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xsection

issue two 2012/13 what is landscape architecture?

Here it is! The second edition of xsection magazine. It was a challenge, but we are very pleased with the final outcome. We would like to thank a few people that helped us get here. Firstly a big thanks to our contributors – students, staff & practicing landscape architects. A huge thanks to Pete Griffiths and John Allan for all the time you both invested in us and the encouragement you gave. Also to Matthew Burson for helping out a lot on the sideline. Special thanks to NZILA Auckland Branch for the promotional support and to the advisory board for helping with the refereed article. Thanks to AGM Publishing and Tanya Griffiths of Norcross Printing Group for technical advice and printing. Cheers to all our facebook 'fans', blog followers and all of the other supporters that we have not forgotten but remain nameless.

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xsection is published annually by Unitec Department of Landscape Architecture. Advertising statements and editorial opinions expressed in xsection do not necessarily reflect the views of Unitec Department of Landscape Architecture and its staff, unless expressly stated.

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Publisher
Unitec ePress
Carrington Road, Mt Albert, Auckland
study@unitec.ac.nz

Supported by New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects

Printed by Norcross Printing Group.

ISSN 2230-6277 print edition
ISSN 2230-6285 online edition

Cover image of the Auckland motorway junction kindly provided by NZTA.

Contents page image by student Blair Clinch from his Auckland Waterfront project.

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What is landscape architecture? This ambiguous question is posed as this year's theme for xsection magazine 2012/13. The question initially emerged from an active involvement in the international event 'The Understory' (Landscape Architecture Awareness Day) by Unitec Landscape Architecture students.

The work collected in this publication is a contemporary snapshot of Auckland's landscape architectural professionals, academics and students' views on current practice, modes of representation, and the process of landscape architecture in the world. The work is thought provoking and challenging, and provides a commentary about both landscapes, and the Auckland profession.

The articles each take a different approach to what landscape architecture is; this wide range of enquiry suggests the broad nature of the discipline. Some contributors draw inspiration from current projects, others draw conclusions and speculate on the discipline from a research and experience background. This collection of work suggests that landscape architecture has a major part to play in Auckland's future.

The contributors from this year's edition suggest that collaboration is an important way forward for our profession and that the inspiration behind design decisions is in the context of a site. Some believe that the way we interact with the public needs to change, while others suggest that we as designers need to take more risks.

Students from the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture programme at Unitec have also made a statement of what they believe landscape architecture is about and have produced some visually impressive work.

xsection magazine 2012/13 includes a refereed section where a selected article has been double blind peer reviewed for quality assurance.

We trust you will enjoy the intellectual and visual feast that is xsection: issue two.

For more details about xsection and to access exclusive online only content, go to x-sectionmagazine.blogspot.co.nz/ or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/xsection

Dusk view from atop silo tower looking toward viaduct and Auckland city by Simon Devitt.





auckland ecologies

Matthew Bradbury

The newly amalgamated Auckland Council has recently published a vision for the city; the Auckland Plan. The Plan asks us to imagine a more intensive Auckland, an Auckland that has abandoned sprawl for a compact city formed of five-story apartment buildings clustered around railway stations and along arterial roads. The inhabitants will turn their backs on cars and instead avail themselves of an efficient and modern public transport system to move around the new city. This agreeable vision is in a long line of utopian civic plans that Auckland has produced since the first time Europeans set foot on the muddy beach of Fort Street. Then, the first thing the young governor did was to ask the surveyor general to produce a plan for a new city. Felton Mathew's civic plan of circuses and crescents would have rivalled Regency London. Needless to say the plan was almost immediately ignored.

The attempted transformation of the ferny shores of the Waitamata into a South Pacific

version of the city of Bath was followed by many plans including a grand urban project for a classical civic centre to be located on the old Queen Street Swamp. In 1928 the architects Gummer and Ford planned to transpose the Piazza del Popolo found in Rome to Auckland; Wakefield Street, Queen Street and Greys Avenue were to become a baroque trident to rival Rome. The entry to Queen Street would have been announced by a grand 10 story high civic entry. Of course nothing was built except for the lonely Dilworth building.

The dream of an equalitarian Auckland followed the end of the Second World War. A Red Auckland was built; trams ferried the workers from factories to vast state housing estates surrounding the city. Waterview, Owairaka, Wesley, Oranga, Panmure, Pt England and Glen Innes formed a new Auckland topology. Solid, Tessenownian villas came to rest in the fields of old town farms. The remnants of this unique

equalitarian geography are still to be traced on the slopes of Auckland's volcanoes and rivers.

The building of the harbour bridge and the construction of the new American designed freeway system drove the building of the next Auckland utopia; the suburban city of the North Shore. Haciendas filled the bays, a kiwi Poujadism filled the sensibility of homeowners prefiguring the liberalism of the 1980's. North Shorism became a new urban ideology. Individuals untrammelled by the state, living in their own houses and gardens and driving cars became a new order of government. The result was a sea of sprawl.

Auckland's different utopias; Settler, Victorian, Red, the North Shore and now the Compact City, are a rich and unexamined field that confronts any study of contemporary Auckland. The lack of investigation into these histories is both a confirmation of Auckland's relentless

act now! one step at a time

Claire O'Shaughnessy

As a professional taught to adopt an iterative design process and test ideas it can be difficult to realign this process with an expectation that because you are a professional, play time is over and you had better get it right first time. Truncated time-frames and urgency in delivery are two common reactions to a shrinking economy because less costs upfront means more money to spend later, right? Many of us know that clever design means that we can spend money more wisely and even contribute to economic stability or growth. However, history has shown that people are unlikely to take financial advice from a "greenie". Before this is interpreted as a classic landscape architect's moan, I must state that it is a difficult time for many. People are doing what they know best to survive, and erring on

the side of the conservative, because the error in a trial and error process can be expensive economically and damaging both socially and environmentally. Perhaps we have been spoiled for too long, able to have our folies, understand the repercussions only in theory, learn from (or worse ignore) our mistakes and move on.

Fortunately landscape architects are good at planning for an uncertain future and have been seeking opportunities for responsible risk-taking elsewhere. By responsible risk taking, I'm talking about the opportunity to start with small scale interventions. Observing, learning, and critiquing at this small scale helps to avoid making big, potentially dangerous mistakes. Whether this is through temporary installations

or community based projects, each small intervention is designed to transform a landscape, and community momentum means that a project has a future. An example of this is a small, but highly significant part of the on-going New Orleans project by Spackman Mossop and Micheals. Demonstration plots were constructed to present opportunities for how residents could develop vacant lots in a way that is both sustainable and contributes to the overall resilience of the city. These demonstration sites empowered residents to develop their own sites by providing materials and training as well as resources for urban greening.¹ The sites themselves are also designed to be transformed into community spaces once the development direction of the area is evident.

It becomes apparent when examining these bottom up projects that an ability to know how and when to engage with a community is critical to their success. To me and perhaps other landscape architects, community engagement has been tainted by previous experiences or dismissed as belonging to the domain of the New Urbanists. So, what can we do to rebuild this community relationship, encourage people to become caretakers of their land, and work together to create positive change?

