

**AUCKLAND TRANSPORT
STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL
FREYBERG PLACE, AUCKLAND CITY -
PEDESTRIAN MALL DECLARATION
[MARCH 2018]**

STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL FOR PEDESTRIAN MALL DECLARATION: FREYBERG PLACE, AUCKLAND CITY

A. INTRODUCTION

Auckland Transport (AT) proposes to declare Freyberg Place in Auckland City a pedestrian mall in accordance with section 336 of the Local Government Act 1974. AT is seeking the views of the public on its proposal.

This Statement of Proposal sets out the background to the proposal, details of and reasons for the proposal, how the public can view and obtain copies of documents relevant to the proposal, and how submissions on the proposal can be made.

B. BACKGROUND

Freyberg Place is a small road located between High Street and Courthouse Lane in Auckland's city centre. As an eastbound one-way single road from High Street, it also intersects with Chancery Street and O'Connell Street, Auckland City.

The carriageway width of Freyberg Place measures approximately 3.5m. Vehicles are currently restricted from stopping, standing or parking at all times throughout Freyberg Place. Heavy vehicles are currently prohibited from accessing Freyberg Place.

Freyberg Place is a legal road and as part of the Auckland transport system, it is under the control and management of Auckland Transport. In the past Freyberg Place was a wide road that continued in a straight line towards the roadway of Chancery Street through to High Street. Over the years, this road was redesigned and developed with the southern footpath turned into a public space referred to as Freyberg Square. The roadway vehicular traffic was then narrowed and realigned to overlap the northern edge of the legal road and Council owned land beyond.

Auckland Council undertook an upgrade of the Pioneer Women's and Ellen Melville Hall (Ellen Melville Centre) at 2 Freyberg Place during 2016-2017. This included Freyberg Place. In the most recent redevelopment of Freyberg Place, the remaining legal road was narrowed further and moved almost entirely onto Council land. The original removal of the major carriageways and the creation of the "Square" decades ago has led to the creation of the very narrow roadway on the northern edge.

Auckland Council consulted extensively during September and October 2015 on the draft concept design for Freyberg Place. After much discussion with local stakeholders, it was decided to not declare Freyberg Place a pedestrian mall until after sometime when the construction was completed. It has been a long-term aspiration of Auckland Council to 'pedestrianise' this roadway due to its historic heritage, communal hub atmosphere and a steady increase of residents and visitors to this area.

Under section 336 of the Local Government Act 1974 a council has the power to declare a specified road or part of a specified road to be a pedestrian mall. A declaration may include exemptions and conditions. AT holds this power with respect to roads within the Auckland Transport system (such as Freyberg Place).

AT is proposing to declare Freyberg Place a pedestrian mall and is seeking the views of the public on its proposal. This Statement of Proposal forms part of the special consultative procedure that AT is required to follow under section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002.

C. PROPOSAL

Auckland Transport proposes to declare Freyberg Place, Auckland City, a pedestrian mall. The boundary for the mall is outlined in the green shaded area on the diagram seen in **Appendix 2**.

Proposed prohibition

It is proposed that the driving, riding, or parking of any vehicle, or the riding of any animal, is to be prohibited on any part of the pedestrian mall at all times.

Proposed exemptions

It is proposed that the following exemptions will apply to the pedestrian mall:

- Cyclists will be exempt from the prohibition and may access any part of the pedestrian mall at all times.
- Emergency service vehicles will be exempt from the prohibition and may access the pedestrian mall at any time that is necessary in the circumstances.
- Authorised vehicles (with prior permission from AT) will be exempt from the prohibition and may access the pedestrian mall during times they have been authorised by AT to access.

Both Auckland Council and Auckland Transport will manage and monitor access of authorised vehicles by way of retractable bollards. These are located at the entry and exit point of Freyberg Place carriageway. These bollards will generally remain upright at all times and will be lowered to provide authorised vehicles access to the pedestrian mall in accordance with the exemptions.

