

Research matters

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The land squeeze – how we measure it

by Michael Humphris

With high levels of population growth and competing needs for urban land, the monitoring of land availability becomes an increasingly important aspect of research. Hence, data gathering has commenced for this year's Urban Development Program (UDP), with refinements to the collection process being implemented.

The UDP provides accurate, consistent and updated intelligence on supply and consumption of residential and industrial land across metropolitan Melbourne and the Geelong region. This in turn assists decision makers in:

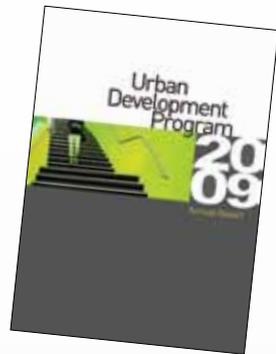
- monitoring the supply of residential and industrial land
- linking land use with infrastructure and service planning and provision
- taking early action to address potential land supply shortfalls and infrastructure constraints
- contributing to the containment of public sector costs by the planned, coordinated provision of infrastructure to service the staged release of land for urban development.

This year the data collection process will include better integration of planning permits into the database to facilitate a more streamlined consultation process with councils. Consultations will be held in April and May 2010, covering all local governments in Melbourne and Geelong.

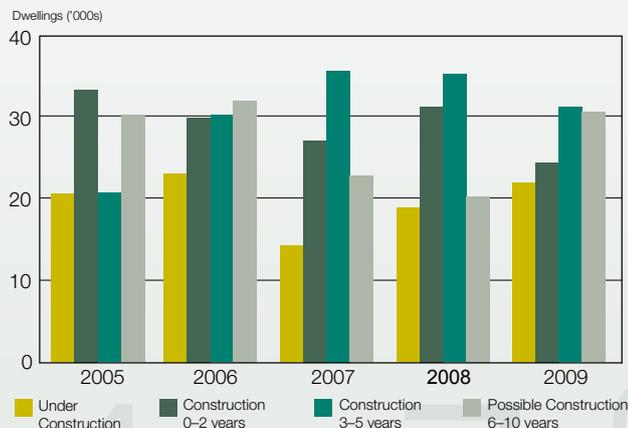
The information reported through the UDP has assisted government to respond to new challenges and has enabled early action to be taken in areas where land shortfalls have been identified.

The 2009 UDP Annual Report is now available online (please see site link under *What's New Online* for further information). Highlights include:

- Around 152,821 potential lots were identified on residential broadhectare land across Melbourne.
- Construction activity of broadhectare lots remained strong during 2008/09, experiencing a slight increase from the previous year with 13,986 lots constructed.
- 1,384 major redevelopment projects were identified, estimated to yield more than 104,000 dwellings over the next 10 years; an increase from the previous year's number of 99,156.
- 264 projects are currently under construction in major redevelopment sites with an estimated yield of 21,419 dwellings (see the accompanying chart for change in residential redevelopment over time).
- Across metropolitan Melbourne there are approximately 22,600 gross hectares of zoned industrial land.
- Since 2004, land consumption within six designated industrial nodes accounted for just over 80 per cent of total industrial land consumed across metropolitan Melbourne.



Residential redevelopment dwelling supply, 2005–2009



Source: Department of Planning & Community Development, 2009

Where does residential and industrial land come from?

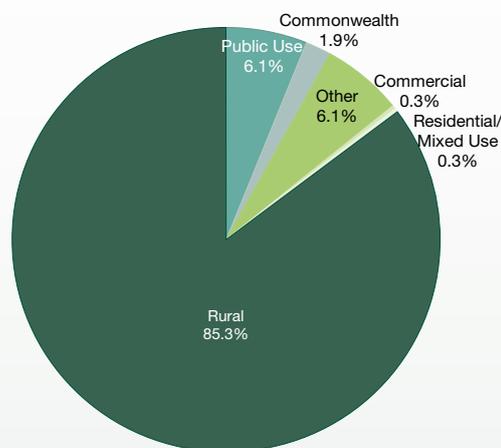
by Peter Elliott

Looking at changes in zoning from 2001 to 2009

This is a simple enough question, the sort of question children ask (well, children of urban planners might) to understand the world around them. Understanding where this land comes from, in a rezoning sense, provides some insight into how the metropolitan area is transforming to meet the needs of a changing and growing city.

