

07.01 NEW POOL - LOCATION AND SITE DETAILS



Figure 64. - A possible plan of a new Naenae pool located on Everest Avenue with entry off an extended Hillary Court. Cafes and other public facilities are located close to the intersection of Everest Avenue and Hillary Court Extension to add vitality to the streets and town centre.

During 2019, the Council identified several options for constructing a new pool at Naenae. 1) retain and strengthen the existing pool, 2) build a new pool with an expanded footprint and 3) combine a new pool with a community hub with an even greater footprint. Option 2) was adopted and budgeted.

From economic analysis it has become clear that locating the pool in such a way that it contributes directly to the social and economic vitality of the Naenae town centre is an important objective. This is possible on an enlarged site shown in Figures 47. and 64. (In Figure 47. the site is the area shown as ‘recreation’ and numbered 12.

The economic rationale for the placement and relationship of the pool to the Naenae town centre is strategic. It’s location and orientation is strategic as it can either catalyse revitalisation of the town centre, or contribute negatively to that revitalisation by poor location and poor relationship to the public realm.

The site for the pool shown in the Naenae Spatial Plan is 1,500 metres larger than the current pool and associated land. It creates a north-facing outdoor area so that there is indoor-outdoor flow from the pool. As this is north-facing it will enjoy a higher level of potential sunshine than other areas, and if sloped gently could be relatively sheltered and private. It would need to be within the pools’ controlled perimeter and fenced. This solution should retain the two specimen trees at the corner of Treadwell Street and Everest Avenue.

From the brief for the pool prepared by Hutt City Council it is apparent that there will be cafes and event spaces to be delivered in association with the pool. If these are located in such a way as to contribute both to the pool and the retail on Everest Avenue and to a future extension of Hillary Court there would be a “win-win” result. Servicing of the pool and deliveries of pool supplies would be from Treadwell Street from a dedicated loading bay. Retail associated with the pool is located to have a relationship to retail on Everest Avenue and the extension of Hillary Court.

07.02 A POTENTIAL SUPERMARKET

Several sites were tested for the location of a supermarket within the Naenae town centre. Only two were found to be practical and viable, and then only for a supermarket of approximately 1,700 square metres in area.

One of the sites, on Cambridge Terrace near the intersection with Treadwell Street, would fail the urban design criteria established during the urban design evaluation. The supermarket would require the demolition of the existing library, and it would present blank walls to Treadwell Street and Cambridge Terrace. This would be a poor urban design and safety outcome and further exacerbate the problem of poor frontage in the town centre. A new site and budget for a new library would also need to be found.

The second site shown in Figure 65, locates the possible supermarket in the heart of the retail core on Everest Avenue and within the footprint of the existing pool. The supermarket would face onto the extended Hillary Court, which could be designed as a slow-moving shared zone. The supermarket should be “sleeved” by other retail facing onto Everest Avenue, and by community facilities (potentially a youth centre) facing onto Walter Mildenhall Park in association with a new basketball court. This would bring activity and activation of the park and surrounding streets. Loading of the supermarket would be off an extension of Rata Street.

07.03 PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

The urban design survey showed that the public open spaces in Naenae are adequate in area, but that they have poor “edge” conditions because buildings turn their backs on these spaces. The NSP proposes an increase in the public open space between the library and the former post office. This would allow the Saturday market to expand into this space, as well as provide the setting for large public events. This new plaza replaces a parking lot with a public space for events. See Figure 75.

