

Darebin Planning Scheme

Amendment C222dare

Explanatory Report

Overview

This amendment introduces heritage protection controls to seven (7) individual heritage places, comprising five (5) churches and two (2) mosques in Thornbury, Preston and Reservoir.

It does this by applying the Heritage Overlay to protect the places of identified heritage significance; amending the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay to include the seven heritage places, amending Clause 72.04 (Incorporated documents) and Clause 72.08 (Background documents) and updating the Incorporated Document *City of Darebin Heritage Study Incorporated Plan – Permit Exemptions (2022)*.

Where you may inspect this amendment

The amendment can be inspected free of charge at:

- Darebin City Council website at <https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au>
- During office hours at the following place:
 - Darebin Civic Centre
274 Gower Street, Preston, VIC 3072

The amendment can also be inspected free of charge at the Department of Transport and Planning website at <http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection> or by contacting the office on 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.

Submissions

Any person may make a submission to the planning authority about the amendment. Submissions about the amendment must be received by 30 April 2026.

A submission must be sent to:

Strategic Planning, Darebin City Council

By post: PO Box 91, Preston VIC 3072

In person: 274 Gower Street, Preston

By email: planningservices@darebin.vic.gov.au

Panel hearing dates

In accordance with clause 4(2) of Ministerial Direction No.15 the following panel hearing dates have been set for this amendment:

- Directions hearing: 31/08/2026
- Panel hearing: 12/10/2026

Details of the amendment

Who is the planning authority?

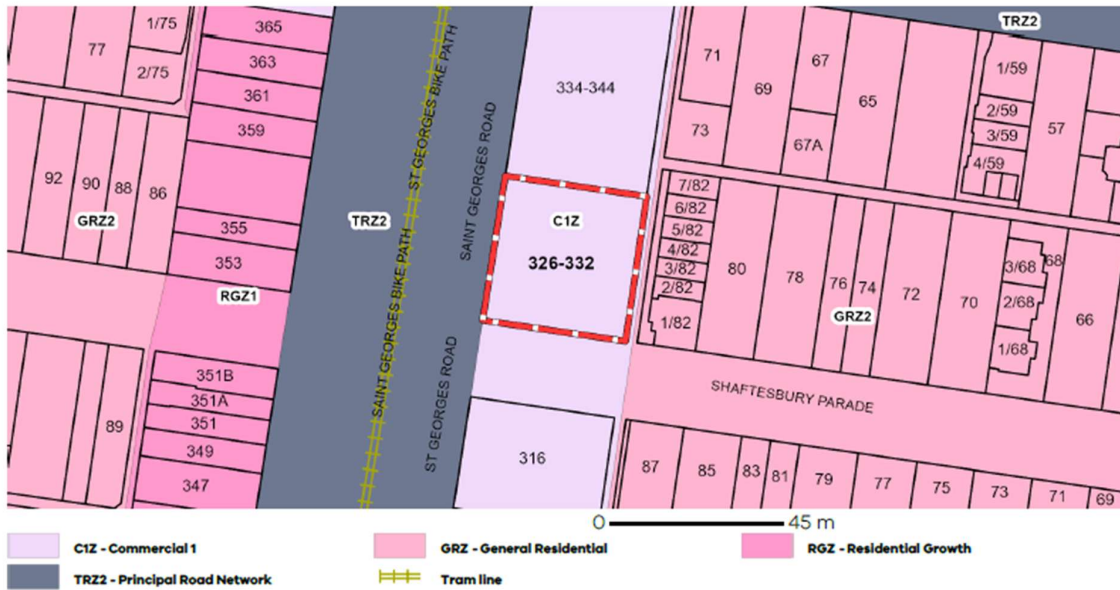
This amendment has been prepared by Darebin City Council who is the planning authority for this amendment.

The amendment has been made at the request of Darebin City Council.

