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Elegance in Participatory Design:
Enabling design culture in landscape architecture

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Landscape Architecture

Wendy Rosalie Hoddinott
Lincoln University, 2018
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ABSTRACT

The quality of public space is vital to livable cities. Yet livable cities also require empowered communities. This thesis asks: how is the landscape architect’s design expertise expressed as part of the public participation process, what are the key features of design expertise that lead to an effective design-based participation process and how does quality in the participation process relate to the quality of design outcomes? A theoretical framework is developed from which to clarify the relationship between decision-making processes in design and public participation. Insights from design theory are combined with the findings of key informant interviews with New Zealand and Northern Europe design experts, and with landscape architects, community and Council staff working in post-earthquake Ōtautahi/Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Results of a case study of Albion Square in Ōhinehou/Lyttelton reveal that the designer’s interactions with the public play a critical role in shaping elegant design outcomes in public space design. Four key insights reveal that participatory design processes in New Zealand need to be reconsidered in order to enable landscape architects to work more closely with communities in mutual learning, rather than the currently limiting technical problem solving process. Institutional, professional and theoretical implications are drawn from the findings.

Keywords: design expertise, participation, participatory design, consultation, co-design, elegance, Lyttelton, public space, liveable cities, Albion Square, Ōtautahi/Christchurch, post-earthquake.
PREFACE

For many people in Ōtautahi/Christchurch, the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes have been a defining moment in our lives. Not only have we lived through the traumatic events of the earthquakes themselves, they have also influenced our work practices and our relationships with others. While my perspective in this study has been strongly shaped by my practice in landscape architecture, my experiences of the earthquakes in this context have also prompted this thesis. It is in many ways a personal story.

At the time of the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes I was a senior landscape architect in a Christchurch multi-disciplinary practice, feeling unsettled at the dominance of efficiency and profitability as the driver and focus of my work. I hasten to add that this is not a criticism of the firm I was working with, but the wider political context within which design practice operates. While I understood that decisions must be made within financial constraints, I also realised that some of the ‘softer’ values that are critical to working effectively in design contexts were being sidelined in the pursuit of profitability.

The effects of the earthquakes served to amplify my concerns as I became involved in the design of one of central government’s first anchor projects in the city. While they were extraordinary times, I, along with many others, was concerned at the lack of public involvement in the decision-making processes, and had a sense that detailed rules and procedures although well intentioned were undermining the design process. While I did my best to conform to the imperatives of the system, I felt increasingly distanced from people who lived in the communities I was working for, who I felt should play an integral part in the design process. Consequently, in my role as landscape architect, I felt disempowered and distanced from the very information I needed to understand the context of my work.

While still working in the context of these tensions almost two years later, a visit to a Norwegian architecture exhibition in Oslo captured my imagination. The exhibition Ung Norsk Arkitektur 2013 or Young Norwegian Architecture 2013, focused on the participatory design processes of Norwegian landscape architects and architects,
showcasing the wide-ranging participatory and experimental approaches to public space design. These innovative projects were unique and in dialogue with their local contexts, highlighting how short-term projects were integral to long term planning. They addressed the physical outcome but importantly also the social processes of their development.

Inspired by my time away, after returning home I embedded myself more fully within my wider Christchurch community, joining the board of Greening the Rubble Charitable Trust, an experimental initiative, which since the earthquakes has worked alongside the City Council and Christchurch communities to find meaningful ways to involve people in re-creating the city. Through involving local citizens in the design and construction of temporary green spaces, the work of the organisation has grounded my thinking over the past four years of this thesis, as I have experienced first hand the creativity and generosity of the public in ways that were difficult to access in professional practice prior to the earthquakes. One of the key features of this work has been the freedom to experiment with people in the design and construction of public space in the city, knowing that failure provides opportunities for further learning.

It is therefore important to note that my personal and professional background have influenced the shape of this thesis so that I am not entirely absent in the storyline. My parents met as architectural cadets in the Ministry of Works in Christchurch so that I was fortunate to grow up in a family where design was a focus of daily life and an influence on my plans to study landscape architecture. As a practicing landscape architect, my activities have been shaped by the normative values of the profession, including the contractual obligations that often shape power differentials between professions and the public. While these are important issues that affect the designer’s relationship with the public, they are not something I cover in this thesis. However I want to acknowledge that these values will have influenced my own perspective in this research and will no doubt create certain limitations and ‘blind spots’. Nevertheless, this background means I have been able to experience a ‘situated’ understanding of how tensions in decision-making play out in the ‘real world’, which is something I believe has strengthened the course of my research. My hope is that by teasing out some of the critical aspects of design expertise relative to
public participation, not only can I be more effective and sensitive in my own practice as a landscape architect, but that the findings from this research will encourage others to gain confidence in this respect too. I believe it holds promise for improving so much of the bland, uninteresting and generic treatment of our urban spaces.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank my supervisors Professor Simon Swaffield and Associate Professor Emma Stewart. I could not have hoped for a better combination of skills and personalities to guide my research. From my first conversations with Simon in shaping the research questions to the submission of the thesis, I have been deeply grateful to have had the benefit of his wisdom, clarity and experience in guiding me throughout. I have been equally fortunate that Emma agreed to be my co-supervisor, and I have appreciated her valuable insights, support and kindness throughout the past three years.

I am grateful to Lincoln University for the Doctoral Scholarship to carry out this research and for additional funding received through the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women and The Royal Society Te Apārangi.

My sincere thanks also to the participants I interviewed for this study who were open to sharing their thoughts and experiences for this research. I feel privileged to have heard their stories first hand and have been inspired by the creativity and compassion of designers and community members alike.

I would also like to thank the staff and students from the School of Landscape Architecture at Lincoln University, staff at the Lincoln University Library and the Landscape Section at the University of Copenhagen, for their help along the way. In addition, the 2016 European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools Conference was a valuable opportunity to help focus aspects of my research, and I am grateful to the Conference and PhD colloquium participants for their feedback on my preliminary results.

The team at Greening the Rubble have been a major source of encouragement and inspiration, as have the wider group of creative and resourceful people involved in the many community-led initiatives in Ōtautahi since the earthquakes.

Completing this work would have been all the more difficult were it not for the support of my good friends Shelley Egoz and Sia Kirknæs who introduced me to many interesting people and projects in Scandinavia and helped me get closer to the
practical interactions between people and place. I am also grateful to my friends Anne Wagner and Anne Cunningham for their careful reading of my drafts and thought-provoking discussions which helped me with my thinking. I’m excited about our complementary research interests and the potential for future collaborations.

Thank you to my parents, Rosalie and Graeme Hoddinott who having practiced in architecture themselves have expressed an enthusiastic interest in my studies. I am much richer for our conversations about design in the city and their unconditional support in all parts of my life. Daily conversations with my son Josh over the past year, and my daughter Emily’s dedication to her own path of study have meant a great deal of encouragement from my children. My grandson Flynn has brought colour to my life during the most intense times of this thesis. And finally, heartfelt thanks to my partner Jonathan who has inspired me no end with his own design practice and been the most supportive, generous and understanding partner I could hope for while carrying out this research.
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All images and diagrams are by Wendy Hoddinott unless otherwise stated in the caption.
GLOSSARY

Māori terms (Mahaanui Iwi Management Plan, 2013; Māori Dictionary, 2018)

Hapū                  Sub-tribe
Iwi                    Tribe
Kaitiakitanga        Guardianship
Kaumātua              Elderly, person of status
Mana whenua           Authority
Ngāi Tahu             South Island tribal group
Ōhinehou              Lyttelton
Ōhinehouroko          Māori name given to Albion Square
Ōtautahi              Christchurch
Parihaka              Small historic Taranaki coastal settlement
Pātiki                Flounder
Pātikitiki            Pattern used on tuku tuku panels
Rāpaki                Māori settlement in Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour
Rūnanga               Iwi authority, council
Tangata whenua       Local, indigenous people
Te Ahu Pātiki        Mt Herbert, highest peak on Banks Peninsula
Tikanga               Correct procedure, customary protocol
Tuku tuku panels      Ornamental latticework
Waharoa               Gateway, main entranceway
Waka                  Canoe
Whakaraupō            Lyttelton Harbour

Abbreviations

CCC                  Christchurch City Council
CERA                Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority
CCDU                Christchurch Central Development Unit
CCRP                Christchurch Central Recovery Plan
ECLAS              European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools
Ecan               Environment Canterbury
FESTA              Festival of Transitional Architecture
LGA               Local Government Act
LTCP               Long Term Council Plan
NZILA             New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects
RMA               Resource Management Act
SCIRT            Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team
UDS               Urban Design Strategy
“Eventually everything connects – people, ideas, objects, etc, ... the quality of the connections is the key to quality per se”.

- Charles Eames (Koenig, 2005, inside cover)

Well-designed public places are vital to liveable cities (Goldhagen, 2017). Liveable cities contain “attractive public spaces [with] walkable, mixed use, higher density neighbourhoods that support a range of green infrastructure and [public] transport. [They also accommodate] affordable housing, vibrant, exciting, sociable, human-scaled pedestrian experiences” (Ooi & Yuen, 2010, p. 3). Public places set the tone of a city, provide the city with character, and as the spaces where life takes place, they offer a “constantly changing sequence of experiences [in which] people are the generators” (Halprin, 1963, p. 7). Liveable cities therefore require empowered communities, so that although we may rarely think about why a public place is designed the way it is, the qualities of the built environment profoundly affect the way we think, feel and act, as well as our sense of belonging in a particular place (Casey, 1993; Lynch, 1960, 1981; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). Skillfully designed places convey deeper messages about our self-identity in the city as well as our perceptions of others (ibid). As highly complex environments, public places need to accommodate a wide range of values while engaging their communities in their design and development (Gehl, 2010, 2011; Gehl, Gemzøe, Kirknæs, & Søndergaard, 2006; The Danish Government, 2014; UN-Habitat, 2016b).

Design & Public Participation

Design and decision-making processes for public space therefore need to address both situational complexity and public participation. However working through complexity to create a well-designed response is one of the less well understood
aspects of creating quality public places. Masiulanis (2017, p. 4) argued that well
designed public spaces are “rich and interesting [as well as] easy to interpret and
navigate [yet] simplicity in design is surely one of the most difficult of all aspects to
achieve”. Furthermore, while we understand a lot about the importance of public
participation in the design of public space, relatively little research has been carried
out on the application of the landscape architect’s design expertise in this context
(Hare & Nielson, 2003; Roe & Rowe, 2007). Skilled designers can face tensions with
public involvement procedures (Thompson, 2000), which focus on appropriate
process and inclusion while less attention is paid to well resolved and “elegant”
outcomes. This is surprising given that landscape architects are interested in the
relationship between people and place and in generating new possibilities for
transforming communities through design. Elegance is a concept that has not been
well articulated in relation to public participation and is a notion I will return to later
in the thesis in order to answer the research questions.

The creation of well designed public spaces and the relationship between design
expertise and public participation is therefore an important matter for the discipline
of landscape architecture (Diedrich, Bridger, Hendriks, & Moll, 2015; Hester, 2012;
Hirsch, 2014). This thesis also builds on studies of human learning in decision-making
(Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Flyvbjerg, 2001), design expertise research in the allied
fields of architecture, urban planning and product design (Dorst, 2011; Lawson &
Dorst, 2009; Plowright, 2014; Rowe, 1987; Schön, 1983; Till, 2005) and participation
in planning (Forester, 1985, 1997; Healey, 1996). It prompts questions of how the
expert relationship between landscape architects and the public is expressed in the
design of complex public spaces and how might it be improved?

**Christchurch post-earthquake**

This question was brought into sharp relief during the design and reconstruction of
the city of Christchurch, New Zealand following the 2010-2011 earthquakes in
Canterbury. Christchurch is a rich context in which to look more closely into the
landscape architect’s design expertise and the relationship with public participation,
particularly given that over the past seven years, Christchurch has been a setting of enormous design activity and opportunity (Figure 1).

![Re:Start Mall, Christchurch, October 2011.](image)

During post-earthquake recovery, the widely expressed vision for Christchurch has been one of innovation and creativity, with a wealth of optimism and enthusiasm generated (Killick, 2011; North, 2011; Sachdeva, 2011; van der Lingen, 2011). Both central and local government ambitions from the outset have been to rebuild Christchurch as the “best small city in the world” (Christchurch Central Development Unit (CCDU), 2012; Christchurch City Council, 2011a; Conway, 2012). However, the scale of change within Christchurch’s urban environment has also highlighted tensions between a desire for ‘world class’ outcomes and the need for transparent and inclusive participatory design processes of recovery and regeneration. The earthquakes had prompted the city to become much more open to new ideas and ways of doing things, including the experimental nature of the community-led transitional movement (for example, Re:Start Mall, Greening the Rubble, Gap Filler and the Festival of Transitional Architecture). Yet many communities have felt left out of formal processes (Dalziel, 2015). Regular articles have appeared in the
Christchurch Press over the past seven years showing disillusionment with the emerging process (Ainsworth, 2015; Bowron, 2015; Feeney, 2017; McChrone, 2014, 2016; McDonald, 2016, 2018; Moore, 2017; Stylianou, 2015; Stylianou & Mitchell, 2016; Truebridge, 2016, 2018; Van Beynen, 2011).

Almost five years after the earthquakes, Christchurch Mayor, Lianne Dalziel, expressed her concern through an article published in The Press. She asked:

“how do we re-engage a community that feels locked out of decision-making? People want to be involved and see the process so far as being a missed opportunity... knowledge embedded in the community is truly extraordinary and must be fed into the recovery planning and regeneration of the city as a whole” (Dalziel, 2015, p. A17).

Alongside the dissatisfaction with the nature of public involvement, many others in Christchurch have noted their disappointment in the quality of design outcomes, as another article noted in The Press later that year:

“What happened to Christchurch’s post-quake creative optimism? [...] The disappointment being expressed is that Christchurch was promised the extraordinary and yet is being delivered the ordinary in its recovery” (McChrone, 2015).

These experiences are clearly important to Christchurch citizens, but also raise questions as to how specific the tensions are between design and participation. Is this a general problem for urban design, a New Zealand phenomenon, or is it something that has occurred as a result of the earthquakes?

An interesting feature of the Christchurch re-build was the influence of Danish designers, Gehl Architects, an internationally recognised urban research and design company from Copenhagen, who before the earthquakes were strongly connected with Christchurch. Their work in the city in 2009 towards the publication Christchurch 2009: public space, public life (Gehl Architects, 2010) and subsequent involvement post-earthquake in the city-wide engagement exercise Share an Idea, was influential in developing the initial framework and urban design principles for the Christchurch City Council’s draft Central City Plan (CCP) post-earthquakes. Gehl Architects are one of the most well-known collaborative public space practitioners.
Chapter 1: Introduction

internationally for their focus on public life in cities and for putting the “human dimension” first through people-oriented design (Gehl & Svarre, 2013, p. 61).

During a visit to Denmark towards the end of 2016, I was introduced to projects that adopted a collective approach to the design of public space. With an emphasis on co-design, these experimental initiatives offered ways of talking about and re-imagining public places in the city that helped citizens to actively participate in its development as co-creators in the process (Munthe-Kass, 2015). Having looked at the tensions in Christchurch and the experiences of the Danish designers in both Christchurch and Copenhagen, I had further questions as to whether the approaches of landscape architects were likely to be consistent across the different settings. In order to find out, my research strategy incorporated ways in which I could make this comparison; to gain a better understanding of what might be similar and different between the two contexts and hence draw inferences about the broader significance of the Christchurch experience.

Research questions, objectives & research strategy

This thesis therefore asks three questions about the nature of the landscape architect’s design expertise in the design of public space.

1. How is the landscape architect’s design expertise expressed as part of the public participation process?

2. What are the key factors that lead to an effective, design based participation process; and

3. How does quality in the participatory process relate to the quality of design outcomes?

The research objectives are first, to develop a theoretical understanding of different decision-making processes in landscape architecture and their relationship with modes of public participation in participatory design processes; second, to use this
understanding to determine the different types of reasoning behind the decision-making process carried out; third, to examine the interactions of these different modes of decision-making when applied to a Christchurch case study; and fourth, to reveal the practical, professional and theoretical implications of the case study results.

The research strategy is interpretive and uses a critical case study design, which in turn guides the logic of the investigation; that is, the methods and techniques for data collection and the way in which data is analysed (Yin, 2014). The case study centres on Albion Square in Lyttelton, one of the first public space projects to be designed and implemented post earthquakes. The case study design uses multiple sources of evidence from the participatory design process for the Square and triangulates data through three different lenses; design, community and institution. I have also critically examined the theory relative to design, collaborative planning, institutions as bodies of practice and design outcomes, applying insights from this literature to the findings of two stages of key informant interviews. The first was carried out as part of a comparative study between New Zealand and Northern European designers as context for the case study. The second set of interviews were with participants involved in the design and engagement process of Albion Square. The findings of this research converge in the development of a theoretical framework, which in various stages evolves and weaves through the narrative of thesis.

**Thesis outline**

**Chapter two** examines four broad areas of theory in order to clarify the research questions; design expertise, public participation, institutions as bodies of practice and design outcomes in the planning and design of public space. A theoretical framework is developed from which to analyse the relationship between design expertise and participation.
**Chapter three** explains the case based methodology and interpretive approach of the research strategy. I explain the multiple methods involved, which include semi-structured interviews, documentary evidence and participant observation.

**Chapter four** provides context to the Albion Square case study, using interviews with design and participation experts in New Zealand and Northern Europe. The comparative group of designers in Northern Europe provided a comparative perspective, enabling me to reflect on the distinctiveness of the New Zealand responses.

**Chapters five, six and seven** relate to the case study. **Chapter five** describes the historic and political context of Christchurch as it relates to design expertise and public participation in landscape architecture. **Chapter six** gives a brief physical, social and historic overview of Lyttelton township, including the devastating impact of the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010 and 2011. **Chapter seven** outlines the results of the case study, starting with a timeline which divides the case study into four phases. These phases are considered through three perspectives, design, institution and community. At the end of the chapter, the outcome of the Albion Square case study is located on the theoretical framework, first introduced in Chapter Two.

**Chapter eight** synthesises and discusses theory and empirical data from the preceding chapters. I review the research questions, the objectives of the study and provide a summary of the research findings. Four themes are used to explain how I arrived at these conclusions as a result of analysing the data. The concept of elegance is used as a way to resolve the tensions between different forms of decision-making in public space design. The theoretical framing used in Chapters Two and Seven is used once more to illustrate the potential for design based participation processes in New Zealand and several implications are drawn from the findings.
This chapter outlines four broad areas of theory relevant to the research investigation: design expertise, public participation, institutions as bodies of practice, and design outcomes in the planning and design of public space. I highlight key features of each theoretical field, how they interact and identify some of the relationships that emerge through these interactions, providing context for the research questions and case study. I have aligned design expertise with the concept of elegance, examining the specific reasoning processes required for dealing with complex problems. A theoretical framework is introduced in the first section of the chapter and is built on in subsequent sections to help clarify the relationship between the designer’s decision-making processes and public involvement in public space design.

**Expertise**

Landscape architects are professional designers, offering a distinctive body of expertise that includes the design of public space. The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1983) describes the professional as “one [who] professes to be skilled in and to follow, a vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning is used in the application to the affairs of others, or in the practice of an art founded upon it”. Pitman (2012, p. 131) goes further to suggest that a particular feature of the professions is the “use of a body of knowledge that is both characteristic of the group and differentiates it from others”. Professional expertise therefore requires special training or skill, which involves higher levels of education or practical experience.
Research into the nature of expertise reveals that the expert makes decisions differently to someone in the early stages of skill development, who will typically follow an analytical, multi-step process of making specific choices by separating the problem into manageable parts (Flyvbjerg, 2001). The expert by contrast:

“responds to a specific situation intuitively and performs the appropriate action straightaway. There is no problem solving and reasoning that can be distinguished at this level of working” (Dreyfus cited in Cross, 2011, p. 142).

The difference between routine problem solving and professional expertise is therefore the direct application of human intuition to a situation based on accumulated knowledge. At its heart, expertise is the expression of experience rather than an explicit, multi-step process of choices based on rules. To illustrate this, Hubert Dreyfus (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986) related the expert’s decision-making process to six phases of development in human learning (Flyvbjerg, 2001). He observed that as a person develops and then masters a specific skill, their decision-making process moves through these six levels of learning from novice to expert and then to ‘visionary’ (Cross, 2011) (Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Six phases of human learning in decision-making (text from Lawson and Dorst, 2009, p. 101).](image-url)
At the beginning of the learning phase, the novice follows rules and procedures, which they can then apply to all similar situations (Flyvbjerg, 2001). While rules are helpful to gain initial experience, as the number of rules increase, so the rules hinder the novice from advancing to address complex problems with the same approach. At some point in decision-making processes that address complex, context-dependent problems (which are typical of design), the nature of the problem means that detached, rule-based decisions are insufficient to satisfactorily resolve the issues (ibid), and “involvement and reflection come in to change the problem solving process” (Lawson & Dorst, 2009, p. 102).

The expert’s process therefore differs from the explicit processes and analytical thinking that characterise lower levels of learning. To resolve the complex problem effectively, experts draw not only on their previous knowledge and training to inform their decision-making, but also upon the countless practical experiences that have influenced their practice. Their approach is typically “intuitive, holistic, and synchronic [and leads to] a given situation releas[ing] a picture of problem, goal, plan, decision and action in one instant” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 21). Furthermore, there is a significant difference between the slower, analytical processes of decision-making and the “interpretation and judgments” of expertise (ibid). The expert may still adopt rule-based processes, yet they are no longer the most important basis for decision-making. Instead the expert determines the appropriate values relative to the context. In other words, complex, context-dependent problems such as public space design require a more sophisticated approach. Flyvbjerg argued that:

“what is needed in order to transcend the insufficient rational perspective [of rule-based decisions], is explicit integration of those properties characteristic of the higher levels in the learning process which can supplement and take over from analysis and rationality, These properties include context, judgment, practice, trial and error, experience, common sense, intuition, and bodily sensation (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 23).

These characteristics are core to the nature of professional design knowledge and are applied through *phronesis* or practical wisdom (Kinsella & Pitman, 2012a). The concept of *phronesis* is an ancient Greek term defined by Aristotle, referring to an intellectual virtue of being able to discern or act in an ethical way (ibid). “It involves
deliberation that is based on values, concerned with practical judgment and informed by reflection. It is pragmatic, variable, context-dependent and oriented toward action” (ibid., p. 2). Kemmis (2012, p. 148) has noted the experiential nature of *Phronensis*, citing the types of knowledge it brings to an encounter:

“Professional practice knowledge involves the knowledge that comes to life in the doing of the practice, the craft of the practice, and is embodied in the relationship of the practitioner to the practice and to others involved in and affected by the practice, that is, a kind of personal knowledge”.

Practical wisdom develops through experience rather than through being taught and enables the “capacity to approach the unavoidable uncertainties of practice in a thoughtful and reflective way” (ibid). As the Dreyfus model illustrates, the shift from competence to expertise involves acting on multiple values, rather than being invested in one mode of reasoning only and involves a shift from rules to practical wisdom as part of expertise. The upper and lower parts of Figure 2 therefore represent different modes of action and knowledge, where each has their proper context for application.

One of the implications of these differences is that the professional expert recognises the significance of the context itself, given that specific rules do not necessarily apply to all situations. Expertise has therefore been found to deal better with “context dependent” problems, where the “determination [of an action] is “situationally defined” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 43). In other words the expert must connect the relationships between “contexts, […] actions and interpretations” (ibid) and understand that the effective resolution of complex problems can’t be reduced to a defined process or set of rules.

The range of possibilities in decision-making can therefore be considered across a spectrum from basic, competent analytical thinking at one end to visionary expertise at the other. This creates one theoretical dimension of the thesis. The following section contrasts these two modes of decision-making as they are expressed in landscape architecture and the design of public space.
Decision-making in landscape architecture

Analytical or rule based thinking that is typically used by competent but less experienced decision makers is a multi-step approach of making explicit choices, based on various facts and assumptions. This contrasts with an expert approach to decision-making, which subsumes analysis with the intuitive and practical experiences of the expert in order to deal with the complexities of a situation. These different modes of decision-making translate into design process in different ways. Where design through analysis involves an in-depth examination of a situation by separating the whole into its parts, and responding logically according to rules and principles, design expertise is more about synthesis and a particular type of decision-making known as abductive thinking. In the next section I explain and contrast these two modes of design decision-making.

Design as competent analytical thinking

Models of decision-making processes in professional landscape architecture based upon logical problem solving have typically been described as Survey-Analysis-Design (SAD) (Turner, 1996). Thompson (2000) noted that this logical progression from description (survey) to analysis to design was evident in the earliest processes of landscape architects such as Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown and Humphrey Repton. In particular SAD has been associated with the work of Landscape Architect Patrick Geddes who advocated for ‘survey before plan’ (Thompson, 2000, p. 99). In design education Sasaki (1950) formalised the process as Research-Analysis-Synthesis and through his book Design with Nature, Landscape Architect Ian McHarg (1969) proposed that a step by step process using sieve or suitability analyses provided a way to determine the best design outcome for a place. Framed through an ecological lens, and separating a site into its parts by layering various maps, McHarg argued that the process:

“provided a method whereby the values employed were explicit, where the selection method was explicit – where any man, assembling the same evidence, would come to the same conclusion” (McHarg, 1971, cited in Turner, 1996, p. 61).
With the emphasis on transparency, the proponents of analytical, rule-based processes assumed that decision-making could be translated across various contexts and guarantee a scientifically reliable outcome. The detailed analysis applied to public space design during the twentieth century was also applied to urban planning with a particular focus upon functional issues of use and circulation (Boyer, 1983; Friedmann, 1987; Hall, 1980). As Treib (1995, p. 48) explained of McHarg’s methods, “[i]t insinuated that if the process were correct, the form would be good, almost as if an aesthetic automatically resulted from objective study”. However the outcomes of public space design during this time highlighted the fundamental flaws in design activity when conceptualised primarily as a logical problem solving processes (Plowright, 2014).

Critics have identified the limitations of SAD given that mechanistic and linear processes are unable to deal with the ‘situatedness’ of problems (Turner, 1996). Similar critique was articulated through the work of various mid 20th century urbanists as they demonstrated the significance of the everyday, human activity of public places that was largely being overlooked in the rule-based process of the period. In his book The Image of the City Landscape Architect Kevin Lynch (1960) related aesthetics to cognition, revealing how people navigate and orient themselves through complex environments by developing an internal ‘cognitive map’ of a city’s organisation. Lynch’s studies emphasised the “irreducible nature of human and nonhuman interaction with (in) space” (ibid, p. 10) and the importance of designer’s ability to embrace complexity so that the “setting [could be] sufficiently flexible for [people] to reshape it to their requirements” (Lynch, 1981, p. 165).

William H Whyte also stressed the significance of the human experience of urban places and criticised the technocratic nature of urban renewal projects, observing that, “[t]he institutional approach is dominant, and unless the assumptions embalmed in it are re-examined the city is going to be turned into a gigantic bore” (Whyte, 1958, p. 25). Whyte’s research group, The Street Life Project, used empirical studies to determine the specific design elements that attracted or repelled passers by such as sociable seating, sun, trees, water and absence of wind (Whyte, 2001).
Whyte’s work was followed by Jane Jacobs (1961) who articulated an intimate and grounded perspective of community social interactions in public space and stressed the connections between the experience of place and the planning of cities. Jacob’s empirical research demonstrated how social interactions and everyday activity should be at the heart of public space design (Goldhagen, 2017), highlighting the nuances and intimacies of context. She argued that, “[y]ou’ve got to get out and walk. Walk and you will see that many of the assumptions on which the [modernist] projects depend are visibly wrong (Jacobs, 1958, p. 159).

Danish Architect Jan Gehl in turn built upon the work of Whyte and Jacobs, recognising the dramatic limitations of analytical models where function dominated at the expense of people-oriented design (Gehl, 2010, p. x). Gehl’s planning for public spaces considered the “human dimension” first, and like Whyte, he used direct observation to understand and prioritise public life and space before built form in urban developments. Gehl introduced specific design concepts as ‘soft edges’, ‘walkability’, ‘active ground floor spaces’ and ‘variability’, documenting how these aspects contribute to life in public places (Gehl, 2010).

These contributions emphasised how rule based analysis dominated public space design in the 1960s and failed to address the complexities of public life in cities. As Landscape Architect James Corner (1991, p. 159) explained, “technocratic thinking has predominated Western culture for more than two centuries. The emphasis on objective and pragmatic reasoning has [therefore] promoted a view of life that is more about the efficiency of means and ends, methods and techniques over questions of existence and being”. Furthermore, with little attention given to the way in which design data was collected and manipulated, as well as the controlled way in which it was brought into the planning context (Healey, 1996), there was an over-emphasis upon “facts, characteristics and rules” without reference to the social situations in which design problems occur (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 11). The focus on design as a logical, problem solving process has therefore disregarded the less obvious but equally important values that can be embraced through a different kind of decision-making.
Design thinking as expertise

The upper part of the Dreyfus’ model of expertise offers insight into a sophisticated mode of design, better suited to the complexity of public space. Design thinking is a term that has been used to describe the processes by which expert designers tackle complexity (Rowe, 1987). Dorst (2011) observed that at its heart, design thinking is different to formal deductive logic in that it follows an abductive process, not only considering an outcome in terms of its ‘value’ rather than a ‘result’ but also as a way to consider ‘possibilities’ (abductive) rather than following ‘rules’ (deductive). Given that designers must consider what ‘may’ be possible to achieve through a proposal or conjecture, they require tools by which they can “shift and transfer thought between the required purpose or function of some activity, and the appropriate forms for an object to satisfy that purpose” (Cross, 2011, p. 10).

Dorst (2011, p. 523) explained that abductive reasoning is fundamental to the generation of creative ideas and requires the designer to determine ‘what’ to create while there is “no known or chosen ‘working principle’ that [...] leads to the aspired value”. The designer must therefore establish a ‘frame’, which serves as the ‘working principle’ but at the same time, establish a ‘thing’, which they can test in parallel (Figure 3). The need for designers to “establish the identity of two ‘unknowns’ in the equation, leads to design practices that are quite different from conventional problem solving” (ibid, p. 524).

\[
\text{WHAT (thing) + HOW (working principle) = VALUE (aspired)}
\]

Figure 3: Abductive thinking process (Dorst, 2011, p. 523)

A common feature of innovative design thinking is the ability to synthesise disparate variables, often described as a “sudden illumination (within a prepared mind)” Cross (2011, p. 253). In such situations, problems are resolved in what appears as a ‘flash of insight’ referring to a sudden revelation or clarity to a problem that until then had
been unsolvable. Yet as Architect Charles Eames famously explained, this apparent genius is more accurately described as a “thirty year flash of insight”, the result of the knowledge and expertise built over many years of thought, inspiration, critical reflection and previous project work that has influenced the designer (Lawson & Dorst, 2009). The expert designer directly applies the knowledge from previous experiences to reframe a situation in a novel context. “Learning design does not [therefore] just involve skill acquisition” (ibid, p. 100), it includes the ability to recognise a situation and the precedents that may also prove helpful, without going through the rule bound stages of analysis (Rowe, 1987).

Schön (1987) described the designer’s expertise as a repository of ideas outside the immediate context of a design project. The designer comes to the project with a “repertoire of examples, images, understandings and actions. His repertoire ranges across the design domains [and] includes sites he has seen, buildings he has encountered and solutions he has devised” (ibid, pp. 66-67) (italics original). The process is therefore experiential and, occurring at a range of scales is not only applied within the ‘project’, but also across ‘practice’, ‘process’ and ‘profession’ (Lawson & Dorst, 2009). Rowe (1987) suggests that the range of experiences provides two kinds of knowledge for the designer to draw on, a “knowing-how” associated with understanding the processes required and a “knowing-that” which understands the situations in which the process should be applied. Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 15) therefore argued that true expertise involves “bodily involvement, speed, and an intimate knowledge of concrete cases in the form of good examples”. What is also significant however, is a “knowing within” which Shotter (1993) has argued is a “developmental’ knowledge that adjusts to and grows out of the social-cultural surroundings in which it is situated” (cited in Till, 2005, p. 7).

Lawson and Dorst, (2009, p. 186) have reported that some of the most classic and enduring design work has been a result of experts “transfer[ing] an idea from one context to another in such a way that it then seems obvious and easy”. Metaphors for example, “provide a new way to understand that which we all ready know [and to reconstitute] … new domains of perception (Brown 1997, p. 98 cited in Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006, p. 179). ‘Reframing’ in design, where problem and
solution are explored together is therefore fundamental to design expertise (Plowright, 2014). The expert design process can be considered a transformative one in that the designer sets up a new frame or context from which to contemplate the problem, outside the context from which the problem originated (Dorst, 2011).

Experienced designers in effect “construct methods from frameworks that are most aligned with the particular needs of the situation they are addressing” (Plowright, 2014, p. 66). Furthermore, expert designers recognise that problems and solutions are often closely connected and that ‘solutions’ alone do not always provide clear-cut answers to ‘problems’ (Cross, 2011). For example Cross (2011, p. 11) suggested that the value of emergent features of a design process evolve as the designer draws tentative relationships between different aspects of a problem so that a leap to a “solution concept” might also be attached to the [...] developing problem-concept”. The perceptual quality of design thinking, whereby the designer tests the “tentative solution concept” by matching it with the “developing problem concept” may therefore end up resulting in “something that not only the client, but also the designer ‘never dreamed he wanted’ ” (Cross, 2011, p. 10).

While it is important to note that design processes rarely fall at precisely one end of the spectrum or the other, the distinction between these modes of decision-making is clear. In detailed analysis, explicit and deductive reasoning is the driver of the design process with rules followed irrespective of context. With design expertise, analysis supports the intuitive process in its application to the particular context (Figure 4).
This discussion returns to the question raised by Lynch, Whyte, Jacobs and Gehl, of how the public needs as ‘client’ and the social dimensions of design could be more effectively incorporated into the expert process. The following section outlines some of the key theories of public participation and various modes of public participation in planning and design.

**Public participation**

This section focuses on the quality of public involvement in participatory design processes and considers a range of modes available relative to decision-making in planning and design. The definition of participation in the wider context of this thesis
is set within the description of Landscape Architect Alison Hirsch’s (2014, p. 174) explanation as it relates to public space. Participation means to:

“integrate the interests, histories, and needs of marginalized citizens; to stimulate aesthetic engagement; and/or to activate citizens’ direct involvement in the development and life of renewed city spaces”.

The concept of participation in design and planning first emerged during the 1970s as political issues over urban renewal from the 1960s began to influence professional practice (Thompson, 2000). Landscape architects have since been involved in many public participation exercises and the range of participation methods has grown steadily to include charettes, workshops, public meetings and focus groups, with varying degrees of involvement from the public (ibid, 2000). While methods of participation vary, public involvement is typically carried out over an extended timeframe and includes “direct […] involvement in decision-making processes whereby people share in social decisions that determine the quality and direction of their lives” (Sanoff, 2000, p. 10). Participation is therefore a collaborative endeavour, which not only helps build the capacity of the public to actively take part in decision-making but also helps decision makers obtain a more complete picture of the community and their preferences (ibid).

Building the capacity of a community through participation is often associated with ‘empowerment’, indicating that best practice participation should engage people in activities that promote responsibility and contribution (Davidoff, 1965; Hester, 1989, 2012). Meaningful participation is highlighted in the International Association for Participation’s (IAP) set of core values, where decision makers are encouraged to “seek input from people in designing how they participate, by providing participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way”. Meaningful participation enables citizens to discover a sense of local autonomy, builds community identity and encourages original initiatives and solutions (Drage, 2002a). It also provides independence to local communities so that decisions are more likely to be accepted by the public as well as being less subject to challenge (Thompson, 2000).
However the realities of public involvement have often led to negative attitudes towards participation, including the belief that participation is “time consuming, inefficient, irrational and not very productive (Langton, 1978, p. 113). Furthermore, critics have observed that the expert professional often remains distanced and inaccessible from the citizen’s perspective, with perceptions that expert’s processes and “esoteric bodies of knowledge” are unavailable to the public (Hughes & Hughes, 2013, p. 30). As a result, participation has often been ‘applied’ superficially, giving the appearance of inclusion, yet in effect “distanced from the real processes of spatial production” (Till, 2005, p. 1). The following section therefore outlines several theories of public participation, which illustrate different modes and degrees of public involvement in planning and design.

Theories of participation

One of the most well known typologies of participation is that of Sherry Arnstein (1969) who defined a normative spectrum of participation ranging from ‘manipulation’ at the lower end of the scale to ‘citizen control’ at the top (Figure 5). Arnstein’s (1969) model responded to inadequacies of participatory programmes of the 1960s and “broadened the use of the term ‘participation’ to embrace consultative situations in which participants had limited decision-making responsibility” (Luck, 2007, p. 218). However, while Arnstein’s model has been widely applied in planning and forms the basis for the current International Participation Standards for Community Engagement (Table 1) it has also been criticised for its failure to promote meaningful public engagement, given that even when communities are engaged, the real purpose is often to legitimise an event and public suggestions can remain ignored (ibid).
Chapter 2: Theory – Design expertise, public participation, institutions and design outcomes

Figure 5: Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein 1969, p. 217).

