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*Inspiring and Creative Public Places:*  
What are the crucial ingredients when developing a  
successful arts precinct?  
A Waitakere City, New Zealand case-study



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A thesis submitted for the degree of  
Master of Public Policy  
at Massey University, New Zealand

Date: February 28<sup>th</sup> 2007

## Abstract

The Local Government Act 2002 directs New Zealand local authorities to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of their communities. Together, these elements can produce profound results for local communities, as has been demonstrated through Waitakere City's Eco City commitments and outcomes. As a further step in this holistic journey, Waitakere City Council has committed itself to developing an arts precinct in the heart of the city.

This applied thesis has identified how public policy and other factors described through qualitative research can support the development of a successful arts precinct. Internationally, what was found to be successful when developing creative public places was where a mix of sustainable cultural and creative activities and enterprises were co-located and importantly connected with the existing historical, environmental, economic and industrial character and features of the place. In light of this thesis' findings, the New Zealand addendum to this evidence would be to bring local government into the journey at an early phase of planning, and to make explicit the continuous involvement of local communities in their arts precinct's development.

### ***Keywords***

Sustainability, wellbeing, creative, cultural, local government, public space, policy, participation, urban form and design, Waitakere City, Corban Estate, community, connectivity

## Acknowledgements

Kia ora koutou

Many people have contributed wonderful ideas in the initiating, visioning and development of this thesis. Considerable thanks are attributable to Tanya Wilkinson, Naomi McLeary, Elisabeth Vaneveld, Peta Si'ulepa, Rachael Trotman, Airini, Wendy Larter, Alison Taylor, Rawiri Wharemate, Kayleen Katene, Fiona McLeod, Jenny Aimers, Chriss Bull, Viv Dalrymple, and Cherie Castaing.

I have unreserved, nay, spontaneous appreciation and admiration for my academic supervisors Marilyn Waring and Jenny Lawn, both of whom offered inspired critique, guidance, and patience, in enabling me to create this work. I am also grateful to Joy Oehlers and her fabulous academic support in her capacity as the Postgraduate Liaison Librarian at Massey University.

I spoke with vast numbers of people, formally and informally, about this thesis - a huge heartfelt thank you for your generosity of ideas and spirit

Finally, specific thanks are offered to my family Daisy, Ben, Rachel and Neville, to my extended family members, and to my wonderful friends and colleagues for each offering their sustained support in giving life, energy and growth to me, and thus, into this work.

To one and all who have touched this thesis since its inception in January 2006.

Arohanui.

Nic Mason  
Author



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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1. Tiriwā

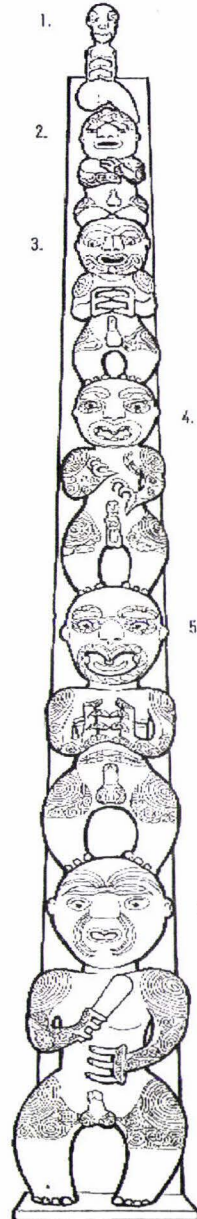
Ko te tino tupuna tēnei o Te Kawerau-ā-Maki. Otirā, nōna nei te ingoa karanga mō te rohe pōtae o te iwi. arā ko TE WAO-NUI-Ā-TIRIWĀ. He nui hoki ngā kōrero mōna ki roto o Waitakere tae noa atu ki roto o Kaipara.

## 2. Hape

Koia nei te tino tohunga o te waka Tainui. Otirā, ko tōna ingoa nunui, ko RAKATAURA. He tupuna rongonui a Hape ki te tapalapa ingoa i runga i wēnei whenua. Heoi anō, he tupuna whakahirahira hoki e ia nō ngā iwi katoa o wēnei wāhi.

## 3. Hoturoa

Ko tēnei tupuna te tino rangatira o te waka Tainui. Heoi anō, mai i tōna haerenga mai i Hawaiki ki tēnei whenua, he tupuna rongonui ki ngā iwi katoa o roto o Waikato. Otirā, nāna te waka Tainui i kawo ki tōna takatoranga whakamutunga ki Kawhia moana.



