

ITEM 5. NAMING PROPOSAL – GIRARD PLAZA (FORMERLY NAPOLEON PLAZA) - POST EXHIBITION

FILE NO: X005053

SUMMARY

This report recommends that Council approve the naming of a public open space located in Central Sydney, bounded by Kent Street, Sussex Street and Napoleon Street, “Girard Plaza”.

The plaza, recently opened to the public, links Wynyard Station, via Wynyard Walk and a pedestrian bridge over Sussex Street, with Barangaroo.

On June 27 2016, Council resolved to provide in-principle approval to name the public plaza “Napoleon Plaza” and to exhibit the proposal for public comment. Fifteen submissions were received; the majority were not in support. Some submissions suggested alternative names, including three submissions in support of the name “Girard Plaza”.

Girard Plaza is considered to be an appropriate name, reflecting the industrial and social history of the site. This proposed name also has the support of Transport for NSW and the Barangaroo Delivery Authority.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the name “Girard Plaza” for the public open space located in Central Sydney, bounded by Kent Street, Sussex Street and Napoleon Street; and
- (B) an application be made to the Geographical Names Board for the naming of the public open space as approved in clause (A), in accordance with the Geographical Names Act 1996.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Images and location of the site of the public open space

Attachment B: Resolution of Council 27 June 2016

Attachment C: Summary of submissions

BACKGROUND

1. A new public plaza, bounded by Napoleon Street, Sussex Street and Kent Street, links Wynyard Station, via Wynyard Walk, to Barangaroo via a pedestrian bridge over Sussex Street.
2. The plaza, opened to the public in September 2016, is primarily comprised of hard paving with adjacent landscaped gardens and seating areas. Refer to Attachment A for the location and images of the plaza.
3. The site is currently comprised of a number of land lots under various ownership, including Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Service, Barangaroo Delivery Authority and the City of Sydney. A process to transfer ownership of the various land lots (with the exception of some small lots containing civil engineering infrastructure such as bridge pylons and ventilation stacks) to the City is currently underway.
4. Under the guidelines of the Geographical Names Board, the relevant roads authority is responsible for naming the site. In this case, the Council of the City of Sydney is the roads authority.
5. On June 27 2016, Council resolved to provide in-principle approval to name the public plaza “Napoleon Plaza” and to exhibit the proposal for public comment for a period of 28 days (refer to Attachment B).
6. The naming proposal originated from a request from Transport for NSW. The project name “Napoleon Plaza” has been in use by Transport for NSW in their communications and media releases and was featured on construction hoardings.
7. Napoleon Plaza was proposed because the name reflected the proximity of the site to the adjacent Napoleon Street, probably named by Francis Girard (1793 – 1859), a convict dance master, baker and flour miller.
8. The naming proposal was exhibited for public comment from 6 September until 3 October 2016. The proposal was advertised in The Sydney Morning Herald, the Sydney Central Courier and on the Sydney Your Say website. Public notices were also erected on site.

Summary of Submissions

9. In total, 15 submissions were received. Three supported the proposed name “Napoleon Plaza” and 12 were not in support, including proposals expressing support for alternative names, and three expressions of support for “Girard Plaza”. A summary of submissions received is contained in Attachment C.
10. Of the submissions in support:
 - (a) one submission expressed support based on the proximity to Napoleon Street and noting that the name had been in use during construction;
 - (b) one submission thought the name strong and bold with an appropriate international flavour befitting of a global city; and
 - (c) one submission expressed general support.

11. Of the submissions not in support:
 - (a) five submissions expressed preference for an indigenous name – unspecified with the exception of a suggestion to name the plaza Patyegarang (a young Aboriginal woman who befriended William Dawes; he subsequently compiled a detailed word list of the local Aboriginal language of Sydney);
 - (b) seven submissions suggested alternative names, including “Nelson Plaza”; “Wellington Plaza”; “NKS Plaza”; “Paul Keating Plaza”; and
 - (c) three submissions expressed support for “Girard Plaza”.
12. Girard Plaza is also supported by the Barangaroo Delivery Authority, current owners of part of the site, in their original communications with Transport for NSW.
13. Transport for NSW supports either Napoleon Plaza or Girard Plaza.
14. The City’s historian is supportive of Girard Plaza, and does not recommend the use of an Aboriginal Sydney Language name for this site due to the lack of direct connections with Aboriginal culture and the urban fabric of the site.
15. The City of Sydney has a naming strategy for Aboriginal recognition naming which is identified in the draft naming policy. Staff continually look at opportunities for applying Aboriginal recognition naming. Many names of Aboriginal language origin have been applied to parks, streets and buildings in recent years, particularly around the southern urban renewal area. The Barangaroo Delivery Authority has also applied Aboriginal recognition naming to many of the pathways in nearby Barangaroo Reserve.
16. The recommendation is to name the site “Girard Plaza” in commemoration of Francois Girard.

