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Wheelin' into Christmas
Photo by John Tadigiri

With November 24 marking the first "triple donut day" in Victoria for 300 days with zero active coronavirus cases, locals like Jimmy (pictured) can now look forward to a wheelie good Christmas!

Injecting room: No other site considered, as report looms

The Victorian government's bid to open the state's second safe injecting facility has only considered one contentious CBD site despite widespread rejection from key stakeholders, as the December release of a key report looms.

WORDS BY David Schout
HEALTH

The site at 53 Victoria St, located below affordable housing residents and near the Queen Victoria Market (QVM), has been roundly condemned by the City of Melbourne, nearby residents and market traders.

The Andrews Government, which nominated the cohealth central city site in June, has maintained it would consider other locations if presented.

But it has been confirmed that the injecting room's rollout, a process led by former police commissioner Ken Lay, as yet had not explored alternatives.

A spokesperson for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) confirmed that at the current point in this process, 53 Victoria St remained the government's preferred site and no other location had been the subject of consultation.

Ahead of Mr Lay's recommendations due in December, the government's position appeared delicate.

Should the report find the site inappropriate, the government would be pressured to take it off the table and start afresh to find a new location.

Should it proceed, a stoush with the council looms after Lord Mayor Sally Capp said it would look to block it, although that step would likely be subject to a vote by newly sworn-in councillors.

The council holds a 299-year lease on the site, which it opposes as an injecting room primarily because of its close proximity to "vulnerable

residents" at Drill Hall, and to the market.

"Yeah I think we will do [block it] — I'll certainly champion whatever measures are necessary because in my view that is not the most appropriate site for the injecting room," Cr Capp told 3AW on November 5.

Cr Capp hinted Mr Lay's review could fall in their favour anyhow.

"My understanding is that after listening to all of the feedback, that it's not a recommended site."

A council spokesperson told *CBD News* that while it accepted the evidence that supervised injecting rooms saved lives, it had told Mr Lay the northern CBD site was inappropriate for a number of reasons.

"The City of Melbourne does not believe that the cohealth site opposite the QVM is the appropriate location for a medically-supervised injecting room," the spokesperson said.

"It is one of the most densely populated areas in the City of Melbourne; opposite the QVM which is the city's most significant tourist attraction, a transport interchange, child care services and vulnerable residents all within hundreds of metres ... we have provided factual information to Ken Lay to demonstrate why this location is not the right choice to assist Mr Lay in his advice to government."

The council did not respond to questions on whether it had suggested alternatives sites to the government.

In June, the findings of an independent report found Victoria's one and only injecting facility in North

Continued on page 3.

What will happen to Campbell Arcade?

WORDS BY Meg Hill
HERITAGE

Tenants in Melbourne's iconic heritage listed Campbell Arcade are holding onto hope despite doubts that still loom over the arcade's future.

Tenants were told in 2017 that their leases would end in July 2019 as work on the Melbourne Metro Tunnel would demolish one of the arcade's walls to build an underpass between the future Town Hall Station and Flinders Street Station. But as 2021 approaches many tenants still remain in the as yet untouched arcade, which is also known as the Degraves St subway.

Long-term Campbell Arcade tenant Sticky Institute is one of the shops that would be demolished according to the proposed plans. The volunteer-run zine shop and publisher has been located in Campbell Arcade for almost 20 years.

Sticky Institute coordinator Luke Sinclair was told by

Rail Projects Victoria (RPV) in November this year the Sticky shop would be able to stay in the arcade until at least mid-2021.

"The plans for the demolition go directly through our shop, the former hairdressers next door and the plant room behind us," Mr Sinclair said.

"The hairdresser left because of the uncertainty; it's been hard for businesses to stay in the arcade. They'd been there for 25 years."

RPV's draft plans include the demolition of a part of the eastern wall, the removal of three shops and construction of a ticket gate which would remove free public access to the space.

RPV took over as landlord in the arcade in 2019. *CBD News* understands tenants in the arcade are currently on month-to-month leases.

Mr Sinclair said RPV was not currently charging Sticky Institute rent.

RPV is yet to apply to Heritage Victoria for a permit to

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Elizabeth St upgrades put on hold again

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Much-needed upgrades to the southern end of Elizabeth St likely won't begin until 2021, almost four years later than first planned.

Once described by former Lord Mayor Robert Doyle as "grotty" and the "ugly duckling" of Melbourne, upgrades on the stretch of road between Flinders St and Flinders Lane were due to begin in June 2017.

But *CBD News* understands early works (before footpath widening and streetscape improvements) will now not start until 2021 after further delays in design approvals and flood modelling. While borehole investigations began in September, it's now taken more than four years for the council to get final designs approved for construction.

The City of Melbourne did not answer questions as to why the project would be put back again, despite an announcement in September

that pre-Christmas works were due to begin.

The street's southern end is primarily made up of fast-food outlets and convenience stores, and has long been earmarked for an upgrade.

These include expanding pedestrian space by the size of a basketball court, installing street furniture and planting trees, closing the south-bound traffic lane to motorists, and mitigating the likelihood of flooding.

The works are important not only for a streetscape touch-up at the city's "gateway", but more importantly represents one of the CBD streets most in need of redeployed space for pedestrians.

A key pillar of the council's 2030 Transport Strategy involves widening space for those of foot, who have reported feeling "cramped" in certain areas within the Hoddle Grid.

Pre-COVID-19, the Elizabeth St pedestrian crossing outside Flinders Street Station saw more than 9000 people cross every 60 minutes in the morning peak.

The project's start date remains unconfirmed ●



▲ Upgrades to Elizabeth Street's southern end have been postponed until 2021.

Elizabeth St South upgrades: a timeline

May 2017

Upgrades to begin "next month"

December 2017

Works postponed until 2019 due to construction at 276 Flinders St

Dec '17 - Feb '18

Summer "pop-up park"

May 2019

Works pushed back to "early 2020"

May 2020

Construction "estimated to commence in late August and completed by end of December"

September 2020

Early works "to commence next month"

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“Christmas is not cancelled”

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
EVENTS

The City of Melbourne's annual Christmas Festival will help bring Melbourne back to life with a range of COVID-safe events and entertainment for all ages.

From socially-distanced photos with Santa to a Christmas-themed picnic area at Argyle Square, the 2020 festival will run from November 27 to December 25 with the help of the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said that this year's festivities would encourage Melburnians to safety rediscover the city and support local businesses.

“Christmas is not cancelled in 2020,” the Lord Mayor said.

“I am absolutely delighted to announce this program of Christmas offers and events that will be irresistible in enticing people back into the city for their Christmas shopping, celebrations and family traditions.”

The festival will kick off on Black Friday with the “Shop the City” event which will run in partnership with Melbourne Fashion Week.

The Lord Mayor said the four-day shopping festival would provide an opportunity to support local businesses while taking advantage of great deals and enjoying the Christmas events.

“It's been a challenging year for retailers, and residents across Melbourne can show their support by shopping local in the city, and enjoying the pop-up street runways, food and drinks, freebies and music while they're at it.”

Last year the festival generated more than \$64 million to the city's economy and the council is predicting city retailers will enjoy a much-needed boost again this year.

One way this will be achieved is through the Christmas Collective business grant initiative which supports 24 events throughout the city.

These include Christmas markets in Docklands, the 12 films of Christmas at Kino Cinemas, and “A Very Victorian Christmas”



▲ Lord Mayor Sally Capp strolls down Hosier Lane with Santa and Mrs Claus on November 18.

which will celebrate local producers and wine-makers at a pop-up cellar door at Garden State Hotel.

To get into the Christmas spirit, the city will also light up with Christmas projections, including a “Thank You” to the city's frontline workers at the State Library Victoria.

Christmas Square will again pop up at Federation Square, with a 16-metre tall Christmas tree adorned with 30,000 energy efficient lights and a COVID-safe Santa's workshop.

The Lord Mayor said protocols would be in place to ensure families could meet Santa in a socially-distanced way.

“Everybody will be able to tell Santa what they want for Christmas, walk around the workshop and take photographs, but you won't be sitting on Santa's lap,” the Lord Mayor said.

To avoid large crowds and queues, this year's festival is “always on” instead of having events on at specific times.

“Whenever you turn up, we're offering a range of events than are always on so we can avoid queues and ensure people don't feel pressured to come into large, crowded environments,” the Lord Mayor said.

“We are also holding most events outside to

make it more COVID-safe.”

Along with old favourites, the city has also organised new events including Deck the Streets, which will see Melbourne-based artists paint a series of festive murals in Hosier Lane, Carlton, North Melbourne and Kensington.

One featured artist is *CBD News* Street Art columnist Adrian Doyle, who said that street art was a great way to express the Christmas spirit in a uniquely Melbourne way.

“It's outdoors, you can bring your kids and enjoy the city and all the Christmas artwork it has to offer,” Mr Doyle said.

Argyle Square in Lygon St will also be transformed into a Christmas-themed picnic area in partnership with Piazza di Natale, and there will be a range of augmented reality experiences displayed throughout the city.

The Lord Mayor said that as the city ended a difficult year, Melburnians deserved to come together and celebrate Christmas with the ones they loved ●

For more information:

melbourne.vic.gov.au/Christmas

Injecting room: No other site considered, as report looms

Continued from page 1.

Richmond had saved at least 21 lives in 18 months, and needed help dealing with demand.

While the report merely recommended that a second Victorian facility should be located within the City of Melbourne, the government went a step further and nominated cohealth without consulting the council.

While angered, the council initially vowed to keep the Victoria St site on the table, but a U-turn on July 21 saw it flex its lease control of the site and reject it outright.

A spokesperson from DHHS said Mr Lay's report was on-track for a December release, and has sought the views of those directly impacted by the potential move.

“The Victorian Government has a strong commitment to listening to the voices of the community and other key stakeholders on this issue. To date, Mr Lay has met with 97 stakeholders over 42 sessions, gauging the views of health and drug reform experts and institutional representatives such as Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria, and relevant resident and business representatives.”

Drill Hall Residents Association president Martin Mulvihill, speaking on behalf of affordable housing residents located above the preferred site, praised the consultation led by Mr Lay.

But he said a degree of “fear and anger” from residents was relayed when given an opportunity.

“Fear of what the consequences would be, and anger that it appeared to have just been dumped on residents out of the blue,” he said.

The council has stressed that its rejection of the site was not a reflection on cohealth, who it has praised as a community health provider.

Rather, concerns surrounded the proximity of the site to affected stakeholders ●



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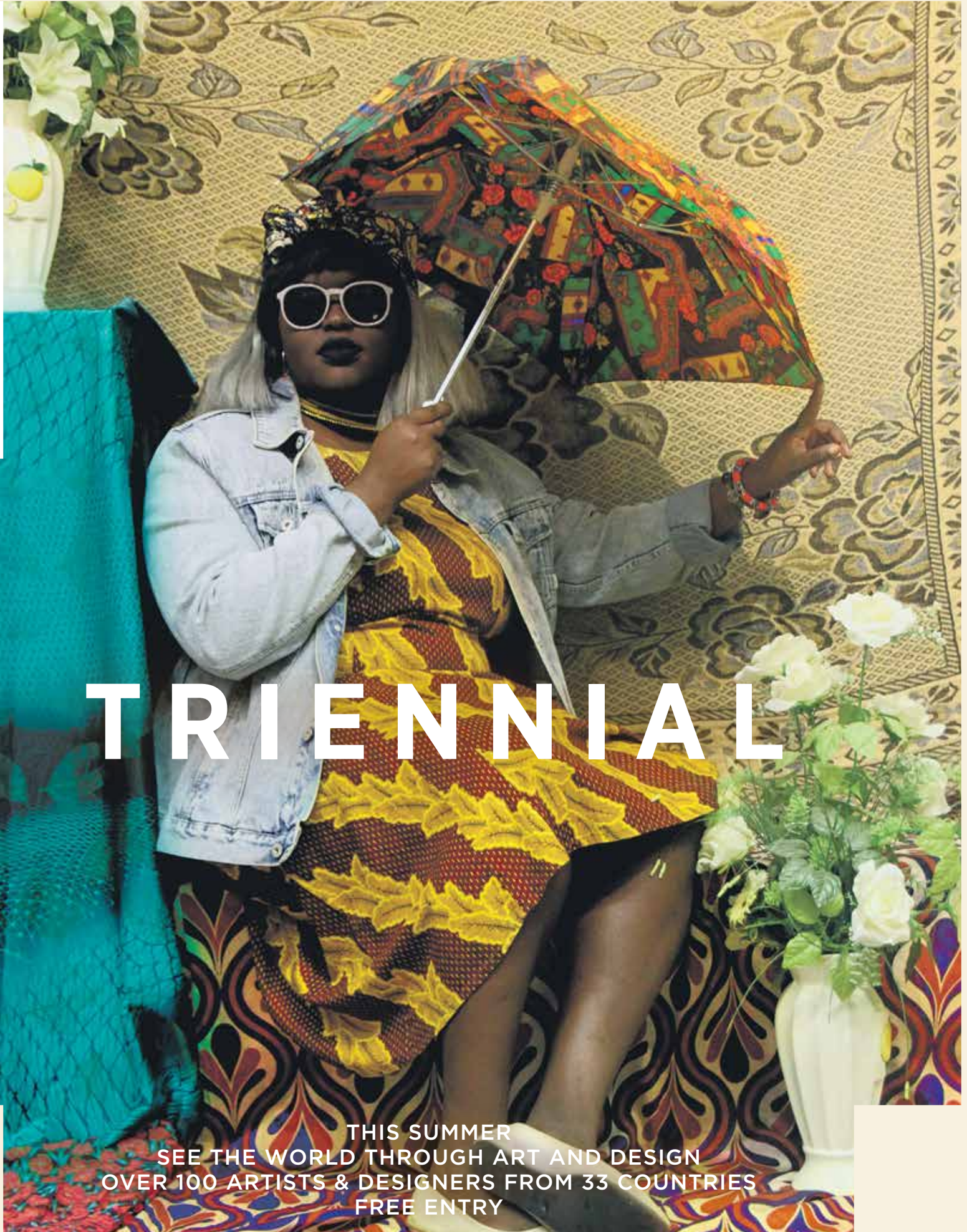
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Tram stops for bees?

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*
ENVIRONMENT

City greening has become an influential idea in recent years. But what can it look like in Melbourne? How can we green our built-up CBD and its unique spaces?

A focus group set up by the Committee for Melbourne (CfM) is pushing for the greening of tram stop roofs to make new homes for bees.

Dr Clare McCausland is a member of the “MelBees” focus group – a project aiming to install green roofs on tram stops to assist the regeneration of the stingless honey-generating bee population in Melbourne.

“When we first got together to form the group, we had about 24 ideas floating around and one of my colleagues in the group pitched the idea of the green roofs – he said it would be a ‘bee superhighway’ along the city,” Dr McCausland said.

“Imagine the entire transport network with the greenery and the native plants to bring the bees back into the city and help restore that part of the ecosystem.”

“We knew it had been done successfully before and we really wanted to give it a Melbourne identity, which is why we’re looking at tram stops.”

Dr McCausland said the idea was based off a project that was successfully completed in the Netherlands.

The city of Utrecht in the Netherlands completed wide-scale installation of green roofs on its bus stops last year. The initiative was taken to help cool the city and promote biodiversity, including bees and other insects.

Colony collapse disorder and varroa mite have affected bees in every continent except Australia. The havoc wreaked on bee populations, and by extension the ecosystem, has been severe.

But Dr McCausland said our cities still posed problems for bees, and Australian populations were vulnerable to the same threats as bees



▲ One of hundreds of green-roofed bus stops in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Picture: the City of Utrecht.

elsewhere through the overuse of pesticides, habitat loss and climate change.

