

# **Attachment E**

**Response to Submissions**

## George Street North Pedestrianisation - Responses to issues raised during community and stakeholder engagement

This document responds to the key themes raised in the George Street north pedestrianisation community engagement campaign. Feedback was sought from face-to-face consultations with key stakeholders, a Lord Mayor's peak body Stakeholder Forum, door-knocking local businesses, and an online community survey,

### Overall level of support for the proposal

Business leaders, government agencies and key industry groups who attended a stakeholder meeting hosted by the Lord Mayor expressed their support for the proposal. Some offered suggestions on behalf of their members and networks. Attendees included Business NSW, Business Sydney, Australian Hotels Association, Tourism and Transport Forum, NSW Hire Car Association, Port Authority of NSW, Placemaking NSW, and Transport for NSW.

Organisations and businesses who attended City of Sydney stakeholder meetings were more likely to be supportive of the proposal than they were to oppose it.

Submitters and local businesses that were door-knocked were more likely to have a neutral opinion on the proposal with door-knocked businesses more likely to support than oppose the proposal.

Relatively even numbers of survey respondents were supportive and unsupportive of the proposal. (Note that one respondent selected both Supportive and Unsupportive.) Those that submitted feedback via email directly to the City were more likely to oppose than support the proposal.

### Key Themes raised online

Theme	Response
<p><b>Access to driveways</b></p> <p>Concern was expressed about the potential for this proposal to increase traffic congestion in and around the affected area, and that vehicles would have to take longer, more circuitous routes to reach their destinations.</p> <p>Pitt Street, Jamison Street, Lang Road, Lower Fort Street/George Street intersection, Essex Street, Harrington Street, and Curtin Place were anticipated to become more congested.</p> <p>A considerable number of respondents were concerned that implementation of the proposal would make vehicle access to homes and businesses difficult: e.g., that "it will prevent a number of apartments in the area accessing their basement garages", and that it would reduce access for visitors and residents.</p>	<p>The proposed concept plan and associated changed traffic arrangements do not prevent vehicles from using their existing driveways. In some instances, access and egress routes are different or more complicated than currently, but access will be always available.</p> <p>The City will continue to consult with impacted business, owners and residents during the detailed design phase to ensure appropriate vehicular access is maintained.</p> <p>The current no right turn provision from Grosvenor St into Harrington St will be removed as part of this proposal to allow unrestricted right turn access into Harrington Street.</p>

Theme	Response
<p>The ability of hotels to provide valet parking, and for guests to access hotels by personal vehicle or taxi was questioned if the proposal goes ahead as planned.</p> <p>Driveway access was of concern to several respondents; the following streets were named in the context of driveway access: Wynyard Lane; Margaret Street; Margaret Lane; Gloucester Street; and, Harrington Street.</p> <p>The needs of disabled people and those with mobility issues were realised in several comments</p>	<p>We will continue to consult with Hunter Street stakeholders and Sydney Metro to ensure hotel operations are maintained.</p>
<p><b>Loading and servicing</b></p> <p>The ability of service vehicles to access locations was an issue raised by a considerable number of respondents. Maintenance of loading bays and servicing access was paramount for these submitters and respondents.</p> <p>The narrowness of laneways and the configuration of intersections (e.g., tight corners) were raised alongside the simple need for loading zones/loading docks. This was for service vehicles such as builders, cladders, and all manner of deliveries such as linen/laundry, and parcel post or couriers.</p>	<p>The proposed concept plan and associated changed traffic arrangements do not prevent freight vehicles from servicing their property. In some instances, access and egress routes are different or more complicated than currently, but access for loading and servicing will be always available.</p> <p>The City will continue to consult with impacted business, owners and residents during the detailed design phase to ensure appropriate loading and servicing is maintained.</p>
<p><b>Events and activation</b></p> <p>Comments included wanting to see the street resemble European cities, that the additional pedestrian space will provide more opportunities for cafes and restaurants to operate which the area currently lacks as well as pop-up stalls (food &amp; beverage trucks / carts). “The overall benefit of making George Street completely pedestrianised has been embraced by community and those that work in CBD”.</p>	<p>The new pedestrian spaces will enable further activation of the street, opportunities for businesses and events.</p>

Theme	Response
<p><b>Emergency services access</b></p> <p>Those who commented on this topic raised concerns emergency vehicle access would be problematic</p>	<p>Emergency services have been consulted about the project through the Local Emergency Management Committee. Further consultation will take place during the detailed design phase but there were no major concerns raised.</p>
<p><b>Footway dining</b></p> <p>Comments were mainly supportive of the proposal and asked for more areas in the CBD to be pedestrianised, "This harbour-front area should be a pleasant, walkable and unpolluted area to spend time and spend money in the local businesses". Those that did not support mentioned existing footpaths are wide enough and "The city is becoming a walkable city without proper means of access."</p>	<p>The project creates new opportunities for outdoor dining and trading.</p> <p>The proposed concept plan and associated changed traffic arrangements will still enable vehicles to access properties and driveways.</p>
<p><b>Approval process</b></p> <p>A hotel raised the difficulty in properly understanding the impact of three different proposals/projects impacting the hotel, which have different timelines and approval processes.</p> <p>One submission doubted their feedback would be heard, and another mentioned the closing of George Street "temporarily" to traffic between Hunter and Bridge on 9 January.</p>	<p>City staff will continue to meet with impacted stakeholders to coordinate works and manage impacts.</p> <p>Options for Stage 2 permanent pedestrianisation works from Essex St to Alfred St will be consulted with the community and key stakeholders in 12 months' time, and before approvals are sought.</p>
<p><b>Construction timing</b></p> <p>The moderate number of comments that addressed construction; each expressed concern about the impacts that construction would have on access or the operation of their organisation. While this was in some cases to do with keeping stakeholders informed, comments mostly revealed that they are wary of what impacts construction will have on their operations.</p>	<p>City staff will continue to meet with impacted stakeholders to coordinate works and manage impacts.</p>