

Summary of the Report

Background (pp. 11-16)

The report has been prepared in response to a request by the State Government that the Board present detailed proposals governing the future planning of the Melbourne Metropolitan Region.

The preparation of the report has been guided by a number of policy directives and related investigations and in particular one in which the Government indicated that Melbourne should be encouraged to follow a corridor type of development with urban development confined to the "growth corridors", separated from each other by "green wedges" of open country protected from urban development.

The report outlines the Board's recommendations for a long term planning policy over the next 30 years and in two amending planning schemes extends planning control to cover the whole of the metropolitan region and makes provision for urban growth over the next 20 years.

Regional planning objectives were established covering urban development, conservation, accessibility, recreation, redevelopment and rehabilitation, diversity of opportunity, protection of mineral deposits and public involvement in the planning process.

Structural Elements (pp.17-50)

Whilst the range and depth of research carried out to secure the foundations for the planning proposals have been extensive, this report can only review the most significant aspects of the data and statistics which produce the basis for the report's recommendations.

It is expected that the population of the Metropolitan Planning Region will reach not less than 3 million by 1985 and not less than 4 million by the year 2000. While somewhat lower than earlier predictions, these figures do not alter the scale of the planning problem in any material way. They compare with the Board's estimate that as at June, 1971, the metropolitan region had a population of 2,435,000.

People:

Between 1901 and 1971 the population of the metropolitan region rose from 507,000 to 2,435,000 but the increases have been unevenly distributed and have favoured the southern and eastern sectors compared with the northern and western, while the central sector has actually been losing population continually since about the end of World War I.

Since World War II there has been a marked tendency for Southern European migrants to show a preference for settlement in the central, northern and western sectors, while other European and U.K. migrants have shown a strong preference for the southern and eastern sectors.

At the same time, there has been a well-defined movement of Australian born population away from the central sector and the inner ring, but this may now be diminishing in strength.

Work:

Since World War II, although the central sector has continued to maintain its status as the most important single centre of employment, rate of growth of employment there has only been marginal, whereas employment in the suburban ring, particularly in the southern sector, has been growing much more rapidly.

The Central Business District has remained relatively static since 1951.

Transportation:

The assumptions and main findings of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan are summarised and their implications for metropolitan planning discussed.

Emphasis is placed on obtaining a balance between all modes of transport.

Recreation:

New recreational facilities will be a major need of the region. There are major areas of land set aside for recreational and public open space use in the planning scheme and further studies are being undertaken to progressively add additional areas.

Environmental Management:

Environmental management policies are being re-examined to provide a sound basis for long term policy.

Solutions will involve the participation of governments, commerce and industry, and people as individual citizens.

The recent Environment Protection Act sets up a new authority to control air, water and noise pollution, to establish appropriate new standards and to carry out educational activities.

The causes of pollution in the city's system of rivers and streams are outlined, and the importance in terms of pollution control of providing adequate finance for the water supply sewerage and drainage construction programmes on a schedule geared to the rate of development is stressed.

The importance of, and problems involved, in protecting conservation areas and deposits of minerals are explained.

Noise and air pollution and the part planning can play in minimising their impact and problems of solid and liquid waste disposal are discussed.

Utility Services:

The extent to which the gravity-based utility services such as water, sewerage and drainage, and those which are not gravity based, such as gas and electricity, offer constraints on development, are indicated. The need to exercise care on the siting of electricity power stations is stressed and reference is made to the problems being created by the fact that water supply, sewerage and drainage services are under the control of different authorities in the metropolitan region.

Physical and Economic Constraints:

There are a number of physical and economic constraints which act to restrict or preclude urban development.

