

PARKING MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Report Author: Executive Officer – Stormwater, Traffic & Transport

Responsible Officer: Director Built Environment & Infrastructure

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

Parking Management is becoming an increasing issue in some areas of the municipality. In the past, the introduction of time limited restrictions has been able to deliver the level of control necessary to meet the needs of the community. However, with growing population, increased tourist visitation and economic development, a comprehensive Parking Management Framework is required to guide the implementation of parking restrictions and supporting technology to better manage the parking across the municipality.

The Parking Management Framework envisions *parking in Yarra Ranges to provide equitable access to community facilities while protecting the natural environment and preserving unique character of its towns and villages.*

The framework consolidates and formalises Council's existing parking management practices into a clear, integrated, and transparent approach, aligning with the strategic objectives outlined in Council's Integrated Transport Strategy and providing a structured decision-making process for parking-related issues

Key Elements of the Framework include:

- **Hierarchy of Controls:** Outlines the types of controls considered for parking management.
- **Hierarchy of Parking Allocation:** Prioritises parking allocation when implementing parking restrictions.
- **Parking Investigations:** Details the process for conducting investigations and making evidence-based decisions.
- **Digital Parking Solutions and Paid Parking Schemes:** Guides the adoption of modern technology to enhance parking efficiency.

- **Parking Zones and Permits:** Defines various zones and permits tailored to land use and user needs.
- **Education and Balanced Enforcement:** Clarifies the role of enforcement and education in supporting parking management to facilitate safety, access and turnover of vehicles.

When the need for parking is balanced effectively with other transport options, residents, workers and tourists will continue to be able to access the various areas of Yarra Ranges Council and enjoy the variety of townships and environmental elements that makes this area so unique.

The Draft Parking Management Framework was released for community consultation from 14 August 2024 to 8 September 2024 with 99 online and 9 email responses received. This feedback has been reviewed, and the framework has been updated to address relevant community input (Attachment 1). Community Engagement Feedback Report can be found within Attachment 2.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note the community engagement on the Draft Parking Management Framework.***
- 2. Endorse the Parking Management Framework (Attachment 1).***
- 3. Write to all submitters to thank them for their engagement and submissions and advise them of the outcome of the Council meeting.***

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

In 2020, the Council adopted the Integrated Transport Strategy 2020-2040 (ITS) to guide transport related decision-making. Recognising the parking challenges within our townships, the document includes Action 24, which outlines the need to implement a Parking Management Framework. This framework aims to ensure a consistent response and alignment with the vision and objectives of the ITS.

At its Council meeting on 15 May 2024, a report on Parking Management for Warburton was endorsed. The report outlined that a Parking Management Framework is currently in development, to create a consistent response to parking management.

At its Council meeting on 13 August 2024, Council resolved to release the Draft Parking Management Framework for public consultation between 14 August and 8 September 2024 and that the findings from the community feedback be presented at a future Council Meeting.

