

Boffa Miskell



Shared space streets

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New street design in downtown Auckland encourages consideration and sharing between pedestrians and motorists.

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Adaptive management for hydroelectricity scheme

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A water consent stipulates ongoing management of river-related effects.

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A village and a town take action to manage future growth.

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news



Editorial: Local government in the spotlight

2010 will go down as a landmark year in the life of local government in New Zealand. Christchurch's September 4th earthquake transformed the priorities of the affected city and district councils; local government elections in October saw a number of significant changes in representation; and, on 1st November, the eight Auckland territorial authorities and the Auckland Regional Council combined, creating a unified Auckland Council together with its contingent council controlled organisations.

These changes are likely to evoke a need and opportunities for new ways of thinking about our communities and strategic planning. In Canterbury, for instance, there is an immediate need for earthquake recovery and rehabilitation. Yet that disaster also highlights questions, relevant throughout New Zealand, about how well we plan, design and carry out our land use activities in this restless country of ours.

The events of this year have brought the role of local government sharply into focus; perhaps engendering a better realisation that this is where important decisions are made and on-the-ground

work undertaken that makes a difference to people's everyday lives. I was recently talking with a council colleague and we were reflecting on the public good benefits achieved through a number of our shared projects. We recognised the challenges but also the potential opportunities for future council projects to realise multiple benefits as well as advancing great built design outcomes.

To mark the breadth and significance of the local government sector, this issue of *Boffa Miskell NEWS* has a particular focus on council projects with which we have assisted, that look to deliver leading environmental, community and economic outcomes.

Rachel de Lambert

Rachel de Lambert, Director: Design

Boffa Miskell NEWS

2010/2011
summer

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COVER: Proposed Fort Street shared space street upgrade in Auckland (see more P3).

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▲ Children at Te Ara Hou housing complex were involved in the design of the playground, including a giant taniwha slide.

Social housing

As demographics change so, too, do public housing needs. In a joint venture with central government, Wellington City Council is implementing a social housing upgrade programme to cater for today's more diverse types of household and to improve compliance with building and earthquake standards. Improved living environments, both inside and outside, is the aim.

Boffa Miskell has provided a range of consenting and landscape architecture design services for improvements at six of the council's housing complexes.

Steve Dunn, Boffa Miskell landscape architect who has designed the upgrades of the outdoor areas in several of the council's housing complexes, says social housing requires a clear hierarchy of community and private spaces.

"Tenants come and go, and have a range of interests and needs, so the design has to be flexible. Private court gardens and community gardens are options to meet tenant gardening interests, for instance."

Working with tenants at design workshops at their housing complexes was an important part of the design process and generated ideas on communal elements, including facilities for community events and artwork to reinforce site identity.

CONTACT: Steve Dunn steve.dunn@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ The central community court at Te Ara Hou housing complex in Newtown: some ground floor units now have private courtyards (right) flanking the shared space.

Places of civility

‘Shared space streets’ are places of civility – designed to be more people-oriented and to encourage considerate behaviour by both motorists and pedestrians by blurring the distinction between foot and vehicle traffic areas.

In a conventional street, vehicle traffic dominates over much of the space and this is clearly signalled by such elements as kerbs and road markings. In a shared space street, these elements are removed, encouraging motorists to modify their behaviour by slowing down, observing how other people are using or moving through the shared space street, taking more care and driving in an appropriate manner. Pedestrians have the legal right of way but, for their part, they must be aware of and have consideration for the vehicles using the street.

“It’s about sharing rather than dividing street space,” says Boffa Miskell landscape architect John Potter. “Where shared space has been introduced overseas, it has been shown to calm traffic, attract more people, enhance business and retail activity, and encourage diverse outdoor activity.”

Sharing space in this way also creates more useable space for pedestrians, and the inherent flexibility of the design provides opportunity for the same part of the street to be used for a range of activities at different times during the day and evening, such as service vehicle loading, outdoor dining and outdoor markets.

John says that shared space is ideal for streets that already have a lot of foot traffic and are not key vehicular through routes.

“The shared space concept enables us to consider streets as a vital part of the public realm rather than simply as movement corridors. It unlocks the potential for streets to be treated as destinations where people want to spend time, which in turn supports businesses and investment in the area.”

Auckland Council is introducing the concept to transform a number of streets in Auckland’s central city as part of its 10-year programme of street and open space upgrades.

Boffa Miskell is the lead design consultant for the Elliott and Darby Street upgrade and Fort Street area upgrade which will be implemented in progressive stages from November 2010 to 2013.

CONTACT: John Potter john.potter@boffamiskell.co.nz

In Auckland’s Central city’s shared streets:

- the full width is paved and there are no kerbs or traffic barriers;
- pedestrians have right of way in the presence of vehicles;
- the use of conventional traffic signs and road markings is minimised;
- there is no car parking;
- loading times are restricted;
- there are pedestrian-only areas for use by anyone who does not wish to share the street with vehicles;
- more flexible-use places are available for people to sit and enjoy.

See a short video about shared space streets at

<http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/council/projects/cbdproject/sharedspace.asp>

▼ Darby Street, as it is currently (left) and as it would be (right) when transformed into a shared space environment to give pedestrians more autonomy and encourage appropriate behaviour between people and vehicles.



