



DELIVERING MELBOURNE'S NEWEST SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

In December 2008 the Government released two integrated policy statements, *Melbourne 2030: a planning update – Melbourne @ 5 Million* and *The Victorian Transport Plan*. These documents provide a long-term plan for managing Melbourne's growth and outline a number of initiatives to ensure our city remains prosperous, liveable and sustainable.

JULY 2010



The discussion of the Urban Growth Boundary, Regional Rail Link, Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor and Grassland Reserves within this report reflects the content of Amendment VC68 as approved by the Minister for Planning, which will not become operational until it has been ratified by Parliament and subsequently gazetted.

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

In December 2008, the Victorian Government released two integrated policy statements, *Melbourne 2030: a planning update* – *Melbourne @ 5 million* and *The Victorian Transport Plan*.

These documents outline the vision and long term plan for managing Melbourne's future growth, while ensuring we maintain our reputation as one of the world's most liveable cities.

The city's population is growing. Melbourne is expected to be home to five million people faster than previously anticipated.

This means that around 600,000 new homes will be needed in metropolitan Melbourne to accommodate this population growth and our changing lifestyles.

More than half of these new homes will be built in Melbourne's existing suburbs, along transport and employment corridors.

Around 284,000 of the new homes required over the next 20 years will need to be built in the growth areas of Casey-Cardinia, Melton-Caroline Springs, Hume-Mitchell-Whittlesea and Wyndham.

To ensure we build and develop sustainable new communities, the Government has taken an integrated approach to land use and transport planning to ensure that infrastructure and essential services can be delivered as these areas develop.

We are determined to manage growth by planning new communities with the services families need, rather than just sub-divisions.

Some of the initiatives ensuring we deliver sustainable new communities include:

- Shifting the Urban Growth Boundary to ensure we have access to the necessary land to accommodate projected population growth and maintain housing affordability;
- Introducing a Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution to help fund substantial State infrastructure to ensure these communities have access to the facilities and services they want and need;
- Improved transport services including an alignment for the Regional Rail Link and the future Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor; and
- Establishing and managing grassland reserves to ensure a long-term approach to conservation management.

This is all part of the Victorian Government's long-term plan for managing growth throughout Victoria.

By working together with the community and local governments, we can ensure the liveability of communities now and into the future.



JUSTIN MADDEN MLC
MINISTER FOR PLANNING



DELIVERING MELBOURNE'S NEWEST SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Delivering Melbourne's newest sustainable communities is the culmination of work focussed on land use, transport and environmental initiatives. It takes an integrated approach to land use and transport planning so that infrastructure and essential services will be delivered as new communities in the growth areas develop.

Initiatives being delivered as part of the *Delivering Melbourne's newest sustainable communities* are:

- > A shift of the Urban Growth Boundary and the land designated for development, to accommodate around 284,000 of the 600,000 new homes is required across Melbourne to accommodate the city's growing population.
- > An alignment for the Regional Rail Link (west of Werribee to Deer Park), which will provide more frequent and reliable regional rail services in Melbourne's west where country trains reach the metropolitan network and boost the capacity of the metropolitan rail system. Major construction on the Regional Rail Link is expected to start in 2010.
- > An alignment for the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor, which will cater for expected increases in the volume of freight and people moving around outer metropolitan Melbourne and Victoria over the coming decades. Construction on the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor is not expected to start before 2020.
- > Establishment and management of the proposed grassland reserves in Melbourne's west to ensure the long-term conservation of a nationally significant and threatened ecosystem.

These initiatives will deliver the most significant land use and transport changes that Melbourne has experienced in a generation. Importantly, these initiatives, built on sound policy platforms, will maintain Melbourne's liveability as the city's population approaches five million.

Delivering Melbourne's newest sustainable communities was informed by a number of separate but interlinked documents, including independent advice and specialist reports for the Urban Growth Boundary and transport projects, and a Strategic Impact Assessment Report to meet the requirements of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The planning elements required for these projects are contained in Amendment VC68.

