

 Preston VIC 3072	Victorian Planning Authority Level 25, 35 Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000
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Dear Sir/Madame,

12th July 2021

Re: Draft Amendment C182dare/Preston Market Precinct Structure Plan

I'm writing to protest the proposed redevelopment of the Preston market precinct.

The proposal appears almost deliberately designed to break all urban planning principles and destroy the liveability of this long-standing and much-loved heart of Preston.

While I do not dispute that the market itself could benefit from a refresh, I was horrified to see the proposed three towers to the west of the stalls.

In particular, erecting a 20-storey tower on Murray Road, right beside the new Preston station, would be an abomination that would transform, irreversibly and for the worse, the charming heart of this old Melbourne suburb.

The need for new residences to house our growing population is undisputed. But the way to do this is with apartment blocks of moderate heights, such as the 6-8 Clinch Ave block that currently faces Murray Road from the opposite side.

At eight storeys high and well set back from the road by the Budget car yard and Caltex petrol station in front of it, it is a reasonable 'high-rise' addition to the Preston landscape.

However, at well over double that building's height, the proposed new 20-storey tower would loom like the Eye of Sauron directly over the Murray Road sidewalk and bus stop, and cast – every single day henceforth – an enormous shadow over the market and surrounding area. More broadly, it would be an eyesore that will single-handedly ruin central Preston's lively but pleasant medium-density character. There is a place for these sorts of buildings; Preston market is simply not it.

Perhaps most concerning is the level of congestion these new towers will generate every single day on the market site and surrounding main roads. As you are no doubt aware, this area already experiences significant congestion during market days. Adding no less than *48 storeys of residents* (across the three proposed towers), however, will cause an inconceivable scale of overcrowding (both pedestrian and vehicular), delays, confusion and, inevitably, accidents.

In short, instead of following the basic liveability principles that have generally made Melbourne such a great city to live in, the current proposal repeats the infamously costly and dire mistake we see in Docklands, where once-prime open space was ruined by thoughtlessly constructing tower after tower after tower, blocking out the sun and sky and creating dark wind tunnels in-between ('Market Street' will undoubtedly become one of these).

This case is even more reprehensible as it seeks to do so on a heritage market site loved by generations of north-siders, in the heart of a suburb that thousands love to call home precisely because it is an escape from the towers and traffic jams of the inner city while remaining close to it.

Change and development are good and necessary. The market itself is certainly due for a refresh and there are spaces in and around Preston where many more medium-rise blocks such as 6-8 Clinch Ave could be developed to house hundreds more residents. But what is being proposed here is simply illogical and unacceptable, and I know the vast majority of ratepayers living in this area passionately agree.

Yours sincerely,

