

This section presents the Central City Framework in more detail and explains the analysis behind it



strategic directions SECTION 5

Strategic Direction:

5

A Vibrant and Exciting City

Strategies aimed at making the central city more attractive to spend time in

In addition to being a concentration of employment and civic facilities, the city centre is the focal point for Dunedin's retail. Central city retail will benefit when people, locals and visitors, are encouraged to spend more time in the centre. A centre that offers vibrant and exciting places and experiences is able to do this best.

This Strategic Direction focuses on the attractiveness of the central city facilities and by extension its network of open spaces. This pertains to both quantitative as well as qualitative aspects. A well-functioning open space network includes public spaces within walking distance of all locations within the central city, offers spaces that are useable and fulfil a diverse range of functions for all users. Improvements to Queens Gardens and The Octagon as well as stronger linkages between these key open spaces help the city accommodate events of all types and sizes.

Initiatives under this Strategic Direction include:

- Protecting and strengthening the central city's retail position
- Enhancing the visitor experience
- Identifying additional public open spaces and their functions
- Improving Queens Gardens resulting from the opportunities offered by the proposed two-waying and reclassification of Crawford Street
- Enhancing The Octagon to better respond to its heritage setting, active edges and the need for green space
- Accommodating central city events in The Octagon and Queens Gardens



5.5.1 Regional Retail situation

Sections 5.5.1-4 contain adapted excerpts of a comprehensive report on retail and retail-related issues relevant to the Dunedin Central City. Refer to **Appendix 3** for the full report.

Dunedin has few of the retail role conflicts that beset other cities in New Zealand. Its CBD is dominant in the retail environment with suburban centres largely confined to a convenience or local centre role as opposed to a role that threatens the health and vitality of the CBD. This is an important economic issue as retail vitality in an urban (as opposed to a mall) environment unlocks a broader range of social and economic activity. The retail environment in the city appears to be relatively strong and healthy.

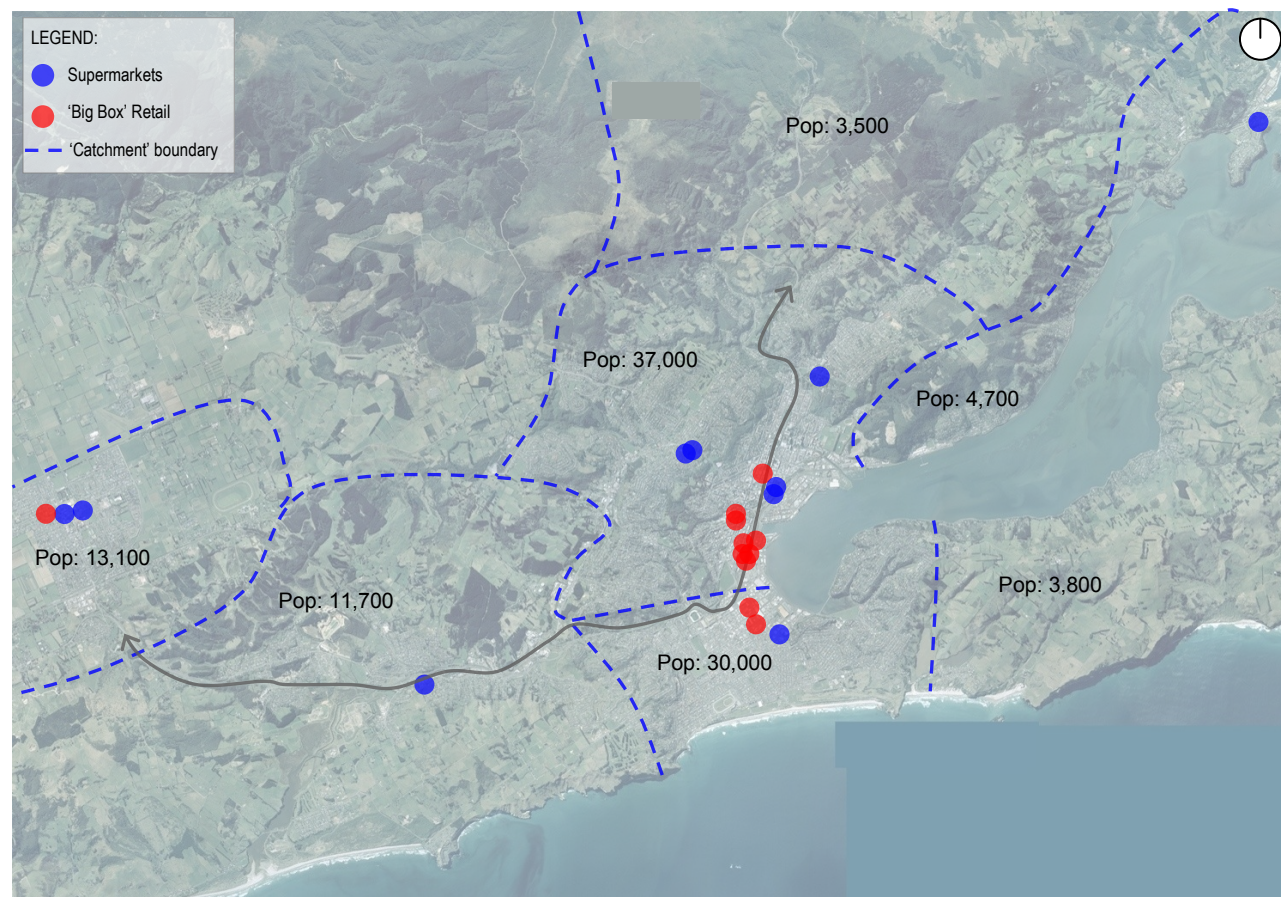
COMPETITION

Dunedin has to compete with:

- Queenstown's international attractor, possibly the new regional capital?
- Invercargill
 - Source of customers – shopping
 - Art and sports, other culture
 - Tertiary education
 - Link between rural land and Port
- Christchurch
 - Port competition
 - Some business services loss
- Auckland and Wellington
- The growing internet shopping market

LARGE RETAIL OUTLETS

The wider metropolitan area shows a relatively stable population base and an appropriate distribution of supermarkets for this population (Figure 5-41). In addition, most of the major "large format stores" are present in the market and also in numbers suited to the population base. The possible arrival of new entrants and the ability to find sites for such activities is a relatively minor issue as the catchment is well served by such activities already. Adding another major store in the



ABOVE FIG. 5-41: Approximate locations of supermarkets and large format retail outlets, relative to population sizes and catchments

appropriate zone for this, located in the Warehouse District, will not materially add to the economic capacity of the city. Instead, the high value employment opportunities provided by the Creative Quarter do lead to adding to the wealth of the city. Taking up valuable space in the Creative Quarter would therefore come at an opportunity cost and would detract from one of the LTCCP's objectives of wealth creation.



ABOVE FIG. 5-42: Central city retail precincts

5.5.2 Central city retail

Several retail precincts can be identified within The Central City:

1. George Street - Retail Core
2. Octagon area - Civic, Food, Drink, Entertainment
3. Princes Street - Fringe Retail and Business
4. Warehouse District - Transition
5. Southern Warehouse District - Large Format Retail
6. The Dunedin harbourside area - 'Separate Place'

1) George Street - Retail core

The retail core of the city lies to the north of The Octagon, which generally acts as a full stop to the potential for a healthy and organic spread of retail stores to the south along Princes Street. It is important for the economic health of a city that specialty or fine grained retail (as opposed to large format or anchor stores) has a relatively free reign in contiguous street front locations around the city centre. This encourages a range of retail activities at a range of price points and stimulates business formation and entrepreneurship.

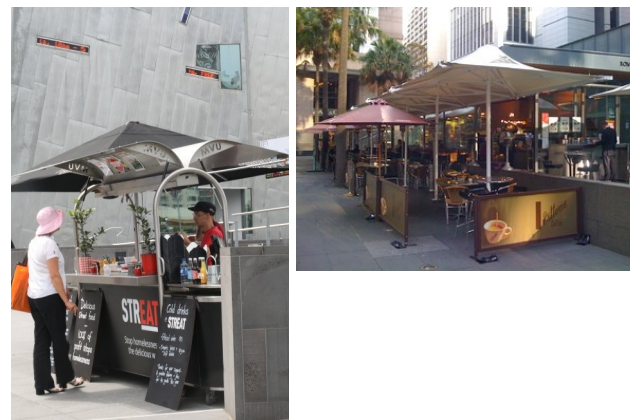
However, there is no benefit in modifying The Octagon in order to change this dynamic. Rather retail south of the Octagon and within the Warehouse District / Creative Quarter should develop its own role, qualities and character and not compete directly with the retail core to the north.

