



2017 QUEENSTOWN PUBLIC LIFE SURVEY

Report credits:

The following report has been prepared for Queenstown Lakes District Council by

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“If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places.

Fred Kent - Projects for Public Spaces

In the mid-1960's, renowned Architect and Urban Designer Jan Gehl, was posed a simple but important question by his wife Ingrid – a developmental psychologist; *“Why don't architects care about people?”*.

In responding to this question, it occurred to Jan that we know more about the habitats of wild animals than we do about people and the relationships they have with the places they live, work and visit. Almost all cities record vehicular traffic, economic growth, housing development, noise and pollution, yet little is recorded regarding people - the life blood, and heart of our urban areas.

This report, prepared as a forerunner to the Town Centre Masterplan signals a change in this paradigm for Queenstown.

In short form, Public Life Surveys are a tool for measuring the relationships between people and their wider built environments - a means of capturing qualitative and quantitative data regarding the health of public life - and in turn informing future strategies and interventions that result in more liveable places.

1.0 Introduction

Without observing a community's relationship to the space around them - who the users are, how they move about, where they are going, what they do when they get there and how long they stay - we risk creating spaces that fail to serve their intended purposes, that is to make our urban areas happier and more liveable for residents, workers and visitors.

As long time students of great urban observers such as William H Whyte, Jane Jacobs and Jan Gehl, this report aspires to address the relationships between the workers, visitors and residents of Queenstown and the places that surround them - their neighbourhoods, communities and homes.

It is with great pleasure that we present this report.

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1.1 Survey purpose

Established by Denmark-based ‘Urban Quality Consultants’ Gehl Architects, Public Life Surveys are a tool for gaining a detailed overview of the level and type of public life visible in our urban spaces.

Public Life Surveys provide information on where people walk and spend time - either as part of their daily activities or for recreational purposes. They provide information on how many people sit, stand or carry out other stationary activities in the city and where they do it. These stationary activities act as a good indicator of the quality of a city's urban spaces - a large number of pedestrians walking in the city does not necessarily indicate a high level of quality, however a high number of people choosing to spend time in the city can indicate a lively city of strong urban quality.

The purpose of this survey was to provide a baseline regarding public life in the town centre and in turn can be used to inform strategies and initiatives within the Town Centre Masterplan. The plan is a thorough review that defines *“what the Town Centre as a place should be and providing the necessary infrastructure to support a robust local economy”*.

Guiding this Masterplan process are four key objectives:

- People enjoy spending time in town, because the built environment complements the natural environment, referencing local history and culture.
- Improved access to the town centre for both locals and visitors.
- Queenstown has a liveable, thriving & authentically NZ town centre, where visitors and locals freely mix and participate in a range of activities.
- Increased commercial activity, without major negative impact on the environment or local residents' peaceful enjoyment.

This report provides measurable and quantifiable baseline data regarding the current quality of the public spaces and public life in central Queenstown allowing the above objectives to be evaluated, measured and delivered.

1.2 Survey area



Activity counting locations.

- 01 Beach Street
- 02 Earnslaw Park
- 03 Village Green
- 04 The Mall
- 05 Queenstown Bay
- 06 Queenstown Gardens



Pedestrian counting locations.

- 01 Beach St
- 02 Rees St
- 03 Cow Ln
- 04 The Mall
- 05 Ballarat St N
- 06 Searle Ln
- 07 Church St
- 08 Earl St
- 09 Marine Parade
- 10 Gorge Rd
- 11 Brecon St
- 12 Lake Esplanade
- 13 Camp St
- 14 Coronation Dr
- 15 Stanley St



Age & Gender location.

- 01 The Mall



The method used for collecting pedestrian activity is widely accepted as the most valuable method for understanding and measuring public life. The survey registers three different data sets:

- 01. Pedestrian traffic
- 02. Stationary activities
- 03. Age and gender

01. Pedestrian traffic | Pedestrian counts, as suggested, are a tally of the number of pedestrians walking within the survey area. The counts provide an indication of activity levels, destinations that attract people and possible indications of where users are walking to and from.

The pedestrian counts were carried out in 10-minute periods, every hour between 8am and 8pm. Pedestrians moving on both sides of surveyed roads have been counted (between building edge and building edge).

02. Stationary activities | Mapping of activities provides a snapshot of the people spending time in the city centre and provides an overview of the 'staying' activities occurring throughout the day, such as standing, sitting, playing, working, and engaging in sports, cultural or commercial activities.

Stationary activity mapping is carried out by walking through a designated public space, from one end to the other, and registering all activities passed on the way.

For the purpose of this report stationary activities were mapped every second hour between 10am and 6pm.

1.3 Survey method

03. Age & Gender | An age and gender survey provides a picture of the age and gender of users moving through the city. The balance between different age groups, and between men and women, is an indicator of the quality, safety and integration of public spaces.

This data was registered every second hour between 10am and 6pm (Mall St), with each registration including a minimum sample size of 200 people.

The survey was undertaken during the peak of winter tourist season on Wednesday 12th July and Saturday 15th July 2017. No unusual events (festivals, markets, protests etc.) that could effect the data took place on the day of the survey.

** Note: The weekend survey included the Creative Queenstown Arts n Crafts Market as this is a regular occurrence in the centre of town and not deemed 'unusual'.*



Wednesday 12th July | H 4° / L 1°c.
Saturday 15th July | H 9° / L -2°c.

2.0 Survey highlights



2.1 Public life at a glance



Stationary Activities | Weekday

In total, 1,259 stationary activities were recorded during the weekday survey, an incredibly high number given the size and scale of the town centre (New Zealand's largest city centre, Auckland, recorded 1,850 stationary activities during a summer count in 2015).

The greater number of these activities were concentrated around the lake side, which offers a range of primary and secondary seating opportunities and importantly space to simply wander about. In stark contrast, spaces removed from the lake side, such as the Village Green, recognised as a popular summer destination, remained almost empty with only 1% of the total recorded counts.

The greater majority of activities were standing and/or walking leisurely, despite at times inclement weather and freezing temperatures. In fact unlike many town centres, leisurely walking does not appear to be less desirable in cold, winter conditions.

The highest level of activity was recorded at Beach Rd/Lakeside - with 31% of all counts, however a high level of stationary activities were recorded at all lake-side counting locations.

Evening and early morning activities were significantly lower across the centre, receiving approximately 15% of total recorded activities. Of these numbers 97% were recorded on either The Mall or the lake-front, acknowledging these areas as important hospitality destinations.



Pedestrian Traffic | Weekday

The total number of weekday pedestrian movements recorded across the weekday survey area totalled 14,186, many of which were recorded either at the lake front, primary retail streets or the feeder streets leading to them. At a glance, pedestrian activity peaks close to midday and remains fairly constant throughout the survey time.

The Rees St survey location experienced the highest levels of recorded pedestrian activity, with 2,535 pedestrian movement recorded over the course of the day, closely followed by The Mall that counted 2,283 pedestrian movements.

Counting spots on 'feeder' routes leading into the town centre, such as Gorge Rd and Coronation Dr, counts for 7 out of 15 survey locations and recorded a total 4,503 pedestrian movements, making up 32% of total counts. Typically (and largely reflecting existing car parking locations) all feeder streets have an even spread of foot traffic, averaging between 3% and 7% of the total foot traffic.

Cow Lane experienced the lowest of all foot traffic in the centre with less than 1% of all pedestrian movements.



Stationary Activities | Saturday

Weekend stationary activity counts totalled a 2,260 - an 80% increase from Wednesday. The presence of the Queenstown Craft Market accounts for much of this increase however the majority of recorded sites experienced increased activities. The Mall was the only location that experienced a decrease (approximately 36% less than Wednesday), which likely reflects fewer workers in the centre and possibly 'retail competition' from the markets.

Unsurprisingly then, the highest level of stationary activity recorded was at lakeside, during the market times, where 1,253 activities were recorded throughout the day. This number accounts for approximately 55% of all stationary activity recorded in the centre. Beyond 2pm (whereby the market begins to wind down), activity along lakeside reduces significantly and better reflects weekday activity levels.

The clear majority of stationary activities recorded after the close of the market (89%) can be found on The Mall or Lake front - the primary centre for retail and hospitality.



Pedestrian Traffic | Saturday

The number of pedestrian movements recorded across the survey area on Saturday totalled 14,086*; approximately the same as weekday foot traffic, with a very similar trend pattern across the day, however peaking slightly later at 2pm. This reflects the towns focus as a tourist hub - differing from many towns and cities that by and large experience a noticeable drop in weekend foot traffic (Auckland City Centre sees a reduction of 14%, while Manukau Town Centre reduces by 40%).

Of the total foot traffic recorded, approximately 69% was located in the core, with the highest number of pedestrians recorded on The Mall (2,452).

Cow Lane remained largely underutilised with a total of 51 counts across the day (less than 0.5% of the total number).

Like weekday traffic, streets that work as feeder routes to the town centre experience roughly 31% of all pedestrian traffic with fairly constant counts from mid-morning on.

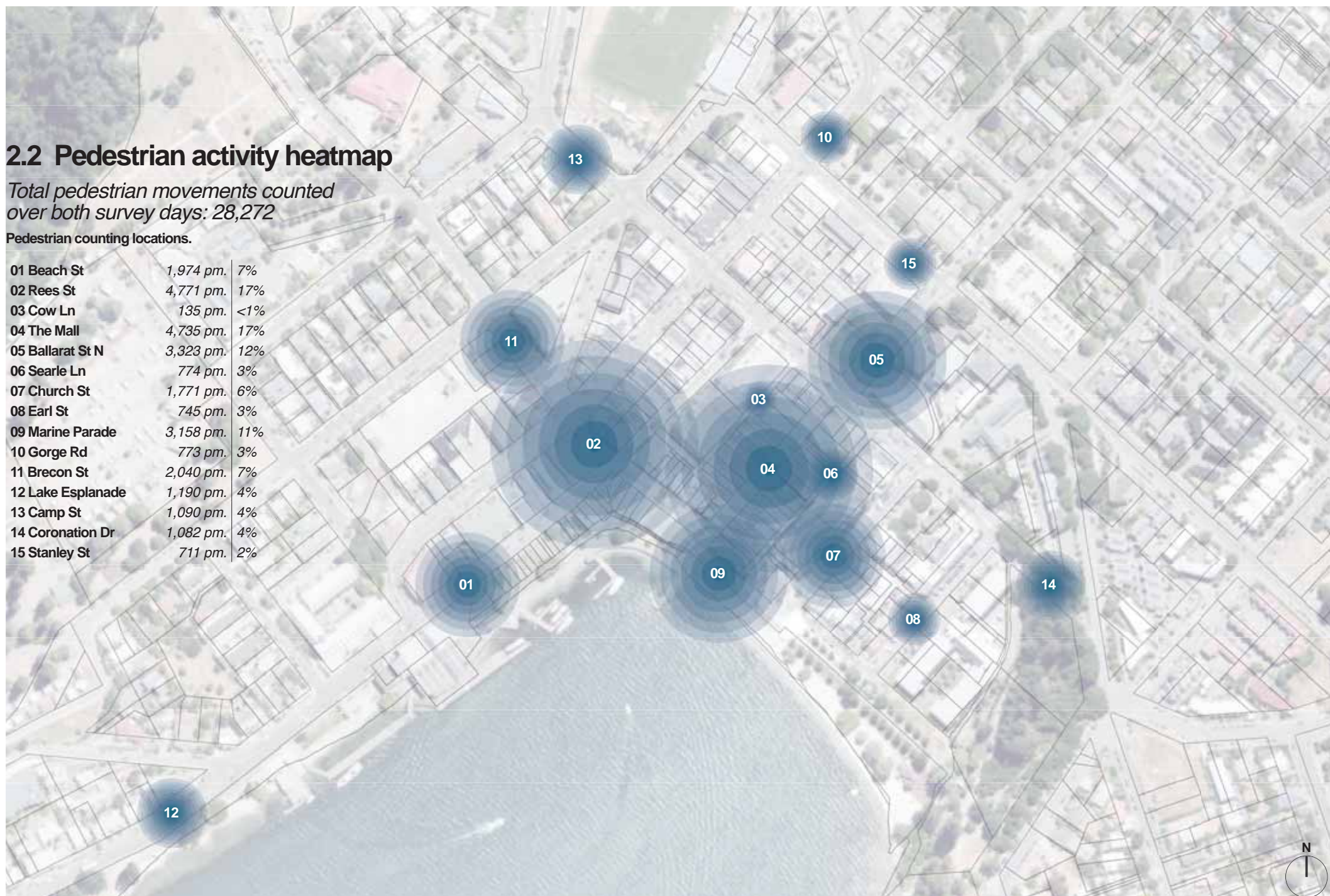
*

2.2 Pedestrian activity heatmap

Total pedestrian movements counted over both survey days: 28,272

Pedestrian counting locations.

01 Beach St	1,974 pm.	7%
02 Rees St	4,771 pm.	17%
03 Cow Ln	135 pm.	<1%
04 The Mall	4,735 pm.	17%
05 Ballarat St N	3,323 pm.	12%
06 Searle Ln	774 pm.	3%
07 Church St	1,771 pm.	6%
08 Earl St	745 pm.	3%
09 Marine Parade	3,158 pm.	11%
10 Gorge Rd	773 pm.	3%
11 Brecon St	2,040 pm.	7%
12 Lake Esplanade	1,190 pm.	4%
13 Camp St	1,090 pm.	4%
14 Coronation Dr	1,082 pm.	4%
15 Stanley St	711 pm.	2%



2.3 Stationary activity heatmap

Total stationary activities counted over both survey days: 3,519

Activity counting locations.

47%	1,642 sa.	01 Beach St +
20%	692 sa.	02 Earnslaw Park
18%	643 sa.	03 Village Green
14%	509 sa.	04 The Mall
1%	33 sa.	05 Queenstown Bay
		06 Queenstown Gardens

Legend

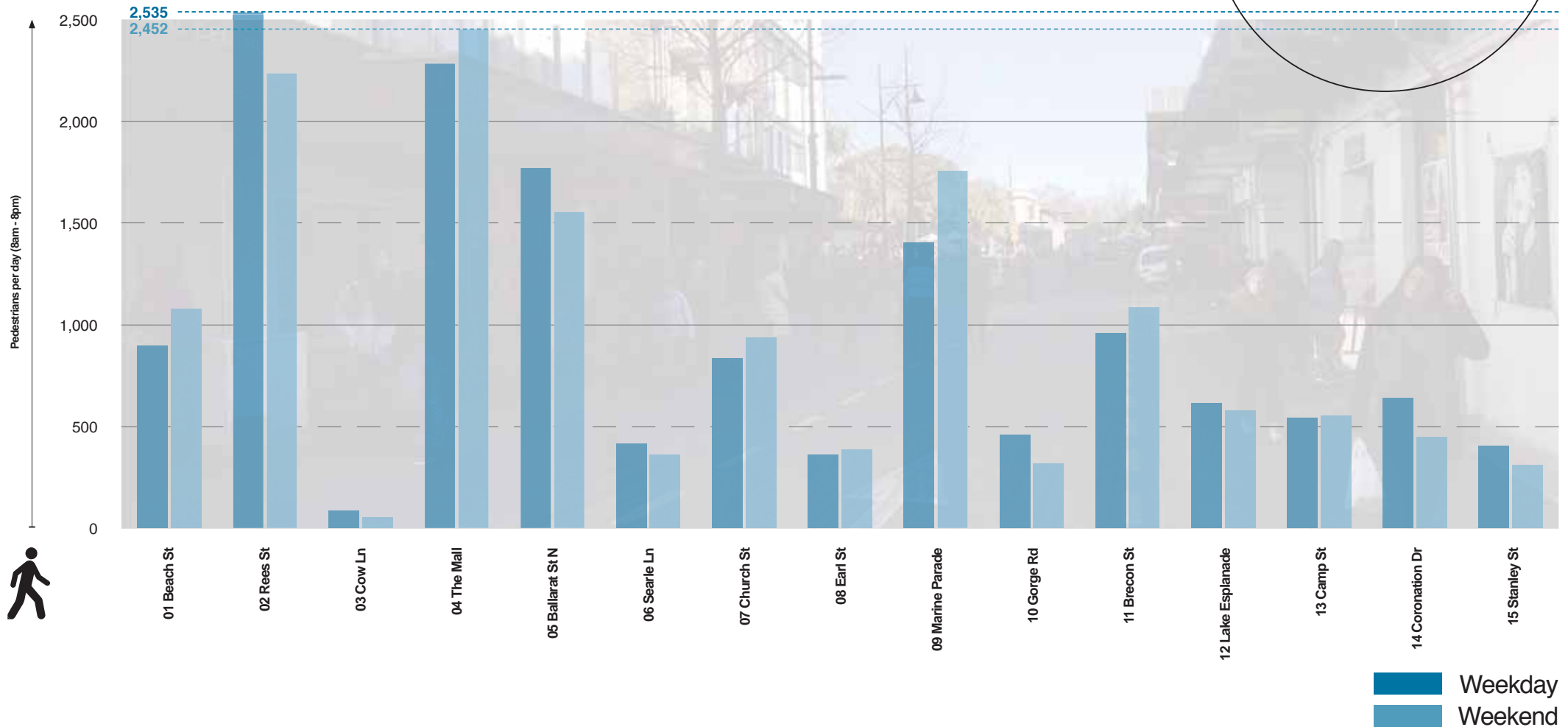
- Waiting for transport
- Commercial active
- Cultural activities
- Standing
- Walking
- Physical activities
- Children playing
- Lying down
- Sitting on café chairs
- Sitting on benches
- Secondary seating



