

Queensland Schools Planning Forum 2022

Victorian Government School Site Selection



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Photographer: Anthea Dance, Indec

Overview of presentation

1. Introduction to the criteria
2. Intended audience
3. Application and limitations
4. General principles
5. Different geographic settings
6. Requirements and variations
7. Review process
8. Questions and discussion



Developing the criteria



Victorian Government School Site Selection Criteria – Guidance and Toolbox

- **Guidance**

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/land-acquisition/guidance>

- **Toolbox**

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/land-acquisition/resources>

Policy and Advisory Library


Find operational policies and guidance for schools from the Department of Education and Training

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Topics A-Z

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Human resources (HR)
Human resources information and services for principals, managers and employees staff including employment conditions, workforce management, recruitment and respectful workplaces (previously on HRWeb)
[Human resources policies A-Z](#)



Finance and procurement
Information on all finance and procurement requirements for schools including the Finance Manual, the Student Resource Package, procurement, budget and accounting requirements
[Finance and procurement policies A-Z](#)



Student health, safety, wellbeing and engagement
Policies and guidance to support student health and wellbeing including child safety, specific health conditions, students with disabilities, duty of care, students at risk and bullying
[Student health, safety, wellbeing and engagement A-Z](#)



Infrastructure and facilities
Information to support planning, building and management of school infrastructure and facilities including Victorian School Building Authority policy, guidelines and resources
[Infrastructure and facilities A-Z](#)

No.	General Principle	Site Feature	Greenfield Requirement	Hierarchy of Requirements and Departures	Established Area Requirement	Hierarchy of Requirements and Departures	High Density Requirement	Hierarchy of Requirements and Departures
1	Avoid competition/negative impact on enrolments at existing schools or other planned schools	Distance from other existing and planned government schools	Future school catchment boundaries (based on halfway point between schools) should ensure a balanced distribution of local enrolments.	Possible. Can be varied if agreed by the department provided that any negative externalities on long-term enrolment can be outweighed by addressing an access gap in school provision / network.	School sites should be centrally located to align with where student demand is located and a suitable geographic distribution with existing and other future school sites. Any implications to the existing school zones should also be assessed by the department. New school sites should address access gaps between existing and planned schools.	Possible. Can be varied depending on the land availability within the established area.	School sites should be centrally located to align with where student demand is located and a suitable geographic distribution with existing and other future school sites. Any implications to the existing school zones should also be assessed by the department. New school sites should address access gaps between existing and planned schools.	Likely. Can be varied depending on the land availability, and in the case of vertical schools or capital projects with extreme land restrictions.
2	Ensure surrounding land uses are complementary to a school site	Location	Land uses surrounding school sites should be limited to residential development, open space and community facilities. Locations proximate to industrial areas, and other existing land uses where the proximity of a school could be problematic (for example, adult services, licenced premises, service stations) should be avoided. Common boundaries of school sites with residential uses should be avoided whenever possible to avoid adverse amenity impacts on residential areas. New government primary schools must have a kindergarten co-located with the school. Where a specialist school is proposed, it should wherever possible be co-located / adjacent to an existing or proposed government school, preferably a secondary school.	Possible. Can be varied if agreed by the department, provided that any negative externalities from the alternative land use (for example, parking and traffic from a town centre) can be minimised.	Land uses surrounding school sites should be limited to residential development, open space and community facilities. Locations proximate to industrial areas, and other existing land uses where the proximity of a school could be problematic (for example, adult services, licenced premises, service stations) should be avoided. Common boundaries of school sites with residential uses should be avoided whenever possible to avoid adverse amenity impacts on residential areas. New government primary schools must have a kindergarten co-located with the school. Where a specialist school is proposed, it should wherever possible be co-located / adjacent to an existing or proposed government school, preferably a secondary school.	Possible. Can be varied provided that any negative externalities from the alternative land use (for example, parking and traffic from a town centre) can be minimised.	Land uses surrounding school sites should be limited to residential development, open space and community facilities. Locations proximate to industrial areas, and other existing land uses where the proximity of a school could be problematic (for example, adult services, licenced premises, service stations) should be avoided. In the case of vertical school design (high rise development) co-location in the same building with other uses must be limited to community facilities, indoor sports and recreation facilities. New government primary schools must have a kindergarten co-located with the school. Where a specialist school is proposed, it should wherever possible be co-located / adjacent to an existing or proposed government school, preferably a secondary school.	Likely. Can be varied provided that any negative externalities from the alternative land use (for example, parking and traffic from a town centre) can be minimised. Unlikely. In the case of vertical school design (high rise development) co-location in the same building with other uses can only be varied if any negative externalities from the alternative co-location use (for example, community health services access) can be minimised.

