

# What do we want to achieve?

The Discussion Paper refers to five outcome principles:

Principle 1: A distinctive Melbourne

Principle 2: A globally connected and competitive city

Principle 3: Social and economic participation

Principle 4: Strong communities

Principle 5: Environmental resilience

## Question 1

What do you think of these outcome principles?

They sound fine, but they always do when stated as principles.

## Question 2

What do you think is needed to achieve these outcome principles?

Stop mucking around with Melbourne's planning. It was all worked out very thoroughly 41 years ago by the Board of Works in its *Planning Policies for the Melbourne Metropolitan Region* (29 November, 1971). As reported at the time: 'Eight green wedges are the key proposal in the Board of Works' master plan for Melbourne.'

'The wedges, or conservation zones, will be the lungs of a future city with a population near five million.'

‘The board’s chief planner, Mr J. A. Hepburn, said the whole basis of the plan was that there would be no urban development in the wedges.’ (“The plan”, *The Sun*, 30/11/1971)

The Board of Works set aside 2,670 square kilometres for green wedges and 2,359 square kilometres as urban land. The urban area is now 2,787 square kilometres (<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/greater-melbourne-just-got-a-bit-wider-20120620-20oh8.html>), 428 square kilometres bigger than the promised permanent urban area.

## **What needs to change?**

### **An expanded Central City**

The Discussion Paper makes references to building an expanded Central City that can attract new jobs to Melbourne and reinforce Melbourne as a world city and tourism hub. An expanded Central City is not simply about a geographically larger area, it is about expanding the opportunities the Central City offers residents, businesses and visitors.

### **Question 3**

What are the key ingredients for success in achieving the vision of an expanded Central City?

Get over the obsessions with the central city. Most Melburnians hardly go there. Think of the city as a collection of centres.

### **Suburban job clusters**

A number of suburban job clusters are nationally significant places of economic activity and innovation. Reinforcing the role of these clusters could boost productivity, support economic growth,

make the most of infrastructure, and promote urban renewal. Clusters have distinctive roles, infrastructure and economic development potential.

## Question 4

What do you think of the idea of identifying and reinforcing em innovation clusters across Melbourne?

Good idea, but what are the details?

## Question 5

What is needed to support growth and development in regional

That's easy. Accept that the green wedges set up in 1971 are permanent – that means reversing the recent theft of green wedge land. Accept that the UGB is already beyond where it should be and take it back to the permanent line established in 1972. Restrict higher density to well-defined areas with strict requirements re permeable surfaces, height, streetscape protection, etc. In other words, enforce the promised permanent shape of the metropolitan area and thus prevent further subdivisions and accept that there are limits to medium density. Both provisions will put a cap on population and thus make people choose other places to live. The market will make our provincial cities more attractive. Connect the provincial cities with each other and Melbourne by fast road and rail links.

## 20 minute city

Accessible, safe and attractive local areas where people can meet most of their needs within 20 minutes travel not only by car could help make Melbourne a healthier, more inclusive city.

## Question 6

What do you think of the idea of a '20 minute city'?

I mostly live in one already. Most things can be provided within a 20-minute drive, but some things (e.g., a major hospital) cannot.

## Question 7

How can established suburbs accommodate the needs of changing populations and maintain what people value about their area?

This question is code for higher density. Start from the premise that people should be able to live in their own areas as they age, not the premise that medium density is a good in itself that everyone must be forced to endure.

If we look overseas, we will see other countries with much more even population distributions in their land areas. I see no reason that we are condemned to always put more than 60 per cent of our population into only six cities because they just happen to be on the river mouths where the British settled some 200 years ago. Decentralisation ought to be our aim.

