

Closure of Pedestrian Accessways Policy

Council Policy

Responsible Directorate: Planning and Community Development

Objective: To provide guidance on the assessment criteria to be used for requests to close pedestrian accessways.

1. Authority:

This Policy has been prepared in accordance with Clause 8.11 of the *City of Joondalup District Planning Scheme No. 2* which allows Council to prepare planning policies relating to planning and development within the Scheme area.

2. Application:

This Policy applies to requests for closure of pedestrian accessways within the City of Joondalup.

3. Statement:

“**Major Transit Terminal**” means a multi-nodal public transport terminal, such as a train and bus terminal.

“**pedestrian accessway**” means any path in the public domain that is available for use by pedestrians, and vehicles that are not regulated by the *Road Traffic Act 1974* (e.g.: bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades). Does not include pedestrian paths provided within road reserves, or on land zoned Parks and Recreation under the *City of Joondalup District Planning Scheme No. 2*.

“**Perth Bicycle Network**” means the network of cycling routes across the Perth Metropolitan Area identified by the Department of Transport, and comprised of local bicycle routes, principal shared paths and recreational shared paths.

4. Statement:

The provision and maintenance of pedestrian accessways is important in facilitating safe, convenient and legible pedestrian and cycle movement, particularly in suburban locations designed with cul-de-sacs. Closure shall not be supported, except in particular circumstances, as described in this Policy.

5. Details:

In considering requests for the closure of pedestrian accessways, the following assessments will be undertaken.

5.1. Urban Design Assessment:

An Urban Design Assessment will be undertaken to determine the significance of the pedestrian accessway in the pedestrian and cycle network through the locality.

In conducting the Urban Design Assessment, the following factors will be considered.

5.1.1. Access to Community Facilities:

Where a pedestrian accessway is considered to provide an important access route to a community facility, closure shall generally not be supported. Examples of community facilities include but are not limited to:

- Schools
- Shops
- Public open spaces
- Bus stops
- Libraries
- Churches
- Rail stations

To illustrate the impact that a pedestrian accessway closure may have on access to community facilities, a walking catchment diagram in the form of a Ped-Shed will be prepared. A 400 metres catchment applies to a pedestrian accessway close to community facilities; and 800 metres, where the pedestrian accessway is close to an Activity Centre identified in *State Planning Policy 4.2: Activity Centres for Perth and Peel* or a Major Transit Terminal.

5.1.2. Availability of Alternative Access Routes:

A safe, clear and direct alternative route must exist which provides access to community services and facilities.

5.1.3. Relationship to the Pedestrian Network:

Closure of a pedestrian accessway which forms part of a key pedestrian network will not be supported where it forms part of:

- a continuous pedestrian network; or
- the Perth Bicycle Network or similar.

Following completion of the Urban Design Assessment, the importance of the pedestrian accessway will be rated as either “low”, “medium” or “high” as set out in Table 1.

5.2. Nuisance Impact Assessment:

A Nuisance Impact Assessment will be undertaken to substantiate claims of nuisance behaviour occurring within the pedestrian accessway.

The City will assess the following types of evidence:

- a. Evidence provided by the person(s) making the request for closure.
- b. Evidence provided by relevant agencies/organisations (e.g.: Western Australian Police).
- c. Evidence provided by the City records (e.g.: Rangers, City Watch).

In conducting the Nuisance Impact Assessment, the following factors will be considered in relation to nuisance behaviour:

- a. Frequency of occurrence
- b. Number of offences
- c. Nature of offences

Following completion of the Nuisance Impact Assessment, the level of nuisance occurring on the pedestrian accessway will be rated as either “low”, “medium” or “high” as set out in Table 1.

5.3. Community Impact Assessment:

A Community Impact Assessment of the use of the pedestrian accessway will be undertaken to gather information from surrounding residents in order to determine the level of use by the local community.

Comments will be sought for a period of 30 days and will consist of letters and questionnaires to all landowners within a 400 metres radius of the subject pedestrian accessway.

The following additional consultation may also be undertaken, if considered necessary by the Council:

- Insertion of notices in the local newspaper.
- Liaison with local community groups.
- On-site assessment(s) to count pedestrian and cyclist movement through the subject pedestrian accessway.

Access for disabled persons and seniors will be given special consideration, as the impact of the pedestrian accessway closure on these groups is likely to be greater.

Following completion of the Community Impact Assessment, the pedestrian access way's level of use will be rated as either "low", "medium" or "high" as set out in Table 1.

5.4. Referral to State Government and Service Agencies:

Requests for closure of pedestrian accessways will be referred to State Government and Service Agencies, including:

- Landgate (who are also to provide a land purchase price to be met by abutting land owners)
- Water Corporation
- Wester Power
- Telstra
- ATCO Gas

Comments received from State Government and Service Agencies will determine if essential services (i.e.: sewer mains) are located within the pedestrian accessway and whether or not these services need to be relocated and/or an easement put in place, should closure be supported. Comments can also be made for or against the proposal.

5.5. Final Assessment:

The results of each individual Assessment will enable a final determination to be made via cross-analysis. Scenarios where closure of a pedestrian accessway will be supported or not supported are provided in Table 2.

