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Metropolitan Planning

In 1949, the Victorian Government asked the Board of Works to prepare a planning scheme for a defined metropolitan area, broadly incorporating municipalities within a 15 mile radius of the central city, with a 25 mile extension to take in the Frankston area. Subsequently some additional extensions were made to the east and south-east, and the scheme finally submitted for approval in 1959 covered an area of 688 square miles.

The planning scheme, approved in 1968, contained a series of statutory maps and an enabling ordinance. It established land use controls by means of zones, and reservations of land for various public purposes. Within the zones, different types of use and activity were either permitted (with or without consent) or prohibited. The information on which the scheme was based is set out in two reports prepared in 1954, "Surveys and Analysis", and "Report". Before the scheme was approved, there were already in existence a number of local municipal planning schemes, and these have gradually been incorporated into the metropolitan scheme, enabling a progressive phasing out of the separate municipal schemes, in accordance with Government policy.

Review Reports to Government

By 1966, it became apparent that a complete review of planning policies would be necessary to meet future needs, and both the Town and Country Planning Board, as the Government's advisor on planning matters, and the Board of Works, as the metropolitan planning authority, were invited by the Government to prepare reports.

Submitted in 1967, these reports were entitled "Organisation for Strategic Planning", (Town and Country Planning Board), and "The Future Growth of Melbourne" (Board of Works). Viewpoints were also presented by other bodies, including the Town and Country Planning Association of Victoria.

The Town and Country Planning Board made recommendations for a major recasting of organisational structure, including the creation of a number of regional authorities in the Port Phillip area and the concentration of further urban-

isation to the south-east in the form of "Metrotowns". The Board of Works report proposed a major extension of the metropolitan planning area, and a more detailed investigation of future growth prospects and policies based on one of a number of alternative growth patterns.

The future Growth of Melbourne

Urban Form

Based on an expectation of up to three million more people in Melbourne in the next 30 years, the Board of Works report concluded that while part of this increase could be accommodated through redevelopment, the major part would have to occur through new development outside the existing built up area. The primary means of future growth should be through growth corridors based on transportation routes separated by permanent wedges of open country, and steps should be taken to encourage some redirection of growth to the north and west of Melbourne, possibly in the form of satellite cities.

Administration

The report recommended that three distinct levels of responsibility and administration, state, regional and local, be defined, and that the Board's planning area be extended to a metropolitan region in excess of 2,000 square miles, with the Board of Works as the planning authority. The recommended area corresponded with the Melbourne Statistical Division. It took in all land within a radius of about 30 miles of the central city area and the whole of the Mornington Peninsula.

It was recommended that the metropolitan regional authority should prepare both a statutory scheme covering a 15 year period, and a longer term statement of regional policy, each of these to be subject to periodic review and approval by the Government. It was also suggested that there should be a programme of comprehensive urban renewal and that the feasibility of satellite city development be further examined. It was envisaged that the carrying out of urban renewal or satellite city schemes would be performed by special function authorities, which would require special financial assistance from Federal and other sources.

Government Action

The Government responded promptly to the various recommendations in the two reports. The Town and Country Planning Act was amended to provide for:—

- A three tier structure for planning
- The Town and Country Planning Board to be given an expanded role in the preparation of statements of planning policy which would lay down the broad aims of planning throughout the state, and help to achieve co-ordination of all planning activities.
- The establishment of a State Planning Council, comprising representatives of the state's major administrative and works authorities to advise the Town and Country Planning Board and to co-ordinate the works of state instrumentalities and semi-government authorities.
- The establishment of regional planning authorities.
- The third planning tier, comprising the municipal councils, having planning responsibilities by delegation from the regional authorities, and with ability to initiate amendments to the regional planning schemes covering their areas.

Since these legislative moves, two new regional authorities (Western Port and Geelong) have been established, while the Board of Works has continued as the metropolitan regional authority for an expanded metropolitan region of 1,942 square miles.

Delegation to the municipal councils within the approved planning scheme area has already taken place.

Government's Metropolitan Policy

The preparation of this report has been guided by a number of policy directions from the government, policy statements prepared by the Town and Country Planning Board and the State Planning Council and approved by Government, and also by several official reports relevant to the planning process.

Through the Minister of Local Government, the government indicated its desire that Melbourne should be encouraged to follow a "corridor" type of development with urban growth occurring primarily along the general axes of principal rail and road routes, enabling the retention of substantial wedges of open country between the corridors.

