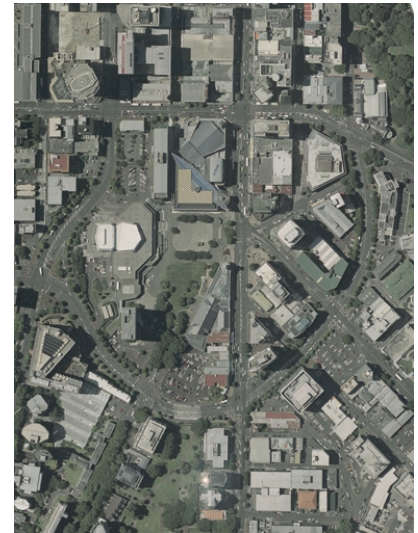


1 Executive Summary

PROJECT INTENTION & DESCRIPTION

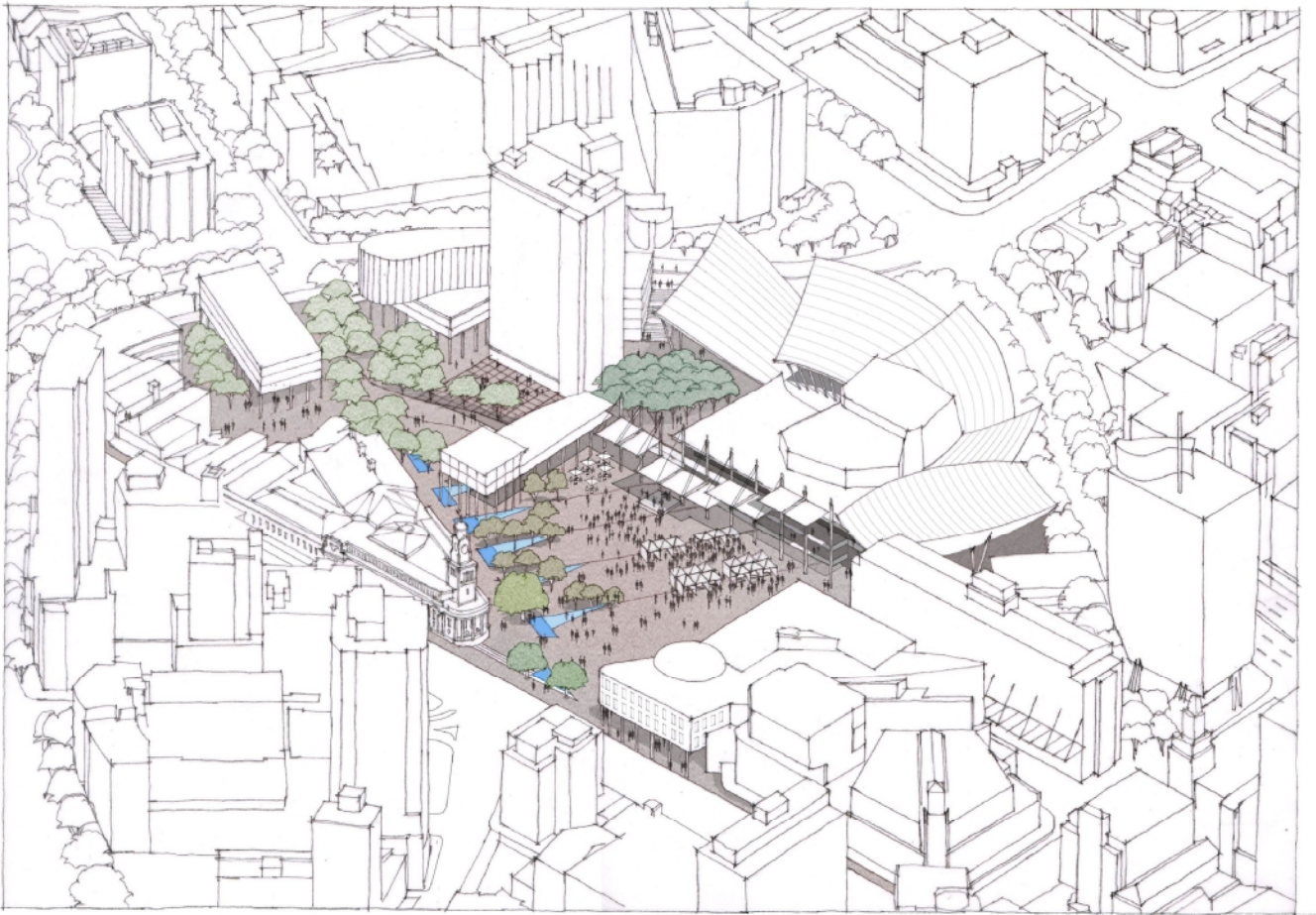
- 1 This study identifies proposals to overcome the problem of the car park failure and achieve a better result for the Quarter in general and Aotea Square in particular. It establishes design principles, recommends certain initiatives and identifies a range of opportunities that warrant further exploration.
- 2 The requirement to repair the roof of the car park, and the potential for changed conditions around the edge of the square result in opportunities that could cost-effectively enhance Aotea Square and its wider setting.
- 3 Preliminary assessment indicates a number of scenarios offer potential to give enhanced value to the square and to the city. All of these scenarios should be verified by a process of design development and further technical and economic assessment.