## 4. Maki

He tupuna whakahirahira tēnei nō te iwi, i whānau ai i Kawhia. He toa rongonui hoki e ia, ā, ko tētehi o ngā parekura ōna, ko Te Waewae Kotuku i tū ai ki Rarotonga (Mt Smart). He maha ngā wāhi i nohoia ai a Maki puta noa i te rohe potae nei o Tāmaki. Otirā, he nui ōna kāinga tae noa atu ki roto o Kaipara. Ko Mimihānui tētehi, ko Hoteo tētehi. Engari, ko ōna kāinga matua ko Kaikai rāua ko Mahurangi.

## 5. Te Kawerau-ā-Maki

Ko te tino tupuna tēnei o te iwi. Heoi anō, nōna nei te ingoa-ā-iwi o Te Kawerau-ā-Maki. Ko tōna ingoa tūluru, ko TĀWHĪA-KI-TE-RANGI. He tama e ia nā Maki, ā, he nui hoki ngā kōrero mōna ki roto o Te Wao-nui-a-Tiriwā, tae noa atu ki te Kaipara.

## 6. Te Hawiti

He mokopuna a Te Hawiti nā Maki. Otirā, ko TE AU O TE WHENUA tōna atu ingoa. Heoi anō, i te wā i a ia, ka tutaki atu ki a Te Pou-tapu-aka, arā he rangatira nō Ngāti Whātua. Tā Te Hawiti ki a ia, "Kore rawa ahau e whakaae kia uru mai koe ki roto o taku rohe". Kātēhi rā, ka mau i a Te Hawiti tōna patu, ā, ka keria te whenua hei tohu ki a Te Pou-tapu-aka ko tēnā te mutunga kē atu o te rohe o Te Kawerau-ā-Maki, me te tīmatatanga kē mai o te rohe o Ngāti Whātua. Heoi anō, nā tēnei mahi āna, i riro ai tōna ingoa karanga ko TE AU O TE WHENUA.

TAONGA TUKU IHO - Pou Whenua

Aratāki - Waitakere - Aotearoa

Te Kawerau ā Maki Trust



This thesis has begun from my passion about the power of creative expression in people's lives. I have seen the strength people experience when they can communicate using their creative talents to express their identity, their issues, and the place where they stand tall. I have personally experienced the *whanaungatanga* (relating and connecting)<sup>1</sup> when sharing creatively and it was a powerful experience. I have a desire to support a local creative place in which all people can come to learn, to share, to belong and to experience their creativity, as a mechanism to feeling connected and strong.

I came to study this particular locality fortuitously, and opportunistically. Waitakere City Council – Te Taiao o Waitakere - made a series of decisions over the last decade which cumulatively enabled the Corban Estate in Henderson to be a creative place. In December 2005 Council decided that the Corban Estate was to be further developed into an arts precinct. I was interested to chart the next phase of this work: the planning towards an arts precinct's development. Early informal discussions with staff associated with the arts in Waitakere revealed that seemingly little research or policy was substantiating or contextualising this planning. I realised that I could provide this contextual analysis of the factors which would support this creative endeavour back to local decision-makers and that this information could directly affect the outcome of this local creative public space.

*Ko wai o?* (Who am I?) I am a New Zealand-born *Pakeha* (New Zealand European) lesbian, mother, 'westie', able-bodied, middle-class, single-parenting 38 year old, with supportive extended family members and friends, a competent understanding of bureaucracy, and with English as my only language. I have been raised in South Auckland and the Manawatu, and lived in various locations around New Zealand, in predominantly medium to large cities. My paid employment has traversed central and local government agencies, and the community sector. In each of these roles my work has been around communicating with and advocating towards better outcomes for young people, people with experiences of mental illness, women and indigenous peoples. My work has also entailed researching and producing resources and books for the workforces who support these communities.

Thus, some of my own cultural, political, social and economic values and experiences are made transparent, so as to enable me to be clearer as to their influence and effect upon this work, such as a degree of marginalisation being experienced through homophobia; a reasonably sophisticated level of knowledge about how government works; a measure of economic 'safety'; a personal ethic leaning more towards independence than collectiveness; a belief in environmental conservation, and my fundamental commitment to the pursuit of social justice. I actively choose and have now lived in west Auckland - Waitakere City - for nearly nine years.