DISCUSSION

Purpose and Background

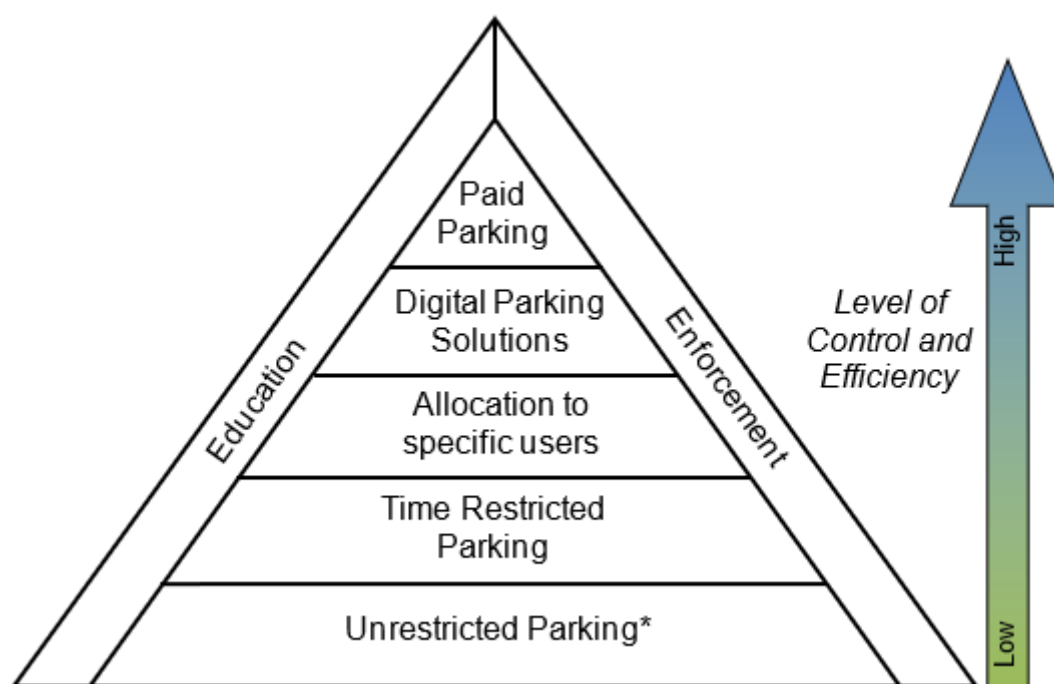
The purpose of the Parking Management Framework is to provide guidance when making decisions relating to the management of parking across the municipality. The framework sets out the main principles that Council will use to manage parking within the road reserve and public land to enable it to be done in a consistent, equitable and transparent way for the benefit of the residents, business operators, tourists and visitors.

The vision for the Parking Management Framework is that *parking in Yarra Ranges provides equitable access to community facilities while protecting the natural environment and preserving unique character of its towns and villages.*

The Draft Parking Management Framework was developed and presented to the community for feedback. The updated Parking Management Framework, reflecting feedback received during the community consultation, is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

Parking Investigations

To ensure that the management of on and off-street parking areas is consistent with the needs of the community, all changes will be based on a hierarchy as outlined below. This hierarchy shows various levels of management and a description of each of these measures is described in more detail within the Parking Management Framework attached to this report. Education and Enforcement are key elements across all levels to facilitate safety, access and turnover of vehicles.



* Unrestricted parking is still subject to the Victorian Road Safety Road Rules 2017

To maximise parking usage a target occupancy of 85% during peak periods is sought before increasing restrictions in an area. Where occupancy is below 15% during peak periods, a reduction of restrictions may also be considered.

Generally, all parking areas will start as unrestricted and specific restrictions investigated and implemented as necessary. The investigation process will be managed by Council's Traffic and Transport Team and include:

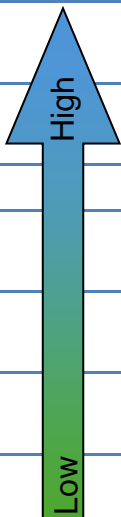
- Identification of the parking issue and associated background information relating to the existing land-use and enforcement.
- Evaluation of parking occupancy and patterns to understand regular parking behaviour.
- Development of a plan outlining the proposed restrictions and present it to relevant stakeholders for feedback. The plan could include the need for resident or trader parking permits if it is considered appropriate.
- Review feedback and make minor adjustments to the plan to best meet the needs of the users.
- Implement the proposal including installing relevant signs and infrastructure.

When digital parking solutions or paid parking solutions are recommended, a detailed investigation will be undertaken across various Council departments and presented to Council for endorsement. When paid parking solutions are being considered, residents and landowners of Yarra Ranges Council will be exempt from paying for parking however a permit will be required with appropriate conditions. Residents and landowners with an appropriate permit will still be required to adhere to the appropriate restrictions.

For Example: A resident, with an appropriate permit, would be permitted to park for free in a paid parking area with a 2-hour restriction however, if they overstay, they would be subject to appropriate enforcement.

