

**‘Community of Interest’ and
Restructuring of
SUNBURY OUT OF HUME CITY COUNCIL
Report**

June 2014

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1 Introduction

'Community of interest' is a term used in local government when considering boundary and representation arrangements. However, there is no widely accepted definition and nor is it defined in the Local Government Act. It can mean different things to different people and it can change over time.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Local Government (Sunbury Out of Hume City Council) Panel states that *the Panel when making recommendations must have regard to the communities of interest and the sociological, demographic, topographic, economic and employment factors relevant to the establishment of the new Sunbury Shire, restructured Hume City Council, and adjoining municipalities.*

To address this aspect of the ToR, similar to other reviews, the panel has drawn on the research paper prepared by the South Australian Department of Local Government.¹ In addition, the Panel has referred to the Electoral Boundaries commission (EBC) and the re-division of the Victorian electoral boundaries.² Section 9(1)

- (a) *area and physical features of terrain;*
- (b) *means of travel, traffic arteries, and communications and any special difficulties in connection therewith;*
- (c) *community or diversity of interests.*

In addition to the EBC Act, the Panel has relied on:

- ☐ the submissions received by the Panel and summarised in Appendix D;
- ☐ The feedback provided by the community in their submissions and from the nine public consultations conducted by the Sunbury out of Hume Community Consultative Committee (CCC) across the City of Hume and reported in Appendix B of the main Panel report;
- ☐ mapping of the spatial patterns of human activity;
- ☐ mapping of topographical features, transport and road network, etc.;
- ☐ analysis of demographic characteristics including journey to work patterns and residential movement patterns (refer **Attachment 2**);
- ☐ discussions with representatives of Hume City Council's Communities, Sustainability and Community Learning Sectors; and
- ☐ analysis of the existing and projected community service provision³ (refer **Attachment 1**).

¹ Fulcher, H. *The Concept of Community of Interest*, Discussion Paper 2 for S.A. Department of Local Government 1989. Edited by Bowey, R. January 1991

² Electoral Boundaries Commission report on the 2012-2013 redivision of Electoral boundaries, 2013

³ PublicPlace, *Community Service Analysis and Planning* to assist Local Government (Sunbury out of Hume City Council) Panel prepared for DTPLI, June 2014

2 Dimensions of 'Community of Interest'

The dimensions of 'community of interest' in the context of local government applies to a group or groups of people in a residential locality or geographic area having one or more of the following three dimensions:

- A. Perceptual: a sense of belonging to an area or locality which can be clearly defined.
- B. Functional: the ability to meet with reasonable economy the community's requirements for comprehensive physical and human services.
- C. Political: the ability of the elected body to represent the interests and reconcile the conflicts of all its members.

A. Perceptual Community of Interest (subjective dimension)

This encompasses people's subjective interpretation and has regard to people's perceptions of the identity of an area to which they feel they belong. It can be said to exist where people feel an affinity or compatibility with a particular geographic area and the people who live there. Such an identity and belonging can be reinforced by similarities in the demographic characteristics of the area, similarities in economic and social activities as well as similarities in the topographical features and the history of the area.

B. Functional Community of Interest (objective dimension)

This takes into account the existing functional relationships between people living in an area or the spatial patterns of human activity. This has conventionally been a measure of local activity patterns: where people go to shop, school, play sport and socialise. The regular and similar activity patterns of communities have implications for the provision and maintenance of facilities and services provided by local government, for example, roads, footpaths, street lighting, garbage collection, parking, traffic management, statutory functions such as planning, building, public health, etc. The provision of community services – family and children's services, libraries, HACC programs, parks and gardens, leisure and youth services, etc. are demanded of Councils by those within their catchment areas.

C. Political Community of Interest (objective dimension based on participatory democracy)

Local government is supposed to act as the voice of local opinion and should be representative of all the people who use and/or contribute to the facilities and services provided by Council. It is important that constituents feel that they are being well represented.

3 Application of the Three Dimensions – Historical Context

During the 1990s Local Government Reform took place in Victoria. Emphasis was on compulsory competitive tendering improving productivity and generating economies of scale. The financial viability of a Council was based primarily on the economies of scale criterion. The reforms were based on the presumption that larger Councils would be more efficient, would improve service delivery and would be able to broaden their focus and play a key role at the regional level and with other spheres of government. This has in general been reflected in the outcomes.

In the case of the formation of Hume City Council, the Local Government Board's interim report of Middle and Outer Melbourne⁴ recommended that the future of that part of the Shire of Bulla west of Deep Creek (including the Sunbury township but excluding the Diggers Rest area west of the Calder Freeway) be considered as part of the North Central Review. Sunbury residents at that time also sought inclusion of their township and environs in that Review that took into account the Macedon Ranges 'communities of interest' – perceptual and functional, between Sunbury and the communities to the north. The Board noted (p 87):

- ☐ *Sunbury sees itself as the entry to the Macedon Ranges*
- ☐ *Sunbury promotes an image of city living, country style. This builds on the fact that it is essentially a country town near the Macedon foothills, with a big commuter population*
- ☐ *It has more a community of interest with Gisborne and Woodend than with Keilor or Broadmeadows.*

However, in the final report⁵, the Board did not apply a great emphasis on these dimensions of 'communities of interest' but rather on a number of other issues that could be more difficult to control if the area were split between two municipalities at Deep Creek:

- ☐ Management of the environmentally sensitive areas along Deep Creek
- ☐ The noise contours from aircraft operations at Melbourne Airport.

Against this background, the Board in its final report of Middle and Outer Melbourne recommended the inclusion of Sunbury Township, along with the majority of the Shire of Bulla in the new City of Hume. Hume City Council (including Sunbury) was subsequently established by Order of the Governor-in-Council on December 15th 1994.

Since that time, while accepting the decision of the Local Government Board at the time, many Sunbury residents would prefer to be separate from Hume City Council and have pressured for such. *In June 2000 the Minister for Local Government [Labor Government] requested a review to examine the feasibility and*

⁴ Local Government Board Middle and Outer Melbourne, Interim Report, October 1994

⁵ Local Government Board Middle and Outer Melbourne Review, Final Report, November 1994

viability of the Hume City Council becoming two separate municipalities, one being based in the Sunbury area, being the area within the Hume City Council west of Deep Creek. The Panel undertaking the review⁶ appreciated the Sunbury residents' attachment to their semi-rural lifestyle and their strong desire to protect their environment. The Panel also indicated that there was an opinion within a segment of the Sunbury community that the current municipal arrangements did not meet their aspirations and that the perception and strength of feelings held at that time were the reasons the review was held.

In spite of the strong feelings held by the Sunbury residents, the Panel recommended:

That separation of the Hume City Council into two municipalities did not occur, due to the significant detrimental financial impact on the residents and ratepayers of the proposed 'Shire of Sunbury' and the high costs, both immediate and continuing, of establishing and maintaining two entities.

That the appropriate facts with regard to the financial impacts be made available to residents of the Hume City Council in a way that maximises public understanding of the cost issues involved.

That the Hume City Council be encouraged to further develop strategies that recognise and respond to the strength of pride and identity obviously felt by residents of Sunbury and district. (p66)

In other words, the Panel was of the view that many of the hard-earned benefits that had been generated between 1994 and 2000 – the establishment of economies of scale that led to improved efficiency and cost effectiveness in the delivery of services to the community would be undone, and that the financial impact of a de-merger would be too costly and outweighed the non-financial considerations and other dimensions of 'communities of interest'.

While the dimensions of the perceptual and the functional 'communities of interest' were not taken into account to any great degree in the above assessment, it is important to recognise and apply the dimensions in this review. It should be noted that since 2000, population growth accelerated sharply in Melbourne and the Sunbury township has already become the focal point for a planned population capacity of 90,000 to 100,000 people, thus meaning it could have the basis to achieve economies of scale. As stated in the previous Review: *If Sunbury were to remain within Hume's current municipal boundaries, based on the passion exhibited to the Panel by a vocal segment of the community, it appears to the Panel that there will be continuing demands for separation. (p64)*

The above prediction has been correct. In light of this, it is even more important to apply the criterion of 'community of interest' when determining the new Sunbury boundaries – to gain an understanding of the community's particular identity, their functional patterns and the nature of the perceived political agendas emanating from that area. At the same time any restructure must not lose sight of the economic sustainability of a new municipality.

⁶ The report of the Local Government (Hume City Council) Review Panel, Review of the possible restructuring of the Hume municipality, October 2000

4 The Perceptual Dimension

The perceptual dimension of 'community of interest' is described as a sense of belonging to an area or locality which can be clearly defined and reinforced by the demographic characteristics.

4.1 Measuring the perceptual dimension

4.1.1 Community perceptions of Sunbury and the need to secede

The HIGAP report⁷ and the accompanying document relating to the delivery of infrastructure⁸ have been informed by extensive consultation, technical documents and consultation reports. These proposed Strategies (now encompassed in Precinct Structure Plans) are underpinned by a strong sense of community identity and attachment to Sunbury. Sunbury's rural setting and township is physically separate and some 15 kilometres west of Broadmeadows – where the Council offices are located, and the Hume Corridor. For these reasons Sunbury is perceived as different and physically isolated from the rest of the City of Hume.

It is also noteworthy, that the proposed strategies are based on a common vision for Sunbury and have reinforced and extended in scope in both the Growth Corridor Plan Report (2014) and Plan Melbourne (2014):

In 2040 Sunbury is a unique township with a sense of community and familiarity which is physically separate but well connected to Melbourne by good transport links. Its rural setting, parks and accessible countryside are renowned and highly valued by the community.

The vibrant town centre and new neighbourhood centres are the hubs of activity throughout the day and evening. These centres and adjoining residential and employment areas are connected by public transport, walking and cycling routes.

Large and local scale health, education and leisure facilities as well as diverse housing and employment opportunities enable people to live and work in Sunbury throughout their lives.
(p10)

In terms of the perceptual dimension alone – attachment and a strong sense of identity with Sunbury and environs, it is not surprising that many Sunbury residents still want to secede and no longer be part of the City of Hume. This is further reinforced by the comments made during the community forums and listening posts held by the CCC. There was a consistency in the key themes that emerged with respect to how they perceive Sunbury now and what they want for Sunbury in the future. To quote from the CCC report⁹:

⁷ Hume City Council Sunbury HIGAP Spatial Strategy, July 2012

⁸ Hume City Council Sunbury HIGAP Delivery and Infrastructure Strategy, July 2012

⁹ Sunbury out of Hume Community Consultative Committee Final Report, April 2014

It is clear that residents are immensely proud of both the heritage (dating back to 1835) and the future of their town and their community, and they feel a deep connection with Sunbury. This theme was strongly and consistently communicated throughout all of the public sessions and in the written feedback. The importance of the connection with regional Victoria was emphasised by respondents who likewise acknowledge that while Sunbury is on the outskirts of more suburban Greater Melbourne, it is this connection with regional areas which characterises the town of Sunbury. This was viewed and valued by residents (p24).

