Chapter Seven: Exploring Tourist Staging

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter described the town of Geraldine using a tourism perspective associated with: moving from the global to local, the travel circuit, authenticity and embodied performances. This chapter focuses upon the concept of staging. The performance perspective is of particular relevance for landscape architecture as it draws attention to the critical role of designed environments in enabling tourists to play out the activities and experiences they seek in the places they visit, whereby providing stages for the individual and collective tourism performances. In addition to the research methods used in the previous chapter (participant observation and key informant interviews) staging Geraldine is studied through a design exploration in which key informants were interviewed and asked to respond to four different design approaches created for a site in Geraldine. The designs feature a range of design characteristics that represent different combinations of local, glocal and global characteristics.

This chapter is divided into 3 sections. The first section sets the context of this chapter. It provides a brief description of the three current tourism stages in Geraldine in order to situate the key informant responses, and then describes the four design approaches used to stage a new tourist space in Geraldine. Each design approach identifies the features that make up the new space and its location on a local to global scale. The design features were selected from considering the student work in chapter five as well as from the tourism and design literature. The second section presents the results of the key informant interviews organised in three thematic categories related to taskscapes, modified taskscapes, touristscapes. The third section draws out the design specific issues that cut across the three taskscape-touristscape categories and includes issues in design process.

7.2 Section One: Geraldine Design Exploration and Context

7.2.1 Current Tourism Stages

As introduced in chapter six, key informants recognise three stages: the touristscape related stages of the Four Peaks Plaza and Kiwi Country, and the taskscape - main street stage. These existing stages set the context where the four design approaches were situated and were frequently referenced by the key informants during the interviews exploring the four design approaches.

7.2.2 Main Street Stage

Geraldine’s main street is a rural service town taskscape that has been slightly modified for tourists. The street retains original road width and street frontage. The streetscape has been modified for
tourists primarily with surface changes such as the addition of colour pavers and street furniture, as well as street banners, adding hanging flower containers, themed signage, and architectural embellishments to building facades. More functional changes to this street which also benefits local people include the addition of a self-cleaning toilet and parking restrictions to regulate key parking areas and restrict overnight camping within the town. The town’s authentic taskscape such as street frontage, building typology and mixed use has been conserved and functions as any other rural town. The town expresses small town necessity and thus object authenticity by preserving and reusing buildings which has resulted in an array of varied architecture and tenants. There have been small incremental changes to the main street stage. A good example of this is a change of the town’s village green which was sold from public ownership and is now private space. This space appears as traditional village green space but is regulated and managed by private interests for their benefit. However, maintaining this private space to appear like a public village green has maintained an authentic overall appearance of Geraldine’s main street.

7.2.3 Four Peaks Plaza Stage

The Four Peaks Plaza is located at the junction of Talbot Street (main street) and Cox Street (the Geraldine-Fairlie Highway/ State Highway 79). It is physically separate from the rest of the main street taskscape and demonstrates some characteristics of an enclave, as well as more homogeneous (Edensor 1998) spatial and material characteristics. The Four Peaks Plaza provides for coach tourists and independent travellers with a cluster of services and outdoor space as a rest stop. Located on an important corner, the plaza has a front stage with characteristics similar to the rest of the main street, and a back stage that has a familiar shopping mall configuration that has been modified to accommodate visitors for a ‘one stop shop’.

The plaza is a hybrid of both local and global characteristics. The local characteristics include: a location in the heart of the CBD; the scale of the plaza which resembles its surrounding rural town context and spatially appears as ‘taskscape’ where pedestrians and vehicles share the space. The more global or enclavic touristscape characteristics of the plaza include: all inclusive tourist related services; spaces that are privatised, regulated, commodified and contained; an ordered aesthetic represented by simplified and selected symbols; and is best experienced through the gaze. The more hybrid or ‘glocal’ attributes of this stage include: local access and use outside of busy tourism hours; and, a visual aesthetic that is locally produced and although more ‘touristy’ than the rest of the taskscape aspects of town has a ‘playfulness’ and scale appropriate to its context in a small rural town.

7.2.4 Kiwi Country Tourism Complex Stage

Kiwi Country Visitor Complex is a contentious new tourism stage located on the edge of Geraldine’s CBD. This stage is clearly a tourism enclave and touristscape, servicing primarily coach tours and other tourists looking for conventional mass tourism facilities. As an enclave it is physically separated
from the everyday taskscape of Geraldine and provides all travel services within one building. The outdoor stage is primarily hard surfaced parking and flower beds decorating the building. The lack of outdoor performance cues suggests the intent of these spaces is to direct people indoors. This stage is contentious because according to some locals it never fulfilled a promise to acknowledge the site’s history (group of 5 female volunteers 50s-70s) and it is a touristscape that provides few attractions for local everyday performances. Most locals and many independent tourists said they would ‘check out’ Kiwi Country but were confident that it wouldn’t provide anything for them. Touristscapes are avoided at certain (busy) times or as in the case of Kiwi Country, avoided altogether. Kiwi Country’s location on the edge of the CBD and alternative tourism stages allows people to choose to use the facilities or not. Having a choice was important for both tourists and local residents. The simple presence of touristscapes conflicts with some people’s perceptions of small towns and intensifies with: the prominence of location; increases in scale and urban attributes; and lessening involvement (providing less for local everyday performances) with the local community.

These three stages: main street, Four Peaks and Kiwi Country, are useful in the understanding and organisation of staging tourism in small towns as they represent the range of tourism development and transitions from taskscape and modified taskscape to touristscape. These categories are used to structure the order and content of the key informant responses to the four design scenarios.

7.3 Local to Global Design Approaches

The overall purpose of this design exploration was to get a better understanding of how people perceive the performance opportunities for tourism in a small town a’ stop along the route’, and what this means for design of the town as a stage for tourism. The strategy was to design a spectrum of possibilities from global touristscapes to local taskscape by explicitly providing the scenarios; informants are presented with possibilities that extend beyond conventional ways of perceiving tourism and small towns. The spectrum was necessary to fully unpack people’s perceptions of the small town tourism stage and, as this research has found to be important, issues associated with: globalisation, authenticity, and place identity. Understanding the characteristics of a stage and how people perceive the stage and its characteristics is of utmost importance for how a designer provides the opportunities for desired performances.

Four design approaches were created as visual prompts for use during key informant interviews. Four options were necessary to organise the different characteristics, and to establish a common language and understanding of the different ways of designing stages. The approaches were helpful for respondents to ‘see’ the different approach changes and compare the changes between designs influenced by a range of characteristics. The focus was a new tourist space (stage) developed on a site currently used as an outdoor sales/storage yard for a rural supplies store. Each approach was shown as
a graphic on a laminated card and provided a short description as to what changes were made to the site. Key informant questions were answered as to what was on the graphic. The key informant were asked to interpret the intention of the new design and to imagine being in the new spaces and relate their preferences and understanding of those spaces. An aerial photograph of the town was also available to the interviewee to help locate the context of the site.

Key respondents were asked to consider if they themselves would use the space, if others (tourists and locals) would use the space, and if the approach was appropriate for Geraldine. The key informants were also asked if they preferred one approach over the others and why they thought this way. The interview started with design one and followed a sequential process to design four.

7.3.1 Design One

![Figure 7.1 Design One: Local Taskscape](image)

This design approach was intended to be the most ‘local’ of the four approaches. The design characteristics that indicated ‘localness’ included:

- The reuse of a site with few changes to the site boundaries, spatial form and neighbouring spatial uses
- Existing street frontages are retained and few visual changes to the streetscape
- Retain and reuse existing buildings and outdoor space. Existing ground plane surface is retained without modification (limited resurfacing)
- Spaces are ‘open’ to public use (security fences removed) and part of the space is shared with a neighbouring church
• Space is flexible and adaptable (market space is not fixed), with mixed car and pedestrian use (similar to temporary markets in parking lots). The buildings are occupied by business or services used by locals and open to visitors
• The park strip (grass area) with parking and picnic tables is public space that performs as a village green, no cost for use, open to interpretation, and no time restrictions, however overnight camping is not allowed
• Existing methods of signage are used (sandwich boards)
• The design makes use of existing infrastructure, few physical elements are added and attempts to ‘blend in’ with current forms and spatial elements found in the town, limiting the amount of “change” to the space and therefore to the town.

7.3.2 Design Two

This design approach was intended to be ‘glocal’, a hybrid of local and global conditions. It had a similar layout to approach one, but added global symbols, most notably an easily recognisable international fast food chain. The design characteristics of this approach, that indicated ‘glocalness’ included:

• The reuse of a site with few changes to the site boundaries, spatial form and neighbouring spatial uses
• Existing street frontages are retained and few visual changes to the streetscape
• Retain and reuse existing buildings and outdoor space. Ground plane surface is modified by resurfacing and coloured pavers are used to connect the new space to the existing Four Peaks Plaza. The old house is no longer a private residence but is now being used as a cafe/craft shop or other facility that may be use by locals
Spaces are basically ‘open’ to public use however shared space with neighbouring church has been removed through the addition of a fence for the parking lot.

Space is less flexible, as outdoor spaces are defined with fences and fixed furniture and car and pedestrian use have been separated. The buildings are occupied by business or services used by locals and visitors but are in one case a major international brand (McDonald’s) is introduced.

The park strip (grass area) in Design One is now a surfaced parking lot.

Signage has been ‘upgraded’ to more formal and fixed signage.

Buses still pick up and drop off on the main highway.

The design still attempts to make use of existing infrastructure, few physical elements are added and attempts to ‘blend in’ with current forms and spatial elements found in the town. Change is focused on global symbols and materials.

7.3.3 Design Three

![Figure 7.3 Design three: Grobal](image)

This design approach was intended to be ‘grobal’, a hybrid of local and global conditions. It was considered to be more global than the first two approaches, by making more purposeful changes irrespective of context and adding a mass tourist script to the stage. The design characteristics that indicated ‘grobalness’ included:

- The removal of existing buildings and changes to the site boundaries, spatial form and neighbouring spatial uses to better suit the proposed design.
- Street frontages are changed and are different to the streetscape found elsewhere.
- New buildings and outdoor space are created for efficiency and as entertainment space. Ground plane surface is modified by resurfacing and coloured pavers are used to connect the
new space to Four Peaks Plaza and the rest of the CBD, and to direct movement within the new stage. The old house has been removed. A new central modern building has been added (similar to Kiwi Country) and an event space with a historic replica/relocated original added as an attraction

- Spaces are private for patron use only and would be monitored
- Outdoor spaces are permanently fixed (except for the designated ‘event’ space) and are defined with fences, and fixed furniture
- Car and pedestrian use have been separated. The buildings are occupied by business or services used primarily by visitors but open to local use
- Much of the space is hard surfaced and supports access for scheduled coaches and parking for independent travellers
- Signage is formal and additional banners and lighting have been added to help define this as a separate place within Geraldine
- The design no longer makes use of existing infrastructure and is intentionally made to ‘stand out’ from the rest of Geraldine.

### 7.3.4 Design Four

![Figure 7.4 Design Four: Global](image)

The last design approach shown to the research participants was created to represent the most ‘global’ situation. This design approach suggested ‘global’ by including:

- A centrally located ‘international-styled’ building surrounded by parking. The building has video screens, Wi-Fi, and all the amenities for the traveller/tourist
- The space is enclosed and separated with the use of fencing from the rest of the town
• The outside spaces are uneventful therefore people are drawn into building and consumer-based activities.

• A large object, oxen (symbolic of the area’s past) in this case provides a focal point for photographs and as an icon for the community. The trend of ‘large objects’ is common in New Zealand and North America.

• Large Signs are used to name and locate the site, and to indicate what is inside the building.

• The tourist stage ignores the context. The ‘visitor centre’ is experienced from inside the space, not from outside. Existing buildings were removed for the new complex.

• Paving patterns are used to indicate spaces for tour buses, pedestrians and for parking.

• The site resembles a coach terminal, airport, or other transportation node that could be located in an urban area.

The four proposed stage design approaches and the three existing stages provide the context or situation in which key informants responded to questions and developed a discussion of designing tourism in small towns. The next section analyses the responses of key informants to these options.

7.4 Section Two: Key Informant Responses to the Design Options

This section presents responses under three themes that emerge from a theoretical analysis- taskscape, modified taskscape, and touristscape. Prior to the theoretical analysis, the key informant interviews were coded and analysed using a more grounded approach – developing themes from what informants said as responses to the semi-structured interview and stimulated by the design scenarios.

Coded categories from the key informant interviews included the following headings: 1) Reasons for travelling in New Zealand; 2) The desired NZ travel experience; 3) Noticed changes in NZ in regards to tourism; 4) Tourism circuit; 5) How should tourism be developed; 6) Role of public spaces in tourism; 7) Changing nature of residents and surrounding landscape; 8) Reasons to stop/live in Geraldine; 9) Geraldine attractions; 10) Geraldine as unique/authentic; 11) Themed towns; 12) Materials used in new developments; 13) Tourist specific places; 14) Tourism in Geraldine/ and in general; 15) Signage; 16) “Touristy” places; 17) Is Geraldine ‘touristy’? 18) Kiwi Country Visitor Centre; 19) Bus tours; 20) Independent tourists; 21) Holiday Park (Geraldine’s RV park) performances; The Four design scenarios: 22) Design 1; 23) Design 2; 24) Design 3; 25) Design 4; 26) General comments about all designs; 27) Understanding other travellers; 28) How we travel/live and our preferences; 29) Problems with tourism change; and, 30) General design issues and process. Since these categories are diverse and varied in how they inform this discussion, it was considered necessary to reorganise this information into the theoretical categories of taskscape, modified taskscape and touristscape. The following then, are key points as derived from the key informant interviews and organised according to the theoretical analyses of taskscape, modified taskscape and touristscapes.
The sections are ordered by first recognising the three theoretical types and then are discusses staging design issues including a number of subcategories: global representation, green space; heterogeneous space or enclaves, defining and ordering tourist stages, visually obvious, large objects and town representations, parking, design conventions, staging order, design precedent, materials, and the need to do something. Each of these themes is derived from the initial themes mentioned above. Quotes are used here to link the grounded data, as interview responses, to the theoretical themes and to theory building.

7.4.1 Taskscape: retaining original town Character

Key informants repeatedly spoke of the necessity to consider and retain a town’s character. Taskscapes are born of pragmatic thinking and actions, such as intentionally organising streets on a grid pattern and unintentionally creating places from repetitive local performances of residents and visitors going about their everyday lives. Taskscapes are therefore an important foundation for a town’s character. Geraldine’s agricultural history and location on South Island as well as how locals used and developed space has made the local stages regionally and locally unique.

As a landscape architect commented

The more or the stronger the local character, and the better the history and historic fabric of those towns is preserved is ... the better. The towns where they have turned their back on that, and they go ‘hollis bollis’, to try and cater for tourism, like they are putting in big bus parks, big shops. It’s all about sell, sell, sell. I think those ones that get into that situation- cook the goose. **The successful ones keep their identity** like Arrowtown for example. They work very hard at that. They have had at least two rounds of community work shops where they have worked very closely with the council and architects, conservation architects, people very experienced in their field of heritage, and things. To actually create building design guidelines for those places so they can actually keep that character, it doesn’t get subsumed by modern faces, sort of development, and in a place like Arrowtown it has worked to a reasonable successful extent. There is a lot of copy cat style, where a new shop is made to look like an old building...which in some ways isn’t good either, but it’s better than something quite plain (SR 30s LA, Emphasis added).

As this LA points out successful development captures the historical fabric and emphases the uniqueness of a place from the community’s perception. Retaining a taskscape’s character, through preservation and restoration is also important for residents, as it contributes to their identity, and is associated with their memories or has in some way achieved special meaning. Locals develop attachments to their taskscapes and therefore prefer fewer changes to the places they know and remember.

