

# Towards the Aotea Quarter Framework Feedback Report

Public and Stakeholder  
Engagement September  
to October 2015





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## 1.0 Background

Auckland Council has been working with stakeholders since 2005 to look at ways to enhance the Aotea Quarter. The Aotea Quarter Plan was produced in 2007 to support the area as the arts, civic, and cultural heart of the city.

The Aotea Framework seeks to update and advance the strategic direction for the area set down in the Aotea Quarter Plan and more recently the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) 2012. Reflecting the changes already underway and the transformation yet to come, the plan will provide the strategic vision for the next 20 years.

The framework area reflects the boundary set down in the CCMP 2012 and is more expansive than the previous Aotea Quarter Plan, extending beyond the Aotea Square core to include a good portion of the Learning Quarter to the east, most of Myers Park to the south, along the Hobson St ridgeline to the west and mid-block between Wellesley and Victoria St. to the north.

### 1.1 Engagement process

The engagement process was carried out during the 6-weeks between 9 September to 22 October 2015. It aimed to use a variety of methods to gain and include insights from sectors of the public that might not normally access traditional submission and market research processes.

#### **Methods:**

Our approach was to use six key methods of qualitative engagement;

1.1.1 Walking tours,

1.1.2 Focus groups,

1.1.3 'Vox pop' interviews,

1.1.4 Online (including an interactive map) and hard copy feedback forms,

1.1.5 Stall at Aotea Centre & Auckland Transport open day

1.1.6 Consultation summary hard copy at all Auckland Libraries

The wide range of methods has enabled a rich and varied range of responses that have tapped into a number of demographics that seldom participate in formal



submission processes; for example youth, differing cultures, and the disability community.

It is worth noting that the written and online feedback process reached very few people in the under 24 year old demographic (5%), but they were well represented in both the vox pops method and via a submission from the Waitemata Youth Collective.

Additionally, only a very small number of people from varying ethnic backgrounds took part in the online and written submission method, yet this group was again well represented in the vox pop street interview method. However, it is also worth noting that the online interactive map for question No. 5 was also well utilised by participants.

It is suggested that from a qualitative methodology point of view, the varied spoken, written, tactile and interactive inputs gathered offer a rich and clear indication of public feelings and aspirations for the Aotea Quarter. It is also worth noting the acknowledgement from a number of participants that the processes occurred to them as genuine, authentic and going further than a 'token' approach to consultation.

There were some very clear themes that emerged across the engagement methods that are summarised on pages 12-13.

### 1.1.1 Walking tours



A walking tour was designed to enable participants to observe and comment on key features around the Aotea Quarter.

The route took in some of the key areas of the quarter that are the focus of future development and potential enhancement.



The tours culminated in a group discussion over coffee at This That, an Aotea Quarter teahouse and gallery opposite the Central Library.

The walking tour enabled participants to view and hear about features in the Aotea Quarter to inform their answers to set questions as outlined in the feedback form in the Towards the Aotea Quarter Framework consultation document.

Seven walking tours of the Aotea Quarter were completed including one for people representing the disability community.

Approximately 46 people took part in these walks and the age range of participants was from 20s through to 60s/70s.

There was a mix of inner city residents, design professionals, arts sector professionals, local businesses, mana whenua representatives and other interested parties; a number living in city fringe suburbs but also further afield in areas such as the North Shore and Papakura.

The walking tours were conducted on weekday lunch times and evenings, and a Sunday afternoon.

### 1.1.2 Focus groups

Four focus groups were held for the independent Arts, Community, Residents and Business sectors.

Approximately 30 participants were asked the questions outlined in the consultation document, and were invited to browse several maps and use 'sticky notes' to place ideas and comments on the maps where relevant.

The residents' focus group attracted 57 registrations of interest, invitations were sent to 15 of these people from across the city. 12 attended.

- There were 29 invitations issued to the business focus group and 3 attended.
- There were 31 invitations to the arts sector focus group and 8 attended.
- There were 13 invitations to the community stakeholder focus group and 10 attended

### 1.1.3 Vox pops

'Vox pops' took the form of audio street interviews of passers-by asking several simple questions about what they like about the area, and what they would like to see improved or changed in the future, based on the series of questions in the Towards an Aotea Quarter Framework summary document. A total of 65 vox pop interviews were conducted in Aotea Square, outside the central library, Myers Park, AUT campus and on Queen St adjacent to Whitireia Polytechnic. These interviews were conducted at lunch times and early evenings on weekdays and weekends.

Interviewers included an AUT radio student, and a recent AUT business school graduate. They sought out a variety of people from varying ethnic backgrounds and of varying ages, with a particular focus on the student population. A mix of people living in the central city or elsewhere in Auckland were interviewed.



The 'vox pops' were anonymous. Their aim was to get informal and colloquial anecdotes, particularly from people who might not usually engage in other traditional consultation methods such as focus groups and submissions.

Those interviewed were aged from 19 to 50. There was an even mix of male and female. Ethnicities included: Indian, Chinese, Arabic, Asian, Russian, Māori, Cook Island, Samoan, Pakeha, New Zealander and European. Online (including an interactive map) and hard copy feedback forms.

Hard copy feedback forms were distributed to key locations such as the council's service centres and libraries, and provided to participants in the walking tours, vox pops and focus groups.

PDF copies of the consultation document and summary and an interactive map were provided on Auckland Council's Shape Auckland public engagement website.

The public could also provide feedback on this site, answering the series of questions outlined in the consultation summary document through an online feedback form. These included:

A total of 69 completed feedback forms were received from individuals and organisations.

Of the 61 online submissions, 45 percent were male and 52 female.

Just over a quarter of submitters 26% were aged 25-34. The next largest group represented were the 45-54 age group at 23%.

19 % of respondents were aged 55 to 64, with 10% over 65 and 5 aged 15 to 24.

79% of submitters were European, 10% listed themselves as 'other', while Māori, Pacific, Asian, African/Middle Eastern/Latin American and 'preferred not to say' were 3% in each category.

52% of respondents lived in the Waitemata Local Board area, while 48% listed themselves as living 'elsewhere in Auckland.'

A number of people completing the online feedback form chose to provide suggestions to an online interactive map for Question 5 relating to improved areas for pedestrians, cycling and safety on the quarter.

They could use up to a total of six dots, with blue representing pedestrians, green representing cycling, and red representing safety.

*Note – in lieu of an option to mark areas for improved accessibility, Council initiated a universal access walking tour with an impending separate report by accessibility specialists to identify key built form, movement and information barriers to deaf people and people with visual and physical disabilities.*



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### Aotea Quarter

0 30 60 90  
Meters

Scale @ A3  
= 1:3,500

Date Printed:  
28/10/2015



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### 1.1.4 Display stall



A display stall was set up at the Aotea Centre and Square. The Aotea Quarter Framework project team joined forces with Auckland Transport to talk about the Aotea Quarter with Aucklanders. About 50 people come through the stall over a few hours on the last day of engagement. Some provided verbal feedback, and some provided feedback through the map and feedback form. There was a lot of interest in the map and it was a great way to get people to have their say.

