

Review of the Darebin Resident Parking Permit Scheme



- City of Darebin
- FINAL REPORT
- 18/05/04



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Executive Summary

The current parking permit scheme in Darebin was developed in 1997¹ and covered the previous municipalities of Northcote and Preston. This scheme has been in operation since 1997. Since its development, a number of residents holding resident parking permits have expressed concerns with its operation. These concerns have included its inability to provide sufficient vacant on street parking spaces for local residents and are summarised in more detail in Appendix B.

Approximately 1,800 households have one or more resident parking permits.

Since the introduction of the resident parking scheme, Council has adopted the Darebin Integrated Transport Strategy that encourages walking, cycling and public transport. It discourages the *unnecessary* use of cars.

The objectives of the resident parking permit scheme are to:

- Give residents priority access to car parking close by.
- To reduce the intrusion of other traffic into residential streets.

This Study

Council established a Reference Group representing a range of interests to assist with a review of the Scheme. Council subsequently appointed Sinclair Knight Merz to undertake this review of the structure of the residential parking permit scheme and develop a new scheme that reflects the future direction of both local and state policies and strategies and that fully considers community opinion. Details of the comprehensive process used in this study are shown in Chapter 1.

A discussion of these recommendations is given in Chapter 4 of this report.

Recommendations

In general the recommendations tighten the scheme to make it more effective for those who really need it. The recommendations would result in a simpler scheme that would be less expensive to administer.

The Schemes' Objectives

The objectives of the Scheme have been confirmed in the consultation process. There is still widespread acceptance of the notion that, on congested local residential streets, residents should have some degree of priority (or privilege) in the competition for on-street parking. Debate has centred on the details of the Scheme rather than the principle.

¹ *City of Darebin Resident Permit Parking Permit Scheme.* Andrew O'Brien and Associates.



Number of Permits

We recommend that the maximum number of permits per household be fixed at two. These permits could be a combination of fixed or transferable (visitors).

The reasons for this recommendation are:

- It would make the scheme fairer by avoiding giving parking privileges to the third or fourth cars of some residents, which undermines the value of the residential parking permit of their neighbours and reduces the ability to park in a convenient location
- It would discourage the unnecessary purchase and use of cars
- It is supported by most existing resident permit holders- 68% in the 2004 survey.

Fees for Permits

We recommend that Council charge for residential parking permits. The fee should be \$20.00 for the first permit and \$30.00 for the second.² Aged pensioners, disability pensioners and other special groups should receive a discounted fee rate of 50% of the full price.

The reasons for charging for residential parking permits are:

- A fee would discourage the unnecessary application of the Scheme in streets that do not have a major parking problem. At present, residents can have the scheme introduced to their street without understanding the real costs of administration.
- It would recover a portion of the administration costs.

These amounts are comparable with charges imposed for resident permits by other metropolitan councils. Each permit costs about 50 cents per week and therefore represents inexpensive parking priority.

Residential Properties with off-street parking

We recommend that the parking permit entitlement of the residents of properties with off street parking should be reduced by one. This is the current situation.

The reasons for this recommendation are:

- Discouragement of the unnecessary development of new off street parking and the discouragement of the removal of on street parking by driveway construction
- Fairness in sharing the limited on street parking spaces – these residents do not *need* the on-street spaces as much as their neighbours without off-street parking

We recommend that the administration of this aspect of the Scheme be changed. Presently Council officers are forced to take residents' statements that they have no off street parking on face value. Digital aerial photography is now available at the service counter.

² Before amalgamation fees of \$5 and \$14 were charged.



Properties with a driveway or a *made*³ back lane (eg bluestone cobblestones) should be deemed to have off-street parking unless the resident can demonstrate otherwise. This demonstration would normally be done by reference to Council's aerial photography of the back yard.

Trader Permits

We recommend that the parking permit scheme should not be extended to traders. There is no underlying community expectation that traders should have special privileges on residential streets. In some centres Council already provides some off street parking for traders.

Retention of Zone A

We recommend that Zone A should be retained to accommodate the needs of shop-top residents.

Amalgamation of Zones B and C

We recommend this for the following reasons.

- It is fair that the same restrictions apply for all residents in streets with parking problems across the municipality.
- The previous maximum of four parking permits per property in Zone C is too extravagant.

Residential Parking Permits for Residents in New Developments

Council should investigate the development of a local law that would empower it to refuse resident parking permits to the residents of new developments. This issue is complex and has many equity and policy implications. Many residents felt that they were being asked to pay the price for the under provision of off-street parking in new developments.

The Reference Group supports an investigation of the implications of such a new local law in Darebin.

Review of the Application of Parking Permit Schemes

We suggest that Council undertake a review of streets with an existing parking permit scheme where there is reason to suspect that it is not operating well.

Enforcement

We recommend that the recently introduced strategies for stricter enforcement be evaluated and refined. The results of this review should be communicated to residents so that they have a better understanding of how enforcement works.

The effect of the proposed charging of parking permits will almost certainly result in fewer streets controlled by resident parking schemes. This will make enforcement easier.

The integrity of the Scheme depends on the degree to which it is enforced.

³ Unmade back lanes would not be deemed to provide off street parking.



1. Introduction

Council appointed Sinclair Knight Merz to undertake a review of their residential parking permit scheme and develop a new scheme that reflects the future direction of both local and state policies and strategies and that fully considers community opinion. A Reference Group representing a range of interests was established by Council to assist with the review.

This project has not examined the need for parking permit schemes at the individual street or precinct level. Instead, it has reviewed the over-arching issues that residents are concerned about in relation to parking and the parking scheme, and how the scheme could be altered or adapted to better service the needs of Darebin. Our focus has been to improve the parking permit scheme, with a particular focus on:

- Fairness and equity for all users of the road space
- The needs of the residents of Darebin
- Administrative practicalities.

The review has found that there is a wide range of parking concerns and issues within the City of Darebin. Some of these problems can be resolved through the application of the parking permit scheme, but some need to be resolved via other mechanisms. The Council has developed the Integrated Transport Plan and a variety of programs and other mechanisms to better manage transport in Darebin (for example the Council is a leader in developing Travel SMART programs). The parking permit scheme should therefore be viewed as one of a suite of tools that is available to Council and the community to manage parking problems.

1.1 Study methodology and consultation process

The study methodology involved the following steps:

- A review of comparative parking policy in Melbourne, Australia and abroad using the Internet and telephone interviews with appropriate Council officers. See Appendix E.
- Review of the results of the consultation undertaken by Council in 2003. At that time Council undertook a survey of residents and convened a workshop held on 3rd September 2003. A summary of the results of this survey are shown on the pamphlet in Appendix A.
- Discussions with Council staff about parking and related issues (including with planning, health, traffic management and enforcement staff).
- Development of an issues paper, which was reviewed and discussed with Council officers and the Reference Group. See Appendix E.
- Conduct of two focus groups with residents of Darebin to further research parking issues in Darebin. These were backed up by face to face and telephone contact with other residents.
- Development of an options paper and then an options pamphlet after discussion with Council and the Reference Group (Appendix D and Appendix E).



- Distribution of the options pamphlet to all current holders of parking permits. The pamphlet was also advertised in the local newspaper and copies were placed in key Council and community venues for other residents to respond.

This document reports on the results of the community questionnaire and then draws together the results from all previous stages to make recommendations on ways the parking permit scheme could be improved and other measures that could improve parking availability in the municipality. A draft of this document was reviewed and accepted by the Reference Group at its meeting on Wednesday 5th May 2004.

1.2 The Current Resident Parking Permit Scheme

The current parking permit scheme was developed in 1997⁴ and covered the previous municipalities of Northcote and Preston. This scheme has been in operation since, but there are now issues that Council would like to address, particularly in response to community concerns.

1.2.1 Objectives of the Parking Permit Scheme

The objectives of the parking permit scheme are to:

- Give residents priority access to car parking in either their street of residence or close by;
- To reduce the intrusion of other traffic into residential streets to maintain residential amenity.

These objectives have been strongly confirmed in the consultation process. Darebin residents particularly want to ensure that they, their neighbours and their visitors are able to park within their own streets, and preferably close to their own houses. Many residents resent the intrusion into residential streets of commercially generated traffic and parking, although others are willing to share car parking space with traders.

1.2.2 Scope of the Current Scheme

Under the current scheme the municipality has been divided into three zones, which have differing limits on the number of permits for households.

- Zone A incorporates all shop-top residences – a maximum of one permit and no fees are applicable for this area.
- Zone B is in a small area of Northcote either side of High Street. A maximum of 2 permits (which can be a combination of visitor or resident permits) is applicable with no fee.
- Zone C is the remainder of the municipality. A maximum of 4 permits can be issued. Whilst the first two permits are free, permit three is \$20 and permit four is \$40.

Non-car owners or households with access to off-street parking are entitled to one less permit. Therefore in Zone A they are entitled to no permits, Zone B they are entitled to one and in Zone C they are entitled to three permits.

⁴ *City of Darebin Resident Permit Parking Permit Scheme.* Andrew O'Brien and Associates.



In addition to the above, there are two types of temporary permits available:

- Guest/Tradespersons' permits⁵ – These permits are issued for a specific period of up to one week for guests (cost \$10) and up to four weeks for tradespersons (cost \$10).
- Function permits⁶ – enable guests of residents to park in residential restricted spaces at one-off functions or gatherings. These cost \$2 and are valid for a 24 hour period.

Resident parking permit schemes apply to a limited number of streets in Darebin. Approximately 1800 households have one or more parking permits.

1.3 The Criteria for Assessment of the Scheme

There are many resident parking permit schemes operating in Victoria and a number of variations which could be introduced to Darebin. This section sets out the structure that was used to assess the various scheme options.

Fairness and Equity

The allocation of parking permits to particular groups in the community is essentially giving them preference to a scarce community resource, ie: on street parking. Therefore, some groups and individuals may need to be given special attention or special consideration. This could be because of low income, special circumstances or community expectation that this group should be given special consideration. It may be that this group has lack of choice concerning their mode of travel. Either way, the practical issues of fairness and equity need to be central to the development and enforcement of any new parking scheme.

Encouragement of sustainable modes

Restricting parking increases the effective costs of car ownership and car use. By implication, this may encourage the use of sustainable modes such as tram, bus, walking and cycling. The less parking available, the more effective such a policy will be. Available parking and road space should be used by cars undertaking trips that are impracticable by other modes. There may be community resistance to schemes which are seen as too restrictive. Educational programs may be needed to inform the community of the rationale behind any particular scheme. Attitude and voluntary behaviour change may only occur in the longer term. The type of parking scheme chosen provides an opportunity to promote sustainable modes of travel.

Administrative practicalities

Permit schemes must be practical to administer in terms of:

- Council staff time
- Time sending out reminders, receipts, and other information

⁵ These types of permits were not raised as an issue in this study. We see no reason why the existing system should be changed.

⁶ These types of permits have not used and will be removed in the new scheme.



- Administrative time spent checking the personal credentials of applicants
- Administrative time spent checking the physical circumstances of each house and street
- Effort spent in enforcement and the pursuit of fine defaulters
- Checks to ensure that abuse of permits is minimised, such as misuse of visitors permits

The practicalities of administering and enforcing any new parking permit scheme were a key issue in the development of the scheme options.

Complexity of the scheme

Parking permit schemes can be plotted on a continuum with simple schemes at one end and very complicated schemes at the other end of the spectrum:

- Simple schemes have the advantage that they are easy to administer and easy to understand.
- Complex schemes have the advantage that they can be tailored to meet the needs of particular geographical areas, particular times of day, particular interest groups, and address the particular problems that they seek to overcome. They are appropriate in diverse municipalities where a 'one size fits all' scheme is not appropriate.

Degree of enforcement

The degree of enforcement can determine the effectiveness of a parking permit system. Complex parking control and permit systems are only practicable if there are high levels of enforcement at the times when the permits apply.

There may also be community pressure to provide a high level of enforcement. In Darebin, the main feedback from the community in this respect has been a call to provide a higher level of enforcement outside of normal business hours.

Price of parking permits

When determining the appropriate price the following aspects were taken into consideration:

- The higher the price the less affordable the permit becomes for lower income households
- The higher the price the more the administrative costs of the schemes can be carried by the scheme itself
- There needs to be a nexus between the cost of the permit and the availability of spaces
- There also needs to be a clear nexus between the price of the permit and the goals of the scheme. If one of the key goals is to restrict car ownership to increase use of other modes of transport, a higher fee would be justified than if the key aim was to ensure an adequate supply of parking for residents.



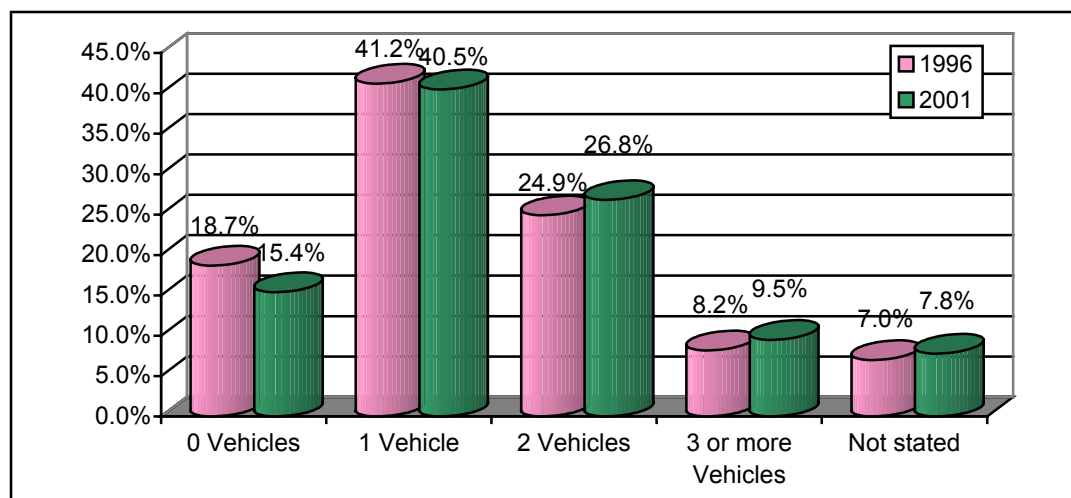
2. Background to the Study

2.1 Travel and Transport Trends in Darebin

The number of dwellings with at least one vehicle in Darebin rose from 47,267 in 1996 to 49,153 at the time of the 2001 Census, an increase of 4.0%. This is partly a result of the number of existing dwellings without a vehicle decreasing, but also partly a result of an increased number of dwellings in the municipality.

The number of households without a car in Darebin has decreased from 18.7% in 1996 to 15.4% in 2001 as shown in Figure 1. There has also been a slight decrease in the number of households with one car. There has been a corresponding rise in the number of households with two or more vehicles. In particular the number of households with three or more vehicles has increased from 8.2% to 9.5%, an increase of 830 households. The net result is both an increase in the number of households with cars and also an increase in the number of cars each household has. This has contributed to the increase in demand for on-street parking.

■ **Figure 1 Number of Vehicles owned by households in Darebin**



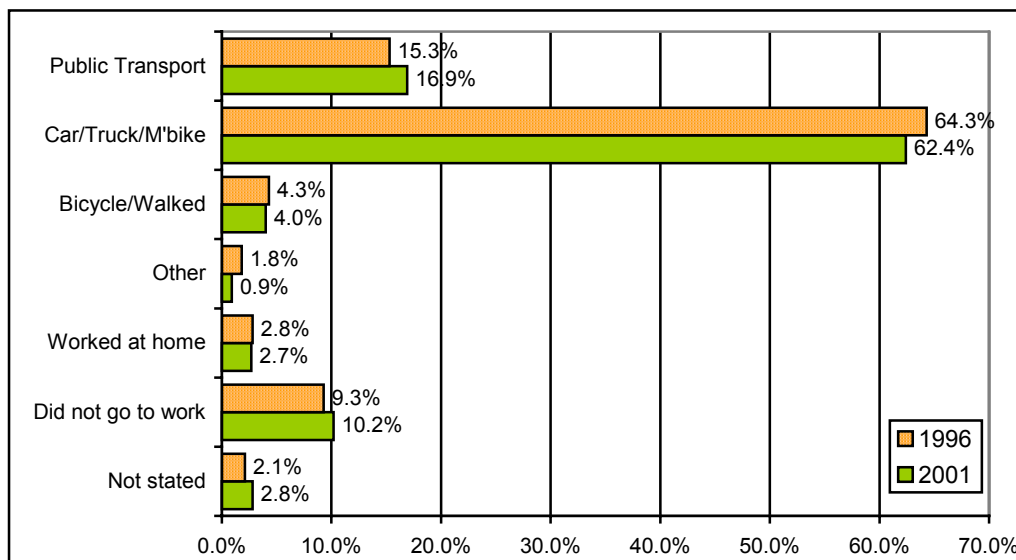
Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 1996 and 2001

By contrast, there has been an increase in the number of Darebin residents travelling to work by public transport, from 15.3% to 16.9%. This is an increase of over 1,500 people. Even more encouragingly, there has been a corresponding drop in the number of people travelling to work by personal vehicle.

The number of Darebin residents who walked or rode a bicycle to work also decreased over the inter-censal period, although by a very small amount. Nevertheless, the proportion of people walking and cycling to work in Darebin (4.0%) is still higher than the metropolitan average, which is 3.3%. This suggests that the strategies to improve walking and cycling rates in the Darebin Integrated Travel Plan could lead to significant increases in the use of these forms of transport.



■ **Figure 2 Journey to Work Trends in Darebin**



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 1996 and 2001

2.2 State Policy Context

2.2.1 Melbourne 2030

The main State government policy document that relates to this study is *Melbourne 2030*. The key direction for this study is #8 – *better transport links*, which includes the following directions:

8. Better transport links, better planning decisions, and careful management
 - 8.1 Upgrade and develop the Principal Public Transport Network and local public transport services to connect activity centres and link Melbourne to the regional cities
 - 8.2 Improve the operation of the existing public transport network with faster, more reliable and efficient on-road and rail public transport
 - 8.3 Plan urban development to make jobs and community services more accessible
 - 8.4 Coordinate development of all transport modes to provide a comprehensive transport system
 - 8.5 Manage the road system to achieve integration, choice and balance by developing an efficient and safe network and making the most of existing infrastructure
 - 8.6 Review transport practices, including design, construction and management, to reduce environmental impacts
 - 8.7 Give more priority to cycling and walking in planning urban development and in managing our road system and neighbourhoods
 - 8.8 Promote the use of sustainable personal transport options

The strategy has a vision of 20% of all trips being made by public transport by 2020. Direction 8 clearly indicates a state government policy of adopting travel demand strategies to increase the use of public transport rather than private vehicles. This has implications for the provision of car parking because reducing car dependency could lead to a reduction in the number of cars, and



hence the need for car parking. However, it may also lead to retention of the car but reduced usage, so the car would then be parked at the residence for longer periods of time.

Melbourne 2030 specifically refers to the use of parking management strategies to encourage a shift to other modes of transport.

2.3 City of Darebin Policy Context

2.3.1 Darebin Integrated Travel Plan

The City of Darebin has adopted an integrated transport travel plan which encourages greater use of sustainable transport modes, ie: walking, cycling and public transport. The plan seeks to discourage unnecessary use of cars but is not an ‘anti-car’ plan. It supports the use of motorised travel where appropriate but seeks to increase usage of other forms of transport. Concurrently the State Government has also adopted transport and land use policies that seek to support the use of modes other than ‘drive alone’.

The following statements from *Going Places- Darebin Integrated Travel Plan* summarise the aims of the strategy in relation to balancing the provision of high levels of accessibility against the need to maintain or improve the other aspects of Darebin’s environment such as:

- Attractiveness of Darebin as a ‘place to be’
- Healthiness and environmental friendliness
- Economic viability for businesses
- Local character.

The integrated travel plan seeks to achieve these aims by the following means:

- **Reducing trip numbers and lengths** (housing densities, development trends, grouping key destinations)
- **Improve walking and cycling** (direct routes with active edges, shelter from wind and rain, lighting, disability access to transport, bike parking)
- **Improve public transport** (advocacy for increasing routes and services, upgrading stops, better reliability and service times, passenger information)
- **Manage cars and trucks** (careful consideration of new infrastructure and road widening, slowing down traffic through sensitive areas, improving safety especially for pedestrians, increasing costs relative to other forms of travel, maintaining goods delivery).

To be successful, the Darebin Integrated Travel Plan requires a shift in public attitudes to the usage of the various modes of travel. This will be a gradual process and involve new community attitudes to health and fitness, more active lifestyles, new attitudes to social responsibility and the recognition of the role of transport in building healthy communities. This review of the parking permit scheme is another opportunity to add to the behaviour change programs that are currently taking place in Darebin, many of which are auspiced by Council.



2.4 Comparative Policy Context

2.4.1 Rationale for Resident Parking Permit Schemes

The majority of resident parking permits schemes in Australia and elsewhere appear to have been initiated in areas where on-street parking is a scarce resource. These areas are usually inner city (older) neighbourhoods, where the streets were not designed to accommodate large numbers of cars. The worst affected areas are generally those close to major traffic attractors, such as retail precincts, business areas, entertainment precincts or large facilities, for example sports grounds.

The key objective of these parking schemes is to provide on-street car parking preference for residents by restricting the ability of other road users to park their cars in the area for any length of time, or at all. In most areas it appears to be accepted that residents should have priority access to the available parking spaces.

A secondary objective is to preserve residential amenity by restricting the amount of non-local traffic. An example is Boroondara, which has a specific objective of considering the effect of parked cars on the appearance of heritage areas and significant streetscapes. Other Councils also consider the noise, pollution and general amenity impacts of cars.

2.4.2 Sustainable Transport or Public Transport Policy

In some instances residential parking permit schemes, or the regulation of on-street parking, has been linked to the establishment of sustainable transport policies.

