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PLANNING POLICIES FOR THE MELBOURNE METROPOLITAN REGION AND AMENDING PLANNING SCHEMES 3 AND 21

REPORT ON GENERAL CONCEPT OBJECTIONS, 1974



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Planning policies for the
Melbourne and
metropolitan region, and
amending planning
schemes 3 & 21 : report
on general concept

Report submitted to the Chairman and Commissioners of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works
by the Chief Planner and Staff, Planning and Highways Branch.

PLANNING POLICIES FOR THE

MELBOURNE & METROPOLITAN REGION AND AMENDING PLANNING SCHEMES 3 & 21

REPORT ON GENERAL CONCEPT OBJECTIONS FEBRUARY 1974

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Introduction

In December 1971 the Board submitted its Report on Planning Policies for the Melbourne Metropolitan Region to the Government and it was made public. At the same time Amending Schemes 3 and 21 which modified the approved Metropolitan Planning Scheme and extended it over the expanded planning area of 5,029 square kilometres (1,942 square miles) were placed on statutory exhibition. Concurrently interim development control over the extended area was approved so that land use control could be exercised while the new proposals were being considered.

A series of seminars and meetings were held to explain the proposals and the normal exhibition period was extended until the end of July 1972. Some 4,000 objections to the amending schemes were made and these included a number of much broader submissions which went beyond statutory objections but which were all relevant to consideration of the proposals.

After a preliminary examination, the objections were categorised under two main heads—

- (a) Objections to the general concepts.
- (b) Others (mainly related to specific areas or proposals or individual properties).

It was decided to deal with category (a) first and objection hearings commenced on the basis of a full day a week in November 1972. By early 1973 category (a) had been substantially heard and the position was reviewed. It was clear that if objection hearings continued until completion, it could be a considerable time before it was possible to make major policy recommendations to the Government, and accordingly it was suggested to the Minister for Local Government that an Interim Report should be submitted covering objections to the general concepts, and that this would—

- (i) enable Government policy on the major concepts to be resolved and therefore create greater certainty in the minds of the public and public authorities on major planning objectives.
- (ii) enable the Board to deal with the remaining objections which were largely of an individual nature in the framework of an adopted Government policy.

The Minister agreed to this course but the finalising of the Report has been made more complex by the generation of considerable activity at the Commonwealth level in the urban and regional development field which resulted in a whole series of studies by the Cities Commission and other bodies on various aspects of metropolitan growth, system cities and growth centres. Both the Commonwealth and State Governments had adopted firm decentralisation policies shortly after the issue of the 1971 report but the implications of these were not clear. There appeared to be some conflicts between preliminary policies on many of the above matters at the Commonwealth and State level. Indeed the Board has been involved in many discussions on these matters and has supplied information to a number of Commonwealth agencies and their consultants.

Planning is a continuing process where proposals are made, interactions occur and decisions are taken by Governments and authorities in a series of stages. Between these stages changes in attitudes, techniques and philosophies take place which can result in changes in policy. This Report represents a further stage in the process and to give it perspective a brief background review is included.

This Report is somewhat different from previous Board Reports. Part C, prepared by the Research and Development Department under the Supervising Planner, Mr G. A. Harris, is basically an examination of the General Concept Objections, but goes further than this and examines alternative strategies available for Melbourne which contains some 72% of the population of Victoria. Particular emphasis is given to the socio-economic rather than the purely physical aspects, but it is clear that the management and arrangement of land use can have significant effect on economic and social factors.

Part C and some of the attachments contain independent and sometimes controversial views from individual officers, several of whom were not involved in the original 1971 proposals. While all these views are not necessarily supported, they indicate different opinions that the Board and the Government must be aware of in making decisions.

As always, one would have liked more time for further investigations and indeed these are necessary and are recommended. However, I believe it is important that some

firm policies even of an interim nature, are adopted by Government at this point in time so that uncertainties can be resolved and the direction of future action made clearer.

The recommendations in Part B which have been the subject of much thought by the Deputy Chief Planner, Mr D. W. Simsion and myself, represent what is considered the most judicious course to be adopted, having regard to the points made in Part C and other circumstances.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J A Hepburn', with a small mark above the 'A'.

J. A. Hepburn ARICS MRTPI FRAP
Chief Planner