Walter Mildenhall Park is currently surrounded by streets, the service area of the closed pool, a carpark and a blank fence preventing views into the park from the bowling club. This is a poor outcome which should be improved. The NSP proposes a community facility on the eastern side of the park which would

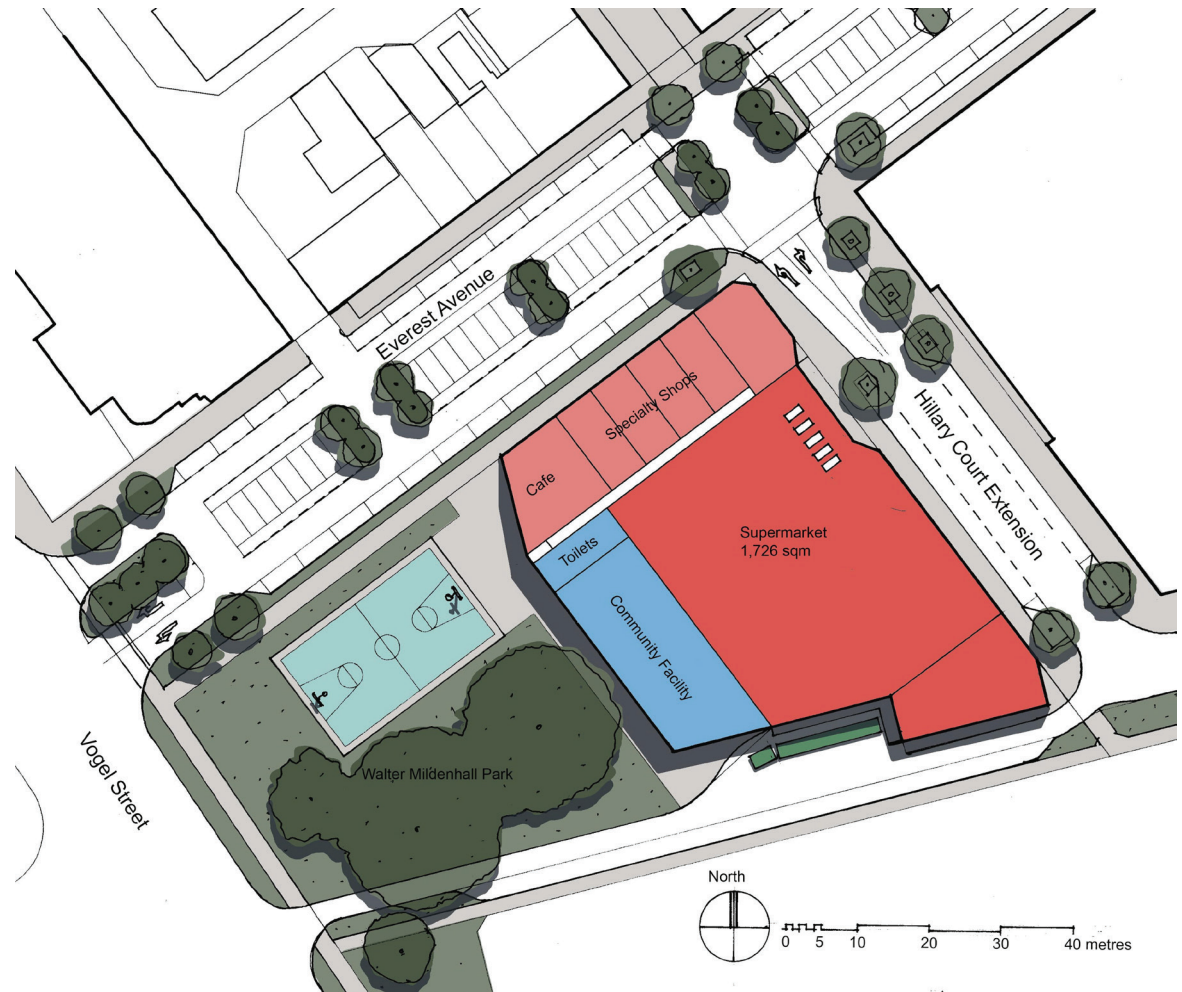


Figure 65. - Possible supermarket sleeved by retail and community uses to ensure a high level of activation of the Public Realm including Walter Mildenhall Park, Everest Avenue and the extension to Hillary Court.

activate this edge and encourage more use of the park. It is also proposed to build a new basketball court on the park as well as seating and shelters for public use. See Figure 65.

The potential extension of Rata Street to Vogel Street will increase activity adjacent to the park and surveillance. The bowling club should be persuaded to change the bowling club fence to increase visibility from the club to public streets and parks.

