A Place in Nowhere

Architectural Placemaking in the Tararua Ranges

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"Architecture is the art of making places"

Robert Campbell (2008)

Abstract

The resulting thesis asks, 'how can architecture curate our experience of site to facilitate placemaking'. It finds that architecture can create distinctive and diverse 'places' in large landscapes by enabling new ways for people to engage with the site. These places result in a deeply felt experience and, when positioned in a series, they highlight the significance of the landscape.

The thesis examines a significant route within the Tararua Forest Park known as the Southern Crossing. The thesis explores how architecture can curate this experience to better connect us to place. This is facilitated by a series of nine architectural interventions that test and refine methods for situating, orientating, temporalising and contextualising one's experience of space.

Starting with site analysis, the thesis finds that subjectivity can provide deeper insights and more powerful concepts when related to experience. It finds that narrative methodologies enable the study of actuality and this is accompanied with the ability to interpret spatial elements which affect this experience. This is opposed to contemporary approaches which are focused on objectivity and fact.

Through evolving narrative techniques, a way for the architecture to curate one's experience of each site is discovered. The design methodology does away with contemporary abstract views. Instead, the process focuses on understanding how the architectonic elements influence the spatial experience to better connect us to place.

Opposite, Figure 1 - McGregor Bivvy, Tararua Forest Park

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Introduction

The question 'how can architecture curate our experience to facilitate place-making' came to me as I sat in my Wellington flat.

I started thinking about how we experience space, find further meaning in certain spaces, and where architecture fits into this. Initially, it seemed like a simple question and one that with my five years of architectural study I should have been able to respond to. Surely it is a core consideration for architects as it deals with the very real, human experience of buildings. However, as I sat there in a flat I don't identify with, I realised I had no answers.

We all remember places that we have identified with as they are imprinted experiences. For me, some of these are:

• Roger Walker's Britten House, where I sat in a nook, perched up high, enjoying a beer with a friend.

• Steven Holl's Chapel of St. Ignatius. Touching the hand-rendered plaster walls with which the beeswax enables a unique lustre (fig. 2).

Landscapes can also achieve a similar feeling for me:

• Remembering the sunrise in the North Cascades as the light pierced through the forest fire smoke that hung in the air.

• Standing on the summit plateau of Mount Ruapehu in the middle of winter with my friends, cloud swirling around us (fig. 3).

Opposite, Figure 2 - Steve Holl's Chapel of St. Ignatius, Seattle, United States of America

For me, the ridge above Field Hut in the Tararua Forest Park feels more like home than my cold, south-facing room in the Wellington flat with its outlook to the neighbours' living room. Sure, my room may be filled with my material possessions, decorated to my taste but at the end of the day, the architecture fails to situate and orientate me within the wider environment. Thus, my room could be located anywhere in the world without the experience of the space being affected.

I believe the significance of place has been forgotten by the architectural profession. Buildings are becoming increasingly mechanical and abstract, and our culture seems to prioritise them as a purely visual art form that ignores much of the subtlety and significance of everyday experience.

At such a time when significant places are under threat, this is an important issue to understand. Buildings such as John Scott's Visitor Centre at Aniwaniwa are already lost (2016) and Ian Athfield's, Wellington Public Library potentially faces a similar fate. Landscapes are also under immense pressure. Sites such as Ihumātao, the Waitotara Forest and the St James Conservation Area all face development or privatisation (Federated Mountain Clubs, 2019).

While this thesis does not argue that the architectural 'object' does not matter, it attempts to say that the ultimate measure of any building is the experience of it. The thesis is an attempt to develop methodologies that are situated in

our experience of the world and an effort to create result-ant experiences that connect us to place.

This thesis was also driven out of a personal desire to explore my sense of place. The Tararua Forest Park is a source of identity for me as it is an area that has formed the backdrop to my life over the past five years. The thesis is an endeavour to understand why it is important that the means of experiencing, creating, and maintaining signifi-cant places are not lost.

Figure 3 - Summit plateau, Mount Ruapehu, New Zealand

Section 1

Place vs Nonplace

1A.1) The Importance of Places

Places are memorable - they transcend just mere 'space' to something that connects and resonates within us. The literature on this topic forms the basis of this thesis as it is important to understand what the distinctive and essential qualities of 'place' are when designing. It will be of no small importance for the architectural profession to understand this topic because, as Relph (1976) says, "we live, act and orientate ourselves in a world that is richly and profoundly differentiated into places". With humans spending more of their lives indoors (Klepeis et al., 2001), architecture plays a key role in developing meaningful spaces. Without such knowledge of how this occurs, it will not be possible to purposely create and preserve the places that form the significant contexts of our lives.

1A.2) A Phenomenological Approach

Augé approaches the topic of 'place' using a phenomenological approach attempting to understand human's perception of space through thoughts and feelings. While this form of research is qualitative, leading people to question the quality, the fact remains that it "presupposes the existence of a direct witness to a present actuality" (Augé, 1995). Relph (1976) criticises the design professions historic reliance on objectivity because it is not the only valid and rigorous way for explaining and resolving problems. A qualitative approach is considered an important technique

Opposite, Figure 4 - View from Waimakariri Falls Hut, Arthurs Pass
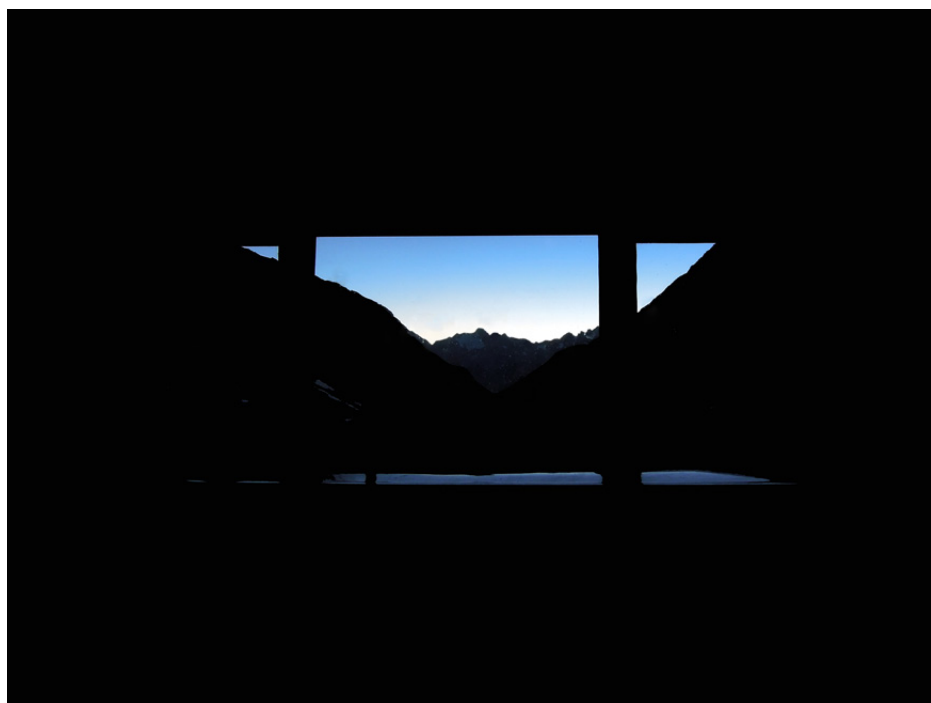
by Denzin and Lincoln (2000), who state that they enable things to be studied "in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them". This makes phenomenological methods suitable for exploring ideas related to place and experience because they relate personal experience to reality (Smith, 2013).

1A.3) Definitions of Place and Non-place

Through Augé's (1995) research, place is defined "as relational, historical and concerned with identity", whereas "a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place". Leach (2005) has since refined these views stating that "place is made meaningful by practices that contextualise it, orient it, situate it, temporalise it". This means that for a place to exist it must not just serve a purpose (contextualised), but we must be able to locate it within the larger experience (orientated and situated) and, within time (temporalised).

Non-places are therefore spaces of transience where the human being remains anonymous, with senses disengaged. This disconnection renders us unable to contextualise, orientate, situate and temporalise the space. Relph (1976) stated that "placelessness (non-place) describes both an environment without significant places and the underlying attitude which does not acknowledge significance in places". These views, along with those of Augé (2008) who says, non-places are "never totally complete", hint

Architecture forms a relationship between people and place through contextualising, temporalising, situating and orientating an experience

that through reconfiguring our relationships with site, these spaces can be transformed into places. Architect, Rick Joy (2002) believes "it is possible that, by giving people a more raw experience with the land, we can help them connect with the place, past and present, in a more powerful way".

1A.4) Engaging our Place-making Ability

A common thread throughout the literature, yet never directly explored, is that it is the 'sameness' (Relph, 1976), 'anonymity' (Augé, 2008) and 'unremittingly uniformity' (Delalex, 2002) within an environment, which causes us to become disengaged. This highlights an underlying theme within the discussion that while "the possibility of non-place is never absent from any place" (Augé, 2008) it is due to "the proliferation of sameness" (Buchanan, 2005) that we become disconnected from place. Architecture can place-make thanks to attracting and concentrating our experience. Due to this focusing, the places "are set apart from the surrounding space while remaining a part of it" (Relph, 1976). It is this 'sameness' or 'difference' that appears to be an important step for engaging our place-making ability.

Within the Tararua environment, areas of extended similarity such as a long path below the bush line (similarity, reduced views and exposure to weather) are more likely to be a non-place. In contrast, an extended route through an alpine environment (increased visual depth, visually scalable movement and exposure to the weather) is more likely to facilitate place-making.

1A.5) Place-making through Architecture

Homes are generally the most important illustration of place with Van Gerrewey (2013) stating that "for centuries now, the home has tended to evoke the most intense emotions and projections". They are also a prime example of how a non-place might become a place for the occupant.

While in the past, travelling through an array of suburban houses may not have engaged us, due to the act of inhabiting, we actively participate with space. It will then become a place of singular personal identity, concerned with history, uniqueness and positioning. Architects are also able to create collective places. A city square, for example, becomes a place of collective identity, reflecting history, culture and territory. Ultimately the architecture forms a relationship between people and place through contextualising, temporalising, situating and orientating.

Within an environment like the Tararua Ranges, the architecture must facilitate quick placemaking as the transient like movement of people through the range ill affords much time to contextualise and temporalise the experience.

1A.6) Problems of Subjectivity

Undoubtedly people and cultures see places differently based on their subjective relationships, histories and identities with the land. This is where most of the criticism of

The significance of experience, in regards to place, has not yet "been understood in relation to such material and utilitarian objects as buildings and larger environments"

(Pallasmaa, 2018).

the current theory is directed with Korstanje (2015) saying that the theory "ignores subjectivity". Augé acknowledges this, saying "place or the opposite, a non-place, is based on the subjective perception of the sightseer" (Augé in Korstanje, 2015). This opens the door for further research within the human sciences field on collective versus individual perceptions of place. However, within the role of this thesis, the effects of how architecture can contextualise, temporalise, orientate and situate the experience through sensory engagement will be explored.

1A.7) Implications to the thesis

This thesis will attempt to engage with both existing places and non-places along the Southern Crossing route. It will attempt to develop an understanding as to the significance of experience, in regards to place, because it has not yet "been understood in relation to such material and utilitarian objects as buildings and larger environments" (Pallasmaa, 2018). By taking 'place' as a multifaceted phenomenon of experience, a range of nine architectural designs will explore the extent architecture can contribute to place-making.

Before this happens, however, one must first understand the existing experience of the route in regard to the current places and non-places. It is thought that this will reaffirm the above theory.

Section 2

Site Selection

2A.1) The Significance of Site

From an old house, high on the hills above the city, I look out over the harbour to the southern Tararua Peaks. Spreading across the skyline at the head of the Hutt Valley the peaks stand tall, glistening white in winter or shades of blue in summer. Many have experienced the wild beauty of the Tararua Ranges, from the Rangitāne iwi who lived and gathered food within them, to the trampers who now explore them recreationally.

Even if one has not been into the ranges, they are still pertinent as they form the backdrop to the lives of people from Wellington to Palmerston North. Due to their significance, they have and continue to provide a source of identity for generations of people. The iwi of Rangitāne (2016) recognises their importance, stating that the "Tararua Range holds great historical, cultural, spiritual and traditional significance… as it is one of two mountain ranges that identify the iwi of Rangitāne". It is undoubtedly a significant area that holds multiple meanings for a variety of people.

2A.2) The Next Great Walk

Opposite, Figure 5 - View of the Tararua Ranges from Wellington City (Suisted, n.d)

In 2017 the Government committed 12.7 million dollars towards expanding New Zealand's 'Great Walk' network (DOC, 2018). This was, as Tourism Minister, Bennett (2017) stated, to continue attracting "high-value tourists

and give them an amazing visitor experience". Following this, the Department of Conservation (DOC) opened nominations for New Zealand's next 'Great Walk'. Stating they would consider existing tracks that could be upgraded, the Tararua ranges were nominated three times (DOC, 2018). In late 2018, DOC notified the public that the nominations were not successful, however this could be revisited as the network of walks continues to grow due to the increasing number of tourists.

DOC (2017) provides minimal criteria for a Great Walk, saying they will assess each proposal against:

• Benefits for conservation,

• Ease of access for New Zealanders,

• Opportunities to engage with Māori culture

• Overall feasibility.

These criteria doesn't directly consider the overall experience, even though Bennett stated it as a specific aim.

While the Tararua mountain range will not get the boosted Great Walk funding to improve infrastructure in the immediate future, the ranges are still an ideal site to explore themes relating to place and experience. It is critical that any future development in such a meaningful environment, respects the significance of place and considers the kaitiakitanga of iwi, ecological impacts and the resulting experience for people.

2A.3) Exploration of Potential Sites

The full extent of the Tararua Ranges stretches 80km and covers an area of 1,165km^2 which makes them the second-largest conservation area in the North Island (DOC, 2018). This is bigger than the more renowned Tongariro National Park at 786 km^2 (DOC, n.d.). Due to the expansive space, if any future development were to occur, this would most likely be focused around a smaller area. Due to this and to limit the scope of the project it was decided that a particular route within the range would be investigated for the thesis.

To decide upon the route, two maps of the range were generated to understand the landscape in new ways. Maps are a key safety device when tramping as they enable knowledge of upcoming terrain that otherwise wouldn't be clear. These maps enable a way of understanding spaces beyond a physical representation (i.e. satellite images). Cosgrove (1999) hints at this power stating that "the measure of mapping is not restricted to the mathematical; it may equally be spiritual, political, or moral. By the same token the mapping's record is not confined to the archival; it includes the remembered, the imagined, and the contemplated". Corner (1999) agrees with these sentiments and goes on to say mapping's "agency lies in neither reproduction nor imposition but rather in uncovering realities previously unseen or unimagined".
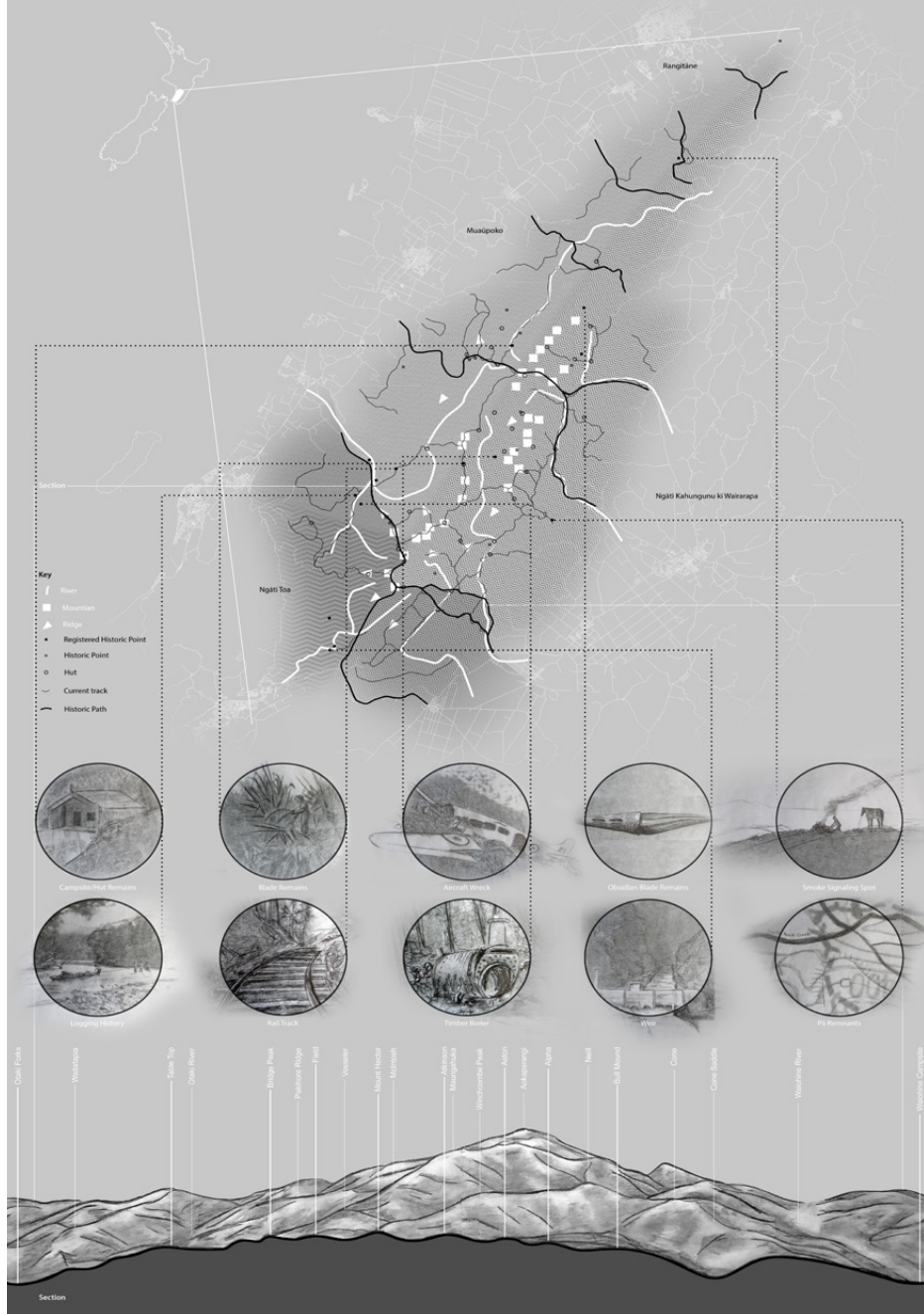
2A.4) Cultural History Map

The first map focused on cultural histories (fig. 6). In doing so my associations with the range were put aside, focusing instead on other people's relationships to them. The exploration, through written histories and conversations, revealed that the ranges have a rich past through the meanings associated with them. Stories of individual deeds, points of interest and historic archaeological sites were found and located on a base map.

The final generated map added further data and combined geographic features, historical points, vertical elevation, landmarks and existing human-built interventions. These were to:

• Locate the history of human interaction, both Māori and European.

• Highlight the important archaeological sites as registered by the New Zealand Archaeology Association.

• Locate additional individual places of importance such as memorials.

• Locate huts.

• Position historic tracks as found in Barton (1996).

• Convey information relating to gradient and views.

The map presented a surprising amount of cultural history and revealed the extent of meaning that the ranges possess for a variety of people. While in the ranges one might feel removed from others, you are in fact tracing the paths of many who have gone before you.
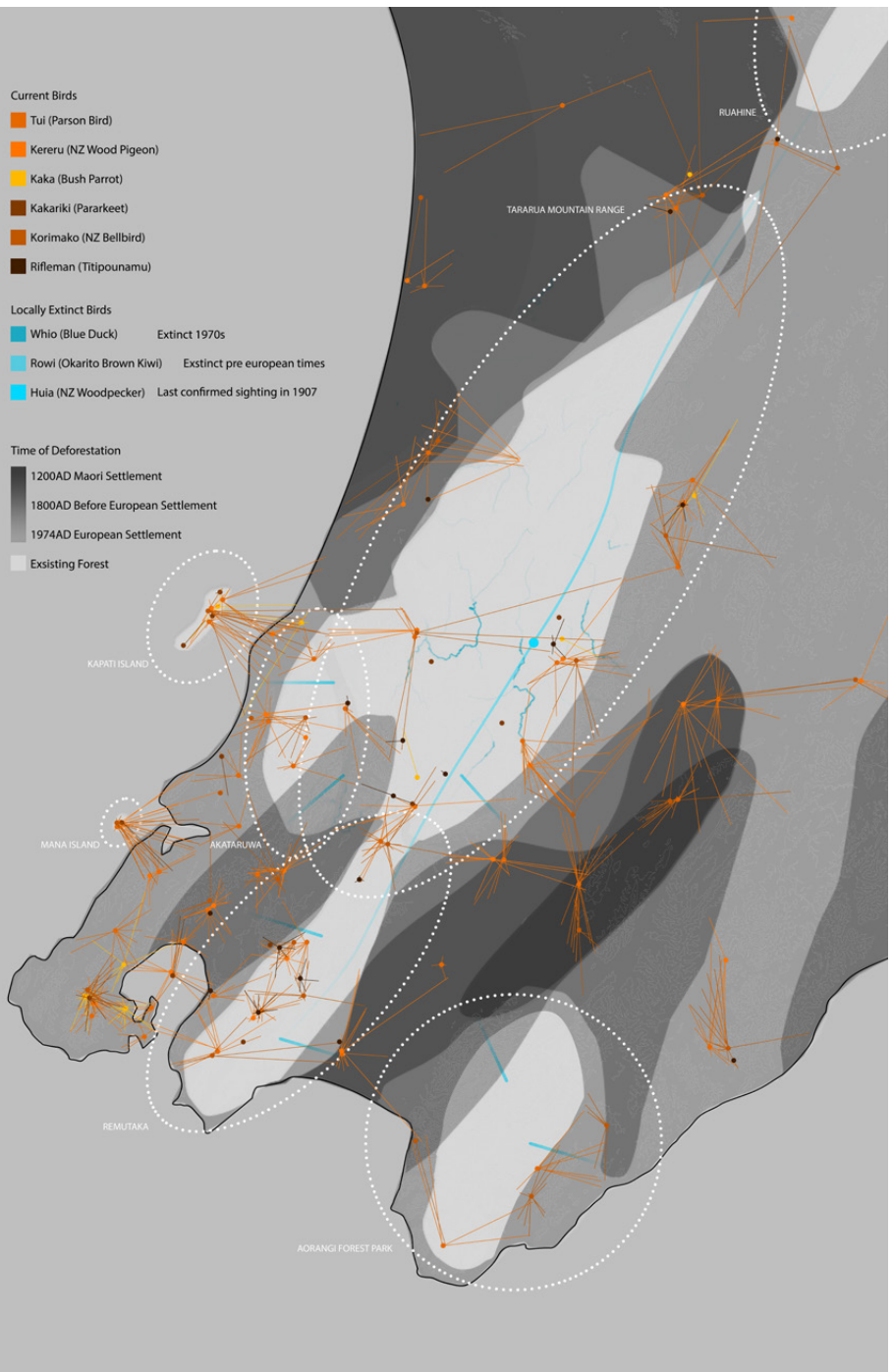
Opposite, Figure 6 - Cultural History Map

Primary Wind Directions
and Location

Rangitāne

Muaūpoko

Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa

Section

Ngāti Toa

Key

/ River
□ Mountain
▲ Ridge
• Registered Historic Point
× Historic Point
○ Hut
⌣ Current track
〜 Historic Path

Campsite Hut Remains

Blade Remains

Aircraft Wreck

Obsidian Blade Remains

Smoke Signaling Spot

Logging History

Rail Track

Timber Boiler

Weir

Pā Remains

Ōtaki Forks
Waiotauru
Table Top
Ōtaki River
Bridge Peak
Pukeatua Ridge
Field
Vosseler
Mount Hector
Maungahuka
Aokaparangi
Maungahuka
Waiotauru Peak
Adkin
Aokaparangi
Alpha
Hell
Bull Mound
Cone
Cone Saddle
Waiohine River
Waiohine Campsite

Section

Current Birds

- Tui (Parson Bird)
- Kereru (NZ Wood Pigeon)
- Kaka (Bush Parrot)
- Kakariki (Pararkeet)
- Korimako (NZ Bellbird)
- Rifleman (Titipounamu)

Locally Extinct Birds

- Whio (Blue Duck) Extinct 1970s
- Rowi (Okarito Brown Kiwi) Exstinct pre european times
- Huia (NZ Woodpecker) Last confirmed sighting in 1907

Time of Deforestation

- 1200AD Maori Settlement
- 1800AD Before European Settlement
- 1974AD European Settlement
- Exsisting Forest

RUAHINE

TARARUA MOUNTAIN RANGE

KAPATI ISLAND

MANA ISLAND   AKATARUWA

REMUTAKA

AORANGI FOREST PARK

2A.5) Ecological History Map

The second map focused on ecological history (fig. 7). Through recorded sightings, the ranges were shown to be an important environment for supporting birdlife. The sightings of key species were mapped revealing the western side supported more birdlife as they access the ranges from the pest protected, Kapiti Island. The map also revealed the Tararua Range links to the other Forest Parks in the area to form a key ecological spine for the lower North Island.

2A.6) Deciding on the Site

The generated maps were displayed as part of an exhibition on the Tararua Range at the Wellington Museum in March of 2019. This was visited by over 2000 people in the 2 weeks it was on display (Landreth, 2019). This enabled me to receive feedback on the maps.

People were amazed at the significance depicted within the cultural history map and this prompted people to also share their individual experiences. These discussions were centred on specific places within the range that individuals remembered, and commonalities started to emerge between people.

Opposite, Figure 7 - Ecological History Map

These commonalities appeared to be:

I. The number of people who had walked the track from Otaki Forks to Mt Hector highlighted its popularity.

II. Marchant Ridge was found to have the reputation of being the least enjoyed area.

III. Maungahuka Hut was found to be the most iconic.

IV. The Carkeek area was the most isolated and kept being referred to as the 'biggest challenge'.

V. The Main Range was thought to have the best scenery.

The ecological history map evoked less response but one topic which emerged was the importance of DOC's 1080 operations. It was thought that birdlife in the ranges should be more prevalent and that increased awareness on this topic is important.

The maps, as well as the feedback gained, highlighted the route, the 'Southern Crossing', as having the biggest potential for the design experiments. It features easily accessible road ends an hour away from Wellington City, contains high historical significance and is an area of ecological importance. The area also holds immense natural beauty, and these make it align closely with DOC's criteria for a great walk.

Two versions of this route exist, one starting or finishing at the Kaitoke road end and the other at the Waiohine Gorge road end. Both routes will be studied to further assess their overall experiential significance to align with Bennett's aims as discussed earlier.
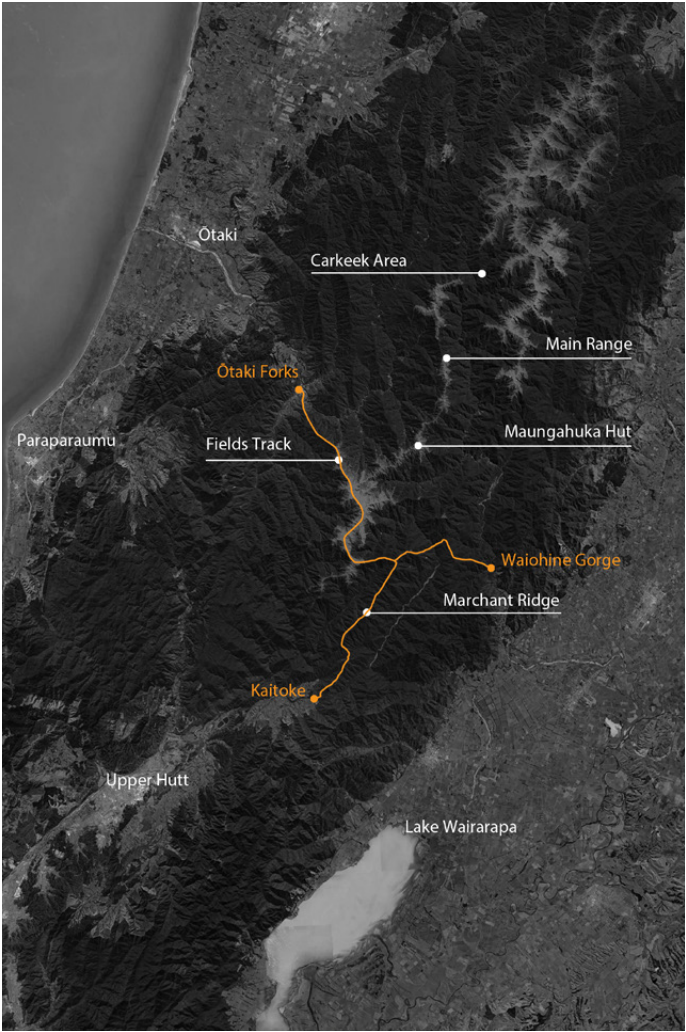
Figure 8 - Key places within the ranges along with the highlighted Southern Crossing Route

Site Analysis

2B.1) Introduction: Phenomenological Site Analysis

If we approach the site from a phenomenological point of view, we must understand the on-ground experience. After all, this is how we perceive and experience the Southern Crossing. While there is, as de Certeau (1984) says, a "pleasure of seeing the whole" we must not forget that we experience the world from eye-level. Objective methods of site analysis, such as traditional mapping, only transcribes paths and reveals nothing more than the routes taken. "Walking is limitless in its modalities… therefore, reducing it to a graphical trail is not sufficient" if we want to understand the experience (de Certeau, 1984).

As a technique, narrative site analysis takes the on-ground experience and translates it into a concise and adaptable guide. Coates (2012) expands on this saying that "narrative in space… has a firm basis in the way each of us learns to navigate and map the world around us". We make sense of space through narratives and these "arise spontaneously in the course of navigating the world" (Coates, 2012). Techniques based on narrative came to the forefront of urban design analysis in the 1960s as a way to link urban space with the lived experience of its users. Unfortunately, this approach faded from the 1970s in favour of "scientifically informed environmental analysis and design" (Notteboom, 2017), replacing an experiential basis with objectivity.

