



residential street with medium density housing

Easing the Pressure on New House Prices

The Growth Areas Authority Precinct Structure Program (PSP) has produced 32,000 zoned residential lots across the growth areas as the result of planning reforms, including a new Urban Growth Zone and an accelerated program of strategic planning work.

This increase in supply represents enough zoned land to satisfy more than two years' of consumption based on the current market demand for new housing in the growth areas.

The Urban Development Institute of Australia's latest analysis confirms Melbourne's housing lot price growth is "the best by far" making the city better placed than other capitals to meet strong demand for housing.

The pipeline of new housing lots in Melbourne's six growth areas has broadly remained steady, helping the city maintain its competitive advantage as the most affordable capital city on the eastern seaboard.

The GAA's current program of PSPs is progressing well, with the aim of producing a further 40,000 residential lots by the end of this year.

This represents around three years of housing land consumption in the growth areas.

The recently approved PSPs helped bolster the tally for residential and employment land – with 4, 478 lots at Cranbourne West in the City of Casey – and Truganina Employment in Wyndham spanning more than 1,000 hectares.

Overall the Growth Areas Authority has completed 12 PSPs from its program of 40, comprising more than 32,000 residential lots and 2,583 hectares of employment land.

"This master planning is part of the State Government's target to of maintaining good levels of land supply," said Peter Seamer, chief executive office of the Growth Areas Authority.

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Growth in the West

WYNDHAM GROWTH AREA

In Melbourne's west, jobs growth is a big focus of strategic planning work.

Truganina Employment in Wyndham is a site of more than 1,100 hectares that's critical to the development of some large-scale employment uses in the short term.

The Precinct is one of Melbourne's three major industrial areas and is nominated as an area of state significance.

The Planning Minister, Justin Madden recently approved an amendment to the Wyndham planning scheme to help drive the development of the Precinct that will include a new distribution hub for Kmart's national and New Zealand operations. (See story right).

A new residential community at Truganina South is expected to open up more than 2,500 houses and will become home to an estimated 7,000 people.

Work on four PSPs in the Wyndham Vale area in the west of the growth area is underway. These PSPs will see master plans prepared for more than 1,000 hectares of residential land yielding well over 10,000 lots when complete.

Overall, Wyndham is projected to grow to more than 270,000 people in the next 20 years.

This will be underpinned by plans to build Melbourne's first major new rail line in 80 years – the Regional Rail Link – which will run from the west of Werribee to Sunshine and then to Southern Cross Station.

The Regional Rail Link will have the capacity to run more than 20 peak-hour trains, servicing an extra 9,000 regional and suburban passengers every hour.



warehousing

MELTON-CAROLINE SPRINGS GROWTH AREA

Toolern east of Melton is another big jobs generating PSP – nearing the end of the planning scheme amendment stage.

Toolern will become a major residential and employment centre. Spanning 2,361 hectares, the new suburb will have an estimated 21,000 residential lots and provide accommodation for up to 58,000 people in four residential neighbourhoods, each with their own town centre.

Toolern has been master planned to attract an estimated 20,000 jobs to the region and is one of the biggest growth precincts in Melbourne. It will transform Melton into a major urban centre for the west, with a major new activity centre, railway station and local jobs.

After going on public exhibition, submissions will be heard by Panel hearing scheduled for this month and approval is expected by mid 2010.

Taylor's Hill West is a smaller residential community to the west of Caroline Springs planned for around 6,700 people with a

proposed school, local town centre, community facilities and active recreation areas. A decision is expected mid-year with a Panel hearing due this month.

Melton North represents a modest expansion to the residential community of Melton and will provide homes for around 3,000 people on an estimated 1,100 new residential lots. It will also have a local town centre. The GAA is currently resolving submissions following public exhibition, with a Panel hearing due shortly and a decision expected by mid-year.

Transport is critical to new development in the Melton-Caroline Springs Growth Area, including the Regional Rail Link.

V-Line services will now reach Melton with work due to start this year on a new station at Caroline Springs. The line is also earmarked for duplication into the future.

A more westerly route for the proposed Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor opens up the potential for new communities to be built both north and south of the railway line, with the Melton Highway generally taken as a boundary between urban and non-urban development.

Work under-way to attract jobs in Melbourne's West

Earthworks have started on Kmart's new Distribution Centre in Truganina, giving a significant boost to a \$60 million industrial project to help create around 7,860 permanent jobs in Melbourne's West.

