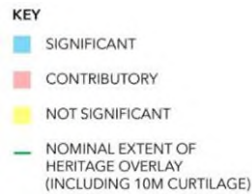


## Preston Market Statement of Significance

<b>Heritage Place</b>	The Preston Market
<b>Address</b>	The Centreway, Preston 3072
<b>Significance</b>	Local
<b>Construction Date/s</b>	1969-70 (main part); mid-1960s to early 1970s (independent shops)
<b>Designer</b>	Structural Consortium
<b>Heritage Overlay</b>	HO315
<b>Amendment No.</b>	C182dare



Exterior of the Fruit & Vegetable Halls viewed from Mary Lane



Interior of the Fruit & Vegetable Sheds

### What is Significant?

The Preston Market constructed 1969-70 is significant to the City of Darebin. The original elements that contribute to the significance of the place include:

- general planning including wide walkways
- space frame roof
- outer concrete tilt slab walls (including their form at the walkways and secondary pedestrian zones)
- steel supports with struts (generally in walls between premises)
- profiled metal sheeting to bulkheads
- metal fascia to original walkway canopies
- areas of glazing - highlight windows to most premises [currently painted over], as well as to the meat and deli areas
- remnant garden beds and planters
- the cruciform plan with three principal intersections
- the division of Preston Market into small blocks that act as distinct neighbourhoods.

The independent shops to the north end, which pre-date the main market structure, are of contributory value.

Later additions are not significant (refer to plan) including:

- Aldi supermarket (18 Cramer Street)
- Section at north-west end (ST12-ST14/20 Cramer Street)
- Lean-tos, etc. attached to side of concrete walls (north-east corner, south-west corner of The Centreway)
- The tensile membrane or Perspex sheeting (or the like) canopies to the walkways and their supporting steel structures.

### How is it Significant?

The Preston Market, The Centreway, Preston is of historical, aesthetic, technical and social significance to the City of Darebin.

### Why is it Significant?

The Preston Market, The Centreway, Preston is of historical significance (Criterion A) for the following reasons:

- Opened in 1970, it was the first market to have been constructed in the municipality since the Interwar period. Unusually it was established as a private venture, whereas most markets were established by the local council.
- Reflects the growth of Preston in the post-WWII period when many immigrants were attracted to the area, and subsequent waves have continued to be. The market was effectively a microcosm of the community as it reflected the cultural diversity of the area in the range of stallholders, etc., and provided economic opportunities for migrants to establish small businesses.

The Preston Market, The Centreway, Preston is of aesthetic significance (Criterion E) for the following reasons:

- Designed in 1969 by the Structural Consortium, a group of three recent university graduates, the Preston Market reflects a Modernist approach to create well-planned, free flowing, uncluttered and functional spaces. The Preston Market is distinguished especially by the extensive use of space frame design, reflecting the Structuralist style/approach of the late 20th century. The emphasis of the Structuralist approach was to create enclosures that 'floated' with limited support and in this instance provided highly flexible spaces by comparison with traditional shopping complexes.
- The original design of the Preston Market is largely intact. Key aspects are the planning, the space frame raised on a limited number of steel supports crowned with struts (generally incorporated into walls), original glazing (to the meat and deli halls and highlights to the stalls [although overpainted], and the outer concrete walls. Some ancillary items, relating to the landscaping, also remain intact. The walkways have however been infilled with canopies, whose structure is separate to the original.

The Preston Market, The Centreway, Preston is of technical significance (Criterion F) for the following reasons:

- The Preston Market is the first extensive use of space frame technology in the State. It is also an early example of computer-aided design, necessary for space frame technology. With the brief to create a well-planned, free-flowing and unencumbered functional space, the designers (Structural Consortium) settled on the space frame to achieve this end as it could be extensively cantilevered and need relatively few supports. With no affordable proprietary system available, a local company, Standard Steel Pty Ltd, were engaged who had been experimenting with/developing a pyramidal module. Local ingenuity was thus employed to develop this system utilising readily available and inexpensive components, though nonetheless with a high level of quality control (for instance, the steel was hot dip galvanised after assembly of the pyramidal units to achieve a long lasting finish – and the steel remains in good condition 50 years later).
- At the Preston Market, (pre-cast) concrete tilt-slab construction was employed for the outer walls, which was an early use of the system in Victoria. Whilst it had previously been used in USA and New Zealand, tilt-slab construction had had limited application in Australia. Its benefits related to labour saving costs and the potential to relocate panels.

The Preston Market, The Centreway, Preston is of social significance (Criterion G) for the following reasons:

- Preston Market has social significance for its strong and special associations with the Preston and wider communities who shop at the market, and with stallholders, many of whom have been a part of the market for many years, and sometimes are second generation traders.
- Preston Market has social significance to the Preston community and wider communities as important social and cultural landmark within the inner northern suburbs. It signifies the particular history of the post-war period and in serving as a focus for social exchange is intimately connected to the daily life of Preston.

- Preston Market has social significance as a place that sustains important community ideas about cultural diversity and inclusiveness. These form a significant element in community identity across the City of Darebin and are actively celebrated.
- Preston Market is of social significance as a place that creates and sustains opportunities for cultural practices and traditions associated with food and cuisine to continue. The market symbolically connects people to their own cultural pasts and those of the wider community.
- Preston Market is of social significance as a place where strong and special attachments have been created and continue, and that go beyond the simple utility of the market as a shopping venue. These attachments are linked to the place, the function and interpersonal relationships.
- The Preston Market has become an informal and inclusive/welcoming community space and allows for the sharing of cultural traditions and practices, especially those associated with cuisine. The generous open spaces/walkways allow for extensive social interaction and are well used as meeting places so that a vibrant atmosphere is created (within the bustling shopping context) and there is a strong sense of ownership by the community. The stallholders themselves form a closely knit sub-community and the market provides opportunities for them to proudly express their cultural identity and values – as such it is a safe haven.
- The Preston Market has continued to be a locally popular destination for nearly half a century and strong relationships between shoppers and stallholders across generations have formed over this period. The traditional, largely open-air format of the market has been well supported from the outset in contrast to the evolving trend during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century for new suburban shopping centres to fully enclosed/air-conditioned.



### Primary Sources

Preston Market Citation (RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants as amended by GJM Heritage, October 2022)

Preston Market Heritage Study Volume 2: Significance (Context P/L, December 2017)