First of all you can’t get rid of the tree. You would have to amend that drawing. It’s historical. That tree will never go. The tree is not allowed to go. It was planted by (the town’s founding father)... so you have to leave it. You didn’t get rid of the church. It’s still there! (Group of 5 female volunteers 50s-70s).

And it’s these cafes and subspaces around here that make it an interesting spot. Irrespective if tourists are there or not. It’s not a bulk bakery, but a nice cafe - locals would go there (AB 40s LA)

Appropriate scale is also important, where reconfigured space needs to consider the existing character and scale.
I’d find that quite an appealing spot (design 2) to stop because it’s an existing house and it has that small town scale. An old retrofitted building, it’s not brand new, and it’s quite an interesting outdoor space (SR 30s LA).

Some (towns) with huge wide main streets … human scale architecture really separates really typical rural towns and that has to do with the time that they were settled and the infrastructure they had at the time, then settled nature of landscape around it… settled trees. More towns are agricultural based. Conflict (is) now with putting visitors in there now… (Which are) based on a different scale (NM 40s LA).

By retaining the character and scale there is a perceived ‘realness’ to Geraldine because it is still perceived as a taskscape. This perception is however tenuous, as we will see in the next part of this section, since the changes made to Geraldine are being modified and shifting towards the touristscape end of the spectrum.

If you can use what is already there, that is the authenticity of the site. … The place where it happens is important… the association of what you are trying to do there and where it is taking place. Could you have things in here, which suggests its previous use? … to show its authenticity. If it has an agriculture theme that is appropriate (SB 60s Tourism Consultant, emphasis added).

Geraldine is real at the moment, because there isn’t anything consciously created for tourists to do. There are these eating and retail places (RW 60s LA).

Comparing the four design approaches, where informants were presented with explicit site changes, allowed the key informants to recognise the problems of removing the character of the taskscape.

Each of these (designs) has progressively gone away from something that I haven’t mentioned about the character of the small New Zealand town. Any town from Christchurch down has used quarter acre sections. Personal houses, individual houses on a private domain, but a main street is modelled on Europe, and where the business is built up to the street and are joined together. So you have a continuous frontage which in our case we put verandas over. Now that is what exists here still and what you have done here has blitzed it. Nah, you have gone exactly away from the spirit of the town, of a small town. You are keeping parts of the character here, but you remove it on the corner, it would be actually better say to keep that house and build a glass conservatory, which is an extension, so they can cater for 50 thousand people out of this house plus, modernise it, rather than faking it, maybe it’s in the image of the Chrystal Palace and it has a glass roof and glass sides and just feels fantastic inside. But it’s of modern construction. … On that dichotomy of traditional New Zealand, built up to the street that is progressively being swept away by developments in our central cities… this is a Los Angeles concept, where you have a something sitting in the middle of space, … A line of shops on both sides…. I’ve really liked because it has that character…. but that is changing (RW 60s LA).

Retaining town character is important for tourists as well since it is the uniqueness of the taskscape, and yet so common for residents, that attracts visitor attention. The unique-common paradox exists because visitors and residents are arriving with different perspectives and various frames of reference.

The small cottage across from Four Peaks Plaza is an excellent example of what many local and regional residents perceive as a common everyday sight in the region, but for touring international tourists the house and yard are romanticized stages worthy of a picture.

The house (existing cottage in designs 1 & 2) has been given a lot of attention… I see lots of Asians take photos… the woman still works in the garden. It would be a shame to remove. Hate to see it removed into a car park (PB 40s Tourism Business).

The stage’s character is supported by the ‘local script’ where the products and services are ‘appropriate’ for both locals and tourists.
I like the idea of using the (existing) building… It could be a permanent craft place. These markets must freeze (located outside). … More of a community resource… devoted to the sale of local produce…

arts and crafts… social welfare, or i-SITE. It would be used by locals and tourists. Ease of access is important (RN 60s tourism business owner).

The taskscape, for many key informants is perceived to be appreciated for its charm and provides the necessary, if subtle, features to provide for tourism. While to a lesser extent, some key informants saw country charm as beneficial towards tourism but not enough to make it viable.

Geraldine doesn’t have much to offer. Mount Cook has the mountain etc... It started with forestry, now trying to do tourism... What it has is its two hours from Christchurch... it’s another town, neat, tidy, nice people, it’s a promotional thing, last day before Christchurch. I’m not being critical it’s just another town. But we can say that about a lot of towns. Its disadvantage is that it doesn’t have a glacier, a lake, but its holding on very well. … (I would) keep it as it is, for its country charm. Keep its buildings. … Clean, tidy, no graffiti, pride in the gardens. … (New Zealanders have) pride in their gardens. …No better in the world for manicured landscapes. If Geraldine didn’t have the restaurants, and the Four Peaks it would have problems. There are tradeoffs to developing the town. But how far do you develop? (AC 50s Australian tourists, Emphasis added)

Just to spend it in a nice little town, that may affect a few, it won’t affect many, in my personal opinion. Think we can get carried away with that nice little town thing. But when the likes of Fiordland beckons, West Coast beckons, other places in the north, and of course Queenstown beckons, sadly. (Laughs) … The quaint township thing is nice and it is one thing if we can retain it is nice, but I wouldn’t get too carried away with thinking that it will bring us a lot of tourists because we are a quaint town (RN 60s tourism business owner, Emphasis added).

One informant expressed the importance of the local’s everyday and his own experiences travelling abroad and how this relates to New Zealand. For him, performing the taskscapes of Paris is his desired experience. Taskscape are linked to place and it is their subtle difference that makes them a delightful experience.

Paris is amazing and quite different, with the parks…huge gardens so many seats, hundreds and hundreds of seats, single seats, benches etc. people live in apartments in the central city, so they encourage locals to come out... they don’t have gardens, so they come out to sit. The activity is enormous, people playing chess, cards, music happening, people playing tennis, we could have sat there for ages because you are people watching and taking in what is happening ... (speaking of Akaroa) the view is great but won’t keep you there for two hours, needs something that is linked to the place, relevant in some way. We (New Zealand) don’t do those things very well …. I enjoy actually being involved in the community activity, not so much the attractions. Taking on board the way of life of those people … a place to relax, and that’s what we are lacking. ... It’s about walking thru the place or around the place... need to take in the ambience of the place (SB 60s Tourism Consultant, emphasis added).

Performing local place is easily accomplished by tourists and provided by the host community. There is however, a general perception that ‘improving’ a town’s stages will improve it as a tourist stop or make it into a tourist destination. These improvements are based on what is occurring elsewhere, on conventional thinking about tourist scripts, and perceptions of what works (physically and economically) in the minds of landscape architects and tourism developers.

They (town councils) have this perception that if they enhance their town centre they will get a degree of vibrancy and bring some life back into their town centre, that is, normally it died away for various social and political reasons, in most cases, and they see that some other communities have had something like that done. The classic example is Gore Main Street which had a upgrade done based on traffic issues, also the main street which is also the state highway was upgraded for better traffic flows, had upgraded the foot paths and the verandas and other things, and other communities saw as good
examples of the work. ... They saw themselves also as being centres for tourism and being rural towns being the points on the track to bigger places to Queenstown (VF 50s LA).

The perception therefore is that for tourism to develop further the town will need to be organised, ‘tidied up’ and activities added to make the taskscape presentable for tourism. This is fundamentally the same approach many of the design students used as described in chapter five. A common design solution, as reported by key informants, is the use of precedence and contemporary ‘trendy’ design solutions. Design proposals are similar because designers are drawing from a small set of exemplars and follow the same trends (aesthetic, environmental and process) in their work. An experienced LA provides an example of this pertaining to the issue of wide rural streets.

... one of the characteristics of the small towns is that they generally do have less cluttered surroundings. The one chain wide street reserves... one of the reactions of our landscape profession, it is sad to say, it seems to be is, if its a big space to try and narrow it down and make it more personal, and I strongly disagree with it and its part of the grandness of the space and it might seem that this road going through... a town. (town x) and that is getting an increase of tourist flow over the last 10 years. … But it also has an increase of New Zealand recreation traffic with people towing their boats up to the lake, and it also has the run of the things like stock trucks, petrol tankers taking petrol up to high country.... it has quite a range of functions, the town designers reactions seems to be you need to keep them a part, that trucks are bad, and therefore and you need to provide personal space. While you don’t want the trucks if you trying to have a dining table outside the cafe, you don’t want the truck going past 6 feet away going 50 miles an hour. In the towns generally there is enough space for these things to happen, and in my opinion, (town x) is a case in point, and therefore you should resist the temptation to just divide up the space for its own sake. Traditionally the character of these towns is that the ground plain was quite simple, you have a foot path, you would have a concrete, but sometimes a stone capped, kerb and guttering, and a carriageway comprising of a parking lane and a two lane carriage way and then another parking lane on the other side. And they were all very simple. When you start fiddling around with design, with edging and stone bits here and there, and rumble strips and to force people to slow down... it does take over the character of the town, in my opinion, and therefore decrease it. You can’t entirely have it that way, since if you have strangers in town you do need; you have to define places for them to park, and places where you should and shouldn’t drive, and all that sort of stuff. You do have to define it but it is one of the key characteristics of the small town is there sense of unfettered... more.... simple space (RW 60s LA).

A taskscape provides the stage for both the physical, social and imaginative needs of locals and tourists, but for some reason this is not enough. Perhaps due to the overly familiar everyday nature of taskscapes, these spaces are unrecognised for their tourism potential. There is definitely a shift occurring where original rural taskscape are being modified to accommodate for tourism. Although many tourists, especially independent tourists express a desire to ‘get off the beaten tourist path’ and experience the local everyday, and much tourist time is spent in the tourist everyday supported by travel taskscape, there is a perception that towns need to be modified over and above the local taskscape.

7.4.2 Modified taskscape

Change is inevitable even in small towns. In addition to the incremental evolution that occurs within local taskscape as a result of changes in how people perform their daily lives, advances in technology, availability of energy and materials, and theories of design and construction, there are also deliberate modifications made to accommodate tourism.
Providing for tourism in a small town taskscape becomes another performance, added to existing ones, that coexists with local scripts and shares existing stages or requires a new stage of its own. Rural towns were not originally built for tourism and therefore need some alteration to accommodate for the scripts and performances associated with tourism. The question is not if change will occur in the small town, but how the town will change to accommodate tourism.

The first step of modifying the taskscape for tourism is initial acceptance by the local people. This can be difficult since locals often resist change and fear they will either become like any other town (homogenised and global) or they will become ‘touristy’.

Main concerns of locals (is) don’t change us we don’t want change, we like it as it is. Population is actually declining, difficult to get people to work there, due to seasonality ... December to April. During winter many business close down... especially accommodation. ... You solve one problem you create another... in these sorts of places... if you keep them longer, it may be more problems. The longer people stay the more money is spent (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

Very good for local people, there isn’t too much change. Would use for the market. Think tourists would use. It is nice (KH 40s retail sales).

If you can use what is already there, that is the authenticity of the site. ... The place where it happens is important... the association of what you are trying to do there and where it is taking place. Could you have things in here, which suggests its previous use? ... to show its authenticity. If it has an agriculture theme that is appropriate (SB 60s Tourism Consultant, emphasis added).

(Reacting to design one) I think it is quite feasible. It wouldn’t be onerous to get it happening. Wouldn’t cause a lot of fuss to put it that way... well, you are not doing major sort of structural work ... (you are) changing the use of buildings. It’s very rural in its character... its utilitarian as how people use the space... parking around a court yard... it’s quite appropriate (SR 30s LA).

A modified taskscape solution complements the way change has been traditionally managed in small towns where residents are familiar with their relatively small and intimate surroundings and change is gradual and relatively slow to occur. For these reasons when changes do occur in small towns they are noticeable and welcomed if beneficial, but also open to resistance if the change challenges a place’s identity. These are changes that people recognise to be inconsistent with the representation and perception they have regarding small towns.

(We have) seen big changes. Eleven years ago there were empty shops, now it’s a hustling town. (Geraldine) has a better feeling now... (There is a feeling of success with) a bit of money. The recession hasn’t hit here. People are spending money, when they are moving around (PB 40s Tourism Business).

Service stations are being pulled out... changing the nature of the town. (There is an increase in the) cost of servicing, repairs...etc. (as) many (new service stations) are pseudo dairies (VF 50s LA).

(I) don’t expect new buildings to mirror the old; I don’t think it’s necessary. ... The Four Peaks, next door, is all new; Geraldine was a rural service town; its reason for being (is) service to the farmers. I’ve seen in the last 15 plus years that I’ve been here, I’ve seen it change, I don’t have the same experience as these women but I’ve seen dramatic change. I still think it’s wonderful and I don’t want to leave. I don’t want to live anywhere else, but tourism is a fact, it is a part of the economy, it’s not going to go away (Group of 5 female volunteers 50s-70s).

In comparing the towns of Fairlie and Tekapo, rural towns near Geraldine, a LA makes the connection between rural character with authenticity and town success.
Simple rural character is the heart of Fairlie. Tekapo is really developed (and) that is not really authentic... (it is) why it didn’t work... People see opportunities to provide things that are not necessary ... Trashy outlets are a blockade (to) the landscape (and) the lake. (In the) Fairlie instance... everything was local. BP station... separate, would go there and move on. Tea rooms are available... not a(n) urban styled BP station it's a garage, fixing tractors, 4 wheel drive with a dog. Low key, not what is in Christchurch (VF 50s LA).

As stated earlier, taskscapes evolve and modifications are made to accommodate changing community interests such as tourism. When staging focuses specifically on tourism and less on the taskscape, the stage becomes a touristscape.

7.4.3 Touristscape: challenging the local stage
The touristscape is fundamentally different from the modified taskscape in the way it is constructed and managed specifically for tourism. The touristscape is intended to provide viable facilities and services for tourists, and is most often associated with mass tourism and conventional ideas of tourism. The term ‘conventional’ is used to indicate the usual script, stage and performances that visitors are likely to experience in tourist areas such as resorts and urban tourist districts. Small towns, with an agricultural or natural resource origin have historically not been associated with touristscapes unless they have been reshaped into a resort town. Towns that have become *touristified* have done so by modifying the stage and creating scripts focused on tourism. These stages are authentic for tourism but are not authentic as traditional rural small towns. For most small towns, adapting for tourism will not be an all encompassing transformation but a site specific reshaping to accommodate tourism.

Touristscapes challenge what it means to be a small town, its sense of identity, and for some people the change that accompanies tourism is neither appropriate nor welcomed.

Little house is gone... what a shame... a big swanky building. No... I’d keep away from that... not a place for me. It’s still very tourist focused... the scale is not right for the size of Geraldine... too much space... it looks like a tourist stopping place. ...It wouldn’t be enough with a change in the building style. It’s the large open hard surface that is the problem. A village green would help but it’s the big bus stopping place (SS 40s LA).

This is what Geraldine needs (being sarcastic with design four). I wouldn’t rate this at all for Geraldine. It is completely kitsch, totally tourist driven. Locals wouldn’t have a hell of a lot of empathy for it, and therefore... it would be an empty void with no character. I can’t see any redeeming features about it what so ever. ... Tourists would use it and it would be for buses, the openness of it these getting in and out by way of buses ... a tourist driven spot. No I don’t see it in the scale of Geraldine (AB 40s LA).

Touristscapes conflict with small town sensibilities. Key informants identified problems with removing rural character, changes in scale, increased volume of people, and seasonality of use, as some of the pitfalls of adding touristscapes to small towns.

Touristscapes by their nature cater for larger flows of people, therefore having larger scale spaces and urban features to support the larger number of people. These urban tourist oriented attributes are perceived as inappropriate for small towns:
That would be right (design 4), the tree is back ... (now it looks like) New York. No, that’s not right. Sorry, no, it removes the town. … You can turn Mundell’s (Kiwi Country) into that, that’s alright, but not next to us (location of where they volunteer) (Group of 5 female volunteers 50s-70s, emphasis added).

