

21.01 MUNICIPAL PROFILE

01/10/2015
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The City of Banyule is located between 7 and 22 kilometres north-east of central Melbourne. It includes all or parts of the suburbs of Bundoora, Greensborough, St Helena, Eltham North, Watsonia, Watsonia North, Yallambie, Montmorency, Briar Hill, Lower Plenty, Macleod, Rosanna, Viewbank, Heidelberg West, Heidelberg Heights, Bellfield, Ivanhoe, Heidelberg, Ivanhoe East and Eaglemont. The municipality has an area of approximately 63 square kilometres. The Yarra River and Darebin Creek clearly define its southern and western boundaries respectively.

21.01-1 Banyule in context

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Banyule is bounded by the municipalities of Nillumbik generally to the north, Manningham generally to the east, Boroondara to the south and Darebin to the west. It lies between inner Melbourne and the outer rural areas, and provides a balance between the attributes of those areas.

Banyule is in the Yarra River catchment. Land within Banyule forms an integral part of the regional open space networks associated with the Yarra and Plenty River valleys, which provide a recreation and environmental resource for metropolitan Melbourne. It also forms part of the Melbourne Riverlands and Plenty Yarra Community Tourism Association tourist areas, which are notable for their natural and cultural heritage (both Aboriginal and post-contact). This heritage and its interpretation – not least through festivals, exhibitions and galleries – present important tourism opportunities.

Banyule provides a significant number and range of jobs to the broader region, particularly in the industrial, retail and public sectors. Residents of Banyule also have easy access to the large number of jobs in the surrounding region and central Melbourne. The municipality and its surrounding region also include a significant number of Melbourne's educational and health institutions.

Banyule's location makes it accessible to central Melbourne and the urban fringe. It is serviced by the Hurstbridge rail-line which gives access to central Melbourne, and cross-town SmartBus routes which link Banyule to other parts of the metropolitan area. Regional roads provide access to the western suburbs and Melbourne Airport. There are also road links to the southern and eastern suburbs.

21.01-2 Banyule in brief

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Significant rivers and diverse topography

Banyule's southern and western boundaries are defined by the Yarra River and Darebin Creek respectively, and the Plenty River meanders through the municipality from north to south. With the exception of relatively flat land in the Heidelberg West area and the flat alluvial floodplains adjacent to the Yarra and Plenty Rivers, the majority of the municipality's quite strongly dissected topography ranges from gently to steeply undulating.

High-quality vegetation and landscape

There are substantial areas of indigenous vegetation, particularly in the east and north-east of the municipality. The vegetation of the southern and western parts of the municipality is now largely characterised by exotic trees and shrubs, although replanting of indigenous species is taking place along the Darebin Creek. The municipality includes several sites of State, regional and local botanical, zoological and habitat significance. A number of significant trees have been identified throughout the municipality.

Extensive, high-quality open spaces

The waterway systems within Banyule provide the basis for significant areas of public open space. These are used for active and passive recreation and to protect the natural environment. The areas along the Yarra and Plenty Rivers and Darebin Creek are particularly important, forming part of a larger regional network of open space and recreation opportunities. Banyule also boasts other significant parks and reserves not directly related to the waterways.

Primarily residential land use

The majority of the municipality has been developed for residential purposes, with the exception of:

- large areas of publicly owned land, primarily in the vicinity of the rivers and creeks, and primarily used for recreational purposes
- public and private golf courses
- a large number of commercial centres, the biggest being the Greensborough Principal Activity Centre, Heidelberg Specialised and Major Activity Centre and the Ivanhoe Major Activity Centre
- significant industrial areas in Heidelberg West, Greensborough/Briar Hill and Bundoora
- large-scale institutional uses, such as the Austin and Repatriation Medical Centres and the Simpson Army Barracks.

Population

Banyule's 2014 estimated residential population of 125,250 is expected to increase to 142,332 by 2031 (*Victoria in the Future 2014*). The largest population gains in the recent past have occurred in the north-west, north and west of the municipality, with the greatest losses in the east and south.

Ageing population

As with Greater Melbourne, Banyule's population is expected to continue to age with 26.9 % of the population expected to be aged 60 or more by 2031. (*Victoria in the Future 2014*).

Declining household size

The average household size in Banyule is expected to continue to decline from 2.54 persons in 2011 to 2.43 persons in 2031 (*Victoria in the Future 2014*).