This opening chapter of my thesis outlines and 'places' the Corban Estate arts precinct's development into the context of Waitakere City's history. It traces the indigenous people's association with the land and surrounding areas, and then moves into the twentieth century purchase of the property by the Corban family and their subsequent on-site developments. This chapter also establishes how this proposed arts precinct was advanced through Waitakere City Council so as to contextualise my research question's development. Key New Zealand and international researchers have contributed to my knowledge and beliefs, and to the body of information relating to public space, sustainability, creativity and culture, urban design and participation. Similarly, government departments, entities and community agencies that are engaged or associated with these fields of enquiry and practice are identified. This information is

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<sup>1</sup> Where Maori language terms or phrases are used, the English translation is bracketed immediately afterwards for clarity. These translations are directly drawn from *The Revised Dictionary of Modern Maori* (1989), by P.M. Ryan.

included because the very nature of an arts precinct's development requires that historical context is established. Similarly, many different central and local agencies and their policies can support an arts precinct's development, and are therefore important for local decision-makers to be familiar with. There is an abundance of research related to creative public spaces which can also inform such developments.

It is important to acknowledge that this is an *applied* thesis. Hence emphasis has been placed upon reflecting on the existing public policies and in hearing from community leaders for their perspectives on how to develop a city-wide creative public place. A comprehensive review of the theoretical knowledge bases that can contribute towards such a development has also been undertaken. My pragmatic research approach is the result of needing to address some of the impending challenges for the imminent Corban Estate development. I provide an outline of the existing international, state and local policy imperatives and literature search findings which I believe can usefully add to the important processes towards developing a community-inspired creative public place.

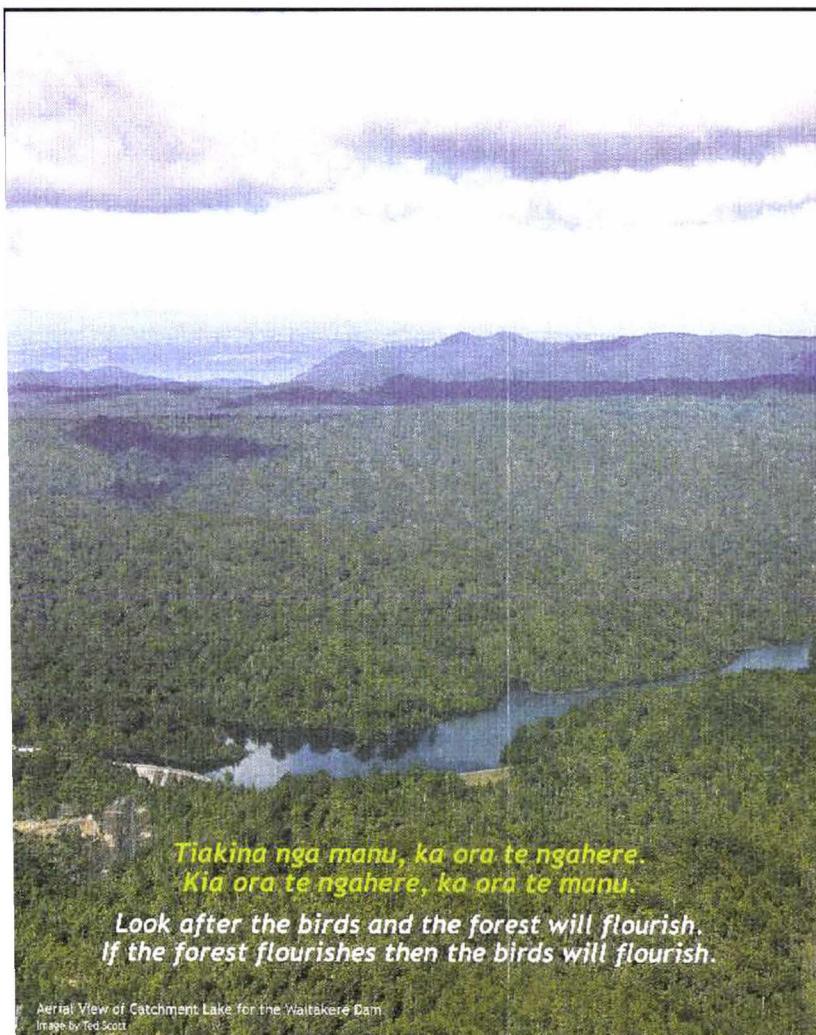
My desire for this thesis is that it be useful for those people who share my passion and inspiration around personally, professionally and politically using creative ideas, methods and energies to support a more inclusive, peaceful and safe world.