If you want this... use more environmentally sound vehicles... push bikes.... You don’t want big coaches ... you cater for big coaches you lose the soul of the place. I don’t like that area (Four Peaks). I prefer the market, a more community feel. No glass front buildings … they don’t realize they are doing that and may regret it later (NW 40s Long term UK tourist).

Now you are talking about a strictly tourist area, where locals would refrain from going to. If we are going to build a tourist area, great, let’s do it, and then let’s build it tomorrow, because the spin off there would be a lot different. That is really the concept of the Kiwi Country. It is touristified. And where it’s right for a small town like this I got my doubts. But truthfully the locals would not buy into that (BW 60s Tourism Business).

Touristscapes are associated with the addition of something that will reshape the current stage with ‘tourist’ features to attract tourists. Adding ‘things’ to the stage removes the ordinariness or everydayness of the space, and makes it more like a stage associated with being on holiday, special events and organised entertainment. Touristscapes are associated with urban tourist precincts, resorts and tourism enclaves such as theme parks.

From a tourist perspective, if we can find a way of keeping tourists here, then we create a bigger tourist centre. The problem is finding something for tourists to do. One example… they are flooding 800 acres, on the Rangitata River. Could be used for water sports, or a salmon farm… if something was developed that was really big, a ski field, a lake, (something you) can’t find in Tekapo. It’s really just a passing through point .... (There) needs to be another reason to increase the number of people stopping. (This) applies to the backpacker, motor camp and hotels... also difficulty to get people to stay more than one night ... We try to sell people the rafting … but they have already done it... they have spent their money… they didn’t know it was there... same with horse trek. All the activities are so expensive, but will also do the free walking in the Peel forest... not necessarily something that will spend an extra night ... Natural is better, so many overseas tourists are blown away by nature and the open space. The staged can occur anywhere in the world. If you haven’t got it you can’t use it. If we have more we could get one or two more people (RN 60s tourism business, Emphasis added).

Quite difficult for a small town to develop a man made attraction that isn’t based on the surrounding natural attraction. Even in Akaroa, (it is) still a natural or nature based attraction... (This is) different in the city, where they have museums, conferences, etc. In New Zealand (tourist attractions are) based on the natural attraction or an event that is short lived (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

These attributes also contribute to perceptions of authenticity.

The buses in the middle there really get in the way of the space. It’s becoming to my eyes a tourist space. The problem is finding something for tourists to do. One example… they are flooding 800 acres, on the Rangitata River. Could be used for water sports, or a salmon farm… if something was developed that was really big, a ski field, a lake, (something you) can’t find in Tekapo. It’s really just a passing through point .... (There) needs to be another reason to increase the number of people stopping. (This) applies to the backpacker, motor camp and hotels... also difficulty to get people to stay more than one night ... We try to sell people the rafting … but they have already done it... they have spent their money… they didn’t know it was there... same with horse trek. All the activities are so expensive, but will also do the free walking in the Peel forest... not necessarily something that will spend an extra night ... Natural is better, so many overseas tourists are blown away by nature and the open space. The staged can occur anywhere in the world. If you haven’t got it you can’t use it. If we have more we could get one or two more people (RN 60s tourism business, Emphasis added).

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There is a perceived notion that to develop for tourism change is necessary, but to what degree and at what expense to the town is up for discussion.

As tourism becomes bigger they need to lift their game a bit if they want to get people in. But if they change what’s there, it may be at odds what is there (SR 30s LA).

It (the tourism stage) has to have huge significance over and above, for it to be worth it... like George Washington’s house... it needs to be significant. You have a conflict between a big touristy thing and a village green. Activity in and out of buses is a huge thing. I don’t see a synergy between the buses and
local activities. If this is the town square … it would be fine … Fountains … if artistic, sculpture, if it were art then that is okay (BC, 50s Community active resident).

Key informants were sensitive to the transition from modified taskscape to touristscape in more ways than just the physical expression. They also recognised the shift in design perspective involved, and the next section considers issues in the design of touristscape stages.

### 7.5 Section three: Staging Design Issues

Staging tourism not only requires decisions regarding how (or if) a town retains taskscape and how (or if) it develops as touristscape, but also requires decisions on other design aspects that inform the (re)shaping of individual stages and the town overall. Staging needs to acknowledge potential impacts design strategies may have when developing a town for tourism. The following design issues were indentified themes in the interviews with key informants: Global Representation; Green Space; Heterogeneous Space and Enclaves; Defining and Ordering Tourist Stages; Parking; and Design Conventions.

#### 7.5.1 Global Representation

Global ideas and information, materials, and people flow through towns on the tourism circuit and other global networks. One example of globalisation that is apparent is the entry and use of international symbols and products (including certain brands such as restaurant franchises) in historically taskscape towns. This ‘invasion’ is highly contentious in developing tourism for small towns. The problems were not primarily associated with facilities such as restaurants, but with the introduction of symbols and associated trappings of an international or global icon into a small town setting. Global icons were perceived to challenge a town’s identity, healthy living, and issues of time and scale.

I really don’t like the MacDonald’s thing. I don’t mind the café and the restaurants... no that makes sense… its much like across the road... it becomes a precinct. It’s really the MacDonald’s I am against …it’s the global thing I am anti. Kiwi alternative to fast food … just have a milk bar (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

Having MacDonald’s there creates a traffic issue, through here …I think it takes away from the town’s identity. McDonalds is the corporate thing, takes away from the small town. Even a larger accommodation complex stuck somewhere in the middle of town is really quite commercial, 100 beds, … it ... doesn’t fit the bill. Reusing the building is an excellent idea (BC, 50s Community active resident).

I hate the McDonalds, don’t need junk like that. There is definitely a need for fast food, we have Subway. But I don’t want to go down the road with everyone else and have McDonald’s. … Antiques would be good. Use to be in the old post office. Used by local and regional tourists. International tourists would have a look, and compare with what they have at home, the prices ... Like two better without the McDonalds. I like outdoor cafés; we have lost the village green haven’t we? (I’d like) only half a car park, and a meeting place and a fountain (PB 40s Tourism Business).

Using the house is good, rather than tearing it down and putting up a glass building; it’s good to retain some of its historical nature. I’m not sure about the parking. But that’s the trade off isn’t it... you need
parking. If you provide more and more parking... when is enough. Keep going and it has no identity (NW 40s Long term UK tourist).

Although there was predominately a negative view of global icons, a few key informants see the positive side of globalisation, specifically standardisation and convenience. Not all global brands were treated equally. For example, the ‘Subway’ brand was perceived to be more small-town friendly and therefore less of a physical impact (regarding the demands put on traffic and parking) and psychological impact on the small town image.

On the other hand, travelling with children in other countries, you know there is a standard, and if you go, and want a quick meal and not expensive. …Buses users will flock to it... and even the independent traveller; there is familiarity and a level of comfort in that. It has its place. I would associate it with bigger cities, more (larger) than Geraldine. If you have a McDonalds, you would have a drive through… even if around the back... a requirement. (I would) probably use it (more) than the Four Peaks... use the old house look, (it) is something I would like (SS 40s LA).

The Subway is largely going to feed the local population and secondarily it’s there for passing trade, but the future might see more a serviceable local food to tell people they have been to Geraldine. That (Subway) doesn’t tell you have been to Geraldine. …. You could concentrate on other things other than fast food (RW 60s LA).

The parking between the church and house would be too much ... (McDonald’s) I think a lot of people would go there. Because they know it, and there is no risk, and this would be dominated by all the activity, happening here, it would have to be buffered from it, needs different access… it’s a major operator McDonald’s… It’s a major brand in the world... if it was a Subway it possibly (would) be better (SR 30s LA).

Accepting a global brand was determined by what it represents and its impact on the local stage. Icons were more readily accepted that support the current representation of the town, and that did not cause additional community problems such as traffic congestion or poor eating habits.

7.5.2 Green Space

Many key informants identified green space as a necessary design strategy that will help improve Geraldine and other small towns generally to become more attractive for tourism. In a way, green space is the local default foil to global incursions. Informants suggested ‘more trees’ and maintaining green space, the Village Inn lawn – previously the public village green, was important for the character and script of rural towns. When the designs appear to be more touristscape in their appearance, adding ‘green space’, such as trees and other ‘rural’ features were encouraged to compensate for the urban aesthetic associated with tourism.

The green spaces which in the centre city (speaking of the domain) is such a draw card, for the people in Geraldine... because you can run events, you can have meeting, in different times of the year, you can have Christmas parades, events, and we also have this green space in front of the hotel, people use because of its central location (SH 50s Business owner).

Village Inn area is private but feels public. (It) has events in the green space… sheep shearing and wood cutting (RN 60s tourism business owner).

For the bus traffic it looks good, but lacks the green. Need for trees. Could have more grass and trees... don’t know if you need that much room for buses. It’s fine. Only use it for the i-SITE or the café. The tourists would like it because it is nice and open. (It) gets them off the road. It’s fair (RN 60s tourism business owner).
Greener, grass, fountains, place for people to sit. Like the bus concept, to get buses off the streets
Get a proper crossing- I quite like that. Use of banners ... (I) like the building place to meet. More
green to have lunch... people meeting (PB 40s Tourism Business).

It’s quite a good idea... but a wee bit unnecessary as there is not that many coming through. Showing
people where to go… is good...Too much concrete isn’t very good. Needs more grass… like in front of
the sports bar… looks nicer than hard concrete... not as nice to sit on (US 20s Local Student).

Many of these key informants have a preconceived idea of the script that informs tourism stages.
Green spaces were perceived as rural stages which are important as multipurpose places that provide:
local event space; are respites from being on the road; and are comfortable social places for meeting
other people and are generally less-consumer driven. Green spaces and adding trees to tourism stages
was generally perceived as a good idea.

7.5.3 Heterogeneous Space or Enclaves
Edensor (1998) distinguishes between heterogeneous tourist space and tourist enclaves by whether or
not it has clear spatial distinction. Rural towns have traditionally been taskscapes, heterogeneous
space that mixes locals with visitors.

In townships they (tourists) stop for food. You mix with locals… in township designs… nothing really
different for providing for tourists and locals. I can’t think of any township plans where we were
considering providing just for visitors (GE 60s LA).

However with the importance of tourism for economic development townships are reshaping local
stages for tourism. Many key informants saw it necessary to cluster tourism facilities (enclavic) to
make certain spaces obvious tourist places as this makes them easier to identify (not hidden in the
everyday) and protects other areas from being spoilt from the adverse effects of tourism.
Concentrating tourist facilities, making them obvious for what they are, also gives people the choice if
they want to enter that stage or not.

(The space is) getting big for a small town. The place is for tourists and not for locals. Good to
separate. Especially when you go some place and it’s too busy from tourists. Don’t go to places at
certain times. (TM 70s Regional NZ tourists)

Is it better to focus (cluster)… it was like what the glaciers were like, all the focus was on Franz... But if
you wanted to wander up and have a nice look at a glacier you went to Fox. It was further in and there
were some disadvantages but it was the local one. Well that has changed, as tourism has grown up …
that’s the concentration thing, you can get away from it, if it’s concentrated you can get away from it.
From a local’s perspective, the New Zealand perspective, the concentration thing has a lot going for it.
You can simply avoid the concentrated space. You are displaced or you are self selecting not to go
there (LC 40s Tourism Consultant).

Tourists would love it... it’s all there in the same area (NP 20s administration).

People like me would use it... passing through …both one and two. One has a stronger local flavour.
Bus tours use it? … it doesn’t really look like bus tours... perhaps not enough paving… I don’t know. …
(I say) no to bus tours, and park somewhere else and walk in (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

A consequence of defining stages in a certain way (as touristscape or taskscape) strengthens the scripts
associated with the stage. Perceived in a positive light, a concentration of tourist facilities and
identifiable physical markers (such as banners, large icon objects, or parking areas) is welcoming as the visitor knows this is a place for them. These spaces are for tourism and therefore are staged for ease of access, for comfort, have the necessary amenities and have removed incompatible activities and objects. Touristscapes however are also considered less authentic for tourists and locals who want to experience ‘real’ local people and culture.

(As you) move into Geraldine, it’s becoming more urban but is still attractive, the river, the slope of the downs, and once in town … you see, not industry, but retail. The coffee retail place … Kiwi Country (has a) relatively attractive building … But because of the way you come into town, you don’t see everything at once… lovely little café… this is (a) concentrated area for tourism … the lack of industry is attractive (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

Regional travellers stop at the park / picnic space… they go there because they don’t want the tourist experience, the crowdedness … there is an exclusion process. They have been marginalized, or displaced… looking for more seclusion. Interaction with tourists... only from a commercial exchange, financial gain from the tourists... the locals would want to spend time with tourists, they are not on holiday… as a local (may) not necessarily want to meet tourists, but tourists want to meet locals (SS 40s LA).

The separation of touristscape and taskscape also means a separation of tourist and local. As already mentioned, some tourists seek out interaction with locals as an authentic local experience. Creating touristscapes where locals avoid will prevent this from happening. Modified taskscape, where locals and tourists are likely to interact, may be more accommodating.

Hard to get tourists and locals interact. As a tourist I would like to interact with locals but I don’t know where to go… even just to find a place… you need to find a local to show that hidden place to eat. I like to discover the local … it’s more real … you find a café, with local people, a place where only locals go, the coffee is better the food is better, they cater to repeat customers (SS 40s LA).

No, don’t keep them separate. I think there are examples all over the world, where there are totally over run parts of towns where tourists go, there is a total invasion, and you often read in these books, we got off the tourist trail it was really lovely, we took the back roads away from tourist route, it was a wonderful experience, we experienced the real Italy, or … you often hear that. That sort of thing could happen in New Zealand just as easily (SR 30s LA).

Having tourism mixed throughout a town was also seen as important from an economic equity standpoint. A few informants saw the need for all businesses to profit from the tourist trade and this was best served when tourism is mixed through out the town. How a town benefits however is not always understood by all.

It’s important that one end of the town isn’t for tourists and the other end of town is for locals. It needs to be mixed. The tourists produce revenue from not only my store but from any other store, in my opinion. As a local I’d like to also see it that way. Still encourage to spend their dollar anywhere in town. It doesn’t matter where it is as long as it stays in Geraldine (SH 50s Business owner).

(I) wouldn’t like to go there (designs 3 and 4). Too many buses and cars,… too many people. Not good for the other shops on the main street. Its all right … but not a good idea to keep people away from the other shops (US 20s Local Student).

Most persons in the town, I think, can relate to tourism as a whole. And they see the coaches and don’t like that side of it because, of course, aside from a cup of tea and a pee they don’t derive a lot of benefit from it. And not to be bloody too silly about it, that is big income for the town. But they don’t see that (BW 60s Tourism Business).
Clustering tourism facilities helps to create a stronger (concentrated) identity which allows for individual choice to enter a tourist stage or not. The tourist stage becomes another component in the larger heterogeneous town space. Spreading tourism throughout a town creates a homogenized tourism layer and when considered in a conventional tourism way is likely to commodify and sanitise spaces therefore affectively producing a (less authentic) touristic town. A homogenized tourism layer also reduces the choice of being in a tourist stage, as all stages will have been painted by the same tourism brush. Geraldine provides an example of a town that has initially clustered tourism services in one area; the Four Peaks stage. Visitors and locals choose to enter the defined tourist area for the services it provides. Geraldine also provides a range of tourist stage choices from a strongly defined global stage (Kiwi Country) and glocal stages (Four Peaks) to a more local experience (main street). Most key informants could distinguish between these types of stages and select the one which most suits their needs and identity. For locals the distinctiveness of the stages is helpful in their decision making and allows them to avoid tourist congestion and places they perceive as less authentic.

Another alternative is to develop the tourist enclave outside of the town therefore preserving the local character.

Might be better off to have something outside of town and leave the town alone (NM 40s LA).