2.4 Pedestrian traffic

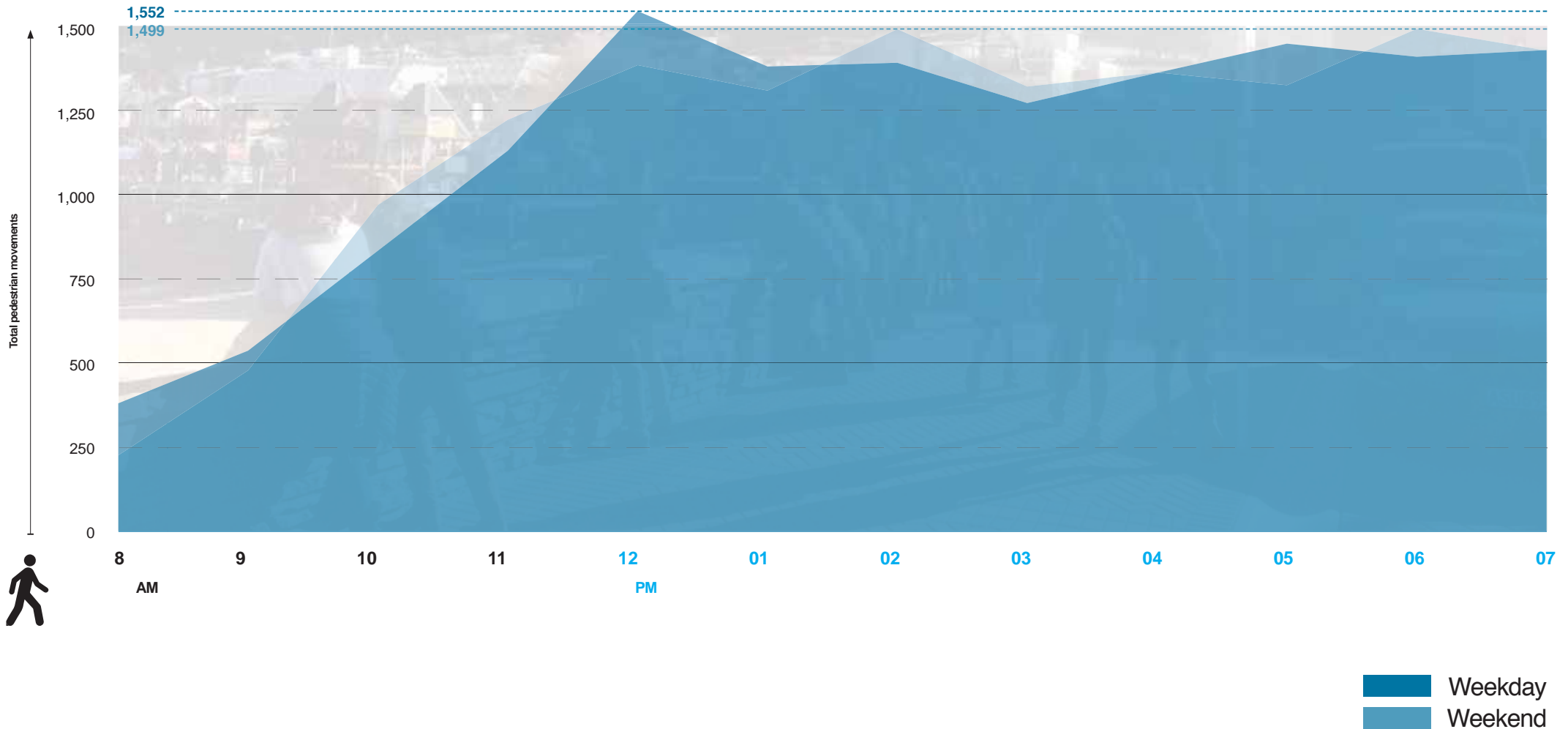
Total pedestrian movements counted per day at each survey spot

Total pedestrian
movements
Weekday: 14,186
Weekend: 14,086



2.5 Pedestrian trends

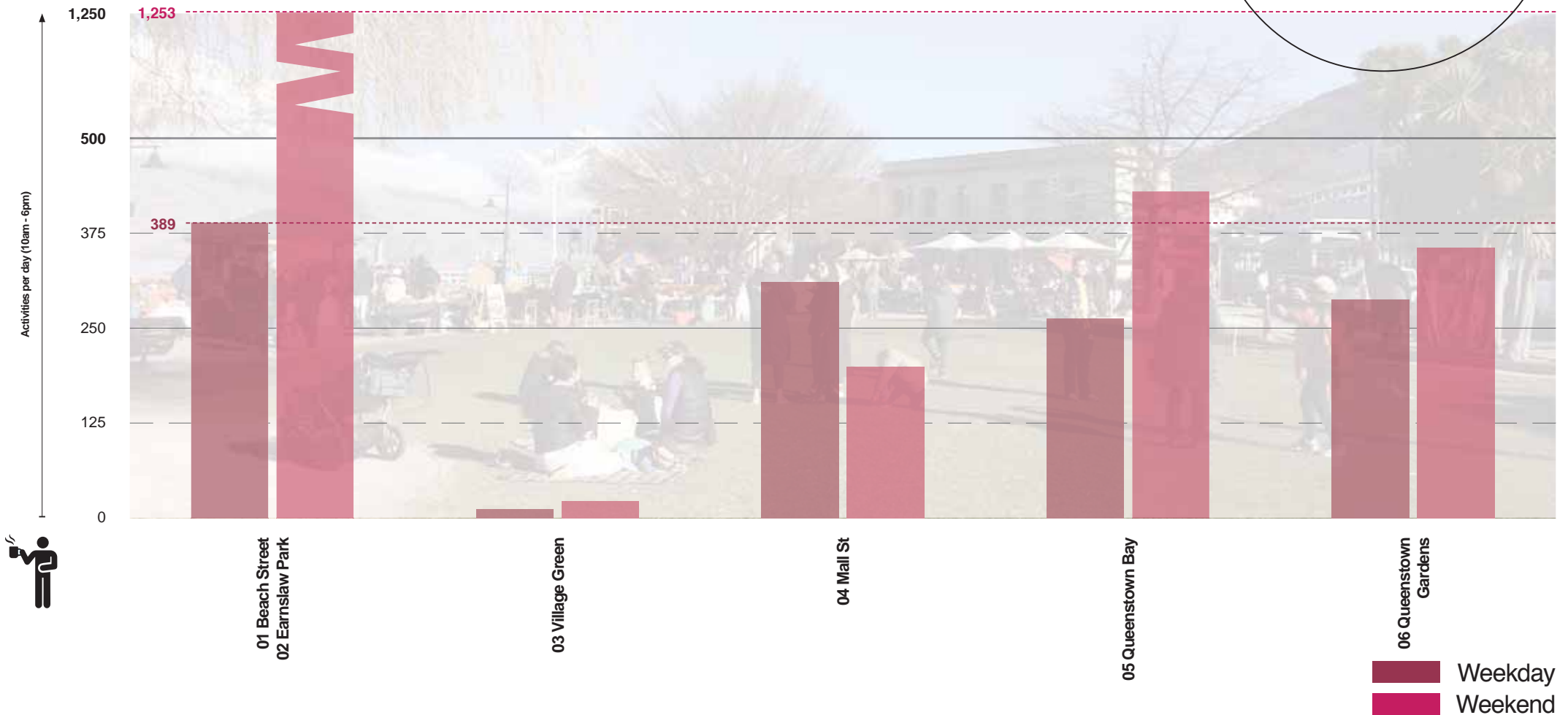
Total pedestrian movements counted every hour between 8 am and 8 pm.



2.6 Stationary activity

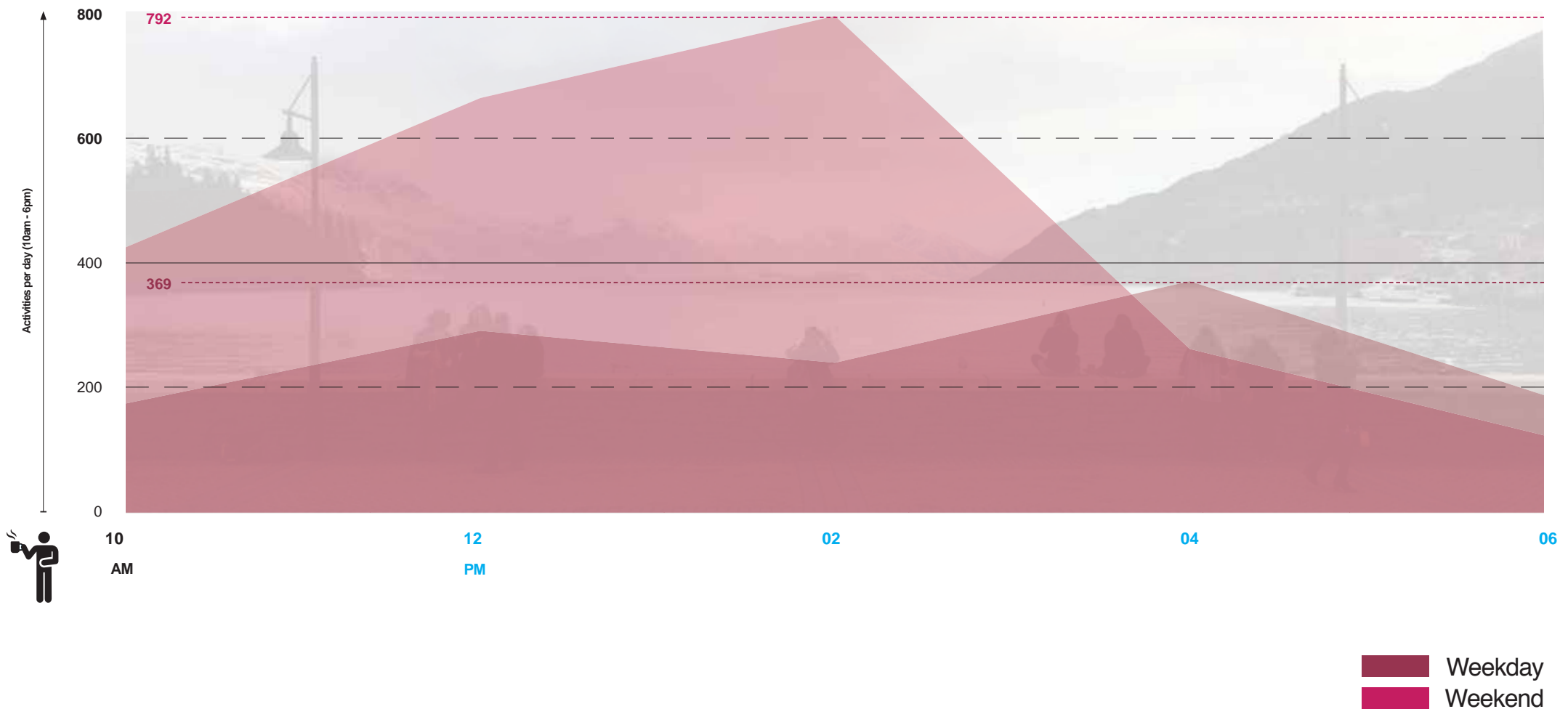
Total stationary activities counted at each survey area

Total activities counted
Weekday: 2,260
Weekend: 1,259



2.7 Stationary activity trends

Total stationary activities counted every hour between 10 am and 6 pm.



2.8 Age & gender

Age & gender percentages registered every hour between 10 am and 6 pm.

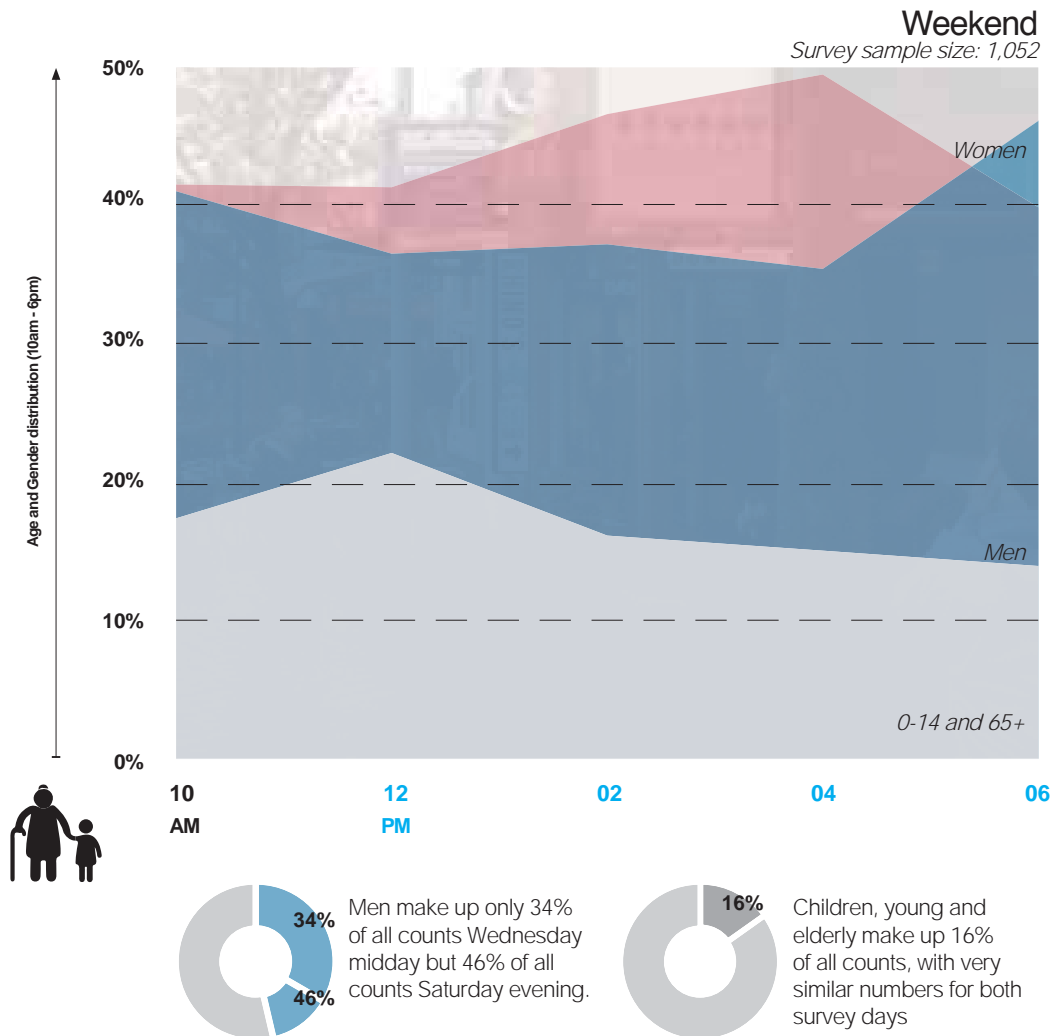
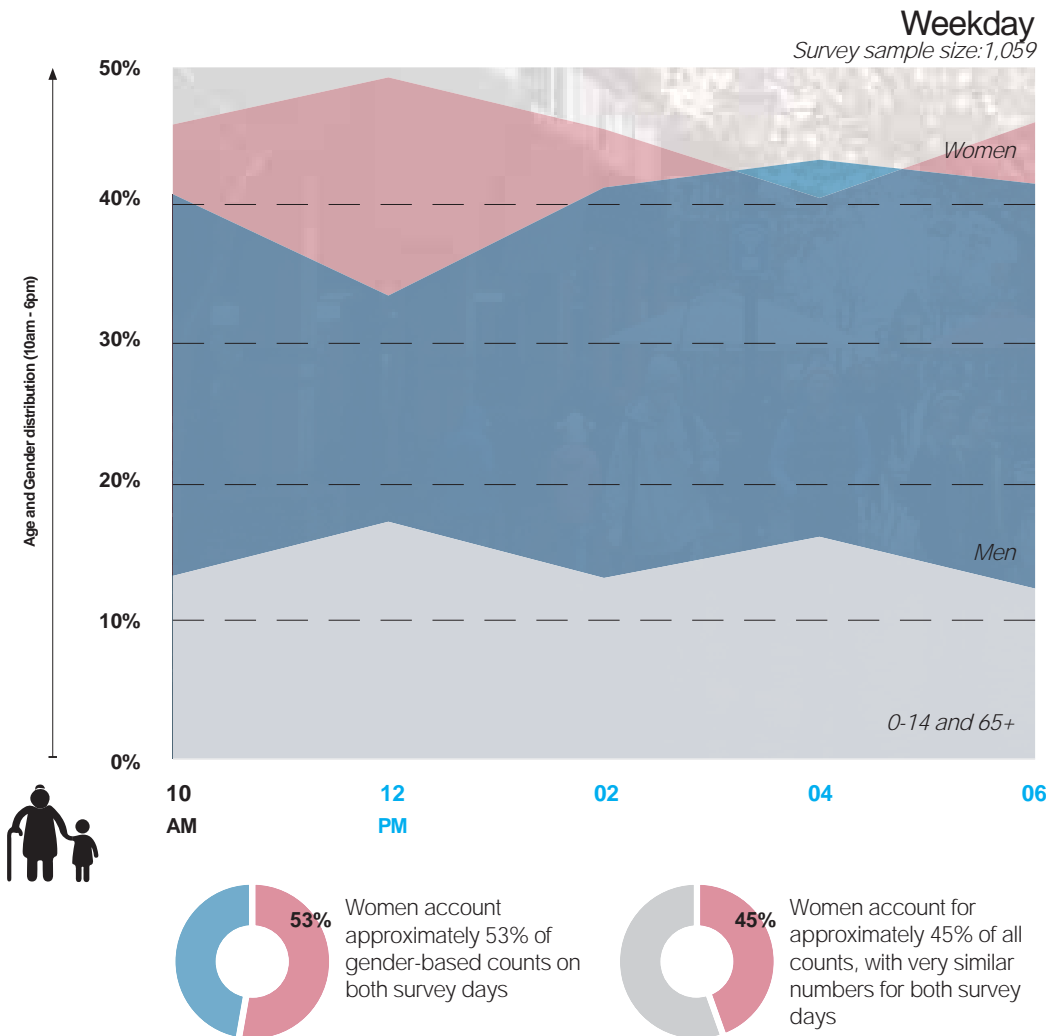
Total survey sample size: 2111

women
account for the
majority of foot traffic



2.9 Age & gender trends

Age & gender percentages registered every hour between 10 am and 6 pm.





3.0 Next Steps

The following summary is based on the findings of the survey and include basic recommendations regarding future surveys and initiatives for addressing some of the more obvious factors impacting public life in the town Centre.

Recommendations:

- A record of winter activity is very important, particularly as Queenstown is a desirable winter destination, however as noted in the introduction to the survey methodology, public life is greatly affected by climate and it is suggested that a summer survey be undertaken. Firstly to measure public life in summer, but also to provide contrasting data and an even more rounded picture of year round public life - for example it is highly likely that the data collected under represents the year round use of open spaces such as 'The Village Green'.
- Ensure a mid-block survey location on Camp St and on Shotover St is added to the list of sites for future surveys as these are key public transport streets. This could be captured during the summer survey and also measured at the same time next winter, independently of other sites, assuming the same methodology is followed.
- As this report has been compiled after the Draft Town Centre Masterplan has been developed, any future surveys could be targeted to preliminary recommendations and initiatives raised within the masterplan document, such as proposed public transport locations and redevelopment sites.

