



# Sustainability Report 2021

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Cooper and Company's chief executive, Matthew Cockram, on a year of sustainability initiatives.

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# Letter from the Chief Executive



Above right: Cooper and Company chief executive Matthew Cockram. Photo by Duncan Innes.

Cooper and Company has long had a sustainability framework that we apply to our endeavours. We make decisions with the assumption of long-term ownership and stewardship, which allows us to focus on environmental, social and economic outcomes that build and support each other.

Our more recent efforts in Britomart have focused on building on that framework so that our sustainability efforts are measured and we can establish clear targets for ourselves to improve.

Three years ago, we were the first property company in New Zealand to adopt the NZ Green Building Council's Green Star Performance Tool. This year, we have worked with Toitū Envirocare to develop a base-case carbon emissions profile and a robust plan to reduce those emissions.

Right: The Buckland and Masonic Buildings, refurbished as part of The Hotel Britomart project, now certified as New Zealand's first 5 Green Star hotel. Photo by David St George.



Our work with Toitū Envirocare is complementary to our efforts with the Green Star Performance Tool, broadening our focus from building efficiency to enable us to clearly assess the environmental impacts of every decision we make.

These efforts require a huge amount of energy from our team members. We make this investment because it is a cornerstone of our business philosophy, which has always sought positive long-term outcomes rather than short-term economic benefits.

In addition to our work with Toitū Envirocare, the past year saw the opening of The Hotel Britomart, New Zealand's first 5 Green Star hotel. It's been gratifying to see the hotel's Green Star status cited by guests as a key reason for them electing to stay there. Consumer sentiment will remain a driver of positive change, and is another reason why we cannot shy away from the seriousness of the threat of climate change.

Our own survey of the Britomart community, which you can see at the back of this report, shows how

widespread concern about climate change is. Every business needs to be developing a genuine response to these concerns, and we need to do this together. Becoming more sustainable is a collective effort: the robust measurement methods we have put in place give us clarity as to how we're progressing, and allows us to share this progress with the members of the Britomart community, many of whom are sustainability leaders in their own right. Our shared focus on the environment is something that amplifies all our efforts.

I should add that we are not claiming to be perfect at this. But we have found through these efforts that we are learning and, step by step, improving. We know that our community requires this of us. We also require it of ourselves.

Matthew Cockram  
Chief Executive  
Cooper and Company



Above: The kapa haka group from Te Wharekura o Hoani Waititi Marae performing in Takutai Square in front of The Hotel Britomart for Matariki 2020. Photo by Joe Hockley.



# The Year In Review

What we've achieved this year, and what we're doing next

# 01

# Report card 2020/1

One of the objectives of creating this, our third annual sustainability report, is benchmarking goals against which we can hold ourselves accountable.

These are the sustainability goals we set ourselves for 2020, with commentary on how we're tracking to meet them.

## 01

Achieve a Green Star Performance Tool rating.

Status: Achieved

Britomart was the first property company in New Zealand to sign up to the NZ Green Building Council's Green Star Performance Tool. The tool has nine key measurement components and requires third-party assessment. Britomart was awarded a 3 Green Star rating (labelled as 'Good Practice') out of a possible 6 stars for the performance of its buildings across the nine-block Britomart precinct. An updated rating is pending.

## 02

All new development will seek the appropriate Green Star ratings for design and build, with a minimum 5 Green Star rating a standing objective.

Status: Achieved, and ongoing

The Hotel Britomart has been awarded 5 Green Star ratings for its Design and Build by the NZ Green Building Council. On Customs Street, the redevelopment of the heritage Barrington and Sofrana buildings, due for completion in late 2022, will also seek a 5 Green Star rating from the NZ Green Building Council.

Right: Our Green Christmas celebration is a giveaway of native trees that raises money for reforestation charities. Photo by Joe Hockley.

Below: The lobby of The Hotel Britomart. Photo by Samuel Hartnett.



## 03

Improve monitoring of our waste streams with the goal of reducing waste to landfill.

Status: In Progress

In our last report, we noted that information on waste data from external contractors lacked the timeliness of level of detail we required to learn and respond quickly to output variations. The improvement of data supply has highlighted the need for us to work more closely with our tenants to collaborate on the reduction of waste from Britomart. This is a project for 2021 and beyond.

## 04

Write up the social and economic elements of our sustainability story and establish baselines through discussion and surveys.

Status: Ongoing

Social and economic sustainability are both integral parts of our Green Star Performance Tool assessment. They are also two of the foundational principles of Cooper and Company, Britomart's owner, which states that good environmental, social and economic outcomes are self-validating and build and support each other. Our social sustainability initiatives and our survey with members of the Britomart community are both detailed later in this report.

## 05

Build partnerships with tenants active in the sustainability area and show the way for those who are not.

Status: Achieved / Ongoing

Our Seven Plans for a Better Planet interview series, included in this document, was developed to encourage conversations and knowledge-sharing about sustainability among the Britomart Community. We also create Britomart Green, a quarterly e-newsletter, about green activities in Britomart. Our social sustainability efforts and Green Christmas giveaway of native trees in Takutai Square are all founded on sharing sustainability values with Britomart's community members.

# Our Targets 2021/2

Right: Street Kai on Takutai, one of our regular community events celebrating small-scale local food vendors. Photo by Joe Hockley.



Our sustainability goals for the next year.

## 01

Reduce our carbon emissions according to our Toitū reduction plan

Our work with Toitū Envirocare has resulted in the creation of a carbon emissions profile and a detailed multi-year plan to reduce those emissions. There is more information about these plans on p.16-17.

## 02

Improve our Green Star Performance Tool rating

We are aiming to improve the environmental performance of our buildings year-on-year through precise measurement and systems improvement, which should result in a gradual improvement in our Green Star Performance Tool rating.

## 03

Continue to lead tenants and find common ground to reduce emissions

Our sustainability initiatives are collaborative and the lessons we learn are shared through numerous channels, from live events in Takutai Square to our social media feeds. Britomart will continue to work with members of its community on the common goal of emissions reduction and environmental awareness throughout the year.

## 04

Achieve a 5 Green Star rating for the Barrington Sofrana redevelopment

A 5 Green Star rating is currently being targeted for the refurbishment of these two heritage buildings. The project is due to be completed in late 2022.

## 05

Create a separate base-case emissions profile and emissions reduction plan for The Hotel Britomart

We are working with Toitū Envirocare on separately measuring The Hotel Britomart's emissions and developing a plan to reduce them.

# Green Star Performance

In 2020 Britomart was awarded 3 Green Stars in its assessment under the Green Star Performance Tool, administered and audited by the NZ Green Building Council.

The Green Star Performance Tool assesses the environmental impact of Britomart's buildings through the use of nine impact categories. These categories include:

Management

Materials

Indoor Environment Quality

Land Use and Ecology

Energy

Emissions

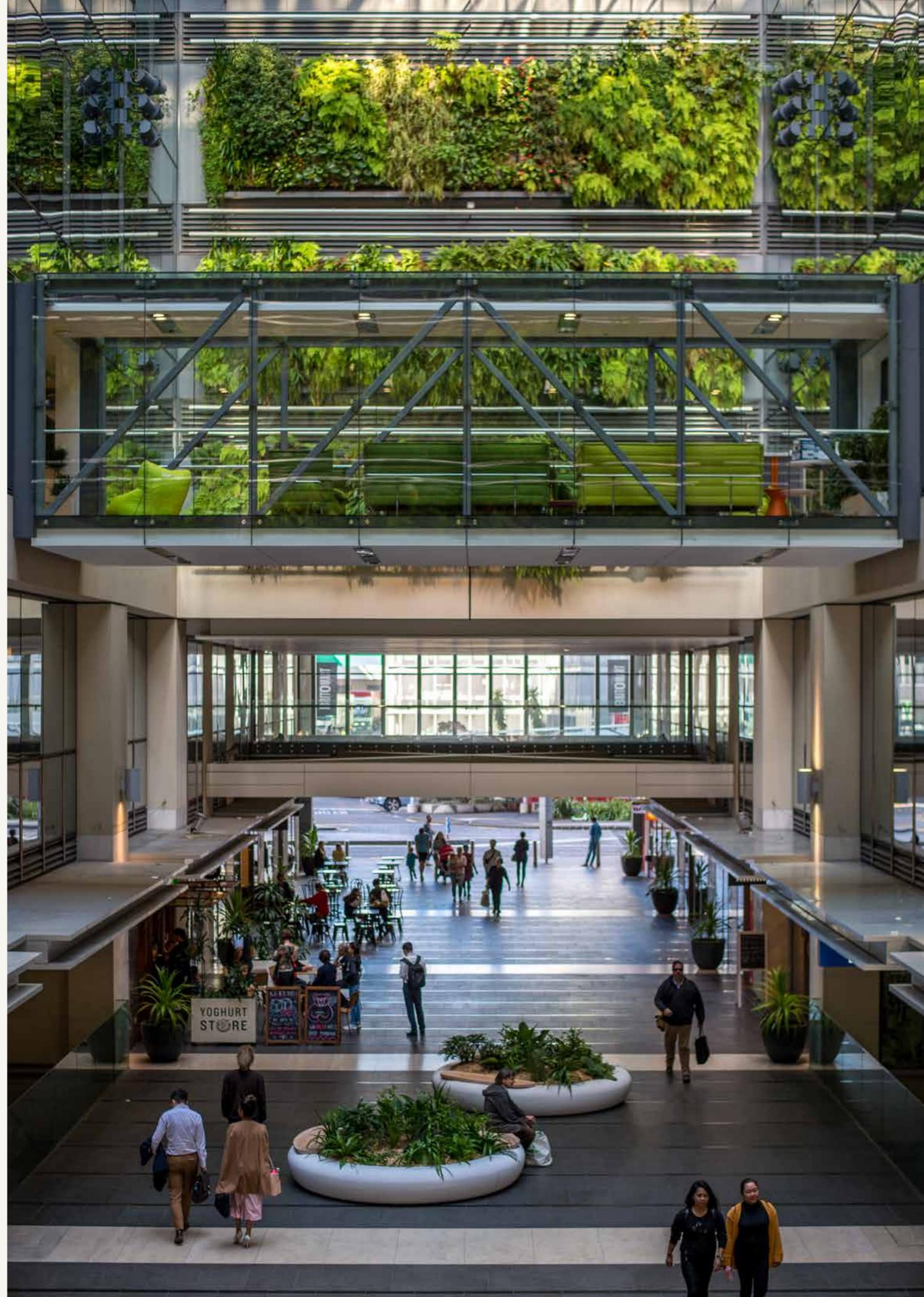
Transport

Innovation

Water

Britomart's 3 Star rating (out of a possible 6 stars) in its first Green Star Performance Tool assessment equates to 'Good Practice'. An updated assessment is currently pending.

Right: The Atrium on Takutai in Britomart's East Building, with its green wall and circular planters. Photo by Joe Hockley.



# NABERSNZ ratings

Britomart’s buildings are rated under the NABERSNZ scheme, an independent tool that rates the energy efficiency of buildings. The maximum possible rating is six stars.

Britomart has what is called ‘Base Buildings’ ratings, which cover energy use in core services and common areas – lifts, stairwell lighting, common toilets, air conditioning and ventilation, and so on. The ratings do not apply to energy use by building tenants.

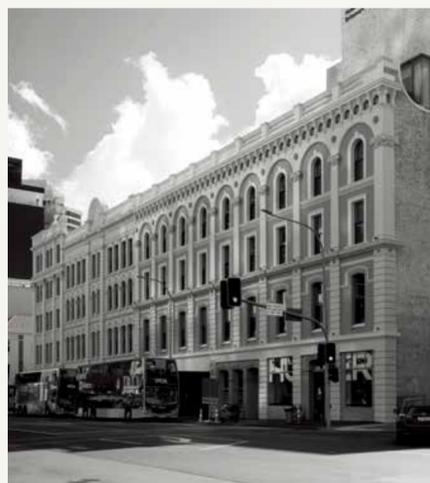
In 2022, three new Britomart buildings will enter the NABERSNZ ratings scheme: The Hotel Britomart, completed in October 2020, Altrans Quay, and the Barrington Sofrana Buildings, to be completed in late 2022.

NABERSNZ ratings apply only to buildings over 1000m2 and which are 80% office space, which is why not all Britomart buildings have NABERSNZ ratings.

## 01

Excelsior and Stanbeth House

NABERSNZ rating: 5½ stars  
(Market-leading performance)



The Australis Nathan Building, a heritage structure which, since its 2017 refurbishment, has achieved a 5 Star NABERSNZ rating.



