

Traffic Treatment - Proposed Permanent Road Closure - Morehead Street at James Street, Redfern

File No: 2020/093562

Summary

This report recommends Council approve a permanent road closure to vehicular traffic in Morehead Street at James Street, Redfern to improve pedestrian access, safety and increase open space.

In August 2019, residents of Morehead Street submitted a petition to the City to consider greening and traffic calming measures in Morehead Street, between Cooper and James Street. The petition was tabled at Council's meeting on 19 August 2019.

Council resolved that the Chief Executive Officer investigate suggested traffic measures and where possible, trial a Liveable Slow Street proposal through a range of temporary design measures and signs to prevent through traffic from Morehead Street onto James Street.

In November 2019, the City sought support from Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) to trial a 'Liveable Slow Street' on Morehead Street. Transport for New South Wales did not support a trial, however supported a permanent road closure in Morehead Street at James Street.

On 28 February 2020, Transport for New South Wales approved a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to permanently close Morehead Street, Redfern at James Street.

The City consulted with the local community to gather feedback on the proposed permanent road closure from April 2020 to May 2020. At the end of the consultation period the City received 28 submissions with 75 per cent of the submissions received supporting the City's proposal.

A road closure in Morehead Street will improve safety by reducing vehicular traffic and traffic speeds. The proposal will provide additional landscaping, and extra space for pedestrian activity. The closure will also include the provision of kerbside traffic islands to provide an area to facilitate vehicles turning at the new closure.

The proposal will result in the loss of approximately four car parking spaces in Morehead Street (see Attachment A).

The proposal was referred to the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee on 17 September 2020 where the closure was endorsed (see Attachment B).

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council approve the permanent road closure of Morehead Street at James Street, Redfern to vehicular traffic so it reduces traffic flow using the street, reduces traffic speeds, improves safety and allows for additional landscaping.

Attachments

Attachment A. Concept Plan

Attachment B. Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee (LPCTCC)
Advice - 17 September 2020

Background

1. In August 2019, residents of Morehead Street submitted a petition to the City to consider greening and traffic calming measures in Morehead Street, between Cooper and James Street. The petition was tabled at Council's meeting on 19 August 2019.
2. Council resolved that the Chief Executive Officer investigate suggested traffic measures and where possible, trial a Liveable Slow Street proposal through a range of temporary design measures and signs to prevent through traffic from Morehead Street onto James Street.
3. In September 2019, the City commissioned traffic counts in Morehead Street, between Arthur and James Streets over a seven-day period. The traffic counts recorded a maximum of 181 vehicles per day and most drivers were driving below 30km/h. The traffic counts indicate the number of vehicles using Morehead Street is low, it is used mostly by local residents and a road closure in Morehead Street would have minimal impact. Local access to and from Morehead Street will remain available from Walker and Arthur Streets or Little Young and Cooper Streets (see Attachment A).
4. In November 2019, the City sought support from Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) for a Liveable Slow Streets trial. Transport for New South Wales did not support a trial but supported a permanent road closure in Morehead Street.
5. In accordance to Section 116 of the Roads Act 1993, a public notice for the permanent road closure of Morehead Street at James Street was published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 8 April 2020 for a minimum of 28 days. 236 letters were also sent out to local residents and businesses in the area.
6. At the end of the consultation period the City received 28 submissions with 75 per cent of the submissions supporting the City's proposal.
7. Following a review of all the submissions, City staff referred the proposal to the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee (LPCTCC) for its consideration at its July meeting.
8. On 16 July 2020, the Morehead Street Closure proposal was deferred at the July Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee meeting at the request of South Sydney Police, as they had concerns the road closure would attract drinking, loitering and other anti-social activity into the street.
9. On 4 September 2020, a site meeting was held between the South Sydney Police, City staff and representatives of the residents of Morehead Street. The Police discussed their concerns with the residents and made them aware of the potential issues that might be caused by this proposed road closure. The residents acknowledged the concerns of the South Sydney Police however, they still wanted the City to proceed with the road closure, as this will provide much needed space for the community.
10. On 17 September 2020, the permanent road closure to vehicular traffic in Morehead Street at James Street, Redfern was endorsed by the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee (see Attachment B).
11. Once approved, the closure will be implemented initially in temporary materials such as bollards or concrete barricades with some road line marking. This will remain until the permanent road closure is built.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

12. 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 plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 2 provides a road map for the City to become A Leading Environmental Performer for Greening Sydney with more landscaping and open space.
 - (b) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling - The proposals help develop a network of safe, linked pedestrian paths which gives greater priority to pedestrians.

Financial Implications

13. Once approved, the closure will be implemented initially in temporary materials such as bollards or concrete barricades with some road line marking. This will remain until the permanent road closure is built.
14. Funding for construction of the permanent works will be sought as part of the next iteration of the City's capital works program
15. Ongoing maintenance costs for the permanent road closure are not expected to exceed existing costs to maintain the current trafficable road.

Relevant Legislation

16. Transport for NSW is responsible for the control of traffic on all NSW roads and has delegated to Council certain functions to regulate traffic on local roads.
17. The Transport for NSW delegation gives Council authority to approve road closures under Part 8, Division 2 of the Roads Act 1993.
18. This delegation can only be exercised by the elected Council and is subject to a number of conditions and limitations, including the advice of Council's Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

19. Projects are prioritised on safety treatments (such as new pedestrian crossings) throughout the Local Government Area and the 2020/2021 is fully allocated. Construction of the permanent closure in Morehead Street will commence at completion of all currently listed safety projects. Estimated construction year is 2023/24 through the LPCTC funding program.
20. Subject to Council endorsement of the permanent road closure, temporary materials will be installed as soon as practicable (early 2021). This will remain until the permanent road closure is built.

Public Consultation

21. In accordance with Section 116 of the Roads Act 1993, a public notice for the permanent road closures of Morehead Street at James Street was published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 8 April 2020 for a minimum of 28 days. 236 letters were also sent out to local residents and businesses in the area.
22. At the end of the consultation period the City received 28 submissions with 75 per cent of the submissions received supporting the City's proposal.
23. Comments received during the public consultation were reviewed to determine how the proposal can progress or modified to address community comments.
24. The Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee meeting on 17 September 2020 considered and endorsed the proposed permanent road closure to vehicular traffic in Morehead Street at James Street, Redfern (see Attachment B).

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