

Car Parking at Museums

Presenter: Bill Kingsley
Session Secretary: Stewart Keenan

Most visitors come by car.

Your car park is therefore a top marketing tool, yet it is so often the least considered aspect of many museum operations.

Your car park **MUST**:

1. **PROVIDE A WELCOME.** "Hey! This looks as if it might be OK."
2. **SET THE ATMOSPHERE.** "Hey! This feels great."
3. **PROVIDE SHELTER FROM SUN and RAIN.** "Let's park under this tree."
4. **SUGGEST SECURITY.** "Yes, the car looks safe over there."
5. **BE WELL DRAINED.** "We certainly won't get bogged."
6. **HAVE TOILETS HANDY.** "Yes kids. There it is!"
7. and after the visit
8. **A NOSTALGIC VIEW OF THE MUSEUM.** "That really was great. Hard to leave isn't it. We'll be back."

Where to put the car park?

INSIDE YOUR MUSEUM

Provide a spectacular entrance – under an archway
– over a bridge

Feel "amongst it" on arrival

BBQs and playgrounds near cars

Car park and toilets are better monitored

But avoid – front of depot

– people movement areas

– photographic vista areas

The nicely tree lined car park at St. Kilda (AETM) is an excellent example and oozes relaxation and friendliness.

That at Bylands (TMSV) has a great view.

Both are right near the trams.

OUTSIDE YOUR MUSEUM

Shade is essential

Car park and toilets are unsupervised

Clear walkways and paths must be provided

Keep walking distance to a minimum

You can enter/exit through a ticket office/souvenir kiosk

Glenorchy (TTMS) is a neat example

Toilets can be in here

Advantage of souvenir sales on departure (and donation box)

Branford, Connecticut is an outstanding example

Or wander in, look around, pay on tram

NO CAR PARK

Route services like PETS, BTM, MOTAT.

Puffing Billy has no real passenger car parks!

CAR PARK SURFACE

Asphalt is formal

Grade 1 in 36 to 1 in 48 for drainage

Can paint bays

Gravel is informal

Grade depends on surface absorptivity

Concrete is harsh and unfriendly

Avoid "bird baths"

CAR PARK DRAINAGE

Peripheral open carrier drains

Valley drains with top entry pits

Grated drains

Kerb, channel and side entry pits

No drains (like Maldon CHTR)

CAR PARK DESIGN

Formal – please park in bays

If formal, try to have vehicles face museum – this is the "Sad to be leaving, let's come again" technique

Vehicles facing away from museum encourage the "Let's get home quickly" syndrome

Informal – tends to induce a feeling of relaxation

Whichever – use trees, planter boxes, etc

And a neat, modest, welcome sign

BUS & COACH BAYS

Must be immediately adjacent to, but not visually obscuring, the museum entrance

Nose in angle parking – facing the museum

NEVER walk bus passengers through the car park

FAREWELL SIGN

Such as

"Thanks for coming. We have appreciated your visit to us. All our staff are volunteers. We would all like to see you back with us again – soon. If you enjoyed our museum then please tell your friends about us."

Questions/Comments

Les Withington: car parks compete with football/swimming.

John Radcliffe: somebody else's park? Can you find a park?

Peter Kahn/Bruce Worthington: small park at SPER – always full.

Ron White: on quiet days fill park with members' cars.

Rod Atkins: car park closed for winter replacing 20-year old car park, but it currently faces Museum.

John Radcliffe: most car parks have two rows – one facing one not.

Bill Kingsley: use logs in dirt areas – lines on asphalt, coach companies have coach facing restaurants, etc.

Les Stewart: museum doesn't supply car park as car parks are low priority – non revenue. Money spent on trams, etc. instead.

David Neish: car park loses customers.

Bill Kingsley: first time at SPER he used train (old site).

Bruce Worthington: mode of transport used by visitors – $\frac{1}{3}$ train, $\frac{2}{3}$ car?

Ron White: STA bus service and Museum buses were tried for Salisbury station but proved unsatisfactory. When public transport mooted, most people (99.5%) use car for leisure.

Bill Kingsley: Ferny Grove plan to extend tram towards station.

Is car park near gates?

WTM car park across creek – families roll up – parents sit in car and send kids on tram ride

Peter Kahn: official car park is at Sutherland but nobody uses it because it's isolated, shielded from highway (theft, etc); people prefer to park at the site.

Bryce Pender: how many museums can expand?

Ron White: St. Kilda planned a large car park together with a coach park.

Bryce Pender: notes coaches in Wellington have hard time (a) parking and (b) turning.

St. Kilda: car park secure, comfortable.

Bylands – on a good day – view of museum and valley.

Bill Kingsley: felt the one at Disneyland was an example of a bad type of car park whilst one of our best attractions – Puffing Billy had no car park; relied on the community one close by.

John Radcliffe: conflict in traffic design? Cyclical plan? Regimented or Casual traffic plan?

Terry Verney: PETS visitors come across a DO NOT ENTER service road sign need.

Ron White: sign points to entrance.

SPER has overhead poles, crossing signs.

MOTAT – big problem is car park.

AETM has paved path to entrance door from near car park – greening policy has hidden museum. Hides undesirable aspects, but also desirable therefore good signage important.

Royal visits help. Signage (AKA McDonalds) 5 km before town type of thing

John Radcliffe: maximum space for minimum expenditure