## 02

Australis Nathan

NABERSNZ rating: 5 stars  
(Market-leading performance)



## 03

Charter House

NABERSNZ rating: 4½ stars  
(Excellent performance)



## 04

East Buildings (Westpac, EY)

NABERSNZ rating: 4½ stars  
(Excellent performance)



# Graphs to go here

Water, waste, electricity and  
gas graphs, with notes on  
each commenting on glitches  
and increases

# Toitū Envirocare

This year Britomart Group worked with Toitū Envirocare to measure the group's carbon emissions and establish a plan to reduce them. Britomart Group is now a Toitū Carbonreduce certified organisation.

Toitū Envirocare is a government-owned organisation with a system of environmental programmes aimed at helping businesses reduce their carbon impacts.

Britomart Group began working with the Toitū Envirocare team in 2020 to develop a base-case emissions profile for the entire group and a plan to reduce those emissions. This work grew out of Britomart Group's use of the NABERSNZ ratings system and the Green Star Performance Tool. While those systems are useful for their focus on the efficiency of individual buildings, Toitū's analysis gives the group an overall picture of its environmental impact.

The calculations for Britomart Group's overall emissions were certified in September 2021. They show the group's overall emissions in the year April 2019-April 2020 were 674.26 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

To reduce its emissions, Britomart Group has developed a GHG emissions management plan and reduction targets. The group has committed to 5% annual emissions

reductions through to 2026, which involves the following plans:

- Undertake a waste audit, review the current waste policy and update it to minimise waste going to landfill
- Check and regularly monitor building temperature set points to ensure floors are not over-heated or over-cooled and maintaining a constant temperature
- Investigate opportunities to install occupancy sensors on lighting controls in buildings and tenancies to save energy
- Investigate alternative systems such as solar to replace gas boilers for heating
- Investigate feasibility of vehicle upgrades to more efficient models
- Monitor emerging remote meeting technologies and introduce/ implement to the team as deemed appropriate to reduce travel

Britomart Group is now a Toitū Carbonreduce certified organisation.



Right: The lawn in Takutai Square is a popular hangout on a sunny day. Photograph by Joe Hockley

# Sustainable futures

## Mark Sinclair



Above right: Britomart sustainability director Mark Sinclair. Photo by David St George.

This year Britomart broadened its sustainability commitments beyond Green Star Performance ratings to work with Toitū Envirocare.

Britomart's sustainability director Mark Sinclair talks to Jeremy Hansen about assessing carbon emissions and establishing a plan to reduce them.

**Jeremy Hansen** This year Britomart is expanding its sustainability efforts, continuing to utilise the Green Star Performance Tool and also establishing a carbon assessment from Toitū to embark on a carbon reduction plan. What's behind this decision?

**Mark Sinclair** It was a decision to look at not only Green Star projects but also at emissions to atmosphere. Our Green Star tools don't measure carbon output – they track the energy efficiency of buildings and utilities. Toitū is more focused on emissions from our buildings: in other words, our carbon footprint and the impact we have in Auckland's atmosphere and the greater world.

**JH** Are they complementary?

**MS** Yes I think so. One needs the other. All the data we capture in our Green Star calculations feeds through into Toitū and some the other way.

**JH** Why is this happening now?

**MS** We introduced it for our business at The Landing [the 1,000-acre heritage estate in the Bay of Islands that, like Britomart, is under the stewardship of Cooper and Company], and we thought it would be beneficial for both parts of the business to do it at the same time.

**JH** What changes is the Toitū carbon reduction plan resulting in?

**MS** Our carbon reduction plan comes from the inventory that we prepare

“Whenever there's a crisis, there are new ideas to beat the crisis.”

Right: Te Ara Tahuu, the pedestrianised, plant-lined street at centre of Britomart. Photo by David St George.



to work out our overall footprint. The carbon reduction plan looks at our year's emissions and sets a path for continued reduction thereafter. It's making the management team more aware of the impact our buildings have on the environment.

Carbon is a much wider issue than the energy efficiency of a building. It's bringing to light the impact that we have on the generation of CO2. I hadn't realised, for example, what effect losing two kilos of refrigerant has on the environment. To cool our buildings, we use refrigerant gas in a vessel; accidentally discharging the gas to atmosphere has significant impact on our carbon measurement. This is how measurement and targeting raises performance, because it raises awareness. It improves the overall understanding of carbon dioxide and the impact we're having.

These measurements take in the diesel we run for our generators, the electricity we consume, the natural gas we use in heating. The better we understand that measurement, the more we also consider our impact on an individual level – the carbon emissions of driving to work, throwing out a coffee cup, the electricity we consume, the natural gas we might use in heating and cooking, our domestic travel. It all has an impact.

**JH** Is Britomart running at a standard you're happy with?

**MS** I think we're already running at a high standard, and our team

understands the direction we're taking. We can always do more and we are doing it. We are on a good path to making a positive difference to reducing our carbon and running our buildings as efficiently as we can.

**JH** Buildings use diesel backup generators, natural gas for heating, and so on. Are the days of these technologies numbered?

**MS** Natural gas is of course a fossil fuel, and there's a lot of talk about transferring to electrical heating through new design and technologies. They're being developed now. That's great for countries that produce electricity from a green environment, but it's not so good for countries that burn coal for electricity. So we need a 360-degree view on all of this. We could look at photovoltaic cells, wind generation, there are many things we can add to buildings. Whenever there's a crisis, there are new ideas to beat the crisis. We're in that crisis at the moment so there will be new ideas coming out, new pathways to take to reduce it. This framework forces us to consider those ideas and keep an open mind about new ways of working.

**JH** This all comes in the context of the recent report by the IPCC which notes that climate change is accelerating. What's your reaction to it?

**MS** It's worrying and deeply concerning that we as a human race aren't moving fast enough to save ourselves. We're stuck in our habits of old and we can't seem to develop new

ones. I worry about it a lot, about what my kids will have to deal with as the weather changes and sea levels rise, and I think they are worried too about the long-term future.

**JH** Has this process changed your personal behaviour?

**MS** It's made me more aware how much of an impact we make on a daily basis. I've been walking more, taking the bike. It has been enlightening for me.

**JH** There's been talk that the scale of the problem makes it hard to think that individual actions will make a difference.

**MS** If we all do our part, some of that will make a massive difference. We all look at it in a big picture, but that big picture is made up of a series of actions made by individuals going about their daily business. Tonnes of carbon dioxide mean nothing to the average person, it's an abstract concept. But if we make it understandable in a unit like a block of butter, you have more of an understanding about what to reduce. Individual behaviour pattern changes will save the day, and all of us need to do our part. We hear about these the costs of climate change being priced into markets. That's being driven by consumer change. The reason we're pushing hard in these areas is fundamental: Britomart Group's business approach has always been about the long term, and sustainability is a natural and intrinsic part of that.



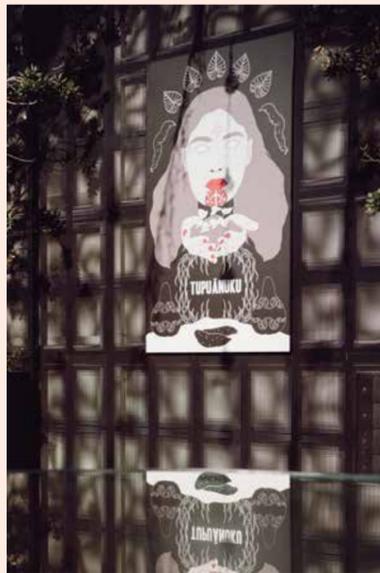
# Social Sustainability

What we've done to build community connection and celebrate sustainability

02

# Matariki at Britomart

Below: Artwork by  
Huriana Kopeke-Te  
Aho. Photo by David St  
George.



Britomart's focus on social sustainability includes a programme of events that run in Takutai Square and elsewhere in the precinct throughout the year. All of these events are designed to build connection with Britomart's unique sense of place, its history and that of the city around it.

One of the highlights of the year's calendar is Britomart's Matariki celebrations, which form a cornerstone of the city-wide Matariki Festival.

This year, hāngi master Rewi Spraggon fired up his hāngi pit in Takutai Square at dawn each day for a week, serving steam-cooked kai for hundreds of lunchtime passersby.

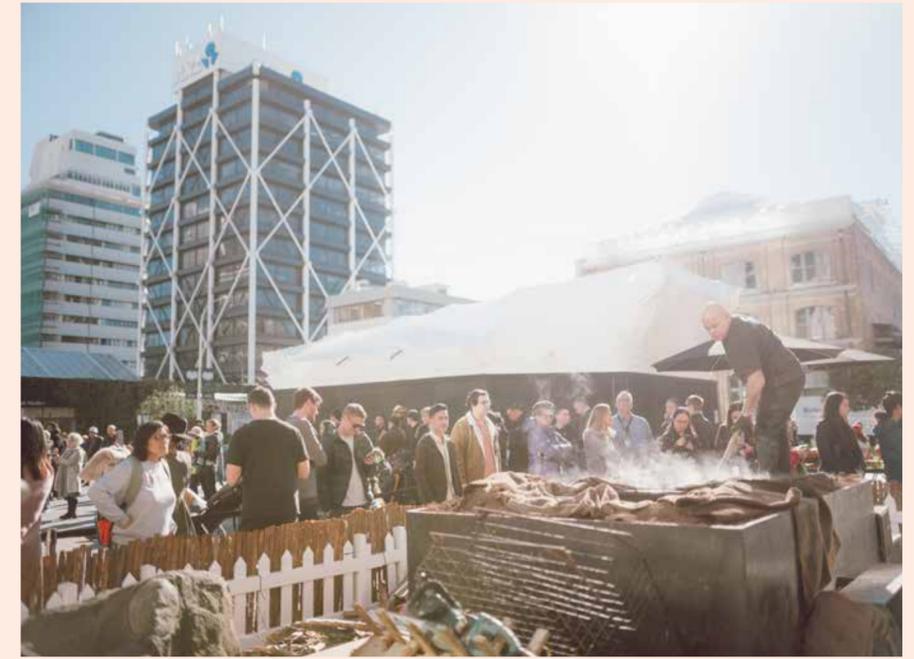
As well as that spectacle, Takutai Square hosted kapa haka performances every day during the first week of Matariki, with performers from Te Wehi Haka, Te Wharekura o Hoani Waititi Marae and Te Rōpū Manutaki entertaining the lunchtime crowds.

The first week of Matariki also featured a roster of up-and-coming Māori musical performers, including Jhasmyne-Leigh Laomahei, Makaira Berry, HINA and RnR Music, culminating in a big Friday evening concert, Te Korakora on Takutai, headlined by performers Ria Hall and Mara TK.

Matariki this year was also marked by a new installation of artworks by Huriana Kopeke-Te Aho, who created personifications of each of the nine stars in the Matariki constellation, powerful faces positioned on Customs Street and Te Ara Tahuu to remind visitors of the narratives that underpin the Māori New Year.



Above: Enjoying some of Rewi Spraggon's hāngi



Above: Crowds watching the hāngi being pulled up and made ready to eat. All photos by David St George.



Right: Rewi Spraggon lifts a hāngi from the pit in Takutai Square. Overleaf: Performers from Te Wehi Haka in Takutai Square. Photos by David St George.



# Green Christmas

Photos by Joe Hockley

Each year in Takutai Square, Britomart celebrates Christmas by giving away thousands of native seedlings from the nursery at The Landing, the 1000-acre Bay of Islands property that, like Britomart, is under the stewardship of Cooper and Company. The Green Christmas project gives people the chance to plant their own seedlings at home, or give the gift of greenery to others. It also raises money for reforestation charities including the Motutapu Restoration Trust and the Native Forest Restoration Trust.

Caleb Scott runs the nursery at The Landing and cultivates trees through the year for this Christmas giveaway. He also comes to Britomart to dispense expertise, advising many hundreds of would-be arborists on strategies for selecting and planting native trees.

The event is a way of encouraging people to actively consider and contribute to the benefits of reforestation with native trees, and also to think about the consumerist

Christmas season as an opportunity to give sustainable gifts.

The trees are technically given away, but we encourage gold-coin donations from the people who queue up to take them home so we can pass these donations on. In the past two years, donations at the giveaway have totalled over \$14,000, which have been passed on in full to the Native Forest Restoration Trust in 2019 and the Motutapu Restoration Trust in 2020.



This page and overleaf: The Green Christmas giveaway offers people the chance to give green gifts and contribute to reforestation. Photos by Joe Hockley.

It is a way of encouraging people to actively consider and contribute to the benefits of reforestation.





TIFFANY & CO.

CHANEL

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Give green gifts

Give green gifts

Take me home  
give green gifts

Ready to grow

ARM EXERCISE

Each year we also commission an illustrator to depict of some of the trees we'll be giving away in our Green Christmas event. The creations of these talented artists were so good we wanted to celebrate them again here. At left, works from 2019 by Huriana Kopeke-Te Aho, and at right, from 2020 by Jess Thompson-Carr.