IAP2’S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public’s role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL</th>
<th>INFORM</th>
<th>CONSULT</th>
<th>INVOLVE</th>
<th>COLLABORATE</th>
<th>EMPOWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC</td>
<td>We will keep you informed.</td>
<td>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</td>
<td>We will implement what you decide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: International Association for Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Engagement (IAP2 Federation, 2017).
Arnstein’s model highlights that participation is about power and control (Cornwall, 2008) and as Pretty (1995) identified it considers participation in terms of those on the “receiving end” rather than those who select the participatory approach Cornwall (2008, p. 270). Pretty (1995) noted that it is also the motivations of those who select the style of participation that are influential in shaping the outcome (italics original). For example, as Cornwall (2008) explained, although the public may initiate a project, the State may facilitate the process with the motivation to further neo-liberal goals. While Arnstein’s ladder is used extensively around the world to assess the extent or type of participation, there is doubt as to the value of its hierarchical structure as it is applied to specific projects (Roe, 2007).

As Luck (2007, p. 219) concluded, “the appropriateness of participatory practice is not vested in a method or role, but in the context of a situation”. So while it is important to acknowledge the disparities of power and knowledge, a more sophisticated mode of participation would “work with those imbalances in a way that transforms the expectations and futures of the participants” (Till 2005, p. 4). Arnstein’s model cannot therefore be seen as a recipe for improved participation, as the motivations and rationales behind different kinds of decision-making in participation remain obscured.

**Representative participation**

How decisions are made in participatory design processes are related to debates in theories of representation. They involve how much say government officials have in decision-making when “involving many people and groups and operating in the complex ways of large-scale social arrangements” (Pitkin 1967, cited in (Forgie, 2002). Drage (2002b) has explained that political representation stems from the idea that local government can be relatively autonomous from central government, while providing a range of services, the ability to raise taxes and to elect representatives to oversee the work of full time officials. This means that while elected representatives must follow procedural and legal frameworks, they are responsible for the way in which they carry out their work so that differences in representative approach are more to do with how rather than what decisions are made. Discussion of theories of
representation as a form of public involvement therefore “revolve around questions of whether representative government knows better than the people and so decides for them; whether the people instruct a government on what to do and how to behave; and whether a government is representative of the people in its characteristics and features” (Drage, 2002, p. 67).

As Cheyne and Comrie (2002, pp. 161-162) have explained, local government has limited capacity to deal with ‘wicked’ or complex problems, with an increasingly educated and well informed public, because methods that involve ‘aggregating’ individual citizen preferences, either by “acting according to their constituents’ wishes or by reflecting on their constituents’ wishes and then forming an opinion” are deficient and inadequate. In addition, participatory theorists have argued that representative forms of participation and decision-making by those in positions of power, remove people from the “democratic rights they have as citizens and negates the fact that ordinary people are experts in the things that affect them” (Forgie, 2002, p. 231). These authors note the deficiencies of “mass participation” based on instrumental reasoning and contrast them with the communicative activities of deliberative and developmental approaches where “citizens’ advisory panels, focus groups and community planning tools” tend to create “a sense of belonging, civic responsibility and better political knowledge and increased participation by citizens’ (Cheyne and Comrie, 2002, p. 162). They maintain that these more “expressive” mechanisms can help circumvent doubts about the true representativeness of public participation (ibid).

**Collaborative planning and design**

Since the 1970s, collaborative planning literature has emphasised the ways that dialogue and discourse can enrich decision-making in spatial settings. Patsy Healey (1996, p. 253) argued that, “interactive perspectives [...] recognise that “strategies and policies are not the outcome of objective technical processes, but are actively produced in social contexts”. Healey explained that how people think about themselves, their interests and values emerge through their relationships with
others so that “an inclusionary discussion [...] means one which draws upon the knowledge and understandings, the values and capacities, of the relational webs ‘represented’ within any political community” (ibid, p. 220).

American planner Paul Davidoff (1965), was one of the first to promote collaborative planning, arguing for a radical shift in the way citizens were involved in the planning and design process. Davidoff believed that given the diverse needs of different groups in society, particularly marginalised and impoverished communities, citizens should be empowered to create their own plans at the neighbourhood level, with assistance from professional planners in an advocacy role (ibid). Davidoff worked to expose the values of both citizens and planners, arguing that, “different groups in society have different needs which would result in fundamentally different plans if [those needs] were recognized” (ibid, p. 421). Collaborative theories have therefore demonstrated that knowledge is not just “discovered by scientific inquiry, but actively constituted through social, interactive processes” (Healey, 1997, p. 29). As Webber (1978, cited in Healey, 1997, p. 252) observed, “values are located in people’s consciousness, not floating around in the ether to be discovered by objective science. Some way of bringing people into policy processes needs to be found”.

Collaborative planning draws on ‘communicative rationality’, a mode of reasoning referring to the mutual understandings possible through interactive and discursive processes (Healey, 1997). Habermas’ (1984, 1987, 1993) critical theory emphasised that through the study of language it was possible to identify how people “validate” their decisions in practical situations. Habermas argued that people’s identity, interests and values are socially constructed and that there are three different types of reasoning that are brought into the public realm through the deliberative process. They are; instrumental-rational, which refers to facts or scientific reasoning, moral referring to values and ethics and emotive-aesthetic relating to emotional experience (Healey, 1997, p. 53, italics original). As Healey explained, while all three should be given equal status, in spatial planning instrumental-technical reasoning has dominated these other two reasoning modes, so that “our moral cares and emotional concerns have [had] to be recast in the measured debate of technical
Chapter 2: Theory – Design expertise, public participation, institutions and design outcomes

analysis or legal principle” (ibid, p. 51). She observed that technical reasoning is typically representative in nature, and relies on tools that manage the environment “out there” rather than the interactive processes that occur in daily life. Habermas maintained that in practice, people’s decisions are a mix of all three forms of reasoning so that interaction and debate are the best way for people to “exchange ideas, sort out what is valid, work out what is important and assess proposed courses of action” (ibid, p. 53).

A critical approach to planning theory was similarly adopted by Geographer John Forester (1980, p. 277) who drew attention to the limitations of normative planning practices, and how they “distort, cover up, or reveal to the public the prospects and possibilities they face”. Forester (1985, p. 16) argued that the notion of “sense-making as an actively interpretive processes” is much better suited to the participatory context to help iron out the “practical ambiguities” of complex problems. He suggested that participation is often as much a “search for problem-definition as much as for problem-solution” (ibid), and it is notable that this corresponds with the fundamental features of design expertise discussed in the previous section. Seen in these terms, collaboration is therefore a practical activity that enables opportunities for emerging and surprising ideas in a way that has similarities to design. By being exposed to what might evolve during the process of these interactions, people come to value information that may not have interested them previously (Forester, 1997). The different forms of reasoning these interactions take can be seen in the:

“surprising, important but unforeseen claims (facts and issues, provocations and emotional appeals, and more) that they take to matter. [In these] ritualized interactions, participants can come to see one another in new ways: problems can be redefined and reformulated; opportunities can be clarified; priorities can be reordered individually and collectively” (Forester, 1997, p. 90-91).

The “new understandings” that emerge from interactive processes are the “discursive key” that transform the discussion and allow an issue to be “re-framed” (Healey, 1997, p. 277, italics original). Dialogue that embraces different forms of reasoning therefore enable a much richer and diverse process from which to
incorporate people’s attitudes and behaviours as well as the physical environment. Such transformative participative processes have been identified by Pateman (1970) who has contrasted them to the representative forms of participation adopted by institutions, which leave the public and institution separated from one another. She explained that:

“[t]he major function of participation in the theory of participatory democracy is an educative one, educative in the very widest sense, including both the psychological aspect and the gaining of practice in democratic skills and procedures. [...] Participation develops and fosters the very qualities necessary for it; the more individuals participate the better able they become to do so” (ibid, p. 42-43).

Accordingly, landscape architect’s design practice in social settings can be understood within the context of two streams of participatory design practice that have emerged since the 1970s (Sanders and Stappers, 2008). The first stream, which emerged from the United States, promotes the ‘user as subject.’ In these circumstances the ‘expert’ perspective is applied to passive users who are limited in their contribution towards the outcome. This stream can be considered a ‘representative’ form of public involvement. The second stream is from Northern Europe and considers the ‘user as partner’, which can be conceived as a ‘participative’ form of involvement. As Sanders and Stappers (2008, p. 10) noted, “it is now becoming apparent that the user-centred design approach cannot address the scale or the complexity of the challenges we face today. We are no longer simply designing products for users”. Furthermore, the designer must also be considered a participant because as Forester (1985, p. 18) observed, “the work of design does not happen in the abstract [...] Whatever the original creative impulse comes from, the development, refinement, and realization of design is a deeply social process”.

Consequently, in recent times, the terms co-creation and co-design have emerged from participatory design practices to describe processes that enable greater public involvement in design from idea generation to the implementation of a project. While the terms co-creation and co-design are often used interchangeably in the literature, I have adopted the definitions used by Sanders and Stappers (2008, p. 6) as they discuss where the terms first evolved in industrial practice and education.
Co-creation refers to “any act of collective creativity, i.e. creativity that is shared by two or more people” with applications ranging from “the physical to the metaphysical and from the material to the spiritual”. Co-design refers to “collective creativity as it is applied across the whole span of a design process [...] thus co-design is a specific instance of co-creation”.

The range of possibilities in public participation can therefore be considered across a spectrum from consultation which is a ‘representative’ or ‘passive’ form of public involvement at one end of the spectrum to co-design which is a ‘participatory’ or ‘active’ form of public involvement at the other (Figure 6). This creates the second theoretical dimension of the thesis.

Figure 6: Theoretical framework indicating the range of possibilities in public participation processes (consultation to co-design) set against modes of decision-making in landscape architecture.
The following section uses the concepts of institutional theory to examine decision-making in three categories of institution, and contrasts their fundamental differences in reasoning in planning and design.

Institutions

The application of design expertise in public space design is also set within the wider context of institutions, that is, government authorities as public institutions, design institutions as professional organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which collectively make up the non-profit sector. This review of the institutional context provides background to a comparative study of design expertise in Chapter Four, which based on interviews with designers in both New Zealand and in Northern Europe, outlines the distinctive character of the landscape architecture profession in New Zealand.

Institutional theory is grounded in a relational view of the world having originated in economics, political science and sociology (Hughes & Hughes, 2013). As Hodgson (2006, p. 1) explained, institutions are “systems of established and embedded social rules that structure social relations. Language, money, law, systems of weights and measures, table manners and firms (and other organisations) are thus all institutions”. Accordingly, institutions are structured by various rules and conventions in order to “enable ordered thought, expectation and action by imposing form and consistency on human activities” (Ibid, p. 2). Healey (1997, p. 62) explained how institutional theory encourages us to consider how our knowledge and values are shaped by our ‘localised lifeworlds’ and the fluid and dynamic way in which we make sense of the world around us. Hughes and Hughes (2013) observed that society is thus structured by “socio-institutions” in that they are multi-faceted and are made up of “cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life” (Scott, 2001, p. 29).

There are differences however, between wider socio-institutional arrangements and those of professional institutions whose functions are achieved by a different set of processes (Hughes and Hughes, 2013). Professional institutions have over time
created their own “cognitive and distinct framework[s] with behaviours that they have internalized as second nature, as well as their own distinct normative systems of rules and conventions determining how things should be done” (ibid, 2013, p. 29). Professional institutions therefore operate both within the context of their own normative procedures as well as within the wider frameworks of society and to be effective, rely on mutual interaction and interdependence with this wider context (Scott, 2001).

**Government authorities as public institutions**

Local authorities are public institutions that use systems of governance with a basis in statute through which they can manage the collective affairs of a society or community (Healey, 1997, p. 206). In New Zealand governance, local authorities make decisions through the authority of central government and address local issues based on local needs and priorities. This arrangement recognises that not all communities have the same needs or requirements (NZ Department of Internal Affairs, 2011). Local authorities typically work within territorial communities, addressing collective concerns while allocating public resources and implementing decisions (Healey, 1997). The focus is on efficiency and transparency using “rule-based systems” that work to legitimise the actions of local government (ibid).

These decisions are undertaken through “bureaucratic practice” (Friedmann, 1987, p. 35), which is the application of this administrative system by officials in various government departments (Healey, 1997). The structure is typically hierarchical with activities of the institution separated into various technical departments. Staff are ultimately answerable to local politicians which ensures that governance is aligned with “politically agreed principles” (ibid p. 216).

Large bureaucratic organisations share unique decision-making characteristics that affect outcomes in the built environment Hall (1980). Hall explained that the different departments that constitute large public organisations, “tend to acquire [their own] internal solidarity; their members come to believe in their own
objectives, so that divergence [within the group] is increasingly seen as deviancy” (Hall, 1980, p. 209). Working within their own individual departments, the decision-making process within these organisations involves breaking issues down into sub-problems, which essentially simplifies them (ibid). Then, various problems are worked on sequentially without total consistency across all groups. Importantly, as Hall noted, “conflicts (between the different goals of the sub-groups within the bureaucracy) are never really resolved. The goals themselves are seen as a constraint on the aspirations of the organization” and because of this, decisions are made “via a series of compromises” (ibid).

This type of decision-making is associated with instrumental rationality, a technical approach that has traditionally appealed to government institutions at the citywide scale (Healey, 1997). Instrumental rationality focuses on “relating means (how to do things) to ends (what can be achieved), in logical and systematic ways” (ibid, p. 9, italics original). It is a rational relationship based on a form of deductive logic, drawing on scientific analysis and separating facts from the discussion of values (Friedmann, 1987). Goals are identified and then translated into strategies to maximize the achievement of the goals through analysis and systematic evaluation. Jonathan Boston (2017) has noted that this is true of governmental process in New Zealand where a “presentist bias” dominates. The focus is on short-term gain rather than long term thinking which adopts a more “anticipatory” and comprehensive approach to complex societal problems.

Pursuing efficiency makes it difficult for large organisations to respond effectively to change (Hall, 1980). “Though organizations have greater power to monitor their environment than individuals [...] they code the information to suit their own purposes and find it difficult to use in new situations: in particular, they cannot readily change from a passive to an active (information–seeking) rule” (ibid, p. 223). As Friedmann (1987, p. 34), explained, “bureaucratic practice is articulated through the institutional structures of the state” and focused on the technical practices of planning rather than the political. These decision-making processes make it difficult to deal with the complexities of public space and given that the nature (and structure) of bureaucratic organisations is to avoid uncertainty, regulatory
procedures are adopted to create a stable environment (Hall, 1980). So while local governance involves both technical and political practices such as public participation processes, they are often in conflict and their “normal state of relation[ship] is one of tension” (Friedmann, 1987, p. 34). The processes of institutional structures have implications for professional practice too, given that the “norms of managerialism” dominant in such settings are founded on the idea that “efficient organisations can be designed and operated rather independently of the nature of the task assigned to the particular organisation” (Pitman, 2012, p. 136). In other words, a different set of values form the basis for decision-making in such situations, evaluated on concepts of productivity and efficiency rather than practical wisdom and communicative reasoning (ibid).

Professional design institutions

Professional design institutions are organisations of practitioners within a specific field, which have various characteristics such as barriers to entry, established protocols and standards of practice (Hughes & Hughes, 2013; Pitman, 2012). Professional designers are required to complete a specified degree in training, practical experience and ongoing professional development as well as conduct themselves in behaviours as that fit the norms of the institute. Along with expected professional character qualities such as integrity, creativity and awareness of the impact on their behaviour on the wider reputation of the Institute, professional organisations typically require members to commit to a code of conduct. Clause 1.2 (a) of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architect’s (NZILA) Code of Conduct articulates the following expectation of its members:

“The Landscape Architect shall have a primary responsibility to seek to reconcile human needs in harmony with the natural environment and its systems, and with reference to environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability” (NZILA Code of Conduct, 2014).

The professional code of conduct essentially sets out the NZILA’s core values for public evaluation and implies that landscape architects must “take account of plural sources of value in landscape architecture” (Thompson, 2000, p. 7). Such values refer
to the “moral principles or accepted standards of a person or social group”. However as Thompson has observed, these are particularly “slippery” concepts that often have conflicting goals (ibid, p. 5). Pitman (2012) explained that conflicts can occur between the codes of the organisation, which exists to provide reference and self-regulation to its members, and the demands of reflective judgment of the individual practitioner which in determining how to ‘act best’ must also comply with these regulatory frameworks. As Pitman (2012, p. 141) argued, “practice does not – and indeed cannot – take place outside of the sets of values revealed through the structures of discourse within the community and through the nature of judgements made in situated practice”. However in reality, the professional often straddles tensions between the moral and ethical responsibility of the service they offer and the accountability they hold towards the regulatory systems of a particular time and place (ibid).

Flyvbjerg (2001, p. 130) argued that value-rationality and practical wisdom are connected, in that by reflecting on some of the typical value-rational questions such as “Where are we going? Is it desirable? What should be done?” the practical wisdom of the professional is able to “balance instrumental with value rationality by increasing the capacity of individuals, organizations, and society to think and act in value-rational terms”. Furthermore, given that values cannot be “rationally or universally grounded”, context and “situational ethics” become significant (ibid). While professional landscape architects draw on both the analytical and abductive modes of decision-making in order to reconcile the diverse values and disparate systems of landscape, there is a major tension between these two modes of thinking:

“When the criteria applied to evaluate the practitioner are instrumental and at variance to the necessity of situated judgement in context, then the good practitioner is increasingly at risk of censure, either because of the need to act outside the regimens of prescribed protocols [...] or because the criteria fail to take into account the constituents of good practice in the service of the [public] entrusted to them” (Pitman, 2012, p. 144).

As noted earlier in this chapter, contextual decision-making – which is the essence of landscape design – does not align well with rule based problem solving that is at
the heart of institutional processes. In contrast to the technical processes of institutional decision-making framed as problem solving, the designer’s work is one of synthesis by abductive process and it involves “altering, respecting, acknowledging, and shaping people’s lived worlds as well” (Forester, 1985, p. 17).

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as institutions

A third category of institutions collectively described as Non-Governmental Organisations first emerged as part of the newly formed United Nations in 1945 (United Nations Charter, 1945). While NGOs have no fixed or formal definitions, they generally work to promote social or political change at a range of scales; for example, environmental, social or advocacy and human rights work (Willets, n.d.). Although the term NGO is most often used in an international context, it is used interchangeably to describe non-profit organisations that are independent of governmental influence, however some do rely on governmental support (Association of Non-Governmental Organisations of Aotearoa (ANGOA), 2009). Non-profits have five defining structural-operational characteristics: they are organised, private, non-profit, self-governing and non-compulsory (Sanders, O’Brien, Tennant, Wojciech Sokolowski, Salamon (2008). Furthermore, they have formed,

“not only because they have recognised significant gaps or inadequacies, but also because they see that they can organise remedies in a manner that is more complete, more reliable and engages more people than if they acted individually” (ANGOA, 2009, pp. 16-17).

The authors explain that New Zealand non-profit organisations have emerged from the coexistence of our European and Māori cultural identities and heritage as well as the influence of the New Zealand welfare state during the 1930s. It is a rich and distinctive tradition and is one of the largest non-profit sectors in the world yet by international standards government funding for these organisations is relatively modest (ibid).

While the relationship between government and non-profit organisations in New Zealand has generally been co-operative, a period of tension emerged during the
1980s and 1990s when the government moved from funding non-profit groups directly to establishing contractual arrangements (Sanders et al., 2008). As a dominant mechanism, these contracts increased the power of government to determine what voluntary agencies did, resulting in a sense of resentment and lack of trust (ibid). While the scale and nature of this dynamic has changed over recent decades, with community organisations playing a greater role in improving the effectiveness of public programmes and the government encouraging partnership and engagement, in practice there are limitations (ibid). Sanders et al (2008, p. 33) maintained that, “partnership and collaborative models imply an equality of status, if not resources, that may be difficult to achieve in practice where one party is the state”. They state that one challenge for the future is to “move away from centrally driven, prescriptive approaches toward negotiated models that aim at achieving more collaborative working relationships while at the same time preserving the independent value of the sector” (ibid). While landscape architects draw on the normative values of their own professional institutions, they must at times also negotiate the tensions and dynamics of these other normative values.

In examining the key features of reasoning in government authorities as public institutions, design institutions as professional organisations, and NGOs as a collective of non-profit institutions, tensions in the contrasting modes of reasoning become clear. First, public institutions place emphasis on analysis and explicit process, which makes administering decisions more efficient and transparent (Healey, 1997). However the focus on technical processes causes tensions with the public who as Healey (ibid, p. 51) noted, “mix together information about what we care about with what we think is happening and what we would like to do”. Habermas illustrated how these different forms of reasoning (the factual, moral and emotive) are at the heart of discursive and interactive process, so that different forms of reasoning can’t be accommodated under instrumental reasoning alone. Second, the norms and codes of design institutions are aligned with the less explicit reasoning of practical wisdom and value rationality and given they are designed to deal with complexity, cause tensions with the constraints of rule based, institutional decision-making.
Design outcome

The fourth theoretical concept of this chapter is design outcome, which refers to the design quality or measure of the design process. One way in which design quality can be assessed is in the functional nature of the design outcome. In other words, “an object which is most suited to fulfill its function will be both a good object in an evaluative or moral sense, and [also] a beautiful or aesthetically pleasing object” (Thompson, 2000, p. 94). Functionalism featured prominently during the mid twentieth century and was expressed through modernist ideals and many planners and architects believed that rational and standardized design could address the complex social problems facing industrialising cities (ibid). In architecture, the ideals of functionalism were also associated with the ‘International Style’ which disregarded cultural, historic or topographical contexts (Bourassa, 1991) so that the dominant mode was “technically elitist [and] plans drawn from god’s eye viewpoints were [presented as] prescriptions for rationally perfectible worlds” (Thompson (2000, p. 101). Modernism in architecture also influenced landscape architectural practice during the mid twentieth century as function became “the starting point for design, rather than any preconceived idea of what is beautiful or picturesque, a shift from aesthetics towards the notion of usefulness” (ibid, p. 96). Philosophers argued that ‘aesthetic experience’ is a more useful way of understanding people’s preferences for landscape (ibid).

Critics of Modernist design have however challenged the reduction of design aesthetics to function, arguing first, that aesthetic experience is vital and that the social, political and environmental characteristics of a place contribute to aesthetic experience as well (Thompson, 2000). Aesthetic experience is therefore also of central concern to design outcomes. For example, Santayana ([1986] 1961) observed that both the ‘symbolic’ (the meaning a place holds for different groups) and the ‘sensory,’ (immediate sounds and/or feelings we might experience of a place) are as significant as the ‘formal’ qualities of a site. As Tunnard (in Imbert, 2007, p. 225) noted, “the modern spirit in design [was] a way of thinking and feeling rather than a ready-made formula”. Through modernist critique therefore, landscape architects developed a social conscience as they started to address the constraints of analytical
reasoning to encompass the values of the “functional, the empathic, and the artistic” (ibid).

Such tripartite expressions of values in landscape architecture have taken various forms over the years. Catherine Howett (1987, p. 1) for example identified “three key source areas for a late twentieth-century aesthetic”. They included, (1) a new ecology of complex systems and human’s place within them; (2) a focus on semiotics and the analogies that can be drawn between language and architecture; and (3) environmental psychology, drawing on cultural and human geography to understand human responses to place experience. More recently Landscape Architect Ian Thompson (2000) has argued that landscape architect’s design decisions draw upon three main value fields; the environmental (ecology), the social (community), and aesthetic (delight). Thompson noted for example that “a particular piece of design [may] embod[y] strong aesthetic principles, that it works in harmony with the ecology of its site, but that it does not have a social dimension” (ibid, p. 8). In this formulation, the most highly valued designs are those that maximize and integrate all three values in landscape architecture, and Thompson calls this tri-valent design.

Thompson’s model (Figure 7), provides a useful framework for landscape criticism and for examining the creative tensions that emerge in the landscape architect’s decision-making process (ibid). Thompson noted for example that, “a particular piece of design [may] embod[y] strong aesthetic principles, that it works in harmony with the ecology of its site, but that it does not have a social dimension” (ibid, p. 8). In this formulation, the most highly valued designs are those that maximize and integrate all three values in landscape architecture, and Thompson calls this tri-valent design.
While landscape architects can usefully draw upon Thompson’s three distinct value areas in making design decisions, and greater integration of these values contributes to improved outcomes in landscape architecture, the model in itself does not help designers either resolve or evaluate the nature of the integration between the three sets of values. For instance, is a good outcome one that includes examples of all three values, or does it combine all the values that may be relevant from the three fields? What does integration of these three value fields mean in practice to the designer and how can the designer integrate these different value sets effectively?

In applying the various forms of reasoning described earlier in this section, an instrumental form of rationality would determine that irrespective of the different values identified, the best solution would be the one that arrives at the best outcome for the most people. It would be based on empirical knowledge, using an explicit, step-by-step process based on maximising efficiencies. As a utilitarian approach, it would provide the greatest good, for the greatest number. By contrast, communicative rationality as a basis for decision-making would integrate all three values through discourse, so that the best outcome would be one that evolved from
a deliberative process where the different values of the community could be heard and talked through until resolved. However, in contrast to instrumental and communicative rationality, the expert landscape architect adopts a value-based form of reasoning, which as Pitman (2012, p. 132) has observed, creates an “unavoidable contradiction in which practitioners are caught between, on the one hand, demands for reflective judgement or phronetic dispositions and actions, and, on the other hand, technical, protocol-driven patterns of behaviour”. In order to resolve this tension, I’ve turned to a long established but under utilised concept, one where the prominent features change with the context, so that what is characteristic of one work may be irrelevant in another (Goldblatt, 2007). The concept aligns closely with the qualities of practical reasoning or phronesis that has been woven throughout this chapter; it can be described as the concept of design elegance.

**Design elegance**

The linguistic origins of elegance associate it with a kind of editing. Eligere in the original Latin means, to “select with care [or] choose” (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2018). Such selection within a design context suggests refinement, cohesion and legibility. Architect Patrik Schumacher (2007, p. 35) noted that “elegance signifies the capacity to articulate complex life-processes in a way that can maintain overall comprehension, legibility and continuous orientation with the composition”. Elegance therefore takes integration beyond the potential for a purely functional but possibly uninteresting outcome, to a higher point of resolution that is unable to be improved upon as a holistic response.

Elegance also evokes a human and experiential quality. As Goldblatt (2007, p. 12) noted, elegance is “part of a conceptual network that includes the likes of graceful, delicate, refined and balanced – what philosophers call aesthetic qualities, properties that are moving for the receptive subject”. Architect Juhani Pallasmaa has revealed the experiential aspects of elegance through his design of spatially and materially rich buildings that engage all the senses. He argued that “the task of architecture is to make visible how the world touches us” (Pallasmaa, 2000, p. 78).
Elegant design outcomes can therefore trigger an emotive or affective response, evoking a higher sense of aesthetic satisfaction in the way a complex situation has been resolved. Elegant outcomes are the result of design expertise that transcends problem solving and multivalent design, and involves the careful editing of options, to draw a complex set of relationships into a sophisticated, timeless and powerful response.

The editing process leading to elegance must consider several dimensions. First, design proposals typically result from establishing “structures of thinking which produce cohesive relationships among elements” (Plowright, 2014, p. 35). As noted earlier, Plowright argued that in contrast to problem solving, design typically responds to a ‘situation’ or ‘context’ essentially transcending the isolated problem. Similar to architecture, landscape architecture is a design discipline that:

“refines a complex network of social, cultural and technological factors to provide quality as part of the human ecosystem...[It has] multiple stakeholders and non-discrete layers of content, and is context-dependent rather than product-focused” (Plowright, 2014, p. 27, italics original).

Elegance in design must therefore be inclusive of a range of factors and values.

Second, design activity uses trial and error to explore the breadth of a problem, often reframing the inquiry towards a design resolution (Cross, 2011). This allows designers to better understand complex relationships, aspects of which initially appear unrelated yet when reframed prove relevant, providing inspiration for innovative outcomes (Lawson & Dorst, 2009). As Plowright observed, complexity is not the same as randomness. While complexity is “difficult to map, describe, understand and act upon using the exact knowledge of cause and effect [...] complexity is generated by simple rules”. These simple rules “structure primary formal choices, while leaving large points of flexibility as points of engagement for human choices, artistic desire and personal interest” (Plowright, 2014, p. 311). Expert designers tend to engage with the broader context, using this flexibility to expand the initial problem and reframe its complexity in an original way (Dorst, 2011). As Dorst explained:
“In design practice we see that ‘themes’ which could (from a problem solving perspective) be judged peripheral to the central paradox, become the triggers for the creation of new frames that allow the central paradox to be approached in a new and interesting way (ibid, p. 528).

Architectural design frameworks essentially “embed” complexity by guiding overall development, while providing “clarity to issues of relevance, as well as content that directly affects that relevance” (ibid). While largely an informal process, trial and error often reveals unexpected resolutions to what are often unpredictable, vague and ill-defined problems (Cross, 2011; Lawson and Dorst 2009; Rowe, 1987). Elegance in design is therefore transformative.

Third, the processes and knowledge acquired by designers to address complex situations develops implicitly and through practice, typically through the environments of design studios as well as informal social interactions (Cross, 2011; Forester, 1985; Lawson & Dorst, 2009; Plowright, 2014; Rowe, 1987). The methods of experienced designers often lack visibility however and solutions appear from seemingly unstructured processes that draw upon the practical wisdom of the designers (Flyvbjerg, 2001) as well as more formal analyses. Elegance in design is therefore associated with a high level of expertise.

Fourth, designers use various representative tools to analyse and express the complexities of landscape as part of their design process. Swaffield and Bowring (2010, p. 150) have noted that representation in landscape architecture “attempt[s] to edit and transfigure the complex, ephemeral, uncertain and emergent nature of landscape within abbreviated expressions which are both retrospective and prospective”. As one of a number of environmental design professions, landscape architects use representational techniques to develop nuanced understandings of place. Well known examples of this include the cognitive mapping and imageability of Lynch (1960), the serial visioning of Cullen (1971) and Bosselmann (1998) and the field notes and sketching of Crowe and Laseau (2011).

Landscape Architect James Corner (1999, p. 166) has illustrated how representational techniques can counter “immediacy and reduction” as designers seek to incorporate complex individual and collective narratives (Beauregard, 2005).
Representational techniques are a generative tool as landscape architects use site drawings to create impressions. While such impressions may appear abstract, representation informed by conversation and being present in the landscape, “situates the designer’s work in a historical, practical context” (Forester, 1985, p. 17). Designers therefore use representation to juxtapose spatial attributes with the intricacies of narrative and dialogue, in order to explore and reveal the less tangible characteristics of place. Elegant designs are therefore communicative and eidetic (Corner, 1999), distilling complex dynamics into a powerful symbolic gesture.

Design elegance is therefore more than integration as it involves a deeper level of synthesis to a point where nothing can be added or taken away without devaluing the design. The decision-making processes that are associated with design expertise are therefore a necessary precondition for elegant outcomes and provide a basis from which to explore approaches to public participation as part of the participatory design processes.

**Theoretical integration – a field of possibilities**

The sections on Design Expertise and Public Participation set out two dimensions of a theoretical framework expressed in Figure 4 and Figure 6. These dimensions create a field of possibilities for the interactions of design expertise with public participation (Figure 8). The form of the diagram is based on a framework developed by Wolfgang Jonas’, the “Quattro stagioni”. This is a frame of four scenarios using two variables that extend across extreme conditions (Jonas, 2001, p. 77). Each scenario is labelled differently, with the four scenarios expressing a potential outcome, enabling us to learn more about the designer’s relationship with the public.
Figure 8: Four different scenarios of design outcome based on the relationship between the decision-making process and the mode of public participation carried out (framework based on Jonas, 2001, p. 77).

Public participation is expressed across the ‘x’ axis and represents all people from the community acting outside of the professional role. The activity of this participation ranges from representative (or passive) at the far left end of the axis to participatory (or active) to the far right. Possible approaches to decision-making on the vertical ‘y’ axis range from expertise at the upper end of the axis, to detailed analysis at the lower end. As Jonas (2001) has explained, the value of the model is in its simplicity. It allows scope to elaborate on a specific project’s interactions, complexities and contexts within each quadrant of the scenario-based framework.

The theoretical framework reveals four combinations of design outcome are possible. Quadrant 1 combines detailed analysis and consultation with the public, illustrating technical outcomes and designing ‘for’ people (neither the expert nor the public’s understanding of the problem/issue is transformed). Quadrant 2 illustrates
the combination of design expertise as the type of decision-making and consultation as the mode of public participation (only the designer’s understanding of the problem/issue is transformed). The outcome is ‘designerly’ elegance, which is limited to designing ‘for’ people. Quadrant 3 combines detailed analysis and co-design. While designing ‘with’ people, the outcome is technical. Just as quadrant 2 reveals a ‘limited’ form of elegance, so quadrant 3 reveals a limited form of co-design. Quadrant 4 illustrates design expertise combined with co-design, resulting in inclusive elegance designing ‘with’ people (both the designer and the public’s understanding and appreciation of the problem/issue is transformed).

The framework helps to clarify my research questions by linking the type of decision-making process applied with the mode of participation carried out. It illustrates the interactions that emerge between the two dimensions through four possible scenarios, which in turn help to explain the design quality or outcomes. In any given process the designer could use either intuitive/abductive reasoning or explicit, rule based analysis; and the process of public participation could be carried out through consultation or co-design. The four combinations possible provide a framework from which to analyse the interactions between design expertise and public participation and to locate the process and outcome of the Albion Square case study.

Summary

In order to clarify the research questions, I have explored four key aspects of theory in this chapter; design expertise, public participation, institutions as bodies of practice and design outcomes. I began by contrasting analytical approaches in decision-making with professional design expertise, explaining the unique qualities of experience, context and human intuition that make design expertise better suited to address the complexities of public space design. I explained that the dominant approach to public space design during the twentieth century has been technocratic, focusing on practical issues of use and circulation while neglecting the social component, the human experience of place. This section has therefore identified
two important strands to emerge from modernism. One strand questioned the nature of design expertise and how expertise was expressed. The other raised questions about the social dimensions of design.

The section on public participation has focused on the importance of communicative rationality in the context of public space design and suggests that the deliberative reasoning of the public and the abstract or instrumental reasoning processes of institutions are in conflict with one another. I emphasised that issues intrinsic to public space design are too complex to be solved through institutional process alone, which highlights the limitations of technical solutions to complex problems. I have discussed how phronesis or the practical experience of design expertise as a reflective, human activity is not only a process for the designer, but also a collective and social activity that is suited to public space design (Forester, 1985; Pitman, 2012).

The types of reasoning that align with various decision-making processes emerge as tensions between public institutions and the public, between public institutions and designers and internally within professional institutions. These tensions have implications for design outcomes. I have concluded that the concept of elegance may help to better understand the relationship between these different forms of reasoning. In order to explore this possibility, I have introduced a theoretical framework that identifies a spectrum of possibilities for the interactions between design expertise and participation, namely how detailed analytical thinking and design thinking at opposing ends of one spectrum might interact with consultation or co-design approaches to public participation across another. The framework provides a range of approaches and design outcomes and forms a basis for further examination in a case study. The following chapter outlines my approach to the research design and the methodologies carried out to address the research questions.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

Chapter Two outlined the nature of design expertise and the distinctive forms of reasoning that shape design decision-making. It also examined participatory design processes and introduced a field of possible interrelationships between the two, in which design elegance represented an optimal outcome against which to assess the empirical findings. This chapter describes the research strategy most appropriate to address the research questions outlined in Chapter One and the methods by which data has been collected and analysed. The following section describes the interpretive approach of this study and it’s applicability to the research questions. The section thereafter discusses the case study design and justification for selecting Albion Square for the investigation. Finally, the methodology section provides detailed descriptions of the particular methods and techniques adopted for the research, including how ethical issues were resolved. A summary concludes the chapter.

Interpretive research

Interpretive research methods involve gathering data from social activities and behaviours, and attributing meaning or coherence to that data through descriptions and explanations of particular events (Neuman, 2011). My approach to the study has been to adopt the following three levels of interpretation, which help explain and organize the research process. Neuman (ibid, p. 177) explained that first, interpretation is about learning the “personal reasons or motives” for what people do. Second, it involves the researcher, who from an “outsider’s” perspective considers the meaning of this data in context, relative to other events in which these meanings occur. The researcher then applies a further, third level of interpretation, which gives theoretical significance to the data and provides a broader level of interpretation. The goal of this third level is more wide-ranging. As Yin (2011, p. 207) explained, it is to “develop a comprehensive interpretation, still encompassing
specific data but whose main themes will be come the basis for understanding [the] entire study”.

As noted in Chapter Two, Flyvbjerg (2001) observed the challenge of studying expert’s decision-making processes, given the dominance of analytical modes of reasoning in scientific study. This is relevant for landscape architecture because the less tangible qualities of expert intuition and synchronicity cannot be reduced to rules or summaries. Flyvbjerg explained that expertise is better studied using approaches where narrative can identify the “complexities and contradictions of real life” (ibid, p. 84). He argued that, “where science does not reach, art, literature and narrative often help us comprehend the reality in which we live” (ibid, p. 18).