“Australia has over 1600 species of bees and eleven species of stingless native bees,” Dr McCausland said.

“We know that the bees are dying, we know that populations are collapsing, and urbanisation plays a significant role in that. There’s a lot of concrete in any CBD and that’s just not appealing, so getting the plants in is a real priority,” she said.

“In addition to attracting the bees they have other benefits. For example, they help to filter the water – storm water that moves too quickly isn’t cleaned by vegetation.”

“And all greenery in the city reduces that heat

island effect that we get in built-up areas.”

The MelBees project is in the process of finalising designs and aims to wrap up in the middle of June. In May 2021, during which World Bee Day is scheduled, the project aims to launch a demonstration shelter.

“I think it would set us apart,” Dr McCausland said.

“It would really highlight to people outside of the city what a progressive, liberal, sustainable city we are. It would be a nicer city, transport shelters would be nicer to look at, people would have a stronger understanding of the value of insects to the ecosystem and of what the Melbourne ecosystem looks like.” ●

City Library’s lifeline

WORDS BY *Jake Pike*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The City of Melbourne will decide the fate of the City Library on November 24, just weeks before the library’s sublease is set to expire on December 15.

Council management has recommended that councillors vote to accept a new two-year lease agreement, with the possibility of a third-year renewal, at the library’s 253-256 Flinders Lane location.

The library has been at the current premises since 2000, but the council has attempted to find a new home in anticipation of the lease expiring in December.

The proposed new two-year lease would give the council the time to finalise the transition to a new home.

The property is currently leased to the council from the Box Hill Institute for a rental price of \$1 million per year.

In 2017-18 the City Library was one of Australia’s busiest public libraries, with an average of 224 visitors an hour and 50 to 60 new memberships a day ●



▲ City Library on Flinders Lane.

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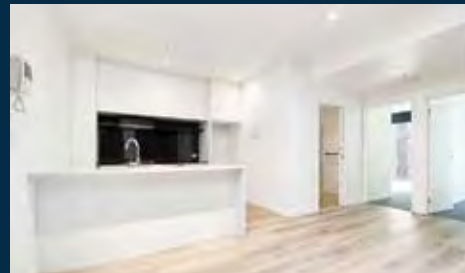


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Should the council step in to regulate short-stay operators?

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

With the majority of the City of Melbourne's (CoM) 180,000 residents living in apartments, residents' groups across the city are proposing that the council forms a dedicated unit focused on the needs of apartment-dwellers.

One of the major concerns cited during a Resident's First meeting in October was the lack of regulation around short-stay operators, which has resulted in decreased amenity and security in apartment buildings around Melbourne.

Docklands resident Dr Janette Corcoran, who recently ran for the CoM as a councillor candidate on the Residents First ticket, said that without council intervention, residents remained powerless to stop short-stay operators from over-running residential buildings.

"We don't have a unit that understands our way of living and our challenges," Dr Corcoran said. "This can make representations on our behalf to other levels of government difficult. The City of Sydney has [addressed the issue]," Dr Corcoran said.

"Residents have the right to feel safe and secure in their home, get a good night's sleep and not subsidise the business operations of others."

CEO of Strata Title Lawyers Tom Bacon said that councils around Australia and the world had short-stay regulations in place for years and the CoM "needs to be doing more".

"As we come out of COVID every government is going to be wanting to cut the red tape, stimulate the economy and get rid of bureaucracy – particularly in Melbourne," Mr Bacon said.

"But in this space, we do need some bureaucracy, databases, and for short-stay operators to pay commercial rates and obtain town planning permits, upgrade their fire safety plans and go through the proper process."

In New South Wales, the state government has a database which requires all short-stay

"In this space, we do need some bureaucracy, data bases, and for short-stay operators to pay commercial rates and obtain town planning permits, upgrade their fire safety plans and go through the proper process."



▲ Strata lawyer Tom Bacon.

operators to register and residents are able to consult the government if they have any issues.

This regulation also exists internationally, with London requiring a planning permit for short-stays in residential buildings and New York having banned them outright for stays of less than 30 days.

But Mr Bacon said as the CoM didn't require short-stay operators to have a land-use permit, it's difficult to keep track of how many there were and how they operated.

"The regulation here is very light-touch and basically endorses short-term letting so you can do it 365 days a year and you can have one night minimum stays," Mr Bacon said.

"It's very disappointing regulation compared to other cities around the world."

With regulation decided by individual building managers and owners' corporations (OCs), there is no uniform policy for how many short-stays can operate.

Residents also have no peak body to consult when breaches occur, including building damage, noise complaints and suspicious activity.

Barbara Francis of resident lobby group We Live Here said that this was particularly an issue from a public health perspective, as short-stays could be a breeding ground for COVID-19 in residential buildings.

"Short term letting is completely at odds with having a COVID-safe plan, it actually creates a potential health hazard," Ms Francis said.

"When residents were concerned in the past about short-stays spreading the virus, COVID-19 and police hotlines were of little help because they did not have the authority to step in."

Although short-stays were badly hit by Melbourne's lockdown, Ms Francis said that with restrictions easing now was the time for the council to step in and strengthen apartment communities post-COVID-19.

"Permanent residents, owner occupiers and long-term tenants who have been putting up with the rampant, out-of-control, short-stay

industry for so long are now rediscovering the amenity and security of our homes that we thought we had lost forever," Ms Francis said.

"The challenge now is to reclaim the title of the most liveable city in the world and make sure all stakeholders have a say as things go back to normal."

Currently, the CoM doesn't have the power to issue land use permits to short-stay operators.

To do so, the Minister for Planning would need to amend the Victorian Planning Division to distinguish between different types of residential accommodation.

Although it would present a significant task for the council, Cr Rohan Leppert said that The Greens fully supported amending the legislation to better regulate land use.

"Council has an important role to support owners' corporations and apartment residents navigate a complicated legal framework, and I support the creation of a dedicated 'apartment living' team or function in the council," Cr Leppert said.

"This cannot, however, be a substitute for genuine reform. We are never going to address the tensions between short and long stay accommodation until we clearly distinguish between them in planning and building law."

"That needs state government intervention, and redefining types of accommodation in law is an enormous undertaking. But with interstate and international visitation at record lows, now is the least worst time for the state, council and strata community to tackle genuine reform and work with all property owners fairly." ●



Katie Johnson
JOURNALIST
KATIE@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

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Melbourne City Council elections

Declaration of results

The following candidates were elected to the Melbourne City Council at the general elections held in October 2020:

Leadership Team

Lord Mayor
CAPP, Sally

Deputy Lord Mayor
REECE, Nicholas

Councillors

LOUEY, Kevin (1st elected)
 LEPPERT, Rohan (2nd elected)
 CHANG, Jason (3rd elected)
 GRIFFITHS, Davydd (4th elected)
 CAMPBELL, Roshena (5th elected)
 BALL, Olivia (6th elected)
 LIU, Philip Le (7th elected)
 HAKIM, Jamal (8th elected)
 DOIDGE, Elizabeth Mary (9th elected)

Further details about the results are available at vec.vic.gov.au

Bill Lang
Election Manager
 Wednesday 4 November 2020

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Post-war heritage on show

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*
HERITAGE

The City of Melbourne's Hoddle Grid Heritage Review is leading an overdue change in attitudes towards post-war heritage, according to the Felicity Watson of the National Trust of Australia.

The council's heritage review is aiming to secure heritage protection for 137 buildings and is open for public exhibition until December 17. Fifty-five of the 137 buildings are examples of post-war architecture.

Felicity Watson is the National Trust's Victorian executive manager of advocacy and will be speaking on a panel discussion as part of the public exhibition.

"We're really particularly interested in the focus the review has on post-war heritage," Ms Watson told *CBD News*.

"As a general rule post-war heritage is not well represented in local heritage protection, or even at the state level."

"We've been advocating for a long time for more recognition so we're really excited about the work done in this review."

Ms Watson said there was a change in attitudes towards heritage occurring more broadly.

"Attitudes about heritage and what heritage is change over time and I guess the longer that you have to reflect on a period of architecture the more you can get an appreciation of its significance," she said.

"We see now a real growing appreciation for places from the post-war period, for historical and architectural significance and the design aesthetic of that period."

Ms Watson pointed to the example of the Royal Exhibition Building, which was built in 1879-80 and in 2004 became the first building in Australia to gain UNESCO World Heritage status.

But Ms Watson said the building was considered unfashionable for a long time and was almost demolished.

She said the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review was significant because of the way the city was often associated with its 19th century heritage and the Gold Rush period.

"We have all this amazing architecture from that period when it was one of the fastest growing cities in the world, but similarly the post-war period was a real boom time in Melbourne's history," Ms Watson said.

"There was a renewed optimism and new ideas about design and architecture. Immigrant architects were coming to work here and bringing influence with them from Europe."

"So, the architecture of that period really became a new layer of significance in the city."

Ms Watson said one of her favourite buildings in the review was the Hoyts Cinema complex on Bourke St – a brutalist building described by the former Minister for Planning Matthew Guy as an "upturned spaceship".

"The building was designed by Bogle and Banfield and it's a really great example of brutalist architecture, another style of architecture gaining in recognition," Ms Watson said.

"It's a reminder of the changing social trends of that period, it was a period where multiplex



▲ Royal Mail Hotel. Photos: Wolfgang Silvers, sourced from National Library of Aus.



▲ AMP Building, 402 Lonsdale St.



▲ St James and AMP Tower, William St.

"Attitudes about heritage and what heritage is change over time and I guess the longer that you have to reflect on a period of architecture the more you can get an appreciation of its significance."



cinemas were just starting to be developed and becoming an important recreational activity, so that's a really great building and quite visually striking."

"The National Trust has for a long time recognised the significance of that building but there has been resistance to the protection of brutalist buildings, but I think beauty is in the eye of the beholder and brutalism is becoming more popular now."

Felicity Watson will be speaking at Melbourne Conversations: Postwar Architecture on December 3 ●

For more information:
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/amendmentc387/engagement-activities



Meg Hill
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▲ Jorge Cuba at a paid gig in Degraoves St.

A good place for buskers

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
ARTS & CULTURE

Every busker adds a personal touch to their performance and Jorge Cuba is taking his gig in Degraoves St seriously.

He's arrived with a trolley of equipment for this prime spot in the CBD busking circuit. Before the pandemic, buskers had to audition and fill in a form at the Town Hall.

Now they are a vital part of livening up the city and are being paid \$200 for a four-hour stint in the ANZ City Vibes program.

Jorge said he had three to four gigs signed up per week in the lead-up to Christmas.

"I was sent an email to play," the enthusiastic busker said. "This is very good for the city."

The ANZ City Vibes program is a government initiative to encourage people back onto the streets.

Every day 20 buskers are heading towards locations in Hardware Lane, Bourke Street Mall, Flinders Lane, Southbank Promenade, Queen Victoria Market, Melbourne Town Hall and others.

Melbourne's busking community has been unable to perform throughout the lockdown.

"To further support the busking community a digital payment platform will be piloted," a spokesperson for the City of Melbourne said.

"At each site buskers will be able to receive contactless QR code payments or tips via people's smartphones."

The initiative is supported by the Melbourne City Recovery Fund established to reactivate Melbourne in the wake of COVID-19 with contributions from the ANZ Bank.

"I used to be a flute player before," Jorge said. "Now I'm playing the charango."

Singing and wind instruments are banned during the COVID recovery period, but Jorge was quite happy to make the adjustment.

The charango is a Bolivian stringed instrument from Jorge's country of origin.

While Melbourne has been coming out of lockdown and the streets are filling with music, the pandemic has resulted in the digging of mass graves in his home country.

"We have a new government two weekends ago," Jorge said. "I don't want to go back." ●

Free parking U-turn on cars

WORDS BY David Schout
TRANSPORT

The City of Melbourne will encourage motorists back to the city during the Christmas period by offering free on-street parking, despite existing policy that seeks to turn cars away in favour of pedestrians and cyclists.

Amid concerns of post-lockdown hesitancy among public transport users, drivers would be lured back into the CBD with free parking from December 1 to January 3 under a proposal expected to pass at a November 24 council meeting.

Motorists displaying a "parking voucher", available in selected newspapers or the council website, would avoid receiving a fine.

Time limits would still apply.

It is hoped the scheme, which is set to cost the council \$1.6 million assuming a 50 per cent take-up, will see motorists spend their dollars at struggling CBD retailers and hospitality outlets, providing a "sugar hit" to the local economy at the busiest period on the calendar.

The council will look to reduce the cost of both on and off-street parking, lengthen on-street timers and extend a congestion levy waiver.

Councillors voted nine to two in favour of the cheap parking move; those "for" included Lord Mayor Sally Capp who argued the short-term policy shift was both necessary and justified.

Cr Capp said feedback from CBD small businesses suggested the council should make returning to the city as easy as possible for potential consumers, particularly those apprehensive about the current environment.

"We need to do everything we can do to overcome any barriers, real or perceived, to people choosing to come into the city for their work, for their dining, for their shopping or entertainment," she said.

The Lord Mayor said that the "extraordinary situation" due to COVID-19 meant they simply had to try new strategies.

"As a city and community, we need to be considering all options, some of which will work, and some may not. But certainly, at the moment, many are worth trying as we try to revitalise our city economy and revitalise our city community."

The move represents a sharp U-turn for years' worth of council policy that sought to rid the CBD of what it viewed as space-inefficient cars.

Last year the council released a 10-year transport strategy that primarily sought to widen footpaths for pedestrians and drastically increase cycling lanes. To do this, they have already begun reducing and even closing car lanes into and around the Hoddle Grid.

Research for the strategy revealed nine in 10 CBD trips were taken on foot, despite the fact 80 per cent of space was taken up by cars.

Both Greens councillors, Rohan Leppert and Dr Olivia Ball, voted against the cheaper parking move at the November 17 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting, arguing the city should instead look to COVID-safe public transport, cycling and walking.

Cr Leppert tweeted the following day that it was "hard not to feel like years of hard-won policy is unravelling".

"I am very concerned that the COVID-induced recession is being used as an argument that the economics of the city have fundamentally changed since the adoption of the Transport Strategy 2030, and that new times call for a temporary car-led recovery," he said.

"The law of supply and demand hasn't been suspended in a recession. I sincerely hope that before the council adopts a fee structure that may risk the congestion of the Hoddle Grid with people looking for free car parks that just aren't available, compromising the excellent plans for people-focused streets and places in the central city that the council is rolling out, that the economics of parking are genuinely considered."

The council has also begun discussions with private car park operators around reduced fees during the busy December period ●

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▲ Newsagent Raj Nair sells his first post-COVID international magazine at Flinders Street Station.



▲ Mother and daughter team, Tarni and Maggio Borg, reunited during the first week of shopping.

Getting your head around post-COVID

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
COMMUNITY

Even the CBD has become a village during the lockdown with small businesses slowly opening their doors and offering hospitality in intimate moments that would have passed unnoticed before the pandemic.

When Raj Nair returned to work in November, he rang customers to let them know their favourite magazines were back in stock.

In the old days he was madly dealing with the rush hour demand for newspapers and didn't have time.

And Block Place café, instead of appealing to hipsters and tourists, was hosting tearful mother and daughter reunions as shoppers returned to town after months away.

The first international magazines arrived back in the city in late October, with two copies of the much-awaited *New Yorker* bringing news of that city's lockdown. "I only have two today and I've sold both of them," Raj said.

The *New Yorkers* took a while to get to readers because Newslink at Flinders Street Station has been closed for five months so he had to chase them up out of the warehouse.

The first magazine to enter the city, dated September 14, included an extraordinary account of a Chinese immigrant branded a traitor



▲ Alejandro Lobez in an empty Block Place.

