

# FOR INFORMATION

Future Ponsonby Strategy

PBA Member Report Back Sessions

**WORKING DRAFT ISSUE: 28 August 2024**



FUTURE  
**PONSONBY**  
LET'S MOVE FORWARD

# A Data Driven Approach

## Developing an evidence base

As part of the strategy foundations, in combination with an engagement workstream, a first phase of the project built a comprehensive evidence base collated and analysed from a wide range of available data and input from subject matter experts and stakeholders. This has provided key insights around:

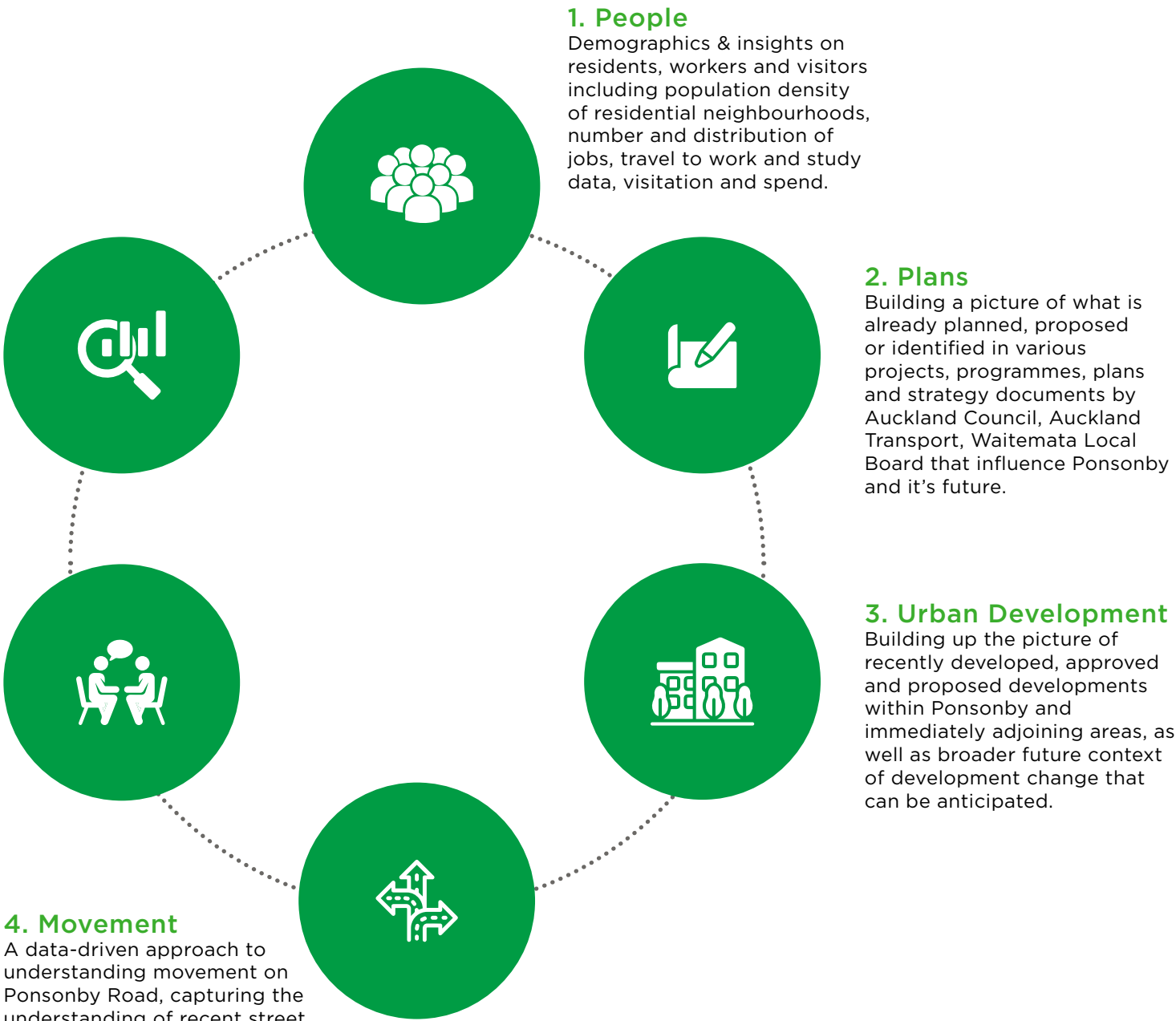
- The key drivers of change
- Current & projected people data (users and demographics)
- Urban development, movement, public life, plans and projects, and local and global benchmarking.

