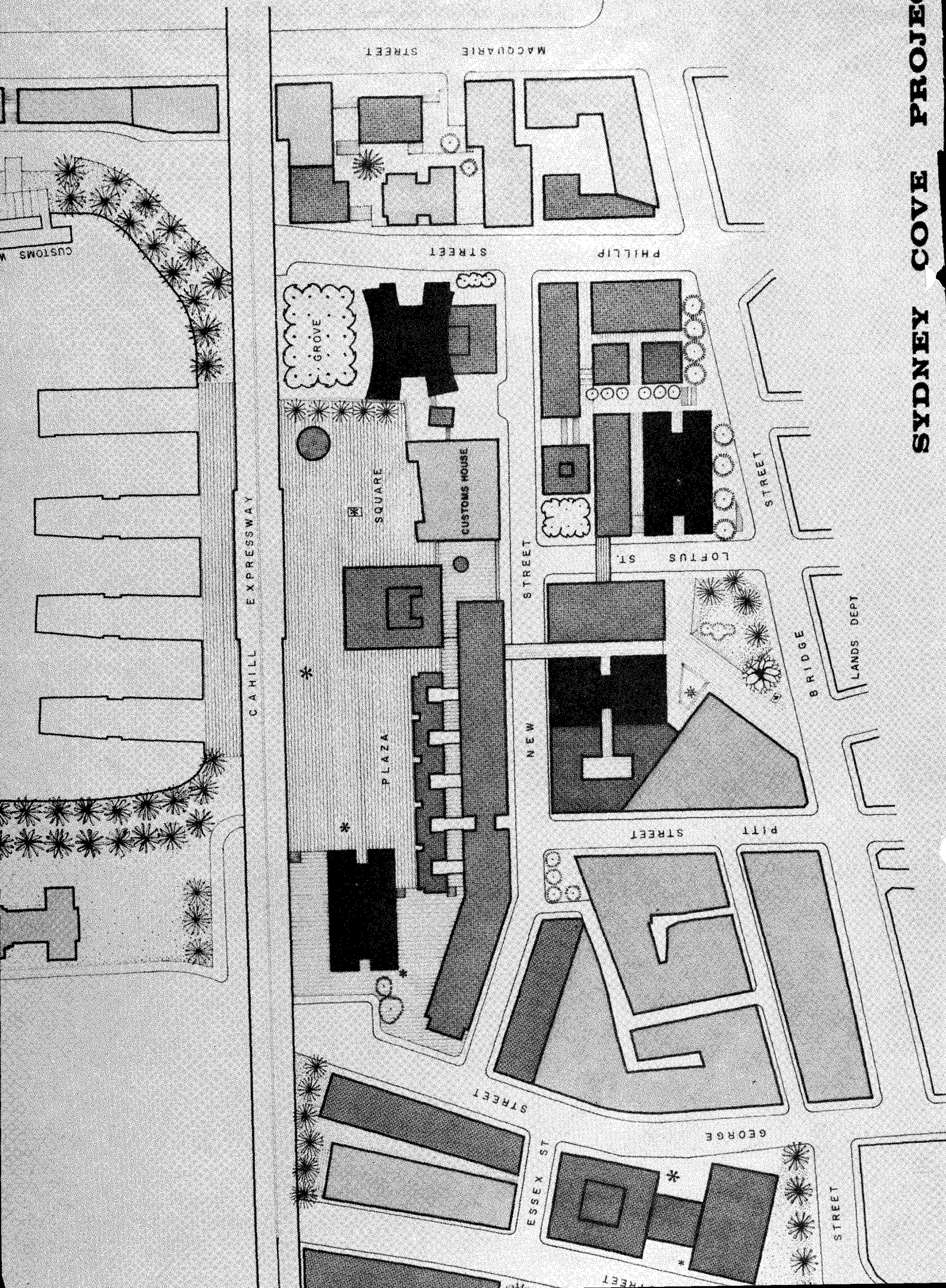


SYDNEY COVE PROJECT



Australian Planning Institute Journal

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Volume 2 Number 3

October 1962

71

	Editorials	73
<i>John Toon</i>	Sydney Cove — a Proposal for Urban Renewal	75
<i>Keith Newman</i>	Planners and the Press II	79
<i>E. L. Wheelwright</i>	Economic Planning and Ideology	82
<i>Frank Crean</i>	Comment	85
<i>Gordon Stephenson</i>	Some Thoughts on the Planning of Metropolitan Regions	86
<i>A. J. Wheeler</i>	Fairfield Moravian Settlement—a Pioneer British Planned Community	90
	Points of Law	92
	Correspondence	94
	Institute Activities	95
	Notes and News	98
	Reviews	101
	Notices	103

