

## **11 BEACONSFIELD PARKING STUDY**

FILE REFERENCE INT1885989

RESPONSIBLE GENERAL MANAGER Michael Ellis

AUTHOR Christopher Marshall

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the following recommendations are presented to Council for approval:

1. That Council advocate to Public Transport Victoria for:
  - a. Construction of additional car parking on vacant VicTrack land
  - b. Increased disabled parking spaces
  - c. Construction of secure bicycle parking
  - d. Review bus routes to provide improved connection between bus and train services
  - e. Update Beaconsfield railway station data to accurately reflect the parking provided
2. Council undertake the following actions
  - a. Consultation with traders to provide parking restrictions within the commercial section of Woods Street.
  - b. Maintain existing restrictions outside the school along Beaconsfield Avenue
  - c. Advise impacted residents that Council intends to hold the State Government to its commitment to provide 150 parking spaces at Beaconsfield Station and advocate for additional infrastructure improvements required to provide effective solutions to the current parking issues.
  - d. Investigate options to improve pedestrian and cyclist connections to Beaconsfield railway station within the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy which can be implemented following increased secure bicycle parking provisions.

### **Attachments**

- 1 Copy of the petition 12 Pages

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council has undertaken a parking study around Beaconsfield railway station.

Parking for railway stations is the responsibility of Public Transport Victoria to provide. Council is responsible as the road manager of the surrounding roads to ensure that they operate safely and balance the needs for all road users.

The study found that the station car park is at or near capacity from 7am to 6pm. The local roads near the station also follow a similar pattern for on-street parking occupancy indicating that the majority of this parking is the result of overflow from the station.

The survey found commuters had little appreciation of the existing 4 hour parking restrictions, indicating that similar 4 hour parking restrictions in other local roads would also have limited impact without an increase in parking provisions at the station.

The study identified that there is VicTrack land available for extension of the existing station car park. This would also provide an opportunity to increase disabled parking, which was occupied for the duration of the day with no turnover.

The commercial section of Woods Street was found to have a high turnover rate of 2 hours or less patrons indicating that restrictions in this section of the road may assist business to avoid the impacts from station overflow parking.

Alternative transport modes were also investigated with opportunities available to increase cycling to the station if Public transport Victoria provides secure bicycle parking at the station. This would reduce the car parking demand.

## BACKGROUND

A petition was submitted at the May 2018 Council meeting request Council to install 4 hour parking restrictions in Railway Avenue, Beaconsfield. Council passed a motion at the July 2018 Council meeting to undertake a parking study of the area around Beaconsfield railway station to further investigate this issue and provide recommendations.

The provision of parking around railway stations is the responsibility of Public Transport Victoria. Council is responsible as the road manager of the surrounding roads to ensure that they operate safety and balance the needs for all road users.

The area around Beaconsfield railway station has had a steadily growing parking demand over the past few years due to increased development in surrounding areas with demand for parking from residents, rail commuters, business and the school.

Council has received on-going requests to address parking issues from residents living within the vicinity of the station and from commuters (including local residents) to address the parking issues.

Council has previously responded to concerns in this area by ensuring signs have been provided to reinforce statutory parking restrictions. Railway Avenue and Arthur Street are narrow residential streets. Generally, the provision of restricted parking times one side of the road in conjunction with no restrictions on the other side would provide options for residents to park as well as making some provisions for visitors. Unfortunately, the narrow nature of these streets does not allow for this arrangement. Therefore, in previous considerations to address parking and access issues on Railway Avenue and Arthur Street, these roads have had parking banned on one side and unrestricted access on the other to allow for residents to park while maintaining access to properties.

Council has recently heavily enforced and improved signage for the illegal parking on the south side of the station along Kenilworth Avenue due to safety concerns and moved most of these motorists on. Correspondence with City of Casey has revealed that parking from the railway station is also extending into the local roads within City of Casey and Manna Gum Park.

### **Parking Survey and Results**

The parking survey was undertaken on Tuesday 21st August 2018 between 6am and 7pm. This day had reasonable weather and no issues with the train services or any other significant issues, as such the survey represents a typical day.

The table below identifies the parking provision identified as available within the survey area.

