11 May 2009

Alexandra Douglas
Executive Officer
Parliament of Victoria
Road Safety Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Alexandra

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IN CAR PARKS

I refer to your invitation to make submissions on pedestrian safety in carparks and advise as follows:

The Wellington Shire has in the order of fifty off-street public car parks. It is estimated that 80% of these parks provide right angle car parking with two way traffic aisles. The remaining 20% provide for 60 degree angle parking and one way traffic aisles.

While Council has no recorded data relating to pedestrian incidents in these carparks, anecdotal suggests:

➢ Traffic aisles that run from the car park to the shopping destination are generally seen as safer as they eliminate the need for pedestrians to move through the parked vehicles and cross the traffic aisles. The crossing of traffic aisles is seen as a high risk especially where children are involved. Two way traffic aisles are seen as higher risk than one way traffic aisles.

➢ Angle parking with its “One Way” traffic aisles make for easier and safer crossing at these carparks as pedestrians only have to look for traffic approaching from one direction.

➢ At points of concentrated pedestrian traffic flow, adequate sight distance is to be provided for both pedestrians (especially children) and drivers. Appropriate signage, pavement markings and speed control devices should also be considered at these locations. Should conditions warrant, signalised crossings should be considered.

➢ Landscaping can also contribute to increased risk especially where plants are allowed to grow so as to obscure sightlines between motorists and pedestrians. Again children are at greater risk because of their height and lack of peripheral vision. Careful selection of plants and/or regular maintenance of landscape areas are pre-requisites for carpark safety.

The Heart of Gippsland
While daytime operations present a range of safety issues, night time introduces a range of additional safety issues. In general, the key to minimising risk for night time operations is the provision of high quality public lighting that extends into all the carpark. In this regard summer shade trees should be selected and planted so as to minimise their impact on the public lighting.

With the increased emphasis on the mobility of people with disabilities the need to provide for them within our communities is even more important. Compliance with the Disabilities Discrimination Act should therefore be given a higher profile in the design, upgrading and maintenance of public car parks.

I trust these comments are helpful.

Yours faithfully

NEIL BREEDEN
Infrastructure Planner

Our Ref: ND:GC
Reply to: Neil Breeden