

**ITEM MAYORAL MINUTE: REVITALISING VICTORIA
ROAD, DRUMMOYNE**

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

It is with great concern that I want to address some challenges local business are facing in Drummoyne Shopping Village. These challenges include the increasingly acute parking congestion caused by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) imposed changes to Victoria Road, creating opportunity for new development and the decline in the appearance and appeal of the strip.

Parking

The State Government recently introduced no stopping signs along an extended stretch of Victoria Road, Drummoyne. The RMS has introduced 24 hour clearways along the road to increase the flow and speed of traffic, however these clearways also reduce the attractiveness of the road for pedestrians, users of public transport and businesses. I do not believe that outside of peak hours there is any need for a clearway and traffic can travel effectively and enable local parking which is vital for local business.

The RMS should also be looking at smarter solutions for Victoria Road and start to think about what people need rather than introduce measures that cause long-term damage to our village centre. They need to look at moving the through traffic away from the shopping centres and looking at a road tunnel to move traffic along the corridor and allowing our community to reclaim the street for walking, shopping and accessing public transport.

Increasing development

The lack of parking has caused shops to close and they are taking months to let. The appeal of Victoria Road as a place for development to occur is declining and I am concerned that without intervention, the amount of development activity along Victoria Road will decrease.

New development in the area will be the key to creating a more appealing centre.

Recent development in the form of five to six storey apartment buildings has occurred at the southern end of Victoria Road. Consideration should be given to whether the balance of the commercial shopping strip along Victoria Road can achieve the same densities.

There are complex considerations for this area as the Victoria Road shopping strip is adjoined by Heritage Conservation Areas and a direct interface with residential dwelling houses.

There is an opportunity for Council to work with landowners, residents and business owners to understand the community's aspirations for the Victoria Road shopping precinct. This feedback can then be used to develop improved planning outcomes and design guidelines. In particular, recommendations should be made in relation to requirements for buildings to have retail frontages, the appearance of development, the size and shape of future buildings and where individual sites would benefit from site specific design controls.

Recommendations should also be made to Council as to how improvements can be made in relation to public spaces to activate the immediate vicinity of the Victoria Road shopping precinct.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT the Mayor requests the repeal of the 24 hour clearway zones along Victoria Road to provide local parking and increased custom to the shopping village.
2. THAT the Mayor call on the Minister for Roads and the State Member to find smarter solutions for traffic along Victoria Road including a tunnel under the road for through traffic and a reclaiming of the road for pedestrians shoppers and users of smarter public transport.
3. THAT the Council commence a process to engage with land owners, residents and business owners to identify the desired future character of the Victoria Road, Drummoyne shopping precinct.
4. THAT following consultation, a report be prepared in relation to opportunities to improve planning outcomes and place activation for Victoria Road.
5. THAT any recommendations resulting from the investigation be reported back to Council for consideration.