Other key themes raised by the community during the CCC consultations and also reflected in the submissions to the Panel included:

- ☐ **City living with country style:** retaining a significant regional or 'country' status and connection ('city living with country style');
- ☐ **An identity:** a connected community that is an attractive and growing area for families... not a suburb but a town with a definite identity;
- ☐ **An 'all inclusive' and 'connected' community:** where everyone is heard and everyone works for the good of the community;
- ☐ **A safer community:** a community with good security systems and a visible police presence;
- ☐ **Industry and employment:** a community with industry and employment opportunities;
- ☐ **A Council that is concerned with:** *better local government service delivery; a Shire that is responsive to community needs and is affordable for all residents; a sustainable and clean environment; affordability and being economically viable; quality infrastructure including improved roads, transport, parking; well managed development to enable growth for Sunbury; with more open spaces, parks and bike tracks (p24).*

However, while these views were strongly put by many Sunbury residents, including the Sunbury Residents Association, and about 18 of the 70 submissions put to the Panel from Sunbury residents, other residents (18) who were as equally attached to the Sunbury area questioned the need to secede and believed they could maintain the area's uniqueness and 'independent' character within the existing structure of Hume City Council. It is also noteworthy that when participants residing in other parts of Hume City Council responded to these questions about how they would best describe the community they want in the future, they generally saw themselves living in an area separate from Sunbury but part of the municipality and ready to see Sunbury secede from the City of Hume.

For Tullamarine respondents:

- ☐ *Maintaining current services – especially the libraries, leisure services and community health;*
- ☐ *A friendly neighbourhood;*

- ☐ *Fairer services for all ages;*
- ☐ *A community not split by distance;*
- ☐ *Accessible and appropriate services;*
- ☐ *A proactive and harmonious community;*
- ☐ *A Sunbury Free Hume.*

For Broadmeadows / surrounds, Craigieburn & Gladstone Park respondents:

- ☐ *More employment, local employment and no job losses;*
- ☐ *Reasonable rates and good services (already good services);*
- ☐ *Keep Hume the same, but let Sunbury go off on its own;*
- ☐ *Inclusive, open and honest community;*
- ☐ *Economically, socially and environmentally sustainable;*
- ☐ *Socially cohesive and supported by appropriate social infrastructure and programmes.*

For Diggers Rest respondents:

- ☐ *No responses to this question were received from the Diggers Rest written feedback. (p25)*

4.1.2 Community Perceptions of the new municipal boundary

The following section highlights the communities' perceptions of the boundary of a new municipality. Reasons for and against the areas either being included or excluded in the new municipality were put forward in the submissions to the Panel and such comment was also sought by the CCC.

Panel Submissions

- ☐ The southern area of the Macedon Ranges Shire is not considered to be a compatible mix with a new Sunbury based municipality
- ☐ There should be another plebiscite taken if the suburbs of Diggers Rest, Tullamarine, Bulla, and the Melbourne Airport (and include the extent of the areas zoned Commonwealth Land), are to be included.

-
- ☐ Must maintain communities of interest to reduce confusion and retain cohesion in representation, and those areas that traditionally and practically have looked to Sunbury to provide the economic, recreational, and social support should remain in the new Sunbury based municipality.
 - ☐ Diggers Rest, Clarkefield, Wildwood and Oaklands Junction (west of the creek) should be included in a new Sunbury based municipality, however the splitting of Oaklands Junction would appear to have little impact overall on the rural community.
 - ☐ Supported the split from Hume City Council based on the KPMG Report as the only references, and if the boundary is to be different from this then ratepayers will have been misled.
 - ☐ If the Outer Metropolitan Ring road is to be used as a boundary, then this would only guarantee future service delivery anomalies like Gowanbrae being located in the Moreland Council, however it is unreachable. It may be appropriate to tweak the boundaries with Brimbank and Melton where all converge, however this should not be undertaken until sometime after the new Sunbury based municipality has settled down.
 - ☐ The residents of Tullamarine, Gladstone Park, West Meadows and Attwood will be impacted with the 25 ANEF zone when the 3rd and 4th runways are built and will find themselves in a minority and overlooked if included in the new Sunbury based municipality.
 - ☐ The boundary should be Deep Creek, Maribynong River from the boundary between Hume City and Sunbury and that areas west, north and south of Deep Creek and Maribyrnong River be considered for incorporation into the new Sunbury based municipality.
 - ☐ Hume City Council without Sunbury will have some financial and demographic changes imposed on it which will need to be addressed. However Greenvale is able to contribute to the resolution of this matter in part, with a refocussing on building Greenvale as a more financially and socially self-supporting community. Future development of Greenvale West is supported as a response to Plan Melbourne, as there is the opportunity for Greenvale to replace the loss of the Sunbury area in the Hume City Council.
 - ☐ The new Sunbury based municipality should include Oaklands Junction, Wildwood and the boundary should be Link Road, include Melbourne Airport buildings and car park, west to Maribynong River to Deep Creek, crossing the Calder Highway to Holden Road, proceeding north to Diggers Rest, then north and parallel to Black Hill Road, through Millet Road and Berry Road to the intersection of Calder Hwy with Mundy/Dalrymple Roads. The boundary with the Macedon Ranges Council should not be changed.
 - ☐ Consideration must be given by the Victorian Electoral Commission to redrawing the Ward boundaries in the new Sunbury based municipality and remaining area of the Hume City Council.

- ☐ The areas of responsibility for City West Water and Yarra Valley Water are consistent with the Deep Creek boundary proposed in the KPMG Report.

Community Consultative Committee consultations

In addition to the panel submissions, more than 110 community members submitted written feedback on the proposed boundaries. As indicated in the CCC Report, possible boundaries contemplated broadly fell into six key categories including:

1. *As per the electorate boundaries for the new State seat of Sunbury;*
2. *Deep Creek as the eastern boundary of a new municipality including Sunbury;*
3. *Former Shire of Bulla boundaries (which included Tullamarine and shared the airport with other former municipalities;*
4. *Sunbury and Bulla only;*
5. *Possibility of Sunbury transferring into another existing shire such as Macedon Ranges or Melton City Council; and*
6. *Sunbury to remain within Hume City Council ("do not proceed"). (p 19)*

The CCC Report also explained:

Overall the views in respect to boundaries were largely determined by the respondent's residential location. That is a clear majority of respondents living in Sunbury believed that a new municipality should comprise Sunbury plus Bulla plus the Melbourne Airport. While those living in Broadmeadows, Craigieburn and Tullamarine were consistently of the view that the boundaries should be limited to Sunbury, Bulla and in some instances the Hume section of Diggers Rest – but it was strongly felt by these respondents that Melbourne Airport should remain within the current boundaries of Hume City Council. (p 20)

4.2 Implications

As noted above, the measure of perceived 'community of interest' generally aligns with a geographic area similar to the area designated in the original vote. In light of the various concerns raised by the Sunbury residents about Hume City Council, participatory democracy and need for strong leadership, it does raise a number of pertinent questions:

- ☐ How can the perceptual dimension be fostered and used to enhance people's identity with, and ability to play a role in the new municipality?

- ▣ How can the restructuring meet with the residents and/or ratepayers' ongoing expectations, and be such to engender their confidence in the new municipality?
- ▣ What strategies can be put in place to reinforce the perceived sense of community, social cohesion and concept of representation?

The size of the new municipality, the corporate and community governance structures and practices will therefore be critical for maintaining residents' confidence in their ability to influence decision-making (refer Section 9).

5 The Functional Dimension

Municipal boundaries should reflect the functional dimension of 'community of interest', that is, the spatial patterns or movement patterns of human activities and should contain most of the facilities and services used by the community, including the location of the municipal offices, the customer service centre and the facilities and services need to be relatively central to the population they serve.

5.1 Measuring the functional dimension

In order to gain an understanding of the spatial patterns of human activities and the population catchments served by a range of facilities, first the Panel has examined the trade area of a number of shopping centres across Hume City Council and nearby and then determined the origin of users of a range of Council and some non-Council services provided in Sunbury. In addition, the Panel has examined the journey to work data of the work force of Sunbury and the Airport as well as the residential movement patterns of Sunbury residents.

While the practice of matching boundaries to spatial patterns of human activity is important, the Panel has also examined the community's perceptions of the services provided by the Council.

5.1.1 Spatial patterns of activity

Shopping Centres

Map 1 highlights the location of various shopping centres in the Hume and Sunbury Corridors and the main trade area catchments for Sunbury Town Centre, Watergardens, Craigieburn Central, Westfield Airport West, Broadmeadows, Gladstone Park and the DFO Essendon.