In most of these cases parking policies are focussed on restricting off-street parking, particularly for new developments, with the aim of forcing the users of those developments to use public transport instead. As noted by the Scottish Executive, “Constraining car parking for new developments focuses developers’ attention on the overall travel context of the development, including providing for travel by public transport, on foot and by cycle. (NPPG 17 Addendum)”. The intention is to direct development into areas where it is easy to provide links to public transport.

The Boroondara Council Parking Policy has a strategic objective of increasing “the use of car pools, public transport, cycle and walk modes to reduce the need for parking spaces.” (City of Boroondara, 1998, p. 6). This opportunity has also been recognised by the City of Port Phillip in their Parking Plan, which states that equal priority will be given “to bicycles, pedestrians and public transport in order to reduce the use, frequency and harmful impact of cars on the municipality’s social, cultural and natural environment.” (Port Phillip City Council, 2000, p. 9) Having an articulated transport strategy enables Councils to be more restrictive in issuing parking permits.

Councils are also more frequently requiring new developments to provide sufficient off-street parking for the likely number of residents. Some Councils, such as Port Phillip, Yarra and Adelaide, will not issue on-street parking permits to new developments. However, while this helps to reduce on-street congestion, it is not necessarily an appropriate response in terms of sustainable



transport policy. Ensuring off-street parking is provided actually seems to encourage car use (because it is made easier), rather than public transport use. Research undertaken by SKM for the Northern Central City Corridor Study indicated a clear link between the number of cars owned per household, which had increased in most suburbs in the inner northern suburbs, and a decline in public transport usage. As indicated earlier, the trend in Darebin is slightly different, where public transport usage has increased and car usage has decreased slightly.

2.4.3 Environmental Policy

Most transport and parking policies relate environment concerns to sustainable transport strategies. The key concerns are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve general amenity by reducing the number of vehicle trips. There are no localities in Australia where pollution is so bad that stringent measures would be necessary to curb vehicle use.

2.5 Municipality Comparison

It is clear that residential parking permits are the priority for most councils and residential needs are certainly privileged above those of traders and businesses. This is not without recognising the need for other types of parking. As one senior manager commented, “we want to provide residents with good parking but we also recognise the importance of allowing other forms of parking”.

The following Table 1 sets out the types of permits that are available in other Melbourne municipalities.

■ **Table 1 Permit Types**

Location	Are visitor permits available	Are temporary permits available	Business Parking Permits	Other Permits
Boroondara City Council	Yes	Yes	Tradespeople Permit	
Brent (UK)	Yes		Available in controlled zones. Cost is \$603.50 (£250.00), £150 if the vehicle is in company livery	
Maribyrnong City Council	Maximum of two per residence	Yes	Tradesperson Permit (\$10 per week)	Guest Parking Permits (one day, maximum 6, \$2.00 each)
Melbourne City Council	Yes		No	Medical Practitioner (\$110) Reserved (one day) parking (\$40)
Moonee Valley City Council	Maximum of two per residence	Yes	Wallis Street Car park provided for employees of the Niddrie Shopping Centre (Permit \$230)	Special Occasions temporary permits (maximum 5)
Moreland City Council	Yes		No	
Port Phillip City Council	Maximum of two per residence	Yes	Tradesperson Permit (\$30 per week) Community Service Organisation (free for eligible organisations)	Party Permits (valid for two days, maximum 10, \$2.00 each)



Location	Are visitor permits available	Are temporary permits available	Business Parking Permits	Other Permits
Yarra City Council	One per residence	Yes	Business/Retail: First permit is \$77.00, second and subsequent cost \$115.50 each	Medical Practitioner: First permit is \$77.00, second and subsequent cost \$115.50 each

A comparison of residential permit charges is set out in Table 2.

■ **Table 2 Resident Parking Permit Fees in Melbourne Municipalities**

Location	No. Permits per Household	Cost of first Permit	Cost of subsequent Permits	Permit Cost – concession
Boroondara	4	Free	Free	
Darebin City Council	Zone A = 1 Zone B = 2 Zone C = 4	Free	N/A 2 nd – Free 3 rd - \$20.00 4 th - \$20.00	No concession
Maribyrnong Council	4, with a maximum of two visitor permits	Free	2 nd – Free 3 rd - \$7.50 4 th - \$15.00	
Melbourne City Council	2, of which one may be a visitor permit	\$20.00		
Moonee Valley City Council	Not stated	Free	Free	
Moreland City Council	3 (two resident, one visitor)	\$15.00	Visitor = \$30.00	
Port Phillip City Council	3, with a maximum of two visitor permits	\$25.00	2 nd - \$25.00 3 rd - \$40.00	Concession card holders get first permit free, subsequent at half price
Yarra City Council	3, of which one may be a visitor permit	\$20.00	\$40.00	Health care card holders get first permit free.

2.6 Enforcement

The enforcement of parking permit rules and regulations is a vital component of local government's overall management strategy. Enforcement of permits is usually undertaken in the local laws area of Council and most Councils have reported two significant changes in the way that enforcement is undertaken. First, council officers indicated that enforcement, both in terms of hours of operation and numbers of staff, has increased steadily over the last few years in order to make sure permit schemes and laws are upheld. This has been particularly important in busier entertainment and shopping precincts and where residential areas abut such precincts.

The second major change regarding enforcement is in the increasing use of digital cameras, particularly in relation to assisting council in situations where infringement notices are challenged. While only a few councils are using cameras as the technology is still reasonably expensive, they are seen as a very effective measure of verifying and recording parking permit breaches.

In terms of enforcing the distribution of residential and visitor parking permits, the Councils contacts indicated that it was a much harder regulating these permits. Where there is a clear breach of privileges, parking permits are withdrawn.



2.7 Approaches to improving parking issues and conflicts

Below is an outline of some the measures local governments are adopting to improve their parking permit schemes, their operation and regulation.

- More effective outcomes have been achieved when parking permit arrangements are developed and tailored for different parts of the municipality rather than a blanket approach.
- There is a trend towards metered parking as a way of enforcing time zone parking in suburban streets and shopping, entertainment and business precincts. Meter parking is easier for parking officers to monitor and enforce than time zone parking signs. It is important, however, to set parking fees at a rate that discourages long term parking.
- Some councils are attempting to control the supply and demand issues by reducing the number of resident parking and visitor parking permits, and/or making them more expensive
- Some councils are attempting to control the transferability of visitor parking permits by making them harder to obtain. An alternative approach is to provide single use vouchers.
- Digital cameras have proved effective in assisting Councils with proving infringement breaches.
- When revising parking permit arrangements, particularly in ‘trouble spots’, some councils have found that bringing the parties together to develop a solution produces effective outcomes.
- To overcome limited information on particular areas, some Councils have undertaken specific qualitative and quantitative local area surveys of parking needs (for example in the Westgarth area in Darebin). This has included running workshops with local residents, businesses and traders as to discuss issues as well as important undertaking surveys of number of parking bays versus traffic volumes, street activity etc.
- There is a question as to the effectiveness of strict rules for residents to obtain parking and visitor permits. Some Councils report that residents become more upset having to provide all the evidence and proof of residency to obtain the permits, particularly when it is a relatively small percentage of people who abuse the system. Other councils feel that strict guidelines are necessary to maintain some form of control.
- Some councils have found it beneficial to link parking permit schemes to other Council policies such as sustainable transport policies to justify approaches or restrictions. This is the approach proposed for the current project.
- Some councils have permits that are defined by zones rather than streets enabling residents more flexibility in the local area where they can park. This has proven useful for busy residential streets. For privacy reasons, some residents do not like their home addresses linked with their parking permits, especially if they are displayed.
- Some councils have decided that no new parking permits will be issued to residents moving into new developments or in the case of Sydney City Council, into busy areas. In general most new development is required to provide a certain level of off-street parking and Councils generally feel that no further parking should be provided for them.



3. Key Issues

3.1 The main parking problems

Darebin, particularly in the southern part of the municipality (eg Northcote, Westgarth and Preston), is very much a mixed use area, with a wide range of commercial, retail and service, educational, community and residential uses in close proximity to each other. This means that parking provision for these uses cannot be separated from each other so must share the same on-street parking spaces. In many instances this means that residential streets are used for parking by non-residents, which creates competition for parking spaces in these residential areas.

These suburbs were developed in an era when most residents either walked to nearby workplaces or caught public transport. Very few of the early residents of Darebin owned cars. This means that many residential streets were not designed to accommodate the number of cars that now use them.

Based on our research, the workshops and the responses to the questionnaire, the main parking problems in Darebin can be grouped into the following themes:

Too many cars in the street

- Where the residents have more cars than can be accommodated on-street – particularly an issue in higher density areas. Some streets are narrow and the properties do not have space for off-street parking, which exacerbates the problems
- Where residents want extra car parking and visitor permits – this issue will continue to grow because:
 - In many family households children are staying at home for longer. Often both parents have cars and when their children reach driving age they also obtain cars
 - New developments often consist of townhouse or unit developments that are rented by group households where usually all members have their own car
- Residents and their visitors often can't park close to their homes, which they want to do for reasons of security and convenience
- New and in-fill development has increased parking pressures in Darebin by increasing the number of households. Planning regulations do not always require new developments to accommodate all parking on-site
- There is insufficient use of the available off-street parking. For example:
 - There are many residences with rear access lanes that do not use these and prefer to park on the street for a variety of reasons. These include difficulty in negotiating narrow lanes; a preference to use the rear yard or garage for other purposes and convenience (for example it may be faster to park and enter at the front). Front access car parking may not be utilised for similar reasons.
 - Planning controls usually require on-site parking for new developments. However the amount provided is not always sufficient. In some cases the areas allocated for parking are later used for storage rather than for car parking.



- There are some planning barriers to developing off-street parking for existing properties if desired by residents. They are required to obtain a permit for the construction of a driveway. In areas where on street parking is at a premium this normally requires the removal of one car parking space which would otherwise be available to the public ie the removal of a public asset so that a private parking space(s) can be created. Council does not always view this as being in the public interest. In some cases the development of a driveway and garage will detract from the streetscape.

Streets close to shopping centres

- Conflict between residents, shoppers and traders – this is often as much a residential amenity issue as a **parking one**. Residents report a sense of intrusion that strangers are able to park close to their homes.
- Peak shopping periods cause problems for residents who live near shopping centres, as they may have to park a considerable distance away from their homes. There is also an issue with night-time uses such as hotels and function centres
- Traders want to have long term parking near their shops. Some residents were willing to accept this, however with the proviso that options such as use of rear property spaces or dedicated parking within shopping centre car parks should be explored first. Other residents feel that traders should use dedicated parking and not go into residential areas at all.

Streets with community facilities

- There is often extra parking demand when functions or activities are on
- There can be short term parking issues (eg for kindergartens and schools when parents are delivering or collecting their children or near churches during services)
- Visitors who cannot find ‘legal’ parking spaces sometimes park across driveways and obstruct residents. Some visitors do not observe time limits and remain well past the signed time limit
- Some residents report significant⁷ commuter parking problems in some streets close to train stations. These are not necessarily people coming from outside the municipality, but may be residents from within the municipality parking close to the station for reasons of convenience.

Enforcement

- There is a strong perception that existing time limits are not regularly enforced in residential areas, and that the enforcement officers focus their efforts on commercial areas. Many residents felt that any new scheme should include an element of increased enforcement
- There are difficulties in enforcement for the enforcement officers, including the size of the area to be patrolled with limited resources.

⁷ These affect a few streets in the southern parts of Darebin. Although not significant on a metropolitan scale, we consider this parking produces marked inconvenience in some local streets.



Issues for Consideration

These issues cannot all be solved through the application of the parking permit scheme. There are a number of issues for further consideration as follows:

- Commuter parking is disruptive for extended periods of time, as commuters may park from eight in the morning until six at night. One resident noted that this is a problem for the streets around Fairfield Train Station. She noted that the parking facilities provided for commuters south of the train station are very difficult to enter in peak hour traffic and this is part of the reason commuters park in residential streets. This is an example of a specific parking problem that has promise of being reduced through a traffic and parking management plan. Parking near railway stations is desirable in that it allows commuters to use public transport who may not otherwise use it. Parking management should strike a balance between the needs of these commuters and the legitimate needs of local residents. Ideally these streets should be managed to have high car occupancy levels but still meet the needs of local residents for daytime parking close to their houses.
- In most areas the resident parking permit scheme would work more effectively if there was more regular enforcement. Any extension of the parking permit scheme therefore needs to be considered in terms of the staffing implications for the Council enforcement officers. There is no point in extending the system if it cannot be adequately enforced.
- A key issue will be to manage resident's perceptions and changing their behaviour. The reality is that inner city areas simply do not have the same supply of parking spaces as outer suburban areas, and those spaces must be shared. Many of the residents that responded to the survey would seem to have retained outer suburban expectations.
- It is unlikely that the parking permit scheme could resolve the parking problems experienced by traders. We would recommend that other opportunities are pursued (for example development of parking strategies, development contributions for car park development etc). However:
 - The parking permit scheme should not discourage shoppers if possible – for example one hour time limits may be too restrictive for shoppers (and are time-consuming for council enforcement officers to police). Two hour time limits may be more appropriate
 - It has been suggested that in some areas residents and traders could share the space, particularly residents who do not use their spaces during the day. This option could be considered further, however it would require extra administration and policing and would be the first case in Melbourne.

3.2 Key issues with the existing parking permit scheme

Key issues with the existing scheme include:

- A discrepancy between the number of permits that residents in various parts of the municipality are able to obtain
- That in some areas the number of permits that have been issued significantly exceeds the number of available parking spaces
- Permits in some areas are free and in others are not
- The scheme is not be enforced to the degree that many residents would wish



- It has not yet been applied in some areas where it is needed and in other areas it may no longer be required.
- Council's general practice is to install parking restrictions with resident exemptions on one side of the street, while the other side is left unrestricted. In some cases residents complain that this does not allow them to park sufficiently close to their houses, particularly in streets where the unrestricted side is occupied all day with the cars of commuters, shoppers or employees of nearby businesses.



4. Community Response

This section sets out the community response that has fed into development of the options for improving the parking permit scheme and the recommendations that SKM have put forward in this report.

4.1 Council Consultation

Darebin Council undertook an extensive consultation process with residents in 2003. This consultation included a survey of residents and a workshop held on 3rd September 2003.

A summary of the consultation and survey results is included at Appendix B.

4.2 Focus Groups

SKM undertook a number of focus groups in February 2004. These focus groups were used to explore a number of issues related to parking in Darebin and whether the parking permit scheme could be used to address them. Focus group participants also discussed the administration of the parking permit scheme and ways to improve the system. A number of residents also contacted Council and SKM separately to provide their viewpoints.

This input, together with discussions by the Reference Group, led to the development of a number of options to improve the parking permit scheme.

4.3 Community Survey

An options pamphlet and questionnaire was developed and sent out to the community in mid-March 2004. The purpose of the pamphlet was to explain to the general community the issues that had arisen over the course of the study and the various options that the Reference Group and consultants had developed to improve the parking permit scheme.

The pamphlet was posted to every household that currently has a parking permit (1,800). Copies were also placed in a variety of Council and community venues.

A copy of the pamphlet is attached as Appendix D.

As at the 15th April 2004, 389 questionnaires have been returned. This indicates a response rate of approximately 22% (slightly less if some respondents did not have permits).

4.4 Questionnaire Results

This section sets out the responses to the questionnaire. The tables indicate the number of respondents that agreed or disagreed with each option. Under each table we have included a selection of the written responses that pertain to each issue.



4.4.1 Number of Permits

Table 3 indicates that 68% of households agreed that the maximum number of permits per household should be two. However, many households linked this to the issue of off-street parking, and felt that even houses with off-street parking should be able to obtain two permits.

- **Table 3 What should be the maximum number of permits per household? A maximum of two permits per household is recommended.**

Response	Agree	Disagree	Blank	Don't Know/ Unsure	TOTAL
Number	263	111	14	1	389
Proportion	68%	29%	4%	0%	100%

Some of the comments that respondents made about this issue were:

- “Ultimately, if the number of cars keeps increasing at the same rate as it has over the past ten years, we will run out of space for them. The council needs to discourage this trend, so there should be a limit on the number of parking permits issued to each household/business ... If you don't have off street parking, you simple have to take responsibility for your own actions (ie. do you really need more than one car, given that you live in the inner city and are within easy reach of public transport?).”
- “Permit should not be reduced to one if the off-street parking of the residence is inaccessible – ie. The lane is too narrow to get a car into the garage.”
- “The tickets are intended for use by visitors not just the residents in those streets; if you limit the maximum to just one or two then the visitors to the affected households will be unfairly disadvantaged.”
- “I strongly urge council not to introduce more than two permits per household.”
- “22% of respondents were from households where there were three or more vehicles – these people should not be disadvantaged (or indeed, discriminated against).”
- “How can you invite friends or family for a meal or a funeral if they'll get booked at any family functions!”
- “Many houses in Darebin are rental houses where it is likely that the house has more than two cars. If they can only get two permits what is the other person supposed to do?”
- “In this day and age many households have more than one car, which means that even though there is the availability of “off street parking” it makes it difficult to have people visit for long periods of time, if you were to reduce the number of permits.”
- “I think there should be an option for households to pay for more than two permits. The cost for the 3rd or 4th permit could be higher eg \$80(?). Some households such as student households consist of more than two individuals not related to each other, or even families with teenage children/adult children who have their own car. There should be an option for these people to pay for a 3rd or 4th permit.”
- “Residents with off street parking should be two permits per household. At times it is very inconvenient to park in garage especially if you are making several trips per day.”
- “Number of permits should depend on how many cars per household otherwise where would the extra cars be parked?”



- “Residents should have the option of many permits as there are cars in the household and these should be free!!”

Those respondents who were in favour of the proposed number of permits (2) generally linked reducing permits to sustainable transport goals and the good provision of public transport in the city. However, many residents have more than two cars and feel that they need to have parking permits for all cars. Reducing the number of permits allowed will be an issue for these residents unless they are willing to make lifestyle modifications to reduce their car dependency. Many of the streets controlled by resident parking schemes are well served by public transport.

One issue that several respondents raised is that of shared households. It is very difficult for non-related adults to share cars and permits. It was also noted that sharing the cost of permits can be difficult in a shared household.

4.4.2 Fees for Permits

Table 4 provides the response to the recommendation that Council charge for parking permits. Only a small proportion (10%) of respondents agreed with this. Of those who disagreed, the main point of contention was the recommended fee rather than the imposition of a fee. Nevertheless, many respondents felt that the cost of parking permits should be covered by Council rates⁸.

Many respondents also drew a clear nexus between paying for permits and enforcement of the parking permit scheme. There is a strong feeling that the parking permit schemes should be rigorously enforced if residents have to pay for permits.

■ Table 4 Council will be applying a charge for permits

Response	Agree	Disagree	Blank	TOTAL
Number	39	339	11	389
Proportion	10%	87%	3%	100%

Some of the comments that respondents made about this issue were:

- “I object to the imposition of a fee for parking permits. Residents are paying high council fees which adequately covers the cost of administration costs.”
- “First permit should be free – especially for those with no off-street facilities.”
- “There are a significant number of ‘extra’ services that council provides to only some residents eg HACC maternal & child health. Do not think we should start saying that because only some people require a service they should pay for it. I thought we were encouraging community, not user pays.”
- “As you say, parking around here hasn’t changed in more than ten years so why should the fees. The rates however have hiked enormously and surely this would cover the administration.”

⁸ Note that the survey was primarily answered by those who hold resident parking permits rather than those who do not.



- “The cost of admin costs should be born by all residents – as the parking spaces are potentially used by all residents of the area and not just by those who live in the affected streets.”
- “Agree – only if illegal parking was properly policed and fines issued where breaches are made. Have had cars/vehicles in front of my house for more than two weeks without permits, where fines have not been issued.”
- “I think that a charge of \$80 is very high. Something like \$10 for 1st and \$20 for 2nd would be more appropriate.”
- “Please remember the wages you receive come from the rates and parking fine incomes the council receives from ratepayers. Therefore I cannot see the reason to charge ratepayers to park in front of their own houses.”
- “I strongly believe there should be no charge to parking permits when they apply to residents that have no other choice than to park on the street.”
- “I think that your proposed charging for permits is just another ploy to get extra money to the council, why should there be a charge?”
- “I know with unshakeable conviction that this current council is only about making money whilst providing the minimal service. I will not be voting for you ever again.”
- “A parking permit IS a right as we already pay for them via other fees, just as rubbish collection is a right, access to public library is a right, voting is a right etc. etc.”
- That proposed charge is ABHORRENT!

Many respondents were prepared to accept a lower charge but felt that the recommended level of \$30.00 for the first permit and \$50.00 for the second was too high. Suggestions included that the first be free and the second \$15.00, or that the fees be around \$20.00, which is more in line with what other Councils charge. Many older people said that these fees were too high for pensioners.

Residents without off-street parking felt that it was unfair that they should have to pay to park outside their homes.

4.4.3 Off street parking

The responses to this issue were mixed, however 60% of respondents accepted the recommendation that off-street parking availability should lead to a reduction in permit entitlement. Other respondents felt that they should not be ‘penalised’ for having off-street parking. Many respondents indicated that their off-street parking space was difficult to access, which made it easier to park on the street. Note that this reduction in entitlements due to off street parking is already part of the present scheme.

