

RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS

4th JANUARY 2025

This information refers to the proposed residence at
318-322 SHEPPERTON RD, EAST VICTORIA PARK

We submitted plans for a proposed car park for the church by clearing some of the existing building to solve an ongoing parking situation. The church was built in the 1940s and it is here to stay. It was built without a car park and within those 80 years the crowd has increased and hence car parking became an issue.

We were quite shocked at the objections as we were trying to solve the parking situation for the purpose of the neighbours. If we do nothing then this issue will continue, whereas if this proceeds almost 50 cars will be off the streets.

Based on the submitted neighbours comments there were 9 objections, 6 in support and 3 comments. However mostly the objections submitted are not actually objecting to the car park itself but rather further doubling down on current situation.

Seems to be a lot of concern on traffic, however Main Roads WA show almost same number of cars on the Shepperton Rd on week days as on weekend days. So church has never had any impact on traffic on Shepperton Rd. The church currently has 5 crossovers facing Gerard St and we are reducing it to 2 crossover. One for entry and one for exit to reduce congestion. The car park and study on traffic was professionally done by Shawmac Traffic Engineers in Victoria Park.

Objection 1:

I believe a 46 bay car park does not fit into our residential streetscape. It'll become an eyesore for our beautiful suburb, which then impacts views for residents on Gerard st and those in the Cul de Sac of swansea street, as well as it'll be the view from my back patio.
This place of worship also stays up to late hours of the night, so having them all coming and going will have lights shining into peoples house on both sides of shepperton road.
Also allows it to become a congregation area for undesirable people (not associated with the place of worship). Which we get enough of already and nothing is being done about that. In the past 4 months I've had to ring the police twice with people loitering in the swansea street park and coming onto my property and trying to access my side gate/jump my fence.

The residential streetscape has a mixture of both residential and commercial. Not mentioning directly across the road on Gerard St is the Table Tennis Club with its own 11 bay car-park. Within a 2km radius of the church there are several large businesses including aquatic centre, tafe, new Oats St Train Station and on the other side all commercial on Albany Hwy.

Shepperton Rd Traffic is notorious for being constantly busy and it is not from the church goers. Church services are only on Wednesdays 8am-11am (approx 30 people), Fridays 6pm-9pm (approx 40 people), Saturdays 6pm-9pm (approx 10-20 people), Sundays 7am-3pm (up to 120 people) and annual late night events on Easter and Christmas. The rest of the times the church is unoccupied. The lights proposed will be timed for the Friday, Saturday and annual events only for car park safety use.

Also being on Swansea St, the street lights alone from Shepperton Rd will drown out any proposed car park lights on site.

Thank you for calling the church goers 'undesirable people'. Secondly the church congregation do not go towards the park on Swansea St, entry and exit are only from Gerard St. This is not our issue on Swansea St.

Objection 2:

The car park will do little to help the traffic on residential streets where there are often children playing in the street. Currently, there is a car park next to the tafe that is of low utilisation on the weekends and served by roads that are more appropriate for higher volumes of traffic. I struggle to see how building more car parks helps to align with the town's goals given all the work on building cycling infrastructure in the area or with community expectations.
Additionally, I don't believe a car park or expanding the commercial use / rezoning of the land is appropriate as this is a residential, not a commercial or industrial area. If the council is to proceed with allowing this, a detailed review of parking and traffic management in the area needs to be undertaken as this is a significant change to area and sets a precedent for allowing car parks to be built in the area. As of this considerations around traffic calming measures and no through roads need to be made.
Access to the car park should also be from Shepperton Road. I also have concerns around the 4-year timeline to build a car park;

something doesn't seem right there.

Children DO NOT play in the streets. They go to and from cars when arriving and leaving services with their parents. Again with several commercial properties in the area all with their own car park, we are asking a car park for the church goers on the church land, the same right as other commercial properties in the area. We are not asking for a public car park it's a private car park, even surrounded by a 1.8m high fence. The tafe car park is for the tafe and almost 70% of the church goers are elderly and cannot walk large distances.

I cannot see how a cycling infrastructure is affected at all. With the church operating hours mentioned before, I cannot see how a church asking for its own onsite car park will affect the traffic management of the area. But car park access from Shepperton Rd as this neighbour suggested WILL cause traffic chaos plus many safety factors, furthermore we are thankfully not allowed. The 4 years is to give us time to sort out documentation and finances, it will take less than 1 year to build.

Objection 3:

Constructing a 46-bay car park at the proposed location would not alleviate the current parking, driving/access challenges faced by residents in the surrounding streets when activities are occurring at the place of worship.

On a Sunday morning, I could hear singing/chanting coming from a semipermanent marquee erected in front of the houses slated for replacement with the carpark. Church officials were seen entering and exiting one of the houses.

During the workweek, I have noticed that the houses are also utilised by the place of worship.

My understanding is that the church owns several other houses in Gerard Street.

Given that the houses currently used for religious activities will be demolished, for the proposed car park, the church may need to relocate some of its activities. Will this result in some of the other houses owned by the church being repurposed and used by the place of worship?

