

# In the Shadow of Metropolitan Planning

Local Plan Making in Melbourne, 1946 to 1976

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**Melbourne has evolved and changed over time in response to the many challenges that this city has faced over the last century and a half. Some of this change was due to forces that lay beyond the control of those who governed it whereas other changes had been guided by local government acts and a handful of metropolitan level strategic plans. Largely absent from the historical narratives that have been written about the planning of Melbourne is what had happened to urban planning at the local level. This is a serious gap in our understanding of Melbourne's historical urban development when it is remembered that local councils and shires had been charged with enforcing metropolitan strategy since 1955. It was at the local government level that the detailed strategic and statutory planning was undertaken but it was also here at the local level that a city's capacity to respond to any newly emerging challenges were either expedited or stymied. In an attempt to shed some light on this much neglected facet of Melbourne's urban planning history this paper proposes to investigate how much urban planning took place at the local level and what forms it took between 1944 to 1976, plus what factors may have impacted upon the local plan making process.**

*Keywords* — *Local planning schemes; Town and Country Planning Board, Melbourne.*

## INTRODUCTION

Daniel Burnham, the famous American architect and urban planner of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, has been quoted as saying, '...make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die' (Peterson, 2003, p.189). This was a very narrow and dismissive claim to have made about local plan making. Local or municipal level plans may be small in scale when compared to the metropolitan-wide plans that had become the preoccupation of Burnham when this remark was made but they have and continue to be the basis for so much urban planning activity in Melbourne. In fact, local plan making in Melbourne dates back to the mid 1940s and our understanding of urban planning practice at this level remains a seriously neglected facet of this city, essentially because the metropolitan level has received virtually all the attention from Australian urban planning historians (see Buxton, et al., 2016; Freestone, 2000, 2010; Freestone & Grubb, 1998; Grubb, 1976; Logan, 1981; McLoughlin, 1992; Sandercock, 1975; Spencer, 1985).

As a consequence, a standard textbook account of the urban planning of Melbourne will make mention of the ill-fated 1929 Metropolitan Town Planning Commission – hereafter MTPC - final report for Melbourne or the master-blue print plan completed in 1954 for the metropolitan region by the now defunct Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works – hereafter MMBW. More recently, Melbourne 2030, released in 2002 with its contentious urban growth boundary, would

be supplanted just over a decade later by Plan Melbourne in 2014, which was in turn replaced by Plan Melbourne Refresh in 2016. This kind of historical account has and continues to dominate what has been written about urban planning in Melbourne and it largely focuses on the metropolitan level. Absent from these historical accounts is any consideration of what had happened at the local municipal level (see exceptions in Logan, 1981; McLoughlin, 1992). Contrary to the somewhat dubious prediction of Burnham, it has been the ‘little plans’ devised and implemented across the many municipalities and shires that have come to constitute the greater region of Melbourne over the last 75 years, where a good deal of the urban planning has occurred. However, these so-called little plans have gone virtually unnoticed, by most urban planning historians.

It is the intention of this paper to therefore investigate what had happened at the local plan making level between 1946 and 1976. For clarification purposes, local plans are understood to encompass any planning schemes that were initiated at the municipal or shire level, within a broader metropolitan and/or statewide planning framework. A local planning scheme must possess a statutory dimension such as land use zoning and accompanying ordinances whereas strategic policies that seek to achieve long term goals for an area can be optional, as this may be provided by a broader metropolitan strategic plan (see Logan, 1981, p.8-12). The starting point for this historical analysis is the year 1946 because this is the formal beginning of urban planning at the local level in Victoria following the establishment of the Town and Country Planning Board – hereafter TCPB. The analysis artificially finishes in 1976, due to data collection issues, as local level planning in Melbourne has actively continued well into the 21st century. Specific focus will be given to how much local level planning did occur, the procedures guiding this process and why there may have been differences between local government areas within the metropolitan Melbourne region over this time period. The analysis will begin with an overview of local plan making and how it came to be viewed as subordinate to metropolitan level planning at the start of the 20th century.

## METROPOLITAN VERSUS LOCAL PLANS

From a contemporary perspective, it would be easy to assume that metropolitan plans have always been the principal form of plan making, with local plans therefore always having been subordinate to them. In fact, metropolitan-wide urban planning is a relatively recent phenomenon in the history of urban planning, at least in most English speaking countries (Ward, 2002). The need to plan at the metropolitan scale can be traced back to the latter decades of the nineteenth century when cities expanded in population and physical size as a result of industrialization. This was particularly pronounced in northern Europe and America where an industrial-driven urbanization process promoted both outward expansion and an over development of the central-inner city (see Lees & Lees, 2007). It is against this historical backdrop of unregulated urban growth that Daniel Burnham emerges as a key figure in the City Beautiful Movement in America during the 1890s (Peterson, 2003; Scott, 1969).

What is frequently overlooked about Burnham is that by the start of the 20th century he had realized a purely design oriented approach to city planning was an insufficient antidote to the many problems that American urbanization had generated. Many of the beautification projects undertaken were piecemeal in nature with the exception of Harrisburg and Washington, DC (Peterson, 2003; Ward, 2002). Too often, single buildings and their immediate surroundings or several central city blocks were the beneficiaries of beautification projects that largely left the rest of a city unaffected. Moreover, when the term ‘city’ was used in the literature of this time, it essentially referred to the central business district or historic core of a city. It did not refer to a broader metropolitan region that had begun to sprawl away from the old city centre. The limitations of a localized, piecemeal approach to city planning had become evident to Burnham. A city could only be beautiful if it functioned efficiently and this was only possible through a coordinated strategic plan at the metropolitan level. Burnham is said to have developed these ideas while working on a plan for San Francisco (1905) and Manila (1905) but it was not until his 1909 blue-print master-plan for the city of Chicago that the first modern application of comprehensive metropolitan planning had been undertaken in an English-speaking country (see Smith, 2006; Ward, 2002).

