

CUBA CHARACTER AREA DESIGN GUIDE – TABLE OF CONTENTS

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1.0 Introduction

The Cuba Character Area is one of the few remaining older parts of the central area. In the late 1980s following the development boom and bust, Council identified the area as deserving special attention to ensure that any development of the area should not threaten its special character. In planning terms, the former District Scheme gave the area little separate identity. It fell within the Scheme's general use zone, with an emphasis on retail along its principal streets surrounded by industrial zoning. The uncertainty of the area's future during the development boom, including inappropriate planning provision and proposed motorway extensions through the southern end of the area, left it vulnerable to significant change.

A Cuba Precinct Plan was produced in 1992 to establish a framework within which change could occur. The process involved first identifying the area's special character, through interviews with those who use it and an analysis of the area based on direct observation.

The "character" of an area refers to those qualities - social, cultural, physical and economic - that individually or collectively distinguish it from its wider surroundings.

The research findings and the assumptions of the studies of the Cuba Character Area have led to the definition of nine separate environmental qualities that collectively express the character of the area.

2.0 Intention of the Design Guide

As specified in the District Plan rules, all new building development within the character area is a Controlled Activity, in terms of the design and appearance and siting of buildings. This Design Guide provides the criteria against which controlled elements are assessed.

Applicants are required to demonstrate, through the detailed design of proposed new development, a commitment to maintaining and extending the present and intended character of the Cuba Character Area. Beyond this intention, and in accordance with the design guidelines, designers have a degree of flexibility in the preparation of development proposals.

No precise formula exists for ensuring the skilful and innovative design of buildings. However, the provisions of this Design Guide require that particular character elements be respected. Applicants must show that the provisions of this Design Guide have been acknowledged and interpreted and the objectives satisfied.

3.0 Analysis

Boundaries

The extent of the Cuba Character Area is an approximate rectangle marked by Webb Street to the south, Willis Street to the west, Dixon Street to the north, and Taranaki Street to the east.

Southern Edge

Webb Street east of Cuba Street borders an area, including Torrens Terrace and northern Hopper Street, whose commercial and warehouse uses and strong pedestrian links tie it to the Cuba Character Area. This area should be considered transitional.

Webb Street west of Cuba Street forms a clear boundary along the street line due to the combined effects of changing topography, use and traffic volumes which cut off and redirect pedestrian flow.

Eastern Edge

Traffic volumes, width of road, speed of vehicles, and the practical restrictions these place on pedestrian connections, make Taranaki Street an effective physical boundary to the west.

Northern Edge

Dixon Street represents a transition between the Cuba Street area and the southern edges of the city's commercial, retail and administrative centres. This is particularly the case around the junction of Cuba and Manners Street where people tend to arrive, linger and make decisions about the route they will take to other parts of the city.

Western Edge

The line of the Victoria Street Extension has superseded Willis Street as the nearest physical barrier between the Cuba Character Area and its neighbouring areas. Existing traffic flows do not, however, break current patterns of informal pedestrian movement across this line, and many uses on the strips of land between Willis and Victoria Street are similar to the Area in their mixture and type.



Variety

The Cuba Character Area contains a dense mixture of shops, residential accommodation, restaurants, social services, entertainment, light industry, craft, commercial services and warehouses.

It supports an equally diverse population - old and young, rich and poor, and multicultural - who occupy the place at different times of the day for a variety of reasons, and who consequently understand and interpret the area in dissimilar ways.

This essential variety is concentrated in the appearance, economy and society of Cuba Street. It is supported by the combination of a relatively moderate range of local land and values, the presence of a large number of older buildings, and the area's attraction as a shopping venue for a wide range of Wellington people.

Social Contact

The Area is one of the few areas in Wellington City where a wide range of social and economic groups come into regular contact with each other.

This diversity, with all its daily encounters with familiar faces (as well as the eccentric and the occasionally threatening) is an accepted part of how the area is understood by Wellingtonians. This contrasts with the informal segregation of economic class, the exclusive values of high consumption and the narrowed scope of acceptable public behaviour encouraged by streets such as Lambton Quay.

While no particular social or business group writes the rules for local street life, this casual quality of social co-existence remains a vulnerable part of the area's character. It is the aspect most directly affected by the way issues of social control are understood locally. This, in turn, is subject to change from any significant tilt in the nature of the property development market.

Transition

The appearance, use, building type, bulk, height and degree of street activity run through a marked series of changes down the four blocks north from Webb to Dixon Street. The transition spans from inner-city residential areas around Webb and Upper Cuba street, through an area of small business and working class institutions, to the fringes of the inner city's commercial district.

Fortunes have changed. Each part of this transition has experienced patterns of growth and decline. Some important points of reference have been lost and others added. Each, however, retain a tangible presence, maintaining the transition that has marked this part of Te Aro Basin since the city was built.

Uncertainty

Short leases, earthquake strengthening and demolition requirements, motorway proposals, rumours of major change, the steady departure of familiar faces, and widely fluctuating land values, rates, and rentals all contribute to an underlying feeling of uncertainty about the area's future.

The "character" quality of uncertainty was repeatedly present in people's comments about this place and most share a negative view of its effects. Developer, landowner, small business operator, tenant, resident, shopper or transient - all share a similar insecurity about their long-term future in the area.

People in the area have become used to feeling temporary without really knowing where they are going to move to.

Continuity

Throughout the area Wellington's long history of growth and change is recorded in the diversity of its buildings. Change to these has been gradual and incremental, and has always managed to balance new initiatives with strong sense of continuous habitation and use.

This is not simply an issue of conservation. It has to do with those qualities of a city that invoke memory, and provide its inhabitants with a present sense of place linked forward and back in time.

Visibility

The Area's environment is very expressive of its social and economic life. This comes in part from the continual conversion of older buildings for new uses while leaving some evidence of previous roles. It is also to do with the ease with which passersby may directly observe the activities going on within many of the Area's buildings; and includes the variety of social contact and types of people clearly visible on its streets.

These qualities are the reverse of a common complaint about the modern city - that it is opaque, impersonal and lacking in immediacy.

Access

People prefer to walk in the Cuba Character Area - not just internal movement within the precinct but it is also the manner in which most people arrive in the area. While pedestrian movement is centred on Cuba Street and the road system, it also includes a large number of mid-block short cuts and alternative routes that cut across this street pattern.

Physical Structure

The precinct is marked by a prevailing pattern of grid roads and blocks. Most buildings are built to the street line of the blocks, and are typically of two to three storeys, with a few in the northern section of the area exceeding four storeys.

Buildings are most commonly walk-ups directly off the street, and have clearly differentiated and often quite large windows that provide many clues to what goes on above street level.

Local Magnet

The four-block length of Cuba Street between Dixon and Webb Streets, at the heart of the area, expresses all of the area's other qualities of local character. It is the Area's social centre and the one distinct physical entity that sets this place apart from the rest of the inner city.

From north to south, each of its four blocks represents the quality of transition in the marked but gradual change in use, physical scale and street life.

The mix of its buildings presents an easily read cross-section of the city's history and its processes of change.

Its two- to three-storey scale and narrow shopfronts with their highly individual expressions of merchandise and ownership sustain a street that continues to wear its social variety on its sleeve. Its range of overlapping uses and high levels of activity fill it with people and flavour its unique shopping environment.

Local shopping for its workers and neighbouring residential population; specialised food outlets and a growing restaurant district for the city as a whole; a place of social support for the city's dependents; a red light district and a craft community - its roles are numerous and easily accessible.

