



Dominic Perrottet

Treasurer

Don Harwin

Special Minister of State

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Minister for the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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PLAN TO TRANSFORM MACQUARIE STREET INTO A CULTURAL PRECINCT

Sydney's Macquarie Street is set for a shake-up with a report out today recommending the historical stretch through the city's east be transformed into a dynamic cultural hub that recognises and celebrates the precinct's significance to the State.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the Macquarie Street East (MSE) Precinct Review offered fresh ideas for reviving an often-overlooked location, considered the civic spine of Sydney.

"Macquarie Street is home to many heritage buildings and historical spaces that should be appreciated and shared with as many people as possible but right now barely anyone visits outside business hours," Mr Perrottet said.

"This is an opportunity to be innovative and rethink how these spaces could showcase our city's cultural and social history and attract visitors by day and by night.

"As a global city we need to have a culturally diverse night-time economy and Macquarie Street East has the potential to become a vibrant destination."

The Review found the precinct lacks public recognition of its historical significance, both before and after 1788, and provided only limited public use of spaces and buildings.

It recommends improving accessibility and linkages to the rest of the CBD, and adopting a unified vision.

The NSW Government commissioned the review into the precinct in 2018, which was led by former Prime Minister Paul Keating and former Chief Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commissioner and former Lord Mayor of Sydney Lucy Turnbull.

"The report provides a blueprint for the true consolidation of the historic triangle between the Art Gallery of NSW, the former Registrar General's building and the State Library along the axis of Macquarie Street," Mr Keating said.

Mrs Turnbull said the tourism potential of this precinct was just waiting to be realised.

"With the massive opportunities created by the transformation of the Art Gallery of NSW and the new Sydney Metro Martin Place into a major transport interchange, combined with our greatest early colonial buildings, the Macquarie Street East Precinct

can become a more lively public space and cultural and social hub that also recognises and reveals our 60,000-year-old cultural heritage.” Mrs Turnbull said.

Special Minister of State, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for the Arts Don Harwin said the release of the Review is another step toward reactivating Sydney’s cultural venues and promoting the rich cultural heritage of the Gadigal Land as NSW recovers from the pandemic.

“Celebrating our heritage and bringing it together with our city’s vibrant culture will enable people visiting the Macquarie Street East Precinct to learn more about our history,” Mr Harwin said.

A Strategic Business Case is now being developed to identify options to progress the Precinct and deliver economic benefits to NSW.

Mr Perrottet thanked Mr Keating and Mrs Turnbull for their work on the Review.

“Making Sydney better crosses political divides and it’s important we recognise the historic and cultural value of every corner of our great city,” Mr Perrottet said.

“I look forward to hearing what the public thinks of the ideas in this report.”

Please find a copy of the Macquarie Street East Precinct Review at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/plan-to-transform-macquarie-street-into-a-cultural-precinct>

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