



At least nine car parking spaces were closed in Williams Square, Warragul by Baw Baw Shire contractors just four days before Christmas to remove brick structures.

Council closes carparks

Warragul traders were less than impressed when Baw Baw Shire contractors closed almost 10 car parking spaces in Williams Square just four days prior to Christmas.

A Gazette photographer snapped the closure of at least nine car parking spaces at 9.15am on Wednesday, December 21.

However, Baw Baw Shire community assets director Simon Hill stated only four car parking spaces were affected in an email response to an enquiry on why car parking spaces were closed so close to Christmas.

"Council contractors, in good faith, commenced removal work of brick

structures in the car park of Williams Square that were impeding delivery trucks in an effort to make more room for shoppers and workers alike in the lead up to Christmas," said Mr Hill. "In doing so, the contractors closed four car parking spaces. However, when the inconvenience caused by these works came to that attention of council officers, works were immediately shut down at 9.30am with this work being re-scheduled after Christmas."

Traders said they reported the poor state of the brick structures to Baw Baw Shire about 12 months ago.

Petition success for three parking bays

Three parking bays will be reinstated in Barkly St, Warragul.

Baw Baw Shire has decided to reinstate the parking bays after receiving a petition signed by almost 300 people.

Council also will instal signage to convert the driveway crossovers to one-way "entry only" at the eastern end, and "exit only" at the western end.

The petition, lodged by the Warragul Senior Citizens.

The petition opposed removal of four parking bays in Barkly St opposite the doctors' surgery.

A report to council said the bays were removed by council following complaints from users of the Senior Citizens Centre about the safety risk whilst exiting the car park into Barkly St.

"Limited visibility around vehicles parked in Barkly St adjacent to the driveways crossovers at the car-park was the main cause of concern.

"Council officers inspected the site and were of the opinion that the vehicles exiting the off street car park were at risk due to the limited visibility around parked vehicles.

"Although it is legal to park adjacent

to a driveway crossover, the officers considered that as the off-street car-park was a public car-park owned by the council there was an extra duty of care needed to eliminate the safety risk," the report said.

A letter from Warragul Senior Citizens that accompanied the petition suggested an alternative solution to reduce the safety risk would be to sign the car park driveways as one-way "entry only" at the eastern end and one-way "exit" at the western end.

Officers said this option had "merit" and three bays could be reinstated.

However, officers said one of the bays at the exit should not be reinstated to ensure adequate visibility.

The report said the changes would reduce the risk of collision between vehicles departing the car park and traffic on Barkly St.

Councillors were told the loss of the car parking bays also had created a "nuisance factor" because they were opposite the doctor's surgery.

Cr Julie Grant said the change would restore some parking bays and in a safer layout.

Charges

A 41-year-old man was extradited to Victoria from Queensland last week after being charged in relation to an assault at Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort in August.

Baw Baw CIU detective senior constable Graeme Carter said Darcy Taylor, aged 41, from Paradise Island in Surfers Paradise, Queensland appeared at Southport Magistrates' Court on December 20.

He has been charged with intentionally causing serious injury and common law assault.

He was remanded in custody and extradited to Victoria on December 21. He appeared at Latrobe Valley Magistrates Court the following day and was bailed to reappear on February 23.

Bell damaged

An intentional act of criminal damage was inflicted on St Joseph's Catholic Church in Warragul the week before Christmas.

Police said an unknown offender cut a metre long steel cable within the metal frame bell tower at the front of the church. The damage occurred between December 18 and December 19.

The cable was used to ring the bell.

Police believe bolt cutters or something similar were used to cut the cable.

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