

5.5. Jacaranda Season – Residents Feedback - McDougall Street, Kirribilli

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ATTACHMENTS: Nil

PURPOSE:

To outline feedback received from a notification letter outlining the VMS locations to residents in McDougall Street, McDougall Street, Hipwood Street, Bradley Avenue and Broughton Street.

To outline and address traffic and pedestrian management in McDougall Street, Kirribilli during the annual jacaranda blooming season.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Each year between September and November the jacarandas that line both sides of McDougall Street in Kirribilli come into flower for a period of approximately 6 weeks. Crowd control measures are implemented to improve safety in the area.

This report is to outline resident feedback that was received from the notification letter sent on 9 September 2022 to approx. 350 residents in the area of McDougall Street. It also includes Council responses/suggestions to this feedback. This notification letter was sent out as per the Traffic Committee and Council recommendation below.

On 2 September 2022 Traffic Committee approved and on 26 September 2022 Council approved:

1.THAT Council finalise the crowd management actions identified within the report for the 2022 Jacaranda flowering season in McDougall Street by ways of:

- a. Installation of Council-owned Variable Message Sign (x2) to provide safety messaging stating “Slow Down” and “Watch out for Pedestrians”.
- b. Temporary directional footpath signage by installation of pavement stickers stating “Take care, be Car Aware” as implemented during the Jacaranda season in 2019.
- c. Following further consultation with affected properties in McDougall Street, Hipwood Street, Bradley Avenue and Broughton Avenue and with the local area Command.

2. **THAT** Council notes the cost of the crowd management activities identified in the financial implications of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

As per previous Traffic Committee report on 2 September 2022:

The cost of crowd management activities identified for the six-week Jacaranda season in McDougal Street is approximately \$6,000 and will be funded between Traffic Operation and Environmental Services. The budget breakdown is as follows:

- \$500 for Council owned VMS,
- \$1000 for Temp directional Footpath,
- \$3000 for Hire of 3 porta loos and
- \$1100 for cleaning of porta loos and park toilets

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council proceeds with the 2 September Traffic Committee's recommendation for the 2022 Jacaranda flowering season in McDougall Street.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

2. Our Built Infrastructure

2.4 Efficient traffic mobility and parking

4. Our Social Vitality

4.1 North Sydney is connected, inclusive, healthy and safe

5. Our Civic Leadership

5.3 Community is engaged in what Council does

BACKGROUND

Each year between September and November the jacarandas that line both sides of McDougall Street in Kirribilli come into flower for a period of approximately 6 weeks. This seasonal occurrence which generally peaks around mid-November has become a growing attraction for local North Sydney residents and tourists in recent years who wish to photograph themselves amongst the jacarandas which form a spectacular flowering avenue for the length of McDougall Street adjacent to Milson Park.

On 2 September 2022 Traffic Committee approved and on 26 September Council approved:

THAT Council finalise the crowd management actions identified within the report for the 2022 Jacaranda flowering season in McDougall Street by ways of:

- a. Installation of Council-owned Variable Message Sign (x2) to provide safety messaging stating "Slow Down" and "Watch out for Pedestrians".
- b. Temporary directional footpath signage by installation of pavement stickers stating "Take care, be Car Aware" as implemented during the Jacaranda season in 2019.
- c. Following further consultation with affected properties in McDougall Street, Hipwood Street, Bradley Avenue and Broughton Street and with the local area Command. (5.3)

2. **THAT** Council notes the cost of the crowd management activities identified in the financial implications of this report.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement is not required.

Relates to ECM No:

Standard or Guideline Used: RMS TDT 2005/02b, TfNSW Instructions for the use of portable variable message signs May 2021

Signs & Lines Priority:

Precinct and Ward: Milsons Point and Lavender Bay Precincts

Impact on Bicycles: Nil

Impact on Pedestrians: Nil

Impact on Parking: Reduction of two spaces

DETAIL

Consultation

A notification letter was sent to approx. 350 residents in McDougall Street, Hipwood Street, Bradley Avenue and Broughton Street which outlines the VMS locations on McDougall Street the notification offered feedback in regard to the locations.

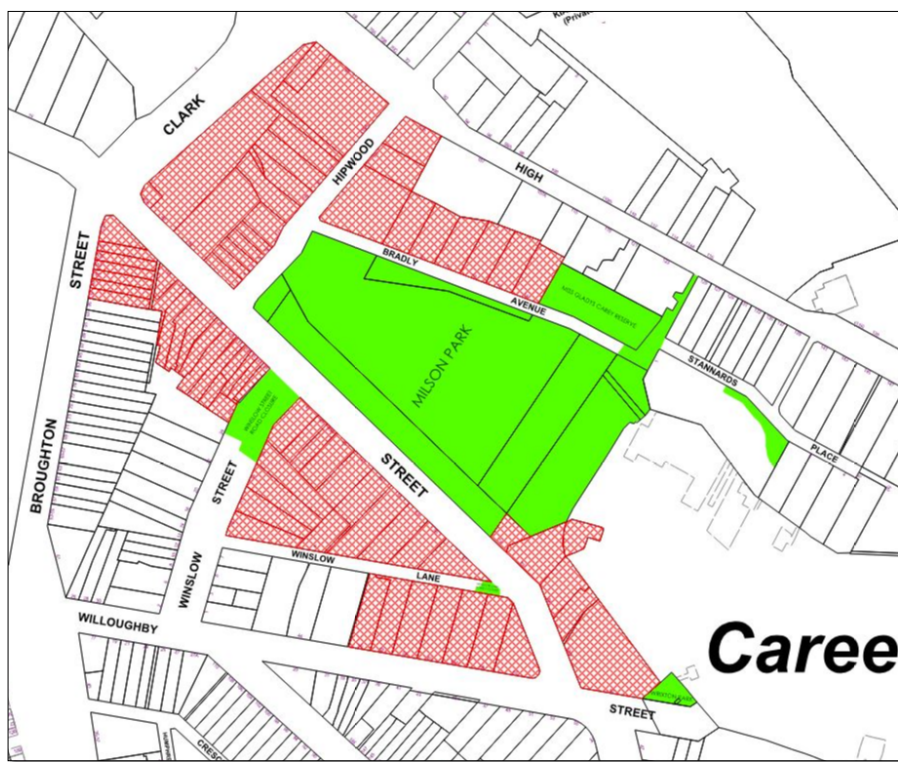


Image 1: Notification area shown in red

The notification letter outlined the 2 locations of the Variable Message Signs (VMS) and included a map of the preferred locations (see image 2 and 3 below) at both ends of McDougall Street. The letter also explained that:

The VMS signs cannot be located on the footpath due to their size and for the safety of pedestrians, therefore must be located on the road, in the parking area. This means the temporary loss of two parking spaces during the period.

Temporary directional footpath pavement stickers will also be placed along the length of the area to remind pedestrians to “take care, be car aware”.



Image 2 and 3: Preferred locations map on McDougall Street sent with notification letter

Contrary to what the concerns are in regards to loss of parking and also comments on that the signs are ineffective, there is still a need to warn drivers and also pedestrians of the possibility of pedestrians on the road and to slow down. There is still a need to also remind pedestrians to watch for cars with the pavement stickers. These stickers are a non-slip material which is the same material that is used for pavement stickers installed by TfNSW.

The location of the VMS signs in both locations were chosen as per advice from the documents: Technical Direction RMS TDT 2005/02b, TfNSW Instructions for the use of portable variable message signs May 2021.

With the Technical direction and TfNSW instruction on portable VMS, the locations for the VMS were chosen to maximize drivers ability to read them, they are not located at a decision point (intersection) and also limits the amount of loss of parking spaces.

A suggestion of the relocation of the VMS to the corner of an intersection is not supported as this a 'decision point' (an example was near the EzyMart). Being able to read a sign and navigate a round-about as well as being near a pedestrian crossing is not a safe option to place a VMS due to it being a distraction and its ability to be read. The location would have to be further along Clarke Road and Broughton Street. If the option was considered to relocate the VMS on to Willoughby Street, Clark Road, Broughton Street then 4 VMS signs would be needed and the removal of 4 parking spots would be required.

Submissions Report

There were approx. 350 notification letters distributed to residents.

There were Seven (7) submissions that were received in regard to the VMS locations, including a submission from the Milsons Point Precinct with minutes from a meeting they held in May 2022 (stating that there were 33 residents present).

All of the 7 submissions didn't support the VMS or plan of management, with comments on that in previous years this strategy didn't work as the behaviours still occurred or claim that the VMS don't address the issue or problem. Objections were also over loss of parking. Some submissions suggested other locations for the VMS or closing the end part of McDougall Street.

The main concerns were:

- Loss of parking
- Speeding cars & beeping horns
- Locations of VMS
- Safety of pedestrians on the road/near misses
- Stickers on the footpath are distracting/slippery
- Changing the traffic to one way
- Closing of the end of the road
- Traffic controllers/rangers

The summary of the feedback and concerns received and the response to these are outlined below:

Issue	Summary Feedback/Comments from Residents	Council Response
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objections to loss of parking in a busy time of the year, taking up limited and valuable parking, with most houses not having off street parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for VMS to warn drivers of the presence of pedestrians on the road and to slow down.
VMS/VMS locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objections that the VMS can't be seen at those locations, that drivers have already encountered pedestrians on the road before they enter McDougall Street and the VMS warns drivers after the fact. • Suggested location should be on footpath outside EzyMart and near pedestrian crossing. • That drivers can already see the dangers on the road that the VMS are not needed at all and create an eye sore and create a distraction. • They are ineffective and haven't worked in past years to stop the behaviours or solve the problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per the Technical direction and TfNSW instruction on portable VMS, the locations for the VMS were chosen to maximize drivers' ability to read them, they are not located at a decision point (intersection) and also limits the amount of loss of parking spaces.
Pedestrian safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with people on the road, concerns about some people even lying on the road or standing in the middle of the road. Issues with pedestrians standing on the road at the entrance to McDougall at Clark Road/Broughton. • There have been many near misses, aggressive behaviour from both Pedestrians and drivers. • A sign should be made to manage visitor/pedestrian behaviour rather than vehicle movements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the VMS "Pavement stickers" will also be placed on the footpath with the message reading "TAKE CARE BE CAR AWARE".
One way system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One way traffic flow along McDougall Street via with a change of parking direction along the street. • Closure of the road and entrance to McDougall Street (between round about and Hipwood Street). Cars to enter via Willoughby Street and exit via Hipwood Street and High Street. This closure could be done with just barricades, not traffic management or controllers and "local traffic only signs" for the residents in that section of road. This would allow people to stand in the middle of the road to take photos. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These suggestions are noted and will be considered for future Jacaranda events.
Pavement stickers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that they will be slippery, create a distraction by pedestrians looking down, ugly when left on pavement. That they create more danger than they solve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stickers are non-slippery and are placed on footpath

Traffic Control Rangers Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic controllers in place at busy/peak times around school times and weekends to slow traffic and take control of the number of cars. Rangers to be present to stop illegal car parking. Police to control illegal car movements and move people on/off the road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic controllers are not included in this year's Jacaranda season; however, Rangers will be on duty to assist with enforcement of non-complying matters
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That promotion should be done by council to visitors to use public transport to access the area instead of driving. Working with the state Government to encourage this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This suggestion is noted for consideration at the future Jacaranda events.

Table 1: Summary of feedback from residents