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ARCHITECTURE THROUGH A  
LENS OF DECOLONISATION

By Ellie Tuckey

# *A Third Space*

ARCHITECTURE THROUGH A  
LENS OF DECOLONISATION

By Ellie Tuckey

A 120-point thesis submitted in partial  
fulfilment for the degree of Master of  
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*Note: All unreferenced images are produced by the author.*



## *Abstract*

In Aotearoa New Zealand our history of colonisation means that Western structures imbue all areas of our lives and the world in which we live is based upon Western ideologies. In its many states – buildings, space, process and theory – architecture holds an important role in society as a physical and abstract framework that structures the ways in which we live. Architects have the agency and power to represent identity in built form and this places responsibility on them to ensure that the values and worldviews of others are represented genuinely.

This thesis explores how architects (particularly Pākehā) can enable Third Space in the design process. Third Space is the culmination of a theoretical framework that examines decolonisation, architecture and identity, and design process. It is a figurative environment in which contributors from

different backgrounds can bring forth ideas, values and opinions to be meaningfully discussed and valued. A flexible strategy – informed by ‘a kind of Kaupapa Pākehā way’ and participatory action research methodologies – utilises immersive tools such as PC games, virtual and augmented realities to explore the catalysation of Third Space in three projects. The first two projects resulted in the development of two different PC games that aimed to aid the architect’s collaboration with Christchurch and Kiribati youth respectively. The lessons learnt from these two incubator projects were brought into the third project which explored decolonising education with Ngāti Toa rangatahi.

This research found that for meaningful discussion and negotiation to occur in this conceptual Third Space, there needs to be a balance of power and agency between

designers and community end-users. It found that high-quality relationships based on the concept of Third Space can be enabled through greater spatial understanding, something that can be supported by visuospatial languages such as computer games and immersive virtual and augmented reality experiences. This is represented in a process that was collaboratively developed and called A Mana ki te Mana Process.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini

*My strength is not mine alone, but the strength of many*

Mitra, thank you for being the best collaborator, co-conspirator and friend.

Rebecca Kiddle, thank you for your guidance and unwavering support.

Jershon, Kaleb, Camryn, Tayla, Bianca and the other rangatahi from Te Puna Mātauranga, thank you for your time, trust and generosity.

Amiria, Andrew and the team at FIELD, thank you for your insight, support and for taking a chance on us.

My friends and family, thank you for the support and encouragement over the years.

Those who provided support and guidance on collaborative work within the Masters Thesis Regulations, thank you.

CMIC, thank you for the technical help and general excitement about using this technology in an innovative way.

The spark which ignited this thesis started with a couple of questions:

What is decolonisation  
in relation to architecture?

How, as Pākehā, might I  
practice with it in the future?

Through previous work, conversations and collaborations, I came to realise it might not be so much about the physical architecture, but about architectural process. The conversations, experiences and work outlined in the following chapters is a brief insight into the journey that I've had the pleasure of undertaking for the last twelve months. A journey that I hope will continue well past this thesis.

A significant feature of this thesis is the collaborative nature between myself and fellow student, Mitra Homolja. As I'm writing this at the beginning of 2021 I can say, without a doubt, that the collaboration I have had the pleasure of sharing with Mitra has been a success. Though we share similar opinions on some aspects, Mitra and I have individual interests, approaches and reflections of our research and our collaborative efforts do not mean we have a homogeneous voice. As you will see in the following chapters, the collaborative practice has challenged my ideas, developed my critical thinking, and created a supportive environment in which I could thrive as an individual.

In light of this, I highly recommend reading 'a) Rangatahi Project' by Mitra Homolja.

Note: All content is my own unless stated otherwise.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION



The Māori conception of time has been characterized by terms such as cyclic, spiral and resonant. Certainly we are well aware of the notion that agricultural, hunting and gathering societies are more attuned to the rhythms of the tides and seasons as opposed to the Western focus on progress and development ...

Westerners think of their location in time as similar to a stream, backs turned to the past, poised in the present, facing the future, being carried relentlessly into the future, but never arriving. The Māori space-time construct can be thought of more like a constellation with the past and the people of the past always felt in the present, like the constellations of the sky to the voyager: enmeshing, surrounding, always before you, always behind, forming patterns that can be interpreted in various ways.

*(McKay, 2004, p. 8)*

## 1.1 *The Context*

In Aotearoa New Zealand Western structures imbue all areas of our lives. Due to colonisation, the world in which we live is based upon Western ideologies. Conventional understanding of such concepts as space, time, knowledge and power structure our society and the ways in which we live. Systems of things like ownership, research and history are constructed upon values that come from a Western worldview. This very thesis lies within a Western understanding of knowledge and system of language and values. The concept of decolonisation gives space to question the assumptions we have of how our world works and considers the ongoing effects that the enforcement of colonial structures has on people – Māori and Pākehā alike.

In its many states – buildings, space, process and theory – architecture holds an important role in society as a physical and abstract framework that structures the ways in which we live. In Western thought, architecture is commonly understood as a visual representation of identity. Any built, or spatial outcome is produced by a process that is conventionally rooted in Western ideology and systems of knowledge and values. Put differently, the space that is created as a response to a need, an issue or brief reflects the values held by those who were involved in the decision-making and design. The lens of decolonial theory highlights the need for, and unrealised benefits of, examining conventional architectural processes and the ideological structures in which they exist.

# 1.2 Location of Research & Intentions

Conventional architectural design processes employed in public architecture tend to lack meaningful engagement with the end-user community, particularly with non-dominant cultures. In the Aotearoa New Zealand context, Māori voices have been systematically marginalised in euro-centric processes. A recent example that questions these processes are the Te Aranga Design Principles. Core to the successful use of

these principles are “high-quality, durable relationships” (*Te Aranga Principles: Description*, n.d.) without which the principles can become a ‘tick-box exercise’ and result in architecture that speaks of extractive relationships and tokenism.

This research aims to re-evaluate community engagement through a decolonial lens and focusses on the formation of relationships.

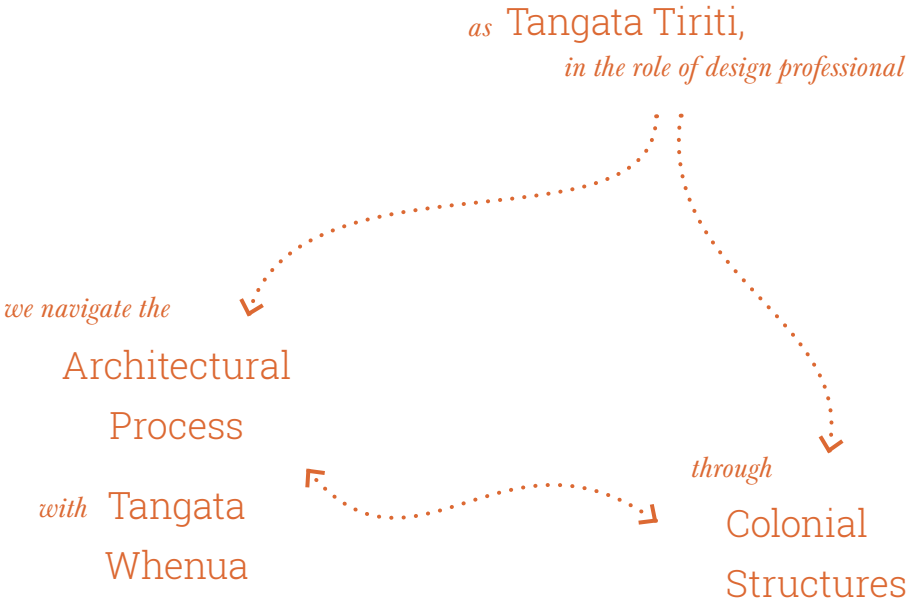
### 1.3 Research Questions

This thesis asks:

How can design processes, explored through the lens of decolonisation, enable meaningful engagement with communities?

To ask this question, my own position as a Pākehā undertaking academic research must be considered. Therefore, we must also ask:

How can Pākehā engage with tangata whenua in research and design without reinforcing colonial structures?





1.4 Approach

POSITIONALITY & REFLEXIVITY

A large part of this research is exploring the power dynamics that occur in, and are formed by, the architectural process, recognising how they affect the architectural journey and outcomes. Similarly, participatory action research (which will be discussed further in the next chapter) is imbued with levels of privilege and power that affect the process and findings.

Reflexivity<sup>1</sup> – which is the ongoing examination and critical reflection of a person’s own position and the effect on the research process<sup>2</sup> – is a research approach that recognises the power dynamics between the researcher(s) and the subject(s). In ‘Decolonisation Through Reconciliation’, Pākehā researcher Diana Amundsen asserts, “the involvement of Pākehā academics in

decolonisation “requires self-reflexivity” (Langdon, 2013, p. 385) through recognition of privilege, personal change and growth, as well as unlearning of old knowledge designed to subjugate and exploit “the other”” (2018, p. 149). Part of my positionality is being an able-bodied, Pākehā woman in my mid-20s, who has had easy access to state education and has followed a privileged pathway to tertiary study. Like many others, I am conscious that I have blind spots and aware that there are many more that I am not conscious of<sup>3</sup>. This thesis and the research which informs it is necessarily very personal. Therefore, before I look at decolonising the design process, I have to first look at myself through this lens, making the research process as much about architectural process as it is about my personal identity journey and discovering how I want to practice architecture in the future.

Throughout the thesis the impact of my positionality will be reflected upon and will affect the research methods following. In the consideration of decolonisation in the context of research, Amundsen suggests that “decolonisation involves efforts by Pākehā and Māori to reflectively work together to shape current and future cultural identities, politics and economics. This process may be painful as it necessarily traverses self-critique, self-negation and self-rediscovery ...”

(2018, p. 148). Similarly, in ‘Decolonisation is not a Metaphor’ Tuck and Yang discuss how “directly and indirectly benefitting from the erasure and assimilation of Indigenous peoples is a difficult reality for settlers to accept. The weight of this reality is uncomfortable” (2012, p. 9). Put simply, there is a necessary self-reflection of identity and heritage that must occur throughout the research process, regardless of the discomfort it may cause.

Born and raised in Te Whanganui-a-Tara / Wellington, I know some of my Pākehā genealogy. The small amount I know of my paternal forebears is that they were a mix of Scottish and English who came to New Zealand in the late 1800s riding on the wave of European settlement. On my maternal side, my grandfather and his family emigrated from England when he was a small child. My grandmother’s forebears were a similar mix of English and Scottish who came to New Zealand in the 1840s and 1850s and several had active roles on the colonial government side of the New Zealand Wars. At the time, the imperialist rationale of colonisation as the ‘civilising’ of ‘primitive’ or ‘savage’ indigenous peoples was generally not considered problematic by European settlers. It was not until the mid-1900s that this thinking was reassessed and



1 Reflexivity is the “process of becoming self-aware. Researchers make regular efforts to consider their own thoughts and actions in light of different contexts. Reflexivity, then, is a researcher’s ongoing critique and critical reflection of his or her own biases and assumptions and how these have influenced all stages of the research process” (Mills et al., 2010).

2 Positionality is “the stance or positioning of the researcher in relation to the social and political context of the study—the community, the organization or the participant group. The position adopted by a researcher affects every phase of the research process, from the way the question or problem is initially constructed, designed and conducted to how others are invited to participate, the ways in which knowledge is constructed and acted on and, finally, the ways in which outcomes are disseminated and published” (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014b).

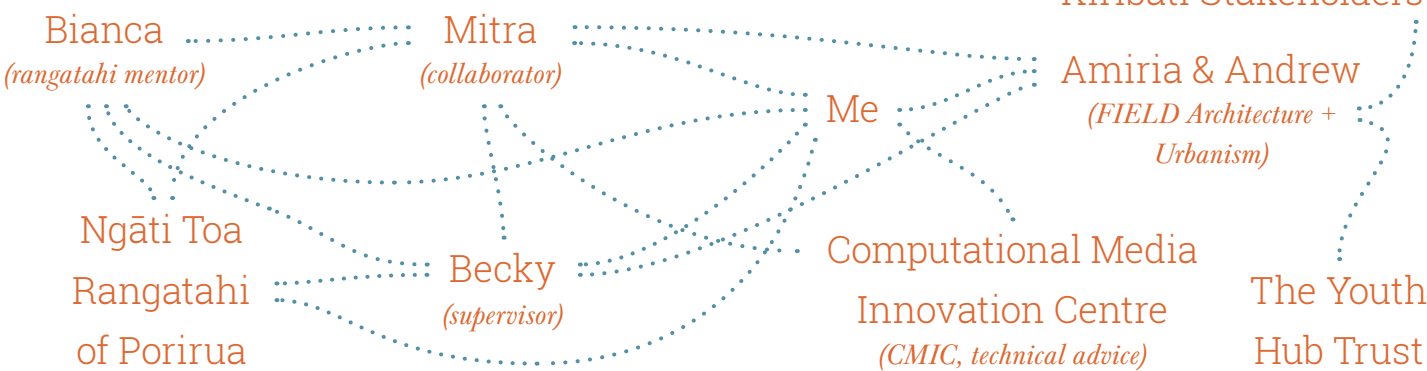
3 Pākehā former Rhodes Scholar, Max Harris, discusses some of his blind spots and ‘white defensiveness’ in ‘Racism and White Defensiveness in Aotearoa: A Pākehā Perspective’, 2018.

these ideas still exist in our society (Thomas, 2020). Knowing this part of my family history helps me understand how part of my identity and culture is interwoven with the colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand and in that context, entwined with Māori history. It is brought home to me how ‘monocultural’ I am: from my Pākehā upbringing to the settler frameworks that I operate in and reinforce. Yet I am connected to Māori through my forebear’s role (in the settlement of Aotearoa) and my own role (in the maintenance of settler frameworks which guide our lives) in the colonisation of Aotearoa. It also leaves me with a sense of discomfort.

Pākehā academic, Amanda Thomas, speaks of a similar heritage to my own and, like Amundsen and Tuck and Yang, discusses the importance of discomfort in the context of identity and decolonisation. Thomas describes how discomfort “can be bound up with shame, guilt and tension. Or discomfort can arise when Pākehā cultural dominance is challenged” (2020, pp. 43–44). Thomas suggests these feelings should be embraced and used in the reflection on Pākehā identity, “encouraging us to be humble and learn” (2020, p. 44). In a discussion on more harmful reactions<sup>4</sup> to the discomfort which can be caused by decolonial concepts, Tuck and Yang examine how settlers ‘move to

innocence’ through relieving these feelings of guilt, discomfort or responsibility without “giving up land or power or privilege”, benefitting only the settler (2012, p. 10). Through both perspectives, it is evident that the identification and analysis of these feelings in reflexive practice is only the first step, and it is the actions taken accordingly which are of equal, if not more, importance. It is with this in mind that it was clear that this research, while working from within Euro-centric academic structure (university), needed to involve real projects with real problems and most importantly, real people which this work could directly benefit.

4 In ‘Decolonisation is not a Metaphor’ Tuck and Yang outline settler ‘moves to innocence’ via a “framework of excuses, distractions, and diversions from decolonization” which aims to allow people to “be more impatient with each other, less likely to accept gestures and half-steps, and more willing to press for acts which unsettle innocence” (2012, p. 10). Essentially, the framework offers an interesting analysis of ‘what not to do’ in the approach of decolonial thinking and practice.



## COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH & METHODS

As mentioned above, it was important for this thesis to involve live projects which people can engage with via the research explorations and outcomes. The relationships between stakeholders within these engagements is where the scope of this thesis sits, and where themes of power, agency and decolonisation in design process will be explored. In that vein, a collaborative approach to the research was considered vital for two core reasons which I will address briefly here.

From a practical perspective, collaboration with other researchers, academics and skilled people allows a more comprehensive study. The collaboration between myself and my colleague and friend, Mitra Homolja, means we have the ability to create a far more well-

↓ *Relationships.*

rounded research project which explores, in depth, multiple methods and theoretical standpoints. Mitra’s shared interest in working with people and her personal investment in the project means that our discussions about theory, practical application, outcomes (and so on), are robust in a way that is distinct to the discussions I have with my peers, friends, and even supervisor. Given the time frame of a Master of Architecture thesis, this would not be achievable to the same extent individually. It is important to note that the research is collaborative to the extent which is currently permissible under the VUW Masters Thesis Regulations. In this context, a supplementary aim of this work is to provide a formal point of reference from which future architectural theses can challenge the current structures within tertiary education. This brings us to the next, more theoretical, point.

The concept that research, and therefore knowledge, can be individually created or accredited is rooted in Western epistemology (Denzin et al., 2014; Jones, 2020b; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). In ‘Decolonising Methodologies’ Māori academic Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) discusses how “the individual, as the basic social unit from which other social organizations and social relations form, is another system of ideas which needs to be understood as part of the West’s cultural

We no longer believe in the myth of the designer as solitary genius. Despite the anachronistic survival of the “Starchitect” phenomenon, it is now generally understood that design is a collaborative process involving many participants, including, in various mixes, professionals, educators, students, clients, users and the general public ...

Beyond this change of perspective lies a radical set of deep transformations that are now taking place: what is at stake is not just a quantitative shift of emphasis from singular to plural authorship, but a comprehensive philosophical, social and political reappraisal of the roles performed by different players in the process of design.

*(Fournier, 2017, p. 2)*

archive” (p. 103). From this understanding stems the conventionally-held value of the individual above the collective that is exemplified in Western structures of research and education. In contrast, Te Ao Māori is rooted in “the values of collectivity” (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 167) which Tuhiwai Smith rationalises:

To return to the story of Tane-nui-a-rangi and the three kinds of knowledge, these gifts were all essential to the survival and well-being of the group. Because knowledge was conceived from the beginning as being highly specialized, it had to be distributed among the members of the group. Individuals with specialist skills held them on behalf of the group. They were also dependent on other members of the group, with other types of knowledge, to carry out the various interdependent activities. (2012, p. 287).

Pākehā academic and professor at Te Puna Wānanga<sup>5</sup>, Alison Jones, sums up the epistemological contrast succinctly stating how “Māori collectivism foregrounds the individual in that each individual is actively included. Pākehā individualism, on the other hand, effaces the individual, who must keep up or be left behind” (2020b). Thus a more collaborative approach must break from

the conventional “individualistic practice of research” (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 21) and begin to understand the collaborators as experts in their own right (Till, 2005) who collectively ‘own’ the resulting research.

For the process to be sound, it must allow for complexity and openness:

Collaborative interdisciplinary projects are necessarily characterised by an epistemological and ontological shift away from the confidence of ‘knowing’ to a more de-centred knowledge creation system that hinges on ‘unknowing’ (Vasudevan, 2011) and unsettling assumptions. This perspective prioritises chance and mess as characteristics of emergent practice. (Pahl & Facer, 2017, p. 222).

Similar to academic research, the concept of uncertainty as a core component in architectural process challenges the conventional idea of the architect as an expert whose practise is as solid and stable as their buildings (Hill, 2006; Jenkins, 2010; Till, 1998). It is this valuing of ‘unknowing’ that this thesis aims to explore simultaneously in the research and architectural process.

<sup>5</sup> The School of Māori and Indigenous Education at the University of Auckland.

THESIS STRUCTURE

As the scope of this research is limited to process and tools, the theory behind architectural process and the research process have become tightly interwoven. I think this is partly because, the initial stages of an architectural process (in which this research lies) are effectively a research project undertaken by the architect and stakeholders. For this reason, you will find that the research methodology and the design methods researched overlap frequently, which I think is to the benefit of both.

Nō Piritana Nui ōku tīpuna

*My ancestors are from Great Britain*

He Pākehā ahau

*I am Pākehā*

Ko Kaukau te maunga e rū nei taku ngākau

*Kaukau is the mountain that speaks to my heart*

Ko Raukawa te moana e mahea nai aku māharahara

*Raukawa is the sea that alleviates my worries*

Nō Te Whanganui-a-tara ahau

*I am from Wellington*

E noho ana au ki Island Bay

*I live in Island Bay*

Ko Gordon tōku whānau

*Gordon is my family*

Ko Tuckey tōku whānau

*Tuckey is my family*

Ko Ellie tōku ingoa

*My name is Ellie*

He tangata tiriti au

*I am a person of the Treaty*

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa

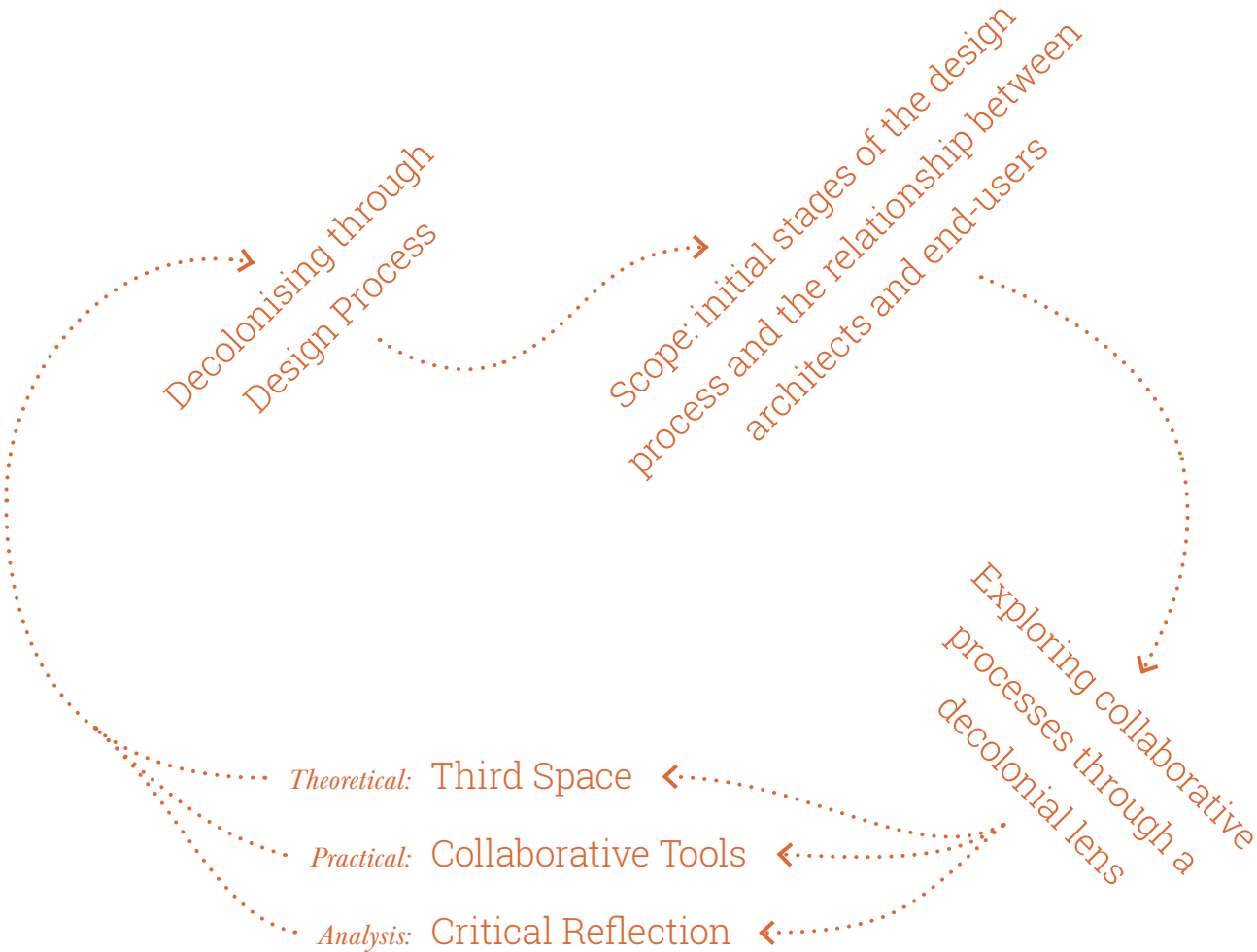
*Greetings, greetings, greetings to you all*





## 2. A FLEXIBLE STRATEGY





Following on from the Approach section which outlined the need for flexibility, reflexivity, and collaboration, this chapter discusses several methods and tools used to explore how to catalyse Third Space, which is discussed further in Chapter 4. Before that, I will briefly outline the values that guide this strategy and contextualise them within conventional research methodologies.

## 2.1 Methodological Influences

### A KIND OF ‘KAUPAPA PĀKEHĀ WAY’

Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s book, ‘Decolonising Methodologies’, is a seminal text in the discussion of research and Māori in Aotearoa. From the perspective of ‘the colonised’, Tuhiwai Smith argues that research of Indigenous peoples is “inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism” (2012, p. 30) and directly addresses

‘collaborative research,’ describing it as a Westernised label which co-opts indigenous values, attitudes and practices within a Western model (2012, p. 214). This draws to mind the Common Ground model, briefly discussed in Chapter 4, in which similarities between Māori and Pākehā worldviews are sought to enable collaboration. Though the model is thought to enable a balance of power and agency, there is risk of Māori knowledge

and values being subsumed into the socially dominant Pākehā structures. Accordingly, the problem of neo-colonial practices (in research and architecture) lies with the hegemonic group. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) suggest that the lens of decolonisation flips the ‘Pākehā researching Te Ao Māori’ equation, making Te Ao Pākehā the subject of critique and inquiry (p. 7). They go on to discuss being an “allied other” exploring decolonisation concepts in research “from within the Western academy and its positivist epistemologies” using autoethnographic and participatory methodologies:

We write as privileged Westerners. At the same time, we seek to be “allied others”<sup>6</sup> (Kaomea, 2004, p. 32; Mutua & Swadener, 2004, p. 4), fellow travellers of sorts, antipositivists, friendly insiders who wish to deconstruct from within the Western academy and its positivist epistemologies. We endorse a critical epistemology that contests notions of objectivity and neutrality. We value autoethnographic, insider, participatory, collaborative methodologies (Fine et al., 2003). These are narrative, performative methodologies — research practices that are reflexively consequential, ethical, critical, respectful, and

humble. These practices require that scholars live with the consequences of their research actions. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 8).

The methodologies and approaches Denzin and Lincoln identify allow the researcher to position themselves as allied, whilst recognising that they remain within western research traditions. In this vein, Pākehā anthropologist, Rachael Fabish (2014), develops a kind of ‘Kaupapa Pākehā way’ (as opposed to a Kaupapa Māori methodology<sup>7</sup>) as a means to clearly position her work as non-Māori but nevertheless in partnership with Māori (p. 37). Drawing on a combination of Participatory Action Research, ‘interactive interviewing’ and auto-ethnography, Fabish contends that the collaborative approach “involves a continual ‘learning to be affected’” (2014, p. 18).

6 An ‘allied other’ is described by Jen Margaret as “people who support those more directly affected by a particular justice issue” (2013, p. 2).

7 Kaupapa Māori research is, “research by, with and for Māori [that] is about regaining control over Māori knowledge and Māori resources” (Cram qtd. in Fabish, 2014, p. 25). It is research that is undertaken in the validity and legitimacy of the Māori language, knowledge and culture (Smith, 2012). Smith argues there is a duality that makes up Kaupapa Māori research. Firstly, it has the “ability to challenge the structures and societal context of unequal power relations, and to continue to make appropriate space for the validity of our own [Māori] ideas and ways of being” (Smith, 2012, p. 19). Secondly, through the act of challenging, it is able to self-develop.

## PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a widely used methodology in architectural research which is likely down to its flexibility and room for creativity. At its core, PAR emphasises collaboration between researchers and communities in the production of knowledge that is directly relevant to the community. The intention is for the produced knowledge to contribute to academic, professional and community realms with an underlying agenda of social change (‘Participatory Action Research’, 2014; Fabish, 2014). PAR is undertaken via the combination of research and action in a cyclic or spiralling manner, allowing each component to affect the other repeatedly. The process and the values that inform it,

encourages researchers to ignore discipline-bound methodologies and

to be flexible. They try multiple data collection methods and instruments, develop unconventional methods and apply unconventional criteria for determining the appropriateness of those methods. (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014a, p. 6).

Methods for PAR are chosen or developed based on the needs of participants and “lays emphasis on authenticity rather than on the scientific validity of the information” (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014a, p. 6). By placing value on the experiential knowledge of participants, PAR allows the researcher to become one of the participants — as opposed to an outside researcher — encouraging meaningful engagements via methods such as creative activities and informal interviews (conversations). Conversely (and unlike traditional field research), community members are placed in the role of active

022 researchers, elevated beyond passive sources of information. Participatory Action Research also emphasises the importance of the relationship between the researcher and the participants in a comparable manner to the relationship between architect and end-user. ‘The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research’ contends that the researchers, like architects, may find it difficult to relinquish the role of experts and may end up consciously or subconsciously imposing their own ideas. To counter these tendencies, all research [and architecture] stakeholders must actively engage in self-reflection. They consciously need to examine the sources of social power in their lives and how these sources could end up biasing their research [architecture]. (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014a, p. 5).

Participatory Action Research is rooted in the concept of making space for conversation,

with the aim of enabling people to transform the way they understand the world. Through the interactions, engagement and conversations between participants (researchers and community members alike), knowledge and tools might be developed that can aid social change.

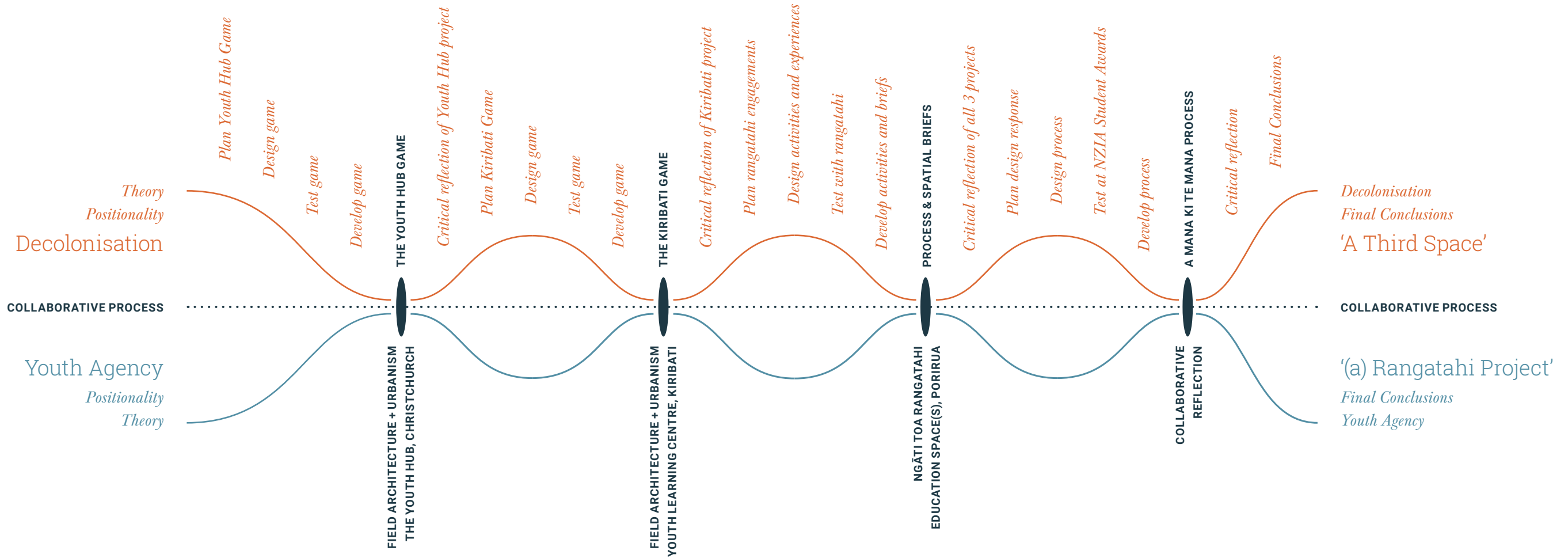
### THE ROLE OF DESIGN

In this research, the role of design lies in the iterative design of architectural processes and tools. This approach is known as ‘design-led’ and opens the research process to an element of ‘unknowing’ and flexibility. A design-led approach with a participatory mindset has the ability to strengthen people’s relationship to each other and to place. This becomes particularly relevant when thinking about what benefits the research can have on the people and community groups involved.

## 2.2 *The Strategy*

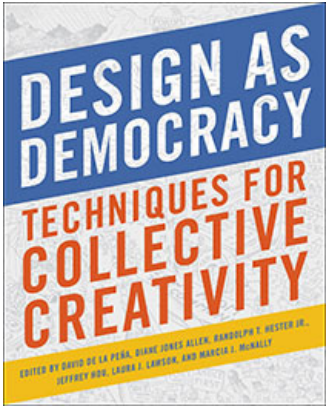
Based upon the methodological influences above, a flexible, interpretive methodology will be employed to guide my exploration into the modes of communication, methods and tools which can help architects and end-users develop high-quality, durable relationships through the lens of decolonisation. Alongside my collaborator and colleague, Mitra Homolja, we will undertake a multiplicitous combination of action and theory synthesising

the relatively unstructured nature of research through design, with the alternate perspective of theoretical research. A series of collaborative engagements within three projects will be undertaken, each time the methods and tools will be evaluated and refined (individually and with project stakeholders), informing the next iteration. The collective body of work will inform a final research outcome.

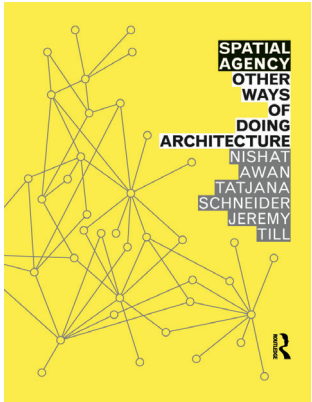


*Restricted by the Victoria University Master's Thesis Regulations, our collaboration has been measured in time. Up to 15% of my time spent on this research*

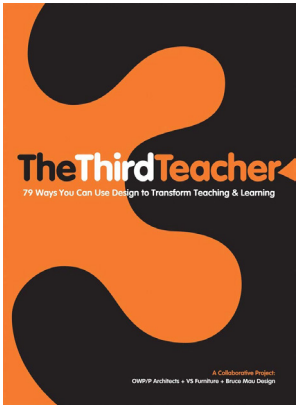
*(including reading, writing, engaging with people, planning, drawing, designing etc.) has been in collaboration with Mitra.*



← FIG 01. Design as Democracy.



← FIG 02. Spatial Agency.



← FIG 03. The Third Teacher.

## 2.3 Introducing the Methods & Tools: the Development of Extended Realities

This brief section will give an outline of the methods and tools Mitra and I plan on utilising in our collaborations and the reasons for these choices. The methods employed all have the same fundamental core – they are values-based, and they aim to catalyse conversations that will simultaneously help build trust and allow the participants to feel comfortable to share their perspectives and values from their worldview.