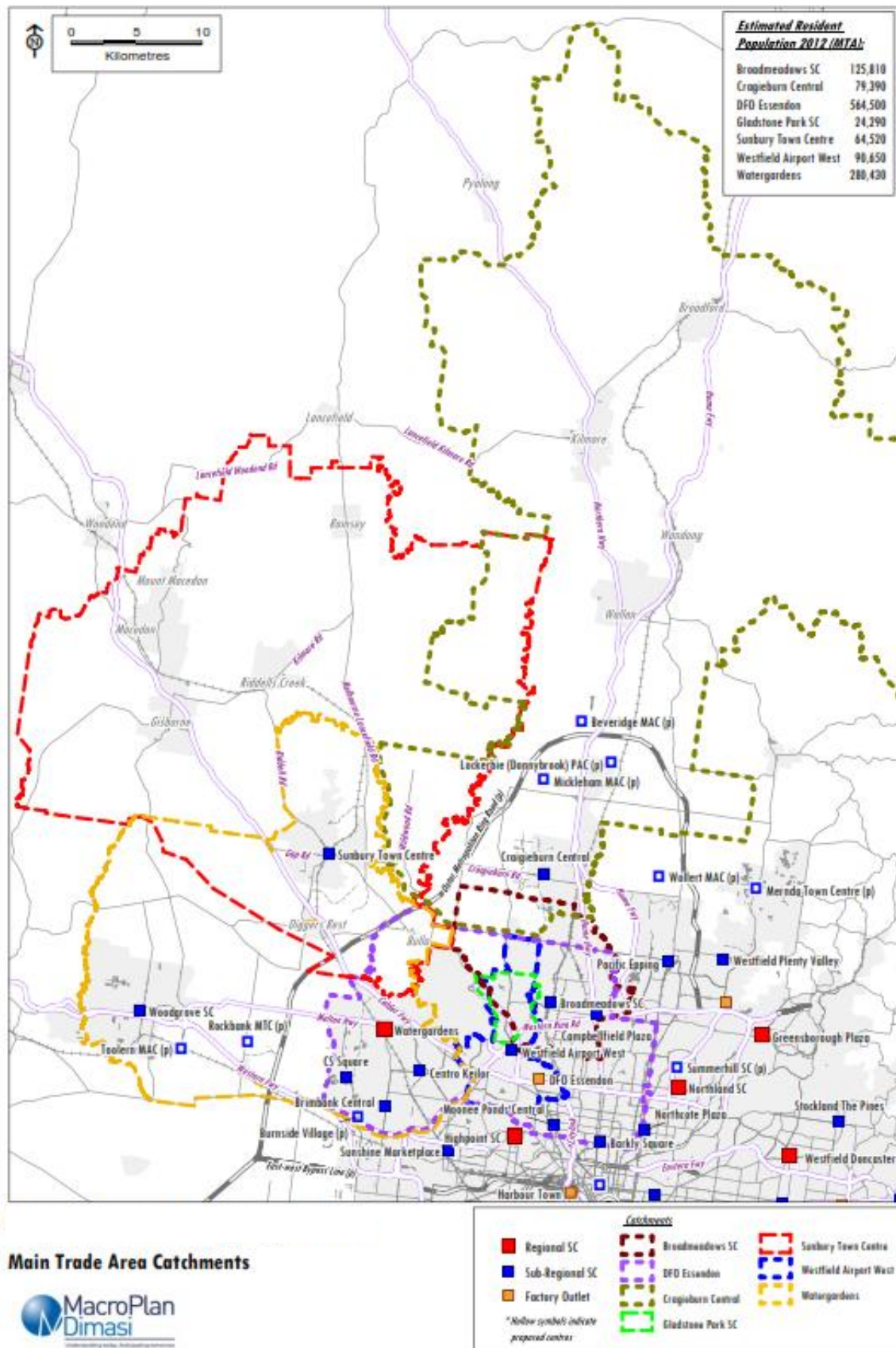
The Sunbury Town Centre main trade area has an estimated resident population of 64,520 (2012). It draws from a wide area to the north and west in the Shire of Macedon Ranges, to the south from Diggers Rest and part of the City of Melton and only as far as Bulla to the east.

Watergardens main trade area has an estimated resident population of 280,430 (2012). It draws mainly from the Cities of Melton and Brimbank and is the only other centre in that corridor that influences the shopping patterns of Sunbury residents – it draws extensively from the north from beyond the Sunbury Town Centre.

Craigieburn Central only draws as far west as Deep Creek. Its primary trade area mainly draws from the north, as far north as Beveridge and as far south as Somerton Road.

The other centres do not impact on Sunbury residents. As the map illustrates the main trade areas of each of the other centres do not draw from Sunbury. They relate to their area in the eastern part of the municipality. This demonstrates the Calder Highway gateway importance to Sunbury more so than to the west to Bulla.

Map 1 : Main Trade Area Catchments



Key Community Services

Table 1 below highlights the origin of a number of key services: family and children's services, HACC, the library, Sunbury Aquatic and Leisure Centre. The majority of households use these services reside in Sunbury. Only a very small number reside outside Sunbury.

Table 1 : Key Services - Residential origin of Users

Service Type	Origin of Users
Family and Children's Services	
Long Day Care	97 children from 80 families who reside in Sunbury; 4 families from outside Sunbury – Romsey, Diggers Rest, Maribyrnong and West Melton.
Kindergartens	Majority of children from families who reside in Sunbury; only 6 families from outside Sunbury – Melton, Avondale Heights, Roxburgh Park, Sunshine, Meadow Heights and Deer Park
Maternal and Child Health	Elizabeth Drive encompasses the majority of the urban component of Sunbury (excluding Goonawarra) and extends to the northern municipal boundary as far south as Diggers Rest; Goonawarra encompasses Goonawarra and areas to the east to Wildwood and part of Bulla.
HACC Program	Delivered to clients in the home.
Leisure and Aquatic Centre	Primarily used by residents of Sunbury township and surrounding non-urban areas to the north and west - utilisation is high.

Source: Data provided by HCC, 2014 and included in Publicplace report (Attachment 1)

The Sunbury Community Health Centre and other Health Services

Information provided in their submission to the Panel indicates that the Sunbury Community Health Centre draws from a wide area across Sunbury and the surrounding communities of Diggers Rest, Clarkefield, Bulla, Gisborne, Woodend, Lancefield and Romsey.

Journey to Work Patterns

Journey to work patterns (refer Table 2) are quite localised with some 21.8% of employment locations being in Sunbury. The other locations are quite dispersed. The next key locations are in the City of Hume – Craigieburn (8.4%) and Broadmeadows (6.2%).

Table 2 | 2011 employment location of Sunbury residents by SLA (*number of residents exceeding 300 in each location*)

SLA	Number	%
Hume (C) – Sunbury	3,907	21.8
Hume (C) – Craigieburn	1,507	8.4
Hume (C) – Broadmeadows	1,117	6.2
Melbourne (C) – Inner	1,058	5.9
Melbourne (C) – remainder	1,023	5.7
POW no fixed address (Vic)	843	4.7
POW capital city undefined (greater Melbourne)	820	4.6
Brimbank (C) – Keilor	797	4.4
POW State/Territory undefined (Vic)	557	3.1
Brimbank (C) – Sunshine	526	2.9
POW not stated	476	2.7
Macedon Ranges (S) balance	441	2.5
Melbourne (C) – Southbank/Docklands	417	2.3
Moonee Valley (C) – West	416	2.3
Wyndham (C) – North	349	1.9
Maribyrnong (C)	336	1.9
Port Phillip (C) – West	281	1.6
Melton (S) – balance	229	1.3
Hobsons Bay (C) – Altona	193	1.1
Darebin (C) – Preston	188	1.0
Whittlesea (C) – South-West	178	1.0
Yarra (C) – North	165	0.9
Moreland (C) – Coburg	134	0.7
Melton (S) – East	129	0.7
Banyule (C) – Heidelberg	103	0.6
Macedon Ranges (S) – Romsey	103	0.6
Moreland (C) – North	102	0.6
Moreland (C) – Brunswick	99	0.6
Yarra (C) – Richmond	95	0.5
Macedon Ranges (S) – Kyneton	71	0.4
Hobsons Bay (C) – Williamstown	65	0.4
Boroondara (C) – Hawthorn	51	0.3
Whittlesea (C) – North	48	0.3
Stonnington (C) – Prahran	44	0.2

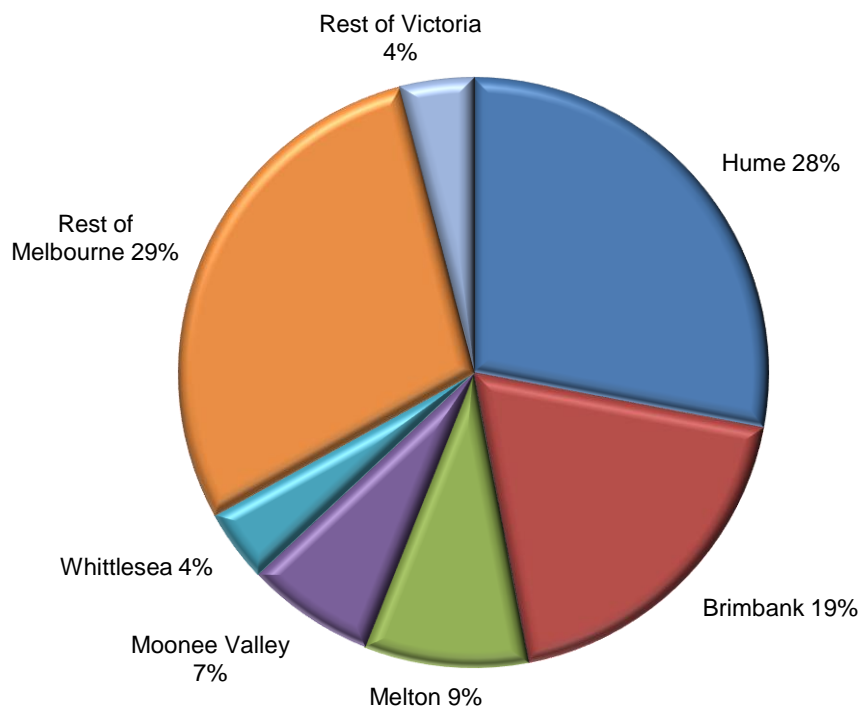
SLA	Number	%
Darebin (C) – Northcote	42	0.2
Kingston (C) – North	40	0.2
Monash (C) – Waverley West	35	0.2
Moorabool (S) – Bacchus Marsh	32	0.2
Port Phillip (C) – St Kilda	32	0.2
Whittlesea (C) – South-East	30	0.2
Mitchell (S) – South	30	0.2
Stonnington - Malvern	26	0.1
Whitehorse (C) – Box Hill	26	0.1
Banyule (C) – North	25	0.1
Boroondara (C) – Kew	24	0.1
Monash (C) – South-West	22	0.1
Greater Dandenong (C) – balance	21	0.1
Boroondara (C) – Camberwell South	19	0.1
Knox (C) – South	17	0.1
Wyndham (C) – South	16	0.1
Whitehorse (C) – Nunawading West	14	0.1
Manningham (C) – West	14	0.1
Greater Geelong (C) – Point Cook	13	0.1
Greater Bendigo (C) – Central	12	0.1
Nillumbik (S) – South	12	0.1
Greater Dandenong (C) – Dandenong	11	0.1

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011

The Melbourne Airport's operations directly employ 14,000 people. Almost two thirds of these workers live in the LGAs around the airport. Some 28% coming from across the City of Hume, 19% from Brimbank and 9% from Melton (refer Figure 1).

