

## **ATTACHMENT 4**

**Sunbury Residents Association  
Submission**

**August 2000**

# SUNBURY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Established in 1974

Victorian Local Governance Association Member

## SUBMISSION TO

## THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (HUME CITY) COUNCIL REVIEW PANEL

AUGUST 2000

*It should be noted that the Board considers that the parts of that part of the Shire of Bulga west of Deep Creek (including the Sunbury township but excluding the area of the Colaba-Parramatta) be considered as part of the New Central Province. (p84)*

*in regard to the western boundary of the proposed City of Hume, the Deep Creek should be the western boundary of the Sunbury township and the Colaba-Parramatta. (p87)*

*The Board decided on balance not to place Sunbury within the proposed municipality (City of Hume) for the following reasons (pp87)*

- 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 actually a country town near the Macedon foothills with a lifestyle that is different from the city.
- It has more community of interest with Colaba and Woodend than with Kallaroo or Broadmeadows (pp87)

The Local Government Board clearly stated that Sunbury was not to be part of a Melbourne or Metropolitan based municipality.

The Local Government Board further emphasised this point by including a large map (pp32) in its submission report, which clearly showed Sunbury was outside the proposed City of Hume.

The Sunbury community accepted this position and there was enormous support within the Sunbury region that it would be part of a municipality linked with the Macedon Ranges or established as a stand alone municipality.

**SUBMISSION TO THE PANEL APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE  
THE VIABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF THE CITY OF HUME  
BECOMING TWO SEPARATE MUNICIPALITIES, ONE BEING  
BASED ON THE SUNBURY AREA**

1. POSITION
2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW BOARD –1994
3. STATE ELECTION COMMITMENT
4. SEPARATION OF SUNBURY AND DISTRICT FROM THE CITY OF HUME
5. ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF THE NEW SHIRE OF SUNBURY
6. COUNCIL STRUCTURE
7. CITY OF HUME WITHOUT SUNBURY AND REGION
8. IMPACT ON OTHER MUNICIPALITIES
9. CONCLUSION

ATTACHMENTS X 4

REVIEW PANEL ASSUMPTIONS - COMMENTS

## 1. POSITION

That the City of Hume becomes two separate municipalities one being based on the Sunbury area.

The new Sunbury based municipality (Shire of Sunbury) would comprise all that area of the City of Hume west of Deep Creek to the current boundaries between the municipalities of Macedon Ranges and Melton

## 2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW BOARD -1994

It was recognised during the 1994 review of local government by the Local Government Review Board that there was strong community support and justifiable arguments for Sunbury to be included in a municipality based on the Sunbury region.

The Local Government Board recognised the above and clearly determined in its Middle Outer Melbourne Interim report that the Sunbury area would be considered as part of the North Central Victoria review and not part of the metropolitan area (City of Hume).

The Board made a clear recommendation, which was supported by other statements within the report that Sunbury not be included within the new City of Hume.

The Board said in its report:

*It should be noted that the Board considers 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. (P83)*

*In respect to the western boundary of the new City of Hume The Board also recommended that Deep Creek should be the western boundary. This will exclude Sunbury township and the Calder Highway P87*

*The Board decided on balance not to place Sunbury within this proposed municipality (City of Hume) for the following reasons (pp87)*

- *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 community of interest with Gisborne and Woodend than with Keilor or Broadmeadows (pp87)*

The Local Government Board clearly recognised that Sunbury and District should not be part of a Melbourne metropolitan based municipality.

The Local Government Board further emphasised this point by including a large map (pp82) in its interim report, which clearly showed Sunbury was outside the proposed City of Hume.

The Sunbury community accepted this position and there was enormous expectation within the Sunbury region that it would be part of a municipality linked with the Macedon Ranges or established as a stand alone municipality.



However, without any further public consultation and clearly contrary to its own interim report the Local Government Board in its final report included Sunbury in the new metropolitan City of Hume municipality.

Following the release of the Board's final report a petition of over 2,500 signatures objecting to the recommendation of the Board's final report that proposed Sunbury be included in the City of Hume was collected in Sunbury over three Saturday mornings.

