

# Living Streets Aotearoa



## Submission from Living Streets Wellington On Kilbirnie Town Centre Plan

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### About Living Streets

Living Streets Aotearoa is New Zealand's national walking and pedestrian organisation, providing a positive voice for people on foot and working to promote walking friendly planning and development around the country. Our vision is "More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places".

The objectives of LSA are:

- to promote walking as a healthy, environmentally-friendly and universal means of transport and recreation
- to promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities
- to work for improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners e.g. walking surfaces, traffic flows, speed and safety
- to advocate for greater representation of pedestrian concerns in national, regional and urban land use and transport planning.

Living Streets Wellington is the local group based in the Wellington region which is working to make city and suburban centres in the region more walking-friendly.

For more information, please see: [www.livingstreets.org.nz](http://www.livingstreets.org.nz)

## Submission

Living Streets considers that the main issues for Kilbirnie are:

### 1. Pedestrian linkages

Links to other suburbs (e.g. Newtown) are poor, and within Kilbirnie routes to the recreation centre, the aquatic centre, the library and the proposed ICSC are not obvious. There is no public link through the block between Bay Road and the car parking in Onepu Road.

### 2. Quality of streetscape and urban design

Bay Road is dominated by cars, and provides the potential for shared space; Onepu Road carparks are very unattractive and an inefficient use of space.

### 3. Public transport provision

Kilbirnie is a major public transport centre, but the facilities are poor for both pedestrians and buses, and there are no bus links to nearby suburbs such as Melrose or Houghton Bay, for which Kilbirnie is their local shopping centre.

Living Streets members took a walking tour round Kilbirnie Town Centre, and they recorded the following points:

#### 1. Rongotai Rd (western end)

- a. The Rongotai Rd/Bay Rd cross roads has opportunity for narrowing the intersection with attractive low planters. (The planters outside Commonsense Organics are about to be planted up with herbs by volunteers).
- b. The driveway by Configure gym emphasises cars over pedestrians and could be improved with either pedestrian stencils or putting the slope only at the edge of the kerb.
- c. St Patrick's Parish Hall's blank face is unattractive (a window would help), but the planting is nice.
- d. For pedestrians the crossing by Childers Terrace going towards Newtown is appalling. Is this an opportunity for a roundabout, making Childers Terrace a dead-end at this point (allow walking/cycling through)? There are schools nearby e.g. St Catherine's, which should be involved as stakeholders – could there be a Safer Routes to School exercise done? There is a walkway leading up from the west side of the road, but there is no indication as to where it goes.
- e. Make clear the walking links to the Southern Walkway heading north and to Newtown past the tennis courts
- f. Need to liaise with GW re bus routes and possible interchange/bus hub, and provide links to areas currently hard to access by bus, e.g. Melrose and the South Coast (Lyal Bay is well served, but not the rest of the coast).
- g. Heritage character that remains is important e.g. Number 2 Rongotai Rd (Kim's curios, Nick's coffee house and single storey cottage next door).
- h. A passer-by said that the rubbish bins should be larger.

## 2. Kilbirnie Plaza

- a. This is not a place, but a car park – it should be more like Melbourne’s lanes! It is unattractive run-down and not treated as a whole, with not many mobility parks noticed. The street furniture of bins and seats is tired. WINZ rear building access is good – can see people through big glass wall. The apartments are dire at ground level, but better higher up.
- b. The “mini square” outside Housing NZ “mini square” has possibilities, e.g. a swing near the Children’s Bookshop.
- c. There are poor-quality wooden drain covers and grotty pavers, many of which are slumping, creating a trip hazard.
- d. The cherry trees and the prostrate coprosma in pedestrian-only part are nice.
- e. There are nice shops e.g. Children’s Bookshop but they are hidden. There are many interesting ethnic food premises (Greek, Indian, and Russian) but no common marketing together.

## 3. Onepu Rd

- a. The Onepu Rd/Rongotai Rd intersection is appalling – no pedestrian access from Pak’n Save corner to the Police corner, nor from Police to KFC. Planting would help soften the landscape.
- b. The car parks along the back of Woolworths etc need planter boxes and shared car parking – perhaps a parking building?
- c. There is a charming view of balconies and decks at corner opposite Rita Angus – human scale! Rita Angus a positive contribution especially where balconies overlook the street.
- d. The footpath on Onepu Rd beside Rita Angus seems to be used permanently as a car park – this is unsafe and unsightly.
- e. Onepu Rd needs more trees.
- f. The proposed redevelopment of the bus barns would provide an opportunity for mixed development, but the heritage of Kilbirnie needs to be respected.

## 4. Bay Rd

- a. The footpaths should be wider – perhaps a shared space, with carparking encouraged in Onepu Rd rather than Bay Rd.
- b. The block between Bay Rd and Onepu Rd is impermeable except through shops, and this access is not always available (e.g. in the evenings). There should be better linkages between Onepu Rd car parking and Bay Rd.

## 5. Other points and ideas

- a. The drainage reserve is run-down but could be great space for a linear community garden/ orchard with espaliered fruit trees. It provides a connection with an off-road path to Lyall Bay, which is not obvious and needs signage.
- b. The connection to the Coutts St airport underpass should be clearly signed for peds/cyclists – a great connection that few know of.
- c. There should be a walking map for Kilbirnie/Rongotai and their connections.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Kilbirnie Town Centre Plan. We would be happy to present in person, or to discuss with you further if there is the opportunity to do so.