

PONSONBY OPEN SPACE STUDY



prepared for auckland city by boffa miskell ltd december 2000



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1.0 Introduction

Open space is an important component of the urban environment, contributing to the way that environment functions. The balance that open space provides to the built elements of a city comes in the form of public reserves of different scales and forms, public and private institution grounds such as schools, streets and private open space of individual properties.

As an urban environment and its community adapts over time so does its open space needs. The aim of this study is to examine the existing open space network of the Ponsonby area in relation to existing development patterns and make recommendations regarding ways in which this network should be extended and/or upgraded.

The first section of the report describes the factors in the area's history which have influenced the current urban pattern. The second section summarises the zoning provisions contained in the Auckland City District Plan which guide current development patterns. The third section provides an analysis of the existing open space network. From the findings of this analysis recommendations are made regarding extensions and upgrading of the network.

2.0 Study Area – Context and Development Pattern

As shown in the location map opposite and Figure 1 the study area is generally contained by the main ridge roads of Jervis Road, Ponsonby Road, Great North Road and Richmond Road. The development pattern has evolved over a long period. The fundamental urban structure and street pattern is, in part, a response to the undulating topography of the area. Main roads follow the ridgelines with a modified grid street pattern running into the gullies.

The study area has a long and varied history which is reflected in its current rich and diverse built character. Residential development of the area began in the 1840's and was Auckland's third suburb, after Parnell and Grafton. From the early 1860's the area grew rapidly. During this early period, access to the area from other parts of Auckland and in particular the City centre was difficult, and the area was poorly serviced with infrastructure. The introduction of the electric tram in 1902 saw a shift of development into the Jervis Road area. The tram ran the full length of Ponsonby Road and Jervis Road. Prior to this housing was concentrated at the Ponsonby end of the suburb between Three Lamps and Franklin Road.



p o n s o n b y o p e n s p a c e

Much development occurred in the area between 1900 and the First World War. Shops and businesses along Jervois and Ponsonby Roads meant the suburb was virtually self contained, while also being connected to the City with cheap transport. After the First World War and the flu epidemic of 1919 the area fell into disrepute. During the 1950's the migration of Maori people into the area was indicative of a larger national movement of Maori to the cities. During this period many older houses were divided into flats and rented out. It was during this time that many historic street trees were removed. Mature elms were removed from Jervois Road and Williamson Avenue amongst other streets. In some places they were replaced by Melia and flowering peaches, apples and cherries but in many places the trees were not replaced at all.

By the mid 1970's the revitalisation and gentrification of the area had begun. The transformation of the suburb to one of middle class residents with resultant high real estate values was largely complete by the end of the 1980's. The change in the nature of the residential mix also resulted in a change in the retail mix along the commercial strip of Ponsonby Road and Jervois Road.

The change of this retail/business/entertainment mix continues today, not only along the primary retail strips but also in the neighbouring, traditionally industrial areas. Continued high real estate values have also seen a continual adaptation of dwellings in the area and site redevelopment with increasing residential densities. Despite this gradual adaptation and evolution of the area, its distinct character is still determined in part by its underlying topography, early road and subdivision patterns and varied architectural styles.

(Source: Ponsonby Road and Jervois Road Heritage Study)

3.0 Zone Structure of Study Area – residential intensification potential

The zoning pattern of the area as specified in the Isthmus Section of the Auckland City District Plan is shown in Figure 3. Provisions for each of the zones preserve certain existing characteristics and allow various opportunities for residential intensification. Key characteristics of each of these zones include the following:

Residential 1 – Built

- Applies to relatively intact areas of Auckland's early established residential neighbourhoods.
- Houses largely Victorian and Edwardian, generally standing close to each other on narrow, small sites.
- Building alterations a controlled activity.

- Albany Road, Wangapui Avenue and Ardmore Road and part of Trinity Street are contained in Conservation Area C, described as "an area of Edwardian villas of exemplary architectural and landscape character, with very clear geographic and topographic identity."
- Little residential intensification potential.

Residential 5 – Low Intensity

- Applies to areas characterised by detached homes, mainly low rise (1-2 storeys), at lower densities (1-2 units per site) on sites with relatively generous areas of open space to accommodate landscaping and leisure activities.
- Purpose of the zone is to maintain and enhance the environment of these areas.
- Little residential intensification potential.

