

PART 14.5 - AOTEA PRECINCT

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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.



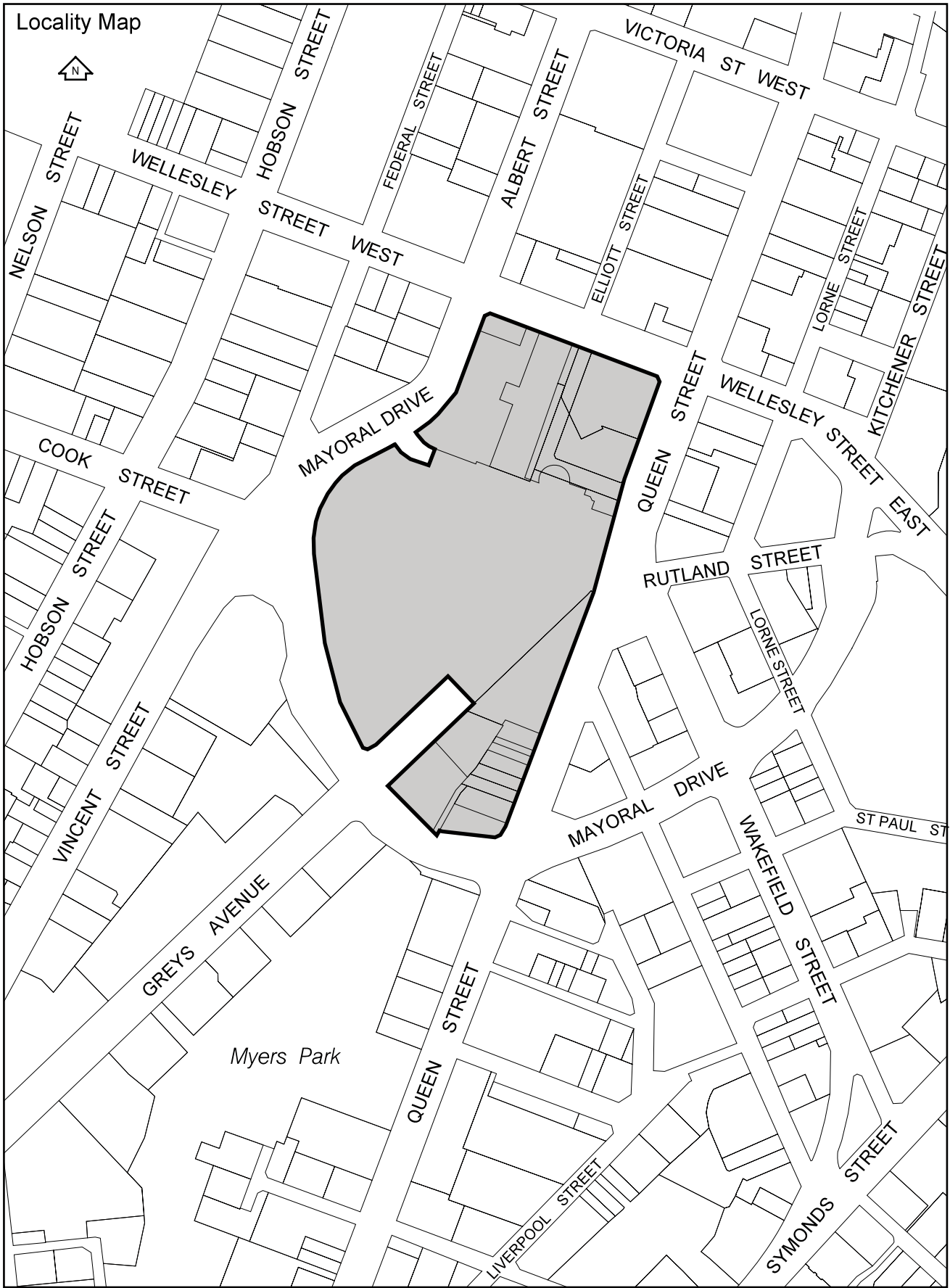
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AOTEA PRECINCT

14.5.1 INTRODUCTION

Aotea Precinct is defined as the area between Wellesley Street West, Mayoral Drive and Queen Street.

This part of the Central Area has been identified as a precinct in view of its particular location, function and character. The Aotea Precinct has a strong sense of physical and functional identity, focusing around the cultural, entertainment and civic activities which predominate.