This petition demonstrated that there was significant public dissatisfaction with the recommendations contained in the Board's final report in respect to Sunbury.

The Sunbury Residents Association also met with the then Minister for Local Government Roger Hallam MLC and request that the recommendation for the incorporation of Sunbury and district in the metropolitan-based City of Hume be rejected.

While the Minister provided a verbal commitment that he would respond to the request within one week, he provided no such response despite numerous contacts by this Association and the then member for Tullamarine Mr. Bernie Finn. In fact the Minister did not provide any response at all.

Since the inappropriate incorporation of Sunbury within the City of Hume there has been continuous community activities to have Sunbury and district removed from the City of Hume including representation to government and opposition members of State parliament.

It can be seen from this background that Sunbury should not have been included within the City of Hume in the first place and that there has been continuous high level active community effort to have the decisions corrected.

### 3. STATE ELECTION COMMITMENT

A meeting was held in August 1999 with the then leader of the state parliamentary labor party The Hon. Steve Bracks who responded positively to the case for the separation of Sunbury and district from the City of Hume and the level of continuous community support for such action.

In a letter dated 10 August 1999 to the Sunbury Residents Association (see attachment 1) Mr. Bracks, said

*As mentioned to you, Labor will consider change to municipal boundaries where there is a clear and definable case for modification(s). In regard to Sunbury, I believe there is sufficient local ground swell for a separate municipality from the City of Hume, to warrant a poll of Sunbury and district residents*

*Under a Bracks labor Government this poll would be concluded in the first year of our term of office, requiring more than 50% of those polled in favour of a change before any boundary change is undertaken.*

On the election of the state Labor Government a proposal was put by the Minister for Local Government The Hon. Bob Cameron to the City of Hume to undertake a poll of the whole of the City of Hume not just of Sunbury and district as per Mr Brack's commitment.

Due to a number of reasons the poll was not proceeded with. Following subsequent representations by the Sunbury Residents Association and the Sunbury Chamber of Commerce to the Minister for Local Government, the Minister determined that a Panel be appointed to investigate the viability and feasibility of the City of Hume becoming two separate municipalities, one being based on the Sunbury area and being the area within the City of Hume west of Deep Creek.

This again demonstrates that the Sunbury community will not be deterred from its efforts to have the Sunbury area withdrawn from the City of Hume.

#### **4. SEPARATION OF SUNBURY & DISTRICT FROM THE CITY OF HUME**

The following details arguments for the separation of Sunbury from the City of Hume.

##### **No Community of Interest**

There is virtually no community of interest between Sunbury and the eastern part of the City of Hume.

The Local Government Board recognised this fact and in its interim report listed as one of the reasons for not including Sunbury within the Hume City municipality as

*it (Sunbury) has more community of interest with Gisborne and Woodend than with Keilor or Broadmeadows.*

Sunbury residents continue to feel polarised from the eastern part of the municipality and the community has on a number of occasions clearly demonstrated their support for the separation of Sunbury from the City of Hume. The latest being the number of residents who attended the community consultation on the separation issue held in Sunbury on 29 July 2000 by the Review Panel.

##### **No Transport Links**

There are no direct transport links between Sunbury and the eastern part of the City of Hume which further demonstrates the lack of interaction between the Sunbury area and the eastern part of the municipality.

Sunbury is located in the Calder corridor and is serviced by the Calder Highway and the Bendigo train line and its community of interest and transport links are located along this corridor. The eastern part of the City of Hume is in the Hume Highway corridor and serviced by the Seymour train line.

In fact to travel to the Broadmeadows municipal offices from Sunbury by public transport residents have to first travel to either North Melbourne by train or to Essendon by bus and then by train to the Broadmeadows side of the municipality. Both trips take close to one hour in travelling time, which does not include waiting times between connecting public transport modes.