**Context and data**

Context is therefore a significant feature of this study; an aspect that as Landscape Architect Elizabeth Meyer (1991) maintained is relevant to the developing theoretical knowledge of landscape architecture itself. Straddling both art and science, landscape architecture has drawn on the theoretical positions of many other disciplines over the years (Thompson, 2014), yet as Meyer argued, it requires positioning and understanding relative to our own subject and analytical methods. I have therefore adopted an interpretive approach, which applied through the discipline of landscape architecture, encapsulates both content and context:

“Content refers to the meaning of the work’s form, and context refers to the meaning of the work’s relationship to its immediate surroundings and to its cultural and environmental milieu. In brief, landscape architectural design as criticism should foreground the meaning of relationships among things, spaces and systems in addition to the things, spaces and systems themselves” (ibid, p. 157).

This thesis therefore ‘situated’ the landscape architect’s process within the socially structured context of a participatory design process so that the “embodied interactions” and broader complexities of public space creation can more easily be observed (Forester, 1985, p. 14). Attoe (1978, p. 9) explained that “whether an assessment of a designed environment is right or wrong in relation to some external
norms or standards is not the issue here; rather interpretive criticism attempts to make us see the environment in a particular way”.

Key informant interviews, documentary analysis and participant observation provide the basis for the first two levels of interpretation described by Neuman (2011), while the theoretical notion of elegance is used to investigate the third level which is the relationship between design expertise and public participation. The aim is to understand the specific qualities that make certain design based participation processes stand out from the others.

Case study design

Case studies are widely recognised as ideal for investigating complex phenomena or relationships, potentially revealing insights into relationships beyond the individual event or situation being investigated (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Demming and Swaffield (2011, p. 84) noted that case studies are “particularly well suited to landscape architecture research, as the focus of interest of the discipline is typically complex, multi-dimensional, and embedded in a wider context, and thus hard to separate discrete factors”. The value of case studies is therefore in the ability to capture both the uniqueness of events while also identifying types of relationships and implications that can be transferred to other situations (Yin, 2014). As Yin suggested, the most important feature of the case study is to “explain the presumed causal links in real-world interventions that are too complex for survey or experimental methods” (ibid, p. 19).

Another key benefit of the case study is that it enables the researcher to explore phenomena first hand. Flyvbjerg (2001) contrasted the richness available through first-hand knowledge with the metaphor of a map. He suggested that rather than following the ‘important’ streets only, first-hand experience allows the researcher to explore some of the lesser-known side streets as well. In doing so, the researcher can “stay close to the complexities and contradictions of existence [while] allowing the case narrative to unfold from the diverse, complex and conflicting stories that people, documents, and other evidence tell them” (ibid, p. 86). The case study’s
value is therefore not so much in coming to a generalisable conclusion but in revealing the richness and ambiguities of a context (Yin, 2014).

Nevertheless, as Neuman observed (2011, p. 42), case studies “have a detailed focus but tell a larger story”. They tend to produce “complex explanations or interpretations in the form of an unfolding plot or a narrative story about particular people or specific events. This makes the passage of time integral to the explanation” given that the focus on process helps explain how particular issues, conflicts or relationships might develop (ibid, p. 177). Chapter Two introduced the reflective and intuitive nature of expertise and the practical reasoning of the designer’s interactions in practice. Case studies are ideal for investigating the processes and outcomes of such qualities, potentially revealing insights into relationships beyond the interactions and situations being investigated (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

**Choice of case study**

My choice to use the case study method was determined by how I could best understand the application of design expertise in the social context, particularly since “phenomenon and context are not sharply distinguishable in real-world situations” (Yin, 2014, p. 17). In order to produce robust justification for the new knowledge created, case studies should therefore be selected theoretically so that the characteristics of the particular case enable generalisations to be made “based on their type, rather than on their statistical occurrence” (Swaffield, 2016, p. 129). Flyvbjerg (2006) highlighted three categories of case study in this respect; paradigmatic, extreme and critical. Paradigmatic cases are chosen for their “metaphorical” or “prototypical” value (ibid, p. 232), extreme cases are often well-known cases that are useful for highlighting a particular point in a powerful way (ibid), and critical cases are chosen because “they have features that are central to the theoretical purpose of the investigation” (Swaffield, 2016, p. 130). The Albion Square case study was therefore selected as a “critical case”, and the theoretical circumstances that relate to the case have been outlined in Chapter Two.
Specifically, Christchurch City Council regard the process and outcome of Albion Square as an exemplar in participatory design. The Lyttelton/Mt Herbert Community Board entered and won the ‘Engaging Communities’ category of the New Zealand Community Boards Best Practice Awards in May 2015 for Albion Square, with their entry *Participation by Design*. I was interested to know how far ranging this view was, given that as Bonta (1975, p. 66) has noted official interpretations are “based on a single source authority rather than on consensus” and in time, interpretations of a work change as people ultimately “force the designer to see his work in certain ways”.

On the face of it, Albion Square should be considered an “exemplar” case. But the media record suggests it was not entirely without contest. Another reason for selecting the Albion Square case was the well-known attributes of Lyttelton people; that they are actively interested in the character and community of their town and not afraid to voice their opinions (Christchurch City Council, 2012b). It was likely therefore that local residents involved in the design and engagement process would be willing to share their experiences and opinions and would be relatively easy to access.

The choice of case study also had a practical motivation. As noted in the Preface, Christchurch is my home and having worked in the wider Christchurch area as a landscape architect over the previous ten years, I had access to various documentation and data, as well as a good understanding of local politics in the city.

In summary, the case study approach provides a real-world context in which to explore complex causal relationships. As a critical case, Albion Square is a rich setting within which to interpret the application of the landscape architect’s design expertise in the participatory design process.
Methods

The case study was carried out in two stages, each with a combination of methods and techniques. Stage One provided context to the case study by interviewing experts on the nature of design expertise in contemporary landscape architecture. Stage Two focused on the process and outcome of the case study, Albion Square. Table 2 gives an overview of the different phases of research, which are described in detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases of Research</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage One: Design expertise</strong></td>
<td>Context for the case study: understanding the nature of design expertise.</td>
<td>Key informant interviews • 10 NZ landscape architects • 10 contrast group (Northern Europe) • 3 participation experts (NZ and Northern Europe)</td>
<td>In-depth semi-structured interviews Discourse analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage Two: Case study</strong></td>
<td>To gain an understanding of the process &amp; design outcome of Albion Square.</td>
<td>Documentary research</td>
<td>Discourse analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To gain feedback on preliminary research findings and the theoretical framework</td>
<td>Conference and workshop participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To see how people used Albion Square at different times of the day and year.</td>
<td>Key informants • 4 Council staff, 11 community members &amp; 3 landscape architects</td>
<td>Discourse analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>People using Albion Square</td>
<td>Participant observation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 2: Different stages of the research (framework based on Johnston, 2014).
Stage One: Key informant interviews with design and participation experts

To provide a professional and disciplinary context to the case study, I interviewed designers in both New Zealand and Northern Europe who were experienced at working in participatory design processes. As part of this phase I also interviewed key informants in New Zealand experienced in leading participatory processes, in order to provide a richer understanding of the participatory context. By using a contrast group of designers my intention was to provide a broader perspective on the core attributes of design expertise, and to make sure that the findings in this case were not just framed by the Christchurch study itself. The interviews for the first stage of research took place between 24 January 2016 and 30 March 2017.

The majority of interviews carried out in Northern Europe were with designers in Copenhagen. This was for several reasons. First, as noted in Chapter One, the Danish firm Gehl Architects had been active in Christchurch both pre and post earthquakes, and could provide useful insights as to the degree to which Christchurch was distinctive. Second, I timed the interviews in Europe to coincide with several other activities that I hoped would provide perspective to my research. During August and October 2016, I spent nine weeks as visiting researcher at Copenhagen University, and during this time took part in a PhD course *Constructing Criticism: Methods for studying what design ‘does’*. During my time in Europe, I presented the preliminary findings of my research both at the PhD course and then at the 2016 European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools Conference in Switzerland. At both these occasions, the discussion provided constructive feedback on my preliminary research findings and helped to refine my theoretical framework. It was also an opportunity to recruit key informants.

*Semi structured interviews*

I interviewed nine New Zealand based landscape architects and one urban designer, using a ‘snowball’ sampling technique to select participants (Tolich & Davidson, 1999). Initial contacts were able to recommend others with similar experience in the discipline that might also be willing to be interviewed, and the New Zealand Institute
of Landscape Architect’s members list proved a useful reference. The group of key informants I interviewed included people with experience in bi-cultural design, with one having been a leader in the field both intellectually and practically for the past thirty years.

In Denmark, my contacts at the City of Copenhagen and Copenhagen University put me in touch with landscape architects and architects who were similarly experienced in participatory design. There, I interviewed eight landscape architects, one urban designer and one architect in total, following the same ‘snowball’ technique to select experts experienced in public participation. I deliberately sought the opinions and experiences of experienced designers, given they had the ability to reflect on the practical experiences of their practice over an extended time.

The comparative group of designers provided a critical perspective to the New Zealand sample and enabled me to return to the New Zealand context and reflect on what was distinctive about the New Zealand designer’s expertise. This provided vital context to the Albion Square case study. Several New Zealand designers had also worked with Gehl Architects in Christchurch and the importance of Gehl’s ethos came up regularly as an influence in their own design work, as well as for design in the city generally.

Initial contact with potential participants was made by telephone or email, giving a brief explanation of the research before asking for their participation. Both designers and participation experts were given sufficient time to decide if they wished to take part in the study and if they were willing to be interviewed. After gaining approval to carry out the first stage of this research from the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee (Appendix A), I sent a Research Information Sheet to prospective key informants (Appendix B and Appendix C). This explained the research in further detail. The interviews were typically conducted at the participant’s place of work or a local café, which was chosen for convenience and as a quiet setting, so that background noise wouldn’t distract from conversation. Participants were asked if they were willing to be recorded, with the intention that this would provide a more accurate account of the interview. However, I also took notes, which served as a
reminder to come back to important points made without disrupting the flow of conversation. At the conclusion of the interview I offered participants the opportunity to review a transcript I would make following the interview and to amend or withdraw any information recorded from our conversation. Written consent was sought at the start of each interview using the consent form in Appendix D.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews are a common form of case study research that use open-ended questions so that new information can appear during the interview (Babbie, 2016). Yin (2014) observed that open-ended interviews enable respondents to share a range of information; not only facts or what they think about events but also their own insights, propositions and sources of evidence. Appendix E and Appendix F show the interview sheets used for both sets of key informants (landscape architects and participation experts respectively) and the degree of flexibility for participants to share their opinions and experiences. Keen to compare the findings from New Zealand experts upon completing interviews with Northern European key informants, I was therefore careful to use the same open structure for my contrast group so that they could provide a “fresh commentary” from a different cultural perspective (ibid, 2014, p. 111).

I attempted to remain neutral during the course of conversation, by being conscious of how much I was talking and finding ways of asking questions that lead to extended talking on the key informant’s part (Lofland et al., 2006). I therefore used probes and follow up questions as a key part of each interview that I intended would help participants expand on their initial comments (Arthur & Nazroo, 2011). I soon became flexible about the sequence of the questions on my question sheet, as key informants understandably took a different path than the one I had planned to follow. At the same time I ensured that in the course of the interview I had covered all the topic areas related to my research question, aware that the particular sequence the participant took may reveal important aspects of their experience (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2011; Lofland et al., 2006). Yin (2011, p. 137) observed that, “you need to set the boundaries for the conversation but nevertheless permit
the participant to color it – as well as giving the participant an opportunity to move outside of the boundaries when needed”.

At times when undertaking interviews in Europe, the different concepts in Danish and English languages meant I had difficulty understanding exactly what was said, and on reflection there was potential for this issue to be reciprocal. However, I took time in each interview to ask for clarification if unsure and provided opportunities during the interview for key informants to ask the same of me. I also had difficulty in getting a response from everyone I contacted, and given my limited time in Europe, potential key informants from some of the larger firms I’d hoped to talk with weren’t represented in my sample. There was however a good balance of small to medium sized practices, which was similar to my New Zealand sample.

**Analysing the data**

Demming and Swaffield (2011, p. 161) noted that discourse analysis is particularly relevant within landscape architecture research given that it is focused on “interpreting the ways meaning is expressed through words and text”. They argue that distinctive and inter-related patterns emerge through analysing both writing and talking so that by identifying and better understanding these patterns, we can gain “insight into many of the practical issues we face, as well as into the assumptions and values that shape our responses” (ibid).

I carried out the first stage of analysis immediately after each interview, noting initial impressions that while still fresh appeared relevant to the research questions. Transcribing the interviews formed the second stage of analysis, during which I made notes in comment boxes alongside the main body of the text and highlighted passages that appeared significant. I found the most effective way to analyse the data was to identify three categories and to create a table in order to code the data accordingly (Lofland et al., 2006). These categories were; the core attributes of design expertise, the designer’s relationship with the public and any distinctive features to appear between the New Zealand landscape architects and the contrast
group of Northern European key informants. I read and re-read the transcripts, coding the notes and highlighting text accordingly. I created a summary conclusion for each category. Throughout the process I compared what was developing with the existing literature in order to frame the discussion of these findings for the Design Expertise section in Chapter Four. These findings were also valuable as context for the case study results in Chapter Seven.

Stage Two: Case study of a participatory design process

The Albion Square case study was the second stage of the research and this involved three forms of data collection; documentary research, semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

Documentary research

Initially I began collecting all publically available data on the design and engagement process for Albion Square, which began with a comprehensive outline of the sequence of events published on the City Council website. Previous media articles were also useful, as various reporters had documented the experiences and opinions of both Council and the Lyttelton community as the process evolved. As Yin (2014, p. 107) explained, “the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources”. Accordingly, one of the most helpful publications was *The Lyttelton Review*, which began in 2011, soon after the first earthquakes, giving a fortnightly update of Lyttelton events and activities, advising local residents of what was happening in the community. The regularity of this local newsletter and the detail it contained provided an invaluable resource against which to correlate key informant’s recollections. It also helped maintain accuracy as I constructed a timeline of the Square’s evolution from conception to implementation (see Figure 30 in Chapter Seven). The newsletter also revealed community aspirations, motivations and helped demonstrate where crucial differences or similarities in points of decision-making had occurred.
In order to understand the design and engagement process in a broader landscape-based context, I looked back to some of the earlier landscape studies carried out for the wider Lyttelton Harbour as well as design guidelines and heritage assessments that have provided direction for development in the township. In addition, through my interviews with key informants, further documentary evidence emerged as participants made their own records available. This included plans, newspaper articles, minutes from meetings, email correspondence and documentation of significant decisions, which would have been otherwise difficult to obtain.

**Semi structured interviews**

I interviewed three landscape architects, four Council staff and eleven community members. My intention was to identify the roles, aspirations, motivations, values, processes and experiences of these three groups, set within the context of the design and engagement process of Albion Square. Similar to the design expert interviews I’d undertaken previously, I used a ‘snowball’ sampling method to select participants. Initial contacts recommended others they knew had been involved in the process that might also be willing to be interviewed. The interviews took place between 22 April 2016 and 5 May 2017. By triangulating data across these three different perspectives, my aim was to establish an inter-subjective ‘fix’ on reality, thereby providing a framework for validation (Tolich and Davidson, 1999). The interviews were used to gain insight into the relationship between the landscape architects and the style of public involvement and to reflect on themes that emerged from both the literature and participant observation.

The initial features of the process were the same as the professional key informant interviews outlined in Stage One. After gaining permission from the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee for this second stage of research (Appendix G), initial contact with key informants was made via telephone or email, giving a brief explanation of the research before asking for their involvement. All participants were given sufficient time to decide if they wished to take part in the study and if they were willing to be interviewed, sent out a Research Information sheet
(Appendix H). This explained the research in further detail. The interviews were typically conducted at the participant’s place of work, a local café or at the participant’s home which was chosen for convenience and as a quiet setting in which background noise wouldn’t distract from conversation. Several interviews were carried out at the Shroom Room café next door to the Square and this made it possible to refer to particular features of the site. Participants were asked if they were willing to be recorded with the intention that this would provide a more accurate account of the interview. However, I also took notes, which served as a reminder to come back to important points made without disrupting the flow of conversation. At the conclusion of the interview I offered participants the opportunity to review a transcript I would be making following the interview and to amend or withdraw any information recorded from our conversation. Written consent was sought at the start of each interview using the consent form in Appendix D. Appendices I, J and K show the interview sheets used for the three groups of key informants (landscape architects, council staff/stakeholders and community members respectively). These sheets illustrate the degree of flexibility in the questioning so that participants were able to share their opinions and experiences.

My approach to key informant interviews in the second stage of the project was similar to the first. However given the questions were about a specific place, I brought along site plans and images as ‘props’ as a focus for discussion. When evidence was unclear or contradicted expectations, or when further context was needed, I contacted several key informants via email to clarify the data. Once analysis began, several questions emerged regarding participation historically in Christchurch. I therefore contacted three additional people who had worked in Council during the 1990s to discuss their experiences over preceding decades as context for the Albion Square process.

Continuous interaction between the theoretical issues and data being studied called for an iterative approach. This involved taking advantage of opportunities as they arose to delve into a particular area in conversation. It meant asking open questions, listening well and being aware of my own desire to jump in or agree. Where
unexpected information appeared, I remained open to this and found it important to be aware of my own biases without responding with them (Yin, 2014, p. 73). My journals and ‘notes on notes’ helped me to remain reflexive and to realise when I was becoming influenced by my own values and preconceptions.

**Participant observation**

Participant observation is a valuable method of research which enables the researcher opportunities to experience the social dynamics of a situation first hand and to study phenomena as they arise (Ritchie, 2011). Lofland et al (2006, p. 3) argue that “only through direct observation and/or participation” can we effectively learn about social life. By immersing myself as a participant at Albion Square at different and regular times of the year I was able to gain a more intimate understanding of how the square was used. I chose to observe the Square as a post-occupancy type evaluation, assessing its use at different times of the day and year. Gehl and Svarre (2013) have noted the value of being on site for an extended, uninterrupted period of time in order to gain a more detailed understanding of the interactions between people and place. I recorded my observations using photographs, sketches, written notes, notes made retrospectively and expanded field notes (recording a chronology of events). I also traced the paths people took through the Square for a five-minute period every 10 minutes over the two hours I was in the Square. This included locating where various people stopped to talk, sit down or interact with various features in the Square.

Knowing the ‘farmer’s’ market was the driver for the Square’s use on a Saturday, I used that as a starting point and spent on average one Saturday a month for two hours at a time over the course of a year. I also spent two hours at the site mid-week once a month for the same length of time. By observing the Square at a consistent day of the year and at the same time I was able to observe the seasonal variations and any effect that might have on activity. I also attended the Anzac Service in April 2017 to get a sense of how well the Square facilitated the event relative to the cenotaph, one of the key features of the Square.
While debates range over situations where consent for participant observation should be obtained, Lofland et al. (2006) suggest that where observation takes place in public spaces, it is generally not necessary that the researcher make their purpose explicit. However, I did prepare a specific Research Information Sheet for this part of the research and I carried this with me in case I encountered anyone with concerns about my activity (Appendix L). The sheet explained the purpose of my research and how the results would be used, with reassurance that the identity of any person using the space would not be made public. No one approached me with concerns.

**Analysing the data**

Rather than waiting until I finished collecting data to analyse my results, I adopted Becker’s (1986) approach that “writing can also lead to discovery” (Tolich and Davidson, 1999, p. 161). Consequently, before finishing interviews with case study participants, I took the opportunity to consider what some of the issues might be, and write about these insights early on in the research.

Similar to my approach with design experts in Stage One, I recorded initial impressions immediately after each interview. I also used comment boxes and highlighted passages of text during the transcription process as a way to note key insights as I listened to the interview (Tolich & Davidson, 1999). While analysing this material, I was regularly referring back to the literature and the different decision-making processes identified in Chapter Two. I coded key informants responses using the three lenses of institutional effectiveness, design quality, and community empowerment, initially with post-it notes on large sheets of paper and eventually within a diagram, which helped summarise the key results. The timeline mentioned previously helped clarify the sequence of events and where the decision-making processes converged or diverged.
Chapter 3: Research Design & Methodology

Assumptions and limitations
At the time of key informant interviews for the case study, the Albion Square design and engagement process had taken place three to four years previously, so that most participants memory of the process was a little hazy in places. However once they began talking, they started to recollect more detail. The sequence of events was the most difficult aspect of recollection overall so that the regular issues of *Lyttelton Review* which had documented the process helped validate many details. However, while several key informants spoke about the way in which Māori cultural values had been incorporated into the process, it was difficult to gauge exactly how some of the earliest contributions were made. Given key informants appeared reluctant to share too much detail in this respect my impression was one of difficulty in communication.

Summary
This chapter has explained the overall research design, methodological approach and analysis of the research investigation using a case study to examine the complexities of a real-world context in light of theoretical writing in this field. Data analysis has therefore been an iterative process as theory from Chapter Two has provided an orientation from which to analyse the data emerging from the case study.

The research has involved the investigation of a critical case, in that it contains qualities that are critical to the theory of design expertise. The Albion Square case study was selected in order to provide insight into the research questions about the nature of design expertise in the participatory design process. The following chapter investigates the nature of design expertise in contemporary landscape architecture, providing context to the case study in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.
CHAPTER 4: DESIGN EXPERTISE

Chapter Two raised a number of questions about the relationship between design expertise and the social dimensions of design, asking how the public needs as ‘client’ could be more effectively incorporated into the expert design process. This chapter therefore examines in further detail the nature of design expertise in contemporary landscape architecture using interviews with two sets of key informants, one group of ten New Zealand landscape architects and urban designers closely related to the case study context, and another group of ten designers from Denmark and Germany. Three participation experts each from New Zealand and Denmark were also interviewed, to help give broader understanding of the participatory context for design. The key informants were from similarly developed countries but from different administrative and social settings, which provided contrasting perspectives and helped flesh out some of the subtleties in the literature. The first section of this chapter focuses on consistencies in the core attributes of design expertise shared across both groups of key informants. The second section looks at the consistencies in the nature of designer’s contact with the public. The third section identifies and analyses some of the differences to emerge in the reported experiences of experts. The summary draws together both the consistencies and differences of key informants responses and identifies several themes for development in the case study.

Consistencies – core attributes of design expertise

The core aspects of design expertise that emerged as consistent across both groups of key informants included intuitive decision-making in the design process, design framing in order to shape the disparate nature of content in a design proposal and testing design frames within the social context.
Intuitive decision-making

As explained in the theory chapter, Lawson and Dorst (2009, p. 286) found that experiential learning is at the heart of the designer’s process. In other words, an experienced designer’s skill involves “abstracting generic lessons from particular cases” and then intuitively applying what is relevant within a new and specific context. The crucial role of intuitive approaches to design was a common theme to emerge among key informants from both New Zealand and Northern Europe. For example, one New Zealand expert noted that his early design concepts came from “having hunches and a feeling of what [the outcome] is going to be” (Expert #27). To a scientific mind, the term intuition might sound vague, but as Flyvbjerg (2001, p. 19) has argued, intuition in the context of the expert process is not “some sort of guesswork, irrationality or supernatural inspiration”, rather but a reflective process drawn from extensive practical knowledge. As design expertise literature dating back to the 1960s has explained, intuition evolves from having observed or experienced countless practical experiences related to the problem at hand, both in the designer’s own work and inspired by those of other designers (Schon, 1983; Rowe, 1987). Applying intuition is a core part of the design expert’s ability and its value is the ability to apply specific information within particular contexts. The influence of practical experience was obvious in the response of the following New Zealand expert who explained that:

“as you get more of a developed sensibility and more confident and a mature sense of yourself as a designer, that stuff’s still there informing you. You’ve got those broader precedents out there in the profession as well as the stuff that you’ve done earlier on that might have been born by those, but has now become a body of work […] if I have to suddenly come up with a concept, I can see those come through quite quickly […] You can look to how this problem’s been solved in the past, it doesn’t mean you copy it or even emulate it. But you can be informed by how somebody has masterfully, elegantly resolved a comparable situation. Even just be inspired by this person’s ability to solve a problem is a precedent as well” (Expert #26).

Various authors in the literature noted that intuition features early in the design expert’s process and this resonated with a number of key informants from both groups of experts. As Expert #26 explained:
“My design doesn’t start until I’ve read the brief and talked to the people involved [...] from there it’s intuitive to start with. I just go in with what resonates instinctively. I always try to do that straight away without thinking too hard, because there might be something original there you know [...] if you just do something intuitively it might actually be original and fit so you can use that as a kernel of an idea and then let it go from there”.

As with many key informants I spoke with, it was the first time Expert #26 had paused to consciously reflect on the less obvious aspects of his design process. It prompted him to recall a moment where he became aware of the difference between his process and that of a less experienced team member:

“I noticed one of the graduates the other day was looking at a piece of playground equipment that was going to be bespoke and they had straight away started looking at fall heights and so on. I just can’t work like that. I know what fall heights are generally off the top of my head but when I’m designing I never think about turning radii or fall heights, I just design it. [...] I do it very intuitively and make it work later” (Expert #26).

While it is easy to observe the logic by which design decisions are made in analytical problem solving, this expert’s anecdote demonstrated what was clear in the literature; that the reasoning of experienced designers is far less easily detected. As Flyvbjerg (2001, p. 17) noted, expert methods are, “intuitive, holistic, and synchronous action is now at the center”. Intuition based upon extensive experience therefore emerged as the first core attribute across both sets of key informants and the literature. Intuition enables designers to draw on and experiment more efficiently and creatively with a much larger pool of practical information when relieved of the restraints of rule-based analysis (ibid). However I was also keen to understand the ways in which designer’s applied their intuition in the design context. The answers to my question came through discovering another key theme in the responses of key informants, and this was the notion of framing.

**Design framing**

According to key informants, framing a complex problem allows them flexibility to prioritise certain characteristics over others in order to create cohesion to a design proposal. As one New Zealand Expert noted:
“We talk about trying to throw the net out wide to capture whatever phenomenon we’re working with and we frame it often in a context. Context is about a larger frame than the associations that connect this certain subject, whether it’s a site or whatever” (Expert #27).

This comment highlighted how concept frames help prioritise, interrelate and respond to the most important aspects of a complex context or situation, and are used by designers because many problems aren’t problems as such, but more “a complex layering of pressures, forces, perceptions, desires, priorities and values” (Plowright, 2014, p. 26). These disparate influences could be seen in the remarks of another New Zealand landscape architect who explained the different values sets that designer’s attempt to embrace in a proposal:

“One of the things I tend to do nowadays is to build into it a multi-faceted approach whereby for example aesthetic considerations will be part of it, practical considerations will be part of it, [...] diversity, providing for more than just the plants but wildlife and birds and so on, using water to good effect, using landform to good effect and telling stories. It’s all of those things and a whole lot more” (Expert #28).

Not only does framing enable designers to selectively respond to certain aspects of the problem over others, it also allows them to address less tangible considerations, which might otherwise be overlooked in reductive problem solving methods (Plowright, 2014). As Batty (2012, p. 4) explained, the issue with applying logic to complex problems is that they are “hard to define or rather, they defy definition and clarity as soon as one begins to explore them”.

The value of framing to address complexity was reported by both sets of key informants, but like intuitive decision-making, its use is not always obvious (Cross, 2011). A Danish Expert illustrated the synchronistic nature of the expert’s processing of different types of information and how seamlessly this information is often dealt with:

“We do a kind of walk and talk, like an analysis on the site. We do analysis and get the concepts at the same time. [...] It’s not like we do an analysis and then sit and sketch. We do everything in a mix [...] because in that conversation you can work in multiple scales at the same time” (Expert #33).
Key informants used similar terms to framing in describing their expertise, such as “translate”, “synthesise”, “edit” and “distill”. This confirmed their need to develop some kind of “filtering process” that as Plowright (2014, p. 27) argued, “limits which information [is] used in the initial set up of an architectural design process”. Key informant’s descriptions included poetic explanations such as; “to create a clear story”, “devise a metaphor” or “envisage a mental map”. As reported in the literature, frames are essential tools for designers by providing an underlying structure. Importantly for participatory process, this leaves “large points of flexibility as points of engagement for human choices, artistic desire and personal interest. Reduced to this description, there can often be deceptively simple patterns behind complexity” (ibid, 2014, p. 311). The attributes of design expertise therefore contain similar qualities to elegance outlined in Chapter Two, in that the designer performs a kind of editing process in order to create a coherent outcome out of complexity.

Key informant’s views on framing therefore reinforced the human aspects of design expertise observed in the literature, in that the “the starting bias and selection of elements in the design are the role of the designer, not of the method” (ibid, 2014, p. 28). Framing enables designers to create a “(novel) standpoint from which a problematic situation can be tackled” (Dorst, 2011, p. 525). One of the New Zealand participation experts illustrated this by recollecting her own experience of design expertise within the participatory context:

“A lot of participatory design is about reforming a place, not big or small interventions, it’s about reforming the place and therefore the life. And that’s what [designers] do for me. It’s that moment of magic where, if you had a mucky bit of wool in knots, I’d pull it apart so that you can see a different pattern in it and then they can go oh that pattern tells me a new story and therefore I make a new type of design” (Expert #23).

Lawson and Dorst (2009) explained that the main source of designer’s learning comes through the project so that, when faced with a design problem, they intuitively use relevant details from past experience as well as the current context in order to generate a new proposition or frame. Framing as a core attribute of design expertise therefore demonstrates the importance of human judgment in addressing complexity and the use of intuition by which to prioritise particular information.
A Danish expert highlighted the flexibility of framing as a design strategy, noting the ability to incorporate new information as opposed to being restricted by the step-by-step processes of explicit problem solving:

“I get the point when you’re not in control over everything [...] because the project would be nice just going from A to B. But we always say if a project is just going from A to B, your end product is always going to be outdated when you get there. But if you allow yourself to do this on the way to B, [a better] outcome might be a C. I think it’s just about how to explain that to the people that are sitting in the financial department, that its not going to cost more, we’re going to learn a lot more” (Danish Expert #35).

Creating a structure to provide direction to idea generation was therefore a consistent feature across both groups of key informants. Framing is an activity that temporarily puts aside some issues while “selectively viewing the design situation in a particular way (Lawson and Dorst, 2009, p. 50). By doing so, designers can apply breadth to a specific context rather than be bound by the logic of analytical methods. In identifying framing as the second key feature of design expertise, what also became obvious from the responses of key informants was the relevance of a related and complementary process, which involved testing the design frame.

**Testing design frames**

Another equally important theme to emerge from the responses of key informants was the activity of testing, in which designers explained how they gather information about the problem and experiment with different solutions relevant to the frame. A New Zealand Expert described this important part of the design process. He noted that:

“after crafting [and] teasing and reviewing it and pushing it around and molding it [...] you need to put it through a qualitative sieve [...] and then test the things you know [...] You need to throw some different angles at it and then see what comes out of that. Pull it together and communicate it, what it is, how it acts and performs and looks and feels” (Expert #27).
Testing was an important complement to framing. As Dorst (2011) explained, the designer is essentially working backwards from the frame. The frame is developed initially as “the only ‘known’ in the equation” [which is] the ‘value’ that needs to be created” (ibid, p. 525). Yet as was obvious in Expert #27’s response, and the views of other key informants, designer’s proposals are experiments that hold the potential for various ways in which the problem might be solved. Lawson and Dorst (2009, p. 34) explained the iterative process:

“Designers sketch an idea and then look at what [they] have made with a critical eye. This fresh look often immediately shows [them] what needs changing to improve the design. So [they] modify and then [they] again look critically at what [they] have done”.

As noted in Chapter Two, this learning process involves trial and error where the designer explores different possibilities as they “learn their way towards a design solution” (ibid). Through it all, the overriding fame holds the complexity of different values together, keeping the evolving design cohesive, as problem and solution are worked on iteratively, although the evaluation of the various tests might lead to a new frame (Schon, 1983).

The social context of testing ideas also featured as an important aspect of designer’s expertise, as key informants explained how they extended their experimentation with other professions. As New Zealand Expert #24 explained:

“everything we do is collaborative, either collaborative just within our team or collaborative with other disciplines. [When] collaborat[ing] with other disciplines, you productively argue the solution through. So it’s tested, it’s rigorously tested so you come to a point that we will, we think, work. You have to stand by that and get that through the next phase”.

Further insights emerged as designers spoke about testing ideas within the participatory process, with much of their focus on establishing relationships with participants. This was particularly relevant for a New Zealand Expert working in the Māori cultural context, as he explained the connection between testing and developing the frame:

“First we would have what we call whakawhanaungatanga which is, you know, to establish our relationships and explain who we are and where we
come from and so on, and then we would talk about the project itself. It would be more a matter of ok well lets work this thing through together and see what we can come up with as a group. And that is a way of testing different ideas of fleshing out the brief and getting a better understanding of what possibilities exist. So not immediately having necessarily a sort of a zeroed in approach to what the outcome might be, but leaving it more open” (Expert #28).

These comments illustrated the way designers use both frame and testing in the social context. The process aligns closely with Forester’s (1985) notion of “sense-making” in which the process has a robust structure but is flexible enough to allow emergent information to form, not envisioned at the beginning of the project. The reasoning process serves as a learning process for the designer as well as the participants and situates the designer’s work in context.

The third core attribute of design expertise therefore, was that testing forms a necessary complement to framing, and involves experimenting with different possibilities in the social context. But what is it that makes the social context so important? The following section explores one of the most significant themes to emerge from interviews with designers and participation experts and that is the importance of the landscape architect’s direct and iterative relationship with the public.

Consistencies – designer’s relationship with the public

“Designers design with others as much as they do with their heads or hands”
- Forester, 1985 p. 18.

The second set of important consistencies in key informant views included the importance of a direct and iterative relationship with the public, and the ability to listen well. They also indicated the importance of cohesive group dynamics. These responses emphasised the socially constructed nature of design expertise and that
good communication was a significant aspect of designer’s ability to resolve spatial issues towards cohesive outcomes.

**Direct and iterative relationship**

Both groups of key informants reported that the designer’s direct and iterative relationship with the public was an important aspect of the participatory design process, and this was also emphasised in the literature. For example, Till (2005, p. 11) explained that “conversation allows the architect [to move] from being a detached observer into an engaged participant, enabling him or her to see from within a given situation”. Till drew attention to the importance of everyday conversation in which non-professional moments contain the “germ of new spatial possibilities” (ibid). The relevance of this exchange was obvious in the comments of a New Zealand Expert who uses his practical knowledge to both ‘filter’ and incorporate public knowledge simultaneously:

“I can’t just sit there and listen. I have to sit there and draw it at the same time [...] Not only am I downloading but when I’m doing that, I’m also thinking, what are the design solutions. You can’t help thinking, when you’re drawing it out, you can’t help doing analysis at the same time in your mind. [...] The ability to draw [and] synthesise ideas off analysis very quickly is powerful” (Expert #20).

A Danish urban designer described a similar dynamic and the impact of this two way process on her design thinking where patterns and relationships emerge while interacting with the public:

“I do interviews, mixed with open workshops. It’s very inspiring to have these one on one interviews. We learn a lot from them and [people] talk about things that they are very passionate about. My design mind starts to tick away” (Expert #37).

Key informants illustrated the “practically situated” nature of design expertise identified by Forester (1985), which included the socially constructed way in which designer’s develop and refine their design concepts. Designers emphasised the opportunity in everyday conversations to pick up and work with the seed of an idea that is otherwise unavailable, through the phased models of problem solving
processes. As Forester (ibid, p. 17) observed, design expertise is “not simply a matter of instrumental problem-solving, it is a matter of altering, respecting, acknowledging, and shaping people’s lived worlds as well”.

Forester’s observations resonated in the following recollection from a New Zealand participatory Expert who reinforced the value of working directly with participants. The anecdote illustrates the value of the iterative relationship as way to reach new insights and understandings where ideas can be justified and explained:

“The professional was able to take their ideas and work [them] up and say, is this what you mean? They were working ‘on the fly’, building scenarios and concepts. It was just so rich [...] The [public] could see their ideas coming to life and then the landscape architect would be saying actually it’s not going to work because the sun is going to go across here and its going to be in shade, or its going to always be in sun, so it’s not going to work. The community hadn’t thought about that. [Until then], the dialogue just wasn’t there” (Expert #42).

Till (2005, p. 7) suggested that this kind of relationship requires the designer to project themselves into the user’s experience of the spatial context and to supplement their professional knowing ‘how’ and knowing ‘that’ with a “knowing ‘from within’”. Iterative process is therefore at the heart of transformative participation, where “architectural knowledge [is] not applied as an abstraction from the outside, but developed within the context of the given situation” (ibid). As Till explained, developmental knowledge “adjusts to and grows out of the social-cultural surroundings in which it is situated” (ibid).

The designer’s intuitive decision-making process enables them to see patterns and relationships relatively quickly, so that when applied iteratively within the social context, they are able to determine how new ideas and information might not only fit a frame or “tentative solution concept”, but also validate, justify and allow public knowledge to influence the “developing problem concept” (Cross, 2011, p. 10). Given that not everything of a particular context can be known from the outset, this two-way, iterative process allows the public “opportunity to actively transform the knowledge of the architect” (Till, 2005, p. 7). As several key informants noted
however, there is a mistaken perception that these processes take more time, particularly when working in the institutional context. As Expert #28 explained:

“although it may seem as though there’s time being wasted [with] relationship establishment and that this might delay proceedings, [...] if you have got a good relationship, if you establish that relationship up front, then the later stages happen a lot more smoothly and you’re not then later having to go back and rework stuff because you haven’t well understood what the goal is, what the intention is” (Expert #28).