Opposite, Figure 9 - Photo from the Southern Crossing in poor weather
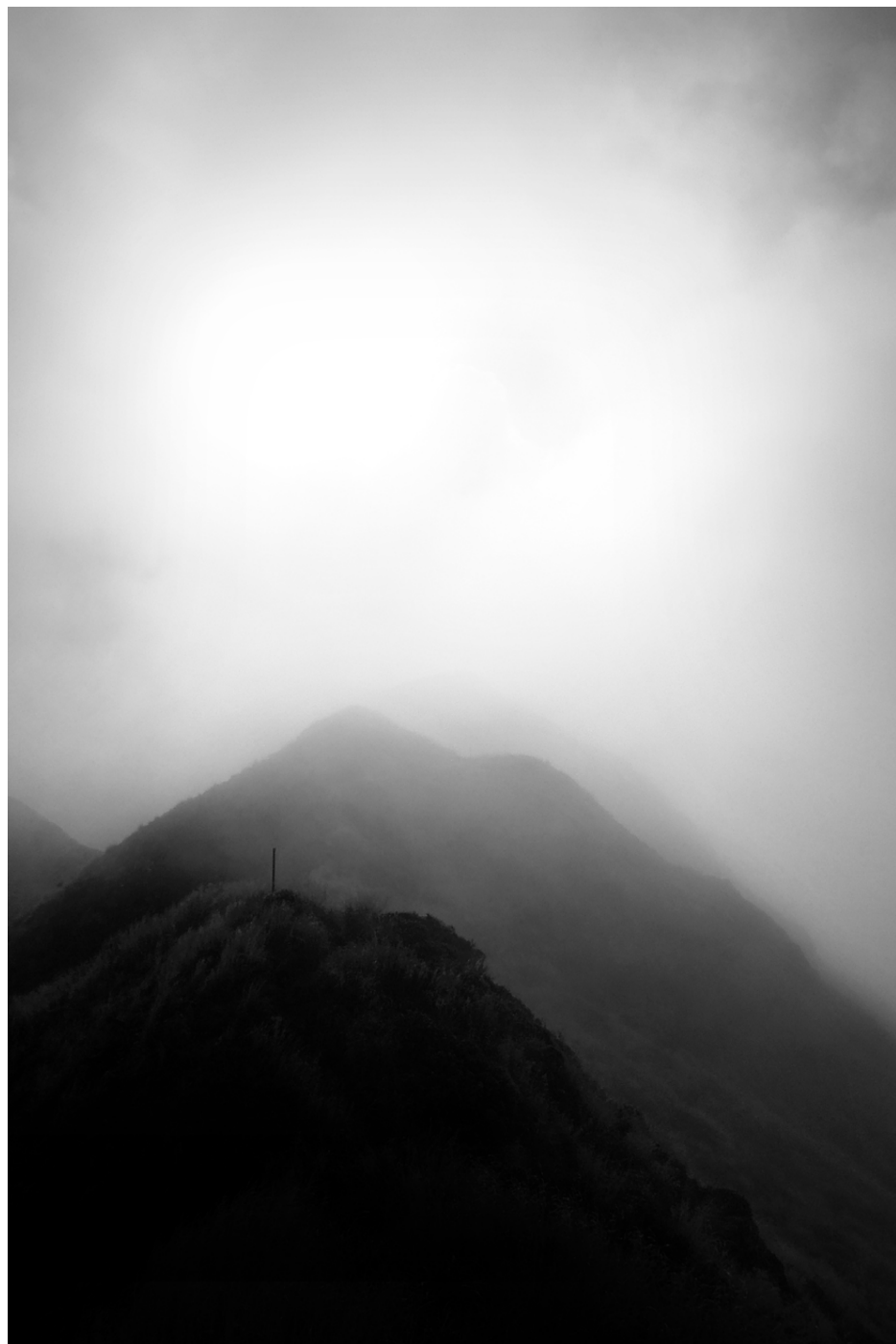
2B.2) Three Approaches

The three key narrative urban design approaches of cognitive mapping, serial vision and written narrative can be seen as a comprehensive way to develop an experiential understanding of the site. While these methods were developed in an urban realm, they were ultimately developed based on our perception of the environment. This means that while the environment might change, the processes are still valid and important. These techniques enable a way to:

• Ascertain commonalities and differences,

• Document the visual characteristics, and

• Record thoughts and feelings evoked by space.

Ultimately, they serve to connect the space to the experience (Overdijk, 2017).

2B.3) Cognitive Mapping

Lynch's (1960) approach to site analysis broadened the discipline by combining "traditional data recording techniques (field surveys and mappings) with non-traditional resources and techniques (residential surveys/interviews and cognitive mapping)" (Stapp, 2009).

Lynch attempts to collate individual navigational narratives to ascertain collective perceptions of space. This approach focuses on the simplification of space through five discovered elemental components (paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks). Lynch theorised these create the syntax of how we perceive space (Lynch 1960). While Lynch's simplification of space specifically focused on five key ele-

ments, recent thinking has expanded these components as urban design theory has developed in complexity (Tveit et al. 2006). What remains a valid and important technique is distilling the complexities of space into individual elements to reveal the assemblages that make spaces unique. This takes a complex whole and enables key elements which influence our experience to be identified.

2B.4) Serial Vision

Cullen (1961) introduced a new technique in site analysis with the use of the graphical, narrative technique called, "serial vision". This technique attempts to relate space and visual aesthetics to experience. Serial vision allows for analysis of 'content' (visual details), 'optics' (the effect of movement related to views) and 'place' (the position of the body within its environment) (Cullen, 1995).

It is thought that the information we gather visually plays a central role in creating a vital, vivid and successful place. While this approach also attempts to simplify space by only focusing on our visual perception, it enables us to make links between spaces based on the visual patterns. Relph (1976) believes our visual sense is the best-understood aspect of the place experience, with the other senses only acting to reinforce the visual patterns.

2B.5) Written Narrative

The final key approach of understanding our experience of space was developed by Smithson (1967). Through Smithson's use of photos and introspective writing, he highlights the gaps or disruptions in the unity of his expe-

rience of space. These "gaps provide Smithson his point of entry" (Overdijk, 2017) and he calls these focal points, 'monuments'. These monuments are defined as "places that lack unity within their surrounding environment" (Overdijk, 2017), and this causes us to focus and engage with these areas.

While the other two approaches simplify our experience of space to enable identification of the similarities and differences, written narratives can embrace the complexities. This approach focuses on the memorable moments that we engage with, allowing the identification of the key focal points that anchor the experience. While the approach does not attempt to make sense of space, the fact that it is embedded within the on-ground experience and doesn't rely on abstraction is the key to ascertaining its importance.

2B.6) Site Analysis Approach

These three different techniques enable diverse and relevant phenomenological understandings of site. It is believed that by using a written narrative approach, a comprehensive knowledge of where places and non-places are located, can be developed. Occurring alongside this, through mappings and serial vision, an understanding as to how individual elements influence the spatial experience will provide tangible elements that can be curated. Ultimately, these techniques should reveal how and where architectural interventions along the route can curate the experience, either to preserve and reinforce current places or in the creation of new places.

Using phenomenological site analysis techniques enables the study of space and experience - directly relating reality to personal experience.

The Site

The Southern Crossing was walked multiple times, and this was accompanied by the collection of 572 photos, 38 videos and 61 voice monologues.

2C.1) Written Narrative

2C.1.1) Keywords Map

Initially, the keywords within the voice monologues were mapped (fig. 10). Due to the recorded timestamps, they could be directly located to a map and this took my direct experience and applied it to a scale-based representation. This reveals the bones of the experience. The words were split up into built elements in orange, natural tangible elements in black, and my subjective experience in white. This showed a relationship between objective elements and my subjective response.

2C.1.2) Experiential Essay

A story-like essay, aided by voice monologues, was then written recounting the experience. When read, the essay revealed areas of interest and dislike, struggle and amazement, hunger and contentment. In this essay, however, what became most prevalent, as with Smithson's account, were the 'monuments' of the experience. These monuments tended to be human interventions such as signposts or huts but also involved strong natural elements such as river crossings and expansive views. The monuments are the focal points within the experience making the route what it is.

Opposite, Figure 10 - Keywords Map generated from voice monologues

Car Park
Bridge
Achievement
Satisfaction
Swim

Trudging
Tired
Anticipation for home

Speed
Cultivated
Normal Life

Motorway Section

Older forest
Bird life
Change of growth

No Views
Annoyanse
Lack of Progression

Camaraderie

Afternoon tea
Hut

Sense of Place
Memories
Views /Locate myself

Heading home

Lunch Hut

Other people
Depth of view change with clouds
Mt Hector Cross

Away from it/Turning point
On top of the world

Weather changes
Atmoshpere
Risk vs reward

Camaraderie

Nervous

Moment of pause

Divider of normal and transendance

Popping out
Views
Compression/Release
Anticpation

Lunch
History
Comfort
Rest
Hut

Hidden Views
Flattening
Easier going

Progression

Warming Up

Awe
Height
History
Bridge
Car Park

Top of the world
Views
High Spirits

Arrival
Ritual
Contentment
Hut

Departure
Rested
Rejuvenated
Anticipation

Tunnel path/foliage

Anticipation

Change of Vegitation
Canopy getting lower

Steep

River Crossing
Risk
Turning Point
Cold, Wet

No Views
Annoyanse

Steep

Anticipation
Excitment
Edge of Civilisation
Start, End

Canopy getting lower

Almost popping
through trees

No Views
Annoyanse

Lack of Progression

Tiredness

Movement of Body
Touch/ Texture

Snack Break
Low Water

Wetness
Bog
Lack of View

Camping Spot

Camaraderie

Compression / Release

Natural Seat and View

Fire History - Totems of the past
Walking in the footsteps of others

Stop for Lunch
(Before exposure of ridge)

Older Forest
Adventure/Risk
Disconnection

Old Hut Remains

Hungry

Temporality
Ephemerality
Life Cycle

New Growth

Tension between Nature and Built

Lots of Weeds
Overgrown

Warming Up

Anticipation

Starting/Finishing Point

Car Park

By linking subjective experience to objective distance, a new understanding of space is developed and this reveals where human interventions currently change the experience

2C.1.3) Visual Map

Next, the essay was converted into a visual depiction by using the relevant images to illustrate the text (fig 11). This visual depiction took the form of a map and this took the data one step further, revealing accurate scale-based distances that the mind ultimately compressed.

Based on the essay the monuments were highlighted in orange and the route varied from areas populated by images showing points of engagement, to areas devoid of images showing a lack of engagement. It is these devoid areas that reveal areas of non-place. The written account skips over these spaces, compressing time and distance as memory and the resulting narrative is concerned only with the memorable aspects. It is only through arranging them in space that the true extent of the gaps is revealed.

Opposite, Figure 11 - Visual Map generated from the experiential essay and associated photographs

2C.1.4) Point Map

Further simplifying the visual map into points increased the locational accuracy (fig. 12). This also helps to highlight the frequency of when places occur in the experience.

0.5

1

2
2.5
3

4

5
5.5

Central Point

6.5

6
5
4
3.5

3

2

1.5

1
0.5

0   5 4 3   2   1
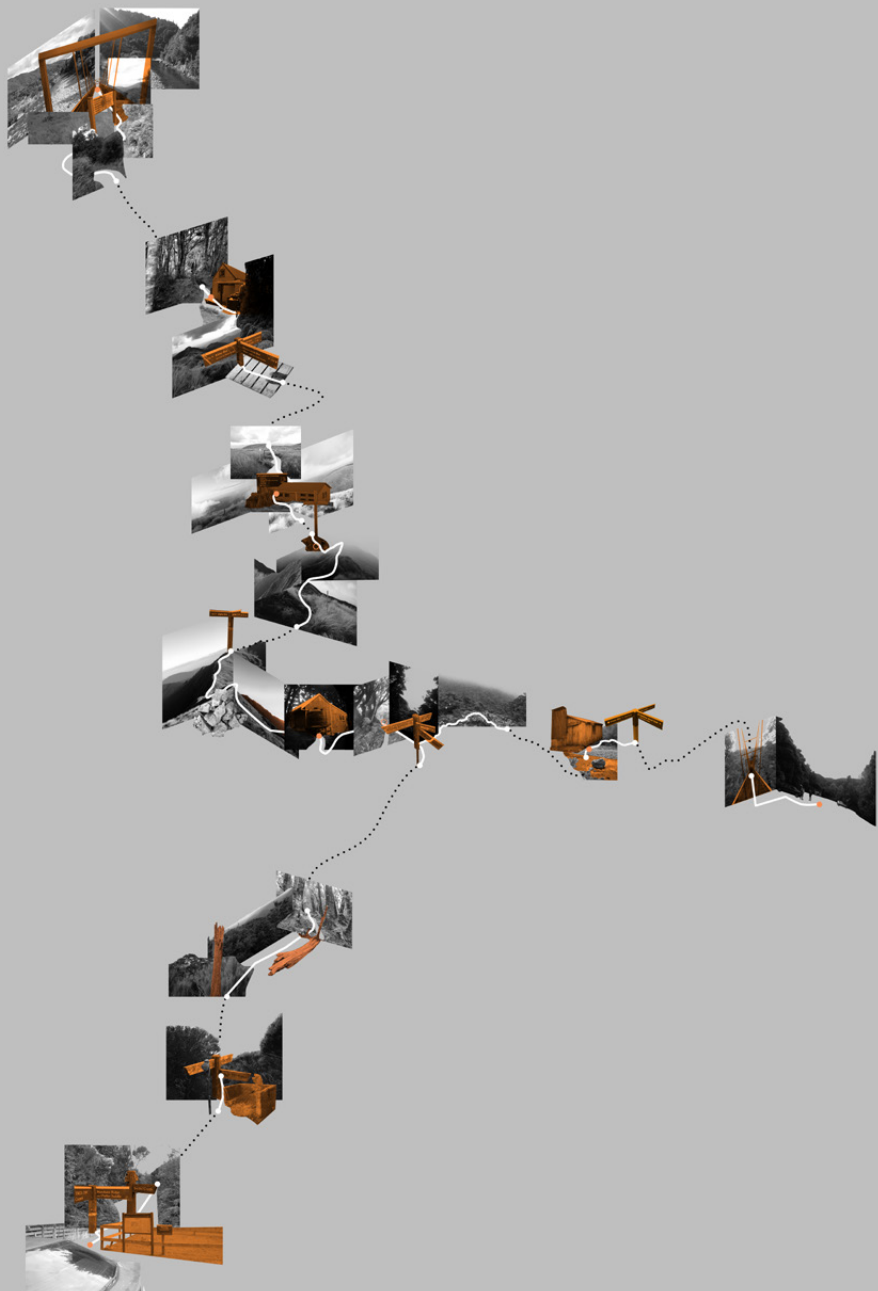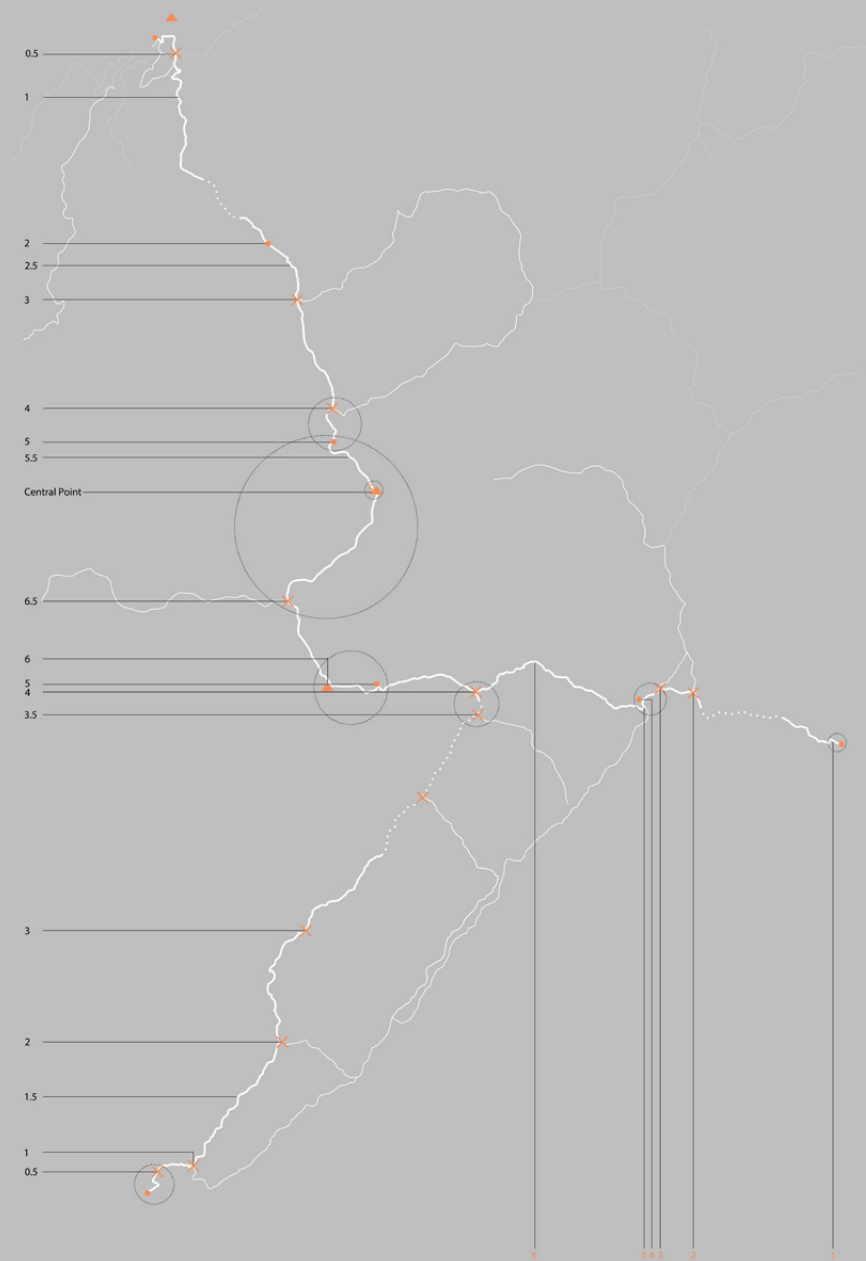
2C.2) Serial Vision

With an understanding of where the key experiential spots occurred, 'serial vision' was employed to understand the visual experience and to ascertain whether there was a direct relationship.

The full photo series was studied and of the 572 photos taken, 134 showed visual differences when placed in chronological sequence. The visual differences are crucial as these reveal distinct environments which are vital for engaging our place-making ability.

The photos were then analysed using drawing overlays, highlighting visual patterns such as edges, landmarks and paths.

2C.2.1) Specific Analysis

Individually the photos highlighted:

• Quality of the track

• Surface materiality (fig. 13)

• Signs of history (natural and built) (fig. 14 and 16)

• The movement of the body (fig. 15)

• Amount of path exposure (fig. 16)

• The extent of human interventions

• Boundaries formed by vegetation

Opposite, Figure 12 - Point Map locating the key experiential spots within space

Changes in Surface

12:13
Remains of
Dobsons Hut #2
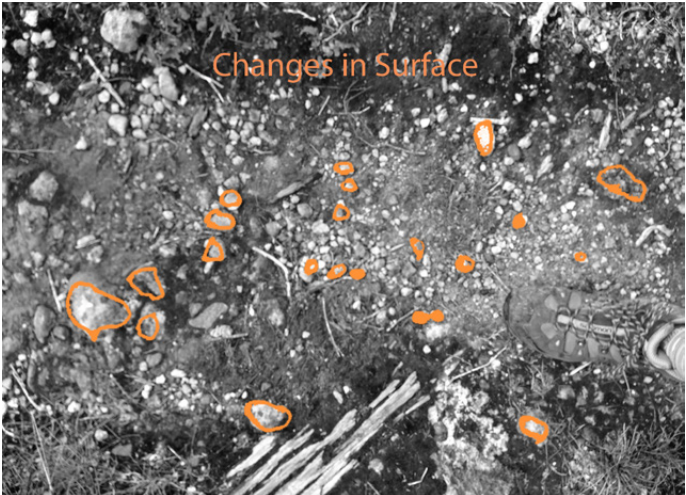
Top, Figure 13 - Surface materiality of path
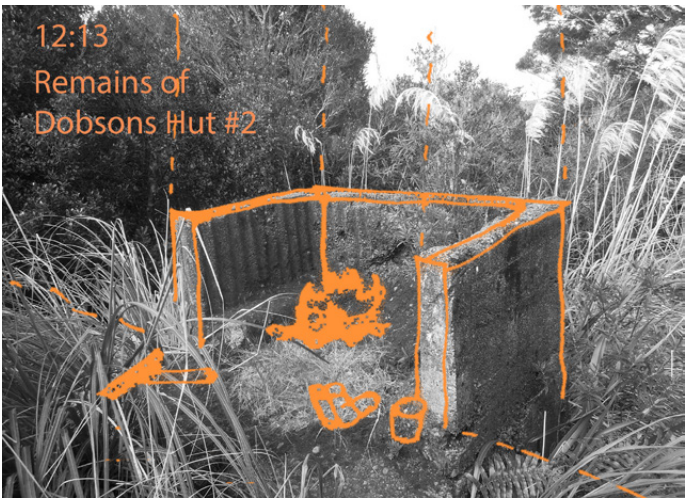
Bottom, Figure 14 - Signs of history (natural and built)

Fallen Tree on Trail
Movement of body

Scars from fire
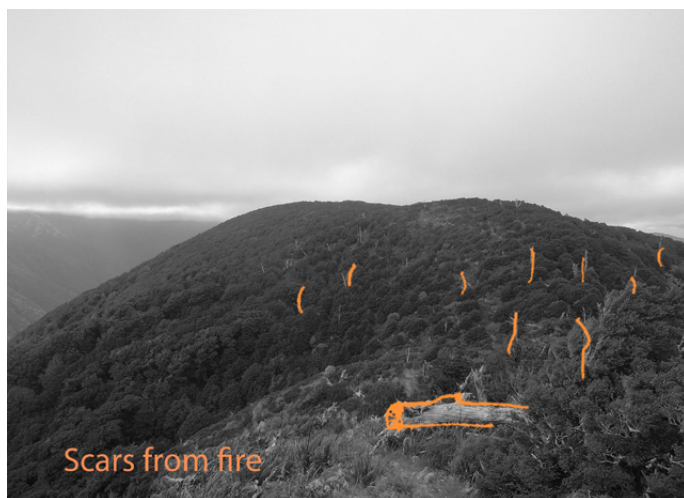
Top, Figure 15 - Change to the path requiring a different movement of the body

Bottom, Figure 16 - Signs of history related to a past forest fire and changes to the amount of enclosure

2C.2.2) Collective Analysis (fig. 17, 18)

When laid out in series the photos highlighted changes related to similarities and differences which in turn revealed:

• Regions based on vegetation,

• The extent of enclosure,

• Areas that are exposed to weather,

• Relationship to landmarks.

The serial vision layouts and analysis enabled an understanding of the visual on-ground experience. However, while visual character was identified, it was not clear whether this was occurring in single or multiple areas.
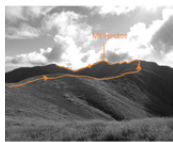
2C.2.3) Spatial Positioning

Another layout was created combining the photos grouped by regions along with a plan and section. It was expected that most of the images would line up with the 'places' already found. This would add validity to the suspected sameness versus difference debate for engaging our place-making ability.
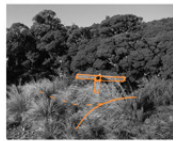
Opposite, Figure 17 - Serial vision chronological layout

When the photos were arranged alongside the plan, the number of photos in relation to the areas revealed regions with lots or limited visual character.

Pause
Others
Start

Compression

Entering the bush

New Growth

View Back

Loose
Exposed

View Ahead

View Back

Compression

Exposed roots

Heading into clouds

10:47
Broken Sign Turn off

View Back

Wide Open Bracken

Exposed roots

Release

Whole Vs Half Rocks

Weeds

View Back

Loose Edge

Remains of
Dobsons Hut #2

Following others footsteps

Life Cycle - Death/Life

Framing Progression

Totems
of the past

Changes in Surface

Release

Totems?
of the past

Seat

View

Scars from fire

Into the bush again

Old Growth
Less Maintained

Unusual campsite spot

Scars from fire

More like Dunedin

Damp
Moss
Dense

View up at roots

Strong
Verticle Elements

Stragglyness

Marker Trees

Weaving through the trees

Glimpse of a view

3:12 - Heading into Clouds

Areas that contained human interventions, changing views, necessitated different movements and increased exposure to weather made up the most memorable regions. These findings reinforce the literature (Augé, 2008 and Leach, 2005)

2C.2.4) Serial Vision Findings

Through the spatial positioning, four regions became apparent that contained a reduction in photos, highlighting a lack of visual character. These regions were below the bush line and the photos highlighted the enclosure of vegetation throughout. When compared in section these areas also highlighted a lack of gradient change revealing not only visual similarities but similarities of movement too.

Areas that contained human interventions, changing views, necessitated a change in movement and increased exposure to weather made up the most memorable regions.

These findings reinforce the literature (Augé, 2008 and Leach, 2005) and mean any architectural intervention should reinforce the ability to contextualise, situate, orientate and temporalise the experience.

Opposite, Figure 18 - Serial vision chronological layout

*Opposite, Figure 19
- Paths and nodes
map, paths in white
with nodes in orange*

*Next page left,
Figure 20 - Edges
map, the density of
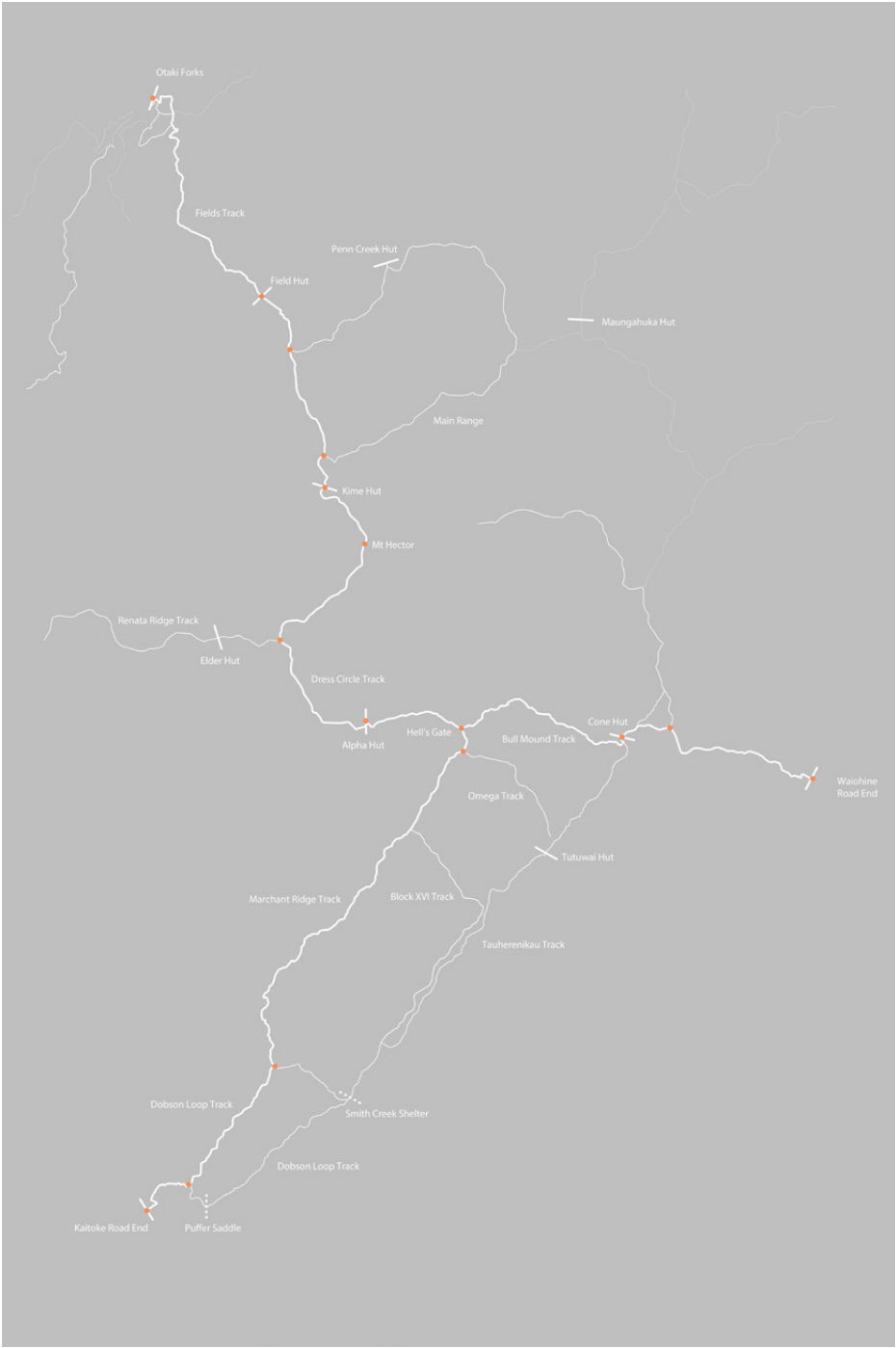black reveals extent
of perceived edge*

*Next page right, Fig-
ure 21 - Landmarks,
orange highlights
landmarks with black
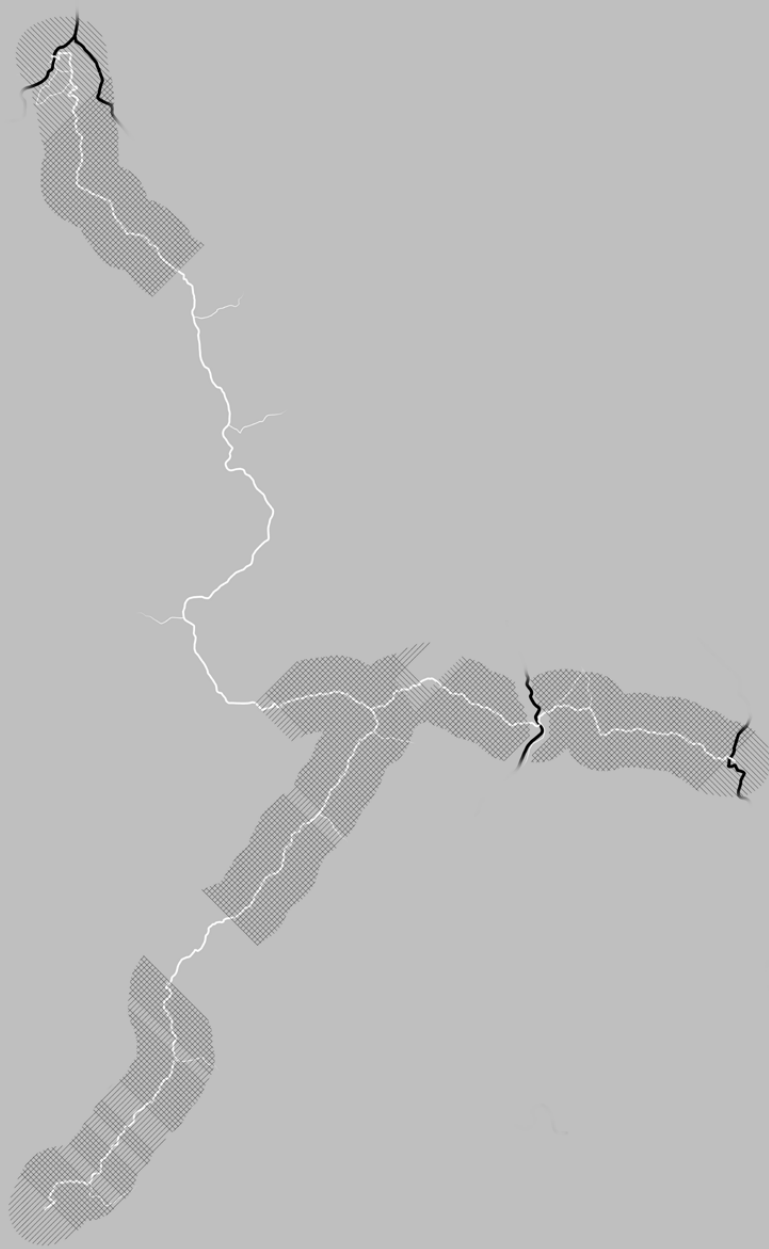lines showing where
they are visible from*

2C.3) Cognitive Mapping

Finally, a series of maps focusing on our perception of sin-
gular elements was created. This was to draw attention
to elements that contribute to creating our spatial syntax
as well as identifying their impact upon our perception of
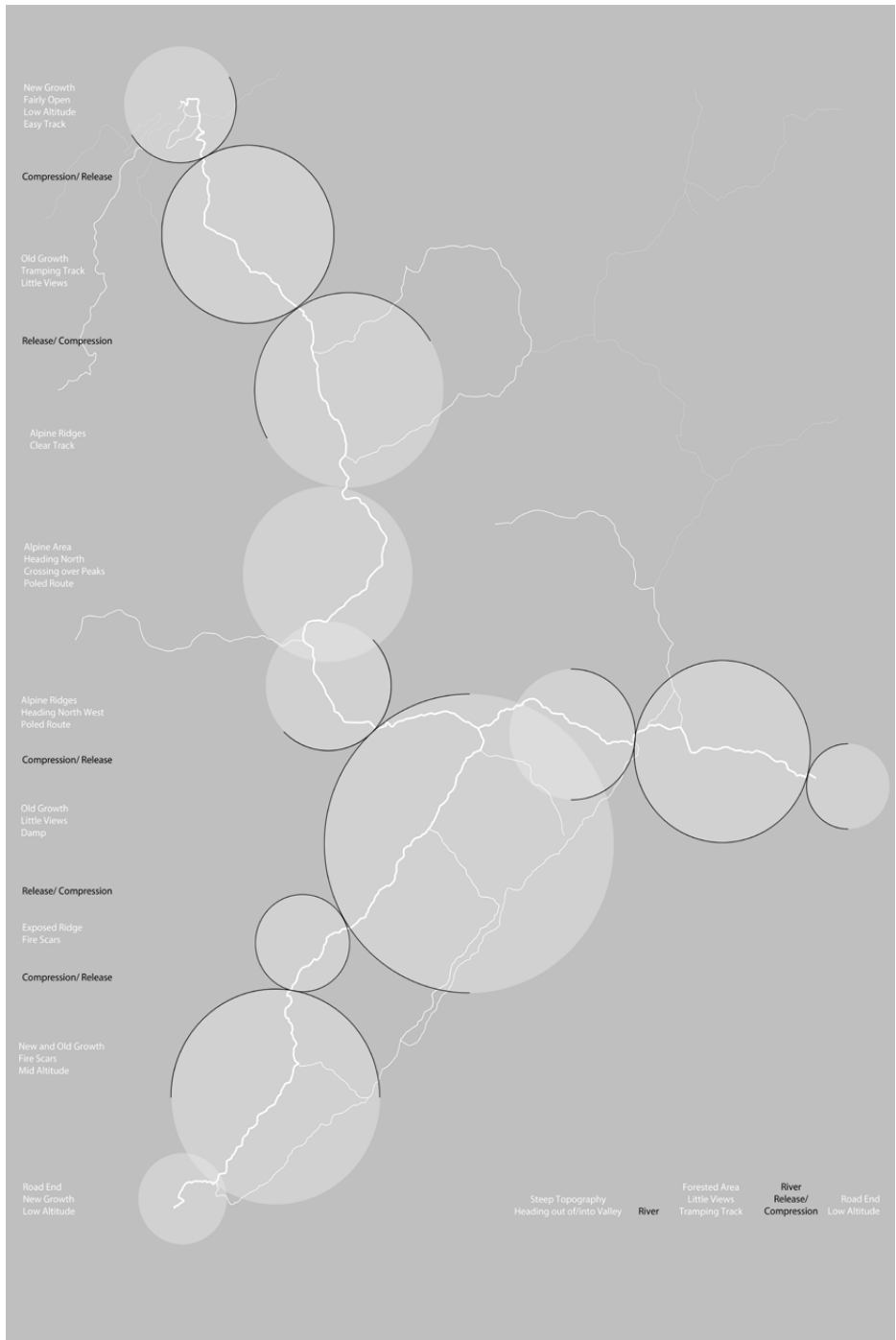places and non-places.