Design for walking highly commended

A Boffa Miskell-designed boardwalk at Caroline Bay in Timaru has been highly commended in the New Zealand Best Practice Walking Facility category of the 2010 Golden Foot New Zealand Walking Awards.

The awards are run annually by Living Streets Aotearoa to celebrate and recognise New Zealand achievements for walkers.

The 1123-metre-long boardwalk is part of the recently completed redevelopment of Caroline Bay that Boffa Miskell has designed for the Timaru District Council. Caroline Bay has been a popular beachside holiday destination, famed for its annual summer carnival since 1910.

The boardwalk is designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to reach the formerly rather inaccessible beach across remodelled and replanted sand dunes.

CONTACT: Phil Millar phil.millar@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ The Caroline Bay boardwalk provides easy access and protects native dune enhancement plantings (Timaru port in the background).

Small change for a big difference

Small-scale upgrades on limited budgets can make a big difference to local communities, if strategically designed and well implemented. Boffa Miskell has recently designed, documented and overseen the implementation of two such projects.



▲ Improvements to Sharkey Street will act as a catalyst for future investment in the area.

Sharkey Street, Manukau City

Streetscape improvements in one part of Sharkey Street have had positive effects on the entire street. The street is a key urban spine through a business and employment area that is currently dominated by vehicle traffic.

Boffa Miskell was engaged by the Town Centres and Business Precincts Group of Manukau City Council to design a public place that would act as a catalyst for future investment in the area. Public seating and green space was developed to improve the quality of the street environment, encouraging pedestrians to use the street.

The design for these improvements, including the palette of materials used, exemplifies the implementation of the *Manukau City Centre Public Domain & Technical Manual* that Boffa Miskell produced in parallel (see page 10.)

CONTACT: Rachael Eaton rachael.eaton@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ Horne Bay Reserve: improved beach access, as well as signage and seating, have significantly improved local amenity.

Herne Bay Reserves, Auckland

In the suburb of Herne Bay, the progressive upgrade since 2002 of nine small road reserves has significantly improved public beach access and amenity. All the reserves lead from short, dead-end streets to the cliff above Waitemata Harbour and down to the foreshore.

Boffa Miskell provided landscape planning and landscape assessment and design services to obtain the necessary resource consents and has managed the construction works for the Auckland City Council.

Issues of difficult beach access via the cliff face had to be resolved, in consultation with the local community, as well as planning considerations specific to road reserve land.

CONTACT: Claire Walker claire.walker@boffamiskell.co.nz

North Bank Hydro Project

Robust ‘adaptive management’ will be the key to complying with the terms of a water consent granted in August 2010 for a proposed hydroelectricity scheme on the lower Waitaki River.

The consent, granted to Meridian Energy for its proposed North Bank Hydro Project, allows water from the river’s Lake Waitaki to be taken through a tunnel, used for generating hydroelectric energy and returned to the river 34 kilometres downstream.

Boffa Miskell worked closely with Meridian, its lawyers and numerous technical experts in managing the assessments of environmental effects (AEE) and the statutory planning required to achieve the consents; carried out landscape and ecology assessments; reviewed the information presented by multiple experts at both the council and appeal hearings; and worked closely with all involved in developing the consent conditions.

“The consent conditions are complex because they need to respond to a complex and dynamic natural environment,” Boffa

Miskell planner, Sarah Dawson, explains. “They had to be tight and workable and provide enough certainty about desired outcomes while also providing flexibility, with guidance, to respond to changes in the environment.”

Adaptive management

Formal adaptive management was the answer; a tightly woven combination of consent conditions and management plans to manage the ongoing river-related effects of the proposed water take.

Di Robertson and Mark Sanders, Boffa Miskell ecologists, who led the assessments of potential effects on the wetland and braided river bird environments, prepared preliminary management plans in their areas of expertise to demonstrate to the Court the way the plans would work.

“The management plans are based on predicted effects developed from ten years’ of scientific investigations,” Di says, “but there’s an annual monitoring and reporting process built in, with the ability to adapt actions according to what actually happens. The important thing is being very clear about what has to be achieved – and that doesn’t change, even if the management methods do.”

The adaptive management process also includes regular consultation with interest groups, including formal input from



▲ Braided river and wetland environments in the lower Waitaki River: dynamic systems that will be monitored under adaptive management.

