

Boffa Miskell

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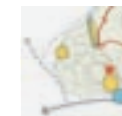


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Boffa Miskell^{NEWS}

winter²⁰⁰⁸



Editorial: Investing in the future

Forty years ago, I became a landscape architect. I was attracted to a profession that sought to address the concerns of the emerging environmental movement and also emphasised the role of design in achieving high quality environments. Today, the need for creative planning and design remains – in fact, it is even more pressing due to the increasing complexity and scale of the environmental issues we now face.

That is why Boffa Miskell invests heavily in technology and our staff.

Through technology we seek better ways to understand and communicate the world around us. At the Banks Peninsula hearing, for instance (see opposite page), we used both computer mapping and an interactive three dimensional model to 'fly' around a virtual peninsula; tools that the Court put to full use as the hearing progressed.

Technology, in its ability to access seemingly infinite data and apparently provide answers, is seductive. However, it is only as good as the people using it - those who exercise their judgement and experience to use it wisely.

Recognising this, we actively foster and expand the company's intellectual capital by attracting overseas expertise, supporting young staff to gain overseas experience, enabling professional development and ensuring our senior personnel pass on their wisdom through mentoring and coaching. At the suggestion of new staff, we have extended these opportunities to students (see page 7).

Such initiatives are vital to sustaining our future and our success as a multidisciplinary team capable of assisting our clients to address today's increasingly demanding development challenges.



Allan Rackham, Consultant

Boffa Miskell NEWS

winter²⁰⁰⁸

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COVER: Boffa Miskell has been involved over the years with a number of vineyard projects. (see page 8).

ILLUSTRATIONS: P.6, far right, by Kevin Hawkins. P.7, Pegasus Pou image, by Alistair Marshall.

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Urban design award

The top urban design award in this year's Property Council New Zealand awards went to Housing New Zealand's Talbot Park Community Renewal Project.

Boffa Miskell provided urban design (based on a master plan prepared by Brisbane-based Geoffrey Walker), planning and landscape architecture services in the redevelopment of the 5-hectare public housing area in Glen Innes, Auckland.

The area was selected as a 'flagship' project by Housing New Zealand and Auckland City to demonstrate the application of current urban design principles, sustainable development practices and community involvement in neighbourhood renewal. It was also the first project to be developed under the Residential 8 zone provisions of the Auckland City District Plan, which encourage intensification around town centres and transport modes in line with regional growth strategies.

Community satisfaction monitoring is already showing beneficial outcomes with increased demand to live in the previously undesirable area, reduced tenant turnover and more acceptance of medium density housing as an urban redevelopment option.

Talbot Park also won a merit award in the Special Purpose Property Award category.

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▼ Talbot Park caters for different household types through a range of housing including (left to right) terrace units, family housing and walk-up apartments.



Environment Court endorses landscape study

“...the most comprehensive analysis of landscape issues this Court has been faced with to date...”

So found the Environment Court in regard to expert evidence presented by Boffa Miskell in relation to appeals against proposed Banks Peninsula landscape provisions in the Christchurch District Plan.

Acting for the Christchurch City Council, Boffa Miskell landscape planners Allan Rackham and Yvonne Pfluger, and planner Nicola Rykers, based their evidence on the Banks Peninsula Landscape Study 2007, which Boffa Miskell had prepared for the council following years of controversy over landscape management issues on the peninsula.

The study was commissioned during an adjournment of the appeal process to provide better information about the issues in question.

The Court considered that “the landscape approach adopted is robust and repeatable. While acknowledging that subjective judgements must be made, it has sought in the first instance to obtain the maximum amount of objective information and has canvassed available sources in preparing that information.”