It is the focus of the area's pedestrian movement. Its basic qualities of shelter and containment and its north-south orientation to sunlight assist this. While it has always had the function of a main pedestrian route in and out of town from the southern parts of the city, it has also remained its own destination with people continually making surprising detours in their ways about the city to experience its particular mix of the familiar and the unexpected.

4.0 Objectives

The following objectives are designed to achieve the intention of this Design Guide. They are:

- 01** to continue the variety of use and physical appearance of the area
- 02** to maintain the north-south transition across the Cuba Character Area
- 03** to maintain tangible evidence of the city's past and present as a context for future development initiatives
- 04** to ensure that buildings and open space display evidence of the use and activity they contain
- 05** to maintain and enhance current patterns of public access throughout the Cuba Character Area
- 06** to guide the design of development to ensure continuation of the existing scales and form of the area
- 07** to address local uncertainty by proposing a clear and enforceable image of the area's future

5.0 Guidelines

Urban Form

Urban form involves the composition and shape of blocks and streets which collectively define the Area's three-dimensional form and its pattern of public and private space.

G1 *Building Height*

The Cuba Character Area is part of the Low City. For the provisions relating to:

- maximum building height refer to rule 13.1.2.1
- specific street wall heights for Cuba Street refer to rule 13.1.2.7

and the Central Area Height Map within the District Plan Maps.

G2 *Street Edges*

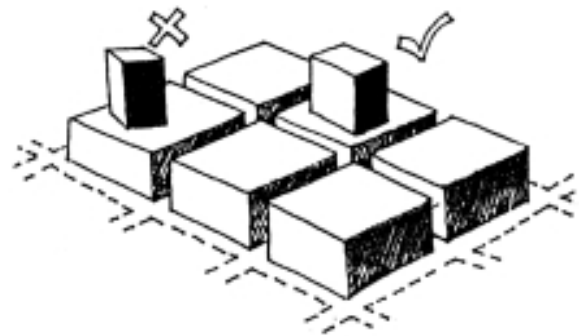
All new buildings are to be built to their street boundaries. Some variation is allowed where new development frontages on Cuba Street make provision for small seating recesses (approximately 2.2 metres wide by 1.2 metres deep) off, and facing, the street; or offer some provision for mid-block open space no wider than two typical shop widths (8 to 12 metres wide) and related to existing or proposed patterns of through-block pedestrian connection. Generally no more than four recesses for off-street seating are permitted per Cuba Street block, with only two recesses to any one side of the street and positioned so they are not side by side. In each case exemption from the continuous verandah requirement to retail frontages will be considered.

G3 *Building Orientation*

All buildings in the area not on street frontages and above four storeys should be aligned to reinforce the local street grid.

G4 *Corners*

Corner sites along the four Cuba Street blocks offer unique opportunities to mark the start (or finish) of each block, and their relatively different characters and transitions. These corners should have "built" edges to at least two-storey scale, to avoid opening up the characteristic and valuable containment of the street at its most sensitive points. Entries to street-level shops should be concentrated at these corners.



Where pedestrians gather at traffic lights on these corners, pavement areas may be enlarged by allowing for the recessed, weather-protected indentation of building facades or by some other method appropriate to the location. This would be particularly useful, for example, at Dixon, Ghuznee and Vivian Street corners.

G5 ***Buildings Fronting Open Space***

Owners of buildings edging areas of existing or proposed public open space are encouraged to develop frontages and entries opening directly onto this space - in a pattern similar to typical local street frontages.

Street Environment and Image

Street environment and image involves the composition, shape and communication qualities of street edges, particularly to Cuba Street and its side streets.

G1 ***Shop Front Windows***

Older buildings along Cuba Street and its intersections set a precedent for the width of shop fronts. The maximum frontage width for new ground floor retail uses south of Cuba Mall should be limited to the range of 4 to 6 metres. Larger uses should be narrow at the street and expand behind other shops. Wider shopfronts of between 10 and 12 metres have been the norm to the northern end of Cuba Mall.

Although the balance of shopfronts within the Mall are set at a maximum width of 6 metres, some variation for frontages up to 12 metres will be considered where larger department store uses are proposed.

G2 ***Street Entries***

Entries to buildings and shops at the street edge are required to keep to the width and frequency of current entrances, and should open directly on to the street and any adjacent pedestrian path or public open space.

All street entries to buildings should make provision for tenants' signboards to be placed adjacent to the entry and clearly visible to the passersby on the street.

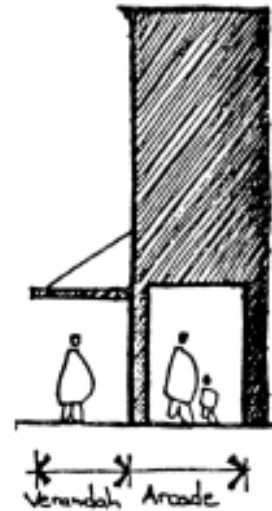
G3 Pedestrian Weather Protection

All frontages used as major pedestrian thoroughfares must offer pedestrians continuous protection from wind and rain in the form of verandahs related to the heights and depths of existing street canopies (refer to rules 13.1.2. and 13.3.2. and Appendix 8, Chapter 13 indicating these frontages).

G4 Personalised Shopfronts and Visible Interiors

Each retail outlet to Cuba Street and its intersections should be treated as an individual frontage, the signing and plan configuration of each to be left to the particular requirements and interpretation of the tenant.

Ground floor building uses in Cuba Street are a part of the street scene. Every attempt should be made to make shop interiors visible to passersby without contradicting the characteristic base board and window frame pattern of existing older shops.



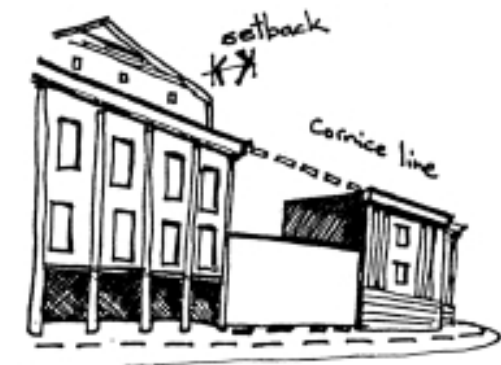
Building Design and Appearance

Building design involves the design and appearance of buildings that form the street walls of the area, and contribute to the composition of each block. The emphasis is on the external effects of design.

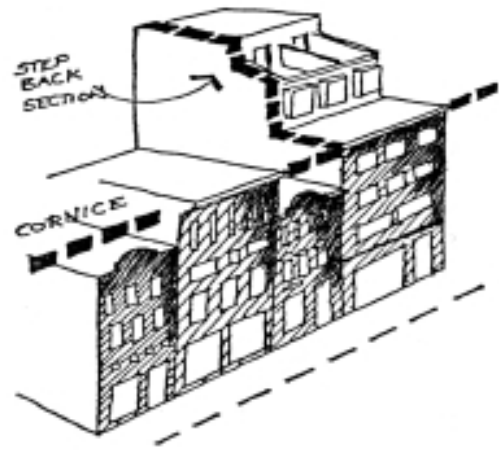
G1 Continuity of Facades

Given the quality of the old building stock fronting Cuba Street, and its intersections at Dixon, Ghuznee and Vivian, new developments with these frontages should reinforce the visual cohesion and continuity of those facades; particularly where new development adjoins older two and three storey buildings.