“

In the first week I was so happy, but the second week was a disaster.

”

by nationalists in her home country.

Despite the slow return of people to the CBD, Newslink was shut by 4pm because there was no peak hour.

Alejandro Lobez, the owner of a Block Place café, was also shutting his business earlier than normal. "There used to be 15,000 people through here. Now there are a couple of hundred," he said.

The first week back was good but after that custom died off. "In the first week I was so happy, but the second week was a disaster."

He said he had been talking to his friends in Spain and they reported the same pattern in Madrid. Business took three months to recover.

The cafe depends on workers, students, tourists and locals in that order. He wished he had time to focus on the stories, but staff have reduced from nine to three, sometimes just him.

One poignant moment occurred in the first week of opening when Tarni and Maggio Borg came shopping for baby clothes and stopped off for lunch.

The mother and daughter had not seen each other for four months. Tarni was 17 weeks pregnant with twins when they were reunited.

Tarni lives in Ashwood and Maggio in Westmeadows, 35 kilometres apart. "We had to meet in the middle. We dressed up. I haven't worn make-up for months," Tarni said.

"It's amazing how good it feels to have some fun things in the calendar," her mum agreed. "Getting your head around post-COVID, getting yourself positive is the challenge." ●



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What will happen to Campbell Arcade?

Continued from page 1.

demolish the arcade wall but has received permits from Heritage Victoria for “preparatory works” limited to the back-of-house plant room.

An RPV spokesperson told *CBD News* an application for further works in the arcade would be made in 2021. But heritage advocates have opposed the plans and criticised what they called a lack of transparency and consultation.

In 2017, the National Trust of Australia publicly responded to the draft plans.

“The National Trust is strongly opposed to the proposal as it stands,” a statement from National Trust advocacy manager Felicity Watson read.

“The National Trust believes that Campbell Arcade has two levels of significance. One; as an example of post-war transport infrastructure (and the first major public infrastructure project in the city following WWII), and two; the contemporary socio-cultural significance of the tenancies and use as an art space over the past two decades.”

“We believe that for these reasons, it is important that no shops are removed from the arcade, that the symmetry of the arcade is maintained, and that the space remains freely accessible to the general public.”

The statement recommended that the ticket gate be moved to allow free public access to the arcade, and the underpass connection be relocated to a different part of the arcade so multiple shopfronts would not have to be removed.

The National Trust and others opposed to the plans also cite the Victorian Heritage Register’s claim that the arcade has the same level of heritage significance as the other parts of the Flinders Street Station complex, including the façade and concourse.

Tristan Davies, president of Melbourne Heritage Action (MHA), said the heritage significance of the arcade warranted a more open approach from RPV.

“The Campbell Arcade plays a crucial role in Melbourne’s cultural scene, and has the highest level of heritage protection, so we would expect more transparency with the plans for this iconic arcade in the same way as other heritage places affected by Metro Tunnel works,” he said.

“But instead, we’ve simply seen its demolition taken as a foregone conclusion, with little discussion on alternatives or availability of plans.”

Mr Davies said the MHA would like to see a rethink of demolition works and tenant removal that used a creative solution to keep the arcade accessible, intact and still home to creative institutions like Sticky Institute.

An RPV spokesperson told *CBD News* the plans would be made publicly available in 2021 and refuted the process has lacked consultation.

“Stakeholders have been kept informed and involved throughout the planning process and design development of the Campbell Arcade connection. The next step will be the public display of designs for comment in 2021,” the spokesperson said.

The RPV spokesperson also did not rule out a change in design of the proposed ticket gate in the arcade.

“RPV and Cross Yarra Partnership continue to work closely with key stakeholders including Heritage Victoria and Metro Trains to ensure the design and location of the ticket gates meets the needs of passengers while minimising any impact on the arcade,” they said.



▲ Sticky Institute Co-ordinator Luke Sinclair (left) and volunteer Bailey Sharp (right) in Campbell Arcade.



▲ Bailey and Luke outside their business.

Mr Sinclair said Sticky Institute would prefer that the works returned to earlier plans to go through the now demolished Port Phillip Arcade instead of Campbell Arcade.

“But if they have to go through Campbell, they should take the National Trust advice,” he said.

“When they apply for their heritage permit, we will mobilise our people to push that they follow that advice.”

“If they demolish Sticky there will be a lot of people in Melbourne who will be really angry with them. I’d like to see the Metro Tunnel look after a not-for-profit arts space which is a Melbourne institution.” ●



We would expect more transparency with the plans for this iconic arcade in the same way as other heritage places affected by Metro Tunnel works.



Relaxing in the Sunday food queue

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
COMMUNITY

There’s no need to stand in line for two hours at the Food Relief Centre in Swanston St any more. Your trolley can do the work for you.

The food queue culture has evolved since August when hungry CBD locals were forced to stand on white crosses on the street in all kinds of bad weather.

Now people are given numbers at 11am and they can leave or find a seat nearby until distribution begins at 1pm.

Regulars say the queue has halved in length since the hospitality industry resumed in November when many of the Cross Cultural Church’s clients returned to work ●



▲ Foodbank Victoria CEO Dave McNamara and Ong Chee Wei, director of UEM Sunrise in Australia.

Pop-up grocery store for international students

COMMUNITY

The developer of Aurora Melbourne Central on LaTrobe St has teamed up with Foodbank Victoria to create the CBD’s first international student pop-up grocery store.

The store provides free fresh food and supplies to international students in Melbourne currently experiencing food insecurity due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Located at developer UEM Sunrise’s Aurora Melbourne Central development on LaTrobe Street, the pop-up store is currently helping almost 2000 international students a week, from more than 50 different countries and more than 100 different learning institutions.

Foodbank Victoria operates the pop-up grocery store three days a week, re-stocking it daily with fresh, culturally-diverse food supplies and ensuring a COVID-safe environment. The easy-to-access, central retail space is provided rent-free by UEM Sunrise, as part of an initiative to leverage available retail space for positive community impact during the COVID-19 pandemic ●



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Bar culture returns to Russell Place

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
BUSINESS

The CBD's bar scene is cracking back into life thanks to some swift thinking by owners such as Ben Luzz who know how to appeal to regulars.

Ben is part-owner of the Gin Palace on Russell Place and the bar opened on the dot of midnight as soon as restrictions were lifted.

But unlike other venues which insisted on bookings, Ben took a risk.

"When we came at midnight and had a line out of the venue I was overjoyed. I teared up," he said.

The cellar bar is small so they thought bookings would be best after the first lockdown, but people sat on their drinks for too long.

"When we opened last time, we were down 40 per cent," Ben said. "The numbers [in the venue] are restricted. It's a lot smaller than normal trading."

For the second opening they served customers off the street while maintaining safety standards. "We went back to the normal process and the drinks per head sped up."

The more free form approach by the Gin Palace and its neighbour Bar Ampere, also owned by Ben, is appealing to regulars who like to pop in unannounced.

One customer Nicki Mitchell-Adams rented a maxi-taxi from Sandringham and met eight girlfriends at the Gin Palace on its opening night for their first drink out in months.

She said she rang around on the day restrictions were due to lift, but other bars weren't open.

"I rang the Gin Palace and came in as soon as I heard. They had 20 guests



▲ Regulars return to Bar Ampere.



▲ Ben Luzz keen to be back at work in Russell Place.



▲ Nicki Mitchell-Adams celebrates the opening of the Gin Palace.

inside in a couple of shifts. The sheer joy of being there. You could feel the lift in spirits."

Nicki calls herself a "marvellous Melbourne meanderer". "I love Melbourne. I'm a huge supporter of tourism, a massive foodie and bar lover," she said.

She said she passed one bar that night that was too small to have people inside, so they put their tables out in the lane. Nicki was back in again two days later taking pictures of the

city shops as they came back to life.

In the lead-up to the lifting of restrictions on October 27, Ben worked with others in the laneway and put in a proposal to the City of Melbourne to close Russell Place.

"We applied for the road originally," he said, but it was too complicated with the carpark opposite.

Bar Ampere now spills out onto the footpath. In the past the council has rejected applications for tables on the footpath because of pedestrian

access.

"We applied for it before. The council said no but with restrictions they are activating outdoor spaces."

The Gin Palace has negotiated the use of a small open-air car park further down the lane, which will open in two weeks.

By the end of November with temperatures still hovering above 30 degrees in the evening, a casual drink in Russell Place was high on the list for CBD aficionados ●

“
I'm a huge supporter of tourism, a massive foodie and bar lover.
”



Floral takeover

COMMUNITY

Floristry and landscaping students from Melbourne Polytechnic have joined forces to construct a floristry installation in the heart of the CBD.

As part of the City of Melbourne's "Urban Blooms" initiative, the students will gain hands-on experience in a major industry event for their chosen area of study.

The secret garden-themed installation, Down the Garden Path was revealed on November 21 at the forecourt of the Old Treasury Building on Spring St.

In a bid to bring the city back to life after lockdowns, Urban Blooms encourages Melburnians to rediscover iconic Melbourne landmarks, laneways and boulevards throughout November.

Volunteer students from the Certificate III in floristry and Certificate III in landscape construction began installing of the flowers on November 20.

A total of 18 floral installations have adorned buildings and streets to create a bright path through the city until November 27.

The City of Melbourne, the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show and floristry consultant Elizabeth Ricci from Melbourne Flower Merchant have commissioned local florists to create a spectacular display at each location ●

Rooftop bar goes ahead despite downstairs anger

WORDS BY David Schout
PLANNING

The rooftop of an eight-storey Bourke St building has been approved to operate as a 100-patron bar despite objections from tenants on the levels below.

The Stolen Gem at 388 Bourke St, which currently operates as a private function space, will soon be able to operate as a public bar after City of Melbourne councillors unanimously approved it.

Councillors found there were little grounds from which to object to the rooftop bar, which is set to open next year.

However, tenants of floors below – a mixture of retail, commercial, education, recreation and place of assembly premises – strongly objected to the application.

Concerns related, among others, to the bar's impact on noise, safety and amenity.

"All of the tenants in this building have been severely affected financially by the COVID-19 lockdowns over the past seven to eight months," one objection read.

"This report represents another cruel kick in the guts. Loss of business clientele due to the detrimental presence of a public bar on branding and profile to these businesses has not been considered."

Other concerns surrounded sharing a lift with patrons who had visited the bar, which will be open until 1am on Friday and Saturday nights and 12am on all other nights.

But Matt Newman, director of The Stolen Gem, said they had hosted more than 80 events since opening in 2018 without any major incidents or formal complaints.

"While I am trying to be understanding of the objections we have received, I must admit I am a little disappointed given our track record in working with other tenants of the building," he said, adding that the application has the support of the building owner.



▲ The Stolen Gem on Bourke Street.

"I believe our management of the space and approachability as a management team would mean that our fellow tenants would be confident in our exciting new business opportunity."

The venue has been closed since March, which has had a significant impact on the business according to Mr Newman.

He said the ability to progress from a purely event space could ensure their longevity.

"The uncertainty of restrictions and private event rules going forward means that this will allow our business to continue operating."

Cr Rohan Leppert said the application was a "really difficult" and "vexed" issue, while planning chair Nicholas Reece acknowledged the objections.

"I very, very much understand the concerns that they've raised and empathise with them," Cr Reece said.

"Would I be happy about a rooftop bar being

put at the top of my building in circumstances that look like this? And the answer is probably not. But the question before us this evening is does this application comply with the Capital City Zone schedule and the other planning overlays and regulations that apply. And the answer here on balance is that yes, it does."

In the Capital City Zone, bars that accommodate less than 100 patrons and which have appropriate noise reduction plans are encouraged under the Melbourne Planning Scheme ●



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A big year ahead at Queen Victoria Market

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
 PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*
 COUNCIL AFFAIRS

As the most turbulent year in the Queen Victoria Market's (QVM's) history nears an end, the City of Melbourne's ongoing renewal of the market will come under even sharper focus in 2021 as its traders try to rebuild.

On November 24, the newly-elected council was due to consider the market's management company QVM Pty Ltd's annual report, as well as a quarterly report from council management on its \$250 million market renewal program.

While the pandemic has wreaked havoc on so many businesses, few have felt the impacts harder than the market's traders and management, with QVM Pty Ltd recording a near \$10 million loss of revenue (largely generated from market rent and car parking).

The five-kilometre travel restrictions enforced by the state government during the height of Victoria's second wave saw a significant drop in market patronage, with more than 65 per cent of its usual customer base located beyond that radius.

While fresh food traders were considered an essential service during the lockdowns, general merchandise traders were forced to close, with only 120 of the market's more than 600 traders operating at the peak of the second wave.

In its annual report, QVM Pty Ltd, of which the City of Melbourne is the sole shareholder, noted that in response to the downturn it had, among a range of measures, implemented:

- A 44 per cent reduction in its permanent workforce through decreased hours and redundancies in events- and tourism-based roles;
- A 50 per cent reduction in directors' fees from April 2020, as well as cleaning, waste and security;
- A 90 per cent reduction in head office rent from May 2020; and
- In conjunction with the council, a trader support package providing 100 per cent rent relief from April 1, 2020 for an initial period of three months.

While rent relief has continued to be provided to its traders on varying levels throughout the pandemic, restrictions on large gatherings has also impacted the market's revenue streams in 2020, with the Night Market and other events all affected.

But like so many businesses, the market has "pivoted" to support traders through a range of measures, including business mentoring, a new pre-order and pick-up service, international student vouchers and free one-hour parking.

According to its annual report, market visitation was strong in the second half of 2019, which saw more than half of that year's 10 million visitors through the market, turning around a 14-year decline in visitation.

While the impacts of COVID-19 on domestic and international tourism will continue to see the market target local customers for some time to come, the focus now shifts to the council's ongoing renewal program in a bid to draw visitors back to QVM.



▲ Work continues on restoring the Queen Victoria Market's heritage sheds.

The City of Melbourne has made no secret of its intention to use the quieter times of the pandemic to fast track its program, with workers still onsite undertaking the \$30 million restoration of the market's heritage sheds.

Construction of the Munro development on the corner of Queen and Therry streets, which will provide 500 car parks for the market, as well as affordable housing, community facilities and new retail, continues to progress.

Following an agreement with City of Melbourne during the 2019-20 financial year, QVM Pty Ltd will be responsible for recruiting and managing the retail/hospitality tenancies in the "Munro Community Hub".

According to the council's quarterly report on the renewal program, the Munro car park is expected to be operational by mid-2021, paving the way for QVM's current car park to be transformed into new open space dubbed "Market Square".

As of September 30, 2020, renewal program expenditure since 2013 totalled \$44.04 million with much of the money spent on shed restoration, Munro and general market upgrades, including String Bean Alley.

The immediate focus now turns to Heritage Victoria's (HV's) determination on the council's new market infrastructure plans, with development applications having been submitted for new Trader and Northern Sheds at Queen St in September.

With this "essential market infrastructure" to provide a range of storage, waste management and trader amenities in an effort to improve safety and logistics at the market, HV is expected to reveal its decision on the applications in December.

But while the plans emanated from the council's People Panel process, which consisted of traders, customers and other key stakeholders, they aren't without their critics and all eyes will be pointed to next month's decision following submissions from a range of parties.

Should the applications be given the all clear by HV, they will be considered by the council at a Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting in 2021.

The big question within the council is on the program's other key piece of infrastructure – the "Queen's Corner Building", which is proposed to be located on Queen St near Franklin St under the current plans.

The building is proposed to accommodate QVM Pty Ltd's new offices, as well as municipal, retail and hospitality uses to complement the adjoining 1.75 hectares of new public open space at Market Square.