Landscape architects have the ability to understand the landscape as a continuum and interpret its potential. However, we need to communicate this potential so people will understand not only our motivation, but feel motivated themselves to grow with a

project and garner enthusiasm from others. Exploring these methods of communication is going to be one of our most exciting creative challenges. This can be where we once again test ideas and maybe even allow ourselves to make little mistakes and learn from them.

Claire O'Shaughnessy is a landscape architect based at JASMAX.

Images accompanying this article are by student Anna Bish from her negotiated study research project 'Revealing the Cryptic'.

I. Green, Jared (Interviewer), "Interview with Elizabeth Mossop on How Landscape Architects Can Protect New Orleans" The Dirt, <http://dirt.asla.org/2011/12/07/interview-with-elizabeth-mossop-on-how-landscape-architects-can-protect-new-orleans/> 12 July 2011



heal the land and the land will heal us

Jane Rumble

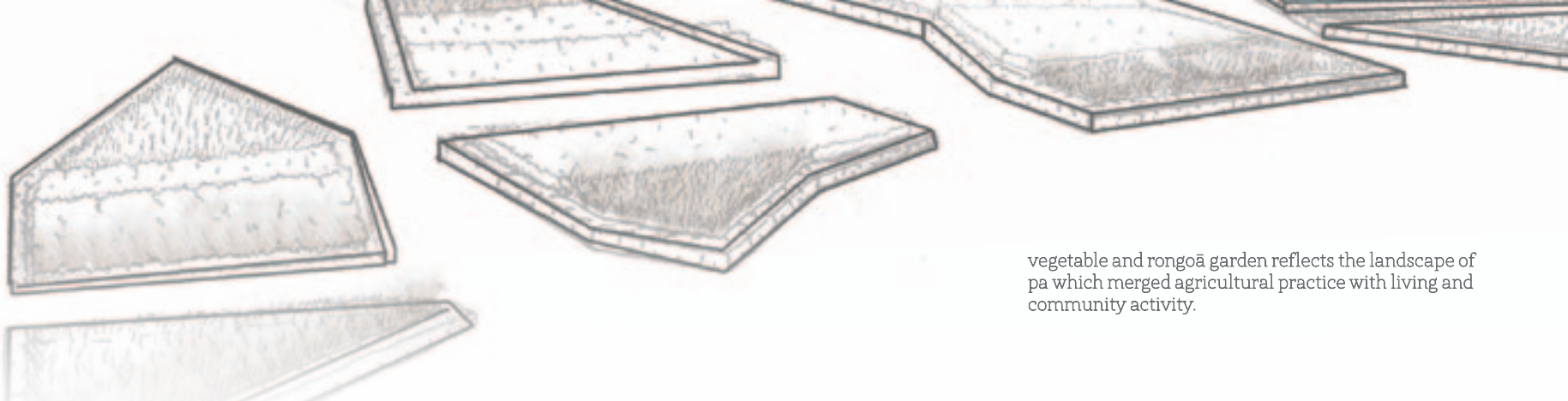


indicative perspective of the movement of water and marking of the Puhinui Stream flow path is expressed through drifts of low growing native grasses, cabbage trees, nikau and pou whenua.

As the scope of the landscape architect's role broadens, so too does the description of landscape architecture. Without attempting to devise a new definition, the following project encompasses and describes many of the challenges that we now undertake as a profession.

At the core of the landscape proposal is the concept of 'healing through the landscape' and kaitiakitanga. A concept evolved that not only enhanced and improved the natural environment but also successfully incorporated the need for visual integration and prisoner rehabilitation. The result was a 'rehabilitative landscape' that blurred the conventional institutional boundaries between the internal environment and wider external environment through ecology and cultural meaning.

Natural Habitats were engaged by the GLM Consortium; G4S Australia and New Zealand Limited; Leighton Contractors; and Mainzeal Property. Our team at Natural Habitats was led by Debbie Tikao with support from Jenny Wood, Jane Rumble and Helen Mellso. We worked closely with architects Stephenson & Turner, Rewi Thompson and MPC Planning. GLM consortium was one of the three in the running to build and operate New Zealand's first public-private partnership (PPP) prison at Wiri.



vegetable and rongoā garden reflects the landscape of pa which merged agricultural practice with living and community activity.

Although the tender wasn't awarded to the GLM consortium, the project was highly rewarding. As a team, the consortium cultivated an overall landscape concept and Integrated Design & Management Strategy (IDMS). Collectively a report containing a detailed ecological and visual mitigation strategy, planting plans, and long term strategies for implementation and management was produced.

The IDMS addressed complex factors typical of the corrections environment including; the historical context of the site, the physical context of the facility within its wider environment, security requirements, tikanga, prisoner eco-sourcing programme and rongoā (Maori medicinal gardens). As part of the IDMS process there was extensive stakeholder consultation. The strategy aimed to weave the layers of meaning inherent in the site, bringing forth many potential interactions by optimizing all of the whole system simultaneously.

The 47ha site and surrounds have an extensive history of occupation and use, including pre-European occupation associated with the Matukuturua Stonefields and maunga. Extensive landform modification from quarrying activities left a modified volcanic form of Maunga Matukuturua which characterises the site's western boundary and represents key landscape elements and patterns of the area.

Key Landscape Components;

- The concept of healing was achieved through the integration of rongoā (Maori medicinal gardens) and horticultural gardens which were woven through the core of the site.
 - Kaitiakitanga (protecting and enhancing native biodiversity).
- Ecology blends and mitigates the visual barriers between the designated site and the wider landscape. Viewshafts of the wider landscape were retained, while a visual separation between accommodation wings was achieved.

This has been shown to have a positive influence on both the behavioural and psychological outlook of prisoners and staff. Puhinui stream was integrated as a cultural wetland feature into the southern part of the prison. Water was an integral element of the design and IDMS proposal to create therapeutic spaces for healing and rehabilitation.

From our involvement in this multifaceted project, came a depth of understanding. Large scale and complex projects such as the Men's Prison at Wiri, represent the breadth and depth of issues we face today in landscape architectural projects. With all that was achieved came a realisation of how much more there is to learn.

Written by Jane Rumble in collaboration with the Natural Habitats Design Team.

