



Case Study 53

Rooke Street Mall Redevelopment

Devonport TAS

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Client: Devonport City Council

Landscape designer: Philp Lighton Architects

Paving & landscaping contractor: Devonport City Council

Rooke Street Mall redevelopment, **Devonport TAS**



Peter Gaggin of Philp Lighton Architects recalls visiting the Rooke Street Mall as a youth. "It was fairly barren, paved with typical old 1970's mud-coloured concrete pavers." By the end of the 1990s the trees were overgrown and paver surfaces had worn, exposing the porous body.

"Our main brief was to open it out and bring some life back into the street," Gaggin explains. Building on Devonport's rich maritime history – the port, one of the busiest in the state, is the city's economic base and the gateway for passengers arriving on the *Spirit of Tasmania I, II and III* – the designers created a wave pattern in the paving, sweeping down the mall to the Mersey River. The side strips are segmented into market spaces, with the centre being a throughway.

'Waves' of paving sweep down the mall, reflecting Devonport's maritime heritage and ongoing connection to the sea.

Any major redevelopment has potential to disrupt trading. The Devonport City Council took a proactive approach to the problem. "Well before work started we appointed a liaison officer," says Chris Wools-Cobb, from the council's Infrastructure Services department. "His job was to visit all the shops, and keep them in touch with our plans and progress."

The project was divided into three stages with council staff working in two teams, one crew starting at 6 am, the other two hours later. This allowed for a continuous work flow and minimal disruption.

The complex centre pattern caused a few teething problems. The solution was to prepare laminated plans showing the paving pattern. "Getting a system happening with the guys worked quite well," says Wools-Cobb.

The greatest challenge was finishing to shop thresholds, which varied considerably. This was exacerbated by the mall's 3.5 metre fall over its city block length.



"Making a Great Mess to Make a Great Mall!"

Capping the project, and reinforcing the maritime theme, will be three different sails: stainless steel mesh, galvanised mesh square shade structure, and PVC sails. All were fabricated in Tasmania.

The project's forthright slogan was 'Making a Great Mess to Make a Great Mall!' The redevelopment has opened up the space, and encouraged the return of shoppers. "The feedback from shop owners and the shoppers themselves is excellent," concludes Peter Gaggin.



(Clockwise from above top)
The Rook Street Mall redevelopment has delivered on its promise to return shoppers and pedestrians to what had become a run-down precinct. Matching pavement levels was a unique challenge at each shop entry. The simple design of the street furniture doesn't distract the eye from the flow of the mall. The paving patterns and colours delineate and break down the extensive area.

Photography by Bob Iddon

Links

www.dcc.tas.gov.au