Akeake  
*Dodonaea viscosa*



Kahikatea  
*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*



Pohutukawa  
*Metrosideros excelsa*



Mānuka  
*Leptospermum scoparium*



Ti Kōuka  
*Cordyline australis*



Whārangi  
*Melicope ternata*



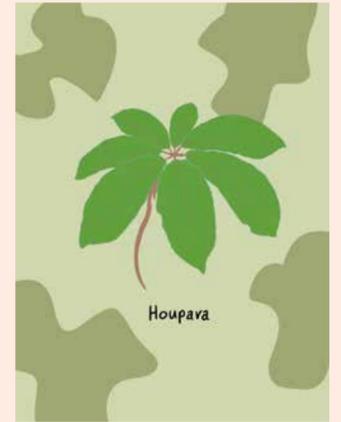
Kānuka



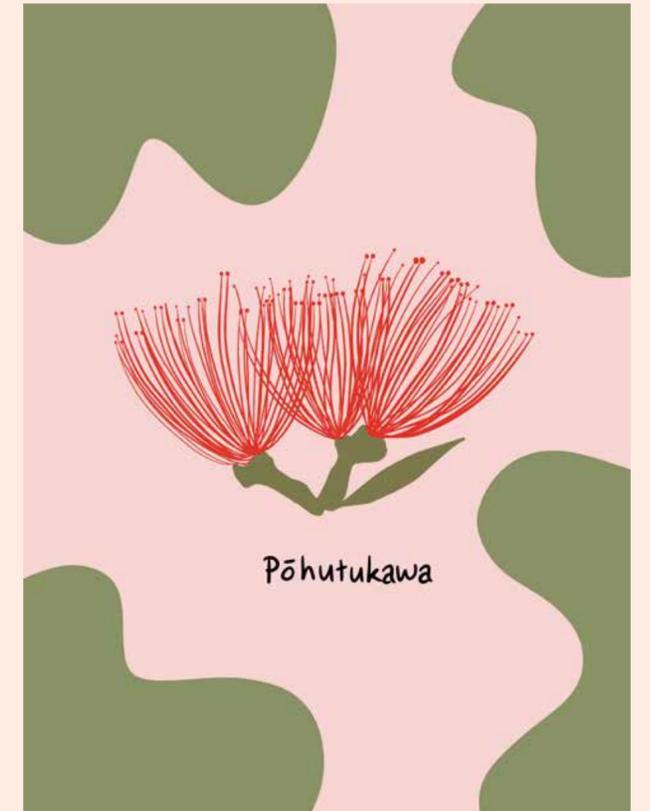
Mānuka



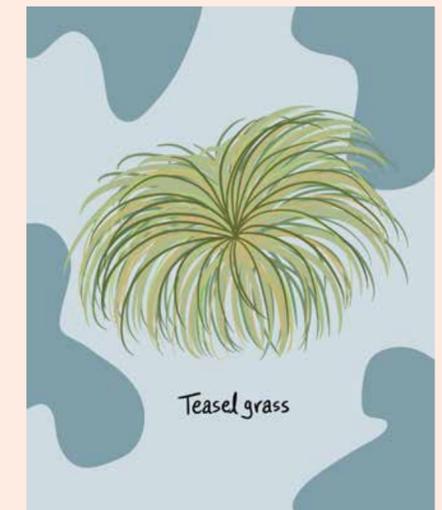
Silvertussock



Houpara



Pōhutukawa



Teasel grass

# Toi Tū Toi Ora Contemporary Māori Art at Britomart

Below: Part of Charlotte Graham's work, *Te Hau Whakaora*. Photo by David St George.



Last year our partnership with Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki created a satellite exhibition of the landmark show of contemporary Māori art. Working with curator Nigel Borell, the Britomart Arts Foundation commissioned four artists to create works for the satellite exhibition: Lyonel Grant, Charlotte Graham, Lonnie Hutchinson and Shane Cotton.

Three of those works are permanent, imprinting Māori narratives and the memory of the exhibition on Britomart's outdoor spaces. Shane Cotton (Ngāti Rangī, Ngāti Hine, Te Uri Taniwha) created *Maunga*, a five-storey-high mural on the western side of the heritage Excelsior Stanbeth Building, one of the largest pieces of public art in the city. In Takutai Square, Lyonel Grant (Ngāti Pīkīa, Te Arawa) collaborated with Tim Gruchy, the creator of the digital artwork *SCOUT* (2012) to create *Scout: Wawata Hōhonu*, a constant stream of AI-generated imagery using Lyonel's carvings as foundational material.

Lonnie Hutchinson (Kai Tahu, Ngāti Kuri ki Kai Tahu, Samoan), created two sets of intricately patterned folded aluminium panels to retell the Kai Tahu creation story and highlight its three protagonists. And Charlotte Graham (Pare Waikato, Pare Hauraki), made a temporary installation of a series of flags and banners named *Te Hau Whakaora*, which brought the healing energies of the winds and water to Britomart.

The exhibition was a vibrant addition to Auckland Art Gallery's flagship exhibition, showing how art can enliven the centre of the city.

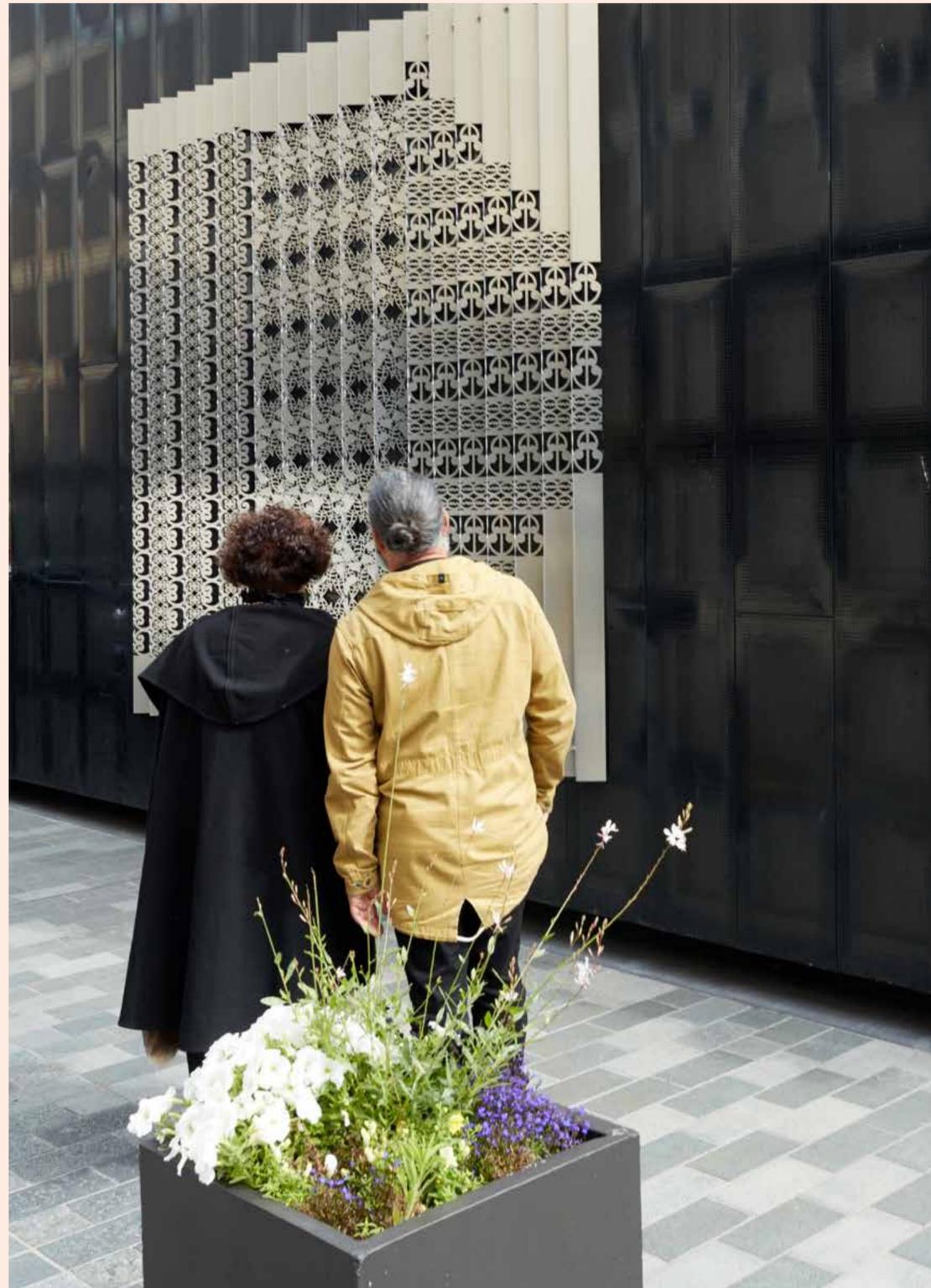
Three of the works are permanent, imprinting Māori narratives and the memory of the exhibition on Britomart's outdoor spaces.



This page: Scenes from the opening of *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art at Britomart*, a ceremony led by elders from Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei. Photos by David St George.

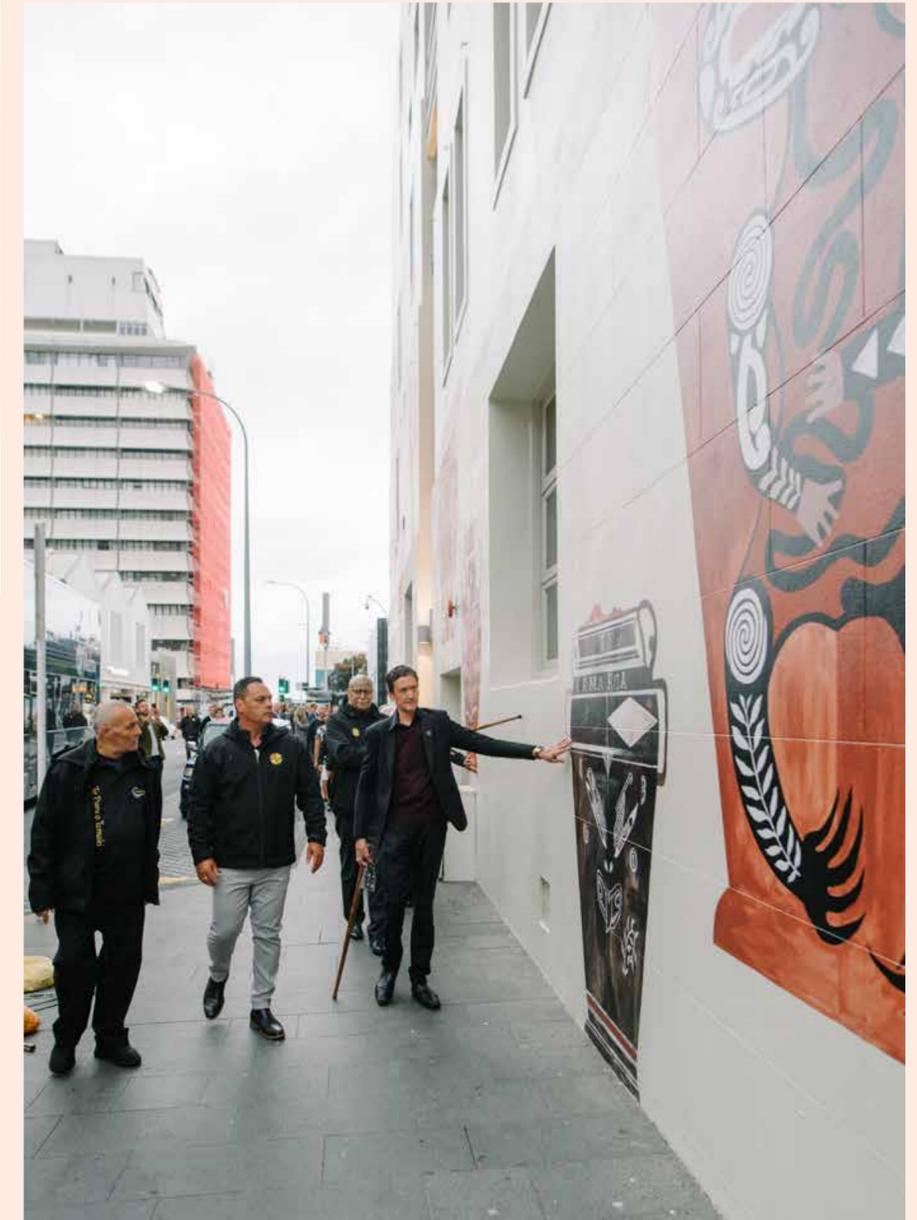


Below: Lonnie Hutchinson's work, *Aroha ki te Ora*, features two sets of three folded panels, each panel representing one of the three protagonists in the Kai Tahu creation story. Photograph by David St George.