The number of jobs directly related to airport operations is forecast to reach 23,000 by 2033.

Figure 1 | Where Melbourne Airport employees come from

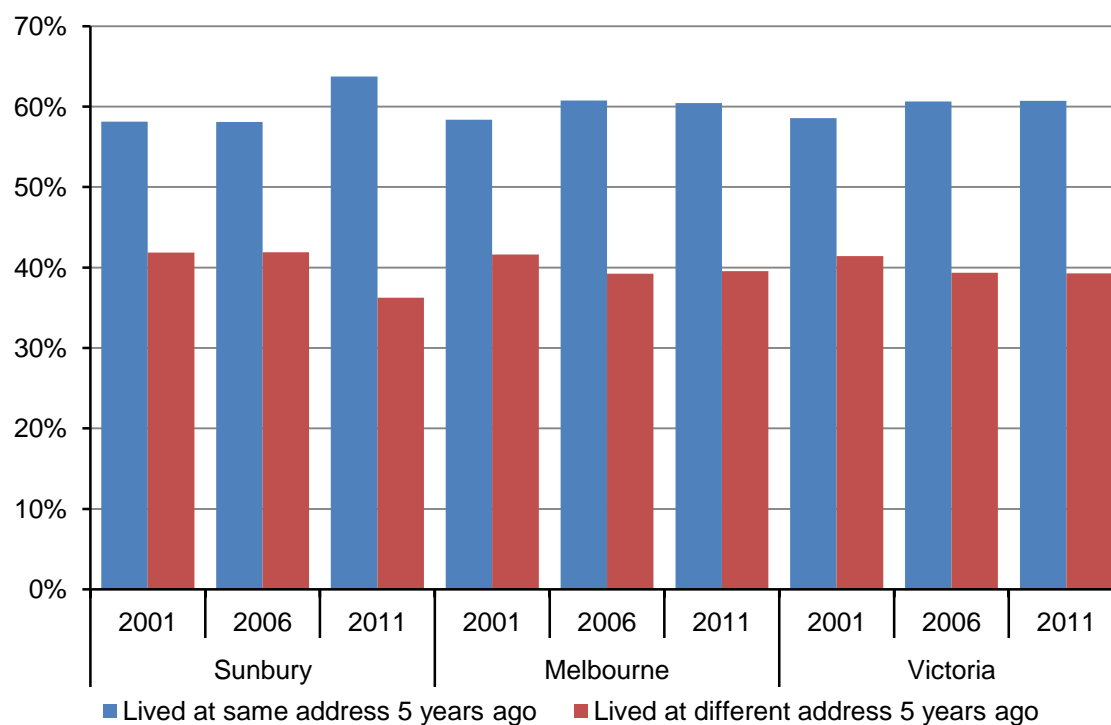


Source: Melbourne Airport

Residential Movement Patterns

People who move to Sunbury are relatively more likely to remain at the same address for more than five years than the rest of Melbourne and Victoria, that is to say they are relatively less mobile.

Figure 2 | Population Mobility, Persons living at the same vs different address by location - 2001 to 2011



Source: ABS Census 2011

Table 3 | Place of usual residence (SA2s) 2006 - Sunbury and Sunbury South

Place of Usual Residence 5 years ago	Sunbury South	Sunbury	Hume
Sunbury South	16,037	752	16,789
Sunbury	1,001	8,515	9,516
Romsey	204	88	292
Gisborne	175	53	228
Gladstone Park – Westmeadows	84	43	137
Riddells Creek	75	47	122
Essendon - Aberfeldie	71	47	118

The steady rise in persons living at the same location within Sunbury and the decrease of persons having moved out of Sunbury suggests that people taking up residence in the Sunbury area are remaining there. This consistent rise reflects the growth across the residential sector in Sunbury, and the lack of migration from the area provides a strong foundation for the development of new residential areas.

5.1.2 Community's Perception of the Council Services

In summary, current community perceptions of the services provided have been examined with respect to:

- ☐ importance level of services provided
- ☐ satisfaction ratings of services provided, compared with the rest of the municipality.

The Hume City Council Community Survey 2013/2014 has been sourced. In summary, there is a total mismatch between the reality of what is being provided, as indicated below, and the perceived level of Council's performance.

Table 4 | Direction of Council's Performance

Performance	Sunbury	Hume City Council
Deteriorated	16.8%	9.5%
Stayed the same	73.3%	66.2%
Improved	9.9%	24.3%

In other words, the current municipal arrangements do not meet the Sunbury community's expectations and aspirations. When this was explored further in the CCC community forums and later in discussions with community service providers the reasons expressed related to the community's lack of involvement in the planning and management of their services, they want to 'have a say' in how their community is developed.

5.2 Implications

The spatial activity patterns and usage of shopping centres and other facilities and services demonstrate that the Sunbury residents do not significantly travel east, beyond Deep Creek, to use retail centres, facilities and services in the rest of the City of Hume. In other words, the functional dimension of 'community of interest', that is, **the spatial patterns or movement patterns of human activities are contained in the wider Sunbury area, including Diggers Rest, Bulla and parts of the Shire of Macedon Ranges not in the remainder of the City of Hume.** This is demonstrated on Map 1 and Tables 1 and 2.

6 The Political Dimension – Perceived Representation and Participation

In this instance the Panel has only considered residents’ perceptions of their representation and their ability to participate in decision-making.

Many of those who participated in the consultation processes stated that they were no longer well represented and believe the community should be able to influence what happens in their area. To quote: *We lost our leaders previously; we need leadership back again.*

In light of this, the Panel sees that it is important to explore as part of this process and the formation of a new municipality, governance opportunities, local democratic representation, alternative service delivery models and community involvement as well as cost efficiencies derived from economies of scale and scope and strategic capacity. The formation of the new municipality requires a more innovative approach rather than more of the same (refer Section 8) to achieve the outcomes requested by the community.

7 Other Factors

The Panel has also examined a number of other inter-related factors that contribute to 'community of interest' and determination of the new municipal boundary. These relate to:

- ▣ demographic characteristics, trends and future growth
- ▣ topographical features
- ▣ transport and communications network.

7.1 Demographic Characteristics *(refer Attachment 2 tables)*

As at 2011, the Sunbury SLA was home to approximately 35,162 people or 21% of the Hume City Council population. The population of the Sunbury SLA is projected to grow substantially over the next 20 years.

The Hume City Council population is concentrated in the urbanised east and south east of the Hume Local Government Area (LGA) (an extension of the broader metropolitan area) and in Sunbury (in the west). These two urban areas separated by an expansive non-urban area, the majority of which lies outside the UGB.

The population of Sunbury is notably different to that of the rest of Hume, in terms of ethnic and cultural background and socio-economic status. To illustrate, 88.7% of residents of the Sunbury SLA speak only English at home, compared with 50.1% of residents of the Craigieburn SLA and only 39.4% of residents of the Broadmeadows SLA. When the data are viewed at SA1 level, it is clear there is a finer grain to this spatial trend. Specifically, areas to the south east of the LGA which are within the UGB are home to a very high proportion of people who speak other languages (in some parts of Broadmeadows, Meadow Heights, and Roxburgh Park, more than 70% of residents speak another language). In the non-urban areas which separate Sunbury from the broader metropolitan area, there is less language diversity and in the Sunbury Township only a small proportion of the population speaks a language other than English (approximately 7%).

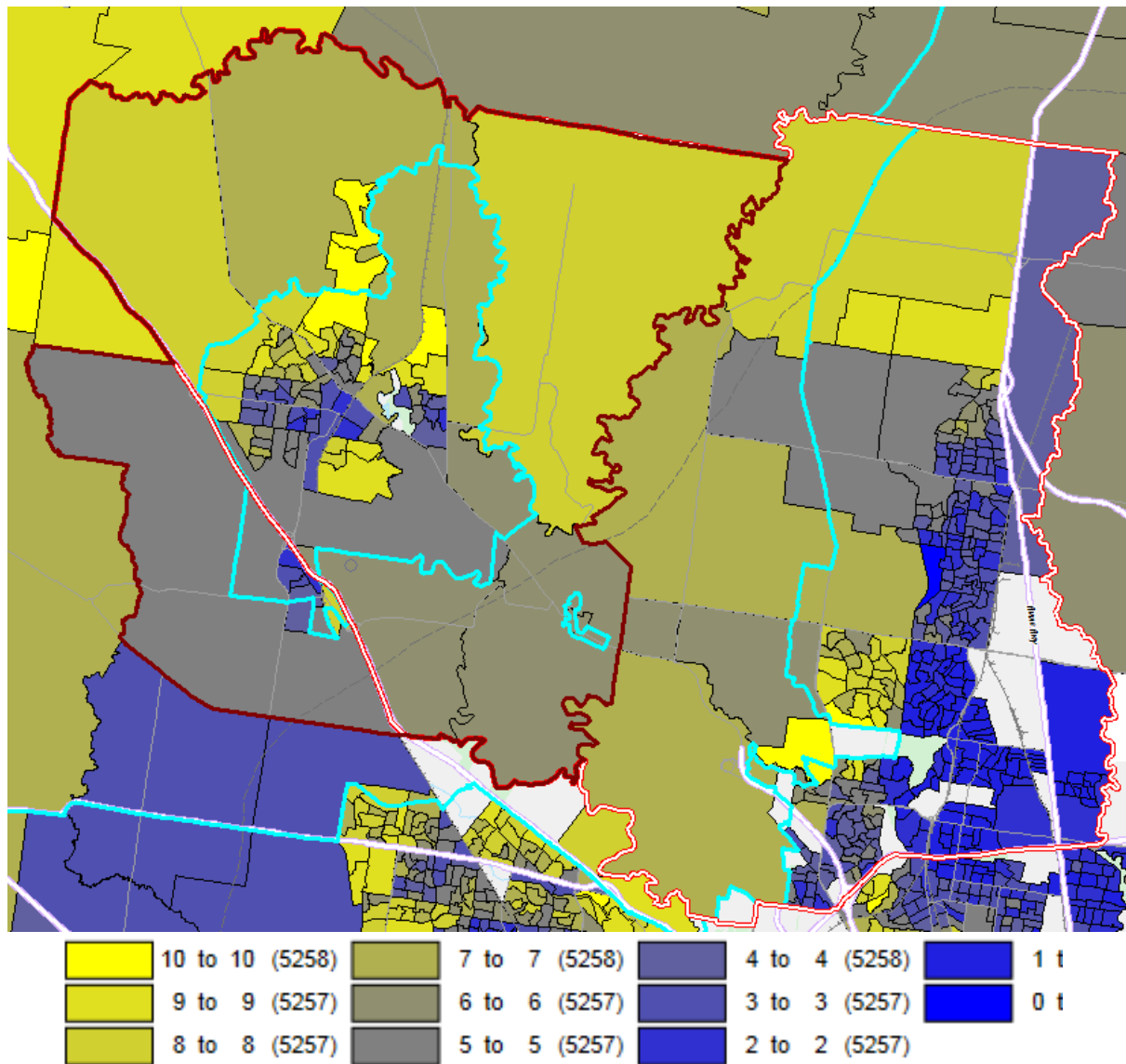
A similar spatial pattern is evident with respect to the SEIFA index (see Map 2). The SEIFA index shows that within Hume municipality socioeconomic outcomes vary greatly, with Broadmeadows an area of relative disadvantage (SEIFA index of 800) compared with Sunbury (SEIFA index of 1043).