Residential 6a – Medium Intensity

- Applies to areas that tend to be less spacious and often more diverse in form than the Residential 5 zone.
- The zone recognises the need for further development while retaining and sustaining a reasonable level of amenity.
- The subzones of Residential 6 vary in density and height provisions. Residential 6a provides for 1 unit : 375m² and a maximum height limit of 8m.
- The zone anticipates residential development that is distinctly different from the higher densities of Residential 7 and low intensity character of Residential 5 zones.
- Some residential intensification potential.

Residential 7a – High Intensity

- Characterised by a range of building types, particularly higher density.
- Located in areas with good access to amenities
- Applies to a small area within the study area adjacent to Jervois Road and Great North Road.

Business 1

- Applied to existing small centres in predominantly residential areas
- Principally function to satisfy local retail and service needs.
- Applies to a small group of shops along Richmond Road.

Business 2

- This zone recognises the existence of the City's traditional suburban retail centres.
- Objective of the zone is to provide for retailing, office and commercial service activity at a medium intensity suburban level.
- Where retailing is the dominant function controls are imposed to maintain and enhance residential amenity.
- Residential units are a controlled activity and a permitted activity in existing buildings.
- Height limit of 12.5m with a maximum floor area ratio of 2:1.
- Residential intensification potential.

Business 4

- Applies to areas where existing low-medium intensity light industrial and service uses are the dominant activities. Some of the areas have residential origins, reflected in narrow subdivision patterns, difficult topography, inconvenient road systems and a residue of residential uses.
- Generally zone is in close proximity to residential areas – either adjoining, surrounded by or overlooked by housing.
- Objective of zone is to provide for medium intensity business activity.
- Wide range of activities permitted including residential. However, no particular or additional measures have been adopted to protect residential uses within the zone from the generated effects of permitted business activities.
- Height limit 15m with a maximum floor area ratio of 2:1.
- Residential intensification potential.

Business 8

- Applies to existing large scale comprehensive business developments, which is only a single site within the study area, on the corner of Jervois Road and Kelmarna Avenue.
- Is designed to allow for a flexible and co-ordinated planning approach on larger sites.

The zone pattern within the study area generally follows the historic development patterns. The ridges of Jervois and Ponsonby Roads are lined to the south with a Business 2 zone and the ridge of Great North Road is lined on both side with a Business

4 zone. There are 4 other main pockets of Business 4 land scattered throughout the study area, but predominantly in close proximity to the Business 2 areas. The residential areas are dominated by Residential 1 zone with pockets of Residential 6a land predominantly in the western portion of the study area. There are several pockets of Residential 5 land, again, predominantly in the western area.

In recent times there has been significant intensification of residential development within the study area. The demand for higher density housing reflects the desirability of living in the area, being a strategic location in close proximity to the city centre and a range of commercial and entertainment facilities, and an area with a unique and distinct character. The greatest level of residential intensification in the study area is currently occurring on land zoned Business 4, due to the development potential and lack of development controls of that zone. Figure 5 demonstrates those sites within the Business 4 area that contain multi-unit residential developments. As shown, few of these residential developments provide on site communal open space.

4.0 Role of Open Space

In urban environments open spaces, both private and public, range widely in their scale, form and configuration and perform a range of important functions. In more intensive residential environments the amount of open space available on-site diminishes reducing the ability to provide a range of amenities within a property. Changing lifestyles accompany the changing housing patterns, with people's leisure/recreation time being spent in the public realm, but not necessarily in parks. Within the study area the street environments of Ponsonby Road and Jervois Road provide the setting of leisure time activities. Public open spaces can perform a range of functions, contributing to the amenity of the residential environment. The functions that public open space can perform include the following:

- Space and facilities for active recreation;
- Locations for passive recreation;
- Community focal points, gathering locations;
- Protect and link ecological systems;
- Improve air quality;
- Protect landscape features or sites of public interest;
- Provide visual relief to the built environment;
- Assist with wayfinding and understanding of the urban environment;
- Improve pedestrian connections;
- Contribute to streetscape amenity.

These functions can be summarised in three main categories: providing for physical use; contribution to the urban form and quality of environment; and the provision of connection advantages including physical linkages, air quality and ecology.

