

## **12 RAILWAY AVENUE, PAKENHAM ROAD CLOSURE**

FILE REFERENCE INT1885999

RESPONSIBLE GENERAL MANAGER Michael Ellis

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

- 1 Approve the closure of Railway Avenue, Pakenham at the intersection of Racecourse Road following the opening of the Henry Street and Racecourse Road intersection
- 2 Continue to advocate to Public Transport Victoria for upgrades at Pakenham railway station, which include development of formal parking along the full length of Railway Avenue.

### **Attachments**

- 1 Consultation responses 6 Pages

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the July 2018 General Council meeting, Council resolved to commence the statutory procedures in accordance with clause 9 schedule 11 of the Local Government Act, 1989, (the Act) to block Railway Avenue, Pakenham at Racecourse Road.

As such, consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989. A public notice was issued on the 15th August 2018. Consultation was open between 12th August and 14th September 2018 with 73 responses received. Of the 73 responses, 59% of respondents in support of the proposed intersection closure including Victoria Police, VicRoads and Public Transport Victoria.

Negative responses related more so to issues associated with the railway crossing itself and issues associated with the traffic congestion at Bald Hill Road and Racecourse Road. Although both of these issues are valid concerns for the community and supported by council officers, they are outside the scope of the closure of Railway Avenue.

It is recommended that the closure of Railway Avenue, Pakenham at the intersection of Racecourse Road be undertaken following the opening of the Henry Street and Racecourse Road intersection.

### **BACKGROUND**

Railway Avenue, Pakenham runs along the railway line on the north side of the train station between Main Street and Racecourse Road. It currently acts as the main and only local access to and from the eastern side of the Pakenham town centre. The intersection of Railway Avenue and Racecourse Road is currently unsafe due to sub-standard sightlines, to address this issue it is proposed to close Railway Avenue at the intersection as soon as a safe alternative is available.

The opening of Henry Street now provides a safer alternative. As such, it is proposed to close Railway Avenue at the intersection with Racecourse Road due to safety issues at this intersection.

At the July 2018 General Council meeting, Council resolved to commence the statutory procedures in accordance with clause 9 schedule 11 of the Local Government Act, 1989, (the Act) to block the Railway Avenue, Pakenham at Racecourse Road.

As such, consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989. A public notice was issued on the 15th August 2018. Consultation was open between 12th August and 14th September 2018 with 73 responses received. Of the 73 responses, 59% of respondents in support of the proposed intersection closure including Victoria Police, VicRoads and Public Transport Victoria.

Council is also aware that Transport for Victoria is looking at improvement around Pakenham railway station. This closure will provide an opportunity to get improvements that benefit rail patrons along Railway Avenue included in their design considerations.

During the 2018 Victorian election, the State Government committed to removing the level crossing at Racecourse Road. As the level crossing removal is still likely to be many years away it is not considered to impact on this proposal in the short term and due to the safety issues these works should proceed.

Long term planning should develop a master plan of this area taking into account the level crossing removal. This will maximise the planning options available around this location including reopening this intersection with a safer design if required in the future.

Taking this into account, the immediate civil works to close the road will be adapted to provide limited impact to the redundant existing road pavement. Pending the master planning, should this section of road be revitalised following the level crossing, the proposed works will have minimal interference.

It is proposed to time the closure of Railway Avenue as soon as possible given the recent opening of the Henry Street and Racecourse Road intersection so that it occurs whilst motorists are still adjusting their driving habits to the new intersection.

Based on the recommended road usage and consultation feedback, it is recommended that the closure of Railway Avenue, Pakenham at the intersection of Racecourse Road be undertaken following the opening of the Henry Street and Racecourse Road intersection.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Nil.

## **RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN**

This proposal is relevant to the following actions in the Council Plan:

- 1.6.1. Work with the Police, Victorian Government and the community to improve safety in homes, businesses, public places and roads.
- 3.1.1. Maintain all Council roads and supporting infrastructure in accordance with the Road Management Act 2004.

3.2.1. Upgrade Council roads to improve safety while considering the traffic demand of the community.

3.2.3. Develop transport networks that incorporate effective public transport.

## **CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION**

A permanent road obstruction under clause 9, Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act, 1989, requires that under sections 207A and 223 that a person be given the opportunity to make a submission.