2C.3.1) Initial Maps

Starting with Lynch's 5 elements (paths, edges, districts,
nodes and landmarks) these revealed a correspondence
between how we perceive space within the urban and nat-
ural realms (fig. 19-22). While Lynch's identified elements
are over 50 years old, the fact that they can still be mapped
and identify commonalities of space justifies their contin-
ued relevance. While the criticisms of this technique are
focused on "social-spatial determinism not being evaluat-
ed and… the normative aspects revealing a potential prob-
lematic side" (Overdijk, 2017), having this as one aspect of
the analysis can still be considered beneficial.

Otaki Forks

Fields Track

Penn Creek Hut

Field Hut

Maungahuka Hut

Main Range

Kime Hut

Mt Hector

Renata Ridge Track

Elder Hut

Dress Circle Track

Alpha Hut

Hell's Gate

Bull Mound Track

Cone Hut

Waiohine Road End

Omega Track

Tutuwai Hut

Marchant Ridge Track

Block XVI Track

Tauherenikau Track

Dobson Loop Track

Smith Creek Shelter

Dobson Loop Track

Kaitoke Road End

Puffer Saddle

New Growth
Fairly Open
Low Altitude
Easy Track

Compression/ Release

Old Growth
Tramping Track
Little Views

Release/ Compression

Alpine Ridges
Clear Track

Alpine Area
Heading North
Crossing over Peaks
Poled Route

Alpine Ridges
Heading North West
Poled Route

Compression/ Release

Old Growth
Little Views
Damp

Release/ Compression

Exposed Ridge
Fire Scars

Compression/ Release

New and Old Growth
Fire Scars
Mid Altitude

Road End
New Growth
Low Altitude

Steep Topography   Forested Area   River   Road End
Heading out of/into Valley River   Little Views   Release/   Low Altitude
                                 Tramping Track   Compression
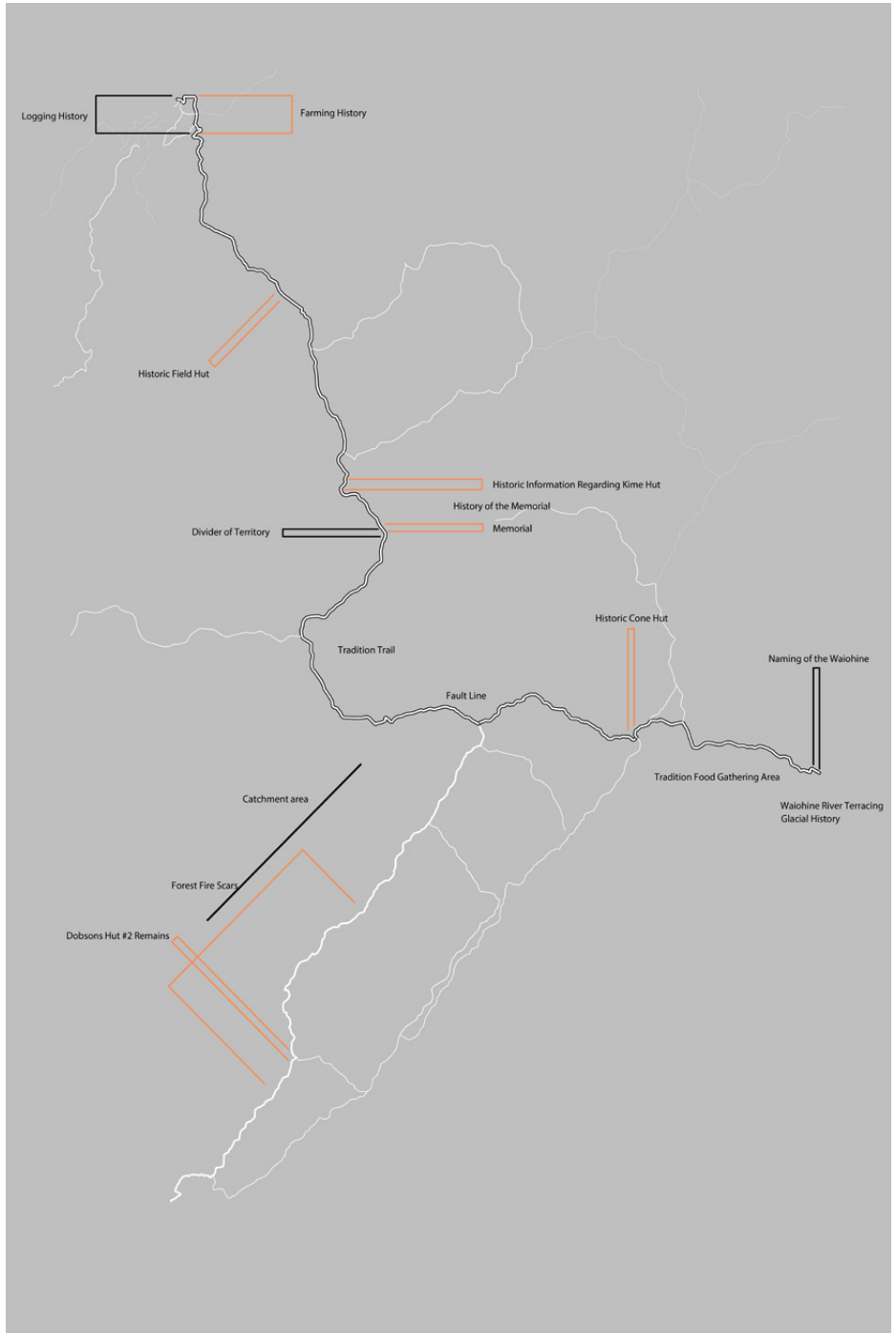
2C.3.2) Expanded Maps

Expanding on Lynch's five elements through a more recently proposed nine elements by Tveit et al. (2006) (Stewardship, Coherence, Disturbance, Historicity, Visual Scale, Imageability, Complexity, Naturalness and Ephemera) reveals ways with which this analysis can increase in depth. While these elements are primarily based on analysing the urban realm, it was decided that another series of maps would be created drawing upon historicity (fig. 23), visual scale and blocked views (fig. 24). It was also decided that isolation, ephemera and directional confusion (fig. 25) would also be mapped as they are key aspects of the experience that were revealed within the narrative.
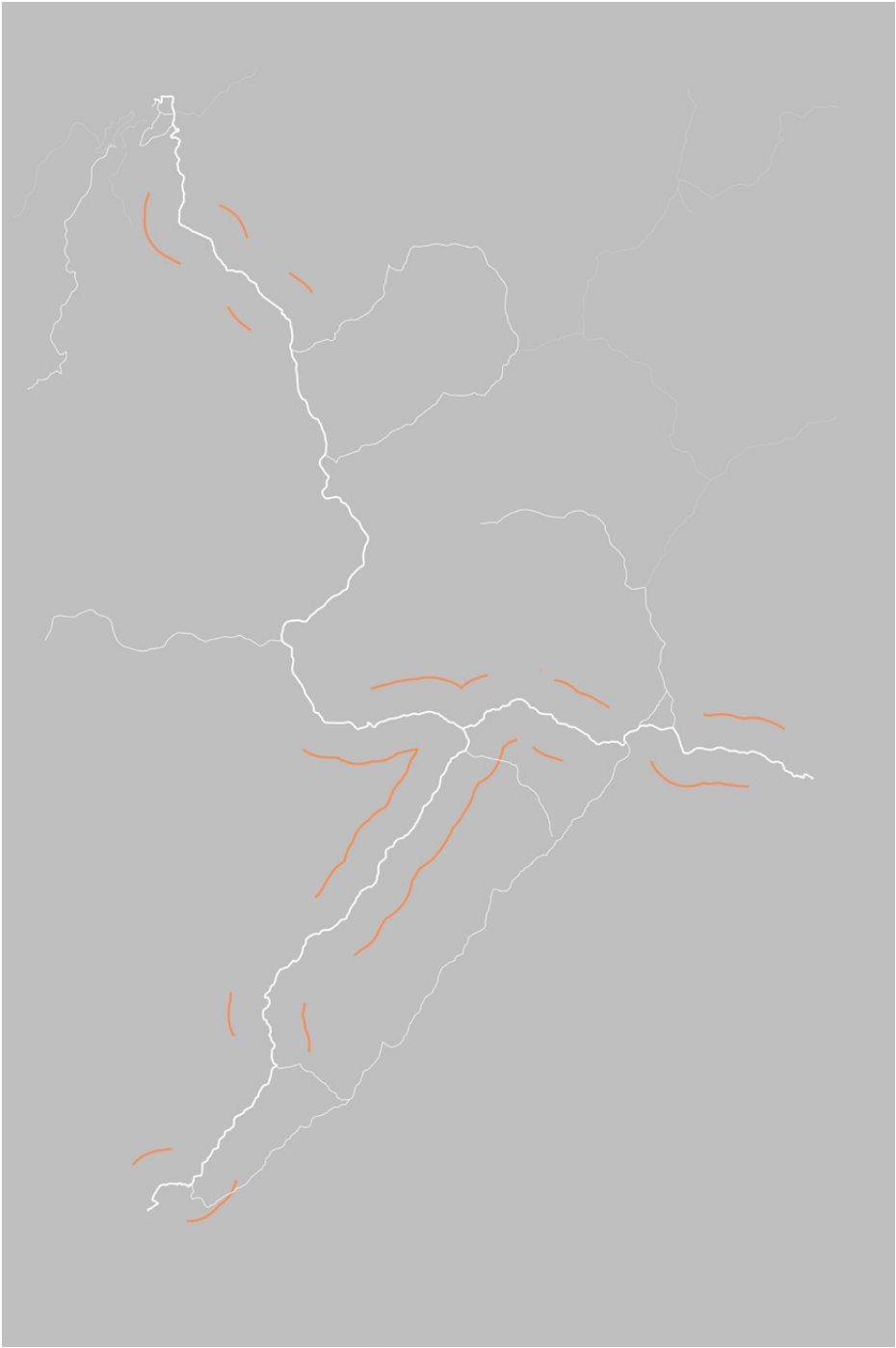
The importance placed upon stewardship and naturalness does not relate strongly to this rugged, natural environment, while coherence, disturbance and imageability have already been considered through the previous analytical techniques. Finally, complexity was revealed through the overlaying of the individual maps (fig. 26-27).
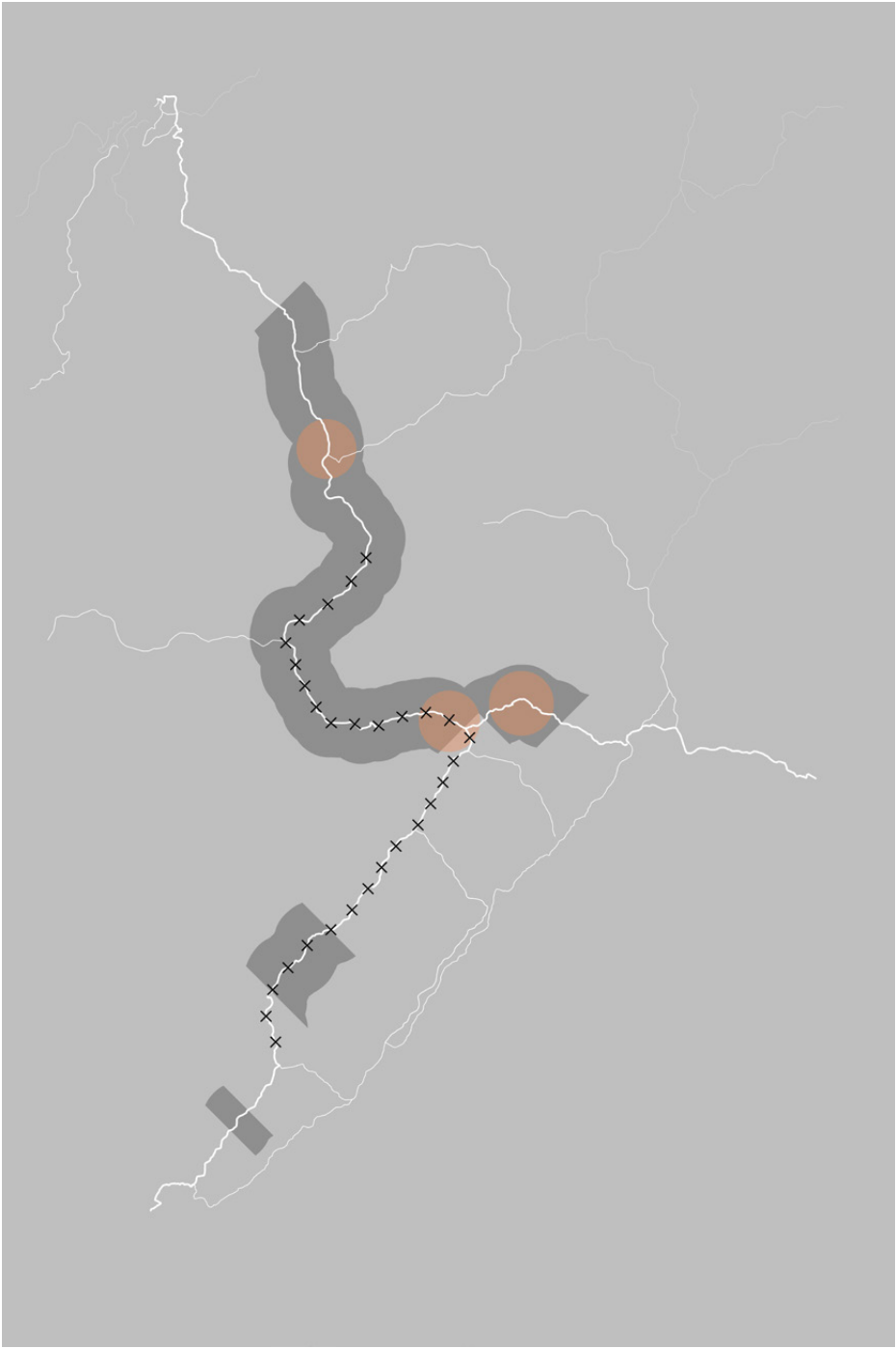
Opposite, Figure 22 - Regions map, circles show the distinct regions with the black outline highlighting a distinct change

Next Page Left, Figure 23 - Historicity, visible history in orange and hidden history in black

Next page right, Figure 24 - Visual scale and blocked views, orange lines shows areas of blocked views

Logging History

Farming History

Historic Field Hut

Historic Information Regarding Kime Hut

History of the Memorial

Divider of Territory

Memorial

Historic Cone Hut

Naming of the Waiohine

Tradition Trail

Fault Line

Tradition Food Gathering Area

Catchment area

Waiohine River Terracing
Glacial History

Forest Fire Scars

Dobsons Hut #2 Remains

These maps along with the other analysis techniques validate the theory explored in Section 1.

2C.3.3) Combined Map

Next, these individual maps were overlaid, and areas revealed themselves that reinforced the previous findings. These overlaid maps (fig 26-27) added an understanding between the relationship of our spatial syntax and areas of perceived 'place' and 'non-place'. A clear example of this is where there is a change from a sub-alpine to an alpine environment. This change in environment naturally highlights a new region, the amount of exposure changes along with views. This natural change enables one to orientate, situate themselves while the experience is temporalised due to weather conditions. One naturally recognises these spatial features, and this creates a 'place' evident when cross reference with the serial vision and written narratives.
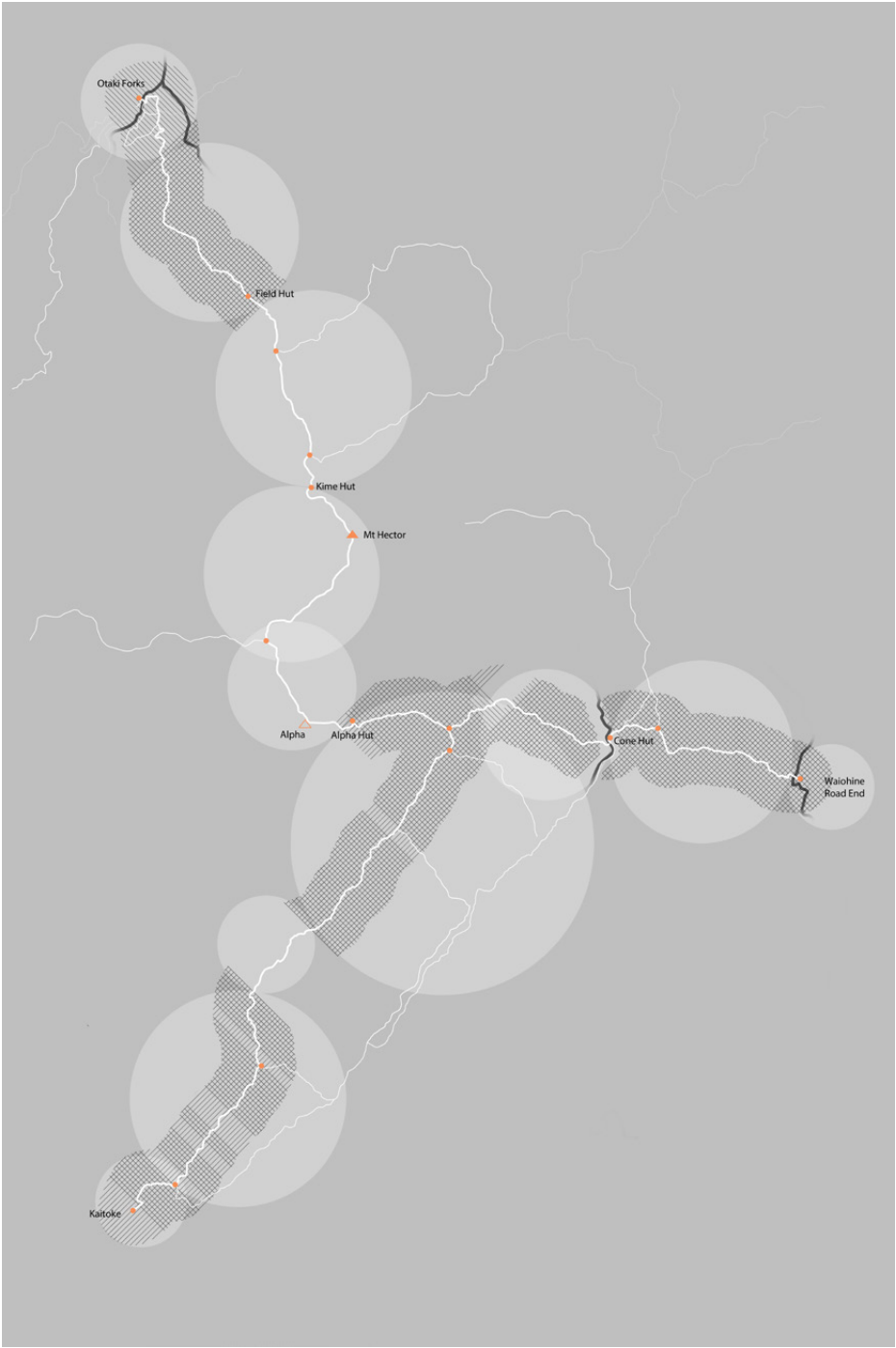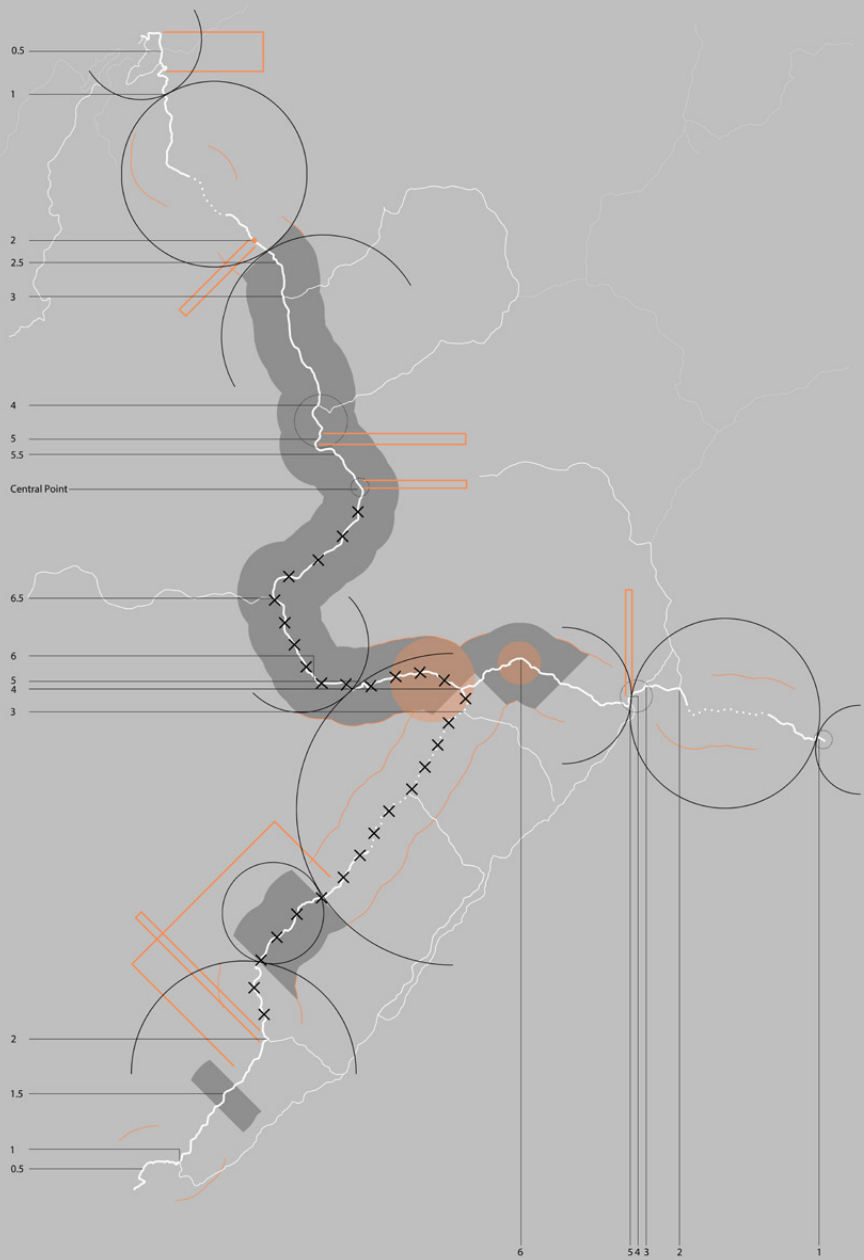
2C.3.4) Map Findings

These maps clearly show a relationship between individual elements and spaces we can considered 'places' and 'non-places'. These maps along with the other analysis techniques validate the theory explored in Section 1 and highlight the importance for architecture to contextualise, situate, orientate and temporalise one's experience if it wishes to place-make.

Opposite Figure 25 - Isolation, Ephemera and Directional Confusion. Isolated areas in grey fill with orange circles highlighting areas of directional confusion and crosses showing areas of ephemera

Next page left, Figure 26 - Combined Map, Lynch's five elements

Next page right, Figure 27 - Combined Map, Expanded elements

Otaki Forks

Field Hut

Kime Hut

Mt Hector

Alpha
Alpha Hut

Cone Hut

Waiohine
Road End

Kaitoke

0.5
1
2
2.5
3
4
5
5.5
Central Point
6.5
6
5
4
3
2
1.5
1
0.5

6   5 4 3   2   1

2C.4) Identified Sites

Cross referencing the generated spatial knowledge enabled specific sites and their wider experiential significance to be identified (fig. 28). These sites were either current places that should be strengthened or non-places that could be transformed by a manipulation of the experience.

2C.4.1 Site 1 – Alpha Hut

The current Alpha Hut forms a node and acts as a focal point within the experience. Not only is it the daily goal for most people, if staying there, it is the one point people will spend an extended period of time at.

While the hut manages to create a place, the analysis techniques revealed this is only a weak node. This is due to the hut failing to situate or orientate the user highlighted through the maps. The hut manages to contextualise and temporalise the experience to a small extent, but as this is a focal point within the journey, this could be greatly improved.

2C.4.2 Site 2 – Dobson Water Tower

Another weak place within the experience was identified at the Dobson Loop Track intersection. Due to the signposted intersection and historic remains, this place breaks the monotony of the experience. Even with this, serial vision

Site 7 - Ōtaki Visitor Centre

Site 6 - Fields Track Shelter

Site 5 - Cone Ridge Lookout

Site 1 - Alpha Hut

Site 4 - Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre
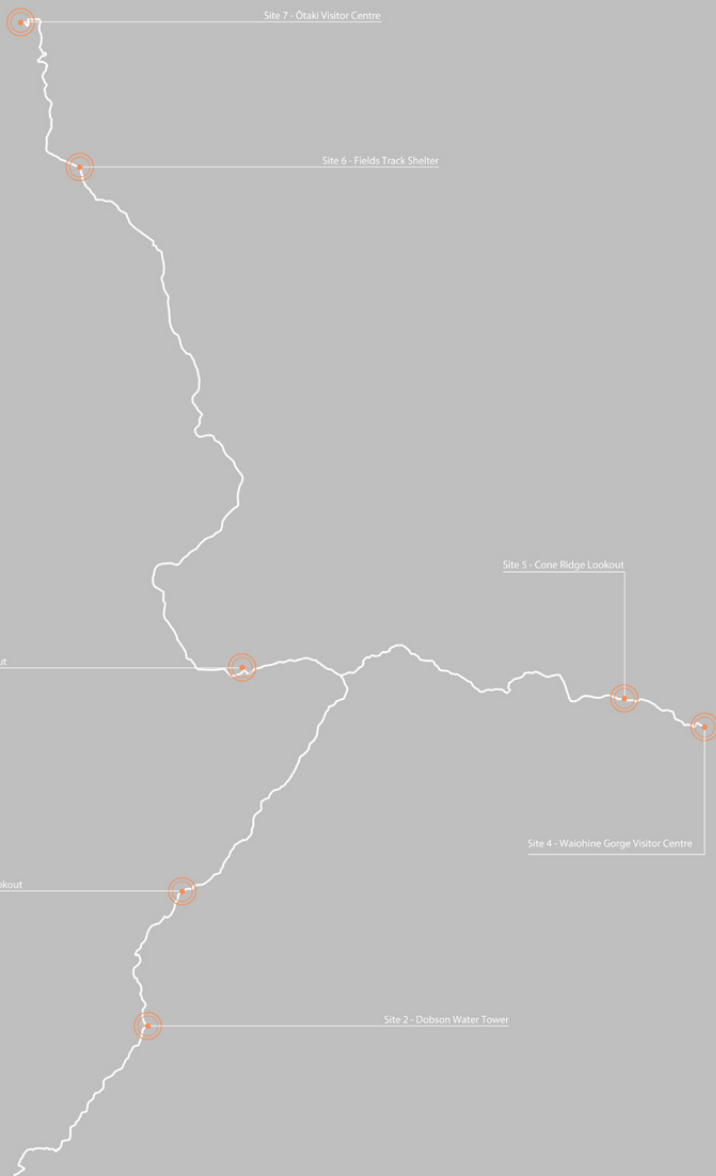
Site 3 - Marchant Ridge Lookout

Site 2 - Dobson Water Tower

analysis showed it is an area covered in weeds with no invitations to pause.

This place manages to temporalise and situate the experience, but due to the lack of contextualising and orientating it remains a weak place within the experience.

2C.4.3 Site 3 – Marchant Ridge Lookout

An area of non-place is Marchant ridge. This is a region of non-place due to the proliferation of sameness that disengages our ability to place-make. The written narrative skips over this area, serial vision analysis reveals a lack of visual character and the cognitive maps highlight blocked views, directional confusion, and a feeling of isolation.

This region fails to situate, orientate, contextualise and temporalise the experience leading to a boring area. This is most likely why it is considered the worst area based on feedback from the exhibition (see Section 2A.6).

2C.4.4 Site 4 – Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre

The road ends automatically create places as this forces us to engage with the area as we change our mode of transport. This automatically facilitates a place that is situated and contextualised. This road end also orientates one to a view of the mountains, although this could be further emphasised.

The analysis fails to reveal a temporalising aspect to the site leaving a place that was memorable but also one that has potential to be strengthened. Greater facilities would also help to further contextualise this area enabling opportunities to strengthen this node.

2C.4.5 Site 5 – Cone Ridge Lookout

The second area of non-place is a region of the Cone Ridge Track. This is an area of non-place as once again the sub-alpine area fails to situate, orientate, contextualise and temporalise the experience.

The written narrative compresses the distance and this correlates with the maps and serial vision showing blocked views and a lack of visual character. An intervention here could improve the adventure by providing another focal point within the experience.

2C.4.6 Site 6 – Fields Track Shelter

The final region of non-place was identified along Fields Track. This area of low complexity results in another extended period of sameness. This sameness fails to engage us, rendering one unable to situate, contextualise, orientate and temporalise the experience.

This area is well below the bushline and located a considerable distance between key focal points. The written narrative reveals increased bird life and the serial vision images show an older, more established forest highlighting potentials for an intervention to engage with.

2C.4.7 Site 7 – Ōtaki Forks Visitor Centre

Like the Waiohine Gorge road end, Ōtaki Forks already creates a key place within the experience. It is situated, contextualised and temporalised, however, it fails to orientate the user. This along with the other place-making attributes, could be greatly strengthened through an architectural intervention and bookend the adventure.

Section 3

Design Approach

### 3A.1) Ways of Approaching the Design Process

The site analysis techniques enabled a comprehensive understanding as to how the route is experienced. It revealed how and where architectural interventions could be situated to enable placemaking, while also remaining contextual to the wider experience. While this understanding of the route was a critical first step, we must now scale in and study how the architectural interventions themselves will facilitate an experience to further connect with place.

