

CITY OF VICTOR HARBOR

Report

on

***THE ACCESSIBLE CENTRE
PROJECT***



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CITY OF VICTOR HARBOR ACCESSIBLE CENTRE PROJECT

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CITY OF VICTOR HARBOR ACCESSIBLE CENTRE PROJECT

Strategic Plan for CBD Access for People with Disabilities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 1999, on the basis of information gathered during development of an Access Action plan (Jardine and Ashton 1999), Council made a successful submission to Planning SA for a grant to carry out improvements to the Victor Harbor CBD. Consequently, Council commissioned Capable Consulting to carry out this study. Work commenced in February 2000. This project links firmly with several other access-related studies being carried out at all levels of government.

Council's stated aim is to make the centre of Victor Harbor South Australia's most accessible tourist venue by 2005 (*Project Brief*). This includes cooperating with businesses to help them become more accessible. The Accessible Centre Project will also link with Council's Corporate Plan and Access Action Plan.

Two principal strategies will be employed to achieve improved access. The first examines present and future projected provisions for designated parking in the CBD, considers any other means within Council's span of control of achieving greater access to the CBD, and makes recommendations about how this may occur.

The other arm of the project involves auditing for access all participating businesses and shops in a designated area of the CBD. Individual reports have been prepared for each business with suggestions of how access may be achieved, or at least improved. Results of this exercise appear in a separate report prepared by Margaret Ashton of Mashrob Access Consultants.

Council will later select specific business sites to carry out access demonstration projects, and negotiate with other businesses where means of increasing access are within Council's province.

The general population of Victor Harbor is predicted to more than double over the next decade or so. Numbers of people with disabilities will also increase, and there will be a disproportionate number of elderly people. To cater for its growing resident and tourist populations, Council needs to increase already inadequate access provisions in the CBD.

The consultants have presented a strategic plan for redevelopment and future development of designated car parking in the CBD and other means of access in the City of Victor Harbor.

Cooperation between public and private enterprise has the capacity to greatly increase both safety and access in Victor Harbor's CBD. Implementation of recommendations of this report, together with ideas from related projects will transform the CBD into an attractive, safe, and accessible environment for all users. The City will be meeting its stated aim of being the safest and most accessible tourist destination in South Australia by 2005.

Discussion and Recommendations

Access Policy

Council has an Access Policy which informs all other policy and development decisions (See Access Action Plan, Jardine and Ashton 1999).

Recommendation 1

Refer to Council's Access Policy and incorporate it in all future planning decisions.

Pedestrian Linkages

Some time was spent examining possible pedestrian linkages within the CBD. Attractively designed pedestrian linkages, with longer-term parking times, will attract people and free up parking space in Ocean Street. Reduced speed limits, reduced standing time and some designated parking spaces in Ocean Street will further benefit people with disabilities and the elderly.

Recommendation 2

Continue with work necessary to create attractively designed pedestrian linkages to blend Ocean Street with its environs and form a central precinct. Safety and accessibility will be primary considerations. Ensure paving is even and kerb ramps are built to standard (AS1428.1 revised 1998).

Recommendation 3

As pedestrian linkages are created between Ocean Street and environs, reduce standing times in Ocean Street to a maximum of 30 minutes.

Designated parking

Increasing numbers of elderly people and those with disabilities will require a greatly increased number of additional spaces if Victor Harbor is to satisfy local residents' needs and continue to attract tourists and holiday-makers.

There appear to be no figures relating to proportion of general or designated car parks per head of population. The Australian Building Codes Board, however, has flagged a minimum of 3% proportion of designated to general spaces, with more at places of high usage such as shopping, entertainment, and medical centres.

Recommendation 4

Declare one-way traffic in at least one end of Coral Street, and create angle parking there with designated spaces abutting Ocean Street.

Recommendation 5

Use pavement width to create designated spaces in Ocean Street near main centres of activity (post office, medical centre, and cinema).

Recommendation 6

Amend relevant By-law to allow for erection of deterrent signs, eg, "Penalty \$200", institute regular and consistent policing of dedicated parking spaces and enforce compliance with relevant by-laws.

Recommendation 7

Refer to individual car park audit reports (Appendix 5) and address shortcomings in Council-owned car parks. Negotiate with private car park owners to correctly mark out and sign their designated parks.

See also **Recommendation 10** (below).

Recommendation 8

Increase the overall proportion of designated car parking spaces to at least 4% of the total number of spaces.

Signage and Tourist information

People have difficulties in finding their way around the CBD. Signage should be clear and unambiguous, and information about access readily available to tourists and local residents.

Recommendation 9

Ensure that all key CBD features are adequately signed, and all signage is clear, unambiguous and sufficiently large as to be easily discernible to people with low vision. Consult the Low Vision Centre, Adelaide, or Australian Standard AS1428.1 (Revised 1998).

Recommendation 10

- (a) Negotiate with eg, Tourism SA to produce an easy-to-use community guide/map, which includes specific information about accessible facilities (toilets, telephones, car parks, and public information directories, ATMs. See format used by the City of Adelaide) or
- (b) alternatively, investigate other means of funding and producing such a document.
- (c) Publicise the Guide and ensure distribution of it to all households in the Council district. Ensure supply of multiple copies to the Tourist Information Centre for distribution.
- (d) Provide copies of the Guide in alternative format, eg, audio tape, large print, electronic version (disk or available on the Internet) and advertise their availability.

Business Premises

There were complaints about lack of access to non-Council premises, including the great majority of businesses. The Business Association has stated willingness to work with Council to educate the business community about the advantages in increasing access. Council has a role in encouraging local businesses to sponsor training and information sessions in disability awareness. Physical access will achieve a measure of inclusion, but will fall short if attitudinal issues are not addressed.

