



# HERITAGE SHED RESTORATION

## Restoring the market you know and love

The Queen Victoria Market's open-air sheds are part of its unique character and are culturally and historically significant. However due to their age, significant conservation works are needed to ensure they continue to be a part of Melbourne's heritage long into the future.

The repair, conservation and restoration of the open-air sheds is a key market renewal project, as outlined in the 2015 Master Plan and supported by a recommendation from the People's Panel.

We're getting on with the market's renewal, investing \$11 million in the staged on-site restoration of the heritage sheds. This important conservation project will be staged over a number of years to reduce disruption to traders and customers.

The full heritage restoration project represents the most significant restoration of the market sheds in the past 40 years.

### Trial works

Starting in September, trial works will get underway at the upper Peel Street ends of A and C sheds. Heritage Victoria has issued a permit exemption for these works (Permit P30631). Over the next four to five months, works by a qualified heritage builder will include:

- repair of timber elements including posts, gable ends, fascias and pediments
- repair of wrought iron including knee braces, trusses and tie rods
- repair of verandahs
- painting.

These trial works will help inform planning for the major shed restoration and structural enhancement works which, subject to Heritage Victoria approval, are anticipated to commence in 2020.

### History of the sheds

- The market's sheds have been standing for more than 140 years with the upper market sheds A to E built for the 1878 opening of the Queen Victoria Market.
- C Shed was the longest shed, extending along the alignment of the former Fulton Street, between Queen and Peel streets.
- The oldest shed is H Shed, in the lower market near the Dairy Produce Hall. With a different truss design, it is believed to date back to the 1850s or 1860s. It may have been moved to the Queen Victoria Market from another market.
- F Shed was built in 1878 and was designed to incorporate the brick wall constructed to mark the new northern boundary of the Old Melbourne Cemetery. The cemetery wall remains in place today and can be seen from J Shed.



## A history of the sheds

The market's sheds have been standing for more than 140 years with sheds A to E built in 1878. After being awarded the contract in April 1877, builder James Thurgood had just eleven months to construct the sheds for the Queen Victoria Market's grand opening in March 1878. However three sheds were still unfinished at the time of the official opening.

F Shed was built by Thomas Walker & Co in 1878. It was originally an open shed on three sides backed by the brick wall which had been constructed to mark the new northern boundary of the Old Melbourne Cemetery.

An article in *The Argus* on 21 March 1878 chronicled the market's busy first day of trade:

*"Three cheers were given for the Queen, and three for the mayor, and business then proceeded. There was an unusually large attendance of carts, the number being computed at about 600. As the pitching of three of the sheds had not been completed, only half the market could be occupied. About 300 vehicles were admitted, and remainder had to be provided for in the streets. All, however, appeared to do a good trade."*

The oldest shed in existence is H shed which is believed to have been in use in the 1850s or 1860s. It has a different iron truss design to the other sheds and may have been moved to the

Queen Victoria Market from another market or been previously used in another part of the lower market.