Wyndham is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia, and Planning Minister Justin Madden said a thriving industrial employment precinct at Truganina would provide thousands of new jobs close to home.

"I'm pleased to see that construction began in January on Kmart's central distribution hub and is expected to be completed by early next year," Mr Madden said.

"Building works are on track to start in April, and Kmart and its staff is expected to move into the new centre in early 2011.

"Goodman, Qanstruct and the planning authorities are working closely to ensure that all conditions of the planning permit are satisfied, as this is a pivotal project for employment in the region."

Mr Madden's approval of the Truganina Employment Precinct Structure Plan has opened up 1,177 hectares of quality industrial land at the north-eastern edge of the City of Wyndham.

"The release of this land will create much needed employment opportunities in the Wyndham area, with its population projected to grown by more than 270,000 people over the next 20 years," he said.

More importantly, the area will be a strategic location for a broad range of businesses with a bias towards logistics and the new economy.

greenvale with melbourne CBD in background

Growth in the North

HUME-MITCHELL-WHITTLESEA

Strategic planning work is underway on two PSPs to allow for more residential expansion around Greenvale in the city of Hume to Melbourne's north.

Greenvale West will become a new community of around 3,500 on 106 hectares, with a local town centre and school with views of the Greenvale Reservoir, which is influencing landscaping and plantings. Greenvale North will be a similarly sized suburb set on 230 hectares.

Separate Precinct Structure Plans will go on exhibition next month, with decision anticipated in late 2010.

Longer-term growth in the Hume-Mitchell-Whittlesea area is earmarked for areas to the north of Craigieburn, through Donnybrook, ending south of the Wallan township, as part of the propose UGB expansion.

The Victorian Transport Plan committed to extending the Epping railway line to South Morang.

Bus services are also planned to extend from Ringwood to

Melbourne Airport through Blackburn, Greensborough, South Morang, Epping and Roxburgh Park.

Domestic interstate rail freight handling facilities will also be moved from West Melbourne to a new terminal at Beveridge.

The proposed Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor also runs east-west through the area opening up better transport connections to the airport and possible urban development around Mickleham.

Looking ahead, future growth is projected to focus around Sunbury, helped by the electrification of railway services to Sunbury.

Master-planning for a new residential community in Hume known as Craigieburn R2 is also well advanced through the planning scheme amendment process. A Panel hearing is in progress and approval expected mid-year.

The PSP opens the way for a new residential community set on 456 hectares to the north of Craigieburn, next to the Highlands estate.

Catering for a population of around 9,000 residents, Craigieburn R2 will have two retail and town centres and an extensive open space network along the creek-line. A prep to year 12 Government school and a Catholic School are also proposed for the area.

Growth in the South-East

In Casey-Cardinia years of comprehensive strategic planning work are coming to fruition for this growing community.

The Cranbourne West PSP – a new community catering for around 9,632 people – was recently approved by the Mr Madden.

The precinct will include land for 4,500 new homes and around 450 hectares of land for employment. A host of developments are now moving into the planning permit stage, with subdivision construction due to start later this year.

Cranbourne East – a new residential community for an estimated 19,600 people – is currently nearing the end of the approval process and the panel report has been released.

A brand new swimming pool and recreation centre has

recently opened and new schools are also being planned along with four new local town centres and parkland.

A decision on the PSP is expected within months and also includes a one-off demonstration project showcasing excellence in practical urban design exceeding current standards. The project is a partnership put together by the Growth Areas Authority and the Planning Institute of Australia, involving the developer Stocklands and the City of Casey.

A rail extension from Cranbourne to Cranbourne East has also been identified as a long-term priority in The Victorian Transport Plan.

Other PSPs still being prepared include Cardinia Road Employment, which is due for public exhibition this month and is estimated will create land for 15,000 jobs and housing for around 5,600 people.

aquatic centre in cranbourne



The precinct will become a benchmark development highlighting how to mix homes, business and much needed services to create a great place to live, work and enjoy life in a single community.

It will include a broad mix of jobs, a centrally located town centre while protecting a wetland system supporting the endangered growling grass frog.

The other major residential community being planned is at Officer – in what will be a large, community with a new town centre to accommodate more than 26,000 people.

The innovative town centre is being master-planned by VicUrban and is expected to have employment space for an estimated 4,800 jobs.

