

Off-Street parking, (both public and private) is well catered for in the study area, with the Wilson 'Pay and Park' carpark on the corner of Chancery Street and Courthouse Lane on the NZI site; casual parking for a fee on the former District Court site off Courthouse Lane; and the Auckland City Council public carpark on the corner of Victoria Street East and High Street.

In the Lorne Street area off-street parking for the public is provided by the Wilson carpark building accessed off Kitchener Street just north of Khartoum Place with easy pedestrian access to Lorne Street via escalators. Some private off-street parking is located off Lorne Street on the Telecom Site, and also on the Countrywide site.

Although the removal of all traffic from streets in the vicinity is an often expressed goal, great care is needed in analysis of the situation.

High Street in its current form provides access to the area immediately east of Queen Street and to the properties along High Street itself. Due to the limitations on servicing from Queen Street and prohibition of parking access from Queen Street it services properties along the east of Queen Street between Shortland Street and Victoria Street East. At this time there are no proposals to alter this.

In addition to servicing, High Street provides direct access to off-street parking in buildings fronting the street. The future re-development of buildings in the area could see a substantial increase in such off-street parking, but a reduction in on-street servicing needs.



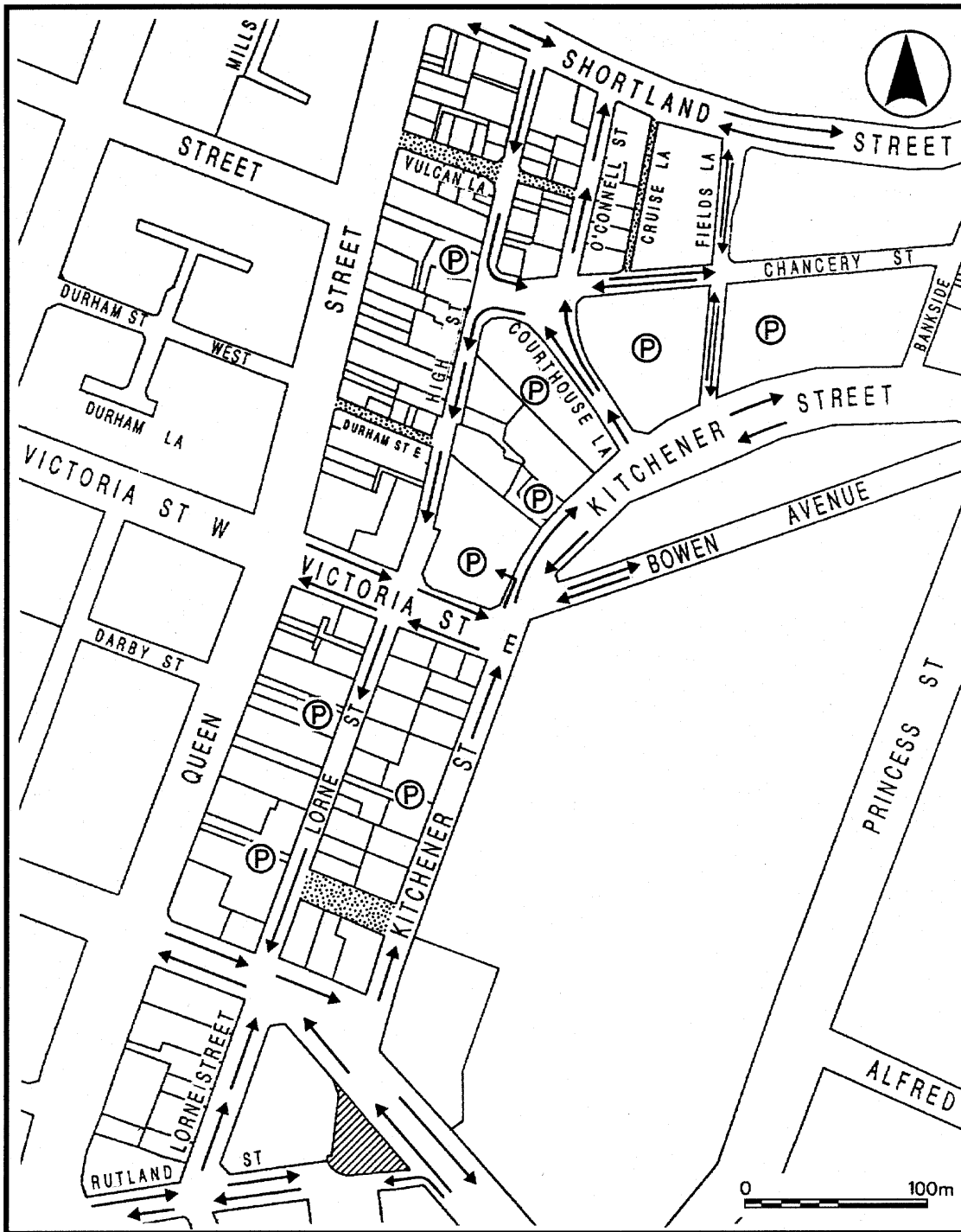
**...High Street provides direct access to off-street parking in buildings fronting the street ...**