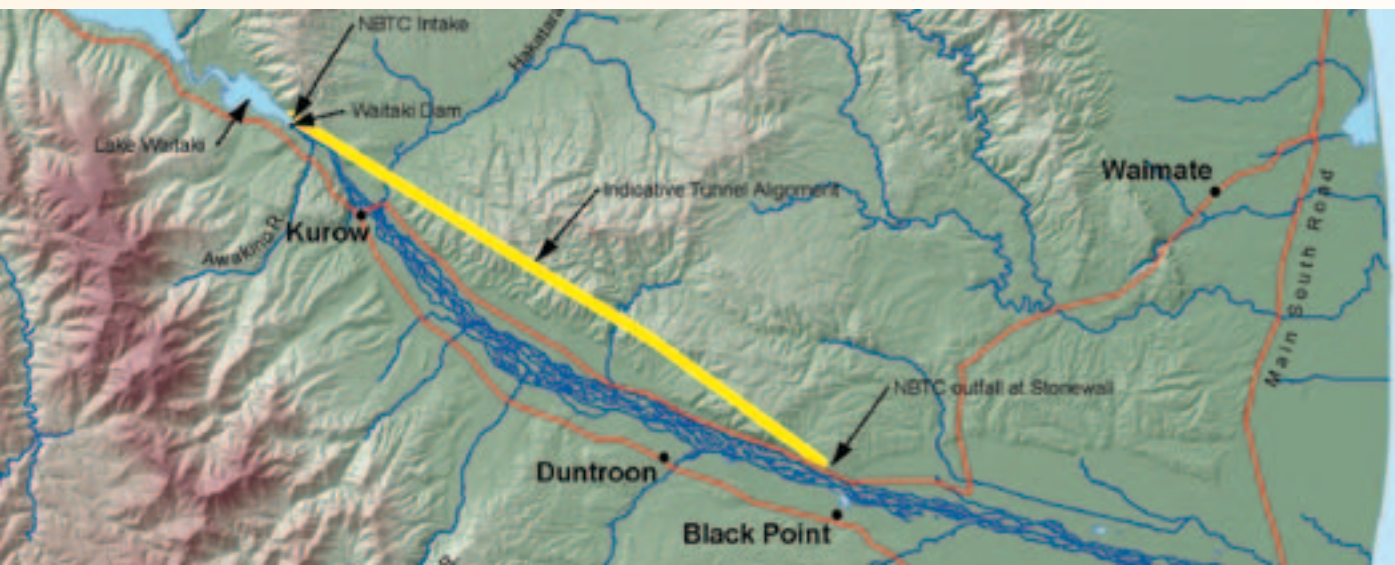
Ngāi Tahu and Waitaha, community and statutory groups, and regular peer review by a panel of independent experts appointed to monitor the adaptive process.

“Meridian was successful in achieving provision in the Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Regional Plan for a potential hydro scheme like this in the lower Waitaki,” Sarah says. “That was important, as it provided a policy framework for the water consent applications. The consenting process was also simplified by separating out the water-related issues from the land use and construction issues.”

The next step

With the water consents now in place, further environmental investigation and scheme design work is under way preparatory to Meridian lodging the second phase of resource consent applications, relating to land use and the potential impacts of construction for this significant hydroelectricity scheme.

CONTACT: Sarah Dawson sarah.dawson@boffamiskell.co.nz



◀ The proposed North Bank hydro scheme will divert water from Lake Waitaki (top left) and return it to the Waitaki River 34 kilometres downstream.

Motorway goes underground

Building a new section of motorway in a 'cut and cover' tunnel under a much-loved park is one of numerous features designed to protect and enhance a focal area of central Auckland in the Victoria Park Tunnel project.

The project, which also involves widening the motorway from the park to the Auckland Harbour Bridge, is aimed at reducing traffic congestion in and around the central city section of State Highway 1. The highway is one the government's Roads of National Significance, identified as critical to New Zealand's economic prosperity.

Boffa Miskell prepared the Urban Design and Landscape Framework for the New Zealand Transport Agency as part of its 2005 Notice of Requirement; then, in 2009, worked with Sinclair Knight Mertz to prepare the urban design and landscape mitigation plan for the whole project as well as concept plans for parts of the project. In late 2009, we were then appointed, with

Warren and Mahoney Architects, to provide the urban design and landscape architecture services to the Victoria Park Alliance, which is responsible for the project's construction.

"Through our long involvement we're bringing to the project comprehensive knowledge of the issues and opportunities in relation to the park and its environs," says Boffa Miskell landscape architect Peter Whiting.

And it's under construction...

Boffa Miskell has completed the urban design master plan and the detailing, and is now supervising the construction of the urban design and landscape works.

Newly completed landscape works include the Westhaven Drive retaining wall. Designed in collaboration with the iwi liaison team, and affectionately referred to as the 'fish wall', it represents the rich fisheries of the Waitemata that were so important to the area's former occupants.

Future works will include the reinstatement and redevelopment of Victoria Park, a transparent noise-absorbing wall along St Marys Bay Reserve, the relocation of the nearby historic Rob Roy Hotel in

a new plaza, and better walking links, including the 'Jacobs Ladder' footbridge, which will reconnect access between the St Marys Bay cliffs and the sea after 50 years of separation.

The entire project is due to be completed in 2012.

CONTACT: Peter Whiting peter.whiting@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ The design of the 'fish wall' was based on a sketch (inset) by Pita Turei, one of the project's iwi liaison team.

Undergrounding the new motorway enabled the open space potential of the new Rob Roy Hotel plaza (foreground) and Victoria Park (background beyond the existing southern motorway viaduct) to be developed.



Apartments over shops will be made possible by changes to district plan rules on carparking and out-of-centre retailing.



Local desires drive district plan changes

Two district plan changes in the greater Auckland metropolitan area have recently been notified. While one relates to a small rural settlement and the other to a town of 25,000, both are in response to community desires to take urgent action in managing future growth.

Clevedon village

In Clevedon, a village of just over 200 dwellings, local residents have been wanting a structure plan for the past 20 years that would recognise the character of the village and its rural surroundings whilst enabling some development. Furthermore, local landowners who had been constrained from developing their land by the lack of adequate wastewater treatment and possible flood risk on low lying land, were seeking solutions.

