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Boffa Miskell^{NEWS}

summer²⁰⁰⁶



Editorial: Time for a change

In recent years we have seen and experienced widespread change in landscape practice, in environmental policy and law, in people's attitudes to and perceptions of the landscape and, indeed, in the focus and direction of Boffa Miskell as a professional services provider and an employer. From the relatively narrow focused one person practice I established in Christchurch in 1972, the company has grown and matured to a large integrated environmental practice employing in excess of 130 staff throughout the country.

After 35 years it's now time for a change for Frank Boffa. On 30 April, 2007 I will cease to be a Principal and major shareholder of Boffa Miskell. Following an overseas holiday I intend to return and operate as a specialist consultant focusing on peer reviews, providing strategic landscape advice and commissioner work.

In my 'Clayton's retirement' I will work as a part-time specialist consultant and will continue working from the Wellington office of Boffa Miskell where I will have access to administrative and technical

services support. I will maintain my involvement with ongoing projects that I am currently associated with. Lifestyle changes will include more time on the golf course, travel and gardening.

I am immensely proud of what Boffa Miskell has achieved in its 35-year history and the standing and credibility we have gained in the market place both in New Zealand and overseas. I am confident that the company will continue to prosper and grow its culture of care and its reputation for flair.

Frank Boffa, Founding Principal



Protection lots incentive

In the last ten years, Boffa Miskell ecologists have assessed some 200 areas of indigenous vegetation proposed for protection through an incentive offered in the Western Bay of Plenty District Plan.

The incentive, introduced in 1996, enables landowners to gain additional subdivision rights in exchange for protecting indigenous forest, wetland or riparian margins on their land.

Boffa Miskell ecologist Dr Sharon De Luca-Abbott says it is an exciting win-win situation that benefits both biodiversity and landowners.

"A remarkable spinoff is a move by landowners to restore natural wetlands on their properties with a view to achieving a complying protection lot in the future," she adds. "We've been assisting this through the preparation of wetland restoration plans."

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Boffa Miskell NEWS

summer ²⁰⁰⁶

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For whom the road tolls?

Boffa Miskell is helping Transit New Zealand to hear Aucklanders' views about possibly introducing tolling to help fund Auckland's partially complete Western Ring Route.

The 48-kilometre route will link Manukau, Auckland, Waitakere and North Shore and bypass Auckland's CBD. Tolling, it is predicted, could see the alternative to SH1 completed by 2015, fifteen years sooner than would be possible with existing funding.

The Boffa Miskell "Western Ring Route Consultation Team" has been commissioned by Transit to



explain and discuss the tolling concept at seven mobile information centres across Auckland. Opinions are being recorded via public response forms and 'listening sessions' at which a panel will hear verbal presentations from stakeholders and individuals.

Consultation will finish in mid-December and the team expects to finish analysing the results by early February.

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The Western Ring Route. ►

Second thoughts transform Kotuku Park subdivision



▲ Planting is establishing around the artificially created Lake Kotuku which is part of the subdivision's stormwater management system.



After an adverse Environment Court ruling, a land development company has embraced a different approach to housing development that seeks to better integrate the residential and natural environments.

The 1999 ruling had found against some aspects of the proposed Kotuku Park subdivision at Paraparaumu Beach on the Kapiti Coast. The Court was concerned that the proposed housing density would be incompatible with the adjacent Waikanae Scientific Reserve, a nationally significant estuary and habitat for rare native plants and myriad birdlife.

Frank Boffa had been one of the appellants, acting in this instance as a private citizen and ratepayer.

"I considered some aspects of the original proposal were inappropriate next to such a sensitive environment and teamed up with the local Kapiti Environmental Action group. We felt that if any development was to happen, it should be designed more sensitively."

Developer Alan Fraser of Kotuku Parks Ltd took this view seriously and asked Frank if Boffa Miskell would assist in the preparation of an alternative concept to demonstrate how a different design approach might work.

The alternative approach

In the new concept the number of lots immediately adjacent to the scientific reserve was reduced from 31 to 10 and a corridor of open space was introduced through the 4.6-hectare subdivision with extensive planting areas, walkways, lakes and wetlands. Stormwater

was to be captured and filtered in purpose-built lakes before discharge into the estuary. A large central sand dune that would originally have been flattened for houses was retained as a focal feature with a lookout across the scientific reserve to Kapiti Island.