This data-driven approach is to ensure the strategy is evidence-based. To help build the baseline and guide the strategy development, this phase is collating data and undertaking analysis around 6 key areas or “pillars”.

**6. Benchmarking**  
Local and global comparisons and precedent studies from relevant urban neighbourhoods and business districts in Auckland, Australia and beyond, to inform strategic direction for the future of Ponsonby.

**5. Public Life**  
Understanding how people spend time on & around Ponsonby Road, and how the street and public spaces support people to create vibrancy.

**4. Movement**  
A data-driven approach to understanding movement on Ponsonby Road, capturing the understanding of recent street change, and the way transport change in neighbouring parts of the city will have an influence on the future of Ponsonby.



# Data Baseline Summary



## 1. People

18,000 residents and over 13,500 jobs in the Ponsonby area (2018 census). People travel to Ponsonby to work from across the city, especially the isthmus and North Shore. City centre the main place of work or study for Ponsonby residents, but also a high rate of living locally and working locally, distinctive compared to Auckland as a whole.



## 2. Plans

Some long running projects and plans, including completion of the City Rail Link, development of public space at 254 Ponsonby Road, restoration of the Ley's Institute Library, and Great North Road upgrade, are being implemented and will have an influence on future. Potential greenway initiatives that would deliver on aspects of the 2014 Ponsonby Plan. Influence of Northwest Rapid Transit not certain. No funding for any upgrade to Ponsonby Road within the next 10 years or beyond.



## 3. Urban Development

Steady rates of urban intensification within Ponsonby have occurred last 10 years, and anticipated to continue next 5 -1 0 years. The southwest triangle between Williamson Avenue, Ponsonby Road and Great North Road a high change area with significant development potential remaining. The Greenhouse and Rose Road apartments opened in 2024 adding 150 new homes alone. Pompallier on Ponsonby development continues the trend of mid rise new buildings working in with the old, and its location represents a significant counter pull and balancing of development activity to the north towards 3 Lamps, a shift away from the trend of increased concentration of development and new retail and hospitality around the central and southern parts of Ponsonby seen in last 5-10 years.



## 4. Movement

We are still working with AT to gain data and analyse insights around changes in traffic volumes, traffic speeds, safety, parking utilisation and public transport patronage. There are plans to improve the Inner Link service that will benefit people catching this bus between Ponsonby and the city centre. The frequency of bus routes to increase in the medium term through to 2030. Ponsonby is a hot spot for hire scooter operations with most trips between Ponsonby and Karangahape Road or the City Centre, with lesser trips for origins and destinations within Ponsonby itself.



## 5. Public Life

The community space at 254 Ponsonby Road, a long-planned-for initiative of the Local Board and its predecessors, is moving towards implementation, with demolition underway and construction pending. This will add a new public space of a size and sort different to anything currently found within Ponsonby. There are opportunities for PBA to be involved in how this space might be programmed to support added vibrancy and become a positive addition to Ponsonby. Few other recent public space improvements in the last 5 years since the side street crossing improvements. Some potential funding under LAMP programme to improve walkability and support social life of streets and spaces leading to Ponsonby Road.



## 6. Benchmarking

Exemplar and case study projects and initiatives, particularly from Australian cities, where there are strong benchmarks in terms of great streets at the heart of great urban villages comparable in scale and character to Ponsonby. These cities also offer different approaches to investing in and managing great urban places like Ponsonby. These benchmarks are being identified and incorporated to inform strategic direction and illustrate elements of other places that might benefit Ponsonby in Future.