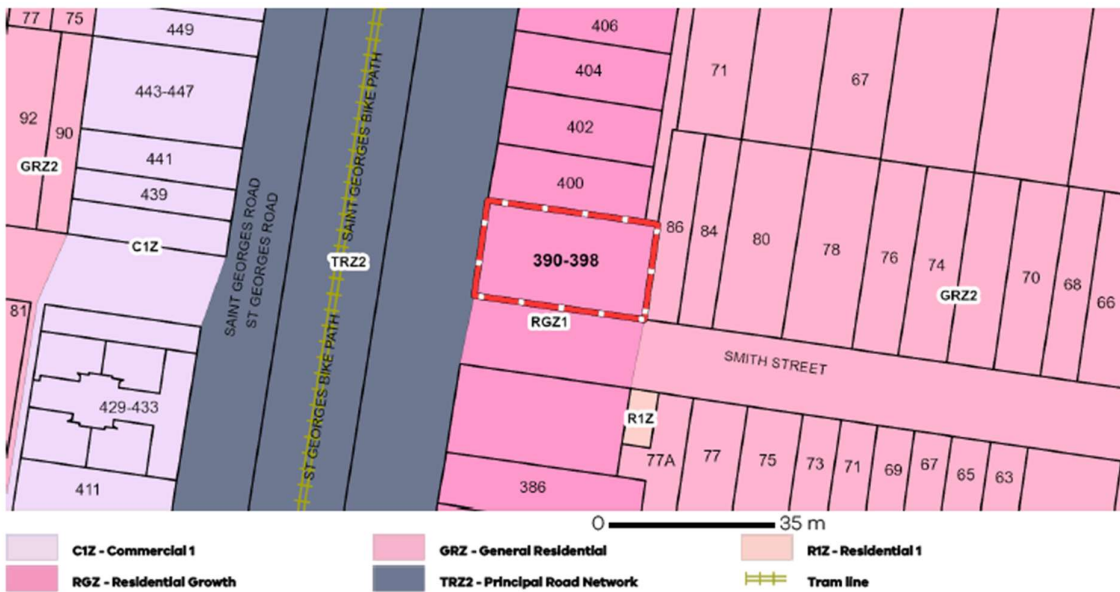
Land affected by the amendment

The amendment applies to seven (7) separate land parcels, as per the below list and identified by the red outline on the maps following.

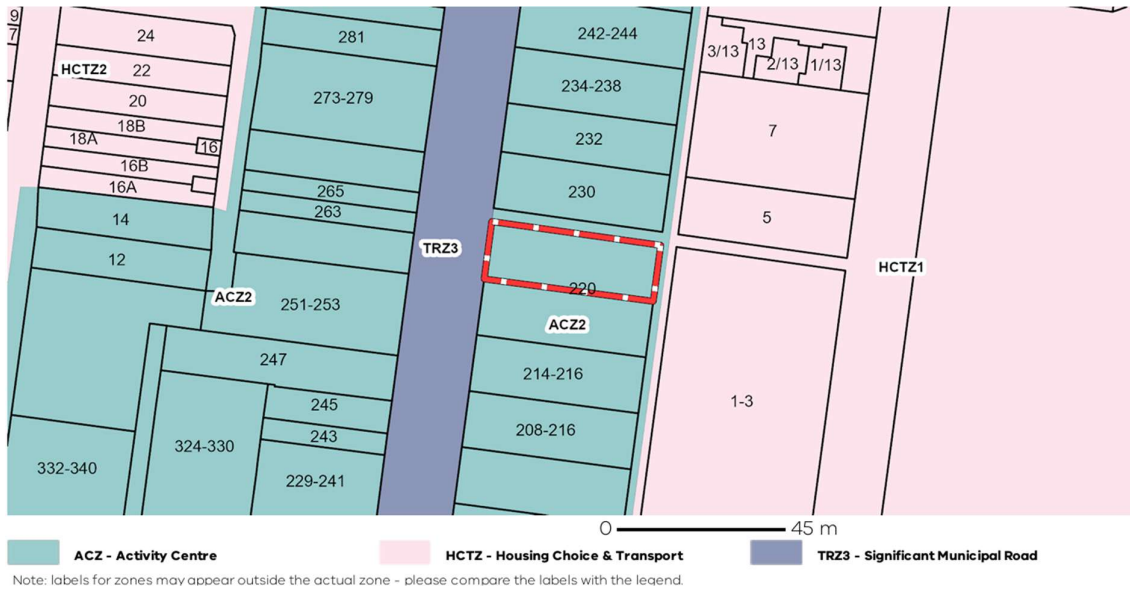
- 326-332 St Georges Road, Thornbury
- 390-398 St Georges Road, Thornbury
- 220 High Street, Preston
- 88-92 Cramer Street, Preston
- 16-18 Martin Street, Thornbury
- 66 St David Street, Thornbury
- 111 Blake Street, Reservoir



