

## **2 Structural Elements**

## The Melbourne Region

The physical characteristics of the Melbourne region have been a major element in determining the way in which the city has developed in the past, from the days of Batman to the present time.

The topographic characteristics of the region and adjacent areas are shown on Plan 1.

The region lies within the broad basin of the Port Phillip sunkland. From the low, flat, coastal plains in the south-east and the lava plains in the west, the land rises gradually to meet the Great Dividing Range on the northern boundary.

The most significant features are Port Phillip Bay itself and the rivers and streams which dissect the region and converge at the head of the bay.

The river valleys in the early days acted as barriers and encouraged development to occur along the valleys and create a radial transport system.

Early settlers tended to choose the most attractive land for settlement and this trend has continued over the years. It accounts for the strong preference for settling on land which lies east and south-east of the central city area, which has a 30 inch rainfall compared to 20 inches in the west, good soils, and is close to the bay, the Mornington Peninsula and the Dandenongs.

The unsettled areas which may be required to accommodate future settlement broadly consist of:—

1. Flat basalt plains in the west and north, which are dissected by the deep river valleys of the Maribyrnong and Plenty Rivers. These become increasingly undulating towards the far north in the foothills enclosed by the Great Dividing Range and towards the north-east in the Plenty River valley.
2. The steeply broken silurian hills of the north-east in the Kinglake and Eltham areas.
3. The Yarra valley, the strongly undulating Dandenong Ranges and the arc of hills between Lysterfield and Upper Beaconsfield.
4. The broad flat coastal plain in the south-east extending eastward from Port Phillip Bay with extensive alluvial deposits at Carrum and Koo-wee-rup.

5. The higher, undulating topography of the Mornington Peninsula.

The marked preference for the east and south-east is expected to continue.

## Regional Growth

### Population

Melbourne's population has been rapidly rising during the post-war period as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

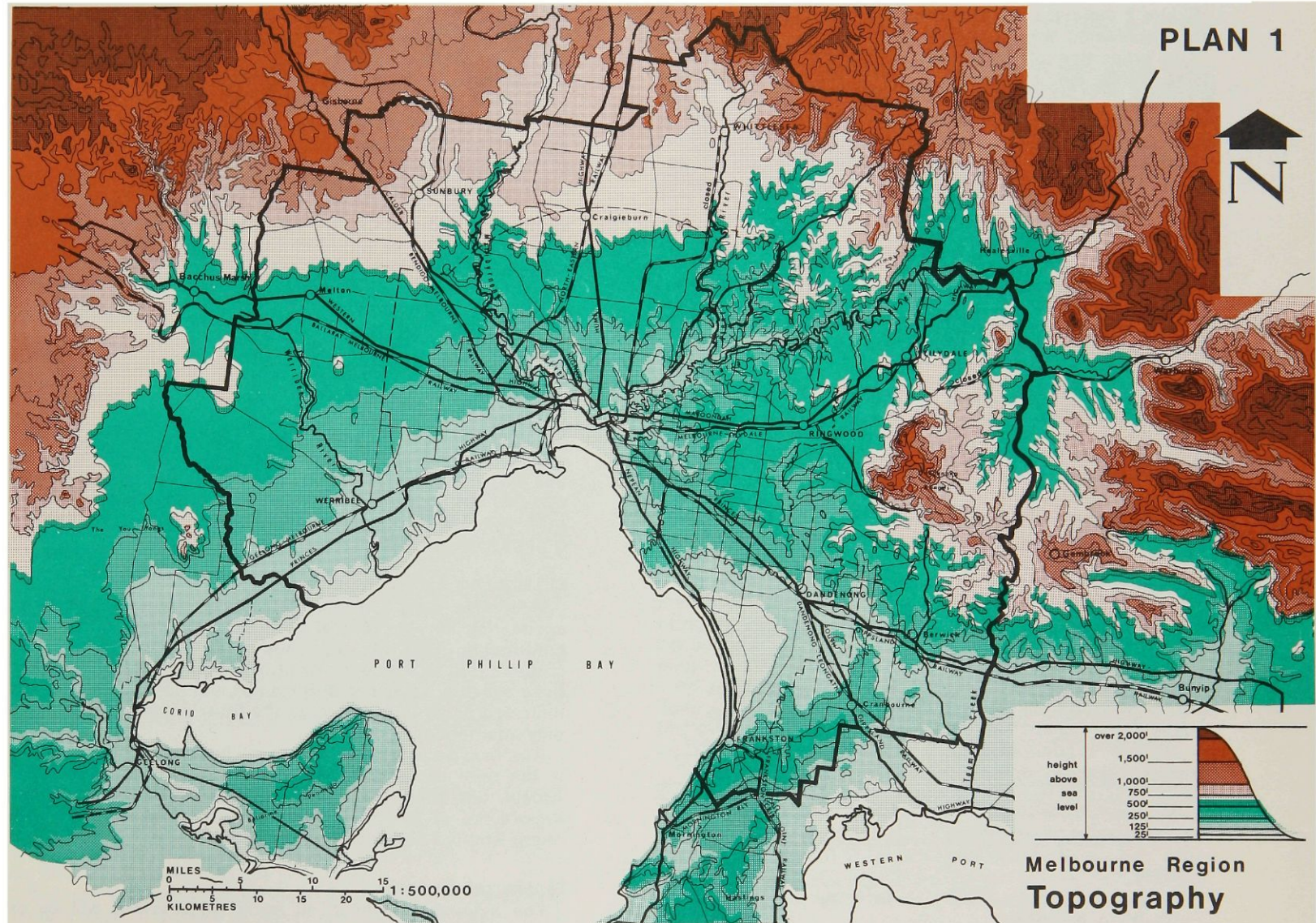
Population in Melbourne Statistical Division*	
Year	Population
1947	1,343,402
1954	1,588,523
1961	1,984,815
1966	2,230,580
1971 (estimate)	2,480,300

\*Note: This includes the whole of the metropolitan region and the Mornington Peninsula.