There are some like in Te Anau, and it reminds me of Farmers Corner at State Highway 1 and there is another one... do we put another one in Geraldine? I’m doubtful. There are two or three of that concept. They are outside of towns. The reason they are used by the drivers because the people don’t escape. ... That’s why it may not work. It’s all about time. Because they need to push on to their next... they have their next x, y, z to do before they get to their next port of call (BW 60s Tourism Business).

The big signage is 1960s, Route 66. It just doesn’t fit. If it’s part of a small town, it is separate from the rest of the town itself. If they are totally independent and separate ... I guess (an example) is the Farmers Corner one, by Ashburton... is set up like this... outside by itself. If in a commercial point of view it takes over the town, if you have to have one, it goes outside of town (BC, 50s Community active resident).

One last consideration in regards to heterogeneous space and enclavic space are the issues associated with tourism inconsistencies and seasonality. Tourism in New Zealand is highly subject to market trends and seasonality therefore resulting in stages that go unused. For this reason staging needs to consider how to attract locals and multiple uses unrelated to tourism.

The spectacular spaces can be left redundant if they don’t have the everyday sort of use as well, especially in a small town (AB 40s LA).

What happens when there is no market? And when the season is over? ... There needs to be something there (It needs some other use) (Group of 5 female volunteers 50s-70s).

7.5.4 Defining and Ordering Tourist Stages

Tourist stages are defined, given order and often themed to ‘classify’ it for tourism and distinguish the site from the heterogeneous space found in the rest of the town. Characteristics that help define a stage for tourism includes making spaces obvious by marking the stage with symbols and tourism
'things’, increasing the scale to accommodate for more people, and adding more formalised parking. This section will briefly expand on these characteristics.

7.5.5 Visually Obvious

A common strategy for tourism stages to get noticed is to make them obvious from the main roads transecting towns. Business operators and designers agree with this strategy and stages are created based on the gaze and few other senses.

I don’t like the (existing) farmer’s market (in a parking lot near the river) right now... don’t like where it is, needs to be more visible. Would like it to be seen more (PB 40s Tourism Business).

(Design 1) has a view problem with people perceiving what is happening behind. How would people know what is going on behind there (BW 60s Tourism Business)?

If I were doing this ... I would get rid of this stuff (existing buildings). Get more exposure … to see from the street (GE 60s LA).

Positive to bring people into the space. ... You can see the space from the road. … Put strong things in to bring people in. Locals would use it more, and slow visitor traffic. It wouldn’t pull the fast traffic into it (NM 40s LA).

The easily seen and accessible tourism stage provides immediate attention for the passing tourist. For convenience this works well, but many people were looking for the ‘back stage’ experience (MacCannell 1999) and interactions with locals. These stages are less conspicuous and are somewhat hidden in the taskscape. Verdé Café described in chapter six is a good example of this.

I wonder if many tourists use Verdé (café), it’s a bit hidden. It took me a while to know that it was even there. The wee sign down the drive way was … what’s that? They (the new little house café in design two) wouldn’t take customers off of (Verdé) there… it’s just another option isn’t it (NP 20s administration)?

Another way tourism stages are made more visible is by ordering the space by indicating where people should go. This is achieved by using coloured pavers on the ground surface to visually identify place and articulate safe passage by connecting spaces and directing people. Large open spaces, as suggested in designs three and four were considered unsafe since they did not indicate where people should walk. Pavers are also thought to tidy up a space and indicate a space separate from the everyday.

That surface change across the road would work quite well, especially in Geraldine. It articulates safe passage to cross here (AB 40s LA).

Needs better linkages, could make the spaces work. (I) wouldn’t want to cross that bus parking (SS 40s LA).

This is quite clever; it doesn’t take much to make a connection (referring to the paving patterns to the rest of the town). (It is) quite a simple thing (LC 40s Tourism Consultant).

7.5.6 Large objects and town representations

Large iconic objects have found their way into the New Zealand landscape; representing towns or regions and their people. A large ox was used in design four to initiate this discussion. There were mixed feelings on large objects. Some respondents are quite familiar with them and consider them as
another feature comprising a modified taskscape, while others see it as kitsch and too touristy (tacky).

In the past, town committees have considered creating a large icon but in the end could not agree on a single icon for the community.

Brilliant! That’s one thing Geraldine lacks is a big iconic animal or fruit. Rakaia works well. A bit like the fore mentioned one but worse. In that it wouldn’t do a lot for Geraldine as a town. The gimmick-y would wear off pretty quick even for the tourist. I wouldn’t see it being successful what so ever in this town. Obviously tourist driven. ...Screens provide information in Franz Joseph. Small screens in windows. We did a competition for Auckland waterfront and big screens were part of that. Totally urban. Not Geraldine but might fit into Wellington, Auckland or Christchurch (AB 40s LA).

Don’t like that … anything about it ... not village-y... the big screens ... hate the big objects, not a big fan… would rather see a fountain... or rather see… trees, beautiful trees, seats, meeting places. Incorporated the need for the buses and the village green concept … better in three, used by tourists and locals as well (PB 40s Tourism Business).

Big object … get rid of that. We have had people already proposing things like that. But it hasn’t gotten very far at all. They wanted oxen, cutting along. Hauling logs out of the forest, or whatever that was, many years ago (BC, 50s Community active resident).

How the town is represented with objects and themes plays a key role in people’s perceptions of the tourism staging. Objects used in tourism staging need to compliment the stage’s script. The object’s perceived authenticity plays a key role in its acceptance.

Also a replica of a cottage that is not the right place there. It’s just lost. If it were brought here, reassembled here and was genuine ... If it has genuineness about it, I can live with it. But if it is just the faux thing, forget it. You are much better to make a new building (RW 60s LA).

Could you not get a historic building and put it there. I don’t know about remodelling something because that’s pretty fake. If you’re going to do that you are going to need to relocate something from within that area. Authenticity is important (NP 20s administration).

That’s becoming really fake and tourist focused. ... And that’s about having a real experience is connecting it all together. Connecting the locals and the tourists together. And keeping them connected. Locals would use the market area as they are already using it over there. Tourists will use that (old house café) since it is closer and easier to find (NP 20s administration).

7.5.7 Parking

Tourist parking in small towns has usually been left to driver initiative to find street parking or a small lot associated with larger stores such as supermarkets. Developing for tourism as a stop along the route or as a destination requires the town to contend with more vehicle traffic and opportunities to park. Roughly speaking, the general attitude amongst local business is ‘more people mean more money and more parking’. Simply developing new and more parking however is not the answer, as many view large parking lots as inconsistent with character of small towns.

(Design three) allows for more people to come through … and allows for more money coming into the town and that’s a good thing (NP 20s administration).

More parking would be good. More parking is needed because there are more cars. Seen camper vans with stoves out the back cooking (on the street in Geraldine) (RN 60s tourism business owner).

(What are other aspects that make a town good for tourism?) Easy to park, In Geraldine I have never parked in a parking lot, always on the street. It has its good and bad... everyone parking on the street can impinge on the vistas, and create feelings of crowdedness. But (I’ve) never had a problem. The
smaller the community the less people want to walk. Because they want to drive and park outside of where they want to go … Akaroa is like that (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

Our biggest problem in Geraldine is car parking. And that is what is lacking in the central city area. And it’s something that troubles me. In the next 10 years where are people going to park their cars. While I (his business) have 2 or 3 sections as car parks, when it gets busy at peak times there is no where to park. They can’t shop or do what they want (SH 50s Business owner).

Four Peaks Plaza provides zoned street parking for coach buses and has an overflow parking lot on council owned land, formally a light industrial site. Kiwi Country has a large bus parking area behind the complex and a loading space beside the side doors of the building. Parking might be anticipated to be a significant issue, but this was not necessarily the case when observing parking in Geraldine. Most people were content with parking where they could and walking into the area of town they desired.

I know there is a problem of parking buses. It is an issue. (Does this fit in with Geraldine?) I think it is a ten years into the future, I can’t see it at the moment. The same scenario is virtually occurred at the other end at Kiwi Country that is purpose built to get the buses in and while I’m not privy to their revenue earnings, it does the job perfectly. And encourages the buses off the streets, but if that unit was to stand alone and to say if it is viable or isn’t, it wouldn’t be. I know the amount of buses that go into it. (Four Peaks) is busy, the amount of people coming off the buses and spending money in his shops is minimal. They buy water, and they go to the amenities, and then they are gone. … The duration of the stays are not (long), and that is what we are trying to encourage is to get people to stay longer. How do we do that? And how do we manage that (SH 50s Business owner)?

This is the main route to Queenstown, (it) will get busier. Is the potential to get people stopping an hour longer … can create traffic and parking problems … need turn over … . Changes from half to two hours … do you have specific parking areas. … The parking will become the issue in Geraldine. To change people from stopping for 2 to 3 hours to overnight… is a massive task (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

The presence of vehicles signals people that there is something there (NM 40s LA).

Usually (tourism will) overload... infrastructure. … For example, six tour coaches turn up at once, they can dominate the place. … It’s hard for them to find a place to park. And you may get a deluge of people descending on the local pie shop. It might be at odds with local’s experiences of those facilities. It’s this kind of boom and bust occurring on a daily basis (SR 30s LA).

You never resolve, enough parking for the big event (NM 40s LA).

The over flow lot is seldom used although it is only a few minute walk to the Four Peaks Plaza. The perception that parking is a problem is unfounded. Because Geraldine is a stop along the route, there is a continual flow of vehicles arriving and leaving. Even large vehicles with trailers have been observed parking along the street by the green space and by the domain. During the town’s large Arts and Plants Festival, where thousands of visitors arrive at one time, parking can be found within a few minute walk of the festival site. Although this research does not perceive parking to be an issue, many residents are quick to point out that there is a problem.

What about the traffic thing? What about parking is what I’d like to know? We are very very short of parking. (There is an) extreme shortage of parking. (I point to parking on the plan) but that’s not very much. That parking will only accommodate that block. … (Should there be a big parking lot then? Is that Geraldine?) No! (Group of 5 female volunteers 50s-70s).
If the intent of tourism is to keep people a little longer in the town, to spend money, it seems counter intuitive to provide facilities such as parking lots that efficiently focus and direct tourists to the main tourist stages. Requiring tourists to ‘explore’ more (get out of their cars) would likely help tourists to get a better appreciation of the town and its services and spend more time in the town. Convenient parking is counter productive as it helps tourists to move efficiently through the town and be on their way.

7.5.8 Design Conventions

Designers and tourism experts were found to follow conventions in creating tourist stages. Conventions are used as guidelines or best practices in their work as they have been previously tested and accepted in their discipline making the work more efficient. The following are key design conventions that informants considered while staging for tourism: order, precedence, materials, need to do something and design process.

7.5.9 Staging Order

Design conventions recognised in this research included: ordering space by breaking down large spaces by- separating pedestrians and vehicle traffic; separate parking from other uses; corners are very important and should be special or eventful; and finally, tourist stages should provide order so they are attractive and easily located. Setting order also implies less attractive spaces like wide parking lots should be less prominent and signs should be used to indicate what is occurring on the stage.

I think the idea has potential ... the idea is good ... (there may be) conflict between people moving around and cars parking in there. Tourists would use it ... because of what is going on across the road. (It) could well work for locals (SS 40s LA).

Corner decision makes people slow down (VF 50s LA).

What I don’t like about this, is the corner has become a non-event. Very much so, if there was a huge historic tree at the corner, known as Morrison’s tree, and something that has been here since 1856, … I think there should be something memorable on the corner. (It should be) much more than an open thing (RW 60s LA).

You had fun with this one. It’s very open. This little historic building is totally dominated by this scale of that one (building). I don’t know if that works, next to it. ...The idea works (something to take photos of), but it needs to be on the corner. This corner is weak. … It’s too open, wide open it’s a hostile space, wind swept, trees would help a lot. ... Person driving the coast would like it... very handy to pull in there. [it would be a one stop shop, event space]. I’m a fan, of putting a strong statement on a corner. ...corners are quite prominent places ... they often have landmark buildings on them. To my mind … put parking out behind... the performance would have to be internal ... Arrowtown has that, a bit out of the town. ... A green area, with a big rock… a natural type of town…. People might feel exposed (otherwise) (SR 30s LA).

It never feels great to have the parking fronting the street. It happens more with commercial real-estate experience. Try to isolate the parking, create a visual cue to get to the parking lot. (There are) strong connections between here (and across the street). Help create cues to bring people in. ...The McDonalds would bring in the fast tourists, because of the perception. It alters the identity, but then once you go down that track, clear signage and identity you will need a degree of simplicity, a conflict that needs to be resolved (NM 40s LA).
The place itself has to be attractive (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

I would use it... time wise I could get to it easier than the current market... a bit hidden away for tourists. Sandwich boards would be used for signage. More parking would be good (RN 60s tourism business owner).

Most of the key informants consider conventional ways of providing for tourism as indicated by the design solutions mentioned above. A few landscape architects however saw things differently preferring authenticity, playful and flexible space and more subtle design interventions.

I like ... there are activities here that are tucked off the main street and by the alley ways so it’s another way to get through. Breaking down boundaries between tourists and church ... nice permeability at a scale that is quite nice. Used by locals and tourists. ... the odd bus, campervan. ...Nice thing about it - it seems there isn’t a huge provision for parking within it … it’s more for pedestrians (AB 40s LA).

The more specific we try to provide for one thing it rules out others, therefore, if an object we put in a space is more generic like a railing, to direct people, and can be sat on, ... I think definitely, as designers to try and not rule out people’s options, and it is best to leave a space open, a square with decorated walls where people can go in 15 directions, skateboard, or an impromptu dance rather than have a patterned (surface) with cross paths and grass... the more flexibility the better (RW 60s LA).

The redevelopment (of Four Peaks Plaza) has made it a bit staged compared to what it was before. The old churches set the tone for Geraldine and have been submergered with the new designs. I don’t think the tourists like it. …I think tourists want a genuine experience and they recognise when they are not getting it. … I think some of our own profession are gilding the lily a lot in some places, especially some historic places. The trend with some of the younger designers is that we need some kind of intervention, there has to be some kind of stamp on, my stamp on it. You have to pull yourself back from intervening too much. and all you really need to do is provide for people to get in and out and park their cars without providing pieces of sculpture. Without adding elements that you don’t really need. You don’t really need a clever footpath, you only need is a dry foot path, because you are there to see the gorge or the historic site … or x’s paving pattern. It is a temptation to intervene much more in a design sense it’s a little more difficult to draw back and say I’m not worried if we use a regular round bollard because I don’t want to do anything that is too clever (RW 60s LA, emphasis added).

It should be noted here that respondents refer to places being staged, in the same sense MacCannell uses staged authenticity, where places are constructed specifically for tourism. This research however, uses the term stage to indicate all physical spaces, be they natural or constructed for tourism or everyday life.

A common thread in this discussion is that there is a preference by key informants for the tourism strategy to work within a town’s physical, historical and imagined context. They consider the most appropriate tourism development considers a town’s natural attributes and connection to surrounding landscape, the development works with historical identities and provides a local experience. Although they believe and verbally expressed this in the interviews, many of the key informants also understand and support some aspects of the attraction of convenience and conventional mass tourism development to provide the mediated experiences or ‘pseudo-events’ (Boorstin 1964 in Wang 1999) which tourists have traditionally consumed.

The addition of Kiwi Country in Geraldine is a case in point. The addition of a global tourism node in a small town which has already successfully created a sophisticated tourism stop along the route (Four
Peaks) indicates the economic and symbolic power of traditional mass tourism development. The belief that the level of development, as a stop along the route is not enough, and towns need to be well developed (provide what is traditionally thought as tourism) destinations suggests the power of conventional thinking. Conventional tourism development needs to be contested for a locally focused stop along the route to be considered the most appropriate level of tourism development for a small town.

