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VC37**PROFILE OF THE CARDINIA SHIRE**

The Cardinia Shire is located on the fringe of the Melbourne metropolitan area, and Pakenham which is the main urban centre within the Shire is located 55 kilometres south east of Melbourne. The context of the Cardinia Shire in relation to Victoria and the Melbourne metropolitan area is shown in Figure 1. One of the Shire's strongest attributes is its diverse physical environment which covers an area of 1,280 square kilometres as shown in Figure 2.

The northern part of the Cardinia Shire is set in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, and is an area with significant environmental values. The interesting and diverse landscape varies from undulating hills to steep slopes, and has extensive areas of remnant vegetation which are of botanical and zoological value. Environmental factors and the pattern of development in this area contribute to a high fire risk which is shown by the history of wildfire in this part of the municipality. A significant area of the northern part of the municipality comprises the Bunyip State Park and the Cardinia Reservoir. The population is focused in the townships of Emerald, Clematis, Avonsleigh, Cockatoo, Gembrook, Upper Beaconsfield, Pakenham Upper and Maryknoll. The Puffing Billy tourist railway which is a major tourism asset of the State runs between Belgrave and Gembrook. The red volcanic soils around Gembrook are significant for potato production.

The Princes Highway corridor runs east west through the centre of the municipality and provides a demarcation between the hills in the northern part of the Cardinia Shire and the alluvial plains to the south. The corridor is a key road and rail link between Melbourne, the Latrobe Valley and Gippsland. The south eastern growth area for metropolitan Melbourne extends east to Pakenham with development to occur mainly around the townships of Pakenham, Beaconsfield and Officer. A number of townships exist to the east of Pakenham including Bunyip, Garfield, Tynong and NarNarGoon. The hills to the north of the highway contain hard rock resources with a number of existing quarries.

The Kooweerup swamp and Westernport Bay form the significant features of the southern part of the Cardinia Shire. The land is generally flat alluvial plains which have been substantially cleared of vegetation with the exception to this being the Heath Hill area which is recognised as being of landscape significance. The Kooweerup swamp was drained and cleared for agriculture at the turn of the century, and the peaty clay soils in the Kooweerup swamp area are of State significance in terms of the production of vegetables including potatoes and asparagus. The Kooweerup Flood Protection District has over 600 kilometres of man-made drains and levee banks, and the maintenance of the drainage system and frequency of flooding is an important issue. The area contains important groundwater reserves in the Westernport basin. The northern coastline of Westernport Bay is largely inaccessible, although it is an area of environmental significance. The Townships in the southern part of the Cardinia Shire include Kooweerup, Lang Lang, Bayles and Cardinia. The South Gippsland Highway is a key link to south Gippsland and a tourist route to Phillip Island. Sand resources exist in the Lang Lang area which will increasingly become a major source of sand for Melbourne.