Kotuku Parks Ltd adopted the revised plan and also developed a code of conduct for property owners with conditions relating to building design, reserve access, control of pets, stormwater discharges and recommended planting.

"Frank was influential in our incorporating an environmental ethic and standards of excellence into the revised development plan," Alan recalls.

Daphne Steele, of Kapiti Environmental Action, says the watchdog group had no objections to the revised plans. "In fact, we took it as a compliment that the developer chose to use our professionals."

Implementation

Under the direction of Ian Prentice of Truebridge Callender Beach Ltd, the subdivision has now progressed through six of ten stages. Truebridge Callender Beach has been responsible for planning, surveying and engineering services, and the implementation of the stormwater management system which was designed jointly by TCB and Boffa Miskell's ecologists.

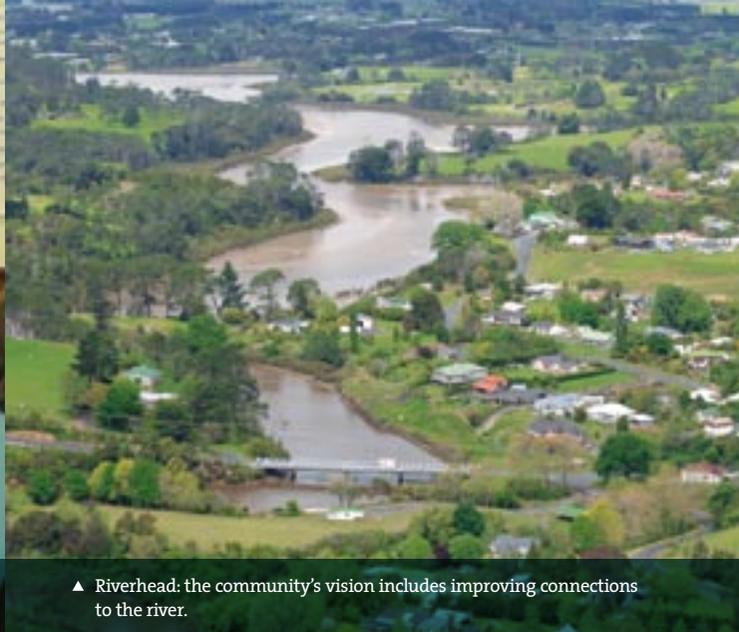
Boffa Miskell has designed and managed the implementation of all the open space development including boardwalks and walkways, extensive planting of locally indigenous species, development of an historic reserve and monitoring of the wetlands and water quality.

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◀ Stormwater flows through Lake Ngarara (pictured) to the estuary. Sediments are first collected in a detention pond where pollution spills can also be isolated. Raupo (foreground) absorbs excess nutrients and is periodically cut and taken off-site.



▲ Boffa Miskell project leader, Doug Leighton, guides the Riverhead community visioning workshop.



▲ Riverhead: the community's vision includes improving connections to the river.

Development near high voltage transmission lines

Development near high voltage transmission lines can have impacts two ways: the impact of the lines on activities and the impact of the activities on the lines.

Ways to avoid or mitigate these potential effects are explained in a new Transpower guideline, released in September.

Boffa Miskell assisted Transpower prepare the guideline, which is intended for landowners, local and regional authorities, planners and other professionals involved in land development.

The illustrated guide looks at development situations that typically occur near transmission lines and shows examples of good and bad practices.

Boffa Miskell project manager, Robert Schofield, says the aim is to achieve good development outcomes while ensuring safety and providing for ongoing lines access and operation.

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Management plans for multiple reserves

Boffa Miskell has just finished drafting the last of four comprehensive reserve management plans for the Western Bay of Plenty District Council.

Each ward-based plan contains an overall vision for providing open space and recreation facilities in the ward as well as generic district-wide objectives and policies, and site-specific policies where required.

“The idea is to provide for consistent reserves management through the district while also recognising the specific requirements of each reserve and community,” explains Boffa Miskell landscape architect Rebecca Ryder. “Showing how the reserves fit into the wider network will also help the council prioritise reserves projects.”