2) Octagon area - Civic, Food, Drink, Entertainment

Dunedin's civic heart is undoubtedly formed by The Octagon. This area features the City Council headquarters, The Municipal Chambers, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Public Art Gallery, a cinema, large areas of public space, various bars and restaurants, offices, and boutique retail.

As described, The Octagon somewhat functions as a divide between the retail core in George Street and the activities in Princes Street. In order to minimise the perceived distance from George Street to Princes Street through The Octagon, an increase in public realm activity

should be considered. One way of adding greater pedestrian life through the middle of The Octagon as well as securing the area would be to encourage New York style linear kiosks selling newspaper, fruit and vegetables, hot dogs etc. Views and other public space design aspects such as the current walkway covers through the middle of The Octagon should be considered. Spatial redesign options for The Octagon are presented elsewhere in this report (Section 5.5.10).



3) Princes Street - Fringe Retail and Business

The development of additional retail in and around Princes Street is desirable if it acts to inspire a broader range of employment and revitalisation of the wider Creative Quarter. Retail south of The Octagon is therefore seen as a subsidiary service mechanism for wider economic endeavour and not as an alternative to the retail core that is positioned to the north.

However given the characteristics and intent of the proposed Creative Quarter, retail that is a product of on-site or Otago-based design activity should be encouraged. It would be ideal if design-based retail became a major feature of the precinct. Such retail could be in the fashion, home wares, accessories or furniture and furnishings categories but could also include the visual arts. Improvement of the connectivity with the Warehouse District is therefore crucial.

Anything that is local design based should be allowed at any scale. Otherwise any boutique retail (specialty retail) should be allowed if it directly contributes to the vitality of the street (no internal retail unless in the form of a design centre). Specialty retail is in this context classified as anything less than 300m², unless local design or specialty food (but not supermarket), which can be bigger. This precinct should be given a relatively free reign to evolve. It needs to develop its own cache and can act as a counterpoint to the core north of The Octagon.

Although design-based retail is preferred, a fashion outlet would also be acceptable, provided that all of it addresses the street in the form of multiple buildings, and not an internalised centre. An outlet could form an obvious starting point and could work early to assist to trigger high intensity use and employment on upper building levels and internal spaces.

Retail is considered not on its own account but as an inspirer of a wider and more intensive and high value employment mix. Retail is therefore subservient to this objective (hence the need to ensure that it activates the public realm as the highest priority).

4) Warehouse District - Transition

The current provisions in the District Plan provide for large format retail in the Warehouse District (the proposed Creative Quarter). Some smaller versions of this activity have sprung up on the east side of Cumberland Street, but generally the market has not required this area for the purpose for which it was intended. Large format retail is amongst the lowest economic yielding activity in any city. To largely quarantine an entire area of the basis of a possible future change in the retail market is not ideal. The city is well served by a range of retailers in the general "large format" category and the likelihood of replicating or adding additional large format stores is low. Despite industry preferences to co-locate such stores into major centres this would be almost impossible within this precinct due to heritage constraints (even if such an outcome was considered desirable). Furthermore the urban qualities of the "Warehouse District" are exceptional and ideally suited to creative industry, which offers a much higher economic return to the city and better fits with the "Wealthy Community Vision" as outlined in the LTCCP. Given the evolution of businesses out of and around the tertiary education sector, this precinct seems ideally suited to intensification and provides an adaptable and flexible platform for a variety of clean and creative industry activities as well as inner city living. The qualities of the precinct could be further improved by public realm works that softened the street edges and modified traffic behaviour in streets such as Vogel and Bond Streets. These streets could be seen as shared spaces, but it would be important to retain as much of the parking as possible so as to lessen the effects of higher levels of visitation and activity.

Improved connectivity with the retail core and the civic heart is crucial for this area to generate a benefit and function as complementary to other areas in the central city.

5) Southern Warehouse District: Large Format Retail

The Southern part of the Warehouse District and the area to the south of it (up to The Oval) accommodates predominantly large format retail and smaller service and

trade retail. Different from the area roughly north of Police Street, the built form in this area is dominated by lower quality buildings, several with large setbacks for parking or trading yards on the street side.

It is envisaged that this area continues to attract these uses. However, District Plan revisions may be required in order to align the minimum site sizes in the Plan with what is currently available.

6) Steamer Basin / the harbourside area - 'Separate Place'

The Steamer Basin is largely severed from the city centre due to the interventions of the State Highway, the heavy traffic bypass and the rail line. Even with the most effective pedestrian devices that could assist people to cross these barriers the site is a separate place from both the core city centre and the neighbouring Creative Quarter. For this reason its retail and commercial role should be carefully managed. Food service retail would be expected to be the dominant activity in the Basin, with other retail categories as ancillary. The objective for retail at the Steamer Basin should be for it to be a subservient use to other activities. There is possibly one exception to this being a fish market. However it is unknown as to what capacity exists for such a use that expands existing sea-based activities and facilities. In other words we would accept a retail use that expanded on the economic relationship with the sea, but not a use that is well provided for elsewhere and which through its location elsewhere generates wider economic benefits and effects. The scale of development in the Basin in a city with limited growth is clearly a tension given its degree of separation from the city centre. As an objective it would seem appropriate for regulation to require the Basin to not act to disperse activities that are better concentrated in the central city. Activities that fall into the sensitive categories in this respect are signature offices and comparison retail.

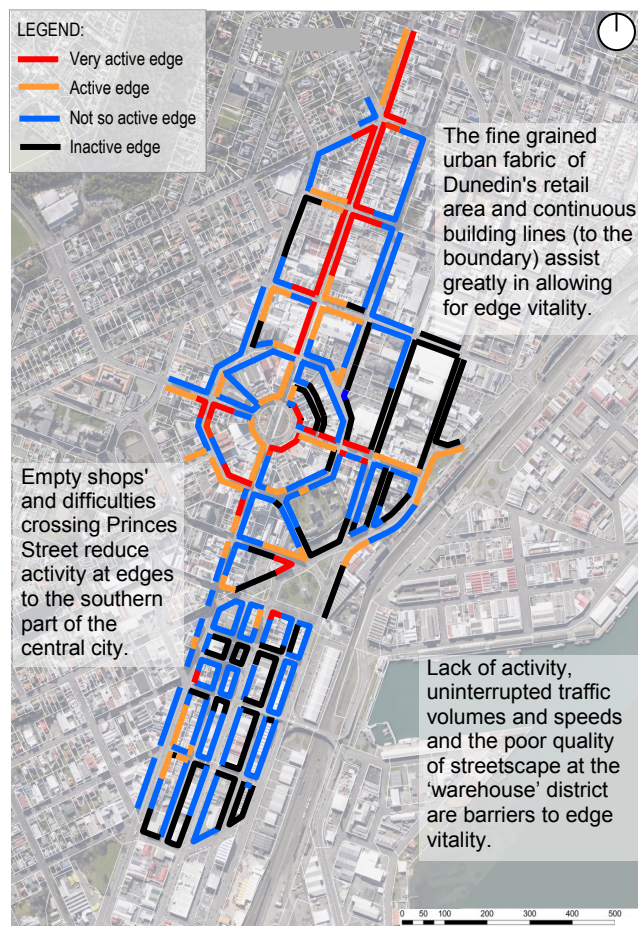
5.5.3 Edge vitality

Figure 5-43 illustrates the activity or lack of activity experienced on the built street edge. There is a noticeable relationship between the quality of the streetscape (the public realm design and traffic conditions) and the response of the land use to it. The reverse could also be true: areas that are less attractive to walk past, due to their inactive edges or dominant vehicular traffic, would be less likely to have qualified for a streetscape upgrade.

The main observation from this analysis is that George Street undoubtedly features the most extensive uninterrupted area of high level activity on the street edge. This coincides with its identification earlier in this report as the centre's retail core. Conversely, secondary retail areas, including Princes Street immediately south of The Octagon, feature less active street edges. Activity levels on Princes Street gradually diminish going south due to empty shops, modern office blocks with poorly designed ground floor edges and inhospitable environmental conditions.

