Design

This booklet outlines the key design features of the new shared space that will be developed in Lower Cuba Street in 2011. The area is being redesigned to provide some additional public space as part of the project to open Manners Mall to buses. It will:

• provide a clearer pedestrian link from Cuba Mall to Civic Square and the waterfront
• provide space where people can sit and rest and street buskers can perform
• be able to be closed to traffic on occasions to help accommodate large street events
• give pedestrians priority by limiting vehicle speeds to walking pace
• provide one-way vehicle access and some parking.

The area will have red brick pavers, strips of a type of basalt rock (Timaru Bluestone) and asphalt underfoot. These materials, along with the street furniture, trees and plants, will create a high-quality public space that will continue the ‘feel’ of Cuba Mall to Wakefield Street and Civic Square.

General

The traffic direction has already changed. General traffic, including cyclists, can only travel through the space one way – from Manners Street to Wakefield Street. This change of direction has two benefits. It reduces the number of vehicles travelling through lower Cuba Street and makes the Manners/Taranaki and Courtenay Place intersection – currently the city’s most hazardous – safer for pedestrians.

The council consulted on reducing traffic speed through lower Cuba Street to 10kmh and approved the new limit in September 2010. The 10kmh speed limit will be introduced once the shared space is complete. Signs will be installed near the entrance to lower Cuba Street to make drivers aware of the speed limit and that they are entering a shared space.

The area has been designed so it can be closed to traffic during special events. Relocating the moveable concrete seats in the centre of the shared space will provide a large open area of approximately 9060 m².

Car-free areas

Though lower Cuba Street is a shared space, it will have areas that only pedestrians can use. These areas have been designed to be safe and accessible for people with visual and/or mobility impairments. There will be a 3.3m strip down each side of the street between the shops and the edge of the tree pits to provide a safe accessible route for anyone who wants the security of a car and cycle-free area. People who have a visual impairment and who use a cane, will be able to use the building edge and the basalt strip adjacent to the tree pits as markers.

Surfaces

The surface of the shared space will:

• be asphalt between areas of red brick pavers and basalt paving strips
• be one level from building edge to building edge
• continue the look and feel of Cuba Mall by using the “Cuba” red brick paver at the entrance, centre and end of lower Cuba Street.

Planting

Thirty-six trees will be planted in the positions shown on pages 4-5. These are deciduous trees that will provide some summer shade. We’ll be planting the largest specimens available, but the trees will take years to mature.

The trees will:

• contrast with the hard building and pavement surfaces
• help to define the shared and pedestrian-only areas
• provide shelter when it is windy
• help to define the parking bays
• provide a corridor that will make the vehicle entrance look narrow, helping to encourage motorists to drive very slowly.

Rain gardens will be located around the trees at both ends of lower Cuba Street. These are planted areas that perform a dual function – making the city look better and allowing us to manage storm water more sustainably. Water that runs into the rain gardens will filter down to sub-soil drainage rather than going straight down a drain and into the harbour. This helps water the trees and plants and filter out any pollutants.

The rain gardens and landscaped areas will be planted with New Zealand native plants and grasses. These include:

- Apodasmia similis
- Astelia grandis
- Machanotis sinclairii
- Unicina uncinita
- Aciphylla squamosa
- Liriope camara.

The surface of the shared space will continue the look and feel of Cuba Mall by using the “Cuba” red brick paver.
Seating
The eight seats in the centre of the street will be moveable concrete platform seats, as shown below. Metal ridges will be fitted to these seats to dissuade skateboarders.
Eleven wooden ‘park bench’ style seats will be located near the trees.

Parking
The shared space will have:
• two parking spaces for taxis
• two loading spaces
• one metered mobility parking space
• one space for police vehicles
• 18 metered parking spaces (two-hour maximum)
• bike stands.

Cuba Mall
The design of Cuba Mall will remain the same apart from the following alterations:
• Another kerb extension will be constructed on the northern side of Dixon Street to reduce the width of the road so it is easier and safer to cross.
• The “umbrella” will be relocated from the Manners Street end of Cuba Mall to the Dixon Street end.
• The northern area of Cuba Mall by Manners Street will be cleared of planter boxes to create a performance space of approximately 300sq m for buskers and other events.

The northern area of Cuba Mall by Manners Street will be cleared of planter boxes to create a performance space.