I’m on one end of the spectrum as landscape architects, … where we are mostly urban based and we bring our prejudices … with us, so point one, our current practices have somewhat tried too hard because we have a job for council, so we have to prove that we earn our money. … We have gone past trying to make things ye old Victorian, but we haven’t fully cracked it yet, and made it slick with modern materials. In modern drainage lessening the use of kerbs and things, not entirely eliminating them, but making some thoughtfulness about how to deal with rain events … I think we have come a long way in the past 12 to 20 years, and those are important characteristics of small towns. I think heavily engineered structures … The use of ecological and sustainable concepts… so as long as you don’t just start talking about the use of native plants, ecological in the sense of natural processes, but the other thing about these traditional towns is that they didn’t have much planting in them at all, what they did have consisted of shade trees … They are not entirely devoid of native trees, but the character of the planting was traditionally much more about trees than to do with little plants. Trees and grass was the main thing. Tussocks, well…. I think are over used but they do have their place. Ecology is, to me, not trying to manufacture a bit of the backcountry hills on the main street of the town. I think it is trying to make sure that the life giving cycle of air, water, nutrients, sunlight, is still going on throughout the town, but is sitting happily with human life that is going on (RW 60s LA, emphasis added).

There is ambivalence to what should be done to provide for tourism. Conventional wisdom and current practice suggests spaces should be reshaped so they are ordered, tidied, made convenient, themed or marked to indicate as tourist space, and other approaches that are familiar in enclavic tourist space (Edensor 1998). Applying a set of staging standards (global in scope) is helpful to convey the script and expectations for tourists making decisions with limited time and seeking conventional tourist experiences. Mass tourism, as seen in the scripting, staging and performances on coach tours, works this way. The problem becomes apparent when tourists no longer see homogenised tourist spaces and experiences, created and managed by the tourism industry, as their authentic tourist experience and look for other ways to meet their needs. Touristscapes become even more problematic in small town stages as issues of interventions, associated with intrusion, identity and scale are made more apparent with the immediate and obvious change as contrasted with the taskscapes of the everyday. Ambivalence occurs when tourism is important for a town’s survival but in the process irreversibly changes or removes what initially made the town unique and special.

7.5.10 Design precedent

Spaces are judged and preferences made by comparing spaces with other places we have been and experienced. Design education promotes the use of precedence as a way to inform and provide an array of solutions. Stage attributes are copied because they have worked elsewhere however, many people are aware of this and understand stages need to adapt to the specific context they are working within.
Look and learn from other situations ... (but) not copy. Do the New Zealand thing in a different way. ... In terms of learning from it and how to adapt to our own situation... Meet our situation; vary from one place to the other. But if something works well somewhere else, evaluate why it works and how it could work here, how it could be adapted, if we thought it is appropriate for here. But don’t just dismiss it because someone from somewhere else if it was created elsewhere and couldn’t work here (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

Many of the key informants recognised the design attributes in the design scenarios in the existing tourist stages in Geraldine. These associations were helpful communicating ideas by sharing common references but may also restrict design alternatives as proposals deviate from familiar and referenced design.

There are certain aspects of that that I quite like. I think it is more orderly than the last one, (would tourists/locals like it), in a way it is already what exists over here (Four Peaks) (RW 60s LA).

My way of thinking, we have become the Kiwi Country again ... not what we want ... new building taken over, car parking ... what appeals to me, the second one with enhancements. Yes to the little house development. No MacDonald’s. Keep corrugated iron building, associated with farming and rural. Depends on people, ownership, and council. What they are trying to do ... A concept, something in place so someone else can’t build something bad. Most people can’t think 20-30 years ahead. They are only thinking now (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

Although designs are proposed with good intentions of improving space, they may miss the mark by not fully understanding the nature of how people use space (performances) associated with social scripts and stages. Methven’s reshaped town square was repeatedly identified as a designed space that was copied from elsewhere and applied to a socially different situation. What is forgotten is that scripts and performances on public stages are negotiated by the people who not only use (or reject) these places with what has been officially provided, the design’s intended purpose (script) and activities (performances) but adapt and make these stages their own. One LA gives an example of this with his own experiences in Malaysia:

Village green (or) the square is not designed for everyone… in Malaysia we tend to create our own green space, or favourite place ... used over time. Hang around a big drain ... just hang around. Different than a square that was especially made, it (might be) beautiful but (has) no soul. Could be green or concrete just not the same (HT 30s LA).

Places function ... But not too inspirational ... We think is beautiful but not practical for people to use. Expensive playgrounds …. We have forgotten (about) human exploration and play (HT 30s LA).

7.5.11 Materials

The choice of materials used on a public stage is important as they have symbolic reference and contribute to perceptions of authenticity. Although the choice of materials is important, choices are hampered by availability and costs.

(I) often judge a town by its materials, by how old it is in terms of the building materials... the materials of the pub... like wood would be quite common, depends on the location. ... How it was put together tells you the age (LC 40s Tourism Consultant).

(When designing) I would personally look at what has been used in the past. I don’t mean what might have been used like when they did a main street revamp ten years ago. I mean the original, so products that might have been used. A lot of that information you can get from the older buildings. The different claddings, what they are constructed of, what they might have used; the local river boulders for foundations... definitely look to what is local to the place rather than importing materials. Arrowtown
is a good example with the shiest that is a fantastic looking material, works really well with paving walls and cladding of buildings (SR 30s LA).

You won’t see anything much better than in those townships than precast concrete cobblestone, just because of the cost. Occasionally you will find clay pavers. But see they come from Australia. So they are much more durable and they keep their colour much longer but significantly more expensive (GE 60s LA).

Look at local materials (they are) used as much as possible. … If client suggests (using local materials) I would support that, encourage it as much as possible ... Depends on budget ... local material more expensive than imported materials. I don’t think you ever start with a blank slate … There are always context to work with ... there are key indicators to pick up the context…then add on the layers (SS 40s LA).

Poor decisions or decisions taken too lightly have resulted in changes to the intended outcome of the design.

What little history is apparent is of value but I think they have lost it some how. I don’t know quite how. But they seem to have over looked how much historical heritage is. Maybe it’s the modern kind of paving (NM 40s LA).

I consider them … like precast pavers. Technology is great; there is huge potential in it. But I’m not convinced that designers select the best pallet of materials that might represent that place. Often use too many paving patterns, powder coloured furniture, sometimes they over look that the design gets over cooked. They forget about the actual town. And they are just looking between the boundaries of the buildings, going for it. If the town has enough character, and it has a good built heritage, I think the actual landscape can be quite quiet in that space (SR 30s LA).

(Current design trends are) very important, not certainly at the top of the list, but we put a lot of emphasis on it in terms of bringing out the character of that place. And that’s probably a reason that we get a comment … that places are becoming the same. (Trends and technology) Treat them with care. What I have worked on recently, current trends haven’t played a part what so ever. And we have bucked, a little bit, just hold on a minute you don’t need this stainless steel bollard or you don’t need the clay pavers because they are being used elsewhere. What makes your place special? Nobody else has got that (AB 40s LA).

7.5.12 Something needs to be done.

New Zealand is perceived to be genuine, as the advertising campaign suggests “100% Pure”. The tourism focus has traditionally been on natural attractions and cultural history rather than large entertainment based resorts or amusement parks.

It’s not less developed … but it is the real… it is one thing New Zealand does have to offer is genuine experiences. It is hard to find manufactured experiences here. Like we don’t have Disneyland, Knott’s Berry Farm and places like in Australia like Dreamworld. Even the places that people consider to be commercial are pretty low key and are genuine. It is not the level of development but that it is genuine experience. So if you go to an historic site they have not reconstructed the historic buildings, they are the original buildings even though they are just... you can walk around some of the historic sites... you could take things, and put it in your pocket …. Things are just sitting there… it’s not a manufactured thing (GE 60s LA).

Although many tourists have commented on the genuineness or realness of the people and natural areas, there is a general understanding that over time, in New Zealand in general and in small towns specifically, something extra is needed to encourage tourism and more spending in small towns.

In years to come, I can see we will need to redevelop this end of town, to get that spread of customer’s spending money everywhere in town. The old buildings need to be done up to encourage spending everywhere (SH 50s Business owner).
With this belief then, how should a town stage itself for tourism? There are many different perceptions of the ideal tourism stage. It could be a stage that highlights a historical past and showcases preserved or restored settings. It could also be more modern and provide entertainment spaces that are common to and expected in cities and other jurisdictions. While there are different schools of thought as to what should be done, most people recognise these decisions are not just business related but they impact the memories, identities and lives of its residents. Changes to a town need to be sensitive to a wide range of people and their various needs. Town’s people are not resistant to change and understand the need to diversify. Even people with strong attitudes to what a town should be are open to change.

Materials do matter how it looks, its quite important that it is attractive: clean, the stone of the toilets... shows a bit of class, money has been spent. (There is) limited graffiti. Lots of places depress me…. I wouldn’t like to live in places that look old, rubbish, ugly old buildings. I feel quite strongly. ... Sometimes I like them (modern design and technology). (I) don’t like them too far out. Too far out that wouldn’t fit in here. ... Old things need to be looked after, painted. ...Don’t mind old, needs to be ordered, sharp clean clear minds. Ultra modern (designs) could fit in Geraldine if done right (PB 40s Tourism Business).

I would (prefer design) number two. You do have global things coming in. They are dealt with a sensitive manner aren’t they? .... Where you could retro fit an existing building with a McDonald’s. There are some good examples, like going to Sydney’s old brick buildings where it’s tucked away; it’s not on the corner with a drive thru. It’s in the context of the city. Although you can have global features, it’s all about the setting. And then the local identity can drive that (AB 40s LA).

7.5.13 Design Process

The design process also determines who and what is included in a design. Current design practice promotes community engagement and public consultation for a holistic approach. Although most everyone would agree there is a need to include all interest groups in the process, this does not always happen in practice. A tourism consultant explains this view:

(We) completed a study of tourism carrying capacity ... (where) I learned something too. There were 3-4 stakeholder groups in the small town. (The consultants) often ignore the residents, who live there for quite specific reasons, ... who love the place and who would rather have it without visitors except they fail to realize sometimes that it is because of visitors that they have so many facilities and services they have. One thing that came out: with smaller communities in particular is that you need to meet the needs of all people or you will get people angry (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).

The tourists themselves should also be considered in town design as they arrive holding a certain perspective and are looking for specific experiences. The New Zealand experience is strongly connected to natural attractions but is also about the social and cultural uniqueness of place.

If we think of international visitors who come to New Zealand, this is on the first visit, they are quite sophisticated travellers, those people they are not wanting to sit on a bus, they are looking for the differences between the regions, and we haven’t done that very well. (We haven’t) differentiated the regions in food and culture. Many food things associated with an area... have a little in the wine area. ... focus too much on the natural attractions... need to attract the visitor that stays longer, and spends more, we don’t want to get into the mass tourism thing… but (I’m) afraid Air New Zealand and China are likely wanting to fill the seats ... and we had huge problems with Korea when they first started... with rip-offs, and it was from their own people on their own people. Same is happening with China. Need to be quite careful. It’s the social and cultural differences that people are looking for (SB 60s Tourism Consultant).
The design process is also hampered when final decisions are being made and there is difficulty getting consensus and agreement to spend money. Initially people can agree with general concepts and are willing to spend money on generating more proposals, but it is much more difficult to have those same people to commit to a specific design and have to live with it.

A lot more proposals, council or group get ideas and then its a Catch 22, there is a lot of enthusiasm at the time… easy to set out what should happen and people see that but its difficult to get people to agree (NM 40s LA).

The designers themselves and the profession of landscape architecture also contribute to the way tourist stages are produced. Most of the firms said they have completed tourism planning and designs for townships in the past, especially during the mid 1990s when the government sponsored Main Street Programme was funded. However when those funds dried up so to did the work involved with tourism in small towns. One LA perceives part of the problem lies with a disconnect between the nature of landscape architecture concerned with how a town functions, and communities and councils who are more concerned with ‘decorating’ their towns.

Firm did town planning in the past, but not too much now... mostly subdivisions, and streetscapes in that … Tourism not considered… most suburbs don’t relate well to tourism, depends where the towns are... Pegasus has tourism because of the golf course (SS 40s LA).

The township plan has gone by the wayside over the years, because our expectations as professionals are different from the community’s expectations, and the council’s expectations. We see as landscape architects we immediately find things functionally we ought to deal with, to make it work better, like traffic, and parking. I think the community and the council almost always think we are going to decorate the place. … you have a plan where you suggest to close a street, and narrowing streets, and putting in sidewalk cafes or whatever, and they had in their heads that you were going to put in hanging baskets along the main street. During the ‘hey day’ of these township plans, there was a thing by the Department of Labour … Main Street Programme. It was very popular. Basically what it was … was decorating. It was a cute sign and planting flowers on the main street. It was more appealing to the communities than what we were suggesting. This took place in the mid 90s ...  Run by the Department of Labour … (It primarily looked at) main street frontage and shopping areas (GE 60s LA).

Designers tend to want to emphasise transitions and mark certain spaces as special. As spatial manipulators, designers want to assist the performer by providing strong visual and symbolic cues of the intension or narrative of a given stage.

Because I know it (the town of Geraldine) I don’t look for it (visual cues to how to use stages)... there are not a lot of physical cues in terms of spatial manipulation… (There is a) kilometre long stretch (of road), stretch along the north and south ends of town, that are broad and residential in character, and then you just happen into the CBD... it would be quite neat to have stronger markers as you head into town, stronger spatial definition as you head through those broad residential areas, and then definitely signalling the central area, (its) important to mark them (NM 40s LA).

I think it’s a fine line. How to make it more real without forcing the realness of it? I think it matters a lot. I think it matters more for designers than, then to locals and then it matters to tourists less (AB 40s LA).

These cues are not necessarily created by the designers but already exist as accepted social scripts and are then only embellished by the designer to reinforce what tourists expect and what residents will tolerate.

Well I’m sure the public toilets are a giveaway, the I-site sign… but because we have been going there for years… we just stop. Because the main street is the retail, we would consider eating at the pub…
most little hotels is the only place to eat… its ingrained in me… main streets are stopping queues… from memory they have well maintained toilets (SS 40s LA).

There will be some clear markers that we use to pull people’s attention ... there will be some large stone columns, with prefabricated steel frames over the top which are suppose to mirror the combination of grape vines and the limestone landscape. … it’s not something you want to ram down the throat of the locals, but you want to bring attention to the main street to a particular building, but the scale drops down. In the end it becomes day to day useable ... Depends how you use your space. It’s the areas where you create a commercial identity, it’s not an area with a lot of physical access …it’s a big brassy entrance. But then the locals will use the spaces that get walked thru all the time or have recreation and social components to them, two things that complement each other, one is the day to day and for designers is probably more at a human scale, and more low key (NM 40s LA).

7.6 Summary and Contributions

Chapter seven has built upon the analysis in chapter six that investigated Geraldine as a case study of a ‘stop along the route’, and focuses specifically on the nature of tourism stages and their design. A set of four design approaches, with a spectrum of local to global features, was used as visual prompts to assist key respondents in a discussion about tourism development in Geraldine. This final section in chapter seven is a summary of the staging findings and explains the contributions these insights have for designing for tourism in small towns. There are four key points.

First and foremost, the key informant responses to the four design approaches clearly identifies that there are two primary schools of thought in staging tourism. The first school of thought as represented by modified taskscapes considers how staging needs to consider local authenticity, building on existing site and cultural conditions. Edensor (1998) would consider this perception of tourism staging as heterogeneous tourist space where stages bridge the liminal global tourism with the reality of the local and “permit a conditional exploration whereby ‘alternative forms of play are enacted and a wider range of expressive practices and meanings are stimulated” (Edensor 1998:53). Modified taskscapes are regulated by the performances of the everyday and provides transition between the ‘authentic’ local and global tourism or the ‘backstage -front stage’ (MacCannell 1999), which is both appreciated and consumed by tourists. Modifications and interventions are subtle and cognizant of the town’s existing scale, context; and character, and more sensitive to the consequences of tourism influencing change on town character and the residents who will live with the change(s) as part of their everyday. Although people who prefer a modified taskscapes approach, as depicted in design approaches one and two, where tourism development adapts to the context, and not the other way around, they do not share a single vision of what should occur. Although there is ambivalence to the level and type of change needed to stage tourism there is general consensus that staging should not result as a touristscape, as mythical Queenstown.

