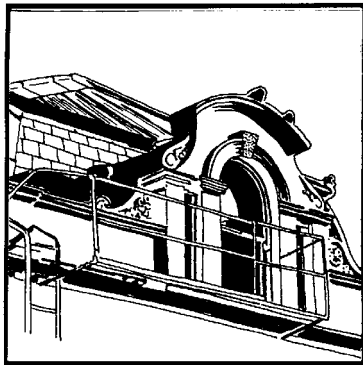
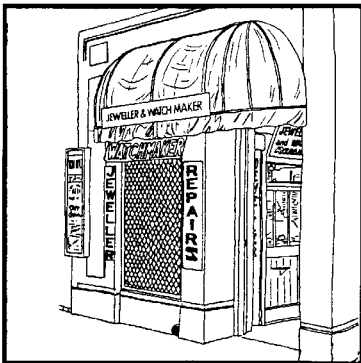
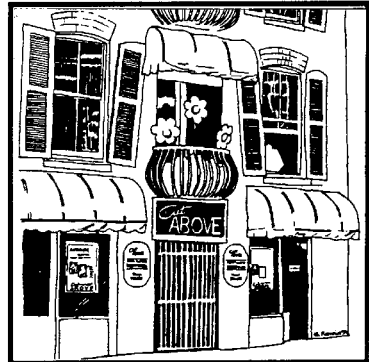
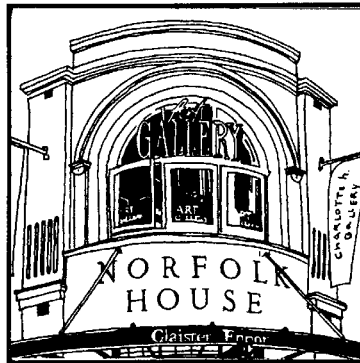
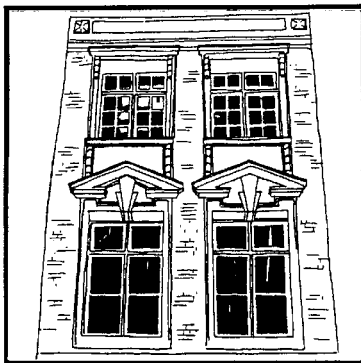


ANNEXURE 4



HIGH STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES





See key on page 3
of this section



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Plan modification annotations - key



Indicates where content is affected by proposed plan modification x.
Refer to plan modification folder or website for details.



Indicates where the content is part of plan modification x, which is
subject to appeal.

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Auckland has adopted a planning approach for the Central Area based on the identification of planning precincts or quarters.

Where these are identified as special character areas respected for their unique physical or heritage qualities, the Council has decided to develop design guidelines as part of the special planning mechanisms which apply to these localities.

In the case of the High Street/Lorne Street area the Council perceived a need to adopt particular planning mechanisms and design guidelines to aid new development in fostering the unique qualities of this part of the city.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for building owners, developers and design professionals to influence the design of new buildings and the refurbishment of the old. Recognising items of heritage value, the guidelines do not seek to conserve the area exactly as it is but rather to guide and co-ordinate development in a manner which enhances existing character. The guidelines do not prescribe specific solutions to individual design problems.

Preparation of the guidelines involved a user survey and a detailed analysis of the various aspects of character. A summary of character elements and objectives followed and led to the formulation of guidelines.

Public participation in the preparation of this document has taken three forms: input from the Civic Trust Auckland's Urban Design Group; input from business people and building owners of the precinct (initially through a public meeting organised by the Civic Trust Auckland); and input from users of the precinct via a User Study.

In the interests of co-operative planning, Auckland City Council officers have liaised closely with the Civic Trust Auckland as they progressed the study of the High Street/Lorne Street precinct. Background research prepared by senior planning students Dawn Mackay and Julie Turner, who were employed by the Trust over the summer vacation, has been invaluable.

Initially there appeared to be no formal Business Association representing the area. As a result of the public meeting organised by the Civic Trust Auckland, an informal group of retailers and business people of the precinct has now been formed, and liaison with them is ongoing.

The user study was carried out in March 1991 by consultants Karen McMillan and Heather Worth of the Department of Sociology, University of Auckland. It was conducted as part of a joint exercise between Auckland City Council and the Civic Trust Auckland, to co-ordinate inputs from the community, the business sector and design professionals in order to guide future planning and revitalisation of the High Street/Lorne Street area, while preserving its special character and heritage features.

