

THE ALTERNATIVE FUTURES SUMMARY

8

THE PLANNING PROCESS

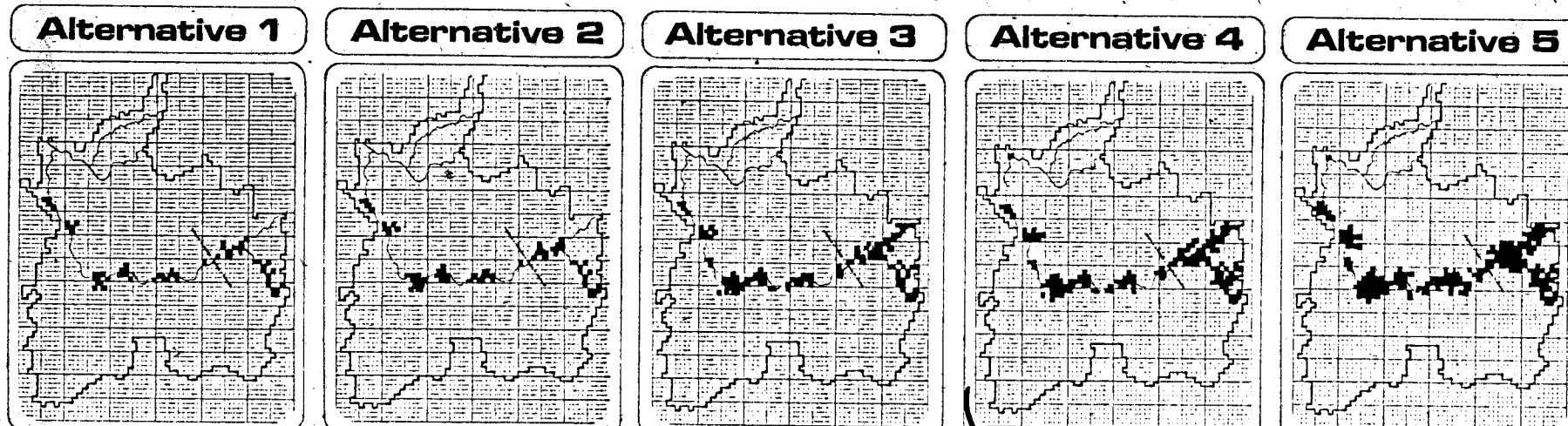
Planning begins with an analysis of life styles, travel habits, employment, leisure and education. Conflicts, issues and problems are identified in many specialist fields. Several possible alternative futures are then nominated and tested for compatibility with the natural environment and the existing man-

made systems. Choice and modification of these possible futures is made through an in-depth public participation programme. At the same time, policies and required actions are decided upon.

The final planning step is to combine an alternative future with the preferred policies to produce a strategy for im-

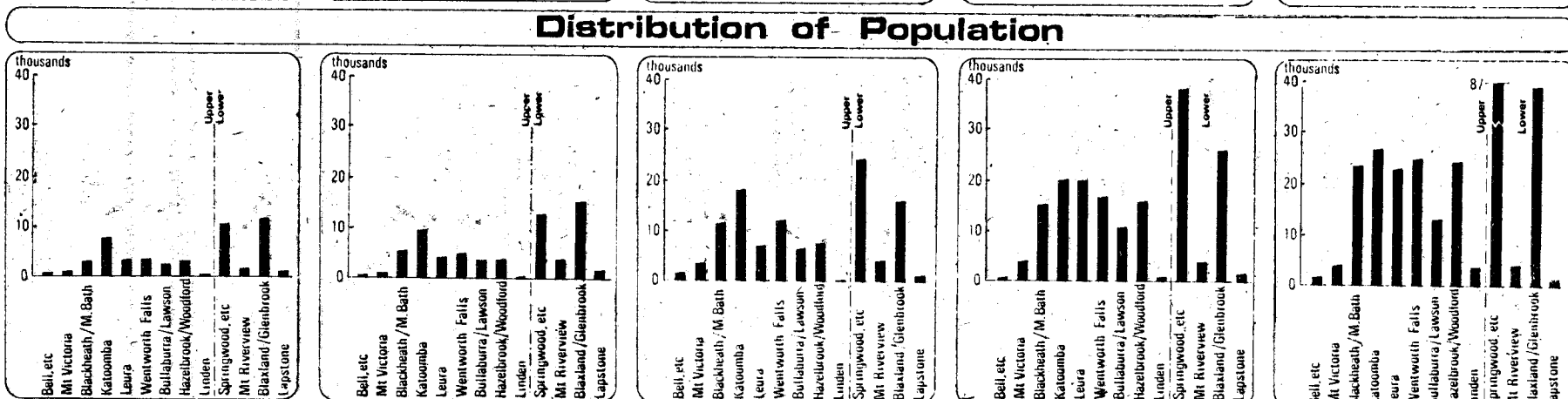
plementation and safeguarding.

Although each of the alternative futures summarised below covers the whole city area, their impacts will be different at a local level. The selection of the most suitable future for each locality will require strong community involvement and planning skill.



Population Capacity				
Upper BM	22,500	31,300	67,400	103,600
Lower BM	24,800	33,600	45,000	69,500

Assumptions				
Estimated Population as at December, 1973. Further urban development would not be permitted outside this area, other than re-development of existing development. Compensation or acquisition of land in non-urban areas, and subdivisions which are not developed may be required to conserve and restore natural environment.	No additional residential subdivisions would be permitted. Only development in serviced subdivisions would be approved. Flats would not be permitted.	No additional subdivisions would be permitted. Populations are based on full development of all existing subdivisions at existing densities. Flats would not be permitted.	Development would occur in accordance with the Exhibited Planning Scheme. Population capacities are based on 27 persons per hectare in Residential 'A' zones, and 100 persons per hectare in areas where flats are permitted.	This represents the maximum limit of urban development. It would include all areas in the Exhibited Planning Scheme, plus additional developable areas having slopes up to 1 in 3, which are adjacent or connected to existing services. Megalong Valley and all existing designated parks and recreation areas are prohibited from development. It has been assumed that higher density residential zones (100 persons per hectare) would be similar to Alternative 4. Additional development assumes residential densities of 27 persons per hectare.



NOTES, COMMENTS, IDEAS, AND CHOICES

(Please remember to bring this broadsheet with you to the participation sessions)

These are some of the issues currently present within the Blue Mountains. These issues and conflicts must be considered in the choice of the Blue Mountains' future role. The choice will largely depend on the results of this public participation programme, and on the support given to continuing planning efforts and actions.

it's your city
FIX IT OR FORGET IT!

it's your city —

FIX IT OR FORGET IT

1

THE STRATEGY PLAN REPORT

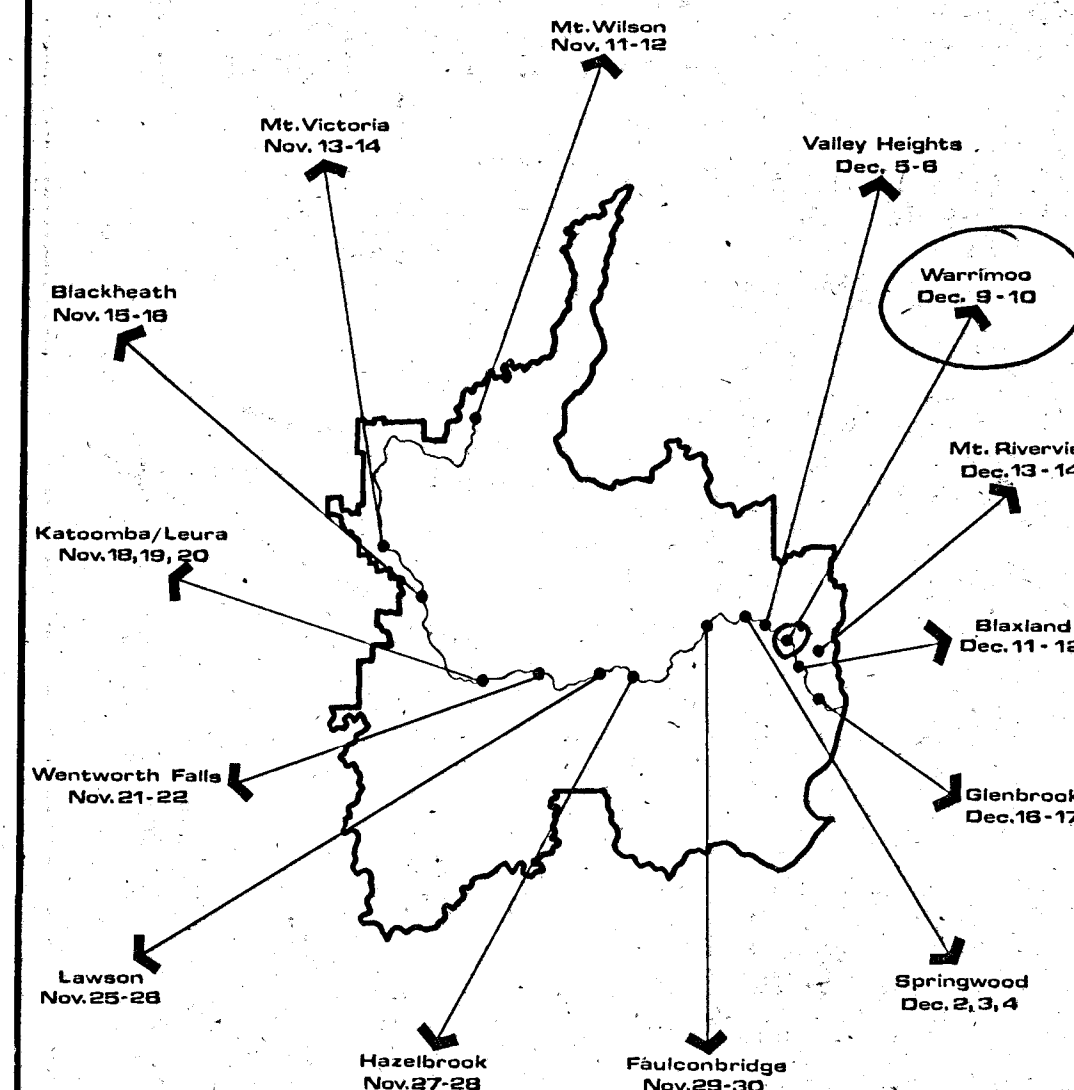
The Blue Mountains Strategy Plan report commissioned earlier this year has recently been completed. The report identifies major issues and conflicts between conservation and development in the Mountains. Five options for the best population of the Mountains are presented in the report. These five options (or alternative futures) list different population sizes and explain their consequences on the environment, on shopping and commerce, on transportation and industry, and public utilities.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RECOMMENDED

