

MILLER PLACE

A New Plaza for North Sydney



**BUSINESS
SYDNEY**

lendlease





“ North Sydney needs a beating heart. Making Miller Street a people friendly plaza provides that beating heart. Business Sydney supports the concept enthusiastically. ”

Paul Nicolaou, Executive Director, Business Sydney

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Message from Mayor of North Sydney

Giving the North Sydney CBD “a heart” – a place to bring workers, students and residents together to gather, meet and play - was first championed in the 1970s.

For over a decade North Sydney Council has been planning for just that – a social heart for the CBD, to transform North Sydney to fully meet its potential as a unique and vibrant MicroCity. That social heart is Miller Place.

Almost ten years ago, Council engaged with stakeholders and the community to create a vision for the North Sydney CBD. Through that engagement, we heard what people value about the CBD: the sense of community here, the leafy green feel, heritage buildings, the easy access to the harbour, urban bushland and breathtaking harbour views. There was a focus on people and the importance of work-life balance, wellbeing, acknowledging that happy, healthy people are creative and productive, supporting a vibrant CBD.

However, we also understood the challenges: the lack of vibrancy in the CBD after business hours with little choice in food, bars, arts and entertainment and the perception by some that ‘over the bridge’ is a psychological barrier, a commute too far.

In response, we have worked with our community, key partners, and stakeholders to build a bold set of transport, public domain, commercial growth initiatives which are helping to transform our city.

In 2018, Council significantly increased commercial height limits in parts of the CBD that could sustain additional growth, to strengthen investment and employment.

Over \$11 billion in investment has now catapulted North Sydney into the second fastest growing CBD in the country and the opening of the new Metro has brought North Sydney closer to the rest of Sydney like never before. Rather than being too far from the action, North Sydney is 'the upside of Sydney!' – only 3 minutes from Barangaroo or 5 minutes from Martin Place.

Vibrant new laneways and retail, new public spaces, new people, and businesses calling North Sydney home. Existing restaurants and bars will be joined by a variety of new food and beverage offerings for residents, visitors and importantly the 80,000 workers and 12,000 school children who commute to North Sydney each day.

Miller Place is vital to injecting vitality into the North Sydney CBD for workers, residents and students. That is why North Sydney Council has committed \$9 million towards the project which will be the social heart for a vital, connected MicroCity.



Zoë Baker
Mayor
North Sydney





Foreword

North Sydney is experiencing the energy of a new Sydney Metro Station and a spectacular redevelopment of its heart.

All that has happened so far presents an opportunity to make Miller Street a new precinct and a vibrant sanctuary for pedestrians.

With the opening of the Metro Station at Victoria Cross, Miller Street can become a wonderful plaza. This is a golden opportunity to return part of busy Miller Street to the people.

Business Sydney strongly supports turning Miller Street, from the Pacific Highway to Berry Street, into a people and walking friendly pedestrian plaza.

With thousands of Metro passengers coming and going each day it makes all the sense in the world to have an area of open space at its “front door”.

We are grateful to Lendlease for inspiring efforts to make the pedestrian plaza part of the overall project. The plaza would add around 7,500 square metres of open space giving North Sydney the beating heart of a major CBD.

It is inspired by world cities such as Copenhagen, New York City and Barcelona with a nod to what has been achieved across the harbour with the transformation of George Street.

The case for the Miller Street pedestrian plaza is a strong one: by 2036, there will be 80,000 workers streaming into the North Sydney CBD – 54 per cent more than currently. Miller Place could accommodate commuters, visitors and students arriving via the Victoria Cross Metro Station and the Greenwood Plaza portal linking to nearby North Sydney Station.

In addition to Business Sydney and Lendlease, the plaza has the full backing of North Sydney Council, which regards it as critical to the long-term development of the CBD. We think the concept deserves widespread support – let's make it happen.