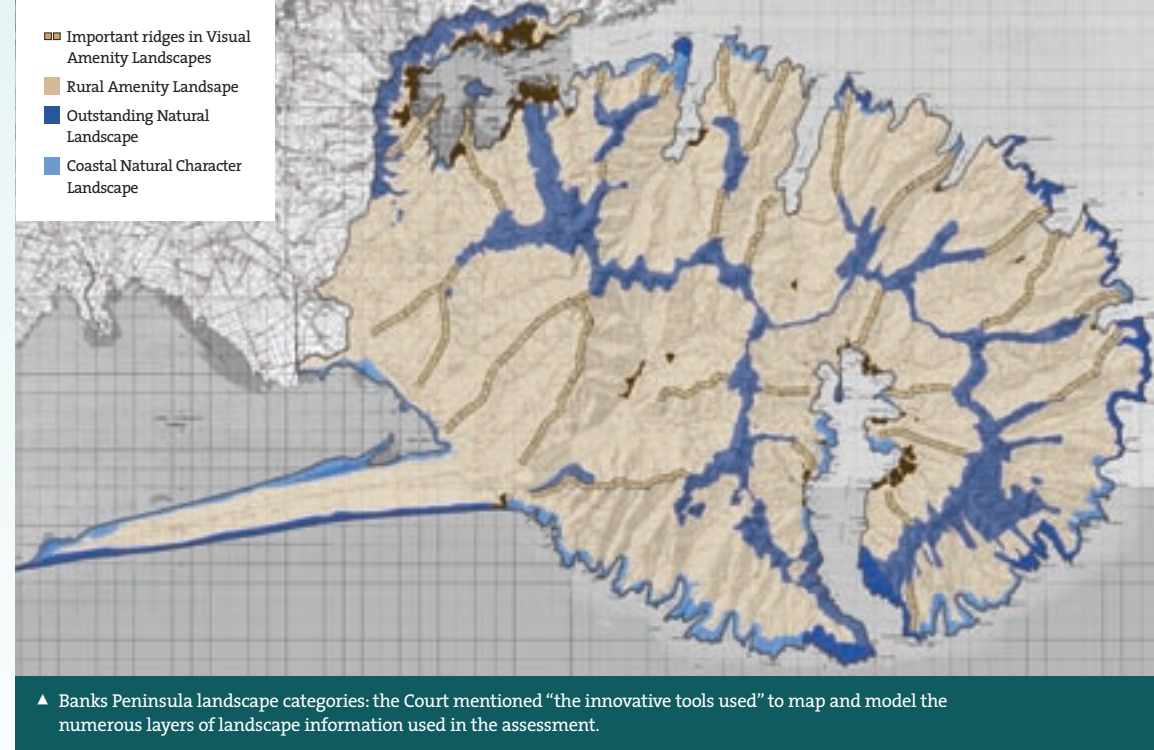
Lessons learnt

The Boffa Miskell team was very aware that they were working within a tight framework set by the Court and that the landscape study would contribute to the mediation process.

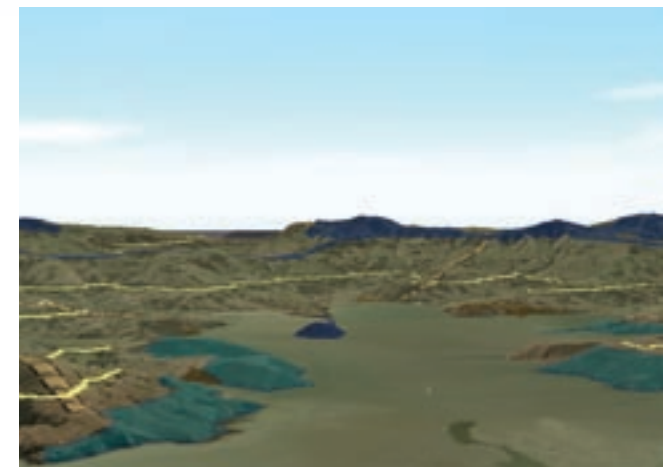
“This was a matter that had polarised a community and we were very conscious of the need to be professional and open in our approach,” Nicola recalls. “We engaged with the appeal parties at the very beginning to outline the methodology and the consultation programme so they understood the purpose of the study and the opportunities for having input to it.”

Allan considers that those opportunities were a key to achieving the large amount of agreement eventually reached. “Because people had been involved throughout, and knew that their input had been heard, they understood how the outcomes had been reached and were more prepared to compromise. At every stage, we explained what we were planning to do, reported our results and asked for feedback – which we got!”

