



Newtown Park Apartments

Wellington

Originally constructed in 1967 on the site of an old tram depot, the Wellington City Council housing at Newtown Park consists of three large towers and two lower blocks containing 205 housing units on an 8,700 square metre site. The brief for the project was to give a new life to the buildings and their surrounding landscape by addressing seismic and code compliance issues and increasing amenity to residents by improving the quality of exterior and interior spaces. This included giving the buildings identity and integrating them into the surrounding site and suburb. Units were to be upgraded to a modern standard of living, including creating new family units.

Externally, the site and landscape surrounding each of the buildings has been remodelled from what used to be predominantly carparking into a series of distinct community spaces that provide amenity to tenants. Timber fencing is finished in Resene Waterborne Woodsman in **Resene Pitch Black** while exposed concrete is protected in Resene Uracryl GraffitiShield to help protect the prone surfaces against graffiti.

The site is stitched back into the surrounding Newtown suburb by breaking down the main street frontage with a series of private and community yards

that directly relate to the buildings. The main entries for the buildings are clearly defined with light and colour.

A series of new internal community spaces focus out into a new exterior community courtyard, which provides a recreation space for scooters, bikes, ball sports and playing. A series of material thresholds and planted spaces help define the public thoroughfare as distinct from semi-private and private residents' spaces. A new site lighting scheme provides a safe and comfortable level of light and warmth at night.

Each of the buildings has been upgraded to meet seismic and Building Code requirements and to improve safety, security and amenity for residents. Inside, entry lobbies and corridors have been upgraded with new surface finishes, acoustic ceilings and new coloured lighting recesses to provide a freshness to the interior. New glazing and louvres provide natural light and fresh air throughout the corridors. Corridors open out onto an open drying terrace at the north end of each building, where residents can enjoy the views and fresh air together. Access and egress has been improved with new or refurbished lifts in each of the buildings as well as new compliant fire egress stairs in each of the towers.





Each of the apartments has been upgraded with double glazing and insulation to improve thermal performance. New carpets, vinyl, wall finishes and curtains provide fresh surfaces throughout the units. New bathroom and kitchen ventilation has been added to improve amenity and compliance with kitchens and bathrooms. Kitchen joinery has been retained and upgraded by re-finishing the existing Rimu kitchen joinery and stainless steel benchtops. Some units have also been amalgamated into larger family units, to provide a variety of unit types across the site.

Colour is used in a considered way throughout the project as a way of encouraging building identity, highlighting key building elements and spaces and to provide a sense of joy and lightness to what would otherwise be a heavy collection of buildings. A neutral 'concrete' base in a number of tones, accompanied by coloured

