

Attachment F

**Council Report - Partial Road Closure -
Jones Street, Ultimo - 10 December 2007**

ITEM 12. PARTIAL ROAD CLOSURE - JONES STREET ULTIMO**FILE NO: S048082****SUMMARY**

The permanent closure of Jones Street to traffic, between Broadway and Thomas Street, is part of the Development Approval conditions for the CUB site. It is also consistent with the proposed future redevelopment of various university buildings by UTS to achieve greater unity of the City Campus and enhance pedestrian safety and amenity for students.

The long term vision is for the roadway to become part of a series of pedestrian friendly spaces linking Mary Ann Street Park in the north through the existing pedestrian mall in Jones Street and the proposed development of Balfour Street to the proposed neighbourhood park to the south of the CUB site and the pocket park further south in Balfour Street itself.

As the works for the CUB site and the permanent closure of Jones Street are still some time away, the University of Technology (UTS) would like to implement an Interim Traffic Management Scheme to overcome the current pedestrian safety concerns between Broadway and Thomas Street. A proposal has been developed by UTS in consultation with the City of Sydney which will deliver significant improvements for students, pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

The proposal involves a partial closure of Jones Street, Ultimo, for which Council approval is sought. From a midway point between Broadway and Thomas Street, only buses, taxis, service vehicles and bicycles will be allowed to travel northbound. All southbound access on Jones Street from Thomas Street will be prohibited except for cyclists, who would be provided with a dedicated contra-flow lane. In addition, the existing ticket parking would be replaced with extensive bicycle parking, some motorcycle and scooter parking, and loading facilities for service vehicles.

The proposal was advertised for a period of four weeks. No objections were received and on 4 December 2007 a special Sydney Traffic Committee endorsed the proposal. This will be recorded in the Traffic Committee minutes for 19 December 2007.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) approve the partial road closure of Jones Street, Ultimo, between Broadway and Thomas Street, as shown in the Interim Traffic Management Plan at Attachment A to the subject report; and
- (B) endorse in-principle the long term vision for a full closure of Jones Street, between Broadway and Thomas Street.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Sketch showing the proposal.

Attachment B: Letter from UTS to the City of Sydney dated 9 August 2007.

BACKGROUND

1. The University of Technology (UTS) is concerned about the safety of a large number of students crossing Jones Street between Broadway and Thomas Street as they move to different part of the campus. UTS has consulted with the City of Sydney regarding measures to improve student, pedestrian and cycle safety while retaining public transport (buses and taxis) access.
2. UTS has a longer term proposal to redevelop various university buildings, which would ultimately achieve greater unity of the City Campus and enhance pedestrian safety and amenity for students. This proposal includes a full closure of Jones Street, which will enhance pedestrian safety, improve student access and provide large open space.
3. The full closure of Jones Street to traffic, between Broadway and Thomas Street, is also part of the development approval conditions for the CUB site. The closure will see the existing traffic lights at Jones Street relocated to Balfour Street to provide right turn access from Broadway into the site. At the same time, the existing bus and taxi right turn from Broadway into Jones Street will be provided for at the Broadway and Wattle Street intersection.
4. The long term vision is for the roadway to become part of a series of pedestrian friendly spaces linking Mary Ann Street Park in the north through the existing pedestrian mall in Jones Street, and the proposed development of Balfour Street, to the proposed neighbourhood park to the south of the CUB site and the pocket park further south in Balfour Street itself.
5. It is expected that the full road closure will be achievable, but this will require the existing right turn access from Broadway into Jones Street for buses and taxis to be relocated to a right turn into Wattle Street. This arrangement is undergoing further discussion between the Roads and Traffic Authority, Frasers Greencliff and the City.
6. However, there are already a significant number of student movements along Jones Street to Broadway and towards Thomas Street that require immediate attention to improve student safety.
7. To address the safety issues, and to improve the urban environment adjacent to the university main building entrance, UTS has suggested implementing an interim traffic management strategy. The strategy has been developed in consultation with City staff and UTS has agreed to fund the design and implementation.

PROPOSAL

8. Currently Jones Street provides a two way traffic flow with pay parking on either side of the street.
9. The proposal, which involves a partial closure of Jones Street, Ultimo, will significantly improve safety for students and the general public in the area (see Attachment A).
10. From a midway point between Broadway and Thomas Street, only buses, taxis, service vehicles and bicycles will be allowed to travel northbound.

11. All southbound access on Jones Street from Thomas Street will be prohibited except for cyclists, who would be provided with a dedicated contra-flow lane, which will assist cycling connections to Broadway.
12. Pedestrian access to and from Broadway will be improved via provision of new kerb extensions either side of Jones Street at Thomas Street, and a raised, marked zebra crossing with kerb extension at the midway point on Jones Street between Broadway and Thomas Street.
13. Currently there is metered pay parking for approximately twenty cars along Jones Street which will be removed as part of the proposal. This will be replaced with extensive bicycle parking along the eastern kerb of Jones Street, some motorcycle and scooter parking, and loading facilities for service vehicles.
14. The proposed motorcycle/scooter parking along the eastern kerb lane between the pedestrian crossing and Broadway serves a dual purpose by also encouraging pedestrians to use the marked foot crossing, while also assisting with parking for motorcycles/scooters, which are popular among students.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental Implications

15. The interim traffic management strategy will significantly improve the urban environment, reduce traffic conflicts and improve safety for pedestrians.
16. The partial road closure of Jones Street midway between Broadway and Thomas Street will reduce the volume of traffic using the street. Moreover, on-street pay parking for cars will be replaced with extensive parking for bicycles and some parking for motorcycles and scooters.
17. There would be only minor traffic diversions on to other adjacent streets.

Social Implications

18. Jones Street is a key outdoor link between significant campus facilities, where student safety and amenity is currently compromised. By reducing traffic, and improving facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, the interim proposal would improve student life and outdoor activity.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

19. There will be no construction cost to Council. The UTS has agreed to fund the design and implementation of this scheme (see Attachment B). There will be a revenue loss arising from the removal of two parking meters. This is estimated at around \$90,000 per annum.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

20. Roads Act 1993, Division 2 of Part 8. Under Section 116 of the Roads Acts 1993, Council may apply to the RTA for consent to close a local road to traffic, subject to public advertising of the proposal and obtaining the consent of the Traffic Committee.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

21. The UTS has advised that it would like to have this work completed for the beginning of the first Semester 2008. Accordingly, Council approval is required as soon as possible, and certainly no later than the end of 2007.

OPTIONS

22. Council has the option not to support the interim partial road closure, however, this is not recommended. There are pedestrian safety issues which should be addressed and opportunities to significantly improve the urban environment and social activity at this location.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

23. Advertising of the Jones Street proposal for a minimum of 28 days commenced on 31 October 2007 and was completed on 28 November 2007. The proposal was advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald and the Daily Telegraph and the local community notified by way of letter box drop.
24. One submission was received expressing support for the proposed road closure and no submissions were received expressing opposition to the closure.
25. The Roads and Traffic Authority's delegation to Council requires Council to consider the advice of its Traffic Committee. Comments received from the advertisement were collated and submitted to a special meeting of the Sydney Traffic Committee on 4 December 2007, and no objections to the proposal were raised.

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