

Part C. Strategies for Melbourne

Report prepared by Research and Development Department

Preamble

The following report was prepared by the Research and Development Department of the Plannings and Highways Branch, and forms part of the material that was considered in preparing the recommendations set out in the previous section.

The report is based on research carried out by officers of the Department. Papers of individual officers, taken into account in preparation of the report are submitted as attachments. The viewpoints contained in the papers are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the viewpoints of the Department or Board.

The report contains a number of parts. Firstly, it deals with the concept of a management approach to planning and looks at the political and administrative implications of such an approach. It argues that a set of objectives should be established to act as a keystone which will lock the various parts of the strategy into a logical and consistent whole. Secondly, it deals with the various implications of these objectives in the context of this management strategy and looks at the economic and sociological implications, the implications of technological and social change, as well as the residential locational and environmental implications.

The report then deals with a number of important costs which will arise from the strategy, looking at the environmental, travel and establishment, development and land costs.

Finally, the report summarises these implications and relationships in the context of five possible plans for the future development of Melbourne. That is, in an effort to make the wealth of detail and possibilities more readily understandable, an initial attempt is made to bring together the different relationships and conflicts which will arise if the future development of Melbourne is planned along the lines of each one of the five possibilities put forward. These particular five strategies have been selected because they broadly encompass the range of issues raised in the objections to, and submissions on, Amendments 3 and 21.

Given the conflicts of interests which are disclosed in this analysis the report makes no recommendations concerning adoption of a particular strategy.

It is considered that the Board and State Government must decide the weight which should be attached to each of the issues raised before such a political decision can be made.

1. A Management Approach to Urban Planning

This report proposes that the urban planning strategy selected must be based on the social, economic, environmental and physical consequences of that strategy. The Board must appreciate, that because its actions impinge upon these things, they must therefore be taken into consideration when deciding on the particular strategy to be pursued.

An appreciation of these consequences can be arrived at through two processes.

1. Detailing the range of objectives which the residents of Melbourne may wish to pursue; an example of a set of such objectives is set out below.
2. Develop a number of alternative planning strategies to analyse the possible future outcome of the different plans and the way these futures harmonize with, or conflict with, the set of objectives.

Having developed a number of future planning strategies the next stage in the process entails decision taking by Government. Based on a consideration of the alternatives presented, Government must assign priorities to the objectives it wishes to see pursued. This will then enable a particular strategy to be selected.

Whatever the strategy developed, it will influence, or be in conflict with, some objectives more than others and this has obvious implications for the way our urban areas are managed. That is, to be effective it demands the need for consistency within one level of government action, and between different levels of government action.

Objectives

This is a sample set of planning objectives which people of the Melbourne Metropolitan Area (MMA) may wish to pursue.

A *People and Community*

Objectives relating to the population and its mix.

- 1 Freedom for people to choose where they may wish to locate.
- 2 Fostering community interaction and diverse development in terms of family ties, socio-economic status, and ethnic origin.
- 3 Fostering community development at different spatial levels for different family, socio-economic and ethnic groups.

B *Physical Environment*

Objectives relating to the preservation, conservation and management of the resources of the MMA.

The preservation, conservation and management of:—

- 4 the MMA'S physical features;
- 5 a pollution free environment;
- 6 indigenous flora and fauna;
- 7 a diverse and varied urban fabric to allow opportunities for alternative and individual life styles;
- 8 historic buildings and places.

C *Physical Infrastructure*

Objectives relating to the development of a utilities and services infrastructure to meet any increase in population and the higher living standards associated with increasing affluence.

- 9 The development of accommodation of sufficient standard to meet varied demands;
- 10 The development of utilities to an adequate standard to service these demands;
- 11 The development of adequate open space;
- 12 The development of adequate communications to meet individual needs for movement, information and accessibility;
- 13 The development of adequate communications to meet mass needs for homes, work and social activities.

D *Social Infrastructure*

Objectives relating to the development of a community services infrastructure to meet higher living standards associated with increasing affluence and any increase in population.