Type of geographic setting and associated requirements, hierarchy of requirements and departures:

● Greenfield areas
 ● Established areas
 ● High density areas

Intended audience



Direct users

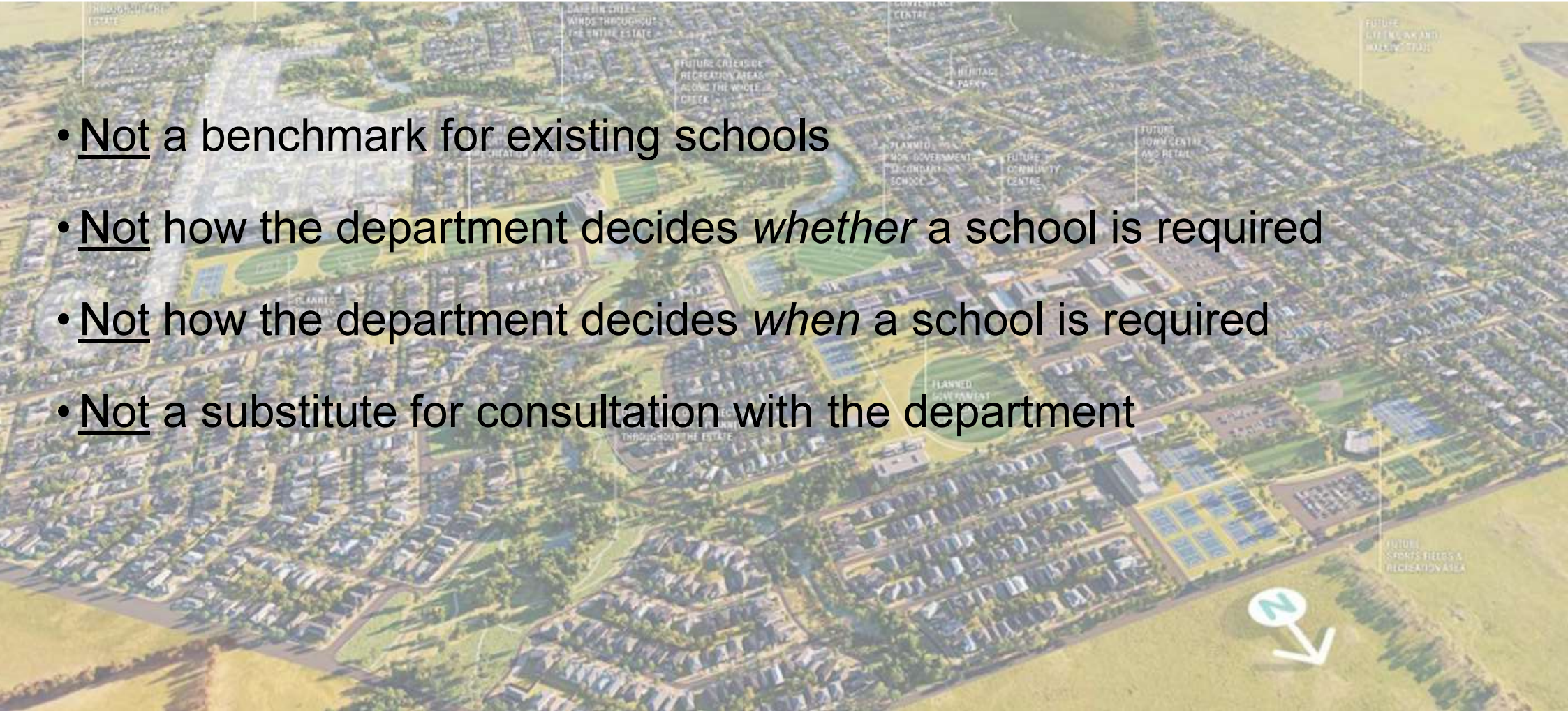
- Victorian Planning Authority
- Municipal Councils
- Developers
- Etc.