Work is progressing on a high quality residential community at Botanic Ridge for 12,600 people on 741 hectares next to Cranbourne's native Royal Botanic Gardens. The precinct is being designed to fit into the surrounding landscape, with

tree planting programs a major feature along with a bio-link to protect the endangered southern brown bandicoot.

Plans for another similar scale precinct at Clyde North south-east of Berwick have recently been on public exhibition showing the master planning for a new community of around 14,200 people on 534 hectares, which is expected to attract 2,235 local jobs.

Cranbourne North (stage two) on 188 hectares will complete planning for land north of Cranbourne, in central Casey. The new community of around 6,200 people on 1,800 lots will boast a waterway providing a corridor of parkland for families moving in to enjoy. A trail system will link schools, sports facilities and local town centres.

A smaller community spanning 75 hectares at Berwick Waterways for 2,240 people will free up precious land for housing in Berwick and use innovative drainage solutions, while a waterway will support habitat for endangered frogs.

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"We've been working across Government to integrate transport, access to local jobs and land use decisions and have picked up the pace on our own strategic planning so that master planning new communities is streamlined.

"The GAA's PSP program is on track to approve land for an additional 110,000 residential lots by 2012, slicing two years of red tape out of the process helped by new precinct planning guidelines and new biodiversity mapping arrangements," he said.

New housing in the growth areas is also making more efficient use of land – instead of a house on the old quarter acre block, densities in new precincts are closer to one eighth of an acre, or about 500 square metres.

"There's a mistaken view that housing on the outer edge of Melbourne is low density, but the lowest densities are in older middle ring suburbs. The work we're doing is all about urban consolidation, higher density near transport and more choice of housing from a mix of housing styles," Mr Seamer said.

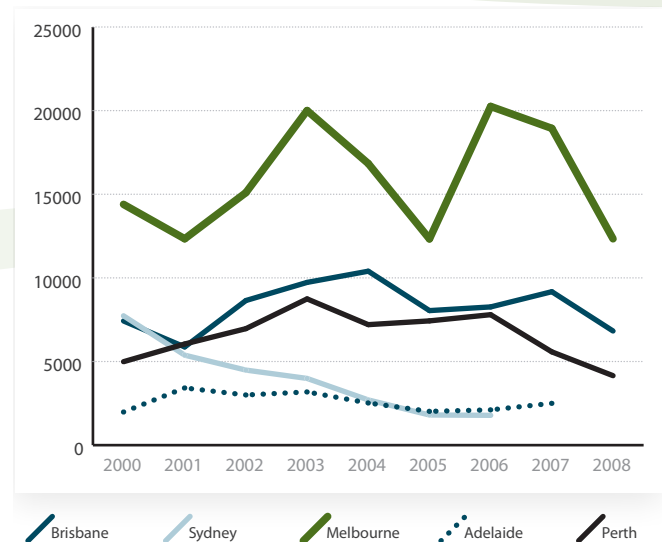
The UDIA's State of the Land update identifies Sydney as having the most uncompetitive cost structure of development levies in Australia with a "large disparity between prices for existing and new housing stock". Brisbane is cited as applying "ad-hoc" development levies that are sometimes even higher than Sydney's.

Australian Industry Group CEO and board member of Infrastructure Australia, Heather Ridout, singled out Victoria for praise as being much better placed to manage strong population growth.

Ms Ridout told the ABC's 7.30 Report series on population growth that Victoria had "been more prescient" than other states by having a strategic plan that considered transport and urban infrastructure planning.

"There is no doubt about it, one of the major frontier issues for Australia over the next decade will be the future of our cities," she said.

Number of Lots Produced



Source: UDIA 2009 State of the Land graph representing the number of lots produced by capital city.