- 14 Provision to meet the community's increasing demands for skilled services, cultural and leisure-time activities;
- 15 Provision for increasing standards of health;
- 16 Provision of adequate recreational facilities for the enjoyment of organised sport, natural features, cultural and other activities;
- 17 The development of increasing standards of social welfare to meet community needs and the needs of areas suffering particular stress;
- 18 The fostering and development of community participation in planning at all levels of the government in the MMA;
- 19 The maintenance of adequate standards of law and order.

E *Economic Infrastructure*

Objectives relating to the socio-economic aspirations of the community.

- 20 A desirable rate of income growth;
- 21 The achievement of a socially acceptable distribution of income;
- 22 Sufficient job opportunities to satisfy the potential supply of labour likely to be available.

Political and Administrative Implications

If the appropriateness of a particular strategy for Melbourne can only be determined in the light of all its social, economic and environmental, as well as physical, consequences, then such an approach to planning also has important administrative and political implications. This

is essentially a management approach to planning—management by objectives—applied to the public sector. What is being suggested is that we should develop a new conceptual approach to planning—one of the management of our cities. We will firstly look at two important features of this approach and then at the political implications of it. The two features have their counterpart in modern large scale corporate enterprises.

The first feature is the need to consider what all the various conflicting objectives—the market share, the rate of return on capital, the shareholder's dividend—might be for the corporation, and to determine what its policies are going to be in the light of the balance struck between these conflicts. Despite the greater complexity of the inter-relationships between objectives in the public sector, the planning authority must take the same approach as the private corporation if it is to avoid, *ad hoc*, and largely self-defeating, reactions to problems already generated by previous decisions. This implies that all actions taken by the planning authority must be seen as instruments for achieving the intended strategy. The level of amenities and facilities supplied to certain areas will be as much positive instruments in achieving the objectives as land use controls are negative instruments for the same purpose. Even rising land prices may be used as an instrument to deter development where it is considered undesirable or excessive. In fact the faster the rise in prices in such areas the more effective will be the instrument.

A second feature of this management approach to planning is that again, like the private corporation, the public planning authority must look to the future situation when deciding upon the priority it will attach to different objectives. The problems the authority must attempt to meet are those which will be prevailing at the time of impact of its policies rather than those which are occurring today. By way of example, obviously, there is no point in introducing policies to alleviate an increase in land prices if by the time those policies have had any effect, prices have already stabilised. Such a policy would itself only add to instability. The aim of this new management approach is to prevent problems arising rather than trying to react to them once they have been created. Because of the time lag between the taking of a decision and its actual impact

it is only possible to affect future situations. Therefore, given this long gestation period between the taking of a decision and the time required for all of the implications of that decision to work themselves out, it is imperative that forecasting become an integral part of this management approach.

These management features have very important political implications. Firstly, there is a need to determine the appropriate body within which decision making should take place. What is required is to relate Government to a problem area which appears meaningful in terms of resolving conflicting objectives; i.e., an area for which priorities between different courses of action need to be determined. The Government's proposals to transfer some of the Board's implementing functions to other authorities will not assist in resolving problems at metropolitan level. Whilst more effective co-ordination of action within an individual field such as transport, may be achieved, the opportunity for effective integration of transport with other services within a co-ordinated urban strategy will be reduced. If the resolution of urban problems has greater priority than the functional efficiency of transport, then the appropriate course of action would be to transfer more transportation functions to the strategic urban management authority rather than the converse, as is now intended.

The democratic resolution of conflicts at metropolitan level requires that direct representation should occur, to ensure direct responsibility for decisions. This implies that there should be a metropolitan government of Melbourne, directly responsible for resolving conflicts at the strategic metropolitan level, as suggested by Mannigan; "... the Board of Works might become a top tier authority with a more democratically elected Council."¹

The second political implication is that this approach to management will require at least some forward programming at all levels of government. This is because, in order to ensure consistency between decision making at the metropolitan level and decision making at the State and Commonwealth levels, it is necessary to see Melbourne's strategy in the context of a national and a state development

1. A. Mannigan, Department of Legal Studies, University of Melbourne. See *The Age*—"Letters to the Editor", 6.11.73.