The general goals of the user study were :

- to evaluate usage of the High Street/Lorne Street area.
- to evaluate the user perceptions of present strengths and shortcomings of the High Street/Lorne Street area.

In March 1991, 250 pedestrians in the High Street/Lorne Street area were surveyed. The interviewing was carried out between 10am and 3pm on weekdays and Saturday, although some attempt was made to survey in the evening.

There was an excellent response to the questionnaire.



The researchers concluded of the study:

"...The area is used regularly by people familiar with it and who judge the intimate atmosphere of the area to be special. It is seen primarily as a 'people' place. Seating, greenery and pedestrian considerations are highly valued and those who use the area generally would like to see more of these features.

Users are very satisfied with the range and quality of shops and happy with the physical aspects of sun and shade.

Traffic and parking are the prime areas of dissatisfaction. More than half of those who feel that there is a pedestrian vehicle conflict offer partial or total closure to traffic as a solution.

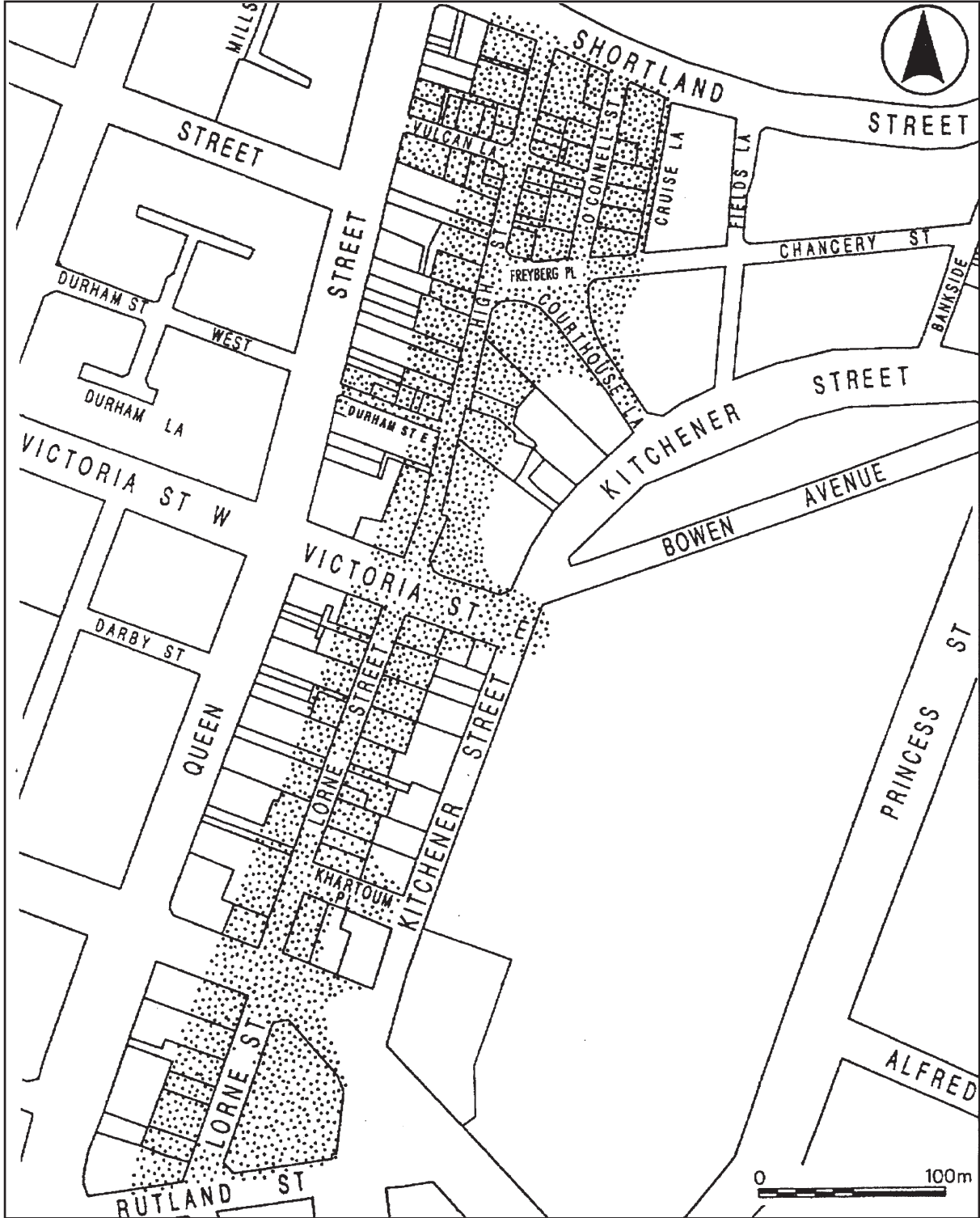
This area is most heavily used at midday by Aucklanders who come to shop and eat. These patrons are professionals, students and local workers and tend to be in the 25-44 age group..."

