

DELIVERING MELBOURNE'S NEWEST SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES



PROGRAM REPORT

DECEMBER 2009



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PART 1: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

The Victorian Government has entered into an agreement with the Commonwealth Government, under section 146 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, to conduct a strategic assessment of the potential impact of the Program ‘*Delivering Melbourne’s newest sustainable communities*’ on matters of national environmental significance.

Matters of national environmental significance are identified under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, including threatened species and ecological communities, migratory species, world and national heritage properties and Ramsar wetlands. The undertaking of any action that could have an impact on a matter of national environmental significance requires approval from the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts.

The Program seeks to expand Melbourne’s Urban Growth Boundary to develop residential and employment areas and related infrastructure (including transport, utility and social infrastructure, commercial and industrial activities, quarrying and related land use and development) within the growth areas and to construct the Regional Rail Link (west of Werribee to Deer Park) and Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor.

In addition to the strategic assessment process, the Program will be subject to assessment and approvals processes under Victorian legislation.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this report is to specify the Program and to identify the processes and mitigation measures that the Victorian Government will use to implement the Program.

The Victorian Government aims to provide certainty to the Commonwealth Government that the likely impacts of implementing the Program on matters of national environmental significance will be managed through the process of urban and infrastructure development and proposed mitigation measures.

References to legislation in this document are provided generally for background information and contextual purposes. Any amendment to this legislation not affecting conservation activities or any other measures required by this document does not interfere with the applicability or requirements of the Program.

Similarly, references to the names of Commonwealth and Victorian Government Departments and portfolio agencies are correct as at the time of publication. Any change in the names of these entities will not, of itself, interfere with the applicability or requirements of the Program.

1.2 DEFINITION OF THE PROGRAM

The Program means the Urban Growth Boundary Review for Melbourne being undertaken by the State of Victoria and announced on 2 December 2008, for the development of land, including transport infrastructure, within:

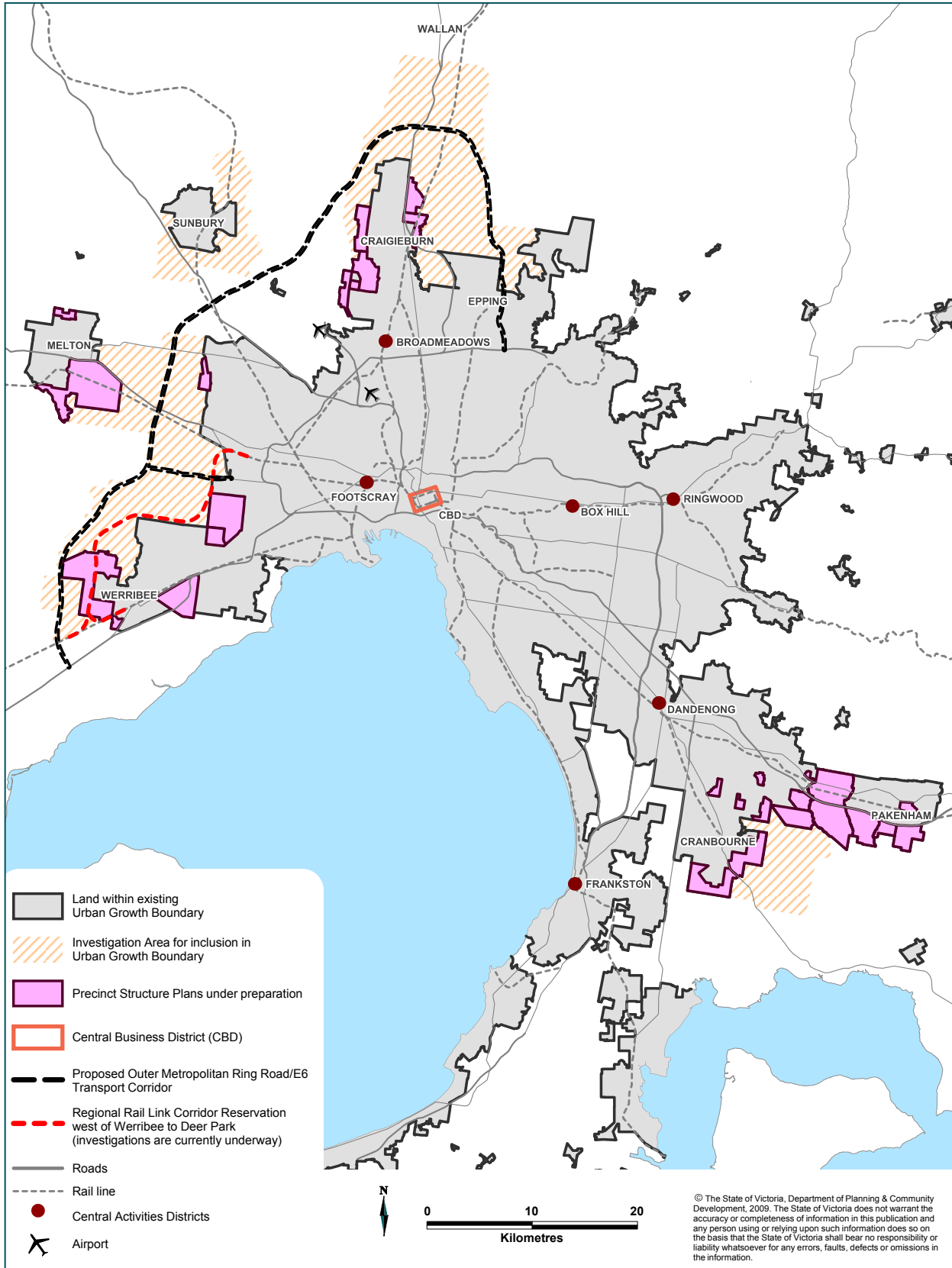
- i. the investigation areas shown in the *Melbourne 2030: a planning update, Melbourne @ 5 million Report* (published by the State of Victoria in December 2008) including the subsequent extension to these areas as shown on Map 1;
- ii. areas inside the existing Urban Growth Boundary for which a planning scheme amendment to introduce a Precinct Structure Plan has not commenced to be exhibited or does not remain on exhibition under sections 17-19 of *The Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)* as at 26 May 2009, as shown on Map 1;
- iii. areas in the Outer Metropolitan Ring Transport Corridor, the E6 Transport Corridor and the Regional Rail Link Corridor between west of Werribee and Deer Park as discussed in *The Victorian Transport Plan* (published by the State of Victoria on 8 December 2008) as shown on Map 1.