- **Table 5 Should Council take into account off street parking available to the household? Availability of off-street parking currently reduces the entitlement by one permit.**

Response	Agree	Disagree	Blank	Don't Know/ Unsure	TOTAL
Number	234	135	18	2	389
Proportion	60%	35%	5%	1%	100%



Some of the comments that respondents made about this issue were:

- “Does this mean that I will only have a permit for one vehicle if I have off street parking. I live in a one-hour zone close to High Street. When visitors come they will have to shift vehicles every hour or risk a fine.”
- “It would be good if residents with off street parking actually used them to leave room for those who don’t have that luxury.”
- “I disagree with the reduction to one for those with off street parking. Off-street parking is on private land provided by the rate payer for themselves for the purpose of security at their own expense. Further costs are incurred for council approval erect such structures. Council does not provide or supply this parking and can have no claim over it.”
- “Reducing entitlements for those with off-street parking is not fair as it penalises those who go to the expense and trouble of installing off-street parking.”
- “The fact that some households have off street parking should not enter into the equation. If you don’t have off street parking, you simple have to take responsibility for your own actions (ie. do you really need more than one car, given that you live in the inner city and are within easy reach of public transport?).”
- “What is the definition of availability? My house has a lane at the back but the ‘gates’ do not open and at this stage I cannot afford to replace them so it is not available or accessible for parking. Would that count and therefore my household receive one less permit?”
- “Keep in mind that not all off-street parking is accessible – ie a household may have a garage where the doors do not open.”
- “I pay the same amount of rates as next door. They have decided to make their parking spots into a garden / courtyard, and fence off the right of way. Just because I have retained my available parking spots does NOT mean I should have my entitlement reduced.”
- “We have off street parking via a rear laneway which is unsafe, unlit, and at present blocked by old furniture dumped in the laneway.”
- “Disabled people might not be able to use driveways because of their need for extra width to enter or exit their vehicle”

Many respondents who were concerned about this issue did not feel that access to off-street parking should reduce their entitlement. Some respondents do not seem to understand that their driveways reduce the available on-street parking and this is one of the reasons for the recommendation. For other respondents the key issue is convenience of access, and they prefer to park on the street because it is easier.

4.4.4 Trader Permits

The majority of respondents (73%) did not favour providing permits to traders. Respondents were generally resentful of traders parking in residential streets. Car repairers appear to be a particular problem. Most respondents felt that traders should be provided with parking in other areas.



■ **Table 6 Should traders be eligible for parking permits? This is not recommended.**

Response	Agree	Disagree	Blank	Don't Know/ Unsure	TOTAL
Number	284	87	17	1	389
Proportion	73%	22%	4%	0%	100%

Some of the comments that respondents made about this issue were:

- “With regard to traders, my experience is that cars owned by a business in my street have occupied a parking space in front of my house for a week at a time (without being moved) ... Perhaps it would be appropriate for parking permits allocated to business to be restricted to business hours.”
- “As far as I am concerned business people are not welcome when they leave their cars all day in front of private houses.”
- “Traders should not be eligible for parking permits. Permits should only be available to rate paying residents only.”
- “Traders can claim parking costs as part of running business.”
- “I agree that traders should not be eligible for parking permits. At present ample all day parking (free) has been accommodated for in some surrounding streets for traders and their staff in High Street.”
- “Traders do need a substantial number of parking areas. Along the railway line would have been ideal, instead of housing. They should not be having to park in areas provided for shoppers, who are their life-blood. They should have a ‘traders’ sticker and park as long as needed in trader designated areas.”
- “Traders need parking as well as residents. Without traders there are no shops and vibrant, local shopping strips will disappear.”
- “Permits along High St need to be considered. ... I am a resident ratepayer and a business operator within the municipality and therefore I have every right to parking in a safe and convenient space.”
- “Traders should be considered for permits. Some traders, eg. smash repairs, mechanics use street parking for customers AND staff vehicles using up much parking spaces.”

4.4.5 Retention of Zone A

Table 7 shows that the majority of respondents (74%) are happy for the zone provisions for shop top dwellers to remain. Of the 8% that disagreed, none made any specific comments about their reasons for doing so. However, the general tone of the comments suggests that the respondents do not like shop-top dwellers and traders parking in their streets as they feel that they themselves should have priority.

The high level of blank responses to the question (17%), indicates that this issue was of little concern to many respondents.



■ **Table 7 Zone A should be retained to accommodate the needs of shop-top residents.**

Response	Agree	Disagree	Blank	Don't Know/ Unsure	TOTAL
Number	289	31	66	3	389
Proportion	74%	8%	17%	1%	100%

4.4.6 Amalgamation of Zones B and C

The negative responses to the recommendation to amalgamate Zones B and C were largely based on the concern that respondents would have a reduced permit entitlement. There are many respondents who have more than two cars or who have large families that visit regularly, and they do not want to lose their permit entitlement.

It should also be noted that the wording of this question seemed to be misunderstood by many of the respondents. There was some confusion in that people felt that, if ample parking is available, the right to park should not be reduced. It will need to be made clear to residents that restrictions would only occur in streets where there are existing parking problems, so in this respect those streets in Zone C where resident parking permit schemes apply are no different to streets in Zone B with parking problems.

■ **Table 8 Amalgamation of Zones B and C is proposed**

Response	Agree	Disagree	Blank	Don't Know/ Unsure	TOTAL
Number	245	94	47	3	389
Proportion	63%	24%	12%	1%	100%

Some of the comments that respondents made about this issue were:

- “There has been an increase in building development in Zone C ie more houses on less land meaning that there are more people with more cars. Just because these developments have off-street (generally Row access) parking doesn't mean they use them – more often that area used for garden or picnic area.”
- “Limiting the number of passes will severely disadvantage our household – we need at least three.”
- “We all agree that all households are different. In this house we have 5 cars and only 1 (off street parking) available – through lane. This remains that we need 4 permits for street parking we all believe it is unfair to pay for more permits.”
- “Zone C should be retained specially for people with large families who have more than three cars, most households in our street have two or three cars if not more, and sometimes they have large extended families who come to visit them often during the day.”
- “Amalgamating Zones B and C and then applying conditions for Zone B to both zones and then wanting to charge for it makes it pretty obvious that this has just become a money making exercise. Needs of Zone B and C residents are NOT being addressed according to the level of the parking problem in each area.”



- “Zone B and Zone C should not be amalgamated as Zone B has limited parking available and Zone C has ample parking.”

4.5 Parking Permits for Residents of New Developments

Residents of new developments such as dual occupancy, townhouses and high-density developments are currently eligible for parking permits if their dwellings are within a permit zone.

New development was not the subject of a specific question in the questionnaire. However, several respondents made comments about this issue. The gist of the comments was that new development exacerbates parking problems, and that developers should be required to provide sufficient and easily accessible on-site parking. Existing residents are resentful when parking pressures are increased by new, higher density developments.

This is in line with the recommendation of the Project Reference Group.

Research undertaken by SKM into this issue indicates the following:

- Restrictions on availability of parking permits for new residential developments have been achieved in other municipalities through local laws and/or the residential parking permit scheme. There are varying legal implications based on the approach used
- The planning scheme cannot be used to enforce this requirement. For example, a Section 173 agreement cannot be used. This means that there is no way to append the condition to a planning certificate and it would be the responsibility of the vendor/property owner to advise any purchaser/tenant that they could not acquire a parking permit
- Refusing parking permits to the residents of new developments could have the long-term effect of changing the type of people that move into those developments, and potentially the type of development being undertaken.

As long as occupiers of new developments are aware of the parking permit restrictions, only those people who are prepared to manage their parking needs on-site will choose to move into them.



5. Permit Scheme Options and Recommendations

This section sets out our recommendations for improving the parking permit scheme.

5.1 Number of Permits

We recommend that the maximum number of permits per household be fixed at two as described in the options pamphlet. These permits could be a combination of fixed or transferable (visitors). This flexibility will enable residents who may not have a car of their own but do have regular visitors to have two visitor permits.

This recommendation is based on the fact that parking permit schemes are only applied where there is high competition for the available parking spaces. Limiting the number of permits available is one way of more fairly sharing the parking resource. The issuing of high numbers of permits undermines the effect (like printing too much money reduces its value).

We *don't* consider that the resident parking permit system should allow for additional permits (ie greater than two) in special circumstances. This introduces a degree of complexity not warranted by the size of the scheme, as it would require council officers to make judgements as to what constitutes special circumstances. It would be preferable for households to manage their parking needs within the constraints of urban living.

5.2 Fees for Permits

A fee to help to cover the cost of administration of the scheme is considered to be fair and reasonable, based on the following:

- Parking permit schemes only apply to a small proportion of the municipality
- A fee would discourage the unnecessary application of the Scheme in streets that do not have a major parking problem. At present, residents can have the scheme introduced to their street without understanding the real costs to Council, and
- The schemes are a service that is provided over and beyond the services provided to other residents and in fact they reduce the parking rights of those not in the scheme- many of whom could be expected to also be Darebin ratepayers. ie the scheme gives priority of one group over other groups in the competition for street parking. It can therefore be considered as a privilege rather than a 'service' or a 'right'.

The fee suggested in the questionnaire was considered to be too high by the majority of respondents, particularly in areas where permits have been free in the recent past⁹. Many of the responses indicated considerable distress about the proposed fee level. Note that the response may have been different if more residents without permits had responded! The distribution of the

⁹ Before council amalgamation fees of \$5 and \$14 were charged.



questionnaire was deliberately targeted at those who benefit from the Scheme rather than those who are inconvenienced. We therefore suggest the following:

- That the initial fee for parking permits should be \$20.00 for the first permit and \$30.00 for the second. The review system of the fee level should follow the Councils' general practice in setting other Council fees and charges such as library fees.
- That aged, disability and other pensioners and full time university students should receive a discounted fee rate of 50% of the full price. At this stage we do not recommend the inclusion of discounted charges for people whose situation is transitory. For example those receiving unemployment benefits because unemployment is often a transitory state, and it would add a layer of administrative complexity to deal with this. For example, Council could be faced with having to make retrospective refunds if a person becomes unemployed after paying for their permit.

5.3 Off street parking availability

In considering this issue we have recognised the following factors.

- Properties that have driveways and off-street parking at the front of the property normally reduce on-street parking by one space.
- Off street parking can either be accessed from a rear lane or from a driveway – each has different implications.
- Rear access does not normally result in the loss of as many on-street spaces as front driveway access.
- The availability of on-site parking spaces also reduces the residents' *need* to park on the street.
- Council cannot force residents to *use* their off street spaces.
- Some residents have difficulties accessing their off-street parking for a variety of reasons, such as poor lane way access. Where properties have rear access via blocked, narrow or unsafe laneways, it may not be possible for them to use this access on a regular basis.
- The actual conditions on each site often require a council officer to visit the site. Although at least one metropolitan Council does this as a matter of course, it would require significant additional staff time.
- Council officers can check some details in the office by existing databases such as aerial photographs. The present system relies on the honesty of residents declaring their off-street parking.
- Many new developments provide their main and only access off a laneway.

Ideally the resident parking scheme should be:

- Simple and inexpensive to administer.
- Encourage those with off street parking spaces to use them.
- Be equitable to residents in varying circumstances.
- Discourage the unnecessary reduction in on street parking by the construction of driveways where parking is at a premium.



In assessing the various options we consider that the following would be the best compromise between these objectives:

- The parking permit entitlement of the residents of properties with off street parking should be reduced by one. This is the current situation.
- The *administration* of this aspect should be changed. Presently Council officers are obliged to take residents' statements that they have no off-street parking on face value. Since the introduction of the Resident Parking Scheme in 1997, digital aerial photography has become available so this is no longer necessary.
- Properties with a driveway or a *made*¹⁰ back lane (eg bluestone cobblestones) should be deemed to have off-street parking unless the resident can demonstrate otherwise. This demonstration would normally be done by reference to Council's aerial photography of the back yard. For example the aerial photograph may show no parking areas in the rear yard. Unfortunately aerial photography cannot identify whether a gate is provided, nor whether a shed abutting the back lane is a garage. In other cases residents may be able to demonstrate that the tight geometry of their access does not allow them to use car spaces in their back yards.
- Where back lanes are unmade the properties would be deemed to have no off street parking from the rear lane.

5.4 Trader Permits

We recommend that the parking permit scheme should not be extended to traders. This is because there is no effective way to do this and still ensure that residents have priority over the available parking. There is no underlying community expectation that traders should have special parking privileges on local residential streets. Few other Councils provide this type of permit to traders.

Council and traders need to work together to identify and investigate alternative solutions to their parking problems including:

- More effective use of rear access space for parking
- The provision of trader dedicated parking in some Council car parking areas or the purchase of land to develop trader parking
- More effective use of public transport by traders and staff to reduce the level of parking demand (this could include the development of park and ride).

5.5 Retention of Zone A

Zone A should be retained to accommodate the needs of shop-top residents. This will require an acknowledgment on the part of residents of nearby streets that shop-top residents have been granted the right to share 'their' parking space.

¹⁰ Unmade back lanes would not be deemed to provide off street parking.



There is an administrative issue in that many shop owners whose property is rated both commercial and residential are applying for a permit. It is very difficult to determine whether the person actually resides at the premises. In this study we did not examine ways to reduce this problem of checking the credentials of shop top permit applicants.

As noted in the previous section, consideration should be given to the more effective use of rear access space for parking for both traders and residents.

Council is presently receiving development applications for multi-story mixed used developments on streets such as High Street eg retailing on the ground floor and housing above. These developments would not come under the normal understanding of 'shop top housing'.

5.6 Amalgamation of Zones B and C

Parking permit schemes are only applied in streets and areas where there is heavy competition for the available parking spaces. The only way to more fairly share the limited parking spaces is to restrict the number of permits available to each household so that every car driver has a better chance of parking near their property.

It is also fairer that the same restrictions apply for all residents in streets with parking problems across the municipality.

For these reasons, it is recommended that Zone C be abolished and that the zonal restrictions of Zone B are applied to all streets in Darebin that have a parking permit scheme (except for those zoned 'A'). This would have the effect of reducing the maximum permit entitlement from four permits to two in areas currently zoned 'C'.

The residents of Zone C should be given a period of time to adjust to the new permit conditions. It is therefore recommended that this change is implemented the next time permits become due for renewal.

5.7 Proof of Residency

Currently proof is accepted on face value and not questioned. When a property is sold or re leased council staff have no easy way to confirm the credentials of the new occupants. In our discussions during this study we did not uncover any evidence to suggest that this system is being abused to any significant degree. If circumstances change then some documentation requiring proof of residency could be introduced. This could be similar to the proof of residency generally required to obtain a library card.

5.8 Fake Permits

Although there was no suggestion that fake permits have been produced, it is likely that the temptation to do so will increase, as permits become more valuable and the means to produce fake



permits become more accessible. We recommend that Council should investigate the development of a local law to penalise people who produce and use fake parking permits.

5.9 New Development

This issue is complex and has many equity and policy implications. Many residents felt that they were being asked to pay the price for the under provision of off-street parking in new developments.

The Reference Group considered that a new local law should be investigated. It would empower Darebin Council to refuse resident parking permits to the residents of new developments. Technically this is a better option than changes to the resident parking permit scheme because it is more formalised and has a legal basis.

If Council were to pursue this then it should be widely advertised to provide the opportunity for developers to amend development plans if needed.

5.10 Review of the Application of Parking Permit Schemes

The current precinct-wide arrangements for permit schemes seem to work well and no change is recommended.

However, it is apparent from the community feedback that the details of some permit schemes should be reviewed. We therefore suggest that Council undertake a review of those streets with an existing parking permit scheme where there is reason to suspect that it is not operating well. This review should include consultation with residents to determine:

- Whether the scheme is still required
- Whether the scheme should be further extended to surrounding streets
- Whether there needs to be any variations to the time limits set for visitor and other vehicles (for example from one to two hours).

Because of the time and resources that would be needed to undertake these reviews, we recommend that they only be undertaken when residents of particular streets request such a review. This should enable Council to spread the review process out over a period of some years and thus spread the resource and cost burden. However, if parking issues in single streets are linked to other, Council may need to review several together and develop a precinct parking strategy for that area.

If Council were to introduce fees as we recommend, residents of some existing streets covered by the scheme may well call for its removal from their streets. We consider that this could be a desirable outcome. It would reduce administrative costs in streets where residents don't value its benefits. There would of course be the short-term costs of changing signs.



5.11 Non Car Owning Households

The present scheme specifies that non car owning households are eligible to receive one less permit than otherwise permitted for their property. This aspect was not raised as an issue in this study. We see no reason why the existing system should be changed.

5.12 Housing Type

The present scheme specifies that households living in a flat, unit or town houses are entitled to one less permit than otherwise permitted. This provision would appear to have been included as a *proxy* for the availability of off-street parking ie these housing types generally have off street parking. Given that we have dealt with off-street parking as a separate issue there is no reason why this provision should remain. It is difficult to justify why housing type *per se* should affect entitlement.

5.13 The Introduction of the New Scheme

We suggest that the new scheme be introduced as the existing permits expire. The main changes Council would have to make relate to administration. We would expect that these could be implemented when the current permits expire at the end of December 2004.

5.14 Location specific issues

There are a number of areas where specific facilities generate significant traffic problems. These include:

- The NMIT, secondary college, primary schools and kindergartens
- Hotels and function centres
- Community facilities such as the bowling club and various churches
- The railway stations
- Shopping areas.

The parking permit scheme may be able to assist in reducing some of these problems. For example, if it were applied in the streets closest to the train stations, it could encourage people to either walk to the station or park in the station car park. However, many of these issues need to be solved through other means such as:

- Developing parking strategies for the areas surrounding major traffic generators (such as the Westgarth strategy)
- Improving peak hour access to the train stations to encourage commuters to park at the station instead of in surrounding streets
- The use of TravelSMART and other behaviour modification programs with local schools and employers to reduce the number of cars trying to park in the same area
- More active enforcement in specific locations at specific times to prevent over-staying.



5.15 Disability Access

During the study the difficulties that some residents with disabilities face were raised. For example a wheelchair bound resident found it difficult to park close to her house. We consider that this is best dealt with separately from the resident permit scheme. The resident parking permit scheme merely increases the likelihood that residents will find a vacant space near their house. Council has powers to provide higher priority parking for these special situations.

5.16 Enforcement

Many of the focus group participants and respondents to the questionnaire made it clear that they do not feel that the resident parking permit schemes are adequately enforced. Many respondents referred to:

- cars that regularly park all day in one hour zones
- cars that are left for weeks on end in restricted areas without ever being fined, and
- cars parked illegally at times of peak demand (for example during a church service).

Respondents also felt that if fees were to be introduced then there should be a higher level of enforcement to ensure that they were getting the priority access they pay for. Quite a few people felt that increased enforcement would cover the cost of administering the scheme. We consider this is unlikely given the particular costs and difficulties with enforcing this type of restriction. Enforcement normally requires multiple visits to check that the time limits are not exceeded. Often officers need to work in pairs because of the abuse they can be subjected to.

It is likely that a key to acceptance of charging for permits will be the perception of increased enforcement.

As noted in the options pamphlet, the enforcement department has recently begun investigating the parking problems in a number of streets to develop an improved enforcement strategy. We recommend that this strategy and its outcomes be communicated to residents so that they have a better understanding of how enforcement works.

5.17 Display of Resident Parking Permits

There is a particular enforcement problem if a resident claims a resident parking permit was displayed correctly and the parking enforcement officer(s) disagrees. Over the past year at least 386 infringements to a dollar value of \$21,959 fell into this category.

In this study we did not investigate the administrative changes needed to avoid this hassle for both enforcement officers and residents. This issue is likely to increase as enforcement increases. Council will need to reinforce the importance of proper placement to residents and could consider the use of digital cameras to record evidence by enforcement officers.



5.18 Frequently Asked Questions

These questions and answers are intended to clarify the way in which the recommended system would operate.

Question: I don't have restrictions in my street but the street around the corner does. Can I get a permit?

Answer: No. Permits are only issued to residents of the particular streets where residents are exempt from some restrictions. This is to provide these residents with a better chance of convenient parking for their vehicles. If you believe that your street has a severe enough parking problem for a resident parking scheme then you can approach Council to have it extended.

Question: I am an owner but I don't live in the property, can I get a parking permit?

Answer: No. The scheme only applies to people who actually live in the property.

Question: Can I please have an extra permit as our household has three cars? I am willing to pay a bit more?

Answer: No. The Scheme does not allow more than two permits for any property. Many properties have a maximum of just one permit. This is to avoid permits issued to residents' third or fourth cars undermining the value of the residential parking permit of their neighbours' first or second car. The more permits there are in a street the more competition there is for the restricted parking spaces. Council would also like to discourage the unnecessary purchase and use of cars. Of course you can still park your third or fourth car on the street- its just that the closest legal spaces may be further away than for your first two cars.

Question: Why should I have to pay for a parking permit when it used to be free? Why don't my rates cover the cost of the scheme?

Answer: The parking permit scheme provides a service to some residents that is over and above what other residents get. It gives them priority for parking in their streets over visitors to the municipality and other residents. This means that it is a special privilege to these residents. Because of this, it is only fair that they contribute towards the cost of maintenance of street signage, enforcement and administration.

Question: I can't use the off-street parking on my property so why can't I claim the maximum of two permits?

Answer: You can, provided you show council staff the reasons why you cannot use the off street spaces.



Appendix A Summary of the Recommended Resident Parking Scheme

- The scheme is area based. Zone A incorporates all shop-top residences along the defined shopping streets – a maximum of one permit.
- Zone B covers areas with significant parking congestion. A maximum of 2 permits (which can be a combination of visitor or resident permits).
- These permits could be a combination of fixed or transferable (visitors). This flexibility will enable residents who may not have a car of their own but do have regular visitors to have a visitor permit if there is no off-street parking on their property.
- The fee would be \$20.00 for the first permit and \$30.00 for the second. Aged pensioners, disability pensioners and other special groups would receive a discounted fee rate of 50% of the full price.
- Households with access to off-street parking are entitled to one less permit. Therefore in Zone A they are entitled to no permits, in Zone B they are entitled to one permit.
- Properties with a driveway or a *made*¹¹ back lane (eg bluestone cobblestones) would be deemed to have off-street parking unless the resident can demonstrate otherwise. This demonstration would normally be done by reference to Council's aerial photography of the back yard. For example the aerial photograph may show no parking areas in the rear yard. Aerial photography cannot identify whether a gate is provided- or whether a shed abutting the back lane is a garage. In other cases residents may be able to demonstrate that the tight geometry of their access does not allow them to use car spaces in their back yards.
- Where back lanes are unmade the properties would be deemed to have no off street parking from the rear lane.
- Non-car owners are entitled to one less permit than car owning households in similar circumstances.
- In addition to the above, Guest/Tradespersons' permits are available. These are temporary permits that are issued for a specific period of four weeks and cost \$10 per permit.
- Application forms and enquiries concerning the Residential Parking Permit Scheme can be made by visiting one of Council's Customer Services Centres or by phoning the Traffic Enforcement Department on 9230 4544. They are also available on Council's web-site (www.darebin.vic.gov.au)
- Every Permit must be applied for in writing on form obtained from the Traffic and Local Laws Department and accompanied by the requisite fee.
- Every permit will expire on the 31st of December each year and not more than one year after the date of issue. It will cease to be valid in the event of change of ownership of the vehicle for which it is issued, or change of residence by the person in whose name it is issued.