- Proposals should strive to maintain compatibility of cornice lines, floor-to-floor heights where these are strongly expressed, sign bands and other elements which serve to unify the street elevation as a whole. This is instanced by the West Side of the Cuba Street block between Abel Smith and Vivian Street. The strong roof cornice of the old National Bank building on the Vivian Street corner is picked up and expressed on the facade of the proposed new Salvation Army Citadel, to mark a break between the street wall and a building setback. With this pattern established, this type of acknowledgement should be encouraged as part of further new development in this block.



- Where buildings are proposed at single or two storey heights on frontages to Cuba Street (or its intersections), and adjoining buildings are significantly higher, proposals should consider the use of high parapets, false fronts and cornices to approximate more closely the average height of the neighbouring facades.
- Where new buildings are proposed to Cuba Street (or its intersections), and where these buildings are significantly higher than adjoining buildings likely to remain, proposals should consider the use of setbacks above the average existing height of buildings to keep all the building heights along the street front looking similar.
- Where the average frontage of development bordering Cuba Street (or its intersections) has created a distinct pattern of development, projects with larger-than-average frontages should maintain this pattern by articulating their facades to reinforce it.
- Wherever special detail, such as bay windows, recessed balconies, overhanging cornices or materials, has established a recognisable presence, new developments should try to use these in a manner compatible with the established character of the Street facade.



G2 *Communicating Variety*

The design of a development scheme should give outward expression of the full range of uses intended for the development. Evidence of use as part of the architectural composition of a building may range from overt display to subdued hints of internal activity. Whatever approach is taken, the evidence should be clearly seen from adjacent public spaces such as streets, parks or pedestrian routes. Opportunities to communicate "variety" extend to:

- **Building Imagery.** Building design should explore a range of appropriate imagery associated in some way with an aspect of a building's use.
- **Individual Shopfronts.** Individual shop front signage and display should be left to the discretion of the ground floor tenant. This may extend to the choice and form of verandah. Individual shop verandahs should vary along a street front where a number of retail outlets make up a single development frontage.
- **Roofs.** When building roofs, advantage should be taken of expressing the eclectic nature of the area through detail and form. Access to roof areas has previously been restricted within the character area. Access to roofs and their semi-public use

should now be explored for their potential as interesting outdoor space.

G3 *Past and Present*

Where existing building fabric cannot easily support the development brief or be adapted to meet its requirements, serious consideration should be given to incorporating significant fragments or sections of the former buildings as an innovative contribution to any new building design.

This is not a requirement for facade retention per se. It invites designers to bring their professional skills into play to acknowledge a certain quality of the district and respond to it.

G4 *Social Context and Image*

Development schemes should favour subdued or discrete entrances to new buildings, and avoid entrance areas which simply appropriate adjacent open space as a building threshold.

Where new open space is created as a building forecourt, or where a pedestrian route is provided through a new building, both should be designed and managed in such a way that the space can be used for twenty-four hour public access, free of any overt attempt to screen or restrict its pedestrian use to certain classes of physical appearance or social behaviour.

G5 *Access*

Advantage should be taken of opportunities to link major public areas (streets or open spaces) by pedestrian links through new building development.

Where this occurs, ground floor uses should open into, or be visible from the pedestrian link and should express the same qualities evident along the neighbouring retail streets.

Heritage Character

The area's buildings range in age from the mid to late nineteenth century through to new modern buildings. They represent architectural influences from Victorian and Neo-Classical, through Art Deco to buildings of Modern and Post-Modern origin.

It is the association of this mix of building types and styles with Wellington's history, and the architectural and historical continuity they represent, that contribute significantly to the area's character.

These requirements encourage the protection, rehabilitation and continuing use of key buildings and building groups considered essential for maintaining this character. The provisions of the Plan apply to heritage buildings within the Cuba Character Area (refer to Chapters 20 and 21 of the Plan).

G1 *Heritage Setting*

Where opportunities exist, new development should attempt to complete, improve and enhance the heritage setting of adjacent individual buildings or groups of buildings listed as heritage items in the Plan.

G2 *Heritage Compatibility*

New developments should pay special attention to the heritage compatibility of the following aspects of adjacent developments:

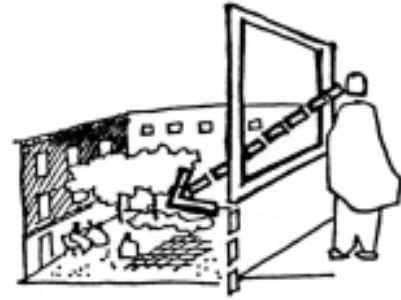
- building height, bulk, placement
- frontage module
- floor-to-floor height
- materials
- roof and cornice lines
- window size
- type of architectural detail
- entrances
- signage
- lighting
- landscape elements
- decoration
- colour
- any other special feature that may apply.



Residential Development

G1 Residential Presence

The design of residential accommodation should where possible express its residential use. The explicit and varied identification of each residential unit should clearly indicate its residential use as seen from any adjacent public street, pathway or open space.

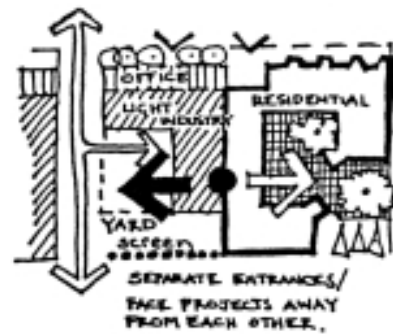


G2 Informal Surveillance and Safety

Residential accommodation should be designed to have a clear view of any nearby public space to assist the informal supervision of that space and add to the general level of public safety.

G3 Mixture of Uses

Where residential uses are proposed every effort should be made not to detract from the quality of the proposed residential environment. This especially applies to aspects such as appearance, safety, night noise, lighting, air quality and traffic.



G4 Entrance Transition

Give each doorway and entrance an appropriate entrance transition by introducing elements such as alcoves, seats, level change, direction change or materials change.



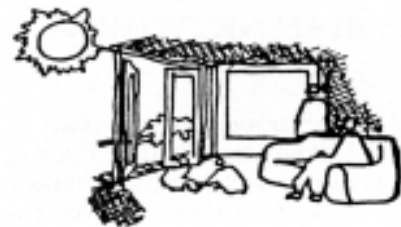
G5 Identifiable Front Entrance

Ensure that the front entrance of every housing unit is capable of becoming distinctly different from its neighbours.



G6 Sunny Main Rooms

Ensure that the most frequently used habitable rooms in every housing unit can receive sunlight.



G7 ***Roof-top Living***

Flat roofs above residential living areas should be accessible to people and roofscaped.



G8 ***Housing at Ground Level***

Where ground-floor units face pedestrian activity, place a raised terrace between the living areas and the public activity so that people outside cannot see directly into the unit.



G9 ***Outdoor Space***

Make habitable indoor/outdoor space (such as a balcony, gallery, porch, deck or arcade) at least 2.5 metres square.



Pedestrian Network and Open Space

Important opportunities exist within the Area for extending the provision of public open space and for establishing a safe, well-marked system of pedestrian movement. New development should recognise ad hoc patterns of local pedestrian movement by linking new areas of mid-block development and pockets of existing or proposed public open space.

G1 Usable Open Space

Too often, open space is left over in the wake of development with little consideration given to its use and comfort. The following two sections detail requirements for the use of open space in the Cuba Character Area.