Nicola recalls, too, the care with which the landscape management rules had to be drafted. “Given the potential for rules to specifically



▲ The Banks Peninsula landscapes are recognized for their multiple natural, economic and heritage values.



▲ A screenshot from the K2VI 3-dimensional virtual model used to ‘fly’ round the peninsula; a useful communication and analysis tool.

affect certain interests, we ensured that guiding principles were agreed first, through consultation, before we began writing.”

For more about this project see ‘Featured Projects’ on www.boffamiskell.co.nz

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Residential capacity modelling

Residential intensification policies are being proposed and implemented around the country in efforts to consolidate urban sprawl and revitalise our city centres. But how well do we understand – let alone visualise – the available capacity and likely outcomes of increased residential densities?

This question arose when the Christchurch City Council's Senior Policy Planner, Maurice Roers, asked Boffa Miskell for assistance in better understanding the residential capacity of Christchurch's central city, where higher densities are allowed.

"A common problem with capacity modelling is how to factor in the combination of district plan rules and development realities that influence the actual built form," says Boffa Miskell urban designer and project leader Tim Church.

"We saw a need for, and developed, a computer model that could incorporate the likely two and three dimensional constraints across a wide geographical area in an efficient and repeatable way."

The Boffa Miskell team comprised Tim, senior planner Stephanie Styles, geographic information specialist Garry Christoffersen and a number of the company's GIS/CAD specialists.

The model was built from a foundation of detailed existing site information over which the relevant district plan rules were added and explicit 'development assumptions' included, such as likely orientation of outdoor living spaces. From this foundation, building forms, tailored to some 3000 sites across the central city, were



▲ The model's base line: existing built form.

automated and floor areas calculated. A mix of residential unit sizes was then applied and both household and population figures derived.

"Of course not all sites would be redeveloped, and that had implications for the realism of the city's strategic residential targets," Tim says.

To address this, the model incorporates a 'residential redevelopment probability' for each site, based on nine criteria such as building age, zoning, ownership, development value and heritage status.

Using the combined probability criteria, 3D representations of the likely city form were generated showing conservative, moderate and aggressive redevelopment scenarios.

"The 3D spatial model was essential for us to test our assumptions and for other people to visualise the results," Tim says.

Tim says the model has numerous potential applications because, once set up, specific variables can be manipulated over broad areas to analyse the spatial and capacity implications of existing and proposed district plan rules and changing growth trends. At a smaller scale, implications of proposed development on sensitive areas such as heritage neighbourhoods can be modelled or sites analysed for liveability factors such as shading and privacy.

Maurice Roers says the council is already utilising the model and its results for a range of applications. "Specifically, the model is shaping city plan changes that are currently underway and providing for much more intelligent, informed discussion about the region's long term development needs."

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▲ The 3D GIS capacity model generated from applying zone rules and development assumptions across the Christchurch central city.

▼ The summit of Maungawhau Mt Eden: low impact development of visitor access and interpretation is proposed to preserve the remaining unmodified features.

GIS proves its worth

GIS applications are integral to many Boffa Miskell projects, proving extremely useful for their capacity to help staff, clients and, ultimately, communities visualise proposed outcomes and options.

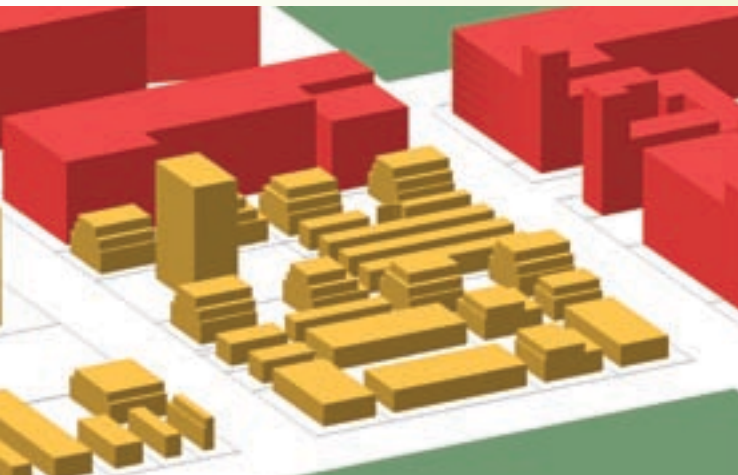
The Christchurch residential capacity model (see opposite page) is a good example. It was also one of the most challenging and satisfying that our Tauranga-based GIS specialist Garry Christoffersen has undertaken in his 13 years of GIS work.