Different scales, forms, configurations and design details of public open space are required to perform the range of functions listed above. Generally large structured spaces that are easily accessed are required to provide for active recreation. Local reserves that act as a gathering location for the surrounding community need not be large, but should be in a central location with good visibility. They are often located in association with other civic facilities. Appropriately located local reserves provide the opportunity for people to rest and observe the activities of the surrounding world. Detailed design elements of these parks can make a positive contribution to creating a sense of place that reflects the qualities and values of the surrounding community and create a level of comfort through the provision of seating, shade, protection and enclosure. Reserves that protect ecological systems and landscape features while performing these primary functions also often reinforce the underlying geographical patterns in an urban environment and can also assist in wayfinding and understanding the urban form. These reserves also often perform an important passive recreation, informal play opportunity and physical linkage function and can perform an educational role, informing about natural processes.

As the built form of urban environments increases in intensity and dominance, open space becomes valuable in providing respite from the built form. Streets themselves can make a positive contribution to the open space network. Rather than just being routes for vehicles, streets also perform a valuable visual and social function, providing a public setting for members of the community to meet. Opportunities exist within road reserves to create resting spots and to introduce visual features including street trees, garden beds and community art features.

5.0 Open Space analysis – existing situation

Figure 1 shows the location of open space within the study area, including both public reserves and schools which, while not providing unlimited access to the general public, do perform an important open space function within the community. As can be seen in these figures the study area contains a range of open space types with a variety of scales, forms and performing a range of the functions listed above. An inventory of the reserves follows.

A. Hukanui Reserve/Cox's Bay Reserve/ Bayfield Park

Size:	Bayfield Park: 2.6ha, Cox's Bay Reserve 11.47 ha (including area outside study area)
Playing facilities:	Not within study area
Sports facilities:	Not within study area, but playing fields on adjacent area of reserve
Furniture:	Picnic tables, seats
Topography:	Undulating, watercourse along gully floor, Bayfield Park steeply sloping
Vegetation Pattern:	Informal clusters of both natives and exotics, mangroves around watercourse, open grassed areas
Street frontage:	Very small frontage to Richmond Road., narrow frontage to both Parawhai Cres. and Hector St
Pathways:	Network of paths and bridges, part of Kelmarna Gardens Nature Trail
Overall Character:	Topography dominant feature, visible from surrounding areas, informal recreation and walking dominant activities

This collection of reserves effectively performs functions contained in all three categories described in the previous section. Although not within the study area playing fields provide for physical play, and the more enclosed areas with picnic tables and seats provide for passive recreation. The park provides relief to the surrounding built areas, reinforcing the landscape features and underlying topography. Ecological systems are protected and the park provides an important link with the coast. The reserve also provides good pedestrian linkages with the surrounding street network.

B. Sackville Reserve

Size:	2086m ²
Playing facilities:	Playground
Sports facilities:	None
Furniture:	Picnic tables, seats, barbeque
Topography:	Gentle slope, slightly raised above street
Vegetation Pattern:	Perimeter – dense shrub planting, young specimen trees

- Street frontage:** Good, open frontage to Sackville Street
- Pathways:** None
- Overall Character:** A good example of a local park – good facilities, open character, visually and physically accessible.

This park is well located and designed to perform a range of local functions. The playground and bar-be-que facilities provide for informal play and family recreation. It's location and open aspect to the street provides a good focal point for the local community. The open aspect of the park also contributes to the streetscape quality and provides a visible relief to the built aspect of the surrounding area. The park does not contribute to linkages in the environment.

C. Hakanoa Reserve

- Size:** 2834m²
- Playing facilities:** None
- Sports facilities:** None
- Furniture:** None
- Topography:** Undulating
- Vegetation Pattern:** Native, informal, dense clusters, mainly around the perimeter
- Street frontage:** Good connector between Sackville St. and Hakanoa St.
- Pathways:** Part of overall connection between Grey Lynn Park and Coxes Bay, signage included "Walkway to Grey Lynn Park"
- Overall Character:** Functions as a good connector, natural, vegetated character

This reserve primarily performs a good connector function. The dense, informal native planting contributes to the functioning of local ecological systems. It also provides good pedestrian connections, contributing to an almost continuous open space walkway between Grey Lynn Park and Coxes Bay. To a certain extent it also contributes to the overall urban form, providing a green relief to the surrounding built environment, reinforcing the underlying geographical patterns.