In initiating the design process, the literature revealed two separate but specific ways in which the process is generally instigated. Simply put, these are the expert and the subjectivist approach (Lothian 1999; Tveit et al 2006; Pallasmaa 2018; Appleton 1996).

Andrew Lothian (1999) explains these as:

- "The expert approach… a way of looking at architecture visually and generating thoughts and opinions based on this, an objective based reliance".

- "The subjectivist approach… a way of looking at architecture using a variety of senses and understanding the sensual effects of this in terms of generating thoughts and moods".

Opposite, Figure 29 - Expert based view of Syme Hut. The hut is portrayed as an object
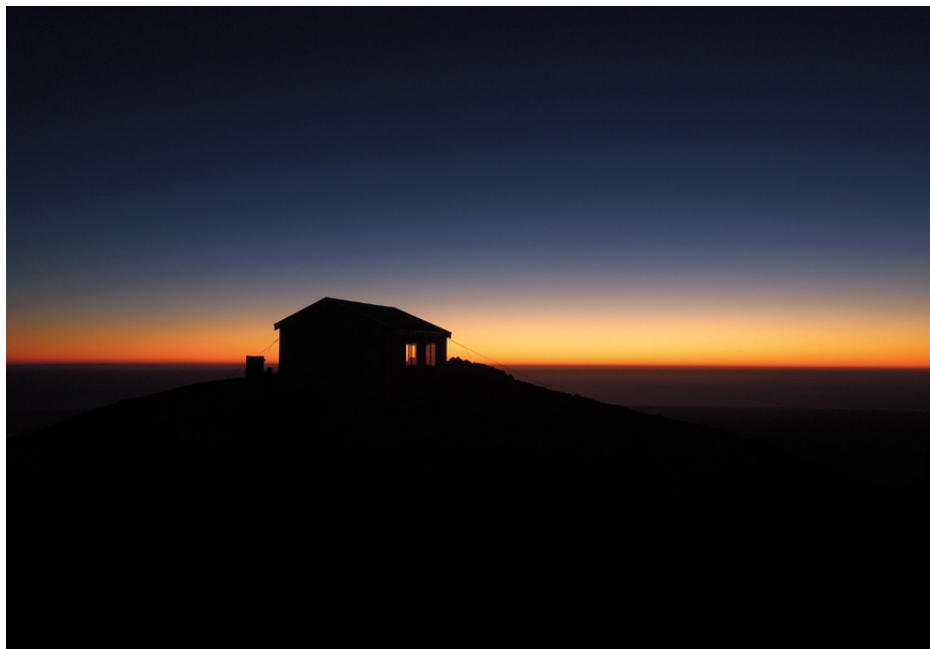
3A.1.2) Architecture's Object-Based Reliance

Jay Appleton (1996) believes these two disparate ways of approaching architecture has been led by the distinction of the arts and the sciences. Appleton believes the accepted dichotomy explains the lack of a holistic approach. This is because our perception is more complex than pure science or art. Due to the "inherent internal complexities, contradictions and irreconcilability of our perception of architecture", Pallasmaa (2018) questions the feasibility of a comprehensive theory ever being developed. However, as a discipline, architecture is well placed to explore this topic of experience and place as it is inherently concerned with both of these.

Pallasmaa (2018) states that in modern times we have come to see architecture from the 'expert' viewpoint. He highlights this by saying that analysis of architecture in "modern theory, education and practice have all focused on architecture as physical objects and their geometric and compositional qualities". This expert approach was evidenced with Le Corbusier (1959) defining architecture as "the masterly, correct and magnificent play of masses brought together in light". This object-based way of designing is also pushed by the typical tools of architects. Computer-Aided Design generates the design in an object-based way, as an architect designs from above in a god-like manner. This places a high priority on only our visual sense. It takes a well-skilled designer to imagine the other possibilities of senses in this environment. Pallasmaa (2018) states that current thinking within architecture continues to place an emphasis on "rationality and intellectualisation - understanding over experience".

Opposite, Figure 30 - Subjective view within Syme Hut. The photo captures the experience of life within

3A.1.3) A Dual Approach

Pallasmaa (2006), along with the writings of Aalto & Schildt (1998), Holl (2000) and Zumthor (2006) argue for approaching design in a more phenomenological way. Ways that do not forget about the object, but that attempt to bridge the distance between the arts and sciences. We experience space with all senses and therefore, by prioritising a purely visual, object-based approach is misguided.

If we experience architecture from both object and experiential viewpoints, how might we approach this in terms of design? Again, turning to Pallasmaa (2018), he states that "architecture mediates between the outer world and the inner realm of the self, creating distinct frames of perception and understanding". If this is true, approaching the design using the idea of 'distinct frames' makes sense. Oscar Niemeyer provides an exemplar of how we might do this.

3A.2) Designing Through Frames

In 1965, architect, Niemeyer was commissioned to plan a tourist resort in Algarve, Portugal. While the 'Pena Furada Development' was never realised, the techniques used by Niemeyer in the conceptual design reveal an insightful approach to designing in frames.

Niemeyer's approach relies upon narrative techniques, using sequential drawings accompanied by a written, experiential narrative. The words and drawings presented are

"Architecture mediates between the outer world and the inner realm of the self, creating distinct frames of perception and understanding"

Pallasmaa (2018)

reliant upon one another and the two are linked through numbering. To locate this narrative in space, Niemeyer uses a plan allowing us to cross-reference this abstracted view with the on-ground experience.

While the buildings presented by Niemeyer remained as vague conceptual forms, the process has links to the 'serial vision' technique and situates the experience in regard to the moving viewer. The viewer moves along the major axis of the site - the main road, and while this only allows for a linear understanding of the design, this is justified as it is the route visitors would have taken coming to the resort.

Cabral (2017) believes the "narrative structure showed a coexistence of fundamentally different viewpoints" and enabled a coherent, experiential understanding of the architecture and its relationship to the site. The plan for the Pena Furada Development was ultimately presented to the Portuguese Government, enabling us to realise the value and thought Niemeyer placed on this approach (Niemeyer, 1968).

Using Pallasmaa's idea of frames, we can initiate the design using two distinct approaches. The first being traditional object-based methods, such as form modelling and the second using Niemeyer's techniques, approaching the interior with more experiential methods. With this base understanding, the thesis tackled the following design.

Initial Design Exploration

3B.1) Introduction: Design Exploration

A new Alpha Hut was the perfect starting point as huts naturally form 'places' as these "simple structures act as a focal point for people in the backcountry" (Barnett et al. 2012). Being "one of the traditional overnight shelters for the classic Southern Crossing" (DOC, n.d.) Alpha hut is a key point within the experience and hence has the potential to create a strong connection between person and place.

3B.2) Current Hut

Alpha Hut is located 1000m from Alpha Peak and as such, is nestled below the bush-line with no views. The approach to the hut is unremarkable as it appears only as one rounds the corner directly before it (fig. 31). What the hut lacks in terms of its siting it attempts to make up for with its interior, enabling the standard tramping related rituals to take place. This includes a fireplace, reliant on people gathering wood, and communal areas for sharing stories of the day's adventures. The hut enables 20 people to sleep comfortably and this area is distinguished through a small level change. Even with this, the hut feels lifeless due to its large open plan design creating a considerable draughty

and soulless experience. The fireplace, located in one corner, attempts to battle the cold but often fails in providing a noticeable difference. Windows wrap around the front of the building providing plenty of heat loss. These windows are located under a large veranda which restricts light, and the windows face directly into the trees providing little view.

3B.3) New Design Potential

3B.3.1) Contextualised

Currently, the important functional attributes of the interior result in a contextualised experience (elements such as a fireplace and communal areas) but these could be improved through spatial and sensory reinforcement. The overall hut feels big and cold while a new hut could create a more intimate experience.

3B.3.2) Situated

A hut located closer to Alpha Peak would have the opportunity to reinforce the landmark. Currently, Alpha Peak is a weak landmark due to its lack of singularity and is often only recognised when a map is used. Situating the hut visibly closer to the peak would mean that when someone travels along Marchant Ridge or stands at Atkinson's Peak,

they will be able to establish the landmark of Alpha Peak by recognising Alpha Hut. A hut is generally a distinguishable form in the landscape, due to its geometric form and contrasting colour. Once this landmark is established, an individual's progress concerning this landmark becomes visually scalable, and this landmark is considerable as it acts as the daily goal for a large majority of people.

3B.3.3) Orientated

A hut that engages with its immediate environment is also an important step in creating a memorable and engaging place. While situating the hut closer to Alpha Peak helps curate the wider experience, the hut itself needs to involve the user with distinct views and proper solar orientation for warmth and light. These are aspects the current hut sorely lacks.

3B.3.4) Temporalised

The current hut fails to actively engage with time, instead, the only traces of this are the passive weathering of materials. While locating the hut above the bush line would increase the exposure to weather, through good design, elements such as a deck could actively temporalise the experience.

Mt Hector

Alpha
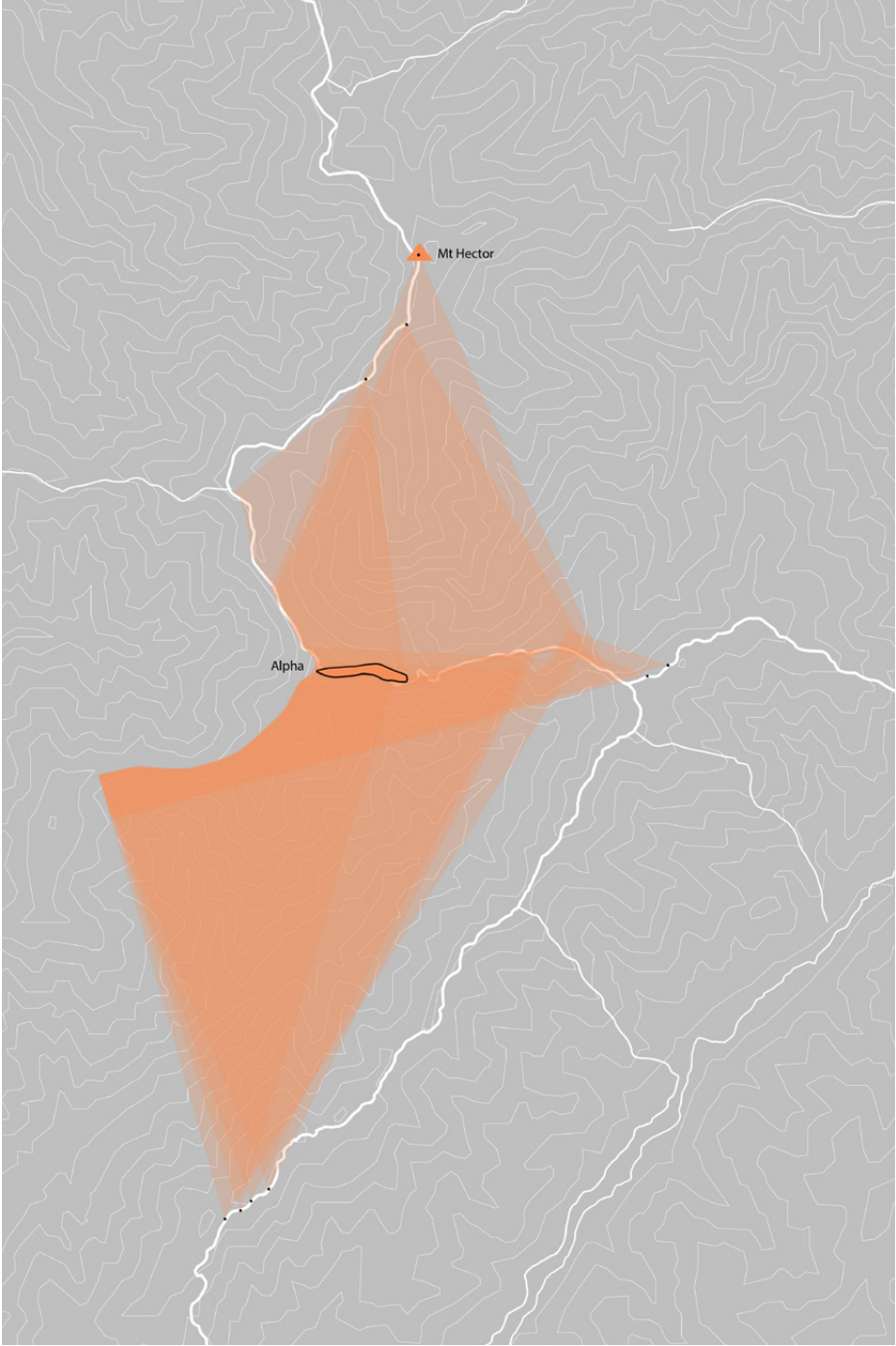
3B.4) Design Approach

Using the idea of a distinctive object and experiential frames, the design process was initiated. The 'expert frame' was used to create a situated and orientated experience while the 'subjective frame' was used to create a contextualised and temporalised experience. This was based around hut being seen as an object from far away but experienced when entered and inhabited.

3B.5) Expert Frame

To design in this frame, a methodology of mapping view shafts and exterior modelling was deployed.

Mapping view shafts enabled the situating of the hut in relation to the visibility of the surrounding paths (fig. 32). While locating the hut at the top of the peak would arguably create the most memorable siting, this is unrealistic due to weather and distance to a fuel source. Mappings revealed a ridge on the east still enabling high visibility. Modelling at 1:5000 then helped highlight the potential of this ridge (figs. 33-36). A location 600m down the peak was best, meaning views are possible to and from the hut while enabling a site protected from the harshest weather. Further modelling at 1:500 helped refine this siting, locating the design on a naturally flatter area (figs. 37-38).

A series of exterior form models at 1:100 explored potential geometric forms. These were analysed using drawing overlays to refine and hint at material and entrance opportunities.

Opposite, Figure 32 - Visibility Mapping. The orange area shows the visibility from the surrounding paths

Figure 33 - Physical Model Enabling Identification of a Suitable Location

*Figure 34 -
Located just above
the bushline
enabling a fuel
source and views
found to be best*

Figure 35 -
Looking out of the
tree canopy

*Figure 36 -
Model highlights
where the original
hut was with an X*

*Figure 37 - Refining
the siting*

Figure 38 - Hunkers into the ridge, projecting out towards the view

3B.6) Subjectivist Frame

Designing in this subjective frame, serial vision, charcoal drawings and narrative excerpts were used (figs. 39-45).

Charcoal was chosen due to its looser nature when compared to pencil, therefore while the drawings may have lacked a sharpness, the result evoked the imagination to complete the drawing. This resulted in a more sensual image. The drawings individually suggested details important to the experience such as materiality, spatial proportions and areas of light and darkness. Using the previous analytical concept of 'serial vision' the drawings proceeded to form a visual narrative set, creating an overall cohesive interior when viewed together. The drawings were analysed through an overlay of text and the outline of key elements. This enabled an interpretation of the multi-sensory elements within each drawing.

During the creation of the drawings, written narratives served to solidify the multi-sensory experience. The combination of image and text when examined together created a powerful narrative experience of the hut's interior.

Sitting at the table etched with names from the past I enjoy my hot dinner. The light from a candle dances on the pages of the hut book. Across the table and drawn together by the enjoyment of the outdoors, another tramper discusses the highlights of their day.

Figure 39 - Experiential Frame 1

The wood I cut up earlier from the forest is keeping the fire going strong, its warmth comforts me.

Another tramper prepares their dinner, the roar of the cooker fills the room. His gaze shifts out the window while he waits for the water to boil - hopefully in the morning there will be a view towards the valley below.
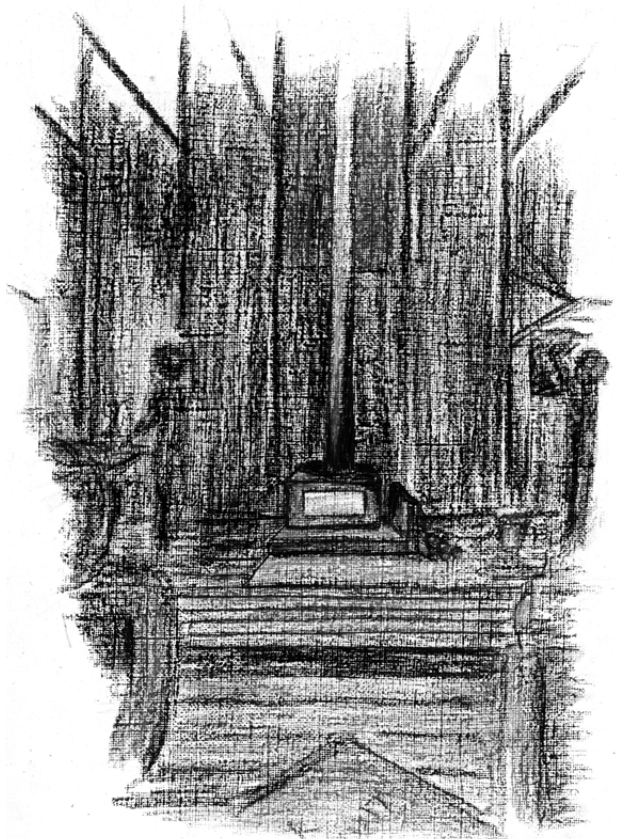
Figure 40 -
Experiential Frame 2

My eyes follow the strong vertical lines of the chimney, which then combine with the vertical corrugations of the translucent polycarbonate. The whitewash glow from the moon enters the space here, filling the room with an airy feeling. The verticals of the room along with the wooden truss exemplify its double height.
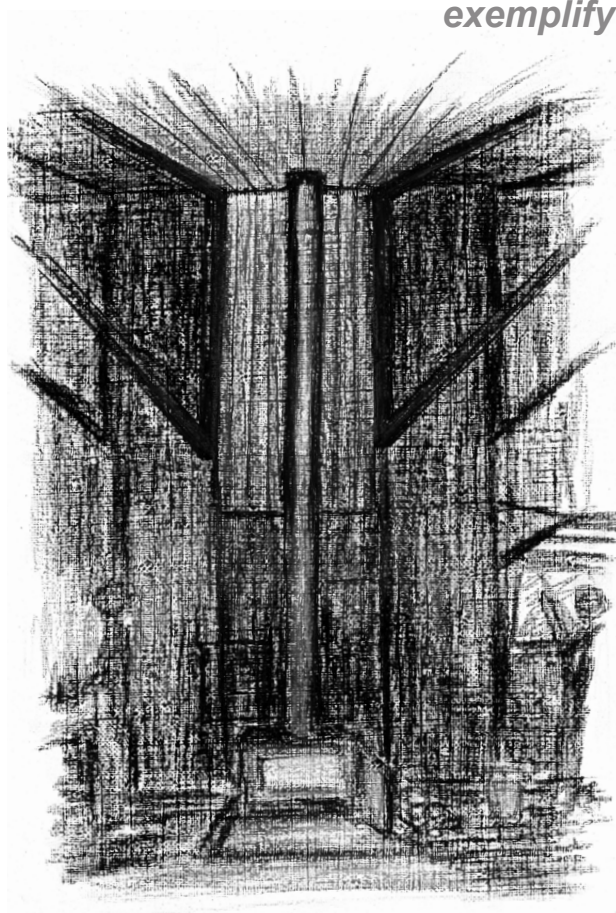
Figure 41 - Experiential Frame 3

I reach out my hand and touch the smooth wooden upright of the ladder that many others have worn down over the years. While I do this I also look out the window ahead. The warmth from the fire seemingly keeping the snowy landscape, at bay.
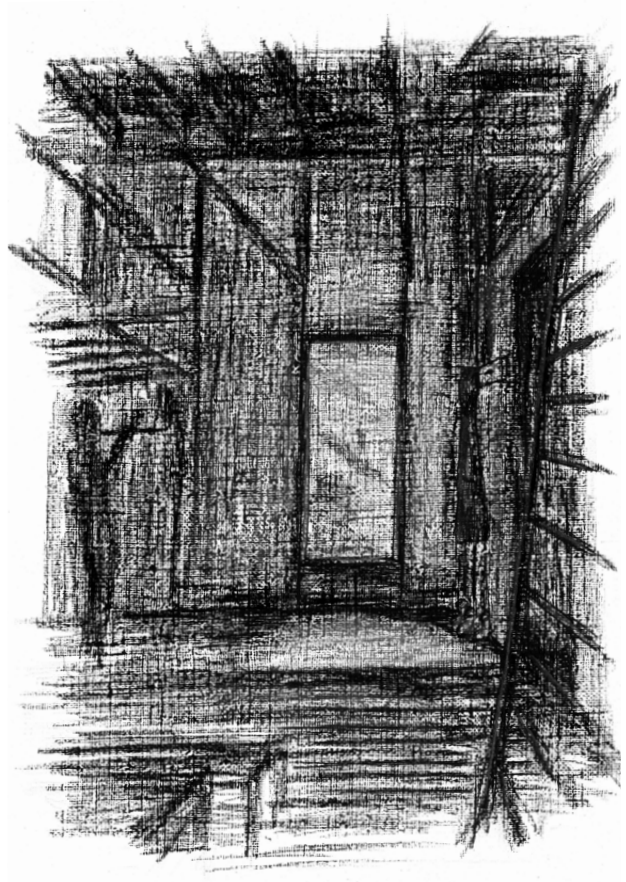
Figure 42 -
Experiential Frame 4

I look back as I move up the ladder. The refuge like space of the social area is evident by the intimate ceiling height and protective walls.

The crackle from the fire and the conversation from others drifts into the background as I move away and up the ladder.
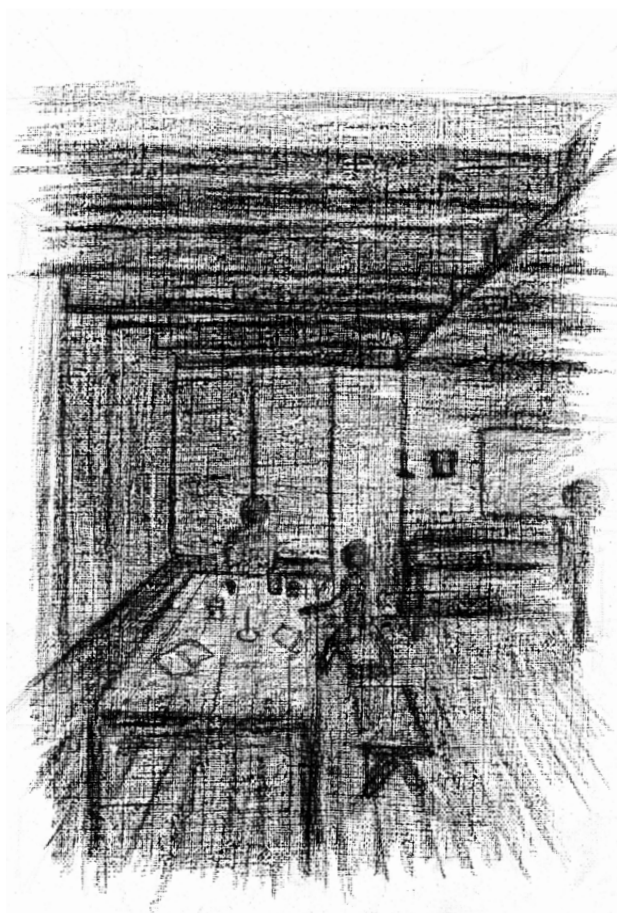
*Figure 43 -
Experiential Frame 5*

Up on the mezzanine sleeping area I move towards my mattress. A window at the end frames the space.

The simple sleeping set-up is part of the ritual of the hut. Everything has to be carried in here - a way to disconnect from busy city life.
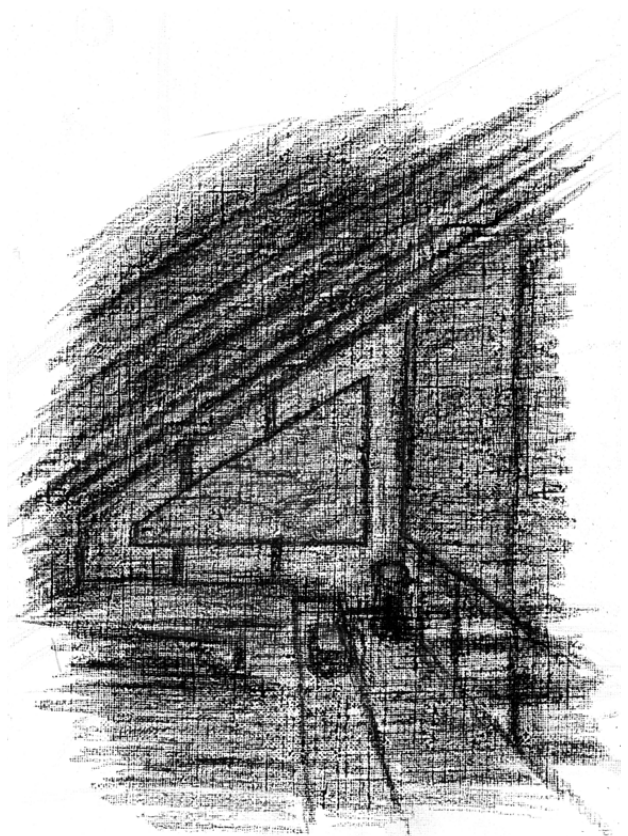
Figure 44 -
Experiential Frame 6

I melt into the mattress, finally my muscles are at rest.

I look up towards the ceiling. The moonlight is still filling the space through the polycarbonate skylight that wraps around the roof. I hope in the morning I will awake to sunlight streaming in through this.
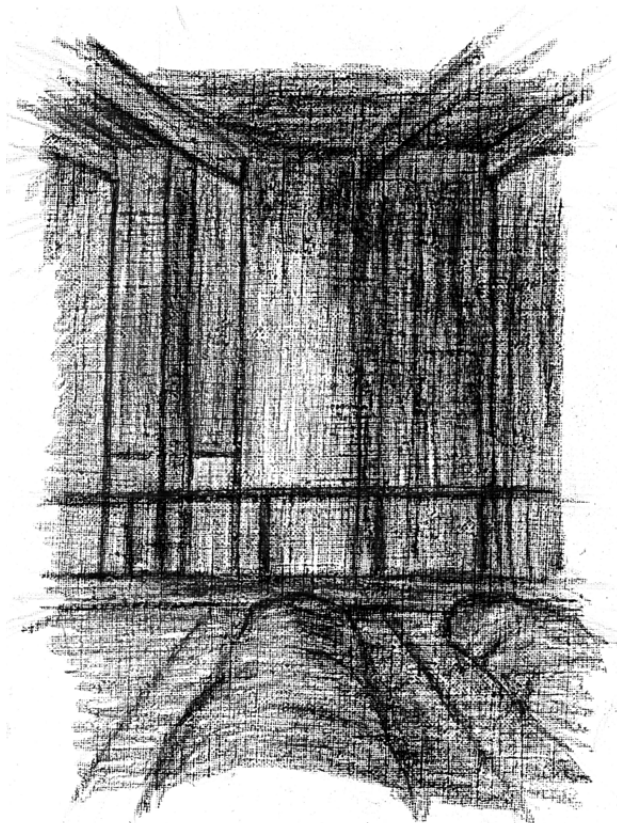
Figure 45 - Experiential Frame 7

3B.7) Synthesis

With two distinct frames, a way to synthesise these into a coherent design was required. Computer modelling was used for this due to the wide-ranging scale it facilitates.

The exterior forms were consolidated with the interior. By establishing key views in the model, based directly on the drawings, changes could be checked and refined by using the same analytical process.

Ultimately, however, a compromise had to be reached in this process due to the distinct approaches and this is a limitation of such a method.

Finally, a 1:50 model of the design was built, enabling a way to engage with and experience the design in its totality. The model was also inserted into the serial vision narrative and the images revealed a refuge like experience (fig. 46-49).
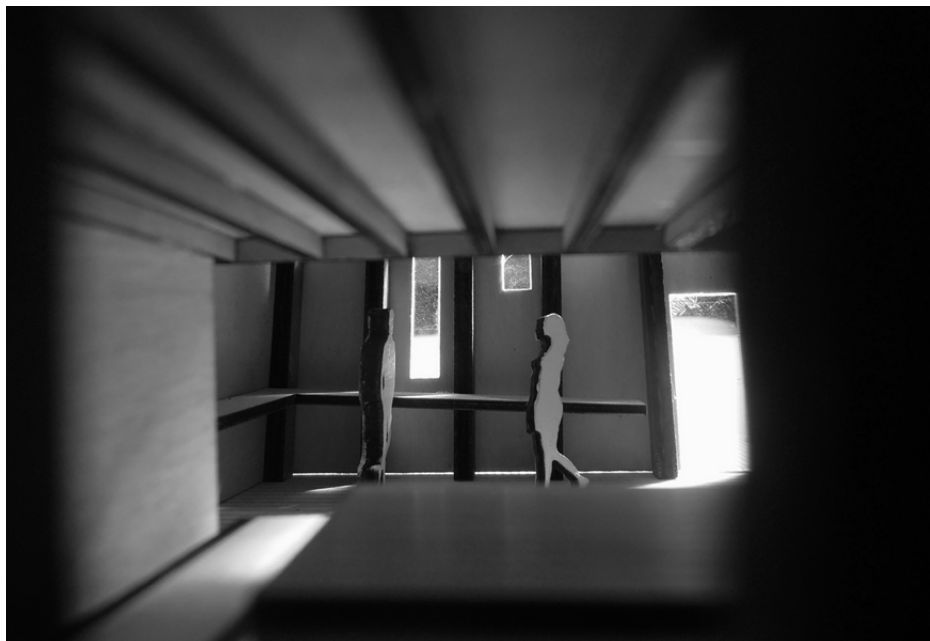
*Figure 46 -
Approaching the hut*

Figure 47 - Entering
through the main
door

*Figure 48 - Siting at
the dining area*

Figure 49 - Lying down in the sleeping area

3B.8) Testing and Reflection

To test the design, the perceived changes were mapped, and these could be compared directly against the initial experience. The mapping showed that the intervention would improve the wider experience by acting as a landmark for the surrounding paths. This revealed the design was well situated.

Studying the generated design against the framework revealed that the design enabled a contextualised experience by facilitating standard hut rituals. This experience was improved through the eye-level perspective drawings defining relevant spatial proportions to create a warm and intimate interior. The materials and furniture evoked in the drawings hinted at a temporalised experience.

The biggest downfall of the design was its failure to orientate the experience. In hindsight, this was due to the exterior form modelling not being done with site topography in mind, resulting in a form devoid of connection to site. Further understanding of the specific site and localised experience was needed.

May Review

3C.1) Review Focus

The May review focused directly on my site analysis and design approach with Alpha Hut. It was hoped that the review would provide feedback on my design methodology and provide further insight into where the analysis was lacking.

3C.2) Feedback

The reviewers were intrigued with the direction of the project and praised the site analysis approach, saying it was already well resolved. The reviewers raised questions related to the depth and refinement of the design methodology with the design being seen as "prosaic" and unimaginative.

While the model and subsequent photos captured the sensory experience of the design well, approaching the design with the dualistic intent of the object and experiential base resulted in a weak and disjointed design. This was especially evident at the 'mid-ground' area - the point of transition between inside and outside, where the contrasting approaches did not combine. This resulted in a hut that closed out the landscape and an exterior form that failed to consolidate the interior spaces.

3C.3) Reflection

Upon reflection, I realised the design methodology needed to become more cohesive and directly consider the 'mid-ground' area. This would hopefully mean as one approaches, moves around and looks out, the design is cohesive in achieving the four place-making attributes found in the framework.

The importance of designing at human eye-level was thought to be a strong approach and so the decision was made to carry this on. This however, needed to be refined further and used within multiple frames to help synthesise the exterior and interior more effectively.

The reviewers questioned the charcoal sketches concerning their multi-sensory aspects. This is a problem of any drawing as they are confined to a visual perception that can only hint at the other senses. The analysis of these drawings through overlays and narrative text helped to highlight the other sensory aspects, however, being in words these failed to engage the reviewers. While this is a good device within the design process, a refinement of this is needed in presentations and therefore future drawings will require more detail to hint at the multi-sensory experience.