The plans for the Katikati, Kaimai and Te Puke Wards are complete and the draft Maketu Ward plan is currently undergoing consultation.

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View across the Little Waihi estuary from Ororoa Park ► to Bledisloe Park, two reserves in the Maketu Ward.

Residents take the lead at Riverhead

Three years ago the Riverhead Residents and Ratepayers Association (RRRA) reformed and got into action.

Chairperson Karen Body says the close-knit rural community north of Auckland was concerned about its future; the impacts of Auckland’s urban growth spreading ever closer, outstanding infrastructure needs, potential growth and a desire to enhance Riverhead’s special character.

“We realised that everything hinges around the Riverhead Structure Plan but things have changed since it was done in 1994 and it needs updating. The planners at Rodney District Council advised us to start by forming a vision of what we wanted.”

With council funding, the association commissioned Boffa Miskell to assist.

Boffa Miskell ran two workshops in March 2006; one for Riverhead’s teenagers and another attended by 80 interested community representatives. The workshops were structured to answer four key questions: “Where are we now?”, “Where are we headed?”, “Where do we want to be?” and “How do we get there?”

“Boffa Miskell was absolutely fantastic,” Karen says. “We got more than we expected in guiding us through the process. And the pinnacle was the public open day.”

Opened by Rodney District’s mayor, John Law, the public day enabled the wider community to see the results of the workshops and provide their own input via a questionnaire.

Boffa Miskell provided the RRRA with a full report on the vision, including an action plan on how to achieve it. The association has subsequently used it as the basis for their submission to the Long Term Council Community Plan.

“We’re determined to go ahead with the Structure Plan now we’ve got a clear and shared vision,” says Karen. “In fact, because the visioning process has helped us reach a level of consensus, the landowners who will potentially develop growth areas in Riverhead have agreed to cover any shortfall from council funding.”

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A foundation for future growth

Hamilton City Council has earmarked a 720-hectare area on its southeast fringe to absorb city expansion over the next 25 years.

As a signatory to the Urban Design Protocol, the council has set itself high standards for the Peacocke growth area, and asked Boffa Miskell to review and constructively critique its draft structure plan in terms of landscape and urban design.

The project team focused first on identifying features and attributes of the Peacocke area and its relationship to Hamilton city and the hinterland.

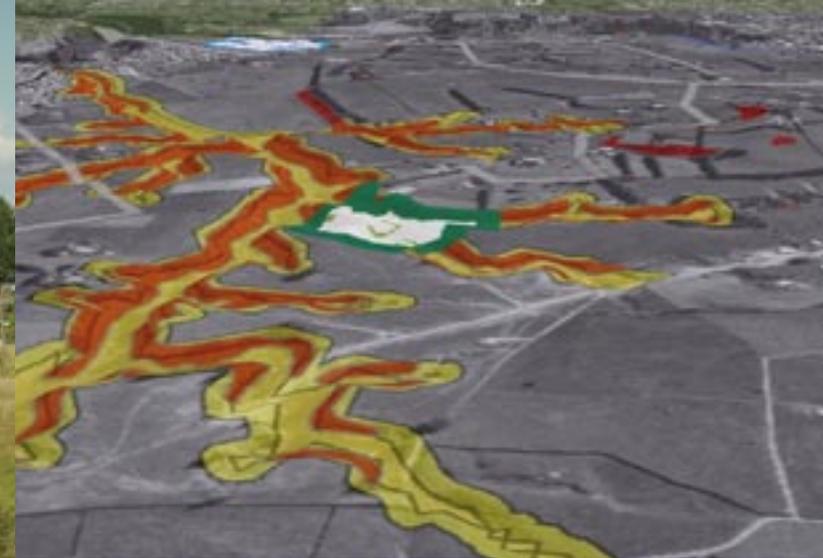
The Waikato River, curving around the northeast boundary, and the deeply incised Mangakotukutuku gully system that bisects the site were found to be the most influential natural features. These, together with a range of other site suitability factors including slope, existing vegetation, accessibility and visibility gave cues to both site constraints and opportunities.

Boffa Miskell project leader, Simon Fenwick, says the main objective was determining how best to incorporate the landscape qualities into the structure plan.

