

From: [REDACTED]
To: [amendments](#)
Subject: Preston Market Structure Plan
Date: Sunday, 11 July 2021 2:36:40 PM
Attachments: [Preston Market Structure Plan.docx](#)

Hi Preston Market consultation,


Am sending you this submission as an attachment,

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

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Preston Market Precinct Structure Plan – draft Amendment C182dare



Reason for the submission: I and my partner shop every week at Preston Market (usually on a Thursday morning). We like the atmosphere, conviviality and the low prices. It is convenient for us to shop there. During the lockdown the Preston Market was a lifesaver. One had a sense of being part of a community and participating in a social connection with other people from Melbourne.

Overall comment: I oppose the proposed development and would prefer that the market continue in its current form.

Parking issues

The proposed market plan has no provision to replace current parking with equally convenient (open air, lots of space) free parking with the same number of car spaces. There is nothing mentioned or shown in the diagrams. One can conclude that the intention is that there is no parking for the proposed units or that it is handled by the unit corporate body. For the market it is intended that shoppers walk, take public transport or bicycle.

Our experience is that even at 9 am on Thursday morning the market car park is close to full. It is totally packed out on Friday and Saturday mornings. A disproportionate number of shoppers (compared to residents in the surrounding suburbs) are older people, often from migrant backgrounds, who come in their cars to the market. This is because, as an older person, it is less feasible to walk or ride a bike and difficult to catch public transport with your trolley of shopping. The other reason is that these people are also economically low income compared to the average in these inner suburbs and the market, with low prices for stalls and little attention to décor, is the cheapest place to buy basic supplies. Compared to supermarkets, vegetables are close to half price at the Preston Market.

The impact of the proposed market re-structure will be to exclude these people from the market and (at the very least) change the demographic of shoppers very radically with flow on impacts on prices, the kind of shops that can make money and so on.

Broader issues leading on from this

My comments will assume either, (a) this change is with good intent *or* (b) this change masks intentions that are not immediately apparent.

(a) If this change is with good intent.

It is assumed that petrol cars will be phased out by the early 2030s and that most people, unable to afford an electric vehicle, will travel by public transport or bicycle. If there is any clientele at all for the markets it will have to travel there by sustainable transport options.

While this is a laudable goal, there is no predictable political mechanism by which this change might take place. The government would have to increase fuel prices drastically or

ban petrol and diesel vehicles. The logic of this change is wishful thinking on the part of environmentalist town planners. The actual effect will be to exclude most current users from Preston Market and radically change the nature of the shopping being offered there. This is never announced as an intention of the plan.

It would take a thirty per cent vote for the Greens Party nationwide by 2025 to make this imagined shift in transport real. At present this seems extremely unlikely. Much more likely that in the period 2025 – 2035 there will be more uptake of electric vehicles and more use of public transport and bikes by young people. But most of those over fifty will be hanging on to their petrol and diesel cars as the cheapest and most convenient transport option.

(b) The proposed plan for Preston Market masks deeper intentions.

The real intention of the plan is to downgrade and by stages eliminate Preston Market as we now know it – and to replace it by an upmarket shopping centre catering to the gentrified owners and renters of the new proposed apartments.

In fact, the whole plan is an example of “primary accumulation” in the sense used by political economy theory. The aim, with much of neoliberalism, is to acquire a public resource at rock bottom prices and give it holus bolus to the capitalist class to make a healthy profit. The only people advantaged by this (other than the real estate owners and developers) will be a small cohort of building employees during the construction phase. The rest of the community will lose this public resource for all time.

Just think for a moment what the cost might be of acquiring a similar parcel of land from private owners. For example, the block of residential private housing on the other side of the railway line – at prices that would attract current homeowners to sell their blocks.

This is seen as a rational response by politicians trying to deal with an investment strike by the capitalist class in the rich countries. Tempt them to invest by giving away the resources now in public hands.

Such a scenario should be resisted by the ALP and the Greens – as well as by town planners who have been instructed to serve the public interest.