In summary, Sunbury compared with Hume City Council:

- ▣ Has an even age distribution
- ▣ Has only half the proportion of 'overseas born'

- ☐ Has lower proportion of individuals on lower incomes in Sunbury and much higher on higher incomes
- ☐ Educational attainment is higher
- ☐ Much higher SEIFA index (excluding Greenvale).

Map 2 | SEIFA deciles - Sunbury, Hume and Surrounds – 2011



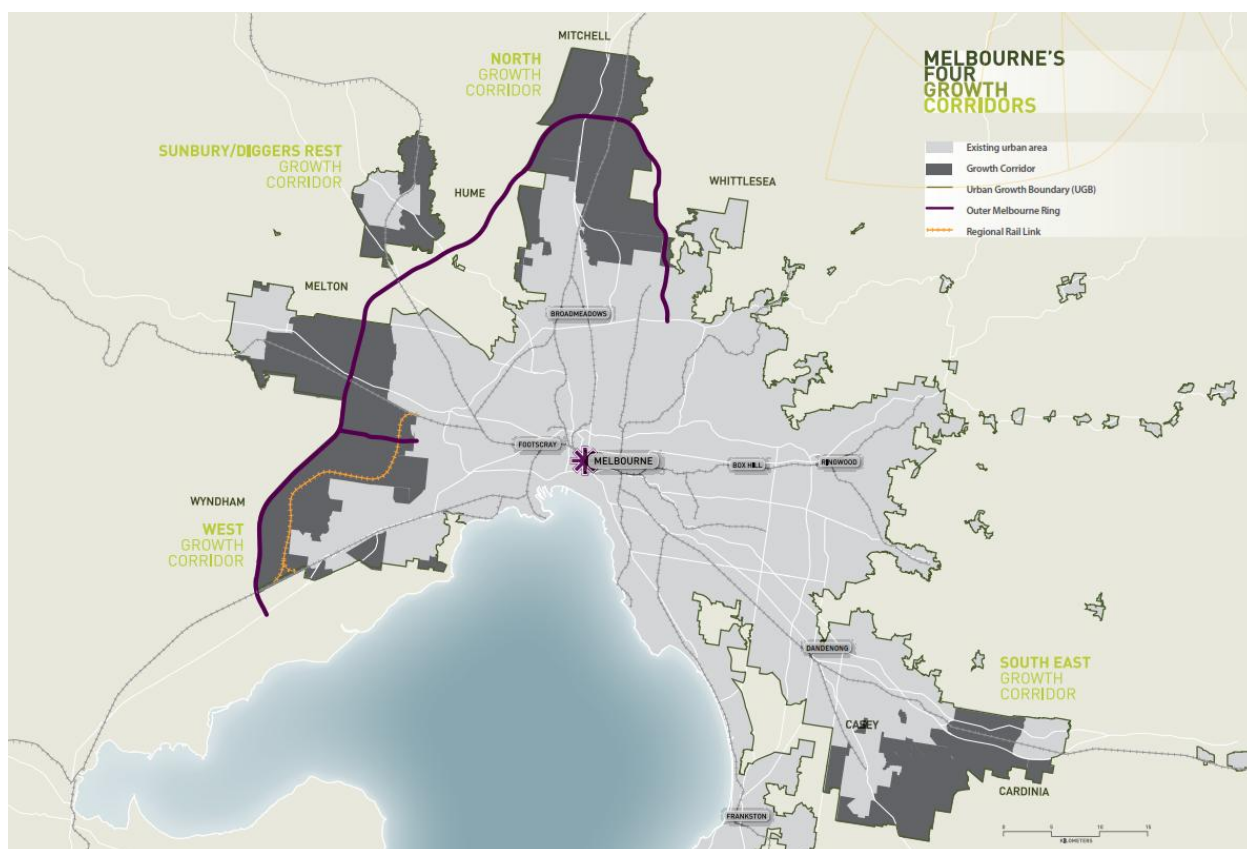
Source: ABS SEIFA Tables 2011

7.2 Population Trends and Future Growth

The future geographic shape of a new Sunbury inclusive municipality must have regard to recent initiatives and policies of the Victorian Planning Provisions (recognising the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) is still in draft form), Plan Melbourne, Regional Growth Plans and Growth Corridor Plans plus strategy and research undertaken as part of the Sunbury HIGAP Reports undertaken by Hume City Council. In addition, the recently endorsed Melbourne Airport Masterplan needs to be considered. These documents set out current strategic guidelines for Hume City Council.

The Growth Corridor Plans (January 2014) prepared by the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA) set an overarching strategic planning framework to guide future development in the four Growth Corridors of Melbourne.

Map 3| Melbourne Growth Corridor Plans



Source: MPA Growth Corridor Plans – Managing Melbourne’s Growth. January 2014

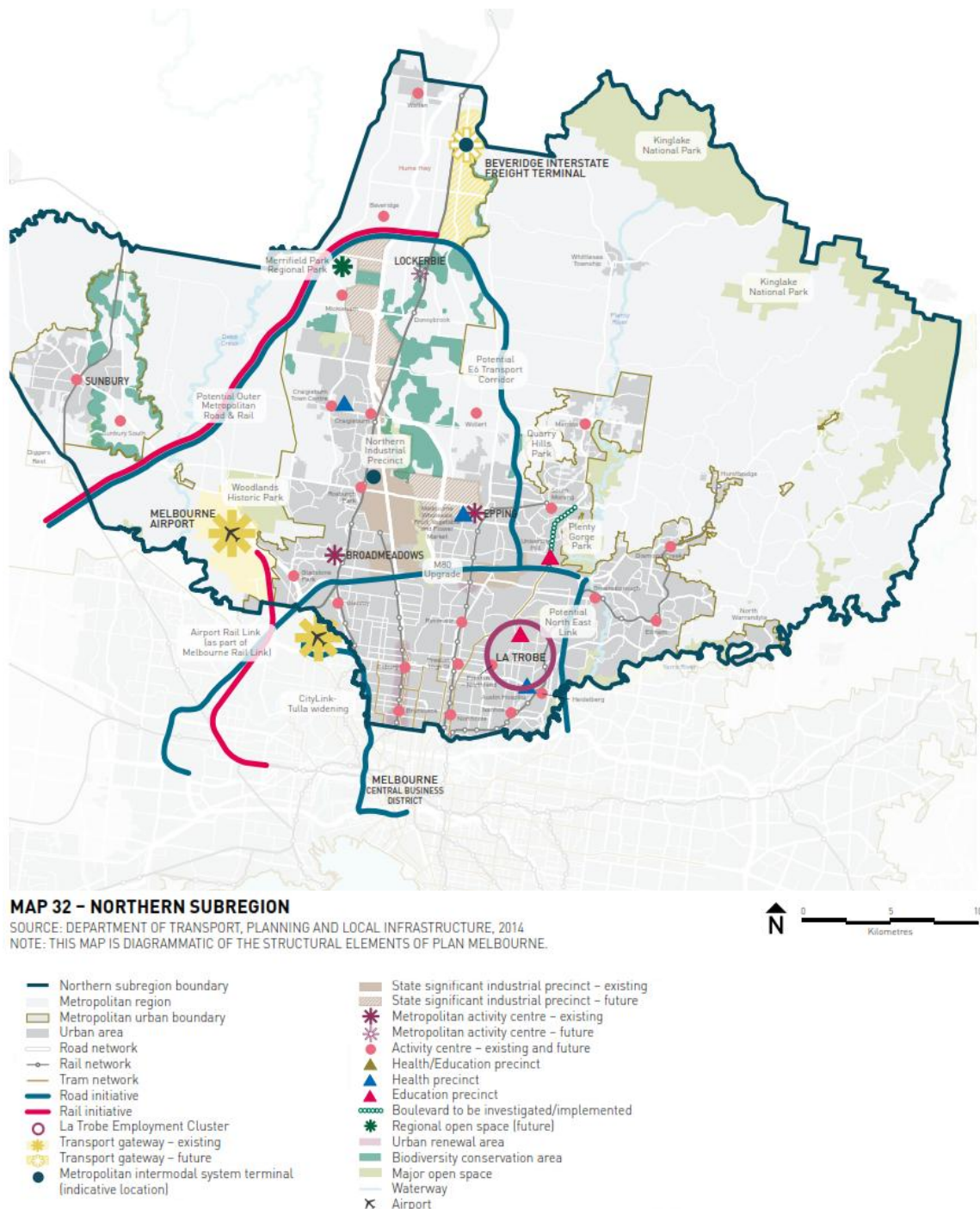
The Growth Corridor Plan vision is as follows:

“Sunbury and Diggers Rest will develop as a highly attractive city linked to but distinct from the metropolitan area... The Sunbury Town Centre will grow in its importance as a regional hub and will be complemented by a series of smaller town centres that meet the local shopping and

other needs of residents. Diggers Rest will grow to become a more self contained neighbourhood supported by a Local Town Centre with open space and community facilities."