Manukau City Council engaged Boffa Miskell to help formulate a sustainable development plan for growth. Boffa Miskell was then retained to develop a district plan change and design guidelines to enable the intent of the sustainable development plan to be achieved.

▼ Clevedon residents were actively involved in visualising how their community might look in the future.



The Boffa Miskell project team of urban designers, planners and landscape architects explored the issues and the aspirations of the local community from the outset.

The proposed district plan change includes zonings allowing for an additional 600 dwellings, a road hierarchy and urban design principles aimed at enhancing the sense of place, with the village at the heart of the rural community.

Pukekohe central

At Pukekohe, the Franklin District Council wished to develop a concept plan to help implement the District Growth Strategy.

Boffa Miskell carried out an urban design assessment of the town centre catchment and the large business zone to the south.

A range of issues were identified including a need to enhance the viability of the town centre with some higher density mixed-use development offering more housing choice. Improving the town centre's connections to the surrounding residential areas and limiting retail development in the old industrial zone were amongst other needs addressed.

"We took part in staff and councillor workshops and jointly developed specific mechanisms to address the issues," says Boffa Miskell urban designer John Mackay.

The mechanisms are contained in the Pukekohe Central Concept Plan, which is part of the district plan change notified in November.

CONTACTS:

Lisa Mein lisa.mein@boffamiskell.co.nz
John Mackay john.mackay@boffamiskell.co.nz

Take a lead from the wild side

Imagine ecology and landscape values shaping an area's future urban growth; imagine a green network growing alongside built development, linking in with a corridor of 'wild' biodiversity hotspots across a region.

This vision is the basis of the *Whenuapai-Hobsonville-Westgate Triangle Integrated Landscape Restoration Plan* that Boffa Miskell recently completed for the Waitakere City Council.

"This is a fresh approach to spatial planning," says Boffa Miskell ecologist, Simon Chapman. "Typically, such planning is focused on maximising the developable area while green, open space is allocated to the marginal left-over fragments. Our landscape and ecology-led approach optimises natural values and the ecological services that sustain needs, such as clean water."

The plan is consistent with the principle of facilitating ecological restoration alongside urban growth. It will also integrate a green network in the Whenuapai-Hobsonville-Westgate area with the 'North-West Wild Link', a regional-scale vision of biodiversity restoration that will eventually link habitats of the Waitakere Ranges with the Hauraki Gulf Islands.

The proposed restoration takes human as well as natural systems into account. Consequently, community wellbeing and health is an important objective, and restoration initiatives at the local level are proposed, to encourage landowner interest and community care.

CONTACT: Simon Chapman simon.chapman@boffamiskell.co.nz



▼ Korimako (bellbird) is recommended as a flagship species to focus community engagement in restoring Auckland's North-West Wild Link through the Whenuapai-Hobsonville-Westgate triangle.

From vision to structure plan

Under the 2007 Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, and a corresponding proposed change to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement, Rolleston township, south of Christchurch, is set to grow from its current population of 7,000, to 20,000 by 2041 and potentially up to 50,000 by 2075.

Realising the urgent need to plan ahead, the Selwyn District Council commissioned Boffa Miskell to prepare the Rolleston Structure Plan, which was completed in 2009. Boffa Miskell provided urban design, landscape architecture and sustainability services; working with Aecom infrastructure and transport advisors, and council officers.

The vision

Articulating a vision of what Rolleston should be like in the future was a crucial first step.

"The vision statement, and the objectives that were derived from it, provided the touchstone for the project," says Boffa Miskell urban

designer Tim Church. "We constantly referred back to those to check that the structure plan would deliver local aspirations on the ground."

The structure plan vision states that Rolleston should remain a town in its own right, despite its proximity to Christchurch, with a strong community spirit and its new and existing development well integrated.

Tim says there was a strong desire that the town centre should be the heart of the community although that led to a hard choice – whether to enhance the existing town centre or completely rebuild on undeveloped land further out. Residents favoured enhancing the existing town centre, with a network of supporting neighbourhood centres to be developed as the town grew.

Objectives were developed from the vision, based on three guiding and inter-related principles; Rolleston had to be sustainable, well designed and realistically achievable. The principles were woven through the planning of such aspects as land use, movement networks and infrastructure.

For instance, a diverse range of living requirements and housing densities were provided for, located so that the majority of residents would be within easy walking or cycling distance of neighbourhood centres, community facilities and public transport networks. Utility



▲ The Rolleston Structure Plan provides for the progressive development of mixed density residential neighbourhoods within an open space and transport network designed to foster a sense of community and minimise environmental impacts.

services and public open space were integrated where possible to implement low impact design principles, such as capturing and reusing stormwater, and planting only drought-tolerant species in the planned network of green belts and corridors.