# A People-centric Approach

## Gaining people-centric perspectives

We have sought a diversity of perspectives to obtain a depth & breadth of insight and understanding that focuses on people's lived experiences of Ponsonby and their hopes and aspirations for the future of this place.

A two prong engagement phase was undertaken to gain people-centric perspectives on Ponsonby. This included deep-dive interviews with a range of stakeholders, as well as an extensive community campaign centred around a questionnaire.

This has formed a key part of the foundation that has underpinned the development of this strategy.

## How has this informed the development of the strategy?

Key themes from the engagement activity are summarised here as the key direction-setting understanding that has fed into and directly informed the strategy development, led by the working group and tested through a series of visioning workshops with the PBA board. This process has also included drop in sessions open to all PBA members, to provide a further opportunity to report back on key insights and signal the direction of strategy development.

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Responses Recorded

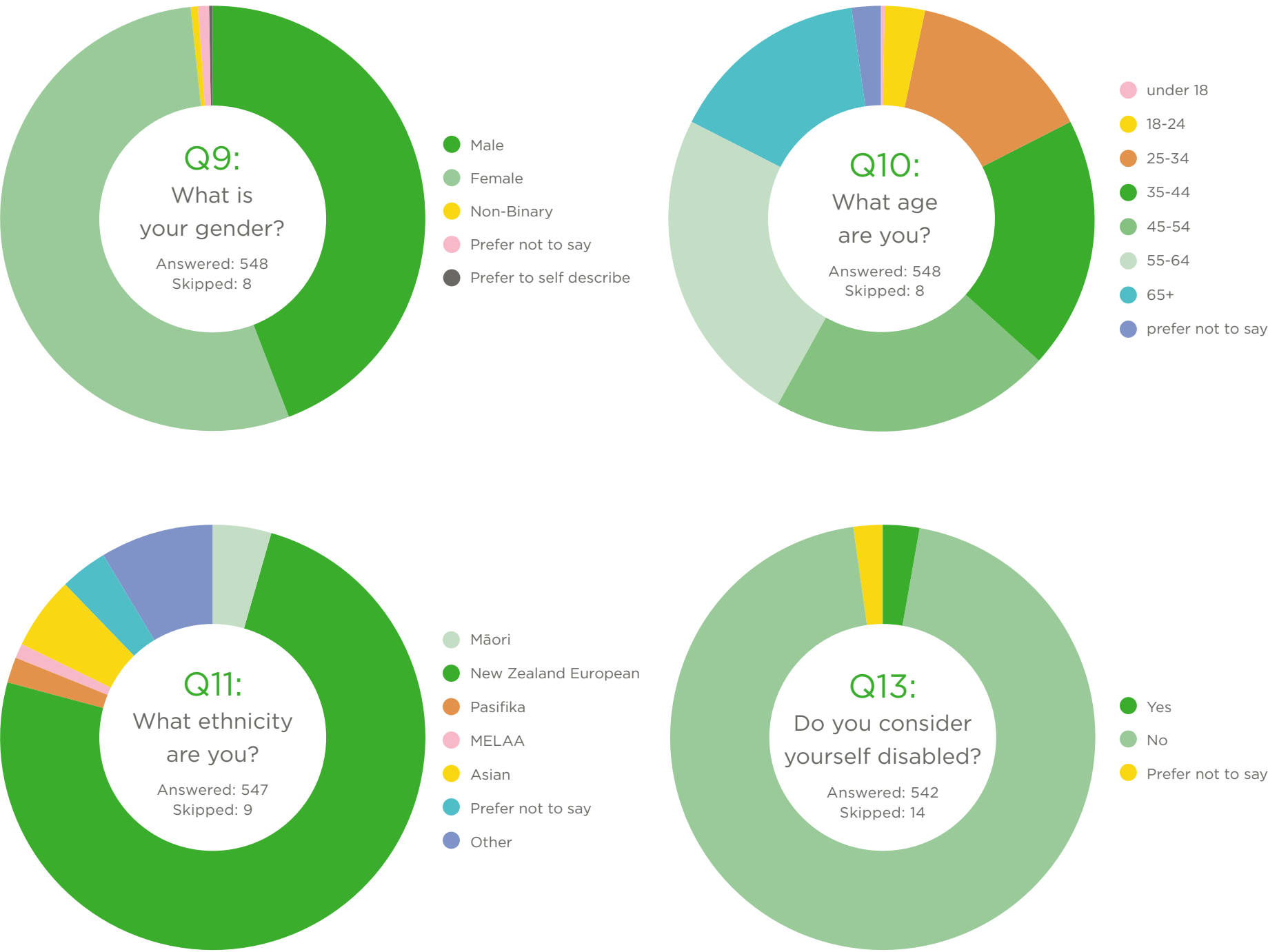
>50%

Ponsonby Locals

SEVEN

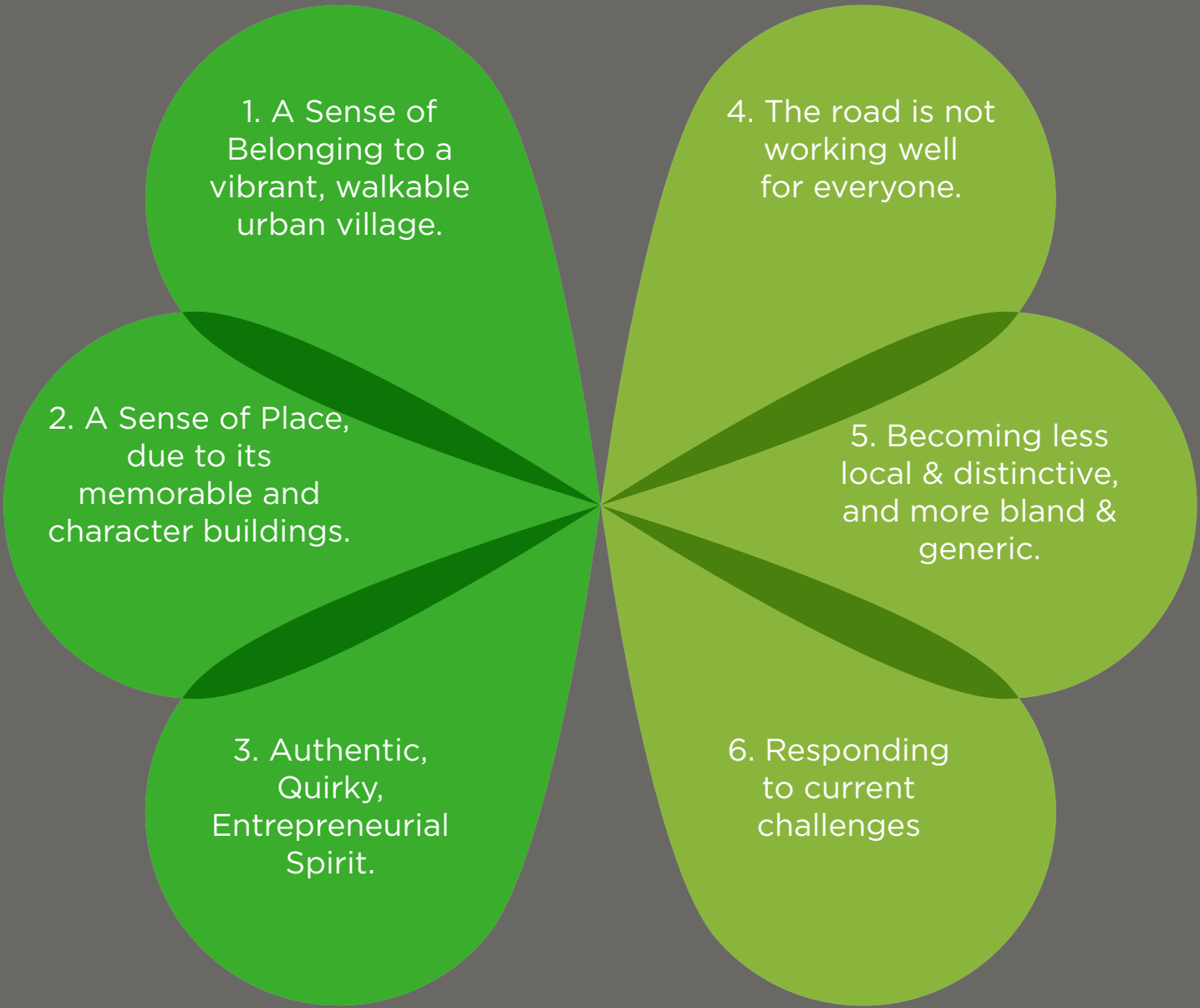
Deep Dive Stakeholder Interviews

# Summary Of Survey Responses



Engagement Summary  
Key Emerging Themes

**What makes  
Ponsonby  
special & loved?**



**What are  
people concerned  
about?**

# Engagement Summary

## Key Emerging Themes

### Special & Loved

Sense of Belonging
