

06 December 2012

Manager, Heritage Projects
Heritage Services Branch
Ministry for Culture and Heritage
PO Box 5364
WELLINGTON 6145

Attention: Brodie Stubbs

Dear Mr Stubbs

National War Memorial Park: CPTED Assessment

Introduction

1. I have been asked to conduct a Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment to assist with the design for the National War Memorial Park.
2. To this end I have:
 - a been apprised of the key features of the design by Wraight Athfield Landscape + Architecture – in particular the pedestrian movement paths;
 - b reviewed the updated Concept Design drawings [Wraight Athfield Landscape + Architecture, October 2012];
 - c ascertained potential traffic volumes through the Buckle Street portion of the park from Traffic Design Group;
 - d spoken with Massey University regarding the history of criminal events that have been experienced by students walking to and from the university in the vicinity of the park;
 - e reflected on crime data obtained from the Police for the project area as part of a prior CPTED assessment that I prepared for the Basin Bridge Project before the Memorial Park became a separate project;
 - f visited the site and its immediate environs during the day and after dark in the early evening;
 - g considered best practices for CPTED including those contained within the relevant national and local guidelines¹ for crime prevention in public spaces;

1 - the Qualities and Values, Q3 "Healthy/Safe City" – enabling people to feel safe as well as comfortable, of the "Wellington District Plan"; the objectives set out in the District Plan "Guidelines for Design Against Crime"; CPTED objectives in Council's "Walking Policy", specifically Objective 2; Policy 2.3.; the seven qualities of safer spaces set out in the Ministry of Justice (2007) "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design – Draft New Zealand Guidelines".

h commented on the key CPTED matters below.

Existing environment

3. Provisional crime statistics for the Memorial Park and environs obtained from the Police for the calendar year of 1 March 2011 to 1 March 2012 indicated:
 - a seven common assaults on nearby streets (Kent Terrace near the Basin Reserve, Tasman Street (3) and Buckle Street);
 - b one abduction from Sussex Street;
 - c four reports of fighting and disorder on Sussex Street, and Buckle and Tasman Streets corner;
 - d five instances of wilful damage (Paterson Street, Tory and Buckle Streets corner);
 - e four assaults reported at a secondary school nearby;
 - f no instances of graffiti mentioned.
4. Notwithstanding the small number of offences it is interesting that most of them occur late in the evenings and in the small hours on Thursday through Saturday nights. I believe this is related to pedestrian traffic between residential areas near the Memorial Park and the Courtenay Place entertainment precinct.

The local (Newtown) police community constable said people destined for Courtenay Place are regularly seen 'preloading'² on the way and are involved with further drinking and disorder on the way home, but most of this is low level offending and largely unreported. During the course of my CPTED assessment I found several beer bottles and RTD³ cans discarded along Buckle Street and in the planting beside the paths through the park towards the Carillion and the university.
5. While there are examples of graffiti and tagging – in fact the new hoarding for current excavation works was heavily tagged before it was even finished – the level of visible graffiti is quite low. This is because a company contracted by the Wellington City Council to remove graffiti finds much of it themselves and are also despatched by the Council's call centre when reports are received from members of the public. Both the contractor and the Council's call centre say levels of graffiti are quite low compared with Newtown, the CBD, and increasingly Kelburn. It appears graffiti is reported to the Police only infrequently.
6. Overall, the reported crime statistics and Police anecdotal experience would suggest the Memorial Park environs experiences offending towards the lower end of the spectrum of frequency and seriousness

² Drinking inexpensive pre-purchased alcohol so fewer higher-priced drinks need to be bought at bars.

³ Ready to drink (RTD) alcohol / soft drink premixes.

relative to the City generally. But this is not to diminish the significance of a very small number of more serious assaults.

7. Apart from the wooded part of the park that flanks each side of the Carillion and Tasman Street, which is outside of the War Memorial Park project, there are presently very few opportunities for people to pause within the project area. There are no seats or congregation points because the landscape is largely undeveloped with little more than footpaths and open space, so there are very few places where crime might occur within the project area at the moment within the project area. This will change with the new design which provides places to pause and enjoy the park as is consistent with its very nature. CPTED measures will therefore be required to maintain safety and security in the new environment.

Key Design Features

8. I believe the key features within the project boundaries of the concept design that have CPTED implications are the:
 - a main pedestrian pathways;
 - b seating integrated with the low retaining structures edging the transverse pedestrian pathways;
 - c fence, lane and car park along the northern boundary;
 - d public toilets;
 - e new trees;
 - f vehicular accessway between Tory Street and Taranaki Street.

I will now discuss each of these in turn.

