

National **SCIENCE** Challenges

**BUILDING BETTER
HOMES, TOWNS
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Ko ngā wā kāinga hei
whakamāhorahora

Co-design with Young Aucklanders

Eastern Viaduct Renewal & Puhinui Stream Regeneration

**Urban Wellbeing
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*‘Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi,
engari he toa takitini’
– ‘My strength is not as an individual,
but as a collective’*

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Introduction

'...tapping into young people's ideas and reflections is essential for improving our cities'

– *Pierre Sane, UNESCO (Driskell, 2002)*

There is now widespread support for the inclusion of children in urban planning, but often inertia because of lack of knowledge on how to go about it. To address this knowledge gap, research to explore effective methods and processes to engage with children in public space design was undertaken in collaboration with Panuku Development Auckland (Panuku) from November 2017-November 2019. The research was funded through the National Science Challenge, Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities, Ko Ngā wā Kainga hei whakamāhorahora.

Children's engagement in two public space co-design projects – the Eastern Viaduct Renewal and the Puhinui Regeneration – has informed the development of an on-line resource to support engagement with children in local government decision-making processes and provided children's input into the pre-concept and conceptual design stages of the two public space developments. A more child-friendly public realm is the ultimate goal.

The research built on a 2015 consultation with children (commissioned by Auckland Council) which informed the redevelopment of Freyberg Square in Auckland's CBD. This was a 'first' for the council, and the success of the process led to calls from staff to engage with children on other public space developments (Carroll & Witten, 2015, 2017; Carroll et al., 2017).

This research was grounded in the following premises:

- To be socially sustainable cities need to accommodate the needs of children
- As our cities intensify, public space becomes increasingly important and its use contested
- Children and young people have a right to feel welcome and safe in public spaces
- They have a right to be consulted on matters which concern them
- Inscribing mana whenua voices and visibility in the urban landscape is important
- Designers can be open to engaging children and young people, but be unsure on how to proceed

Co-design in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) is about kotahitanga, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga, and requires a genuine and active commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and reducing inequality for tangata whenua. The research was guided by Te Aranga principles, which seek to foster and guide culturally appropriate design processes and responses through the development of high-quality durable relationships (Auckland Council, 2016).

Our research questions were:

- How can local government effectively engage children/young people (8 -16 years) of different ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds in co-designing child-friendly public spaces, thus contributing to the social sustainability of our cities?
- What changes are needed to business-as-usual public space design processes and protocols to accommodate children and young people's participation?

In response to these questions an on-line resource 'Tips for Designers' has been provided to inform and encourage local government and private design and planning practitioners to engage with children in the design of public spaces.

<https://kidsinthecity.ac.nz/codesign>

The two case studies – the Eastern Viaduct and the Puhinui Stream – were identified in consultation with Panuku. Panuku’s vision for the Eastern Viaduct is for a pop-up public space providing activities for residents and visitors in the heart of the city. The vision of the Puhinui Regeneration is to ‘restore the mauri’ of the stream and surrounding areas, providing habitats for native flora and fauna, and recreational space for those living nearby. The importance of mauri ora, or “life-field wellbeing” (acknowledging interconnections between people, other species and place), of whakapapa (as multi-species lineage) and kaitiakitanga (active stewardship and protection) (Yates, 2019, p.15) are recognised in our research.

The report first places children’s participation in urban design/planning within the context of children’s rights. The two case studies are briefly outlined and feedback on the effectiveness of workshop methods from the children and observers/co-facilitators/advisers involved in the workshops is summarised. We then draw on the children’s feedback, interviews with observers/co-facilitators and our own observations to reflect on processes and outcomes. (Full details of methods and findings are presented in the two interim reports attached as Appendices 1 & 2. The co-designing with children resource developed from our research findings can be accessed through the Kids in the City website: <https://kidsinthecity.ac.nz/codesign>

Ethics approval for this research was obtained through Massey University in December 2017.

Background

A quarter of the world’s population are children. Like adults, they are citizens who belong to, identify with and participate in communities (Hayward, 2012). The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989), ratified by NZ in 1993, guarantees children’s participation rights, including their right to be consulted on matters which concern them. In NZ these rights are recognised in legislation and strategy documents such as the *Agenda for Children* (Ministry of Social Development, 2002), *Youth Strategy Aotearoa* (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002), and *I Am Auckland* (Auckland Council, 2017), at national and local government levels.

A major challenge of the 21st century is to ensure the social sustainability of our cities. This requires urban planning and design decisions which welcome the presence of children and young people as well as adults into the public spaces of the city. A ‘child-friendly’ city would take into account the needs and rights of the children who live in them: their needs to play, explore and make meaning of their physical environment to ensure their wellbeing and healthy development; and their rights, as citizens, to feel safe and welcome in public places.

The built form and social dynamics of our adult/car-centric cities restrict children’s play, mobility and social interaction, with children often confined to the domestic realm and deemed out of place in public space. There is a need to address this inequality of access and the diversity of histories in public spaces (Toolis, 2017) to ensure ‘child-friendly’ cities. Currently a default planning position largely limits children’s public presence to child-specific settings such as playgrounds, swimming pools and skate-parks. Without purposeful intervention, current residential densification policies threaten to further reduce children’s access to the public realm.

Including children in design processes foregrounds their rights to inclusion and participation and acknowledges that children have “a valuable contribution to make to social and political life” (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010, p. 135). Freeman and colleagues (2004) contend children should be involved in the design of public space, not only because they are valuable members of the community (now and in the future) and have the right to be included, but also because children and adults have different needs and perceptions, and children can provide new perspectives and ideas. Everybody learns from their participation, which can both benefit their own lives and create a better future.

Initiatives engaging with children in urban planning have grown world-wide, in part fostered by Unicef’s Child Friendly Cities initiative (Malone, 2015). However, despite some notable exceptions – including co-design projects in New South Wales, Australia (Malone, 2013); in Colorado, USA (Derr & Tarantini, 2016; Kreutz et al., 2018); and in Britain (Wood et al., 2019) – children’s effective participation in urban planning (which includes the possibility of influencing decision-making), remains rare. Even where legislation requires consultation with children, a significant gap remains between rhetoric and reality (Cele & van der Burgt, 2015; Freeman & Tranter, 2011). In NZ, Freeman and colleagues (2003) have identified lack of training and experience amongst planning staff, a focus on targets and performance measures, established hierarchical ways of working, tight time frames and limited budgets and resources as specific barriers to engaging with children.

Children’s participation in public space design can take place at various stages in a design process, from helping shape the project brief, involvement in concept development and design development, through to construction (Kreutz, et al., 2018); and their participation can range from merely having an opportunity to express their views, through to their perspectives feeding into design and construction decisions. In practice, children’s participation generally means being consulted and listened to, (Cele & van der Burgt, 2015) which “limit[s] designer-child exchanges to a traditional pattern of roles and power relationships” (Birch et al., 2017, p.246). However, there is always a possibility when professionals and children work together on a public space project – at whatever stage of the design process – of reciprocal learning and transformation (Birch, et al., 2017).

Children’s competencies differ from those of adults, but this does not make them ‘lesser’ (Kellett, 2014; Percy-Smith & Burns, 2013). They have much to contribute to the restoration of the mauri ora of urban public spaces. However, to effectively participate in an adult domain such as urban design and planning, they require adult assistance, and methods and spaces which enable them to form and express their ideas (Kellett, 2014; Newall & Graham, 2012). In addition, a two-way respectful and trusting relationship is essential, with genuine engagement and interest from the adult researchers/facilitators (Christensen, 2004; NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2005, 2009). Our two case studies are examples of facilitating children’s participation in a domain routinely dominated by adult priorities and processes, through scaffolding with new learning and appropriate engagement.

The Case Studies

The Eastern Viaduct Renewal and the Puhinui Regeneration projects were identified by Panuku as public space developments where research and development timelines would enable co-design processes to be conducted and outcomes evaluated. The two case studies had different attributes, scales and timelines and children were recruited to the studies in various ways – through established research relationships, personal networks and via a school. The Eastern viaduct project will support the refurbishment of a relatively contained public space in a prominent central city, waterfront location. By contrast, the Puhinui project is in a suburban setting and concerns the restoration of mauri ora to an entire catchment, with associated benefits for people, place and biodiversity. This section briefly outlines case study methods, processes and findings. Full details of these are in the reports attached in the appendices.

Methods

“It is essential that the methods used are appropriate to the cultural context and to the children’s age and interests”

– Freeman & Tranter, 2011, p235

For each case study, on and off-site sessions enabled children to explore and experience the sites, and learn about their history and their current use, so they had the information they needed to effectively participate. Panuku staff informed them of the design briefs for the two sites and how the sites fitted into wider planned developments. We, the researchers, explained the aims of the research and co-design processes. Children learned about mana whenua histories

of the areas – the whakapapa (multi-species lineage), the tohu (significant sites and cultural landmarks), the mahi toi (creative expression of hapu/iwi narratives) and the continuing presence of taniwha such as Horotiu (Eastern Viaduct) and Puhinui and Kahu Pokere (Puhinui). In the Puhinui case study, several walks along the Puhinui Stream (including one to the Botanical Gardens and back to the school), helped familiarise the children with the stream and wider neighbourhood environment, and provided them with ecological information to assist them in coming up with ideas in line with Panuku’s design brief.

Various age-appropriate workshop methods – visual, oral, written, photography, drawing and modelling, and working individually and as part of a group – ensured children had opportunities to contribute in ways they felt comfortable with. They were invited to ask questions/make comments at any time. Sharing food and having fun were integral parts of the workshops. As facilitators we took a role of ‘friendly other adult’, with genuine respect for and interest in the children’s ideas and perspectives. Regular check-ins with the children and debriefing with observers and co-facilitators after workshops explored what was working well and confirmed we were ‘getting it right’. Adults and children do not see and experience the world in the same ways. Meaningful co-design requires that children’s ideas are clearly and correctly understood and presented and are not ‘lost in translation’.

To ensure we were working within established child-friendly principles, we drew on *Built for Kids* (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2005, 2009) and children’s feedback from the Freyberg Square consultation (Carroll & Witten, 2015). Subsequent evaluation interviews were conducted with the children to confirm this, and to obtain their perceptions of workshop methods and processes.

Reports were prepared by the authors collating children’s perceptions and their ideas for transforming the two sites into safe, welcoming places where they would want to spend time and where a range of flora and fauna could thrive. These were given to Panuku and the respective contracted landscape architects, who reported back to the young participants in the final workshops.

Mana whenua consultation prior to the workshops informed both workshop content and processes. While more limited in the Eastern Viaduct case study due to tight time frames (and Christmas intervening), in the Puhinui co-design case study, Chris Wade of Te Ākitai Waiohua became much more than an advisor and co-facilitator – he also introduced the children to bone carving, with each completing a taonga to take away at the end of the last workshop. Co-facilitator Alex Whitcombe (from Healthy Families) noted the carving process “*wove the whole project together*”:

“People saw the journey from...a raw piece of bone to a carved taonga at the end of the journey, and it kind of symbolises, you know, that refining process, strengthening the ties...”

Whitcombe, Wade, and six other advisers/co-facilitators were interviewed on completion of the Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui workshops for their feedback on our methods and processes. Others interviewed were Jan Donaldson (principal of Wiri Central School); Sara Zwart (Puhinui Regeneration project lead, Panuku); Lucy Tukua (mana whenua adviser, Panuku); David Rameka (The Southern Initiative); Diccon Round (Wraight and Associates, contracted landscape architects for the Eastern Viaduct Renewal); and Gary Marshall (Resilio, contracted landscape architects for the Puhinui Regeneration).

Segments of the workshops were videoed throughout the co-design project to provide a visual record of the process for the on-line co-design resource.

Eastern Viaduct Renewal

In the first case study – the Eastern Viaduct Renewal – we worked with a reference group of inner-city children during school holidays. The Eastern Viaduct, at the foot of Auckland’s CBD, was part of their inner-city neighbourhood. Three

half-day workshops were facilitated with 19 children (8-16 years old), seeking their input into the proposed transformation of the area from a public car park to a vibrant public 'people' space – 'a flexible space with a 'kit of parts' that facilitates activation and dynamic use of the space' (Panuku Development Auckland, 2017). Eight of the children had been part of the 2017 Freyberg Square consultation and the remaining 11 were recruited through personal contacts. The children worked altogether, and in four groups, each with a researcher-facilitator. The first January (2018) workshop was held on-site in the Viaduct Events Centre and the second at SHORE & Whariki Research Centre. (See Appendix 1 for the report describing workshop structure, methods and findings).

Feedback from Panuku project lead Cameron Perkins and Diccon Round was given to the children in the third and final workshop at Paunku Development in October 2018. Perkins said their ideas for the transformation of the Eastern Viaduct, collated in the April 2018 Report, were an important part of the design process:

"All of the ideas that we've got from you...fit in the design process."

Said Round (from Wraight and Associates):

"It's really good having this report because we can look and say, 'oh, that's a great idea.'"

Round said the report provided "exciting ideas" for transforming the Eastern Viaduct space:

"I think adults start to kind of think of things you can't do whereas it came through in the document that there were a lot of [possibilities] that maybe would be really challenging to do, but wow, that would make the site really exciting."

Perkins said the co-design process had

"...really demonstrated to all the leaders in our city, all the big decision-makers – that we need places for kids."

The renewal of the Eastern Viaduct has been on hold since the co-design workshops and the space used as a storage area for adjacent public space projects. Said Round:

"We would have loved to have been able to do our work a year and a half ago but it's very much a client [Panuku]/Council kind of decision...where that money is allocated and when it is allocated."

The timing of children's engagement is a critical yet challenging aspect of co-designing public space with children.

Puhinui Regeneration

In the second case study – the Puhinui Regeneration – we worked with a group of suburban children at Wiri Central School. This co-design project is nested within broader community consultation on proposed housing renewal and urban intensification within the Puhinui Stream corridor and surrounding areas. These developments are in turn part of a far wider vision of transformational change in South Auckland led by The Southern Initiative (TSI). The currently degraded Puhinui Stream is seen as a 'wonderful natural asset', and an important link to Manukau's cultural and ecological heritage. The vision is for "a clean, healthy, flowing Puhinui Stream [which] will link neighbourhoods and provide high-quality open space for all to enjoy" (Panuku project brief). As an early step towards a vision of broad ecological, social, cultural and economic transformation, Panuku has been interested in how local children relate to the stream, their immediate neighbourhoods and the wider environs. As Panuku project lead, Sara Zwart told the children at the first workshop:

“We need to find out what you love about it [the stream], how you move through the space, and then we can help design it so it’s right for you.”

The workshops at Wiri Central School have paved the way for wider consultation with both other children and adults in the area.

Five full-day workshops were facilitated at the school with 24 9-12-year-old children from four Year 5/6 composite classes. We consulted with teachers on workshop content and formats that would both enhance the local curriculum and fit in with the school timetable. Teachers decided participants would be six students from each of the four classes who could later share workshop processes with classmates. In workshops the children worked together in class groups, with the same researcher-facilitator throughout.

Additional workshop time provided children with more information about the ecology of the Puhinui Stream and surrounding natural areas; allowed for their input into a proposal to create a new playground adjacent to the Puhinui Stream; and enabled them to share key findings with Puhinui Regeneration stakeholders, their teachers and classmates. The workshops began in March 2019. (See the report in Appendix 2 for detailed descriptions of workshop structures, methods and findings).

At the fifth and final Wiri School workshop in October 2019, Zwart, the Puhinui project lead from Panuku, and Marshall, from contracted landscape architects Resilio, gave feedback to the children on the value of their ideas – and the latter took the opportunity to clarify some of the children’s ideas for the proposed new playground.

Marshall noted that the children’s ideas, collated in the report, were received too early in the design process to have a direct input into design, as Resilio was only at the stage of *‘confirming the brief and putting together a kind of engagement programme’*. However, he said, their feedback was significant for the pre-concept *“discovery and interpretation phase”*:

“Those sorts of insights are invaluable to us and they will be factored in as part of the next phase of work which we’re just on the cusp of...In six months’ to a year’s time [when] the much larger Puhinui piece of work is done, then the Wiri neighbourhood and playground design...[can be] better understood within that larger whole.”

Zwart observed the process of engaging children in the co-design process at Wiri Central School had *“built a bridge of relationship”* with mana whenua and with the local Wiri community.

Evaluating the co-design process

Our key research question was: how can you effectively engage children (8-16 years) of different ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds in co-designing child-friendly spaces? We reflect on case study methods, processes and outcomes, drawing on our own observations, interviews with the eight stakeholders involved in the case studies and feedback from the participating children.