The Local Government Board also recognised this as a factor and said in its interim report:

*Craigieburn and Sunbury are serviced by two different railway lines and bus routes. There is no direct bus or train route between the two (p85)*

### **Different Regional Character**

The former Shire of Bulla's motto / theme was City Living Country Style. This theme was particularly reflective of the life style character of the Sunbury and district area.

The Local Government Board recognised the importance of these semi rural regional characteristics in its interim report when it stated as one of the reasons for not including Sunbury within the City of Hume as:

*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*

*Sunbury sees itself as the entry to the Macedon Ranges (pp87)*

This unique lifestyle and character was the attraction for many residents who chose to move to the Sunbury region. Many residents have moved from the metropolitan area to the Sunbury region because of this unique character. Also many residents from rural Victoria who needed to move closer to Melbourne specifically decided to locate in Sunbury because of the semi rural character it provided in comparison to the metropolitan areas.

The preservation of this rural character was incorporated in the development of the former Shire of Bulla's Rural Area Strategy Plan and other strategies including the Sunbury Township Approach Strategy and the Sunbury Town Centre Design Theme.

These strategies were part of an overall planning framework developed in response to the strong community desire to protect the unique semi rural character and lifestyle of the Sunbury area. The framework aims to protect the green belt that separates Sunbury and the metropolitan areas of Melbourne from inappropriate urban type developments and ensure the developments within Sunbury commercial area are consistent with a prevailing design theme.

The protection of this character continues to be strongly supported by the vast majority of both the long-term residents and the new residents in the Sunbury region.

However, the metropolitan based councillors of the **Hume municipality have demonstrated that they have no empathy or understanding of this character and the lifestyle** of the Sunbury region and the reason why so many of its residents moved to the area and their aspirations for the future development of the region.

We firmly believe this semi rural character and lifestyle will be destroyed within a few years if Sunbury remains within the City of Hume. The Council's preparedness to totally undermine this character and lifestyle is clearly demonstrated in the major planning decisions the council has taken which were totally contrary to the planning framework for this region.

The key planning decisions taken by the City of Hume council, which directly undermined and threatened the rural character of the region, have included:



- **Councils decisions to support the subdivision of a major parcel of land on Settlement Rd - west of Sunbury (Amendment L39 - 1998). The Council supported this amendment against the clear recommendation of its planning officers.**

Rural based residents in the area and the Sunbury Residents Association objected to this proposed subdivision in the green belt surrounding Sunbury. The Shire of Macedon Ranges also saw the potential impact of the decision by the City of Hume and objected to the proposal.

The local residents and the Sunbury Residents Association argued against the proposal on planning grounds before an independent planning panel appointed by the Minister for Planning pursuant to the Planning and Environment Act, with an aim of protecting the surrounding rural environment.

The planning panel rejected the Council's decision and recommended that the amendment be abandoned, as it was contrary to the planning framework covering the Sunbury and district area.

The Planning Panel stated in its report that:

*when fully developed the subdivision will change the rural character of the area because of the nature of the residential development that is likely to occur.*

*The subdivision has the potential to affect the conduct of adjoining rural uses, adding to the pressure for future subdivision of adjacent land.*

- **Councils decision to place on public exhibition and subsequently refer to a panel a proposed subdivision of 127 hectares of rural land between Sunbury and Diggers Rest along Vineyard Rd (Amendment No L44 - 1999).**

The Sunbury and district community again was forced to protect the unique character of the region before an independent planning panel appointed by the Minister for Planning. The Sunbury Conservation Society, Sunbury Residents Association and a number of residents opposed this amendment and argued to protect the important rural entrance into Sunbury.

The planning panel again recommended that council abandon the amendment. The panel concluded that the amendment substantially breached current and proposed planning objectives and policy for the City of Hume and Sunbury area.

