

PART 14.2 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PRECINCTS

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Plan modification annotations - key



Indicates where content is affected by proposed plan modification x.
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of this section



PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PRECINCTS

14.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Central Area has a rich legacy of open spaces. These include areas of natural, heritage and scenic value. They give form to the development of the City and add to its diversity and interest.

The streets, squares, and parks have become increasingly important as the City grows and develops. The open spaces contrast with the densely built-up nature of the Central Area, providing sunlight, tranquillity and opportunity for various forms of recreation.

The Plan recognises the streets as being part of the key public spaces in the Central Area. The streets serve multi functions which must be provided for in the District Plan.

Most open spaces are vested with the Council but there are some which are in private ownership. These too are a valuable resource and make a fundamental contribution to the vitality of the Central Area.

14.2.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The Plan must adopt a resource management approach which maintains and enhances the important open space network within the Central Area. The Plan addresses the following issues:

- a) The need to ensure the protection and enhancement of open space in order to meet the foreseeable needs of a diverse range of users.
- b) The need to recognise that planning and management must be carefully attuned to people's needs.
- c) The need to conserve and protect areas of significant scenic, heritage and natural value and to reconcile public accessibility and enjoyment, with the maintenance and protection of the quality of these areas.
- d) The need to ensure that the provisions of the Plan recognise and are consistent with the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977.
- e) The need to provide for the acquisition of additional open space and to ensure that opportunities for reserve contribution through development are achieved.

- f) The need to ensure the quality of the streetscape environment in order to maintain the comfort, safety and pleasantness of streets.
- g) The need to recognise that the streets form a valuable part of the public open space network, whilst recognising the considerable investment in infrastructure and services that they carry.
- h) The need to recognise that, in limited situations and where it is in the public interest, the stopping of streets or the stopping or leasing of their air space or subsoil and inclusion in adjacent development may be appropriate to meet special operational or infrastructural needs associated with the development.
- i) The need to identify and maintain significant views and vistas to and from open spaces including protecting streetscape vistas while avoiding adverse effects on other activities and development in the Central Area and beyond.

14.2.3 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

14.2.3.1 OBJECTIVE

To maintain, protect, and augment the open space public squares and parks of the Central Area and to maintain and protect where appropriate open spaces in the form of public streets.

Policies

- a) By conserving existing open space in the form of squares and parks and other public space to the maximum extent possible.
- b) By identifying a range of open spaces and maintaining their character and function.
- c) By using the provisions of the Plan as a positive means of conserving and protecting areas of scenic, ecological, heritage, scientific or natural importance including the historical street pattern.
- d) By adopting controls which protect certain identified streets as public spaces in the Central Area.
- e) By adopting measures which ensure the design of the built form complements and is sensitive to the public



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environment in order to protect and enhance the quality of open spaces.

- f) By adopting controls that maintain and protect important view shafts (including views along streets) from identified vantage points to the harbour, to other natural features, to public spaces and landmarks within and outside the Central Area, while avoiding adverse effects on other activities and development in the Central Area and beyond.
- g) By protecting sunlight access to identified public places by the establishment of defined sunlight planes.

14.2.3.2 OBJECTIVE

To retain and enhance the open spaces, including streets, in the Central Area as places where pedestrians can move safely, easily and comfortably.

Policies

- a) By providing bonus floor area incentives to encourage the provision of desired pedestrian facilities and public amenities within developments which are readily accessible to members of the public.
- b) By facilitating the comfortable movement of pedestrians through the central area between places of work, leisure, entertainment, shopping, home and places of interest through the creation of a convenient, safe and interesting pedestrian network.
- c) By establishing a network of publicly available open space within the Central Area and protecting such places from adverse wind conditions, glare and shade.
- d) By implementing a programme of public works designed to support and enhance the environmental qualities of public spaces identified in the Plan.
- e) By providing for complementary activities to locate on or adjacent to recognised pedestrian routes and public places.
- f) By providing for passenger transport facilities on the street.
- g) By applying controls requiring verandahs and under verandah lighting to improve the amenity and safety along primary pedestrian linkages.
- h) By adopting guidelines for design against crime aimed at creating a safer city.
- i) By restricting building and the location of structures on streets where they are identified as Public Open Space 3.

