

Naming Proposal - Two New Lanes at 180 George Street, Sydney

File No: X086317

Summary

The redevelopment of 180 George Street is creating a new public plaza and activating the industrial lanes between George and Pitt Streets. The renewed public domain – plaza and lanes – now require official naming.

The spaces are currently within private property but will be dedicated to the City when the development is complete.

This report recommends that, subject to community consultation, Council provide in-principle approval to name two small lanes within the development site. This report also outlines the consultation process to name the new public plaza.

The proposed names for the lanes are:

- "Crane Place" - It is proposed the historic name of Crane Place be reinstated on its east-west alignment from Pitt Street. The original name evolved from the long-established showroom and works of GE Crane & Sons, importer and manufacturer of building materials and hardware, steam marble and slate works, on Pitt Street where the lane is located.
- "Cabinetmaker Place" - It is proposed that the lane with a northeast-southwest alignment recognises the evolution of Sydney's original Chinatown around Lower George Street and The Rocks from 1850s – 1880s. The proposed name specifically recognises the contribution of Chinese cabinetmakers manufacturing furniture in Sydney and celebrates the multicultural history of Sydney.

A new public plaza and community building will be delivered as part of this development. The plaza and community building will include a new public artwork by Kudjla/Gangalu artist, Daniel Boyd. The artwork includes a perforated steel canopy cover that will be suspended 20m above the plaza and interact with the ground below through shadow and light. This will be a significant new artwork and public space.

It is proposed that the City undertakes a stakeholder consultation process to work with the artist and Cultural Knowledge-holders and consult Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, the NSW Aboriginal Languages Trust and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel to identify a suitable name for the plaza.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) provide in-principle approval to name the east-west aligned lane "Crane Place" and that the name be placed on public exhibition for community comment for a minimum period of 28 days;
- (B) provide in-principle approval to name the northeast-southwest aligned lane "Cabinetmaker Place" and that the name be placed on public exhibition for community comment for a minimum period of 28 days;
- (C) note that a further report will be submitted to Council, detailing the results of the public consultation process;
- (D) note the stakeholder consultation process to be undertaken for the naming of the new public plaza; and
- (E) note that a further report be submitted to Council to seek in-principle support for the name of the plaza to go on public exhibition for 28-days.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Map showing location of development site, including lanes
- Attachment B.** Artist impression of plaza, artwork and community building
- Attachment C.** Historical justification

Background

1. The redevelopment of 180 George Street is creating a new public plaza and activating the industrial lanes between George and Pitt Streets.
2. The public plaza, laneways and community building is part of Lendlease's Sydney Place office tower development at 180 George Street. The development predominantly comprises commercial space with a mix of ground floor retail.
3. The plaza, artwork, community building and lanes are currently within private property but will be dedicated to the City when the development is complete.
4. Proposed names for the lanes have been checked against the City's Naming Policy and with the Geographical Names Board.

Cabinetmaker Place

5. It is proposed that the lane with a northeast-southwest alignment be named Cabinetmaker Place. This name meets the principles of the City's Naming Policy, the Geographical Names Board criteria and has been reserved with the Geographical Names Board.
6. Cabinetmaker Place recognises Sydney's original Chinatown, Sydney's multicultural history and the historical contribution of Chinese cabinetmakers manufacturing furniture in Sydney.
7. Aside from market gardening, furniture manufacture was the largest post-gold rush Chinese economic activity in Australia. It was the only manufacturing activity that involved a substantial number of Chinese people, and a significant proportion of those people were based in Sydney city. At least two cabinetmakers operated on the site in the 1880s. Many Sydney households were furnished with local Chinese-manufactured hall stands, wash stands, book cases and tables. This community's contribution to furniture manufacture and the decoration of domestic households is largely forgotten.

Crane Place

8. It is proposed the historic name of Crane Place be reinstated on its east-west alignment from Pitt Street. Crane Place was a private lane whose name morphed to Rugby Place in the 1960s to reflect business interests of the day. Since the new lane will be public and on a very similar alignment to the original, the recommendation is to revert back to the historic name for the lane.
9. This name meets the principles of the City's Naming Policy, however, it cannot be reserved with the Geographical Names Board due to a minor duplication within the stipulated 10km radius – Crane Place, Bellevue Hill. This name will need to be considered specifically by the Geographical Names Board, taking into consideration the historic nature of the name, the differences of the two built environments and localities and level of community support for the name.
10. The original name of Crane Place evolved from the showroom and works of GE Crane and Sons. The long-standing firm was established by George Ekins Crane in 1867 and became one of the leading companies to import and manufacture building materials, hardware, marble, slate and lead.