Recommendation 11

That Council work with the local businesses to

- (a) implement and publicise an annual Access Awards Scheme and invite participation from local businesses.
- (b) investigate other means of encouraging local businesses to provide access, and publicise improvements in accessibility.
- (c) encourage local businesses to participate in disability awareness training.

Public toilets

There is no accessible public toilet at all in or near Ocean Street. This makes access difficult for people with disabilities and elderly people.

Recommendation 12 (Public Toilets)

Provide an accessible (according to specifications of AS1428.2) and clearly-signed public toilet in a central location (vicinity of Coral Street Ocean Street intersection).

Street Seating

There are few seats in the CBD for resting.

Recommendation 13

Install seats in the CBD at approximately 60 metre intervals and according to specifications of AS1428.2.

6.7 Pedestrian Crossings

Ocean Street and Coral Street are integrated zones where pedestrians and vehicles share existing road space without supervision. This creates a danger for people with disabilities, the elderly and children. Safety and access would be improved by installation of pedestrian crossings.

Recommendation 14

Install a marked pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the Coral Street/Ocean Street intersection. For safety, ensure that street lighting is adequate, and that kerb ramps are appropriately placed to facilitate pedestrian access. Refer to *Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, pt 13: Pedestrians* (AUSTROADS) for a detailed discussion.

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CITY OF VICTOR HARBOR ACCESSIBLE CENTRE PROJECT

Strategic Plan for Designated Parking for People with Disabilities

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Victor Harbor's Population

The City of Victor Harbor has the highest proportion (almost 30%) of people aged over 65 in Australia, and there is ample evidence to show that the incidence of disability increases directly with increasing age. The City's population is predicted to more than double over the next 10 years with a disproportionate increase in numbers of elderly people. Victor Harbor is also a popular seasonal tourist resort for people of all ages and levels of ability, and the population trebles in the peak tourist season.

1.2 Victor Harbor's Access Action Plan

Council commissioned an Access Action Plan (Jardine and Ashton 1999) consistent with requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. Amongst other things, this involved auditing Council owned and controlled services and facilities for level of access. Results were drawn from community survey, public meeting, focus group discussions and consultation with local service providers and business representatives. Access to shops and businesses in the town centre and lack of designated parking for people with disabilities were identified by the community as high priorities.

1.3 "Access the Advantage"

There is also a growing awareness amongst business operators that:

People with disabilities shouldn't be viewed as charity cases or regulatory burdens, but rather as profitable marketing targets. - - - People with disabilities have money!" (Prager, J: in Wall Street Journal, Dec. 1999)

Tapping the disability market makes good business sense.

"Providing access to people with disabilities will expand the scope of your market by at least 19%." Darcy, S: Gold Medal Disability Access Strategy.

According to the SA Health Commission SERCIS *Survey of Disability Prevalence* (1997), 27% of people with disabilities surveyed in South Australia have an annual income of \$30,000 or more (sample size = > 2,678).

The South Coast Retail Centres Study (1999) estimated that almost 50% of Victor Harbor's retail income derives from tourists and non-residents.

1.4 Related Projects

Related projects are occurring at each level of government:

- 1.4.1 The Commonwealth Government is encouraging businesses to *Access the Advantage* (August 1999) by offering *Gold Medal Access Awards* for disability-friendly businesses and use of Universal Design concepts.
- 1.4.2 The SA Tourism Commission has developed and distributed a Disability Strategy. One aim of the strategy, to carry out an access audit of selected tourist facilities in South Australia, including those In the Fleurieu, has been achieved.
- 1.4.3 The present project is the result of a grant offer by Planning SA. It was made to selected SA localities to help improve and individualise town centres.
- 1.4.4 Victor Harbor Council has established the Railway Precinct Committee, which has tendered out a concept plan to revitalise the Railway Precinct and create links between it and other areas of the CBD. Pedestrian safety and access are key considerations.
- 1.4.5 Other projects are the Main Street Revitalisation Study, and the South Coast Retail Centre Study.
- 1.4.6 A Town Pride Committee is about to be established with the aim of improving visual aspects of, and access to, the CBD. There is cross-membership between this and the Railway Precinct Committee, and Council itself.
- 1.4.7 Council has recently purchased property in Victoria Street to provide supported residential accommodation for up to 25 people, and this will also require provision of access to the CBD.
- 1.4.8 Council's policy regarding Outdoor Café Licences is currently being developed to include access and safety issues.
- 1.4.9 A Post-School Options Program for people with disabilities may base activities in Victor Harbor.

1.5 Victor Harbor's Aim

Council's aim is to make the centre of Victor Harbor South Australia's most accessible tourist venue by 2005 (*Project Brief*). This includes cooperating with businesses to help them become more accessible. The Accessible Centre Project will link Council's Corporate Plan and the Access Action Plan.

1.6 Council's Relationship with the Business Community

Council is moving to confirm a relationship with the business community which is characterised by mutual trust and obligation. The Town Pride Committee and the Railway Precinct Committee both include local businesspeople as members. The Victor Harbor Business Association is said to have a broad view of the future of Victor Harbor, in terms of commercial benefit, community well being and social responsibility.

2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

2.1 The Designated Parking Study

The overall aim of the study is to provide direction on how to make Victor Harbor's City Centre accessible to people with disabilities and the elderly.

Two principal strategies were employed to achieve this. The first examines present and future projected provisions for designated parking in the CBD, considers any other means within Council's span of control, of achieving greater access to the CBD, and makes recommendations about how this may occur. The consultants will present a strategic plan for redevelopment and future development of designated car parking in the CBD and other means of access for people with disabilities in the City of Victor Harbor (see Appendix 1 for project brief and map of study area)

2.2 Access Audit of Commercial Premises

The other arm of the project involved auditing for access all participating businesses and shops in a designated area of the CBD (see Appendix 2). Individual reports were prepared for each business with suggestions of how access may be achieved or at least improved. Council will select specific business sites to carry out access demonstration projects, and negotiate with other businesses where means of increasing access, eg, raising footpath levels, may be within Council's province.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Reference Group

A reference group was formed to work with and advise the consultants. The group was convened by the Community Services Officer and included Council's Planning Officer, Parking Inspector, a Graduate Officer, and one Elected Member. Names of members will be found in Appendix 3.