The locality has for many years been identified as the civic heart of the City and significant steps have been taken in recent decades towards reinforcing the cultural and civic focus. The Precinct's location at the head of the Queen Street Valley exerts a counterbalancing effect to the attraction of the waterfront and harbour edge.

The Precinct contains heritage buildings such as the Town Hall, Civic Theatre, Civic House and the Fergusson Building with a diversity of styles ranging from classical to modern and post modern. The Aotea Centre is the most recent addition to a collection of public buildings around Aotea Square.

This space serves as the connecting hub of the Upper Queen Street pedestrian system and is well linked to the surrounding ridges by streets, parks, footpaths and concourses. A section forms part of the Queen Street retail area which is integrated with Aotea Square.

Most processions and celebrations in Queen Street culminate in Aotea Square, making it the City's main focal point for public occasions.

The Precinct's vibrancy is further enhanced by its role as one of the City's principal destinations for entertainment. The Aotea Centre will be complemented by further entertainment venues following the refurbishment of the Town Hall, the future upgrade of the Civic Theatre and various other ventures.

14.5.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- a) The retention of the civic focus and role of civic ceremony of the Precinct and particularly Aotea Square.

- b) Greater activity.
- c) The enhancement of pedestrian linkages from surrounding streets, parks and footpaths.
- d) The protection of the openness of the environment against incongruous and high building forms.
- e) The enhancement of spatial enclosure of the open spaces in the Precinct.
- f) The rationalisation and integration of existing parking and loading facilities where appropriate.
- g) Provision for increased use of public transport.

14.5.3 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

14.5.3.1 OBJECTIVE

To maintain the Precinct's role as the City's prime location for civic ceremony and a focus for entertainment.

Policy

- a) By providing for a variety of activities with the emphasis on entertainment, retail, recreation and tourist activities.

14.5.3.2 OBJECTIVE

To protect light access and avoid the visual dominance of buildings surrounding the Square.

Policy

- a) By imposing controls on surrounding developments.

Method

Through applying sunlight planes and a specific recession cone.



14.5.3.3 OBJECTIVE

To maintain pedestrian linkages through the Precinct to and from other parts of the Central Area and ensure the area is attractive and safe.

Policies

- a) By enhancing the pedestrian network and public spaces.
- b) By enhancing the accessibility through improved bus stop facilities.

Methods

- i) Through classifying the Square as a public open space which recognises and enhances the public function and importance of this area.
- ii) Through identifying pedestrian linkages and including design criteria to encourage the provision of access points.

14.5.3.4 OBJECTIVE

To retain significant heritage buildings in the Precinct which contribute to the character of the Area.

Policies

- a) By scheduling buildings and parts of buildings for heritage protection.
- b) By enabling the reuse of scheduled buildings while ensuring that their valued features are not impaired or destroyed.
- c) By avoiding signs or other objects on the street adjacent to scheduled buildings that detract from the heritage values for which the building is scheduled.

Methods

The methods specified under Part 10, Heritage will be applied.

14.5.3.5 OBJECTIVE

To maintain a built form in the Precinct which is of an appropriate scale in relation to the form and scale of existing character buildings.

Policies

- a) By encouraging a quality of urban design which respects the form, scale and architecture of existing character buildings.

- b) By applying a building development control package which seeks to maintain the character, sense of scale and access to daylight levels and visible sky.
- c) By maintaining the small-scale variation and detail of shopfronts.
- d) By reinforcing the character of the Precinct by requiring the design of new buildings or new work on existing buildings to respect the design elements of the existing buildings where specified.

Methods

- i) A special character frontage control is applied to require building up to street frontages on identified sites.
- ii) Floor area ratio limits are applied.
- iii) Resource consent applications for new buildings and building alterations and additions are required to be assessed against urban design criteria.

14.5.4 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Aotea Precinct is a unique and valuable attraction in the Central Area and the heart of civic activities. The City's most popular entertainment venues are also situated in the Precinct or nearby, including the Aotea Centre, the Civic Theatre, the Town Hall, the St James Theatre, the Art Gallery and the Central Public Library as well as cafes, restaurants, cinemas, hotels and bars. The Precinct is therefore primarily a location for people-orientated activities and Aotea Square is the focus of the Precinct. With the square, lawns and other public places, it offers a variety of recreational options. This public arena serves the City both for occasions of a formal nature such as public parades as well as informal ones such as lunch time relaxation. It also serves as a through route linking the city centre with other parts of the Central Area.