Children’s feedback on the co-design process

Feedback from the children showed they were clear children had the right to be consulted about public spaces in the city and that their input was valuable.

‘[It’s good] having the opportunity to just like be heard...and to like make a difference’.

'We all got to share our ideas and it was like all evenly spread and all of them were in, put in to consideration'.

'Kids have good imaginations and better ideas so they should always be asked about their ideas'.

'It's good that they ask someone in a younger generation about the city, yeah... and it's good that we get to make a place that we'd like to be in'.

'...because we'll grow up in the city'.

They reported the mix of methods, from on-site exploration to the visual, oral, written, photography, drawing and modelling exercises, allowed them to express their ideas:

'I liked how we went on trips to go to see the stream. I also liked how we got to take photos'.

'If you weren't confident enough to speak about it you could just write it down'.

'We could draw our ideas instead of just writing them down...like designers, they draw stuff...[we could] just show the designer what we mean by our idea'.

'I liked the drawing because it let me express my ideas about the park'.

'I liked modelling and walking to the stream'.

The children spoke of enjoying learning new things, especially the mana whenua history and the ecology of the Eastern Viaduct and the Puhinui areas – and bone carving with Māori adviser and co-facilitator, Chris Wade in the Wiri Central School workshops.

'I liked learning how to carve with Papa/Matua Chris'.

'I loved learning about the history of the Puhinui Stream and going to the botanical gardens.'

'You learn about like things that you probably wouldn't usually learn about'.

'[We learnt] eels go all the way to Tonga to spawn. Then the babies swim all the way back to the Puhinui and climb the fish ladders.'

'We got some idea on how you design stuff and the process it takes of doing it'.

Children's responses to 'child-friendly indicator questions' (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2009) confirmed they were empowered, felt safe, and gained a positive sense of self through participation in the co-design process. All spoke of enjoying the workshops.

'I enjoyed being in the urban design groups.'

'I loved being here meeting new people'.

'I liked going on trips with you guys.'

Wiri Central School principal, Donaldson, spoke of children's increase in confidence through their participation in the co-design project:

'Changes in the children were things like confidence to participate in something they might not have previously had an opportunity to participate in...and to participate alongside and engage with a range of different people'.

She also spoke of their empowerment:

'...they're empowered that they do have a voice, and...that they can impact change.'

Stakeholder feedback on the co-design processes:

All stakeholders interviewed felt workshop methods and processes had effectively engaged the children in the co-design process (*"It was great to see that the kids were actually really engaged"*, said Tukua); all agreed on the importance of mana whenua engagement in the workshops (*"I thought that was really invaluable in terms of helping the students connect with the historical significance of the area"* said Rameka); and all confirmed the value of the children's ideas, which subsequently fed into the pre-design conceptual stages of the Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui developments. Several Puhinui interviewees commented on the strong relationships forged among research participants – professionals and children – and the empowerment of the children through their co-design engagement.

The interviewees also evaluated aspects of the co-design processes through their different stakeholder lenses of school principal, mana whenua adviser, Panuku/Auckland Council, Healthy Families, The Southern Initiative and contracted landscape architect, commenting on the wide reach of the Puhinui case study beyond our initial research aims. For instance, Wiri school principal Donaldson, in addition to noting the children's increase in confidence and empowerment over the course of the case study (see above), spoke of the project creating *'a learning connection with parents'* and raising the profile of the school in the community *'in a really positive way'*:

"I had been feeling that the school had lost a little bit of its profile in the community...".

Puhinui project lead Zwart said the Puhinui workshops had given her not only *"a window into the world of the people I serve with this project"*, but also *'an accessible route'* to engage with the community. This was an area that Council had been struggling in, she said. Zwart, Tukua and Whitcombe all talked of the wider significance of the co-design project. Whitcombe spoke of the spinoff benefits for the wider Puhinui project through the relationships formed; Tukua, of the case study being *"our poster child project as part of the Puhinui Regeneration"*; and Zwart, of the project becoming a *'flagship'* for Auckland Council climate change initiatives. This included the Puhinui case study being showcased as an example of regenerative development at a Commonwealth meeting in London in October, said Zwart. Whitcombe also spoke of the wairua-centred approach of Puhinui co-design case study *"... helping kind of shape the conditions of how it could be done better in an urban context"*.

Rameka (The Southern Initiative) spoke of the workshops *'opening [his] eyes'*, to *"the importance of factoring in a children's perspective which is reflected in on-going [urban] planning."*

Reflections on methods, processes and outcomes

We now reflect on our case study methods, processes and outcomes – and what we have learnt in terms of our research questions: how to effectively engage with children in the co-design of public space; and changes needed to business as usual public space design processes to effectively engage.

The Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui case studies showed that to meaningfully engage in the co-design of public space, children need:

1. An opportunity to explore and experience a site and become familiar with its natural and material attributes. Being in a space, and becoming familiar with the location over time, fosters a sense of place. Exploring and learning about a place helps to build confidence and agency. It also helps elicit children's ideas. For instance, *"I liked walking around on the Viaduct...you could see like what we were going to change"* (Eastern Viaduct participant). Whitcombe, reflecting on visits to the Puhinui Stream and the Botanical Gardens in the Puhinui case study, saw these visits as a *"good blend of the current reality, going down to the awa, seeing the state of it, seeing, you know, the trolleys, the rubbish, the lack of bird life...then showing them the potential future, that already exists, and solutions in the botanical garden."*
2. An opportunity to learn about the history of a place, both mana whenua narratives and other relevant history. This gives children new ways to connect to place and resources for their design imaginations. Rameka spoke of the 'invaluable' Māori historical overview shared by Wade, which helped children connect with the historical significance of the area and the waterway in the Puhinui case study. Both Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui children spoke of liking learning about the wairua and historical significance of the respective sites, and the Eastern Viaduct children spoke of wanting more Māori carvings, depictions of the taniwha Horotiu on the underneath of the bascule bridge and *"signs and interesting history on the wharf"*.
3. To gain an understanding of mauri ora and of factors undermining the wellbeing of a place. This helps build concern and care and fosters kaitiakitanga. Tukua commented on changes in the children's attitudes between their first and last visits to the Puhinui Stream: *"... the first visit down to the Puhinui, the kids wanted to throw things in the water, and then by the end of the project they wanted to pick stuff out, you know, so there was this whole mind shift that happened over time."*
4. To be in spaces that feel safe and comfortable, with skilled, friendly adult facilitators who are genuinely interested in their views.
5. A range of age-appropriate methods which allow children to access and express their views. Children took photographs and captioned them, drew, modelled, wrote down and talked about their ideas (full details Appendix 1 & 2). The children's feedback made it clear children vary in the methods which best help them express their ideas.
6. To be introduced to what is possible in terms of transforming spaces into welcoming places (through site visits, stories and images).
7. Time frames/processes which allow them to contribute their ideas (allowing for children's meaningful engagement is time-consuming); and for their input to have an influence on the design of public places. Contracted landscape architects Round and Marshall noted the challenges of syncing effective engagement with children in co-design with Council time frames. Round commented: *"It's always a changing beast when you are working with Council"*.
8. Feedback from designers/council staff that indicates the children's views have been listened to and taken seriously; and feedback on how their input has contributed to design decisions in public space developments.

Other key learnings from the case studies were:

1. The primary importance of relationship building – with project partners, mana whenua, children and schools involved – and of connecting to the wairua of place.
2. Public space design and development is complex and takes time. The children need to know they are contributing their ideas to their community and to future generations.
3. Public spaces endure over time, hence the importance of intergenerational planning. We need to think, said Whitcombe, *“about the seven generations: the three before us and the three to come...that’s what real intergenerational planning and execution looks like”*.
4. Both the Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui co-design projects are nested within a complex network of institutions, development priorities, relationships and (perhaps) competing project partner imperatives. Zwart noted how responsive Puhinui project partners were to the children’s ideas: *“The children kind of allow you to remove all the other conflicting agendas and just go back to the truth of the situation”*.
5. The public places of a city are not just spaces for the use and enjoyment of the people (children and adults) who live in the city. There is a need, as Rameka noted, for *“affinity with the environment, affinity with the elements, the importance of...collective well-being”*.
6. In school-based processes it helps to have the co-design project relating to the local curriculum and thus creating *“an authentic learning experience”* (Donaldson).
7. Involving teachers helps embed the learning so that it continues beyond the workshops, *“allowing the good work to continue”* (Whitcombe).

Whitcombe called the Puhinui case study *“a nice little template”*:

“We’re trying to shift that paradigm from just creating urban spaces for people. When you put the person back into equilibrium with the rest of the ecosystem, you get balance.”

The case studies showed changes needed to business-as-usual public space design processes to effectively engage with children include:

1. Establishing the value of engaging children in local government public space design processes, *“so that then the programme allows for it and the budget allows for it”* (Zwart).
2. Council staff/designers accepting children not only have the right to be included, but can also make an important contribution to public space design.
3. Adequate funding and time to ensure children have the experiences and the tools to engage in co-design – at whatever design stage.
4. Clear guidelines on how to proceed.
5. If working through a school, detailed time frames and adequate advance notice are important.

Discussion

A major challenge for urban development is to ensure the sustainability – social, cultural and environmental – of our cities. This requires urban design which welcomes the presence of young people as well as adults and embraces the concept of mauri ora. How do we ensure, going forward, that all young people feel valued, and an integral part of the urban landscape they are growing up in? How do we mitigate the impact of development on our environment and safeguard other species for which urban landscapes are ‘home’? As Rameka and Whitcombe noted above, a paradigm shift is required in both the processes and desired outcomes of urban design.

Whanaungatanga – meaningful relationships, with and among children, stakeholders and researchers – is paramount. Time is needed to allow these relationships to develop and for the children to gain the confidence to share what is important to them and to express themselves creatively. Having the children work in the same small groups in both case studies, with the same researcher-facilitator, allowed for relationship-building and provided a supportive environment for the children. As relationships deepened among researchers, mana whenua, other observers/co-facilitators and the children, a reciprocal and ‘*authentic*’ learning environment was created.

The two case studies, conducted in different settings (out-of-school and in school) with children living in different urban settings (inner-city and suburban) and of different ethnicities, ages and socio-economic backgrounds, showed different methods and processes work well in different situations. A balance is required between information, knowledge and experience. Openness and flexibility on the part of facilitators (along with respect and genuine interest in the children’s ideas and concerns) assists children to effectively engage in the co-design process

While the two case studies differed widely in form, content and time frame, they proved equally challenging in terms of synching children’s engagement with Panuku time frames. In the Eastern Viaduct case study, Panuku wanted children’s specific design ideas quickly to meet an imminent deadline for a proposed transformation of the Eastern Viaduct from a car park to a ‘vibrant public space for people’. This determined our approach to recruiting children (an out-of-school reference group), the quick timing of the first two ideas-gathering workshops and the preparation of the report. The subsequent delay of the project due to development priorities in areas adjacent to the Eastern Viaduct meant the designers/Panuku were unable to provide feedback to the children on how their input had contributed to concept plans (apart from in very general terms) in the third and final workshop eight months later. Reporting back to children on how their ideas have informed public space design is an essential part of an effective co-design process.

In the Puhinui Regeneration case study, the design brief was still being developed when the first workshop began. Panuku’s remit for the children’s input thus focused on gaining a general understanding of their engagement with their neighbourhood environments, including the Puhinui Stream. After realising many of the children had limited neighbourhood engagement – and that our site visit to the stream in the first workshop was for many children their first – an extra workshop was added which included a guided walk along the stream to the Botanical Gardens and visual images of other public space transformations. These provided children with experiences and information to enable them to more effectively engage in the co-design process. Council approval of funding for a new playground near the Puhinui stream half-way through the case study led to a request for children’s input and a third site visit. Their ideas were included in the report which went to the contracted designers. However, the timing of the children’s input was premature from the designers’ point of view, as they were only in the preliminary phase of developing their brief. This again undermined an effective reporting back process.

The nature and short time frame of the Eastern Viaduct case study meant it was outcome oriented (focussed on providing children’s ideas for the designers), whereas the nature and longer time frame of the Puhinui case study allowed for a more process-oriented approach. As noted earlier, representatives from several organisations working in South Auckland joined the workshops in the latter case study (nested as it was in the broader Manukau transformation) first as observers, and, as relationships were established, as co-facilitators.

The Puhinui case study in particular signals possibilities for embracing whanaungatanga and firmly embedding co-design within a given community. The involvement of people from a place who are committed to the future of the place and its people augurs well for the sustainability of co-design initiatives. The role of mana whenua is crucial in this regard. Involving rangatahi in the process – thereby reducing the social distance between the children and those facilitating and responding to their kōrero – is also likely to be beneficial.

At the beginning of the Puhinui case study we had envisaged, in conjunction with Year 5-6 teachers, that the young participants would work with their classes in a parallel co-design process (using techniques, resources and learnings from the workshops) so that the learning from the co-design process radiated out and extended beyond the workshops. Keeping the children in class groups during workshops was to allow for this possibility. However, a parallel process beyond the workshops only happened in a very limited way as teachers were busy with day-to-day teaching. A 'work plan' for each session, developed in conjunction with the teachers well in advance, would have been needed for this to happen. Having teachers more directly involved would allow more possibility for continuing momentum once the research stage was complete.

While the Eastern Viaduct case study remained a contained co-design project with three workshops which specifically addressed our research questions, Puhinui morphed and expanded (to five workshops) in response to input from mana whenua and other stakeholders and to the children's needs (so they could fully engage with the process). As the observers became co-facilitators, the Puhinui workshop programme became a co-creation. Being open to this allowed for serendipitous outcomes beyond the initial aims of our research: for instance, the Puhinui case study brought stakeholders in the broader Puhinui Regeneration project together; kick-started wider community consultation; empowered children, parents and Wiri Central School to take the project forward; and the project became a 'flagship' for Auckland Council climate change initiatives.

The children's input in both case studies was confined primarily to pre-concept (Puhinui) and concept (Eastern Viaduct) development stages, with some potential input into preliminary design stages at Eastern Viaduct. However, as Birch and colleagues (2017) have noted, when professionals and children work together on a public space project – at whatever stage of the design process – there is the possibility for reciprocal learning and transformation. This was evident in both case studies. As children's knowledge of their immediate environment, their sense of place and of kaitiakitanga grew, so too did their sense of what might be possible in terms of the renewal of the Eastern Viaduct and the regeneration of the Puhinui Stream. Conversely, through the children's layered perceptions, feelings and stories, we, the researchers/facilitators/observers, and the planning and design professionals began to see these public spaces – and the possibilities for fostering mauri ora – through the eyes of the children.

Conclusion

The Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui case studies have enabled an exploration of effective processes and methods to engage children in public space design. They confirm the 'do-ability' and desirability of working with children in the design of public space, notwithstanding the challenges local government planners and designers face of meeting targets and performance measures, political priorities, tight time frames and limited budgets and resources.

Children have the right and the capacity to be involved in the 'adult' domain of urban planning. They also have valuable ideas to contribute. As Sane notes (Driskell, 2002), tapping into children's ideas and reflections is essential for improving our cities. What is required is a shift in adult/local government thinking to allow and facilitate their participation – and the provision of resources to enable it.