Initiatives (movement):

- Detune vehicle movement in and around the town centre and lake front. Private motor vehicles dominate the landscape and the priority of movement afforded to these vehicles is at the expense of continuous and enjoyable walking links.
- The ability to walk with minimal interruptions is critical to accessibility and walkability. On high volume pedestrian streets this is often restricted due to intense pedestrian traffic and limited physical space. Widening footpaths where possible, possibly through 'road diets' could dramatically improve this situation.
- Improve pedestrian accessibility and priority along 'feeder' routes such as Gorge Rd, Coronation Dr and upper Camp St. These 'feeder' routes account for 36% of all recorded pedestrian activity however many of these routes are poor quality, characterised by inconvenient crossings and/or long waiting times at intersections.
- Improve the pedestrian experience on high volume vehicle routes that are currently very car-biased (Rees St, Ballarat St North, Beach St, Church St). These are well utilised by pedestrians however little attention has been given to the pedestrian experience.
- Cycling - either from a commuting or recreational standpoint, cycling in Queenstown could become a viable mode of transport for moving to and around the town centre. Invitations to cycle are currently limited with an incomplete cycle network and little provision for cycle parking in the centre.

Initiatives (staying activities):

- Explore potential to accommodate more kerb side public seating. There is currently a lack of resting options in terms of public seating. While pedestrianised spaces such as The Mall and Queenstown Bay provide generous levels of public seating, much of the public space and subsequent public life occurs on the streets thus it is important to consider these for recreation, not simply movement.
- While the recorded temperature during the survey was cool there is still opportunity to encourage more kerbside dining with cafe tables and chairs. In areas that do accommodate these have been provided, such as near the lake front, were and outdoor cafe table/seating opportunities (road diets/footpath widening).
- Establish footpath zoning to reduce conflicts between street furniture and pedestrian movement, particularly on high pedestrian volume streets.

Follow up survey:

- In order for any future surveys to be comparable (winter or summer), these should be carried out at the peak of the high season and during school holidays. The weather should also be 'typical' for the season with no special events taking place (such as the winter festival).



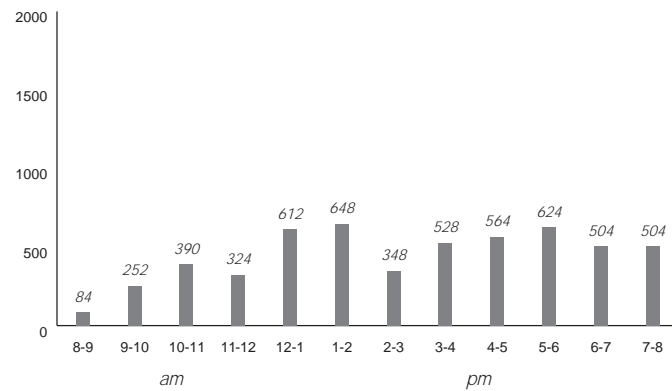
4.0 Appendices



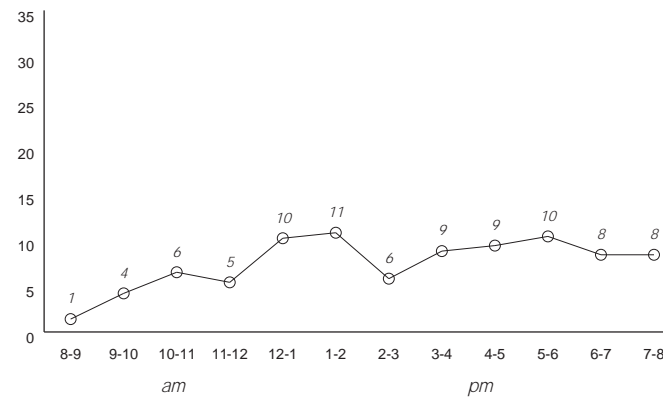
4.1 Pedestrian activity - 01 Beach St

Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

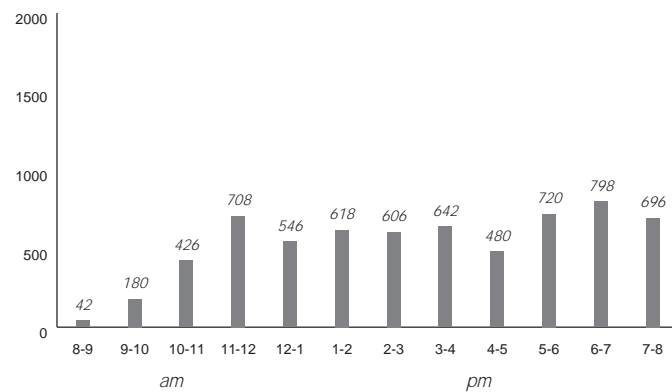


Pedestrians per minute

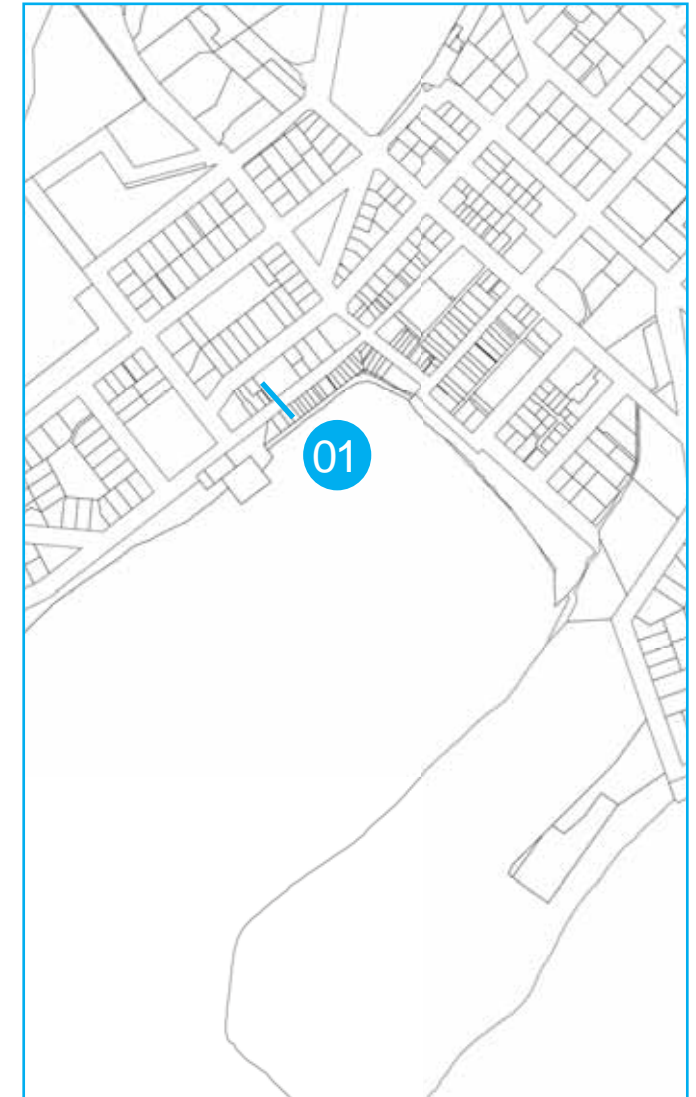
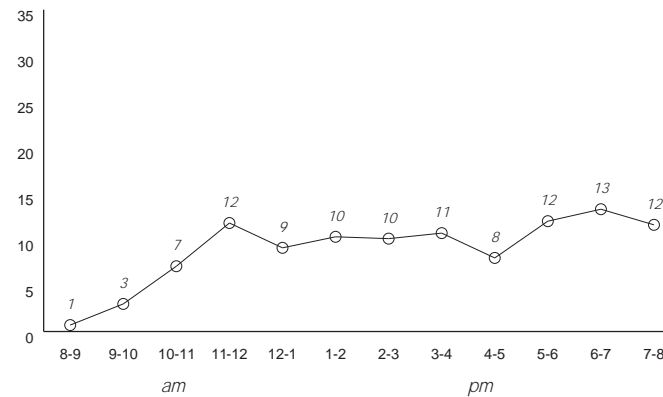


Saturday

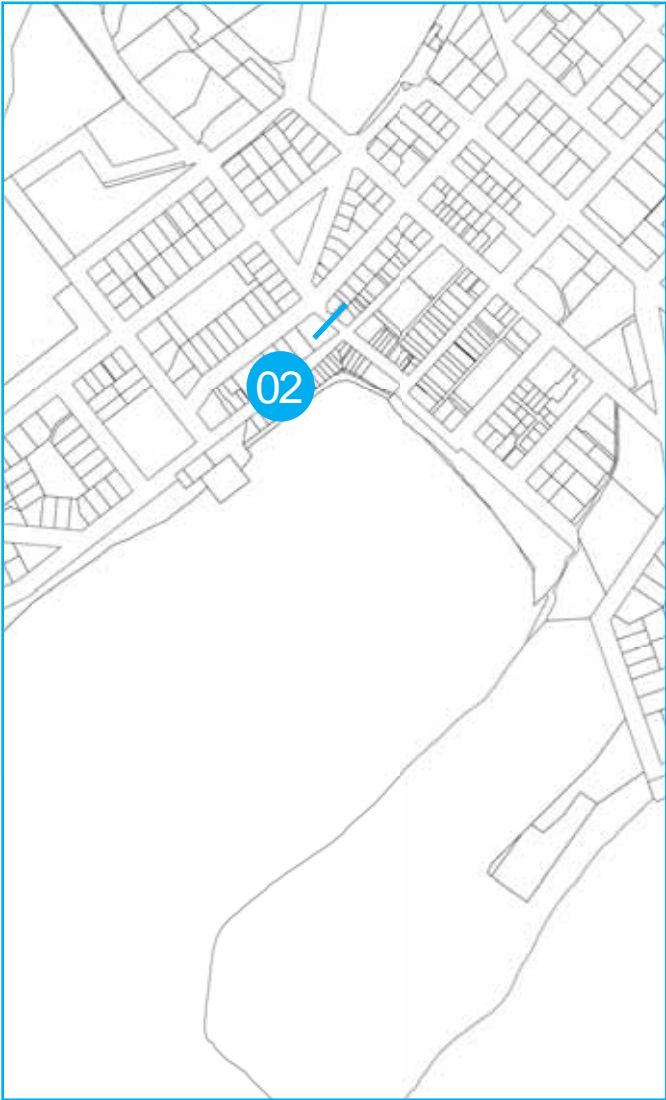
Pedestrians per hour



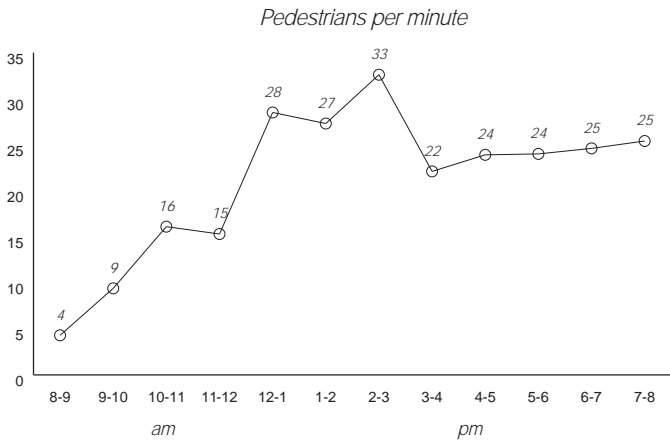
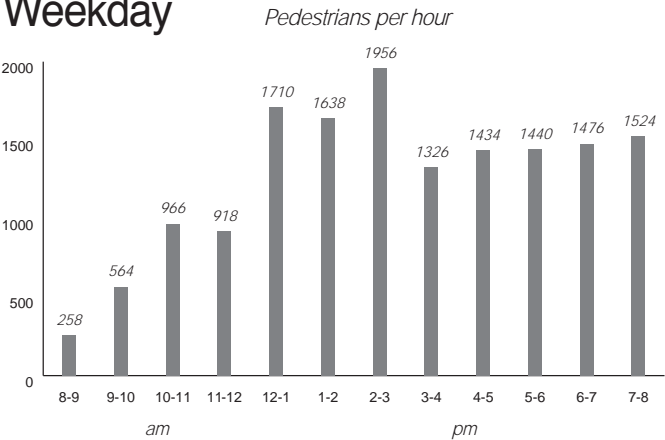
Pedestrians per minute



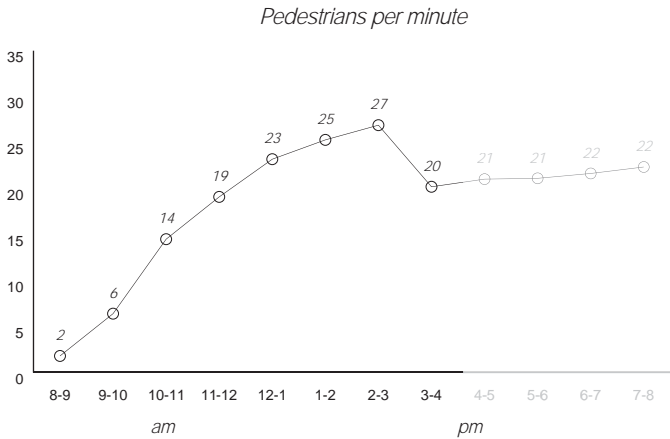
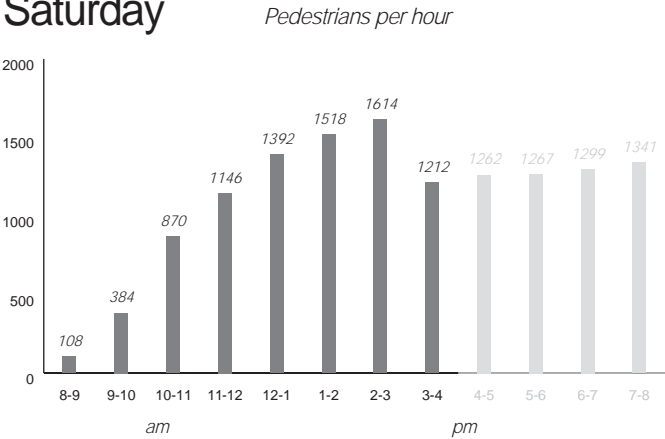
4.1 Pedestrian activity - 02 Rees St



Weekday



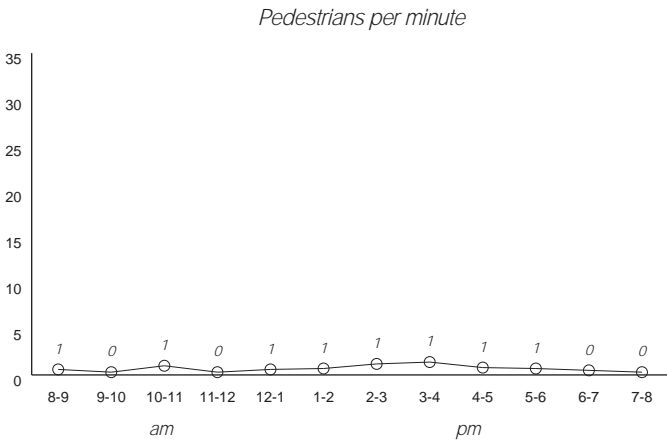
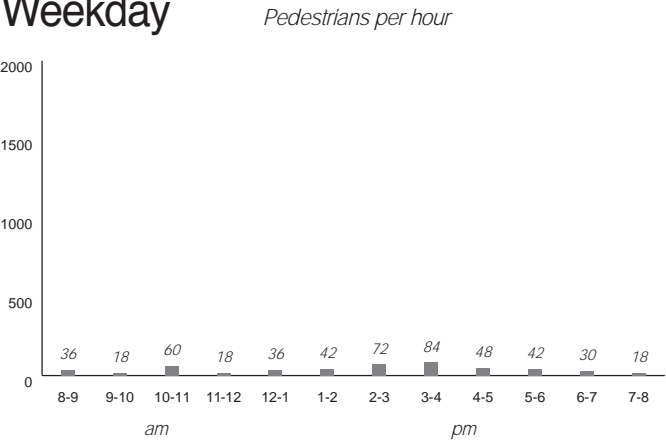
Saturday