3.2 Desk Research

This involved examining:

- relevant Council policies and other documents,
- the location of present designated car parks,
- the perceived adequacy of existing levels of provision,
- projections of future demand on provision of designated parking,
- means of providing additional parking spaces,
- priority locations for future development, and
- quotas for numbers of designated parking spaces in relation to Victor Harbor's Development Plan and disproportionate numbers of elderly citizens.

3.3 Active Research

This took the form of:

- (a) A community survey conducted by:
 - Approaching people seen to be using designated car parks and inviting them to complete a questionnaire,
 - Messages in the local paper and on local radio inviting people to phone in and respond to the questionnaire.
- (b) Additional consultation with local businesspeople, Council staff and the Access Reference Group

- (c) An access audit of all existing car parks containing designated spaces, and
- (d) An access audit of entrances to all participating businesses and shops in the CBD. A streetscape audit of the study area has been carried out previously (Jardine and Ashton 1999).

4 RESEARCH PHASE

4.1 Review of Relevant Policies/Documentation

4.1.1 City of Victor Harbor Plan

Several objectives of the District Centre zone section of the Plan dovetail with aspect of the present project. They call for:

The establishment of safe and convenient pedestrian environment and movement network through the development of malls, arcades and courtyards within the zone, with appropriate linkages to adjoining areas,

Sufficient off-street parking to meet anticipated demand, and

Creation of a pedestrian dominant area with vehicle access and car parking provided in a manner that will not prejudice - - - the amenity of pedestrian spaces.

4.1.2 Disabled Persons Parking Permit (DPPP).

Eligibility

The Motor Vehicles Act states that

“Persons with a temporary or permanent physical disability (a) whose speed of movement is severely restricted by the impairment and (b) whose ability to use public transport is significantly impeded by the impairment may apply to the Registrar for a Disabled Persons Parking Permit. A temporary physical impairment is a physical impairment that, in the opinion of the Registrar, is likely to endure for more than six months, but not likely to be permanent.”

A medical certificate confirming eligibility must accompany an application for a permit (see Appendix 4).

Other benefits are conferred by possession and display of a DPPP. The person:

may park for twice the length of time indicated on a parking sign, or for the period of time indicated on the sign and a further 90 minutes, whichever is the greater.

May apply, in writing, to a council for permission to park near to his/her place of employment.

The above could both be taken into account by Council in considering means of making Victor Harbor CBD more accessible.

4.1.3 The Access Project (Victor Harbor Achieving Access)

This study was carried out in 1999 to determine how Council could improve general access for people with disabilities and the elderly. It was agreed that

Council has a role as a community leader and is in a position to encourage local businesses to improve their own access provisions. A community survey indicated particular concern about access to shops and business premises in the central business district as well as insufficient numbers of designated parking spaces.

4.1.4 The Traffic Management and Parking Study (TMPS)

This study was carried out in 1998 for the then District Council of Victor Harbor. Since the study was broad and general, it includes few references to people with disabilities. Authors of the study did, however, suggest that the number of designated parking spaces for people with disabilities be increased to the percentages recommended in Australian Standard AS2890.1. There were also suggestions about pedestrian linkages to Ocean Street which may improve access and a reference to angle parking which could allow sufficient width for designated car parking.

4.1.5 Tourist and Community Information

The Times Community Guide is not a council document, being provided by *The Times* newspaper. It is a general community guide, and the current format does not provide any information about specific facilities such as accessible public telephones, toilets, accessible or otherwise, public car parks with accessible parking spaces or public information directories. Council has produced its own tourist maps, which have the same shortcoming.

Ideally, Council would produce its own comprehensive Community Guide, but it is recognised that lack of resources may preclude this. Joint funding may be available to produce a more informative guide. People with disabilities recommend the format used by the City of Adelaide for ease of use.

4.2 Demographic Report

4.2.1 General

Determining the exact numbers of people with disabilities or limitation due to ageing is not an easy or precise task. Reasons for this include older people not wanting to be thought of as disabled, and people who are employed or occupationally productive despite significant functional impairment may not consider themselves 'disabled'. Estimates vary according to the definition of disability used and the sources of the data. (National Access Working Group: *Accessible Design in Australia 1999*). Data have been drawn from several sources in compiling the following report, and the above proviso should be kept in mind in any interpretation.

In 1998, 22.4% of the South Australian population was identified as having a disability (ABS: *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers*.) As South Australia has a population older than the rest of the nation, and that of the Fleurieu is considered the oldest in Australia, it is reasonable to assume that this figure may almost be doubled with confidence. People with mobility impairment, and, therefore, likely to be needing designated parking spaces, comprise almost 60% of all people with disabilities, and the likelihood of having one or more impairments that restrict activity, increases with age (*ibid*).

The population of Victor Harbor was recently estimated at 9,903, of whom 29% (2,872 people) are aged 65 years and over. Numbers of people aged 65 or over had increased by almost 30% in the years 1991 – 98, and this can be expected to accelerate with an expected population increase of almost 20% in the years to 2008. (*A Regional Profile of Victor Harbor 1998*)

4.2.2 Disability and Ageing

There is a strong positive correlation between disability and ageing. The rate of disability for children in the 0 – 4 age group is 4%. By age 64, the rate rises to 40% and at age 85 and over, the rate is 88% (National Access Working Group 1999). The demographic trend for population ageing will result in a substantial increase in the number of people with disabilities and people with handicap over the period to 2013. (Dept of Human Services 1999). Typical disabilities in older people are likely to be mobility and sight. People with these impairments are likely to have or at least, require, a disability parking permit.