Paul Nicolaou
Executive Director
Business Sydney



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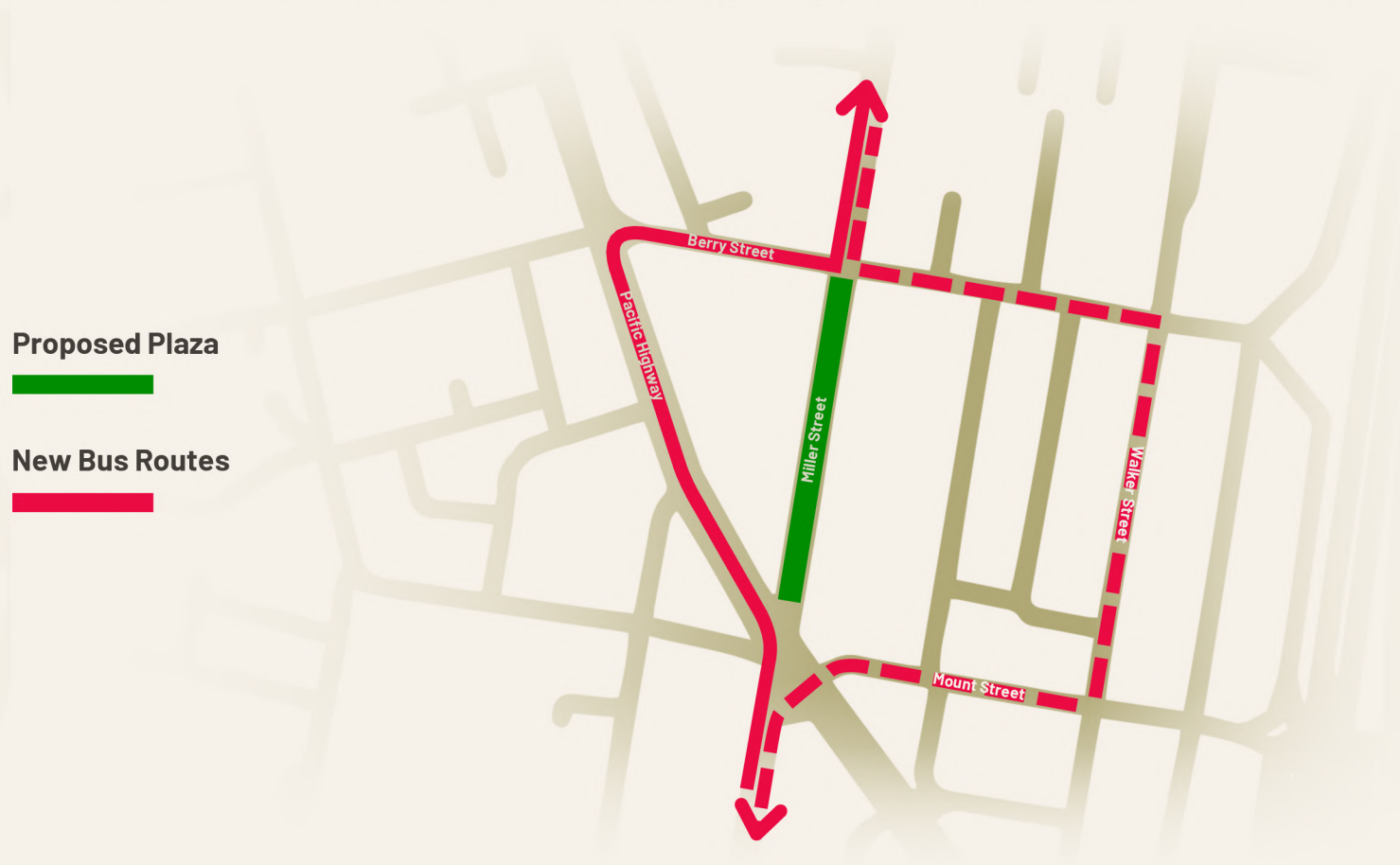
Miller Place



The Project

It is possible to envisage Miller Place as an upgraded civic spine with a new 7,450 square metre public plaza equivalent in size to Martin Place. Located at the entrance to the Metro, it could be achieved with the closure of Miller Street between the Pacific Highway and Berry Street.

By 2036, around 80,000 workers in the North Sydney CBD will be contributing to a large concentration of high-value, knowledge-intensive jobs. This major new public space in the centre of the CBD could be achieved by **closing Miller Street to traffic between Victoria Cross and Berry Street, and making changes to existing bus routes to allow for the new plaza.**





Supporting Council's Vision

Miller Place is critical to North Sydney Council's vision for its CBD. Work is already underway by state and local government agencies to consider the strategic merit of the project as well as the transport measures needed to make it happen.