(Karen McMillan and Heather Worth - User Study, High Street/Lorne Street Special Character Area Study, May 1991.)



THE STUDY AREA

The study area covers the Lorne Street/High Street route from Rutland Street to Shortland Street, and includes Khartoum Place, Durham St East, Freyberg Place, Vulcan Lane and O'Connell Street.

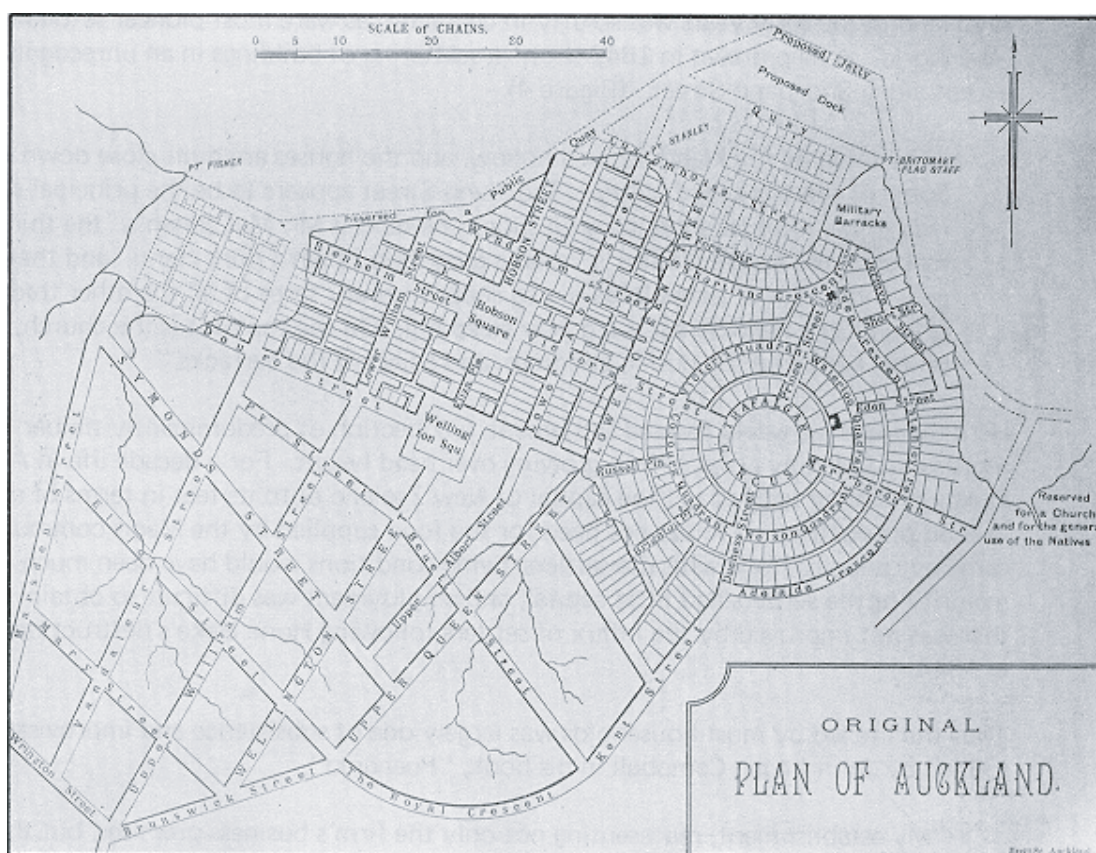


HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Much of Central Auckland's present street and land subdivision pattern is due to Felton Mathew's 1841 plan, complicated by the mishandling of Crown land sales, and the speculation that followed.