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Appendices

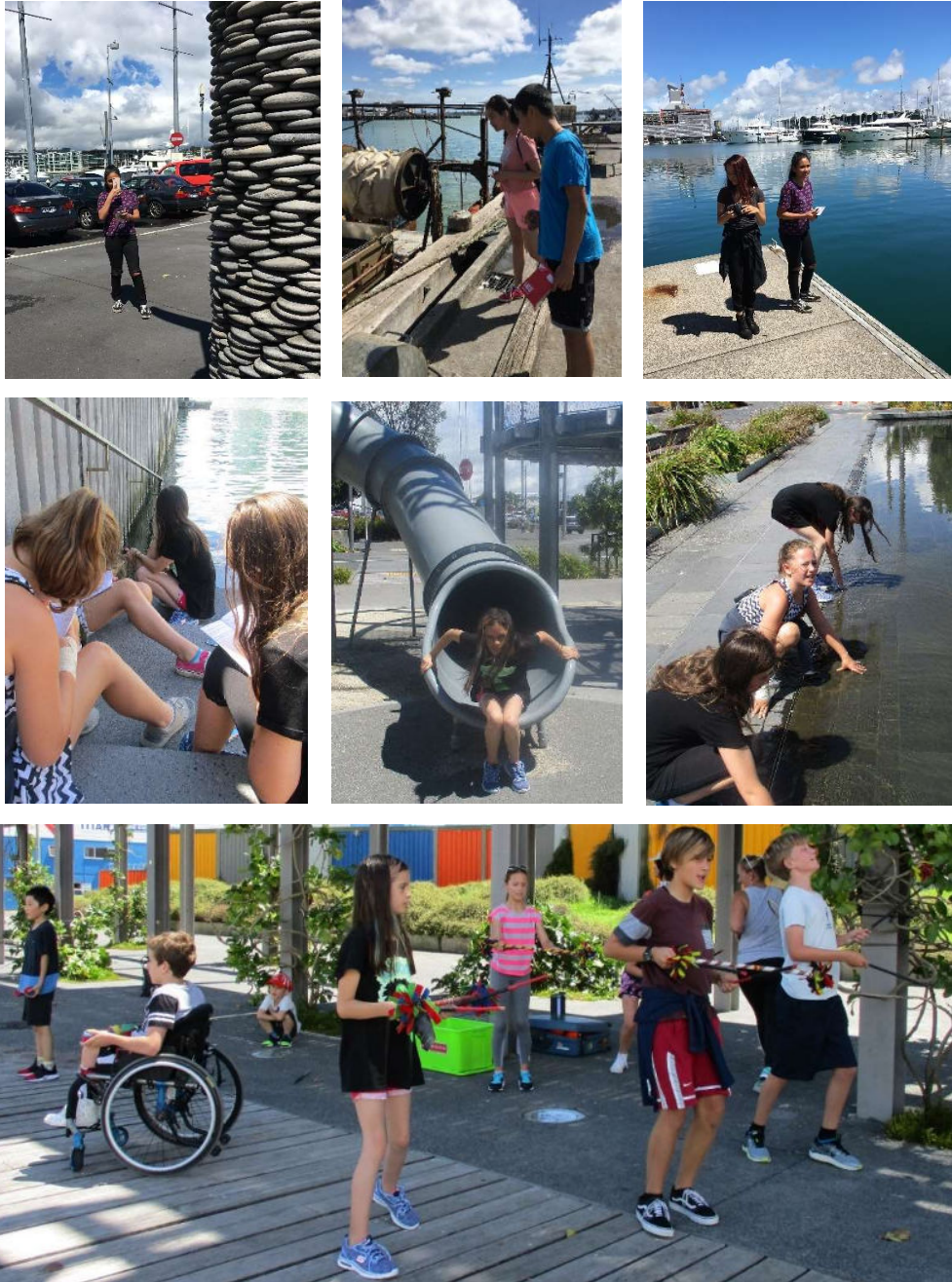
Appendix 1: Eastern Viaduct Renewal: Co-design with young Aucklanders

Appendix 2: Puhinui Stream & Playground: Co-design with young Aucklanders

Appendix 1: Eastern Viaduct Renewal: Co-design with young Aucklanders

Eastern Viaduct Renewal

Co-design with young Aucklanders



Interim Report prepared by Penelope Carroll, Karen Witten, Emerald McPhee & Aynsley Cisaria
SHORE & Whariki Research Centre

April 2018



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Heartfelt thanks to our team of 19 young Aucklanders – Angeline, Ana, Caleb, Dante, Dustin, Elizabeth, Eva, Jaden, Jeffrey, Jennifer, Jessica, Lachlan, Liliana, Logan, Lola, Kahukura, Manon, Ramona and Scarlett – for their willingness to participate in the co-design of the Eastern Viaduct and to share their ideas; and to their parents for their support of this co-design project.

Introduction

'...tapping into young people's ideas and reflections is essential for improving our cities' (Pierre Sane, UNESCO, Driskell, 2002).

This interim report presents findings from two half-day workshops conducted with a group of 19 young Aucklanders (8-16 years old), seeking their input into the proposed transformation of Auckland City's Eastern Viaduct from a public car park to a vibrant public 'people' space – 'a flexible space with a 'kit of parts' that facilitates activation and dynamic use of the space' (*Eastern Viaduct Renewal Design Brief*). With increasing numbers of families with children living in inner-city apartments, the Eastern Viaduct is a 'vitaly important public open space' not just for city workers and other adults, but for children and young people as well.

The first workshop on January 23 (2018) was held on-site in the viaduct Events Centre and the second, on January 25, at SHORE & Whariki Research Centre. A third workshop and site visit is planned for August, when Panuku Development Auckland and contracted landscape architects Wraight and Associates will report back to the group on how and why their ideas have (or have not) fed into plans for the use of the Eastern Viaduct space.

The report is structured as follows: firstly, this co-design project with young Aucklanders on the renewal of the Eastern Viaduct is placed within the context of young people's rights to the public spaces of the city, and to participate in urban design. The processes which led to this co-design project are also briefly outlined (Background). The Methods section summarises the processes used in the first two workshops. The ideas which emerged from the workshops are presented in the Findings, followed by a brief Discussion.

Background

'It is important that...[young people's] input into planning be sought and heard' (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2009, p.5).

A major challenge of the 21st century is to ensure the social sustainability of our cities. This includes 'child-friendly' cities, which welcome the presence of children and young people as well as adults into the public spaces of the city. A 'child-friendly' city takes into account the *needs* and *rights* of the children who live in them: their *need* to play, explore and make meaning of their physical environment to ensure their wellbeing and healthy development; and their *rights*, as citizens, to feel safe and welcome in public spaces. Young people's participation in urban planning decisions affecting their use of the public realm is an avenue for realising these needs and rights. This project provides pathways for realising children's rights to be included.

In 1993, when New Zealand ratified the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, it committed itself to acknowledging a raft of children's rights – including the right to play, to move safely through the public realm, and to speak out and be heard on matters which affect them. Following the 1996 UN Conference on Human Settlements, which declared the well-being of children 'the ultimate indicator of a healthy habitat, a democratic society, and of good governance', UNICEF launched a framework for the participation of children in urban planning with its Child Friendly Cities initiative.

Auckland Council has a stated aim to “put children and young people first and consider their wellbeing in everything that we do” (The Auckland Plan, 2012) and the Auckland City Centre Masterplan (2012) – a blueprint for city centre development/redevelopment – lists ‘inclusiveness and child-friendly’ amongst 10 guiding factors. Furthermore, **Waitematā** Local Board, which includes Auckland’s city centre, has been investigating full accreditation with UNICEF as a ‘child friendly city’. Co-design of Auckland City’s public spaces with children and young people is in line with Auckland Council’s commitment to ‘put children and young people first’, the Auckland City Centre Masterplan’s guiding factors, and UNICEF ‘child-friendly city’ accreditation.

In our adult/car-centric cities, children are often deemed out of place in public space, and a default planning position has largely confined their public presence to child-specific settings such as playgrounds, swimming pools and skate-parks. The built form and social dynamics of many cities restrict play and mobility opportunities, which in turn curb children’s social interactions, impacting negatively on their development and wellbeing (Spencer and Woolley, 2000).

Without purposeful intervention, current residential densification policies threaten to further reduce young people’s use and enjoyment of the public realm. Their presence is seldom embraced city-wide and they are generally excluded from the planning process itself (Freeman & Tranter 2011).

There is now widespread support for the inclusion of children in city planning. Freeman et al, (2004) list the following reasons:

- They have the right to be included
- They are valuable members of the community, now and in the future
- There is a legal and moral imperative to aid their participation
- The local environment can help or hinder their development
- Young people should be partners in community development
- Everybody learns through their participation
- They provide new perspectives and ideas
- Environments that are better for children and young people are better for everyone
- They have different needs and perspectives than those of adults.

It is clear there is a willingness on the part of urban design and planning staff to consult with children and young people, but often inertia because of a lack of expertise on how to proceed in a meaningful and cost-effective manner. There is also interest from private urban design practitioners working on public space projects to include children and young people in design processes, however in a budget-driven environment, consultation can often be reduced to asking for feedback after the bulk of the work has been done, rather than collaborative design with young people at the beginning of the project.

This research project is intended to both provide ‘child-friendly’ input into the renewal of the Eastern Viaduct – and later, the Puhinui greenway development – and, more broadly, to address this knowledge gap with the development of a toolkit/on-line resource for engaging with children in local government decision-making processes. It will incorporate established child-friendly principles (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2005, 2009).

The project builds on a successful children's audit/consultation (commissioned by Auckland Council and co-facilitated by the authors and Auckland Council staff) which informed the redevelopment of Freyberg Square in Auckland's CBD in 2015 (Carroll & Witten, 2015; Auckland Council, 2017; Carroll & Witten 2017; Carroll et al, 2017). This was a 'first' for Auckland Council and the success of the process led to calls from Council staff to consult with children and young people on other redevelopment projects. Staff commented that a better concept plan for the redevelopment of the inner-city square had resulted from the children's input.

"It's actually been extremely useful. The whole concept is stronger because it's had input from children around what they would like in the space, how they'd use it, what could be improved. I would definitely be an advocate for following this process again on another project" (Lisa Spasic, project design manager).

Many of the children's suggestions were specifically included in the Freyberg Square design, or informed it.

The Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui were two developments identified in partnership with Auckland Council and Panuku where child-friendly consultation was seen as desirable and where research and development timelines enabled a co-design process to be conducted, and outcomes evaluated. The two co-design projects are collaborations between Panuku, Auckland Council, private planning and design consultancies (including Boffa Miskell), the young participants and the SHORE & Whariki research team.

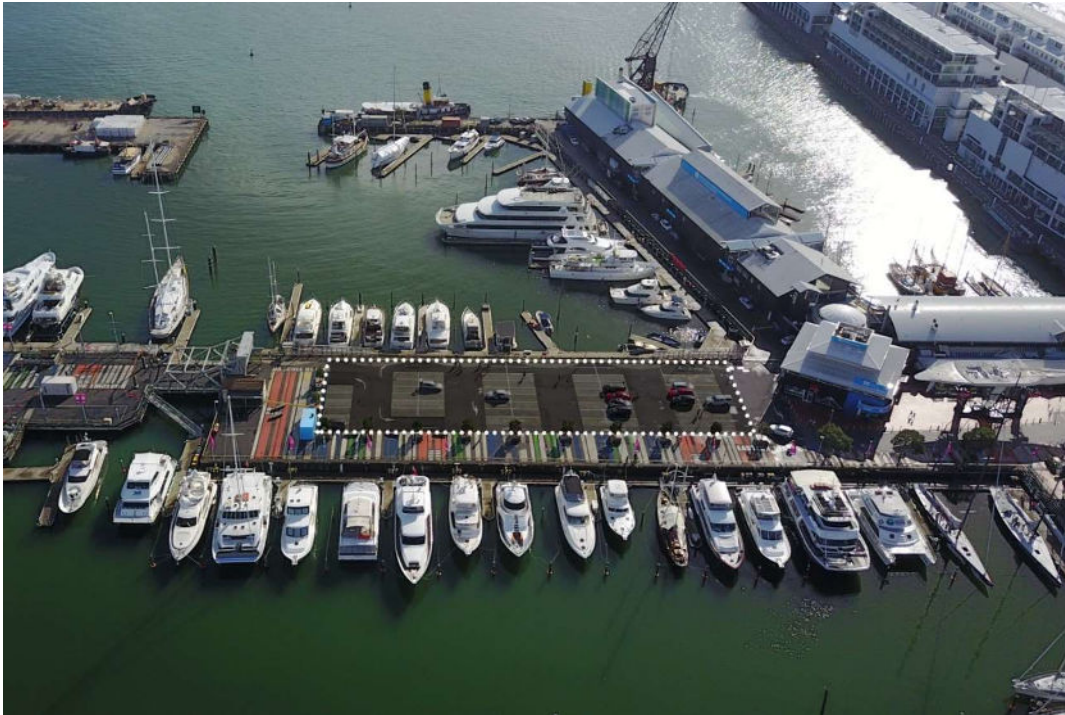
The research project runs from October 2017-June 2019 and is funded through National Science Challenges *Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities, Ko Nga wa Kainga hei whakamahorahora*.

Specific research questions being explored during the co-design processes are:

- How can local government effectively engage children/young people (8-16 years) of different ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds in co-designing child friendly public spaces, thus contributing to the social sustainability of our cities?
- What changes are needed to business-as-usual public space design processes and protocols to accommodate children's participation?
- How can effective processes of engaging with children be collated into a tool-kit/on-line digital resource for use by local government and private design and planning practitioners, and their use be embedded in local government design and planning protocols?

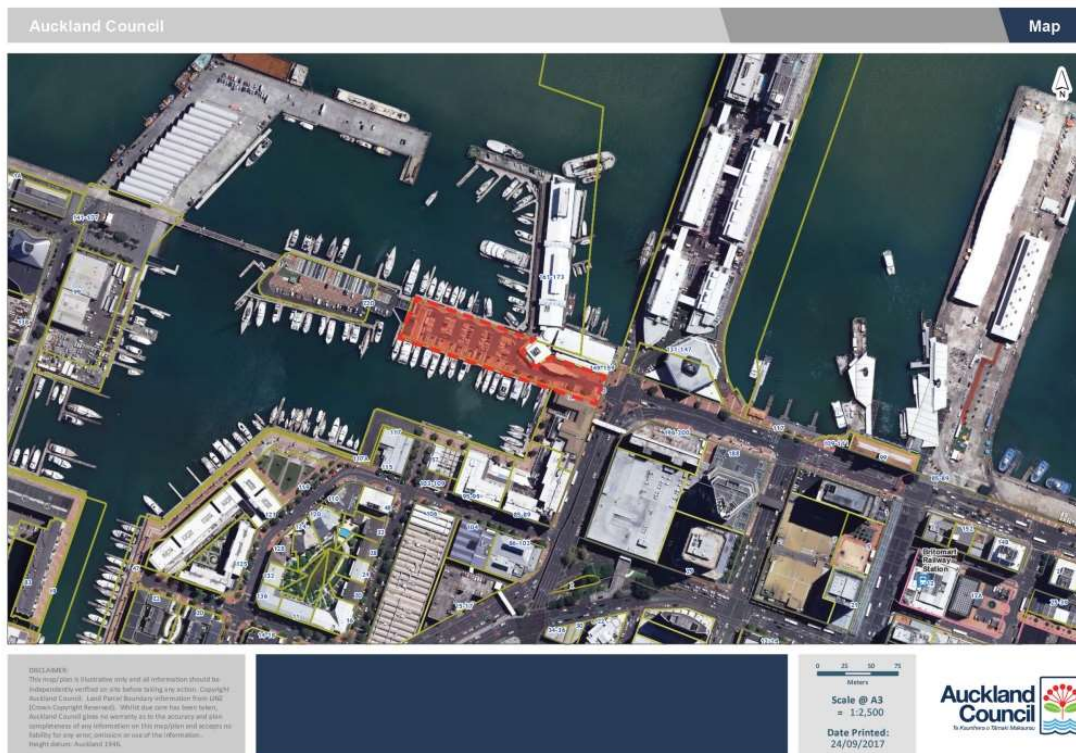
Ethics approval for the project was obtained through Massey University in December 2017.

The Eastern Viaduct site



Photographs (above and below) of the Eastern Viaduct site.

The children were informed that the Eastern Viaduct, which forms part of the Viaduct Basin, adjacent to the Maritime Museum (see photographs above and below) was to be transformed from a public car park into a 'pop up' public space.



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Methods

'It is essential that the methods used are appropriate to the cultural context and to the children's age and interests' (Freeman & Tranter, 2011, p 235.)

For each co-design project a series of on-and-off-site workshops with the young participants is being facilitated by the researchers in collaboration with Auckland Council/Panuku, and planning and design consultancy staff. Segments of these workshops are being videoed to provide material for the planned participation 'tool kit'/on-line resource.

A variety of age-appropriate methods are being used to ensure children have opportunities to contribute in ways which they feel confident and comfortable with (visual, oral, written; one-on-one and as part of a group). They are invited to ask questions/make comments at any time. Sharing food and having fun is an integral part of the process.

This interim report outlines methods used for the first two half-day Eastern Viaduct workshops. Methods may vary for the forthcoming Puhinui Greenway project, where the co-design process will be conducted with students through neighbourhood schools.

Recruitment

In December 2017 we approached 11 children who had previously participated in our 2015 child-friendly audit and consultation on the redevelopment of Freyberg Square, in collaboration with Auckland Council. Eight of them were keen – and available – to be part of this co-design process in January 2018. Snowball recruiting through these participants and other contacts accessed a further 11 participants. The short timeframe for input on the Eastern Viaduct renewal precluded working through neighbouring schools.

The 19 participants are aged between 8-16 years; 12 are girls and 7 boys; and 12 identify as Pakeha, 3 as Maori and 4 as New Migrants. All except four of the participants live in the inner city or environs.