4.2.3 Options Coordination Clients

According to the Disability Services Office, there are presently almost 1,000 clients of the Options Agency aged under 65 living in the 5211 postcode area. No breakdown was available of numbers in different disability categories, but extrapolating from South Australian figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1998), it may be assumed that 60% of the 1,000, or 600 people, are likely to have a mobility impairment. It may be also be assumed that since these 600 are already Options clients, they all experience significant handicap, and are likely to require designated parking spaces.

These numbers would be expected to increase proportionally with local population increase.

4.2.4 Future Numbers of People with Disabilities.

In addition to the above numbers, there will also be people aged 65 and over acquiring mobility impairment as they age. This population group is predicted to reach more than 4,000 ten years from now, with a likely disability rate of about 65%. It can be assumed that some of these people at the upper age range may be confined to their place of residence.

Even at a conservative estimate, however, this could still mean about a 65% impairment rate amongst some 25% of the resident population, or around 2,600 people. Add to these numbers of people under 65 with disabilities, also likely to increase with population increase, and people with temporary disabilities, and the figure is likely to be nearer 3,500. In addition to these figures, tourist numbers (people of all ages) are said to treble the population in the holiday season (additional 20,000). Of the 15% of these likely to experience a handicap, it is estimated that 60% will have mobility impairment (9% or 180 people).

4.3 Present Parking Provisions in Victor Harbor

For a resident population of almost 10,000, there is presently a total of 1,726 off-street parking spaces and 24 (1.3%) designated spaces for people with disabilities. The spaces include both Council-controlled and privately owned ones. There are an additional 545 Council-controlled on-street spaces for general parking. (Traffic Management and Parking Study (TMPS) 1998). There are no designated on-street spaces. Time restrictions for on-street parking vary from 15 minutes to 3 hours.

The TMPS points out that although it is preferable for designated parking to be located on off-street areas, there are times when on-street parking is the only alternative. While provision of designated parking (minimum width 3800) is difficult with parallel parking, it can be achieved in areas where angle parking is appropriate, or where footpath encroachment is a possibility.

5 ACTIVE RESEARCH

5.1 Audit of Designated Car Parks

Using a checklist based on Australian Standards AS1428.1 and 2 (see Appendix 5), an access audit was conducted of off-street parking which included designated spaces. Results were as follows:

Results of off-street designated car park audit (general)

Total of 12 car parks audited

Item	Private parks (8)		Council parks (4)		Total 'yes'
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Ratio of designated to general spaces > 1:100	8	0	4	0	12
Flat/no excessive cross-fall	8	0	4	0	12
Smooth surface	8	0	4	0	12
Appropriate signage on ground	8	0	4	0	12
Clearly visible upright sign	2	6	1	3	3
Close to building	6	2	3	1	9
Minimum 3800 width	2	6	1	3	3
Kerb ramp adjacent	2	6	0	4	2
Access path 1000 between bays	1	7	2	2	3
Clear access path to building	2	6	1	3	3
Need to cross path of other vehicles	8	0	3	1	11

Details of parking areas (individual)

See Appendix 5 for individual audit reports

5.1.1 Discussion

It is apparent that all of the above car parks need upgrading to provide safe and convenient parking for people with disabilities. Ratios of designated spaces to general spaces are all above the minimum of 1:100, all are level, have a smooth surface and are marked with the International wheelchair sign. Almost none, however, provide the required clearly visible upright signage, have a clear access path between bays, provide a clear access path to the

building, or are of the prescribed width. Only 2 of the twelve have an adjacent kerb ramp to allow easy access, and these are non-Council parks. The McKinlay Street park has located the designated space in an area too tight to permit easy entry or exit. All parks except one require people with disabilities to cross the path of other vehicles to access their destination and to return to their vehicles.

5.2 User Questionnaire

A questionnaire was given to 59 users of designated parking spaces. These were administered principally at the Woolworths shopping centre, which, although outside the designated area of the study, has the largest car park with the most designated spaces. There are few designated spaces in the prescribed study area. The questionnaires were administered by a young male graduate officer attached to Council for general duties, and assigned to assist the consultants in the present study. He introduced himself to prospective respondents as representing the Council.

All respondents were displaying a current disability permit from Transport SA, except for one aged over 80 years and having a broken ankle. Only one person approached refused to respond, and most who agreed, were happy to give contact details for follow-up information.

Approximately one third of the questionnaires were administered during the week in March, one third on a Saturday in April and the remainder over the April Easter weekend. (See Appendix 6 for a copy of the questionnaire).

Results were as follows:

5.2.1 Are you a local resident?

Yes	No	Total
40	19	59

5.2.2 Areas from which non-residents were drawn:

Location	Numbers	%
Adelaide Metro	9	15
Normanville area	1	2
Goolwa/Port Elliot	5	8
Eyre Peninsula	1	2
Mt Compass	2	3
USA	1	2
Total	19	

5.2.3 How often do you use special parking spaces at Victor Harbor?

Frequency	Numbers	%
Daily	9	15
2-3 times per week	12	20
Weekly	12	20
Occasionally	7	11
Tourist	17	29
No response	2	3
Total	59	

5.2.4 Where are you most likely to park in Victor Harbor?

Location	Numbers	%
Woolworths	55	66
Ocean Street	13	16
Stuart Street	2	2
Esplanade	3	4
Where I can see views	2	2
Post Office	2	2
ANZ bank	2	2
Medical Centre	4	5
Total responses	83*	