Parking Allocation based on User Groups and Types of Permits

When Parking Precinct Plans are developed the safety of people, providing access to properties and facilitating network efficiency and traffic movements will be the greatest priority before parking restrictions are implemented. To consider the needs of different user groups, a Hierarchy of Parking Allocation was developed. This highlights which groups will be given greater priority when conflicting demands are identified.

Level of Priority	User Group	Examples of Restrictions
	Safety of people, access and network efficiency	Restricting parking to enable safety, provide access and increase visibility and traffic movements.
	Public Transport Users	Introduce bus stops in suitable places. They must have enough space to enter and exit.
	Accessible Parking Spaces	Dedicated spaces close to amenities and services.
	Customers and Visitors	Providing a range of time restrictions based on the types of business and needs of users.
	Special Use (e.g. Vehicle Charging, Loading)	Dedicated spaces to meet the needs of special users groups.
	Residents and Business Staff	These are spaces to allow longer term parking needs to access the area.
	Park and Ride Commuters	Commuter parking is typically near train stations and provided by the relevant authorities.

To support the allocation of parking to different groups a range of permits can be utilised, including:

- Accessible Parking Permit
- Local Resident Parking Permit
- Free Parking Permit for Residents and Landowners in Paid Parking Areas
- Trader Parking Permit
- Construction Parking Permit

Details of when these permits are considered appropriate and how they are issued are detailed within the attached Parking Management Framework.

In addition, information on when relevant zones are considered appropriate is described in detail. The various zones included:

- Areas with No Stopping at Any Time
- Bus and Taxi Zones
- Accessible Parking Spaces
- Loading Zones
- Electric Vehicle Charging Zones
- Parents with Prams or Seniors Parking Spaces
- Car Share Scheme Parking
- Roadside Trader Parking
- Parking on Nature Strips and Verges

In order for parking restrictions to work effectively to provide safety and turnover of vehicles, drivers must adhere to them. It is recognised that at times some drivers do not adhere to the restrictions and therefore enforcement is required. Enforcement of parking restrictions is undertaken by both Yarra Ranges Council Officers and the Police. Yarra Ranges Council Officers undertake parking enforcement using both manual and in-vehicle camera use.

Council's approach to enforcement aims to create a safe, accessible, and fair parking environment for everyone. The program supports residents, businesses, visitors, and tourists and is continually assessed to ensure alignment with community priorities and laws.

All parking restrictions in the municipality can be enforced, but more targeted enforcement might be needed at certain times or places if unsafe behaviour or overstay are identified or parking issues are causing problems for nearby landowners. Regular patrols of school zones and high demand areas ensure the safety of pedestrians. Targeted enforcement in business areas supports fair access to parking and efficient turnover, particularly during peak times.

In instances where misuse of on-street parking in residential areas is identified, Council will seek to work with residents and users through warnings and education where possible. Enforcement of these spaces will only be undertaken if required.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The cost for the development and consultation of the Parking Management Framework has been funded through Council's current operational budget.

Development of specific investigations and Parking Precinct Plans will generally be undertaken in-house through Council's current operational budget.

The introduction of changed parking restrictions can be achieved using Councils existing signage budget.

The introduction of new or upgrades to parking areas or the introduction of digital parking solutions and/or paid parking schemes will require additional capital works budget and an application for funding will be made at the relevant time.

Revenue obtained from enforcement can be used in the Council's overall budget for improvements. Some of the revenue from paid parking schemes, such as in Warburton, will be used for local improvements.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This Parking Management Framework contributes to the following strategic objectives in the Council Plan.

- **Connected and Healthy Communities** A strategic approach to parking management is aimed to ease traffic congestion and facilitate parking for people who need to use private vehicles while encouraging those who can use walking and cycling to do so.
- **Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places** Creating liveable places includes implementing and effective management of the suitable provision of quality on and off-street parking spaces which provides access to town centres and key destinations.
- **Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment** Effective parking management balances the need to protect the natural environment, whilst providing opportunities for residents, tourists and visitors to experience the many unique environmental attractions that the Yarra Ranges has to offer. It also reduces the need for greenhouse gas emissions caused by circulating vehicles.
- **Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism** Successful demand management for parking spaces caters for the needs of customers while maximising vehicle turnover to provide access to commercial and retail businesses. Strategic parking management at tourist attractions, festivals, and events provides a better overall experience for tourists, visitors and patrons.
- **High Performing Organisation** As an organisation, Yarra Ranges Council strives to become a lead Council in implementing and managing innovative solutions to parking issues which meet the needs of residents, visitors, workers and tourists alike which makes the best use of existing assets.