A public notice was issued on the 15th August 2018. Consultation was open between 12th August and 14th September 2018 with 73 responses received. Respondents could also request to present in person to the sub-committee established for this purpose however despite 25 respondents requesting this none took up the opportunity when given the option.

The 73 responses had 59% of respondents in support of the proposed intersection closure. Negative responses related more so to issues associated with the railway crossing itself and issues associated with the traffic congestion at Bald Hill Road and Racecourse Road. Although both of these issues are valid concerns for the community and supported by council officers, they are outside the scope of the closure of Railway Avenue.

The consultation responses have been provided in a tabulated format attached to this report.

Victoria Police, VicRoads, Public Transport Victoria and Metro Trains have all indicated in principle support for the proposal.

## **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The closure of Railway Avenue at the intersection with Racecourse road is expected to reduce maintenance costs in the long term as the current 4B Local Collector road classification can be reduced to a 4C Local Access road reducing the maintenance requirements.

The closure of the intersection is expected to cost up to \$100,000 and can be incorporated into the 2018/2019 roads rehabilitation program.

Council officers will need to identify and issue amendments to any planning permits that are restricted to having their delivery vehicles access their premises within the town centre via Railway Avenue to have this access amended to be via Henry Street (i.e. Pakenham Marketplace).

Future parking improvement opportunities will be considered separately. There are grant opportunities to improve parking around railway stations that may be able to fund these works.

## **CONCLUSION**

The intersection of Railway Avenue and Racecourse Road is currently unsafe due to sub-standard sightlines, to address this issue it is proposed to close Railway Avenue at the intersection as soon as a safe alternative is available. A suitable alternative route is now available via the Henry Street and Racecourse Road signalised intersection, which is designed in accordance with current safety

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standards. Consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 with majority of respondents supporting the closure.

## Railway Avenue, Pakenham Consultation Responses

Response	Reasons	Officer response
1 I do not support the proposal	It is a road I use quite often. I don't think it is a good idea to redirect traffic past residential housing. Suggest to make it a no right turn out of railway ave instead.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
2 I do not support the proposal	Well if were to be removed, would affect busses when running train replacements. They turn into railway Avenue or turn from it when heading to the freeway or old highway	PTV have been consulted and do not object
3 I do not support the proposal	Being able to bypass the level crossing via multiple points is essential - during emergencies you'll only be risking more people doing stupid things to get away from the track. Congestion will worsen if we don't have multiple roads leading in and out of town centre - the newly proposed road with lights has to service the new estates AND take some of the other traffic. It can't do it all. Essential services run off other roads from railway ave including the businesses on station street which would become difficult to access from the south west end of station street Or with the increased congestion via the new roads. The bulk services for the station are on railway ave which makes disabled access significantly more difficult if you have to go around. Railway ave should become overflow parking during parking disruptions and with the increased demand with the estate and the childcare.	Emergency services have been consulted and can be accommodated in design if required. Henry St and other roads have been designed to provide suitable alternative access
4 I do not support the proposal	put in only an left turn at the crossing I do not support full closure.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
5 I do not support the proposal	Because it's easy access for people in the area, if you close it we'll have to use Henry street which will be traffic chaos majority of the time because of all the shops!	Henry St has been designed to accommodate these volumes
6 I do not support the proposal		
7 I do not support the proposal	It is perfectly clear visibility and as a motorist who uses this road every single day, I can truly say that visibility is fine and traffic moves nicely. Turning out from Railway Ave to Racecourse Road during peak hour everyday and onto Railway Ave from Racecourse Rd each night, I have never encountered an issue or problem. If anything, pushing all traffic to Henry Rd will congest the area further which is already an issue. With all the new developments and extra traffic being backed up to the traffic lights on Henry Rd, traffic will be increasingly problematic. It makes much more sense to leave both parallel roads in operation to share the traffic load and leave a more direct route straight to the Pakenham Train Station.	Sightlines do not comply with design standards. Henry St has been designed to accommodate these volumes.
8 I do not support the proposal	Much better to spread out traffic across Henry and Railway Ave instead of congest Henry Ave and close Railway Ave	Henry St has been designed to accommodate these volumes
9 I do not support the proposal	The intersection is only at its worst at peak times in the afternoon. I use the intersection every day to park at the station and have no issues with turning right to head towards the roundabout, albeit I do it at night. I cannot see any issues with vision at the intersection from railway infrastructure, there is adequate line of sight and time to pull out safely. Maybe closing turning onto racecourse road at these specific heavy traffic hours ( say 9am-6pm) would be more appropriate, particularly for traffic coming using Bald Hill Rd. I have personally seen this implemented in many other locations in Victoria and other states to much success.	Sightlines do not comply with design standards.