Aotea Quarter

VISION

- 4 As part of this project, a vision statement has been established for the square. Aotea Square should be:
The City's Centering Stage.....where the best performers gather and everyday people make cameo appearances in others' lives.



Design Exploration for Aotea Square and Quarter

VALIDITY OF AOTEA SQUARE

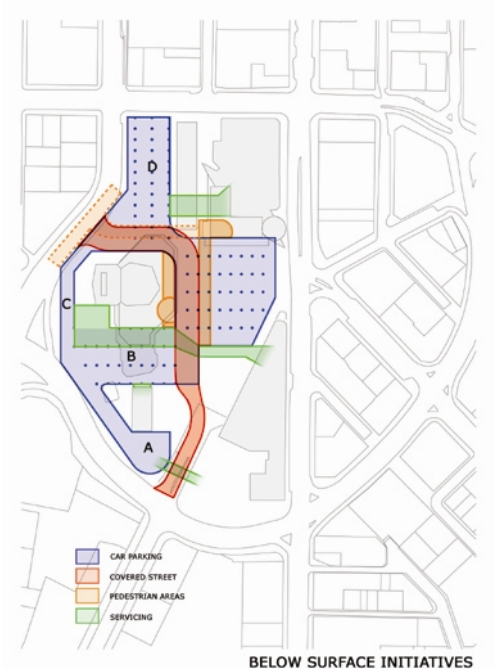
- 5 A major square is required in Auckland as an important civic venue for public life in the heart of the city. It complements neighbouring parks and other public spaces at the waterfront and along the water's edge, offering qualities that extend the range of social and cultural opportunities available to Aucklanders.

- 6 The square is properly located in the Aotea Quarter because a large public square is a necessary component of the arts, cultural, entertainment and civic heart of the city. In this location, a square relates to local urban form and is close to major centres and axes of activity. It enhances local amenity and vitality, and it contributes to people's understanding of the city.

- 7 Concept explorations reveal significant potential for reconfiguration of the space. The new layout can be coordinated with planned or possible activities within the Aotea Quarter.

CAR PARKING PROVISION

- 8 Car parking provision should remain, and additional capacity developed if possible. The existing car park is a major asset, supporting the activities around it. As activity within the Aotea Quarter intensifies, demand for car parking is likely to increase. Car parking is required to complement public transport and provide access to the city's cultural and entertainment heart. Feedback from the reference group and stakeholders indicates a preference for more parking here.
- 9 The existing car park is well located, but parking within the Quarter need not be located exclusively within the confines of the square. The Quarter offers a number of possibilities for additional parking in a variety of reconfigurations.



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

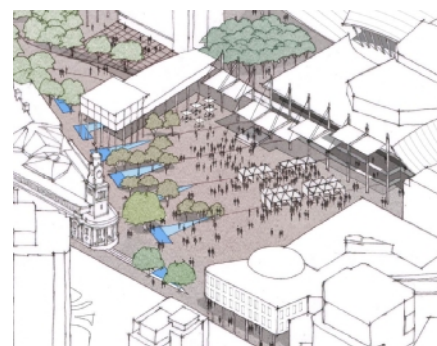
- 10 The vision referred to above can be realised with reference to the following design principles:
- 10.1 *Activity Layers* – provide simple flexible spaces that accommodate a range of activities.
 - 10.2 *Anchoring Landmarks* – preserve and celebrate the Town Hall, Civic Building and Bledisloe Building as landmarks of enduring quality.
 - 10.3 *Ordering Line* – continue the line of the Bledisloe and Civic Buildings as a device to order the western side of the Quarter.
 - 10.4 *Faces to the Sun* – configure edges of the square to create sunny active frontages.
 - 10.5 *Collection Point* – create a major civic public space with a simple surface, distinct edges and an easily recognised shape.

- 10.6 *Tributary Spaces* – place smaller more varied spaces around the western and southern perimeter of the main square.
- 10.7 *Dramatic Entrances* – make the square's entrances and exits more visible and enhance the experience for people using these.
- 10.8 *Great Street* – begin a step-by-step transformation of Mayoral Drive into one of Auckland's great walking streets while retaining its importance for vehicular traffic.
- 10.9 *Landscape Linkages* – achieve linkages to the underlying landscape, adjacent parks and the history of the site with planting and a water element.
- 10.10 *Life Underground* – construct a new thoroughfare beneath the square to celebrate the experience of arrival by vehicles and to provide for servicing for adjacent buildings.
- 10.11 *Distinctive Identity* - develop an authentic identity for the square that is derived from its immediate context: central Auckland at the south end of Queen Street.
- 10.12 *ESD* – showcase cutting edge design and management of public space which supports environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability.