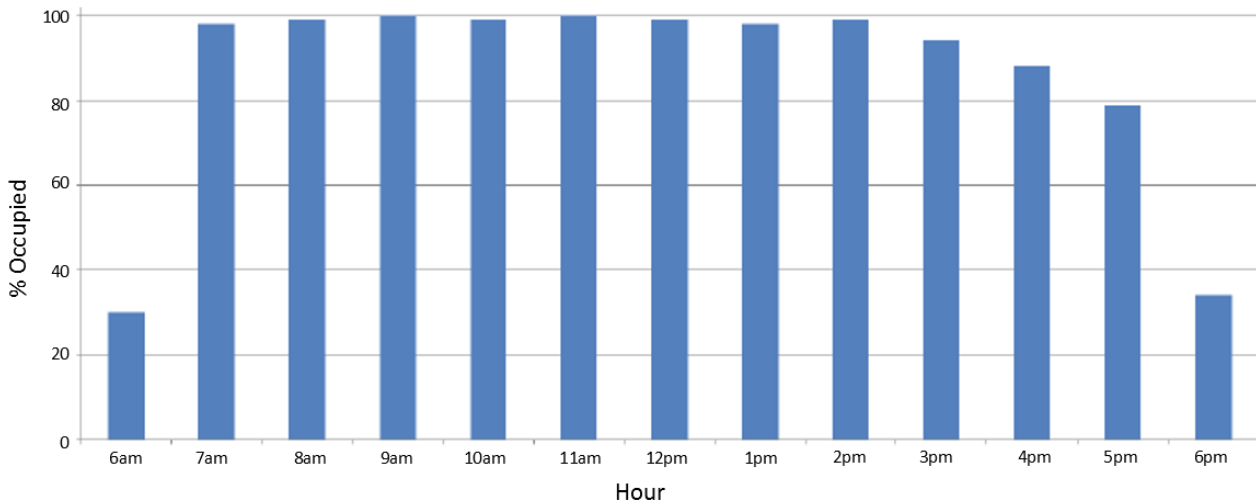
Location	Parking spaces
5 min parking outside school	~15

4 hour parking along east side of Woods St	~25
Disabled parking (PTV)	4
Station car park (PTV)	280
Unrestricted on-street parking	~269

As the on-street spaces are not marked as individual bays, the numbers are approximate as it depends on how motorists park as to the actual availability of spaces. A review of the PTV website states that 341 parking spaces are provided. This overstates the actual parking provided by 57 spaces.

The survey found that the station car park was at capacity by 7am and remained at over 80% capacity until 6pm.

Station car park occupancy



The survey found that the on-street parking occupancy around the station reflected the parking occupancy observed within the station car park. This indicates that the majority of the on-street parking around the railway station is overflow from the railway station. The below heat maps show the parking occupancy at 8am and 3pm respectively.



Although difficult to pinpoint, based on observations and the survey results, it is estimated that the current level of spill parking generated by the railway station into neighbouring areas is approximately 150 - 250 cars.

The existing parking restrictions, disabled parking and commercial area parking were investigated in more detail to ensure these areas are operating as intended.

The existing 5 minute parking outside the school wasn't well captured due to the short duration and high turnover which the survey couldn't capture but was generally vacant indicating that it is working as intended for school drop-off and pick-up at that isolated time of day.

The existing 4 hour parking restrictions along the east side Woods Street between Beaconsfield Avenue and Arthur Street had 46% compliance. 33% of the motorists that ignored the restriction were parked for 6 or more hours. This indicates very poor conformity with these restrictions.

The disabled parking was occupied for the duration of the survey with no space occupied for less than 3 hours. This is likely to indicate that there is potentially an undersupply of disabled parking and investigation is required to determine if additional disabled parking is required.

The section of Woods Street north of Arthur Street generally consists of commercial properties. Whilst 57% of motorists parked for more than 4 hours within this section, 33% of motorists were parked for less than 2 hours. This would indicate that there is a need for short-term parking within this commercial area and parking restrictions may be beneficial to prevent railway parking from extending into this area and impacting the traders.

### **Solutions**

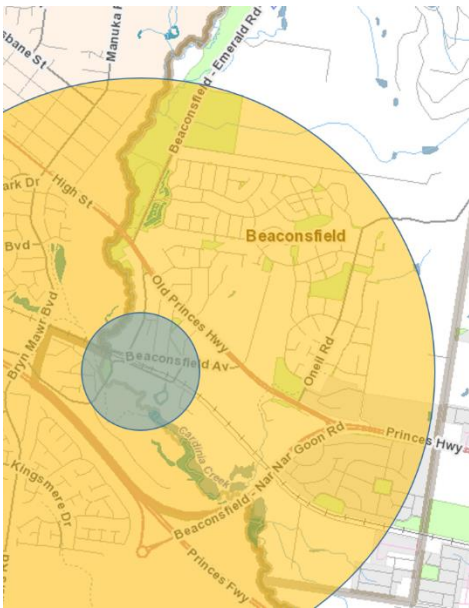
The preferred solution to reduce the impact of railway commuters would be to provide more adequate parking for commuters to address the shortfall. There is land available between Station Street and the existing Beaconsfield railway station car park that is owned by VicTrack that would be able to accommodate the extension of the car park to provide additional parking for rail patrons. This additional land would be able to accommodate 200-300 spaces and would therefore accommodate most of the overflow parking from the station. It is acknowledged that additional parking does generate more demand, meaning that although the car park would cater for the current problem, the improved facilities would attract more patrons to the station.