The second school of thought as represented by touristscapes contrasts with modified taskscapes in a number of ways. Touristscapes are liminal spaces that are ‘staged’, in the MacCannell sense of the term, where the stage managers and performing tourists share a similar understanding that the
authentic tourist experience is about comfort, convenience, and entertainment. Touristscapes are represented by designs three and four and generates discussion as their suitability in small towns. Touristscapes may be interpreted as more authentic than modified taskscapes since it is clear that they are a tourism intervention. This stark contrast with the taskscapes however also fuels the argument that touristscapes are better placed outside towns because of their impact on the local character. Farmer’s Corner outside of Ashburton provided an example of this. Kiwi Country was also identified as a touristscapes and provides facilities for larger scale tourism often associated with urban locations. It was thought the urban aesthetic could be mitigated by adding more trees, green space or tourist oriented objects like fountains to the otherwise ‘hostile’ environment. Touristscapes are considered beneficial economically because they are thought to attract mass tourists, capture their attention and provide activities for them to spend their money. Although they may be economically important, their impacts are considered by many people to be too great and inappropriate for the character and sensibilities of small towns.

Staging tourism is further complicated by the nature of design disciplines, particularly landscape architecture where the process and practice of design influences the outcome. Key informants suggested current design practices have likely been influenced by experience of an earlier design focus on ‘decorating’ streetscapes; the fact that there are now fewer projects specific to tourism and tourism issues; and a perception that tourism is no different than any other local stage. The design process is also likely to express limitations as clients want designs that are already proven to work, work is restricted due to limited budgets, and there is a belief that there is an increasing gap between what clients and designers want from design. It is also the possibility that there is built-in homogeneity as designers use similar processes and as chapter four illustrated there is a perception that designers feel obligated to make their mark in their designs therefore more emphasis, symbolism and objects are added to designs. Places become more complicated than they need to be.

The exploration of staging tourism using four design approaches was helpful in understanding the research and design process in three primary ways. First, the use of visual references was very helpful in the design discussions. Having hard copies of the designs during the interviews allowed specific characteristics to be highlighted and allowed for comparisons to be made of the four different approaches. The images also acted as a catalyst for prompting comments which the comparisons helped to identify- for example traditional rural townscapes have a certain building setbacks and character. Secondly, the images confirmed the attributes which represent existing stages in Geraldine. Respondents easily identified and understood the relationship between taskscapes with main street, and modified taskscape with Four Peaks Plaza and Kiwi Country with other touristscapes. Finally, key respondents found it helpful to visualize the discussion which helped to prevent misrepresentation and provided shared meaning of the terms and abstract ideas of local, glocal, grobal and global. Presenting
the range of design approaches in this progressive manner helped to keep order and clarifies the abstract and manages character details that could otherwise easily become over complicated.
Chapter Eight: Discussion and Conclusions

8.1 Context and Approach

This research set out to explore the nature of tourism in small towns in New Zealand. The exploration is from a landscape architect’s perspective that focuses on the design and use of public space. In an attempt to ‘see things differently’ the performance metaphor was used and tested as a theoretical lens. The choice of this lens was partially based on the successful use of the performance metaphor in other academic disciplines, predominantly geography and tourism studies, where it has challenged long held assumptions about tourism space, place, experiences and authenticity. The overall goal of this research was to investigate the use of the performance metaphor to enable and inform tourism design in light of the globalising effect of tourism. The specific objectives have been: to explore the current use of tourist-related public space in a range of small towns; to explore how these spaces are designed for tourism and their relationship with the town; and to better understand what this means in terms of designing spatial experience and designing for both local residents and tourists. The research explored three separate but linked case studies. The case studies looked at specific small towns each representing a town type on a tourism circuit model. Each town was explored through the performance lens, as well as being ‘performed’ by the researcher as participant observer. Methven was also explored through the design process of a design studio, while Geraldine was explored in more depth with key informant interviews seeking their understanding and responses to a range of possible design approaches, from global to local, developed as a design experiment.

Tourism has been seen by many communities as a viable economic alternative for small towns and has been gaining momentum as traditional rural economies, predominantly agricultural and resource based activities, are changing and sometimes disappearing. This focus on tourism has also been a result of national policies encouraging tourism development to “revitalise small towns and create a sense of local identity and pride” (New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2015, 2007:55). Towns are therefore asked to play a role in tourism both for their own benefit and for the national tourism strategy. However tourism has frequently been encouraged without a critical understanding of what is being designed and constructed, and what this ultimately means for tourists, the township and local community.

Changing the nature of a rural town’s economy by providing tourism spaces (or ‘stages’ using the performance perspective terminology) is likely to impact on the town’s character and on other aspects of the community. Preliminary field based observations found physical changes were taking place where tourism spaces appear ubiquitous and ‘placeless’ or non-places (Augé 1995) and seem to have a predetermined ‘tourist’ theme or aesthetic. Initial research questions therefore asked - are tourist spaces becoming more ‘placelessness’ and if so why does this occur? And what does this mean for designing these spaces? Initial observations lead to a closer examination of small towns and New
Zealand tourism which resulted in the development of a travel circuit model where towns have different roles in tourism.

As a landscape architect I approached this research from a designer’s perspective which focuses, among other things, on spatial qualities and human use of tourism places. This perspective is multidisciplinary and draws upon a range of different disciplines from which indentified six key concepts underpinning this thesis. The key concepts of global to local; travel circuit; authentic experiences; embodied performances; tourism stage; and staging, provided the analytical framework to understand the social complexities of tourism, and specifically designing spaces for tourism in small towns were set out in chapter two and informed the case study analyses. These concepts are now used to draw the main findings of the thesis together in the following sections. First a summary of the case studies findings.

8.2 The Tourism Circuit

Initial scoping of travel and tourism in New Zealand helped to identify and create a tourism circuit model comprised of three tourism town types. Each of these towns has different tourism functions and therefore likely to have different stages providing for specific needs. The circuit model builds upon the ideas of tourism flows (Forer 2005) where towns have different positions on a travel itinerary as a result of timing and the overall nature of the tourism itinerary. Towns are considered to be destinations, gateway communities or stops along a route, which depends upon the town’s cultural and natural attributes (historical and scenic value), recreational values, proximity to other destinations and geographical position on the circuit. This model as circuit is also helpful to indicate that tourism experiences are spatially created and cumulative- building on what happens during travel and from previous global and local experiences.
Scoping the travel routes and towns found on and near these routes supports Edensor’s (1998: 53) notion of heterogeneous space; described as “emerged in an unplanned and contingent process”. Rural towns have a range of functions that generate familiar working urban landscapes that can be characterised as ‘taskscape’ (Ingold 1993; Ingold and Kurttila 2000). These places are vernacular in origin and provide for local everyday activities. It is the taskscape that visitors perceive as authentic ‘other’ - the target for tourist experiences. Towns also have touristscapes (Edensor 2007) which are connected to the tourism network and provide for the tourist everyday. Enclavic tourist spaces (Edensor 1998:45) such as Kiwi Country and Farmer’s Corner are becoming more common, and displayed the spatial characteristics, described by Edensor as being more regulated, commodified and privatised. Coach tours were observed habitually using the enclavic tourist spaces while more independent travel types were found to favour less defined and more heterogeneous space. These initial observations informed the need to take a look closer at the tourist town types as case studies.

8.3 Akaroa- The destination

Akaroa was chosen to represent a tourism destination town, which provides for travel and holiday experiences. The performance metaphor was helpful to unpack the complexity of the multiple spaces found in the town as taskscape and touristscape. Using the performance metaphor and analysing spaces as separate stages, with associated scripts and resulting in a performance, spatial affordances became more apparent. Spatial affordances are characteristics such as form, patterns, layout, connectivity and materials, and their meanings which structure the use, movement and impression of place. It was necessary to retain the complexity of the notion of performance which allowed a better understanding why people use space as they do. Akaroa provides a range of distinctive stages from historical and recreational taskscape for exploratory and leisure based performances, to more traditional mass tourism performances associated with café and consumer culture. The stages have an ‘organic’ organisation working with the town’s layered cultural history and with natural geographic parameters placed on the stages.
Tourism works well in Akaroa because it provides an engaging and timely travel distance from where tourists originate, a variety of stages, and is situated in a setting with existing natural scenery and preserved cultural (object) authenticity. The blend of consumption and authentic taskscapes, as well as enclavic tourist space and heterogeneous space provides necessary cues for tourist performances but also room for improvisation. This mixed use tourist strategy, along with tourist spaces that are authentic in character and scale to the surrounding taskscapes, make this town successful.

Choices are also important as visitors and residents carry a wide range of expectations of what this coastal town is suppose to be. This success is also attributed to clear planning policies to preserve and protect the town’s historical character but also provide for more mass consumption in designated enclavic spaces. The stages in Akaroa allow for improvisation where performances are negotiated with other people and as afforded by the material and symbolic stage. Visitors become a part of tourist performance with their co-presence on stage, as exemplified by people in wetsuits in a makeshift outdoor classroom and motorcyclists playing their part near outdoor cafes. Improvised playfulness, as found on Akaroa’s beach and parking areas, is a welcomed experience which is often removed from more controlled enclavic tourist stages. Tourism success could also be attributed to the provision of non-consumption practices such as relaxing in a vehicle or public space and people watching, as alternatives to mass tourism.

Overall the Akaroa case study provided a good example of a successful tourism destination town. The performance metaphor helped understand space as not only an arrangement of material objects, but also as places of performed activities with social meaning and significance for those performing. Finally it should be noted that even towns as tourism destinations, as represented by Akaroa, may have an overall stage character that is more taskscape than touristscape in appearance. However this is in transition, as seen with the reshaping and development of the harbour side, suggesting a move towards the experience economy and conventional tourism enclaves, but not enough to alter the overall town character and become placeless spaces such as those found in themed amusement parks or all inclusive resorts. New Zealand has created a national brand based on ‘100% Pure’ and visitors have expressed their motivations to travel New Zealand are based on notions of ‘authentic’ nature and cultural experiences. A shift to more conventional mass tourism, especially in rural towns that contribute to the ‘naturalness’ of New Zealand, would have a profound impact on both the community and material places, as well as the tourists who travel here for these specific experiences.

8.4 Methven- A Gateway Community

Methven is the case study example chosen as a gateway community. As a town it is primarily a rural taskscape, which has a recent history of also providing support services for snow sport tourism. As a response to its gateway role the town has recently reshaped and reorganised town stages to
accommodate tourism. This has been accomplished through road closures and by creating new tourism stages such as the town square and heritage centre. The performance metaphor was again useful to investigate tourist stages and performances. In addition to my personal observations this case study used a design studio with students as co-researchers to better understand the design thinking associated with tourism. The performance metaphor was also tested by students as a means to understand and design for tourism space.

As a gateway community Methven is highly seasonal and well scripted for the winter ski season. Most outdoor spaces are taskscape providing for local everyday performances. However Methven is in transition, where new tourist stages are being created, such as the town square with its highly visible central location and ornate street furniture and paving. These changes are obvious additions to a context lacking the natural attractions often seen and expected in a destination. As a gateway community it is however questionable if destination-like attributes are really necessary. The stage and props used here have focused on imaginary scripts related to the Mt Hutt ski field and are disconnected from the scripts of a small rural town. The new tourist stages are poorly used by locals and show signs of neglect and vandalism, signals they are not being supported. The town square has enclavic characteristics (Edensor 1998) such as: clear spatial distinction, contemporary standards through the use of pavers and street furniture, and regulating the space with anti skateboarding devices and design features that prevent alternative uses. The square’s geometric pattern, scale and hardscaping provide a stage for events like the seasonal farmer’s market but are used for little else. This stage is designed to be gazed upon and provides few cues other than sitting in an open space, and provides little in terms of improvisation or alternative experiences. The new space in front of the Methven Heritage Centre also adds a contemporary look but the grass lawn may be more multifunctional and attractive for local performances.

The Methven case study illustrates the risk of getting things wrong in small town design. The design has tried to prescribe a new ‘artistic’ identity and provide a stage for generic tourism performances, but the outcome is a stage that is primarily visual, and lacks the attributes needed to provide diversity of scripts and improvisation opportunities for locals or tourists. These new stages are touristscapes and likely a result of a perceived obligation to provide more dramatic features and obvious indications of tourist space. There are expectations that tourism stages should have a certain aesthetic and genius loci to consider them for tourism. Methven’s relative lack of success as a year round centre suggests that providing scripted touristscapes may not meet the expectations of non ski tourists.

The Methven design studio provided a number of further insights about the nature of designing for tourism. Although students recognised the problems of the current tourist stages they fell into reproducing similar problems within their own designs. It appears that the normative design process, with a strong object and visual basis, contributes to homogeneity and the formation of non-place. Students tended to redesign Methven by re-ordering the streetscape to formalise and define tourist
spaces and to improve circulation and movement, which paradoxically reduced the attractiveness of the spaces for everyday authentic taskscape functions. The performance metaphor did however help student designers to consider the experiential nature of the spaces they design. As young designers this skill is still developing. Tourism design solutions were chosen by students that added levels of familiarity from media representations (themes of what tourist spaces are suppose to be about) leading to spatial homogenisation and non-place. It was found that student designers were fond of normative design solutions where stages took on a specific aesthetic or had to accommodate certain scripted activities regardless of the stage’s performed affordances. The normative or what I am calling conventional design results in designs that are more enclavic-like tourist spaces, as opposed to critical adaptations to heterogeneous spaces, ultimately changing the character and in turn the identity of the town. The student designs provided features (global attributes: organisation, objects, materials) that were tested in the next case study.

The student work also revealed inherent bias in the nature of design process. What is occurring in design can be explained in terms of Butler’s (1990) performativity theory, where difference- in Butler’s case gender formation- is the result of ‘recurring performances that makes certain social norms acquire their authority, their aura of inevitability “(Schein 1999:369 in Minca and Oaks 2006:9). Although students were asked to be reflexive and consider the performance metaphor, many were designing spaces from preconceived ideas of design and design norms that have become conventions through repeated use. Similar to Butler’s gender theory it is the ‘repeated performative enactments’ that gives credence to the formalised design process. This is paradoxical since the performance metaphor was intended to provide opportunities to challenge existing conventions. However many students, at such an early stage in their education, instead focused on practical conventions. This becomes problematic when convention is unchallenged and design produces spaces that are taken-for-granted, and in terms of performativity are unreflective and produce a hegemonic and therefore homogenised world.

Design is not just a reflection of social condition but plays an active part in its co-production. This is best accomplished when places are not considered to be fixed and stable entities but as Crang suggests should be viewed as ‘fluid and created through performance’ (Minca and Oates 2006:11). The challenge for designers, especially when considering tourism, becomes how to provide balance between providing order for comprehension and ‘disorder’ for interest, awareness and authenticity. This challenge to convention is not new for landscape designers, and this balancing act has already been addressed in ecological design; offered as orderly frames for messy ecosystems (Nassauer 1995). It is also the underpinning theory behind critical regionalism. Perceiving space as fluid and interpretive has also been considered in design and best represented by West-8’s public space Schouwburgplein. In the heart of Rotterdam this park is “designed as an interactive public space, flexible in use, and changing during day and seasons” (Paysages: Conference Adriaan Geuze
Most contemporary landscapes like Schouwburgplein are innovative and site specific in urban environments but few examples have been found adapting to rural sensibilities. Village greens would have historically provided for these types of performances, but as is the case in Geraldine they have become privatised and regulated. In the end, the performance perspective provides a means to be critical through design by not only considering the material stage but also by the use of space as understood by phenomenological performances and imagined scripts. Retaining this complexity, the affordances of stage, script and performance improves our understanding of space and ultimately improves design decisions.