### ***1.1 Localised history of Corban Estate in Henderson, Waitakere City***

*Te Wao Nui a Tiriwa* is the forest  
*Ngatai Whakatu a Kupe* is the sea  
*Te Au o te Whenua* is the ancestor  
*Te Kawerau a Maki* are the people  
(Murdoch, in Harvey and Harvey,  
2006, p.19)

This *mihi* (greeting) traces the connection *mana whenua* (indigenous people to a specific area) – Te Kawerau a Maki - have with the area that is inclusive of the Corban Estate Henderson locality.

The forest referred to in this *mihi* Te Wao Nui a Tiriwa stretched from the Manukau Harbour upwards to Muriwai and over towards Riverhead, and is far larger than what is now known as Hikurangi - the main range of what is the Waitakere Ranges. Hikurangi was the name gifted upon the ranges during the fourteenth century by Rakataura, an exploring Tainui tribal chief.



Maki and his people conquered and settled in the north-east edge of Te Wao Nui a Tiriwa in the mid sixteenth century, a time when moa birds were still known to traverse this area (Murdoch, in Harvey and Harvey, 2006). Te Kawerau a Maki are related to the Moekakara *waka* (canoe) which landed at Wakatuwhenua (near Leigh). Crew from this waka migrated overland to Waitakere (Northcote-Beale, 1990). Through inter-marriage with Ngati Whatua, mana whenua of Tamaki Makaurau (greater Auckland and inclusive of this area), Te Kawerau a Maki consolidated an alliance which guaranteed their protection. They were subsequently left alone in the Waitakere ranges where they lived in relative peace and isolation for almost a century (Si'ulepa, 2004a).

Three events impacted significantly upon the Kawerau people and had repercussions affecting subsequent generations: the flu epidemic outbreak in 1790; the decimation of the tribe by armed Ngapuhi tribe raiding parties in the mid 1820's and their forced exile into the Waikato; and the arrival of Pakeha settlers (Ibid).

Pakeha settlement was occurring in the Auckland isthmus soon after *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (the Treaty of Waitangi) was signed in 1840. Several years are thought to have passed before the first Pakeha settler visited Waitakere Valley. He is believed to have been a Wesleyan missionary, the Rev James Butler, who walked into the Parawai settlement between Muriwai and Te Henga, and who consequently converted two *rangatira* (chiefs) to Christianity (Northcote-Beale, 1990).

Gradual Crown purchases of land over the following decades saw Te Kawerau a Maki concentrate their occupancy at Waiti, Te Henga. Te Kawerau had returned to their ancestral home in 1835 and 1836 under the protection of the Tainui tribe's *Ariki* (lord, highly ranking chief) Te Wherowhero (Si'ulepa, 2004a). The Kawerau people had elected to isolate themselves rather than to participate in the surrounding land wars. The cost of this decision was their inability to sustain their seasonal cycles of movement and harvesting across their customary territory, leading to poverty. Te Kawerau a Maki eventually abandoned the Wesleyan church and became adherents of the 'Pai Marire' faith that had been adopted by the King Movement, whose protection had been critical for their survival.

The Scottish settler Thomas Henderson became a key figure in the Waitakere area soon after his arrival in New Zealand in 1840. An exchange of goods - a schooner - with Ngati Whatua in 1844, saw 17784 acres of land pass into his possession. This is documented as being "the land between the Manukau ranges and the Waitakere river" (in Flude, undated, p.15). However, this 'transfer' coincided with the appointment of Governor Grey in 1845 who resumed the practice of the Crown exclusively purchasing land from Māori (Si'ulepa, 2004a), and which therefore immediately negated this deal. A legal conclusion was only reached 29 years later between Henderson and the Crown, whereby he retained 57% of his original land purchase. He also made many, many thousands of pounds profit over these decades by reducing Te Wao Nui a Tiriwa to stumps. Henderson's own timber mill was founded in the 1840s and within a decade had become a village (Scott, 1979). Milling timber was big business, with upwards of 2 million feet of Kauri being milled in 1883 (Ibid, p.73). With Henderson's continuing interests in shipping, the journey of the Kauri logs were in his hands: tracts of trees were pit-sawn in the Henderson Valley and Waitakere Ranges, pulled by bullocks to streams where they were floated to the harbour and loaded onto Henderson-owned ships (Flude, undated, p.20) for international purchase. Henderson's Mill was well known in the 1880s (Northcote-Beale, 1990) and was the only settlement of size west of Auckland. Henderson sold his mill in 1881. In a truly odd twist of nature, Thomas Henderson was to later become a conservationist:

The most prominent advocate for the opposition to indiscriminate logging was led by locals William Swanson supported by Thomas Henderson, MP for Henderson (one of the most influential businessman in the land) and five years retired from the timber trade (Si'ulepa, 2004a, p.7).