Above: Artist Shane Cotton at the blessing of his work.

Right: Clay Hawke (right) of Ngāti Whatua Ōrākei leads the blessing of the *Toi Tū Toi Ora* artworks. Photographs by David St George.



Left: Artist Lonnie Hutchinson, *Toi Tū Toi Ora* curator Nigel Borell, and artists Lyonel Grant, Shane Cotton and Charlotte Graham.

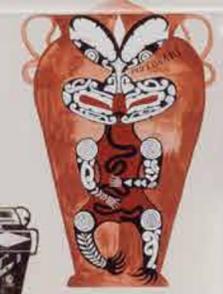
Overleaf: Shane Cotton's artwork, *Maunga*, on the exterior of Britomart's Excelsior house. Photos by David St George.



BRITOMART

EY

W



EXCELSIOR

COMMERCE

# Painting the city Shane Cotton



Above right: Shane Cotton.  
Photo by Russ Flatt

The largest work in *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art at Britomart* is *Maunga*, a five-storey high mural by Shane Cotton (Ngāti Rangī, Ngāti Hine, Te Uri Taniwha) on the wall of Excelsior House, one of the most prominent corners in downtown Auckland. Here, the artist talks to Jeremy Hansen about the creation of the work, and bringing a Māori narrative to the centre of the city.

**Jeremy Hansen** How did the site shape the work you've created for it?

**Shane Cotton** It's a space that the public is using and walking past every day. I thought about Auckland and how people come from out of town, how the big city draws you in. Then I started thinking about places outside the city. That's when I started thinking about different mountains and landscapes and how when people come here, they bring a piece of that with them. So I thought, maybe I should represent something along those lines. That's where the idea of the pot came from. The pot as a motif is an image that I've used before. I could rejig and theme it, so

it's connected to the landscape and particular places beyond Auckland. This way places around New Zealand could be represented through the pot.

**JH** You've used this motif of the pot a few times in your works, particularly back in the 90s, partly as a reference to the way this image pops up in painted whareniui, at a time that Māori artists were responding to new materials and traditions they were exposed to after contact with European settlers. What made you want to double back to it now?

**SC** I've been doing some of those types of paintings recently. Re-examining and exploring the motif

"I love the origin of the image of the pot and the way it featured in the whareniui that were built in the 19th century."



Right: *Maunga* at street level, on the corner of Commerce Street and Customs Street East. Photo by David St George.

in various ways. I love the origin of the image of the pot and the way it featured in the whareniui that were built in the 19th century. The way that the pot becomes this little vessel of dirt that you take care of and allow plants to grow in. You become sort of a miniature guardian. I just like the ideas associated with it and all the visual history that it contains.

There are lots of different narratives that are associated with the image, but the narratives that I'm most aware of are those that relate to Te Kooti and the Ringatū faith. Painted scenes of fauna, trees, and people going about their business on the land, very western in terms of the depiction but with a very strong Māori kaupapa at play. It was such a unique way of looking at something that's European in essence, like the idea of putting plants in your house. I think it's kind of a European idea that some Māori decided to adapt visually into their art form and into their own narratives and beliefs. But yeah, I'm sure there are lots of different readings, colonial and post-colonial in nature also. Plant forms and pot forms feature in lots of different houses – they've all got their

own stories; they mean specific things to those communities. As a generic Māori narrative and idea, I'm drawn to re-represent it, transcribe it in different ways.

**JH** What interested you in the fact this is a post-contact form of Māori art, a hybrid form of artistic tradition?

**SC** It's definitely hybrid. A lot of the imagery was very much about the hybrid nature of the times. New materials, new ideas and new visions, all expressed in unique and unfamiliar ways. A lot of that work, for me, has a beautiful freedom about it. There's a sense that it's not contained by any tradition, it's just found in the moment, a response to the moment, pure expression – that's what I like about it. Also, it speaks about what's ahead, the future, this idea that Māori and modernity are a thing that can happen. There's a sense of purpose, hope and aspiration embodied in the imagery. To celebrate something that is new and not be totally bound by the past.

**JH** So, you see it as those artists adapting to the times, but also looking

ahead into an unknown future and charting it themselves.

**SC** Absolutely. Many Māori leaders understood that change and adaptation were essential if Māori were to survive as a people in a future New Zealand. I think the art forms of this time record and reference these shifts with incredible clarity and beauty. They're art forms that are challenging for Māori and European.

**JH** What aspects of history were they responding to?

**SC** A lot of upheaval and change came out of the Land Wars. That was a big disruption and the traditional societal norms were broken apart. Maybe you didn't have a carver in the community anymore; maybe someone had passed on or maybe that person disappeared as a result. The knowledge base concerning traditional practices and laws were affected. So how are you going to put art in your house? Paint it! Painting became a substitute art form for carving, the default art form, but produced some incredible, amazing results.



Left: Maunga is made up of 25 pot forms. Photo by David St George.

**JH** How did you choose the name of the maunga that are featuring on the pots in the mural?

**SC** That's really a difficult one. Which ones do you put in there or reference? So what I've decided to do is place maunga or mountains that I've had some kind of personal relationship to. Be they places that I've visited, or places that I have imagined – I haven't physically been there, but at some point their presence affects you. The representation of Ruapehu and her relationship with Taranaki, how she and another maunga had a moment, so Taranaki decided to separate from her. I love that story and the way it describes the landscape through that narrative. So I've included Taranaki and Ruapehu. And because most of my life I've had many occasions to view them both you reflect on their distance and the way they dominate our landscape. You can get some beautiful views of Ruapehu and Taranaki from Manawatū, which are absolutely sublime. As an artist, finding ways to represent this is challenging.

**JH** What's your feeling about participating in this big show of contemporary Māori art? Your place in that world, the sense of this group of artists all collaborating on a single project. I don't know if it feels like kind of sense of a community, gathering in one place for a certain number of months to express a variety of viewpoints. Do you take that stuff into account as you're creating all these works?

**SC** I see the diversity and expanse that is Māori art today. It's been a long time since a gathering of Māori artists on this scale has happened, so it's really engaging. There is definitely a sense of community in the contemporary Māori art world. A sense that we are all on the same waka, driven by a purpose that is connected to our identity and narratives.

**JH** So it wasn't coming from a place of optimism, but was a reaction to changing conditions?

**SC** Yeah. Not entirely coming out of a place of optimism, depending on the time and location of the house, but there's no doubt, when you look at some of the imagery, that it is aspirational in terms of a future. You've only got to look at Rongopai and go to that house and see the complexity and beauty within. It's a kaleidoscope of colour and imagery, the full spectrum! So that's why I like the pot form and I keep coming back to it. Because as a Māori artist I can look to a generation of Māori artists that were painters,

that expressed imagery in a very unique, idiosyncratic way. That's why I like it so much, that's why I go back to it time and again.

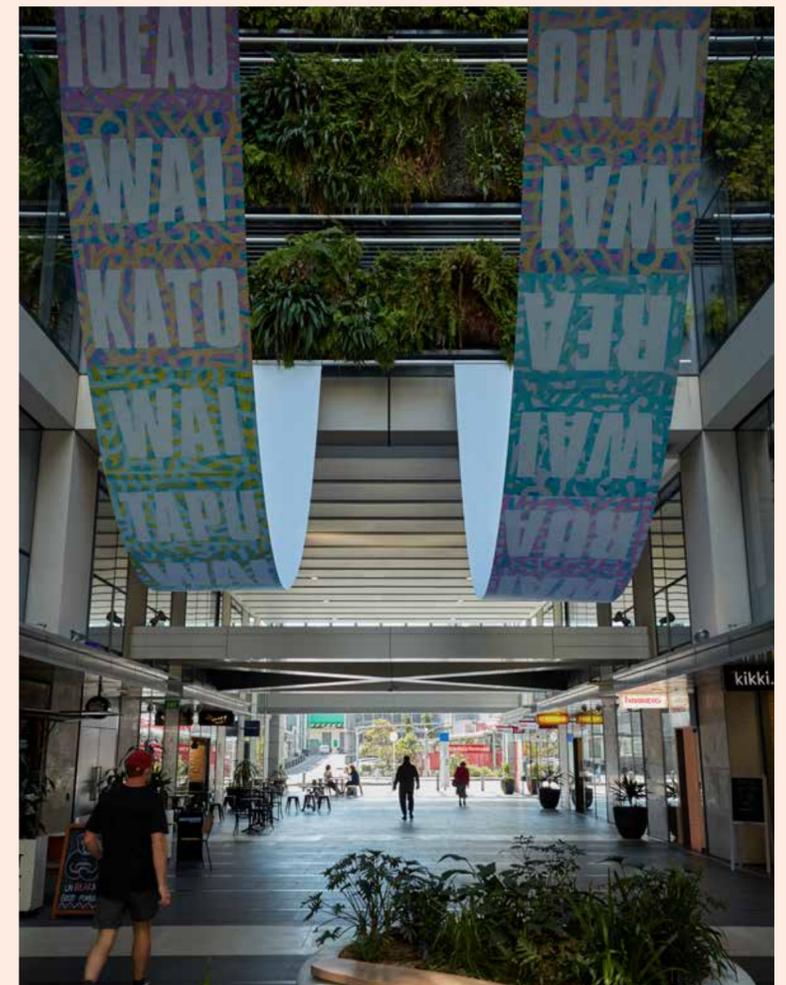
**JH** And there's no easy fixed reading either, is there? There are many ways to see it.

**SC** I think so. I think there are multiple readings and interpretations at play and the narratives are numerous for obvious reasons. The underlying currents tend to be ones that are related to land, and to your place in the world, how you fit into the world, between Ranginui and Papatūānuku. What is our place in it?



Left: Lonnie Hutchinson's Aroha ki te Ora on Galway Street.

Below: SCOUT: Wawata Hōhonu, a digital artwork by Tim Gruchy and Lyonel Grant in Takutai Square. Photo by David St George.



Above: Banners with text relating to the healing powers of water in the Atrium on Takutai, part of Charlotte Graham's Te Hau Whakaora. Photo by Russ Flatt.



# Seven Plans for a Better Planet

Britomart community members  
discuss the next steps forward  
in sustainability

# 03

# Plan 01 Nigel Borell



Nigel Borell  
Illustration by Lucy Han

The curator of Māori art says care for the environment has always been intrinsic to the Māori world view. He spoke to Jeremy Hansen as part of our Seven Plans for a Better Planet interview series.

**Jeremy Hansen** You're the curator of *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*, the landmark show that opened last November at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, with a satellite exhibition here in Britomart. What was your vision for the exhibition?

**Nigel Borell** Yeah. My name's Nigel Borell, my tribal affiliations are Ngāi Te Rangī, Ngāti Ranginui me Te Whakatōhea. So I hail predominately from the Bay of Plenty region, but I was born and bred and lived in Manurewa and did my art training here in Auckland. And I suppose as an artist, curator, researcher and Māori art advocate, it's about the visibility of Māori art and the vitality of Māori art for me. *Toi Tū Toi Ora* was about presenting a survey show in a way that I felt spoke to a Māori audience and to a Māori worldview and Māori knowledge first.

**JH** Why was it important to you, as part of that, to have permanent works here in the city that are more accessible than they might be in a gallery space?

**NB** We took the thinking of the show outside of the gallery space and into the public environment with the creation of the satellite exhibition at Britomart. It's quite exciting because it does that beautiful thing of making us feel and think differently about the power of contemporary Māori art when we see it in the built landscape, when we see it in the architectural spaces, when we see it in the environments that we walk and tread.

**JH** So if we look at Shane Cotton's mural, *Maunga*, for example, which is five storeys high, how does such a prominent Māori narrative tweak the feeling of the city?

**NB** To have a large artwork such as Shane Cotton's *Maunga* on the side of a building declaring itself the way that it does is an amazing contribution to what people are experiencing in these public spaces. Whether it makes them pause or see our built landscape differently, these reactions will have profound implications. They become markers in people's experiences of space and the city. The thinking behind the work is very generous too, how it talks about Auckland as a melting pot where people migrate for prosperity, for change, for all manner of exchange with other people, other Māori, other cultures. So in that way, it's perfect for that spot.

**JH** We're talking about sustainability, which to a lot of people is purely environmental or measuring carbon footprints. What does the word sustainability mean to you, and how does Māori art relate to it?

**NB** Māori ways of seeing the world are quite holistic; all these things are connected conversations. Our personal health and well-being is connected to the health and well-being of the city and the land. These narratives about different Atua or gods such as Papatūānuku, the earth mother, Tangaroa, god of the sea, Tāne, the god of the forest – they're what we might call meta narratives about primordial

family, and they relate to people. And I just think art does that beautiful thing of enriching our soul, and keeping us engaged with the world that we see around us, as well as offering an imaginative reprieve from the environment we are immersed in.