Points to note include:

- In many areas outside George Street, edge vitality is negatively impacted by large areas where buildings back onto the street. Examples of this can be found in Cumberland and Castle Streets, the State Highway one-way pair where motorised traffic is dominant and pedestrian conditions are harsh.
- Another example of an area with not so active edges is observed in Filleul Street where poorly designed buildings and on-site car parking interface with the street.
- In the 'Warehouse District' large areas suffer from extremely low levels of activity at the street due to vacancies and buildings that are underutilised.



ABOVE FIG. 5-43: Edge vitality

5.5.4 City management and economic development

Successful cities typically have place-based management organisations in place that facilitate change and improvement in their city centres. This is currently missing in Dunedin City. Such organisations are usually retail-dominant and actively involved in marketing and public realm works along with civic lobbying and facilitating deals between new tenants and landlords. However, most management entities operate in a competitive environment with the suburban centres challenging their role. This dynamic does not exist in Dunedin. This begs the question as to whether the city would perform better with centralised management that was exclusively focused on the city or whether it is needed at all. In retail terms possible benefits to the city would lie in the following areas / activities:

- Focused marketing to regional residents and visitors.
- Coordinated public realm maintenance.
- Proactive promotion of the city to new or desired retail tenants.
- Active lobbying of central city / retail issues to the Council.

Any strong signals that the city needs such an entity were however not picked up, so it is recommended that it does not have high priority. As outlined above, the city centre is in a relatively unique position in New Zealand in that it does not have major competition for its role from the suburbs. Given the higher economic tasks of the EDU and its importance in assisting to deliver the "Wealthy Community Vision" it should not be distracted from this task by being the city centre manager.

If a management organisation were set up, ideally such an entity would be predominantly funded by a special rate collected from the businesses within an identified area and turned over to the management company. In such a model the entity would sit outside the Council, but with Council representation on it. If the Council entirely funded the management entity, then it should most appropriately sit within a division of the Council.

5.5.5 The visitor experience

The current visitor experience of the central city has been analysed as part of this project. The result is shown on the map overleaf.

The following propositions have consequently been identified:

- With the (at least perceived) lack of signage to public parking, to camping grounds, to the i-site and to the railway station, this should be improved.
- There is lack of long term parking accessible for campervans and in walking distance from The Octagon. For this reason the railway station should be promoted and if needed improvements should be made for it to function as a central transit hub with parking, coach and mini-bus set-downs, and passenger transport information.
- The relocation of the i-site should be considered in the long term. This should include a location in or near the railway station, if severance of the connection with The Octagon can be reduced.
- More areas of short term free parking (P10, P30), especially near the current i-site should be considered as part of a more comprehensive consideration of on-street parking.
- The State Highway one-way pair is a barrier between the area around The Octagon and some major tourist attractions, including the Otago Settlers Museum and the railway station. This Central City Framework proposes reduction of the severance of the State Highway one-way pair south of Leviathan Hotel. An intervention in the future dealing with the State Highways north of this point (in outline terms supported as part of this Central City Framework) will improve the pedestrian routes to the railway station and the Settlers Museum.
- In response to the (perceived) lack of toilets in accessible and safe places, new locations should be considered.
- The legibility of the bus system should be improved for people who do not use it daily.
- Tourist trails with signage and interpretation should be introduced (e.g in the London Street-York Place area, and the route: Octagon - railway station - Queens Gardens - Exchange).
- The square in the Exchange should be introduced as an orientation point and gateway to future visitor attractions in the Warehouse District.

Non-spatial analysis identified that the visitor stay could possibly be extended by:

- Better packaging of visitor attractions.
- Further improvements to the promotion of Dunedin's attractions.
- Growing the heritage awareness, leading to better 'story telling' to the visitor.

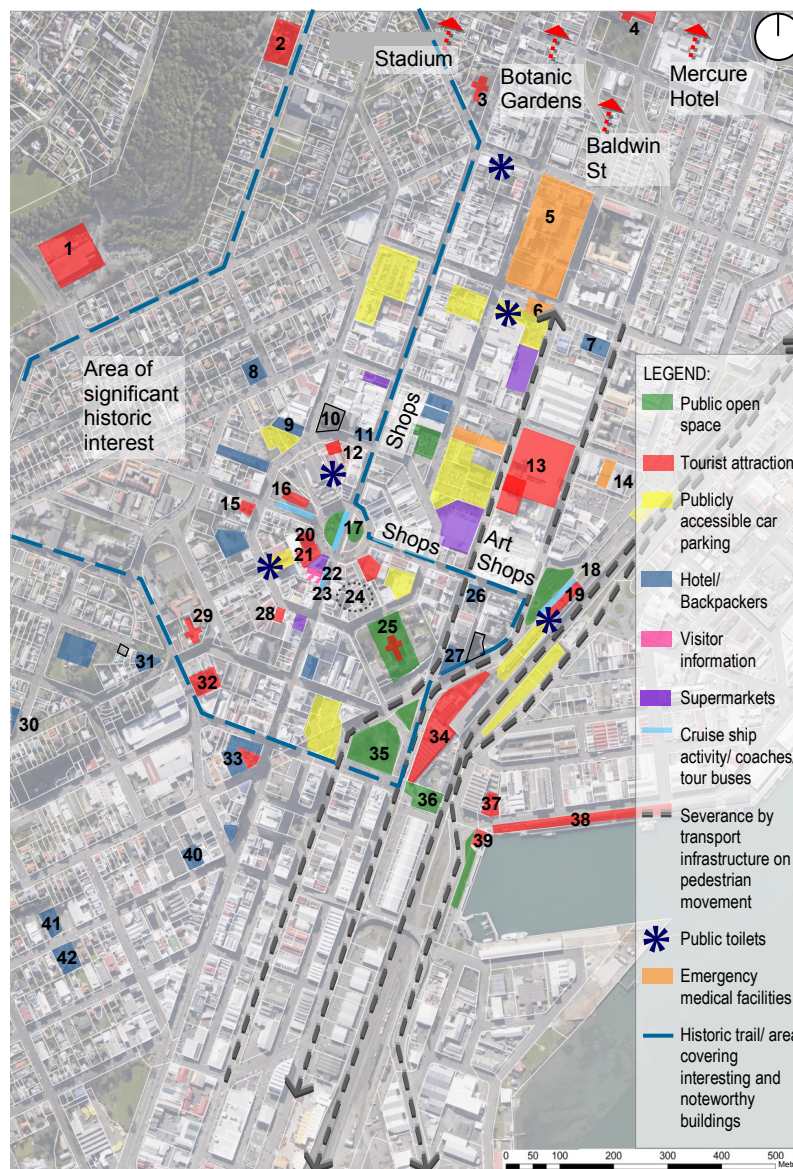


ABOVE FIG. 5-44: Proposed improvements of the visitor experience

Background analysis: the visitor experience

Figure 5-45 illustrates the main visitor attractions and other items relevant to the visitor to the Dunedin Central City. The numbers on the map refer to the following:

1. Moana Pool
2. Olveston
3. Knox Church
4. Otago Museum
5. Accident and Emergency
6. Emergency Pharmacy
7. Living Space
8. York Motel
9. Backpackers
10. Post Shop
11. Backpackers
12. Metro
13. Cadbury
14. Intercity Bus Depot
15. Fortune Theatre
16. St. Pauls Cathedral
17. Octagon Market/ Cruise ship drop off
18. Farmers Market
19. Station, Sports Hall of Fame, Taieri Gorge Train, Art Society
20. Hoyts Cinema
21. Arts
22. i-site
23. City tours
24. Arts
25. First Church & Museum
26. Law Courts Hotel
27. Leviathan
28. Rialto
29. St Josephs
30. Backpackers
31. Backpackers
32. Speights Brewery
33. Casino/ Hotel



34. Otago Settlers Museum
35. Queens Gardens
36. Chinese Gardens
37. Pub
38. Cruises
39. Customhouse (restaurant)
40. Backpackers
41. Backpackers
42. Backpackers

ABOVE FIG. 5-45: Attractions and other items important to the experience of the visitor to the Dunedin Central City

5.5.6 Public open space distribution

The distribution of public open spaces within the central city has been analysed. Drawing a circle representing a 5 minute walk around each open space illustrates which areas have and which areas do not have public open space within walking distance.