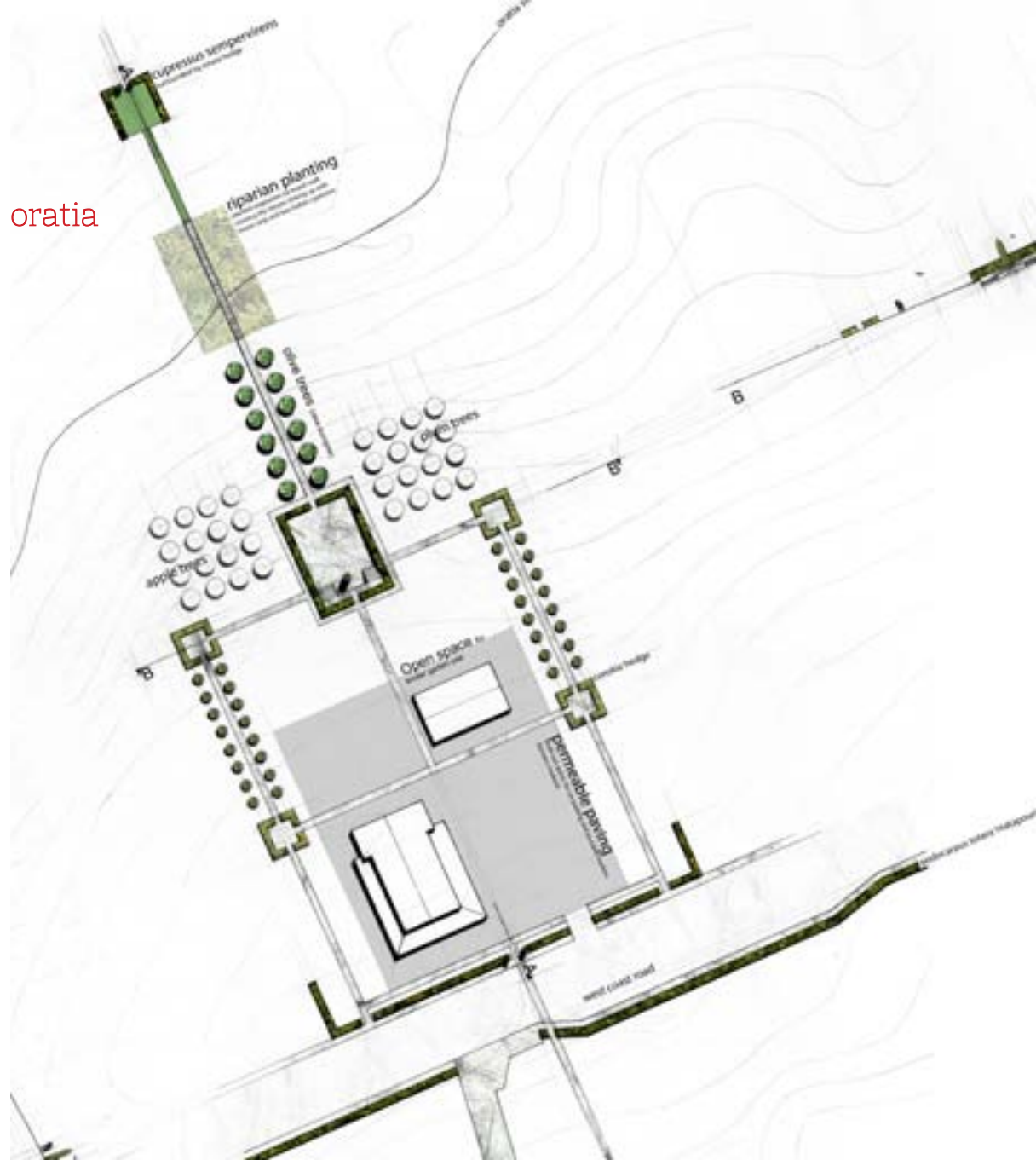
Images by authors.

Ist year study oratia

The role of context, or the regional setting of a place [character], forms an integral part of any design process from historical and contemporary art practice to science, writing, architecture and town planning. For this project students were asked to focus on vegetation as a driving factor for design intervention. By exploring the landscape processes and contextual site information found within the Oratia Valley catchment, they developed a concept plan for the Oratia Community Hall.

Daniel Pervan

Considering this reserve as a memorial and a contemplative place was the driver for this design. Being universal (for everyone) and also remembering the history of the site of Oratia, such as the Dalmations and Europeans who came to Oratia in the 1800's was also important. The main axis has a courtyard (centre of site) surrounded by totara trees. It then leads down to the stream by olive trees which are very European and would give a Mediterranean feel.



Claire Liesching

The aim was to create a design for Oratia that would link the site back to its history as well as bringing people to the reserve. My idea incorporated the previous productivity of the rural land and the central location of the site to civic facilities like the town hall and primary school, turning the site into a social project where the community can unite and work together to manage and harvest a series of community gardens.



visual communication

This project focuses on a combination of hand drafted work, collaged imagery and digital rendering through the utilisation of perspective with photoshop techniques. This creative process enables the landscape architect to better convey their vision.



Reuben McPeak

Using a number of computer-aided design techniques, an impression of the kiwi summer escape is created. Inspiration is borrowed from the New Zealand natural landscape and from anticipation of the imminent holiday period.



Alice Rose Taylor

Using simple two-point perspective drafting techniques combined with layering of imagery on photoshop, the idea of a new shared space was created. This type of perspective offers an effective way to communicate ideas visually.

gamechanger

Changespace

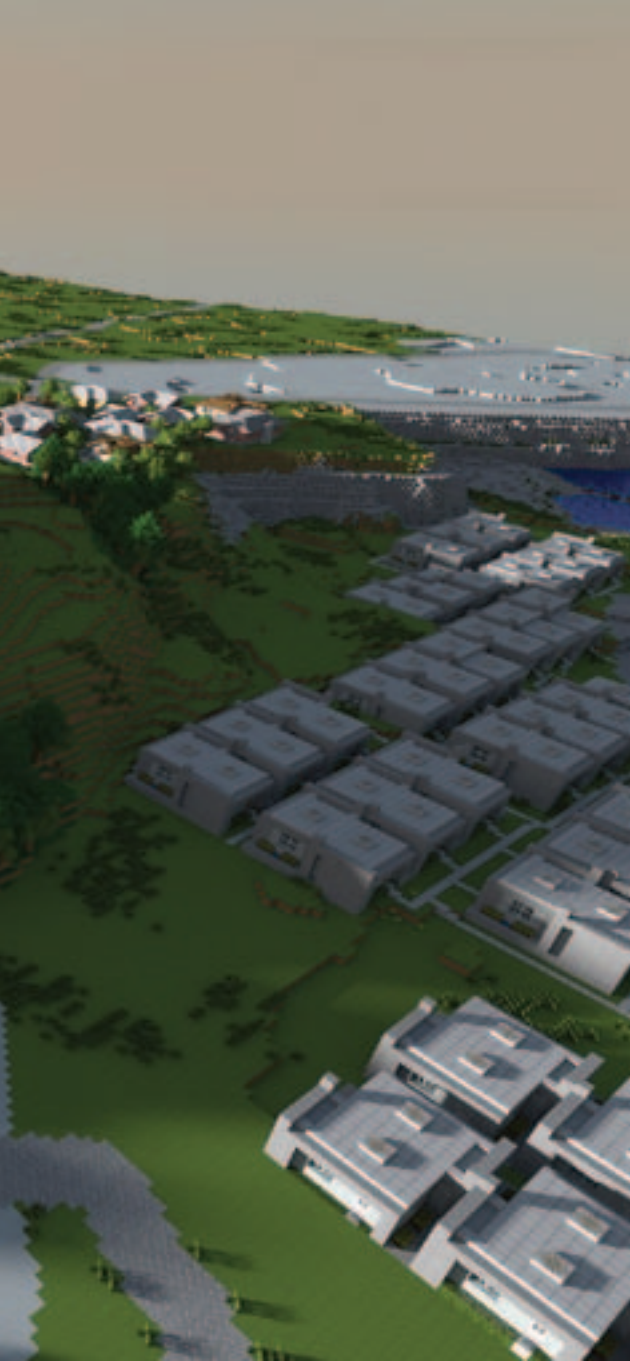
'If 19th century culture was shaped by the novel, and 20th century culture by cinema, then the culture of the 21st century will be shaped by the interface.' In opening his 2010 TED talk, Aaron Koblin raises a sentiment which has interesting implications for landscape architecture.