8.5 Geraldine- a Stop along the Route

Geraldine Township is the third case study representing the stop along the route on the travel circuit model. Geraldine provides good examples of three types of tourism stages having a range of local to global or taskscape to touristscape characteristics. Key informants responded to a range of design approaches, which manipulated the local to global spectrum and resulted in a number of key insights.

As a stop along the route, Geraldine has been transitioning from local taskscape, as still found on the town’s main street, towards a more globally focused touristscape. This has been demonstrated by what has been occurring at the Four Peaks Plaza with an increasing concentration on consumption. This is demonstrated by the fencing of the seating area at Oak’s café and the addition of more shops in the Plaza. Some of the features that make it more globally connected and homogenised include: increasing spatial scale, adopting urban concepts of parking and circulation, accepting international icons, and creating attractions. The addition of the strongly defined tourism enclave Kiwi Country also demonstrates this move towards global tourism, although the effects are contained and do not dominate the overall local character.

Kiwi Country provides a great example of the tourist enclave where the spaces are characterised as single-function, bounded to assert distinction and sharpened definition (Edensor 1998). Edensor suggests “the imperatives of modernist planning and consumer capitalism have tended to transform space so that it maximises consumption and facilitates transit” (Edensor 1998:470). Four Peaks Plaza also has enclavic characteristics but to a lesser extent. It is a hybrid stage between the main street and the tourist enclave, and, unlike Kiwi Country, it is more multi-functional, more inclusive with the local surroundings and less defined as a separate place. Four Peaks Plaza balances the tourist familiar with local adaptations providing the cues for visitors to stop as well as cues for resident performances. For some people however the scales have already tipped and Four Peaks is already a touristscape and they, wanting more local authenticity, have been displaced to main street or to find another stop along the route.
These case studies suggest a trend in New Zealand where towns are becoming more homogeneous and commodified as towns move from taskscapes to touristscapes. Touristscapes are being developed by business and government interests as well as by designers to accommodate predominantly mass tourism and a particular segment of tourists, driven by a desire to achieve the best economic yield for New Zealand’s economy. The result of this is changing NZ townscapes, especially in rural areas, where the changes are particularly obvious due to the scale and character of new tourism stages that are juxtaposed to the existing taskscape. People who are content with mass tourism and other aspects of modernism will typically find these changes appropriate, while others are likely to see this as globalisation and commercialisation which downgrades the local rural character, which may be the major reason for living in or visiting these places to begin with.

Design disciplines contribute to this trend by continuing to follow normative design practices that primarily consider visual experiences and focus on site development to create tourist attractions and satisfy tourist’s interests (Relph 1976). Most key informants felt it important for tourism designers to organise space clearly and make distinctions between touristscapes and taskscapes. Mass tourism and enclavice models were considered where the priorities are ease of circulation, consumption, and packaged experiences. But as there are differences in the needs of tourists, there are also different designers and ambivalence in how tourism should be accommodated. The question put forward then is how to balance the needs of the global tourism network as well as the needs of local communities and other tourist types who do not want their communities to become commodities. This research proposes the use of the performative perspective as a design approach with the potential to inform and enable a more sensitive design approach to manage complexity and change in creating liveable and meaningful places. It does this by critiquing designed space and by asking questions of how a designed space is perceived and performed. The approach focuses not only on the material environment (form, spatial qualities, and materials) but also upon what the space represents (social structure and encoding). Performing space is how people act (embodied practice) on a stage and the meaning (social and cultural meaning as well as individual decoding) for those actions.

8.6.1 The Performance Metaphor

The performance metaphor was chosen as a theoretical approach for the potential insights it could offer as an alternative to the predominantly visual based or aesthetic perception of tourism and of design. As a theoretical lens, the performance metaphor is “grounded in the spaces and selves of the tourist experience …to move beyond traditional activity-based analyses of tourism to an approach that is space and subject centred” (Wearing et al 2010:12). The metaphor also moves beyond the traditional visual or image-based understanding of tourism, as expressed as gaze (Urry 1990, 2002) to include all human senses and additional sensations associated with movement, memory, emotion, representation, and social value (Wearing et al 2010:10). In landscape architecture, a similar shift has
occurred where perception is now recognised to be not only visual but also connected to the body and social meaning. Design now draws on phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty 1945; Norberg-Schulz 1980; Seamon 1993, 2000) and environmental psychology (Thwaites 2001) in response to the earlier dominance of visual understanding. The problem however has been in the application of these theories to practical design. Current design methods continue to produce outputs or objects rather than outcomes or experiences.

The performance metaphor was tested as a means to take and understand subjective perceptions and apply them to the design of material spaces. The relationships between script, stage and performance help to better understand the nature of a design and its success. The use of the metaphor is not formulaic or a tool based system in which entered data results in a ‘best’ solution. It does however provide a critical point of reflection that acts as a check by asking questions of the proposed solution and how it responds to form, function and symbolic attributes. The approach considers human senses and perception of site specific conditions (spatial and socio-cultural) as well as how a site is performed. With experience, the critical reflection can occur not just at the end or later stages of design but throughout the design process. This non-linear process is comparable to Halprin’s (1969) RSVP Cycle and in similar fashion contests idealistic, finite and formal goal solutions. Halprin focuses on scoring, or the processes where creative involvement occurs in the ‘doing’ “from which, in fact, structure emerges –the form of anything is latent in the process” (Halprin 1969 in Swaffield 2002:48). Performing places are also based on ‘doing’ where the performance is produced from the affect of the material space and from social scripts. However the performance metaphor improves upon the RSVP Cycle by being more accessible through common everyday language for both designers and non-designers, and is therefore adaptable in existing design processes.

The performance metaphor is not without flaws. Two problems were evident. Firstly, students (working as proto-designers) confused this metaphor with the concepts of theatrical stages, and interpreted performative as design for passive viewing of performances. Students saw performances as theatre and entertainment events where audiences are separated from the performers and passively view and consume a scripted and staged act for their enjoyment. The students also presumed that there was a need for spectacular space since it is being consumed as tourism. The performance perspective is more complex than this, and requires the performer (includes all people) to actively engage with other people and with their environment. This theory suggests people are both performer and audience and practice on all types of stages, be they spectacular or the everyday. This mistaken understanding of performance prevented some students from exploring the advantages of using this metaphor in their design process. With this in mind the use of the performance metaphor in practice needs to be clearly explained to prevent misunderstanding from the community, other designers or anyone involved with the project using this perspective.
A second problem associated with the performance metaphor was the interpretation that spaces labelled as ‘stages’ are contrived places, and therefore staged authenticity (MacCannell 1999)- that is, places deliberately constructed for outsiders (Relph 1976). The varied stages in the case studies show this to be a narrow interpretation of this concept. Stages, as described in Akaroa and Geraldine are also taskscapes, where performances are habitual and not predetermined for outside audiences. It is best to think of stages as all material spaces, regardless of their level of staging and perceived authenticity, where performances take place.

8.6.2 Planning & Design Implications

This exploration reveals a number of planning and design implications for designing tourism in small towns. I will focus on three issues. The first stems from the importance of taskscapes and touristscapes. All three case studies indicate that towns have evolved from taskscapes where planning and design focused on the functional uses of townscapes. It is not until towns became self aware and were promoting themselves for tourism that touristscapes are created. Although touristscapes are economically beneficial, when they become the primary character of a town they are likely to be detrimental to a town’s original identity and authenticity, and how they are perceived by locals and tourists. It appears towns that lack other viable options are willing to become touristscapes more out of desperation than desire, as informants stated regularly that most towns do not want to become another ‘Queenstown’. This may be happening regardless, as the case studies indicate all three tourism towns connected to the tourism circuit show indications of becoming more global and therefore more homogenised. The structure of the industry and commercial pressures mean that taskscapes are being modified and touristscapes created in place of taskscapes despite the stated goals of retaining local authenticity.

A second implication is that touristscapes are not a necessity for tourism to take place. We have seen modified taskscapes and enclavic touristscapes regulated to fit within rural sensibilities. Tourist enclaves, such as Kiwi Country are the most susceptible to opposition and are better served outside rural communities or need to be designed to better meet local needs. Touristscapes that take on mythical tourist expectations, such as theme parks, are better suited to large cities or in other countries all together. However modified taskscapes such as Akaroa’s main street or Four Peaks Plaza retain the rural character which provides the cues for tourists to recognise and access these places. There isn’t a formula in balancing the level of conventional markers for tourism and retaining a local taskscape. We know it is important to preserve object authenticity by preserving and managing historical buildings and landscapes but there also needs to be places for tourists to express their own performative authenticity (Knudsen and Waade 2010) as they have come to understand and perform place. Design needs to provide this opportunity for improvisation and innovation where tourists co-create their experiences. These spaces may be open green spaces or taskscapes where improvised performances take place. They are important for the identity of a rural town.
Perhaps unintentionally, local places in Geraldine such as the small cottage across from Four Peaks Plaza, and Verdé café tucked behind the main street, are good examples of authentic spaces that keep this town rural and ‘real’. These symbols of rural authenticity however are tenuous: key informants recognise the importance of the cottage’s location and feel it likely to be transformed into tourist space. A restaurant without the overt goal of attracting tourists is paradoxically very attractive for many types of tourists and perhaps more importantly for local residents. However when towns try to compete with urban and more ‘sophisticated’ tourism ventures, such as what happened in Methven, they are likely to fail if they do not also meet the sensibilities of the local community.

The question then becomes ‘how do you articulate the phenomenological qualities of a taskscape in a plan or in a town’s goal and objectives’? The performance metaphor bridges this gap between the theoretical and applied. This is accomplished by refocusing design from creating objects (props) as outputs to the outcomes of the over-all experience of performances (what people do) as shaped by *scripts* (how they perform according to individual and social ideas of activities) and *stages* (where they perform as informed by symbolic cues and spatial qualities/affordances). How this is best articulated, be it a three dimensional model, a conventional two dimensional plan, a written policy, or as yet to be discovered way to envision information is not clear. Further research is required to test how experiential performances are best recorded and modelled. Current design conventions used to envision information are ‘flatland’ (Tufte 1990) and need reshaping to articulate and assist in the design process of the multiple dimensions we now want to consider in design.

The third design issue is the nature of conventional design thinking. It was found in student work and later in the key informant interviews that design is strongly informed by the designer’s and their client’s preconceived notions of tourism. Rowe (1998) recognised this tendency in his book- Design Thinking, which shows how designers have two realms of inquiry. The first realm suggests “prevalent logical-empirical orthodoxies have tended to bequeath a reductionist and naïve functionalism to the design and physical planning professions” (Rowe 1998:199) and, the second realm of inquiry has the tendency to “adhere to the rhetorical domain of architectural objects and organizing compositional principles” (Rowe 1998:200). Although these prejudices are widely known and other interpretive frameworks have been proposed, the theoretical and practical discourses of these normative positions continue. There is a strong tourism stereotype that tourism is about creating popular (in the mass tourism sense) destinations. The case studies confirm a current trend where new tourism spaces are places for consumption and tend to have a more global aesthetic. The newest tourist stages are more at home in urban environments where they provide comforts and entertainment that are familiar and expected by mass tourists. Geraldine’s Kiwi Country is an example of this, attempting to maximise the tourism opportunity and provide for a particular type of tourist.

Key informants and specifically landscape architects were ambivalent in how to approach tourism. They expressed an understanding that changes need to be grounded and reshape townscapes according
to their ‘genius loci’. They however also hold onto design conventions that ‘should’ be followed, such as making corner spaces eventful. The student work also emphasises this point where many felt it necessary to strengthen connection cues (paving and repeating objects) and design spaces at urban scale and character regardless of the existing rural context. Few designers managed to imagine spaces used in alternative or improvised ways, although places in the case study are being performed in these non-standard ways.

Designers need to reconsider how they perceive space, as visual objects or as ‘generic’ activities, and consider how people are actually performing place. Standard solutions (homogenisation) are less likely when design bridges the ‘sense of place’ with how people perform place. Design thinking needs to take another look at how people co-produce their experiences and consider the multitude of potential opportunities. So far, design typically attempts to direct and choreograph space and therefore control experience from one point of view. Spaces may be more successful if design stages space in a way that enables performances to be improvised and produced according to the performer’s needs. Cues and props are still needed to assist directing the performance, but the experience becomes that much more successful and in turn memorable when participants are embodied and directly involved in producing their own travel experience. Creative tourism and slow tourism are based on this concept. The challenge will be to design spaces that meet the imaginative needs of a wide range of tourists as well as the various needs of the local population.

![Figure 8.2](image)

1) Women pose and ‘play’ with nude sculpture on Wellington’s Waterfront 2) People seek out their own play spaces – Akaroa waterfront away from the formal beach and consumer spaces

This may not be as difficult as it seems. A good starting point is to consider modifying the taskscape. This stage will provide inherent scripts and stage characteristics that already inform the performance. Beaches are good examples of stages where the simplicity of a coastal taskscape is as inviting as a commercial holiday resort. If the performance literature is correct, tourist spaces need to provide more opportunities of co-production rather than a pre-determined tourism experience. Designers need to reconsider how they will provide for this.
I have used the local – global spectrum as a perceptual dimension (Carmona et al 2010: 111-132) to locate small towns, with individual ‘sense of place’ on a global tourism network. Much like the performance metaphor, the lens of local – global affects how we perceive small towns, and in this case in relation to a networked world. This is important as it is how we make sense of our landscape; giving it meaning, symbolism, value, and its sense of place. Designers have long been interested in place making and local distinctiveness in their sustainable efforts to prevent ‘placelessness’ (Relph 1976). Tourism clouds the issues, as designs are deliberately made ‘placeless’ to mitigate the affects of cultural difference and unfamiliarity, through international standards, such as those used in hotel chains and airports used to make places efficient, safe, and familiar. These spaces however are not inevitably totally global in nature, but may have some local characteristics making them ‘glocal’.

This research indicates that small towns are becoming incrementally more global, and are increasing their opportunity to benefit from tourism. The resulting changes are however impacting on the town’s character and ultimately how people perceive the town’s sense of place. Towns will over time lose aspects of their authentic rural sense of place and identity. Eventually towns will become touristscapes, representations of their original authenticity. This becomes problematic when the representations become common place, or reduce their ability to compete with other tourist destinations, and the town becomes yet even more placeless or transformed into something quite different. There is ambivalence from designers and from communities how they should then proceed. This is not an either- or situation. Towns have a great deal to offer as taskscapes and modified taskscapes without turning to touristscapes. Especially in New Zealand, authenticity is important and it is a town’s sense of place, its localness that makes it unique and attractive for tourism.