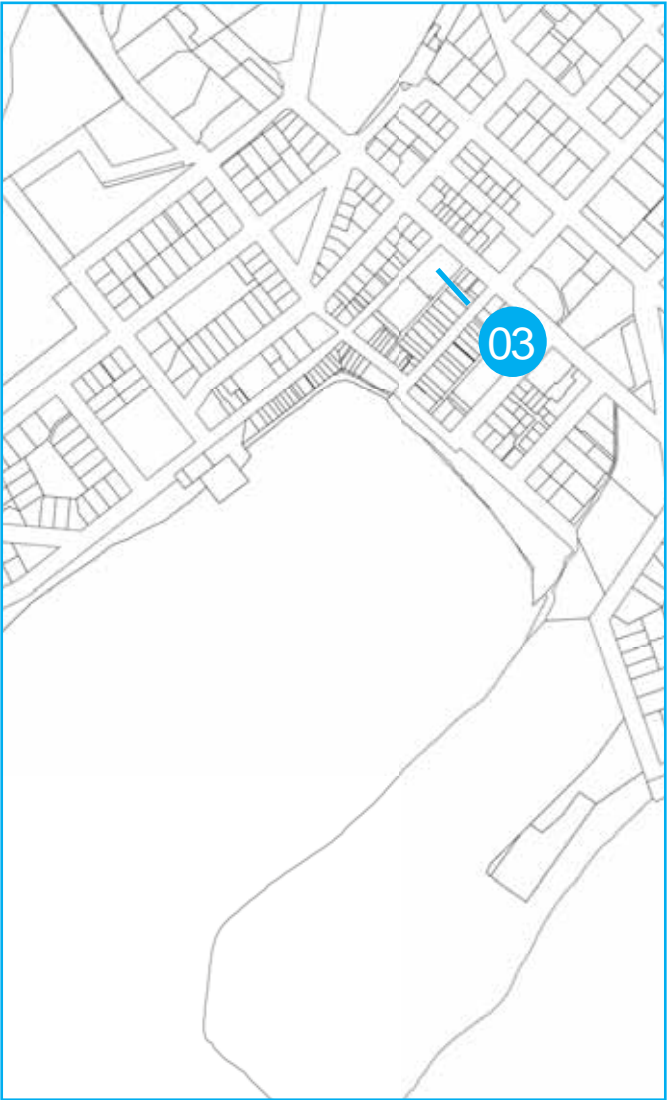
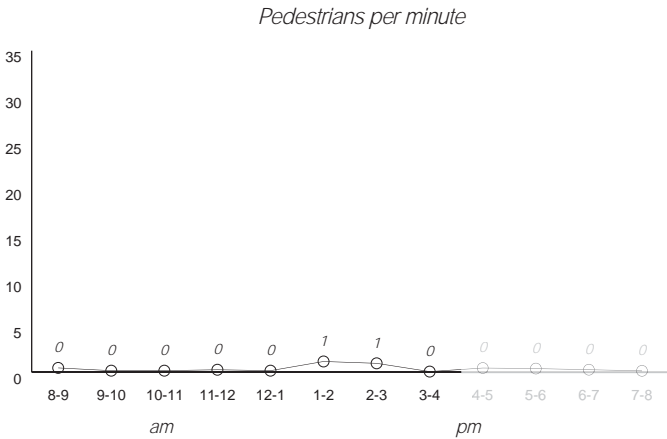
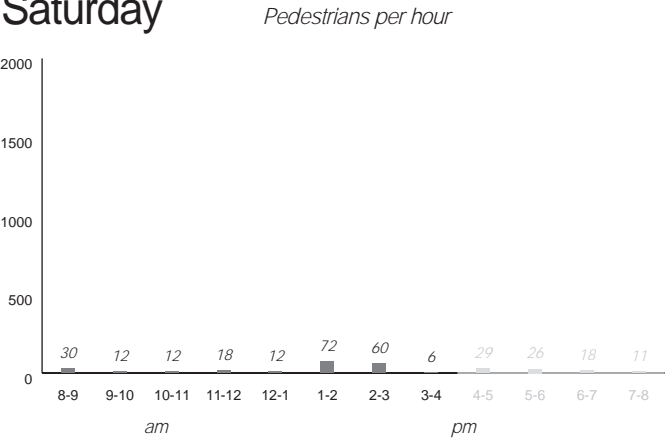
**Saturday counts between 4 and 8 pm are estimates based on Wednesday counts and the difference between the remaining counts.*

4.1 Pedestrian activity - 03 Cow Ln

Weekday

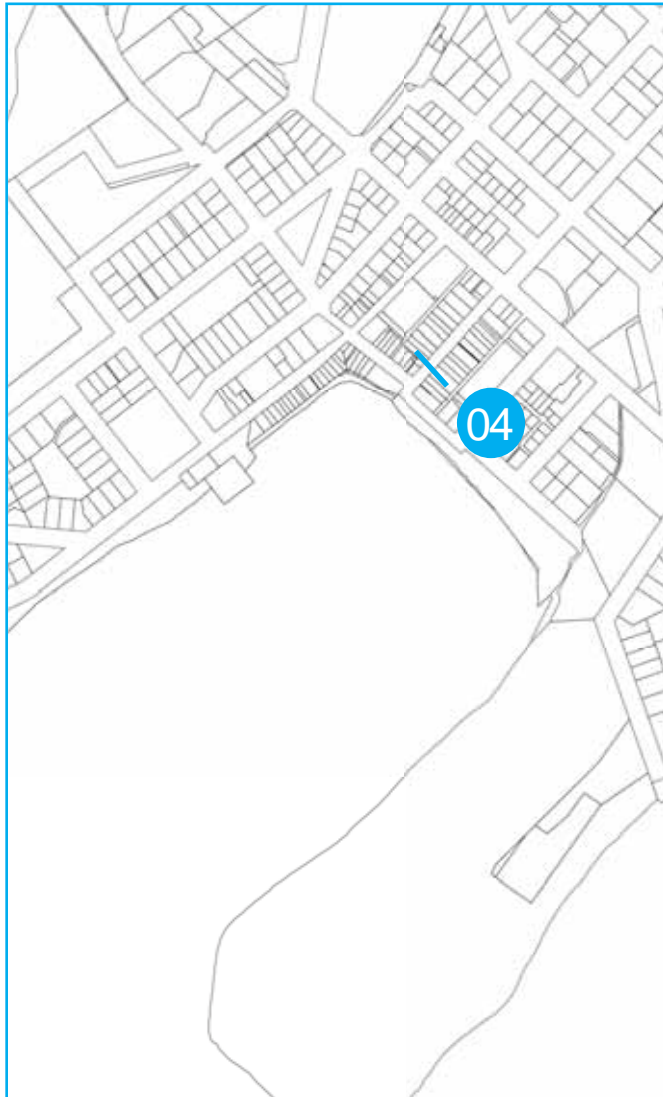


Saturday



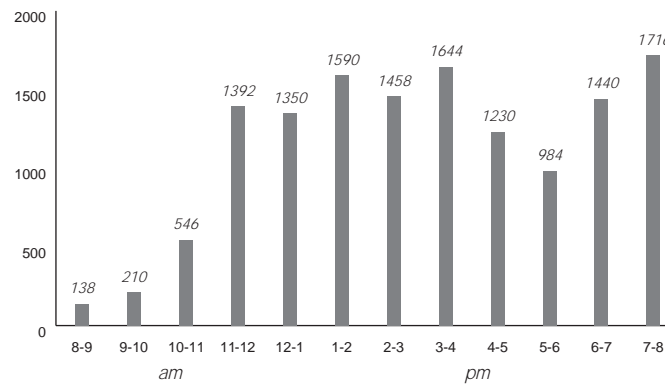
*Saturday counts between 4 and 8 pm. are estimates based on Wednesday counts and the difference between the remaining counts.

4.1 Pedestrian activity - 04 The Mall

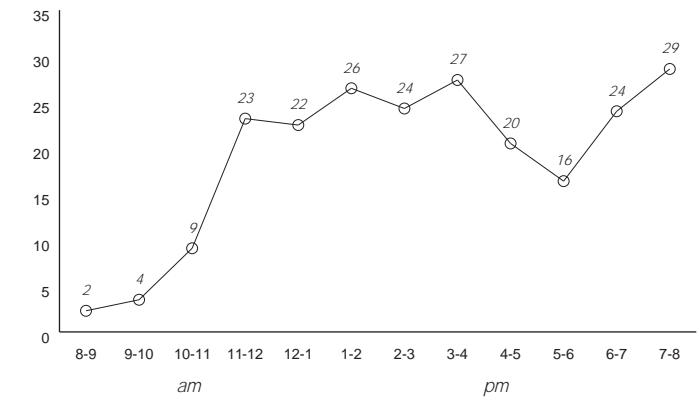


Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

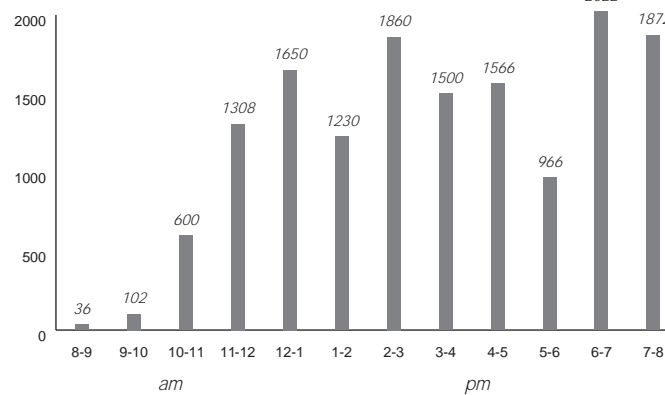


Pedestrians per minute

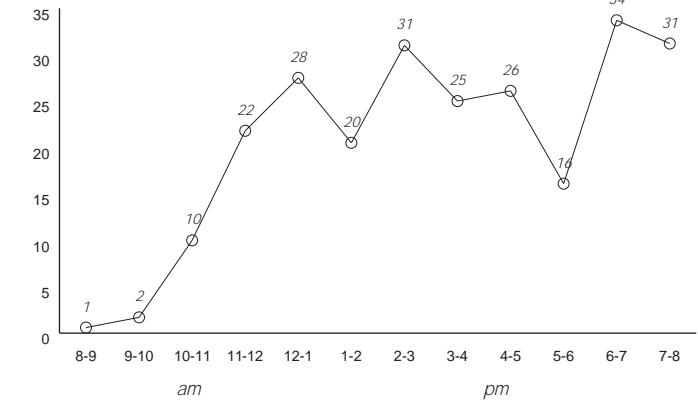


Saturday

Pedestrians per hour

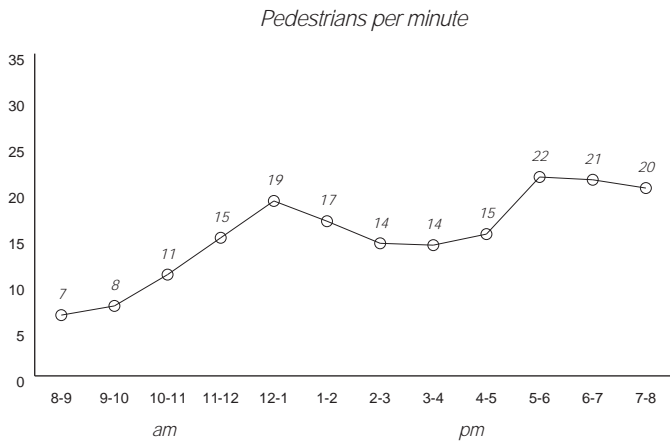
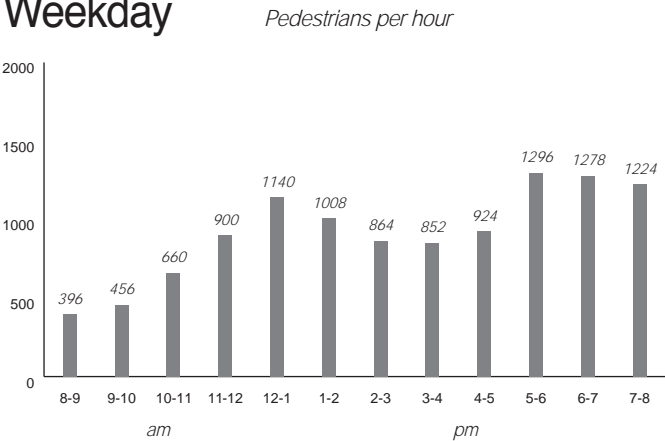


Pedestrians per minute

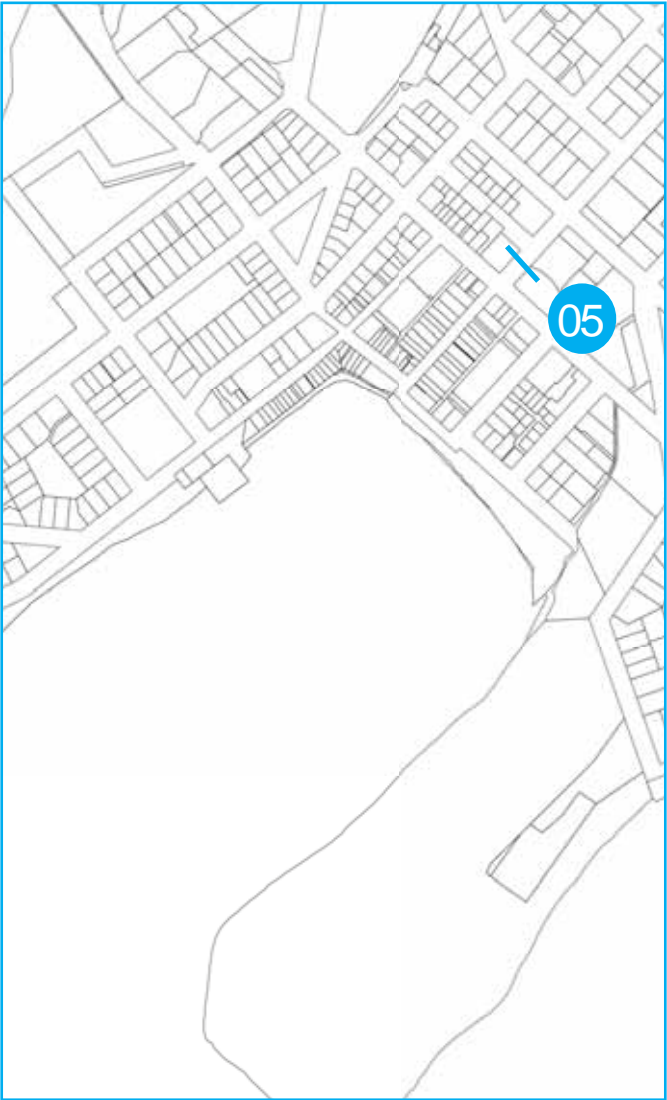
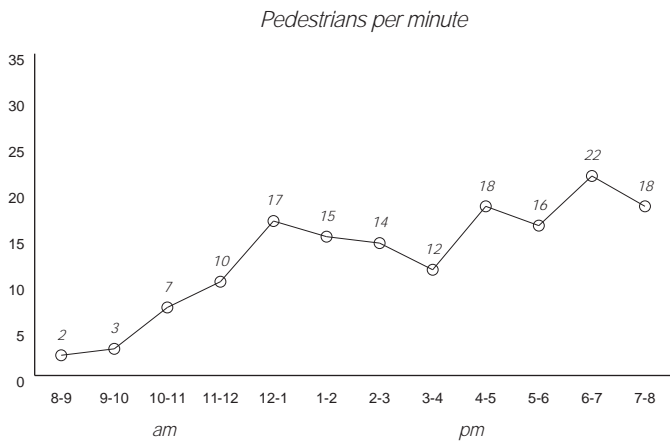
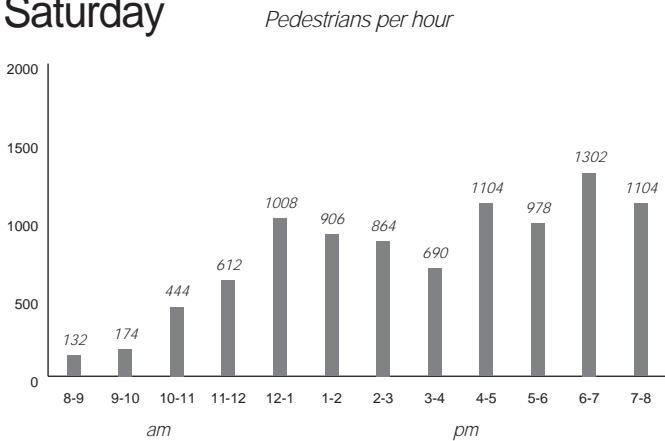