Section 4

Enmeshed Experience

The thesis now focuses on developing a more refined methodology based on our experience of space. One approach is 'enmeshed experience' as described by Holl and discussed in this section. Using this as a precident a developed design methodology is created and then tested and refined over the three designs presented in Sections 4B, C and D.

4A.1) Multiple Frames

The two distinct frames (expert and subjectivist) failed to generate a cohesive experience of place, revealing the need for further consideration. Pallasmaa (2018) believes that while within a space, you perceive it with your whole being, there is a lack of understanding about how this perception changes as different senses are prioritised during the movement between 'frames'.

Holl provides further insight on our experience of architecture, thinking of it in multiple frames. Holl (2000) states "from the optic-haptic realm of material and detail to the connections of space developed in the light of foreground, middle ground, and distant view… enmeshed experience… is an elemental force of architecture".

While Holl coins the term 'enmeshed experience' he provides no tangible understanding of how we design for this. Studying his process was seen as a way to potentially uncover this thinking and develop the design methodology further.

Opposite, Figure 50 - Steven Holl's Chapel of St. Ignatius

4A.2) Precedent - Steven Holl

In every project, Holl's approach can be divided into the solving of four defining problems. These problems are site, circumstance, phenomena and a driving concept.

Holl starts the process by understanding the site and circumstances for the design – this includes understanding the context, programmatic requirements and desires of the clients (Holl, 2012). From here his process is reliant on watercolours and annotations in his portable 5x7inch sketch book where he makes a concept diagram. It is a solitary practice from which each of his projects emerges, but in doing so Holl (2012) says "that by starting with an analogue process I feel connected to the concept that I'm making and there's a kind of condition of scale that permeates the project". The concept emerges either before he starts the drawing process or after an image has been created. It is "an ambiguity, you never know which is coming first", but ultimately "there needs to be words that come with the images and that's the concept" (Holl, 2012).

While Holl (2012) always starts with this analogue process, once established he embraces "every single digital means at the hyper level". This enables quicker changes as well as environmental analysis which he sees as very important. While Holl embraces the digital, he also realises the drawbacks associated with the processes. One of the main draw backs he sees is the 'scalelessness' afforded by the digital as an infinite scrolling zoom constantly changes the scale. "There is a scale to the step… that's

"There needs to be words that come with the images and that's the concept"

(Holl, 2012)

not going to go away. There's no digital measure that's going to displace that" (2012).

Through this process he changes between expert based and subjective views, considering the changes in terms of the sensual qualities. Holl views experience as reliant on a 'multiplicity of phenomena'. These 'zones' he defines as:

- The merging of object and field,

- Perspectival space,

- Of colour,

- Of light and shadow,

- Spatiality of night,

- Time duration and perception,

- Water,

- Of sound,

- Detail,

- Proportion,

- Scale and perception.

These 'zones' reveal themselves through perspective views and this is where the sensual qualities of his work are generated. This is either in physical drawings, computer views or physical models. Holl (2006) ultimately views the final measure of architecture being in "its perceptual essences, changing the experience of our lives".

*Figure 51 - Main
door in the Chapel of
St. Ignatius*

Figure 52 - Lighting in the Chapel of St. Ignatius

4A.3) Linking Holl's Methods to Curating our Experience of Place

To generate a more cohesive experience of place, Holl's approach reveals key insights.

Firstly, it is critical to understand the specificities of site. This base understanding then feeds into the second important step which is a conceptual driver. Starting with understanding the site and drawing a conceptual driver from this, helps situate the design within the site and develops contextual links.

The third important step is using a variety of object and experiential perspectives to check the sensual qualities. These sensual qualities Holl has termed the 'multiplicity of phenomena'. Most of these phenomena appear to have an underlying place-making ability that relates to Leach's (2005) framework of contextualised, orientated, situated and temporalised. For example:

- The merging of object and field – orientated

- Perspectival space - situated

- Of light and shadow - orientated, temporalised

- Spatiality of night - temporalised

- Time duration and perception - temporalised

Holl views experience as reliant on a 'multiplicity of phenomena'. These are revealed through perspective views and this is how the sensual qualities of his work are generated.

- Water - temporalised

- Of sound - contextualised

- Detail - contextualised

- Proportion - situated, contextualised

- Scale and perception – situated, contextualised

Checking and tweaking these qualities from perspective views develops a design with sensual qualities dependent on the place.

4A.4) Refined Methodology

Reflecting upon the initial design reveals ways to refine the current design methodology. Firstly, while retaining the understandings of the wider experiential concerns found in Section 2, site specificity itself needs to me increased. Focusing on the written narrative at these points will be a way to uncover the unique experiences specific to each site. Secondly, using two distinct frames was not enough to create a cohesive design, therefore an array of perspective views that move from exterior to interior will be used to design from. Drawing overlays will then enable a way to understand and refine phenomena related to our ability to place-making. It is expected this refined process will fix the short comings in the initial design and resulting in more engaging experience.

Dobson Water Tower

4B.1) A Starting Point

To test the refined methodology, a water tower was chosen as the next design exploration. This was chosen because of its singular nature and minimal complexity, resulting in a back to basics approach.

4B.2) Curating the Wide Experience

Located 1 ½ to 2 ½ hours into the experience from the Kaitoke road end, the location serves as a good place to pause, consume food and water before ascending into the exposed section of the track ahead. If coming from Alpha Hut this spot is located 5 to 6 hours within the experience which often results in people having low water levels as the ridge provides no way to refill a water bottle. After battling your way through the exposed section of track this would be an ideal situation to pause and recover by consuming food and water.

Opposite, Figure 53 - Dobson Water Tower final filling area
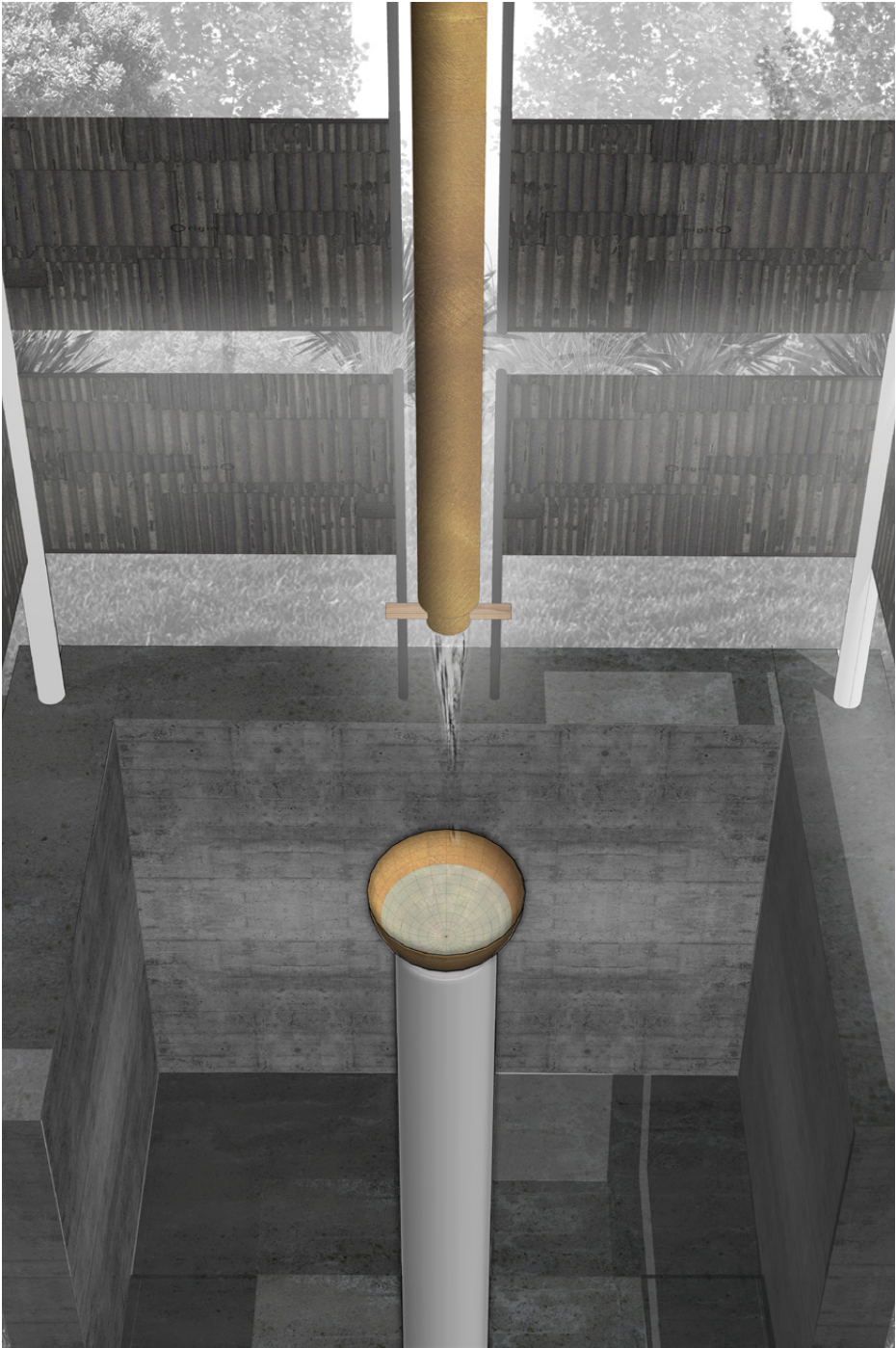
4B.3) Curating the Specific Experience

The site has historic significance as the second 'Dobson's Hut' was located here ('Dobsons Hut No. 2', n.d.). This spot, at the intersection of Dobson Loop Track and Marchant Ridge, forms a significant contextual place within the narrative experience. This, along with the remnants of the hut, reinforce the break in unity and results in a place even though it is overgrown and neglected. All that remains of the hut is the concrete base from the fireplace and rusting corrugated iron shoved in the bushes. Along with the hut remains, the natural life cycle of the vegetation is also visible with old and new growth plants, and together these aspects stress the temporality of life. The narrative excerpts from the essay reveals this subjective experience of the site in further detail (opposite page).

With this background of site knowledge leading into the design process, it was decided that a spot to stop, sit down and consume food and water was needed. To be specific to the site the design should create a stronger intersection and highlight the temporal nature of the site.

"The area we are now walking through has a dynamic tension between old and new. The areas of new growth contrast with the older areas of the bush. In the new areas, weeds proliferate the experience, sharp needles of gorse, low overgrown bushes and straggly trees interfere with movement. In the old areas, the tree canopies envelop you, cradling you along the journey.

One of these older areas suddenly releases into a newer growth area. The space opens up giving way to the overgrowth of weeds. In the centre stands relics of a past hut, centring the site around the old concrete fireplace. The area is overgrown, uninviting, and holds a part of history lost to nature now."

4B.4) Design Process

The design process started with a physical model of the surrounding area which conveyed the impact a water tower could have on the wider environment (fig. 55-56). The tower's location at the junction of three tracks, along with its height, creates a strong landmark. This enables the site to be situated within the wider environment. Following this modelling, a series of sketch designs were generated (fig. 54). These designs built upon the temporal remains of the old hut and contrasted the old fireplace to the new refilling station. A gravity fed system was necessitated because of the remote environment and accordingly, the water tank was placed above the user. Iterations occurred further refining the form to place further emphasis on the water tank and faucet, drawing attention to the precious liquid.

The process started from a removed visual base, but once inserted into the site, the effects of the design within the environment became apparent. This demonstrated the need for further contextualisation and therefore seating options along with track signage was inserted into the design. Materials were also refined in this process and the design reused the old hut's corrugated iron. This was made to contrast with the newer wood elements stressing the temporality. Once the design was refined (fig. 57-58) it was presented and feedback was received.
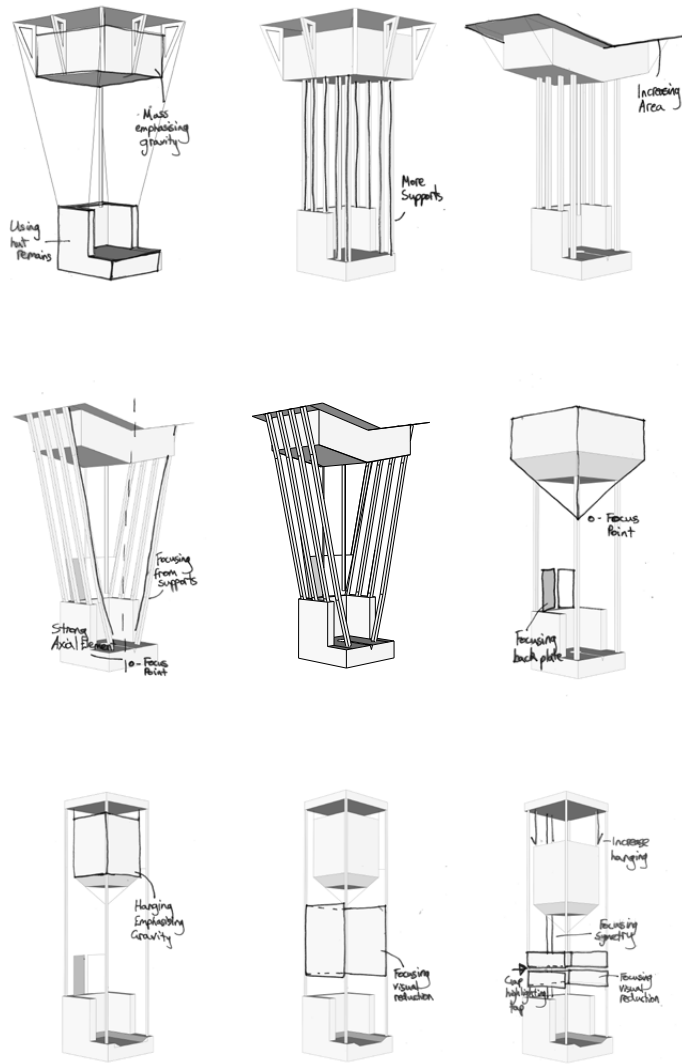
Mass
emphasising
gravity

Using
heat
Remains

More
Supports

Increasing
Area

Focusing
from
supports

Strong
Axial Beam

0 - Focus
Point

0 - Focus
Point

0 - Focus
Point

Focusing
back plate

Hanging
Emphasising
Gravity

Focusing
visual
reduction

Increasing
hanging

Focusing
symmetry

Core
highlighting
ring

Focusing
visual
reduction

*Figure 54 - Sketch
designs with drawing
overlays*

*Figure 55 - Place-
ment of Water Tower
on site*

Figure 56 - The placement strengthens the intersection of the Dobson Loop and Southern Crossing Tracks

*Figure 57 - Iteration
one - standing at the
intersection*

The feedback stated that the secondary elements, such as the signage, were competing with orientating the user to the water tower. This confused hierarchy when experienced.

Agreeing with this feedback, the secondary elements were pulled back, with a focus on prioritising the water tower (fig. 59-60). The secondary elements now define the site's boundaries and support growth of vegetation by acting as stakes for young native trees (fig. 61). This now orientates the user to focus on the water tower but will also create an enclave as the trees grow up around, further underlining the temporality of the site.

4B.5) Learnings

The key learning from this design was the advantages of placing the design in the environment to test and refine it. This reveals the design by grounding it in the real experience of the users.

Figure 59 - Final design - approaching the intersection

Figure 60 - Final design - standing at the intersection

*Figure 61 - Final
design - leaving the
intersection*

Marchant Ridge Lookout

4C.1) Adding a lineal axis

Increasing in complexity, by adding an axial movement, was the next step for developing the methodology. This expands from focusing on the singular element of the water tower to considering movement, and how the experience changes due to this.

4C.2) Curating the Wider Experience

Situated along Marchant Ridge in the middle of an identified 'non-place' this design serves to contextualise the experience by breaking the current unity. This is done by orientating the user to the daily goal or through revealing progress if coming from the other direction.

Through the specific framing of Alpha Peak, attention will be drawn to it, isolating its singularity and strengthening its landmark characteristics. The lookout will not only enable beautiful views but will cause the Marchant Ridge Track to become 'visually scalable' with progress now measurable against the now established landmark, Alpha Peak. This will help situate the wider experience through negating the current directional confusion that exists.

Opposite, Figure 62 - Final design, approaching the lookout

4C.3) Curating the Specific Experience

This intervention will engage the person in a new relationship with the site, as otherwise they pass through disengaged. The site is located under the tree canopy and while great views exist around the site, these currently are not exploited (see opposite page).

With this knowledge of the site, it was decided that a lookout would be designed so people could engage with the view, break the unity of experience and allow a moment to pause.

4C.4) Design Process

The situating of this design allowed for more freedom as the area defined the program rather than specificities at a certain location. This meant further explorations of potential sites were needed and large-scale models were once again used to identify the best site. If the lookout were to frame Alpha Peak, it was important to orientate the lookout to face this. Three potential sites were identified but with the idea that the lookout would extend from the land, one site revealed itself to be best.

The model located the lookout tucked down off the ridge (fig. 63-64). This means one descends towards it, breaking the unity of moving along the ridge. The topography on the site forms a flatter ledge allowing enough space for the user to engage with the intervention. Situated between two ridges the impact of the look-out on the landscape is lessened.

The tree canopy has slowly been lowering and opening up above us enabling sunlight to stream through. Up until now, we have had pockets of views, glimpses through the trees focusing our vision if we decide to look. These help spurred us on to get to Alpha Peak.

I can't really tell where I'm going, so I just keep following the path. I move through the trees that will hold me for the following two hours.

*Figure 63 - Siting of the lookout, tucked down off Marchant Ridge*

Figure 64 -
Extending out from
the ridge

Once situated, the specific design itself started with a series of sketch designs. These explored concepts and developed forms relevant to the environment. The design picked up on the strong vertical elements of the dead trees that contextualise the site by repeating vertical elements. These elements also act to orientate the body. A temporal focus came by placing a reflecting pool at the end of the lookout enabling light to reflect into the standing space and for the water surface to reveal wind or rain. In bad weather the view may disappear, but the pool will overflow engaging ones sense of sound and amplifying the temporality of the design.

Again, using the technique of serial vision, the design was refined from human eye level through approaching and engaging with the site (fig. 65-67). This time, however, the perspective views started from outside before occupying the design as one moved through the site. Analysis of the iterations occurred through overlays that attempted to understand the multi-sensory aspects within the design. This added refinement to the resultant design.
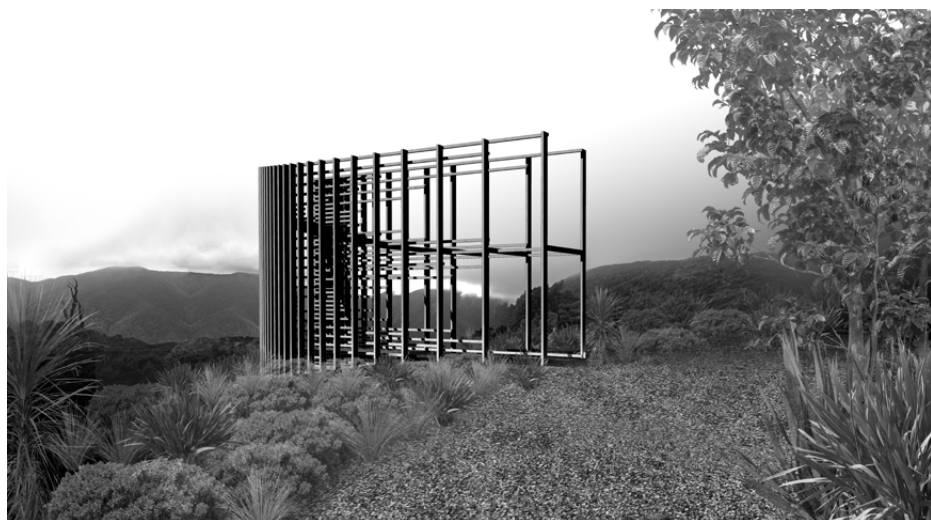
*Figure 65 - Iteration
one, approaching
the design*
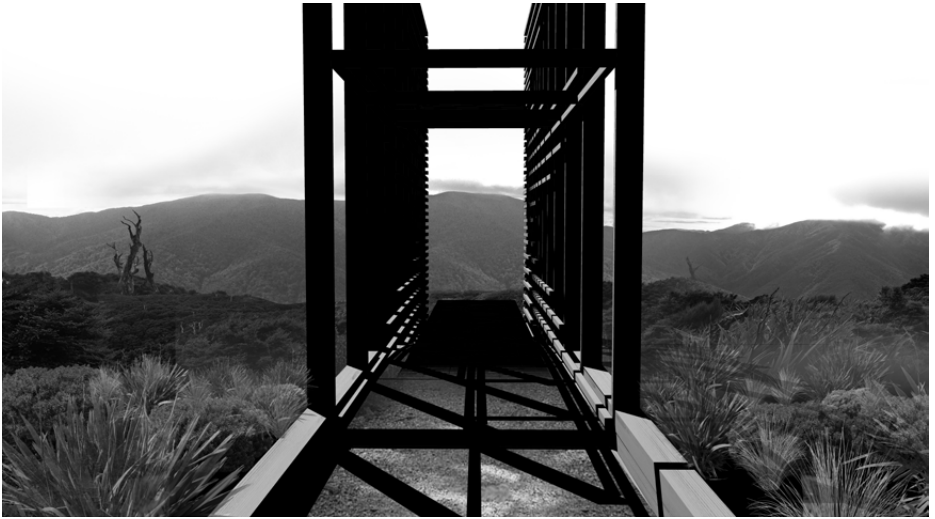
*Figure 66 - Iteration
one, entering the
lookout*
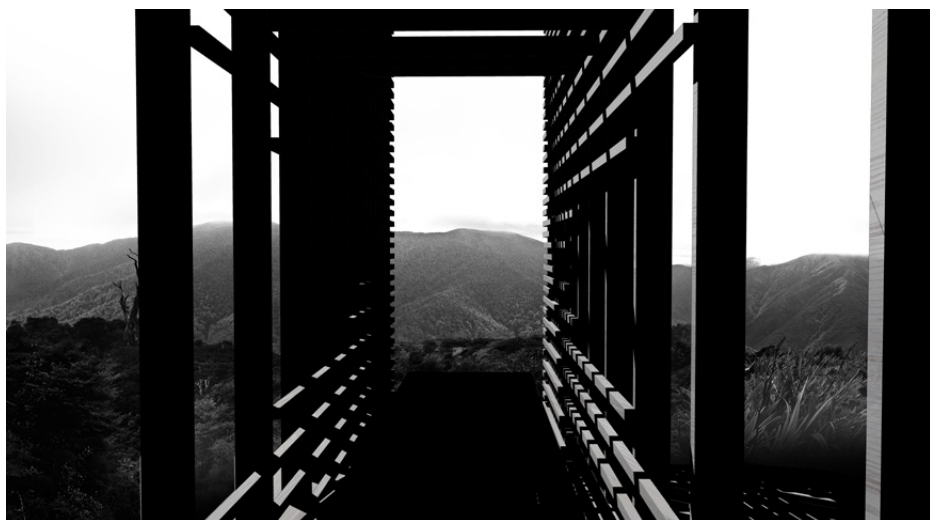
Figure 67 - Iteration one, focusing towards Alpha Peak

The movement through the design meant consideration of how the senses might change as one moves. The final design results in one ascending towards the viewing platform while the ground drops away (fig. 69-70). This results in a transcendence like shift for the person. The final viewing area protects against the weather when compared to the start, and along with the reflecting pool help highlight the temporal nature of the site (fig. 71). As the end closes out external forces, this allows for increased comfort and emphasises the visual sense, drawing attention to Alpha Peak in the distance (fig. 72).

4C.5) Learnings

The key learning from this design was how movement can cause transitions in sensory experience, creating different understandings of place from beginning to the end.

*Figure 68 - Final
design, view of the
lookout from further
back along the ridge*
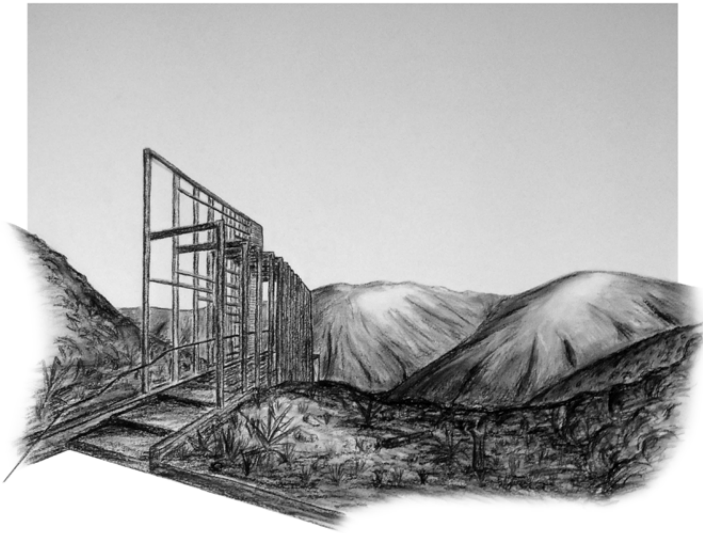
*Figure 69 - Final
design, approaching
the lookout*

Figure 70 - Final
design, entering the
lookout

Figure 71 - Final design, materiality and reflecting pool
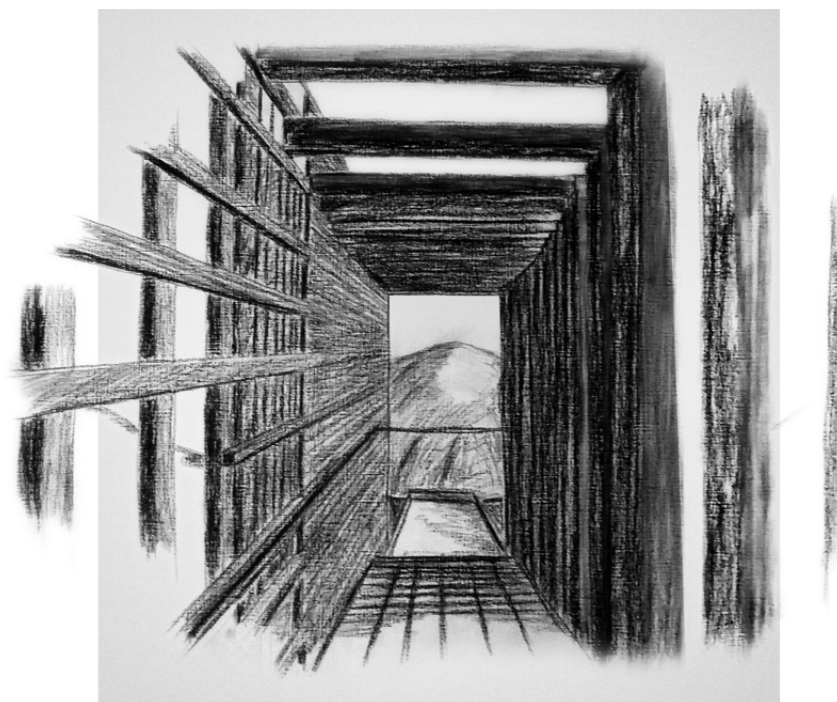
Figure 72 - Final design, focusing on Alpha Peak

Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre

4D.1) Multi-axis Movement

Finally, building upon the learnings so far, a visitor centre added multi-axial movement to the design process.

4D.2) Curating the Wider Experience

Opposite, Figure 73 - Waiohine Visitor Centre Southern Crossing Aspect

Situated at one end of the Southern Crossing, the visitor centre would reinforce the contextual node condition found at the current trailhead. The centre would also provide people with detailed information about the upcoming journey.

4D.3) Curating the Specific Experience

The site is where anticipation is at its highest as one transitions from the urban realm into the natural realm beyond. Opposing this, it is also a spot where satisfaction is at its highest as people end their journey. This visitor centre has the chance to contextualise this by acting as a boundary element within the experience, defining 'normal urban life' to the 'basic natural life' beyond (see opposite page).

4D.4) Design Process

Drawing upon these emotions, the design was to emphasise the edge condition by creating a hard wall-like boundary to the road resulting in a sudden shift. The other end necessitated the opposite approach - a thin delicate design where the boundary blurs indoors and outdoors, creating a soft transition back to normality.

Having found large-scale site modelling important for situating the lookout, this was once again employed (fig. 74-76). It revealed noteworthy landscape features of which the visitor centre could orientate the user towards, specifically the prominent valley and the mountain range beyond. This provides not only a dramatic view but an extensive altitude change.

Driving from the city out to Waiohine Gorge has taken its time, but we are finally nearing the road end. Any lingering tiredness from getting up early has now disappeared and anticipation has us wide awake. We are slowly disappearing from our modern lives, buildings are replaced by slowly enveloping trees, the pavement turns to gravel. Speed slows. People disappear.

I get out of the car in a different world from where I began. My only confines are now my ability, and the speed of time is only judged by the movement of the sun.

While the pack on my back might be heavy, the legs are fresh, just like the air, just like the river water.

With this foundation a form was created to take advantage of these aspects resulting in a triangular form that presented a contextual, wall-like element to the carpark and a high, orientating framing device at the opposite end (fig. 77). Sketch iterations explored forms and 'serial vision' refined these. Again, these were analysed through drawing overlays to further understand the multi-sensory aspects of moving through the building.

4D.5) Learnings

With the increasing complexity required by multi-axial movement, the methodology struggled in creating a well resolved design. This was due to the time requirements involved in producing the perspective images required by the serial vision methodology. While this was affordable in the less-complex designs, the quantity of images needed to understand the impacts each iteration had, was found to be too demanding. The design process therefore defaulted to concentrating on three main views and while this enabled a refined section, upon reflection, it became clear that the other areas were less resolved.

*Figure 74 - Exploring
site placement*

Figure 75 - Emphasises boundary condition

*Figure 76 - Causes
a focusing towards
the peaks*

Figure 77 - Carpark Aspect

*Figure 78 - Interior
of the visitor centre*

August Review

4E.1) Review Focus

The August review focused directly on my three new designs – The Water Tower, The Lookout and the Visitor Centre. It was hoped that the reviewers would provide feedback on the success of the outcomes and provide further suggestions for refining the design methodology.

4E.2) Feedback

The reviewers once again praised the understandings gained from site analysis but raised questions in regard to how the designs were emphasising site specific elements.

The feedback stemmed from the 'ordinary nature' of the design outcomes especially in regard to the Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre. While the designs had a wider experiential purpose that were well justified, the site-specificity of each design was seen as weak.

It was thought that through further engagement with the subjective aspects at each site this might be a way to advance the methodology. While I believed the designs picked up on wider emotions of the region, understanding how the architecture curates the specific experience was needed.

The Marchant Ridge Lookout was seen to be the most well resolved design and each part of the lineal movement through the design was well understood. It was thought that this design was strengthened due to engaging physically

with the site's topography. On the opposite side, Waiohine was the least resolved and the reviewers struggled to understand the experience formed by this intervention. The reviewers also highlighted that the situating of this design failed to engage with any site-specific elements apart from orientating individuals towards one view.

Finally, the reviewers thought the designs were too singular or object based. They posed the challenge to consider what the build-up to each specific moment could be.

4E.3) Reflection

Reflecting upon the feedback, I realised the presentation focused on the object-based nature of each design, instead of the experiential. This was evident as the emotional effects of the design were not realised by the reviewers. In reflecting upon how I presented the designs, it became clear that it had been difficult to get across these aspects. Returning to my first-person narrative techniques could once again be a way forward to improve upon the presentation.

To cope with increased complexity of larger designs, further refinement to the methodology was needed. Written narrative was seen as a potential device for understanding how architectonic elements might further contextualise the subjective experience. This, combined with consideration to how the architectural elements might orientate one to site specific features, could further connect the designs to their sites.

Section 5

Written Narratives

The thesis now explores how written narratives can refine the methodology and enable further experiential engagement with site. Section 5A explores the theory to understand their potential. The results highlight a way to refine the design methodology and this is tested and resolved in the final five designs (Section 5B-F).