### 1.1.5 News Media

News media were invited to join the walking tours so they could potentially report on the Aotea Quarter Framework consultation.

Reporters participated in two of the walking tours from the New Zealand Herald and Radio New Zealand. Radio New Zealand journalist, Justin Gregory, produced this item:

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/standing-room-only/audio/201773201/aotea-square-reimagined-as-an-arts-and-cultural-hub>

Gregory reported participants felt the engagement process was positive and genuine.

New Zealand Herald columnist, Catherine Smith, also took part in one of the walking tours.



## 2.0 Key Themes

The areas of most interest, concern and opportunity for participants were:

### 2.1 Connections and Accessibility

The key messages from the various feedback was that people wanted better ways to pleasantly and safely link the different sub-areas around the Quarter, as well as shift the dominance of vehicle traffic to a more pedestrian environment.

Specific concerns include:

- Library location cut off from Aotea Square and other areas.
- Lack of flow across to the galleries north of Wellesley St, including the Art Gallery.
- Hidden spaces lead to anti-social behaviour and rough sleepers.
- Infrequent buses, particularly to and from outer Auckland areas.
- Limited availability of parking at major events mean older people cannot access Aotea Centre and other major venues, some turn around and go home if Civic car park is full (or spaces leased out).
- Dangerous to cross over lower Greys Ave/Mayoral Drive entrance to Civic car park.
- Traffic light phases favour cars over pedestrians, takes a very long time to cross some roads.
- Lack of parking major issue for older patrons of NZPO and shows, public transport too difficult for them.
- Absence of dedicated cycle lanes in the Aotea Quarter.

### 2.2 Buildings and spaces

The key message a from various feedback included buildings as the key activators of public spaces, available and functional spaces for the independent arts and community groups, opportunities for temporary markets and additional food and beverage offerings and enabling more 'pop up' activities. Specific concerns include:

- Civic space does not flow well around back of Q theatre and through to Myers Park, remove car parks.
- Missed opportunities in Aotea Square, other squares are more specific about 'civic' activity.
- Aotea Square space is too licensed and programmed, should be more free events like the 'people in parks' days.
- Affordable rental in the area a barrier to community, creative sector, not-for-profit activity or small business commerce e.g. smaller art galleries have gone because rent too high.
- Some property owners do not have the quarter-area vision, like with the successful Federal St (SkyCity), Britomart and Elliott St etc.
- Lack of investment in infrastructure for events such as power, security, lighting, temporary stage for showcasing the area's diverse culture such as kapa haka finals.
- Less transient living, more apartments for long term living.
- Lack of meaningful exhibitions (e.g. from adjacent learning quarter and galleries) or outdoor music performers.
- Need to ensure the integrity of key heritage buildings are preserved and supported

### 2.3 Information and way finding

Need for a creative, coordinated and accessible information hub to share what's on throughout the whole of the quarter. Specific concerns include:

- Lack of coordination of information about the whole area, what is where (way finding), and events and activities.
- Limited voice for independent players/communities/events/arts. Need for Auckland Council 'family' organisations to work together on solutions and to communicate better all the events on in the area, such as with the independent theatres, tertiary institutions; events on at the library, and the events young people are hosting such as the Waitemata Youth Collective and #claimthecity;

### 2.4 Landscape and natural spaces

Greater recognition of natural connections through space design and linkages; improved narratives of the natural history of the area e.g. the Waihorotiu stream <http://tino.maori.nz/our-history/significant-places/> and the need for green areas connecting through the quarter.

## 3.0 Questions and feedback

### 3.1 Question 1

***What is the most important thing to you when it comes to unleashing the Aotea Quarter's potential to be the civic, arts and cultural heart of Auckland?***

#### 3.1.1 Access and Connections and Public Spaces

Participants cited better connections and accessibility across the quarter as a top priority for unleashing the area's future potential. It was felt that shifting a focus more towards pedestrians and cyclists would help realise these connections.

Those on the walking tour pointed out that vehicle traffic particularly on Mayoral Drive created a significant barrier to connecting areas such as Greys Ave, Myers Park, Federal St, Vincent St, Cook St, and Airedale St.

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"Mayoral Drive is the killer. The pathways under it are awful, and the connections from Aotea Square to Mayoral Drive are awful." - Written submission

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Participants in the feedback forms suggested that the quarter should look bright and welcoming and give a sense that there is 'always something happening.' People felt there still needed to be access for cars, but that the entire quarter should be far more pedestrian-friendly, accessible at all times to welcome people. Car parks and driveways/access ways were cited as being unwelcoming and breaking up connections.

A submission on behalf of the Blind Citizens NZ Auckland Branch representing 200 members cited well designed public transport and pedestrian friendly access to the environment as the most important actions to unleash the quarter's potential for the visually impaired who cannot drive and are reliant on public transport, private cars, and taxis. The organisation said better access also includes the need for sufficient car park spaces for those who cannot use public transport, and effective drop off and pick up points for taxis and private cars within comfortable walking distance from building entrances.

Submitters also felt a number of facilities were isolated, such as Aotea Centre and access around it to Aotea Square from Mayoral Drive. Likewise, the central library was seen as isolated and the public space outside it as having an unrealised potential to be further activated.



People felt that the quarter needs to be one where there are more places people can congregate and be a community. There was a desire to see more open space, with trees and grass, and development at a human scale, with 'medium and low rise' developments.

A number of submitters felt it was important for the Aotea Quarter to develop in a way that complements adjoining quarters.

A submission on behalf of ARTSPACE NZ asked that the thriving arts and cultural life of the Karangahape Rd area not be undermined by development in the Aotea Quarter and that it is important to have the two quarters complement each other and connect 'meaningfully and sustainably' in a manner that enriches the lives of Auckland's citizens and visitors.

The Waitemata Youth Collective listed four key aspects to unleash the quarter's potential:

- Enhancing the public spaces
- Improving accessibility of the area for a diversity of users; and
- Tapping into Aotea Quarter's proximity to the Learning Quarter.
- The Collective sees Aotea Quarter as becoming the hub for central Auckland, and a place where the inner city community can be connected to other dwellers and visitors to the quarter, including students, tourists, and other communities that use the city.

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"We envision the quarter to be a sustainable space that is accessible, pedestrian and youth-friendly."  
– Waitemata Youth Collective

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Participants pointed out there were a number of areas that had a great potential to be better utilised as public spaces, in particular the areas around the Civic Administration Building and linking to Aotea Square, the car park area outside Q theatre and the Basement theatre, and the edges of Aotea Square such as below the town hall. It was felt more could be done to activate Aotea Square and it's surrounds by opening up 'dead space.'

Many participants suggested there were simply not enough places to eat in Aotea Quarter.

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"Aotea should be one of the hubs of the city...surrounded by people-friendly locations with commerce, preferably food and beverage, and a couple of drink spots, bars, pubs and restaurants"  
Written submission

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### 3.1.2 Way-finding and identity

Way finding, including better access to information, signage, and site-lines connecting up places was also suggested as a way to realise the potential of the quarter.