4.1 Pedestrian activity - 05 Ballarat St

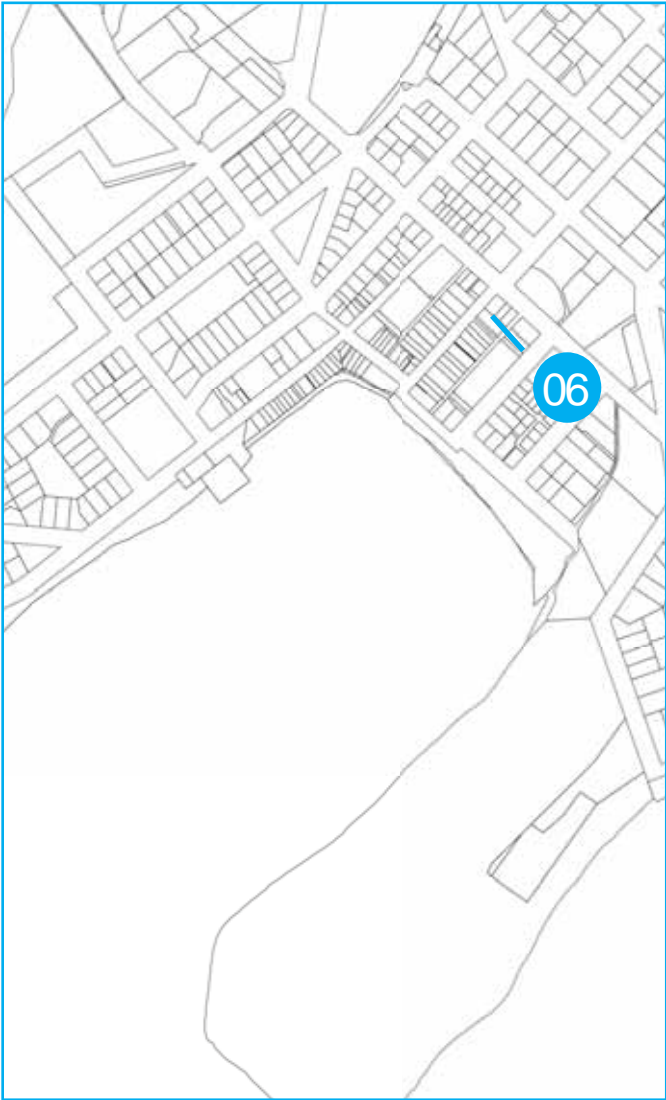
Weekday



Saturday

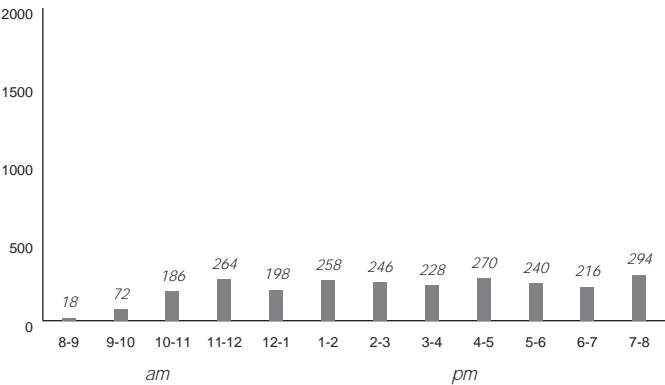


4.1 Pedestrian activity - 06 Searle Ln

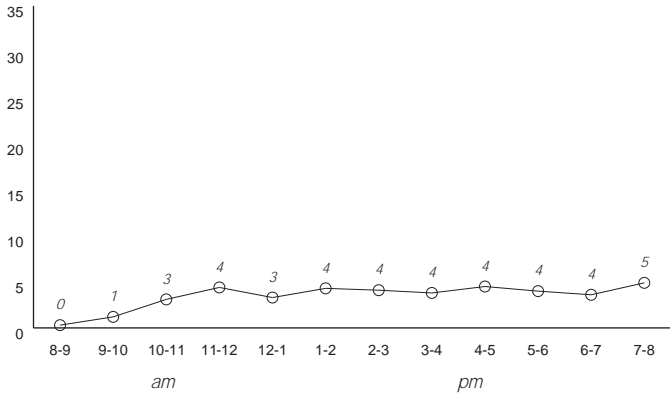


Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

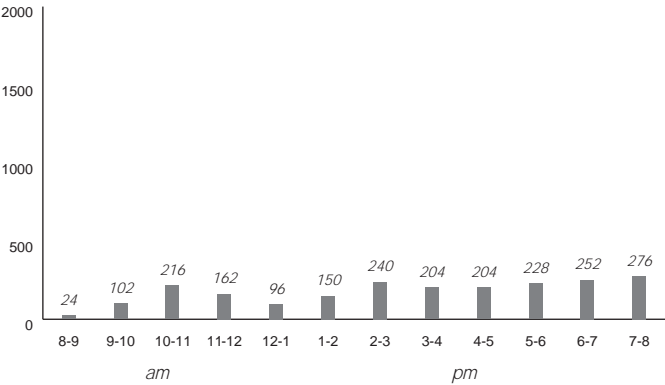


Pedestrians per minute

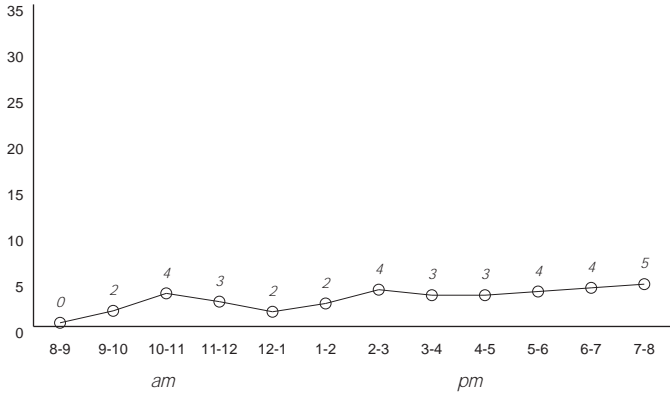


Saturday

Pedestrians per hour

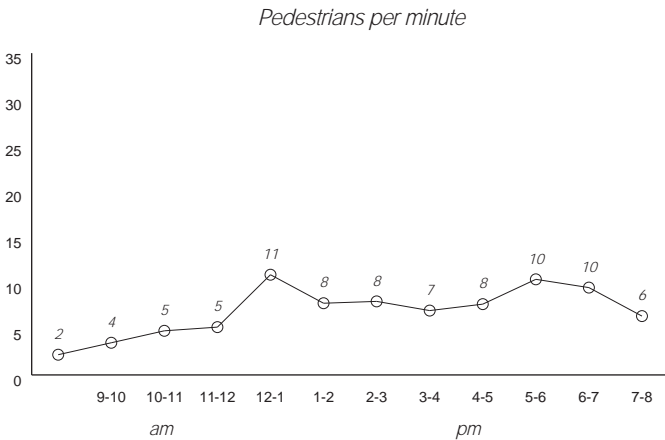
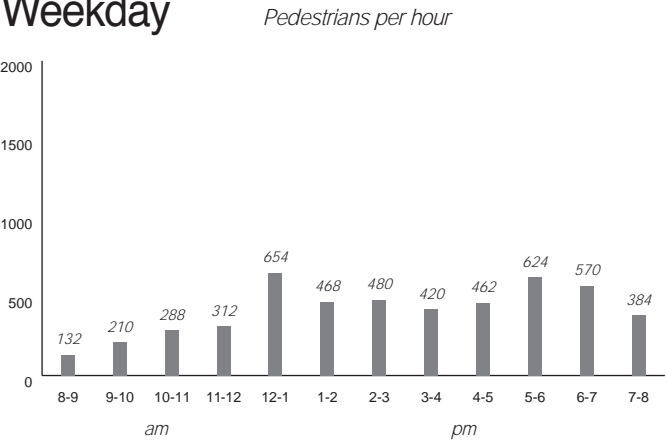


Pedestrians per minute

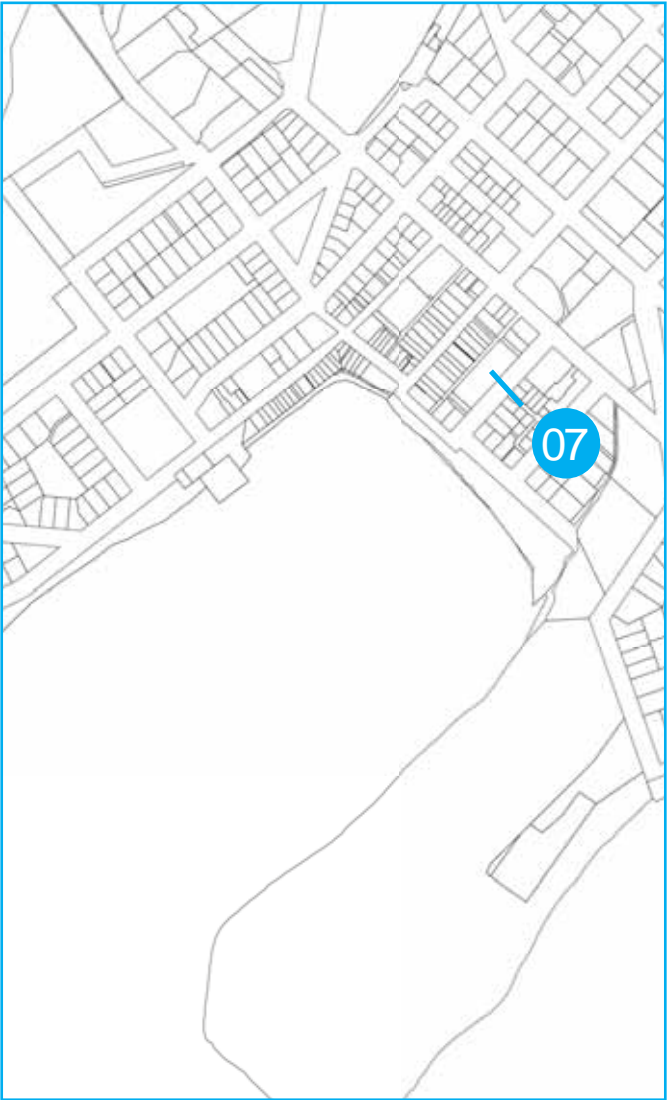
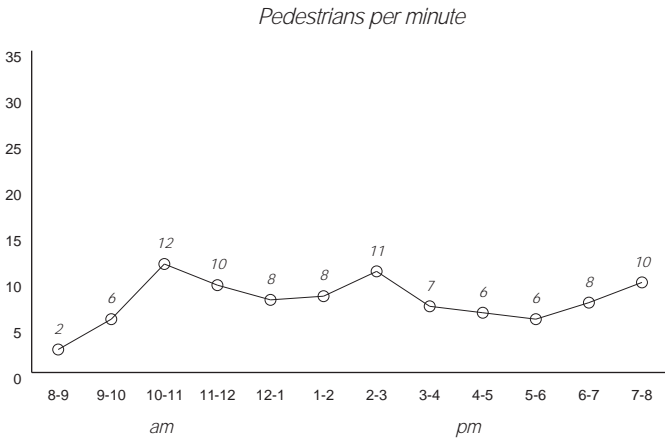
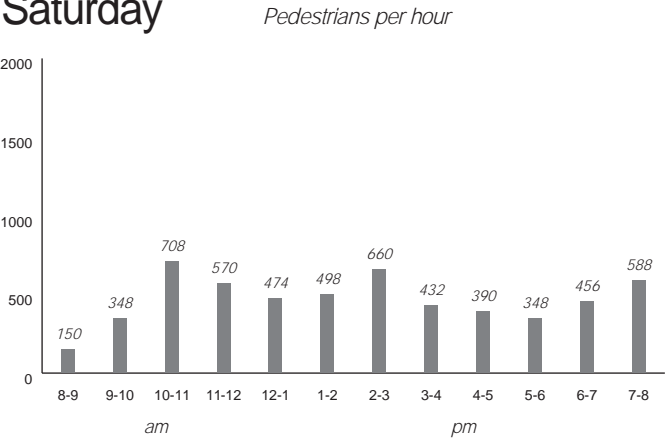


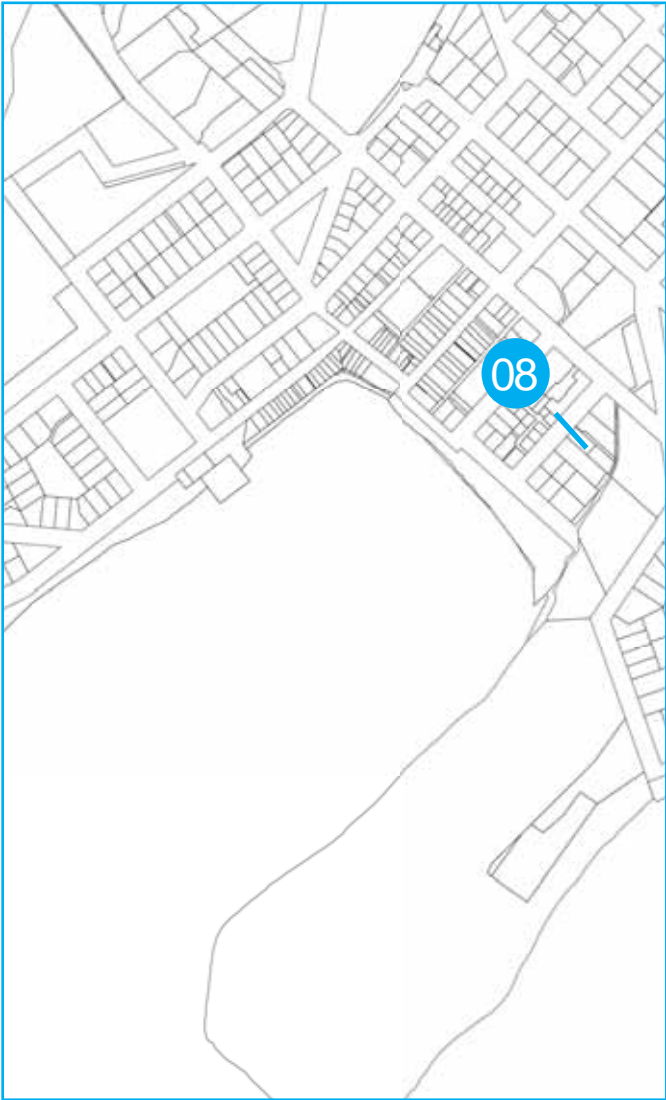
4.1 Pedestrian activity - 07 Church St

Weekday



Saturday

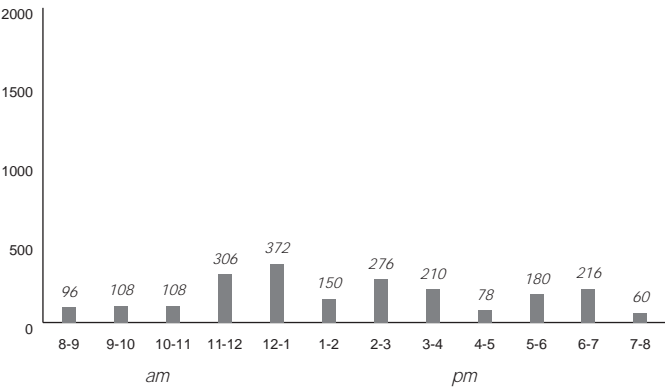




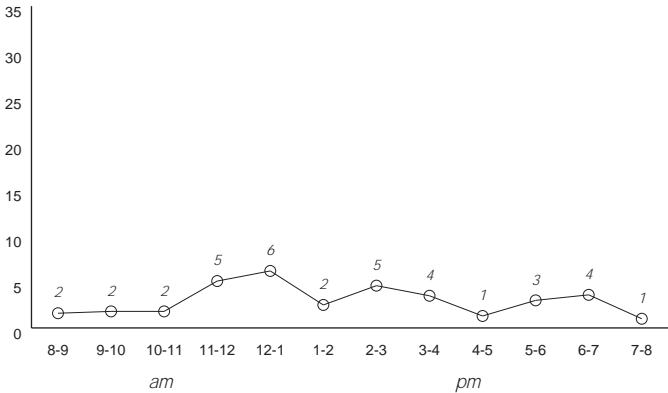
4.1 Pedestrian activity - 08 Earl St

Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

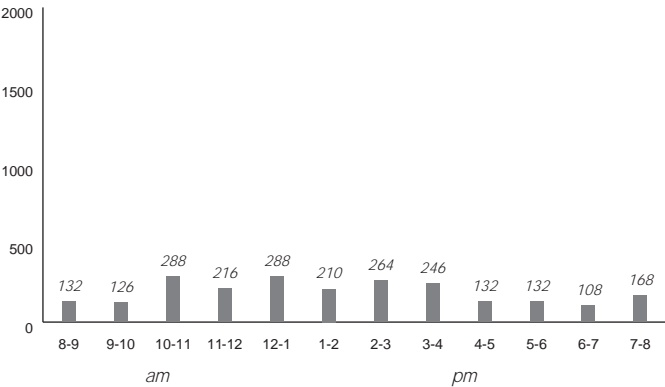


Pedestrians per minute

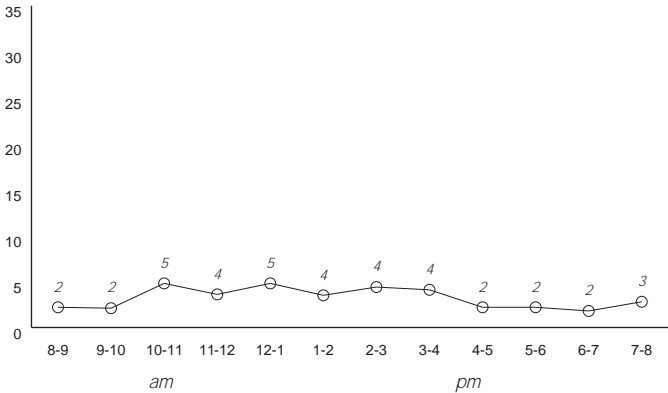


Saturday

Pedestrians per hour



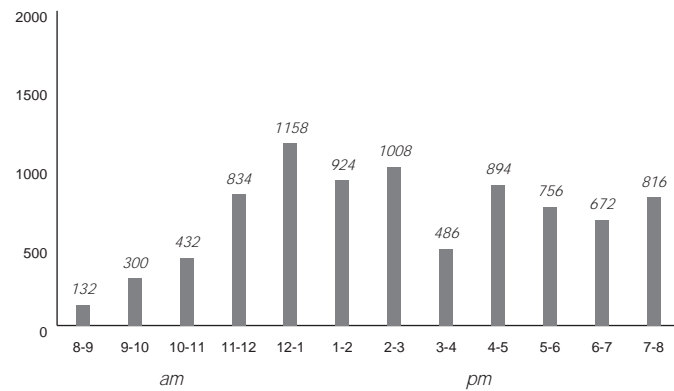
Pedestrians per minute



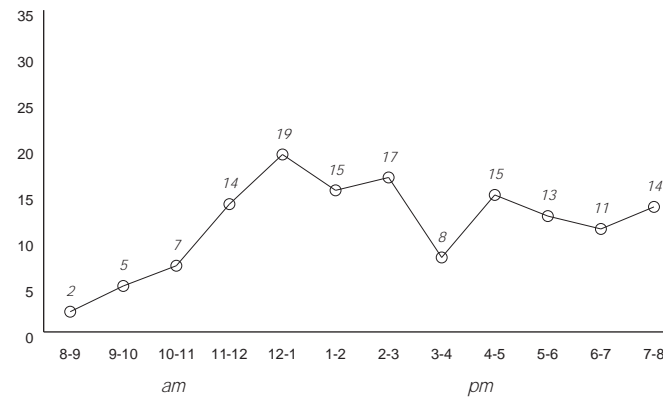
4.1 Pedestrian activity - 09 Marine Parade

Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

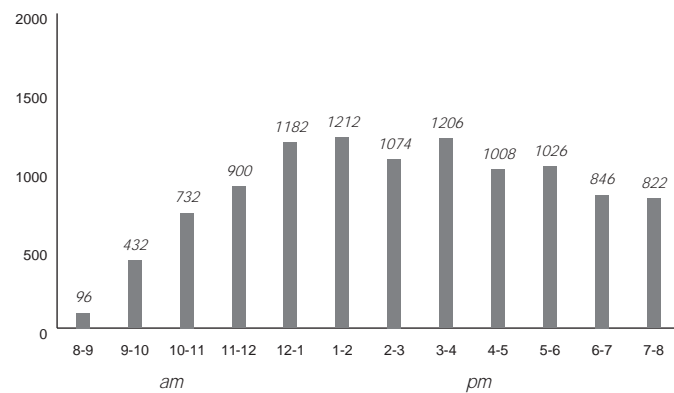


Pedestrians per minute

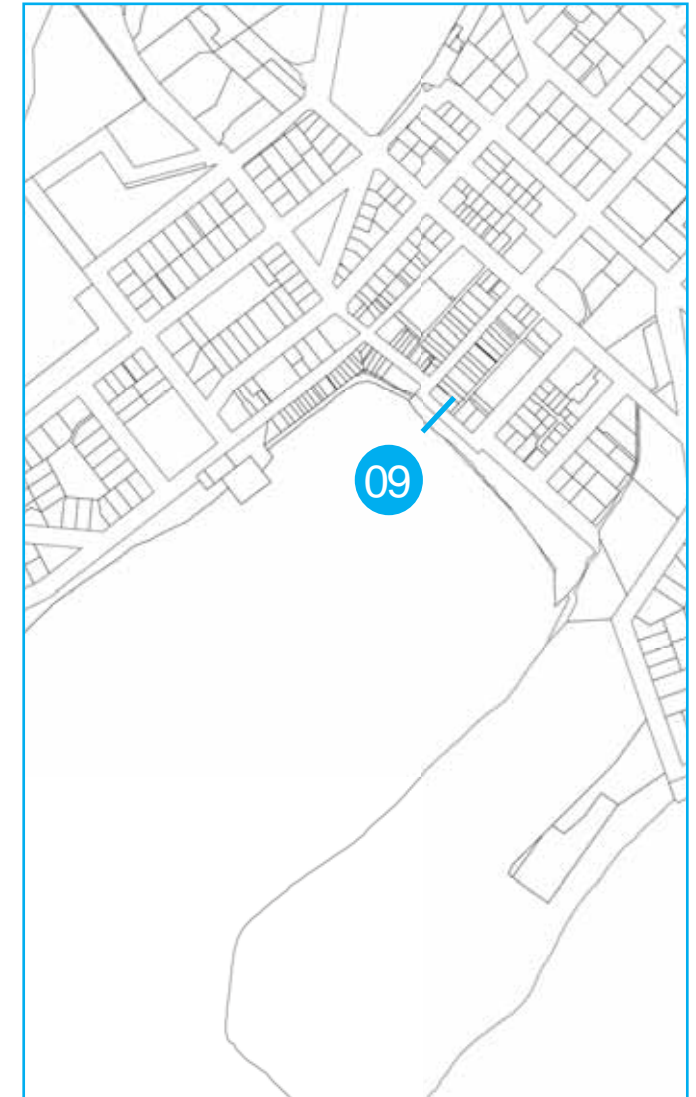
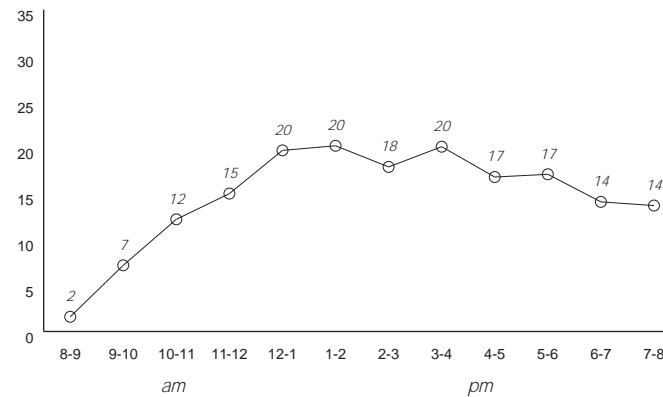