Existing methods will be drawn from participatory methodologies and texts including some listed to the right. A selection of methods outlined in these texts will be adapted and developed for the design context and the mixed reality tools.

- × Design As Democracy: Techniques for Collective Creativity, by David de la Peña et. al. (2017)
- × Engaging with Māori - it's about the Who, the What's, Why's and How to's? by Atawhai Tibble (2019)
- × Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture, by Nishat Awan et. al. (2011)
- × The Third Teacher: 79 Ways You Can Use Design to Transform Teaching & Learning, by OWP/P Cannon Design Inc., et al. (2014)





↑ FIG 04. A collaborative engagement.

In public architecture and urban design projects, participatory processes between designers and citizens are the norm, yet often the methods and tools employed are time consuming and feedback can often be limited to surface-level, partially-informed opinions.



↑ A conventional form of communication.

Traditional architectural communication methods require an elite understanding of two-dimensional mark making which symbolises three-dimensional built form in plans, sections and elevations. Such communication requires professional knowledge of this language to understand comprehensively what the space might feel like, look like and how it might interact with the surrounding environment – such a prerequisite can often result in a communication gap between architects and stakeholders.



↑ The HoloLens 2 augmented reality headset.

Extended realities offer a more flexible, intuitive and immersive toolkit that can reduce (if not remove) this prerequisite, allowing any layperson to understand a space's qualities without needing expert professional knowledge. Immediately, this allows a balance of power and agency in the architect-stakeholder relationship, allowing constructive discussion of complex design issues. It also actively engages them in the creation of space, recognising their expertise and empowering them with the agency to make decisions visually.



↑ The Oculus Rift X virtual reality headset.

As Pallasmaa (2014) states, perspectival space leaves us as outside observers, whereas multi-perspectival and atmospheric space, and peripheral vision, enclose and enfold us in their embrace. (p. 243).

If this collaborative 'embrace' is achieved, I believe stakeholder engagement will be of a higher quality, allowing more meaningful and complex design discussions to occur.

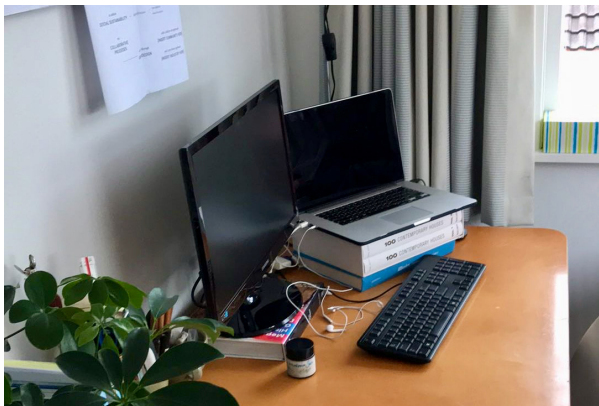
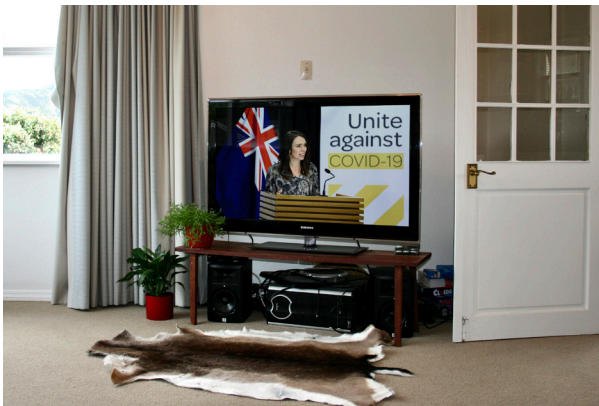
Further down the line, this different form of engagement has the opportunity to enhance feelings of meaningful involvement and connection with the design process - later translating to the built outcomes.





## 3. COLLABORATION AND COVID-19





Before we get stuck into the practical explorations, I want to touch on a key event in 2020 that affected this research quite considerably: the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the start of 2020, when Mitra and I were beginning to plan this research, the highly infectious virus, COVID-19, was only just reaching our news reports and still felt like a world away from New Zealand. Uni started back in March and Mitra and I were starting to talk to community groups that might be interested in collaborating with us whilst dreaming up ideas for community engagements that involved sharing food and VR headsets. By mid-March Aotearoa had a handful of cases and restrictions were being placed on our borders. On the 23rd of March we were told to go home and prepare for a full lockdown in two days' time – it really put a spanner in the works.

← *The 'new normal' at home.*

After spending a week or so getting used to this 'new normal' and jumping in front of the telly for the daily 1pm update from the Prime Minister, I brought my attention back to this research project. I was disappointed that our dreams of in-person engagements were taking such a hit and I became fairly anxious about the direction this thesis might have to take. Community groups that we had begun talking to either notified us politely that they had other priorities (understandably), or we simply never heard back from them. Advice to “find the silver lining” and “seek out opportunities this affords” felt hollow when no community groups wanted to collaborate with us and neither Mitra nor I were interested in creating a fictional community to undertake our research hypothetically.

During this time, I researched methods of engaging with people online. Software

like Zoom<sup>8</sup> provides a video conferencing platform that can be used anywhere in the world provided there is good internet connection. Zoom has a free option and is relatively accessible for computer-savvy people. Online platforms such as Social Pinpoint and EngagementIQ have been built specifically for community engagement and incorporate multiple methods of engagement including forums, mapping, and surveys. These platforms require a paid subscription that lends itself to larger scale urban projects. Other softwares that incorporate the use of VR and AR in the facilitation of collaboration were Spatial and Arkio. By far the most exciting platform I found was U\_CODE. U\_CODE, or Urban Collective Design Environment, is an EU-funded project which designs and develops new kinds of co-design platforms that enable urban designers, architects, and developers to co-design and communicate their projects with the larger public. Started in 2019,

<sup>8</sup> Zoom use skyrocketed from approximately 10 million daily meeting participants in December 2019 to more than 200 million daily meeting participants in 2020 (Yuan, 2020).

↗ FIG 05. Social Pinpoint. Image redacted.

↗ FIG 06. Engagement IQ. Image redacted.

→ FIG 07. U\_CODE. Image redacted.



it appears this developing system covers both front-end and back-end information, educating citizens about design decisions through interactive tools, and collecting data about potential projects, translating both into usable design intelligence. While these tools appear to be successful in gathering quantitative information from a wide range of participants, they didn't seem to capture the core aspect of collaboration that Mitra and I wanted to address. That is, we wanted a tool that could communicate space on an immersive level that is unparalleled by static images. A tool that could help catalyse discussions about values and space.

While I was frantically trying to figure out how this thesis was going to progress, our supervisor, Becky, turned to the social media power of Facebook and posted that she had a couple of thesis students who were interested in collaboration and VR. To our relief, Amiria Kiddle, an architect from FIELD Architecture + Urbanism, indicated interest and video chats with Amiria and Andrew began. Within the context of a Master of Architecture thesis and the 12-month timeline, collaboration with people outside the university is known to be difficult. It takes time to make contact, time to discuss possibilities, negotiate possible outcomes and eventually wait for them to make a decision

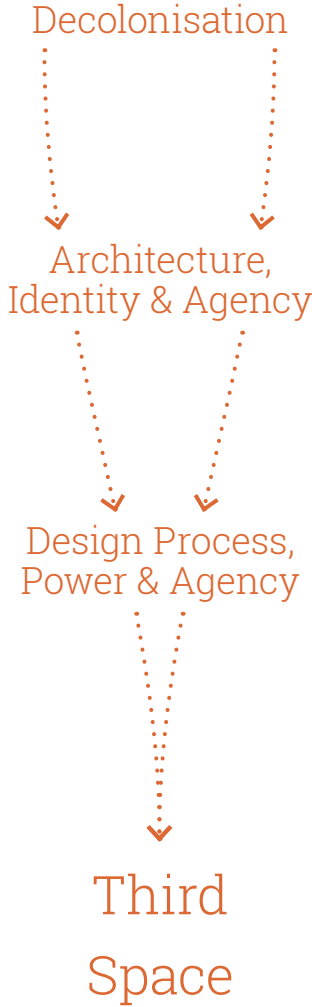
on whether it's worth collaborating. Often this occurs multiple times over a period of weeks, or even months, before a relationship is formed which can be unsettling to students and supervisors aware of the limited timeframe. Knowing that we wanted to undertake multiple projects, initial discussions with other community groups continued through to about May. In addition, approval is needed from the university's Human Ethics Committee, requiring an extensive application and time allowed for review and amendments. Mitra and I started the detailed application in late April, submitted it mid-May and in early July it was approved.

By the end of May 2020, we were back on campus and it was looking like in-person engagements might be a possibility in the future. In the meantime, we had one project underway with FIELD and were exploring how to collaborate with people remotely (FIELD are based in Christchurch). In hindsight, those who told us that a global pandemic "might create a great challenge" for our research were right. The tools and skills we developed via the collaboration with FIELD were successful enough to lead to a second project, and heavily influenced the third project's in-person engagements that included shared kai and mixed reality headsets.





## 4. A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



The methodological approach outlined in the previous section is developed from the contextual topics from which the research questions are drawn: decolonisation, architecture and identity, and design process. In this section, each contextual area will be explored from a theoretical stance to provide an overview of the existing literature and place this research within it. The terms ‘decolonisation’ and ‘decolonial’ have numerous and varying definitions. Even limited to the context of Aotearoa, the question, “what is decolonisation?” receives varying answers. Definitions from Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā will be discussed and explored in relation to architecture. Weaving into the discussion of decolonisation is the concept that architecture is inherently

political. It acts as a symbol of identity, thus making “whose identity?” a key question. The architectural process, which eventually leads to built architecture, is also politically imbued. Those who have power and agency in the process are heard and respected, and their identity is reflected in the built outcome of the process. This discussion will then narrow down to conventional design processes which will be considered in terms of their cultural origins and evolutions in the Aotearoa context. Finally, the theoretical contexts, now woven together and refined, will form a critical framework around the concept of ‘Third Space’ from which the practical engagements explored later in this thesis will be evaluated.



## 4.1 Decolonisation

Decolonial, post-colonial, neo-colonial – what do they all mean? Given the substantial number and variety of opinions about this, it is fair to suggest that there is no one definition and that any current definition is in a constant state of evolution. Therefore, for the purpose of this section, I will explore the meaning of ‘decolonisation’ according to Indigenous authors (with emphasis on authors from Aotearoa) and how people, particularly Pākehā, might interact with the concept. The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘decolonisation’ as “the withdrawal from its former colonies of a colonial power; the acquisition of political or economic independence by such colonies” (n.d.). This “‘colony ups and leaves’ kind of decolonisation that the dictionaries know about” is one definition that people find “unsettling in the New Zealand context” (Mercier, 2020, p. 10). It seems a very limited definition of

the term when the effects of colonisation reach far beyond economic and political realms. Perhaps this is why terms such as ‘emancipatory’, ‘power’ and ‘Indigenous agency’ are commonly found in works that discuss decolonisation (Denzin et al., 2014; Kiddle et al., 2020; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012), as they evoke a liberative concept that is far more holistic than the dictionary definition above. In this vein, Indian scholar Chandra Talpade Mohanty describes decolonisation broadly in ‘Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity’ (2003), as the “active withdrawal of consent and resistance to structures of psychic and social domination” (p. 7) through which social structures and individual and group identities are transformed. Pōkā Laenui, a Hawaiian lawyer and scholar, offers a slightly more specific definition, stating:

True decolonisation is more than simply replacing indigenous or previously colonized people into the positions held by colonizers. Decolonization includes the re-evaluation of the political, social, economic and judicial structures themselves, and the development, if appropriate, of new structures which can hold and house the values and aspirations of the colonized people. (2000, p. 155).

It seems reasonable to suggest that this ‘re-evaluation’ which Laenui talks about starts with the recognition that accepted structures and systems are predominantly based on Western ideologies. Through recognition, steps can be made towards the transformation of the inherited structures and systems in which we all live. The contemporary effects of colonialism continue to structure our lives and imbue our social relations (Summerfield, 2015). This discussion is becoming increasingly prominent in Aotearoa, and the responsibility for action arguably belongs to everyone, Māori and Pākehā alike. Ocean Ripeka Mercier emphasises this stating; “while others, like most Pākehā, may enjoy

the comfort of the colonial framework, even the least impacted of us may have a sense of unease, a sense that something is not quite right ... Where inequity exists in a society, all suffer, not just the oppressed” (Mercier, 2020, p. 10). Put more bluntly, “colonisation sucks for everyone” (Kiddle, 2020, p. 30).

So how might we engage with and work towards decolonisation? Mohanty argues that the practice of decolonisation is centred around “self-reflective practice in the transformation of the self, re-conceptualisations of identity, and political mobilisation” (2003, p. 8). Like many other writers that discuss decolonisation in

Decolonisation involves critical self-reflection and outward observation; it seeks to embody pre-colonial, Indigenous and non-colonial paradigms; it unearths and addresses embedded colonial thinking.

Decolonisation, then, takes individual and collaborative action to root out the weeds of colonisation and provide space for Indigenous ways of knowing and being – and more besides. All together, these actions can lead to radical personal and societal change.

(Mercier, 2020, p. 11)

Aotearoa, Mohanty suggests that any active interaction with the concept starts with individuals looking inward (Fabish, 2014; Margaret, 2013; Mercier, 2020; Summerfield, 2015; Thomas, 2020). I suggest that this is a journey of self-discovery and in that sense, is unique to each person.

Elaborating on the positionality and reflexivity section in Chapter 1, my own journey began with a critical observation of my identity and the values and beliefs that I take as truth. In doing this, I can begin to make space within my knowledge for multiple ways of knowing. As Mercier states, “very basically, decolonisation involves rethinking and then action” (2020, p. 11). It is this process, and the way architects might draw it into their practice, which this research explores. However, rushing into it might do more harm than good to the people I’m undertaking this research with. Tuck and Yang (2012) warn that decolonisation is not a metaphor for other theories of social change, and the “easy absorption, adoption, and transposing of decolonisation is yet another form of settler appropriation” (p. 3). This caution is something I keep in mind and relates to the argument that decolonisation in Aotearoa must be led by Māori (Thomas, 2020; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). That is not to say that as Pākehā, it is best to sit back and relax.

Thomas suggests,

Pākehā and other tauwiwi should take our cue from Māori in the work of decolonisation – that means Māori set the agenda and are leaders in discussions about decolonisation. As Pākehā work towards decolonisation within our communities, it’s important to constantly check back in on what Māori communities and leaders are saying and actually asking for – without expecting hand-holding or back-patting. (2020, p. 42).

It is this relationship between Māori, Pākehā and tauwiwi which Thomas talks about, and the making of space for Indigenous ways of knowing, which has the potential to transform how architects engage with communities in Aotearoa. The relationship between Māori and Pākehā (underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi) is the responsibility of both Māori and Pākehā and many scholars emphasise the role of Pākehā who, as the majority group, have the power and agency to enact change. The lens of decolonial theory, placed over the scope of this research, highlights the dominance of Western knowledge and ideology in architectural processes and suggests the need for greater scrutiny of power and agency dynamics that occur within conventional architectural processes.

*Ocean Ripeka Mercier offers an interesting analogy for the decolonisation efforts in Aotearoa:*

Although not discussed in great detail here, the widespread paid and volunteer efforts to ecologically decolonise Aotearoa of rats, possums, stoats, old man’s beard and other noxious exotic species may provide a helpful touchstone for considering the decolonisation of human systems.

In this metaphor, we restore taonga like the bush. We cannot reverse all past harms – resurrect the trees that were felled, or bring back to life the species that were driven to extinction – but we can remove the destructive colonial imports so that the endemic plants and animals can thrive again.

We do not seek to banish all European species from Aotearoa (you can still grow tulips and roses in your garden, for instance, or keep a carefully monitored pet cat!), but we want to ensure that those that remain do so in balance, without damaging te taiao or Indigenous ecosystems.

*(Mercier, 2020, p. 28)*



## 4.2 Architecture, Identity & Agency

Architecture is inherently a reflection of identity and therefore we would expect to see evidence of Aotearoa’s ‘bi-culturalism’ in our built environment. Yet many scholars and architects argue that Te Ao Māori is inadequately represented or attributed in architecture (Allan & Smith, 2015; Kake, 2020; Kiddle, 2019; McKay, 2004). As discussed in the previous section, this lack of representation and attribution can be related to an imbalance of power and agency in the systems and processes that create architecture. Therefore, this section will delve deeper into the political role of architecture and the power dynamics that permeate the design process. Allan and Smith argue that rather than a clear expression of ‘bi-culturalism’, we typically see design “default to a narrow number of archetypes and symbols typically

expressed in standard forms and surface patterning” (Allan & Smith, 2015, p. 50). Drawing on New Zealand architect and academic Bill McKay<sup>9</sup>, they go on to suggest that the lack of equal cultural representation in the built environment suggests that either, bi-cultural exchange in New Zealand is far from equal, or designers are not yet sufficiently conversant with the appropriate design modes and practices necessary to effect meaningful cultural exchange. (Allan & Smith, 2015, p. 50).

Why is this important to consider? Architectural theorist, Kim Dovey, deliberates ‘habitus’, a term widely discussed by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu which considers architecture a form of knowledge (2002, p. 268). Dovey succinctly defines Bourdieu’s concept of habitus as “a way of knowing the world, a set of divisions of space and time, of people and things, which structure social practice” (2002, p. 268). Put simply, habitus is the notion that architecture is a language that communicates the identity and social practice of people in that place. The built environment, or habitus, directs how we use or ‘be’ in space. Habitus silently communicates who should feel comfortable and welcome and who should feel like they belong. It is knowledge that “is not cognitively understood but rather

internalised and embodied” (Dovey, 2002, p. 268), thus seeming natural, rather than socially constructed. How do you objectively re-evaluate something that is so internalised, so natural to you that you consider it a given, if you even cognitively consider it at all? An architect, or spatial designer, has their own habitus knowledge which inherently informs how they design. Therefore the design of space, who designs it and how it is

renegotiation of identity, the question ‘who is involved?’ is incredibly important. A growing body of literature discusses the redistribution of power and agency in the architectural process and the idea that collaboration<sup>10</sup> can be an empowering, rather than a diminishing experience for users and architects alike (Allan & Smith, 2015; Awan et al., 2011; Kake, 2020; Kiddle, 2020; Till, 2009). Dovey recognises that, while habitus is limited as a



designed, is important if we are to challenge the hegemonic structure in which we live – one that has been socially constructed but which we perceive as natural. Through a re-evaluation of who is involved in the design of the built environment and how it is designed, I propose we can make a small step towards decolonisation.

If architecture is complicit in the

<sup>9</sup> It is interesting to note that while Allan and Smith draw on Bill McKay when discussing ‘bi-culturalism’ in architecture, in 2012 McKay stated: “we think that concept of bi-culturalism is where we’re at but it’ll be really interesting to see where we get to after that” (qtd. in Harvey, 2012, p. 36), suggesting that ‘bi-culturalism’ might not be the ultimate aim.

<sup>10</sup> In the extensive breadth of writing that discusses community engagement, the terms ‘participatory,’ ‘collaborative’ and ‘codesign’ tend to describe a similar process, although ‘participatory’ more often refers to the participation movement which was popular in Europe in the 1970s. In this work these terms will be loosely interchangeable in the sense that they describe a process which includes multiple people and perspectives.

*Till argues that the relationship can achieve transformative engagement and knowledge validation by being able and open ...*

to move between the world of expert and user, with one set of knowledge and experience informing the other ... [which] will only happen if the architect first recognises and then respects the knowledge of the user ... The architect (as citizen-expert) needs to listen to, draw out and be transformed by the knowledge of the user (as expert-citizen). The process becomes two-way and expansive ... [and] presents an opportunity to reinvigorate it through challenging the very limits and constraints of specialist knowledge.

*(Till, 2005, pp. 33-34)*

theory, “it is useful in understanding the deep conservatism of the field of architecture and its deep complicity with practices of power” (2002, p. 269). New Zealand architectural designer, Jade Kake, argues for a “sharing of power” by Pākehā and tauiwi practitioners to help enable Māori designers “make culturally-based and community-based architecture mainstream ... [and have it be] led by us, Māori/Indigenous designers”

(2020). Whilst Kake discusses relationships between design professionals, other scholars extend the examination of power dynamics to the relationship between designer and end-user community group. Much of the current literature on collaborative practice argues that transformative collaboration between the architect and the future user can provide the user with agency, therefore power, over the results of the process.

History shows that collaborative practice isn’t always deemed successful and writing to date indicates that the rapid rise and eclipse of wider social participation in the architectural process in the 1970s was due to the lack of meaningful power distribution and manifested as “token, bringing a degree of worthiness to the architectural process without really transforming it” (Blundell Jones et al., 2005, p. xiii). British architect and academic, Jeremy Till, argues that in the 1970s movement “the conventional architect is seen as the possessor of irresponsible power” (1998, p. 71) and the movement “resolved to strip experts of their authority and reduce them to being technical facilitators ... unable to re-imagine their knowledge from the perspective of the user; their knowledge is not used transformatively” (2005, p. 31). This indicates that even if the architect relinquishes power in some form, the participant does not automatically gain, and neither are transformed nor empowered. In ‘Positions on Emancipation: Architecture Between Aesthetics and Politics’, Anne-Julchen Bernhardt suggests for collaborative process to be successful there must be “shared values by all the actors implicated in the process. The group has to work in the same direction with the shared agenda” (2018, p. 162). A shared agenda might arise from a deeper mutual understanding of the participants’

worldviews, something that Till proposes can be achieved “in recognising the power and validity of ordinary conversation as a starting point for the participatory process” (2005, p. 37). It is this starting point which builds a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

Through the critical analysis of previous ideas of participatory design, it emerges that for meaningful engagement, discussion and work to occur, there must be a greater consideration of power dynamics, habitus and a validation of alternate worldviews. This statement is nuanced, however to put it succinctly (and perhaps idealistically), a collaborative process in which the agency or power between the parties is balanced, provides opportunity for greater knowledge and empowerment for those involved, leading to greater community investment in the outcomes. Thus, through the conscious making of time and space for Indigenous ideologies, a more transformative and meaningful<sup>11</sup> engagement can occur which can better support a collaborative, decolonial re-evaluation of structures and architecture.

<sup>11</sup> Meaningful is a vague term but is used in this context to suggest an interaction that ensures community members hold an equal balance of power and agency, that ultimately leads to a stronger connection to the built outcome.

### 4.3 *Design Process, Power & Agency*

Drawing together the ideas around decolonisation, power and agency, this next section will discuss their application to the initial stages of the architectural process. Scholars discuss Western origins of the profession which can be linked to a keen sense of individualism that affects power dynamics throughout the architectural process and, as an effect of colonisation, continues to permeate the profession today. Ongoing shifts in societal values and developing technologies have caused the profession – like all professions – to adapt, thus transforming the role of the architect. This section will briefly outline contemporary design process in Aotearoa and discuss the evolving role of the architect. The role of the architect has historically implied a singular expert whose practice is based on intellectual mastery and

practical skill. Johnathan Hill argues that “the practice of architects is expected to be as solid and reassuring as their buildings” (2006, p. 74), referencing his earlier statement that “architecture is expected to be solid, stable and reassuring – physically, socially and psychologically” (2006, p. 2). It is hard to say if either the profession or the public founded this idea, however it is accepted that the architectural profession is instrumental in maintaining it. Hill discusses the evolution of the architect from the master craftsman to the professional “... associated with intellectual rather than manual labour” (2006, p. 33). He suggests that the idea of the professional architect as a singular hero stems from the notion that “intellectual labour is associated with individual production” and “the illusion of sole authorship is important to architects because of the assumption that art is the product of individual creativity” (Hill, 2006, p. 50). This can be seen in architects of the twentieth century such as Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier and later Zaha Hadid, who are considered ‘heroes’ for their singular vision. Hill describes this power dynamic as being based on the dualism of architect and user, each defining itself in relation to the other:

In architecture the architect is assumed to be the superior term and the user the inferior one. Architects have two main strategies to maintain

this hierarchy. The first is to assume that a building need not be occupied for it to be recognised as architecture, the second is to attribute to the user forms of behaviour acceptable to the architect. (1998, p.18).

This indicates that higher agency and power is held by the architect through a stable practice, maintained by the architecture profession via the controlled agency and even the exclusion of the user in the design process. In the same vein, Till (1998, 2005) suggests the exclusion of the user from the design process is put down to the assumed inferiority of the layperson in the intellectual undertaking of design. The conventional idea of the architect as the expert, who employs a niche visual and verbal language for lived space, imposes a hierarchy from the beginning thus, the concept of a collaborative process brings an uncontrollable element into the ‘authoritarian’ role of the architect. From this angle, the idea of a committee is a watering down of design values. The notion of the unknown and uncontrollable destabilises the normative role of the architect and consequently the certainty of the architectural output.

Whilst this might give some context to the origins of conventional architectural practice in Aotearoa, one of the questions

that this thesis asks is how is collaborative practice evolving in Aotearoa and how does this relate to the role of Pākehā architects supporting decolonisation? As of 2017, the New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA) and Ngā Aho (the national network of Māori design professionals) signed the covenant Te Kawenata o Rata, outlining a collaborative relationship between Ngā Aho and NZIA “in the spirit of partnership under the mana of the Treaty of Waitangi” (Ngā Aho & New Zealand Institute of Architects, 2017). Kept deliberately simple, it formalises a space for mātauranga Māori in the architectural profession. Though this is a great step, similar structures show that there is still a great need for exploring and developing how the values manifest in practice. For example, Allan and Smith argue that although the Resource Management Act (RMA) of 1991 “recognises and provides for the values of both Māori and Pākehā ... there are at least two major impediments” (2015, p. 50). They contend that Māori values and knowledge systems “remain poorly understood and amongst Pākehā there appears to be a fear of cultural transgression, which can be crippling for design” (Allan & Smith, 2015, p. 50). It appears that this particular framework for bi-cultural exchange is in place, however the meaningful exchanges which are required to create a truly equal, democratic outcome

*Legal structures are beginning to evolve in Aotearoa to better reflect Māori worldviews and values. Referring to the Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement) Act 2017, Daniel Irving (qtd. in Kake & Paul, 2018b), states:*

New Zealand is first in the world to give personhood to a river. There is value in that. This didn’t exist anywhere else in the world. An indigenous group who fought for a particular set of rights, who said that ‘you need to understand that we don’t look at the landscape the same way that you [The Crown] look at the landscape’. They argued their case in a very particular way and they convincingly made the argument that this was the right thing to do. They changed the law.

*Are our design processes - shaped by these legal and societal structures - evolving at the same rate?*

have yet to become the norm - including in the architecture industry. This is supported by Māori architect and academic, Rau Hoskins, who stated in 2012 that,

there's a reluctance, I sense, on behalf of a lot of Pākehā architects, to engage in Māori architectural principles because they feel uncomfortable from a lack of knowledge or they feel they might be criticised for appropriating.

And I think that's an important conversation to have... (qtd. in Harvey, 2012, p. 35).

Though this was five years before the formalisation of Te Kawenata o Rata, I think it is fair to suggest that there continues to be a hesitance from Pākehā architects to actively engage with decolonisation out of fear of cultural blundering. There are, of course, conceptual ‘spaces’ for these discussions and

engagements to happen in architecture that are developing in the otherwise westernised structure of the architectural industry. That is not to say that they have only recently come to existence, but rather that they are becoming increasingly prominent. Of note are Kaupapa Māori design processes and the Te Aranga Design Principles. Ocean Ripeka Mercier describes Kaupapa Māori as:

one of the most important decolonising actions in Aotearoa to date. First established in the field of education, it has since become widely used in other disciplines as a critical exploration and expression of Māori identity. Kaupapa Māori is work that is performed by Māori, about Māori and for Māori. It seeks transformative outcomes for whānau, hapū and iwi. (2020, p. 20).

Whilst Kaupapa Māori design processes are argued to be undertaken by Māori only (Kake, 2020; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012), a set of design principles was developed by Māori designers and tangata whenua to provide “an enabling strategic foundation to adopt for design engagement with iwi/hapū” (*Te Aranga Principles: Description*, n.d.). The Te Aranga Design Principals were a response to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol published in 2005 and have increasingly been integrated into local government policies and architectural practices (Kake & Paul,

It comes down to “what is your personal experience of the world?” ... My aunt, for example, views buildings in a really different way to how I view them; she absolutely embodies them and views them with deep spiritual qualities which relate to how the whānau has done things of the history of the landscape. It’s an entirely different way to the way I see it.

(Yates *qtd. in Harvey, 2012, p. 32*)

2018a, p. 9). In ‘Our Aotearoa: Te Tiriti o Waitangi and equity in architecture’, Kake and Whaanga-Schollum assert that the principles and values-based methodology were “launchpads for the design professions to begin seriously and tangibly engaging with mana whenua and mātauranga Māori” (2020). The conceptual ‘space’ has been made however, in 2020 Māori architectural graduate and Ngā Aho representative, Elisabeta Heta, stressed that,

they are often disrespected and treated as a tick-box exercise ... and approached in an inauthentic manner where project teams are failing to engage in genuine consultation with the people who hold mana over the land they are seeking to work in. (*qtd. in West, 2020*).

Seeing as the use of the principles “is predicated on the development of high-quality durable relationships being developed between iwi/hapū, cultural and design professionals and local and central government” (*Te Aranga Principles: Description*, n.d.) Heta’s observation suggests there is a disconnect between the methodology of the principles and the methods architects are using in practice. In this context, I think Rau Hoskin’s 2012 statement becomes highly relevant. He indicated that he was,

trying to take off the architect's edifice

hat and step back to reading the broader cultural landscape ... so, my focus at the moment is to try and take the conversation beyond architecture and into that wider landscape and involve other players in the mix. (Hoskins in Harvey, 2012, pp. 33–34).

Though he was referring to himself, the idea he addresses talks about a broadening of the architect’s role, one that encompasses far more than built form and that must include collaboration and conversation with others in the ‘broader cultural landscape’, something I think is not yet fully valued or intrinsic in conventional architectural process. As the traditional holders of power in the design process, it is the role of the architect to firstly make adequate ‘space’ for this collaboration and conversation, and secondly to ensure that all parties are equally able to contribute meaningfully and in detail to the project and decision making.

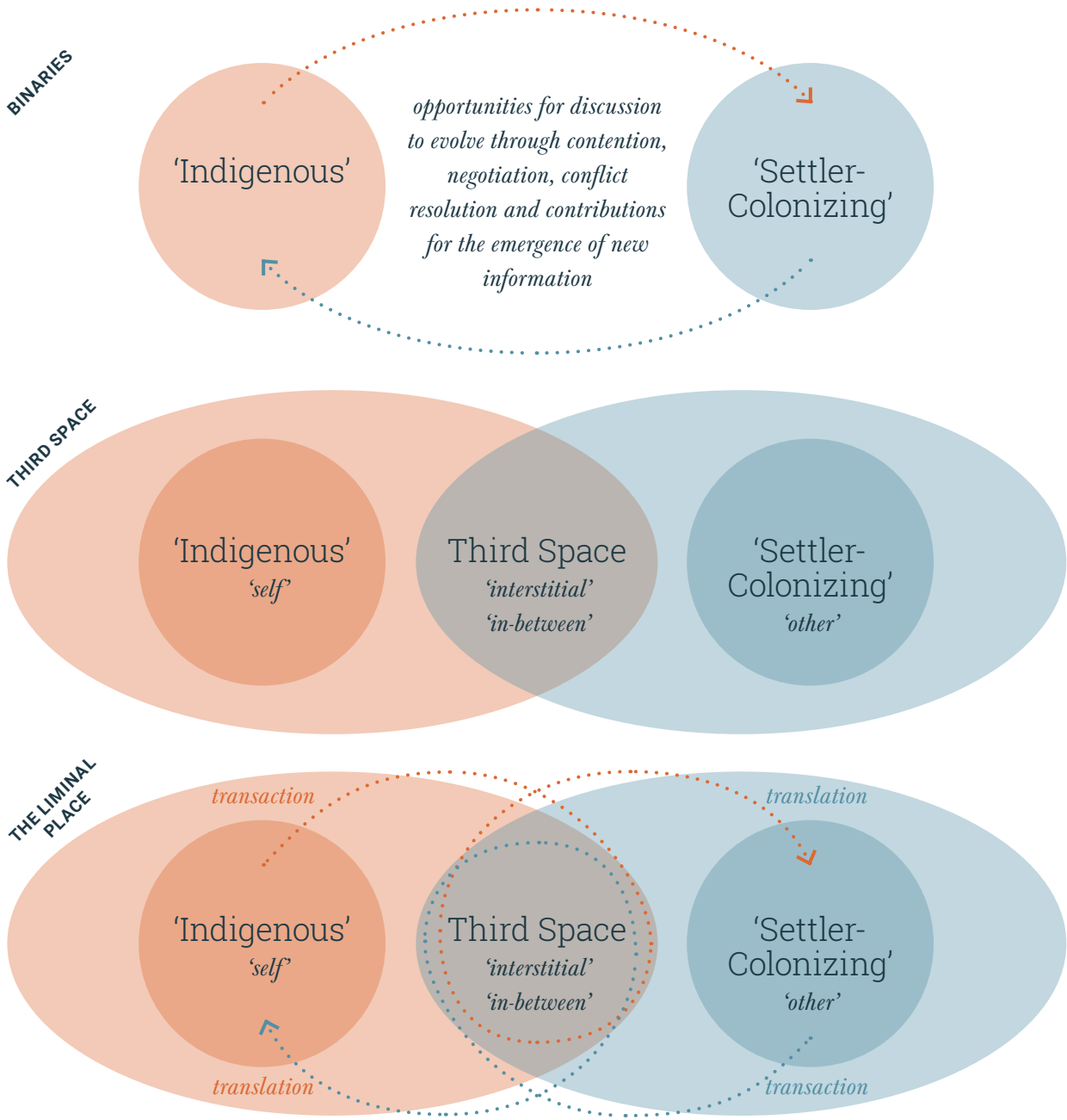


# 4.4 Third Space

Weaving together the theoretical contexts of decolonisation, identity, power and agency, and thinking about where these might sit in the design process, this section will outline a theoretical start to a methodology based on the concept of Third Space. Different to ‘Third Place’ (Oldenburg, 1989), the term ‘Third Space’ is referred to by several theorists active in the decolonial area (Allan & Smith, 2014; Mercier, 2012; Mossman, 2018; Royal, 1998). Indigenous Australian architect and academic, Michael Mossman, builds upon earlier concepts of Third Space formed by post-colonial theorist Homi Bhabha and urban theorist Edward Soja. Drawing on the two scholars, Mossman argues that the Third Space zone affords binary oppositions to “reclaim capacity, relinquish aspects of power, negotiate perspectives that may overlap and critically exchange imaginations beyond the ways

of the epistemological and ontological norms” (2018, p. 205). Put simply, “it is used to facilitate agency for communication purposes and unbalances [existing] power dynamics” (Mossman, 2018, p. 202). In the New Zealand context, Allan and Smith further explore the concept of ‘Third Space’ through the connection with the Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa ‘Model of Partnership - Two Peoples Development’ first discussed by Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal. The model presents three houses and advocates for, the creation of discrete spaces in which the cultures, one represented as Māori (the Tikanga Māori house), and the other represented by the Crown (the Tikanga Pākehā house), can naturally evolve in their own way. It also sets forth the conditions and principles in which two discrete houses can interact with one another to give rise

→ FIG 08. Third Space according to Michael Mossman.