Main pathways

9. There are several pedestrian pathways throughout the park:
 - a to the south the main Buckle Street footpath is retained in its present position;
 - b through the centre, a broad walkway extends through hard surfacing towards the western portal of the SH1 tunnel and deflects to follow alongside the roadway to emerge at the Taranaki Street crossing;
 - c at the northern side of the park pedestrians can walk between Tory Street and Taranaki Street via another broad pathway or use the lane alongside the Mt Cook School fence line.

The main paths between the Old Crèche and Tory Street are similar.

10. The pathways are legible and advance views are unobstructed. There are no recesses or hidden spaces adjoining the paths where people one would normally wish to avoid could lurk. Another CPTED advantage is

the many choices of paths providing opportunities for pedestrians to take the route they are most comfortable with, including being able to avoid or distance themselves from other people or groups of people in the park if needs be.

Transverse pathways

11. Transverse pathways intersect the green open space at both the eastern and western sectors of the park. They connect the main walkways and provide access to the grassed open space. The edges formed by low retaining walls also provide informal seating. These edges and informal seating encourage people to stay and enjoy the park rather than simply pass through without pause. This is an important CPTED feature in that it helps activate the park by promoting the supporting collateral necessary for desirable occupancy. Good examples of the same thing are to be found around the edges of Civic Square in Wellington where people meet, relax and eat their lunch.
12. Consideration may need to be given to the resilience and long term appearance retention of the masonry surfaces for resisting chemicals and high pressure water cleaners when the inevitable but hopefully infrequent graffiti needs to be removed⁴.
13. It is foreseeable the same informal seating opportunities provided on the edges of the transverse pathways could also be used by people drinking in public, leading to disorder. A liquor ban could help to deter this. But most of all, the people infringing the liquor ban and congregating suspiciously, need to be conspicuous to other members of the public (referred to as 'capable guardians'), passing Police patrol cars, and the City Hosts⁵.
14. Suitable lighting will be provided to assist pedestrians walking through the park at night and to illuminate cars parked in the lanes, and any people occupying the park – blameless or questionable.

Northern boundary

15. The northern boundary mostly comprises a lane. North lane (west) has a fence set on top of a concrete retaining wall; and North lane (east) has a building abutting the edge of the boundary. The westernmost (nearest Taranaki Street) part of the park also has a building along the northern boundary edge.
16. The lanes are intended to be more in the form of 'shared spaces', meaning that traffic will be calmed by means of suitable ground surface textures to very low speeds (10 km/hr) so they share the space safely with pedestrians who are given priority.

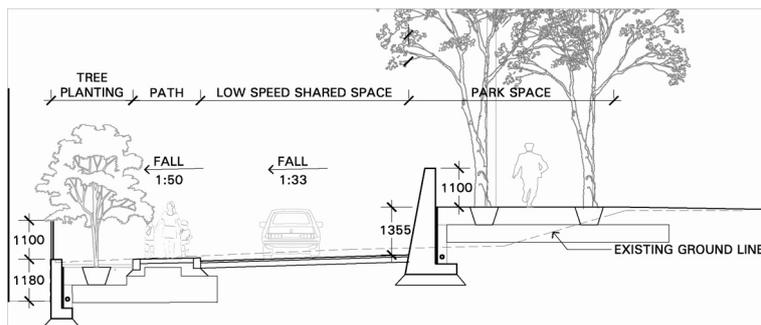
⁴ Soft stone in Wellington's Civic Square is being significantly degraded from graffiti removal.

⁵ Wellington City Council's in-house replacement for Walkwise.

The fence on top of the concrete retaining wall will be a permeable wire mesh fence similar to the existing one which allows it to be seen through.

17. Being able to be seen through is especially important for Mt Cook School so that children drop-offs and pickups can be seen from the school. In addition, a permeable fence with slow moving shared access for vehicles enables the school property to be checked and deters antisocial activity in the school grounds.
18. The other key reason for a non-solid fence at this point is that fences and hoardings in this area have been popular informal billboards and have been subject to tagging and graffiti for many years now. I think it is essential for the north boundary fence to be designed to resist tagging and graffiti for a number of reasons:
 - a to maintain high standards of presentation of the park commensurate with its importance as a national amenity;
 - b to deny opportunities for what could arguably be thought of as a form of desecration;
 - c to ensure there is no graffiti present such as might be inadvertently captured in the backdrop of events being televised; and
 - d generally to eliminate the sense of unease if not fear of crime that can be imbued by extensive disfigurement which remains as evidence of occupancy by people one wouldn't want to encounter.
19. Gateways into the school should be located at points that work for the school. They should also be access controlled in accordance with school hours.

20. In addition to providing an opportunity for surveillance at this end of the park, the west lane is also necessary to manage ground



levels. This is particularly the case in the vicinity of the paved area that extends across the whole site and is centred on the war memorial itself. Without the lane and the retaining wall to the south of the lane, the boundary wall at the school for example, would be unacceptably high and the edge would be unoccupied.