*Total exceeds N due to multiple responses

5.2.5 Do you need an extra wide space to accommodate a wheelchair/frame?

Yes	No	Total
26	33	59

5.2.6 Do you sometimes use general parking spaces in Ocean Street?

Yes	No	Total
47	12	59

5.2.7 Do you have problems in getting a special park in Victor Harbor?

Yes	No	Total
38	21	59

5.2.8 Which are the worst times for finding a special park in Victor Harbor?

Times	Numbers	%
Summer Holidays	34	58
Any time	8	14
Thursdays/Fridays	7	12
10.00-12.00 any day	3	5
After school	3	5
Weekends	4	7
Total	59	

5.2.9 Where in Victor would you like to see (more) special parking spaces?

Location	Numbers	%
Ocean Street	23	33
Medical Centre	14	20
Library	6	9
Woolworths	5	7
Hotels	6	9
Causeway	8	11
Post office	3	4
Stuart Street	2	3
Banks	3	3
Total reponses	70	

5.2.10 Apart from additional spaces, what would make Ocean Street easier for you to access?

Condition required	Numbers	%
Footpaths clear of clutter	4	5
Good kerb ramps	25	34
Even paving surfaces	12	16
Better policing of designated parks	5	7
Proximity of parks to shops	5	7
Accessible toilets on Ocean Street	5	7
Wide spaces for wheelchair users	2	3
Better signage	2	3
Access to cinemas	3	4
Better community transport	2	3
Support handrails	2	3
Fix Stuart Street ramp	3	4
Seats for resting	4	5
Total	74	

5.2.11 What is your disability type?

Category (self-report)	Numbers
Physical	46
Age-related	8
Sensory	4
Other	1
Total	59

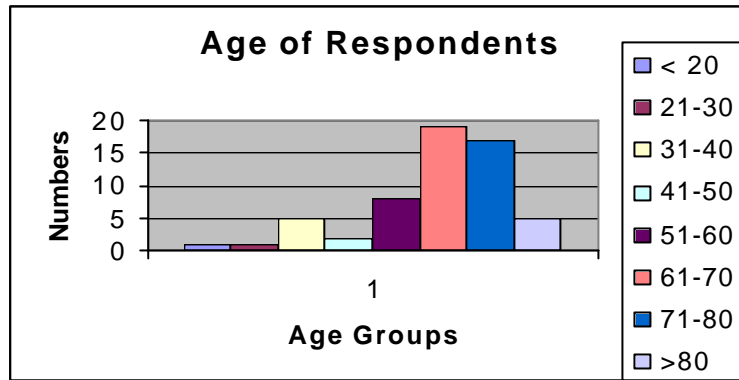
5.2.12 Is your disability permanent or temporary?

Description	Numbers	%
Permanent	48	81
Temporary	11	19
Total	59	

5.2.13 What is your age group?

Age Group	Numbers	%
<20	1	2
21-30	1	2
31-40	5	8
41-50	2	3
51-60	8	14
61-70	19	32
71-80	17	29
>80	5	8
No response	1	1
Total	59	

Chart next page gives a graphic representation of above results.



Results of User Questionnaire (cont)

5.2.14 General issues

Access to shops. Steps are difficult.

McKinlay Street parking no good. Hard to enter because too small. Ramp to Ocean Street too steep.

Delivery trucks park across disability parks (4 comments)

Need more parking inspectors.

Permits should be like registration stickers, not able to be transferred.

Encounter Lakes kerbing too steep.

Stuart Street kerb ramps near Times no good.

Parking opposite medical centre inadequate for purposes (5 comments).

Additional raised strips in front of parks at Woolworths create a hazard for people with mobility impairment.

Poor access to shops along Victoria Street.

5.2.14 General issues (cont)

Taxi frequently parks across disability parks at Woolworths (2 comments).

Need a place for people with disabilities to work.

Woolworths could provide seating for customers.

Woolworths could have a priority lane for people with disabilities.

Access to cinema no good (2 comments).

5.2.15 Discussion

The majority of respondents (68%) were local residents and a further 25% came from Adelaide and the metropolitan area. Forty percent reported either weekly or 2-3 times per week usage of designated parking spaces in Victor Harbor. Fifteen percent reported daily use. The most likely parking place was the Woolworths complex (66%) with a further 16% nominating Ocean Street as their most frequent destination. Given that there are no wide designated spaces in Ocean Street and 44% of people said they required a wide space, the above disparity is not surprising. Some 80%, however, said they sometimes used Ocean Street spaces. Several of those who do park there stated that they do so with difficulty, but there was nowhere else to park if they needed to go anywhere in the CBD, and several important destinations are there.

Thirty-three percent said they would like to see designated spaces in or near Ocean Street, with an additional 12% stipulating near the Medical Centre.

Tourists would like to see more spaces near the Causeway, and others mentioned a variety of locations as above in 5.2.9.

Respondents were asked what would make it easier for them to access Ocean Street. Thirty-four percent stated good kerb ramps, and 16% better paving surfaces. Others suggested an accessible public toilet in Ocean Street, proximity of car parks to destination, and better policing of designated parks (see 5.2.10 above). No respondent suggested pedestrian linkages between Ocean Street and other areas.

Seventy-eight percent reported having a physical disability and in 81% of cases the disability was permanent. Sixty-one percent of people interviewed were in the 51 – 70 years age-group. The chart under 5.2.13 (above) illustrates this graphically. This figure is consistent with Victor Harbor's ageing population.

5.3 Interviews with Key Staff

Discussions were held with the Directors of Technical Services and Planning and Community Services. The Community Services Officer and the Parking Inspector were members of the Reference Group.

5.4 Meeting with Local Businesspeople

Council representatives convened a breakfast meeting of local businesspeople (see Appendix 7 for letters of invitation, attendance list and agenda). The meeting was held at a local hotel and was attended by 18 people excluding Council personnel. Most of the people present represented businesses in Ocean Street, and all reported access problems.