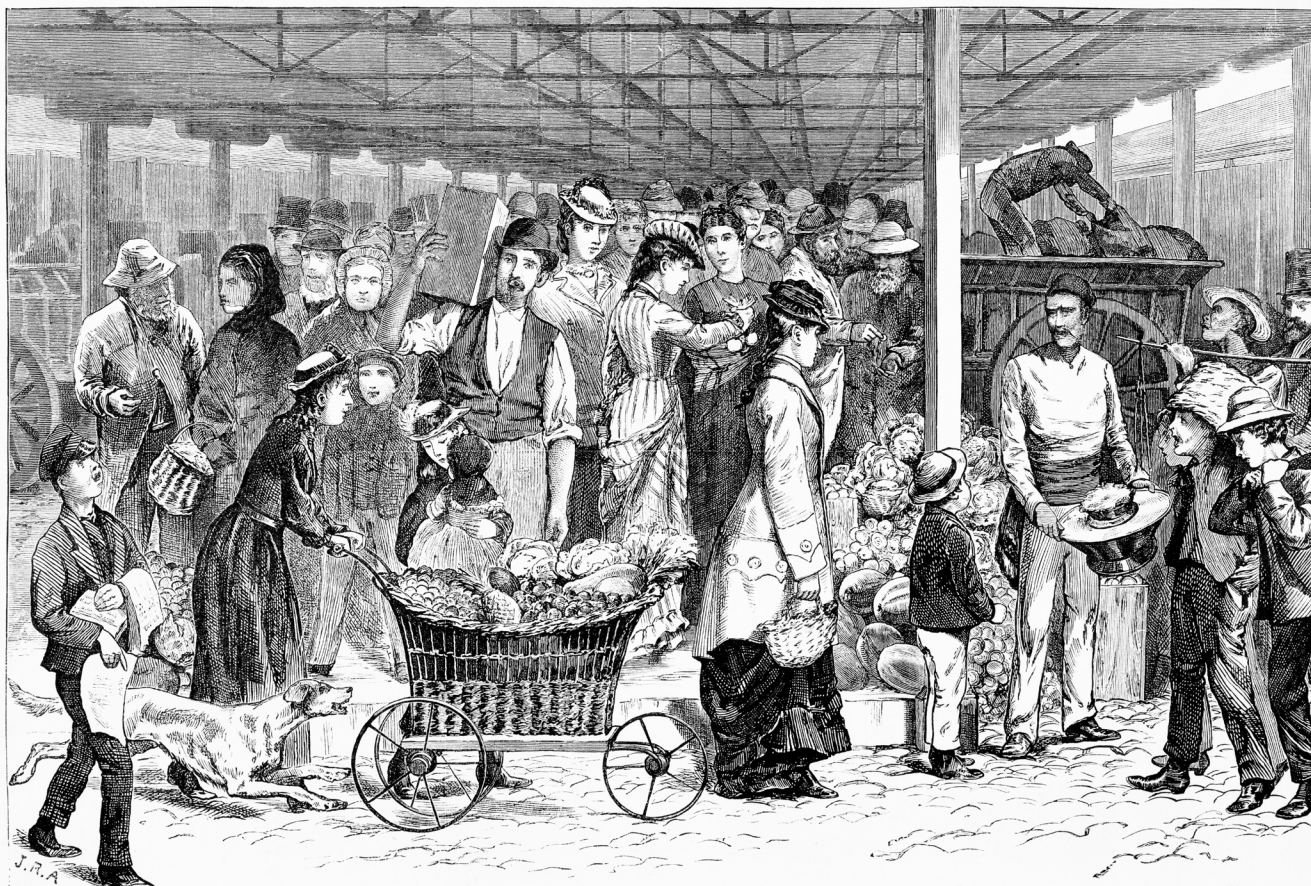
Growers travelled by horse and cart from Doncaster, Brunswick, Brighton, Moonee Ponds, the Mornington Peninsula and further afield to sell fresh seasonal produce to a rapidly growing Melbourne population. The market's early success was in part due to the variety of produce grown in the surrounding regions.

Goods were sold directly into the 'buyers walk' in the centre of the sheds, with horses safely tied to the shed posts to prevent them wandering off while their owners traded. The shed posts marked each trader's stall and allowed for two horses and carts.

As Melbourne and the market have grown, the sheds have evolved with additional sections and verandahs added and numerous repairs and re-roofing works undertaken.

Today, the 19th century sheds continue to be used by fruit and vegetable traders (A, B, H and I sheds) and general merchandise and street food traders (C to E and J to L sheds).

While there has been considerable additions and phases of refurbishment over the years, the form of sheds A to E remain consistent to their 1878 construction with many original elements including timber posts, beams and corbels, iron trusses and bluestone footings.



A typical Saturday morning in the Queen Victoria Market. Source: *Illustrated Australian News*, State Library of Victoria, 5 July 1879.



## Historical significance

From its beginnings as Melbourne's wholesale and retail produce market, through to its successful reinvention as a retail market in the 1970s, Queen Victoria Market has played an important role in the economic and social history of the city.

In 2018, the Queen Victoria Market was added to the National Heritage List, becoming the 114th place in Australia to receive the heritage honour. The listing recognises the market's links to the early colonial population of Melbourne and its ability to demonstrate the principal characteristics of a 19th century metropolitan produce market, including displaying all of the building typologies of a market of this time.

The National Heritage List recognises the collection of open-air sheds in upper and lower markets, enclosed market halls, stores and perimeter shops.

The significant features of the market sheds are recognised in the listing, including their open design, layout in regular row pattern flanked by laneways, and construction of post and beam system, with exposed triangulated trusses supporting a gabled roof (sheds A to E) or other original construction design (sheds F, K, L and M).

The sheds are also identified as items of primary cultural heritage significance within the registration of the market's 1989 listing on the Victorian Heritage Register. The sheds are recognised as significant:

*"The Queen Victoria Market is of architectural significance for its remarkably intact collection of purpose built nineteenth and early twentieth century market buildings, which demonstrate the largely utilitarian style adopted for historic market places."*

Through the \$250 million market renewal, the City of Melbourne is protecting the values and history that underpin the market's heritage recognition across both the national and state heritage listings. This includes restoring its heritage sheds and buildings, securing the market's place as a traditional open-air market for future generations.



## Market prices

The Queen Victoria Market has always been a place for quality affordable fresh produce. In the days of shillings and pence, Melburnians flocked to the market for a range of fresh seasonal produce direct from growers. The table below shows the 1878 shillings and pence price and the decimal equivalent.