The plan itself gave central Auckland a fairly serviceable main street system which generally but not always followed the ridges and valley floors. It also generated a service alley system which, although subjected to severe criticism and to widening over the years, nevertheless is an asset that accords with the principle of rear service access.

As can be seen from Felton Mathew's Plan, the High Street area remains largely intact as planned, and the embryonic Lorne Street can be identified as the curved service lane behind Lower Queen Street, between Victoria Street and Russell Place.



With the early centre of Government established on the Princes Street ridge, and the landing at Fore Street (later Fort), it was natural that the early centre of commerce became established on the track joining these areas. Shortland Street, as it became, was until the 1858 fire a dense area of small wooden buildings, both housing and commercial. The subsequent rapid growth of Queen Street left the early subdivision pattern of High/Shortland/Fort Streets area virtually intact for many decades (see Appendix 1 for further details of this period).



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The same area today bears a significant imprint of the earlier period in its narrow Streets, generally small units of property, and frequent building survivors from earlier periods. Always a transitional area between Queen Street and the Albert Park Hill, its commercial fortunes followed in the wake of the main street. Strictly utilitarian and "back door" until the mid-twenties, the area later attracted interest as potential recreation space for the clutter of Queen Street. Spaces such as Freyberg Place were established in concept by the late 1930's, and formed by the late 1940's. Various widenings took place to the earlier narrow and congested lanes.

In more recent years, various areas of public and private land have become valued for their open space or landscape qualities.

The character and scale of the precinct have attracted attention as an area of very different urban qualities to most of the surrounding area - it persists almost as a "village" within the city.

Physical improvements such as Vulcan Lane's closure, Freyberg Place pleasure area, and the pedestrianisation of Khartoum Place have enhanced the amenity level for pedestrian users.

Various town planning provisions have attempted to recognise and protect qualities of the area. The building facade control has been intended to ensure that new buildings retain the sense of scale and alignment of the streets. Although often referred to in the past as a "special character control", the control has been in reality a height-in-relation-to-street-boundary requirement.

Verandah requirements apply to most streets in the precinct, and sunlight protection performance standards ensure that during peak-use hours, sunlight is preserved to Freyberg Place.

A limited number of buildings are scheduled by either (or both) Council and the Historic Places Trust for various levels of protection. The planted backdrop to the Freyberg Place pleasure area was declared a "Special Amenity Yard" to protect its valuable qualities as an element of landscape, and the setting for Freyberg Place itself.



CHARACTER

The concept of "special character" of cities (or parts of them) is a complex mix of objective and subjective issues. Some of these involve personal opinion, but there is a consensus that "character" is a basic and quantifiable urban resource.

There is increasing public awareness and concern at perceived threats to this character. The intensity of this debate is perhaps stimulated by an awareness of surviving urban character which might well be lost if no recognition of that character takes place. "Conservation" of a special city character must not be confused with "fossilisation" of a city form at any one point in its development - whilst there may well be some items of specific heritage value which deserve attention, character is a dynamic, multi-faceted, evolving quality. It is important to acknowledge, preserve, stimulate, and extend the richness of this character rather than every literal fragment of it.

This process requires a broad, multi-disciplinary overview of city character.

Aspects which may contribute to the special character or amenity value of a particular area include:

- (a) Building forms - scale, rhythms, height, architectural style, roof form and pitch, facade detailing, materials, age or historic character - architectural, spatial and streetscape character.
- (b) Topography - slope, landforms, geological features, views.
- (c) Natural features - trees, bush, landscaping, relationship to water.
- (d) Microclimate - sun, shadow, wind, shelter
- (e) Use - type or intensity of human activity - functional character.

Historically Lorne Street and High Street evolved primarily as service lanes, particularly for Queen Street properties, and much of their character now derives from their narrow, intimate scale and variety of shops which exist in spite of this constraint.

Proximity to civic amenities such as the Art Gallery, Public Library, High Court, and University and to the central business district, which combined with old buildings and definite streetscape qualities, has produced an area of "distinctive special character" in the High Street/Lorne Street area.



SPATIAL AND TOPOGRAPHIC CHARACTER

Part of the special character of the High St/Lorne St area is its location, draped along the steep slope between the Queen Street Valley and the Princes Street Ridge. Whereas the valley is mostly of gentle slope, this section was modified by ash and scoria eruptions from one of the area's first volcanic vents which appeared near the Victoria/Kitchener Street intersection about 60,000 years ago. The resulting deposits modified and steepened topography in the locality.

