

# Victorian Planning Authority

## Submission overview

Submission to the Legislative Council  
Environment and Planning Committee  
Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Presented by Stuart Moseley  
Chief Executive



**TORIA**  
State  
Government



# Role of the Victorian Planning Authority

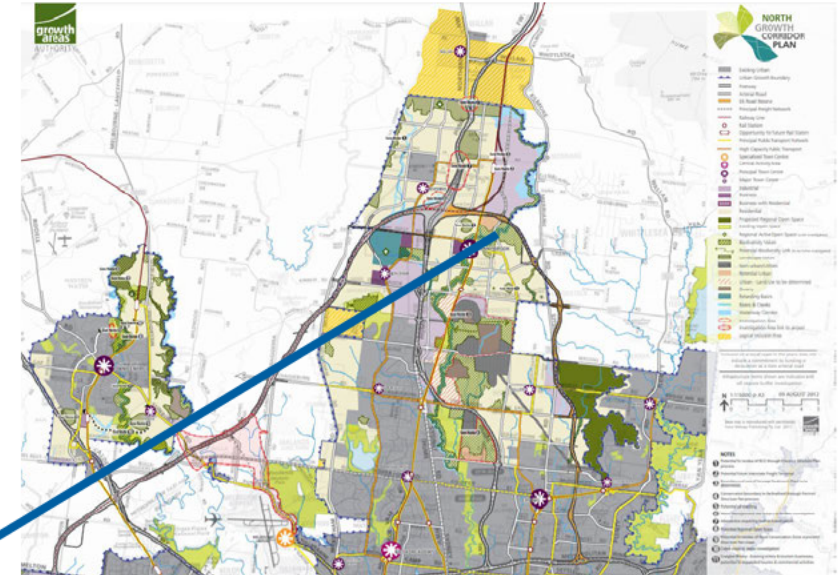
- The VPA is a State Government statutory authority reporting to the Minister for Planning.
- Our role is to lead place-based strategic planning for growth in designated areas.
- Our focus is on integrated land-use, built form and infrastructure planning outcomes for significant precincts and places in growing Victorian cities, suburbs and regional towns.
- The VPA does not develop or construct. We do not deliver infrastructure. We do not issue permits within Precinct Structure Plans.



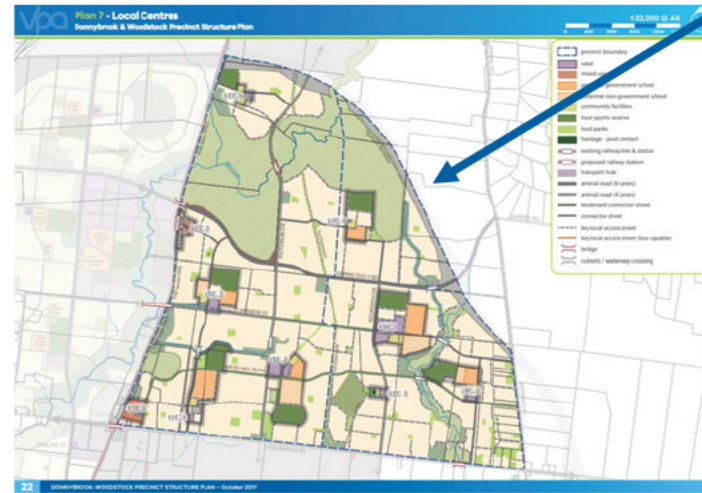
# Corridor and Precinct Level Planning

- In the Greenfields, the VPA plans for open space and conservation through a corridor and precinct level approach. Corridor plans indicate areas of high environmental or landscape value.
- We integrate conservation and open space
- Linking broader open space network with waterways, local parks and sporting reserves
- The Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) is the overarching strategy for protecting biodiversity in Melbourne's growth corridors.

