

# COLOUR

## In Karangahape Road a variety of colour has been used to decorate buildings externally, contributing much to the vibrant streetscape.

Frontage colour contributes significantly to streetscape character and is prominent when viewed from footpath level, especially where clear verandahs are used.

Many Karangahape Road frontages are in fairly subdued pastel colours while some display a greater use of strong contrasting colours. A frontage may be unified through the use of subdued colours or be given a sense of individuality by emphasizing architectural features in contrasting colour.

Colour used on frontages should be considered as a whole, integrating under-verandah shop fronts with the frontage above. Much of the Karangahape Road street-level character derives from brightly coloured signs and shop displays and it is appreciated that individual shopkeepers and businesses use colour and detail to attract custom.

Originally, many plastered frontages in Karangahape Road were unpainted, but a surface of this type does not weather well in Auckland's humid climate, becoming a dull grey over the years.

Frontages were often painted to refresh buildings and improve their appearance, adding considerably to their "street appeal". In the early 1980's a joint City Council/Karangahape Road Businessmens Association programme stimulated the painting of frontages to improve the retail image of the street and complement Council's environmental street improvements undertaken at that time.



**Plaster panels and detailing enlivens this brick frontage**



**A plaster frontage with brick trim around window openings, in spandrel panels and at parapet level**

Ornate frontages of one material generally suite a scheme of several matching or moderately contrasting shades to enhance the detail of the building and highlight the decoration.

In the Victorian and Edwardian period building colour was limited by the restricted range of colours then available. These were mainly muted "earl colours" such as rich brown, red brown, purple brown and dark green and a few lighter shades including pale grey, pale green, light stone and light brown. A rich and lively effect was produced by using these colours in varying combinations.

Bright colours using modern paint pigments should be used with restraint as they lack the subtlety evident in the original colours, especially if used in large areas of frontage.



A polychrome colour scheme is in keeping with the spirit of Victorian and Edwardian architecture, which was often more colourful than is generally recognized. This period produced frontages of great interest and colour variety through the juxtaposition of the basic wall surface with plaster decoration and varying window designs.



*The Naval and Family Hotel (corner Karangahape Road and Pitt Street) was originally an unpainted plastered frontage which relied on rich textural decoration for interest. Repainted in recent times, its colour scheme respects the spirit of its Victorian frontage. Walls are painted a grey base colour, and ornamental cornices and parapet details are contrasted in white to emphasize these features. Red window frames provide a small splash of accent colour*



**Pitt Street Building, August 1988**



**Pitt Street Building, December 1904**

A monochrome colour scheme conceals the richness of detail and structural image and gives window openings an aggressive prominence not originally evident. The original character has been recaptured by sensitive repainting.



# DESIGN GUIDELINES:

## Colour

Restrained colour palettes and sensitivity towards relief elements fully express the spirit of the frontage and respect the colour sense of the street

Strong modern colours are uncomfortable even when disposed with some respect for the structural message of the building

Overpowering modern pigment hues and casual colour application to elements of the structure tends to result in a chaotic image

Unmodulated monochromatic colour conceals detail and alter emphasis of the original balance of forms



# VERANDAHS

**The function of the verandah is protection from wind, rain and summer sun. It was originally designed as an integral part of the building and was used to achieve a visual transition from frontage to street.**

Auckland has a moderately windy and capriciously wet climate. Over-footpath canopies (from building frontage to kerbside) are a valued city asset acknowledged in the District Plan. Relaxation of this requirement is only granted in exceptional circumstances.

Although the verandah was built primarily as a transitional shelter space, it also forms an enclosed space of human scale at street level; a secure haven for people separated from the traffic in the roadway.



In the past verandahs were supported on posts (often decorated) at the kerbside, creating an arcade-like space - perforated screen between the road and the footpath



The canopy over the footpath of the motorway overbridge in Karangahape Road recaptures the arcade-like quality of the verandahs of the past



Cantilevered curved verandahs (or high flat verandahs with “shelter skirts” dropping from the outer edge) maintain a sense of containment



Modern verandahs hung from the building by tension stays create an open-sided space





**Curved clear verandahs maintain a sense of containment while letting in the light and exposing the visual continuity and coherence of the frontage.**



When the verandah was designed as an integral part of the building, the fascia was often deep and modulated, echoing the forms of the parapet, emphasising a detail around a window or articulating an entrance. Along and across the street one could easily distinguish certain buildings because of their individuality, which extended to the kerbside in the form of the verandah. The streetscape enjoyed a richness and lateral depth which was later lost when modern verandahs with their featureless narrow and undecorated fascia boards replaced the older forms; original verandahs reinforce the form of the parapet.



Pitt Street Buildings, December 9, 1904



Karangahape Road, October 15, 1908

