

# Queen Victoria Market a key election issue in race for Melbourne Lord Mayor

774 ABC Melbourne

By [Stephanie Chalkley-Rhoden](#)

Posted Fri September 23, 2016



**PHOTO:** [The City of Melbourne is planning a \\$250 million revamp of the market.](#) (ABC News: Stephanie Chalkley-Rhoden)

**The future of the Queen Victoria Market and wider redevelopment in Melbourne's CBD is shaping as a critical issue in the race for Lord Mayor, with many traders still unconvinced about the current plan for the site's renewal.**

The 130-year-old market is set to undergo a significant \$250 million makeover that has divided opinions among traders, government and shoppers.

The plan will see the creation of an underground car park, underground trader facilities and a revamp of the iconic sheds.

The surrounding area is also an issue of contention as more and more high-density and apartment building developments are approved.

Incumbent Robert Doyle, who is running for a third term after being elected in 2008, told [774 ABC Melbourne's](#) Jon Faine the market's heritage needed to be protected.

Mr Doyle said he supported nearby developments, like apartment buildings, to "frame the market so the edge of the city comes up to it and the market sits like a little jewel".



**PHOTO:** [A number of traders are openly resisting the redevelopment.](#) (ABC News: Stephanie Chalkley-Rhoden)

When asked about the opposition from some traders and regular customers, Mr Doyle said council needed to be better at explaining how the development would affect the site.

"If you think about the deli hall, that will remain pretty much as is," he said.

"We purchased the Munro Street site, a very large site on the edge of the market, to inoculate it against bad development.

"You don't want to spit-polish it too much ... you need a market feel."

Fears market will lose X factor, become 'sanitised'

The market has never had proper storage facilities for traders, on-site refrigeration or even running water in the produce sheds. Those facilities will be part of the upgrade.



**PHOTO:** [The 130-year-old market site still does not have refrigeration for traders.](#) (ABC News: Stephanie Chalkley-Rhoden)



But there is concern among traders about how the extension of trading hours would affect the predominantly family-run businesses.

Many are also worried the growing developments will eventually overwhelm the site and that the small size of the kitchens in the apartments being built meant residents did very little cooking.

Deli owner Faye Kanarev, who started at the market as a 14-year-old, said the site had been neglected for the three decades she had been working there.

"The toilets are a bit of a disgrace, the outdoor traders need amenities, they need electricity, they need running water," she said.

**"My fear is going underground may be a little bit too intrusive. The market has an X factor and my fear is that will go. I don't want it to become ... sanitised."**

"Vic Market is a market for all Melburnians; it is a fresh food place, it is not a tourist precinct. We need to look after our Melbourne customers."

'Future plans must retain market's fabric'

Prominent Melbourne identity Phil Cleary, who is running for mayor as an independent, said he had spoken with traders and many were disenfranchised with market management and the direction of the renovations.

He dismissed Mr Doyle's suggestion that traders had come to the council asking for the massive overhaul.

"They came to say the management was failing, that it did not promote the market properly, that it did not develop strategies in keeping with the market's fabric," Mr Cleary said.

Dr Olivia Ball, standing for the Greens, said she was concerned about urban planning in the area and wanted to make Melbourne a world leader in sustainability.

"We want to see clean government in town hall and to preserve the character of our neighbourhoods, to preserve the heritage of our market," she said.



**PHOTO:** [The Queen Victoria Market currently operates five days a week.](#) (ABC News: Stephanie Chalkley-Rhoden)

"We see opportunities for renewal. We do think there are upgrades needed."

Pollster Gary Morgan said the market needed to operate seven days a week and become more commercial and allow traders to sub-lease their stalls if they did not want to increase their hours.

Mr Morgan also said Mr Doyle's time as mayor was up and was compromised by his links to developers.

**"We need an honest council, we need a council not funded by developers," he said.**

Extend City of Melbourne boundaries for 'proper planning'

Anthony van der Craat, a member of the Labor Party, which does not endorse local government candidates, agreed the market must trade seven days a week.

He said high-density development "was a must" for the inner city, and wanted the boundaries of the city to be reconsidered.

"The liveable city doesn't just begin and end at the Yarra and extend up to Kensington. It should extend beyond it," he said.

"I'm certainly in favour of a city of a greater Melbourne. [It should] take in the lakes of Port Phillip, the former city of Prahran and possibly the City of Yarra.

**"To just focus on this little hole in the middle is just misrepresenting Melbourne and not allowing for proper planning."**

Melbourne City Council elections are conducted by postal vote and voters must send or hand deliver their ballot by October 21.