Northern Growth Corridor Plan

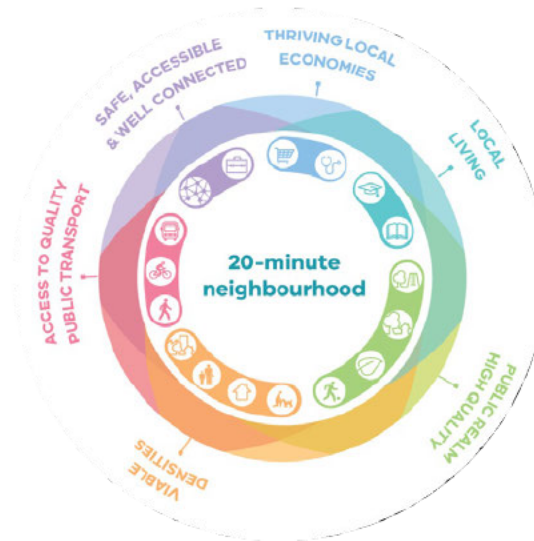
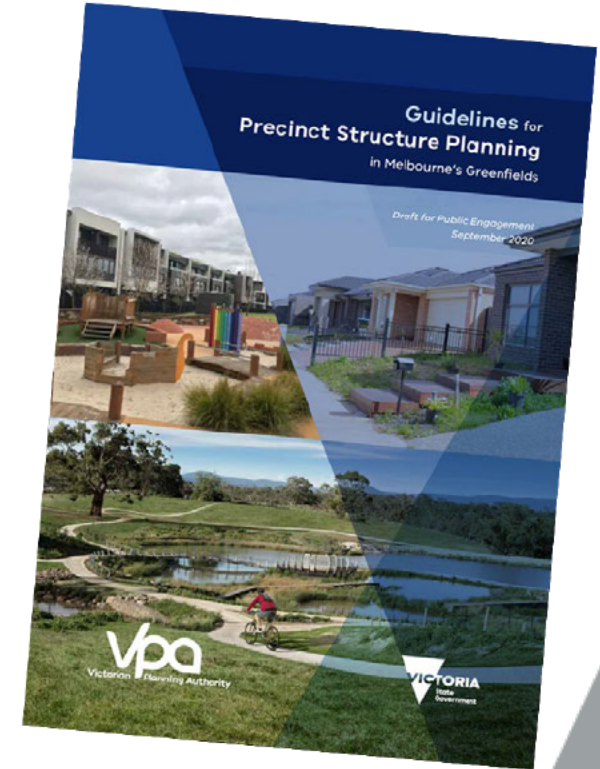


Donnybrook & Woodstock PSP



# Importance of 20 minute neighbourhoods

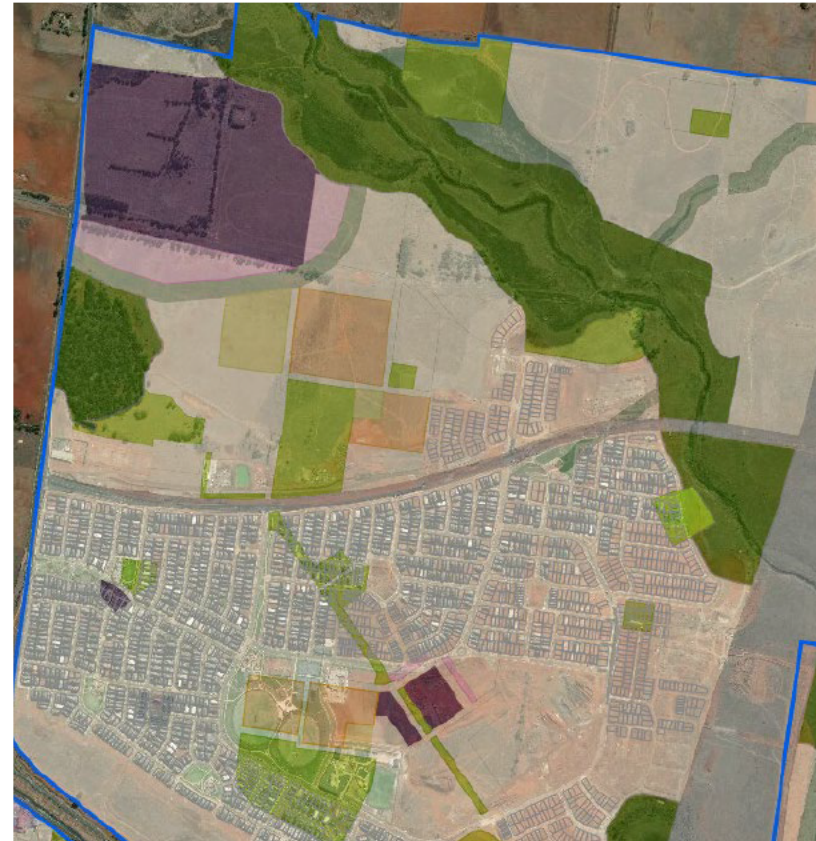
- An area of focus for the VPA is through the creation of more compact and walkable communities (20 minute neighbourhoods).
- The VPA has updated its Guidelines for Precinct Structure Planning in Greenfield Areas to ensure best practice policy is applied in Victoria's greenfields through the 20 minute neighbourhood hallmarks which plan for living locally, living sustainably and social connectedness.
- 70/30 compact city target
- This ensures that the pressure to expand urban settlement into rural areas is reduced, safeguarding existing habitats and ecosystems.



# Protecting ecosystems

- Potential conservation reserves need to be identified and protected early in the planning process.
- Most new suburbs have 20% open space, which involves incorporating local wetlands and preserving environmental qualities
- The VPA has planned for a total of 6,600ha of open space in 52 residential and mixed-use Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs), which averages 127ha per PSP or 23% of the total planned area.
- Aquatic and marine biodiversity values considered through healthy waterways planning. We plan for Integrated Water Management.
- **The VPA recommend the inquiry consider a more streamlined decision-making process for when there is a proposal to adjust existing BCS conservation area boundaries.** For example, where a plan supports the strategic need for an arterial road, an early decision about conservation area boundaries would assist in finalising the plan.

