

## **Part B. Recommendations**



## 1. Need for National and State Context

The report in Part C, produced by the Board's Research and Development Department, draws attention to the desirability of evolving a management approach for cities. It suggests that unless actions of the various levels of Government are effectively co-ordinated and directed towards achieving an integrated strategy, much of the action undertaken to influence the development of Melbourne could be self defeating. The choice of strategy which involves political decision will ultimately depend on the emphasis which is to be given to social and economic implications for segments of the population as compared to, say the preservation of the built up areas, or conservation of the natural environment.

These will be key factors in metropolitan planning from now on, and it is appropriate to draw attention to the need to be thinking about the most appropriate machinery that will enable an integrated metropolitan strategy to be determined, hopefully within the context of consistent state and national goals.

In the absence at this time of any specified targets for State and Commonwealth policies it has been necessary to *assume* the most likely outcome of those policies.

## 2. Population Components

Both Commonwealth and State Governments are now committed to policies aimed at decentralising activities from the main cities in Australia, although it is believed that the social and economic consequences of these policies warrant further investigation. The policies so far disclosed can have very little effect on metropolitan growth over the next 10 to 15 years. For this reason the urban zoning proposed in Amendments 3 and 21 are still considered valid.

Whether the figure of approximately 4 million (the minimum figure mentioned in the 1971 Report) by the year 2000 is still appropriate, depends on what action is taken by government to formulate and implement new population growth and distribution policies, whether by way of increasing the scale and rate of decentralisation, changing immigration targets or encouraging a reduction in natural increase.

Until intentions on these matters become clearer it would seem appropriate to plan for a population of some 4 million by the year 2000.

## 3. Implications of Strategies

To ensure consistency of decision making at the metropolitan level it is necessary to understand the implications of alternative strategies. In the past the social and economic consequences of physical policies have not been adequately considered and these may be prejudicial to other metropolitan policies. Section C of this report includes a table indicating the basic implications of alternative strategies for the development of Melbourne. These implications include impact on—

- developed areas, particularly areas of historic and architectural significance;
- the natural environment;
- income and employment growth;
- social and economic conditions (structural unemployment, income polarisation and interrelated social dysfunction, and relative deprivation);
- choice of location; and
- transportation costs.

Unfortunately from the viewpoint of decision making at this particular time, no generally accepted body of knowledge exists, which relates socio-economic and environmental consequences to different urban forms. It has only been possible in the time available to outline these implications for the Melbourne region in the broadest possible terms. Nevertheless, even at this preliminary level, marked differences are revealed in the implications outlined in Part C of this Report from those which are conventionally associated with the strategies discussed. For example,



it is suggested that relative poverty and its related social problems are heightened by a dispersed city form. However it must be stressed that the implications discussed require further investigation and that before political priorities can be meaningfully attached to different policies, it will be necessary to quantify those consequences, at least within broad limits.

The strategies chosen broadly represent the proposals of the Government, Board or objectors and are as follows—

- *Strategy 1*—provision for large scale decentralisation
- *Strategy 2*—concentrated, balanced development
- *Strategy 3*—demand based corridor development
- *Strategy 4*—south-eastern corridor development
- *Strategy 5*—small scale commuter settlements.

It is apparent that Strategies 1 and 2 illustrate two extremes both in terms of urban form and in implications.

● *Strategy 1* would provide an opportunity for a most substantial preservation of developed areas and significant natural environments, but would create a low rate of income and employment growth, maximum adverse social and economic impact, and severely constrained choice of location within Melbourne.

● *Strategy 2* would have low impact on the natural environment, high rate of income and employment growth, favourable social and economic implications, and low transport costs, but it would entail major impact on developed areas through major redevelopment and renewal, and require constraint in location to the east and south in conflict with the main thrust of development.

● *Strategy 3*, by contrast, provides greater opportunities for choice of location. It provides for a less adverse impact for a broader range of objectives than Strategies 4 or 5, particularly if outward development is channelled within a reduced number of corridors, thus reducing adverse impact on significant natural environments. Encouragement of additional outward growth in northern and western sectors would provide some opportunities for relief of relative deprivation, already apparent within these sectors but would appear to have little impact on the growing problem of relative poverty in some of the inner areas of Melbourne.