This is an area that Spatial Analysis and Research (SAR) has started to examine. Initial analysis provides an overview of additions to residential and industrial zoned land. These two zoning

Figure 1 Proportion of the type of land rezoned to industrial zones, metropolitan Melbourne, 2001 to 2009

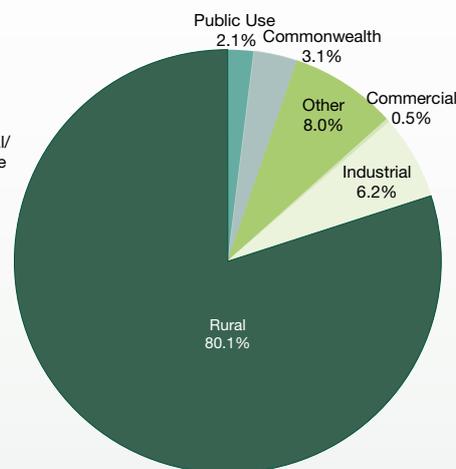


categories are appropriate candidates for analysis as they make up the majority of current land use and recent rezoning activity.

Industrial Land

Between 2001 and 2009, some 2,950 hectares of additional land was zoned to one of the industrial zones (either Industrial 1, 2 or 3 Zone, Business 3 Zone or one of the special use or comprehensive development zones that are industrial in character). Much of this land has been rezoned from agricultural purposes (see Figure 1) and reflects that most industrial land rezoning is occurring on the fringe of the metropolitan area.

Figure 2 Proportion of the type of land rezoned to residential zones, metropolitan Melbourne, 2001 to 2009



Residential Land

Residential land zoning (residential zones, mixed use zones and selected comprehensive development zones) has experienced a larger increase than the industrial zoning with some 7,060 hectares of additional land zoned from 2001 to 2009. Again, the vast majority of this has been sourced from agricultural land within the growth areas (see Figure 2). However, the overall picture is more complex as residential rezoning also occurs in the established areas of Melbourne and is supplied from a variety of sources.

The amount and location of much of the rezoning activity is no surprise as the government has identified the location of future residential and industrial land across metropolitan Melbourne through strategic plans such as *Melbourne 2030* and *A Plan for Melbourne's Growth Areas*. Change will also be monitored annually through the department's annual Urban Development Program.

A brief report using this data will be published in the near future, which will be available from the Department of Planning and Community Development website.

National Housing Conference Melbourne, November 2009

The importance of understanding the demand for and supply of housing and the effect of housing on the economy were the primary topics at the 6th National Housing Conference, *'Housing in a New Era: Building the Connections'*, held in Melbourne in November 2009. The conference was hosted by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) and the Victorian Office of Housing, and has been running biennially since 1999.

In the past these conferences have tended to be mainly concerned with social housing issues pertinent to state housing authorities, and also with research coming out of AHURI such

as social housing and low income households in the private housing market.

However, the 2009 conference proved to be different and its themes reflected the increasing interest of the policy and research community in housing and urban issues. The conference attracted 1,300 delegates who attended nearly 40 sessions and events.

Dr Jeff Harmer, Secretary of the Commonwealth Department for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, opened by outlining the challenges faced by Australian governments and describing how the new National Affordable

New Journey to Work information on small towns

by **Christine Kilmartin**

In 2006, Spatial Analysis and Research (SAR) worked with VicRoads to better understand from Census data whether people who lived in small towns also worked in those towns. SAR and VicRoads are again working together to prepare for the next Census and invite your comments on small town data (see below).

VicRoads, as the state's road authority, provides the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) with the details of how to code workplace addresses into destination zones. Workplace addresses are identified from responses to the following Census question:

For the main job held last week, what was the person's workplace address?

This process enables all states to identify those destinations of most interest to them in terms of transport demand, congestion and urban planning requirements.

Prior to the 2001 Census, no data was available in relation to work locations in regional Victoria, apart from destinations in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and the Latrobe Valley. In 2001, the ABS coded workplace destinations to Statistical Local Areas (SLA) for most of regional Victoria. This created the first total spatial coverage of data on where people were heading to when they went to work. However, because an SLA can contain several urban areas and some large non-urban areas, being able to refine destinations within the SLA provides an added understanding of the relationship between where people live and where they work.

For the 2006 Census, every town with a population of 1,000 persons or more was identified through the VicRoads/ABS processes as a work destination zone, defined by the boundary of the urban centre. As a result, data is now available to identify the number and nature of jobs in small towns.