- *Left-over Space*

Where left-over space occurs as a result of site development, new development should be shaped to create usable courtyard spaces that are formed by buildings and/or planting, rather than spaces that surround a building.

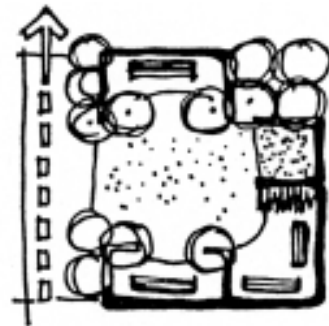
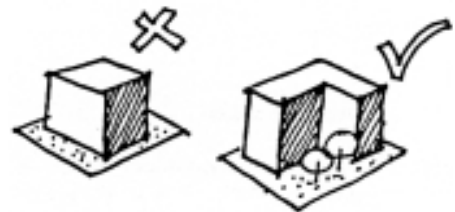
Small carparking areas, service courts or entry areas at ground level should be designed so as to combine their primary function with any possibility for outdoor recreation.

- *Peripheral Activity*

Any public space where people come to linger and collect should be surrounded by an alternating pattern of uses, small activity pockets, entrances and access paths, to ensure usefulness and generate pedestrian traffic.

- *Subdividing Public Space*

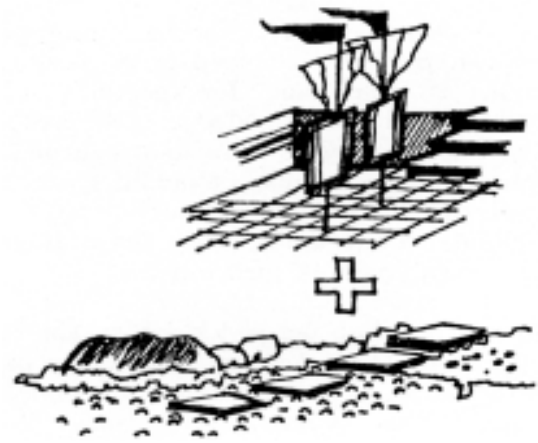
Surround major open areas with smaller autonomous areas to encourage smaller-scale activities to co-exist with the activity in the major area. Define these minor areas by the use of tree planting, structures, outbuildings, small mounds or other techniques.



- *Landscape Approach*

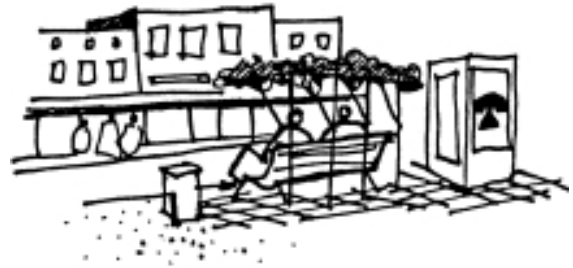
Both the "hard urban landscape design" and the "native planting - natural forms" approach to open space design have their place within the area. Landscape opportunities should be explored within both idioms, or through a mixture of each.

Either approach should utilise variations of texture, scale, wind and water movement, colour, sound, smell and shade to define spaces and make them unique.



- *Furnishing Public Space*

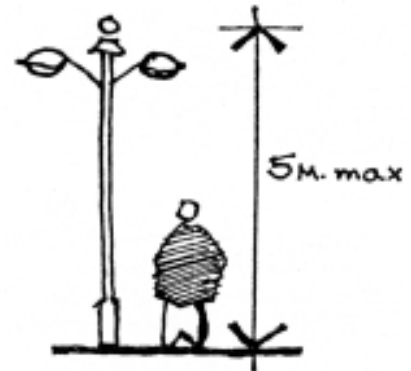
Furnish open areas with sunny places to sit that are protected from winter winds and overlook areas of activity or have an interesting outlook. Make provision within these areas for mailboxes, news stands, kiosks, telephones, rubbish disposal, information and display. Relate these amenities as close as possible to pathways through open space.



- *Lighting*

Pedestrian malls, parks and pathways should be given lighting of appropriate character and scale. Special lighting fixtures and the quality of light can enhance the identity of these areas.

Street lighting should be located at safe intervals along pedestrian pathways, with concentration near areas of higher pedestrian activity. Make sure that light standards are in scale with activity on the street (no higher than 5 metres). Lighting should enhance and not distort colours.



G2 Pedestrian Network

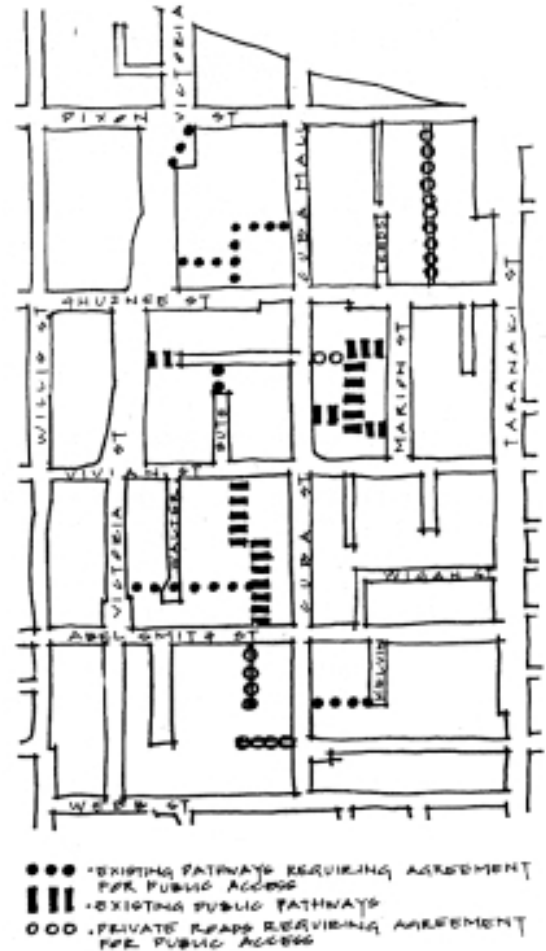
A comprehensive and connected series of public pathways, partially independent of a city's street system, is important for people's collective orientation and their knowledge of different parts of a city. These pathways form short cuts and provide access to sheltered areas of public space, open up centres of city blocks for public use, and help inhabitants to develop a strong sense of place and attachment to parts of their city.

With this in mind, the pedestrian system proposed for the Cuba Character Area sets out a pattern of circular pathways that criss-cross it, connecting the existing street system with new mid-block development and with pockets of existing and proposed public space.

Large parts of this network already exist, although sections of it lie across private land and have no formal public status.

A series of new pathways is possible to connect important pieces of the existing pedestrian system. These new connections will be pursued as part of Council's pedestrian policy within the area. All of these links lie across privately owned land.

As opportunities arise, either through change of ownership or new development proposals, Council will seek to establish these links by negotiating with the private landowners involved.



G3 Shared Outdoor Space

Surface carparking uses frequently occupy the area's sunniest and most sheltered mid-block areas. New development should exploit their potential as shared pedestrian space, involving the careful use of planting for small areas of sheltered seating.

All surface carparking proposals should be able to demonstrate that the space provides for the shared use by pedestrians and cars in such a way that the pedestrian amenity is enhanced, through planting, seating, lighting and other elements.