The Planning Panel stated in its report that:

*Council (City of Hume) did not fulfill its major obligations as a planning authority when it made its decisions about this amendment. In practical terms this led to the prolongation of the life of an amendment which in the Panel's view should not have been exhibited in the first place. In practical terms it raised expectations amongst the proponent land owners which cannot be met, and used Council and Community resources that could have been put to better use.*

*The panel believes that these practical outcomes should not be dismissed lightly as they are often at the heart of perceptions about the performance of the planning system.*

*The panel urges the Council to consider more fully in the future whether allowing these planning schemes amendments which cannot be strategically supported to proceed to*

*exhibition and beyond is in the interest of its community, and whether it can actually deliver on the expectations that it raises amongst land owners when it takes this course of action*

- **City of Hume's decision to issue a permit for the development of a major petrol filling station and restaurant complex in the rural area along Sunbury Bulla Rd between Sunbury and Bulla. The Council supported this development against the clear recommendation of its statutory and strategic planning officers.**

The Sunbury Residents Association and the Sunbury Conservation Society and individual residents again had to fight to protect the rural character of the region as this proposed development would have set a major precedence and totally undermined the planning framework that protects the rural areas between the Bulla and Sunbury townships.

The Community argued before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal in December 1999 against this development.

The tribunal rejected the City of Hume council's decision and determined that a permit not be issued. The tribunal stated that:

*the Responsible Authority (City of Hume Council) decision to allow the development and use of the subject land represented an ad hoc approach to decision making. It does not appear to me that the Responsible Authority's decision to approve the permit application albeit with modifications had due regard to the long standing policies "green wedge" policies.*

*The Responsible Authority (City of Hume) must resist the temptation to make "ad hoc" decisions in response to claims that rural enterprises are not viable.*

*I do not consider it appropriate to allow the use and development of the subject land for urban purpose when the Local Planning Policy Framework clearly directs such uses to be located within the townships, township boundaries are to be contained and integrity of the non urban areas in between townships is to be protect and enhanced.*

These examples clearly demonstrate that the metropolitan based City of Hume does not place the same value on protecting the green areas which surrounds Sunbury as does the Sunbury region community. This semi rural characteristics and lifestyle will therefore continue to be under threat and eventually destroyed if Sunbury remains within the City of Hume.

#### **Neglect of Sunbury and district infrastructure.**

Since the inappropriate incorporation of Sunbury within the City of Hume there is a clear and justifiable perceptions within Sunbury that the Sunbury area is being significant neglected.

There has been no new Council provided infrastructure of any major significance since the merger, even though the Sunbury area continues to experience strong growth and a significant level of assets in the area have been sold by the Council.

Also the maintenance levels of existing facilities and infrastructure including parks and garden including those within the Sunbury CBD area have significantly deteriorated which the community clearly recognizes.



Services have deteriorated which is reflected in examples such as the recent closure of the Sunbury pound and its relocation to Whittlesea.

Also only a limited number of Council administrative divisions are now located at the Sunbury offices. Sunbury residents need to travel to Broadmeadows to undertake face to face discussions with relevant officers in areas such as statutory planning, building and health.

It is expected that some time in the future this level of staff will be further reduced resulting in a reduction in face to face contact by the Sunbury community with staff in the Sunbury office.

#### **Sale of Sunbury based community assets**

As at 10 April 2000 a total of \$3.941m worth of assets located in Sunbury have been sold (see-attachment 2) with no return in the way of improved infrastructure in the Sunbury area. Since this date a further property has been sold.

No assets are safe from sale, which is reflected in Council previous proposal to sell the well established, and highly regarded youth centre facility in Evans St Sunbury. The centre was saved from sale only due to the high level and tireless efforts of the Sunbury community.

The possible sale of the Sunbury youth centre by Council was occurring at the same time as the Council was considering the construction of a new youth centre in the eastern part of the municipality.

#### **Potential asset sales**

This Association wrote to Council on March 2000 seeking a valuation of a number of assets

Council replied with 1994 valuations. Based on our discussions with real estate agents and developers we estimate the value of these assets is now close to \$12m.

Council in its letter was not able to reassure the Sunbury community that these assets would not be sold and also that any revenue generated from the sale would be directed to projects located in Sunbury area.

Due to the structure of the Council with only two councillors covering the Sunbury district the future use of these Sunbury based community assets will be predominately determined by councillors outside Sunbury.