¹¹ Unmade back lanes would not be deemed to provide off street parking.



- Permits are fixed or transferable permits. Affixed permits are in the form of a registration label for permanent use by residents. Transferable permits are for the use by residents or their visitors and can easily be transferred between cars.
- Lost vehicle permits must be reported as soon as possible. Permits are not valid for persons attending entertainment or sporting events near your home.
- Vehicle permits must be firmly affixed to the left hand side of the front windscreen at the bottom (near the vehicle registration label) in such a manner as to be clearly visible from outside of the vehicle. Any vehicle not displaying a current valid permit in this manner can be deemed not to be parked in accordance with the regulations and accordingly may be liable to a parking infringement.
- The permit does not guarantee the availability of a parking space.
- The use of parking spaces in parking areas to which parking permits apply, may be suspended by members of the Police Force or by authorised council officers.
- The granting of a permit does not allow contravention of the road traffic regulations.
- Council must be notified immediately of a change of address.

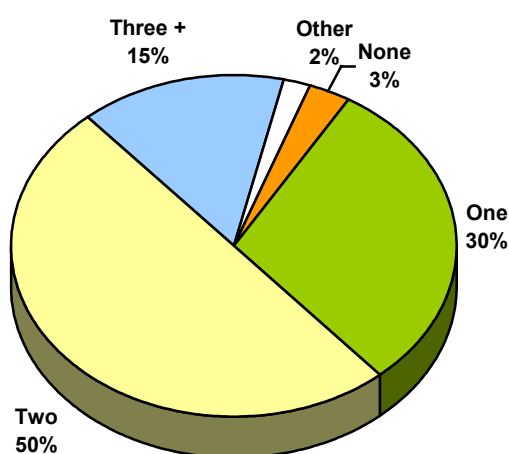


Appendix B Council Consultation in 2003

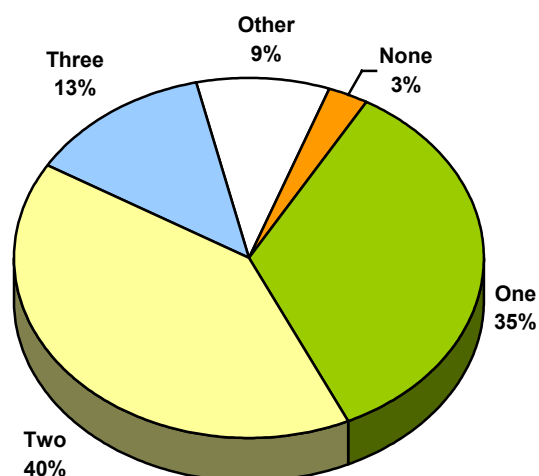
B.1 Questionnaire Results

The following graphs indicate answers to questions from the questionnaire sent out by Council in September 2003

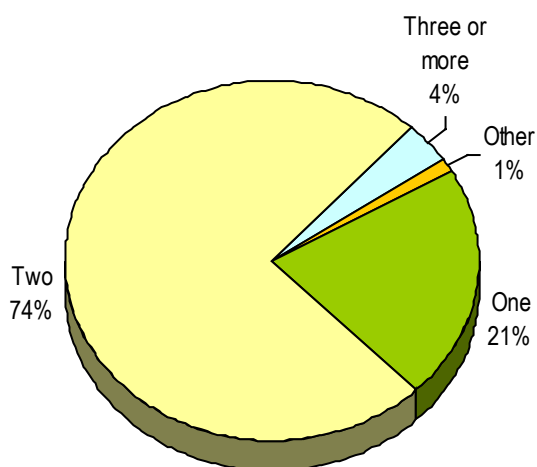
- How many licenced drivers live in this household?



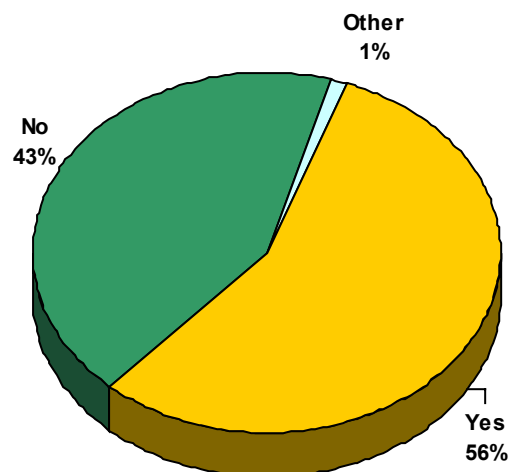
- How many cars are located at this household?



- How many permits have been issued to this household?

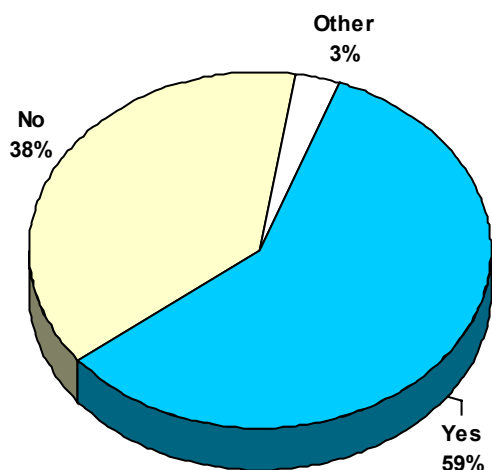


- Do you have off-street parking facilities?

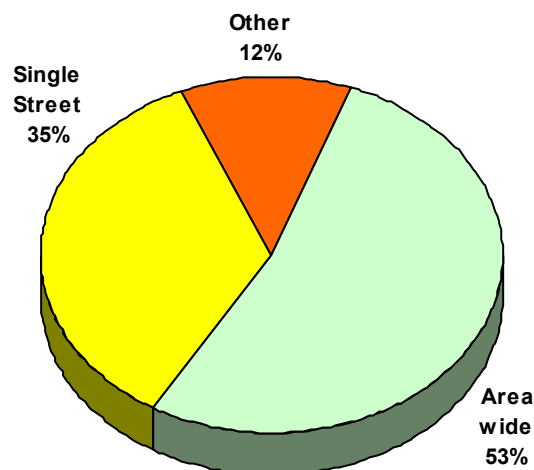




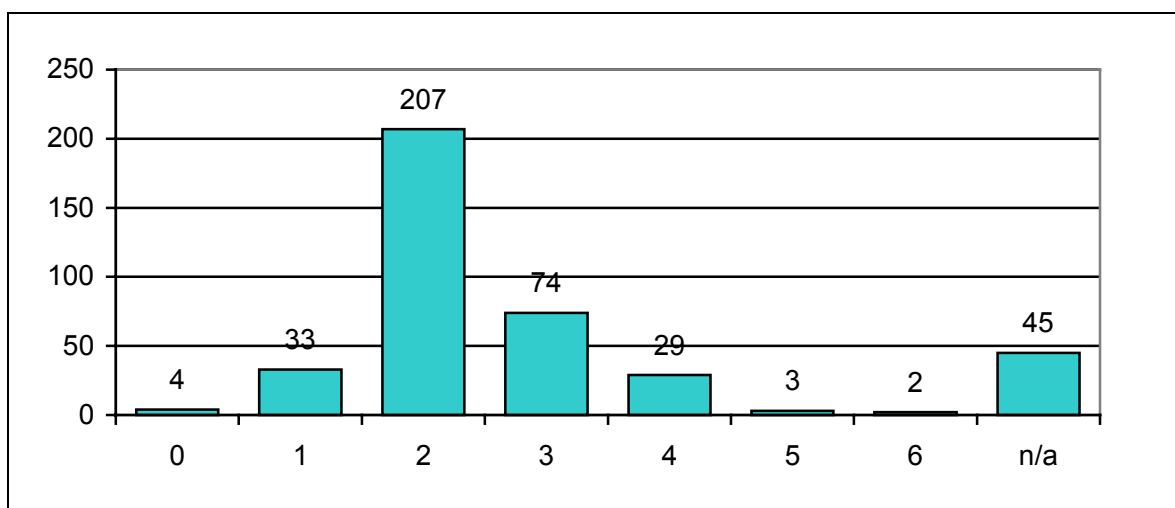
- Do you find difficulties parking in your street?



- Do you think area wide or single street zones are better?



- How many permits do you think are appropriate to meet your needs?



B.2 Issues and Concerns raised by the Community through the Questionnaire

The following lists of points were raised by the community through the questionnaire which was sent to all current permit holders. Policing and Enforcement Issues does not specifically fall under the scope of this study but is something that Council will need to consider and address separately at a later date. Parking Time Limits is also outside of the scope of this review, parking arrangements for specific streets are resolved on a street by street basis rather than at a municipal wide basis. The Parking Issues for Particular Locations is also generally outside the scope of the review.

Policing and Enforcement

- More rigorous policing of system
- More inspections and policing

SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ



3. Checking on regular basis needs to be carried out as non-permit drivers tend to overstay 2 hour limit.
4. Police guest permits as they are being used as regular permits.

Parking Issues in Specific Locations

1. Areas around NMIT and the Mosque.
2. Northcote High School
3. St Marks Church (Gilbert Rd)
4. Preston TAFE and Murray Rd Primary School
5. Gertrude St is parking on one side for residents and 1 hour for others. I would like to see permit parking for one side of the street. The only reason for one side parking was for Windsor Smith Factory. This is now a small operation.
6. Dennis Street (Park visitors)
7. Garnet Street has people who park all day who work nearby to High St factories
8. Preston Market area
9. Edith Street
10. Permit zone only between High and Hayes Streets in Darebin Rd (South Side).
11. Pearl Street
12. McCutcheon Street
13. Ford St Preston
14. Charles Street
15. Miller Street (caused by the near-by restaurant).
16. Is the permit zone in Charles St relevant any more?
17. Seems to work in Westgarth.

Parking Time Limits

Some feel that parking limits should be extended to two hours, mainly to make it easier for their visitors. Others want to maintain one hour limits to keep people out of the street.

Ideas for Managing Parking in Streets

1. The restrictions which operate during the day only should be extended to evenings & weekends.
2. You should be able to park anywhere in your street with the parking permit.
3. Introduce permit-only parking at all times.
4. Do away with permits and take your luck.
5. Cars with permits should not be allowed to leave their cars parked in the street without using them for an indefinite time.
6. If streets in our zone (Westgarth) had marked parking bays this may improve the amount of cars that could actually park in the street.
7. In Fairfield there are many pockets of vacant land that could be developed for short-term parking.



Cost/Price of Parking Permits

1. The cost of permits above 2 should be increased. Under no circumstances should Council cave into greedy residents who want to abolish the system.
2. If one household wants more than two permits it should be more expensive (double what it is now).
3. Pensioners should be free.
4. That all permits be free. Free parking everywhere at all times

Number of Permits

1. Having the option to purchase a 3rd permit.
2. The number of permits should be limited
3. Not sure that any household would require 4 permits and also if they have four cars then cars would always make it difficult to park in front of/or close to their house - blocks of land are generally only two car lengths wide at maximum.
4. Do not give too many permits out as then it will be harder to get a parking spot leave parking restrictions the same.

Administration of the Parking Permits Scheme

1. Rather than having to re-apply every year permits be posted to owners of properties before end of every period. Make them easier to obtain - I have difficulty getting from and paying for permit under current system.
2. Renewal notices to be sent out once the current permit expires as a reminder.
3. A review of restrictions is called for. Some are probably not necessary due to changed circumstances. Some restrictions seem to pander to residents' selfish needs.

Town Planning Issues

1. There needs to be some equality between street frontage and the number of permits issued for residence. We are about to be swamped by medium sized apartments and parking will be a major problem.
2. Some streets could be 'permit only' on one side/no permits for new multi-storey residents.

Area-Based vs Street-Based System?

1. Each street needs to be reviewed separately.
2. Near tram stops and taxi depots single street zones should apply for residents only.
3. If we were to change to "single street" and our street was full up of cars, we would not have nowhere to park - therefore creating a catch 22 position.
4. Concern with the location of some parking precinct boundaries which run down the middle of streets – confusing.



Parking Needs for Specific Groups

1. Provide parking spaces for employees that come from other suburbs so they do not park all day in front of the house.
2. Effort needs to be given to non-residents parking in the street and then commuting to work also businesses using street parking for clients and workers. But do not park in the tram-stop because of vandalism. We have no parking and it needs to be patrolled.

B.3 Issues and Concerns raised during the Workshop

- With parking on property vs on street can you get a permit even if you have off street parking?
 - Council officer response: Under the current scheme households with a driveway or off street parking are entitled to 1 less permit than otherwise permitted in their area.
- Issuing more permits than parking spaces isn't this a planning issue rather than a permit issue. More families and increased population means more car parking is required. Therefore need to create more car parking.
 - Question raised by the facilitator (Peter Tesdorpf): Who should be responsible for finding and maintaining this parking? Community in attendance responded that Council should be responsible.
- On Street car parking space is not being used as effectively as it should be. Many cars park in a way that means they take up one and a half spaces.
- Question as to whether Council has done anything to assess the overall cost of the scheme? Including costs associated with enforcing of restrictions, installation of signs, and administration of the permits.
 - Council advised that this is difficult to work out as traffic enforcement officers enforce all restrictions such as clearways and restrictions in commercial areas and this costs approximately \$1 million
- How many parking spots are allocated or should be allocated to a church?
 - Council Officers response: Under current scheme if you live at the church then you fall under the current scheme and the current guidelines apply. If you don't live at the church then you are not eligible for any parking permits.
- Difficult to find parking around the church when there is a funeral or service etc What are the people attending supposed to do? Potential for conflict between church users and residents.
 - Costs should be divided up similar to rates and this is what people have to pay. Rebates should be available for people using rear access and driveways to provided on site parking. People not using there on site parking should have to pay more.
 - Question raised by the facilitator (Peter Tesdorpf): How do you enforce this type of thing?
- West Preston has a problem caused by the school and nearby flats very busy and high demand for parking.



- Westgarth Trader mentioned that there have been a lot of developments approved for their strip and many of these have been for cafes and hairdressers. It would be better to have different business that combine together so that parking demand was reduced.
- Resident from Roseberry Ave at the High St end advised that as they are close to the shops often when they get home the only place to park is near Plenty Road. Suggestion was that perhaps the sections of Roseberry Ave near High Street could be made residents only.
- Lives around the corner from a disco. Restrictions are for 1 hr however no body polices them so people are parking are ignoring the restrictions and parking for as long as they like.
- Shortage of both short and long term car parking around the Preston Business area and they would like to see that the traders are given some sort of permit.
- More policing required at the creek end of Clarke St. The main problem is in the evening when people have visitors or leave car there to go into town etc. The time when the policing and enforcement should occur is in the evening.
- Permit zones where residents are the only ones who can park there are not used much within Darebin like it is in other municipalities.
 - Council Officers response: Darebin hasn't reached the point that the other inner city suburbs have. Installation of Permit Only Zones does not maximise the use of the kerb side parking.
- How many streets would allow on street angle parking as this would increase the parking.
 - Council Officers response: Difficult to say how many streets could because it depends on the width of the road and other conditions. Each street would need to be assessed individually.
 - Regarding the suggestion for angle parking many people object to angle parking being in front of there house as this means more cars are able to park in front of their house and it doesn't look as appealing.
- Likes that Council encourages business to the area but believes they should provide more parking because the business' pay money to be there.
- Review should also consider accommodating people who work from home.
- With developments that are put forward if there are no car spaces available Council asks developers to pay money for car parking what happens to this money? His development paid for 15 spaces and they haven't been built.

B.4 Findings and Recommendations from Group Discussions

Group A: Town Planning Issues

Key issues that require attention:

- Short term priority
 - Public transport timetabling and co-ordination is inadequate, especially cross-radial east-west services. Need to upgrade and educate people about public transport to encourage people out of their cars.



- Long term priority
 - Make a policy to refuse on-street parking permits for new developments. All new developments should provide all their own parking on site, without reliance on the street space.
- Priority
 - Need to accept there is not (and will never be) sufficient car parking for everyone.

Group B: Cost/Price of Parking Permits; and Area-Based vs Street-Based System

- Permit Pricing
 - Key issues that require attention:
 - Group noted that 74% of people appear happy with the current pricing.
 - Use the pricing system to encourage or discourage certain parking behaviours.
 - Use fee system to generate extra revenue to help manage the scheme.
 - Everyone should be charged a fee for parking in the street but perhaps no more than \$10 (??)
 - Residents must be encouraged to use their driveways if they have them.
 - If parking is free, people will be lazy and park in the street.
 - Suggest three different fee rates: Residents: \$20, Pensioners and disabled: concession rate, Traders: higher fee than residential.
- Area-Based vs Street-Based System
 - Key Issues:
 - Area-based scheme preferred, as it offers more scope and is easier to monitor.
 - A street-based scheme gives less flexibility, but may be necessary in a few special cases/locations.
 - With a street-based scheme, if your street is full there is nowhere else you can go to park. And corner sites would be problematic: which street would they belong to?

Group C: Administration of the Parking Permits Scheme

- Key issues that require attention:
 - This group responded to the 11 comments received prior to the workshop, as follows. (Group comments in bold):
 - Rather than having to re-apply every year permits be posted to owners of properties before end of every period. Make them easier to obtain - I have difficulty getting from and paying for permit under current system. **Send permits out with rate notices and introduce credit card payment facilities.**
 - Having moved from the City of Yarra we have found the process of applying for permits and prices here are satisfactory and user friendly. **\$50 fee for additional permits seems too high.**



- ID check to get permit (photo ID with address) and more inspectors checking permits. **Too hard and cumbersome to police.**
- Notification of your entitlements as a resident. **Existing Darebin newsletter is sufficient.**
- Guests permits (1 week) should be available locally ie Fairfield library. As we work F/T away from Darebin. It's difficult to get to main centre during the week or do on the Internet. **One-week permits should be issued from convenient outlets.**
- Informing users of permits that the permit doesn't give them ownership of the space that they use. Especially those that don't have driveways. **Not seen as an issue.**
- A review of restrictions is called for. Some are probably not necessary due to changed circumstances. Some restrictions seem to pander to residents' selfish needs. **Not sure.**
- Recently I found a parking sign to be changed without being notified by Council about an impending change. **Council should inform residents of any changes.**
- I think the system is running a lot better and fairer than a lot of other Councils. **Agree.**
- When street sweeper is used - notification would be a good idea for cars to be moved so gutters can be swept. **Notify people of when the street sweeper is coming.**

Group D: Number of Permits

- Key issues that require attention:
 - Supply visitor parking vouchers with rate notices (on annual basis).
 - Review boundaries of current parking precincts.
 - Two permanent parking permits per household is enough.
 - Additional permits should be on request and if justifiable reasons are provided.

Group E: Parking Needs for Specific Groups

- Key issues that require attention:
 - Visitors:
 - Mixed opinion in group as to whether or not to provide visitor permits.
 - Limit of 1 or 2 visitor permits.
 - Introduce metered parking.
 - Traders:
 - Blanket 1-hr parking not suitable for shoppers.
 - No access to additional parking.
 - Traders who rely on long-term customers have no options in High Street Preston.
 - Traders should be able to apply for parking vouchers (paid/unpaid).
 - Traders could provide a shuttle service for goods and customers to and from shops and car parks.
 - Need a variety of parking times (1/4 hr, 1 hr, 3 hr etc)



- Residents:
 - Availability – how do we get more priority to residents?
 - All new developments must have on site parking.
 - For itinerant parking, make use of under-utilised open land.
 - Offer incentives to residents to provide on-site parking and construct crossovers.
 - Mark on-street parking bays clearly with painted lines etc.
 - Better traffic management.



Appendix C Focus Group Presentations



City of Darebin Parking Permit Scheme Review

Community Focus Groups

Thursday 5th February

Tuesday 10th February

Background

- H The Council introduced a Parking Permit Scheme about five years ago
- H There are a number of issues with the existing scheme because of competing needs and views within the community about parking management
- H The current project aims to address community concerns with the existing scheme where possible

What do we plan to achieve today?

- H** Discuss the problems and issues you have related to car parking in your local area
- H** Talk through some of the overarching issues and get your input
- H** Gain agreement on what the key aims of the parking permit scheme should be
- H** Discuss how a parking permit scheme could be used to resolve some or all of the parking problems in residential streets

What are the parking problems?



Gillies Street

What are the parking problems?



< Station Street >



< Elm Street >



How does the current system work?

Darebin has been divided into three zones:

- H Zone A: Includes all shop top residences.** Only one resident permit is allowed per residence and no visitor permits are issued. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, are not entitled to a permit. The permit is for use in the surrounding streets if they have parking restrictions. This zone is only in Westgarth and High Streets.
- H Zone B: Includes areas where resident parking is limited.** Households are entitled to two permits, which can be fixed or transferable, such as to visitors. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, can have one permit. Zone B is located in parts of High Street, Westgarth Street, Darebin Road and some surrounding streets.
- H Zone C: Includes areas where there is generally ample parking available** (most of the municipality). Households may obtain a maximum of four permits for their vehicles. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, may obtain three permits.

What are the main parking problems?

H Too many cars in the street?