One of the recommendations in the report was to carry out a comprehensive public participation programme to present the findings of the Strategy Plan, and to crystallize issues and future potentials in the Mountains through in-depth consultation with the public.

Council has embarked on this programme. This broadsheet contains details of the display and schedules of public participation, and a general summary of the Strategy Plan report.

We are asking all people concerned about the Blue Mountains to help us finalize the Plan and put it into action.



HOW THE PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME WILL WORK

DISPLAY UNIT

A mobile display will be set up in most centres in the Mountains. This display unit will contain large maps and diagrams which were published in the Strategy Plan report. Photographs and other explanatory graphics will be presented. Copies of the Report will be available for perusal, as well as other town planning information, literature and maps.

Every opportunity will be afforded to choose strategies, comment, and present ideas and policies which Council should adopt for future planning. Detailed comment booklets will be printed which seek to collect ideas for immediate action plans and projects. Large maps of the Mountains will be provided for identifying ideas for conservation, transportation, and development.

STAFFING OF THE DISPLAY

The display will be manned by Council staff and Town Planners from Urban Systems Corporation who were directly involved in the preparation of the Strategy Plan. These planners will discuss and explain the findings of the report and illustrate how comments can best be put forward. Co-operation has also been accepted from local progress associations, resident action groups, and regional service clubs.

DIAL-A-CAR

Pensioners and others without transport will be able to ring for a car during the operation of the display. This service is being operated to ensure that participation is gained from the full range of residents, ratepayers and visitors. Those wishing transport to public meetings should call Katoomba 82-1333 or Springwood 51-1888 during office hours and ask for "Strategy Plan dial-a-car service".

LOCAL GROUPS

Many resident action groups and progress associations supplied information or advice during the preparation of the Strategy Plan report. Over 20 of these groups are receiving copies of the report.

Many other groups have been approached for help and co-operation during the participation programme and many have already come forward. Groups wishing to participate which have not yet been approached are asked to contact Mr. Mikel Ball, Field Manager, Urban Systems Corporation, Sydney 929-0855; or Council's Town Planning Department.

COPIES OF PLAN AND THIS BROADSHEET

Copies of the Blue Mountains Strategy Plan report are available for purchase or short-term loan from the Blue Mountains City Council Offices in Katoomba or Springwood.

Additional copies of this broadsheet will be sent free of charge upon receipt of a large self-addressed stamped envelope. Inquiries should be directed to Council offices or to Urban Systems Corporation.

Both the report and this broadsheet, however, will be included in the mobile display unit, and will be available for perusal during hours of operation.

VISITORS, NON-RESIDENT RATEPAYERS AND ADVERTISING

The display centre will also be open to visitors and tourists in an attempt to gather comments on the role of tourism and recreation in the Mountains. Visitors and non-resident ratepayers will be appealed to participate and comment through advertisements in Sydney Metropolitan Newspapers. Comment booklets will be sent to these people upon receipt of a self-addressed, stamped envelope sent to Urban Systems Corporation, 2nd Floor, MLC Building, North Sydney, or to Blue Mountains City Council, P.O. Box 189, Katoomba.

Posters advertising the display dates and times will be circulated in each centre several days before commencement of the display. Watch for them in your centre.

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

To collect your ideas for the Mountains and reactions to the Strategy Plan we are providing comment booklets in the display unit which will be visiting your locality. The comment booklet will ask for planning ideas and what role you think the Mountains should play in the future. Questions of population sizes and environmental controls will be asked. Your ideas on housing, commerce and industry will be asked for.

You can visit the display unit any time during operating hours.

SCHEDULE OF PARTICIPATION SESSIONS

MT. WILSON	November 11	10 am to 6 pm
	November 12	Noon to 8 pm
MT. VICTORIA	November 13	10 am to 6 pm
	November 14	Noon to 8 pm
BLACKHEATH	November 15	10 am to 6 pm
	November 16	Noon to 8 pm
KATOOMBA-LEURA	November 18	10 am to 6 pm
	November 19	10 am to 6 pm
	November 20	Noon to 8 pm
WENTWORTH FALLS	November 21	10 am to 6 pm
	November 22	Noon to 8 pm
LAWSON	November 25	10 am to 6 pm
	November 26	Noon to 8 pm
HAZELBROOK	November 27	10 am to 6 pm
	November 28	Noon to 8 pm
FAULCONBRIDGE	November 29	10 am to 6 pm
	November 30	Noon to 8 pm
SPRINGWOOD	December 2	10 am to 6 pm
	December 3	10 am to 6 pm
	December 4	Noon to 8 pm
VALLEY HEIGHTS	December 5	10 am to 6 pm
	December 6	Noon to 8 pm
WARRIMOO	December 9	10 am to 6 pm
	December 10	Noon to 8 pm
BLAXLAND	December 11	10 am to 6 pm
	December 12	Noon to 8 pm
MT. RIVERVIEW	December 13	10 am to 6 pm
	December 14	Noon to 8 pm
GLENBROOK	December 16	10 am to 6 pm
	December 17	Noon to 8 pm

Public Participation Programme for the

BLUE MOUNTAINS STRATEGY PLAN

Blue Mountains City Council

(The Strategy Plan was prepared through an enabling grant from the Australian Department of Urban and Regional Development)

Urban Systems Corporation

FINDINGS OF THE STRATEGY PLAN REPORT GENERAL SUMMARY

2

INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY PLAN REPORT

The Blue Mountains City Council, recognising the conflicts between preservation of the environment and uncontrolled urbanisation, commissioned this study as a first step in the development of a Strategic Plan of the Blue Mountains.

Initially, The Council sought a definitive statement of the aims, policies, guidelines and ideas that would provide a framework for the future broad planning, development and conservation of the City. This has been the approach in other areas where there has generally been a consensus of opinion on what the broader goals of the community and objectives of a plan might be.

However, once work on this Plan had commenced, it became obvious that there were a number of deep seated and fundamental conflicts which could not be resolved by the preparation of a single management document and without a far greater opportunity for participation in the decision-making process by all groups and individuals who would be affected by the plan. These basic conflicts are between conservation and urbanisation, the level of local employment opportunities, industry and commerce that should be provided (Self-contained versus a dependent community), and so on. It is obvious that there are fundamental choices to be made about the future of the City and its community. The community must be aware of these choices and should participate fully in their determination. In addition, it became obvious that because of the social and physical structure of the City, the implementation of broad objectives would have vastly different impacts at the local level, and these local impacts would have to be determined before any final strategy could be evolved.

Therefore, the approach was modified and the purpose of this study has been to investigate those matters which could effect a plan; and to postulate an initial set of alternative futures of strategies that might lead to a substantial resolution of conflicts, and to define the broad implications of these strategies, or courses of action.

THREE VOLUMES

The study is presented in three volumes.

Volume 1, **ALTERNATIVE FUTURES**, recommends a strategic planning process to enable the definition of goals, objectives and policies and to help resolution of conflicts; identifies problems, issues and potentials; assesses the broad implications of five 'alternative futures' or courses of action; and recommends a programme of immediate action.

Volume 2, **TECHNICAL ANALYSES**, contains individual studies pertaining to the environment, tourism, people and housing, industry, commerce, transport and public utilities.

Volume 3, **MAPS AND DIAGRAMS**, contains illustrations and graphics referred to in Volumes 1 and 2.

PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

In order that the study objectives be met, a comprehensive programme of investigations were necessarily detailed to gain a sufficient understanding of critical elements of the study or others were of a more general nature in keeping with the level of understanding required for strategic planning on a sub-regional scale. It should be noted that this study is concerned with the investigation and analysis of broader issues, policies and strategies, and is not concerned with the preparation of detailed local or predict action plans — the study procedures have been tailored to the appropriate scale.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

Although Blue Mountains City contains large areas of open space, most is within the Blue Mountains National Park. Other large land areas are the Waragamba catchment, Erskine Creek State Forest, and dedicated open space controlled by Council. These large holdings are perceived as 'natural environmental areas' and are important to all views from the Blue Mountains escarpment lookouts.