D. Grey Lynn Park

- Size:** 10.4975 ha
- Playing facilities:** Flying fox, skateboard ramp, playground
- Sports facilities:** Basket ball hoops, grass playing fields, hard courts, clubrooms, fitness circuit, paddling pool
- Furniture:** Seating, public toilets, picnic tables, barbeques
- Topography:** Large area of flat playing fields, some relatively steep slopes around perimeter
- Vegetation Pattern:** Large, established trees, particularly around perimeter, open grassed areas, recent shrub planting
- Street frontage:** Relatively good, open frontages to a large number of streets. Many surrounding elevated residential properties overlook reserve
- Pathways:** Good walking paths through park, forms part of open space route to Cox's Bay
- Overall Character:** Open and large scale, different character to different areas of park, multifunctional, provides natural respite from surrounding urban area, sculpture garden a community feature

This large scale park makes an effective contribution in all three categories of open space functions. The range of playing fields and accompanying clubhouses, play structures, pic-nic and bar-be-que facilities and walking tracks provide for a range of both organised and informal active and passive recreation. While the park has relatively poor street frontage for its scale it does perform an important role as a community focal point and hosts a range of community gatherings, most notably the Grey Lynn Festival. The park provides an area of scale and varied topography that does provide effective relief from the surrounding built environment. To a lesser extent the area performs an ecological function, but due to its scale, it does make a contribution to the improvement of air quality. The network of paths through the reserve provide useful pedestrian connections, and in particular the sculpture walk creates a walkway with a unique character.

E. Moira Reserve

- Size:** 3213m²
- Playing facilities:** Playground
- Sports facilities:** No
- Furniture:** Seating

Pattern: planting extends into street edge open grass areas

Street frontage: Good length and open frontage to both Richmond Road and Brown St. Good visual connection between streets, overlooked by neighbouring properties

Pathways: Good pathway connection between streets

Overall Character: Balance between enclosure and openness, integration with surrounding area through design details, linkages with past through use of memorial plaque

This is a well located and designed local reserve. It is relatively small, but having good frontage to both Brown Street and Richmond Road, makes a positive contribution to the streetscape amenity and general amenity of the urban area. It also provides a useful pedestrian connection across the block, in close proximity to the high foot traffic area of Ponsonby Road. The configuration and scale of the reserve provides for predominantly passive rather than active recreation. The detailed design elements of the reserve make reference to the sites past uses providing a link with the past and creating a unique character, contributing to the richness of the urban environment.

I. Tole Reserve

Size: 1.4492 ha

Playing facilities: Playground, skateboard ramps

Sports facilities: Petanque, basketball hoop

Furniture: Seating

Topography: Undulating with open flat area in middle, elevated with good views to west

Vegetation Pattern: Perimeter shrub planting, open grass

Street frontage: Very poor, poor visual connection to Tole Street. Due to topography, poor visual connection with Clarence St.

Pathways: Connecting Tole St, Clarence St and Ponsonby Tce

Overall Character: Good facilities but hidden away, open and large scale. Elevation of some surrounding properties facilitates observation, gates from some properties to Reserve. Ponsonby Community Centre and Kindergarten are located on Reserve accessed from Ponsonby Terrace.

This reserve is relatively large and provides a range of recreational facilities for informal active recreation. The Community Centre and Kindergarten provide community facilities which act as a community focal point. These built elements on the reserve reduce the visual connection with the open space area of the reserve when viewed from Ponsonby Terrace. Therefore, the reserve had poor visual linkages with the surrounding urban area, and does not make a significant contribution in terms of visual amenity and relief to the built elements in the environment. Both Tole Street and Ponsonby Terrace are dead end streets and the reserve provides a useful pedestrian connection from these streets to Clarence Street.