While Melbourne's growth in the recent past has been a reflection of a relatively high natural growth and a very substantial intake of migrants in the future it can expect to be in much stronger competition with other States where emerging new economic forces are helping them to attract larger shares of Australia's total population increase. Melbourne compares very favourably with the rest of Australia so far as natural increase is concerned. More efficient family planning is not expected to substantially reduce the birth rate but rather to bring about a more regulated spacing of children.

The fact that girls are marrying and having children at a younger age has important implications since it is a major factor in increasing the number of married women returning to the workforce at a still relatively young age.





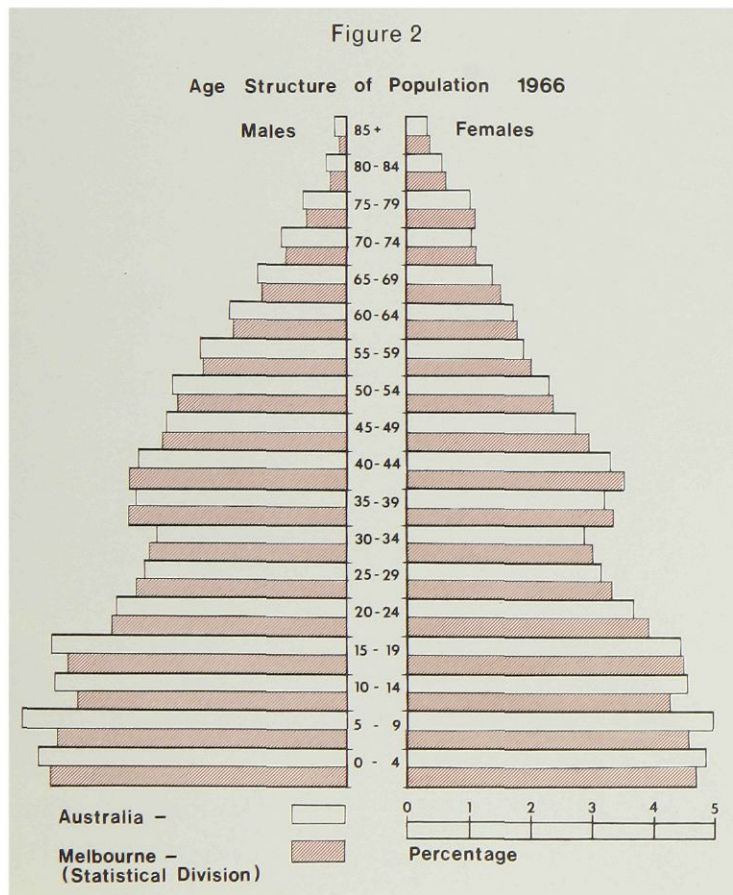


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Figure 2 indicates the age structure of Melbourne's population compared with Australia as a whole in 1966.

The proportion of people in the younger age groups is rising. While minor fluctuations within the age groups are occurring the general trend is towards an increase in the numbers of school age children, whereas the 30-40 age group is not expected to show an increase until the end of the 1970's.

New household formations are expected to accelerate because of the increase in the number of people of marriageable age.



## Immigration

Melbourne's future population growth to a large extent will be influenced by population movement—that is by the number of people attracted to settle permanently whether from overseas or other parts of Australia, and the number of people who transfer permanently away from the metropolitan area. The number of additional people gained will be the net result of all such movements.

With favourable conditions prevailing in the industrial countries of Europe, the expected entry of U.K. into the European Economic Community, the increasing demand in these countries for skilled labour and the progressively liberalized regulations permitting movements of work force within the Common Market area, Australia can expect to face increased difficulties and competition in securing suitably qualified migrants from traditional sources.

While it is possible that there will be more skilled people available from the U.S.A. and Canada than in the past, the number of permanent settlers from these sources is unlikely to increase dramatically.

It is possible that the desired numbers of migrants may be available but not necessarily the desired component of skilled people, and in an economy becoming increasingly skill-oriented such a situation could well aggravate the city's urban problems should the concentration of low income migrant groups keep increasing.

## Changing Economic Role

Melbourne has retained its strong industrial position, accounting for over 82% of Victoria's industrial workers and contributing 80% of value added in manufacturing. The region's role as the focus of diverse economic activities has been aided by advances in transport and communications as indicated by its importance as the State's major seaport and only international air port.

Australia's economic structure will be affected by the decline in the rural sector and further reductions in the trade with Britain, but these trends will increasingly be off-set by the importance of mining and accelerated trade relations with Japan and the South-East Asian countries.

## National Growth

The national growth in all non-rural activities will be of