Figure 5-46 shows the result of this analysis. The main findings include:

- The central city is generally well provided with urban open spaces within walking distance (400m) of any location within the centre.
- There is a noticeable shortage of open space in the north of the CBD with a gap being shown between in the area bound by Frederick, Filleul, St Andrew and Great King Streets.
- The grounds of First Church offer the potential to serve as additional open space and could further strengthen the network between Queens Gardens and the CBD.
- Council-owned land should be investigated for their potential to create additional open space or linkages between existing open spaces.
- The privately owned car park at the bottom of Burlington Street could be strategically important in providing additional open space connections.
- Existing public open space could be redeveloped to improve its performance and attract intensified use.
- The State Highways diminish the actual walkable catchment of open spaces.



ABOVE FIG. 5-46: Public open space distribution



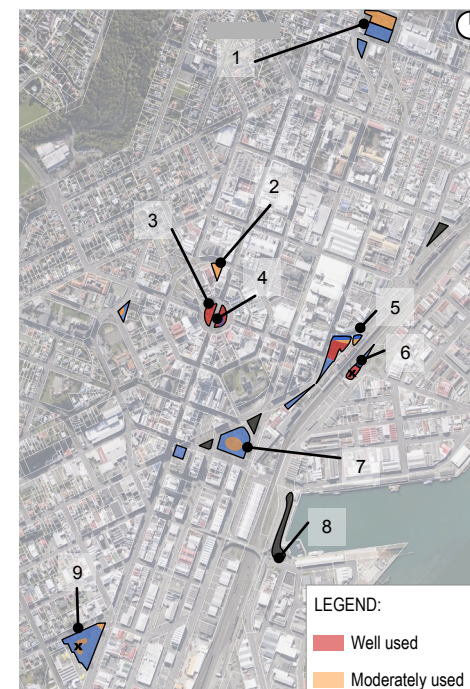
5.5.7 Public open space quality

The quality of open spaces within the central city has been assessed, based on gradations of how well-used they are. The result is shown in Figure 5-47.

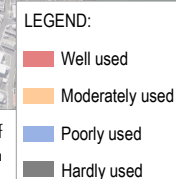
Highlights include:

- The grassed area in The Octagon is popular for passive recreation. The bottom area suffers from lack of use due to its exposure to the elements and design that fails to suggest use.
- Traffic has been identified as having a negative effect on the edges of much of the city's open spaces.
- Improvements and upgrades should address issues of poor definition and access.
- Well used inner city open spaces such as the upper Octagon and the library plaza could be improved through upgrades to landscape treatment, materials and furniture.

In addition to the distribution and qualities, the different functions of central city public spaces have been assessed. These assessments together have led to propositions for upgrades of existing and developments of new public spaces within the city centre. These are presented over the following sub-sections.



ABOVE FIG. 5-47: Quality of existing open space, based on how well-used the spaces are



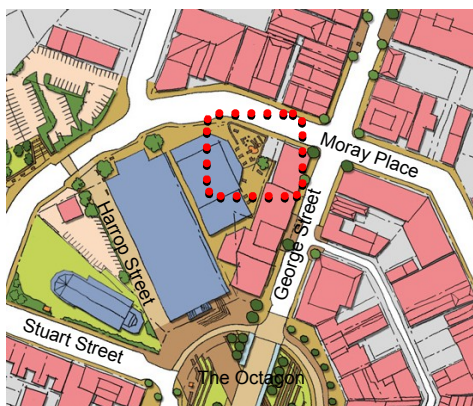
1. Museum Reserve: well used, but interference with traffic movement on peripheral parts. Predominantly a pedestrian movement area with less emphasis on passive use, i.e. pass through, rather than stay.
2. Library plaza: well used, but needs better definition.
3. Upper Octagon: well used.
4. Lower Octagon: some confusion of use, conflict between passive and active.
5. Railway station: iconic setting.
6. Skate park: well used for this specific purpose, needs better definition of edges.
7. Queens Gardens: conflict between active traffic movement and passive use; peripheral areas very under-used, due to strong influence from traffic.
8. Steamer Basin Reserve: not as well used as it potentially could be.
9. Market Reserve: steep bank discourages access; playground relatively well used; traffic issues along southern boundary; very exposed.

5.5.8 Public open space proposals

The analysis on the previous pages has led to a number of open space related proposals. This includes open space upgrades, redesign, playgrounds and public toilets. The numbers below refer to the proposed sequence and correspond with the numbers in Figure 5-48.

1. A playground at Albion Place. It is envisaged that this will extend the functionality of the existing open space. It also forms a direct alternative to the McDonald's facility, which is not a public playground.
2. Low-key play equipment in the library Plaza, to provide a place for families with children to hang out (refer to Figure 5-49 and the photo examples shown).

List continued overleaf >>



ABOVE FIG. 5-49: Proposed play space in the Library Plaza



Current situation in the Library Plaza



Examples of the kind of atmosphere that could be created in the Library Plaza

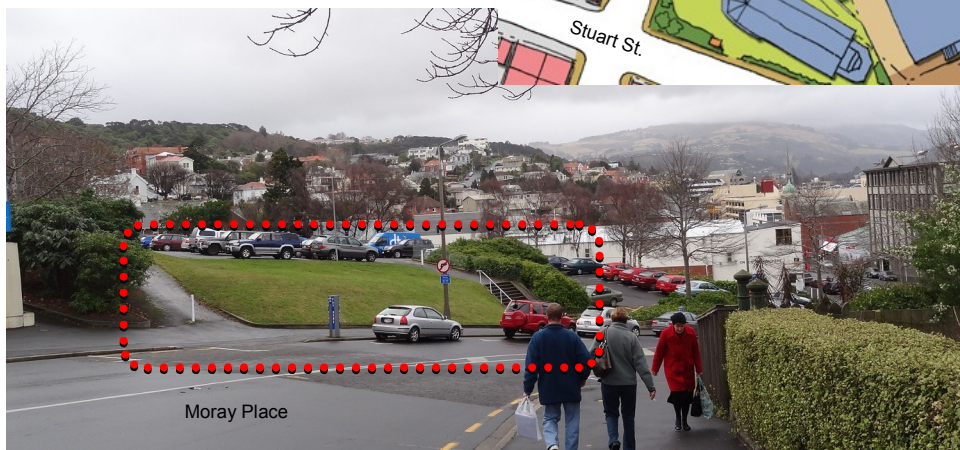
RIGHT FIG. 5-48: Proposed changes to the open space network (numbers refer to sequence)



3. A green open space adjoining the Council-owned car park in Moray Place / Filleul Street. This pocket park would take advantage of the elevated and sheltered location of the site. It would provide an additional green space and offer welcome relief for workers. The current car parks could be retained. This space would also encourage pedestrian traffic through Harrop Street and the linkage would be strengthened through coordinated paving and planting. A design concept is shown in Figure 5-50. Other improvements in this area could include a connection between Harrop Street and the grounds behind St. Paul's Cathedral (Figure 5-50).
4. A play area (aimed at children under 5yrs) near the railway station and skate park to provide for the whole family during the Farmers Market.