J. Pompallier Reserve

Size: 364m²

Playing facilities: None

Sports facilities: None

Furniture: None

Topography: Generally flat

Vegetation Pattern: Perimeter planting and young specimen trees, dense shrub planting along street frontage

Street frontage: Good physical frontage being on a corner, but visually screened by planting

Pathways: Path through reserve

Overall Character: Good location, not well utilised

This reserve is well located with good street frontage and good potential visual connection to the street environment. The existing planting dislocates the reserve from the street. The reserve is well located in close proximity to both the commercial hub of the 3 Lamps area of Ponsonby Road and the concentration of apartment buildings around Sheehan Street, Prosford Street and Blake Street. The qualities of the site and its context have not been maximised in the site development. Therefore, the reserve does not make a positive contribution to the amenity of the surrounding urban area.

In determining the efficacy of the existing open space network at meeting the needs of the existing and future community and performing the functions described in Section 4 a broad systematic approach can be adopted. The relationship between three primary factors will determine where additional open space is required. These are:

1. Whether residents are within 400m (an easy walking distance) of a reserve;

2. Where residential intensification has occurred or is likely to occur in the future (the Business 4 zone);
3. Whether reserves within 400m are of a poor quality or are inadequate.

An analysis of these factors can assist in determining future requirements and priorities.

Figure 2 demonstrates the 400m pedestrian sheds from the boundaries of each of the public reserves. The reserves have been categorised into 'large' (over 1ha) which may contain community facilities and generally provide amenities for the wider community, and 'small' (under 1 ha) which generally perform more of a local function. 400m represents an easy walking distance. While nearly the entire study area is within 400m of at least one reserve, it is the area towards the centre of the study area that has the greatest overlap and access to a range of types of reserves. The more peripheral areas to the north and south have easy access to fewer reserves. However, as shown in Figure 3 these areas are predominantly zoned Residential 1, which provides limited potential for residential intensification. In particular, the streets running off the ridge of Jervois Road, including Ardmore Road, Wanganui Avenue, Albany Road and Kelmarna Avenue contain stand alone dwellings with on-site open space. As shown in Figure 5, the streets in this area are relatively wide and contain chicanes with established street trees and lower level planting. This provides an effective open space element within the street environment. While the street environment does perform an important role in the open space network through the neighbourhood, it does not replace the need for parks and reserves, which perform a different function. As can be seen in Figure 2, the pedestrian shed for Grey Lynn Park covers a large area. However, the portion of the study area to the south of Grey Lynn Park is poorly served by small reserves.

Figure 6 demonstrates the relationship between the first two of the criteria described above. The overlap between the areas outside the 400m pedestrian shed from existing reserves, and the 400m pedestrian shed around Business 4 zones highlights priority areas for future reserve acquisition. This analysis highlights 2 priority areas. The first and main area is along the southern edge of the study area, within close proximity to Great North Road. The second is a small area at the northern extent of the study area, adjacent to Jervois Road. However, it should be noted that this systematic approach needs to be tempered by a level of pragmatism. Obviously, future acquisition of land will rely on a range of factors and in particular availability of land and its cost. Within this framework there needs to be the potential to respond to opportunities as they arise, bearing in mind the approach and areas highlighted by the above system.

Council has recently prepared an Open Space Demand Model. Released in 2000 this study, entitled 'An Analysis of the Use and Provision of Open Spaces, Recreation Facilities, Community Facilities and Libraries', examined the distribution and use patterns of open space facilities throughout the entire City. As part of this study a

'Community Resources Model Output' was prepared. This report describes the key outputs of the above study, evaluating the patterns of demand for community resources, the differences in these patterns according to life stage and other demographics and provides a model for defining and assessing the relative supply of a range of community resources based on the distribution of likely demand. This model has been developed as a higher order planning tool, but does provide some broad assessment of open space provision within the study area. The maps included in the report show that the study area generally has a low to medium low supply of small reserves (less than 1ha), a low- medium supply of medium reserves (1ha – 10ha) with small pockets of high supply, and a low-medium supply of large reserves (over 10ha), again with pockets of high supply.