In the end, the saving and restoration of the Waitakere Ranges to their former glory was not initiated for conservation reasons, but for the necessity of securing a ready supply of fresh water for the growing Auckland citizenry in the 1920s (Harvey, 1998). However, from this pragmatic need sprang renewal and opportunity for the environment and for people affiliated with the land and waterways.

The large scale planting of orchards in Henderson township was initially undertaken by J.H Hougham in the late 1880s, and was quickly followed by other settlers' planting. Simultaneously, Dalmatian families were settling locally after migrating from the north as gum diggers (Scott, 1979) where substantial sums of money had been made from their extremely rugged toil.



Assid Abraham Corban arrived in New Zealand in 1892 from his homeland of Lebanon. In 1902, A.A. Corban and his family bought land between the Henderson rail-lines and the Opanuku Stream on Great North Road, naming it Mt Lebanon Vineyard and immediately planting grapes. This is the property now known as the Corban Estate (Harvey and Harvey, 2006).

Winemaking began in the district at the turn of the twentieth century. The increasing prohibitionist measures, which accumulated in the Licensing Act 1908, did eventually squeeze most winemakers out, except the Corbans (Scott, 1979). The Corban family undertook significant business expansions on and off-site, and were leaders in the development of a viticultural industry in New Zealand. The family also made noteworthy contributions to Henderson township and the surrounding area (Burgess, 2005). In the mid 1970's, the family relinquished their financial interests in Corban Wines Ltd and the winery closed in 1992. The 9¾ acre site, located

on the border of Henderson's commercial business district was purchased by Waitakere City Council at this time (Ibid).

The Council established the Corban Winery Estate Trust soon after the purchase (Ibid), although activity was sporadic and then lapsed for some years. In 1999, the Waitakere Arts and Cultural Development Trust was established, trading as Corban Estate Arts Centre (CEAC). It now has a paid Director and 10 full-time and part-time staff. A phenomenal range of activities are driven or delivered by CEAC including exhibitions; art classes for adults and children; a schools education programme; events; tenancing to local artists and sub leasing to community organisations (Corban Estate Arts Centre, 2005).

In 2002, a studio at Corban Estate was made available for the development of Pacific arts and culture. This was quickly peopled by a weaving group - colloquially known as 'The Mamas' - who offered education programmes for young people and formed the basis for a weekend market. This work was formalised into a second community-based trust on-site: the Waitakere Pacific Arts and Culture Trust (WPACT), established in 2005. The WPACT vision is to enhance the wellbeing of Pacific peoples and the wider community through fostering Pacific arts, crafts and culture (Si'ulepa, 2005). Both of these trusts have their own Trust Deeds and governance boards, with City Councillors being members on these boards alongside community representatives. A third smaller trust, the Mau Dance Theatre Company also operates on-site.

Operationally, the trusts connect regularly in activities such as the delivery of education programmes. These agencies all receive funding from a diverse range of philanthropic and public agencies, including Waitakere City Council. In December 2005, Council voted to formally develop an arts precinct on Corban Estate. In the 2006-2007 financial year, \$145,000 had been committed to this output (Waitakere City Council, 2006a), and staff identified to manage this development.

Hence, by the commencement of my thesis in 2006, the Corban Estate was a vibrant, living site which buzzed with creative industry. There are enclaves and glades where pukeko dig and ducks mingle alongside the replanted banks. The spectacular Opanuku Arts Bridge, designed and made on-site by resident sculptor Neil Miller, connects neighbouring people and the Corban Estate. The built environment of bottling sheds, cellars and barrel storage warehouses were constructed with functionality in mind, and now yield administrative and artistic outputs. These buildings also coexist with Pacifica totem, tapa, market commerce and weaving women, and the entire property is skirted by rattling railcars and belching westie cars careering home from labour.