### Australia

Population 22,526,524 (ABS, 8/11/2010)

Area 7,686,500 square kilometres

Density 2.9 persons per square kilometre

Proportion of Australia's population inside nine mainland state capitals 62.0 per cent

(Sydney 4,500,000, Melbourne 4,000,000, Brisbane 2,000,000, Perth 1,700,000, Adelaide 1,200,000, Canberra 300,000, Hobart 200,000, Darwin 100,000 = 14,000,000) – more than half in the four largest cities

### Victoria

Population 5,547,527 (June 2010)

Area 227,416 square kilometres

Density 24.4 persons per square kilometre

Melbourne (Statistical Division = 30 complete local government areas plus part of Yarra Ranges Shire)

Population (June 2009) 4,000,000

Area 8,812 square kilometres

or

Planning area 7,673 square kilometres (very hard to get precise figure on this)

Density 521 persons per square kilometre

Proportion of Victoria's population inside Melbourne (Statistical Division) 72.1 per cent

### Melbourne (urban area)

Population 3,371,886 (2006?)

(Area 2,153 square kilometres (2006?))

Density 1,566 persons per square kilometre (2006?)

### United Kingdom

Population 62,041,708

Area 243,610 square kilometres

Density 254.7 persons per square kilometre

Proportion of United Kingdom's population inside London 12.5 per cent

### London

Population 7,753,600

Area 1,572 square kilometres

Density 4,932 persons per square kilometre (not including green belt area)

London greenbelt area 4,850 square kilometres

London plus green belt area 6,504 square kilometres

Density 1,192+ persons per square kilometre (including green belt area)

Other large cities (conurbations) in the UK over 1,000,000

Birmingham 2,284,093

Manchester 2,244,931

Leeds 1,499,465

Glasgow 1,184,350

### Calculations

Amount of land needed to accommodate Victoria's population at Melbourne Statistical Division's current density 10,647 square kilometres

Percentage of Victoria completely free of people if all were accommodated at Melbourne Statistical Division's current density 95.5 per cent

Amount of land needed to accommodate Victoria's population at Melbourne's urban area density of 1,566 persons per square kilometre 3,542 square kilometres

Percentage of Victoria completely free of people if all were accommodated at Melbourne's urban area density of 1,566 persons per square kilometre 98.4 per cent

Amount of land needed to give every Victorian his or her own 1,000-square metre block of land 5,548 square kilometres

Amount of land left over 221,868 square kilometres (97.6 per cent of the state)

Make provision for limited medium density development under set rules; e.g., within 200 metres of a railway station, within 100 metres of a shopping centre, with at least 50 per cent of the surface area of any land to be permeable, with no more than 2 storeys allowed, etc.

## Question 8

How do we ensure a healthy and sustainable environment for future generations?

Protect our green wedges, cap the population of Melbourne, stop squashing people up.

## **Making it happen**

Implementation is essential to the success of the Strategy. The Discussion Paper presents a range of ways infrastructure could be funded and financed.

### **Question 9**

What do you think about the possible ways of funding infrastructure?

Henry Bolte happily borrowed money. Get over the modern-day obsession with debt. Do not fall for the rent-seekers who want private profit partnerships or to buy public assets (e.g., the Eastern freeway).

### **Question 10**

How can all levels of government, business and community work together to create the city you want?

By allocating set responsibilities to each level, which means remaking federalism in Australia. By governments acting as if the rules applied to them too; e.g., no setting aside height limits, calling planning proposals in just because the government wants to throw its weight around.

## **Any other comments?**

Please provide any other feedback, comments or ideas you may have on the themes in the Discussion Paper

I have absolutely no faith in this process. The mere fact that the government intends to review the urban growth boundary every two years (when it was supposed to be permanent in 1971) and that it is at the same time talking about a permanent urban growth boundary (when it was supposed to be permanent in

1971) tells me that there is an agenda and that consultation is a farce. So, why respond? Just so the record shows that some people did.

See <http://blogs.crikey.com.au/theurbanist/2010/10/20/what-should-we-do-about-melbourne/> for a history of Melbourne's planning (in case there is an official somewhere in this process who can nudge it back onto the right path in the long run).