



Mon, 15 Aug, 2022

CCRG Emily Place Innovating Streets Feedback 15 August 2022

Kia ora Team,

CCRG have discussed this project at our recent monthly meeting, and received some further feedback that is incorporated here, both on the existing trial, and what we think we've learnt and what would improve the final project.

CCRG are very pleased with the implementation and success of this project. We've supported it as being a real and meaningful step in creating a better city for residents, in line with City Centre Masterplan objectives.

Well done to all those who made it happen so successfully. It is possibly one of the few Innovating streets project that is progressing to a permanent stage. That is no mean achievement.

It is very clear that a much more pleasant environment for residents and other people, has begun. It's used by all sorts of people, and along with activities in the central plaza, is proof that people will use spaces where they feel safer and protected from vehicles. It is much more detuned than before, quieter, and more pleasant all around. From residents relaxing, catching up, awaiting deliveries or Uber/taxis, to office workers lunching, people on the coast to coast walk - all marvelling at this urban surprise, through to exercise groups using the space - the change is really quite extraordinary.

The widened footpath down to Customs street is a significant improvement, and the planters tidied up the illegal parking issue very nicely.

A good response.

It's been great to see locals take some ownership of the planters with watering in the dry months, planting, and tending to the plants.

The Emily Place trial successfully linked in directly to all 10 of the CCMP's [OUTCOMES](#), (especially [Outcome 6](#): Residential city centre neighbourhoods).

They encapsulate sums the vision and intent of the trial, and provide further guidance as the CCTR project is planned, designed, and implemented.

CCRG is very supportive of the progression of this trial to the targeted rate project stage. We are keen to see the final design build on the successes of the trial, and fulfil the vision and intent of the city centre masterplan, as well as learning from previous targeted rate projects to ensure we are also incorporating lessons from them as well as incorporating further city centre plans and policies such as Te Tāruke ā Tāwhiri, A4E, C40 cities, TERP (just out today), Urban Ngāhere strategy, Draft parking Strategy, and of course the climate change emergency.

Who knew that even in the space of a 18 months or so since this trial was being proposed, consulted on and designed, that the climate emergency and its response would become even more critical.

The NZ Govt has also released it's Reshaping Streets regulatory change proposals, which are full of many tools that support, and can be employed for Emily Place, particularly Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Filtering Traffic, Modal Filters and Traffic calming devices.

We have also learnt lessons from the St Patrick's square, and even from the Federal Street stage 2 projects, that should be incorporated.

The trial suggests to us that there are three areas or zones to this project, with different functions, and positions in the priority-of-use hierarchy:

- 1. Lower Emily Place** - the feeder up to the Square - in this zone we are balancing safe access for pedestrians, active modes, and vehicles.
- 2. The central square** - the core or heart of a new public space, prioritised for people and their amenity and safety. In this area we are prioritising people space, as well as building access, servicing and loading/drop offs - and it requires very slow vehicle movements.
- 3. Upper EP** - the two wings on either side of the reserve providing access and egress. In this zone we are balancing safe access for pedestrians, active modes, residents, and vehicles's access to buildings and service/deliver, (and the existing legacy parking scheme for the Brooklyn apartment building).

The most critical element to the success of this space as a people-prioritised one, is controlling speed, and eliminating unnecessary movements of vehicles. And to further restrict unnecessary through trips, reduce circling for parking, and re-design the carriageway to ensure lower speeds through *design*. This is now a 30KPH max zone so we have the opportunity to narrow drivable carriageways, and sharpen up turns, so that 30kph becomes an actual **MAXIMUM**.

We have this unique opportunity to start implementing a hierarchy of prioritised use across this project area.

1. Lower Emily Place

There could be a suitable gateway treatment at the bottom to indicate or announce the zone with bi-lingual signage.

This is the opportunity to test some A4E neighbourhood signage concepts.

The widened footpath has proved wildly successful and must be kept, and widened further to provide a 3m max wide roadway (the street width at the very bottom of this section seems to work for the fire engines that come to Emily Place, so should be the width we aim for on these straight sections).



Or widen the southern side footpath as well, which is quite narrow. General Parking could be retained on the south side or repurposed for the car share, and some expanded loading and servicing zones required for a dense residential+ business neighbourhood. A widened broad footpath, that even slow cyclists and active modes could use to go uphill. Or we could have a downhill lane for cyclists and active modes, separated from the uphill footpath.

It is very common to see scooters and bikes going down hill lets 'legalise' that ongoing activity to support great connectivity for active modes.

While the planters or similar are essential to prevent vehicles parking, and have proved very effective, is there an opportunity for trees along here instead? It is a harsh environment for small plants, with extremes of wet, dry + wind, but trees would help break the winds that funnel through here, and require much less maintenance than planters. There may be an opportunity to collect surface water flows and support trees through the longer dry periods we are now experiencing, (more on that further on).

