

Preston Market Precinct Questions & Answers

August 2023

The Minister for Planning has approved new planning controls to support the substantial retention of Preston Market, protect its heritage significance and deliver more housing choice for people in Melbourne's north.

The market precinct covers more than five hectares in the heart of Preston. The precinct is generally bound by Murray Road in the north, Cramer Street to the south, the rear of the High Street shops to the east and St Georges Road to the west. The precinct includes the Preston Market and is next to the new Preston Station.

How did we get here?

The Preston Market precinct is located within the Preston-High Street Major Activity Centre identified in *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*. This precinct has been identified as an ideal location to provide more housing choice for Victorians close to family and friends, jobs, community infrastructure and public transport.

It is within walking distance of Preston Station and is close to other transport services, shops, employment opportunities and open space, including Preston City Oval.

In 2017, the Minister for Planning directed the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) to review planning controls in the precinct. In 2018 the Minister asked the VPA to prepare a structure plan and planning scheme amendment to guide future development in the precinct.

What consultation was undertaken for the draft Preston Market Precinct Plan?

The VPA undertook several rounds of community consultation about planning for the Preston Market Precinct. The VPA consulted with the landowner, Darebin City Council, traders and the community.

Final public consultation on the draft structure plan and draft planning scheme amendment occurred in 2021. There were over 380 submissions received and referred to the advisory committee, which conducted public hearings in 2022.

What did the advisory committee say?

The advisory committee found that there was strong strategic justification for the proposed amendment but that the proposed removal of a substantial portion of the existing market's fabric had not struck the right balance in the context of the Preston Market's historical, aesthetic, technical and social significance.

The new planning provisions respond to the committee's recommendation that more of the market buildings and structures should be retained in any redevelopment of the precinct.

What has the Minister for Planning determined?

The Minister has approved Amendment C182dare to the Darebin Planning Scheme, including new zones and overlays to guide the future development of the precinct and to protect the heritage significance of the market.

The amendment includes an Activity Centre Zone, Development Plan Overlay and Heritage Overlay. Other provisions also apply to manage development contributions, environmental audit requirements and provision of parking in the precinct.

The planning controls make the Minister for Planning the responsible authority for the development plan and all planning permits for the precinct.

How is the market being protected?

The new planning controls require that the market be substantially retained in its current place, while allowing sympathetic change and renewal.



Preston Market will be protected by a new Heritage Overlay which will require any development to conserve and enhance the heritage significance of the site.

A planning permit will also be required for any new buildings and works, including alteration or demolition of any existing buildings.

Will these new controls support the continuation of the market?

While the continuation of the existing market is a decision for the landowner, the new planning controls will encourage market activity on the site.

The Development Plan Overlay requires the permanent location of the market to be identified in the development plan, with the market being substantially located within the heritage market structure.

Before any development can occur, the proponent will need to prepare a market continuity plan to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning that outlines how the market will continue to operate during and after any redevelopment within the precinct, including any arrangements for temporary relocation.

What else do the new planning controls do?

The new planning controls will guide a vibrant, mixed-use development for the precinct which features:

- Approximately 1,200 new dwellings.
- Building heights varying between one and 14 storeys across the site.
- Approximately 3,700 square metres of public open space that complements the market experience for all visitors.
- Protection of sunlight to Preston City Oval and other public open space.
- Street and pedestrian networks that connect the precinct to the new Preston Station and High Street.

What happens next?

As part of any redevelopment, the landowner (or any other proponent) must prepare a development plan in accordance with the new planning provisions to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning.

The development plan must be prepared and approved before a planning permit can be granted for new use and development.