6.0 Action Areas

This section of the Design Guide does not constitute part of the Wellington City Council District Plan. It is included to provide an indication of design and management initiatives that Council believes would enhance the Cuba Character Area. Council will advocate to achieve these aims.

There are eleven special issues, or "action areas", where either a particular opportunity exists for Council action or where there is an aspect of character area make-up that requires some special acknowledgement and guidance.

Most of these action areas are particular instances of one of the general development issues. They are included here either because they are particularly important for achieving the objectives for the area, or because they provide the opportunity for fine-tuning development proposals.

Cuba Mall

Existing Conditions

A long-established (late 1960s) pedestrian shopping mall. Some attempt has been made to shape open space and form a central area. Through neglect it has acquired a run-down appearance. The existing landscape design has not explored the full potential for this sheltered, well-used and sunny open space.

Strategy

The Cuba Mall requires a complete redesign of its urban landscape and street lighting.

It still requires some covered space, but this should not include opaque roofing or obscure the street walls of the Mall. It should visually open up the Mall.

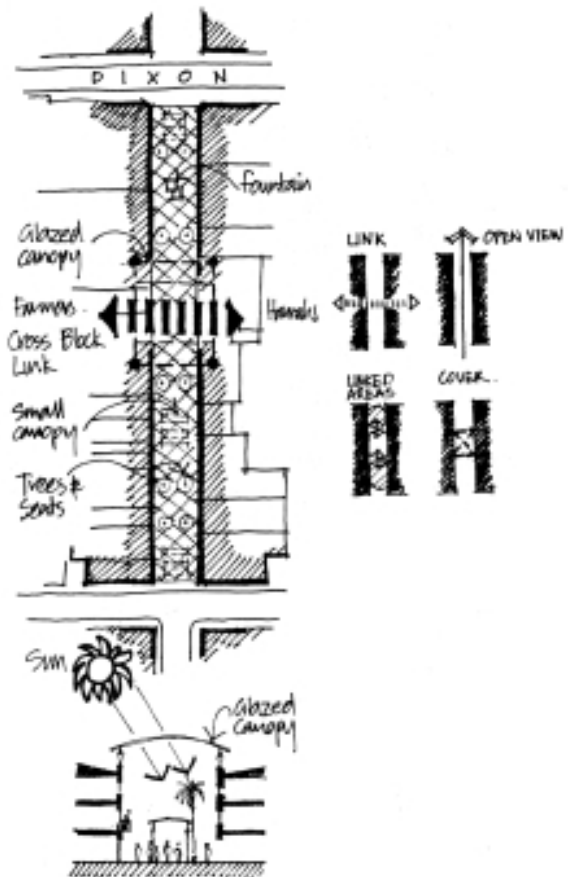
The Mall is long enough to be developed as two separate but linked areas, to encourage people to make use of the full street space.

Development plans for large sites on either side of the Mall create the opportunity for a new east-west pedestrian route, mid-point in the Mall linking the World Trade Centre/Farmers/Deka site and any future development on the Hannah's-owned land to the east. This should be seriously considered in any new landscape proposals for the Mall.

The Mall requires a management policy, and needs some group to take local responsibility for the maintenance and promotion of the Mall.

The current colourful use of the Mall for impromptu performances by street musicians, lunchtime street jugglers and the like should be encouraged and extended where possible as part of a management strategy.

The much maligned/much enjoyed sugar-scoop bucket fountain should resume pride of place in the Mall. A commitment is needed to oversee its correct operation and its regular maintenance and repair.



World Trade Centre, Farmers, DEKA Block

Existing Conditions

This potentially major development site has three owners. The site currently contains a mixture of three fairly large buildings with a tangled mix of through-site connection and relatively unexploited development potential.

If this site is jointly developed, its size and location present an opportunity to enhance not just the site but its immediate surrounding environment.

Strategy

Form/Scale/Sunlight

Design should maintain 2 to 4 storey level scale to Cuba Mall, with height and massing to the western end of the site. Overshading to the Mall should be minimised.

Corners/Edges

Design should emphasise block corners and street edges.

Heritage Buildings

Council will encourage some portion of the facade to the Farmers building or some evidence of its former presence, coupled with a group of 2 to 3 storey buildings fronting the south eastern edge of the site, to be substantially retained and integrated into any new development.

Frontages

All site edges offer potential frontages to their respective streets. The Victoria Street frontage where the street space is currently used for parking should be developed as effective public space fronting a major site entrance.

The varied scale of shop widths characteristic of Cuba Mall and Ghuznee Street should be maintained. This is generally small scale at the street edge, with larger floor area uses located within the block.

Uses

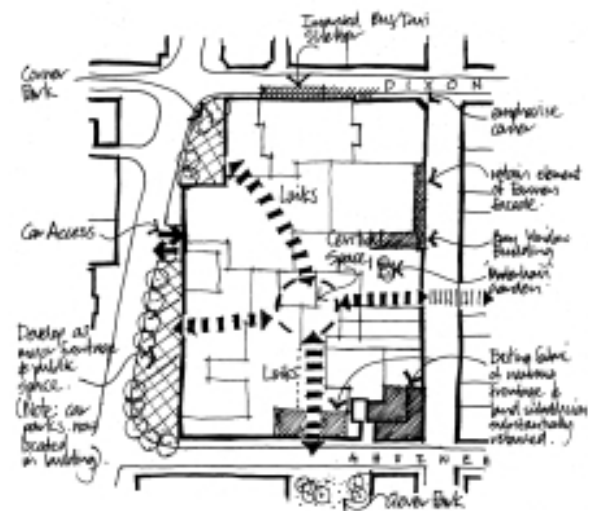
Uses should be developed which support and extend but do not commercially undermine the existing mix of speciality shopping/food outlets along Cuba Street.

Linkages

At least one major through-site link should combine with a mid-block open space. The link should connect with any mid-block pedestrian routes that may develop within the opposite block of the Mall.

Management

Any future comprehensive development should be encouraged to extend its management structure for public space to that of the Mall.



Bristol Hotel Service Lane

Existing Conditions

A service area at the rear of the Bristol Hotel and Barber Buildings contains two old brick stables. The space is sunny and intimate, but lies virtually unused. Ways of incorporating this area into the network of pathways and small open spaces in the Area should be explored.

Strategy

Retain and renovate the existing brick stables. Encourage the refurbishment of the Bristol Hotel and Barber Buildings.

Landscape

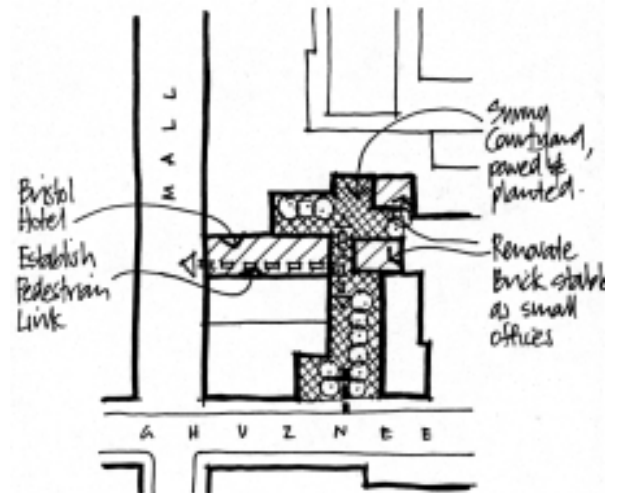
Encourage the development of landscaped courtyard, possibly paved and planted but not interrupting vehicle or service access.