I have drawn extensively from Edensor’s (1998) chapter on constructing tourist space where he explains concepts of heterogeneous and homogenous space, and taskscapes and touristscapes to make distinctions between local places and global spaces. The intent here was not to add to an over crowded list of binary sets but to refocus on spatial characteristics and how they affect our perceptions, the meaning we give them and how they are used for our imagined experiences and identity formation. In other words my interest is in how spaces are staged and perceived and their affect on how people perform them. Crang (2006) identifies the potential problem of a naïve polarity of good tourism as “interested in the particularities of the place and able to fuse harmoniously with the host society and projects all the problems onto bad tourism that is the converse” (Picard 1996:108 in Crang 2006:55). Reducing this to a question of good or bad is a mistake and loses sight of the complexities of both place and tourism and why the performance perspective is necessary in this discussion.
8.6.4 Ambivalence between Touristscapes and Modified Taskscapes

Reshaping towns for tourism is intended to capture and provide better experiences for tourists. The idea of touristscapes has particularly captured the attention of decision maker’s imagination as the ‘right’ way to develop, promote and enhance their community. This choice extends the global reach of tourism into local places and builds on distinct symbolic, aesthetic, and material notions of tourism. All town types on the tourism circuit model appear to be moving toward the touristscape model. This decision can be understood as touristscapes are successful in so far as people arrive knowing exactly what they will be consuming. This is the same rational used to explain the premise of fast food chains. These are places that have been seen before, even if only in their imagination and represented in the media. Ideally they are regulated as homogeneous and enclavic spaces where consumption of goods and services, especially entertainment are the key activities. Touristscapes are designed to control the experience even as ‘ordered disorder’ (Minca 2006:180) where there is a “clear (and unquestioned) separation between (observed) objects and (observing and, presumably, authoritative) subjects”. However, as Minca points out, the ordered disorder is incomplete, as there is an inevitable entanglement and confusion with subject and object within the experience of place, and there is a process of ambivalence with this negotiation in place. Tourists arrive with different perceptions of cultural symbols and they have different skills and experiences negotiating space. The highly controlled touristscape does not meet the sensibilities of all tourists or local residents. Touristscapes remove possibilities of negotiation and the benefit of co-production and individual adaptation. Ambivalence occurs because people have a different sense of their own identity and therefore different ideas of tourism and leisure. These conflicts are compounded with touristscapes (as opposed to taskscapes) because visitors carry their cultures with them as they travel. It is also more likely that visitors (even more so with international visitors) have different perceptions of the script, stage and performances from the local perceptions. Tourism space needs to consider multiple ‘readings’ and be staged to accommodate the negotiation of various scripts and performances, preventing exclusion from under or over programming the stage. Ambivalence is therefore a result of getting the right balance between taskscapes providing authentic natural or cultural features, and touristscapes that provide the ‘goods’ to be consumed. This ambivalence is heightened by the impact tourism changes have on the sense of place and on the town’s economy.

8.7 Theoretical Implications

This exploration into small town tourism and the adoption of the performance metaphor has resulted in three primary implications for theory. The first is concerned with tourism, while the last two are specifically design related.

For tourism this research adds to our understanding of everyday tourist places and what they offer to the tourism circuit. Travel spaces and tourist everyday stages are equal in importance to the spectacular and to destinations, as they all combine to create the overall experiences and memories of
Further research is needed to better understand the roles of the local everyday and tourist everyday as a tourist stage in comparison with, and complementary to, the spectacular and hyper-real. The globalising and homogenising effects of tourism suggests there is a need to reconsider the importance of the everyday as tourist experience, where the uniqueness of landscape and townscape and their real and imagined experiences are the source of tourist opportunities.

Perceiving landscape through the performance metaphor introduces a new way of conceptualising and therefore understanding landscape. The performance perspective is unlike previous approaches where geographers have studied and understood landscape from a common sense approach where “landscape may be defined in terms of an objective world of physical features” (Wylie 2007:12-13), as ‘a way of seeing’ approach, and most recently to non-representational and phenomenological approaches. The performance metaphor adds to this understanding by being more inclusive, and conceives landscape from a perspective of how people use space, and how that use is related to perceptions of social and cultural meaning and embodied experiences. For landscape architects the performance metaphor can be helpful to challenge base assumptions of visual dominance and activity oriented ways of perceiving space. This metaphor asks the designer to consider why and how people use space over and above the visual and material understanding of the landscape. The idea of ‘sense of place’ plays an important part here where understanding space is tied to a number of concepts, including dwelling, embodied experiences, individual and place identity, practicing tourism and performing place as afforded by cultural scripts, and a physical and imaged stage. A performative approach is multidisciplinary and necessitates that concepts such as sense of place, authenticity and place making are not over simplified and reduced to a single concept such as gazing at a scene.

A theoretical turn to experiential outcomes as opposed to visual, material objects or even activity based outputs changes how spaces are considered and designed. Designing for objective outputs has been inherent in modern design convention, perhaps from physically sketching solutions (Rowe 1998) and with the traditional ways we teach and practice design. This has become problematic, especially for tourism, as place is increasingly becoming homogeneous by removing or constructing representations of local identity and spatial characteristics. There has been a turn in our understanding of the sociology of tourism (Franklin 2010) from the theories of MacCannell and Urry based on dualisms and staged authenticity, to an open ended and subjective understanding of tourism, where the focus is on affect, which is informed by space and the co-production of experiences. This is a fundamental change, where places are perceived with multiple authenticities and design needs to provide cues to the nature of place for negotiated interpretation and performance.

This research has also identified the potential for design to inadvertently contribute to spatial homogenisation due to designer’s insistence on imposing spatial order and by designing for material outputs that represent rather than provide imaginative opportunities to directly experience, in multiple
ways, place. As designers we need to question more of what we do and why we do things in a certain way. ‘Good’ design is not formulaic but is a result of critical thinking, understanding process and stating goals, being flexible, and developing the imagination to allow for ‘what if’ questions.

8.8 Methodological Implications

This research was exploratory and initially open ended. The exploratory structure provided opportunities to seek out a grounded understanding of what was occurring as ‘tourism in small towns’. The use of participant observation - of immersing oneself in a site and ‘observing’ what happens - is a familiar method used by designers in site analysis and to better understand ‘place’. It was helpful to use a system that didn’t require additional training or specialised equipment. The methodology became incrementally more focused as understanding the situation became better understood, and as new opportunities for investigation opened up. Three methodological implications are significant. The first is having students as co-researchers to inform and test the performance metaphor and include research as a part of their design education. The choice of using students as researchers was opportunistic as it coincided with studio teaching and the use of the performance metaphor could potentially be included into the studio curriculum. The opportunity to capitalise on a studio project was important to have other people use and ‘play’ with the metaphor to tease out the benefits and potential problems the metaphor may have when applied to design. As mentioned previously, the studio exercise revealed how people have preconceived ideas of the term – performance – as it relates to an audiences’ passive visual consumption and the performer’s act being dramatic or entertaining in some way. This emphasises the need to be clear that social performances are embodied experiences when both giving and receiving a performance, and is an expression of how people act everyday, and therefore likely to be a combination of the mundane and eventful. Having other people interpret these meanings of performance was important to broaden my understanding of the initial use of the metaphor.

The second methodological implication had to do with the use of images in the design approaches used in the interviews regarding a new tourist space in Geraldine. A good deal of time was used to create videos of a ‘drive and walk’ through of each of the four design approach scenarios. The three dimensional computer programme which produced the images that were used in the interviews also was used to produce videos of moving through the designed spaces. The intent was to provide an experience more like being there rather than interpreting a two dimensional image. Although the videos were useful, albeit a bit rough for many accustomed to current animation available, they were not used in the end as they consumed a great deal of the time available for the interview. The complexity of what was occurring in the videos required more time to comprehend and respond. The use of two dimensional images turned out to be very helpful explaining (visually) the relationships and details of the four design approaches, and were readily acceptable by key informants as a familiar way to express design. The graphics showed context, the new design and people ‘performing’ in the
spaces. However it is questionable the extent to which informants could read ‘into’ the graphics the performances that were intended. New ways of graphically depicting ‘performance’ are needed to prevent confusion. The graphics do however allow for multiple interpretations of what performances could occur. Without the use of graphics interview pre-tests found informants to rely more on conventional ideas of tourist stages.

The third methodological implication was the difficulty of recording what happens during performance. I used photographs and written description to record a performance. This however seemed to only give the aura of what was happening. Halprin used the idea of ‘scoring’ as borrowed from dance notation to record the process of design. Exploring what occurs in dance or attempting to create a new system for recording experiences was well beyond the time and energy of this current research. A system of recording movement over time, and the wide range of behaviours and possible reasons for those actions are almost limitless. But some type of recording system would be beneficial to better understand the nuances of tourism performances as embodied experiences and in turn design for them. These are problems for future research.

It is also important to note some limitations to the study arising from the methodology. Firstly, the Methven design studio provided only enough opportunities for a preliminary use of the performance metaphor due to time limitations imposed by a set school curriculum. The second limitation was the problems associated with accessing tourists during their travel experiences. I was well aware of the time needed for the depth interviews, specifically discussing the design approaches, which did not meet the travel agendas of many tourists. To reduce the key informant interviews to a few questions would have simplified the nature of the interviews and likely change the nature of the data collected. This limitation is acknowledged in analysing the data and compensated by reporting a range of results and indications rather than reporting on specific quantifiable data.

8.9 Implications for the Role of Research in Practice

This research was an exploration, and as such was helpful to understand the basic phenomena associated with the performance perspective and small town tourism. Much of the tourism performance research has concentrated on urban sites, famous locations or spectacular events. This project highlights the role of performative and design research into everyday places and specifically small towns, in order to challenge the assumptions we already have of these landscapes. Designers use rules and design guidelines during the design process as parameters to guide their work. Research should test the implications of these types of conventional process, and it is better yet if students themselves become involved as co-researchers in questioning design conventions and process. Even students who are focused only on practice would benefit from knowing how to critically question information sources and the implications of designing by precedent.
The use of the performance perspective has only begun in the design fields. A broader application of this metaphor is useful to test existing theory and aid in the turn toward designing for experience, emotion, imaginative co-production, and authenticity. The way we perceive space is in transition. The performance perspective adds performer agency into the theoretical mix that changes the nature of how spaces are perceived and designed. This addition of a performance perspective will require current theories to adapt and include a component of affordance. For instance, the concept sense of place, which is important in both design and tourism, will need to be modified to include aspects of performance along side physical setting, activity and image/meaning which contribute to and enhance the potential sense of place (Montgomery 1998 in Carmona et al 2010). Activities can no longer be considered as routine and unchanging expressions of what people do, but designers also need to consider that spatial activity is in continual flux and is (re)created each time that a phenomenon occurs. This means that activity is never the same but in transition and dependent on the dynamic nature of the individual and social condition. Design and research will need to adapt to this way of perceiving the world.

8.10 Practice Implications

This research has two main implications for design practice. The first is how we perceive tourism. Tourism is often associated with iconic destinations such as Milford Sound or with the beautification of main streets to attract people to stop and spend money. Tourism is much more than this. It is a complex networked system that reshapes local spaces as commodity which is then sold to tourists as experiences. Tourism is also linked to and builds upon a town’s sense of place. For designers this becomes a paradox, since the goal given by the client community is to create a destination. This typically results in a touristscape, a representation of the town, sometimes themed and often reorganised and tidied creating a ‘front stage’ for tourists to consume, whilst the locals continue their everyday lives in backstage taskscapes.

Most recent tourism staging has taking a more global approach whose characteristics are enclavic, ordered, and representative of place. The town square in the Methven case study and Kiwi Country complex in Geraldine provide good examples of current tourism staging, and unfortunately its failure. Both of these examples demonstrate a jump from taskspace to touristscape where the new space is highly controlled to meet a specific tourism segment at the expense of local residents and other tourists. The original sense of place has been lost and conflicts with its surrounding context and people’s perception of what it should be.

In the case of Methven’s square, the strong visual presence of the streetscaping has greatly altered the town’s sense of place. The town’s overt self awareness challenges its own sense of authenticity as a
rural small town. The implication for design practice is that there is a point where you can it wrong, typically identified by key informants as being ‘touristified like Queenstown’. Tourism however is not just one thing. It is not only destinations but a range of experiences as depicted in the travel circuit model. Design needs to recognise that there are a number of roles towns may play in the tourism system. How they are staged for the role they take needs to accommodate not only the real and imagined needs of the global tourist, but also the real and imagined needs of local residents. There is ambivalence in how tourism should proceed and getting it wrong is a costly mistake. Staging the town therefore becomes a deliberate reshaping of part or all of the community to provide the necessary cues and props for a tourist and local co-production.

The second implication for practice is the need for designers to question their design process and ask themselves what they are being asked to do to contribute to place. It was found in both the studio and key informant interviews that normative practice which focus on a fixed design process (Murphy 2005:123) and on ordering space and adding material objects to a site has the potential to homogenise space and change its perceived authenticity and sense of place. In providing for tourism, designers with direction from their clients are deliberately or indirectly changing town characteristics from taskscapes to touristscapes. The impacts of these decisions are potentially irreversible and in the long term will remove, especially for tourism, the inherent attractiveness of small towns. Methven’s town square is a good example of how things could go wrong.

Rethinking design as outcomes, especially as potential and possibly multiple experiences, rather than outputs as spatial form or materials, is one possible way to help prevent this from happening. Critical thinking is necessary to adapt basic design concepts and not take them for granted. The performance metaphor indicates people not only encounter, but also perform places (Sheller and Urry 2004:6 in Light 2009). Furthermore they perform these places with the imagination and understanding they carry with them, and by the stage’s affordances that inform and choreograph performance. Conventional practice such as designing for visual consumption, design by standards and best practice, as well as design by precedence or preconfigured images and ideas of tourism, only tell one, and usually simplified, side of the story. Designers need to be more imaginative in providing for the embodied and various imagined experiences of space. These ‘experiences’ need to meet the needs of a range of tourists as well as the local residents, therefore becoming a unique and situated solution.

This research therefore asks designers to reclaim their important contribution to reshaping places for tourism by exercising deeper design, where metaphors like the performance perspective are used to build upon the foundations of design. Classic design thinking taught in design school such as Whyte’s (1980) exploration of the social life of small urban spaces or Lynch’s (1960) visual based image of the city have been instrumental in how we design, but now need to be challenged or revised as we change and progress in how we perceive the world. This rethinking of fundamental design need not be
dramatic, but may occur as adaptations to current thinking and additional consideration to issues such as agency and the dynamic nature of co-producing understanding and experiences. These adaptations provide for ‘better’ design and keep the profession of landscape architecture current and competitive.

8.11 Conclusion

In his introduction to Theory in Landscape Architecture: A Reader, Swaffield (2002) draws from James Corner to explain the difference between the two roles of theory. One generalizes and codifies knowledge while the other takes a more critical role “which resists and challenges taken-for-granted ways of thinking, and puts forward alternatives” (Swaffield 2002:1). This research takes the role of the latter, and through an inductive system of generalizing from observation, and then testing the observations with a design studio and key informant interviews, proposes that the performance metaphor provides an important contribution to the process of design and design thinking. The performance metaphor as developed and applied in tourism studies has grown in use and acceptance from its challenge to “assumptions about places and tourist practices which need to be recast” (Coleman and Crang 2002:1). Edensor’s writing on constructing tourist space (1998: 10-40); the regulation of tourist space (1998: 41-68) as well as his notions of staging tourism and tourist stages (2000; 2001) have influenced the research.

Experiencing place through a performance lens has introduced a new way to perceive space. Although this perspective is related to phenomenology and non-representation, there have been difficulties expressing and sharing what exactly phenomenological experiences are and how to design for them. The performance metaphor provides a means for communicating ideas and designing for such experiences. This lens also provides a check list of sorts to ensure all components of the experience: as embodied performance, as imagined and socially afforded script; and as afforded material space or stage are all acknowledged for a comprehensive understanding of how place is performed and what design needs it may have. The performance metaphor is not a formula and does not simplify the design process. It requires the designer to be critical of what he/she is doing and attempts to model the performance by considering the most appropriate stage for the client’s desired script. The challenge in tourism is that there becomes more than one client to consider. For small towns the challenge becomes even greater, as the stages are not only for consuming tourists but are memory laced places that have particular identities and afford the identities of its local population. The performance metaphor helps to think critically and this is especially helpful now when the local rural character of small towns in NZ is at risk in this time of increasing global flows and connections.

The performance perspective is not a panacea for tourism design and does not provide standards or guidelines that are normative in design and planning practice. However it provides a means to critically consider the town’s identity and ultimately what role it plays in the New Zealand travel circuit and its use highlights that designers need to reconsider process, understand the issues better,
and push their imaginations further to resolve the tensions found in designing for global tourism in local places.