Australian Planning Institute Journal

EDITORIALS

Henceforth, the A.P.I.J. will be published in January, April, July and October of each year, instead of in March, June, September and December. We will thereby avoid the pre-Christmas rush, and our readers will be able to digest the January issue during those first few unhurried weeks of each year. Our October issue will then be able to report fully all the Annual General Meetings and Congresses which tend to be held in August and early September. The Editors feel that the new arrangement will be more popular among readers and advertisers alike.

Deadlines for submission of manuscripts and news items are similarly pushed forward one month to November 30th, February 28th, May 31st, and August 31st. Journal Correspondents and Division Committees please take note. All contributors of material for publication are also requested to take careful note of the *Information for Contributors* published under the Notices at the back of this issue. The Editors will

increasingly tend to reject or return manuscripts which are not clearly typed in double or triple spacing with wide margins.

National Planning

The Editors have been most anxious to stimulate informed and objective comment, from all political points of view, on this difficult and complex subject.

In this spirit, leaders of both the Federal Government and Opposition were respectfully invited to comment on the matters raised in Dr. Hall's paper *National Planning in Australia*, published in A.P.I.J., March 1962.

Invitations were extended to The Minister for National Development, to The Minister Assisting the Treasurer, to The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and to Mr. Frank Crean, M.H.R.

Senator W. H. Spooner, the Minister for National Development, noted that 'As (Dr. Hall) acknowledges, the concept of a national economic plan

The Australian Planning Institute is a professional association, the major purposes of which are: To advance the study of regional and town planning, civic design and the related arts and sciences; To promote the aesthetic, economic, scientific and social development of regions, cities and towns, and to encourage the development of urban and rural areas in the best interests of the community; To bring matters affecting regional and town planning to the notice of government, municipal and other authorities, public bodies and associations and the officials thereof, in all parts of the Commonwealth of Australia and elsewhere; To raise the character and status and to safeguard and advance the interests of the profession of Regional and Town Planning, and of those engaged therein.

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raises complex issues for Governments in Australia and these are not confined to the field of Commonwealth responsibility'. He felt that he could not, at this stage, discuss the wide ramifications of the question.

Mr. L. H. E. Bury, the then Minister Assisting the Treasurer, did signify his willingness to comment briefly, but his departure from Cabinet unfortunately coincided with the Journal's publication deadline and the promised comment was, perhaps understandably, not available at that time. We still hope to obtain a comment or paper from him.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, The Honourable E. G. Whitlam, was unwilling to comment in the absence of comments from Government Leaders.

Mr. Frank Crean, M.H.R., who has been described in the popular press as the Opposition's 'Shadow Treasurer', was finally the only one to comment for publication in this issue. The Editors are pleased to be

able to publish his views, and look forward to further discussion in future issues of the Journal.

The Rocks

It was hoped that this issue of A.P.I.J. could publish a news report of the N.S.W. Government's decision on this project, together with descriptions and an independent critique of the nine submitted schemes. The Government's announcement is now, however, not expected before Christmas.

Nevertheless, a highly respected and independent architect—planner, who has had no connection with any of the nine submitted schemes, has already submitted to the Editors a critique of the schemes, from the city planning and urban design points of view. It may be possible to publish this and other critiques in the January, 1963, issue.

Meanwhile, we keep the other half of our June promise to our readers, and present herein a detailed account of the Sydney Cove urban renewal proposals.

Leading Questions

Which Australian State has achieved the most sensible and smooth running political, legal, technical and administrative set-up for urban and regional planning?

Could pioneering New South Wales now learn from the innovations of other States which have introduced statutory planning since 1945?