But *CBD News* understands that no firm decision has yet been made on the building yet as debate within the council remains as to whether the facility, expected to cost around \$40 million, stays or goes.

A spokesperson for the City of Melbourne said further details on the building, including plans, would be released next year.

"The Queen's Corner Building is part of the agreement between the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government to revitalise the Queen Victoria Market precinct," the spokesperson said.

The council will also embark on an expression of interest process in 2021 to seek "suitably qualified and interested parties" to develop the "Southern Site" on Franklin St, which offers a 14,233 sqm of developable space abutting Market Square. This site will also accommodate an additional 500 car parks for market customers ●



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▲ L-R: Beverley Pinder, Susan Riley and Jackie Watts.

Former councillors become friends of QVM

COMMUNITY

Three former City of Melbourne councillors, Dr Jackie Watts, Susan Riley and Beverley Pinder, have made the bold move to support community lobby group Friends of Queen Victoria Market (FOQVM).

With 32 collective years of experience working in local government, all three former councillors have supported QVM since 2002.

Having been unsuccessful in her bid for re-election in October, Dr Jackie Watts leaves Town Hall after 10 years on council and has accepted a new role on the committee of FOQVM.

The group's president Mary-Lou Howie said Dr Watts brought considerable experience in local government, invaluable connections and rational and strategic thinking in helping achieve an appropriate outcome in the revitalisation of the heritage market.

"As a councillor Jackie actively engaged with the concerns of traders and customers regarding the proposed market redevelopment and on all QVM issues," Ms Howie said. "She will make a tremendous contribution in the struggle to protect QVM's social, cultural and architectural heritage and to achieve an appropriate outcome that will ensure the future of our historic working market for generations to come."

As the council's former Knowledge City portfolio chair, Dr Watts, who has for a decade been a supporter of FOQVM, has been outspoken about inappropriate development and a viable economic future.

"The strength of the QVM lies in its traders and the family businesses they run. Support for them means support for an extended community who care for the QVM's future," Dr Watts said.

Ms Howie said she was also delighted that former councillors Susan Riley and Beverley Pinder had agreed to become members of her group.

Susan Riley, a former Deputy Lord Mayor, said, "For the love of the market we need to help out and return it to its halcyon days."

Beverley Pinder, a marketing specialist and the council's former Chair of People City said, "QVM is a small business, retail, hospitality and community hub and the time is right to boost representation of the aspirations of QVM's hardworking cohort of traders." ●

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The City of Melbourne has welcomed its newly-elected Council. Here is a brief introduction to the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and councillors at the City of Melbourne. To find extended biographies and contact details for councillors, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil



**Lord Mayor
Sally Capp**

Re-elected in November 2020 after having previously been elected in May 2018

Sally began her career as a solicitor and was the first woman to hold the post of Agent-General for Victoria in the UK, Europe and Israel. She has also served as the CEO for the Committee for Melbourne and COO of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Sally has held senior roles at both KPMG and ANZ, and she took the small business she co-founded to the ASX. Most recently she was Victorian Executive Director of the Property Council of Australia. A passionate Magpies supporter, in 2004 Sally made history as the first female board member of Collingwood FC. She is involved in a number of charities.

Sally is the first woman to be directly elected as Lord Mayor.



**Deputy Lord Mayor
Nicholas Reece**

Elected Deputy Lord Mayor in November 2020, after having previously been elected Councillor in 2016

Nick is an executive in Chancellery at the University of Melbourne and holds an academic position of principal fellow and teaches at the Melbourne School of Government. Nick is the chairman of global men's health charity Movember and, for more than 10 years, he was a director for the street newspaper *The Big Issue*.

Nick has considerable experience in government and policy making, having worked as a senior adviser to Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Victorian premiers Steve Bracks and John Brumby. He is a commentator for SKY News and a regular columnist for *The Age*.



**Councillor
Olivia Ball**

Olivia has lived, worked and studied in the City of Melbourne for most of her life. With a Masters and PhD in human rights, and experience working in women's, children's, refugees', workers' and older people's rights, she brings human rights expertise to the diverse activities of Council, from the affordability of housing to the accessibility of our city and democracy.

A published author, Olivia also has a science degree, giving her skills in assessing evidence and applying research. Most recently, she has been studying urban planning.



**Councillor
Roshena Campbell**

Roshena is a barrister with expertise in commercial law and corporate governance. Prior to that she was a solicitor with a leading national law firm for nearly a decade. She has represented some of Australia's largest companies as well as state and local government bodies.

Roshena has put down deep roots since moving to Melbourne as a 20 year old and has lived, worked and studied in the City of Melbourne. She has three young children. She is passionate about contributing to Melbourne's re-emergence as a vibrant, thriving city. Her priority is ensuring that Melbourne is Australia's greatest city to do business in and the destination of choice for families to live and visit.

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**Councillor
Jason Chang**

Jason is co-founder and CEO of Calia, a restaurant-to-retail brand created in Melbourne specialising in quality products and ingredients. His hospitality and retail group employs hundreds of people across his stores in Melbourne and Asia, and for his online store operations.

Born and raised in Melbourne, Jason knows all too well the devastating impact that COVID-19 is having on Melbourne's beloved hospitality, retail, international student and tourism industries.



**Councillor
Elizabeth Mary Doidge**

Elizabeth was born, raised, and has lived her entire life in Melbourne. She has a proud career in the trade union movement, playing a key role in communication and stakeholder engagement. Elizabeth currently works in the construction sector engaging with a diverse range of industry and community stakeholders.

Elizabeth recognises the important role Council will play in the recovery of our city and the opportunity presented to Council to contribute to the design of a more productive, inclusive and enriched city for all.



**Councillor
Davydd Griffiths**

Davydd moved to Melbourne to study in 1993 and since that time has lived or worked in the City of Melbourne. Davydd worked as a school teacher for many years and remains passionate about the power of education to transform lives and connect communities.

After leaving teaching he worked as a policy advisor in both education and health with a particular focus on community health provision, men's health and mental health. Addressing the impact of loneliness, particularly in rapidly transforming urban communities, is another of Davydd's key interests. In recent years, Davydd has owned and operated hospitality venues in Kensington and West Melbourne and has experienced first-hand the impacts of COVID-19 on business.



**Councillor
Jamal Hakim**

Jamal is Managing Director of a national health non-profit that has safely and successfully navigated COVID-19. Having worked in complex, challenging global organisations his entire career, he is both an entrepreneur and business person at heart. Jamal is a GAICD and holds a number of board roles, including with Democracy in Colour, Marie Stopes PNG and previously with Midsumma Festival.

A resident of Docklands for 12 years, Jamal is passionate about ensuring a thriving community that is physically, emotionally, culturally and environmentally safe for everyone. Jamal is also an advocate for representative and evidence-based decision making.



**Councillor
Philip Le Liu**

Re-elected in November 2020 after having previously been elected in 2016

Philip is a local resident and a long-time worker within the City of Melbourne. With more than 10 years of experience across a variety of sectors, including government, utility, telecommunication, and financial services, Philip is a trusted adviser to many in the community, business, and government sectors.

Philip is a regular speaker at conferences and on panels across Australia and Asia, and he speaks on key issues in the media. In 2019, he was recognised as one of 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australians and winner of the Public Sector/Government category. Outside of council, Philip is an entrepreneur and heavily involved in helping local communities.



**Councillor
Rohan Leppert**

Re-elected in November 2020 after having previously been elected in 2016 and 2012

Rohan is a member of the Victorian Greens. He has lived in the City of Melbourne his entire adult life and currently lives and works in Kensington. He has worked as a musician and teacher for more than 15 years, and more recently as an urban planner.

Rohan is a board member of the Municipal Association of Victoria, where he also chairs the Planning Committee, an associate of the Planning Institute of Australia and a member of the National Trust (Victoria).

Rohan's priority and passion as councillor is planning Melbourne in the public interest, for a more economically just, environmentally sustainable, accessible and creative city for future generations.



**Councillor
Kevin Louey**

Re-elected in November 2020 after having previously been elected in 2016, 2012 and 2008

Kevin has extensive experience across the business, government and community sectors and spent seven years at the City of Melbourne as Chief of Staff to the former Lord Mayor John So, before being elected as a councillor in 2008.

Kevin has been the City of Melbourne's appointment to the advisory committees including Enterprise Melbourne Pty Ltd and Business Partner City Network.

Kevin is passionate about working with small business and activating the city to increase visitation.



ABOUT COUNCIL

To find out more about the Council, including meeting dates and decision-making, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil

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▲ Dionne Wilson prepares for an open house inspection.



▲ A two-bedroom apartment is up for sale in the Masonic Lodge building next to the Forum.

Open for inspection

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
PROPERTY

Living and working in the CBD has been difficult since the pandemic began and no clear picture of the future has yet emerged.

Real estate agents, building owners and tenants may hold the keys to the actual rental space but their hands are tied.

Everyone is waiting on government announcements in terms of workplace safety.

Agents are hopeful that open house inspections will be permitted in early December, following the regular Sunday press conference by Premier Daniel Andrews.

Flinders Lane agent Dionne Wilson, of Harcourts, predicts that a move from private to open house inspections will ease the pain of selling and renting apartments.

For the past month, individual inspections have meant that clients look at properties one at a time.

Dionne has a heritage apartment for sale in the old Masonic Lodge on Flinders St. The two-bedroom apartment is on the market for \$650,000 and she hopes it has held its price.

"I won't lie," she said. "We have a 30 per cent vacancy rate in the CBD. I expect other agents are in the same boat. It's been a difficult time."

Residential real estate depends on getting buyers and renters through properties but this was banned during Stage 4 restrictions.

"I rented out a few apartments sight unseen," Dionne said. "We created escape clauses. Two clients stayed on but a third reduced the lease to three months."

Renters are benefitting by an estimated 20 to 25 per cent drop in rents. This ranges from \$50 to \$200 a week.

Many are renegotiating their leases based on the rentals being asked for empty apartments in their buildings.

The vendor of the Masonic Lodge property previously rented it to visitors through Airbnb but this was banned during the COVID crisis. She had four other CBD apartments on the books and ran them as a business.

"Now she's got a fulltime job," Dionne said. "She's selling kitchens." Commercial building owners have had even less leeway to open up their buildings to potential tenants. Many have been forced to reduce rents on unoccupied offices and put up with vacancies.

King Ng's family business owns a nine-storey commercial building in Collins St. They have reduced rent for tenants but at this stage office workers are still expected to work from home if they can.

"No-one knows what is going to

happen," King said. "Some companies won't need as much space. Surveys show that 70 per cent of staff say they want to work two-three days at home."

The sub-leasing rate in both Melbourne and Sydney has increased and some of the corporates have been downsizing their CBD office holdings. KPMG is looking to sub-lease and others are considering moving their offices out of the CBD.

But King predicts that only government and large companies will go down the home office path to retain talent and this is a sentiment echoed by small businesses with a strong commitment to the CBD.

Dionne said that it took 40 minutes on Zoom to teach an intern something that would take two minutes face-to-face. "We're desperate to get back to the office," she said. "I've got the space so it makes sense to have

people in it."

A survey by the Building Council of Australia found that just seven per cent of building owners in Melbourne's CBD thought that workers would return this year. This compares to 40 per cent in Sydney.

The survey was done in October, however, and the goal posts can move quite swiftly. Who would have thought that the number of cases would drop so resoundingly to zero?

CBD businessman George Richards manages an educational recruitment company in Flinders Lane. He said he would be moving back next year but he was too busy on Zoom to elaborate.

"Super sorry, but I've just been dragged into another meeting, which blocks out my day (don't love the meeting density brought about by COVID)," he texted ●

Pledge to return CBD workers

WORDS BY David Schout
BUSINESS

Some of the city's largest employers will aim to return 70 per cent of their workforce when "work from home" guidelines are lifted.

In a meeting with the City of Melbourne, representatives from entities like ANZ, Metro Trains, PwC, Telstra and NAB vowed to return more than two-thirds of their workforce when safe to do so.

The move is a reassuring sign for the CBD's hospitality and retail sector, which has suffered as a result of the sharp decline in foot traffic brought about by COVID-19.

The corporate workforce is a key economic driver, and workers were responsible for half of the city's population prior to the pandemic.

Their mass exodus since March has crippled many small and medium CBD businesses that rely on their presence.

While the pledge is a targeted number rather than a binding agreement, it represents an indication that big businesses plan to return a majority of their workers back post-pandemic.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the city needed some form of reassurance for when work from home guidelines were lifted by the state government.

"City workers and students provide so much life and energy to our city," Cr Capp said at a November 17 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting.

"They are a pulse and a lifeblood to our city economy, and we are missing all of those factors in our city at the moment."

Property Council data revealed that office occupancy in the CBD was at just eight per cent



in October, which has had a profound flow-on effect.

According to the council, food businesses in the city have been hit hard with seven point five per cent closed permanently and a further eight per cent considering closing.

Spending at restaurants, cafes and pubs in the CBD is down by 90 per cent from February levels.

Cr Capp said that while this predicament meant they were keen for workers to return as soon as possible, things would be done safely.

"We of course don't expect 100 per cent of workers to come back to work on day one; it's unrealistic and it's unsafe ... [it is] about coordinating staggered days, staggered start times and ensuring an orderly and safe return for workers. It's in everyone's best interests to see that happen."

On November 22, Premier Daniel Andrews announced that from November 30, up to 25 per cent of workers, who have to be nominated

“

I've been meeting with major city employers for many months and I'm confident that we can safely bring workers back with a phased approach.

”

by their employers, would be able to return to on-site to workplaces.

The Lord Mayor welcomed the announcement.

"Today's announcement is the first step towards welcoming our workforce back to the city and I want commend the Victorian Government," Cr Capp said.

"I've been meeting with major city employers for many months and I'm confident that we can safely bring workers back with a phased approach."

"More workers in the city means cash registers ringing and more Melburnians staying in jobs."

"I'm excited for all the workers who've been stuck on Zoom meetings at home and missing their favourite coffee shops and other city rituals."

"This announcement means workers be able to come into the city to enjoy their end of year celebrations."

Voucher scheme in the works

And in a move that could replicate the UK's "Eat Out to Help Out" scheme, the council will also explore the possibility of a voucher program for city businesses.

Under the scheme, the UK government offered a 50 per cent discount off bills at restaurants, up to the value of £10 per person, to eat out on certain days of the week.

And Cr Capp confirmed the council was looking at a similar scheme, whereby a venue would receive full value for the meal, subsidised by the council.

While the UK scheme focused purely on hospitality, the council was also exploring vouchers for retail and entertainment outlets.

During the stage four lockdown, Cr Roshena Campbell said daily entertainment spending including hospitality dropped by 95 to 97 per cent.

While the easing of restrictions had seen a bounce-back, it was still 30 to 50 per cent lower than the corresponding period last year, something that was "untenable".

"It is vital those business owners who have struggled under restrictions are thrown a lifeline as our city reopens," Cr Campbell said.

"Hospitality in particular is a sector that has been on its knees due to COVID, yet it's at the heart of our city's vibrant culture. A voucher program would provide a much-needed incentive to visit city venues and provide a drawcard to those Melburnians who live outside the city to spend their dining and entertainment dollars within the City of Melbourne."

The Lord Mayor will speak with Premier Daniel Andrews about the scheme ●

Summer dining

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*
BUSINESS

The city's outdoor dining program is set to ramp up for the summer after an accelerated rollout from October 28.

After three weeks of outdoor dining, the City of Melbourne announced on November 16 that the city's New Year celebrations would drop its long-term major firework display and focus on food and wine culture.

A two-day "dining experience" – the New Year Street Feasts – will be delivered by the City of Melbourne, the state government and Melbourne Food and Wine Festival from December 31 to January 1.