**JH** How optimistic are you about holistic change being achieved?

**NB** I'm more optimistic today than I was 10 years ago. I feel like there are a range of templates, ways of working that are starting to be formed, like the incorporation of the Te Aranga Māori design principles in urban design projects. That document is full of different ways of acknowledging knowledge systems and cultural viewpoints in a really courageous and exciting way. I never saw that 10 years ago. This idea of working collaboratively is also about the amount of goodwill we can bring to manifest an idea or to shine a spotlight on the importance of matauranga Māori, Māori knowledge, within those projects. And what's good for Māori is good for everybody because those concepts are so generous – they're not fads, they're part of our cultural way of seeing the world. They are enduring ways that our ancestors have treated the earth and understood their relationship to the environment. And

they still make as much sense today as they did thousands of years ago when they were formed as cultural ideas and paradigms. But yeah, I think the important thing is to stress that they're there for all of us to think about how we can create change that is beneficial for everybody.

**JH** So it would make sense then, given the way those principles are embedded in Te Ao Māori, for voices from Te Ao Māori to be leading sustainability conversations?

**NB** Yeah, I think we need to be brave, brave enough to embed Māori cultural ways of seeing the world in everything we do. I think we've become brave as a country to want to do that and to make it visible and to be proud of it. Te Ao Māori offers the generosity of allowing everybody to see themselves as part of it.

“What's good for Māori is good for everybody because those concepts are so generous.”

Right: Shane Cotton's mural, *Maunga*, on the corner of Auckland's Customs Street East and Commerce Street, a prominent Māori narrative in a very public space. Photograph by David St George.



# Plan 02 Kate van Praagh



Kate van Praagh  
Illustration by Lucy Han

Kate van Praagh is the sustainability lead at Westpac, incorporating climate-related goals into every aspect of its business.

**Jeremy Hansen** Kate, Westpac has a really multifaceted business, with clients covering a broad spectrum from small personal accounts to large corporate ones. So how does the organisation approach sustainability?

**Kate van Praagh** We think about sustainability almost like three steps. The bottom step is the role that we play as a large New Zealand organisation, which has connections across New Zealand – from our supply chain to our customers, communities and our employees. That bottom step is all about getting our own house in order, things like being a Living Wage certified organisation, looking at the makeup of our workforce and our policies about gender, diversity, and inclusion. It's also about looking at our own operational carbon footprint and how we can manage that and offset the remaining emissions. That bottom step is all about trying to raise the floor and do it to the scale that is expected of an organisation of our size.

The next step is about what kind of organisation we are. For us, it's about financial wellbeing, how that intersects with New Zealand's issues and what role we can play. Financial capability in New Zealand is a real challenge and we see ourselves having a big role around that. We know there's a lack of knowledge and confidence; we know there's high personal debt; we know there's a growing wealth gap and growing inequality. So how can we bring our skills to help solve some of those complex problems? Housing, for example, is one area where we can have a role to play.

Then the top step is about climate change and women in leadership. That includes things like reports around our pay parity and climate change, being more transparent, holding ourselves up to the spotlight and encouraging others to join in. When we do something like converting our fleet to electric vehicles, we learn a lot during those processes and we want everyone

“I think humans respond to what's right in front of them, and because climate change is invisible, one of the things we're always thinking about is how to make it relevant to people's lives and easy to engage with.”

to jump on board, so we publish lots of resources on our website, which is another way that we can show leadership and encourage others to join in.

**JH** If you don't mind me saying, that's a lot of work. How do you isolate the main issues that you'd like to tackle in amongst all that? Or is it all holistic?

**KVP** It is all holistic. I guess because of the nature of our organisation and the fact that our customers are everyone from someone who might have just a day-to-day bank account to really large New Zealand businesses in all sectors of the economy, we don't really have the luxury of just focusing on one small part of that. But there are some really key things we need to focus on to make a difference. So for example, we've been really looking at our climate-related financial risks. We published our first report on that in December last year. Then we took a look at our residential housing portfolio, and sea level rise and coastal erosion. That's just a start. We need to look at all of those sector by sector, look at what the exposure is, but then look at how we can support our customers to adapt to the changing climate, and to reduce their own emissions at the same time.

**JH** You're a financial organisation ultimately, yet it sounds like many of these initiatives come from a desire to do good? How are those two things linked?

**KVP** I think the pressure comes from all angles. It comes from our customers. It comes from global investment pressures. Then there's also what you could call our social license to operate,

wanting to be a really responsible presence and in New Zealand for our customers and our employees.

**JH** How do your customers tend to respond to that leadership? Because it seems that Westpac is really making its values clear and staking a real position on all of this.

**KVP** I think because our customer base is so broad that it's not a simple answer. Some wouldn't pay any attention to this and some are really, really focused on it. Obviously we've got customers who are large emitters and who are getting pressures from their customers, and their supply chains, and their investors. We can also see the future. We know that sea levels are rising and we know that New Zealand has some big problems to solve which aren't ours alone: Insurers, regional councils, and national government all have a role. Consumers themselves have a role to play in thinking about the kind of society we want and how we're going to adjust to those challenges. Lots of these conversations are going on in the media and in the public at the moment around inequality, financial wellbeing, climate change response. The Climate Change Commission's draft report has had more than 10,000 submissions in response, which is an amazing number of people who are interested in acting on this. It would be irresponsible if we weren't doing it too.

**JH** What do you think the biggest obstacles are to change in this area?

**KVP** With climate change, I think it is because it's invisible and because people can't see it immediately. I think humans respond to what's right in

front of them, so that's always a big challenge. One of the things we're always thinking about is how to make it relevant to people's lives and easy to engage with. That's one of the reasons we partnered with CoGo, which is an app which you can download and link with your bank account. It pulls the data of your spend and you can really easily see your own carbon footprint, and then choose to offset it or change some behaviors to improve it. So we're always thinking about ways to engage customers. We do a lot of sustainable finance, looking at the ways business can get interest benefits for meeting sustainability targets, and all kinds of different things that we can use to nudge and encourage people to join the journey.

**JH** When you talk about incentives, these are actually things that will impact Westpac's bottom line. And a bank can't survive on philanthropic endeavours, so how does this work in practise?

**KVP** I can use an example. We decided a couple of years ago now to launch a product called Westpac Warmup. That's a \$10,000 interest-free loan for people who have home loans with Westpac. You can use that loan for heat pumps and insulation to improve your home. That's seen an amazing pickup, because the demand is there and people really need it. This outcome benefits everyone. If a customer's house is warm and dry, and they have great insulation and heating, they're going to be healthier, their costs are going to be lower, and they'll be in better financial shape, so their ability to pay off their mortgage is much better. The same thinking can be applied to any kind of customer.

# Plan 03 Maggie Hewitt



Maggie Hewitt  
Illustration by Lucy Han

## Maggie Hewitt is taking her fashion label, Maggie Marilyn, on a bold sustainability journey.

**Melinda Williams** Maggie, you're shifting from a model that distributed your clothes through wholesalers to a direct-to-consumer model that sells only through your stores and website. Talk me through why you decided to make such a giant change to what was to all appearances a highly successful business model.

**Maggie Hewitt:** We'd been on a journey for a while of seeing the challenges of educating our customer but not having a direct line of conversation with them because [of] wholesaling internationally. To be honest, we were moving in the direction of wanting to reduce wholesale and increase direct-to-customer for about 18 months, but we really didn't see ourselves becoming a full direct-to-customer brand.

**MW** What does that mean, to educate your customers?

**MH** We've always tried to be incredibly transparent and vulnerable with our

journey and taking the customer on that journey with us. I think that's built incredible consumer loyalty and brand trust. From on our Instagram being very candid about the challenges we face to being transparent about where our garments come from and how they're produced, I guess there are lots of different touchpoints for that education. But it's incredibly challenging to educate a customer on what we actually do as a brand through, say, a department store in Kuwait.

**MW** Your flagship store has opened at Britomart and you're now operating under the new business model you've been describing – how has it been working out for you?

**MH** Anyone who has built a business knows the challenges you face in the early years – there's a crazy statistic that between 50-60 percent of businesses fail within their first five years, so that's how challenging things can be. The first six months

“It's really exciting to build this new strategy based on circularity and regeneration.”

Right: Maggie Hewitt, founder of the Maggie Marilyn label, sources merino from a South Island farm that works according to regenerative principles. Photograph by Jordan Stent of Motion Sickness.



of Maggie Marilyn were an absolute whirlwind, a dream come true, and then the four years that came after, really sometimes it felt like an uphill battle, *Groundhog Day*. It's been challenging and we've had our fair share of mistakes made. But since we've made the shift to say goodbye to our retailers and sell directly to our customers, it's really been the best decision we could have made. It's felt liberating, to be honest. And we've also launched our new sustainability roadmap.

**MW** What are the key elements of your new plan?

**MH** Our first roadmap built us up to the current one, which was really embedded in supply chain transparency. And that seems like something you shouldn't really get a gold star for, but at the time it didn't really exist in fashion, for a business to know every single person involved in the chain of making a garment. There was no framework or certifications for that, but we needed to go down that path, to know the farmer, the spinner, the weaver, the dyer, right up the chain. So with that in place, it's really exciting to build this new strategy based on circularity and regeneration.

**MW** Could you explain what circularity means in specific terms for your business?

**MH** So, circularity – we live on a planet with finite resources and our economy

is based on a very linear model, but the way nature is designed is much more circular. In the fashion industry, what we take from our resources we give back, so ultimately nothing ends up in landfill. And we have a plan to make a regenerative impact. I think that's a key element – our planet is so sick that it's not enough to be circular, we have to actually give back.

Within our business, we are opening up a take-back scheme, so that people can bring back product that's designed to be recycled or composted so there's an end-of-life solution. For us, it's about taking full accountability for every product we put out into the world, making sure that there is an end-of-life solution instead of acting like once it's in the customer's hands, it's no longer our responsibility. And with our Forever line, those more special pieces that are produced in limited runs, we have a free repairs scheme and sell repair kits on our website.

**MW** And the regeneration aspect?

**MH** So our goal there is to transition all our raw materials to be sourced from regeneratively farmed sources. Primarily we're talking about cotton and merino, which are the two main fibres that we use. We've already made exciting headway with a farm in the South Island that's farming in a regenerative way and a farm in Queensland that is producing the first carbon-negative cotton in the world.

So, we want to give back more than we take, and the simplest way to measure that is through carbon. We've been measuring our carbon for the last two years, working with Toitū carbonzero to be certified. The first year was about measuring and the second year was about reducing, which we did by 30 percent. The goal is working down through our supply chain and working with our suppliers to sequester more carbon through regenerative agriculture projects on those farms, increasing biodiversity and increasing soil health.

**MW** One aspect that is really important to your social sustainability model is community events.

**MH** Yes! Something we were tabling as a team was that we do really beautiful events for product launches, but what if we heroed our sustainability work in the same way? So we decided that instead of just putting this roadmap on our website, let's start a discussion in our community and find out what other like-minded businesses are doing and where the parallels are and how we can work together. We realise that as one business we can't solve all the massive changes that our society faces so we need collaboration. As a brand, we feel like so much of our power comes from being a conduit for connection, bringing like-minded individuals together and creating community. At the end of the day, as humans, that's what we crave the most.

# Plan 04 Helene Pacalin



Helene Pacalin  
Illustration by Lucy Han

Helene Pacalin is an account manager for Toitū Envirocare, the organisation that's making great strides in helping businesses measure and reduce their carbon impacts.

**Jeremy Hansen** Helene, let's start with you telling us what Toitū is and does.

**Helene Pacalin** Toitū translates as 'to actively sustain'. Our organisation was previously known as Enviro-Mark Solutions, but we began trading as Toitū Envirocare almost two years ago. We're helping businesses step up for positive change and start managing their environmental impacts. We work with all types of industries and diverse types and sizes of businesses. We have a science-based, hand-held approach to things, so we really like to make it as simple as we can. If a business signs up with Toitū, they get someone like me who will be the go-to person for anything they need. We guide them at first by asking some key questions: What are they going to include in their carbon footprint measurement? What do they have control over? And what are the things they're going to want to start reducing? We have

two programs, carbonreduce and carbonzero, which has the extra step of buying carbon credits to balance out emissions while working on reductions. So we take businesses through all of that and are available for any other support they might want, including engagement, education and general awareness.

**JH** How would you characterise New Zealand's progress towards becoming an economy that understands carbon emissions and is able to measure them and manage them?

**HP** That's a tough question. I think there's been a lot happening in New Zealand in the last two years, which would explain why we've been receiving so many enquiries from businesses wanting to get started on the journey. I think New Zealand companies have really understood they have a big role to play – but some

companies are well ahead and some are still playing catch up.

**JH** What timeframe can businesses expect if they're coming from a standing start to try to get a handle on their carbon emissions?

