

New rules mean smaller houses and land McMansions out in war on sprawl

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MELBURNIANS will have to live in smaller houses on smaller blocks as authorities try to stop the spread of McMansions and improve the city's transport networks.

Developers will be required to fit 15 homes to a hectare in our fastest-growing suburbs.

And they will have to show potential buyers how far they will have to travel to schools and jobs.

The tough new planning guidelines aim to create vibrant communities and local employment rather than empty, sprawling suburbs.

The guidelines will be launched by Planning Minister Justin Madden today to enable councils and planners to create master plans for new precincts of more than 3000 homes.

The guidelines are not legally binding but will assist planning approvals.

In areas such as Casey-Cardinia, Hume, Whittlesea, Melton and Wyndham, developers will be expected to provide a mix of homes including one-person units and home/offices.

Developers will also be encouraged to ensure people who move to growth suburbs can walk to local centres, transport and jobs to reduce reliance on cars.

Mr Madden said the plan

Vision of the future: an artist's impression of new homes in suburban Melbourne



New guidelines for growth areas mean developers must:

- Squeeze 15 homes on to each developable hectare
- Provide a range of housing options including one-person units and home offices
- Have efficiency checks to test plans against cost, land and water-use measures
- Ensure residents are within walking distance of shops, transport and jobs
- Show how many jobs will be created and where

was to create communities rather than housing, so families could raise children and work locally.

The State Government wants to see more community-based plans for large-scale developments to stop "dormitory suburbs".

Planning experts have slammed urban sprawl and

called for higher density living to create sustainable housing.

Developers will be required to prepare an "employment statement" showing the number and type of jobs forecast for new communities.

Growth Areas Authority chief executive Peter Seamer said the guidelines built on recommendations made in 2006. Apart from a "journey to

work" statement, "The guidelines will also bring native vegetation and cultural heritage into the mainstream planning process to ensure protection of bush land and indigenous cultural heritage."

They also must set out how public space will be used and when community infrastructure, such as schools, will be available to residents.