I Conflict between residents

I Residents want extra car parking and visitor permits

I Residents and their visitors can't park close to their homes

H Streets close to shopping centres:

I Conflict between residents, shoppers and traders

I Peak shopping periods cause problems for residents

I Traders want to have long term parking near their shops

H Streets with community facilities:

I Extra parking demand when functions or activities are on

I Short term parking issues (eg for kindergartens)

I Visitors parking across driveways or not observing time limits

H Enforcement:

I Existing time limits not regularly enforced

I difficulties in enforcement for the enforcement officers

Things we need to consider in developing a new parking permit scheme

- H The policy must be fair and equitable
- H It should encourage use of sustainable transport modes
- H The administrative practicalities for Council and residents
- H Complexity of the scheme
- H the degree of enforcement required for it to work must be practical
- H the price of parking permits must be fair

What is the role of a parking permit scheme?

- H** Is it solely to ensure that residents are able to park in their streets?
- H** Is it to preserve residential amenity by restricting the use of these streets by other vehicles?
- H** Should the aim be to encourage residents to shift to more sustainable transport modes?

How should the available number of permits be determined?

- H Per household - providing each household with a set limit of permits unless they can prove unusual circumstances.
- H Per Street or Precinct - providing a set number of permits per street (based on available parking spaces) and then setting a structure in place to distribute those amongst the residents.
- H With a link between house size and parking spaces - each household would receive a number of permits based on their street frontage or number of bedrooms and available off-street parking.
 - I The first alternative is the easiest to administer but is also the one most likely to result in over-provision of parking permits.

What about alternatives?

H How strongly should the resident parking permit scheme be linked to the Darebin Integrated Transport Plan?

I For example, should the number of permits available be restricted for those households within a set distance of a public transport route?

I Could we encourage alternative transport by providing parking for bikes and motor cycles as well as cars?

Other Issues

- H Should residents be allowed to reduce the amount of on-street parking where it is limited - for example by putting in driveways for off-street parking. Should they lose on-street parking rights if they do this?
- H Should Council consider expending parking permits to business operators?
- H Should special provisions be made for people with disabilities - for example extended parking hours or by providing special parking places.
- H The scheme needs to be both simple for Council to administer and easy for residents to access. An element of cost-recovery should be built into the cost of the permits, since it is providing an extra service to the residents who have them.

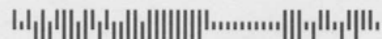


Appendix D Options Pamphlet



Delivery Address:
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City of Darebin

Review of the Parking Permit Scheme Options Survey March 2004

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If you have difficulties understanding this information from the City of Darebin phone 9230 4353 and tell us what language you speak to be connected with an interpreter.

إذا كنتم تجدون صعوبات في فهم هذه المعلومات من بلدية دارين الرجاء الاتصال على الرقم 9230 4353 وإعلامنا عن اللغة التي تتكلمونها لإيصالكم بترجم.

ARABIC

如果您對此信息中的事宜有疑問，請致電 9230 4353 給Darebin市政府，請求轉接講中文的翻譯。

CHINESE

Se trovate difficile capire queste informazioni del Comune di Darebin telefonate al 9230 4353 e diteci che lingua parlate per essere messi in comunicazione con un interprete.

ITALIAN

Αν έχετε δυσκολίες να καταλάβετε αυτές τις πληροφορίες από τη Δημαρχία του Darebin, τηλεφωνήστε στο 9230 4353 και πείτε μας ποια γλώσσα μιλάτε για να σας συνδέσουμε με διερμηνέα.

GREEK

Ако имате тешкотии да ги разберете овие информации од општината Даребин, јавете се на тел. 9230 4353 и кажете ни кој јазик го зборувате за да ве поврземе со преведувач.

MACEDONIAN

Nếu quý cô bác thấy phần hướng dẫn này có gì không hiểu, xin gọi Hội đồng Thị xã Darebin qua số 9230 4353 và nói cho biết quý cô bác nói tiếng Việt rồi nhân viên sẽ nói đường dây với một thông dịch viên.

VIETNAMESE



Review of the Parking Permit Scheme

Have Your Say!

March 2004

Introduction

Darebin's Parking Permit Scheme was developed in 1997 and is currently being reviewed to keep it up to date and better reflect community attitudes. Council is committed to improve amenity for residents by addressing a range of parking and traffic issues.

Council held a Community Workshop in September last year and distributed a questionnaire for community comment. Following this, a Reference Group was formed to assist Council with the development of a new or modified parking permit scheme. The group comprises local residents, traders and relevant Council staff.

Experienced parking and traffic consultants Sinclair Knight Merz have been engaged to assist Council with this process to provide independent advice on the issues, to undertake community consultation and to identify best practice parking options that may be suitable for Darebin.

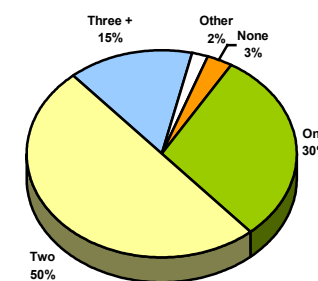
Council is distributing this pamphlet to inform you about the options that have been developed and to provide you with the opportunity for input (see end of pamphlet for comment options). The community has had input into developing these options through consultation, focus groups and the Reference Group. Council wants to make sure, however, that all interested citizens have an opportunity to comment on the options being considered.



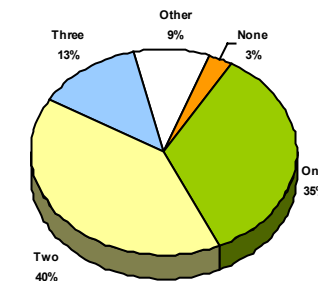
What have people said before?

Over 1800 questionnaires were sent to households in September of last year, and 340 (19%) were returned. Over half of the responding households in permit controlled streets had two cars and two permits. The majority of households have off-street parking available.

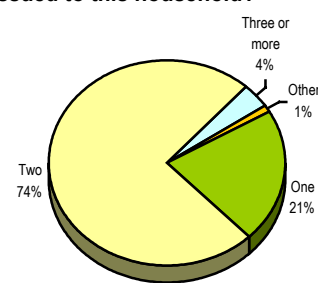
How many licenced drivers live in this household?



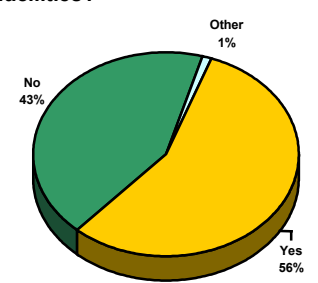
How many cars are located at this household?



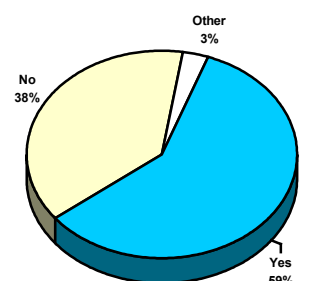
How many permits have been issued to this household?



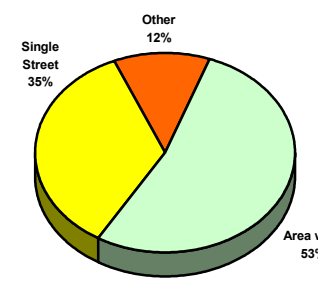
Do you have off-street parking facilities?



Do you find difficulties parking in your street?



Do you think area wide or single street zones are better?



Residents' views about what the parking issues are and how to solve them vary widely. Council are addressing some of the parking problems in other ways, for example through the Integrated Travel Plan. This review has concentrated on ways the resident parking permit scheme can be improved.

Cut page to return your comments to Council



Appendix E Earlier documents in the Study

- Background Review Discussion Paper, November 2003
- Options Paper, February 2004
- Restrictions on Availability of Parking Permits for New Residential Developments, March 2004

Parking Permit Scheme Review



DISCUSSION PAPER

- Background Review
- Final Report
- 12 November 2003



Parking Permit Scheme Review



DISCUSSION PAPER

- Final Report
- 12 November 2003

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1. Introduction and Summary

1.1 Background to the Paper

About 5 years ago the City of Darebin introduced a parking permit scheme which covered the previous municipalities of Northcote and Preston. This scheme has been in operation since but there are now issues that Council would like to address, particularly in response to community concerns.

Council have appointed Sinclair Knight Merz to undertake a review of the residential parking permit scheme and develop a new scheme that reflects the future direction of both local and state policies and strategies and that fully considers community opinion. A Reference Group representing a range of interests has been established by Council to assist with the review.

This discussion paper is intended to inform the development of the new scheme and provide a background for the reference group and the community consultation. The discussion paper is based on the following:

- A review of the existing parking permit scheme policy and other relevant Council files and records
- Research into local and international best practice in parking management
- A review of statistical data including demographics, car ownership trends etc.

The research included:

- An Internet-based survey of twenty-one local authorities in Australia, North America and the UK
- Telephone discussions with the council officers in charge of residential permit schemes in seven local government areas in Melbourne.

1.2 Summary Conclusions

We are able to draw the following conclusions, and make the following observations, based on the research we have undertaken to date for this study.

Policy

- There seems to be no challenge to the basic contention that residents deserve special privileges in on-street parking
- Only occasionally do councils provide similar privileges to other groups such as retail traders and almost never to other types of businesses
- The promotion of sustainable transport has not been a driving force in the allocation of resident permits.



Administration

- There are no authoritative studies on the level of abuse of existing resident permit schemes. Anecdotal comments made by council officers indicates that there is a problem with abuse but it is not widespread
- Councils vary widely in the number of checks on the credentials of applicants and their dwellings
- The geographic area applicable for individual permits varies – from individual streets to the whole municipality. There is a compromise between small areas (residents may not find a vacant space in a small area) and very large areas (abuse)
- Permit schemes are most contentious, and most needed, where there is a shortage of on-street parking compared with demand
- The prices charged for resident permits seem to be well below the cost of parking in commercial car parks nearby
- Councils do not seem to draw comparisons between the costs to administer the scheme and income through the sale of residential permits.

Enforcement

- After hours enforcement is particularly important if residential parking permit schemes are to be used near entertainment or sporting venues
- The perception of the Darebin community is that the level of parking enforcement in Darebin is lower than other municipalities. This issue needs to be further researched so that an appropriate level of enforcement can be proposed.

Application of Resident Parking Permits

- Most schemes either:
 - 1) Exempt vehicles from time limits; or
 - 2) Exempt vehicles from parking bans
- It is common to control parking by limiting visitors to one side of streets in the areas adjacent to commercial centres.

Visitor Permits

- Most Councils issue permits which could be used by visitors to residential properties. Some have explicit visitor permits available for short periods ('party permits')
- There is little control of who uses visitor permits or information on their use.



Community Attitudes

There are still two widespread misunderstandings:

- That the greater the number of permits issued the easier it will be for permit holders to find a vacant on-street space
- That a residential parking permit guarantees that there will be a vacant space available – or even a reasonable expectation that there will be a space

A significant proportion of residents expect Councils to provide the same on-street parking availability in the inner and middle suburbs as they may have enjoyed in the outer suburbs. There is limited understanding that greater residential density and mixed use development may not make this practical.

1.3 Issues for Consideration

There are several key issues that need to be considered as part of the process of developing a new resident parking permit scheme. Questions that have been raised during the course of developing this paper include:

- What is the purpose of the scheme? Is it solely to ensure that residents are able to park in their streets, or is it to preserve residential amenity by restricting the use of these streets by other vehicles? Alternatively, is the aim to encourage residents to shift to more sustainable transport modes?
- How should the number of available permits be determined? Alternatives are:
 - Per household – providing each household with a set limit of permits unless they can prove unusual circumstances
 - Per Street or Precinct – providing a set number of permits per street (based on available parking spaces) and then setting a structure in place to distribute those amongst the residents
 - With a nexus between house size and parking spaces – each household would receive a number of permits based on their street frontage or number of bedrooms and available off-street parking.

The first alternative is the easiest to administer but is also the one most likely to result in over-provision of parking permits

- How strongly should the resident parking permit scheme be linked to the Darebin Integrated Transport Plan? For example, should the number of permits available be restricted for those households within a set distance of a public transport node?
- What planning and/or legal strategies can be used to prevent the loss of off-street parking? If residents use their off-street parking space for other purposes should they be eligible for an on-street permit?
- Should the Council consider provide parking permits to businesses? If so, the following issues need to be considered:



- It is likely that these could only be provided in areas where there is ample spare capacity for parking. In other areas Council may need to work with the businesses to come up with ways to manage parking demand – for example by finding alternative parking locations or through alternative travel programs
- Residents would expect to have precedence in areas where there was competition for car parking spaces. This could lead to conflict between residents and business operators
- Business operators and their employees are also part of the Darebin community and add to its economic well-being. Their need to operate efficiently needs to be recognised
- The scheme needs to be both simple for Council to administer and easy for residents to access. An element of cost-recovery should be built into the cost of the permits.



2. Criteria for Assessment of Parking Schemes

There are many resident parking permit schemes operating in Victoria and a number of variations which could be introduced to Darebin.

We present the following discussion to provide a structure to make sense of the trade offs by which a preferred scheme could be identified.

Fair and Equitable

The allocation of parking permits to particular groups in the community is essentially giving them preference to a scarce community resource, ie: on street parking. Therefore, some groups and individuals may need to be given special attention or special consideration. This could be because of low income, special circumstances or community expectation that this group should be given special consideration. It may be that this group has lack of choice concerning their mode of travel. Either way, the practical issues of fairness and equity need to be central to the development and enforcement of any new parking scheme.

Encouragement of sustainable modes

Restricting parking increases the effective costs of car ownership and car use. By implication, this may encourage the use of sustainable modes such as tram, bus, walking and cycling. The less parking available, the more effective such a policy will be. Available parking and road space should be used by cars undertaking trips that are impracticable by other modes. There may be community resistance to schemes which are seen as too restrictive. Educational programs may be needed to inform the community of the rationale behind any particular scheme. Attitude and voluntary behaviour change may only occur in the longer term. The type of parking scheme chosen provides an opportunity to promote sustainable modes of travel.

Administrative practicalities

Permit schemes must be practical to administer in terms of:

- Council staff time
- Time sending out reminders, receipts, and other information
- Administrative time spent checking the personal credentials of applicants
- Administrative time spent checking the physical circumstances of each house and street
- Effort spent in enforcement and the pursuit of fine defaulters
- Checks to ensure that abuse of permits is minimised, such as misuse of visitors permits

The practicalities of administering and enforcing any new parking permit scheme must be discussed up-front to guide the type of options explored.



Complexity of the scheme

Parking permit schemes can be plotted on a continuum with simple schemes at one end and very complicated schemes at the other end of the spectrum:

- Simple schemes have the advantage that they are easy to administer and easy to understand.
- Complex schemes have the advantage that they can be tailored to meet the needs of particular geographical areas, particular times of day, particular interest groups, and address the particular problems that they seek to overcome. They are appropriate in diverse municipalities where a 'one size fits all' scheme is not appropriate.

Degree of enforcement

The degree of enforcement can determine the effectiveness of a parking permit system. Complex parking control and permit systems are only practicable if there are high levels of enforcement at the times when the permits apply.

There may also be community pressure to provide a high level of enforcement. In Darebin, the main feedback from the community in this respect has been a call to provide a higher level of enforcement outside of normal business hours.

Price of parking permits

When determining the appropriate price the following aspects would be taken into consideration:

- The higher the price the less affordable the permit becomes for lower income households
- The higher the price the more the administrative costs of the schemes can be carried by the scheme itself
- There needs to be a nexus between the cost of the permit and the availability of spaces
- There also needs to be a clear nexus between the price of the permit and the goals of the scheme. If one of the key goals is to restrict car ownership to increase use of other modes of transport, a higher fee would be justified than if the key aim was to ensure an adequate supply of parking for residents.



3. Background and Policy Context

3.1 The current Resident Parking Permit Scheme

About 5 years ago the City of Darebin introduced a parking permit scheme which covered the previous municipalities of Northcote and Preston. This scheme has been in operation since but there are now issues that Council would like to address, particularly in response to community concerns.

The scheme divides the municipality into three zones which have different limits on the available number of permits for households. The zones are:

- Zone A Incorporates all shop top residences. Only one resident permit is allowed per residence and no visitor permits are issued. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, are not entitled to a permit. The permit is for use in the surrounding streets if they have parking restrictions. Only located in Westgarth and High Streets.
- Zone B Includes areas where resident parking is limited. Households are entitled to two permits, which can be fixed or transferable, such as to visitors. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, can have one permit. Zone B is located in parts of High Street, Westgarth Street, Darebin Road and some surrounding streets.
- Zone C Includes areas where there is relatively ample parking available, which is the majority of the municipality. Households may obtain a maximum of four permits for their vehicles. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, may obtain three permits.

The concerns raised by the community during the recent process of public consultation have included:

- The demand for permits in some locations exceeds the supply of parking
- Varying issues about the number of permits per household
- Administration of the Parking Permit Scheme (although this is very similar to other municipalities around Melbourne)
- The cost of permits
- The boundaries of the zones – consideration needs to be given to setting restrictions on a street by street, rather than zonal, basis
- The parking needs of specific groups
- Town planning and design issues
- Enforcement of existing restrictions (mainly that the residents felt there is insufficient enforcement).

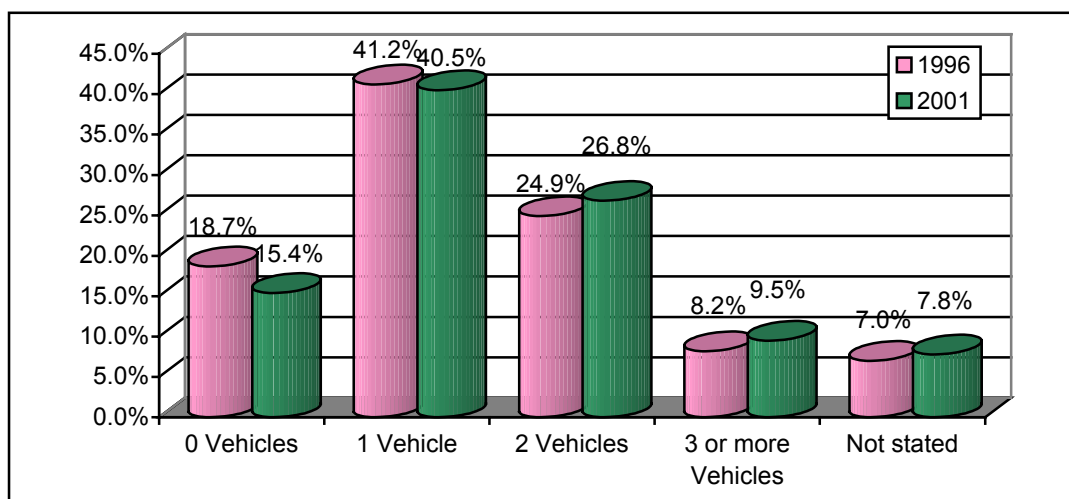


3.2 Travel and Transport Trends in Darebin

The number of dwellings with at least one vehicle in Darebin rose from 47,267 in 1996 to 49,153 at the time of the 2001 Census, an increase of 4.0%. This is partly a result of the number of existing dwellings without a vehicle decreasing, but also partly a result of an increased number of dwellings in the municipality.

The number of households without a car in Darebin has decreased from 18.7% in 1996 to 15.4% in 2001 as shown in Figure 1. There has also been a slight decrease in the number of households with one car. There has been a corresponding rise in the number of households with two or more vehicles. In particular the number of households with three or more vehicles has increased from 8.2% to 9.5%, an increase of 830 households. The net result is both an increase in the number of households with cars and also an increase in the number of cars each household has. This has contributed to the increase in demand for on-street parking.

■ **Figure 1 Number of Vehicles owned by households in Darebin**



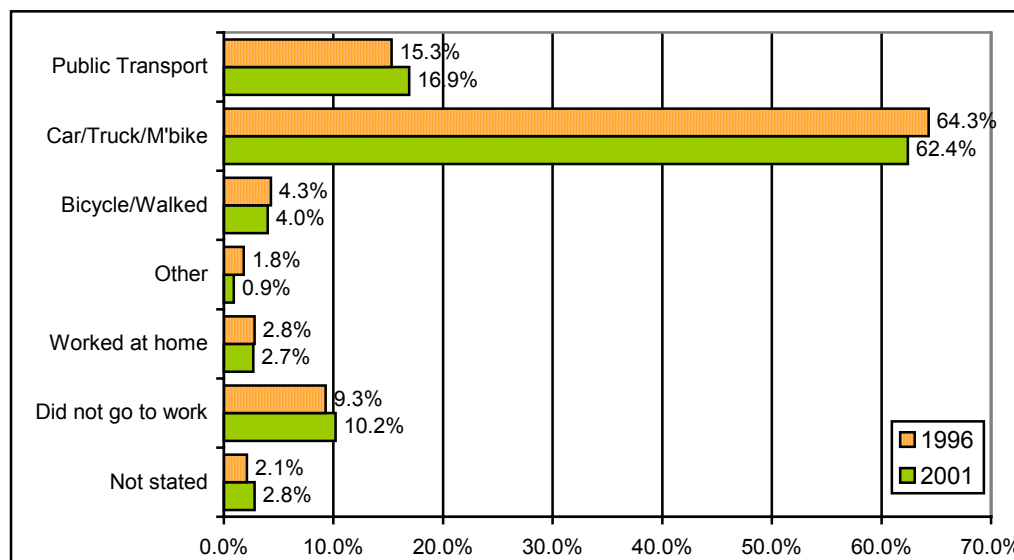
Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 1996 and 2001

By contrast, there has been an increase in the number of Darebin residents travelling to work by public transport, from 15.3% to 16.9%. This is an increase of over 1,500 people. Even more encouragingly, there has been a corresponding drop in the number of people travelling to work by personal vehicle.