And still, the undulating landform that is the Corban Estate sits patiently at the feet of the Waitakere Ranges, bursting with creative attention-seeking behaviour.

## ***1.2 Research topic objectives and significance***

Waitakere City is an Eco City (Waitakere City Council, 1993). This philosophy is directly inspired by and derived from the United Nations' *Agenda 21* (United Nations, 1993). This means that a set of strategic sustainability priorities and policies have existed for over a decade to guide important city-wide developments in Waitakere. The gestation of this arts precinct has taken place in this period.

Waitakere City Council voted to progress the existing Corban Estate into an arts precinct in December 2005 (Riley, 2005) and commissioned a preliminary concept plan from Visitor Solutions Ltd for its development. A limited number of local people and organisations were spoken with in this early conceptual phase, with participants being identified by Council and Corban Estate Arts Centre staff, and included a public meeting (C. Jones, 7 November 2006, personal communication). The preliminary plan identified a range of facilities and opportunities which could complement the substantial creative, economic, environmental and cultural activity already occurring on-site (see Corban Estate Arts Precinct Preliminary Concept Plan diagram, p.12).



A structural framework was identified (Visitor Solutions, 2004) to unify the Corban Estate site, comprising a series of concepts and flow plans including:

- ⊙ pedestrian trails, squares, streets, open space and bridges;
- ⊙ built components such as indoor and outdoor performance centres, artists' studios, cultural-specific facilities;
- ⊙ enhanced gallery and storage spaces;
- ⊙ new retail and accommodation spaces;
- ⊙ transport bridges, rail-lines, roads and parking;
- ⊙ appropriate improvements to existing historic buildings.

Some contextual reading was undertaken by the plan's authors of existing public policy for the development of an arts precinct, with the Ministry for the Environment's sequence of publications pertaining to urban design being specifically noted in the plan. Yet there is substantially more central, regional and local government public policy and international and local research in which the development of an arts precinct needs to be contextualised.

Ultimately, this thesis aspires to answer: what are the key factors, including any processes and policies that support the successful development of an arts precinct? Corban Estate is used as a case study to frame the responses to this question.

### ***1.3 Key Concepts and Leaders in this field of research***

The important policy themes which relate to an arts precinct's development pertain to local government; sustainability; urban design; culture and creativity; public place; and participation concepts.

Local government is a field ripe for research in New Zealand, with literature still largely authored by central government agencies, with a smattering of academic and consultant contributions. Each Council in New Zealand must develop a Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). It needs to clearly describe what the Council plans to do over the forthcoming decade, how these actions contribute to community priorities and how the Council will measure its success. Overall costings for these actions are also calculated (Waitakere City Council, 2004a). The overall monitoring of LTCCPs is undertaken by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), an independent statutory corporation. Many government departments critique LTCCPs for their inclusion of specific content of interest to that department. For example, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage *Te Manatū Taonga* critique a sample of Plans to identify forthcoming cultural wellbeing projects occurring across New Zealand. Similarly, the Ministry of Youth Development *Te Manatū Whakahiato* critique Plans to identify where youth development opportunities are occurring. There does not appear to be a central clearinghouse of these analyses, at this time.

The 'published' lineage of sustainability has been traced to Rachel Carson's seminal work *Silent Spring* (1962), to findings from a series of African development conferences in the 1960s, and with the Club of Rome's 'Limits to Growth' (1972) report. Arne Naess was a key author at this time who was differentiating between different types of sustainable development although the World Conservation Strategy published in the early 1980s made bare the development agenda. This was reiterated in the Brundtland Report (1987) which shifted the international agenda further towards development and away from the sustainability values proffered in these earlier years by Carson and Naess. Into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, John Elkington, Anita Roddick, Peter Singer and many others are attempting to redress this agenda over towards sustainability, with equivalent New Zealand authors such as Jane Kelsey, Marilyn Waring, Mason Durie, the Sustainable Business Network, John Craig, and others authoring publications advocating for similar outcomes. These

exemplars are noted here as they do relate to this specific study in style and content, in that they have begun to weave the multiple threads which reflect 'wellbeing' and sustainability into cohesive theoretical narratives. This holistic approach resonated for me and again reminded me to seek connections between seemingly disengaged notions.

Jared Diamond's eloquent exploration and explanation of historical communities' capacity to survive or collapse (2005) has demonstrated that people have been undertaking their own forms of sustainable practise for many thousands of years. Diamond's work transcends the specific nature of this study's requirements, but he is included here because I admire his practical and accessible demonstration of an interdisciplinary approach to analysis and solution-focussed research to issues of global concern.

