



Gathering place at Picton

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A new town square on Picton's waterfront will restore what was, historically, the town's focal gathering point.

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Sustainable solutions

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New technical reports offer practical advice on stormwater management and low impact design.

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Resource consent success

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In gaining full consent for a cement plant, a strong client-consultant relationship has also been forged.

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summer²⁰⁰⁹

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issue number

Boffa Miskell

news



Editorial: Design differentiator

I have recently been appointed to the newly created role of Director: Design by the Boffa Miskell Board.

This is a role that I am thrilled to take up because design, in its broadest sense, is at the core of Boffa Miskell's practice. The company has diversified from its landscape architectural beginnings, yet design remains a key differentiator of our practice.

We have embraced a broad definition of design and see the creative process as fundamental to the way in which all our disciplines approach our clients' projects and integrate our work. At the same time we have reaffirmed, through recent strategic planning, our desire to maintain a strong pure design capability in the market. In my new role I will be championing a renewed focus on design internally as well as externally.

With this opportunity ahead it is timely that we are celebrating in this edition of *Boffa Miskell NEWS*, the opening of St Patrick's Square in Auckland's CBD. This simple and beautifully crafted design pays

respect to its Cathedral context and creates what is a much overdue urban oasis in the city. The delivery of successful public spaces like St Patrick's Square is one component of the expression of design in Boffa Miskell. Our role in delivering these projects is incredibly important to us as they are tangible public places that enrich everyday life.

Projects like this in some ways return us to Boffa Miskell's design roots; they remind us of the rewards in our emphasis on the design differentiator and they give us reason to be proud of our excellent designers.

Rachel de Lambert, Director

Boffa Miskell NEWS

COVER: *High Density Oceanic (Samopolis 2)*, woodblock print, Edition 42, 63 x 63 cm by Sheyne Tuffery.

Sheyne is a contemporary Pacific artist and founder of LeSA Gallery in Petone. He describes himself as a paper architect who uses his work to create and represent his own cultural context and sense of belonging. His prints and paintings often envisage Polynesia as a futuristic urban utopia; with the Samoa fale as the symbolic archetype for skyscrapers, apartment housing and rocketships (vaka).

This newsletter is published twice a year by Boffa Miskell Ltd.

DESIGNED AND PRODUCED BY: DNA

EDITED BY: Shona McCahon

ILLUSTRATIONS: P6 & 7, Copyright Department of Conservation; Silvereye, Little Barrier Island, May 1968 by J.L. Kendrick and Morepork by C.S. Robertson; P7, [centre top] photo by Duncan Shaw-Brown; P8, photos by Simon Devitt. PRINTED IN WELLINGTON BY: Service Printers

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Building a landscape framework at Papamoa

A high quality, site-sensitive landscape framework is taking shape at 'Coast Papamoa Beach' as stage one of the landscape works nears completion.

Boffa Miskell is carrying out the detailed landscape design of the 22-hectare mixed housing development, including streetscapes, open spaces, residential environments and public spaces, and is managing the landscape construction works.

Client Fraser Papamoa Limited acquired the land, 10 kilometres south of Tauranga, in 2004. Boffa Miskell



▲ The future neighbourhood centre (background) and reserve: informal planting, natural materials and flowing water throughout create a sense of tranquillity.

provided urban design, landscape design and landscape planning services during the five-year resource consent application process and, therefore, has a thorough understanding of the ongoing landscape development requirements.

'Sands', the first of four neighbourhoods planned for development over the next seven to ten years, was launched in October.

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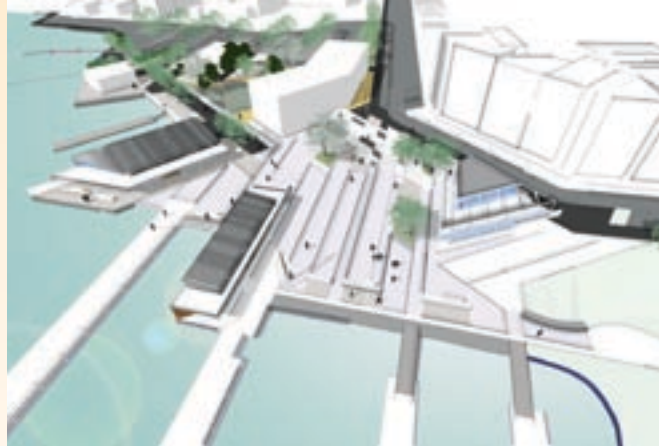
A new town square for Picton

At Picton, a new waterfront town square is being developed: a public place that will be a community focal point.

The site, which straddles the town's commercial and marina zones, was once the town's bustling social and working hub, but its amenity value was gradually subsumed by changed service functions and car parking. Its potential as a town focal point was highlighted when Boffa Miskell senior urban planner, Marc Baily, began a process for the Marlborough District Council in assisting the community to investigate various options for the area.