Figure 1: State and metropolitan context of the Cardinia Shire

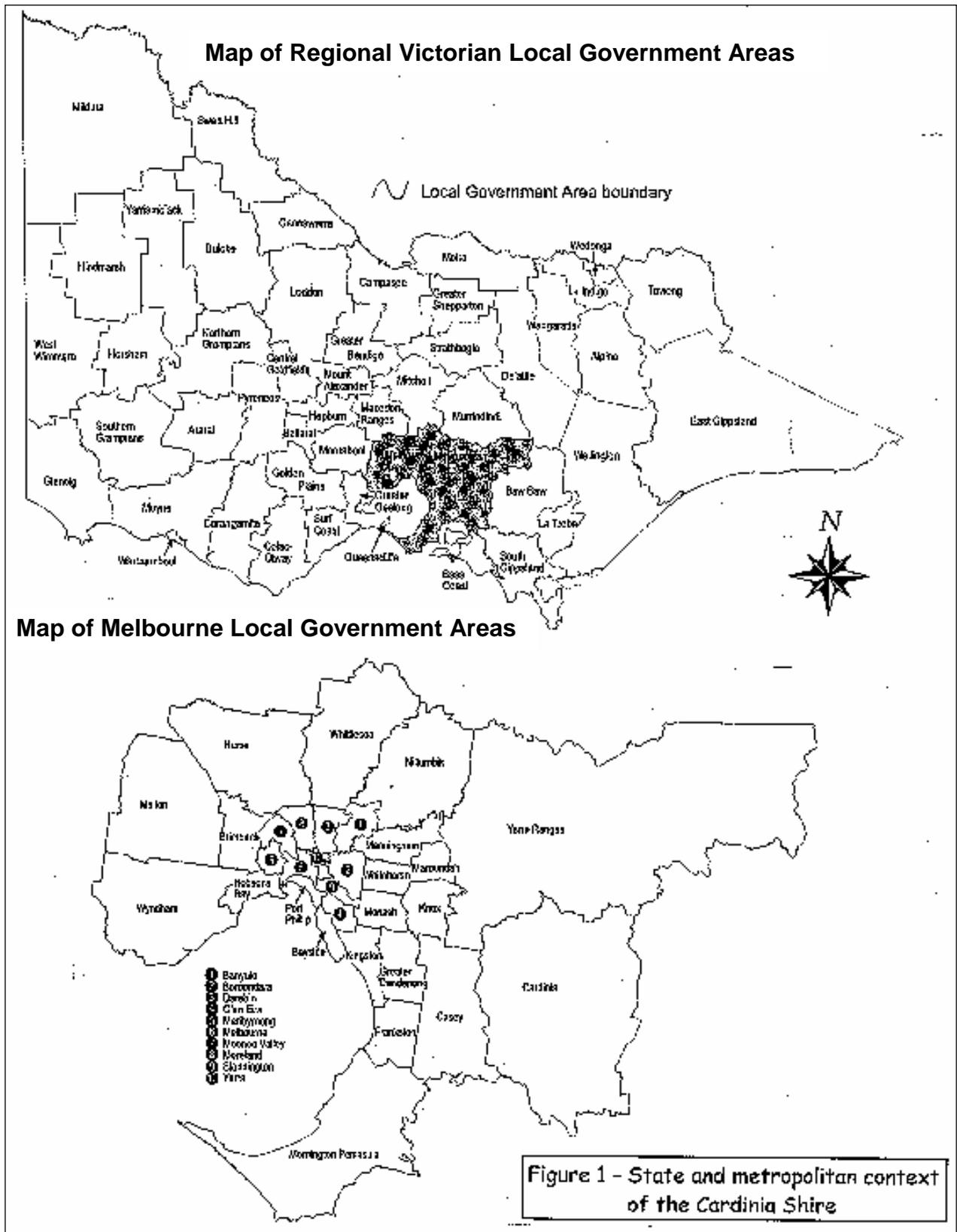
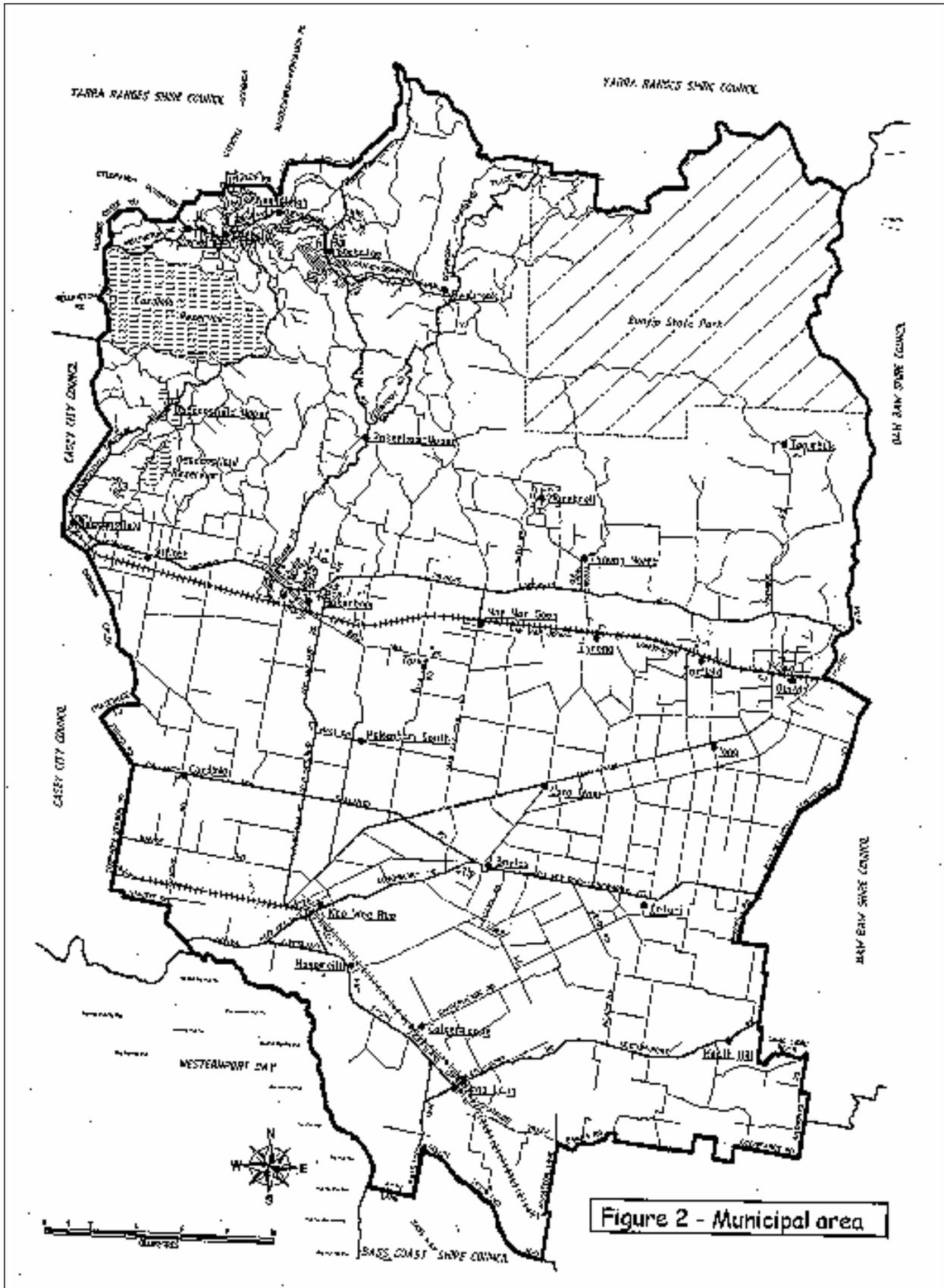