**HP** It depends on resources, but it could take a business from four months to eight months to get ready. The average would be able to take about six months for clients to sign up with us and then be able to say, we've verified our footprint, this is what it looks like, and this is our action plan.

**JH** Has the Climate Change Commission's report accelerated that process, and created a greater sense of urgency?

**HP** I think yes, especially since they have released the first draft of the climate change budgets, and the opportunity for businesses to give feedback. People know more ambitious targets are coming, and there's also more general awareness from the news. So yes, people understand the urgency of it.

**JH** Are you optimistic about our ability to respond to the challenges that climate change presents?

**HP** It depends on the day! I remain optimistic because there is so much we can do. Even small changes – creating less waste, using less plastic, cycling to work or walking whenever I can – can add up to something big. And so the more people think about it, the more everyone is involved, the more change will accelerate. But there are definitely some days where you read the news or attend a climate conference and you tell yourself, well, this is way too slow. It doesn't feel like it's fast enough, so we need that urgency now.

**JH** Has the pandemic accelerated the sense of what's possible?

**HP** Yes. For a lot of office-based companies, their biggest emissions are related to air travel. So the shift to online meetings is having huge benefits in that sense. If we can make a change like that almost overnight, we can make other changes too.

**“It's a journey. Progress now is more important than perfection later, and waiting for perfection stops you from getting started. It's fine to say hey, we're just at the beginning.”**

**JH** Measuring carbon emissions also helps people spot companies attempting to greenwash their operations, right?

**HP** Unfortunately, you'll always have companies who will put a green logo on a product or add green to their name. So I think certification helps customers. It means someone else has gone in and actually verified what a company has done, providing independent endorsement of the action. There is a lot of work happening in terms of rewarding the people that are doing it well and punishing the ones who are misleading.

**JH** Is there pressure for companies to feel like they need to get everything absolutely right before they go public with a sustainability strategy?

**HP** Quite often companies are worried about communicating anything until they're five to 10 years down the line. I think that's incorrect. It's a journey. Progress now is more important than perfection later – and waiting for perfection stops you from getting started. It's fine to say hey, we're just at the beginning and this is where we are at now; this is a plan. It just needs to be easy to understand: don't talk about tons of CO2 equivalence, just say electricity use is the biggest cause of emissions for your company, for example. Everyone will understand that. Try to simplify everything and make it interactive and make people part of your journey.

# Plan 05 Hana Kajimura



Hana Kajimura  
Illustration by Lucy Han

At Allbirds, Hana Kajimura is charged with making the complexities of climate change easily understandable to customers.

**Melinda Williams** When you began at Allbirds, the first thing you did was clarify the company's sustainability direction. Why was that?

**Hana Kajimura** Sustainability can mean 10 different things to 10 different people. It can be this very emotional, subjective space, so it was really important that we defined what sustainability meant to Allbirds the brand. Allbirds had all this ambition to do the right thing, be a responsible business in every sense of the word, but was also starting from scratch. We always had the mentality that focus was going to be key to us having an impact and that what we cared about could scale over time.

**MW** And how did you choose your areas of focus?

**HK** So, really it was a conversation with Tim and Joey [Tim Brown and Joey Zwillinger are Allbirds' founders] early on about why they started the

business, which was that the footwear industry in particular relies really heavily on synthetic materials which are plastics, which come from oil, and as we know, oil and gas are really driving the climate crisis. It became clear that climate change was our number one priority and the most urgent issue facing our generation, so then the question became okay, so how do we measure, track, judge our progress towards reversing climate change?

**MW** So refining your focus enabled you to get really granular on how you're making a genuine difference.

**HK** What's nice about this space is that as big of a problem as this is, it's really objective. Carbon emissions are driving climate change, and measuring carbon emissions is something we can do by looking at every stream that we create and coming up with the carbon footprint of each product, and coming up with plans to reduce that footprint

“We have less than 10 years left to avoid the worst effects of climate change, and if we all keep trying to do that alone we're never going to make it in time.”

over time. And while carbon is not the only metric for sustainability, it does encompass a lot of other elements of sustainability, whether we're talking about types of materials, amount of materials, waste, energy. A lot is rolled up into that carbon footprint number, so we felt that it was a great place to start.

**MW** Has your sustainability focus connected you with other businesses?

**HK** We're always looking for ways to share what we know and to learn from our peers in a way that benefits everyone. In material innovation, we've invested in material companies to develop and bring natural alternatives to the market, for example – our sugar-cane based form we developed with a company in Brazil and then open-sourced to the industry so that anyone can use it. I get emails every day from new brands that want to try it. And the other main way we collaborate is by working with other brands. Last May we announced a partnership with Adidas to create the lowest-carbon performance shoe, because we have all this experience around natural materials and using them in footwear, and Adidas brings decades and decades of manufacturing experience, and together we could combine to create something more than either of us could alone. That's just the way we need to operate at this point. We have less than 10 years left to avoid the worst effects of climate change and if we all keep trying to do that alone we're never going to make it in time.

Right: A promotional shot from Allbirds, which chose Britomart as the location for its first standalone store in New Zealand.

**MW** Given what's happened in the last year, have you found that taking a strong sustainability stance has created greater resilience?

**HK** We have. It's been really fascinating to watch because conventional wisdom has said that in the midst of a global pandemic and financial crisis, sustainability would have been the first thing to go off the CEO agenda but that just hasn't been the case at all, not within our business, not in conversations I'm having with my peers. Instead, sustainability has really accelerated and I think at the root of that is this global social awakening of customers waking up to their power and realising that they can and should demand more from businesses than just great products. In this world where there are a million things they can buy, they are able to be more selective about where they spend their money, and want to do that in a firm that is in line with their values.

**MW** This year you published the carbon footprint of your shoes. What kind of responses have you had to that accountability?

**HK** This is a two-fold answer. Customers respond really well to the transparency and accountability. They like that we're providing hard numbers and not just fancy marketing taglines. Of all the sustainability topics you could go after as a brand, carbon is probably the most intangible and hard to grasp, as opposed to say, plastic bottles. So we're at the start of the education journey there. But there

needs to be other carbon footprints out there, not just for shoes but for other products so we can start to create a broader understanding about carbon footprints in the same way as we have around calories in food. You don't actually need to know what a kilogram of carbon equivalent emissions is, you just need to know the difference between a shoe and a sweater.

**MW** We can understand that at Britomart, because we talk about carbon emissions too, but in terms of the ones produced by buildings, which is something people have less personal agency over. What have you learned about communicating sustainability concepts effectively?

**HK** So much of it is just persistence and giving the message again and again. Something we've thought about a lot is that telling a story and generating understanding around carbon and carbon emissions is probably one of the most powerful things we can do as a fashion brand. Like, we make shoes and shoes probably aren't going to solve the climate crisis by themselves. But we can make climate change fashionable in a way that no other industry can. So we just really keep challenging ourselves to get creative in the way we tell the story. We provide both a really scientific download from the website that talks about the ins and outs of our calculations, as well as a very funny, entertaining video from Bret McKenzie from Flight of the Conchords. We just really try to meet people where they are.



# Plan 06 Pip Best



Pip Best  
Illustration by Lucy Han

Pip Best is the climate change and sustainability services director for EY, advising businesses on how to prepare for the rapid changes that lie ahead.

**Jeremy Hansen** Pip, your work at EY focuses on giving advice to clients on climate change and sustainability. Can you tell me a bit more about that?

**Pip Best** Sure. I run EY New Zealand's climate change and sustainability practice. We work on a broad suite of issues for companies or governments, helping them deal with a range of topics including climate change, but also helping them address other sustainability challenges that their organisations might be facing.

**JH** How would you characterise the preparedness and the openness of the companies you work with to the scale of change that might be necessary?

**PB** The openness and the ambition across New Zealand is there. And I think New Zealand does really understand the concept of natural capital – the value of nature and what it means to the country. But there is quite a lot of work to be done in terms

of preparedness. To me the biggest issue is having the data to understand what your organisation's inputs and outputs are, and then being able to work out what changes you need to make so that you become more sustainable.

**JH** This is pretty basic stuff, right? You're talking about the work organisations have to do before they get on track to reducing their emissions – essentially, making a plan to do so.

**PB** It is really basic. To me it is a reflection of the way that organisations have historically worked. If we were talking about financial information, this data would be well captured and understood. There would be specific methodologies about how to quantify that and calculate the different impacts. We haven't done such a good job in setting up the same systems for our non-financial inputs and outputs.

**JH** I guess this is one of the big challenges that faces a lot of businesses: the work they happen to do on the sustainability front does not necessarily have a measurable outcome on the bottom line, at least in the short term.

**PB** Absolutely. And that is the key challenge. You have to be financially sustainable as well as environmentally sustainable and socially sustainable. And our system has optimised around the short-term financial elements. In the past we haven't well understood the long-term implications of our business models. And I guess what we're seeing happen is, as we approach a planetary boundary, those implications are now starting to come through into the bottom line. I think we're starting to understand the financial impact, particularly with the emissions trading scheme in New Zealand. There's a variety of other environmental and social inputs our businesses use and we haven't yet put a price on them. We'll start to pretty rapidly understand that these things do have value and those costs will probably exponentially grow as we start approaching some of those [planetary] thresholds.

**JH** Are things changing faster now than they were five years ago?

**PB** They are. What's driving this at the moment is a very rapid change in international investor expectations and consumer expectations. People are very quickly changing their buying habits. We're also seeing moves by investors that require a business to have an understanding of climate change and to have taken some steps to addressing that issue as a precursor to accessing capital. So it probably is quite sudden for some organisations to start realising this and addressing this issue.

**JH** What interests you about this sustainability space personally, and how did you begin your journey into it?

**PB** I'm an engineer by background. I love numbers. I then worked in the finance side of things making, I guess, short-term, financially optimal decisions. And it did strike me that something was missing there in terms of how we valued anything. Because I

come from a background of financial trading, I am intrigued by a mispriced asset. We have vastly mispriced our environmental and our social inputs and outputs over the very long term in a way that will have serious consequences. And so it's really that bit that I guess is my mission, my purpose, and the area that I focus on.

**JH** Are you confident that we can achieve the systemic transformation that we need to make climate change less of a problem?

**PB** I think this is one of the key challenges. There's a temporal element to all these things. Climate change is quite a long-term issue. What we do now is going to impact us beyond 2050. That I think creates a very tricky challenge for us, because as people we operate within our lifetimes, which is a different timeframe. Every job we have, it's maybe a five-year time horizon or a 10-year time horizon we're looking at. So that mismatch of time horizons is going to be a huge challenge for organisations to overcome so that we can actually drive long-term outcomes.

**JH** Are there advantages for New Zealand as a whole if the country is able to become a leader in this field?

**PB** I think New Zealand has the potential to see huge opportunities out of the change we need to make. But the rapid pace of commitments from other countries is accelerating. The EU is moving quite quickly towards having a carbon adjustment tax, a border tax that importers into the EU will have to pay based on the carbon intensity of their products. The EU is also quickly moving towards having circular systems, so if you're a producer into the EU, you need to meet the requirements of product stewardship schemes that are in place to address your waste stream and to reduce it.

China has also pledged to be carbon neutral by 2060. That is pretty phenomenal for that country. We would expect to see the US, which is the other kind of significant player in this international space, to change their behaviour and political and regulatory structure reasonably quickly after the last election. And that should drive significant momentum.

So there are numerous countries that have similar ambition to New Zealand but probably are moving quicker in terms of the implementation of actions that align them to those commitments.

**JH** I wanted to ask you about two industries specifically, and they're both very important to New Zealand: dairying and tourism. Both are carbon intensive in their own ways. Does the New Zealand economic base have to broaden in order to ensure a prosperous future?

**PB** There is the ability to transform. We can see the technologies on the horizon – not all are commercially viable in the agricultural space yet, but they're on the horizon and the actual innovation going on is pretty incredible. If we put the effort into the transformation of agriculture in New Zealand there is a huge opportunity to be a leader in that space. If we don't make that transformation, then we will need to diversify the economy if we're going to align to the Paris agreement.

The tourism sector is a really complex question. A lot of the modelling that's done shows that aviation will still be an emissions source into the future as commercially viable zero-emissions technologies are not on the near term radar. Having a green tourism sector outside of aviation is going to probably be something that's hugely beneficial. We need to have a path to get us to zero emissions over the longer term.

**JH** Given all that you know from the broad range of companies you advise, does all this make you an optimist or a pessimist?

**PB** I'm an optimist. I guess I might be pessimistic on our ability to rapidly change to an economic model that's going to start valuing all our environmental and social inputs and optimise for that long-term value piece. I think that's going to take a very long time. But I am an optimist in our ability to change. I do think that we see these thresholds or planetary boundaries on the horizon and suddenly price signals do come through or regulation does come through. I think our ability to innovate is a huge asset that we have. I do think that humans have the ability to rapidly change.