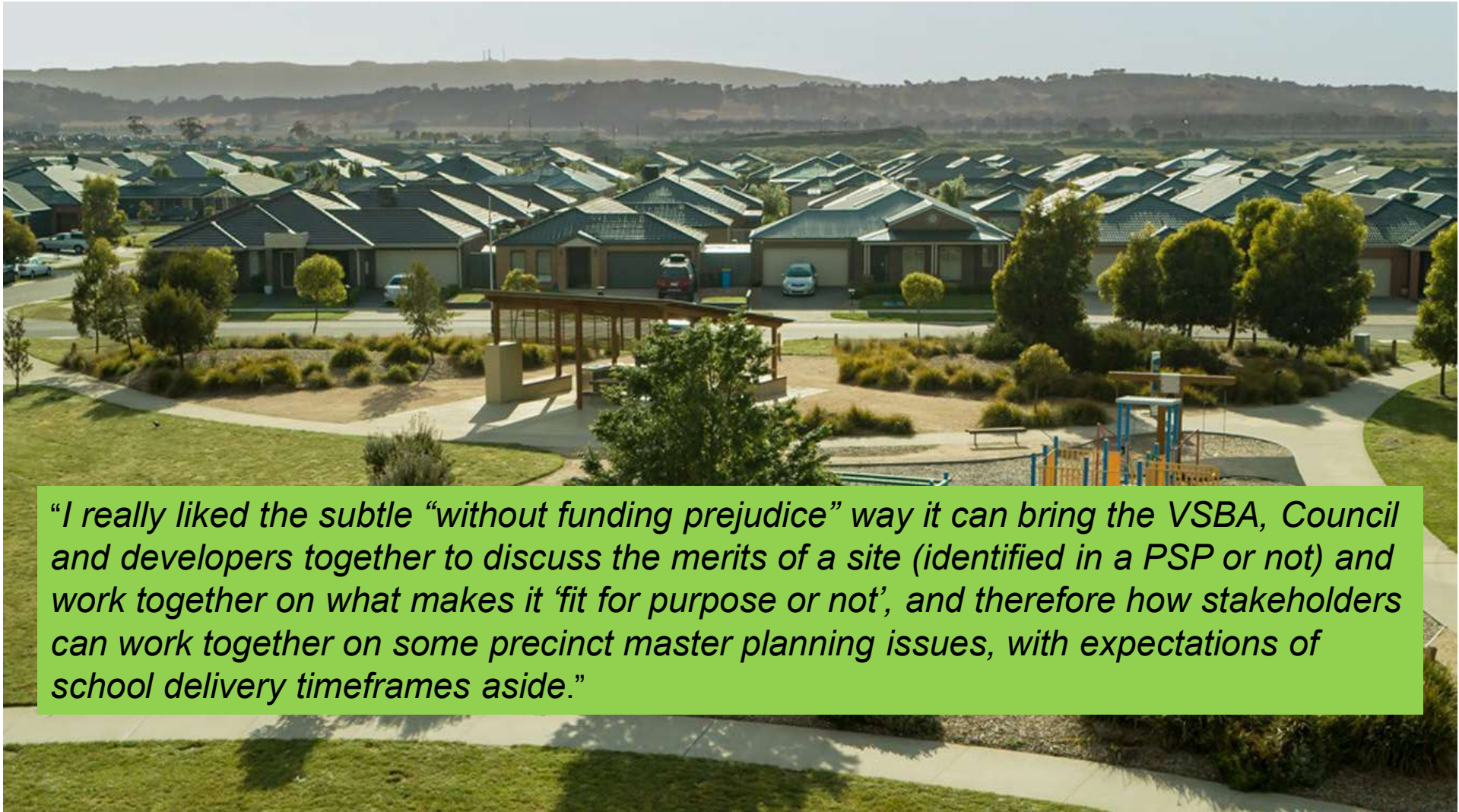
Indirect users

- School communities
- Broader communities
- School planners in other jurisdictions

Application & Limitations

- Not a benchmark for existing schools
- Not how the department decides *whether* a school is required
- Not how the department decides *when* a school is required
- Not a substitute for consultation with the department