The number of Darebin residents who walked or rode a bicycle to work also decreased over the inter-censal period, although by a very small amount. Nevertheless, the proportion of people walking and cycling to work in Darebin (4.0%) is still higher than the metropolitan average, which is 3.3%. This suggests that the strategies to improve walking and cycling rates in the Darebin Integrated Travel Plan could lead to significant increases in the use of these forms of transport.



■ **Figure 2 Journey to Work Trends in Darebin**



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 1996 and 2001

3.3 State Policy Context

3.3.1 Melbourne 2030

The main State government policy document that relates to this study is *Melbourne 2030*. The objectives of Melbourne 2030 cover the following nine directions:

- 1) A more compact city
- 2) Better management of metropolitan growth
- 3) Networks with the regional cities
- 4) A more prosperous city
- 5) A great place to be
- 6) A fairer city
- 7) A greener city
- 8) Better transport links, better planning decisions, and careful management
 - 8.1 Upgrade and develop the Principal Public Transport Network and local public transport services to connect activity centres and link Melbourne to the regional cities
 - 8.2 Improve the operation of the existing public transport network with faster, more reliable and efficient on-road and rail public transport
 - 8.3 Plan urban development to make jobs and community services more accessible
 - 8.4 Coordinate development of all transport modes to provide a comprehensive transport system
 - 8.5 Manage the road system to achieve integration, choice and balance by developing an efficient and safe network and making the most of existing infrastructure



- 8.6 Review transport practices, including design, construction and management, to reduce environmental impacts
 - 8.7 Give more priority to cycling and walking in planning urban development and in managing our road system and neighbourhoods
 - 8.8 Promote the use of sustainable personal transport options
- 9) Better planning decisions, careful management.

The key direction for this study is #8 – better transport links. The strategy has a vision of 20% of all trips being made by public transport by 2020. Direction 8 clearly indicates a state government policy of adopting travel demand strategies to increase the use of public transport rather than private vehicles. This has implications for the provision of car parking because reducing car dependency could lead to a reduction in the number of cars, and hence the need for car parking. However, it may also lead to retention of the car but reduced usage, so the car would then be parked at the residence for longer periods of time.

Melbourne 2030 specifically refers to the use of parking management strategies to encourage a shift to other modes of transport.

3.3.2 The Northern Central City Corridor Strategy

The NCCC Strategy addresses traffic and transport issues in the suburbs immediately south of Darebin. For that reason, many of the issues it discusses and the solutions will also apply to Darebin.

It is noted in the NCCC Strategy that:

Parking is primarily a local government responsibility, even on arterial roads. Availability of parking is a key determinant in mode choice; parking at home influences car ownership levels, and parking at or near destinations influences the decision to use a car for a journey. Provision of parking space has a major effect on local amenity and streetscape, especially in areas like the inner north where the majority of residential car parking (and a large proportion of commercial and retail parking) is on-street. As initiatives to encourage more public transport use and behavioural change programs are implemented, it is desirable to influence both parking availability and price as part of the overall management of demand.

The following initiatives were suggested in the NCCC Strategy as the basis for ongoing development of parking as a demand management tool.

Residential parking

Residential parking permit schemes in the inner north (administered by the Cities of Melbourne and Yarra) should be revised to provide the following key features:

- *Availability of residential and visitor permits should be more strongly linked to the amount of on-street and off-street parking space available*



- *Permit-only on-street parking spaces should be provided consistent with the number of permits issued in residential areas, to guarantee that there will be at least one permit-only parking space for each permit issued*
- *Permit parking precincts or areas should be reviewed. In general they should be reduced in size and increased in number, to discourage people living in one part of a precinct from parking in another*
- *Pricing of permits should be increased to a level that more accurately reflects the value and impacts of on-street parking*
- *Trading (selling) of permits should be banned*

Commercial and Retail Parking

Adequate provision should be made for a suitable mix of on-street parking in commercial and retail areas throughout the inner north. Most of the commercial and retail areas are on arterial or collector streets, so there is inevitable conflict between parking and traffic flow requirements in many areas. Commercial and retail area parking should provide the following:

- *Strong emphasis on short-stay parking*
- *Charges for on-street parking using meters or ticket machines, and development of suitable off-street facilities where parking demand clearly exceeds supply*
- *Sufficient loading and unloading areas*
- *Measures to prevent parking demand from spilling into adjacent residential streets (positioning of resident permit zones can be a significant factor)*
- *Conveniently located taxi ranks (especially in entertainment areas).*

Commuter Parking

The NCCC Strategy refers to both workplace parking and 'park and ride' parking. It is recognised that workplaces in inner suburbs rarely have high levels of dedicated off-street employee parking. The NCCCS does not propose to change the principles behind the provision of workplace parking, however it is recognised that the development of workplace travel behaviour programs could assist in managing employee travel patterns.

Some informal park and ride travel already take place in Darebin and other inner northern suburbs, where commuters park on-street, and this results in loss of parking spaces for residents.

The NCCCS recommends the development of park and ride facilities should be developed further out in the Principal Public Transport Network to intercept incoming car users at an earlier point in their journey. This would reduce the amount of commuter traffic passing through the inner north.



3.4 City of Darebin Policy Context

3.4.1 Darebin Integrated Travel Plan

The City of Darebin has adopted an integrated transport travel plan which encourages greater use of sustainable transport modes, ie: walking, cycling and public transport. The plan seeks to discourage unnecessary use of cars but is not an ‘anti-car’ plan. It supports the use of motorised travel where appropriate but seeks to increase usage of other forms of transport. Concurrently the State Government has also adopted transport and land use policies that seek to support the use of modes other than ‘drive alone’.

The following statements from *Going Places- Darebin Integrated Travel Plan* summarise the aims of the strategy in relation to balancing the provision of high levels of accessibility against the need to maintain or improve the other aspects of Darebin’s environment such as:

- Attractiveness of Darebin as a ‘place to be’
- Healthiness and environmental friendliness
- Economic viability for businesses
- Local character.

The integrated travel plan seeks to achieve these aims by the following means:

- **Reducing trip numbers and lengths** (housing densities, development trends, grouping key destinations)
- **Improve walking and cycling** (direct routes with active edges, shelter from wind and rain, lighting, disability access to transport, bike parking)
- **Improve public transport** (advocacy for increasing routes and services, upgrading stops, better reliability and service times, passenger information)
- **Manage cars and trucks** (careful consideration of new infrastructure and road widening, slowing down traffic through sensitive areas, improving safety especially for pedestrians, increasing costs relative to other forms of travel, maintaining goods delivery).

To be successful, the Darebin Integrated Travel Plan requires a shift in public attitudes to the usage of the various modes of travel. This will be a gradual process and involve new community attitudes to health and fitness, more active lifestyles, new attitudes to social responsibility and the recognition of the role of transport in building healthy communities. This review of the parking permit scheme is another opportunity to add to the behaviour change programs that are currently taking place in Darebin, many of which are auspiced by Council.

3.5 Comparative Policy Context

3.5.1 Rationale for Resident Parking Permit Schemes

The majority of resident parking permits schemes in Australia and elsewhere appear to have been initiated in areas where on-street parking is a scarce resource. These areas are usually inner city



(older) neighbourhoods, where the streets were not designed to accommodate large numbers of cars. The worst affected areas are generally those close to major traffic attractors, such as retail precincts, business areas, entertainment precincts or large facilities, for example sports grounds.

The key objective of these parking schemes is to provide on-street car parking preference for residents by restricting the ability of other road users to park their cars in the area for any length of time, or at all. In most areas it appears to be accepted that residents should have priority access to the available parking spaces.

An example of this is in Boston (USA), where the Council will only implement a resident parking permit scheme if it has been requested by residents, who have to hold a series of community meetings and have a petition completed by over fifty percent of residents before the Council will consider implementation. In New Westminster, Canada, there are specific levels set: at least one side of the street must be occupied more than 80% during at least four days per week, four hours per day, and the parking problem must be caused by non-residents, that is, more than 25% of the vehicles in the area belong to non-residents and a two thirds majority of residents must support the installation of time-regulated parking, before it will be considered. However in Vancouver, an assessment is undertaken of the amount of off-street parking available to residents, and a parking scheme may not be introduced if sufficient parking is available (so residents cannot lease their on-property spaces to commuters and park their own cars on the street).

The Chester City Council (UK) appears to only provide a limited number of resident parking permits in each zone. Permits are not granted to residents who have off-street parking on their premises. All residents with on on-street parking are placed on a reserve list and receive a permit on a rotational basis as they become available. Their aim is to manage the number of cars in the area at any given time to try to ensure parking is available for anyone who has a permit.

A secondary objective is to preserve residential amenity by restricting the amount of non-local traffic. An example is Boroondara, which has a specific objective of considering the effect of parked cars on the appearance of heritage areas and significant streetscapes. Other Councils also consider the noise, pollution and general amenity impacts of cars.

3.5.2 Sustainable Transport or Public Transport Policy

In some instances residential parking permit schemes, or the regulation of on-street parking, has been linked to the establishment of sustainable transport policies.

In most of these cases parking policies are focussed on restricting off-street parking, particularly for new developments, with the aim of forcing the users of those developments to use public transport instead. As noted by the Scottish Executive, “Constraining car parking for new developments focuses developers’ attention on the overall travel context of the development, including providing for travel by public transport, on foot and by cycle. (NPPG 17 Addendum)”. The aim of the addendum is to introduce maximum, rather than minimum, parking standards. The intention is to direct development into areas where it is easy to provide links to public transport.



Councils are required to develop structure plans and transport plans that enforce maximum parking standards that may vary depending on the amount of traffic and the types of traffic generators. Parking spaces are generally linked to floor space (for example there is an allowance of one car space per 30m² of business floor space). This policy is also set out in Melbourne 2030, although an implementation program and standards have not yet been established.

The Boroondara Council Parking Policy has a strategic objective of increasing “the use of car pools, public transport, cycle and walk modes to reduce the need for parking spaces.” (City of Boroondara, 1998, p. 6) They have been working on traffic management plans (eg the Swinburne/Glenferrie Travel Management Demonstration Project) in an effort to reduce the number of vehicle trips within the municipality, and hence the competition for car parking spaces. This opportunity has also been recognised by the City of Port Phillip in their Parking Plan, which states that equal priority will be given “to bicycles, pedestrians and public transport in order to reduce the use, frequency and harmful impact of cars on the municipality’s social, cultural and natural environment.” (Port Phillip City Council, 2000, p. 9) Having an articulated transport strategy enables Councils to be more restrictive in issuing parking permits.

Councils are also more frequently requiring new developments to provide sufficient off-street parking for the likely number of residents. This is required of single dwelling developments as well as multi-units. Some Councils, such as Port Phillip, Yarra and Adelaide, will not issue on-street parking permits to new developments. However, while this helps to reduce on-street congestion, it is not necessarily an appropriate response in terms of sustainable transport policy. Ensuring off-street parking is provided actually seems to encourage car use (because it is made easier), rather than public transport use. Research undertaken by SKM for the Northern Central City Corridor Study indicated a clear link between the number of cars owned per household, which had increased in most suburbs in the inner northern suburbs, and a decline in public transport usage. As indicated earlier, the trend in Darebin is slightly different, where public transport usage has increased and car usage has decreased slightly.

The following Figure 3 illustrates this trend.

3.5.3 Environmental Policy

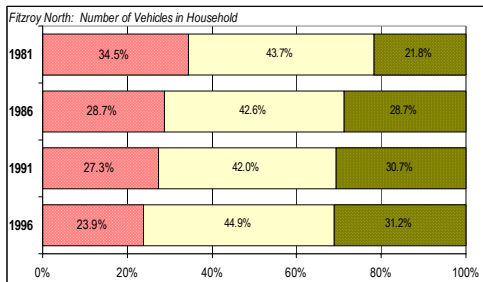
In South Boston, USA, a freeze has been placed on the total parking supply for off-street parking, including for residents. The aim of this freeze is to mitigate traffic related air pollution. It includes stringent requirements for new developments (particularly commercial development) that limit the amount of car parking they can provide.

However, most transport and parking policies relate environment concerns to sustainable transport strategies. The key concerns are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve general amenity by reducing the number of vehicle trips. There are no localities in Australia where pollution is so bad that such stringent measures would be necessary to curb vehicle use.

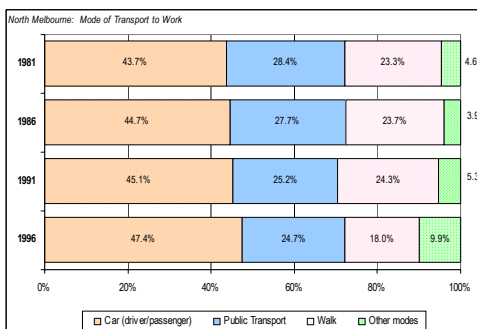
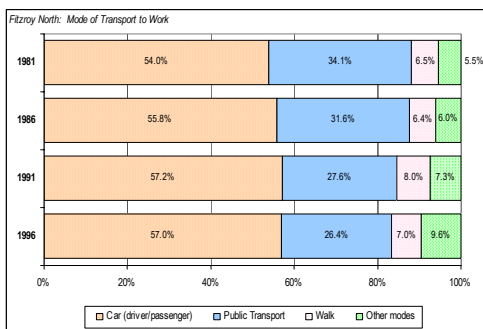
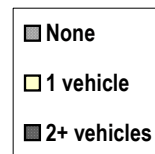
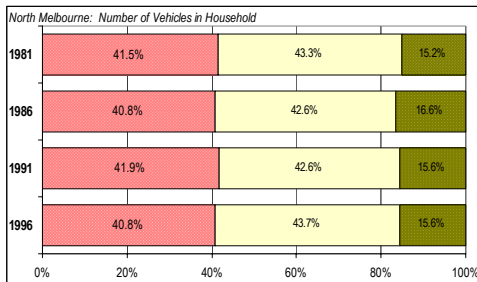


■ **Figure 3 Comparison of Car Ownership and Journey to Work Mode**

Fitzroy North



North Melbourne



Source: Northern Central City Corridor Study – Social Assessment, Existing Conditions Report



4. Comparative Review

4.1 Municipality Comparison

The following Councils were contacted as they were considered to be the most appropriate and useful to compare with Darebin:

- Port Phillip
- Stonnington
- Maribyrnong
- Moonee Valley
- Boroondara
- Moreland
- City of Melbourne

Sydney City Council was also contacted.

All are inner city councils that, like Darebin, have a mixture of high and low density residential areas as well as areas where popular shopping and entertainments strips intermix with or are close to residential areas. We held telephone discussions were held with a senior officer in each Council whose area of responsibility was management of their parking permit scheme.

4.2 Types of Permits Available

The types of permits across metropolitan Melbourne councils appear to be very similar. All have residential permits, visitor permits and disability parking permits. Discussions with officers suggested that there are generally no formal permits given to traders or other business operators. Rather, there is the option, as in the case of Boroondara, which allows traders to buy parking permits that give them all day parking in parking lots which might otherwise have restricted parking. It is understood, however, that such an arrangement only applies to designated parking lots or car parks and not to street parking.

It should be noted that while some Councils appear to have a 'blanket' permit zone across their municipality, others link their permit types to permit zones. For example, Stonnington has three basic permit zone areas (similar to Darebin) and an associated number of permits that are available in each of these zones:

- Area 1: most congested zone – 3 permits per household
- Area 2: Medium level congestion – 4 permits per household
- Area 3: Low level congestion – 5 permits per household



Those that have adopted blanket permit zones did so because they consider this to be a fairer system as it doesn't single out a particular area or group. It is also seen to reduce administrative costs and confusion.

■ Table 1 Permit Types

Location	Are visitor permits available	Are temporary permits available	Business Parking Permits	Other Permits
Boroondara City Council	Yes	Yes	Tradespeople Permit	
Brent (UK)	Yes		Available in controlled zones. Cost is \$603.50 (£250.00), £150 if the vehicle is in company livery	
Maribyrnong City Council	Maximum of two per residence	Yes	Tradesperson Permit (\$10 per week)	Guest Parking Permits (one day, maximum 6, \$2.00 each)
Melbourne City Council	Yes		No	Medical Practitioner (\$110) Reserved (one day) parking (\$40)
Moonee Valley City Council	Maximum of two per residence	Yes	Wallis Street Car park provided for employees of the Niddrie Shopping Centre (Permit \$230)	Special Occasions temporary permits (maximum 5)
Moreland City Council	Yes		No	
Perth City Council	The single permit can be used by resident or visitor		No	
Port Phillip City Council	Maximum of two per residence	Yes	Tradesperson Permit (\$30 per week) Community Service Organisation (free for eligible organisations)	Party Permits (valid for two days, maximum 10, \$2.00 each)
Sydney City Council	In some areas only		Business Parking permit \$60.00 (only available in some areas)	
Yarra City Council	One per residence	Yes	Business/Retail: First permit is \$77.00, second and subsequent cost \$115.50 each	Medical Practitioner: First permit is \$77.00, second and subsequent cost \$115.50 each

4.2.1 Business Parking Permits

The Brent Council in the UK allows business to obtain permits for company-owned vehicles, or employee's personal vehicles, on the condition that the vehicle is used for the purchase and sale of goods and/or services on behalf of that company.

Discussions with the above Melbourne metropolitan Council officers, however, made clear that local government is moving away from enabling business and traders to obtain parking permits. As previously mentioned, only Boroondara seems to have a scheme that enables traders to obtain parking permits in designated parking lots. Sydney City Council do enable some traders and



businesses to obtain a permit if there is a strong case that a vehicle travel and parking outside their offices or premises is critical to their business.

According to one Council officer in another municipality, there is actually nothing in the Local Government Act that specifically legislates Council the power to provide permits for traders and businesses. Others say that their priorities are their residents. Nearly all identified a conflict with Melbourne 2030 in terms of business parking permits. Most of the council officers said that whilst local government prioritises its residents, it was felt that Melbourne 2030 was emphasising development and developers which was causing some form of conflict at the local level in terms of parking arrangements. Few had come up with a resolution other than by not providing any permits to non-residents.

Medical Practitioner permits are usually provided in areas where there are several medical facilities or a hospital and are for the use of the practitioners who work at those facilities. Some Councils also allow community service providers to have parking permits, such as childcare centres or community health nurses.

Some Councils provide tradespeople permits. These permits are specifically for the use of tradespeople working in the area for extended periods of time and are usually charged on a weekly basis. Boroondara has a scheme, for example, which enables tradespeople to purchase a special parking ticket from Council to have all-day parking in designated parking lots. Others allow tradespeople to park in residential streets all day.

Temporary permits are usually provided for single days when the applicant requires parking in a specific place on a particular day. These permits are provided to non-residents as well as residents and are often used for business activities or social events.

4.2.2 Visitor Permits

Most Councils allow households to have at least one visitor parking permit. There is little information about whether or how the use of these is policed – the main issue for Councils is how to manage who the residents give their visitor parking permits to. Some Councils have found people selling their visitors parking permits on e-Bay or by other means. Most Councils will revoke parking permits if the resident has abused the system in this way.

Most of the Melbourne Councils allow for guest or party parking permits which enable residents to provide single use permits for visitors. The number available for each event is limited and they are usually valid for a twenty-four hour period.

Visitor parking arrangements vary slightly between Councils. Some councils give out a certain number of visitor passes, others have visitor pass books that are valid for one night only and others require residents to pick up a pass from Council offices on the day the visitor is expected. This pass is dated and only lasts for a 24 – 48 hour period. At Stonnington for example, such passes cost \$2 per day but the purchaser has to have proof of residency in order to obtain the permit.



Yarra City Council is trialing a punch card visitor pass book where the resident writes the date and time on the card. There are 10 cards in the pack and it saves residents the hassle of obtaining a pass on the day.

4.3 Resident Parking Permits

It is clear that residential parking permits are the priority for most councils and residential needs are certainly privileged above those of traders and businesses. This is not without recognising the need for other types of parking. As one senior manager commented, “we want to provide residents with good parking but we also recognise the importance of allowing other forms of parking”.

Approaches to residential parking permits vary slightly, mainly in terms of the costs associated with the purchasing of more than one permit and in the sort of proof required to obtain a permit. Most Councils allow residents to obtain up to four permits as well as one or two permits for visitors.

Permits are provided for either a single street or more commonly a precinct. The permit-holder is then entitled to park anywhere within the precinct.

The number of permits issued also varies. Again, the most restrictive Councils are the inner city ones where there is insufficient room on the streets.

The proof required to obtain permits also varies. Some Councils require residents to provide up to three types of documentation proving that they are residing in the municipality. This can include a tenancy agreement or proof of home ownership as well as providing a utilities bill. One Council even requires residents to show that their car is not only registered to them but listed at that particular address.

Some councils like Moreland, do not require residents to prove that their cars are also registered to their current addresses. They have found this to be particularly problematic for students who may be using their parents’ car which is registered to another address. Or, with a high turnover of rental properties, people simply haven’t had the opportunity to register their car to the new address. It becomes very difficult to enforce and somewhat unfair on those people who do have legitimate circumstances to negotiate in terms of car ownership and registration.

The cost of obtaining parking permits varies significantly between councils. Costs are rising and even those that have kept their parking permit costs down to date, have made significant increases over recent years because of the growing tensions and issues arising around parking. First permits vary from \$20 through to \$100, and fourth permits cost between \$20 and \$100. For example, Stonnington Council charges \$70 per annum for the fourth permit and \$80 for the fifth. Those Councils that have a high demand for parking in shopping, business and entertainment precincts as well as in residential areas (such as Port Phillip and Melbourne), tend to charge the upper limit for all parking permits, especially additional ones. Often, the officers interviewed justified these



charges in terms of their view that Council was trying to encourage less dependence on cars and car travel and as a way of mediating demand and conflict.

A comparison of residential permit charges is set out in Table 2. The table shows that parking permit fees in Melbourne are in line with other major cities in Australia. The cost of permits in Melbourne is significantly cheaper than in the UK. The majority of schemes in the USA are either free or charge a token administration fee.