The advantages of short-stay on-street carparking to businesses in the area are in reality quite small in terms of customer access. Few people would expect to be able to find a space on High Street and unless strict enforcement is maintained, the average length of stay quickly rises, considerably reducing their benefits.

However, as detailed above, there is ample visitor carparking within a reasonable walking distance.



# TRAFFIC FLOW AND PARKING



- Traffic flow direction
- Ⓟ Off Street Parking
- ▨ Pedestrians Only



Traffic in the area is slow-moving, relatively infrequent, and scarcely hazardous to pedestrians. Some aspects of the streets' atmosphere derive from the close-knit mix of functions and users (including traffic) competing for elbow-room in the close confines of streetspace. Thus the 'gains' of mallings may be partly illusory, and destructive of part of the existing character.

In traffic planning terms the objective can be stated as to improve the pedestrian environment along High Street while maintaining the accessibility of the area and properties served by High Street. To do this, measures need to be introduced which will give clear signals to drivers and pedestrians alike that pedestrians, not cars, are dominant. This could be achieved by uniformly paving over the whole of High Street (north of the Victoria Street carpark exit); remarking all on-street parking; and providing ample space for on-street servicing, but restricting the hours during which service vehicle access is provided. Efforts just to widen footpaths periodically into existing carriageways may not be sufficient to achieve the broader goal. Whatever measures are introduced it is essential that vehicle speeds are kept low.

It should be quite feasible to produce a significant improvement in the pedestrian and general environment of High Street while meeting the business service needs and retaining High Street's access functions. This could be achieved by :

- a design which emphasis low speeds and pedestrian priority
- a long term uniform paving of High Street using, say, interlocking paving blocks;
- the provision of ample area for service vehicles, but a restriction on the hours during which servicing is permitted;
- the removal of some on-street carparking;
- Periodic areas of specific pedestrian amenity (such as sidewalk cafes, seating areas) on alternate sides of the vehicular route;
- additional trees, shrubs and street furniture at these seating areas;

In Lorne Street, the recent alterations have been successful and should be retained. There is no need to alter the current situation from the traffic viewpoint. Indeed as long as Kitchener Street remains one-way any move to downgrade Lorne Street's general traffic function should be discouraged.

## TRAFFIC AND PARKING OBJECTIVES

- Maintain low-speed limits to traffic flow and adjust the balance of surface allocation to vehicular flow versus pedestrian activity;
- Maintain ample service vehicular access to commercial activities dependent on this, but restrict hours of access;
- Discourage on-street service requirements in new developments;
- Encourage a dispersal of individual service or off-street parking entrances to avoid significant discontinuity's to retail frontages;
- Undertake changes to street paving and pedestrian-area furniture to convey a clear message of pedestrian priority in the precinct;
- The provision of areas of specific pedestrian amenity (such as pleasure and seating areas, and sidewalk cafes) in the precinct;
- Additional planting and landscaping at particular pedestrian 'pause' locations, but limited in scope so as not to detract from spatial and view amenities



