

SECOND MARTIN PLACE BLOCK TO BE CLOSED

Weekend start on Plaza work

By Our Civic Reporter

Sydney City Council will begin work this weekend on extending Martin Plaza from Pitt Street to Castlereagh Street.

The first task will be to close the section to vehicular traffic.

The quick action follows State Cabinet's decision this week to allow the council to proceed with its plans.

The Premier, Sir Robert Askin, said the plaza, between George and Pitt Streets, could be extended to Elizabeth Street.

But the council will not complete the extension from Castlereagh to Elizabeth Streets until 1975.

The chairman of the Martin Plaza Committee, Alderman L. Port, was jubilant yesterday at Cabinet's decision.

"I am grateful that the ministers accepted the overwhelming public sup-

port for the scheme," he said.

Alderman Port said that initially the extension would contain temporary decorations and facilities. These would remain until final plans for the extension were drawn and contracts let for the work.

This week the council allocated \$23,645 towards extending the plaza for three months during the Opera House opening and Waratah Festival celebrations. But that work was not to begin until October 16 — and was to be a stop-gap while Cabinet was considering the permanent extension.

"Some adjustments may have to be made to our original plans for the permanent extension," Alderman Port said.

"We had intended allowing vehicular access for the cars of senior Federal Ministers to the Commonwealth Bank Building, which will be in the closed section.

"But the Prime Minis-

ter, Mr Whitlam, has asked to look at the plans. He is concerned that it might not be the right image for the Government to have privileged access."

The chairman of the council's City Development Committee, Alderman A. Briger, was delighted at Cabinet's decision.

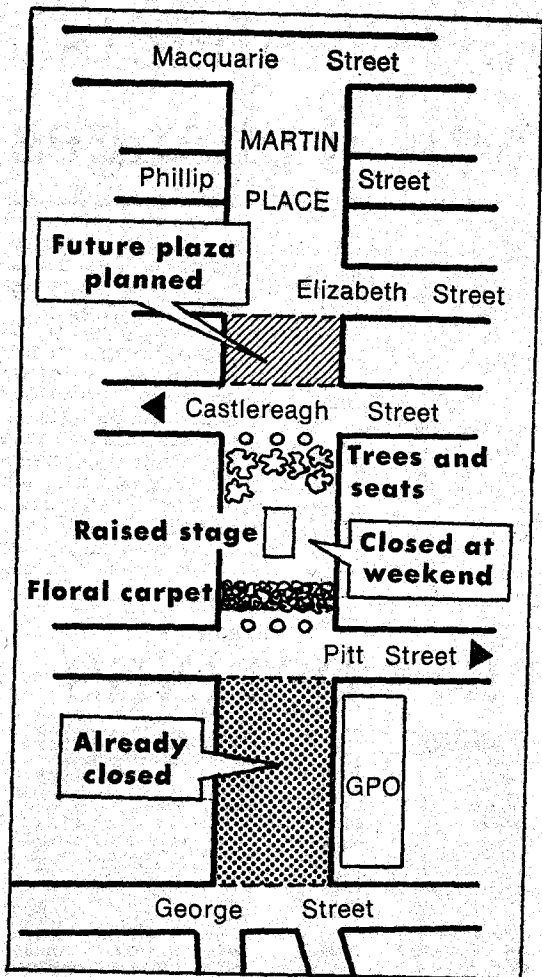
"The Pitt-Castlereagh Street extension will give Sydney its first open air restaurant and an open-air theatre for live lunchtime performances."

During the life of the temporary plaza, a coloured pattern will be sprayed on the roadway to distinguish it from vehicular sections of Martin Place.

Dominating features of the layout will be a 20ft by 30ft floral carpet of potplants at the Pitt Street end and a grove of 20 18ft trees at the Castlereagh Street end.

Seats for 160 will be placed in the grove.

The Pitt Street to Castlereagh Street extension will cost \$560,000.



How the Martin Place plaza will be extended.

26/9/73

NEWS IN BRIEF

Martin Plaza extended

State Government has approved the extension of Martin Plaza to Elizabeth Street, the Premier, Sir Robert Askin, said yesterday.

While Martin Place would be closed, Pitt, Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets would remain open to traffic. A decision on extension to Macquarie Street would be made after Eastern Suburbs Railway work was completed.