Raised speed tables at the bottom, and add another one further up just before 14 Emily Place - reduces speed and narrows the carriageway. Both with pedestrian priority. We really should move away from ersatz pedestrian safety with raised tables that have no pedestrian priority. Let's do this right.

2. The Central Square

Perhaps an obvious observation: squares, while not necessarily square in plan, are centered spaces rather than linear spaces. Often they are enclosed on more than two sides by buildings, and they often have a dominant or important building along one or more sides. There is a strong sense of place.

(Graeme Scott)

This area is the focal or core zone where we can do the most to achieve all our agreed plans and visions: *"to create a sense of an urban square for residents and other people to use, meet, sit or just pass through safely"*

To achieve, this the remaining parking should be removed - that is the 'appropriate' level of parking for areas where we are placing pedestrians at the top of the hierarchy of use. This will also allow for narrowed carriageways, and slow speeds through this zone, while maintaining current access to buildings, and allowing loading/servicing, pickup/drop-off. This not the area to prioritise storage of people's property - ***We need to attract people into the streets -into attractive, safe, clean and quiet areas.***

Car share & additional LZ can move to Upper and/or lower EP zones. We expect even more people to use these services so this is the time to expand those offerings.

While we don't want to be automatically locked into this 2012 CCMP placeholder render, while we await expert design input, this early imagery for Emily Place in the form of terracing, still seems an eminently practical, simple and flexible-use solution. They provide simple, flat, usable, surfaces. Terraces also have strong cultural and historical ties to this area. Impressive design nous and forward thinking from the 2012 CCMP team!



The two central box trees are in poor shape and health and need replacing and these terraces will provide new tree opportunities.

We're sceptical that grass would be a suitable or best practical cover, or is a particularly sustainable (or usable) option in future for this particular often-shaded space. The grass at St Patricks Square requires a lot of maintenance, and is often muddy and/or bare.

There obviously is the opportunity for sturdy picnic tables, drinking+dog fountains, seating, Bike pump, bike racks, scooter parking, a composting station, or a centralised food scraps collection point.

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It would be great to be able to incorporate some kids play elements. Slower play activities probably, due to vehicles presence?

Alex Bonham at the Waitematā Local Board specialises in Kids and Play so there's an expert on hand. And previous feedback givers with who have identified as having kids would be a target to ask.

The furniture at Waitematā Plaza in the viaduct has a good example of how slow play, and amenity+art can be combined.



Robust furniture examples - Parnell and Fort Street:



Wynyard Quarter, and Queen street provide further examples of robust furniture, so the designs are existing.

It would be great to have electrical power and water available for neighbourhood activations and events. Maybe some anchor points to attach temporary structures such as pop up tents/marqueses to for neighbourhood activation events.(or elements in the design that could be used as tie down points.)

Thinking of how community events and info have been undertaken with the trial, it would be good to have a small lockable hub that could incorporate elements such as community library on the outside, info board, power/water for events, a fixed table with a chess board /chequers marked out on it etc.

A securable and Local/Aotearoa-themed version of kiosks/storage that we see in other cities that could work as a hub and community focus and support activations:



Water features - there is not much better than running water, however small, if feasible - a simple robust representation of waters flowing from Te Waiariki maybe? Maybe just a visual representation through art? This is a tough one as we know the large water feature at St Pats square requires weekly attendance, and has been an ongoing source of trouble, blockages, floods, breakdowns, Big opex costs, lots of emails, and degraded amenity - ever since it was built. If it's not sustainable, as nice as flowing water is - we don't wish to repeat that experience.

3. Upper Emily Place - one way system for access and egress on either side of the reserve.

Once car share, disabled, and drop off/pick up has been prioritised, any remaining Parking might be retained. But we would rather see uses that support practical day to day use, accessibility, community safety and amenity, in the first instance.

If the residential parking scheme for Brooklyn apartments is to be retained on the east side, then that should start at the boundary of 48 and 62 Emily Place - the corner here needs considerable narrowing down - it is currently way too wide and cars accelerate up through here due to its over-generous radius.

The footpaths on the reserve edges need to be built out more - they are currently about 1m wide - barely enough for two people to walk side by side. The carriageways on the side are currently too wide, measuring about 6m width next to the parking. The footpaths on the reserve side are only about 1m wide - so they could be widened by another 3m. 3.2m wide for a single lane is plenty for vehicles to travel up and down on a one way, 30kph. max system. Let's design to slow down, as we still have vehicles going too fast for the area, and 'gunning' it up the hill.