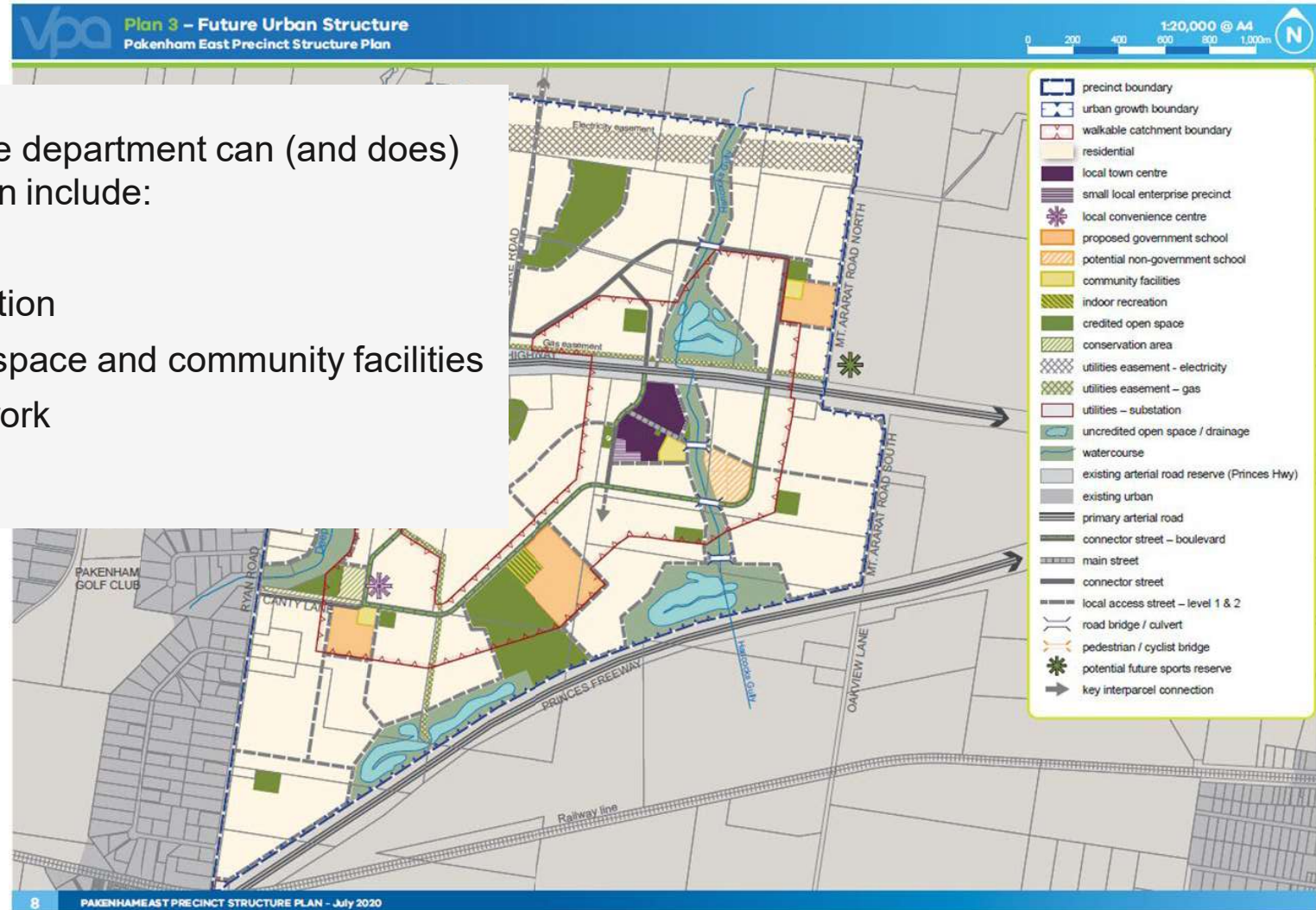


“I really liked the subtle “without funding prejudice” way it can bring the VSBA, Council and developers together to discuss the merits of a site (identified in a PSP or not) and work together on what makes it ‘fit for purpose or not’, and therefore how stakeholders can work together on some precinct master planning issues, with expectations of school delivery timeframes aside.”

