

Wombat Crossings Scott St Warracknabeal

July 29, 2022

Dear Graeme,

We are seeking your support to have Wombat Crossings installed in Scott St.

The Townscape Committee recognize and have feedback that the pedestrian crossings and traffic control in Scott St could be improved, and the safety of our pedestrians enhanced. We undertook to see if the community endorsed the raised platforms (wombat crossing) approach.

To this end we undertook to inform the community what a wombat crossing was and ran a survey to assess interest in the project. This took the form of articles in the Herald and then talking to people with a manual survey form.

96% of 250 respondents signing the form favoured the wombat crossing.

We recognise that other measures, lights, additional signage, speed restrictions could also be applied however the raised platform is a significant traffic control and awareness measure and is being widely adopted. We enclose some supplementary correspondence that may be of assistance in elevating this cause to a Council agenda item and hopefully, to the construction.

Regards

David Kranz

Townscape Chair



Enclosed:

Survey form (sample below). *See privacy note*

Road Safety supporting documentation (attached document)

Warracknabeal Herald snaps

Weekly Advertiser article extract on Horsham crossings.

## Scott Street Pedestrian Crossings

Your Townscape committee is concerned for the safety of pedestrians.

This is a survey to assess the community feeling on the type of crossing.

In completing this survey there are your privacy considerations

Summary data only may be presented to WAG or Council. Individual data will be protected.

**Zebra crossings** - what we have at present

**Wombats crossings** - suggestion

A wombat crossing is the affectionate name given to a pedestrian (zebra) crossing that is placed on a flat top road hump. Not only does this provides pedestrian crossing priority, but the raised platform gives further prominence to pedestrians and encourages motorists to slow down on approach to the crossing. A recent study<sup>1</sup> showed that wombat crossings can lower casualty rates by over 60% and are effective at reducing vehicle speeds. [safetysolutions.com.au](http://safetysolutions.com.au)

Your preference....

Date:

Zebra crossing. (as is)	Wombat crossing. (raised platform)	Don't care.	Name	Address

We are holding the forms but will pass them to an authorized officer for validation and safe storage or destruction as per your privacy laws.

## COMMUNITY PUSHES FOR



## SAFER CROSSINGS

• **CHANGE:** Warracknabeal Townscape Committee members Joy Swagerman, Adrienne Knezger and (far right) David Kranz, joined by Peter "Dingo" Schulz, are pushing for a change of the unsafe pedestrian crossings on Scott Street. Committee members will be soon along Scott Street this Friday with surveys for Warracknabeal residents to fill out about their experiences with the crossings. Photo: DAVID WARD

**By Sammie Louise**

**WARRACKNABEAL.** Townscape Committee are pushing for Yarramblick Shire council to install wombat crossings at the pedestrian crossings on Scott Street. The townscape committee, a sub committee of Warracknabeal Action Group, have had the dangerous crossings on their radar for

approximately four years. "Probably a month ago I was crossing there and I could easily see that the driver didn't see me because she was having a full conversation with the passenger". Committee member Adrienne Knezger said. "I was noticing and just watching her, she didn't even see me as she crossed there."

The two pedestrian crossings are located approximately in front of the Historical Society Museum and the Royal Mail Head and have 'give way to pedestrian' signs.

A raised pedestrian crossing, or wombat crossing, is a regular zebra crossing that is placed in a flat top road hump. The crossing provides pedestrian crossing priority and gives further prominence to pedestrians, encouraging motorists to slow down to approach the crossing.

A recent study undertaken by Safe System Solutions showed that wombat crossings can lower casualty rates by over 60 percent and are

effective at reducing vehicle speeds. In hopes of coming to a community agreement, townscape committee members will be walking along Scott Street on Friday, June 17 and June 24, with a short survey that community members can fill out about their experiences with the crossing.

The townscape committee said that it should not come to an injury of a pedestrian before something is done to protect the walking community.

"This is what council is waiting for, they want a serious injury before they recognise the potential threat," Ms Knezger said.

"We don't want a death or someone to have a brain injury."

The townscape committee will also be giving the surveys to the Lanes Club, Rotary and Woodbine in hopes that enough people will sign it and show the council that Warracknabeal needs the crossings changed.

By producing the survey in paper form, the

committee hopes that most people will engage with it as an online survey conducted by the Yarramblick Shire regarding the speed limit for Scott Street was lightly participated in, resulting in no action.

"The worry is that you have these young kids, even aged up to 25, who's brains aren't fully developed yet, and they cross (the street) whenever and put themselves in danger," Ms Knezger said.

"We have an older population and a disabled population, it's a very vulnerable population and these crossings pose a risk to them."

Pedestrians are amongst the most vulnerable users of roads, according to the Transport Accident Commission (TAC), who recorded over a third of pedestrian deaths in the last decade being older, aged 70 and over.

The most common types of crashes involving pedestrian deaths between 2014 and 2018 were caused by a pedestrian crossing a road and being struck by the driver's side.