This Program Report (this document) provides for the development and implementation of a number of individual plans and policies that will be relevant in the implementation of the wider Program. Where a plan, policy or other document is expressed in this Program Report (this document) as requiring the approval of the Commonwealth Minister, the Victorian Government will provide that policy or plan to the Commonwealth Minister in draft form before it is finalised and implemented. The Commonwealth Minister may approve the plan or policy, or require modifications to the plan or policy before deciding whether to approve it.

Any plan or policy referred to in this document that requires approval by the Commonwealth Minister will form part of the Program once it is approved by the Commonwealth Minister. Where a plan or policy is finalised and implemented without the prior approval of the Commonwealth Minister according to the process outlined above, it will not form part of the Program. Any subsequent variation to a plan or policy proposed by the Victorian Government will require the approval of the Commonwealth Minister before it forms part of the Program.

Within this broad definition, aspects of the Program may be defined more precisely in subsequent updates provided to the Commonwealth.

MAP 1: DEFINITION OF THE PROGRAM



1.3 PLANNING CONTEXT

The Victorian Government anticipates that an additional 600,000 new dwellings will need to be accommodated in Melbourne over the next 20 years of which 316,000 new dwellings will be located in the established areas and 284,000 will be located in the growth areas.

In order for Melbourne's outward growth to occur in a sustainable way, it is important that sufficient land is allocated for housing, retail, local employment, open space, recreational facilities, schools and other community infrastructure; and for major infrastructure corridors and regional employment areas.

The Program is driven by the Victorian Government's land use planning and transport policies (refer to Figure 1).

Melbourne 2030 – planning for sustainable growth (2002) is the Victorian Government's long-term plan to manage Melbourne's growing population over the next 25 years.

In *Melbourne 2030: a planning update – Melbourne @ 5 million (2008)*, the Victorian Government identified the need to review Melbourne's Urban Growth Boundary around the growth areas of Melbourne in response to population projections set out in *Victoria in Future 2008* showing Melbourne will reach five million people faster than anticipated.

