

Item 2.

Traffic Treatment - Permanent Road Closure - Hill Street, Surry Hills

File No: X003005.005

Summary

This Report recommends Council approve the permanent road closure of Hill Street, Surry Hills, between Short Place and Clare Street, to vehicular traffic.

The Council-endorsed Surry Hills Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming (PCTC) Plan recommended the City investigate the following pedestrian-friendly treatments for the precinct bounded by Albion, Bourke, Short and Flinders Streets:

- the permanent closure of Hill Street, between Short Place and Clare Street, to vehicular traffic; and
- Shared Zones in Hill Street, Short Place and Marys Place.

To further enhance pedestrian-priority within the precinct, the City also proposed Shared Zones in Clare Street and Floods Place. A Shared Zone is a road with a posted speed limit of 10km/h and where pedestrian access and safety takes precedence over the ease of vehicle movement.

Associated parking changes were also included in Bourke, Clare and Hill Streets to consolidate on-street loading opportunities within the precinct, as well as better manage taxi operations immediately outside the precinct.

The proposed Shared Zones in Hill and Clare Streets, as well as Floods, Marys and Short Places, have been approved by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), and the associated parking changes for Bourke, Clare and Hill Streets were unanimously endorsed by the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee (LPCTCC) on 15 February 2018.

However, the permanent road closure of Hill Street, between Short Place and Clare Street, is subject to Council approval.

The proposed road closure is an essential element of the pedestrian-priority precinct as it would deter through traffic, support the low speed environment, and deliver an area where pedestrians and cyclists are fully protected from vehicular traffic. Furthermore, given that on-street parking in Hill Street, between Short Place and Clare Street, is currently banned, the proposed road closure would not result in any loss of on-street parking.

In compliance with Section 116 of the *Roads Act 1993*, the City, via letterbox drop to 632 properties, sought feedback in June 2017 on the proposal from local residents and businesses for a period of 28 days. The proposal was also advertised in The Sydney Morning Herald and the Central Sydney Magazine.

At the conclusion of the consultation, the City received a total of 14 submissions, with five responses supporting the proposal and nine responses opposing the proposal. The submissions supporting the proposal encouraged all measures that improved pedestrian safety, access and amenity within the precinct, while submissions opposing the proposal raised concerns about the impact to on-street loading within the precinct, as well as the management of taxis in the vicinity of the precinct.

Given the feedback received, the City amended the proposal to address the concerns raised about on-street loading and taxi operations and re-consulted local residents and businesses in December 2017. At the conclusion of the consultation, the City received no submissions on the amended proposal from local residents and businesses.

As such, the amended proposal, including the proposed closure of Hill Street, and the associated parking changes in Bourke, Clare and Hill Streets, was referred to, and subsequently endorsed unanimously by, the LPCTCC on 15 February 2018.

RMS has also approved a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) for the proposed closure of Hill Street, Surry Hills, between Short Place and Clare Street, to vehicular traffic.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council approve the permanent road closure of Hill Street, Surry Hills, between Short Place and Clare Street, to vehicular traffic.

Attachments

Attachment A. Location Plan

Attachment B. Concept Plan

Background

1. The Council-endorsed Surry Hills Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming (PCTC) Plan recommended the City investigate the following pedestrian-friendly treatments for the precinct bounded by Albion, Bourke, Short and Flinders Streets:
 - (a) the permanent closure of Hill Street, between Short Place and Clare Street, to vehicular traffic; and
 - (b) Shared Zones in Hill Street, Short Place and Marys Place.
2. To further enhance pedestrian-priority within the precinct, the City also proposed Shared Zones in Clare Street and Floods Place. A Shared Zone is a road with a posted speed limit of 10km/h and where pedestrian access and safety takes precedence over the ease of vehicle movement.
3. Associated parking changes were also included in Bourke, Clare and Hill Streets to consolidate on-street loading opportunities within the precinct, as well as better manage taxi operations immediately outside the precinct.
4. The proposed road closure is an essential element of the pedestrian-priority precinct as it would deter through traffic, support the low speed environment, and deliver an area where pedestrians and cyclists are fully protected from vehicular traffic.
5. Furthermore, given that on-street parking in Hill Street, between Short Place and Clare Street, is currently banned, the proposed road closure would not result in any loss of on-street parking.
6. To assess the impact of the proposed closure, the City commissioned traffic counts in Hill Street in July 2017. Over a period of seven days, the count recorded a maximum peak of 79 vehicles per hour - or just over one vehicle per minute - in Hill Street.
7. Should Hill Street be permanently closed, a portion of traffic currently using Hill Street, between Short Place and Clare Street, is likely to transfer to nearby Short and/or Albion Streets. Both Short and Albion Streets would be able to sufficiently accommodate any transfer of traffic from Hill Street, either partially or in full, without any noticeable reduction in capacity in either street.
8. The proposed Shared Zones in Hill and Clare Streets, as well as Floods, Marys and Short Places, have been approved by the RMS, and the proposed closure associated parking changes for Bourke, Clare and Hill Streets were unanimously endorsed by the LPCTCC on 15 February 2018.
9. RMS also approved a TMP for the proposed closure of Hill Street, Surry Hills, between Short Place and Clare Street, to vehicular traffic on 28 October 2008.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

10. 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 strategic directions and objectives:

- (a) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling - the proposal will considerably improve pedestrian safety and accessibility within the precinct bounded by Albion, Bourke, Short and Flinders Streets. Furthermore, the proposal is consistent with the Council-endorsed Surry Hills PCTC Plan, as well as the objectives of the City's *Walking Strategy and Action Plan*.

Budget Implications

11. Funding for these works has already been approved as part of the capital works budget for the Surry Hills Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming plan.

Relevant Legislation

12. The RMS is responsible for the control of traffic on all NSW roads and has delegated to Council certain functions to regulate traffic on local roads.
13. The RMS delegation gives Council authority to approve certain traffic controls, including road closures, under Part 8, Division 2 of the *Roads Act 1993*. This delegation can only be exercised by the elected Council and is subject to a number of conditions and limitations, including the need to obtain the advice of the LPCTCC and receive TMP approval from RMS.
14. This Report seeks to formalise the permanent road closure of Hill Street, Surry Hills, between Short Place and Clare Street, to vehicular traffic in accordance with Section 116 of the *Roads Act 1993*.

Public Consultation

15. In compliance with Section 116 of the *Roads Act 1993*, the City, via letterbox drop to 632 properties, sought feedback in June 2017 on the proposal from local residents and businesses for a period of 28 days. The proposal was also advertised in The Sydney Morning Herald and the Central Sydney Magazine.
16. At the conclusion of the consultation, the City received a total of 14 submissions, with five responses supporting the proposal and nine responses opposing the proposal. The submissions supporting the proposal encouraged all measures that improved pedestrian safety, access and amenity within the precinct, while submissions opposing the proposal raised concerns about the impact to on-street loading within the precinct, as well as the management of taxis in the vicinity of the precinct.
17. Given the feedback received, the City amended the proposal to address the concerns raised about on-street loading and taxi operations and re-consulted local residents and businesses in December 2017. At the conclusion of the consultation, the City received no submissions on the amended proposal from local residents and businesses.

18. As such, the amended proposal, including the proposed closure of Hill Street, and the associated parking changes in Bourke, Clare and Hill Streets, was referred to, and subsequently endorsed unanimously by, the LPCTCC on 15 February 2018.

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