“We knew the existing landscape could provide the foundation for a future urban form that had a high level of residential and recreational amenity, provided there were strong physical and visual connections to the river front, gully system and surrounding suburbs. The collaboration of our landscape architects and urban designers from different offices brought together a good range of skills and perspectives.”



▲ Mature vegetation retained from the existing farm landscape will provide visual amenity and help integrate new development.



▲ The Mangakotukutuku Gully system and Waikato River (background) are significant natural features in the Peacocke growth area that define a basic spatial framework.

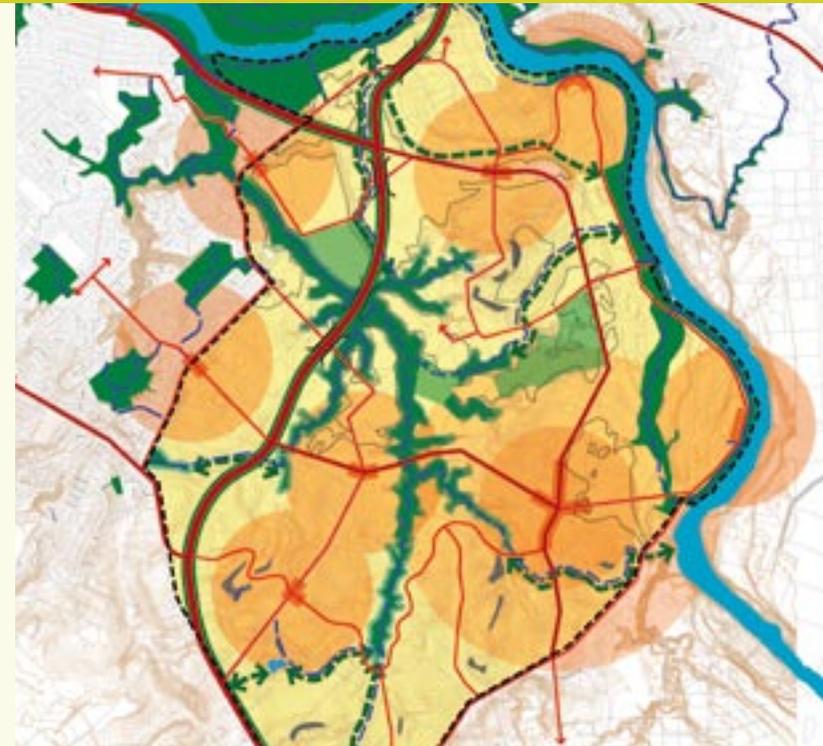
The team defined twenty-one landscape and urban design principles to help guide the structure planning and future master planning processes. The principles give a starting framework to bring out the area's essential character while also overlaying land uses, transport routes and commercial centres.

Analysis of the council's draft plan in relation to the assessment findings and guiding principles revealed it to be a good start but in need of some refinement – particularly in terms of realigning major roads, emphasising high density development at key nodes and better integrating the proposed reserve network with adjacent built areas.

Three refinements to the draft plan were prepared and a preferred option recommended. The team also recommended that a number of detailed studies be undertaken into such aspects as traffic, stormwater management and potential land use activities as part of progressing the landscape and urban design framework into a final structure plan and stage one master plan.

Simon says the council has been very receptive and will soon be embarking on further consultation based on the recommendations.

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▲ The recommended option: a major arterial route provides a direct link to the city centre while a series of commercial centres – all within walking distance of green space – are linked by a secondary road network.

Visualising change at New Brighton

Many people agree that the coastal suburb of New Brighton needs revitalising and there is widespread interest in the future development of the area.

A Christchurch City Council team has been looking into revitalisation options for some time, including the possibility of extending the existing 3-storey building height limit to allow high-rise residential development. Council planner, Jonathan Clease, says some apartment development is already happening through the resource consent process and more developers are waiting in the wings.

“We will be facing this issue over and over again through a series of developer-led consent applications,” he says, “so the Council decided a single, comprehensive study would be a better way of considering the capacity and desirability of increasing residential density in central New Brighton.”

Boffa Miskell was commissioned in December 2005 to lead the study, together with specialists from Fitzgerald Applied Sociology, Opus, SIMES, Traffic Design Group and URS.

“There are a lot of inter-related issues – not least what the community thinks,” says Boffa Miskell project manager, Ken Gimblett, “so it was essential to take a holistic and consultative approach.”

