

Island Bay town centre Audit

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Executive Summary

The CPTED audit of Island Bay was carried out throughout March 2022 – the area looked at was around the central shopping area, including the New World car park, it extended down the parade to include the library and further on south to the Empire cinema. It also included the walkway between The Parade and Clyde Street.

Overall, the look and feel of the area is good, if a bit tired. Crime statistics show there are no major issues, instead showing some minor car break ins and tagging. The main issue observed is the disconnect between the shops and the library, and the main shopping area and the cinema. There is also lack of frontage and signage for the community spaces (library and community centre). In addition to this there are some accessibility and safety issues with the trees lifting the footpath making it uneven in the area of the bus stop/ liquor store on the west side of The Parade.

While use of territorial reinforcement has been used well in some private areas to indicate what spaces are public or private, it has not been used to good effect around the spaces you want the public to use like the community centre, library or public toilets. This can lead to inappropriate behaviour or lack of intended use of a public space.

The walkway between the Parade and Clyde Street presents its own specific safety issues. It is narrow and confined and has insufficient lighting. While it feels safe to use during the day, at night it loses that feeling of safety and it appears little used.

Engaging with shop and business owners will be an important part of any development in Island Bay, encouraging additional mixed use of space, securing or making it clear areas that are not public, and shared use/responsibility for lighting and frontages is key.

By increasing the use of a space leads to more eyes and ears on the street as well as use of areas like the walkway, this in turn improves both the actual safety and perception of safety in the area. Community spaces such as libraries and community centres are the heart of any town centre, bringing them to the forefront (figuratively) will increase the sense of ownership and community inclusion.

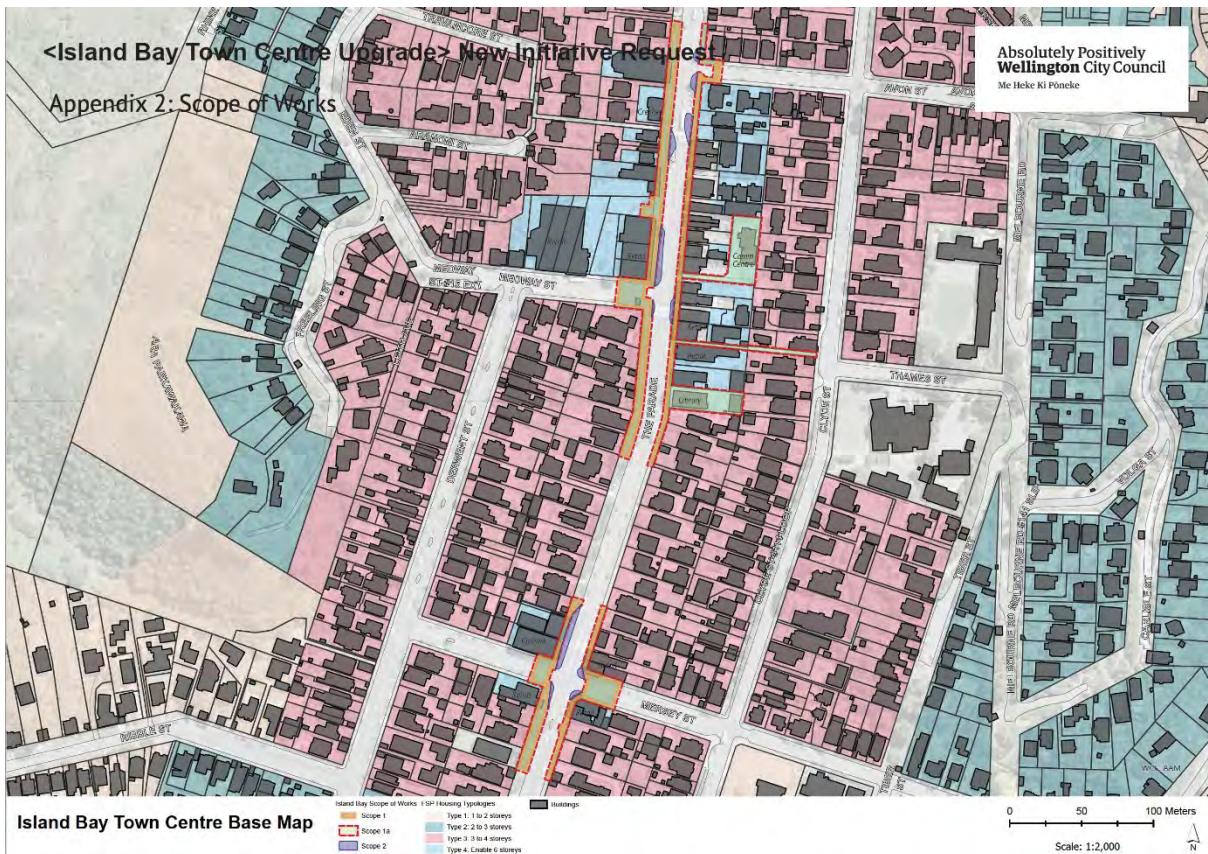
Improving signage and extending the feel of the centre to encompass the library, public toilet and cinema areas will make them feel included, improve flow and make them feel part of the area as a whole.