Map 1: 326-332 St Georges Road, Thornbury – Former Croxton Methodist Church



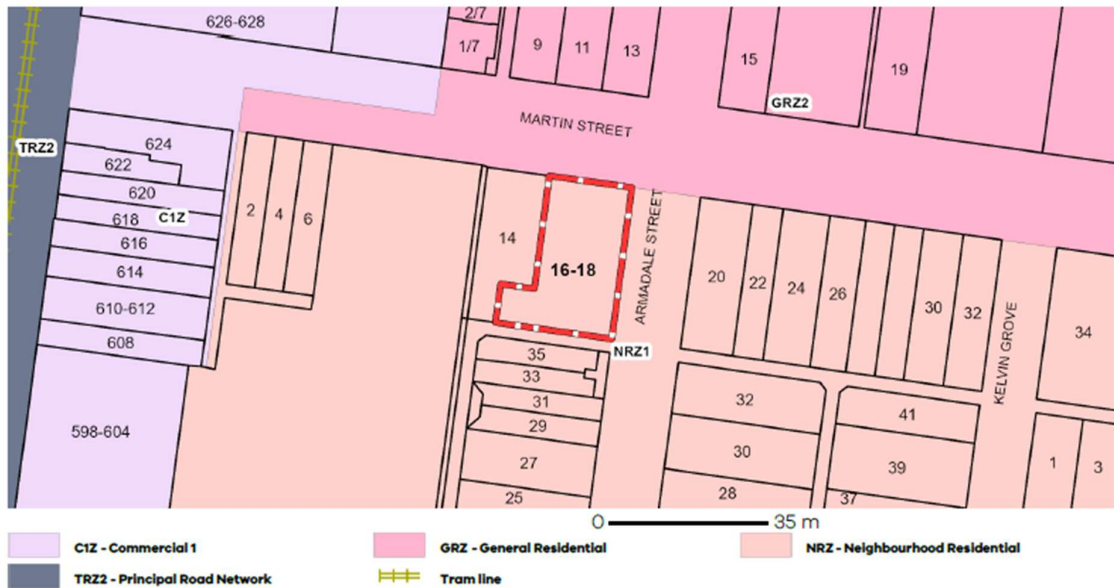
Map 2: 390-398 St Georges Road, Thornbury - Church of Christ



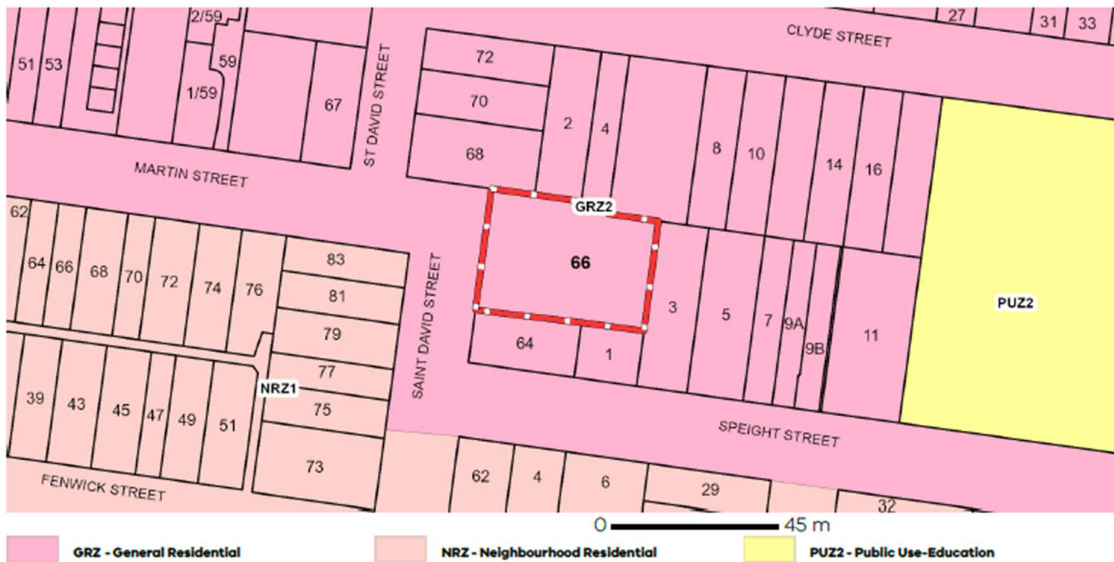
Map 3: 220 High Street, Preston - Former Preston Church of Christ