## SIGNAGE

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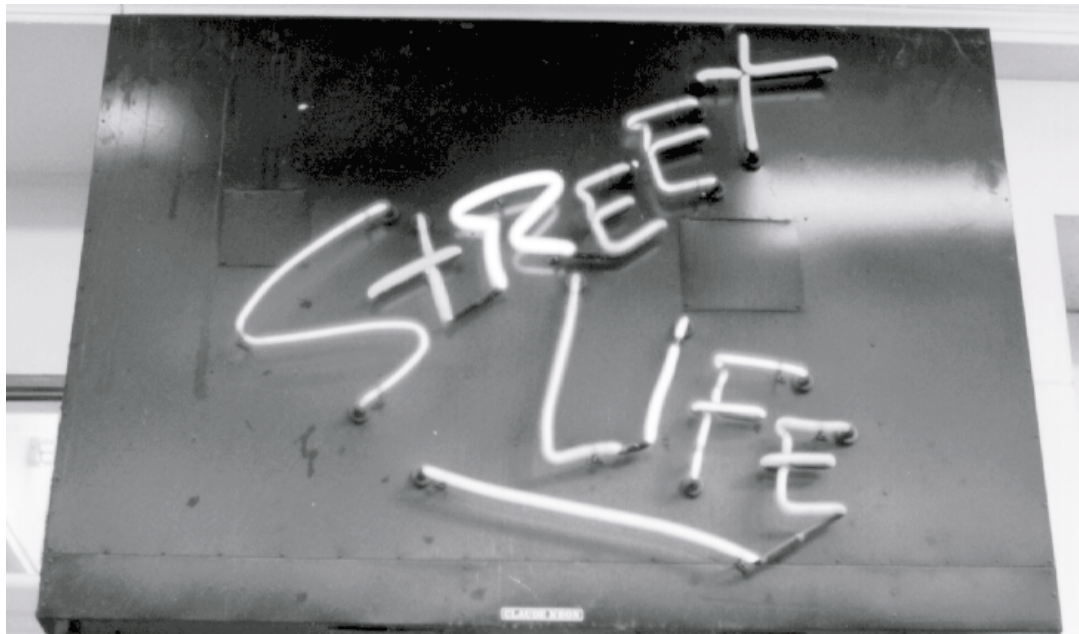
Many activities in High/Lorne Streets, especially some of the more recent arrivals, have sought to mark their commercial presence with a finely-crafted signage image at their frontages.

As a result the area generally has a rich texture of sign types, techniques and designs. Most of these (but not all) are compatible with the ambience of the precinct as a unique locality in the Central Area, with a slightly "fringe" atmosphere.

Existing signs range from simple banners, through craft-inspired carved and painted signs, up to sophisticated neon designs. Thus, like the uses themselves, the signage atmosphere is rich and broad.



... painted signs ...



... sophisticated neon designs ...



The emerging use of small banners (especially to remote first-floor activities) is laudable, and adds movement and lightness to the existing signage complement. Banners in this form should be encouraged provided restraint is implicit in size and location.



**... The emerging use of small banners ... adds movement and lightness to the existing signage complement ...**

Some rigid banner signs are obtrusive by their size and projection distance - Durham Street East is a good example of this effect.

Sandwich boards are inappropriate in such narrow footpaths and streets, and probably represent a public safety liability for Council. There are no sound justifications for cluttering pavement with such signs, especially where space is already of an absolute premium, and in locations where considerable public resources have been spent upgrading the footpath spaces for pedestrian use. Sandwich boards cannot co-exist within the intended upgrading of the narrow spaces of High and Lorne Streets.

Where arcades provide a through-site-link for public use, a post sign indicating this could accommodate a restrained and systematic group of arcade user signs within the same frame.

The precinct would be well-served by co-ordinated banners (or more permanent cross-street signs) expressing a precinct character (as well as individual advertising) - e.g. High/Lorne at Victoria Street, High Street at Shortland Street, Durham Street East at Queen Street, etc - similar to the well-known Karangahape Road local centre pole signs.