5A.1) Introduction; Written Narrative

So far, the visual narrative technique of serial vision has been used to test and refine the designs. The potential of written narratives, however, has not been fully explored. Narratives "arise spontaneously in the course of navigating the world" (Coates, 2012) as "storytelling is a fundamental cognitive mode to cope with the complexity of the world around us" (Bruner, 2004). It is surprising then how narrative techniques have rarely been exploited within architecture as a design methodology as the field is directly concerned with human experience within space. Pallasmaa (2014) highlights this saying that "typically narrative has only had a subservient role within the field, acting as mere supporters of the assumed visual essence of the art form".

Opposite, Figure 79 - Designed through narrative, Rick Joy's Amangiri Resort creates compelling experiences through-out the design (Pinter, 2013)

5A.2) Potential for Refining the Methodology

Refining the methodology with written narrative techniques may serve to link site specifics with architectural experiential designs. This could ultimately solve the shortcomings highlighted in the August review resulting in a deeply felt connection between people and place.

5A.3) A Way to Connect Object and Experiential?

While approaching architecture from a narrative point of view is ambiguous, Havik (2014) says "therein lies their strength". Notteboom (2017) best explains this statement, stating that the ambiguity of narrative affords "on the one hand the interviewees (or the main character) to be 'objectified': we (the reader) observe from an outsider position, while on the other hand, by virtually walking and talking with them we also take part in the immersive experience ourselves". Ryan (2007) backs this up describing narratives as "fuzzy representations" that mediate in a process of understanding between a storyteller and a listener. Taking a narrative methodology can, therefore, afford a blending of interpretation from the subjective experience to the objective form. Augé (2008) agrees, stating that "narrative, and especially the journey narrative, is compatible with the double necessity of 'doing' and 'seeing'".

5A.4) Narrative Within the Profession

Narrative techniques within the architectural profession are an under-explored methodology especially when it comes to the design of buildings. Some architects and academics, however, have started picking up on its potential. In an interview with architect Anke Schmidt, Schmidt (2017) says that "projects can benefit from storytelling as a research tool, as a design tool, and often as a communication instrument as well". In one of her projects she used storytelling to gather information about the site, "at the start of a project especially, narrative formats are well-suited to activate local, implicit knowledge and to map out emotionally important places" (Schmidt, 2017). Coates (2012) agrees, saying that narrative is important for designing buildings connected to site because "it relies on

your ability to draw on the world around you, and render it light enough to move into the territory of the imagination". Schmidt (2017) suggests that narrative approaches can both be personal to the designer, but also engage with other people's narratives to broaden the designer's understanding of place. While an important tool at the start of the design process Schmidt (2017) also suggests that a narrative approach "can complement existing instruments and plans to engage with people, both in terms of inclusive design and in terms of communication".

5A.5) The Potential

"The uniqueness of a narrative approach is that it maintains its point of departure and conceptual roots in the world one inhabits and builds upon cognitive mechanisms that arise from existing places" (Coates, 2012). As Schmidt (2017) suggests, narrative can "combine strategic thinking and site-specific design work and address the emotional qualities of the landscape", to ultimately create site-specific objects and experiences. In this thesis, using written narrative as a design tool could further the site-specificity. This could enable ways to understand the subjective complexity of the designs and these outcomes can then be presented using this technique as well.

5A.6) Narrative Within an Academic Setting

The Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands has in recent years guided several postgraduate students to use narrative methods for the analysis and design of places. Havik & de Wit (2017) says "it has allowed students to focus on specific aspects of placemaking, taking their subjective experience as a starting point, while exploring the potential of narrative methods to move beyond the sub-

jective". One such project focused on urban fringe spaces that often are determined as 'placeless'. This project used the student's personal narrative experience of the site to pick up on specific site qualities that were then ultimately enhanced and brought to the fore through an architectural folly.

This justifies that this design approach is suited for architectural designs which seek to placemake. The strength of a narratives ability to place make is also evident in architect, Rick Joy's work. Further exploring of his process was seen as a way to understand how these techniques might be implemented.

5A.7) Precedent – Rick Joy

Rick Joy's work manages to create buildings that speak of their place, merging site-specific design and experiential qualities (fig. 79-80). Joy states that part of his motivation as an architect comes from an appreciation of very personal stories of life. "The best tales are simple narratives that include descriptions of some of the more sensual aspects of our experiences. I feel that the greatest architectural achievements in the world can only truly be described in this way. This is how I think as an architect and it is how I see the world" (Joy, 2002).

Beginning with generating a narrative from the site enables Joy to understand the context and on-ground experience with which he is designing in, enabling a weaving of historic themes (Convent Avenue Studios, 1997) with the contemporary demands from the client (Woodstock Vermont Farm, 2008) and enhancement of the current experiences on-site (Tubac House, 2000).

As Joy's work becomes more well-known, he has had to contend with larger projects (Fig 79-80, Amangiri Resort and Spa, 2008). Joy has tackled the increased scale and complexity by focusing in on his narrative methodology. Creating a written description as a starting point, these texts are an experiential description through the senses of the clients. They always begin with the arrival and continue at length through the sequence of spaces. In these accounts, Joy hardly mentions any architectural structures; instead, they focus on views, feelings and sensations that are revealed and articulated by the architecture. The account registers haptic feedback (sounds, smells and temperature differences) with the same weight as the visual impressions. This would not be possible within a drawing.

While his buildings may appear simple in form, the allure of his work is found in the sensual qualities of the experiences, which ultimately creates an undeniably beautiful building. One of Joy's mantras seems to be that "the simplest things evoke the deepest feelings" (Joy, 2002). Pallasmaa (2002) considers Joy's work, not as architectural objects; instead, the architecture becomes an existential instrument that frames, conditions, and articulates the realm of experience.

The outcomes of Joy's work are undoubtedly an engaging multisensory experience that heightens one's awareness of place. Joy's design methodology shows that creating a narrative that focuses on the experiential sequencing of a building can connect one to place. Using this technique early in the design process enables a strong base for the design then to be refined around. Joy's insights will be incorporated going forward.

5A.8) Learnings

In reflection, this design-led research has struggled to fully consider the experience, and this has resulted in designs that aren't specific to place. By using written narrative to imagine how the architecture might freshly engage the person with the site, might be a key step in developing the designs.

As Joy does, creating a written description as the designs starting point, beginning with the arrival and continuing through the sequence of spaces, could reveal specific opportunities. Focusing on views, feelings, and sensations that the architecture can reveal and articulate should be the goal here. Quick models or human perspective sketches could be used to depict and quickly refine this narrative as these can prompt the imagination of the on-ground experience. This will enable a furthering of the orientational, contextual, and temporal aspects which are specific to the site.

Opposite, Figure 80 - Rick Joy's Amangiri Resort central avenue. The resort evokes the feeling of a desert oasis (Pinter, 2013)

Once a refined text is established that articulates the architecture, formalising this in a digital model and then sequentially moving through can then refine the haptic experience. This will enable contemplation as to the material finishes and refinement of spatial proportions. A series of final designs will now be developed, incorporating all the learnings from the theory and design experiments so far.

Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre

5B.1) Introduction

As Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre was the last design experiment (see 4D), a new iteration would be the starting point. This would enable a direct comparison to be drawn as to the impact of the refined methodology.

5B.2) Design Process

A fresh look at the Waiohine Gorge road end, through revisiting the site and consulting the physical model, revealed a new opportunity that was unique to the specific location. While the old site was set back, the new site is situated on the old glacial valley edge. This furthers the sites specific and wider experiential conditions of boundary (fig. 82-83).

To Cone Ridge
Lookout

To Greytown
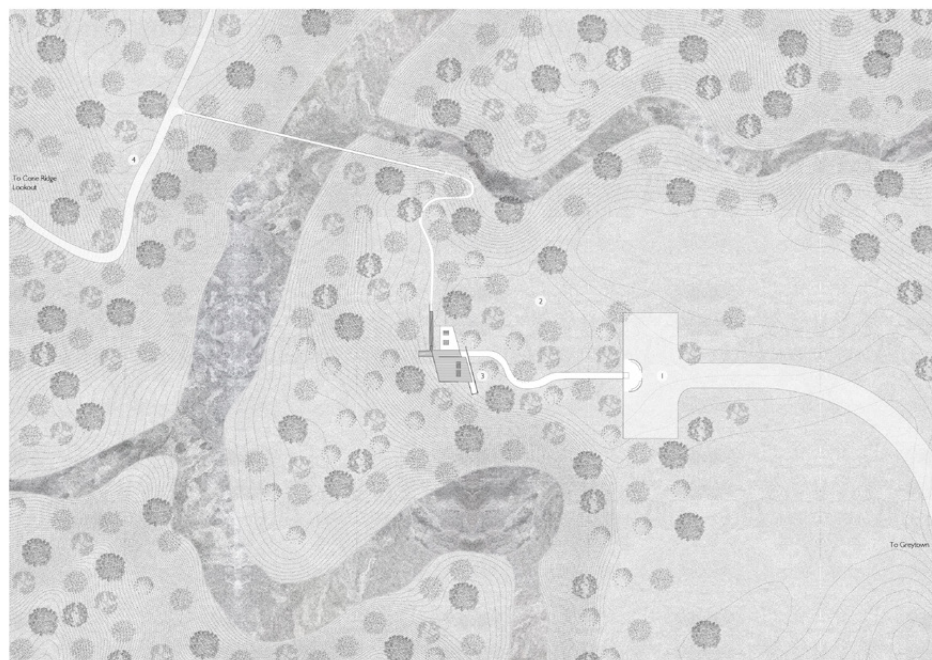
Key
1   Carpark
2   Camping Areas
3   Visitor Centre
4   Cone Ridge Track (Southern Crossing)

Figure 82 - Moving the design towards the glacial edge reinforces edge conditions

Figure 83 - The new site also foregrounds the river and mountain views

A written, first-person narrative depicted moving through the area to initiate the design process. The text focused on the sensual experiences that architectonic elements could create, in relation to the body and site. This directly drew inspiration from Rick Joy's narrative methodology and enabled contemplation as to the contextual, orientational and temporal experiences attainable from the site. Specifically:

• The contextual experience was highlighted concerning the boundary concept, with the text revealing an interplay between thresholds and the generated areas on either side.

• The orientational aspects were disclosed through the potential of specific views and framing devices included within the design.

• Finally, the temporal experience was shown through the play of natural light and shadow as well as the potential for outdoor spaces that could be utilised depending on the weather.

A physical sketch model (fig. 84) was generated from the initial narrative, reaffirming the spaces depicted in the text. This process also identified holes within the narrative early on, and these could be easily fixed. One such problem was the spatial proportions evoked by the text not aligning with the model. This process resulted in a back and forth dialogue occurring between the text and model, ensuring an iterative design process. While the text and the imagined spaces are undoubtedly subjective, the ability to transfer these quickly to a sketch model, enabled the themes to become crystallised and embedded within the design. This narrative included sensual experiences such as sounds, temperatures, views, textures and movement.
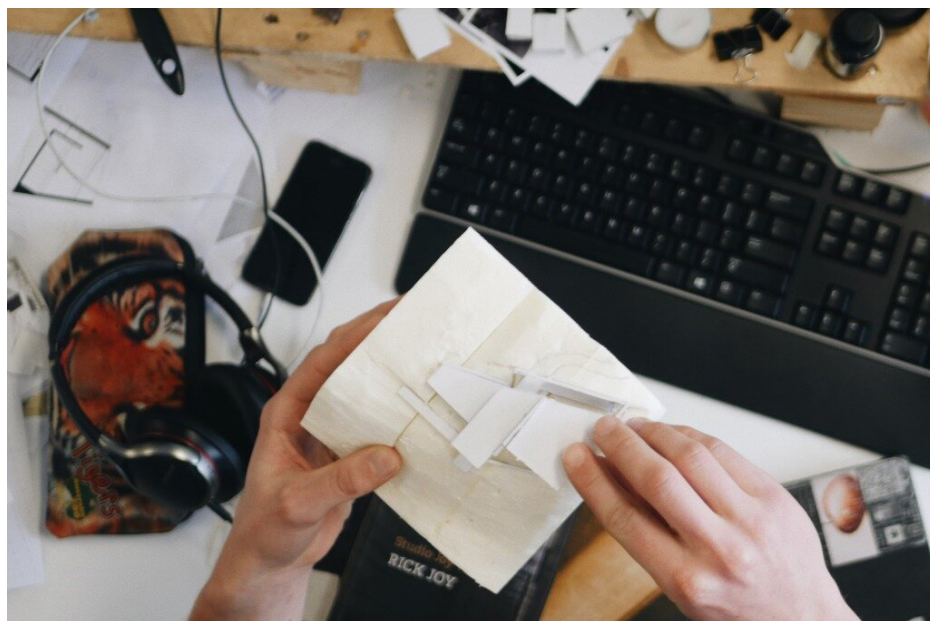
While most of the process thus far had been heavily reliant on instinct with development occurring through written scrawls or the sketch model, this changed when the design was formalised in a digital model. The digital model initially took the form of the then, current sketch model, and this was accompanied by an accurate topography. When compared to the text, this initial computer model revealed some inconsistencies afforded by the inaccuracies of the different processes - such as the orientation to specific views. This highlighted, that while the narrative and physical modelling techniques generated a strong base, the freedom afforded by these facilitated at times distorted realities. The computer formalised the design and enabled the quick adjustments needed, as now, every space was visually depicted. Along with this formalisation, the advantage of the digital model occurring at this point in the process was that it enabled details to be conceived and refined. A strong foundation had unquestionably already been formed through the narrative techniques which were missing in the previous methodologies. As Holl's (2012) process indicates, delaying this switch into the digital realm, enables a personal connection to the concept and conditions of scale to permeate the project.

The final step in the methodology drew from Cullen's and Niemeyer's processes as previously explored. This step used objective serial vision images accompanied by a subjective, first-person narrative. Depicting the design like this, enabled a profound understanding of the architecture by comprehending the relationship between the body moving through site and the subsequent curated experience. This enabled the coexistence of fundamentally different viewpoints of which the methodology had been searching for.

**5B.3) Final
Design**

A Cor-Ten steel wall emerges from the earth, its weathered orange hues frame the peaks beyond.

Opposite, Figure 85 - A path initially leads one away from the carpark before one reaches the visitor centre
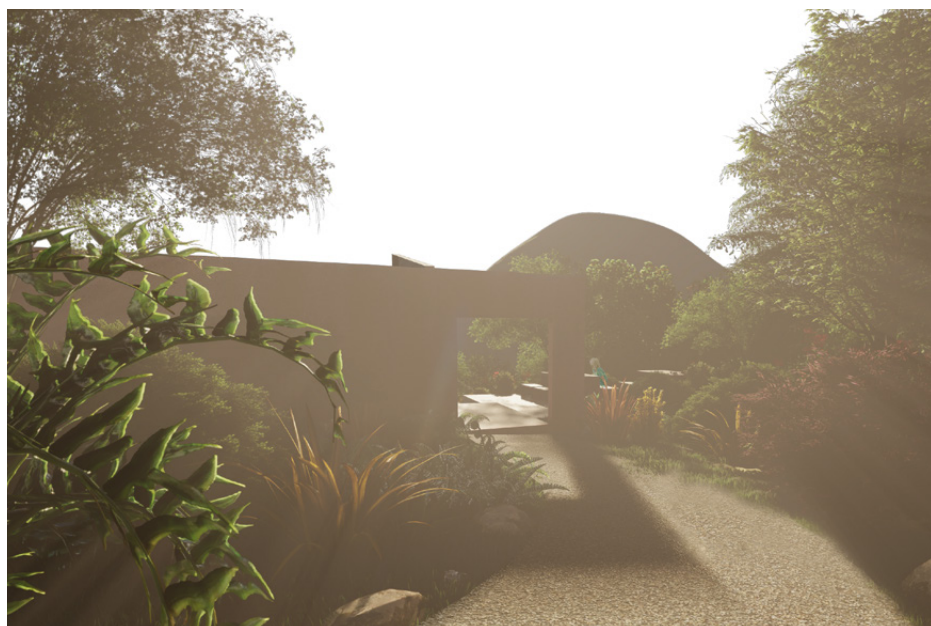
As one moves to occupy this frame,
four rammed-earth walls are revealed,
nestled behind.

*Opposite, Figure
86 - One enters the
visitor centre through
the large cutout with-
in the cor-ten wall*

One engages with different zones of threshold throughout:
Outdoor spaces embrace the temporal weather,
Semi-enclosed corridors extend transitions,
Sliding doors blur boundaries and,
A corner window breaks the buildings boarders.

Opposite, Figure 87
- The design slowly leads one inside, generating different zones of interiority
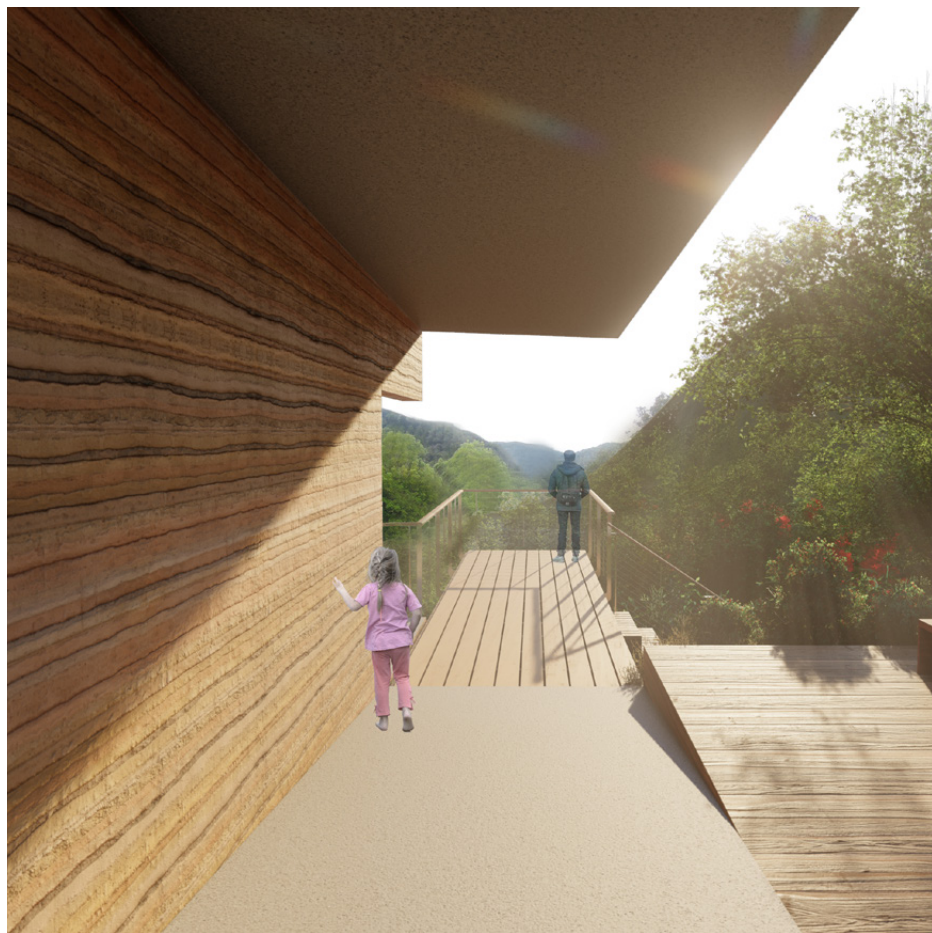
The split-level building initially follows the topography, but this terminates as it draws you out and over the valley edge.
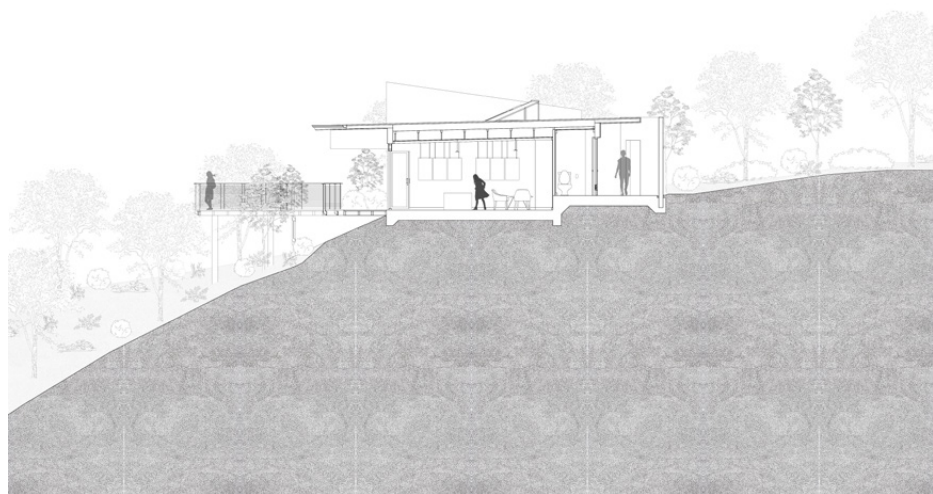
A lookout aligns with the main axis of the building enabling one to look into the Waiohine River. A gesture connected to the iwi of Rangitāne and their traditional story of Haunui-a-nanaia.

Opposite, Figure 89 - A lookout area enables one to connect with the river and hills beyond

The materials reveal a textural engagement; a pitted steel entrance, varnished plywood ceilings, rugged rammed-earth walls, translucent glazed voids and worn brass details.

Opposite, Figure 90 - Warm plywood contrasts with the rammed earth while a dropped ceiling creates an intermate space

The red to yellow hues of the rammed-earth walls are directly drawn from the soil held along the Southern Crossing extending its relationship to the site.

Opposite, Figure 91 - A corner window breaks the building's boundaries and looks out over the trees beyond

**The design's three main exposures
face away from the carpark,
reinforcing the road end.
Consequentially the aspects orientate
one towards the valley, the peaks
beyond and the direction of the
Southern Crossing.**
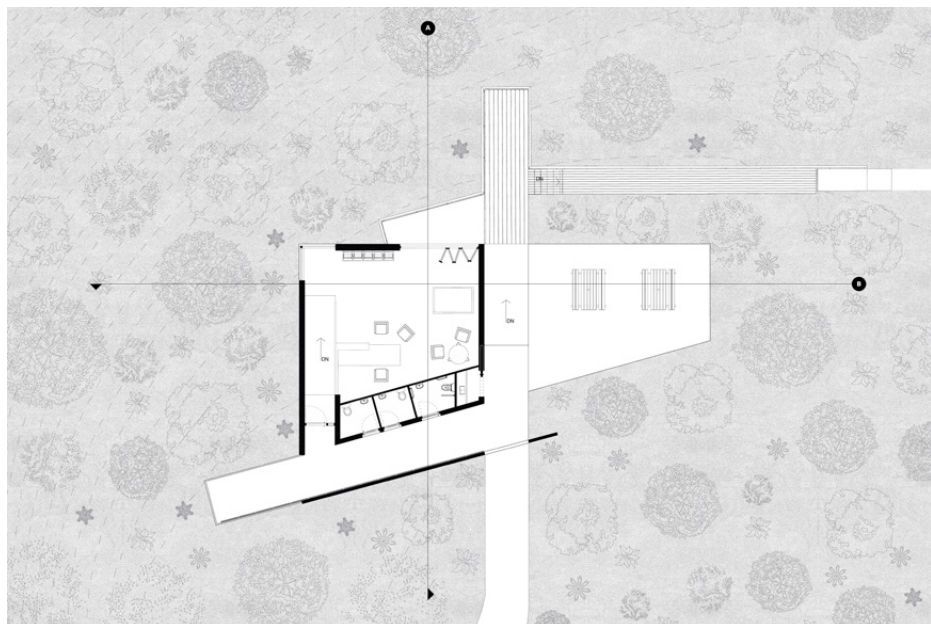
The rammed-earth walls anchor the visitor centre on the edge of the old glacial valley. The form evokes that of a natural ruin nestled within the trees, as it reinforces the topographical edge.

Opposite, Figure 93 - The building fits into the landscape while enabling new experiences of site to take place

Cone Ridge Lookout

5C.1) Understanding the Experience

Located within the non-place region of 'Cone Ridge Track' this space is situated just below the bush line. This results in low tree heights, yet they still enclose one within their canopy. The space has a lack of visual character due to this, and the monotony of the area disengages one from the experience. The lookout, therefore, acts as a device to break the unity of the current experience by enabling a different perspective of the tree canopies as well as a view up the Waiohine River Valley.

5C.2) Design Process

A written narrative initiated the process. The text depicted a lookout tower as the best way to get above the treeline. This tower was depicted as a way to enable a unique experience of moving through the tree canopy that otherwise couldn't be facilitated. Starting from the open track area one would ascend the stairs being confined before emerging above the trees at the top.

A sketch design was created, and it was realised that the proportions required for the tower didn't align with the site conditions. The extruded form and the smaller tree heights resulted in an overbearing structure out of place for the

Opposite, Figure 94 - Site Plan
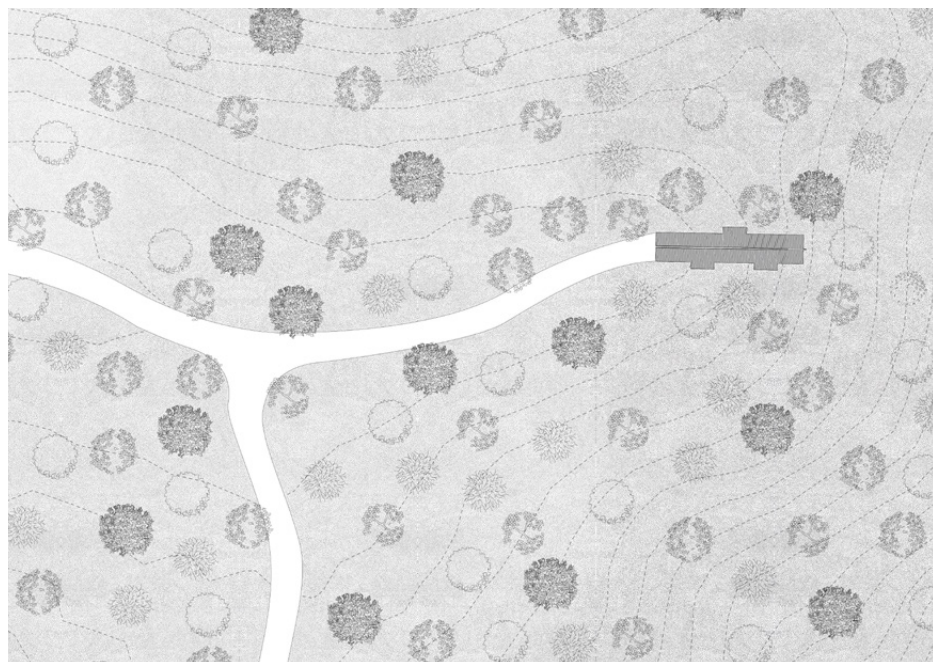
area. Revisiting the site after this realisation it became apparent that extending the lookout horizontally would be a better approach for realising the goals. Aligning the lookout in this direction would enable unique opportunities for engagement as the site naturally slopes away from the ridge. This means if the lookout were to stay at the same initial elevation the tree canopy itself would lower, eventually facilitating a view out from the site. The narrative was adapted, and the text provoked a strong potential design.

Due to the specifics required by the site, transitioning to a digital model occurred earlier within the process. This enabled the topography and trees to be dealt with in a tangible manner. The design took a linear approach moving one from the track to the view. A butterfly roof was identified as an ideal way to engage with both the transitioning tree canopy and framing the end view. The temporal nature of the design was considered early on and this was important because in poor weather views out from site may not be facilitated, rendering a typical look-out useless. With a butterfly roof, the rainwater would be channelled by a central gutter which would then terminate at the framed end view. Due to the 26 metre roof length, this would enable a waterfall-like effect, given enough rain. Revisiting the text instigated more connection to the changing canopy. Three side nooks were added, increasing interaction along the main axis. Evenly spaced within the design these highlight how the tree canopy changes.

Serial vision perspectives finally enabled refinement of aesthetic features such as the step nosing, central stainless-steel insets and balustrade infill.

5C.3) Final Design

A lookout extends perpendicularly from Cone Ridge enabling passage through the confining tree canopy.

Opposite, Figure 95 - Approaching the lookout which emerges within the trees

This lookout stretches forth, breaking the monotony of traversing through this area and orientating one towards a view of the Waiohine River Valley.

Opposite, Figure 96 - The end of the lookout hovers above the trees and enables a fantastic view of the Waiohine Valley

The lookout is defined by its large, stainless steel clad, butterfly roof. This roof floats above the lookout and is supported by exposed timber beams.
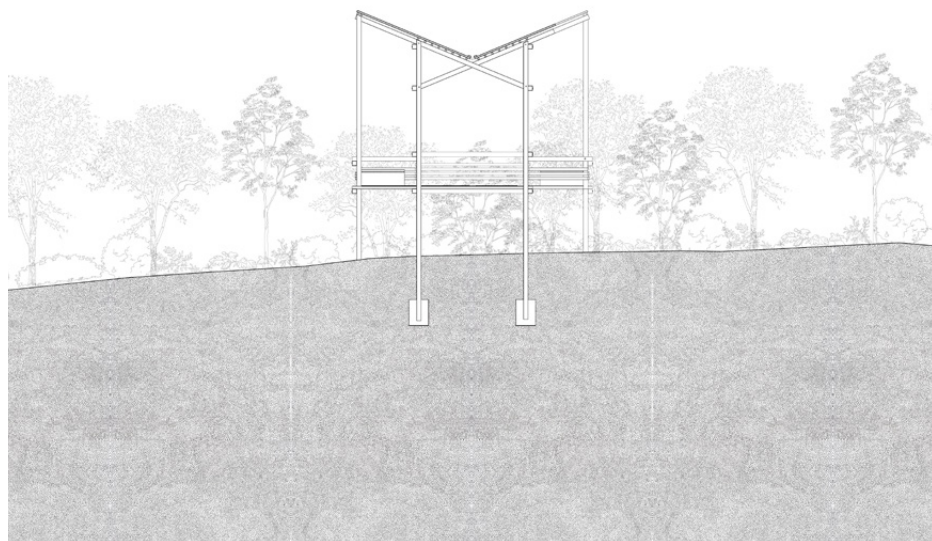
The stainless-steel finish on the roof's underside, reflects views from the tree canopy and brings their visual presence into the space.

Opposite, Figure 98 - Looking up from one of the seated areas the green glow of the trees is projected into the space

The major axis of the space is high-lighted by the parting of the roof, and this is mirrored by stainless steel inlaid within the floor below.
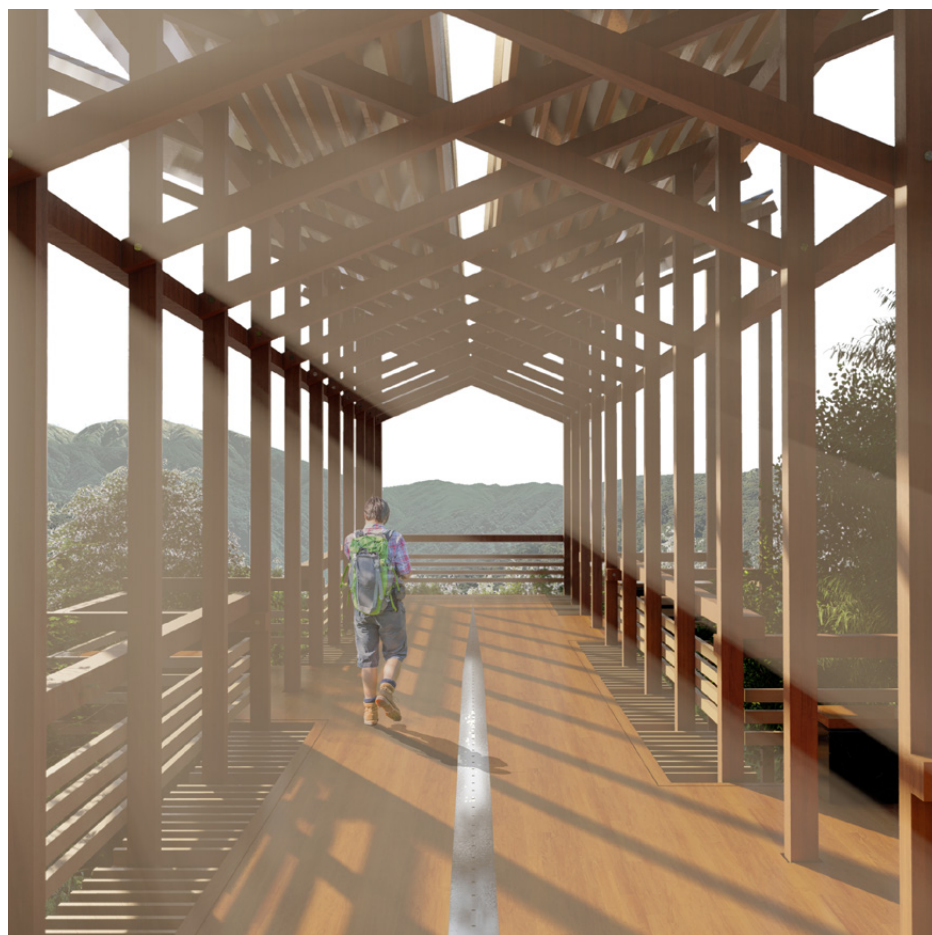
The roof channels rainwater over its extended length, culminating in an exposed brass gutter that enables water to cascade towards the ground. These aspects help temporalise the experience.