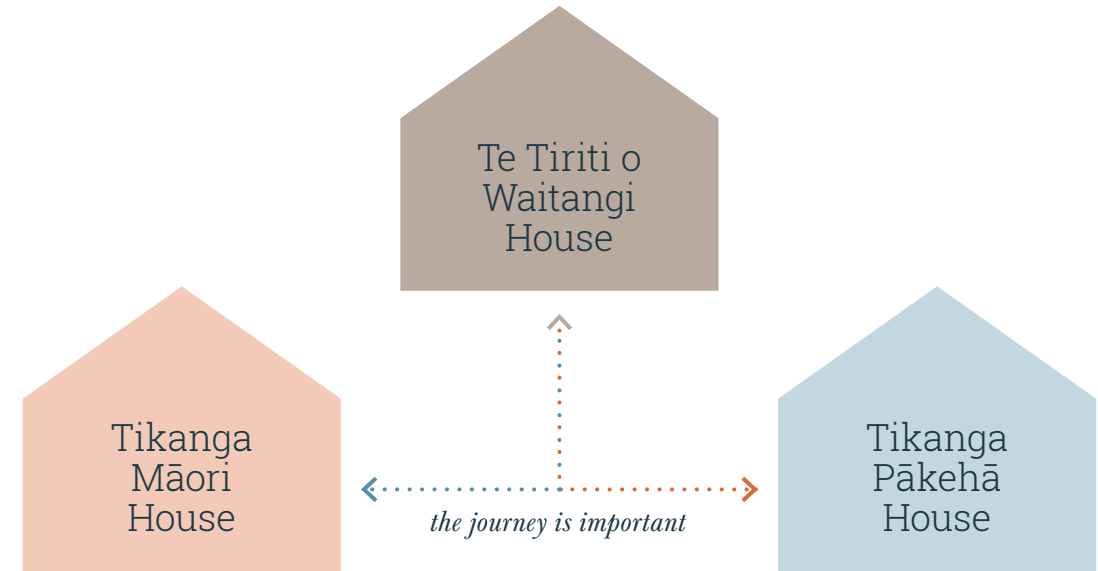


to the “Treaty of Waitangi House.” (Royal, 1998, p. 10). It’s this third conceptual ‘house’ which is built upon by Allan and Smith in ‘Research at the Interface: Bi-cultural studio in New Zealand, a case study’. They present a protocol designed to support interactions in bi-cultural partnerships, aiming to “establish the rights and values of both cultures and create a “third space”: an environment where both cultures feel free and safe to experiment and challenge the status quo” (2014, p. 147). In a later text, Allan and Smith explain how a conceptual ‘third space’ aims to “operate ‘between cultures’” and “encourage experimentation and innovation while leaving the worldviews, knowledge bases and mental spaces of each culture intact” (2015, p. 51). Though the pictorial models indicate strong binaries, the reality is arguably far more

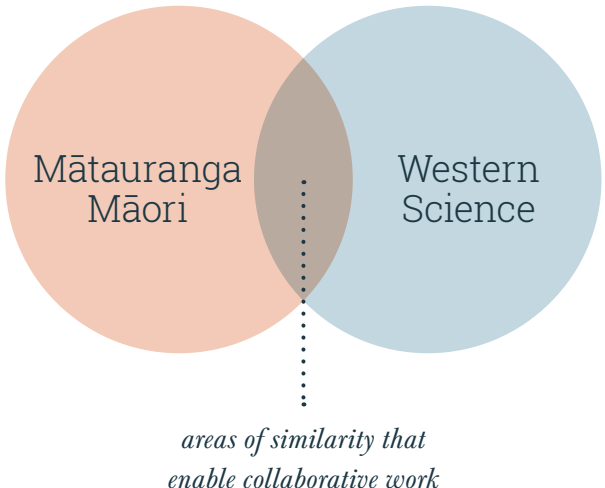
nuanced and blurrier. However, this can be problematic in itself as the ‘blurriness’ can often be a subsuming of one knowledge system into the socially dominant structure of the other. The Third Space overlap referred to in Mossman’s diagram references the Common Ground<sup>12</sup> model whereby each binary finds similarities in knowledge and practice enable them to work together. The ‘liminal space’ that Mossman refers to in the

third diagram, expresses the more nuanced, blurry journey to negotiating that Third Space. When drawing on the previous section about the formation of power dynamics in processes, this initial process of negotiation and subsequent co-creation of Third Space

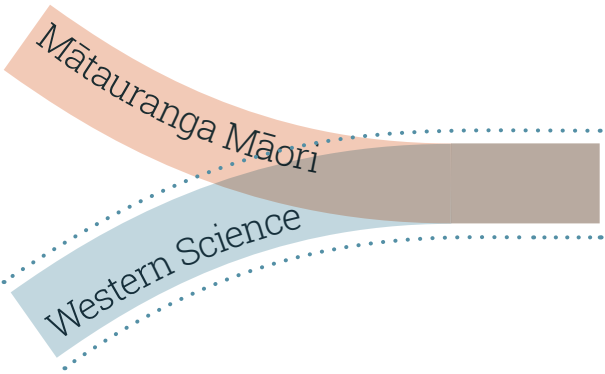
12 Common Ground model (Roberts 1996; Barnhardt and Kawagley 1997) referred to by Mercier.



↑ FIG 09. The Treaty of Waitangi House model.



↑ FIG 10. The Common Ground model.



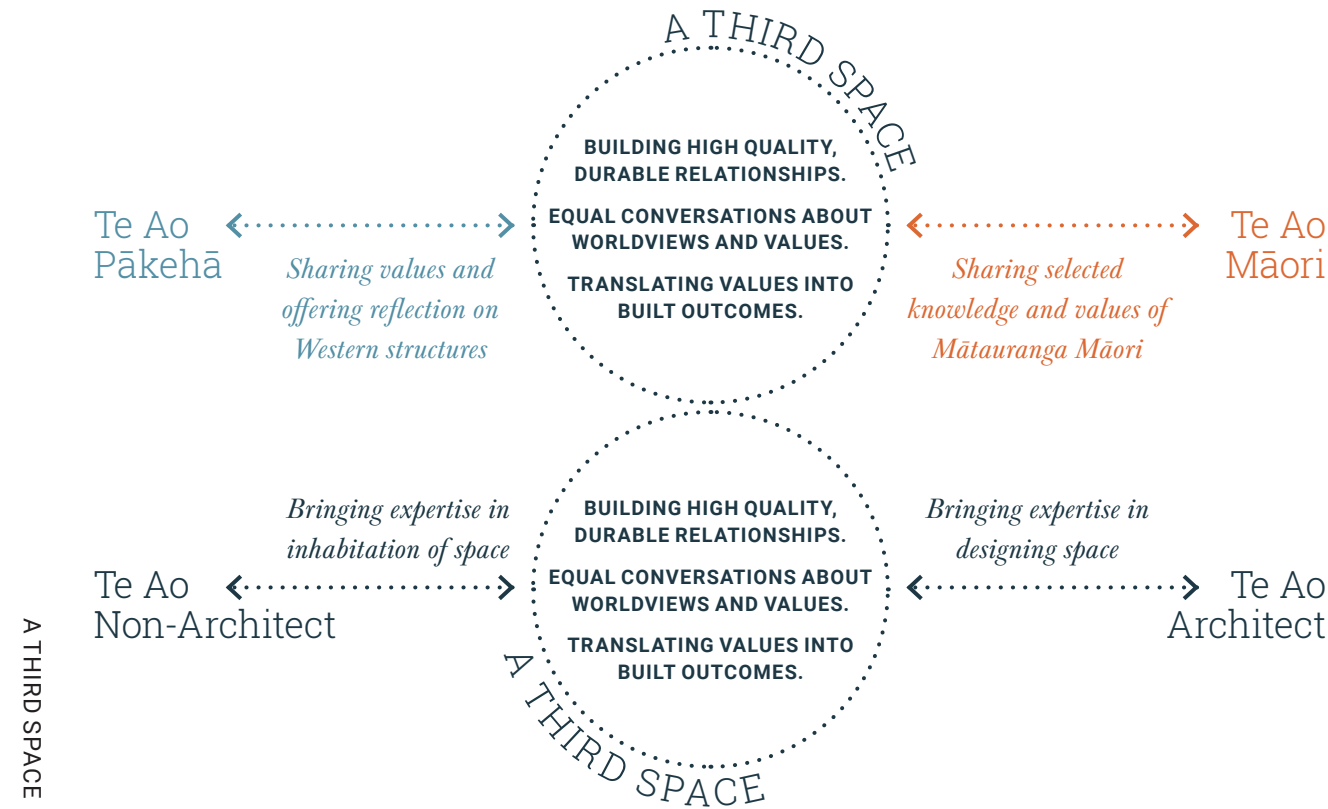
↑ FIG 11. Convergence or Confluence/Tributaries model. Encourages collaborators to reflect on whether the two knowledge systems contribute evenly and the benefits shared. Is one knowledge system made tributary to another?



058 appears vitally important and this ‘overlap’ approach is argued to assume a balance of power, of equal weight and mana, whereby the binaries find equal common ground, when it may be in fact “imposing a Western world view and values upon all” (Pickerill qtd. in Denton, 2016, p. 99). Similarly, the diagram of the three ‘Treaty houses’ seems to assume balance and, like the Convergence or Confluence/Tributaries model<sup>13</sup>, there is

risk of one ‘stream’ being dominant over the other, making it a tributary to the dominant cultural paradigms and conventions. Unlike Mossman’s diagram, the Tikanga Māori House and the Tikanga Pākehā House remain firmly separate and the journey of

13 Convergence model (Barnhardt, 2008), or Confluence/Tributaries model (Mercier et al, 2008).



getting to a negotiated Third Space is more clearly defined in a visual sense. It is this journey, I think, that is the catalyst of a Third Space from which the “high-quality durable relationships” which predicate the Te Aranga Principles can be developed.

The following chapters will explore modes of communication, methods and new design tools that might help architects catalyse a negotiated Third Space, and as a result, enable meaningful, transformative collaboration with communities in Aotearoa. To help evaluate the practical explorations that will be undertaken, a framework of sorts will start with this set of questions:

Where does the power and the agency lie?

- × Who is funding the engagement?
- × Whose physical space are we in?
- × Whose cultural space are we in?
- × Who is in leadership roles?

Are we, as designers, affording meaningful, open discussions?

- × What Western, colonial structures are at play?
- × Are we bringing in preconceived/limiting ideas in our capacity as the ‘expert architect’?
- × Who is leading the conversations?
- × Have people been able to discuss their personal values?
- × Have people been able to discuss their wider cultural values?
- × Were there ideas/comments that came up that I had not thought about that or that would be formed within a worldview other than my own?

Is this going to afford a durable relationship that is of value to all collaborators?

- × Is there a sharing of skills/knowledge?
- × Have people gained something, or been empowered?
- × What will the effect be on the architectural process and built outcomes?
- × Who will be involved?
- × Are the collaborators invested somehow?
- × Will they have ongoing, meaningful engagement in the process?

Create a space that  
you would go to  
escape the world  
for a while...

Instructions:

1. Use the arrow keys to  
move and the mouse  
to look around your  
environment.
2. Explore the space!  
Click the buttons below  
to see the different  
options and look around  
to see the effects.

CEILING 2

WINDOW 4

WALL 6

FLOOR 3

# 5. THE YOUTH HUB GAME





↑ FIG 12. The organisations involved.

# 5.1 Context

In April 2020 we had our first video call with Andrew and Amiria from FIELD Studio of Architecture + Urbanism. FIELD are a Christchurch-based collective who place a strong emphasis on collaboration with communities and believe in work that contributes positively to society – an outlook that aligned with the topics Mitra and I wanted to explore. This first meeting established that Amiria and Andrew were keen to investigate methods of engagement, focussing on a couple of key aspects:

1. Community engagement (particularly in-person workshops) takes time. Can this be sped up whilst retaining the quality of interaction?
2. ... and/or can we change the perceived value of in-depth community engagements?

These questions were being considered in the context of a developing project: The Youth Hub Ōtautahi, a “collective of co-located services and facilities, along with transitional housing, based in the heart of central Christchurch” (Te Hurihanga ō Rangatahi The Youth Hub).

The range of community groups involved in this project is complex, yet are all involved for one core purpose: to support the healthy development of youth from ages 10 to 25 years. Thus, in order to design such a space, FIELD understood the need to develop a comprehensive understanding of the needs and desires of rangatahi (youth).

FIELD had already undertaken extensive engagement via co-design workshops and interviews with groups involved and rangatahi across Christchurch. However, they were aware of some blindspots or limitations of their existing processes:

- × Christchurch has a population of over 140,000 youth aged 10 to 25 years<sup>14</sup>
- × Many of the services provided by the Youth Hub focus on highly personal matters, which rangatahi may not want to discuss at a workshop
- × Workshops tend to attract a certain type of person. That is, the ability to share thoughts and values in a public space often requires a level of confidence and outspokenness. Depending on how the workshop is run, some voices may be heard louder over others.

So how could Mitra and I contribute to FIELD's ongoing engagements with Christchurch rangatahi?

---

<sup>14</sup> Statistics New Zealand states that at the 2018 census, 39.6% of the Christchurch City population was aged between 10 and 24 years. The total population of Christchurch City at the time was 369,006 people (*Christchurch City*, 2018).

We're always trying to  
improve our practice and  
improve our reach to young  
people, because it has been  
hard to access.

– *Andrew*  
(*Just & Kiddle*, 2020)

The great thing about the  
collaboration [with Mitra and  
Ellie] has been the potential  
to get a lot more young people  
involved in the project ... we're  
all really excited about  
that possibility.

– *Amiria*  
(*Just & Kiddle*, 2020)

## 5.2 Methodology & Methods

Though Amiria and Andrew were interested in our experience with mixed realities, the need for a person to be on-site to set up and help with the technical side of mixed reality was a limiting factor, especially considering new requirements for social distancing. Andrew and Amiria also wanted to reach a wide range of youth, and with singular mixed reality experiences, this could be very time consuming. After brief inquiries into mobile apps, the decision was made to pursue a game that could be played on a PC computer<sup>15</sup>.

Through the design of a PC game, Mitra and I aimed to explore how this mode of communication could enable rangatahi to discuss design potentials knowledgeably and meaningfully. The flexible plan for the game design and development, was:

1. I would focus on building the user interface  
(ie. how people will interact with the game via menus, buttons, controls etc.).
2. Mitra would focus on building the content  
(ie. the different wall, window, floor and ceiling options).
3. Regular meetings with Andrew and Amiria would discuss what design aspects would benefit from rangatahi knowledge. This would then be translated into spatial content in the game.
4. At various stages the game would be tested with designers, friends and rangatahi for informal feedback.
5. Formal feedback was given by Amiria and Andrew, who also passed on feedback from partnering organisations.

---

<sup>15</sup> I had previous experience designing augmented reality environments using the software Unreal Engine, which can also be used to design virtual reality experiences, PC games, mobile games and more. Unreal Engine was first developed as a state-of-the-art game engine but has evolved into a real-time 3D creation tool which can develop interactive and immersive spatial experiences.

### 5.3 Design of the Youth Hub Game

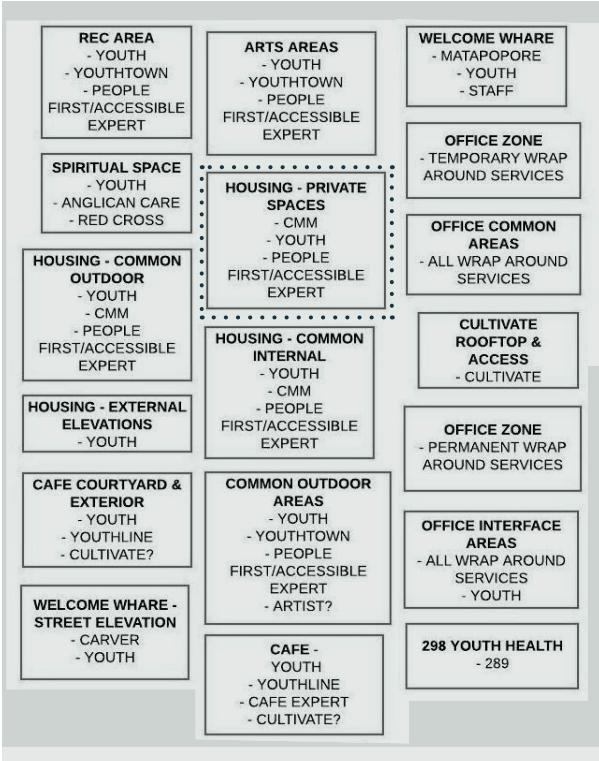
Known for its subversive qualities, play has been discussed as means for breaking down social boundaries and for constructing new ways of being.

(Hope, 2005, qtd. in Brich et al., 2017, p. 252)

It was decided that the game would focus on a part of the proposed Youth Hub that was at a design stage that would benefit from engagement with rangatahi:

SUPPORTED HOUSING

- Possible explorations:
- Sanctuary
    - ceiling heights
    - colour (comfort)
    - openings (public/private)
    - Textural finishes
  - Connection to Nature
    - openings (view of vegetation)
    - Interior vegetation (biophilia)
    - organic forms
    - Organic colours/textures/finishes

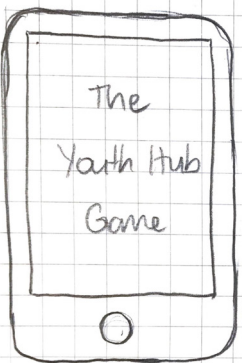


↑ FIG 13. The supported housing is one small part of the proposed Youth Hub.

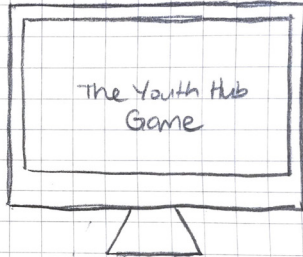


↑ FIG 14. Iterations of the game were discussed with Andrew and Amiria via Zoom.





- x space on mobile
- ✓ transportable
- ✓ most youth have a smart phone



- ✓ good screen size
- x have to have access to PC
- ✓ much easier to develop

PLATFORM: MOBILE VS PC

The purpose was to create a visuospatial language to enhance the communication between Christchurch rangatahi and FIELD.

The platform must be accessible to rangatahi, spatial concepts be clearly represented and the feedback easy to provide.

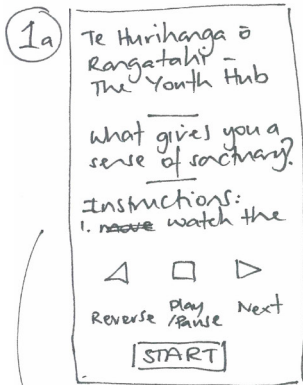
I on 1 experience possibly more appealing to introverts.

- Invitation to people on their own terms

- easy on PC
- very difficult for users to download app on to iOS without apple store which is a lengthy process and not private.
- Android

can email APK app file to user. User then opens email on Android device. Android system should recognise APK and display 'Install Now' button. Users will need to allow the install of unknown apps in their settings.

The spaces aren't 'real', they are immediately changeable. Can these games be a catalyst for Third Space? Does the Youth Hub Game provide players with language and skills to participate more meaningfully in discussions about space? Because the spaces in the game are not tangible, not real, they are up for discussion and critique.

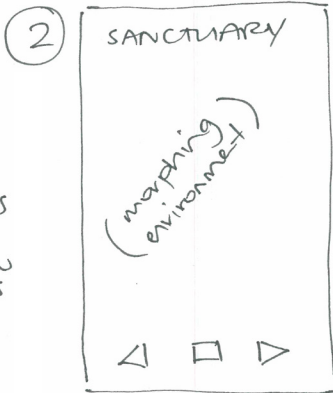


- NAME
- TITLE
- INSTRUCTIONS
- EXPLANATION OF BUTTONS
- START

- Instructions:
1. watch the transition of the environment
  2. Press Pause (□) when ~~you~~ it feels the most like 'sanctuary'. You can reverse (◀) the transition at any time.
  3. After you have paused the transition press next (▶) to go to the next transition.

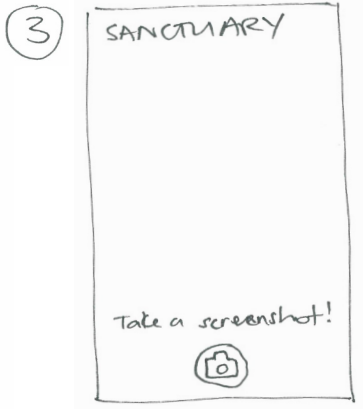
↑ this will need a (1b) screen of its own...

↗ First draft for a mobile app concept.



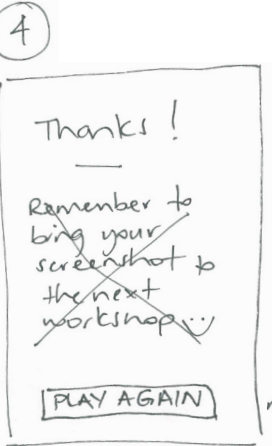
TITLE to remind of the focus.

Player will be ~~ste~~ placed in centre of environment. They can use the touch screen to look around, but cannot move in the space.



Player will be asked to take a screenshot of their final environment

↓ this can be sent to FIELD / brought to workshop.



Please email with your thoughts + if you could, we'd love to know why you made these choices. Flick us on email at...

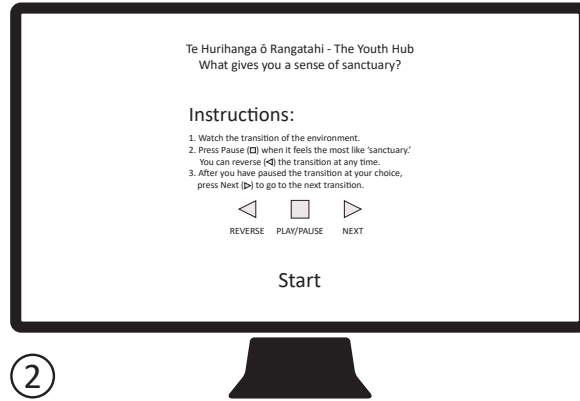
Final screen.

If you would like to be more involved with this project please let us know



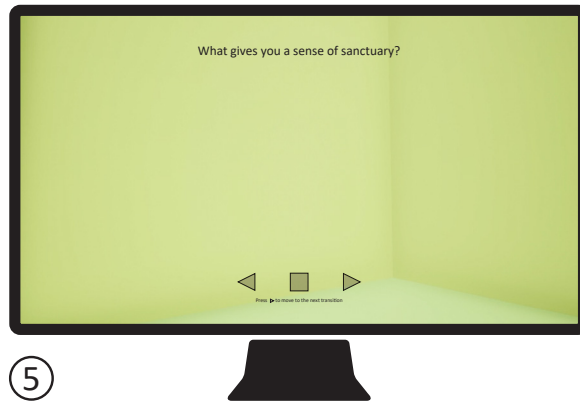
①

Title Page  
To be designed so it continues visual language of existing Youth Hub documentation.



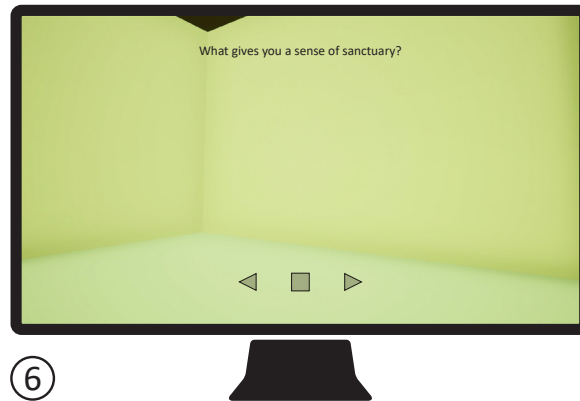
②

Instructions  
How to play the game.



③

Transition  
The player is placed in centre of the environment. They can use the mouse to look around, but cannot move through the space. The first parameter starts to transition around the player (eg. colour). Small notes below the buttons give the player prompts. The title of the conceptual exploration remains at the top of the screen to remind players the purpose of this game.



④



⑤

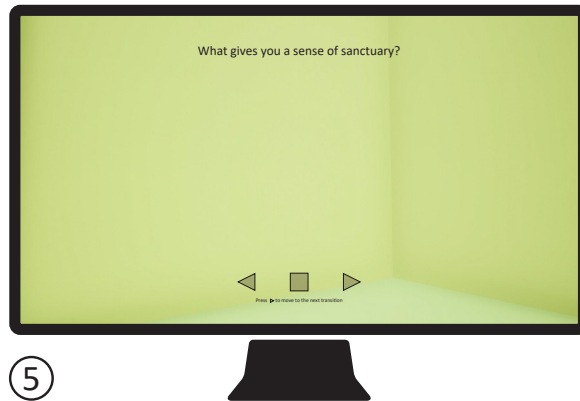
Selection  
The player is prompted to pause the parameter transition (eg. colour) at a stage where, for them, it most relates to the larger conceptual exploration (eg. sanctuary).

⑥

Confirmation  
Once the transition is paused at the chosen stage, the player is prompted to move to the next parameter transition.

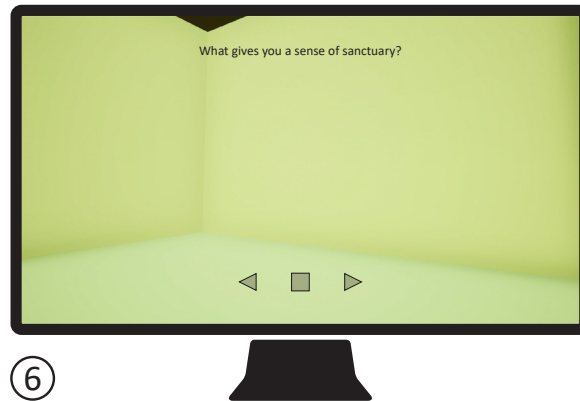
⑦

Transition 2  
The second parameter starts to transition, layered on top of previous selections (eg. height layered on top of selected colour). There can be numerous parameter transitions, though four is the recommended number. Stages 3-5 repeat for each parameter.



⑧

Documentation  
At the culmination of all parameter transitions, the player will be encouraged to take a screenshot of their environment. They continue to have the ability to look around the space.

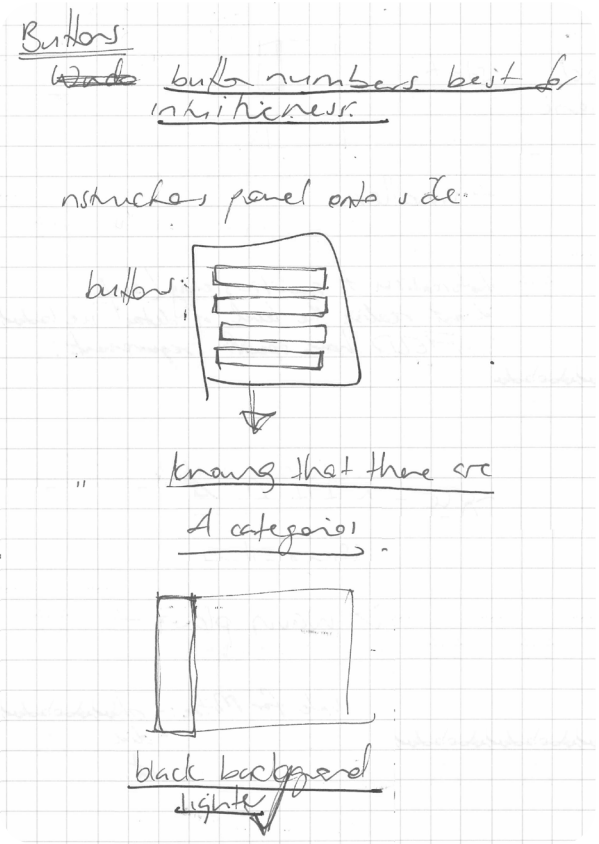
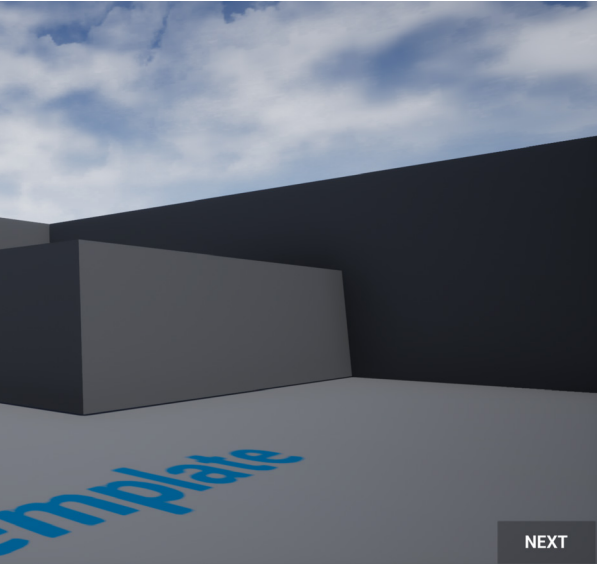


⑧

Feedback  
The final screen will show their screenshot and ask them to share their thoughts and decisions. This could simply be a link to a Google Form (can be anonymous) which would consist of a couple of questions and an opportunity to provide contact details if they are interested in being further involved.

Note:  
Automated screenshot capabilities are still being explored and the format for this screen may change.

↑ *First draft for a computer game.*



## THE USER INTERFACE

My aim was to make this ‘digital third space’ as accessible and easily used as possible for youth regardless of their familiarity with computer games.

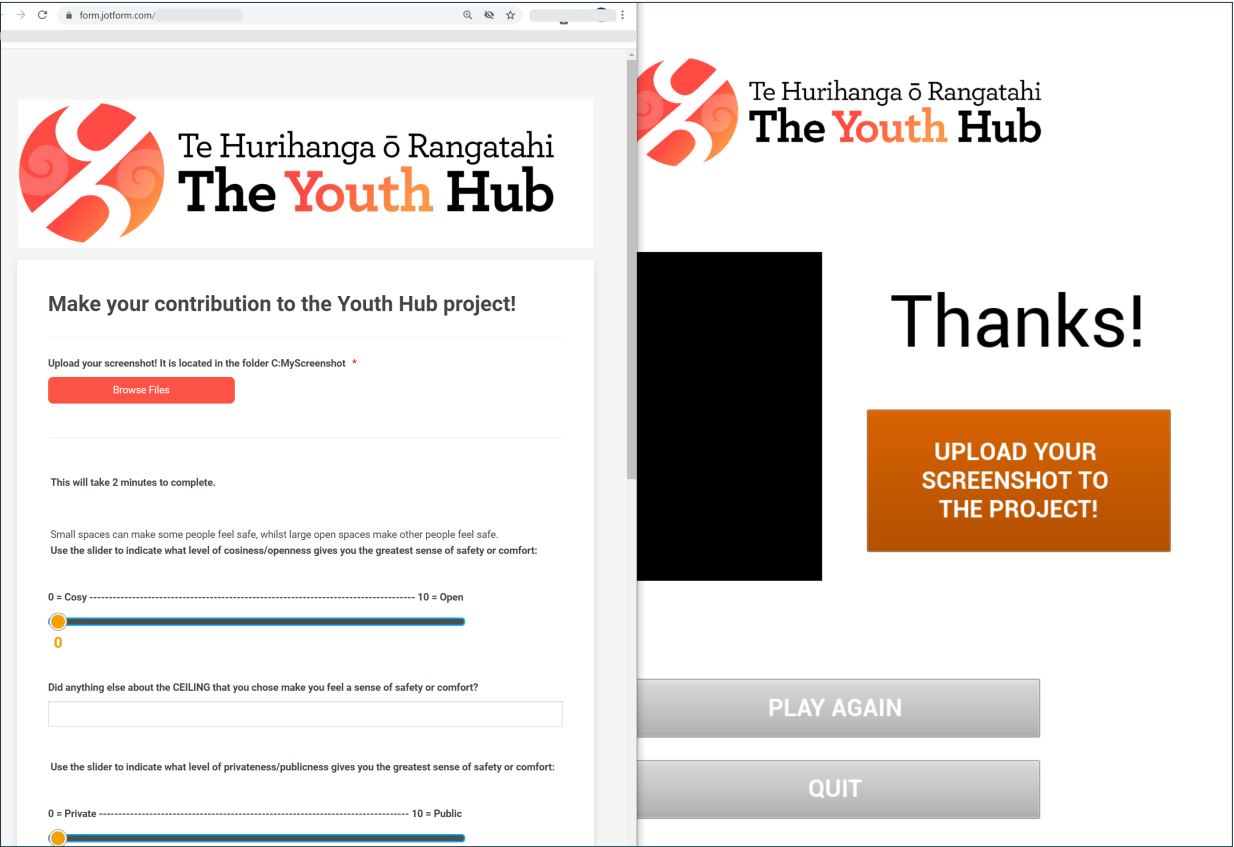
Key feedback was about the intuitiveness: if it’s not straight-forward, or easily navigated by the player, there is little motivation for them to persevere. This game needs to be easy for someone to pick up and play effectively in a minute or two, or they will lose interest.

Other interesting feedback was “what is the purpose?”, “why do I need to create this space?”. This was a dilemma because we, as designers, thought it needed to be abstracted from a bedroom otherwise it may narrow players’ understanding of the space and push preconceptions of how a bedroom should look. However, in doing this, we have made the game too abstract, so that now players are lacking purpose and therefore motivation to play the game.

← *Unreal Engine scripting of the buttons that click through different spatial options.*

←← *Iterations of the user interface.*





← Clickable button in the game which opens the web browser and feedback form.

✓ Unreal Engine scripting of screenshot and feedback form.

[Play] enables the construction of dialogue and thus enhances communication because players are required to respond to something unexpected.