Not everything happens at the site selection stage

Key site features that the department can (and does) influence at site selection include:

- site size
- site shape and orientation
- co-location with open space and community facilities
- surrounding road network
- potential hazards



General Principles

1. Avoid competition / negative impact on enrolments at existing schools or other planned schools
2. Ensure surrounding land uses are complementary to a school site
3. Encourage walking to and from school, ensure safe and convenient access by walking and cycling and allow for increased connectivity and accessibility
4. Ensure that the surrounding street network is able to cope with traffic volumes likely to be generated by the school
5. Encourage use of public transport for journeys to and from the school
6. Minimise the impact of busy roads on school sites and improve the amenity and safety of schools
7. Maximise passive heating, solar exposure and natural light infiltration for school buildings
8. A site large enough to fit the necessary permanent and relocatable buildings, sport facilities and dispersal spaces
9. A site with sufficient dimensions to fit the necessary buildings and sport facilities
10. Facilitate efficient layout of buildings and outdoor facilities
11. Facilitate safety and efficiency of traffic and pedestrian movement, especially at pick-up and drop-off times
12. Allow student drop-off zones and on-street parking areas
13. Enable opportunities for integrated facilities at delivery stage
14. Ensure students have access to community sports fields within close proximity to the school
15. Ensure students have access to buses within close proximity to the school
16. Ensure that the public infrastructure required to ensure the site is accessible and suitable for the department's proposed use will be delivered
17. Reduce complications associated with site acquisition
18. Minimise any potential risk to students from electromagnetic fields (EMFs)
19. Minimise any potential risk from high pressure gas pipelines
20. Avoid other potential hazards
21. Ensure students can evacuate from schools quickly and safely
22. Ensure that utility services are available to the new school site
23. Avoid significant impacts on cost of construction

General Principles – in brief

- Location, location, location – other schools, other land use
- Co-location / integration opportunities – kinders, community facilities, sports fields
 - Efficient layout – passive heating, solar exposure and natural light
 - Encourage sustainable and active transport
- Safety and hazards – including site evacuation
 - Site acquisition, servicing and utilities
 - Cost of construction



Schools operate (successfully) in different geographic settings

Ramlegh Park Primary School, Clyde North – opened 2021

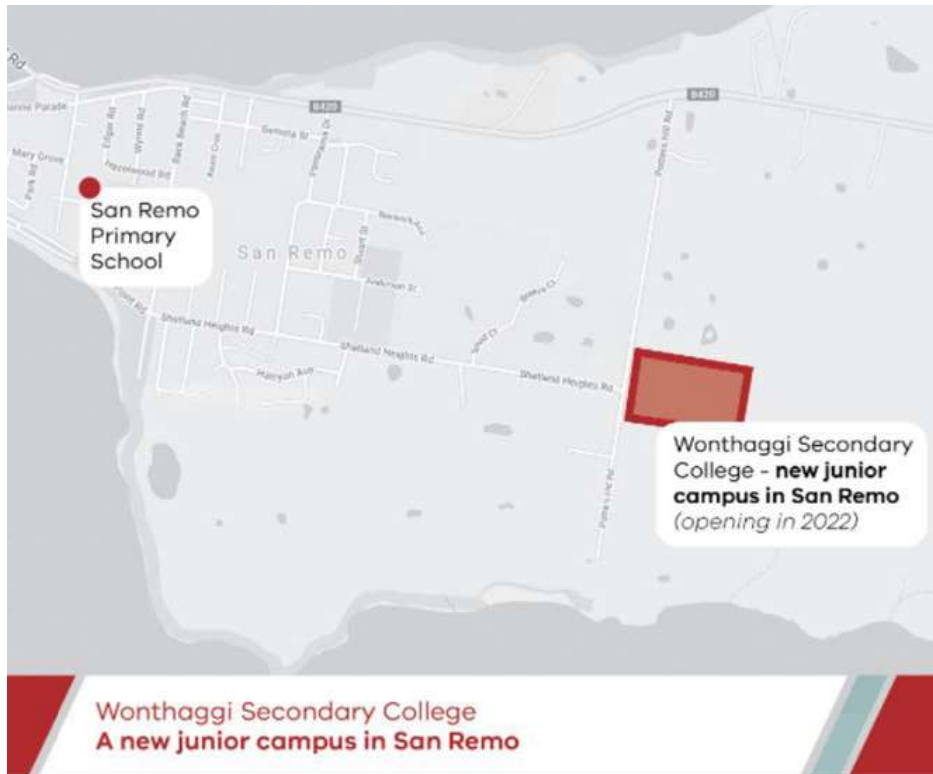


Docklands Primary School, Dockland – opened 2021



Same general principles apply to site selection, but **different** opportunities and challenges.