# Plan 07 Tom Hishon



Tom Hishon  
Illustration by Lucy Han

## Tom Hishon spotlights sustainable seafood at his restaurant, kingi, working with independent suppliers to nurture fish stocks and the ocean

**Jeremy Hansen** Tom, you opened kingi with the intention of promoting sustainable fishing. What does that term mean to you – and what can a restaurant hope to teach people about it?

**Tom Hishon** Sustainability has different meanings to different people. How I've defined it with kingi is through the selection of fish we put on the menu, the catch method and the suppliers we work with. To me, it all stems from how the produce is harvested or farmed and the positive effect it has on its environment. It was a challenge for me to see if it was a possibility for a seafood restaurant to be able to live up to that in New Zealand. I wanted to show that it is possible and that, through ethically sourcing produce from the right suppliers, it can create more awareness for both our guests and within the fishing industry. There need to be urgent changes to the way we fish on a global scale and I believe

New Zealand could and should be leading this change.

**JH** So if somebody comes to eat at kingi, what can they be assured of before they even order?

**TH** They can have peace of mind that whatever they choose off the menu is ethical in terms of how and where it's caught, the pressure that's on the fish stock. These values interlink with the selection of produce. We believe in provenance with seafood and in its traceability. We give a bit of a shout-out to the fishing crews via our menu and talk about the boat, catch method and the place the fish has come from, so people can really understand the how, where, what and why through our actions. It's really important to note that we don't support any companies that have a negative impact on the seabed or fishing stocks. There are a few large companies in New Zealand that harvest seafood from the ocean in an extremely unsustainable way using



“We support independent fishing operators, and another really positive element of doing that is that it's in their best interests to fish for the future.”

Left: Tom Hishon on a fishing boat off the Chatham Islands, on a recent trip on which he worked with one of the suppliers to his Britomart restaurant, kingi. Photograph by Troy Goodall.

indiscriminate, mobile bottom-contact fishing methods such as dredging, trawling or Danish seining – there is a huge amount of by-catch [aquatic species and seabirds that get caught in nets and are dumped], over-fishing and seabed degradation from the way they fish. We don't support these companies nor these fishing practices. They should be illegal.

**JH** How do you tell people that it's okay to eat fish? Many people think the best way they can help the planet is by becoming vegan.

**TH** That's a good question and something I've put a lot of thought into. If we can respect and manage our ocean's fish stocks correctly, the biomass has the ability to repair itself and get to a far more sustainable mass. It's understanding the intricacies of our fishery on a case-by-case scenario, listening more to what the science and numbers are telling us, where the pressure is, what we're sourcing. Again, it comes back to how we're sourcing this fish. We also put a lot of trust in our suppliers to keep us in the loop. We support independent fishing operators, and another really positive element of doing that is that it's in their best interests to fish for the future. It's their livelihood, they want their children and their children's children to be out fishing in their same community and to have that income coming back into their family for generations. So it is definitely in their best interests to maintain healthy fish stocks and practices.

**JH** Can you tell me specifically about some of the independent fishing operators that you work with that exemplify the values you're talking about?

**TH** A fantastic example would be the team at Chatham Island Food Co. They're working with about 30 different fishers from around the Chatham Islands. They're locals and have quota or lease quota for blue cod, crayfish, pua and kina. They fish ethically and the value of what they sell has increased by way of educating the customer around their provenance. They're generating more value from their products and that gets passed on to the local community and stays with families on the island. The Chathams is one of the last fishing communities in New Zealand, so it's cool to see that sustainable fishing can help that endure.

**JH** What kinds of things are they doing to be more sustainable there?

**TH** One example is they've worked with a collective of fishing operators on the islands to increase the size of the nets they use on their pots. Pot fishing is a really sustainable way to fish because there's no by-catch – the gaps are sized so that the juvenile cod can get out. And it's working – they have such an abundant fishery there, especially with blue cod. And I think it all comes down to the way that they collectively work and the fact that they're all invested in the same outcome, which is to protect and manage their own

natural resource around the island. They've learned from past experience, like lots of fishing communities. There have been tough times where they've put too much pressure on the crayfish and pāua industry. Now at certain times throughout the year now there is rāhui put on crayfish, they take a break from fishing blue cod over summer when they are spawning, and there is also an annual meeting held by the pāua divers on the island to discuss what areas they will target where the stocks are strong for the coming season and what areas they will leave. It makes perfect sense.

**JH** What can people do if they're buying fish to eat at home? How can they buy fish in an ethical way?

**TH** I'd like to encourage people to get out there and gather it yourself, share with family and friends and don't waste anything. We are a country surrounded by the ocean and it is one of the most incredible gifts we have. Try and shop local and support people within the community who have direct links with the fishing operators. There's a few of them around. You can buy a box of blue cod from the team at the Chatham Island Food Co and have it delivered to your door. If you're at the supermarket, mussels are probably the better things to buy, because they're farmed and being a bi-valve they have a positive impact on the environment and don't need to be fed like farmed salmon. Sadly, most supermarkets support unethical companies here and across the globe.



# Green Star Buildings

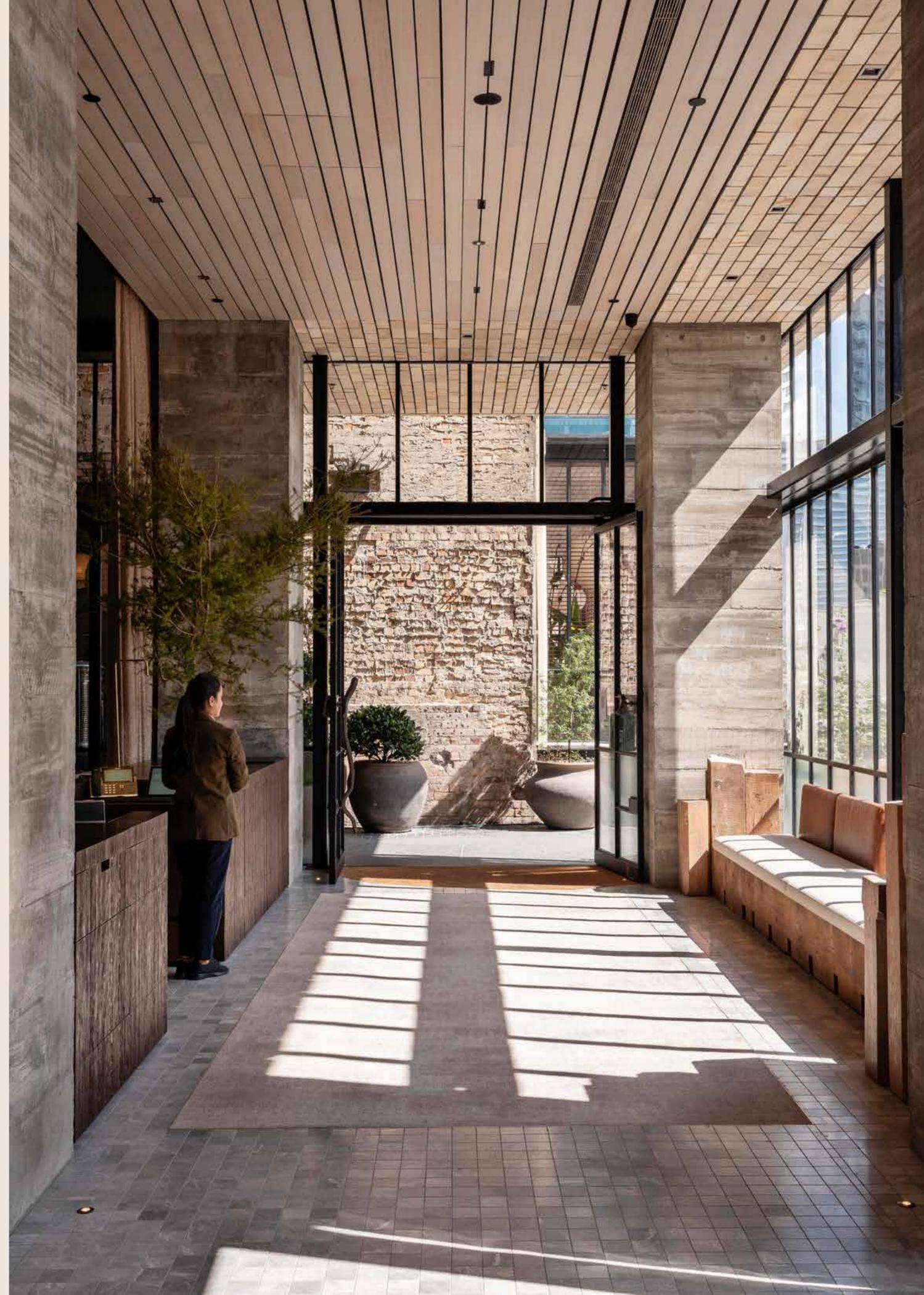
Our new development projects  
and their Green Star credentials

04

# The Hotel Britomart

The Hotel Britomart lobby  
Photo by Samuel Harnett

The Hotel Britomart, New Zealand's first 5 Green Star hotel, opened in October 2020. On these pages, Cooper and Company development director Campbell Williamson, sustainability consultant Hayley Koerbin discuss the process of making the building achieve its sustainability aims, while a chat with uniform designer Tamzin Hawkins talks about how the sustainable ethos was applied right down to the smallest details.



# Keeping tabs Hayley Koerbin



Above right: Hayley Koerbin.  
Photo supplied.

As the New Zealand sustainability lead at engineering consultancy Norman Disney Young, Hayley Koerbin was deeply involved in the myriad of decisions required to ensure The Hotel Britomart achieved a 5 Green Star rating for its design and build.

Here, she explains to Jeremy Hansen how Green Star ratings require consideration of every aspect of a building's construction and operations – and how these decisions benefit the environment.

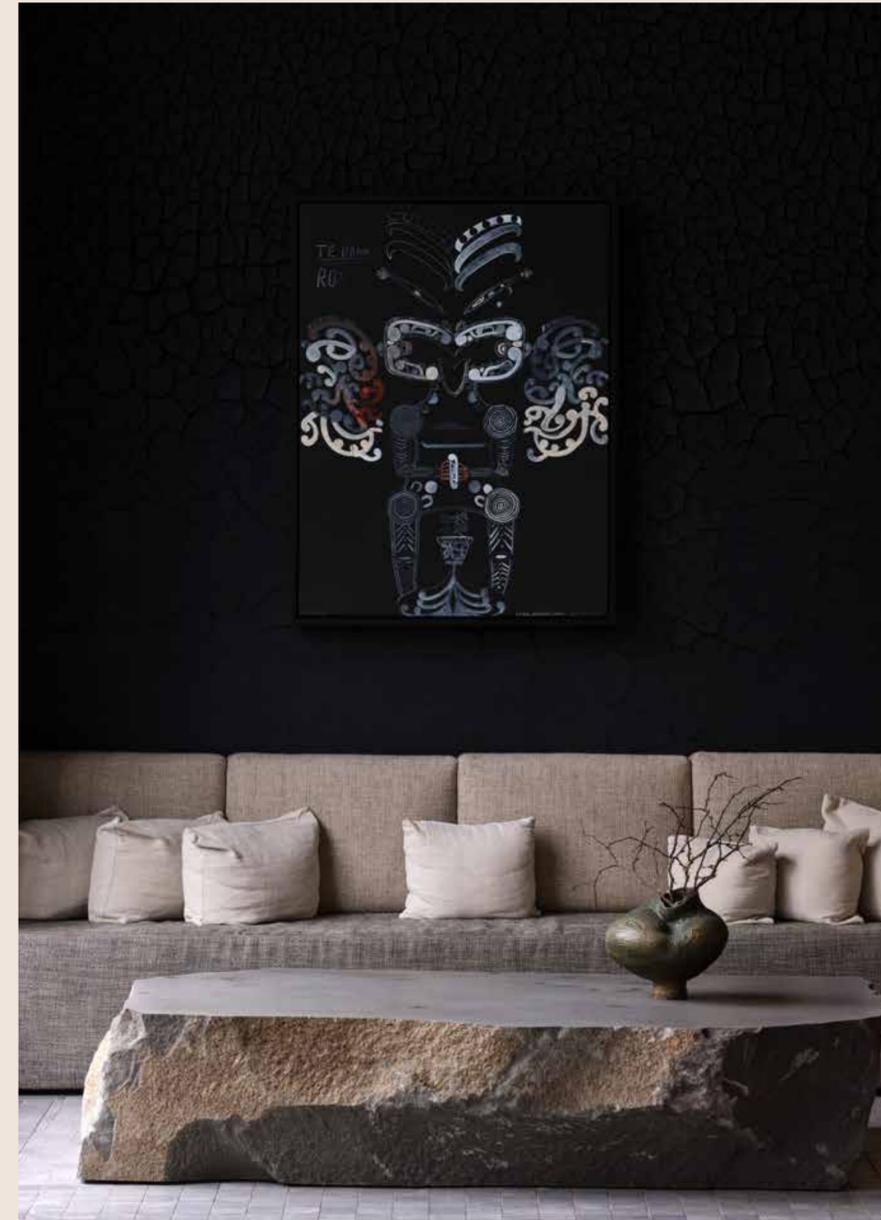
**Jeremy Hansen** Firstly Hayley, can you describe your job?