These are described, by a series of transparent overlay maps and a base plan showing land which is already committed for public or private use and thus not available for future urban development. This enables the reader to study them and see how they effect the selection of urban and non-urban land. They include:

Flood Control

Areas where flood control will act as a constraint on development;

Water Quality

Water supply reservoirs whose catchments must be rigidly protected from pollution;

Water Pollution Control

Location of existing and proposed purification plants and major trunk sewerage systems in the metropolitan region;

Miscellaneous

Electricity transmission lines, electrical interference, building height restrictions and noise levels around airfields;

Mineral Resources

Location of proven and potential deposits of minerals, clays and sands which have commercial value and may be required for future extraction to meet building and road making requirements;

Conservation Areas

Dealt with in two categories—areas of conservation significance and areas of landscape interest based on advice from the Conservation Council of Victoria, the Fisheries and Wild Life Department, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agricultural Economics, Melbourne University;

Terrain Characteristics

The physical characteristics which affect development, such as catchment boundaries, land slope and soil types.

Synthesis

The Board has taken into account the various constraints mentioned, the desirability of containing development within drainage catchments and sub-catchments, and the Government's corridor policy, in defining a framework for regional development.

Regional Planning Policies (pp.51-74)

The Framework Plan:

The framework plan (Plan No. 5) shows the areas proposed to be set aside for urban development and those it is intended to preserve as non-urban areas. This plan forms the basis for the Draft Statement of Planning Policy in Appendix 1.

Summary

Urban Corridors and Non-urban Areas

Areas shown as urban corridors in the plan would contain all future outward urban expansion of the city. Development would not necessarily occupy the whole of each corridor, and studies are continuing to determine which parts should be developed in the future. The wedges of non-urban land between the corridors would be retained substantially in their present non-urban character.

The wedges contain most of the areas of significant landscape, historic and scientific interest, the major areas supporting significant bird, animal and plant life, the major agricultural resources and the water catchments.

The urban areas contain terrain suitable for urban use which is close to existing or planned major transport routes.

The urban corridors vary in width but are generally between 4 to 6 miles wide.

Figure 10 shows the various uses that it is intended should be permitted and not permitted in the non-urban areas and those which, in certain circumstances, could be acceptable.

Development of Urban Land

A permit will be required for subdivision and development in most new urban zones. It is intended that full services should be made available at the time of development and that the developer should be obliged to meet certain specific requirements.

Yarra Valley

Already this significant physical feature of Melbourne has warranted the special attention of the Government in that a "Statement of Planning Policy" has been promulgated to secure its conservation and improvement.

The Board has always recognised the importance of the Yarra Valley, its river and its tributaries, and a detailed study has been made of approximately 1,450 square miles which covers the Valley and its contributing catchments. The area has a present population of 700,000 with two-thirds living in the contributing catchment areas and the balance in the Valley itself. Investigations show that land already committed to urban zoning could accommodate a further 250,000 people and the new land use proposals would allow a further increase of approximately 200,000 over the existing potential without creating major problems.

Because of its particular geography and variation in local topography, problems of flooding and pollution through waste disposal into its waters are increasing, as urban growth in its environs accelerates. These problems mean that special management measures are imperative if the river is to be maintained as a social and recreational attribute and the waters that flow into it from its extensive catchment are to be kept within manageable bounds. Incidence of flooding will tend to increase as run-off of stormwater is accelerated by urban development, and pollution from such development will, unless properly controlled at source, create serious problems to the environmental character of the river. Already evidence of these manifestations of urban growth is apparent, and strict measures and controls will be necessary in the future to avoid these problems.

In accordance with a request from the Government, the Board has preserved the opportunity for the establishment of water storages at Yarra Brae, Watsons Creek and Sugarloaf Creek.

The Board in this report deals in some detail with the Yarra Valley and its problems and explains the policies and methods it intends to adopt to maintain and improve this important regional characteristic which include pollution and sanitation controls; stormwater and flood mitigation; water supply and storage potentialities and general environmental and recreational proposals.

A major part of the Yarra lies outside the control of the Board for water, sewerage, drainage and town planning purposes. If the measures outlined are to be effective it is considered desirable that the Board's servicing and planning functions should be extended to cover the whole of the Valley.

Dandenong Ranges

It is proposed that present urban zoning and local zoning controls which provide for increases in population for this area should continue, but, it is contemplated that modifications may be necessary to bring them into line with the Statement of Planning Policy on the Dandenongs. Further urban development beyond areas already zoned will be confined to the foothills of the ranges.

Dingley

No further urban development is proposed for this area