There is an emerging New Zealand critique around urban and public spaces, which builds upon seminal internationally-derived public space work by Jan Gehl, Sharon Zukin, Charles Landry and Jane Jacobs. Each of these four authors' work was returned to in the course of this research as their clarity of perception and pragmatic responses were refreshing. 'Mixed use' pertains to spaces being used at different times for diverse reasons such as work, play, study, by various communities. This mixed or multiple-use of space is consistently signalled by these international authors, and by local agencies as being of significant benefit in any urban development, rather than with the perseverance in monofunctional spaces.

In New Zealand, a significant body of urban design work has been undertaken by the Ministry for the Environment *Manatū mo te Taiao*, with partner agencies, to inform the Year of the Built Environment 2005. The year's aspirations sought to raise the "awareness of how the built environment can be designed to create more liveable environments and how this helps to ensure a sustainable future for all our cities and towns" (Ministry for the Environment, 2005c). This corpus was a valuable New Zealand-based reference for this thesis. The Ministry clearly articulated the potential economic, social, and environmental benefits of good urban design, but are only beginning to make the case for the inclusion of cultural imperatives. Rather, this synergy has been facilitated by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage's work in defining how creativity and culture can meaningfully connect with local government responsibilities. Collectively, these two agencies have helped local government make meaning of using holistic approaches in their work.

Other significant contributors to the inclusion of culture and creativity within the context of developing an arts precinct include Jon Hawkes in his work pertaining to cultural sustainability and its role in public policy. Penny Eames has contributed significantly to notions around social inclusion, community development and arts participation in New Zealand. Both authors have provided pragmatic leadership in the cultural development field through demonstrating how creativity can facilitate community wellbeing. For example, this evidence has been applied in Hawkes' home state of Victoria, Australia by the health department through their funding of an incredible range of community art programmes with diverse communities over many years:

One of the arts' most powerful contributions to health is that they reflect and create an inclusive sense of community. There is now considerable evidence that the stronger people feel this sense of belonging, the healthier they are (VicHealth, 2006).

Similarly Penny Eames and her employer, Arts Access Aotearoa, have made considerable progress in enabling marginalised communities such as prisoners, older people and people with disabilities to access the arts.

An arts precinct is a public place which implies public engagement with this place. Ongoing community participation with an arts precinct is critical and beneficial. As previously noted by VicHealth, evidence has shown that friendships, relationships, identity and belonging are

enhanced for people engaged in creative activities. *Agenda 21* consistently iterated the importance of community participation as have publications from the Ministry for the Environment and other central government agencies. Wayne Knox authored an insightful report (2004) about tangata whenua perspectives of partnership and participation for Waitakere City, and found *whanaungatanga* (relationships) to be the most critical element towards faithfully ensuring and sustaining Māori participation. This latter locally-derived report was precious when I needed to refocus my attention upon the importance of *people* in any arts precinct development.

There are two methodological authors in particular whom I have gravitated towards during the course of this research, both indigenous to Aotearoa-New Zealand: Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and Mason Durie. In her seminal analysis *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999) Smith spoke clearly to me of the systemic racism and sexism inherent in methodologies generally, and in the New Zealand social research field specifically. I did not wish to replicate either of these prejudices and subsequently gave significant thought to my research methods, processes and findings so as they could be inclusive and useful for a diversity of participants and audiences. Similarly, Durie has persistently made the case for holistic approaches to public policy through presenting very persuasive *tikanga* (Māori custom and principles)-based ontological and epistemological models to government and non-government agencies alike. There is a less-obvious acknowledgement of his work in this thesis though his writings and actions permeate my thinking and beliefs.

The important community-identified factors that relate to the development of a successful arts precinct are operational management, development and gentrification issues, and community connectivity. These three specific findings also frequently arose in the searched literature. The community's interpretations of these factors are fully outlined in Chapter 5.

#### ***1.4 Gaps in this field of research***

For some time, Waitakere City Council has taken proactive steps to nurture and progress the local pool of creative talent and industry through the Eco City ethos:

Waitakere City, and in particular localities such as Titirangi, is known for the considerable number of artists who live there, attracted by the magnificent landscape, the cultural diversity and the presence of established artists. It is seen by many to be a real strength of the City that it has a particularly rich cultural resource in terms of its well-known and well-established artistic community (Waitakere City Council, 2004b, p.31).

