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David M. Davis, M.P.

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council
Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change
Shadow Minister responsible for Scrutiny of Government
Member for Southern Metropolitan Region

Thursday, 7 August 2008

Cr
Mayor
.... Council
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Dear Mayor

Re: Council's position on proposed extension of clearway times

You will be aware of the extension of clearway times that the Brumby Government has imposed on local communities from the end of this year. This will extend clearway times within a ten kilometre radius of the city, regardless of the views of local communities, retailers and, indeed, councils.

Many people have raised their concerns with me over the lack of consultation over this proposal and the failure to take into account the concerns and needs of residents, retailers and local communities and the circumstances of each strip which will be affected by these changes.

These strip shopping centres are more than just places people go to shop; they are also a vibrant and vital part of our communities and a very important source of the social capital that makes up our communities.

The economic harm that will be done to local traders could alter forever the treasured and hard-won character and ambience of our local strip shopping centres and may even strike their death-knell in some cases.

A further concern is the likely increases in traffic speed through our suburbs and the consequent impact on school arriving and departure times as well as the elderly and disabled. The rate of pedestrian and bicycle accidents is already unacceptably high in affected inner suburbs and increased clearway times are unlikely to improve the situation.

I am aware that some councils have made submissions to the State Government on this issue while others have passed formal resolutions. I would be most interested to learn the formal position of the ... Council on the State Government's plan and would greatly appreciate a copy of any resolution you may have passed or submissions you may have made.

We need to find a workable way to reduce traffic congestion without destroying our local communities and ruining our retailers. I await with interest Council's views on the Brumby Government's current proposal.

Yours sincerely

David Davis, MP
Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council
Member for Southern Metropolitan Region