The City of Melbourne said the initiative took inspiration from the piazzas and squares of Europe. Eleven dining precincts will be set up across the municipality, with more than 50 venues across:

- Little Bourke St
- Little Collins St
- AC/DC Lane
- Hardware Lane
- Russell St
- Spring St
- Flinders Lane
- Lonsdale St
- Market Lane
- Domain Rd
- Docklands

In its announcement the City of Melbourne said the 400,000 people Melbourne's New Year's Eve fireworks drew to the city posed a public health risk during the pandemic.

It said the pre-booked dining program was designed to bring people into the city across two days without drawing mass crowds at once.

"This has been an incredibly tough year and we want to mark its end by celebrating and supporting Melbourne's wonderful cafes, bars and restaurants," the Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"We are tailoring a program to safely encourage more patrons into our incredible and deserving hospitality businesses that have struggled through lockdown restrictions."

"This is will be an opportunity to say goodbye to 2020, look forward to a brighter 2021 and thank every Melburnian for their efforts to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic."



New Year Street Feasts is being arranged by the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne through the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund.

Melbourne Food and Wine Festival CEO Anthea Loucas Bosha said the program would add thousands of restaurant seats across the city during the two-day period.

"Melburnians are passionate food lovers. We're very much looking forward to working with the city's talented operators to create extraordinary dining experiences to ring in the New Year," he said.

The council has received the equivalent of four years' worth of applications for outdoor dining permits in normal times in the weeks since October 28.

More than 1300 permits for outdoor dining have been issued across the City of Melbourne, utilising almost 200 on-street car parking spaces across 100 locations.

The Lord Mayor said the council would review the outdoor dining program in making decisions about what the program may look like in the long term.

"This program was put together in record time in response to COVID-19 and will be in place until at least the end of March next year," the Lord Mayor said.

"We will review the program and take on board feedback from businesses, customers, residents, precincts and industry groups when we look at what might be appropriate over the longer-term."

The council has also launched an after-hours helpline for residents to report non-compliance with local laws in relation to outdoor dining ●



▲ Construction of Manchester Unity, 1932. RHSV BL011-019.002.



▲ Princes Bridge during demolition 1885. RHSV_PH-100109.



▲ Burke and Wills funeral cortege, LaTrobe St, 1863. RHSV_P-477.

Melbourne's 20 Decades

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*
HISTORY

It took Melbourne's population 94 years from European settlement – from 1835 to 1929 – to reach one million. In 2018 it reached five million, having jumped by a million since 2011, in only seven years.

The time it takes for the city's population to reach each million was one of the lenses through which the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) looked at the city's history in its 2019 publication *Melbourne's 20 Decades*.

When RHSV Dr Richard Broome edited *Melbourne's 20 Decades*, it was projected that Melbourne's population would reach six million by 2025, jumping by a million in only six years.

"During the last seven years the pace of the population increases seemed to be hiking up with international students and people coming to Melbourne by way of preference, immigrating for permanent reasons," Dr Broome said.

The pandemic has blown the 2025 projection apart, and the story of Melbourne's next million will be untold for some time. The impact of the year 2020 will, like most of history, be best observed through much longer time frames than a single year.

Dr Broome said the decade-by-decade lens was one that was particularly useful in piecing together Melbourne's history.

"I've known Melbourne's history pretty well, but I think when you look at it from decade to decade you see the rhythms. You have spectacular growth in some periods and then periods of slump, I got to know a lot more about the city," he said. "You get a sense of the rhythms of a city over 200 years."

Dr Broome said he originally planned to layout Melbourne's growth year-by-year.

"It was too hard over 200 years on one page and when I did it decade-by-decade I sort of realised the great drama of how it takes to get to each million," he said.

"I'd never thought about that issue, and on top of that is the relativity of growth."

While it took Melbourne 94 years to reach its first million, and seven to reach its most recent million, in the 1840s and '50s the increases represented 500 per cent growth. During the last jump of a million it was around 20 per cent.

Melbourne's 20 Decades also follows Melbourne's changing sense of itself. Those identities, according to Dr Broome, included convict-free, the golden city, marvelous Melbourne, staid Melbourne and multi-cultural Melbourne.

"Melbourne set itself against Sydney in the 1800s and identified as the city free of convicts, fighting hard to great separation from Sydney and the NSW government, which was granted in 1851," he said.

"Of course, once gold was discovered, and the rushes were much bigger in Victoria than NSW, there was another period of phenomenal growth and you get the idea of the golden city. There was a great degree of wealth coming in, Parliament House was built in this very young colony."

The upward trajectory was smashed by an economic collapse in the 1890s. The land bubble burst and there was international financial trouble, Melbourne went into a spin and there was negative growth for a period.

"Melbourne experienced incredible growth and by 2010 is nominated as the world's most liveable city. There's a very strong view that Melbourne has of itself as a global city and that's again been punctured by COVID-19," Dr Broome said.

You can purchase a copy of *Melbourne's 20 Decades* from the RHSV bookshop at its offices at William St or online ●

Connect with your local community

The **CBD Community Hub** is a free online space to connect with fellow CBD locals, stay in the know, post requests for help, share skills and local knowledge, ask for recommendations, discover local services, classes, retailers, events and more!

This Facebook group is owned by **CBD News**.

If you're a local resident or business you can join up here:

www.facebook.com/groups/melbournecbdcommunityhub/



CBD LOCAL

▼ CBD resident Karis Oka.



Promoting inclusiveness in the arts world

WORDS BY *Sean Car*

While few industries have been impacted by COVID-19 as deeply as those working in the creative industries, 23-year-old actress and CBD resident Karis Oka has made the most out of her time in lockdown.

Having only moved to the CBD early on in the year just prior to the beginning of the pandemic, like so many artists, Karis's creative practices were forced to the confines of her home – a reality many have struggled with.

But for the young actress, a Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) graduate trained in musical theatre, acting and dancing, the pandemic has provided new opportunities for her to continue honing her skills.

"I've found it quite difficult," Karis said. "But without the momentum of our industry in the real world, as an artist you realise you were just propelled by the world around you rather than your own identity."

"When your world stops and that was your creative outlet, it's difficult to find out how to be creative and interact with your own creativity but now that has just brought new creativity to life."

While she was originally destined to feature in the musical *Six* at the Comedy Theatre this year, which naturally was postponed due to the coronavirus, Karis instead was chosen as one of 30 semi-finalists in the inaugural Artists of Colour (AOC) initiative.

The AOC initiative is a scholarship program providing financial assistance and industry support to exceptionally talented theatre performers who identify as black, indigenous or people of colour.

Having submitted an audition tape for the competition, which she produced and submitted from her apartment, Karis told *CBD News* that it felt special to have been chosen as one of 30 semi-finalists representing 21 different cultural

backgrounds.

But in a year which has seen considerable political and cultural upheaval, typified by the prolific Black Lives Matter movement around the world, she said just being a part of the AOC program, which promoted inclusivity, felt extra special.

"Even if I wasn't in the top 30, I would have been really moved by this initiative in general," she said. "One of the things that our industry is building itself up to be is more inclusive. It was built off so much politics this year and, in many ways, it [2020] was kind of like the straw that broke the camel's back."

In the first round of the competition, applicants were asked to submit a video of themselves singing or rapping any song from a musical, dancing or moving to any song from a musical, as well as an introductory video and a response to how they would spend \$5000 to further their training and career aspirations.

Having made it to the semi-finals, Karis is now in the running for the top six who will share in a \$40,000 prize pool, with a number of scholarship opportunities also available to successful participants.

While she is still finding her way in the industry as a young artist, she said she had recently started learning Auslan and was interested in focusing her future efforts on promoting accessibility in the arts.

But in what had been a difficult year, she said she had enjoyed the connection the AOC initiative had given her to other artists during lockdown and was loving her new life in the CBD. "I'm just a city girl now," she said ●

For more information:
aocinitiative.com

HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS

Housing benefits every level of society



Welcome to the fifth article of our 12-part series which will attempt to explore the role that housing can and should play within Australian society and why it is important to our economy that we house all Australians, rich or poor. This series intends to draw on a range of perspectives centred around housing and homelessness. We will hear a range of views from business, the not-for-profit sector and hopefully government, as to why they believe housing is an important social and economic building block for Australia's future prosperity. This month we have asked Cameron Harvey, a partner at lawyers Norton Rose Fulbright, to share his thoughts around why the objective around housing all Australians should be considered an economic imperative for Australia ...



There are many causes for homelessness in Australia but, to date, as a society we have been unable to force the right government policy settings to promote solutions to one of the most pernicious of conditions that plague our society.

The pandemic has shown us that we can move quickly to house the homeless when it is prioritised as a community concern. The speed with which Melbourne's homeless community were temporarily housed in all manner of accommodation throughout the greater CBD, whether it be vacant hotels, emergency accommodation and the like, was revealing.

The drivers for this were a desire to protect a vulnerable group of people from infection, but also to meet the societal need of ensuring there were no gaps in the isolation and lockdown of our community in order to try and manage the spread of the virus.

Those short-term measures are unravelling as I write, but that doesn't mean we cannot still make progress. The government, private sector, local government and the community at large should combine to create solutions. This was shown, at least in the short term, by the response in Melbourne at the time of the pandemic taking hold. The challenge now is to create the appropriate conditions to allow the right government policy levers to be pulled and the engagement of the business community to be encouraged, such that long term, acceptable solutions to homelessness in this country can be implemented.

It is incumbent on any fair-minded, reasonable and considerate community such as ours, to apply itself to delivering solutions to this problem.

To date it is apparent that:

1. The market has failed to provide affordable housing for those at the lower end of the income scale or who are unemployed;
2. There is a chronic shortage of government housing (particularly compared with countries such as the United Kingdom);
3. Data supports the proposition that

long-term homelessness creates a cost in excess of the cost of supporting these homeless people into affordable housing;

4. A stable and safe home environment creates a platform where support systems can be built, and remunerative employment sought; and
5. There is a tension between the federal and state governments as to which government should bear the burden for funding major social housing projects.

Good communities, particularly those with relative high levels of wealth and education, should and must look after those within their community who, for whatever reason, find themselves without the most fundamental of needs, a safe home.

This is a unique moment in our history. We are starting to emerge from a pandemic, we have a government that appears to be willing to engage in Keynesian-style intervention in the market place to force economic growth (in particular through the infrastructure sector) and we have historically low costs of finance which not only provides great investment incentive to the private sector but also allows the government to continue to spend and increase its deficit without major financial risk in the short to medium term.

A structured program between federal and state government should seek to:

1. Increase the stock of public housing;
2. Engage with the private sector to develop appropriately funded public/private partnerships for the construction of affordable blended housing projects which include public housing, the "build-to-rent" apartment style market and private housing at secured long term rental fixed as a percentage of income (with tax incentive to smooth out a market return for private investors); and
3. Active government intervention in the reduction of regulatory delays in the conception and execution of the

development of affordable housing projects.

In late November the Victorian Government announced a \$5.3 billion public housing program of some significance if it is delivered as promised. A substantial number of public houses supporting those on no income and those on low incomes in a regulatory fast-tracked environment is certainly a positive step forward. The economic multiplier effect of this type of investment through the broader community will be very well received as well.

There has probably not been a time quite like this when the political, social and economic environments have collided in a way that allow an atmosphere of genuine collaboration between the public and private sector to ensure that major programs are undertaken to dramatically increase the supply of government and privately affordable housing for not just this generation but for generations to come. The benefits will impact every level of society.

I hope you found the above perspective by Cameron interesting and insightful. While what was said may not align with our own view of the world, we all need to listen and digest what is said by others in order to find common ground.

This is why we are focusing on the fact that the provision of shelter is a fundamental human need (not human right) and without that need being met, we have unintended social and economic consequences that will span generations.

As I said in my first article, doing nothing is NOT AN OPTION! We need to act, and we need to act now. All of us need to be part of the solution so please feel free to write to me with your thoughts ●



Rob Pradolin
FORMER GENERAL MANAGER AT FRASERS PROPERTY AUSTRALIA AND FOUNDER OF HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS (HAA)
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A very merry virtual Koorie Krismas

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*

Although there'll be no sweaty crowds packed into Federation Square this year, the Koorie Heritage Trust's (KHT's) Koorie Krismas will go ahead as a one-of-a-kind online event.

From dance performances by Djirri Djirri Dancers, to a special appearance by Koorie Klaus, the online show will take place on December 12 and will be hosted by award-winning playwright and actor John Harding.

Curatorial manager Gail Harradine said that while the show would look different this year, the Trust was putting in the work to make it as engaging and interactive as possible.

"There's still some anxiety around elders being out in big crowds during COVID, so to meet the challenge we felt it was best to go ahead with an online event," Ms Harradine said.

"We're pre-recording the performances at the River Terrace, so you'll be able to look out over the Yarra too."

The free event will be held online between 11am and 2pm and feature performances from The Merindas, Bumpy, Aaron B and a range of others to be announced later this month.

Ms Harradine also said there would be interactive presentations from elders who would pass on their thoughts to the community during Christmas time.

"It's going to be a full day of activities – we usually get swamped at the end when Santa comes," she said.

The virtual Krismas event will be nothing new for the Trust, as all of their workshops and exhibitions have been online since COVID hit in March.

Ms Harradine said that based on the positive community response, the Trust had decided to continue with the online format going into 2021.

"I'm really pleased with how our collection has been travelling during this time and how we've kept all of our public programs going," Ms Harradine said.

"It's helped people who can't go anywhere, especially when you're used to going to galleries

it's a highlight for a lot of people."

A key event coming up in December is the 8th Koorie Art Show, which boasts a display of 125 artworks submitted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who reside in Victoria.

The artists range from emerging to professional and all of the artwork will be available to view and purchase online and in the gallery.

"It will be an array of contemporary of traditional styles and mediums including painting, photography, sculpture, fibre and digital mixed media works," Ms Harradine said.

"It will be really interesting to see what people have produced during such a trying year."

Included in the exhibition will be work submitted by artists under 17, as well as work sent in by indigenous offenders and ex-offenders in Victoria as part of a program to reduce the rate of reoffending.

"The Torch is a really amazing program for people who have left prison which encourages the exploration of identity and culture through art," Ms Harradine said.

The show will run from December 5 to February 21 2021 and artists will go into the running to win \$32,000 worth of prizes, including the Creative Victoria Award and the Metro Tunnel Creative Program 2D Award.

As a Wotjobaluk artist herself, Ms Harradine said working as the Trust's curatorial manager for the past two years had been an uplifting experience.

"I used to work at the Trust in the mid-90s, so it's exciting to see how it has evolved and improved over time," Ms Harradine said.

"It has always been about reconciliation so it's great to have a space where indigenous art can be showcased." ●

For the latest information about Koorie Krismas and the 8th Koorie Art show:
korieheritagetrust.com.au



▲ Gail Harradine.

Photo credit Sandy Hodge.

OWNERS' CORPORATION MANAGEMENT

Buy with confidence: what the owners' corporation certificate can reveal about a property

There is a lot to consider when buying a new property. This is even more true when purchasing a property within a plan of subdivision or a strata plan.

WORDS BY *Alex Smale*

OWNERS' CORPORATION (OC) MANAGER AT THE KNIGHT

Included in your Section 32, will be an OC certificate which should highlight any potential issues with the property. However, without knowing what to look for, purchasers may be lost in a sea of information.

Most owners when purchasing a property will be concerned with the cost of strata fees. However, it is worthwhile looking beyond the sales agent's statement of information so you can determine not only what the fees are currently, but whether they are likely to increase.

