

CHRISTCHURCH 2009

PUBLIC SPACE PUBLIC LIFE

GEHL ARCHITECTS



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FOREWORD

In November 2008, Christchurch City commissioned world renowned Danish urban designer Jan Gehl of Gehl Architects to undertake a Public Spaces Public Life Study of central Christchurch.

The study's focus extended from Kilmore Street to Saint Asaph Street, Rolleston Avenue to Madras Street. Spatially this area captures the most intensively used parts of the central city.

The study considers how people use our public spaces and streets in central Christchurch. It assesses the spaces in the central city, how people move around and how our public spaces could better sustain public life and foster our community. Jan's proposals to improve Christchurch sit firmly with this Council's vision for a vibrant, fun, exciting, safe and sustainable heart of Christchurch.

The study provides us with a useful benchmark to assess our city against others that have been studied by Gehl Architects including Copenhagen, Melbourne, Sydney, Lyon and Wellington.

Central Christchurch, laid out by the city fathers in 1856, has a distinctive pattern of streets and public spaces. Much has been achieved by our heritage preservation, city mall upgrade, ongoing street upgrades and our investment in the Public Transport Interchange and new Civic Offices.

However to get the best out of our natural and built assets and provide great spaces for people, Jan and his colleagues found that the Central City needs ongoing attention. The study suggests implementing pedestrian and bicycle priority, creating strong links between our city's assets, strengthening the city identity and creating a place that is good for living, working and playing – for all age groups.

The study comes at a time when the Council is two years into implementing the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and four years into the action plan in the Central City Revitalisation Strategy. We have begun thinking about the next phase of central city revitalisation. We recognise that whatever solutions we apply to whatever issues, we need to ensure they are integrated across the central city.

I am pleased to present Jan Gehl's study. It will help us refine our plans and unlock our city's potential as a liveable, pedestrian friendly, vibrant and exciting city.

Bob Parker
Mayor
Christchurch City



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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDY

Gehl Architects' work is based on the public space research conducted by Jan Gehl. With the human dimension as a starting point Jan Gehl has for the last 30 years, worked to improve city environments in Denmark and abroad.

The book "Life between buildings" from 1971 has been translated to a number of languages and is compulsory reading in numerous architecture schools worldwide. "Life between buildings" describes the life that takes place in the spaces created by the buildings in both cities and suburbs and advocates for a stronger effort from planners and architects to understand and create the framework that provides for public life in the best possible way. The objective for Gehl Architects is to create a stronger coherence between the life lived and the planned or existing building structures. Public life is at the top of the agenda and great care is needed to accommodate the people populating our cities.

As a working tool Gehl Architects has developed the Public Spaces and Public Life studies which can be used in several contexts. In Copenhagen, PSPL surveys have been conducted every ten years throughout the past forty years.

The surveys clearly and thoroughly document the gradual change occurring in this time period and provide empirical evidence of the significant improvement of the quality of city life.

Additionally follow-up surveys have enabled the municipal government to gather information and inspiration for the further development of the urban spaces and the general public has acquired a valuable understanding and interest in the public realm.

This trend has spread to other cities as well, as Gehl Architects have performed follow-up surveys in Perth in 2008 (follow up to a 1993 survey). Stockholm in 2005 (follow-up to a 1990 survey) and Melbourne in 2004 (follow-up to a 1994 survey). In all cases, PSPL studies have shown that public realm improvements truly have had a large impact on the quality of public life in the city. Such evidence has proven to be vital in maintaining public interest in further improvement projects, as well as general satisfaction amongst citizens as residents can see quantifiable evidence of improved quality of life.

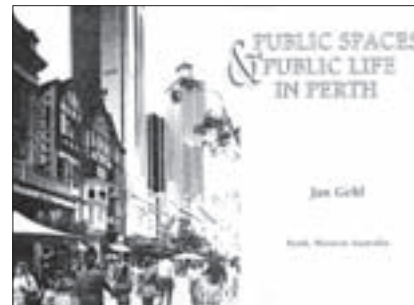
public spaces and public life



MELBOURNE - 2004 - 3 MIO. INHABITANTS



ADELAIDE - 2002 - 1.3 MIO. INHABITANTS



PERTH - 1993 - 1.2 MIO. INHABITANTS



WELLINGTON - 2004 - 0.3 MIO. INHABITANTS



COPENHAGEN - 2005 - 1.3 MIO. INHABITANTS



SYDNEY - 2007 - 4 MIO. INHABITANTS



LONDON - 2003 - 7.5 MIO. INHABITANTS



NEW YORK - 2008 - 8 MIO. INHABITANTS

THE STUDY IN BROAD OUTLINE



the city



the people



recommendations



inspiration



public life data

THE CITY section presents the study area and an analysis of the actual physical conditions provided for pedestrians. What is the traffic situation like? How are the public spaces composed? How are the public spaces organised, designed and equipped?

THE PEOPLE section presents an analysis of the people living and spending time in the city. What are the major conflicts with pedestrian movements? Through qualitative analysis the public spaces in Christchurch are evaluated as to how people are accommodated in the city today.

The analysis covers both the issues related to walking and getting around in general, and the issues regarding spending time in the city.

RECOMMENDATIONS are based on 'the city' and 'the people' analysis and user surveys. A set of simple and overall recommendations are put forward covering the main issues today. These are followed by more detailed guidelines indicating desirable improvements in selected spaces.

REFLECTIONS describe how the Public Space Public Life Survey can be used as a tool and reflects on the process ahead.

INSPIRATION describes the process of how Barcelona, Lyon, Melbourne, Copenhagen and New York have been turning their focus and goals towards "better people places".

PUBLIC LIFE DATA presents a survey of pedestrian activities on summer days in selected spaces.

How are the streets, squares and parks in the study area used? How many people are walking in the streets? How many activities are going on? What goes on during summer, weekdays and on Saturdays? Which age groups of the population use the spaces in the city centre?

The data is divided into observations regarding pedestrian traffic, stationary and recreational activities. The data gives information and detailed background on the present state of public life in the city.

INTRODUCTION

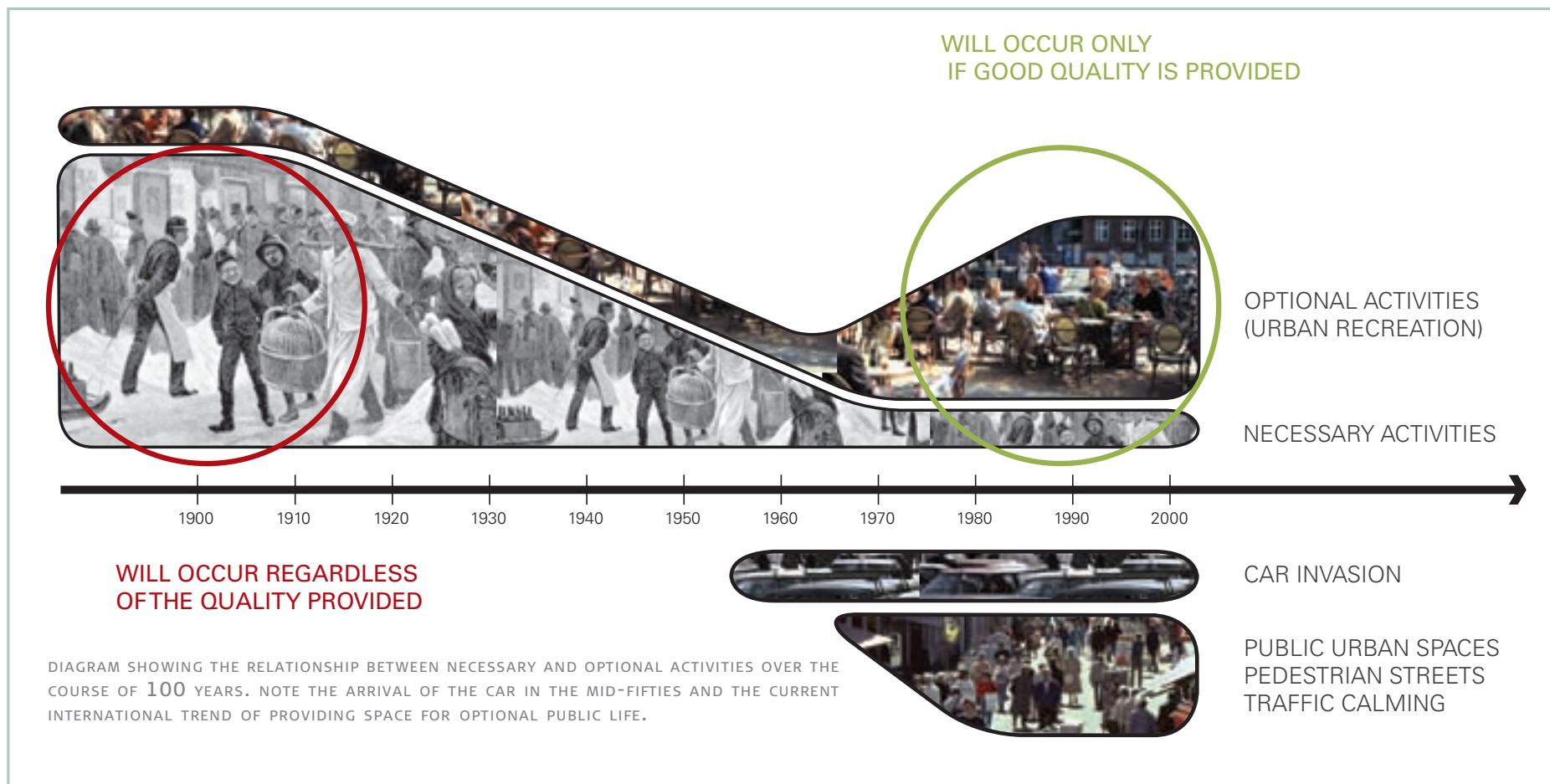
NEW NEEDS AND NEW ACTIVITIES

In western cities of the 21st century public life can no longer be taken for granted! As cities experience declining densities, suburban sprawl, increased commuting and more knowledge intensive labour, fewer people depend on public space for their day-to-day living. As a majority of public spaces have lost their original function, e.g. as market or meeting places, and as increasing amounts of cars have squeezed out more "soft" social activities, cities all over the world have lost valuable public space and only then realised that public life disappeared with it.

If a modern city wants lively streets and a vibrant public realm, a fundamental prerequisite is to provide public space. As today's citizens have more options on how to spend their time, they will only spend it in the public realm if it is of high quality and is easily accessible.

Today, "people first" - strategies, as presented in this report, are used to assist the transition of modern knowledge intensive cities into attractive and environmentally conscious cities of the 21st century.

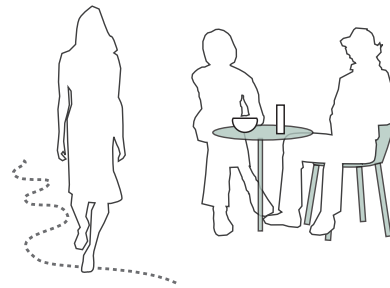
21st century: a dramatic change in the character of public life



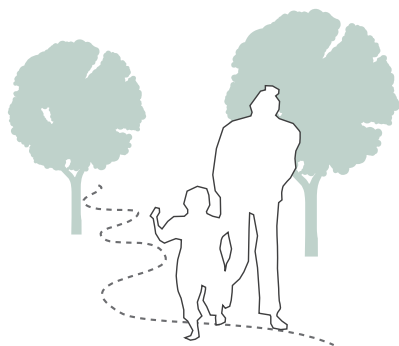
trends in public space activities in the 21st century



INCREASED INTEREST IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



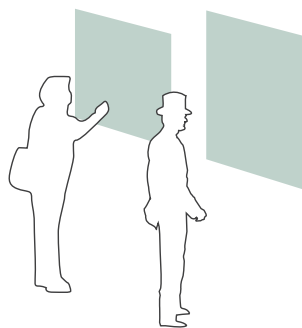
PRIVATISATION = INCREASED INTEREST IN PUBLIC LIFE



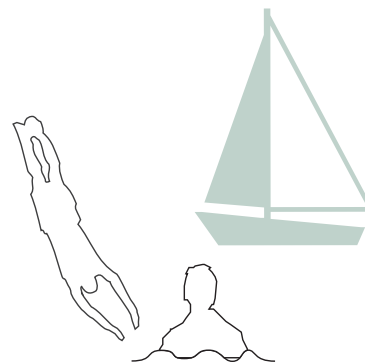
THE WISH TO ENJOY NATURE AND FRESH AIR ALL YEAR ROUND



MORE CHILDREN AND SENIOR CITIZENS WISH TO USE THE CITY SPACES



INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL EVENTS



AMENITY VALUES

INCREASED INTEREST IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Born out of other trends like the increase in car travel, inactive daily lives and renewed environmental consciousness, the interest in walking, biking and an active, healthy life style has increased substantially. Jogging, roller skating or simply walking to and from errands today comprise a substantial part of the activities taking place in our cities.

AMENITY VALUES

Amenity values and special attractions play an increasingly important role for the attractiveness of cities. Easy access to water and green areas becomes an important point of focus.

INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL EVENTS

Public spaces can create the basis for a wide variety of activities, such as exhibitions, performances and play. The number of people now living alone has generally meant an increased need for going out to meet other people and take part in city life.

PRIVATISATION = INCREASED INTEREST IN PUBLIC LIFE

Still smaller households and the rapid privatisation of home life, work life and service activities has resulted in a general increase in the interest in public spaces and public activities, serving as a counterweight to the increased isolation of individuals within the city.

THE WISH TO ENJOY NATURE AND FRESH AIR ALL YEAR ROUND

A large portion of the population spends working hours indoor, and consequently many choose to spend much of their spare time outdoors.

MORE CHILDREN AND SENIOR CITIZENS WISH TO USE THE PUBLIC SPACES

Focus needs to be put on inviting children, young people and senior citizens to use the city. A high degree of variation in user groups creates the basis for active city spaces if they are designed with care to welcome the needs of both the young and the old.

INTRODUCTION

CITY CENTRE ACHIEVEMENTS

In the following pages are displayed a number of findings on an overall level concerning both current achievements, potential and challenges in Christchurch city centre.

PRESERVING HERITAGE



ACHIEVEMENTS

A large number of heritage buildings in Christchurch have been preserved.

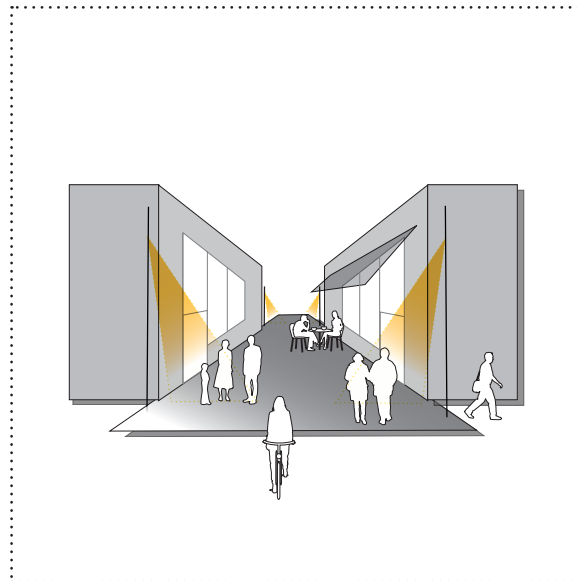
BENEFITS

Heritage buildings add character to streetscapes and encompass the history and culture of the city. Their relationship to the streets (number of openings and scale), improve the quality of the streetscape as public space.

CHALLENGES

Some heritage buildings appear to have been converted as part of major developments. Some of these buildings now form awkward juxtapositions between the new and the old as well as the low rise and the high rise. Christchurch does not have sufficient policies to take the historical value of the heritage buildings into consideration. Developing preservation-policies will be an important challenge for the future.

LANES - THE CITY'S TREASURE



ACHIEVEMENTS

Christchurch has succeeded in redeveloping some of the city's lanes. Christchurch City has developed a Lanes Design Guide that aims to enhance Central City lanes by setting out objectives, principles, and targets to facilitate their redevelopment. The plan also describes a process by which lanes will be identified and evaluated and design guidelines for lane redevelopment projects.

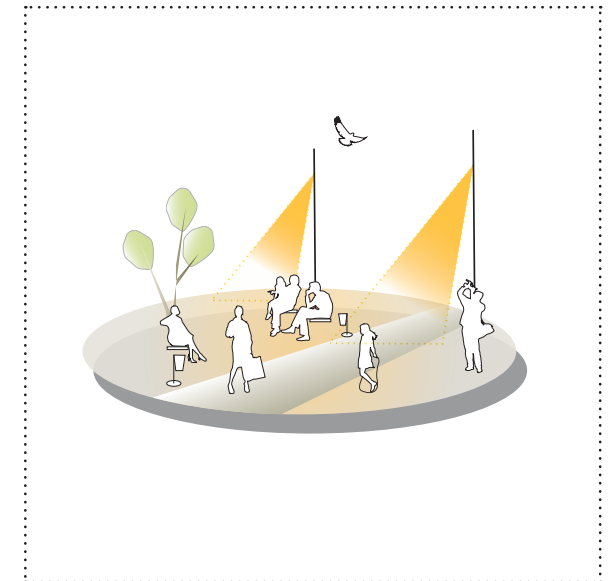
BENEFITS

The Central City lanes have fantastic potential for strengthening the public realm and increasing pedestrian opportunities. Their small-scale intimate spaces provide an alternative to the streets and large open spaces of the grid structure. Physical improvement of the city's lanes will provide comfort, engagement and entertainment for pedestrians, inviting a range of popular uses. They also create opportunities for innovation, surprise and unique approaches to both permanent and temporary design.

CHALLENGES

Christchurch has not yet fully realised the city centre's potential of a developed lanes network.

INTRODUCING DESIGN CODES



ACHIEVEMENTS

Christchurch City has developed a Draft Central City Streetscape Plan 2008. The plan provides guidelines for appropriate design, development and management of streetscapes in the Central City. It offers a design mechanism that promotes positive design outcomes to fulfill the many functions of the contemporary urban streets, turning traffic corridors into city streets.

BENEFITS

A beautiful street environment of high quality, durable materials will stimulate the use and care of urban spaces. Simple street layouts and increased pedestrian priority will be a very important feature in the transformation of Christchurch into an attractive city for all.

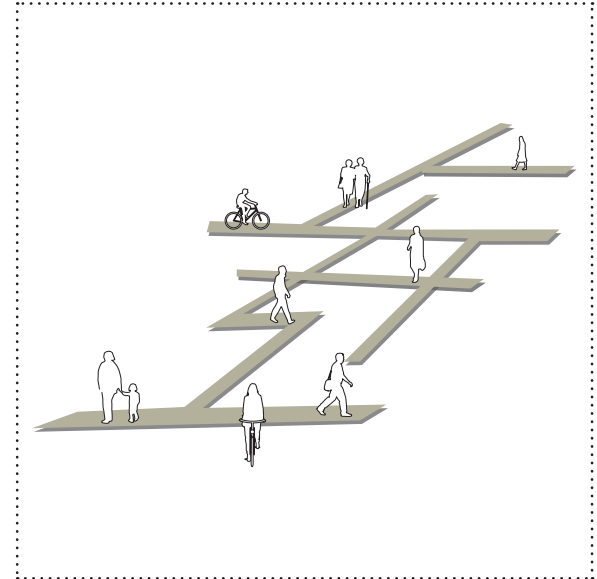
CHALLENGES

Expanding the program to widen footpaths in selected streets and developing a public space plan for renewal of public squares. Broadening the scope to include funds for integrated public art.

INTRODUCTION

CITY CENTRE POTENTIAL

A CITY FOR WALKING AND CYCLING



POTENTIAL

The grid makes a rational, flexible and efficient urban structure, that is easy to move around. Unfortunately most of the streets in the city centre are very much alike and a clear street hierarchy is lacking.

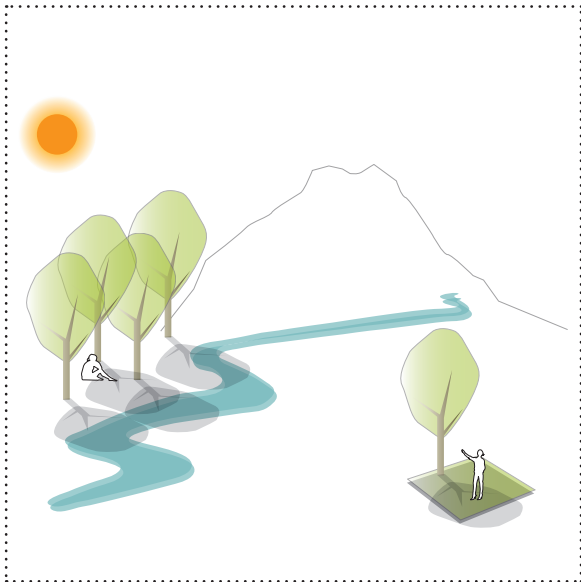
The flat and wide streets provide the perfect setting for a culture of more walking and biking in the city centre.

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL

The flexibility and robustness of the grid has an under utilised potential for a system of differentiated street layouts. A street hierarchy based on clear street identities is an attractive possibility.

The street width has potential to accommodate more uses than driving, parking and walking for example providing cycle lanes as well as seating and diverse landscaping.

A FANTASTIC SETTING



POTENTIAL

Christchurch is located at the edge of the volcanic slopes of the Port Hills. The nature around the city strengthens an image of a strong landscape setting.

The Central City is of a walkable size, bringing many amenities within reach and promising a potentially car independent future for all those moving into the inner city. The Avon River meanders lazily right through the city centre, bringing the elements of water and nature to the doorsteps of large numbers of citizens.

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL

It would be of great benefit to the city if connections between Central City and these amenities were created. The possibility of easily combining the attractions of the city with the natural environment for residents and guests is a great potential. Removing obstacles, upgrading primary connectors and introducing recreational cycle routes are ways to achieve this.

ACTIVE DURING WORKHOURS



POTENTIAL

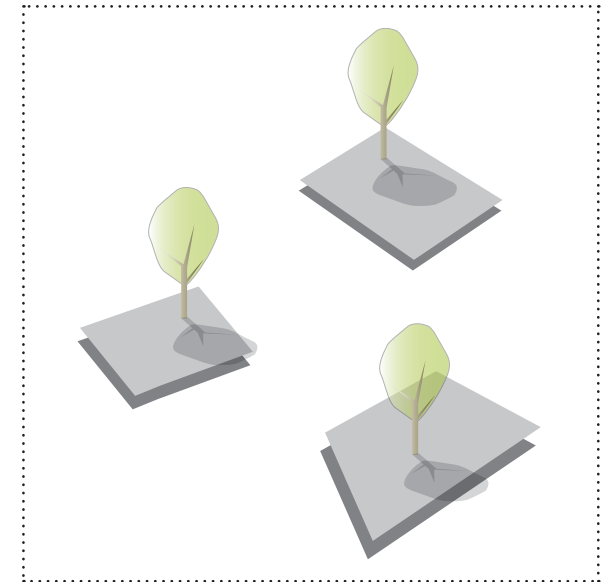
Christchurch is active during work hours. Many people commute into Central City for work, which creates activity.

The city also has a respectable number of visitors and tourists, who spend time in the city centre during the day. The Central City is still the heart of entertainment for the city with many restaurants and bars.

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL

It is very positive that the city centre already has a lot of regular visitors. This can be explored further to make the city centre more inviting and encourage people to stay even longer. To achieve this it is very important for future development that Christchurch also provides attractive public space and facilities for central city residents, as well as a broader spectrum of user groups.

PUBLIC SPACES WITH POTENTIAL



POTENTIAL

Christchurch's urban spaces do not function optimally today, but they have great potential. The spaces are scattered in different parts of the city. They are mostly un-programmed in their present form, but will in the future be able to invite more people to use the city. The urban spaces can support larger variation in city life and contribute to a lively city throughout the day and year. Christchurch has a head start; the spaces are already there, they just need to be made more attractive and more user friendly - spaces that can provide for today's and the future's public space needs.

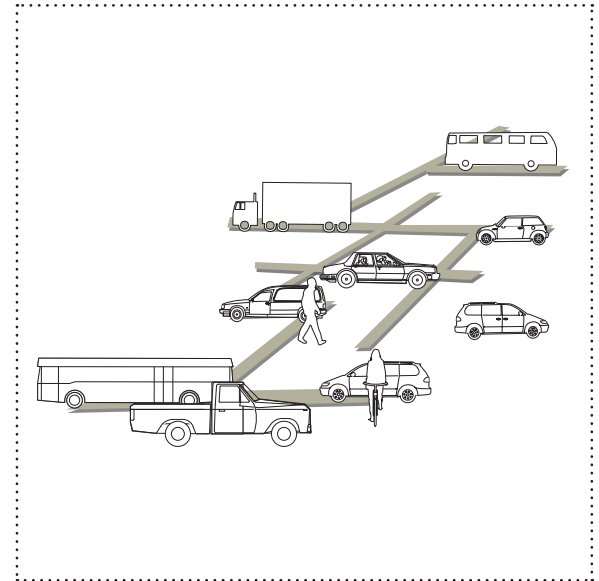
EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL

There is great potential in Christchurch, if the recreational facilities are upgraded and integrated further into city life. The city needs to strengthen the public space network to encompass more and new significant public spaces and to develop strong walking links in-between.