Burnham’s plan for Chicago had taken a quantum step forward not only for American urban planning but also for planning in general and various countries would gradually copy the new focus on the metropolitan region including Australia (see Freestone, 2000, 2004). In 1922, the Victorian state government bowed to lobbying pressure and set-up the MTPC, which was commissioned to prepare a metropolitan plan for Melbourne (Grubb, 1976). This was an easy political option compared to resourcing municipal councils to cooperatively prepare together a regional metropolitan plan. If the final plan, completed in 1929 by the MTPC, did not meet with the approval of the state government, then it could simply be rejected (Sandercock, 1975). This is indeed what happened and for the next 25 years, local government authorities in Melbourne were left to continue to plan their districts largely unencumbered, as they had done before. Another go at metropolitan planning was attempted in the early 1950s when the state government once again decided that local government authorities were either incapable or unwilling to engage in urban planning. The politically independent MMBW was commissioned to prepare a Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme – hereafter MMPS – which was completed in 1954 but it too would not be gazetted, at least not until 1968 (Buxton, et al., 2106; Logan, 1981; McLoughlin, 1992). An Interim Development Order – hereafter IDO – was however passed in 1955, to enforce land use zoning and land reservation provisions as recommended by the MMPS, which finally offered some strategic guidance to local plan making at the municipal level. Melbourne did not get an up-to-date, gazetted strategic metropolitan plan, until 1987 but within a year the MMPS was being dismantled as key planning powers were handed back to the municipal councils (see Buxton, et al., 2016).

Overlooked in this kind of reconstructed planning history of Melbourne is what had happened to local plan making during this pre-1988 period where local government authorities only received limited guidance from the various plans that had been developed at the metropolitan level, starting as far back as the late 1920s. The planning of Melbourne has therefore rested quite heavily on the many local ‘little plans’ that had been so un-appealing to Daniel Burnham all those years ago. Under these peculiar historical circumstances, local plans have seemingly played a more significant contributing role in shaping Melbourne’s metropolitan region, than is commonly recognized by urban planning historians (for an exception see McLoughlin, 1992). This then necessitates posing the question: what had happened at the local plan making level across the Melbourne region since 1946?

## LOCAL MUNICIPAL PLANNING AND PLANS IN MELBOURNE, 1946 TO 1976.

The commencement of locality based urban planning coincided with the end of World War Two. As part of a Commonwealth-State agreement to fund the construction of public housing from 1945 onwards, a state planning body had to be formed, the TCPB, which would oversee and facilitate planning at the local level (Eccles & Bryant, 2006, p.219). The TCPB was officially established in February 1946 to administer the *Town and Country Planning Act of 1944* (TCPB, 1946, p.1). Its initial task was to prepare and secure legal approval for the first piece of statewide planning regulation that was appropriately titled the *Town and Country Planning Regulation No. 1: Preparation and Submission of Planning Schemes*, which received approval in June 1946 (TCPB, 1946, p.1). Both the Act and the Regulation were permissive in nature that would allow but did not require local government authorities to draw up their own local planning scheme (Logan, 1981, p.7; McLoughlin, 1992, pp.80 & 134). The motive for doing so was to reduce the incident of haphazard development that had come to characterize so much urban development especially in the inner city. It would be achieved through statutory based land use zoning by-laws that would better ‘...regulate areas for residential, shopping, factory, and other development, [as well as, insure]...against the intrusion of incongruous uses...[that would be] detrimental to both people and property’ (TCPB, 1948, p.18). Eight months later, in November 1946, approval was secured for the *Town and Country Planning Regulation No. 2: Joint Committees provision*. It would permit two or more local government authorities to jointly prepare a planning scheme for their respective areas (TCPB, 1947, p.7). This regulatory initiative was essentially directed at provincial towns and smaller rural shires that lacked the resources to prepare individual planning schemes.

Under these regulations, any Victorian local government authority proposing to prepare its own local planning scheme

was required within 28 days of having formally resolved to do so, forward to the TCPB a map showing the area – borough, shire or municipality - to be included in the scheme. During the preparation of the planning scheme, application could be made to the Governor-in-Council for an IDO and once approved, it would permit the ‘responsible local authority’ to regulate any development within the designated area. Notice of the IDO was to be published in both the *Government Gazette* and in a newspaper that circulated in the affected area. Landowners were still permitted to develop both subdivided and un-subdivided land during the life of the IDO but they were now required to seek approval for any proposed development from their local government authority. Here strategic planning capabilities could be exercised as a local government authority had the power to decide on the current and future uses of any land found within its boundaries. A completed local planning scheme was to consist of ‘...all maps, plans, descriptions, and other data necessary to enable the scheme to be effective’ (Vic Govt. Gazette, No. 121, 3rd July, 1946, p.1961). The completed scheme had to then be exhibited for 3 months in order to give rate-paying property owners an opportunity to lodge any objections. Once the public exhibition period had concluded the local government authority was to consider and deal with all objections before submitting the scheme to the TCPB for consideration and its eventual approval by the state government. All public objections and a record of what action was undertaken to address them was to also accompany the submission to the TCPB (Vic Govt. Gazette, No. 121, 3rd July, 1946, pp.1962-3). The planning scheme became effective once it had received approval by the Governor-in-Council and had been published in the *Government Gazette*.

*The Town and Country Planning Regulation No. 1* provided instructions for the detailed preparation of the maps upon which the scheme was to be based. One map was called the ‘existing conditions map’ which essentially constituted a land use audit for either only a part or a whole area using contour intervals and a recommended set of colours to denote different land usages in the scheme that was to include roads, waterways, private and public open space, objects of historical significance, the main land uses – residential, industrial, business, commercial - plus all public buildings such as schools, hospitals, cemeteries, aerodromes, etc. The second map was the actual planning scheme and it was to incorporate all the relevant ‘existing conditions’ as well as any newly proposed roads, building allotments, public open spaces, railways, waterways, land uses, public buildings and utility infrastructure. The different land uses could be classified into a range of sub-types. For example, residential areas could be subdivided according to area site coverage, housing density, types of construction, and so on. Industrial land uses was divided into heavy, light and offensive types. All maps had to be drawn to the scale of 500 feet to an inch and use the codified set of colours recommended by the TCPB regulation. An example from Sandringham City is presented in Figures 1 and 2 that show the existing condition



Figures 1 and 2: First Local Planning Scheme Maps, Sandringham City Council, 1948. Source: courtesy of the Public Records Office of Victoria, File Box VPRS 16156/P0001/1.

map on the left and the proposed planning scheme map on the right for a neighbourhood area. This planning scheme was seeking to rezone several existing market garden allotments into light industrial as signified by the brown colouring and an expansion of public open space as signified by the green colouring in Figure 2. The decision to expand the amount of open space in this particular neighbourhood can be viewed as an exercise in both statutory and strategic local planning by Sandringham Council because the additional open space met a public need for more and it acted as a buffer zone for the nearby residential area located on the other side of Cheltenham and Reserve Roads.

