



ATTN: VPA

RE: Rejection of Proposal for Preston Market Precinct

I am writing to express my dismay at the proposed VPA Planning Authority draft Preston Market Precinct Structure Plan which prioritises dense high-rise residential apartment construction and does not allow for people who will eventually live in the proposed precinct or visit the precinct sufficient open spaces and community facilities.

I reject the proposal based on the following considerations:

Further degradation of Murray Road

The building of high-rise apartment towers on Murray Road do not allow for set-backs, and make Murray Road a narrow and unattractive road corridor, subject to already very heavy traffic which will become even more crowded and less conducive to walking or cycling. The plan shows two traffic lights for pedestrian access but fails to show there is another traffic light 50 metres away at the Spring St/Murray Road intersection which makes calling Murray Road a ‘Transport Street’ very misleading. It fails to take into account that people will and must use Murray Road for access to the market, the supermarket, the carpark and the rail line. Much of the Murray road part of the site will create shadows and reduce sunlight. There appears to be no landscaping or traffic calming elements on this or any design elements including the new Mary Street that mitigate against graffiti.

Density of apartment living

The draft plans allows extremely dense numbers of apartments onto the site, with the VPA setting a dwelling target of 2200 apartments, almost 100 dwellings per hectare higher than the rules for Australia’s largest urban renewal project at Fisherman’s Bend. The space will be crowded and noisy for dwellers in this space

with no room for respite and outdoor retreat. There is no commitment or indication from the developer that sustainable building design and materials will be used to mitigate against excessive use of airconditioning/heating or consideration of climate change which are core values to the majority of Preston residents. The whole space seriously underestimates the requirements and value of open landscaped areas for families and gatherings. The proposed open Spaces are largely concrete and hard surfaces, which is not conducive to sustained outdoor activity. In addition, study after study prove that increasing hard surfaces in cities contributes to urban heat and increased pressure on storm water drainage.

Lack of consideration of local infrastructure

There is no consideration of an increased population on local infrastructure. Schools in Preston are already at capacity. Trains to and from the city already exceed capacity and are full in the mornings before the trains even arrive in Preston. Roads around Preston and particularly around the Murray Road/High street area at capacity and congested.

Lack of connection to Preston Station

There appears to be very limited consideration of the new railwork immediately adjacent. There is no dialogue or connection between these two large infrastructure projects in terms of space usage and architectural and landscaping synergy.

The brochure and artist impressions presenting the development are seriously misleading and purports to take into consideration all of the above elements.

The VPA must insist that the developer consider these points more fully and go back to the drawing board to enhance the site rather than repeat the failures of other Melbourne precincts like Docklands.

Yours sincerely

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