

**Item 29.****Traffic Treatment - Pedestrian Boulevard - George Street, Haymarket****TRIM Container No.: 2021/522493****Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee endorse the following traffic treatments and parking changes in George Street, Haymarket:

- (A) Footpath widening on both sides of George Street between Pitt Street and Rawson Place;
- (B) Reallocation of parking on the eastern and western sides, between the points 38 metres and 51.6 metres, north of Pitt Street as "Loading Zone Ticket 6am-6pm Mon-Fri 6-10am Sat" and "4P Ticket 6-10pm Mon-Fri 10am-10pm Sat 8am-10pm Sun & Public Holidays";
- (C) Reallocation of parking on the eastern side, between the points 56.6 metres and 70.1 metres and between the points 76 metres and 83.8 metres, north of Pitt Street as "No Parking Wedding and Funeral Vehicles Excepted";
- (D) Reallocation of parking on the eastern side, between the points 89.7 metres and 125.7 metres, north of Pitt Street as "No Parking Coaches Excepted 15mins Limit";
- (E) Reallocation of parking on the eastern side, between the points 125.7 metres and 134.5 metres, north of Pitt Street as "Loading Zone Ticket 6am-6pm Mon-Fri 6-10am Sat" and "4P Ticket 6-10pm Mon-Fri 10am-10pm Sat 8am-10pm Sun & Public Holidays";
- (F) Reallocation of parking on the eastern side, between the points 10 metres and 38 metres and between the points between 51.6 metres and 56.6 metres as "No Stopping"; and
- (G) Reallocation of parking on the western side, between the points 10 metres and 38 metres and between the points between 51.6 metres and 142.7 metres as "No Stopping".

It is recommended that the Committee note the following proposed traffic restrictions at the signalised intersection of George Street/ Pitt Street/ Lee Street/ Quay Street, Haymarket:

- (H) Introduction of a "No Left Turn" restriction from George Street (North) to Pitt Street;
- (I) Introduction of a "No Entry" restriction for northbound traffic from George Street (South) at Railway Square into George Street (North)..

**Voting Members for this Item**

<b>Voting Members</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Object</b>
City of Sydney	[Insert]	[Insert]
Transport for NSW	[Insert]	[Insert]
NSW Police – Sydney City PAC	[Insert]	[Insert]
Representative for the Member for Sydney	[Insert]	[Insert]

**Advice**

Advice will be updated after the meeting.

**Background**

The City of Sydney's Sustainable Sydney 2030 strategic plan identifies George Street as the central spine of the city centre. The vision for George Street is a pedestrianised boulevard designed to provide a focus for public life in the city centre with light rail connecting three city squares – Circular Quay, Town Hall and Central Station. The strategic directions of Sustainable Sydney 2030 includes a city for walking and cycling; a lively and engaging city centre; and resilient and inclusive local communities.

The City's Community Recovery Plan in response to the Covid-19 pandemic includes actions to continue the acceleration of the capital works program to upgrade city streets, parks and playgrounds; work with the NSW Government on city management initiatives such as mobility and transport, temporary footpath widening, cycleways, change signal timing, lower speed limits, travel demand planning and reprioritisation of roads; and invest in the pedestrianisation and activation of south George Street.

The introduction of the CBD and South East Light Rail (CSELR) permanently closed and converted George Street into a pedestrian boulevard between Hunter Street and Rawson Place.

To continue the pedestrian boulevard, it is proposed to upgrade the public domain in George Street, Haymarket between Rawson Place and Pitt Street, with wider footpaths, new trees and street furniture.

## Comments

In November 2020, as part of the George Street Pedestrian Boulevard project, the Committee endorsed the proposal to widen the footpaths of George Street, Haymarket between Rawson Place and Pitt Street.

The proposal to widen the footpaths will improve pedestrian access and providing opportunities for outdoor dining and the installation of trees and street furniture.

The proposed turn restrictions at the intersection of George / Pitt / Lee and Quay Streets will improve the efficiency and reduce the number of conflicts at the signalised intersection. It will require drivers to travel on alternative routes.