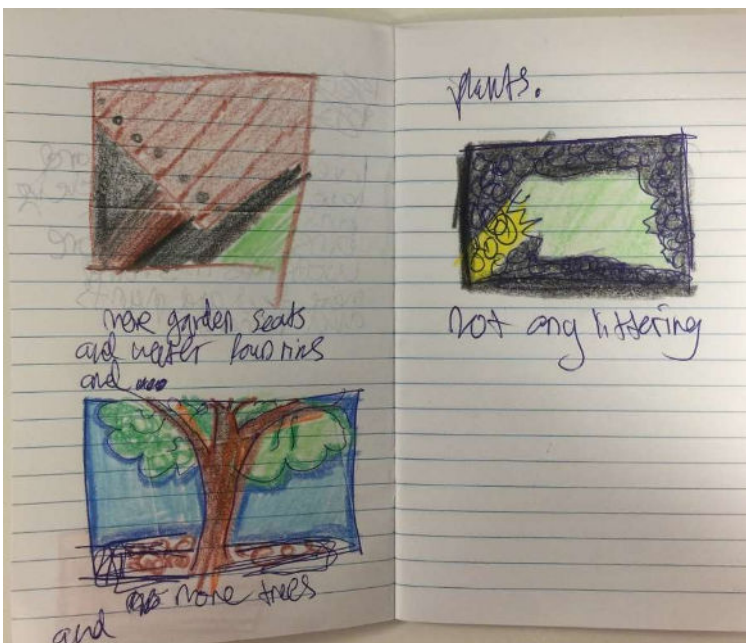
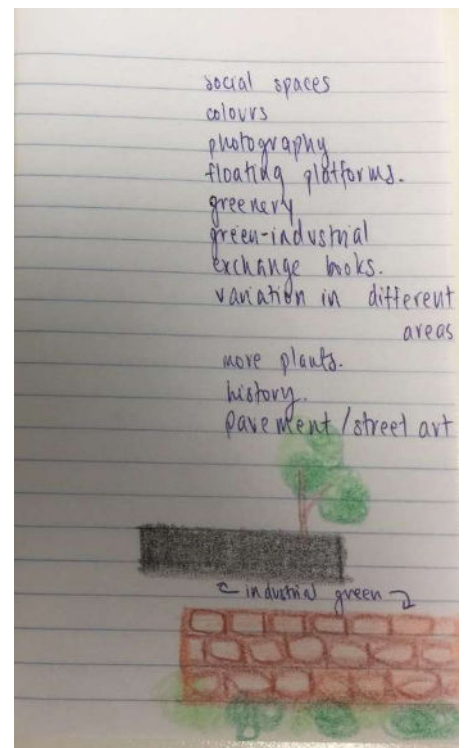
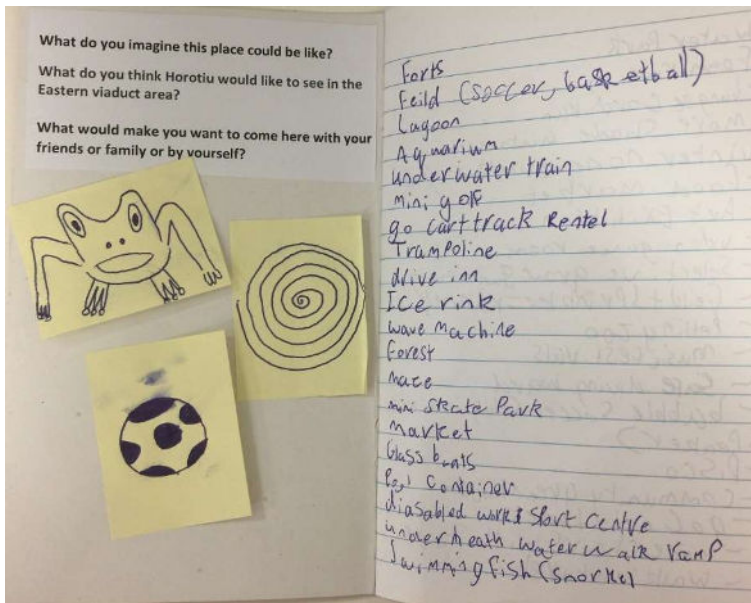
The researchers discussed the project, and what participation would entail, individually with the young people and their parents. Information sheets were provided, and consent forms signed by the participants and their parents.

Workshop One

The half-day workshop was held on-site at the Viaduct events centre overlooking the Eastern Viaduct and included the young people, the researchers, Panuku project leader, Cameron Perkins, Boffa Miskell landscape architect Aynsley Cisaria, and the videographers documenting the process. We were mindful of the need to use a variety of age-appropriate methods to engage the children in the process and for them to have access to information which would allow them to participate effectively. After a 'getting to know you' exercise, participants were given notebooks, pens and cameras and formed into five groups. Cameron Perkins explained the Eastern Viaduct renewal project with the help of maps and photographs and talked about what Panuku was wanting from the participants. Researcher Emerald McPhee further oriented the participants to the Eastern Viaduct by outlining the whakapapa (Maori ancestral names), tohu (significant sites and cultural landmarks) and mahi toi (creative expression of hapū /iwi narratives) of the area. She spoke of the continuing presence of the taniwha, Horotiu. Questions she asked the young people to consider

included what they thought Horotiu and the ika (fish) in the sea would like to see in the Eastern Viaduct area, along with what they themselves would like to see, and how the area's Maori history could be acknowledged.

Each group, accompanied by a researcher, then explored the Eastern Viaduct and surrounding areas during 'go-along' walking interviews, conducting a 'child-friendly audit' with the following additional questions in mind: what did they like/not like and why? Where and what would they play/hang out? Did they feel safe (and if not, why not)? They took photographs and wrote and drew their impressions in their notebooks as they explored the area (see below). Conversations with the accompanying researcher were recorded, and later transcribed.



Notebook entries of three of the participants



Participants exploring the Eastern Viaduct and surrounding area.

Back inside the events centre they discussed their experiences and impressions within their groups and made more notes and drawings in their notebooks. Children participating in the 2015 Freyberg Square audit/consultation had commented that being able to explore the site was important for formulating ideas; and having a variety of formats for them to express their ideas, allowed them to engage in the process in the ways they felt most comfortable – orally, visually (through photographs or drawings) or writing. A follow-up second half-day workshop was held at SHORE & Whariki Research Centre two days later.

Workshop Two

The group met again with the researchers, Cameron Perkins, Aynsley Cisaria and the videographers at SHORE and Whariki Research Centre to continue the co-design process. At the beginning of the workshop, the validity of our understanding of the participants' responses to the Eastern Viaduct from the first workshop were confirmed. Meaningful co-design requires that young people's ideas are being clearly and correctly presented and have not been 'lost in translation' – adults and children/young people do not see and experience the world in the same way.

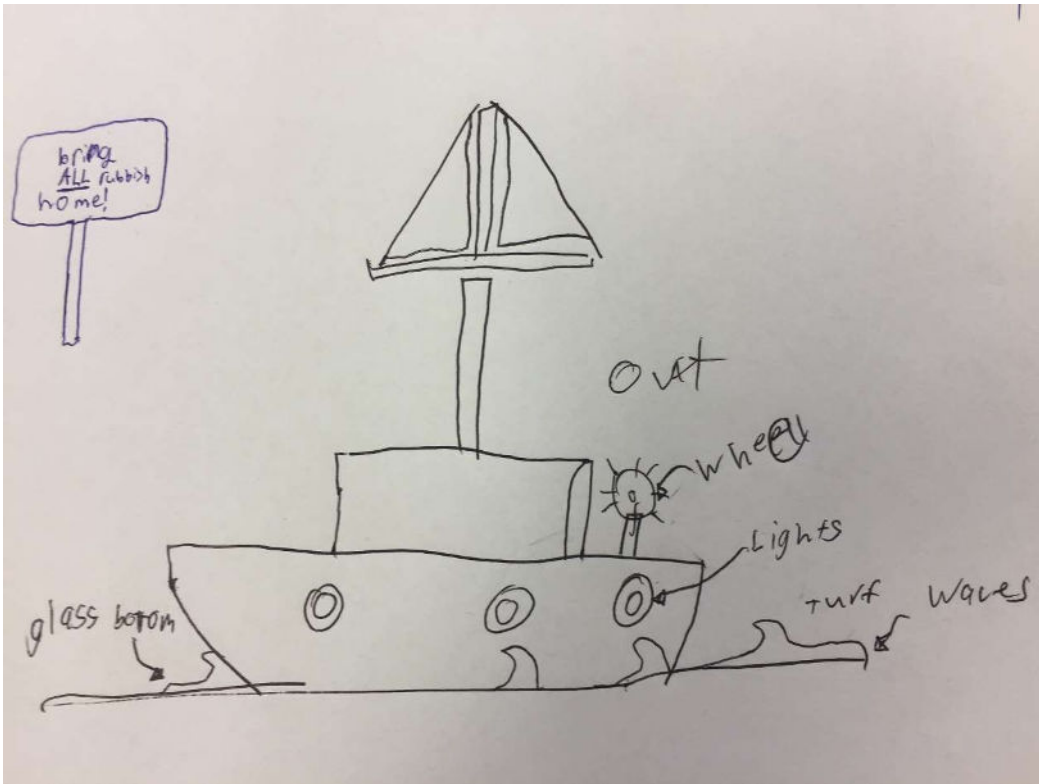
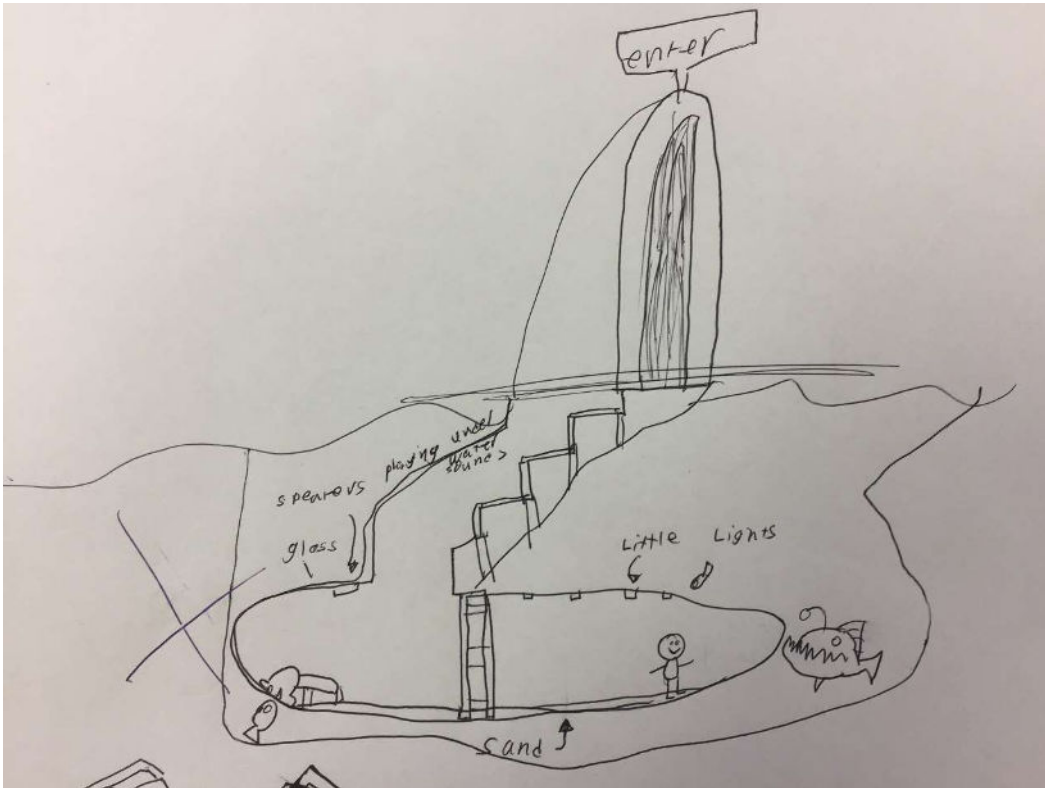


Working in the same five groups, the participants produced group montages of their ideas (some including drawings) for transforming the Eastern Viaduct and presented these to the whole group.



Children presenting their montages to the whole group.

Two drawings from montages with ideas for the redevelopment of the Eastern Viaduct are presented below – an underwater viewing chamber and a glass-bottom boat to view marine life from.



An underwater viewing chamber (top) and a glass-bottom boat to view marine life.

In a follow-up photovoice exercise, each participant chose three or four from amongst the many photographs they had taken on site and wrote captions for these. Group discussion both clarified and elicited additional suggestions for activities/features children would like to see on the Eastern Viaduct. These were noted down.



The workshop ended with the children evaluating the efficacy and 'child-friendliness' of the methods and processes of the two workshops.

Findings

This section presents the young people's feedback from the two January workshops, including their responses to the existing space on the Eastern Viaduct and their ideas to transform the car park into a vibrant, attractive 'people' destination. Findings have been collated from thematic analyses of transcripts of 'go along' walking interviews as the participants explored the Viaduct Basin area, their notebook ideas and reflections, group discussions and presentations and the photovoice exercise. Their ideas are grouped below under thematic sub-headings.

Under each theme, a list of ideas collated from the young people's work is followed by their photographs and the captions they wrote. We have included a number of photographs and captions which convey commonalities but also variation in their responses, both to the waterfront as currently experienced and as the young people imagined it could become. 'Experiencing the water' was the largest category.

1. Experiencing the water – seeing it, feeling it, smelling it, getting into it

- Floating docks where you can feel the water underneath
- More access to the water –steps into or docks open to the public
- Glass area to see through the wharf to the sea, a dry space or capsule into, or tunnel under, the water
- Aesthetics - seeing the water and the clouds
- Hearing the soothing sound of the water and experiencing the tides/current
- Smelling the water, salty and fishy
- Glass boats
- Knee height patch of water (clean water) to walk through
- Water wall – water trickling down a stony wall
- Bombing spot or diving board



We finally found water that a wheelchair can access!



You need to be able to see the water and touch it as well. You also should be able to go under it.



Water is calm and peaceful, it is different and nice on your skin. Water contains creatures. Meaning we have to take care of it and not just throw rubbish in.



This is a picture of the water by the stairs by the bridge. I think it would be cool to see more of the ocean because of it is wildlife and the importance of keeping it clean.



I like this picture because it represents the water, and we are going to be near it. It shows how pretty water can be.



This shows that you can take pictures of tiny fish with a camera. Also if we are going to be near water, fish will be cool.



We need more wildlife. (Fish are in the photo).



The water wall had lots of nice textures and it was also associated with water and it was a good thing to cool yourself down with.



The water is dirty.



I like this because it is very relaxing how it sparkles and the way it moves. I liked touching the water.



I really like it. I like swimming in it and I like what it looks like. But I wish they could clean it because the water is very dirty.



- + Able to get really close to the water. Can hear, smell, see and touch it.*
- + Good for a hot and sunny day with shade and breeze.*
- + Great place to read a book, go on your phone, etc.*
- + Safe for kids to go because the water is quite shallow*
- + Too dull.*



I choose this because water is something important in summer and helps us refresh and relax ourselves when we are stressed.