Provision was to be made for the renewal and redevelopment of the inner areas of Melbourne at higher levels of density so as to reduce outward growth and to cater for a growing dwelling demand in these areas, and with this in mind, the Board was requested to prepare a detailed report on urban renewal policy.

The Government also requested that special attention be paid to the Yarra valley as one of the major physical features in the region. Government policy was to encourage renewed growth in the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne to restore some balance to the present lop-sided growth of the metropolis.

In amplification of this, the government asked the Board to prepare a detailed report on the feasibility of satellite towns based on Whittlesea, Sunbury and Melton.

In addition, the Board was requested to draft statements of planning policy to identify longer term planning objectives for the metropolitan region over the next 30 years.

Statements of Planning Policy

Four statements of planning policy approved by Governor-in-Council have also guided the work of preparing this report. Statements 1 and 2 apply to the Westernport region but have significance in relation to the metropolitan region.

Statement No. 1 (Western Port) covering the coastal land on the mainland between Stony Point and Quail Island and on the western side of French Island states:

The area shall be planned primarily as a major specialised port and heavy industrial complex. The port shall be regarded as a principal generator of future urban growth to be integrated with development in the metropolitan area.

The regional planning of the area shall acknowledge the value of the resources of adjoining areas for recreation, nature conservation and tourism. The use of land in the area including any reclaimed land, shall be regulated so as to control all forms of pollution.

Statement No. 2 (Mornington Peninsula) covering that part of the Mornington Peninsula which lies generally to the south

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of the existing urban settlements of Mornington and Hastings states:

The natural resources of the area shall be conserved for their recreation and scenic value, and biological and geological significance.

Urban development of such scale and type as to prejudice the conservation of the area shall be discouraged. Development within the area shall be required to conform to visual and other standards appropriate to its special character.

Statement No. 3 (Dandenong Ranges), applying to the general area which incorporates the ranges and environs and lies almost entirely within the metropolitan region states:

The Dandenong Ranges shall be identified by appropriate planning measures as a nature, conservation, recreation and tourist area of State significance.

Land use controls shall be designed to ensure that the value of the area for conservation is maintained, the fire hazard in the area and the pollution levels in waterways are minimized.

Urban development of a scale or character likely to prejudice the nature, conservation, recreation and tourist functions of the area shall be discouraged, and development to be permitted shall be designed to achieve harmony with the landscape and shall be of a standard consistent with the status of the area.

Statement No. 4 (River Yarra) applies to the River Yarra and its immediate environs and, east of Warrandyte, to the whole of its catchment. It applies to a great extent within the metropolitan region except for the upper part of the valley generally east of Yarra Glen, and states:

The River Yarra and its environs shall be identified through appropriate planning measures as one of the most significant physical features in the Melbourne metropolis;

The River Yarra and its immediate environs shall be planned primarily as an open space system for nature conservation and recreation, with provision, where appropriate for primary production and forestry.

The planning of areas within the catchment of the River Yarra east of Warrandyte shall take account of the potential of the area for water catchment purposes.

Other Relevant Reports

Residential Planning Standards

Following a request from the Minister for Local Government, investigations were begun to enable a complete revision to be made of the form and type of control for residential development and redevelopment in Melbourne. A preliminary report containing basic concepts for a code of control was submitted to metropolitan councils and the public for comment, and a Technical Advisory Committee was set up to examine the concepts in more detail.

This Technical Advisory Committee submitted its report in September, 1970 and this again was given wide circulation by the Board.

The comments fed back from municipal councils and other interested parties, and the two reports themselves are now being fully evaluated. It is expected that final proposals will be released shortly. These will be in the form of a residential code to be included in the planning scheme, to be followed by appropriate re-zoning.

Transportation Plan

In 1969, the Transportation Committee comprising the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Local Government and the chairmen of the Board of Works, the Country Roads Board, the Victorian Railways, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board, the Transport Regulation Board, the Victorian Traffic Commission, the Director of State Finance and the Chief Planner of the Board of Works made public the Transportation Plan for the metropolitan region which has since been approved, in principle, by the Government. This contains comprehensive recommendations for the road, rail, tramway and bus networks required to serve a population of about 3,700,000 expected to be living in the metropolitan region by about 1985. Later in this report reference is made to this plan and how its recommendations are being integrated with the proposals for the region.

Airfields Report

The Victorian Airfields Committee on which the Town and Country Planning Board, the Department of Civil Aviation and the Board of Works are represented was set up by the