There are no changes to existing driveways' access and egress, including that of Christ Church St Laurence.

On-street parking provision for specific needs in George Street such as loading zones, weddings, funerals and coaches are maintained.

## Consultation

The City first sought feedback from the community on the George Street South Pedestrianisation proposal in September and October 2020. Feedback received during the public exhibition has been considered in this proposal.

City staff also met with impacted stakeholders during 2021, which has further informed the proposal.

From 8 December 2021 to 10 January 2022, the City sent out 561 letters to consult with the local community for feedback on the design plan for George Street between Rawson Place and Pitt Street, including changes to the public domain, street parking and access.

The consultation period was further extended to 31 January 2022 to give the community more time to make a submission over the holiday period.

A total of 74 submissions were received during the consultation period.

37 of these submissions (50%) were from members of the Christ Church St Laurence parish and council. 33 of these submissions (45%) were from/on behalf of Chinatown businesses. Two submissions (3%) were from youth hostels operating in the area, and a further two submissions (3%) were from city residents/workers.

The comments received for the proposal raised concerns about:

- Drivers requiring to take a longer travel route due to the proposed "No Left Turn" restriction from George Street (North) to Pitt Street and the introduction of a "No Entry" restriction for northbound traffic from George Street (South) at Railway Square into George Street (North);
- Loss of on-street parking spaces;
- Impacts on businesses due to vehicle access changes in the area; and
- Traffic congestion caused by reducing the number of traffic lanes in George Street between Rawson Place and Pitt Street

- Increased traffic in Quay and Valentine Streets as a result of the "No Left Turn" restriction from George Street (North) to Pitt Street.

The traffic restrictions at the signalised intersection of George Street/Pitt Street/ Lee Street/ Quay Street is proposed to improve the safety for all users including pedestrians and vehicular traffic. These restrictions optimise the performance of the intersection by reducing delays for vehicular traffic and walking distance across the travel lanes and thus improve pedestrian amenity and safety.

Access will be maintained to local stakeholders, through diversions that require drivers to travel on alternative routes.

The traffic egress diversion resulting from the left turn ban will require vehicles to turn right onto George Street at Railway Square then left onto Regent Street, left onto Lee Street and then right onto Pitt Street. This turn restriction for vehicles at the intersection will shorten the cycle time at the intersection, improving pedestrian space, safety and potentially reduce waiting times at the intersection to overall optimise the performance of the entire Railway Square traffic flow.

The traffic access diversion resulting from the through/left ban on George Street will require vehicles to turn left onto Quay Street, right onto Valentine Street and then left or right onto George Street. This will ensure no loss of access to businesses from the "No Entry" restriction for northbound traffic from George Street at Railway Square into George Street.

All other movements at the intersection of George Street / Pitt Street / Quay Street / Lee Street will remain available.

Traffic analysis has shown George, Quay and Valentine Streets will continue to operate within satisfactory mid-block capacities with the reduction of lanes on George Street and the additional diverted traffic on Quay and Valentine Streets.

On-street parking provision for specific needs such as loading zones, weddings, funerals and coaches are maintained while overall provision of general parking is reduced. This is consistent with the aim of the project to reduce vehicle traffic on George Street and enhance pedestrian amenity.

There is no loss of access to Chinatown by vehicle. The project aims to improve business activity by promoting a better and safer pedestrian environment. Wider footpaths and improved intersections will make it easier for people to walk around Chinatown and access shops.

It is anticipated that the development of Tech Central, Atlassian and the completion of the Central Walk project, as well as new commercial developments in Chinatown will generate significant increases in pedestrian numbers on George Street. The abovementioned projects represent a quantum of floorspace comparable to Barangaroo and the proposed increase in footpath width is warranted.

## **Financial**

Appropriate funding for the proposal will be secured once greater certainty on the construction timeline is reached.

**CLEMENT LIM, SENIOR TRAFFIC ENGINEER**