INTRODUCTION

CITY CENTRE CHALLENGES

A TRAFFIC DOMINATED CITY



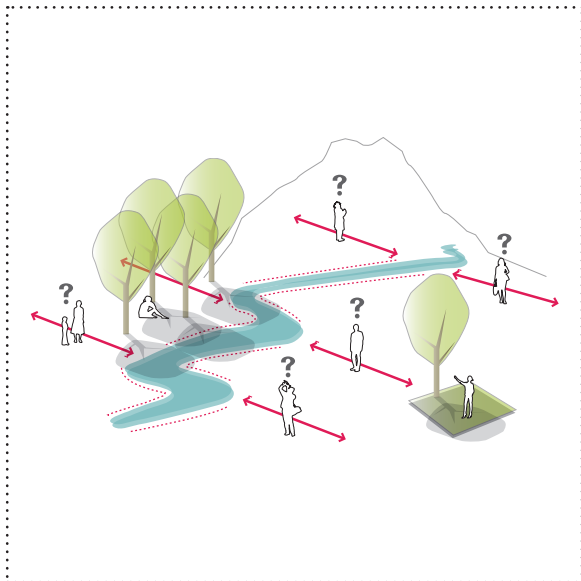
CHALLENGES

Vehicle traffic dominates Central City. The car is king, and the pedestrians and cyclist have to wait and move on the premises of the cars. The streets are dominated by car parking. The large number of buses contribute to the unpleasant environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The network for cars dominates planning and there is a lack of an attractive, safe and closeknit pedestrian- and cycling network connecting important destinations. The invitation to walk is missing.

CONSEQUENCES

There are almost no people walking in Central City compared to other cities. City streets generally serve the same purpose as transport corridors, primarily for vehicular traffic, as service roads and as parking spaces. Streets look alike, the distinction between them is weak. This makes the general orientation difficult and creates a sense of indifference towards the individual streets. The streets are being perceived as insignificant - beyond their current function to connect.

WEAK CONNECTIONS TO AMENITIES



CHALLENGE

The Avon River and Hagley Park together with the Botanic Gardens possess great recreational potentials for the Central City but today the integration between these recreational spaces and the city grid is insufficient. Access from Central City to Hagley Park is limited because the river and one way streets create a series of barriers.

The promenade along the Avon River is not continuous and is interrupted at the roadcrossings because the bridges are too narrow and low to pass underneath. The road crossings are generally neither well marked nor safe for pedestrians.

CONSEQUENCES

The barriers reduce the use of the recreational spaces and these amenities will not be associated as parts of Central City even though they could and should be.

MONOFUNCTIONAL CITY LIFE



CHALLENGE

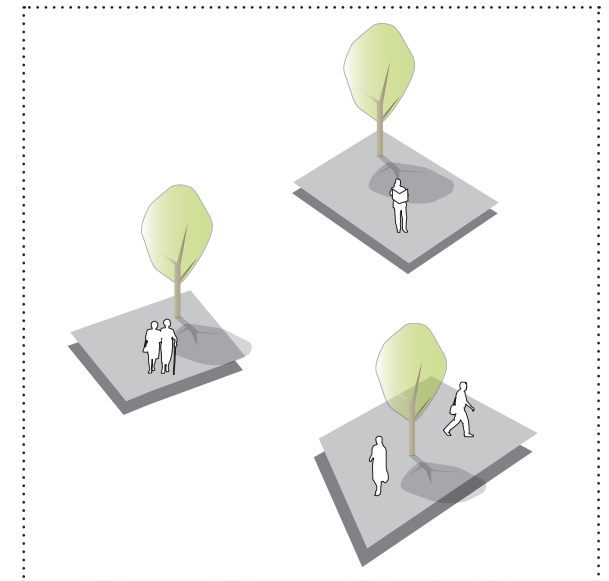
Various functions are confined to specific geographical areas creating a number of precincts dominated either by residential, retail or entertainment activities.

CONSEQUENCES

The lack of diversity and mixing of functions within specific areas has a number of side effects. In terms of public life, large parts of the city centre are only active during office hours and close down in the evenings and weekends, with only a few people using the public spaces. This leads to many people perceiving a lack of safety in the city centre.

A number of areas appear busy at nighttime while others appear deserted. Both can be perceived as unsafe areas to pass through because of either a lack of activities or because of a concentrated precinct of bars etc.

LACK OF PUBLIC SPACE ATTRACTIVE AND IDENTITY



CHALLENGE

The public spaces are under utilized. Very few public spaces in the city centre manage to invite people to spend time for optional recreational purposes and leisure.

A substantial part of the public spaces have the same layout, the same functions and the same type of design/materials. The links in-between the public spaces are weak. There are limited dedicated routes for promenading and no dedicated walking links between the various public spaces.

CONSEQUENCES

The outdoor city culture is generally undeveloped in Christchurch - the city needs more instantly appealing and inviting public spaces. Lack of public life is a self-perpetuating process; a lot of public life tends to generate more life, while lack of public life has the opposite effect.



THE CITY

BETTER QUALITY FOR PEOPLE

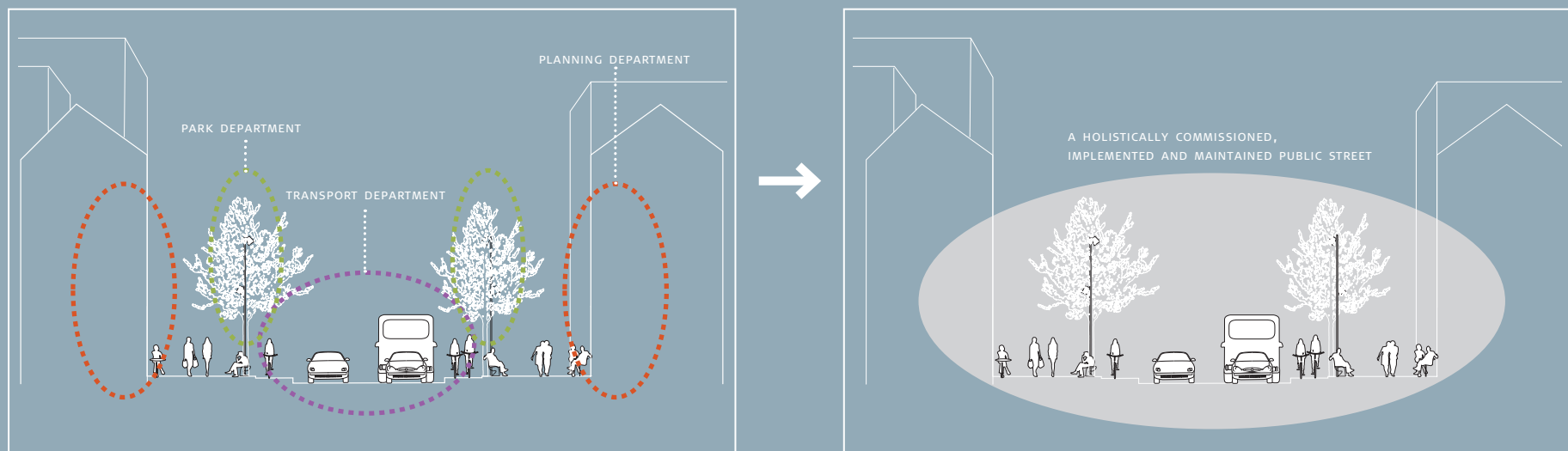
THE DESIGN OF CITIES IS OFTEN UNDERTAKEN BY ADDRESSING THE DISTINCT SYSTEMS AT WORK: BUILDINGS BY THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT, TRAFFIC BY THE TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT, VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPE BY THE PARKS DEPARTMENT, BICYCLES BY THE BICYCLE DEPARTMENT. THERE IS NEVER A PEOPLE OR A LIFE DEPARTMENT!

GEHL ARCHITECTS HAS DEVELOPED WORKING METHODS FOR DEALING WITH PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN IN WHICH "PEOPLE ACTIVITIES" IN THE CITY ARE CONSIDERED FIRST. QUALITY OF SPACES IS ANALYSED BASED ON CRITERIA DEVELOPED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PEOPLE. RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE TO INCREASE HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC REALMS, AND IMPROVE URBAN QUALITY AND LIFE.

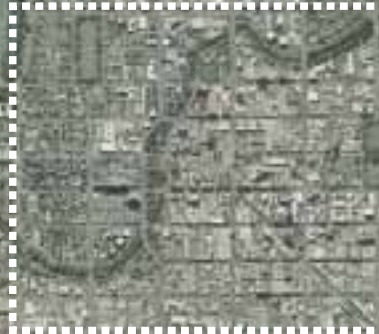
WE OFFER AN EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED SCENARIOS BASED ON OUR UNDERSTANDING AND RESEARCH OF CITIES THAT WORK FOR PEOPLE. THIS APPROACH RECOGNISES PEOPLE AS THE GENERATOR OF SPACES.

GOOD CITIES TAKE TIME TO DEVELOP. PEOPLE NEED TIME TO CULTIVATE NEW HABITS. WHEN THIS HAPPENS THE CITY RESPONDS ACCORDINGLY: NEW PLACES DEVELOP, NEW HABITS DEVELOP AND THE CITY BECOMES AN INCREASINGLY BETTER PLACE FOR PEOPLE. ONLY WHEN APPROPRIATE DECISIONS ARE MADE AND IMPLEMENTED CAREFULLY OVER TIME - ALWAYS REMAINING TRUE TO THE PEOPLE PERSPECTIVE - WILL THE CITY DEVELOP LIFE.

CHRISTCHURCH ALREADY HAS A FINE TEMPLATE FOR AN ACTIVE, HEALTHY CITY CENTRE. THE RIVER BANK PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION, AND SPONTANEOUS OR UNPLANNED EVENTS. THE URBAN STRUCTURE HAS ROOM FOR PRIVATE VEHICLES, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS.



THE CITY



STUDY AREA



THE CITY

open space

LANDSCAPE

Christchurch's location and the way the city lies in the landscape brings a level of immediate quality to the city.

The city is surrounded by a fantastic landscape. To the east lies the open ocean and Banks Peninsula, featuring sheltered bays, sandy beaches, bush clad valleys, rocky coastline and high, wild places. To the west, beyond fertile plains and braided rivers lie the tallest mountains in Australasia, the Southern Alps, strung out parallel to the coastline. East of the study area lies Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens and in the heart of the city centre is the meandering river Avon, as a natural oasis.

With such a beautiful location and so many amenity features round the corner - it is a shame the city does not utilise them more.

When in the city centre one does not sense the short distances to the surrounding landscape. There is much more to Christchurch if the city got in touch with the surrounding landscape.

HISTORY OF CHRISTCHURCH

MAORI ORAL HISTORY SUGGESTS THAT PEOPLE FIRST INHABITED THE CANTERBURY AREA ABOUT A THOUSAND YEARS AGO. THESE FIRST INHABITANTS WERE MOA-HUNTING TRIBES AND THESE WERE FOLLOWED BY THE WAITAHA WHO ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE MIGRATED FROM THE EAST COAST OF THE NORTH ISLAND IN THE 16TH CENTURY. THIS MIGRATION WAS JOINED BY THE NGATI MAMOE AND NGAI TAHU AND CONTINUED UNTIL ABOUT 1830.

THE FIRST EUROPEAN LANDED IN CANTERBURY IN 1815, 45 YEARS AFTER CAPTAIN JAMES COOK SIGHTED WHAT HE NAMED "BANKS ISLAND", LATER FOUND TO BE A PENINSULA. IN 1840 THE FIRST EUROPEANS SETTLED ON THE PLAINS AND WHALING SHIPS WERE OPERATING OUT OF LYTTELTON BY 1850. DURING 1850-1851 THE FIRST ORGANISED GROUPS OF ENGLISH SETTLERS, THE FOUNDERS OF CHRISTCHURCH, ARRIVED ON THE 'FIRST FOUR SHIPS' INTO LYTTELTON HARBOUR. CHRISTCHURCH BECAME A CITY BY ROYAL CHARTER ON JULY 31, 1856, MAKING IT OFFICIALLY THE OLDEST ESTABLISHED CITY IN NEW ZEALAND.

THE CITY

open space

STUDY AREA

DEFINITION OF THE STUDY AREA

The outline of the study area has been determined in close cooperation with Christchurch City Council. The main focus of the study is the city centre with the boundaries being Kilmore Street (north), Saint Asaph Street (south), Rolleston Avenue (west) and Madras Street (east). These streets encompass the most intensely used areas in the city. Having a coherent study area allows for a study of the network and coherence as well as connections to the bordering areas.

The same approach for selecting the study area has been used in a number of previous studies including Perth 2008, Seattle 2008, Copenhagen 2006, Wellington 2004, Melbourne 2004 and Adelaide 2002.

SHORT WALKING DISTANCES

The illustration to the right pinpoints how easily accessible destinations are by foot within Christchurch.

6 MINUTES WALK TO MOST OF THE CITY CENTRE

The illustration shows that once you are within the vicinity of the city centre, most attractions and destinations are located within short distances. Just 6 minutes of walking can bring you to most central locations. As such walking is a realistic mode of transportation. Most city centres have a size of approximately 1 km² as one kilometer is considered a reasonable walking distance when using the city facilities.



THE OUTLINE OF THE STUDY AREA HAS BEEN DETERMINED IN CLOSE CO-OPERATION WITH CHRISTCHURCH CITY

UNDERSTANDING THE GRID

CHRISTCHURCH IS THE clearest example in New Zealand of a town laid out in a 'classical', grid plan. The plan for Christchurch (laid out by the surveyor Edward Jollie, March 1856) was the 'standard' rectangular grid of colonial settlement (adopted for ease of survey and to facilitate land sales). The formal, geometric lay-out was typical of contemporary approaches to urban design for new towns.

The grid of Christchurch allows for the irregularity of the Avon River and the terraces on each of its banks and for the two major diagonal streets; High Street and Victoria Street. High Street was the direct route to Ferry Mead and hence the main route for supplies. Victoria Street was the direct route northwards (via the first bridge over the Avon) to settlements such as Deans Bush and Oxford. At the very centre of the city was a 'square' (actually cross-shaped) intended as a grand centre for the city and the site of the proposed cathedral.

THE GRID IS VERY SIMILAR TO ADELAIDE'S GRID AND LIKE ADELAIDE CHRISTCHURCH ORIGINALLY HAD DOMAINS ON ALL FOUR SIDES. OVER TIME THE DOMAINS TO THE NORTH, EAST AND SOUTH WERE SOLD AND BUILT OVER BUT TO THE WEST HAGLEY PARK AND THE BOTANIC GARDENS REMAIN.

CHRISTCHURCH CENTRAL CITY CHARACTERISTICS:

- HAS A CLEAR AND LEGIBLE RECTANGULAR GRID
- GENERALLY GENEROUS STREET WIDTHS OF 20 METRES.
- THE TYPICAL BLOCK IS 220M EAST WEST BY 100 METRES NORTH SOUTH, CREATING FEWER STREETS RUNNING NORTH SOUTH.
- LANES RUNNING THROUGH THE LARGE BLOCKS SERVICING THE EARLY WAREHOUSES AND FACTORIES
- CONSECUTIVE LANES CREATING CONTINUOUS MOVEMENT PATTERNS.
- THE CLEAR CENTRE OF THE CITY IS CATHEDRAL SQUARE

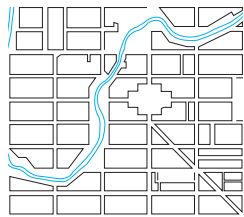
CITY SCALE COMPARISONS

COMPARISON WITH OTHER CITY AREAS

Studies of other cities are used for comparison and act as the frame of reference in this study. Comparisons are based on similar studies carried out in - Wellington, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Seattle and Copenhagen.

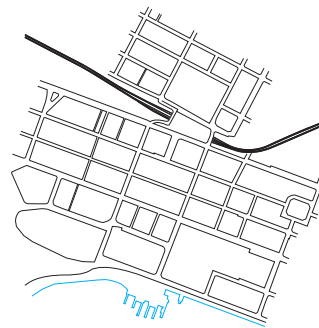
By comparing Christchurch city centre with other city centres we can get an idea of size, distances and urban grain and insight into the public life in relation to other cities of comparable size. There is allowance made for differences in the history and character of the cities. Copenhagen is a medieval city with the characteristics that implies, Adelaide and Perth are younger cities with some similar problems to Christchurch. Christchurch has large blocks in comparison with the other city centres. Adelaide and Perth have similar sized blocks in a rectangular grid.

Adelaide, Perth and Copenhagen have populations in the metropolitan area of approx. 1 million. Sydney has a vast suburban sprawl and therefore a larger population of 3 - 4 million inhabitants in the metropolitan area.



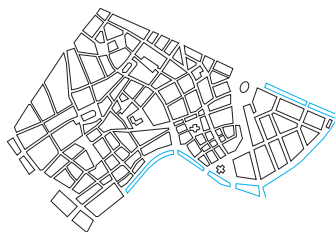
CHRISTCHURCH
1.740.000 m²
Approx. 2.000 residents in the city centre (2008)
12 residents per hectare
(382.000 residents in the metropolitan area)

INNER CITY AREA 1-2 KM²



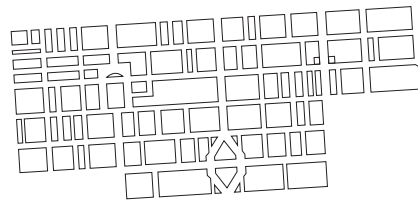
PERTH
1.200.000 m²
Approx. 1000 residents in the city centre (2006)
8 residents per hectare
(1.4 million residents in the metropolitan area)

INNER CITY AREA 1-2 KM²



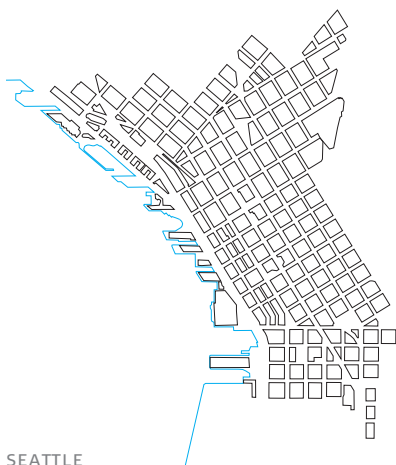
COPENHAGEN
1.150.000 m²
7.600 residents in the city centre (2005)
66 residents per hectare
(1,2 million residents in the metropolitan area)

INNER CITY AREA 1-2 KM²



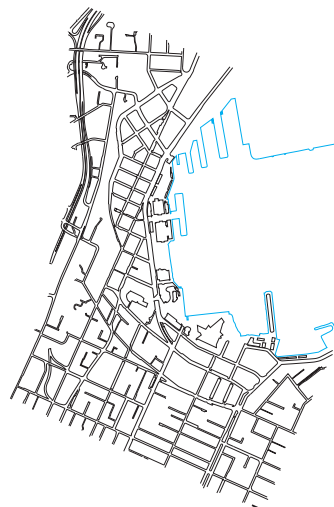
ADELAIDE
1.575.000 m²
1.900 residents in the city centre (2002)
12 residents per hectare
(1.1 million residents in the metropolitan area)

INNER CITY AREA 1-2 KM²



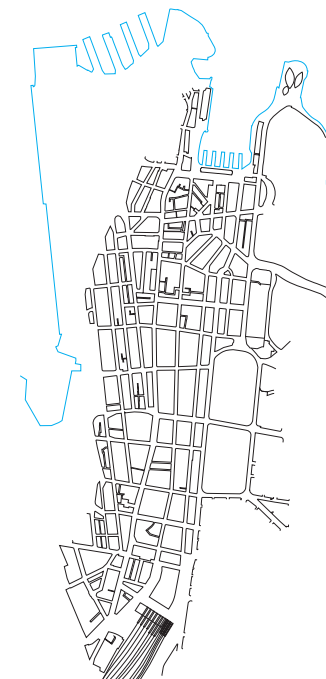
SEATTLE
1.610.000 m²
4.300 residents in the city centre (2008)
27 residents per hectare
(3,4 million residents in the metropolitan area)

INNER CITY AREA 1-2 KM²



WELLINGTON
2.155.000 m²
Approx. 9.000 residents in the city centre (2004)
42 residents per hectare
(382.000 residents in the metropolitan area, 2008)

INNER CITY AREA 2-3 KM²



SYDNEY
2.200.000 m²
15.000 residents in the city centre (2006)
68 residents per hectare
(4 million residents in the metropolitan area)

INNER CITY AREA 2-3 KM²

THE CITY

open space

THE RIVER AS A RECREATIONAL ELEMENT

THE AVON

The river is the main landmark of Christchurch and is fortunate to have a wide selection of public spaces at its banks. However, the riverfront as public space has both strengths and weaknesses.

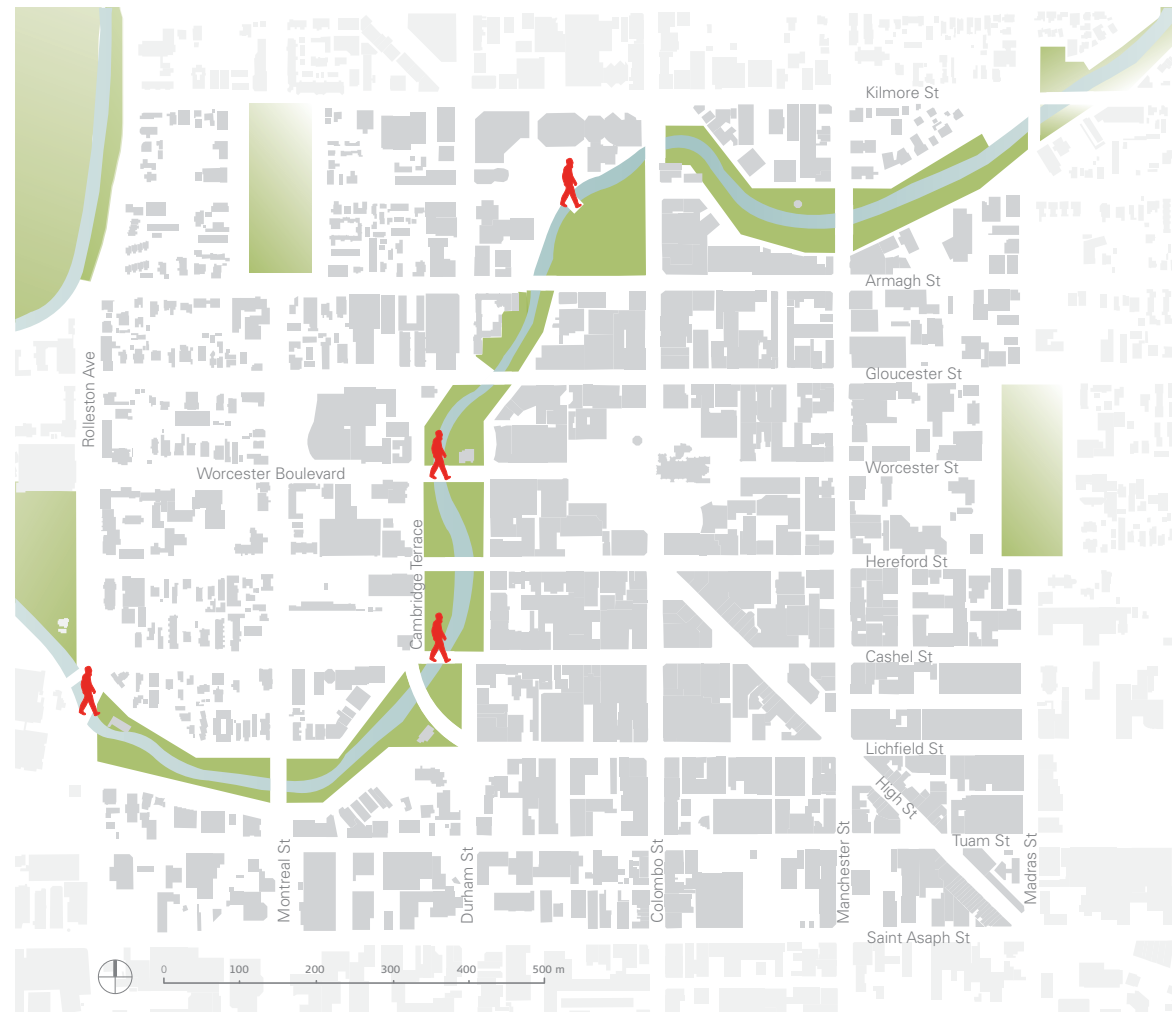
GOOD ACCESS FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES

A substantial amount of river front is accessible for pedestrians and cyclists. The many river front paths suit recreational purposes well.

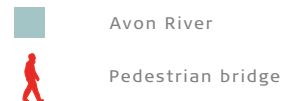
PROBLEMATIC CROSSINGS

However the promenade along the water is not continuous and is interrupted at the road crossings because the bridges are too short and low to pass underneath and the street crossings prioritise vehicular traffic. This means that pedestrians have to walk up and cross several roads as they walk along the river. The road crossings are generally not well marked and unsafe for pedestrians.

The river is one of Christchurch's great amenities - it should be treated like that!



THE AVON RIVERBANK IN THE CITY CENTRE
Length within survey area: 2,1 km



SUMMARY: PROBLEMATIC CROSSINGS

When walking along the river one has to change level to cross the streets.

BRIDGE AT MANCHESTER STREET



There is a problem with the promenade along the water not being continuous - it is interrupted at the road crossings. This means that pedestrians have to walk to road level and cross several roads on a walk along the river.

ACTIVITIES ON AND ALONG THE AVON RIVER



Punting on the Avon - a peaceful journey through the central city, gliding beneath weeping willows and alongside historic buildings.



Recreation on and along the river.



Enjoy a nature walk along the river.



Relaxing time-out at the riverbank.

THE CITY

open space

GREEN OPEN SPACE

GREEN RESOURCES

Christchurch has many green spaces - parks and gardens both within and in close proximity to the city centre.

Hagley Park has been at the heart of Christchurch since the 1850s and is today by far the most significant park in the city centre. It has wide-open spaces and mature woodlands. Hagley Park is also a major sporting and cultural focal point. It offers a diverse range of entertainment and recreational opportunities in close proximity to the city centre.