The provisions encourage the enhancement of the Precinct as a focus for people-related activities, particularly at street and ground level. The provision for retail, services and food and beverage activities in this Precinct along the Queen Street frontages not only serves to stimulate the vibrancy of Queen Street but also to assist in attracting pedestrians.

The central location of the Precinct in relation to the Central Area makes it important to protect and enhance its accessibility, and particularly Aotea Square, to pedestrians. For the same reason it is desirable that the Precinct remains an integrated part of the Central Area's pedestrian network.

The provisions applied to the Precinct's built form provide a balance between achieving spatial enclosure of open



spaces such as Aotea Square and to maximise sunlight and views. This is attained by applying a sunlight plane which ensures that specified areas are open to sunlight for the times of the day when the spaces are most intensively used. A recession plane is applied to buildings surrounding Aotea Square to maintain a sense of orientation from viewing points to identified landmark buildings and to avoid intrusion of tall buildings into the open space.

14.5.5 ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

It is expected that the provisions contained in the Plan for the Aotea Precinct will maintain and enhance the role of the Precinct as a focus for civic ceremony and entertainment in the Central Area.

The provisions which relate to retail, food and beverage services in Queen Street reinforce the generation of activities which attract people. It is envisaged that a lively atmosphere along Queen Street will exert a positive influence on the vitality of the adjoining spaces in the Precinct

The provisions will promote redevelopment on sites in the Precinct in a way which enhances Aotea Square as a public open space.

14.5.6 RULES - ACTIVITIES

The activities allowed in the Aotea Precinct are those listed for pedestrian-orientated areas in the activities table under Part 5 with the following exceptions:

- a) For those sites identified on Precinct Plan A, the occupation of not less than 100% of the length and not less than 10m depth of the ground floor frontage (other than vehicle entrances and loading bays and pedestrian entrances and lobbies) shall be limited to the following activities:
 - food and beverage
 - retail
 - services
- b) The activities listed for pedestrian-orientated areas shall not apply to the area denoted as Aotea Square on Precinct Plan A (refer Clause 14.5.6.2)

Explanation

The Precinct frontages on Queen Street and Wellesley Street form part of some of the Central Area's primary retail frontages. The activities located at street level are

considered to be crucial to maintaining its vitality and character. These features also assist in creating public interest close to the public spaces during those periods of the day when activity is less.

14.5.6.1 Additional Activities

In addition to the activities under 14.5.6 above, the erection of any new building or external alteration or addition to the street frontage of any existing building on any site in the Aotea Precinct requires consent as a restricted discretionary activity.

14.5.6.2 Aotea Square Activities

For the area denoted as Aotea Square Concept Plan on Precinct Plan A, the activities shall be those listed in the activities table for the Aotea Square Concept Plan contained in 14.2A.10.

Explanation

In terms of Part 14.2 of the Plan, Aotea Square is classified as Public Open Space 1. In order to facilitate the management of activities and development that could adversely impact on this area of open space, a concept plan has been prepared for Aotea Square that contains rules which relate to activities and development controls and is to be read in conjunction with Precinct Plan A.

14.5.7 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

An application for a restricted discretionary or controlled activity shall be accompanied by an assessment of the environmental effects of the proposed activity in terms of the relevant criteria contained in Part 15, the design assessment criteria below for building works where applicable and the criteria under 14.2A.10 for the Public Open Space activities.

Explanation

A significant part of the Precinct's existing frontage on Queen Street and Wellesley Street enjoys a continuity largely brought about by buildings extending up to the street boundary.

In the case of Queen Street, this applies along the frontages of the Civic Theatre, Fergusson Building and Civic House. It is also in evidence along the Queen Street facade of the Town Hall and adjoining buildings stretching up to Mayoral Drive. This continuity creates a well-defined edge and ensures a positive sense of enclosure.

In a similar way the frontages of the Civic Theatre along Wellesley Street and the buildings further west up to Albert Street offer a valuable frontage.



The existing buildings that currently surround the Square have achieved limited success in creating a suitably scaled sense of enclosure. However there is potential for improved enclosure to the north of the Square. This could also improve the integration between the buildings around the Square and the Square itself.