The certificate will include a statement of the financial position. You should be concerned if the financial statements show a deficit. Conversely, a healthy maintenance fund is a good sign as it shows the property is prepared and the likelihood of special levies needing to

be raised is reduced. There will also be a section where any work which may lead to additional charges will be declared. Here any defects or major projects should be disclosed, and the previous year's annual general meeting (AGM) minutes should also be reviewed for more details.

OC certificates are required to disclose any building orders or building notices imposed on the property. Works the council imposes can lead to costs and this is one of the places where you may see combustible cladding disclosed.

A different problem is difficult personalities which can have a huge impact of the quality of life of residents. It is difficult to tell when purchasing a property if the other residents are friendly. However, there are giveaways that may be included in the certificate. The first is the committee election in the AGM minutes. In most OCs, everyone who nominates will be voted on. If the minutes note that committee



members are voting against each other, it can indicate that the committee is fractured.

Another giveaway is in the number of complaints received. Any formal complaint must be recorded at the AGM. Purchasers should consider the content and frequency of any complaints received. For example, a simple parking dispute should not dissuade you. However, complaints can also include allegations of antisocial behaviour. Further if they are numerous and vexatious, it can indicate deeper issues within the property.

Finally, the certificate will also include information on the current contracts between the OC and another party. Here you can find out whether there is an embedded network or if the OC is a party to any long-term contracts that

may not favour you.

While conveyancers may be able to point some of the above out, they are not typically OC experts and therefore it is worthwhile looking through this documentation yourself and familiarising yourself with the areas where potential issues could be disclosed ●

Want to learn more about OCs? Head to:
theknight.com.au

TRADER PROFILE

Miss Brown Vintage – advocating slow fashion

The world of fashion is often characterised as being fast-paced, disposable and cheap.

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*

But for the past year Queen Victoria Market's (QVM's) beloved sustainable fashion store Miss Brown Vintage has been advocating for things to slow down.

Located in String Bean Alley, Miss Brown offers a unique collection of vintage clothing and accessories from the '50s to the '90s sourced from all over the world.

Brand ambassador Kelly Roberson said that aside from all of the high-quality pieces on offer, marketgoers loved how sustainable the brand was.

"In the last decade Australians have become more mindful of sustainable fashion. It's moved from an underground niche to the mainstream, so our market has expanded significantly," Ms Roberson said.

"Our customers know that our pieces are individual, of exceptional quality, there's history attached to them and there's only one of each."

Miss Brown was originally started by owner Madeleine Thomson in Perth 25 years ago – long before sustainable fashion became trendy.

Since then the brand has expanded into Sydney, Byron Bay, Burleigh Heads and finally to Melbourne eight years ago.

"The brand has really blossomed in Melbourne, first in our Melbourne Central store and then into Fitzroy and QVM," Ms Roberson said.

"Melburnians are great supporters of ethically-produced products."

With QVM's retail precinct yawning back to life after months of hard lockdown, Ms Roberson said it will take some time for things to bounce back to normal.

"Sadly, Melbourne was hit the worst by restrictions and the retail sector at QVM isn't back to its normal self yet," Ms Roberson said.

"It took the wind out of our sails, but we have bred a strong culture around our brand that will get us through and I'm confident we'll bounce back in the summer."

Although its Melbourne stores were closed down for most of the year, Miss Brown was still getting orders from its online store and its Depop account.

Ms Roberson said her customers were loyal because they knew that the pieces were manufactured to a high standard and no plastic was used in the packaging.

"Our customers know fashion can be beautiful regardless of whether it comes out of a plastic bag and has a fancy tag," Ms Roberson said.



"We respect designers and manufacturers from eras ago and keep to the trends of the '70s, '80s and '90s which are still so versatile today."

With the Melbourne market saturated with fast-fashion chains, Ms Roberson said Miss Brown was able to go against the grain to provide something timeless and ethical.

"These are pieces you just can't get at generic fashion stores," Ms Roberson said.

"You can wear these pieces knowing that

they're one-of-a-kind."

Miss Brown Vintage is open every Sunday at String Bean Alley QVM ●

For more information:
missbrownvintagebyronbay.com

RESIDENTS 3000



Residents to the rescue!

In last month's CBD News, readers were reminded of the Postcode 3000 campaign. Did you know that in the same year, 1992, our community group, Residents 3000 Inc. was born?

Postcode 3000 was a bold initiative for city planners. Melbourne city, in those days, was just a workplace that died after 6pm. Along with the rest of Australia, Victoria needed to revive its economy following the late-'80s recession. If you were not there at the time, imagine how bold the concept was, to encourage people to move into the city to live. In Australia, people lived in sprawling suburbs, in large houses on the quarter-acre block.

You couldn't live in the city! Where would you do your shopping? "It is just a concrete jungle in there", people would say. Despite these perceptions, other people with a bold vision, saw Melbourne's city centre becoming not only a business centre, but both a cosmopolitan residential and a business centre. Aspirations for Melbourne to rival other famous cities like Vienna, Paris, London and New York were there in those planners' minds. These cities had many residents. A 10-year plan was developed to turn unused commercial buildings into stylish apartments plus add some modern new high-rise buildings to the mix.

Think about it. How bold was the plan to build large supermarkets in the city centre to cater for the planned new population – the residents to come. "If you build it, they will come!" (you hope). But the people did come, and they loved it.

Who were these people? The ones who preferred to live in apartments, who rejoiced in the fact that they had a small environmental footprint. These residents were bankers, insurers, students, IT experts, retirees, artists, musicians and so on. They generate income and they consume. Thus, the local economy began to grow, making a big contribution to economic recovery.

Ten years later the city became the envisaged vibrant place. As time progressed, it won awards as the world's most liveable city, many times. Residents contributed over a third of the local domestic product. The City of Melbourne and commercial interests continued to develop the beauty of the city, the shops both grand and large as well as those that were small, boutique and much loved. CBD Melbourne grew up.

But now, we have another economic downturn and possibly the restrictions and difficulties are not over yet. But the city is so much better off than in 1992. Excellent infrastructure is in place. There are more trees, great parks, wonderful shops, art precincts, beautified laneways, museums, excellent public transport and a new metro under construction – in fact, all the trappings of a sophisticated city centre.

How we live has changed a lot during this past year. People are realising that they can work at home. But they also realise that buzz of ideas that spark innovation and invention, needs personal interaction. It makes sense then to live close to your work. In fact, what if some of the un-used office space was changed into apartments but some remains as office accommodation? So, you live in the building that employs you? Take the lift from your apartment to the office, for an in-person meeting but do your contemplative work from home several floors below?

Residents are the key to recovery. Those that have been hibernating in the quiet, dead city are starting to emerge with a pent-up need to consume and invent. But the city can grow further. City planners maybe should be considering re-promoting the advantages of residing in the city, to build the residential population beyond the natural growth trend. People make a city.

Certainly Residents 3000 has been and still is a vibrant organisation providing the essential social context to the fabric of city work/life balance. Your committee is planning many exciting in-person events when it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, the Zoom events are continuing and 2021 should see the revival of our "3000 Steps" walks, discovering more about your city, plus some community activities like plastic waste clean-up campaigns. Both being outdoor activities with small groups that are healthy and safe.

This is the last column for 2020. The committee of Residents 3000 wish you all a safe and healthy festive season and encourage you to aspire to be a part of the city's revival. With your enthusiasm, vision and belief, Melbourne can grow to be the most liveable city in the world again ●



Sue Saunders
VICE PRESIDENT OF RESIDENTS 3000 MELBOURNE



METRO TUNNEL



Metro Tunnel gives outdoor dining a pop-up push

The Metro Tunnel Project has joined the push to help rejuvenate Melbourne's dining scene as it bounces back from the coronavirus pandemic.



The project's creative program has extended the pop-up park on Domain Rd, South Yarra, so even more people can dine outside while following social distancing guidelines.

The park has converted another three parking spaces into attractive outdoor dining areas so nearby restaurants can extend their service – making it easier to seat more patrons under COVID-19 restrictions. These extend the five spaces that existed previously.

Last year, the Metro Tunnel Project worked with businesses and the City of Melbourne to install seating and planter boxes, allowing restaurants to increase their outdoor dining space.

Planting in the pop-up park was designed under guidance of the nearby Royal Botanic Gardens.

Specific species were determined by current and past varieties within the gardens, with

planting to be reflective of the current leafy aesthetic of the area.

The Metro Tunnel Creative Program is also delivering a pop-up park at Albert Road Reserve to enhance seating and planting for people to enjoy. It will feature timber decking with plenty of seating and planting.

Construction has begun and the park will open to the public soon.

The parks are among several activities delivered by the creative program to help keep Melbourne vibrant during the construction of the tunnels and stations.

The pop-up park will allow people to enjoy this beautiful part of Melbourne and its popular restaurants while enjoying pleasant surrounds during summer.

The Domain pop-up park ties in with the City of Melbourne's push to help restore Melbourne's world-class dining scene.

The council has transformed footpaths and car parking spaces to allow extended outdoor dining.

Outdoor dining "parklets" featuring bollards, planters and barriers are being installed in locations across the city, including car parking spaces along Flinders Lane, Bourke St and in Carlton.

Under this initiative, the City of Melbourne has issued 1300 permits for outdoor dining ●

For more information:
metro.tunnel.vic.gov.au

MELBOURNE BUSINESS NETWORK

Respond, recover and thrive

Every December is the time for reflection on the year that has been and what will be in store for the new year ahead.

We can all agree that 2020 was a year like none other in our lifetime and probably one that none of us would like to experience again. With an estimated loss of 75,000 jobs and 15 per cent of businesses expected to close permanently in Melbourne alone, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been widespread – especially on the small business community.

When dealing with a crisis, experts will talk about its three phases: respond, recover and thrive. If your business has survived the respond phase of the pandemic, you are moving into recover. But what are your plans? How are you going to rejuvenate your business for 2021? This can be an incredibly challenging time for small businesses when resources and cash are already depleted.

Thankfully, yes, there are several government resources available through grants, subsidies, etc. However, for most, this will not be enough. What businesses will really need is connectivity, leverage and collaboration with other businesses. To really accelerate the recovery phase, business owners and leaders need the opportunity to learn from one another and leverage their respective skillsets. There is a great expression about life being too short to make all of your own mistakes. This is truer now than ever.

Another critical part of recovery is collaboration. It is my prediction that 2021 will be the year of collaboration. We will see more businesses joining forces and working together to strengthen their respective businesses. Whether it is through strategic alliances or formalised joint-ventures, leaders will recognise that they

are stronger together, can create better value for their customers and will recover faster by collaborating with synergistic organisations.

If you would like to know more about the Melbourne Business Network (MBN) and how we can support, connect and promote you and your business, please reach out to me via our website: melbournebusinessnetwork.org.au. Additionally, be sure to register for our events and webinars designed to support your business through recover and move into thrive faster.

All the very best for the holidays – and 2021!

For more information about the MBN:
melbournebusinessnetwork.org.au



Wendi Dawson
WENDI DAWSON IS PRESIDENT OF THE MELBOURNE BUSINESS NETWORK

SALVOS

Time for a new vision

As the new parklets begin to appear around the CBD, the City of Melbourne and state government are to be congratulated on acting creatively and nimbly in implementing new ideas to help return the city to normal.

We've seen Paul Guerra, the CEO of Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) and Australian Hotels Association (AHA) (Vic) CEO Paddy O'Sullivan advocating hard on behalf of their many members to help see the city re-activated to enable our currently decimated hospitality industry to be alive and thriving once again.

The energy, flexibility, nimbleness and creative thinking, all designed to return our city to the one we knew and loved before COVID-19 struck is to be highly commended.

At the risk of being branded as a naysayer, I really do have to ask the question about whether our city will ever really return to "normal"?

Various corporates are indicating that their employees' productivity has actually increased since many of them have been working from home. Some corporates are in serious negotiation about reducing their CBD property footprint by up to 50 per cent. Other corporates are considering the option to contribute to the development of mini CBDs across metropolitan Melbourne and even in regional communities. This would be for the purpose of developing working spaces for employees in close proximity to their homes.

The unintended consequence of these potential developments is that foot traffic in the Melbourne CBD will remain minimal, hence having a profound impact on small businesses, particularly cafes and restaurants. A further unintended consequence would be an increase in property vacancies in the CBD.

If this was to occur, the city runs the risk of having certain areas become ghettos; precincts to be avoided at all costs.

The energy and focus that has been initiated by many to return our city to normal is absolutely necessary and to be highly commended. But is it time now for our city's best thinkers to be gathered to consider some revolutionary thinking that will potentially re-purpose those parts of the city that remain dormant as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, or dare I say it, as a result of further outbreaks. Is it time to seriously consider re-purposing unused shopfronts as housing or cheap rent for start-ups or artist colonies?



The thought-power required to re-purpose a city is enormous, but surely it's time to realise that there is a strong possibility that our city will never be the same again, hence it's time to proactively plan and initiate a meaningful response ●



Major Brendan Nottle
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HISTORY

Intersection of Swanston and Flinders streets, looking north, 1890s

At first glance there is little that is familiar about this street scene taken some time in the early 1890s.

The traffic is dominated by horses and carts. The pedestrians cross without streetlights to guide them. Public transport consists of cable trams, a relatively recent innovation. The roads are in poor repair, especially where the pedestrians cross and at the gutters.

The photographer is standing in Swanston St looking north. It is a busy intersection, but there are no traffic lights to impede his view or to regulate the flow of foot and vehicular traffic. That is the task of the policeman, glimpsed in his white hat on the left of the image, next to the streetlight.

Only just visible in the left-hand corner is a veranda. The photo has been taken before Flinders Street Station as we know it was built. That came a decade or so later. This is the site of the Old Fish Market, and the old train station is just south of it, out of view.

It is probably spring or early summer, as the women are wearing straw hats and light outfits and there are some puddles on the road. Men are dressed formally, and it seems strange today to see a tram passenger wearing a top hat and frock coat as the man on the right edge of this photo is doing. A businessman or member of the legal fraternity, perhaps? He is sitting in the open carriage of a south-bound

Prahran-Balaclava tram.

On the north-west corner of this intersection is a Melbourne institution – Young and Jackson's Hotel. Originally called the Princes Bridge Hotel, it was built during the Gold Rush days – the 1850s – but since 1875 it had been run by Young and Jackson, Irishmen from Dublin, and the hotel has been known as Young and Jackson's ever since.

Several doors down, a tall building with scaffolding draws our attention. This is the six-storey M.A. Alexander Building, built in 1888 and demolished in the 1950s. Although to today's Melburnian it is decidedly low-rise, at the time it is one of the tallest buildings in the area. You could be forgiven for thinking its principal tenant was Hair & Gill, the auctioneers whose advertising you see on the wall, but in fact that company occupies the ground and basement floors only. For several years after it is built, there are few other occupants, a sign of the disastrous economic depression that gripped Australia, and particularly Victoria, in the 1890s. Soon, though, it is home to a number of small traders and companies.

On the other side of Swanston St, the east side, you can glimpse the Town Hall with its distinctive portico and dome in the distance. The two big buildings south of the Town Hall are gone now, but are testimony to the great advances made in the 1880s, the era celebrated as the days of "Marvellous Melbourne". Closest to the photographer, partly obscured by the cable tram, is St Paul's Anglican Cathedral, which looks both familiar and unfamiliar. It is built



in the English Gothic Revival style. English architect William Butterfield designed it and building began in 1880. The initial building work was completed in January 1891 when the cathedral was consecrated. You will have noticed that the building is without spires. They followed many years later and were built between 1926 and 1931.

What you might not know is that the cathedral site has been in public use since the first days of white settlement and in 1836 was the site of the first public Christian service held in the new village, a village that grew to become the vast metropolis we know today. Until 1848 it was a busy corn market, but in 1852 a bluestone church was built on the site. (The cathedral at that time was St James Cathedral, then on the corner of William and Collins streets, but now in King St opposite the Flagstaff Gardens.) The bluestone church was demolished when the current St Paul's Cathedral was built.