An inherent natural feature of the Blue Mountains is the "string of beads" character of isolated towns within natural open space. Development of this character has resulted mainly from topography, terrain and geologic features controlling vegetation and drainage patterns.

"Intermediate environmental areas" such as non-urban and open space land which separate towns are important to contrasts between the urban and open atmosphere along the road and railway. Megalong Valley and Mts. Wilson, Irvine and Tomah are special areas containing a blend of man-made and natural environments. These intermediate areas are rapidly becoming threatened by ribbon development along the Great Western Highway, and development pressures within Megalong Valley and "The Mounts".

Quality of townscape is important to both visitors and residents. Rapid growth and a lack of in-depth control planning has resulted in inferior visual character and deficient amenity in many Mountains towns. Village character and the rural atmosphere is disappearing within these "man-made environments".

RECREATION

Significant inequalities in recreational facilities are currently present. Only 17 sports ovals are provided for a population of 45,000, many of inferior standard. The two major facilities in the Mountains are the Catalina motor racing circuit and Katoomba showground. General deficiencies in cultural facilities are present throughout the Mountains. Needs include arts and crafts centres, multi-purpose cultural centres including provisions for the performing arts.

CRITICAL ENVIRONMENT AREAS

The goals of environmental management are delineation, preservation, and maximisation of suitable uses within environmental areas. These goals are most advanced in the National Park, but are lacking in many other critical areas within the City.

The most critical are within intermediate environmental areas which separate the Mountains towns. Most of this area is proposed non-urban and therefore subject to alienation by Appeals Tribunal determinations caused by increased development activity.

Other critical environments are the escarpments and within existing intermediate habitats such as Mts. Wilson, Irvine and Tomah and Megalong Valley. Historic urban places such as Mt. Victoria, Woodford and the railway stations and individual historic buildings and aboriginal relics should also be included as critical areas and items.

It is pointless to define critical areas unless the goals of environmental management are carried out. The first step facing Council is to accurately delineate these areas, then to implement protection measures and evolve suitable uses within them. This delineation is an objective of urgent action planning.

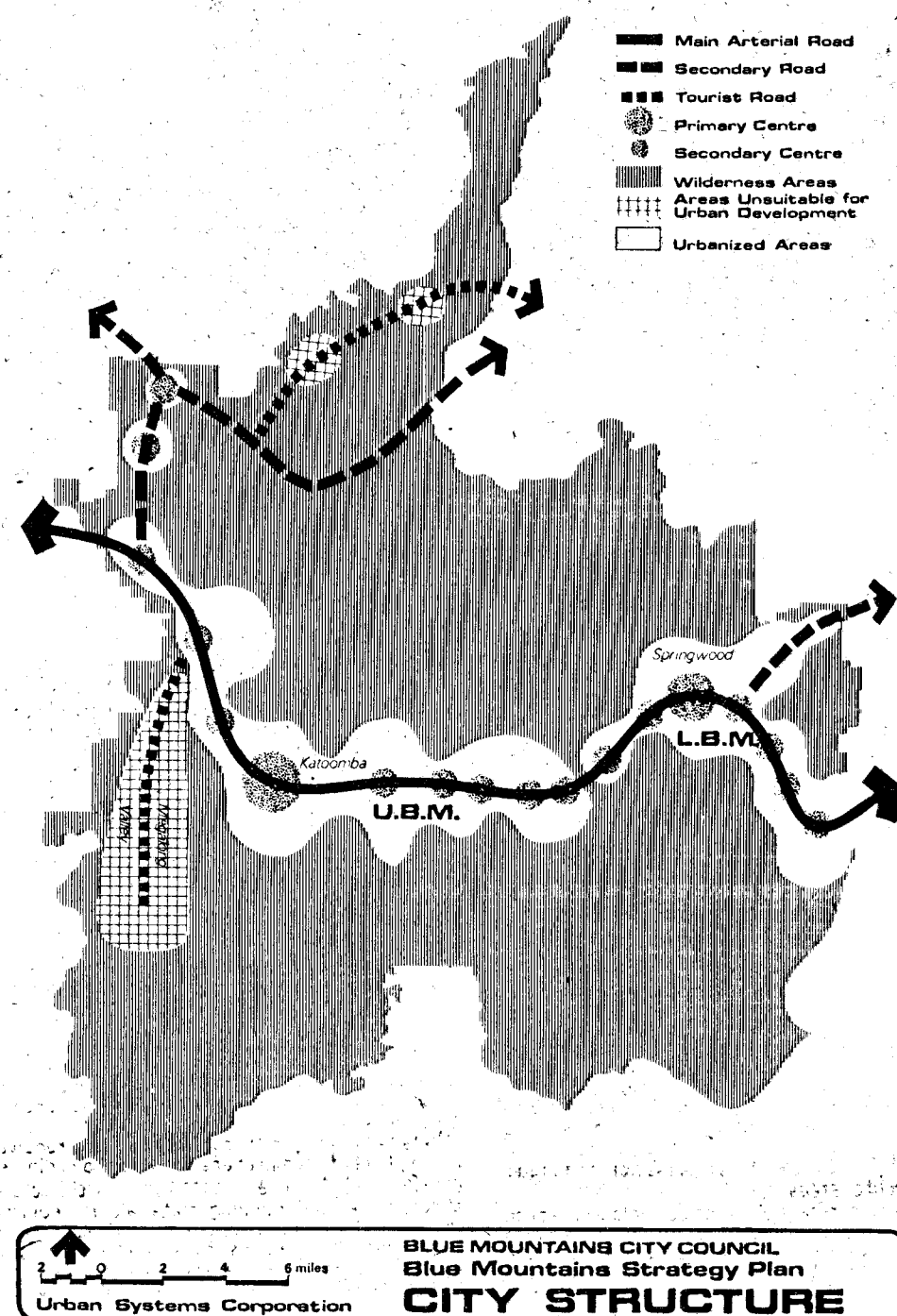
HISTORIC

Although eight buildings are categorised by the National Trust, over 50 others possibly worthy of preservation have been identified by Council, historical societies and individuals. There is a strong need for a co-ordinated classification and protection programme of historic and aboriginal sites, and for definition of suitable administrative and financial policies for protection.

BUSH FIRE

Areas of high "fire proneness" are usually present in locations exposed to westerly and north-westerly winds with uninterrupted exposure to bushland gullies containing high levels of combustible material.

Bush fire hazard reduction methods in expanding areas include the provision of peripheral roads ensuring vehicular access to bushland gullies, and establishing "buffer areas" between development and bush for fire control activities.



THE TWO CITY SYSTEM—DIFFERENCES IN POPULATION

Very distinct population patterns exist between the Upper and Lower Mountains due to historic, locational choices based on climate, terrain and settlement patterns. The strongest differences are in patterns existing now, and probable future migration trends.

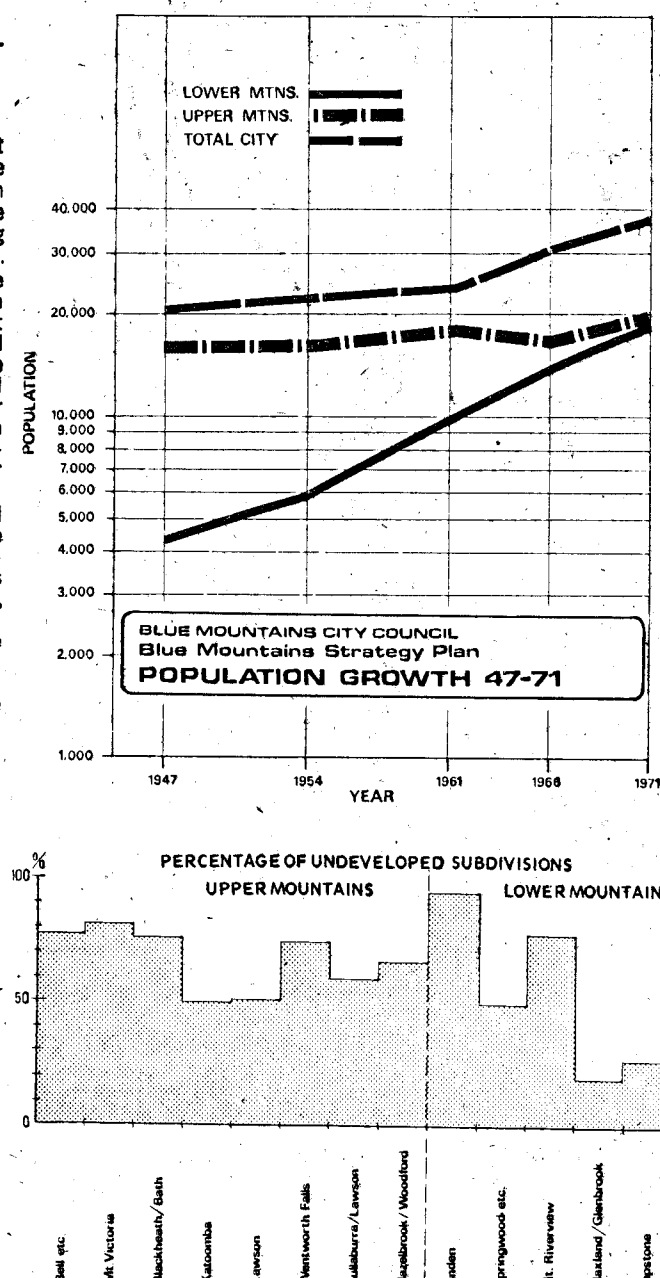
The actual out-migration of the 15-24 age group experienced between 1966 and 1971 in the Upper Mountains suggests that educational and entertainment facilities and suitable employment opportunities are lacking for school leavers. A general dissatisfaction with the life style in the Upper Mountains, coupled with difficulties in reaching Sydney Metropolitan Area's opportunity base, are undoubtedly the major causes of out-migration of young people.