## **SIGNAGE OBJECTIVES**

- Encourage a finely-crafted co-ordinated signage image for the streets
- Encourage banner signs for upper levels
- Define precise dimensional (or building envelope) limits for all types of signage to protect other amenities whilst encouraging adventurous signage.
- Promote co-ordinated group signage in some arcade/through-site-link situations, whilst eliminating sandwich board signage on public streets



## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER ELEMENTS OF AREA

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- Narrow streets, creating sense of enclosure, intimate human scale, particularly suited to pedestrians, rich diversity of activities resulting from predominantly small leaseable spaces.
- Abundance of multi-level retail activities, 2nd storey, basement and ground level.
- Area of historical significance, oldest part of city. Predominance of older buildings still in existence (particularly High Street precinct) many listed by NZHPT, some in ACC plan. All sites are of potential archaeological interest.
- Buildings of varying height generally plain and restrained in style. Architectural diversity one of chief characteristics.
- Buildings predominantly built up to street boundary for full width of site resulting in special street spatial definition and scale and an almost continuous retail frontage.
- Windows generally expressed as punctuations in solid walls, solid to void ratio high.
- Generally good streetscape at ground level with small human scale shop fronts (often defined by the scale of original residential lot sizes) and recessed entrances, providing transition from outside to inside. Some recessed whole-shopfronts are successful in creating "pause spaces".
- Many cafe and restaurants, some spilling out and interacting with street activities - potential exists for more of this.
- Proximity to civic amenities such as Albert Park, Art Gallery, University and Public Library.
- Awareness of landform through location across slope between valley and ridge. Legibility of underlying landform
- The High Street character (especially the northern end) is dominated by buildings 5-7 stories high at the street frontage, i.e. up to a 2:1 building: street width ratio.
- The precinct exhibits a multiplicity of openings (doors, windows) at street and ground level.
- The narrow original lot subdivision gives rise to a diversity of buildings, architectural treatments, and functions.
- The streets have a concentration of speciality shops (especially fashion) together with small-scale clothing manufacturing on upper floors.
- There is an absence of chain-stores, and most shops are owner-managed.
- There are many east-west pedestrian links, both public and private.



## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER OBJECTIVES

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### 1.0: Spatial and Topographic

- 1.1 Maintain the sense of awareness of and contact with the underlying landform and topography of the area;
- 1.2 Reinststate landform features where possible;
- 1.3 Maintain glimpse views of public open space;
- 1.4 Maintain the visual integrity and clarity of unobstructed streetspace between building facade above road level (the spatial "volume" of the street);
- 1.5 Preserve and enhance qualities of the Freyberg Place Special Amenity Yard;
- 1.6 Maintain sunlight performance controls to public open space;
- 1.7 Stimulate street frontage continuity.

### 2.0: Streetscape

- 2.1 Recognise and protect the special character and qualities of the public open space at Freyberg Place and Khartoum Place;
- 2.2 Maximise continuity of retail frontages and stimulate "building-to" the frontage rather than to arbitrary bonused or enforced setbacks;
- 2.3 Maintain an articulated character of frontage -especially embayed doorways, entrances, and a multiplicity of building openings (doors, windows, balconies, etc)- to enliven the street and avoid the sterility of flat frontages;
- 2.4 Encourage streetside cafe uses and a high level of interaction between such uses and the street, specially at Khartoum Place and in High Street;
- 2.5 Establish a sense of 'place' to the area with symbolic character planting/structures/signage;
- 2.6 Continue the development of Freyberg Place as a focal node for the area, and promote an appropriate built edge where structures abut the space;
- 2.7 Maintain the key presence of the palm trees above Freyberg Place as a 'signature' for the area;- Soften the hard visual image of the Khartoum Place stairwell;
- 2.8 Develop Durham Street East as a 'trader alley' with specific improvements and provision for street traders;
- 2.9 Enhance the street character of Lorne Street south between frontages to create a sense of 'place', and link it to the rest of Lorne Street with appropriate continuity of detail whilst recognising the entertainment role of this street;
- 2.10 Encourage through-site-links to further elaborate east-west pedestrian communications through the area, but on a structured basis to promote useful links but discourage others, such as repetitive routes close to existing links, or those which do not effectively shorten pedestrian travel;