As the data summarized in Figure 3 reveals, the adoption of these ‘new’ regulatory planning powers was initially slow, as indicated by the number of planning schemes commenced after 1946-47 when the regulations first came into effect. Only 16 local government authorities across Victoria showed any immediate enthusiasm for them. It would include the cities of Brunswick, Chelsea, Geelong and its District, Hamilton, Horsham, Nunawading and Sandringham; the country town of Castlemaine, plus the shire townships of Altona, Coburn, Corio, Euroa, Moe-Newborough, Heywood, Seymour and Traralgon (TCPB, 1953, pp.6-9). Surprisingly, only five of these cities and towns were from local government authorities located in or on the edge of the then metropolitan area of Melbourne.

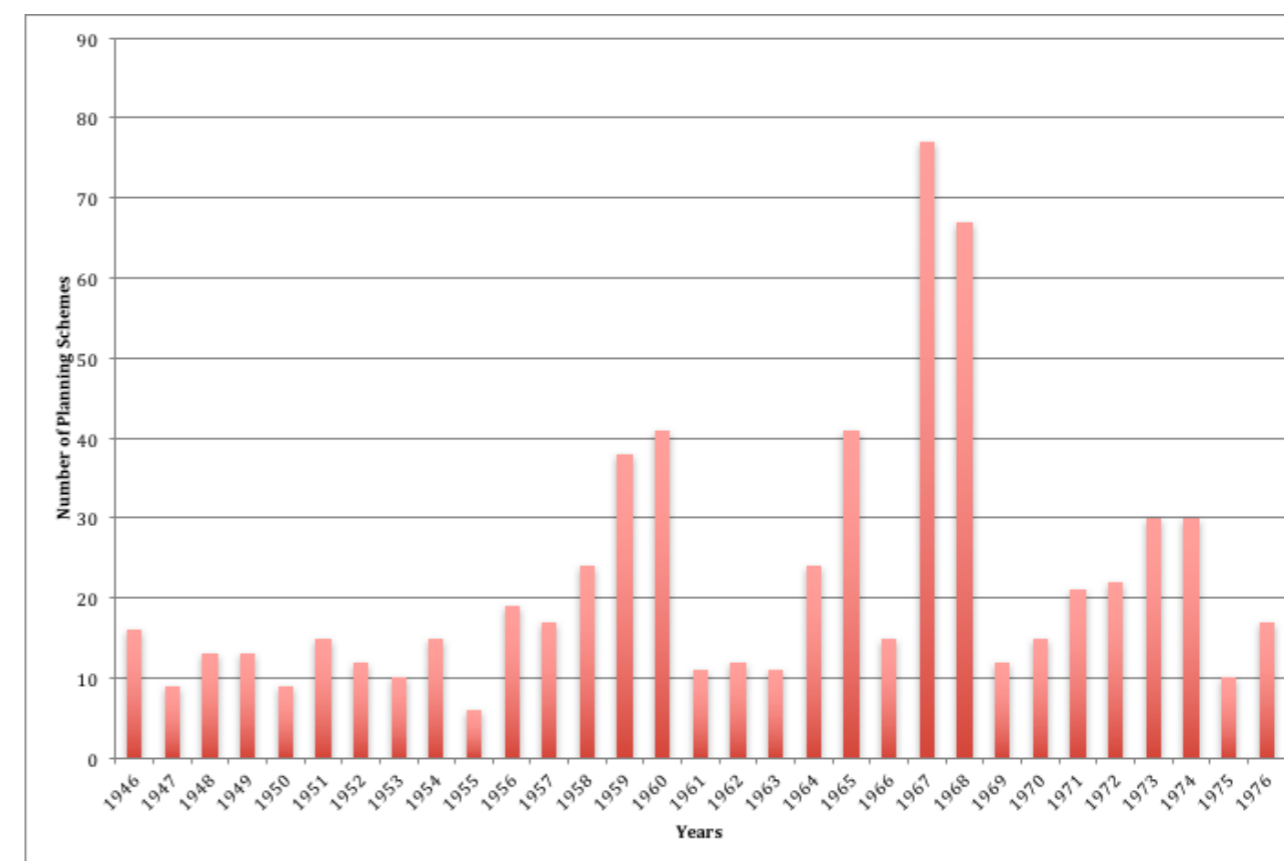


Figure 3: Commenced Planning Schemes in Victoria and Melbourne, June 1946-76. Source: compiled from TCPB, Annual Reports, 1947-77.

By June 1950, a further 46 new commencements had taken place, a majority of which were still from rural Victoria, as illustrated by figure 3. Between 1951 and 1960, a further 198 commencements would be recorded in the various annual reports of TCPB, a sizeable number of which constituted amendments to existing planning schemes. There was a noticeable surge in activity towards the end of the 1950s and 1960s (see Figure 3). Fluctuating economic conditions and corresponding increase in building permits lodged over this time period are considered to have had a significant bearing on the decision of municipal councils and shires to commence the preparation of planning schemes across both Victoria and Melbourne (see McLoughlin, 1992). A disproportionate number of these new commencements could be attributed by the early 1970s to local government shires found in rural Victoria as shown by the pink coloured areas in Figure 4.

