

per cent. of all metropolitan shopping is done. To add to this concentration more than sixty per cent. of all industrial employment is located within three miles of the centre of the city.

Into this congested area the suburban railway system discharges each working day more than 100,000 passengers at Flinders Street Station alone, from which they emerge at peak periods at the rate of over one thousand per minute, and towards which they converge at the end of the day's work.

All these activities — industry, commerce, shopping — are large generators of traffic. It is no wonder therefore that, with this continual centralisation of activities, conditions within and around the central business area are progressively becoming worse. It is also not surprising that, with the growing population and the increasing use of the motor car, it is becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate stationary vehicles, and that business is suffering in consequence. If this trend continues conditions must deteriorate further until eventually the city's economy suffers. A study of Melbourne reveals that many of its problems stem from this cause — the undue concentration of activities within a limited central core.

It is apparent, therefore, that one of the most essential needs in the future development of Melbourne, both from the viewpoint of healthy civic growth and of civil defence, is to encourage influences which will tend to counteract this growing concentration, and to decentralise at least some activities throughout the metropolitan area.

In approaching this question it must be realised that there are some activities for which a centralised location is essential, but there are many to which this does not apply. For example, many industries find a location within the inner suburbs desirable because of linkage with other industries, access to the port, or the convenience of employees living throughout the suburbs. But many industries are finding that they are too cramped in these inner areas, that they are housed in unsuitable premises and unable to develop their works in accordance with contemporary factory design which demands space not attainable in central locations. Many are moving to new quarters of their own volition, particularly into the Dandenong-Oakleigh area. While this is beneficial, the move is unguided and unco-ordinated, and there is a danger that the full advantages expected will not be realised because new sites have not been chosen with due regard to all the relevant factors.

There are also signs that business and public administration is tending to move from the centre, although sometimes not to the most suitable locations.

Suburban shopping is increasing in importance, and if the American trend towards decentralisation of shopping is felt here, will continue to do so. Yet most suburban shopping centres are inadequately equipped for modern needs.

So decentralisation is already on the way, but it is occurring haphazardly, and no adequate provision is being made for proper accommodation in new locations. The planning

scheme endeavours to remedy this lack in the following ways.

Firstly, as a counter to the daily surge of workers into the city centre, new industrial areas have been selected in the outer suburbs nearer to workers' homes. These have been dispersed throughout the area and are large enough to provide not only for the expansion of the immediate future, but for later growth as well. These new areas have been located near existing and proposed road and rail communication systems to facilitate the movement of men and materials. They should, therefore, be attractive to the manufacturer who is not tied to a central location and to new industries which will be seeking sites.

Secondly, five district business centres have been selected which have the physical potentialities for gradual re-development and which are suitably located in relation to road and rail communications so as to be readily accessible to a large residential population. It is visualised that in these centres there could in time be located cultural and entertainment facilities, branch department stores, branch offices of business and public administration, and courts of law. With proper planning and systematic development they could grow into flourishing centres of community activities with many facilities comparable with those of the central business area. Thus, for many people, the wearisome journey into the city centre could be avoided, and some relief afforded to the already overcrowded central area.

Thirdly, wherever in the larger suburban shopping centres opportunities exist for re-development which would make them more attractive and more in keeping with present and future needs, additional areas have been zoned for this purpose and conditions imposed to ensure that the contemplated purpose may, in time, be achieved.

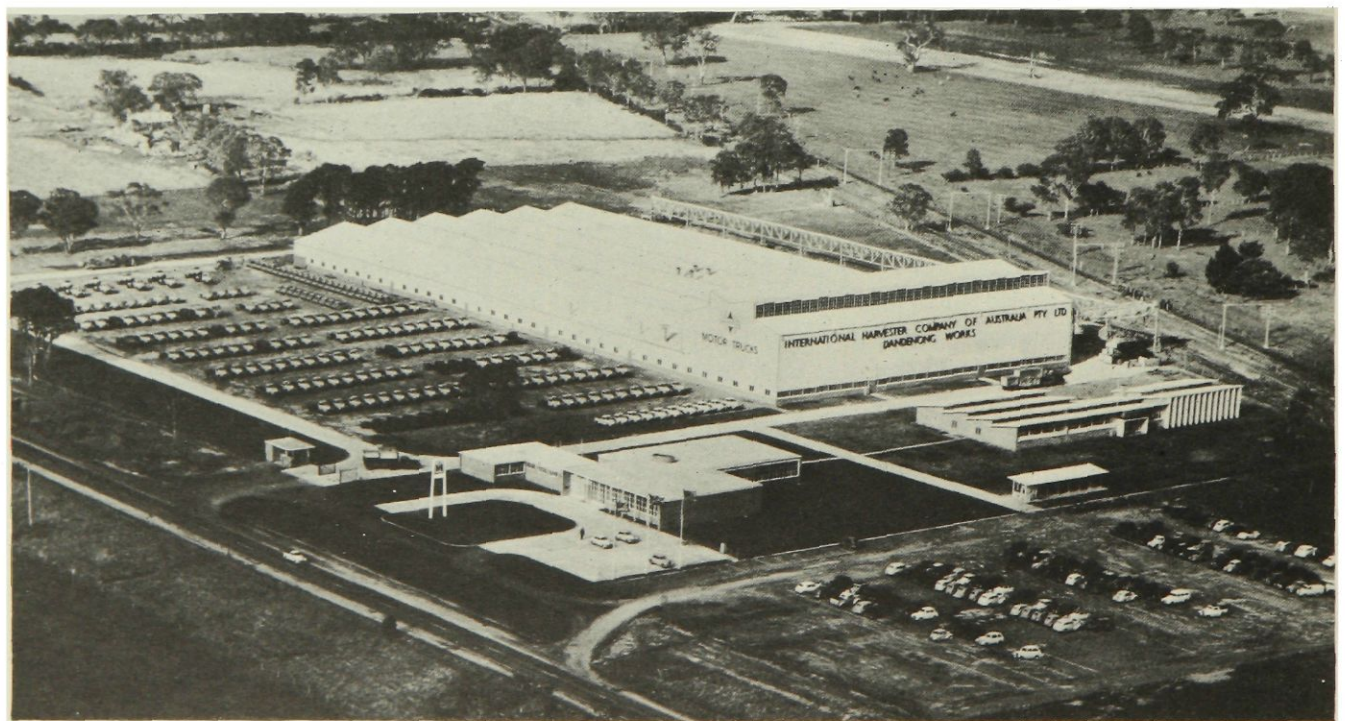
Such a policy of dispersal of industry and business is a commonsense measure designed to counter the undesirable and uneconomic concentration in the city centre, which is getting worse every year. It does not mean that the central business area will not continue to expand, for as the city grows there will be many activities which must still find central locations. Rather will such a policy tend to preserve space within the inner areas for those activities which should rightly be there, and which otherwise would not be able to find accommodation.

There are no grounds for fearing that such a policy will cause a decline in the development of the central business area or unduly retard its growth. On the contrary, it will give new life to the area because unless some such measures are taken the centre will tend to choke itself and in so doing bring about its own decline. In a growing city the space vacated by one activity will be readily occupied for some more appropriate use.

It is only by such a policy that the efficiency of the central business area, and through it the efficiency of the community, can be maintained and the citizens given the convenience for fulfilling their daily needs, which is their right.



*"Flinders Street Station . . . from which they emerge
 . . . at the rate of over one thousand per minute"*



"Contemporary factory design which demands space not attainable in central locations"