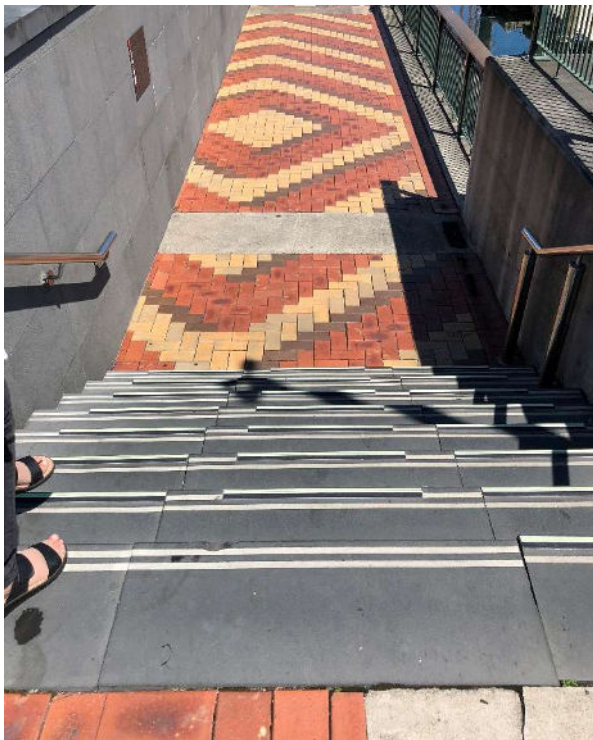
This picture represents the idea of having more safe and secure entrances into the water in order to get a full experience and all senses / a full body experience. Getting to smell the scent and aroma of the sea, being able to see the oysters on the wall; hearing the water and sea sounds and being able to feel the water current. This picture also shows and reflects the grey concrete appearance that is relevant among the eastern viaduct. This idea could change by incorporating more colours/ greenery within these floating docks. Having more of the accessible entrances to the water allows people to understand the connection between man-made and nature. It would also be beneficial and effective to have



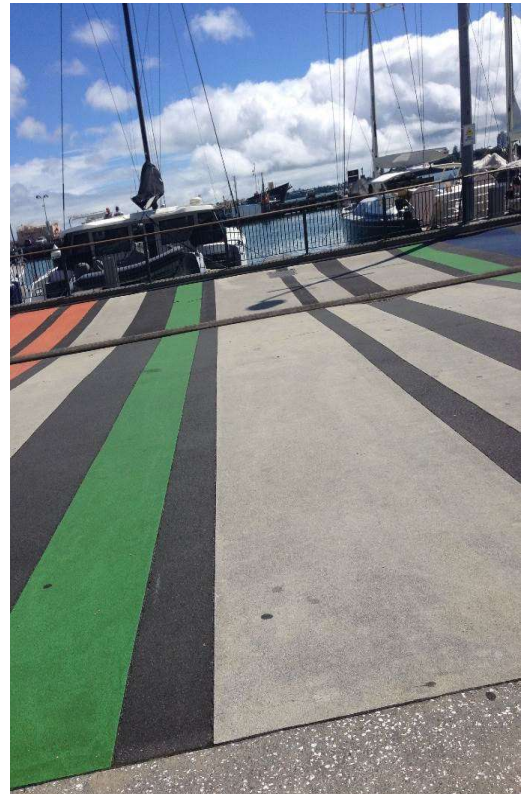
It should be deeper and cleaner.

2. Colours and textures

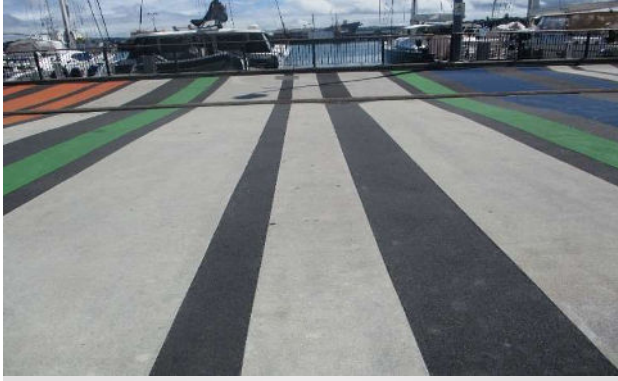
Art works (water art, playful art – rainbow taniwha slide)
Pavement art – being able to do and look at art done by others
Art on walls and concrete planters
Sculptures - interactive and colourful
Less concrete everywhere
More variety of colours and patterns on the planter boxes and the bridge
More colourful areas – e.g. no more grey play equipment, fences and bridge
Colourful flowers with good smells, cherry trees
Smooth surfaces (for bikes, pushchairs, skateboards)
Interesting textures to look at
Fish wind mobile



The floor work is interesting and would be a good component at the viaduct, colourful and intricate grounds would allow the area to be complex and modern alongside other colours that tie in. inin.together.



I took this picture because the ground was patterned and was different sizes. It also had a few different colours.



I like it because it's by the water but I don't like it because it is not colourful at all and I want to improve it by putting some bright pastel colour on it and also improve it by putting a wharf or floating dock by it.

[Cite your source here.]



It is important to be able to touch things. It would also be fun to have texture to touch.



For people who like touch or can't see can feel & see through touch. It also makes you calm.



More colourful seats and less dangerous.



Colourful furniture makes the area more interesting. There should be more out-door furniture with different designs and colours, instead of the same old brown bench everywhere.



This picture reflects the colour and greenery that could be incorporated into the eastern viaduct. The positive colour of yellow can reflect the positive energy and feeling around the viaduct. This is effective as it allows people to feel positive and happy at one area, along with other positive and welcoming colours. The plants are interesting to look at and bring in aspect that is more natural.



This picture represents dullness which needs to be improved. Colours and textures must be added to attract attention. Colours can mean something important to us such as cultures.



Turning something that could just be dull and making it colourful.



The carpark is ugly and plain.



I don't like this because the bottom of the bridge and the top are dull, ugly and plain. Overall not nice (make more bright and colourful).

3. Peaceful and relaxing places to walk and talk and sit in summer AND winter

Shade, shelter, breeze
More trees, forest and green spaces, bushy pathways
Wildlife everywhere
Huts in trees for climbing
Real grass – for sitting on, picnic and looking at
Bean bags, chairs



I like it because it shows it's really relaxing in the trees and trees have lots of shelter and can be used at any time of the year, and the thing I like it too is that it has real grass and not fake grass.



Trees and grass makes us feel happy and cheerful, they provide us shade, air and happiness. You can have picnics with your family and friends. Attract people to come here. Bigger and more of these places will affect how people feel about this place. I feel peaceful in quiet places and it helps us to think!

[Cite your source here.]



I like this picture because the man was relaxing under a big shady tree. He was also lying on real grass.



It's good because you can be in the shade, but it needs more chairs.



Shade! Shade on the side similar to picture.



I think this is important because shade is good for health because it's nice to cool down. People also have skin cancer from sun and global warming is just getting hotter and hotter. Also it's a place where an automatic shade fold out can appear.

4 a. Maori history and culture –

- More carvings (like on the tank slide post)
- Maori entrance way more separated from the metal bridge
- Taniwha slides, art
- Signs and Interesting information on history of the wharf



I took this picture because it was a Maori gateway and it was cultural. When I see it I feel welcomed and happy.



They should add/print a Horotiu on the bottom.



The underside of the bridge needs to have some paintings that relate to Maori some stuff.

b. Architecture/street furniture

- * More colourful and interactive furniture- so kids can climb up and sliding down – and not made of metal (burns kids)
 - * Giant taniwha to climb on, slide down, look at, multi coloured or changes its colours
 - * More seats – tables and chairs for picnics
- Pond with rocks surrounding it
Free wifi
Amazing architecture
Sundials
Bird feeders



More benches and water fountains.

5. Sustainability

Recycling stations to include composting and bins more colourful
Information on pollution – updates on if the water is getting better or worse



No rubbish, Because it can get into the sea and pollutes it.



There shouldn't be rubbish.

6. Food and drinks

Drinking fountains of different heights so small kids and people in wheelchairs can reach
Chilled water stand/Lemonade stand

Food market/trucks

Ice cream stand

Bubble tea



I like the idea of a shop in one of the containers because you can get shade.



Brings forward the idea of having pop-up shops for food and other things. This could be beneficial for the viaduct as it would bring in more people as well as provide a good environment. Having the shops in the shipping containers relates to the sea.

7. Temporary Activities

- Art exhibitions
- Environmental themes
- Concerts/festivals
- Pop up shop
- Ethnically themed months/activities – Chinese month, Indian month etc. Include activities teenagers can do using their phones like scavenger hunt with QR codes
- Library – pop up
- Pool in a container
- Fireworks
- Mini tramps/mini skate park
- Petting zoo
- Mini golf
- Circus
- Field and sprinkler run
- Wave machine
- Ice rink
- Foam maze/hedge maze
- Bubble soccer
- Daily workshops
- Go cart track
- Watching films on bean bags with waiters bringing drinks
- Virtual reality
- Turf wave and slide in real grass
- Volcano experiment – baking soda and vinegar
- Sea animal games
- Stepping logs



I like the idea of having shops or things like that in shipping containers because it looks seaside and it is portable.

I like this shipping container library because it is a good source of entertainment and shade.



I like it because I can hang out there even when it is raining and read a book.

8. Permanent activities

- Community greenhouse
- Video game room
- Telescope
- Stage
- Zipline/flying fox
- Basketball hoops/court
- Disability work and sports centre
- Aquarium – large or very small

9. Play equipment (not covered elsewhere)

- Sandpit
- Monkey bars
- Mini train track for pushing small children around
- Parkour

10. Amenities

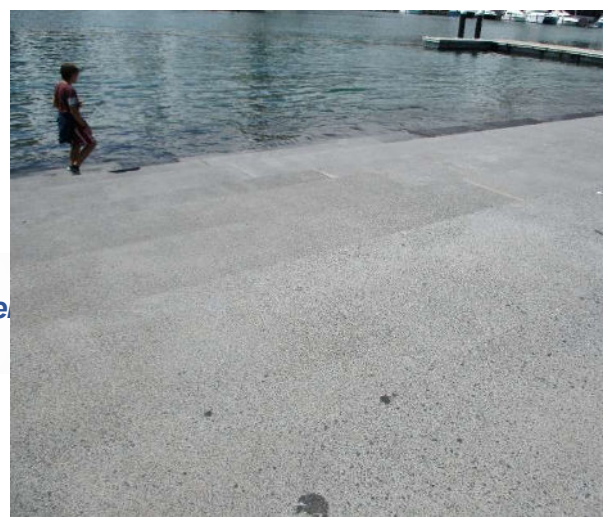
Toilets
Sunscreen dispenser
Bottle refill station

11. Other

Liquor and smoke free area
An all ages area
Accessible for everyone – including access to the water (people in wheelchairs can't get to the water currently – or reach the water fountain)
People in apartments need public places to go to

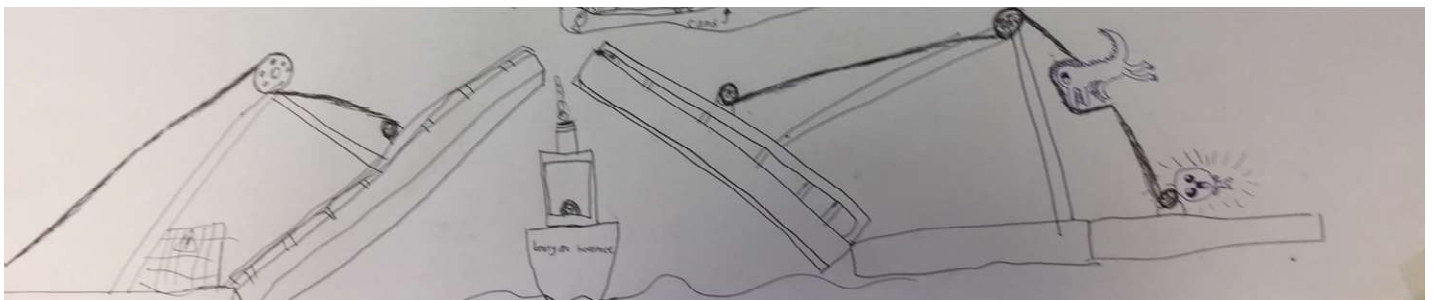


Dangerous for people walking and wheeling.



Accessible for people in wheelchairs?

The drawing below from one of the montages presented to the whole group acknowledges Horotiu, the taniwha, and pictures him living under the footbridge and rising from the water as the bridge is raised for boats to enter or leave the viaduct basin.





I like how this photo represents the diverse ecosystem of the viaduct.



This picture shows the connection between the natural environment and man-made environment. It shows how humans can get close to and interact with the natural environment. I think that we need more spaces like this to get away from the man-made areas and enjoy and experience what the water is.

Discussion

If children can safely engage with urban environments, their independence, resilience and social competence are enhanced, and the whole community benefits. If, on the other hand, children's well-being is severely compromised in their urban environments, the sustainability of our cities is in question. With increasing numbers of families with children living in inner-city apartments, the Eastern Viaduct is an important 'neighbourhood space' for increasing numbers of children and young people – not just visitors.

The January workshops with young people have produced a raft of different perspectives and ideas for Panuku's Eastern Viaduct Renewal project. These are outlined in this interim report. The next step is feeding the young people's perceptions and ideas into the 'official' design process.

Including young people in a meaningful way in urban planning and design processes is time consuming and resource intensive. In this instance, having prior established research relationships with most of the young people involved and their parents allowed us to assemble a reference group in a short period of time to provide input for the renewal of the Eastern Viaduct. Responding quickly was necessary to accommodate Panuku/Auckland Council timeframes. In addition, the fact that eight of the 19 participants had previously taken part in the Freyberg Square consultation meant they had some understanding of the urban design process and how their input could be useful and valued. Additionally, these young people were familiar with the methods used to elicit their ideas. With a longer lead time for the Puhinui project, we will work with students from adjacent schools to explore their ideas for the greenway development and involve them in the co-design process.

The Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui case studies are enabling an exploration of methods to engage young people in public space design. They will help confirm (or not) the 'do-ability' and desirability of working with young people in participatory design and identify the challenges of integrating their participation into routine planning processes.

It is anticipated that developing a tool kit/on-line digital resource in conjunction with council design and planning staff and private urban design practitioners, will help support the routine inclusion of young people in the design and planning of urban space. A more 'child-friendly' public realm is the ultimate goal of this work.

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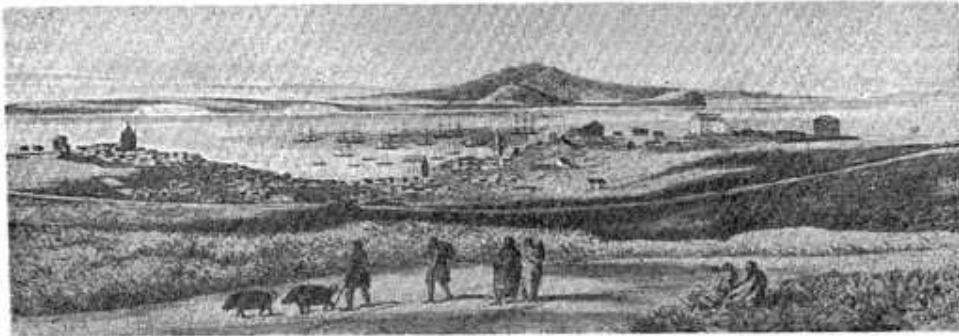
A Māori History of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland City/Auckland CBD

Adapted from Māori Affairs Department (June, 1959) Te Ao Hou, The New World: The Māori in Auckland



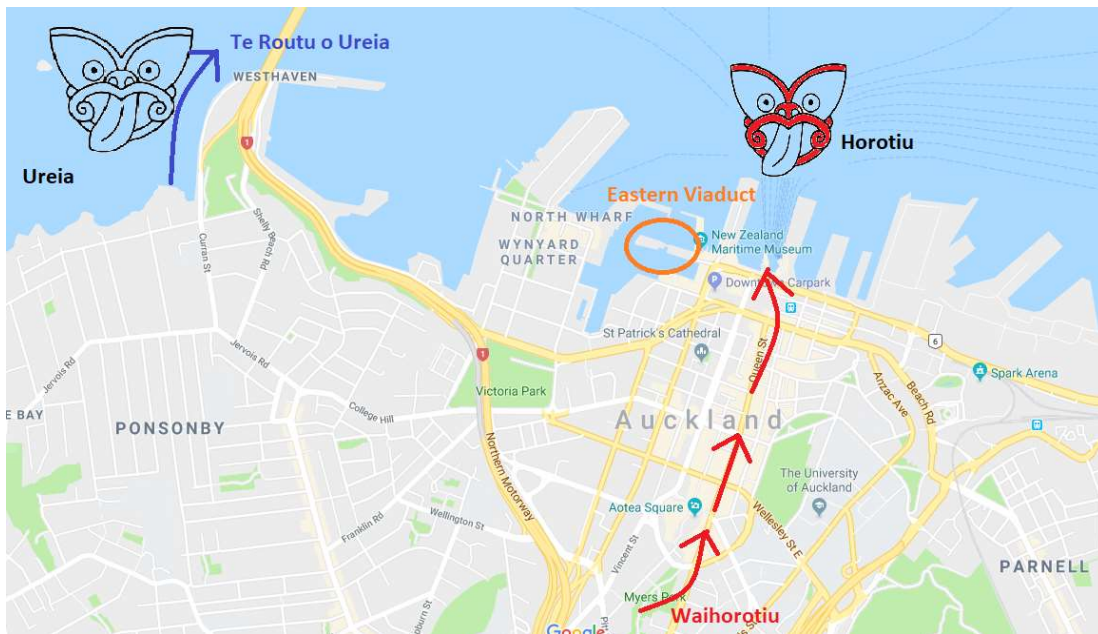
Photo retrieved from https://images.ehive.com/accounts/3648/objects/images/1q315si_kuk_l.jpg

- During the 1840s Governor Hobson chose the area we now know as Auckland Central Business District and Auckland City (previously 'Horotiu') as the new capital
- Hobson saw the potential for commerce and trade and a sizeable influx of Europeans came to the district to acquire land which was sold by Ngāti Whātua for cash, blankets, clothing, tobacco, sugar, flour and hatchets
- The Government and settler-colonisers made quick turnover and profit after cheaply purchasing land from Ngāti Whātua, soon enough leaving just Orakei and Okahu Bay in Māori hands
- Where the Ferry Terminal now stands was once 'Horotiu Bay' or 'Commercial Bay' where the Horotiu stream flowed into the harbour
- Ngāti Whatua, Ngāti Paoa and some Waikato iwi were quick to set up a 'Māori mart' at Horotiu Bay to sell Māori produce to Europeans. Most of the produce came from Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Poverty Bay. Māori vendors thrived in their trade along the waterfront.
- From the 1860s Auckland became home to racial conflict. European farmers often neglected to treat Māori with courtesy and disregarded Māori agricultural farming styles and Europeans looking for work on farms were angry as Māori were being employed for a cheaper wage.