With large plane trees, publicly accessible lawns and good access to sunlight for extended periods of the day, **Miller Place can be a place to relax, be entertained and enjoy a bite to eat** – all activities you would expect in a major CBD. It has the potential to become the civic, retail, and social heart of the North Sydney CBD.

As proposed, it is large enough to accommodate tens of thousands of commuters, students and visitors arriving via the Victoria Cross Metro Station and the North Sydney Train Station portal from Greenwood Plaza each morning.

Opportunities and Goals

Miller Place seeks to achieve easier crossings, active frontages and retail edges, places for gathering, new public artwork, and seasonal and festive offerings. Its many other opportunities include:

- A major public space for students, workers, visitors, and residents
- Flexible lunchtime, evening and weekend event spaces
- Public seating and passive recreation for lunchtime workers
- Circulation for commuters entering and exiting the Metro Station
- Pedestrian-focused lighting to support the night-time economy
- High-quality retail, cafes and bars
- Child-friendly green space

Pedestrian Friendly Hubs are Vital

Public space is at a premium in North Sydney and Miller Place holds the key to improving the balance. These are the driving factors that make more public places such a necessity:

- Little additional public space has been gained in North Sydney over the last half century through the development process
- By 2036, population growth will cause pedestrian activity to increase by 50 per cent and 22,000 more people will use streets and public spaces every weekday
- North Sydney has less public domain per worker than places such as Barangaroo South or Macquarie Park
- Some 16,000 square metres of new public space is needed to maintain current person to public space ratios

North Sydney Issues and Solutions

- | | |
|---|--|
| ⚠️ A general under supply of plazas and parks | 💡 Increase the quantity, quality, and variety of public domain and green space |
| ⚠️ Existing public domain lacks delight and warmth | 💡 Create new city-shaping spaces to connect with cultural, social and transport hubs |
| ⚠️ Heavy impact of peak hour vehicle movements | 💡 Slow vehicle speeds and actively encourage walking and cycling |
| ⚠️ Empty parking spaces after hours and on weekends | |
| ⚠️ A lack of after hours activities | |



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Pedestrian Spaces





Purpose and Background

A vital way to provide benchmarking and understand the need for pedestrian friendly public spaces in North Sydney is to examine how this has happened in other global cities. We can draw on these examples for our space at Victoria Cross.

Areas of a city or municipality designated for pedestrian only use and where most vehicular traffic is banned are designated as 'pedestrian zones'. **Making areas pedestrian friendly can give urban centres additional social benefits, which include boosting economic activity and creating attractive public spaces that encourage walking and a sense of community.**

Global Trends



Some of the world's most traffic choked cities are banning cars in key thoroughfares and transforming streetscapes to improve walkability



Cities are reclaiming their streets as urban dwellers and city administrations become increasingly conscious of the impact of motor vehicle use on air quality



Melbourne announced a plan to transform its city streets by controlling car use and promoting walking within the city centre



As the world's population expands and emissions rise, cities are tackling congestion to boost local economies, improve community wellbeing and reduce emissions



A shift in urban planning is happening in many cities moving away from dominance of cars to encourage walking and more human scaled development



As the world population grows, so does the need to promote pedestrian friendly measures

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Plaza Examples





Global Pedestrian Plazas

Around the world, pedestrian plazas have emerged as vibrant urban spaces prioritising pedestrians over vehicles. These pedestrian friendly zones foster community engagement, encourage sustainable transportation, support local business, and enhance overall urban liveability.

Featuring amenities such as benches, greenery, and cultural displays, these plazas provide a platform for social interaction and cultural exchange. **By reclaiming public spaces from vehicles, cities worldwide are promoting a healthier environment and redefining urban landscapes to prioritise the well-being and connectivity of their residents and visitors.**

This section highlights a number of global examples where pedestrian plazas have reinvigorated city centres and become global success stories.

Las Ramblas, Barcelona, Spain

Las Ramblas (pictured left) is 1.2km long and dates as far back as 1905. It is the sequence of three pedestrian-orientated street/boulevards. Landscaping and ample seating are some of its greatest strengths. A mix of activities promotes a diverse image and flexible character. **Las Ramblas is universally seen as Barcelona's most characteristic, most-important and best street.** Miller Place has the potential to have the same status in North Sydney.

Broadway, New York City, United States

Broadway is 1.2km long and completed in its current form in 2009. The city closed two stretches of Broadway to cars and opened pedestrian plazas. They also created seating areas around the city and multiple bike lanes. **It has become a space that supports business and encourages people to live and spend time in the city centre.** Broadway is known globally and is recognised as one of the most visited pedestrianised destinations.



