundreds of owners in the Wonthaggi North East Precinct Structure Plan locality with the newly introduced Environmental Audit Overlay.


**Reply:**

The Department of Transport and Planning has worked closely with Bass Coast Shire Council, the Environment Protection Authority and the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) to minimise the impact on landowners affected by the EAO, while ensuring potential risks posed to human health are not compromised.

This has included joint funding by the VPA and Bass Coast Shire Council to undertake a preliminary risk screen assessments (PRSAs) for existing titled lots in the precinct that have been affected by the overlay. PRSAs have also been undertaken by some developers.

Following the completion of PRSAs which satisfied the obligations of the EAO, a total of 630 lots have now had the EAO removed.

I will continue providing updates to the Wonthaggi community as soon as information comes available.



**Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP**  
Minister for Planning

30/07/2024