A Maori family goes to market in Auckland in the eighteen-forties.
Photo: Alexander Turnbull Library.

- When the Taranaki land wars broke out in 1860 Auckland city became unsafe for Māori. Māori who showed loyalty to the New Zealand Government (mostly Ngāti Whātua) had to wear coloured arm bands and abide by a curfew during this time. Legally Māori were limited in what they were allowed to do or purchase as well – thus the city's Māori population became alienated and somewhat scarce.
- During the 20th and 21st century efforts to make compensation and acknowledge Māori contributions to Tāmaki Makaurau have increased and continue to be an important part of developing the city, its infrastructure and culture.



Sources:

[Sketch] Unknown Artist (1840s) *Heritage: Myers Park. Looking north from the Karangahape ridge down the Waihorotiu gully in the early 1840s.* Retrieved from <http://www.kroad.com/heritage/myers-park/>

[Photo] Unknown Photographer (2007) The bricked up stream/drain exposed recently during repairs to Queen Street. Ure (2015) has explored the possibility of restoring the buried stream as a feature of our city.

- The area now known as Auckland CBD used to be called 'Horotiu', sharing its name with the taniwha who still occupies this space

- The stream has been piped into the stormwater system and used to be an abundant feature for Māori living in the area before colonial times
- At the early stages of colonization the stream went from water source to polluted galley due to rubbish being dumped by British occupants
- The area near the Eastern Viaduct is thought to be where Horotiu now swims and plays
- Horotiu was recognized in the NZ media in 2011 when Auckland Council did not adequately consult with Ngāi Whātua about a billion-dollar rail tunnel project which is currently being completed in Auckland CBD



Source: Ure (2015) *Redemption Stream. Architecturally weaving the Waihorotiu stream through Māori and Pakeha culture.*

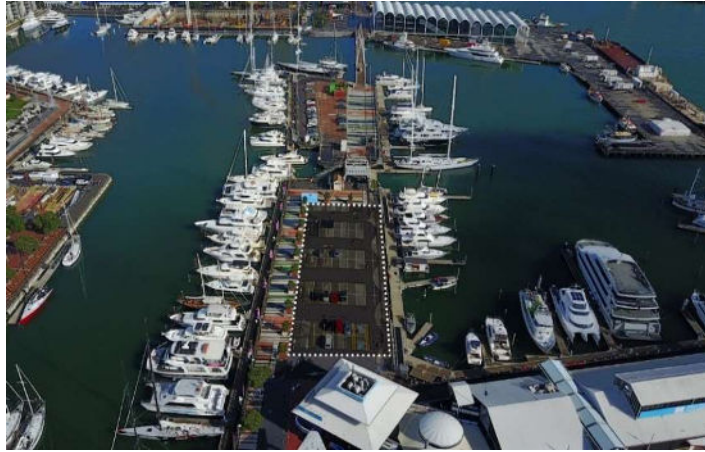
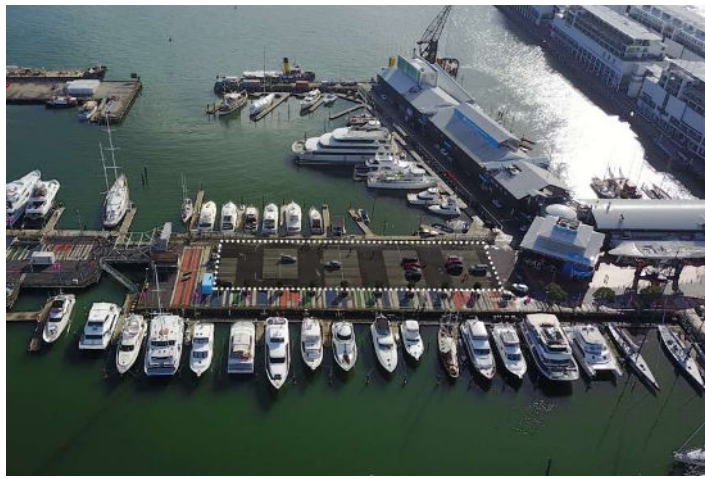


Tamaki – kainga nga ika
me nga wheua katoa!

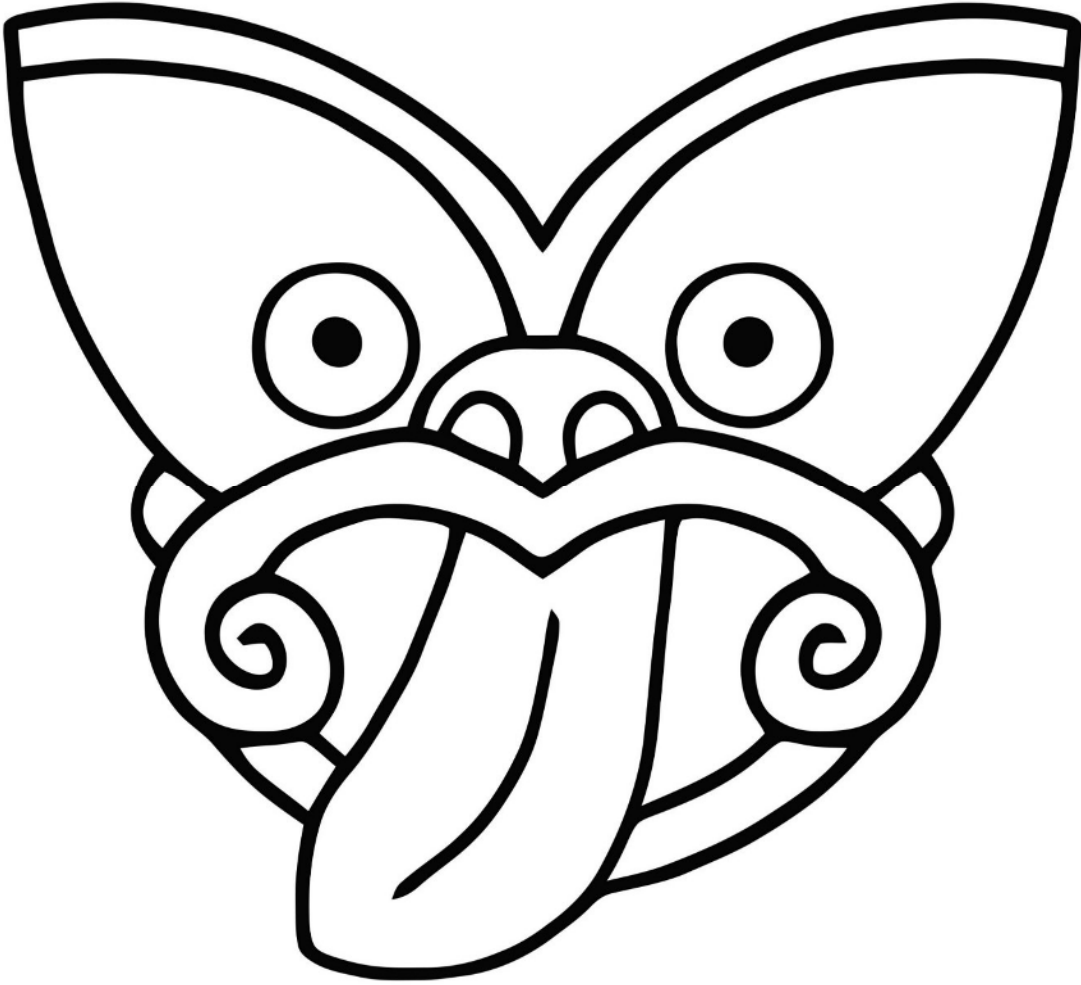
Auckland – where the fish
are so succulent you can
eat them bones and all!

This proverb alludes to the once abundant and sought after marine resources of Auckland's waterfront. It signals Waterfront Auckland's desire to create a sustainable waterfront providing for the current and future generations of Aucklanders. A place all Aucklanders can access the Waitemata Harbour for recreation, business or cultural practices.

Source: Panuku (2012) *The Waterfront Plan*



Source: Panuku, Auckland Council (2017)



Puhinui Stream & Playground Co-design with young Aucklanders



Report prepared by Penelope Carroll³, Karen Witten¹, Aynsley Cisaria⁴ and Teah Carlson¹ SHORE & Whāriki Research Centre
July 2019



³ SHORE & Whariki Research Centre

⁴ Boffa Miskell



Tirohia kia mārama, whāwhāngia kia rangona te hā!

Observe to gain enlightenment, participate to feel the essence.

Ngā mihi nui e te whānau o ngā tamariki ma. Heartfelt thanks to our 24 young co-designers from Wiri Central School – Adoni, Agnes, Amaziah, Amy, Bronx, Bua, Clarissa, Craig, Cyrus, Ezra, Fiona, Gafatasi, George, Julius, Katerina, Ketulen, Maxseen, Metotisi, Niwa, Priya, Sioeli, Tamatoa, Te Akau and Vera – for their ideas, enthusiasm and commitment to the project; and to Wiri Central School staff for their unfailing support. Grateful acknowledgement also of mana whenua, Panuku Development Auckland and The Southern Initiative (Auckland Council), and Healthy Families advisers and co-facilitators who have worked with us on this co-design project.

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INTRODUCTION

‘...tapping into young people’s ideas and reflections is essential for improving our cities’¹

This interim report presents findings from four workshops conducted with a group of 24 students (9-11 years old) at Wiri Central School, seeking their input into proposed Panuku Development Auckland plans to “restore the mauri of the [Puhinui Stream]...and provide high-quality space for all to enjoy”² along the banks of the stream, and for a new designated playground.

The four workshops (March-June, 2019) included site visits to the Puhinui Stream/Reserve, Auckland Botanic Gardens and the proposed location for a new playground in the reserve. A fifth workshop is planned for September, when Panuku and contracted landscape architects will report back to the children on how their ideas are being incorporated into development plans. The workshops were facilitated by the researchers in collaboration with mana whenua, Auckland Council, Panuku, Healthy Families and design consultancy staff, with segments videoed to provide material for a planned children’s participation ‘tool kit’/on-line resource for urban planners and designers.

The report is structured as follows: In the Background, the project is placed within the context of young people’s rights to access and enjoy the public spaces of the city and to participate in the design of these spaces. The origins of the project are also briefly outlined. The Methods section sets out processes used in the four workshops. The children’s responses and ideas shared during the workshops are presented in the Findings. This section is followed by a brief Discussion.

BACKGROUND

‘It is important that...young people’s input into planning be sought and heard’³

A major challenge of the 21st century is to ensure the social sustainability of our cities. This includes child-friendly cities, which welcome children into public spaces. The built form and social dynamics of many cities restrict play and mobility opportunities, which can curb children’s social interactions and impact negatively on their development and wellbeing (Spencer & Woolley, 2000).

A child-friendly city takes into account the *needs* and *rights* of the children who live in them: their *needs* to play, explore and make meaning of their physical environment to ensure their wellbeing and healthy development; and their *rights*, as citizens, to feel safe and welcome in public spaces.

¹ Pierre Sane, UNESCO, Driskell, 2002.

² <https://www.panuku.co.nz/manukau/chapter/realising-the-potential-of-the-puhinui-stream>

³ NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2009, p.5.

Child-friendly cities are places where children can:

- Influence decisions about their community/city;
- Express their opinions on the community/city they want;
- Participate in family, cultural, community/city and social life;
- Be safe and protected from exploitation, violence and abuse;
- Meet friends and have places and spaces to play and enjoy themselves;
- Have green spaces for plants and animals;
- Live in a clean, unpolluted environment; and
- Be an equal citizen, with access to every service regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or ability. (Unicef, 2010)

Children's presence is seldom embraced city-wide. Their participation in the design of public space is an avenue for realising their needs and rights.

In 1993, when New Zealand ratified the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, it committed itself to acknowledging a raft of children's rights – including the right to play, to move safely through the public realm, and to speak out and be heard on matters which affect them.

Auckland Council declared itself a 'child friendly' city with a stated aim to "put children and young people first and consider their wellbeing in everything that we do" (The Auckland Plan, 2012). Engaging children and young people in the design of the city's public spaces – including the restoration of the Puhinui Stream, and development of a new adjacent playground is in line with this commitment.

Co-designing public spaces with children acknowledges that:

- Children have a right to have a say;
- They provide new perspectives and ideas;
- Everybody learns through their participation;
- They are valuable members of the community, now and in the future; and
- Environments that are better for children and young people are better for everyone.

**'He iti, he iti kahikātoa.' 'Though
little, it is still a mānuka tree.'**

It is clear there is a willingness on the part of urban design and planning staff to consult with children and young people, but it often does not happen because they are unsure how to go about it (Freeman & Tranter, 2011). This co-design project, as well as providing children's input into the Puhinui Stream development (and the Eastern Viaduct renewal), is also investigating:

- How local government can effectively engage children/young people in co-designing child-friendly public spaces.
- Changes needed to public space design processes and protocols to accommodate children's participation.

Findings from this investigation will feed into an on-line resource for design and planning staff to facilitate more engagement with children in public space design projects.

This project builds on a successful children’s audit/consultation (commissioned by Auckland Council and co-facilitated by the first two authors and Auckland Council staff) which informed the redevelopment of Freyberg Square in Auckland’s CBD in 2015 (Auckland Council, 2017; Carroll & Witten 2015, 2017; Carroll et al, 2017). This was a ‘first’ for Auckland Council and the success of the process led to calls from Council staff to consult with children and young people on other public space developments.

“It’s actually been extremely useful. The whole concept is stronger because it’s had input from children around what they would like in the space, how they’d use it, what could be improved. I would definitely be an advocate for following this process again on another project.” (Lisa Spasic, project design leader).

Many of the children’s suggestions were included in the Freyberg Square design.

The Eastern Viaduct and Puhinui Stream developments were identified by Panuku as suitable sites where the research and development timelines would enable a co-design process to be conducted, and outcomes evaluated. The Eastern Viaduct co-design process was completed in December 2018; the current Puhinui Stream/Playground co-design project will be completed in September (2019).

The two case studies are enabling an investigation of child friendly methods which allow meaningful participation of children in public space design. The goal of developing a resource based on this investigation, in conjunction with Panuku, Auckland City Council design and planning staff and private urban designers, is to support the routine inclusion of children and young people in the design and planning of urban public space. A more ‘child-friendly’ public realm is the ultimate goal.

The research project is funded through National Science Challenge, *Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities, Ko Nga wa Kainga hei whakamahorahora*. Ethics approval for the project was obtained through Massey University in December 2017.

Puhinui Stream/Playground co-design project



The map shows the Puhinui Stream running through the Wiri neighbourhood on its way to the Manukau Harbour. Extensive housing and other developments are planned within the shaded area.

This co-design project is nested within wider community consultation on proposed developments within the Puhinui Stream corridor and surrounding areas (pictured above) led by Panuku. These developments are in turn part of a far wider vision of transformational change under The Southern Initiative (TSI). TSI was set up through the 2012 Auckland Plan to provide a focus for social, economic and environmental development in the area of South Auckland covered by the Local Boards of Mangere-Otahuhu, Otara-Papatoetoe, Manurewa and Pakapapa. A quarter of Auckland's children live in this area.

Panuku is interested in how local children relate to their immediate neighbourhoods and the wider environs, and their relationship with the Puhinui Stream. This “wonderful natural asset” is considered an important link to Manukau's cultural and ecological heritage; and “a clean, healthy, flowing Puhinui Stream will link neighbourhoods and provide high-quality open space for all to enjoy,” says Panuku. Ecological, social, cultural and economic transformation is to be achieved through “working with local people to restore the mauri of the stream and its surrounds.” This includes working with local children. These workshops with Wiri Central School students are paving the way for wider consultation with children.