## Railway Avenue, Pakenham Consultation Responses

Response	Reasons	Officer response
10 I do not support the proposal	Upgrading the intersection would be a better option rather than just closing it down and pushing all the traffic down a residential street with high density living. There is also planned shops and community centre for ascot estate which on its own will increase traffic in the area. At the end of the day people using the corner of railway and racecourse road need to be more observant when turning there	Henry St has been designed to accommodate these volumes
11 I do not support the proposal	All proposals sound great but why not make it a one way street where drivers can turn into Racecourse Rd.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
12 I do not support the proposal		
13 I do not support the proposal	This road space is also used as car parking due to lacking space at the train station. Also this notes in the submission is using the cost to fix the sings at the rail crossing is null as the crossing will be fixed due to the new train service center. Both the issues listed have not been covered.	Proposal should increase parking opportunities. Other issues outside scope of this proposal.
14 I do not support the proposal	having lived in this area for well over 35 years. the amount of extra traffic congestion it would cause entering and exiting the 'main street' area would be far far worse than what it is now. the sight lines could be easily fixed by making the railway crossing signs 50 feet towards main street. that way there would be a clear line of sight. also traffic lights would solve situation at racecourse road roundabout. the new McDonalds is also a huge concern, whoever passed the planning permit - needs to go there on a afternoon, access to their car park from pak kwr road is ridiculous. it is far too close to the intersection of roundabout. causes terrible delays and there will be accidents.	Signs cannot be relocated as they must meet design standards. Other issues outside scope of this proposal.
15 I do not support the proposal	I think we need to have another alternative to entry into the shopping area in case of a temporary closure of Henry steet due to work or accidents	Any works would need to consider this impact and Council approvals would require this to be mitigated
16 I do not support the proposal	It will hinder much needed access to the railway precinct and funnel traffic into residential areas creating an unsafe traffic sewer for residents	Henry St and other new roads have been designed to accommodate these volumes
17 I do not support the proposal	bloody stupid idea! just have no roght hand turns. also a bit stupid having it as a carpark as it is to far away from the station.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
18 I do not support the proposal		
19 I do not support the proposal	Why not just restrict traffic during peak times?	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
20 I do not support the proposal	I do agree that a right hand turn from this intersection is dangerous but i do not agree that a left hand turn is dangerous. Why cannot it be made 'no right hand turn'. We have wanted another entrance into Pakenhams centre for so many years. We are finally getting another enterance which will make traffic flow so much better but you are no proposing to close one.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
21 I do not support the proposal	I live next to Racecourse Road, and travel down Railway Avenue constantly. Such closure would result in LESS options	Henry St and other new roads have been designed to provide suitable options
22 I do not support the proposal	I think you should fix McGregor Rd crossing first. It's an absolute joke	Issue is outside scope of this proposal