Blind Citizens NZ called for precise instructions for getting to and from drop off and pick up points and adjacent building entrances.

A number of submitters suggested further work be carried out to create the quarter as a destination with unified branding.

A submission from the Urban Design Forum suggested a need for active placemaking to give the quarter a new identity. They believe there is a need to investigate what a 'civic space' means in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Forum also said a landscape and 'built form' response is required that takes account of the topography of the area as a steep valley opening onto a 'flat-ish and swampy basin' (sic).

The Forum also included suggestions that architectural solutions would be important for the future of the Aotea Quarter, and the use of a Masterplan approach and design guidelines that have proved successful in the Wynyard Quarter and Britomart precincts should be considered.

Heart of Auckland considered there is an opportunity for branding for Aotea Quarter that will be vital in translating the vision for the area and ensuring that Aucklanders and visitors understand what the quarter offers.

The Civic Trust Auckland submitted that protecting and enhancing heritage buildings in the quarter is important, including the St James Theatre and Civic Administration Building. The trust felt the council should dedicate resources to supporting their protection and use.

A number of submitters also suggested that providing more for a mix of residential, retail and commercial activities combined with excellent arts and culture facilities were further keys to improving the quarter.

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"Auckland is going to keep growing and the central city will need to undergo greater intensification to accommodate the rise in population. This area is perfect to create a multi-user space that can be enjoyed by all" - Online written submission.

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## Future Outcome One: Te Aronganui Tahī

**The quarter as the enduring home for the arts, culture, entertainment and civic life, creating a unique destination experience.**



### 3.2 Question 2

***What events or activities (large or small) have you enjoyed in and around the Aotea Quarter? What else would you like to see? What would you prefer not to see?***

Participants cited a number of activities that they had enjoyed at the Aotea Square including the ice-skating rink, the table tennis tables, Arborio, Diwali, and the Aotea Square markets, TEDx at the Aotea Centre, operas/musicals/dance at the Aotea Centre, productions at Q Theatre and Basement theatre. Auckland Arts Festival and the Christmas Parade were also mentioned. The NZSO and APO were also listed as enjoyable indoor events.

There were suggestions to establish greater links across the quarter for cultural festivals such as the Lantern Festival in Albert Park connecting with the art gallery and public library, and Queen and Hobson St for the Farmers Christmas parade.

There was a desire to see events in the quarter complement other events at other central city locations such as Silo Park, Victoria Park, Britomart and Albert Park.

The 2011 Rugby World Cup was mentioned as a successful activation of the city centre, and the fan trail that ran through Myers Park was viewed as great. It was felt that reviving that linkage would be really useful.



More use of large outdoor digital screens was also recommended. These were popular for big events like rugby world cup.

There was a lot of support for encouraging a range of markets, not only at Aotea Square but also in other public spaces and courtyards. It was felt this could help bring some 'dead' public spaces to life, including little known places such as the space adjoining Airedale St and Mayoral Drive. People were keen on markets that might offer a range of products from food and beverages, art and crafts, to 'green' markets for fresh produce and 'food truck' areas. There were suggestions of both regular markets and occasional 'pop up' markets.

Food and shopping festivals were also suggested, and there was interest in closing Queen St to traffic more often for such festivals.

The Waitemata Youth Collective said the quarter thrives when larger events are put on, and they particularly appreciate seasonal installations such as the ice skating rink, and polar bear installations. They suggest that when there are no such large events the quarter becomes 'somewhat lifeless and Aotea Square is only a thoroughfare where people do not spend any time.' They would like to see activities for youth that can utilise the space and 'creative positive energy' without requiring people to spend money.

The Collective said that feedback it gathered from young people suggested that often central city events are orientated towards adults, families or young children, and they would recommend providing opportunities for young people to hang out and to be active in the area.

They support temporary 'pop up' activations such as the recent parklets, as well as markets for artists to showcase and sell work and 'pop up shops'.

The Civic Trust felt that there should not be too much space 'activated' around the edges of the Aotea Square for activities such as retail so as to allow for 'unactivated' space to offer respite from the business of the city centre.

The common theme among residents was the wish to see more community volunteer type of activities such as clean up rubbish day, so that residents in large apartment buildings can get to know their neighbours and build a sense of local community.

### 3.3 Question 3

***How would you like to see the quarter fulfil its potential as the creative, civic and cultural heart for all of Auckland (for example types of businesses, design, activities)?***

There was universal support for the concept of the Aotea Quarter being the creative, civic and cultural heart of the city. There was warm support for the idea that the quarter becomes the equivalent of the arts and culture precincts found in other cities around the world such as Broadway in New York, the West End in London or the Dallas Arts District or Houston Museum District. One submitter provided the following links as examples. (<http://www.thedallasartsdistrict.org/visit/directions>  
<http://houmuse.com/visitor-information/houston-loves-museums/>)

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“Connecting everything together, the pieces are there, they just need to be joined up.” - Walking Tour participant

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There was agreement that more could be done to enhance the area as an arts and culture quarter, making better connections, linkages and opportunities to enhance the existing facilities such as the Aotea Centre, the town hall, the Civic, the St James Theatre, cinemas, the library and art gallery.

Heart of Auckland agrees emphasis should be placed on the importance of ‘anchor facilities’ in the quarter such as the St James, the Civic, the Art Gallery, the Library and Aotea Square both as destinations and for their added heritage qualities.

They submitted that it is important to continue to enable the performing arts to flourish in the quarter through support, promotion and possible incentives, financial or otherwise, noting that the visual arts have moved from the area due to high rents.

Heart of Auckland believes there needs to be a long term strategy to ensure these businesses are retained and attracted into the quarter.

#### 3.3.1 Civic focus

Participants felt that it was important to ensure there is a clear civic focus for the quarter, in particular Aotea Square and the Town Hall. It was recognised that the area was important for such events as university graduation, protests, and public civic events. A number of submitters suggested more could be done to visibly activate Aotea Square as the city’s Civic Centre. They suggested more information and signage, and more amenities for people in the square. It was felt that at times the square feels empty and unwelcoming, lacking shelter and places to gather.

## Comments included:

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“It is crucial the Aotea Quarter remains free of private corporate interests. I want to see a community area, not a place for people to go and be advertised to.” - Community Focus group

“Make the Aotea Centre work as a positive urban element, and make the square work as an urban square, rather than an odd park.” - Written Submission

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### 3.3.2 Arts and theatre focus

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“At the moment you have all these venues in close proximity to one another, and yet for whatever reasons, they do feel miles away. I was talking to someone the other day who regularly goes to Q Theatre but didn’t know where The Basement was. How is that possible? Anything that can be done to integrate these creative spaces is going to be good for Auckland. - Sam Snedden Basement Theatre

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“Activate the space to recognise its multiple uses; civic, protests, graduation, offices/jobs, public park, arts and entertainment, pride.”- Independent Arts focus group

“Lots of artworks in and around the train station (like Vienna), arts studios and offices, arty shops and cafes, rehearsal spaces that the public can see and hear.”- Walking Tour participant

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Participants appreciated the area as one that already had an arts and theatre focus. They were keen to see more of this activity, and encourage it adjacent to places like the Q theatre and The Basement.