The Christchurch Botanic Gardens feature one of the finest collections of exotic and native plants found in New Zealand. Towering majestic trees - many over 120 years old - dominate the Gardens, forming a striking backdrop to the extensive plant collections and sweeping lawns. A loop of the Avon River encloses a large part of the Gardens.

These parks are open every day of the year and offer a diversity of recreational opportunities for the people of Christchurch.

GREEN OPEN SPACES IN TOTAL: APPROX. 2.033.260m²
(INCL. HAGLEY PARK AND BOTANIC GARDENS)

MAXIMUM DISTANCE TO GREEN OPEN SPACES: 470m

NUMBER OF GREEN OPEN SPACES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA: 4



green spaces in and adjacent to the city centre

RECREATIONAL CITY SPACE OFFERS A PAUSE IN THE THROBBING LIFE IN THE CITY AND A SENSE OF CULTIVATED NATURE



Botanic Gardens



Hagley Park



Latimer Square

PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS & SQUARES

INCOMPLETE PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK

Christchurch city centre has a number of very similar open spaces, in function and layout. The existing open spaces are scattered across the city centre and although they are distributed throughout most of city centre it is evident there is no public space network connecting the open spaces and the main pedestrian routes.

The map shows pedestrian priority streets and squares in the city centre. In total, the city centre has 66.480 square metres of public squares and public pedestrian priority streets. The only true pedestrian street is City Mall, with an approximately length of 540 m.



PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS AND SQUARES IN THE CITY CENTRE

■ Pedestrian priority streets and squares

NUMBER OF CAR FREE STREETS: 2
(CITY MALL, NEW REGENT STREET)
TOTAL LENGTH OF CAR FREE STREETS: 640 M

NUMBER OF PUBLIC PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY SPACES: 9
TOTAL AREA OF PUBLIC PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY SPACES: 55.250m²

pedestrian priority streets and squares in the city centre

A CLASSIC PUBLIC SPACE WHICH ADAPTS THE CITY CONTEXT AND OFFERS SPACE FOR EVENTS, SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OR RESTING



Cathedral Square



New Regent Street



City Mall

THE CITY

OPEN SPACE

LANES AND ARCADES

LANES

Christchurch has a fine grain network of lanes, finding them is like finding a treasure chest. The lanes are oriented mainly in a north south direction, dividing the large rectangular blocks.

Lanes offer very different urban space experiences compared to the primary street network - here you have an opportunity to explore. The intimate lanes can create a secondary network in the city, with their own separate identities. Much of the character of the existing lanes is derived from their origin as service lanes providing access to industrial buildings. Lanes have the opportunity to have many different identities, where the artistic and playful come together. The city centre lanes have fantastic potential for strengthening the public realm and increasing pedestrian opportunities. The city centre's human scale, the quality of materials and the network of lanes represent potential not yet fully realised.

LAYOUT OF LANES

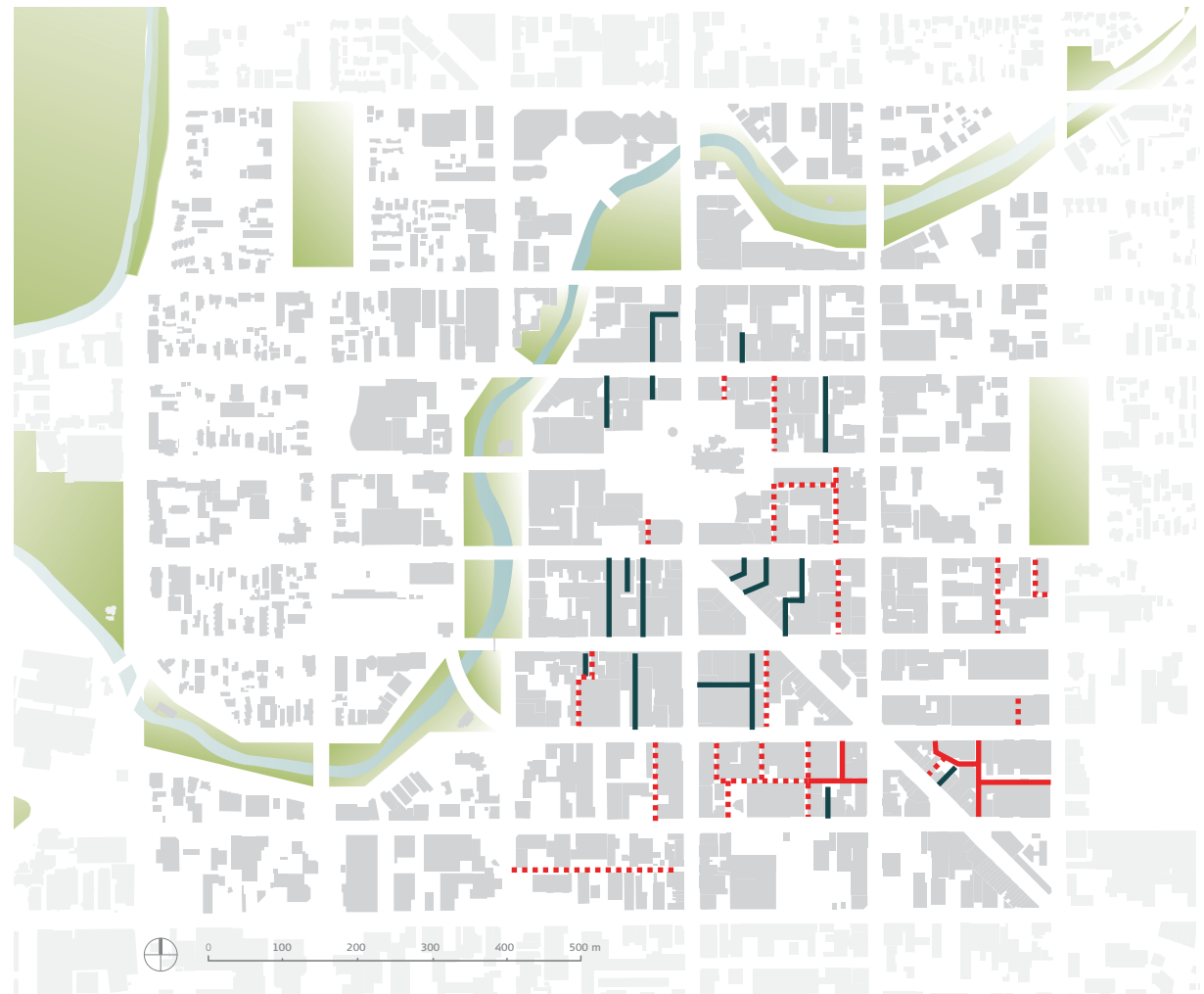
The layout of the city grid structure with blocks of 220 m x 100 m has a secondary set of connections - lanes in almost half of the blocks, nearly all oriented north-south. The total length of lanes is approximately 2.070 m.

Today around 81% of all the city centre lanes are treated as back alleys, with closed facades, poor paving and inadequate lighting. The uses vary from rubbish storage, air conditioning units, goods deliveries and garage entrance or exit gates. The majority of the lanes in the city centre are under utilised and potentially unsafe at times.



SUMMARY: UNEXPLOITED POTENTIAL OF LANES

- Only 19% of the lanes are of good quality.
- 81% of the lanes are of poor quality with no activities and they feel unsafe.



LANE QUALITY EVALUATION FROM A PEDESTRIAN PERSPECTIVE

Number of lanes: 24. Total length: 2.070 m

Number of through-links: 17. Total length: 1.180 m

- Good quality (400 m)
- ... Poor quality (1.670 m)
- Arcades and short cut links

QUALITY OF LANES

good quality lanes



Struthers Lane (Sol Square)



Poplar Lane (Lichfield Lanes)



His Lordships Lane (Sol Square)

poor quality



Westpac Lane



Press Lane



Tramway Lane



Kivers Lane

The lanes are very much needed in the city structure as important pedestrian links. They need to be upgraded in order to invite people to use them and improve the accessibility for pedestrians in the city centre. In many cases the lanes have a character of dark, back alleys and are certainly not places one would like to walk through late at night. The most important lanes connections need to be identified in order that they can be redeveloped into attractive, plausible routes through the city as part of a new pedestrian network.

GOOD QUALITY LANES

Lanes rated as 'good quality' are ones which feel safe to walk through, are clean, and offer added attractions such as interesting public art, nice vegetation, store entrances or cafés. They offer a unique, positive pedestrian experience.

Sol Square (Struthers Lane and His Lordships lane) and Lichfield Lanes (Poplar Lane and Ash Lane) are privately initiated development projects that have been undertaken which demonstrate how lanes can create an alternative urban environment that diversifies people's experience of the city and encourages greater urban revitalisation.

POOR QUALITY LANES

'Poor quality' lanes may be reasonably clean and feel relatively safe, yet function as little more than a drive-through street for service vehicles. There is nothing that invites pedestrians to pass through or stay in these spaces, even if they might provide shortcuts when walking. These lanes have the most potential for improvement to create more usable, welcoming spaces in the city centre.

THE CITY

open space

LACK OF OPEN SPACE NETWORK

MISSING LINKS IN THE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

The map to the right clearly depicts one of the main issues in Christchurch. There is a reasonable amount of open space in the city centre, but the connections between them tend to be weak.

The existing open spaces are scattered across the city and although they cover most of the city centre they do not constitute a connected network for users to enjoy.

The most important spaces are Cathedral Square, Worcester Boulevard and City Mall. These make up the backbone of Christchurch's open spaces.

LACK OF PUBLIC SPACE HIERARCHY

Christchurch city centre has a number of quite similar open spaces, in function and layout. There are a selection of hard-surfaced and green city squares, but a lack of pocket spaces as a more local component in its public space hierarchy. Streets of Christchurch are mostly wide enough to allow both large numbers of pedestrians and footpath dining. However, they frequently suffer from the impact of heavy traffic which reduces their potential usage.

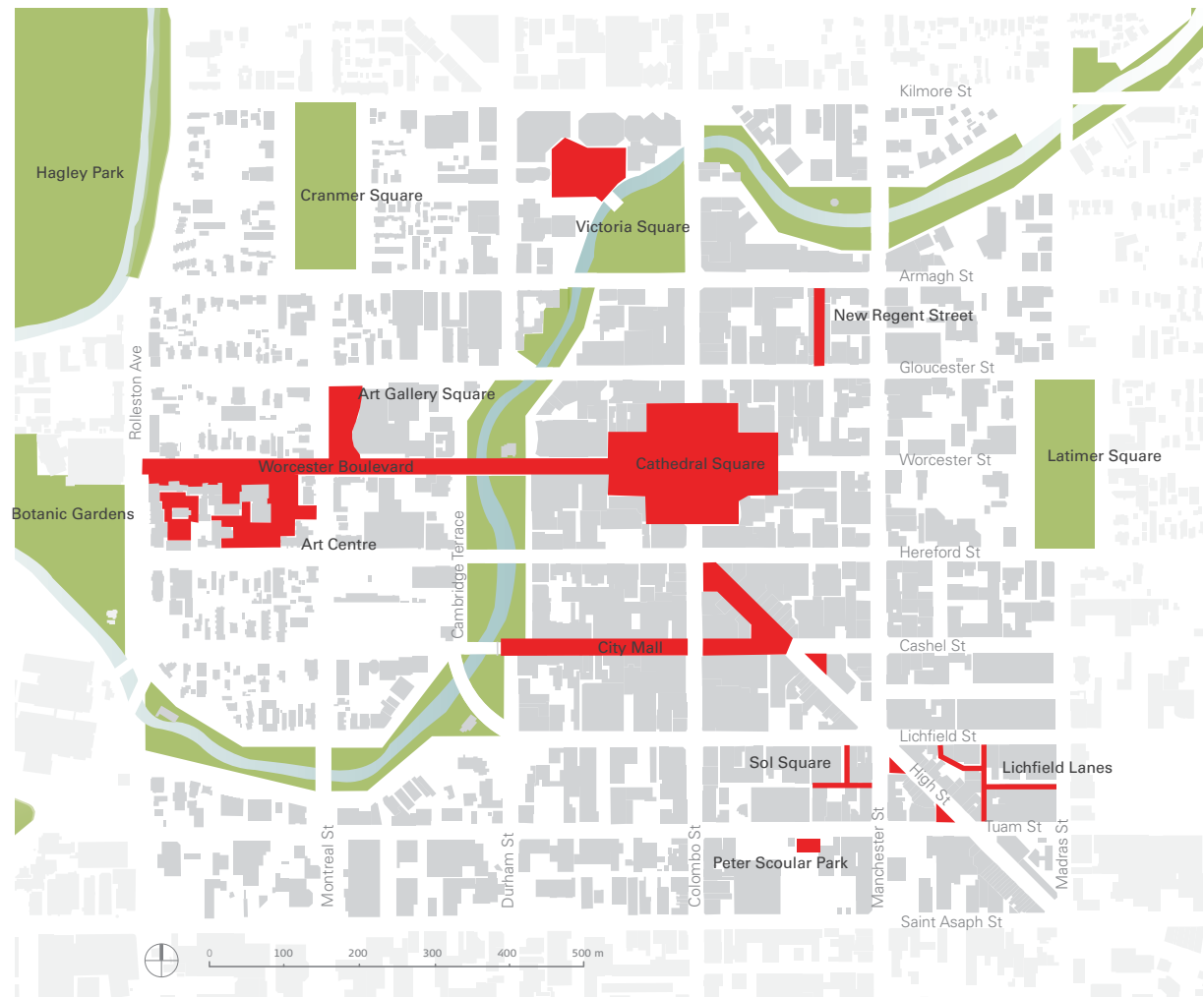
AREAS OF HIGH PEDESTRIAN USE

A rich and diverse public life needs space. Pedestrian areas provide more and better space for public life and also a safer, more dignified and calmer urban environment.

One of the key elements for a high quality urban environment is a pedestrian network of streets or wide, comfortable footpaths that connect important places and enable people to walk easily through the city. In Christchurch such a pedestrian network is yet to be fully developed. Except City Mall and New Regent Street that function as pedestrian priority streets. The spaces have so far not been developed to accommodate the needs of pedestrians and the pedestrian priority in the public spaces is generally low.

SUMMARY

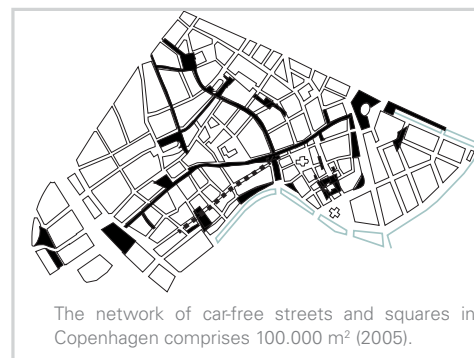
Christchurch city centre is not fully developed as a place for people to walk and stay in, more diverse range of activities can still be achieved. The central city squares and streets offer big areas to be further developed for pedestrians in order to create a pedestrian network of higher quality.



OPEN SPACE IN THE CITY CENTRE

Total amount of open spaces in the city centre: Approx 3.000.000 m²

- Pedestrian priority streets and squares
- Green open spaces
- Good lanes



COPENHAGEN CASE STUDY

COPENHAGEN HAS TURNED A CAR ORIENTATED CITY INTO A PEOPLE ORIENTATED CITY IN A STEP BY STEP PROCESS THROUGH 40 YEARS. THE DEVELOPMENT HAS INVOLVED STOPPING THROUGH TRAFFIC, REDUCING THE NUMBER OF CAR PARKING SPACES IN THE CENTRE AND INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF SPACE SET ASIDE FOR PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITIES FROM 15.000 m², WHEN THE FIRST PEDESTRIAN SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED IN 1962, TO THE PRESENT DAY 100.000 m² OF CAR FREE STREETS AND SQUARES. THESE STREETS AND SQUARES NOW FORM A COHERENT NETWORK OF HIGH QUALITY WALKING LINKS AND PUBLIC SQUARES FOR RECREATION, ALL OF HIGH QUALITY AND UNIQUE CHARACTER.

LACK OF STREET DISTINCTION

LICHFIELD STREET



The streets primarily serve as traffic corridors for vehicular traffic.

ARMAGH STREET



No visual distinction of the streets is identifiable. The city's grid structure and the lack of street distinction creates homogeneity.

STREETS ARE USED FOR THE SAME PURPOSE

The streets of Christchurch primarily serve as traffic corridors. Over time their role as infrastructure to make traffic run smoothly has become more and more dominant, eliminating a number of other functions which streets are also used for, such as recreation, trading and the informal meeting place. The general trend has also been the disappearance of a number of user groups from the footpaths as conditions for being there grew worse.

The streets now work as part of a big traffic machine, where their main purpose is to deal with as much traffic as possible. This has a major effect on the atmosphere in the streets the gradual anonymisation process leading to a lack of distinction between various streets which all serve the same purpose.

Because of this the general attractiveness of walking in the streets is low, since it can be difficult to orientate oneself and the general experience of walking is not pleasant.

STREETS AS PUBLIC SPACES

Streets and squares can act as connectors as well as urban lounges and meeting places. They also have an important role as the scene for activities of a more urban character than green recreational spaces. Daily social encounters and special events such as crafts or farmers markets, street concerts, performing buskers and artists, street side exhibitions and festivals need streets and squares to take place.

Streets are everywhere but often their potential as great places to be is not recognised. To reap their social and recreational potential they must be designed and detailed for pedestrians and fit the human scale. Squares, both large and small, function as destinations for pedestrians. Like pearls on a necklace, they become points of activity and concentrated public life along corridors of pedestrian movement.

SUMMARY

The large street widths have great potential that can be utilised for more recreative activities, improved conditions for cyclists and pedestrians and dedicated bus lanes.

ENTRY POINTS TO THE CITY CENTRE

THE GRID STRUCTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH IS A SIGNIFICANT FEATURE AND CHRISTCHURCH IS THE BEST EXAMPLE IN NEW ZEALAND OF A CLEAR 'COLONIAL LAYOUT' LIKE THIS. THE GRID AS AN ORGANISING STRUCTURE IS NEUTRAL AND ULTIMATELY OPEN. IT ALLOWS FOR EXPANSION AND MAKES ENTRY INTO THE CITY CENTRE POSSIBLE FROM ALL DIRECTIONS. THIS HAS THE CONSEQUENCE THAT A CLEAR EXPERIENCE OF A CITY CENTRE IS LACKING. ONLY CATHEDRAL SQUARE - THE VERY CENTRE OF THE GRID STRUCTURE - CAN BE PERCEIVED AS DIFFERENT.

PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY ZONE IN THE CITY CENTRE

THE CENTRAL CITY AREA CONSEQUENTLY HAS VERY FLUENTLY AND VAGUELY DEFINED EDGES. THE SITUATION TODAY MEANS THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CLEARLY DEFINE A CITY CENTRE. THIS CAN BE A PROBLEM WHEN AIMING TO DEFINE A ZONE FOR PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY.

THE CITY

getting to and from the city centre

TRAFFIC VOLUMES IN THE CITY CENTRE

TRAFFIC DOMINATED CITY

Over the years unlimited vehicular traffic has been allowed into the city which has caused deterioration of the streetscape and problems for the pedestrian landscape. All planning has gradually been focused at increasing capacity for motor vehicles in order to make traffic run smoothly through the city streets. No obstructions to traffic, please !!

Through the years growing numbers of motor vehicles have been passing through the city centre, some with an errand in the city, others on their way to other destinations. The result has been a traffic dominated city where every last breathing space has been used for just an extra lane of traffic. Visiting Christchurch today it is evident that there is a gridlock to be solved regarding priorities. Today most streets are treated in similar terms regarding road layout, traffic management and design.

HEAVY THROUGH TRAFFIC

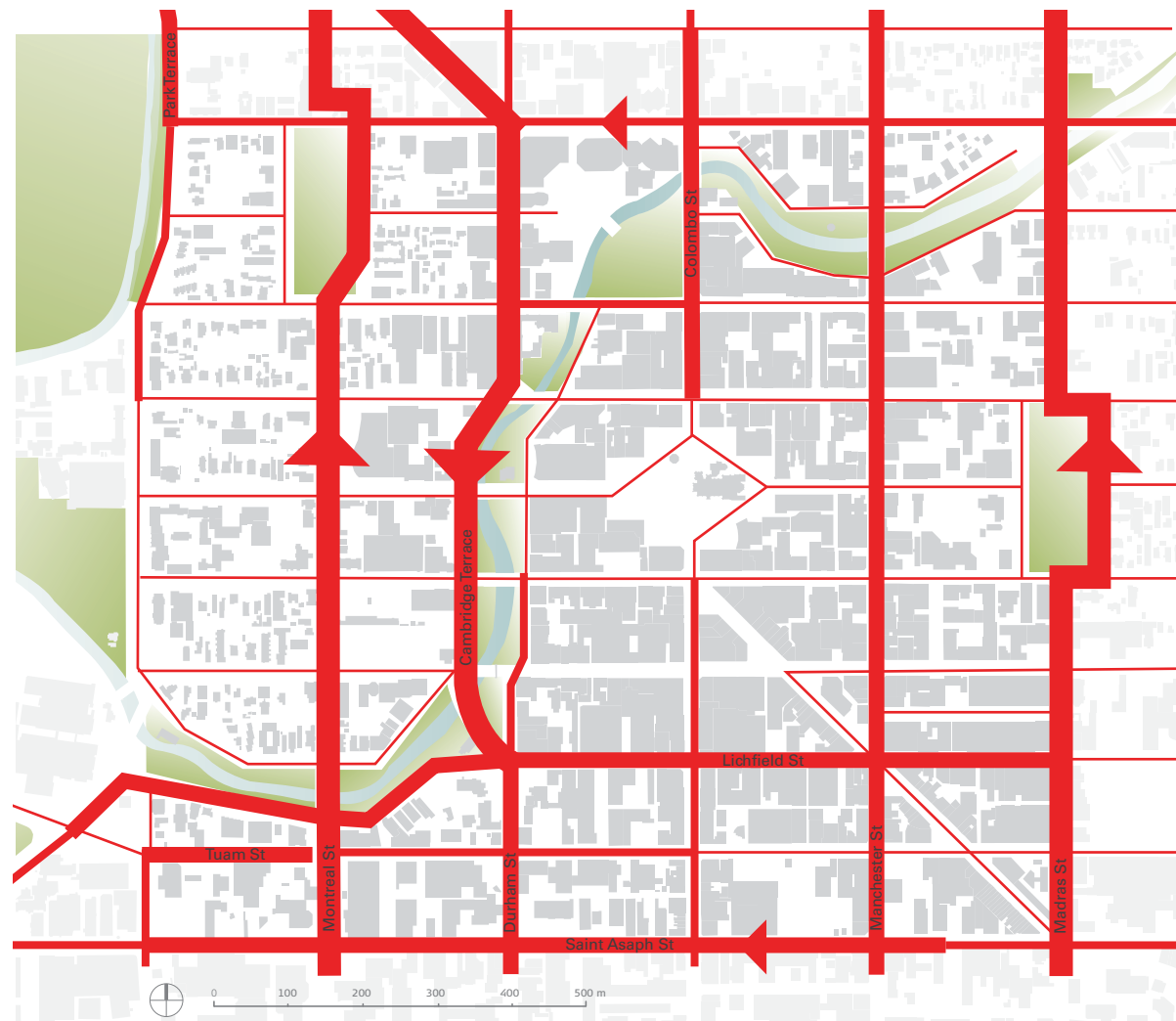
Traffic is heavy especially on the north south one-way streets; Cambridge Terrace, Montreal and Madras Streets. The streets act as barriers for pedestrians. 16-20% of this traffic is estimated to be through traffic. Cars are being driven through the city centre because the streets through the city centre are too inviting for vehicles and are seen to be short-cuts to avoid major metropolitan roads.

Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians is one of the major problems in cities today. In many cities traffic has steadily increased. As a result there are frequent conflicts between pedestrians and motor traffic. It is important to look at the traffic in city centres with a critical eye and especially pay attention to unnecessary through traffic which conflicts with the creation of a lively and people friendly city environment.



SUMMARY: STREETS SEVERELY AFFECTED BY HEAVY TRAFFIC

Christchurch suffers from heavy through traffic and high volumes which is putting pressure on the city centre and decreasing the quality of the public spaces. In order to develop a good city for people and to improve the overall city quality the number of private motor vehicles driving through the centre needs to be decreased. Other modes of transport need to be developed in order to offer people an alternative to the car.



MAJOR ARTERIAL 24 HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUME

- 0-5.000 vehicles per day
- 5.000-10.000 vehicles per day
- 10.000-15.000 vehicles per day
- 15.000-20.000 vehicles per day

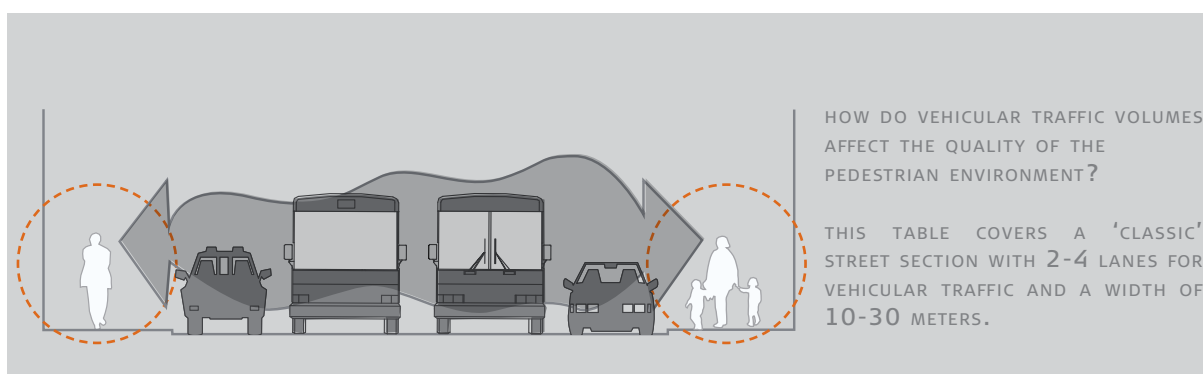
Note:

The illustration above is based on the information available from Christchurch City Council (figures from 2008)

FLOW VERSUS QUALITY

FLOW VERSUS QUALITY

A rule of thumb: the more traffic, the lower the quality of the environment for pedestrians and cyclists. 'Quality' in the table on the next page has to do with multiple factors: safety, comfort and the possibility for public life to take place.