RIGHT FIG. 5-50: Proposed pocket park near the Filleul Street / Harrop Street car park

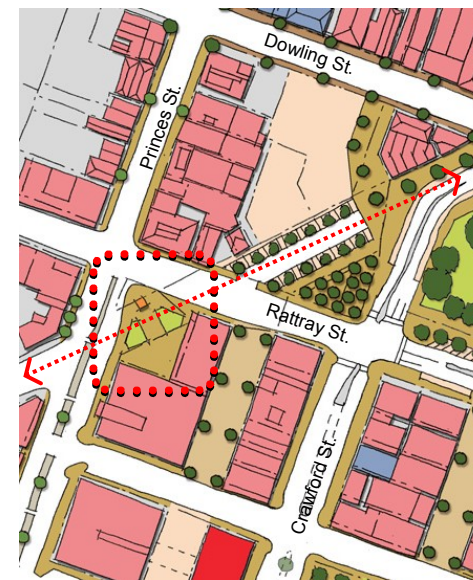


The Moray Place / Harrop Street / Filleul Street car park seen from Moray Place

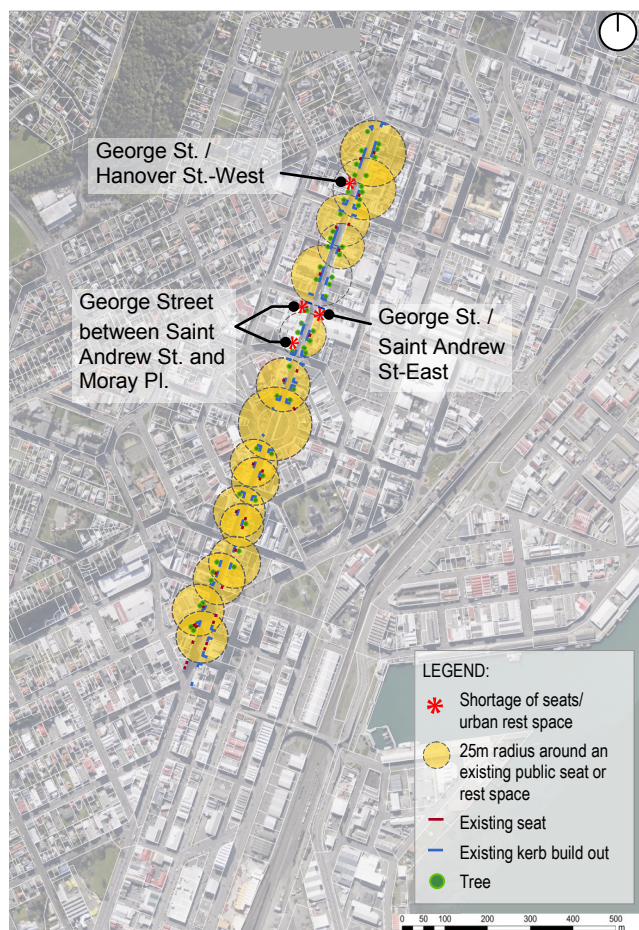
5. Queens Gardens redesign, high priority, but depending on the proposed revised traffic situation (refer to Section 5.5.11).
6. A new highly visible and accessible public open space, facing north, in the Warehouse District on the car parking site bound by Crawford, Water and Vogel Streets. This proposal is dependent on the proposed development of a car parking building elsewhere in the precinct. The design could include both soft space as well as an informal sports court, e.g. with a basketball hoop (refer to Figure 5-51).
7. Design changes to the Exchange Square to encourage better use as orientation point for visitors and allow an uninterrupted High Street view shaft (refer to Figure 5-52).
8. Several options for an upgrade of The Octagon, including more space for pedestrians and less for cars, clearer lines of sight, better definition of its envisaged use (refer to Section 5.5.10). Public toilets should also be considered for a location somewhere in The Octagon. In the short term longer opening hours of and better signage to the public toilets in Municipal Lane would suffice.
9. Modifications to the Steamer Basin Reserve to make it more user friendly. The design should include natural storm water management systems.



ABOVE FIG. 5-51: Conceptual design for the proposed new open space in the Warehouse District



ABOVE FIG. 5-52: Proposed redesign of the square in The Exchange (concept only)



ABOVE FIG. 5-53: George and Princes Streets: amenity of micro public spaces

5.5.9 George and Princes streetscape amenity

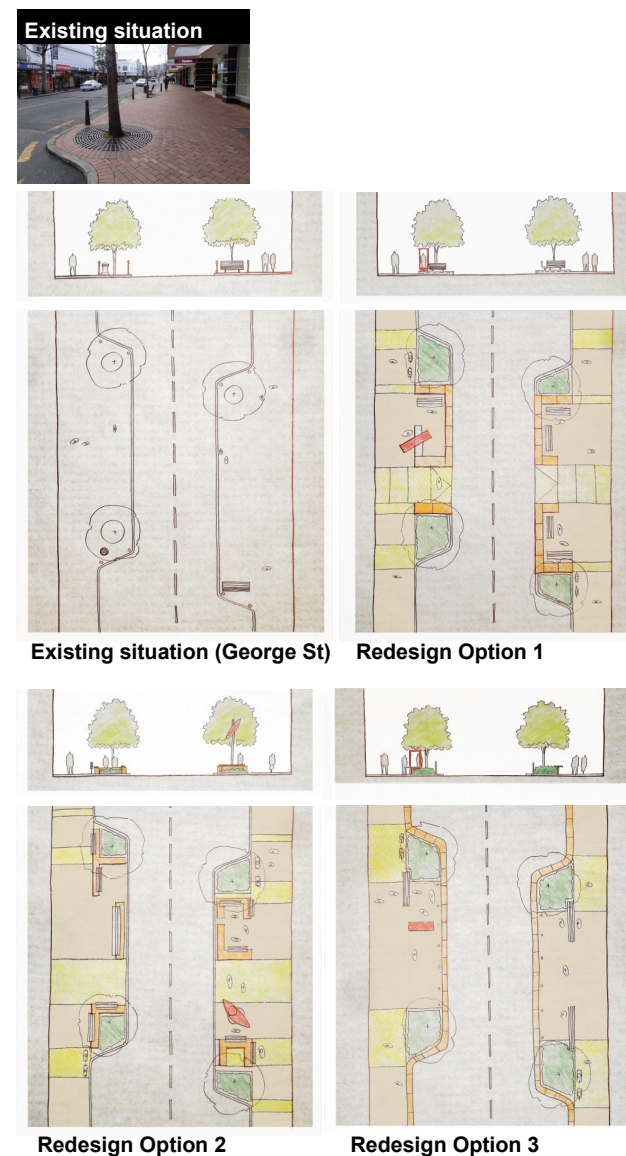
The streetscape amenity in Dunedin's retail streets (George and Princes Streets between Frederick Street in the north and Jetty Street in the south) has been assessed, using circles with a 25m radius around on-street seating and rest spaces. The areas outside the orange circles in Figure 5-53 form 'gaps' in an otherwise continuous pattern of streetscape amenity. In response four small urban main street nodes with additional amenities are proposed for the locations indicated on the map. This could be achieved by replacing one or two car parks by pedestrian spaces.

Other highlights of this analysis:

- The kerb build-outs at the northern end of George Street are well used and have created micro gathering spaces based around retail.
- In Princes Street the frequency of street trees and furniture is adequate, although the quality of the amenity is somewhat negatively impacted by the quality and location of the furniture.
- Additional street trees and improved furniture design and location would offer protection from wind gusts along Princes Street. Deciduous trees would offer the greatest benefits, providing shade in summer, while letting through the sun in winter.
- There is some conflict caused by private operators assuming control of the build-outs. This should be addressed through better management and thoughtful design solutions.

DESIGN OF THESE MICRO PUBLIC SPACES

Although most of these micro spaces are reasonably successfully used, there are several ways of improving their amenity (particularly aimed at improving safety, providing shelter and re-orientating seating) by low-cost interventions that could be incrementally implemented over time. Figure 5-54 shows three conceptual redesign options, alongside the typical existing design.



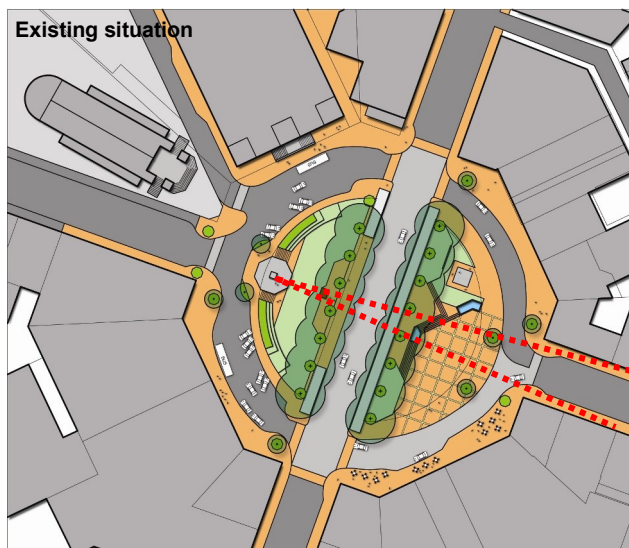
ABOVE FIG. 5-54: Micro public spaces in George and Princes Streets: existing situation and redesign options (conceptual only)

5.5.10 The Octagon

The Octagon is undoubtedly Dunedin's heart and premier civic space. It features the City Council offices, the Municipal Chambers, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Public Art Gallery, a cinema, large areas of public space, various bars and restaurants, offices, boutique retail, and access to the Town Hall and the Dunedin Centre. The place attracts a wide range of people, including workers taking a lunch break, locals meeting others or reading a book, and tourists photographing buildings or orienting themselves on a tour of the city.

