



## 4. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

### Item 4.1

A Joint Letter containing 30 signatures, from 23 properties abutting Post Office Place, Port Melbourne was received by Council at its Ordinary Council Meeting on 20 June 2018.

The Joint Letter states the following:

We confirm receipt of the City of Port Phillip letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018 regarding Proposed Pedestrian Safety Improvements in Post Office Place Port Melbourne. Further to receipt of the correspondence we lodge with you position that we oppose both options at this point of time.

In addition, the Residents of 15 Beach Street Port Melbourne would like to have a meeting to further discuss the benefits and impacts of the two options and with council look at alternatives as the current proposal do not consider the interests and safety of residents.

### **OFFICER COMMENT**

#### **History/Background:**

An opportunity to investigate options to develop Post Office Place as a shared space/zone to provide safe open space for the Albert Park College was identified in late 2016. Concerns had been raised with Council regarding pedestrian safety, amenity and maintenance of resident access. Post Office Place, street, is adjacent to residential properties, Albert Park Secondary School (yr 9 campus), The Local pub and South Pacific Health Club.

This project idea was added into the Council Plan and Budget process for 2017/18, and was allocated \$50,000 in the final Project Portfolio.

The proposed approach to the project was to:

- Examine constraints such as pedestrian safety, vehicle access to off-street car parking spaces, access for emergency vehicles (for residents and adjacent pub), on street car parking and through traffic.
- Develop options to consult with affected community.
- Source external funding from the State Government for any required construction and/or explore other opportunities.

Council subsequently engaged an independent traffic engineering consultant to assess the proposal and develop possible options.

Traffic studies indicate that Post Office Place carries an average of 207 vehicles per weekday between Rouse Street and Laneway. During school drop off and pick up hours, approximately 26 cars travel through the area between 8 am - 9am and 15 between 3 – 4pm. An average volume of 150 vehicles per weekday travel between Laneway and Beaconsfield Parade. 85% of recorded vehicles drove at or below 30.7km/h. These are considered low volumes and speeds, however pedestrians frequently walk on the roadway and may be exposed to vehicles in the process.

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Based on that advice, Council's Coordinator of Transport Safety Engineering identified two options to modify traffic conditions to improve the safety of pedestrians and road users. The two options examined were a proposed closure of Post Office Place at Rouse St, and a proposed road closure and creation of a shared zone along the Albert Park college frontage. Feedback was sought from all adjacent properties on the proposed options, including the design and implementation trail.

## **Community Engagement**

Consultation was undertaken during May 2018. Letters were mailed on 8 May 2018, advising the community regarding the two proposed closure options, inviting feedback by 23 May 2018. Feedback was received via email and a return mail questionnaire. Feedback channels remained open until 30 May 2018.

The results of the consultation are summarised below:

- 57 letters were mailed to local residents and businesses directly affected by the proposed changes
- 15 responses were received by Council (responses from the school and parents):
  - 3 supported the road closure of Post Office Place at Rouse Street;
  - 3 supported the mid-block road closure of Post Office Place.
- Feedback received from parents and students of Albert Park College was similar to the Albert Park College's response, therefore they were combined into one (school) response. In total 13 responses were received from the school; and
  - 9 did not support either option.

No feedback was received from businesses.

A petition signed by 30 individuals objecting to a trial closure was also received after the survey's closure.

## **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

Notes that responses to the community consultation undertaken on this matter were mixed, with a majority of surveyed stakeholders preferring to maintain the status quo. In accordance with that sentiment, Council will not proceed with a trial closure at this time.

Notes that officers will re-examine options to improve safety and amenity of Post Office Place, considering enhanced placemaking and possible urban design outcomes, as well as parking and traffic impacts.

Notes that future officer recommendations regarding changes to Post Office Place will be brought to Councillors for consideration before commencing further community consultation.

**TRIM FILE NO:** 68/13/721

**ATTACHMENTS** Nil