Peter Hall, Council's Director of Planning and Community Services, chaired the meeting and introduced the morning's topic.

Councillor Rae Parker outlined the background of the present project, and indicated Council's willingness to cooperate with businesses to assist in achieving greater accessibility.

The consultant addressed the meeting, outlining business responsibilities under the DDA, the meaning of disability, and the advantages, in terms of increasing market share, of improving access.

Margaret Ashton, access adviser, outlined the applicable Australian Standards for access, and described the process she would use in auditing participating businesses for access.

Few of those present owned their business premises, and foresaw possible problems in engaging their landlords in access improvements. Peter Hall offered Council's services as a broker, where necessary, in mediating with landlords.

Results of Meeting with Businesspeople

Business people present were keen for their premises to undergo the audit process, and particularly interested in the demonstration access project proposed by Council. Others were unable to attend the meeting, but expressed an interest in participating in the project. The total number of 25 business representatives present expressed an interest.

Margaret Ashton carried out access audits for all participating businesses and provided individual reports with suggestions for improvement (see Appendix 8 for handouts provided as follow-up to the meeting).

5.5 Improving Access to Ocean Street

5.5.1 Pedestrian Access Linkages To Ocean Street

The Traffic Management and Parking Study (TMPS) suggested that with the provision of off-street parking on Railway Terrace, Stuart Street and McKinlay Street, pedestrian linkages should be provided between these and Ocean Street .

Three possible links were identified: on the North side of the Medical Centre from Ocean Street to Torrens Road, from McKinlay Street through the Mall and from the Westpac car park through to Ocean Street.

North Side of the Medical Centre:

If angle parking, including designated wide spaces, were provided off Torrens Street this would enable access to Ocean Street. There are several issues however. Shortening standing time for standard parking spaces would lessen the likelihood of local employee parking, as happens under present arrangements. Also the fact that the Medical Centre is some distance away may deter people with disabilities from using this to access it. Alternatives may be to:

- (a) create designated parks by encroaching on the footpath outside the Medical Centre (see 5.5.3 below), and
- (b) provide a longer disability park to allow for vehicles with rear ramp access.

McKinlay Street Through the Mall:

This link would provide access to those shops in the Mall and around to the Post Office. There are several issues to be addressed such as the present inadequacy of the designated park in McKinlay car park, traffic levels in McKinlay Street and finally, the steep gradient of the ramp through to the Mall. These matters should be resolved with completion of the proposed multi-story car park in this area, together with improved access through the Mall, and designated car parks at ground level.

Westpac Car Park:

This link is already good but could be improved by level paving surfaces and additional lighting. Access to the Westpac car park would need to be negotiated since this is private land.

Railway Precinct

The upgrade of the Railway Precinct will include provision for pedestrian movement between the Precinct and Ocean Street. This is likely to attract tourists.

Discussion

It is desirable to improve access to the CBD by providing pedestrian links between Ocean Street and surrounding areas. The suggested links would be made more attractive by long-term, eg. four-hour, parking provisions, cafes with street tables, clear signage, good lighting, level paving and safe kerb ramps. These features would attract people, particularly tourists, to use the links and release some Ocean Street short-term parking spaces. This would benefit disability permit-holders who are allowed an additional 90 minutes or double the specified time, whichever is the greater, on any timed parking.

Many people with disabilities, including the elderly, require proximity to their destination and would still find access difficult if they had to travel any distance on foot. For this reason the link from Railway Terrace suggested in the TMPS would be unlikely to directly increase access to Ocean Street for people with disabilities.

5.5.2 Angle Parking

Because of the additional width required for designated parking, angle parking is necessary to include designated spaces in on-street parking. While several user questionnaire respondents requested designated parking in Ocean Street it is not possible to provide angle parking there. Ranking could, however be introduced by encroaching for necessary width on the presently broad Ocean Street footpaths (see 5.5.3 below).

While Coral Street is wider, it would also be difficult to provide angle parking there while there is two-way traffic. One-way traffic in Coral Street in an easterly direction from the Stuart Street intersection or Torrens Street would allow angle parking on at least one side of the street, preferably on the Library/Town Hall side. This would preclude people having to cross the road to access the library. Designated spaces nearest the Ocean Street intersection would improve access to at least the central part of Ocean Street.

The TMPS Report states that the angle parking in Albert Place adjacent to Warland reserve should contain at least one designated car park. Given projected numbers of people with disabilities, something like four spaces would be appropriate.

5.5.3 Creating Designated Spaces by Footpath Encroachment

The present configuration of Ocean Street does not appear to lend itself to wide parking bays. However, the pavements are wide enough to allow encroachment to extend present bays to 3.8 m to accommodate wheelchair users, and still permit clear access for pedestrians on the footpath. This would assist people with disabilities to access eg., the Medical Centre and the Post Office, where questionnaire respondents specifically requested designated parking. A precedent has been set by Transport SA in Cross Road Westbourne Park where parking bays have been cut into the pavement.

This strategy is consistent with Council's desire to better integrate vehicular and pedestrian traffic in Ocean Street.

5.5.4 Other improvements

- Reducing the speed limit in Ocean Street and Coral Street is likely to decrease traffic flow and allow for better integration of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- Providing more marked pedestrian crossings will improve access to Ocean Street for the elderly and people with disabilities.
- Questionnaire respondents suggested provision of an accessible toilet in Ocean Street. This should be centrally located and clearly signed.
- A further request was for seats for resting. According to Australian Standard 1428.2, in areas of high use by elderly people, seats should be provided no more than sixty metres apart along paths of travel. The composition of Victor Harbor's population indicates a need for more street seating.
- Lack of signage, and inadequate signage, has created problems within the central business district, both for people with disabilities and those without. For safety, both type and placement of signs should be consistent through the area, and lettering should be sufficiently large and clear as to be easily discernible to all, including the elderly.
- Negotiations have taken place between Council and owners of some private car parks with the result that the ANZ bank has agreed to seal the present car park and provide line parking, and Smugglers' Inn will include a designated space in its car park.