It is essential that the Rata Street extension is designed in such a way that vehicle movement is limited to 30kph. This should be achieved through design, not just signing.

07.04 ACCESS TO NAENAE CENTRE

The existing underpass and tunnel is a poor connection to the railway station. It may well have met previous standards, but no longer meets current Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CEPTED) standards for community safety. There are three possible improvements which could be made.

The first would be a significantly widening of the tunnel to improve sight lines. This would be a disruptive and expensive solution.

The second possibility would be an at-grade level crossing along the alignment with Hillary Court. This would effectively connect the railway station with the town centre, which would be a positive outcome. This solution is however dependent on either the acquisition of a privately held site, or significant disruption to the storage facility on Cambridge Terrace.

The third option would be a bridge linking Hillary Court, Cambridge terrace, the railway station, and Oxford Terrace. An expensive version of this solution would include at least eight lifts in conjunction with stairs. A cheaper, solution would have Health and Disability Act-compliant ramps in conjunction with stairs. Weather protection in all solutions should be included. The alignment of the possible bridge is important. It should be angled to make access from Naenae College and Naenae Intermediate School both located on Walters Street easy at the intersection with Oxford Terrace, and discharge south-bound pedestrians and cyclists in Hillary Court. The optimal bridge alignment is shown in Figure 66. If there is deviation from this alignment, both the ped-shed result and the Space Syntax result would be reduced in strength. The alignment is critical to maximise the walking and access benefit.