“The rules were incredibly complicated to factor in. It was a case of working interactively with our planners and urban designers to translate their ideas and requirements into a robust and workable product.”

Given the usefulness of GIS applications and the growing sophistication of digital spatial information and techniques, the company has been investing heavily in hardware, software, recruitment and training in the field. GIS specialists are employed in each of the company's four offices and this year two additional GIS specialists, Gaynor Astbury and Matt Daniels from the UK and USA respectively, have been appointed in Auckland.

“We find GIS applications are a cost-effective way to investigate options and scenarios,” Garry says.

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▲ Factors incorporated into the automated site-by-site modelling of likely built form included setbacks, heights and recession planes.

Best practice in planning recognised

A Boffa Miskell-led study received a Best Practice Award at this year's New Zealand Planning Institute's awards.

The institute described the study as an “excellent example of best practice in planning analysis” and considered that it “exemplifies best practice in terms of providing realistic and environmentally sustainable solutions”.

The study, *Visitors' Centre and Transport Mode Option Studies Report for Maungawhau Mt Eden*, was commissioned by the Auckland City Council in 2007 to assess options for visitor facilities and alternative energy-efficient transport to take visitors to the summit of Maungawhau Mt Eden. The volcanic cone is a sacred maunga (mountain), an important landscape feature and significant archaeological, geological and cultural site visited by over 1.2 million people annually.

Boffa Miskell planners, landscape architects and cultural advisors formed a team with Architectus architects, T2 Engineers traffic engineers, WT Partnership quantity surveyors, Clough and Associates archaeologists, JAWA Structures structural engineers and Logan Brewer Production Design interpretation designers to assess and recommend options.

Project leader Peter Hall says establishing good teamwork was fundamental to the project.

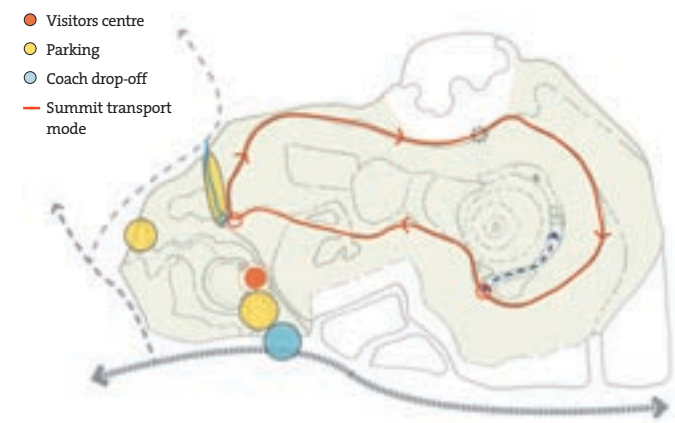
“Given the range of expertise needed, it was essential that we had regular round-table sessions, always involving the client, where the range of technical information and viewpoints could be openly shared, debated and weighed up.

“Ngati Whatua o Orakei also worked with us throughout. In particular, Ngarimu Blair, who explained the cultural significance of Maungawhau to us and helped inspire the guiding principles for the project.”

The team tested a series of preliminary options against the objectives and policies in the council's management and conservation plans for Maungawhau, and eliminated those that were clearly unfeasible or inappropriate to the site. They then investigated the remaining options and assessed them against detailed criteria including functionality, environmental impacts, infrastructure needs, cost, consentability and sustainability. A number of alternative transport modes were examined, ranging from electric buses to gondolas.