During the 2018 Victorian election, the State Government committed to providing 150 parking spaces at the station carpark during the current term of government. Council will advocate for the State Government to uphold its commitment and provide additional upgrades that have been identified in this report. If the full area of land available is not proposed to be formally constructed, Council will advocate that the remaining land be opened up as a temporary gravel car park until funds are available to formally construct the car park.

Until this additional parking is provided it is not considered suitable to provide new parking restrictions outside of the commercial area and existing parking restrictions. Any increases in parking restrictions will push the existing rail patrons parking in these streets into other nearby streets further increasing the impacted area. The poor conformance with the existing 4 hour parking restrictions also indicate that its likely impact will be low with any new restrictions at this time. In addition, the options available in the streets where the petition was generated is restricted based on the narrow roads while still providing for residents. The ideal time to introduce parking restrictions would be immediately following additional parking being provided before new rail patrons start parking in the locations within the residential streets that the existing rail patrons will have vacated.

Alternative active travel modes have also been investigated, as this has the potential to reduce car parking demand. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy 2017 identifies that for commuting purpose pedestrians will walk for about 800m and cyclists will generally ride up to 5km. From a planning

perspective, this is generally shown using a radial catchment for a train station of 400m for pedestrians and 2km for cyclists. This area is shown below.



As can be seen from the image most of the section between the station and Princes Highway are within the walking catchment area whilst almost every estate within Beaconsfield falls within the cycling catchment area.

There are two major barriers to cycling; bicycle parking and incomplete infrastructure. The station has five bike racks based at one end of the outbound platform providing unsecured parking for up to 10 bicycles. To encourage cycling secure parking, such as the Parketeer cages provided at other train stations, would need to be available at Beaconsfield Railway station.

In addition to bicycle parking availability, there are missing sections of the bicycle network to enable easy access to the station for commuters that would need to be constructed. The main barrier for cyclists not confident enough to ride on the road is crossing the Princes Highway which will be addressed through future development with the signalisation of O'Neil Road and Beaconsfield Avenue intersections, though existing crossings would provide a suitable alternative in the short-term.

As such, a summary of actions to mitigate the issues of parking within this area include:

1. That Council advocate to Public Transport Victoria for:
  - a. Construction of additional car parking on vacant VicTrack land
  - b. Increased disabled parking spaces
  - c. Construction of secure bicycle parking
  - d. Review bus routes to provide improved connection between bus and train services
  - e. Update Beaconsfield railway station data to accurately reflect the parking provided
2. Council undertake the following actions
  - a. Consultation with traders to provide parking restrictions within the commercial section of Woods Street.
  - b. Maintain existing restrictions outside the school along Beaconsfield Avenue
  - c. Establish preferred parking restrictions (including 2hr and 4hr options) for the surrounding area for consultation with stakeholders pending the construction of additional car parking on the vacant VicTrack land.

- d. Investigate options to improve pedestrian and cyclist connections to Beaconsfield railway station within the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy which can be implemented following increased secure bicycle parking provisions.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed recommendations are in line with and part of the priority actions in the Beaconsfield Car Parking Precinct Plan and the implementation plan for the Beaconsfield Structure Plan.

Investigation into pedestrian and bicycle access to the train station may provide additional information to support the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy 2017 and therefore prioritisation of actions.

## **RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN**

This report is in line with Council Plan action 3.2 Transport linkages connecting towns and 3.5 Balancing needs of development, the community and environment.

## **CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION**

The chief petitioner for Railway Avenue was informed following the Council motion at the July 2018 Council meeting that a survey would be undertaken to further investigate the parking around the station.

## **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Advocacy to Public Transport Victoria can be incorporated into officer duties and preparation of advocacy documents generally considered part of core duties.

Parking restrictions will require officers to undertake consultation and the cost of any signage required can be incorporated into the Traffic Management Devices budget, which funds new signage.

Once secure bicycle parking is provided at the Beaconsfield Railway Station improvements to the cycling links to the station can be incorporated into the Pedestrian Bicycle Strategy program or footpath program prioritisation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Council has undertaken a parking study around Beaconsfield railway station. The station car park and overflow into nearby streets shows near full occupancy from 7am to 6pm. with the exception of the Wood Street commercial area, without additional parking provisions the installation of parking restrictions is not considered likely to provide a solution to the overall parking issues around the station. There is VicTrack land available to extend the existing car park including increasing the available disabled parking. Implementation of secure bicycle parking at the station will provide incentive to cycle to the station and minimise the need for car parking.