The multi-disciplinary team carried out a range of technical investigations including potential shading, wind tunnel and visual implications of various building heights and bulks; geotechnical and natural hazard issues; infrastructure, transport and community facility capacities; and economic and social effects that might arise from a growing and changing type of community.

Modelling scenarios

Six scenarios were modelled to assess potential effects by applying existing sets of rules from elsewhere in Christchurch to maximum permitted standards.

“By using existing rules as a basis it was relatively easy to model a range of scenarios ranging from presently permitted development at 3 storeys through to much higher rise and high density development at 15 storeys, as well as a couple of mixed-density options,” explains Ken.

Spreadsheets were compiled to calculate and compare factors such as gross floor areas, population increases and car parking requirements and each scenario was visually illustrated through a range of mapping, 3D modelling and animation techniques.

“The 3D modelling was extremely helpful as an assessment tool for the team and a communication tool for consultation,” Ken says, “as it’s often difficult to visualise just how planning rules translate into reality.”

Varied opinions

Following an introductory public meeting in March, two open days were held in June. The six scenarios were graphically portrayed along with summary information and the 600 visitors were invited to comment through on-the-spot comment sheets, email feedback or written submissions.

The more than 350 written responses from individuals along with other responses from representative groups presented a wide range of views. While some wanted to retain the low-rise village atmosphere, others favoured taller buildings and higher densities. Some favoured just a limited amount of change and some favoured a more extensive high-rise opportunity. More consistently, however, respondents rejected a ‘Gold Coast glitter and glass’ look and wanted to see a variety of built character.

“The technical assessments indicate that a mixed-use scenario with increased density and building heights around the mall is likely to be a good option,” says Ken. “It’s preferable to concentrate the commercial and community functions centrally and reinforce that with a coherent visual focus of grouped taller buildings rather than have isolated tower blocks.”

The council will soon be considering Boffa Miskell’s Section 32 analysis, which weighs up the comparative costs and benefits of initiating a Plan Change.

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gam mid summer

▲ ▼ Potential shadowing effects of the high rise scenario.



gam mid winter



▲ New Brighton, a seaside suburb known for its pier and long sandy beach.



Sustainable business trailblazer award

Boffa Miskell's Auckland office won the Westpac-sponsored 2006 Northern Sustainable Business Trailblazer Award, in the annual 'Get Sustainable Challenge' run by the Sustainable Business Network.

The Trailblazer category recognises businesses that have sustainability as a strategic part of their business operations, products and services; and are innovators & leaders who are positioned to maintain market advantages while providing ecological, social and financial dividends.

Boffa Miskell's company-wide Environmental Action Plan to standardise methods for monitoring office operational impacts was recognised as well as the ecological sustainability component in the company's approach to its consultancy work.

Sponsorships

This year Boffa Miskell has been proud to sponsor the following events or projects that promote understanding or enhancement of the environment.

Digital Earth 06 Summit on Sustainability.

Digital Earth was launched in 1998 by former United States Vice President Al Gore, to develop a virtual 3-D model of Earth by co-ordinating and combining data from around the world to measure, monitor and forecast natural and human activity on the planet. The summit, which ran from 27-30 August in Auckland, focused on applications to achieve sustainability in all sectors of society and the environment.

New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Education Foundation.

The foundation seeks to raise awareness of landscape architecture, design and planning on the environment. This year the foundation jointly sponsored, with RNZIH, a lecture tour by Professor Joan Nassauer from the School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan.

"Pathways to Sustainability," Resource Management Law Association Conference 2006.

The conference was held in Auckland from 5 – 8 October. The concept of sustainable development in international law was examined and alternative approaches to sustainability in New Zealand then considered.

Overseas connections



International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) – World Congress

Don Miskell, from our Christchurch office, together with IFLA President, Dr Diane Menzies of Menzies Environmental Ltd, Christchurch, presented a joint paper to the IFLA World Congress, "Green Solutions for a Blue Planet", in Minneapolis in October.

Their paper, 'Law as a Tool for Landscape Architecture: Experience from New Zealand', examined the contribution of landscape architecture to New Zealand's planning law and mediation, and included several case studies.

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"Keeping it Fresh", New Zealand Freshwater Scientists Society Conference, 2006.