Growth Corridor Plans, 2014 (p99)

Map 4 | Northern Subregion

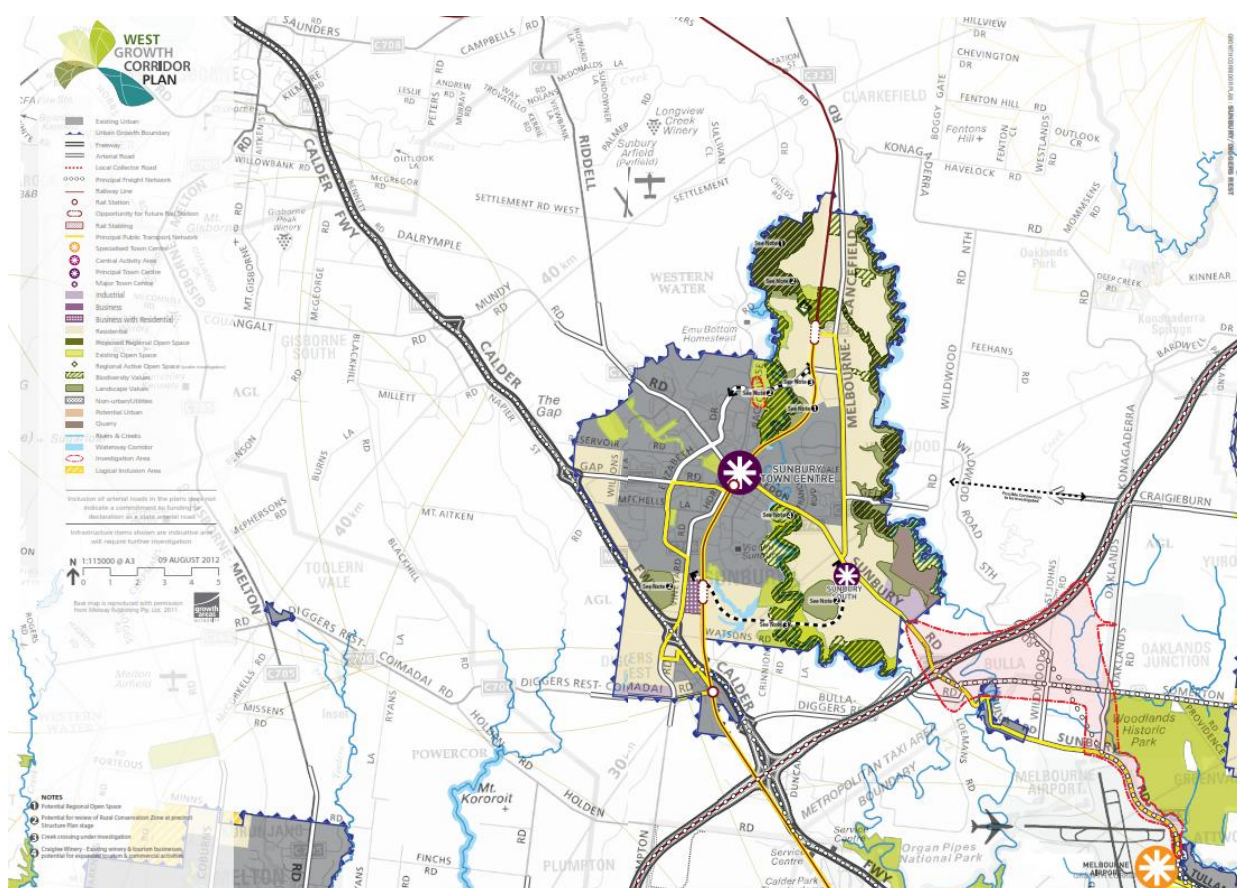


Source: Plan Melbourne, Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Strategy. May 2014

Plan Melbourne identifies significant expansion of the Sunbury urban area within the current UGB. Plan Melbourne recommends that the UGB be confirmed in the short term. The Panel recommends consideration be given to the inclusion of Sunbury South. Sunbury north and to the north of Diggers Rest to set a future municipal population target of over 200,000 persons.

The West Growth Corridor Plan is set out in Map 5. This plan was based on the following upper and lower targets likely to be met between 2025 and 2035.

Map 5 | Western Growth Corridor Plan



Source: MPA Growth Corridor Plans – Managing Melbourne’s Growth. January 2014

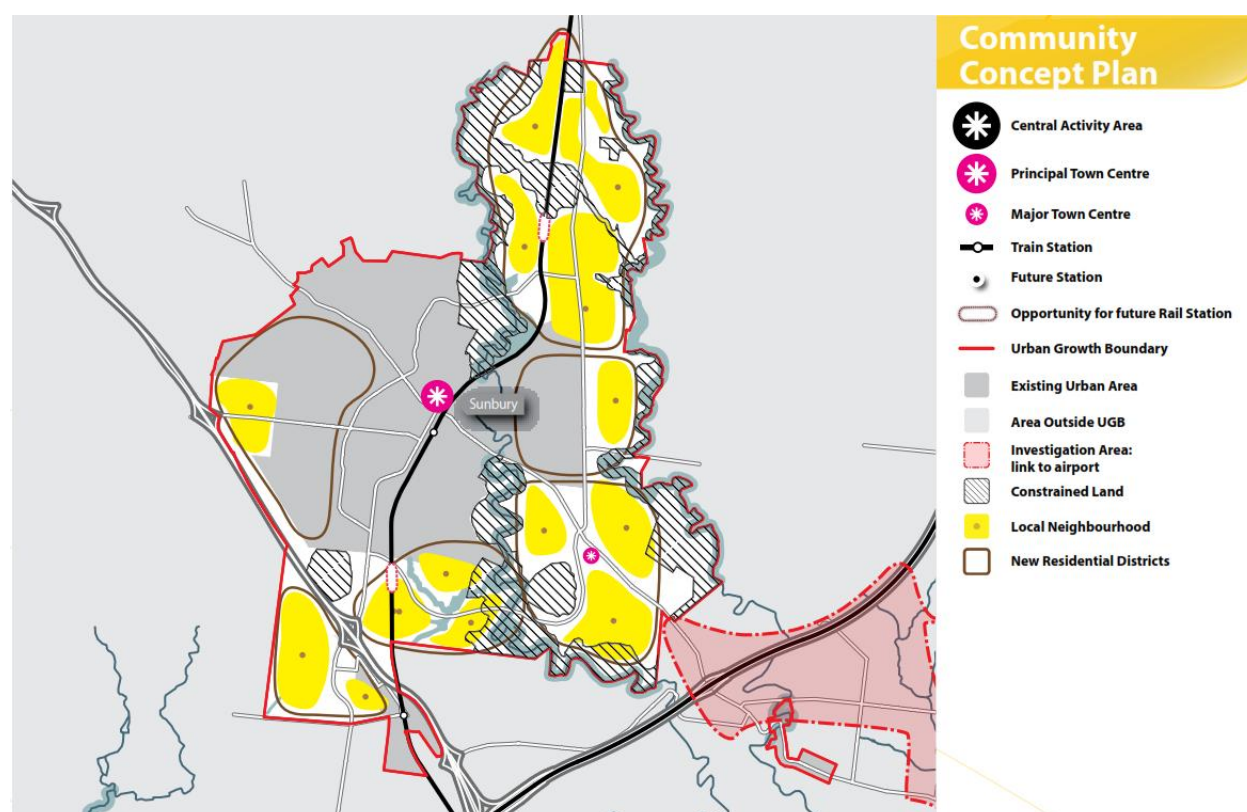
Table 5 | Sunbury/Diggers Rest – 2025 to 2035

	Lower	Upper
Dwelling Capacity	26,000	32,000
Population Capacity	71,000	90,000
Jobs Capacity	10,000	15,000

Source: MPA Growth Corridor Plans (2014)

The West Growth Corridor Plan integrates strategic planning for Sunbury and Diggers Rest in respect to landscape, environment, open Space, biodiversity, drainage and community planning. This is demonstrated in Map 6 and is supported by the view that *'The new communities in Sunbury/Diggers Rest will need to be designed to feed off the existing Sunbury Town Centre.'*

Map 6 | Sunbury Community Concept Plan



Source: MPA Growth Corridor Plans – Managing Melbourne’s Growth. January 2014

The Hume City Council is treated independently of Sunbury/Diggers Rest in the Growth Corridor Plan Statistics. The Growth Corridor Plans indicate the following parameters for Hume and part of Mitchell Shire (i.e. adjoining Hume inside the Urban Growth Boundary).

Table 6 | North - Hume and part Mitchell - 2025 to 2035

	Lower	Upper
Dwelling Capacity	93,000	117,000
Population Capacity	260,000	330,000
Jobs Capacity	83,000	105,000

Source: MPA Growth Corridor Plans (2014)

Future Hume City Council and new municipality population forecast (excluding Diggers Rest) as follows:

Table 7 | Hume City Council population projections in five year increments

	2011 (a)	2016	2021	2026	2031
Current Hume City Council	174,290	199,448	229,558	260,246	291,278
Portion of Sunbury LGA proposal within Hume City Council	35,227	40,312	46,398	52,600	58,872
Portion of Sunbury LGA proposal outside of Hume City Council	2,275	2,787	3,397	4,212	5,148
Hume City Council without Sunbury	139,063	156,136	183,160	207,646	232,406
Total current Sunbury proposal	37,502	43,099	49,794	56,813	64,020

Source: VIF2014, MacroPlan Dimasi

The Panel notes that several Precinct Structure Plans could be brought forward to include population growth rates for Hume City Council.

7.3 Employment Patterns and Economic Development

The Sunbury Township currently provides 0.37 jobs per resident which is relatively low when compared to metropolitan Melbourne. Sunbury is unlikely to be a location that attracts a large share of the metropolitan employment market, even at its full development.

The Sunbury/Diggers Rest Corridor Plan provides in the order of 10,000-15,000 new jobs. These are expected to be heavily represented by household service based sectors such as retail, health care, education and service industries. Considerable local government effort will be required to achieve this outcome.

The existing Sunbury Principal Town Centre is focussed around the Sunbury Train Station and accommodates a range of retail services, entertainment/leisure, office and civic functions. This will become the service sector focal point and every effort should be made to locate the new municipal headquarters in the town centre.

The planned town centre network for Sunbury seeks to reinforce the principal role of the Sunbury Town Centre and improve the distribution of sub-regional scale retail services within the Township. To achieve this, the Corridor Plan provides for a Major Town Centre on Sunbury-Bulla Road to support the adjoining employment precinct and the residential population, particularly in the northern and southern sections of the expanded Sunbury township. Sunbury South is planned to accommodate a new railway station and an employment precinct.