Culture is a regular feature in modern definitions of landscape architecture, appearing as a sort of foundational element alongside environmental concepts and physical processes. Theoretical works by Guallart or Girot describe culture/nature as inseparable, a conjoined system where nothing is natural or artificial. Therefore, could we assume culture is landscape architecture?

Returning to the idea of culture being shaped by interface, our research proposes that studying different types of interface should reveal a transforming edge to the way in which people are relating to and interacting with landscape.

Our chosen experimental interface has people interacting with vast algorithmically generated worlds of cubed materials; Minecraft employs a blocky approximation of landscapes and ecosystems to capture the attention of 7.3 million players.





'landscape architecture is culture-produced and crowd-sourced.'

The approach is intrinsically related to landscape architecture; users shape the surface by destroying and relocating blocks, making it more habitable, productive or aesthetically pleasing for their pixelated self.

Maungarei, Mount Wellington, provides a real site which meets certain criteria - pronounced topography, intersecting 'urban biomes' and definite potential to perform an energetic role within its developing surrounds. We are proposing that a game level of the mountain could be used to explore a new type of information gathering. How will users behave, what will they create - and will this harness a kind of lay-man's 'design opinion' about the site?

The process began with a greyscale height map constructed in GIS, which produced a rough topography including water tables for the Pakuranga estuary, Panmure basin and nearby quarry wetlands. We then literally hand detailed the model, adding surface objects, materials, laying roads and populating the villages, all over a glass of red, near the end of a working day.

Additions of instructional sign posting, tools, and material blocks to undertake construction on the mountain brought the model to a point

where it could be issued to test subjects. It's still early days, but at this point we have received designs for an art gallery within the volcanic cone, a futuristic night club perched atop the maunga, hand-glider launch pads, and a glass extension to the peak.

It's not our intention to take these concepts at face value and launch into feasibility studies, but rather to weigh up the value of a technique which can collect thousands of spatial opinions.

You can think of it as an advanced form of community consultation where survey forms, hearings and public forums are replaced with pixelated tools, unrestrained physics and explosives. Or you can think of it as a version of generative design where 'turtles' are replaced by real test subjects whose behaviour can appear just as complex. Either way, in answer to the question, landscape architecture is culture-produced and crowd-sourced.

Article by Ethan Reid and Jamie Stronge of Changspace. Changspace is a new, landscape architectural venture seeking to synchronise spatial design technique with a rapidly changing world.

Image by the authors.

defending the realm is no walk in the park

Ian J. Vincent

It's been said many times before that our own worst enemy is complacency. To quote the fable teller Aesop, complacency chews and swallows up our special character and values, *"the secret we know and no one else does"*. Because I have a fear of complacency I've been doing some soul searching recently about the things I choose not to accept about my chosen profession – landscape architecture. Some people say landscape architecture is a dying profession.

While I don't accept that, it is undeniable there are some fundamental issues to confront around asserting a much clearer and stronger definition of what landscape architecture is, and where it stands as a profession.

Definitions are hugely important in helping form perceptions. We know we have some stark problems when people easily misinterpret the very word landscape





architecture, what it actually means, or when it's substituted with garden design, or worst of all, described as landscaping.

Let's face it, being spoken of as the "trees and plants guys" isn't uncommon. Nor is being in meetings where the attitudes toward landscape architecture is more an afterthought, a tag on to the buzz word "Urban Design", than a central element that provides multiple value-adding strands to any project. These perceptions just serve to marginalise a profession that is perhaps guilty of being missing in action. So where has it gone and where is it going?

This brings me back to the need for clarity of definition. To my mind a primary purpose of landscape architecture is to ground our social and cultural foundations by bringing people and places together. Good landscape architecture is concerned with creating, conserving, and enhancing a 'sense of

place' – that hard-to-define but palpable and satisfying sense of quality and uniqueness that all successful built environments possess.

Landscape architects recognise towns and cities as richly diverse, eclectic environments in a continual cycle of adaptation to social, economic, and environmental change. Landscape architecture needs to respond by integrating climate, topography, art and science. It needs to do this in order to create meaningful and enduring places and restore a healthy measure of unity between people and nature.

The skills of the landscape architect encompass not just engineering and design but also human psychology and ecology. They can be applied at every stage of the planning and design process and at every scale, be it the setting of a major

development, the creation of public realm or the design of private interior spaces.

Landscape architecture is founded on the belief that design integrity and social relevance are paramount. We believe the creative potential is realised through sincere intent and communication throughout the design process, and by providing leadership in the shaping of our environment.

The mission, as I see it, is to unveil the extraordinary in the environment, to create places and spaces that are unique to their context, that are memorable, and that touch the human spirit.

Ian J. Vincent is the director of Urbanlogic.

Images supplied by author and are from the Kingsland Shared Space Concept.

context

FIELD_LA

Landscape architecture is context: "the circumstances relevant to something under consideration". Landscapes can be described as fields, pulsing with active forces and flows (visible and invisible) that are dynamically embedded in the character and workings of the landscape. Climate, aspect, population, activation, politics and circulation are each examples of contextual fields that influence the landscape or environment in which we live. Design professions such as urban planning, planning, engineering and architecture tend to engage mechanical systems such as buildings, roads, transport networks etc. Landscape architecture, however, is a profession with a focus on humans and social systems: the activation of space, balancing scale, engaging in the ephemeral nature of seasonal change, and the experiential characteristics of a given site.

In his teaching at Cornell University, as early as 1964, Colin Rowe began trialling with his





students, methods that engaged site context, operating in a manner that prioritized the method of investigation over the results. He found then, as we do now, that engagement with the contextual fabric of the site offers opportunities to produce new forms and also re-configurations of existing and older forms. This technique results in design interventions that become intrinsically linked to the character of the site and specific to the nature of that place. Too often sites are accepted as straightforward entities contained by their immediate boundaries. While physical design arguably has a focus on a finite place or site, the way that a site functions reaches well beyond those physical boundaries. Wind and bird movement, seed dispersal, aspect and orientation, are all elements that occur outside of site boundaries, yet have a direct and immediate impact on the physical shaping of the site.

