



Flaxmere Park Public Toilets

Hastings

The Hastings District Council was carrying out an extensive project improving the long established Flaxmere Park in the satellite suburb to the north-west of Hastings. The park is a flat green block with beautiful large mature tree specimens adjacent to the shopping centre which is the social heart of the area and includes a library and local police station.

Under this redevelopment project the existing playground within the park was moved and expanded and augmented with the addition of a new splash pad and a new public toilet facility.

The design of the toilet building was inspired by the lush green and soothing environment of the park itself. In what is an area of high unemployment and consequent social deprivation the park is an oasis of calm. The new toilets were not intended to be overtly challenging in design terms but rather to sit comfortably within the park environment

and make direct reference to this setting.

Precast concrete was selected for pragmatic reasons for the building structure and left as a natural texture with colour used as an accent to soften the bulk. These panels were cast with recesses to have colour applied to break the 'blank canvas' temptation the concrete walls would offer would-be taggers. Floating above these solid wall panels is the roof with plywood soffit which is stained with perforated aluminium panels between the two to draw light and air inside.

A low concrete wall and bench seat is placed in front of the toilets to create a buffer to the park and form an outdoor 'lobby'.

The use of colour was considered at concept design stage and is an important part of the design expression. The recesses in the precast concrete wall panels had colour applied to express an abstracted pattern of the colours and shapes of variegated flax leaves. Three colours were chosen for

the building – two greens and a yellow (**Resene Groovy**, **Resene Billy T** and a colour matched Heritage Green) inspired by the green and yellow stripes found in many flaxes, with the greens repeated on the doors.

Being a public toilet probably the most important consideration in design is robustness and an ability to detract vandalism but when the inevitable happens, that graffiti can be removed without damage. Resene Uracryl was the obvious solution. Concrete panels were sealed with Resene Aquapel water repellent sealer and then clear coated with the topcoats being low sheen. Pigmented Resene Uracryl is used under the clear coats where colour is applied. The soffit is a natural timber finish with Resene Colorwood stain in **Resene Ironbark** overcoated in clear Resene Uracryl.



Architectural specifier: Brent Scott, Citrus Studio Architecture

Building contractor: Waipukurau Construction

Client: Hastings District Council

Landscape design: Phil Henderson, Evergreen Landscapes

Painting contractor: Chris Clark, Napier Painting Contractors

Photographer: Brent Scott

Structural engineers: Guy Lethbridge, Stratagroup

 Resene Meltwater