Saturday

Pedestrians per hour



Pedestrians per minute

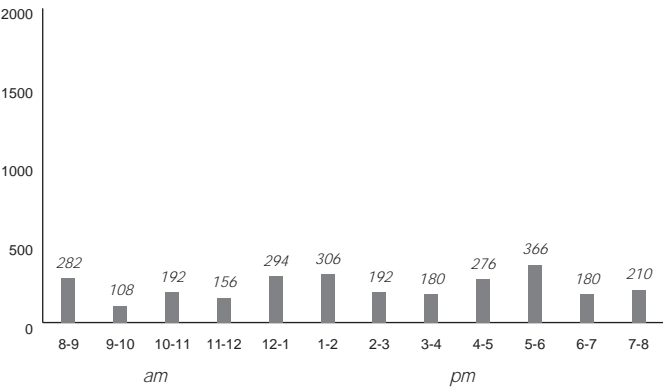


4.1 Pedestrian activity - 10 Gorge Rd

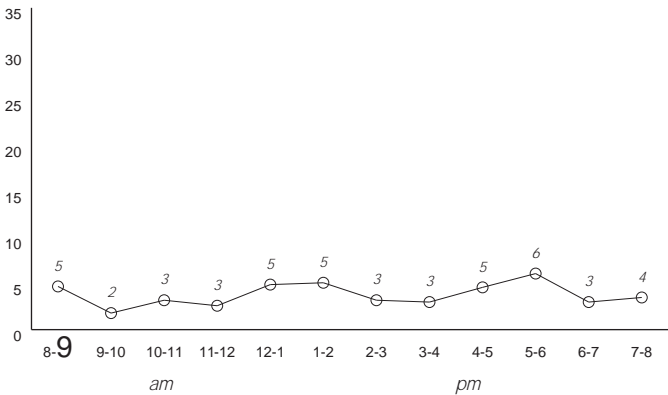


Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

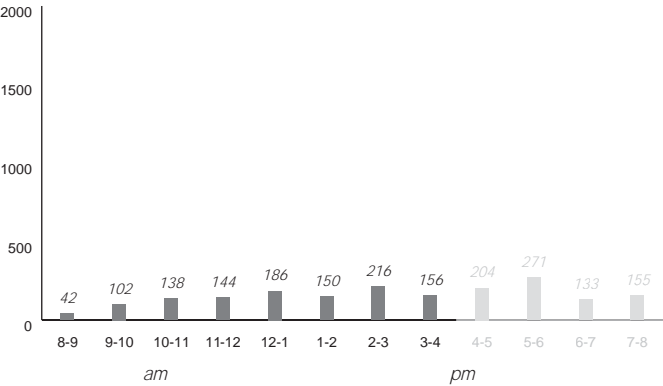


Pedestrians per minute

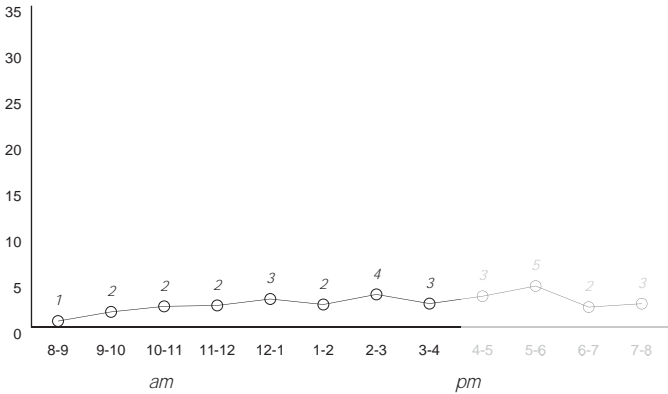


Saturday

Pedestrians per hour



Pedestrians per minute

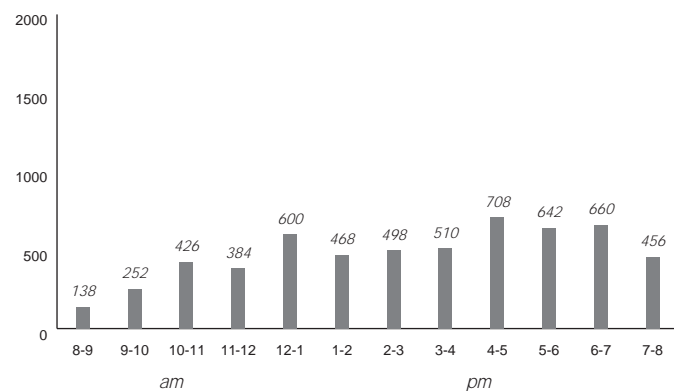


*Saturday counts between 4 and 8 pm. are estimates based on Wednesday counts and the difference between the remaining counts.

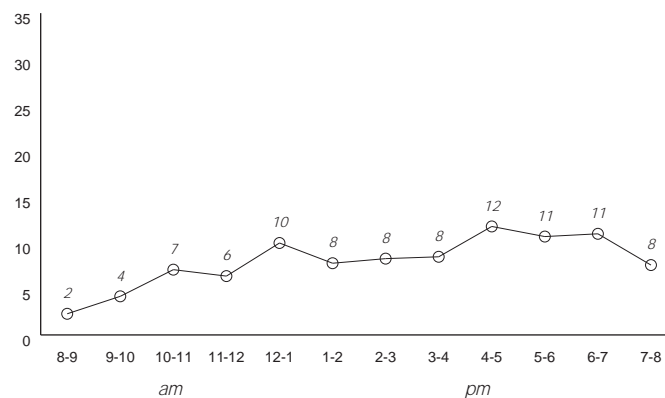
4.1 Pedestrian activity - 11 Brecon St

Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

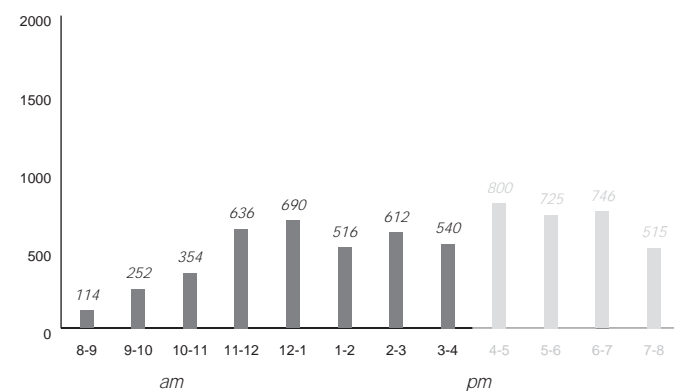


Pedestrians per minute

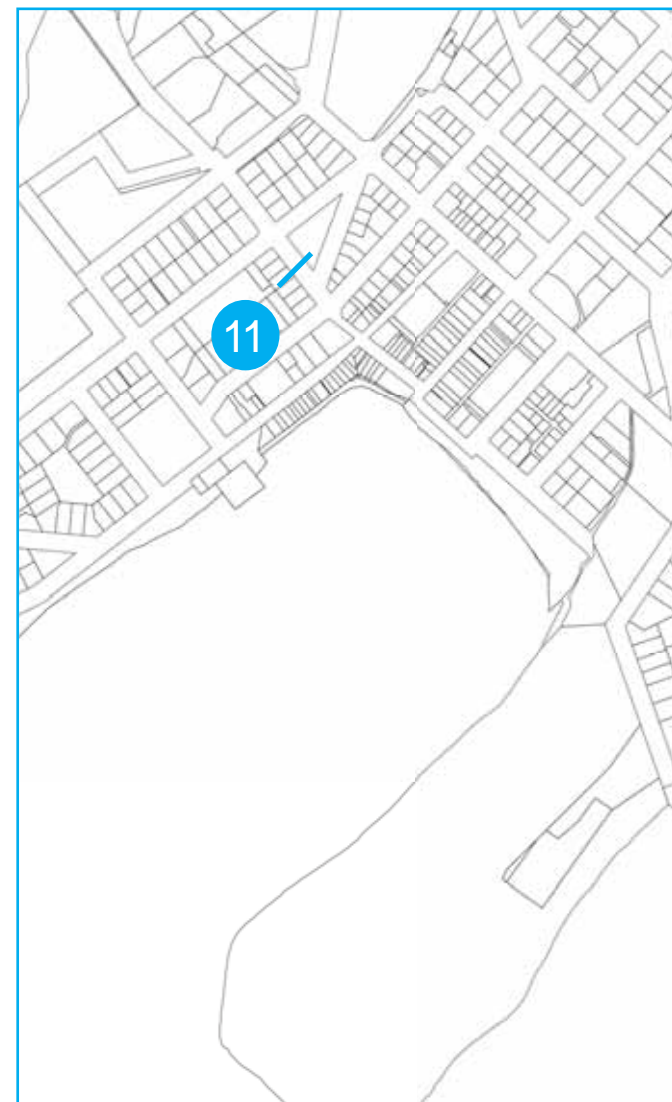
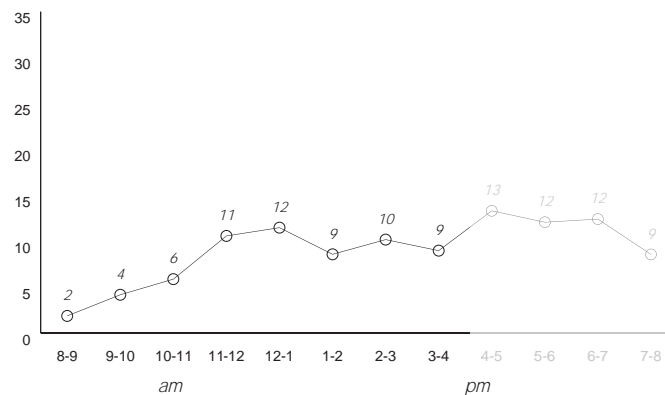


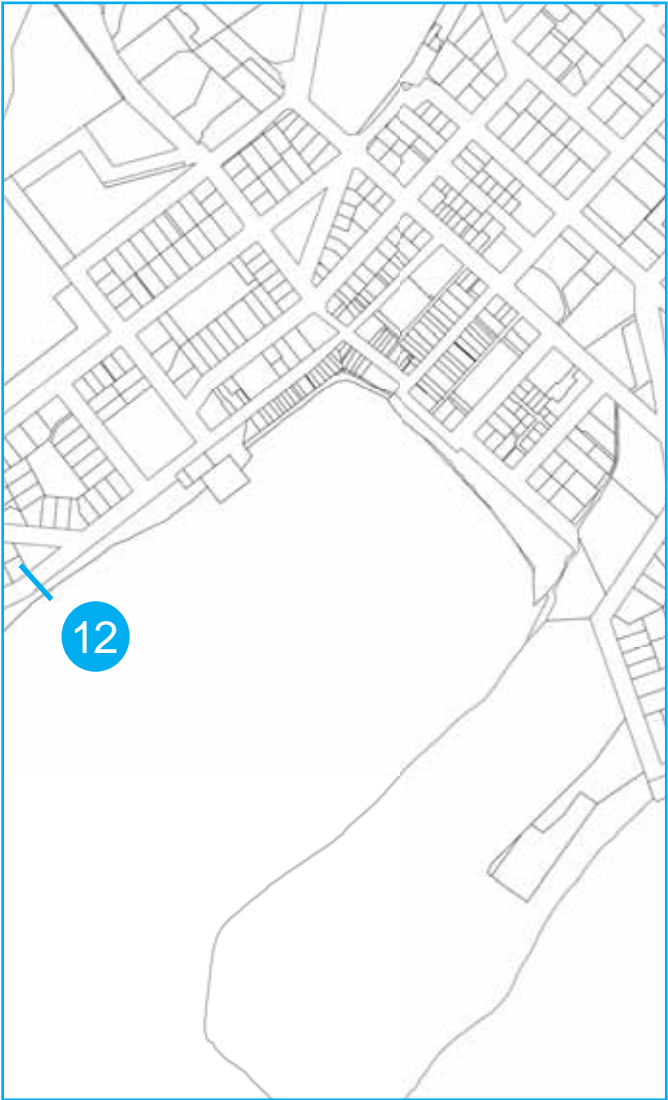
Saturday

Pedestrians per hour



Pedestrians per minute

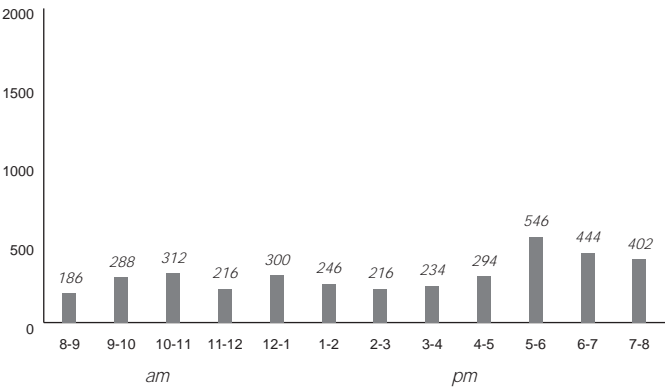




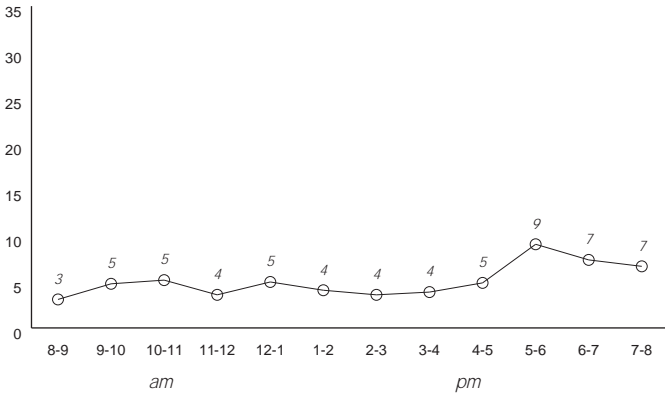
4.1 Pedestrian activity - 12 Lake Esplanade

Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

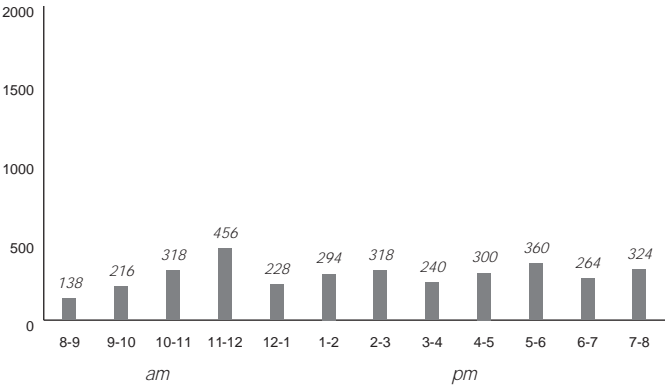


Pedestrians per minute

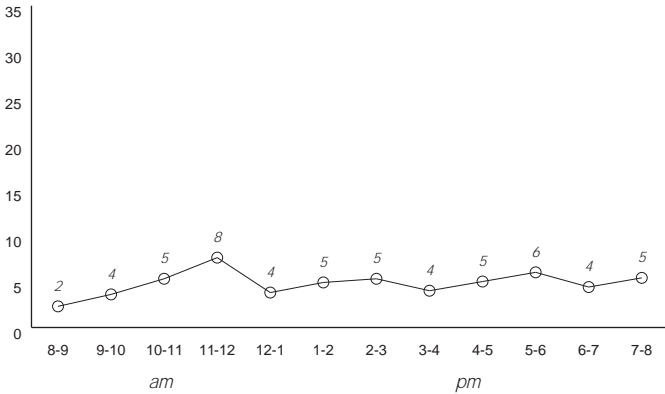


Saturday

Pedestrians per hour

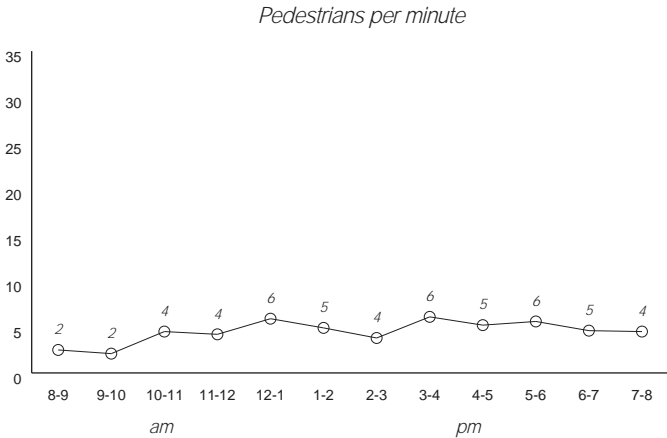
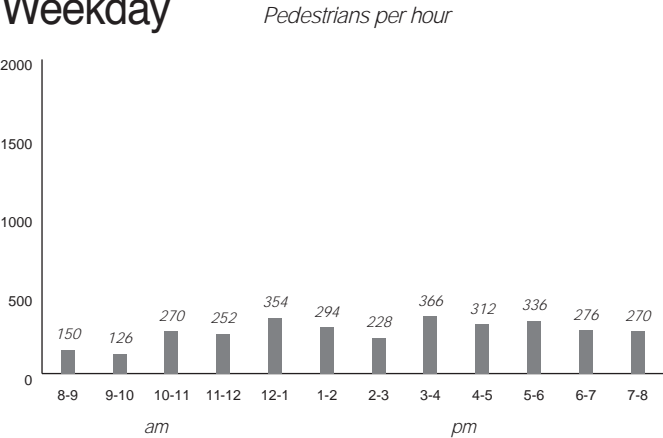