Observations and consultation have identified the need for improvement to this key open space:

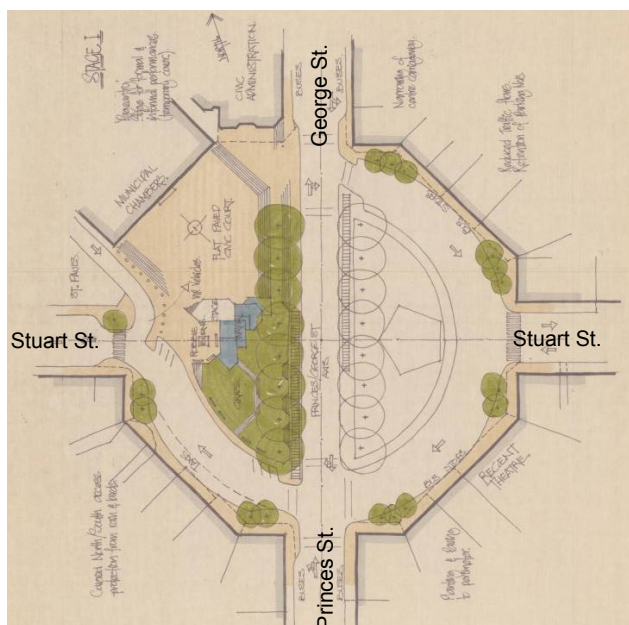
- Currently The Octagon and the high quality heritage architecture that surrounds it, have little physical connection. The streets around and through the space create barriers between buildings and open space. This reduces the quality of the experience in this space.
- The same applies to the visual connections. Views through The Octagon and down Stuart Street are interrupted and views onto some of the city's most memorable architecture (the railway station, and the Municipal Chambers and St. Paul's Cathedral) are blocked by elements in the public realm.
- The current trees are very strong characteristic elements, giving the space a soft and green image, displaying the seasons and attracting birds. However they also strongly reinforce the street bisecting the space and block important view shafts. The health of some of these trees have been of concern in recent years.
- There is a lack of gathering space and space for tourists to admire the heritage buildings.
- In the Lower Octagon the footpath space is at times fully taken up by outdoor seating associated with bars and restaurants. Especially in the evening, passers-by conflict with people standing outside bars.



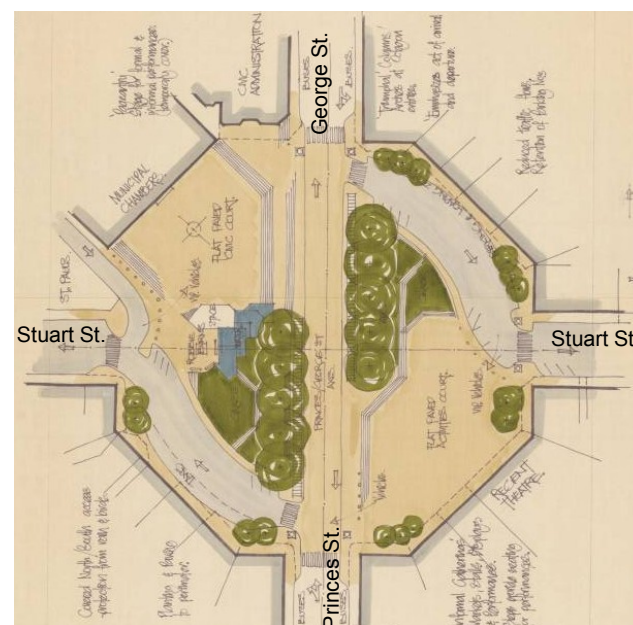
ABOVE FIG. 5-55: Current plan of The Octagon, with indication of the view shaft from the Robert Burns statue



View from the Robert Burns Statue onto the railway station along Stuart Street, interrupted by the stage canopy



RIGHT FIG. 5-56: Plans for The Octagon by the Ministry of works, emphasizing the prominence of the City Hall. Date unknown



Although not urgent, future upgrades should take into account these considerations. Their main aim should be to raise the profile of Dunedin's Central City with visitors and reflect the changed activities in and around the space, rather than change for the sake of change or to be trendy. A staged redesign is proposed.

OCTAGON IMPROVEMENT

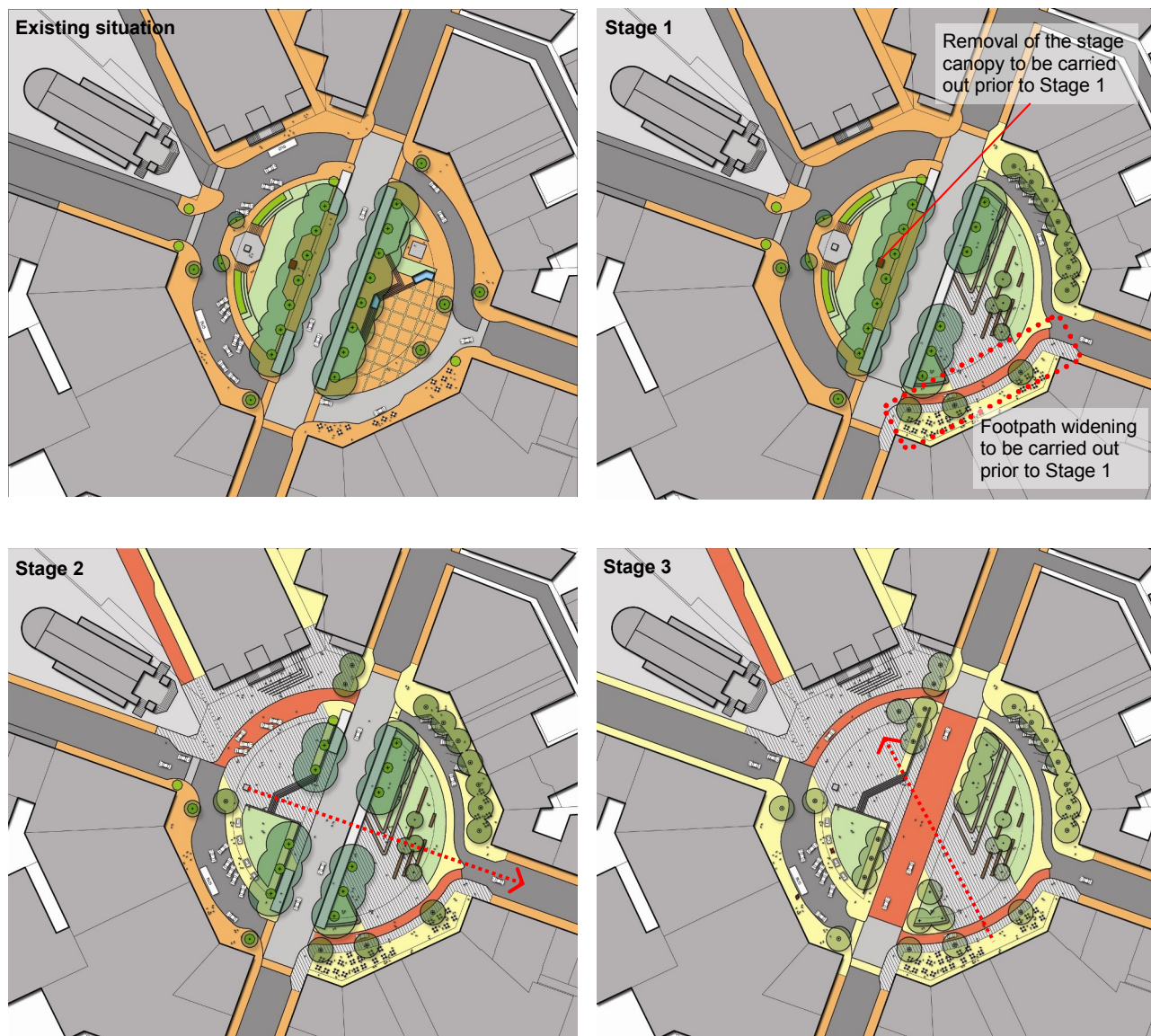
Figure 5-57 illustrates the design stages of The Octagon, addressing the abovementioned issues.