The findings were canvassed with stakeholders and further refined before recommending a visitor centre concept for Tahaki Reserve on the lower slopes of the maunga adjacent to Mt Eden Road. Light-weight electric vehicle transport and low-impact improvements to the summit were also selected. The council is currently considering these recommendations.

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▲ A light-weight electric vehicle utilising innovative battery technology developed by the University of Auckland was recommended to take visitors to the summit.

Award winners

Boffa Miskell projects were among the winners in the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects' 2008 Resene Pride of Place Awards.

The biannual awards honour the best in landscape architecture around the country and attracted a record 97 entries.

Manukau City Council Restoration Guidelines: Restoring Our Native Plants



CHARLIE CHALLENGER SUPREME AWARD – for Excellence in Landscape Planning

GOLD – Landscape Planning and Environmental Design

This 68-page booklet was commissioned by Manukau City Council to promote sustainability and increased biodiversity. Boffa Miskell worked collaboratively with the council, iwi, local interest groups and public agencies to provide easily understood guidelines based on Manukau's eight 'ecosystem character areas'.

Heidi Monks, the Awards Convenor, said the guidelines provided "real, practical advice to help local residents actively participate in restoring their environment as development throughout the city increases."

The judges described the project as "outstanding" and a "beautifully resolved restoration and biodiversity practice manual, with excellent guidelines to re-establish native plants." They considered the approach was "relevant regionally, and even nationally."

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Northern Gateway Alliance ALPUR B2 Motorway



▲ The ALPUR B2 Northern Motorway traverses environmentally sensitive areas north of Auckland.

SUSTAINABILITY AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – Landscape Design, Commercial/Industrial/Institutional

SILVER – Landscape Design, Commercial/Industrial/Institutional

The Northern Gateway Alliance is responsible for project management, design and construction of the ALPUR B2 Northern Motorway extension in Auckland. Boffa Miskell is the project partner responsible for environmental management.

The judges noted that the Alliance had taken advantage of the project's high profile "to push the envelope with respect to environmental and landscape considerations in highway engineering design and construction." They acknowledged that the Alliance is the first New Zealand construction delivery team to report publicly on their performance against triple bottom line measures and described the system of Sustainability Performance Measurement as "sophisticated".

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Stream Daylighting Opportunities for Central Auckland



▲ Potential opportunities for 'daylighting' the Waipapa Stream, Auckland.

SILVER – Landscape Planning and Environmental Design

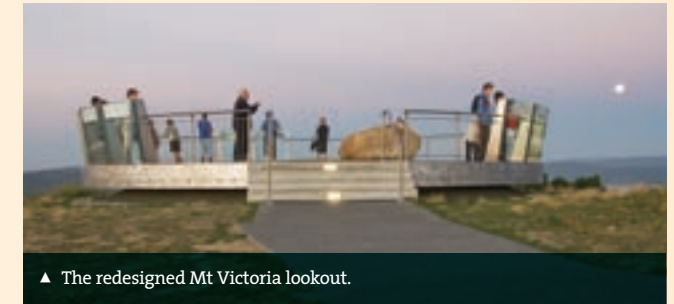
On behalf of Auckland Regional Council, Boffa Miskell investigated the opportunities for bringing piped watercourses back to the surface as flowing streams.

Focusing on three watercourses in Freeman's Bay, Parnell and the CBD, Boffa Miskell developed a methodology for identifying the historic location of watercourses, and assessing the potential stream 'daylighting' constraints and opportunities.

The judges considered it to be a "highly relevant research and feasibility study that has innovative and practical ideas for sustainable catchment outcomes in central Auckland". They noted that "the idea and its research and development are integral to the ecologically sustainable retrofitting of our settlements".

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Mount Victoria Redevelopment



▲ The redesigned Mt Victoria lookout.

BRONZE – Landscape Design, Rural/Park/Recreational

Boffa Miskell was commissioned by the Wellington City Council to design the upgrade of the lookout and visitor facilities at the Mt Victoria summit, one of Wellington's most popular visitor destinations.