As was clear through the literature, and previously noted, the expert’s skill in public space design is not applied using a specific rules or the isolated “genius” of the designer, but is predicated on their intuitive ability to draw on many different practical experiences that have influenced their thinking over time. Till (2005) argued that when empowered to selectively apply this intuitive knowledge alongside the people who actively understand and care about a place, a powerful combination for decision-making emerges. As Till (ibid, p. 12) explained:

“The role of the architect therefore becomes to understand and draw out the spatial implications of the urban storytelling. This role requires both knowledge and imagination, but in both cases these attributes are externalized and shared, rather than being internalised and exclusive as happens in non-participatory practice”.

Keen to understand how the direct and iterative relationship might affect the outcome, I asked key informants to elaborate on the characteristics of their practice that support the participatory process.

**Ability to listen**

Key informants emphasised that the ability to listen was a critical feature of the designer’s relationship with the public, which lay at the heart of the two way process. As a New Zealand landscape architect explained:

“If there were objections or suggestions or amendments, I’d always listen to those carefully and not necessarily take them on board as finished article, but what is it about that objection, or go back one step, what is it about the original idea that didn’t work and what is it about their suggestion that might make it better” (Expert #28).
Several experts noted that it was important to determine what might lie behind people’s initial thoughts, so that by listening carefully and applying the designer’s own experience and knowledge in these conversations helped take resolution to the next level:

“I think the reason why we had very good dialogue was that we were listening a lot and the people themselves advanced their future expectations and ideas. We tried to coordinate them with the possibilities of planning, law and [broader issues]. I think that form of listening to each other was very productive for the process” (Danish Expert #38).

Author Nancy Kline (2004, p. 37) has examined the conditions in which people think well together, explaining that when we listen to someone, “much of the quality of what you are hearing is your effect on them” (italics original). She argued that the quality of people’s thinking is therefore directly related to the quality of the listening, and that good listening makes it possible for people “move further, go faster, plumb insights, banish blocks and produce brand-new, exactly needed ideas in record time (ibid, p. 27). In the context of New Zealand politics, Max Harris (2017, p. 262) has also recognised the value of listening, suggesting it has a transformational role in decision-making. He noted that:

“[i]f a ‘politics of listening’ is to be more than just a nice sounding phrase, it requires structural changes to political practice, as well as improvements in interpersonal contact. Listening does not mean placing weight on every demand made by a member of the public. It requires discerning the agendas and interests that can lie behind demands”.

One of the New Zealand Participation Experts broadened this notion, suggesting that:

“an ecology is actually what you’re trying to develop. It’s not [necessarily] a workshop or things that get lots of people to them or lots of voices [...] It’s actually about having the skill to design the system to suit the community. And that community includes those that are professionally involved – the architect, perhaps the local authority planner, perhaps councilors, it’s about creating the system and the ecology that works” (Expert #23).
This comment resonated with what was emphasised in the literature, that design expertise is not just a “cook-book method” but a very human application of experience which is influenced by a wider set of relationships. These interactions:

“take place in an institutional world where rationality is precarious at best, where conflict abounds, and where relations of power and authority constitute the terms of the feasible, the desirable, and at times even the imaginable” (Forester, 1985, p. 14).

By considering the socially constructed way in which design takes place, designers were reflective of how they influence the social context but how it influences them as well. The two-way process was illustrated in the following comment from a German Expert who noted the influence of group dynamics on his own professional practice as he sought to empower the group he was working with:

“I [have] had to learn well maybe there are other people in the group that can answer the question […] it is much more interesting if it comes from the group […] People would defend or have a good argument for one or other parts of the design. Then it’s not me defending the design, it’s them finding something in it. These mechanisms you really have to learn by experiencing them. You have to do it over and over again. You are part of the group. You are not sitting [above] the group [and] you really have to see what the dynamics of the group really are” (Expert #40).

Several key informants indicated the vulnerability of the developing concept, and the value of having another person present to facilitate the social dynamics which enabled them to focus on the design as it was tested in the social context:

“If the one who is moderating a session is also the author of a plan or a design, it’s sometimes a little difficult. Sometimes we [need] two roles […] I am playing the role of the designer, presenting a plan and [my colleague] is trying to at least act neutral, not trying to defend what I have put on the plan (Expert #24).

New Zealand Expert #28 felt similarly:

“If you’re a single person working with a group, it’s somehow not as easy as if there’s two or three of you where you can kind of build on each other. You can take time out and assess where it’s going and can have a kind of more helpful or telling kind of input rather than being one person having to think on their feet and cover off all possibilities”.

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The core attributes of design expertise articulated by Experts reveal that design expertise is clearly a human centred activity, based on intuition, not logic alone, and that methods that ‘filter’ or ‘frame’ disparate but relevant content allow designers to deal with complex situations in a coherent and elegant way. Key informant’s responses therefore show that the theoretical positions described in Chapter Two are still evident in contemporary practice. They also demonstrate that for both groups, “design is a deeply social process” (Forester, 1985, p. 18), so that the public needs as ‘client’ are most effectively incorporated into the expert process through a direct and iterative relationship. The ability of designers to listen well and to understand the nature of group dynamics was another important feature.

Importantly, there were no significant differences in the core attributes of design expertise across the contrasting groups of key informants in both New Zealand and Northern Europe. However, there were other differences. Having described the core attributes of design expertise and the social dimensions of design to emerge in the responses reported from both New Zealand and Northern European Experts, the following section identifies some of the differences to appear between these groups.

**Differences between New Zealand & Northern European Experts**

While the core attributes of design expertise were similar across both New Zealand and Northern European key informants, there were differences in the application of their design expertise in the social context. This section highlights these differences, revealing that New Zealand landscape architect’s practices were shaped by a context of consultation with the public, while Experts in Denmark and Germany were working in collective forms of practice with the public through co-creation. These differences illustrate some of the tensions between instrumental and practice based reasoning in the context of public space design. The insights from these differences provide context to the case study in the following chapters.
**Design expertise and institutional process**

Tensions between design expertise and institutional process was a key theme to emerge in the experiences of New Zealand key informants. For example an expert from New Zealand explained his involvement in a project where he was faced with navigating two very different value sets, one as part of the deliberative process within a local Māori community, the other through the instrumental values of a government department’s project deadlines:

> “On one hand there was the park ranger saying when is that asset going to be delivered and on the other hand there was the kaumātua saying, we don’t all agree on what this is to be yet. It even came down to how these things are represented because in a conventional sense we [use] plans and sections, very diagrammatic, formal sorts of drawings” (Expert #26).

Expert #26 explained the design skills that enabled him to communicate most effectively with the iwi. Meeting regularly and sketching was a key part of an iterative process. This involved:

> “nearly all one-point perspectives because they were quick and easy. They were more of a ‘feel’ for something. I’d provide that at the meeting, we’d all discuss it, they’d take it away and they’d come back with it and then in the meantime I’d developed up what I thought they’d said – we’d then have another one so it would just keep going round. [...] Trying to keep those things working together to arrive at one common outcome is quite a challenge”.

The tensions described by Expert #26 were also observed by Healey (1996, p. 51) who emphasised that it is often the moral and emotive-aesthetic reasoning modes, which enable articulation of ‘truths’ and ‘values’, that are ‘crowded out’ by facts and the efficiencies of logical rule-based problem solving. This example illustrates that the nature of design thinking and its spatial application enabled the designer to more effectively resolve and communicate complex concepts in the context of communicative reasoning.

Another New Zealand expert explained a different experience of these tensions and how a more distanced relationship with the public affected their design work:

> “I have to be honest and say we are a little bit disenfranchised [...] We started out doing quite a bit of work [with this community] and actually engaging
with [people]. But as time has progressed the [management team] have said, you need to deal with us, and we’ve got removed from that […] We quite strongly believe that’s been to the detriment of the projects. There have been more problems with them because of that, the way that’s handled” (Expert #29).

Managerial staff adopted an instrumental approach to decision-making and became the point of contact between the landscape architect and the public, in order to create a ‘level playing field’ so that each client group could access the same level of expertise, rather than one group getting more out of the engagement exercise than another (ibid). This kind of reasoning has much in common with analytical problem solving where values are reduced to detached and objective information rather than the “practical judgements in context” associated with design expertise. Expert #29 observed the consequences for both designer and the public:

“Some of the disgruntlement that comes back from [people] is that they feel as if they’re having something placed on them rather than being engaged in it […] They get really minimal input these days where we perhaps show them some things that we can do and they put a wish list together kind of thing”.

At a broader scale, instrumental reasoning also appears behind larger city-wide projects where analysis is carried out through administrative processes prior to the designer’s involvement. While several New Zealand landscape architects noted the value of pre-commencement surveys to get a gauge on public feeling, this was often the only public information available to designers. This prompted another New Zealand expert to talk about the difficulty this created in truly understanding the complex issues behind the problems:

“As designers you’re more divorced from the impact on the [public]. You’re thinking at such a large scale that you can only estimate [the impact] or read the analysis of the feedback (Expert #49).

The challenges designers face in effectively incorporating public involvement through instrumental reasoning was reinforced by a New Zealand participatory expert whose insights illustrated how both communicative reasoning and the core attributes of design thinking were marginalised by problem solving:

“The nature of the larger projects means engagement is difficult and less intimate [and so] a kind of mindset develops where people get pushed out. I
sort of understand it because I had design guidelines for the city and this is exactly how the city could look. But it required council to have big capital budgets and to be lined up to deliver these big projects. When you do that, you don’t necessarily engage with the people because you’ve got a timeframe, you’ve got a budget. So that engagement becomes just a by-product all the time. One of the things that kept getting missed in the design process was allowing things to happen within it and being able to test and try things instead of just having to roll out the big capital project” (Expert #42).

These comments supported what I had discovered in the literature about the association of instrumental reasoning with government institutions, where the focus on decision-making is on ‘means’ and ‘ends’ in logical and systematic ways. Both New Zealand and Danish designers explained the reductive outcomes of such approaches and the challenge of addressing the wider complexities of design within these modes of bureaucratic practice. Expert #26 noted that public involvement was often:

“measured as being delivered to satisfaction, rather than just an ‘intangible’ [or] seen as a ‘feel good’. So you just tick the box. Yes we talked to them or yes we sent the plans out in the mail”.

Danish experts noted a similar challenge with the administrative processes of consultation, which, focused on public feedback, is associated with a ‘passive’ style of public participation (as illustrated on the theoretical framework introduced in Chapter Two. As Danish Expert #35 explained:

“I think citizen involvement [in Denmark] has been on the agenda for many years but it’s been like a checklist. You know it’s been like you’re checking off boxes. They use the word ‘hearing’ but I think there is a difficulty in using the word ‘hearing’ [...] Hearing is, I present something to you and I hear you but that’s it. It’s not a dialogue”.

These insights from both sets of Experts highlighted another tension between institutional decision-making and design expertise, and that is the dominance of instrumental reasoning over the application of practical judgments in context. As Pitman (2012) noted, such processes are often undertaken independently of the nature of the task, and outside “the sets of values revealed through the structures of discourse within the community and through the nature of judgements made in situated practice” (Pitman, 2012, p. 141).
The following Danish designer’s comments therefore reinforced what was emphasised in the literature about the conflicting motivations of designers and institutions:

“Municipalities and institutions are [...] always very, very careful when it’s about being transparent and open and I think we’re the totally opposite. We have a trust in that if you give people insight, they also have a better understanding of why things are happening” (Expert #35).

As Hall (1980) noted, government institutions are focused on efficiency and stability and therefore seek to avoid uncertainty so that regulatory processes are in place to create a stable environment. These processes make it difficult to accommodate forms of reasoning other than those that serve this outcome. A New Zealand Participation Expert reinforced this, suggesting that:

“local authorities in New Zealand tend to keep people at ‘arms length’ by focusing on their own modes of instrumental reasoning. Council knows its processes very well and builds its own capacity to deliver that, but it doesn’t always think about how the community can get there” (Expert #42).

Expert #42 explained the dominance of administrative processes as it related to participatory design, and demonstrated how the focus on efficiency is an example of what Jonathan Boston (2017, p. 15) called a “presentist bias”, where short term interests are given more weight than holistic and comprehensive approaches:

“The Local Government Act sets a minimum standard, [that is] you have to go through a special consultative procedure or whatever. So people just stick to the minimum standard and don’t think right, well we can do more or we should change our practice and we could change the way that people view local government” (Expert #42).

The reason that the conflicting decision-making processes of designers and institutions are important is that they have implications for effectively and coherently dealing with the complexity of public space. While both New Zealand and Northern European Experts associated consultation by public authorities with instrumental reasoning and representative forms of public involvement, the experiences of Experts from Denmark and Germany revealed that there have been significant changes within institutional process in these countries over the last ten years to actively counter this instrumental dynamic. These approaches are having a
significant impact on the processes and outcomes of public space design as the next section explains.

**Co-creation and co-design**

The second major contrast was the way in which Experts in Germany and Denmark focused on a form of participation known as Co-design. As noted in Chapter Two, co-design is a particular example of co-creation, and refers to “collective creativity as it is applied across the whole span of a design process” (Sanders and Stappers, 2008, p. 6). This means that the public is empowered early on in the process, having “influence and room for [taking] the initiative in roles where they provide expertise and participate in the informing, ideating, and conceptualising [of] activities” (ibid, p. 9). Co-design empowers the public to assume the active role of “participant” rather than “user” who instead provide their feedback and perform particular tasks leaving others responsible for the concepts (ibid). In recent years the City of Copenhagen have encouraged a more open approach to participation and found a way to advance the aspirations of both designers and citizens beyond abstract planning. Their recently released vision, *Co-Create Copenhagen 2025* (City of Copenhagen, 2015a) describes the municipality’s ambitions for a “liveable, bold [and] responsible city”, explaining that everybody who uses the city “is invited to play an active part in developing the city and bringing it to life”.

A video on the Copenhagen Municipality’s website states that:

> “we call it co-create Copenhagen because we want to develop the city in collaboration with those who care about Copenhagen. It is a city with an edge. A city with an edge is about the unexpected, inviting new projects which are not yet defined. For me ‘edge’ is something that wakes my curiosity. Something that makes me feel smarter, like walking on shaky ground” (City of Copenhagen, 2015b).

Influenced in large part by Architect Jan Gehl’s work on public life in public spaces over the past sixty years, the municipality explicitly states their desire for a radical rethink of traditional planning. The document suggests that “the process must be less controlled – it must unleash Copenhageners’ creativity so that everybody works
together to build the city we want”. While these are high-level ambitions, the municipality is enthusiastically promoting an active partnership with the public, prioritising urban quality, and recognising that design and public participation are at the heart of the co-creative process. These ambitions can be found right through to central government in Denmark, who specifically mention the limitations of consultation as an institutional process. In their Architectural Policy (2014), *Putting People First*, they explain that, in the typical consultation phase,

“the public is only heard in connection with the solution phase rather than in the crucial initial phase when the assignment is given, and in which the citizens’ input is often most fruitful for the architects. Once the solution is drawn, the feedback is often reduced to a question of being for or against rather than being the kind of constructive input into the creative process that early involvement could bring. Therefore, we need to develop the methods of citizen dialogue and inspire to an earlier and more powerful use of the citizens’ input”.

Experts in Denmark spoke in particular about the value of temporary use projects that involve direct and ‘hands-on’ public participation. As “interim” or “meanwhile uses”, the less permanent nature of temporary use provides opportunities for testing ideas alongside the public which then influences the future use of a site (Bishop and Williams, 2012). As Wagner (2016, p. x) noted, temporary use sites are recognised as much more than simple short-term occupation of a vacant area:

“They become tools for various planning agendas – to establish new collaborative practices, transform spaces, test future facilities in ‘light’ versions’ and communicate with the public. They embody a wish for ‘different’, exceptional and experimental initiatives to frame city making”.

Danish architectural firm Arki_lab explained that developing a collective approach to creativity is a fundamental part of their design process:

“In public spaces, we find temporary projects are perfect opportunities to involve the citizens, not only because the guidelines become a little blurred but also because it’s more experimental. The journey from an idea to a result is shorter, sites can transform in a matter of days, and DIY building techniques offer fun and practical learning experiences” (Arki_lab, 2016, p. 113).
For example, temporary projects and other experimental initiatives were integral to the design process of Tåsinge Plads in Østerbro (Figure 9), a small public square that is part of a larger Master Plan for Klimakvarter, Copenhagen’s “first climate-adapted urban space” (City of Copenhagen, 2016).

The purpose of the project was to create a new public space for the local community in an area with little public activity (Expert #34). Design for the square focused on developing a “coherent, green and climate-adapted neighbourhood” so that the purpose of temporary public activities were to generate public interest in the space while addressing the wider issues of stormwater in the area. As a “citizen driven urban renewal project” co-design became a central part of the process, and the experimental nature of public involvement in the project had a significant influence on the future design for the area (Munthe-Kass, 2015). The Municipality established a secretariat or local office in the immediate neighbourhood, which for five years served as a hub for the project. Local residents were invited to use the building to
carry out other related activities. This included a sustainable development organisation, a place for students to study and carry out related research projects, public meetings and local drama productions.

From summer 2012 until May 2014, a large number of temporary activities took place on the site. Led by local artists and designers they included ‘hands on’ prototyping as well as other experimental activities central to design based reasoning, all tailored to the framework for design. Temporary activities were a way in which citizens were encouraged to think about and use the space in different ways before more permanent solutions were considered. The interventions helped locals to understand the potential in the square, and it became more regularly used as a result:

“The space was made available through the interventions, and was developed and defined further from that vantage point by the involved citizens. In this way, the socio-technical imagination of citizens, as well as planners, was challenged and developed, which made it possible to re-imagine the space in new ways” (ibid, p. 234)

Local residents contributed to the project from the very beginning of the design process and were an integral part of establishing a detailed brief (Expert #34). As an architect, the design skills of the project director were an important part of this process, as he was able to discuss the implications of public ideas with local residents and facilitate dialogue with landscape architects tasked with the project (ibid):

“Some of the discussions about the layout of the square with the other neighbours, it’s been important to be able to say that I actually agree, this is a good idea you have, but to explain why it would or wouldn’t work” (ibid).

One of the most influential aspects of the temporary projects at Tåsinge Plads was that it enabled people to understand that it is possible for “overlapping ideas” of the space to exist at the same time (Munthe-Kass, 2015, p. 234):

“As active stakeholders in the urban spaces around them, these [new use practices] move from the domain of professional planning into a shared, collectively performed domain [...] The interventions make visible the many different conceptions of ‘the liveable city’ that exist among citizens – such as
urban space as a playground, urban space as recreational space or urban space as a ‘second home’ (ibid)”.

The local residents were therefore able to develop a sophisticated understanding of what was possible in the space. Their involvement in temporary projects over time essentially refined local thinking about different uses for the space, which then influenced what went into the final tender (Expert #34). Rather than asking for specific elements, people wanted the final outcome to be a “framework” for their own activity. For example, Expert #34 noted that people said, “don’t make a playground, but make something playful” and “make the water visible”. This process revealed that citizen involvement as part of a design thinking framework served not only to help people see their place in the area in a new way, it also helped them to understand how different uses of the space could occur simultaneously (Munthe-Kass, 2015). “Co-design interventions [therefore] serve to improve the interpretative flexibility of the spaces in which [people] are situated” (ibid, p. 234).

A second project I learned about through conversations with a researcher from the University of Copenhagen also used design based reasoning process in which to frame public involvement. Landscape architects from Copenhagen University have been working with 11 Municipalities around Denmark over four years on a project called Fremtidens Landskaber or Future Landscapes, experimenting with the ideas contained in Healey’s (1997) concepts of spatial planning and spatial strategy making, some of which have been outlined in Chapter Two. Expert #32 explained that the focus of their work is to bring experts, non-governmental organisations and citizens together with the idea to produce coherent plans and policies within the rural landscape. The researchers have experimented with concepts initially intended for the urban landscape, with very successful results.

In response to the Danish Environmental Ministry’s desire for improvements in spatial planning, the researchers have developed a process in which two groups tasked with devising a plan for an area; one a local group of residents, the other a group of experts from various disciplines, spent a morning at a particular site or area with representatives from the Municipality. Having developed their plans separately, the two groups then met during an evening session to discuss the outcomes, with a
Chapter 4: Design Expertise

landscape architect who as part of the expert group is tasked to draw up a final concept (Expert #32). The findings of the project have revealed that confronting external knowledge and ideas (the group of experts) with local knowledge and ideas (the local community) was extremely productive for the outcome (ibid). Expert #32 explained that the Municipality had been struggling for years with complex spatial planning issues, however the direct contact between experts and lay people have prompted unexpected resolutions that neither group had considered before the discussions. As another expert involved in the project noted:

“there’s normally a big distance between the municipality and the inhabitants at the local level, but these projects made this contact possible. Usually the municipalities are seen as controlling and distant organisations. But in this case, we created a very good collaboration between the locals and the municipalities. [As landscape architects] we were a kind of catalyst” (Expert #38)

Expert #38 reflected on the success the Municipality was experiencing not only in this rural context but in working at a more intimate level with the public in the city environment:

“It shows that it’s a good idea like what people have done in Copenhagen in the Municipality. That is, starting work on a more local level with the different parts of the city. Making local planning with those procedures also at a more detailed and local level than you usually have”.

Such approaches illustrate how both expertise and local knowledge are essential to the design process, and that in Denmark a number of municipalities are taking seriously the limitations that instrumental reasoning have placed on design expertise.

Working with the public on site, in a design-based process, was therefore a key theme to emerge across the Northern European key informants and this contrasted with the New Zealand responses. Similar to the process followed by *Future Landscapes*, the following German Expert illustrated how integral public knowledge and ideas are to the developing design concept. Expert #40 illustrated the experimental and experiential nature of the participatory design process, explaining that structuring a spatial design processes with the public was a critical part of their
site analysis, where public knowledge and ideas are collected through plans and images as well as dialogue. He explained that:

“we’re doing a lot of these projects where people walk or cycle with us through regions and communities and we try and make them put down their first questions, ideas, I would call it implicit knowledge. [At first] they don’t want to put it down, because it’s not done, it’s not ready yet. We know that, but you will lose it if you do not put it down, so just put it down. And they do that [...] it’s always engaging with space and trying to put down what the perceptions are, what structures people find interesting or what topics, themes they’ve discovered, all this disciplinary, basic part of our projects all the time” (Expert #40).

Expert #40 explained that almost seventy percent of his firm’s projects are co-creative processes where they work across an entire region to determine how the region could better work together and how landscape might be the connecting theme that “runs the project”. He noted that, “the most interesting projects are the ones where the community or the region who are commissioning it are still open for adaption during the process”.

Metta (2015) has observed that more recently in Europe, landscape architect’s aesthetic focus is on the process, which includes the type of interactions carried out with the public, rather than just the finished work we might have been accustomed to seeing in design publications. She noted that, “the social purpose shapes the aesthetic concept, so that sharing and participation have been elevated to aesthetic criteria” (ibid, p. 117). Design expertise in these contexts has been compared to the role of a “curator”, similar to exhibition curators “who design an overall narrative of a collective work in collaboration with a multitude of creators” (Diedrich et al., 2015, p. 87). Such processes include the involvement of the public in experimental activities such as prototyping and testing. As Degnegaard, Degnegaard and Coughlan (2015, p. 20) noted, this helps to make ideas tangible, “show[ing] how an idea might be part of a larger process, or how a particular detail might work. Creating a tangible manifestation of the idea takes the idea out of an individual’s head and makes it accessible to others, encouraging dialogue”.
The contrast in reported experiences between New Zealand and Northern European Experts draws attention to the tensions that New Zealand landscape architects experience through the consultation process followed in New Zealand. In New Zealand, public participation in design is most typically undertaken as part of a consultation process under the Local Government Act (2002). This statute provides for a representative form of engagement, requiring Councils to establish processes that ensure communities have information to make decisions and the opportunity to engage with Council and share their views. The purpose of consultation is therefore to “enable the effective participation of individuals and communities in the decision-making of councils [and to] enable elected representatives to make better-informed decisions on behalf of those they represent” (Te Tari Taiwhenua Department of Internal Affairs, 2011b). As Healey (1997) noted, representative approaches to public participation are most often associated with abstract, technocratic processes, as they are filtered through analytical planning procedures or administrators.

This illustrates the contradictions between different forms of design decision-making outlined in Chapter Two, where designers often find themselves caught between the need for reflective judgment on one hand, and the instrumental demands of the regulatory frameworks of institutional process on the other. As Kinsella & Pitman (2012b, p. 163) pointed out, “professional practices are more than the technical application of our knowledge in a service role”. The current New Zealand dynamic of reducing the designer’s expertise to a problem solving activity within a wider project management process is a well-observed phenomenon. As also noted in Chapter Two, it goes back to the 1950s, where technical reasoning was applied to manage the complex environment “out there” rather than the interactive processes that occur in daily life (Healey, 1997, p. 53).

Summary

Table 3 summarises the consistencies and differences in the design expertise and experiences of Experts from New Zealand and the Northern European contrast group, structured by themes from the literature in Chapter Two.
### Table 3: Consistencies and differences in design expertise and relationships with the public reported by key informants in New Zealand and Denmark/Germany.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSISTENCIES</th>
<th>DIFFERENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORE ATTRIBUTES OF DESIGN EXPERTISE</strong></td>
<td><strong>No differences found - core attributes of both groups of key informants were remarkably similar.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Designers adopt <em>intuitive decision-making</em> processes by abstracting lessons from previous cases and applying them in a new context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <em>Framing</em> a complex problem enables designers to create cohesion by prioritizing some characteristics over others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <em>Testing design frames</em> involves gathering information about the problem and experimenting with different solutions relevant to the frame.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Both groups of Experts had very similar understandings of <em>elegance</em> and its relevance for design expertise in creating cohesion from complexity.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DESIGNER’S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PUBLIC</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunity for a <em>direct and iterative relationship</em> with the public is a critical part of the design process.</td>
<td>• <em>Tensions between design expertise and institutional process</em> were more obvious in New Zealand key informant responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <em>Direct</em> contact allows the designer the opportunity to test ideas with the public – to tap into the ‘wealth of knowledge’ in the local context not available with problem solving.</td>
<td>• Northern European municipalities and designers used co-design to involve the public experientially and experimentally throughout the design process (e.g. writing brief, site analysis, creating plans, experimenting with and constructing prototypes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This helps justify or if necessary alter design decisions, educates both designer and the public and advances everyone’s ideas.</td>
<td>• By adopting co-design practices, public institutions empowered designers to use the practical reasoning associated with design expertise (<em>intuitive decision-making, framing, testing design frames</em>). This meant designers could incorporate disparate values and include public knowledge, which evolved alongside the contribution of the designer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The <em>ability to listen well</em> determines the quality of public response.</td>
<td>• <strong>Co-design</strong> enabled the designer to retain the editing or synthesising role, in order to create a cohesive and <em>elegant</em> resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Designers held shared experiences of consultation, which were associated with instrumental reasoning and representative forms of public participation. These types of engagement were not as effective as communicative reasoning framed by design expertise.</td>
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It reveals that the core attributes of design expertise were similar across both New Zealand and Northern European designers, confirming that the disciplines’ understanding of design expertise is essentially the same across contexts. The differences between these groups however lay in the framing of the social context. Where consultation within a wider administrative process appears dominant in New Zealand participatory process, co-creation is a more obvious part of participatory practice in the reported experiences of Northern European experts. These differences draw attention to the contrasting styles of bureaucracy in each setting.

On one hand the tendency for New Zealand public institutions is to rely on technical analysis and problem solving which keep the public at ‘arms length’. On the other it appears Northern European public institutions are more willing to involve the public in design processes which involve experimentation and prototyping. When considered in relation to the core attributes of design expertise discussed in Chapter Two, key informant responses demonstrate what was evident in the literature; that design expertise, when applied within a developmental process with the public, effectively incorporates a wealth of public knowledge and ideas not available from ‘arm’s length’ type consultation processes. The co-design process in Northern Europe is fundamental to creating cohesive and inclusive design outcomes.

Specific project examples from the Northern European experts illustrate the insights from Chapter Two, that design expertise when applied as a frame enables flexibility for the public to test and contribute to the developing concept, while transforming both the thinking of the designer and the public. Design thinking as a framework for participation, is therefore a human-centred perspective, which enables the public to be at the centre of the process. The different experiences between New Zealand and Northern European designers highlighted some of the tensions between instrumental and values based decision-making in design, the insights from which provide context to the case study in the following chapters.
CHAPTER 5: CHRISTCHURCH - CASE STUDY CONTEXT

As an introduction to the results of the case study investigation in Chapter Seven, this chapter traces the relationship between design expertise and public participation in Christchurch historically and politically, emphasising the success of integrated approaches that were the basis of many Christchurch City Council projects during the 1990s. The subsequent changing nature of this relationship is set within the broader political context of New Zealand politics, and the response by central government to the Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011. These events in particular appear to have prompted a shift towards a highly technocratic approach to decision-making in the design of public space.

Democratic heritage

Christchurch is a city with a strong democratic heritage. In earlier times, for example, the strength of the city’s trade union and suffragette movements fundamentally changed the political landscape of New Zealand (McAlloon, 2000). Leading suffragette Kate Sheppard called Christchurch home, as did Elsie Locke, who was a highly regarded peace activist living in the central city (Hayward & Cretney, 2015). McAlloon (2000) has emphasised the strength of social and environmental activism in Christchurch historically, which played a formative role in the democratic process of the city during the 1970s. For example, the Christchurch Environment Centre was established in Christchurch in 1973, encouraging Christchurch citizens to publically debate issues including public transport, recycling, pollution, Third World trade and disarmament (ibid). Alongside this, the concept of ‘municipal socialism’ has historically been a distinctive feature of Christchurch democracy, ensuring public ownership of the city’s utilities and amenities (ibid).

Democratic ideals and a strong representation of left-leaning mayors have also influenced the direction of local politics in Christchurch in recent decades. While standing as an Independent, three-term Mayor Vicki Buck was quietly supported by
the Labour party during the 1990s, and both Buck and her chief executive Mike Richardson were known for their promotion of collaboration and innovative approaches (McCrone, 2012). The city proudly embraced the label *The People’s Republic of Christchurch* during the 1990s, and Buck and Richardson were rewarded for their efforts towards democracy and efficiency as Christchurch received the German Bertelsmann Foundation Award in 1993 (Johnston, 2014). The award recognised the high levels of resident satisfaction with Council’s approach to public participation processes (Hayward & Cretney, 2015). The dynamics of the Christchurch political scene were in stark contrast to the national politics of the time as local ideals were increasingly at odds with the direction of a new right-wing government, which was dramatically reforming public administration and policy (Roper, 2015).

Changes in Christchurch City Council philosophy began to appear in the late 1990s, with the entrepreneurial ambitions of Mayor Gary Moore, as he implemented strategies to revitalise the central city (Johnston, 2014). Decision-making in the Council changed dramatically with Moore’s arrival, who during his leadership disbanded all Council standing committees in favour of seminars and portfolio group meetings, so “there was much less information available to the public about Council activities than ever before” (ibid, 2014, p. 106). As Johnston explained:

“By first establishing the Mayoral Forum and then by making changes to the decision-making structures of Council, power became concentrated in the mayor as he chaired the only decision-making body” (ibid, p. 257).

Moore served as Mayor between 1998 and 2007, and eventually replaced CEO Mike Richardson whose approach was about “teamwork and creativity” with Leslie McTurk who believed in “clearly defined responsibilities and performance targets” (McCrone, 2012, p. 3). Through creating a new public management regime, Moore’s changes to Council meant that the public came to be considered clients rather than citizens. McChron (2012) reported that the “first result of this corporate makeover was a rapid exodus of experienced staff. Within a couple of years [of Richardson leaving], 20 of [his] 25-strong leadership group had gone. There were complaints about the loss of institutional knowledge and a sharp change in attitudes as a new
breed of “we know best” technocrats took over [...] This drive toward professional managers was normal for the time” (ibid, p. 3).

**Landscape architecture and institutional process**

These shifts in political ideologies have played a large part in influencing the shape of landscape architect’s participatory design process in Christchurch. One example of this is the *Christchurch City Council’s Waterways and Wetlands Natural Asset Management Strategy* (Christchurch City Council, 1999, 2000).

During the 1990s, under the enabling regime of Buck and Richardson, Christchurch City Council engineers led the way in New Zealand waterway management, adopting innovative approaches and multi-value approaches to waterway design (Watts, 2011). A design-led process was used to develop a framework of values in response to requirements that Council create inventories and plans for the long-term management of the city’s assets (Heremaia, 2005). Landscape strategies were developed for various areas in Christchurch, and local communities played an empowered and pivotal role in the process (Lucas Associates; Christchurch City Council, 1998). Six values (landscape, heritage, ecology, recreation, culture and drainage) were used to explain and justify how naturalizing the city’s waterways would attract less cost for future generations than the traditional but utilitarian approach of piping water (Figure 10).
Designers, citizens and local government worked closely together to integrate the six values of the strategy into local catchment based plans and projects, and landscape architects played a key role in leading these projects while addressing their complexities (Christchurch City Council, 1999). A design-based approach meant that the purely functional outcomes of the past were improved by incorporating a number of related values, for less cost over the life of the entire project. City Council Engineer Robert Watts, the Council engineer leading the initiative, recalled the change from reductive, fragmented thinking towards this more integrated, holistic approach to waterway management, noting that public involvement in the design process was a key part of this philosophy:

“Today, in New Zealand, we endeavour to be influenced by the collective wisdom and knowledge of the community. The people of Christchurch when asked to describe what they would expect to see in a well-managed surface water environment expressed many different ideas. These ideas are able to be grouped into six values: ecology, landscape, recreation, heritage, culture
and drainage. The adoption of these values enabled a fundamental mind-shift away from past practice to occur. Over time this influenced how investments in the surface water system were planned, designed and maintained” (Watts, 2011, p. 38).

Through pilot projects such as _Restoring the Waterways within the University of Canterbury_ (Christchurch City Council, 1998) and _Restoring Avoca Valley Stream: a community model_ (Lucas Associates; Christchurch City Council, 1998), landscape architect’s skills were brought to the fore as they worked with communities to incorporate some of the less measureable but equally important ecological and social values into infrastructural asset management projects that fostered both local agency and elegant design outcomes in the city (Figure 11). Several Experts I interviewed were involved in this experimental work with the public and Expert #49 recounted that during this time landscape architects would present plans to Council at special lunchtime meetings, with plans and images of what was possible:

“We had special Council meetings during the lunch breaks where we presented these wonderful things that mainly landscape architects had come up with. Wonderful images of what was possible and I’m not kidding, after every presentation at each lunch break there was a round of applause from the committee. And they were thoroughly enthusiastic and supportive” (Expert #49).

Expert #49 recalled that at one particular presentation, one of the senior women councillors mentioned that this was exactly the kind of integrated management that she was hoping for with Local Government reform.
Figure 11: Avoca Valley Stream pilot project (Lucas Associates; Christchurch City Council, 1998, cover).
Local Government Act (LGA) 2002

The values and approach expressed through the *Waterways and Wetlands Strategy* were reflected in the Local Government Act (2002), which served to support open and transparent decision-making between local authorities and the public through increased engagement. As Cheyne (2015, p. 422) has observed, the Act:

“provided a unique legacy of devolved environmental administration with public participation at all levels of environmental planning and decision-making [with] the facilitation of participation by Māori and/or iwi [...] expressly provided for”.

The creative potential of design was therefore empowered through statute through political commitment and the institutional support of community partnerships. The intention was to respond to community need and monitor progress towards the four well-beings (social, economic, environmental and cultural values) identified in the Act. The mutually dependent nature of these values has been emphasised by Dalziel, Matunga and Saunders (2006) who noted the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) emphasises the strong interconnections between the four well-beings and that they must be considered together rather than in isolation. The LGA 2002 was a major change for local government and as Johnston (2014, p. 86) explained, it was a “move forward in working with the community”.

The 2007 Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy

The design and values based collaborative approach was also expressed at a strategic level through the creation of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (2007). The strategy was prepared under the LGA, and led by an Inquiry by Design process (Mentz & Goble, 2014) so that the strategy further illustrated the Council’s commitment to strengthening the relationship between design expertise and participation in the city. The strategy signalled a major shift towards integrated and sustainable growth policies. Christchurch residents, experts and stakeholders took part in numerous workshops during 2005 and 2006 and were clearly supportive of the increased interventionist approach to planning that worked towards creating
high-quality, sustainable environments. The strategy noted the value of a strong framework but also the challenge in allocating sufficient resources to keep it on track over future years.