## Railway Avenue, Pakenham Consultation Responses

Response	Reasons	Officer response
23 I do not support the proposal	Completely closing the intersection is not necessary. Simply make it a no right turn for both entry into Railway ave and exiting from railway ave.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
24 I do not support the proposal	Too much traffic to an area that is supposed to be residential. Will invite criminals from the train station to be closer to our homes. Two avenues for traffic is always better than one.	Henry St and other new roads have been designed to accommodate these volumes
25 I do not support the proposal	Pakenham is gridlocked enough, without closing existing roads. Pakenham needs more roads so drivers have more routes, so they're not all funnelled onto one or two roads that are already at full capacity. You will be able to turn right on to Racecourse Road more easily when the traffic lights are operating as they will make a brake in traffic travelling south bound.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option. Henry St and other new roads have been designed to accommodate these volumes
26 I do not support the proposal	Increase traffic within high density residential area. I think that a left in and left out ONLY solution would be better. That way buses can still turn left from Racecourse Rd to access the station and vehicles could still turn left onto RaceCourse Rd to access the HWY. That traffic would not have to travel via the Ascot Estate. This is a better solution than a total closure and allows for 2 east-west connectors north of the train line.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option.
27 I do not support the proposal	By closing take away direct access to the station , instead putting that burden of traffic on what will be the henry rd . With the opening of the new intersection at henry st / racecourse rd, this road this will reduce the hazardous nature of racecourse rd as turning opportunities will now be more readily available due to the lights.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option. Henry St and other new roads have been designed to accommodate these volumes
28 I do not support the proposal	I am a Pakenham resident living close to Henry Street, and I think this proposal will put too much pressure on Henry Street. Having more routes open to motorists will help with congestion, particularly during peak hour. The combination of the railway and the lights at Henry / Racecourse will help to create gaps in traffic for those turning at Railway / Racecourse. For motorists going straight from the station and new childcare centre to Racecourse road, it means they avoid having to backtrack to Henry St to be able to get to Racecourse Rd.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option. Henry St and other new roads have been designed to accommodate these volumes
29 I do not support the proposal	The new intersection recently constructed at Station Street / Slatery Way should have been a round about and the entry / exit to the northern station carpark entry (off Slatery Way) is too close to the new intersection. The northern car park entry should be closed and the new intersection become a round-a-bout. BTW: Sky rail is the only suitable solution for McGregor, Main and Racecourse Roads.	Issues are outside scope of this proposal. Other works are outside scope of this proposal.
30 I do not support the proposal	I dont believe that closing the road is necessary, yes it has an issue with sight obstructions but i think this proposal would be more suited to this area. I believe the rail line should be lowered below the road surface all the way from city side of MacGregor Road all the way through to after Racecourse Rd before the line branches out to the new maintenance facility. With lowering the line this would remove the 3 rail crossings in Pakenham for ease of access in and around the suburb. Pakenham Railway station is an eyesore and needs to be upgraded, therefore demolish the old rebuild the station on the lower level with a bus interchange and carpark facility over the top of the station. This brings Pakenham into the next century 3 main roads remain open with no level crossings and less congestion.	Sightlines do not make this a safe option.

## Railway Avenue, Pakenham Consultation Responses

Response	Reasons	Officer response
31 I support the proposal	I think that intersection is very dangerous and moving the road to new intersection that runs down to big w is a fantastic alternative. I would like to see a park coming of the lake built over the old road, provide a bit of green space for the new housing estate!	
32 I support the proposal	Less congestion and dangerous at Railway Ave, easier to drive between station precinct and Racecourse Rd	
33 I support the proposal	This closure should relieve a bit of congestion at this intersection, with the side benefit of increasing the available land for parking, considering all the new developments in the East of pakenahm now and in the future.	
34 I support the proposal	Ive witnessed too many near misses of people trying to turn out of railway parade or blocking traffic needing to turn. Whilst traffic lights would also solve the problem making additional room for train carparkibg makes sence as long as the alternative routes dont become bottke necks. Concerned of possible railway parade and main street	
35 I support the proposal	Better traffic flow	
36 I support the proposal	The current intersection is outdated and dangerous. the new intersection with lights will make exiting much safer	
37 I support the proposal	Improve traffic congestion and allow for level crossing removal	
38 I support the proposal	There is always a line up of cars. Only other option would be a left turn only there	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
39 I support the proposal	Poor vision and congestion now	
40 I support the proposal	This should ease the congestion at BaldHill Road roundabout, people that normally use Racecourse Road will now have traffic lights to ease the congestion that now exists with traffic exiting and entering Racecourse Road	
41 I support the proposal	it i adangerous intersection	
42 I support the proposal	It makes a lot of sense: less congestion in that area, for a start.	
43 I support the proposal	This intersection has long been a problem especially when turning out onto Racecourse Rd. I have seen buses have to wait for 5 minutes or more before some kind soul allows them to turn. Very frustrating for the traffic waiting behind them, most of whom are waiting to do a simple left turn. Speeding traffic on Racecourse Rd does not help either. Then sooner Henry St is opened, the traffic lights come into use and this intersection closed the better although I can commiserate with the residents on the Ascot Estate who will probably have to endure a fairly high volume of traffic.	