Changing household composition

Although Banyule provides diverse housing, the municipality predominantly accommodates couples with children (45.2 per cent of all households), couples without children (25.3% of all households) and lone person households (24.25 % of all households). Households comprising couples with children are expected to remain the predominate household type to 2031, with a rise in the percentage of households comprising couple only and one person households. (*Victoria in the Future 2014*)

Mostly separate houses, but the trend is towards higher densities

Banyule has a limited variety of dwelling types with 80.1% of dwellings being separate houses on a lot. Only 19.7% of the dwellings are medium or high density compared to 28% in Greater Melbourne. (*ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011*)

In recent years, growth has occurred most significantly in the numbers of medium density dwellings. This indicates a demand for smaller sized homes and a decrease in demand for separate houses. The distribution of the higher density housing has been highly dispersed with no particular concentrations occurring.

Most homes privately owned

The majority of dwellings (71.6%) in Banyule are privately owned or being purchased. Private renters account for 18.6% and 4.4% are in social housing. (*ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011*)

Housing stock varied in age

The oldest houses – predominantly solid brick – are located in the Eaglemont area. Land was subdivided for residential purposes in the Montmorency and Greensborough areas from approximately the 1910s. The majority of dwellings are of brick veneer construction, with significant numbers of weatherboard houses in areas subdivided and developed prior to the 1950s.

Limited variety of lot sizes and dwelling densities

Dwelling densities in Banyule are low with the lowest densities in the north-east of the municipality. There is also a concentration of large-lot, low-density development in the Lower Plenty area in the south-east of the municipality.

Significant heritage features

Banyule has a significant Aboriginal heritage. Aboriginal heritage features include scar trees and archaeological sites, mainly associated with watercourses. The city also has a significant post-contact cultural heritage associated with the painters of the Heidelberg School and architects and urban landscapers including Walter Burley Griffin, Alistair Knox, Edna Walling and Ellis Stones. Specific heritage features include buildings of national, State and local importance and significant landscapes and precincts which warrant protection.

Employment focused in the industrial, retail and public sectors

The three occupations of professionals, clerical and administrative workers, and technicians and trades workers accounted for 57.4 % of Banyule's employed resident population. Compared to Greater Melbourne, Banyule has a higher percentage of persons employed as professionals, and a smaller percentage of persons employed as machinery operators and drivers and labourers. (*ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011*)

Ivanhoe East, Ivanhoe, Heidelberg, Eaglemont and Rosanna have the highest percentages of managers and professionals.

Most jobs are filled locally, while the remainder are filled by residents from neighbouring municipalities and from the northern and north-western suburbs. Most of the Banyule workforce is employed within the general region of the municipality, while the second most important destination of the workforce is the City of Melbourne and its immediate

surrounds. Unemployment rates are likely to vary across the municipality, being generally lower in the east and north and higher in the west.

Access to public transport

Banyule is serviced by nine railway stations along the Hurstbridge railway line, the Plenty Road tram route, orbital SmartBus routes and other bus routes. While many of these contribute to the Principal Public Transport Network, there are differences in the frequency and quality of these public transport services. For example the better quality bus services, which give local access to the region, are the red, green and yellow orbital SmartBus routes.

More needs to be done to encourage increased public transport use and deliver associated community and environmental benefits, by:

- Greater connectivity between bus services and bus and rail services
- Improvements to associated facilities
- The development of coordinated modal interchanges
- Encouraging new housing to locate close to Activity Centres and the Principal Public Transport Network.

Road networks which perform a strong regional function and suffer from localised congestion

Because Banyule is located in the middle suburbs, many of its roads perform a regional function, including linking nearby residential areas in the Plenty Corridor growth area and elsewhere with inner suburban places of employment, the airport, and the industrial areas of south-east Melbourne.

Well serviced with community facilities

Banyule has a wide range of community services and facilities. These include educational, health and leisure facilities and facilities for specific groups, such as the aged and people with disabilities.

The Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre, Warringal Private Hospital and Banyule Community Health Centre form the basis of an unusually large and diverse health sector within the municipality.

The provision of facilities and services needs to be responsive to the needs of the community – the lack of services for youth has been identified as an issue that needs to be resolved. Given Banyule's projected population profile, there is also likely to be increased demand for aged and medical services in the years ahead.

Valuable industry and commerce

Although primarily a residential municipality, Banyule is fortunate to have significant industrial and retail centres which make important contributions to the city's economy.

The major industrial area at Heidelberg West and other significant industrial areas at Greensborough/Briar Hill and Bundoora are important generators of employment and economic activity within the municipality and need to be supported. The same goes for the retail and commercial sector, which is represented by the Greensborough Activity Centre, Heidelberg Activity Centre, Ivanhoe Activity Centres and numerous Neighbourhood and Local Activity Centres.