New Christchurch mayor

However, the wider political landscape was changing rapidly. A centre right politician, Bob Parker, was elected mayor in 2007, and he continued Gary Moore’s corporate approach. Compared with the earlier years of Vicki Buck’s open and participatory styles of leadership, Parker’s style was one of corporate governance, which was reinforced by the changing management approach within Council (Drage, 2011). His actions raised questions in the public mind about Council transparency and accountability, and doubts emerged over Council competence within the first year of Parker’s mayoralty, when media reported that $17 million was spent on five inner-city properties with no consultation with community, local businesses or independent property advice (Van Beynen, 2008). As one of several controversial decisions under Parker’s leadership, the purchase destabilised democratic process in Christchurch and indicated a change in the political dynamics of local government in New Zealand, that were marked by reduced opportunities for public involvement (Drage, 2011).

Statutory participatory planning since 2008

The move away from public engagement towards corporate management was amplified in 2008 by political changes at a national level. The election of the National government led by John Key prompted a shift in focus away from local democracy and public participation (Cheyne, 2015). The change in direction was evident, for example, in a controversial decision made by central government early in 2010, as Canterbury’s democratically elected Regional Council were replaced with government appointed commissioners tasked with making strategic decisions regarding Canterbury’s air, water and transport Stuff (2010). This event further
degraded democratic process and local decision-making in Canterbury, leading to
strongly felt but ultimately fruitless public protests (Gorman, 2010). It is only
recently, in October 2016, that locally elected Councillors have re-joined the Council
alongside the six appointed commissioners.

The Canterbury earthquakes and local government

Later in 2010 the September 4th earthquake struck Canterbury, and its aftermath
was another factor in shaping the trajectory of local democracy. Ahead of the
October 10th election just over a month later, incumbent Mayor Bob Parker’s
handling of city affairs saw him behind in the polls, illustrating a clear local mood for
change. His competition, Jim Anderton focused his campaign on his connection to
the city’s strong Labour roots and his intention to “return the city to the people”
(Drage, 2011, p. 156). However the crisis and uncertainty surrounding the events of
the earthquake overturned local polling predictions, as a state of national
emergency was declared in Christchurch. Parker was re-elected as mayor, with the
issues of governance and public accountability that had emerged prior to the
earthquakes still left unresolved (ibid, 2011).

In February 2011, a second more destructive earthquake devastated the central city
as well as many parts of eastern Christchurch and it prompted the government to
establish a new, centralised government department to manage the crisis. The
Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) was created in March 2011 to
oversee the reconstruction of Christchurch. The government passed the Canterbury
Earthquake Recovery (CER) Act 2011 under urgency, which while useful for securing
national resources for the struggling city initially, gave the Minister extensive powers
and the ability to override locally elected decision-makers (Hayward & Cretney,
2015). As Reid (2011, p. 60) argued, this has essentially “obscure[d] the
constitutional separation between the two levels of government” and led to
significant and continuing tension between local and central government in
subsequent years.
Share an Idea and community response

Despite the wider shifts in ideological direction, the creative relationship between design and participation in Christchurch was revitalised in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes through a citywide community engagement process in May 2011. Share an Idea was a City Council led, week long event where communities were invited to consider the future recovery of Christchurch and to articulate the future citizens would like to see for their city (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Share an Idea, August 2011 (Christchurch City Council, 2011).

The approach built on work the Council had undertaken in 2009 with Gehl Architects (2010) and Gehl worked closely with the Council to facilitate the Share an Idea process. Over 100,000 local insights were gathered from the public towards replanning the city (Christchurch City Council, 2011b). This event culminated in the draft Central City Recovery Plan, which was presented to the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister in December 2011.

The Share an Idea event complemented many other community focused partnerships, competitions and presentations that emerged after the earthquakes, such as an international speaker series and the public exhibition and discussions initiated by the New Zealand Institute of Architects. The Institute facilitated regular events and invited the public to consider wide ranging topics affecting the future shape of the city, including environmental planning, urban design, heritage and
character, residential settlement and transportation and infrastructure (Athfield, 2011).

**Political response and democratic process**

In April 2012 the enthusiastic response from public was essentially stopped in its tracks as the Minister for Earthquake Recovery announced the establishment of the Christchurch City Development Unit (CCDU), who were tasked with gathering a team of designers to substantially revise the Council’s Central City Recovery Plan (Steeman, Holden, & Sachdeva, 2012). While some ideas from *Share an Idea* that were contained in the Council’s original draft would remain, the ‘100-day Blueprint for Action’ that was subsequently developed by twelve international and local architects and planners received no involvement from the public (Farrell, 2015).

CERA used the extra-ordinary powers assigned to them under the CER Act (2011) to exclude the public from the procedures of planning and design, despite protests from legal specialists and citizens. Hayward (2013, p. 37) argued that:

> “rather than reinvigorating a struggling local Council by investing in staff and using advisors to lift the capacity of elected representatives, democracy was supplanted by appointed professionals. In the process, institutional memory was eroded and pre-existing lines of communication were disrupted”.

The effect was to further weaken democratic process as the locally elected urban authorities were sidelined in re-planning the city. The Blueprint was completed in just 67 days, according to an architect involved in the process (Harvie, 2015). It became law the day after it’s launch in July 2012 (Bennett, Dann, Johnson, & Reynolds, 2014). Naomi Klein (2007) has argued that national crises have often been used by governments to push through unpopular policies, thereby exploiting situations where people are too emotionally exhausted or physically distracted to fight back. As Hayward (2016, p. 3) has observed, “urgency was used to justify limiting opportunities for inclusion, participation and transparency in local decision-making”. This has, in effect, widened the gap between design expertise and public participation in Christchurch.
In 2012 under section 27 of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act, the Minister for Recovery Gerry Brownlee launched the Land Use Recovery Plan, which immediately released land for residential and commercial development by amending the Urban Development Strategy planning framework (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012). With the Minister having taken over the UDS, CERA controlling the design of the central city, and SCIRT (The Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team) being assigned responsibility for re-building the city infrastructure, the division of responsibility over the city’s assets was clear. The Christchurch City Council was essentially excluded from the larger strategic planning and design processes, but would remain liable for a portion of costs and long term maintenance.

**Local Government Amendment Act 2013**

Successive amendments to the LGA under a National-led government have further weakened opportunities for participation at the local level by narrowing the purpose and powers of local authorities (Cheyne, 2015). As Hayward (2014, p. 182) has argued, the 2013 amendment to the Act has signalled a move away:

> “from fostering ‘social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities’ (known as the four wellbeings) to a much more limited role of ‘providing for good quality local infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions at the least possible cost to households and business’”.

These successive changes to statutory participatory planning have reduced the scope for citizen influence (Cheyne, 2015), essentially reversing what was gained during the 1980s and 1990s. Thomas and Memon (2007) have stressed the ideological tension that has always existed behind the LGA with its focus on improving management and accountability. They suggest that the provision to respond to local needs always stopped short of empowerment for local government to act independently of central government:
“The LGA reflects an ongoing dialectic between democracy and efficiency. In other words, there is a tension in New Zealand local government to give elected local authorities flexibility to respond to ‘diverse’ local communities, but also in a manner that is compliant with rational planning, evaluation and decision-making processes laid down by central government in order to ensure economic efficiency” (Thomas & Memon, 2007, p. 176).

The loss of the four “well-beings” as an integral and integrated aspect to earlier legislation signalled the reassertion of more instrumental approaches to decision-making. Deliberative, socially oriented values had been diminished, leaving design-led process and citizens less able to embrace the values based approaches that had proved so innovative and successful during the 1990s. As Hayward (2015, pp. 20-21) explained:

“New Zealand is [now] a well established ‘market liberal’ democracy, in which the state has been effectively rolled back from public life through far-reaching reforms over three decades, [with] concern that values of managerialism are supplanting a tradition of democratic citizenship in the nation where women first won the vote”.

Although the earthquakes had initially prompted a high point for engagement in Christchurch through the City Council and other public initiatives, Central Government’s response to the earthquakes was strongly technocratic and the trajectory that had been leading towards closer levels of interaction between designers and citizens during the 1990s and 2000s was dealt a major setback.

Community initiatives post-earthquakes

Despite this, local citizens have developed their own ways to participate in earthquake recovery, creating positive new memories by exploring experimental, playful and provocative ways to test out new ideas in the public realm (Cameron, Montgomery, Moore, & Stewart, 2018). Many ‘grass roots’ or ‘transitional’ organisations such as Gap Filler, Greening the Rubble and Te Pūtahi – Christchurch Centre for Architecture and City-making have evolved as a result of the earthquakes, believing that there are lessons to be learned in embracing more creative, inclusive and active approaches to community planning generally (Montgomery, 2012) (Figure
13). These groups have actively promoted the importance of ongoing engagement with the public from the beginning of each process (Bennett et al., 2014). They are creative and enthusiastic and through their local leadership have created novel and “non-traditional” ways of involving people in the activation of public space (Brand & Nicholson, 2016; Carr & Dionisio, 2017).

Several of these community initiatives have been supported by the Christchurch City Council through an annual Grant Funding Agreement, which has more recently been embedded in the 2015-2025 Long Term Community Plan (Christchurch City Council, 2015). Evaluations of the programme have identified some of the benefits of these initiatives to date, with further funding recently made available through a recently established Community Resilience Partnership Fund (Christchurch City Council, 2017b). The experimental nature of transitional projects post-earthquake has
enabled the Council to test ideas before full investment in a particular project, illustrating the value of their propositional nature. This in turn has helped people to think differently about the potential uses of sites and the way in which temporary projects can provide clusters of activity and unique experiences around other investment in the city (Reynolds, 2014). More broadly, organisations and individuals around the world have been studying these initiatives, seeking to learn more about coping resiliently and creatively in the aftermath of a natural disaster (Dionisio & Pawson, 2016). However, whilst innovation in participatory design has been promoted in temporary initiatives, it has been less evident in mainstream projects.

The Suburban Master Plans
At the same time as Share an Idea, and perhaps looking for a way in which they could respond to local need, the Council began engaging with Christchurch suburban communities to develop a series of Suburban Master Plans, the purpose of which was to provide an integrated, tailored and achievable framework to guide decision-making in the suburban areas of Christchurch (Christchurch City Council, 2012b). In contrast to the Blueprint, the Master Plans were promoted as an inclusive and collaborative initiative, “involving the Council, community boards and local stakeholders, including business property owners and operators, central and regional government agencies, community groups (such as social and environmental groups), local residents, Iwi and any other organisations that have a stake in the local community” (Christchurch City Council). Lyttelton Master Plan was one of the first plans to be adopted in June 2012, and urban design company Urbanism Plus was engaged by the Council to work closely with the Lyttelton community using the same Design by Inquiry approach that had been adopted for the Urban Development Strategy in 2007.
Election of a new mayor and local democracy

The strong traditions of local democracy in Christchurch had not been lost however, and in the October 2013 local body elections, Lianne Dalziel, a senior Labour Member of Parliament within the Christchurch East parliamentary electorate, the area hardest hit by the earthquakes, achieved a landslide victory and was elected mayor (Law, 2016). With a strong mandate from the public for transparent decision-making and better communication between Council and the public, she was in the position of negotiating a difficult relationship with central government. Yet as outlined in the introduction of this thesis, she had no hesitation in articulating the importance of empowering citizens as a model for regeneration:

“A community is not the co-location of houses – that’s a suburb. It’s the relationship between people and their collective relationship with decision-makers. Communities are not just those of place, they can be communities of identity or interest” (Dalziel, 2015, p. A.17).

These ambitions may yet gain support from the latest amendments to the LGA in 2014 and 2017, which require Councils to develop a Significance and Engagement Policy. Cheyne (2015) has suggested that this policy appears to create a more flexible process for Councils and may serve to simplify the process, shifting the emphasis from consultation to engagement.

Significance & Engagement Policy 2017 and Albion Square

Christchurch City Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy 2017 (Christchurch City Council, 2017c) is based on the International Association for Participation’s (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum (see Table 1 in Chapter Two), which many local authorities around the world use to determine the type of role the public might play in a public participation process. The policy outlines the Council’s desire to engage with the community in local decision-making and states that “genuine engagement will be encouraged in a manner that is consistent with the significance of the issue, proposal or decision, is transparent and clearly communicated” (2017c, p. 1). The policy also explains that Council determines the approach to engagement by
assessing the level of the project’s significance. Various criteria are given as guidance and Council staff use these in assessing the appropriate style and method of engagement. Among the criteria considered is the number and level of impact on those affected, the level of existing community interest in the project, the project’s impact on Māori culture and traditions, and/or cost and risks to the Council etc (ibid, p. 2). Significance is then linked to the appropriate level and type of engagement activity using a table, which ranges across a scale of increasing citizen involvement (Table 4).

### Table 1: Examples of Engagement Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Level</th>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does it involve</td>
<td>To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</td>
<td>To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</td>
<td>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</td>
<td>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</td>
<td>To place final decision making in the hands of the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples of tools the Council might use (Note: these tools may be applicable across many levels of engagement)</td>
<td>• Email newsletter to local communities and networks</td>
<td>• Formal submissions and hearings or the Special Consultative Procedure</td>
<td>• Workshops</td>
<td>• External working groups (involving community experts)</td>
<td>• Binding referendum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Information flyers to neighbourhoods</td>
<td>• Focus groups</td>
<td>• Focus/ stakeholder groups’ meetings</td>
<td>• Community Advisory Groups (involving community representatives)</td>
<td>• Local body elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Public notices/info in community newspapers, website</td>
<td>• Community meetings</td>
<td>• Public meetings, drop-in sessions</td>
<td>• Online surveys/forums</td>
<td>• Delegation of some decision-making to a community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Online opportunities to submit ideas/feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the community is likely to be involved</td>
<td>Once a decision is made and is being implemented.</td>
<td>Once the Council has determined an initial preferred position it would endeavour to provide the community with sufficient time to participate and respond.</td>
<td>The community or specific communities could be engaged throughout the process, or at specific stages of the process as appropriate.</td>
<td>The community or specific communities will be engaged from the outset, including the development of alternatives to the preferred solution.</td>
<td>The community or communities will be engaged throughout the process to ensure ownership of the development of alternatives, identification of the preferred solution(s) and delegated decision-making on the preferred solution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Examples of Engagement Activities outlined in CCC’s Significance and Engagement Policy (Christchurch City Council, 2017c, p. 8).
Several experts I spoke with explained that although the IAP2 model extends from informing to empowerment (after Arnstein), the Christchurch City Council engagement processes are typically located in the ‘consultation’ category, towards the passive end of the range. In the Council’s *Significance and Engagement Policy 2017*, consultation is defined as, “a subset of engagement; a formal process where people can present their views to the Council on a specific decision or matter that is proposed and made public” (ibid, p. 5). Ways of giving feedback range from surveys, feedback forms and online opportunities to hearings, community meetings and focus groups. As noted in Chapter Two, consultation is a relatively passive form of engagement and being ultimately aligned with Arnstein’s model, says little about context or the motivations and rationale for decision-making in participation. Consultation is more closely associated with representative decision-making and the instrumental reasoning of public institutions, than with the abductive processes of co-design.

One of the experts I spoke with when looking into Council’s policies on engagement explained that face-to-face contact was the more successful approach, and that one of the most challenging aspects was how to motivate people to respond and take part in Council engagement processes.

“I don’t think it is fatigue because if you’re interested in something, it’s not that we’re consulted out, it’s that people need to be connected at the right time, in the right way and with the right message. It’s not that their general attitude is I don’t care about it. It’s like I as an engagement person haven’t managed to reach them in the right way, at the right time. People for the most part, do care, especially the urban space” (Expert #27).

These comments suggest that relational or values based aspects of engagement are the most effective tools for engagement, and that Council are perhaps limited by their instrumental reasoning in representative process.

It appears that the pressures of technocratic project management and delivery processes may have undermined the ability for values to be more central in the design process (Harris, 2017). While as Expert #27 noted, the *Significance and Engagement Policy* is a “relatively blunt instrument”, and that Council staff use
discretion as to the tools and tactics they use, the changes to the LGA as noted by Hayward (2013) earlier in this chapter led to greater focus on technocratic solutions as the infrastructural focus of the rebuild replaces the four well-beings and the associated reasoning in public space design. As one Expert observed, the 2013 changes to the Local Government Act no longer refer to sustainable development. “It’s about efficiency for the household, rates and so on. They removed virtually every reference to sustainable development in [The Act] and all those criteria of the well-beings of the community are gone” (Expert #48).

Interestingly, Albion Square is used in the policy document as an example of a “low significance” rating, alongside other public space projects (Christchurch City Council, 2017c, p. 2). Expert #48 explained that this is because low significance decisions are typically considered less risky for the Council and are smaller in scale. They are often delegated to the Community Board who are slightly distanced from the Council.

Summary

The City Council-led Waterways and Wetlands projects of the 1990s, the Greater Christchurch Urban Design Strategy in 2007 and the Share an Idea engagement process of 2011 are all recent examples of the integrated way in which designers and communities have worked together towards the design of public space in Christchurch. The Waterways and Wetlands programme demonstrated that for a period of time in Christchurch, landscape architects enjoyed a pivotal role in participatory design processes and that they engaged directly with the public in order to resolve complex values within a spatial framework. Christchurch has therefore in the past experienced an empowering context in which designers and communities worked closely together in the design of public space. However, ‘market liberal’ ideology has exerted a strong influence on design and democracy in New Zealand since the 1980s so that while there are still examples of the close ties between design and public participation today, as Chapter Four suggests, there appear to be many more examples where landscape architects are removed. The following chapter introduces the small settlement of Lyttelton and the location of
the Albion Square case study. Being close geographically to Christchurch, the town shares similar democratic traditions.
Chapter Six outlines the unique natural, cultural, historic and social characteristics of Lyttelton and the effects of a major earthquake close to the township in February 2011. It emphasises the significant changes to the built form of the historic town as a result of the earthquakes and provides context to the findings of the case study in Chapter Seven.

The location for the case study is in the heart of Lyttelton, a small township twenty minutes drive from the centre of Christchurch. The setting of Lyttelton is unique relative to Christchurch geographically, as it sits within a remnant volcanic crater on the north shores of Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour on Banks Peninsula (Figure 14). Lyttelton township is located on the steep, south facing side of the harbour and is an intensive settlement concentrated around the Whakaraupō coastline (Christchurch City Council & Boffa Miskell, 2007).

Figure 14: Lyttelton township relative to Christchurch City (Google Earth, 2018).
Chapter 6: Lyttelton & the February 2011 Earthquakes

Natural history

It is likely that Whakaraupō once contained some of the most spectacular podocarp forests on the Port Hills before human settlement (Wilson, 2009). The fertile soils, shelter and the south-facing aspect would have resulted in a dense and diverse forest canopy and beneath this there would have been rich layers of ferns, shrubs, climbers, epiphytes and a ground layer of mosses and herbs (ibid). The use of fire and other land clearance methods during European times meant that the forest retreated to the gullies of Whakaraupō so that there is little original native vegetation remaining (ibid).

Above the township the steepest slopes are still undeveloped with bluffs and large rocky outcrops covered with regenerating tussock, shrub and scrublands (Lucas, Meurk, & Lynn, 2005). These natural elements “create a memorable skyline that clearly reflects Whakaraupō’s underlying volcanic history” (Christchurch City Council & Boffa Miskell, 2007, p. 76). They accentuate the unique natural character of the area and can be seen either from the township itself, on entering Lyttelton through the road tunnel from Christchurch or from the high, winding Evan’s Pass Road that leads from the township of Sumner to Lyttelton (ibid).

Māori history

The Mahaanui Iwi Management Plan (2013) outlines the origins of Māori settlement and occupation of the Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour area over the past 800 years. The Plan explains that where the township of Lyttelton is centered, “the Kati Kuri/Ngāi Tahu war party fought and defeated the resident manawhenua Ngāti Mamoe at Ōhinehou (now Lyttelton)” (ibid, p. 34). The traditional story explains how Te Rakiwhakaputa cast his rāpaki (waist mat) on the shores of Rāpaki and ensured his descendents manawhenua (authority) by marrying Hine-te-a-Wheka, who had Ngāti Mamoe whakapapa (lineage). The fishing village of Ōhinehou was situated near where Sutton Reserve now stands, and a small trading market established near the site of the Oxford Street Bridge. The historic narrative of the Lyttelton Township Historic Area report notes that “by the time early European
settlers explored the area that was to become Lyttelton, it appears there was no longer a village or pa at Ohinehou” (Burgess, 2009). However the Lyttelton Master Plan has noted that during 1830-1850 in particular, local Māori from around the harbour were trading produce to early settlers and whalers from this area (Christchurch City Council, 2012b).

Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke (Rāpaki) Rūnanga hold manawhenua (authority) and are kaitiakitanga (guardians) of Whakaraupō and their relationship with Ōtautahi/Christchurch and Whakaraupō is acknowledged in the Lyttelton Master Plan (Christchurch City Council, 2012b, p. 90). Lyttelton also shares a connection with Parihaka, a small Taranaki coastal settlement, which by 1870 had become the largest Māori Village in the country and the centre of non-violent resistance to European confiscation of Māori land (Hohaia, O'Brien, & Strongman, 2005). By 1880, amidst mass dispossession from their land, many men from Parihaka were exiled to South Island prisons including the Lyttelton Gaol. As prisoners, they were involved in building the historic rock walls of the township as part of its new infrastructure (Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre, 2015a). As Warne (2016) observed, sending the prisoners to Lyttelton was a deliberate strategy to distance and weaken the Māori community. White albatross feathers or raukura can be seen stencilled as street art around Lyttelton today as the symbol of Parihaka, the symbol of peace (Figure 15). It is a tangible reminder of the important connection that Lyttelton and local Māori have with the community of Parihaka and the events of that time.
Physical description

The town has outstanding views of the harbour (Figure 16), its unique character having evolved due to its natural physical separation from Christchurch by the Port Hills (Burgess, 2009). The natural character of the area combined with the township’s unique nineteenth century features are a reminder of the evolving relationship between the port and the township itself, and these links to the city of Christchurch (Rice, 2004). The township dates from 1849, its distinctive grid pattern following 19th century urbanist planning principles with its pedestrian scale and “tight interconnected set of roads and pathways” (Burgess, 2009, p. 2). Almost the entire township is listed as an Historic Area and has been described by Heritage New Zealand as an “excellent surviving example of a planned colonial settlement” (ibid). The contrast of the township’s grid layout is clearly obvious in an early hydrographic survey of the Whakaraupō Lyttelton Harbour in 1856, showing where it sits within the context of the broader volcanic landscape (Figure 17).
Figure 16: Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour (May, 2017).

Figure 17: Portion of hydrographic map showing Lyttelton township in the Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour, 1856 (Alexander Turnbull Library Cartographic Collection, MapColl 834.44gmfs 1856 951849).
The original grid layout of the streets in Lyttelton remains clearly legible today with the highest concentration of historic buildings and features in the township having been concentrated within this grid (ibid). The Bridle Path is also a distinctive historic feature in the landscape, and is a reminder of how the first settlers walked from Lyttelton to the developing city of Christchurch, prior to the construction of the railway tunnel. The excavation of the tunnel through the volcanic hillside was completed in 1867, creating a vital link between the port and the Canterbury Plains. The growth of small farming in Canterbury led to an increase in the number of ships calling in at Lyttelton and the increasing capital works over the years to reclaim land to further the capacity of the port has created a distinct contrast between the nature of the port zone and residential activity in the township (Christchurch City Council, 2017a) (Figure 18). The port has also served as gateway to Antarctica and as a popular weekend recreational area to Christchurch residents (Rice, 2004).

Figure 18: Lyttelton from The Bridal Path, Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, presented by the Lyttelton Harbour Board, 1938 (Sydney Lough Thompson, 1938).
Social history, cohesion and local initiatives

Lyttelton is an important hub for other smaller communities around the Harbour Basin and has attracted an eclectic and artistic population of around 3000 residents (Christchurch City Council, 2012b). Since the first European settlers arrived, Lyttelton has been home to port and railway workers and fishermen as the most common historic occupations (Rice, 2004) and this historic social link remains obvious in the number and character of the original worker’s dwellings in the township (Burgess, 2009). At the start of this century, the restoration of many of these cottages demonstrated that Lyttelton was becoming a popular place to live and that trend has continued (ibid). Similarly many historic buildings located in the commercial area such as the hotels and lodges that had supported local people in it’s earlier days as a working port, have been retrofitted as cafes and specialty shops, and over recent years they have attracted many tourists (ibid) (Figure 19).

Figure 19: London Street before the earthquakes (Jocelyn Kinghorn, 2007).
The ever-changing port activity contributes to the gritty, industrial feel of the town and to some degree is what draws people to live in Lyttelton:

“A lot of lifestyle people have chosen to live there for the particular character of the place. That’s what it is, actually they love Lyttelton the way it is and they don’t want people coming in and changing it in a way that they’re not comfortable with” (Expert #7).

The working character and small scale of Lyttelton therefore creates a human dimension to the local area (Burgess, 2009) and Lyttelton residents are generally considered a close-knit community. Over the past decade the Lyttelton community have developed numerous successful initiatives, which have strengthened the local character of the township. Project Lyttelton is a non-profit organisation behind numerous community projects including the Timebank, the annual Festival of Lights, Harbour Harvest Festival, Garage Sale, and a regular not-for-profit Farmer’s Market (Figure 20), all run by local volunteers. The focus of the market is on the local community with vendors either from Lyttelton or the surrounding bays. As one resident noted:

“I think Lyttelton has acquired a reputation for being resilient and also for picking up with initiatives and pushing them through from an idea to completion with very little input from the Council. People say, why is it that Lyttelton does so well and honestly if we could bottle it, we could sell it. But I don’t think that you can. It’s something that’s evolved with time over Lyttelton. It’s partly the geography and also the people who are attracted to live in this place. It has a reputation for being creative, artistic, slightly out of the ordinary” (Community Member #11).

These traits illustrate a widespread perception of the Lyttelton community. Proud of their self-sufficiency, Lyttelton people have a strong interest in urban design matters and high expectations of engagement (Expert #7).
Lyttelton’s built form

The built form of Lyttelton has in many ways helped shape the social connectedness of the port town, with the steep topography allowing most residents views across a mix of buildings in various architectural styles (Burgess, 2009). In 2009 Heritage New Zealand listed the entire township as an Historic Area noting that, “[t]hose who live in Lyttelton see it like a community estate, since just about everyone has a view of the town and its setting” (ibid). Narrow walkways and steps weave between
nineteenth century timber cottages and link the town’s main streets and terraces (ibid).

However Lyttelton people are no strangers to disaster. In 1870 a huge fire spread out of control across the heart of the township. It was New Zealand’s worst fire to that point, destroying over two thirds of the township (Daily Southern Cross, 1870). The commercial centre was gradually rebuilt, demonstrating the adaptive nature of the small community (Rice, 2004) and post 1870 growth developed slowly. This meant that when the Lyttelton Stylebook was published in 1991, the town had managed to retain its historic character compared to other small townships of a similar size (Banks Peninsula District Council & Don Donnithorne Architects Ltd, 1991). The Lyttelton Stylebook was commissioned to provide a reference for new development and the improvement of the town centre, in order to protect and preserve the existing town character. Figure 21 and Figure 22 are sketches from the publication, emphasising the colonial character of Lyttelton and the relationships different buildings had with each other in terms of scale and style. As the commercial heart of the township, London Street had strength in both form and historic character, being completely built to the street edge (ibid). As the stylebook noted:

“Individually the number of buildings within the Commercial 1 zone which are of great architectural merit are limited. However, there are a significant number of substantial and well maintained buildings with varied architectural styles which contribute greatly in forming the character and image of Lyttelton” (ibid, p. 3)

The guidelines therefore emphasised the collective relationship of the historic buildings in the town centre, particularly those on street corners. Prior to the February 2011 earthquake many historic public and commercial buildings were still key features of the township. Located in prominent positions, many expressed the economic and social history of the area and were described as a “reference book of architectural styles” (Burgess, 2009). One of the key aspects of the Lyttelton’s appeal is the visual links available within the town, to the ever-changing port activity, the harbour and the broader crater rim (ibid).
Figure 21: London Street looking north-west pre-earthquakes (Banks Peninsula District Council & Don Donnithorne Architects Ltd, 1991, p. 3)

Figure 22: Prominent buildings in London Street from Lyttelton Stylebook (ibid, p. 4).
The February 2011 earthquakes

The epicentre of the first February 2011 earthquake was just 2km west of Lyttelton (Figure 23) and while it registered 6.3 on the Richter scale, the peak ground acceleration was one of the greatest ever recorded anywhere in the world (Gorman, 2011).

![Figure 23: Proximity of the February 2011 earthquake to Lyttelton Township (Google Earth, 2018 with text overlays).](image)

The earthquake was particularly violent due to its vertical motion and the ongoing aftershocks were felt regularly for several years afterwards. Well over 20,000 aftershocks have been recorded in the Canterbury region since (Figure 24).

One resident explained the terrifying effects in Lyttelton during the February 2011 earthquake:

“...I was trying to grab the door handle which was sort of elevating itself up and down by probably a metre or so. Well it probably wasn't that big but it felt like that, so I had trouble finding the door handle on the door [...]. I looked down the main street of Lyttelton to see this wave of obviously seismic energy lift up the Empire Hotel on the crest of this wave and then drop it gently down again and when I saw that that force of nature was strong enough to lift that whole building up and lower it down again I thought that
we’re in serious trouble here [...] the magnitude of that was just mind blowing really” (Stanaway, 2012).

![Earthquake Count & Energy Release](chart.png)

**Figure 24:** Number of earthquakes in Canterbury from Feb 2011 to Feb 2018 (Crowe, 2018).

The close proximity of the epicentre to Lyttelton impacted the small township dramatically (Figure 25 and Figure 26), with a significant number of the historic commercial buildings and churches severely damaged and subsequently demolished (Heather, 2011). The context of these effects on the Lyttelton community is important to emphasise as it created a heightened state of anxiety and stress for a significant time, which included the period of development of Albion Square. Figure 27 shows the impact of the earthquakes on London Street, the commercial heart of the township and the number of prominent buildings, which were irreparably damaged and subsequently demolished. Of particular significance were those buildings located on street corners, such as the old Fire Station, The Borough Offices and the Ground Café, formerly the Albion Hotel (Figure 28). Collectively these buildings were an eclectic mix of styles that had developed since the 1870s.
The Lyttelton Master Plan (2012, p. 16) noted that, “most prominent heritage buildings have been lost, including those which occupied commanding positions and served as ‘bookends’ to the main street”.

**Figure 25: Volcano Café – one of Lyttelton’s prominent buildings damaged as a result of the earthquakes and subsequently demolished (BeckerFraserPhotos, 2011).**

**Figure 26: Collapsed buildings on Oxford Street, Lyttelton (Stuff/The Press, 2011).**
Figure 27: Location of prominent buildings demolished in the commercial heart of Lyttelton Township (graphic overlay on aerial pre-earthquake, Ecan GIS, 2018).

Figure 28: The Ground Café (formerly the Albion Hotel) was one of the buildings located on prominent street corners on London Street, Lyttelton (Jenny Garing).
Figure 29: Prominent buildings in London Street, demolished after the February earthquakes (BeckerFraserPhotos, 2010; KeteScape, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2010d, 2010e).
Summary

This chapter has described the rich historic and cultural character of Lyttelton Township, set within the dramatic volcanic landscape of the broader Whakaraupō Lyttelton Harbour Basin. While the physical character of the built form has changed significantly as a result of the earthquakes and the town centre has lost important heritage landmarks, there remains a cohesive, creative and active community who have a strong focus on local initiatives and a desire for self-sufficiency. Well-known for its arts scene and creative edge, Lyttelton is a rich context for design inspiration. One would imagine that if a participatory design process could be successful anywhere, it would be here. The following chapter outlines the results of the case study, which begins with the community’s response in the aftermath of the earthquakes.
CHAPTER 7: RESULTS - THE ALBION SQUARE CASE STUDY

This chapter describes the design and community engagement process of Albion Square in Lyttelton, following the February 2011 earthquakes. A timeline (Figure 30) divides the case study into four phases, and is considered through the three theoretical perspectives previously discussed: design process, institutions, and community participation. Each phase begins at a time of tension or change in these relationships, which in turn has influenced the course of events and the design outcome. This chapter discusses each of these phases, and each section highlights the relevant phase in the diagram.

Phase One: Creating a Vision begins with a description of the effects of the earthquakes for the Lyttelton community, and in the context of crisis highlights the decision-making values that formed the foundation of the design and community engagement process for a new civic square. The section ends where the Council-led design process is announced and the first divergence in values are most apparent.

Phase Two: Placing a Vision covers the six-month period of the official Council-led design and engagement process to develop a concept plan for the Square. It ends with Community Board approval on behalf of the community and the appointment of a new design team for developed and detailed design, the next stage of the project.

Phase Three: Implementing the Vision outlines the expectations of the new design team for the project and some of the challenges they faced in developing and detailing the approved concept plan. It provides insight into the constraints the designers faced during the Council-led process and the implications for the outcome.

Phase Four: Living the Vision reports on results from interviews with participants, which are woven with site observations of Albion Square. This section reports on the design outcome through the perspectives of design quality, community inclusion and empowerment and institutional effectiveness.
Chapter 7: Results

The Albion Square Case Study

**Figure 30**: Timeline of the design and engagement process for Albion Square, from January 2011 to April 2015 and set within the effects of the Canterbury earthquakes.

- **PHASE ONE: Creating a Vision**
  - Local landscape architects make submission for alternative location
  - ‘Design by Inquiry’ workshop
  - Local landscape architects present alternative location in Lyttelton Review

- **PHASE TWO: Placing the Vision**
  - Carver & local artists review draft concepts
  - Peer review panel
  - Boffa Miskell - developed/detailed design
  - CCC landscape architects - concept plan

- **PHASE THREE: Implementing the Vision**
  - Council ask designers to make developed design to look as similar to concept plan as possible
  - Boffa Miskell - site supervision
  - “A refined local design aesthetic was created”
    - Boffa Miskell website 2017

- **PHASE FOUR: Living the Vision**
  - Waarao carving

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Lyttelton Master Plan development & adoption

RFP Transitional Arts Project

Consultation process

Site preparation

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Deputation ask Council to purchase Ground Cafe land

Community request partnership

Lyttelton Recovery Plan

Anzac Service

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Concern at engagement for Transitional Arts Project

Community brainstorm towards ‘richer engagement’

Anzac Service

Festival of Lights

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Temporary occupation of Ground Cafe site

Artworks created

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JAN 2011

JAN 2012

JAN 2013

JAN 2014

JAN 2015
Phase One: Creating a Vision

Figure 31: Phase One: Creating a Vision covers the events between February 2011 and March 2013, leading up to the Council’s design and engagement process for Albion Square.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the immediate aftermath of the February earthquake generated an upsurge of community based initiatives and self-help, so that as the recovery phase began there were high expectations and early local leadership.
Institutional response - Lyttelton Master Plan

On April 11 2011, a month prior to Christchurch City Council’s Share an Idea process, the Lyttelton/Mt Herbert Community Board (2011) called a public meeting to develop a Local Recovery Plan. Over 400 locals attended the meeting and after a second gathering in May 2011, the Community Board presented an overview of the resident’s ambitions and issues to both Christchurch City Council and CERA (Harvie, 2013; Smith, 2014).

Lyttelton subsequently became one of the first areas selected by the Council to develop a Suburban Master Plan due to the level of damage to both commercial and community buildings and also the regeneration work already begun prior to the earthquakes (Christchurch City Council, 2012b). After an initial information gathering phase, which built on the Local Recovery Plan already carried out, a Council-led community engagement process was undertaken between May and December 2011 which involved an ‘Inquiry by Design’ workshop led by Urban Design firm, Urbanism Plus. This process was similar to that undertaken for the 2007 Urban Design Strategy in Christchurch and the firm were engaged to lead workshops over three days in June of that year (ibid, p. 21).

Community response – a social gathering space

As far back as June 2011, while the Master Plan was being developed, local residents had been gathering regularly on the site of the Ground Café, which had been a popular delicatessen located in the historic Albion Hotel building. It was one of the earliest buildings to be demolished in Lyttelton as a result of earthquake damage (Figure 32). Supported by Gap Filler, a creative urban regeneration group that emerged in Christchurch as a result of the earthquakes, the site was the venue for numerous community activities (Figure 33). Petanque, barbeques, poetry and musical performances were just some of the regular activities held on the site with many from the community involved in creating it (Winn, 2015). The site was located on a prominent street corner and affectionately named the Lyttelton Petanque Club or LPC, which also played on a reference to the Lyttelton Port Company.
One of the key issues to emerge from consultation during the Lyttelton Master Plan process was the need for a new civic square (Christchurch City Council, 2012b, p. 59), and this was illustrated in the Master Plan as being located on the empty site of the Ground Café (Figure 34). “More gathering places” had emerged as one of the top
eight priorities in the *Lyttelton Recovery Plan* (Smith, 2014) and as Councillor Claudia Reid said at the opening of the square, “it’s quite remarkable that this community has never had a place to gather” (Young, 2013, p. A4).

![Artist’s impression of Lyttelton’s new civic square](image)

**Figure 34:** Artist’s impression of Lyttelton’s new civic square based on the acquisition of 44 London Street (Christchurch City Council, 2012b, p. 61).