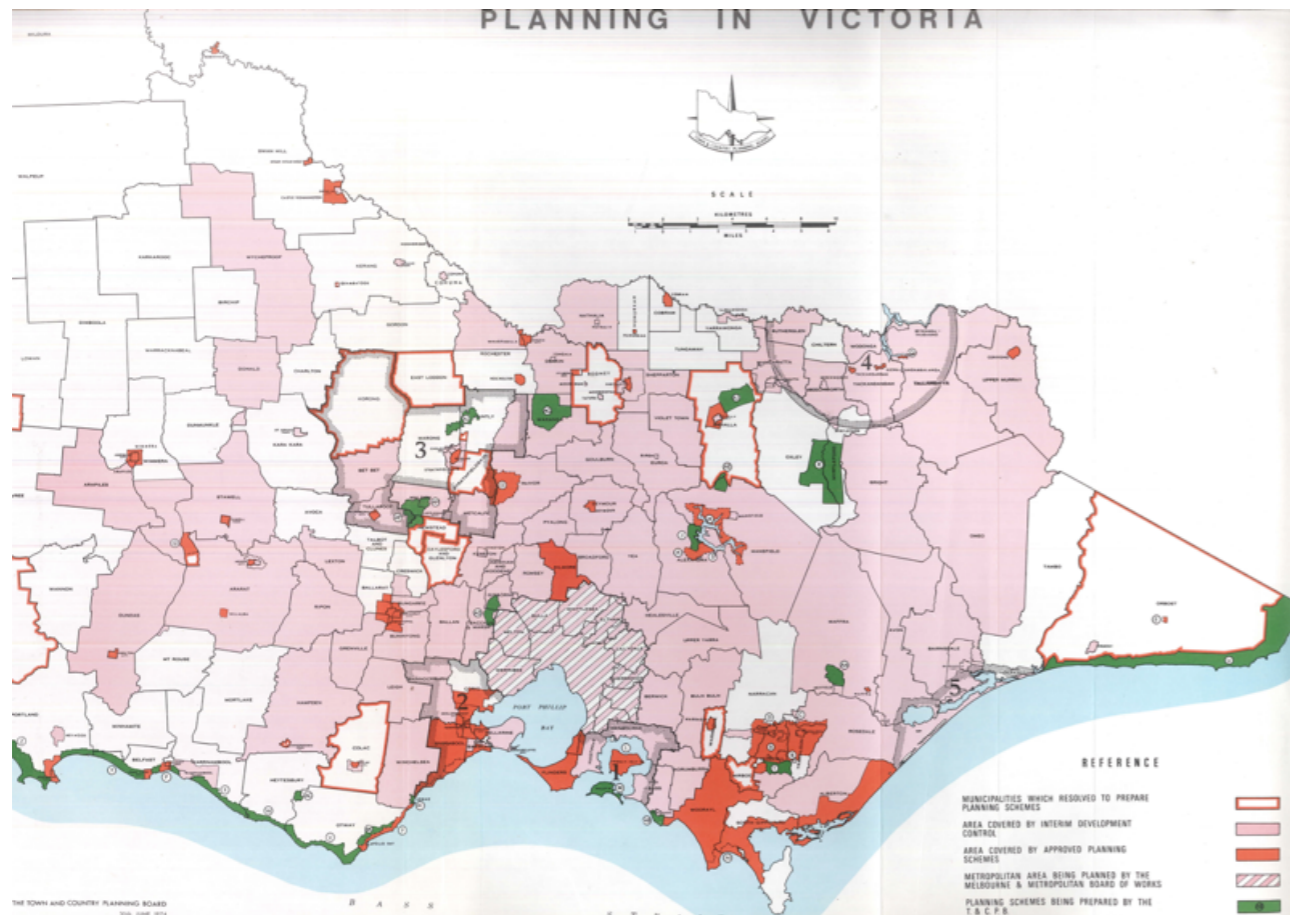


Figure 4: Planning Schemes Commenced and Approved for Rural Victoria by June 1973. Source: TCPB, 28th Annual Report, 1972-73, p. 40.

Focusing the analysis now just on metropolitan Melbourne, between June 1946 and June 1960, 31 planning schemes were commenced by municipalities and shires located within or on the edge of the then metropolitan region (see Table 1). A further 23 metropolitan based municipalities and shires had exhibited no interest in preparing a local planning scheme by June 1960 (see Table 1). Of this number, 17 were within the metropolitan boundary including the then cities of Box Hill, Brighton, Caulfield, Collingwood, Dandenong, Footscray, Kew, Melbourne, Mordialloc, Northcote, Port Melbourne, South Melbourne, Springvale, St. Kilda, Waverley and Williamstown. If the edge shires of Sunshine, Doncaster and Templestowe are added to this list, then it rises to 19 local government authorities (see Table 1). Several of these cities would commence a local planning scheme in the ensuing decade and a half but not the cities of Collingwood, Caulfield, Dandenong, Mordialloc, Northcote, Springvale, Williamstown or the shires of Sunshine, Doncaster and Templestowe. When a planning scheme commenced, it was common practice for the municipality or shire to apply and have an IDO issued usually within a 12-month period, as was the case for Coburg. IDOs could be renewed and extended with reasonable ease even though the TCPB tried to discourage such a practice. Coburg had its IDO extended and renewed more than half a dozen times during the late 1950s and early 1960s (see Figure 5). A suggested motive for extending an IDO, sometimes for years, was it 'offered greater flexibility in the day-to-day operations' of a council than a gazetted planning scheme (McLoughlin, 1992, p.121). Some councils took 2 years from the initial date of applying to being granted an IDO such as Chelsea, Diamond Valley, Fitzroy and Healesville (see Table 1). For the cities of Knox, Oakleigh, South Melbourne and St. Kilda, it took between 3 to 7 years for this seemingly straightforward process to occur (see Table 1). A possible explanation for the delay in issuing an IDO was a possible lack of urgency these councils accorded to the preparation of a local planning scheme (see Logan, 1981, p.42). It was not uncommon for the planning process to become inactive even after an IDO had initially been issued as was the case with the municipalities of Chelsea, Essendon, Fitzroy, Frankston and Hastings, Heidelberg, Ringwood, plus the shires of Altona, Berwick and Eltham (see TCPB, Annual Reports, 1946-1976).

In some cases like Altona, Ringwood, Frankston and Hastings, planning was reactivated only after a decade of inactivity, via the re-issuing of an IDO.

Local Govt. Area	Metropolitan Area	Year Commenced	Year of First IDO	Year Approved
Altona	Edge	1946	1947	1958
Berwick	Edge	1950	1950	1956
Box Hill	Inside	1961	1962	1968
Brighton	Inside	1964		
Broadmeadows	Inside	1948	1948	1952
Brunswick	Inside	1949		1949
Bulla	Edge	1959	1960	1966
Camberwell	Inside	1951	1951	1957
Caulfield	Inside			
Chelsea	Inside	1946	1948	
Coburg	Inside	1949	1949	1951
Collingwood	Inside			
Cranbourne	Edge	1956	1956	1963
Croydon	Inside	1956	1961	1965
Dandenong	Inside			
Diamond Valley	Edge	1962	1964	
Doncaster & Temple.	Edge			
Eltham	Edge	1954	1954	
Essendon	Inside	1948	1948	
Fitzroy	Inside	1948	1950	
Footscray	Inside	1967	1968	
Frankston & Hastings	Edge	1948	1948	1960
Hawthorn	Inside	1956		
Healesville	Edge	1960	1962	
Heidelberg	Inside	1950	1951	
Keilor	Edge	1974	1974	
Kew	Inside	1975		
Knox	Edge	1956	1963	1965
Lilydale	Edge	1956	1957	1965
Malvern	Inside	1953	1953	
Melbourne	Inside	1961	1961	
Melton	Edge	1959	1960	
Mornington	Edge	1949	1949	1961
Moorabbin	Inside	1948		1952
Mordialloc	Inside			
Mulgrave	Inside	1951	1951	
Northcote	Inside			
Nunawading	Inside	1946	1947	1951
Oakleigh	Inside	1954	1958	
Prahran	Inside	1950		
Port Melbourne	Inside	1974	1974	
Preston	Inside	1952	1952	
Richmond	Inside	1952	1952	

Ringwood	Inside	1951	1951	1964
Sandringham	Inside	1946	1947	1949
Sherbrooke	Edge	1965	1965	1968
South Melbourne	Inside	1970	1973	
Springvale	Inside			
Sunshine	Edge			
St. Kilda	Inside	1971	1974	
Waverley	Inside	1961	1961	
Werribee	Edge	1967	1967	
Whittlesea	Edge	1966	1966	
Williamstown	Inside			

Table 1: Planning Schemes: Commencements, IDOs and Approvals, Melbourne, 1946-1975. Source: compiled from TCPB Annual Reports, 1946-1976.