CCRG support the one way traffic system - it has worked really well and made a big difference. But we need better signage to let drivers know what they are entering into, & there probably needs to be a warning sign for extra large vehicles (eg buses) not to come down from Shortland street. The top intersections with Shortland St and Eden Crescent need to be considerably reduced in width and the radii sharpened up considerably (that also conveys messages to drivers), and need raised speed tables with zebra crossings - they are very difficult to cross safely as a pedestrian and are much too wide with speed enabling radii. Again gateway signage can be replicated in these two intersection locations.

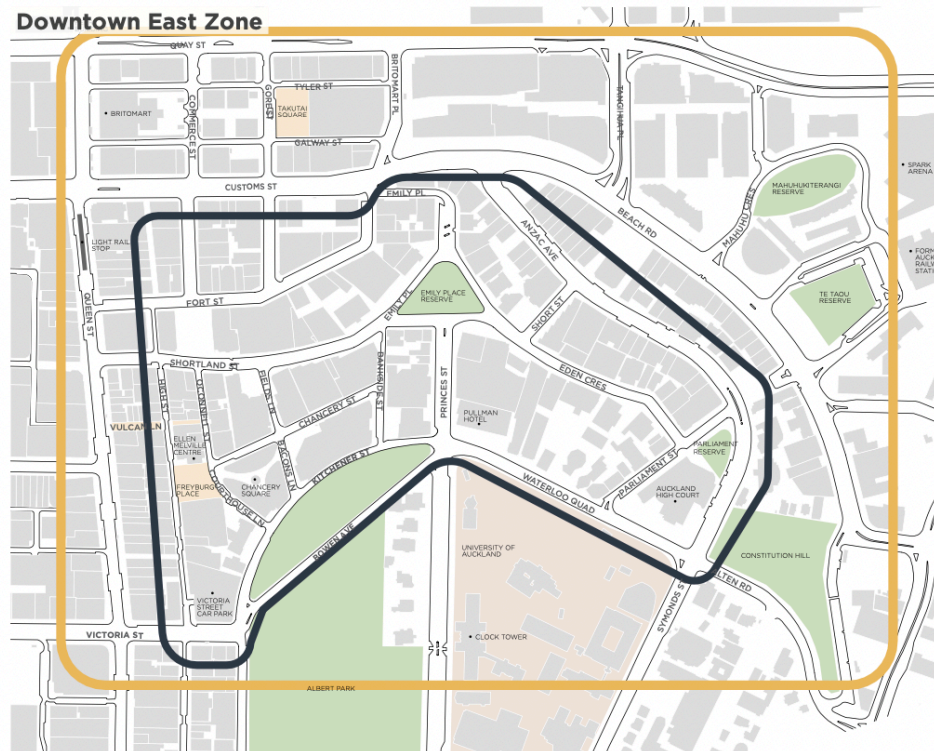
We should have two sets of speed tables - two on the western side, and two on the eastern side. One at the top intersections with Shortland st, and Eden Cres, and another on the corners where the road meets the top of the Central square zone and care enter or leave the square proper.

General Comments:

Access for Everyone

Emily Place sits as the core of a proposed Downtown East A4E zone

(see ACCESS FOR EVERYONE / DOWNTOWN EAST CASE STUDY/DOWNTOWN EAST ZONE 2019)



Legend

- Orange line: Downtown East Zone
- Black line: Focus of field work

Is there any thought as to how this Emily Place project will integrate into this wider CCMP A4E work, as the beating core - the residential neighbourhood and permanent community at the heart of this proposed zone, that shows off the best of A4E intentions, vision and actual implementation?

What opportunities are there to implement A4E and roll out and reference this as part of that wider work? (consistent A4E signage scheme?, gateway treatments?)

Māori Outcomes

The trial provided artistic opportunities as much as that project permitted.

We expect that mana whenua will have a key part to play in the future CCTR project, recognising ahi kā and the significance of Te Rehenga-ora-iti and the 18 September 1840 Tuku Whenua.

Sustainability and climate change mitigation are crucial.

The trial didn't provide much opportunity to for the sorts of works required, given the budget, so we are looking for meaningful and effective initiatives in this area. Landscape professionals will have expertise in this area.

In sustained and/or heavy rainfall there is a large amount of water flowing down all the roads in sheets, and gutters, and contributes significantly to the flooding down on Customs Street. The catch pits are frequently blocked with debris from further uphill and the reserve. So we need **Gardens/soak pits** that collect and divert as much of the rivers of water that flow down EP to stormwater, or surface flooding.

Surfaces: to mitigate Skateboarder damage, we should avoid smooth surfaces anywhere. Have all walking surfaces and ledges wavy or bumpy (within limits of course for mobility impaired users. This also serves against slipping in the wet, especially as there's a lot of sloping areas there.