One example of this methodology in practice is the Hunt Road Project, a collaborative proposal between landscape architect, architect and client. Located in a small rural community in the Catlins (the South Eastern most corner of the South Island of New Zealand), this project provides the program for design intervention through linkages to

the contextual implications of journey and the exposure of expansive, at times harsh, site scale characteristic of the region. For example, microclimates, overland flow, unexplored wetland opportunities, the muted tones and rugged materiality of the native landscape, and notions of journey, arrival and destination.

By viewing our living environments, built and un-built, as fields-streams of information, shifting scales, ephemeral moments in time—we can begin to develop a methodology that examines contextual information, and in turn, influences the design outputs we create. *C. Peter Griffiths (MLA) and Den Aitken (BLA Hons) are lecturers in the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture programme at Unitec and also directors in the landscape architectural firm FIELD_LA.*

Images by the authors.

1. Collins English Dictionary, 21st Century Edition, Harper Collins, 2001.

2. S. Isenstadt, Contested Contexts, in C. J. Burns & A. Kahn, eds. Site Matters, Great Britain, 2005, p. 163.

3. C. J. Burns, & A. Kahn, Why Site Matters, in, C. J. Burns & A. Kahn, eds. Site Matters, Great Britain, 2005, p. vii.

2nd year study

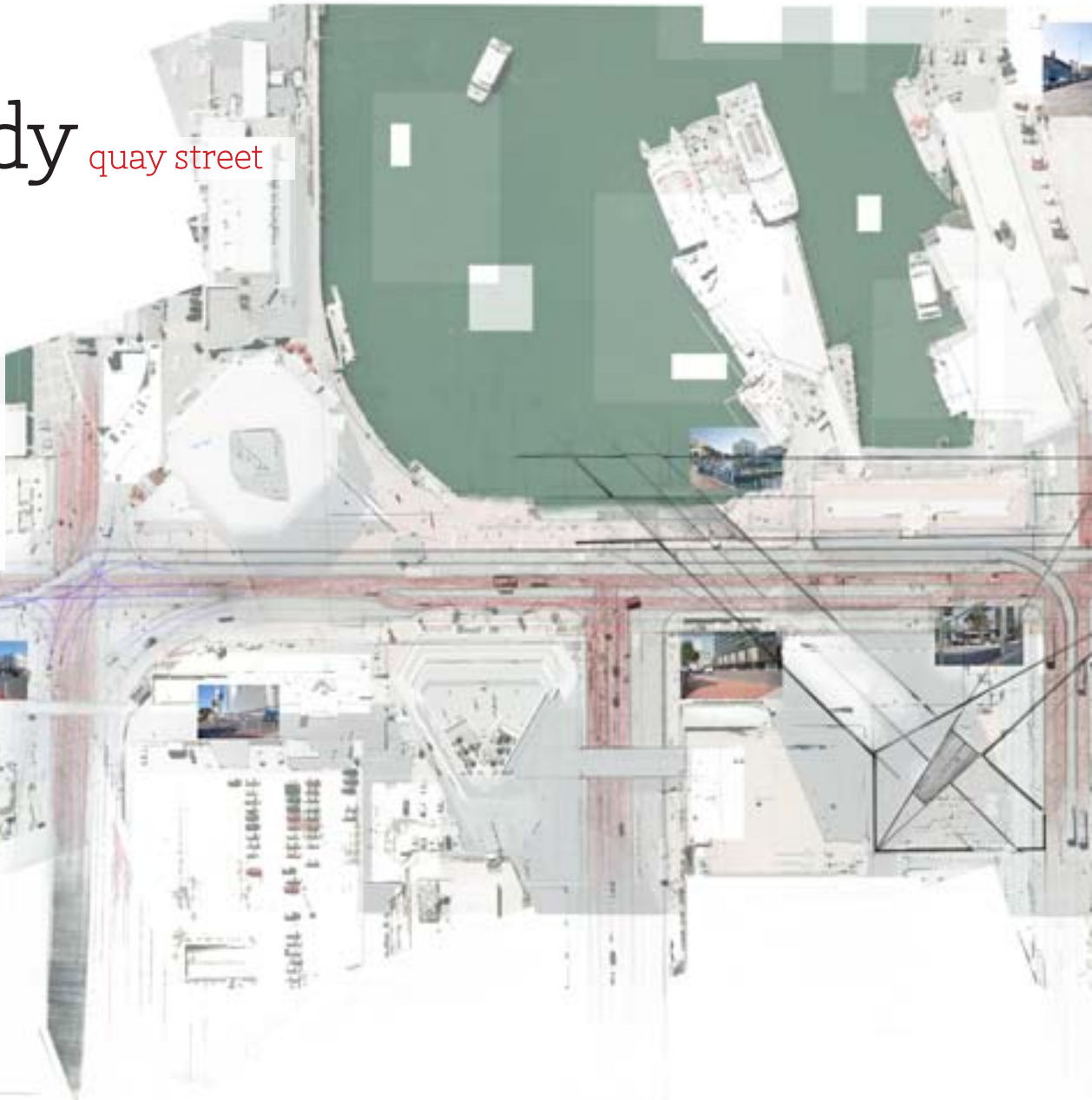
quay street

New Zealand by global comparison, has a strong cultural heritage of rural living, however today with a population approaching 4.5 million people, more than 70% of the country's citizens call the urban realm home. As a conceptual design tool, scale, in this project can refer to both spatial and temporal dimensions: processes and form. With this in mind, how can Quay Street become the link between waterfront and city through an investigation into scale and social activation?

Tosh Graham

Quay Street stretches along the city harbour side creating an axis where numerous spaces exist - activated or not. The brief was to investigate the areas and convey opinions and findings. I found that spaces of interest lay asymmetrically along the Quay Street axis, on the corner of Queen Street and Quay Street, I found a triangulation of sites:

- 1) The seating harbour side next to the Ferry Building,
- 2) Queen Elizabeth II Square and
- 3) Queens Wharf.



