GREEN BELTS, GREEN WEDGES OR DISPUTED GROUND

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**Introduction**

- **Green Wedges:**
  - 600,000 hectares (1.5m acres)

- **Hinterland:**
  - 100 kilometres (approx)

- **Growth Area**

- **Urban Area & Urban Growth Boundary**
Hinterland key facts

- Population - 617,000
  - (700,000 in broader peri urban region)
- Number of lots - 477,000
- Number of settlements - 103
- Multiple values and land uses

- Business as usual paradigm:
  - Decline of habitat and biodiversity
  - Loss of productive land and open space

- Choice:
  - Pathways and actions to a preferred future
Green wedge and hinterland values – environment & amenity

Biodiversity & Conservation

Lifestyle

Landscape

Open Space

Recreation
Green wedge and hinterland values - economic

Agriculture & Food Security
Buffers
Tourism
Viticulture
Protected Catchments
Sensitive Land Uses
Melbourne planning - early years

1837
• Melbourne was officially settled
• Surveyor Robert Hoddle’s street grid plan
• Parks and gardens were provided for
• Constraints were recognised

1929 - Landmark report
*Plan of General Development*

Addressed:
• transport and traffic congestion
• distribution of recreational open space
• haphazard intermingling of land uses

Proposed:
• planning and land-use zoning scheme – business, residential & industrial uses
• recreational scheme – open space, playgrounds, parks and ‘parkway drives’
Melbourne planning – mid 20th C

Proposed Major Park System for Melbourne and Metropolis 1944

Note: Permanent Agricultural Belt (proposed - not official policy)
Melbourne planning – mid 20thC

Sprawling low density urban development
- perception of ‘boundless land’
- increased affluence - gardens, large lots
- rapid increase in car use & mobility

Social consequences
- poor services
- disadvantage
- haphazard planning

Under threat
- productive rural and agricultural lands
- landscapes and open space
- wildlife habitat and natural resources
Melbourne planning – 1954

• 1st comprehensive Metropolitan Planning Scheme
• central locations - housing, transport, employment & community activity
• rural zones surrounding the urban area to reduce sprawl
• development corridors and ‘wedges’ of non urban land
Melbourne planning – 1968

Urban growth corridor / green wedge pattern of development was officially adopted as planning policy in 1968

To:

• provide relief from continuous building development
• preserve countryside near to established populations
• protect areas of high natural amenity
• protect primary production including orchards and market gardens
• protect mineral deposits, resources and other rural activities
• provide locations for major public utility installations and large institutions
Melbourne planning – 70s/80s

1974
Melbourne’s Development

Urban settlement
1851 to 2004
Melbourne planning – recent years

1990s
• ‘New format’ planning schemes – performance based
• 4000 hectares of rural land ‘lost’ to residential development

2002
Melbourne 2030 – Planning for sustainable growth:
• 30 year plan to manage growth and change
• Urban growth boundary established
• 12 green wedges designated
• Legislation and planning controls to protect green wedge land
2002 - Proposed boundaries and green wedges
2005 - final alignment of boundaries

2010 - urban growth boundary moved

West

North
Issues & Opportunities - 1

Population growth

• Melbourne = 1 million by 2020 – not 2030 as predicted
• Higher average annual growth rates in hinterland:
  - Peri-urban = 1.8% / Victoria = 0.9% / Regional Vic = 0.8%

Agriculture

• Food security, climate change, peak oil, food miles
• Retention of large properties is critical
• Land use planning affects farming

Environment

• Loss of native vegetation and habitat
• Decline in biodiversity and viable species populations
• Loss of ecosystem services
• Carbon offsets, Bush Broker schemes
Issues & Opportunities - 2

**Water**

- Last decade:
  - El Nino weather pattern – lower rainfall / higher temperatures
  - Few rivers in good or excellent condition
  - Water situation likely to worsen under climate change (5 – 45% reduction in runoff)
  - Recent extreme flood events in Victoria

**Social**

- Commuting:
  - 42% work outside local area / 28% commute to Melbourne
- Lifestyle – rural living and maintaining a close connection with nature
- Diversity of hinterland towns – heritage values & character
- Connected settlements – internet broadband technology
Case Study – Black Saturday Bushfires 2009

700,000 people live in Melbourne’s broader peri-urban region.

One of the most fire-prone areas in the world.
Case Study – Black Saturday Bushfires 2009

173 lives lost  414 people injured  7562 people displaced

450,000 hectares burnt

350,000 hectares in hinterland areas
Case Study
Shire of Mitchell

Dwelling permits
(aqua & orange dots)
1997-2007
Bushfire Royal Commission:

“...the Commission considers that there are some areas where the bushfire risk is so high that development should be restricted.”
Lessons

Green Wedges and Hinterland provide:
• Opportunities for greater resilience
• Capacity for improved sustainability
• Enhanced liveability
• Climate change adaptation
Integrated planning:
- Metropolitan Melbourne
- Green Wedges
- Hinterland
- Regional Victoria
Regional Planning & Partnerships

Objective: Integration and Implementation

• 8 Regional Strategic Plans
• 8 Regional Land Use Plans
  • AU$17.2 million

PARTNERSHIPS

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IMPLEMENTATION
Conclusion

A city in isolation of its hinterland is not sustainable