People believed that the general public did not know about many of the activities events and venues in the area, and that there was little awareness of what was on other than 'big ticket' events. There was also considered to be a lack of awareness of how to get around the area.

Members of the theatre and performing arts sector emphasised the range and difference of performance venues in the City Centre and the Quarter to suit the breath and character of the live performance on offer. The reincarnation of the St James Theatre was seen as a valuable asset that would strengthen the live performance offering in the Quarter especially during festival seasons. Rehearsal spaces were also needed, particularly for dance. There are specific requirements in stages for dance.

One key concern was voiced regarding access for older patrons of the orchestra, opera and similar events. It is difficult for these people from suburban areas to use public transport, and they need to use private cars to get close to venues. There were occasions where patrons had turned back and gone home when the Civic Car Park was full. It was suggested that a park and ride facility near the quarter would assist so these older people could use their vehicles and a potential shuttle close to the Aotea Centre and town hall. This was echoed in the submission from Blind Citizens NZ. Participants in walking tours pointed out that making the quarter more accessible for people with mobility challenges will make it more accessible for everyone.

### 3.3.3 Communicating and supporting events

There was an interest in better communication of events. A number, including inner city residents, had some concerns about larger scale events, or nightclubs in the area. People were keen to see clear co-ordination between different districts in the CBD and the events that each attracts.

Event organisers say the costs of staging events, installing infrastructure; lighting, power sources, stages, AV, etc. is expensive and leads to less being spent on the acts and creative content. There were several suggestions that the council provide more event 'infrastructure' that could be hired/shared by different event organisers.

Many participants said they would like to see more continuous activity in public spaces; stalls and markets at night, shops, cafes, restaurants and bars open for longer, and a sense of 'life' in the quarter 24/7.



### 3.3.4 Information flow

Participants called for more information and coordination of communication about events, activities and places in the Aotea Quarter.

Some participants felt there is an opportunity for better information to be provided in 'hubs' such as Aotea Square, in the form of an information centre or similar. A number felt that more could be done to provide information both for way finding and history, but also regarding events and activities. Better co-ordination of sources of information for activities in the city, e.g. art gallery, library and other venues working together.

### 3.3.5 Public spaces

People felt public spaces and connections need to provide cover from sun and weather for people to sit or congregate and to offer forms of shelters along connection ways.

Southern Aotea Square between Aotea Centre and the Civic Administration Building was viewed as under developed and under-utilised and holding a lot of potential. Inner city residents were also keen to see opportunities for fresh food markets in the area, a 'green' market for people living in the area.

Some younger participants said youth surveys had identified young people had only identified two places they could hang out in the City Centre, the central library, and Skyway Metro.

A number of people felt it was important to establish spaces where people could run their own events, rather than have them totally purpose-built for specific activities i.e. people wanted to see a balance of well organised and branded large events as well as community-led small-scale impromptu or 'pop up' activities.

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"Spaces for events that don't look so polished like a huge curated marketing event. Create spaces for events where anyone in the city can get involved, where maybe you just leave some cricket bats out or the 'ping pong' tables ... good enough but not overwhelmingly programme." - Walking tour participant.

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### 3.3.6 Businesses and services

It was recognised that larger businesses such as banks are moving to the waterfront, but it was felt that smaller businesses like start-ups, or those related to the universities or creative arts would work well in the quarter. However, high rental costs were seen as a major impediment.

It was felt the very small-scale retail outlets on Queen St opposite the town hall had been a failure, with fast turnover of businesses coming and going. The spaces were seen as too small and ineffectual, with some businesses only lasting a few weeks. There was a lot of interest in seeing more food and beverage outlets in the quarter, particularly in close proximity to venues such as the Aotea Centre and town hall, Q theatre and The Basement. There was also interest in seeing business hubs and premises to support the creative industries in the area, but again it was recognized that high rents prohibit this.

Heart of The City submitted that it is vital to lift hospitality offerings in the quarter to support the aspirations for the area as a destination.

Interest was expressed in the council supporting the establishment of 'co-working' spaces and shared spaces for businesses and people working in the creative industries.

It was felt these sorts of businesses and activities were a good fit for the quarter. However, it is worth noting that art gallery owner, Gary Langsford, attended the Business Focus Group and said most art galleries had moved out of the area because of the high rental costs.

The Waitemata Youth Collective said they received feedback from over 100 people between the ages of 14 and 24 when developing the #MyAKL map. One of the strongest areas of feedback was the need for quiet spaces that offer reflection, where people can get away from the 'hustle and the bustle.' Myers Park was mentioned as a place that could offer seating in quiet spaces and safe and sheltered with greenery. The need for peaceful places as respite from the busy city was also mentioned by the Civic Trust and a number of other submitters.

The Collective also felt that options could be explored to encourage a wider range of affordable and healthy food and beverage outlets.

In terms of events, they also suggested attention be given to the changing seasons and their impact on the use of public spaces. They suggested thought be given to staging events in the quieter winter months and providing for spaces that offered shelter at this time of the year.

## Future Outcome Two: Te Aronganui Rua

**Liveable, vibrant and diverse inner city neighbourhoods, engaging with and supporting the quarter core.**

### 3.4 Question 4

***If you live -or would like to live- in the Aotea Quarter, what amenities or facilities would you like to see in the area? What would encourage more children and their families to live near or visit the area?***

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“The biggest excitement for us was the opening of Countdown in Victoria St. Everybody absolutely loved it! We’d love an artisan bakery.” - Greys Ave Resident

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Participants were keen to see more residential living encouraged in the area. However, preferences were voiced for low to medium height apartments, not tower blocks. There was a lot of support for encouraging good quality apartments.

The upgrade of the Myers Park play area was mentioned by a number of people including neighbours as being a great success. They would like to see more of that sort of development to make public spaces family friendly, safe, well-lit and well designed.

Local residents had observed more families using the park since the refurbishment.

People were keen to see provision made to encourage families to live in the area, and saw opportunities for inner city schools, and shops and markets that would support families. Currently the nearest primary school is in Freeman’s Bay, and it was mentioned by one submitter that it is a difficult and challenging walking route for children and parents from the City Centre to the school.

There was an acknowledgement of challenges between residential uses and events, as well as the range of residencies.

There was an emphasis on providing for quality apartment living and attracting long-term residents to the quarter. It was identified that the current residents are made up of short-term rentals often for students, owner-occupiers and long-term tenants. Local residents suggested there be recognition of different residential areas, and that careful thought be given to where other activities are located, for example night clubs and outdoor events. They considered there needs to be ‘buffer’ areas between outdoor areas and venues where there maybe noise late. Noise levels needed to be



set, and recognition given to where sound might bounce or reflect off buildings as they can channel and amplify noise.

A number of submitters felt public festivals such as Diwali, Matariki and Pasifika or political rallies were appropriate larger scale events in the square as a civic space, but that large scale private sector live concerts or big screen fan zones should not be prioritised in Aotea Square, “A public square is needed for the people. It is one of the few, light open public spaces (along with St Patrick’s Square and Freyberg Place) in the City Centre for respite from the hustle and bustle and noise of the streets.”