## Railway Avenue, Pakenham Consultation Responses

Response	Reasons	Officer response
44 I support the proposal	I use the interesection almost daily. I am tired of waiting behind people turning right. I watch people drive on the wrong od racecourse Rd AND the wrong side o Railway Pde when the traffic is jammed up and the boomgates are down. I have reported this to the police over and over again, with no action. Turn the road into parking, and tidy up the weedy mess.\ on the roadsides.	
45 I support the proposal	Some improvement surely to a dangerous intersection BUT NOT BEFORE THE TRAFFIC LIGHTS outside Cardinia Waters Retirement Village ARE OPERATIONAL.	
46 I support the proposal	Not necessary once Henry Street extension is opened	
47 I support the proposal	I support the closure for safety reasons. However PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE ensure that the Henry Street/Racecourse Road traffic lights are programmed to allow equal time for traffic crossing Racecourse Road or turning at the lights and proceeding along Racecourse Road	
48 I support the proposal		
49 I support the proposal	a much safer way to enter pakenham township	
50 I support the proposal	It makes sense	
51 I support the proposal	tidy up a mess	
52 I support the proposal	The intersections cause many traffic delays out bound on weekdays	
53 I support the proposal	It would make Racecourse Rd safer and the opening of Henry Rd with traffic lights would provide a convenient and safer alternative.	
54 I support the proposal	I think it is a good idea, it can be very difficult to turn in to Racecourse Rd, if someone is turning right you can be there for ages waiting	
55 I support the proposal		
56 I support the proposal	less traffic jams	
57 I support the proposal	Cogestion	
58 I support the proposal		
59 I support the proposal	Increased safe traffic flow	
60 I support the proposal	Increased safety. I have nearly been hit turning right from Railway Ave onto Racecourse Rd due to poor visibility of oncoming traffic	

## Railway Avenue, Pakenham Consultation Responses

	Response	Reasons	Officer response
61	I support the proposal	That intersection is so awfully congested that I go a long way around to reach Racecourse Road. I am a resident of Ascot Estate and this will be much easier to access my home.	
62	I support the proposal	In my opinion, it will improve the safety of train passengers by reducing the traffic. Also, it will provide more parking opportunity around the station	
63	I support the proposal	it is very difficult to exist the current road onto racecourse road and we need the traffic lights to get out of the retirement village	
64	I support the proposal	There are long delays waiting to turn left onto Racecourse Road. Also it can be dangerous exiting and entering Cardinia Waters Village. because any traffic trying to turn right is held up for long perios thus blocking the way.it is sometimes very dangerous entering or exiting from Cardinia Waters Vilage.	
65	I support the proposal	makes sense	
66	I support the proposal	I approve the proposal to make more parking available for commuters, presumably in the area gained from closing the road. However, I would like to see the footpath retained along Railway Avenue, as is it nicely level and would be preferable to use rather than the path alongside of Henry St. Also, access needs to be maintained for the childcare facility that is being built.	Footpath access to be maintained
67	I support the proposal	Based on the attempt to remove the level crossing, I believe that this is the correct decision to make. If the level crossing would not be removed, I would rather railway avenue be changed to a one way street with an exit left onto racecourse road which would start a two lane road (hopefully all the way to the highway T intersection).	Sightlines do not make this a safe option
68	I support the proposal	Because turning out of that street is dangerous especially for those turning right towards Bald Hill Rd. Having the 928 bus turn right there also makes the congestion worse	
69	I support the proposal		
70	I support the proposal	I use this intersection daily, and it can be extremely dangerous particularly when turning right to head towards the highway.	
71	I support the proposal	Turning onto racecourse road is really very dangerous added to which the traffic banks badly. It is only a matter of time before someone gets caught on the tracks as a train comes into station	
72	I support the proposal	The need for a safe exit from Cardinia Waters Village	
73	I support the proposal	I fully support this proposal once the traffic lights at the junction of Rsccourse Rd and the Henry Street extension are operational. As these traffic lights were reportedly to be ready at the end of 2017 I look forward to these being operational before the end of 2018. Exiting Cardinia Waters Village in either direction has been a nightmare for the past year.	