AMENDMENT VC68

The Minister for Planning has approved and is now seeking parliamentary ratification of Amendment VC68. Amendment VC68 implements new planning scheme provisions that address the objectives of *Delivering Melbourne's newest sustainable communities* and delivers:

- > An expanded Urban Growth Boundary
- > New zones for land brought inside the Urban Growth Boundary
- > Public Acquisition Overlays for the Regional Rail Link, Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor and the two grassland reserves
- > Environmental Significance Overlays for land inside and outside the Urban Growth Boundary for protecting biodiversity values, including areas outside metropolitan Melbourne
- > Provisions that remove the need for a planning permit for the construction of the Regional Rail Link
- > New controls in the *Victoria Planning Provisions* to:
 - i. Change the definition of metropolitan Melbourne (in planning schemes) to include the expanded growth areas in the Shire of Mitchell, and
 - ii. Introduce underlying planning provisions, specifically for the Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor.

GROWTH AREAS INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTION

Parliament passed the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution) Bill* on 25 May 2010.

The Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution is an essential component of the Delivering Melbourne's newest sustainable communities program. It will deliver revenue that will help pay for essential State infrastructure and services in the new growth area communities. It will also enable the infrastructure to be delivered sooner. It is estimated that revenue from the Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution will account for up to 15 per cent of the total cost of new State infrastructure.

The Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution will only apply to land brought into the existing growth areas since November 2005, and to all land within the new Urban Growth Boundary that is zoned for urban development (i.e. the Urban Growth Zone in the new areas).

STRATEGIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Strategic Impact Assessment is an assessment of the impacts arising from an expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary, the Regional Rail Link and the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor on matters covered by the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. The Strategic Impact Assessment seeks to identify appropriate mitigation measures for any impacts of these initiatives on matters of national environmental significance.

The Commonwealth Government has endorsed the Program covering the expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary and the alignments for the Regional Rail Link and the Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor.

To enable the Program of urban development to occur, the Commonwealth Minister recently approved actions for the development of section 2 of the Regional Rail Link (west of Werribee to Deer Park) and the 28 precincts within the current Urban Growth Boundary.

The Commonwealth Minister has also approved prescriptions for the Golden Sun Moth; Natural Temperate Grassland; Matted Flax-lily; Striped Legless Lizard, Spiny Rice-flower, Grassy Eucalypt Woodland, Growling Grass Frog, Southern Brown Bandicoot and migratory species. These prescriptions will be used in the approval of precinct structure plans, transport infrastructure, extractive industries and other development approvals within the Program.

The key outcomes will be:

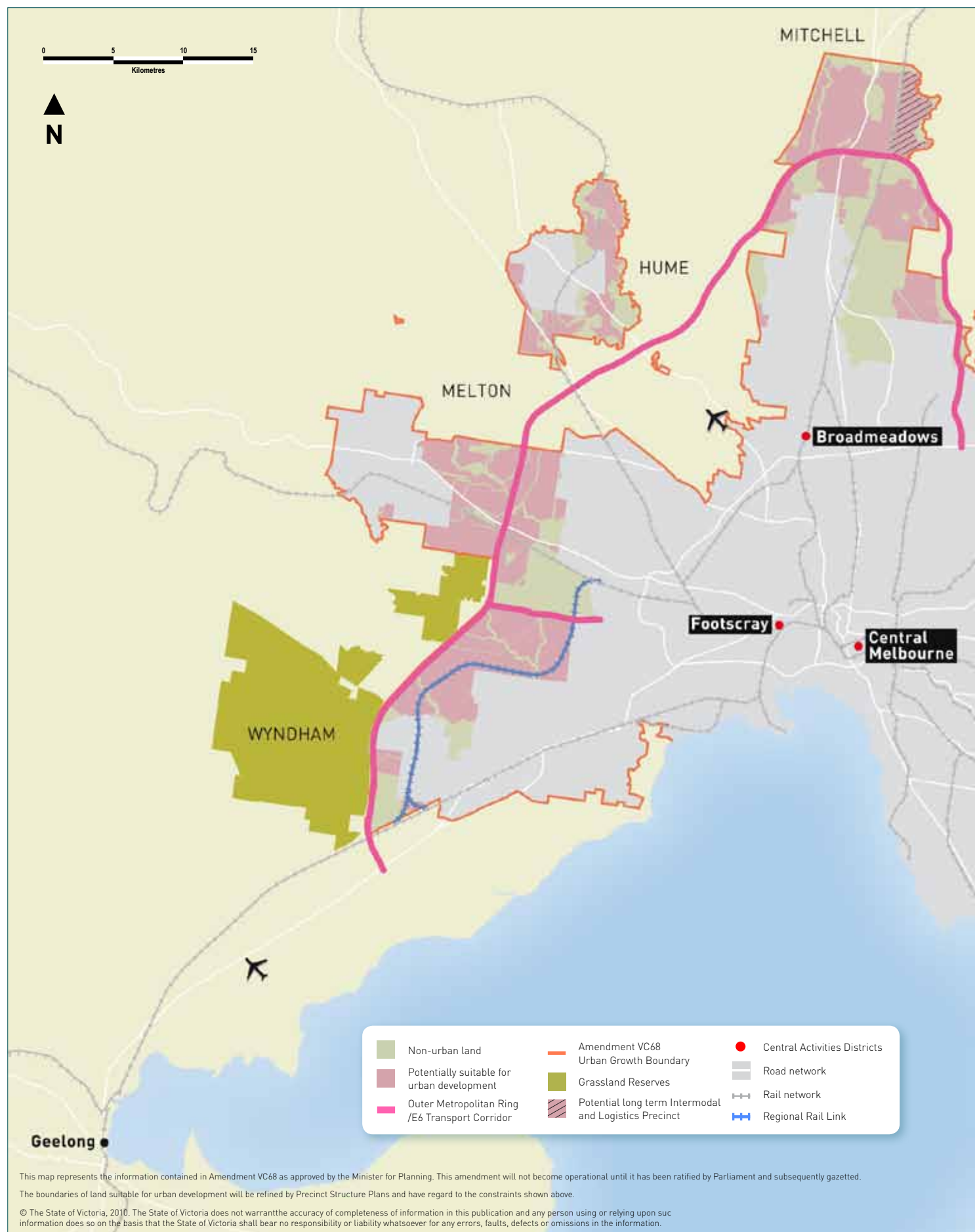
- > Simplified and aligned State and Commonwealth biodiversity approvals for the Program early in the planning cycle.
- > Increased certainty and reduced cost for development proposals where they meet the conditions of the approvals.
- > A ready supply of native vegetation and species offsets that developers will purchase from the Government.
- > A commitment by the Victorian Government to enhanced protection of a network of key biodiversity values that are retained inside the Urban Growth Boundary.
- > Advance mitigation of the impacts of clearing biodiversity values.
- > Strict adherence to the principles and standards required under Victoria's native vegetation policy framework and species regulations.
- > A commitment to monitoring and full public reporting on the implementation of the Program and its approval conditions under the Commonwealth legislation.

Environmental Significance Overlays have been introduced to achieve a number of objectives outlined in the Program Report. These objectives include facilitating the interim management of the western grassland reserves and providing recognition through the planning process for other grassland remnants on the Werribee Plains including land outside metropolitan Melbourne.

Along with a number of other environmental values, Environmental Significance Overlays seek to protect the particular values of Grassy Eucalypt Woodlands within the Hume-Whittlesea and Sunbury Growth Areas and key riparian corridors including along the Merri Creek and Cardinia Creek.

The Environmental Significance Overlays do not preclude development. Rather, they are a tool to identify particular values and provide guidance on how they should be considered in planning decisions, including amendments to the planning scheme and planning permit applications. Where a planning permit is required under any Environmental Significance Overlay introduced by Amendment VC68, as well as being assessed by the local council they will also be referred to and assessed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. Within the City of Greater Geelong the Environmental Significance Overlay covers a number of pre-existing employment areas (such as around Avalon Airport and the Heales Road employment precinct). These areas will be exempt from the requirement for a planning permit for buildings and works.