As demonstrated in the inventory of reserves within the study area, the existing reserves perform a range of functions and are varied in their success at contributing to the urban form. Brown Reserve provides a good example of a local reserve that makes a positive contribution to the surrounding urban environment. There is good visual access into the reserve from both Richmond Road and Brown Street, the reserve having frontage to both these streets. The park is relatively flat and you can see right through from one street to the other. This combined with the connecting path creates a good physical linkage between the streets. The park integrates well with its surrounding environment. Planting and paving extends from the reserve into the street environment, blurring the edges. The mural on the neighbouring dwelling on Richmond Road, provides visual interest, contributing to and creating an effective edge to the park. Simple but effective planting provides an appropriate balance between enclosure and openness. Simple swings provide play elements for children. However, the park is predominantly used for passive recreation. Detailed design elements such as the pergola and light fixtures contribute to the character of the reserve and link it with surrounding built form elements. The commemorative plaque at the entrance to the reserve, explaining the historic uses of the site, provides a link with the past.

In contrast, Moira Reserve provides an example of a poorly functioning neighbourhood reserve. The park is a rear section, accessed by 4 very narrow pedestrian paths. There is no signage at the street front and little to provide visual cues that a reserve exists. The reserve does contain play equipment, but there is little relationship between the park and surrounding residential properties. The park is bounded by high dense planting. There are no paths through the reserve and while it is bounded by a school, there is only an informal link connecting the two.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of Business 4 zoned land in the study area and where residential activity occurs within this zone. A number of clusters of comprehensive residential development occur through the study area. One of these clusters is in the south eastern portion of the study area. While it retains a predominantly light industrial/business character, a number of sites have recently been redeveloped for residential purposes (as shown in Figure 4), and the potential exists for further

intensification. This area generally contains few street trees. While this general area is within easy walking distance of Western Park, outside the study area, it falls within a different visual catchment and is to a certain extent dislocated from this park by the ridge and edge created by Ponsonby Road. Other comprehensive residential development clusters are located near the Ponsoby Road/Jervois Road intersection around Prosford Street; around the Brown Street/Richmond Road area; and around the Richmond Road/Sackville Street area.

6.0 Recommendations

The Open Space Demand Model demonstrates at a broad level that the area is generally poorly served with small and medium sized reserves. The above section and the accompanying maps provides a more detailed analysis of the quality and functions performed by the existing open space resource and their relationship to recent and potential future residential intensification in the area.

While the area contains a range of reserve types and scales, a combination of additional open space and a reconfiguration/upgrading of some existing reserves and streetscapes is recommended to contribute to a well balanced open space network in the area. In particular, with increasing residential intensification, it is considered that additional, appropriate and effective open space is required. The following recommendations are divided into two categories: additional open space; and changes to existing open space. Some of these recommendations will be achievable in the short term, while others will depend on opportunities presenting themselves and may be long term rather than immediate goals. The locations that the recommendations relate to are shown in Figure 7.

Additional Open Space

In the previous section it was noted that the relationship between three factors can be used to determine the location of additional open space. Figure 6 demonstrates the relationship between the first two factors, being the gaps in the pedestrian sheds from existing reserves and the pedestrian sheds from intensification areas. The third factor described is the quality of reserves created.

In the future selection of specific sites for the creation of local reserves, and the determination of whether they have the potential to provide quality open space, the following criteria should be applied:

- Whether the site has good street frontage and is highly visible from the surrounding street network;
- Whether the use of the site as a reserve is compatible with neighbouring uses;
- Whether surrounding uses provides good passive surveillance of the site;
- Whether the site has good pedestrian linkage or other connectivity benefits;

- Whether the use of the site as a reserve will provide public access to natural or cultural heritage items;
- Whether the site has a relatively flat contour;
- Whether the site has good solar access and is sheltered from predominant winds;

1. Additional Neighbourhood Reserves – Southern portion of study area

As discussed above, the south eastern portion of the study area, zoned Business 4, has experienced considerable residential intensification and is not currently well served with neighbourhood reserve facilities or other open spaces. The northern edge of Great North Road is also zoned Business 4, but has experienced less residential activity to date. It is recommended that additional open space be located in the southern portion of the study area. Given the established nature of the area, opportunities for future acquisition may be limited. Any site under consideration in this area should be tested against the above criteria. Frontage to either Crummer Road or Great North Road would maximise visibility and accessibility to the surrounding neighbourhood. The industrial site that is bounded by Williamson Avenue, Pollen Street and Crummer Road, contains grassed areas at its perimeter, currently used for overflow parking and presents an opportunity for a well located neighbourhood reserve. As this site is in relatively close proximity to Western Park and therefore, falls outside the priority area for additional open space as shown in Figure 6, it is well located in close proximity to a node of residential intensification and relates well to the surrounding street network. A reserve in such a location would perform a more local role than Western Park. Should a reserve be established on this site it should meet the following objectives:

- Be located on either the corner of Williamson Avenue and Pollen Street (1st preference) or the corner of Pollen Street and Crummer Road (2nd preference);
- Have a minimum area of 800m², with minimum street frontages of 20m;
- Be designed to maintain visual connection to the street;
- Incorporate a balance between planting and hard surfaces to provide shade and a level of enclosure, while maintaining openness, and providing seating, and opportunities for play;
- Create a visual focal point;
- Incorporate design elements that reflect the character of the surrounding mixed use environment.

In addition, the creation of a small scale reserve in the south western corner of the study area would be beneficial. A site in the vicinity of Coleridge Street, Northland Street and Crummer Road would be preferable, being in close proximity to the retail node of the Grey Lynn Shops and Great North Road.

2. Additional Neighbourhood Reserves – Northern portion of study area

Figure 6 demonstrates that additional open space in the vicinity of Provost Street and Jervois Road would be beneficial. However, this does not take into account the open space function that is performed by Ponsonby Intermediate School, located at the end of Provost Street. While the school does not provide unlimited access to the general public, it does contain open playing fields that create an open space element in the area. If the opportunity arose for the acquisition of a residential site on one of the streets coming down off the ridge of Jervois Road, in close proximity to this street (but not fronting Jervois Road) a local reserve in this location would be beneficial.

3. Create Civic Open Space – Eastern side of Ponsonby Road

Ponsonby Road is fronted by Business 2 zoned land. A number of sites contain retail activities at the lower level and residential units at the upper levels. Ponsonby Road has been a primary route running along the ridgetop since development began in the area. It has adapted with various changes over time. However, even today its character is in part created by stretched or continuous retail frontage along its edge. While civic open space in this urbane environment would be beneficial there is a danger of dislocating this continuous frontage that frames the street. Along the street there are stretches with a more residential character, containing stand alone dwellings, set back from the street. The area on the eastern side of Ponsonby Road between Franklin Road and Russell Street is characterised by a greater level of separation between buildings, and openness, which also affords views to the City providing a visual connection between the area and its wider context. There is a vacant site on the northern corner of Ponsonby Road and Pember Reeves Street that would provide an appropriate location for a civic park. Being on a corner it has good visibility and as described above is located in a portion of the street with a more domestic character, with stand alone dwellings set back from the street boundary.

It is envisaged that a park in this location would be urbane in character, providing a meeting place and rest spot adjacent to the activity of the street. Careful detailing of built elements within the space could contribute to the character of the area and provide a link with important elements from the past. Local artists could be commissioned to create custom-made furniture/design elements with local significance.

Changes to existing reserves

As described in the inventory contained in Section 5 a number of factors diminish the effectiveness of a number of existing reserves. The following recommendations address these shortcomings.

1. Improve Connections – between Hakanoa Reserve and Hukunui Reserve

A good open space linkage exists from Williamson Avenue, through Grey Lynn Park, along a short length of street (Dryden Street, Cockburn Street), through Hakanoa Reserve, through a narrow walkway, along Westmoreland Street to Hukunui Reserve and Coxes Bay Reserve, right to the Harbour's edge. The weak point of this linkage is the walkway connection from Sackville Street to Westmoreland Street West and the street environment of Westmoreland Street West.

It would be preferable to extend Sackville Reserve, which has good frontage to Sackville Street, to the north through to Westmoreland Street West, for a minimum width of 15m. This site currently contains established warehouse activities. However, should it come up for redevelopment, the opportunity may arise for considering this open space configuration.

The opportunities to widen the existing 1.2m wide walkway are also currently limited with the Cox's Village Pensioner Housing immediately to the west of the walkway on Sackville Street and an established industrial building in close proximity to the eastern boundary. From Westmoreland St West the site to the east contains a relatively unkempt heavy vehicle storage area. The site to the west contains an office building with a grassed and shrub planted area adjacent to the walkway boundary. There may be the opportunity to widen the walkway slightly at this end.

Streetscape upgrades including street tree planting, improved footpath surfacing, a design feature on the corner of Westmoreland Street West and Richmond Road and improved signage would all improve to the visual linkage between Hukunui Reserve and the walkway.