Particularly significant in both 1966 and 1971 was a very high proportion of people over the age of 65. The proportion has increased since 1954; the 1971 proportion was almost double the New South Wales average, indicating a very strong retirement location preference especially in the Upper Blue Mountains. Lower land prices and environmental considerations seem to be the major factors in retirement preferences in the Upper Mountains.

The type and scale of social facilities required varies greatly between the Upper and Lower Mountains. The present inequalities and deficiencies will reach crucial proportions if the recent migration patterns continue. Urgent needs now are for youth-oriented social programmes, vocational and tertiary education, and adult education / retirement facilities in the Upper Mountains. The Lower area requires community and child-oriented multi-purpose centres.

HOUSING & OCCUPANCY

The imbalance in housing types and dwelling occupancy rates is startling. The Upper Mountains shows distinct patterns of holiday homes and low occupancy figures, whereas the Lower Mountains is overwhelmingly a new home area. Although some 88 per cent of all housing stock is single family dwellings—the difference in numbers of medium density housing is much higher in the Upper Mountains. In Katoomba some 20 per cent of all housing types is medium density.



STRATEGIC POLICIES & ACTIONS

7

THE NEED FOR POLICY MAKING

The Blue Mountains City Council, by embarking on strategic planning, has recognized the conflicts and problems emerging from growth in the Mountains. The major question now is how long will these conflicts and problems be allowed to continue before controlling measures are taken or before irreparable damage to the environment occurs.

The lack of clearly-stated and fully-committed strategic policy is the single most important factor determining the future of the Mountains. We must decide

now whether to pursue clear and positive planning policies, or whether to continue with an ad hoc approach to development and conservation. This study has identified the urgent need for co-ordinated policies in city management, the environment, tourism and the make-up of the City.

The time has now come to accurately list the objectives of the Blue Mountains: Is it to become a tourist region, a residential dormitory, a self contained commercial unit, a preservation zone? Is it to remain a series of villages or become

expanded? These are questions which will determine the eventual pattern of the Mountains. First we must clearly list what is wanted in terms of conservation and development. Only then can policies be adopted and adhered to in future planning decisions.

The first objective of strategic planning must be to provide a capable policy-making and financial base to ensure that future growth within the Mountains is appropriate to the environment, and consistent with strategic policies.

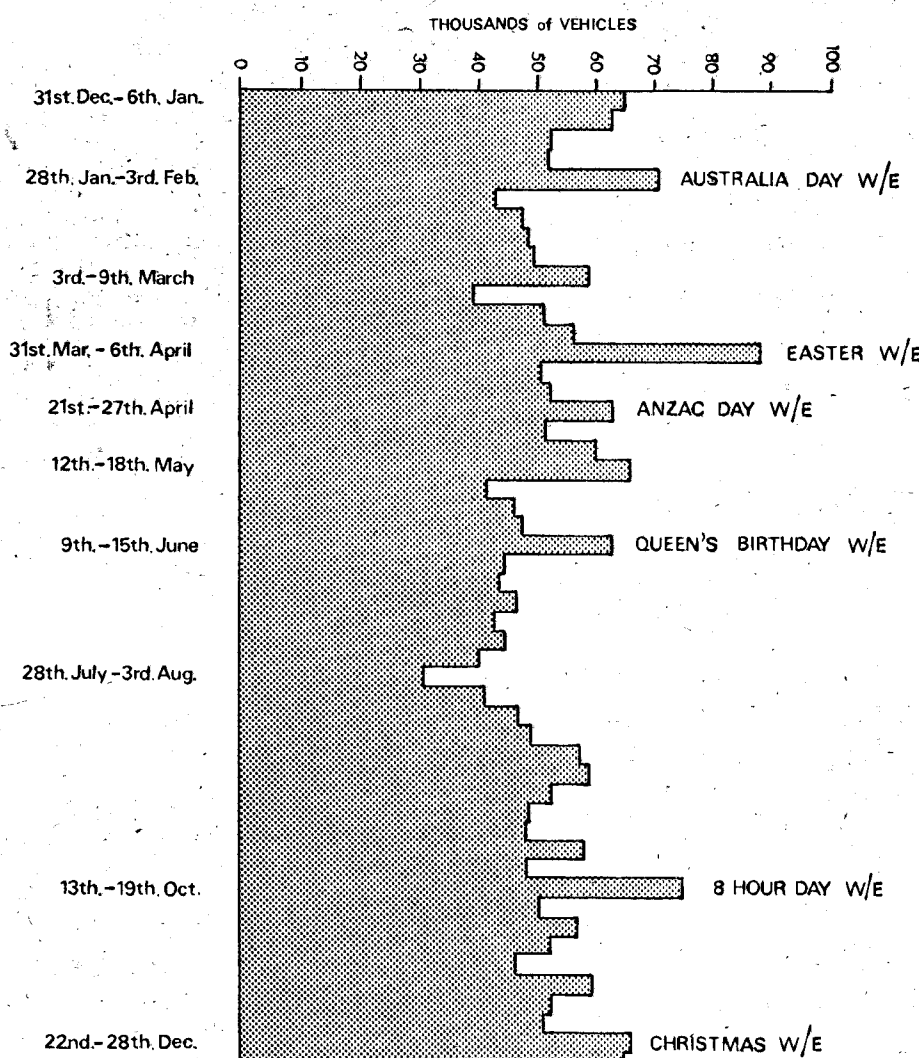
The Strategy Plan identified the policies and actions below for adoption and implementation by Council. Several have already been acted upon such as the Administration Action which is to carry out this public participation programme. Other urgent planning actions are currently being carried out in commercial and environmental areas in the Mountains. And measures are being taken to prevent development in unsuitable areas. We would like your comments on these policies, and which actions should have the highest priorities.

City Framework	
SELF-CONTAINMENT To achieve the self-contained character of the City.	<p>Action 1: Undertake immediate action to determine commercial, residential, industrial, and recreational land use patterns in the City.</p> <p>Action 2: Implement actions identified in Section 3.3 of the Report according to the "alternative futures" choice.</p>
HOUSING To examine and provide for a range of housing types and layouts.	<p>Action 1: Determine the need for housing in the City, medium density housing in the City, and medium density housing in the City.</p> <p>Action 2: Review medium density housing in the City, and medium density housing in the City.</p>
TRANSPORTATION Achieve traffic and parking according to the City's needs.	<p>Action 1: Implement actions identified in Section 3.3 of the Report according to the "alternative futures" choice.</p> <p>Action 2: Investigate and rectify existing deficiencies in the City's transport system, especially in the City.</p>
SOCIAL Rectify existing deficiencies in the City's social services.	<p>Action 1: Implement actions identified in Section 3.3 of the Report according to the "alternative futures" choice.</p> <p>Action 2: Investigate and rectify existing deficiencies in the City's social services, especially in the City.</p>
Tourism	
TOURISM To promote appropriate development and to anticipate future demand.	<p>Action 1: Seek methods of reducing disruption of the City's tourism industry.</p> <p>Action 2: Identify areas of potential tourism development in the City.</p>
Environment	
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN Enhance the City's environment, including the City's natural and built environment.	<p>Action 1: View from Lookouts, the City's environment, including the City's natural and built environment.</p> <p>Action 2: Prepare a statement of the City's environment, including the City's natural and built environment.</p>
PRESERVATION To preserve and control suitable areas within the City's environment.	<p>Action 1: Achieve the environmental goals of the City's environment, including the City's natural and built environment.</p> <p>Action 2: Preserve and protect the City's environment, including the City's natural and built environment.</p>
Management	
ORGANISATION AND FINANCE To ensure the City's financial and administrative structure is sound and efficient.	<p>Action 1: Review the City's financial and administrative structure, including the City's natural and built environment.</p> <p>Action 2: Implement actions identified in Section 3.3 of the Report according to the "alternative futures" choice.</p>
ADMINISTRATION To ensure the City's administrative structure is sound and efficient.	<p>Action 1: Review the City's administrative structure, including the City's natural and built environment.</p> <p>Action 2: Implement actions identified in Section 3.3 of the Report according to the "alternative futures" choice.</p>

BLUE MOUNTAINS CITY COUNCIL
Blue Mountains Strategy Plan
STRATEGIC POLICIES & ACTION PRIORITIES