The Victorian Government has also identified two major transport initiatives to facilitate Melbourne's growth: the Regional Rail Link and the Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor. These policy initiatives are set out in *The Victorian Transport Plan (2008)* and *Freight Futures: Victorian Freight Network Strategy (2008)*.

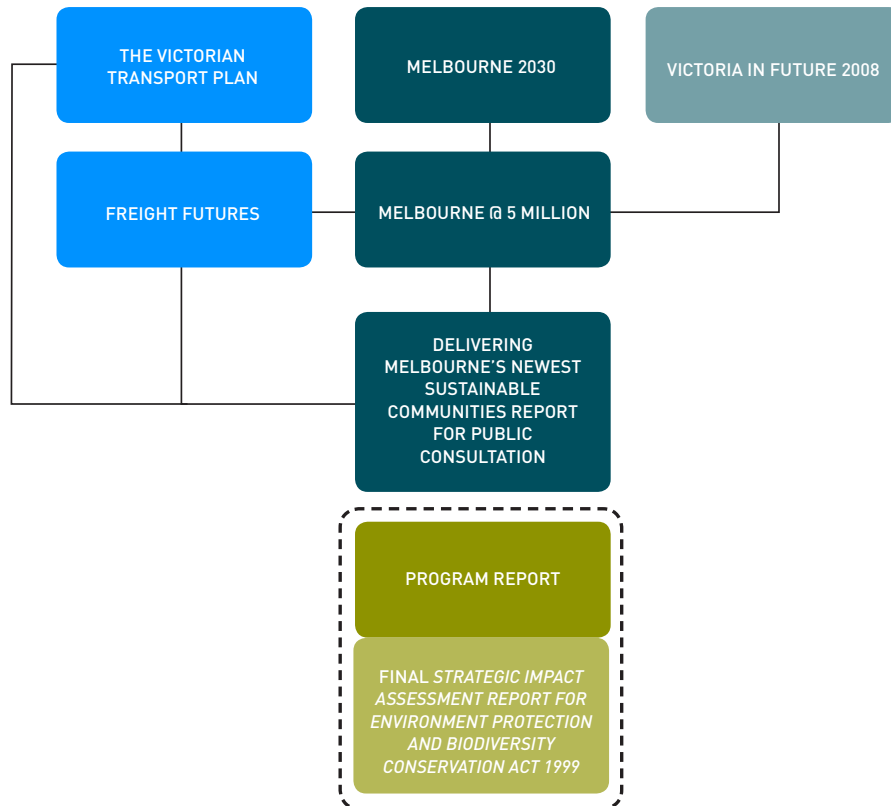
Delivering Melbourne's Newest Sustainable Communities Report for Public Consultation was provided for public comment in June 2009. Information was provided about the Program including the rationale and proposed location of:

- > Melbourne's revised Urban Growth Boundary and land for development;
- > The alignment of the Regional Rail Link (west of Werribee to Deer Park) and the Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 Transport Corridor; and
- > Grassland reserves in Melbourne's west.

A draft *Strategic Impact Assessment Report for Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* was provided for public comment at the same time. This report outlined the strategic impact of the Program on matters of national environmental significance. The Victorian Government has considered all public comments received and has finalised this report.

The final *Strategic Impact Assessment Report for Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* report provides the basis for outlining how the potential impacts of the Program on matters of national environmental significance will be managed.

FIGURE 1: INTERACTION OF THIS PROGRAM REPORT WITH GOVERNMENT POLICY



1.4 STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This report is structured as follows:

The remainder of **Part One** describes the Program.

Part Two explains the legislative and policy framework for implementing the Program, including the activity stages required, anticipated timeframes and roles of Victorian Government agencies.

Part Three sets out the Victorian Government’s management measures for addressing the impacts of the Program on matters of national environmental significance. It confirms the outcomes to be achieved for each matter and details the Victorian Government’s commitments to undertake specific mitigation activities, by indicating responsibilities, timeframes, resourcing and monitoring measures.

Part Four outlines the monitoring processes that will be effective during the development period and the commitments to evaluating the implementation of the Program. It also describes the adaptive management procedures for responding to new information and changing circumstances that may be introduced, reassessed and accounted for in implementing the Program.