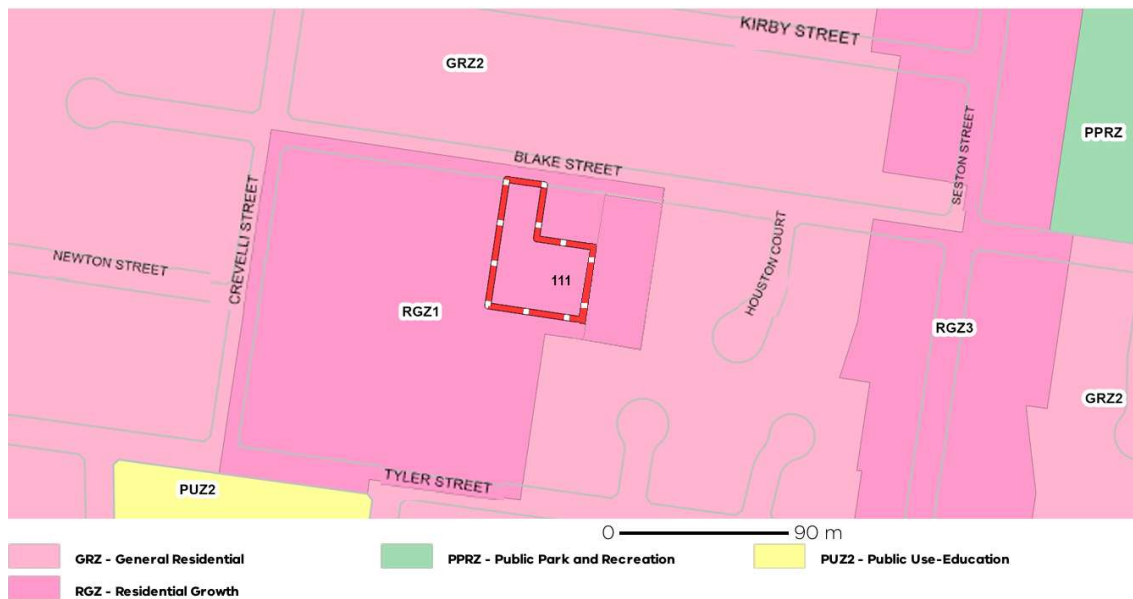
Map 4: 88-92 Cramer Street, Preston - Omar Bin El Khattam Mosque



Map 5: 16-18 Martin Street, Thornbury – Former Northcote Congregational Church



Map 6: 66 St David Street, Thornbury - Holy Church of St George Greek Orthodox Complex



Map 7: 111 Blake Street, Reservoir – Reservoir Albanian Mosque

What the amendment does

The amendment seeks to apply the Heritage Overlay to seven (7) places of worship in Thornbury, Preston and Reservoir on a permanent basis and makes other consequential changes to the Darebin Planning Scheme.

Specifically, the amendment seeks to:

Overlay Maps

1. Amend Planning Scheme Map Nos. 10HO, 11HO, 12HO, 13HO and 14HO to apply the Heritage Overlay to seven (7) places of worship in Thornbury, Preston and Reservoir.