(Birch et al., 2017, p. 251)

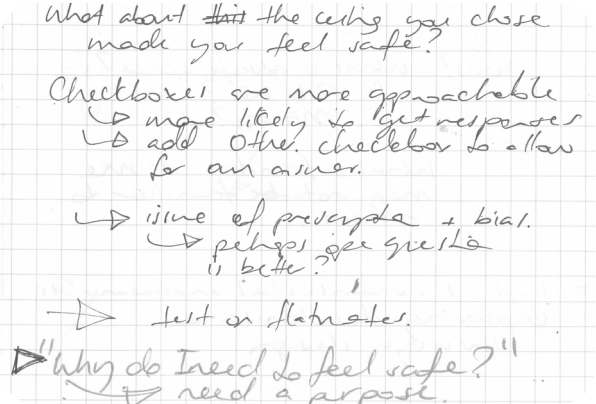
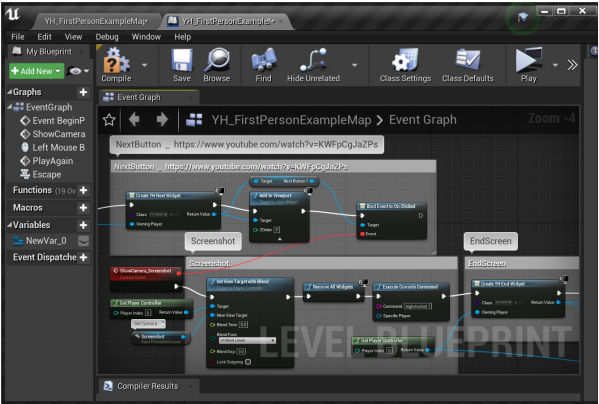
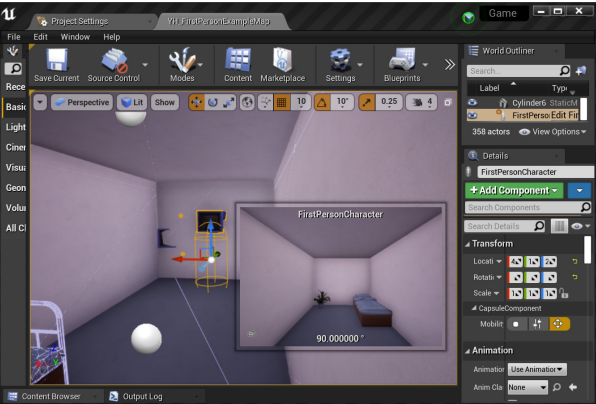
There are two formats of information: the visual screenshot, and the written feedback. Where do they go?

We could automate uploading the screenshot to a web browser, though this would entail designing a website that would be coded to ‘talk’ to the players’ computers. This can feel like an invasion of privacy, and we were restricted by time. Instead, the final button in the game opens the computer’s web browser and directs the payer to an online form.

**WORKING WITH LANGUAGE: CREATING PROVOCATION**

The wording of the questions on the feedback form was crucial and there were several considerations:

- × This feedback is optional and our target audience is youth. How do we make them want to give feedback, when they could simply play the game and not bother?!
- × We need the feedback to be useful to FIELD. How do we ask questions that prompt answers about feelings and values without putting off the users?
- × Do we rely on the screenshot only?



We discussed the phrasing of the interactive experience, and it's clear that there are many benefits of it being described as a 'game.'

The term 'game' evokes leisure, choice, fun and can create a sense of excitement far more than an 'engagement workshop'. Games can appeal to people from all backgrounds, a sense of exploration and of challenge is something many will rise to, and the label 'game' suggests less pressure on the user's performance and opinions.

A 'PC game' is a familiar concept that immediately gives the user an indication of the level of engagement that will be required. It indicates how it will be used and in what format. A PC game is easily transportable. No scheduled workshop need take place. A development of this research would be creating Android and Apple phone apps that can be easily installed on users phones and take little space. Limitations in time and development knowledge have kept this to a PC game.

→ *Early concepts for the game's name.*

The type of game that you've developed is quite neutral when talking about who plays video games.

– *Amiria*  
(*Just & Kiddle, 2020*)

Te Hurihanga ō Rangatahi - The Youth Hub

What gives you a sense of  
**sanctuary?**

Next



## Workout Your Hideout

Instructions:

1. Use the arrow keys to move and the mouse to look around your environment.
2. Right click the mouse to freeze your view and left click the buttons on screen to select the different options.
3. After you have chosen your favourite options press Next.

PLAY

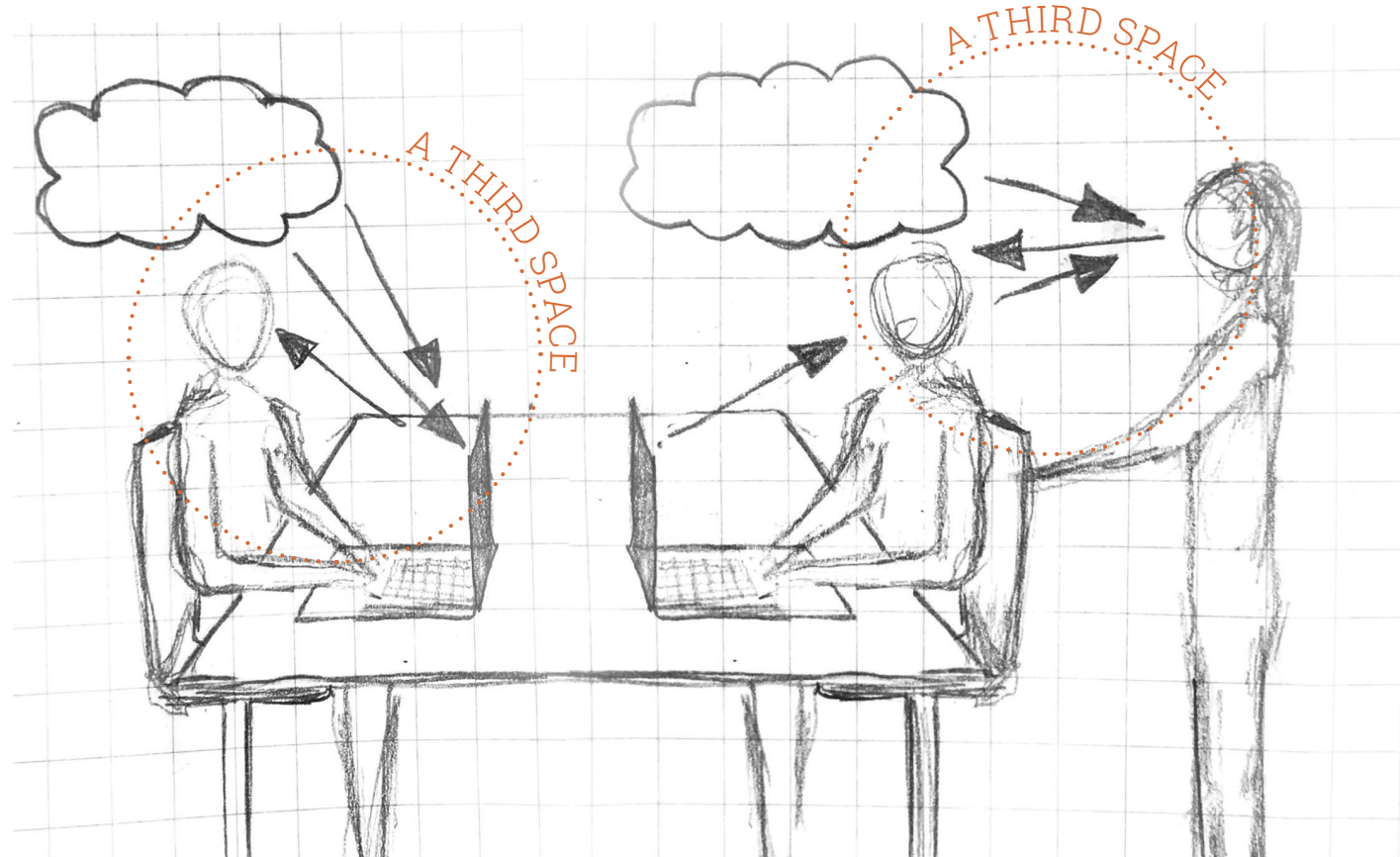
QUIT



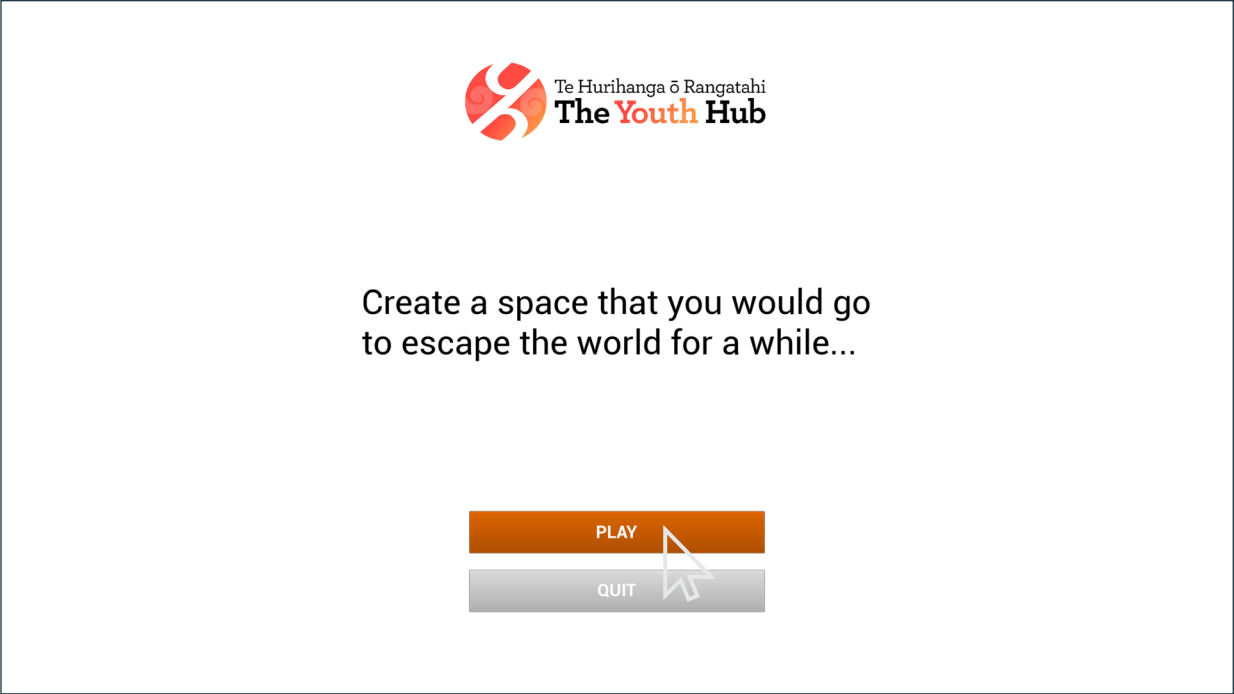


Even though much thought had gone into it, it became immediately apparent that the language used for the questionnaire was very exclusive to a design-trained or academic audience.

One person who hardly spoke when we all sat together and discussed the project, was able to express her strong opinions about the space when interacting with the game. She discussed the feelings that particular choices evoked which alluded to her values for a space of sanctuary.



Another person, who had been vocal in the group sessions got to the form at the end of the game and said, “I don’t know what to write.” However, when chatted with, he had lots of input about the game and the design choices he’d made. The in-person conversation enabled him to ask questions about the space and it was the back and forth discussion that brought out his values - the form was a barrier to that.



THE GAME    ↑ *Home screen.*

*Click here to  
download the game  
(url on page 182)*



↑ *Players move around and explore the space.*





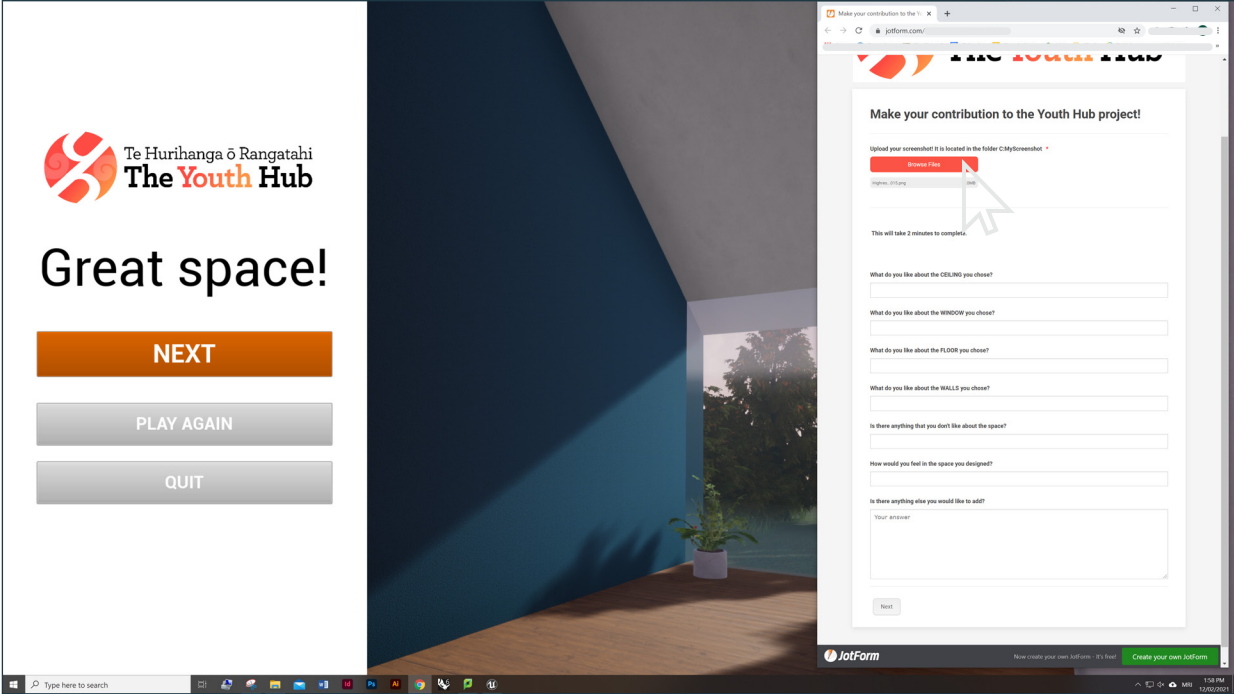
↑ *Players click through different options for the ceiling, window, wall and floor.*



↑ *Players click 'Next' when they are ready.*

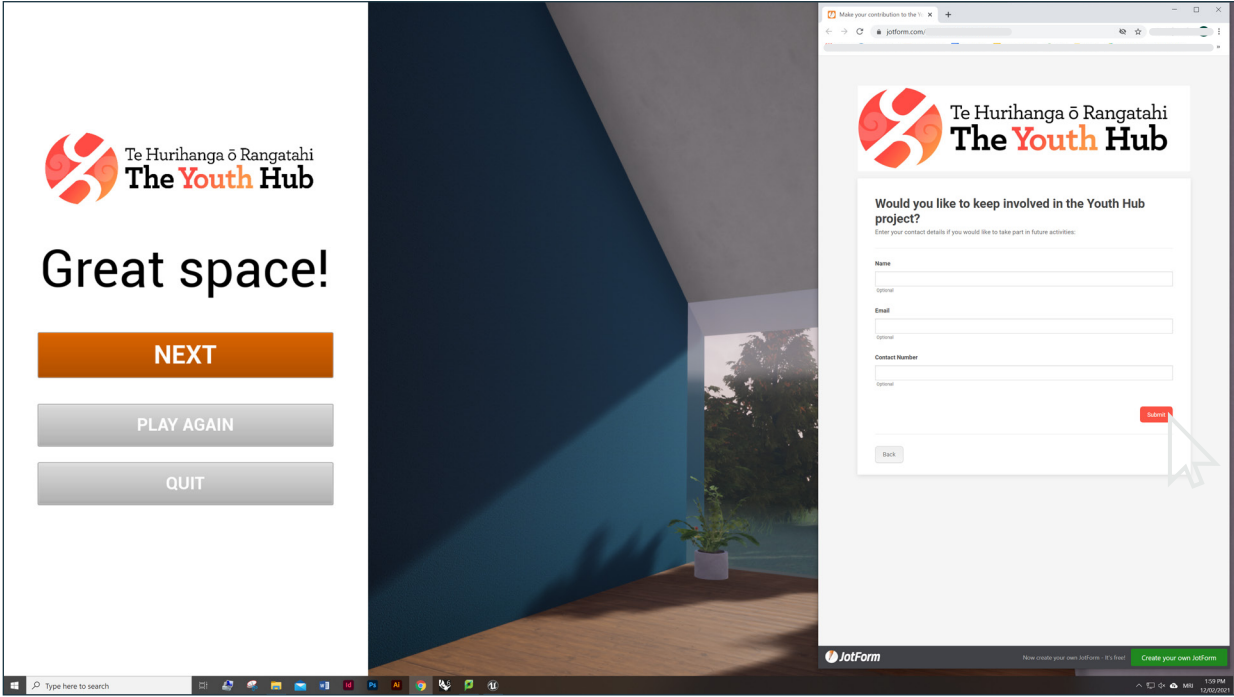


↑ *The game takes an automatic screenshot and saves it to the player's computer.*

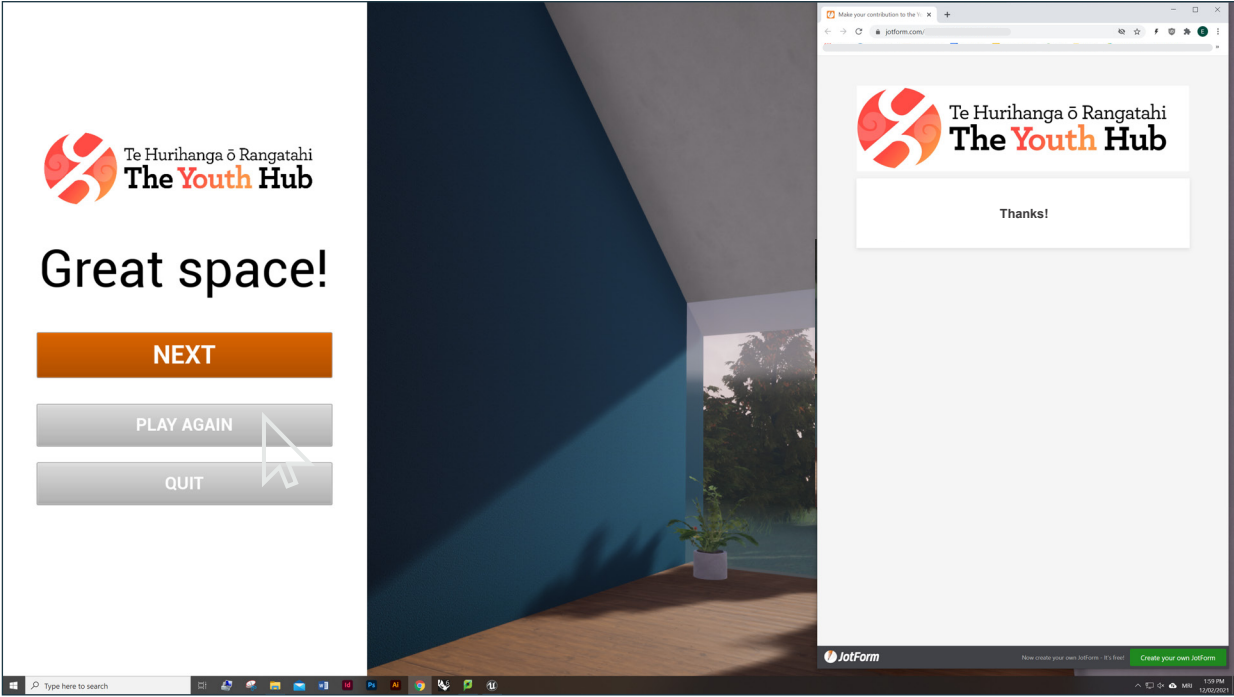


↑ *The game opens the web browser with the feedback form.*





↑ *Players are taken through a series of questions and asked if they want to give their details to stay involved.*



↑ *Players can play again or quit the game.*

## 5.4 A Critical Reflection

The relationship Mitra and I developed with Amiria and Andrew from FIELD afforded us important insights into a live participatory architectural process. While we were not engaging with youth end-users directly, the stage at which we joined the project and the tool we developed allowed us to evaluate (from a limited perspective) how effective FIELD’s collaborations had been so far, and how immersive tools might enhance or provide a new angle through which to engage.

### OUR COLLABORATION WITH FIELD

In discussions with Andrew and Amiria it became clear that they are constantly trying to improve their community engagements and both argued for the value of ongoing interaction with people. Although it’s time-consuming, Andrew stated that values-based

practice, “gives you a stronger ability to question things because it means you’re not just based on assumptions” and therefore, as Amiria said, “everyone is taken along each step of the way” (Just and Kiddle, 2020). I could see how they were designing a process in which stakeholder values were made intrinsic, thus making the core values more than a once-off checklist and making space for them to be an ongoing discussion. In their role of architects managing the project, FIELD were willing to destabilise their conventional practice by taking a risk on two students, to see what we could offer and evolve their process to benefit the youth stakeholders. Though I don’t think it’s a substantial destabilisation, it was significant enough for Amiria to express that the outcome of the collaboration (the game) was not what she had expected - it had opened up a whole new way of engaging with youth that they would never have been able to do on their own. It’s important to note that even I did not expect to be developing a PC game! As someone who’s never been overly interested in video games, mobile game apps or computer games, it was well out of my comfort zone. However, I found that I could apply my skills in design and spatial understanding to the development of this tool, just as an architect can apply their skills to a pencil to create a plan or perspective drawing.

### REACH: AGENCY THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

When FIELD use this game to engage with rangatahi<sup>16</sup> one of our key considerations is where does the power and agency lie? As discussed in Chapter 4, this question also asks: Who has access? Whose physical space are we in? Whose cultural space are we in? Who are in leadership roles?

The PC game platform, in the form of an executable file (.exe), means that anyone who has access to a Windows computer and the internet can play the game and send feedback to FIELD. Though it is reasonably common for people to have access to a PC at home, many lower-income households will not. Most rangatahi aged 10-18 will have computer and internet access at school and this is a key motivation for the game to be distributed to several Christchurch schools. The digital platform allows the game to be played in almost any physical space (given access to a computer and internet) and reduces the need for youth to travel in order to engage with the project. The design potentials explored in the game are from a Pākehā perspective and there would be value in iterating it collaboratively with youth from more diverse cultural backgrounds. Whilst the content of the game is arguably from mātauranga Pākehā, the cultural context in

which it is played is flexible. The singular-player nature of the game allows rangatahi to engage at their own pace, in their own time, and their own space. The accessibility of the digital engagement is also affected by motivation – who will want to play the game? As discussed in the previous section, simply calling it a ‘game’ was deliberated, and it was

The game has a much wider reach than those that can physically be at workshops. So getting more diverse feedback then hopefully the design being influenced by and catering for a wider range of people. Empowerment and ownership is big.

– Amiria  
(Just & Kiddle, 2020)

<sup>16</sup> The Youth Hub game is going to be part of a larger package that was due to be implemented into the 2021 curriculum at several Christchurch schools. Unfortunately this has been halted because of a complication in resource consenting but we hope this will be temporary.

decided that the platform and the term might be more enticing for young people. ‘Game’ inherently suggests playfulness, possibility and an uninhibited environment that is not quite reality. Because of the platform and ability to be disseminated digitally, this game could reach a far larger audience than other methods previously employed by FIELD. It could also reach a more diverse audience, though, like a workshop, a PC game might attract a certain type of person.

#### TESTING THE GAME: ARE WE AFFORDING MEANINGFUL, OPEN DISCUSSIONS?

The visuospatial language which the game provides aims to empower rangatahi to knowledgeably discuss complex design concepts in a Third Space environment. Via interactivity with a virtual space, players can explore the consequences of spatial decisions in a safe environment, providing them with knowledge and skills to communicate spatial ideas. As a platform that endeavours to gather participant’s views about design concepts, awareness of how the designers are influencing the feedback is vital – is the design of the interaction bringing in preconceived ideas, or limiting the players’ engagement? It is important to remember that FIELD had already undertaken extensive

A ‘visuospatial language’ is defined as a visual representation of space that can be used to communicate design concepts.

workshops and had gained an understanding of values held by the future users of the Youth Hub. If the game was to be used for these initial engagements, the design potentials provided would be far too limited to truly explore core values. However, FIELD were past this stage and had already translated some of the values identified into design potentials. They were now ready to take them back to rangatahi to collaboratively assess if they were adequate translations. Thus, the game aimed to tease out any unconscious biases that may have gone into the design decisions and we saw a clear example of this when an early version of the game was trialled with Christchurch rangatahi. One teenager was very clear about preferring muted blue tones in what she felt was a calming space, and this contrasted with the vibrant and patterned texture which I think Andrew and Amiria had assumed would be the popular choice with rangatahi.

The method of transmitting the rangatahi’s feedback to FIELD needs improvement.

While the screenshot images provide FIELD with a great visual database, the questions digging into the values behind the rangatahi’s design decisions were not as effective as we had hoped in prompting values-based answers. Furthermore, I don’t think the design options, or the formulated questions made adequate space for discussions about cultural worldviews relating to the Youth Hub. We found that the conversations between designers and rangatahi while they were playing the game and immediately afterwards, were far more insightful, and this, I think, comes down to the quality of questions and the power of conversation.

It was really interesting with this game and the iterations that are available because it feels genuinely like you’re designing ... it gives that good representation but it also means that that is embedded in the DNA of the place.

– Andrew  
(Just & Kiddle, 2020)

#### A BRIEF SUMMARY

Via an intuitive and provocative user interface, in addition to considered design potentials, The Youth Hub Game aims to catalyse a digital Third Space. The visuospatial language supports rangatahi with spatial knowledge and skills that will enable them to meaningfully discuss complex design concepts. They can play the game in their own time and their own space (given accessibility considerations of a PC), and due to the digital format of feedback gathering, the responses can be quick and unlimited.

However, the language and questions designed in the feedback form are currently limiting the value of responses and require development. As the adage goes: good answers come from great questions. A key technique for formulating questions was gained from my collaboration with Amiria and Andrew where I could see how they use design potentials to provoke interesting conversations that often led to high-quality feedback. While this game has the ability to reach a virtually unlimited number of rangatahi, the comments are mostly quantitative and Mitra and I realised that we needed to develop a tool that could draw out the deeper ‘why’ behind the rangatahi’s responses.





# 6. THE KIRIBATI GAME





↑ FIG 17. Zoom meetings with FIELD and ChildFund representatives in Kiribati.

It’s really exciting to have these games go over to Kiribati and have the young people and the ChildFund team working together to do this stuff.

It was a big mission to get over there and to line everyone up – this smooths over a whole lot of logistics.

– Andrew (Just, 2020)

## 6.1 Context

In July 2020, Andrew and Amiria floated the idea of another game for a project FIELD were undertaking based in Kiribati. Like the Christchurch Youth Hub project, the Kiribati project needed further engagement with youth for the design of a youth learning centre. FIELD had undertaken workshops in Kiribati at the end of 2019, but with budget and COVID-19 travel restraints, it was far more feasible for engagements to be achieved remotely.

Building upon lessons from The Youth Hub game, the Kiribati game would be a tool through which FIELD could provoke meaningful conversations with Kiribati youth about values and spatial qualities. In addition to being a democratising tool, the game would provide a tangible outcome of FIELD’s

engagement of youth, which was important for the continuation of funding from Child Fund and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Kiribati game needed to do a few things:

- × It needed to check the collaboration so far. Had FIELD translated the values discussed (within Kiribati culture) successfully into built outcomes?
- × It needed to provoke further discussions about Kiribati values
- × The game files needed to be small enough to download in Kiribati and be able to be played on a basic computer.

## 6.2 Methodology & Methods

Having designed and developed a game already, Mitra and I hoped that the skills we gained would allow this game to be developed much quicker. Though there would be different features in the Kiribati game, we now knew the basics of Unreal Engine, where to find good information and who best to ask for help<sup>17</sup>.

FIELD had a draft SketchUp model of the building that we would bring into the gaming engine as a blank object, apply materials (eg. glass to windows) and build the user interactions. Through the design of this second game, Mitra and I aimed to build upon what we learned from the first game and explore how to ask better questions:

1. I would focus on building the user interface (ie. how people interact with the game via menus, buttons, etc.)
2. Mitra would focus on translating FIELD’s Sketchup model into a usable 3D model in the gaming engine.
3. Regular meetings with Amiria and Andrew would evaluate the level of representation required by the model (ie. how realistic it looks), and what questions should be asked.
4. At various stages the game would be tested with designers, friends and rangatahi for informal feedback.
5. Formal feedback was given by Amiria and Andrew, who also passed on feedback from partnering organisations.

<sup>17</sup> Big thanks to the people at CMIC for their technical and moral support.

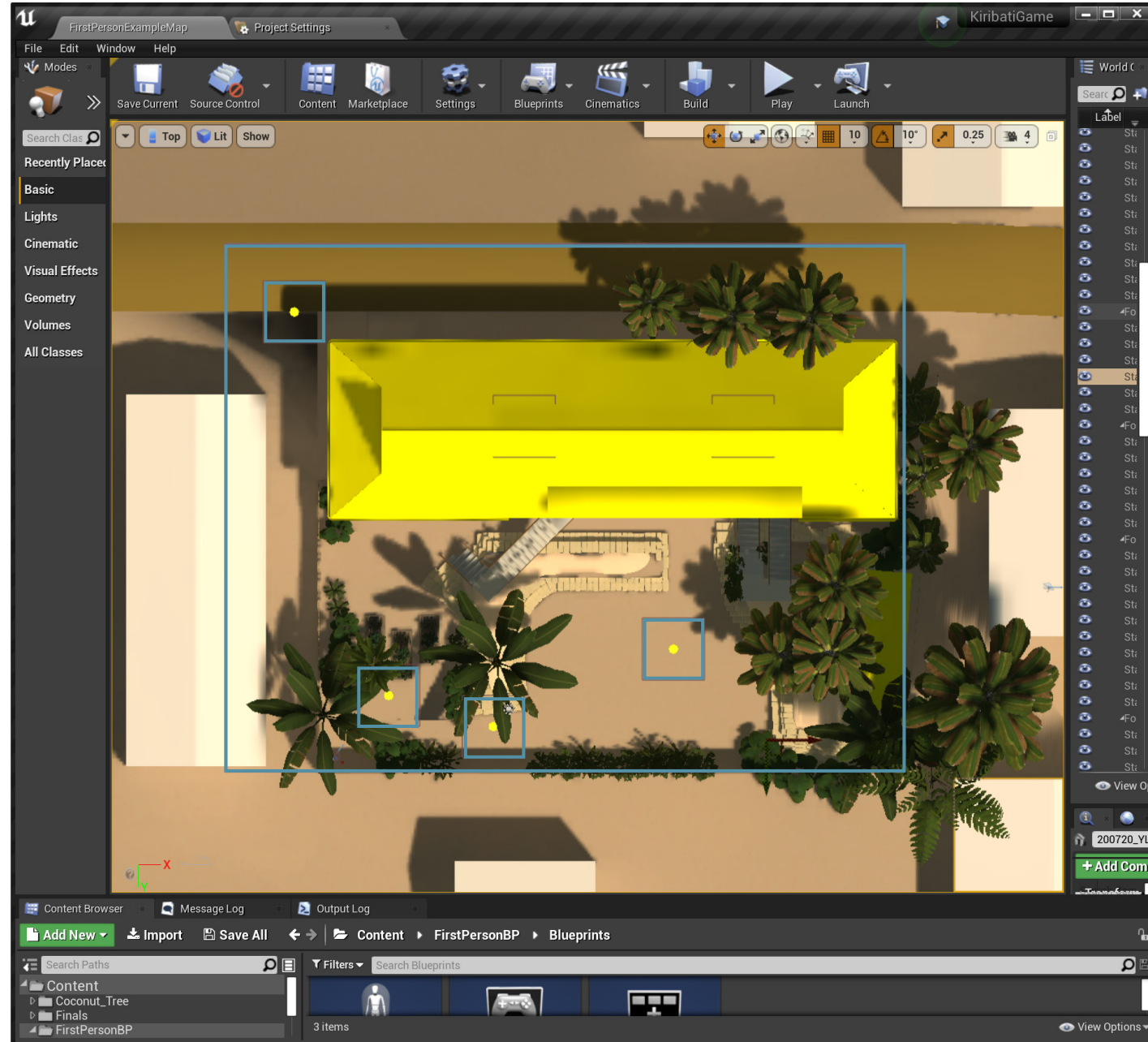
## 6.3 Design of the Kiribati Game

### USER MOVEMENT: FREEDOM TO EXPLORE

The Kiribati Game allows players to roam far more freely than the Youth Hub Game. This is due to a couple of reasons:

1. Feedback from The Youth Hub Game suggested that players needed more contextual information to be able to knowledgeably discuss the space they were in
2. The scale of the Kiribati Youth Learning Centre is significantly smaller than the Christchurch Youth Hub

This greater freedom of movement helps to enhance the feeling of discovery - a key element in many video games.