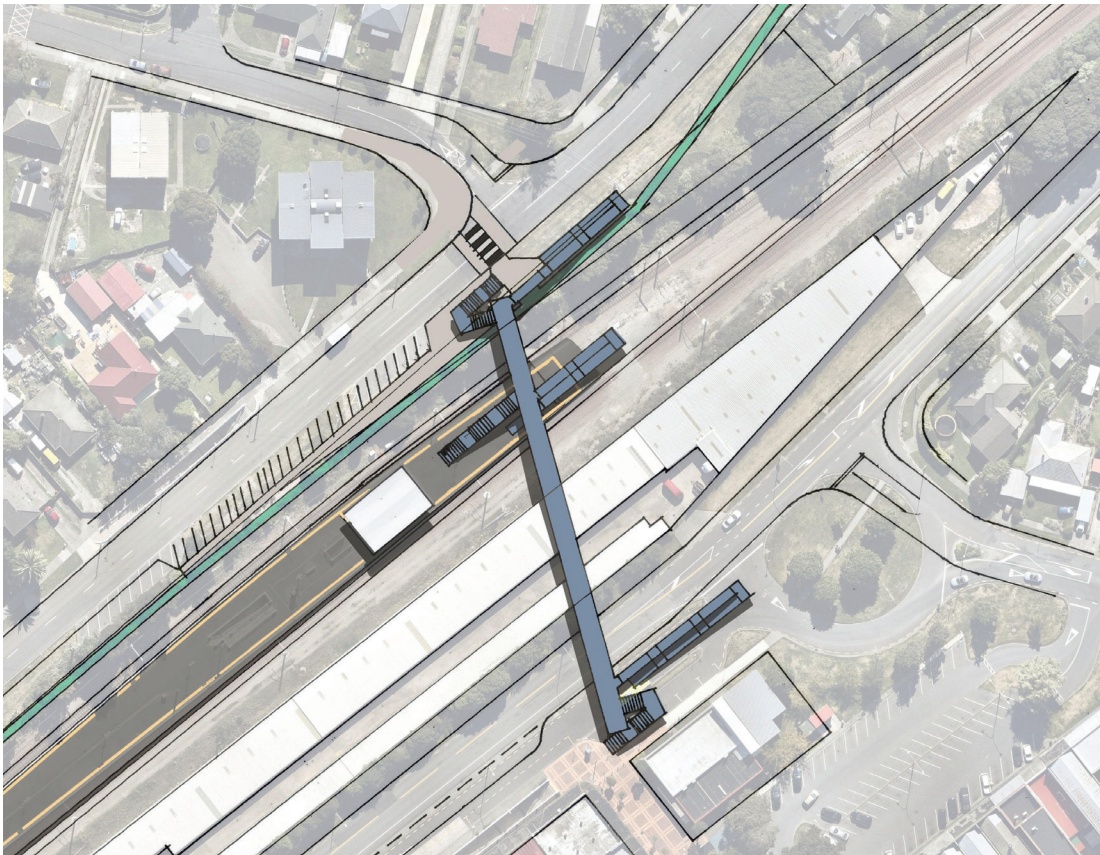


Figure 66. - Possible bridge connecting Hillary Court to the Naenae Railway Station and beyond to Oxford Terrace and Naenae College. This bridge includes ramps rather than lifts. Either option is possible and the solution will be determined by cost and Health and Disability Act compliance.

07.05 HILLARY COURT AS COMMUNITY HEART

As outlined in the economic evaluation Hillary Court is no longer the heart of retail in Naenae town centre. Many factors have contributed to this. It is however an important urban space in New Zealand's planning history and deserves to be revitalised and given a new future. Internationally retail streets are in decline and are changing to include community uses and public spaces.

There is an opportunity to discover a new future for Hillary Court with the former post office and existing library as key community assets. The former Regent picture theatre could also be reinstated as a community asset, possibly a meeting hall or gymnasium. Many of the buildings adjacent to Hillary Court could be reimagined as community facilities. This will be an ongoing investigation beyond this spatial plan. A reference for the future of Hillary Court may be the Toi Pōneke Arts Centre in Wellington. (<https://toiponeke.nz/>)

More people living around these future community assets will increase potential patronage and activity in public places and give the town centre more of a “buzz”.

07.06 POTENTIAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

In the past, strict zoning regulations prevented the mixing of land uses in and around town centres. Since the 1980's there has been a recognition that people living in town centres has many benefits. It provides a setting for a diversity of housing, as well as a twenty-four hour presence of people in the town centre. This encourages the establishment of a night-time economy as well as providing activity, surveillance, and increased safety in town centres.

Given the limited catchment for Naenae retail, there is too much frontage for retail to perform adequately on all fronts and along all streets. The introduction of residences as part of the land use mix would support the existing retail and increase the patronage of community facilities and public transport.

It is estimated that approximately 220 residential units could be delivered within the Naenae town centre. This would increase retail expenditure by approximately \$5.2 million per annum, much of which would be spent in Naenae. This would almost double local expenditure in the town centre.



Figure 67. - Expanding Hillary Court as a Community Heart. This includes a larger public plaza as well as the re-use of existing buildings for community purposes, shown blue.



Figure 68. - Possible residential development in Naenae town centre.

07.07 OPTIONS FOR NEW STREETSCAPES

The Naenae Spatial Plan proposes options for new street and shared space connections. In all cases the design will be essential to avoid typical suburban traffic behaviour. In other words, the movement in these streets should be balanced so that the needs of all users are considered and protected, particularly for those on foot. The proposed new connections and streetscape improvements are as follows:

Everest Avenue

Currently Everest Avenue is designed as a two-way street with angled 45 degree parking. The angled parking is to maximise the number of parking bays along this key retail street. The problem with angled parking is that it is aggressive to the footpath, the nose of vehicles extends over kerbs and spears onto the footpath. This reduces the attraction of alfresco dining and café seating on footpaths. It is also unsafe for vehicles required to reverse from parking bays into on-coming traffic, often unsighted when large SUV's or vans are parked alongside.

The redevelopment of the Naenae pool creates an opportunity to improve this street to create a tree-lined urban boulevard. This involves creating parallel parking along footpaths on both sides of the street. This in turn creates a useful 'barrier of steel' for external café seating and for alfresco dining. Parking numbers would be increased by a central parking lane. It is estimated that at least 104 parking bays can be achieved which is 10 more than the current design of Everest Avenue. The central parking should have a 1.8 metre "see-and-be-seen" zone in front and behind the parking bays to allow vehicles to nudge forward and see on-coming traffic. This will also facilitate ease of turning in and out of parking bays.