Most experts and community members I interviewed believed that the success of the site’s temporary occupation made it one of the most obvious reasons for the permanent civic square location. These sentiments were expressed formally in the Lyttelton Master Plan (2012b, p. 59) which noted that, “given its post-earthquakes occupation as a temporary landscape (The Lyttelton Petanque Club), the community seems to have made and accepted this site as the new civic square already”. In addition, several residents reported that the site was one of the safest places to gather during the ongoing aftershocks and local media reported the temporary park as “a symbol of Lyttelton’s recovery” (Greenhill, 2012). One resident noted the social opportunity the demolished site presented explaining that:
“before the quakes, people had been lobbying the Council for a public space but after the quakes when there weren’t places to gather [...] this place served a function. People needed it and it got people thinking. It was a catalyst from the temporary to the permanent, but it was [also] timing, because they got it going early” (Community Member #4).

While many community members were supportive of the location, several experts were less enthusiastic, noting that the indicative concept of the new civic square shown in the Master Plan was problematic because the location appeared predetermined (Expert #3). Some suggested that the sketch was biased in choosing to illustrate just one location for the future civic square. Expert #8 argued that:

“the graphic was misleading and just one of the artist’s impressions contained in the document which were to the detriment of fair consultation and the consideration of strong alternatives for the site of the new civic square. [For example] the town/ferry connection was another project that wasn’t done justice by the sketches”.

Some experts believed that the wider context of the township needed consideration and that the proposed location conflicted with the design guidelines contained in the Master Plan. This emphasised the importance of consistent scale and built form in the rebuilding of the Lyttelton Town Centre. As Expert #8 said:

“putting a park here, that proposal kind of flies in the face of your urban design guidelines. It doesn’t make sense. We were worried that it... and it does... leak down the street, I mean spatially it leaks down the road. It doesn’t hold that corner. [There] was also an issue of what was going to happen at this [other] corner because the Stanaways had proposed their place. They made a proposal of their building and the Council said no it wasn’t substantial enough or something. I don’t know the details of that but we said ok if you want substantial protection then [London] Street needs book ends, solid book ends at either end because this block is the heart of Lyttelton”.

The Lyttelton Master Plan contained recommendations that any new development should consider preserving the architectural form of Lyttelton, particularly the prominent street corner sites which contributed significantly to the character and image of Lyttelton (Christchurch City Council, 2012b, pp. 93, 97, 99-100). The proposed site for the civic square was one of these sites.
Temporary occupation

Many experts and community members spoke about the influence of the local community in securing the site for the civic square and the impact of the transitional project on its permanent design. Both the sensory and symbolic aspects of temporary use appeared to satisfy a fundamental social need, particularly given the loss, trauma and ongoing aftershocks of the earthquakes. As Community Member #5 reflected:

“I don’t know when the actual hotel was pulled down but it was June 2011 when we had the Festival of Lights…and that place just became quite a spiritual place. Whenever anything happened, we were always gravitating to that spot and our local musicians were spontaneously playing on the corner”.

Several experts also noted the influence of temporary occupation on the site as significant to informing its future use. Expert #10 observed that, “the precedent had already been set because the community had taken over the space and started using it. So they were quite well informed about what they wanted and needed in the space”.

Temporary use of the site was set within the wider context of Christchurch post-earthquakes where, as outlined in Chapter Five, similar community initiatives had emerged in numerous parts of the city. Expert #10 explained that temporary use of the space enabled the community freedom to explore different ways of using the space:

“to test and try rather than the site being chosen by someone at Council and then being asked what they wanted to do on it. They actually had a chance to have a crack themselves”.

At this point, Council and many Lyttelton people appeared to share a common vision, working closely together towards the purchase of a new public space. However there were differences that also began to appear. Significant disagreement from local design experts emerged and also for Lyttelton residents as the style of engagement they were asking for was different to the regular approach of Council consultation. These sentiments were strongly expressed in a local newspaper article well before the Lyttelton Master Plan process was complete.
Consultation verses partnership

While the Council was collating feedback on the draft Master Plan, the *Lyttelton News* section of the *The Akaroa Mail* featured a full-page article describing the type of engagement that locals wanted from the rebuild (Baird, 2011). Many in the Lyttelton community were looking for ‘partnership’ not ‘consultation’ and they emphasised the wealth of local expertise and knowledge that could contribute to the process. The Lyttelton/Mt Herbert Community Board heard delegations from several community members asking that locals be “intimately involved in creating the new form of their town” (ibid, p. 9). Residents were particularly concerned that the Council’s traditional forms of consultation would be applied to the project, and insisted that:

> “although consultation allows for all the community to put forward their ideas, the process has limitations. Involvement needs to be continuous, not just for the gathering of information phase and then feedback once the draft document has been prepared” (ibid).

Expert #7 confirmed that:

> “people started saying to the Board, we want to be involved from the beginning in this design process... It was the community’s own insistence that they would be involved...It hasn’t worked that way in Christchurch but people were still thinking that way [in Lyttelton] and hadn’t given up on the idea at that stage”.

The site of the Ground Café was considered by many experts and community members as the logical evolution for the new civic square and the Lyttelton Master Plan noted that the location would achieve all the objectives identified from the consultation feedback (Christchurch City Council, 2012b, p. 59).

Alternative proposal from local landscape architects

At the same time however, and as part of a peer review for the Council’s draft Master Plan process, local landscape architects reiterated their concern at the bias towards the Ground Café site, and argued that other locations should be considered as part of a robust deliberative process. They proposed an alternative location; one
that they believed would also meet the needs of other issues identified in the Master Plan and address the role of Lyttelton as a hub for other small communities around the harbour. The designers had intended to present their proposal at a hearing of submissions to the draft Master Plan. However in April 2012 the Community Board decided against holding hearings, in the interests of speeding up the recovery process (Napier, 2012, p. 11).

Determined to provide residents with an opportunity to debate the issue, the landscape architects found other ways to share their alternative proposal, which featured in a July 2012 edition of local community newsletter, Lyttelton Review (Figure 35). Lyttelton Review is a community initiative, published fortnightly, that was developed by the Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre soon after the February 2011 earthquakes. Since that time it has kept local residents informed of news and events within the wider Lyttelton Harbour community.

![Figure 35: Alternative proposal location for Lyttelton’s Civic Square introduced by local landscape architects (Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre, 2012, p. 3).](image)

In the article, the landscape architects explained that in accordance with best practice urban design principles and other related issues outlined in the Lyttelton Master Plan, the town square would be better placed in the heart of the town centre, which needed to be ‘contained’ given the constraints to Lyttelton’s growth
geographically. The designers argued that instead of developing a public square on the site of the previous Ground Café:

“architecturally, the intersections at either end of London Street’s core business area should be enforced with appropriate buildings thereby giving support to the form and rhythm of the remaining [and future] buildings along the main street” (Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre, 2012, p. 3).

They suggested the Council carry out a land purchase or land swap with the empty central supermarket site (Figure 36) so that the long term plans for waterfront access identified in the draft Lyttelton Master Plan could be achieved through the development of internal lanes as part of the central block of the township (Figure 37).

Figure 36: Plans prepared by local landscape architects showing suggested land swap. The landscape architects requested further discussion, outlining the opportunities associated with a more central location for the civic square (Expert #8).
Figure 37: An alternative proposal was prepared by local landscape architects and put forward for Lyttelton’s civic square. It was circulated within the Lyttelton community and presented to the Lyttelton Business Association (ibid).
Expert #8 argued that:

“It was the right time to do something like this. It was post-earthquake, there was a Master Plan process [and] because [landscape architects] were involved early on, we could have had input in the actual foundations of why they’re doing the project, where they’re doing the project. Actually picking the right site for what they wanted to achieve”.

The designers gathered support from many locals in the community, including the Lyttelton Business Association where they pitched the idea at a meeting in August 2012 (Expert #8). However momentum was already under way through the Council purchase of the Ground Café land, and with the location for the square now fixed in the public mind, the landscape architects’ proposal was shelved (ibid).

**Ground Café site purchase**

Timing appears to have played a large part in Council’s ability to purchase the Ground Café site and no time was lost in making the most of the opportunity (Experts #7, #8 and #11). Community members observed that when a deputation of Lyttelton locals approached the Council to buy the site, it was unclear how much money was available for repairs and recovery after the earthquakes:

“In theory there was still some money sitting in the annual plan for land purchase but not long after that they realised a tidal wave of debt was building up because [the Council] basically had to focus on the infrastructure [...] the deputation went forward just at the right time and there would still have been some money sitting in the acquisition fund” (Community Member #11).

With mounting pressure from the community, and having been largely excluded by central government from the larger strategic planning processes, the Council ensured that the public square for Lyttelton became a key focus on the Council agenda. As Harvie (2013, p. 3) reported:

“The Civic Square and other progressions show the sorts of things the City Council can get done on its own, without seeking agreement or cash from the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) or Lyttelton Port of Christchurch”.

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City Councillor Claudia Reid announced the land purchase in July 2012, emphasising its role as “a catalyst for the recovery and rebuild of Lyttelton” stating that she had “no doubt that Lyttelton’s new civic square will become the town’s pulsating heart” (Christchurch City Council, 2012c, p. 1). In short, the new civic square had acquired political significance that extended well beyond the town itself.

**Energy of the Lyttelton community**

While energised by Council’s purchase of the land, Lyttelton locals also realised the limitations of Council resources to design and develop the new civic square. Local Community Member Tim Taylor issued a provocation to the community in the September 2012 issue of *Lyttelton Review* suggesting that it was within the community’s means to design and implement development of the Square themselves:

> “Lyttelton already has plenty of designers, builders, machinery, a whole range of materials, arborists, creativity, gardeners and energy in the community... The Gap Filler initiative showed that a lot of pleasure can be gained from simple ideas and some enthusiastic working bees. So let’s take that lead a step further. In the process we should be able to get an improved public space faster and highlight our ability to take a lead in our recovery” (Taylor, 2012, p. 3).

The experiences of the transitional project had served to empower the community and after establishing a strong connection to the site, many in the community were clearly ready and willing to take the next step. Council’s response to Taylor’s letter appeared in the following month’s *Lyttelton Review* as they announced funds were available to progress concept designs for the Square (Sowerby, 2012). Council and community leaders met and talked through ways in which they could work together and in the meantime a temporary license for the community to occupy the site was set up through Gap Filler (ibid, 2012).

Towards the end of 2012, a $101,600 budget was assigned for the design and consultation of the new Civic Square and a Council project team was tasked to work with the Lyttelton/Mt Herbert Community Board to develop design options (Expert
The role of the Community Board is set out in the Local Government Act 2002 stating that they are appointed to, “(a) represent and act as an advocate for, the interests of its community” and (b) communicate with community organisations and special interest groups within the community” (New Zealand Government, 2017). Expert #7 noted that the Community Board provided a valuable role in the project, being trusted and known by the community to effectively facilitate the process, to break down the “us and them” feeling between the community and Council. The Community Board subsequently acted as “broker between community and the Council organisations” and approved the final design concepts (Expert #7). The Council set aside a further $2.8 million over the following two years for implementation of the civic square as part of the Council’s Long Term Council Community Plan (Young, 2013).

**Transitional Arts Project**

As the Council project team was announced, the Council also advertised a Transitional Artworks project for the site (Christchurch City Council, 2012a). The project was directed at local artists, many of whom had lost their income and studios as a result of the earthquakes (Experts #7 and #15). Artists were encouraged to put forward proposals, which, if successful would trial future design elements for the new square (Christchurch City Council, 2013m).

$70,000 was allocated from a Council Transitional Projects budget towards the construction of the artworks and a flyer was soon circulated advising locals of the seven successful projects that would be considered as part of the square’s final design (Figure 38).
Chapter 7: Results – The Albion Square Case Study

Selected by a local panel, the judges included residents and a Community Board representative (Sachdeva, 2013). While there was an enthusiastic response from many members of the community, some were less than impressed with the Council investment. One community member noted that, “there was horror at the amount that the Council had spent on the transitional art project” (Community Member #9). What appeared to cause more unease among the community however was the process by which Council were planning to engage with residents in the formal process for the new civic square.

In January 2013, community members wrote to the Community Board expressing their concern at the approach to engagement for the Transitional Arts Project (Expert #7) and the intended engagement approach for the civic square. They noted that the process hadn’t embraced the strong networks of the community and they reiterated the sentiments contained in the October 2011 Akaroa Mail article regarding a request for partnership. They suggested instead that community-led advisory groups would allow citizens to be more involved part of the process.
(Community Member #5). A community brainstorm was announced in the Feb 2013 issue of *Lyttelton Review* in an attempt to encourage a “richer process of engagement with the Council into the future” (Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre, 2013b). The article invited community members to a local discussion, encouraging residents to take ownership of the process. The article explained:

> “Being a naturally pro-active community a quick brainstorm was called to discuss how we can enhance the voice and effective participation of the community as we work in partnership with the Council and these great projects unroll” (ibid, 2013b, p. 4).

However, despite the group’s efforts to negotiate a more meaningful relationship, many in the community were disappointed at the Council’s chosen approach to engagement. Community Member #5 explained:

> “We were trying to get this model happening so we wouldn’t be just told what was going to happen. So we got a half-way house. Things shifted a little. There was certainly consultation and quite a bit of it and quite a few of the ideas were listened to but I think they lost a little bit from that old Gap Filler site. Maybe we could have designed it together. Some of our landscape architects might have put their hands up to help. And people who weren’t trained as well because Lyttelton is such a designer place. There are lots of people who are really creative that could have come up with lot of ideas”.

The Community Board had observed rising tensions in the community as people requested more active and involved approaches as opposed to regular Council engagement (Expert #7). Expert #7 considered these responses within the context of Lyttelton historically and was concerned about what this might mean:

> “There’s a bit of tension within Lyttelton of people who’ve come to live there more recently and the older people who were born there and grew up. [The Community Board were] thinking primarily about making this work for everybody and hoping that we had happy citizens at the end of it [...] What I thought was, what we want is not to have our community implode”.

In response to the requests for partnership, the Community Board decided on an alternative option. They selected instead a local peer review team made up of six local design experts to review the Council concept plans as part of the Council-led consultation (Christchurch City Council, 2013h, p. 4).
Phase One Summary

While Council and the local community appeared to share a common vision during the Lyttelton Master Plan process and the purchase of the land for a new civic square, tensions began to appear over differences in the engagement approach for the Council’s Transitional Arts Project and the formal design process for the square. Where Council and community aspirations had converged in the purchase of the land, they diverged again as the mechanism for engagement of the design of the square omitted to fully embrace community networks. In short, the community were looking for partnership while the Council were now focused on consultation and completing the job.
Phase Two: Placing the Vision

Figure 39: Phase Two begins with the formal Council-led design and engagement process to develop a concept plan for the Square and ends with the appointment of a new design team for developed and detailed design.

The Council made every effort to adopt an efficient design and engagement process for Albion Square, aiming to involve as many local community members as possible. However, a focus on consultation as opposed to partnership was clearly different to what many in the community were expecting. As highlighted in Figure 39, Phase Two
outlines the Council-led design and public engagement process for the new civic square. A brief description of each stage of the process is woven with responses from community members and experts. This phase illustrates the ways in which the institutional process shaped both community response and the application of design expertise in the project.

Project Setup
Direction for the design, delivery and construction of the project was the responsibility of a Project Control Group made up of five Council staff. The group included the Lyttelton Master Plan project leader, a representative each from Parks Development, Communications and Community Services and an external Project Manager seconded to Council for the project (Expert #15). Council landscape architects were involved as part of the wider project team alongside a consultation leader from the Council.

For several of the project team, it was their first time working on a community engagement project in the design of public space. Experts and community members alike noted the challenges and opportunities of this project, given that the Lyttelton community is well known for driving its own initiatives. As one resident explained, Lyttelton is:

“not a place where rules are followed. [R]ules get put in place and Lyttelton makes it its focus to break them. [T]here's no way round that, it's just the nature of the people that live here and what attracted us in the first place” (Stanaway, 2012, p. 6).

A number of respondents mentioned an historic lack of trust towards the Council, citing controversy over the amalgamation of Banks Peninsula with Christchurch City in 2006. More recently, many were concerned over what they perceived to be generic treatment to the local streetscape in the London Street upgrade:

“There’s people who have chosen to live in Lyttelton because of it’s gritty, industrial, smelly kind of feel and when they start seeing generic solutions they react. They’ve learned that they want to have input earlier on to avoid getting uncomfortable I suppose” (Expert #7).
One expert acknowledged that through the process “we had to work quite hard to regain some of the trust within the community” (Expert #15). Community member #18 noted that the Council “tried quite valiantly to work out how to involve the community but it was interesting that it showed how hard it was for them to really do it”.

**Survey questions and ‘Drop In’ sessions**

The seven artists who were successful in their proposal to the Council Transitional Arts Project, began working on the site for the new square as part of the engagement process. At the same time, Council began the formal consultation process and invited local residents to submit feedback on the recommended features that had been outlined in the Lyttelton Master Plan. Two ‘Drop In’ Sessions were held at the empty supermarket in London St early in March 2013, and a questionnaire and feedback form was also sent out in a letterbox drop to residents outlining the features from the Plan. These included:

- “A strong frontage that reflects the location and significance of the site;
- Possible relocation of the cenotaph from its present position;
- Space for an imaginative state-of-the-art playground;
- Public toilets;
- Innovative water play;
- Possible day-lighting of a section of the historic barrel stormwater drain and;
- Creation of a strong relationship with existing community facilities and future businesses” (Christchurch City Council, 2013a, p. 2).

The summary mentioned an opportunity for the square to “reflect Lyttelton’s cultural and heritage significance as well as its physical features” (ibid). Locals were invited to view discussion documents, talk to staff and provide feedback via an official feedback form which was also available online. Public responses were summarised in graphs and bullet points and the results were sent out to the one hundred and forty five Lyttelton residents who had responded (ibid), about 20% of the Lyttelton population. While some Experts felt that the survey was useful for eliciting more focused information from the community (Expert #3), others noted
the limitations of quantitative data as it contributed to the design process. Expert #14 explained that:

“some methods worked better than others, like the workshop rather than survey. With surveys the answers that you get are only as good as the questions and what you put in front of people. Interviews and workshops are where you have that qualitative stuff, you get richer information” (Expert #14).

This response correlated with Expert #17’s experience of the process who suggested that the survey questions were relatively ambiguous which made it difficult to make use of the information in the design context. “I don’t think there was that much clarity in some of those questions and so I don’t think they produced the results that [the Council] wanted. It shouldn’t result in just a big long wish list of things” (Expert #17).

An example of the issue could be seen in the Council’s Summary of Community Feedback on Lyttelton’s Civic Square (Christchurch City Council, 2013a, p. 9). Question 2a of the survey asked respondents to rate their agreement or disagreement with the statement, “I want the cenotaph to be integrated in the square’s design”. The summary explained that “a clear majority want the cenotaph to be integrated in the square’s design” yet as the graph below indicates, there remained a high percentage of people that felt strongly that the cenotaph should not be located in the square at all (Figure 40).
Both experts and community members noted the challenge of accommodating diverse views and opinions and many suggested it was difficult to appease everyone.

As Expert #14 recalled:

“we had to kind of tiptoe quite a bit, especially with Lyttelton because it’s quite a vocal community. It was kind of doing enough to influence decisions and try to keep everyone happy but not keeping it too open that you never get anywhere. It was quite a fine balance. You are never going to please everybody but you have to try”.

An expert in survey design and analysis I spoke with during the first stage of this research explained the inherent bias in asking focused questions early on in the process. He explained that:

“people need to share openly what their ideas are [so that] everything can be covered. Rather than responding to particular, quite detailed topics and then other topics aren’t answered because they don’t get asked. […] The thing that surprises me most is that the analysis isn’t thought about until after in most cases, until after the engagement has commenced” (Expert #25).
There was no mention of feedback from Rāpaki Rūnanga in the *Summary of Community Feedback on Lyttelton’s Civic Square*, although there was a submission made via email to Council from Mahaanui Kurataiao Ltd (MKT) on 18 March 2013 (Expert #7). MKT is a resource and environmental agency who regularly act on behalf of the six local Rūnanga, to help recognise and protect tangata whenua values (Mahaanui Kurataiao Ltd, 2017). The focus of consultation at this stage of the engagement process was more about specific objects for the square rather than the relationships between them or the broader context of Lyttelton. Expert #47 explained that while the term ‘consultation fatigue’ was often raised as a reason why many don’t engage in participatory processes, in reality it was much more complex:

“It’s because the connections’ not right. It’s not that their general attitude is, I don’t care about it. It’s like I as an engagement person haven’t managed to reach them in the right way, at the right time”.

This expert explained that for the most part people do care, particularly when it comes to urban space and that there is a huge challenge for Council staff to make those connections with people. As Expert #47 noted, “they’re not passionate because they’re not aware of the impact of it”. The quality of the relationship is therefore an important factor in the engagement process.

**Transitional artworks project**

Public opinion was also divided on the value of the artworks (Figure 41), with some community members reporting that they were quite controversial. Several people felt the artworks reflected the “creative” and “quirky” nature of the Lyttelton community and Expert #1 mentioned the “depth and character” they contributed to the final square design. They noted that, “you couldn’t ask for more site specific and meaningful art pieces” (ibid). Conversely, one artist reflected on the lack of appreciation of his work. “Someone had hung a sign on my [artwork] when it was nearly finished saying ‘for demolition’” (Community Member #18). As the Community Board noted in their entry for the 2015 Community Boards Best Practice Awards, “Many people loved the idea of temporary art, but others did not” (Lyttelton/Mt Herbert Community Board, 2015).
Community meeting

The first community meeting for the design of the new civic square was held on the evening of April 17, 2013 and both experts and community members considered this to be one of the most successful parts of the engagement process. The evening began by Council staff presenting the March survey results and inviting locals to “talk about the look and feel of the Square, discuss the kinds of materials that could be used and consider the location of various elements” (Christchurch City Council, 2013k, p. 1).

Around forty community members attended the evening, as the project team, including community board members, a project manager, landscape architects and an urban designer, facilitated discussion in nine small groups (Christchurch City Council, 2013h). One community member explained the process of the evening a few days after the workshop.
“[They] turned us loose in small groups with maps, ‘mood’ photos, pens, markers and proportionally appropriate design elements like a toilet block [which our group decided was way too big for the site], play areas, Cenotaph, etc. and gave us an hour to talk, plan, draw and ‘communicate our ideas for the site’ (van der Burch, 2013, p. 3).

An expert involved in the evening noted the benefits of the face-to-face discussions and reported that this event prompted the first signs of resolution and agreement in what people wanted for the space. “We started to get some of those priorities sorted out. People really started to hold onto the project as theirs a bit more, as a community and it certainly helped the Council refine what had been happening” (Expert #17).

While several experts reported noting resistance at the beginning of the meeting, as the evening progressed, they observed people warming to the process, and that a sense of cohesion began to emerge for the site. Local community members reported similar sentiments with one resident recalling, “I felt like I was able to make a contribution in ways that I haven’t felt before with this process” (ibid).

Expert #17 explained that the main purpose of the workshop was to give the Lyttelton community an opportunity to work closely with the designers. The idea was to:

“draw out the key priorities and messages and to start to really clarify, what’s this space supposed to be about? Rather than everything going in there, what’s the real intent of it? What do you need as a community? Because everyone wanted everything for a very small space” (Expert #17).

This expert also observed that until this point in the process, the boundaries of the site hadn’t been considered from a design perspective. They reported that, “the space was being designed as an entity without consideration of the built form or anything next door to it” (ibid).

The community meeting was the first opportunity for designers and community members to work together. Facilitators encouraged people to consider how the design features might be prioritized, how they might relate to each other given the
context of the site and to hear what people had to say about the overall use of the square (van der Burch, 2013).

One community member reported people’s surprise at the various themes that began to emerge during the evening. She noted that “we are not always well known for our ability to agree and this was no different, yet there was a lot of consistency” (ibid). Similarly, Expert #17 reflected that, “the opportunity to listen to each other was probably the key one to see. It was about [gaining a] better understanding of the space I think. Because then you start to see this space is not unlimited. I think it was about getting a feeling for that space”.

Many of the experts and community members I interviewed expressed their preference for face-to-face meetings over questionnaires and that the discussions were the most meaningful way in which they could contribute. The workshop was the closest the community came to achieving the partnership many had been looking for from the Council from since their first public request in October 2011.

**Meeting report and integration**

The Council released a summary of the meeting in the May 2013 issue of *Lyttelton Review* and outlined the most significant themes to emerge. These included retaining the existing three levels of the site and recognising the opportunities they offered for views and creating different atmospheres within the site (Christchurch City Council, 2013h). One of the main tasks for designers was to allow sufficient flexibility within the space to accommodate a range of different uses, as well as a design that would enable people to meet and “cross paths” (ibid). Integration was one of the most frequently used words to feature in the summary and this included integration with the town centre, Lyttelton’s history, culture, play and performance as well as individual features such as the cenotaph and toilet (ibid).

Without conversations with Rāpaki Rūnanga early on in the design process, the integration of European and Māori cultural values was a challenging task. Māori design contribution began in May 2013 with an invitation to a Community Board
meeting held to review the first concept plans developed by the Council landscape architects for the square. Along with other local artists and landscape architects, a carver from the Whakaraupō Carving School was asked to provide feedback on the first iteration of the concept drawings to result from public consultation. Expert #1 explained how the integration of cultural values were directly shaped by the pressures of Council process and the tight timeframes in which the project team were working:

“We were stuck for time and [were asked for] a design for the waharoa in a week. In a week! I think what [the carver] came up with was a knee jerk reaction [...] and then that was it. He was stuck with this really literal translation. I always thought it was a shame” (Expert #1).

Cultural values were therefore less integrated than many had hoped and several participants reported this as a “missed opportunity” (Experts #14 and #16).

Draft design concepts & peer review
Council landscape architects developed three draft design concepts from information gathered during the engagement process and these were then peer reviewed on 14 May 2013 by the panel of six local design experts selected for the project by the Community Board (Christchurch City Council, 2013]). Council continued to inform the community at each stage in the process, featuring regular updates in the local newsletter Lyttelton Review.

Local experts who took part in the peer review discussion agreed that the meeting was well organised and the focus was to determine the specific arrangement of elements that had been identified community as part of the consultation. One panel member explained that:

“Council representatives talked about the elements and their public consultation and said [...] these elements need to be included because it had come out really strongly in the consultation and it was just a matter of how it was going to work together” (Expert #12).

Similar to the survey in the early stages of consultation, the process seemed to focus on fitting what everyone had asked for into the plan. One panel member explained
that while the panel discussion offered useful feedback as to how to further refine the concept, it was “more a case of moving objects on the plan around than work-shopping” (Expert #13).

Expert #8 reported concern that the three options presented to the panel were very similar, which meant that discussion became too specific, too soon. They explained that a range of plans could have prompted greater debate, yet being so similar, the design for the site appeared relatively prescribed:

“There is an education role in consultation in getting an unbiased response from the community. Because if you see three pictures of the same thing with a minor difference in them, I mean how much more can they imagine? [...] There is a kind of ethical stance to take, in trying to tease out input from the public that might be innovative or another idea” (Expert #8).

Similar to views expressed in the earlier stages of the engagement process, peer reviewers considered tight timeframes an unfortunate constraint at this stage in the design process. Given the challenging nature of the site, one reviewer asked project leaders for extended time to consider the design resolution. In a letter to the project team immediately after the meeting, the reviewer recommended that:

“Lyttelton Civic Square needs an element of extraordinary charisma, of individual and never-been-seen [and] time should be given to this. The project needs more considered time for design” (Expert #8).

Project timelines were set however and with little room for flexibility, the Project Control Group recommended their final two draft concepts to the Community Board on 23 May 2013, just over a week after the peer review evening (Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre, 2013a).

**Final consultation**

Council landscape architects prepared two final concepts for the last round of public consultation (Figure 42, Figure 43 and Figure 44) where community feedback was sought at two ‘Drop-In’ sessions on the 15th and 18th June 2013. Design was now at a relatively resolved level and it was the first time that local residents had seen the
proposed spatial layout for the square. A Council survey and feedback form was used to gather community feedback at this point, noting that the main difference between the two concepts was the location of the cenotaph. As part of the feedback, people were also asked to suggest a name for the new civic square and with artists having completed their artworks as part of the Transitional Arts Project, to select which artworks they would like to see become part of the permanent Square (Christchurch City Council, 2013f). The consultation document explained that, “Council landscape architects have focused on designing flexible, uncluttered spaces which provide the framework for a range of temporary and permanent features and activities” (Christchurch City Council, 2013b).
Figure 42: Lyttelton’s Civic Square Draft Concept Option 1 (Christchurch City Council, 2013e, p. 5)
Figure 43: Lyttelton’s Civic Square Draft Concept Option 2 (ibid, p. 4).
Figure 44: Images of Lyttelton Civic Square Draft Concept, Options 1 and 2 (ibid, p. 6).
Results of the public feedback featured in an August 2013 issue of *Lyttelton Review* revealing that 77% of the 140 named submissions preferred the cenotaph placed to the rear of the site with the waharoa (entranceway) on the London Street corner (Christchurch City Council, 2013d). The waharoa would symbolise the coming together of Māori and European cultures and reflect Lyttelton’s maritime history. An updated concept plan was then sent to submitters after all feedback was received, informing them of the recommended plan that would be put before the Community Board for approval.

**Challenges for resolution**

On 1 July 2013, just over a month before the Community Board’s final approval for the concept plan, MKT sent the Council a submission on behalf of Rāpaki Rūnanga. MKT acknowledged the efforts of Council officers to engage with tangata whenua prior to the public consultation process, noting their regret that the Rūnanga had not been available for the process to this point. The submission contained feedback on a number of items including an appropriate Māori name for the site and specific cultural references and protocols that should be woven through various features in the square (Mahaanui Kurataiao Ltd, 2013).

In their submission, MKT emphasised the importance of an integrated design approach to ensure that cultural components and tikanga (protocols) would be appropriately addressed throughout the design process. However it is clear that integration would have been difficult to achieve given the speed of the process, the ‘consultative’ approach’ to engagement and the late stage that their feedback arrived. As Expert #6 explained:

“culturally there’s quite a difference there. Not as barriers, but just different ways of how things work and that can be affected by timeframes. Because [the carving school] work[s] underneath the mantle of the kaumātua, there is often a delay. When working in a traditional field, there’s always that time factor. It does take a bit longer”.
Council’s focus on quantitative consultation techniques appeared to cause difficulties not only for the integration of cultural values but also for the effectiveness of decision-making generally. As Community Member #2 reflected:

“It seems as though the consultation was more about what things do we want? […] Often the City Council will take ownership of that decision-making process, as the default mechanism or people on the Community Board or people with loud voices. But those are often not the voice” (Community Member #2).

Several community members reported some of the more meaningful ways they would have preferred to contribute to the design of the new square:

“It might mean that we have community Councils attached to the Community Board. So we really hear from young kids to old people. We have our own community discussions and then we feed those ideas into the mix. They are trying to set that up here in Lyttelton now, just to get more voices” (Community Member #5).

Another local resident acknowledged the value of hearing a variety of opinions from various community members, and that people generally accept that not everyone will get their own way:

“I know myself my views quite often change because you hear a different point of view. Even though it might take longer, I think the end result is heaps better” (Community Member #9).

Council staff presented the final concept plan with its associated report to the Community Board on August 22, 2013 (Figure 45) and Council approved the plans on October 3, 2013. The square was officially renamed Albion Square and the proposed waharoa, Ōhinehouroko, which refers to the name of the earliest Māori Pā site within the township area (Boffa Miskell Limited, 2017). When the final design concept was announced in Lyttelton Review, Community Board Chair Paula Smith praised the project as a “true community partnership” (Christchurch City Council, 2013c, p. 2).
Figure 45: Lyttelton’s Square Development Concept – approved concept plan (Christchurch City Council, 2013).
Temporary use

Informal community use of the site continued for almost 3 years, demonstrating local ownership of the site in the most ordinary of ways. Winn (2015) recounted that, “the site accumulated things that people gifted to it. A sandpit with kid’s toys, plants, furniture, a hose; people added to the site over time. People weeded it, picked up rubbish and watered the garden”. Impromptu gatherings and informal events were complemented with the larger scale ceremonies such as Anzac Day and the annual Festival of Lights. Several community members noted their disappointment that the local energy and knowledge that was developing through the temporary use project was not embraced more fully into the development process for the square. As community member #18 aid of the experimental project:

“I know that’s where Gap Filler have been wonderful and I know Ryan and others were frustrated. It was really appreciated but treated as a novelty. Nice to have you guys filling up the spaces while we work on the real city type thing [...] I think [the Council] tried their best but it’s quite telling. [The temporary site] was seen as being somewhere off in the ether really, where I don’t see it as particularly revolutionary. However, it links into thinking about the Timebank and community currency and devolving and getting things done at the lowest level that they can meaningfully be done [...] Working a lot more efficiently than through one big centralised contract”.

The Council-initiated Transitional Arts Project was completed at the end of May 2013 and the informal occupation of the site continued until the entire site was closed in preparation for site works in April 2014. Most experts and community members interviewed believed that this temporary use and the creation of the artworks led to greater involvement during the formal Council process including community acceptance of the final design.

However, while some of the physical objects from the Transitional Arts Project were included in the permanent design, the less tangible, experiential dynamics and relationships that had evolved through community use of the temporary site did not emerge as part of the formal design process and outcome. For example, Community Member #18 explained that:

“through the spontaneity [of the temporary site], something was created that people really appreciated. But then some of that heritage that was
created through the project then got erased. Why did the designers feel so much like they needed to start from scratch, wipe the slate clean?”

Another resident suggested that something was lost in the transition from the ‘temporary’ project to the ‘permanent’ design:

“The temporary project wasn’t necessarily aesthetically amazing all the time [but] it had something that was invitational, that created community use and connection to the space which I do think we haven’t really seen in the permanent site” (Community Member #4).

For those who had occupied the square over the three previous years, partnership was about local agency and taking their collective experience and activity into the permanent project. The ‘official’ and ‘local’ versions of partnership at this point appear to be somewhat at odds with one another.

Phase Two Summary

The dominant approach to the design and engagement process for Albion Square was framed more by institutional process than the key attributes of design expertise and community empowerment and this severely limited the opportunity for an integrated design outcome. While landscape architects were involved throughout the engagement process, the institutional framework used to carry out consultation effectively distanced people from a truly iterative relationship with the designers during the process of spatial resolution. This had been highlighted by both design and participation experts in Chapter Four as crucial to the outcome in participative contexts. Phase Three begins at an advanced stage of the design process where landscape architects from Christchurch design consultancy Boffa Miskell were engaged by the Council to complete the developed and detailed design stages for the new civic square (Figure 46).
Phase Three: Implementing the Vision

Time constraints
Several experts acknowledged that the reason Council landscape architects handed the project to another design firm was due to time constraints. As Expert #1 explained, “[The Council landscape architects] were too pushed. [They] didn’t have
the time or resources to get all the detailed design done because there was a real time pressure”.

Council continued to inform local residents of the Square’s progress through media releases in the Lyttelton Review. However community involvement in the design process had already closed at the point Boffa Miskell began developed design. As Expert #10 explained, the new designers:

“had a slightly indirect relationship with the community [in that] all the community wants and needs that [had been] communicated to the Council [during the concept stage] flowed through into what they were asked to do. The challenge was to get all of those aspects into the design [...] while creating a space that was purposefully designed as a public space”.

Expert #1 observed that when Boffa Miskell were awarded the project, “they tried to change it a bit [...] and it looked amazing but it was departing too far from the agreed, signed off and approved concept plan”. Expert #16 agreed, noting that:

“[Boffa Miskell landscape architects] definitely had some interesting conversations about how far can you go away from the [approved] design before you’ve gone too far and [they] went too far for a few weeks. [The Council] said, just keep working on pulling it back a bit” (Expert #10).

Another Expert confirmed that there was no opportunity for the newly appointed landscape architects to adjust what had already been agreed to in the concept plan. They explained that:

“it’s very important that what is approved by Council is actually what proceeds. Initially some fresh ideas were considered but the [developed and detailed design] plans were [eventually] aligned to the approved plans and Albion Square constructed” (Expert #3).

The limitations applied by institutional process at this stage of the process frustrated aspects of the developed design process which is intended to address as yet unresolved issues in the concept plan. In addition, the lack of public engagement meant that landscape architects were not able to justify or communicate with the public why such change could be beneficial. Expert #14 noted the overwhelming nature of the task:
“It was a challenge to try and set them in the right setting, in the right place so they worked harmoniously together [...] we had to include everything. We did suggest quite strongly that some things should be left out for other spaces but they’d gone down such an engagement with the community that everybody was invested in having all those things [...] Initially, I have to say that we were just a little bit overwhelmed to fit this all in one space”.

Expert #10 reported that the design process was different to how they would typically work. He explained that, “in landscape we’re not trying to solve one problem. We’re trying to solve a whole lot and bring them together as if there is one solution that holds it all together”. But this project was different. He noted that:

“the challenge was not editing the ‘shopping list’ but being able to figure out how to achieve it all. It wasn’t about distilling, it was about rearranging and molding so that in the end we had a spatial solution that did the job”.

The institutional approach to the design and engagement process for Albion Square therefore highlighted tensions between design-based reasoning of the designers and the instrumental problem solving processes of the Council.