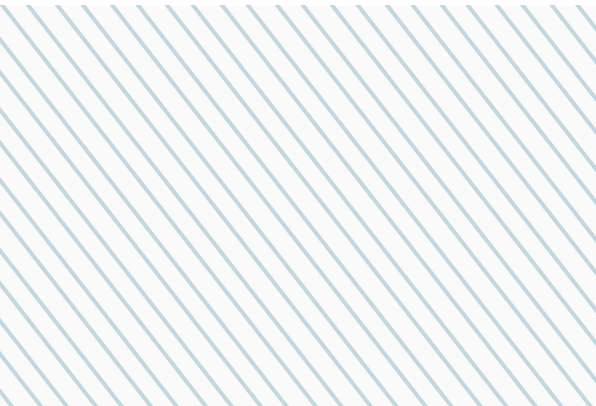
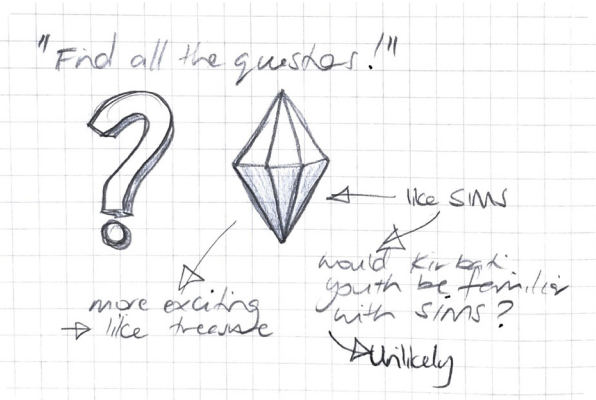
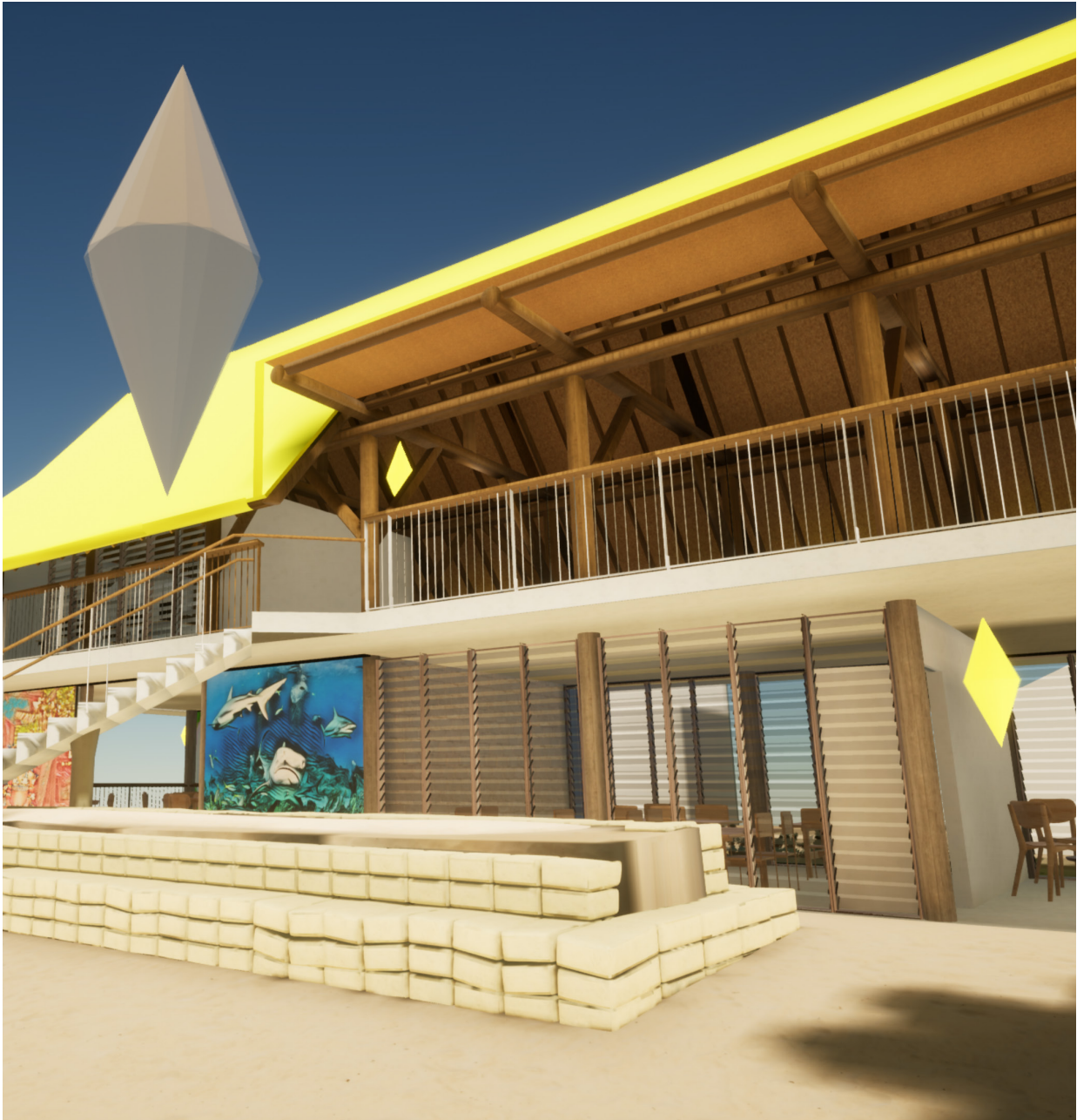
← Birds eye view of game in Unreal Engine. The large blue box is the boundary for player movements. The smaller blue boxes are overlaps that cause the questions to pop up on the player's screen.

I think the type of game that we've got is really appropriate for where we're at for getting feedback from young people who were heavily involved at the start.

The young people are also getting a chance to see the design that they've contributed to so far – which contributes to the excitement about the project in Kiribati ... Momentum is really important with these kind of projects.

– Andrew & Amiria  
(Just & Kiddle, 2020)





SETTING A CHALLENGE

Something that was common in the testing of both games was, “why?”

“Why should I play this game?”

For this purpose, I tried to make the Kiribati Game more of a challenge so that players gained some sense of achievement.

The diamonds aim to create a challenge, causing the player to:

- 1. Be motivated to play the game
- 2. Explore and experience the entire space

Once the player has activated a diamond it turns grey.

← FIG 18. The Sims. Image redacted.

↖ What is going to attract a youth player?

← Unreal Engine scripting diamonds.

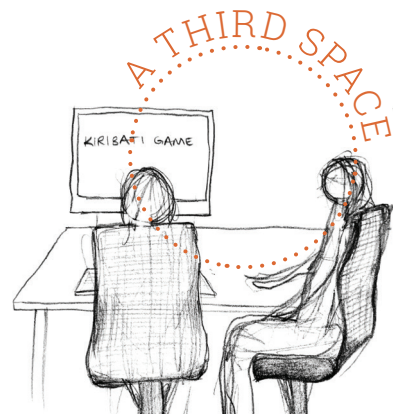
←← The diamonds spin and change colour to grey once the player has activated the question.



## CREATING THIRD SPACE THROUGH OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Developing on The Youth Hub Game, the Kiribati Game needed to better provoke insightful discussions about the spaces and the values of the player in relation to those spaces. By asking open-ended questions it affords a more varied response, with virtually unlimited answers. This kind of engagement depends on a facilitator being present and having the skills to encourage and facilitate meaningful discussion from the player. In this sense, the game aims to *enhance* the relationship between end-user and architect, not stand in place of the architect (as The Youth Hub Game kind of did).

A challenge was the cultural context in which we were working Kiribati youth speak Te taetae ni Kiribati and some English. The questions asked by FIELD and the discussions caused by them needed to be in both languages for them to transfer. To help ensure the accuracy of translation and encourage further discussion, it was clear that having someone facilitate the game being played would be beneficial. The availability of computers in Kiribati is limited, therefore having youth come to one place to play the game is more attainable and having a person on-site to facilitate is more feasible.



↑ *The game enhancing a figurative Third Space between the youth player and the facilitator.*

→ *Six of the eight questions in the game.*

It's quite a different design tool – dropping new information into that hopefully feels quite different to dropping it in a video render.

A video feels like it's showcasing a thing whereas these games feel like they're closer to “what about this?!”

– *Andrew (Just, 2020)*





THE GAME    ↑ *Home screen.*



↑ *Players move around and explore the space.*

*Click here to  
download the game  
(url on page 182)*







↑ *Once they activate a diamond it changes from yellow to grey.*



↑ *Players have the freedom to explore all space at their own pace.*



↑ *Some questions aim to provoke a Third Space discussion.*



↑ *Other questions encourage the player to explore further.*



## 6.4 A Critical Reflection

The “project confidence” thing – to be able to go to the likes of MFAT and be confident that this has genuinely asked people in Kiribati “what do you want?”

It’s a huge thing for the project and for your confidence, to be able to advocate for it and explain it and then for [MFAT] to be able to invest in it.

– Andrew  
(Just, 2020)

Mitra and I designed, developed and packaged another game for FIELD, however this time, it took a slightly different approach to the previous game. Whilst the Youth Hub Game aimed to be a digital Third Space, the Kiribati Game aimed to support an in-person Third Space, offering a visuospatial language, provocations and a playful platform.

### WORKING AS PĀKEHĀ WITH KIRIBATI CULTURE

A big challenge for FIELD’s collaboration with Kiribati youth is navigating the cultural landscape with care and respect. It is crucial that any unconscious bias that the designers bring into the project (from a culture other than Kiribati) is identified and worked through in collaboration with the Kiribati stakeholders.

Language can be a barrier to creating a meaningful Third Space of discussion as complex design concepts and cultural nuances can get lost in translation. In this context, the game offers a visuospatial language that is universal and unbound by verbal tradition. Help from Amiria and Andrew’s Kiribati collaborators ensured the user interface in the game was bilingual – they were supportive of English translations as Kiribati youth learn

English at school and, in addition, FIELD thought it would be useful for their work and that of the partnering organisations.

### FINDING A DIFFERENT WAY TO PROVOKE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS

In contrast to The Youth Hub game, provocation about rangatahi values and design features was created via open-ended questions which the player has to actively seek out. There is no feedback form here. Instead, Mitra and I (and in discussions with Amiria and Andrew) realised the value of conversation and proposed that a facilitator records the players’ responses to the questions and, if necessary, prompts them to further explain the ‘why’ behind their response. In a sense, whilst connecting rangatahi and designers, the game also ensures the separation of the two groups, allowing rangatahi their own space – physical and cultural – to engage with the game and respond to it without the pressure of English-speaking, adult, architects being present. The Third Space catalysed by the game occurs between the player and the facilitator, placing an elevated level of importance on their skills in listening and transformative kōrero. This information then needs to be translated effectively back to FIELD.

I speculate that the game empowers rangatahi in multiple ways:

1. Players can see evidence of where their previous collaborations have been translated into design outcomes – demonstrating that their collaboration is meaningful.
2. Players have freedom to explore the space in their own time, allowing them to spend more time in spaces that they find interesting/enjoyable etc. This could be a significant element that the facilitator could make note of.
3. Open-ended questions and the facilitator spending time to actively listen will make the player feel like their opinions matter, and further design iterations will show.
4. Ongoing collaboration from the designers indicates that the project is an evolving discussion in which the rangatahi play a vital part.

One limitation I see is that the players do not have the ability to make any design changes in real-time within the game, thus the architects are still leading the conversation. This could manifest in a second game, or even another level of the existing game where the players have more creative freedom to create their own visuospatial languages.

## THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE ARCHITECT: WHAT CAN ENGAGEMENT DO?

Mitra stated that Andrew and Amiria “made it very clear in many different ways how talking to the people you’re creating architecture for is crucial to creating architecture that is going to address their needs” (Homolja, 2020) and yet there are so often comments made by people in the architecture industry stating there is not enough time, or not enough budget for comprehensive engagement. I think all practices, on some level, value the end-users of the spaces they’re designing. It’s a matter of where this high-level, time consuming, meaningful engagement sits on the priority lists of architects and project funders. For this reason, FIELD has been an incredibly interesting case study because of the value they place on engaging with the end-users of a space. There appears to be a tension between running a business and doing in-depth consultations and FIELD navigates this by advocating for the importance of this to the multiple funders of the projects they work on. From their own accounts, FIELD had to constantly justify why engagement, and the way they wanted to do it, was important. Andrew stated that the game developed for the Kiribati project provided a tangible tool for engagement with Kiribati

youth that would support their advocacy for further engagement funded by ChildFund NZ and MFAT. This indicates that the game provides a platform that is more tangible than traditional forms of engagement such as workshops.

Engagement platforms such as this game can be used by architects as an iterative design tool whereby architectural translations are designed, critiqued, and developed. By using it as a tool to engage rangatahi, FIELD has the ability to present for critique “the right level of information at the right time” (Just and Kiddle). Andrew pointed out that if a built outcome (like a youth learning centre), “in worst-case scenario, is antagonistic to people, that’s a disastrous investment of huge amounts of time, money and goodwill” (Just and Kiddle) and it is part of FIELD’s role to ensure against that happening. Through the continual engagement afforded by this tool in the architectural process, designers can reduce the risk of such an outcome.

### A BRIEF SUMMARY

If the Youth Hub Game afforded a quantitative approach, the Kiribati Game took a more qualitative approach. It builds upon the lessons from The Youth Hub game

What is interesting about this game is that you’re looking at pretty compelling imagery of what the building is, but then you’re introducing a bunch of questions almost undermining that certainty.

That’s our whole job, guiding people through [design decisions]. It’s a constant state of excitement and nerves. The more we are able to reassure that these are the right decisions, the better.

[It supports] the confidence of the whole project team [and] when you’re asking MFAT for a couple of million dollars, you can say “this is what it should be, we checked, we’ve gone through that”. It also protects the project ... it becomes much more holistic and integrated as a design.

– Andrew  
(Just & Kiddle, 2020)

by moving past responses such as “I like/dislike...” to responses that dig deeper into community values, such as “this is interesting because...” “this is successful because...”. The visuospatial language provided by the interactive, visual nature of the game crosses language barriers and affords players to explore design concepts in their own time and

space. Transitioning the players’ responses from digital to physical harnesses the power of conversation, within the constraints of the skill of the facilitator. Finally, the game platform, the design of the experience and the way FIELD employs it, demonstrates how technology like this can be another tool in the architect’s collaborative toolkit.



# 7. NGĀTI TOA RANGATAHI

Ka oho te wairua  
Ka mataara te  
inana  
e aroha ki te  
soha  
ka kā te rama.  
ia Te Raupa

Ko te manu e kai ana i te miro, nōna te ngahere  
Ko te manu e kai ana i te mātauranga, nōna te

Pā Wānanga

Cookies

Second  
Year  
Ngaio  
Kaitiaki  
Kaitiaki

\$20.00  
\$30.00  
\$40.00  
\$50.00  
\$60.00  
\$70.00  
\$80.00  
\$90.00  
\$100.00

## 7.1 Context

In April 2020 we began discussions with a small group of Ngāti Toa rangatahi based in Porirua. Though it wasn't until July that we met in person, our contact Bianca – organiser of Te Puna Mātauranga and the Ngāti Toa general manager for Education and Employment – indicated that the iwi was considering developing a space, or spaces, for education that would be “rooted in Ngāti Toa-ness.” Bianca thought it was crucial that rangatahi be involved in the design process and was interested in our research and experience to date.

The work with Amiria and Andrew had provided a great insight into how FIELD utilised varied methods and tools to break down power dynamics and create agency in their collaborations with rangatahi. It was clear that FIELD had to work hard to advocate for ongoing collaboration

with community groups which suggested that conventional architectural practice did not include structures to support such collaboration.

This third project is situated right at the start of a design process, much earlier than the projects undertaken with FIELD. Thus, it would allow Mitra and I to explore our own methods, and methods developed from our experiences with FIELD, to cultivate relationships. In contrast to the previous two projects, Mitra and I were directly engaging with end-users. Therefore, in addition to exploring tangible tools that can catalyse Third Space (mixed reality, pens, paper, cameras), we were also very conscious of the intangible elements of collaboration – our personal actions, demeanour, language, conversation etc. Due to the ‘realness’ of the project, Mitra and I were mindful of



meeting the expectations of Bianca and the rangatahi, as well as our own research aims and objectives.

In summary, the combined aims of the project are:

- × Offer insight into what it’s like to study architecture
- × Expose the rangatahi to emerging technologies such as virtual and augmented reality
- × Develop explorations into how mixed reality tools can help catalyse Third Space
- × Explore the power dynamics that arise in this project that relate to Māori-Pākehā relationships in addition to architect-nonarchitect relationships
- × Support the involvement of rangatahi in any future design process
- × Explore how to best communicate the value of collaboration in architectural processes

## 7.2 Methodology & Methods

Aligning with the methodology of the overall research, I wanted to approach this series of collaborative engagements with openness and creativity whilst remaining flexible to the specific methods. Methods are developed based on the needs of the participants which are reflected upon and revised along the way. My overarching goal was to enable a Third Space: an environment where the rangatahi could comfortably share thoughts, opinions and values, have the agency to discuss complex design concepts in relation to their shared opinions and values, and eventually, co-create a process that they can take through to any future design projects.

A loose plan was drawn up that covered the following:

1. Build trust between ourselves and the rangatahi, whilst also encouraging spatial thinking:
  - × Consider carefully the language I’m using – is it inclusive or exclusive?
  - × Am I asking good questions that can receive good answers?
2. Collaboratively identify wider values and narrow down how they might manifest into design:
  - × Inspiration taken from established participatory design methods
  - × What is the right level of information at the right time?
3. Bridge communication gaps with mixed reality tools, the experiences designed would evolve as we reflect on each engagement:
  - × Mitra exploring the potential of a virtual reality headset
  - × Me exploring the potential of multiple augmented reality headsets
4. Reflect and evolve:
  - × What power dynamics am I, in the role of the designer, cultivating?
  - × Whose physical and cultural space are we in?
  - × Am I being affected?

### 7.3 Designing Engagements

#### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH RANGATAHI

In the first engagement we were introduced as architecture students from Victoria University and the rangatahi we met were introduced by their name and age, placing them all as high school students. From this initial introduction, it felt like we were given authority and leadership over the rangatahi that we hadn't yet earned. I was aware that my identity (at least the small part that was being introduced) was defined as being university educated and I became conscious that I was assuming power based on Western values. We were also there in the role of researchers, making the rangatahi 'the researched', which has historical contexts and is a role that can sit uncomfortably (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Jones and Jenkins, 2014). In contrast, mine and Mitra's ages (25 years and 23 years respectively) worked in our favour as we could



↑ FIG 19. Camryn testing VR in the 1st engagement.

relate to being students and relate to many social practices. Via this small connection, Mitra and I worked hard to try and break the initial power construct down in the next few engagements.

The second engagement began to identify the architectural project and the goals for mine and Mitra's involvement. The vision is for Takapūwāhia to have its own kura that is rooted in 'Ngāti Toa-ness':

- × Be inclusive of all cultures and be based on shared history, however, at the beginning focus might centre on students from Ngāti Toa.

- × Curriculum would be holistic and perhaps more project-based.
- × It would have several 'classroom' locations. Two locations were discussed as potential sites: Mana Island and Whitireia Maunga.

Our challenge was to explore this idea with rangatahi to integrate their views and values into a future architectural brief/project.

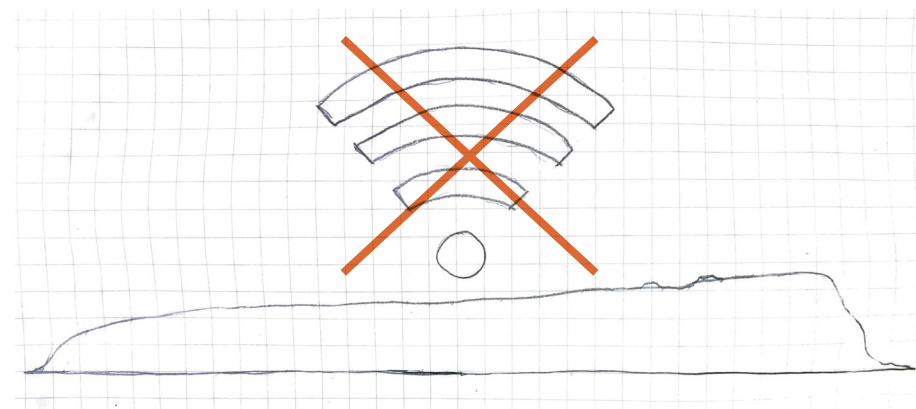
We would like to make this as straightforward as possible for you and those who wish to engage. If it suits, we are happy to integrate these engagements into existing (Wednesday night) events. Equally, we are open to any other alternatives, and are flexible for weekends and evenings. The following is a rough outline of how we envisage engagements might occur over the next few months. Again, these are simply ideas and we would welcome your thoughts on how best to engage and create the most useful outcomes for you and Ngāti Toa Rangatira. We have outlined 4 engagements, but are willing to reduce to 3 if that suits better.

Pre-Engagement Date: Start of July (1st)	Engagement 1 Date: Mid-late July (15th)	Engagement 2 Date: Early-mid August (5th)	Engagement 3 Date: Mid-late August (19th)	Engagement 4 Date: Early September (2nd)
<b>Goals</b> - Introduction: who we are, what we're about - Come along to a weekly Wednesday evening session - Purpose is to meet people related to the project, to informally create a connection - This is to create some sense of familiarity between us and start building trust as people, not researchers. It is also a chance for us to gain understanding about their contexts before jumping into planned engagements	<b>Goals</b> - Establish mutual respect, mutual values, mutual conduct and agreement -Unpack the actual problem, own the problem as well as the solution	<b>Goals</b> - Unpack photovoice activity - Talk about a future vision of education in Porirua - Mitra & Ellie to be educated about the possibilities of this project from the rangatahi's point of view	<b>Goals</b> - Bring everyone to Te Aro campus for a tour and interactive activities - Talk about architecture and possibilities/solutions for the project, Mitra & Ellie to design something from creative expressions in previous engagement - Mitra & Ellie to reciprocate the viable possibilities/spatial outcomes for the project	<b>Goals</b> - A reflection of all previous engagements - Unpack design activity together and talk about dreams - Celebration vibe with understanding that there can be an exhibition
<b>Activities</b> - Brief informal introduction - We can help out with anything, happy to have a run around, will bring food.	<b>Activities</b> - VR/AR interactions - Google Tilt Brush - Creative games - Core values activity	<b>Activities</b> - Possible site visit - Creative expressions: drawing, making, korero, dance	<b>Activities</b> - Food - Games - VR/AR - Tour of campus - Key speakers	<b>Activities</b> - Food - Korero - Feedback
<b>Takeaway Activity</b> - None	<b>Takeaway Activity</b> - PhotoVoice	<b>Takeaway Activity</b> -	<b>Takeaway Activity</b> - Design something	

↑ FIG 20. The initial plan for engagements: a loose plan which we knew would change. The timeline certainly did.

When discussing the remoteness of Mana Island, the rangatahi agreed that they would prefer it to be ‘unconnected’ in that there would be no wifi, and possibly no mobile reception. It would be a welcome break from their usual world of total connectivity and notifications. Bianca commented that this was in opposition to what some of the older generations thought, expressing how total connectivity had been a goal of sorts for the past few years.

This discussion brought to light the importance of having rangatahi (as the end-users) be part of the conversation because assumptions were already being made on their behalf that did not align with their values.



If I wanted wifi  
I would stay on  
the mainland.  
I want to  
decolonise.

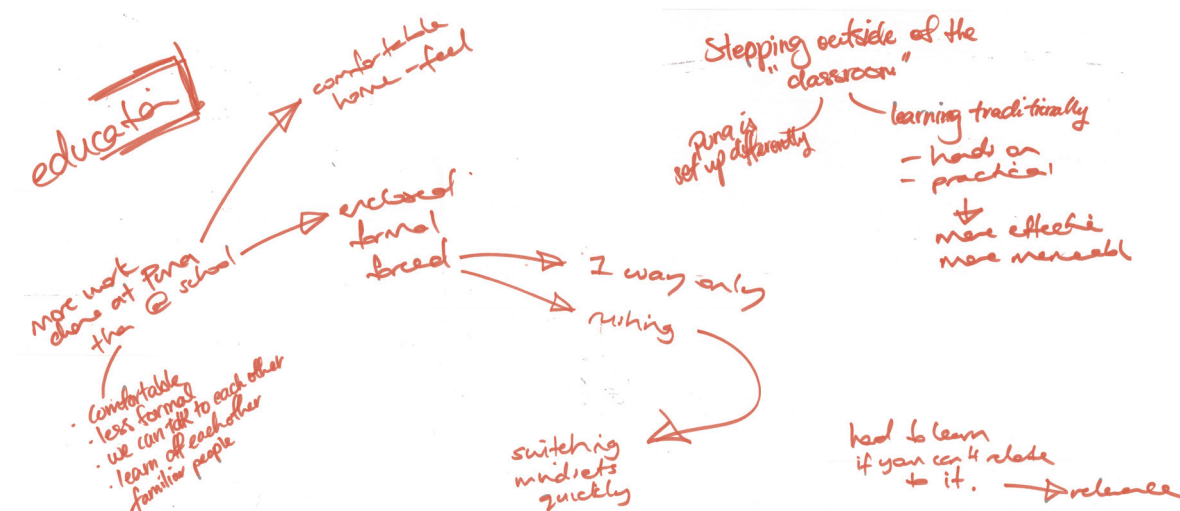
– Kaleb

Whilst focussing on power dynamics created in the relationship between nonarchitect-architect, we also realised that we could not separate that from the dynamics of the Pākehā-Māori relationship at play.

As soon as Mitra and I entered Te Puna Mātauranga, attention was on us with the expectation that we would lead the activities and discussions for the next 60 minutes. We quickly became aware that our identities as Pākehā/Tauīwi and the contexts of our education and training, would undoubtedly colour the engagements and could not simply be left at the door. Even though, because of my age, I could relate to the rangatahi’s experience of education to some extent, some differences also became evident.

For example, Jershon relayed how she was left unmotivated in English class until she was able to study texts that had some relevance to her life, or that of her forebears. With the change of subject, her motivation increased, and her grades reflected this. This made clear to me that no matter how much we could relate to each other’s experiences of classrooms, our cultural backgrounds added a dimension that I could never fully comprehend. My experience of a classroom was affected by the content within it – I had easily engaged with a film set in England, likely relating it to my family origins. Thus, the power of this conversation was its emphasis on valuing the difference between myself (as the researcher/architect) and Jershon (as the researched/end-user).

We were talking a lot about concepts of decolonisation and this was where I brought another assumption into the process. I was still trying to wrap my head around what decolonisation meant. I went in assuming that because they were high school students, they would have the same reaction – understanding the broader concept of decolonisation but not fully comprehending the intricacies of it, how you might go about it and how you might implement these ideas in our day-to-day lives. I was surprised by how assured at least a couple of rangatahi were about what decolonisation was and how it should be implemented in education contexts. It brought to light the biases I had brought into that conversation and the engagements before it.







← FIG 21. Using cardboard boxes we diagrammed our typical day, each side indicating a different space. The activity aimed to encourage the rangatahi to start thinking spatially.

### Spatial Thinking

Starting to relate thoughts and feelings to spaces. Perhaps relating a particular space to a feeling, or expressing thoughts and feelings in three-dimensional space as opposed to words or two-dimensional drawings.

A warm-up of sorts to thinking about how values might take shape spatially.

## TESTING TOOLS: PENCILS, PAPER, PHOTOS AND MIXED REALITIES

A conventional method of participatory design is PhotoVoice. In the second engagement we asked the rangatahi to take photos guided by a set of questions:

- × A place you consider beautiful
- × A place to go to be with friends
- × A place that needs most improvement
- × A place you go to be alone
- × A place you find most interesting
- × A place (outside of school) you learn, this could be 'life' learning
- × If not above, your favourite place

When we returned the following fortnight, only one person had taken a couple of photos. Perhaps we hadn't explained it sufficiently or perhaps it wasn't interesting enough for them to be motivated. Though the activity had not turned out as we expected, the two photos were enough to start a discussion about spaces they all associated activities and feelings to. Again, it was clear that the conversations were where the value of the whole activity lay. The question 'why?' prompted discussion of the reasons they had identified each space and created talk about what they valued about their education. It was this engagement that sparked the start of the spatial brief values.



FIG 22. Notes of the rangatahi's responses.

Ngāti Toa rangatahi are...

Ko wai tātou...

THE BIG QUESTION

What do Ngāti Toa Rangatahi see for the future of education in Porirua?

THE BIG IDEA

To have an education 'space' that creates a sense of **connectedness** between people and **natural, social and historical environments**. Through this connectedness, this space should **nurture openness** to multiple ways of learning and encourage a **sense of kaitiakitanga** over the physical space and the ways of learning.

HOW TO GET THERE

WHAT  
what values should be imbedded into the space

HOW  
how the 'what' comes alive in the space

TRANSLATION  
our individual and collective interpretation of the 'how'

WHAT  
A visual connection between people and the history of the iwi and the location

HOW  
1) Ngati Toa stories being seen in and around the space.  
2) Allowing spaces to contribute your own stories to the ongoing history of the iwi.

TRANSLATION

WHAT  
Awahi towards the land

HOW  
1) Thought is put into where materials come from and if they can be sourced locally and sustainably.  
2) Every space needs to be working with nature instead of against it.

TRANSLATION

WHAT  
Feeling comfortable to learn

HOW  
1) The space should provide a sense of belonging through familiar architectural features and materials.  
2) Providing spaces that encourage discussion rather than dictation through position, scale, movement and flexibility.

TRANSLATION

WHAT  
Spaces which are flexible to different types of learning

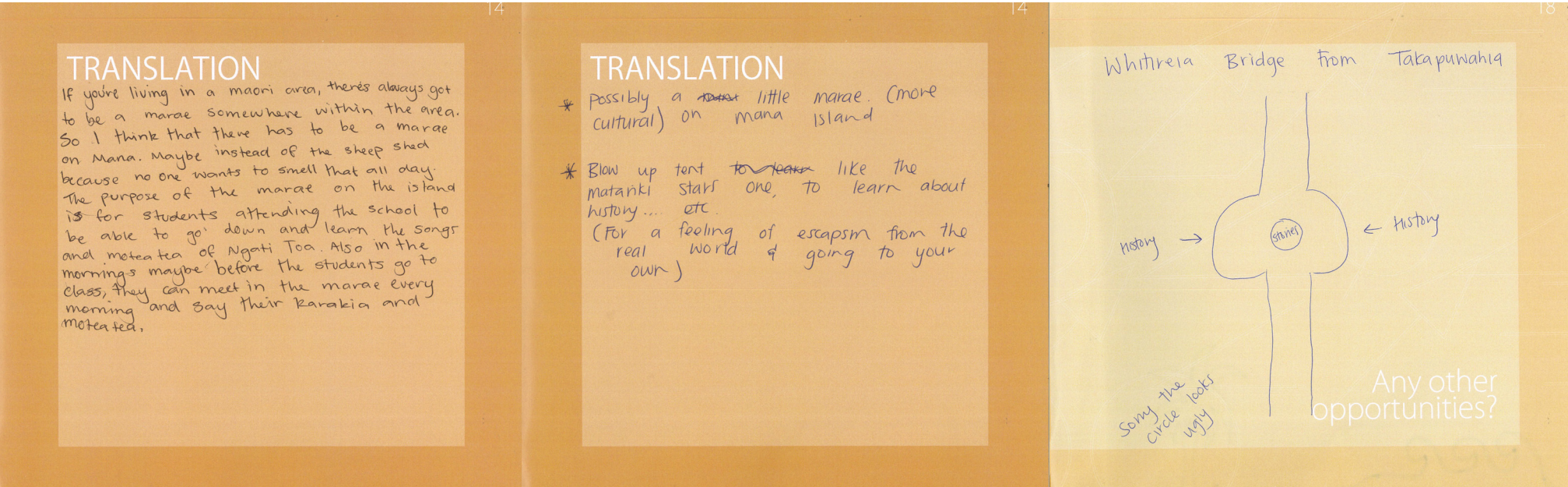
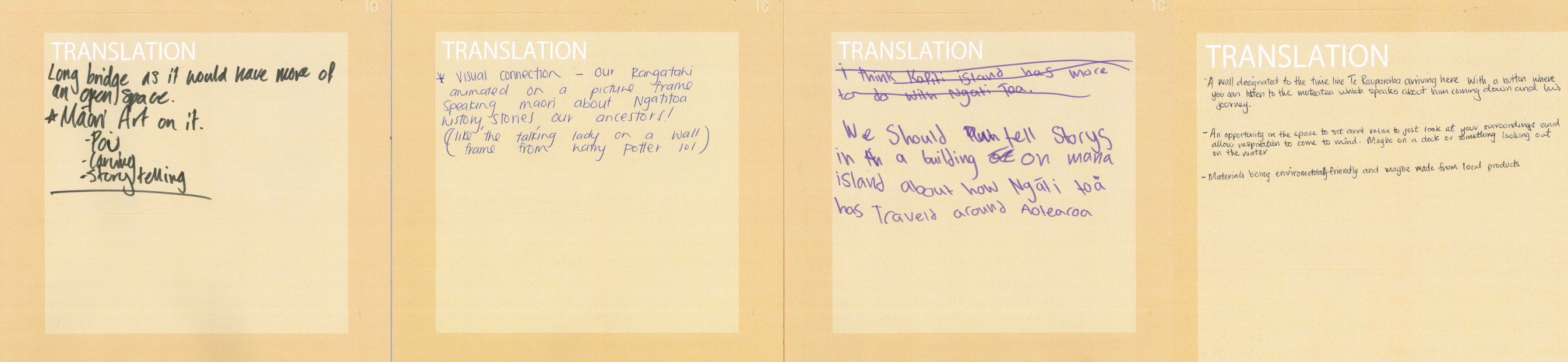
HOW  
1) A consideration of how the structure of a day is influenced by space  
2) Spaces that encourage interconnectivity of subjects

TRANSLATION

Any other ideas?

Any other opportunities?





↑ FIG 23. Discussing the evolving spatial brief after experiencing parts in AR and VR.

← FIG 24. Rangatahi answers to the brief booklet.

←← FIG 25. A printed booklet for the first version of the spatial brief, designed by Mitra [Previous spread].





↑ An AR environment.

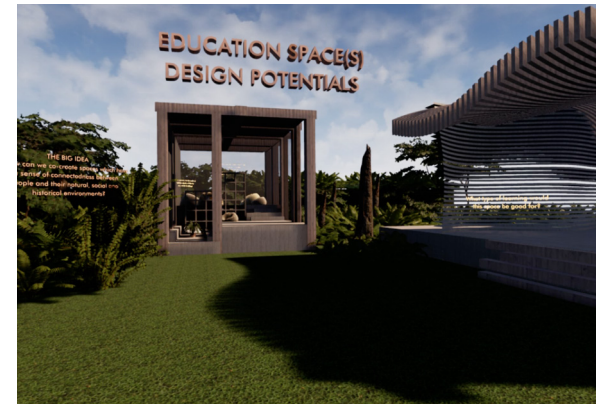
Augmented and virtual reality experiences offer an immersive, 1:1 scale experience of spatial explorations. Often used as a presentation tool at the end of a design process, Mitra and I explored how AR and VR can be a design tool, as much of the architect's toolkit as pencil and paper are.

↗↑ FIG 26. - 27. Collaborative kōrero in AR.

## Design Potential

A designed space that is not a final design but instead, intended to propel conversation by providing a visuospatial language.

The design potentials aim to provoke conversation and are by no means a final architectural design, or even a concept design. Instead, the experiences provide a visuospatial language that can enable rangatahi to discuss complex design concepts by referring to the spatial qualities that they are experiencing.



↑ FIG 30. A VR environment, designed by Mitra.

There was a feeling that we had collectively got to some values and ideas for education, and then us 'architects' could go and design some concepts. But where's the agency? That's why 'design potentials' is a powerful phrase, as it suggests a small aspect that could make up a larger space. Evaluating a small aspect individually seemed much easier to change than a large space/collective of aspects.

↗↑ FIG 28. - 29. Rangatahi in VR.

## Visuospatial Language

A visual representation of space that can be used to communicate design concepts.

Often if a person is presented with a concept design and they point out an aspect they don't like, they are encouraged to suggest something that might work instead, placing pressure upon them to find a solution on the spot. These 'design potentials' encouraged the rangatahi to critique them freely and suggest their own as there was less pressure on it being perfect.





The HoloLens 2 augmented reality headsets had many benefits and some limitations:

- × Being able to use multiple HoloLens 2 headsets collaboratively allowed rangatahi and me to discuss the experiences live.
- × The tool is very intuitive and recognises hand movements and eye movements.
- × The ability to overlay digital content onto the real world means the user can interact with both simultaneously.