After urban design analysis and extensive consultation, an option for redevelopment was recommended. It included retaining important activities such as fishing boat use, Marlborough Sounds tourism operations and boat-related servicing based in new purpose-designed buildings, together with new public space and complementary mixed use development. Marc says the concept has enabled a level of self-funding in the creation of a bustling town square, which will be enlivened by ground floor public uses in buildings positioned to create a well-proportioned public open space.

From this consultative urban design process Boffa Miskell reviewed and refined the waterfront master plan during 2008 and Warren and Mahoney Architects was engaged to work with us on the first



▲ The square will be a pivotal open space between the marina (left), the commercial zone (background) and the foreshore reserve (right).

three of six building designs. Boffa Miskell produced the detailed landscape and urban design and is now supervising the works, which are due for completion in early 2010.

"The redeveloped space and new built form will strengthen the connections between the waterfront and town centre and be a stimulant for local businesses," says Boffa Miskell senior landscape architect Michael Hawes. "It's always been a place of arrival and departure and that historical role as a focal gathering place will be restored.

"Layers from the past in the public spaces of New Zealand towns are not uncommon and they can give strong cues for revitalisation. The investment in Picton's town square will pay dividends through the enhanced business opportunities and community uses."

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▼ Connections out to the Marlborough Sounds (background) are reinforced by the orientation of buildings, the detailed landscape design and the framing of key views.



Rakau Rangatira 'Chiefly Trees' – joint management project

Boffa Miskell is facilitating negotiations between tangata whenua Te Roroa and the Department of Conservation (DOC) in regard to the future management of the Waipoua Forest and associated areas north of Dargaville.

DOC appointed Boffa Miskell to assist with the negotiations that followed Te Roroa's Treaty settlement in 2008, which paved the way for joint management of Waipoua Forest.

Anthony Olsen, Boffa Miskell senior cultural heritage advisor, says that the joint management relationship is a unique co-management model based upon agreements that bring together matauranga Māori and Western science, and kaupapa Māori and Western management methodologies.

"We've been able to act in a neutral advisory role, and have also provided land information and landscape assessment advice to assist in developing a conservation management plan and long-term vision for culturally-sensitive tourism opportunities in the area."

While management of Waipoua Forest is the core component, the future plans also extend to nearby freehold land which has come into Te Roroa ownership through the Treaty settlement.

As Boffa Miskell landscape architect Phil Wihongi puts it, "Simply, it's about recognising the mana of the rakau (trees), the mana of the two partners and respectfully managing the resource for the future."

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Tane Mahuta in the Waipoua Forest, is the largest kauri tree in New Zealand, estimated to be 1,200 years old.



Stormwater and low impact design

Boffa Miskell ecologists, planners, landscape architects and urban designers have been assisting the Auckland Regional Council to review its technical publications on stormwater management, including TP124 Low Impact Design Manual and TP10 Stormwater Management Devices.

Boffa Miskell senior landscape architect Mark Lewis says the multi-disciplinary approach was essential, given the many factors influencing stormwater management.

“We were asked to prepare a technical report, *The Integration of Low Impact Design, Urban Design and Urban Form*, where we found important synergies between these

diverse fields”, says Mark. “However, there is still a need to reconcile objectives for urban intensification with other objectives for conservation.”

The report included a ‘toolkit’ to address these issues through integrated planning and design. The report will also inform the review of the TP124 Low Impact Design Manual, to which Boffa Miskell will be a contributor.

Boffa Miskell also prepared a volume for the revised TP10 guideline, entitled *Landscape and Ecology Values for Stormwater Management*. The new volume provides broad principles to promote landscape and ecology values in stormwater devices as well as specifications, plant lists, and programmes to inform the functional design of specific devices such as rain gardens, green roofs, and wetland ponds.

The technical publications are available online at the Auckland City website.

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A study of urban form focusing on integrated low impact design (LID) and urban design approaches.

Bioacoustic bird monitoring

For the first time in New Zealand, bioacoustic devices are being used for large-scale bird monitoring; technology that holds great promise, according to Boffa Miskell ecologist Jamie Steer.

“Bioacoustic sound recording enables 24-hour-a-day monitoring without needing people on-site; a significant resource saver. Better still, we can identify calls to species-level”.

Boffa Miskell has trialled this technology and is now implementing it in relation to a bird monitoring project on the Kaipara Harbour Peninsula south of Dargaville. Boffa Miskell ecologists purpose-built the six bioacoustic units, weather-proofing them for the remote and exposed field situations.

Jamie says software, developed overseas to analyse recordings, saves many person-hours of real-time listening. Each species’ bird call has a unique digital ‘sound picture’ or sonograph pattern, which the software recognises. This has enabled Boffa Miskell to compile its own sonograph library for the identification of species in New Zealand.