Proposed map of pedestrian mall declaration (Refer to Appendix 2):

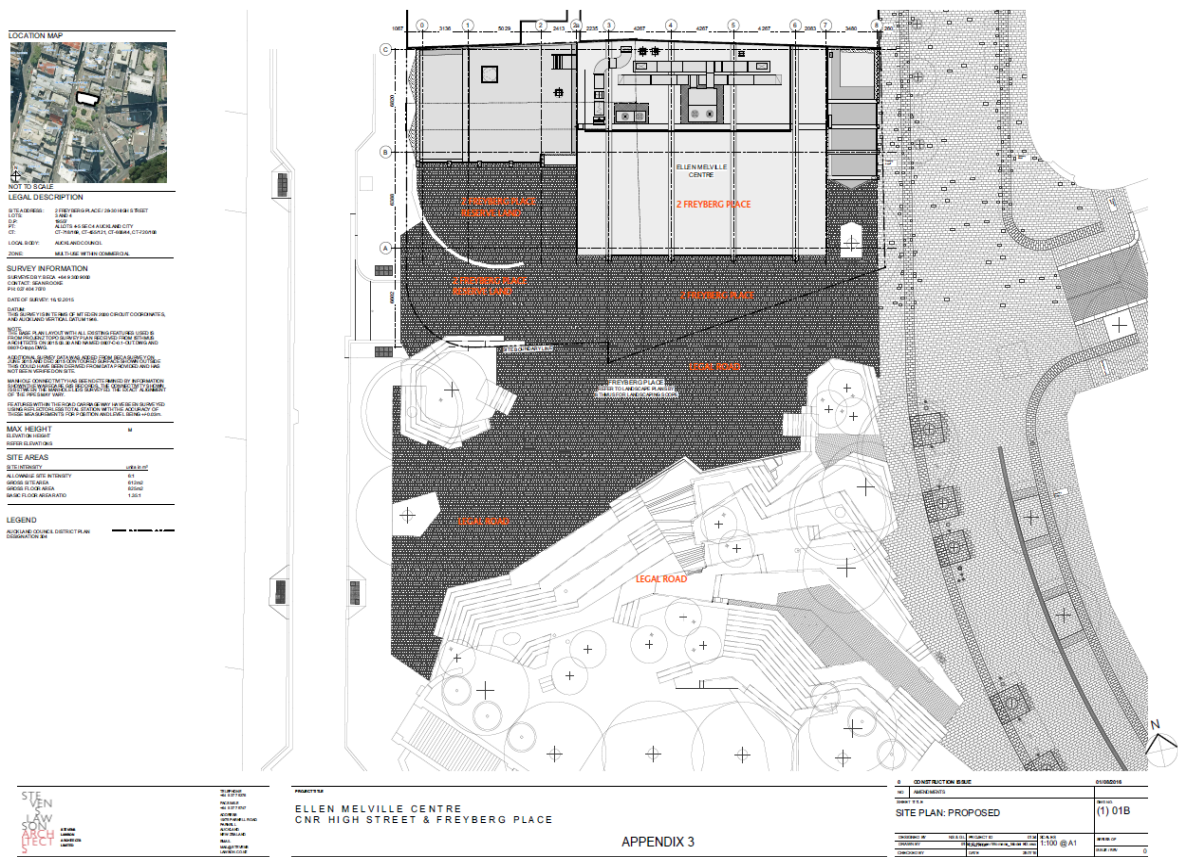


D. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL:

There are a number of reasons for the proposal to declare Freyberg Place a pedestrian mall. The main reasons are set out below:

- The recent upgrade and design of Freyberg Place (Square) has created a more vibrant community place, which has become a popular destination for residents and visitors to frequent.
- In addition, from a previous consultation undertaken by Auckland Council in 2015 where they consulted on the design concept for Freyberg Place. Participants were asked a number of questions on the concept design. They were also asked about their views on removing vehicular traffic from Freyberg Place. This saw a majority of participant's express support for the removal of vehicular traffic through Freyberg Place (of the 337 respondents 84% were in support). Many felt that removing vehicular traffic from the Square would facilitate a safe environment and help to create a sense of community.
- There are concerns over the legal property boundaries of the road reserve no longer containing a traffic lane and if the road no longer fulfils a traffic function this should be formalised by way of a pedestrian mall declaration. The central portion of the current

traffic lane is now entirely on Council owned land. This is illustrated in the following drawing (Refer to Appendix 3):