Linkage

Encourage the development of a possible pedestrian link through from Cuba Mall.

Sunlight

Nearby developments should not cause the courtyard to be overshadowed.



Egmont Street

Existing Conditions

Egmont Street is a narrow accessway linking Dixon and Ghuznee Streets and is surrounded on both sides by a mixture of warehouse, commercial office space generally between three to eight storeys and vacant lots.

The accessway has various private owners. The District Plan map does not designate it as a public road.

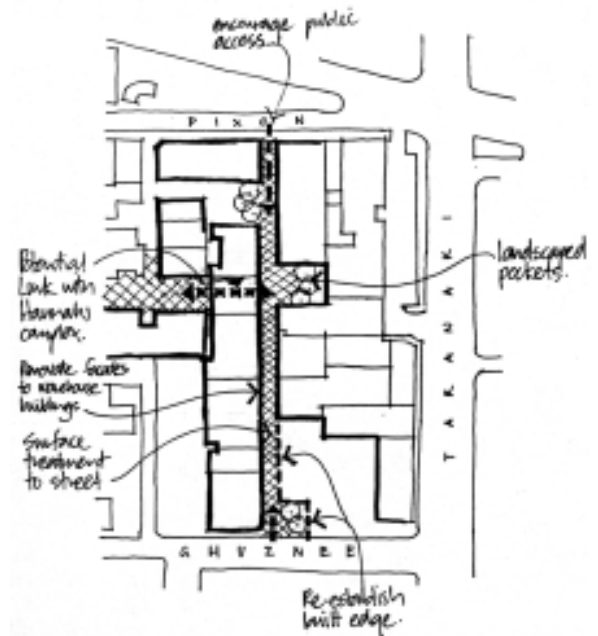
Strategy

Investigate the status of the accessway. Council should negotiate an arrangement with its various owners to ensure future public access.

Retain warehouse buildings or facades to the west side of the accessway.

Encourage small-scale open seating spaces on the east side of the accessway, particularly as part of vacant site development.

Investigate improved street lighting.



Mixed-Use Development

Existing Conditions

There are three large "holes" in the general block fabric of the area, all of which are substantially in Wellington City Council ownership. These are found in Marion Street, Walter Street, and the Bute/Garrett Street area. Council wishes to see such blocks "repaired" by new development complying with the design guidelines (Section 5).

Strategy

Linkage and Open Space

Provide pedestrian and vehicle linkages through areas to existing streets and footpaths, and include some public open space around which new development can focus.

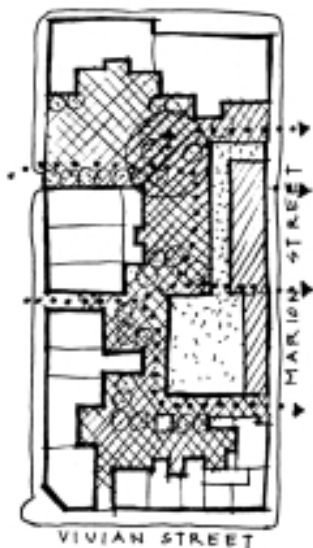
Mixed Use

Incorporate a mixture of uses, including carparking, residential accommodation and commercial or service uses. Ensure that commercial uses are located on the perimeter of developments and that residential use focuses on central open space. Some carparking provision should be made as part of any mid-block development.

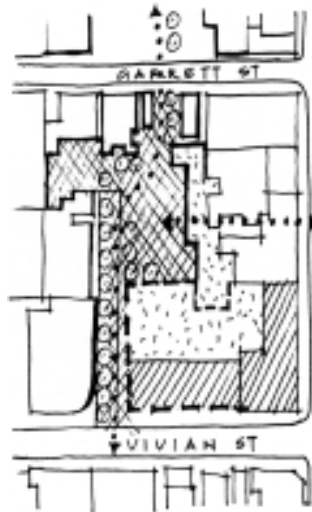
Council Initiative

Wellington City Council intends to initiate or sponsor appropriate development on its own land. In this way it not only directly implements the policies of this report, but influences future private development in the area.

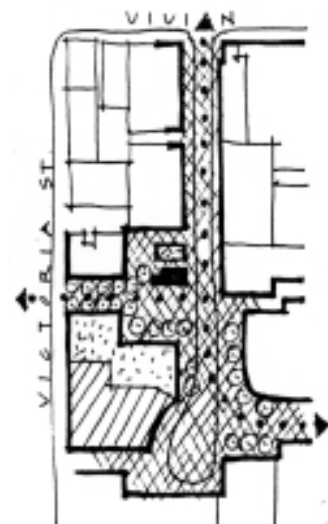
For example, Council could form a partnership with an agent for housing provision to promote residential development that would otherwise prove uneconomic in the inner city.



(a) Marion Street



(b) Bute/Garrett Streets



(c) Walter Street

Upper Cuba Street

Existing Conditions

The Upper Cuba Street area is located south of Abel Smith Street.

The area is characterised by a rich mix of inhabitants, a strong sense of community, low-rise buildings and "alternative" lifestyles.

Most of the area's residential population live in this area and many work here as well. The area is the home of a number of co-operative organisations.

A motorway development threatens to alter the character of the area radically displacing groups of people and individuals who have few other places in the inner city to locate.

Strategy

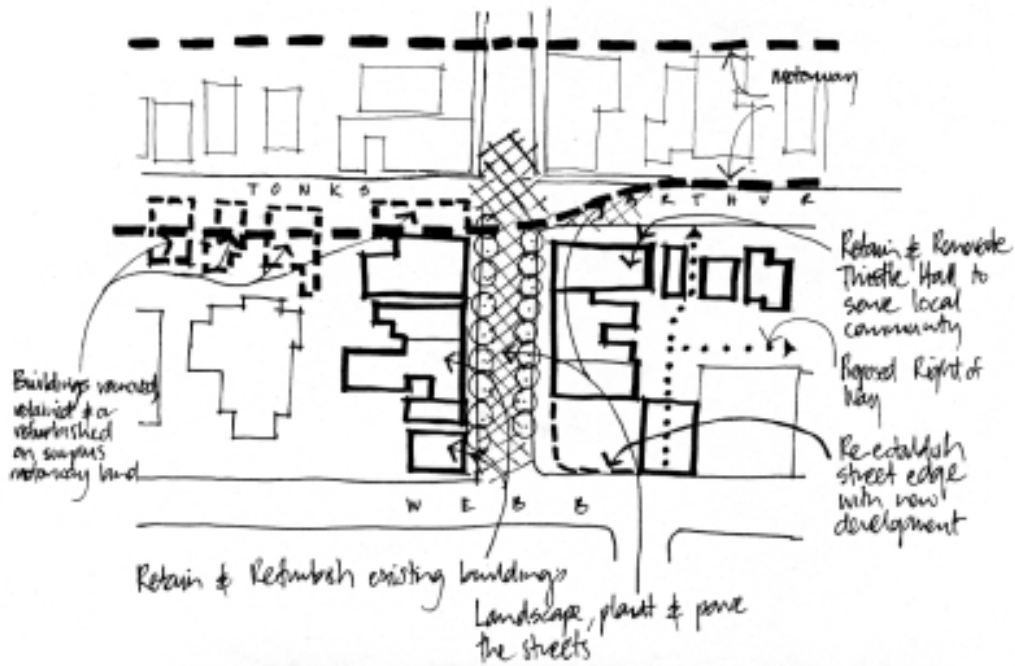
Retain and refurbish existing building stock and encourage the continuation of existing uses.