To what extent does each State have unique problems and opportunities, requiring a unique system of planning legislation?

How closely, under current Australian conditions, should the planning and development of each metropolitan capital be directly controlled by each State Government? Is the control of metropolitan planning a matter for elected local political representatives, or should it be under the direction of an expert Commissioner, or Board of Commissioners?

How can the multitudinous and often disastrously separated responsibilities for Main Roads, Transport, Port Facilities, Housing, Major Parks, Water Supply, Sewerage, Land Use Zoning, Public Works and so on, be co-ordinated for the best development of our regional cities? How can this co-ordination be achieved in our country towns?

How do we fairly assess the Victorian system, with its Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, as compared with the looser N.S.W. system, with

its Cumberland County Council? Has Queensland or West Australia achieved a simpler and more effective system than either of the more populous States?

How can the individual States move towards the National Capital's system of complete integration of long-range urban and regional planning with the detailed carrying out of public works and services? Is it essential for our States and for our cities to adopt the American technique of the six year capital investment budget?

These are, indeed, the kinds of leading questions with which this Journal must increasingly be concerned in the months to come. They are especially topical at this time, for the New South Wales Government has undertaken to introduce major new planning legislation before the end of this year.

The few hints so far given of the Government's intentions lead us to expect sweeping changes in authority and lines of command across the State. In this situation, the Editors of the Journal will encourage the submission of papers which analyse and compare the political, legal, technical and administrative aspects of Australian statutory planning systems.

The Brisbane and Melbourne Divisions of the Institute have already offered to assist in the collation of special series of papers. The Editors intend to confer with these and other Division Committees in an effort to stimulate the submission of papers which deal realistically with the kind of leading questions sketched above.

It will probably prove very difficult to achieve any sort of truly national viewpoint on these questions. Very few individuals have enjoyed the breadth of interstate experience necessary for the making of worthwhile comparative analyses. The first job might perhaps be to publish individual descriptions and critiques of individual planning systems, State by State.

The Editors trust, however, that by thinking aloud on these matters, as in this Editorial, they will encourage a number of readers to put forward their own thoughts and to participate in the evolution of editorial policy.

The Seventh Australian Planning Congress

In spite of icy gale-force winds, rain that turned into sleet, and sleet into rain, the 1962 Seventh Australian Planning Congress was a great success.

At the concluding session of the Congress the 130 delegates warmly congratulated the combined Melbourne Division and its Hobart Branch Congress Committee; and in particular the Congress Chairman, Mr. Neil Abercrombie, and his charming wife, for being such wonderful hosts to the delegates and their wives.

Mr. Abercrombie in his closing remarks said that 'it was obvious that the Congress had not lost anything by not having a distinguished overseas guest speaker. This Congress has demonstrated that there are excellent speakers within our own numbers, and that by this Congress we as an Institute have come of age.'

Those fortunate to attend the Congress would agree that no previous Congress had produced such excellent integrated Addresses. The four speakers: Mr. Stuart Hart, Dr. I. Boileau, Mr. D. C. Ward, and Mr. D. A. L. Saunders, treated their own aspect of the theme 'Whither our Australian Cities?' in considerable depth and each paper stimulated the several discussion groups.

A highlight of the Congress was a Public Forum, on the Congress theme, held in the Hobart Town Hall on the Wednesday night. The four principal Congress speakers who formed the panel answered, in a brilliant and entertaining manner, questions submitted by delegates through the Quiz-Master, Mr. Neil Abercrombie.

The wintry Hobart conditions were tempered by the warm hospitality at the Congress and Civic Receptions, and at functions sponsored by the Hobart City Development Association and the Southern Metropolitan Master Planning Authority.

Several outside visits had to be cancelled due to the weather but one feature was a conducted tour of 'The Cat and Fiddle Arcade and Square' through the courtesy of Messrs. Charles and Geoff Davis. It is hoped to illustrate this extremely interesting commercial redevelopment project in central Hobart in a later issue of the Journal.