Planning Scheme Ordinance

1. Amend the Schedule to Clause 43.01 (Heritage Overlay) to apply the Heritage Overlay to seven (7) places of worship in Thornbury, Preston and Reservoir.
2. Amend the Schedule to Clause 72.04 (Incorporated Documents) to:
 - a. Introduce Statements of Significance for seven (7) places of worship in Thornbury, Preston and Reservoir as incorporated documents;
 - b. Remove the incorporated document titled 'City of Darebin Heritage Study Incorporated Plan - Permit Exemptions (2022)'; and
 - c. Introduce the document titled 'City of Darebin Heritage Study Incorporated Plan - Permit Exemptions (Darebin City Council, February 2026)' as an incorporated document which includes reference to the document titled 'Places of Worship Heritage Assessment Volumes 1 and 2 (Extent Heritage, February 2026)'.

3. Amend the Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background Documents) to include 'Places of Worship Heritage Assessment Volume 1: Findings and Volume 2: (Extent Heritage, February 2026)' as a background document.

Strategic assessment of the amendment

Why is the amendment required?

Under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act), Council has a responsibility to protect local cultural heritage. The amendment is required to protect the heritage values of the individual places and preserve the places for current and future generations.

The amendment proposes to implement the recommendations of the Places of Worship Heritage Assessment Volumes 1 and 2 (Extent Heritage, February 2026). This study identifies seven (7) places within the municipality, comprising five (5) churches and two (2) mosques, as meeting the threshold for local heritage significance, and therefore for protection under the Darebin Planning Scheme.

How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The amendment implements the objectives of Planning in Victoria, under Section 4 of the *Planning & Environment Act (1987)* in particular:

- *To conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value.*
- *To balance present and future interests of all Victorians*
- *To facilitated development in accordance with the objectives outlined above.*

Further, the amendment implements section 12(1)(a), which is to implement the objectives of planning in Victoria, in this case to protect heritage values.

These objectives are implemented through the identification and protection of heritage-built form.

How does the amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?

Environmental

The amendment is expected to have a positive environmental impact by providing for protection of places of historic significance and thereby supporting the reuse of existing building stock.

Social

The amendment is expected to have positive social effects by protecting fabric that

adds to the understanding of cultural history, providing a link to the past and giving a sense of place.

Economic

The amendment is not expected to have significant economic impacts, although it may impose some additional costs on the owners or developers of affected properties as a planning permit will be required for most buildings and works due to the application of the Heritage Overlay.

The Heritage Overlay does not prohibit development but instead requires the significance of a place to be considered when assessing applications. These impacts are offset by the benefit to the community provided through the protection of heritage places over many generations.

Does the amendment address climate change?

The amendment does not rezone land from a non-urban zone to an urban zone, nor will it result in the intensification of urban land or expose use and development to a natural hazard arising from climate change. The amendment does not require an assessment under Ministerial Direction 22 – Climate Change Consideration.

The application of the heritage overlay will encourage the retention and reuse of existing buildings, which will help the state minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?

The properties subject to the amendment is not subject to bushfire risk or a Bushfire Management Overlay, and the amendment is unlikely to result in any significant increase to the risk to life, property, community, infrastructure or the natural environment from bushfire.

Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any other Minister's Direction applicable to the amendment?

The amendment complies with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes under Section 7(5) of the Act.

The amendment complies with Ministerial Direction No. 11 (Strategic Assessment of Amendments) under section 12 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as the requirements of this direction have been followed in the preparation of this amendment.

How does the amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?

The amendment supports the Planning Policy Framework (PPF), in particular Clause 15.03-1S (Heritage Conservation) by providing heritage protection for identified heritage places to minimise the loss of local heritage whilst more permanent heritage

protection is progressed.

The amendment additionally supports Clause 15.03-1L (Heritage) of the Darebin Planning Scheme by seeking to protect, conserve and enhance a place identified as being of local significance by applying the Heritage Overlay. The amendment also seeks to discourage demolition or relocation of locally significant heritage buildings.

