



east sydney neighbourhood association inc.

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East Sydney is the area bound by College, William, Oxford and Forbes streets and is home to approximately 3,500 people the majority of whom live at street level in terraced housing. The East Sydney Neighbourhood Association (ESNA) is the body representing local residents. For further information about ESNA and to view our community Strategic Plan visit our web site <http://www.esna.org.au/>.

STANLEY STREET STREETScape CONCEPT – FORMAL RESPONSE

ESNA's response to the community consultation presentation and exhibition are as follows:

1. URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Build on the existing character of the street
Agreed
- *Support and encourage outdoor dining*
Agreed
- Build on the special character of Stanley Street
Agreed
- Minimise the dominance of traffic and unify the two sides of the street in the hub
Agreed
- Plant new trees in the parking lane
Agreed
- Retain existing two way traffic

president: martin daley
vice-president: doug purdie
secretary: debbie williams
treasurer & public officer: veronica heron

committee members: christine byrne
nicki braithwaite
john boers

Disagree

- Retain the bus route and bus stop locations
Agree with retaining one way bus route. Disagree keeping all bus stops in current locations
- Maintain the number of parking spaces in the precinct
Agree
- Investigate change to parking time restrictions
Agree but with proviso of installing parking meters

2. OPTION 3

After careful consideration of the three options presented for consideration ESNA's preference is for Option 3.

In choosing this option over the other two it is understood that there are implications of increased cost and also for changes to traffic management which will need further negotiation with both commercial traders and with the RTA. However we feel that the significance of this proposed upgrade to Stanley Street in terms of its role in East Sydney in the long term is so important that it is worth getting the design right from the beginning, whatever the cost or the difficulties in negotiating traffic changes.

ESNA considers that Option 3 offers the most flexible and desirable outcome. The very fact that Option 3 has been presented for consideration encourages ESNA to consider that it is indeed possible, especially for a well resourced and innovative Council committed to providing state of the art excellence in its public domain and having a clear objective of pedestrian amenity. Far greater sums have been spent on the streetscape upgrades of Glebe Point Road and Redfern Street. Even Barcom Park in Darlinghurst was undertaken with no expense spared. ESNA considers that cost should not be the main deciding issue for long term public domain projects of this nature. Instead equal if not considerably more emphasis should be given to the consideration of excellent and innovative design, environmental amenity and practical urban management for the long term.

At the beginning of the recent community consultation meeting it was stated by the Council's landscape architect that the over-riding objective of the streetscape upgrade was *'to reduce traffic dominance and to put the focus on pedestrians'*. ESNA completely endorses this objective and for this reason considers Option 3 to be the best way to achieve it both for current conditions and for the potential which the future offers. The other two options are considered to be a mere tinkering with the street which will eventually need to be revisited as circumstances change. The cost and the

disruption it will cause makes such a return very unlikely. This is the one chance to get it right and the upgrade should be undertaken with vision and done once.

In ESNA's consideration Option 3 provides valuable long term flexibility which will serve Stanley Street well into the future and can provide an appropriate response to changing circumstances, functions and needs. It will instantly create an innovative public space, a very great need in this dense inner city neighbourhood. In future this role could be enhanced further. In time when demands for through-traffic diminish, as they will, this option makes possible a true piazza. This would be a highly appropriate and desirable outcome taken the Italian heritage of Stanley Street and the annual Primo Italiano Festival. It could become a place where people to gather, to meet, to talk and most important to eat and drink. In effect it provides the potential for a village square and as such provides a very valuable and necessary benefit for the whole East Sydney community. Options 1 and 2 have a very limited outlook by comparison.

ESNA believes that Option 3 will also serve the restaurants well from its very inception and will provide opportunities for many to significantly expand their outdoor seating areas creating unique spaces for each restaurant. It will also allow the development of the crossroads of Stanley and Riley for an iconic public art focus which is seen by the trading community as a very desirable improvement. Unique lighting and imaginative public art should be a strong component of the design, as should additional trees, landscaping and street furniture.