Integration of cultural values

Expert #16 conveyed disappointment at how ‘fixed’ the concept plan was at the beginning of developed design. “[The carver] had already been engaged way back [at the concept stage] and there wasn’t a lot of engagement [during developed design] because it was already a done deal” (Expert #16). Similar to the concept phase of the project, the carver’s involvement was generally independent of the landscape architect’s expertise during developed and detailed design, with Council facilitating the relationship. The landscape architects and the carver met twice during this stage and Expert #10 recalled that:

“[the carver] had a fairly defined brief and it would be fair to say that he had his idea [...] for what the waharoa could be, the size of it, the scale of it, the materials and so it was really kind of just keeping in the loop with him. There was a bit of collaboration early on but it pretty quickly became a project he was responsible for and we sort of made allowance for it, made sure it had enough space around it” (Expert #10).
Although the landscape architects and the carver worked relatively independently during the project, local stories and traditional designs were provided to the landscape architects and woven into specific details of the square. Weavers from Rāpakī provided guidance for the paving pattern, which referenced local food resources such as pātiki (flounder) and Te Ahu Pātiki (Mt Herbert), the highest peak on Banks Peninsula. Pātikitiki (a pattern used on tuku tuku panels) formed the inspiration for the pattern and the poutama design referred to the ability to overcome obstacles (Expert #6). Similar to the waharoa, the symbolism reflected Māori and European people coming together and enjoying the resources of the area in a sustainable way.

However the absence of an iterative relationship clearly affected the landscape architect’s ability to integrate cultural stories in a more sophisticated way throughout the entire site. Expert #6 explained that:

“The landscape architects asked [the carving school] what [they] could offer design, because [they] also did the paving as well. But when it came to the Māori side, ticking that box, [the carving school] were consulted but that was about it. It was sort of, ‘this is your part, this is our part’”.

With the final design for the square ‘locked in’ at concept stage and no opportunity for public engagement with the landscape architects beyond that point, several experts reported the constraints this placed on the landscape architect’s design expertise when it came to spatial resolution, including making the most of local knowledge. Expert #16 said, “if we did it again, it would be good to have a bit more interaction, a bit of a to and fro process. But because it was already set way back, we had some challenges. It’s so eclectic because there are so many things, [but] quite a lot of things were prescribed”. Institutional process therefore appears to have had a major influence on how the designers were able to resolve emerging spatial issues in the concept plan as they applied their expertise.
Institutional process

Several experts spoke about the influence of project management processes and that it was challenging to manage the expectations of so many different stakeholder groups, each with different agendas. Some suggested that this also involved a conflict in the roles of those managing the process. Expert #14 explained that “there was the Community Board as a client, there was the Council who was sort of like delivery but also like the client too”. Expert #17 believed that the process was “project management heavy” and that the “project managers almost appeared to be the clients. They were directing it and had far too much involvement in the design process”. The application of landscape architect’s design expertise, through a direct and iterative relationship with the community, therefore appeared secondary to following an efficient programme of work, which would meet anticipated timelines and what was promised in the agreed concept plan.

Expert #10 explained that “[the Council] continued to dialogue with the community throughout the process and [the designers] fed into that, but [the designers] weren’t front and centre in those meetings as they went on. The institutional process had essentially limited the scope for design resolution and the integration of cultural values.

Another expert agreed:

“Throughout the process everybody had wish-lists of what they wanted to see there and the council designers to their credit managed to squeeze every single thing that people wanted into this tiny wee space in a way that although cluttered, it’s actually not too bad” (Expert #7).

Expert #7 noted that landscape architects often have to give up on their ideas for a project and that one of the reasons for Albion Square’s success was that “the landscape architects accepted almost everything the community wanted. Even though, in their heart of hearts they probably would have liked to have done it quite differently”. Council went so far as to request that the detailed design plans replicate the look and feel of the approved concept plans (Figure 47) to ensure that there
could be no perception by the public that they had strayed from the approved concept plans (Expert #16). A council update in the December 16 edition of Lyttelton Review reported that the detailed design was approved, having been “received positively” by the Lyttelton/Mt Herbert Community Board on 6 November 2013 (Christchurch City Council, 2013i, p. 10).

**Implementation**

Construction of the Square began early in 2014 and Council kept the community informed of progress through regular media releases in *Lyttelton Review*. Community involvement in the square’s implementation included a small ceremony held by the Returned Services’ Association (RSA) who laid a time capsule behind the date stone in the cenotaph (Christchurch City Council, 2014c) and children from the two Lyttelton Schools who were involved in planting the lower terrace (Christchurch City Council, 2014b).
Figure 47: Developed Concept Plan for Albion Square, November 2014 (Christchurch City Council, 2014a).
The Council organised a “public viewing day” at the end of August, for the community to observe the progress on the site. It was timed to coincide with the Lyttelton Farmers Market and there were opportunities to speak with the City Council project team, the designers and the builders of the project (Bay Harbour News, 2014). The waharoa foundations were completed during the ground works for the square, however delays in shipping the timber meant that the carving and installation of the structure wasn’t complete until April 2015, five months after the opening ceremony.

A large crowd celebrated the official opening of the Square in November 2014 (Figure 48) and those officiating commended both Council and the community for the huge milestone that was achieved (Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre, 2014). Councillor Paula Smith noted the cathartic value of the project, acknowledging how important community involvement had been in the process. “The process of the planning and design has been just as important for the recovery as the finished product...Lyttelton people are always keen to voice their ideas and opinions and this is the embodiment” (Napier, 2014, p. A7). She also noted the speed of the process reflecting, “I actually cannot recall a Council project that has rolled out quite as quickly from go to whoa as this one has” (Smith, 2014).

Figure 48: Opening day Albion Square, Lyttelton – November 2014 (Boffa Miskell, 2014).
No record could be found in local newspapers regarding the installation of the waharoa although the blessing ceremony featured in the April 21 issue of *Lyttelton Review*, (Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre, 2015b). The article noted a “good crowd” had attended the event in which the carver explained the stories behind the design and the symbolic details in the carving, which referenced waka and the seafaring nature of the area.

**Phase Three Summary**

Phase three of the design and engagement process has highlighted the dominance of problem solving approaches to decision-making over design integration and refinement. The focus of this stage was on the object rather than the relationships between people and the site, so that everything that the community asked for could be incorporated into the detailed design. Speed and compromise and were prioritised over the core attributes of design expertise and a direct and iterative engagement with the Lyttelton community. In addition, the dominance of project management processes essentially constrained opportunities to integrate the less tangible qualities of Māori cultural values. The landscape architect’s expertise was therefore applied predominantly through their technical capacity rather than their practical reasoning of design expertise, grounded in context. In the following final Phase Four, results of interviews with experts and community members are woven with observations of the square. This section reports on the design outcome through my own observations of the Square as well as Expert and Community Members insights. Figure 49 illustrates where this final phase sits in the overall sequence of events.
Phase Four: Living the Vision

Figure 49: Phase Four: Living the Vision reports on the design outcomes of the square from both interviews and site observations.
Albion Square today

The following description provides a picture of the activity in Albion Square on a typical Saturday.

It’s a sunny Saturday in Lyttelton, mid way through the morning. Music streams from the Saturday Farmer’s Market along London Street, which is in full swing packed with people browsing, purchasing local produce.

Albion Square is a popular place to meet and greet and is located close to the market at the start of the street closure on the corner of London and Canterbury Streets. The popular café Shroom Room sits immediately west of the square and opens into the lower tier and amphitheatre at street level. Many locals retreat to the Shroom Room for a coffee or to sit within the square itself and watch the buskers.

There’s a constant stream of activity in Albion Square on a Saturday morning where the majority of foot traffic migrates between the market and the café. This particular Saturday a busker has arrived with his two young children and they set up along the London St entrance facing the stepped seats of the amphitheatre (interestingly not the stage in the corner which was designed for such occasions). Scatterings of people are seated on the steps opposite and at tables outside the café. Eventually the younger child who looks quite vulnerable and no more than four years old starts playing her guitar and singing a song everyone is familiar with, ‘If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.’ Spontaneously, the crowd responds with two supportive claps at the end of each line, an unexpected but heart-warming interaction of support and care that demonstrates the community spirit in Lyttelton.

Meeting place and thoroughfare

For the past year that I’ve been observing Albion Square, it’s clear that the place provides an intergenerational meeting point for Lyttelton residents. Family groups of grandparents, parents and children either meet in the square or arrive there together for a bite to eat or to chat while the children play. My observations have corresponded with responses from interviews with community members who told me how popular the place is, particularly on a Saturday morning (Figure 50).
Community Member #4 explained that “on Saturday when the market’s on, [the Square] is fully used. There are kids running around and it’s really pumping”. Another local talked about the Square fulfilling the aspirations she had prior to the Square’s opening:

“I was hoping for a town square where people can gather, that people can use and I think that both those things are happening. I wasn’t so worried about it being a showcase for art or being an extension of a café, it’s just good to see people using it” (Community Member #9).

While a relationship to the adjacent café wasn’t considered until after the concept development was complete, its presence is now fundamental to the life of the Square. It is a major reason people either stay awhile or use the space, and without it there is no doubt that activity in the Square would suffer. For example Community Member #11 noted:

“there’s a walking group that set off at seven in the morning and walk the hills of Lyttelton. They always go to the café there for their coffee. The café is a great magnet. It draws people there and they’ve got seats out in the square. The mums form a group and sit and chat so they can see the children. The kids are safe but they can catch up with their friends as well”.

Figure 50: Albion Square on a typical Saturday morning (December, 2016).
The Square is used as a through-route as much as a gathering space and people walk between London Street and the terraces above the township as well as to and from the café. Many people stop and watch the activity in the square from the adjacent footpaths, which allows them to feel part of the place without entering the Square itself. Expert #10’s impression was “that people feel comfortable and at home in the space. So it wasn’t something that had been imposed on them. It was just a progression, an evolution of what they’d already started”. While there is no doubt that the Square is well loved and now integral to many activities and events in Lyttelton, my research over the past year has also highlighted some of the less resolved dynamics.

Performance, play and spatial resolution

With no precedent for a public space in Lyttelton, both experts and community members recognised that a lot was expected of the new civic square:

“Because the community hadn’t had a space like that before, there was a big shopping list of things that people would like. [...] There’s a kind of danger with the big shopping list, that you end up with a space that ticks every box on the list but doesn’t actually work as a space” (Expert #10).

Community Member #14 noted that, “the only problem with Albion Square was that it ended up with too many different things happening. Because they were trying to keep too many people happy”.

Play and performance space are both key features of the Square (Christchurch City Council, 2013h) and as Community Member #11 explained, “there was an understanding that it would be used by a whole cross section of people for different events”. The stage and amphitheatre is therefore one of the main features of the Square, yet as explained in the composite description at the beginning of this section, the amphitheatre seating is not oriented towards the stage. As a result, performers often position themselves alongside London Street where they can face the majority of people sitting on the curved seating built into the retaining wall of the lower level. When performers used the stage, I often observed people either
standing or pulling café chairs in front of the performers so they could see the activity on the stage (Figure 51). While the opportunity to move furniture could be one of the features of a successful public space, in this case it highlights a disconnect in orientation between people and performance.

![Figure 51: People stand to watch a performance, illustrating the awkward orientation of tiered seating to the stage (June, 2016).](image)

These problematic spatial relationships are especially obvious during one of Lyttelton’s key annual events when a large crowd gathers to commemorate Anzac Day (Figure 52). The cenotaph stands as the most prominent feature of the Square yet the large crowds and ritual that accompany the event appear awkward in the Square’s formal space. Having been the key item for consultation in the design process, it is surprising that some of the experiential aspects that accompany the ceremony around the cenotaph are not as integrated in the square’s design as they might be. This could be interpreted from a design critique as an opportunity lost.
Figure 52: Anzac Day service (April, 2017).

During the 2017 Anzac service, a large crowd gathered both inside the Square and around the perimeter on the footpath adjacent, with the tiered nature of the site permitting views across the majority of the site. The priest and official guests speaking at the ceremony, stood outside the toilet at the top of the staircase, presumably the best place to speak to the majority of those gathered. Various presenters faced London Street with their backs turned to much of the crowd, the cenotaph, and the assembled Sea Scouts and Fire Brigade who were lined up alongside the cenotaph towards the rear of the site. In turn, those seated in the ampitheatre seating in the lower level of the Square, had their backs to those officiating the ceremony who were located immediately above them. Several community members mentioned the awkwardness of this arrangement at events they’d attended (Community Members #4 and #9).
A similar disconnection can be found in the small play area in the northwest corner of the Square, containing a slide and an elegantly designed water feature (Figure 53).

![Figure 53: Children's play area, Albion Square (December, 2016).](image)

The water feature sits alongside the slide as an interactive play feature while referencing the old brick barrel drain beneath the Square (Expert #16). Parents stand close by to watch their children play, as the closest place to sit is at the base of the cenotaph across the main thoroughfare. Many times over the course of the year I watched parents traipse up and down the steps, between the café and the play area, deliberating whether they would stand and watch their children play or bring them down to the café while they ate. It was clear that the spatial layout inhibited a common desire to sit down and relax while watching the children play.

Some community members mentioned ‘the strange juxtaposition of the cenotaph and the kids playground’ (Community Member #9) and several community members mentioned their concern for children’s safety given the height of the retaining walls adjacent to the play area. This concern also extended to the amphitheatre seating in the lower level of the Square. Both upper and lower levels of the Square serve as informal play areas and children run along retaining walls and through adjacent
garden beds as well as on top of the slide. Even the large carved waharoa (entranceway), at the entrance to the Square is an unintended climbing feature (Figure 54).

Figure 54: It is clear that the Square could have benefited from a more integrated approach to children’s play, given the unanticipated ways in which children use various elements (March, 2017).

While the aspirations for the square included play that would be “integrated into the landscape as much as possible,” (Christchurch City Council, 2013d, p. 3) several community members described the playground as a “missed opportunity” to embrace the objectives outlined in the Lyttelton Master Plan in a more unique, integrated and sophisticated way. The Master Plan aspirations for play included “interactive, enriching experiences” that are “designed to showcase the identity and imagination of the community” (ibid). In this respect, the Square does not appear to have achieved the “imaginative state-of-the-art playground” identified as a key action item for the Lyttelton township (Christchurch City Council, 2012b, p. 82).
Clutter

Many key informants reported that a lot was expected of the space and surprisingly almost everyone I spoke to said that the square appears cluttered. Expert #8 noted that:

“the project kind of turned into a collection of artworks and the actual programme or spatial experience suffered. It feels like a collection box, a Victorian collection box, of artefacts, of things”.

On the other hand, several participants suggested that the lack of cohesion reflects the eclectic nature of Lyttelton. Expert #7 said, “I think that it’s actually more important that people own that site, that it met their need for something at a time where they really did need something”, implying that design quality wasn’t the highest priority. Some people weren’t sure that elegance is a quality that could be suitably attributed to Lyttelton, and Community Member #4 suggested that the lack of cohesion might be “of this place more”. This raises the interesting question of whether elegance can be experienced in different ways across different settings. That is, elegance is neither singular nor universal.

Still other people believed that the lack of cohesion had resulted from an inability to fully embrace the design expertise of the landscape architects:

“The cenotaph was relocated there, then we had the art features from when they were trying temporary art, they got relocated there and then there was the weaving design in the paving and then of course the Māori entrance. I don’t know… it could have ended up just a little too piecemeal. I think a better outcome could have been if there was, not less consultation but a bit more authority or directive” (Expert #14).

Community Member #9 expressed similar sentiments:

“They’ve crammed a lot in. I think it’s quite crowded. They’ve had a lot of ideas and wanted to include them all but it could have been edited. More space would be good, especially around the cenotaph”.

While the waharoa was planned as part of the concept design, the separateness of the process meant that it was completed independently of the overall concept, many experts and community members did not anticipate the scale of the structure until it was installed (Community Member #2). Expert #7 explained that when it
arrived, “nobody quite realised what it was, so I imagine the landscape architects got quite a surprise”. Integration had clearly been one of the key aspirations to come from the engagement process, yet achieving this through the process Council had adopted was a challenging task.

**Phase Four Summary**

Albion Square is clearly a well loved place for Lyttelton people, who have felt involved in the design process and have embraced the square as a community gathering and meeting place. There is a sense that people forgive its shortcomings, grateful to finally enjoy a long-awaited public square in the township. However, one of the goals for the design of the square was to provide an “uncluttered space” (Christchurch City Council, 2013d, p. 1), yet reference to clutter was overwhelmingly the most common response by interviewees in terms of the design outcome of the square. Despite Council’s best intentions and as transparent as the process had been, the design outcome indicates a process unable to address complexities of the site in a cohesive way. It was also obvious that both community and designers were constrained by the institutional process. The instrumental approach to decision-making appears to have directly affected the spatial resolution of the square, which can be seen through a disconnect in orientation of various spaces and the ways in which the square is used.

**Chapter Summary**

Chapter Seven has considered the Albion Square case study through four discrete but inter-connected phases, illustrated by an overall timeline. In considering the theoretical perspectives of design process, institution and community participation, this chapter has highlighted times where these perspectives converged, sharing similar goals. However at other times the results have revealed tensions in these relationships, the most fundamental being that designers were constrained in their design process, as were the public in taking a more active role in participation. The
result of the Council’s instrumental approach to decision-making has meant a focus on trying to fit everything in over design integration and refinement.

The theoretical framing introduced in Chapter Two can be used to locate the outcome of the Albion Square case study (Figure 55).

![Figure 55: Theoretical framework illustrating the design outcome of Albion Square relative to the landscape architect’s design expertise and public participation in the participatory design process.](image)

Using the variables of designer’s decision-making processes and public participation, the framework illustrates the interaction between design expertise and participation and how, despite a high degree of public involvement in the project, the institutional focus on consultation and detailed analysis during the design and engagement process essentially constrained opportunities for a more integrated and elegant design outcome.
The framework helps to locate the landscape architect’s design process within a range of possibilities. In this case, landscape architect’s design expertise was focused on *designing technical solutions for* the community (Quadrant 1). By attempting to incorporate everyone’s wishes into the final design resolution, the design outcome was limited by the decision-making processes of detailed analysis, which as outlined in Chapter Two, are characteristic of instrumental reasoning. The landscape architect’s expertise was applied technically, as directed by the Council-led Project Control Group so that the design outcome was essentially a “series of compromises” (Hall, 1980, p. 209) rather than the transformative participatory design process where both designer and the community are engaged together in an iterative and active learning process. The design outcome offers insights regarding the challenges of the design process when carried out as a problem solving exercise and the constraints that emerged as the design process evolved.
CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

My research has focused on the importance of public participation in public space design and the Christchurch, New Zealand case study has raised important questions about the way design expertise engages with the public. It has also highlighted the significance of the institutional and social contexts in shaping this relationship. The first section of this concluding chapter reviews the research objectives of the study, and summarises key features of the research findings. The second section is a critical discussion framed around four insights that have emerged from the investigation, and concludes by identifying institutional, professional and theoretical implications and pathways towards improved practice.

Research questions, objectives & summary of findings

The specific research objectives are to first, develop a theoretical framework in order to clarify the relationship between decision-making processes and modes of public participation in the participatory design process; second, to highlight the potential interactions between the two dimensions; third, to examine the interaction of the two dimensions when applied to a case study; and fourth, to show the implications of the results of the case study relative to the potential for design-based participatory processes. In this section, the theoretical framework that was developed in Chapter Two to clarify the research questions is used to interpret the findings. The framework (Figure 56) shows that the landscape architect’s design expertise as applied within public space design can be expressed on a spectrum from design expertise to detailed analysis, and that public participation can be carried out on a continuum between consultation and co-design, with four combinations of design outcome possible.
First, Chapters Two and Four revealed that design expertise (the upper two quadrants of the diagram) is a particular kind of decision-making process. It is different to processes of detailed analysis (the lower two quadrants of the diagram) because it involves the direct application of human intuition in order to deal with the complexities of a situation. I found through both literature and key informant interviews that there are core attributes of design expertise that transcend specific contexts and countries. These include intuitive decision-making, framing and the testing of frames.

Second, I discovered through these methods that public participation as co-design (the two right hand quadrants of the diagram), refers to “collective creativity” where the public as “participant” are invited to be part of an active learning process for the entire community. This contrasts with the public as “subject” as in consultation (the
two left hand quadrants on the diagram) where a passive form of engagement is carried out through more representative forms of involvement.

Significantly, a third key insight from literature and the key informant interviews was that the core attributes of design expertise offer potential to involve the public in the same creative and collaborative learning process as the experts. Effective participatory design involves a direct and iterative relationship, the ability to listen well and the need for a supportive network or ‘ecology’ for those involved in the process.

Through examining a New Zealand case study and design practice both in New Zealand and in Northern Europe, I found that key informants in Northern Europe suggested that improved results in public space design could come from an approach where the public are involved directly in “designing elegance with”, that is, design based reasoning through a co-design process. New Zealand participatory design appears to be taking a different path however. It seems that in New Zealand, participatory design is separating public knowledge and ideas from the designer, by filtering public input through administrative consultation and project management processes. As a result, there has been a form of consultation in New Zealand which is essentially applied as a separate process ‘over the top’ of design expertise, attempting to “design elegance for”. This has the effect of disempowering both designers and the public.

Key insights of the research findings

The following section elaborates on these broad conclusions, using four key insights that emerged as a result of the research.

1. There has been an increasing focus on risk management and technical decision-making in New Zealand public administration.

2. This institutional context influences the types of participatory interactions between designers and the public.
3. Tightly managed and constrained interactions between designer and public in turn result in particular types of design process, which differ from those that produce elegant design outcomes.

4. A more explicit focus on the pre-conditions for design elegance has potential to be a powerful way to shape public participation in the design process.

Insight One: There has been an increasing focus on risk management and technical decision-making in New Zealand public participatory design.

Manzo and Perkins (2006, p. 339) observed that the “creation and use of space is a political act” so that the social and institutional context plays a large part in determining “the appearance, meanings and uses of place” (ibid). Chapter Five outlined the political and historic context to the Albion Square case study by taking a broader look at landscape architecture in Christchurch and the relationship between design expertise and participation. This revealed how landscape architects had moved progressively from limited engagement with the public to highly integrated, values based approaches during the 1990s. At this time, the political context was facilitating empowering relationships between designers and the public so that local citizens were able to contribute their knowledge and ideas within values-based, design-led frameworks. This combination allowed for transformative and innovative outcomes in waterway management that were recognised and adopted internationally.

Since that time however, the influence of neo-liberal ideologies, changes to legislation, changes in the key decision-makers, and the disruptive crisis of the 2011 earthquakes have all led to a more technocratic approach to public administration. This has in turn altered the relationship between designers and the public in a number of ways. When introduced, the Local Government Act (2002) originally empowered the creative potential of designers through the institutional support of community partnerships and the ‘four well-beings’ outlined in Chapter Five. However changes to the Act in 2013 have narrowed its intent so that the purpose
and powers now reflect a ‘flattened’ and specialised activity, which as Max Harris has explained (2017, p. 14), “demands a focus on ‘what works’, [essentially] draining politics to a large extent of any moral or values-based content”. With legislation moving away from fostering the four ‘well-beings’, the participatory design process for Albion Square must therefore be seen not only in the context of post-earthquake Christchurch, but in the context of increasingly technocratic and risk averse approaches to public sector management, which amplified tensions between institutional processes and design expertise. Changes to Council structure under the entrepreneurial and less deliberative approaches of two Christchurch mayors from the late 1990s to 2013 further contributed to the decline of a values-based approach to decision-making in the city.

Both the case study and interviews with New Zealand landscape architects illustrated how the designer’s relationship with the public is strongly influenced by the type of instrumental reasoning expressed in two key statutes affecting urban design; the Resource Management Act and Local Government Act. Minimum standards for engagement are set as the benchmark for public participation, rather than actively promoting innovation through design and citizen empowerment. This was one of the key differences to emerge between the responses of New Zealand designers and those in Northern Europe. Several experts familiar with New Zealand legislation explained that the current form of the LGA is not designed to drive innovation or to do things differently. So that while there’s often a will to innovate, bureaucratic processes dominate the processes of decision-making and complex problems are worked on sequentially without consistency across disciplines. As noted in Chapter Two, this leads to difficulty in responding effectively to change, as institutions adopt processes that are intended to reduce uncertainty and create a stable administrative and financial environment, even at the expense of lower quality design outcomes.

The experiences of New Zealand landscape architects reported in Chapter Four confirmed what the literature had also identified, that over recent years many
design and engagement projects have been framed by institutional process rather than design innovation, essentially prioritising the explicit multi-step approach of problem solving over the application of design expertise. As Pitman (2012, p. 144) explained, this has implications generally for how the professional can act:

“When the criteria applied to evaluate the practitioner are instrumental and at variance to the necessity of situated judgement in context, then the good practitioner is increasingly at risk of censure, either because of the need to act outside the regimens of prescribed protocols [...] or because the criteria fail to take into account the constituents of good practice.”

The effects of the Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 served to amplify the tensions between institutional processes and design expertise in Christchurch. With central government having taken control of the rebuild of the central city and red zone, the design and engagement process of Albion Square became highly politicised. Albion Square was one of the few urban design projects still controlled by the City Council, which although keen to be seen to be active was also risk averse in a financial and political sense. This case study has therefore highlighted how instrumental problem solving became elevated above other modes of decision-making better suited to the complexities of public space design. It also revealed some of the fundamental limitations when design activity is conceptualised primarily as a logical spatial problem solving process (Plowright, 2014).

As outlined in Chapter Two, institutions typically adopt instrumental modes of reasoning using rules and procedures in order to ensure stability and efficiency. These modes of activity are closely aligned with routine problem solving and work well for the purposes of institutions themselves, as they enable transparency and accountability. However design conceived as problem solving, when applied within social and complex situations such as those in public space design, becomes limited in its application, and is thus less suited to addressing the multiple values and social complexities of particular contexts. It therefore lacks the ability to incorporate specific, localised and emergent knowledge characterised by expert design and public co-design. Tensions between these two modes of decision-making (instrumental and abductive) have filtered through to the results of the Albion Square case study in several ways.
Ultimate responsibility for design and delivery of the Albion Square project was a Project Control Group set up by the Council, so that while landscape architects were involved throughout the design and engagement process, decision-making was framed by institutional values associated with explicit, step-by-step choices rather than through synthesis and the core attributes of design expertise. Accordingly, with consultation the basis for engagement, the process was separated into its respective parts, and landscape architects had limited opportunities for a direct and iterative relationship with the public. Public participation was heavily influenced by surveys and the collection of quantitative data, which was analysed by specialist consultation staff through tightly controlled processes. These processes influenced how effectively public ideas and knowledge could influence the developing landscape concepts, and limited how the knowledge of both designers and citizens might transform the concepts in the process.

The late stage at which the Project Control Group determined that a completely new design team would be engaged for developed and detailed design illustrated that efficient process and following procedure was paramount, regardless of relationships that had already been established between the landscape architects responsible for the concept plans and the local community. The new team of landscape architects had difficulty in creating a cohesive design, given that the public engagement process was already complete when they started, and constraints were placed on their expertise. Landscape architects noted the difficulty in resolving the design effectively, given the instruction to include all items from the public ‘wish-list’ into the developed and detailed design plans. As outlined in Chapter Two, the decision-making processes of public institutions have different priorities and reasoning processes to professional designers, so that in the Albion Square case, functional efficiency and political factors were more important than cohesive spatial relationships, meaningful public engagement, and design outcomes. These points of tension in the case study reinforced the experiences of New Zealand Experts in Chapter Four, who explained the constraints applied to their design expertise when instrumental reasoning dominates.
Instrumental reasoning is characteristic of institutions and relies on deductive and scientific logic, a multi-step approach of making explicit choices, based on various facts and assumptions. However as experts know, the effective resolution of complex problems can’t be reduced to a defined process or set of rules. The case study illustrates that when instrumental decision-making is applied to public space design, such approaches fail to address the different values and less tangible characteristics of a place. As explained in Chapter Two, instrumental reasoning essentially de-contextualises the landscape architect’s design expertise, so that the designer is unable to connect the relationships between contexts, actions and various interpretations of a place (Flyvbjerg, 2001). The impact of these statutory controls and participation requirements have been noted by Hughes and Hughes (2012), who observed that professionals have experienced a gradual weakening of control over their specific roles and bodies of knowledge. The emphasis on design activity as a logical problem solving process has historically failed to address the complexities of public life in cities, and has been more about the efficiency of means and ends than the practical situations in which design problems occur. This emphasis has also had an effect on the kinds of relationships possible between designers and the public.

Insight Two: This institutional context influences the types of participatory interactions between designers and the public.

Earlier chapters in this thesis highlighted the socially constructed nature of design expertise and the abductive forms of reasoning that enable designers to deal with complexity. Rather than applying specific rules, experienced designers use an intuitive process to draw on practical knowledge and experience alongside local knowledge and ideas. Compared with the flexibility of design-based reasoning, which can incorporate disparate, discrete and complex information, institutional processes reduce the richness of public input. As Munthe-Kaas, (2015, p. 232) has explained, “the specific, localized wealth of knowledge, advice and concerns is rarely given space in the formal planning paperwork (Star, 2010) and thus gets lost in the translation process”.
Insights from the Albion Square case study also highlight the tensions between instrumental reasoning of institutions and communicative reasoning of the public, noted both in the literature in Chapter Two and by New Zealand key informants in Chapter Four. This tension was obvious very early in the Albion Square case study, as over an extended period of time Lyttelton residents had asked Council for a more meaningful process of engagement than the standard consultation procedure. They were disappointed that the Council weren’t willing to pursue a more deliberative and therefore empowering approach. Many in the community were looking for ‘partnership’ rather than ‘consultation’ and were keen to learn how they could work with landscape architects on a plan for the site. Lyttelton residents confirmed what was identified in the theoretical literature, that conversation and experimentation enables a more sophisticated form of engagement in the participatory design process. As Till (2005, p. 11) explained, these forms of reasoning challenge the norms of institutional process where discourse is often set against the principles of “logic and completeness” […] The openness of ordinary conversation is [therefore] seen as a lower form of communication and thus one capable of being dismissed”.

Although a relatively small part of the design and engagement process, the two-hour community meeting held during the consultation process demonstrated the importance of deliberative and design based reasoning to the design process. Both community members and experts explained that conversation and experimentation enabled designers and locals to gain a broader understanding of the square and the effects that various outcomes might have on the space. Yet apart from the workshop, the process offered little opportunity to continue this relationship, and Māori cultural values in particular were reduced to a separate element very early in the project. Many in the community expressed disappointment with being held at ‘arms length’ during the process, as they had hoped that the ‘invitational nature’ of their involvement in the temporary site would be more effectively translated into the formal Council process. Where conversation and experimentation held greater potential for designers and the public to evolve ideas together, instead specific objects from the temporary site were literally located into the design concept for the square.
As noted in Chapter Two, design expertise is the direct application of human intuition to a situation based on accumulated knowledge, so that the synchronistic, holistic decision-making processes of design enable flexibility for public input. Such processes were observed in the Danish examples of co-design outlined in Chapter Four, where the Municipality of Copenhagen’s openness to involving local residents in experimental design processes enabled people to evolve their own perceptions of a place over time. People were involved in and evolved their thinking through early involvement, experimental activities and everyday conversations as a fundamental and ongoing part of the process. The flexibility of the process for Tåsinge Plads in Copenhagen for example, ultimately enabled the transformation of both designer and the public’s understanding of the site, which led to the opportunity for “overlapping” uses of the square, resulting in a cohesive outcome.

In contrast, it was clear that in the design and engagement process adopted for Albion Square, landscape architects were not able to use the core attributes of their design expertise mentioned in Chapter Four which would have enabled them to incorporate local knowledge towards a cohesive outcome. Given that the institutional process didn’t allow for the expression of these core attributes, it also wasn’t able to provide the direct and iterative relationship that designers require for an effective design process and that the community were looking for in their desire for partnership. The focus on problem solving and the inflexibility of the problem solving process, therefore had implications for how effectively landscape architects could work with public knowledge.

Designers require mechanisms that recognise and support the socially constructed nature of design thinking and the opportunities and limitations that support a richer relationship with the public (Forester, 1985). As shown in the comments by one New Zealand participation expert, design “framing” is fundamental to effective collaboration in public space design, given that it’s very rarely as easy as asking people what they want and building it. They explained that people ask for things, they get them, and then the things they ask for disrupt other parts of their lives (Expert #4). What is needed is a re-writing of the whole story before the final form is
created. As Plowright (2014, p. 27) noted, “holistically, architecture responds to a situation or a context. It does not solve discrete problems [...] This doesn't mean that a type of problem-solving cannot be attempted, only that it tends to be detrimental to the outcome”. The instrumental decision-making process therefore has limitations in the ways it can address the social dimensions of design. The ‘wish-list’ of things developed from the problem solving approach in the case study and the lack of ongoing direct and iterative engagement, meant that designers were using their skills in a technical rather than in a generative way. Equally the use of survey and feedback forms meant that people found it difficult to envisage any more than their separate ideas for the square, and they had limited opportunities for engagement at the workshop.

Till (2005, p. 7) has explained that like the communities they serve, designers are also “embodied citizens” and that in order to enact this role, they need an intimate understanding of what it means to be a citizen in that place and to move between the roles of expert and user “with one set of knowledge and experience informing the other”. Institutional processes therefore ‘decontextualise’ the designer’s knowledge by separating this whole into its parts (Shotter, 1993). Shotter argued that participative process would be better served by designers embracing a “‘developmental’ knowledge that adjusts to and grows out of the social-cultural surroundings in which they are situated”, rather than instrumental forms of reasoning which focus on facts and rational logic (Till, 2005, p. 7). This tension was evident in the way that landscape architects living within the local community sought but failed to open out the discussion regarding possible locations for the square.

The dominance of institutional process in the Albion Square case study therefore placed restraints on both the design expertise of landscape architects and their interactions with the public, so that the participation process resulted in a “managerial solution...[where] there is a ‘symmetry of ignorance’ between the dweller and professional – neither knows the dweller’s needs” (Lerup, 1977, cited in Till, 2005, p. 6). Despite two groups of landscape architects being an important part
of the council-led project team, and a third group who were prominent in the community, the case study has illustrated how administrative mediation of the relationships between designers and the public in this project effectively disabled the experts.

**Insight Three: Tightly managed and constrained interactions between designer and public in turn result in particular types of design process, which differ from those that produce elegant design outcomes.**

The case study showed that landscape architects were not only limited in their direct engagement with the public but the application of their design expertise was also shaped by strict timeframes and the instrumental values of project management processes. This meant that while the engagement process for Albion Square responded to the community’s request for a public space, the approach to managing its design process limited the nature of design possibilities for the square. Through a problem solving approach to decision-making, the spatial arrangement was about fitting objects in rather than transforming and creating new functional and cultural relationships. The narrow technical application of designer’s skills appeared to not only limit the more creative ways in which the community could have participated in the formal process, but also limited the potential for integrating various events and activities in the space.

As outlined in Chapter Two, professional design expertise is more than just “refined technique” however. It requires the designer to “reflect non-trivially on his or her practice(s), to make situated professional judgements, and to interrogate those judgements in social, discursive, material, political, economic and ideological contexts” (Kinsella & Pitman, 2012b, p. 169). This requires the designer to tolerate uncertainty, which is critical to the concept of practical reasoning. As identified earlier in several chapters of the thesis, in complex situations “it is not clear what the best *means* are to deal with the situation, nor, more importantly, is it clear what the appropriate *ends* are in the situation – what we should we be aiming to do. […] One must first decide – by practical deliberation – what *kind* of situation we are encountering, what is at stake, and how we might best respond” (Kemmis, 2012, p.
This abductive form of reasoning (explained in Chapter Four) is vital to the
generation of creative ideas. It enables the designer to draw tentative relationships
together conceptually and spatially, without closing off to emerging information too
early, while at the same time retaining an overall grasp of the complexity across all
aspects of the project.

However as also noted in Chapter Four, uncertainty is what public institutions try to
avoid, so that in the Albion Square case study, both the landscape architects and the
public had limited scope to create transformative outcomes. It is therefore not
difficult to see how tensions emerged. As Chapter Two explained, instrumental
reasoning follows a logical and systematic approach to decision-making, separating
facts from the discussion of values and maximizing the achievement of these goals
through efficiency. The designer is therefore less able to incorporate public
conversations to create design frames and to test those frames. Design quality is
constrained given that the “technical know-how of the expert is not enough to help
the users to develop new spatial visions; the user is given nothing to enable them to
expand on their nascent but unarticulated desires, and so these remain at the lowest
common denominator” (Till, 2005, p. 6). Both experts and community members
expressed sympathy for the landscape architects in the frustrations they
experienced with the institutional process with one Expert observing that the result
was essentially design-by-committee.