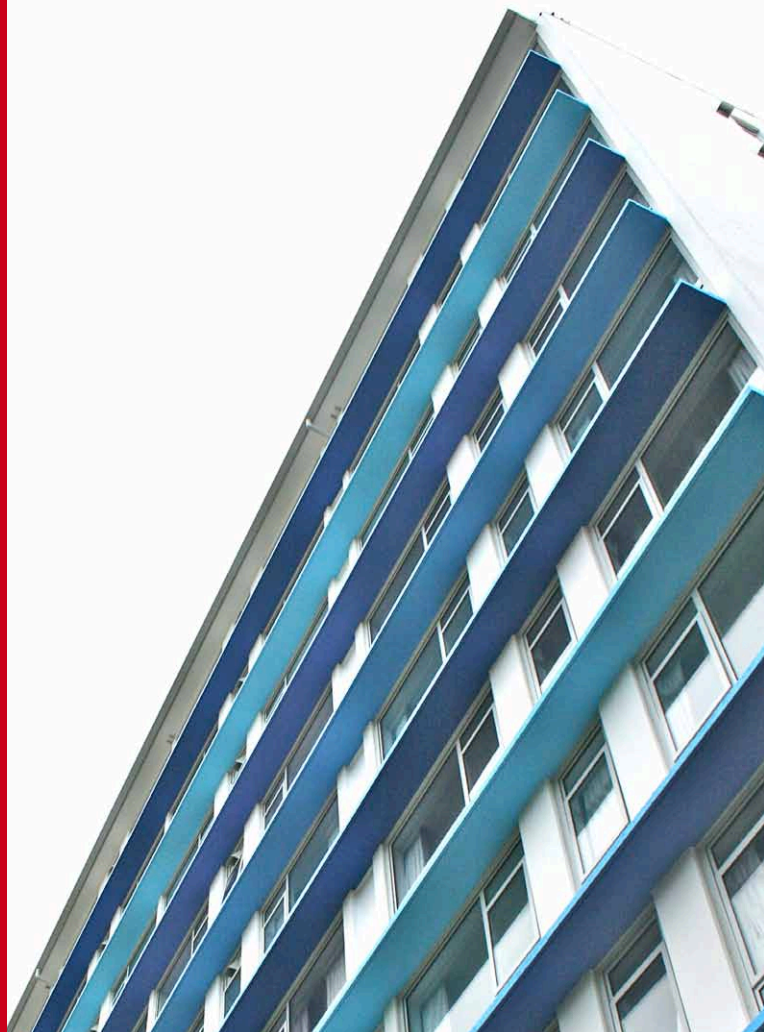
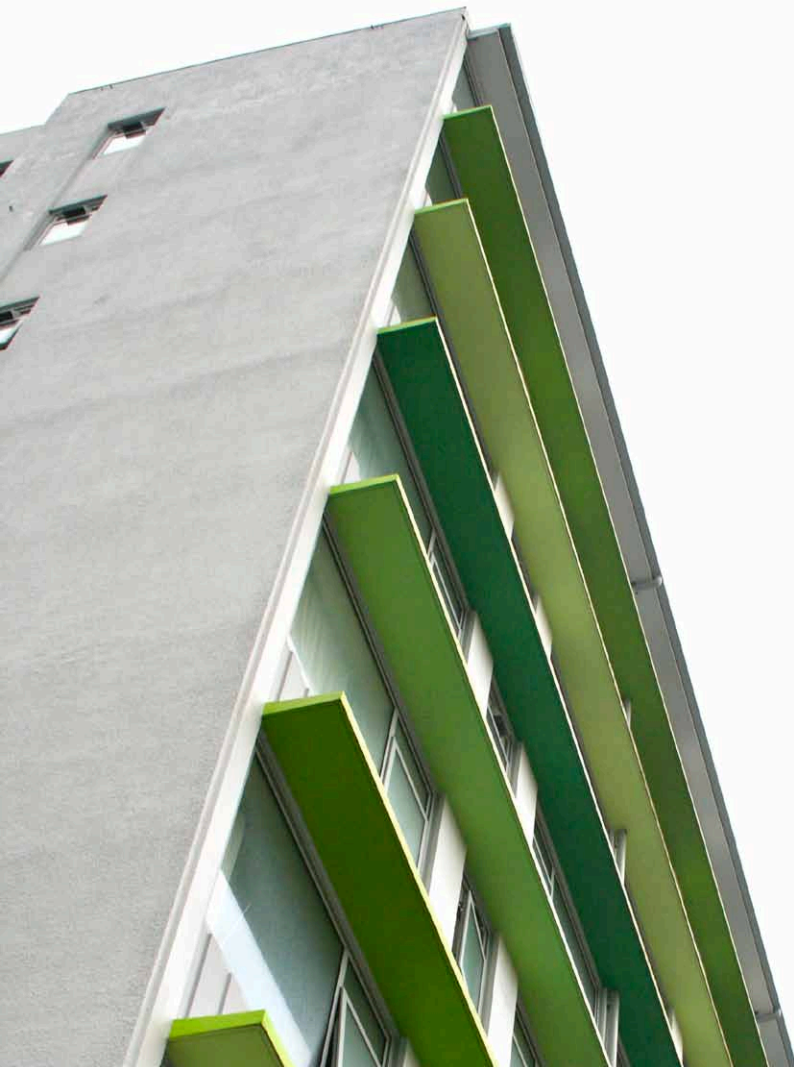
highlights is used to make each of the buildings sing.

The neutral greys palette is made up of **Resene Half Concrete**, **Resene Double Concrete**, **Resene Triple Concrete**, **Resene Eighth Tuna**, **Resene Quarter Tuna**, **Resene Tuna** and **Resene Double Tuna** used in a variety of products to suit the area of use. **Resene Sonyx 101** semi-gloss waterborne is used on fibre cement sheeting, **Resene Enamacryl** gloss waterborne enamel on exterior timber doors, **Resene Lustacryl** semi-gloss waterborne enamel on refurbished timber windows, **Resene X-200** weathertight membrane on concrete aprons, **Resene Armourcote** and **Resene Uracryl** on steelwork, **Resene Aquapoxy** on concrete floors and **Resene Lumbersider** low sheen waterborne paint.

