



PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 190

20 February 1974

**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. WHITLAM,
THE PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, MR. TONKIN, AND
THE LORD MAYOR OF PERTH, MR. LEE-STEERE**

New planning proposals for part of the central area of Perth were announced today by the Prime Minister Mr. Whitlam, the Premier of Western Australia, Mr. Tonkin and the Lord Mayor of Perth, Mr. Lee-Steere.

The imaginative proposals envisage extensive changes to the appearance and character of the city.

They involve:-

- . re-planning and widening of Forrest Place;
- . a new Administrative Centre in Forrest Place for the Australian Post Office;
- . re-development and landscaping of the central railway area;
- . integration of the Cultural Centre north of the railway line with the central railway area.

The proposals regarding Forrest Place are the result of agreement between the Australian and State Governments and representatives of the Perth City Council. The other two proposals do not involve the Australian Government.

All four proposals have been incorporated in an overall plan which has been submitted to Cabinet by the Perth Central Area Design Co-ordinating Committee after receiving an interim report from its consultant, Professor Gordon Stephenson.

The proposals were considered by State Cabinet at its meeting on Tuesday.

The new concept for Forrest Place is ^{described} in the following joint statement.

A new plaza will be created in Forrest Place, Perth. In addition, the Australian Post Office proposes to construct a new Administrative Centre adjacent to the existing Perth G.P.O. The two developments will be made possible by an exchange of land between the Australian Government and the Perth City Council.

The Prime Minister promised the creation of the new Forrest Place Plaza at an election meeting in Forrest Place shortly before the 1972 Federal elections.

The Western Australian Government has actively supported the proposal in negotiations over the transfer of land. The Australian Government will transfer to the City Council the land on which Padbury Building now stands and the building will be demolished.

Forrest Place will be widened and public space will be increased significantly. This will transform Forrest Place into a public pedestrian plaza enclosed at the northern end by the proposed Post Office Administrative Centre.

The new building will protect the plaza from winds while not preventing a desirable amount of air circulation and sun penetration.

The Administrative Centre will be designed to enable vistas from within the plaza at ground and first floor level to the Perth Cultural Centre.

The old Central Hotel structure will be demolished as well as the Padbury Building and the new Administrative Centre will be erected on part of these sites and part of the northern section of Forrest Place.

The Administrative Centre will enable a centralisation of many now scattered elements of Perth's postal and telephone services. It will be sited across the northern end of Forrest Place with two extra floors at the western end. This will enable it to achieve harmony with the existing G.P.O. building which will remain.

Subject to the approval of the Australian Parliament, the Administrative Centre could be operational early in 1979. State and Civic authorities propose an elevated pedestrian way linking Hay Street and the Cultural Centre.

This will traverse the eastern side of the plaza, pass through the new Administrative Centre and cross Wellington Street.

The re-development of the Forrest Place area follows a feasibility study carried out by a local firm of architects and town planning consultants. The study commissioned by the Australian Department of Housing and Construction was carried out in conjunction with State and City planning authorities.

We believe that the re-development will materially enhance the environment of Forrest Place and will complement conceptual plans of the State Government and the Perth City Council for the development of the "heart of Perth".

The Administrative Centre will also provide services of benefit to the community in Perth.

The Premier, Mr. Tonkin said that two models and plans showing the proposals would go on public exhibition in the R. and I. Bank, Barrack Street, Perth, on Thursday morning.

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