Pedestrians per minute

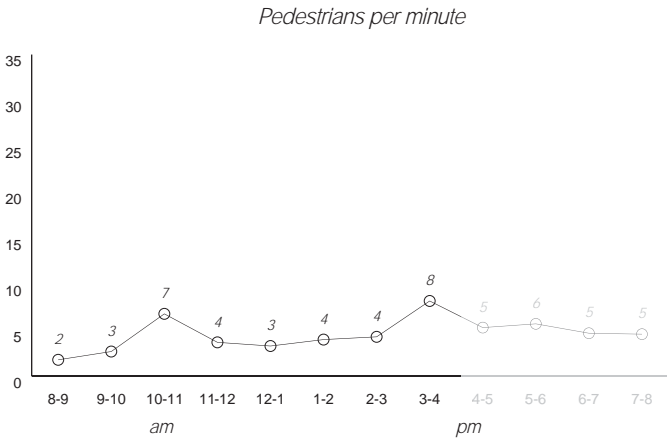
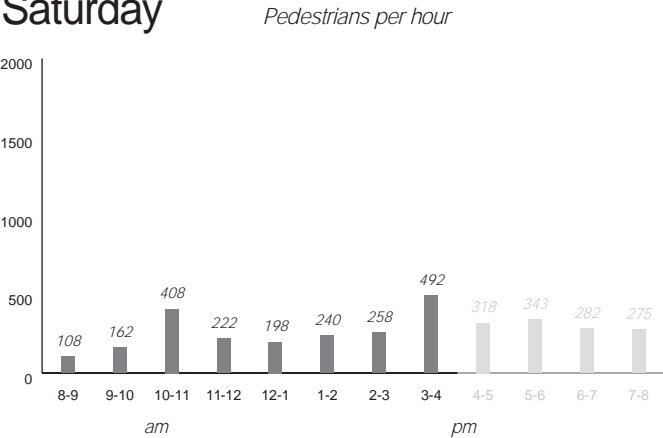


4.1 Pedestrian activity - 13 Camp St

Weekday

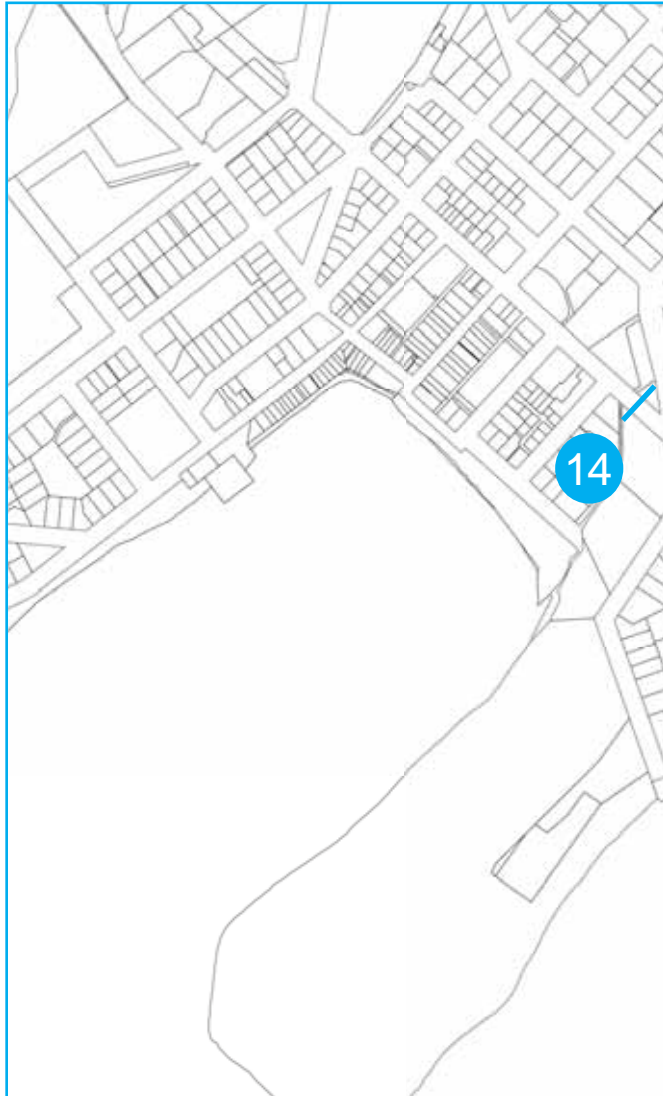


Saturday



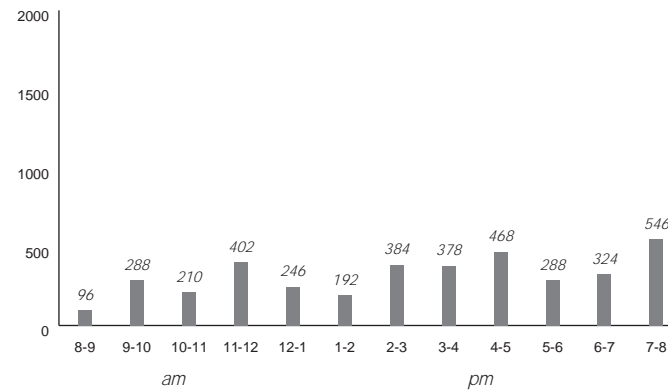
*Saturday counts between 4 and 8 pm. are estimates based on Wednesday counts and the difference between the remaining counts.

4.1 Pedestrian activity - 14 Coronation Dr

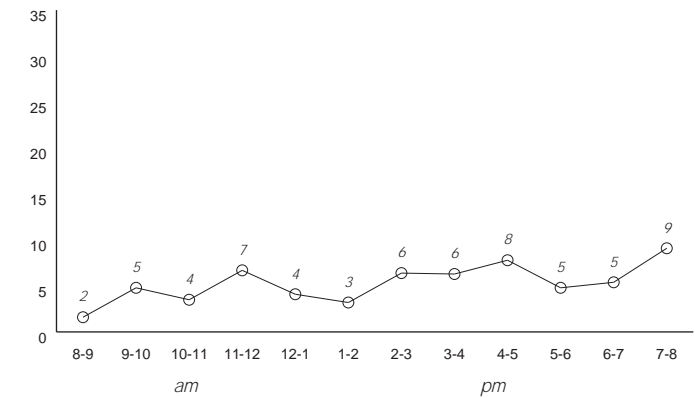


Weekday

Pedestrians per hour

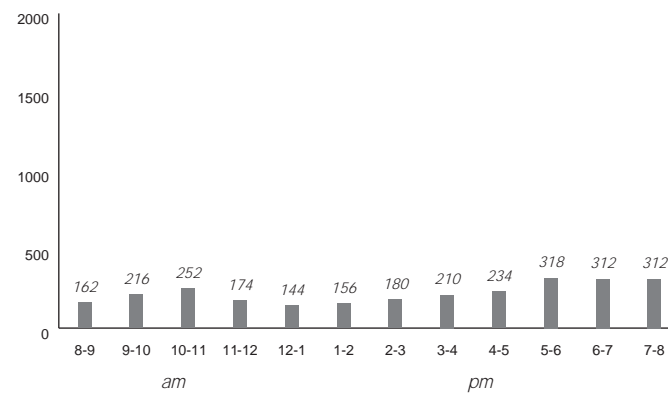


Pedestrians per minute

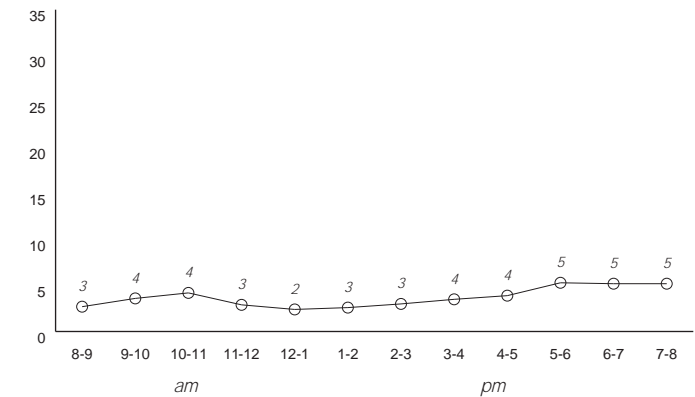


Saturday

Pedestrians per hour

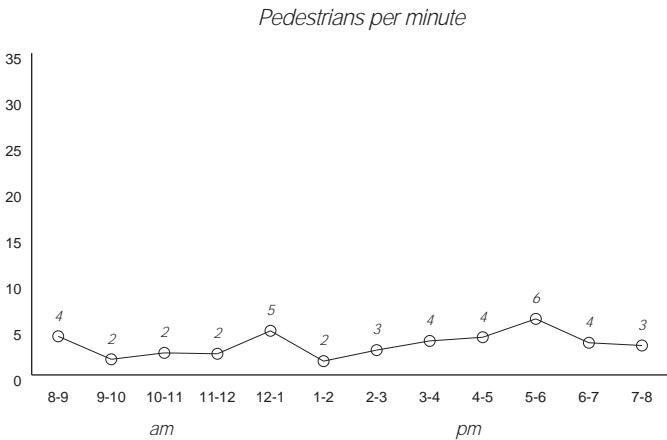
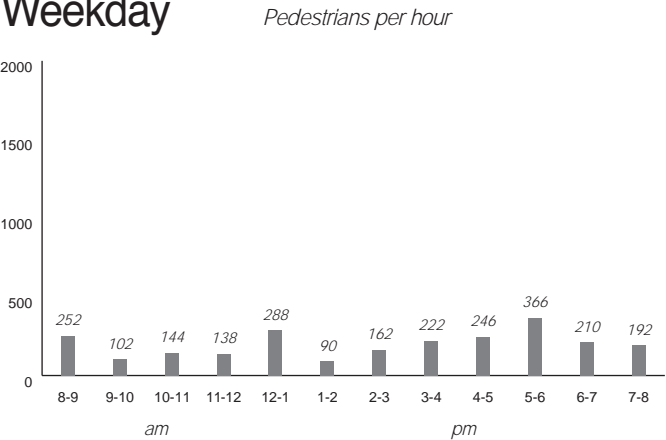


Pedestrians per minute

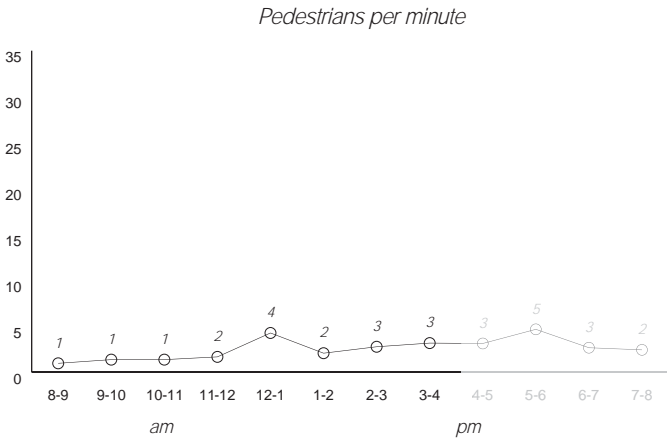
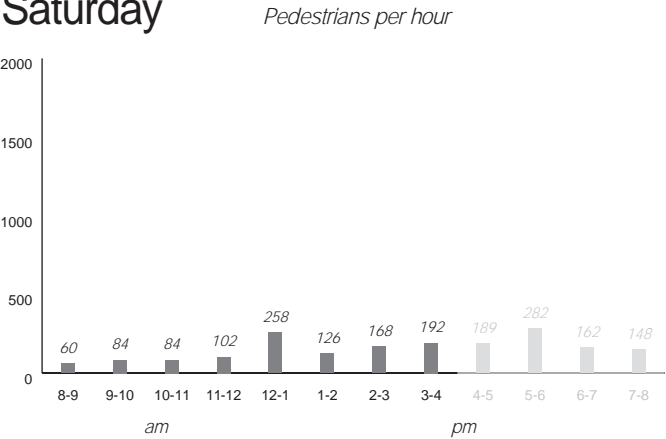


4.1 Pedestrian activity - 15 Stanley St

Weekday

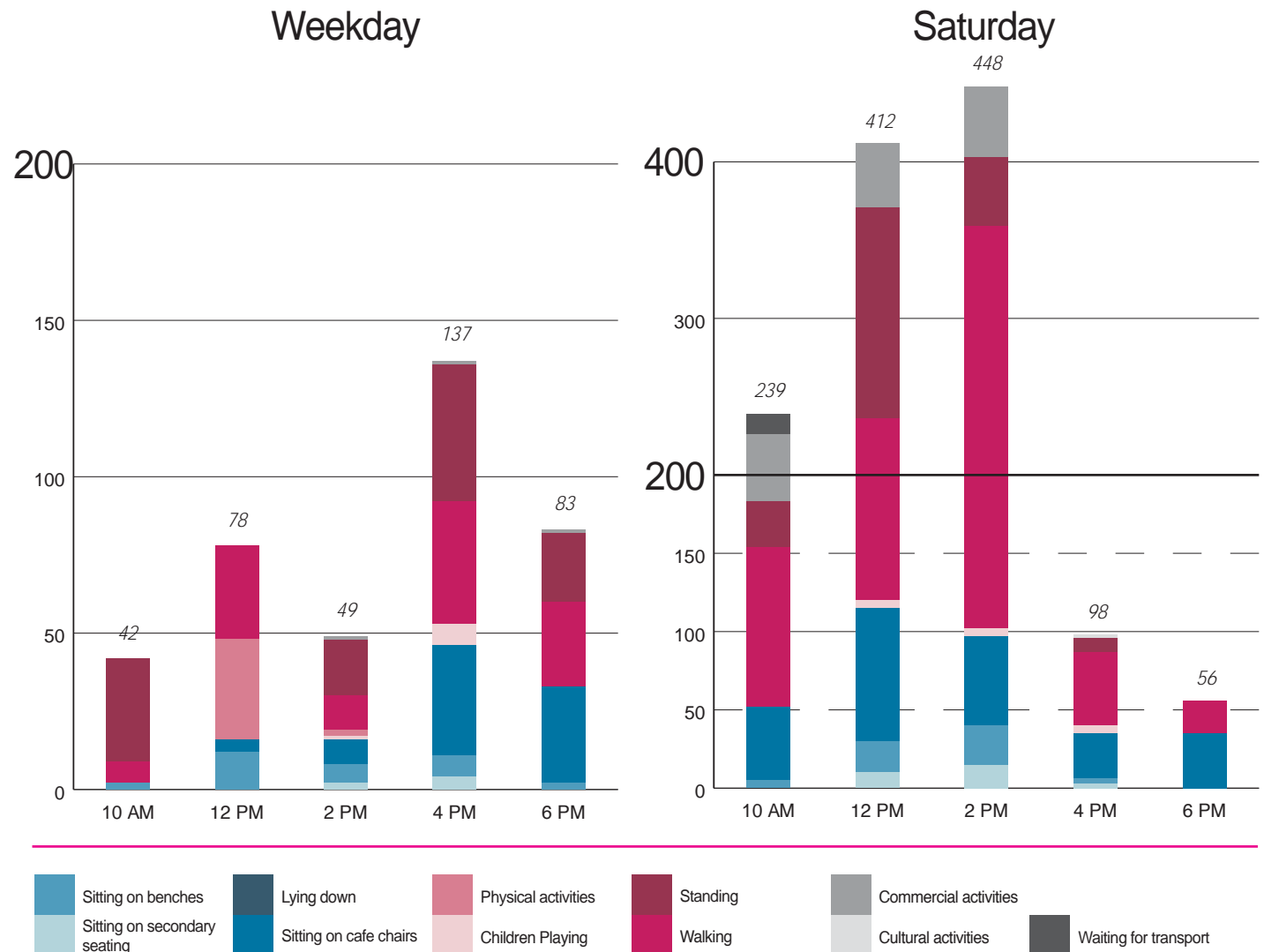
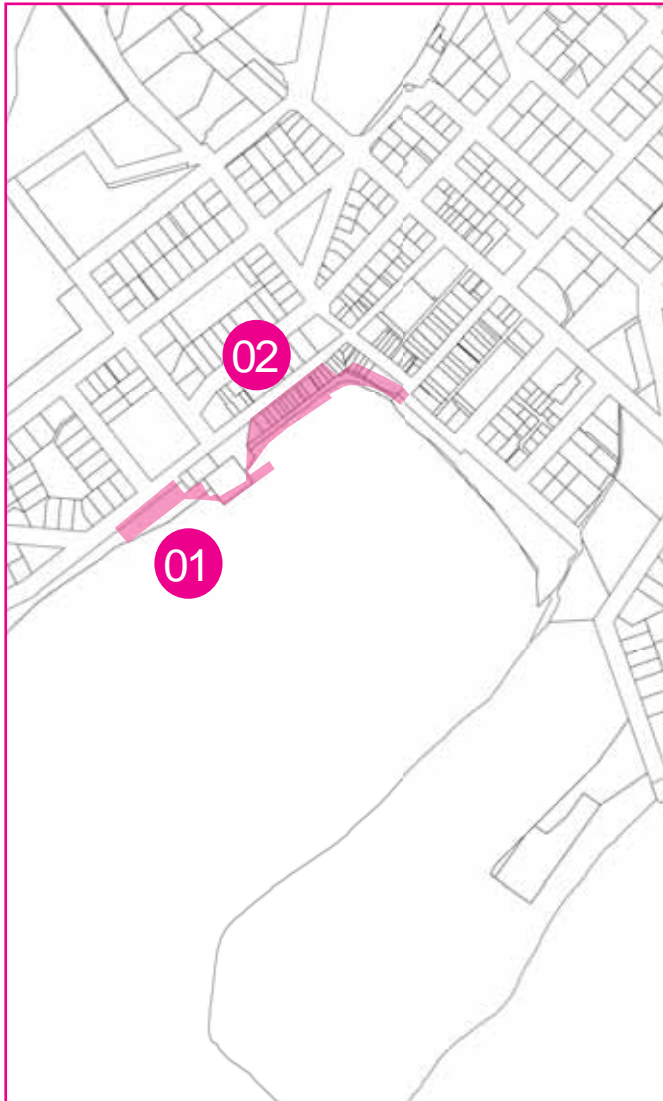