■ **Table 2 Resident Parking Permit Fees**

Location	No. Permits per Household	Cost of first Permit	Cost of subsequent Permits	Permit Cost – concession
Adelaide City Council	2	Free		25% discount
Boroondara	4	Free	Free	
Boston (USA)		Free	Free	Free
Brent (UK)	3	\$120.70 (£50.00)	Second = \$181.05 (£75.00) Third = \$241.40 (£100.00)	
Chester City Council	1	£60.00	N/A	
Darebin City Council	Zone A = 1 Zone B = 2 Zone C = 4	Free Free Free	N/A Free \$20.00	No concession
Maribyrnong Council	4, with a maximum of two visitor permits	Free	2 nd – Free 3 rd - \$7.50 4 th - \$15.00	
Melbourne City Council	2 of which one may be a visitor permit	\$20.00		
Moonee Valley City Council	Not stated	Free	Free	
Moreland City Council	3 (two resident, one visitor)	\$15.00	Visitor = \$30.00	
New Westminster, Ca	For all vehicles registered at address	\$10.00	\$10.00 Fourth = \$50.00	One
Perth City Council	1	\$55.00		
Port Phillip City Council	3, with a maximum of two visitor permits	\$25.00	2 nd - \$25.00 3 rd - \$40.00	Concession card holders get first permit free, subsequent at half price
South Sydney Council	2	\$40.00	\$80.00	\$15.00
Sydney City Council	3 (two resident, one visitor)	\$30.00	\$60.00	Concession card holders get first permit and one visitor permit free, second permit \$30.00
The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (UK)	1 per person	\$241.40 (£100.00)		
Westminster City Council (UK)	1 per person	\$241.40 (£100.00)		
Yarra City Council	3, of which one may be a visitor permit	\$20.00	\$40.00	Heath care card holders get first permit free.

Some councils in Melbourne have considered making it more expensive for residents with off street parking to obtain parking permits. However, they have found this difficult to put into practice. In some instances, Council themselves have rejected this option, perceiving it to be disadvantageous



to home owners. Others have explored negotiating parking permits on the basis of property frontage, ie the larger property frontage, the less parking that is required, but this proved to be unfavourable with Council. It was also seen as discriminating against particular households.

Residents living in shop top dwellings are usually allowed parking permits but often not in the street of residence. Instead, they are given a permit in the nearest adjacent residential street.

Where residences abut or are close to popular retail and entertainment strips, many councils have a policy of providing permit parking on one side of the street and limited general parking on the other side which residents with permits can still access. There is some variation as to the nature of that limited general parking. Some councils like Moreland have only signage parking indicating the limited hours whereas Stonnington and Port Phillip for example, have meter parking.

It is interesting to note that the experience of some Councils is that residents themselves are not necessarily totally supportive of a stricter parking scheme if it means that it is more hassle and inconvenience to them in gaining parking permits and visitor passes. Stonnington Council for example, has experienced some reservations from residents about tightening up visitor permits because it requires such an effort for residents to obtain a pass. Currently, residents have to obtain guest permits for singular evening visits on the day. This proves to be more of an inconvenience for residents than the hassle for visitors of finding parking.

There is limited information about whether any Council has a formal nexus to determine a maximum number of permits that can be allocated in any particular street or precinct. This is an issue that has been raised in Melbourne 2030 and the NCCC Strategy. It is considered that there needs to be consideration given to this issue in future permit schemes.

4.4 Enforcement

The enforcement of parking permit rules and regulations is a vital component of local government's overall management strategy. Enforcement of permits is usually undertaken in the local laws area of Council and most Council's have reported two significant changes in the way that enforcement is undertaken. First, council officers indicated that enforcement, both in terms of hours of operation and numbers of staff, has increased steadily over the last few years in order to make sure permit schemes and laws are upheld. This has been particularly important in busier entertainment and shopping precincts and where residential areas abut such precincts. For example, Moreland City Council has increased the number of staff it has employed and their hours of operation from 9am-5pm to 9am to 9pm. In some areas, they are considering having staff patrol up to 12 midnight where entertainment precincts are close to residential areas.

The second major change regarding enforcement is in the increasing use of digital cameras, particularly in relation to assisting council in situations where infringement notices are challenged. While only a few councils are using cameras as the technology is still reasonably expensive, they are seen as a very effective measure of verifying and recording parking permit breaches.



In terms of enforcing the distribution of residential and visitor parking permits, the Councils contacts indicated that it was a much harder regulating these permits. Where there is a clear breach of privileges, parking permits are withdrawn.

In some instances, Council's enforcement is achieved, to a degree, by increased regulation and monitoring at the initial stages of the parking permit process. That is, by having quite strict guidelines and procedures that govern resident's capacities to obtain both residential and visitor permits. For example, Sydney City Council requires residents to provide three types of documents to prove their residency as well as showing that their car is also registered to their place of residence. If the car is not registered at that address because it is a company vehicle or a student is using their parent's car for example, a statutory declaration is required to confirm the status of the car. Sydney City Council also require residents to update their proof of residency on an annual basis. In other instances, Councils have designated areas as no visitor parking permit zones or refuse to give both residential and visitor permits to people who have off street parking.



5. Issues for Consideration

5.1 Local Government Administration of Parking Schemes

There are a range of key lessons and issues emerging from other parking permit arrangements in these comparative Councils that have implications for this Study. Interviews with relevant council officers highlight the complexity around devising a parking permit scheme that meets all stakeholder's needs. What is clear is that there is no ideal parking scheme that currently exists. Councils are continually having to negotiate residents' expectations, particularly those who seek inner city living environments but cannot accept that this could entail restricted parking opportunities. Traders and the commercial sector are also increasing their pressures on local government to assist in the provision of parking. Local governments on the other hand, are evidently keen to engage in sustainability debates and begin to plan for local communities that are less dependent on cars. Parking permit schemes are seen as one mechanism through which this can be achieved.

5.1.1 General Issues

The following key lessons and issues have been identified:

- State Government Planning scheme policies needs to be reformed to reduce conflict at the local level between residential needs and state government's desire for development
- The needs of stakeholders in popular retail and entertainment precincts need to be considered. Those areas often have parking schemes which allows some residential parking zones on one side and limited general parking on the other. It is rare that entire streets have all residential parking although Stonnington are currently reviewing some parking zones around Chapel Street and are considering making them entirely residential parking permit areas.
- Most Councils reported on increasing pressure to make parking permits available to traders. Stonnington Council argue that overall, no business is dramatically affected by not having permits available and that Council's priority is its residents and in working towards a reduction on the dependence of cars. Further, Councils argue that it is actually not their responsibility to cater for businesses and that restricted parking allows for a higher turnover of customers for traders. However, it could also be argued that facilitating parking for businesses could make running businesses easier and thereby facilitate economic development. In practice Councils may need to deal with these issues on a precinct or organisational basis to identify options to manage parking issues.
- Council policies are usually not about maximising the usage of streets, but preserving residential amenity. This means that Councils are generally unsympathetic to the needs of businesses within their boundaries. However, parking can also be seen as an economic development issue and in this context a case could be made for considering business parking permits in some areas.
- There is considerable difficulty in monitoring visitor passes, particularly in preventing residents from selling them to business people.



- There needs to be consideration given to the number of permits issued in each street or precinct. This would prevent the problem of oversubscribed streets where there may be 100 parking spaces but 300 permits are issued.
- Council should consider balancing tighter enforcement and rules around obtaining permits with resident convenience. The administration of schemes should be as simple as possible for both Council and their residents.
- Most Councils appear to have substantial charges for permits, especially for more than one permit. Whilst this might act as a deterrent to car ownership, it also privileges those who can afford to pay for extra places and may be viewed as discriminatory.
- There is a general trend towards increasing the number of metered car parking spots as a way of enforcing restrictions.
- Where resident parking permits schemes are in place they need to be appropriately enforced. This includes including outside of normal business hours, such as on Saturdays and Sundays
- Most Councils have already been required to increase their level and hours of enforcement although some also indicated that they had statistics and local knowledge which helped them identify the major areas of conflict.
- The trend towards more people working from home has changed the dynamic of suburban street usage somewhat and the appropriateness of current parking restriction measures, particularly for those streets that have limited permit parking and other restrictions.

5.1.2 Approaches to improving parking issues and conflicts

Below is an outline of some the measures local governments are adopting to improve their parking permit schemes, their operation and regulation.

- More effective outcomes have been achieved when parking permit arrangements are developed and tailored for different parts of the municipality rather than a blanket approach.
- There is a trend towards metered parking as a way of enforcing time zone parking in suburban streets and shopping, entertainment and business precincts. Meter parking is easier for parking officers to monitor and enforce than time zone parking signs. It is important, however, to set parking fees at a rate that discourages long term parking.
- Some councils are attempting to control the supply and demand issues by reducing the number of resident parking and visitor parking permits, and/or making them more expensive
- Some councils are attempting to control the transferability of visitor parking permits by making them harder to obtain. An alternative approach is to provide single use vouchers.
- Digital cameras have proved effective in assisting Councils with proving infringement breaches.
- When revising parking permit arrangements, particularly in ‘trouble spots’, some councils have found that bringing the parties together to develop a solution produces effective outcomes.



- To overcome limited information on particular areas, some Councils have undertaken specific qualitative and quantitative local area surveys of parking needs (for example in the Westgarth area in Darebin). This has included running workshops with local residents, businesses and traders as to discuss issues as well as important undertaking surveys of number of parking bays versus traffic volumes, street activity etc.
- There is a question as to the effectiveness of strict rules for residents to obtain parking and visitor permits. Some Councils report that residents become more upset having to provide all the evidence and proof of residency to obtain the permits, particularly when it is a relatively small percentage of people who abuse the system. Other councils feel that strict guidelines are necessary to maintain some form of control.
- Some councils have found it beneficial to link parking permit schemes to other Council policies such as sustainable transport policies to justify approaches or restrictions. This is the approach proposed for the current project.
- Some councils have permits that are defined by zones rather than streets enabling residents more flexibility in the local area where they can park. This has proven useful for busy residential streets. For privacy reasons, some residents do not like their home addresses linked with their parking permits, especially if they are displayed.
- Some councils have decided that no new parking permits will be issued to residents moving into new developments or in the case of Sydney City Council, into busy areas. In general most new development is required to provide a certain level of off-street parking and Councils generally feel that no further parking should be provided for them.

5.2 The Impact of Parking Schemes

Parking permit schemes have at least two effects on transport by car. The precise nature of these effects has yet to be determined but SKM understands that:

- They may have an effect of *car ownership*. Preference in the competition for on street parking spaces means that the purchase of new cars within permit holding households is made easier because there is a greater chance of a long term parking space being available nearby.
- They may have an effect on *car usage*. The increased likelihood of a car parking space on the return leg of a short trip means that permit holding drivers are inclined to undertake more trips.

5.3 Planning and Building Issues

Existing off-street parking may be lost as part of a residential redevelopment (for example an extension), or simply by residents using their garage for other purposes (such as storage). In many cases these residents then require the use of on-street parking, which adds to parking congestion.

There are a variety of ways this has been addressed by various Councils, but the key ways are:

- Refusing to grant planning or building permits where they would lead to the loss of off-street parking (which may be challenged at VCAT)



- Refusing to grant parking permits to any household that has the capacity to park off-street (which may require enforcement officers to check every dwelling before granting a permit)
- Assuming that any dwelling built after a certain period (ie when planning regulations required this) would have adequate off-street parking and refusing any of these dwelling a parking permit (which requires the applicant to state the age of their dwelling as part of the assessment process, which is done in Adelaide).

If any of these approaches are considered as part of the resident parking strategy further research will be undertaken into their applicability and useability.

5.4 Commuter Parking

It is unclear whether commuter parking is a serious problem in Darebin. However, an opportunity exists for Darebin to identify appropriate areas to be developed for 'park and ride' stations that could be linked to trams or trains stations. These could be used by both residents and commuters and may ease parking problems in some streets.

It is recognised that employee parking presents a problem for many inner city areas as many businesses do not have adequate off-street parking. This is an issue that needs to be dealt with on a precinct or even organisational level within Darebin. For example, the Council could extend their work with businesses within their boundaries to develop further Travel Smart programs or identify areas that could be used for off-street employee parking.



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Parking Permit Scheme Review



OPTIONS PAPER

- Draft V3.0
- 16/02/04



Parking Permit Scheme Review

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- Draft V3.0
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Review

Council have appointed Sinclair Knight Merz to undertake a review of their residential parking permit scheme and develop a new scheme that reflects the future direction of both local and state policies and strategies and that fully considers community opinion. A Reference Group representing a range of interests has been established by Council to assist with the review.

This project has not examined the need for parking permit schemes at the individual street or precinct level. Instead, it has reviewed the over-arching issues that residents are concerned about in relation to parking and the parking scheme, and how the scheme could be altered or adapted to better service the needs of Darebin. Our focus has been to improve the parking permit scheme, with a particular focus on:

- Fairness and equity for all users of the road space
- The needs of the residents of Darebin
- Administrative practicalities.

The review has found that there are a wide range of parking concerns and issues within the City of Darebin. Some of these problems can be resolved through the application of the parking permit scheme, but some need to be resolved via other mechanisms. The Council has developed the Integrated Transport Plan and a variety of programs and other mechanisms to better manage transport in Darebin (for example Travel SMART programs). The parking permit scheme should therefore be viewed as one of a suite of tools that is available to Council and the community to manage parking problems.

This suggests that in some circumstances the parking permit scheme may not be the most appropriate parking management technique. This issue is discussed in more detail below.

1.2 The current Resident Parking Permit Scheme

The current parking permit scheme was developed in 1997¹ and covered the previous municipalities of Northcote and Preston. This scheme has been in operation since, but there are now issues that Council would like to address, particularly in response to community concerns.

1.2.1 Objectives of the Parking Permit Scheme

The objectives of the parking permit scheme are to:

- Give residents priority access to car parking in either their street of residence or close by
- To reduce the intrusion of other traffic into residential streets to maintain residential amenity.



These objectives have been strongly confirmed in the consultation process undertaken to date. Darebin residents particularly want to ensure that they, their neighbours and their visitors are able to park within their own streets, and preferably close to their own houses. Some residents close to commercial streets have considered that it would also be acceptable for traders to share the available parking under certain conditions.

1.2.2 Scope of the Scheme

The scheme divides the municipality into three zones which have different limits on the available number of permits for households. The zones are:

- Zone A Incorporates all shop top residences. Only one resident permit is allowed per residence and no visitor permits are issued. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, are not entitled to a permit. The permit is for use in the surrounding streets if they have parking restrictions. Only located in Westgarth and High Streets.
- Zone B Includes areas where resident parking is limited. Households are entitled to two permits, which can be fixed or transferable, such as to visitors. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, can have one permit. Zone B is located in parts of High Street, Westgarth Street, Darebin Road and some surrounding streets.
- Zone C Includes areas where there is relatively ample parking available, which is the majority of the municipality. Households may obtain a maximum of four permits for their vehicles. Non-car households, or those with off-street parking, may obtain three permits.

1.3 Steps taken since discussion paper

SKM have undertaken face to face and telephone interviews with:

- Darebin Council officers
- Council officers from other municipalities that deal with parking issues
- Residents in a variety of locations around Darebin.

Two focus groups were conducted in early February, the first on Thursday 5th February and the second on Tuesday 10th February. These focus groups were advertised by:

- A direct mail invitation to 169 residents
- A letter-box drop of approximately 350-400 households
- Posters provided to traders to display in their premises and to Council to display in Council premises. Information was also provided to Council's diversity officer to pass on to interested residents
- Details were provided to members of the reference group to pass on other interested residents.

¹ *City of Darebin Resident Permit Parking Permit Scheme.* Andrew O'Brien and Associates.



The attendance at the focus groups was less than anticipated, being seven at the first group and five at the second. However, several residents also contacted us by telephone or e-mail to provide input.

The interview program and focus group outcomes have been used to inform the development of the options put forward for discussion in this paper.

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2. Key Issues

2.1 The main parking problems

Darebin, particularly in the southern part of the municipality (Preston and south), is very much a mixed use area, with a wide range of commercial, retail and service, educational, community and residential uses in close proximity to each other. This means that parking provision for these uses cannot be separated from each other but instead must share the same space. In many instances this means that residential uses are used for parking by non-residents, which creates competition for parking spaces in these residential areas.

There is also an issue that these suburbs developed in an era when most residents either walked to work or caught public transport. The early residents in Darebin would not have owned cars. This means that many residential streets were not designed to accommodate the number of cars that now use them.

The main parking problems in Darebin can be grouped into the following themes:

- Too many cars in the street:
 - Conflict between residents where the residents have more cars than can be accommodated on-street – particularly an issue in higher density areas
 - Residents want extra car parking and visitor permits – this issue will continue to grow because:
 - In many family households children are staying at home for longer. Often both parents have cars and when their children reach driving age they will also obtain cars
 - New developments often consist of townhouse or unit developments that are rented by group households where usually all members will have their own car
 - Residents and their visitors often can't park close to their homes, which they want to do for reasons of security and convenience
 - New and in-fill development has increased parking pressures in Darebin by increasing the number of households. Planning regulation do not require new developments to accommodate all parking on-site
 - There is insufficient use of the available off-street parking. For example, there are many residences with rear access lanes that do not use these and prefer to park on the street for a variety of reasons. These include difficulty in negotiating narrow lanes; a preference to use the rear yard or garage for other purposes and convenience (for example it may be faster to park and enter at the front). Front access car parking may not be utilised for similar reasons, although another reason given was so that the driveway could be used as a safe play area for children. It was noted that there are a number of planning barriers to developing off-street parking if desired by the resident



- Streets close to shopping centres:
 - Conflict between residents, shoppers and traders – often as much an amenity issue as a parking one
 - Peak shopping periods cause problems for residents, who may have to park a considerable distance away from their homes
 - Traders want to have long term parking near their shops. Some residents were willing to accept this, however with the proviso that options such as use of rear property spaces or dedicated parking within shopping centre car parks should be explored first
- Streets with community facilities:
 - There is often extra parking demand when functions or activities are on
 - There can be short term parking issues (eg for kindergartens and schools when parents are delivering or collecting their children)
 - Visitors who cannot find ‘legal’ parking spaces sometimes park across driveways and obstruct residents. Some visitors do not observe time limits and remain well past the signed time limit
 - There are significant commuter parking problems in some streets close to train stations. These are not necessarily people coming from outside the municipality, but may be residents from within the municipality parking close to the station for reasons of convenience.
- Enforcement:
 - There is a strong perception that existing time limits are not regularly enforced in residential areas, and that the enforcement officers focus their efforts on commercial areas. Many residents felt that any new scheme should include an element of increased enforcement
 - There are difficulties in enforcement for the enforcement officers, including the size of the area to be patrolled with limited resources.

As noted previously, these issues cannot all be solved through the application of the parking permit scheme, and the majority of the residents that have participated in our consultation program accept this. There are a number of issues for further consideration as follows:

- Commuter parking is disruptive for extended periods of time, as commuters may park from eight in the morning until six at night. One resident noted that this is a problem for the streets around Fairfield Train Station. She noted that the parking facilities provided for commuters south of the train station are very difficult to enter in peak hour traffic and this is part of the reason commuters park in residential streets. This is an example of a specific parking problem that could be resolved through a traffic management plan
- In some cases the resident parking permit scheme would work more effectively if there was more regular enforcement. Any extension of the parking permit scheme therefore needs to be considered in terms of the staffing implications for the Council enforcement officers. There would be no point in extending the system if it cannot be adequately enforced.



- A key issue will be to manage resident's perceptions and changing their behaviour. Residents need to recognise that they live in an inner city area that simply does not have the same supply of parking spaces as an outer suburban area, and that those spaces must be shared.
- It is unlikely that the parking permit scheme could resolve the parking problems experienced by traders and we would recommend that other opportunities are pursued (for example development of parking strategies, development contributions for car park development etc). However:
 - The parking permit scheme should not discourage shoppers if possible – for example one hour time limits may be too restrictive for shoppers (and are time-consuming for council enforcement officers to police), so two hour time limits may be more appropriate
 - It has been suggested that in some areas residents and traders could share the space, particularly residents who do not use their spaces during the day. This option could be considered further, however it would require extra administration and policing.

2.2 Key issues with the parking permit scheme

Key issues with the existing scheme include:

- A discrepancy between the number of permits that residents in various parts of the municipality are able to obtain
- That in some areas the number of permits that have been issued significantly exceeds the number of available parking spaces
- Permits in some areas are free and in others are not
- That the scheme may not be enforced to the degree that residents would wish
- That it has not yet been applied in some areas where it is needed
- The general application is for one side of the street to be permit parking and the other restricted parking. In some areas this does not necessarily solve the parking problems (particularly in areas used for commuter parking)

In the interviews and focus groups that have been conducted to date SKM have asked a number of questions designed to assist in resolving these issues. These are discussed below.

What is the role of a parking permit scheme, and how strongly should the parking permit scheme be linked to the Darebin Integrated Transport Plan?

- Is it solely to ensure that residents are able to park in their streets?
- Is it to preserve residential amenity by restricting the use of these streets by other vehicles?
- Should the aim be to encourage residents to shift to more sustainable transport modes?

The principle that the key objective of a parking permit scheme is to give residents priority access to the available parking spaces was endorsed by the focus group participants. They did not feel that



the number of parking permits should be restricted to induce people to use public transport. Most felt that any shift to sustainable transport would only occur in the longer term and that the available transport options, particularly public transport, were insufficient for their needs.

However, all of the people we consulted were supportive of Council pursuing strategies to increase the use of sustainable transport modes. It was considered that this could assist in reducing the conflict between residents and other road users.

How should the available number of permits be determined?

The number of permits currently available in Darebin is broadly in line with other municipalities in Melbourne (refer to the discussion paper, November 2003). The usual number allowed is between two and four, depending on the degree of congestion within the precinct (including visitor permits).