14.5.7.1 Design Assessment Criteria

- a) Buildings on sites identified as special character frontages on Aotea Precinct Plan A shall be designed to address and align to the street boundary. However, minor modulation and variance of the frontage layout, such as recessed pedestrian entrances, is acceptable to avoid architectural monotony provided that the overall continuity of the frontage is not compromised.
- b) Frontage height and design should relate closely to existing buildings in the vicinity and maintain a consistent scale. This does not imply a rigid adherence to a single height but it does imply a respect for the general appearance of the surrounding blocks.
- c) The design of setback levels above the frontage height should relate naturally to the frontage.
- d) The design of frontages should include vertical and horizontal articulations that avoid dominance of frontage elements larger than historically present in the Precinct. Where existing sites are amalgamated the frontage design should have regard to the pre-amalgamated site boundaries for articulating variation of style.
- e) The consistency of the existing character in a cohesive streetscape should be maintained with new buildings acknowledging traditional design and detail. However, new buildings should not replicate or imitate the architectural detail or style of adjacent original buildings in the Precinct.
- f) The design of buildings in the Precinct should incorporate and increase the number and visibility of pedestrian routes, connections and entrance points in the Precinct. The existing and preferred additional pedestrian linkages are indicated on Precinct Plan B.
- g) Design at pavement level must contribute to the continuity of pedestrian interest and vitality, particularly for those frontages where the activities control under Clause 14.5.6.2 applies. However, frontages entirely of glass at street level (curtain walls or continuous shopfront glazing) must not be used as they detract from the streetscape. Sympathy with (and, where feasible, restoration of) original street level detail should be included for buildings adjoining heritage buildings or alterations to heritage buildings.
- h) Large expanses of blank walls should be avoided at upper levels and must be avoided at frontage and pavement levels. In particular, the proportion of void

and solids on elevations should reflect any patterns existing in retained heritage buildings. This will tend to favour solid walls penetrated by a repetition of windows above verandah level, articulation of floor levels and an appropriate treatment of the parapet level. A hierarchy of window size is encouraged to create a distinction between the top, middle and bottom level of the frontage.

- i) Frontages should be designed as far as possible to avoid aggregated service and access interruptions to frontage continuity, by dispersing such requirements along available frontage.
- j) Materials and colour used in new buildings should complement the existing, but may use new and contemporary interpretations in form and detail.
- k) The design of buildings on corner sites should emphasise and visually celebrate the corner where appropriate. In particular, designs should recognise the importance of corner sites in linking the narrow street spaces to the wider, more expansive intersections and public open spaces. Building design on such sites should “address” the corner with symmetry and formality.
- l) Designs must provide strong architectural visual cues to accesses and through-site links, with clear entrances, so as to enhance the visible sense of pedestrian permeability to the area.

Explanation

Although there is a diversity in the architectural character and styles of buildings within the Precinct, the character of the older buildings exerts a strong presence in Queen Street and Wellesley Street in particular as well as in parts of Aotea Square. This rule recognises the need to protect that character by requiring an application for resource consent to undertake work on new or existing buildings. The application is assessed in terms of design criteria which aim to ensure that building design respects the elements of existing older buildings. The purpose is not to promote replication or imitation of those elements but rather to maintain a visual cohesiveness to building frontages that will maintain the human scale and design qualities of the Precinct.

14.5.7.2 Anticipated Environmental Results

It is expected that compliance with the assessment criteria will result in the following.

- a) Development which is sympathetic and sensitive to the existing qualities of the Precinct, both at street level and above.
- b) Maintenance of and respect for the heritage value of significant buildings and groups of buildings through



the Precinct resulting in a cohesive and attractive streetscape.

- c) Maintenance of a “human scale” at ground level throughout the Precinct.
- d) Development within the Precinct which is appropriate to the immediate context when viewed from the public domain.
- e) Development that addresses the edges of streets and open spaces at its lower levels, and contributes to a continuity of interest and vitality at pedestrian level.
- f) Development that enhances the Precinct as a “people place” and promotes pedestrian flows through the precinct.

14.5.8 RULES - DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

All development in the Aotea Precinct is subject to the development controls contained in Part 6 and in 14.5.6. except as specified by the following rule.

14.5.8.1 Special Character Frontage

On sites identified as a special character frontage on Precinct Plan A the frontage of any building must abut the site boundary.

Note: An application for a non-complying activity will be required to modify this rule.

Explanation

The Special Character Frontage control is applied to ensure that new buildings conform to the scale and alignment of existing older buildings in relation to the street. It will thereby maintain and in certain cases enhance the sense of intimacy and enclosure which characterise the area.