This again is of great concern to the Sunbury community and further strengthens its view that Sunbury needs to be separated from the City of Hume so as the Sunbury and district community can determine its own future.

## **5. ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF THE NEW SHIRE OF SUNBURY**

### **Size**

We believe the new Shire of Sunbury will be viable, as its population would be close to 30,000 (which includes the rural areas and part of the Bulla population), which is equal or greater than 43% (35) of existing municipalities in Victoria (see attachment 3) and a large number of municipalities in other states which appear to be viable.

The Shire of Sunbury will have a population similar to municipalities of Macedon Ranges, Mitchell, Wodonga, Melton and Moorabool. However, the Shire of Sunbury will be substantially more compact with a significantly higher population density than each of these other municipalities which have a number of population centres to service.

The population density of the Shire of Sunbury would be in the order of 300 per sq. klm while the above municipalities population density varies from 9 to 81 per sq. klm.

Sunbury is experiencing steady and firm population growth, which is forecast to continue to 2021. This will provide a good increase in the residential rate base. The increasing population level makes additional commercial operations viable e. g as the township reached 30,000 people it became viable to construct a new major multi million dollar commercial complex (incorporating Big W and Safeway) currently under construction in Home St which also includes a picture theatre complex consisting of seven screens.

Other commercial operations will become viable with each reasonable population increment resulting in increases in the commercial rate base.

### **Efficiencies**

The Shire of Sunbury would have a number of in built efficiencies including the fact that it would be compact with only one major population centre surrounded by a rural area. The benefit of this are that key infrastructure including library, pool, leisure centre and a range of sporting facilities will not be duplicated which significantly reduce capital and operational and coordination costs.

It should be noted that there are a number of existing similar sized municipalities, which have a number of townships to service and yet appear to be viable; e.g. The Shire of Macedon Ranges has seven distinct population centres while The Shire of Mitchell has three, with the resulting duplication of facilities within each municipality.

The Shire of Sunbury would not incur the substantial costs that the City of Hume incurs as a result of staff having to continue to travel between a number of centres across the municipality. This includes both indoor and outdoor staff (permanent and contract).

We estimate that these costs will be significant and should not be underestimated. In one conversation we were informed by an officer of the City of Hume that they had travelled between the Broadmeadows and Sunbury offices on three occasions on the same day.



These significant cost include

- Vehicle purchase and operating (including petrol)
- Increased staff requirements due to lost staff time during travel
- Increased communication costs including mobile phones

There has also been no demonstrated evidence that any significant economies of scale have resulted from the merger resulting in the City of Hume. We believe that because of the nature and spread of the City of Hume there could in fact be some diseconomies and inherent inefficiencies.

The previous Shire of Bulla also incurred some inefficiencies with the spread of its population centres across a broad area which resulted in the duplication of facilities including swimming pools, stadiums and golf courses. The Shire of Bulla also had two office locations being at Sunbury (main office) and Cragieburn again increasing its staffing levels and associated costs.

Both the current City of Hume and previous Shire of Bulla organisational structures reflected the need to cover two office locations and services a broad and multi centered municipality with duplication in a wide range of facilities and the need for central coordinating staff and management.

The proposed Shire of Sunbury will be compact with a single population centre with no duplication of services, which incorporates resulting significant efficiencies.

We believe the new Shire of Sunbury would be able to undertake a range of activities currently undertaken by dedicated staff within the City of Hume e.g. economic development and media and communications units through the incorporation of these activities into the day to day activities of other existing staff. This will provide significant savings without impacting on the services provided to the residents of the new Shire.

#### **Existing Administration infrastructure**

The Shire of Sunbury will incorporate established and up to date municipal administration offices and Council chambers located in Macedon St Sunbury and an established municipal depot in McDougell Rd Sunbury. As the whole of these facilities will not be required part of the facilities could be commercially leased to generate additional income. We believe these facilities will be sold if Sunbury remains part of the City of Hume.

#### **Level of Debt**

It is noted that there will be a need for Sunbury to accept its fair share of the existing debt of the City of Hume. However, the debt apportioned to Sunbury needs to reflect the fact that most of Sunbury's infrastructure would be debt free or close to it.