	AVERAGE DAILY TOTAL	PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT	ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS - NOISE & POLLUTION	BICYCLE SAFETY & ENJOYMENT
<p>VERY PLEASANT STREET</p>	1000 CARS	<p>Pedestrians and cyclists are able to share the road with cars and cross safely at any time. Recreational life (e.g. outdoor cafés) has good opportunities. It is likely there will be a lot of open and active facades at ground floor level.</p>	<p>No noise problems. Pollution is at an acceptable level to breathe and see. Buildings can have windows open to the street. Street trees and greenery have good opportunities if the right conditions are available.</p>	<p>Cyclists are able to ride safely in the traffic flow with cars. It is pleasant.</p>
<p>PLEASANT STREET</p>	5,000 CARS	<p>More separation between cars, pedestrians and cyclists is necessary. A dedicated zone for pedestrians is necessary along facades, that can be used when needed. It is possible to cross midblock. Recreational life still has good opportunities. It is likely there are still cafés and active facades at ground level.</p>	<p>Only minor noise problems. Pollution is at an acceptable level. Street trees and greenery have good opportunities if the right conditions are available.</p>	<p>Cyclists are able to ride safely in the traffic flow with cars. It is a good experience.</p>
<p>OKAY STREET</p>	10,000 CARS	<p>People are able to cross at intersections and carefully at mid-block. It is still possible to sit at a bench and have an okay time, but you will choose to be somewhere else with lower traffic impact if you have the option.</p>	<p>There will be noise and pollution issues, especially at peak hours. People are able to talk, but need to stand close. Buildings are not able to have windows open to the street, because of noise and pollution.</p>	<p>Cycle lanes are necessary and cycle tracks are advised. It is an okay street to cycle along.</p>
<p>UNPLEASANT STREET</p>	25,000 CARS	<p>Crossing at intersections only. It is an unpleasant experience to walk along the street and there is no recreational life on footpaths.</p>	<p>Noise and pollution problems are significant. People are unable to hold a conversation.</p>	<p>Cycle tracks (raised, separated space for bicycles) are necessary. The quality of cycling is very low.</p>
<p>VERY UNPLEASANT STREET</p>	<p>50,000 CARS</p> <p>NOT FIT FOR PEDESTRIANS!</p>	<p>Crossing at intersections only and waiting times are increased significantly. Guard rails, barriers and similar interventions are often introduced in order to prevent pedestrians walking into car lanes. No pedestrian quality.</p>	<p>Severe noise and pollution problems. In pollution terms, it is a street worth avoiding if one wants to stay healthy. Only some of the more tolerant species of trees are able to survive.</p>	<p>Cycle tracks (raised, separated space for bicycles) are definitely necessary. Cycling is an unpleasant experience, and is not recommended.</p>

THE CITY

getting to and from the city centre

PARKING IN THE CITY CENTRE

YOUR CAR IS WELCOME IN CHRISTCHURCH

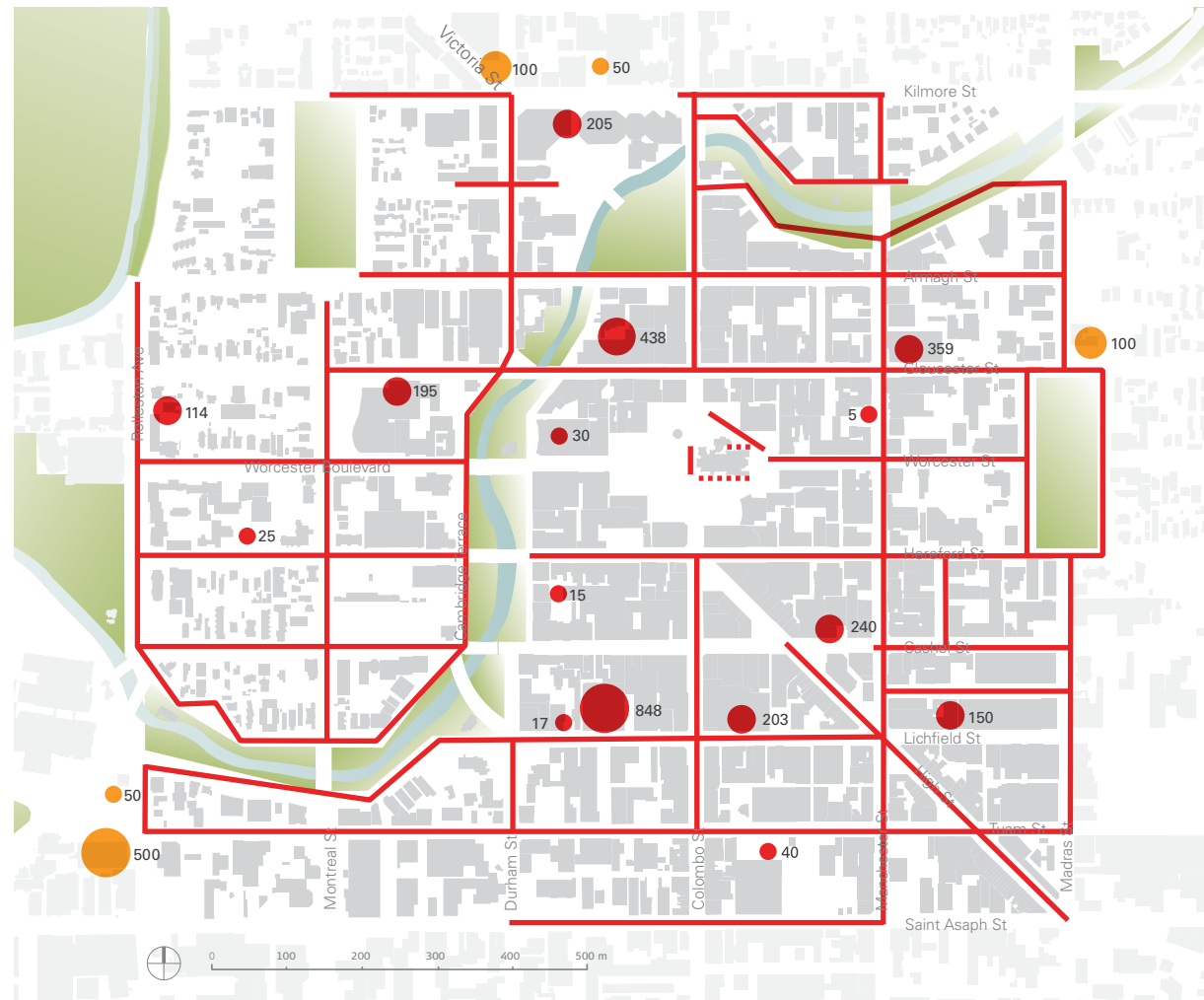
Parking dominates Christchurch's city centre at present. Compared to the size of the city Christchurch hosts a very large number of parking spaces in the city centre. A total of 13,180 parking spaces (on-street and in structures) equally spread in the city centre gives a wide range of choices for people who choose to drive to the city. Almost all streets have on-street parking.

CONFLICTS WITH PEDESTRIANS

Parking in structures is generally a good idea since it can potentially lower the number of parked cars in the streets. But parking structures also come with a set of challenges.

First of all, how do these parking structures meet the public realm? In several cases the parking structures are tall buildings that communicate 'parking structure' to the street, and give a poor impression when analyzing the quality of a streetscape.

Another question is, how are the ground floors organised? When you walk along it, do you look in on parked cars? Unfortunately this is often the case in the city centre, which contributes to a poor pedestrian environment. Finally, there is the potential for dangerous situations when cars drive across the footpath to enter or exit a parking structure. This situation ought to be organised as gently as possible so the disadvantages for pedestrians are minimised. In several cases the very wide entrances/exits create unpleasant 'holes' in the facade.



LOCATION OF PARKING SPACES IN THE CITY CENTRE

In total: 13,180

3,700 parking spaces in structures and 9,480 on-street parking spaces

parking structures:

- Less than 100 parking spaces
- 100-300 parking spaces
- 300-400 parking spaces
- More than 500 parking spaces
- Near by parking structures and zones

On-street parking:

- Short term parking spaces
- ⋯ Private parking spaces



SUMMARY: TOO MUCH PARKING IN THE CITY CENTRE

Christchurch has a very high number of parking spaces in the city centre offering good conditions for cars but also increasing the problem of traffic in the city centre. Where the concentration of on-street parking and parking structures is at the highest it becomes dominant and lowers the quality of the pedestrian environment.

A LOT OF PARKING OPTIONS IN THE CITY



Car dependency is prevalent in Christchurch and this impacts significantly on the pedestrian environment. Pedestrian priority is generally low and the quality of the streetscape is poor in many areas.

MANY ON STREET PARKING



Probably the most misplaced parking in all of the city centre is found in front of the Cathedral in Cathedral Square where the parking spaces seriously downgrade the general experience of walking along the main street and reaching Cathedral Square, the most central location in the city.

COMPARISON TO OTHER CITIES

Many leading cities around the world are building strategies to get rid of as much surface parking as possible. Copenhagen has developed an effective parking policy where 2-3% of inner city parking has been removed each year during the last ten years. Alongside the positive side effect of less traffic the road space has been used for cycle lanes and widened footpaths. At present the excess width of the Christchurch streets is used for car parking. A better use is possible.

In Christchurch the overall goal has been to offer everybody a parking space in the centre of the city in order to make the city accessible. This strategy has provided good opportunities for vehicular traffic but has proven to have a large negative impact on the quality of the public spaces and conditions for pedestrians.

FOUR LANE VEHICLE ENTRY TO LICHFIELD CAR PARK



The entrances to parking structures are constructed with up to 4 lane entries/exits which cut across the footpath and leave pedestrians in an undefined pedestrian area. This is the situation on Lichfield Street and a number of other places in the city centre.

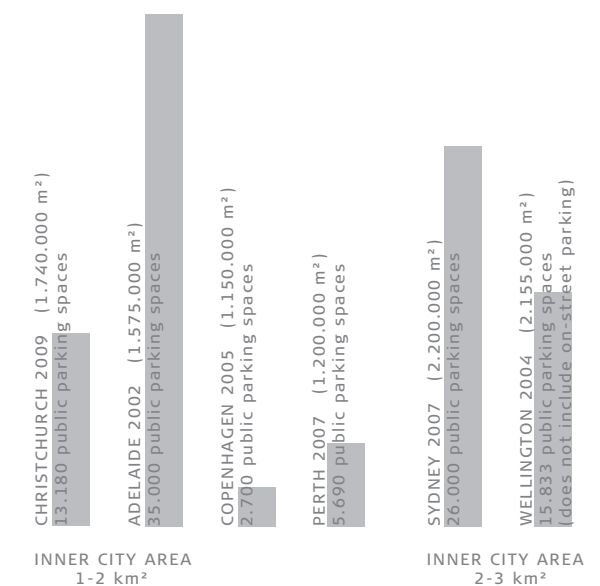
100 METRES OF INACTIVE FRONTAGES



Pedestrians have low priority on footpaths where entries and exits to parking structures interrupt the footpaths. Pedestrians need to give way to cars entering the car park although they are walking on the footpath. The quality of the paving and the footpath level is in many incidents, less than ideal.

If Christchurch starts increasing on-street parking it would be a step in an unattractive direction. In order to reduce vehicular traffic through the city and start improving the streets a parking strategy identifying parking needs and goals for reducing parking in the city centre is needed. Given the high number of parking spaces available it is not recommended that parking in the city centre is increased. Increase in parking capacity should in the future be linked to public transport lines in the form of park and ride facilities, which are currently successfully being introduced in many other cities.

COMPARISON: AMOUNT OF PUBLIC PARKING SPACES



LARGE SCALE PARKING STRUCTURES



Huge parking structures, as in the example shown from Manchester Street - Gloucester Street, have a tremendous downgrading effect on the public realm in that specific area if they are not carefully detailed and planned.

PARKING STRUCTURES



The parking structure suffers from being a mono-functional block with no public functions at ground floor, no residences and no office space. The facade is quite monotonous, the ground floor frontage is completely inactive and the footpath is interrupted by a four lane entry to the car park.

THE CITY

getting to and from the city centre

PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE CITY CENTRE

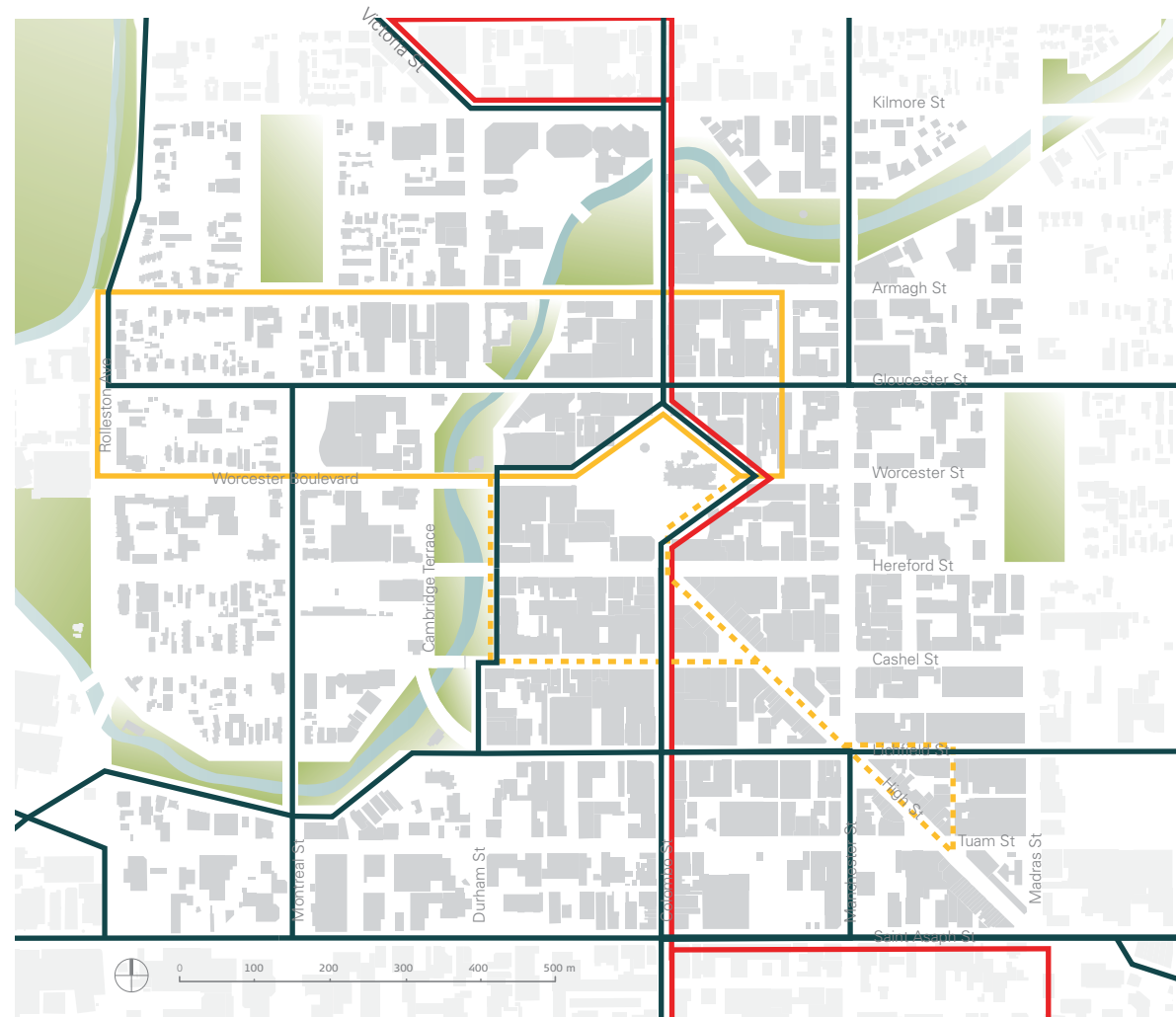
PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM

A well organized public transport system can give people the ability to move around in the city without a car and provide seniors and children with a real alternative.

There are a number of positive features about the public transport system in Christchurch. The system consists of buses. It is generally positive that public transport has been improved during recent years. The free bus service – the Shuttle – is especially good since it offers – free of charge – an easy and dependable way of getting around the city centre. In future this system could be expanded to reach other important links such as park and ride facilities further away from the city centre.

BUS STOPS

Waiting for the bus is an experience that could be improved. The lack of seating at bus stops on the streets is a problem. More shelters at bus stops along the busiest routes would also be positive.

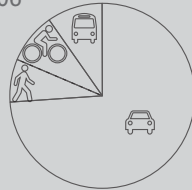


PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE CITY CENTRE

- Bus routes
- The shuttle bus (free)
- Historic tramway
- - - Historic tramway extension

MODE SHARE OF CHRISTCHURCH 2006

VEHICULAR TRAFFIC:	82%
PUBLIC TRANSPORT:	5%
CYCLING:	6%
WALKING:	5%
OTHER:	2%



INNER CITY AREA 1-2 KM, 1.740.000 M²

APPROX. 2.000 RESIDENTS IN THE STUDY AREA (2008)

12 RESIDENTS PER HECTARE

(382.000 RESIDENTS IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA)

MODE SHARE OF ODENSE* 2008

VEHICULAR TRAFFIC:	19%
PUBLIC TRANSPORT:	29%
CYCLING:	31%
WALKING + OTHER:	22%



*ODENSE, 5TH LARGEST CITY IN DENMARK.

INNER CITY AREA 1-2 KM, 2.870.000 M²

APPROX. 4.900 RESIDENTS IN THE CITY CENTRE (2005)

56 RESIDENTS PER HECTARE

(187.000 RESIDENTS IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA)

WAITING FOR THE BUS



Almost all bus stops lack seating. Seating could make waiting more pleasant.

THE CITY

getting to and from the city centre

PUBLIC TRANSPORT VOLUMES

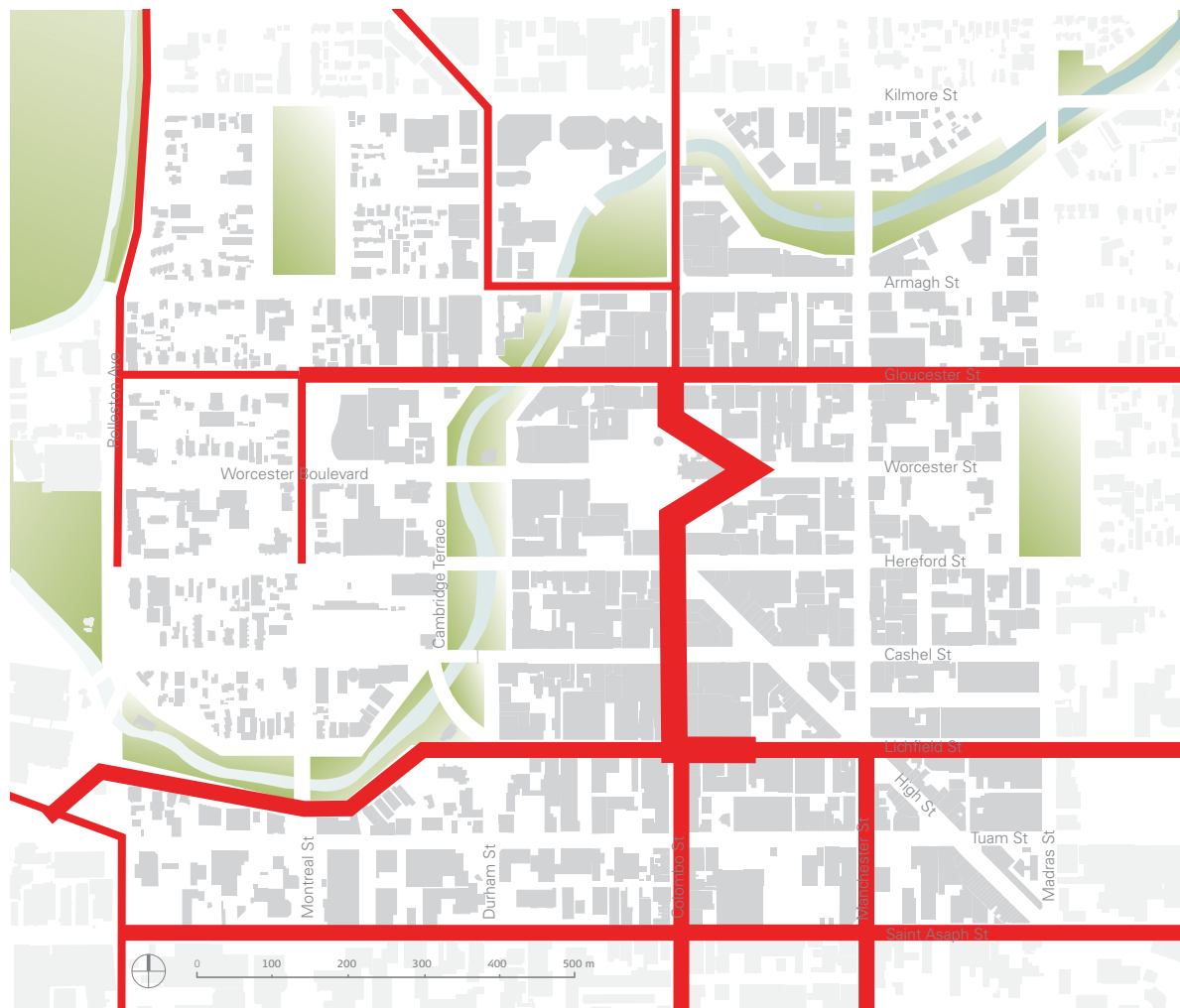
A CITY CENTRE WITH HEAVY BUSTRAFFIC

The bus routes are laid out so that too many buses are running directly through the city centre every day and several streets are suffering from a high bus impact.

ONLY 5% TRAVEL BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The majority of people travelling to work in Christchurch arrive by private cars (82%) and only 5% arrive by public transport. But even though the system is not transporting large numbers of passengers some streets like Colombo Street, and most notably Cathedral Square, are suffering from a high bus impact.

The high impact of buses and the lack of pedestrian crossings with timed lights on Cathedral Square create very unpleasant situations for pedestrians and cyclists. Not only are there too many buses driving across the square every day, they also drive too fast!



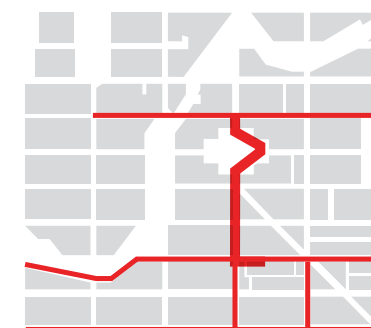
24 HOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT VOLUME

- 100-500 buses per day
- 500-1000 buses per day
- 1000-2000 buses per day

TOO MANY BUSES THROUGH THE HEART OF THE CITY



Confusing and unpleasant situations on Cathedral Square with the high impact of buses and the lack of pedestrian crossings with timed lights.



SUMMARY: AREAS WITH HEAVY BUSTRAFFIC

There are too many buses through the heart of the city. 2000 buses cross Cathedral Square and drive through the most busy part of Colombo Street - every day!

THE CITY

getting to and from the city centre

CYCLING IN THE CITY CENTRE

CYCLING AS A DESIRABLE TRANSPORT MODE

Cycling is like walking - it is all about opportunities. Cycling is an attractive alternative transport mode – cheap and an excellent way of exercising. In cities worldwide cyclists are increasing in numbers counting both children and the elderly, where conditions for cycling are safe and attractive. In a number of cities cycling becomes a favorite transportation mode offering the same free choice as motor vehicles, just less congestion and parking problems.