### 3.5 Question 5

***The map below shows the Aotea Quarter area. What parts do you think should be made better for pedestrians, people cycling or safer?***

#### 3.5.1 Transport

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“Slow or drastically reduce car/truck/bus traffic so people can walk, talk, stop, relax and feel safe.” -  
Written submission

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Most participants found the dominance of cars and roads orientated for vehicles detracted from bringing the area together cohesively. There were some concerns about how much focus was placed on transport as a solution rather than working on other areas to attract business and residents to the area while transport solutions are developed.

Several participants talked about the frustration of slow phases for pedestrians at key pedestrian crossings, and felt that could be changed.

There was a lot of support for the existing Link buses, but concern about heavy bus traffic on Mayoral Drive making it less accessible for pedestrians to cross and cyclists to use.

People were keen to see the City Rail Link in place and light rail but felt that it was still a long time off.

Heart of Auckland submitted that while public transport such as the CRL and light rail will considerably improve access to the area, the availability of parking would remain important. They also considered there should be a focus on short term parking in the Civic Carpark over long term parking when surface level parking is lost to development.

In the series of vox pops conducted, a number of participants of Indian, Asian and East European descent generally considered transport options and the open spaces in the Aotea Quarter to be adequate as they are. This contrasted with the feedback from 'locals' who considered there was a great deal of room for improvement.

### 3.5.2 Pedestrian accessibility

There was a good response to pinpointing areas on the online interactive map depicting where areas could be improved for pedestrians, cyclists and for greater safety.

In terms of pedestrian improvements, better crossing over Mayoral Drive (particularly between Wellesley and Cook St. adjacent to the future Aotea Train Station site) were a key concentration, as was access the Aotea Square via Greys Ave, linking Myers Park and Mayoral Drive. There is also a concentration around the Mayoral Drive/Queen St intersection, Airedale St/Mayoral intersection and Wakefield St from Symonds St to Mayoral Drive; at the upper end of Rutland St. The Albert St/Wellesley St intersection is also outlined as a key area of concern (especially the slip-lane on the northern side) requiring significantly improved pedestrian and accessibility safety.

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"The crossing time you get on an average crossing on Mayoral Drive is about ten seconds of the green man, and then you have to wait about two minutes while the cars have their right of way, so the balance is way in favour of the vehicle."- Walking Tour participant

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Most participants agreed that there was far too much focus on vehicle traffic over and above pedestrians, cyclists and other forms of transport. This was seen as a key impediment to linking the area more cohesively. The difficulty of traversing the quarter as a pedestrian was viewed as inhibiting people spending more time in the area, and moving through the area to take part in activities ranging from events through to shopping and eating out.

The Civic Trust suggests there should be more 'barnes-dance' pedestrian crossings particularly in Hobson and Nelson Streets. The Trust said residents in the area report motorists regularly drive through crossings in a dangerous manner.

People also recognised that the terrain through the quarter was uneven, at a range of elevations, as well as a range of surfaces, making it difficult for people with mobility challenges to navigate. Governor Fitzroy Place at the end of St Paul St of the AUT campus adjoining Mayoral Drive was offered as an example where access was well designed, with bike racks, stairs at different elevations and zigzagging ramp

access through the area. It was viewed as both an aesthetically pleasing and functional area for access and mobility, and a place to spend time.

A number of people felt that the uneven surfaces and terrain in the quarter make it difficult for anyone to navigate. A number of people suggested that better maintenance of lighting, footpaths, and clearing rubbish should be a priority to improve the area before any further work and investment is made. A disability sector representative said there were many obstacles for sight impaired people and those with mobility challenges. A full audit of accessibility was recommended.

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“It’s more than just for wheelchairs, some people can’t walk very well or use steps.” - Accessibility Walking Tour participant

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Participants suggested accessibility around the quarter was a considerable issue. Uneven surfaces, lack of way finding, handrails and ramps were all cited as concerns.

### 3.5.3 Cycling

In terms of cycling, Queen St was strongly viewed as the spine that could be made more cycle friendly with new cycle infrastructure in particular. Additionally Mayoral Drive, lower Greys Ave through to Aotea Square, Vincent St through to Albert St, Wellesley St and adjacent to the Aotea Station site on the corner of Wellesley St and Albert St were all key areas for cycle infrastructure improvements.

Participants who were both cyclists and non-cyclists were keen to see better provision for cyclists throughout the quarter and connecting other areas in the central city and inner suburbs.

Safe and secure cycle storage/parking areas were recommended, as were potential facilities for cyclists to shower and change.

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“Give Mayoral Drive a ‘road diet’ by converting one vehicle lane into a bi-directional cycle lane.” - Written submission

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Separated cycling lanes were favoured to link different areas of the quarter safely. There were suggestions too that pedestrian areas such as Aotea Square could have allocated areas for cyclists.



A cycle connection from Grafton Gully via the Elam Art School through the Learning Quarter via St Paul St to the Aotea Quarter was also suggested.

#### 3.5.4 Safety on the map

Areas depicted on the interactive map where safety could be improved included Myers Park, Federal St, Aotea Square, Airedale St, and Albert Park. Many participants suggested that more life and more people about assisted safety, and they felt opening up closed off areas would assist, along with better security and police presence.

#### 3.5.5 Maintenance

There were some concerns about levels of maintenance of street paving, lights, and clearing rubbish. It was felt by some that this could be a first step to improve the area. O'Connell St and Aotea Square were mentioned as places that looked good from regular maintenance, but some other streets and areas were messy. Areas around Rutland St, Mayoral Drive, Airedale St, Lorne St, and Liverpool St were all cited as places that were messy, needed more lighting and even paving surfaces, and had places smelling of urine. The lack of quality public toilets which were open throughout the night were mentioned a number of times in the focus group sessions.

#### 3.5.6 Connections

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“Destroy the six lane moats that slice the city into pieces.” - Focus group participant.

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A predominant theme has been a desire to see improved connections around the area, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists; both residents and visitors. This emerged as a top priority for most participants.

All agreed that better access across roads such as Mayoral Drive, Albert St, and Queen St were needed, as currently the dominance of vehicle traffic on roads made it difficult to find your way through the quarter to key locations.

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“The Vincent St/Mayoral Drive intersection where the curved road of Mayoral Drive becomes Albert St. It is massively wide. Either make it narrower or provide a traffic refuge so that pedestrians can get across. It's mostly the width of the streets that is off-putting for pedestrians.” - Walking Tour participant

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The consensus was that roads such as Mayoral Drive inhibited pedestrian and cycle access to the centre and across the Aotea Quarter. However, some submitters did recognise that Mayoral Drive was an important connector and through route for vehicle traffic connecting to the motorways.

Ensuring sightlines and way-finding are in place was also seen as important to enabling people to get a sense of the connections throughout the quarter. An example was provided of international visitors to the city arriving on the airport bus outside the Classic theatre on Queen St and having no idea of where they were in the city. There is no place, signage or information to assist them. It was viewed as an unrealised opportunity to engage with visitors.