*Typical precinct structure plan layout along Kororoit Creek in Melbourne's West*



Aerial photography of actual development showing: preserved woodland and planned GGF riverine habitat (dark green); new housing area (yellow) schools (orange); town centres (purple) and local parks (light green)

# Conservation area planning outside of the MSA

- Conservation areas in Melbourne's greenfield growth areas are facilitated by planning in accordance with the Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA) and Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) which address matters of national biodiversity significance.
- Logical Inclusion areas within the Urban Growth Boundary are not included in the MSA.
- **VPA recommend the Inquiry consider a broader roll-out of a MSA type approach for other major growth areas (example would include the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Area).**
- **Outside Melbourne's greenfield growth areas, planning for biodiversity is at risk of being inconsistent and fragmented, leading to uncertainty, dispute, delay and poorer environmental outcomes.**
- Given the rapid growth of regional areas during Covid-19 where else should be considered?



# Planning for urban renewal – Arden Precinct

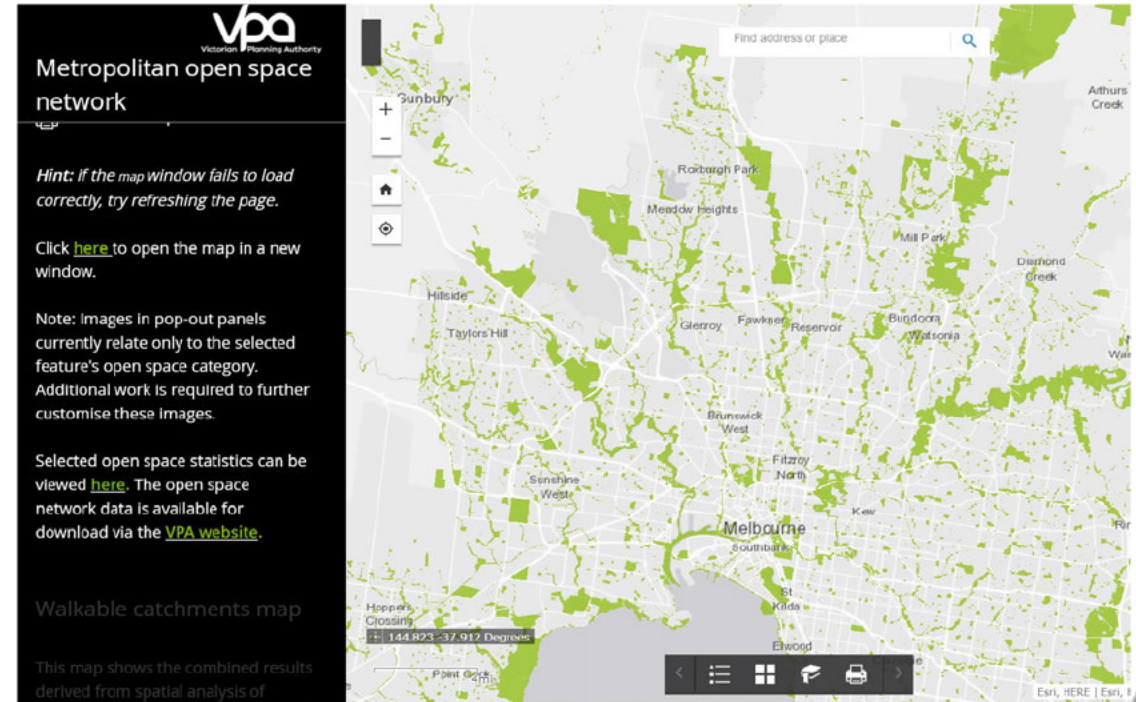
- The VPA applies spatial land use planning to urban renewal precincts.
- The Arden Precinct will provide an ambitious target for street tree canopy and green infrastructure
- Biodiversity can be encouraged through planning controls.
- It will deliver best practice Integrated Water Management to deal with flooding whilst providing blue/green infrastructure to cool the environment.
- Best practice Environmentally Sustainable Development will encourage urban ecology.
- The precinct will deliver 1.6 ha of new open space in Arden Central comprising a Capital City open space and a neighbourhood open space to align with the City of Melbourne's Open Space Strategy. This will be delivered early to complement the opening of Arden Station.

## Artist's Impression Future Urban Structure – Draft Arden Structure Plan 2020



# Metropolitan Open Space Strategy and Network Portal

- The VPA created the Metropolitan Open Space Network portal to assist relevant state agencies and local councils in their continued planning, analysis, delivery and maintenance of Melbourne's open space network.
- It provides a comprehensive GIS dataset of the existing open space network throughout the Melbourne metropolitan area.
- This portal is a key input to the Metropolitan Open Space Strategy, recently released by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning as a *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* action.
- The VPA recommends the Inquiry consider reforms in conjunction with the Metropolitan Open Space Strategy, which will provide a city-scale approach to effectively planning and managing open space across Melbourne in support of natural ecosystems.





# Thank you.

## Questions?