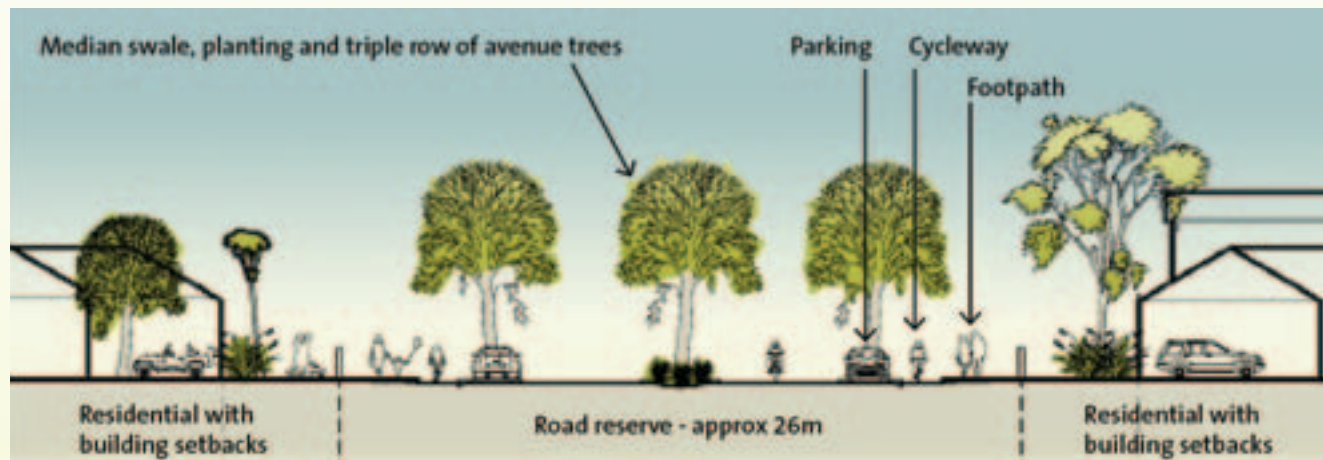
Implementation

Likely land requirements, timelines and cost implications have been assessed and a sequence of development planned, with flexibility to be adapted to the actual population growth rates.

"An over-riding principle is to ensure that Rolleston is an attractive place for people to live and that will mean putting some features, such as key movement and open space corridors, in place ahead of development to provide necessary connections and enhance amenity," Tim explains.

Given the long timeframe, the structure plan includes checklists of actions and responsibilities to guide implementation, and a monitoring programme to regularly assess progress in achieving the desired development outcomes.

CONTACT: Tim Church tim.church@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ The proposed 'Town Avenues' will retrofit the existing rural roads within the urban limits, with multiple benefits of creating a legible hierarchy of routes, enhancing amenity and integrating low impact stormwater management approaches.

Our restless country... recovering from natural disasters

After the quake

The Christchurch earthquake of 4 September demonstrated that a shared experience in even the worst of times can bring together a community. Thankfully, Boffa Miskell's Christchurch office came through unscathed, enabling the Christchurch team to contribute its skills and knowledge to the recovery and redevelopment of the city and surrounding areas as required.

Already, our urban designers and landscape architects are assisting Waimakariri District Council with the redevelopment of affected residential streets in Kaiapoi, one of the worst affected areas, as well as providing advice on redevelopment through team members who are on the Christchurch Urban Design Panel.



Heritage conservation charter update

The Christchurch earthquake has rekindled debate in many parts of the country about the future and value of heritage buildings.

Relevant to this debate is the New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value, which is used as a touchstone on heritage matters nationally. The revised and updated edition has just been released by the New Zealand chapter of ICOMOS, the International Council on Monuments and Sites.

Matata five years' on...

Five years have passed since debris flows and flooding devastated the coastal village of Matata in the eastern Bay of Plenty. Much remedial work and hazard reduction is complete and the Whakatane District Council remains committed to further long-term restoration.

The May 2005 disaster saw an estimated 700,000 m³ of rocks, silt and organic material discharged onto the Matata coastal fan, disrupting road and rail links and destroying houses.

Boffa Miskell's ecologists, planners, landscape architects and cultural advisors have worked closely with the Whakatane District Council project team and specialist engineers from Tonkin and Taylor Ltd to design and gain resource consents for the works required over four affected stream catchments.

"In leading the recovery work – involving numerous agencies – the council has sought to reduce future hazard while also restoring amenity for the community," says Boffa Miskell planner, Craig Batchelar.

Matata Lagoon

Matata Lagoon, formally known as Te Awa o te Atua, is a highly valued landscape, ecological and cultural feature that was virtually destroyed by the debris flow. It was decided to rehabilitate the lagoon and environs in tandem with the hazard reduction works.

Boffa Miskell prepared a landscape and revegetation plan to guide the long-term rehabilitation works, aiming to achieve the necessary balance between good environmental results and the affordability required by the council.



▲ Long-term restoration of the Matata Lagoon (foreground) is part of the post-disaster recovery programme at Matata village.

The resource consent granted by an independent commissioner was appealed to the Environment Court on wide-ranging issues including potential effects on cultural values, engineering feasibility and the economic impact on the community of rate funding the works. The Environment Court confirmed the Commissioner's decision and physical works commenced in 2009.

The Matata Lagoon is now back, following dredging of the deposited silt and debris, and revegetation has begun. Restoring the area's natural character is a long-term prospect but, already, the lagoon environment is starting to provide a habitat for native flora and fauna, and a destination for the local community and visitors to enjoy.

CONTACT: Craig Batchelar craig.batchelar@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ Active street level uses will be encouraged in the Manukau city centre to help create vibrant streetscapes designed to encourage people to walk and mingle safely.

