

29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Mayor City of Darebin  
Darebin Councillors  
CEO, City of Darebin

**Subject: Matters that requires your urgent and immediate attention**

Dear Mayor, Councillors and CEO,

We the undersigned members of the Preston Market Community reference Group are writing to you to express our immediate and urgent concerns regarding Council's commitment to working to preserve the heritage values of the Preston Market site.

On Monday 21st May 2018 the Council decided at its meeting to belatedly release the Preston Market Heritage Study and Peer Review reports which the community had repeatedly requested to be made publicly available. While we are pleased Council has finally come to the party nevertheless it is yet to follow through with a resolution to seek a heritage overlay and interim heritage protection for the market. We believe this is irresponsible as it now leaves the market completely exposed to heritage vandalism in the future.

As you all well know the heritage study clearly recommends that the Preston Market complex comprising the original footprint of the market buildings, the built form, structural elements particularly the space-frame, the internal pedestrian 'streets' and interior elements is of local significance. Furthermore, one of the key findings of the study states that Darebin Council includes Preston Market in the Heritage Overlay of the Darebin Planning Scheme which Council has explicitly failed to imitate at its last meeting.

Additionally, the heritage study recommends that Darebin Council consider undertaking further research to determine whether two aspects of Preston market may potentially be of state significance, namely the space frame technology, given its early use at Preston market and most notably the importance of the market to represent a key aspect of post war migration history. It is disappointing to say the least that Council is abandoning its pledge to the community by failing to resolve to do more work to strengthen its case to apply heritage controls over the market.

Council's abandonment of pursuing heritage protection is further compounded as on Wednesday 23rd May 2018 we attended the first meeting of the Preston Market Reference Group and contrary to our expectations we were again disappointed to learn that the role the reference group is restrictive, limited and impotent in only raising key consideration. More importantly the reference group cannot recommend that a heritage overlay, or interim protection or permanent heritage controls be applied. Term such as "encourage and support" are not good enough.

This is of immediate concern to us as it undermines the integrity of the joint VPA/Council consultation process. In addition we were told that the times line for developing the new Incorporated Plan have been extended to the end of October

differing to the original time table that had been set. This is unacceptable, unwarranted and unnecessarily delays the process of making a decision before the government enters into a caretaker period given the state election will be held in late November 2018.

In light of these concerning developments we respectfully call on you to immediately and urgently re-consider your recent decision and call an urgent meeting to immediately seek approval from the Minister of Planning to apply a Heritage Overlay and install interim or permanent controls to the market site. Moreover, we call on Council to immediately undertake further research into the state significance of the mark and that Council and the VPA scraps the extension of the new timelines for Community Reference groups

In conclusion we would greatly appreciate and seek your indulgence to urgently meet with you prior to the next Community Reference Group meeting on Thursday 7th June 2018, so we can consider our future role as reference group members.

Yours sincerely

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| Anne Laver            | President, Darebin Ratepayers Association      |
| Stewart Midgley       | Darebin Appropriate Development Association    |
| Manny Spiteri         | Advocate for Preston Market Traders            |
| Nalliah Suriyakumaran | Chairperson Darebin Ethnic Communities Council |
| Leanora Spry          | Community Member                               |

cc. Hon Richard Wynne MP - Minister for Planning  
Hon Robin Scott MP - Member for Preston  
Stuart Moseley - CEO VP  
John Casey - Strategic Planning Manager VPA