The judges noted how the project team had successfully extended the brief to include the whole ridge and linkages with pedestrian walkways and Wellington's Town Belt. They considered that the design response was "sensitive to cultural expectations, with a clear design intention that extends beyond existing use". They noted the high standard of site furniture and noted that, "seats, interpretation, lighting, site materials and motifs all combine to provide users with a clear sense of place."

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Encouraging the next generation

In an initiative to encourage the next generation of environmental professionals, Boffa Miskell ran workshops this year where students were given a glimpse of environmental consulting in practice.

In May Boffa Miskell ran a landscape planning workshop in our Christchurch office for landscape architecture and resource management students from Lincoln University. A range of senior to graduate landscape planners from our Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch offices presented a range of project work, enabling the 26 students to hear about 'real' situations and the interesting range of work in the discipline. With more registrations than places available and enthusiastic feedback received, there is no doubt about high levels of student interest, and the company is considering organising similar workshops annually.

In April, two groups of twenty high school students visited our Auckland office. Staff from each of the company's main disciplines – ecology, planning, landscape architecture, urban design and digital environmental services – described their work and assisted the students in a practical site-design exercise. The students, who knew very little about the breadth of environmental consulting work before, gained new ideas about career options.

Pegasus new town

The Pegasus master plan, prepared by Boffa Miskell for client Infinity Investment Group, is fast becoming a reality.

Homes are now being built in the completed first three stages of the 13-stage town planned for approx 7,000 people, with stages 4 and 5 well under way. The adjacent Mapleham golf course is greening up well and the first 2 stages of the Mapleham residential lots have been titled.

Restoration work continues in the extensive conservation areas of the site and development of the town centre is due to begin in 2009.

Overseas connections

'Developing and Investing Green: Creating Value through Sustainability,' Urban Land Institute Annual Conference 2008.

When our Managing Director Don Miskell attended this conference in North Carolina, he noted that the United States real estate industry is coming to recognise the benefits of sustainability and is starting to put 'green development' into practice.

"It was interesting to hear that, in the slowing housing market over there, green buildings and green developments were still selling reasonably well because of lower operating and transport costs, healthier living environments and an increasing consumer desire to live in environmentally friendly neighbourhoods."



London-based urban design training

One of our landscape architects, Stuart Houghton, has been granted a Boffa Miskell study grant to undertake a one-year Master of Architecture in Urban Design at The Bartlett (University College, London). Stuart is completing the course to complement his landscape architecture training and

his project experience to date, which has increasingly focused on urban environments in the Auckland region.

Boffa Miskell encourages staff to pursue professional development objectives and from time to time sponsors individuals to take up suitable opportunities that are not available in New Zealand.

For more images of work in progress see the featured projects section at www.boffamiskell.co.nz.

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Impact Assessment Conference, Perth

In May this year, ten Boffa Miskell staff, representing the company's disciplines, attended the International Association of Impact Assessment Conference in Perth. The conference, "The Art and Science of Impact Assessment", focused on international recognition that impact assessment must incorporate an understanding of social, cultural and political processes as well as the biophysical sciences to promote societal change towards sustainability.

Our staff delegates made the most of the training sessions and field trips as well as the main conference programme and are sharing what they learned with colleagues in the company.

Sustainable Irrigation Conference, Spain

Boffa Miskell planner, Sarah Dawson, was a co-author of two papers that were presented in June at the second International Conference in Sustainable Irrigation Management in Alicante, Spain.

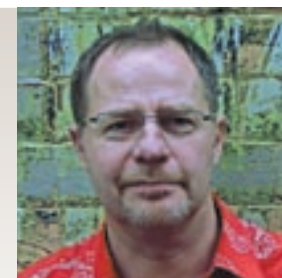
One paper, about using farm management plans to manage land use changes associated with irrigation in Canterbury, was co-authored principally with Brian Ellwood of Meridian Energy. The other paper about predicting environmental sustainability for proposed irrigation schemes was co-authored principally with Ned Norton of NIWA and was judged the best paper at the conference.