Francois Girard

17. Francis (Francois) Girard (1793 – 1859) was an army officer during the Napoleonic Wars who migrated to England, where he was convicted for theft, possibly unfairly, and transported to Sydney in 1820. Although a convict, upon arrival he was allowed to earn his keep, which Girard did as a dance master. He was granted conditional pardon in 1825.
18. Girard established a flour mill and wharf on Darling Harbour which operated between 1832 and 1841. Girard also had a flour mill on Woolloomooloo Hill.
19. Girard was one of the early business people located along Darling Harbour. His flour mill and business laid the foundation for a later company established on the site, the Sydney Flour Company founded by Thomas Breillat.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

20. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This report is aligned with the following SS2030 strategic directions and objectives:

- (a) Direction 4 – A City for Walking and Cycling – formally naming the public open space will assist in pedestrian wayfinding and will facilitate recognition and visitation;
- (b) Direction 5 – A Lively and Engaging City Centre – the plaza is located on a busy pedestrian route linking the public transport hub at Wynyard with the Barangaroo business precinct. Naming the plaza will engage and educate visitors and commuters about the site history;
- (c) Direction 6 – Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – naming the plaza will raise awareness and promote visitation to the precinct and to nearby businesses such as cafes and restaurants; and
- (d) Direction 10 – Implementation through Effective Governance and Partnerships – the naming proposal is supported by state government agencies including Transport for NSW and the Barangaroo Delivery Authority.

Organisational Impact

- 21. Naming of the open space “Girard Plaza” will have minimal organisational impact. The City will install signage following formal handover of the site and the name will be added to the City’s wayfinding signage, currently in production.
- 22. The organisational impact of the handover to the City of the various land parcels which comprise the plaza will be the subject of a future report to Council.

Risks

- 23. There are no identified risks associated with the naming proposal.

Social / Cultural / Community

- 24. The naming proposal has been exhibited for public comment. The Geographical Names Board will also advertise the proposed name “Girard Plaza” for community comment prior to their consideration and Gazettal of the name.

Environmental

- 25. The naming proposal has no environmental effects or outcomes.

Economic

- 26. Naming of the plaza may generate a positive effect by facilitating increased visitation to the site and surrounding businesses.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

- 27. Installation of signage will be funded through operational budgets.
- 28. Adding the name Girard Plaza to the City’s wayfinding signage, currently in production, will incur a (negligible) additional cost of \$6,000 to the wayfinding program budget, which will be absorbed through current 2016/17 budget expenditure.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

29. The *Roads Act 1993* (NSW) and associated regulations – the City is the relevant roads authority for the site.
30. The *Geographic Names Act 1966* (NSW) and Geographical Names Board Guidelines – the recommended name “Girard Plaza” complies with this legislation and meets the Geographical Names Board Guidelines.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

31. There are no critical dates. Following approval of the name by Council, a formal naming application will be submitted to the Geographical Names Board for consideration.

OPTIONS

32. The City may choose to approve the name “Napoleon Plaza”. This is not the preferred option because the proposal was not widely supported by the public.
33. The City may choose to consult the community further about alternative names. This is not the preferred option. The proposed name “Girard Plaza” reflects the colonial, industrial and social history of the site and is supported by community stakeholders.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

34. Key stakeholders, Transport for NSW and the Barangaroo Delivery Authority have advised of their support for the proposed name “Girard Plaza”.
35. The Geographic Names Board will advertise the proposed name for public comment prior to their final approval and gazettal, expected to occur in early 2017.

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