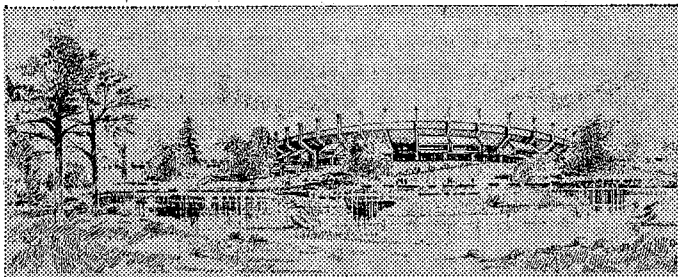


Strategy for a heart attack

22



Main stadium in proposed sports complex.

SIR, — Aldermen Briger and Port (Letters, June 19) are quite right to defend the Council of the City of Sydney on which they serve from the charge that the council has "torn the heart out of old Sydney and destroyed much of its warmth and amenities," to use John O'Hara's words (June 16), but research that I am presently making leads me to believe that they may be misguided.

It is true that a new floor space index has been adopted, but neither an examination of the strategic plan nor inquiries that I have made from the planners satisfy me that there is any proper basis for the decisions which have been made. Indeed, I have some reason to believe that John O'Hara's comments will become increasingly true, replacing

that throbbing heart with the sterility of glass office towers set in a concrete desert.

While I cannot be sure of the above result because my studies in this regard are not yet complete, I have recently had the need to examine that part of the strategic plan which recommends, in action priority 12B referring to the Showground precinct, that "council should press for new sports facilities to be of an Olympic standard." The plan goes on to say that "the prospect of Sydney as a venue for the 1988 Olympic Games is an exciting one, but the Moore Park complex should in any case be comprehensively developed to serve a wider range of sporting and community activities," making it quite clear to everyone, including the Minister for Lands,

that the Showground area could and should be so developed.

Curiously, action priority 12B goes on to say that there should be no alienation of "the City's largest parkland area, Moore Park." The fact is that it has been shown to be impossible to develop an Olympic venue on this site without alienating not only some of Moore Park but, even more seriously, by alienating much of Centennial Park as well as destroying its serene character.

Further, policy 9 of the plan reads: "Arrest and reverse the decline in the City's residential population." Yet, as we have seen from the published plan of the Olympic complex, the destruction of a fine and important residential precinct is inevitable if the recommendations of the strategic plan in regard to the Showground area are implemented.

If the effect of the implementation of what is probably the first recognisable impact of the strategic plan on our living environment is as disastrous as the recommendations contained in action priority 12B, then it is right and proper that every citizen be wary in the extreme of each and every recommendation contained in this dubious plan.

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Woolahra.

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