2. Improve Access – Moira Reserve or Remove Reserve

As described in the inventory and the following analysis, Moira reserve does not function well as a neighbourhood reserve. It is not strategically well located in terms of effectively serving a surrounding higher density residential environment. However, the functioning and safety of the reserve could be considerably improved by increasing its frontage to Moira Street. It is recommended that a neighbouring site fronting Moira Street be purchased and incorporated into the reserve. Upgrading the surface treatment of the access paths and installation of signage would also help to signify the entrance points. Direct paths connecting the reserve with the neighbouring school would also improve connections with the reserve. Boundary planting could be thinned to improve passive surveillance of the reserve. Additional feature planting could contribute to the character of the reserve, while preserving its overall open character.

Alternatively, purchase of an adjoining property on Moira Street could be considered to provide physical access to this rear site. The site could then be on-sold as a

development site. The current open space zoning would provide restrictions to this scenario. It is likely that any future residential development on the site would require a plan change to create an appropriate residential zone, or a notified resource consent application.

3. Upgrade Existing Reserve – Pompallier Reserve

The eastern end of Pompallier Terrace and Redmond Street form part of the overall Three Lamps precinct. Pompallier Reserve is in a strategic location as part of this precinct. As shown in Figure 4 there has recently been substantial residential intensification in the Business 4 zone in the vicinity. The one way street of Redmond Street is the main vehicular route between Ponsonby Road and Jervois Road travelling in a northern direction. This is also the Link bus route with a bus stop located in close proximity of the reserve. Pompallier Reserve is well positioned in a highly visible location, to provide an appropriate public open space focal point. It's location is also strategic in that it is in close proximity to the retail node of 3 Lamps, without interrupting the continuous retail frontage of this area. It currently does not function well as civic open space as it is cut off from its street frontage with dense planting.

To function effectively as a neighbourhood focal point upgrading of this reserve should:

- Be open to the street;
- Be urbane in character, with careful use of hard materials;
- Use a limited palette of plant material;
- Provide adequate shelter and seating to be a comfortable place to meet and rest;
- Include design details that reflect the character and qualities of the surrounding environment and community.

4. Precinct Streetscape Upgrade – Three Lamps area

The three lamps area of Ponsonby Road has been an important node in the urban fabric of Ponsonby since early development of the area. In recent times the cultural and architectural significance of the area has been eroded and the street environment has become more of a vehicular route than a social space. It is considered that a detailed analysis of the qualities of this portion of Ponsonby Road along with the eastern portion of Pompallier Terrace, Redmond Street, the adjoining area of Jervois Road and the western end of St Mary's Bay Road is required in order to determine appropriate works necessary within the street environment to reinforce both visually and functionally the cultural significance and important focal point function of this area.

5. Upgrade of Street Nodes – Ponsonby Road

As noted above, the character of Ponsonby Road is in part determined by the strong edge created by continuous development. Rather than treat the street environment adjacent to this edge continuously it is considered that streetscape upgrades at nodal points will be effective in creating a vibrant street environment that is well punctuated. Typically street junctions provide the opportunity for such upgrades. Detailed design guidelines have been prepared for streetscape treatment and the first of these intersection treatments at the corner of Franklin Road has been completed. While these guidelines provide a level of consistent 'language' to be used along the street, it is suggested that the opportunity also exists to reflect the richness of the varied community of Ponsonby through the commissioning of public art (by local artists) to be used to visually reinforce these nodes along the street. In particular, the integration of art with street furniture is an effective means of creating a street environment with local relevance.

6. Streetscape upgrade – West Lynn shopping area

Like the Three Lamps area of Ponsonby Road, the Richmond Road shopping area is an important visual and functional node in the neighbourhood. While the varied retail, residential and community activities either side of the street contribute to the creation of a vibrant street environment the quality of the street environment itself does not contribute to the creation of effective social space. Again, commissioned work by local artists could contribute to a sense of place and could be used to visually cue the entry points to the neighbourhood shopping precinct. Improvements in footpath paving, and the introduction of locally relevant street furniture including seating, rubbish bins, and a community notice board will all improve the amenity of the area.

p o n s o n b y o p e n s p a c e