CORE INITIATIVES

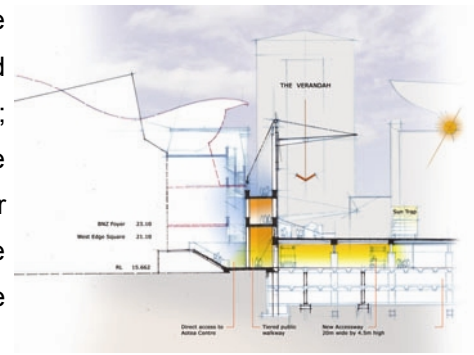
- 11 Four interlinked core ideas are essential to achieving an improved outcome for Aotea Square. These are:

- 11.1 ***Enhancement of the central public space*** of Aotea Square. This will be in conjunction with renovation of the roof of the civic car park; will make landscape linkages to the wider setting; and will integrate opportunities for edge occupation and movement arising from the 'Covered Street' and 'Verandah'.



Indicative treatment of Aotea Square & pavilion

- 11.2 **Covered Street** that enhances the experience of entering the civic car park and Aotea Centre; provides for efficient servicing; and, as a consequence, releases land at the edges of Mayoral Drive and Albert Street for more valuable uses. This would be constructed as part of the renovation of the roof of the civic car park.
- 11.3 **Verandah** that shelters the square along the facade of the Aotea Centre. This signature multi-functional element provides enhanced conditions for occupation and movement along the western side of the square and improves the accessibility and appearance of the Aotea Centre.
- 11.4 **Pavilion** that houses an important civic facility and gives physical definition to the south end of the square.



Design Exploration: Covered Street & verandah

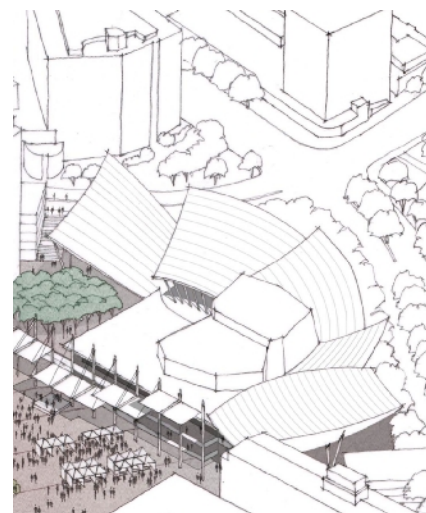
EXISTING INITIATIVES VALIDATED

- 12 A number of projects are already under investigation for areas at the periphery of the Square. These are supported, and comments are offered regarding the direction of their development:
- 12.1 **Bledisloe West site development** – potential exists for a variety of uses. Important issues include high quality connections into Aotea Square, active edges at ground and maintaining amenity for the Bledisloe Building.
- 12.2 **South Town Hall Cultural Precinct** – current plans for this area are consistent with contributing vitality to the square and Quarter as a whole and should be pursued.
- 12.3 **Myers Park Link** – recommended option is to create an open, water focused landscape link under Mayoral Drive.

OPPORTUNITIES

- 13 A number of opportunities arise that are highly desirable and worthy of further investigation. These include:

- 13.1 **Library Relocation** – preliminary investigations reveal a number of possibilities for locating the library on or in close proximity to the square.
- 13.2 **Mayoral Drive Edge Development** – the edge of Mayoral Drive should be defined by a range of low-medium rise buildings. These are most likely to accommodate office space fronting out to Mayoral Drive. Other activities are also possible.
- 13.3 **Aotea Centre Wrapping** – there is potential here for new activities which might include a convention centre, library or offices co-located with the Aotea Centre. The new structure should be treated as a major landmark building.
- 13.4 **Expanded Parking** – space exists for possibly 1700-1800 new underground parking spaces. Detailed investigation is required to determine layout and technical feasibility.
- 13.5 **Activation of Sky City Metro Façade** – an opportunity to enhance the orientation and vitality of the north edge of the square.
- 13.6 **Crossing Queen Street** – the presence of the square on Queen Street should be flagged in three-dimensional form, and various initiatives should be undertaken to assist pedestrian access from east to west across the precinct.



COST AND VALUE

- 14 Preliminary cost and value assessments demonstrate there is merit in further investigating the initiatives. Further detailed design and assessment is required to verify both cost and value. For this reason assessments of cost and value are not quantified in this report.

STAGING

- 15 Staging involves first providing ongoing car parking capacity and, at the same time, carrying out more detailed feasibility studies for the other initiatives. This will allow an integrated approach to the repair of the car park and the subsequent refurbishment of Aotea Square.
- 16 While close attention must be given to coordination, remaining project initiatives are largely independent of work on the square itself. All initiatives should be 'future-proofed' to keep potential related options open.