Scope of the report

As discussed, the scope of this report would cover town centre, including the New World carpark area, the library and down to the Empire movie theatre. It also covers the walkway between The Parade and Clyde Street.

Key focus will be given to the safety and perceived safety concerns around these areas, as well as lighting, use of space and movement of people.

I conducted several day time and night time visits to the sites, aiming to be there at different times of the day and days of the week to see how the space is used by residents, workers and visitors.



What is CPTED?

CPTED, or crime prevention through environmental design, is the practice of looking at an area from a social use and a crime and safety perspective. Proper design and effective use of a built environment leads to a reduction in the incidence of, and fear of, crime (including anti-social behaviour). It fosters positive social interaction and use of the space and focuses on the prevention of crime. Second generation CPTED also brings in the wants and needs of the community surrounding the area to form a holistic approach to problem solving.

There are 7 key elements to CPTED, all of which were considered while completing the site visits:

Surveillance – Hard and natural

- See and be seen
- Visibility by staff, vendors, residents
- CCTV
- Visibility of people and places by passing pedestrians, traffic, retail users etc.
- Lighting

Quality Environment (space management)

- Graffiti removal
- Rubbish
- Clean
- Repaired

Access control – to private or semi-private areas

- Clear routes
- Movement safety is maximised
- Fences
- Gates
- Access points

Territorial reinforcement

- Signs
- Markings
- Design
- Physical or symbolic barriers
- Promotes ownership

Layout & Orientation

- Safe movement and orientation
- High quality frontages
- Good signage for nearby facilities

Use, activity mix

- Mixed use, activity generators
- Events
- Use of public space maximised
- Encourage appropriate night time use

Physical protection

- Target hardening
- Barriers fences gates
- CCTV

Guidelines and plans

Guidelines for designing against crime are part of the Wellington District plan. It states that:

“Personal safety and security and freedom from crime is a critical component of the liveability of the city. The general intention of this Design Guide is to reduce the opportunity for crime against both people and property in urban public space, and by reducing the opportunity for these crimes to occur, to reduce the fear of crime. This will be achieved by applying the established principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to the design of relevant parts of all new development and alterations to existing buildings or public spaces” (Wellington District Plan - Volume 2: Design Guides - Non-Statutory - Guidelines for Design against Crime)

It therefore leads that all redesign and new design of public spaces must take CPTED into account. WCC achieve this by either having staff trained to an advanced level of CPTED to review their plans or sites, or by contracting reports and audits out to those that are qualified.

For lighting Wellington City council should be guided by the AS/NZS 1158.3.1 lighting standards, for roads and public spaces which states – A2 Fear of crime:

“If a community has a fear or a heightened perception of crime occurrence (which may or may not be justified) it will lead to a general fear of personal involvement. This reduces the quality of life for individuals, and also leads to changes in lifestyle, including not going out at night.