There are signs in this image, too, of a society

in transition. Yes, it is the middle of a devastating economic depression. Yet electric light poles run down the western side of Swanston St, a new technology that is already threatening the profitability of the gas companies. Cable trams have replaced horse trams on this route and a major new public building has emerged – St Paul's Cathedral – to dominate this southern edge of the CBD.

Out of sight, behind the photographer, is the Yarra River and Princes Bridge which leads you to the wide, tree-lined beauty of St Kilda Rd and takes you out of the busy city atmosphere to the green oasis that is the Botanic Gardens or on to the beach at South Melbourne or St Kilda ●



Dr. Cheryl Griffin
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
VICTORIA

WE LIVE HERE

State cladding group splits from VBA

Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV) is splitting off from the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) to become the world's first standalone agency for combustible cladding rectification.

CSV has kindly provided We Live Here with a report card on its progress this year:

- 460 individual owners' corporations (OC) have met with CSV.
- CSV has inspected and facilitated remediation plans for 310 buildings.
- CSV has helped 200 funded buildings to appoint independent project managers (IPMs). The manager's role includes assisting OCs through the rectification process and to ensure that works run smoothly.
- 200 remediation works will be in progress by July 2021.

Absent from the report was data on the extent of the financial support being provided to buildings. We have followed this up with CSV and are awaiting an answer.

"A danger to life, safety or health"

CSV told We Live Here that "combustible cladding detected on the exterior of your building doesn't necessarily mean that your building is unsafe. However, once a fire starts combustible cladding may contribute to the spread of fire."

The CSV advice conflicts with what most of you are reading on your council building order, which uses legally mandated language that is much less comforting.

How are we supposed to manage the risk? CSV's advice includes instructions to OCs not to use barbecues and not to smoke on balconies.

What about short-stays? The CSV has not provided any advice on how to deal with transient guests who are more likely to be ignorant of fire safety issues.

What happens with guests with mobility issues and other medical needs? When the fire brigade attends an alarm, one of the first actions is to check the list of residents with special needs. Short stays rarely if ever, keep the building manager informed on occupancy. The short stay industry needs to fall into line on this issue and CSV could assist.

DHHS unresponsive

Both the Minister for Health and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) are washing their hands of responsibility for the pandemic risks associated with short-stays.

We asked Minister for Health Martin Foley what his plans were for protecting residents from the health risks posed by the short-stay industry, given that we are overrun with short-stay platforms and Australia is the most penetrated market outside USA.

The galling answer from the minister's office was risible:

"Your enquiry has been referred to the Ministerial Office, who are the appropriate people to answer these questions. Our office also recommends contacting Airbnb itself to enquire as to the health and safety measures it requires hosts to undertake."

So, there we have it – Minister Foley's beneficent blessing for self-regulation by behemoth multinationals accused of having no regard for local communities in any country. Australia now has the distinction of being the most penetrated market for short-term letting outside the USA.

Vision for 2021

So, when the pandemic is under control and we return to some semblance of normality – whatever that is – we will be emerging into a new landscape, one created by a microorganism.

How we live and work could be vastly different from what we have known in the past and we must use the opportunity presented to us to get it right.

All stakeholders need to have a say in how Melbourne should look in the future including, planners, developers, businesspeople, all levels of government, and all those that live, work, and visit the city.

Reset now

We need a reset now – we'll never get a better opportunity.

The new norm for the Melbourne accommodation industry must include proper provision for students; those needing social housing, or medium-priced housing; residents-owner occupiers and long-term tenants; and visitors – business and holidaymakers.

The hotel industry must not be ignored in all this. The accommodation must be fit-for-purpose. We all must have a seat at the table.

Residential apartments and short stays

Residential Class 2 Buildings in which 83 per cent of the population of Melbourne currently live should be for residents only – except for individual owners renting out a room in their own apartment for short-stays when they are also present.

Commercial operators leasing many apartments for their own gain, not contributing to the wear and tear on the buildings they operate in should be banned forever.

Buildings that are segmented into hotel, apartments for short-term letting and apartments for permanent residents, are okay

provided they have separate management, entrances, car parks, etc. and must be tightly controlled – with severe penalties for breaches.

There needs to be more purpose-built apartment hotels to accommodate short stays.

In other words, there are ample options for accommodating visitors instead of greedy short-term operators being allowed to cram them into Residential Class 2 buildings never designed for the purpose; especially now that our buildings have become COVID-safe since the Stage 4 lockdown and should remain so.

Reclaim the title of "World's most liveable city"

So, when the pandemic is under control and we start to move into a new landscape please can the city planners have a vision that will accommodate all those who live, work and play here so we once again reclaim the title of the most liveable city in the world?

For this to happen there must be a level playing field in which all stakeholders have a say.

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to donate, please visit our website at welfare.net. We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests ●



Barbara Francis &
Rus Littleton

CAMPAIGN@WELIVEHERE.NET
WELIVEHERE.NET



STREET ART

Deck the walls with awesome art

Hosier Lane has seen some hard times in the past few years, with the opening of Culture Kings and much of the street art being destroyed by tags and bad art.

When the art school kids hit the lane with fire extinguishers filled with paint earlier this year, they did the lane a favour.

Hosier Lane was finished!

A Melbourne icon that gets around 6000 tourists a day is on life support. To make things worse there was the announcement earlier this year that there would be a hotel built in Hosier Lane. This has no doubt put the creative freedom of Australia's most famous laneway on notice. Can it be revived? With things looking so catastrophic for Hosier Lane, it's hard to imagine that it could ever be as good as it once was.

It could happen, but it will take work, collaboration and understanding.

Through my role at Blender Studios I have set up a number of laneways in the CBD over the years; Blender Lane, Lovelands and Flinders Court, and I am currently talking with Haileybury College, to set up Blender Lane Two next to our studio, near Flagstaff Gardens. Although not confirmed, it is important for cultural and educational institutions to work together to make the city more culturally interesting and to create platforms for public art and experimentation.

This month has seen much of Melbourne's famous Hosier Lane repainted. Originally it was to be an outdoor and COVID-safe alternative for many families looking to enjoy a Melbourne Christmas with the Myer windows originally cancelled.



▲ Liz Sontag's artwork in the New Blender 2 Lane.

Photo: courtesy of the artist.

“*The City of Melbourne thought outside the box when it set up “Deck the Streets”, which is a large-scale paint-up that is loosely based on the theme of Christmas. This is a great initiative and now that the Myer Christmas windows are back on, the city will be truly awesome this Christmas.*”

There has been a number of murals placed around the City of Melbourne, including; *Hessco* in Lygon St piazza, *George Rose* in Errol St, North Melbourne, and *Makatron* in Kensington. And there is also the Hosier Lane paint-up. This included many important local and national artists and will help revive a lane that has become so important to Melbourne both culturally and via the tourist dollar.

Some of the artists that have added their mark are Presto, Maha, Kaffine, Manda Lane, Duke, Liz Sontag, Kasper and so many more. We respected the important and awesome art from the past, while adding another cleaner layer of fresh art to the stains of time.

The lane now looks better, it's now just a matter of keeping it up to date and, allowing a continuously and controlled evolution of the art. Hosier is a space for good artists to make good art, it is an important part of Melbourne's creative vernacular.

Yes, there is a chance Hosier Lane can once

again be beautiful, aesthetic and restored, and become a pivotal and proud voice for creative Melbourne. Although it is highly unlikely, but at least there is something happening in Hosier and the laneway for the time being is looking much better.

For the rest of this month and into the future you can check out all of these amazing family friendly public art murals. Plus of course, some of Melbourne's Christmas classics like, the Myer windows, the Christmas projections and Santa.

There is so much more this year in the city, Christmas is awesome, and so is Melbourne! ●



Adrian Doyle

ADRIAN DOYLE IS THE BLENDER STUDIOS

LEARN MORE ON THEBLENDERSTUDIOS.COM

SKYPAD LIVING

Vertical village energy consumption

The Victorian Government has announced \$797 million for energy improvements – how much of this might our energy-hungry vertical villages access?

Our vertical villages are considered “expensive energy guzzlers”.

In particular, our common areas are accused of comprising – or exceeding – 20 per cent of our building's total administrative fees as they account for up to 60 per cent of our building's total energy consumption.

Naturally then, there was great anticipation that the Victorian Government's super-splurge of \$797 million on energy efficiency would bring good news for apartment-dwellers. And on November 17, the Victorian Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio announced that this multi-million dollar energy efficiency stimulus package would deliver:

- \$335 million to replace old wood, electric and gas-fired heaters with new energy-efficient systems in 250,000 homes;
- \$112 million to upgrade the comfort and efficiency of 35,000 social homes;
- \$14 million for appliance upgrades under the Victorian Energy Upgrades program; and
- New minimum energy efficiency standards for rentals homes to ensure that they are fit for habitation will be in place from 2022.

Anything for residential apartment buildings?

While apartment residents can potentially access funds for appliance upgrades, missing from this scheme is any focus upon redressing the specific challenges encountered by apartment

buildings. This was a view echoed on a recent Energy Efficiency Council session where both guests, Nick Aberle from Environment Victoria and Kellie Caught from Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS), agreed that apartment buildings did not really benefit from this scheme because “apartment buildings are difficult”. Kellie Caught proceeded to comment that the government was addressing social housing in the scheme, and that as some social housing is high-rise, residential buildings might also draw some benefit.

Such comments again underscore the lack of understanding about residential strata.

As was evident in the COVID-19 discussions with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), government decision-makers appear to consider similar high-rise public housing, high-rise student accommodation and high-rise residential strata. This perception might also go some to explaining why our vertical villages are typically not included in other residential assistance programs, such as the Victorian Government Solar Homes Package – because residents in high-rise public housing, student accommodation or residential strata “do not own their roof”. However, the difference is that in residential strata, we collectively own our roof.

There is, however, a light on the hill.

CSIRO, in conjunction with Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, is undertaking a project aimed at profiling the energy consumption of our common areas.

According to Michael Ambrose, Senior Experimental Scientist, Energy at CSIRO, it is vital to have a greater understanding of how, when and where high-rise residential apartment buildings consume energy – because without this detailed data, energy efficiency improvements typically take a “hit-and-miss” approach. For the initial stage of the project, a small number of residential buildings located in the City of Melbourne have been engaged. Over the coming year, energy consumption monitoring equipment will be installed to capture energy consumption data.

While the ultimate aim is to build the capacity of high-rise apartments to improve their energy consumption, the specific aim of this project is to test tools for profiling energy consumption in different high-rise residential buildings.

Over the coming year, this column will report upon this project's progress – and in the meantime, thanks to CSIRO and the federal government for recognising the needs of our vertical villages! ●



Dr Janette Corcoran

APARTMENT LIVING EXPERT

LEARN MORE ON FACEBOOK.COM/SKYPADLIVING/



Coffee break

“Why make it difficult for yourself?”

Degraves Espresso



ANDREAS

An IT student, Andreas said he didn't know where he got that mask from, but told *CBD News* that even though it carried a smile, he found it rather upsetting to wear one as, like most other masks, it fogged up his glasses! Taking off his glasses, he said that he is trying his best show his smile.



KRUZ

From Melbourne's west, Kruz bought his mask from Facebook Marketplace. He said he didn't like wearing it, but on his way to work at a nearby construction site, when asked what was keeping him entertained these days, without hesitation he said, "nothing is going to entertain me until the clubs open".



BEN AND MELIS

Ben got this vibrant pink fabric from his friend Melis and stitched up a mask with it. Initially, *CBD News* had only planned on capturing Ben's portrait, but then after hearing the story of the mask and their friendship, we thought best to capture them both!



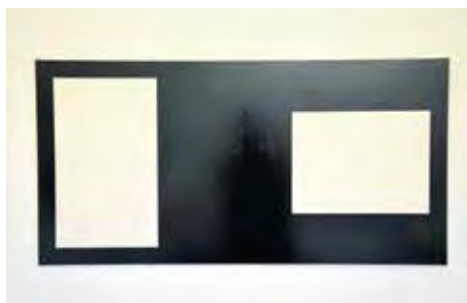
RAHUL

Rahul bought his mask online and said, "I like the fabric, it's breathable ... and I'd rather be interesting than just be conformed to the norms". It was Rahul's birthday the next day when *CBD News* met him last month.

Masks of the CBD

Photos by John Tadigiri.

CRITIC



▲ *Untitled, John Nixon, 2020.*

Final John Nixon works on show

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

There is still time to catch the cool minimalism of John Nixon in an exhibition at Anna Schwartz Gallery in Flinders Lane.

The exhibition must break a record for a commercial gallery in that it's showing for 10 months.

The gallery rejected a digital solution when the exhibition was forced to close in March after just one day.

Tragically John Nixon died of leukemia during the pandemic and although the show is not a retrospective it could be read as such.

Most of the works are on white PDF with geometric shapes, painted in primary colours, attached in various formations.

Nixon worked on pieces in pairs and series and this created quite a strong logic for his exploration of constructivism over a long period. He had more than 70 solo exhibitions since 2001 and is seen as a seminal figure in Australian abstraction.

His work is distinctive, recognisable and influential. The gallery is hoping to sell the entire exhibition to a public institution.

John Nixon, *Groups + Pairs 2016-2020*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, until December 19 ●

MUSIC

Jack Howard

Small Moments of Glory (Brolga Press 2020) is the name of Jack Howard's first book.

It covers his career as a musician in Hunters and Collectors, his solo career and the various projects he has played in such as his time on the 2017 Midnight Oil World Tour where he was recruited into the band to play trumpet, keyboards and various percussion instruments.

That tour kicked off in Brazil and travelled throughout the world and was a phenomenal success.

Jack Howard's house as a kid was filled with music, and he managed to get into Wesley College where they have a superb musical program. Years later when he was in Hunters and Collectors the opportunity to return to Wesley to be a music teacher arrived, and Howard said that it seemed surreal to be working with his teachers back at his old school.

Small Moments of Glory is an apt title for the book for Jack Howard, who while being a brilliant, succinct and accurate trumpet player, always placed the music first in terms of what was occurring on stage. Jack Howard is a titan of a musician being able to match the stage presence of such illustrious front musicians such as Mark Seymour from Hunters and Collectors, Steve Lucas from legendary punk rockers X, Peter Garrett from Midnight Oil, Fiona Lee Maynard (Delacados, Have A Nice Day) and Penny Ikingier (Wet Taxis). *Epic Brass* is one project that brings together many luminaries in Melbourne's musical world that Howard is involved in.

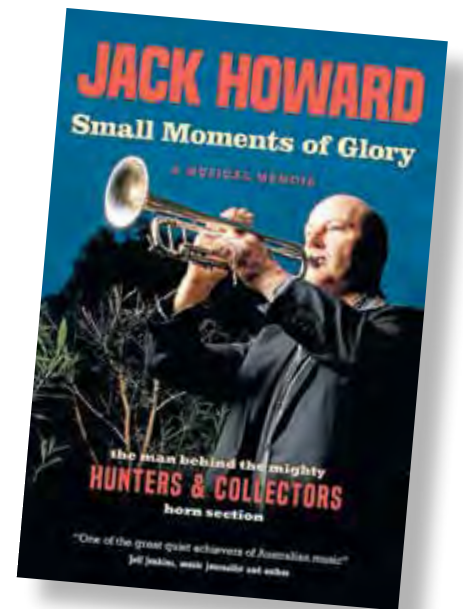
Jack Howard's first gig with Hunters and Collectors was when the band had the support slot for Robert Smith's band The Cure at the legendary Seaview Ballroom.