A number of options were discussed for determining how many permits should be issues in Darebin including:

- Per household – providing each household with a set limit of permits unless they can prove unusual circumstances.
- Per Street or Precinct - providing a set number of permits per street (based on available parking spaces) and then setting a structure in place to distribute those amongst the residents.
- With a link between house size and parking spaces - each household would receive a number of permits based on their street frontage or number of bedrooms and available off-street parking

The second and third options were not favoured, although it was considered that a link between the number of residents per household and the available number of permits to be issued could be effective. The following conclusions were reached:

- Residents were more in favour of allowing each household a set number of permits, however the exact number appropriate was disputed. Two was considered to be the absolute minimum. The suggestion that extra permits could be charged for at a premium rate was considered appropriate but was not greeted with any enthusiasm
- There was some discussion of the possibility of redistribution of permits among residents. For example, a single person household could relinquish the right to their extra permits which could be passed on to a larger household. However, this would be administratively complex for Council
- The link between the available permits and the available parking spaces could warrant further investigation. In particular, this could be used to justify the refusal of extra permits.



New Residential Development

The current parking permit scheme reduces the number of permits available to households that have off-street parking available to them. There is no evidence that this is not being followed and the existing level of enforcement should continue.

A number of residents have raised the potential to reduce parking pressures through the planning system by requiring new developments to provide for all parking on-site. However, this is problematic for a number of reasons.

Firstly, as identified in the discussion paper, increasing the amount of off-street parking generally leads to increased car dependency. This would therefore not support the aims of Council's Integrated Transport Strategy.

Secondly, it would require the existing planning scheme provisions to be significantly altered. At present, developers are able to apply for a waiver of the existing parking requirements if they can prove there is excess capacity in the supply of street parking. Council would need to remove this waiver before they could force developers to provide more on-site parking. It is unlikely that this would occur, unless Council developed parking precinct plans that empirically demonstrated a lack of parking capacity in those precincts.

The areas with parking restrictions are also areas that are well-serviced by public transport. Developers could well argue that residents of their developments could use public transport, thereby reducing the need for cars. Taking all these factors into account, it is highly unlikely that Council would be able to force such a requirement on any new development.

Traders Permits

Residents were not generally opposed to this in principle, however their response indicated that they would be willing to allow traders to use their parking spaces only when they did not want them. Sharing permits would therefore be quite difficult, unless it were possible to match up traders with residents who were absent all day. Even then, conflicts would inevitably occur. It would be more appropriate if trader parking could be accommodated in another fashion, for example by providing trader parking permit areas within commercial car parks (such as in Boroondara) or encouraging them to use alternative transport options.

Based on the above comment and our other research, we do not support the option of providing parking permits to traders. There are a number of reasons for this, including:

- It would not reduce the conflict between traders and residents trying to park in the same places, in fact it could exacerbate the problem
- The focus of a Resident Parking Permit Scheme is to provide priority for residents. To provide for traders as well would dilute the focus of the scheme
- There are other mechanisms that can be used to manage trader and business parking. These include parking strategies developed for specific shopping precincts, developer contributions



to fund commercial car parking facilities, development and use of rear access ways and parking and encouraging the use of public transport by staff.

Enforcement of the Scheme

Enforcement was regularly raised as an issue during our consultation. This indicates that residents are not satisfied with the degree of enforcement that they observe and this issue needs to be dealt with, by:

- Advising residents how the enforcement system works
- Potentially encouraging enforcement officers to patrol residential streets on a rotational basis so that every street receives a visit at regular or irregular intervals.

Location specific issues

Council have advised that their standard practice is to provide resident parking on one side of a street and unrestricted parking on the other. There are some locations where it may be more appropriate for the whole street to be zoned for restricted parking, particularly areas that face problems with commuter or employee parking (ie where cars are parked in the same location for more than eight hours at a time). However, it is possible that location-specific traffic studies could identify alternative solutions.

Other Issues

- Should residents be allowed to reduce the amount of on-street parking where it is limited - for example by putting in driveways for off-street parking? Should they lose on-street parking rights if they do this?
 - The response to this question was that most felt that residents should be able to install off-street parking on their properties if they wished. However, if they did so it should be used in preference to on-street parking, and not for other purposes. The difficulty and expense of actually doing this was an issue for some residents who have attempted it.
- Should special provisions be made for people with disabilities - for example extended parking hours or by providing special parking places?
 - People with disabled parking permits have the right to park for extended hours anyway. This question was in response to one council which has a formal system for giving significantly disabled residents priority access to the parking space in front of their house (which has also happened in Darebin). This concept was unanimously supported by the focus group members.
- The scheme needs to be both simple for Council to administer and easy for residents to access. An element of cost-recovery should be built into the cost of the permits, since it is providing an extra service to the residents who have them.
 - Residents are somewhat resistant to paying for parking permits, particularly if they have not had to do so in the past. However, they accept that Council incurs costs in administering the scheme and that these should be recovered. The fairest price for a



permit was not agreed upon. It was however considered fair that in areas of high demand and low availability that any extra permits should incur a significantly higher fee.

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3. Options for the future

The research and issues discussion above has been used to evaluate the present scheme. Some of the community concerns about parking problems cannot be solved through changes to the parking permit scheme and need to be solved in other ways. Most elements of the existing parking permit scheme work well and meet the goal of being fair and equitable. However, there are some aspects that could be modified or changed to take account of the changed conditions in parts of Darebin since the scheme was introduced and to reflect the standard practice around Melbourne. A number of options are raised for discussion.

The options have been divided into two elements – those that should be considered by Council to improve the day to day operation of the scheme, and those that should be taken to the community for further discussion.

3.1 Options for Council consideration

These issues should be considered by Council to improve the day to day operation of the parking permit scheme.

Application of the Scheme in new areas

As stated in the existing scheme, new permit schemes should not be implemented unless there is a clear majority of residents in the area that support it (at least 60%). However, when residents have raised a petition to obtain parking permits, some research should be undertaken into the causes of parking congestion and what the best solution for their problems should be. This is because the application of a parking permit scheme is not necessarily the best solution to every parking problem, as they are often very location specific.

Residents could be encouraged to take part in this research and help to decide what solution would best suit their particularly parking problem.

This could be built into the scheme in the form of a series of steps of how to deal with an identified parking problem.

Pricing of Parking Permits

The parking permit scheme requires Council resources for administration and there should therefore be an element of cost recovery built into the pricing structure.

Charging for permits prevents residents for applying for unnecessary permits and therefore reduces the administrative cost for Council.

However, there may also an opportunity to link the parking permit scheme to broader sustainable transport strategies by using the pricing structure to discourage requests for extra permits.



Compared with other inner city areas, Darebin is unusual in not charging for parking permits in all areas. The following table sets out the fees for parking permits in other municipalities in Melbourne.

■ **Table 1 Annual Parking Permit Fees**

Location	No. Permits per Household	Cost of first Permit	Cost of subsequent Permits	Permit Cost – concession
Boroondara	4	Free	Free	
Darebin City Council	Zone A = 1 Zone B = 2 Zone C = 4	Free Free Free	N/A Free \$20.00	No concession
Maribyrnong Council	4, with a maximum of two visitor permits	Free	2 nd – Free 3 rd - \$7.50 4 th - \$15.00	
Melbourne City Council	2 of which one may be a visitor permit	\$20.00		
Moonee Valley City Council	Not stated	Free	Free	
Moreland City Council	3 (two resident, one visitor)	\$15.00	Visitor = \$30.00	
Port Phillip City Council	3, with a maximum of two visitor permits	\$25.00	2 nd - \$25.00 3 rd - \$40.00	Concession card holders get first permit free, subsequent at half price
Yarra City Council	3, of which one may be a visitor permit	\$20.00	\$40.00	Health care card holders get first permit free.

It appears that around \$20.00 per permit is a reasonable amount to charge and would enable Council to recover some of the administrative costs associated with the scheme. Concessions could be provided to concession card holders to prevent undue hardship.

Visitor Permits

Local laws need to enable the policing of the use of visitor permits to prevent abuse. This would include the use of cameras to record which vehicles are using the permits. This is an issue that needs to be resolved for the enforcement officers to enable effective enforcement.

Excess Permits (exceptional circumstances)

We do not consider that excess permits should be provided. The principle should be that, if residents have more cars than they can obtain parking permits for, they must either accommodate them on their property or find another solution for storing them. This principle should apply in all zones across the city. This needs to be clearly stated in the permit scheme.

Administrative Practice

The administration of the scheme should be easy for both Council and residents. Permit payment should be by as many ways as possible (eg at counter, B-Pay, via Internet).



Council could consider an Internet based reporting system for residents to report where they have parking problems. This could be used over time to provide evidence for which streets do and do not require the application of the parking permit scheme.

3.2 Options for community feedback

These options for improving the parking permit scheme should be taken to the community for comment.

Amalgamation of Zones B and C

The division of the municipality in zones for parking permit purposes is fair because it recognises the differing availability of and competition for parking spaces in Darebin. The number of permits available in Zones A and B appears to be appropriate. However, Zone C is problematic for two reasons:

- It introduces inequity into the scheme by allowing residents in one area to have more permits than residents in another, even though they have the same problems
- Parking permit schemes are only introduced in areas of high parking pressure. The reason to introduce them is to reduce the number of cars on these streets so that all residents have an equal chance to park there. The most equitable way to ensure this is to limit the number of permits available to each household, which would give every household an equal opportunity to park in their street.

The extension of Zone B and abolition of Zone C is therefore considered preferable to a blanket reduction in the number of parking permits available to residents in streets with parking permit schemes. Streets where there is adequate parking would not have such a scheme applied and would therefore not be restricted. The Zone B restrictions are in line with other similar municipalities in Melbourne and abroad.

This would then lead to a two tiered system:

- Zone A: Allows one resident and no visitor permit (shop top dwellings)
- Zone B: Allows two permits, which can be used by either the resident or visitor. If off street parking is available the number of permits available is reduced by the amount of parking available. This would be in place across the whole of Darebin.

There could be some difficulty in extending Zone B into areas that are currently Zone C if residents are asked to surrender parking permits. Options are:

- To require immediate surrender of excess parking permits (when they expire)
- To phase in the reduced entitlement after a period of time (for example two years)
- Allow existing residents to retain excess permits but refuse to issue them to new residents.



Varying the number of permits available

Council could consider allowing Zone B residents to have two fixed and one transferable (visitor) permit if they can demonstrate that they have no off-street parking available to them (similar to the number of permits available in Yarra and Moreland Councils).

This option could be taken to the community in the form of a question of how many permits would be fair for households with no off-street parking.

Boundaries of Permit Parking Areas

Permit scheme areas are usually set on a precinct area. This usually allows a resident to park in a nearby street if they cannot find parking in their own. However, there are a number of issues with this, including:

- For some streets, it is the residents of nearby streets that create their parking problem. An example that was given was a street has clearways, so the residents often park around the corner instead
- Some precinct boundaries run down the centre of streets, which means that residents may be able to park on one side of the street but not the other. A boundary has to be set somewhere, but would it be better to set it on a street by street or precinct basis, and where should the boundaries be?



4. Draft Community Questionnaire

This section sets out a draft questionnaire for distribution to the Darebin community. The questionnaire will be refined with Council and the Reference Group prior to distribution.

Introductory Questions

- 1) Are you a resident of Darebin or a trader/business person?
Resident ____ Trader ____ Both ____
- 2) In which part of Darebin do you live?
 - Fairfield
 - Northcote
 - Preston
 - Reservoir
 - etc
- 3) How many adults do you have in your household? _____
- 4) How many cars do you have in your household? _____
- 5) Do you have any Resident Parking Permits at present? Yes ____ No ____
- 6) If Yes, how many do you have? Fixed ____ Transferable ____
- 7) If you are a resident, would you support standardising the number of parking permits available to residents in residential streets (not including shop top dwellings)? Yes ____ No ____

If Yes, How many permits should residents be able to apply for:

- One fixed and one transferable ____
- Two fixed and one transferable ____

- 8) Since parking permit schemes are an extra service to some residents, should Council be able to charge a fee to recover the administrative costs of running parking permit schemes? Yes ____ No ____

If Yes, what is a fair fee to charge?

- \$20 for all permits ____ First permit fee, second permit \$20
- \$30 for all permits ____ First permit fee, second permit \$30
- (Note that concession card holders would receive a discount)*

- 9) If you are within a parking permit scheme precinct, is the existing boundary in the right place?
Yes ____ No ____
If no, where should it be (please explain in full)

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10) Do you have any other comments about the resident parking permit scheme?

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5. Next Steps

The next steps are as follows:

- These options will be discussed with the reference group and Council at the Reference Group meeting on Wednesday 18th February
- After the options have been finalised, SKM will develop an Options pamphlet and will distribute this to the community. The pamphlet will include a questionnaire asking for community comment.
- The community feedback will be incorporated into a final options paper
- This will be reviewed again by the Reference Group and Council
- SKM will provide their final report to Council.

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Discussion Paper



Date 1/03/2004
Project No SS30243
Subject **Restrictions on Availability of Parking Permits for New Residential Developments**

Below is a discussion of the current situation within the City of Port Phillip, the City of Yarra and the City of Adelaide with regard to Residential Parking and on street parking permits.

The research has shown:

- Restrictions on availability of parking permits for new residential developments have been achieved through local laws and/or the residential parking permit scheme. There are varying legal implications based on the approach used
- The planning scheme cannot be used to enforce this requirement. For example, a Section 173 agreement cannot be used. This means that there is no way to append the condition to a planning certificate and it would be up to the vendor/property owner to advise any purchaser/tenant that they could not acquire a parking permit
- Refusing parking permits to the residents of new developments could have the long-term effect of changing the type of people that move into those developments, and potentially the type of development being undertaken.

1. City of Port Phillip

- **Contact: Paul Smith, Sustainability Co-Ordinator.**

On street parking issues have been addressed by the City of Port Phillip via the Local Government Act rather than use of the Planning and Environment Act.

Under the Local Government Act, Council has the right not to issue a permit. Utilising this right the City of Port Phillip has determined that parking permits will **not** be issued for any new development where there is any increase in development of residential lots on an allotment, this includes access to visitor permits. Where additional dwelling(s) are built on a lot with an existing dwelling(s), the permit requirements of the existing dwelling(s) are also reassessed and where it is determined that on street parking requirements are increased, eg. Removal of on site parking to accommodate high density, that existing dwelling will also lose its permit rights.

Council had been employing the requirements of the Good Design Guide to try and control parking issues.

Response to the changes have been positive, Council (& developers) generally take the view of 'buyer beware', developers are not particularly concerned and existing residents are very pleased with the scheme.

In an attempt to inform potential future buyers / residents Council had sought a Section 173 agreement as a condition on a permit. The following is an excerpt from the VCAT order for

SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ



Evans v Port Phillip CC [1999] VCAT 1887 (3 November 1999) which dealt with this condition:

Evans v Port Phillip CC [1999] VCAT 1887 (3 November 1999)

8. I will deal first with condition 7 where, among other things, Mr Callander has made the point that the condition is not a valid one.

9. The proposal shows three parking spaces on the site, that is, one for each unit. I was told by Mr Evans that the present dwellings have parking permits for two vehicles at the front of the site. This was supported by Mr and Mrs Selkirk. This in essence means that there are five parking spaces available to this development. The Good Design Guide's techniques for such require 4.5 spaces. Therefore this development satisfies the Good Design Guide.

10. In any event in my recollection no division of this Tribunal has upheld this particular condition which has become a standard condition in areas such as this. This Tribunal in Appeal No 1998/47305, *Ian Perkins & Associates v City of Port Phillip* commented that if the Council wished to achieve its aims in relation to resident parking it should do so through other legislation such as the Local Government Act and local laws etc. In another appeal (Appeal No 1998/47348), *Ian Perkins & Associates v Port Phillip City Council* the Tribunal, as submitted by Mr Callander, said:

"The present division of the Tribunal is of the view that it is not up to the Responsible Authority, in having it accepted that the proposed development is a satisfactory one, to fetter the future rights of residents to apply for any parking entitlement that might be available in some future street parking permit scheme. The Tribunal is of the view that it is open to the Responsible Authority if such a parking scheme is to be introduced to place restrictions on it at that time if it would appear that the scheme would be unworkable because of excess demand. In this regard the Tribunal agrees with Mr Stewart that "a condition in a permit should not prohibit the granting of another permit or authorisation which is itself subject to a discretion". "

11. I will delete this condition from the permit.

From October 2003 the policy is mutually exclusive and Council has determined that it will not issue permits under any circumstances. Council planners are aware of the requirements and assess developments within the context of restricted opportunities to park on street in those streets where parking restrictions apply. Organisation of the administration and finalising exactly how the restrictions would be applied and enforced took Council a while to finalise but it is now working very well.

The City of Port Phillip 'Parking Plan Towards 2010' is not an incorporated document in the Planning Scheme and as such does not carry statutory weight in decision making for planning applications. The policy supports 'ensuring that newly constructed developments are self sufficient in parking and that the new residents do not rely on the streets to meet their parking needs'. Key recommendation with regard to the parking permit system includes 'restricted access to parking permits for new developments with inadequate parking supply'.



The policy also recognises that *'new residents moving to the municipality are increasingly becoming car dependant and are looking for accommodation in which car parking is provided'*.

The policy highlights the need for preparing parking precinct plans which will provide the strategic basis for specifying parking provision rates for all new forms of developments and use within a precinct. Estimate budget requirement for the data collection and policy work is \$1,000,000 with in additional \$10,000 - \$20,000 for the development and amendment process for each parking precinct plan.

2. City of Yarra

■ Contact: John Lombard, Manager of City Safe

Changes to the City of Yarra Parking Permit Policy were adopted by Council 14 October 2003. To date there has been no negative feedback, much to the surprise of Council. The general feeling is that existing residents are happy and developers don't care. Changes apply to the entire municipality. Approximately 80-90% of Yarra's Streets have some sort of parking restrictions in place.

It was considered that the changes would address *'growing resident concerns over the increasing impact of parking on-street, the repeated submissions contained in planning permit objections and the opposition to the impact of planning parking permit waivers'*.

Council is empowered to amend or replace Council's current Parking Permit Scheme or make a local law under the Local Government Act 1989.

Current wording of, including proposed amendments, of the City of Yarra Parking Permit Policy:

22. That the Parking Permit Policy be amended by the deletion of the following paragraphs (which are those adopted at the Council meeting on 14 October 2003):
- (a) *for all new residential development constructed on or after 15 October 2003 which increases the number of dwellings on a site, all future residents and occupiers will not be permitted to obtain resident or visitor parking permits irrespective of the level of off-street (on site) parking provided;*
 - (b) *the policy will apply on the day immediately after adoption of the policy by Council (ie: 15 October 2003);*
 - (c) *development affected by heritage controls under the Yarra Planning Scheme that can prove adequate provision for parking vehicles on site would adversely affect the integrity of the heritage place be exempt from the policy;*

and the insertion of the following paragraphs:

That Council amend its Parking Permit Policy as follows:

- (a) *for all new residential, mixed use, commercial or industrial development:*



- (i) *in respect of which construction commences on or after 10 December 2003; or*
- (ii) *in respect of which construction has commenced before 10 December, 2003 but any separate dwelling or occupancy erected or to be erected is not occupied or lawfully available for occupation as at that date; and*
- (iii) *which increases the number of dwellings, or, in the case of a mixed use, industrial or commercial development, which increases the number of separate occupancies, on a site,*

all future residents and other occupiers will not be permitted to obtain parking permits irrespective of the level of off-street (on site) parking;

- (b) *the policy will apply on the day immediately after adoption of the policy by Council (ie 10 December 2003);*
- (c) *development affected by heritage controls under the Yarra Planning Scheme that can prove adequate provision for parking vehicles on site would adversely affect the integrity of the heritage place be exempt from the policy; and*
- (d) *for the purposes of para (a)(ii) of this policy, if construction commenced prior to 10 December 2003 the onus be on any applicant for a parking permit to satisfy Council that the separate dwelling or occupancy was occupied or lawfully available for occupation as at 10 December 2003.*

Recommended changes were adopted and came into effect 10 December 2003.

3. City of Adelaide

■ Adam Newbold, Planner

Management of on street parking in the City of Adelaide is determined by the age of the dwelling and the number of on-site parking spaces. Parking permit options fall into 6 categories.

Category 1 applies where to dwelling(s) constructed prior to 1976

- No on site parking – eligible for two vehicle permits
- On site parking for 1 vehicle – eligible for one vehicle permit
- On site parking for 2 or more vehicles – not eligible for permit

Category 2 applies where to dwelling(s) constructed post 1976

- No on site parking or 1 on site parking available – eligible for one vehicle permit
- More than 1 on site parking space – not eligible for permit



Category 3 applies to dwelling(s) meeting category 1 & 2 requirements where resident requires daily medical treatment.

- Daily care parking permit may be issued for approved person providing daily care, provided total number of permit issued does not exceed maximum stated amount for categories 1 and 2.

Category 4 applies to dwelling(s) meeting category 1 & 2 requirements where resident is holder of a current Pensioner Health Benefit Card or full time student card, entitles holder to 25% concession of permit fee for 1 vehicle.

Category 5 applies to single dwellings where property is designated for short term tenancy, permit issued for dwelling rather than vehicle

- Eligible for one vehicle permit.

Category 6 applies to residents who hold permits under the old scheme but are excluded under the new scheme. Maximum number of permits issued will match the number currently held under the old scheme. Where permits expire and are not renewed, no further permits will be issued. The holder may opt for a permit in the nearest residential permit area for the same fee as would be applicable in that area.

Residential development in the 'core' and 'frame' of Adelaide's CBD is not required to provide off street parking. This requirement has been in place for approximately 8 years with residential development in this area experiencing significant growth over the last 5 years. Developers have responded by siting developments in close proximity to existing car parks and arranging agreements with car park to secure of site parking. The general trend has been that the 'high end' developments provide off site parking, or the penthouse style apartments within a development are provided with on site parking.