Some limitations included:

- × The HoloLens 2 headset required a shaded environment to see the digital content, making it difficult to use outdoors in broad daylight.
- × The HoloLens 2 headsets arrived in New Zealand in April 2020. Because it was such new technology, there were limited apps available for the headset. Paired with my inexperience in AR development, the limited help available online made designing augmented reality experiences time consuming and difficult. As of 2021, the apps and online help are growing exponentially.

←↖↑↑ FIG 31. - 34. Rangatahi in AR.

Remaining images show the view from the HoloLens headset.



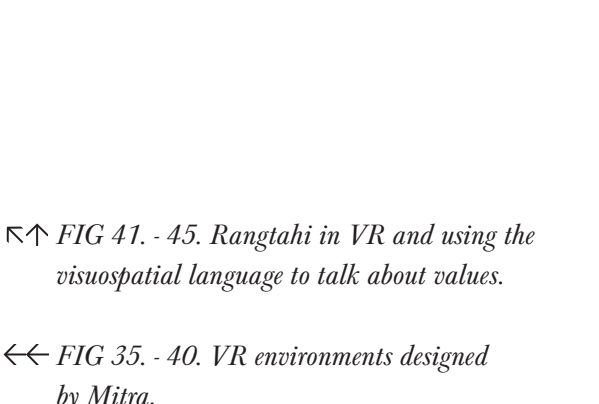
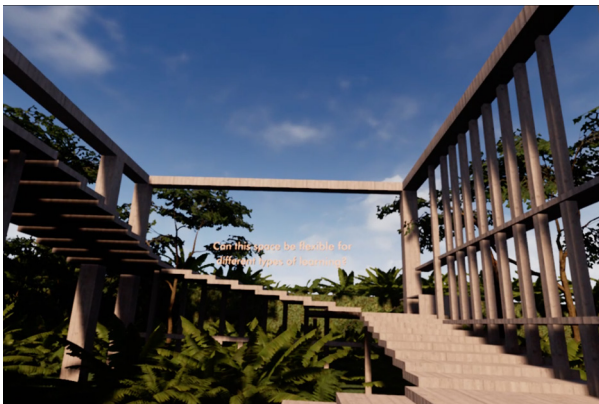
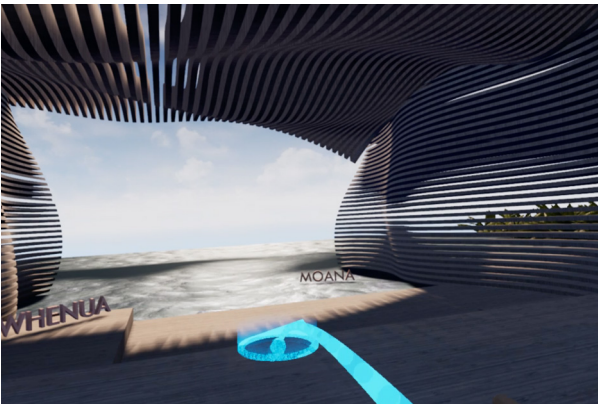
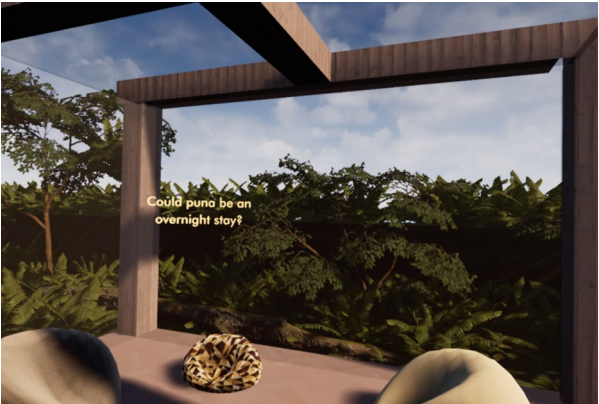


FIG 41. - 45. Rangtahi in VR and using the visuospatial language to talk about values.

FIG 35. - 40. VR environments designed by Mitra.



→ FIG 46. Camryn in VR.



Third Space is inherently based on the two parties coming from their own metaphorical ‘spaces’ with a power balance. That notion of coming in equal, or *mana ki te mana*, is important as it sways any conversations that come out of that Third Space.

In terms of our engagements, we were very conscious of this power balance. I tried to make sure I was talking *with* people, rather than talking *to* people. Part of that I think is how you position yourself relative to the space you’re in and relative to the rangatahi - ie. am I standing taller than someone or at eye level with them? Who have I brought with me? etc.

The rangatahi’s mentor, Bianca, facilitated steering conversations or bringing topics of conversation up. However, we realised that different topics of conversation would come up when she was not present which clearly demonstrated the impact on the rangatahi of having an adult in the room.

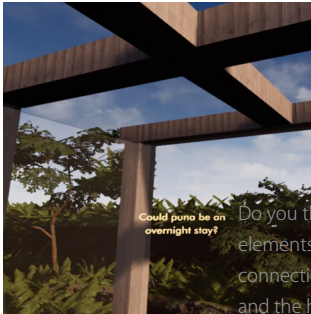
One example was when Camryn was creating a space in virtual reality and Bianca came over to see what she was doing. Having previously described it in detail to Mitra and beginning to relate parts of it to her deeper values, Camryn exclaimed to Bianca: “No! Don’t look! It’s really bad” – suddenly seeming shy and doubtful of her skills and knowledge.

The rapport and trust that Mitra and I were able to build with the rangatahi allowed them to bring up thoughts and values that they would not have been comfortable to share in the presence of others. Through *this manifestation* of Third Space, I speculate that the rangatahi will be empowered to make their values and thoughts heard by other stakeholders in the project.

**WHAT** A visual connection between people and the history of the iwi and the location.

- HOW**
- 1) Ngati Toa stories being seen in and around the space.
  - 2) Allowing spaces to contribute your own stories to the ongoing history of the iwi.

TRANSLATIONS



Do you think these two elements show "a visual connection between people and the history of the iwi and the location"? What other opportunities do you see?

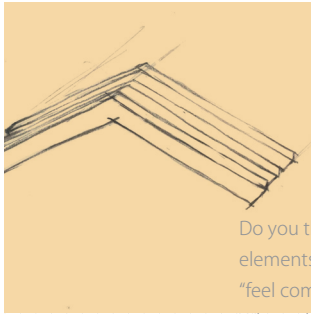


Spatial Brief for Ngāti Toa Education Space

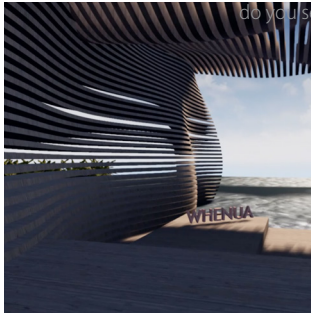
**WHAT** Feeling comfortable to learn.

- HOW**
- 1) The space should provide a sense of belonging through familiar architectural features and materials.
  - 2) Providing spaces that encourage discussion rather than dictation through position, scale, movement and flexibility.

TRANSLATIONS



Do you think these two elements could help people to "feel comfortable to learn"? What other opportunities do you see?



Spatial Brief for Ngāti Toa Education Space

**WHAT** Spaces which are flexible to different types of learning.

- HOW**
- 1) A consideration of how the structure of the day is influenced by space.
  - 2) Spaces that encourage interactivity of subjects.

TRANSLATIONS



Do you think these two elements provide "flexibility for different types of learning"? What other opportunities do you see?

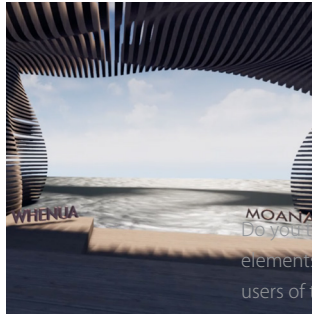


Spatial Brief for Ngāti Toa Education Space

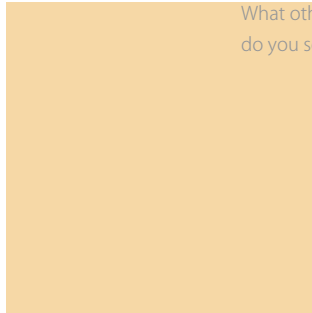
**WHAT** Awhi towards the land.

- HOW**
- 1) Thought is put into where materials come from and if they can be sourced locally and sustainably.
  - 2) Every space needs to be working with nature instead of against it.

TRANSLATIONS



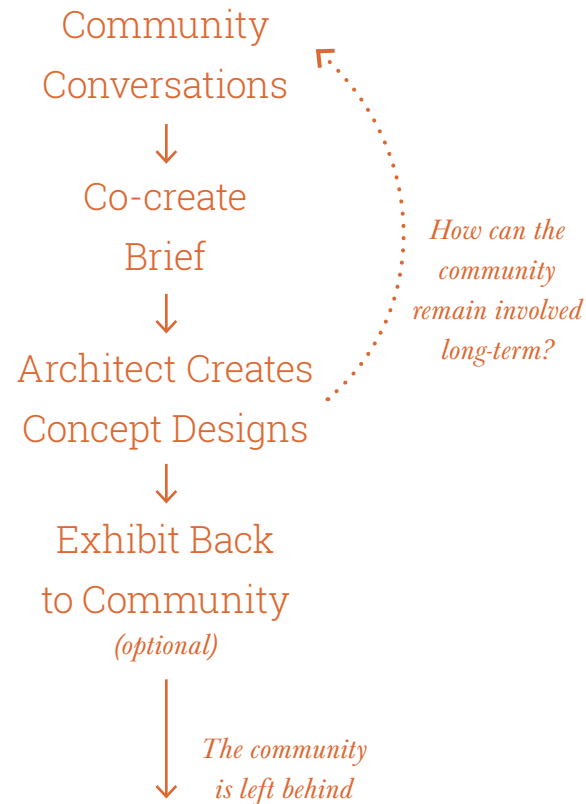
Do you think these two elements show, or allow users of the space to show, "awhi towards the land"? What other opportunities do you see?



Spatial Brief for Ngāti Toa Education Space

➤ Posters created for the next engagement with rangatahi to further evaluate the design potentials so far.



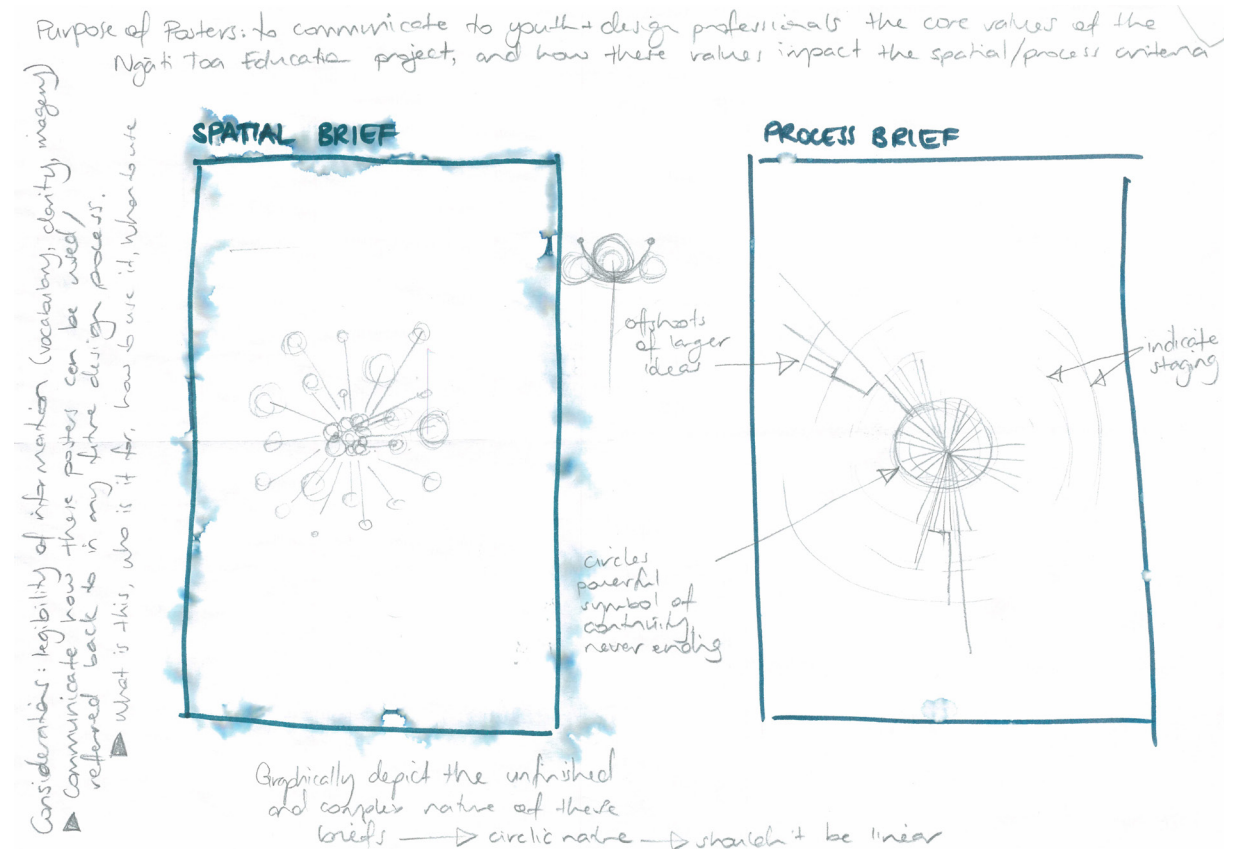


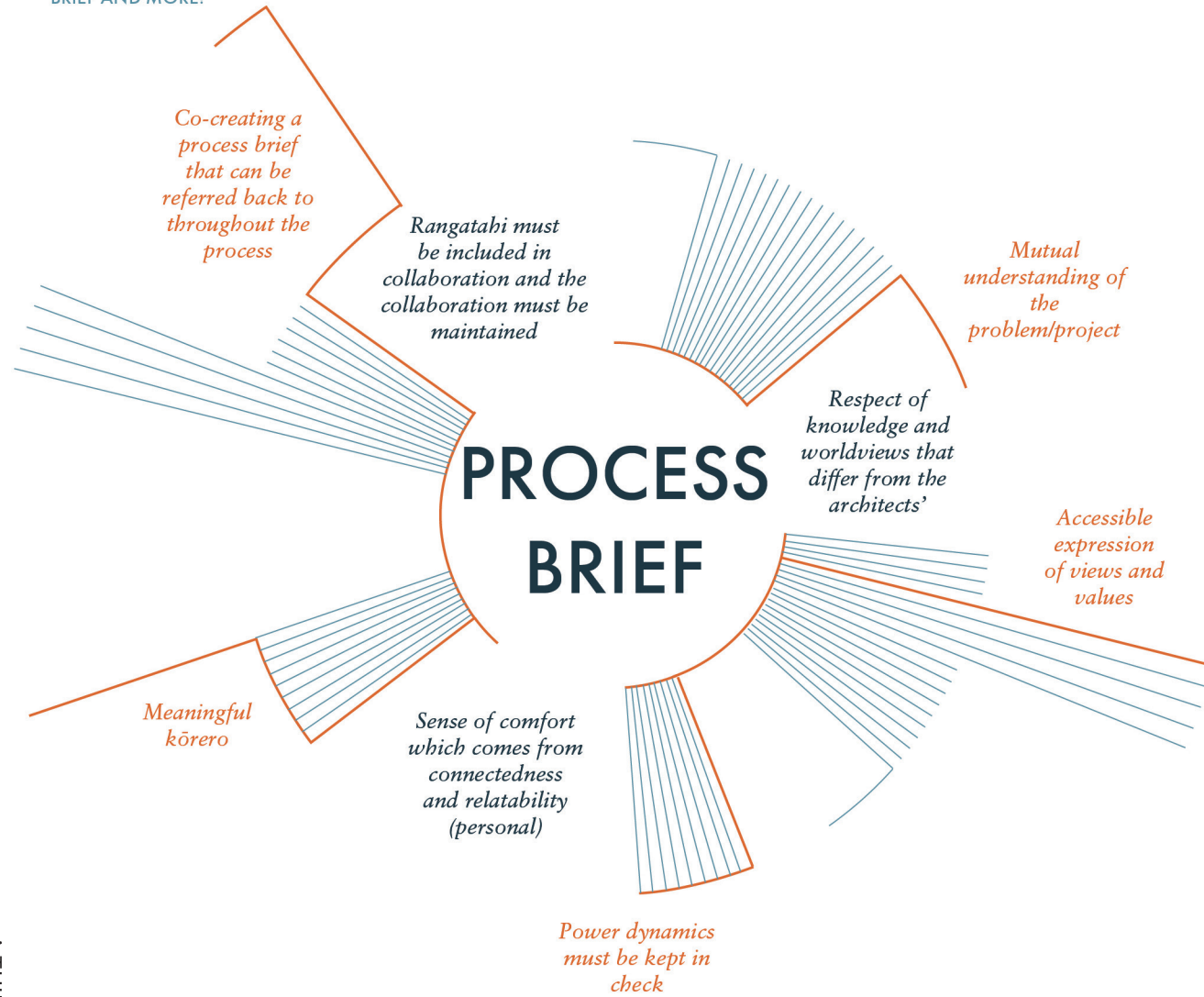
### DEVELOPING DUAL BRIEFS: A DIFFERENT TYPE OF ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURE

Before we got to the spatial brief we were trying to structure a process – which highlighted the need for a process brief.

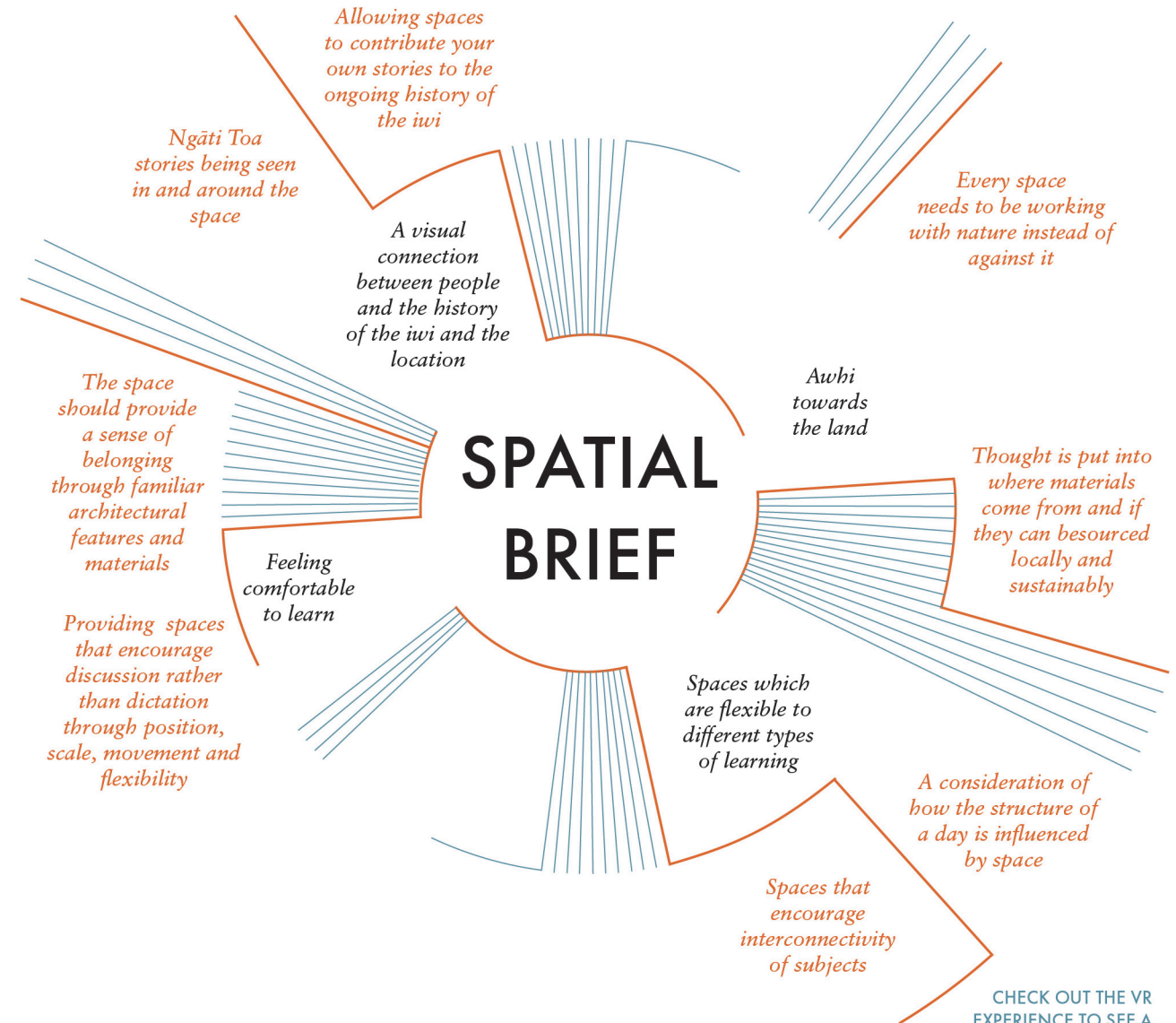
Collaboratively developing a brief is an established technique used in codesign practice. However, sometimes it can be a tick-box exercise in which, after the initial consultation, the community is left behind in the design process.

The co-creation of a process brief aims to set criteria and structure for ongoing collaboration. It provides a document to refer to when factors like time, budget and policy take prominence over community engagement.





➤ FIG 47. The process and spatial briefs as of December 2020.





→ FIG 48. Rangatahi trying out other VR projects at the architecture school.

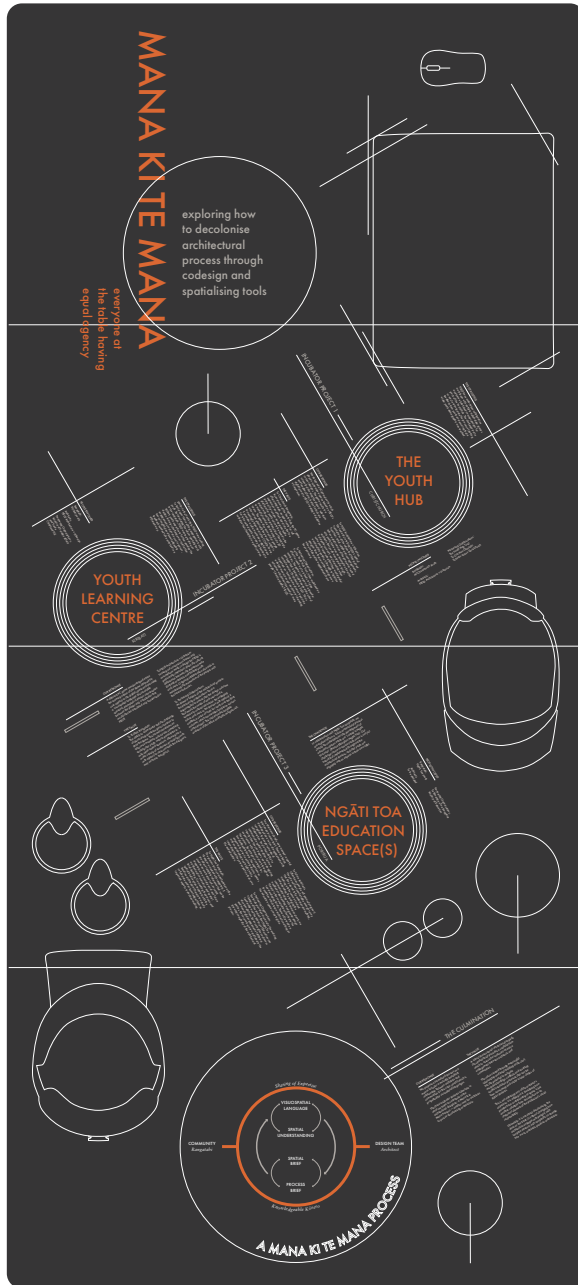


← FIG 49. Kai and kōrero always featured in our engagements.



← FIG 50. Rangatahi exploring the campus.





## NZIA STUDENT DESIGN AWARDS: A TESTING GROUND FOR COMMUNICATING VALUE

Mitra and I were lucky enough to be selected to represent the university at the NZIA Student Design Awards in December 2020. Though we were disqualified from winning due to the collaborative nature of the project, it was a great opportunity for us to test how to communicate the value of the work.

We learnt that people needed to mentally locate themselves within the context of our work, within a figurative space between ‘decolonial practice’ and ‘colonial (bad) practice’ that encourages people to reflect without feeling attacked.

We also learnt that the AR, VR and game tools can be disconcerting to those unfamiliar with them and once a little encouragement was applied, people tended to relax into it.

←← FIG 51. Laser cutter file for the table top made collaboratively with Mitra.

↖ FIG 52. Building and assembling the table top.

← FIG 53. Mitra and me at the NZIA Student Design Awards in Auckland.



→ FIG 54. Bringing the judges to sit at the table with us to have a kōrero about the work.



→ Responding to a design provocation in AR.



← FIG 55. A group of high school students trying the VR at 'A Mana ki te Mana Table'.

Their engagement and excitement about the tools was a testament to the accessibility of the technology.



← FIG 56. A group of high school students excited by the PC Games and AR.

# 7.4 A Critical Reflection

Third Space isn't as defined as the three houses diagram might suggest. It's more like a fuzzy journey of starting outside of it, walking through a thick mist of trust-building and conversation, and then emerging from the mist realising that somehow, without knowing when you crossed the threshold, you've made it. It's also important to note that this 'journey' is individual to each group or person, meaning the steps Mitra and I have explored in this project are simply one way of doing it. In this vein, rather than focussing on the specific activities in the following reflection, I will discuss the underlying principles which I speculate could translate into other community engagements.

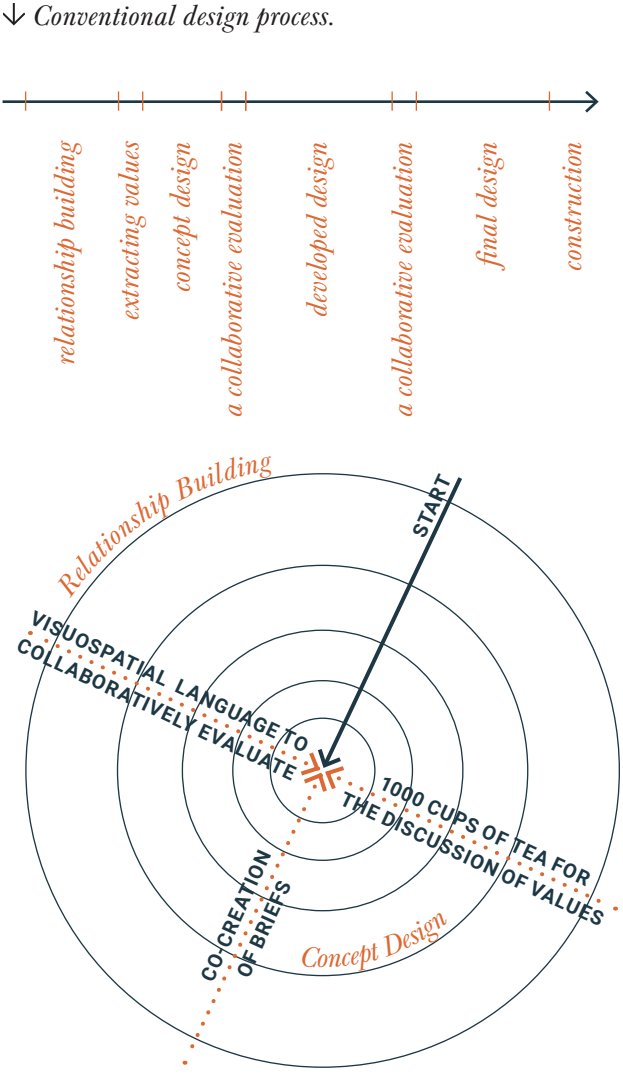
**CATALYSING THIRD SPACE:  
MIHI BEFORE MAHI**

The importance of conversation (of the democratic kind) was already established in the previous incubator projects but really came to light in our initial engagements with the Porirua rangatahi. As soon as we stepped foot into Te Puna Mātauranga, even as students, power dynamics arose that set Mitra and me as the leaders. We had to work hard to dismantle this and I was very aware of the influence these dynamics would have on the thoughts and values that we had started to talk about collectively. It was clear that this 'mihi'<sup>18</sup> in the first stages of relationship-

18 Mihi, in verb form, means to greet, pay tribute, acknowledge, thank (Māori Dictionary).

building was vital in setting the tone for any future engagements and should not be rushed or overlooked. This is supported by one of Atawhai Tibble's 'Tips For Engaging With Māori' (which I think are good guidelines for engaging with anyone) "1000 cups of tea [because] real relationships with Māori take real 'face' time, over time" (Tibble, 2019).

This conversation, relationship-building, space-making stage, is not the first step to be completed then left behind in a linear process. Instead, it sets the stage for its ongoing importance and conscious return to it. At the beginning, it provides architects and communities opportunity to reflect on their worldview and assumptions, before diving into design activities. In our engagements, it became clear that food was a great equaliser of power dynamics in these discussions. The process of sitting down at a table and sharing snacks or dinner (generously provided by the Te Puna), relaxed everybody. I think it was partly due to the element of time – there was less pressure to provide a detailed response immediately – and it gave the rangatahi a chance to reflect on what we had discussed



↑ *In a re-imagined design process the relationship encapsulates the entire process.*



and bring forth further insights. It also allowed me to reflect on my approach – What were the power dynamics in the room? How did I ask questions? What stood out to me or surprised me, that made me think about my positionality differently, or made me see the rangatahi in a different light? These conversations, initial and ongoing, were crucial chances for reflection and created space for improvement to future conversations.

#### **BRIDGING A COMMUNICATION GAP: AR & VR EXPERIENCES**

The ongoing conversations, understanding of spatial values and co-evaluations were enhanced via the use of virtual reality and augmented reality experiences (via the Oculus Rift X and HoloLens 2 headsets). These tools, in addition to being an exciting piece of technology, helped foster spatial understanding and supported the conversations with a visuospatial language as a frame of reference. As we started to translate the values into design potentials, the immersive environments provided opportunity for rangatahi to better grasp the possible implications of design decisions. By having the agency to transform solid objects, change the time of day, time of year, weather

conditions and move through space, looking up and crouching down to experience every angle of a built environment, they could begin to see, in real-time, the effects that space and architecture can have on human, environmental and spiritual aspects of their lives.

Though we explored working with words in an immersive environment the experiences, in my opinion, did not yield better outcomes than those created via pen and paper at a table. Instead, these tools better communicated to rangatahi that design is not static, and that they had the agency to explore all possible changes. By focussing on smaller, ‘design potentials’ I think Mitra and I were able to foster further creativity for the rangatahi and ourselves and explore design concepts in a way that would not have been possible through pen and paper alone.

#### **TAKING A SEAT AT THE TABLE: VALUING COLLABORATION**

The dual briefing system – the spatial and process briefs that sit alongside each other – aims to solidify the importance of collaboration in this project and provide a structure for other parties to refer to when joining the project. The NZIA Student

Awards presentation was a great platform for Mitra and me to test how to present this work and its value to the architecture community. The discussion of specific tools (AR, VR and PC games) and methods (sharing kai, forming questions, dual briefs etc.) seemed to make the decolonised approach that Mitra and I were presenting more accessible and readily implementable to architecture professionals. I admit this is a bit of a generalisation based on a few comments, but I think the fact those comments were made directly to us validates them and suggests the view is more widely held. Our next step is to communicate the value of collaboration with rangatahi on this project to wider stakeholders: other Ngāti Toa rangatahi, iwi decision-makers, potential funders, possible architects and design consultants. The metaphor of ‘taking a seat at the table’ spatially presents the idea of the rangatahi voice being equal to other stakeholders and the importance of making adequate space for them ‘at the table’.

#### **A BRIEF SUMMARY + WHERE TO NEXT**

Admittedly this thesis sits on my existing belief that meaningful collaboration between architects and communities is beneficial to both parties, however, this project has greatly enhanced this belief. Through the five

engagements so far, I’ve seen the rangatahi discuss complex cultural values, create and evaluate complex design concepts and get excited about the possibility of being able to say that they had a hand in co-creating their future kura. I think time<sup>19</sup> and reciprocity are key to the catalysation of Third Space. Structures that actively make space for the ongoing development of relationships will help support meaningful production of architectural design from within a Third Space. It is my hope that the spatial and process briefs we have begun to co-create can help structure meaningful and ongoing collaboration between the rangatahi and any future architects that join the project. Mine and Mitra’s next step after developing the briefs further is to present the work in a format that is clear and compelling to community members and design professionals.

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<sup>19</sup> It must be noted that time is a significant factor in any contributor’s ability to collaborate. Conventionally, designers are compensated for their time engaging the community, however, community groups are often expected to volunteer. This convention implies that the architect’s contribution is of more value and unavoidably creates a power imbalance.



## 8. FINAL OBSERVATIONS



## 8.1 Summary

Three incubator projects explore how a Third Space methodology can inform collaboration between designers and community end-users as a means of pursuing decolonisation within architectural process. The engagements in each project were undertaken collaboratively with fellow student, Mitra Homolja, who focused on youth agency, an approach that complemented the theoretical contexts I explored in Chapter 4. Starting with an interest in exploring decolonisation in architecture, the theoretical investigation narrowed the concept down to its application in architectural process, breaking down identity, agency, and power dynamics through this lens. It was clear to me that these concepts would be best explored – in research and architecture – through a collaborative methodology that was based on several theorists' concept of Third Space (Allan & Smith, 2014; Mossman, 2018; Royal, 1998).

Design processes can enable meaningful engagement with communities by creating a Third Space.

Third Space is a figurative environment in which contributors from different backgrounds can bring forth ideas, values and opinions to be meaningfully discussed and valued.

The concept of Third Space has a fatal flaw: it is undoubtedly an ideal. In my view, this ideal can never be reached in practice. However, it provides a structure through which architects can *pursue* decolonisation in their practice via crafting strong, durable relationships<sup>20</sup> with communities.

Whilst navigating collaboration in a global pandemic, Mitra and I established

<sup>20</sup> Like those mentioned by the Te Aranga Design Principles.

relationships with Amiria and Andrew from FIELD Architecture + Urbanism, and a group of Ngāti Toa rangatahi – Jershon, Kaleb, Camryn, Tayla and their mentor, Bianca. These relationships led to Mitra and me exploring tools that allowed immersive interaction with spatial environments on a level that could help catalyse a conceptual Third Space of conversation.

For meaningful discussion and negotiation to occur in this conceptual 'space', there needs to be a balance of power and agency.

I think this can be enabled through greater spatial understanding, something that can be supported by visuospatial languages such as PC games and immersive virtual and augmented reality experiences.