Public realm design leads city centre planning

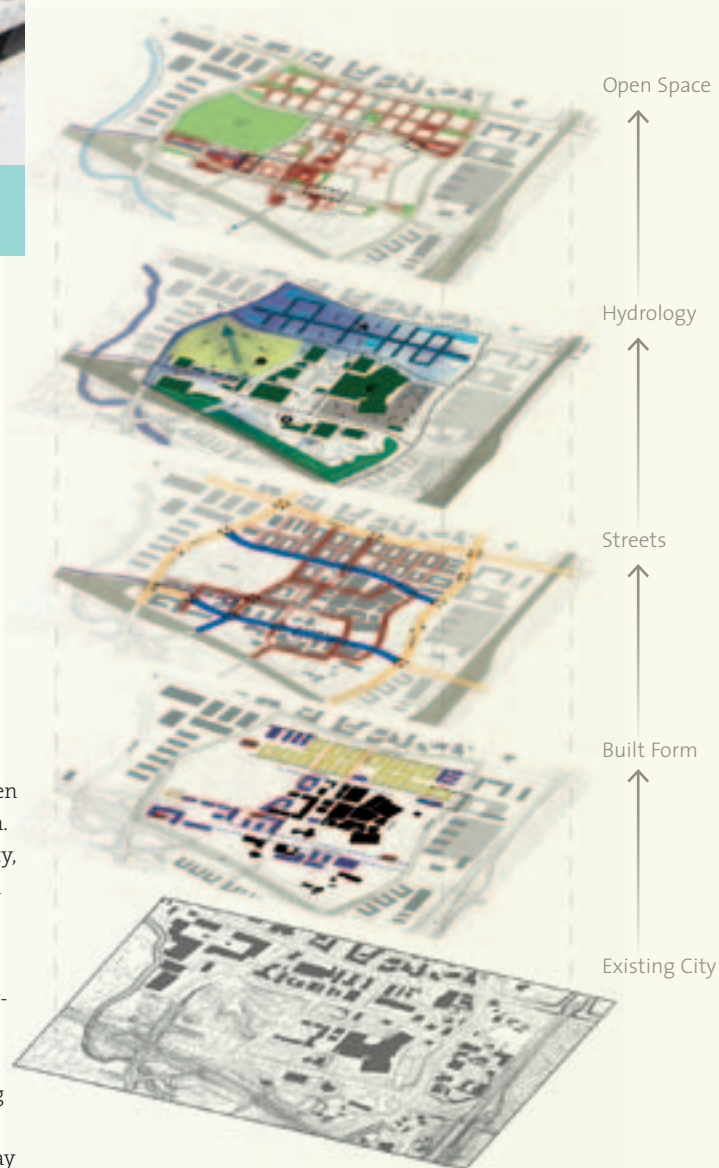
A public domain design manual is central to delivering on a spatial structure plan for improving and developing the Manukau City centre.

The Manukau City Centre Public Domain & Technical Manual sets out an over-arching three-dimensional concept for the city's public realm, working down in scale to precinct, street and open space, with supporting technical specifications. Boffa Miskell prepared the manual, which the Manukau City Council approved in September.

"The importance of the public domain in providing a cohesive, legible spatial framework and overarching urban character is often overlooked," says Boffa Miskell urban designer Simon van Wijnen. "Good public realm design can significantly enhance local identity, community belonging and amenity, as well as serving functional purposes."

The Boffa Miskell design team found that much of the space between buildings in the Manukau City centre is currently under-utilised and lacking in coherent or place-responsive character, being dominated by surface car parks, wide streets, poor pedestrian links and empty lots. The manual is aimed at enabling more positive 'public behaviour'; that is, creating a public realm where people naturally intermingle in the course of their everyday activities; using, enjoying and celebrating their city environment.

CONTACT: Simon van Wijnen simon.vanwijnen@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ In the Manukau city centre structure plan, the integration of built form, street layout, stormwater management and open space is central to the public domain environment.

Integrated sports solutions

The Mount Greens Sports project has enabled the Tauranga City Council to rationalise reserves space, upgrade sports facilities to international standards and trial an innovative low-impact stormwater system.

The new 2.8 hectare facility accommodates multiple croquet lawns and bowling greens, club and green keeper facilities and parking. Boffa Miskell was the lead design consultant, responsible for the overall design and implementation, including landscape, infrastructure and architectural components. CPG NZ Ltd provided engineering and architectural services.

The project followed a decision to provide combined facilities for local croquet and bowling clubs. Once the clubs are relocated, their former greens, strategically located near Mount Maunganui, will be freed up for other reserve purposes.

Boffa Miskell landscape architect Morné Hugo says all storm water had to be disposed of on-site as the reticulated system had no extra capacity.

"We suggested a low-impact design solution, using the Atlantis 'Rain Smart' sub-surface storage modules in conjunction with rain gardens to provide filtration and absorb the run-off."

The council decided to extend the project and construct additional roadside parking incorporating rain gardens in the traffic islands of the adjacent roadway as a test case of low impact design for potential use elsewhere in the city.

The new sports facility is due for completion in December 2010.

CONTACT: Morné Hugo morne.hugo@boffamiskell.co.nz

▼ The new Mount Greens Sports facilities with Mount Maunganui in the distance.



Environmental award



Boffa Miskell ecologist, Dr Judith Roper-Lindsay, has received the Environment Institute of Australia & New Zealand's 2010 top award.