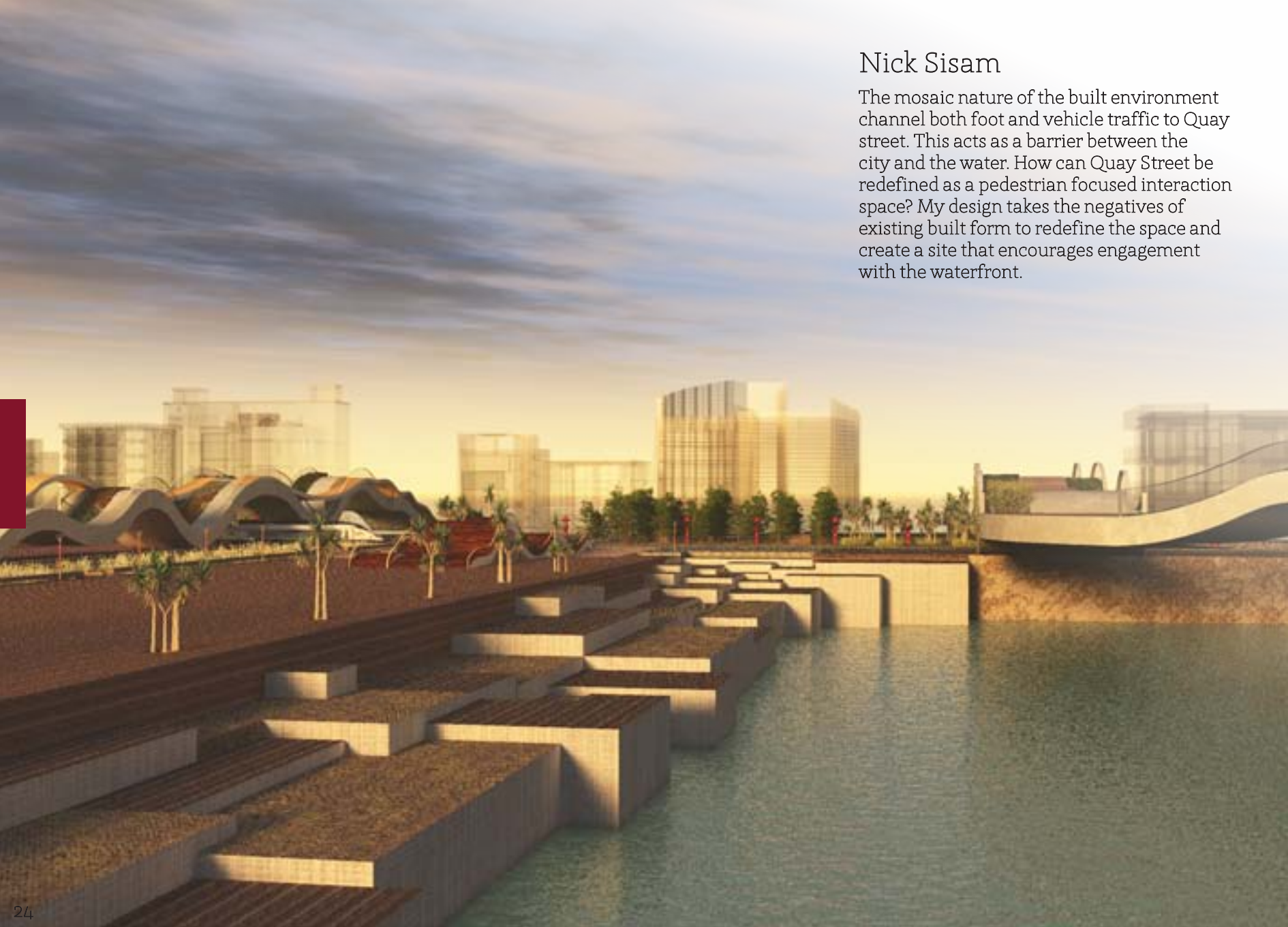


Matt Lay

Landscape architecture can be applied to different scales and involves both function and form throughout the design process. Quay Street forms both an axis and an edge between the sea and the land. I was interested in breaking down the axis of Quay Street into separate sections. These sections responded to their surroundings and drew on unique features that made up different parts of the street; for example industry, historical architecture and connections to public space.

Nick Sisam

The mosaic nature of the built environment channel both foot and vehicle traffic to Quay street. This acts as a barrier between the city and the water. How can Quay Street be redefined as a pedestrian focused interaction space? My design takes the negatives of existing built form to redefine the space and create a site that encourages engagement with the waterfront.



Lauren Vincent

Existing activity and behaviour on Quay Street suggests a disconnection is present. This is due to the patterns of public movement and the sense of discomfort when encountering a mental or visual barrier. Fusing the Viaduct/Quay Street zones will not only open up interactive links into Auckland, but will also improve the waterfront axis and the engagement with the public along Quay Street.



the ultimate dichotomy

conservation and tourism

Rebecca Cray and
Pete Griffiths

Research Question

What key factors enable symbiotic relationships between conservation practice and tourism?

Introduction

The focus of this paper is an investigation into the complex relationship that exists between conservation and tourism territories from a landscape-based perspective. It is concerned with perceptions and interpretations of what constitutes acceptable human use of conservation landscapes. Anna Dora Saethorsdottir describes in her paper, *Adapting to Change: Maintaining a Wilderness Experience in a Popular Tourist Destination*, that "...wildernesses are supposed to offer "primitive" forms of recreation opportunities to experience solitude as well as for finding freedom away from the constraints of urban living.' However, as wilderness areas become known as tourist destinations, maintaining these conditions becomes increasingly difficult."¹ In the paper, *Issues in Applying Carrying Capacity Concepts: Examples for the United Kingdom*, Richard Butler agrees that "...ever increasing numbers of visitors to recreation and tourist areas have created concerns...about unwanted impacts."²

It is this perceived dichotomy (or incompatibility) that exists between traditional ideas of conservation and tourism that is of particular interest. By its own nature tourism does not conserve, as it is through the introduction of tourists to a sensitive area that there is a potential to endanger the landscape. David Cole explains in his article *Carrying Capacity and Visitor Management: Facts, Values and the Role of Science*, that "...concerns have been voiced about both the biophysical and experiential impacts of recreational use on parks and protected areas."³ Researchers including Manning, 1999, and McCool and Lime, 2001, debate the usefulness of the term "carrying capacity", which explores ways of determining optimum visitor numbers for particular landscapes.

"Conservation means different things to different people."⁴ In the context of this research it is important to define the perspective on which these studies were based. It could be argued that conservation is the preservation and protection of landscapes, their wildlife, ecosystems and plants. It is about fostering a holistic approach to nature and enabling the components of a landscape to be able to evolve over time on their own accord, minimally affected by the use and impact of humans.



As a contribution, this work is an investigation into how a landscape architectural approach to sensitive landscapes might provide the means whereby the territories of conservation and tourism could exist within a singular landscape in a symbiotic way. In this context, symbiosis is used to describe a close prolonged association between the territories of conservation and tourism and the potential for these to respond and change together according to their own fluctuations. Outcomes produced do not necessarily benefit conservation and tourism simultaneously, but address the interplay between these two dynamic territories.

This paper also draws on the work of Robert Riddell's eco-tourism and sustainable tourism models, builds on the theories of Anna Ryan's work concerned with representation and spatial experience, and uses existing ornithological case studies carried out by Brenda Greene.

Site: Muriwai Gannet Colony, Otakamiro Headland

To test these dynamics, trials were performed on the Muriwai Gannet Colony, Otakamiro Headland, West Auckland. The results from these were used to hypothesize on the broader field of conservation and tourism within the landscape architecture discipline.