Strøget, Copenhagen, Denmark

Strøget in Copenhagen (pictured left) was established in 1962. With a total length of 3.2km, Strøget is the world's longest and oldest pedestrianised street. **It has become one of the city's most important, high-profile and heavily trafficked streets.** It has revitalised the city's forgotten alleyways by turning them into vibrant laneways. It has changed patterns of driving and parking into cycling and using collective transport to access key destinations. Many cities around the world have used Strøget as a blueprint for similar urban transitions.

Bahnhofstrasse, Zurich, Switzerland

Bahnhofstrasse is one of the world's most exclusive shopping streets, and it's entirely pedestrianised in certain sections. Located in the heart of Zurich, this wide, tree-lined street is lined with luxury shops, cafes, and banks, and has become a welcoming and comfortable space for locals and tourists to stroll, shop, and socialise.

Buchanan Street, Glasgow, Scotland

Stretching just 1km, **Buchanan Street has evolved Glasgow's shopping district.** It is characterised by a collection of department stores and street performers, and is home to the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. A key characteristic it shares with Miller Place is easy access via Glasgow Subway's Buchanan Street station.

Istikal Avenue, Istanbul, Turkey

Finished in the 1980's, Istikal Avenue (pictured right) is 15 metres wide and runs for 1.4km. **It is undoubtedly one of the most famous avenues in Turkey.** It has a mix of cultural and commercial uses located in historic buildings. Studies have shown that concentrating on pedestrian use has reduced traffic fatalities by 60 per cent. Turkey partnered with local government and relied on the input of local business, communities and stakeholders to revitalise public spaces.

Piazza del Duomo, Florence, Italy

This iconic square in Florence, surrounded by historical buildings like the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, has been pedestrianised to enhance its cultural and social value. Offering expansive open spaces, benches, and a backdrop of Renaissance architecture, Piazza del Duomo draws thousands of visitors and locals to engage with its vibrant atmosphere, making it **one of the most significant public spaces in Italy.**

Rennweg, Vienna, Austria

Rennweg is a bustling pedestrian plaza located in the heart of Vienna, surrounded by beautiful parks and cultural institutions. **It is one of the main access points to the historic centre of Vienna and has been designed to emphasise green spaces and pedestrian movement.** The plaza's proximity to the Belvedere Palace, home to world-renowned art collections, makes it a hub for culture and leisure.





Local Pedestrian Plazas

In Australia, several cities have also embraced the concept of pedestrian plazas to enhance urban spaces, reduce traffic congestion, and foster vibrant communities.

By focusing on pedestrian accessibility, **these urban hubs are embracing the future of sustainable and vibrant city design**, where the well-being of residents and visitors is prioritised.

These local examples stand as a testament to how pedestrian-friendly zones can be integrated into urban planning to create dynamic and thriving communities.

George Street, Sydney

George Street's transformation created 9,000sqm of additional car-free space in the city centre. **It opened the door for outdoor dining, new street trees, seating, safety and lighting to flourish.** The addition of light rail transformed the public transport experience.

Albert Street, Brisbane

The Albert Street precinct has been undergoing a significant transformation as part of the city's push to make its urban areas more pedestrian-friendly. The pedestrianisation of Albert Street connects key cultural and commercial precincts, while **the addition of street furniture, landscaping, and open-air spaces encourages people to linger, interact, and enjoy the surrounding retail and dining offerings.**

BUSINESS SYDNEY

Business Sydney is the voice for business in Sydney. We advocate, influence and deliver policies and outcomes to drive economic growth and create opportunities to invest, work, live and visit our city. For nearly two hundred years, we have worked to advance Sydney as a global, competitive and liveable city.



As a global, integrated real estate group, we draw on decades of experience and the latest thinking in investments, development, construction, design and placemaking to deliver iconic and enormously successful places. Our mission is to shape cities, create connected communities and deliver workplaces of the future.

Acknowledgement

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North Sydney is a welcoming, connected, and resourceful community which acknowledges its past, enjoys the present and plans for our future. We respect our beautiful harbourside locale, its unique villages and much valued bushland and open spaces. With a population of more than 72,000, North Sydney has become Australia's second fastest growing CBD.

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