Colour provides an opportunity to give each of the individual buildings a distinct identity and assist with site wayfinding. Five different colourways were applied to

each of the buildings as highlights – green, green-blue, blue, purple and orange-red:

- Block A is highlighted with **Resene Lickety Split**, **Resene Christi**, **Resene Sulu**, **Resene Japanese Laurel** and **Resene Mantis**.
- Block B is highlighted with **Resene Niagara**, **Resene Observatory**, **Resene Guru**, **Resene Riptide** and **Resene Kitsch**.
- Block C features **Resene Whizz Bang**, **Resene Hazard**, **Resene Dynamite**, **Resene Equator** and **Resene Flame Red**.
- Block D features **Resene Curious Blue**, **Resene Governor Bay**, **Resene Torea Bay**, **Resene Malibu** and **Resene Havelock Blue**.
- Block E features **Resene Sassy**, **Resene Lavender**, **Resene Chetwode Blue**, **Resene Blue Bell** and **Resene Troubadour**.



 Resene Smashing

Acoustic engineer: Marshall Day www.marshallday.com

Architectural specifier: Studio of Pacific Architecture
www.studiopacific.co.nz

Building contractor: Hawkins Construction www.hawkinsconstruction.co.nz

Client: Wellington City Council www.wcc.govt.nz

Façade engineer: Aurecon www.aurecongroup.com

Geotechnical engineer: Tonkin + Taylor www.tonkin.co.nz

Landscape architecture:
Isthmus Group www.isthmus.co.nz

Painting contractor:
Metropolitan Painters and JPB Painting Contractors

Photographer: Studio of Pacific Architecture
www.studiopacific.co.nz, Neil Price, Wellington City Council www.wcc.govt.nz

Project strategy: RJHA Limited www.rjha.co.nz

Security and crime prevention through environmental design: Stoks Limited

Services, ESD and fire engineer:
BECA www.beca.com

Structural and seismic engineer:
Dunning Thornton Consultants
www.dunningthornton.co.nz



Each colourway is used to highlight key elements inside and outside each of the buildings. On the outside of the buildings, colours are used to celebrate the strength of the existing modernist architectural features, such as the slender horizontal inter-storey concrete aprons on the Towers, or the punched-out living room windows in the low blocks. Colour is also used to highlight exterior balconies and terraces as focus points for residents' interaction.

In the interior, colour is used to activate and provide warmth to spaces intended for residents to occupy together. Colour highlights each of the building entry lobbies, brightens up the stair spaces through vibrant steel balustrades, warms up drying terraces and balconies, signifies the entry to a home by brightening up the unit's entry alcove, and provides a soft wash to the lighting recess in each of the internal corridors.

A choice of three different colourways (neutral, red or blue) adds identity to the interior of each apartment. Among other material selections, this includes

refurbishing the existing Rimu kitchen joinery with new paint colours to suit.

The perforated screen panels that make up the Mansfield Street elevation of Block C were prefabricated and painted off-site using a robust combination of zinc arc spray, Resene Armourcote and Resene Uracryl. The screen panels are part of a new façade strategy for Block C which is designed to turn the old back of the building into the new front of the building by injecting colour, texture and depth into the building's façade.

The façade creates a filter between the inside of the building and the street, providing increased privacy, security and shelter for tenants to access their front doors. It provides varying levels of natural light and views within the corridors and apartments behind, by changing the size, shape and frequency of holes within the panels. Screen panels may 'open up' where they are in front of windows or next to balconies, and also become more solid when they are in front of an apartment's entry door.

The panels hang off a steel tray system which is clipped to the existing building to extend the width of the corridor behind the façade. The modulation of the façade reflects the arrangement of the units within the building, by 'popping out' to reflect the arrangement of the units behind the screens. The panels are prefabricated from 6mm thick mild steel to standard sheet width, perforated using a water jet and were lifted and fixed into position on site over just a few weeks. Coloured balconies add an additional level of detail and articulation, defining spaces for residents to pause, take in the view and activate in their own ways.

In order to provide a cost effective design, as much existing built fabric was retained as possible. This offered a significant challenge in ensuring that finishes were of a high level of quality throughout. This included repairing existing broadwall plaster, plasterboard and wallpapered walls of varying conditions. A careful, site specific specification with a focus on surface preparation was vital to achieving a quality outcome.