11. Their work can be seen in significant public buildings around Sydney. They produced marble flooring for St Mary's Cathedral and a pressed metal ceiling for Pitt Street Congregational Church; both buildings are listed on the State Heritage Register. GE Crane & Sons also collaborated with the NSW Government Railways to design and manufacture the large indicator board which was used on the main concourse of Sydney Central Station 1906-1982, which is now held in the Powerhouse Museum collection.
12. Maps, plans and archival documents show how the lane evolved beside their showroom on Pitt Street from a right of way access to their yard and sheds.
13. The name of the private lane, Crane Place, was superseded by Rugby Place in the 1960s when Rugby Union NSW established their club in Bacon's Building, which fronted Crane Place. The Rugby Union Club has been demolished as part of the current redevelopment in the area and is no longer on site.

Public Plaza and Community Building

14. A new public plaza and community building will be delivered as part of this development. The plaza and community building will include a new public artwork by Kudjla/Gangalu artist, Daniel Boyd. The artwork includes a perforated steel canopy cover that will be suspended 20 metres above the plaza and interact with the ground below through shadow and light. This will be a significant new artwork and public space.
15. It is proposed that the City undertakes a stakeholder consultation process to work with the artist and Cultural Knowledge-holders and consult Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, the NSW Aboriginal Languages Trust and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel to identify a suitable name the plaza.
16. The process will involve the following steps in-line with the Naming Policy:
 - (a) speak with artist, Daniel Boyd about the naming of the artwork;
 - (b) identify Elders or Cultural Knowledge-holders to suggest suitable words / meanings for the artwork and plaza;
 - (c) seek advice from the NSW Aboriginal Languages Trust;
 - (d) seek support for the proposed name or names from Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council;
 - (e) report to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel;
 - (f) seek in-principle support from Council for the name of the plaza to go on public exhibition (not the artwork as this is not an official "place" and the artwork's name is the artist's prerogative);
 - (g) 28-day public exhibition of the proposed plaza name with outcomes reported to Council;
 - (h) plaza name is endorsed by Council; and
 - (i) assessment by the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales, and subsequent approval and publication in the NSW Government Gazette.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

17. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. 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 3 - Public places for all - naming the lanes will acknowledge important local historical context and enhance the renewal of the northern end of the city's central business district.
 - (b) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - the naming proposals will enhance the renewal of the northern end of the city's central business district.
 - (c) Direction 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - formally naming the lanes will assist in wayfinding and will facilitate recognition and visitation.
 - (d) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - naming the lanes will acknowledge important local historical context.

Organisational Impact

18. Naming of the lanes will have minimal organisational impact. The City will ensure signage is installed once construction is complete.

Social / Cultural / Community

19. The community will have an opportunity to comment on the naming proposal for the lanes during the exhibition period.
20. The names of the two lanes recognise the site's industrial and manufacturing history and the evolution of Sydney's original Chinatown in this area. It also acknowledges that the name "Crane" was in formal use as a lane from at least the 1920s, but probably used informally from much earlier.
21. The City will consult with Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel and work with Cultural Knowledge-holders and the artist to identify Sydney Aboriginal language word/s to name the plaza and the artwork.

Financial Implications

22. There are funds available in the 2022/23 operational budget for the installation of signage for the lanes.

Relevant Legislation

23. The Geographic Names Act 1966 (NSW) and Geographical Names Board Guidelines.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

24. A subdivision application will be lodged by the end of July 2022 and the subdivision plan registration with NSW Land Registry Services will follow. Address schedule, including road names must be part of this plan.

Public Consultation

25. The process for naming of public spaces proceeds as follows:
 - (a) early consultation as required with key internal and external stakeholders, including Metro Local Aboriginal Land Council and the City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel for names using Aboriginal language or that are of Aboriginal significance;
 - (b) in-principle approval by Council of the proposed name/s;
 - (c) public notification of the naming proposal/s with a minimum 28-day response time;
 - (d) Council approval following community consultation;
 - (e) assessment by the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales through its formal application process; and
 - (f) approval by the Geographical Names Board and subsequent publication in the NSW Government Gazette.

26. The Geographical Names Board will also notify the public as part of their routine procedure for the naming of public places. If objections are raised, the proposal is returned to Council for further comment or amendment if required.
27. The naming proposal will be advertised on the Sydney Your Say website, notices will be letterboxed to surrounding properties (approximately 450 metres radius) and there will be a public notice on site.

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