FINDINGS OF THE STRATEGY PLAN CITY FRAMEWORK

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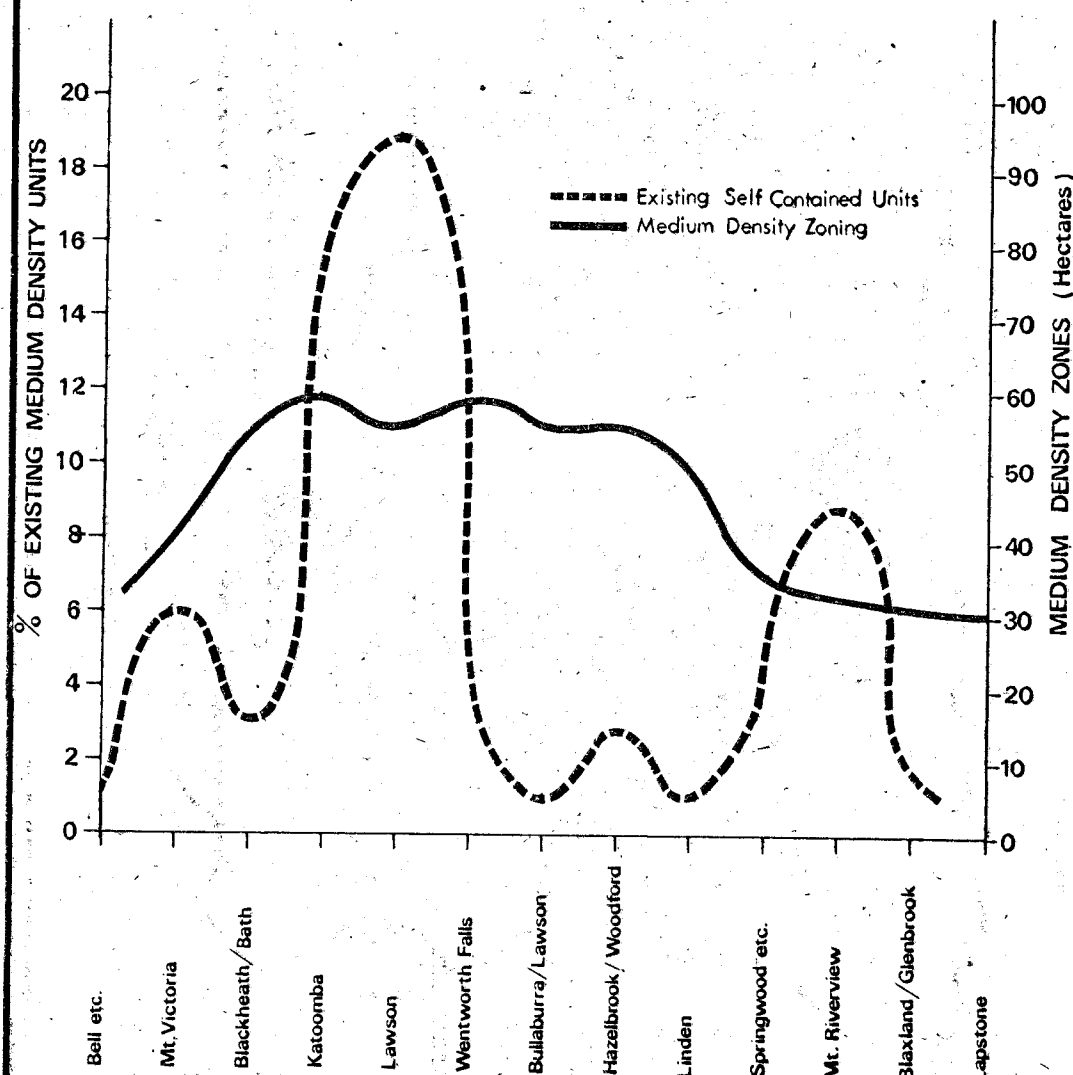


BLUE MOUNTAINS CITY COUNCIL
Blue Mountains Strategy Plan
SEASONAL VARIATION OF
TRAFFIC VOLUMES
ON GREAT WESTERN HIGHWAY
AT WENTWORTH FALLS
1972 WEEKLY VOLUMES

Source - Dept of Main Roads

U.S.C.

Traffic volumes along the Great Western Highway show very drastic differences which are caused by high patterns of tourist visitation. Average volumes generated by residents alone would be at the lowest level shown during mid-winter.



The figure above illustrates existing and proposed medium density housing. The solid line indicates amounts of land set aside for medium density in the Town Planning Scheme for 1973. The broken line shows what percent of all housing is presently made up by medium density in each town.

TRANSPORTATION

Existing traffic volumes on the Great Western Highway already justify upgrading to four lanes between Katoomba and the Nepean River. If the planned development of Bathurst-Orange proceeds, it is likely that the Bells Road would also require upgrading to four lanes.

Bells Road traffic is growing at about 8 per cent every year whereas growth on the highway is about 3 per cent. The greater volumes along the Bells Road are probably due to increased through traffic, a more scenic route, and avoidance of ribbon development and congestion on the Great Western Highway.

All traffic volumes show a major influx of tourist vehicles during holiday periods (see illustration). There is a major opportunity to reduce resident-visitor conflicts and congestion on the Highway by providing more "cliff drives", and tourist roads.

Future railway commuter problems include difficult gradients and topography which limit train speeds, deficiencies in rolling stock, signalling, and the narrowness of the Glenbrook Tunnel. The widening of the Glenbrook tunnel was identified as feasible in 1973. Large-scale expansion in the Mountains will have drastic implications on additional commuter train capacity as well as requiring railway sidings to service potential industrial expansion.

Problems in bus services are widespread. At the moment bus routes have little overlap and service shopping centres and railway stations. There are no scheduled services after 6.30 p.m. At the present population level, comprehensive bus services could only be provided if heavily subsidized. However, higher levels of service could be supported by larger populations.

HOUSING

There has been a growing concern in the Mountains over the potential provision of medium density housing. Reasons for this concern include opposition to redevelopment of old and well-established residential areas, anti-developer attitudes, reduction of privacy, overshadowing, increased traffic generation, and poor examples of medium density housing in the Sydney Region.

On the other hand there is little doubt that there is a demand for medium density housing for the aged and retired, young married couples, single persons, and short-term residents. If large-scale population expansion is to proceed in the Mountains, medium density housing represents one way to reduce visual intrusion of houses into the natural environment, and reduce costs of public utilities. It is often assumed that the numerous examples of poor quality medium-density housing in Sydney are the only types that can be expected.

It is possible to improve housing forms by careful site planning and the use of stringent controls. Existing housing codes appear to be insufficient in this regard. Alternative housing forms include town houses, villa houses, terraced housing group and cluster housing. These forms offer a greater opportunity for sympathetic integration with the natural environment. Environmental quality is a most important feature of the Blue Mountains and special care must be given to questions of housing types and controls.

FINDINGS OF THE STRATEGY PLAN THE ENVIRONMENT

3

ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS

BLUE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

The vastness of the Blue Mountains National Park is impossible to grasp except from the air. The total area of land contained within the Park is about 984 square kilometres (380 square miles) or 56 per cent the size of the existing Sydney Metropolitan Region. Compared with other major National Parks near Sydney, the Blue Mountains National Park is about five times larger than each of the Royal National Park, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and the Dharug National Park.

Although 276 square kilometres (106 square miles) of the Park is outside the Blue Mountains City boundaries, virtually all access to the Park is from the City area.

Blue Mountains Open Space Resources

	Hectares	(acres)
Blue Mountains National Parks	70,000	(175,600)
State Forests	6,775	(16,742)
Catchment Areas (BMCC)	19,917	(49,190)
Escarpment (IDO 26) *	1,696	(4,192)
Regional Open Space	10,872	(26,854)
Parks and Recreation	182	(450)
Proposed Recreation	63	(156)
Private Recreation	131	(182)
APPROXIMATE TOTAL	118,838	(273,366)

*Interim Development Order No. 26 (Escarpment Preservation Area)

ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

GOAL 1: To delineate, define and classify special environmental areas.

The first goal of delineation was accomplished at a large scale with the establishment of the Blue Mountains National Park in 1958.

Other large areas of open space are also contained within the City boundaries including State Forests, water catchments, and local recreation areas. The Eastern Escarpment Preservation Area is one example of how this first goal can be used to define a unique area.

GOAL 2: To ensure the preservation of unique environmental areas.

For example, recent planning controls will reduce the visual impact of housing within the eastern "escarpment preservation area". The preservation of historic sites and buildings also comes under this second environmental goal. Council's usual method of preserving unique environmental areas is to zone them "Special Uses - Historic", or to dedicate open space areas for various recreational purposes.

GOAL 3: To define and encourage suitable uses within environmental areas.

Management policies are needed to guide and control development activities in environmental areas. One instance is the current non-urban zones limiting the subdivision of land in Megalong Valley. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is forming management principles to achieve this goal within the National Park. Other management plans due to the Mountains needs similar management plans due to different land ownerships and a lack of overall open space policies.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCE

The environmental goals of "delineation, preservation and proper use" must be based on how we experience the physical environment. The Blue Mountains are generally experienced at three basic levels:

1. Perception of the National Park, and from escarpment lookouts. National Park areas are mainly in a natural state. Adjoining areas also in largely natural conditions include the Warragamba Catchment and Erskine Creek State Forest. Views from escarpment lookouts are the single most important reason for tourist visitation to the Blue Mountains; these views encompass not only natural areas, but also other escarpments.

By far the most heavily visited escarpment system is the south-western segment overlooking Jamison Valley and containing the Three Sisters. The Cliff Drive provides an excellent scenic ring route along most of the escarpment with many vantage points accessible by vehicle.

The northern/north-western escarpment (Grose Valley and Banksia Valley) was described by Charles Darwin as "probably the most extensive perpendicular walled canyon system in the world. This escarpment system is the least visited or viewed in the Mountains due to very severe problems in access to vantage points. The most used vantage points are located east of Blackheath on separate non-connecting roads. Faulconbridge Point offers magnificent views but is accessible only by a very bad vehicular track. The Mt. Banks/Banksia Valley lookout points have been closed to all but National Parks and Wildlife Service personnel.