At a pivotal moment in his musical career, Jack Howard found himself on stage in front of a massive crowd playing with a bunch of strangers. Hunters and Collectors were a massive collective unit with double percussionists playing industrial rhythms with a brass section that included a French horn playing Johnny Staccato rhythmic pulses. Jack Howard explains in the book that over time Hunters and Collectors became two bands in one, with singer guitarist Mark Seymour and the guitarist bassist and drummer (Falconer and Archer among them) in one corner, and Jack Howard and the Horns of Contempt in the other.

One jarring moment for Hunters and Collectors was when Mark Seymour presented to the band at rehearsal the absolute anthemic song *Throw Your Arms Around Me*, a beautiful tender love song, a most un-Hunters and Collectors song. Previous to this, all material was built up as a collective, at rehearsals and soundchecks. Here for the first time a complete song was presented. Not just any song but one of their most important songs, up there with *Holy Grail*. The songs that Hunters and Collectors would play on Grand Final Day in a superb comeback performance.

Throw Your Arms Around Me was an epiphany.

One of Melbourne's brilliant guitarists James Lomas is mentioned as well. Lomas was in Have A Nice Day, In Vivo and Delacados and is a true bona fide St Kilda muso. As Billy Flores said, James Lomas could play anything he wanted to on the guitar. A muso way beneath the radar. And Jack Howard plays in Delacados with



Fiona Lee Maynard and James Lomas. *Small Moments of Glory* is available now in all quality bookstores in Melbourne.

The What Colour Is Sound? musical posse has been busy during the lockdown time, issuing its third volume of great music. Curating the third volume is Melbourne muso Michael Plater who is now based in the United Kingdom. There is a clutch of Melbourne-based musical projects on this volume that concentrates for 82 breathtaking minutes the best in electronica experimental post rock post punk ambient dark exotica beyond shoegaze music ●



Chris Mineral

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BUSINESS

Summer at Queen Victoria Market

Queen Victoria Market (QVM) is preparing for its biggest summer yet with the return of speciality retail shops and stalls, a four-week food truck festival and the launch of online shopping platform "Queen Victoria Market Online".

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

Following the easing of state government restrictions with regards to retail and hospitality, the market will see the long-awaited return of speciality retail stalls and shops, cafés and restaurants.

Visitors will be encouraged to explore the extensive range of locally- and Australian-made products and seek out those who showcase unique craftsmanship and authenticity across clothing, homewares, jewellery, skincare, plants, art, books and more.

The market's cafés and restaurants will also welcome back dine-in customers. Those re-opening include Spanish tapas bar El Ricón; Sri Lankan street food and curry experts Drums Café; Turkish gozleme and kebab specialists Market Kebab Café; Japanese-inspired sandwich bar Meet Sando; and the market's fresh pizza and pasta makers, Café Verona.

For the 200 small businesses returning to QVM, the return to trade presents an opportunity for locals to support the city's small and family-run businesses who have been at the heart of Melbourne for generations and are among the hardest hit.

Second-generation stallholder Ben Borynsztein and his family have called QVM home for the past 47 years.

Restrictions saw Mr Borynsztein increase the online presence for his women's footwear stall, Planet Shoes, as the only way to support his growing family.

"The past seven months have been extremely difficult. With face-to-face customer service,

the main driving force of my business, income has been very low," Mr Borynsztein said.

"It has been hard to maintain a consistent customer base, but online sales have helped support my family – wife, daughter and newborn son – during what has been our most challenging time."

"Between my father, uncle and brother and I, we collectively have more than 100 years' experience selling footwear at QVM. It means so much to our family to finally be able to return to the market, our second home."

Mr Borynsztein said he needed the help of Melburnians now more than ever, and by shopping local, customers were supporting so many small, family-run businesses.

QVM CEO Stan Liacos said the announcement came as reassurance for traders who had been eagerly anticipating the return for months.

"The return will see QVM spring back to life with all areas of the market open for shopping and dine-in hospitality. It comes as a welcome relief for our speciality retail shops and stalls in particular who have been the hardest hit over the past seven months," Mr Liacos said.

"I invite all Melburnians and Victorians to come and rediscover the market and support local, Melbourne businesses."

In what will be welcomed news for many locals, summer will also see the return of street food dining at the market.

Following in the footsteps of the ever-popular Winter and Summer Night Market, "Festive Food Truck Stop at Queen Vic Market" will bring together a collection of Melbourne's favourite food trucks with street food from

across the globe.

Running every Wednesday 5pm to 10pm from November 25 to December 16, the Festive Food Truck Stop will be the markets first return to night-time trading since March.

Visitors will be able to satisfy their street food cravings, indulging in everything from bao buns, burgers and tacos to mac-and-cheese croquettes, smoked barbecued meats, mango lassis and more.

The market will be showcasing an all-Victorian beer garden line-up with Brick Lane Brewing beers, Coldstream Brewery ciders, a range of Mitchelton Wines and cocktails.

If you are not able to venture down and walk the under the 142-year-old sheds and stalls, the market is bringing your favourite traders to you with a new online shopping platform, "Queen Victoria Market Online".

Melburnians are now able to shop more than 2000 products from 45 of their favourite QVM traders for fresh vegetables, meats, seafood, wine, beer and more.

The new service features same-day delivery for orders placed before 10am on market days for more than 150 Melbourne suburbs.

Customers can also click and collect from a conveniently located pick-up zone in the market's car park between 12pm to 7pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and 12pm-5pm on weekends.

Traders that will be on the online platform include Alec Watson & Son Butchers; Gunday's Fruit & Vegetable; ReWine; The Apple Corner; The Epicurean; QV Nut Co.; and George the Fishmonger ●



For more details on the market's return of retail, the Festive Food Truck Stop and QVM online, visit: qvm.com.au



Melbourne Grand has been built with resident facilities that are ready for use now and incorporate the customary luxury associated with all Central Equity developments.



Central Equity opens Melbourne Grand

The CBD's latest luxury residential tower is now complete, with the opening of Central Equity's Melbourne Grand.

Carefully and creatively designed in collaboration with Graham Fisher of Guilford Bell Graham Fisher Architects, the 58-level building at 560 Lonsdale St marks another step further into the Hoddle Grid from Central Equity.

Melbourne Grand offers extensive resident amenities and unparalleled luxury in the heart of the CBD and has been designed for the needs of young professionals and empty-nesters as well as for the growing tide of young parents looking to raise their families in the inner city.

Melbourne Grand will greet residents with a sense of "hotel style" luxury as they enter the foyer with an experienced round the clock concierge team assisting their daily needs.

The apartments are generously-sized and many, whether they be one-, two-, or three-bedroom apartments, have studies which accommodate the needs of busy professionals and offer a space to work from home in this ever-changing office life.

As working from home has become a

much-talked-about topic in recent times, the team at Central Equity pride themselves on staying ahead of the curve with industry-leading design and residential facilities, allowing occupants to continue life as usual while work continues from home.

The abundance of floor-to-ceiling glazing encourages residents to make the most of the breathtaking views from Melbourne's inner city and north across to Flagstaff Gardens and south to Port Phillip Bay, with balconies on all apartments to ensure occupants can maximise these views.

Melbourne Grand has been built with resident facilities that are ready for use now and incorporate the customary luxury associated with all Central Equity developments.

The tower boasts around 1700 sqm of facilities, which include banquet rooms for residents, in-house entertaining, a luxurious diamond class theatre and lounges while fostering a sense of community with a coffee lounge for residents to meet and catch up.

Residents will have access to a large gym, sauna, yoga room, indoor swimming pool and barbecue areas, while also gaining access to the exclusive "Lonsdale Club" resident facilities.

The project encourages sustainable transport alternatives with generous amounts of bicycle and motorbike storage in addition to private car parking. Melbourne Grand is within the free city tram zone and a short walk to several train stations and bus routes.

Melbourne's universities, prestige schools, retail precincts, Flagstaff Gardens and the legal district, are all within walking distance. Strong interest has been shown from lawyers, barristers and other members of the legal profession seeking the convenience of being close to the courts and legal offices.

Central Equity is regarded as the pioneers of inner-city living, having completed more than 80 major projects in locations around Melbourne for more than 33 years.

There are a limited number of apartments available for sale and rent ●

For more information: 9278 8888 or visit melbournegrand.com.au

“圣诞节活动不会取消”

为了庆祝一年一度的圣诞节，墨尔本市政将举办一系列老少皆宜的COVID安全活动和娱乐活动，使墨尔本市恢复生机。

Katie Johnson

从保持社交距离与圣诞老人拍照到Argyle广场的以圣诞节为主题的野餐区，墨尔本市政将从复苏基金中拨款1亿澳元，帮助举办于11月27日至12月25日的2020年圣诞节。

市长萨利·卡普 (Sally Capp) 说，今年的庆祝活动将鼓励墨尔本人安全地重新发

现这座城市，并支持当地的商业。

市长说：“2020年的圣诞节庆祝活动不会取消。”

“我非常高兴地宣布这次圣诞节活动计划，它将吸引人们回到这座城市，进行圣诞购物、庆祝活动以及家庭传统活动。”

这次节日将在黑色星期五与墨尔本时装周合作举办的“购物城市”活动中拉开帷幕。

市长说，为期四天的购物节让人们在享



受圣诞节购物和庆祝活动的同时，提供一个支持当地商家的机会。

“对于零售商来说，这是充满挑战的一年，墨尔本各地的居民可以通过在市内购

物，在弹出式的街道服务、食品和饮料服务、免费赠品和音乐欣赏的过程中表达自己的支持。”



电车站筑蜂窝?

Meg Hill

近年来，城市绿化已经成为一个有影响力的想法。但是对墨尔本城市来说会是什么样子呢？如何绿化我们的中央商务区及其独特的空间？

墨尔本委员会(CfM)成立了一个焦点小组正在推动电车站台顶棚的绿化，为蜜蜂建造新家。

克莱尔·麦克考斯兰德 (Clare McCausland) 博士是“MelBees”焦点小组的成员，这个小组项目是在电车站台上安装绿色顶棚，以帮助墨尔本的无刺产蜜蜂群繁殖。

麦克考斯兰德博士说：“当我们第一次聚在一起组成这个小组时，我们大约有24

个想法，其中的一个成员提出了这个绿色站台顶棚的想法，他说这将是一条沿着城市的‘蜜蜂高速公路’。”

“想象一下，整个交通网络带有绿色和本土植物，可以把蜜蜂带回城市，帮助恢复这一部分的生态系统。”

“我们知道这种项目以前有成功的例子，但我们很想把它建成一个墨尔本的特征，这就是为什么我们看中了电车站台。”

麦克考斯兰德博士说，这个想法是基于一个在荷兰成功完成的项目。

荷兰Utrecht市去年完成了公共汽车站台绿色顶棚的大规模安装。这个项目旨在帮助城市降温，促进生物多样性，包括蜜蜂和其他昆虫。

承诺员工返城工作

David Schout

一旦“在家办公”的指令取消，墨尔本市的一些大雇主将争取让70%的员工返城上班。

在墨尔本市政的一次会议上，来自澳新银行，地铁局，普华永道，澳洲电信和澳大利亚国民银行的代表发誓要在安全的情况下让三分之二的员工返城工作。

此举对中央商务区的酒店业和零售业来说是一个令人宽慰的信号，由于新冠疫情造成的人流量急剧下降，这些行业受到了很大的影响。

企业员工是经济增长的主要动力，在疫情大流行之前，员工人数占了本市人口的一半。

自3月份以来，由于“在家工作”的指令，使许多依赖他们的中小型商家陷入困境。

虽然这一承诺指有一定数量的员工返城，但并不是一个有约束力的协议，这表明大企业计划在疫情结束后将让大多数员工返城工作。

卡普市长说，一旦州政府取消“在家工作”指令，本市需要某种形式的安全保证。

卡普市长在11月17日的未来墨尔本委员会 (FMC) 会议上说：“市区的员工和学生为我们的城市提供了如此多的活力和能量。”

“这是我们城市经济的脉搏和活力，而我们目前正缺失了城市中所有这些因素。”

房地产行业机构的数据显示，10月份CBD的写字楼出租率仅为8%，对此已产生了深远的影响。



夏季餐饮

市中心的室外餐饮计划自10月28日推出后，将在夏季逐步扩大。

Meg Hill

经过三周的室外用餐实践，墨尔本市政于11月16日宣布，市中心的新年庆祝活动将放弃其长期以来的大型烟火表演，转而将重点放在美食和葡萄酒文化上。

墨尔本市政府、维州政府和墨尔本美食美酒节将于12月31日至1月1日举行为期两天的“餐饮体验”即新年街头盛宴。

墨尔本市政表示，该倡议的灵感来自欧洲的诸多广场。

全市将建立11个餐饮区，其中50多个场

所设立在以下街道：

Little Bourke 街
Little Collins 街
AC/DC 巷
Hardware 巷
Russell 街
Spring 街
Flinders巷
Lonsdale 街
Market 巷
Domain 路
Docklands 港区

墨尔本市政在公告中表示，墨尔本除夕烟花所吸引的40万人在疫情流行期间将对公众健康构成威胁。

廉价停车吸引驾车者回到市区

David Schout

墨尔本市政将在圣诞节期间通过提供更廉价的停车位以鼓励驾车者返回市区，尽管现行的政策是偏向行人和骑车者而不利于驾车者。

由于封锁以后通勤者对使用公共交通有所担心，在圣诞节前夕，中央商务区(CBD)将以优惠停车费吸引司机返回市中心，具体折扣待定。

希望驾车者把钱花在陷入困境的CBD零售和餐饮酒店，在这历年最繁忙的时期中给CBD经济提供一个“消费刺激”。

市政将寻求降低街道内外停车的成本，延长街上停车时间，并延长拥堵费豁免。

市政议员以九比二的票数赞成廉价停车的举措；那些“赞成”的人包括萨利·卡普市长 (Sally Capp)，她认为短期的政策改变既是必要的也是合理的。

卡普市长表示，来自CBD小商业的反馈意见表明，市政应该使潜在的消费者，尤其是那些对当前环境感到担忧的消费者，尽可能容易地返回城市。

她说：“我们需要竭尽所能，克服人们选择来市中心工作、吃饭、购物或娱乐的任何障碍，无论是真实的障碍或者是感觉到的障碍。”

市长说，由于COVID疫情造成的“特殊情况”，这意味着我们必须尝试新的策略。

“作为一个城市和社区，我们需要考虑所有的选择，有些可行，有些并不可行。但可以肯定的是，目前在我们努力振兴城市经济和城市社区的过程中，有许多值得一试。”

廉价停车的举措标志着多年来市政政策的一个重大转变，原先则认为空间效率低下而要减少CBD车辆。

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2 🏠 2 🚗 1 🚲



61/1A St Kilda Rd, St Kilda Auction
1 🏠 1 🚗 1 🚲



919/555 Flinders St, Melbourne Private Sale
1 🏠 1 🚗



408/123 Pelham St, Carlton Private Sale
2 🏠 1 🚗



3706/27 Therry St, Melbourne \$650,000
2 🏠 2 🚗



2013/9 Power St, Southbank Private Sale
1 🏠 1 🚗

FOR LEASE



5005/500 Elizabeth St, Melbourne \$650 pw
3 🏠 2 🚗



2404/483 Swanston St, Melbourne \$450 pw
2 🏠 1 🚗



2609/33 Rose Ln, Melbourne \$400 pw
2 🏠 1 🚗



901/151 Berkeley St, Melbourne \$425 pw
2 🏠 1 🚗



1905/318 Russell St, Melbourne \$380 pw
1 🏠 1 🚗



4804/35 Queensbridge St, Southbank \$700 pw
2 🏠 2 🚗 1 🚲

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