

Neighbourhood Conversation Walk

Moa

A group of 17 people participated in a walk led by local resident Scott around the 'Moa' neighbourhood on 27 June 2020. This neighbourhood is a diverse area full of potential. The area has a unique mix of small streets and large big box retail. A mix of current residents and people interested in Central City living participated in the walk. The main purpose of the walk was for Council staff to hear people's thoughts and experiences of the neighbourhood and discuss opportunities to enhance neighbourhood elements and character. Informally the walk also served as an opportunity for people to discover new spaces, talk with each other about Central City living and to make connections with like-minded people. Key spaces and observations are outlined below:



Neighbourhood Strengths

- Moa Reserve provides significant amenity for a range of people, especially families with young children.
- There are a number of small residential streets which have little traffic, many trees and lower fences. This makes the streets nice and friendly and pleasant to live on.
- There is a variety of housing, including workers cottages, new developments and larger standalone homes.
- The Peterborough housing cooperative is located on Peterborough Street and features townhouses with a shared green space, a shared kitchen and laundry.
- The neighbourhood is located close to the Ōtākaro Avon River. Residents enjoy the river for walking and recreation.

Opportunities

- Find opportunities to transform the little streets into living streets to slow traffic and improve access for pedestrians.
- There is a number of large vacant sites in the neighbourhood that have the potential to be redeveloped. A large site in the commercial area next to Briscoes would be ideal for new neighbourhood services such as a supermarket and/or small local businesses.
- The Barbadoes Cemetery is a historic and contemplative space in the neighbourhood. Despite its amenity and size, the space is under-utilised by the community. The community suggested water for blessing at the cemetery entrance, wildflowers and bee hives could help make it more of a welcoming space for everybody.
- Cambridge Terrace outside the cemetery is a wide road that is rarely used for through traffic. Commuters use the road for free parking. The road could be narrowed or closed between Barbadoes and Churchill increasing the space for other users.
- Opportunity to campaign for better water quality in the Ōtākaro Avon River, and explore with Ngāi Tahu opportunities related to mahinga kai.
- Look at better ways for big box retail to interface with residential. Carters and Southern Hospitality have large blank walls which face residential properties.

Residents Points of Interest

The following spaces were some of the main points of interest on the walk led by a local resident of the Moa Neighbourhood.



Green Space

1  Moa Reserve

2  Barbadoes Cemetery

3  Avon River

Businesses and Community


4  Peterborough Cohousing


5  St Mary's Cathedral

6  Salisbury Hotel

Notable Places

7  Ely Street

8  Otley Street

9  Aberdeen Street

Summarised comments from participants

Insights gained

- “Moa Reserve is quite an attraction particularly if you had children as it is nice and contained.”
- “I learnt about the history but also what’s happening in some new builds and how others view streets.”
- “It was the first time I had seen/heard about the three Pou on Barbadoes Street. It encouraged me to find out more.”
- “It was interesting to hear from the walk leader about his experience with young children using the city as their backyard.”

Likes

- “St Mary’s Cathedral is a nice landmark for the neighbourhood.”
- “The River is very important to the community.”
- “Small streets are an oasis from the busy roads nearby.”
- “The Moa neighbourhood group meets monthly and has a summer BBQ which often gets around 140 visitors.”
- “There are lots of benefits to raising a young family in the Central City, Margaret Mahy Playground is in our backyard, local reserves, the river and we are close to services.”
- “Being able to walk to and from work creates a nice transition between home and work life.”
- “The city is an extension of my backyard.”

Dislikes

- “Ely street is swept very infrequently and roads and paths are in very rough order... the area is generally not maintained well.”
- “There are too many high fences.”
- “Commuters park in our small streets making it difficult to get out of our driveways and sometimes find a park outside our house.”
- “Sad that new builds in the area tend to be units rather than stand-alone homes. Units are less likely to be owner-occupied, occupants are often short term and less interested in being involved in the local community.”
- “There is a real jumble of uses in the area, including a large hardware store, NZMA college, and residential.”

Other

- “Salisbury Hotel has a dairy opening on the ground floor, a rooftop bar is planned and has said the community can use communal spaces.”
- “We had lots of negative perceptions of the Central City but once we moved here we love it. Some of the obstacles such as parking, having a small garden were overcome. Public parks are now an extension of our backyard and we don’t have to maintain it”.
- “We need more shops and services for locals. The electric bus would also help us get around”.
- “I hope in 10 years’ time the city is more people focussed rather than built for cars”.

How will the information be used?

Insights and experiences shared by participants on the Conversation Walk will help inform neighbourhood level planning. The walk was a great way to hear from people about the neighbourhood and build relationships. The list of strengths shows the Council what the advantages of this neighbourhood are, and the list of opportunities provides a good starting point to identify elements that could be enhanced. This information may also help shape Council webpages about Central City living.