Moreover, the issuing or re-issuing of an IDO was no guarantee that a local planning scheme would be completed, exhibited and submitted for approval to the TCPB, before it was sent on to the state government for approval and gazetting. The data in Table 1 reveals that 22 metropolitan based municipalities and shires never succeed in either completing their planning scheme or having it approved by the Governor-in-Council. If the municipal districts of Caulfield, Collingwood, Dandenong, Mordialloc, Northcote, Springvale, Sunshine and Williamstown, who never even commenced this process, are added to this total then 35 local government areas in the metropolitan region never completed their own local planning schemes by June 1976. The City of Sandringham would be the very first local government authority in Victoria to have a local planning scheme gazetted on the 4th May 1949 but it only covered a very small part of this municipality as already depicted in Figures 1 and 2. Brunswick quickly followed with a partial plan of its district on the 26th October 1949 (TCPB, 1950, p.7). Nunawading and Coburg both secured final approval for parts of their districts in 1951, which was quickly followed by Moorabbin in 1952, Cranbourne in 1956, Camberwell in 1957 and then Altona in 1958 (TCPB, 1960-61, pp.4-5). Outside of the metropolitan region, the township of Cobram in the Shire of Tungamah was the first rural based local planning scheme granted Governor-in-Council approval in 1950 (TCPB, 1960-61, pp.4-5).

Interestingly, data presented in Table 2 reveals that the rural shires, provincial towns and cities of Victoria had a much higher rate of completion and approval, than metropolitan based local municipalities and shires. Initially, they were on par with each other during the 1950s, but the balance clearly shifted in favour of rural shires and their townships from 1958 onwards (see Table 2). There was a discernable upward surge in the number of planning schemes being completed and approved for the metropolitan region during the mid 1960s but thereafter there was a sudden decline again. This downward trend was also evident with the number of approvals granted to rural shires and their towns but it was less dramatic in comparison to the metropolitan councils. This is a significant discrepancy because commonsense would suggest that planning schemes should be most prevalent where the urbanization process was at its most intense, the metropolitan region of Melbourne. This gives rise to the question: why were there fewer planning schemes completed and approved during this latter period of this analysis in the metropolitan region?

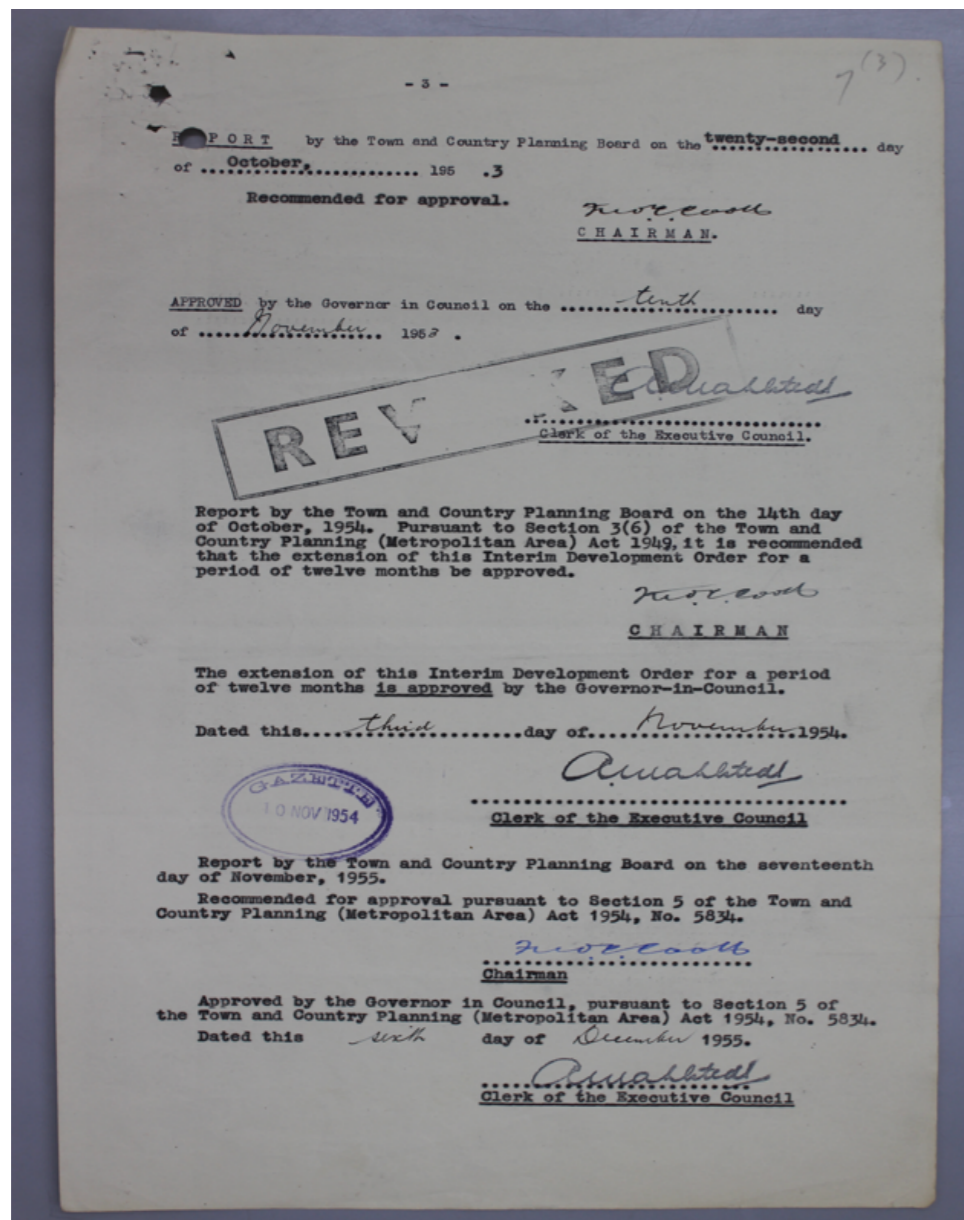


Figure 5: Extension and Revoked IDO, City of Coburg, 1955. Source: courtesy of the Public Records Office of Victoria, File Box VPRS 16156/P0001/92.