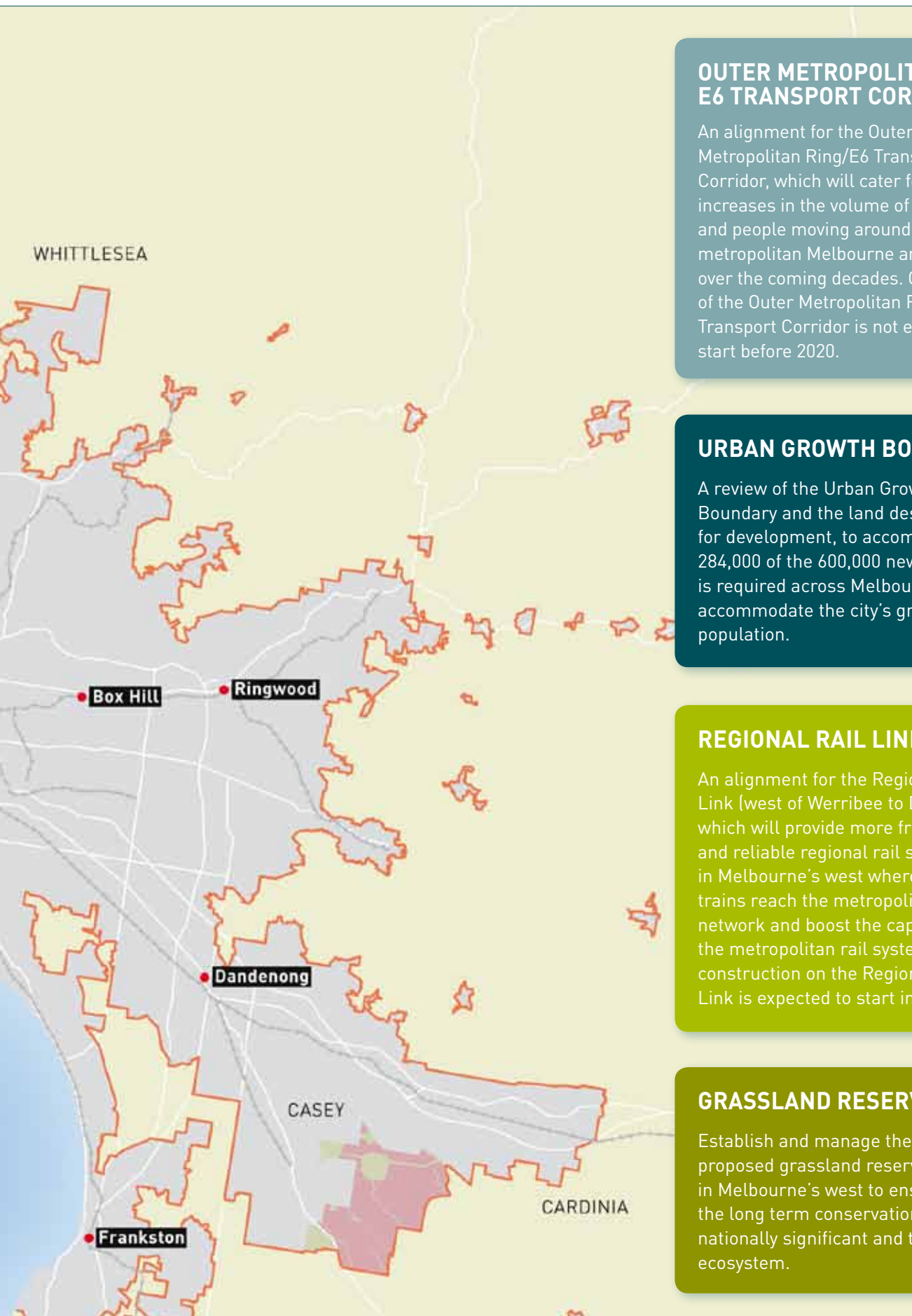
MAP 1: DELIVERING MELBOURNE'S NEWEST SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES – PRINCIPAL INITIATIVES



This map represents the information contained in Amendment VC68 as approved by the Minister for Planning. This amendment will not become operational until it has been ratified by Parliament and subsequently gazetted.

The boundaries of land suitable for urban development will be refined by Precinct Structure Plans and have regard to the constraints shown above.

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OUTER METROPOLITAN RING/ E6 TRANSPORT CORRIDOR

An alignment for the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor, which will cater for expected increases in the volume of freight and people moving around outer metropolitan Melbourne and Victoria over the coming decades. Construction of the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor is not expected to start before 2020.

URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY

A review of the Urban Growth Boundary and the land designated for development, to accommodate 284,000 of the 600,000 new homes is required across Melbourne to accommodate the city's growing population.

REGIONAL RAIL LINK

An alignment for the Regional Rail Link (west of Werribee to Deer Park), which will provide more frequent and reliable regional rail services in Melbourne's west where country trains reach the metropolitan network and boost the capacity of the metropolitan rail system. Major construction on the Regional Rail Link is expected to start in 2010.

GRASSLAND RESERVES

Establish and manage the proposed grassland reserves in Melbourne's west to ensure the long term conservation of a nationally significant and threatened ecosystem.

STEPS TO DELIVERING NEW COMMUNITIES IN THE GROWTH AREAS

The Government's decision to move the Urban Growth Boundary is the first step, in a number of steps, to deliver new sustainable communities in Melbourne's growth areas. For land brought inside the expanded Urban Growth Boundary, decisions still need to be made about how this land will be used and ultimately developed. There are a number of interrelated actions that will inform these decisions.

These actions are as detailed below.

- > The development of **Biodiversity Conservation Strategies** to identify management strategies for areas of biodiversity value. These strategies will inform the preparation of Growth Area Framework Plans.
- > **Sub-Regional Species Strategies** will be prepared to address specific matters of environmental significance such as the Growling Grass Frog, Southern Brown Bandicoot and Golden Sun Moth. These strategies will influence the design of precincts during the preparation of Precinct Structure Plans.
- > **Growth Area Framework Plans** will define the urban structure for the expanded growth areas and identify areas for areas for housing, employment, community facilities, public transport, road and rail infrastructure, drainage and open space. The Growth Area Framework Plans will also provide direction on the sequencing of development. The sequencing of development will be informed by the delivery of key Government infrastructure such as the Regional Rail Link in Melbourne's west. It will also be informed by other important strategic objectives at the State and local Government level.
- > The development of **Precinct Structure Plans** to provide a detailed framework for land use and development at the community level and identify the development and investment that will occur in the growth areas over many years. The Government recently released updated guidelines for the preparation of Precinct Structure Plans. These plans will be the primary mechanism to manage the sequencing of development. The Government is committed to the efficient use of land and infrastructure and will continue to encourage the development sector to deliver average housing densities of at least 15 dwellings per hectare.
- > **Native Vegetation Precinct Plans** will set out the requirements for the protection and removal of native vegetation for a defined area or precinct in the growth areas. These plans will be incorporated into the relevant local planning scheme.
- > **Future planning in Wallan and the surrounding area** will ensure appropriate controls are in place to manage the urban and non-urban interface. The Government's metropolitan Green Wedge principles will be a prime consideration for this interface area.
- > Ensuring the remaining **Green Wedge Management Plans** are delivered to fulfil the statutory, strategic, environmental, economic and social requirements necessary to manage the use and development of Melbourne's green wedges.
- > **Managing Melbourne's hinterland.** The Government is committed to the protection and enhancement of the range of values and assets in Melbourne's hinterland. Encouraging growth in the provincial cities of Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo is central to managing growth and change. Managing the growth of townships in the hinterland will be guided by a number of principles, including ensuring discrete communities, the provision of infrastructure plans and a focus on creating opportunities for local employment. Residential land supply will be considered on a municipal basis, rather than a town-by-town basis.

These actions will further refine planning controls and deliver sustainable environmental outcomes. This will be important for areas, such as quarry buffers and landscaping constraints, which are brought into the revised Urban Growth Boundary but are currently identified as unsuitable for development. For these areas, a conservative approach has been taken in identifying the current boundaries and they will be refined through more detailed work, particularly during the preparation of Precinct Structure Plans.

In addition to a general refinement of settlement planning through the above actions, there are a number of locations inside the new Urban Growth Boundary where specific issues need further consideration. These areas are:

- > **Devon Meadows:** the primary objective in the Devon Meadows area is to deliver on biodiversity outcomes, with housing outcomes a secondary objective. Further work will need to be undertaken in this area to ensure this is achieved.
- > **Quarry Hills:** the Government has supported the local strategic work of Council. The Growth Areas Authority will continue to work with the council and the Department of Sustainability and Environment to resolve detailed development issues and advise the Government on appropriate zonings.

