Some ideas for rail-led rebalancing city v country

Access my research papers from Google Citations
Major considerations

- Tony’s starting premise that Plan Melbourne should consider the country rail network and possibilities of controlled development the peri-urban environment has merit

- **Issues**
  - Quality of life and environmental sustainability issues are cardinal
  - The City, where districts are becoming unlivable, is growing like a cancer with rampant development in most corridors that have not already been “developed”
  - Except for Green Wedges and a mess of council planning regulations (all too often controlled by developers), there is no overall population plan or long-term vision for state
  - Prime agricultural land & remnant vegetation is being bulldozed
  - Automotive commuting is a major generator of greenhouse gasses, to say nothing of the resources consumed to produce and house them and the land and spreading tarmac they require
  - Existing public transport corridors and stations are well distributed, making it easy to preserve agricultural & natural resources between
Focus

- I’ve lived in & commuted from Macedon Ranges Shire for 20 years
  - I know the Calder/Bendigo Line corridor
  - & I have become reasonably well connected politically
    - Greens
    - Labor
    - Environmental & Landcare

- Calder Corridor seems typical of other North & Western corridors
  - Each connects to major regional or (Hume Fwy) national city
  - Trucking arterials
  - Growing suburban towns & shopping centers spreading out from train stations!
  - Substantial agricultural and remnant vegetation still exists between & in corridors along lines between stations that warrants strict controls to preserve those uses

- Impossible to prevent development, but should be able to control and direct it
Consider Macedon Ranges & Riddells Creek

- Consensus is that the entire council save one serves developers before all else and should be replaced
- Ongoing subdivision rampant, planning reviews, etc.
- Emerging coalition looking to run candidates in all wards: Landcare, sustainability, Hanging Rock preservation, Greens, ALP, etc. (farmers little heard from)
  - Want to preserve existing “rural” amenities, open space & habitats
  - Macedon Ranges themselves still reasonably good second growth forest
    - Cleared late 1800’s by timber felling for railways
    - Not otherwise developed except for a few small farmsteads
- Riddells Creek surrounded by overgrazed & degraded horse paddocks
  - Substantial open but degraded land exists south of tracks
  - Macedon Ranges includes substantial tracts of already protected land behind Riddells Creek, Gisborne, Macedon & Woodend
Mount Macedon Shire remnant vegetation

- Riddells Creek Landcare 2014 submission to council re Open Space Management Plan
  - Presented the story of Boulder City's Open Space and Mountain Parks System as a model for the development of Macedon Ranges Shire
  - One of greenest, most liveable cities in USA
The Boulder (Colorado) Open Space & Mountain Park story
A remarkable history

- 1907 - A federal grant of 1,600 acres of land on Flagstaff Mountain.
- 1912 - Boulder citizens purchased another 1,200 acres of Flagstaff Mountain for $1.25 an acre.
- 1959 - PLAN Boulder County formed & successfully campaigned for many land preservation issues.
- 1959 - No town water supplied above "blue line".
- 1964 - Citizen protest led city council to stop development of a luxury hotel on Enchanted Mesa and force sale land. Community funded land purchase.
- 1967 - Boulder voters approved a 0.4% sales tax to buy, manage, and maintain open space, passed by a 57% majority.
- 1971 - A charter amendment allowed City Council to issue bonds for the acquisition of open space.
- 1973 - Citizen activists led creation of a separate Open Space Department to acquire & maintain natural land with an Open Space Board of Trustees.
- 1989 - 76 percent vote to add 0.33% sales tax for 15 years to accelerate open space preservation; in 1997, voters extended the tax through 2018.
- 1986 - Charter amendment providing more permanent protection for open space lands adopted by 77%.
- 2003 - Voters added further 0.15% sales tax through 2019 to fund continued land acquisitions and maintenance.
Publicly owned land in MRSC

- Area shaded in pink is land that might be considered for protection/management to complete an arc of protection.

- A new subdivision currently zoned for no development, monitored & protected by Riddells Creek Landcare.
Medium density housing: A town planning suggestion for sensible peri-urban development to minimize the use of/need for private cars.
What might be better for many people than quarter acre+ detached housing

- **Garden apartments**: mews (click picture below) and/or courtyard
  - Build on degraded land 1 km max (walking distance) from trains & shops with pedestrian, bicycle, trolley & scooter (only) paths
  - Four floor height restriction
  - Limited basement/undercroft parking
  - Allotments & native vegetation

- **Other new development restricted beyond 2 km radius**
Some courtyard apartments
Where might such developments fit in Macedon Ranges

- View in Google Earth