

# NEW HOMES LAND

## Market day for Mernda

Growth continues apace in the Whittlesea corridor, writes **Mary Costello**.

**R**EPORTS of the demise of the Mernda Market have been greatly exaggerated. The Monday-morning gathering still takes place, albeit without the livestock sales. It's now more of a trash-and-treasure exchange but the community still meets.

The market's makeover reflects the transformation of Mernda itself; it may be the boom suburb of the Whittlesea growth corridor, yet it is still, somehow, a country place.

Today, land buyers will have another option in the area, with the release of the first blocks at Integrated Development's new Fairview estate. Fairview occupies 27 hectares of undulating paddock next to the proposed extension of the Quarry Hills Regional Park. It is named after the 1860s bluestone homestead — a heritage-listed building of architectural and historical significance — that still stands north of the site.

Fairview comprises 330 blocks and 64 of these are now selling, sized

from 312 square metres to 512 square metres, with prices ranging from \$161,000 to \$240,000. Buyers can choose the more affordable, low-maintenance Lifestyle blocks on flat, sheltered land or the larger Premium blocks, many of which offer rural views.

Buyers can also register their interest in the upcoming Outlook release. At the highest points of the estate, Outlook blocks will average 630 square metres, with views to the Kinglake Ranges. All houses here will be close to a central park and a tract of open, green space will run through Fairview, connecting it to the future Quarry Hills parklands. For buyers keen to stay active or for those interested in birds, wildlife and the outdoors, there are also parks, playgrounds, reserves and wetlands in the nearby estates.

The two small commercial centres planned for Mernda have yet to eventuate and, for now, locals must travel to shop. Bridge Inn Road forms a handy east-west connection



Named after this 1860s bluestone homestead, Fairview estate will retain rural views.

between Plenty and Epping roads. As the population increases, both roads are increasingly congested but it takes less than 10 minutes to drive from Fairview to central Epping — a service centre with a train station, excellent shopping options, the Northern Hospital and other medical facilities. Epping Plaza is a large shopping centre and cinema complex. The Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE is beside the train station.

Fairview families will be within easy distance of a number of schools and will be able to walk to Acacia College. This new Uniting Church

school opened this year at primary level and plans to offer prep to year 12 by 2015. The college has been designed as part of a multi-use community hub, with plans for a childcare centre, kindergarten, worship and meeting centre, health club, pool, basketball stadium and hospitality precinct to be realised within five years.

The Plenty Campus of Ivanhoe Grammar (prep to year 12) is on Bridge Inn Road.

At the end of this year, Mernda Primary is to be relocated from the old Mernda township to new facilities at Mernda Villages, closer to

### Fairview

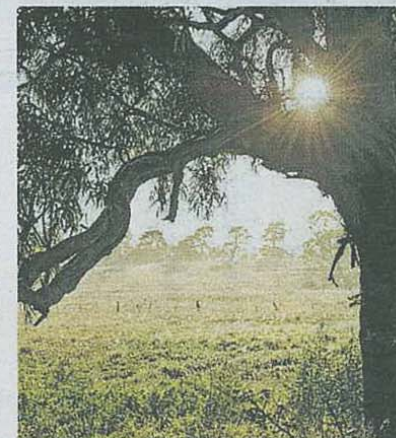
**Address:** 300 Bridge Inn Road, Mernda

**Agent:** Oliver Hume Real Estate, 9684 8119

**Web:** fairviewmernda.com.au

**Prices:** From \$161,000

**Melway:** 390 A9



Fairview. St Joseph's Catholic Primary is another recent addition to the area and parents will find other new schools, state and private, at Epping and South Morang.

One deficiency is the lack of a high-capacity public transport system — a concern 32 kilometres from the city. The Epping rail line will be extended to South Morang by 2013 but there are no plans at present for an extension to Mernda until 2027.

The No. 562 bus stops at the corner of Bridge Inn and Plenty roads. It runs past RMIT and on to Greensborough Plaza and the train station.