Stage 1

- The carriageway in the southern part of the Lower Octagon is narrowed to give more space to pedestrians and separate between space for the bars and walking through. It is suggested that this intervention be carried out prior to other elements of Stage 1.
- The stage canopy is removed. It is suggested that this intervention be carried out prior to other elements of Stage 1.
- The footpath on the outside of the northern part of the Lower Octagon is widened to give more space to activities on the footpath. The parking arrangement is changed to angled, reducing the length of kerb taken up by parking and leading to a reduction in the space taken up by vehicles. Trees are planted for greater pedestrian amenity.
- The Inner part of the Lower Octagon is redesigned to emphasise the diagonal line with a focus on the Municipal Chambers and the Cathedral, and create a stage of these historic buildings. Slightly more grassed space and some new trees are provided. The two central trees are removed to allow views along the diagonal, through the centre of the space.

Stage 2

- The diagonal line of paving is carried through into the Upper Octagon and the carriageway in front of the Municipal Chambers is transformed to a shared space with new paving and the elimination of kerbs. Angled parking and space for taxi's is retained.



ABOVE FIG. 5-57: Changes to the public space of The Octagon, to be carried out in stages

- Harrop Street is integrated in this upgrade to link the Octagon with the proposed pocket park adjoining the Council-owned car park.
- The inner part of the Upper Octagon is partly paved and partly grassed and connected with the paved areas on the outside by keeping it more or less at the same level with a series of steps towards the middle.
- A number of trees are removed to allow for view shafts down Lower Stuart Street.
- In the southern part of the Upper Octagon the footpath space on the inside is widened to accommodate food carts and public art.

Stage 3

- The pedestrian canopies in the central carriageway have been removed to improve visual connections through the space. Alternatively these could be replaced by a fully glazed and lower version with the same, or possibly improved, shelter attributes (refer to the photo examples on this page).
- Trees in the central carriageway are replaced when the lifespan of the trees require this. Openings are left to allow views along Stuart Street and onto the Municipal Chambers.
- George Street through The Octagon is repaved using the same material as the shared spaces on the north-western and south-eastern sides.
- The parking and the taxi stand in front of the Municipal Chambers are removed to give pedestrians more space.

TREES

As stated above, the trees in The Octagon are valuable and characteristic elements in this public space. The proposed improvements include the planting of more trees over time, particularly around the edges of the northern Lower Octagon, as well as prominently in the middle. It is recommended that the removal of trees should be based upon a possible natural decline, although combining this with the removal of some healthy trees may most likely not be possible to be avoided.



The Heart of a City: Dunedin's Octagon, 21 November 2007. © danielphoto.com



Dunedin Town Hall. c 1885. [Alexander Turnbull Library. Ref: 1/2-041780-F]

ABOVE FIG. 5-58: Historic photo illustrating the original prominence of the Municipal Chambers in The Octagon and the gradual slope between the Higher and Lower halves of The Octagon.

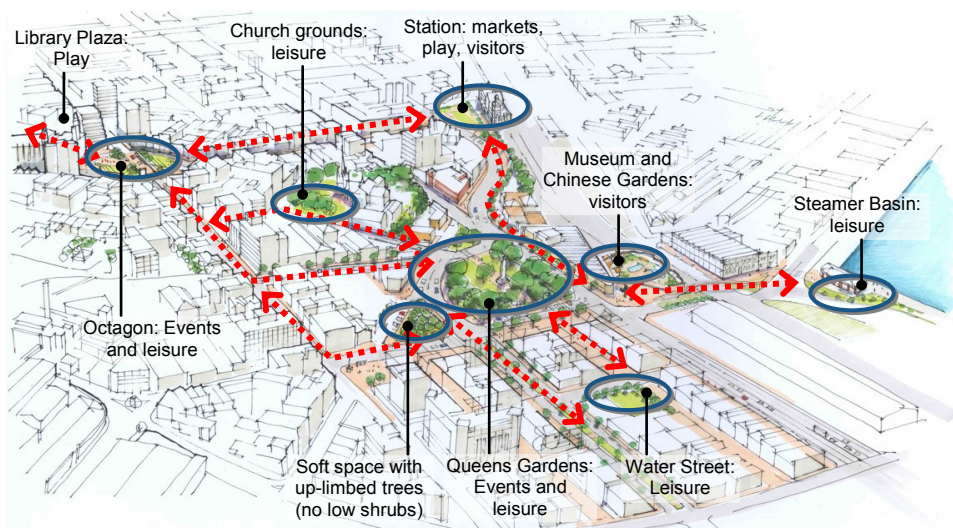


ABOVE FIG. 5-59: Redesign of The Octagon, Stage 3 with replacement of the walkway covers by a fully transparent, glazed alternative, trees are replaced by smaller versions and planted in new locations (artist's impression only)

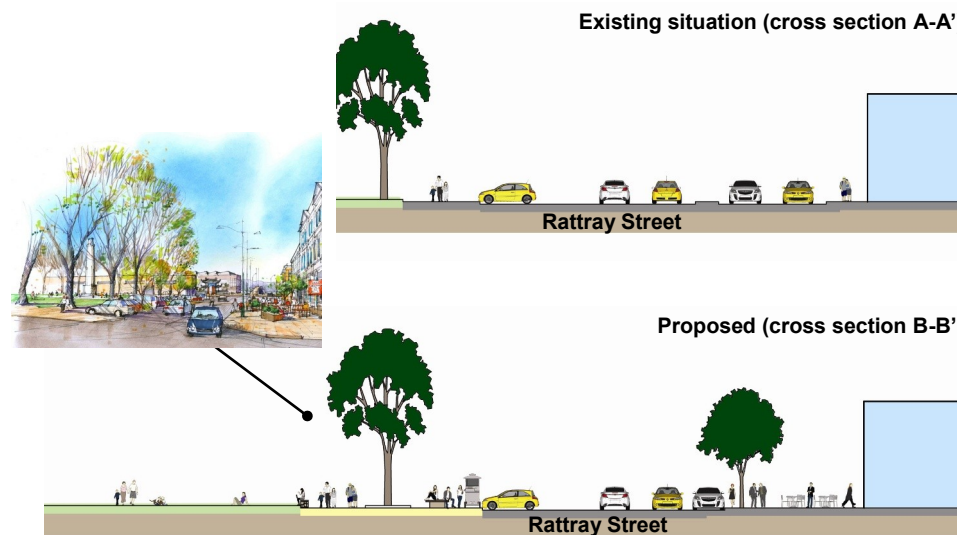
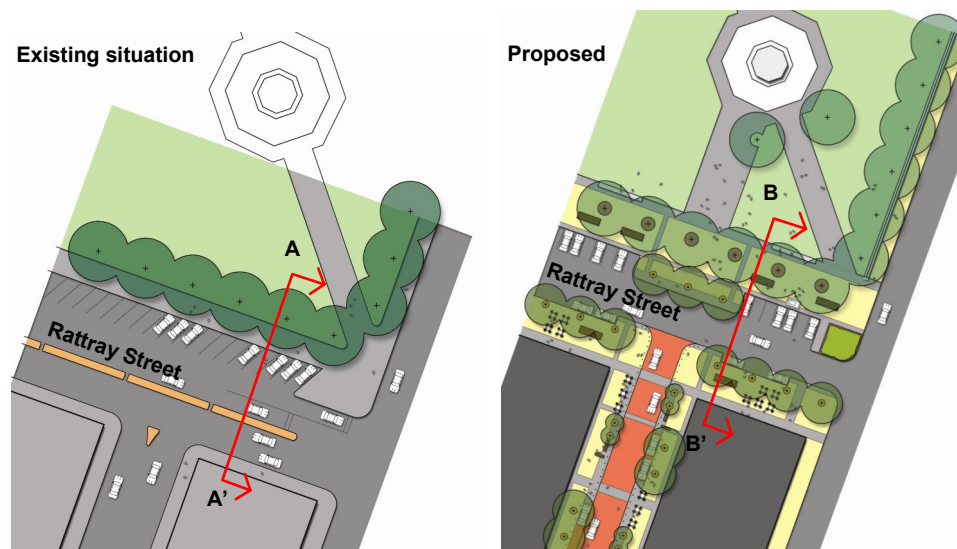
5.5.11 The Events network

As described in the Traffic-related Section 5.4.4. The proposed changes to the State Highway one-way pair provide opportunities to improve connections between The Octagon, Queens Gardens, The Chinese Gardens and the Otago Settlers Museum. Other initiatives are aimed at improving connections between The Octagon and the railway station along Stuart Street, and between the railway station and the museum along High Street and Queens Gardens. All these improvements are resulting in an open space network consisting of several open space experiences and opportunities for events. In more detail, the open space and pedestrian-oriented initiatives include the following (refer to Figure 5-60):

- Improvements to The Octagon and the Library Plaza.
- Development of a Pocket Park adjacent to the Filleul Street car park and Harrop Street.
- Widening of the footpath on the southern edge of Queens Gardens and additional furniture and seating. Widening of the footpath on the southern side of Rattray Street with opportunities for north-facing outdoor commercial activities (refer to illustrations in Figure 5-61). This will also assist in improving connectivity with the employment activities in the Warehouse District.
- High priority footpath upgrades in Moray Place, Burlington Street and Dowling Street.
- Upgrades in Princes Street between The Octagon and Dowling Street aimed at improving shelter against the elements.