In previous Census data, workers who *lived* in those towns could be identified, but workers who *worked* in those towns

could not. Nor could we identify where those workers came from but now, with some restrictions, we can.

The following table illustrates how we can now identify smaller towns as destinations for workers.

The Department of Planning and Community Development and VicRoads are considering, for the 2011 Census, the practicalities and potential value of expanding this coding to towns of fewer than 1,000 people, and would be interested to hear about possible policy and planning applications, and other uses to which such data might be put.

Of workers who live in regional centre or town, per cent who also work there, Victoria 2006

EXAMPLES OF TOWNS FOR WHICH DATA IS AVAILABLE

Regional centre/town & LGA	%
Kerang – Gannawarra (S)	75.7
Corryong – Towong (S)	74.3
Nhill – Hindmarsh (S)	72.0
Boort – Loddon (S)	66.4
Robinvale – Swan Hill (RC)	58.3
Myrtleford – Alpine (S)	52.1
Beaufort – Pyrenees (S)	51.4
Korumburra – South Gippsland (S)	40.6
Nagambie – Strathbogie (S)	38.6
Red Cliffs – Mildura (RC)	36.0
Aireys Inlet – Surf Coast (S)	29.3
Drouin – Baw Baw (S)	26.5
Chiltern – Indigo (S)	15.0
Wallan – Mitchell (S)	14.8
Leopold – Greater Geelong (C)	8.8

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006 special request tables

Housing Agreement, National Partnership Agreements and The Nation Building Jobs Plan have set the agenda for the future of housing reform.

Ric Battelino, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, elaborated on this theme and explored the contradiction between the apparent undersupply of dwellings and the high levels of investment in dwellings.

Helen King, Manager Housing Planning, Department of Planning and Community Development, used the session '*Managing Melbourne's Housing Growth – Challenges and Opportunities*' to provide an outline of part of the Victorian

Government's response to these challenges which aims to support local government to meet the projected demand for housing in Melbourne.

The conference concluded with a call from various speakers including Professor Duncan MacLennan, Director of the Centre for Housing Research at the University of St Andrews, for researchers, policy makers and advocates to better demonstrate the connections between housing outcomes and the economy.

For more information and copies of presentations go to the conference website:

www.nationalhousingconference.org.au/melbourne2009

Revisiting Lake Boga – preliminary findings presented

by Elissa Waters

In the last issue of Research Matters we reported on the Lake Boga Project – a qualitative research study which examines the impacts of environmental change on a regional community. Analysis of the fieldwork interviews has been completed and a draft report is being reviewed and edited for publication.

One of the interesting features of this project has been the presentation of preliminary findings to a number of key stakeholders in order to incorporate their feedback into the final report.

The first group of stakeholders is those involved in formulating government policy around communities and environment. A policy round table discussion was held on 12 November which provided the opportunity to explore policy implications of the research.

The second group of stakeholders includes those who have an immediate involvement in some of the matters being researched, such

as the relevant water authority responsible for irrigation management in the region around Lake Boga, and local government who are responsible for foreshore management and a range of local planning and community development activities. These agencies have been informed of the project through discussions and presentations and have been asked for their comments.

The third group of stakeholders is the participants themselves and, in early December, Elissa Waters, Fiona McKenzie and Christabel McCarthy (from Spatial Analysis and Research) returned to Lake Boga to present preliminary findings to this group. For the project team, this visit was an important part of the study process. Returning to the community and presenting the information they had given us was both a verification and trust-building process. It gave participants the opportunity to see how their information had been collated and the types of findings which the researchers had extracted as being of policy relevance. It also allowed participants to feel that they could have involvement beyond the initial interview phase, prior to final publication of the report.

Feedback from the presentation at Lake Boga confirmed to the research team that the effort had been worthwhile and that locals involved in the project were grateful that we had returned and sought their views at this stage of the project.

The final report is expected to be released in March. Stay tuned for further details which will be presented in the next edition of *Research Matters*.



What's new online

www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/research/urbanandregional

Recent updates to the website include: an Internal Migration in Victoria report which provides an overview of major internal migration trends in the state; the *Residential Land Bulletin*, September 2009 edition; a link to the Urban Development Program 2009 Annual Report; and reports and presentations from the Victoria in Future 2008 Population Projections – 2009 Urban and Regional Forums.

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