

DESIGN GUIDELINES:

CORNERS

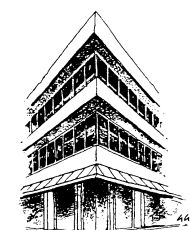
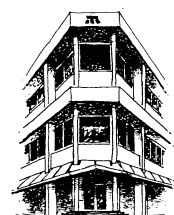
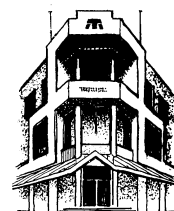
Vertical elaboration in parapet and/or corner tower acknowledges and celebrates the corner with all levels of the building, and gives the adjacent street space an appropriate “sense of place”

Developed canopy over corner entrance and more powerful frontage modulation evoke a particular focus on the corner

Elaboration of special corner detail modulates the building in favour of the “special” quality of a corner site

Corner entrance and some adjustment of the corner angle reduce the bluntness of a plain corner and give minimal expression towards the adjacent space.

Folded frontage fails to respond to the potential of a corner site, and makes no contribution to the “special” spatial quality of a major intersection.

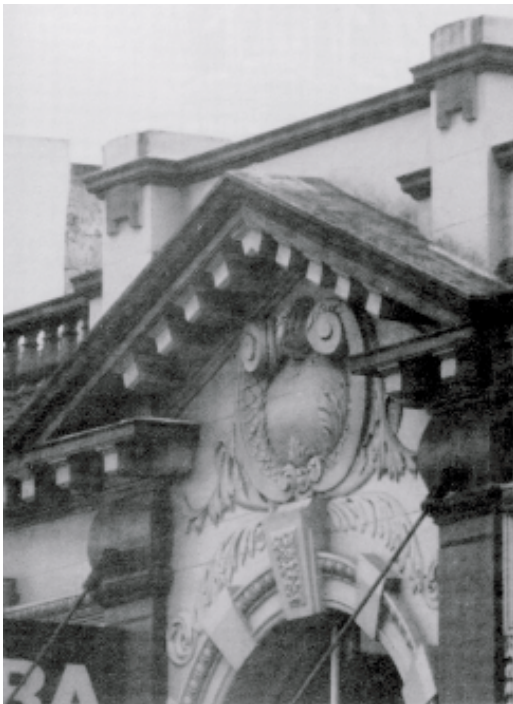


MATERIALS

Although there are still a few of the old buildings remaining which have frontages of timber detailed to imitate masonry, solid plasterwork is common to the frontages of nearly all Karangahape Road buildings

Solid plasterwork was a highly developed technique to create detailed decorative forms in cement or lime plaster. This was applied over brick or other solid substrates which “roughed out” the same forms to provide a base and key for the plaster. The plaster was easily worked into a variety of architectural styles and was often used to suggest stone construction.

Many buildings (such as Rendells), also utilised elements of exposed brick masonry in counterpoint to their solid plasterwork. Most of these have since been painted over, reducing the variety and interest of the frontages and often fundamentally changing the relationship between wall and windows (see following section on “Colour”).



Solid plasterwork illustrating a variety of structural and ornamental motifs



Exposed brick masonry as a counterpoint to solid plasterwork

The appropriateness of modern materials in Karangahape Road will depend very much on their position and function, the way they are used and detailed. Generally building materials suitable for Karangahape Road frontages should achieve a similar visual effect to the following.

- Solid plasterwork over an adequate substrate (including, for instance, reinforced concrete).
- Structural brick masonry.
- Stone cladding, if detailed to imply structural stonework rather than veneer.
- Plain sheet materials used as inset panels. Glass (and particularly reflective glass) should not be considered as a dominant frontage material, but with care and restraint can act as a counterpoint to more solid-looking frontage elements.



DECORATION

In the past, decoration was regarded as an integral part of the design; as an expression of the building's individuality, it personalised and humanised architecture

Decoration provided the “make-up” over and above the unadorned anatomy of the frontage. Although complex in total, it was frequently applied as relatively small-scale elements and details which:

- give visual cues as to the function and importance of a building - civic and private buildings were often richly decorated, with the style, amount of decoration and materials involved reinforcing the use and significance of the building;
- provide a human scale to buildings, unlike plain frontages and simple unadorned shapes which provide few visual cues as to scale;
- enliven the frontage and enrich the streetscape by providing changing patterns of shadow, according to season and time of day - shadows from decorative elements such as window openings, cornices and pilasters projecting from the building face create a high degree of modelling;
- provide visual delight, especially on those parts of the building that are seen and appreciated by pedestrians;
- enhance a favourable building location or attract attention - buildings on corner sites are often more elaborately decorated and may use towers or ornamental frontages to emphasise their corner position, landmark quality and sense of place.