In contrast, the more gradual longitudinal slope down the length of High Street down towards the sea is readily apparent, as is the gradual slope of Lorne Street up towards Khartoum Place and then gently down to meet Wellesley and Rutland Streets.

The much steeper cross slope is only apparent at intervals at the street junctions, where there are views up to Albert Park (from Courthouse Lane, Victoria Street, Khartoum Place, Wellesley Street and Rutland Street) or down to Queen Street (from Vulcan Lane, Durham Street East, Victoria Street and Wellesley Street). Sometimes this steep cross slope is implied by the interior circulation of buildings (the escalators leading downward to Canterbury Arcade, 246 and the new Countrywide development).

The Southern side of Freyberg Place is an important and very visible landform and landscape component. Located on the fringe of the Victoria Street volcanic eruption site, this mound provides an elevated site above the surrounding streets, and its well-vegetated surface is prominent in the view from High Street. However, the protection of this vital feature of the landscape of High Street and Freyberg Place has been assured by the provision of an amenity yard in the Central Area Section of the Transitional District Plan. The Amenity Yard includes the stair from High Street.



..... this park provides an elevated site above the surrounding streets



The Amenity Yard also makes provision for an additional pleasure area constructed at the foot of the mound at the bottom of Courthouse Lane, with sunlight protected to this location in late morning. Construction of this pleasure is intended to include partial reinstatement of previously excavated slopes.

The area has a distinctive spatial quality, deriving partly from topographic qualities, but mostly from the spatial qualities of buildings and streets.

The Lorne Street/High Street area contains small intimate streets of narrow width, lined with buildings of greatly varying architectural character, bulk and heights. The tight channel of the street is punctuated at regular intervals by open spaces or street junctions, which provide visual relief and modulate the streets spatial qualities. This regularly interrupted lineal consistency, and the oasis-like nature of the spaces providing the interruptions, is one of the key characteristics of the area. Of particular note is the enticing 'glimpse' views from a distance of the green oases of Khartoum Place and Freyberg Place, where the tree growth leans into the street channel.



... Most streets in the area end with a visual "wall" of buildings or landform visible

Most streets in the area end with a visual 'wall' of buildings or of landform visible. This reinforces the strong sense of urban containment present in the area.

Street widths vary, and this variation influences our perceptions.

Lorne Street South is wider than Lorne Street North which in turn is wider than High Street. Typically the streets have a building height to street width ratio of 1:1.3 (Lorne Street North) 1:0.83 (High Street), creating a comfortable space with a high degree of enclosure periodically contrasted by the public spaces.

Building height around the Lorne/High Street area and environs is generally unrestricted. Specific height limitations are imposed by the sunlight controls over parts of the area (which ensure sun penetration to Freyberg Place and Albert Park). The development controls include a frontage height and setback control adjoining roads and public open space over parts of the area. The scale of development is also controlled through reduced floor area ratios applied to different parts of the area to maintain the character and sense of scale.



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In spite of the confined streets and pavements, a more expansive feeling is achieved by a successful blurring of boundaries between buildings and streets. In some cases streetside uses extend onto the street (e.g. as sidewalk cafes), whilst in others open frontages to restaurants, courtyard cafes, or cafes with liberal skylights all help to visually extend the streetspace beyond the frontages. The result is an intricate psychological easing of the actual confined nature of public streets in the area.

However, this effect should not be taken as suggesting footpath widening on any extensive basis, since this would actively erode the sense of containment which results from the general alignment of frontages. This containment is maintained where elements of frontage are present even if they are largely perforated or opened to the street.

The relatively high permeability which exists (via through-site-links) also helps to relieve the spatial tightness in the area.

SPATIAL AND TOPOGRAPHIC OBJECTIVES

- Maintain the sense of awareness of and contact with the underlying landform and topography of the precinct;
- Reinstatement of landform features where possible;
- Maintain glimpse views of public open space;
- Maintain clarity of unobstructed streetspace above road level;
- Preserve and enhance qualities of the Freyberg Place Special Amenity Yard;
- Maintain sunlight performance controls to public open space;
- Stimulate street frontage continuity.