*Opposite, Figure 100
- In poor weather the
lookout still creates
a unique experience
by interacting with
the rain water*

Three nooks spread out sideways from the main axis enabling further connection to the trees that contextualise the experience.
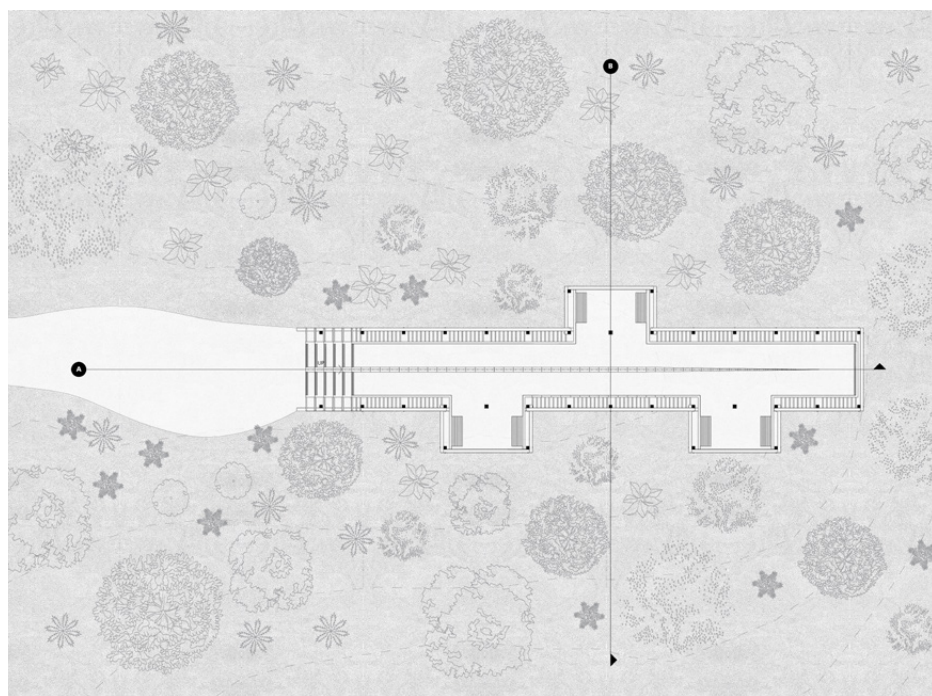
Matai wood flooring continues into these spaces and expands to create a rich and tactile finish for the benches. Each of these spaces provides a moment of repose and facilitates a unique perspective of the changing tree canopy.

Opposite, Figure 102 - The first nook in the lookout enables a sheltered and re-laxing area to pause on the adventure

By adjusting one's relationship to an often forgotten about element, a new experience is created, enabling a place within an otherwise monotonous environment.

Opposite, Figure 103 - The lookout enables transition through the tree canopy to the view at the end

Alpha Hut

Alpha Hut is undoubtedly the most important intervention in the series of design interventions proposed. This is because it provides shelter and forms the daily goal for most people. It is also the one location people will spend any extended period of time within along the journey.

5D.1) Understanding the Experience

Located in the most remote area of the Southern Crossing the hut aims to create a strong nodal condition. Firstly, this will occur by creating a robust focal point within the experience. The hut aims to do this by embracing its unique relationship with Alpha Peak.

Secondly, the hut aims to create a strong nodal condition by embracing site-specific emotions. Satisfaction is highest when reaching the hut as it represents the achievement of the daily goal and enables one to rest their feet. Once recovered, the goal shifts further along the trail and hence, anticipation replaces satisfaction. This duality of emotions establishes a unique condition for this node to facilitate.

Opposite, Figure 104 - Site Plan

Figure 105 - Initial model exploring hut placement
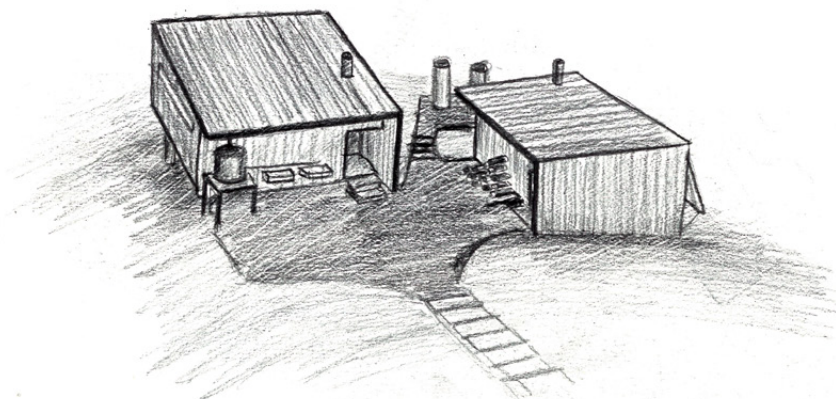
Figure 106 - Initial
sketch based on the
written narrative

5D.2) Design Process

Approaching the site with new eyes, revealed a new, more suitable location than the first design attempt (Section 3B). Located slightly further north, this new site retains the great views, while a more defined ridge enables additional engagement with the site (fig. 105). This engagement occurs through situating the architecture in relation to the prospect/refuge concept.

Once again, a written narrative depicted approaching and moving through the area to initiate the design process. Due to the topography, the situating of the hut could also be explored in the text, furthering the potential of the narrative approach.

The narrative broke the hut into three separate volumes, each orientated to a specific view. Two of these volumes were situated on either side of the ridge, while the third was located directly in line with it. This naturally contextualises the prospect/refuge experience as the refuge elements hug the side of the ridge, whereas the prospecting element extends out. Each refuge element still orientates the viewer to a specific view, revealed through slit windows. The prospect element has a large panoramic view highlighted through its expansive opening. While fantastic views exist in good weather, a more internal focus is necessary for bad conditions. The play of light and shadow also illustrated the temporality within the narrative experience.

"It is important to realise ambiguity exists within any design process, but ultimately words need to be evoked by the images"

Holl (2012)

A physical model was generated from the initial narrative to test proportions concerning scale and function. This identified a problem straight away in terms of the generated volumes. The long horizontal dimension, but short depth required by having two sleeping areas opposed that which was envisaged within the narrative.

The physical model demonstrated two volumes would work better and this also would enable a direct correlation to the prospect/refuge duality. The narrative was adapted, identifying the potential of a welcoming forecourt area and a more secluded placement for the toilets.

Due to the complex topography, moving into the computer modelling faze again occurred early. This was due to the hard to imagine specifics created by the site. While a less visceral text had been imagined, the formalisation within the digital realm helped visualise the ideas. Once again, drawing overlays of computer images were required to check the sensual elements of the design. This process resulted in the narrative being refined from the images instead of the contrary. As Steven Holl (2012) says it is important to realise ambiguity exists within any design process, but ultimately words need to be evoked by the images.

The final step once again used objective serial vision images accompanied by the subjective, first-person narrative to refine details and elements.

5D.3) Final Design

Two volumes emerge as one approaches Alpha Peak. One is prominent, projecting out into the landscape and towards the Northern Peaks. This form is contrasted by the second, which hunkers down into the ridge.

*Opposite, Figure 107 - Emerging from the bushline and approaching Alpha Hut*

These structures each hold a different function - a communal living area, a quiet bunk room and a separated toilet block. These independent structures are linked by a forecourt, which welcomes weary bodies.

The short movement between these buildings connects us to the land, embraces functional differences and reinforces the necessity of shelter within this environment.
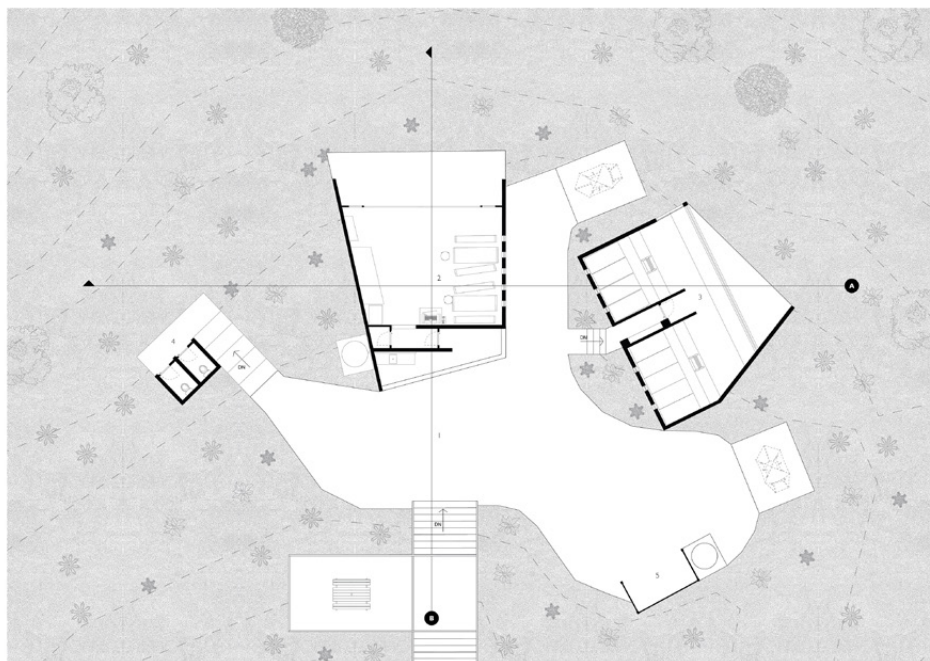
Key
1   Forecourt
2   Living Area
3   Bunk Area
4   Toilets
5   Wood Storage

Naturally, weathered Macrocarpa encase each volume, while warm, plywood panels protect the interior. The raw cladding, with exposed fasteners, contrasts that of the smooth interior panels coated with natural oil to enable a lustre from the changing sunlight. A silver, corrugated metal roof, caps the volumes uniting the forms.

Opposite, Figure 110 - Entrance to the huts. Either ascend to the living area or down to the bunks

Each of these structures is intentionally orientated towards a singular view of the dramatic landscape. The living area projects out towards the panoramic northern peaks.
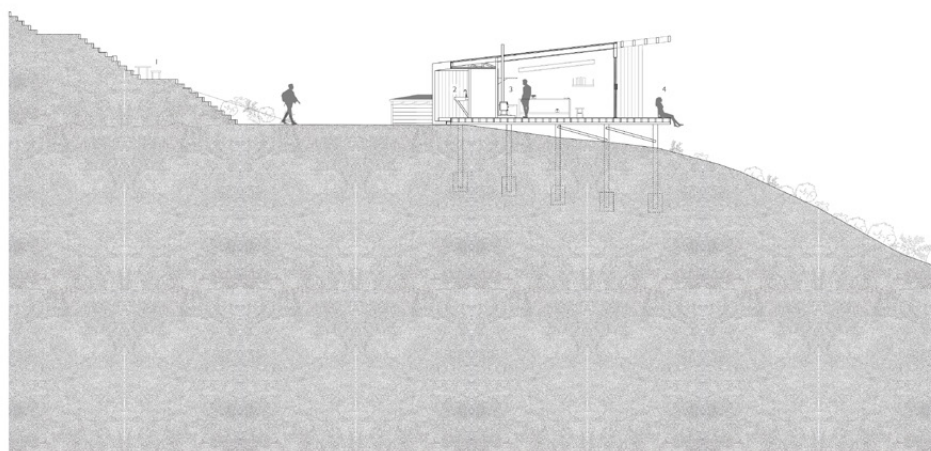
Key
1   Outdoor Table
2   Sink Area
3   Fireplace and Drying Wrack
4   Deck

The large folding doors enable adjustment depending on the time of day or the weather.

When open, the doors allow for sunlight to penetrate through the large aperture. This is complemented by slit windows enabling the play of light within the space in the mornings or evenings.

Opposite, Figure 113
- The morning brings
anticipation for what
the day will bring

The sleeping area is nestled into the land and faces across the hills towards the Wairarapa. The aperture here focuses on the horizon, allowing the distant lights of Carterton to be visible at night along with the sunrise in the morning.

Opposite, Figure 114 - Waking up in the bunk area

The volumes are simple in their nature, but ultimately create a strong nodal condition within the experience. At the site, they enable either an inward or outward focus - one towards the firelight or bunks, the other to the dramatic landscape.
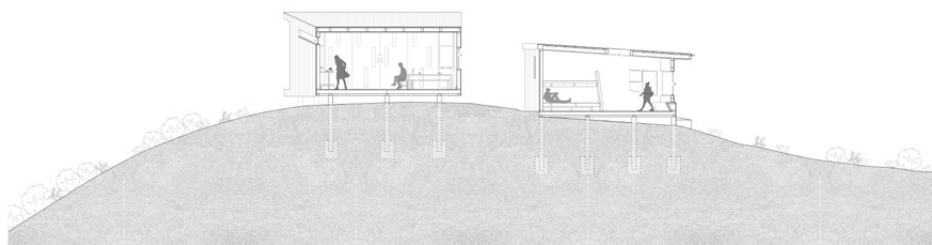
The hut enables a refuge at the end of the day while embracing the opportunity for prospecting in the morning light.

*Opposite, Figure 116
- The large doors
open wide to frame
the northern peaks*

Field Shelter

5E.1) Understanding the Experience

Located within the non-place of 'Fields Track' this region was found to have increased bird life supported by the old-growth forest. Unfortunately, due to the lack of visual character under the tree canopy, the monotony disengages one from the experience. While the area revealed the birdlife, it is hard to engage with while focusing on foot placement. The shelter, therefore, acts as a device to prompt one to pause while orientating an individual towards the tree canopy. Through limiting views, it forces one to notice the sounds of the site.
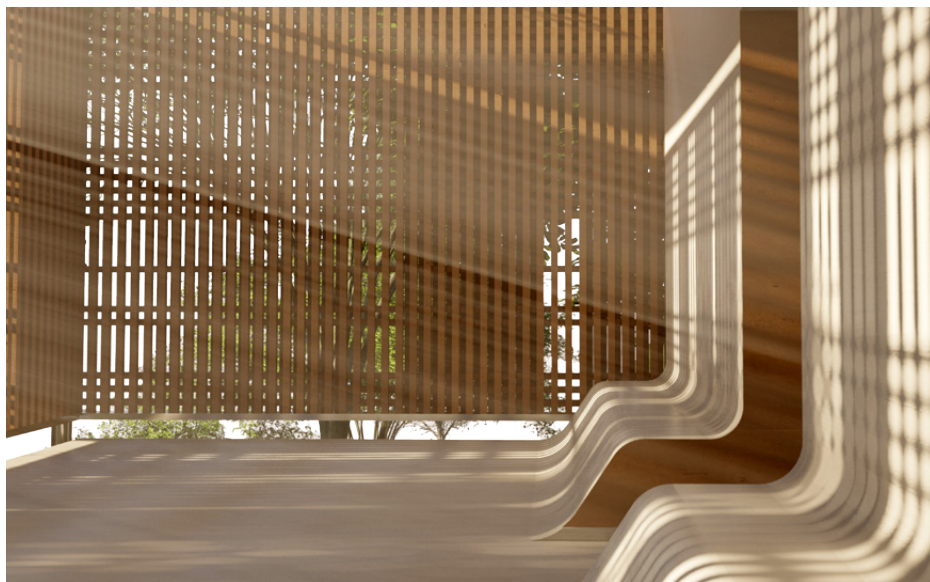
Opposite, Figure 117 - Site plan
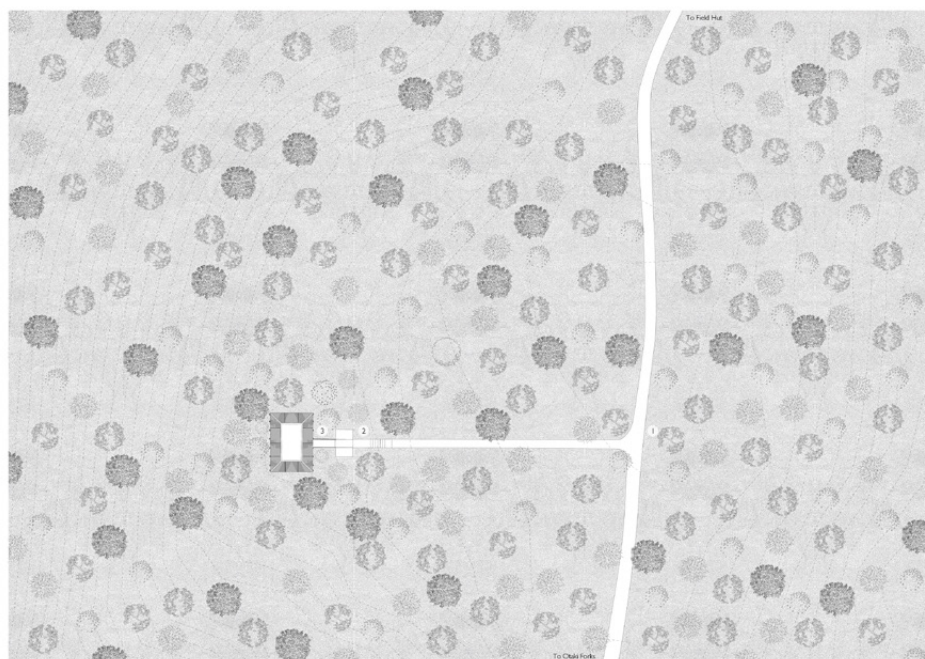
Key
1   Fields Track (Southern Crossing)
2   Coat and Bag Area
3   Shelter
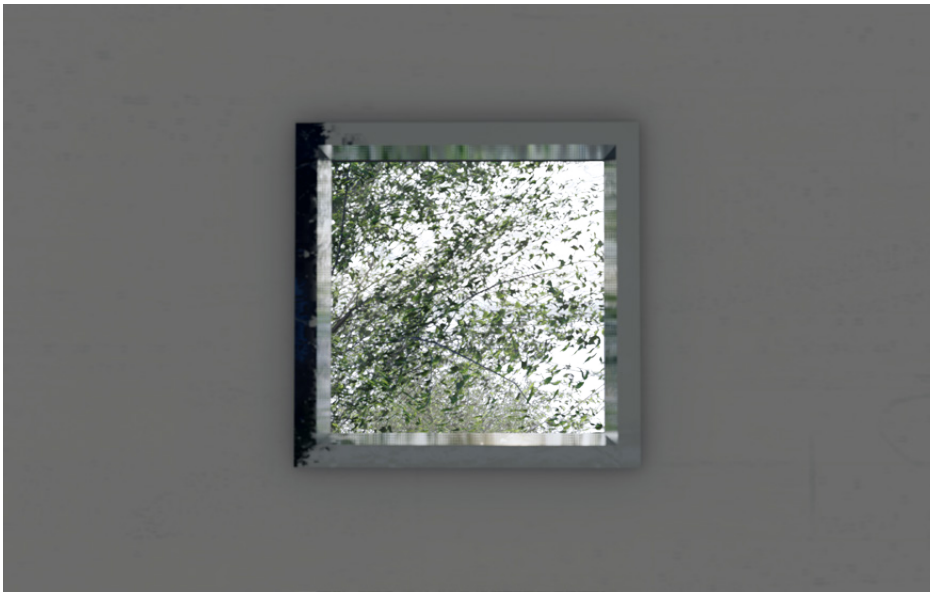
*Figure 118 - Iteration
1 framing views of
the trees*

*Figure 119 - It-
eration 2 playing
with changing wall
densities*

5E.2) Design Process

A physical sketch model started the design process to ex-plore ways to focus one towards the sky. Two forms were generated, with one focusing on detailing of the roof, while the second explored implementation along the path. These showed that limiting horizontal views were important, while the play of light from above would draw one to look up. These small models were then supplemented by a series of sketch perspective water-colours further depicting the ideas embodied within the models.

With an area already identified for the intervention, a writ-ten narrative then took the process further. The writing shifted the initial design, moving it off the main track to sit-uate it in a quieter area. While retaining the ideas present within the sketches it built upon these creating a larger and more enclosed space.

From the narrative an initial computer model was generat-ed, and serial vision views depicted the design further. A back and forth ensued between text and perspective views and the design was slowly refined.

5E.3) Final Design

Located within an established forest,
the shelter is nestled on a
north-facing ridge and is surrounded
by native birdlife.

*Opposite, Figure
120 - Section A-A'
showing integration
with topography*
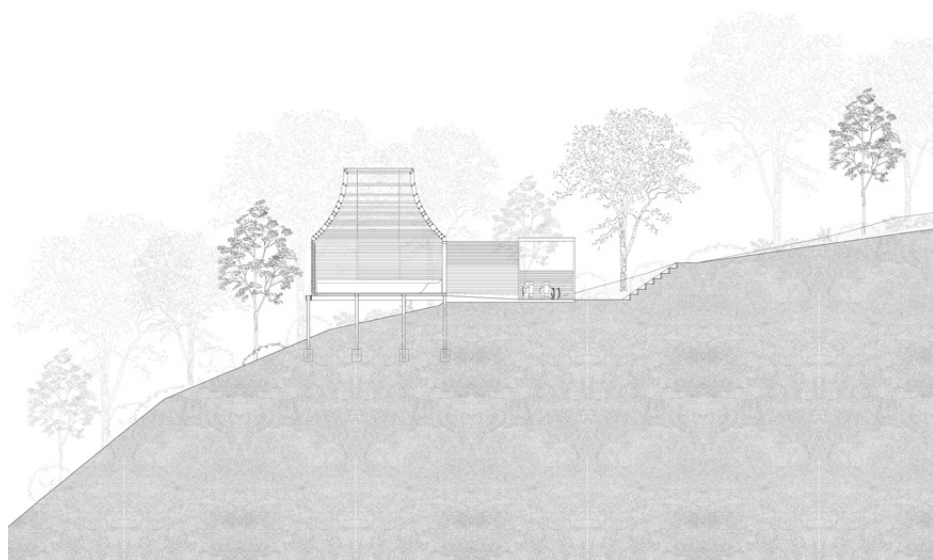
An unassuming DOC signpost highlights the turn off to this shelter and helps one situate the structure within the wider environment. As you move down the gently sloping ridge, the wooden shelter emerges embedded between the trees.

The timber beams, which give form to the shelter, are supported by aluminium brackets and the structure is anchored by four unassuming steel columns.
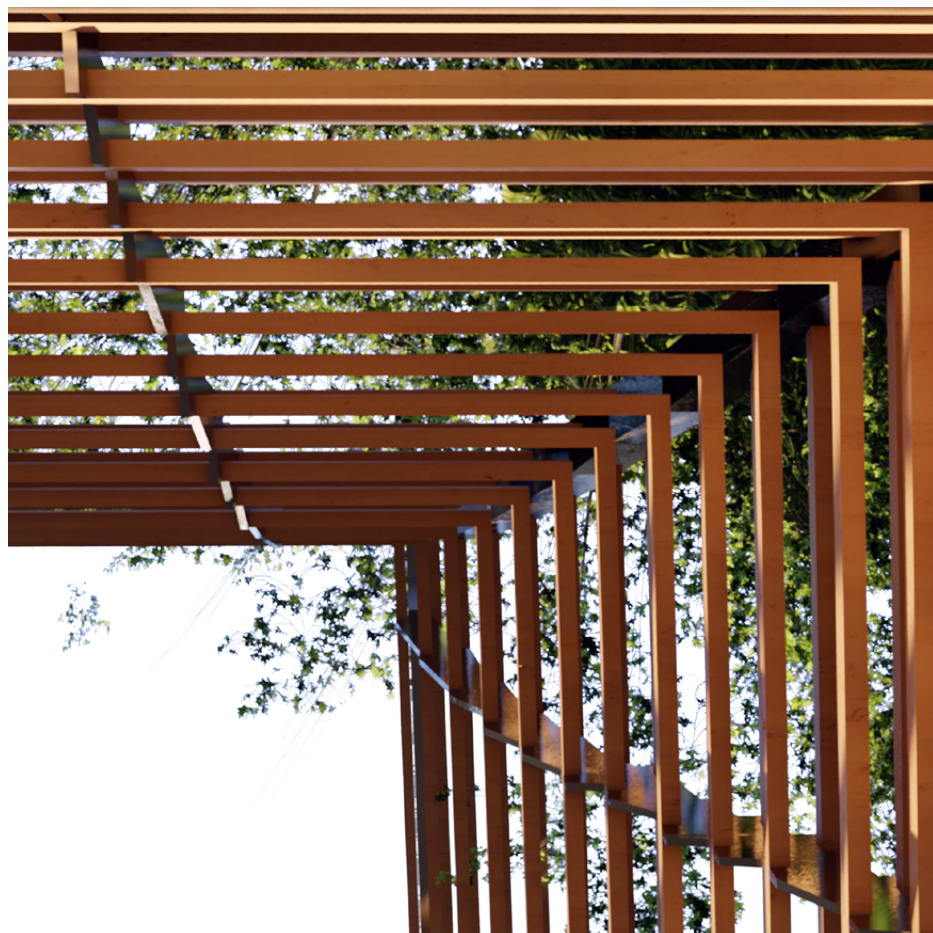
The design orientates one towards the sky and tree canopy above. By limiting horizontal views, your focus is drawn to the bird sounds that spread across the area.

Opposite, Figure 123 - Section B-B' highlighting the form focused around the sky
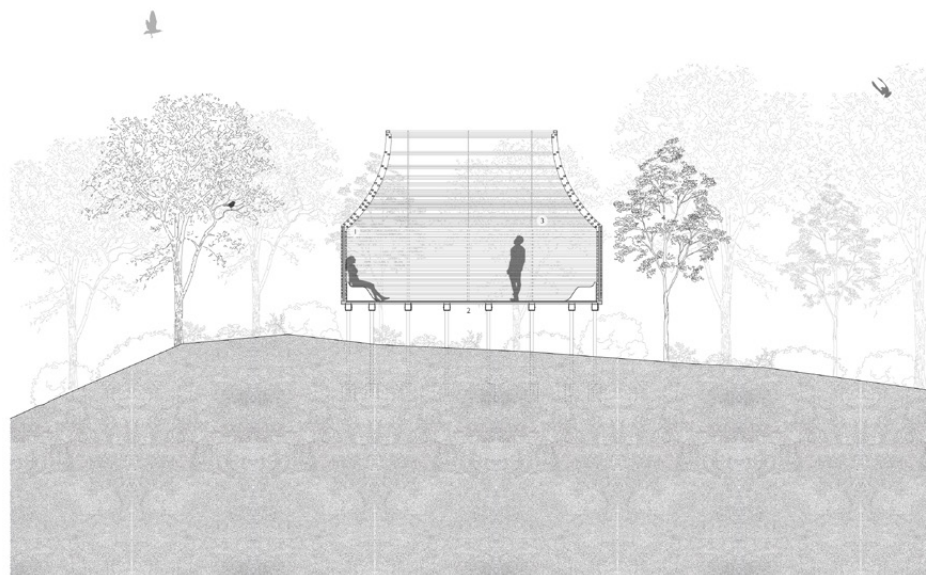
Key
1   Douglas-fir Screen Protects Seated Area
2   Post and Beam Structure Allows for Proximity to Trees
3   Screen Allows the Play of Light and Shadow
4   Trees Surround the Structure

The dispersing density of the walls heightens the play of light and shadow while allowing vegetation to permeate the interior.

These walls also allow sunlight to warm the stained timber beams and flowing form of the floor.

Opposite, Figure 125
- The light created
by the timber screen
walls

With backpacks and boots left at the entrance, one is unencumbered and free to sit or lie against the sculpted concrete forms.