Year	Rural	Metropolitan	Total
1949	0	2	2
1950	0	0	0
1951	2	3	5
1952	0	0	0
1953	2	2	4
1954	1	2	3
1955	3	3	6
1956	4	2	6
1957	3	2	5
1958	10	3	13
1959	8	4	12
1960	14	4	18
1961	22	5	27
1962	15	9	24
1963	21	7	28
1964	26	8	34
1965	41	14	55
1966	38	1	39
1967	54	12	66
1968	77	11	88
1969	20	7	27
1970	1	0	1

1971	8	2	10
1972	2	0	2
1973	4	2	6
1974	4	0	4
1975	4	0	4
1976	6	0	6
1977	3	0	3
1978	2	0	2

Table 2: Local Planning Schemes Approved: New and Amendments, 1949 to 1978. Source: compiled from TCPB, Annual Reports, 1949-78.

A number of possible reasons can be offered. First, the preparation of a local planning scheme was a costly affair, often requiring the hiring of a consultant because few local government authorities had the in-house expertise at this time to undertake such a task (Logan, 1981). The cost of preparing a planning scheme was noted as an issue by the TCPB as early as 1949 (TCPB, 1949, p.6). In response, the state government agreed to provide financial assistance to rural shires and amend the Local Government Act so that metropolitan-based local government authorities could borrow funds to finance their plan preparation efforts (TCPB, 1951, pp.16-17). Second, the possible need to compensate property owners especially during the IDO phase was identified as another reason why local government authorities were reluctant to engage in the preparation of a planning scheme (TCPB, 1949, p.6; McLoughlin, 1992, p.117). Third, the zoning of land was still a relatively new and underdeveloped practice amongst many local government authorities, who had only been empowered under the *Local Government Act of 1946* to prescribe areas within their municipal boundaries for residential purposes. Within any residential area, they could however prohibit or regulate the use of land and buildings that might be used for commercial, industrial or public amusement (Vic Local Govt. Act, 1946: *Sub-Clause XXXViii*). For many municipal councils, this provision had the potential to antagonize land and property owners, who were a valuable source of rate revenue. As a consequence, the TCPB was highly critical of many metropolitan based councils during the late 1940s and early 1950s, for refusing to more effectively use their existing statutory zoning powers and codify them into a local planning scheme.

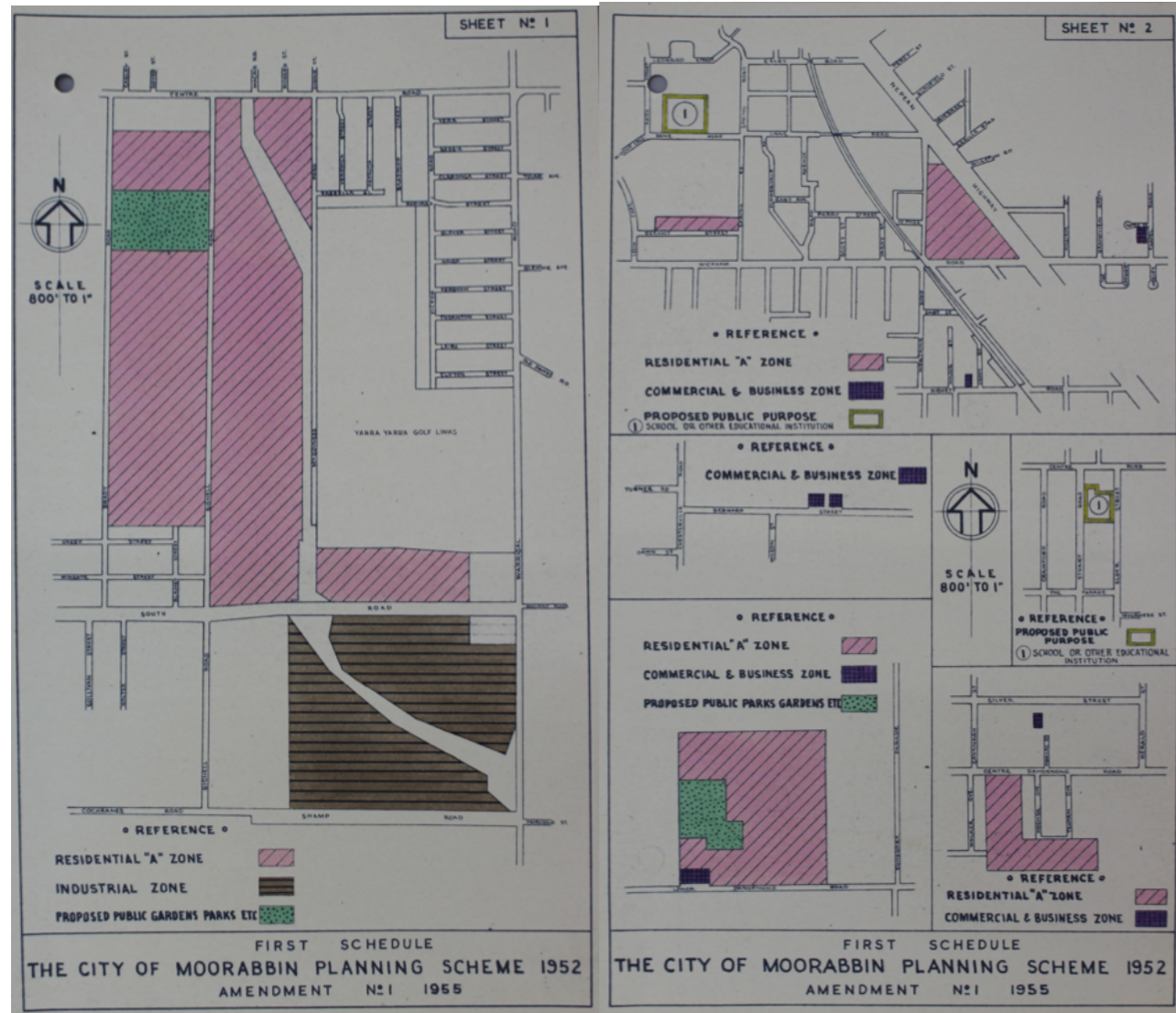
Fourth, corrupt local political party machines, whose senior members were themselves local property owners or had close affiliations with large property owning interests, controlled certain inner and middle distant municipal councils and resisted the call by the TCPB to devise local planning schemes because they had the potential to restrict their economic activities. Richmond Council is one of the more notorious examples where Labor politics was closely entwined with local business interests, which profited from not interfering in the electoral politics of this inner city area in return for lucrative council contracts and the lax enforcement of municipal by-laws (see Grabosky, 1989; Power, 1969; Smith, 1976). Fifth, some inner and middle distant municipal areas had little need for local planning schemes not because they were under the political control of large property-owning interests, but because the land use structure of their respective areas had already been well established. Table 3 reveals that most of the house building activity had clearly by-passed all the inner city municipalities by the mid 1940s and it is therefore not surprising to find that no local planning schemes had been proposed by the mid 1950s in the inner municipalities of Collingwood, Fitzroy, Kew, Melbourne, Port Melbourne, Richmond, South Melbourne, St. Kilda and Williamstown. In the middle distant municipalities – Caulfield, Essendon, Hawthorn, Malvern and Northcote - there were equally limited amounts of building permits being issued between 1945 and 1953 (see Table 3). Again, all five of these municipalities did not engage in the plan preparation process, at least not during the period that the TCPB had principal responsibility for their areas.