With the Project Control Group and the Community Board mediating the design
process administratively, landscape architects were therefore disempowered, not
only from using the core attributes of their design expertise, but also in their ability
to engage more iteratively with the public to incorporate their knowledge and ideas.
As noted in Chapter Seven, landscape architects explained how differently the Albion
Square process was to design-based reasoning. They noted that their role in Albion
Square wasn’t about editing or synthesising, it was about trying to achieve it all
(Expert #10). The institutional approach to the design and engagement process for
Albion Square therefore highlights certain tensions for the role of the landscape
architect. “As mere facilitators the architects are unable to re-imagine their
knowledge from the perspective of the user; their knowledge is not used
transformatively, rather their skills are used instrumentally” (Till 2005, p. 6). The results raise questions as to the role of the landscape architect in the participatory design process. Is their role as technician or a professional expert? Pitman (2012, p. 142) argued that it is critical we address such questions given that they “go to the core of the expectations of the practitioner, and very often to the regulatory, accountability, and decision-making frameworks within which a practitioner must act”

The study has helped illustrate that in the case of the Albion Square outcome, the highest quality of design outcome, that responds to a situation in all its richness and complexity, lies beyond the technical application of skills to the design programme. As noted in Chapter Two, whether design is applied as detailed analysis or design expertise has implications not only for design outcomes in the physical environment but also for how effectively public knowledge and ideas are incorporated into the process itself. To understand possible pathways towards improved design outcomes, I return to the concept of elegance, which I first introduced in Chapter Two. This illustrated how the decision-making processes associated with design expertise are a necessary pre-condition for elegant design outcomes.

Insight Four: A more explicit focus on the pre-conditions for design elegance has potential to be a powerful way to shape public participation in the design process.

Elegance lies in the ability to create connections and relationships between values, people and contexts, and these are distinct qualities of design expertise. Both in theory and through the responses of key informants, it is clear that landscape architecture as a design discipline responds to a ‘situation’ or ‘context’ rather than discrete problems, so that the process designers adopt aims to create a structure within which they can make sense of this complexity. As a human and intuitive based decision-making process, design expertise adopts a values based decision-making process which balances the human and experiential qualities of aesthetics while retaining function and legibility. As Goldblatt (2007, p. 12) explained:
“Elegance is part of a conceptual network that includes the likes of graceful, delicate, refined and balanced – what philosophers call aesthetic qualities, properties that are moving for the receptive subject. But it is iconic as well of an aesthetic Occam’s razor, carrying with it nothing it does not need”.

While elegance is a somewhat old-fashioned term, it holds promise for multiple levels of contextual response to inform the participatory design process. As Plowright (2014, p. 27) noted, in order to deal with complexity effectively, we need to address the “filtering process that limits which information used in the initial set-up of an architectural design process. [This] has so much influence on the final proposal.” Northern European designers have shown that bringing public knowledge into the design process at an early stage is not a threat to the design process. It provides an opportunity to strengthen both process and outcomes through “challenging the very limits and constraints of specialist knowledge” (Till, 2005, p. 8).

Elegance has qualities that align with the core attributes of design expertise and has been used in this thesis, not as a term with elitist or stylistic connotations, but as a way to question the status quo (Rashid, 2007).

Questions about the role of elegance in the participatory design process are therefore woven throughout this thesis, and its relevance became particularly clear in the discussion on design expertise in Chapter Four. While participation is often thought of as time consuming and inefficient, Chapter Four explained that effective participation comes about by understanding its relationship with the nature of the design process. It is not that the current focus on consultation in New Zealand doesn’t allow for design expertise, it’s that the impact of the design process on participation and the resulting outcomes has not been fully appreciated. The theoretical framing used to locate the outcome of the Albion Square case study in in Chapter Seven can therefore be used once more to illustrate the potential for design based participation processes in New Zealand (Figure 57).
Using the variables of decision-making processes (from detailed analysis to design expertise) and public participation (from consultation to co-design), this final version of the framework reveals how elegance is a powerful way to shape effective participation. The framework illustrates the implications of the four insights discussed in this chapter and how it might be possible for the participatory design process to move from **Quadrant 1** where Albion Square is located (designing technical solutions ‘for’) to **Quadrant 4** (designing elegance ‘with’). It moves a design outcome from a process focused on the institutional values and technical processes of planning, to one of design expertise, which through human intuition and practical reasoning, works with the public in a process of co-design.

In Chapter Two I explained that design expertise differs from the explicit processes of analytical thinking, so that while detailed analysis is still an important part of the designer’s toolkit, in complex situations such as public space design, the context
rather than particular rules or processes is the most important basis for decision-making. As noted in both the theory and design expertise chapters, designers intuitively use relevant details from their previous experiences as well as the current context in design projects, in order to generate a new conjecture or frame. The very human application of their practical knowledge, enables designers to work within the context of a situation, to synthesise these different kinds of information in that context and to consider an outcome in terms of its ‘value’ rather than as a ‘result’. Their knowledge is not abstracted as in a technical process, but transformed by the social-cultural context in which they are situated (Till, 2005).

Elegance helps emphasise the qualities of design expertise as a values-based reasoning process, with Expert’s descriptions of elegance showing a strong correlation with the core attributes of design expertise. Key informants in both New Zealand and Northern Europe described elegance as being “rooted in place, not layered with pattern”, “more than the sum of it’s parts”, “conveying a sense of timelessness”, “integrity”, “lets go of all superfluousness”, “a good fit with everything appropriate to its function”, “addressing both function and aesthetics” and “a quiet strength”. Interestingly, some of the more evocative descriptions were metaphorical, and emphasised resolution. These included; “hearing all voices and coming up with a sentence at the end with a clear message from everyone”, “a moment of magic, creating a new story from a tangle of others” and “creating congruity [by] making sense and stories that support one another”. Key informants descriptions of elegance therefore closely resembled the concept of framing, which as Plowright (2014, p. 303) explained, “enables the designer to communicate a core set of priorities to which the proposal responds”. By understanding the nature of elegance, I began to see the connections between design expertise and participation, and how the presence of elegance in an outcome therefore demonstrates a design process that has framed a complex situation successfully.

As one of the core attributes of design expertise, design framing has been a useful way in which to observe the power of elegance and to understand the ways in which public participation might contribute to transformative outcomes. Framing gives the designer flexibility to prioritise specific characteristics of a situation over others,
creating cohesion, while at the same time establishing flexibility to incorporate people’s knowledge, choices and challenges. One example of design framing is metaphor, which relative to communicative reasoning of imagery and narrative can elicit powerful frameworks through which participants can convey common values. Metaphors, like framing, leave space for emotional engagement and the moral and emotive-aesthetic forms of reasoning that Healey (1997, p. 51) argued are often “crowd[ed] out” by instrumental-technical reasoning. As noted in Chapter Four, well chosen metaphors have experiential power, and are a way of creating enriching, emotionally engaging public places by connecting unlikely entities in a poetic way (ibid). In their book *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p. 244) explained that metaphors are not just about words or language but include human “conceptualization and reasoning”. They note that:

> “the heart of metaphor is inference. Conceptual metaphor allows inferences in sensory-motor domains (e.g. domains of space and objects) to be used to draw inferences about other domains (e.g. subjective judgement, with concepts like intimacy, emotions, justice, and so on)”.

This is precisely how the abductive design process is able to deal with the complexity of different values, systems and objects, therefore facilitating the human and experiential qualities of elegance mentioned in Chapter Two.

The ability for design processes to embrace the aesthetic human and experiential aspects of decision-making, as well as the instrumental aspects of logic and function is one of the keys to elegant design. Given that local citizens have intimate knowledge and skills relative to a specific context, the abductive design process is therefore flexible enough to deal with spatial issues but also to incorporate information that addresses how people experience and identify with a place.

Responses from experts reported in Chapter Four showed the importance of collaboration for designers in the testing of design frames. This was a critical part of the design process, which served to refine and transform the concept as it was tested iteratively between designer and the public. Significantly, designers from both New Zealand and Northern Europe emphasised the importance of the social, practical and experiential nature of the participatory design process, which
confirmed what I had found in theory, that public space design is more effective when designer and the public are able to influence each other through the process; the design expert who brings their knowledge of what has worked in countless other situations and the public with their own grounded knowledge and experience of the context.

The case study has therefore highlighted the limitations of expertise when approaching the complexities of public space design as if it is primarily analysis and problem solving. It has demonstrated that technical approaches have effectively ‘dumbed down’ the potential outcome for a more cohesive approach to public space, instead making the place appear more complex as a result of trying to accommodate everyone’s wishes and fit everything in. As Masiulanis (2017, p. 4) explained, with such processes “the temptation to keep playing, to keep solving problems, to keep tinkering without integration into an overriding scheme is sometimes overwhelming, particularly when there are many different stakeholders. However this does not create complexity, but chaos”. Plowright (2014, p. 311-312) noted that there can be “deceptively simple rules behind complexity” so that it is critical to understand the “issues of relevance, as well as content that directly affects that relevance”. Furthermore, the experiences of key informants in Northern Europe illustrated how public involvement as an integral part of the design process helped people to evolve their understanding of public spaces and to see them in a new way. Design expertise is based on a decision-making process that embraces different forms of reasoning, enabling a much richer and diverse process from which to generate transformative solutions for both the designer and the public. As Till (2005, p. 7) has explained, transformation can only occur when the designer applies this from within the design project. In the case of the Albion Square case study, it was applied as an “abstraction from the outside”.

Chapter Two explained that designer’s embodied interactions with the public and the processes by which they make design decisions in social situations play a critical role in shaping elegant design outcomes in public space design. The human and experiential aspects of elegance are found in design expertise through the core attributes of design expertise, and require an intimate engagement with the social
context in order to apply and work iteratively with these attributes most effectively. As Forester (1997, p. 90) noted, we can’t know everything that will be relevant before a process unfolds, so that a degree of “structured unpredictability” is a key component in creating transformative solutions. The thesis has emphasised that while Thompson’s (2002) three value areas are helpful to illustrate the values that landscape architect’s take into account in design decisions, elegance helps to resolve the nature of the integration. Being closely aligned with the qualities of *phronesis* or the practical reasoning of design, elegance recognises the relevance of context, so that what is important in one context may be irrelevant in another (Goldblatt, 2007). Through intuitive decision-making, designers prioritise those features that are most relevant to the current context with both designer and participants being learners in the process. As Cross (2011) explained, trial and error and the iterative development of the final concept may therefore end up as something that both public and designer never knew they wanted. This is the critical value of how design expertise elicits transformative outcomes in public space design.

**Conclusion: Institutional, professional and theoretical implications**

Several implications can be drawn from the findings in this thesis. The final section outlines the institutional, professional and theoretical implications of the research investigation.

**Institutional Implications**

First, design outcomes in public space are fundamentally shaped by the institutional culture within which design takes place. As the research findings suggest, opportunities for well-resolved design are often limited by economic and instrumental imperatives which lead to the designer to act as technician rather than applying their reflective design judgment in context. While Council have supported
community-led transitional groups in experimental initiatives in Christchurch since the Canterbury earthquakes, the case study has illustrated how difficult it is to integrate such experimentation into the formal processes of long-term, permanent projects. This indicates that designers and the public still remain at “arm’s length” from one another in the participatory design process.

These dynamics take place in a context where Council have recently called for submissions to the 2018-2028 Draft Long Term Plan (LTP) with Mayor Lianne Dalziel, announcing her ambitions for a “collaborative approach” over the next ten years:

“‘We’re in this together’ is the theme I have chosen for this Long Term Plan (LTP). It is intended to signal a collaborative approach, both in terms of the planning for the next decade and in the delivery of our goals” (2018, p. 4).

To truly enact this vision however, the institutional system must change. If “enabling active citizenship and connected communities” (ibid) is to be a genuine and meaningful characteristic of public space design, it requires a focus on the “filtering process” that determines how the design process is set up (Plowright, 2014, p. 27). As outlined earlier in this chapter, successful participatory design not only embraces the core attributes of design expertise, designers must also have an active relationship with the public, in a developmental way, with citizens, from within the project (Shotter, 1977). Chapter Four explained how the Municipality of Copenhagen have embraced a radical rethink of traditional planning by demonstrating how the process can be less controlled. Similar to the success of the Christchurch City Council-led Waterways and Wetlands initiative during the 1990s, when it comes to participatory design processes, instrumental values are better relegated a back seat. Council therefore has the opportunity to be at the forefront of change and to rethink how participatory design best operates (Fisher, 2017).

Design expertise as a central tenet in public space design becomes critically relevant if sustainability is to be taken seriously within the design of our cities. As the United Nations Agency UN-Habitat (2016a) have explained, “liveable” cities require 30-50% of land designated to public space. They note that “retrofitting is a lot more difficult and expensive than planning in advance” so it makes sense for Council to adopt
processes that have the best chance of getting it right the first time (ibid). One of the most important implications of this research is that the reasoning processes we choose to apply to decision-making have a critical bearing not only on design outcomes but in how well we can involve people in public space design. It makes sense therefore for Council to focus on processes that address complexity by empowering designers and the public in the formal processes of institutional culture.

Professional implications
The second implication of this research relates to the quality of design outcomes, which depends on the kinds of interactions that are created between professional designers and communities. As Till (2005, p. 11) explained, when direct and iterative rather than separated and sequential, design-based reasoning “give[s] rise to unexpected consequences [and] lead participation down paths that they may never have found through logic”. Yet given the less explicit nature of design expertise, it is institutional process that often dominates the application of design-based reasoning processes needed to address complexity. Kemmis (2012, p. 147) has warned that, there is a danger that phronesis is considered merely a form of knowledge:

“‘in the heads’ (and moral commitments) of practitioners [...] that is, something to be taught as opposed to something that develops through experience as a capacity to approach the unavoidable uncertainties of practice in a thoughtful and reflective way.”

If we want to understand how to improve the relationships in participatory design and work towards more effective and elegant design outcomes, then there is merit in also better understanding the nature of phronesis and the different types of experiences that the expert brings to participatory design encounters. As Kemmis (2012, p. 147) explained, “professional knowledge expresses itself in unique and changing ways as individual practitioners encounter particular [communities], situations and contexts”.

This could mean the landscape architecture profession places more emphasis on understanding and making explicit the nature of expertise and the social processes of design. The NZILA could develop Continuing Professional Development events
that are practically based and include design-led engagement workshops to complement training that is focused on the more scientific aspects of policy engagement. Greater emphasis on the core attributes of design expertise in the participatory context could also elicit greater discussion within the Institute as to how we make these qualities more explicit within the wider profession so that as designers we are able to appreciate the differences and applicability of various decision-making processes in public space design.

By clarifying the differences between design expertise and analytical problem solving, this research also has implications for more effectively embracing Māori design principles and the less tangible yet equally critical metaphysical aspects of place. This could be particularly helpful when considered alongside the *Te Aranga Māori Design Principles* which, while providing a framework to determine the cultural values that shape landscape architect’s design decisions, are similar to Thompson’s model of tri-valent design which requires an understanding of how we resolve the nature of the integration.

At a nationwide wananga (discussion) on the “issues, techniques and mechanics of engagement of kaupapa Māori in the landscape” (Architecture Now, 2015), Landscape Architect Alan Titchener (2015, p. 9) explained that landscape architects must hone their skills that relate to the Western traditions of design, and that this should be done in tandem with exploring and adopting the “wisdom and traditions of the indigenous people of this place”. Titchener (2016, p. 6) explained that:

“Māori culture and sense of place is rooted in the stories and legends of people, events and an anthropomorphic view of features in the landscape. These stories provide a rich vein of potential design inspiration for landscape architects, if only they can engage sufficiently closely with tangata whenua in order that they (the tangata whenua) will be willing to share their stories with them (the recipients of these taonga).”

As both the literature and case study findings suggest, the complexity of different values can be more effectively integrated through practical and reflective reasoning in context, so that a better understanding of the nature of design expertise can help
enable Māori values to be explored and applied more effectively and cohesively as part of the participatory design process.

Hester (2001) has lamented the lack of exemplary participation in landscape architecture noting that participation often remains separated from design. He argued that there is a mistaken understanding that participation is just drawing what the community wants, instead of structuring a framework of how people need to look at the problem and what alternatives need to be considered. Importantly, this research implies that landscape architects should be up front and central in leading public space projects rather than relegated to the side or the end of the decision-making process as was the case with the Albion Square case study.

**Theoretical Implications**

Finally, my thesis has highlighted four theoretical implications relevant to the discipline of landscape architecture. They include design expertise, context, elegance and self-awareness.

McAvin et al., (1991, p. 155) have noted the “absence of a theoretical infrastructure” within landscape architecture and the importance of developing a robust body of theory as a basis for analysis and evaluation in the discipline. While Chapter Two revealed that there is a long history of theoretical writing and search for effective modes of public participation in urban landscapes, there has been very little attention given to the attributes of design expertise in landscape architecture, and the implications that different modes of decision-making have for design outcomes. By developing a theoretical framework that links expertise and public participation, my thesis has highlighted the significance of different levels of design expertise in participatory design.

The theoretical framework that has evolved through this thesis has therefore provided what is essentially a ‘thinking tool’ from which to consider the range of possibilities in design decision-making in the context of public participation. It locates the less well understood abductive processes of design expertise relative to
the more explicit methods of detailed analysis, providing a frame from which to test and identify the various features and merits of these modes within the context of public participation. The framework can also be used descriptively to locate completed projects and case studies and to assess the effectiveness of different kinds of decision-making alongside the participative techniques carried out. The framework offers a new conceptual model from which to consider how we think about and experience the relationship between design expertise and participation in landscape architecture; one which makes more explicit the core attributes of design expertise and how the values of practical reasoning, human contact and experimentation fit into the participatory design process. This framework needs to be incorporated into landscape architectural theory.

The case study has drawn attention to the significance of the institutional context as a critical influence on design process. The findings reveal that the tensions between the different reasoning processes of design expertise and institution (Hall, 1980; Kemmis, 2012; Pitman, 2012) and institution and community (Friedmann, 1987; Healey, 1997) have a large part to play in the resolution of design outcomes. The results therefore show how the relationships between design and participation recognised in planning theory are also vital to urban landscape design. While these theoretical insights have emerged from disciplines outside of landscape architecture, as Meyer (1992, p. 31) explained, theory plays a role in “[b]ridging, mediating and reconciling” [...] design form with the particulars of time and place and the aspirations and motivations of humankind.”

In Chapter Two the models of Thompson (2000; 2002) and Howett (1987) illustrated the importance of plural values in landscape architecture and that the greater integration of these values contribute to improved outcomes in landscape architecture. However the models themselves do not help designers either resolve or evaluate the nature of the integration. I have argued in this thesis that the long-established notion of elegance has the potential to be revitalised as a contemporary way in which we can understand how to integrate values based reasoning in landscape architecture; the preconditions of which include the importance of experimentation, a direct contrast to detailed analysis. The concept of elegance
challenges the idea of the designer as an autonomous and privileged expert and places them in the role of co-designer. As Flyvbjerg (2001) pointed out, design is not some kind isolated genius, but evolves from practical engagement in context.

My thesis has therefore also drawn attention to the need for landscape architects to be more self-aware in their design practice and to reflect on the nature of their own processes as they relate to the levels of design expertise identified in this thesis. As McAvin et al., (1991) recommend, we would do well to draw the knowledge found from other disciplines into the theoretical body of landscape architecture itself. In particular, educators would benefit from improving models of design process in teaching programmes. It may involve exploring particular methods in greater detail and making the nature of expertise explicit in the teaching of design studies. This would mean students would have a better understanding of the core attributes of design expertise that lie the heart of landscape architectural discipline from the outset of their education.

Fundamentally this research illustrates the critical role that the New Zealand political process plays in shaping the relationship between design expertise and public participation. It reveals that elegant participatory design outcomes require an enabling design culture.


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Appendices

**Appendix A: Human Ethics Committee Approval (Stage One)**

**Application No:** 2015-52

11 December 2015

**Title:** Designing with Communities: Expertise, Engagement & Elegance in Landscape Architecture: Stage 1 (Landscape architects and public participation experts)

**Applicant:** Wendy Hoddinott

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*The Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee has reviewed the above noted application.*

Thank you for your response to the questions which were forwarded to you on the Committee’s behalf.

I am satisfied on the Committee’s behalf that the issues of concern have been satisfactorily addressed. I am pleased to give final approval to your project.

Please note that this approval is valid for three years from today’s date at which time you will need to reapply for renewal.

Once your field work has finished can you please advise the Human Ethics Secretary, Alison Hind, and confirm that you have complied with the terms of the ethical approval.

May I, on behalf of the Committee, wish you success in your research.

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Yours sincerely

Grant Tavinor

Chair, Human Ethics Committee

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Human Ethics Committee has an audit process in place for applications. Please see 7.3 of the Human Ethics Committee Operating Procedures (ACHE) in the Lincoln University Policies and Procedures Manual for more information.
Appendix B: Information Sheet – Landscape Architect (Stage One)

Lincoln University
School of Landscape Architecture; Environment, Society & Design
Research Information Sheet – Landscape Architect

You are invited to participate in a project entitled:
Designing with Communities: Expertise, Engagement and Elegance in Landscape Architecture

The aim of this project is to better understand the nature of the landscape architect’s design expertise and how this expertise engages with communities. I am interested in your experience of working with communities across four key areas: project, process, practice, and profession.

I would like to interview you about your experiences in community engagement, particularly in the design of public space. The interview should take between forty-five minutes to one hour and, with your consent, I will record the interview using a recording device. If you would like a copy of the transcript, I am happy to send this to you and you are welcome to correct or withdraw comments I have recorded. If you are not comfortable with a recording, I am happy to take shorthand notes during the interview. You are welcome to decline to answer any questions and can decide to stop the interview at any time. If so, I will destroy any data from the interview.

The results may be published in a journal paper or included in a conference presentation, but you may be assured of your anonymity in this investigation: the identity of any participant will not be made public, or made known to any person other than the researcher, her supervisors and the Human Ethics Committee and in the event of an audit. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality the following steps will be taken:

• Names and contact details will not be used as a part of data dissemination.
• Pseudonyms or code names will be used instead in any written or oral presentation.
• No individual identifying information will be presented in public.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are able to withdraw your participation and the information you have provided for the research by informing me prior to March 2017 by telephone or email. If you are happy to take part in this interview, I will bring a consent form for you to sign at the interview, which we will arrange at a time suitable to you.

The project is being carried out by:

Wendy Hoddinott
Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz Mobile: 027 4766813

She will be pleased to discuss any concerns you have about participation in the project.

Names of Supervisors:

Professor Simon Swaffield
Email: simon.swaffield@lincoln.ac.nz Phone: 03 4230476

Dr Emma J. Stewart,
Email: emma.stewart@lincoln.ac.nz Phone: 03 423 0500

The project has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee
Appendix C: Information Sheet – Participation Expert (Stage One)

Lincoln University
School of Landscape Architecture; Environment, Society & Design
Research Information Sheet – Participation Expert

You are invited to participate in a project entitled:

*Designing with Communities: Expertise, Engagement and Elegance in Landscape Architecture*

The aim of this project is to better understand the nature of the landscape architect’s design expertise and how this expertise engages with communities. I am interested in your experience of working with communities with regard to your understanding of public participation and decision-making.

I would like to interview you about your experiences in community engagement, which would include for example, questions that ask what supports or hinders public participation. The interview should take between forty-five minutes to one hour and, with your consent, I will record the interview using a recording device. If you would like a copy of the transcript, I am happy to send this to you and you are welcome to correct or withdraw comments I have recorded. If you are not comfortable with a recording, I am happy to take shorthand notes during the interview. You are welcome to decline to answer any questions and can decide to stop the interview at any time. If so, I will destroy any data from the interview.

The results may be published in a journal paper or included in a conference presentation, but you may be assured of your anonymity in this investigation: the identity of any participant will not be made public, or made known to any person other than the researcher, my supervisors and the Human Ethics Committee in the event of an audit. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality I will take the following steps:

- Names and contact details will not be used as a part of data dissemination.
- Pseudonyms or code names will be used instead in any written or oral presentation.
- No individual identifying information will be presented in public.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are able to withdraw your participation and the information you have provided for the research by informing me prior to March 2017 by telephone or email. If you are happy to take part in this interview, I will bring a consent form for you to sign at the interview, which we will arrange at a time suitable to you.

The project is being carried out by:

Wendy Hoddinott

Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz  Mobile: 027 4766813

I will be pleased to discuss any concerns you have about participation in the project.

Names of Supervisors:

Professor Simon Swaffield
Email: simon.swaffield@lincoln.ac.nz  Phone: 03 4230476

Dr Emma J. Stewart,
Email: emma.stewart@lincoln.ac.nz  Phone: 03 423 0500;

The project has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee
Appendices

Appendix D: Consent form (Stage One)

Name of Project:

Designing with Communities: Expertise, Engagement & Elegance in Landscape Architecture

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate as a subject in the project, and I consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved. I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided, up to the end of 31 March 2017.

I consent to the interview being (please tick the box as appropriate):

(a) recorded on an audio device
(b) recorded by hand written notes

Name:

Signed:

Date:
Appendix E: Questions – Landscape Architect (Stage One)

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND, PROJECT WORK & DESIGN PRACTICE:
- Tell me about your background and how you came into the profession.
- What types of projects are you typically involved in?
- How do you work as a practice? Are there key aspects of your practice that make you identifiable or unique?
- How is your physical work environment set up to support your design practice?
- I’m interested in your work in the design of public space. Tell me about the work you do there.

DESIGN PROCESS:
- I’m also interested in your design process. Particularly x, y and z.
- When you start a design project, where do you start, where do your early concepts come from?
- Where do your insights, inspirations come from?
- What are some of the challenges of the design process?
- What things hinder or support this process?
- How do you communicate your ideas in the design process? Can you give me some examples?
- Who do you communicate to? What are the challenges of this?
- Literature tells us that elegance is [insert]. What do you regard as an elegant design?

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:
- What groups/stakeholders would you typically work with?
- Can you give me some examples? How do these projects involve the public?
- How are they engaged? What are some of the processes?
- What are some of the challenges?
- What are some of the things that hinder engagement with communities?
- Conversely, what are some of the things that support engagement with communities?
- How do you overcome the challenges?
- What are the benefits of public participation?
- To what extent do you value the input and engagement of public participation?
- Reflecting on our earlier conversation, what role or value does the public have in the design process?
- We’ve talked about your practice specifically, how do landscape architects generally regard public involvement?
- As a landscape architect how do you learn the craft of interacting with the community?

PERSONAL PROFILE:
Name:
Company/Business:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

Wendy Hoddinott
PhD Candidate
School of Landscape Architecture
Lincoln University, Canterbury
Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz

DESIGN PROFESSION & EVALUATING OUTCOMES:
- How do you evaluate the success of [public] engagement? Do you go back to the public directly?
- Do you receive feedback? Is it an integrated process? Do you receive it throughout?
- What is an elegant design outcome to you?
- How important is it that landscape architects achieve elegance in both process and outcome?
- Do you have any suggestions for a community-led design project that I could follow up as a case study?

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule Landscape Architect (Stage One)
Appendix: Questions – Participation Expert (Stage One)

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND:
- Tell me about your background and how you came to be involved in the area of public participation [decision-making].
- What types of projects are you typically involved in and what is your role?
- What types of groups would you typically work with?

LOCAL CONTEXT & DESIGN
- In your opinion, what have been the main challenges regarding public involvement and the design of public space in [Christchurch]?
- What effect has the political/legislative context had on public involvement?
- How have these issues been addressed?
- How could these processes be improved?

PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ROLE OF DESIGNERS
- What is your experience of working in projects that engage design expertise [e.g. landscape architects, architects]?
- Can you give me some examples? How do these projects involve designers?
- How can designers best respond to the complexity of communities through design (both in process and outcome)?
- What are some of the things that hinder engagement with communities in the design process?
- Conversely, what are some of the things that support engagement with communities?
- Do you have any examples of exemplary projects where designers and communities worked well together?
- Conversely, examples where they didn’t work well together?
- Where should landscape architects learn the craft of interacting with the community?
- Literature tells us that elegance is [insert]. What do you regard as an elegant design?

PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
- What are some of the most effective ways in which the public could contribute to a public space design process?
- How can communities play a creative part of the design process? Do you have any examples of this?
- What are the benefits of public participation in the design process?
Appendices

Appendix G: Human Ethics Committee Approval (Stage Two)

3 March 2016

Application No: 2016-07

Title: Designing with Communities: Expertise, Engagement & Elegance in Landscape Architecture: Stage 2 (Case Studies)

Applicant: W Hoddinott

The Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee has reviewed the above noted application. Thank you for your response to the questions which were forwarded to you on the Committee’s behalf.

I am satisfied on the Committee’s behalf that the issues of concern have been satisfactorily addressed. I am pleased to give final approval to your project.

Regarding your query in 1.i, we agree that it would be disruptive to seek consent within the meeting. Advertising the presence of a researcher is an option as you note. There seems to be a very low level of risk here, however, so it may be best just to act pragmatically in this instance. And as you note in response to 1.h, you are prepared to leave the meeting if there is disagreement over your presence.

Please note that this approval is valid for three years from today’s date at which time you will need to reapply for renewal.

Once your field work has finished can you please advise the Human Ethics Secretary, Alison Hind, and confirm that you have complied with the terms of the ethical approval.

May I, on behalf of the Committee, wish you success in your research.

Yours sincerely

Grant Tavinor
Chair, Human Ethics Committee

PLEASE NOTE: The Human Ethics Committee has an audit process in place for applications. Please see 7.3 of the Human Ethics Committee Operating Procedures (ACHE) in the Lincoln University Policies and Procedures Manual for more information.
Appendix H: Information Sheet – Albion Square Case Study (Stage Two)

Lincoln University  
School of Landscape Architecture; Environment, Society & Design  
Research Information Sheet

You are invited to participate in a project entitled:  
*Designing with Communities: Expertise, Engagement and Elegance in Landscape Architecture*

The aim of this project is to better understand the nature of the landscape architect’s design expertise and how this expertise engages with communities. I am interested in your experience of the design and community engagement process for Albion Square in Lyttelton.

I would like to interview you about your experiences in community engagement, which would include for example, questions that ask what supports or hinders public participation. The interview should take between forty-five minutes to one hour and, if you are happy for me to do so, I would like to record the interview using a recording device. If you would like a copy of the transcript, I am happy to send this to you and you are welcome to correct or withdraw comments I have recorded. If you are not comfortable with a recording, I am happy to take shorthand notes during the interview. You are welcome to decline to answer any questions and can decide to stop or withdraw from the interview at any time. If so, I will destroy any data from the interview.

The results may be published in a journal paper or included in a conference presentation, but I can assure your anonymity in this research: the identity of any participant will not be made public, or made known to any person other than the researcher, my supervisors and, in the event of an audit the Human Ethics Committee.

To ensure anonymity and confidentiality I will take the following steps:

- Names and contact details will not be used as a part of data dissemination.
- Pseudonyms or code names will be used instead in any written or oral presentation.
- No individual identifying information will be presented in public.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are able to withdraw your participation and the information you have provided for the research by informing me prior to March 2017 by telephone or email. If you are happy to take part in this interview, I will bring a consent form for you to sign at the interview, which we will arrange at a time suitable to you.

The project is being carried out by:

*Wendy Hoddinott*

Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz  Mobile: 027 4766813

She will be pleased to discuss any concerns you have about participation in the project.

**Names of Supervisors:**

*Professor Simon Swaffield*  
Email: simon.swaffield@lincoln.ac.nz  Phone: 03 4230476

*Dr Emma J. Stewart,*  
Email: emma.stewart@lincoln.ac.nz  Phone: 03 423 0500;

The project has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee.
Appendix 3: Interview Schedule Landscape Architect (Stage Two)

Landscape Architect Interviews: Design Expertise and Engagement with Communities

| Personal profile: | Wendy Hoddinott  
| Name: | PhD Candidate  
| Company/Business: | School of Landscape Architecture  
| Address: | Lincoln University, Canterbury  
| Phone: | Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz  

| NATURE OF THE ENGAGEMENT: | ROLE/BACKGROUND:  
| - What was your experience of working with the community/ stakeholders? | - Tell me about your background and how you came into the profession.  
| - Can you describe your design process as this project unfolded – how did you develop your ideas for Albion Square? | - What types of projects are you typically involved in and what is your role?  
| - How were the public engaged? What were some of the processes? | - In what ways and to what degree has your work involved the public?  
| - What were some of the challenges? How did you overcome these? |  
| - What were some of the things that hindered engagement with the community? |  
| - Conversely, what were some of the things that supported engagement with the community? |  
| - What were the benefits of public participation? |  
| - To what extent did you value the input and engagement of the public? |  
| - What role or value did the public have in the design process? |  
| - How do you think landscape architects generally regard public involvement? |  
| - As a landscape architect how do you learn the craft of interacting with the community? |  

| EVALUATING OUTCOMES: | ASPIRATIONS:  
| - What was the outcome of your engagement with the community? | - What were your initial impressions of the [Albion Square] project before you began?  
| - What did you learn from the process? Do you feel you have learned anything new? | - Did these change... how, why?  
| - How did you evaluate the success of the [public] engagement? | - What were you hoping would come out of this project?  
| - What is an elegant design outcome to you? Would you say Albion Square is an elegant design outcome? | - What were you looking for? Anything else?  
| - How important is it that landscape architects achieve elegance in both process and outcome? | - Literature tells us that elegance is [insert]. What do you regard as an elegant design? Is this important?  
| - Do you have any suggestions for a community-led design project that I could follow up as a case study? |  

Wendy Hoddinott  
PhD Candidate  
School of Landscape Architecture  
Lincoln University, Canterbury  
Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz
Appendix 5: Interview Schedule Community Member (Stage Two)

Community Member Interviews: Design Expertise and Engagement with Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal profile:</th>
<th>Wendy Hoddinott</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>PhD Candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative Group:</td>
<td>School of Landscape Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Lincoln University, Canterbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz">wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Role/Background: | - Tell me about your background and how you came to be involved in the project. |

| Nature of the Engagement: | - Can you describe the process as this project unfolded – how did the ideas develop for Albion Square? |
| - What was your experience of working with the landscape architects/community? |
| - How were the public engaged? What were some of the processes? |
| - What were some of the challenges with engagement? And how were they overcome? |
| - What were some of the things that hindered your engagement? |
| - Conversely, what were some of the things that supported engagement with the landscape architect? |
| - What were the benefits of public participation? |
| - To what extent did you value the input and engagement of the designer? |
| - What role or value did you feel the public had in the design process? |
| - How do you think landscape architects generally regard public involvement? |
| - Are there any ways in which landscape architects could have improved the way in which they interacted with you? |

| Evaluating Outcomes: | - What was the outcome of the landscape architect's engagement with the public? |
| - What did you learn from the process? Do you feel you have learned anything new? |
| - How did you evaluate the success of your engagement? |
| - What is an elegant design outcome to you? Would you say Albion Square is an elegant design outcome? |
| - Do you have any suggestions for a community-led design project that I could follow up as a case study? |

| Aspirations: | - What were your initial impressions of the [Albion Square] project before the community engagement process began? |
| - Did these change... how, why? |
| - What were you hoping would come out of this project? |
| - What were you looking for? Anything else? |
Appendix 4: Interview Schedule Council Staff/Stakeholder Representatives (Stage Two)

Personal profile:
Name: 
Representative Group: 
Address: 
Phone: 
Email: 

Wendy Hoddinott
PhD Candidate
School of Landscape Architecture
Lincoln University, Canterbury
Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz

Interview No. 
Date:

ROLE/BACKGROUND:
- Tell me about your background and the stakeholder group you are representing.
- What types of projects are you typically involved in and what is your role?
- How did you come to be involved in this project?

EVALUATING OUTCOMES:
- What was the outcome of the landscape architect's engagement with the public?
- What did you learn from the process? Do you feel you have learned anything new?
- How did you evaluate the success of the public engagement?
- What is an elegant design outcome to you? Would you say Albion Square is an elegant design outcome?
- Do you have any suggestions for a community-led design project that I could follow up as a case study?

NATURE OF THE ENGAGEMENT:
- What was your experience of working with the landscape architects/community?
- Can you describe your process as this project unfolded – how did the ideas develop for Albion Square?
- How were the public engaged? What were some of the processes?
- What were some of the challenges? How did you overcome these?
- What were some of the things that hindered engagement with the community?
- Converse, what were some of the things that supported engagement with the community?
- What were the benefits of public participation?
- To what extent did you value the input and engagement of the public?
- What role or value did the public have in the design process?
- How do you think landscape architects generally regard public involvement?
- Are there any ways in which landscape architects could improve the way in which they interact with the community?

ASPIRATIONS:
- What were your initial impressions of the [Albion Square] project before you began?
- Did these change… how, why?
- What were you hoping would come out of this project?
- What were you looking for? Anything else?
- Literature tells us that elegance is [insert]. What do you regard as an elegant design? Is this important?

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Appendix L: Information Sheet – Participant Observation (Stage Two)

Lincoln University
School of Landscape Architecture; Environment, Society & Design
Research Information Sheet

Designing with Communities: Expertise, Engagement and Elegance in Landscape Architecture

The aim of this project is to better understand the nature of the landscape architect’s design expertise and how this expertise engages with communities. As part of this study, I am using Albion Square as a case study to determine how this public space is used during different times of the day, week and year; and under different conditions.

This observation will help me to evaluate how the square is used compared to the original intention of the design process (i.e. the intentions of designers, Lyttelton communities and various stakeholders).

The results may be published in a journal paper or included in a conference presentation, but the identity of any person using the space will not be made public.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

The project is being carried out by:

Wendy Hoddinott

Email: wendy.hoddinott@lincolnuni.ac.nz  Mobile: 027 4766813

Names of Supervisors:

Professor Simon Swaffield
Email: simon.swaffield@lincoln.ac.nz  Phone: 03 4230476

Dr Emma J. Stewart,
Email: emma.stewart@lincoln.ac.nz  Phone: 03 423 0500

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