JOHN TOON

Sydney Cove —a Proposal for Urban Renewal

Sydney Cove is the original name for what is now more widely known as 'Circular Quay'. It is a small bay in Sydney Harbour, chosen by Captain Arthur Phillip in 1788 for the first permanent settlement on the continent. It has been the cradle of Sydney and of Australia. The tides of city development and re-development have rolled past it, and its foreshores are again ready for renewal.

On one arm of the Cove is a strip of big new office buildings leading to the Opera House site. On the other is the 'Rocks' site, the redevelopment of which is being organized. Until recently, however, no one was positively planning the land in the centre, the somewhat dilapidated area between the Ferry Wharves and Bridge Street.

THE SYDNEY COVE IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

In 1960, a number of civic-minded citizens noted this serious omission, and separately resolved to do something about it. In time, these individuals met up with one another and established a committee. Professor Denis Winston (F) had long been advocating proper overall planning and design for Sydney's historic 'gateway'. The Macquarie Club, a venerable club for women, owns a building looking out over Sydney Cove, and was anxious to encourage high standards of urban design in the area. Other organizations with new or proposed head offices in the vicinity

JOHN TOON, A.R.I.B.A., is a Lecturer in the Department of Town & Country Planning at the University of Sydney, a post he has held since his arrival from England two years ago. He had previously worked under Percy Johnson-Marshall in the Town Planning Division of the L.C.C.

were the A.M.P. Society, British Tobacco, Imperial Chemical Industries, and Lend Lease Corporation. Leaders of these organizations felt that the redevelopment of the Cove area would continue and that this redevelopment should be in accord with the highest standards of city planning and urban design. They therefore formed the 'Sydney Cove Improvements Committee' and in their own words they 'agreed to donate a total of £4,000 towards the cost of drawing up a suitable sketch plan and the making of a model to illustrate the plan'. Professor D. Winston accepted the responsibility for the investigations and the preparation of plans by suitable planners.

The objectives of the Committee are 'to ensure that Sydney Cove's rebuilding should conform to an overall plan devised by the most competent town planners and administered wisely by an appropriate authority'.

THE PLANNING TEAM

The survey, planning and design team under Professor Winston was comprised of students and lecturers of the Sydney University Department of Town Planning, Dr. Ivan Boileau (M), R. C. Bunker (M) and J. Toon, together with W. George Clarke and Donald Gazzard, Architects and Planners.

This team carried out its work and the resulting proposals were submitted by the Committee to the Mayor and Aldermen of the Sydney City Council on March 5th, 1962. Shortly before this formal presentation was made, the Minister for Local Government, on February 23rd, suspended the subject land from the then-existing zoning regulations, and put the land under Interim Development Control. He further instructed the City Council to study proposals for the area and to report to him on a future detailed development plan.

THE SUBMISSION

The Committee therefore 'respectfully request(ed) the Council of the City of Sydney to consider and favourably resolve upon the following recommendations:—

- '(1) That the redevelopment plan herewith submitted be accepted in principle as the interim development plan for the area;
- '(2) That the Government be asked to enact appropriate legislation to effect the harmonious realization of the redevelopment plan by the setting up of a Sydney Cove Redevelopment Agency with sufficient powers to effectively deal with the problems arising therefrom.'

The City Council welcomed the Committee's submission, and instructed its technical officers to examine it and to report back to the Council. This is how the matter now rests. No official report yet appears to have been prepared. In the meantime, Institute Members and A.P.I.J. subscribers will be interested in the following description of how the scheme was prepared and what it consists of.

THE PRECINCT AREA

The designers were asked to consider the overall aspects of development around Sydney Cove and to make proposals for the area as a whole. After inspection, it seemed the area suitable for review consisted of that precinct of the city North of Bridge Street and Grosvenor Street, bounded on the West by the Bradfield Highway, on the East by the Domain

and Botanic Gardens, and extending along the foreshores of Sydney Cove to the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House.