21. By way of a solution to managing the height difference and potential dead zone at this point on the boundary, the design provides for a

pedestrian accessway, a drop-off and pickup point for the school, and a shared access slow zone for cars including Police cars.

22. Any new building proposed for the westernmost boundary off Martin Square and Taranaki Street will be required to have an active frontage to the park where available ground levels permit. The intention is to eliminate the sorts of blank walls that are frequently targeted for graffiti.
23. If the shared space lanes prove to be problematic due to people parking-up after hours⁶ the entrances can simply be controlled with a chain, a removable bollard or the like.

Tunnel portals

24. While on the topic of managing graffiti and tagging I think it is very important to ensure the design of the portals into the tunnel at each side of the memorial park take into account how to prevent, and if necessary, how to remove any defacement – which again, I believe amounts to defacement of the memorial park. Tunnel portals are notorious, highly prized informal billboards for taggers. I expect some of the other formed concrete panels will also need cleaning from time to time as well.
25. And while discussing matters of appearance retention which have an impact on tagging and vandalism, it is important to provide a fitting number of suitable rubbish receptacles.

Public toilets

26. It is significant that public toilets have been provided in the park. They are essential given the expected need for them during ceremonial occasions. They are respectfully tucked away from the main ceremonial area just to the west of the Old Mt Cook Police Barracks, [South Lane (East)].

27. I note the place immediately adjoining the toilets on the west side (6) has been designated a “future gathering area for powhiri or other events”⁷. However, the toilets should not be apologised for, nor should they tucked so far out of the way they aren’t visible and obvious to passers-by. Being visible and obvious is necessary for good utilisation and for



⁶ Commonly preloading which usually leads to unhygienic soiling, broken glass and litter.

⁷ WALA SK02. MCH Ceremonial Uses.

supervisory purposes.

28. The toilets should be well clear of the planting behind them. They should be placed in such a way as to have clarity of purpose, meaning there is no other obvious purpose for persons in the immediate vicinity to be there, except for bona fide users of the toilets⁸.
29. It is expected the toilets would be of a contemporary design where each cubicle is self-contained as distinct from the older less safe layout having a common lobby.
30. The toilets should be able to be locked off after hours if necessary as is the case with a number of public toilets in Wellington that are locked off automatically from the Wellington City Council Security Centre or by contract security staff who check them in person before locking up.

New trees

31. I note there will be several new trees planted in the park. From the CPTED point of view trees are important for raising the quality of the space and for providing shade both of which support good occupancy, for safety and security. The kowhai trees introduce colour and bird life as well as shade. Shade or not, people like to sit under trees which is good for activation of the park.



32. Specimen trees will mostly be spaced well apart to allow clear views through them. Clustered or closer spaced groups of trees should be organised more or less in a grid pattern rather than a random pattern. [refer image in para 31 above]. An orderly planting pattern makes views through trees more legible and easier to see people in and around them.
33. All trees will have clear views under them to a canopy height of about two metres. Low plantings (under a metre) will maintain easy sightlines over them.

Vehicular accessway

34. The concept design retains a vehicular accessway, a shared space, through the park between Tory Street and Taranaki Street. The intention is the accessway will be designed in favour of pedestrian use and will have surface treatments for traffic calming such as granite sets (which have become accepted street language for going slow in

⁸ For example they shouldn't be located next to a bus stop, or within a playground.

pedestrian favoured areas⁹) and signs to indicate this is a slow zone with a speed limit of 10 km/hour.

35. The slow throughway is understood to be required to make the local street network work, a matter which is not within my realm of expertise. I am informed that Opus's traffic study predicts a volume of about 3000 vehicles per day which I am advised by Traffic Design Group averages about two vehicles per minute, with four vehicles per minute during daylight hours. This can be compared with slightly greater traffic volumes on shared spaces like the western section of Bunny Street, 3800 per day (between the university building, bus exchange and the old wooden Law School building), or the southern end of Lambton Quay with 3600 per day (alongside the old BNZ Building). I understand the target traffic volume would be about 2000.
36. The area would also need to be accessed by emergency services vehicles, and grounds maintenance vehicles.



37. The existing section of SH1 (Buckle Street in front of the war memorial) is multi-laned and requires concentration to negotiate. With no places to stop, the existing road is very weak in terms of providing capable guardians for natural supervision for antisocial incidents on the land adjoining the road. Moreover, and as indicated earlier, there are presently few if any places for such antisocial behaviour to occur that might be deterred by passersby or require interventions.
38. With the new design with SH1 being inside the tunnel or well below the ground level of the park, people in vehicles (including passing Police) have even less ability to provide natural supervision of the park, or to notice seemingly errant activity, or stop, or let alone turn back against one way traffic to intervene.
39. Accepting the park will be a successful well-occupied public space for extended hours of the day it is expected that antisocial behaviour will occur and foreseeably, that more serious crime will also occur on some occasions. Given the inevitability of offences it is a matter of social responsibility to take all reasonable and prudent steps to minimise their occurrence and to preserve the park as a safe and secure amenity with a positive reputation.