The Simon Molesworth Award for Outstanding Service to the Institute was

announced in October in recognition of Judith's role in establishing and developing the New Zealand Chapter of EIANZ as well as her overall contribution to the Institute. The Institute particularly cited her foundation membership of EIA; her term in 2005 as the New Zealand Chapter's president; and her leadership in promoting and developing branches in the Bay of Plenty, Christchurch and Wellington.

Judith's more recent contributions include assisting with the preparation of draft *Ecological Impact Assessment Guidelines* and serving on the interview panel for certifying Certified Environmental Practitioners.

CONTACT: Judith Roper-Lindsay judith.roper-lindsay@boffamiskell.co.nz

Wetland trustee



Senior Ecologist, Kristy Hall from our Auckland office has been elected a trustee of the National Wetland Trust of New Zealand.

Kristy, who has expertise in both terrestrial and aquatic ecology, is keen to assist the

Trust to promote wetlands and their values. "Wetlands are one of our most threatened ecosystems but people are starting to recognise their importance for water quality, flood attenuation, habitat, recreation and amenity."

Next year is the 40th anniversary of the international RAMSAR convention for wetlands so there will be a range of events throughout the year. The Trust is also in the process of developing a national wetland centre at Lake Serpentine, south of Hamilton.

CONTACT: Kristy Hall kristy.hall@boffamiskell.co.nz

Overseas Connections

Returned from overseas study



Stuart Houghton has recently returned to the Auckland office after completing an urban design masters degree at The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, supported by a Boffa Miskell Study Award. Stuart, who is also a landscape architect, says the programme's design-led approach to

urban development renewed his appreciation of the importance of built implementation in delivering urban design initiatives.

Stuart used the study opportunity to consider Auckland's urban growth and intensification issues from afar. His thesis, 'The Ring', which explored the potential to transform Auckland's central motorway junction and waterfront axis into a continuous ring of public space, received a silver award in the visionary landscape design category of the 2010 New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects awards.

CONTACT: Stuart Houghton stuart.houghton@boffamiskell.co.nz

Short listed for international urban design award



The Boffa Miskell design team which partnered with the Auckland City Council on the redesign of St Patrick's Square is delighted that the project was short listed in the prestigious *World Architecture News*

(WAN) 2010 Awards. The redevelopment of the square, designed by Boffa Miskell, was selected by the jury panel as one of the top six built projects out of 61 world-wide entries in the Urban Design – Built category of the WAN awards.

The jurors described all the short listed entries as having displayed "a thorough understanding of their context, a special deftness and intelligence in the way their components were put together." The built award went to Paddington Reservoir Gardens in Sydney, with Target Field and Plaza in Minneapolis highly commended.

Project office in Shanghai

Boffa Miskell has opened a project office in the heart of Shanghai.

It will provide a base for managing existing projects in Shanghai as well as taking up other project opportunities in China.

"The project office enables us to provide better project management and enhance our relationships with clients and contractors, as well as with the Chinese authorities. We are able to draw on Boffa Miskell's expertise in our New Zealand offices while at the same time employing local people who understand the local culture and environment. There are exciting opportunities for us to diversify and interact with another country."

Boffa Miskell is grateful to New Zealand Trade and Enterprise for its assistance in setting up the new venture, which is in line with the New Zealand government's free trade policy and objectives to increase overseas earnings.

CONTACT: Chris Bentley chris.bentley@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ Prime Minister John Key (centre) met with Boffa Miskell clients Mr Wang Cheng and Mr Ding Jianzu (left) and Boffa Miskell director Chris Bentley and his wife Swallow Wang (right) during a visit to China in September.

Best practice landscape assessment

Best practice landscape assessment methodology has been successfully applied in a landscape study that informs the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement Review.

The *Canterbury Regional Landscape Study Review 2010*, a technical report completed by Boffa Miskell in July 2010 to identify and describe the region's areas of outstanding natural features and landscapes, has attracted "extremely positive feedback", according to Marcus Langman, project leader of the RPS review at Environment Canterbury.

"Boffa Miskell was able to take the difficult subject matter and present it in a clear and easily digestible format for users. The work undertaken clearly showed many hours of conceptual thinking that challenged all of us in the process."

Boffa Miskell reviewed the earlier 1993 Canterbury Landscape Study, which was one of the first comprehensive landscape studies undertaken under the Resource Management Act 1991.

"The landscape assessment methodology used in the earlier study was ground-breaking at the time. Subsequently, the assessment criteria were endorsed and refined in case law. Our approach reflected the evolution of that methodology and current best practice."

The recent review, which was rigorously peer reviewed, confirmed much of the 1993 findings

but recommended some refinements and new areas. One particular difference between the two studies is that the original study identified best examples of each landscape type whereas all landscapes of outstanding quality were identified in the review. The identified outstanding areas and their values were described in more detail than was done previously.

The project team was mindful of the need to provide good information to help people understand the findings and, in due course, develop mechanisms to manage the landscape values. Boffa Miskell's GIS specialists were therefore brought in to compile, update and fill gaps in the 1993 information, and translate it into formats suitable for analysis and presentation. Boffa Miskell planners also provided advice on the development of policy relating to the region's landscapes.