2. Moving views from the road and railway. An important asset of the Mountains is the contrast between open space and urban centres, along the Highway and railway line. An increasing movement towards ribbon development is blurring what should be distinct contrasts between villages and open spaces. This contrast can only be retained if the three environmental goals are accomplished in the intermediate areas between the Towns, and in areas such as the Megalong Valley and Mounts Wilson, Irvine and Tomah.

As urban expansion spreads westward from Sydney and population growth continues within the

OTHER NATURAL AREAS

About 184 square kilometres of the Warragamba Dam catchment area falls within the City area. The Erskine Creek State Forest contains about 74 square kilometres within the City.

The scenic and topographic uniqueness of the Mountains is largely attributable to its extensive escarpment system. Over 165 kilometres of escarpment are contained within the boundaries of the City. Only the eastern escarpment, however, is protected by statutory methods.

Of the 1480 hectares of land designated as water catchment areas for the City water supply, some 140 hectares (346 acres) in Wentworth Falls is unusable for water supply. The relocation of "catchment dedication" could release this valuable land for open space or recreation uses.

INTERMEDIATE ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS

Many areas in Mountains contain a sympathetic blend of natural and man-made environments. Among these are Mt. Irvine, Mt. Wilson, Mt. Victoria, Megalong Valley and Mt. Tomah. Only the Megalong is reasonably protected within the City development. In other areas, inadequate zoning and controls are present. Many areas have been the subject of objections to Council's planning scheme.

Clear-cut policies concerning visual and zoning regulations are needed in all of these intermediate environmental areas.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The Mountains abounds with historic places of all types. One can easily locate scores of buildings and structures, pioneering and exploring sites and works, magnificent man-made environments and habitats and widespread aboriginal sites and relics. Yet these places are being destroyed by ignorance and a lack of co-ordination, awareness, funds, legislation and suitable alternatives.

Mountains, the use of the Great Western Highway for tourism, commuting and services will increase. If Bathurst-Orange expands a sharp increase in traffic through the Mountains is inevitable.

The importance of the Great Western Highway is indisputable. Yet the journey along the Highway is largely a depressing and frustrating affair. The glimpses of natural parklands are few and obscured; roadside rest areas are inadequate, poorly marked, and non-uniform. Visual blight in routine along the Highway - dull and unexciting ribbon development is common. Is this non-experience to be accepted?

Detailed development control plans are required to implement comprehensive and co-ordinated development. A sense of cohesion in architectural styles, scale, and building materials is required. Privacy and separation from busy roads is currently scarce in urban centres. Noise and climate considerations are largely ignored resulting in noisy, wind-swept spaces, open to cold and rainy weather. There are two primary goals in the improvement of urban centres in the Mountains.

The first goal is physical separation of centres from busy roads and provision of adequate car parking facilities. Almost all existing centres along the Great Western Highway currently require this separation. The ramifications of increased traffic and by-passes have been discussed above. Springwood, Glenbrook and Leura have already accomplished this separation but exhibit problems of either car-parking or high future traffic volumes through the centres.

The second urban goal is to concentrate activities to create an urban "sense of place" in each centre. The elements of urban layout simply stated are: good townscape and streetscape design, sufficient amenity and diversity, and sensitive environmental design. Although implementing these urban elements may require a long-term effort, great potentials and flexibility are presented by current low settlement densities, low land occupation characteristics, relatively low land prices, and an abundance of urban open space. The proposed civic centre in Katoomba is an example of this required concentration of activities.

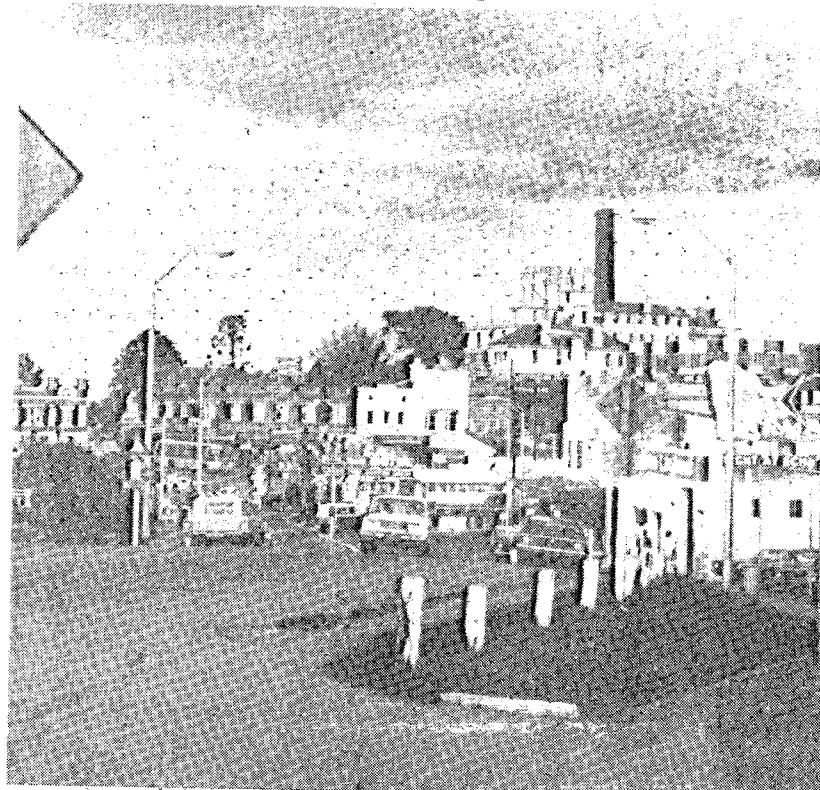
A major immediate improvement can be made by standardizing the graphics, size and location of commercial signs and hoardings. Traveller information centres offering maps and literature concerning attractions, roadside rest areas, camping and picnic areas would improve proper uses of these areas and increase visitor satisfaction. Establishing information centres would require a co-ordinated effort in identifying, improving and sign-posting these facilities. Initial programmes towards this goal in the Upper Mountains scenic lookouts have proved highly successful. The demand for adequate information centres has been identified by visitor surveys carried out in 1969 and 1974 by the NSW Department of Tourism and Urban Systems Corporation. The success of the National Park information centre demonstrates this potential.

3. Urban (man-made) Environments.

The static experience within towns encompasses townscape aesthetics such as design, density, historic and cultural aspects, and the overall feeling of an urban environment.

With few exceptions, the urban experience of the Blue Mountains is one of uniform dullness, poor layout, traffic congestion, and lack of suitable amenity. Virtually all centres are located facing busy roads - in conflict with passing traffic, and have car parking problems. The only centre having an identifiable "sense of place" is Leura by virtue of its grassed median strip, grade separation, and location away from the Great Western Highway.

The introduction of new or intensive activities into existing centres often offers opportunities. For example, where a substantial addition to an existing centre is contemplated, increased traffic generation usually requires road closures, off-street parking and arcades. The opportunity arises for covered malls, mini-parks, and a comprehensive system of landscaping, urban furniture, and streetscape ideas.



GREAT WESTERN HIGHWAY ENTERING KATOOMBA - One example of an area of visual blight from the Highway. A co-ordinated policy is needed to improve roadside environments by introducing codes to control commercial signs and hoardings. USC Photo.



MEGALONG VALLEY (above) AND GROSE VALLEY. Recreation uses in Megalong can be ensured by proposed minimum subdivision sizes of 300 acres. Similar controls are needed elsewhere in the Mountains. Access to lookouts in the Grose and along Banks Wall needs urgent upgrading and maintenance. Dept. of Tourism photos.

IDENTIFIED ACTION PRIORITIES

The Strategy Plan report identified the following projects for environmental action:

- Delineation of critical environments in Natural and Intermediate Areas: review of non-urban policies. Investigate solutions to high pollution levels and their ecological impacts.
- Enhancement of the View from the Road - investigate the resources and design standards in urban areas, and in the open spaces between towns.
- Evolution of Village Character - Look for opportunities in:
 - Historic sites and buildings
 - Urban parks and gardens
 - Streetscape and road closures
 - Housing policy, design standards and structure planning
 - Detailed development control planning in Megalong Valley, the Mounts (Wilson, Irvine and Tomah), Mt. Victoria and Woodford as historic precincts; railway station precincts.
- View from the Escarpments - investigate ways to improve lookouts and maintain them by using funds from Federal and State sources.
- Monitor non-conforming activities such as pollution; erosion; destruction of environment by development works, fire, rubbish dumping, mining and extractive operations, and tree removal.
- Review bush fire control policies - increase access to the bush, levels of responsibility and effectiveness, inequalities in equipment and training. Establish fire prone areas, and suitable planning controls to reduce the hazard of bush fires to houses.
- Defence team - prevent unsuitable development in all critical environmental areas.
- Grants and Powers team - identify and obtain suitable money grants and loans for environmental policies and programmes; commit government authorities to clearly stated Council policies.