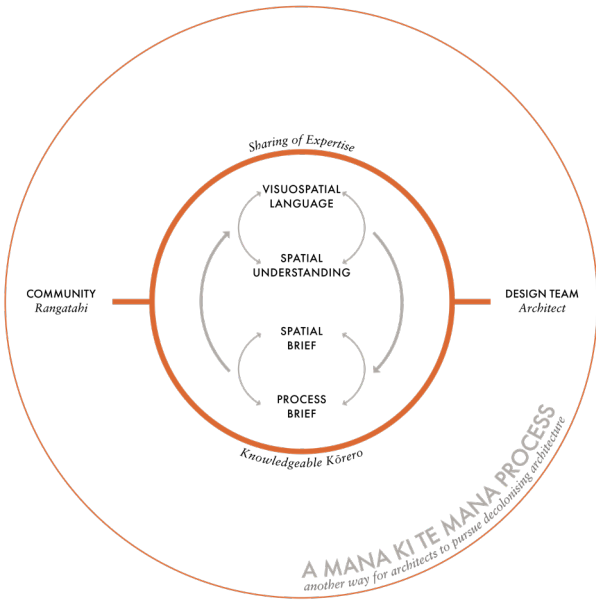
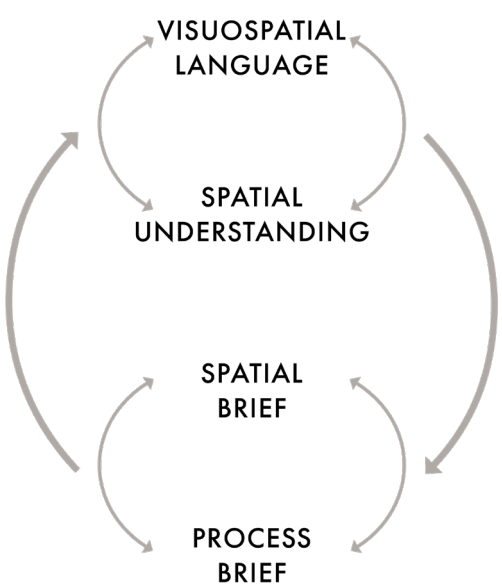
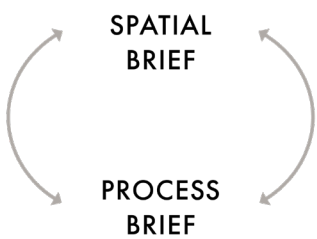
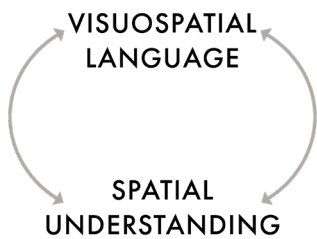
For FIELD, two PC games were developed to aid their collaborations with Christchurch youth and Kiribati youth. The lessons learnt

from these two incubator projects were brought into the third project with Ngāti Toa rangatahi. While the previous two projects focussed on redressing power imbalances between architect and non-architect, this third project brought to the forefront the undeniable power dynamics between indigene and coloniser. There was this duality of relationships that, whilst both dealt with power imbalances, were not entirely comparable. The third project was at the very initial stages – a discussion starting within the iwi – and Mitra and I explore how virtual and augmented realities could enhance the ongoing involvement of rangatahi in this architectural project. From my perspective, this was an exploration of how to catalyse Third Space with rangatahi – as architect/non-architect and as indigene/coloniser – and how we might ensure its longevity in the future architectural process. By building a strong relationship shaped by decolonial theory and visuospatial languages, I think this group of end-users (who would normally be under-represented in a conventional design process) could have more power, agency and influence over the design process, to the benefit of their future kura and their community. The findings of this research, fused with Mitra's insights on rangatahi agency, are represented in a diagram we have named 'a Mana ki te Mana Process'.



8.2 A Mana ki te Mana Process

Mana ki te Mana: a reciprocal relationship that is created through equal authority, agency and respect.



Visuospatial languages (which can be created using spatialising tools such as mixed reality) foster spatial understanding earlier in the design process. The visuospatial languages developed can evolve as the spatial understanding also develops.

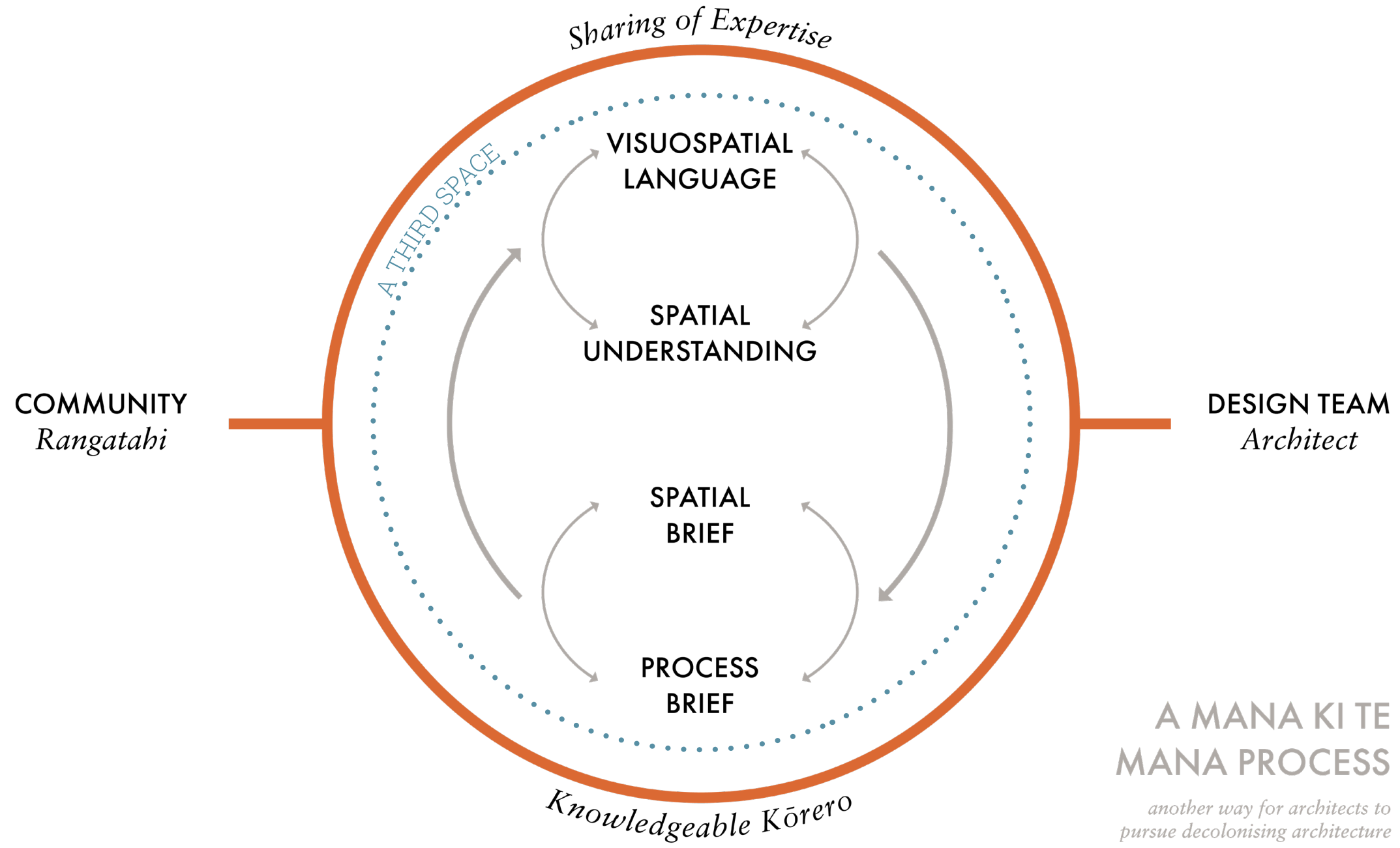
A spatial brief and process brief are co-created to sit alongside each other, supporting the development of one another. The spatial brief outlines the aims and requirements for the built outcome, while the process brief outlines aims and requirements for the relationship between the community and design-team stakeholders.

The spatial understanding and visuospatial languages help develop the briefs further and vice versa.

This process is constant as the spatial understanding enables end-users to share their expertise in an empowered way to keep developing the briefs, and the briefs structure the developing visuospatial languages and spatial understanding.

The ongoing development of spatial understanding and brief building will continue to define the project details by making space for knowledgeable, egalitarian kōrero and sharing of expertise.

This relationship between the community group and the design team is continuous and will evolve in detail, but the bones will remain the same: a high-quality, durable relationship.



### 8.3 A Critical Reflection

Like Mossman's 'Third Space' and Royal's 'Treaty of Waitangi House', A Mana ki te Mana Process diagram visualises what a Third Space could look like, but this time, in the context of architectural process. The diagram is purposefully simple and high-level to allow for complexities distinct to any architectural project which it might influence. Thus, it does not form a checklist for decolonised process, rather, a series of suggested elements that can help guide a high-quality, durable relationship between architects and community groups. Each element – visuospatial languages, spatial understanding, process brief and spatial brief – has been explored, tested and developed via the three projects undertaken with FIELD Studio of Architecture + Urbanism, and the Ngāti Toa Rangatahi. Through our engagements, Andrew, Amiria, Bianca, Jerishon, Kaleb, Camryn and Tayla have

offered insights, values and conversation that have influenced the formation of this process.

I think the strongest aspect of the diagram and the process it represents, is the recognition and importance placed on the intangible parts of the relationship between communities and architects. Because 'a high-quality relationship' can be hard to quantify, it can so easily be put to one side, superseded by more measurable aspects of a project such as budget, policy and time. The formalisation of a process brief gives the architect and community group a written agreement to refer to, evaluate against and, if necessary, remedy. Architects already have such agreements with some stakeholder groups, most often when there is a monetary exchange – there are contracts with funders, with government agencies and with building contractors.

A process brief starts to recognise the worth of knowledge, time and skill being exchanged. Like a conventional spatial brief, I think a process brief should become a standard tool in the architect's wider toolkit. Other tools explored in this research have been PC games, virtual reality and augmented reality, all of which offer immersive, spatial experiences and help communicate space without the prerequisite of being able to mentally translate 2D drawings into 3D space. This is a powerful method of communication between designers and end-users that could be utilised throughout the design process to bridge communication gaps and aid spatial understanding. Though the VR and AR experiences may not represent a final design, they are a tool through which architects can design meaningful collaboration and conversation, leading to final designs.

It is these spatial skills and knowledge, with a good dose of self-reflection, that architects can bring to a Third Space, allowing them to engage with the cultural values and knowledge which the end-users contribute.

As the name suggests, a Mana ki te Mana Process values these contributions equally, making the relationship less likely to reinforce colonial structures.

The role of the architect is so much more than designing spaces.

Architects have the agency and power to represent identity in built form and this places responsibility on them to ensure that the values and worldviews of others are represented genuinely.

At the moment, Aotearoa's public architecture predominantly reflects a colonial identity though there are a growing number of public buildings that are starting to do otherwise. To do so, architects need to be able to engage meaningfully with cultures and worldviews other than their own. I once heard someone say, "in Aotearoa, architects and architecture that are not actively decolonising, are complicit in ongoing colonisation" (Ritani,



2020). It's a powerful statement, and one I think, that makes very clear that the responsibility of action lies on all architects. It is up to non-Māori architects to engage with Māori communities and community members in an appropriate way – which I think they can start to do via collaborative processes.

Collaborative research [and design] relationships are essential to insight, and there are far too few good coloniser-indigene collaborations; the hyphen, after all, joins as well as separates.

... A united front in indigenous-colonizer research collaborations is at times pragmatically important, and “us” may name that collaboration. [However] “us” cannot stand in place of the hyphen; it can only name an always conditional relationship-between.

*(Jones and Jenkins, 2014, p. 7)*

This research has been partly a personal journey exploring identity and decolonisation, partly a collaborative journey with my colleague Mitra, and partly a community-based journey with FIELD Architecture + Urbanism and Ngāti Toa Rangatahi. The outcomes reflect this multiplicity. Mitra and I hope that our collaboration will inspire others as, amongst other aspects, it has allowed us to traverse more ground than if we worked alone. This has been beneficial for reaching more end-users, and for the critical development of our individual research. The PC games developed for FIELD aim to aid their engagement with youth in Christchurch and Kiribati, and we hope will add another valuable tool to their existing toolkit. The engagements with Ngāti Toa rangatahi so far have explored their values, their views on decolonising education, exposed them to emerging technologies and recognised their expertise and importance in any future design process. It has laid the groundwork for a durable relationship that will continue past this thesis and I hope, support their significant role in designing their future kura. Finally, this research has allowed me to explore how I might practice decolonisation and architecture in the future – it has been the most challenging, invaluable, and fun twelve months and has formed the beginning of something that I hope to continue further.

Because ultimately, it is not about decolonising the door or the lintel; it is about changing how architecture engages with people, with tangata whenua, with rangatahi, and to change how we as architects produce architecture.

*(M. Homolja and L. Ransfield,  
personal communication, November 21, 2020)*

# 8.4 Next Steps

As discussed in Chapter 4, many scholars agree that Māori need to lead decolonising processes but Pākehā have an important role in being good allies.

Drawing on the lessons learnt from this research and the collaborative relationships that structured it, enabling a figurative Third Space can help non-Māori architects support decolonisation in their practice via strong, durable relationships.

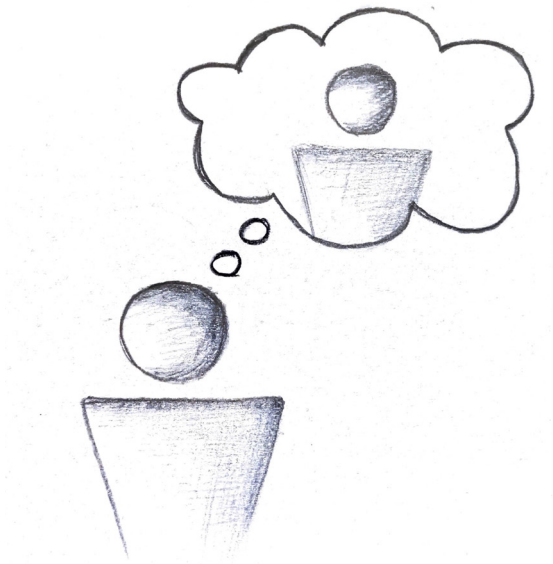
In this vein, the following tips have been formulated to support Pākehā architects and designers engage better with decolonising processes.

## THIS PĀKEHĀ'S TOP TIPS FOR CREATING A THIRD SPACE:

At its core, Third Space is a figurative environment in which contributors from different backgrounds can bring forth ideas, values and opinions that can be meaningfully discussed and valued.



- × Drawing inspiration from Atawai Tibble’s “Engaging with Māori” (2019), sit down for a cuppa.  
  
Aka. Relax! Not every interaction should be loaded with purpose, objectives, checklists etc. The best trust-building happens when both parties can relax. And often, the most interesting conversations happen in this environment.



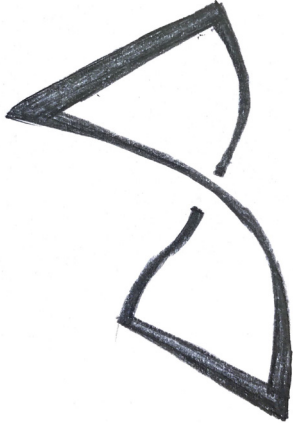
- × Reflect on your own journey: your education, your interests, your likes and dislikes.  
  
Remember when you were first learning to draw an architectural plan? Remember when you didn’t know what ‘atmospheric’ meant? Take a moment to break down the jargon and talk about complex design concepts in plain language without ‘dumbing it down’.

- × Help your community collaborators to understand that they have expertise important to architecture and important to the design process.

Often this little element can have the biggest effects on how community members will engage with designers.

- × Difference is good! Make space (in your practice, in your tools, in your mind, in your calendar) for activities and conversations outside your status quo because difference is where innovative ideas are born.

Remember that a difference of opinions isn't always something that needs to be resolved. Perhaps it's a new approach, or an evaluation method that is different to your own, but it's no less valuable. Make sure to explore this difference within the appropriate cultural structures and check that the conversation/practice is not being subsumed by hegemonic, colonial structures.



- × Be led and be flexible. How does the community want to engage?

Make space (in time and in budget) for the unknown. This can be a hard one because in the industry usually time=money and budgets are limited. Where you can, advocate for time and allow for as much flexibility as possible to make it time well-spent. Quality time spent at the start can save massive amounts of time and money later, not to mention the long-term connection and care created between people and space.

### TIPS FOR INTEGRATING MIXED REALITY & PC GAMES INTO THE ARCHITECT'S TOOLKIT

- × Get to know a software developer.

Or at least someone with more knowledge than you of the software you choose to design in. What might take you three days scouring YouTube tutorials to figure out, will take five minutes and a coffee for them to show you.

That's not to say you should simply get a software developer to design your interactive tools. You have spatial understanding skills that have been developed over years of training and experience that cannot be emulated. Collaboration with an Unreal Engine or Unity 3D expert will simply make the translation of these skills much quicker and far less painful.

- × Test it.

On as many different people as you can. With your grandma, with your friend's 4-year-old kid, with your architecture school mate, etc.

I can guarantee you that each person, regardless of their familiarity with technology or architecture, will have feedback that you would have never thought of by yourself.

- × Play!

The tool is meant to be fun. It's a chance for non-architects *and* architects to experience a conceptual space in a way that cannot be done via plans, sections and perspective images. As a designer, you will notice elements of your design that you hadn't considered before.



A small handbook. ➤



# WHO IS THIS FOR?

*This is a condensed version of the major findings from a Master of Architecture thesis.*

*It offers key tips to architects, industry professionals, students, academics and anyone else interested in architecture.*

*It covers what to consider, what to apply, what to use, what to do, and how these things might impact practice and our society in Aotearoa.*

*This volume is one of many in this series which covers a broad range of topics relating to architecture, space and society.*

1

# BACKGROUND

In Aotearoa, our history of colonisation means that Western structures imbue all areas of our lives and the world in which we live is based upon Western ideologies. In its many states – buildings, space, process and theory – architecture holds an important role in society as a physical representation of identity and spatial system that guides how we act and live.

Architects have the agency and power to represent identity in built form and this places responsibility on them to ensure that the values and worldviews of others are represented genuinely.

2

# DECOLONISATION

3

Architecture that is designed via a process that is rooted in a Western understanding of the world is going to express Western knowledge and values. This is not always a negative thing, however, in Aotearoa conventional design processes often don't engage with other worldviews, like Te Ao Māori, as well as they could. I once heard someone say, “in Aotearoa, architects and architecture that are not actively decolonising, are complicit in ongoing colonisation”. It's a powerful statement, and one that makes clear that the responsibility lies on all architects. Though Māori need to lead decolonising processes, Pākehā have an important role in being good allies.

# A MANA KI TE MANA APPROACH

4

*Mana ki te Mana: a reciprocal relationship that is created through equal authority, agency and respect.*

An approach which ensures ongoing engagement enables a mutual sharing of expertise, which embeds a sense of belonging and awhi over the architectural project and in the long run, any built outcomes.

For more detail about this approach and the tools which can support it, refer to 'A Mana ki te Mana Process' developed in '(a) Rangatahi Project' by Mitra Homolja (2021) and 'A Third Space', by Ellie Tuckey (2021).

# THIRD SPACE

5

A key theoretical concept that informed a Mana ki te Mana approach is Third Space. Enabling a figurative Third Space can help non-Māori architects support decolonisation in their practice via strong, durable relationships. This collaborative methodology aims to redress power imbalances between architect and non-architect, and is based on several theorists' concept of Third Space (Allan & Smith; Mossman; Royal).

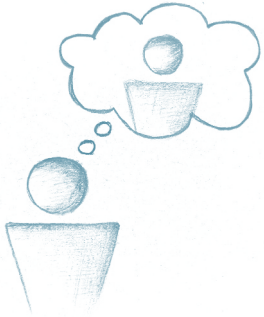
# 6

*Third Space is a figurative environment in which contributors from different backgrounds can bring forth ideas, values and opinions to be meaningfully discussed and valued.*

The following tips have been formulated to support Pākehā architects engage better with decolonising processes by enabling a Third Space:

- + Drawing inspiration from Atawai Tibble's "Engaging with Māori", sit down for a cuppa.

Aka. Relax! Not every interaction should be loaded with purpose, objectives, checklists etc. The best trust-building happens when both parties can relax. And often, the most interesting conversations happen in this environment.



7

+ Reflect on your own journey: your education, your interests, your likes and dislikes.

Remember when you were first learning to draw an architectural plan? Remember when you didn't know what 'atmospheric' meant? Take a moment to break down the jargon and talk about complex design concepts in plain language without 'dumbing it down'.

+ Help your community collaborators to understand that they have expertise important to architecture and important to the design process.

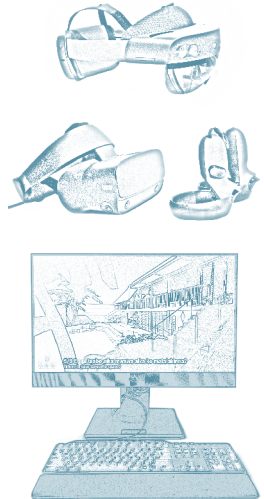
Often this little element can have the biggest effects on how community members will engage with designers.

+ Difference is good! Make space (in your practice, in your tools, in your mind, in your calendar) for activities and kōrero outside your status quo because difference is where innovative ideas are born.

Remember that a difference of opinions isn't always something that needs to be resolved. Perhaps it's a new approach, or an evaluation method that is different to your own, but it's no less valuable. Make sure to explore this difference within the appropriate cultural structures and check that the conversation/practice is not being subsumed by colonial structures.

+ Add to your collaborative toolkit.

Spatialising tools such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and PC games offer immersive experiences and remove the prerequisite of being able to mentally translate 2D drawings into 3D space. They can help you create a visuospatial language that can support Third Space discussions throughout the design process by bridging communication gaps and supporting spatial understanding for yourself and the community.



9

+ Be led and be flexible. How does the community want to engage?

Make space (in time and in budget) for the unknown. This can be a hard one because in the industry usually time=money and budgets are limited. Where you can, advocate for time and allow for as much flexibility as possible to make it time well-spent. Quality time spent at the start can save massive amounts of time and money later, not to mention the long-term connection and care created between people and space.

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Many thanks to my collaborators whose generosity, knowledge and trust helped form my thesis and the tips in this guide.

An Architect's Guide to Decolonisation.

Summarised from  
A Third Space.  
by Ellie Tuckey  
2021





## 9. REFERENCES



9.1 Glossary

Augmented Reality (AR)	<i>An overlay of digital information on a real space.</i>	Kura	<i>School, education, learning gathering.</i>	Te Tiriti o Waitangi	<i>The Treaty of Waitangi.</i>	Visuospatial language	<i>A visual representation of space that can be used to communicate design concepts.</i>
Brief	<i>A set of instructions and criteria.</i>	Mana ki te Mana	<i>A reciprocal relationship that is created through equal authority, agency and respect.</i>	Third Space	<i>My definition of Third Space is a figurative environment in which contributors from different backgrounds can bring forth ideas, values and opinions to be meaningfully discussed and valued.</i>	Whenua	<i>The land.</i>
Design potential	<i>A designed space that is not a final design but instead, intended to propel conversation by providing a visuospatial language.</i>	Mātauranga Māori	<i>Māori knowledge.</i>				
		Rangatahi	<i>Youth, young person.</i>				
		Spatial understanding	<i>The ability to comprehend how a 3D space will feel.</i>	Tikanga	<i>Protocol. The customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context</i>		
Immersive	<i>A three-dimensional image which appears to surround the user.</i>	Tangata whenua	<i>Local people, hosts, indigenous people - people born of the whenua.</i>				
Kai	<i>Food.</i>						
Kōrero	<i>Talking, conversation.</i>	Tangata tiriti	<i>A person, or people, of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.</i>	Virtual Reality (VR)	<i>A fully immersive digital environment.</i>		

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[http://bit.ly/Games\\_Amalgamated](http://bit.ly/Games_Amalgamated)

Url for video files:  
[http://bit.ly/A\\_Third\\_Space](http://bit.ly/A_Third_Space)

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FIG 03. OWP/P Cannon Design Inc., VS Furniture, & Bruce Mau Design. (2014). *The Third Teacher: 79 Ways You Can Use Design to Transform Teaching & Learning*. Abrams.

FIG 04. FIELD Architecture + Urbanism. (n.d.). [Photograph of a collaborative engagement]. Reprinted with permission.

FIG 05. [Photograph of Social Pinpoint used for Porirua Development]. (n.d.). Retrieved March 7, 2021 from <https://www.poriruadevelopment.co.nz/blog/social-pinpoint/>. Image redacted for publication.

FIG 06. [Screen Capture of Engagement IQ used by Wellington City Council]. (n.d.). Retrieved March 7, 2021 from <https://www.letstalk.wellington.govt/central-library>. Image redacted for publication.

FIG 07. [Photograph of U\_CODE]. (2019). Retrieved March 7, 2021 from <https://www.u-code.eu>. Image redacted for publication.

FIG 08. *Third Space* [Diagram]. Adapted from Mossman, M. (2018). Third Space in Architecture. In R. Kiddle, L. P. Stewart, & K. O’Brien (Eds.), *Our Voices: Indigeneity and Architecture* (p. 199). ORO Editions.

FIG 09. *The Treaty of Waitangi House model* [Diagram]. Adapted from Allan, P., & Smith, H. (2014). Research at the Interface: Bi-cultural studio in New Zealand, a case study. *MAI Journal*, 2(2), 146; and Royal, T. A. C. (1998). *Mātauranga Māori Paradigms and Politics*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry for Research, Science and Technology, p. 10.

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FIG 11. *Convergence or Confluence/Tributaries model* [Diagram]. Adapted from Mercier, O. R. (2012, November 14). *Mātauranga Māori and Science*. Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga Media Centre. <http://mediacentre.maramatanga.ac.nz/content/m%C4%81tauranga-m%C4%81ori-and-science-0>

FIG 12. FIELD Architecture + Urbanism. (n.d.). [Diagram of the organisations involved]. Reprinted with permission.

FIG 13. FIELD Architecture + Urbanism. (n.d.). [Diagram of Youth Hub areas]. Reprinted with permission.

FIG 14. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020, August 3). *Reflections on Youth Hub Game and Kiribati Game Interview* [Video Still].

FIG 15. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *A later iteration of The Youth Hub game* [Screen Capture].

FIG 16. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *The rationale for this version of the game* [Screen Capture].

FIG 17. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020, August 3). *Reflections on Youth Hub Game and Kiribati Game Interview* [Video Still].

FIG 18. [Screenshot of The Sims]. Retrieved March 7, 2021 from <https://plumbobpost.tumblr.com/post/170367576875/six-things-you-didnt-know-you-didnt-know-about>. Image redacted for publication.

FIG 19. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *Camryn testing VR in the 1st engagement* [Video Still].

FIG 20. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *Initial plan for engagements* [Document].

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FIG 35. - FIG 40. Homolja, M. (2020). *A VR environment* [Screen Capture]. Reprinted with permission.

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FIG 47. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *The process and spatial briefs as of December 2020* [Diagram].

FIG 48. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *Rangatahi trying out other VR projects at the architecture school* [Photograph].

FIG 49. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *Kai and kōrero always featured in our engagements* [Photograph].

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FIG 51. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *A Mana ki te Mana table top* [Diagram].

FIG 52. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *Building and assembling the table top* [Photograph].

FIG 53. St. George, D. (2020, December). *NZIA Student Design Awards* [Photograph]. Reprinted with permission.

FIG 54. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *NZIA Student Design Awards* [Photograph].

FIG 55. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *High school students trying tools* [Photograph].

FIG 56. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *High school students trying tools* [Photograph].

FIG 57. Homolja, M. & Tuckey, E. (2020). *A Mana ki te Mana Process* [Diagram].

FIG 58. St. George, D. (2020, December). *NZIA Student Design Awards* [Photograph]. Reprinted with permission.

FIG 59. SANNZ. (2020, December). *Instagram story* [Screen Capture]. Reprinted with permission.



9.4 Appendix 1: A Note on Collaboration Between Students

Navigating collaborative work for a Master of Architecture thesis has been difficult, but well worth it.

Mitra and I first met in 2019 when we collaborated on a 4th-year project. The total group was five students in total and the collaboration was voluntary, with other students preferring to tackle the brief individually. This project was a success in more ways than one, and it provided the starting point for Mitra and me to continue collaborating.

Having come from the School of Design at Massey University, I had found previous ‘group’ projects at the Victoria University architecture school surprisingly difficult to navigate in comparison to what I

had experienced at Massey. At Massey, approximately a quarter of the core design projects I undertook were group projects and marked accordingly: 100% group grade. There were of course systems in place to request individual marking, but in my experience, this was rarely pursued. I estimate a further 25% of all papers had a collaborative component and in general, collective practice was encouraged. My experiences of group work at the School of Architecture at Victoria University were quite different. Occasionally you hear about interesting collaborative work being undertaken informally, however, formal group work is highly irregular and when it is done, marking criteria rules that a maximum of 15% of a student’s grade can be attributed to group work. This, I think, structures the students’ emphasis on the 85%

individual grade as it deems the individual work as more valuable, to the detriment of the group component. In my opinion, a culture of individualism is structured through the marking criteria and prevents the fostering of collaborative environments – the primary mode of working in the architecture industry. This culture of individualism was also present in the NZIA Student Design Awards discussed in Chapter 7. Due to there being two of us, our project was disqualified from the awards however, thanks to the support and perseverance from a few members of staff, we were still able to present. In a way,

the situation took the pressure off Mitra and me as we literally had nothing to lose, we just had a big statement to make.

Mitra and I started seeking advice on how to undertake a collaborative thesis project towards the end of 2019. For the most part, the people we consulted were supportive<sup>21</sup> though when prompted for advice on pursuing this formally, were unable to suggest much more than reading the Master’s Thesis Regulations. One particular part that needed further clarification was Clause 6c which states:

Up to 15% of the assessment within a research portfolio may be based on group work where students work collaboratively to explore and develop ideas and solutions to problems, but submit individual work. In exceptional circumstances, where justified by the nature of the discipline, the Dean FGR may approve up to 75% of the work being undertaken in a group context if satisfied that the level of dependency between the candidates’ work will not jeopardise individual candidate’s success. Such approval must be obtained prior to approval of the research portfolio outline.

21 Though one senior lecturer suggested it could diminish our individuality. This belief is rooted in Western epistemology (as discussed in Chapter 1) and was something that Mitra and I were willing to challenge.

By the beginning of March 2020, Mitra and I had secured a supervisor who was supportive of our collaboration and the three of us continued to seek advice. It became clear that approval from the Dean FGR was not an option though whether this was decided by people or by time I am unsure. Thus, this thesis is limited to ‘15% group work’ and is part of the reason we have written separate theses, though we would have preferred to discuss our individual research interests and the practical explorations that resulted, in a singular text. Granted, a Masters thesis is different to a 4th-year project, however, there are examples of collaborative practice in schools of architecture in New Zealand and abroad. Auckland University had a limit of 20% group assessment which, as of mid-2019, has been removed<sup>22</sup>. Looking abroad, institutions such as the Liverpool University School of Architecture are recognised internationally for their group projects at Masters level<sup>23</sup>. The fostering and support of collaboration between students not only prepares us better for the industry but also starts to address the epistemological issues discussed in Chapter 1.

Without a doubt, the collaboration I have had the pleasure of sharing with Mitra has been a success. Mitra’s interest in youth agency and virtual reality has pushed my

own research interests further than I would have been able to do individually. Our shared interest in working with ‘real’ people has been made possible through our ability to share the administrative workload, with us being able to attend countless Zoom meetings, create two PC games, undertake five in-person engagements, create multiple mixed reality experiences, and participate in the NZIA Student Design Awards, all in the 12-month time period. The collaborative practice has challenged my ideas, developed my critical thinking, and created a supportive environment in which I could thrive as an individual.

<sup>22</sup> <https://flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/guide-to-group-work/#Groupworkassessment>

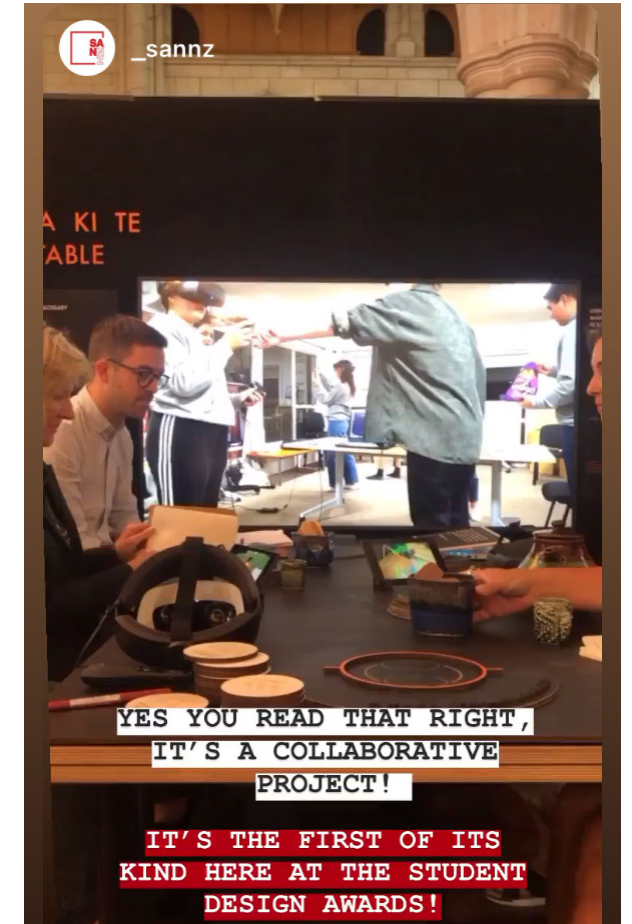
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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/architecture/gallery/zeitgeistarchive/>

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↑ FIG 58. At the NZIA Student Awards.



↑ FIG 59. The SANNZ instagram story.

9.5 Appendix 2: Ethics Approval

1. Focus Group (ages 16 and above):  
Info Sheet & Consent Form (3 pages)

2. Focus Group (under 16 years):  
Info Sheet & Consent Form (3 pages)

3. Focus Group (parents):  
Info Sheet & Consent Form (3 pages)
4. Interview: Info Sheet & Consent Form  
(3 pages)

5. Ethics Protocol for Interviews, Focus  
Groups, Virtual Reality and Filming  
(7 pages)

6. Final Consent Upon Footage Review  
(2 pages)



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Information Sheet for Focus Group Participants —

You are invited to take part in this research. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to participate, thank you for considering this request.

Who are we?