The street currently has very few trees. The new design creates opportunities for at least 33 trees to be planted in the street. This will dramatically increase its visual appeal, cool the street in summer and support biodiversity in Naenae.

This solution for Everest Avenue would require the road reserve to be widened to 30 metres. It is currently 22 metres wide.

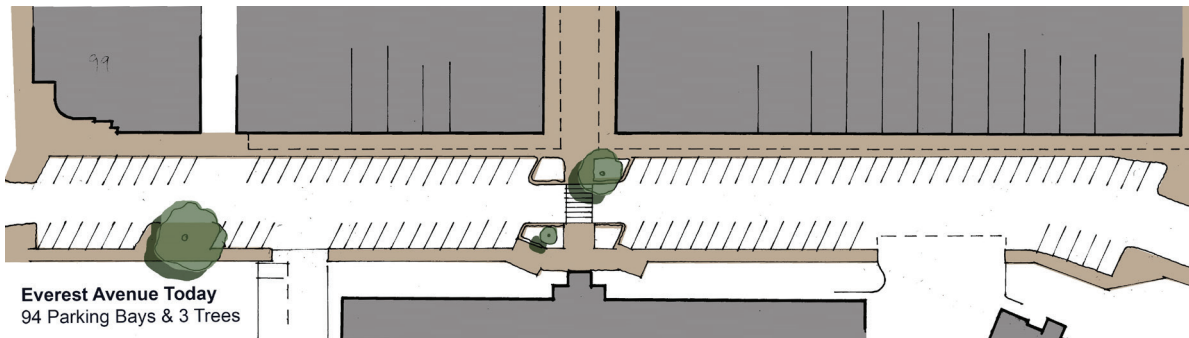


Figure 69. - Everest Avenue Today

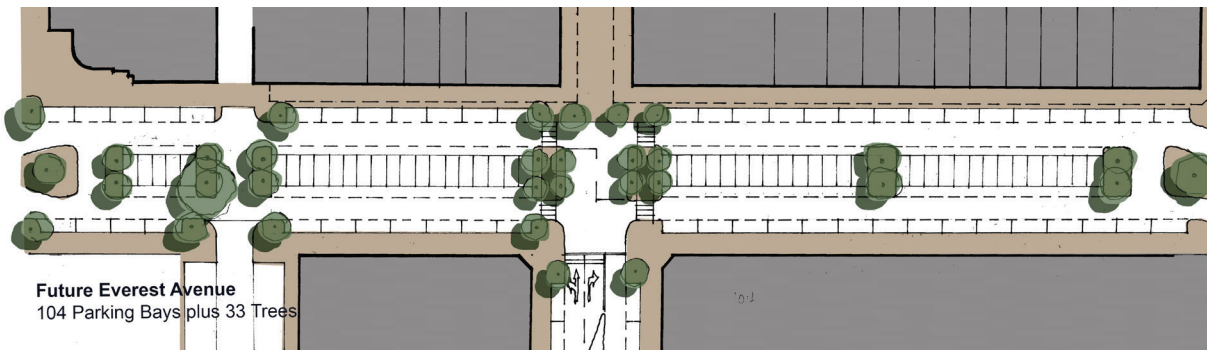


Figure 70. - Possible Future Redesign of Everest Avenue as an Urban Boulevard and Parking Street



Figure 71. - Cross-section of a Possible Future Everest Avenue.

Rata Street Extension

Hollands Crescent used to connect to Treadwell Street before the construction of the Naenae pool. This link was removed in the late 1950's. There is an opportunity to reconnect Treadwell Street to Vogel Street to improve access in and around the town centre. The design of this link will be critical. It should be designed so that speeds of more than 30 kph are discouraged and not possible. This means using multiple traffic-calming devices and techniques to achieve a low-speed street. If a supermarket is delivered on the former pool site, this link will provide an obvious route for delivery vehicles and supermarket loading. It has the potential to provide more on-street parking to service both the new pool and the retail core on Everest Street.