The Puhinui Stream corridor is the main public open space in the Wiri neighbourhood, and Panuku has plans for improved recreational facilities, including a new playground adjacent to the stream. The design brief for the playground envisions a “treasured community asset for all residents” which provides for imaginative, natural, vigorous, group and inclusive play, as well as an appropriate meeting place for families/mixed age groups to gather. Play equipment is to be designed primarily for 2-14-year-olds, with some ‘dual purpose’ equipment for use by older users for physical activities. The brief also calls for seating, shade, rubbish bins and drinking fountains, and level access (for wheelchairs or walkers). Panuku will seek the input of mana whenua on the appropriateness of incorporating māra hūpara traditional Māori play elements, “in recognition of the rich cultural heritage of the Puhinui Stream and surrounding areas.”



A workshop participant anticipates the proposed new Wiri Playground

The four workshops with children from Wiri Central School have explored their relationships with – and dreams for – the central Manukau area, their immediate neighbourhoods and the Puhinui Stream/Reserve

Questions children have considered about their immediate neighbourhoods and environs have included:

- Where do you go and what do you like to do?
- How do you feel about your neighbourhood?
- What do you especially like/dislike?

and about the Puhinui Stream and Reserve:

- Do you go there?
- What do you like/dislike?
- What would you like to change?
- What would the taniwha Puhinui like to see change in the stream?

We have also gathered children's ideas for the proposed new playground:

- What would you like to be able to do there?
- What facilities would you like to be included?

The result of this exploration is a layering of perceptions, feelings and stories, which will feed into Panuku development plans for the transformation of children's neighbourhood spaces. We hope this will help ensure a child-friendly transformation which takes into account the *needs* and *rights* of the children who live there to play, explore and make meaning of their physical environment, and to feel safe and welcome.

METHODS

*'It is essential that the methods used are appropriate to the cultural context and to the children's age and interests'*⁴

It is vital that the processes of consultation, as well as the outcomes, are child-friendly. A child-friendly environment contributes to children's experience of agency by facilitating their effective engagement and providing access to a range of age-appropriate activities; to their sense of safety and security; and to their positive self-image by creating spaces that make them feel welcome and offer opportunities for fun (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2009). Such characteristics are mirrored in a child-friendly consultation process.

In November 2018 we approached Wiri Central School and asked if they would be interested in students from the school being involved in a co-design project which would contribute children's ideas to public space developments. The school is situated within an area of extensive planned redevelopment and close to the Puhinui Stream. Principal Jan Donaldson was keen, and students from Year 5/6 composite classes (9-12-year-olds) were identified as potential participants. We consulted with teachers on workshop content and formats that would both enhance the curriculum and fit in with the school timetable. It was decided project participants would be six students from each of the four composite Year 5/6 classes who could later share workshop processes with classmates. Information sheets and consent forms were distributed to students and parents by teachers.

To ensure child-friendly processes which encourage children's meaningful participation required working in a space where they felt welcome and respected, providing information so they could effectively engage in the project, and a range of age-appropriate methods to allow them to express their ideas. It also required respectful relationships, with interest and trust on the part of participants in the project/processes, and genuine engagement and interest in the children's perspectives from the adult researchers/facilitators (Christensen, 2004). The workshops took place in children's familiar school environment, and the children worked in groups with their classmates. We, as workshop facilitators, adopted the role of friendly and interested 'other adult' – avoiding teacher-student, parent-child roles (Christensen, 2004).

⁴ Freeman & Tranter, 2011, p 235.



Karakia and games were integral welcoming and fun parts of each workshop. So was providing kai to share.



Children loved the bone carving sessions organised by facilitator Chris Wade (Te Ākitai - Te Waiohū, Ngāti Māhanga, Ngāti Pāoa, Ngāti Naho). Each participant had a completed carving to take home with them by the end of the workshops.

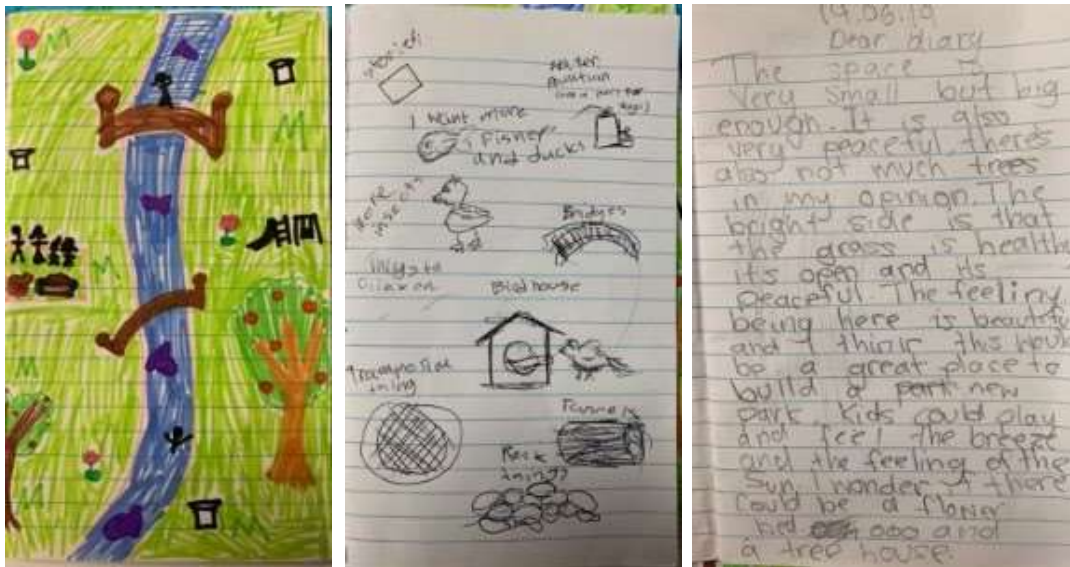


Children were provided with information so they could participate meaningfully. They were encouraged to ask questions/make comments at any time.



A range of methods ensured children could record and share their perspectives and ideas in ways which they felt comfortable with. These included talking (with their ideas recorded and later transcribed), writing, drawing, taking photographs, modelling; and individual and group work. For instance:

Children wrote down and drew pictures of their ideas in notebooks.



They took photographs which they later captioned in a photovoice exercise.



And they built models of features they would like in the proposed new playground.



Children's ideas and reflections, expressed in their notebooks, drawings, photographs, exercises, and individual and group discussions, were thematically analysed by researchers between workshops and findings presented back to the participants to check we had 'got it right'. These analyses, along with evaluations of what was working well and what was not, helped determine the content and format of subsequent workshops.

Workshop One

The aims of this first workshop were:

To introduce

- ourselves (the researchers, other facilitators and the videographers) and the children participating;
- the co-design project;
- the importance of local mana whenua history; and,
- the importance of children contributing to public space design.

To orient the children to the area.

To gather children's perceptions of

- their neighbourhoods and wider environs; and
- the Puhinui Reserve/Stream.

A karakia by mana whenua facilitator Chris Wade, and a welcome by the Wiri Central School co-ordinating teacher for years 5 & 6, Kelly Albert, was followed by everyone introducing themselves (whakawhanaungatanga) before participating in a circle game using harakeke (see picture p.10). Sara Zwart from Panuku introduced the Puhinui Stream Project, using maps to orient the children to the area; Chris Wade spoke of mana whenua links to the school and the surrounding land – and presented the idea of each participant producing a bone carvings which they would work on in each workshop; and researchers Karen Witten and Penelope Carroll introduced the co-design project and the children's roles as 'co-researchers' and 'co-designers'.

Neighbourhood perceptions exercise:

Children were divided into four class-based groups (each with an adult facilitator), and began to orient themselves using large maps of the area. They marked on the maps with dots where they lived in relation to the school and places they liked to go. Some elected to draw their own maps. The children talked of where and what they liked to play; whether they had freedom to roam about their neighbourhood; places they might like to go but were not allowed; what they most liked/disliked about their neighbourhoods; and how they would like their neighbourhoods to be different.



Examples of children's neighbourhood maps.

Perceptions of the Puhinui Stream:

Armed with cameras and notebooks we all then set out to explore the Puhinui Stream, just a short distance from the school. Many of the children said they had never been there, and very few were allowed to play there unsupervised. Facilitators interacted with children, asking them how they were experiencing different places.



The children took photographs and made notes of features they liked and disliked



Feedback from the children was that they really enjoyed exploring the Puhinui Stream/Reserve and thinking about aspects they liked and did not like. They also liked learning more about their local area generally.

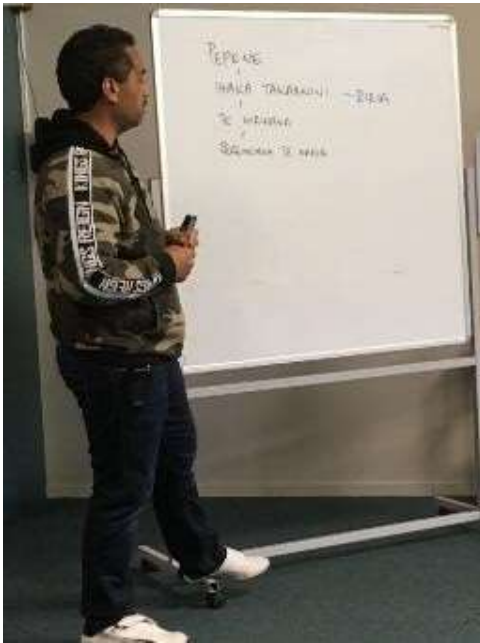
Between Workshop One and Workshop Two we thematically analysed children's perceptions of their neighbourhoods and the Puhinui Reserve/Stream. These are presented in the findings.

We also printed out all of the photographs the children had taken, for them to work with in the photovoice exercise in Workshop Two.

Workshop Two

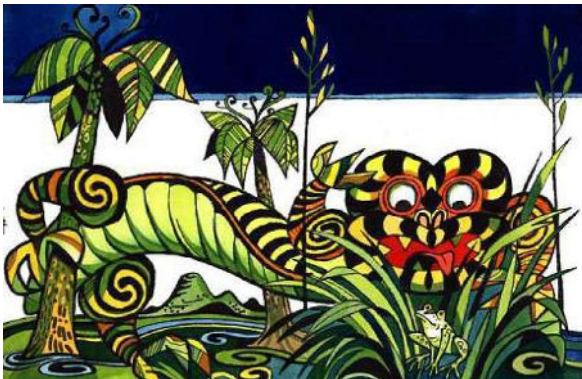
The aims of this workshop were:

- To introduce the children and ourselves to the mana whenua history of the local area;
- To learn about the Puhinui Stream/awa;
- To check in with children about whether workshops methods were working for them and, and about what they had told us – did we hear well, or not?
- To understand children’s perceptions and experience of the Puhinui Stream and find out what they would like to be different.



After a karakia and harakeke circle game, Chris Wade talked about local mana whenua history, and how places like Wiri, Manukau, Manurewa and Puhinui got their names. A presentation he made of his talk is included as an accompanying document.

We also learned of the taniwha, or guardians of the area: of Taramainuku (pictured below) who swam below the Tainui waka on its voyage to Aotearoa.



Of Puhinui, the giant eel which used to live in the Puhinui Stream (below).



And of Kaahu Pokere, the Black Hawk. This is one of the most important taniwha for Te Akitai iwi, said Chris. Hawks are generally brown, but when a mystical black hawk is seen, it is a good sign.



Sara Zwart from Panuku talked to the children about the Puhinui Stream, and its importance in the local area.

We checked in with the children about what they had told us about their neighbourhoods and the Puhinui Stream (where and what they liked to play; whether they had freedom to roam about their neighbourhood; what they most liked/disliked about their neighbourhoods and the Puhinui Reserve/Stream; and changes they would like to see). During this check-in process the children came up with further ideas of changes they would like.



We also asked them whether the various workshop methods were allowing them to express their ideas and record their perceptions. Some liked to write, some preferred to draw, others to talk – and all of them said they liked taking photographs.

Telling stories of the Puhinui Stream in words and pictures:

The children worked in their groups with photographs they had taken during their visit to the Puhinui Stream. Each child selected three photographs they thought were significant and captioned them. Each group then sorted their photographs and captions into different themes and produced a montage which told a story of their responses to the Puhinui Stream.



They worked together with facilitators to identify the common themes in their photos.



Dominant themes were pollution and different aspects of nature (trees, birds, water creatures and the beauty of nature).



The groups took turns to work with Chris on their carvings.

Children presented their montages to the whole group and talked about the themes they had discovered working with their photographs.



Examples from the photovoice exercise are presented in the Findings.

Workshop Three

The aims of this workshop were to:

- Provide participants with more information about the ecology of the Puhinui Stream and surrounding natural areas;
- Find out what children had learned;
- Find out what they would like to see more of in the Puhinui Reserve.

Learning about the ecology of the Puhinui Stream:

After a karakia, we were led by Hannah Brightley from Healthy Waters on an expedition along the stream to the Ratavine overbridge, where we were joined by Rebecca Stanley (Botanic Gardens curator) and continued on to the Botanic Gardens. From Hannah and Rebecca we learned much about the water cycle and the stream, and the trees, birds and other animals which live in and around the Puhinui Stream.



These are some of the 'facts' the children recalled learning:

- There are 16,500 kms of rivers and streams in Auckland;
Water remains in the ocean for 3000 years until it is evaporated and becomes rain. (*"If I was a drop of water in the ocean I'd be pleading 'please, please pick me,'" said one child*);
- Water flows faster and heats up more running over concrete than meandering along a natural course;
- Fewer creatures can live in a concrete bottomed stream;
- Gabion walls are used to keep the banks from crumbling into the stream;
- Dogs scrambling up and down to the stream damage tree roots and have killed six large trees in the past two years;
- The speed at which rain water reaches the Puhinui Stream needs to be slowed down – swales, trees and other plantings and roof gardens are all ways to do this;
- Plants are also good for reducing pollutants reaching the stream;
- Eels go all the way to Tonga to spawn.

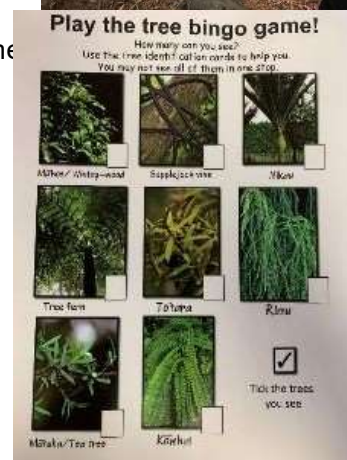
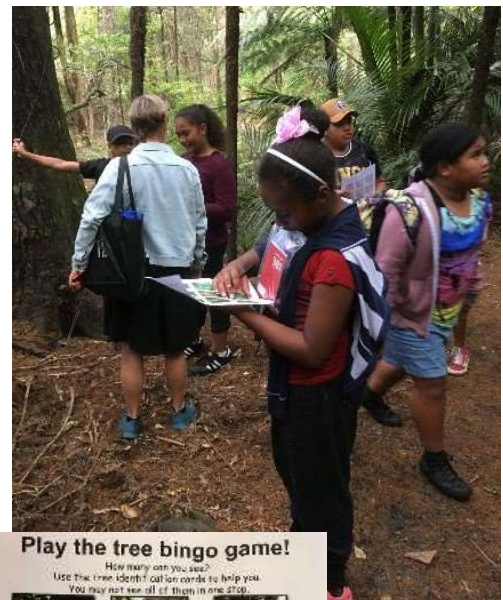
The photographs below show participants exploring along the Puhinui Stream.



Weta houses highlighted the need for habitats for a range of animal life.



Children identified native trees with the Tree Bingo Game



Follow-up activities:

Back at the school children alternated between three different activities and working on their bone carvings.



Activity One looked at concepts of nature (how would children describe nature to an alien?).

Activity Two looked at what children had learned about the Puhinui Stream – and how people could help Puhinui (the awa/stream and the taniwha) be healthier.



In **Activity Three** children looked at changes and activities they would like to see in the Puhinui Reserve.

Some of their ideas about how people could help make Puhinui healthier (**Activity Two**), and what they would like more of in the Puhinui Reserve (**Activity Three**), are included in the Findings.

Workshop Four

The aim of workshop four:

- To gather children's ideas to feed into the design of the proposed new playground in the Puhinui Reserve, adjacent to the stream.

After karakia we recapped on the first three workshops and then focused on the Wiri Playground project.

Thinking about play:



Teah Carlson led the children in a game and Alex Whitcombe talked to them about traditional Māori games.

Thinking about playground design:

The children were shown examples of inspiring playgrounds which had been created elsewhere, including the Te Auaunga Awa Project to the west of Auckland, by Aynsley Cisaria.

Orienting to the site:

The children were introduced to the Wiri Playground project using maps of the area.