Several studies (Boyce et. al. 2000, Fotios, Unwin et. al. 2015, Lowen et. al 1993, Fotios Liachenko- Monteiro et. al. 2017, Fotios and Gibbons 2018, Fotios Liachenko- Monteiro et. al. 2018) have demonstrated that road lighting in streets and public spaces engenders a feeling of increased safety. These studies show that illumination and good uniformity creates an increase in the perceived level of safety, leading to a greater use of the night time environment.

Boyce et. al 2000 found that an illuminance of 30 Lux for carparks was near optimal, for pedestrian footpaths Fotios Liachenko- Monteiro et. al. 2017 found levels of 7-10 lux were acceptable. Fotios Liachenko- Monteiro et. al. 2018 looked at the precaution of safety in an urban environment as a function of the mean illuminance, illuminance uniformity and minimum illuminance. They found that minimum illuminance was the best predictor of perceived safety and that a minimum horizontal illuminance of 2 lux was sufficient.”

This matches with the lighting guides in the standard which state most pathways (unless they have low use and low perception of crime) should be lit between 7-10 lux

Observations and recommendations

Shops and frontages

There is a good mix of shops in Island Bay, from cafes to art, homewares, bars, hairdressers and a butcher. They are bunched into two main “strips” in the main central area with the odd shop standing alone. The area of the Empire cinema sits alone several hundred meters down the road. There is some mixed-use space outside several of the bars and cafes, work to improve this space would be beneficial. Frontages are generally tidy, lighting under the canopy differs between shops.

The brick paving is a good guide for pedestrians, guiding them up past the shops to the crossing area, it is a good example of layout and orientation as well as access control. Footpaths are a good width but could be extended to allow for more outside seating to premises which allow that. There is an issue with the footpath being cracked and broken by tree roots, this is particularly evident between the crossing and Thirsty liquor, it would be almost inaccessible for those with mobility issues.

The empire theatre – is a tidy building with outdoor seating – it does however have poor links to the shop/s in the same area and also poor links back up the road to the main shopping area; meaning there is nothing to guide or encourage patrons towards the shops or to encourage walking.

Possible actions:

- Fixed raised paving
- Increase mixed use of space (e.g. More public/footpath dining)
- Encourage use of under canopy lighting at night by retailers
- Consider some sort of “link” down to the empire, signage, footpath art etc

Community spaces – Library, community centre, public toilets

The Community centre is tucked back off the road with no frontage – there is some signage at the end of two separate driveways but generally it does not invite you up and into the space. The library has a solid front – there is no line of sight between the footpath and the interior of the library, and it is not inviting at all. There are several park benches out the front, and while there is no indication these are used for antisocial behaviour there are improvements that can be made to make the area a more attractive meeting place during the day and would encourage appropriate use. (See photos – Appendix A)

Possible actions:

- Consider how to improve the entry to the community centre – joining it into the main shopping area so it feels included (murals, driveway markings, paving etc).
- Re imagine the front of the library area, to also include it as part of the main “village area”, Open up the front to encourage oversight of the outside space and vice versa, improve signage.
- Improve signage on the public toilets, and directional signage in the area noting their availability.

Clyde Street walkway

The walkway from The Parade through to Clyde Street is approximately 200m long, narrow at the Parade end it widens to allow for vehicles at the Clyde Street end.

While during the day it is used regularly by pedestrians at night it is used far less often (but worth noting it IS still used). The residential properties that form the boundaries for the length of the path are both a help and a hindrance. Their need for privacy has led to high fences on both sides that make the space (at the parade end) confined and removes any lines of sight from residents to the path users. There are no exit points along the path and little lighting. At the top end the fences give way on one side to housing and garaging, however there is still little lines of sight out to the path, with either garaging, small or frosted windows dominating the side of buildings facing the path.

There are both entrapment and concealment spots on the lower end where there is an alcove and then a path that allows access to a rear property. This, along with the narrowness and poor lighting adds to the unsafe feeling when using the path at night.

There are 2 lights along the path, one of which has light partially blocked by a large tree. The lighting is not sufficient as a night time pedestrian route. Light measurements are only 1.5 lux at the start at the Parade end (with Street light spill), it then drops to 0.1 and the 0.9lux when moving closer to the light. The lights are poorly spaced which in turn gives poor coverage, and leaves dark spots.