HARD TIMES FOR CYCLISTS IN CHRISTCHURCH

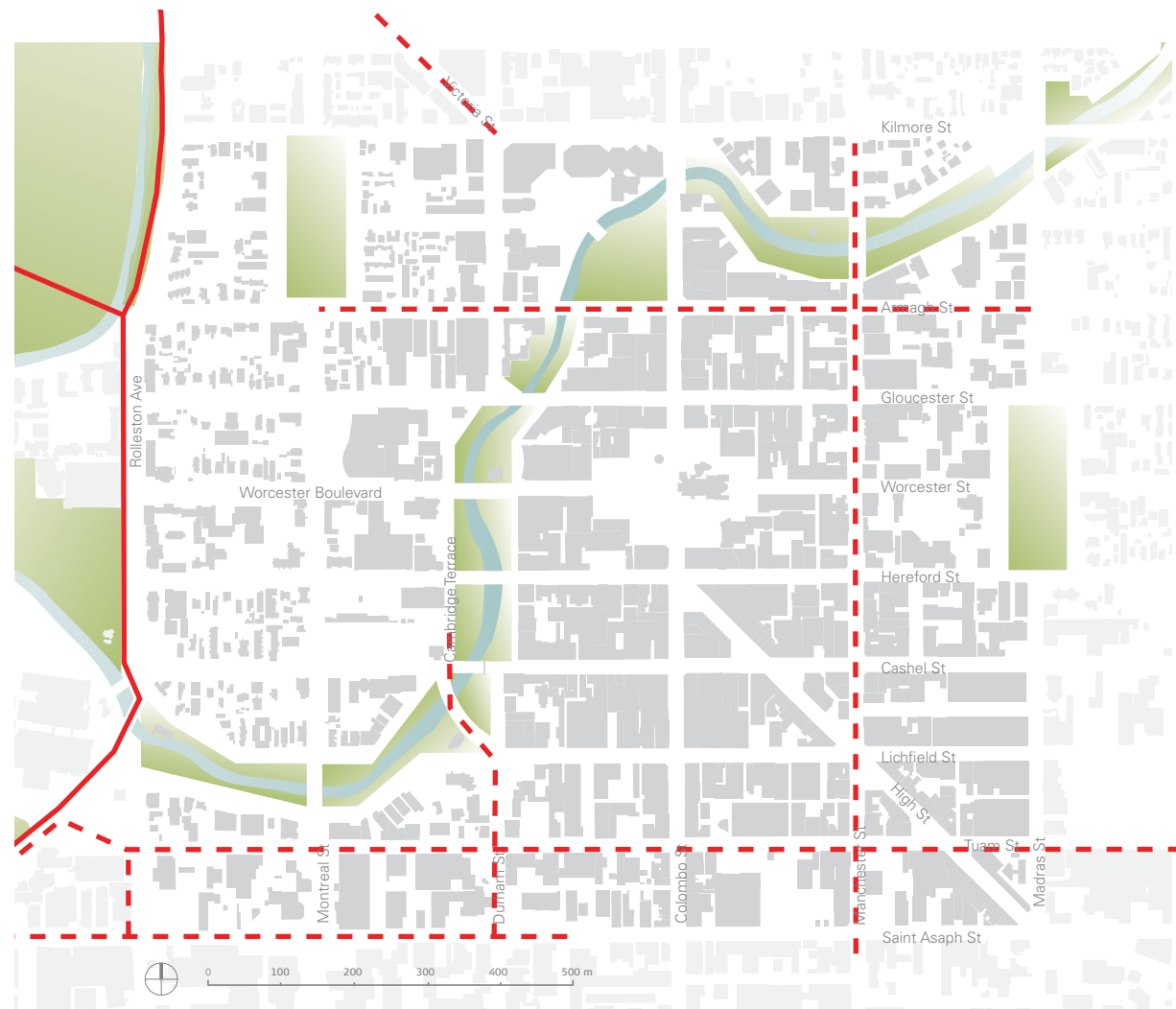
Does Christchurch city centre invite people to use bicycles as daily transportation? Does the city centre invite all age groups to ride bicycles? Christchurch has excellent natural conditions for developing a strong cycle culture since the climate and the flat topography are perfect for cyclists.

A HALF HEARTED GESTURE

Unfortunately the bicycle network is incomplete, making it unsafe to bike, since a person may ride on a bike lane for a couple of blocks but then find themselves riding in between moving cars again.

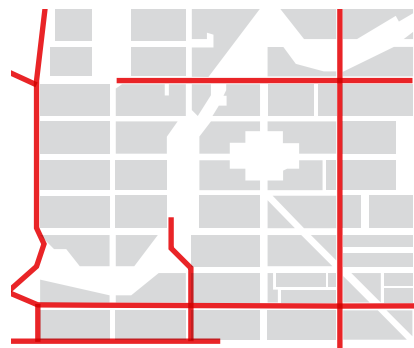
Christchurch lacks facilities in terms of proper cycle lanes, a linked network, dedicated cycle lights, markings on roads where cyclists are crossing or any of the other means that other cities use to look after their cyclists.

The bicycle network ought to be better at inviting more people to ride their bikes - The type of cycle lanes and the way they are set out, ought to be reconsidered. The present cycle lanes are a good start, but it would be good to aim for even higher standards - creating a safer cycling environment.



EXISTING CYCLE LANES IN THE CITY CENTRE

- cycle lanes
- cycle paths



SUMMARY: LACK OF CYCLE NETWORK

Today there is no cycle network only bits and pieces of cycle lanes in the city centre which do not constitute a system. Christchurch has a Cycling Strategy from 2004, but a well functioning cycling structure has not been established.

copenhagen has doubled the number of cyclists in the last 10 years by improving the bicycle network. 36% of copenhageners now commute to work on bicycles and the city council aims at reaching 50% by the year 2015 by continuing to upgrade the network.

THE CITY

getting to and from the city centre

CYCLING IN THE CITY CENTRE

A NEW CYCLING CULTURE

Cycling as a recreational activity as well as part of daily routine has a lot of benefits in an urban environment.

First of all it is slower and quieter than other modes of traffic, so it works well in a pedestrian environment. There is no noise and no pollution and it is in human scale. It brings people onto the streets - not just cars with people hidden inside. It is healthy too, and it takes up much less space than cars. All in all there are both individual and collective benefits of inviting more people to cycle through the city centre as well as through Christchurch as a whole.

Experience from overseas shows that the secret to making cycling popular and reasonably safe is to have a sufficient number of cyclists – a critical mass. Motorists only learn to watch out for cyclists when cycling becomes part of a general traffic culture.

CYCLE LANES



A 'cycle lane' is marked by a solid line. It is placed between parked and driving cars which is an unsafe location since cars easily drive across or open doors into the cycle lane.



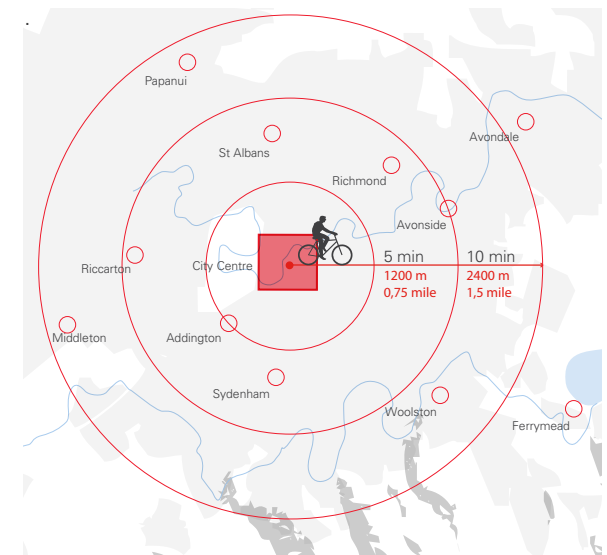
Do cars really respect bikes and look out for them? It can also be unclear on which side of the car cyclists are supposed to ride.



It is unsafe for cyclists to ride between parked cars and driving cars. An ambiguous attempt at providing space for cyclists without actually doing it.



'cycle lanes' located between parked and driving cars, rather than next to the footpaths are unsafe. It is questionable whether cars really respect the painted line of the cycle lane.



SHORT DISTANCES

THE ILLUSTRATION PINPOINTS HOW EASILY ACCESSIBLE DESTINATIONS COULD BE ON BICYCLES WITHIN CHRISTCHURCH. CYCLING IS A REALISTIC MODE OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE ILLUSTRATION SHOWS THAT JUST 10 MINUTES OF CYCLING FROM AVONDALE, PAPANUI AND MIDDLETON COULD BRING YOU TO THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY CENTRE.

SHARED ZONES



The shared walking and cycle path along Rollestone Avenue / Cambridge Terrace sometimes creates conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists.



The path does not explore the potential of an attractive recreational route.

THE CITY

visual quality and comfort

BUILDING HEIGHTS

A HUMAN SCALE CITY

Christchurch is a relatively low city with wide streets. The combination is fortunate as high buildings require more servicing than smaller ones in terms of delivery of goods, collection of rubbish and transport needs for people in the buildings. Christchurch also has some high buildings, for instance on Cathedral Square and along Cashel and Hereford Streets.

GOOD CLIMATE

Christchurch enjoys enviable climatic conditions. It is a temperate climate, with average temperatures in January ranging from 15 °C to 20 °C and average temperatures in July ranging from 5 °C to 15 °C. This creates excellent conditions for a thriving pedestrian culture, making the most of what the city's public space has to offer.

HIGH BUILDINGS

The Central City Zone in the city plan allows buildings from 40- 80 metres in the area between Kilmore Street, Madras street, Tuam Street and Durham Street. One of the problems with high buildings is the micro-climatic conditions created at the base. When strong winds meet a tall free-standing building turbulence and fast down winds will sweep the nearby streets in unpredictable ways. Fast winds lower the temperature of streets and public spaces, minimising the comfort for people walking or staying nearby and effectively preventing public life. Additionally, high-rise casts long shadows limiting the recreational values of city streets and squares.

CONFLICTS WITH PUBLIC LIFE

However grand it may appear as both skyline and from within its apartments or offices, poorly placed and designed high-rise buildings can render public space useless as a place for public life activities. The inevitable result is public space with an absence of public life.



SUMMARY: THE CITY PLAN ALLOW BUILDINGS TO BE BUILT TOO HIGH

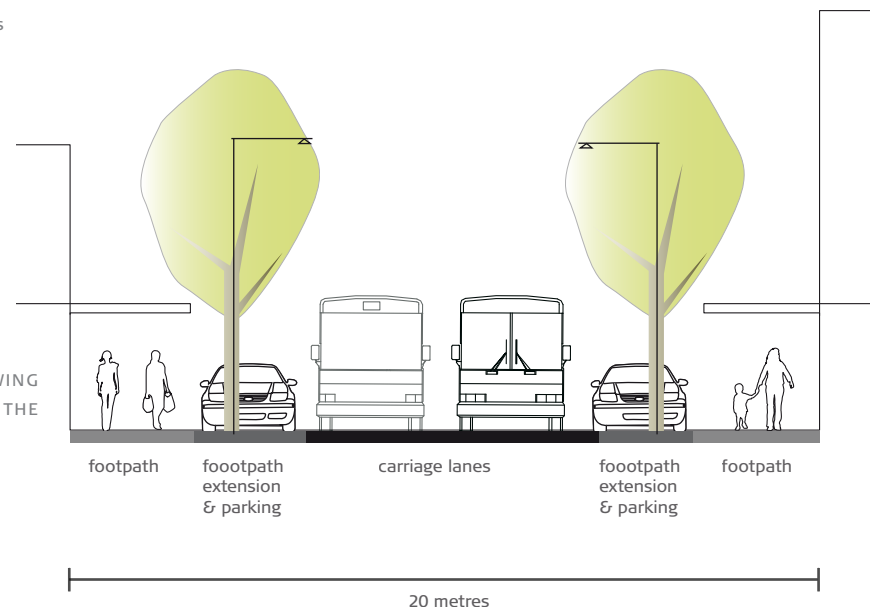
The City Plan for the Central City allows too high buildings in the city centre - from 40- 80 metres south - east of Cathedral square.



BUILDING HEIGHTS IN THE CITY CENTRE



SECTION OF COLOMBO STREET.
SCALE 1:200
A TYPICAL STREET SECTION SHOWING
THE LOW URBAN STRUCTURE AND THE
WIDE STREETS.



THE CITY

visual quality and comfort

HERITAGE BUILDINGS

HISTORICAL STREETSCAPES

Christchurch is a stylish and contemporary city, full of 19th century buildings. The city is known for its English character and buildings. The city is very fortunate in having preserved large numbers of old city buildings with low building heights, narrow frontages and rich architectural details, forming very pleasant and human scale streetscapes.

HERITAGE AREAS

Historical buildings and streetscapes add special quality to the city centre. The historical areas of the city centre have a scale of buildings which allows good sunlight access to public spaces and breezes without causing strong winds. Moreover, these areas have a richness of form and detail, elegant proportions and warm materials with engaging textures and relief. These old buildings are difficult to replace.

The heritage buildings in Christchurch city centre have much to offer as a historical record of the city's existence. It makes it possible to recall history and enjoy its presence.

AWKWARD MIX OF NEW AND OLD

Despite all these positive values there are problematic issues related to some of the newer developments. Heritage buildings have been enveloped by new urban developments that do not consider the scale, design or importance of the heritage buildings.



HERITAGE BUILDINGS IN THE CITY CENTRE

 Heritage buildings



Awkward relationship between old and new.



The historical building stock stands close and is varied with many small units. It holds many buildings from different time periods, with various sizes and functions.



SUMMARY: A HISTORIC CITY CENTRE

Heritage buildings are spread all over the city centre, rather than being confined to one area.

THE CITY

visual quality and comfort

GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES

IMPORTANCE OF GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES

The design of a buildings ground floor frontage has a high impact on the attractiveness of the public realm. They are the walls of the urban environment, and contain the openings through which we see, hear, smell and engage in the city's multi faceted palette of activities. On the ground floor and at eye-level we come close to the city.

Good ground floor frontages are active, rich in detail and exciting to walk by. They are interesting to look at, to touch and to stand beside. High quality ground floor frontages create a welcoming sensation and encourage people to walk and stay in the city.

TRANSPARENCY AND SMALL UNITS

Other qualities include a high degree of transparency enabling interaction between activities inside the buildings and those occurring on the street. Also, frontages with many small units, many openings and a variety of functions make streets more diverse, stimulating and thereby attractive. Frontages with small units also provide a predominantly vertical facade structure which has the important visual effect of making distances feel shorter.

EVALUATION OF GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES

In order to create an attractive, lively and people friendly city, a substantial proportion of the ground floor frontages need to be of high quality.

Through previous public space and public life studies a tool for evaluating ground floor frontages has been developed and used on other cities. The criteria presented on this page have been used in the evaluation of ground floor frontages in selected streets in Christchurch city centre.



categories for evaluation

A ACTIVE

- small units, many doors (15-20 units per 100m)
- diversity of functions
- no closed or passive units
- interesting relief in frontages
- quality materials and refined details

B PLEASANT

- relatively small units (10-14 units per 100m)
- some diversity of functions
- only a few closed or passive units
- some relief in frontages
- relatively good detailing

C SOMEWHERE IN-BETWEEN

- mixture of small and larger units (6-10 units per 100m)
- some diversity of functions
- only a few closed or passive units
- uninteresting design of frontages
- somewhat poor detailing

D DULL

- larger units with few doors (2-5 units per 100m)
- little diversity of functions
- many closed units
- predominantly unattractive frontages
- few or no details

E INACTIVE

- large units with few or no doors
- no visible variation of function
- closed units or passive frontages
- monotonous frontages
- no details, nothing interesting to look at

ACTIVE AND INACTIVE FRONTAGES

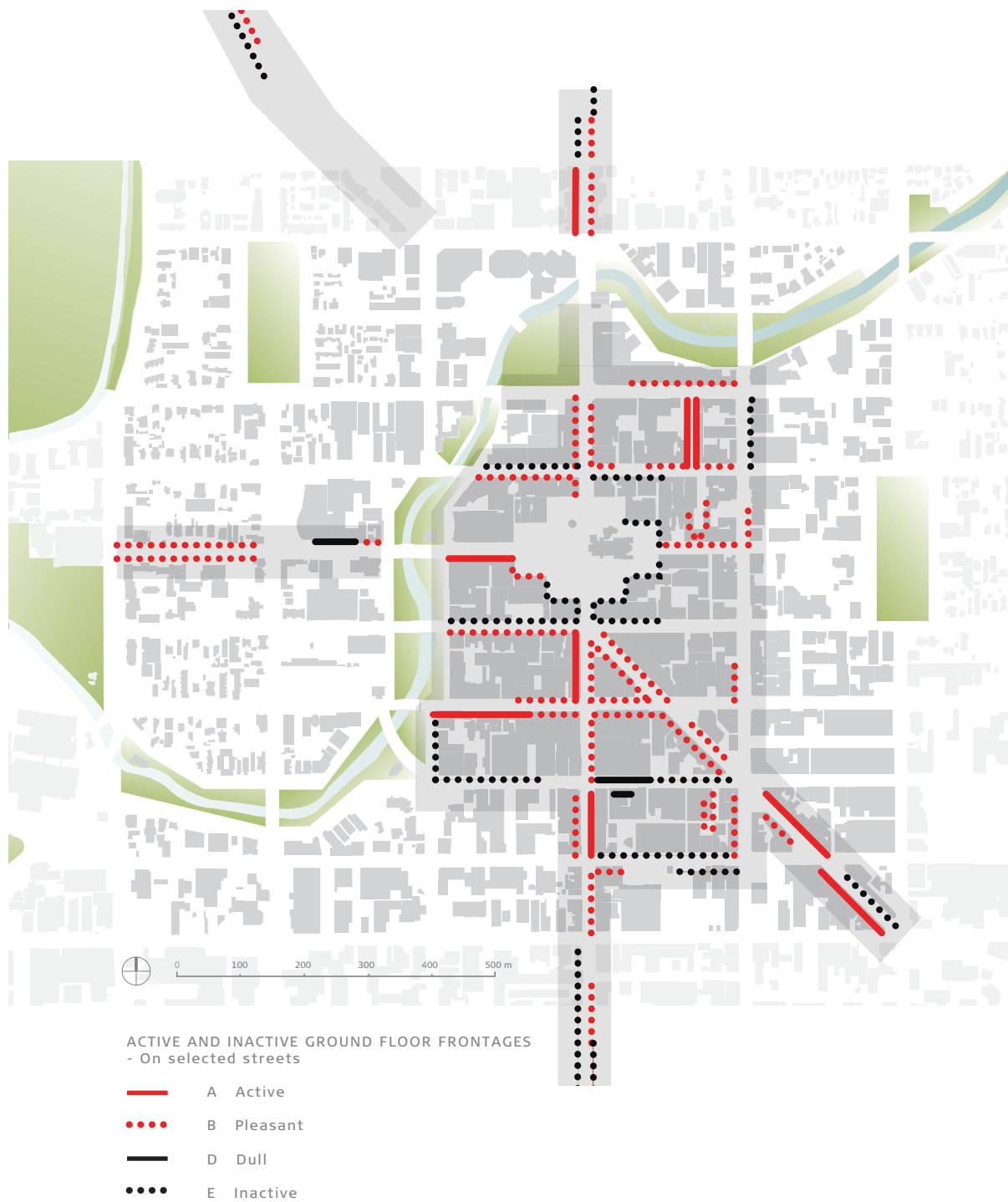
ACTIVE FRONTAGES IN THE RETAIL HEART

Active frontages are primarily found in the retail and entertainment districts where shops, restaurants and bars promote themselves and the area through an attractive streetscape.

Active frontages are mainly found on New Regent Street, City Mall, along Colombo Street and on High Street where some cafes, bars and smaller shops contribute to a more attractive street environment.

INACTIVE FRONTAGES

Most of the inactive and dull street frontages are found in areas designed at a larger scale, such as along the south-east side of Cathedral Square and on the north side of Lichfield Street. Buildings in these areas are often large scale with over-sized, closed and passive ground floor frontages that are incapable of interacting with people at street level. Banks and hotels provide little interaction at street level, and none at night time.



100% VS 700%
CLOSED VS OPEN +13%

THE DESIGN OF THE GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES IS CRUCIAL FOR THE VITALITY OF THE PUBLIC LIFE. SURVEYS* SHOW PEDESTRIANS MOVE SLOWER IN FRONT OF THE ACTIVE FRONTAGES, MORE PEOPLE STOP AND MORE STATIONARY ACTIVITIES TAKE PLACE. THE NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES IN FRONT OF ATTRACTIVE AND ACTIVE FRONTAGES IS SEVEN TIMES AS MANY AS IN FRONT OF INACTIVE AND CLOSED FRONTAGES. ON TOP OF THIS, PEOPLE MOVING SLOWER IN FRONT OF THE ATTRACTIVE FAÇADES GENERATES AN ADDITIONAL 13% INCREASE IN THE TOTAL ACTIVITY. THE CONCLUSION IS THAT INACTIVE, CLOSED FRONTAGES DIMINISH THE PUBLIC REALM WHILE OPEN AND ACTIVE FRONTAGES ACTIVATE IT. APART FROM THIS, ATTRACTIVE FACADES MAKE WALKING A MORE PLEASANT ACTIVITY AND THE CITY A MORE BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO BE. JAN GEHL'S RESEARCH INDICATES THAT PEOPLE WHEN WALKING, NEED NEW STIMULUS EVERY 10M TO KEEP THEM INTERESTED AND ENGAGED.

*'Close encounters with buildings' Survey made by Jan Gehl and Centre for Public Space Research, Copenhagen

THE CITY

visual quality and comfort

VERANDAHS

SIGNIFICANT FEATURE

A significant feature of Christchurch city centre and its urban structure are the verandahs covering large stretches of the sidewalk. These have been a part of Christchurch since the 1860's when the grid plan was formed and streets were lined by buildings. They create a continuous experience of a pedestrian space and provide shelter from rain, wind and sun.

Traditionally verandahs were supported by posts in the sidewalk, although almost all are now cantilevered. Modern verandahs often use glass to increase the amount of natural light on the footpath. The City Plan requires verandahs to be provided in some parts of the central city.

HEIGHTS OF VERANDAHS

In some places low verandahs can make the footpath feel darker and less generous. In Melbourne a minimum height of 3.5 to 4m provides an elegant spacious pedestrian space.



BUILDINGS WITH VERANDAHS IN THE CITY CENTRE

— Verandahs



SUMMARY: VERANDAHS - A SIGNIFICANT FEATURE
Verandahs are a significant feature in the city centre.

COLOMBO STREET



The view to the sky and the street trees is blocked and creates very dark spaces. *Colombo Street*

GLOUCESTER STREET



Newer versions of verandahs constructed in glass allows light to reach the footpaths but still provide climate protection. *Gloucester Street*

STREET TREES

CURRENT ISSUES

Existing street tree planting extends through much of the city centre.

The map on this page shows existing street trees in the city centre. Street trees are generally located in the east-west streets while north-south connections have not been planted. The exceptions are the southern parts of Colombo Street and High Street.

Normally, street trees and other vegetation substantially enhance the quality of urban spaces and the pedestrian experience. Street trees and green gardens can be used to indicate pedestrian priority and contribute to establishing a street identity and hierarchy in Central City.

Viewed in terms of ecological function, Christchurch's street trees represent an incomplete system with many gaps. Street tree planting in the city centre is difficult for a number of reasons; the streets generally have narrow footpaths covered by verandahs, shade from large buildings, and limited root space adds to the difficulties. The general effect of these difficulties is that Christchurch is not experienced as a green city. Street trees tend to be in either a poor shape or of a tall and slender nature with limited impact on the streetscape.

Colombo Street has a rather sparse street tree planting because of some of the issues raised above - a widespread use of verandahs and harsher urban environment.

A STREET TREE MASTER PLAN

Christchurch's Draft Street Trees and Gardens Master Plan guides planting on streets in the city centre. Specific objectives for the master plan are to improve and develop the number, health, longevity and form of street tree species.



STREET TREE PLANTING IN THE CITY CENTRE

●●● Street trees

CATHEDRAL SQUARE

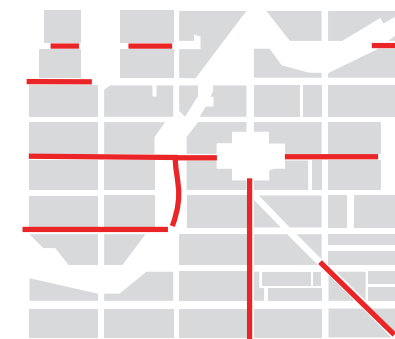


Moveable planters designed for specific seasonal locations in Cathedral Square. The planters are intended to green up the square. The trees will provide shade in summer and shelter in winter.

COLOMBO STREET



The trees along Colombo Street are an unsuitable species for this location.



SUMMARY: A FRAGMENTED GREEN NETWORK

Christchurch has a street planting strategy which needs to be followed in order to strengthen the street hierarchy and the individual character of every street. Planting should not be applied to every street but follow an overall strategy which identifies important routes and places.

THE CITY

visual quality and comfort

STREET ELEMENTS

EASILY ACCESSIBLE FOOTPATHS

In general the city centre has easily accessible footpaths forming a good base for strengthening the public life unfolding in the streetscapes. The typical city centre footpaths has a width of 2.5 - 3m and leaves space for natural pedestrian desire lines plus urban furniture and street elements. Crowding on the footpaths is in generally not a problem in Christchurch.



A little disorder on Worcester Street with many commercial signs and big traffic signs, communicating to drivers and not pedestrians.



High Street footpaths with good accessibility and space for a variety of street elements and urban furniture.

DESIGN CODES

A PALETTE OF MATERIALS

Christchurch City has developed a Draft Central City Streetscape Plan (2008). The plan provides guidelines for appropriate design, development and management of streetscapes in the central city of Christchurch. It offers a design mechanism that promotes positive design outcomes to fulfil the many functions of the contemporary urban streets

The Draft Streetscape Plan covers streets within the four avenues. It is based on the Central City Transport Concept 2004, which introduces a pedestrian core inside the one way streets where pedestrian priority is signalled through the design and level of treatment of the streetscape to support a 30kmph vehicle design speed. In general this area will receive a higher level of streetscape treatment, allowing for the most cost effective investment of the council's resources. The pedestrian core will facilitate pedestrian and public transport access to the new bus exchange. Within the scope there are designated categories of streets that will receive different treatment based on their function.



Seating, City Mall.



Rubbish bins, City Mall.



Signage, Colombo St.



Cycle stands, Hereford St.



Lighting, City Mall



Signage, Worcester St.