Saturday

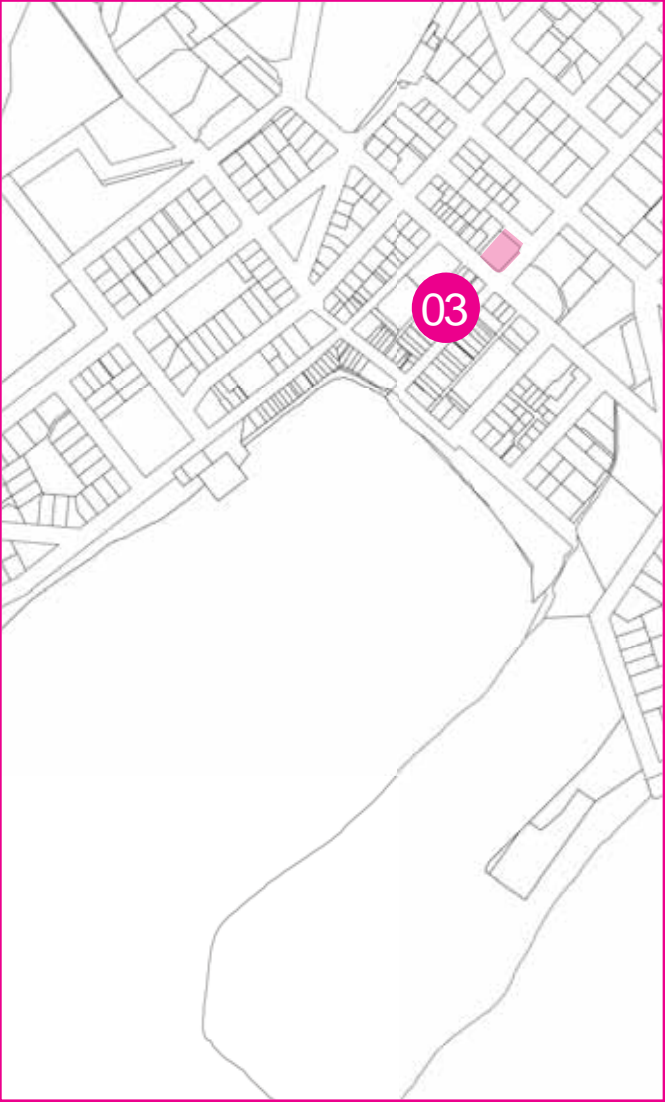
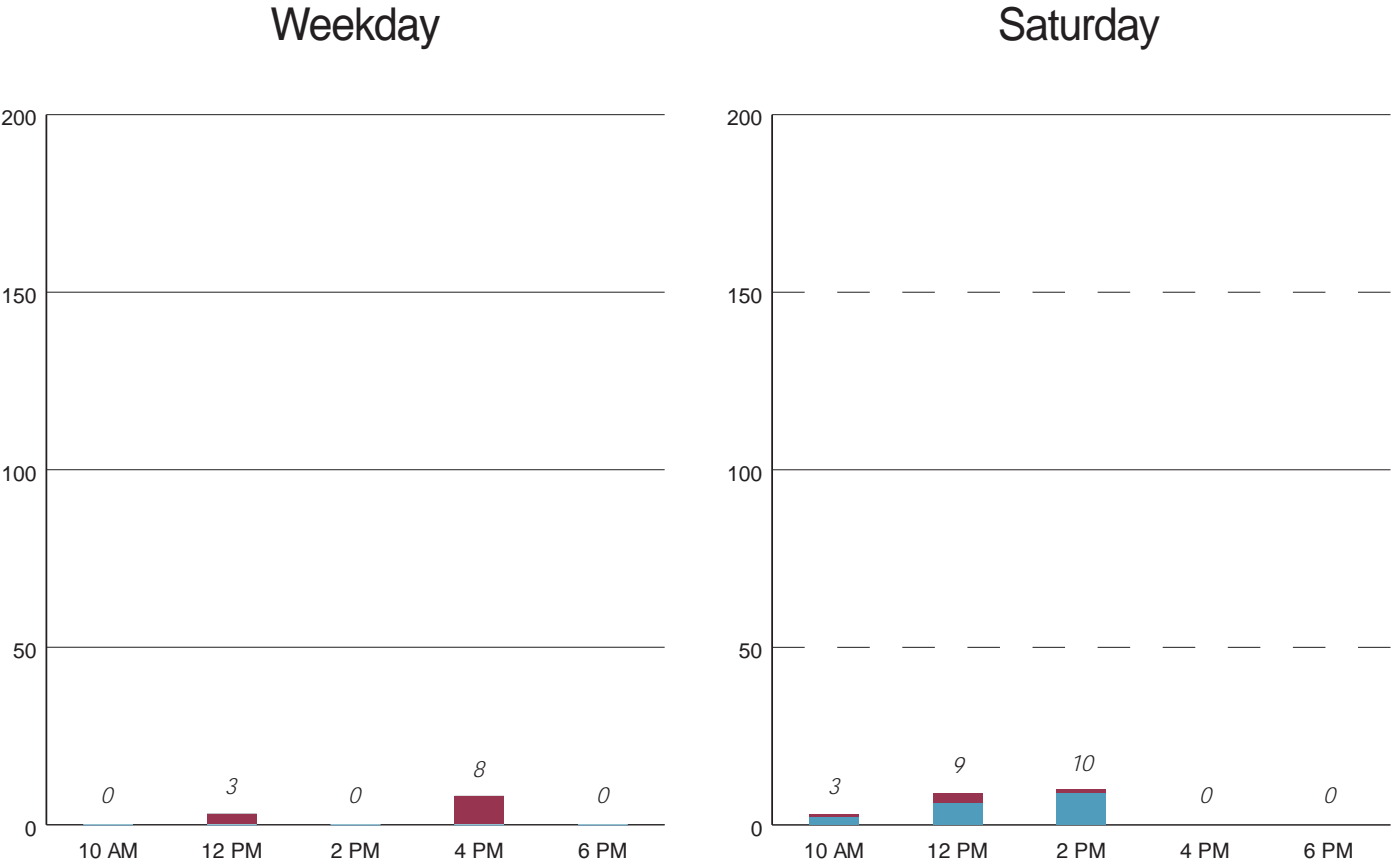


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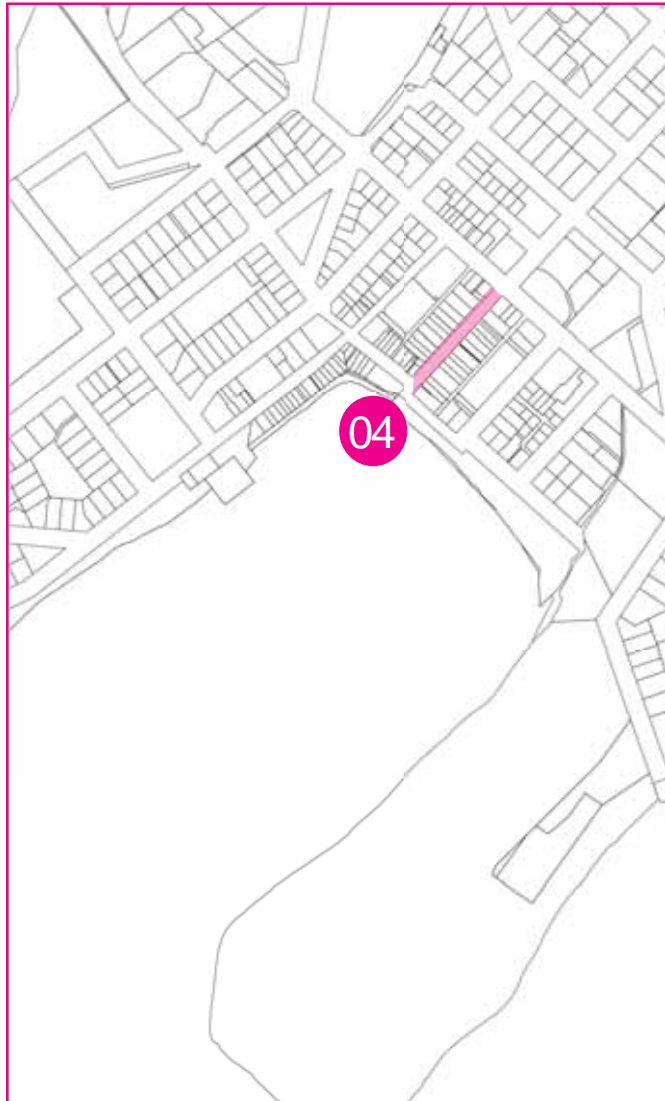
4.2 Stationary activity - 01 Lake Esplanade + 02 Earnslaw Park



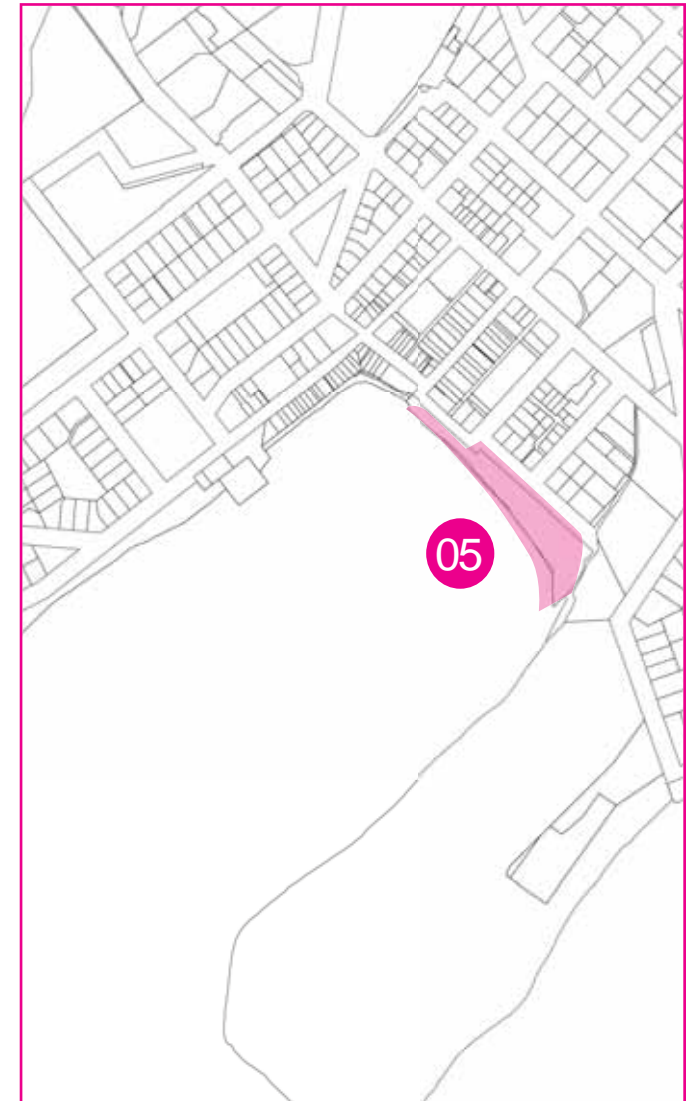
4.2 Stationary activity - 03 Village Green

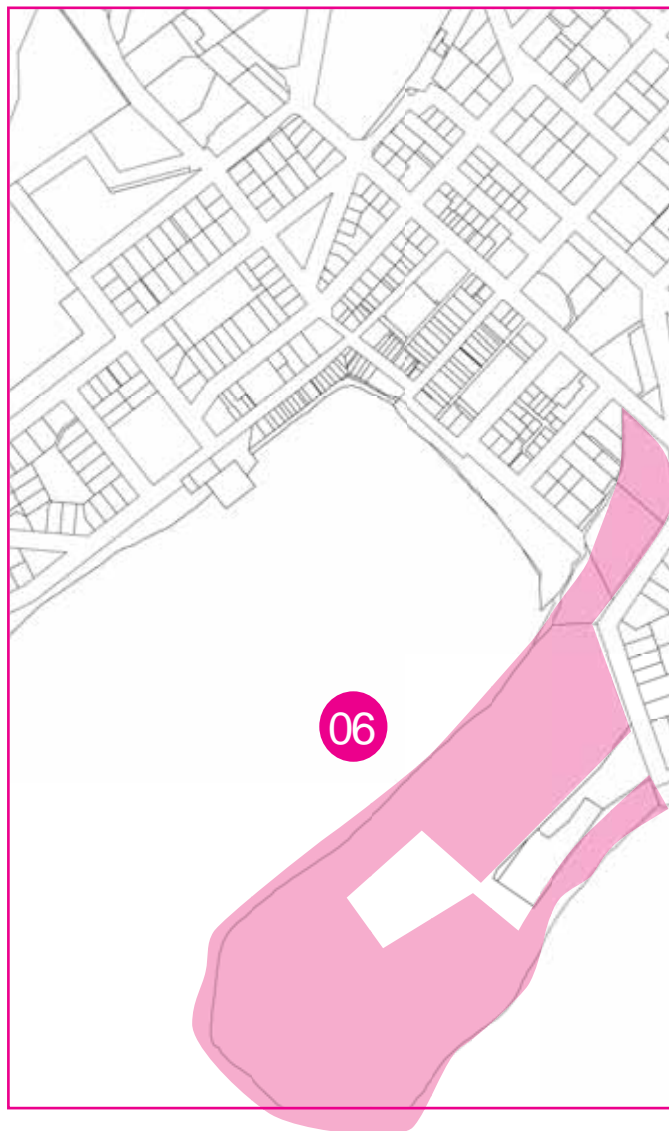


4.2 Stationary activity - 04 The Mall



4.2 Stationary activity - 05 Queenstown Bay





4.2 Stationary activity - 06 Queenstown Gardens



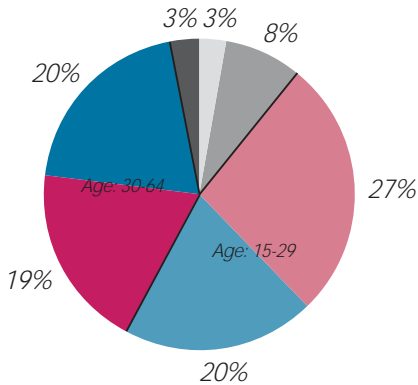
Weekday

Survey sample size: 1059

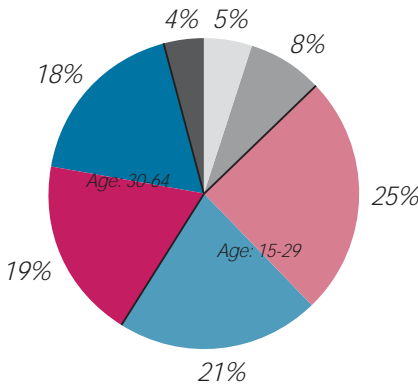
Saturday

Survey sample size: 1052

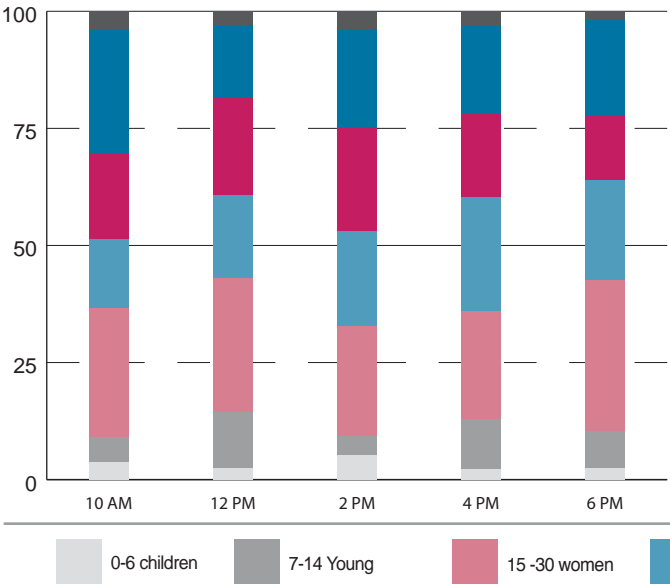
Total distribution



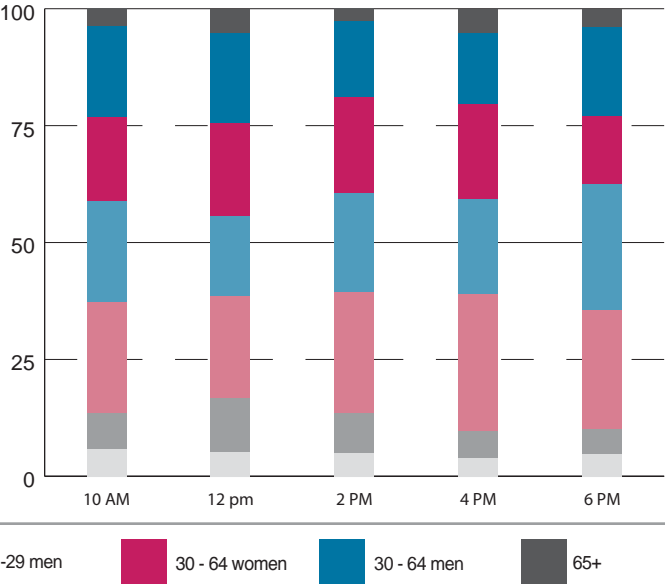
Total distribution



Hourly distribution



Hourly distribution



4.3 Age and gender



2017 QUEENSTOWN PUBLIC LIFE SURVEY