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# Memorandum/instruction

Job MARTIN PLACE ACTION PLAN NO. 24  
re MARTIN PLACE CLOSURE - OBJECTIONS  
to from  
D. GAZZARD P. CASEY

copies to File 7247 date March 15, 1973

1. Parking Advisory Committee

Report available within two or three days.  
SPA concerned about whether closure of the top end of Martin Place would necessitate demolition of the Supreme Court building when King Street is closed. Notation that Bent Street is now two-way and plans are being formulated to widen Bent Street to five or six lanes as part of the scheme to facilitate traffic movement in the northern end of the City following the opening of the Opera House.

2. Police

The police claim about traffic in Hunter and King Streets was not substantiated in the "Before" and "After" study associated with the closure of the lower end of Martin Place. The number of vehicles now using the section of Martin Place between Elizabeth and Pitt Streets is low and could be absorbed elsewhere (Sydney City Council counts substantiate this).

Concerning access to adjacent buildings, it should be noted that no vehicular access has ever been allowed to buildings from Martin Place.

While the question of the King Street closure could have some bearing on the section of Martin Place between Elizabeth and Macquarie Streets, it is irrelevant concerning the section between Elizabeth and Pitt Streets.

The re-introduction of two-way traffic in Bent Street was partially a result of the need to relieve the intersection of Macquarie and Hunter Streets following the temporary closure of Martin Place for the construction of the Eastern Suburbs railway. Two-way traffic in Bent Street allows west bound traffic to proceed via Bent Street to Elizabeth Street or via Bent and Spring Streets to Pitt Street.

The claim that the elimination of right hand turning movements from Macquarie Street and Elizabeth Street at Martin Place would cast an additional traffic load on the Elizabeth Street - Market Street intersection has no foundation. Currently due to the closure for the Eastern Suburbs railway there are no right turns at Macquarie Street and the Sydney City Council counts at Elizabeth Street indicate only a small right turning movement.

The last paragraph concerning "other adjustments to traffic arrangements etc" is simply a rambling truism which is too vague to be commented on. It has no substance whatsoever unless concrete proposals are made.

3. Public Transport Commission of NSW (Bus Division)

Demand for interchange between Eastern Suburbs and Northern Suburbs transport services can be best met at the Town Hall Railway Station. The demand that cannot be met in this manner is likely to be insignificant. Certainly some measure would be required.

In anticipation of the opening of the Eastern Suburbs Railway and the subsequent removal of many buses from Pitt, Elizabeth and Macquarie Streets a complete reappraisal of bus services within the CBD is necessary. For example, now that the Western Distributor Stage 1 has been completed, it should be possible to extend Northern Suburbs buses to the Town Hall or beyond instead of terminating in Carrington Street. Similarly services on the eastern side of the CBD could be extended past Martin Place to a destination further south.

The closure of the lower end of Martin Place actually had a beneficial effect on buses in Pitt Street and there is no reason to believe that similar benefits would be felt in Castlereagh, Elizabeth and Macquarie Streets on closure of the balance.

It is worthy of note that total PM peak hour bus volumes in Elizabeth and Pitt Streets will drop by about 35 % following the opening of the Eastern Suburbs Railway to Bondi Junction.

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September 10, 1968.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH PROFESSOR DENIS WINSTON

In association with R. Seifert and Partners, 34 Red Lion Sq., London, WC1

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The City Commissioners  
The Council of the City of Sydney  
Town Hall  
George Street  
SYDNEY, N. S. W. , 2000

Dear Sirs :

We propose the creation of a Civic Square in the lower part of Martin Place between George Street and Pitt Street. Detailed plans, perspectives and technical reports are attached.

The increasing congestion of people and traffic in the downtown area of Sydney calls for special thought and effort to be given to the separation of pedestrians and vehicles. Nowhere is this more important than in this section of Martin Place, the ceremonial core of Sydney. This is a special place in the hearts and minds of all Sydneysiders.

We have given serious consideration over many years to the practical aspects of the proposal, as well as to its symbolic and civic significance.

In 1954, the idea was first discussed by our town planners, George Clarke and Geoffrey Faithfull. In 1964, we raised the proposal with Sir William Yeo, State President of the R.S.L., who encouraged us to persevere with the concept.

In 1966, in the book "Australian Outrage", published by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Donald Gazzard wrote:

"There are many places where one could suggest the freeing of the city for the walker to stand and talk or walk without fear of being jostled or run over. One that springs to mind in Sydney is that part of Martin Place opposite the Post Office between George and Pitt Streets, containing the Cenotaph. This is the ceremonial heart of Sydney and could be a wonderful formal paved and landscaped space . . . . . This is the sort of urban development which would make an enormous civilised improvement to City life at the level of the pedestrian."

Early in 1968, we and our staff felt that the time had come for the implementation of such a civic square. We therefore decided to carry out detailed traffic and town planning investigations, architectural plans and cost estimates, to test the practicality of the idea. In consultation with Professor Denis Winston of the University of Sydney, we have since given every aspect of the problem serious professional consideration.

This work has shown that the proposal is entirely feasible. We are therefore submitting the plans to the City of Sydney as a token of our civic concern for the health and vitality of the city core.

This City Square, with its fine paving and increased numbers of trees will, we believe, not only be widely used by those working and shopping in the City, but will also become an important tourist attraction as well as providing not only the War Memorial, but also the fine Post Office Building, with a worthy setting and giving a new and exciting image to the City of Sydney. The unifying of the paving of selected stone and marble to run the full width between the existing buildings, ignoring the present kerb lines, will make the space appear wider than at present, and create a truly dignified and appropriate setting for the War Memorial. New light standards, seats, litter bins and attractive flower and news kiosks should be designed for the space so that the design of the Square in all aspects is of international standard.

We do not believe that this section of street is essential for the efficient circulation of traffic in the inner city area. Our Consulting Traffic Engineers, Rankine and Hill, have taken traffic counts in this section of Martin Place and confirm our judgement. We attach a copy of a letter from Rankine and Hill, giving their professional opinion of the proposal. There is one intermittent bus route that passes through this section of Martin Place en route to Wynyard, but we think that a simple re-routing is possible.

The kerbs space formed in George and Pitt Streets by the creation of the square should be reserved, one end for a Taxi rank and the other end for 5 minute parking for people using the G. P. O.

Our Quantity Surveyors, Thompson and Wark, of North Sydney, have carefully considered the costs involved in the implementation of the proposal. There are, of course, no resumption costs, the main cost being that of the paving. Dependent on the exact type of stone chosen, the detailed estimate prepared by Thompson and Wark shows that total cost would be in the order of \$150,000 to \$175,000. We think that this is a low cost for the creation of the sort of civic amenity that this Square would give to the City of Sydney.

We have discussed our proposals informally with most of the authorities who would be involved, including representatives of the Returned Servicemen's League, before presentation to The Council of the City of Sydney. The idea has generally received a warm and sympathetic reception from all with whom we have conferred.

We have considered many fine details not mentioned specifically in this short letter, and we would welcome discussing the proposal at greater length.

Sydney needs a great square, a place of ceremony and dignity. We think this proposal shows how this dream could be realised.

Yours faithfully,  
CLARKE, GAZZARD AND PARTNERS

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Clarke". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

George Clarke, FAPI, City Planner

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donald Gazzard". The signature is bold and expressive, with a large initial "D".

Donald Gazzard, FRAIA, Architect