Hillary Court Extension

Hillary Court alignment could be extended to the south to link with the Rata Street extension. From community feedback a shared zone or very slow-moving street is favoured to create access to the new pool and potential supermarket. This is important for people with disabilities. Shared zones are being introduced to many town and city centres in New Zealand with great success. Hillary Court was the first fully pedestrian mall created in New Zealand, therefore its extension as a shared zone would seem an appropriate innovation.

Figure 72. - Hillary Court Extension as a shared space, and Rata Street extended as a narrow service road and access for coach parking.



Figure 73. - Examples of shared streets, O'Connell Street (left) and Elliot Street (right) in Auckland.

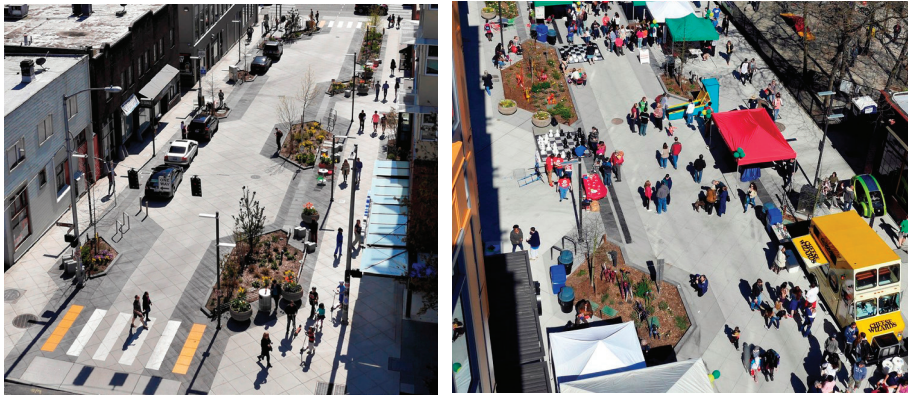


Figure 74. - A typical shared pathway in different modes, either for daily vehicle access (left) or for events and markets (right).

