

It is very important that the population of the inner suburbs should not be allowed to decrease further and in order to keep people there, these areas must be made more attractive to live in. This is an urgent need, and can be achieved only by a vigorous programme of redevelopment.

The present population of the inner suburbs cannot be rehoused there satisfactorily with single family dwellings only. Row housing, walk-up flats and elevator flats must be used as well. The provisions of the planning scheme are designed to encourage all these forms of development.

Redevelopment by housing authorities should be closely integrated with all other features of civic improvement and the work carried out in close co-operation with a metropolitan planning authority. The planning scheme has not covered this aspect, but it is desirable that it should be done without delay. However, certain redevelopment zones have been designated in the scheme where, for purposes of economy, redevelopment should go hand in hand with road widening or road deviation.

Many of the new areas which have been zoned for residential purposes are still not subdivided. To secure better conditions than in the past, subdivision should be carried out in accordance with a properly prepared planning scheme. These areas therefore have been designated Living Areas and appropriate conditions framed to control their development.

To prevent the premature development of land not essential for immediate metropolitan requirements, certain of these living zones have been designated Reserved Living Zones and land use restricted to prevent development until roads, public utilities and transport services can be provided economically and in a reasonable time.

To satisfy the need of those people who desire to live in a semi-rural environment, provision has been made in the scheme for about 3,000 acres of residential areas where in future subdivisions no block may be less than one acre.

Few parts of the metropolitan area are unsuitable for residential purposes, but the east and south-east are more suitable and attractive, and therefore are more popular than the north and west.

In the western suburbs we are faced with two conflicting problems — the need for more residents and the general unpopularity of the area for living purposes.

Public utility services can be extended economically to most parts of the area, but the cost per unit of area is much greater in the west and north than in the east and south. Development in the latter areas, therefore, is more economical to the community and to the ratepayer.

The policy adopted in determining residential zones has been to recognise the strong preference for residence to the south and east, to encourage redevelopment of the old inner suburbs, to attract residents to localities needing greater worker population, and to stimulate development of the townships of Dandenong and Frankston.

The residential zones have been determined on the assumption that, as in the past, one-third of the population increase will want to settle in the central, northern and western districts and two-thirds in the rest of the area.

Melbourne has always been the principal manufacturing centre of Victoria, and 85 per cent. of the whole factory output of the State is produced here. There are many difficulties in the way of State-wide industrial decentralisation, and industrial activity in Melbourne is certain to increase.

In a future population of 2,500,000 it is estimated about 400,000 will be employed in manufacturing industries and that the total area required for manufacturing purposes will be: General Manufacturing Industry 12,000 acres, Oil and Explosives Industry 4,000 acres.

INDUSTRY AND ITS NEEDS

The dominant feature of the present industrial pattern is the concentration of 60 per cent. of industrial employment within three miles of the Central Post Office, and 85 per cent. in this central area and the northern and western districts. The zoning proposals of the scheme are designed to encourage decentralisation of industry and bring about a better distribution throughout the outer suburbs, nearer to the homes of workers.

To protect residential areas from the effects of industrial development, and to provide for the varying needs of industry itself, zones have been provided for the following types of industry — service, light, general, waterside, special, offensive, dangerous and extractive.

The scheme provides for a better distribution of industrial areas, protects residential areas from the encroachment of industry, and preserves for industry the opportunity to select locations appropriate to its needs without competition from non-industrial uses.

DISTRICT BUSINESS CENTRES

This chapter shows the contribution which district centres can make to solving the problems of the central business area.

The key to successful commercial decentralisation is the department store, which to justify its establishment needs to be within convenient reach of a population of at least 200,000. Decentralised locations also have advantages to financial and business institutions and government departments.

It is important that urban decentralisation, of which there are already signs in Melbourne, should be guided to centres well located geographically and offering opportunities for development.

Five District Business Centres have been provided for, and each is discussed. It is visualised that besides the nucleus of shopping, they will provide facilities for retail marketing, for medical, dental, and other professions, for branch offices of businesses and public administration, and for entertainment and cultural activities.

Such centres will be an asset to residents in the various districts, and as the city grows they will alleviate the problems of the central area. Decentralisation will soon be imperative. The choice is between decentralisation according to a plan or without plan.