This is partly due to the fact that

- A number of Sunbury's existing council facilities were provided fully or partly through significant grants provided by the State Government over a number of years through the then Melton Sunbury Management Fund. This fund was established by the State Government to support the then satellite

- 5. township polices of Sunbury and Melton. Substantial funds were provided through this fund to the two towns for infrastructure in advance of their need.

Infrastructure fully or partly provided through this special funding arrangement included the Sunbury Leisure Centre, Boardman stadium and the town centre paving.

- Other major facilities were partly provided with minimum borrowings and these borrowings will now be substantially paid off.
- There has been no new infrastructure provided in Sunbury of any significance other than footpath development since the merger process, which again reduces the expected debt that would be apportioned to the new Shire of Sunbury.

### **Retiring of Apportioned Debt**

In respect to the debt fairly apportioned to the new Shire of Sunbury arrangements are proposed whereby, this debt can be retired early in the establishment process from the proceeds from the partial sale of the community owned land in Racecourse Rd Sunbury.

The arrangement proposed involves the selling of approx. 90 acres of the 120 acres of community owned land in Racecourse Rd with the proceeds used to retire the apportioned debt, cover establishment costs of the new municipality and provide funds for future infrastructure requirements.

Following consultation with local developers this Association estimates the value of this sale alone will generate \$7-\$8m. The remaining 30 acres would be retained for community open space type activities.

These strategies will in fact enable the new Shire of Sunbury to be debt free, a situation enjoyed by only a very few existing Victorian municipalities.

This debt free situation and the identified efficiencies will eliminate or substantially reduce any upward pressure on the rates of the new Shire of Sunbury.

### **Staffing**

The separation of Sunbury from the City of Hume should be undertaken in a planned and orderly manner.

This approach would include the continuation of current contracts including garbage collection, management, operation of the aquatic centre, file / registry management and parks and gardens which will substantially reduce the impact on the staffing arrangements

These contracts could continue to provide services to the Shire of Sunbury with the new Shire paying the City of Hume for the services provided on an agreed basis.

### **Organisational Structure**

The new organisation of the Shire of Sunbury should reflect the identified efficiencies with a significant reduced requirement for activities such as dedicated economic development and media and communications units.



The new organisation will provide new work and career opportunities for existing City of Hume staff moving to the new Shire of Sunbury organisation as well as being attractive in the future for new staff. The new Shire of Sunbury organisational structure will be flatter reflecting the compact nature of the Shire with activities highly focused on service delivery rather than internal process operations.

The new structure would have a reduced need for central services and facility management coordinating and planning.

## **Budget**

We believe that the new Shire of Sunbury with the in built efficiencies with no loan repayment requirements will provide a sound financial base.

An indicative budget (attachment 4) has been prepared for the new Shire of Sunbury which incorporates the identified efficiencies resulting from a compact predominately single population centre municipality. These efficiencies include:

- Reduced duplication of facilities and services
- Reduced central coordination costs of services and facilities including sporting facilities
- Reduced travelling costs and lost employee time for both indoor and outdoor staff
- Reduced need for specialised staff such economic development and media publicity staff as these functions can be incorporated into the day to day activities of other senior staff.

The indicative budget is also based on a debt free arrangement, which provides substantial ongoing benefits.

The budget does include a municipal levy of \$20 per property as part of the budget.

The budget does not include any net surplus from the Sunbury tip as it is unclear based on the information provided by the Review Panel as to how the revenue is recorded and whether this revenue is hidden in contractual arrangements or reserves.

The figures provided show that the Sunbury tip is in fact making a loss of \$96,000. There is a major regional tip and should be clearly generating a substantial surplus at least in the order of \$200,000 to \$300,000.

There is also the potential for increased income through the provision of proactive support to rural landowners to value add to their properties resulting in a net increase in return to themselves and to the new Shire. The Shire of Sunbury with its semi rural characteristics and basis and understanding will be well placed to take a lead in this area.

The indicative budget includes a small level of asset sales being \$130,000 which would occur in the first year only.