- > **Wollert:** the primary objective in the quarry area, in the short to medium term, is to continue to utilise stone and clay resources and protect utility investments, while endeavouring to retain some of the most important biodiversity values. In the medium to long term, the primary objective will be to deliver on retained biodiversity outcomes through rehabilitation measures on the quarried sites. The Government will undertake long term land use planning to ensure these objectives can be met.
- > **Potential future Beveridge intermodal freight and logistics facility:** an area in Beveridge to the east of the Melbourne – Sydney rail line has been identified as a potential future intermodal freight and logistics facility as outlined in *The Victorian Transport Plan* and *Freight Futures*. This is a longer term proposition that requires further investigation on the logistics objectives and development needs for this area. Investigations are currently focused on areas in the west of Melbourne.
- > **Golden Sun Moth precincts:** there are three areas inside the new Urban Growth Boundary (in Mambourin, Wyndham Vale and Mount Cottrell) that may contain concentrations of Golden Sun Moth, which is a critically endangered species. These sites are of sufficient size and quality to meet the thresholds for protection proposed by the Government in the Strategic Impact Assessment. These thresholds were developed in conjunction with the Commonwealth to meet *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* requirements. These sites will be retained for conservation purposes. In the medium to long term, there may be potential to change the status of conservation areas, once the full extent of Golden Sun Moth populations in Victoria is understood and 80% of Victoria's highest priority habitats for this species are protected. There is also an area adjacent to Mickleham Road, Mickleham that requires further investigation before determining appropriate planning controls.
- > **Kalkallo / Donnybrook waste water treatment plant:** In the northern investigation area a new waste water treatment plant is required. The Government will investigate the most suitable location in Kalkallo / Donnybrook for this facility.

GROWTH AREA FRAMEWORK PLANS

In growth areas, it is a requirement of the planning system to “implement the strategic directions within the Growth Area Framework Plans...” Plans are already in place for areas inside the existing Urban Growth Boundary. The next step in the planning process is to prepare Growth Area Framework Plans for new areas brought inside the Urban Growth Boundary.

The role of Growth Area Framework Plans is to:

- > Identify the long term pattern of urban growth.
- > Identify the location of broad urban development types, for example activity centre, residential, employment, freight centres and mixed use employment.
- > Identify the boundaries of individual communities, landscape values and as appropriate the need for discrete urban breaks and how land uses in these breaks will be managed.
- > Identify committed transport networks and options for investigation, such as future railway lines and stations, freight activity centres, freeways and arterial roads.
- > Identify the location of open space to be retained for recreation and/or biodiversity protection and/or flood risk reduction purposes. This will include committed areas and areas identified for investigation by Parks Victoria.
- > Show significant waterways as opportunities for creating linear trails along with areas required to be retained for biodiversity protection and/or flood risk reduction purposes.
- > Identify appropriate uses for areas described as constrained in *Delivering Melbourne's newest sustainable communities*, including quarry buffers, and potentially rezone some of this land to urban growth zone.
- > Include objectives for each growth area.

The major steps in the process are:

1. Call for submissions – informal input on development opportunities and issues
2. Prepare Draft Plan
3. Public consultation
4. Finalise and approve the Growth Area Framework Plans.

ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT – REGIONAL RAIL LINK

Following the submission of an Environment Effects Statement referral by the Department of Transport, the Minister for Planning decided in August 2009 that a number of inter-related reports need to be prepared and endorsed. The reports will include assessments and management responses to the areas of noise impact, ecological impact and cultural heritage.

ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT – OUTER METROPOLITAN RING/E6 TRANSPORT CORRIDOR

In August 2009, the Minister for Planning decided that an Environmental Impact Report is to be prepared. The report will document the likely environmental effects and project benefits of the preferred alignment of the Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor.

VicRoads will commence this work when seasonal factors allow. The report will be exhibited for public comment and the Minister for Planning may appoint an Advisory Committee to assist in the resolution of final corridor alignments.