5.6 Commercial Premises Access Audit Report

This will be presented in a separate report prepared by Margaret Ashton, Mashrob

6 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Access Policy

Council has an Access Policy (See Access Action Plan 1999) which informs all other policy and development decisions.

Recommendation 1

Refer to Council's Access Policy and incorporate it in all future planning decisions.

6.2 Pedestrian Linkages

Pedestrian linkages to the central precinct will not be directly helpful to people with disabilities since walking any distance present difficulties for many of them. Such links, however, attractively designed, with longer-term parking times, will attract other people to use them and free up parking space in Ocean Street. Reduced speed limits, reduced standing time and some designated parking spaces in Ocean Street will further benefit people with disabilities and the elderly.

Recommendation 2

Continue with work necessary to create attractively designed pedestrian linkages to blend Ocean Street with its environs and form a central precinct. Safety and accessibility will be primary considerations. Ensure that paving is even and kerb ramps built to standard (AS1428.1 revised 1998) are placed at convenient intervals.

Recommendation 3

As pedestrian linkages are created between Ocean Street and environs, reduce standing times in Ocean Street to a maximum of 30 minutes

6.3 Designated Parking

The present number of designated parking spaces (24) is just 1.2% of the total number of 1726 spaces in Victor Harbor. The number of general spaces is inadequate for the current resident and tourist population. Increasing numbers of elderly people and those with disabilities (see 4.2.4 above) will require a greatly increased number of additional designated spaces if Victor Harbor is to satisfy local residents' needs and continue to attract tourists and holiday-makers.. Tourist numbers (people of all ages) are said to treble in the holiday season, adding to pressure on parking.

The *South Coast Retail Centres Study* proposed that an additional 8,500m² of retail floor space would be viable for Victor Harbor after 2006, and recommends that this be confined to the CBD. Planners propose that, in future, food and household goods retailing be largely located near the present Woolworths complex, necessitating an increase in designated spaces there, and that Ocean Street and environs be more tourist-oriented, requiring better access provisions.

There appear to be no official figures relating to proportion of general or designated car parks per head of population. The Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) 1997, however, cites an unsourced report (BATAC, 1997), recommending a minimum 3% proportion of designated to general spaces, with more at places of high usage such as shopping ,entertainment, and

medical centres. The ABCB more recently stated that large shopping centre providers are now tending, as policy, to provide 2% of spaces as designated. Since Victor Harbor has a disproportionate number of elderly citizens, 4% would be a better local measure.

There are several strategies to be considered to enable an increase in numbers of designated parks within the study are:

- Angle parking should be considered in Coral Street, along with pavement encroachment in Ocean Street to create wide parking bays, ideally near the Medical Centre, the cinema, and Post Office.
- A greater number of spaces will be required at the Woolworths complex as retail floor space increases.
- There were complaints about insufficient policing of dedicated parking spaces, resulting in abuse of spaces by people without disabilities.
- Lastly, it is apparent that few existing designated parking spaces have been set out, signed or constructed according to Standard.

Recommendation 4

Declare one-way traffic in at least one end of Coral Street, and create angle parking there with designated spaces abutting Ocean Street.

Recommendation 5

Use pavement width to create designated spaces in Ocean Street near main centres of activity (Post Office, Medical Centre, and Cinema).

Recommendation 6

Amend the relevant By-law to allow for erecting deterrent signs, eg, "Penalty \$200", institute regular and consistent policing of dedicated parking spaces and enforce compliance with relevant by-laws.

Recommendation 7

Refer to individual car park audit reports (Appendix 4) and address shortcomings in Council-owned car parks. Negotiate with private car park owners to correctly mark out and sign their designated parks. See also **Recommendation 10** (below).

Recommendation 8

Increase the overall proportion of designated car parking spaces to at least 4% of the total number of spaces.

6.4 Signage and Tourist information

Tourists and non-residents have difficulties in finding their way around the CBD. Signage should be clear and unambiguous, and information about access readily available to tourists and local residents. There is no easily available information about accessible facilities in Victor Harbor.

Recommendation 9

Ensure that all key CBD features are adequately signed, and that all signage is clear, unambiguous and sufficiently large as to be easily discernible to people with low vision. Consult the Low Vision Centre, Adelaide, or Australian Standard AS1428.1 (Revised 1998).

6.4 Signage and Tourist information (cont)

Recommendation 10

- (a) Negotiate with eg, Tourism SA to produce an easy-to-use community guide/map which includes specific information about accessible facilities (toilets, telephones, car parks, and public information directories, ATMs. See format used by the City of Adelaide) or
- (b) alternatively, investigate other means of funding and producing such a document.
- (c) Publicise the Guide and ensure distribution of it to all households in the Council district. Ensure a supply of copies to the Tourist Information Centre for distribution.
- (d) Provide copies of the Guide in alternative format, eg, audio tape, large print, electronic version (disk or posted on the Internet) and advertise their availability.

6.5 Business Premises

There were complaints about lack of access to non-Council premises, including the great majority of businesses. The Business Association has stated willingness to work with Council to educate the business community about the advantages in increasing access. Council has a role in encouraging local businesses to sponsor training and information sessions in disability awareness. Physical access will achieve a measure of inclusion, but will fall short if attitudinal issues are not addressed.

Recommendation 11

Work with local businesses to

- (a) Implement and publicise an annual Access Awards Scheme and invite participation from local businesses.
- (b) Investigate other means of encouraging local businesses to provide access, and publicise improvements in accessibility.
- (c) Encourage local businesses to participate in disability awareness training.