Paving, City Mall

THE DRAFT CENTRAL CITY STREETScape PLAN 2008 ADDRESSES THE DESIGN CRITERIA USED IN THE SELECTION OF STANDARD STREETScape ELEMENTS. THE CITY IS CURRENTLY WORKING TO UPGRADE THE PAVING IN THE CITY CENTRE. THE DRAFT STREETScape PLAN DESCRIBES MATERIALS AND THE FINISH OF NEW PAVING AND INCLUDES A FAMILY OF SIGNS THAT HAVE BEEN DESIGNED IN A COHESIVE MANNER. IT TREADS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION IN PROVIDING A COHESIVE SIGNAGE MANUAL FOR THE CITY, FOCUSING ON THE CITY CENTRE AND MAJOR PLACES OF INTEREST. IT ALSO INCLUDES QUALITY LIGHTING THAT INCREASES THE USE AND SAFETY OF PLACES, DIRECTS VIEWS AND PROMOTES THE CITY CENTRE AS THE PUBLIC 'LOUNGE OF CHRISTCHURCH'.

THE CITY

visual quality and comfort

UNCOORDINATED PUBLIC ART

ART PROGRAMME

Public art and historic sites can enhance the experience of being in a city. A dominant commercial impact is often perceived negatively. Public art in Christchurch is quite sporadically placed, is of varying quality and seems to get a little bit thin at the edges of the city centre area. The city has been in need of a more continuous and overall program, thus bits and pieces have been added without any masterplan which could have coordinated the individual pieces to form a greater whole.

Recently the city has started a plan that aims to coordinate artworks and their locations more proactively; using them to provide "punctuation" for key city spaces.

An example is the series of works starting with the Chalice (Neil Dawson) in Cathedral Square, and down High Street with Flour Power (Regan Gentry) and Nucleus (Phil Price). A final work in this series is planned for the southern end of High Street.



PUBLIC ART IN THE CITY CENTRE

- "Scape" temporary public exhibition art work (2008 locations)
- Public art
- ☆ Historic monument / memorial



SUMMARY: UNCOORDINATED PUBLIC ART

Public art is primarily located in a limited area of the city centre. The existing public art appears to be primarily individual art pieces which are not part of a larger whole.

Strong guidance is needed - with guidelines for the placement of art as well as the quality and type of art for specific spaces.



SCAPE is the only New Zealand biennial art exhibition which focuses on commissioning new works of art in public space. It takes place in Christchurch every second year. During SCAPE 2008 Christchurch Biennial, a celebration of art in public space, there were works by more than 25 artists from 15 countries, displayed around the city centre.



THE PEOPLE

THE LIVEABLE CITY

THE LIVEABLE CITY IS ONE THAT OFFERS A VARIETY OF ATTRACTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ITS CITIZENS AND VISITORS.

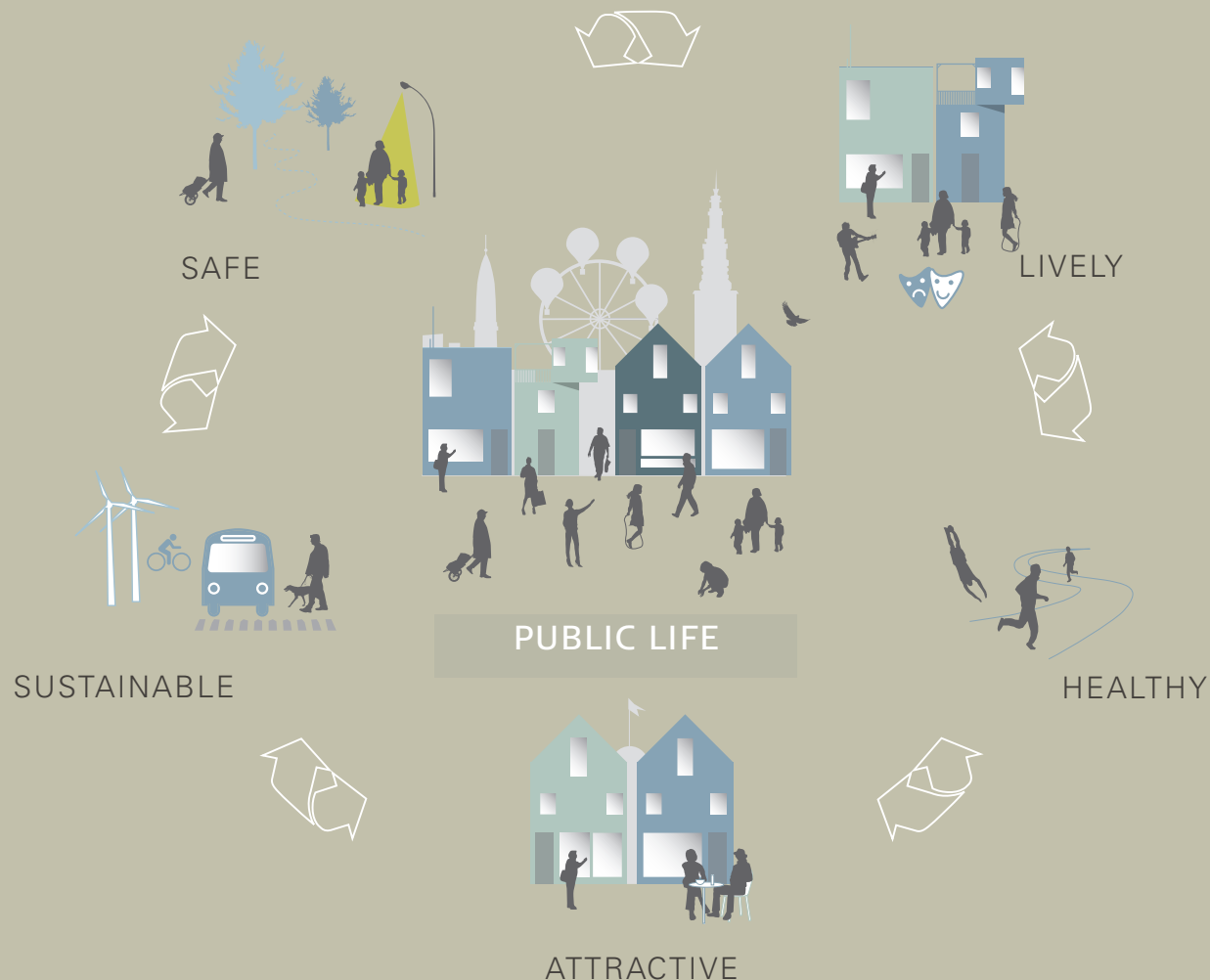
A LIVEABLE CITY PUTS PUBLIC LIFE IN THE THE CENTRE OF ITS PLANNING, STRENGTHENED BY AN OVERALL FOCUS ON VIBRANCY, HEALTH, ATTRACTIVITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND SAFETY.

THE HUMAN, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION TO DELIVER TRULY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE FUTURE. IN OTHER WORDS, THE PLANNING PROCESS NEEDS TO HAVE A HOLISTIC CHARACTER.

OR, AS THE INTERNATIONAL LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE, THE MONOCLE PUTS IT, WHEN RATING THE MOST LIVEABLE CITIES IN THE WORLD:

... 'A COMBINATION OF GOOD IDEAS, GOOD PLANNING AND A MANAGEABLE SCALE, PLUS A SOUND GRASP OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND A VARIETY OF SUBJECTIVE BUT NONETHELESS IMPORTANT ELEMENTS LIKE FOOD CULTURE, HOUSING DESIGN AND A SUNNY DISPOSITION THAT IN THE WORDS OF MONOCLE, YOU HAVE TO GET OUT ON THE STREETS AND EXPERIENCE...'

THE LIVEABLE CITY SHOULD BE THE GOAL FOR CHRISTCHURCH - AND IT IS A REALISTIC ONE!



THE PEOPLE

staying in the city centre

LIVING IN THE CITY CENTRE

IMPORTANCE OF RESIDENTS IN THE CITY CENTRE

Having residents in the city centre means that people live in and care about the city. Residents contribute to the vitality day and night, going about their daily tasks. Particularly in the evening residents, even if relatively few in numbers, create an image of a city lived in and looked after.

THE POPULATION IN NUMBERS

Christchurch has approximately 370.000 people living in the city. Approximately 2.000 of these people live in the study area. Between 2001 and 2006, the population of Christchurch increased by 7.5%, and New Zealand by 7.8%.

Besides its residents, the city receives a very large number of visitors. Around 9 mill. tourists visit the city every year (2007). This figure includes international and national visitors and day trippers as well as people staying over night.

TOO FEW PEOPLE LIVE IN THE CITY CENTRE

Compared to other cities, Christchurch has a low number of residents in the city centre.



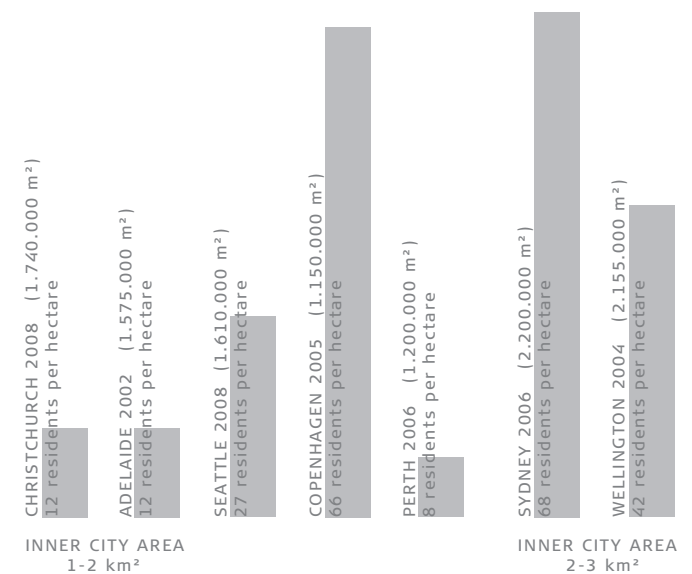
RESIDENTIAL USE IN THE CITY CENTRE
Total number of residents: 2.000

■ residential use



SUMMARY: RESIDENTS IN LIMITED AREAS

The central part of the city centre lacks residents. Most of the residents live in the area west of the Avon River.



COMPARISON: NUMBER OF RESIDENTS PER HECTARE

STUDENTS IN THE CITY CENTRE

IMPORTANCE OF STUDENTS IN THE CITY CENTRE

Students make a strong contribution to the city's vitality and cultural diversity, providing a youthful stimulus and international perspectives. Students come and go day and night, keeping the city active in the evening. They also tend to engage more overtly with the street scene because they have more time available.

STUDENTS IN CHRISTCHURCH'S CITY CENTRE

The number of students attending academic institutions and universities in the study area and just outside is approximately 13,370. These include large numbers of short term overseas students attending language schools.

Outside the study area are major institutions of higher education; the University of Canterbury (approx. 20,900 students [2007 - Wikipedia.org]) and Lincoln University (approximately 4,500 students [2007 - Wikipedia.org]). Both offer a wide range of disciplines and are pre-eminent in their fields. Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) just at the edge of the study area (10,000 students) offers extensive career, community and recreational courses.

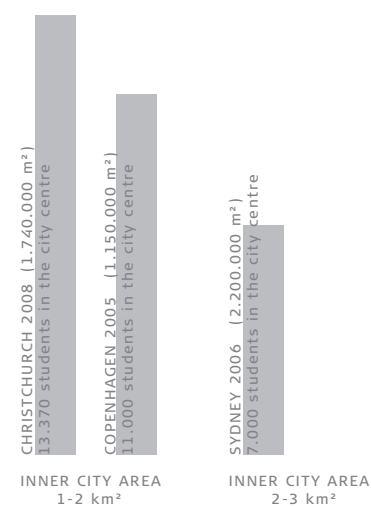
HIGH DENSITY OF STUDENTS

Compared to other cities, Christchurch is fortunate to have a significant number of students in the city centre.



STUDENTS IN THE CITY CENTRE
Total amount of students: 13,370
2,970 students enrolled in the study area and 10,400 just outside

- Language schools
- Other schools of specialization
- ⊙ CPIT, Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
- Primary & Secondary schools (not included in the total amount)



COMPARISON: AMOUNT OF STUDENTS IN THE CITY CENTRE



SUMMARY: MANY STUDENTS IN THE CITY CENTRE
The large amount of students are concentrated in small areas in the city centre.

THE PEOPLE

walking in the city centre

PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC - ON A WEEKDAY

LIMITED NUMBER OF PEDESTRIANS

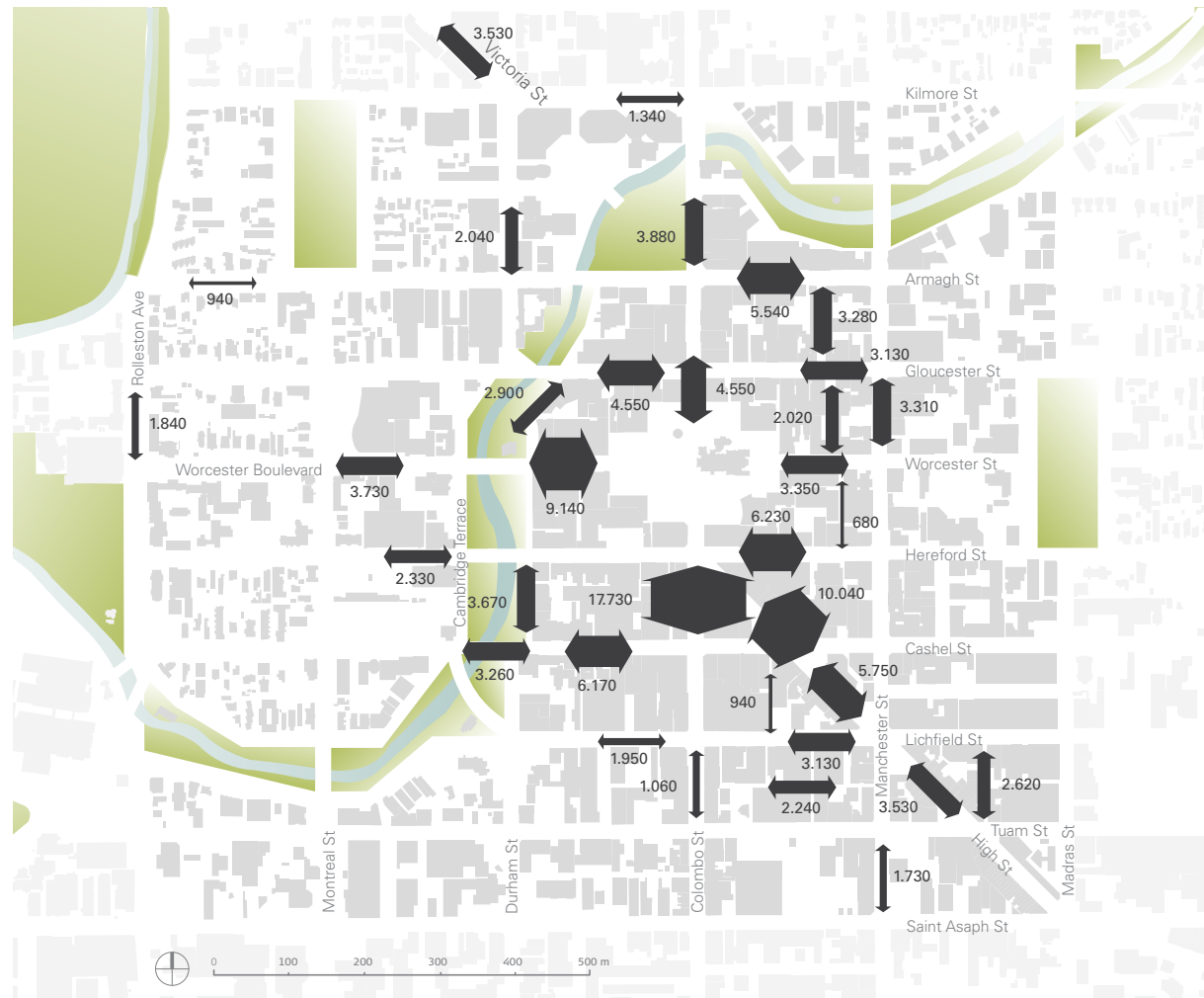
The general walking pattern shows that the highest concentrations of pedestrians are found in the retail core; City Mall and Colombo Street. Most of the pedestrian traffic is located in shopping streets and there is a limited spread over the rest of the city centre. The busiest areas in the city centre are City Mall and Colombo Street between Hereford Street and Cashel Street.

COLOMBO IS THE BUSIEST STREET

Colombo Street between Hereford Street and Lichfield Street is the busiest of the counted streets. Worcester Street between Cathedral Square and the river is also busy, but only carries half as many pedestrians as Colombo Street.

LOW LEVEL OF EVENING TRAFFIC

Pedestrian numbers drop dramatically when shops and offices close down and the majority of all visitors leave the city centre. Large sections of the city centre become more or less deserted. Only Sol Square and Colombo Street experience a fair number of pedestrians. Overall evening traffic is 25% of daytime traffic. In comparison Copenhagen evening traffic is 50% of daytime traffic.



PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

A SUMMER WEEKDAY 8 AM - 6 PM 2008

Data collected on following dates: 6th, 11th, 12th of November.
Weather: Fine and sunny with clouds. 19-22 degrees.

PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

summer weekday 8 am - 12 am 2008

- Concentration of pedestrians 8 am - 6 pm
- Concentration of pedestrians 6 pm - 12 am



SUMMARY WEEKDAY: MOST PEDESTRIANS IN SHOPPING AREAS AND ON COLOMBO STREET

Christchurch becomes inactive after 6 pm when the shops and offices close. The counts display a remarkably quiet city at night time on a normal weekday.



EVENING PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

A SUMMER WEEKDAY 6 PM - 12 AM 2008

Data collected on following dates: 6th, 11th, 12th of November.
Weather: Fine and sunny with clouds. 17-20 degrees.

PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC - ON A SATURDAY

UNCHANGED PATTERN OF MOVEMENT

There are no significant changes in the use of the pedestrian network on a Saturday apart from Colombo Street north from Cathedral Square which is more busy than on a weekday.

Saturdays would normally be the busiest day in a city's retail district. However pedestrian flows in Christchurch suggest a different picture where the city is not laid out for enjoyable walking. As a result pedestrian traffic is limited to the basic, necessary trips of going to work, going for lunch, going shopping etc.

In general pedestrian traffic is lower in Christchurch on Saturdays except for Worcester Boulevard and Rolleston Avenue which experience an increase. This is due to the many visitors to The Art Centre, The Art Gallery, Canterbury Museum and the Botanic Gardens.

MORE PEDESTRIANS THAN ON WEEKDAY EVENINGS

There is a lack of pedestrian activity during Saturday evening compared to Saturday daytime. There are more people in the city centre on a Saturday evening than on a weekday, but the numbers are still very low. The busiest places are Sol Square and The Strip.



PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

A SUMMER SATURDAY 8 AM - 6 PM 2008

Data collected on following dates: 8th of November.
Weather: Fine and sunny with few clouds. 17-20 degrees.



EVENING PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

A SUMMER SATURDAY 6 PM - 12 AM 2008

Data collected on following dates: 8th of November.
Weather: Fine and sunny with few clouds. 17-19 degrees with little wind.

- Concentration of pedestrians 8 am - 6 pm
- Concentration of pedestrians 6 pm - 12 am



SUMMARY SATURDAY: UNCHANGED PATTERN

There are no significant changes in the use of the pedestrian network on a Saturday apart from Sol Square. There are more people in the city centre on a Saturday evening than on a weekday evening.

THE PEOPLE

walking in the city centre

COMPARISON TO OTHER CITIES

COMPARISON OF PEDESTRIANS IN CHRISTCHURCH BETWEEN 8AM-12AM
- IN SELECTED STREETS



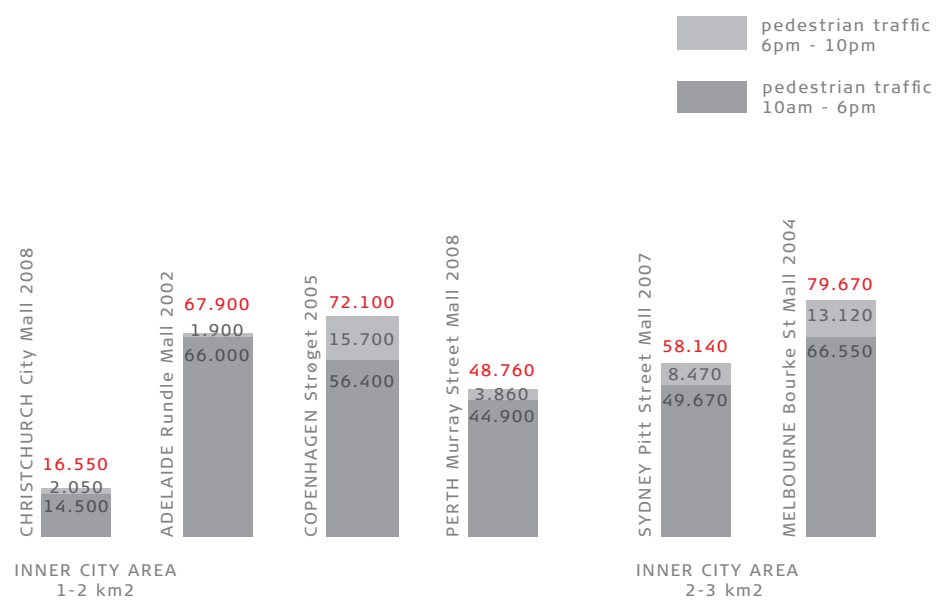
COMPARISON OF PEDESTRIAN STREET TRAFFIC FLOWS ON A SUMMER WEEKDAY BETWEEN 10AM - 10PM

PEDESTRIAN STREETS AROUND THE WORLD

When comparing City Mall (High Street and Cashel Street) with other pedestrian streets around the world it is striking how low the number of pedestrians are. During a summer weekday approx. 18.600 people walk through City Mall while cities much smaller in size (study area) than Christchurch, such as Copenhagen and Adelaide experience numbers which are substantially higher.

Although the number of residents within the study area in Adelaide and Christchurch is similar the numbers of pedestrians is much higher during daytime in Adelaide. What is interesting though is that the evening traffic in Christchurch is substantial - like in Adelaide - which is a healthy sign.

It should be noted that part of City Mall (Cashel Street) was under construction while surveying.



WALKING IN THE CITY CENTRE

THERE IS MORE TO WALKING THAN WALKING

Walking is first and foremost a type of transportation, but it also provides an opportunity to spend time in the public realm. Walking can be about experiencing the city at a comfortable pace, looking at shop windows, beautiful buildings, interesting views and other people. Walking is also about stopping and engaging in recreational or social activities because you have planned them or because you were tempted as you walked along. At some point we are all pedestrians walking from public transport, the bike rack, a parking structure or from home. As such streets should be welcoming to all of us.

A GOOD PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

A good pedestrian network invites people to walk because it is appealing, comfortable and uninterrupted links bring them from one end of the city to another. A pleasant streetscape is pleasant in all aspects: it is comfortable and interesting to walk along, and the quality of the facades, ground surface and other street elements is high. A high quality network in pedestrian terms consists of a number of well connected pleasant pedestrian routes.

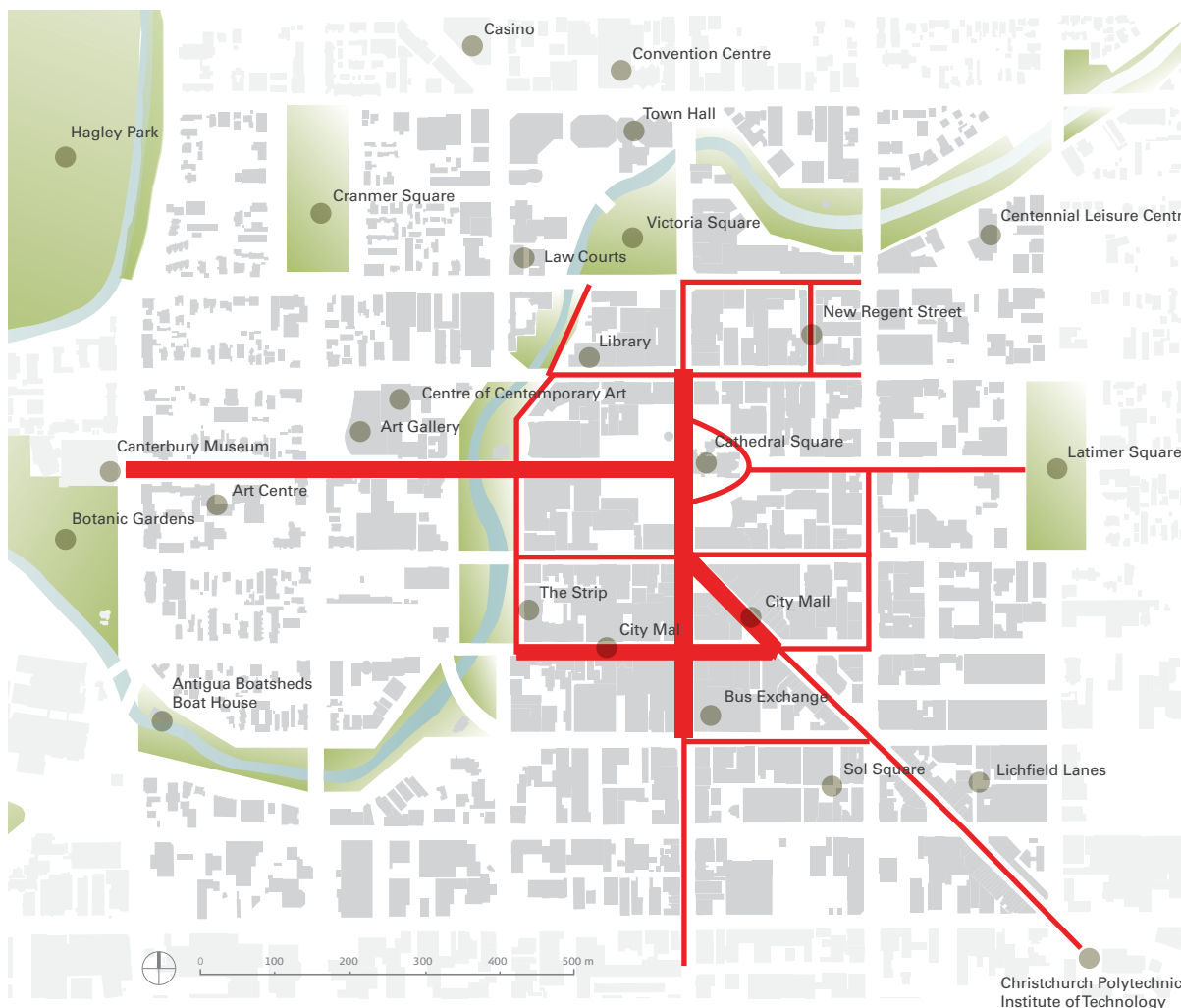
NO PEDESTRIAN NETWORK IN THE CITY CENTRE

Christchurch has a weak pedestrian network. The streets tend to be dominated by vehicular traffic. As such walking is not an attractive mode of transport and people are primarily walking to reach a certain destination and not walking for pleasure.