7.4 Transport and Communications Network

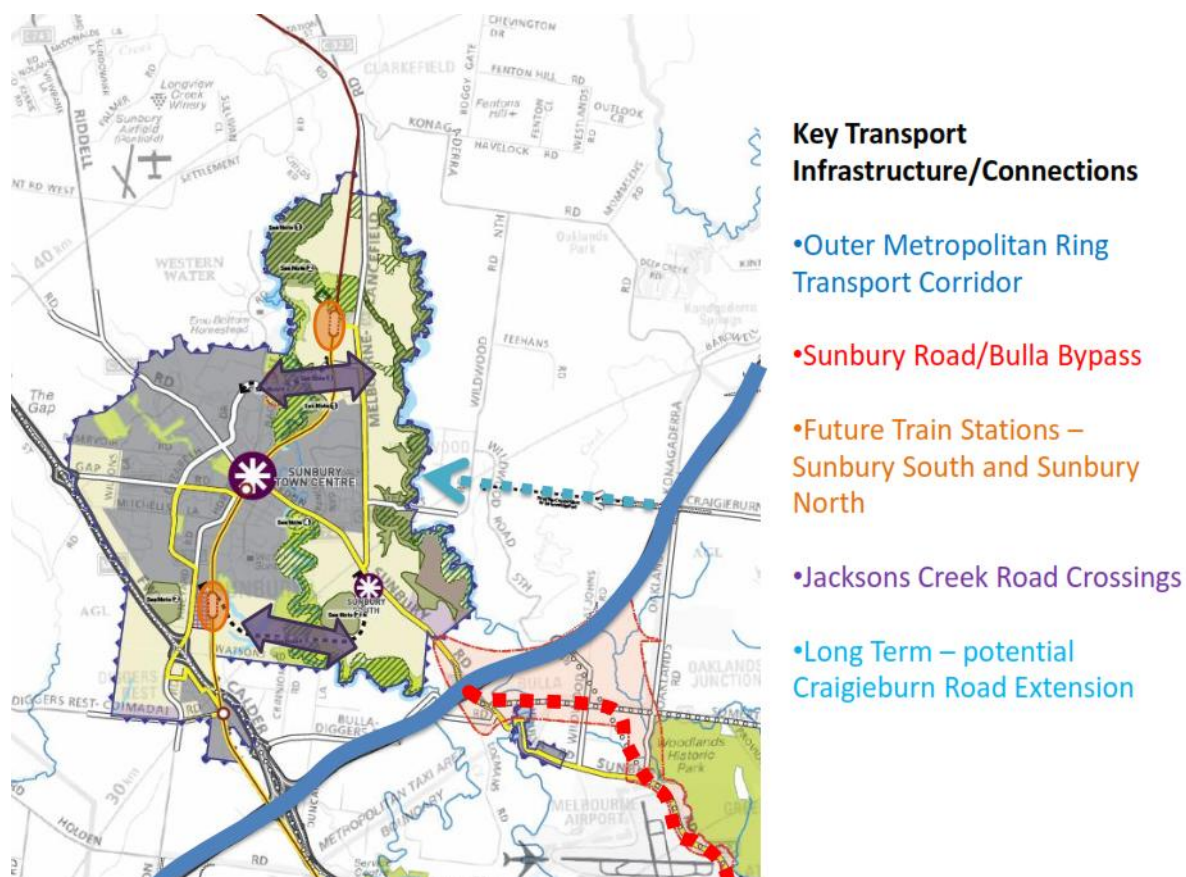
Urban development in Sunbury is proposed to be supported by the rail line to Sunbury, which is electrified. Planning of the Primary Public Transport Network (PPTN) connects with the Sunbury station and to proposed Sunbury South and other town centres, in particular Diggers Rest. The PPTN is planned to connect in future to Melbourne Airport via Sunshine further reinforcing the Calder gateway. A series of smaller town centres will also be delivered within Sunbury and Diggers Rest to support the needs of the local communities. These will be determined through the Precinct Structure Plan process, however there are opportunities to deliver local town centres along the Sunbury railway line and in locations adjoining the existing urban area which would benefit from local retail provision.

The Sunbury/Diggers Rest Corridor Plan makes provision for an additional 100 hectares (gross) of industrial land and 110 hectares (gross) of land for business and other purposes.

The industrial precinct is located on the eastern side of Sunbury-Bulla Road adjoining the existing quarry. This location provides for arterial road access to the Sunbury Town Centre and the Melbourne Airport. The land is relatively unconstrained and un-fragmented which provides the opportunity for a master planned approach to development of the land for industry.

The Corridor Plan nominates a business precinct to the south of the existing Township with access from Vineyard Road. This location provides opportunity for transit oriented development (surrounding the potential train station) including office and business services which will provide additional jobs for Sunbury and Diggers Rest residents beyond those accommodated in the Town Centre.

Map 7 | Key transport infrastructure/connections

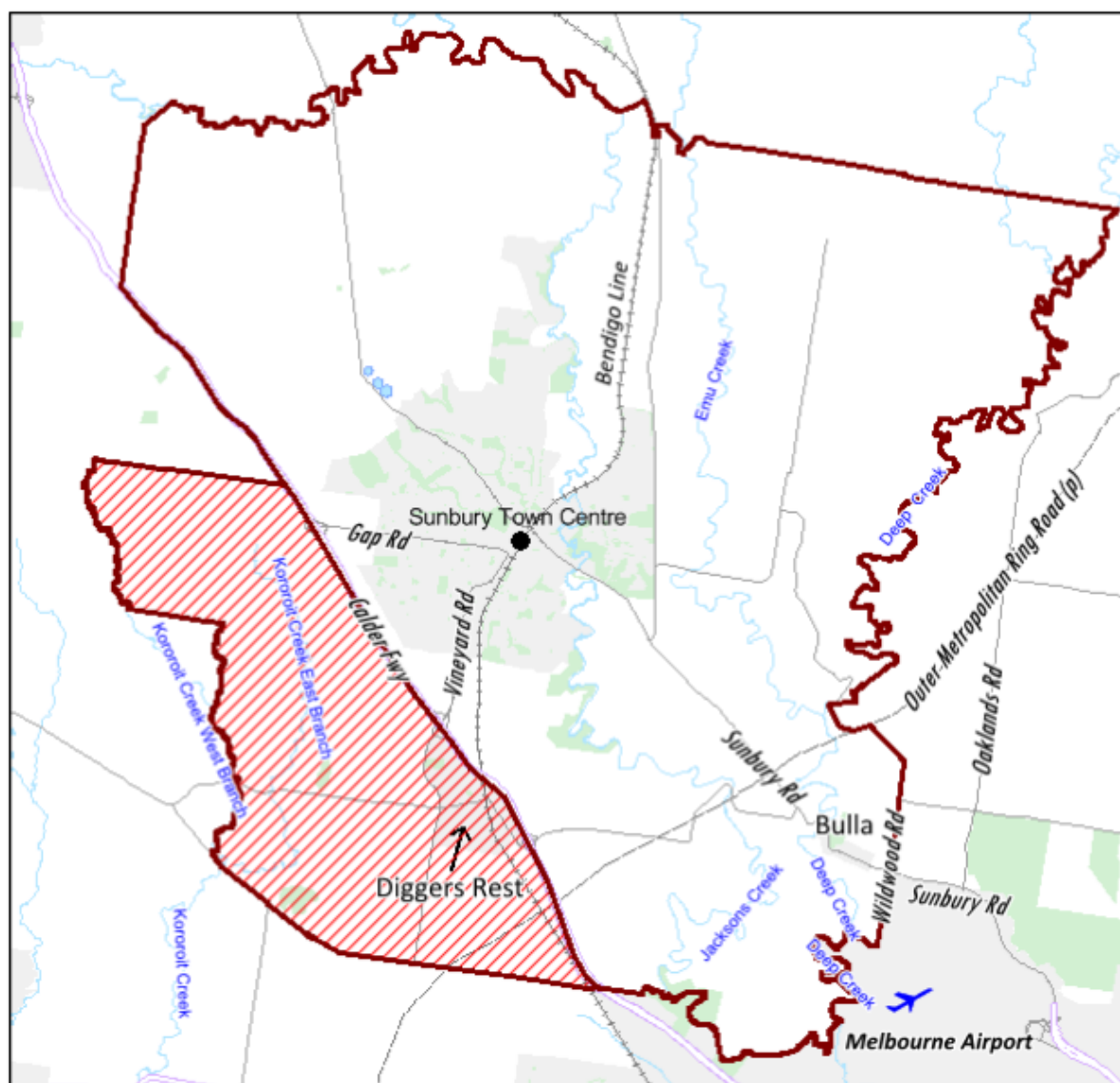


Source: MPA, 2014

8 The New Municipal Boundary

Map 8 delineates the recommended municipal boundary.

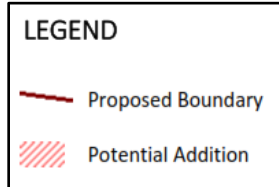
Map 8 | Proposed boundary of new municipality



Source : MacroPlan Dimasi

The proposed boundary overlays the three communities of interest and also considers topographical and natural boundaries. Accordingly, the proposed boundary:

- ☐ Includes Bulla and follows Wildwood Road to Deep Creek.
- ☐ Follows the Deep Creek boundary to the existing northern Hume City Council boundary.



- ☐ Follows the northern Hume City Council boundary to Sunbury North and recommends some minor adjustments to include the long term potential inclusion of Sunbury North just to the north of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).
- ☐ The currently planned future population capacity of the proposed municipality is approximately 100,000 persons. The proposed boundaries will have the capacity to accommodate approximately 200,000 persons in the long term.
- ☐ No 'community of interest' be divided by a municipal boundary; (not always possible).
- ☐ Town and country be developed as an inter-dependent functional unit.
- ☐ The municipal boundary be easily identifiable.