The Parking Management Framework also goes into detail of the stages of the Strategic Framework for Car Parking Actions which is outlined in the Integrated Transport Strategy.

RELEVANT LAW

Road Rules 165 – 213 within Part 12 of the Road Safety Road Rules 2017 (Vic) describe the various rules regarding parking. The *Road Management Act 2004* and the *Local Government Act 2020* outlines that Council has the authority, as the Road Authority, to manage the road network. This includes the power to implement and enforce parking restrictions to maximise safety and access while meeting the parking needs of the local community.

A Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this framework and recommendations have been included. The Gender Impact Assessment highlighted that different people have different needs when it comes to parking based on their situation. These could include:

- People with accessibility needs generally require more space to manoeuvre mobility aids or have limited ability to walk long distances to their destination.
- Parents, particularly women with young children, may require additional width and access to look after the needs of the children.
- Women, people with anxiety issues and elderly may consider the perception of safety when parking their vehicle and seek areas which increased lighting and passive surveillance, particularly if they are expected to be travelling at time of low lightening.
- People doing deliveries need access to a ramp and or be located as close as possible to their destination.
- Staff will require unrestricted areas to park for longer with safe access between the parking area and their workplace.
- People who are staying for short periods prefer to park close to the destination to limit travel time.
- People with access issues, including younger children or the elderly would require safe and unobstructed access to parking areas.

When Parking Precinct Plans are developed or reviewed for specific areas, the needs of various members of the community will be considered. This could include providing a range of parking restrictions in various locations around the precinct to facilitate parking options which are tailored to meet the needs of the specific community. Parking reviews will also consider lighting and access between parking areas and destinations as appropriate.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Implications

The economic implications of the Parking Management Framework include:

- **Parking Turnover** Effective parking management enables higher turnover of parking spaces where required. This can benefit local businesses by increasing the availability of parking for customers.
- **Revenue Generation** Where paid parking initiatives are introduced, revenue is generated by visitors which can be directed toward local asset maintenance, projects, and community initiatives. Similarly, revenue from necessary enforcement can be used in the Council's overall budget for improvements.

Social Implications

The social implications of the Parking Management Framework include:

- **Alternative Transportation** If implemented effectively, parking management can encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation, such as public transport, cycling, or walking, which can have positive social impacts in terms of increased physical activity and community interaction.
- **Parking Proximity** When parking restrictions are implemented, drivers will be required to park in locations to suit their time requirements. This may include the need to park further away from their destination to access free and/or long-term parking spaces.
- **Affordability** The introduction of paid parking initiatives can impact low-income individuals who may have fewer transportation alternatives or less ability to pay for parking. This can raise concerns about equitable access to public spaces and services.

Environmental Implications

The environmental implications of the Parking Management Framework include:

- **Reduced congestion and idling time** The implementation of parking restrictions and supporting signage seeks to free up parking spaces, encouraging turnover and reduce the circulation of vehicles.
- **Optimising traffic flow** Use of digital technology which directs drivers to available parking spaces further reduces unnecessary vehicle movements and reduces vehicle emissions.
- **Reduced environmental damage** Effective installation of signage can direct drivers away from parking in areas which could adversely impact on vegetation. Clarification of rules around parking on verges and nature strips reduces damage to vegetation caused by parked vehicles.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Draft Parking Management Framework was released for community consultation from 14 August 2024 to 8 September 2024.

The community were informed of the consultation through social media and direct email for subscribers and invited to provide feedback via Council's Shaping Yarra Ranges webpage. The project team were also available at each of the community link offices for in person discussions.