- j) By providing for safe, attractive, efficient and identifiable linkages, networks and environments for pedestrians and vehicles.
- k) By reducing conflict between the needs of pedestrians and vehicles, particularly in those parts identified in the Plan as pedestrian routes.

14.2.3.3 OBJECTIVE

To provide for appropriately located new areas of public space and to continue to upgrade existing public space.

Policies

- a) By including financial contribution provisions to obtain funds for both land purchase and open space development.
- b) By applying measures that provide for the acquisition of new areas of public open space particularly along the waterfront, within the development of the former railyards land and within the Western SMA of the Central Area.
- c) By providing for the upgrading and improvement of streets and public spaces through the application of amenity controls and requirements.
- d) By identifying the main pedestrian routes through the Central Area and the link to public open spaces and the preferred location of pedestrian facilities and open spaces including the identification of areas to be improved or enhanced (shown on figure 14.2)

14.2.3.4 OBJECTIVE

To maintain, protect and enhance the streets in the high pedestrian-orientated area.

Policies

- a) By ensuring that the existing streets are retained in public ownership where this is in the public interest.
- b) By ensuring that the quality of the visual environment, particularly at street level, is protected and enhanced.
- c) By providing for streets as part of the public open space network.

14.2.4 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

In order to maintain the open spaces and secure recreation opportunities within the Central Area, the Council adopts a



strategy of applying measures to protect, maintain and enhance the open space resource.

The Plan recognises the intensively developed and densely built up nature of the Central Area and that it is particularly important to maintain the comfort, safety and pleasantness of streets and public spaces.

The public spaces provide areas for large gatherings, quiet relaxation and eating.

A feature of the strategy is to recognise and foster these functions, by applying open space precincts to public places to encourage the protection and enhancement of recognised areas for their various amenity, visual and heritage qualities. Concept plans, overlay rules and development controls will combine to achieve a reasonable level of public access to the open space areas, while securing appropriate protection of those qualities for which such areas are appreciated.

In particular the admission of sunlight to public spaces will be protected through the application of sunlight planes. Important and significant views will be maintained by applying recession cones and viewshafts to identified points. Specific street sight lines are also identified to enhance the focal elements of particular views.

Measures to augment the amenity of public places are included in the Plan. Specific incentives are available to gain floor area bonuses for the provision of amenity features in public areas such as works of art, landscaping, and pedestrian facilities.

The Council recognises the need for additional open space areas and the need to improve the quality and legibility of its street network to meet the increasing demand for recreational resources. Opportunities to meet this need are provided through the Council's fiscal management policy and through the ability to obtain financial contributions from private development initiatives.

Figure 14.2 details the main pedestrian routes through the Central Area and the link to public open spaces. It also identifies the preferred location of pedestrian facilities and open spaces, including the identification of areas to be improved or enhanced.

14.2.5 PLAN METHODS

14.2.5.1 OPEN SPACE PRECINCTS

Public open space is used for a variety of activities. Three broad categories have been identified to facilitate the management of activities that can adversely impact on such space:

Public Open Space 1- major parks, squares and reserves for which concept plans are applied

Public Open Space 2- parks and squares

Public Open Space 3- selected streets.

14.2.5.2 ACTIVITIES

The Public Open Space Precincts provide for a wide range of recreation activities. Emphasis is on the use of the open space land for outdoor recreation but provision is made for some structures. Only those structures such as maintenance sheds, seating, sculptures and water features which are necessary for the management, use and enjoyment of an area will be permitted as of right. It is recognised that structures can detract from open space and the plan provisions are designed to enhance the visual amenity that these areas of open space contribute to their surrounding environment.