All of these factors combined leave few solutions available to WCC to improve this site without residential changes (which is unlikely) – however the use of hard surveillance (such as CCTV) and additional lighting will greatly improve the feeling of safety.

See photos Appendix A

Recommendations:

- Trim or remove overhanging tree
- Increase lighting – number of poles as well as lumens – Aim for 7-10 lux and consider various lighting height to help decrease impact on neighbouring property
- In the absence of being able to improve sightlines due to residential fencing consider CCTV coverage to be the “eyes”
- Improve directional signage

Other areas of interest

New World carpark is located behind a group of shops, it has good exit and entry points and lighting (up to 41 lux in parts). The rear of the shops that back onto the car park includes a bar and a café, along with retail. The bar has a garden bar area that also backs on to the carpark, it is well fenced and there is little to no interaction between bar patrons and users of the supermarket.

The rear of the retail and cafes open directly into carpark space, and there is little to delineate between semi-public to private ownership of space and nothing to stop anyone physically or symbolically from walking up to the rear doors and attempting entry. The lighting from the carpark does light the area somewhat but is dependent on New World using their lighting overnight.

The area around the “community noticeboard” is dirty, uncared for, unused and not signposted.

The Picnic table in an area next to thirsty liquor, while no antisocial behaviour was seen here while I visited, it is an interesting choice of location. Being next to a bottle

shop lends itself to becoming a drinking location, there is also little reason for normal use, it's not a desirable location to sit considering it backs onto a busy carpark and looks out to a bus stop.

Recommend:

- Some territorial reinforcement via painting on the ground, bollards etc to show private space at the rear of the shops backing onto the carpark
- Improved lighting at rear of café and postshop
- Improve community noticeboard area to be more user friendly and noticeable
- Its recommended the "picnic" area possibly be relocated or improved to make it more attractive for appropriate use.

Lighting

While the street lighting in the area is sufficient, the footpath and pedestrian lighting is patchy and mostly inadequate enough to promote safety and encourage appropriate pedestrian and retail/ dining use at night.

While there were various different types of lighting located under the canopy's of shops none were in use during night audits. All lighting came from within premises lit at night with window displays. Lux levels ranged from 0.4 outside the Postshop and Bluebelle café to 123 lux outside the well lit gallery across the road. On average the level along the shopping strip was 1.1 lux. This inconsistent lighting creates dark patches and leads to a feeling that darker areas feel unsafe compared to those areas that are well lit.

As mentioned above the lighting in the Alleyway between The Parade and Clyde Street was also insufficient. There was also little lighting outside the library or the entrance to the Community Centre, and while these are not open in the evenings (on most occasions) lighting options should be available for both safety perception and for when they are used at night – especially the Community Centre.

The lighting between the shops and New World is poor – while this is a short distance from The Parade it was only registering 1 lux, when coming from shop frontages and a well-lit road this makes it feel even darker.

The lighting between the Cinema and the main shops is standard Street lighting – while this illuminates the road well, the presence of large trees partially block light to the footpath. The footpath is flat and passes in front of residential houses next to the

road, so there is some natural surveillance. If the aim is to encourage walking between the two sites in the evening, targeted pedestrian lighting should be considered.

Actions:

- Improve lighting in Clyde Street pathway
- Improve under canopy lighting or encourage its use by business to create consistency.
- Improve lighting in and around the Community Centre and Library – and Toilets if they're accessible at night.
- Consider pedestrian lighting between the Town Centre and Cinema
- Improve lighting between the Parade and New World





Clyde Street Walkway from The Parade at night



Clyde Street walkway from Clyde Street end



Entrapment spot of walkway





Rear of Bluebird Café and Post shop



A good example of territorial reinforcement



Front of library



Poor accessibility with path at an angle and cracked



Community notice board area



Public Toilets



“picnic” area



Good example of mixed use outside the Empire cinema



An example of under canopy lighting not in use





Good use of canopy lights after closing



An example of inconsistent lighting