	1878	Decimal equiv.
Apples (case)	4s. 6d.	45 cents
Cabbages (dozen)	6d.	5 cents
Carrots (dozen bunches)	6d.	5 cents
Cauliflower (dozen)	1s.	10 cents
Celery (dozen bunches)	2s.	20 cents
Cucumbers (dozen)	4d.	3 cents
Lettuce (dozen heads)	3d.	2 cents
Peaches (dozen)	6d.	5 cents
Pears (pound)	11/2 d.	1 cent
Peas (pound)	1d.	1 cent
Plums (dozen)	2d.	2 cents
Pumpkin (each)	3d.	2 cents
Tomatoes (case)	1s. 6d.	15 cents
Watermelon (dozen)	2s.	20 cents
Butter (pound)	8d.	7 cents
Eggs (dozen)	1s. 8d.	17 cents
Honey (pound)	6d.	60 cents
Pigeons (pair)	2s.	20 cents
Pork (pound)	7d.	6 cents
Rabbits (pair)	1s.	10 cents
Suckling pig (each)	10s.	\$1



# Upcoming restoration works

## What's happening at the upper Peel Street ends of A and C sheds



### Works areas

Staged works will occur in small temporarily fenced off sections of the upper Peel Street ends of both A and C sheds (see map below highlighting the works area). The builder will be on-site from Monday to Friday between 7am and 5.30pm. There will be no weekend works. A temporary builder's compound will be set up in a hoarded off location in the upper part of C Shed for the duration of works.



### Noise

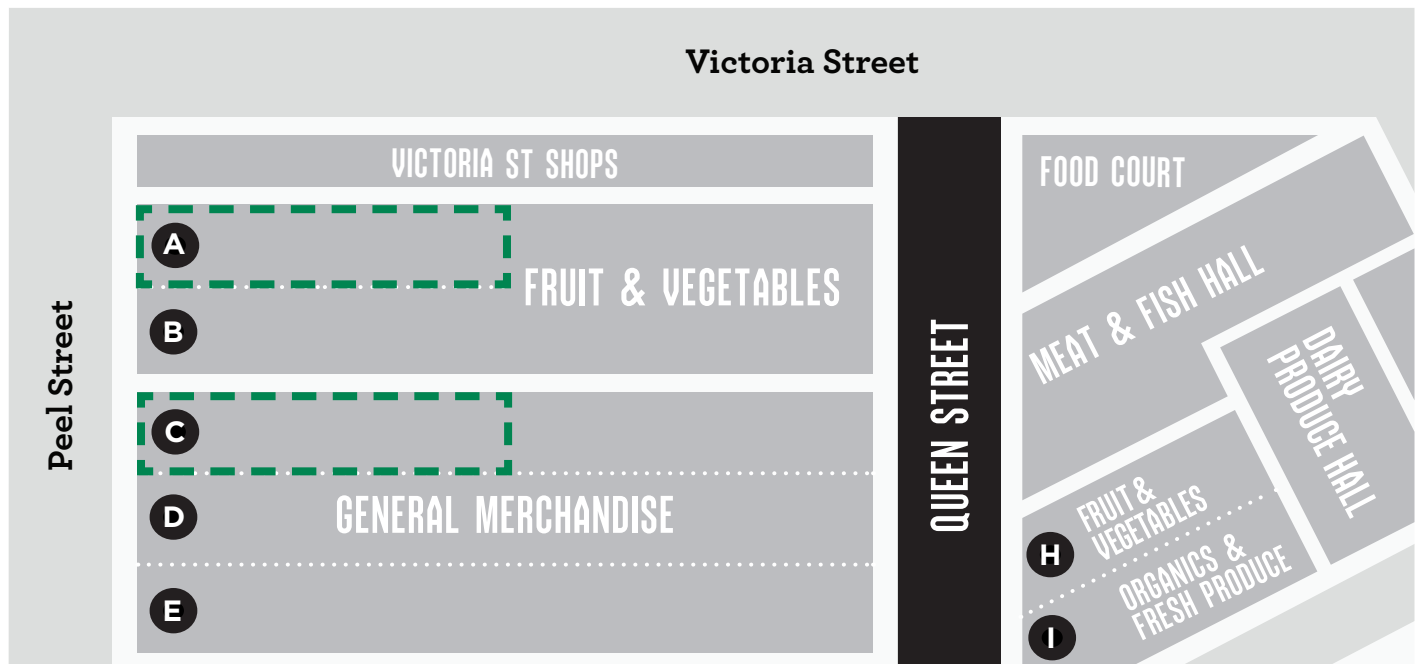
Traders and customers in close proximity to the works areas may experience some inconvenience. Works are expected to generate low to medium levels of noise. These works will include angle grinding, sanding and painting. All works will be conducted within EPA guidelines.



### Pedestrian access

There will be intermittent changes to pedestrian access on market days as staged on-site works occur. Signage on temporary hoardings will assist with safe access for pedestrians throughout.

## Works area



## LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

Find out more about the Heritage Shed Restoration Project and the Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal program at:

**W** [melbourne.vic.gov.au/qvmrenewal](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/qvmrenewal)

**T** 9658 9658

**@** Subscribe to construction updates at [melbourne.vic.gov.au/qvmrenewal](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/qvmrenewal)

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