Walkable
Exciting Food Culture
Sense of Place
Memorable & Character Buildings
Distinctive & Memorable Places
Authentic and Quirky
Entrepreneurial Spirit
Community with social values

### Concerned About

Reducing social cohesion
Street not working for everyone
Reliance on hospitality
Losing our DNA
Cookie cutter buildings
Homogenisation
Bland & Generic
Corporates
Commercial strip and destination

# Engagement Summary

## Key Emerging Themes

**Q6:**  
When you come to Ponsonby which parts do you typically visit?\*

**Q7:**  
If you go to different parts of ponsonby, how do you typically move between them?\*\*



\* % RESPONSE SHOWN IS FOR THE PARTS OF PONSONBY SURVEY RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED THEY OFTEN VISITED.  
\*\* WALKING IS THE PREFERED MODE OF MOVEMENT BETWEEN AREAS ALONG PONSONBY ROAD



# Engagement Summary

## Key Emerging Themes

### Vibrant Built Environment



“I love the unique and creative spaces.”

“There’s not too much glass and glitter in Ponsonby, we don’t have to be too flashy or try too hard. Our buildings are very original.”

“You are Auckland’s village of villages, you are unique & hold a special mix of heritage and newness, and you don’t need to conform”.

“Your street environment is not a nice shopping environment - too many cars and lanes of traffic, too hard to cross.”

““The traffic on Ponsonby Rd is a major detractor. It’s so hard to cross the road and it feels unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists”.

“Everything is walking friendly, dog friendly, safe, and Auckland’s best restaurants 5 mins from my door.”