- Declaring Freyberg Place a pedestrian mall would help to address the above mentioned property boundary anomalies. This would also recognise the sites historic built heritage (at the edge of a lava flow).
- This change would also improve the integration between Freyberg Place and the Ellen Melville Centre. In turn, this should enhance accessibility for mobility-impaired users who currently have to navigate a number of structures that visually separates the community centre from the open space of the square.
- There have also been safety concerns reported around the existing exit point of Freyberg Place. Members of the public have observed the incorrect movement of vehicles entering Freyberg Place from Courthouse Lane. Given this is a one-way road with clear red and white signs stating “No Entry” from Courthouse Lane, the sign appears to be ignored. This illegal behaviour occurs at irregular times that makes enforcement difficult.
- Allowing cyclists access through Freyberg Place is in support of AT’s long term walking and cycling strategy, benefits to a healthy lifestyle and a connection with the wider cycling network.

Vehicular Traffic Volumes:

Vehicular traffic surveys were undertaken after the upgrade work on O’Connell Street shared space was completed and then again when the works were finalised on Freyberg Place.

Survey results for Freyberg Place -

Before (Oct 2014)	After (Oct 2017)
· Volumes weekday morning peak hour - 9	· Volumes weekday morning peak hour - 2
· Volumes weekday Interpeak hour - 2	· Volumes weekday Interpeak hour - 1
· Volume weekday evening peak hour - 12	· Volume weekday evening peak hour - 2
· Volumes Saturday midday peak hour - 17	· Volumes Saturday midday peak hour - 3

The recent 2017 peak hourly surveys indicate low volumes using Freyberg Place during the week with approximately 5 vehicles per day during peak hours. There has also been a dramatic drop of approximately 80% in vehicular traffic volumes since 2014.

E. VIEWING OF DOCUMENTS AND OBTAINING COPIES:

This Statement of Proposal will be made available to the public in accordance with section 83 LGA 2002.

Copies of this Statement of Proposal may be viewed and a copy obtained via:

- a) Contacting Auckland Transport Contact Centre on 09-3553553;
- b) Auckland Transport’s Head Office, Reception area, 20 Viaduct Harbour Road, Auckland City
- c) Auckland Transport’s website - <https://at.govt.nz/>

F. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSIONS ON THE PROPOSAL:

Any person (or organisation) may make a submission or objection to this proposal. AT actively encourages anyone with an interest to do so. We will communicate with affected parties and members of the public to share information about the proposal and advise how submissions and/or objections can be made.

Written submissions

Anyone who wishes to make a written submission may present their views either by submitting an online form (via Auckland Transport’s website) or by a hard copy version. Physical submission forms will be posted to homes and businesses nearby the project area, and can be sent to by request with a replied paid envelope enclosed. Other activities to raise awareness of the proposal and encourage submissions include (but are not limited to)



advertising, social media, media releases, online content, public drop-in days and on-street signage.

Objections in person

Anyone who wishes to make a formal objection to the proposal has a right to do so, under the terms outlined in the Special Consultative Procedure. Any objections to the proposal should be submitted to AT, who will then convene a special public meeting. This meeting will involve hearing any objections in person (any special arrangements such as interpretation support can be organised in advance). Persons who formally object to the proposal will be notified 2 weeks prior to a special public meeting being held at Auckland Transport premises at 20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland City. The rights to object the terms of the Special Consultative Procedure, and what this process entails will be communicated to the public via all consultation material, presented in a language that is simple and easy to understand.

All written submissions and requests to be heard in person must be received by AT no later than the 1-month (4 week) consultation period. Further arrangements will be made for those who wish to be heard to attend a special public meeting.

G. AFTER CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL

Following consultation on the proposal and consideration of the submissions received, AT will decide whether to go ahead and declare Freyberg Place a pedestrian mall. If AT does declare Freyberg Place a pedestrian mall, it will do so by public notice. Any person will have a right (under section 336(3) of the Local Government Act 1974) to appeal to the Environment Court against the declaration. Appeals to the Environment Court need to be made within 1 month after the making of the declaration, or within such further time as the Environment Court may allow. On appeal, the Environment Court may quash or affirm the declaration, or affirm the declaration with modification.

A declaration does not take effect until the time for appealing to the Environment Court has expired and any appeals have been determined.

All outcomes of consultation, including the decision to declare Freyberg Place a pedestrian mall or not, any changes to the proposal, next steps and any implications these may have for the public, will be communicated to all submitters, and made publicly available on AT's website (with links shared through a media release and social media).