“Field observations are clearly still important,” Jamie says. “However, bioacoustic technologies greatly enhance the thoroughness and accuracy of bird monitoring programmes. Similar technology is now in widespread use for bat monitoring and the use of these techniques is likely to be commonplace in future.”

Preliminary analysis of the Kaipara data is very encouraging. All species commonly seen by the field team have been recorded by the bioacoustic recorders, along with several previously unobserved or infrequently detected species.

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Bioacoustic software recognises distinctive sonograph 'bird pictures' when analysing sound recordings, as with silvereye (above) and morepork (below).



Holistic design at Long Bay

“What makes this place special and why would I want to live here?”

The answer to this question underpins the design of an urban centre that will be developed by Todd Property Group Ltd over the next 10-15 years at Long Bay on Auckland's North Shore. A structure plan for the development has recently been approved, and Boffa Miskell is responsible for completing the landscape developed design.

“Long Bay is the last remaining rural catchment in Auckland's metropolitan area and it provides an exciting opportunity to integrate ecological functionality with a strong landscape framework, all set within what will be an urban environment,” says Dave Slaven, Boffa Miskell senior ecologist. “That contributes to the quality of the environment and the sense of place for future residents.”

Of central importance to the ecological functioning will be the restoration of ‘connectivity’, linking existing native forest patches at the top of the catchment with others at the bottom end.

Where practicable, a vegetation framework in the urban open space network will provide habitat for native birds, lizards and fish, including the restoration of inanga spawning habitat in the lower catchment close to the future village centre.

Low impact design (LID) principles (see P4) will also be integrated with the landscape and ecology, by creating rain gardens and other natural water quality treatments within the streetscape and open space network.

▼ Wetlands designed to detain and filter stormwater, will also provide natural habitat and public open space integrated with the built environment (background).



Street environments have been designed to maximise their potential as places for people. In the ‘home zone’ residential streets people will have priority over cars and will be encouraged to use streets as public space. The usual allocations of separate space for transport, walking, cycling and infrastructure functions will be blurred and landscape elements used to enhance amenity and integrate built form with the outdoor networks.

“Integrated design like this enables multi-function solutions,” Dave says. “For instance, we worked with the stormwater engineers to ensure that each stormwater wetland provides for varied biological habitats, public access, recreation and education opportunities as well as for water quality treatment – all within an urban environment.

“These are holistic outcomes with economic as well as environmental benefits.”

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The long road to resource consent

“When a project runs as long as this, you’re looking for technical skills but you also become friends. It was more than a professional relationship and we still keep in touch.”

Ken Cowie, Holcim Capital Projects Manager, recalls the working relationship between Holcim and the Boffa Miskell team that assisted in gaining full resource consent for Holcim’s proposed cement plant at Weston near Oamaru.

Boffa Miskell was engaged in 2005 to provide planning advice and prepare the resource consent application, including the assessment of effects. In 2008, the 46 required resource consents were granted by the Waitaki District and Otago Regional Councils but the proposal went to the Environment Court after Holcim appealed some of the consent conditions and local opposition groups appealed the proposal. In August this year the Court upheld Holcim’s case.

“The land had been acquired and zoned for this use 25 years before so we were surprised at the complexity, costs and the length of time it took to obtain approval” Ken says.

“We felt comfortable about the technical issues like noise, traffic and dust and they were resolved before the Court hearing. In the end, it came down to the question of having an industrial plant in a rural environment – social impact and landscape issues – and Boffa Miskell assisted a lot with that.”

Boffa Miskell provided a wide range of skills to the project including planning advice, project management, landscape assessment, terrestrial ecology assessment, aquatic ecology assessment, visual simulations and the presentation of expert evidence at the council and Environment Court hearings.

Having gained full approval, with the operating consent conditions it had sought, Holcim is now updating detailed costing, factoring in the conditions accepted by the Environment Court and working to complete the feasibility study and business case. The project proposal will need to go through several more internal processes before a final decision is made.

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▲ Pegasus Golf Course with distant Southern Alps backdrop.

Championship golf at Pegasus

Two months after its opening in December this year, Pegasus Golf course will host the 2010 New Zealand Women’s Golf Open.

Boffa Miskell senior landscape architect, Phil Millar, says the course, designed in collaboration with Kristine Kerr, has been constructed over three years, alongside the development of Pegasus township, north of Christchurch. Boffa Miskell is providing master planning, ecological, landscape design and site works supervision services to Pegasus developers, Infinity Group/Multiplex.

The golf course development has included 98 adjacent house lots, 12 lakes, 6 hectares of wetlands, 7 kilometres of golf cart paths and 2,200 trees, as well as 17 hectares of greens and fairways.

