



Item 7.1 Response to Joint Letter regarding Inadequate Vehicle Parking - G12+ Domain Precinct Residents' Group

A Joint Letter signed by 13 people was submitted by the G12+ Domain Precinct Residents' Group and formally received by Council at its meeting of 2 September 2020. Included in that report was an attachment detailing the full submission. This report responds to the resolution of that meeting.

The Joint letter states the following:-

We are writing to you seeking replacement of the loss of 120 utility car spaces removed from the north Albert Rd reserve area as part of the new Anzac Station development. These spaces service the tradesman, professional and community services delivered to 2,000 residents in the 6 residential towers which front the north Albert Rd and Reserve. It will mean that the population of residents' essential living needs will not be provided. The solution must provide the replacement of adequate spaces and provision in all new planning permits for new developments to provide self-contained utility and visitor parking provisions sufficient for their own needs. This may require changes to the planning scheme to ensure the incorporation of appropriate measures.

Attached is a comprehensive paper prepared by the G12+ Community Precinct Group. This matter directly impacts approximately 2,000 residents in six towers on north Albert Road as well as more than 3,000 other residents in the wider sub-precinct. As the paper outlines, the availability of services vehicle parking is a major issue for residents in north Albert Road. It will become much more so with the proposed redesign and expansion of the Albert Road Reserve and following the completion of the Anzac Station project. This is dealt with comprehensively in the paper. The Council must consider both on and off-street parking and the planning implications of its decisions when assessing the issuance of planning permits. Council should seek permanent changes to the planning scheme to ensure appropriate measures are taken to increase the amount of visitor parking, trade and services parking in this vicinity. Furthermore, additional action should be taken by the Council to increase the number of visitor parking spaces in permits across the precinct area.

Yours faithfully

G12+ Domain Precinct Residents' Group

OFFICER COMMENT

The Domain Precinct is experiencing a significant transformation with the construction of ANZAC Station, including the new interchange, and expansion of the Albert Road Reserve. The station is due to open in 2025, and will relieve pressure on St Kilda Road, Melbourne's busiest tram corridor. It will also provide significant support for our community in transitioning to more sustainable transport modes, aligning with Council's endorsed *Move Connect Live* (ITS) Strategy.

It is projected that 33,000 jobs and 17,000 residents will be located within 800 metres of ANZAC Station and it will be used by almost 40,000 people per day in 2031, with an additional 800,000 people located within 30 minutes travel time of the station by public transport.

During the construction period, Albert Road between St Kilda Road and Kings Way is within the Metro Tunnel Project land, under the control of Rail Projects Victoria (RPV).



Car Parking Supply

Council officers acknowledge the parking disruption that is being experienced during the construction period. As identified in the Domain Public Realm Master Plan (Master Plan) that Council endorsed on 22 September 2019, the creation of ANZAC Station and the Albert Road Reserve will result in the removal of approximately 160 on-street car parking spaces in the precinct, primarily from Albert Road. Approximately 80 of these spaces have already been removed to facilitate the construction of ANZAC Station and the balance will be converted to create the expanded Albert Road Reserve in the coming years.

The Draft Domain Precinct Development Plan was released for public consultation in 2017. Council endorsed a formal submission to RPV and the Cross Yarra Partnership (CYP) on 13 December 2017, supporting the ANZAC Station and interchange designs. Council identified car parking as one of seven key design elements that Council officers would continue to work closely with RPV to resolve.

The submission stated that:

“...the proposed public realm improvements in the draft Development Plan significantly reduces the number of on-street parking spaces. The conversion of roads and car parking spaces into public space improves the public realm, community space, active transport and public transport options.

Council encourages a shift toward sustainable transport modes and acknowledges that there are still viable parking alternatives in nearby streets. As such Council supports a balanced approach in the conversion of on-street parking to higher value community uses”.

The preparation of the Development Plan and consultation process followed the Environmental Effects Statement and Planning Scheme amendment on the Metro Tunnel Project.

Future Parking Availability

Council officers have been working with RPV and CYP to retain as many parking spaces as practical on Albert Road as part of the design of ANZAC Station and surrounds. Council officers have secured six additional parking spaces on Albert Road to date, providing approximately 40 on-street car parking spaces in the ultimate design of the road. However, there are limited opportunities for additional on-street parking spaces within the Domain Precinct that could recover the total 160 car parking spaces that will be removed, without reducing the proposed public space.

Analysis completed in the development of Council's Draft Public Space Strategy showed that public space in the St Kilda Road neighbourhood makes up about 12 per cent of the total neighbourhood. This is lower than the city average of 17 per cent and indicates a deficiency in public space within the Domain Precinct. The Draft Public Space Strategy notes the need for greater public space in this area. The Anzac Station design enhances public space by reducing hard surfaces, such as road space, in return for space that is more highly valued and considered more useable for a greater number of people.

The Domain Public Realm Master Plan identified a review of all on-street car parking controls and hours of operations as a priority. The review is planned for completion in the 2021/2022 financial year, subject to securing funding through Council's annual budget process for next year.