Copies of the papers are available at [www.boffamiskell.co.nz/news & publications](http://www.boffamiskell.co.nz/news&publications).

Fellow of NZ Planning Institute

Robert Schofield of our Wellington office was made a Fellow of the New Zealand Planning Institute in April. The Institute created the new category of membership last year to recognise "those individuals who have demonstrated a long-standing commitment to the planning profession in New Zealand".

We are proud that Robert was amongst those to receive the inaugural honour.



A vineyard at Ara

New World wines from Old World traditions

Winemakers in the world's great wine regions have always adapted their viticultural techniques to their localities – thereby producing the distinctive character for which their wines are revered.

It was precisely this principle that prompted Winegrowers of Ara to start with the fundamentals when establishing their Marlborough vineyard – understanding their 1600-hectare site at the confluence of the Wairau and Waihopai Rivers.

To assist in establishing their project vision, they appointed a 'master planning team' in 2003 comprising selected architects from Warren & Mahoney and Richard Priest Architects, identity/brand creators from Designworks Ing and landscape architects from Boffa Miskell.

An intensive period of collaborative work followed.

"We developed our collective understanding of the place, the wines that would be produced there and the way in which people would identify with these, by thinking holistically about the landscape and winemaking people," recalls Boffa Miskell landscape architect Rachel de Lambert. "We all regarded it as a 'legacy project' – creating something that would persist long-term because it was founded on understanding the site and the people that would create the new identity."

The landscape, a fluvial terrace some 9km long and up to 3km wide, is large enough to comprise its own wine region, with old, weathered, stony soils comparable to those found in the Bordeaux and Rhone Valley regions.

"In developing the master plan, we considered the site's productive potential and its spatial qualities – the purity of its form and intactness as a single landscape element between river and hills – and the type of cultural pattern that would fit."

The master plan explains the rationale for the overall layout of vineyard areas, waterways, water storage, access and buildings as well as farming activity, wetlands and lakes. As the plan will be implemented incrementally by a range of people on site, Boffa Miskell produced a 'Landscape Manual' which sets out the 'big picture' design intent as well as detailed guidance for implementation and management.

So far, 385 hectares of the Ara terrace have been put into sauvignon blanc and pinot noir vines and already Ara wines are selling in the United Kingdom and some New Zealand outlets.

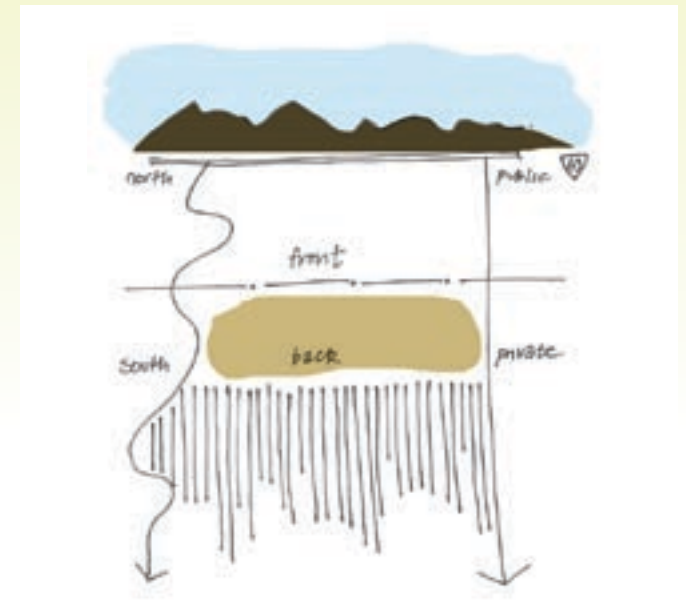
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▲ The western pinot road and stream awaiting planting: a sinuous route for visitors invited into the site.



▲ Influenced by the landscape: Ara's 'Dart' operations building was designed by Warren and Mahoney in collaboration with the master planning team, with Boffa Miskell also designing the 'oasis' garden and immediate landscape context.



▲ Ara is a unique site located between mountains and river.



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