THE SURVEY

As a first step, an exhaustive survey was carried out by students of the Department of Town and Country Planning at the University of Sydney, covering the following items:

1. *Historical Survey*
 - (a) Brief History of Sydney Cove. (b) Past Projects and Schemes for improvement. (c) Age and condition of buildings. (d) Sites and buildings of historic or architectural interest.
2. *Land Use Survey*
 - (a) Land use floor by floor. (b) Floor Space Index. (c) Daytime population.
3. *Needs of the Maritime Services Board*
4. *Traffic Survey*
 - (a) Bus Services, Terminals and Storage Parking Areas. (b) Railway Services. (c) Ferry Services and Terminals. (d) Traffic and Pedestrian flows with peak-hour counts. (e) Car Parking (kerbside and off-street).
5. *Valuation Survey*
 - (a) Unimproved Capital Value. (b) Improved Capital Value. (c) U.C.V./I.C.V. ratios. (d) Principal Owners and Tenants.
6. *Public Utilities Survey*
 - (a) Water Supply. (b) Gas. (c) Electricity. (d) Telephones. (e) Sewerage and Storm Water Disposal.
7. *Civic Design Survey*
 - (a) Existing building groups. (b) Existing Streets and Spaces. (c) Waterside Treatment.
8. *Survey of Current Projects by Public and Private Agencies*

THE ANALYSIS

Analysis of these surveys showed that:

- (a) C.B.D. uses were expanding and intensifying in the area.
- (b) The area acted as an important transportation centre in the metropolitan context—particularly for metropolitan bus services which use the area as a terminal turning point.
- (c) The area is a natural precinct, untroubled by through traffic, although the existing street pattern is confused and inadequate for high density development.
- (d) Large sections are ripe for redevelopment.
- (e) Intense pedestrian flows to the Ferry Terminal and Railway Station conflict with bus movements along Alfred Street.
- (f) Access to the waterfront is limited and unattractive.
- (g) The railway station forms a strong visual barrier between the C.B.D. and the waters of Sydney Cove.
- (h) The Customs House, the Traffic Courts and the Premier's Department building are worthy of preservation.

- (i) Pedestrian areas, tourist and recreational facilities are shabby and unattractive.

Following the survey, planning and design criteria were established. The scheme had to:—

- (a) Rationalize bus movements, and provide an efficient system of bus turning, storage, loading and unloading.
- (b) Eliminate pedestrian/vehicle conflict across Alfred Street, and provide comfortable conditions for the huge daily pedestrian flows through the area.
- (c) Rationalize the street system and consolidate land into more economic shapes and sizes for redevelopment.
- (d) Allow for substantial increase in commercial floor space.
- (e) Open up waterfront along East Circular Quay to form a harbourfront promenade to Opera House.
- (f) Concentrate, rehabilitate and enhance the existing civic, tourist and recreational facilities in the area.

THE DESIGN

In essence, Sydney Cove is a place for all the people—a common or popular place. This is its great natural advantage. If the area became submerged by prestige office buildings, as is likely, then Sydney would lose one of its major attractions. It was therefore necessary to consider ways of balancing a predominant office use, with high ability to pay, with other institutions or places that are essential to maintain the character of the area. This was resolved by creating a series of clearly defined pedestrian spaces along the Quay front, South of the railway station, to counter-balance the predominant office use which encroaches over the whole area. A new E-W lateral road is proposed, linking Phillip Street with George Street, replacing Alfred Street and located immediately South of the Customs House. This has the multiple function of rationalizing the road system, rationalizing the land subdivision, eliminating the pedestrian-omnibus conflict along Alfred Street and freeing valuable space for pedestrian use. The three major bus routes were effectively reorganized within this framework.

The dominant North-South pedestrian flow filters through the new blocks and arcades to the South of the new road: a primary flow is channeled through historic Macquarie Place, along an arcade, bridging over the new road (by using levels to advantage) thence descending by escalator to the pedestrian spaces immediately adjacent to the central design motif or 'jewel'—a three storey hotel including bars, restaurants and a ballroom on the upper floor.

This key building emphasizes the articulation of the pedestrian place into three units—one, a shady grove of trees in front of the A.M.P. Building; two, a formal open square before the Customs House and three, a commercial square surrounded at ground level by arcades which develop in depth to a shopping bazaar on two levels. In this section, to the North of the new road, the two main pedestrian levels overlap, one at the level of the main pedestrian squares, and the other an upper level, which links the new complex South of the new road to Bridge Street, Macquarie

Place and George Street. This section is visualized as being intensively used and contains retail space, office suites, travel agencies and tourist facilities. The low three storey complex, fronting the commercial square, is surmounted by an eight storey building, part hotel, part offices, which continues the general height of the Customs House to define the main pedestrian area. These buildings are designed to accommodate advertisements to develop the 'Picadilly Circus' character of the commercial square, which in addition contains a free-standing advertising tower.