Suggested actions also included closing Queen St to vehicles, easier access across Mayoral Drive to the AUT campus, the Learning Quarter and Airedale St, better links for pedestrians across the Mayoral Drive/Vincent and Cook St intersection, and across to Federal St. Some submitters suggested removing 'slip lanes' for vehicles on Mayoral Drive intersections to make pedestrian thoroughfare easier.

Creating a greater sense of a continuation of Greys Ave down to Aotea Square across the entranceway to the Civic car park was frequently cited as another key connection to develop.

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"Link between Myers Park for Basement (theatre) and all the other dark, dingy, unsafe bits around the precinct." - Written submission

"Make a town square, four sides of retail, mainly restaurants; family friendly, not boozers, and a playground area." - Written submission

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### 3.5.7 Heritage

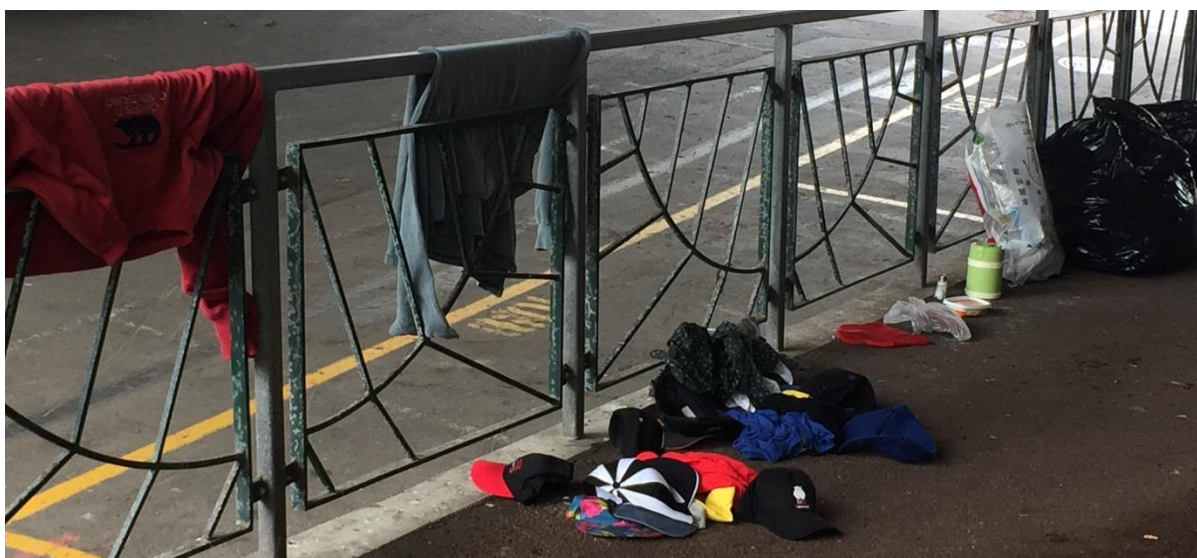
People were keen to see heritage buildings and features preserved. There was a range of views about potential future use of the Civic Administration Building; some suggesting its heritage values be preserved while others felt it should be demolished and a new facility built. Not all were keen to see it retained, but there was interest in it being better integrated to the Aotea Centre and Square.

Many felt that the areas around the building, the South Town Hall area, and Aotea Centre backing onto Mayoral Drive could be better utilised as public spaces.

Participants felt that it was important to retain heritage buildings and features in the quarter to give it character. The St James, the Civic, the Art Gallery, the Central Library were all mentioned as important heritage buildings featuring in the quarter.

### 3.6 Question 6

***What could the council and its partners do to assist rough sleepers in the area?***



Participants universally felt empathy for rough sleepers. Most people did not think they were a safety issue. Some local residents from Greys Ave said they had got to know some of the regular rough sleepers and did not consider that they were a problem in the area. They were keen to distinguish them from some more itinerant people hanging out on the street that could be disruptive.

Participants discussed a range of options to assist the rough sleepers community. They asked if there could be more accommodation and support available from providers such as the City Mission.

There was widespread interest in exploring ways to provide basic facilities for rough sleepers, ranging from lockers to keep their belongings to showers and 24 hour toilets. There was also discussion about providing places for rough sleepers to sleep that offered some shelter.

There were also suggestions of finding accommodation for rough sleepers away from the central city. Some people felt that making the quarter more populated and vibrant with activities during the day and night might dissuade rough sleepers from sleeping in public places. Some central city businesses and facilities such as St Matthews Church said they had to clean up after rough sleepers using their doorways, and they felt providing facilities such as toilets and showers could ease this problem. At one focus group meeting an example of a mobile shower facility in a bus that is offered for rough sleepers in San Francisco was discussed. Participants felt ideas such as this would be useful.

It was suggested by some submitters that Auckland could pick up on some international examples of better providing for rough sleepers, such as in Vancouver and Salt Lake City where housing, accommodation or shelter is provided. An example was given in Vancouver of public seating that converts to a sleeping pod. Further suggestions included installing 'cheap cabins or container-style temporary accommodation.' The Salt Lake City, Utah example was a local government led initiative that enabled 'homeless' people to have a home 'no questions asked' and without having to meet a set of criteria to be eligible. They access support services once they have a home. There were suggestions too that government processes were difficult for rough sleepers with forms to fill out and 'providing a room, no questions asked' was a potential option. An example of warm and safe spaces being provided for rough sleepers in Hong Kong was also mentioned.

A number of people felt there should not be too much organised intervention, and that rough sleepers simply needed facilities and a place to sleep. Some people suggested unused food from restaurants and cafes could be provided to rough sleepers. However, some people cautioned that providing too many amenities could encourage more rough sleepers and that a balance of support was required. Others felt they were a nuisance and 'wardens' or security should move people on.

A number of participants felt other agencies could be more involved, such as the city mission and Lifewise. There was some support for the City Mission expanding their operations in Hobson St.

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"We see the stigmatization of beggars and rough sleepers by simply moving them on as problematic. It is imperative to ensure that housing and food is available to rough sleepers, and the council and partners could help with this by providing better support to organisations that work in the area." - Waitemata Youth Collective.

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Heart of Auckland considered addressing the needs of the city's homeless community should be elevated above just an Aotea Quarter discussion, and should begin with assessing the overall need for improving public amenity (toilets) in the city centre for general public use.

The Civic Trust suggested the Civic Administration Building could potentially be developed to house rough sleepers. It also felt employment opportunities could be created such as clearing up litter and leaves. The Trust offered this quote from Samuel Johnson:

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"A decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization."

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### Future Outcome Three: Te Aronganui Toru

**A public transport node that improves accessibility, supports growth and enables high-quality development.**

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“Good to think about the natural path of a person. People are naturally inclined to go where it is safe, clear and they can see something. - Walking Tour Participant.