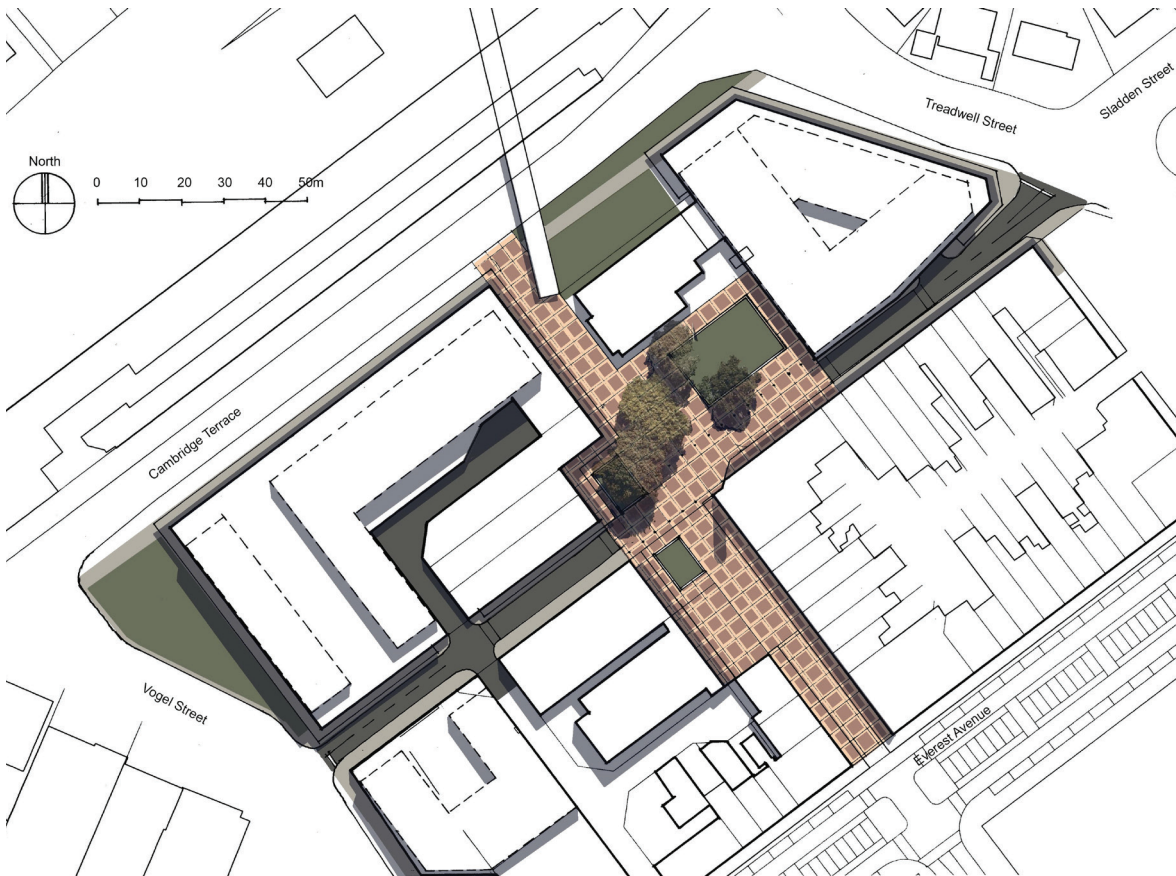


Figure 75. - An extended pathway along the Sladden Street alignment, bringing activity into the northern end of Hillary Court and a new expanded plaza between the library and former post office.

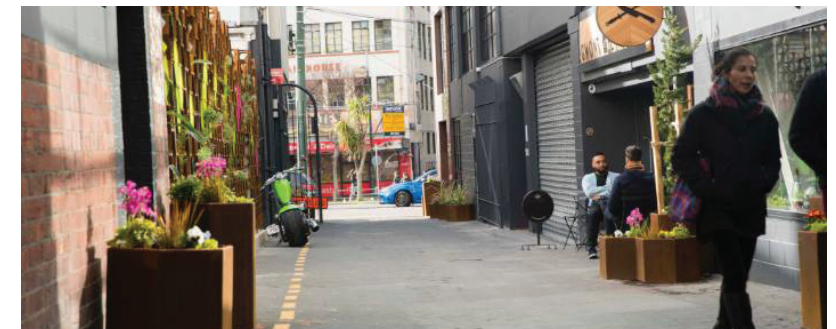
Possible Sladden Street Extension

Hillary Court is relatively long, with no meaningful connections to the north. This is part of the reason for retail failure along its length. Retail is strongest near Everest Avenue. The northern part of the court needs energising especially during quieter times of the day and week. There is an opportunity to create a large public square or plaza between the library and the former post office. This would be in sympathy with Ernst Plischke's original concept for Naenae.

There is an opportunity to enliven both the existing and new plaza, as well as the northern part of Hillary Court by creating a narrow, slow-moving shared pathway which would extend from Treadwell Street to Vogel Street. This pathway is shown at 10m wide, and it would be able to be closed to traffic at times that the plaza was active. Without a link as suggested, the northern end of Hillary Court and the new extended plaza are likely to be relatively isolated and disconnected places. This would entrench existing problems in Hillary Court.

It is critical that this link is designed with pedestrians given priority. It should be paved in one material from edge to edge and have no kerbs. Existing trees should be retained and supported by new green spaces along the street, and vehicles should only be permitted to drive at walking speed to gain access to parking under new residential buildings. Speed limits should be less than 20kph in this new linking street. Egmont Street in Wellington is a good example of such a street (See image below). When the plaza is in event mode, access to future residential buildings would still be possible.

There is an option to create the links to the future residential buildings and permanently exclude vehicles from the expanded plaza, with the exception of emergency vehicles and event-related vehicles. The urban structure of the Naenae Spatial Plan would allow all of these options.



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