These spaces are the core of the design. Ultimately they will develop individual characters of their own—they are essentially a background against which all that is spontaneous and good can occur, although some may feel that they would suffer from proximity to the existing overhead road and railway.

The three tall office towers are designed to maintain the new city scale and approximate to the height of the new A.M.P. building. This enables a Floor Space Index of 12 to be established over the area as a whole, which is in accordance with most city developments.

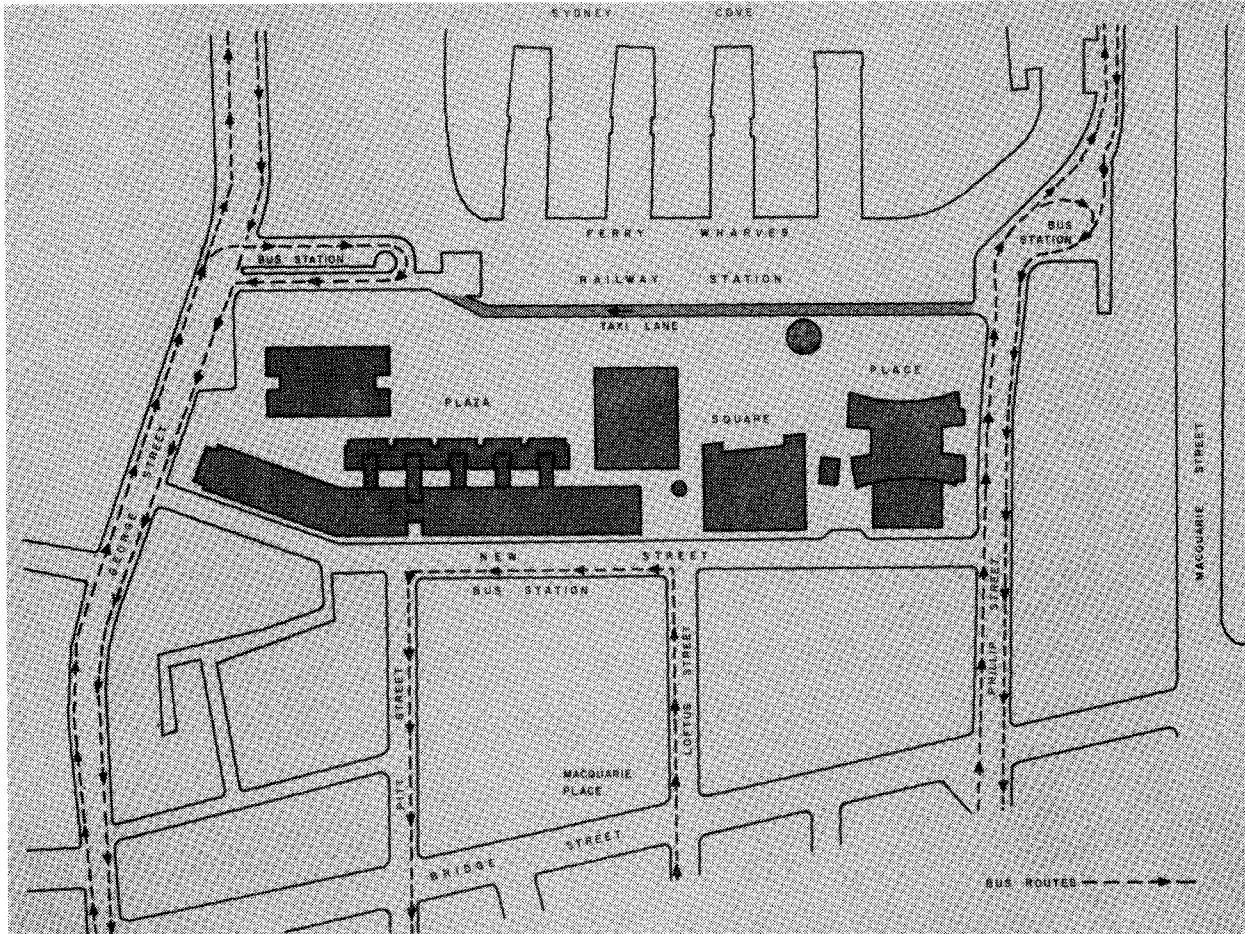
These three towers dominate the composition when seen from the Harbour approach and form part of a new cityscape, taking into account other major building proposals in the city.