Christchurch has a series of beautiful streetscapes and interesting attractions creating the potential for a good walking city. Over the years a number of street improvements have been made. These improvements include upgrading City Mall and Worcester Boulevard.

THE SUSTAINABLE CITY

Walking is a sustainable mode of transportation with a strong impact on health leading towards a more sustainable city where lower energy consumption and focus on a lively city - even at night - are part of the new city strategies. Walking puts eyes on the streets, it enhances public life and increases the local ownership and knowledge of the city. There is more to walking than walking: Walking is the first step - making opportunities to stop, to linger, to talk, to watch, to participate and to perform are the others.



MAIN WALKING LINKS AND PRIMARY DESTINATIONS IN THE CITY CENTRE

- █ Primary walking links
- █ Secondary walking links
- Main destinations

A DESTINATION - AS BUILDING AND AS CITY SPACE

A DESTINATION IS CHARACTERISED BY ITS PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE WITHIN A WIDE FIELD OF FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES. THE CATHEDRAL AND THE BOTANIC GARDENS ARE TYPICALLY REGARDED AS PARTICULAR DESTINATIONS, THOUGH THEY FULFIL WIDELY DIFFERENT NEEDS FOR THE CITY'S OVERALL FUNCTIONALITY. LIKewise, CITY MALL IS A PARTICULAR DESTINATION BECAUSE OF ITS ROLE AS AN INVITING AND INTEGRATING ELEMENT IN CHRISTCHURCH'S CITY CENTRE. ALL DESTINATIONS FILL SPECIAL NEEDS FOR THE CITY AND PROVIDE THE BROAD RANGE OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE INHABITANTS OF CHRISTCHURCH AND ITS MANY VISITORS.

THE PEOPLE

walking in the city centre

EASE OF WALKING

GETTING ACROSS

The design of crossings can promote pedestrian accessibility. The type of signals, the ease of use for people with special needs, the time you spend waiting for the green light and the extent of green light. 'Time spent waiting' will be analyzed on the next page.

SOME CROSSINGS APPEAR UNSAFE AND UNCLEAR

Among pedestrians in the city centre insecurity occurs at a few places in the city. The insecurity occurs at pedestrian crossings where there is confusion and uncertainty about who has priority. These places are called "inconvenient spots." As shown on the map "inconvenient spots" particularly occur in the eastern part of Cathedral Square. The heavy vehicle traffic through the eastern part of the square together with the lack of pedestrian priority makes the experience of walking here unsafe.

PUSH BUTTONS



Push buttons are a widespread phenomenon all over New Zealand and in Christchurch. Here you have to apply to cross the street and if you press the button in time the digital device will give you 6 seconds of green light to step off the kerb before the lights start to flash red to tell you to finish walking across the road. Red periods are long, usually lasting more than 70 seconds. This system takes the elderly, children and people with disabilities hostages since they will often not be capable of moving across the streets at the pace needed. It also sends a clear signal that cars have higher priority than people.

PEDESTRIAN IMPEDIMENTS CREATE JAY WALKING

What can be learnt from other cities is that people can find their way even under the most appalling conditions. Pedestrians are often seen disobeying traffic rules in environments not laid out for walking. Their expectations of a system laid out for their convenience, eg. traffic lights turning green within a reasonable time frame, are quite low and thus they invent their own ways of dealing with a traffic dominated environment. This is generally a dangerous development since it puts people at high risk of getting hurt. People with special needs, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, people with prams, children etc. have especially hard time coping in an environment where disobeying the rules is considered normal.



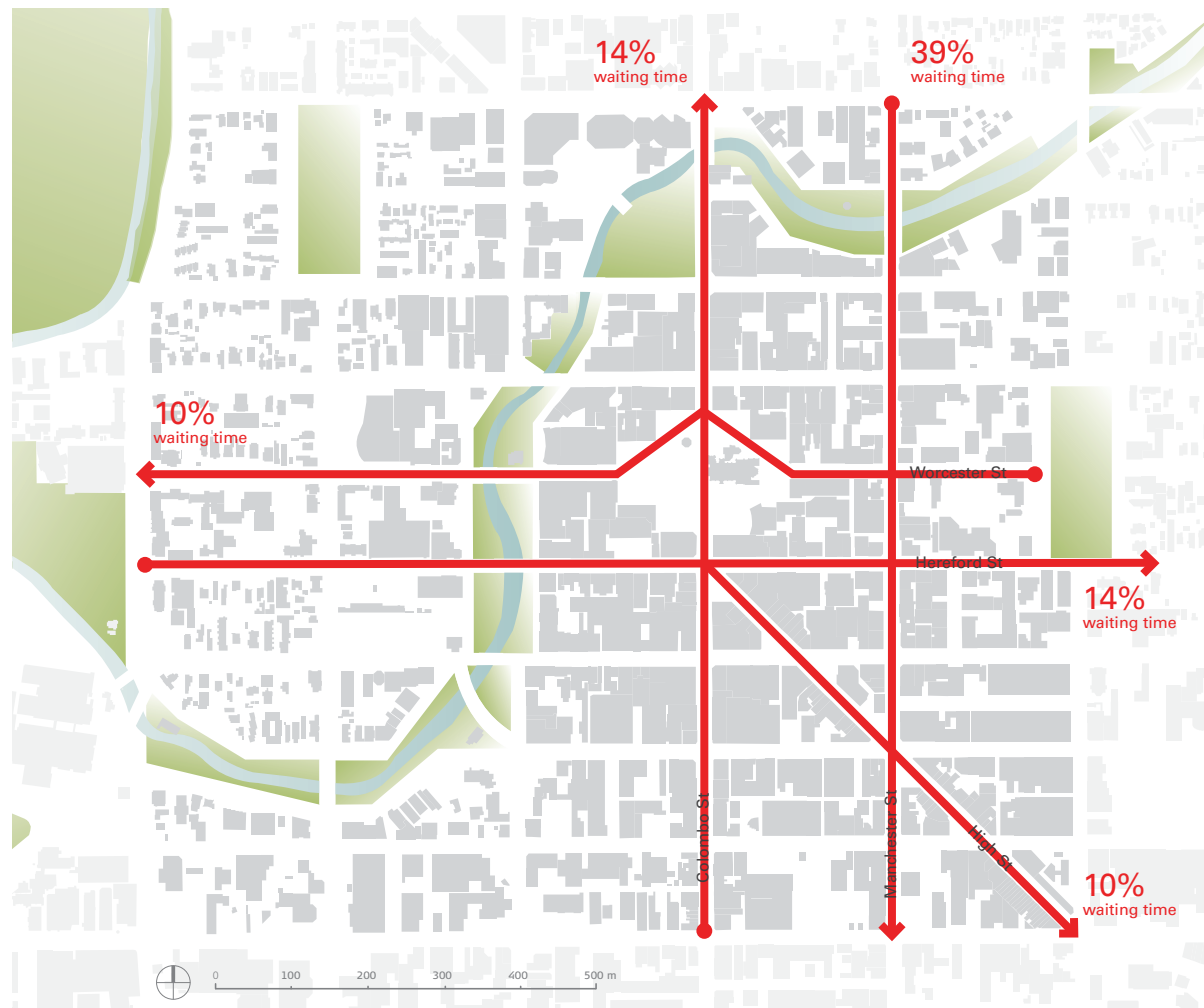
PEDESTRIAN CROSSING IN THE CITY CENTRE

-  Pedestrian crossing without signal lights
-  "Inconvenient spots" in the pedestrian network



Long waiting times encourage people to jaywalk which creates dangerous situations.

GETTING ACROSS TOWN



PERCENTAGE OF WALKING TIME SPENT ON WAITING AT CROSSING SIGNALS

➔ Pedestrian

MANCHESTER STREET
(FROM KILMORE ST TO ST. ASAPH ST)

WALKING TIME: 10 MIN 24 SEC.
WAITING TIME: 6 MIN 51 SEC.
TOTAL TRIP: 16 MIN 75 SEC.
WAITING TIME 39%

MANCHESTER STREET HAS THE LONGEST WAITING TIMES AND
THE MOST SIGNALLISED CROSSINGS.

PEDESTRIANS AS A SECONDARY USER GROUP

For the comfort of pedestrians and the vitality and functional quality of the city, it is important that people can cross the streets frequently and in an uncomplicated manner. It is a simple experience in most cities. In Christchurch the focus has been on vehicular traffic and ways of facilitating car movements, so that pedestrians have gradually become a category of secondary city users who face many hardships and experience both perceived difficulties and real danger when choosing to walk in the city. This is a very unfortunate development because children, senior residents and disabled people do not feel invited to walk in the city.

TEST WALKS

In order to evaluate the walking quality offered, five test walks were carried out. In each case walking time as well as waiting time at traffic intersections was recorded. When you walk down Colombo Street, how much time do you spend waiting at crossings? The walking is calculated based on an average walking speed of 5 km per hour.

LONG WAITING TIME

The city centre has large blocks (east west) creating fewer streets running north south which mean that when walking north south one has to stop for more red lights than if walking east west.

The testwalks running north/south therefore have longer waiting times. Manchester Street is the street with the longest waiting times and the street with more signalled crossings than other streets. The difference compared to the north south walk on Colombo is related to the fact that this walk passes over Cathedral Square and the City Mall which saves the people walking this route from 2 sets of traffic lights compared to the Manchester Street route.

In general pedestrians spend too long waiting at crossings through the city, but that the pedestrian priority facilities reduce waiting times to an acceptable level. A negative side effect of long waiting times is that people tend to resort to jaywalking which can create dangerous situations.

THE PEOPLE

walking in the city centre

CONDITIONS FOR PEDESTRIANS

LOW PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY

A clear sign of low pedestrian priority is found in the many minor side streets and delivery lanes which interrupt footpaths on all streets. This is unfortunate as it forces pedestrians to walk up and down different levels, which is an obstacle for the elderly, people with children and people with disabilities. Another issue is that people have to take extra care even when they are on the footpath. This is not easily explained to children and it demands constant awareness from pedestrians. Cars driving in and out of garages have to cross the footpaths; Who has priority - the pedestrians or the cars?

Pedestrians must be alert and often have to stop and wait for cars. This is an unsafe situation especially for elderly, children, people with special needs etc. It is important that pedestrians feel safe on the footpaths. Ideally, footpath design gives pedestrians the right of way, so it is clear to cars that they must wait for pedestrians.

UNNECESSARY INTERRUPTIONS

A tour through the study area disclosed many unnecessary interruptions of footpaths. Interruptions are placed where footpaths should have continued but have been cut in bits and pieces by crossing traffic lanes for car parks, delivery lanes or minor side streets. Entrances and exits to parking garages are the primary cause of footpath interruptions in the city centre, and lanes are the next most common reason.

EACH OF THESE INTERRUPTIONS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED AND EFFORTS BE MADE TO ENSURE HIGH PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY



Minor streets along Colombo Street.



Driveway to hotel parking on Kilmore Street.



Private driveway on Lichfield Street.



Driveway to parking on Lichfield Street.



People have to take care even though they are on a pedestrian footpath on Cathedral Square.



Tramway to Cathedral Junction on Worcester Street.

THE PEOPLE
walking in the city centre



THE PEOPLE

staying in the city centre

ABSENT USER GROUPS

LOW DIVERSITY IN AGE AND GENDER

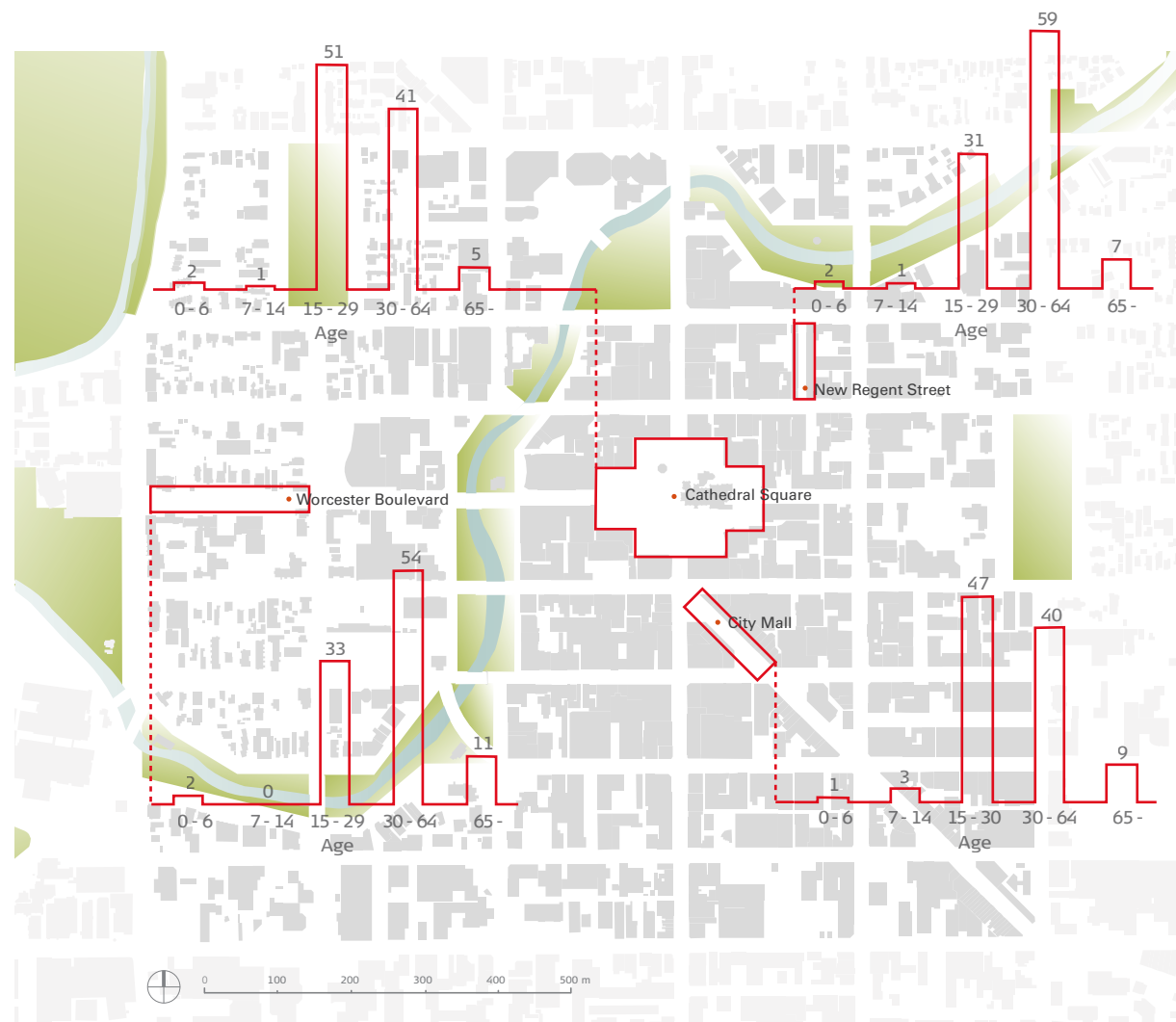
Age and gender surveys were performed in the summer of 2008 on a selection of streets to determine how the public realm is used by males and females and different age groups. The selected streets and places were Cathedral Square, Worcester Boulevard, City Mall and New Regent Street. The age and gender survey shows that children and the elderly are under represented in the streets. The reason could be the lack of interesting destinations and/or the lack of a coherent pedestrian network. The pedestrian network needs to include attractive and safe footpaths, pedestrian streets and a variety of public spaces for rest and play that are inviting for everybody.

11AM - MIDMORNING

The biggest number of people was registered on Cathedral Square at 11am and there was a clear majority of middle aged people (30-64 years). They represent 50% of all people registered on Cathedral Square. In addition to that 57.5% of the registered were women and 42.5% were men. In the city centre children (0-14 years) make up only 4% and the elderly (65<) 13%.

9PM - EVENING

The greatest amount of people were still registered on cathedral square at 9pm. The most dominant group on Cathedral Square was the young people (15-30 years). They make up 30% of all people registered on Cathedral Square. But the gender distribution changed so women were represented with 40% against men with 60%. In the city centre children (0-14 years) have totally disappeared from all streets and the elderly (65<) only make up only 4.5%.



AGE DISTRIBUTION IN THE CITY CENTRE

Recordings made on a summer weekday at Cathedral Square, Worcester Boulevard, City Mall and New Regent Street.

WHO IS USING THE CITY CENTRE OF CHRISTCHURCH?



THE AVERAGE REPRESENTATION OF AGE GROUPS RECORDED ON A SUMMER WEEKDAY IN CATHEDRAL SQUARE, WORCESTER BOULEVARD, CITY MALL AND NEW REGENT STREET.

The survey illustrates a city centre primarily inhabited by young and middle aged people. Children and the elderly are poorly represented in the city centre.

FEW FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN

FEW CHILDREN

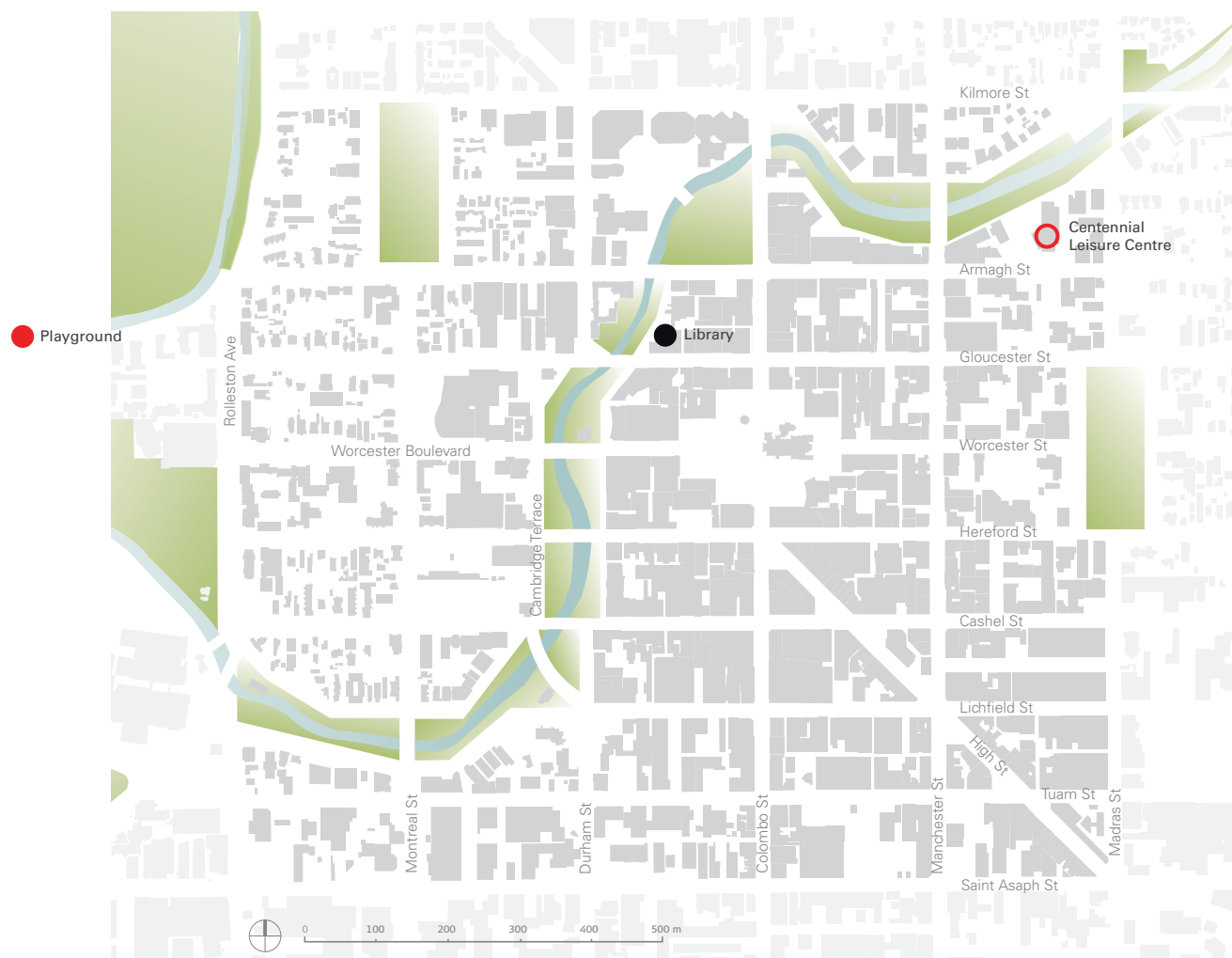
When we look at Christchurch and the users of the city children and senior citizens are not present. Although the survey was taken on a school day, there were virtually no children observed along several popular routes in the city centre. The low number of children and senior residents indicates accessibility issues. During holiday periods many children and their carers are either shopping or on the way to various museums or programmed holiday activities. What is missing however are public spaces in the city centre which are attractive for children and encourage children and carers to enjoy the public life of the city.

The city has a low quality pedestrian environment and few possibilities for stationary and recreational activities. The streets in the city centre are not pleasant to walk on with children or for people with limited degrees of ability. There is a lot of traffic and there are very few recreational facilities.

HARDLY ANY CHILDREN PLAYING

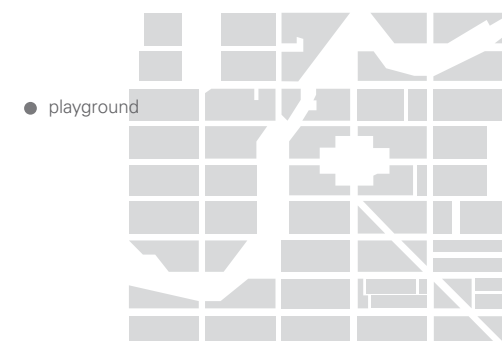
Children playing are good indicators of a city that caters for all users. Public spaces require a little bit extra in order to invite children and elderly people to use and enjoy them. Christchurch's city centre does not have a single public playground. A public space can also appeal to children and invite them to play even though it is not organised as a play ground. Does any space in Christchurch have that quality?

The stationary activity survey showed children playing on the riverbank and in Victoria Park, but only between 4-6 children were observed there between 10am and 8pm. Christchurch's city centre still has a long way to go in order to become a more inviting place for families and children.



FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN IN THE CITY CENTRE

- Playground
- Library
- Paid childrens activity / swimming pool



SUMMARY: NO PUBLIC CHILDRENS FACILITIES

The only playground offered close to the city centre is located in the Botanic Gardens.

THE PEOPLE

staying in the city centre

WHAT IS OPEN AT NIGHT?

EVENING ACTIVITIES

The number of evening activities and their location are important factors in the vitality of the city and the perception of safety. If there are too few activities or if the evening activities are very concentrated the visitor gets the impression of a deserted city and avoids going there in the evening. Christchurch generally has a lot of evening activities, which are also relatively well distributed throughout the city centre.

MONOFUNCTIONAL CITY CENTRE

Most of the evening activities are restaurants and bars and the city at night tends to be monofunctional. There are some distinctive districts like the Strip, Sol Square and parts of Manchester Street which are very loud party zones, especially at weekends.

Another problem is that too few people live in the city centre. Dwellings have the positive effect of generating life at times when other functions are closed. This generally creates a more lively city throughout the day, the week and the year. Overall, the city centre would benefit from more mixed use.



EVENING ACTIVITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE RECORDED BETWEEN 9-11PM

●	Restaurants (restaurants, cafés, pubs)	Total: 130
■	Retail (shops, kiosks, stalls)	Total: 29
○	24 hour convenience stores	Total: 5
☆	Entertainment (theatres, cinemas, clubs)	Total: 20
△	Accommodation (hotels, apartments)	Total: 26

EVENING ACTIVITIES IN TOTAL: 210



SUMMARY: EVENING ACTIVITIES ARE CONCENTRATED IN SPECIFIC AREAS

Restaurants and bars are the most dominant evening activity in the city centre.

SAFETY ISSUES

SAFETY ISSUES

Security is an important factor for the development of public life. People need to feel safe during the day and at night to keep visiting the city and to bring their children. Perceived security and real security are not identical phenomena, so making streets feel safe has much to do with creating a friendly environment that people find inviting.

PERCEIVED SAFETY

Residents and activities in the city during both day and night generally help people to feel more secure. Lights in windows in the evening – a symptom of eyes on the street – give visitors the feeling that help is close by if trouble should arise.

The scale and detail of buildings is also important at night, as well as transparency and light from window displays. Furthermore, sufficient light to find your way and to be able to recognise the faces of passers-by assist to a general feeling of security. Poor visual quality and lack of orientation can create a feeling of insecurity. Feeling insecure induces a stressful state of heightened awareness which most people would rather avoid.