6.6 Public toilets

There is no accessible public toilet in or near Ocean Street. This makes access difficult for people with disabilities and elderly people who have to rely on toilets at either the Causeway or the Woolworths complex, both of which are some distance away.

Recommendation 12 (Public Toilets)

Erect an accessible (according to specifications of AS1428.2) and clearly-signed public toilet in a central location (vicinity of Coral Street Ocean Street intersection).

6.7 Street Seating

There are few seats in the CBD for resting. These should be placed at intervals of no more than 60 metres apart where there is high use by elderly people, and of a seat height up to 520 mm for this population. A range of seat heights caters for a wider population (see Australian Standard AS 1428.2, clause 27, for detailed specifications for this and other street furniture).

Recommendation 13

Install seats in the CBD at approximately 60 metre intervals according to specifications of AS1428.2.

6.9 Pedestrian Crossings

Ocean Street and Coral Street are integrated zones where pedestrians and vehicles share existing road space without supervision. This creates a danger for people with disabilities, the elderly and children, as there are no marked pedestrian crossings in these streets. Safety and access would be improved by installation of pedestrian crossings.

Recommendation 14

Install marked pedestrian crossings in the vicinity of the Coral Street/Ocean street intersection. For safety, ensure that street lighting is adequate, and that kerb ramps are appropriately placed to facilitate pedestrian access. Refer to *Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, pt 13: Pedestrians* (AUSTROADS) for a detailed discussion.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The general population of Victor Harbor is predicted to more than double over the next decade or so. Numbers of people with disabilities will also increase, and owing to the skew of age ranges towards the high end, there will be a disproportionate in numbers of elderly people.

The City is a popular tourist destination for people of all ages and levels of mobility, particularly during the summer, and there is no indication that these numbers will decrease. To cater for its growing resident and tourist populations, Council needs to increase already inadequate access provisions in the CBD. Many aspects of access improvement are within Council's domain. These alone, however, will have only partial effectiveness without cooperation of local businesspeople and landowners.

Council recognises that it has a role to work with businesses to persuade them of the benefits in terms of increased market share, to point out their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, and encourage and cooperate with them to increase access provisions.

Cooperation between public and private enterprise has the capacity to greatly increase both safety and access in Victor Harbor's CBD. Implementation of recommendations of this report, together with ideas from related projects, will transform the CBD into an attractive, safe, and accessible environment for all users. The City will be meeting its stated aim of being the safest and most accessible tourist destination in South Australia by 2005.

8 REFERENCES

- Australian Building Codes Board, 1997: *Draft Regulatory Statement on Provisions of Access etc* (ABCB)
- (ND) Accessible Car Parking Requirements and Proposals (ABCB)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998: *Disability, Ageing and Carers*
- 1998: *A Regional Profile of Victor Harbor*
- AUSTROADS 1995: *Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice Part 13: Pedestrians*
- Commonwealth Government 1999: *Access the Advantage: the Gold Medal Disability Access Strategy*
- Department of Human Services (Disability Services Office) 2000: *Personal Communication*.
- District Council of Victor Harbor 1998: *Traffic Management and Parking Study*
- Jardine, E and Ashton, M 1999: *Victor Harbor Achieving Access*, City of Victor Harbor
- National Access Working Group 1999: *Accessible Design in Australia* from Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney
- Prager, J H 1999: "People with Disabilities are Next Consumer Niche" in *Wall Street Journal* December.
- SA Health Commission, 1997: *The South Australian Survey of Disability Prevalence*, Department of Human Services
- SA Tourist Commission 1999: *Disability Strategy*
- Standards Australia 1992: *AS1428 Design for Access and Mobility Part 2: Enhanced and Additional requirements*.
- Standards Australia 1998: *AS1428 Design for Access and Mobility Part 1 General Requirements for Access* (revised).
- Tutte, A 1999: *South Coast Retail Centres Study* City of Victor Harbor

Appendix 1

Map of Study Area

Submission to Planning SA

Appendix 2

Project brief:

**Access Audit of Participating CBD Commercial
Premises**

Appendix 3

NAMES OF MEMBERS OF THE PROJECT REFERENCE GROUP

**Mark Oliphant: Community Services Officer
(Convenor)**

Councillor Rae Parker

Chris Bowey (Parking Inspector)

Beata Jansens: Planning Officer (Until May 2000)

Timothy Tol: Graduate Officer/Project Assistant

Appendix 4

“Disabled Persons” Parking Permit Information

Appendix 5

Car Park Audit Checklist And

Individual Audit Reports

Appendix 6

Designated Car Parks

User Questionnaire

Appendix 7

Victor Harbor Access

**Breakfast Meeting
9 November '00**

Letter of Invitation

Names of Businesspeople Attending

Agenda

Businesspeople attending access breakfast meeting 9/11/00

Name	Business
Mike Kelly	Australia Post
Marilyn Evans	Victor Sewing centre
Jennifer Collins	Victor Sewing centre
Wendy Carpenter	Victor Harbor Nursing Home
Rosemary Marriott	Pandora's
Doreen Sedunary	Pandora's
Heather Mullan	Hotels Victor, Crown and Smugglers' Inn
Chris Bond	Pots of Colour
Margaret Woodroofe	All Sweets and Treats
Wendy Trebilcock	All Sweets and Treats
Chris Sims	Avondale Deli
Judy Sims	Avondale Deli
Kevin Drogemueller	Café Barvaria
Liz Cooper	Century 21 st
Hilary Martin	Victor Dental Clinic
Richard Martin	Victor Dental Clinic
Dee Elliott	Great Southern FM 99.9

Appendix 8

**Handouts provided as follow-up to
breakfast meeting**

Information sheet

**‘Can everyone access your products
and services?’**