Table 8 | Proposed new Municipal Boundary rationale

Recommended Boundary	Description and Rationale
Northern	Extends along existing boundary between Hume and Macedon Ranges along the natural features of Deep Creek. This area is generally accepted by the community as the northern boundary. They relate to Sunbury and the environs. The area should contain the northern growth of Sunbury as delineated by the UGB.
Western	Extends the boundary from Jacksons Creek on northern boundary to the Calder Highway along the existing Hume boundary. Then extends further west to include Diggers Rest (in City of Melton) to the Kororoit Creek. Diggers Rest residents generally relate to Sunbury rather than Melton for shopping and other services. However, Diggers Rest residents have not expressed a view (at the ballot box) as to which municipality they would prefer to be part of.
Southern	Extends the boundary along Holden Road to Deep Creek and along the northern boundary of Melbourne Airport. Excludes Melbourne Airport from the new municipality.
Eastern	Extends the boundary along Deep Creek then deviates along Wildwood Road so as not to divide the township of Bulla, then extends along Deep Creek. The Bulla and Wildwood communities relate to Sunbury. Deep Creek is an important natural feature and is a natural barrier to movement to the east in other parts of the municipality. Oaklands Junction lies primarily to the east of Deep Creek with a small section of the northern part to the west of the Creek. While some residents' activity patterns relate to Sunbury, the majority of those who voted in

Recommended Boundary	Description and Rationale
	the Sunbury poll indicated not to support de-amalgamation – hence only that part west of Deep Creek is in the new municipality.

8.1 Melbourne Airport

The most frequently commented upon inclusion throughout the submission process was the land where the Melbourne Airport is sited. The Panel also received a range of views as to how the Melbourne Airport was to be considered, and various rationale for its inclusion into the new municipality of Sunbury or its retention as part of the future City of Hume.

Prior to the 1993-94 amalgamations, the airport was sited in the Shire of Bulla. Many of the submissions made reference to this pre 1994 arrangement, and express a sentiment that the airport 'belonged' to the then Shire. The Panel, in keeping with its rationale of no longer considering the arrangements of two decades ago materially significant did not consider this especially relevant. Moreover, the airport has grown considerably since the early 1990s and the impact upon Hume City Council is quite different to that experienced by the Shire of Bulla.

The Panel determined that the airport generates impacts which will magnify over time. This includes consideration of the noise impacts as they pertain to planning, as well as the more obvious increased traffic and associated pressures plus the proposed new runways. Managing these pressures requires a level of sophistication and skill that Hume City Council has developed over the past two decades.

Also importantly, the Melbourne Airport is a significant strategic transport asset for Victoria. It is Australia's second busiest airport, and is advantaged by the absence of a curfew that provides it with a competitive advantage over Sydney and other airports. Melbourne Airport currently handles some 29.1 million passengers per year and 250,000 tonnes of freight. Forecasts indicate that these figures will increase to 64 million passengers and 393,000 tonnes of freight by 2033.¹⁰

The most significant (in terms of number of references in submissions) rationale for the inclusion of the airport into a new municipality of Sunbury is that the annual payment of rates in lieu will add significantly to the revenue stream of a smaller municipality. Many submissions either explicitly or implicitly argued for the airport's inclusion on these grounds, with a prevalent view expressed that without the airport, a new municipality may have to increase rates on the balance of properties significantly, thereby affecting the municipality's sustainability.

The Panel's views on municipal sustainability are covered further in the main Panel report but are highly relevant to the airport inclusion matter. The Panel came to a view that the sustainability of a future municipality would require consideration of a range of factors, most directly on expenditure management and the organizational structure and approach to service delivery. Determining

¹⁰ Melbourne Airport Masterplan 2013

sustainability as solely a consequence of the inclusion or exclusion of a single revenue item would unlikely lead to changed management practices or the necessary actions to ensuring a sustainable future. To this end, by including the airport (and therefore its revenue) into a new municipality simply as an 'easy' way to ensuring financial sustainability would be to perpetuate a myth that simply with more external revenue support can local governments ensure their sustainability, without considering service levels and choices and ignoring organizational structures and management performance. Such an approach, by a new municipality or any other local government is neither sustainable nor prudent.

Inclusion of the airport into a new municipality would potentially manifest itself with a less motivated and innovative municipal administration, overly dependent upon one large effective ratepayer. Second, it may be unlikely to have the skills and expertise to plan and manage the consequences of airport operations in a way mutually beneficial to the airport and the rest of the community; a balance that Hume City Council has, in the view of the Panel, managed to strike.

Therefore, the Panel determined that for the purposes of continuity and certainty for one of Victoria's strategic transport assets, the land upon which the airport is sited remain situated in the City of Hume. The Panel's boundary recommendations therefore reflect this view.

9 A New Approach

A key aim of the new municipality would be to create strong and capable governance structures and practices able:

- ▣ To realise efficiencies
- ▣ To reinforce the sense of community and cohesion that exists
- ▣ To engender confidence in the community and meet the communities'/ratepayers' ongoing expectations
- ▣ To involve the community in an ongoing way in the development of their municipality and the ownership of delivering services – *connecting communities, projects, finance and funds*.¹¹

The following provides suggestions on how this could be achieved.

9.1 Collaboration to Reduce Cost

The new municipality has enormous potential to help its communities shape their preferred futures. The new municipality will need to choose the optimal ways of delivering services and managing the funds effectively and efficiently. As McKinlay states: *Developing and implementing these responses requires a collaborative approach – councils working with councils, and both individual councils and the sector working with stakeholders seeking consensus on what needs to be done and how to do it (p21).*

Information gleaned from the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) provides empirical evidence that council collaboration does reduce costs. An overseas example of such includes:

- ▣ Virgin Media Business – provides cost-effective communication procurement for all London bodies in partnership with London PSN. The shared network provides Local Authorities across the capital with essential local access to facilities such as Department of Work and Pensions, the Government Intranet service and the Department of Health N3 service. It encourages data and service sharing across all borough councils and improves efficiency as it allows staff to work more flexibly.

Local examples include:

- ▣ Bituminous Road Sealing – includes five councils across the Central Highlands Region. By working collaboratively a contract worth \$22 million over a five year period has generated savings of more than \$3 million.

¹¹ *Strong Foundations for sustainable local infrastructure Connecting communities, projects, finance and funds* prepared by Ernst & Young for the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport, 2012

- ☐ Government resource sharing – includes eleven councils in the Hunter Valley Region of NSW. By working collaboratively and co-operatively, the councils have achieved many benefits, for example:
 - strong communication between, Mayors, Councillors and General Managers
 - shared professional expertise through staff forums
 - many inter-Council collaborative projects.

The Hunter Councils provide the lead in resource sharing and striving to reduce costs. In broad terms the Councils strategic units have provided regional resources in the environment division; delivered many local government based programs in learning and development with time and travel cost savings to each council; facilitated the procurement of over \$10 million worth of purchases with an average saving of 10% or \$1million regionally.

- ☐ Wellington Cabonne Blayney Strategic Alliance – includes three NSW councils. By working together they have made a net savings to date of over \$5million (2013).

The report by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office, published in May 2014, about the benefits of resource sharing, etc. further supports these initiatives.

9.2 Community Governance and Engagement

As stated previously (refer Section 5.1.2), the Sunbury community has expressed concerns over the lack of involvement in the planning and management of their services. Their views are consistent with other communities. They want to share in the decisions affecting the way they live.

As stated by McKinlay¹² :

One of the striking shifts taking place in local government is the growing demand for greater involvement in decisions which affect where people live – and in Australia the innovative ways in which councils are responding to this.

It's a shift which has been taking place over quite a long time, and is really the other side of the coin of the decline in turnout at local government elections. In essence, people are increasingly saying that what matters to them is not so much the ability to elect a councillor or councillors, as it is to share in decisions which directly affect them (p16).

This is certainly the attitude of the Sunbury community hence a more community or place based management approach is needed to ensure better ways of working and engaging with the community. In other words, the community becomes part of the solution. This would mean a move

¹² *Building Tomorrow's Local Government: Learning from the Global Context A Presentation to the Future of Local Government Summit 27, June 2012* by Peter McKinlay Director Local Government Centre AUT University Auckland New Zealand

away from Hume City Council's traditional functionally based organisational structure and provider of services to a more lean organisational structure where the new municipality is an 'enabler' or facilitator.

A series of reference groups – issues based and/or service based, where the community has ongoing representation and direct involvement in management is likely to be better suited to the restructured new municipality. A flexible approach will need to be taken in the first instance if a strong, ongoing relationship of mutual trust and collaboration is to be developed with the community. Such will need to be tested during the transition period.

Employment of effective stakeholder engagement techniques will be critical in order that people of the new municipality are able to influence the formulation and implementation of community plans and the Council policies and strategies that affect their daily lives. At the same time, management and at first the administrators of the new municipality will need to understand the importance of such engagement and have the breadth of expertise to ensure that the outcomes of stakeholder engagement inform decision-making. They will need to be able to:

- ▣ communicate evidence and ideas to a wide audience
- ▣ engage with a diverse range of stakeholders
- ▣ work across boundaries and networks, and
- ▣ build alliances and partnerships.

9.3 The Transition Period – transferring of responsibilities

A requirement of the ToR is to make recommendations with respect to (d) a process for ensuring the orderly transfer of responsibility for delivery of services from the existing Hume City Council to the new Shire of Sunbury in a way that provides for efficiency and innovation and minimal interruption in service delivery to residents of either municipality.

According to the CCC, considerable support was shown for the appointment of commissioners [or administrators] in some form to protect assets and to equitably manage the process. The Panel also notes that emphasis was placed on the importance of ongoing engagement with the community during the transition period. The Panel agrees with this and recommends that administrators be appointed, three with varying skills and capabilities to make it happen – to work with the community.

The Panel recommends that four key areas be addressed:

- ▣ Financial performance – financial measures that show Council's ability to meet needs of local community now and in the future.
- ▣ Asset management – balancing need with available funds to make best use of public resources.

- ☐ Governance performance – developing strong governance frameworks and performance measures that ensure strong leadership, community engagement, decision-making and separation of powers between the corporate and community
- ☐ Service delivery – determining agreed levels of service delivery with the community in context of new models for service efficiency and effectiveness.

The report prepared by Publicplace (refer **Attachment 1**) highlights the advantages and disadvantages of the different models for service delivery – direct service provision, shared services, outsourcing or contracting out to NGOs, resource sharing (regional solutions to local problems) for a range of services currently delivered by Hume City Council.

These models will need to be assessed further along with models for service delivery in other sectors – parks and gardens, road maintenance, etc. A business case, that is, detailed service evaluation cost modelling, for each identified service and new delivery model will need to be prepared to ensure greater effectiveness and efficiencies in service delivery and better outcomes for the community going forward. Such will need to be explored in collaboration with the community during the transition period in the reference groups.

Attachment 1

Publicplace Community Service Analysis and Planning

prepared for DTPLI to assist

Local Government (Sunbury out of Hume City Council) Panel

June 2014

Attachment 2

Demographic Characteristics