A QUIET CITY CENTRE AT NIGHT

The fact that most of the city centre closes down around 6pm is magnified by the low level of pedestrians. There are not many people in the city centre in the evenings and there are not many public transport services to and from the city centre.

THE CITY CENTRE CLOSES DOWN AT 6PM



Most of the cafes close in the afternoon and almost all shops close down at 6pm. *Worcester Street*

THE NIGHT LIFE HOTSPOTS



The nightlife takes place in a few specific areas, where a high concentration of bars generates a special atmosphere that can create an unpleasant feeling of being unsafe for some people. *Sol Square*

SAFETY CONTRA SECURITY...



Security cameras record incidents but they are passive and can not interact. *Corner of Worcester Street/Manchester Street*

THE PEOPLE

staying in the city centre

STATIONARY ACTIVITY

SPENDING TIME IN THE CITY

A vibrant city does not necessarily have the same amount of public life everywhere. Less populated spaces are also important for getting some peace. The survey of stationary activities illustrates how the public spaces are used. Surveying what people do in the spaces is important since the number of people in the space alone does not tell much about the public spaces. Surveying what people are doing indicates in which public spaces people choose to spend their time.

Comparing a public space where many people sit on benches and socialize with another public space where many people are waiting for the bus, but not sitting on benches shows that the first public space is a space people like to be in - and choose to spend time in.

The recordings of staying activities show a concentration of activities in the central areas where also the highest number of pedestrians were counted.

The most popular public space is Cathedral Square. The medium used spaces consist of the Avon River, Art Centre and City Mall. The rest of the surveyed spaces in the city centre are not frequently used.

STATIONARY ACTIVITIES

The activities are mostly sitting on benches (resting, socializing), sitting in cafés (resting, socializing) and standing (looking at goods on the street, speaking to friends and relatives). These are the major activities and it is only in Cathedral Square that cultural and small scale commercial activities are found.

Children playing are seldom found in Christchurch. The only places where children have been recorded in the study area are Avon River A and B and Victoria Square. The public spaces are generally surrounded by traffic and parents do not let their children loose to play. A future development of the public spaces could improve the conditions for children.

INVITATIONS TO STAY IN THE CITY CENTRE

The generally low number of people in the public spaces is not only influenced by the quality of the spaces. There are a number of other factors that influence the use of the public spaces. In parts of the city centre the numbers of pedestrians are fairly low, and that reduces the potential user groups. The public spaces might be poorly connected with other activities in the city centre or have few activities. If too few people use the space, this will not attract more people.



STATIONARY ACTIVITIES

The illustration shows the average number of stationary activities found between 12pm and 4pm on the surveyed locations on a summer weekday. If an aerial photo of the selected space was taken at any time between 12pm and 4pm this is the number of people likely to be found in the photo. Data was collected on the 13th of November. The weather was fine and sunny, 19-21 degrees with no clouds.

IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN 12PM AND 4PM THERE WAS AN AVERAGE OF 876 PEOPLE TAKING PART IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

PEOPLE SITTING ON PUBLIC BENCHES:	24%
PEOPLE SITTING AT OUTDOOR CAFES:	34%
PEOPLE STANDING:	14%
CHILDREN PLAYING:	0,2%
PHYSICALLY ACTIVE:	0,5%

- Physical activities
- Cultural activities
- Commercial activities
- Children playing
- Lying down
- Sitting on folding chairs
- Secondary seating
- Sitting on caféchairs
- Sitting on benches
- Waiting for transport
- Standing

THE MOST USED SPACE IN THE CITY CENTRE

CATHEDRAL SQUARE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE
Cathedral Square is an iconic space with a strong identity and a fine location in the very centre of Christchurch with good connections to the surroundings.

MANY DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

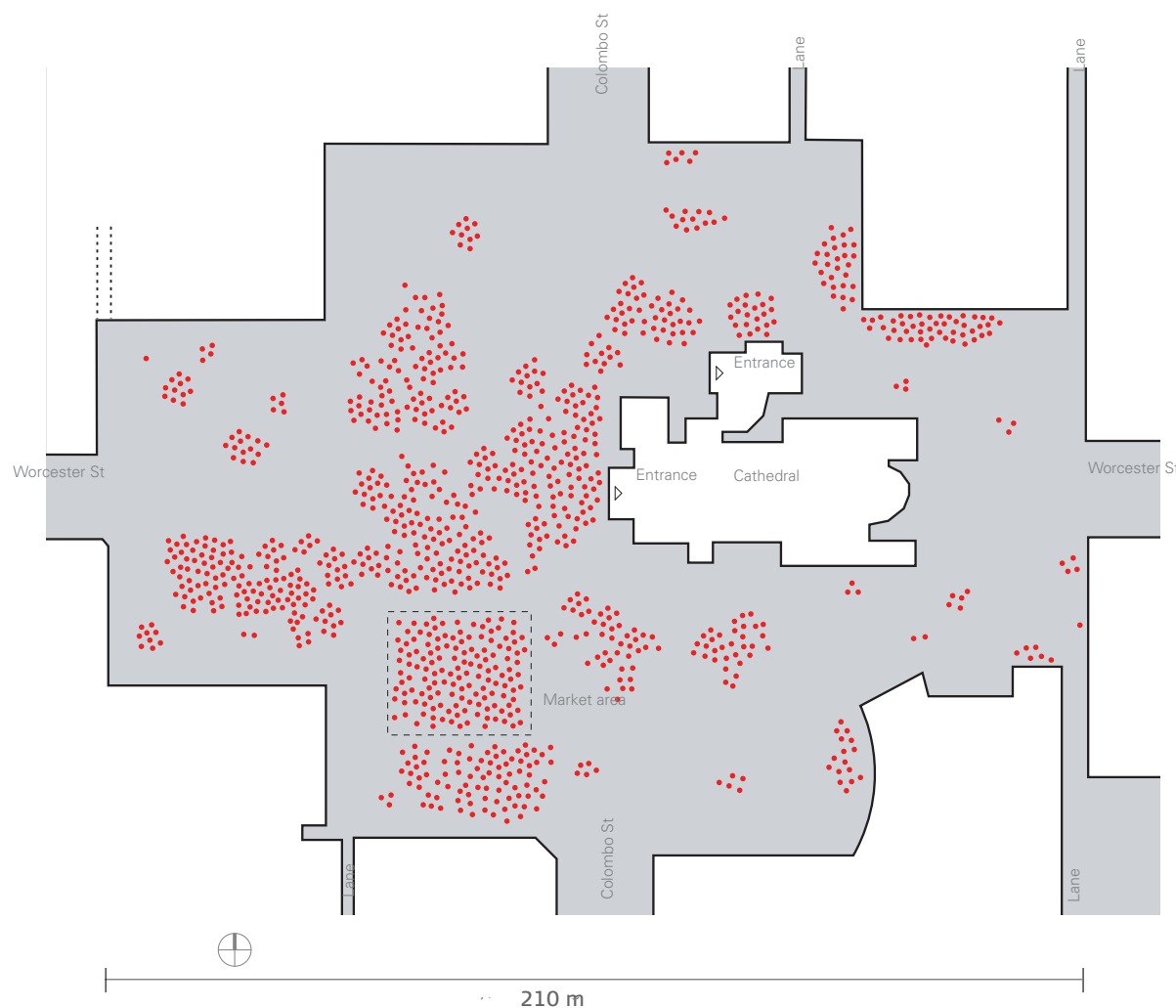
Cathedral Square is a place to walk through and where people take a break. A lot of activities take place here. It is an open 'urban floor' offering space for a wide variety of activity. It is also a major event space, especially the western part.

THERE IS A LACK OF ACTIVE EDGES

Cathedral Square is a formal public space with several large and passive edges. The square has fantastic potential as the heart of the city but it lacks attractive and active edges around much of the square. The most severe problem is the heavy through traffic - both buses and cars - east of the Cathedral. The traffic acts as a barrier cutting off the eastern part of the square and dividing it both physically and visually. This means that this part of the square is experienced as a back side. Thus the stationary activity use pattern - shown to the left - illustrates a lack of activity east of the Cathedral.

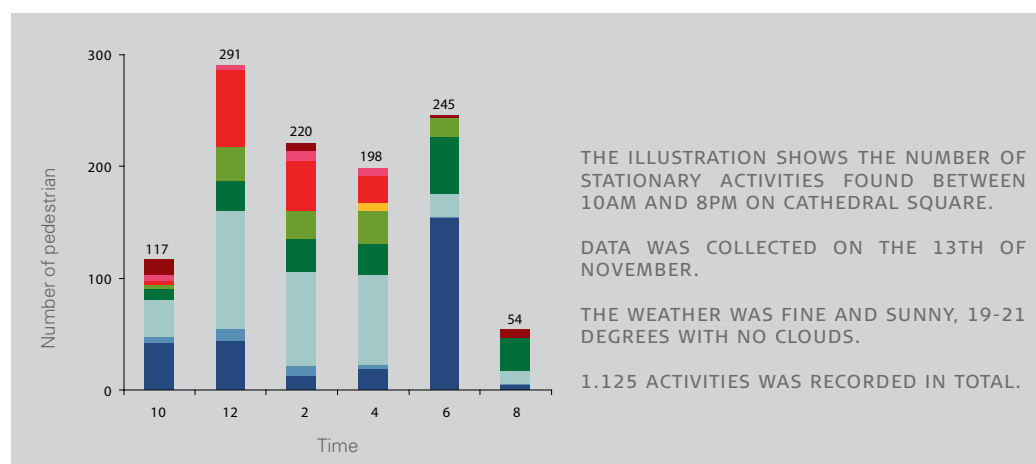
MANY PEOPLE SITTING ON BENCHES

Cathedral Square is a well visited space with a high use rate nearly all day. Highest use rate is found from lunchtime onwards. The types of activity here are of a varied nature but mostly people stop for a rest on the public benches, for socializing, looking at buskers and the market stalls or for café visits. Evening activities decrease to less than a third of the day time activity and Cathedral Square is not part of the night scene in Christchurch, but is merely used as a route to other destinations.



STATIONARY ACTIVITY USE PATTERN DURING A SUMMER WEEKDAY

(Accumulation of 6 recordings carried out between 10am and 8pm.)
● Where stationary activity was recorded



THE ILLUSTRATION SHOWS THE NUMBER OF STATIONARY ACTIVITIES FOUND BETWEEN 10AM AND 8PM ON CATHEDRAL SQUARE.

DATA WAS COLLECTED ON THE 13TH OF NOVEMBER.

THE WEATHER WAS FINE AND SUNNY, 19-21 DEGREES WITH NO CLOUDS.

1.125 ACTIVITIES WAS RECORDED IN TOTAL.

THE PEOPLE

staying in the city centre

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

A FESTIVAL CITY

Throughout the year Christchurch proudly celebrates festivals which provide a wealth of cultural and entertainment diversity.

A SEASONAL CITY

The seasons bring many recurring events with themes of music, the arts, heritage, buskers, floral displays and local produce.

The event calendar shows that Christchurch is an event active city nearly all year round. The exception is the winter time where it can be challenging to lure people on the streets, but certainly not impossible.

The majority of events in Christchurch take place in summer and autumn. Having more events spread throughout the whole year would be beneficial. All events do not have to be big and expensive. Many smaller events scattered throughout the city centre also have a very positive effect.

A BROADER VARIETY OF EVENTS

Many small events supplementing the larger ones would also make it possible to include more of the public spaces in the city centre.

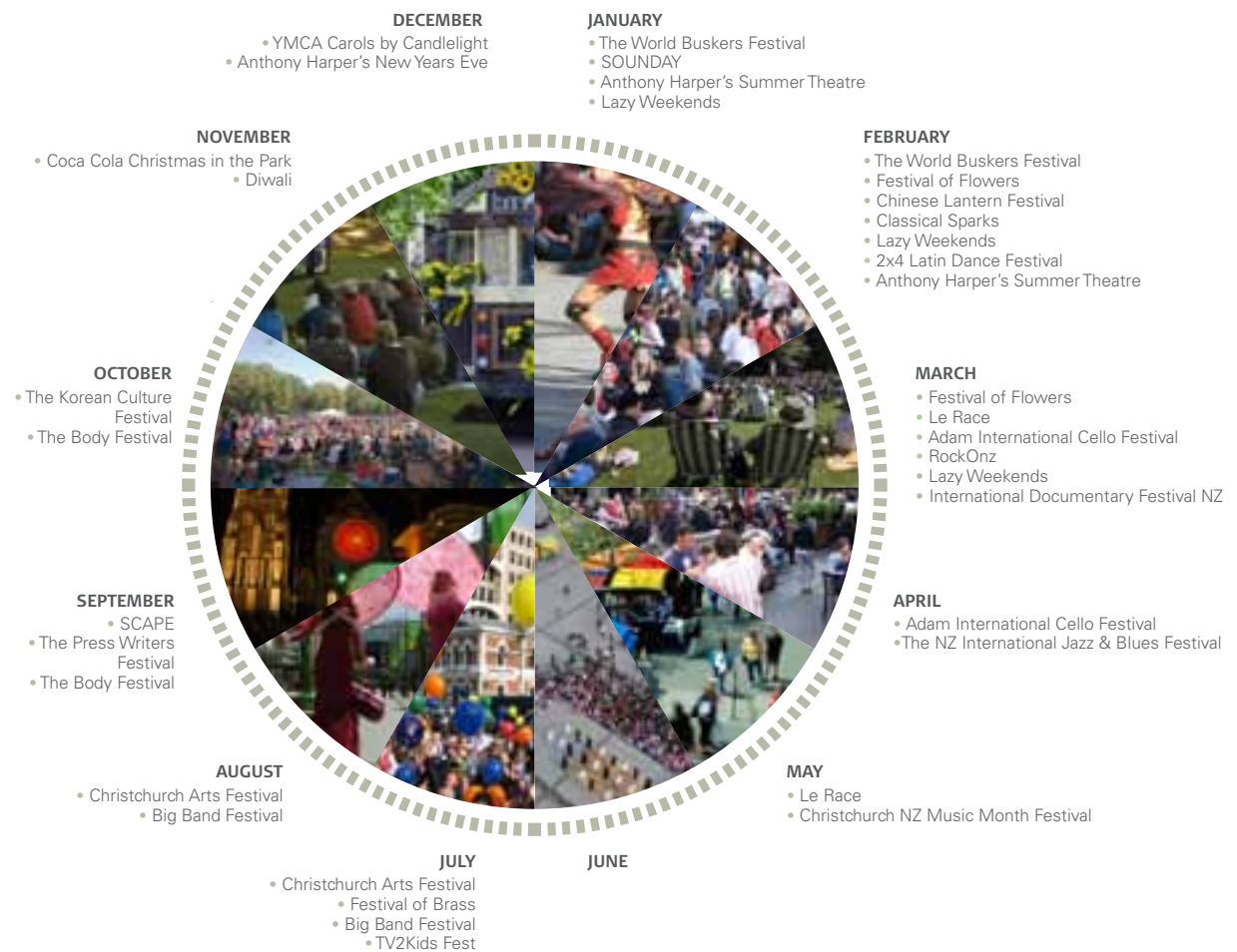
A broader variety of events in the city centre would invite different user and age groups with different interests. For example; skating festival, a sing-along festival, fashion week, Christchurch by night (lighting festival in public spaces), flea markets, historic walks in the city centre, art festival for children etc.

The positive aspect of events is that they gather a lot of people, which adds life and bustle to the whole area in which they take place. For example, once you are in the city centre for an event, you might also go for a coffee, lunch or shopping.



SUMMARY: EVENTS ARE CONCENTRATED IN VERY FEW SPECIFIC PUBLIC SPACES

Only few places are activated by events and most of the events take place in the summer months. In the winter less events occur.



THE CALENDAR SHOWS A REPRESENTATIVE SELECTION OF THE RECURRING EVENTS HELD IN THE CITY CENTRE 2008

A lot happens in Christchurch. Especially in the summer there are many activities in the city centre with festivals, market days and music performances - but there is room and need for more activities.

THE PEOPLE
staying in the city centre



THE PEOPLE

staying in the city centre

PUBLIC SEATS

When inviting people to walk and enjoy the public realm it is important that different opportunities for pausing and resting are provided.

MANY PUBLIC SEATS IN OPEN SPACES

The city centre has approximately 1.500 seats on public benches, which is good when compared to other cities. Unfortunately they are mostly located in open spaces with few on the streets.

LACK OF PUBLIC SEATS IN STREETS

Unfortunately public seats are unfortunately concentrated in a few selected areas such as Cathedral Square, City Mall and along the Avon River. Public seating doesn't seem to be part of general street upgrades. There is almost no public seating along Colombo Street which is the main pedestrian route through the city centre, and few public seats are found along other streets.

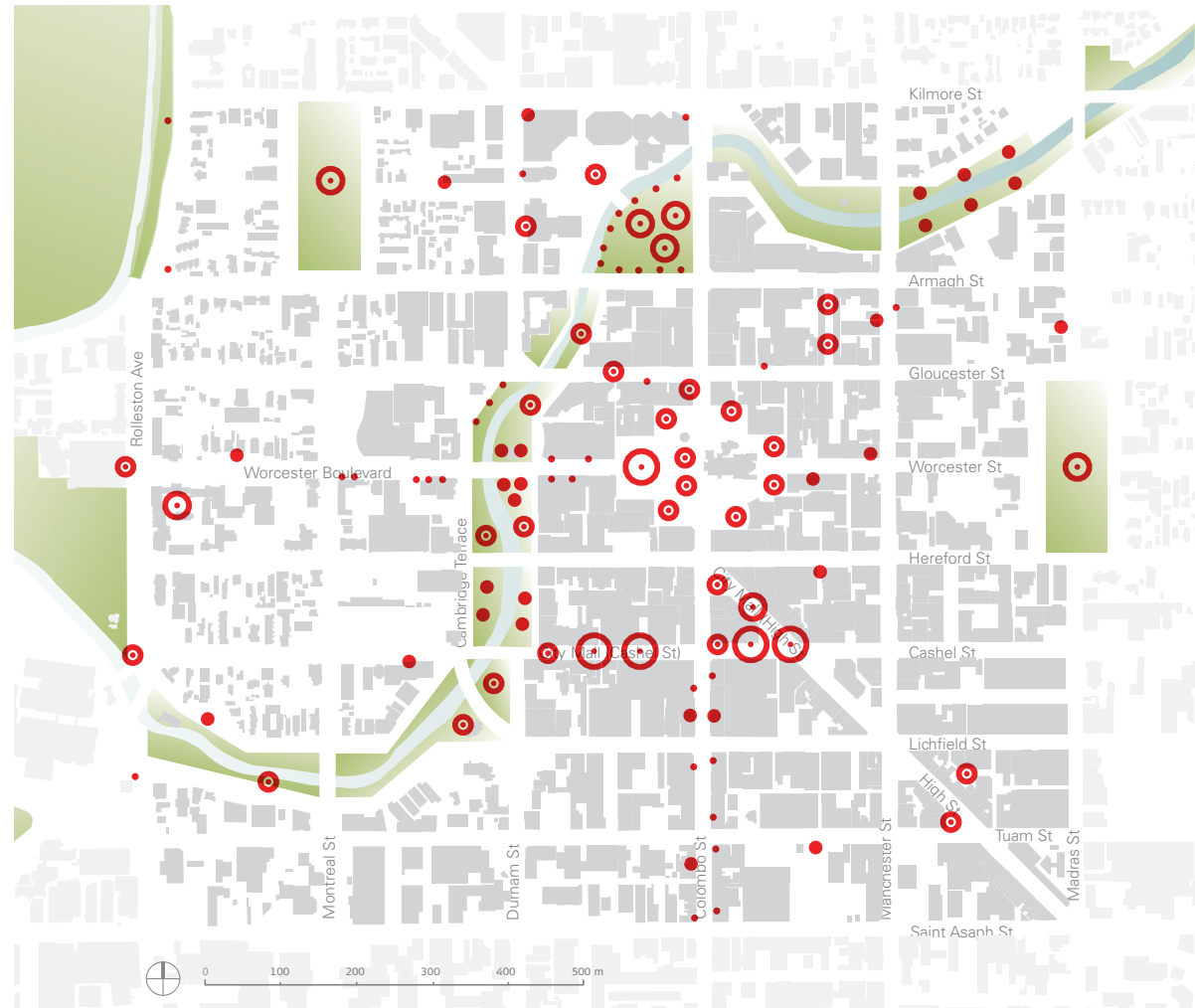
GOOD QUALITY SEATING

Apart from the number of public seats, other factors are important in order to provide good quality seating. Experience shows that the most popular seating is of good quality, has a nice view, sufficient sun/shade and shelter, and most importantly is located close to important pedestrian routes and destinations. Good comfortable seating in the right location provides visitors with rest and an opportunity to stay longer, which contributes to a more lively city. This is one of the keys to encouraging people to walk, enjoy and spend time in the streets.



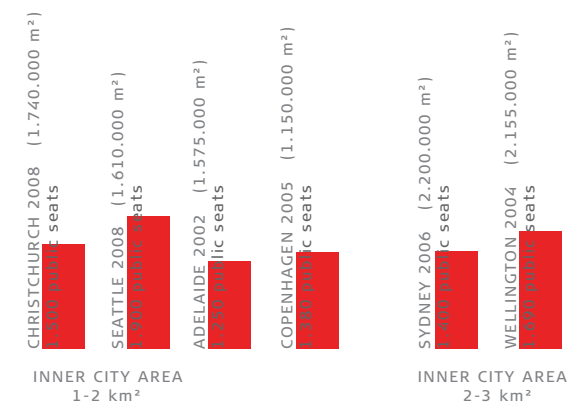
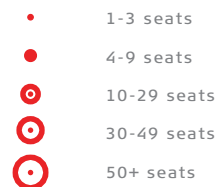
SUMMARY: PUBLIC SEATING IN SPECIFIC AREAS

In general the public benches are placed in public parks and squares. Few benches are located on important city streets.



NUMBER OF SEATS ON PUBLIC BENCHES IN THE CITY CENTRE

Number of seats on public benches in the city centre: 1.500



COMPARISON OF SEATS ON PUBLIC BENCHES IN THE CITY CENTRE

MANY BENCHES BUT NOT WHERE THEY ARE NEEDED



Few benches are located on Hereford Street which is an important walking link in the city centre.

POOR ORIENTATION



There is a lack of public seating along all the streets in the city centre. Benches turn their backs to the life on Colombo Street.



A 'talkscape' environment on the corner of Gloucester Street and Colombo Street.

MANY NEW DIFFERENT CHOICES



A new form of 'talkscape', benches in City Mall.

PUBLIC BENCHES VARY IN QUALITY AND DESIGN



New wooden benches in City Mall.



Cathedral Square offers many possibilities to sit in the shade or in the sun overlooking a lot of different scenes.

THE PEOPLE

staying in the city centre

OUTDOOR CAFÉ SEATING

RECREATIONAL CITY LIFE

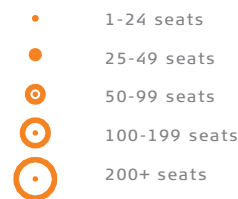
The culture of outdoor cafe life has developed rapidly in many countries around the world. This has significantly changed the usage patterns of city centres. Today summer activities are of a much more recreational nature. Drinking coffee is an uncomplicated way of combining several attractions; being outdoors, enjoying pleasant views and the ever present entertainment of watching people pass by.

QUANTITY OF OUTDOOR SERVING AREAS

The number of 2.480 outdoor café chairs is good when compared to other cities. Most chairs are found in areas such as New Regent Street, The Strip, The Art Centre and Lichfield Lanes.

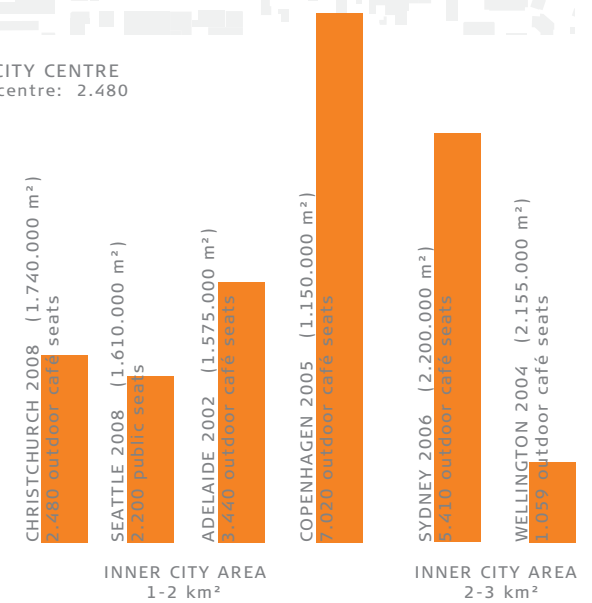


NUMBER OF SEATS AT OUTDOOR CAFÉS IN THE CITY CENTRE
Number of seats on outdoor café chairs in the city centre: 2.480



SUMMARY: OUTDOOR CAFE SEATING ARE CONCENTRATED IN A FEW SMALL AREAS

In general the city centre is well supplied with outdoor serving areas. There are many small lunch time cafes in the central part of the city centre. Unfortunately most of the cafes close in the evenings.



COMPARISON OF SEATS AT OUTDOOR CAFÉS IN THE CITY CENTRE

FLEXIBLE OUTDOOR SERVING



The flexible outdoor serving on Cathedral Square vitalise the square but only during daytime.

OUTDOOR SERVING PARTITION



When screens are put up around seating areas the interaction with the street and the public space is somewhat lost.

OUTDOOR SERVING IN THE CITY CENTRE



There are many small lunch time cafes in the central part of the city centre, but most of the cafes close in the evening.

NICE OUTDOOR SERVING AREA



On High Street people are able to enjoy the public realm. This is an important part of outdoor cafes.