If we do not solve this issue and do nothing, then 46 cars will continue to park on the streets as there is no alternative, if we solve this issue then 46 cars will be off the streets and parked within the church site. Yes the church owns 5 out of the 8 properties on Gerard St between Blair Athol St & Anglesea St. They are all occupied by church members. The main church services gone, will be food for the congregation. When the car park is built, the members of these houses have volunteered to make food and bring to church goers.

Objection 4:

I have had difficulty on numerous occasions of getting my car out of my driveway and then out of my street on Sunday mornings and sometimes during the evening during certain times of the year due to being parked out by attendees of the church. This proposal is not the solution.

There is already a car park on Somerset St at the Tafe that the members of the church could use on a Sunday morning. As well as ample street parking on surrounding streets that could help to spread out the parking during peak times of the church.

I'll have lived in my street for over 30 years and this parking issue has only become a recent issue. Perhaps the church has outgrown its current location. Either way 46 car park bays is not going to be a long term solution to the difficulties I face when trying to get in and out of my street when church services are occurring.

How can this proposal not be the solution? It will take cars off the streets and within the church site and away from your driveway. Using someone else's car park is not a solution. Again if we do nothing then the problem continues.

Objection 10:

I would like to bring to your attention the above building application within a residential area and the significant level of concern the application has caused local residents. For your information, I have lived in the immediate vicinity of this church for 60 years with my family's history residing in the area for nearly a century, so I have seen the area change over many decades. I have discussed the application with a number of residents who have contributed to listing the following concerns:

1. Loss of aesthetic appeal

• **Explanation:** *Even though the application states 14 Trees will be retained/planted car parks distract from the aesthetic appeal of the neighbourhood. This is a residential area, not a commercial area.*

2. Increased Traffic Congestion

- **Explanation:** The church's' patronage has grown significantly over recent times which has seen the facility utilised most weeknights and on the weekend. The busiest day is every Sunday between 1030am and 1pm.

Currently, patron's park their vehicles on both sides of the street and significantly impair normal traffic flow. Residents constantly experience greater difficulty in accessing their homes coupled with higher risks of accidents especially to pedestrian traffic

The proposed car park will cater for 46 vehicles. A recent count of the number of vehicles attending the church and parked in surrounding streets, (Gerard, Anglesea, Blair Athol and Maude) on Sunday morning (10/11/24) identified approximately 140 vehicles. Given the rate at which patronage appears to be growing, this carpark will have no impact of addressing the current traffic issues/congestion. (Please note an alternative is discussed later in this document).

Having recently retired after 30 years of policing in WA Police Force, I would also suggest access by emergency vehicles (Fire & Emergency Services) would still be severely restricted during busy times.

3. Speeding vehicles

- **Explanation:** Residents in Gerard and surrounding streets often witness vehicles speeding at the conclusion of church events. Parents with young families have and continue to voice concerns to each other but are fearful of contacting authorities due to fear of possible retribution. Please note, I personally, as have other residents, attempted to discuss/mediate parking/speeding and traffic issues with church attendees only to be verbally abused and intimidated, to the point of physical altercation. A carpark catering for an additional 46 vehicles will further exasperate these issues.

4. Noise Pollution

- **Explanation:** The presence of a carpark coupled with additional vehicles will contribute to further noise pollution from engines and people coming and going at all hours. This will disrupt the peace of the neighbourhood, making it less pleasant for residents, particularly those living nearby.

5. Decreased Property Values

- **Explanation:** The construction of the carpark may lead to a decrease in property values in the surrounding area. Potential buyers often prefer homes in quieter, more aesthetically pleasing neighbourhoods. The presence of a car park will deter interest and reduce demand for housing, affecting overall property prices.

6. Safety Concerns

- **Explanation:** The carpark will create safety concerns, particularly for pedestrians and children. Increased vehicle traffic often leads to more accidents, and poorly lit or designed car parks can become hotspots for crime, including theft and vandalism.

7. Disruption During Construction

- **Explanation:** The construction phase of the carpark will be disruptive for residents. This will include noise, dust, and limited access to homes or local amenities. The inconvenience can lead to frustration and a decrease in quality of life during the construction period. You have to remember residents are currently dealing with the challenges associated with the building of the elevated rail line which still has another 12-18 months before completion.

8. Impact on Community Character

- **Explanation:** The carpark will alter the character of a residential area, making it feel more commercial and less like a community. This shift will reduce the sense of community identity and social cohesion, as residents will feel less connected to an area dominated by vehicle storage rather than residential amenities.

9. Environmental Concerns

- **Explanation:** The carpark may also contribute to environmental issues, such as increased surface runoff, which can lead to flooding and water quality problems in nearby bodies of water. The heat generated by large asphalt surfaces can also contribute to the urban heat island effect, raising local temperatures.

10. Limited Accessibility for Non-Motorized Users

- **Explanation:** A focus on more car parking may prioritize vehicles over pedestrians and cyclists, leading to reduced accessibility for those who reside in the immediate area who rely on walking or cycling as sustainable transportation options.