⁹ For example along Lambton Quay (south by the BNZ), Brandon Street/Lambton Quay corner, and Grey Street.

40. The first steps in minimising the occurrence of crime and antisocial behaviour have been taken by design, that is by making the whole park intrinsically safe and devoid of the obvious conditions that favour their occurrence. These features have been described above. The second step is to recognise that some of the very features that make the park attractive to bona-fide users are also favoured by miscreants – for example places to gather. At this juncture other crime prevention mechanisms need to be called upon, the key one of which is supervision.
41. In my view a good way to supplement the natural supervision of pedestrians is to draw upon the occupants of the slowing moving vehicles that I think should be allowed to travel through the shared space between Tory Street and Taranaki Street, if not from Sussex Street depending on local traffic management requirements.
42. Experience in New Zealand and overseas shows that pedestrian traffic alone is not always sufficient to provide the flow rate of potential capable guardians necessary to deter crime and antisocial behaviour. Streets once closed to vehicles have been reopened as shared spaces in the interests of increasing supervision, and not just incidentally, for increasing vitality as well. Some examples of this have occurred in Christchurch; Palmerston North Square car park (which has been carefully designed to be equally fitting as a car park or a dignified ANZAC Day parade ground); the main street in Onehunga which was opened up after many years of deterioration as a pedestrian-only precinct; Garden Place in Hamilton; the main street in Tauranga; Flaxmere Park in Hastings¹⁰; and a shopping centre in Coffs Harbour (NSW).
43. For these reasons I would strongly support creating a slow-zone vehicular access. That access would have the ability to be closed to through traffic for events. A condition of the throughway is that it is designed in a respectful manner that gives priority to the hardstand associated with a memorial, where the throughway is a very small part of the hardstand where vehicles are permitted to traverse at a respectful speed and distance from the memorial. Because the throughway is a special circumstance, I do not believe it should be manifest as a conventional city street.

The newly revitalised Elliot Street in Auckland is an example of a street once known as a 'rat run' for speeding vehicles taking shortcuts between the Queen Street area and the university/museum area. By careful shaping of the edges and judicious use of pedestrian-centric materials, the new shared space has become a very successful pedestrian precinct and is no longer vehicle dominated.

¹⁰ A large park now being opened up for vehicles since the general public felt excluded following occupancy by 19 gangs!

Summary

44. The overall design intention is for a respectful, commemorative, open public place with landscaped areas, trees, seating, cycle-ways and walking paths¹¹. The concept design being developed for construction reflects this design intention and includes the above-mentioned features. I think the design is likely to deliver a safe, quality public space that is well used and engaged with, in a manner which is appropriate to the Memorial Park. This would be a positive contrast to present situation where pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike hurry through without pause.
45. With any public space, and this space in particular, it is important to maintain high standards of presentation and behaviours consistent with its commemorative setting. It is for this reason the CPTED principles and features that I have described above have been embedded in the design, especially in regards to making the spaces safe and feel safe, minimise antisocial behaviours, and minimise vandalism and graffiti – corresponding to the special character of the Memorial Park.
46. Design to foster good use of the space by bona fide members of the public is required to prevent the park from becoming a ‘dead (inactive) space’. Dead spaces are likely to be ‘claimed’ for their own use by those with antisocial tendencies and perpetuate the negatives. I think the Memorial Park will be well-used for everyday park activity as well as for memorial occasions.
47. While physical design strategies such as those used in the Concept Design can largely mitigate intrinsic safety and security risks, and be used to create a highly positive environment, security by design is just one, albeit very significant aspect of the package of protective arrangements required. Successful crime prevention (and urban design) outcomes also require the means to assure formal and informal supervision of the spaces concerned - in other words self-regulation. Real and perceived supervision is a deterrent to crime and antisocial behaviour. Supervision increases the likelihood the Police will be called when the need arises.
48. To a limited extent supervision can be provided by pedestrians and cyclists occupying the park. But in order to take all reasonable and practical crime prevention steps, I believe a slow, low volume, controllable, shared space for local motorists, service vehicles, and the Police would be a prudent component of the overall crime prevention plan.
49. A suitable maintenance regime that keeps the environment within the Memorial Park at a high standard of presentation befitting its purpose is another fundamental component of the crime prevention plan. This

¹¹ Ministry for Culture and Heritage website description.

is assured in part by means of material choices and in part by management and maintenance methods.

50. With due attention to the matters described above I expect the Memorial Park to be a well used, low risk space.
51. I would be pleased to discuss any aspects of this assessment if needed.

Frank G Stoks

Frank Stoks

Director

Stoks Limited

6 December 2012