● *Strategy 4* provides an opportunity for substantial preservation of built areas. However it would compound rather than relieve social and economic problems within central, northern and western sectors, would concentrate adverse impact on significant natural environments to the south-east and would entail high transport costs, reduced opportunities for interaction of people and services.

Considerable concern has been expressed in reports at State level and by the Cities Commission regarding the environmental problems associated with development to the south-east, and as indicated elsewhere, a special task force involving the Commonwealth, State, Westernport and Metropolitan Planning Authorities, is undertaking a study of this area. Development east of Berwick would drain to Westernport Bay, and it is clear that no further development should occur within this area until the current environment study, and Task Force study have been completed.

● *Strategy 5* has adverse implications on all grounds; major infrastructure and development costs created by the extra distance and major socio-economic costs generated by the lack of community facilities and the reduced employment opportunities for the metropolitan area as a whole. Even the apparent advantage of this type of development—the cheap land cost—is likely to be short term as it will almost certainly lead to land-extensive development which in the long term is likely to lead to an overall higher land cost. However, adverse implications would be lessened, where large scale, well serviced development is achieved on a co-ordinated basis in comparatively few locations.

## 4. Interim Strategy

Before a strategy can be derived from the above analysis political priorities must be given to the different sets of objectives implicit in each strategy. At this stage the following priorities are recommended—



## Recommendations

- (i) In the light of the conclusions so far reached in the investigation of the implications of different strategies, the Government should avoid any extreme strategy which ignores socio-economic consequences.
- (ii) Until it is possible through further investigation to measure the magnitude of the socio-economic consequences associated with the peripheral expansion of Melbourne it should be decided not to further curtail individual freedom to locate in the metropolitan urban area, wherever desired. However, this must be seen to be an interim decision. If as a result of further investigations the adverse consequences of peripheral expansion are found to be extremely important, the balance between internal and peripheral growth may well require modification.

In the light of the above, it is recommended that an interim strategy be adopted for Melbourne, which preserves opportunities for continued urban growth accommodated primarily through outward development, progressively channelled within a limited number of corridors. Increased emphasis should be given to the extent and standard of development within northern and western sectors, and with non-urban wedges maintained to permanently preserve significant landscape, habitats, and natural resources.

Generally the Board's 1971 Report and Planning Schemes are still considered valid although more positive measures to secure a better balance in the socio-economic characteristics of future growth are advocated. The report defined areas proposed for urban development within the corridors for the next 15 years leaving the balance of the corridors for consideration for potential development, at a subsequent stage.

It is considered that the location of this future growth should now be more positively identified, and certain corridors have been selected for attention.

The Report also considered two possible growth strategies with a recommendation for the one which placed primary emphasis on the Central Business District with complementary growth centres in selected corridors. This proposition is more closely identified with the recommendations contained in this report than is the alternative which suggested concentration of a major growth centre

in the south-east.

At this stage the following interim policies for the region should be adopted and incorporated in a Statement of Planning Policy prepared in accordance with Section 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1961.

- 1.) The principle of the non urban wedges as defined in the Amending Planning Schemes be accepted with the application of land use controls as a primary tool to secure the conservation, management and proper utilisation of the natural resources within the wedges, subject to minor adjustments.
2. The defined urban zones in the Amending Planning Schemes be accepted, with adjustments as appropriate, associated with the promotion of additional growth within northern and western sectors, and minor adjustments which may be necessary, arising from consideration of the objections still to be heard.
3. Urban development within the region be initially contained within the defined urban zones referred to above, and subject to the execution of further studies, be subsequently channelled within deferred development zones forming part of selected corridors.
4. Positive policies designed to overcome the growing social and economic deficiencies throughout the region be instituted with special attention to the provision of diversified accommodation, creation of a wider range of job opportunities and the earlier establishment of appropriate social and physical services. These policies particularly apply to the central, northern and western sectors. Such action will require changes in the structure of certain established areas, resulting in some local self protective resistance from established residents.
5. The present Central Business District of Melbourne should be maintained as the prime focus of the region. Further, increased rates of urban development should be encouraged within northern and western sectors through the promotion of well serviced communities, and the establishment of specific growth centres, intended to provide diverse employment opportunities in the service sector.