The Muriwai gannet colony presents a number of interesting challenges with regard to conservation and tourism. Currently upwards of 1.2million tourists per year visit the gannet colony, which has an established gannet population of approximately 1,200 breeding pairs.⁵ The problem lies in the increasing gannet population, which has risen steadily

since the early 1970s. Today this has resulted in a crossover between gannet nesting territory and tourist tracks, which is creating challenges in the relationship between conservation and tourism.

Issues of Conservation and Tourism

In order to investigate the perceived dichotomy, a comparison of current mass tourism, eco-tourism, and sustainable tourism models was undertaken. It was found that the principles of eco-tourism as defined by Rob Riddell were closely related to a symbiosis between tourists and conservation areas. 'Experiential and enriching' is how Riddell describes the basis of eco-tourism, "eco-tourism encounters of the sustainable kind are small-scale, diversified, humanized, stimulating, physically challenging and above all within the absorptive capacity of the culture and environment being visited."⁶

Alison Johnson states that there are significant differences in the perception of what eco-tourism should entail, and what it actually provides. The main issues that are arriving from the marketing and subsequent popularity of eco-tourism is that far from what its name suggests, it is actually detrimental to the environment, particularly the socio-cultural environment being the landscape of the indigenous peoples.⁷

The retention of landscape character is a key factor in addressing the dilemma of tourism versus conservation. Sustainable practice seems to be the only way to serve both sides of this delicate balance effectively. This concept is further echoed by Riddell, "There is a connection to the Hardin (1986) 'Tragedy of the

Commons' maxim which predicates a wear down of the very scenic and cultural ambience the tourists have come to join and enjoy."⁸

Economically, mass tourism is the easiest way to make significant financial gain, yet its cost for culture, conservation, social interactions and communities is huge. It could be argued that mass tourism promotes a sense of numbness in that the tourist is buffered from the world they are attempting to engage with through the use of generic experiences and landscape views. Riddell points out that an attention to providing a tailored set of experiences allows flexibility, cultural awareness and less impact on the host town or area.

In *Conservation: Studies in Biology*, Hambler discusses the history of conservation, which includes but is not limited to; spiritual and aesthetic features, animal welfare and preservation and protection of soil and water supplies. He highlights that conservation can also include the protection of geological and archaeological features.⁹ These themes fit with the idea of a holistic approach to conservation in the landscape and point to the variety of angles through which conservation can be addressed.

This research is therefore less about what the themes are, and more about the 'angles.' It is attempting to investigate how the crossover between conservation and tourism can be utilized to offer more connections, or ways of perceiving and responding to the issues created by having these two defining elements within a landscape. For this to be tackled, the existing methods for addressing conservation need to be

acknowledged for their role in public perception and the divide which currently exists within the field. Hamblen has termed these two existing responses as 'use value' and 'intrinsic value.' Use value is the conservation of a landscape based on its usefulness to humans, such as maintaining the 'sustainable utilization of species and ecosystems.'⁹ Intrinsic value is defined as being primarily focused on 'protecting nature for its own sake.'⁹

Key Factors

To investigate the tourist and conservation dimensions of the site, two sets of key factors were developed, which came directly from an initial analysis of the Muriwai Gannet Colony.

The first set of key factors were based on the concept of familiarity, which was formed from the results of a comparative study of local and tourist use of the site. The aim of the familiarity series was to investigate and test ways of improving the tourist relationship with the contextual landscape. Through the use of Anna Ryan's, *Where Land Meets Sea: Coastal Explorations of Landscape, Representation and Spatial Experience*, design investigations for journeys and opening subtleties within the case study site were undertaken. These were implemented to see if they could offer new ways of manipulating tourist behaviour and perception in favour of the conserved landscape. It was anticipated that by tapping into what these landscape areas do, opportunities to evoke self-awareness, freedom, understanding and a sense of exploration would be created.

Throughout Anna Ryan's literature, the landscape's ability to open subtleties and the notion of a 'journey' were what enabled 'an awareness and communication of the spatial complexity of everyday experience.'¹⁰ Drawing on these ideas, this investigation endeavoured to uncover what landscape components could be brought together to create a journey where currently, 'gaps' between destinations exist. These were used to engender an awareness of the landscape as a whole rather than foster the destination-orientated experiences that currently exist on site. This required the consideration of the impact of societal conditions and trends, and how they might shape new behaviours and reactions to design. Ryan similarly describes 'that this given environment appears as place-full for one group of people and as 'empty wilderness' for another reveals how any individual's attitude towards their physical surroundings could have a strong impact on the way they experience those surroundings.'¹⁰

In light of this, the influence on tourist behaviour when approaching the site became an important consideration. It is critical to note that Muriwai is only accessible to tourists by vehicle. The experience of being driven directly into the site is inversely proportional to how much 'reading' of the landscape could be achieved, and then in turn processed. It is for these reasons that a meandering pedestrian route was trialled as part of the investigation into journey.

The past and future become irrelevant, or 'cease to exist' as an 'intensity of awareness of the present' becomes explored.¹¹ These concepts derived from Anna Ryan's work formed the

concept of a journey as being one that enables sensory stimulation and freedom of movement. By increasing the time taken to traverse a part of the landscape, it was anticipated that subtle landscape elements could be perceived and added to the collective experience. The 'meandering' tracks could therefore mean that the tourist reaches a destination point, not feeling that this was the sole experience gained from their visit. By encouraging tourists to spend more time on the journey, a shift in focus could be enabled – from singularly looking to reach the gannet lookouts, to recognising the importance of the entire landscape and how this contributes to reaching and relating to its wildlife. The most important influences on a journey's success are therefore believed to be the notion of time, freedom of movement, explorative elements, contrast, and an understanding of self and surroundings.

This trial also contributed to a study of what components of a landscape affect our ability to perceive and interpret its subtleties. This key factor is concerned with people and place, and how people become aware of their connection to a landscape and the potentials it has to offer.



It was found that the critical components in maintaining perception of these subtleties were an integration of space, the concept of the journey, societal conditions and trends, scale, provisions for personalisation, materials, and level of visitor engagement.

As stated in Anna Ryan's literature, "internal and external worlds have a very fluid dynamic."¹¹ Through this idea it was investigated whether opening subtleties could lead to visitors feeling simultaneously empowered and disempowered, surprised, reflective and involved in the landscape. The findings of this test point to conventional tourist-based design as being inadequately equipped to deal with such emotive sensibilities. As Riddell suggests, the challenge is to re-invent and tailor designs for tourists in order to offer mass-personalisation of landscape. Perhaps the utilisation of a harmonious interplay between space divisions, spatial relationships and different territories could enable the basis for deeper visitor understanding of a landscape.

This design exercise has highlighted the importance of direction, distance and levels

when bringing visitors into a site, and the importance of design elements such as lookouts; which have large repercussions for the use and perception of empowering landscapes. The importance of the visitor recognising their juxtaposition against the scale of the landscape in order to increase visitor awareness and foster an appreciation of the vastness of the site was also reinforced. This was similar to Ryan's "fear of being overwhelmed or enveloped by the power of the singular surroundings," concept.¹² There is a focus on design elements which challenge visitors to see the landscape in relation to themselves, as part of the landscape, and also interwoven with the site in space and time.