Within this review, priority will be given to disabled, loading, drop-off / pick-up and other special use spaces to support people and business functions that often do not have alternative transport options.

The proposal is expected to:

- be a transitional step towards the legacy design for ANZAC Station and surround
- discourage commuter parking in an area that is well serviced by public transport
- increase parking turnover and availability and improve parking occupancy usage within private developments
- offset demand for losses due to future projects such as the Park Street Bike Link and ANZAC Station.

A parking study completed for Council in November 2018 to inform the Master Plan found that while the approximately 550 on-street parking bays in the precinct were under pressure, nearly three times as many bays (1,423 out of a total 2,888 off street parking bays) were observed sitting vacant in 13 large-scale residential buildings within the Domain Precinct. This indicated a low use (parking occupancy) of off-street parking (approximately 50% occupied) while the occupancy of on-street parking was high (approximately 83% occupancy).

There may be an opportunity for the owner's corporations of these buildings to encourage use of the parking bays within their buildings to help resolve some of the on-street parking issues along Albert Road.

Parking enforcement and road safety

Council's parking enforcement officers conduct proactive and regular patrols to discourage illegal parking in the Domain Precinct. More recently, in compliance with the Chief Health Officer's direction and Level 4 COVID-19 restrictions, the parking enforcement regime has been limited to responding to parking complaints regarding safety and access issues. We encourage residents to report any parking concerns in the vicinity of Anzac Station to Council's Assist (Customer Service) Centre and a parking officer will attend.

Planning controls

Council's opportunity to apply for a planning amendment to increase visitor and loading bay parking for new developments is limited. Ministerial Amendment VC148, which was initiated by the Minister for Planning, took effect from November 2018 and changed Clause 52.06 (car parking) within all municipal planning schemes to reduce car parking requirements for land within walking distance of public transport on the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN). For new residential developments within the Domain Precinct, this amendment has reduced the rate for visitor parking to zero (previously the rate was one space for visitors to every five dwellings for developments of five or more dwellings). The parking rates for residents of new dwellings remains unchanged.

Given the Ministerial Amendment VC148 came into effect very recently, in November 2018, seeking to vary the visitor parking rates that this amendment introduced is unlikely to be supported by the Minister for Planning.

Ministerial Amendment C154 (gazetted on 24 January 2019) to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme gave effect to policy-neutral changes to Schedule 26 of the Design and



Development Overlay (DDO26). The changes to DDO26 requested by Council, which were not approved through Amendment C154, included converting the discretionary requirements relating to on-site loading facilities to mandatory requirements (i.e. they remain discretionary in DDO26).

Since Council sought to introduce changes to the Design and Development Overlay (DDO26) through Amendment C154, Council has been very successful at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), in instances where developers or submitters have sought to appeal decisions made by Council on planning applications for the redevelopment of existing properties. On these occasions, VCAT have agreed with Council's position to ensure proposals meet discretionary built form controls, including on-site loading facilities.

Officers will continue to work to secure the discretionary requirements, including on-site loading, through the statutory planning service (responsible for determining planning applications) to ensure that new developments are self-sufficient in their servicing and loading needs.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the concerns raised by the signatories to the joint letter and the issues being experienced by residents of Albert Road.
2. Thanks, the G12+ Domain Precinct Residents' Group for the joint letter to Council and advises the head signatory of the joint letter of Council's resolution on this matter.
3. Supports the continued efforts of officers to retain as many on-street parking spaces as practical on Albert Road without compromising the Albert Road Reserve or protection for bike riders and pedestrians.
4. Commits to regular patrols by parking enforcement officers of Albert Road on weekday mornings, once the Level 4 COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted and the Victorian Government has given approval for normal parking compliance activities to resume.
5. Notes that a review of all on-street car parking spaces and controls within the precinct, including loading zones, is planned for the 21/22 FY, to ensure the available spaces are used as fairly and effectively as possible. Having more effective on-street parking management is intended to encourage increased use of the existing parking bays within buildings for visitors, servicing and loading and helping to alleviate current parking pressures. This review is aligned to the implementation of the Domain Public Realm Master Plan and subject to funding through Council's annual budget process.
6. Notes that because the Ministerial Amendment VC148 to all municipal planning schemes (which removed the need for residential buildings with more than five dwellings to provide any visitor parking) only took effect in November 2018, seeking approval from the Minister for Planning to vary these parking rates so soon after the change is unlikely to be supported.

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7. Notes that Council resolved on 28 March 2018 to seek the discretionary requirements for on-site loading facilities be converted into mandatory built form controls in the Design and Development Overlay (DDO26) for the Domain Precinct. However, it was not approved by the Minister for Planning and is unlikely to be reconsidered. Instead Council officers will continue to work to secure the discretionary requirements for on-site loading through its statutory planning service.
8. Notes that since Council sought to introduce changes to Design and Development Overlay (DDO26), Council has been successful at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), with VCAT agreeing with Council's position on several occasions to ensure proposals meet discretionary built form controls, including on-site loading facilities.

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