14.2.5.3 DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

The development controls are designed to ensure that the amenity of the Open Space Precincts is conserved and any adverse effects are avoided or mitigated. Controls on maximum height, building coverage and the identification of building areas are included in the provisions to maintain the environmental quality of the public places.

To ensure the adverse effects of development adjacent to public open spaces are avoided or mitigated the following overlay rules are applied through Part 6:

a) Sunlight planes

The purpose of this control is to ensure that selected public places in the Central Area receive adequate sunlight during mid-winter. The admission of sunlight to public places is considered essential to the continued public enjoyment of parts of the Central Area. In such locations, sunlight penetration is protected by the application of defined sunlight planes. Unless consent is granted to a non-complying activity no building is permitted to penetrate a sunlight plane.

The angles of sunlight planes have been calculated to ensure the admission of sunlight to specified public areas during those times of the day when areas are most intensively used.

b) Recession cone to Aotea Square

The purpose of this control is to maintain a sense of orientation for viewing points from the Aotea Square open space areas to key landmark buildings. The recession cone also protects views into open spaces from buildings and other points around the City centre.



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The control is designed to avoid a sense of tall buildings intruding into the open space.

Overlay rules are applied through Part 10 – Heritage to ensure the heritage resources within public open space are protected and adverse effects on the heritage values are avoided or minimised.

14.2.6 VIEW PROTECTION

Viewshafts

Part of the unique character of the Central Area is the quality of the views of the harbour, open space, natural features and streetscape vistas.

It is important to maintain views of open space and streetscape vistas, where they are identified through the application of viewshafts. Views from public open space including along streets to the harbour, to Rangitoto Island and the North Shore and to other natural features and landmarks from within the Central Area are protected as shown on figure 14.2.C.1, Street Sight Lines. Views along these viewshafts are protected to the extent of controls placed on buildings and structures able to be located on the public open spaces and on public streets. The controls do not apply to other land or to areas outside the Central Area. Part 10 provides for existing views of certain landmarks, views to and from the Auckland War Memorial Museum, views to Dilworth Terrace Houses, the Railway Station Building and the Mount Eden Volcanic Cone.

14.2.7 TREE PROTECTION

Tree cover in the central city is predominantly located on public land such as streets and parks or on land currently used for public activities (such as the university) or former public land (such as the railway station and surrounds). There are a smaller number of significant trees located on private land.

The approach taken in the Plan is to identify the significant notable trees and groups of trees by placing them on a schedule and to protect and manage trees in parks and streets.

14.2.8 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Financial contributions will be levied on private developments for both land purchase and open space development (see Part 8).

14.2.9 OTHER METHODS

The Act requires the Council to consider alternative methods of achieving the purposes of the Act in addition to the Plan rules (see Annex 1).

14.2.10 ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

Implementing the strategy in 14.2.4 should result in open space areas that are highly regarded by the public for their community value and environmental qualities.

The effect of the Open Space Precincts will be to protect the finite characteristics of the public places in the Central Area and to conserve open space and the particular features of scenic, heritage and natural value. In addition the retention of open space areas for informal recreation and visual enhancement will be achieved. The application of the Plan provisions will ensure that maximum use is obtained from the open space within the Central Area while securing an appropriate level of protection for the surrounding environment.



14.2.11 REFERENCES

Reference should also be made to the following parts of the Plan:

- Part 4 Strategic Management Areas
- Part 5 Activities
- Part 6 Development Controls
- Part 7 Noise, Signs and Lighting
- Part 8 Financial Contributions
- Part 9 Transportation
- Part 10 Heritage
- Part 11 Hazardous Facilities and Contaminated sites
- Part 12 Network Utility Services
- Part 13 Subdivision
- Part 14 Precincts and Quarters
- Part 15 General Rules/Designations
- Part 16 Definitions and Interpretations



Figure 14.2 Central Area Pedestrian Network and Preferred Location of Pedestrian facilities and Open Spaces