3. THROUGH TRAFFIC

It is appreciated and understood that the traders on Stanley Street wish to keep two-way traffic and the bus route operating on the street. This is not necessarily the view of the residents in East Sydney who have not yet had the benefit of a specific meeting to discuss traffic on Stanley Street or indeed an opportunity to offer alternative traffic solutions. ESNA considers that the range of arguments for reducing through-traffic have not been properly canvassed with the traders such that the benefits of its removal are made clear. In other words ESNA does not consider that the current proposed two-way traffic solution proposed by some of the traders should be a given commitment.

Stanley Street is a place of relaxation and leisure for hundreds of local people and ESNA considers there are enormous benefits for them and for the restaurant traders on Stanley Street by reducing unnecessary through traffic. ESNA regards the presence of through-traffic as offering absolutely no benefit for either residents or traders. It does however provide many negatives in terms of reduced air quality and degraded amenity. It simply moves through, does not stop and leaves only its unwelcome pollution in its wake. For these reasons ESNA has a long term commitment to reduce through-traffic in all the streets which are classified as local. The opportunity to achieve this in Stanley Street a place of relaxation, food and gathering which is not a crucial link in the local traffic network makes the reduction of unnecessary traffic here an issue very worthy of further consideration and discussion.

As was noted at the community meeting in February there is a long history of mutual co-operation and inter-action between the residents of East Sydney and the restaurant traders on Stanley Street. ESNA believes that this goodwill could be harnessed by Council to develop a mutually acceptable traffic solution for Stanley Street which will

benefit and please everybody. ESNA considers that the issue of through-traffic on Stanley Street needs to be seriously re-addressed in relation to this significant streetscape proposal and seeks further discussions with Council and the commercial operators on this matter.

4. SHARED ZONE

ESNA proposes that the street becomes a shared zone with the traffic moving one-way only and marked by two parallel lines of different coloured pavers and accompanying bollards. Careful design of the bollards can ensure that far from cluttering the street they can actually contribute to the street's aesthetic qualities. This proposal will significantly diminish traffic speed and discourage through-traffic from entering. It will not eliminate vehicles which have a genuine purpose for being there, including delivery vehicles if necessary and it will not affect traders businesses except in a very positive way by freeing up more space for outdoor dining. The speed limit should be dropped to an acceptable level, perhaps 20kph. There should also be a load limit to prevent the entry of excessively large vehicles such as the existing car delivery trucks. It is considered that this proposal will not compromise safety in any way. An excellent and very successful example of this type of proposal exists in Napier, New Zealand where the whole town centre is a shared zone and where traffic and pedestrians happily co-exist (refer Appendix 1).

Clearly ESNA is not proposing the complete elimination of traffic but it is keen to see that the traffic using the street has a genuine purpose for being there. A reduction in unnecessary through-traffic will result in an equivalent reduction in petrol fumes creating a much healthier and pleasant environment. Less traffic will also decrease noise and generally improve the amenity for the restaurant patrons and the general public. These environmental improvements are in fact more likely to lead to increased numbers of restaurant patrons rather than less and it is something the restaurant owners should consider.

It is considered unacceptable by ESNA that because Stanley Street has long been neglected by traffic engineers and thus allowed to gradually develop excessive volumes of traffic, the community is prevented forever from restoring comprehensive pedestrian amenity. RTA intransigence to the creation of a shared zone based on high traffic movements on a small local road, not crucial to the traffic network, is unreasonable. The RTA must be seriously challenged on this. East – west through traffic does not belong here and should be encouraged to divert on to the arterial road, in this case William Street. This should not be seen as impossible for Council especially if it has any intention of adopting more complex traffic measures resulting from the recommendations recently developed by Jan Gehl. If Pitt Street can be closed and turned into a pedestrian mall then Stanley Street can certainly become a shared zone.