The conference, held at Rotorua in November, explored new ways of maintaining and enhancing the value of freshwater environments.

Bay of Plenty Garden & Art Festival 2006.

The annual festival, which this year ran from 6 – 12 November, promotes public art as a component of urban design.

Scape 2006 Biennial of Art in Public Space, Christchurch.

The event explored attitudes to public space through the temporary installation of artworks, from 29 September to 8 October. As well as being a sponsor, Boffa Miskell completed the landscape and urban design assessments for the resource consent application of a permanent installation – kinetic sculpture by Phil Price, entitled *Nucleus*.

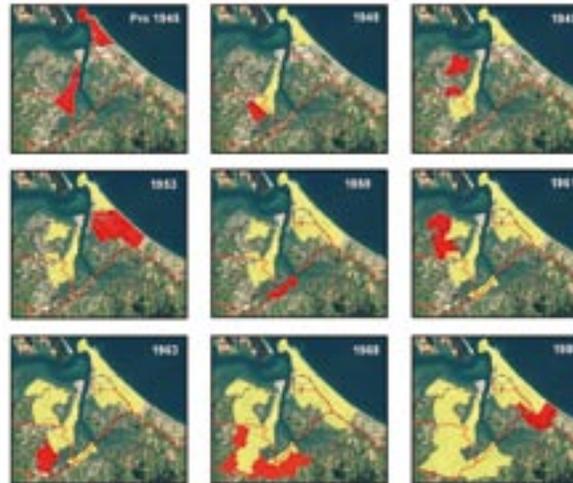


◀ *Nucleus* by Phil Price

Map book assists Treaty claim

A map book has been completed by Boffa Miskell to assist Waitangi Tribunal proceedings in the Tauranga Moana Inquiry.

The Crown Forestry Rental Trust, Nga Kaitiaki Reti Ngahere Karaunu, commissioned the map book as part of its obligation to assist Maori to prepare, present and negotiate Treaty claims that involve Crown Forest licensed land.



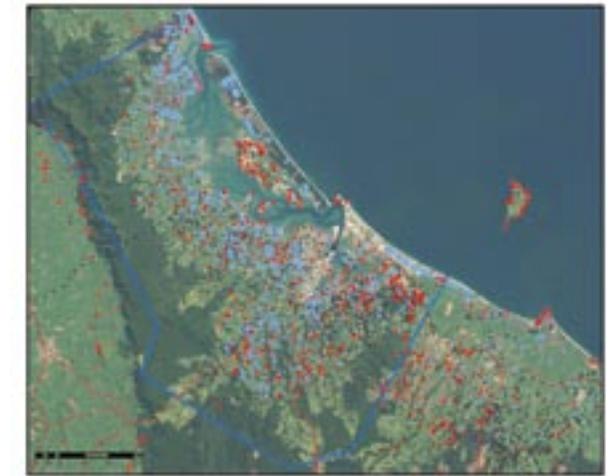
■ Existing urban development ■ Area of urban expansion

▲ A series of 'time lapse' maps show Tauranga's urban expansion between 1945 and 1980.

Boffa Miskell senior cultural advisor, Antoine Coffin, together with Moka Apiti of History Works and David Olsen of Sinclair Knight Merz, gathered the historical and contemporary information about Maori land and occupation as well as land use and demographic changes that have occurred in the Tauranga district. Information was derived from numerous sources including historical maps and photos, land information from local councils and statistical data from Statistics New Zealand.

"There was a lot of information and the challenge was how to depict it so it would be accurate and accessible," Antoine says.

The challenge fell to Garry Christoffersen, Boffa Miskell geospatial specialist. Garry used ESRI Arc GIS software to overlay layers of information and, where necessary, summarise



■ Midden ■ Pa ■ Other

▲ Archaeological sites within the Tauranga Moana district.

data into spatial form. In many instances historic data was laid over contemporary aerial photographs to make it easier to compare earlier and existing situations.

All land blocks were digitally traced from the original Maori land plans and associated documentation.

"In most cases, we found that the property and block boundaries we generated were of a higher accuracy than the underlying context data such as topographic maps," Garry says.

Compiled in just one month from early September to early October 2006, the book of over 100 pages has now been filed on the public record with the Waitangi Tribunal.

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