5.5.1 Referral to the Department of Planning:

The results of the Final Assessment will be presented to Council for consideration. Where Council supports closure of a pedestrian accessway, a full copy of the Closure Report will be referred to the Department of Planning, for determination by the Western Australian Planning Commission.

5.6. Reconsideration of Decision:

Where Council has considered a request to close a pedestrian accessway and has determined that the pedestrian accessway should remain open, Council's decision is final and will only be reconsidered where it is clearly demonstrated that the Assessment has not been in accordance with the provisions of this Policy. In the absence of a reconsideration being heard by Council, a new request for closure may be submitted no less than 18 months from the date of Council's decision.

In circumstances where Council supports closure of a pedestrian accessway but, the Western Australian Planning Commission does not support closure, Council may request that the Commission reconsider its decision.

For a request for reconsideration to be initiated, all landowners abutting the pedestrian accessway are required to make a joint request, with the request being supported by “new information” that addresses the matters raised by the Commission in its decision. Council will then consider the request and forward the decision to the Western Australian Planning Commission for reconsideration.

Once the Western Australian Planning Commission has determined the request for reconsideration no further requests can be made. The City will consider a new request for closure no less than 18 months of the date of the Commission’s decision on the reconsideration

5.7. Alternatives to Closure:

The results of each individual Assessment will enable a final determination to be made via cross-analysis. Scenarios where closure of a pedestrian accessway will be supported or not supported are provided in Table 2.

5.7.1 Request Made on the Grounds of Nuisance Behaviour:

Where a determination is made not to support a request for closure, which was submitted on the grounds of nuisance behaviour, Council may consider upgrading the subject pedestrian accessway. Such improvements may include:

- improvements to lighting;
- improvements to appearance; and/or
- increased security patrols.

5.7.1 Request made on the Grounds of Security:

Where a determination is made not to support a request for closure and a significant security problem is shown to exist for dwellings abutting the pedestrian accessway, Council will give consideration to alternatives or initiatives raised by landowners abutting the subject pedestrian accessway. Options raised shall only be considered where the proposal is:

- considered to significantly improve security;
- supported by abutting landowners;
- deemed to have no significant negative impact on the amenity of the surrounding area; and
- deemed to have no adverse impact on traffic management.

Creation Date: April 2001

Formerly:

- *Pedestrian Accessways Policy*

Amendments: CJ318-09/01, CJ085-04/04, CJ256-11/12

Related Documentation:

- *City of Joondalup District Planning Scheme No. 2*
- *State Planning Policy 4.2 – Activity Centre for Perth and Peel*
- *Road Traffic Act 1974*

Table 1. Impact Assessment

Importance	Urban Design	Nuisance	Community Impact
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian accessway provides a direct route to community facilities. • A safe alternative route does not exist. • Pedestrian accessway is part of a continuous pedestrian accessway link or a key pedestrian network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a high and consistent frequency in the occurrence of criminal activity and/or nuisance behaviour, compared to elsewhere in the suburb. • The number of different types of occurrences is high and is directly related to the pedestrian accessway. • The severity of criminal activity and/or nuisance behaviour is considered higher than elsewhere in the suburb. • Occurrences of nuisance behaviour are substantiated by questionnaire respondents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant portion of respondents are not in favour of closure (over 50%). • A high portion of households use the pedestrian accessway regularly. • A high portion of users will be inconvenienced by closure (over 50%).
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian accessway provides a route to community facilities, but not directly. • An alternative route exists but is some inconvenience. • Pedestrian accessway is not of a continuous pedestrian accessway or a key pedestrian network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are frequent occurrences of criminal activity and nuisance behaviour, compared to elsewhere in the suburb. • There are several different types of occurrences of nuisance behaviour that are directly related to the pedestrian accessway. • The severity of criminal activity and/or nuisance behaviour is considered higher than elsewhere in the suburb. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medium portion of respondents are not in favour of closure (over 30%). • A medium portion of households use the pedestrian accessway regularly. • A medium portion of users will be inconvenienced by closure (30–50%).
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian accessway is not linked to any community facility. • A safe, reasonable alternative walkway exists. • Pedestrian accessway is not part of a key pedestrian network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occurrence of criminal or nuisance behaviour is similar to elsewhere in the suburb. • Types of offences are limited to nuisance behaviour. • The severity of nuisance behaviour is similar to elsewhere in the suburb. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high portion of residents are in favour of closure (over 70%). • A low portion of households use the pedestrian accessway regularly. • A low portion of users will be inconvenienced by closure (less than 30%).

Table 2. Cross-Analysis of Assessments

Urban Design	Nuisance	Community Impact	Supported/Not Supported
High	High, Medium or Low	High, Medium or Low	Not supported
Medium	Low	Low	Not supported
Medium	High or Medium	Low	Supported
Medium	High	Medium	Supported
Medium	Low	Low	Not supported
Medium	Medium or Low	Medium	Not supported
Low	High, Medium or Low	Low or Medium	Supported
Low	High, Medium or Low	High	Not supported