Note the establishment costs and debt redemption costs of the new Shire are covered through the proposed partial sale of the Racecourse Rd land.

## **6. COUNCIL STRUCTURE**

### **Sunbury**

The model proposed for the new Shire of Sunbury council structure involves 5 councillors with no wards. The two existing councillors would see out their current term to 2003.

Three new councillors would be elected for a term running to the next scheduled council elections in 2003.

### **City of Hume**

It is proposed that arrangements be put in place whereby the orderly withdrawal of Sunbury district from the City of Hume does not necessitate council elections within the City of Hume until the election due date in 2003. These arrangements would enable all the existing City of Hume Councillors to complete their term.

The withdrawal of Sunbury also provides the City of Hume the opportunity to review its ward structure and to determine whether there is a need for any changes in ward structure or councillor numbers. Adopted changes to the City of Hume council arrangements can then be put in place for the City of Hume for the next Council elections.

### **Boundaries**

The boundaries of the new Shire of Sunbury would include the existing Sunbury area to Deep Creek Bulla and to the existing boundaries with Macedon Ranges and Melton municipalities.

The Local Government Review Board identified Deep Creek boundary as an ideal boundary during its review.

## **7. CITY OF HUME WITHOUT SUNBURY AND REGION**

The City of Hume will continue to be one of the larger municipalities following the withdrawal of Sunbury and will replace the Sunbury population in the medium term with the continued strong growth in growth areas within the City of Hume, which include Craigieburn, Roxburgh Park and Greenvale.

With the removal of Sunbury from the metropolitan part of the City of Hume, the City will be able to better focus on its remaining growth centres and address the many issues in respect to the ongoing and rapid development in these areas.

The City of Hume without Sunbury and district will be a more compact municipality, which will provide efficiencies resulting from reduced facility duplication and direct and indirect staff travelling costs within the municipality.

There is also the real potential for the withdrawal of Sunbury from the City of Hume to delay the need for new administrative officers for the City of Hume. These offices could cost well in excess of \$10m.



This deferral provides the City of Hume the opportunity to bring forward the provision of other required community facilities.

#### **Bulla Village**

We recognise that the issue of the location of Bulla will need to be addressed by the Review Panel, which should take account of the views of the residents in that area. We understand that there is some feeling that when the Shire of Sunbury is established that Bulla Village residents would prefer to be located as a whole within the new Shire of Sunbury. If the panel determined this way there would need to be some adjustment of the proposed boundary in the Bulla area.

### **8. IMPACT ON OTHER MUNICIPALITIES**

No other municipality will be affected by the required changes, as the external boundaries lines with surrounding existing municipalities will remain unchanged.

## 9. CONCLUSION

We request that the Review Panel recognise that after 5 years it is clear that the inclusion of Sunbury and district within the metropolitan based City of Hume has not worked and will not work in the future.

We strongly believe that a new Sunbury based municipality will be viable and be better able to manage the orderly development of the Sunbury and district region within a semi rural environment. It will gain efficiencies due to its compact size and substantial reduced duplication of facilities.

The community has continuously demonstrated its overwhelming and broad based support for the separation of Sunbury from the City of Hume which is considered essential to protect the semi rural characteristics of the region which attracted so many of the residents to the Sunbury area. The separation would reflect the fact that there are no shared community of interest or public transport links between the eastern and western parts of the City of Hume.

The Local Government Review Board recognised these factors in its 1994 interim report and clearly recommended that Sunbury not be part of the City of Hume.

The strong and broad community support and actively for the withdrawal of Sunbury will continue until this outcome is achieved.

The withdrawal of Sunbury and district from the City of Hume will also in the medium term be of significant benefit to the City of Hume and enable it to increase its focus on its growth centres and existing population areas. It will also gain some additional efficiencies resulting from a more compact municipality.

We therefore call for the adjustment to the municipal arrangements through the establishment of the Shire of Sunbury in order to put in place an appropriate and supported municipal structure which will manage the orderly development of the Sunbury region well into the twenty first century.