SUBURBAN SHOPPING

About one-seventh of the whole workforce is employed in shops and about one-quarter of the population have daily contact with shops and shopping centres. Ninety-seven per cent. of food purchases are made in suburban shops and nearly half the purchases of clothing and furniture.

The survey disclosed 380 separate shopping centres of various sizes containing more than 16,500 shops, and nearly 3,600 additional shops in groups of less than five or as single units.

Overseas, and to some extent in Melbourne, the shopping pattern is changing due to the increasing mobility of the shopper, improvements in the design of individual shops and in shopping centres, the restriction in trading hours, and the need for providing parking facilities for motor cars.

The principal defects in the suburban shopping centres of Melbourne are:

- (a) Location on main traffic routes.
- (b) Ribbon development.
- (c) Lack of amenities, particularly for car parking.
- (d) Intrusion of other businesses and vacant lots resulting in discontinuity of shopping frontage.

The following provisions of the scheme have been designed to correct eventually the faults which exist and to develop a more adequate and better balanced shopping structure:

- (a) An arterial road system designed to divert traffic from the larger centres.
- (b) A secondary road system linking the centres to the arterial road system.
- (c) Inclusion in commercial zones, areas which offer the opportunity for future improvement.
- (d) Local business zones related in size to the populations within their spheres of influence.
- (e) Zoning for other appropriate uses shopping areas now passing to other purposes.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Many existing centres present opportunities for improvement and the most prosperous shopping centres of the future will be those where advantage is taken of such opportunities to remove their disabilities and bring them into keeping with modern trends.

Education affects all phases of community and private life, and is so important that where there is a conflict of interests, those of education should in most instances prevail.

One-quarter of the population — as many as are engaged in all secondary industry — are concerned daily with education either as scholars or teachers.

The benefit of a good education system can be gained only if there are sufficient schools in proper locations and the pre-requisite of a school is an adequate site. A major purpose of the planning scheme has been to reserve these sites, but this has proved very difficult, and has been made even harder because, during the short period the scheme has been in preparation, many desirable sites have been lost because the land has been put to other uses.

New school sites have been selected in consultation with the Education Department. Primary school requirements have been reasonably met, but there are insufficient suitable vacant sites within the urban area for all the secondary schools that will be necessary. Sites for secondary school needs only up to 1965 have been reserved.

As the University and other higher education needs require an additional 240 acres a special use zone has been created to embrace a sufficient area for academic, but not recreational, purposes. In this has been included nearby medical, research and educational establishments.

Cultural facilities have already been provided for, with the exception of a musical and dramatic art centre, for which a location in parklands is suggested.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Facilities for relaxation and exercise outdoors are an essential part of urban living. Because of the love of the outdoors characteristic of the Australian people, provision for these becomes a very important aspect of the planning scheme.

Melbourne has just over six acres of public open space for every 1,000 people, but detailed study shows that 7½ acres for every thousand is desirable, in addition to land for golf courses and racecourses.

Public open space falls into four categories — ornamental parks and gardens, sporting areas, natural countryside, and children's playgrounds. All are provided in Melbourne, but the distribution is not properly related to the population.

The scheme provides for a major metropolitan park system which gives a better distribution of open space, and provides a series of peripheral parks, with radial parks joining the large park areas.

To preserve the environment of the Shrine of Remembrance, a special use zone, with permissible uses appropriate to the surroundings, has been provided to cover the west side of St. Kilda Road in that vicinity. Provision has been also made for continuing Bank Street, South Melbourne, to St. Kilda Road.

OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES

Hospitals. In the urban area it is necessary to reserve sites only for general hospitals. Specialised hospitals can be appropriately located in the rural zone and no special reservations have been made in the planning scheme for future hospitals of this type.

In consultation and agreement with the Hospitals and Charities Commission sites for public hospitals have been selected on the basis of seven hospital beds for each 1,000 people.

Special provision has been made for a medical centre to be established in conjunction with the teaching hospitals grouped around the University.

Markets. Melbourne has five wholesale markets and four truly retail markets. The wholesale markets comprise one large central and two smaller livestock markets, a central fruit and vegetable market, and a central fish market. The principal retail market is the Queen Victoria Market (operated in conjunction with the wholesale fruit and vegetable market) and municipal markets exist in South Melbourne, Prahran and Dandenong.