Precinct Structure Plan Status

PSP NUMBER	PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN (PSP)	STATUS	PSP NUMBER	PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN (PSP)	STATUS
2	CARDINIA ROAD	COMPLETED	23	GREENVALE WEST (R3)	PSP
3	CARDINIA ROAD EMPLOYMENT AREA	PSP	24	MERRIFIELD CENTRAL EMPLOYMENT AREA (E1)	COMPLETED
4	OFFICER	PSP	25	MICKLEHAM EMPLOYMENT AREA NORTH (E2)	PRE-PLANNING
5	OFFICER EMPLOYMENT AREA	PRE-PLANNING	26	MICKLEHAM EMPLOYMENT AREA SOUTH (E3)	PRE-PLANNING
6	PAKENHAM EMPLOYMENT AREA (STAGE 1)	PSP	27	MELTON NORTH	AMENDMENT
7	PAKENHAM EMPLOYMENT AREA (STAGE 2)	PRE-PLANNING	28	ROBINSONS ROAD EMPLOYMENT AREA NORTH	COMPLETED
9	BERWICK WATERWAYS	PSP	29	ROBINSONS ROAD EMPLOYMENT AREA SOUTH	AMENDMENT
10	BOTANIC RIDGE	PSP	30	TAYLORS HILL WEST	AMENDMENT
11	C21 BUSINESS PARK	PRE-PLANNING	31	TOOLERN	AMENDMENT
12	CASEY CENTRAL TOWN CENTRE	PRE-PLANNING	32	AURORA	COMPLETED
13	CLYDE NORTH	AMENDMENT	33	EPHING NORTH EAST	COMPLETED
14	CRANBOURNE EAST	AMENDMENT	34	POINT COOK HOMESTEAD RD	COMPLETED
15	CRANBOURNE NORTH (STAGE 1)	COMPLETED	35	RIVERWALK	COMPLETED
16	CRANBOURNE NORTH (STAGE 2)	PSP	36	TARNEIT WEST	COMPLETED
17	CRANBOURNE WEST	COMPLETED	37	TRUGANINA EMPLOYMENT AREA	COMPLETED
18	HAMPTON PARK HILL	PRE-PLANNING	38	TRUGANINA SOUTH	AMENDMENT
19	CRAIGIEBURN (R2)	AMENDMENT	40	BALLAN ROAD	PSP
20	FOLKSTONE EMPLOYMENT AREA (E1)	COMPLETED	41	MANOR LAKES	PSP
21	GREENVALE TOWN CENTRE (A4)	PRE-PLANNING	42	BLACK FOREST ROAD	PSP
22	GREENVALE NORTH (R1)	AMENDMENT	43	ALFRED ROAD	PSP

Pre-planning
 Precinct Structure Plan Preparation
 Planning Scheme Amendment
 Completed

More choice and more efficient housing density

The Government's target to achieve overall housing density of 15 homes per hectare is being achieved in Melbourne's growth areas, as a result of better design and more efficient use of land.

Contrary to popular opinion, the lowest density suburbs in Melbourne are in middle ring suburbs like Glen Waverley and Wheelers Hill, where densities average around 10 houses per hectare.

By contrast, newer communities such as Cranbourne East, Toolern, Taylors Hill West and Clyde North have densities of around 15 buildings per hectare.

At Cranbourne East a wide range of developers including Stockland, Devine, PEET and Villawood have all managed to achieve the higher densities while offering diverse housing styles.

At Officer, which is being master-planned by VicUrban and Cardinia Shire Council, there will be high-density apartments

close to an upgraded rail station right in the centre of the new town centre.

Five thousand new jobs will also be integrated in and around the higher density housing, in a marked departure from the more traditional planning style where employment and housing are kept separate.

At Toolern, where the Precinct Structure Plan is expected to be approved mid-year, the Melton Shire Council has begun calling for expressions of interest from developers who can meet the higher density expectations with a mix of innovative development proposals.

At Cranbourne West, where people are now registering their interest to buy land, there are also a range of development types and lot sizes on offer to would-be buyers.

Meanwhile at Cranbourne East where land is also about to become available, construction is already underway on a new school that has been fast-tracked under the new Urban Growth Zone provisions.



grasslands with rockbank township in background

Greater Protection For Biodiversity

An increase in the protection of key biodiversity sites will result from a new strategic environmental agreement just signed off between the Federal and Victorian Governments.

The new strategic assessment process under national environment laws allows environmental issues to be considered early on the state planning process.

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett said the strategic assessment was the first in the country to be endorsed, describing it as a "modern, flexible and sensible" approach to managing environmental issues.

Under the new process, Victoria's Planning Minister Justin Madden considers approval of development activities, and where approved, no further federal assessment is needed.

"The program identifies areas suitable for future development to accommodate this growth and those with environmental values that need protection," Mr Madden said.

Mr Madden said the program would provide certainty to developers, landholders, planners, industry, communities and governments for long-term growth.

Under the program, two new national grassland reserves are proposed to be created, increasing from two to 20 per cent the amount of temperate grasslands under protection and the amount of grassy woodlands from three to five per cent.

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The Growth Areas Authority is always interested in your views about our programs and initiatives, and the issues covered in this newsletter.

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