11. Community Resistance

• **Explanation:** Many residents may oppose the construction of this carpark due to the concerns mentioned above. If approved the development may lead to community conflict, petitions, and opposition groups, creating divisions among residents and potentially leading to prolonged disputes.

Please note: Residents have contacted the Town of Victoria Park and Council rangers over previous incidents in an attempt to rectify parking issues however, with little effect.

Additional information:

The buildings that have been nominated to be removed are currently being utilised, by the church, to host events, serve as food outlets, and a variety of other social activities. Residents have voiced additional concern in relation to these matters. Where will these activities now take place? Will the church be requesting additional development opportunities if the carpark is approved to continue on with such activities?

Viable, cost effective alternative:

1. Somerset street has approximately 62 street marked, parking bays (this does not impact/include the swimming pool carpark). The carpark next to the TAFE building has 52 marked bays which totals approximately 104 bays. These parking facilities are free on weekdays after 6pm and free all-day Saturday and Sunday.

The TAFE carparking facility (located approx. 300 metres from the church) is totally underutilised on the weekend in particular Sunday, which is the busiest day at the church. Utilising these parking facilities would provide church patrons with a cost-effective alternative, with no time delays for building whilst going some way to ensuring the concerns of the residents in the immediate area are addressed.

This objection is mostly on the church not the car park. This is a rant not an objection.

1 - Loss of aesthetic appeal. We are not the only commercial site in the area with a table tennis club directly opposite the church. The church property is surrounded by a 1.8m fence and carpark will be significantly lower than Gerard St, so cars will not be that visible.

2. Increased Traffic Congestion. Once again, if we do nothing the problem remains and this will remove 46 car bays off the streets. The church goes are nowhere near the numbers requiring 140 cars, meaning families of 3-4 in each car, we don't even have the seats for that many people. If you did in fact count that many, that means the Table Tennis Club may have add an event too. Many times, when they have an event on Sundays too, the cars on the streets are chaotic.

3. Speeding vehicles. This is 100% false, as it is impossible to speed on Gerard St on Sundays as cars are parked everywhere and you can only go less than 10km to move. I would love to anyone prove this by going any faster than that.

4. Noise Pollution. The church does not operate 'all hours'. The church is here to stay and this concern has nothing to do with the proposed car park as people are going to continue attend services on Sunday.

5. Decreased Property Values. Nonsense, as the church has been there since 1940s and property costs have never been affected. In fact, getting the cars off the streets and into a car park on church site will further increase prices as it will solve an ongoing issue.

6. Safety Concerns. This will solve any safety concerns as it will be a controlled car park on site with 1 entry and one exit. Not car parking all over the street, which is dangerous.

7. Disruption During Construction. This is completely ridiculous. Units are being built along Somerset, a few empty blocks currently on Gerard St awaiting construction. Everyone now has to avoid 'dust' when building?

8. Impact on Community Character. Again there is a Table Tennis club directly opposite the church with a car park. Aquatic centre less than a 1km away with a car park, Tafe centre less than a 1km away with a car park, Oats St station less than a 1.5km away with a car park. Furthermore these are all open air car parks. The proposed car park is lower than street level and surrounded by a 1.8m fence. It would be the least visible car park in the area.

9. Environmental Concern. Significant water control will be by a drainage engineer, not an issue. Plus this is more of the churches concern not this neighbour, as the church does not want its own site to have flooding.

10. Limited Accessibility for Non-motorized Users. No comment, as this is not our concern and has nothing to do with an onsite car park.

This particular person has not mentioned one logical objection to the car park itself, actually many of their concerns would be solved with the existence of the car park.

Objection 12:

Gerard Street is small and narrow, this encourages more traffic and people to the street. There is a lot of children wandering the street as well as Adults, an accident waiting to happen.

The car park will reduce the current parking traffic on Gerard St significantly. Children go to and from cars with their parents only to arrive and leave at the church. Recent traffic report conducted shows that past 10 years, there have been no major accidents on Gerard St.

Objection 13:

My objection to the proposal relates to the time frame. It is way past time the shire sorted out this problem. Over many years, I have contacted the shire with related parking problems. Why do we need to wait another 4 years for the problem to be acted on? I would also point out that 46 bays will make little difference to the problem. They currently park both sides of the surrounding streets making access extremely difficult. Also in Gerard Street they congregate on the roadway between those parked cars and often dare us to try to drive down Gerard St.

Time frame is to sort out documentation and finances. Building will be less than a year. Once again if nothing is done, 46 car bays will continue to park on streets as there is no alternative. If this is done, 46 car bays will be off the streets.

Objection 14:

I have objected to the development application specified above due to the great impact it will have on property values and privacy issues it present to the adjoining residences not only security issues it will present.

The church has been there since 1940s and property costs have never been affected. In fact, getting the cars off the streets and into a car park on church site will further increase prices as it will solve an ongoing issue.

We formally request that this information will be taken into consideration when assessing the plans. Should you have any further queries please contact me.

Thank you

Kind Regards,



Senior Architectural Designer

Genesis Design Studio

Ph: [Redacted]