The amendment is consistent with the recently released *Plan for Victoria* and supports Pillar 3 (Great Places, Suburbs, and Towns) which enables the preservation of '*Victoria's rich and diverse cultural heritage by protecting significant sites and precincts*'.

Is the amendment consistent with the delivery of the relevant housing target set out in the Planning Policy Framework?

Applying the heritage overlay to a select number of sites will have a negligible impact on the ability to achieve Council's housing target at Clause 16.01. There is sufficient capacity in the municipality under current planning controls to meet future housing demand in well-located areas. Development of these properties will not be prohibited by the application of the heritage overlays but will rather ensure that any future development appropriately responds to the heritage values of the area.

How does the amendment support or implement the Municipal Planning Strategy?

No changes to the Municipal Planning Strategy are proposed as part of this amendment.

This amendment supports the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) by protecting and enhancing places of heritage significance as sought by Clause 02-03-4.

The application of site-specific Heritage Overlays to the significant places will not prevent development of the municipality as envisaged by the MPS and will not undermine policy contained within the MPS relating to housing and economic development.

The application of the heritage overlay to a select number of sites will not unreasonably impact on policy objectives that seek to increase housing supply. The proposed heritage overlays will not prohibit development but rather ensure that any future development appropriately responds to the heritage values of the area in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development. No change is proposed to the underlying zoning as part of this amendment.

It is recognised that four (4) sites proposed for the Heritage Overlay are located within a Substantial Change Area as identified on Council's Strategic Housing Framework Plan at Clause 02.04-2:

- 326-332 St Georges Road, Thornbury
- 390-398 St Georges Road, Thornbury

- 220 High Street, Preston
- 111 Blake Street, Reservoir

Policies within Darebin's MPS and PPF for Substantial Change Areas seek to ensure these locations '*support development at higher overall densities*' to accommodate housing demand. These are generally areas in and around activity centres and along strategic corridors such as St Georges Rd. The MPS and PPF also include objectives and strategies to '*protect and enhance places of heritage*' and '*ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance*'.

It is appropriate for Substantial Change Areas to contain site-specific heritage overlays. The Strategic Housing Framework Plan has been prepared from a municipal-wide perspective. It is a broad municipal-scale policy framework that balances a range of competing considerations and objectives (including heritage and housing supply) to guide where preferred locations are for housing growth.

The housing change areas of the Strategic Housing Framework Plan are applied to whole areas/precincts, rather than individual sites. For this reason, the Darebin Housing Strategy notes that Substantial Change Areas may contain standalone heritage sites.

The heritage values of these sites will become one of many considerations when sites are developed in these locations. Appropriate and high-quality higher density development or refurbishment of heritage places is common in Melbourne and Victoria more broadly.

Darebin Housing Strategy August 2025

Council has recently adopted the *Darebin Housing Strategy August 2025*. The updated strategy estimates an additional 28,700 dwellings are needed in the municipality by 2041. Under current controls, the municipality has capacity to accommodate more than 90,000 new dwellings, well above the likely demand.

As such, the proposed heritage protection of seven individual sites will have a negligible impact on the available land for development. Therefore, the Amendment is consistent with housing supply and growth policies as well as heritage policies of the MPS.

Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?

The amendment makes proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions by utilising the Heritage Overlay to protect individual places of local heritage significance. This approach is consistent with Planning Practice Note 1 Applying the Heritage Overlay and the Ministerial Direction - The Form and Content of Planning Schemes.

How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

No relevant government agency was required to be consulted regarding this amendment.

Does the amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?

The amendment is not likely to have an impact on the transport system.

How does the amendment have regard to the principles set out in the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrn) Act 2017* in relation to Yarra River land and other land, the use or development of which may affect Yarra River land?

The amendment does not affect land protected by the Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrn) Act 2017 and will not have an impact on Yarra River land.

Resource and administrative costs

What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?

The amendment will increase the number of properties subject to the provisions of the Heritage Overlay by seven (7). As the amendment only affects a small number of properties, and given some permit exemptions have been included in the form of an Incorporated Document, it is not expected to have a significant impact on resourcing and administrative costs.