FINDINGS OF THE STRATEGY PLAN TOURISM

4

TOURISM POTENTIAL

The Strategy Plan contains an analysis of the traditional role of the Blue Mountains as a tourist resort, recent trends in the development of new types of accommodation and man-made attractions, and the visitor interview programme. A number of general conclusions can be drawn which will have a significant bearing on the overall for tourist development within the region:—

- The initial isolation of the region and its consequent role as a mountain retreat offering full board holiday accommodation has fundamentally changed.
- The area will increasingly be used by the metropolitan population, particularly from the expanding western sectors. Sightseers, day trippers and those staying overnight or for weekends will increase.
- New kinds of accommodation are tending to locate in the region in response to this change in tourist patterns, and to meet the demand for transient accommodation.
- A more mobile metropolitan population and the increasing number of the more transient metropolitan visitors are tending to reduce tourist expenditure.
- With the increase in the transient and mobile visitor to the region, new commercial, artificial attractions have tended to locate in the region. These man-made attractions have initially been dependent upon the region's natural attractions for their success and in aggregate have come more recently to be in 'competition' with these natural attractions.

It is clear that the future of the Blue Mountains in general is deeply involved with tourism. It is important for Council to recognize how the Blue Mountains is becoming more enmeshed and integrated into the expanding Sydney Metropolitan region, and to acknowledge the greater regional significance of the Blue Mountains as a tourist and leisure region.

EASTER VISITOR SURVEY 1974

The survey was carried out mainly to compare visitor patterns in 1974 with those in 1969. There was very little change in patterns of visitation or in tourism expenditure. Visits by Sydney day-trippers is not changing to any significant degree. Ac-

commodation has grown in the interim, almost exclusively in the form of motels. The main motives for visiting the Mountains were to enjoy the natural attractions without having to spend a great deal of money to do so.

TOURIST ROADS

To date there has been little development in the provision of roads specifically oriented to tourist use from which to view the magnificent natural attractions. The Bells Road partly fulfils this function as well as being an alternative east-west link through the Mountains. The Cliff Drive in Katoomba, Leura, Wentworth Falls is the best existing example of a tourist road and is intensively used, forming a part of the regular route of most coach tours. The Megalong Valley road is another example though less intensively used. There are a number of areas which are potentially suitable for the introduction of further tourist roads of the Cliff Drive type, namely north and south of Wentworth Falls, Leura, south of Mount Victoria near the Kanimbla Valley. Another possibility would be to introduce a tourist road on the Eastern Escarpment linking the Hawkesbury Lookout to Yellow Rock Lookout and, across Fitzgerald's Creek to Glenbrook. This would provide another alternative circular tourist route on the eastern perimeter of the City. This link of tourist facilities along the route, could to some extent discourage penetration into the Upper Mountains area.

ACCOMMODATION TRENDS

Since 1972, there has been somewhat of a boom in the provision of tourist accommodation. There is a clear pattern of locating new facilities. There are two basic categories:— Highway-oriented accommodation and resource-oriented accommodation. The latter usually are larger operations offering a greater range of facilities with higher tariffs. They have tended to locate in prime residential areas near major wilderness areas which offer magnificent scenic views. They have been generally built to high design standards with landscaping and, in consequence, have not caused much erosion of residential amenity. The highway-oriented operations are generally cheaper, offer fewer facilities and tend to capture more of the traveller trade.

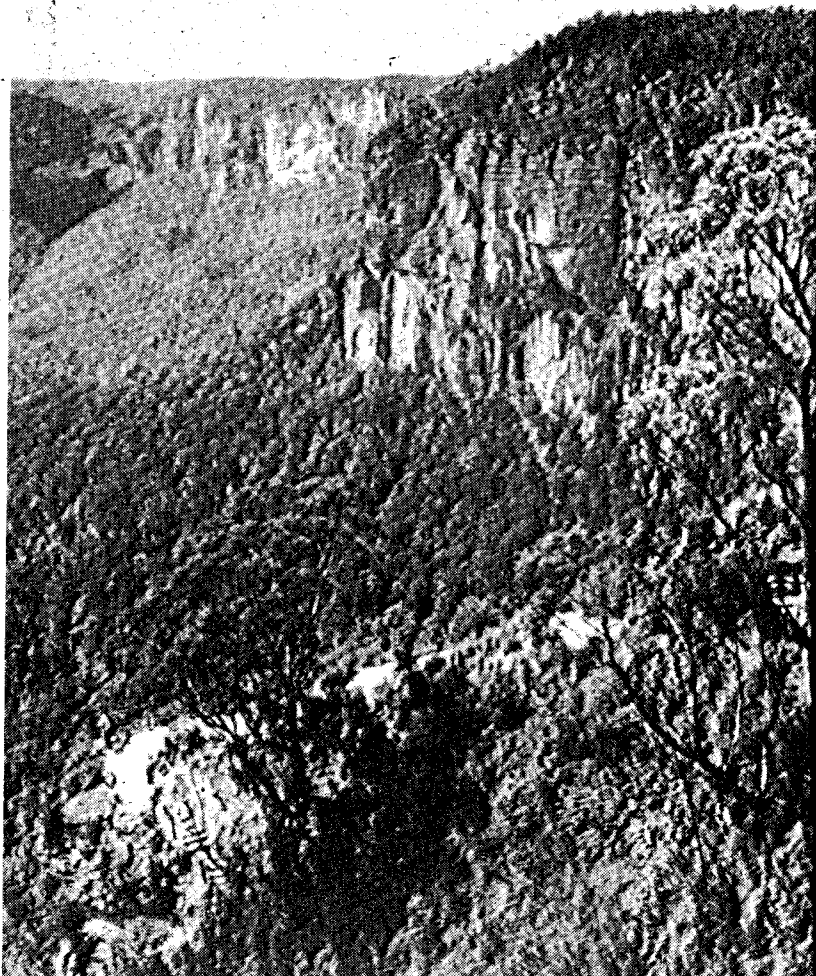
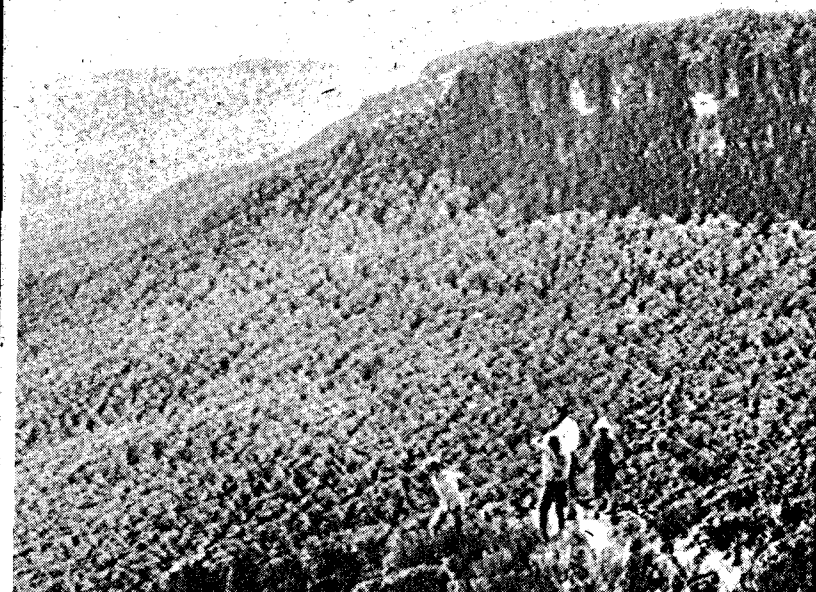
IDENTIFIED ACTION PRIORITIES

The following priorities for action are identified in the Strategy Plan Report:

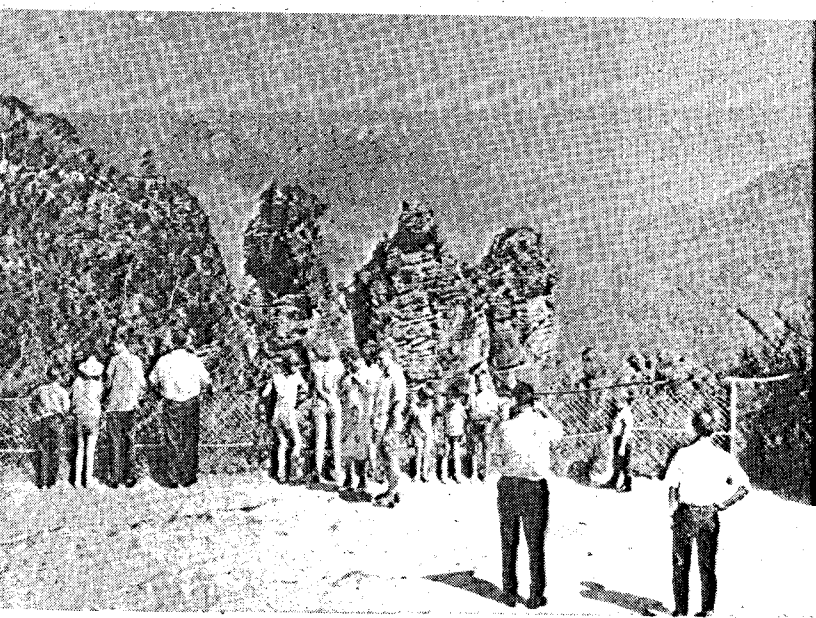
- prepare a detailed classification of tourist attractions by type, with development control, distribution and environmental impact policies.
- investigate potentials of selected non-urban areas within the City region for the promotion of clustered tourist attractions and facilities.
- investigate potentially suitable tourist accommodation areas within the City region, clustered around recreation areas such as golf courses.
- Evaluate subdivision patterns of critical areas within the Megalong Valley, Mount Wilson, Mount Irvine and Mount Tomah, for compatibility with tourism activities.
- look into potentials for locating tourist roads-cliff drives in selected areas along the Eastern Escarpment, Mt. Victoria, Kanimbla Valley, Wentworth Falls.
- initiate a visitor satisfaction programme concerning the provision, range, depth and standard of tourist facilities and amenities. Study ways and means of improving standards, and possibilities of promoting certain amenities from which to derive a financial return, by generating greater spending and to cover increasing maintenance costs.
- complete urban visual and environmental improvements to enhance their image and 'sense of place', incorporating low-cost streetscape improvements and street furniture.
- Improve and expand access points to the major wilderness areas, particularly the National Park.
- Improve the range and depth of evening entertainment facilities in major centres.
- study ways and means of overcoming the problems of seasonality in the area.