Opposite, Figure 126 - Resting in the shelter
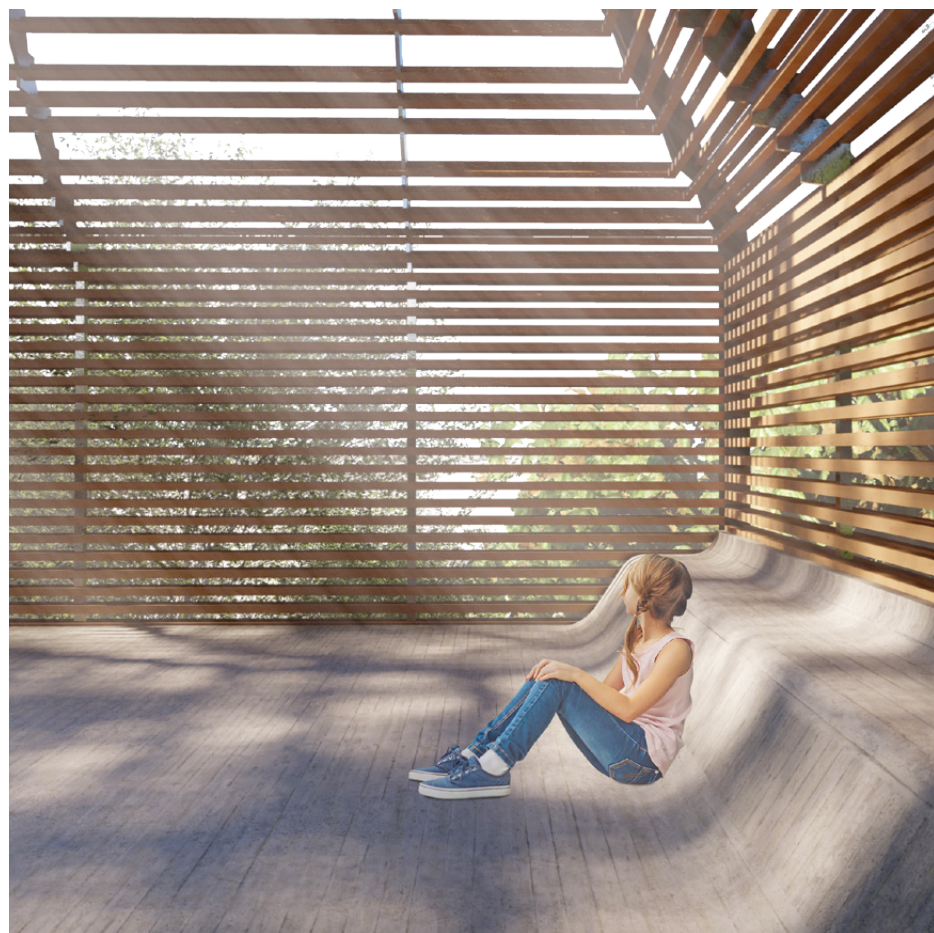
The seated area enables some protection against the weather while the open central core reflects the sky, temporalising the experience.
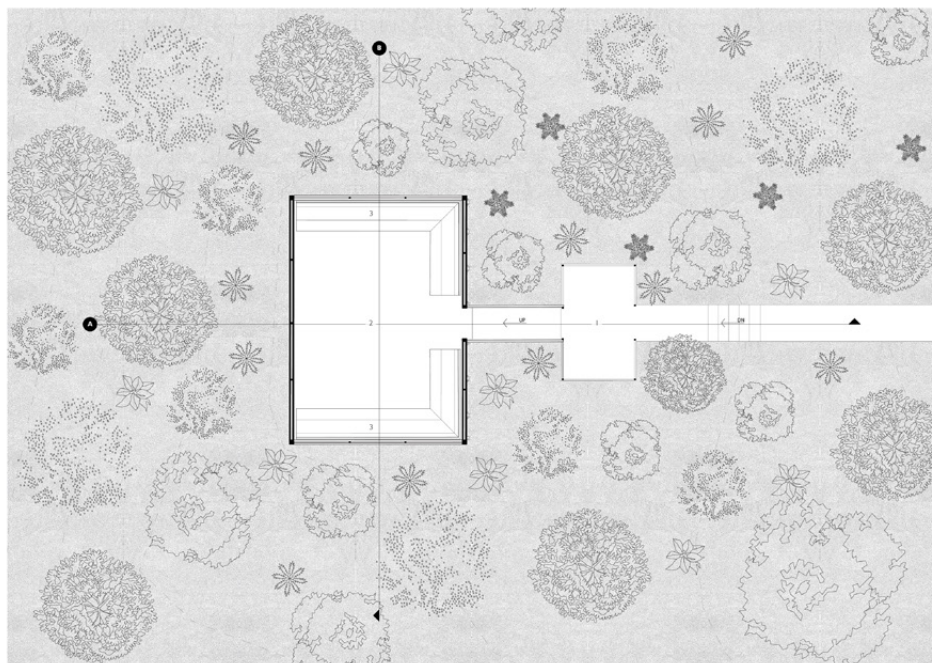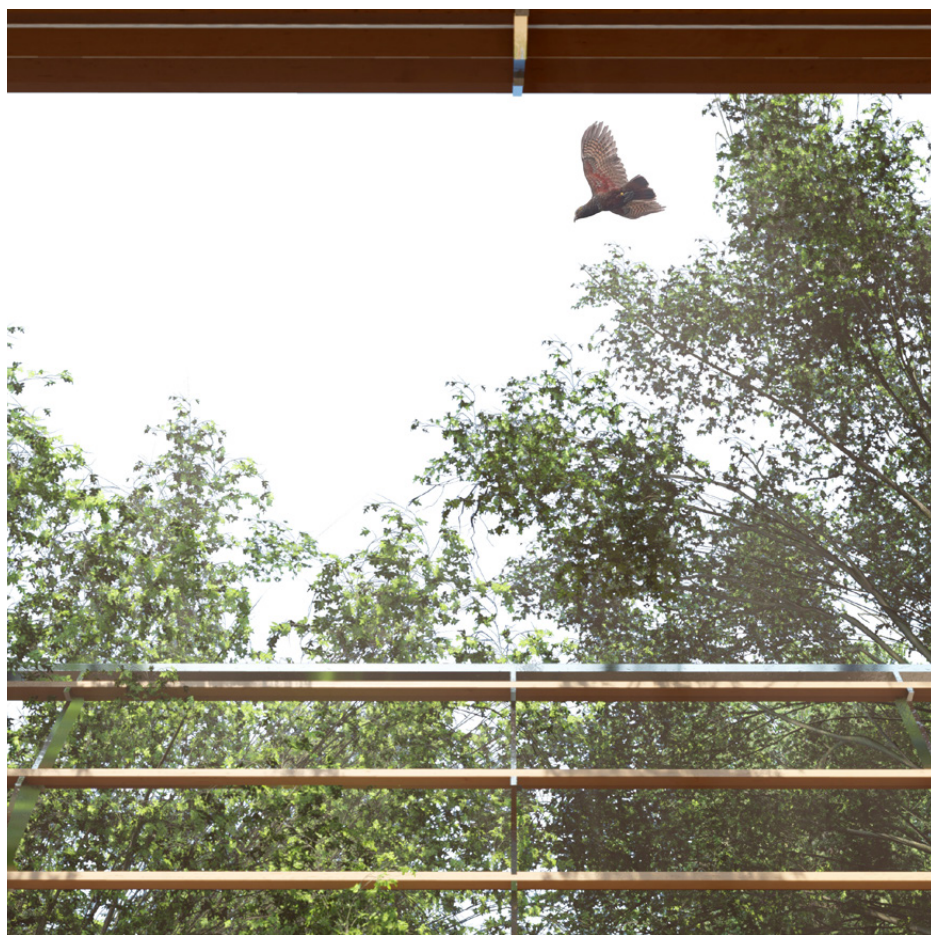
Key
1   Coat and Bag Area
2   Shelter
3   Seated Area

Free to forget about foot placement, one can relax and focus on an element of the experience often neglected. The ethereal nature of the structure resonates with the mind creating a place within an otherwise monotonous environment.

Opposite, Figure 128 - Looking up at the trees and birds that occupy the site
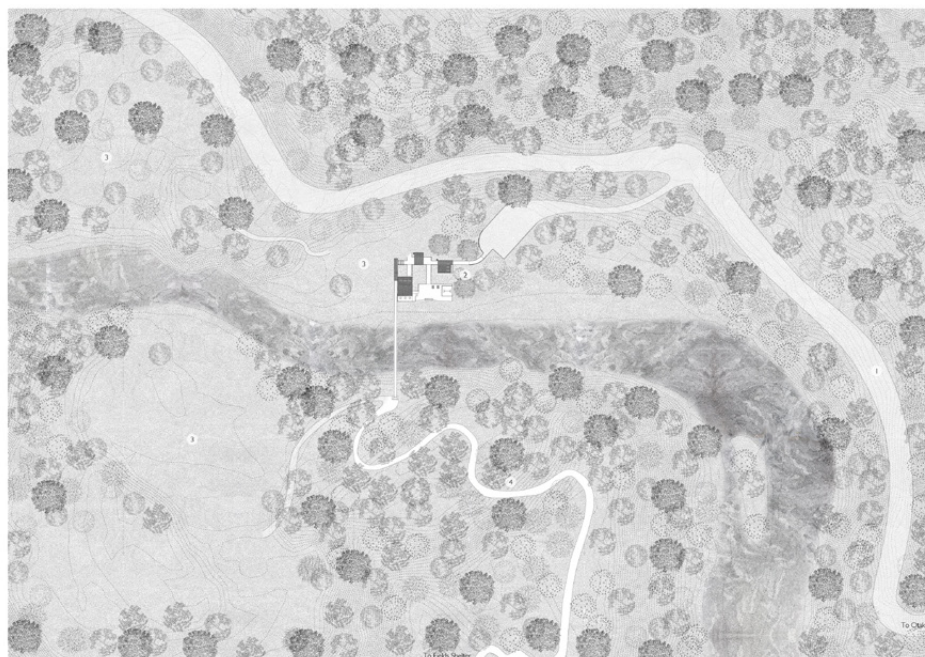
Ōtaki Forks Visitor Centre

Bookending the experience, the Ōtaki Forks Visitor Centre serves to provide an information point, enhance the camping experience, and provide facilities such as toilets and a café. Such facilities must provide a positive and significant initial impression, or equally final impression, such that the prospect ahead or the trail remembered is a positive lasting experience.

5F.1) Understanding the Experience

Much like the Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre, this visitor centre also attempts to reinforce the nodal condition of the trailhead. Where this location differs, is through the high number of people who use the area for camping, outdoor education and swimming. While Waiohine Gorge is mainly accessed to get further into the Tararua Ranges, Ōtaki Forks serves the dual purpose of acting as a destination and allowing for further exploration.
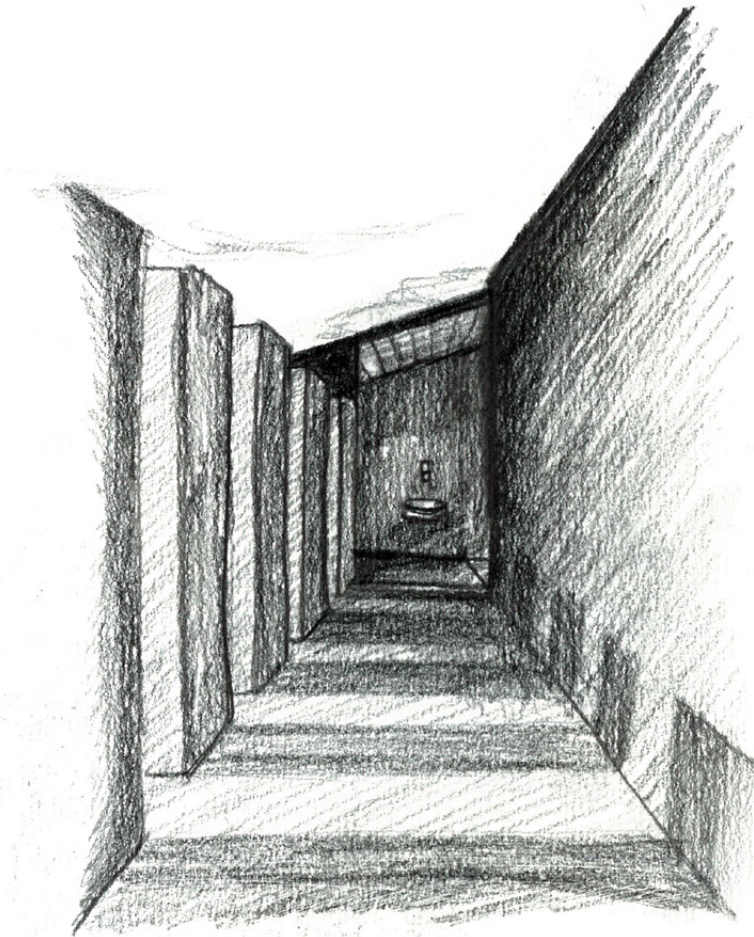
The visitor centre occupies a space adjacent to the Waiotauru River, a site that is great for enjoying, but also one where a lot of people will ascend across the swing bridge and into the hills beyond.
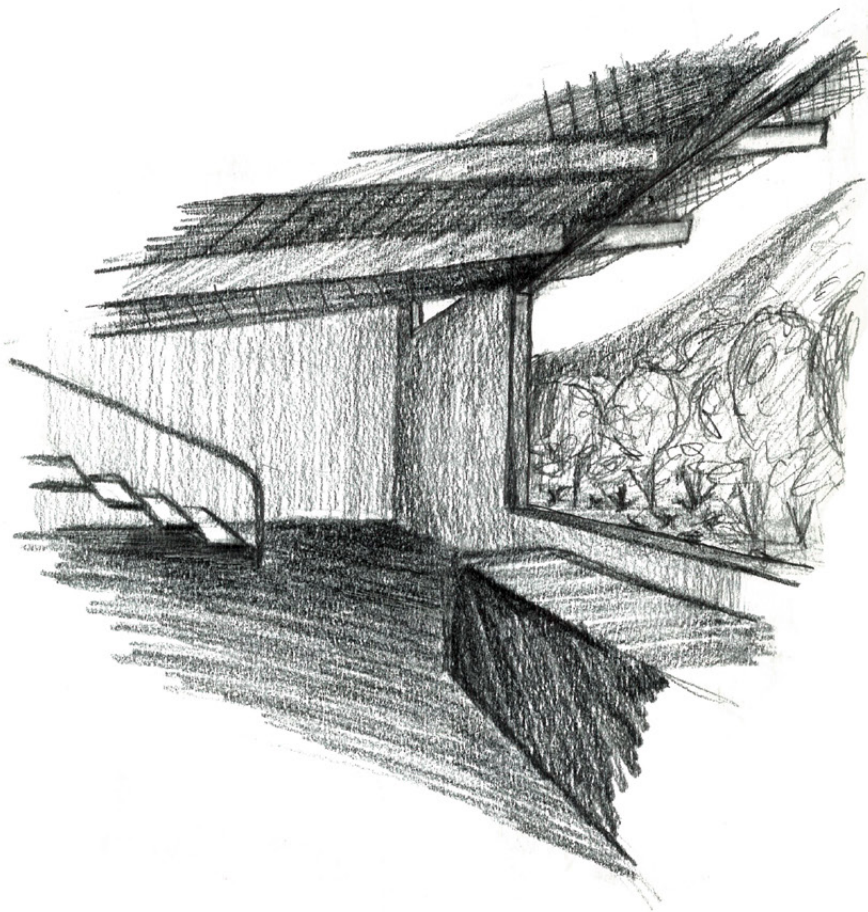
Opposite, Figure 129 - Site plan

Key
1   Otaki Gorge Road
2   Visitor Centre
3   Camping Areas
4   Fields Track (Southern Crossing)

Figure 130 - Initial sketches formed from the narrative, entrance way

Figure 131 - Initial sketches formed from the narrative, Visitor Centre Interior

5F.2) Design Process

With the space adjacent to the river already acting as the main trailhead and providing access to and over the river, this was chosen as the site. This site, thanks to the large open space, serves to consolidate the multiple road ends that exist currently. This acts to create one focal point for people accessing Ōtaki Forks and enables infrastructure to be centralised for the enhancement of the experience.

A written narrative initiated the design process. This again enabled contemplation as to the situational, contextual, orientational and temporal experiences attainable from the site. With the facilities identified as including carparking, toilets, a visitor centre and a café the initial narrative stretched out this program making one move through the site. This then culminates as one accesses a swing bridge to start their Southern Crossing journey. The narrative depicted the carpark being separated through planting and a weathered Cor-Ten steel wall. Next a semi-enclosed corridor led people alongside the river and into the café area. The café was located with the visitor information area, but each orientated the user to different views relevant to the site. Finally, at the end of the information area was the swing bridge enabling people to ascend across and along the Southern Crossing route.

The situating of these areas mediates one's sensual relationship with the river, initially depriving the visual sense but enhancing the auditory aspect. This changes, however, as one enters the café as this space directly orientates

The situating of the different areas mediates ones sensual relationship with the river... The experience of each building slowly contextualises the feeling of transcendence - transitioning from the forest to transending over the river boundary.

the user to occupy the deck area next to the river. The buildings experience slowly contextualises the feeling of transcendence, transitioning from the trees to passing over the boundary the river creates. This is enhanced using the bridge through-out as the focal point. The temporal experience is expressed by semi-enclosed areas such as the corridor and bridge, while bi-fold doors embrace the potential of warm, sunny weather

A physical model was generated and enabled testing of the form, while sketching also tested the ideas within the narrative. Sketching occurred here to reinforce the model as the small-scale model struggled to permit an interior experience. A learning here was that modelling should occur at a larger scale, at lease at 1:100 or bigger. The sketching helped evolve the form as the functional differences of the café and information area identified that different structures would work better. This was especially the case due to the prolonged nature of crossing through the site. The narrative was adapted, revealing a strong experience evoked through the text.

The ideas were finally formalised through a digital model that refined the siting of the structures in relation to site specifics. This enabled furthering of the landscape design within the project identifying the placement of trees and their sizes.

5F.3) Final Design

A forest, a carpark, a visitor
centre, the river, toilets, a
camping area, a café, a swing bridge,
the mountains beyond. Multiple
structures are situated to lead you
through the changing environment
before one transcends into the
mountains beyond. The gravel path
establishes a strong axis and
connects the structures one by one.
Each structure enables unique
possibilities to engage with the site.
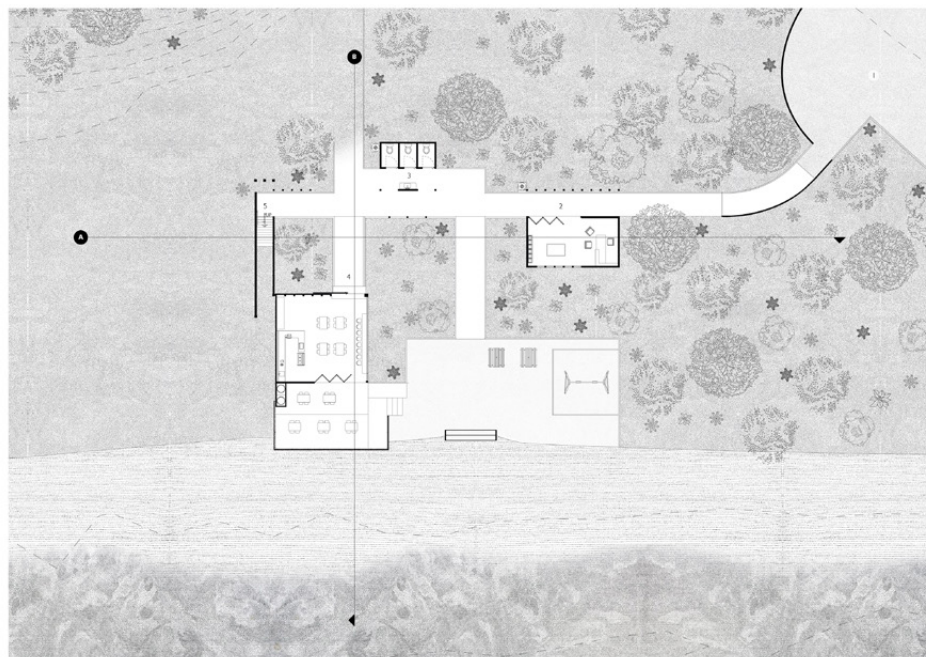
Key
1   Carpark
2   Information Centre
3   Toilets
4   Cafe
5   Bridge

The carpark is enclosed and distant. Shrouded in trees on the left and wrapped by a Cor-Ten steel wall on the right.

The steel enables the play of shadow cast by the trees to dance across its orange hues.

*Opposite, Figure 134
- The cor-ten wall
guide on towards the
entrance*

Ōtaki Forks
Visitor Centre
Kia ora

The Visitor Centre is situated between the forest and river conditions.

Opposite, Figure 135
- Located through
the native forest
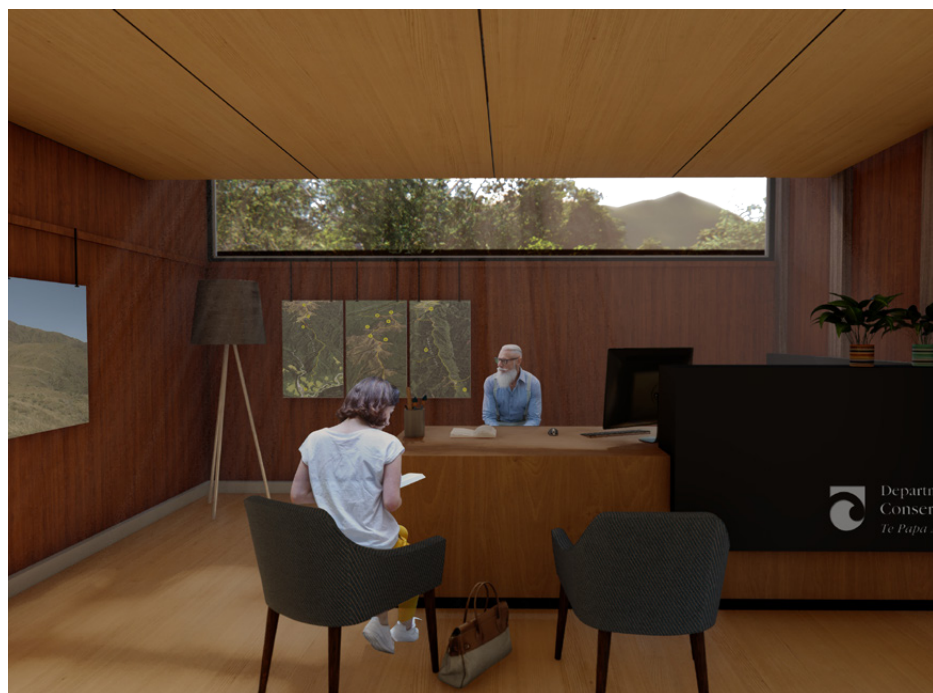*the visitor centre*
emerges

Opening horizontal slit windows, reveal the river and magnifies its sound.

Opposite, Figure 135 - The glu-lam structure forms the shell with plywood creating an intimate interior

An upward, corner window, connects you to the mountains and sky while permitting dappled tree light to illuminate the main space.

The toilets mediate between the river and campsite on the secondary axis. The repeated wooden structure unites all the buildings, while the floating roof allows natural ventilation and the resultant form highlights the river aspect.

Opposite, Figure 137 - The main path continues through leading one alongside the river
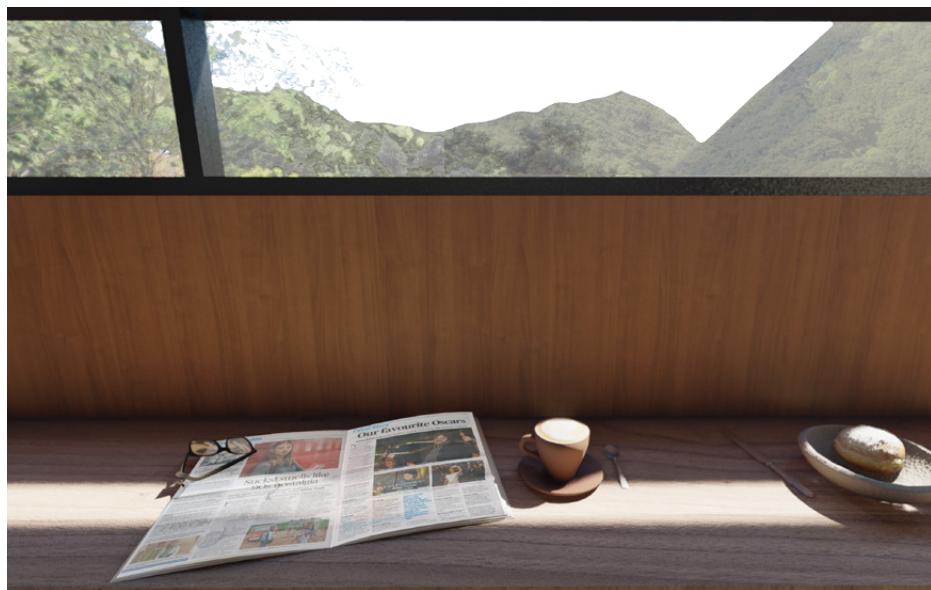
The café, open at both ends, draws you out towards the river. A large deck extends over the riverbank blurring boundaries and immerses one with the riverside area.

Opposite, Figure 138 - The cafe then engages with the river drawing people out towards it

A slit window allows for northern light while framing the mountain skyline when seated.

The bridge, the threshold of transcendence, with its exposed Macrocarpa structure creating a compression of light and space.

Opposite, Figure 140 - The stairs encloses one gradually before suddenly releasing one across the bridge
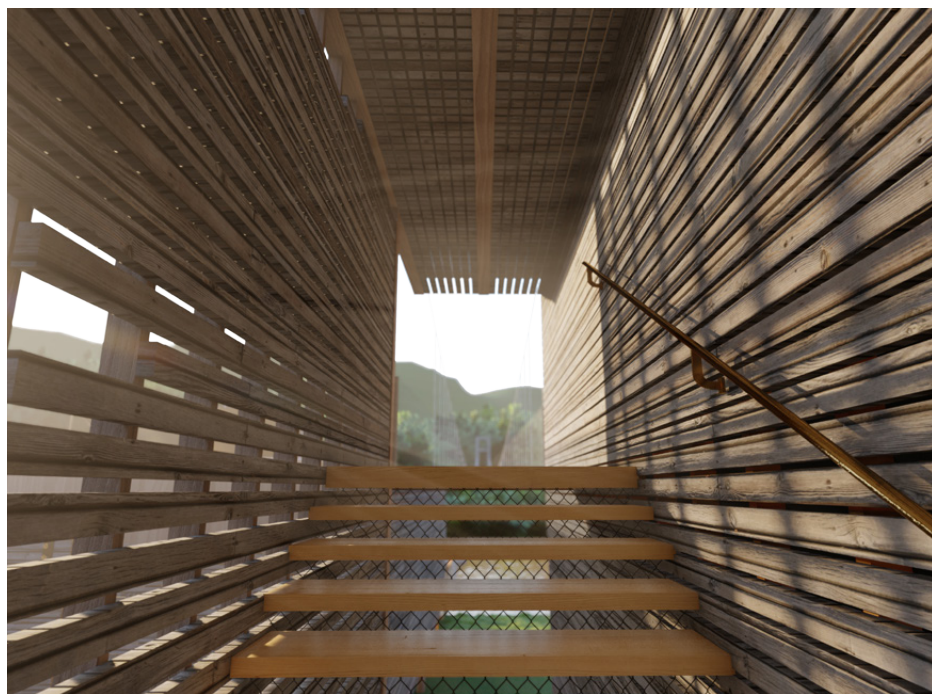
Reaching the top, one bursts forth, over the river and into the mountains beyond.

Section 6

Findings

6A.1) Overview

The thesis finds two sets of outcomes that answer the question 'how can architecture curate our experience to facilitate placemaking'.

Firstly, through the final design set, specific architectonic elements are found underlying each design. These are discussed as considerations for architects to be mindful of when designing for place.

Secondly, through the resultant design methodology, the thesis gives recommendations that enable architects to directly consider experience and place.

Opposite, Figure 142 - Naturally framed view heading up Aokaparangi, Tararua Forest Park

6A.2) Specific Architectonic Findings

The resulting final designs find certain architectonic elements that further one's ability to situate, orientate, contextualise and temporalise the experience. While the specific findings are simple and unassuming, when the parts are combined in unique ways, specific to the site, an increased connection to the place can be formed. All architects need to be aware of these possibilities when designing.

6A.2.1) Situate

How the architecture is situated on the site is found to be a critical aspect. Engaging with specific site features, such as topography, can create a contextualised experience specific to the place. An example of this can be seen through the contrasting designs of the Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre. Design 1 fails to engage with any site-specific feature, but by resituating the design, the second iteration is able to facilitate a unique experience of the site. While in reality engaging with some of the site features presented within this thesis would dramatically increase costs, it is an important aspect that architects should be aware of.

Situating of the architecture must also consider weather conditions. By situating buildings with solar aspects, the play of natural light and shadow is enabled. Due to this, the

experience is also further temporalised (see Fields Track Shelter).

6A.2.2) Orientate

Views are found to be a critical device for enabling place-making. Orientating one to noticeable features within the landscape, visually and through movement, enables a powerful connection to place.

The designs reveal that the framing of specific views is more powerful to the experience than full façades of glass. Panoramic views can often overwhelm resulting in a struggle to make sense of the space. Comparatively, orientating our eyes to a specific point enables a focusing of concentration. Slit windows and a thickening of frame depth are found to lend themselves to this (see Alpha Hut Design 2).

Orientating one to move in particular circulation patterns is also found to be a key consideration. The thesis finds that by prompting one to move along a set path, a sequencing of experience can occur. The designs adopt this through creating strong linear axes with lighting and structural elements to emphasise these routes (see Cone Ridge Lookout). Semi-enclosed paths are found to be a key device in this regard, as they can lead one through space while not restricting movement (see Visitor Centre Designs).

6A.2.3) Contextualise

By facilitating relevant functions within a design, the experience is contextualised. These experiences are furthered through designs that consider scale and proportions relevant to human actions. Elements such as dropped ceilings for more intimate areas, the placing of windows to allow appropriate lighting, and furniture, such as seats, that align with architectural goals all enable a contextualised experience (see Otaki Forks Visitor Centre).

6A.2.4) Temporalise

The thesis finds that an architect must consider how spaces might adapt depending on the time of day or weather conditions. Spaces that can open up or close down can engage with temporal elements and enable one to further connect with the site. Folding doors are a great way to facilitate this as they can be adjusted and help blur interior/exterior boundaries.

Windows and skylights find that consideration of natural light is also highly important for temporalising a place. They can transform the space throughout the day as different aspects are lit up (see Alpha Hut Design 2). The different aspects also enable temperature changes, further temporalising the experience.

Finally, natural materials that show the traces of time are important in temporalising a design. Claddings have the potential to show their connection to the site, as they can transform over the life of the building. Different visual and textural engagements are created by this weathering and natural wood and metal finishes are used throughout the design series for this reason. Material finishes are also important and within the design set, brass handrails will become polished while stainless steel will reflect site conditions (see Cone Ridge Lookout).

6A.3) Design Methodology Findings

As we naturally make sense of space through our own subjective stories, a process, such as that depicted, has great potential. This is especially relevant for a project that deals with an extended journey as the range of emotions one goes through varies greatly. If architects wish to create places of meaning, objective methods such as behavioural mapping, do not reveal any insights as to how one experiences the world. The narrative techniques depicted within the site analysis section of this thesis, enable an understanding of these subjective experiences. With this understanding, one is then able to comprehend how such an experience could be adapted. Using these processes are critical if architects wish to create a well-situated design that is contextual to the overall journey.

Imagining how someone would experience the design is critical for architects to consider at every step of the design process. This is where written narratives and serial vision perspectives are found to be highly relevant for the profession. These processes allow designers to integrate current site experiences within the design process to identify relevant experiential opportunities. An example of this is shown within the Alpha Hut design - one typically reaches the site satisfied and weary, but by morning they are ready for a new goal. The design picks up on this duality enabling a receded and resting experience at night, contrasted by a prospecting experience in the morning sun. While consideration of these ideas is possible using traditional techniques, written narrative brings these thoughts to the forefront of a process. With the ultimate measure of architecture being the experience of it, it makes sense for architects to have this at the forefront of their minds.

While narrative techniques could be considered most useful at the start of a design process, the thesis finds written narratives can complement other design tools. This enables a coexistence between object-based methods and the subjective experiences created. By working between different modes, opportunities to further engage with the site are identified throughout the process and this is shown in the Waiohine Gorge Visitor Centre Design 2.

Finally, the thesis finds that serial vision perspectives are a strong method for refining design details such as material finishes, spatial proportions and window placements. By

walking through the designs, image by image, a cohesive experiential look at the resulting design is enabled.

6A.4) Further Refinement

While my resulting design methodology was refined over the 9 designs presented, the process can still be evolved. By not using existing object-based drawing techniques, two resulting drawbacks can be seen in the final design outcomes.

The first drawback is the reduced ability to understand and then tweak the overall spatial layouts. Perspective views and text result in spatial gaps as they are not confined to a scale. Text can compress and expand distance and time. Perspective views enable gaps between drawings that are not resolved. This is where traditional plan views, can deal with the progressive whole. Integrating some of these object-based methods within the design process needs to be explored further.

The second consideration for further refining the final methodology needs to focus on minimising the personal individuality of the designs. The resulting designs are highly specific to my experience of space and while the thesis did initially engage with the thoughts of others, this needs to be expanded upon throughout the process when designing public spaces. A written narrative that mediated between different views could be a step forward, however, exploration of this was outside the scope of this thesis.

"The significance of place in the human experience... is known to anyone who has experienced homesickness or nostalgia for particular places."

Relph (1976)

Figures

All images are the authors own apart from the ones listed below

Figure 5. "*View of the Tararua Ranges from Wellington City*" by Suisted, Rob, n.d, Retrieved May 25, 2020, from https://www.pinterest.nz/pin/571675746440672120/?nic_v1=1aS8OCZdhxJwTH-14p%2BLwZgPKPg30q9Zo9PasuhqSJS4gOM9amlReO-VnXhJtEOdwNLr. CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Figure 79. "*Designed through narrative, Rick Joy's Amangiri Resort creates compelling experiences throughout the design*" by Pinter, Dave, 2013, Retrieved May 25, 2020, from https://www.flickr.com/photos/dave-pinter/8444897997/in/photostream/. CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Figure 80. "*Rick Joy's Amangiri Resort central avenue. The resort evokes the feeling of a desert oasis*" by Pinter, Dave 2013, Retrieved May 25, 2020, from https://www.flickr.com/photos/davepinter/8445959620/in/photostream/. CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Figure 84. "Waiohine Sketch Model" by Alice Cooke, 2019, Retrieved May 25, 2020, from https://www.sannz.org/show-us-your-thesis/douglas-wright. Reprinted with permission.

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