Our names are Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolija, and we are Master of Architectural Studies students at Victoria University of Wellington. This research project is work towards our theses.

What is the aim of the project?

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori voices have been systematically marginalised in euro-centric processes. This research asks how can design processes, explored through the lens of decolonisation, enhance meaningful inclusion and contribute towards social sustainability?

The purpose of this research is to explore decolonisation and understand how it fits in architectural design processes. The scope of the research is limited to the initial stages of the design process: understanding the values of the people who the architecture will be built for.

Your participation will support this research by including your insights from your own reality and experience. Your insights and values will form the foundations of the co-design process. This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee (Application ID: 0000028597).

How can you help?

You have been invited to participate because of your previous involvement in co-design projects or because you are eager to participate in a new co-design project tailored to your community. If you agree to take part, you will be part of a focus group [specific location of focus group TBD]. We will ask you questions about your age, your whakapapa, ethnicity, your previous experiences with co-design, your opinions about the value of co-design, your opinions about the built environment in your community and how you see the future of that built environment unfolding. It will also include creative expressions (drawing, making, photography), and virtual and augmented reality experiences, all of which will be voluntary. If you choose to participate in the VR or AR experiences, you will use goggles to view concept designs or spaces in order to make decisions about these proposed ideas.

The focus group will take approximately one and a half hours. We will video record the focus group with your permission. The video will also be made available to you to review and redact parts or all of it should you feel it misrepresents you or makes you feel uncomfortable. You can withdraw from the focus group at any time before the focus group begins. You can also withdraw while the focus group is in progress, though it will not be possible to withdraw the information you have provided up to that point as it will be part of a discussion with other participants. Once we have edited the video footage from the focus group, you are entitled to review it and choose the level of anonymity you wish, or request that your face/voice not be shown in the footage at all.



What will happen to the information you give?

This research is confidential to the degree you wish to keep it. This means that the researchers named below will be aware of your identity but the research data will be combined and your identity will not be revealed in any reports, presentations, or public documentation unless you consent to it. However, you should be aware that in small projects your identity might be obvious to others in your community. Creative outputs made by you will be filmed and photographed with your consent and understanding that it may be exhibited at the end of the research. You will be fully acknowledged as the author if you wish, and it will be made clear that it is your work and not the researchers.

Once we record you, you will be given multiple opportunities to review footage and ensure you are comfortable with it. You will be given the opportunity to choose your level of identifiability/anonymity (outlined below) upon review of the footage. This will be discussed with you and personalised to your level of comfort.

- 1. I will be identifiable. My face will be shown and my voice will be heard. My contributions will be attributed to me.
- 2. I will be semi-identifiable. My face will be hidden but my voice heard. My contributions will be attributed to me.
- 3. I will possibly be identifiable by people I know. My face will be hidden but my voice heard. My contributions will not be attributed to me directly.
- 4. I will be anonymous. Neither my face nor my voice will be shown. My contributions will not be attributed to me.

What will the project produce?

The information from this research will be used in our Masters reports and presentations. We also intend to disseminate our collaborative findings in a community exhibition towards the end of the year, which you will be invited to collaborate on and attend. This will include a short documentary-style film, created from the footage recorded at these focus groups. The research outcomes may also be used in academic publications, student design competitions and our work portfolios, however, the research and film won't be used on social media without seeking additional permission from Ngāti Toa Rangatira.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

- You don't have to accept this invitation if you don't want to. If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:
- o choose not to answer any question;
  - o ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the focus group;
  - o withdraw from the focus group while it is taking part however it will not be possible to withdraw the information you have provided up to that point;
  - o ask any questions about the study at any time;
  - o be able to review any footage of you and ask for it to be removed from any dissemination of the research;
  - o be able to read any reports of this research by emailing the researchers to request a copy.

If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact us:

Students:	Supervisor:
Name: Ellie Tuckey	Name: Dr Rebecca Kiddle
University email address:	Role: Senior Lecturer
	School: Wellington School of Architecture
Name: Mitra Homolja	Phone:
University email address:	Email:

Human Ethics Committee Information

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University of Wellington HEC Convenor: Associate Professor Judith Loveridge. Email [hec@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:hec@vuw.ac.nz) or telephone +64-4-463 6028.



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Consent to Participate in Focus Groups —

This consent form will be held for 5 years.  
Researchers: Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, Wellington School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington.

- o I have read the Information Sheet and the project has been explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- o I agree to take part in video recorded focus groups.

I understand that:

- o I am agreeing to keep the information shared during the focus groups confidential.
- o All activities in the focus groups (including drawing, making, photography, virtual and augmented reality experiences) are voluntary and I can opt out of any activity at any time.
- o I can withdraw from the focus group while it is in progress however it will not be possible to withdraw the information I have provided up to that point as it will be part of a discussion with other participants.
- o The identifiable information I have provided will be destroyed on 01/12/2025.
- o I understand that the findings may be used for a Masters report, presentation and short film; all of which will be made publicly available.
- o Should I choose to be anonymous, my name will not be used in reports and utmost care will be taken not to disclose any information that would identify me.
- o I understand that the observations and recordings will be kept confidential to the researchers and the supervisor until it is disseminated with my approval, or not disseminated at all should I choose to opt out.

I consent to information, opinions, or creative outputs which I have given being filmed:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I understand I will be given an opportunity to review the footage taken of me, choose my level of identifiability/anonymity, and be given an opportunity to redact any footage, prior to any dissemination to the public:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to receive a copy of the final reports and video footage and have added my email address below:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of participant:	<div></div>
Name of participant:	<div></div>
Date:	<div></div>
Contact details:	<div></div>



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Information Sheet for Youth Participants —

Kia ora! You are invited to take part in this research. Please read this information with a parent or guardian before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to participate, thank you for considering this request.

Who are we?

Our names are Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, and we are Master of Architectural Studies students at Victoria University of Wellington. This research project is work towards our theses.

What is the aim of the project?

This research considers how can design processes, explored through the lens of decolonisation, enhance meaningful inclusion and contribute towards social sustainability. In other words, we want to understand how your creative ideas can fit in architectural design processes. We want to invite you to be part of a focus group (a group activity) where we can explore how you see the world and how we can design architecture with the help of your perspective. Your participation will support this research by voluntarily providing your insights from your own reality and experiences. Your personal insight and values will be the foundations of the co-design process. This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee (Application ID : 0000028597).

How can you help?

You have been invited to participate because you are eager to participate in a new co-design project tailored to your community. If you agree to take part you will be part of a focus group. We will ask you and other participants questions about your age, your whakapapa/ethnicity, your opinions about the value of co-design, your opinions about the built environment in your community and how you see the future of that community unfolding. It will also include creative activities (drawing, making, photography), and virtual and augmented reality experiences, all of which will be voluntary. If you choose to participate in the VR or AR experiences, you will use goggles to view concept designs or spaces in order to make decisions about these proposed ideas.

The focus group will take approximately one and a half hours. We will video record the focus group with your permission. The video will also be made available to you to review and take out parts or all of it should you feel it misrepresents you or makes you feel uncomfortable. You can withdraw from the focus group at any time before the focus group begins. You can also withdraw while the focus group is in progress. However, it will not be possible to withdraw the information you have provided up to that point as it will be part of a discussion with other participants. Once we have edited the video footage from the focus group, you are entitled to review it and choose the level of anonymity you wish, or request that your face/voice not be shown in the footage at all.

What will happen to the information you give?

This research is confidential to the degree you wish to keep it. This means that the researchers named below will be aware of your identity but the research data will be combined and your identity will not be revealed in any reports, presentations, or public documentation unless you consent to it. However, you should be aware that in small projects your identity might be obvious to others in your community. Creative outputs made by you will be filmed and photographed with your permission and understanding that it may be exhibited at the end of the research. You will be fully acknowledged as the author if you wish, and it will be made clear that it is your work and not the researchers.

Once we record you, you will be given multiple opportunities to review footage and ensure you are comfortable with it. You will be given the opportunity to choose your level of identifiability/anonymity (outlined below) upon review of the footage. This will be discussed with you and your parent/guardian and personalised to your level of comfort.

- 1. I will be identifiable. My face will be shown and my voice will be heard. My contributions will be attributed to me.
- 2. I will be semi-identifiable. My face will be hidden but my voice heard. My contributions will be attributed to me.
- 3. I will possibly be identifiable by people I know. My face will be hidden but my voice heard. My contributions will not be attributed to me directly.
- 4. I will be anonymous. Neither my face nor my voice will be shown. My contributions will not be attributed to me.

What will the project produce?

The information from this research will be used in our Masters reports and presentations. We also intend to disseminate our collaborative findings in a community exhibition towards the end of the year, which you will be invited to collaborate on and attend. This will include a short documentary-style film, created from the footage recorded at these focus groups. The research outcomes may also be used in academic publications, student design competitions and our work portfolios, however, the research and film won't be used on social media without seeking additional permission from Ngāti Toa Rangatira.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

You don't have to accept this invitation if you don't want to. If you do decide to participate, they have the right to:

- o choose not to answer any question;
- o ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the focus group;
- o withdraw from the focus group while it is taking part however it will not be possible to withdraw the information you have provided up to that point;
- o ask any questions about the study at any time;
- o be able to review any footage of you and ask for it to be removed from any dissemination of the research;
- o be able to read (or have explained) any reports of this research by emailing the researchers to request a copy.

If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact us:

Students:	Supervisor:
Name: Ellie Tuckey	Name: Dr Rebecca Kiddle
University email address:	Role: Senior Lecturer
	School: Wellington School of Architecture
Name: Mitra Homolja	Phone:
University email address:	Email:

Human Ethics Committee Information

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University of Wellington HEC Convenor: Associate Professor Judith Loveridge. Email [hec@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:hec@vuw.ac.nz) or phone +64-4-463 6028.



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Consent to Participate in Focus Groups —

*This consent form will be held for 5 years.*  
*Researchers: Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, Wellington School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington.*

- o I have read the Information Sheet with a parent/guardian and the project has been explained to me. My questions have been answered and I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- o I agree to take part in video recorded focus groups.

- I understand that:
- o I am agreeing to keep the information shared during the focus groups to myself.
  - o All activities in the focus groups (including drawing, making, photography, virtual and augmented reality experiences) are voluntary and I can opt out of any activity at any time.
  - o I can withdraw from the focus group while it is in progress however it will not be possible to withdraw the information I have provided up to that point as it will be part of a discussion with other participants.
  - o The identifiable information I have provided will be destroyed on 01/12/2025.
  - o I understand that the findings may be used for a Masters report, presentation and short film; all of which will be made publicly available.
  - o Should I choose to be anonymous, my name will not be used in reports and utmost care will be taken not to disclose any information that would identify me.
  - o I understand that the observations and recordings will be kept confidential to the researchers and the supervisor until it is disseminated with my approval, or not disseminated at all should I choose to opt out.

I consent to information, opinions, or creative outputs which I have given being filmed:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand I will be given an opportunity to review the footage taken of me, choose my level of identifiability/anonymity, and be given an opportunity to redact any footage, prior to any dissemination to the public:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to receive a copy of the final reports and video footage and have added my email address below:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Information Sheet for Parents/Caregivers of Participants —

Kia ora! You and your child are invited to take part in this research. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to participate, thank you for considering this request.

**Who are we?**  
Our names are Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, and we are Master of Architectural Studies students at Victoria University of Wellington. This research project is work towards our theses.

**What is the aim of the project?**  
In Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori voices have been systematically marginalised in euro-centric processes. This research asks how can design processes, explored through the lens of decolonisation, enhance meaningful inclusion and contribute towards social sustainability?  
The purpose of this research is to explore decolonisation and understand how it fits in architectural design processes. The scope of the research is limited to the initial stages of the design process: understanding the values of the people who the architecture will be built for.  
Your participation will support this research by including your insights from your own reality and experience. Your insights and values will form the foundations of the co-design process. This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee (Application ID: 0000028597).

**How can you help?**  
Your child has been invited to participate because they or you are eager for them to participate in a new co-design project tailored to your community. If you agree for your child to take part they will be part of a focus group [specific location of focus group TBD]. We will ask your child questions about their age, whakapapa, ethnicity, their opinions about the value of co-design, their opinions about the built environment in their community and they see the future of that built environment unfolding. It will also include creative expressions (drawing, making, photography), and virtual and augmented reality experiences, all of which will be voluntary. If your child chooses to participate in the VR or AR experiences, they will use goggles to view concept designs or spaces in order to make decisions about these proposed ideas.  
The focus group will take approximately one and a half hours. We will video record the focus group with you and your child's permission. The video will also be made available to you and your child to review and redact parts or all of it should you feel it misrepresents your child or makes them feel uncomfortable. Your child can withdraw from the focus group at any time before the focus group begins. Your child can also withdraw while the focus group is in progress. However, it will not be possible to withdraw the information you have provided up to that point as it will be part of a discussion with other participants. We will be running the focus group under direct supervision of our supervisor, and will not be unattended at any point. We strongly believe in a family-friendly ethos, and we welcome and encourage you to attend the focus group your child is participating in. Once we have edited the video footage from the focus group, you and your child are entitled to review it and choose the level of anonymity you/they wish, or request that their face/voice not be shown in the footage at all.



What will happen to the information your child gives?

This research is confidential to the degree you and your child wish to keep it. This means that the researchers named below will be aware of your identity but the research data will be combined and your identity will not be revealed in any reports, presentations, or public documentation unless you and your child consent to it. However, you should be aware that in small projects your identity might be obvious to others in your community. Creative outputs made by your child will be filmed and photographed with you and your child’s consent and understanding that it may be exhibited at the end of the research. Your child will be fully acknowledged as the author if you and your child wish, and it will be made clear that it is your child’s work and not the researchers. Once we record your child, you will be given multiple opportunities to review footage and ensure you are comfortable with it. You will be given the opportunity to choose your child’s level of identifiability/anonymity (outlined below) upon review of the footage. This will be discussed with you and your child and personalised to your level of comfort.

- 1. Your child will be identifiable. Your child’s face will be shown and their voice will be heard. Your child’s contributions will be attributed to them.
- 2. Your child will be semi-identifiable. Their face will be hidden but voice heard. Your child’s contributions will be attributed to them.
- 3. Your child will possibly be identifiable by people you/they know. Your child’s face will be hidden but their voice will be heard. Your child’s contributions will not be attributed to them directly.
- 4. Your child will be anonymous. Neither your child’s face nor their voice will be shown. Your child’s contributions will not be attributed to them.

What will the project produce?

The information from this research will be used in our Masters reports and presentations. We also intend to disseminate our collaborative findings in a community exhibition towards the end of the year, which you and your child will be invited to collaborate on and attend. This will include a short documentary-style film, created from the footage recorded at these focus groups. The research outcomes may also be used in academic publications, student design competitions and our work portfolios, however, the research and film won’t be used on social media without seeking additional permission from Ngāti Toa Rangatira.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

You don’t have to accept this invitation if you don’t want to. If you do decide to let your child participate, they can:

- o choose not to answer any question;
- o ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the focus group;
- o withdraw from the focus group while it is taking part however it will not be possible to withdraw the information you have provided up to that point;
- o ask any questions about the study at any time;
- o be able to review any footage of you and ask for it to be removed from any dissemination of the research;
- o be able to read (or have explained) any reports of this research by emailing the researchers to request a copy.

If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact us:

Students:	Supervisor:
Name: Ellie Tuckey	Name: Dr Rebecca Kiddle
Email: [redacted]	Role: Senior Lecturer
Name: Mitra Homolja	School: Wellington School of Architecture
Email: [redacted]	Phone: [redacted]
	Email: [redacted]

Human Ethics Committee Information

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University of Wellington HEC Convenor: Associate Professor Judith Loveridge. Email [hec@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:hec@vuw.ac.nz) or phone +64-4-463 6028.



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Consent for Child’s Participation in Focus Groups —

This consent form will be held for 5 years.  
Researchers: Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, Wellington School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington.

- o I have read the Information Sheet and the project has been explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- o I agree to my child taking part in video recorded focus groups.

I understand that:

- o I am agreeing to keep the information shared with my child during the focus groups confidential.
- o All activities in the focus groups (including drawing, making, photography, virtual and augmented reality experiences) are voluntary and my child can opt out of any activity at any time.
- o I can withdraw my child from the focus group while it is in progress however it will not be possible to withdraw the information they have provided up to that point as it will be part of a discussion with other participants.
- o The identifiable information my child has provided will be destroyed on 01/12/2025.
- o I understand that the findings may be used for a Masters report, presentation and short film; all of which will be made publicly available.
- o Should I choose that my child be anonymous, their name will not be used in reports and utmost care will be taken not to disclose any information that would identify them.
- o I understand that the observations and recordings will be kept confidential to the researchers and the supervisor until it is disseminated with my approval, or not disseminated at all should I choose to opt out.

I consent to information, opinions, or creative outputs which my child has given being filmed: Yes ☐ No ☐

I understand I will be given an opportunity to review the footage taken of my child, choose the level of identifiability/anonymity, and be given an opportunity to redact any footage, prior to any dissemination to the public: Yes ☐ No ☐

I would like to receive a copy of the final reports and video footage and have added my email address below: Yes ☐ No ☐

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent/caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Information Sheet for Interview Participants —

You are invited to take part in this research. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to participate, thank you for considering this request.

Who are we?

Our names are Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, and we are Master of Architectural Studies students at Victoria University of Wellington. This research project is work towards our theses.

What is the aim of the project?

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori voices have been systematically marginalised in euro-centric processes. This research asks how can design processes, explored through the lens of decolonisation, enhance meaningful inclusion and contribute towards social sustainability?

The purpose of this research is to explore decolonisation and understand how it fits in architectural design processes. The scope of the research is limited to the initial stages of the design process: understanding the values of the people who the architecture will be built for.

Your participation will support this research by including your insights from your own reality and experience. Your insights and values will form the foundations of the co-design process. This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee (Application ID: 0000028597).

How can you help?

You have been invited to participate because of your previous involvement in co-design projects or because you are eager to participate in a new co-design project tailored to your community. If you agree to take part, you will be part of an interview, either via Zoom, or face to face. We will ask you questions about your age, your whakapapa/ethnicity, your previous experiences with co-design, your opinions about the value of co-design, your opinions about the built environment in your community and how you see the future of that built environment unfolding.

The interview will take approximately one hour or less. We will video record the interview with your permission. The video will also be made available to you to review and redact parts or all of it should you feel it misrepresents you or makes you feel uncomfortable. You can withdraw from the interview at any time before the interview begins. You can also withdraw while the interview is in progress. Once we have edited the video footage from the interview, you are entitled to review it and choose the level of anonymity you wish, or request that your face/voice not be shown in the footage at all.

What will happen to the information you give?

This research is confidential to the degree you wish to keep it. This means that the researchers named below will be aware of your identity but the research data will be combined and your identity will not be revealed in any reports, presentations, or public documentation unless you consent to it. However, you should be aware that in small projects your identity might be obvious to others in your community. Once we record you, you will be given multiple opportunities to review footage and ensure you are comfortable with it. You will be given the opportunity to choose your level of identifiability/anonymity (outlined below) upon review of the footage. This will be discussed with you and personalised to your level of comfort.

- 1. I will be identifiable. My face will be shown and my voice will be heard. My contributions will be attributed to me.
- 2. I will be semi-identifiable. My face will be hidden but my voice heard. My contributions will be attributed to me.
- 3. I will possibly be identifiable by people I know. My face will be hidden but my voice heard. My contributions will not be attributed to me directly.
- 4. I will be anonymous. Neither my face nor my voice will be shown. My contributions will not be attributed to me.

What will the project produce?

The information from this research will be used in our Masters reports and presentations. We also intend to disseminate our collaborative findings in a community exhibition towards the end of the year, which you will be invited to collaborate on and attend. This will include a short documentary-style film, created from the footage recorded at this interview. The research outcomes may also be used in academic publications, student design competitions and our work portfolios, however, the research and film won't be used on social media without seeking additional permission.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

You don't have to accept this invitation if you don't want to. If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:

- o choose not to answer any question;
- o ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- o withdraw from the interview while it is taking part however it will not be possible to withdraw the information you have provided up to that point;
- o ask any questions about the study at any time;
- o be able to review any footage of you and ask for it to be removed from any dissemination of the research;
- o be able to read any reports of this research by emailing the researcher to request a copy.

If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact us:

Students:	Supervisor:
Name: Ellie Tuckey	Name: Dr Rebecca Kiddle
University email address:	Role: Senior Lecturer
	School: Wellington School of Architecture
Name: Mitra Homolja	Phone:
University email address:	Email:

Human Ethics Committee Information

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University of Wellington HEC Convenor: Associate Professor Judith Loveridge. Email [hec@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:hec@vuw.ac.nz) or phone +64-4-463 6028.



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Consent to Participate in Interview —

This consent form will be held for 5 years.  
Researchers: Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, Wellington School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington.

- o I have read the Information Sheet and the project has been explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- o I agree to take part in a video recorded interview.

- I understand that:
- o I can withdraw from the interview while it is in progress.
  - o The identifiable information I have provided will be destroyed on 01/12/2025.
  - o I understand that the findings may be used for a Masters report, presentation and short film; all of which will be made publicly available.
  - o Should I choose to be anonymous, my name will not be used in reports and utmost care will be taken not to disclose any information that would identify me.
  - o I understand that the observations and recordings will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor until it is disseminated with my approval, or not disseminated at all should I choose to opt out.

I consent to information, opinions, or creative outputs which I have given being filmed:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand I will be given an opportunity to review the footage taken of me, choose my level of identifiability/anonymity, and be given an opportunity to redact any footage, prior to any dissemination to the public:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to receive a copy of the final reports and video footage and have added my email address below:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

Researchers: Ellie Tuckey, Mitra Homolja  
Project Name: An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

PROTOCOL DOCUMENT 1:  
INTERVIEWS

The interviews will be conducted as a means to identify participant values in regards to the built environment and to evaluate their responses to our interpretations of those values in the form of speculative designs. Interviews will be conducted with approximately 16 people, ranging in age, gender identity, ethnicity and architectural experience. Our intention is to implement and maintain an ethos of safety, privacy and comfort, with the intention that participants feel listened to and cared for throughout the research.

PRE-INTERVIEW PROTOCOL:

- Participants are contacted and recruited via snowball sampling strategy, where a contact person we have established an agreement with will organise people who are willing to participate in our research.
- Participants will be sent a documentation package, including our intention for the interview and consent forms for review. Participants will be given an opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions in regards to the consent forms which they are signing.
- It will be made clear to participants about our intentions around deidentification of data, and that the filming and dissemination of filmed content is created with their choice of anonymity in mind.
- Participants can print the consent form, sign it, scan it and email it back to the researcher. If hard copy documents cannot be obtained, a digital copy, email, or a recorded verbal consent will be accepted.
- Once there is agreement and mutual understanding around protocol and respectful discussion, arrangements will be made for a time and a space for interviews via Zoom. Once it is safe to practice face to face, interviews may be arranged with social distancing and hygiene protocols in place (according to government guidelines in regards to COVID-19).

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL:

- Zoom:
- Participants will be informed again that they are being recorded, and we will reiterate our intentions and their rights to opt out at any moment
  - The recording device will be turned on
  - We will ensure participants are comfortable and prepared to begin the interview
  - Interviews lasting longer than half an hour will have a 5-10 minute break.

- Face to face:
- Participants will be offered kai/refreshments prior to the interview
  - Participants will be informed again that they are being recorded, and we will reiterate our intentions and their rights to opt out at any moment
  - The recording device will be turned on
  - We will ensure participants are comfortable and prepared to begin the interview
  - Interviews lasting longer than half an hour will have a 5-10 minute break.



Interview Questions:  
Note, questions may be altered in the interview however, the intent will remain the same.

- What are your opinions about co-design between architects and clients?
- What are your experiences of design processes?
- From your experiences, what are the positives and negatives in co-design between architects and clients? Is there value to it?
- What does 'decolonisation' mean to you?
- How would you describe the typical relationship between an architect and the end-user of a space?
- What does an architect do?
- What role does the client have in the design process?
- How do you best interpret spatial qualities? ie. from a drawing, a plan, a collage etc.
- What has been the most rewarding experience you've had in a design process and why?
- Without naming specific people/organisations/communities, what has been the most disappointing experience you've had in a design process and why?

POST-INTERVIEW PROTOCOL:

- Thank them for participating and stop the recording.
- Reiterate that they will be given the opportunity to review the footage and have the opportunity to redact anything they do not feel comfortable with. They will be reassured that they will be part of the editing process.
- Once the footage is exported, a copy of the footage will be sent to them via email.

PROTOCOL DOCUMENT 2:  
FOCUS GROUP:

The focus groups will be conducted as a means of engaging participants in creative methods of research, and allow constructive discussions of values to occur. Each engagement will

take place in a space of their choosing\*. Engagements will include korero and visual expressions (drawing, making, photography), VR and AR experiences. Participants will be invited to use tools provided (pens, pencils, paper etc.) and it will be emphasised that they can do as much or a little as they wish. There will also be an opportunity for them to use design tools of their own (ie. mobile phones). The purpose of these engagements is to facilitate discussions through various mediums between all participants and researchers, in the co-creation of knowledge. Our intention is to implement and maintain an ethos of safety, privacy and comfort, with the intention that participants feel listened to and cared for throughout the research.

\*In person engagements will be subject to social distancing rules set by the New Zealand government due to the COVID19 situation. Should we not be able to engage in person, focus groups will be conducted via Zoom and other, similar, online networking tools.

PRE-FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL:

- Participants are contacted and recruited via snowball sampling strategy, where a contact person we have established an agreement with will organise people who are willing to participate in our research.
- Participants will be sent a documentation package, including our intention for the interview and consent forms for review. Participants will be given an opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions in regards to the consent forms which they are signing.
- It will be made clear to participants about our intentions around deidentification of data, and that the filming and dissemination of filmed content is created with their choice of anonymity in mind.
- Participants can print the consent form, sign it, scan it and email it back to the researcher. If hard copy documents cannot be obtained, a digital copy, email, or a recorded verbal consent will be accepted.
- Once there is agreement and mutual understanding around protocol and respectful discussion, arrangements will be made for a time and a space for focus groups to occur. If it is safe to practice face to face, focus groups may be arranged with social distancing and hygiene protocols in place (according to government guidelines in regards to COVID-19).

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL:

Zoom:

- Participants will be informed again that they are being recorded, and we will reiterate our intentions and their rights to opt out at any moment
- The recording device will be turned on
- We will ensure participants are comfortable and prepared to begin
- Focus groups lasting longer than half an hour will have a 5-10 minute break
- The following rules will be outlined:
  - You do not need to agree with others, but you should listen respectfully as others share their views.
  - We would like to hear a wide range of opinions: please speak up on whether you agree or disagree.
  - There are no right or wrong answers, every person's experiences and opinions are important.

Face to face:

- Participants will be offered kai/refreshments prior to the focus group
- Participants will be informed again that they are being recorded, and we will reiterate our intentions and their rights to opt out at any moment
- The recording device will be turned on
- We will ensure participants are comfortable and prepared to begin
- Focus groups lasting longer than half an hour will have a 5-10 minute break
- The following rules will be outlined:
  - You do not need to agree with others, but you should listen respectfully as others share their views.
  - We would like to hear a wide range of opinions: please speak up on whether you agree or disagree.
  - There are no right or wrong answers, every person's experiences and opinions are important.

Focus Group Questions:  
Note, different activities will be undertaken to target different questions. These activities will revolve around creative expression as described above.

- What does an architect do?
- What role does the client have in the design process?
- How do you best interpret spatial qualities? ie. from a drawing, a plan, a collage etc.
- What does 'decolonisation' mean to you?
- Please take a look at this design. Do you think this reflects your values and why?
- What in this design can you relate to?
- If you could change anything in this design, what would you change and why?
- What places in your neighbourhood do you enjoy visiting and why?
- How do you enjoy spending your time? Where does this normally occur?
- How do you imagine this city will look in 10 years? 50 years?
- What is special to you?

PROTOCOL DOCUMENT 3:

VIRTUAL/AUGMENTED REALITY

Virtual reality might be used in the later stages of the focus groups in order to gauge participant reactions to various virtual reality experiences. The VR experiences will be based around existing sites and potential design interventions. They will not involve any content which could potentially cause discomfort or fear to participants.Our intention is to implement and maintain an ethos of safety, privacy and comfort, with the intention that participants feel

listened to and cared for throughout the research. We intend to follow the correct protocol as established by previous VR related projects at the Wellington School of Architecture. This involves providing enough information prior to interaction with VR tools, proper hygiene practices and care towards participants feeling any form of discomfort during the activity.

The AR and VR experiences will be done using an Oculus Rift VR headset and the HoloLens 2. We have no reason to believe that the content of these experiences would be upsetting to participants. This will be filmed, as their responses to the environments will be useful feedback for the development of the spatial outcomes. As with all other footage, participants will have opportunities to review the footage and decide on their level of anonymity for the final presentation. Refreshments and seating will be made available in case of any form of motion sickness. A clear space with a 2 metre radius will be provided so that there are no hazardous objects which could hinder or harm the participants. Participants will not be spending more than 10 minutes with the headsets on. We have both had experience with VR and AR as part of previous research. Both researchers have had previous experience conducting participants in virtual environments.

PRE-VR PROTOCOL:

- Pre-existing conditions such as epilepsy or migraines will be identified verbally prior to participants using the headsets.
- Participants will be informed verbally, in written form (information sheet) and visually (short video) about the use of VR and best practice when using VR tools.
- Participants will be given a brief description of the VR experience they are about to be part of.
- A suitable amount of clear space will be provided so participants can move without any restrictions.
- The participants will be guided by the researchers at all times.
- VR headsets and tools will be thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant wipes prior to any interaction with participants.

VR PROTOCOL:

- Participants will be able to explore the VR environment freely
- Participants will be shown conceptual ideas in virtual space and will be asked to verbally respond to them.
- As the primary risk that should be considered is severe motion or simulator sickness, we will verbally ensure that participants are comfortable, and that they have the right to remove the headset if they feel discomfort at any point.
- Participants might be prompted to turn a certain way or to comment on specific architectural forms
- Participants may be asked to critique the VR experience.

VR prompt Questions:  
Note, questions may be altered in the interview however, the intent will remain the same.

- What are your initial feelings about this space
- What is a disadvantage of this space?
- Does any part of this space make you feel in a negative way? Why?
- Does any part of this space make you feel positive? Why?

- What would improve this space?
- Now that you have spent some time, how do you feel about this space?
- Does this space feel like it fits into your community?
- Does this space feel like it represents your community?
- Can you see yourself living in/inhabiting this space?
- Does this space reflect the values of your community?

POST-VR PROTOCOL:

- Headsets will be removed and disinfected
- Participants will be asked about their VR experience, and whether they see the value in such technology. They will also be asked if they are feeling well after the experience, and will be offered refreshments
- Thank them for participating and stop the recording.
- Reiterate that they will be given the opportunity to review the footage.
- Once the footage is exported, a copy of the footage will be sent to them via email.

PROTOCOL DOCUMENT 4:  
VIDEO FOOTAGE AND  
EDITING

Video footage will be taken of the interviews and focus groups, and will inform a short film that will help disseminate our research. We strongly feel that the privacy and comfort of our participants is a top priority, and take their agency in the process very seriously. Due to the sensitive nature of video footage, we intend to not only offer multiple opportunities of footage to be reviewed and critiqued by participants, but also a number of creative editing options which the participants might explore with us during the editing phase. We hope that this reflects our ethos of care, particularly with the dissemination of footage.

- The final footage will be used for:
1. Our final thesis presentation/thesis defence
  2. A community exhibition (estimated March 2021)

FOOTAGE EDITING PROTOCOL:

- As well as the initial consent form to participate, our participants will be asked to sign a consent form upon approval of the final edited version of the footage (we estimate this to be at some point in December 2020). Up until that point, they have agency in the editing process.
- Editing techniques such as rotoscoping, silhouetting, and digital overlays may be used for participants who chose to not be identified
- Use of participants' voices only may be used if they are comfortable with this
- Camera angles avoiding faces will be favoured
- An original cut and a final cut will be made available to participants. Any concerns will be addressed on a case to case basis to ensure all participants are happy with the final outcome.





An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Consent to Use of Video Footage —

*This consent form will be held for 5 years.  
Researchers: Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, Wellington School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington.*

- o I have participated in a filmed focus group or interview.
- o I have reviewed the footage that includes features of myself that could be identifiable.

I understand that:

- o I understand that the observations and recordings will be kept confidential to the researchers and the supervisor until it is disseminated with my approval, or not disseminated at all should I choose to opt out.
- o Should I choose to be anonymous, my name will not be used in reports and utmost care will be taken not to disclose any information that would identify me.
- o The identifiable information I have provided will be destroyed on 01/12/2025.
- o I understand that the findings of the research may be used for a Masters report, presentation and short film; all of which will be made publicly available.

**Please select the level of identifiability/anonymity you wish to have in the final dissemination of this research:**

I choose to be identifiable. My face can be shown and my voice can be heard. My contributions should be attributed to me. ☐

I choose to be semi-identifiable. My face should not be shown but my voice can be heard. My contributions should be attributed to me. ☐

I choose to possibly be identifiable by people I know. My face must be hidden but my voice can be heard. My contributions should not be attributed to me directly. ☐

I choose to be anonymous. Neither my face nor my voice should be shown. My contributions will be attributed to an 'anonymous participant'. ☐

Other. Please state: ☐

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_



An Approach to Decolonising the Architectural Process through Co-design

— Consent to Use of Video Footage —

*This consent form will be held for 5 years.  
Researchers: Ellie Tuckey and Mitra Homolja, Wellington School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington.*

- o My child has participated in a filmed focus group or interview.
- o I have reviewed the footage that includes features of child that could be identifiable.

I understand that:

- o I understand that the observations and recordings will be kept confidential to the researchers and the supervisor until it is disseminated with my approval, or not disseminated at all should I choose to opt out.
- o Should my child or I choose to be anonymous, my child's name will not be used in reports and utmost care will be taken not to disclose any information that would identify them.
- o The identifiable information I have provided will be destroyed on 01/12/2025.
- o I understand that the findings of the research may be used for a Masters report, presentation and short film; all of which will be made publicly available.

**Please select the level of identifiability/anonymity you wish to have in the final dissemination of this research:**

I consent to my child being identifiable. My child's face can be shown and their voice can be heard. My child's contributions should be attributed to them. ☐

I consent to my child being semi-identifiable. My child's face should not be shown but their voice can be heard. My child's contributions should be attributed to them. ☐

I consent to my child being possibly identifiable by people I/they know. My child's face must be hidden but their voice can be heard. My child's contributions should not be attributed to them directly. ☐

I want my child to be anonymous. My child's face must be hidden and their voice not heard. My child's contributions will be attributed to an 'anonymous participant'. ☐

Other. Please state: ☐

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent/caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

