

To whom it may concern,

Draft Market Square Master Plan

This is a submission from the Committee for Geelong (the 'Committee') to the draft Market Square Master Plan (the 'Master Plan') prepared by the City of Greater Geelong.

For more than 20 years, the Committee has been an independent, member-based organisation representing businesses and community organisations to provide strategic leadership and influence to leverage the economic and social prosperity of the Geelong city-region. Our organisation's mission is to design Geelong's best future.

The Committee welcomes the release of the Master Plan. We particularly welcome the role of the City of Greater Geelong to sponsor this document on behalf of a range of landowners within the plan area, especially considering the potential for the Master Plan to incentivise redevelopment of the Market Square Shopping Centre and surrounds.

As is well documented, the Market Square Shopping Centre and adjoining Little Malop St Mall are areas of Central Geelong in dire need of intervention and redevelopment in order to continue developing a world class central city and address the societal issues which have plagued this part of the City for decades. Therefore, the Committee supports the potential for the Master Plan to facilitate redevelopment that can bring activity and vibrancy to Central Geelong, alleviate some of the societal issues, and deliver high-quality residential development that meets the housing needs of all sectors of our community.

A desire for a reimagined Market Square precinct to maximise public open space in the heart of the city is a common theme in consultation with our membership. We understand this was a common theme in Council's own consultation process and it raises the question – has the opportunity for a fourth option been missed that incorporates a significant public open space?

In our submission, an option that delivers a significant and meaningful open space area - the 'green heart' of the City – is an undeniable option that must be more deeply explored. The Committee see this option being able to achieve or support the following outcomes:

- Retention of the historic Moorabool Street façade & the historic clock tower building on Malop St, honouring our European heritage.
- Creating an inner-city park and community gathering place through the centre of the site that is open to the mall and the Malop St Green Spine, creating a unique opportunity to celebrate our indigenous history.
- Delivering a high-rise apartment complex on the eastern side of the site to deliver increased living population in Central Geelong, for all sectors of our community.

We understand there are financial realities of such a concept, and it would likely require investment from State and/or Federal Government to achieve a financially viable outcome. However, when designing our best future, we must make bold and visionary moves and explore all options to provide the best outcome for our community of the future and honour our designation as a UNESCO City of Design.

It is with this in mind we encourage the City of Greater Geelong to be bold and visionary in considering a 'green heart' for the City.

The Committee stands ready to support.

I would be pleased to discuss this matter in further detail with you.

Regards

Michael Johnston

Michael Johnston

CEO

Committee for Geelong