A landscape framework

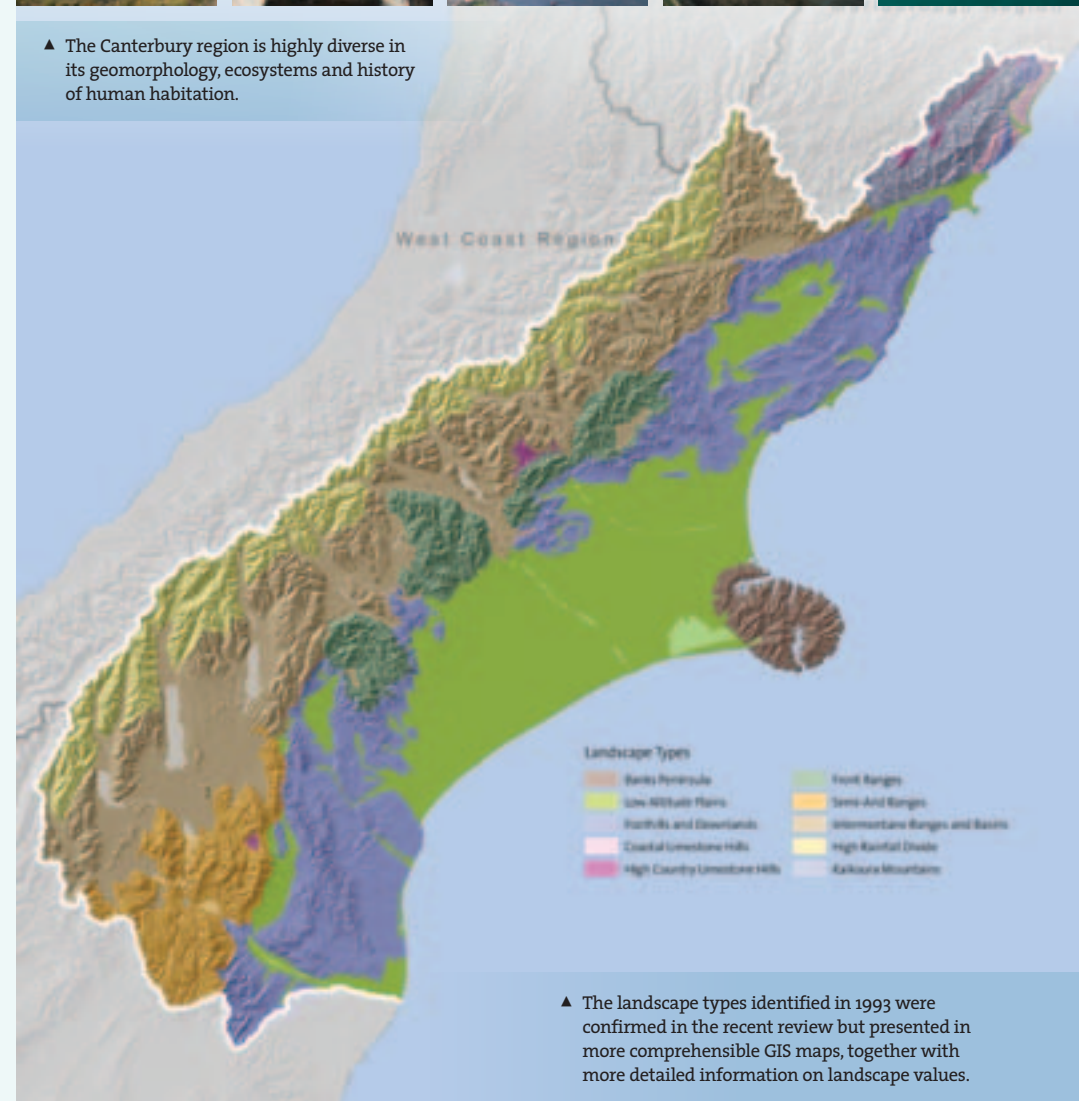
The *Draft Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2010* was released for public comment in September. It included provisions relating to the identification of outstanding natural features and landscapes in the region, which were referenced to the landscape study review to provide a broad framework for more detailed landscape assessments at the local level.

The 2010 landscape study can be downloaded from the publications section of the Environment Canterbury website <http://www.ecan.govt.nz>.

CONTACT: Yvonne Pfluger yvonne.pfluger@boffamiskell.co.nz



▲ The Canterbury region is highly diverse in its geomorphology, ecosystems and history of human habitation.



▲ The landscape types identified in 1993 were confirmed in the recent review but presented in more comprehensible GIS maps, together with more detailed information on landscape values.

Boffa Miskell



WEBSITE: www.boffamiskell.co.nz
EMAIL: info@boffamiskell.co.nz

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AUCKLAND
Level 3, IBM Centre,
82 Wyndham Street,
AUCKLAND 1010
PO Box 91 250, AUCKLAND 1142
PH: 09-358-2526
FAX: 09-359-5300

TAURANGA
Level 2, 116 on Cameron,
cnr Cameron Road and Wharf Street,
TAURANGA 3110
PO Box 13 373, TAURANGA 3141
PH: 07-571-5511
FAX: 07-571-3333

WELLINGTON
Level 9, 190 Willis Street,
WELLINGTON 6011
PO Box 11 340, WELLINGTON 6142
PH: 04-385-9315
FAX: 04-384-3089

CHRISTCHURCH
Level 6, Brannigans Building,
86 Gloucester Street,
CHRISTCHURCH 8014
PO Box 110, CHRISTCHURCH 8140
PH: 03-366-8891
FAX: 03-365-7539