

UNIVERSITY SQUARE MASTER PLAN CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

April-May 2018

Construction of the first stage of the University Square Master Plan will start in May 2018.

The University Square Master Plan is a blueprint for the future of University Square. It sets the direction and plan to transition a 19th century landscape into a 21st century space that responds to significant demographic and contextual change, while recognising the rich history of the site.

The master plan was adopted by Council in 2016 and is based on extensive community and stakeholder engagement.

The master plan outlines a new vision for University Square that will:

- Create a bigger park by expanding into Barry and Leicester streets to meet the needs of a rapidly growing, changing and more densely populated community.
- Respond to our changing climate by using open space to redirect and reuse storm water, capture solar energy, and increase tree canopy cover and species diversity to reduce the urban heat island effect and to contribute to the ecological and human needs of urban space.
- Provide for a greater range of use and activity by restoring a failing landscape and create a new open space hub that better serves the needs of the community.

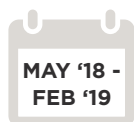


Leicester Street "road within a park"



Pelham Street plaza and park entry

Key dates



Stage 01

It is anticipated that construction will take 9 months to complete.



Park re-opened to the public.



Stage 02

Master plan completion once Metro Tunnel Parkville Station is constructed

Stage one construction

Implementation of the Master Plan will be delivered in stages to allow for the construction of the Metro Tunnel Parkville Station. Stage one works will take place over the next nine months and include:



Leicester Street



Pelham Street



The Green

The remainder of the Master Plan will be completed when Parkville Station has been constructed.

Planned works at University Square

Planning for trees

In May, the staged removal of English Elms (*Ulmus procera*) will start. Staged removal will start on the Pelham and Leicester Street sides of the park.

Unfortunately, their advanced age, the Millennium Drought and the use of poor pruning techniques in the early part of the 20th century has seen the health of University Square's elms deteriorate beyond repair.

The City of Melbourne has used every arboricultural practice available in the last decade to extend the life of these trees including mulching, irrigation, elm bark and leaf beetle control measures and formative pruning to halt this decline.

With 80 per cent of trees at University Square in stages of advanced decline, we need to act now to ensure that we manage trees that can be retained and remove those that have reached the end of their life so that we can plant a new generation of trees.

Animals

Extensive work has been undertaken to ensure that possums and birds are relocated before tree removals. Possum banding started last October. Empty hollows have also been sealed to ensure that birds are not nesting in these trees.

An ecologist and experienced fauna handler will be on-site to conduct pre-inspections of trees. They will also be on-site when the trees are removed.

Succession tree planting

The approach of maintaining and retaining trees in the landscape until they die, or become hazardous is difficult as it reduces re-planting opportunities, compromises planning for future trees and prevents the planting of new avenue plantings. Interplanting new trees next to existing, mature trees is problematic because established trees compete with new trees for water, light and nutrients causing stunted growth.

By taking a strategic and staged approach to tree removals, we will create planting conditions that allow future generations to enjoy a similar uniform and knitted tree canopy.

Over 100 new trees will be planted in the first stage of work including:

- Autumn Gold Elms (*Ulmus 'Sapporo Gold'*)
- Camphor laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*)
- Sydney Blue Gums (*Eucalyptus saligna*)

Elm tree timber

Large sections of Elm tree trunks will be retained, milled and used for new seats in the park.

Disruptions



Pedestrians

Much of University Square will be closed to the public during construction. Every effort will be made to re-open sections of University Square as quickly as possible, starting with the new Leicester Street footpath.

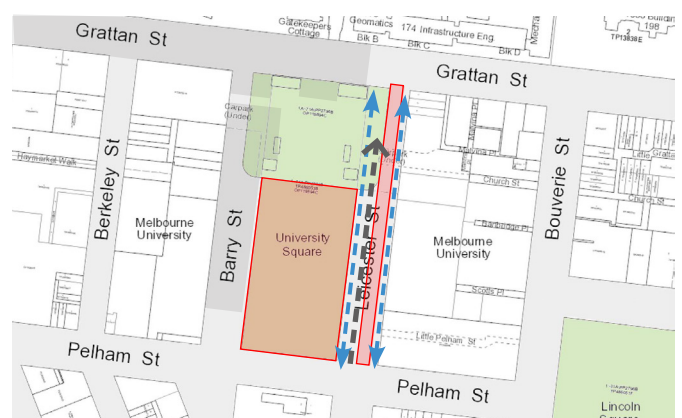
Pedestrians will not have access to large sections of University Square during early construction works. Pedestrians will still have access to footpaths on Leicester Street and Barry Street for north-south movements.



Vehicle Traffic

Once construction starts in May 2018, University Square will be expanded by removing much of Leicester Street.

Leicester Street will change from a 30 metre wide road with two-way traffic to a five metre wide road for northbound traffic only.



Further information about the implementation of University Square Master Plan will be provided as the project progresses

To find out more, please contact **9658 9658** or visit www.participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/universitysquare