“It’s been a long and meticulous construction process,” Phil reflects, “but worth it to see completed a top-class championship course worthy of the Womens’ Open”.

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



Photo-simulations prepared by Boffa Miskell helped, during the resource consent application process, to show what the proposed cement plant will look like.

Spatial planning

In response to increasing interest in spatial planning, Boffa Miskell senior landscape planner, Bruce McKenzie, wrote an article on the concept in the June edition of *Local Government* magazine.

Spatial planning involves the integrated planning of natural and built environments in a logical hierarchy of plans that can be implemented on the ground at a range of spatial scales from region-wide to site-based. Spatial plans are based on sound (GIS-based) spatial analysis of existing resources and future needs.

Bruce says GIS tools greatly aid the integrated approach inherent in spatial planning; recognising and working with the inter-connections between the different aspects of our physical, social and economic environments including such factors as infrastructure, ecological systems, green networks, employment and housing opportunities.

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▲ GIS tools can be used to analyse spatial data (top) and help people visualise spatial and built form proposals (bottom).

SCAPE 2010 Christchurch biennial of art in public space

Boffa Miskell senior landscape architect **William Field** has been appointed to a new curatorial group that will select artworks for SCAPE 2010 – the sixth biennial ‘art in public space’ event run by the Art & Industry Biennial Trust in Christchurch.



The Trust aims to engage people’s interest and involvement in art by locating permanent and temporary artworks in public spaces.

The curatorial group of three will select and work with artists to produce the public artworks for the September-to-November 2010 event. William, who has had a long-standing interest in public art, will bring his landscape design skills and knowledge of the Christchurch urban scene to the group.

Talking it through

Heritage landscapes

During this year’s Auckland Heritage Festival 09, Boffa Miskell senior landscape architect and newly-appointed Director: Design, **Rachel de Lambert**, spoke at the Auckland City Council’s regular ‘Lunchtime Learning’ and ‘Mayoral Conversation’ forums about the festival theme, ‘Living Heritage’. She gave her personal view of heritage landscape and described work Boffa Miskell has been undertaking with the council involving thematic mapping and the development of its heritage landscape policy framework.



Recognising the relevance of these topics to a wider architectural and urban design audience, the conveners of the Auckland Architecture Week then invited Rachel to give the same presentation at the opening night of their celebrations.

Scholarship to advance sustainable urban design

Over the 2009/2010 summer, a Lincoln University landscape architecture student, **Hannah Ayres**, will be investigating sustainability in urban design under a research scholarship co-sponsored by Boffa Miskell.

The scholarship is partially supported by the government under the ‘Jobs Summit’ scheme.

Hannah will investigate approaches to integrate sustainability into structure planning, after investigating relevant overseas best practice. She will work with Lincoln University lecturers and with Pene Burns, Boffa Miskell’s Sustainability Advisor.

“We have a good track record of incorporating sustainability principles into urban design and planning projects at various scales. We are keen to build on that, with Hannah’s input,” Pene says, “and collaborate with Lincoln University in advancing the practice of sustainable structure planning.”

Creatures of the mud

Dr Sharon De Luca, Boffa Miskell senior ecologist, spoke at the 2009 NZ Marine Sciences and Meteorological Societies Joint Conference, ‘Oceans and Climate’.



Drawing upon her ongoing work in estuarine environments, she talked about ‘Creatures of the Mud – Mangrove Forest in Tauranga and Auckland’, focussing on benthic (seafloor) invertebrate diversity within mangrove forests and about increasing demands for mangrove removal.

Urban oasis restored

Aucklanders are once again enjoying their much-cherished St Patrick's Square, which was reopened in October after extensive upgrading.

Boffa Miskell designed the upgrade and supervised the construction works, by JFC Limited, for Auckland City Council. The upgrade included a new terraced water feature, paving, seating, planting, lighting designed in collaboration with Lighting Design Partnership, and artworks, by Steve Woodward and Mary-Louise Browne – all designed to improve amenity and safety, while respecting the special character of the St Patrick's Cathedral.

John Potter, Boffa Miskell landscape architect, says the entire process from the preliminary consultation, through the design, resource consent and construction stages, has been one of partnership.

"We've been very fortunate with the project's approach to collaborative relationships with the St Patrick's parish, local businesses and residents, and users of the square. Because of their input, and Auckland City Council's facilitation, this feels very much a shared project.

"We set high quality standards on the finished works, as befits such an important public open space."

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For more about this project see *Boffa Miskell NEWS* 18 (P.8) and 21 (P.8) on www.boffamiskell.co.nz

The terraced water feature, lawns and trees provide a tranquil central city public space.



High quality natural stone is used throughout the square, including (pictured), Guilin limestone for low seating terraces, that contrast with the Jura limestone of the cascade water feature.

Boffa Miskell



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