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### 3.7 Question 7

***The council owns several sites around Aotea Square, including uncovered surface car parks and the Civic Administration Building surrounds. How do you think these sites could be better used to help realise the area’s potential?***

There was a widespread view that surface area car parks were a waste of space. There was interest in a range of uses and facilities that could be developed on council owned land adjacent to the Civic Administration Building and the back of the South Town Hall (adjacent to the Q and Basement theatres).

The Urban Design Forum submission expressed support for the preservation of the old civic administration building and particularly views of the east and northern faces forming a strong vertical element on the side of Aotea Square, which was seen as very important. However the preservation of the external form of the Aotea Centre is seen as less important. An approach which realises ‘the building as landscape’ which would see the human-occupation and activation of the Aotea Square via the terraced levels of the Aotea Centre (such as the Adelaide Festival Centre) was seen as a key move in a future redevelopment of this site.

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“The reinstatement of the former Cook St axis (visually at least) from the west to the Town Hall is a great idea.” - Design Community focus group

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There was a view there should be a balance between programmed and ‘pop up’ type use of spaces at Aotea Square and the public spaces running up to Myers Park, outside the Central Library and other small public spaces. Providing infrastructure and equipment for the community and creative arts sector to use public spaces was viewed as a good idea.

There was interest in making areas more accessible for use for people and events other than the large programmed events in venues and Aotea Square.

Some of the theatre supporters were keen to see closer linkages to the cinemas and theatres in Queen St, and there were some views that making parts of Queen St more pedestrian friendly or even closed to traffic could be explored.

Suggestions for better use of council owned land particularly adjacent to the Civic Administration Building and the car park behind Q Theatre included bike parks, green spaces, developing subsidized studio and rehearsal spaces for local artists, food stalls, local businesses, accessible public spaces, apartments, hotels, water features, fountains, play equipment, pathways, places for meditation, child care, cafes, a show ticket booth, low cost housing.

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“A liveable city isn’t measured by its car parks; it’s measured by how well people love living in it. Surface area car parks in a high value area of the city is an inefficient use of expensive real estate, no matter how much revenue the park costs return.” - Written submission.

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People were also keen to see a lot more cafes, restaurants and bars in the area. It was felt people currently go elsewhere in the City Centre to eat.

### 3.7.1 Way Finding

People felt accessibility could be enhanced by better information and way-finding, identifying where places are by using signage, banners, creative pavement markings, digital information and other measures. Some felt better information would give people some cultural knowledge and background to areas. It was also felt this could be good for locals to gain greater knowledge of the area that they could pass on to visitors. There was interest in encouraging greater linkages and pedestrian and cycle thoroughfare from Symonds St through to Queen St and the quarter, and likewise from Hobson, Albert, and Federal St. Some people were unaware of some of the alternative routes that already exist such as Airedale St from Symonds St through to Queen St.

There was interest in ensuring areas have good ‘sightlines’ so people can see connections to other buildings, public spaces, visually appealing landscapes and streetscapes.

## Future Outcome Four: Te Aronganui Wha

**Spaces and buildings that lead and showcase Auckland's drive for sustainability and celebrate its unique cultural identity, through the Te Aranga Maori design principles.**

### 3.8 Question 8

***How and where would you like to see the quarter showcase civic identity, Māori identity, Pacific identities, other cultural identities, progress towards self-sustainability?***

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“Nature should be central; a New Zealand town square embeds tangata whenua, nature, sound, birds and people, food and activities.” - Focus group participant.

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#### 3.8.1 Māori identity



Participants identified a link between expressing a Māori identity and recognising natural spaces. A clear example of this is the Waihorotiu stream that once ran through Myers Park and Queen St. People felt there was a great opportunity to include Māori artists and designers to design ways to recognise the stream and surroundings; bringing together art, culture, design and natural spaces. A range of ideas were suggested including a ‘waka for children to climb’ through to water

features or fountains where children can play, referencing Waihorotiu. There was interest in the use of native species and attracting native birds. Some participants were keen to see the stream 'daylighted', others felt it was better to recognise its route in other ways and integrate that through the urban and natural landscape.

There was also support for more Māori cultural events; expression of the performing arts.

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"There were a lot of shows we used to see at Aotea Square it would be good to see come back, like kapa haka nationals, it would be good to see some of the runner-up groups perform. There needs to be more not just Māori, but Pacific Island as well, and any other cultures. Culture is a beautiful thing and worthwhile being proud of." Vox Pops Interview, Male Māori, 42.

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Sculptures such as the pouwhenua carved poles at the Britomart precinct were suggested as a good example of integrating cultural identity into architecturally pleasing spaces.

### 3.8.2 Pacific identity

Some submitters felt that cultural festivals are a good way to further celebrate Pacific cultures. Some did not think these cultures should be singled out separately from other ethnic cultures living in Auckland. Many submitters felt that a similar approach as that taken for expressing Māori cultural identity should be used for Pacific cultures.



### 3.8.3 Cultural identity



Cultural festivals such as Diwali, the Lantern Festival, and Chinese New Year were mentioned as good opportunities to celebrate different cultural identities. A number of participants suggested that cultural events for other ethnicities such as Malaysian and Scandinavian that are currently held in other areas of the region should be brought to the centre. It was also suggested that design features, artworks, and exhibitions should welcome and include different cultural ethnicities. There was widespread recognition that as a civic centre, the Aotea Quarter should celebrate all cultures that are represented in the city, from differing ethnicities to other sub-cultures and interests ranging from main stream and big ticket events, through to more fringe and alternative cultures and arts.

### 3.8.4 Self-Sustainability - Natural spaces

People were keen on the idea of better recognising natural features, such as the Waihorotiu stream. There was some interest in it being 'daylighted', but some concerns about maintenance, cost and integration.

Generally, all wished to see elements of water features, fountains or similar created to recognise the streams and to create green and natural connections across the quarter. There was support to connect the natural features in Myers Park through to Aotea Square, Queen St and throughout the quarter.

There was an interest from participants in more recycling opportunities, reducing the use of plastic and disposable containers, use of solar panels and alternative energy sources, and the development of community gardens and edible landscaping areas.

There were suggestions the Council encourage other sustainable measures such as grey water recycling, potential litter fines associated with fast food outlets, composting, use of LED lights.

The Civic Trust submitted that the demolition of buildings should be viewed as unsustainable, as demolition not only destroys inherent character values, but incurs costs in disposal of waste materials, and the embodied energy and expenditure in creating a building should be taken into account. The Trust suggests this approach would be in line with the principles of Whakamāramatanga, which calls for water, energy and material resources to be conserved.