To the East, the area around the old Traffic Courts is opened up to provide a high viewing platform at the Macquarie Street level, 35 feet above plaza level. This forms a visual and physical link between the

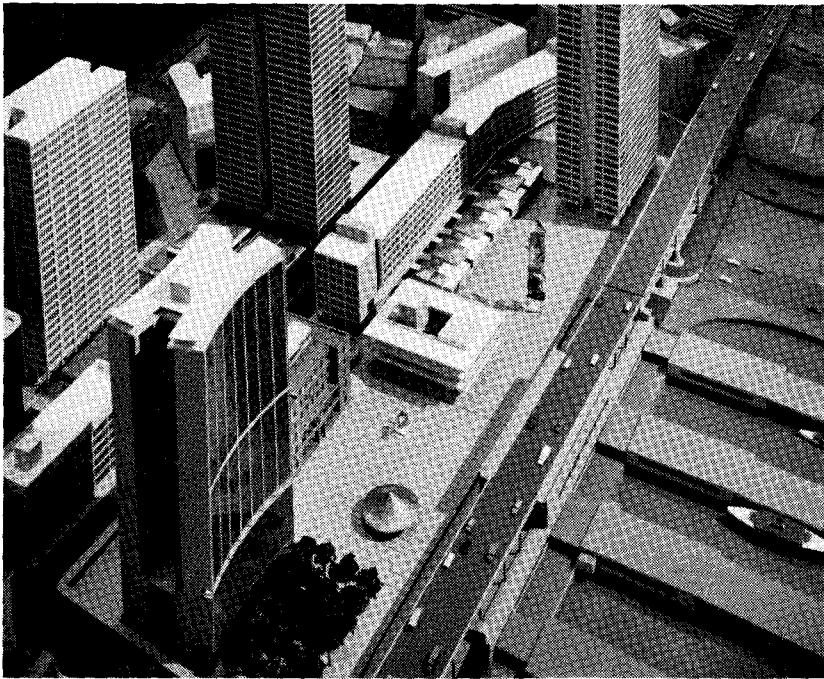
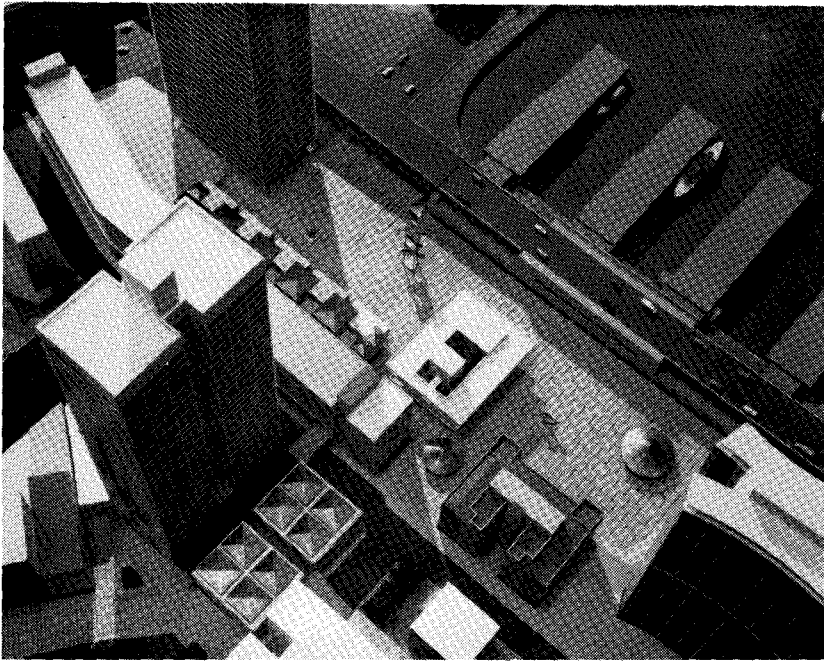
pedestrian squares and the Domain parklands. Further North, between Macquarie Street and East Circular Quay, the present saw-tooth multi-storied arrangement of curtain-walled office buildings alternating with low stone warehouses is reasonably attractive, but cannot last. The possibility of developing an even silhouette is not quite lost but it would be unfortunate if this narrow strip of land became a continuous curtain-wall destroying the visual relationship between Sydney Cove and the Domain. As it happens one narrow gap must remain at Moore Stairs and it would be an advantage to maintain and widen this gap to establish a firm visual link, which is also a way through to the parklands.