“You light up Auckland with your vibrancy and well curated mix of retail & hospitality venues.”

“Pavements could be more pedestrian friendly and we need to allow for scooters and bikes so they don’t compete with walkers. Make it easier to come to Ponsonby and not bring a car.”





# Engagement Summary

## Key Emerging Themes

### Authenticity, Identity, Experience



“You sit atop the city, bridging the views from East to West, offering different environments and offerings from one end to the other.”

“Ponsonby is full of businesses that are authentically Ponsonby, we need to maintain that”

“We want to keep our extremes in Ponsonby, not make it beige”

“I worry we are loosing our edge in Ponsonby – becoming expensive and mainstream”

“We need to create more community-based events for other parts of the city to let them know how unique and wonderful we are.”

“Excellent restaurants and cafes, and pop-up stores/ events dotted along the main road makes ponsonby an area to visit “just because” and see what you find.”

“I love sitting in cafes at an outside table chatting to total strangers or to friends going past.”

“You are not a mall, I like shopping at independent retail stores”



# Engagement Summary

## Key Emerging Themes

Influence the bigger forces of change



Everything is closing down and it's becoming unsafe at night.

There is an issue with homelessness and mental health issues of some people in the Three Lamps end of Ponsonby.

The element of fun and safety seems to be less than in the past. Walking in the dark is not an option for me anymore.