We then set off to the Puhinui Reserve and explored the proposed site, noting down possible features they would like included, in their notebooks. Children also talked about their ideas with workshop facilitators. These ideas were recorded.



Modelling possibilities:

Back at the school and working in groups, the children imagined possible playground designs and created models which incorporated features which they would like included.



One group drew up a plan before beginning their model; other models came together organically with each child adding in their particular ideas. Each group presented their model and explained the various features they had included. These explanations were recorded and transcribed.

They are presented in the Findings.

FINDINGS

This section presents findings from analyses of activities and discussions from the four workshops at Wiri Central School. In combination, they are a layering of children's perceptions, feelings and stories of their neighbourhoods and the Puhinui Stream/Reserve, and of their hopes and dreams for the future.

Children's perceptions of their neighbourhoods (Workshop one):

Children generally liked living in their neighbourhoods, with having friends close by seen as the most important positive attribute. Most participants talked of playing inside with friends, (generally because of parental safety concerns), although some participants sometimes played outside with friends. A few children spoke of biking and scootering in the local streets, and further away with whānau; and one boy spoke of skateboarding alongside the Puhinui Stream. However, several children said they were not allowed out of sight of their parents, because of safety concerns.

Participants listed places they liked to be (presented here in order of 'likes'):

1. Home, backyard, inside games and the street outside home
2. Friends' grandma's, aunts' houses
3. School
4. Food outlets: bakeries, Krispie Kreme, KFC, McDonalds, BP Station, Happy Days
5. Manukau Mall, Countdown, library
6. Entertainment sites: Rainbows End, Gravity, Chipmunks, Time Zone, Te Wero, Ice-skating, movies
7. Parks, playgrounds, creek, Botanic gardens, Totara Park
8. Beach for swimming and fishing and BBQs with whanau, eg Maraetai, Kawakawa Bay
9. Sports fields for soccer, rugby, touch and courts for netball and volleyball.
10. Other: Otara markets, church

Some of the children's comments about their neighbourhoods:

'I like where I live because most of my friends live around there.'

'It's cool where I live. I live right next to a park and a shop and N's house.'

'It's not a good place to live because I don't have my friends close to me.'

'I'm not allowed to walk around alone. Sometimes I go with my brothers.'

Some comments about neighbourhood activities:

'We stay inside and play on our play station 4'

'I'm not allowed to walk around but I can ride my bike up and around the street.'

'I ride my bike sometimes.'

...and about neighbourhood destinations:

‘We go to the playground at the weekend. We go with my family. I like the swings the best.’

‘We go to the botanical gardens on special occasions. They have these gardens that are free and you can walk around and see heaps of things.’

‘I like going to the shopping mall. We go to Countdown [and] we go to the library every time we go to the supermarket.’

What children didn’t like about their neighbourhoods:

1. Motorway, roads, noise.
2. Unhelpful noisy neighbours
3. Drunk people (hanging out around the Puhinui Stream)
4. Other: cemetery/unveilings, weedy gardens, not enough bus stops.

Perceptions of the Puhinui Reserve/Stream:

While a few children spoke of walking through the area on their way to school or going to the playground – and one boy of skateboarding alongside the Puhinui Stream – for many participants, our workshop exploration of the stream was the first time they had ever been there.

Aspects children liked:

1. Nature/wildlife (tadpoles, birds, ducks)
2. Nature/plants (trees, harakeke, flowers, leaves, bark – and especially the Puriri tree).
3. Quiet, peaceful, shady
4. Playground

Aspects they didn’t like:

1. Rubbish (food trash, mattresses, supermarket trolleys, plastic bags, nappies, shoes).
2. Dirty water (polluted, weeds and slime, smelly water).
3. Lack of rubbish bins, tables, BBQs, puriri trees, flowers, birds and other creatures.
4. Seeing fast running water.
5. Seeing other people.

What participants thought most needed to change:

1. Clean up the water
2. More creatures (eels, fish)
3. Take all the rubbish out of the water
4. Make it attractive for people to come (more colour, a tree house, a flying fox, repainting)

Additional comments about the Puhinui Reserve/Stream:

'It would be so cool if the Puhinui was right next to our school.'

'The only thing I didn't like down there was the dirty water and the rubbish.'

'I like the peace and quiet...not many people come down here because they think it's yuk - and it is yuk.'

'Stop littering because the rain will wash it away into the river and kill the fish.'

'They can stop throwing rubbish, trolleys and taking the concrete out.'

Feedback on experiencing the Puhinui Reserve/Stream:

The children spoke of very much enjoying our explorations of the Puhinui Reserve/Stream, many of them for the first time. As the participant quoted above said: *'It would be so cool if the Puhinui was right next to our school.'* With each visit (three in all) they seemed more at ease, confident and curious about their surroundings. Children also showed increasing awareness of ecological issues and some of their responses suggest the development of a sense of kaitiakitanga. All of the children said they would like to spend more time in the Puhinui Reserve/Stream, hanging out and exploring with their friends.

Some participant comments:

'It was fun because we got to go to the park and go exploring.'

'It was pretty cool...going exploring and walking with friends.'

'I liked it down there...and taking photos and stuff.'

The Photovoice exercise (workshop two)

Themes from the photovoice exercise (combining photographs children took in workshop one with captions they wrote in workshop two) included nature – beauty, trees and plants; nature – wildlife (birds and fish); people/activities; and pollution. A third of the photographs the children chose and captioned related to pollution – with an indication from some of their captions of a sense of kaitiakitanga.



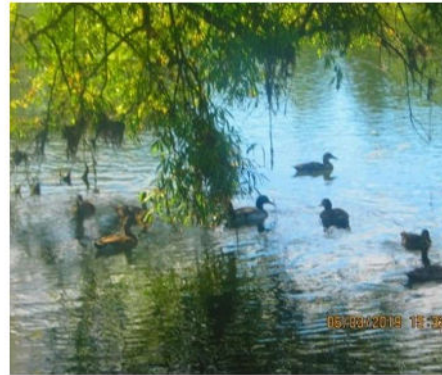
Each group of children explained their photovoice themes to the whole group.

Next are some examples of their photographs and their captions which represent different themes.

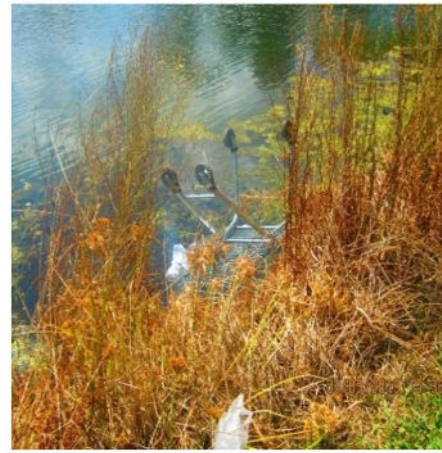
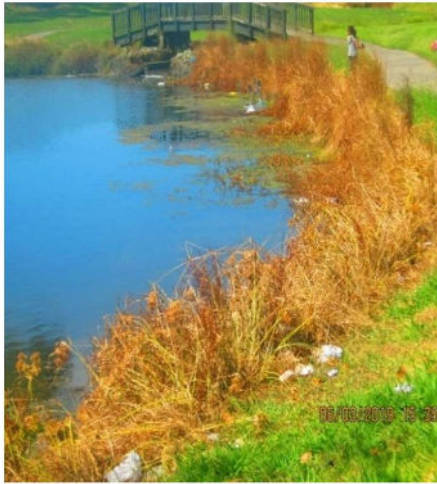
Nature -beauty, trees, plants:



Nature – Wildlife (birds/fish):



Pollution:





What children would like to see more of in the Puhinui Reserve (Workshop Three)

Children were given a list of 16 things they might want more of in the Puhinui Reserve and stars to prioritise which they thought were the most important.

Top of the list was Fun things to climb and swing on (19), followed by More places to play sport (16); Places to have adventures (14); More trees and shady places (12); Sculptures and carving (11); Walks through nature (10); Signs telling you about birds and creatures in the stream (10); A healthy stream (9); Places for birds to live (9); Paths to ride bikes and scooters on (7); Places for picnics and BBQs (5); Quiet and Peaceful places (5); Community gardens for growing food (5); More places for fish and other creatures to live (3); More places for little kids to play (3); An outdoor classroom (1). Although there was space for other suggestions, there were none.

What children would like to see in the new playground (Workshop four)

Inspiration for the models children made incorporating their ideas for a new playground, came from viewing images of playgrounds elsewhere (including the Te Auaunga Awa Project to the west of Auckland), and exploring the site and surroundings of the proposed playground. While on site the children were continually drawn to the Puhinui Stream water's edge and plantings, adjacent to the playground site. Many children talked of wanting to be able to play in the water, go fishing – and how cool it would be to have a glass platform suspended over the water that they could look through to observe what was happening under the water. There was also a proposal for a footbridge, linking the new playground with the existing playground via the island in the middle of the Puhinui Stream 'pond'. Free WiFi in the playground itself was another proposal.

Four models of the children's ideas for the proposed new playground were created and presented. Children explained the various features of their models to the whole group. While there were similar themes – trees, water, shade; BBQs and seating; play equipment and possibilities for play; and places for animals and birds as well as people – each group incorporated different features into their playground design.

Room 12 called their playground 'Puhinui Taniwha Place Park'. Features their model included were:

- Monkey bars
- Eel slide
- A waka see-saw where you can rock back and forth
- A BBQ
- Music available by pushing a button
- A water fountain for dogs and for people
- Seats
- Rubbish bins – *'because you need lots of rubbish bins'*

A tunnel – 'you go through the head and it will make a rrrroar noise and then you go through to the end and come out and it makes a fart noise.'

There are some trees with houses so the birds can make nests
An actual water fountain *'with a built-in trampoline you can play on and an eel that swims around and when it's night time you will see glow worms at the bottom.'*

- Swings and a tyre swing
- Fresh water for the fish

A big focus of Room 13's model was people who were modelled playing, sitting and walking in the park. Features their model included were:

- People
- Trees
- A sandpit *'with a baby playing in it'*.

- A bouncy castle
- An eel going into the river
- A hamsterwheel
- A swimming pool

Kaahu Pokere (the Black Hawk taniwha) presided over Room 14's playground. Features their model included were:

- See-saw
- Slide
- A *'spinning around thingy'* – *'you stand up and spin and try to balance'*

- A log (*'dead tree'*) for climbing on
- Trees

- Shade to protect you from getting sunburnt.

- Benches
- An island with an eel in the water
- A scarecrow
- A bin for your rubbish
- A BBQ

Room 16's playground featured a wide path through the middle (*'so you can walk around easily'*). Other features their model included were:

- Lots of trees – *'for the birds to live in and for some shade'*

- Benches (underneath the trees)

- Little birds feeding around

- Slide

- See-saw

- Tyre swing

- Obstacle course – *'You jump side to side then balance, then jump into the water and try walking your way out'*



Some children also drew pictures of features they would like to see in the playground

‘One of the best ways to make built environments child-friendly is to involve children and young people in creating them’⁵

Including children in a meaningful way in urban planning and design processes is time consuming and resource intensive. However, there is now widespread support for the inclusion of children in urban planning and design and acknowledgements of benefits, including:

- Grounding adult understanding and decision-making in the reality of children’s experience;
- Removing the need for assumptions by adults about what children and young people need and what they want;
- Recognizing children’s right to participate in community development processes as citizens of their community;
- Recognizing the value of children and young people’s contribution to community development; and
- Recognizing that children and young people’s knowledge and experience of their environments differs from adults’ experience.

If children can safely engage with urban environments, their independence, resilience and social competence are enhanced, and the whole community benefits. If, on the other hand, children’s well-being is severely compromised in their urban environments, the sustainability of our cities is in question.

The four workshops with students at Wiri Central School have produced a raft of different perspectives and ideas for the Puhinui Stream/Reserve and Playground developments. These have been presented in the Findings. The next step is feeding children’s ideas into design and decision-making processes. Then, at a fifth and final workshop in September, Panuku and designers will report back to the children how their ideas and perspectives have been incorporated.

‘It is really important to kids that you show you’re totally interested in what they have to say, because what they have to say is utterly relevant’⁶

We hope the information provided by Wiri central School students will help Panuku and urban landscape designers create child friendly environments in their transformation of the Puhinui Stream corridor and the construction of the new playground: environments which welcome children, providing them with opportunities for play, exploration and hanging out, while at the same time, making them feel welcome and safe. As many commentators have noted, public places and spaces which work for children, work for everyone.

Children’s meaningful participation requires providing them with relevant information and experiences. This co-design project addressing the ecological restoration of the Puhinui and the construction of a new playground (possibly incorporating mara hūpara elements), is complex, and has required up-skilling both participants and researchers through workshop activities. A discussion of this will be contained in the final report.

⁵ NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2009.

⁶ Fiona Robbe, in NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2009, p36.

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Appendix: Presentation by Chris Wade



Presentation: Wiri Central School – Kids in the City

by Chris Wade (Te Ākitai - Te Waiohua, Ngāti Māhanga, Ngāti Pāoa, Ngāti Naho)



Mana Whenua: These are the local iwi or tribes of the area. In Manukau their ancestors came on the Tainui waka. Some of the other iwi are from the Te Waiohua tribe which is one of the oldest tribes in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland)

Wiri: Named after Te Wirihana of the Te Ākitai tribe. He was born about 1850 and lived at Pūkaki Marae near Auckland Airport. His father was Ihaka Takaanini, and his mother was Riria, he also had a brother named Ihaka, and a sister named Erina. Te Wirihana's name in English means "Wilson".

Te Wirihana had a very good childhood, his dad was the chief of the tribe who owned a lot of land especially in Manukau. However, in his early teens his family suffered a big tragedy and his family had to move away for several years. Eventually Te Wirihana and his mum returned and he attended Auckland Boys Grammar where he was part of the debating team, cricket team, and athletics team winning the shot put.

When Te Wirihana became an adult, he took over as chief of the tribe and married a woman called Te Raukohe. They had three sons and a daughter, the daughter's name was Reremoana Te Mahia and is how Mahia Road in Manurewa got its name. The Takanini area was named after his father Ihaka Takaanini.

Later on Te Wirihana joined the Manukau Tug of War team, as their anchorman which is the last person at the end of the rope, who is usually one of the heaviest or strongest.

Te Wirihana died in 1893 but his descendants still live at Pūkaki Marae including those from Reremoana

Taniwha (Guardians)



Puhinui the giant eel: This taniwha used to live in the stream and although the stream needs more cleaning, it still has a lot of eels. Other tribes say Puhinui was a waka that was hidden along the banks and taken back to the tribe a short time later

Matukutūreia and Matukutūrūrū. These two maunga (mountains) are near Roscommon Road and are named after the Bittern bird. A long time ago there were two brother who were chiefs on each maunga. Another chief wanted to take charge of these maunga. One of the brothers was away catching eels and lost his maunga but the other brother was alert and stayed back saving his maunga. From then on, the maunga were named



Bittern Bird

Matukutūrūrū (Sleepy Bittern) after the brother who went eeling, and **Matukutūreia**

(Watchful Bittern) after the other brother who stayed alert



Kaiwhare: This taniwha is a giant stingray who accompanied the Tainui waka on its voyage to New Zealand. Kaiwhare now resides in the Manukau harbour and helps to keep it safe

Taramainuku: This taniwha swam below the Tainui canoe on its voyage and how resides in the Tāmaki Estuary around Otara and Papatoetoe. One version on how Otara got its name is “Te Puke o Taramainuku” - “The hill of Taramainuku



Kaahu Pōkere (The Black Hawk). This is one of the most important taniwha to the Te Ākitai tribe. Hawks are brown but when a mystical black hawk is seen it is a good sign

Manurewa: Named after two brothers were flying their kites. The kites became tangled and the younger brother followed them and eventually lived in the Tauranga area. The event was called “**Te Manuaute e rewa ana**” - “The Flying Kite”





Manukau: Three versions for this name;

1. *“He manukau noa iho”*: When the Tainui waka crossed overland from Otahuhu to the Manukau harbour, the captain named Hoturoa thought he could hear people ahead. However when his scouts came back they said *“He manu kau noa iho”* (It's only birds).

2. **“Te Mānukanukatanga o Hoturoa”**: The second version also involves Hoturoa. When the Tainui canoe arrived at Manukau harbour it would not go into the water. Hoturoa became unhappy with his wife and so they did a karakia and the waka was able to move. However, Hoturoa remained unhappy with his wife and so they called the event “Te Manukanukatanga o Hoturoa” (The anxiety of Hoturoa).
3. The third version is about the many manuka trees in this area. Although there are still a lot of manuka, there were much more in the past