The foreshore treatment proposed is a tree lined promenade from the ferry wharves eastward to the Opera House and westwards to the ocean terminal. Car-parking for the Opera House is planned to accommodate 500 cars in two levels below ground between the Opera House Steps, the Tarpean Way and the new line of the Quayside. The Opera House forecourt is a large formally paved area with a substantial fountain. The M.S.B. building is set in a simple grassed area sloping down to the waterfront, achieved by a street closing. By these means, Sydney Cove is substantially opened up for public access although it would be an advantage to maintain an open shipping berth on the east side of the Cove for special visiting vessels which are open to public inspection.

The area west of George Street and south of Cahill



SYDNEY COVE PROJECT—PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK



*Photography David Moore.
Model by Finecraft.*

Expressway contains a number of substantial buildings. The only large vacant or ripe area available has been allocated to a major parking station housing up to 4,000 cars, with direct access from Bradfield Highway over York Street and possible egress to the Cahill Expressway. This is visualized as one of several major city fringe parking stations and would serve to reduce the parking load on inner city parking garages thereby reducing traffic on inner city streets.

IMPLEMENTATION

The realization of these proposals places a heavy responsibility on the city authorities. The new lateral road, which is essential to the scheme, has the advantage of sorting out the complex road and land subdivision pattern, but it costs money. To retain Alfred Street and the existing status quo does nothing to

rationalize land subdivision or to diminish the pedestrian/vehicle conflict. On balance, the authorities would gain by investing in the new road and forcing a reorganization of land subdivision. By this means, not only good planning can result, but also a more intense development of the land, which would yield higher rateable values. The value of land in this area is at present amongst the lowest in the inner city and the City Council, by resumption, reorganization and resale could reap considerable capital gains. The alternative to active Council participation is through a form of 'land bank' in which titles are rested whilst the reorganization takes place. In this way present landowners are assured of an equivalent area or interest. The net gain of road closures over area of new road could be vested in the City Council. Each of these alternatives illustrates that the City Council could profitably improve planning and design in the City if only it were capable of acting decisively and with competence.

LAND REDISTRIBUTION

The Committee envisages 'the setting up of a Land Exchange for the purpose of facilitating the acquisition by sale, exchange or other consideration of adjoining land "parcels" which would enable larger sites to be created by merging existing boundaries'.

Present owners, including government bodies, could therefore voluntarily exchange their present titles for land elsewhere in the area which would be suitable for their future requirements; alternatively, they could elect to exchange their equity for similar valued equity in the building or buildings to be erected partially on their holdings. (In this respect the existence of strata titles would be of great assistance.) But in the event of a deadlock or refusal by an owner to negotiate equitably the Land Exchange authority should have overall power to resume the land in question so as to complete the redistribution plan.

This system would reduce compulsory acquisition to a minimum but would enable the type of development which is desired to take place with fair compensation to present owners where applicable.

There are important precedents for the 'Land Exchange' envisaged. The cities of Rotterdam and Hamburg each instituted this system of Land Exchange to implement its post-war rebuilding program after the virtual destruction of the centre of the city during World War II. A large portion of the land in the area was negotiated voluntarily by individual owners of sites under the auspices of the Land Exchange authority. Of the remaining area, much was owned by public authorities and was available for merging with adjoining sites. Only a small proportion of the area was acquired compulsorily.