The Naval and Family Hotel Circa 1880



Richly decorated frontages extend along Karangahape Road and Pitt Street, embellishing the corner

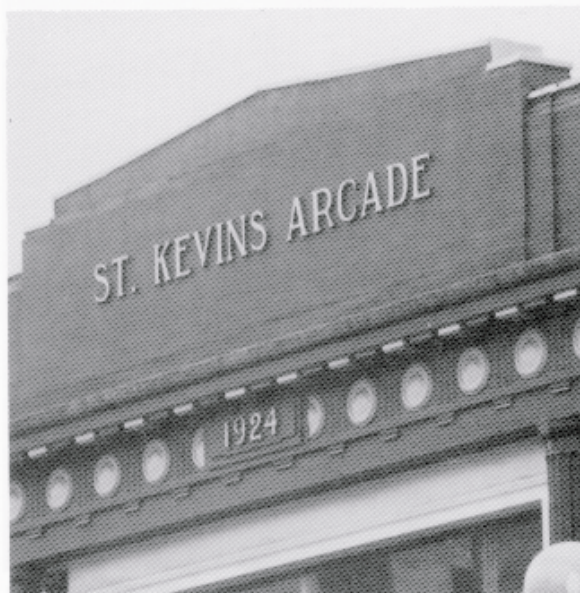
Decoration in the Victorian/Edwardian Period

Decoration reached a peak in the late Victorian era, covering surfaces with profuse ornamentation. A range of styles borrowed freely from previous eras were applied to building frontages in accordance with accepted conventions which stressed order and respectability.

Edwardian decoration tended to be less inhibited and more flamboyant; styles and motifs were used in an eclectic and often whimsical manner.

Buildings from these eras addressed themselves to the street through the use of decoration. The street elevation was of primary importance and therefore the most decorated face of the building. Side and rear elevations were relatively plain, especially if they faced into a service lane or minor street.



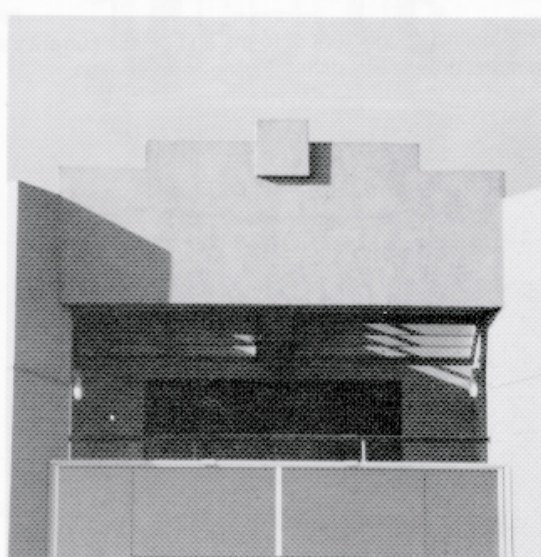
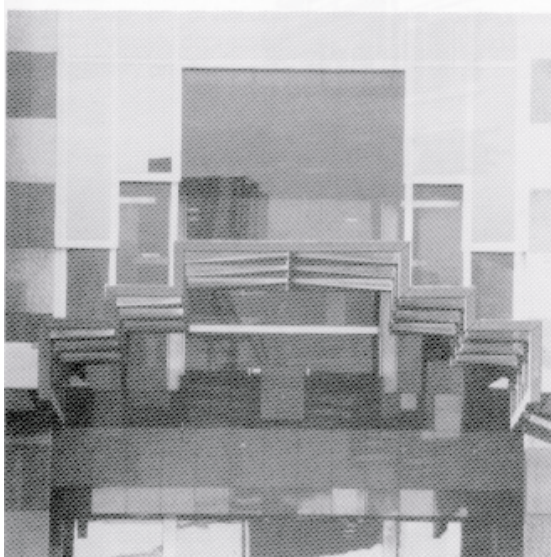


St Kevins Arcade 1924 Simple uncluttered lines and the use of classical motifs including columns, friezes, cornices and pediments were common in buildings of the early interwar period.

Early Interwar Period

After the First World War building form and decoration became simpler as the reaction against the use of decoration in Victorian and Edwardian times developed. Classical motifs were used with restraint to decorate building frontages.





Liverpool House 1988 Marble cladding used in a decorative manner on the lower floors of this building emphasises the corner entrance and enriches the streetscape.

Contemporary Buildings

The “modern movement” in architecture rejected applied decoration, believing it was superfluous and unnecessary. Decoration fell into disuse, with contemporary buildings relying amongst other devices on the juxtaposition of materials, fenestration patterns, and the external expression of structure for ornamentation.

By the 1980’s however, the post-modern movement recognised the value of these qualities, returning to the conscious use of reinterpreted classical motifs and decoration. This philosophy has generally persisted into the late ‘90’s, even where a freer approach to design elements has evolved.



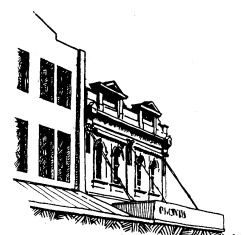
DESIGN GUIDELINES:

Decoration (1)

Restrained use of decoration derived from (rather than copying) existing motifs firmly establishes the compatibility of buildings and provides interest and a human scale to the frontage. Restoration of lost detail has the same effect

Some acknowledgment of forms and details current in the street greatly assists the feeling of integration

Over-simple new frontage appears bland and uncompromising if adjacent to a richly detailed old building



INCREASINGLY SYMPATHETIC

Generally inappropriate

INCREASINGLY UNSYMPATHETIC



DESIGN GUIDELINES:

Decoration (2)

Consistent approach to decorative use of colour, materials and building elements, integrates and emphasises a human-scale “face” to the building

Development of textural, material, and building element detail visually depresses apparent bulk and adds interest, especially on prominent sites

Formally interesting new building without finer detail lacks human scale and “close-up” interest