## 4.0 Ideas and Solutions

### 4.1 Buildings

- Strongly recognise the topography of the quarter and the 'buildings as part of the landscape'
- Buildings themselves to provide the necessary activation around the public spaces (rather than relying of the programming of the square in particular to attract people).
- Assess heritage values of buildings in the quarter
  - Outcomes such as the very tall St James apartments need to be avoided in the future" (Design Community )
- Attract more food and beverage retail to quarter
- More retail to suit residents, e.g. artisan bakery
- Height restrictions in quarter, keep scale to keep heritage, 8 storey limit like Paris preferable
- Enable sight-lines so people can see buildings, landscapes and connections, don't allow development that will block this. E.g. reinforce Cook St view to Town Hall tower
- Reinstate or strengthen the pedestrian and cycle connection of Greys Ave back to Queen St (apex of the Town Hall)
- Increase gallery space, like Toi Māori
- Open up the roof of the Civic Administration Building to the community as a restaurant or bar
- Use the Civic Administration Building as a library or accommodation for rough sleepers
- Creative design for bus stops along Mayoral Drive and the Aotea Station that reinforce the arts and cultural identity of the quarter
- Showcasing sustainable best practice - use green roofing or solar panels either on new buildings or upgrading existing buildings
- Showers and toilets for both visitors, the public and rough sleepers
- Create or make available building space available for young people and civic uses. Consider a temporary winter-pavilion at southern end of Aotea Square for shelter during the winter months for civic / community uses
- There was widespread support to encourage more residential living in the city and providing family-friendly facilities and amenities to support. But people were clear they wanted to see quality apartment buildings at a 'human scale' e.g. consider Vancouver model of street townhouses and spatially separated towers above; high people density, an active street edge.

## 4.2 Spaces

- Set up 'shared tools' for arts and culture/community orgs, e.g. moveable stage, PA, AV, screens, seating, DIY/Hireage, a 'toolbox' as a city area investment, can be shared
- Have two libraries, existing one focus on research and a second one in or around Aotea Square focussing on technology/youth
- More public sculptures
- More food and beverage around edges of Aotea Square, preferably north-facing
- A dance rehearsal space or venue
- Set up a space for Food Trucks, potentially outside library
- Set up water feature like silo park, that is used by children
- Temporary soccer goals and basketball hoops
- Storage spaces for rough sleepers
- More public toilets at convenient spots near Aotea Square
- A hub/centre for youth
- Large outdoor screen
- Sculpture trail from St Kevin's Arcade, down Myers Park to Aotea Square and across to the gallery spaces off Kitchener St / Auckland Art Gallery.
- Public use exercise machines.
- Water bottle fillers
- Community gardens / edible landscape areas / Mobile gardens in car parks
- Fruit trees in public spaces and bird feeders
- An inter-faith spaces; Mobile video screens in Aotea Square
- Use an idea from Denmark where different ethnic communities each contributed a statue, playground equipment, art to showcase the variety of ethnicities
- Highlight historic stream and wetlands with a sculptural waterway or water feature (like Freiburg, Germany)
- Engage with mana whenua and have Māori culture and artists drive the area
- More alleys and laneways, small shops, studios, student shops



### 4.3 Activity

- Markets with stalls for all ethnic communities, with events for bands and dancing
- More food markets, regular fresh fruit and vege markets
- More events that close streets to traffic
- Hold shopping festivals during January and public holidays
- Māori, Pacific and other communities represented in artworks throughout the precinct
- Ticket booth selling last minute/discount/same day tickets to shows
- Provide physical anchor for performing arts in Queen St, like Times Square, red steps, lunch time performances
- A hub and ticket sales for fringe theatre, festivals
- Pop up venues in public spaces such as the back of Q theatre
- Volunteering events such as get to know your neighbours, rubbish pick up days, etc
- Arts activities such as once a month get together to paint pictures/landscapes of Auckland

### 4.4 Connections & movement

- Reconnect flow of Greys Ave down to Aotea Square
- Potentially use fill from the CRL to fill lower Myers Park up to the level of Mayoral Drive
- Close the Greys Ave entry to the Civic car park
- Reclaim Mayoral Drive as a city street
- Provide park and ride on edge of City Centre for people who cannot use public transport easily.
- Close or set up shared use for Queen St to traffic to better connect St James, the Civic, the library
- Charging stations for electric cars
- More parks for bikes and a bike tyre pump/bike utility station
- More dedicated cycleways
- Free bike schemes
- Priority parking for electric cars
- More car sharing

- Better maintain footpaths on side streets as well as main streets
- More accessible pathways across varying elevations
- 30 kph for cars throughout the quarter
- Free bus/transport up steep hills, e.g. Queen St to K Rd
- Remove steel handrails from footpath behind Civic Administration Building to allow pedestrian flow from Mayoral Drive to Aotea Square

#### 4.5 Information, relationships & engagement

- Improve wayfinding, use creative means, creative route markings on footpaths
- QR codes to download information
- Bi-lingual - English and te-reo signage
- More places, online and physically that tell people what is going on
- Coordinate info about events across council, agencies and providers.
- Create welcoming signage
- Signage about the history and activities of the area
- Apps with alerts about what is happening in area
- Geo-fencing, info, historical data, information
- Set up large digital screens for shows/events, and updates about 'what's on'
- Story and wayfinding signs at key places for visitors, i.e. by the airport bus stop on Queen St
- Partner with Air New Zealand to offer travel package to area and festivals (Currently done now for WOW festival in Wellington).
- Develop marketing plan, brand, and better use of social media
- Have a signpost like at Cape Reinga and Bluff showing distance to sister cities and Pacific Island capitals
- Free wifi

## 5.0 Conclusion

The engagement methods used in this process were qualitative in nature and identified key themes across all participants in the range of methods including the walking tours, focus groups, vox pops interviews and online and written submissions.

The predominant theme that emerged for the Aotea Quarter to reach its potential was to make the physical spaces around the precinct more accessible, welcoming and connected for people, which in turn makes them considerable more safer.

There was widespread recognition that currently vehicle traffic dominates the connections across the quarter and creates separation the various activities.

People consistently commented that they felt more could be done with the public spaces in the quarter, in particular linking Aotea Square through to Myers Park, including better use of land currently in car parks.

There was a lot of interest in more food and beverage outlets and shops and spaces for small businesses.

More access for cycling and public transport was widely supported, and there was a lot of interest in turning streets into shared spaces or closing them to vehicles, including Queen Street.

However participants were concerned about the length of time it will take for alternative transport systems to come on stream, and how transitions to less vehicle access and parking will be managed.

Many participants were very keen to see more natural spaces linked up across the quarter, and in particular Myers Park, the Waihorotiu stream.

There was widespread support to encourage more residential living in the city and providing family-friendly facilities and amenities to support. But people were clear they wanted to see quality apartment buildings at a 'human scale.'

In conclusion, there was a clear demand to see the quarter developed to meet its potential with a very definite focus on making public spaces, activities, buildings and communication better contribute to its arts, diverse culture, entertainment and civic identity, as well as to be more accessible to wider groups of the public.

There was an overall clear direction that the quarter is currently under-utilised, under promoted, and poorly connected, and actions were sought to rectify this in order for the quarter to reach its potential.

## 6.0 Sources

Information for this report has come from a number of sources including:

- audio recordings of walking tours
- note-taking on walking tours
- 'yellow sticky' comments at focus groups
- note-taking at focus groups
- Radio New Zealand documentary
- street vox pops (recorded at Myers Park, Aotea Square, central library, AUT campus)
- online feedback form
- hardcopy feedback form
- online interactive map
- display stall at the Aotea Centre and Aotea Square.



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