However, this enduring promotion of a locality's cultural and creative capacity is unusual amongst the 85 local authorities in New Zealand, although there are councils who have invested in this creative capacity such as Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin cities and Gore and New Plymouth districts.

There is minimal New Zealand policy or research documentation that links the legislated local government environment with Councils growing and developing creative public places. This is not unreasonable, as it is a niche area and government cannot accommodate every nuance of policy interest. However, undertaking research which links those threads of public policy which do exist in this niche field could assist Councils to nurture and potentially capitalise on this emerging strand of economic, social, environmental and cultural awareness and opportunity. Making these connections is an aspiration of this thesis.

This applied thesis attempts to harness the various policy strands and other key factors that can successfully support an arts precinct being developed within the Local Government Act 2002 context.

## 1.5 Structure of thesis

I have already introduced some localised knowledge and connections about the case study - Corban Estate – with relevant policy themes which are applicable to the development of an arts precinct. There are gaps in this knowledge, although some promising local, regional and New Zealand-wide policy and research does exist which can nourish such an important creative development. Some pertinent international literature will also be explored and connected to this topic.

In the following chapter, my research seeks firstly to outline the perimeters of what social research and public policy encompass in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Additionally in Chapter Two, a synopsis of the Local Government Act 2002 is presented. A key purpose of this legislation is for Councils to promote the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of their local communities. These wellbeing elements are discretely explored so as to define what each element might encapsulate. I also outline who some of the government and community agencies are with responsibilities in achieving these outcomes. I have emphasised that the four wellbeings contribute most fully *as a collective wellbeing entity* towards the sustainable development approach explicitly noted in the Act's purpose, and are not individual entities. The supporting evidence that is presented in Chapter Two that relates to social research, public policy, and the defining Local Government Act, transcend and bind this thesis. After Chapter 2, they reappear again in Chapter 6 where an analysis of the findings is correlated with these three overarching theoretical perspectives.

To begin to answer my research question, it was important to search the literature to identify key factors which could enliven the development of an arts precinct. Chapter Three outlines the five identified concepts, and delivers corresponding definitions which are given significant and purposeful consideration, as they are multi-faceted and necessarily, inter-related. Waitakere City-located definitions or examples supplement the international and national readings of many of these core concepts. The conclusion of this section consolidates these varying and complex impressions into a succinct statement of 'what denotes an arts precinct in New Zealand'.

The methodology adhered to in this research is outlined in Chapter Four, and describes the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, within the guidance of Massey University's Code of Ethical Conduct (2004b). Participatory Action Research (PAR) is the research method employed for this thesis, and is detailed in this chapter, as well as the three specific methods used to gather data towards answering my research question. Ensuring that my research has rigour has been an important aspect of the entire study because of my desire that the findings be applied within the actual Corban Estate arts precinct's development. Thus a comprehensive explanation is made of the methods I used to collect, reduce, organise and interpret the data.

The summation of the research's thematic findings from the qualitative discussions is articulated in Chapter Five. The three community-based findings were identified by a range of people and agencies' perspectives and build a picture of what the key ingredients are which can support an arts precinct being developed successfully. Chapter Six weaves into a coherent whole the qualitative community-derived findings with the quantitative literature-based data. It is my summation of the key factors that can enable the successful development of an arts precinct to occur within the New Zealand context.

The conclusion (Chapter Seven) binds the thesis' methodological aspects with the definitional outcomes and the evidential findings, exposing the maze that is public policy-making and its metamorphosis into project implementation.

## ***1.6 Chapter conclusion***

My thesis question seeks to identify the key factors which can support the successful development of an arts precinct. I am motivated by my own positive creative experiences which connected me with others as well as the synergistic opportunism whereby by my local Council committed itself to further developing an arts precinct in my community. The intention is that my applied thesis' findings can contribute to the actual development of the Corban Estate arts precinct in Waitakere City.

The following chapter charts the theoretical perspectives related to social science research, including the cultural perceptions which are included or excluded in this knowledge base of enquiry. The perimeters and features of public policy are also defined, drawing upon the international and local political context and evidence. The next chapter also explores the central and local government contributions to the Local Government Act 2002 intention of promoting community wellbeing, and delivering democratic decision-making on behalf of those communities. These three perspectives: social science, public policy and the Local Government Act 2002 are the theoretical foundations for my study.