



13 September 2022

Mr Steven Avery
Executive Director
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T 03 9656 9818

File No: B2282 Queen Victoria Market

Re: Permit application P34494—Queen Victoria Market

Dear Mr Avery,

We object to the above Permit Application to install freestanding, lockable retail and hospitality pods within Sheds A and E in the Upper Market, and formalise a storage and business-to-business environment between Sheds A and E.

The National Trust has a long-standing interest in the Queen Victoria Market Renewal Program, and has been actively engaged in the process for many years, including as a member of the QVM People's Panel. The National Trust recognises the Queen Victoria Market's National significance as one of the great nineteenth century markets of Victoria. It has been in continuous operation since the 1870s, and is the only Melbourne market to survive from a group of important central markets built by the City of Melbourne.

We also recognise the social significance of the Queen Victoria Market as a record of change and continuity in market activity over a long period and as an important shopping, leisure and meeting place for generations of Victorians and visitors to Melbourne. The complex of enclosed food halls, open sheds, shops, and stores perpetuates distinctive forms of trading, providing a very tangible continuity from the nineteenth century to the present. The social significance of the Market is reflected in its function as an affordable and diverse retail market serviced by small, independent businesses, from many different cultural backgrounds.

In responding to the current proposal, we recognise that extensive work has been undertaken by the City of Melbourne and Queen Victoria Market Pty Ltd over a number of years to determine the most appropriate solution to delivering functional outcomes, while maintaining the market's identified heritage values. We also acknowledge that this proposal is part of a revised programme of works in response to the refusal of a permit to develop basement areas beneath A to D Sheds in 2018, which was intended to address some of the issues noted in this application.

However, the National Trust submits specific concerns about the visual impact of the proposed lockable pods, and new trading format of sheds. We believe these changes would disrupt site lines in and along the open sheds and impact the historic use of the sheds for open air trading.

Of key concern is the effect of closing off the interface with Peel Street. The impact on foot traffic through the disruption of fencing off the northern sections of Sheds B to D will disrupt view lines and customer access to traders around this area.

Furthermore, the installation of retail and hospitality pods to address storage issues does not appear to be in consideration of alternative options. While these structures are removable, we are concerned by the cumulative impact of the introduction of fixed structures across the sheds, including String Bean Alley, as they will fundamentally change the character of market operations.

We recognise a need to provide facilities which can enable market trade to thrive in the twenty-first century and beyond, however, no exploration of less invasive options to address market operation requirements have been provided with this application. The National Trust submits that while this proposal attempts to address recognised operational issues at the market, it requires further resolution.

The National Trust acknowledges the challenges in retaining traders and attracting new traders to the market, particularly within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, but no analysis has been provided with this application to explain what market management is doing to retain and support existing traders, and the drivers for turnover. Without this evidence there is little argument for an economic need for the proposed changes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this permit application for the installation of hospitality pods and a proposed new trading format at the Queen Victoria Market. We believe these works would interrupt the current rhythm of the sheds, and we submit that further work should be undertaken to minimise the visual impact of new structures and changes to the operational layout of the sheds.

For any enquiries regarding this submission, please get in touch with this office on 9656 9818 or with me directly at felicity.watson@nattrust.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Watson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Felicity Watson
Advocacy Manager
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)