PROBLEMS OF EXPANSION

Immediate planning guidance is needed to establish policies governing the expansion of tourism attractions and facilities. These policies should govern siting, space consumption, environmental impact, architecture, visual and performance standards. By defining tourist precincts and standards, many of the problems of traffic congestion and noise can be overcome and conflicts between visitor and resident can be reduced.



"Environmental Design Policy—To enhance views from the lookouts..." Two examples of existing escarpment lookouts needing facility construction or upgrading. Virtually all lookouts currently lack suitable access roads, standardized facilities and explanatory graphics. Dept. of Tourism photo.



ECHO POINT LOOKOUT—The Blue Mountains most famous and heavily patronized natural attraction. Should maintenance of this and other lookouts be supported by users, ratepayers, or subsidized by government sources? Dept. of Tourism photo.

FINDINGS OF THE STRATEGY PLAN CITY FRAMEWORK

5

SELF CONTAINMENT

Self containment is a measure of how many jobs are available locally, or how many people have to commute to work places outside the Mountains. The Blue Mountains is very heavily dependent on the Sydney Region for employment. Only 25 per cent of workers living in the Lower Mountains work within the area. This local work figure is about 75 per cent in the Upper Mountains. Thus the Lower Mountains has 25 per cent self containment and the Upper Mountains 75 per cent self containment.

Some of the problems of low self-containment (i.e., where most people commute long distances) are social isolation, and the mass migration of young people seeking employment. This migration problem is especially severe in the Upper Mountains. On the other hand, boosting self containment by increasing industry will have an impact on the environment and transport systems.

Self containment can be increased by expanding commerce, tourism and manufacturing. Three basic options are presented in the Strategy Plan.

OPTION A—Natural growth of commerce and industry which will continue the existing situation of high levels of commuting.

OPTION B—Expansion of industry to existing capacity of land zoned for industry and the development of a major retailing complex in the Lower Mountains.

OPTION C—Expansion of industry to provide employment for 50 per cent of industrial workers living in the Mountains, and the development of major retailing complex in the Lower Mountains.

COMMERCE

In the Upper Mountains, Katoomba overshadows all other centres in terms of size and range of retail goods offered. The other centres have very limited ranges and serve local neighbourhood needs. Much less emphasis is placed on clothing and personal services.

The Lower Mountains retail structure is not as simple. Springwood dominates the western portion of the Lower Mountains with a strong emphasis on food, clothing, household and personal services. Blaxland's strengths are in food and household goods, but the centre also contains significant office activities.

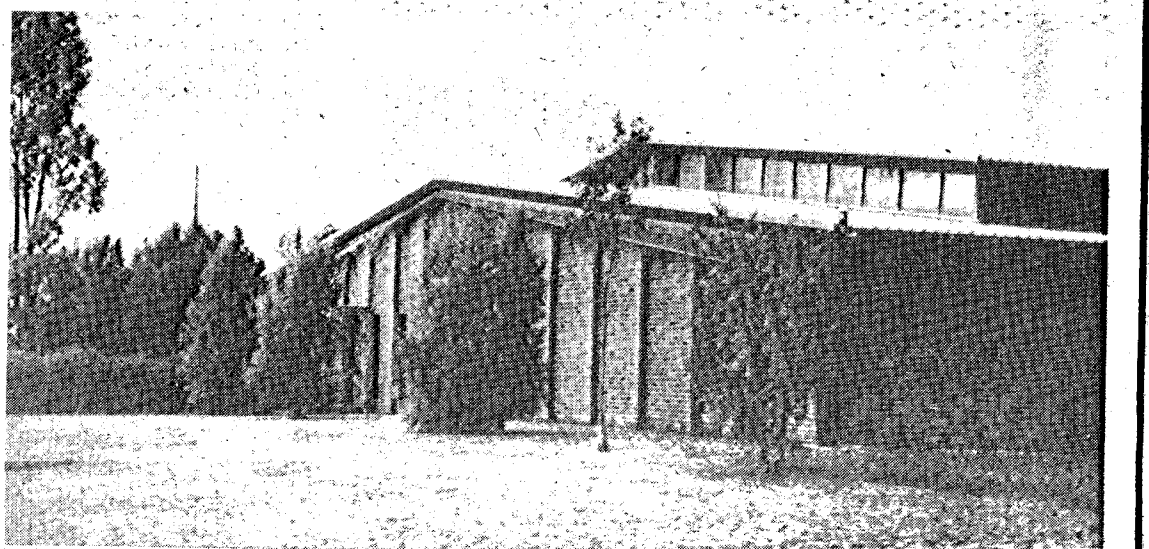
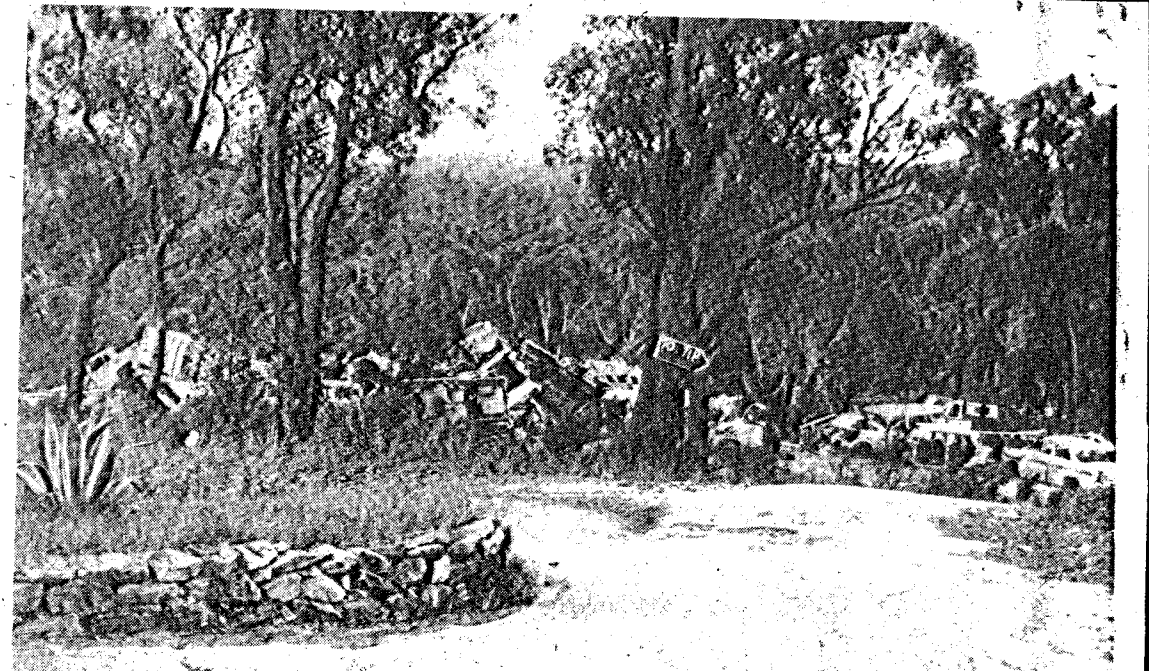
The present Lower Mountains population cannot support a major shopping complex, and Penrith will continue to attract lower Mountains residents, especially for large household goods and comprehensive personal services. This situation will continue until the Lower Mountains approaches approximately 60,000 people. At this population, a major shift in shopper patterns could justify large-scale expansion of shopping space to rival Penrith.

The immediate pattern of shopping areas in the Lower Mountains is presently the subject of urgent study. Among other things, the ultimate capacities and likely design of these centres is being investigated.

Office space in the Lower Mountains currently appears to be insufficient. Only 30 per cent of all Blue Mountains office space is located within this fast-growing area.

Several important factors in future planning strategy must be kept in mind:

- The separate orientations of Upper and Lower areas must be recognised. The upper area, while being linked to the Sydney Region for services of a highly specialised nature, is self-contained in many of the more common commercial requirements. The Lower Mountains form an integral part of the Sydney Region and to a great extent will be linked to trends in Sydney and Penrith.
- The physical layout of the centres is linear in form, and will dictate the choice of location and size. Although choice is limited, the linear form of development has the advantage that can facilitate efficient public transport systems.
- The Blue Mountains area cannot look to any highly populated surrounding areas for extra trading opportunity. The level of commercial service will rely on resident populations, although the proposed development of Orange-Bathurst may lift trading performance.



Most industrial areas in the Mountains are located adjacent to rubbish tips (top) and sewage treatment plants. The lower photo (Rainsford in Springwood) shows that industrial facilities do not always represent visual blight. USC Photos.