Street furniture - needs to be robust, and protected from errant vehicles.

The biggest single source of damage to amenity and street furniture in the city centre is vehicles. The evidence of this degradation and destruction of property and amenity is visible all throughout the city centre.

Bike racks, seats, rubbish bins etc must be protected from being able to be backed into by vehicles. Seating etc needs to be able to 'fight back' if backed into by cars.

Please do not rely on enforcement as a strategy. Design has to be the strategy.

At St Pats square the concrete seats and tables work well and if they'd been used for the seating at the edges, many of the illegal parking issues would have been avoided.

Please don't use the city suite of furniture near vehicles. At St Pats square, they report that it generally lasted about one month each time it was repaired/replaced. One of the bike racks on fed st stage two is already bent over from a vehicle backing into it. Jean Batten place has only one intact 'city suite' seating bench out of 6 originally, no bike racks, and all bollards have been destroyed.

While we haven't had any issues with skateboarders, and very minimal vandalism, or graffiti, clearly these will need to be considered.

Please ensure the potential for creating nice skateboarding props and skateboarding damaging furniture and any stairs/steps etc is considered in the design. St Patricks Square is definitely something none of us wish to go through for the future decades in regards to community tensions.

Bollards - Where we need bollards - please install robust bollards. Bollards really are such effective tools to prioritise access, and create safety through design. The time has well and truly come to push back against residual opposition to bollards from some quarters. Again, please do not rely on enforcement as a strategy. Design has to be the strategy.

Suitable **Lighting** throughout the project - less of the white cool daylight lighting please, more warm-coloured lighting.

We're sure you will run **CPTED** and **universal access** filters across this project.

Traffic Calming Devices

Mainly plenty of raised speed tables ideally with zebra crossings painted on them, but also narrowed down lanes with sharper corners, where corners exist. Considerably narrowed intersections at the top of the reserve

Parking fees and zones

As part of this work, AT should be re-assessing the parking zone that Emily Place is currently located in. It should be moved into the same zone as Shortland Street so we put an end to people searching and circling for cheaper or 'free' parking, beyond the Shortland Street zone, whether it is during the day, or particularly at nights, and on Sundays. If some general parking is retained then this actually gives residents many more opportunities to get that occasional car park when they need it, as it encourages churn.

As always, **Trees, trees, trees**. 'Too hard' is not an argument that has much sense anymore.

It is really important that **PLACE** for residents and community is prioritised over Movement for this space. We have so few places such as Emily Place in the city centre (though we could have many more) - a highly residential enclave in a square-type typology, with streets that can be serving very local functions.

There is no need to model traffic impacts of this proposal on the wider network. Instead we need to model the effects of the traffic network on the health, safety and wellbeing of this neighbourhood.

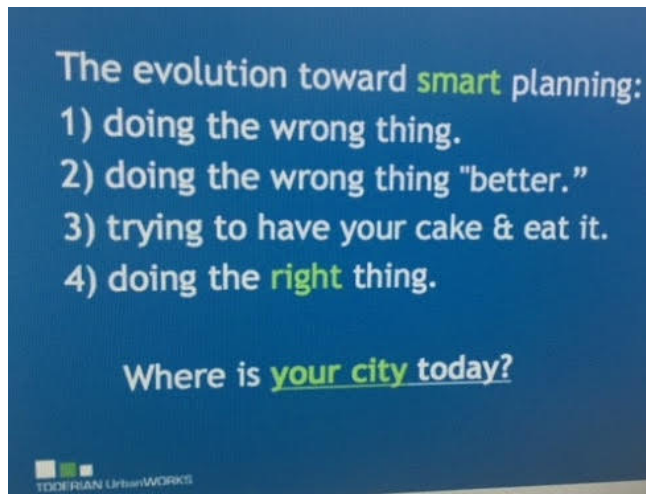
We cannot (on a street by street basis) "balance" urban design outcomes with traffic modelling and car parking.

We can optimise the urban outcomes, or we can try & shoehorn everything in.

People are compact & good at interacting. Cars are large and no good at all at interacting with, or sharing space.

Their climate impacts are quite well understood.

CCRG uses doing the **right** thing as a model for the future:



Brent Toderian

The Innovating street trial started to use the the tools that we now have to move away from prioritising the movement and storage of vehicles. Tools which CCRG hope will be added to & legalised via the Reshaping Streets programme just announced by the Government.

It is via the cumulative effect of such projects such as this Emily Place trial and future CCTR Project, localised though they may be, that we can make a huge difference to residents' lives and daily living, that includes all ages abilities. But we must be brave and bold to do that, and also to meet the challenges of the climate change emergency. Now is the time.

Adam Parkinson

For

CCRG

ngā kainoho o te pokapū o tāmaki
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