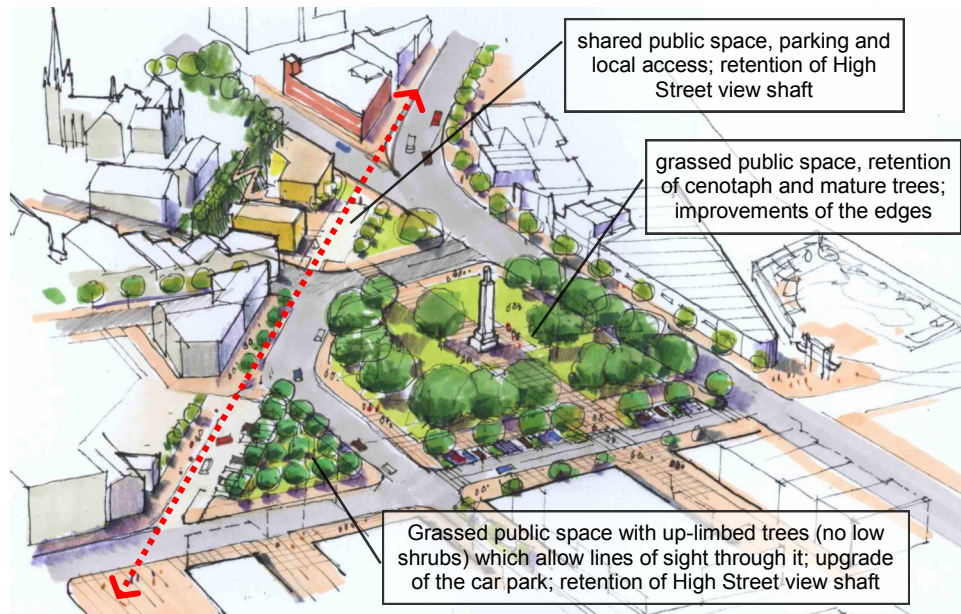


ABOVE FIG. 5-60: Events network connecting the key existing, redesigned and newly proposed open spaces

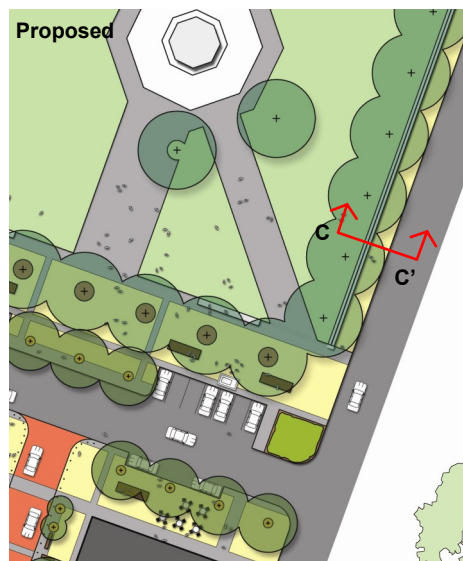


ABOVE FIG. 5-61: Improved southern edge of Queens Gardens: Existing situation (cross section A-A') and proposed (cross section B-B')

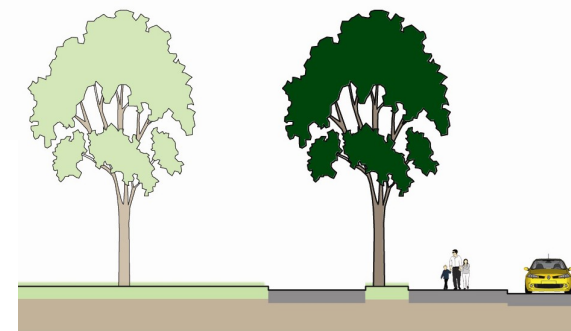
- Work with First Church to encourage more formalised public access to the open space around the church, possibly including a walkway down the bank connecting with the Leviathan Hotel car park.
- Work with the Leviathan Hotel to encourage commercial or mixed-use development on the car park facing Queens Gardens.
- A wall on the Eastern edge of Queens Gardens (Figure 5-63) providing for a safer family-oriented space.
- Improvement to the pedestrian experience along Castle and High Streets through additional street trees, furniture and public art. This is the key connecting Queens Gardens and the Settlers Museum with the railway station.
- Improvements in Lower Stuart Street, including furniture and street trees and accommodation of bicycles as part of the proposed strategic network (Crawford-Cumberland Central-Stuart-Moray-Great King Street, as explained in Section 5.4.8).
- Additional play space near the skate park at the railway station and possible other open space improvements in front of the railway station.
- A possible future connection across the railway line (either at-grade or in the form of a pedestrian / cycle bridge preferably at the end of Rattray Street) would be an extension of this network to include the public space on the edge of the Steamer Basin.



ABOVE FIG. 5-62: Improved routes to and around Queens Gardens



Existing situation (cross section C-C')



Proposed (cross section C-C')



ABOVE FIG. 5-63: Improved eastern edge of Queens Gardens (Cumberland Street interface)

5.5.12 Events and event space

THE OCTAGON

Dunedin currently accommodates approximately 150 small community events per year. Approximately 30 of these take place in The Octagon with the balance in other parks (Chingford Park, Museum reserve, Market reserve, the Oval, Logan Park). While events bring the desired life to the middle of the city, there are also some issues that should be addressed:

- The size and nature of some events are not fitting for The Octagon.
- Sometimes the road is closed for events when it does not need to be, according to a number of retailers negatively impacting on their turnover.
- For some events the road should be closed for safety reason but is not, due to the lack of notification (there are 21 days notification required to close the road).

For these reasons and given the proposed changes to Queens Gardens, pedestrian routes leading to it and the surrounding roads, it is proposed to use Queens Gardens more frequently as an events space.



Current events space in the Lower Octagon

QUEENS GARDENS

What sort of events could go into Queens Gardens?

- Events too large for the Octagon;
- Events that require a meeting point for cars / motorbikes at the start of the event;
- Events connected with the Chinese Gardens or Settlers Museum;
- Events with large structures;
- Larger music / performance events;
- Large protests;
- ANZAC events;
- Noisy events; and
- Long events (2 days or more).

For this reason the following issues should be considered pertaining to Queens Gardens as a more frequent events space:

- Public toilets in the vicinity should be improved.
- The impact on the road network resulting from large pedestrian flows should be considered as well as pedestrian safety.
- Some form of a barrier is needed at the interface with the State Highway to contain people in the Queens Gardens and assist with the safety of children.
- The capacity of public parking in the vicinity should be assessed (the Dowling Street car park is over-subscribed for permit-holder parking).
- The safety of the venue relative to fireworks should be confirmed.
- The impact on the surrounding environment should be considered, especially if more residential activity is to take place in the CBD and Warehouse District.
- Consultation with local retailers is required. On the one hand, the loss of activity may negatively impact on businesses in The Octagon, but on the other hand less road closures around The Octagon may impact positively on businesses in Princes Street.
- Consultation is required concerning the relocation of Doctor Stuart's monument from Queens Gardens, which may free up more open space.



Another envisaged use of Queens Gardens is promoting it as an exercise space for visiting sports teams