Figure 2: Municipal area



The population of the Cardinia Shire at the end of 1996 was approximately 42,500 people which were accommodated in 14,770 households. Over the next decade, population growth in the Cardinia Shire is projected to be relatively slow, with an additional population of 5,100 people to be accommodated in 2,470 households. The majority of this growth will occur in the urban area of the Pakenham and Beaconsfield townships. Within 10 to 15 years, the growth rate will increase as the availability of land for urban development in the Narre Warren, Berwick and Cranbourne area decreases and land is made available in the Beaconsfield, Officer and Pakenham areas. The projected growth of the municipality over the next 25 years is set out in the following table.

YEAR	POPULATION	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS
1996	42,500	14,770
2001	45,400	16,210
2006	47,600	17,240
2011	51,800	19,010
2016	62,500	23,240
2021	82,400	31,050

Source: Victoria in Future

The majority of this growth will occur in the urban growth corridor between Beaconsfield and Pakenham, with limited growth in the rural townships and rural areas of the municipality.

The current age structure of the population is shown in the following table, and also the projected age structure in future years as the population grows.

AGE GROUP	1996	2001	2011	2021
0-4 years	9.6%	8.9%	8.5%	10.0%
5-17 years	21.6%	21.7%	21.6%	17.8%
18-24 years	8.8%	8.2%	7.1%	9.8%
25-34 years	16.1%	16.4%	18.6%	24.2%
35-49 years	23.4%	22.3%	19.8%	17.9%
50-59 years	9.4%	11.5%	11.6%	6.9%
60-69 years	5.5%	5.3%	7.5%	6.4%
70-84 years	4.8%	4.7%	4.3%	6.1%
85 years and over	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%

Source: Victoria in Future

The age group structure shows a strong family pattern, which is demonstrated in the following tables which compare the Cardinia Shire with the Melbourne Statistical District (MSD). The age group structure also highlights a need to focus on the needs of young people, and also the needs of an increasingly aged population.

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	%	% MSD
1 family household	79.4	71.7
2+ family household	0.8	1.3
group household	17.4	22.6
lone person household	2.4	4.4

Source: Melbourne in Fact

FAMILY TYPE (1 FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS)	%	% MSD
1 parent families	9.0	9.8
Couples without children	23.8	22.2
2 parent families	45.8	38.1
Related individuals	0.8	1.6

Source: Melbourne in Fact

The population of the Cardinia Shire is predominantly Australian born which is shown in the comparison with the Melbourne Statistical District. The table indicates the top six ranking birthplaces of residents in the Cardinia Shire. Only a small proportion of the population comes from a non English speaking background.

BIRTHPLACE OF RESIDENTS	%	% MSD
English speaking countries	90.6	74.8
Non English speaking countries	9.4	25.2
Australia	82.2	67.3
UK/Ireland	7.0	5.3
Netherlands	1.5	0.5
Italy	0.9	2.8
New Zealand	0.8	1.1
Germany	0.7	0.7
All other countries	3.6	18.8
Not stated	3.3	3.4

Source: Melbourne in Fact

There is a higher dependence on motor vehicles for transport in the Cardinia Shire as shown in the following table which compares car ownership per household in the Cardinia Shire with car ownership per household in the Melbourne Statistical Division. This is due to the rural nature of a large part of the municipality and the limited public transport services available.

CAR OWNERSHIP PER HOUSEHOLD	%	% MSD
No vehicle	4.9	11.2
1 vehicle	30.0	36.6
2 vehicles	42.5	34.4
3+ vehicles	18.2	12.1
Not stated	4.3	5.5

Source: Melbourne in Fact