Local Area	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Box Hill	135	524	665	490	609	685	563	335	515
Brighton	60	231	210	214	207	212	183	69	153
Brunswick	20	58	53	45	34	61	49	27	37
Camberwell	188	829	821	764	752	876	711	343	524
Caulfield	42	217	255	183	176	127	103	59	92
Chelsea	84	172	231	219	270	285	240	189	237
Coburg	131	375	550	579	633	805	716	399	547
Collingwood	1	0	0	0	2	2	3	2	7
Essendon	53	178	185	171	177	223	202	115	150
Fitzroy	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	4
Footscray	123	197	275	293	326	386	447	221	226
Hawthorn	17	41	23	132	24	48	29	9	20
Heidelberg	97	346	525	439	618	587	534	326	434
Kew	33	148	127	92	108	136	123	61	97
Malvern	40	100	99	121	117	179	158	90	106
Melbourne	3	9	8	10	3	11	7	9	14
Moorabbin	177	938	1200	1171	1712	1773	1372	897	1088
Mordailoc	81	353	362	314	445	399	313	143	202
Northcote	32	106	171	175	199	163	125	76	118
Nunawading	114	389	412	489	643	735	787	502	609
Oakleigh	65	278	273	217	409	536	439	228	297
Port Melb	5	15	10	2	6	4	2	2	0
Prahran	1	3	14	22	24	42	43	22	45
Preston	114	531	650	667	770	816	720	367	459
Richmond	0	1	3	2	2	5	3	8	1
Sandringham	86	229	237	203	232	264	238	144	236
South Melb	3	2	2	2	0	1	3	0	0
St. Kilda	4	17	13	9	11	14	5	8	9
Sunshine	62	207	261	337	438	507	465	265	337
Williamstown	18	69	85	103	279	259	174	133	100

Table 3: Number of Building Permits Issued for New Private Dwellings including Flats, Greater Melbourne, 1945 to 1953. Source: *Victorian Yearbook, 1951-52, p. 432.*

A final reason for the decline in the number of local planning scheme commencements and approvals was the completion of the MMPS by the MMBW in 1954. It could not be immediately gazetted into law because its public exhibition resulted in some 3800 objections from members of the public and businesses. An IDO was therefore drafted and introduced in March 1955 that reaffirmed the MMBW was the responsible strategic planning authority for metropolitan Melbourne but it also now required all local planning schemes and local IDOs be made to conform to the MMPS (Logan, 1981). The MMPS IDO had to be renewed multiple times and would last until 1968. This impacted on the preparation of local planning schemes in a number of ways. For some municipal councils – Chelsea, Camberwell, Franks and Hastings, Heidelberg, Moorabbin, Prahran, Ringwood, Oakleigh – the plan making process was suspended and they duly adopted the land use zones prescribed by the MMPS for their respective municipal districts in 1955. Other councils that had not commenced the plan making process adopted the land use zoning provisions and public land reservations prepared by the MMBW because they had little option not to do so plus it was a significant cost saving for them. Those councils that had already prepared their own local planning scheme before 1955 were now required, if discrepancies existed, to bring them into line with the MMPS. This took the form of planning amendments that happened over the next decade and a half for the municipalities of Altona, Brunswick, Camberwell, Coburg, Moorabbin, Nunawading and Sandringham (see TCPB, Annual Reports, 1956-68). A good example of this amending

process can be found in the City of Moorabbin whose original 1952 planning scheme was immediately amended in 1955 after the IDO came into effect (see Figures 6 and 7). Changes were made to several residential A zoned areas and a brown zoned industrial area in the original 1952 scheme. The number and significance of amendments that were subsequently required from the different councils that had completed a local planning scheme before the 1955 IDO was introduced would vary from council to council.



Figures 6 and 7: 1955 Amendments to the Original 1952 Moorabbin Planning Scheme. Source: courtesy of the Public Records Office of Victoria, Box File VPRS 16156/P0001/56.

In contrast, those municipalities and shires that were located either just outside or partly within the then boundaries of the MMPS were still allowed to continue to prepare local planning schemes, which many did (see Table 1). For example, the Shire of Berwick in the early 1970s, commissioned a forward strategic plan – Berwick Planning Study – that sought to better regulate outward suburban growth but also propose how the City of Berwick should be allowed to develop and house 110 000 people. This study proposed a strategic innovation called a ‘cell plan’ which outlined how a single residential neighbourhood should be designed and equipped with a range of public services and facilities including schools, open space, community centres, commercial and retail activity nodes, plus areas of light industry (see Figure 8). This was the forerunner of the more contemporary precinct structure plans that are currently being used on the outskirts of metropolitan Melbourne.