## Community responds to wombat crossings

By Sammie Louisa

**THE Warracknabeal Townscape Committee members will be continuing their routes across town with forms for residents to fill out about how safe they feel using the Scott Street pedestrian crossings.**

The committee will continue their routes along Scott Street each Friday until July 1, or until they have 300 names on the forms. The committee will then give them to the Warracknabeal Shire Council to be actioned.

Committee member Adrienne Kneegher said that they have had a good community response and have heard some concerning stories from residents regarding the crossings.

"It's actually been surprising on how many people have actually had near misses on one of the pedestrian crossings," she said.

"Someone's kids had gotten loose and ran out in front of a car. They were able to grab their kids in time after running off."

"They were at the start of the crossing about to cross on the correct side and the car just didn't see them."

"The car was visibly going faster than what it should be. (I've heard of) people just not observing properly and not slowing down or being able to react in time."

The two pedestrian crossings are located approximately in front of the Historical Society Museum and the Royal Mail Hotel and have 'give way to pedestrian' signs.

A raised pedestrian crossing, or wombat crossing, is a regular zebra crossing that is placed in a flat top road hump. The crossing provides pedestrian crossing priority and gives further prominence to pedestrians, encouraging motorists to slow down to approach the crossing.

Ms Kneegher said that she was also told a story of someone having to stop in front of a person on a mobility scooter as they approached the crossing to protect them from oncoming traffic.

"The person on the scooter couldn't see the car...fortunately, the walking pedestrian was in front because the car coming along wasn't going to be able to slow in time," she said.

The townscape committee, a sub-committee of Warracknabeal Action Group, have had the dangerous crossings on their radar for approximately four years.

As a road safety educator, Ms Kneegher said that it was "horrifying to hear these stories and it justifies what we are doing."

"(We're) putting this survey/petition onto Council's agenda to not do a simple fix. We want a good fix, a fix that is going to force drivers to slow down," she said.

"There is a pedestrian education element on this as well but drivers need to slow down, if they can't see pedestrians on an intersection or pedestrian crossing because of trees or parked cars, they just need to slow down to avoid a collision, and that's what the wombat crossing will do."

"There's just too much of a gap between roundabouts and pedestrian crossings which allows drivers to pick up speed...it all needs to be seriously looked at."

Ms Kneegher said that the safety of the pedestrian crossing is not just about drivers, but also pedestrians that should be educated to use the crossings.

Although it may be faster to cross the road where there is not a crossing, it is riskier than

crossing at a designated space.

Forms are currently available to be filled out by Warracknabeal residents at Neighbourhood House, Woodbine and from committee members on Scott Street.

Ms Kneegher said that residents are welcome to approach her if they see her around and she will take down their details for the form.

Horsham Rural City Council has begun the process of making their crossings safer across

Horsham City following the endorsement of proposed pedestrian safety work during their recent council meeting on June 27.

The works include the installation of a temporary rubber wombat crossing at McLachlan and Finlayson roundabout for a trial period to determine feasibility.

Two raised crossings will also be installed between Darlot Street and Glead Street and O'Callaghan Parade and Finlayson Street.

## Crossings advance, Weekly advertiser.

06 July 2022

Horsham Rural City Council will install six pedestrian safety crossings in Horsham's central business district.

Councillors supported works including a pinned rubber wombat crossing for the McLachlan and Firebrace streets roundabout and for Firebrace Street between McLachlan Street and Roberts Avenue; raised crossings for Darlot Street at Gleed Street and the O'Callaghan Parade and Firebrace Street roundabout; a pedestrian refuge island on Wilson Street; and a pedestrian crossing at Pynsent Street in front of Horsham Town Hall.

The works are estimated to cost \$600,000 – with federal and state governments funding through Regional Roads Victoria.

The council's infrastructure director John Martin said the works would provide pedestrian priority and reduce vehicle speeds, enhancing people's utilisation of the central business district and potentially increasing retail trade and other activities. He told last week's council meeting that works could take four weeks to complete and the council would explore the opportunity for weekend activity.

Cr Les Power said the crossings would set-up Horsham for the future.

"The CBD is for prosperity, for growth, for investment – and without the safety options that go with it, it won't happen," he said.

Cr Penny Flynn said improved pedestrian safety may encourage more 'active transport'.

Cr Ian Ross said the report 'appeared rushed' to capture the funding available – and it was critical the locations were appropriate.

Cr Claudia Haenel said concentrating on the central business district missed other opportunities for safety.

"If we're really serious about safety in the town we would do a bypass and get the trucks out. People don't want to come to a transport town," she said.

Councillors voted on a crossing at Firebrace Street, between McLachlan Street and Roberts Avenue, separately due to a declared conflict from Cr Bell. They proposed the crossing's instalment as a pinned rubber crossing instead of a midblock, raised crossing and to test its impact on businesses, people and traffic.

– Jessica Grimble