14.5.9 SCHEDULED HERITAGE BUILDINGS

Alterations or additions to any buildings within the Precinct which are listed on the Heritage Schedule are subject to the obtaining of any necessary resource consents under Part 10.

14.5.10 REFERENCES

Reference should also be made to the following:

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

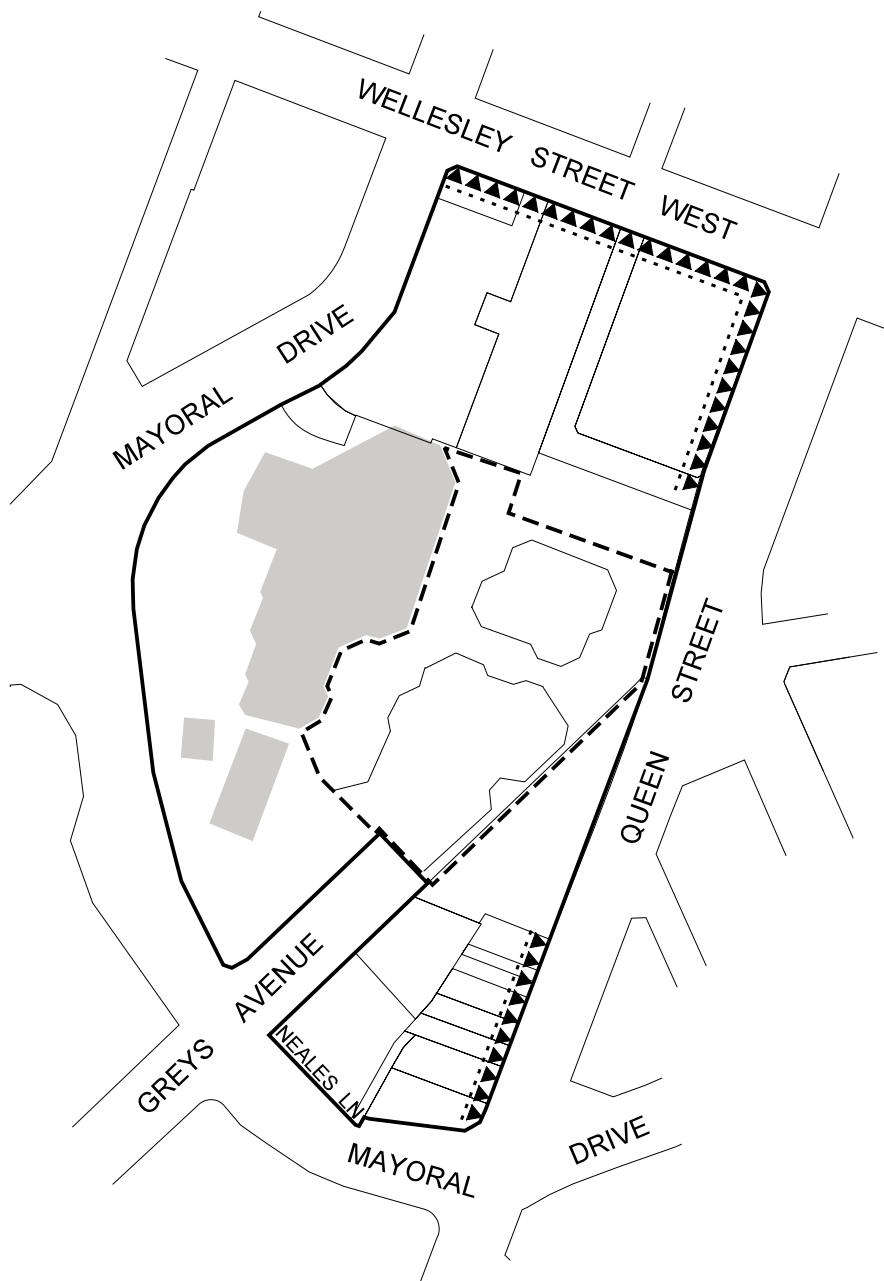
Part 14 Precincts and Quarters

Part 15 General Rules/Designations

Part 16 Definitions and Interpretations



Precinct Plan A



- Precinct Boundary
- - - Aotea Square Concept Plan Boundary (See 14.2A.10)
- Special Character Frontage
- ▼▼▼▼▼ 100% of ground floor frontage, not less than 10m in depth, for food and beverage, retail and services
- Building



Precinct Plan B

