



Item 7.5 Petition requesting to reduce significant risk of child being hit on Liardet St, Port Melbourne by vehicles

A Petition containing 212 signatures, was received from local residents.

The Petition states the following:-

The Bubup Womindjeka Family & Children's Centre board, the Risk committee and the wider Bubup Womindjeka Community request that urgent action is taken by Council to further mitigate the significant risk of a child being hit by a vehicle on Liardet St, Port Melbourne.

It is specifically requested that the originally planned wombat crossing be installed, from Lagoon Reserve to Edwards Park to further slow vehicles, give priority to pedestrians crossing and enhance driver awareness of the sensitive area. As per the Bay St structure plan and the Lagoon Reserve Park plan.

That the Council ensure that budget is prioritised for Liardet St wombat crossing and other safety requirements as needed immediately.

Background The last few years have seen Liardet St significantly increase traffic throughput from Pickles to Bay St.

- *The volume of U turns at Liardet St & Esplanade East St has increased exponentially*
- *The volume of pedestrians crossing from Lagoon Reserve to Edwards Park has continued to increase, especially with animals.*
- *The green foliage in the centre median strip and along the sides of Liardet St outside the centre, is maturing and providing a haven and consequently has also made it more difficult to see that there is a Family & children's Centre there.*
- *The unique position of parks on both sides of the street can give a sense of safety for families*
- *There are 350 families at the centre*
- *The Council installed a wombat crossing at Esplanade West that has slowed down traffic coming from Bay St, however as a pedestrian crossover is not well placed.*
- *A bus stop also stops slightly southeast of the Centre outside Lagoon Reserve and often causes congestion at the crossing, for vehicles doing a U turn and those vehicles travelling down Liardet St towards Bay St, and aggressive driver behaviour is regularly witnessed right outside the Centre.*
- *Families of the centre are regularly informed and warned about the dangers and to hold children's hands when crossing roads or exiting cars*



- *Several large planter boxes have been placed outside the centre to stop Children from running straight onto the road.*
- *An independent risk adviser to BWFCC has assessed the risk as extreme and required urgent mitigation.*
- *This is a council owned building*

In the three years (2016 – 2019) 10% of all admissions to the Royal Children’s Hospital were from Road Trauma (roads, driveways and carparks).

48% were road accidents and 28% pedestrian injuries.

Source Professor Warwick Teague RCH 2019.

Let's not forget the tragic accident in October 2019 outside a childcare centre in Melbourne

OFFICER COMMENT

Council received a request in September 2020 for the installation of a wombat crossing (a raised pavement zebra crossing) across Liardet Street adjacent to Esplanade East from Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children’s Centre. In late November 2020, Council officers undertook an investigation to determine if any additional traffic management measures were warranted in this location. The key findings from this investigation identified:

- The average vehicle speed is 38.4 km/h
- 15% of vehicles travel at more than 45.9km/h
- The average daily traffic volume is 4,429 vehicles.
- The crash history on this section of Liardet Street shows no recorded causality crashes in the last 5 years.

Based on the key findings, in particular, that vehicles regularly exceeded the 40 km/hr speed limit, a wombat crossing could be an appropriate traffic calming measure to reduce speed and improve pedestrian safety and amenity in this location. In October 2020, officers referred this location to Victoria Police for targeted speed enforcement.

Prior to installing a wombat pedestrian crossing, the existing PTV bus stop on Liardet Street (at the entry of Lagoon Reserve) needs to be relocated. The Department of Transport’s (DOT) approval is required to both install a pedestrian crossing (either zebra or wombat) and to relocate the PTV bus stop.

DOT will not support the installation of a zebra crossing unless pedestrian counts demonstrate a demand for pedestrians crossing at this location. In addition to DOT support, Council will need to undertake community engagement given that there is likely to be a loss of parking. Finally, Council, through its budget process, will need to agree to fund the wombat crossing.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Petition.
2. Notes that Council officers will conduct pedestrian surveys to determine the pedestrian demand along Liardet Street adjacent to Esplanade East.
3. Subject to the outcome of the pedestrian surveys Council will,

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- a. Seek DOT support to move the PTV bus stop
 - b. Seek DOT approval for the wombat crossing
 - c. Undertake community engagement, and
 - d. Subject to the outcome of discussions with DOT and the community engagement, seek funding through the Council budget process.
4. Will provide a further update to Council in June 2021.
 5. Request Victoria Police continue to undertake targeted police enforcement activities on Liardet Street.
 6. Notes that Council Officers will notify the head petitioner of Council's resolution.

TRIM FILE NO: F21/7

ATTACHMENTS Nil