Encourage the development of a variety of housing types in this area, above the street frontage.

New buildings or additions should maintain the low-to-medium scale of the area.

Wellington City Council intends to retain and renovate the Thistle Hall and orientate its use to the needs of the local community.

Wellington City Council should actively pursue policies that improve the security and the satisfactory accommodation of various local community groups within the area.



Motorway Designation

Existing Conditions

An extension to the Urban Motorway is proposed on designated land across the area's southern blocks.

The route affects Upper Cuba, Arthur, Victoria, Willis, Kensington Streets and Tonks Avenue, and involves a double carriageway (with off ramps) sunk below ground in an open trench.

A strategy is required to minimise the social displacement and physical disruption to existing land, car and pedestrian patterns resulting from this project.

Strategy

Short-term use - Transition Period

Wellington City Council intends to negotiate with Transit New Zealand to ensure the active short-term use of designated land for uses related to local interests.

Wellington City Council may take over administration of short-term leases to underwrite, in part, its social policies for the area.

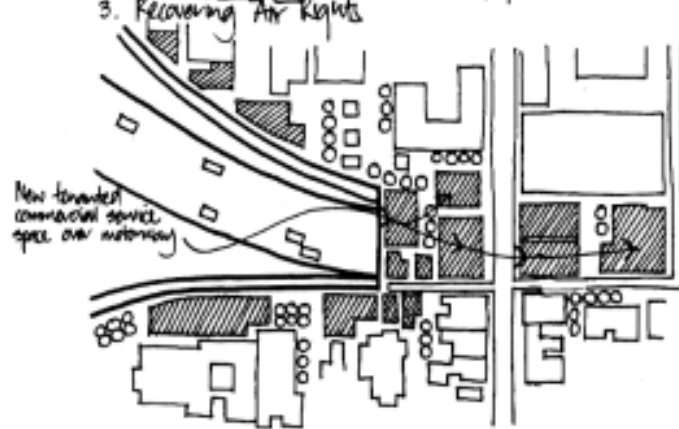
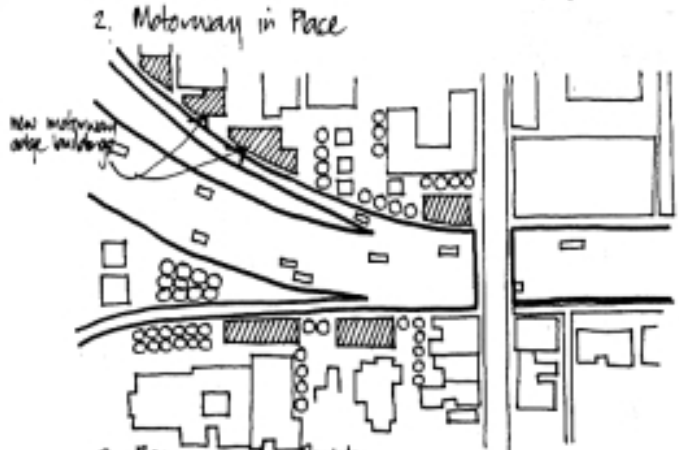
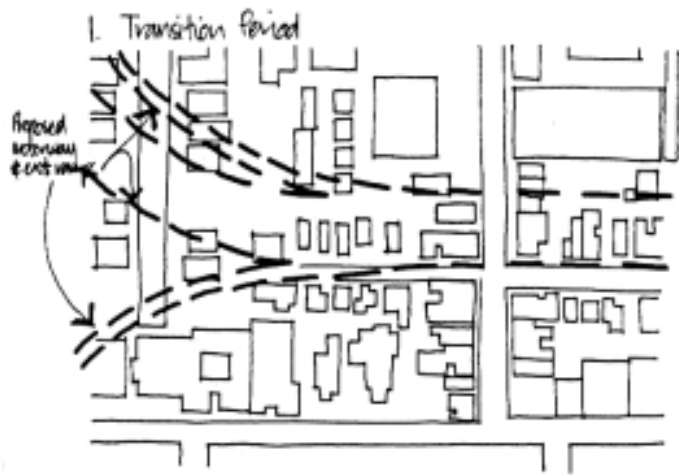
The aim is to avoid an area of run-down, empty sites and to support the continuing existence of the local community through a transition period.

Design of the Motorway

Every effort should be made to minimise the impact of the motorway trench on the area.

To this end:

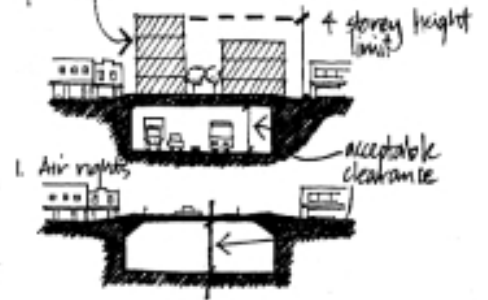
- all planning and design of remaining designated land beyond the trench should be the joint responsibility of Wellington City Council and Transit New Zealand
- the trench walls should be vertical, avoiding setbacks or battering
- the principle of a continuous "green corridor" to either side of the trench should be avoided. Residual space should be available for building
- new pedestrian routes should be developed to parallel each edge of the trench, linking through all the nearby public open space proposed for remaining designated land.



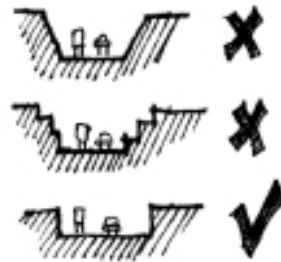
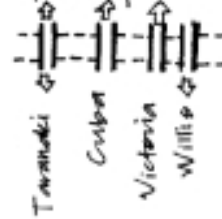
Building over the Motorway



New office/commercial space



Road patterns preserved



Footscray Avenue

Existing Conditions

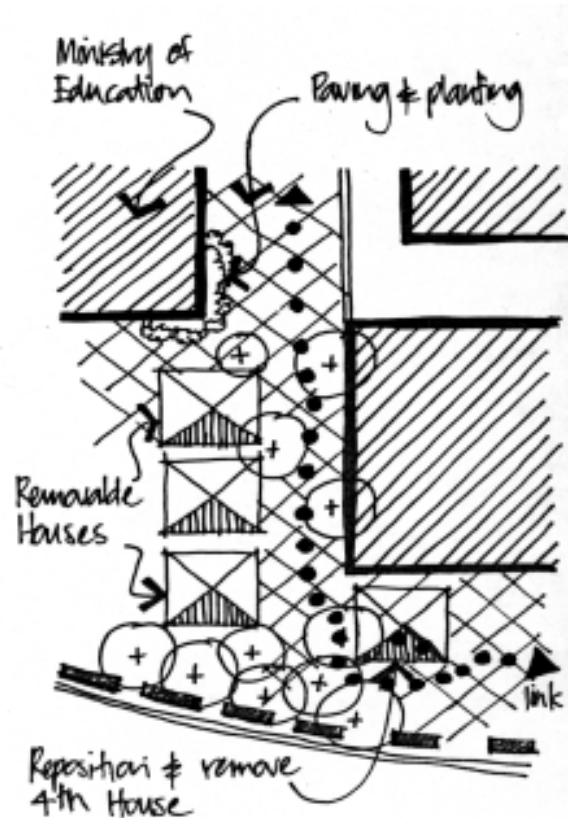
This is a small cul-de-sac road running off Abel Smith Street. It contains four cottages considered to be particularly good examples of nineteenth-century "model" dwellings for workers.