The second set of key factors were based on the theme of territory. This investigation stemmed from Brenda Greene's ornithological studies and trials carried out on the Muriwai Gannet Colony over many years. Greene's research suggests that "there is some concern that human disturbance may be affecting the productivity of the Muriwai colonies."¹³ In consideration of this issue the aim of this series was to investigate the conservational qualities of the landscape

and how they might inform new territorial relationships within the site. The degree of human impact on the gannet colony depends upon the setting, the type of human behaviour and proximity to the birds.¹⁴ These objectives were then linked to the familiarity series in the anticipation that this connection could provide new ways for tourists to relate to both the site and, more specifically, conservation territory.

Greene's research also highlighted that nesting sites for gannets is a limiting factor for the population'.¹⁴ It was from this perspective on territory that gannet increase and decrease, along with seasonal occupation and gannet population spread over time were studied. These looked particularly at how the landscape relationships currently existing at the Muriwai gannet colony might shift or change in the future.

The projected outcomes for this series were a greater understanding of gannet nesting patterns and how tourist and gannet territories work together to inform interactions, movement and use of a landscape.



In order to consider the conservation demands of the site and the territorial relationships present, the investigation was expanded to consider what methods of design could provide new ways of accommodating for territorial fluency between conservation and tourism. The findings point towards fluidity, change, integration and shift being the key ways in which the dichotomy of tourism and conservation could be explored. The complexity of the tourism conservation relationship means a huge gap exists between what conservation and tourism need and what design solutions currently offer.

Conclusion

Through the investigation into these key factors, territory repossession and shift over time have emerged as critical issues in the way landscapes operate with regard to conservation and tourism. In order to maximise the gain for each, design solutions need to offer flexibility of territory and avoid permanence in the landscape that would inhibit the redefinition of spaces, and the ability of spaces to be used by another territory stakeholder.

The findings from the key factors point to addressing the destination-orientated way tourists traverse the site as a key way to establish the connection and understanding of landscape and hence shape new relationships with conservation territory. The concept of adopting the flowing, less boundary-based behaviour that locals exhibit, in order to test whether this improved tourists self-awareness, connection and understanding to the landscape has produced an array of elements worth considering in the wider application of

landscape architecture to conservation and tourism landscapes.

Somehow tourism and conservation need to offer mass-personalization, that is, personal and therefore unique experiences of landscape, but for a large amount of people at one time. This could require some landscape subtleties to be seen by fewer people, rather than all 'subtleties' being seen by everyone. The investigations suggest that for subtlety in the landscape to be preserved there needs to be a resistance against commonality as this could undermine uniqueness and perceived value. It is a dichotomy within itself, and to overcome it requires an acknowledgement of the subjectivity of space and its direct repercussions for personal landscape interpretation.

To summarise findings so far, the tourist experience could be altered through design in order to provide positive behavioural affects that enhance tourist perception and understanding of conservation landscapes. For example, the journey and a landscape's subtleties are ways in which tourist perception and understanding can be fostered. Design findings included the notion of time, freedom of movement, explorative elements, contrast, and mechanisms, which enable understanding of self and surroundings. The integration of space, use of scale, provisions for personalisation, and a level of visitor engagement should be incorporated in design moves. Territorial fluency and an ability to shift over time are ways in which the landscape architecture discipline could contribute to a strengthening of the symbiosis between conservation and tourism.

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Images by student Rebecca Cray from her Negotiated Study project 'The Ultimate Dichotomy'.

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park(ing) day

John Allan

Collaboration. Landscape architects frequently talk about it. We claim it as 'our territory'. To collaborate with experts such as architects, ecologists, engineers, etc, is touted as the key to creating a design that is functional and beautiful. Landscape architects also engage in collaboration with the public, through the means of 'community consultation'. This year, Park(ing) Day became the medium to tackle this challenge.

Park(ing) Day is a growing international event, where teams take a public, metered car-park (or two) and reclaim it for public use as a 'parklet' for the day. This year, for the

first time in Auckland, a group of landscape architecture professionals and students teamed up to produce a parklet in order to raise the profile of landscape architecture.

A short design workshop resulted in a challenging brief: to pull together three threads of landscape architectural discourse – recreational, environmental and socio-cultural. While the first two of these threads were represented in standard Park(ing) Day style (grass, trees and seats), the socio-cultural thread proved to be the main attraction. In a loosely Candy Chang style interaction, we asked passers by to engage

with a map of their city, centered around the Auckland CBD (where our parklet was located). By prompting interested people with the phrase "By 2050 I wish this was" the public were asked to consider what they want the future of Auckland to be. All manner of people got involved and had their say on the stickers, which were placed on the map wherever that individual thought was a relevant position.

This very informal, ad-hoc and voluntary community consultation process was so successful that even the council has taken notice. From social commentary on wage

rates through to specific requests for party islands or additional harbour crossings, the public clearly has ideas on what needs remedying in their city. To the credit of Auckland Council, the comments often re-iterated the goals of the Auckland Plan. For landscape architecture, this form of collaboration can achieve 'buy in' from the community at the early planning stages, and be the difference between support and objection when a design is unveiled.

What is landscape architecture? Landscape architecture is a collaborative design practice.

John is a Landscape Architecture student and active board member of the NZILA Auckland Branch. He was part of the team of students and professionals who donated their time to design and install this parklet.

Images supplied by author.



capturing the feeling

Simon Devitt

"A landscape, as opposed to the land, is a human creation. What makes us judge one feature of the landscape to be more fitting than another is the total system of values that we bring to the act of perception."¹

As a photographer, my attention is as much on the landscape as it is on the built environment and the people that inhabit it. The work I do as a photographer has a lot to do with sitting still and seizing moments. Glimpses of subtle gestures, moments and brief encounters. My priority when I am shooting, is how it feels to be somewhere, rather than how it looks. My intention is to create a coherent series of pictures that tell a story about what it is I have been charged with photographing. I feel a picture story is whole and complete when a combination of pictures are created; pictures that establish a scene are useful but their true potential is realised when shown in combination with pictures that question rather than answer. A book (for example) is a great venue for picture stories. 'The sequence of photographs in a book can describe what certain places and events look like; they can also suggest what they might mean. Meaning can arise as much from what happens between the photographs as from what happens in them. To be satisfying, the meanings that are created must be coherent, or else understanding can be frustrated, but they must also have some of the complexity and contradictoriness of lived experience, or else credibility can be strained'.²

Simon Devitt is an Auckland based Photographer who brings a unique view to photography of architecture.

Images by author.

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1. view from atop Silo looking down.
2. Wynyard Quarter, Silo Park
(Architects: Taylor Cullity Lethlean and
Megan Wraight Associates).
3. segway rider near Silo towers.
4. kayaker navigating bio retention
wetland.
5. cyclists resting near gantry and tank
farm.
6. Wynayrd Quarter, Wind Tree
sculpture (Artist: Michio Ihara).