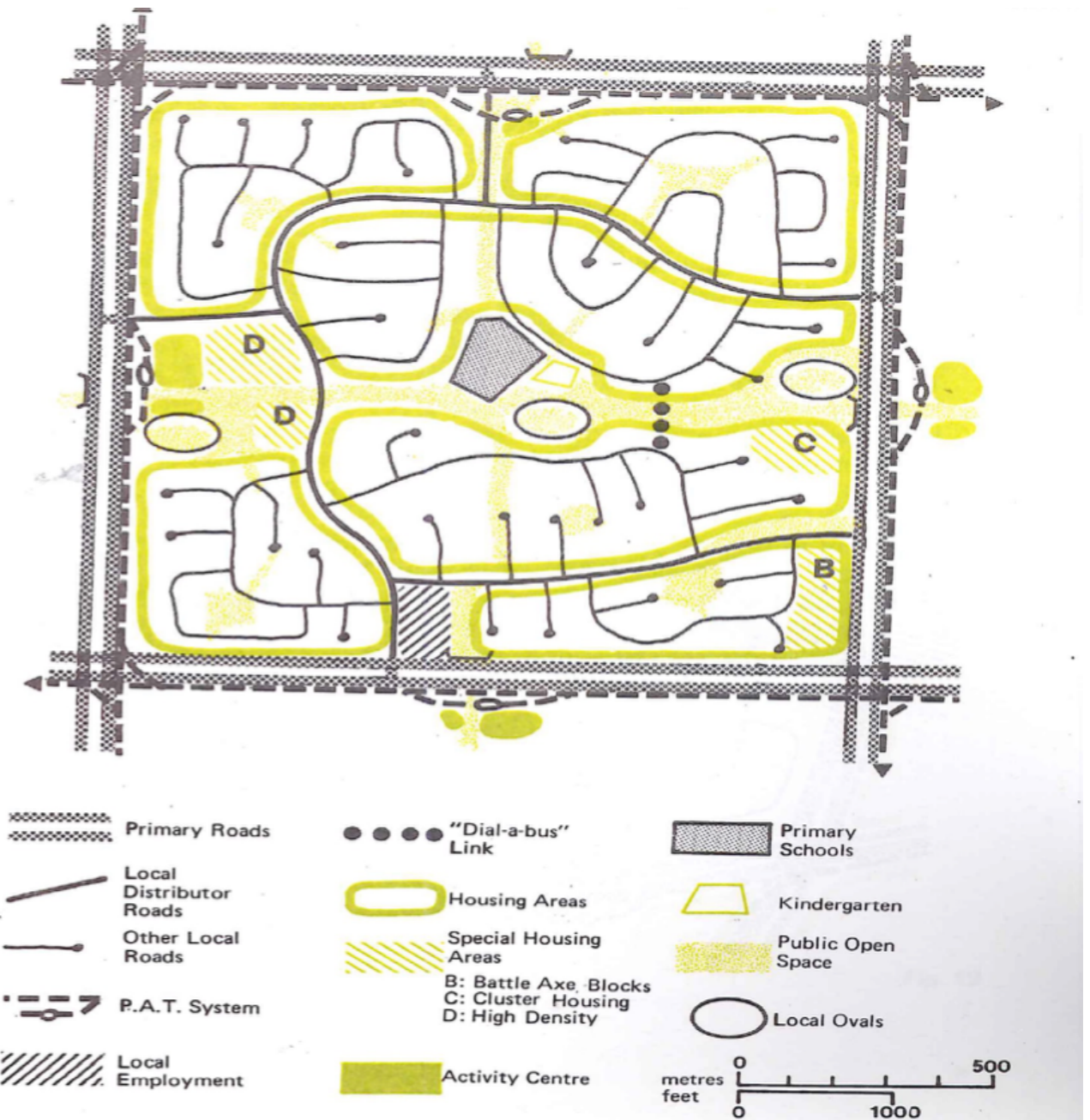


Figure 8: The City of Berwick Theoretical Residential Cell Plan, 1974. Source: City of Berwick, Planning Study Report (1974, p. 38)

Prior to 1968, completed local planning schemes by these edge shires did not have to conform to the MMPS IDO, because they were submitted for approval to the TCPB (rather than the MMBW). This included the outer fringe municipalities of Frankston and Hastings, parts of Broadmeadows, Lilydale, Cranbourne, Croydon, Knox, Sherbrooke, parts of Ringwood and Mornington. They would eventually be brought into the orbit of the MMWB and its MMPS when it was finally gazetted in 1968. In 1969, the MMBW had the metropolitan boundaries expanded to incorporate most of these fringe areas as well as parts of Healesville, Bulla, Berwick, Eltham, Melton and Whittlesea (TCPB, Annual Report, 1970, p.11). Once this happened, the number of planning scheme commencements began to slow for these newly incorporated outer fringe municipalities and shires, however the number of amendments that now needed to be made to the MMPS increased from 1970 onwards in order to accommodate the various local plans that needed to be absorbed into the MMPS (see TCPB Annual Reports, 1970-78).

## CONCLUSION

A number of conclusions can be made from the preceding analysis with regard to the existence and the nature of local plan making by local government authorities in metropolitan Melbourne between 1946 and 1976. First, there is evidence that local plans had been prepared and submitted for approval, both before and after the introduction of the MMPS IDO in 1955. Rural shires proved themselves to be just as active in this process as urban municipalities. In fact, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, more local planning schemes were commenced in rural Victoria but then there were more shires than urban municipalities so this finding should not have come as a surprise. Once the MMPS IDO was introduced, it significantly slowed the plan making process amongst metropolitan based municipalities, as amendments to the MMPS effectively replaced the need for local plans. Second, the permissive nature of the legislation that governed the local plan making process in Victoria, allowed local government authorities to opt in or out of engaging in this process. Some councils and shires were very keen from the very start to prepare local planning schemes whereas others were reluctantly drawn into it due to urban development pressures. Others seemingly resisted the process altogether and a number of reasons were offered for why this may have been the case. Further research is needed to establish exactly why some local government authorities did not become active in local plan making during this period. Third, the analysis also found considerable variance existed in how the planning process was undertaken. Some council's were found to have applied for an IDO and then would complete a local planning scheme in a timely manner that was duly submitted to the TCPB for its approval and eventual gazettal. Other councils delayed this process and even when IDOs were issued they often did not result in the completion of a local plan. Several became inactive and a few were re-activated but after very lengthy time periods. This investigation has therefore revealed that a local planning process did indeed exist both independently of and in conjunction with a metropolitan-wide planning scheme in Melbourne between 1946 and 1976. Moreover, the discernable amount of variance that existed between urban municipalities at different times of this study, suggests that local plan making was a varied process across Melbourne that possibly warrants further historical investigation.

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