A total of 99 online and 9 email responses were received from a wide range of the community with the key themes being:

Restrictions

- Range of restrictions are required
- Don't want parking restrictions/ There is not a parking problem
- Feedback related to Paid Parking or Digital Parking Solutions
- Clarification of which areas are being considered
- Need for unrestricted staff parking close to businesses
- Site Specific Parking Issues

Enforcement

- Need for enforcement

Development

- Increased Parking demand due to incremental development
- Road width on new developments must cater for on-street parking

Parking Demand

- Visitors to residential properties will not be able to find a park
- More parking is needed

Other

- Need more detail on the Management of permit process
- Consideration for other modes - e.g. cycling, walking, public transport

A detailed Engagement Feedback Report outlining the consultation process, demographics of respondents, and key issues is included as Attachment 2 to this report.

The Parking Management Framework provides a structured approach for responding to the above key issues and other operational matters. The Engagement Feedback Report also describes how the key issues are considered within the Parking Management Framework.

Key Updates Based on Community Feedback

1. Revised Parking Occupancy Targets

- Draft: Target occupancy of 80% before tightening restrictions.
- Updated: Target occupancy now 85% before increasing restrictions, and 15% as a lower limit before easing them.

2. Updates to Parking Hierarchy: Emphasising the Stronger Role of Education and Enforcement

- The updated hierarchy integrates education and enforcement at all levels, ensuring parking controls remain effective by promoting compliance rather than relying solely on restrictive measures.

3. Additional Details on Enforcement Approach

- Clarifies how enforcement will be applied, ensuring Council Officers use judgment and discretion, supported by technology.
- More information on Parking Enforcement Program, which focussed on:
 - Enhancing road safety
 - Supporting businesses with parking turnover
 - Reducing disruption for residents

4. Adjustments to Parking Permit Policies

- More details added on Local Resident Parking Permits, Trader Permits, and Construction Parking Permits.

5. New Details on Parking Overlays in Planning Scheme

A Parking Overlay is a planning tool that manages car parking at a precinct level rather than a site-by-site basis. It is designed to address local parking challenges such as:

- High traffic congestion.
- Rapid urban development.
- Increased parking demand.

A Parking Overlay can:

- Identify parking requirements for specific areas.
- Set local parking rates to align with demand.
- Provide design standards for new parking spaces.
- Facilitate financial contributions in place of on-site parking provisions.

To implement a Parking Overlay, Council must undertake a parking capacity analysis to support an amendment to the Planning Scheme. This process includes stakeholder consultation and requires Ministerial approval before implementation.

6. More Specific Guidelines for Special Parking Areas

- Expanded details on Electric Vehicle Charging Zones, Car Share Scheme Parking, and Roadside Trader Parking.
- More flexibility in nature strip parking enforcement, with Council working with residents to assess solutions like indented parking bays.

7. Refinements to Digital Parking Solutions & Paid Parking

- Greater emphasis on using data and technology to manage parking demand.
- Clarifies that paid parking will mainly target high-tourist areas and be regularly reviewed to maintain affordability and space availability (85% target occupancy).

8. Clearer Structure and Language Improvements

- Some sections have been reworded for clarity and consistency.
- The hierarchy of parking management remains the same but with better explanations of enforcement, decision-making, and user group priorities.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Various parking policies, frameworks and information available online from other Councils were reviewed in the development of the Parking Management Framework. This has provided a benchmark for best practice in terms of parking investigation process, hierarchy of users and how and where different permit types are used.

The development of this framework has been in conjunction with the proposal for Parking Management in Warburton which has involved input from various internal departments.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The development of a Parking Management Framework reduces the risk that parking investigations are undertaken in an inconsistent manner. It will also enable the community to be informed about how Council will make decisions around parking and enforcement.

Specific risks associated with individual parking investigations and area wide Parking Precinct Plans will need to be detailed at the time of the investigation.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Parking Management Framework
2. Draft Parking Management Framework – Engagement Feedback Report