Different geographic settings



- Greenfield areas

Melbourne's growth municipalities areas of Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Melton, Wyndham, Whittlesea and growth areas of Mitchell, and greenfield development in Victoria's regional areas

- Established areas

Areas in Melbourne and regional centres that have been urbanised for at least several decades or have been fully developed

- High Density areas

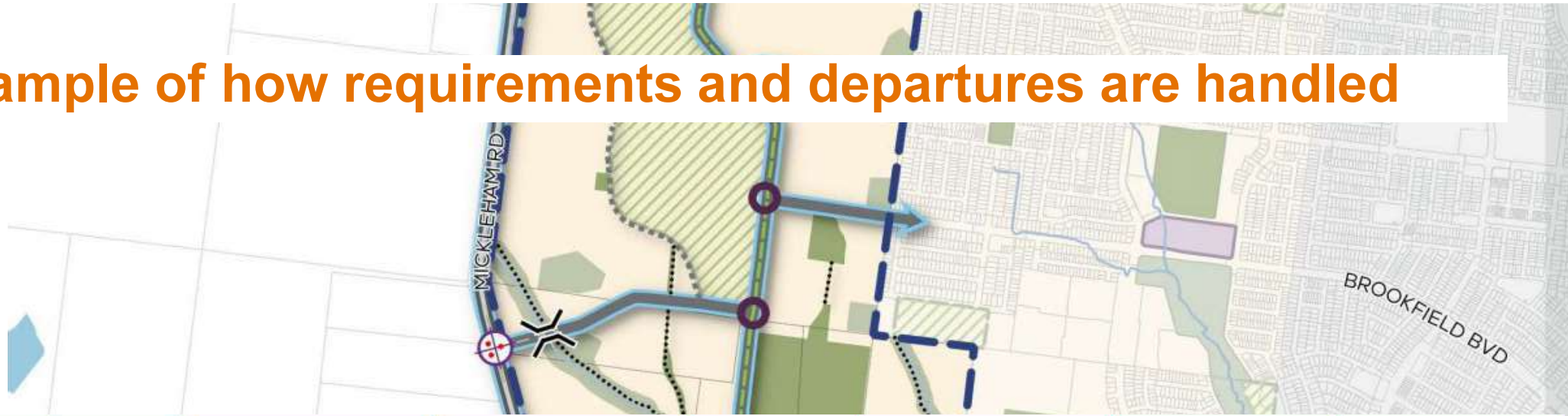
Areas with significantly higher density residential development compared to other parts of Melbourne and Victoria

Hierarchy of requirements and departures

Qualifier	Definition
Must	Critical for ensuring a safe school environment and facilitating effective building design and operation, and/or is required under other department or Government policy.
Should	The recommended method for achieving the general principle.

- **Yes.**
- **Possible.**
- **Unlikely.**
- **No.**

Example of how requirements and departures are handled



No.	General Principle	Site Feature	Greenfield Requirement	Hierarchy of Requirements and Departures	Established Area Requirement	Hierarchy of Requirements and Departures	High Density Requirement	Hierarchy of Requirements and Departures
12	Allow student drop-off zones and on-street parking areas	Street design	At least two streets abutting new school sites must have sufficient widths to allow for student drop-off zones and on-street indented parking in addition to other street functions.	No , except where a detailed travel management plan has been developed and the department and local council are satisfied that student drop-off zones and on-street parking are not required.	At least two streets abutting new school sites should have sufficient widths to provide student drop-off zones and on-street parking in addition to other street functions.	Possible , particularly where a detailed travel management plan has been developed and the department and local council are satisfied that student drop-off zones and on-street parking are not required.	School entry or pedestrian access points should be provided from street level from all school sides. Vehicle access (i.e. vehicle access for the purpose of student pickups and drop-offs) to the school is discouraged.	Student drop-off zones and on-street parking will not generally be provided for schools in high density areas.



Review process

Regular reviews will be informed by the experiences, observations and learnings of departmental staff and periodic consultation with external stakeholders.



QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



For further information:

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Education
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