The cottages are surrounded by modern low-rise office buildings. Despite this, the Avenue retains a unique domestic quality. It illustrates the compatibility of low-rise commercial use with residential accommodation.

Their value is recognised by the Wellington City Council by being included in the District Plan heritage lists, and the Historic Places Trust has designated them as an Historic Precinct.

The land containing Footscray Avenue and the four houses and their lots is currently owned by the Ministry of Education and Transit New Zealand (two houses each).

The motorway designation includes the two southernmost houses. Motorway construction would require the temporary removal of the northernmost of this pair. The southernmost house would need to be permanently relocated.



Strategy

The continuing existence of the Avenue and its domestic quality should be maintained. Wellington City Council intends to negotiate with Transit New Zealand and the Ministry of Education to retain and renovate the four houses.

Education Ministry requirements for parking near their Abel Smith Street building should be accommodated on adjacent motorway-designated land, left over after construction is complete.

The southernmost house displaced by the motorway edge should be repositioned on the other side of Footscray Avenue, within motorway-designated land.

Footscray Avenue should be upgraded and its landscape design integrated with the adjacent Ministry of Education building.

A public right-of-access should be negotiated with the landowners, including guarantees for the appearance and function of the Avenue.

Ideally the city should negotiate to purchase the access and houses as a public street and heritage area with residential use.

Abel Smith Street/Vivian Street Right-Of-Way

Existing Conditions

An existing mid-block right-of-way runs from Abel Smith to Vivian Street. The "back doors" of Cuba Street properties front the right-of-way.

The right-of-way has been resurfaced with tar seal and white painted parking lines.

Strategy

Landscape Design

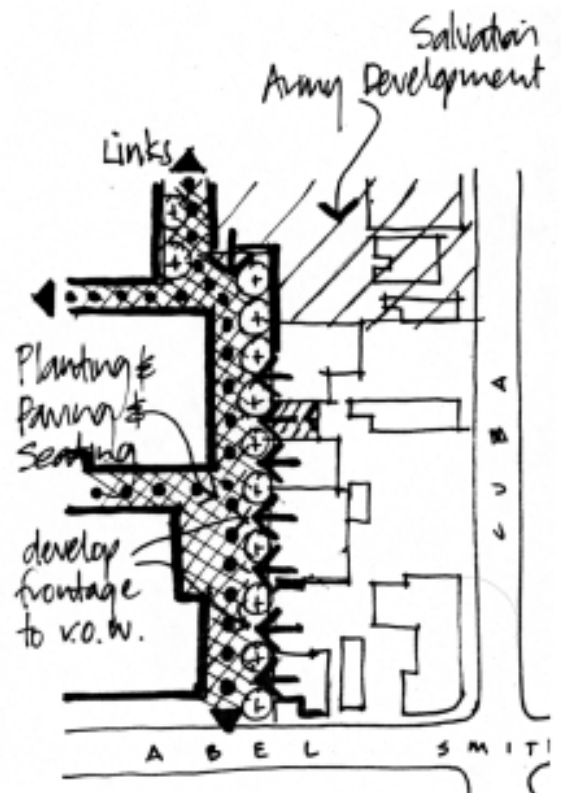
Landscape design should indicate pedestrian use as well as car access. Planting and paving should be used to soften the edges and surfaces. There is also some opportunity for seating in sunny positions.

Frontages

Open up backs of Cuba Street properties to the right-of-way, thereby creating new frontages and supporting its potential pedestrian uses.

Linkage

Cross-block linkage should be sought between the right-of-way and Cuba Street. This would complete a pedestrian pattern linking south to Footscray Avenue, north to Bute Street and west to Walter Street and Victoria Street.



Victoria Street Extension

Existing Conditions

This is a new road created from fragments of four previous north-south streets between Webb and Manners Streets.

Three triangular parking islands of varying width have been left over as a result of the street realignment. Currently they are utilised as off-street car parks with some screen planting. The sunny aspect of these spaces has not been fully exploited.

Strategy

Public Open Space

The triangular spaces could be used as much for pedestrians as for vehicles. Careful landscape design would improve the juxtaposition and mix of people and carparks.

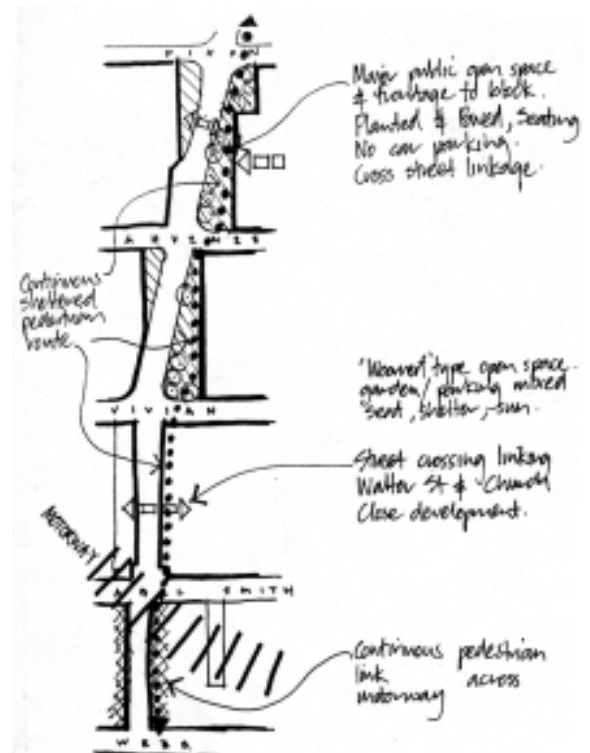
This would be achieved by resurfacing, enlarging grassed and planted areas, including sheltered seating areas, and by providing covered areas and accessways.

Linkages

Allow for cross-block linkage with development on western side of Victoria Street (for example, the Walter Street area and the Church of Christ Scientist/Church Close development).

Motorway

Where the motorway extension crosses Victoria Street, a continuous pedestrian link under or across the motorway should be maintained.



Glover Park

Existing Conditions

A city park running between Garrett and Ghuznee Streets west of Cuba Street. The park is designed on a series of levels with paths, seating and curved, brick screen walls.

Although well-located and established, its layout and brick screens and the colour and type of foliage used have produced a rather forbidding and private place, particularly along its western edge, which has compromised its full potential for comfortable and safe public use.

Its east and west boundaries are marked by the walls of neighbouring buildings with no park-related activities at ground level.

Strategy

Glover Park is generally well-sited and its current use suggests that many more people would use the park if it were redesigned along more open, visible lines. A revised landscape design should be prepared for the park opening up a central area to make it more visible from neighbouring streets and surrounding buildings.

Park lighting should be increased so that it will not appear such a dangerous place. A small children's playground should be provided towards the Garrett Street side of the park.

Increasing the park-related activities and uses around the park's edges would support more effective public use of the park.

The Culture and Recreation Division's work shed forms the south-eastern edge of the park. Council intends to explore the possibility of adding onto or converting the use of this building to provide alternative uses such as a small all-day cafe opening out to the park, associated with a kiosk selling magazines and newspapers.

A path should remain across the site to acknowledge the shortcut it represents and to link Ghuznee Street with any future development on the Council-owned mid-block site between Vivian and Garrett Streets.

