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# PRESTON CITY OVAL



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Preston Band Hall

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## Location

11-21 CRAMER STREET, BRUCE STREET, and MARY STREET, PRESTON, DAREBIN CITY

## Municipality

DAREBIN CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO210

## Heritage Listing

Darebin City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### *What is significant?*

Preston City Oval, Cramer Street, Preston was reserved for use as a sporting and recreational venue in 1876. Preston's cricket and football clubs have used the ground continuously since 1882. It is still the home of the Preston Cricket Club, and the Northern Bullants Football Club-the present day name of the Preston Football Club. It has also been used by the community as a venue for social events and celebrations. The following elements contribute to the significance of the place:

- the oval and the use of the space as a sporting venue
- the mature Elm (*Ulmus x hollandica*) trees
- Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*)
- the mounded embankments
- the bluestone retaining walls
- the sign; and
- Preston Band Hall

Later additions including: the fences, grandstands and other ancillary buildings, recent landscaping works and children's play area and alterations to the contributory elements are not significant.

*How is it significant?*

Preston City Oval, Cramer Street, Preston, is of local historic and aesthetic significance to Darebin City.

*Why is it significant?*

Historically, Preston City Oval is significant as the earliest recreational space in the City of Darebin and, one of the longest-standing, continuously used principal sporting and social venues in Darebin. (AHC criteria A.4, B.2)

It has aesthetic significance as a fine cultural landscape within Preston City. (AHC criterion E.1)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Darebin - Darebin Heritage Study, Context P/L, 2011;
Construction dates	1876,
Other Names	Preston Band Hall,
Hermes Number	27068
Property Number	

## Physical Description 1

Preston City Oval is located to west of, and in close proximity to, the commercial and civic centre of Preston. It is bounded by Cramer Street to the north, Mary Street to the east, Bruce Street to the south, and the railway (Epping Line) to the west.

The oval is defined by low bluestone edging and a low fence. Mounded earth embankments provide spectator seating / screening, at the Bruce and Cramer Street ends of the oval, and in the centre of the Mary Street (east) side. Bluestone retaining walls and a post-WWII era sign ('PRESTON CITY OVAL', white lettering on black) mark the entry off Cramer Street.

On the west side of the oval is a cluster of three buildings; the grandstand (one of which is presumed to be the 1925 stand, though now altered), an adjacent smaller building with a hip roof, and a small two storey brick building with a tiled hip roof (scoreboard?).

The Preston Band Hall and a scoreboard occupy the Cramer and Mary Street corner of the site. The band hall dates from the post-WWII period. It is a low, single story, red brick building with a shallow pitch gable roof, and large timber-framed windows in the north facade. The rear of the building comprises public toilets. The Band Hall stands adjacent to an earlier building; a small, red brick interwar building with more steeply pitched gable roof. Its windows and doors have been in-filled with brick. Concrete lintels remain visible on the external facade.

The frontage setbacks to Cramer and Bruce Streets are more generous than to Mary Street. They are publicly accessible and landscaped with lawn areas. 23 elm trees are planted around the perimeter of the oval (*Ulmus x hollandica*). Some of these trees may date from the early twentieth century. The spacing of those remaining

suggest they were originally evenly spaced (confirmed by the 1945 aerial photograph). The elm on Mary Street, two of the three elms on the Cramer Street boundary, and the three elms along the Bruce Street boundary, have their root flares covered by the moulded earth, grassed embankments suggesting the trees date before the embankments were formed. Some of these elm trees are in moderate condition (those which are less mature). The more mature elms are in moderate to fair condition. Some build up of earth around the base of the trunks has covered the root flare of some of these trees. A combination of drought, age, and change in ground level may contribute to senescence (or increase the rate of).

There are three Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), a single tree planted in three corners of the site (not the Bruce/Mary Street corner which is occupied by a recently constructed children's playground). These trees are relatively young and appear to be in good condition.

A new cyclone wire fence surrounds the site. A children's playground has recently been constructed at the Bruce and Mary Street corner of the site. There is new landscaping along the Bruce Street frontage of the site (seating, tree planting).

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*