5. CAR PARKING

By removing a lane of traffic, car parking could be significantly increased with the provision of bays of angled spaces in the re-configured extra space provided. This is another matter that should be seriously considered by the restaurant owners. ESNA agrees that parking times should be extended to two hours but insists that if this happens it is properly enforced and regulated. The introduction of parking meters is crucial to ensure a regular turnover of cars and to provide a reasonable opportunity of

finding a parking space. The use of a limited number of meters issuing paper tickets for dashboard display is an excellent way of reducing street clutter.

It is recommended that signage to the existing private car park station on Riley Street be improved on all its approaches to encourage greater use by people using Stanley Street.

6. BUS ROUTE

The bus route can be retained in this proposal but it would be required to use William Street for either its outward or inward journey depending upon the direction of the one-way proposal. Irrespective of the outcome of this suggestion however it is strongly recommended that the bus stop currently outside the convenience store on Stanley Street be removed as it is completely unnecessary and is replicated a few hundred metres further along across Crown Street.

7. CLOSURE OF PALMER STREET

ESNA strongly supports the closure of Palmer Street on its southern junction with Stanley Street. This will not only provide the opportunity for increased angle parking to serve Stanley Street but will remove a notorious kerb crawling circuit which has long been a constant problem for local residents. It will also provide an opportunity to introduce landscaping into the public domain. It is important however that the closure of Palmer Street does not create a rat-run though the very narrow Chapel Street and for this reason it is recommended that Chapel Street should also be closed.

8. RILEY STREET CLOSURE

ESNA supports the closing of Riley Street at its junction with Stanley Street. All traffic including vehicles from the hire car outlets and car delivery vehicles should enter via the William Street junction. This will remove a considerable amount of unnecessary traffic from Stanley Street and provide an opportunity for landscaping and public art as well as a new place where people can simply sit without having to make a purchase.

9. CLOSURE OF YURONG LANE

ESNA supports the permanent closure of Yurong Lane and welcomes the opportunity to create a landscaped area which is accessible to both pedestrians and cyclists. This small stretch of Yurong Street is highly visible from William Street and as such is something of a gateway to East Sydney. As part of the changes to Yurong Lane an opportunity exists for the under-grounding of the unsightly bundled overhead powerlines on Yurong Street. (refer to photograph in the Appendix). ESNA requests that a simple but well designed “Gateway” treatment be considered here as part of the Stanley Street proposal.

10. IMPROVE THE INTERSECTION OF YURONG AND STANLEY STREET

ESNA strongly supports this proposal.

11. IMPROVE LIGHTING ARRANGEMENTS IN LANEWAYS

ESNA strongly supports this proposal.

12. ADDITIONAL STREET TREE PLANTING

ESNA strongly supports this proposal.

13. ECONOMIC SURVEY

ESNA supports the suggestion made at the community meeting of an economic survey being undertaken to determine the nature and scope of the business community on Stanley Street. This should also include the patrons who use the businesses to determine such things as when they use the street and for how long, how often they visit, where they come from, how they get there and how much they spend etc. This will provide valuable information and may serve to improve the eventual design of the upgrade in small but significant ways.

14. CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this response to the draft design proposals will be given serious consideration even though it does present challenges for Council. East Sydney has been largely ignored by successive Council administrations with little if any improvement to its public domain. It deserves to have a first class project rather than a 'no frills' response. ESNA encourages Council to tackle the issues that the Option 3 version presents in order to provide the traders and residents of East Sydney with a truly innovative and visionary approach to a streetscape upgrade which will last. It might even win some prestigious design awards if it does. Here's hoping.

Martin Daley
President - East Sydney Neighbourhood Association

per D Williams
Secretary - East Sydney Neighbourhood Association

Appendix 1

SHARED ZONE – NAPIER, NEW ZEALAND





Yurong Street – overhead power lines