**Hayley Koerbin** I lead the New Zealand sustainability team at Norman Disney Young within our global sustainability group. We work across all regions and all sectors. We look at environmental sustainability: reducing energy use and carbon emissions, as well as social and governance sustainability such as occupant experience, health and wellbeing.

**JH** How did you get into this role?

**HK** I studied Building Science and majored in Sustainable Engineering Systems at Victoria University of Wellington. Eight years ago I moved to Melbourne and worked in this field there. I moved back to New Zealand almost two years ago. New Zealand has historically been behind Australia regarding sustainability in the built environment, so it means there's huge potential.

**JH** What does it mean for a building like The Hotel Britomart to have a 5-star Green Star rating?



The lobby of The Hotel Britomart features a painting by Shane Cotton (left), while the bronze door handle (above) was cast from a branch in architect Dajiang Tai's back yard. Photos by Samuel Hartnett.

**HK** If we look at Green Star it's a very holistic tool. To have that third-party assessment and certification is ensuring you're delivering on what you set out to do in the first place. Historically, things have fallen down during construction when there's no proof that what is designed is actually built. Green Star allows us to verify these outcomes through tangible assessment methods, and set the building up to operate in a sustainable way.

**JH** What does a Green Star rating show to a potential user of a building?

**HK** That [the building's developers are] looking to reduce the impact of climate change. It's enhancing our health and quality of life. The tool asks that we

look at restoring our biodiversity, our ecosystems, that we drive resilient outcomes and contribute to better communities, market transformation and a sustainable economy. Green Star enables us to benchmark data through modelling processes and product selections, how much energy we have saved and how much water use we have reduced. We can convert that to something the general public really understands. There are a lot of technical elements but everything has a very clear intent and outcome that relates to a positive impact on the environment and human health and wellbeing.

**JH** So what can I be assured of as an occupant of a Green Star building?

**HK** It depends on what credits the building has targeted, but one of the things that people notice first is a better indoor environmental quality. Daylight, high-quality light fittings – you may notice after a reasonable amount of time that you're not getting eye-strain, headaches or sneezing – you will feel a lot healthier in that space.

**JH** Why isn't every building required to have 5-star Green Star certification?

**HK** There are no government or property council regulations in New Zealand around this which does make it a bit difficult. A lot of clients see cost as a barrier. We try to guide them through the process – if you think about the building and design it well from the



Previous page: The Hotel Britomart project involved the creation of Tuawhiti Lane, which slips beside the hotel entrance to connect with Customs Street. Photo by Samuel Hartnett.



Above: Guest rooms in The Hotel Britomart feature organic cotton sheets, and hand-made ceramics by local artisans. Photos by Samuel Hartnett.

beginning, you won't see a huge increase in costs. We work to make sure these features are integrated into the design, rather than being an additional add on (and then cost) at the end of the process. People are starting to realise the benefits and how they translate to users of the space, and will make decisions based on that.

**JH** What are some highlight achievements of The Hotel Britomart, in your opinion?

**HK** Green Star certification applies to almost every decision made during construction, but there are a few that provide really clear examples of the difference a Green Star process can make. One of them is recycling or reuse of construction waste – the industry benchmark is for 70% of construction waste to be re-used or recycled, but The Hotel Britomart has achieved almost 80%, which is huge. Part of it is designing to minimise construction waste in the first place, then careful management on site to ensure that items are used efficiently and sorted correctly before going off for recycling.

The efficient design of the building avoids excessive heat gain or loss and means that we expect the building to have ~50% fewer greenhouse gas emissions than a building that meets the minimum requirements of the New Zealand building code. That's a huge improvement. We're also providing double the minimum requirements of fresh air specified in the building code, so there is less carbon dioxide in occupied spaces and people will feel more alert.

Although we have used concrete in the building's construction which typically is a very carbon-intensive material, the team has worked hard at minimising its environmental impact. That means at least 50% of the mix water for all concrete used in the project was captured or reclaimed water, and we've also ensured 60% of the coarse aggregate used in roading, footpaths or parking outside is recycled, recovered or secondary aggregate. Those are some of the highlights, but I don't want to underplay the huge range of attention to detail in other areas too – from the provision of flicker-free lighting (which makes people feel better in a space if they're there for longer periods of time) and access to natural light, to the use of environmentally friendly paints and other coatings. All the timber used in the building is responsibly sourced and has a low environmental impact. All the taps and other fittings are highly efficient with their water use. The list goes on – and every element of the list is checked, so everyone knows The Hotel Britomart will be meeting the standards it set itself.

# Measure everything Campbell Williamson



Above right: Campbell Williamson. Photo by Duncan Innes.

Britomart development director Campbell Williamson led construction on The Hotel Britomart, New Zealand's first 5 Green Star hotel. Here, he talks to Jeremy Hansen about the twists and turns and intense attention to detail that came with the design and construction process.

**Jeremy Hansen** According to the certificate on your wall, The Hotel Britomart has officially been awarded a 5 Green Star Design and Build rating.

**Campbell Williamson** Yes, it has. It was a nice accolade because we're the first New Zealand hotel to get a Green Star rating. That's a pat on the back for everyone, including the New Zealand Green Building Council, because being the first one, there was a lot of working through the interpretation of the documentation for the first time and how it all worked.

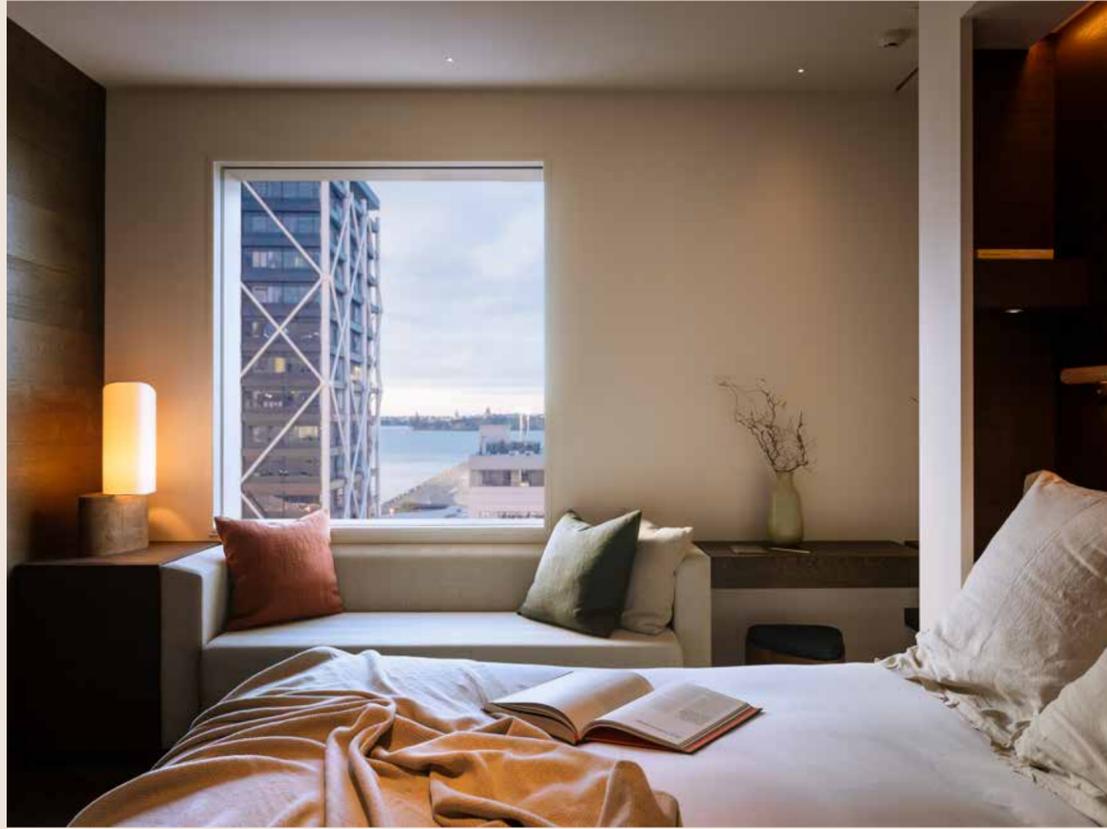
**JH** What did it take to achieve the 5 Green Star Design rating?

**CW** A lot of it is business as usual for Britomart. We've spent maybe a

couple hundred thousand dollars more, in terms of direct cost, than what might otherwise have been the case, to get us to the 5 Star Green Star rating. The key elements are concrete mixes, glass, insulation, [reducing] plastics in the building, furniture, timbers and veneers, stains, landscaping and wellness within the building such as volume of fresh air, carbon dioxide levels and so on.

**JH** Could you explain one or two of those elements in detail to give a clearer idea of what's involved?

**CW** Sure. In concrete, for example, a big factor is in how far the trucks have to travel to get to us. You might be able to get sustainable concrete, mixed and at the best price, but if it comes from the Waikato, 100km away, it's



Left: One of the guest rooms at The Hotel Britomart, with a view of the Waitematā Harbour. Right: The Hotel Britomart, viewed from Britomart's Takutai Square. Photos by Samuel Hartnett.

“Everything needs to be checked and double-checked and checked again – there are highly technical specifications and nuances.”

not going to work. You have to get a supplier closer to the site.

**JH** What's been the biggest challenge of building to Green Star standards?

**CW** For us, the big cost is in following through all the documentation and ensuring that it's right, and not just taking it as read when someone says, “Yeah, it's all right.” Everything needs to be checked and double-checked and checked again. And it's important that we get the terminology right because the certifications and labelling are not yet day-to-day business in New Zealand's construction industry – there are highly technical specifications and nuances that can trip us up.

It's not so much the direct cost, it's the management and the research requirements that have been the most challenging. There are products that the industry understands well and that everyone has become used to using without any question that they satisfy the building codes and that they are compatible with all the other components of the building process. But if a new product is substituted

in because the usual product is not Green Star compliant, that new product requires thorough research and analysis as do all the other components the proposed Green Star product relates to, to ensure they are all equally compatible. For example, a change away from standard timber stains on our project triggered questions to revisit flame spread, colour selection, adhesion, availability, ease of application, safety, warranties, and so on. On first look, a product might have the attributes we need, but it's not until we're really digging into all of the product attributes that we can be certain it is compatible. But did all of that.

**JH** So the Design rating comes first, and now hotel has received a Build rating, which reflects how closely the Design rating was followed in reality.

**CW** The design stage was one part of it, but the delivery is another again. That's where we have prove we've done what we said was going to happen on the drawings. Now the 5 Green Star Build rating has come through, we've proven the hotel is running as it should.



# Thread count Tamzin Hawkins



Above right: Tamzin Hawkins. Photo by Jaime Smith.  
Far right: The Hotel Britomart uniforms.

The Hotel Britomart's 5 Green Star rating applies only to the building, but the sustainable ethos has been woven through every decision the hotel makes. Take, for example, the hotel uniforms: as designer Tamzin Hawkins explains to Melinda Williams, every part of them was made as sustainably as possible.

**Melinda Williams** How did you get started in the textiles business?

**Tamzin Hawkins** I studied at AUT – a Bachelor of Art & Design – and I worked for Trelise Cooper once I graduated. From there, I went and lived in the UK and worked for Silver Cross, designing textiles for pushchairs and baby strollers. That was quite different. After about five years I came back to start my own thing in New Zealand. I actually started Mavis & Osborn in children's wear but after I made some aprons for a friend's cafe in Wellington, the aprons took off really organically and the children's wear got left behind. I've been expanding the range from there. Mavis & Osborn is now more homewares, and then we have White

Label, which is uniforms and products for brands.

**MW** What made you passionate about sustainability?

**TH** As a maker, I think it's a moral obligation to look after the earth, and if you're going to make consumer products, you're responsible for what goes into them and what happens to them at the end of their life. When I started my label, I made a commitment to only use natural materials. When I was working for Silver Cross, everything was manufactured in China. It was huge volumes of product moving around and I realised I'd ended up quite a long way from my roots. I really wanted to focus on natural materials and supporting local economies.

“I really wanted to focus on natural materials and supporting local economies.”

That was quite a challenge in the beginning, trying to source as much as we could from New Zealand. It took a long time to source all our suppliers. We're constantly researching. At the beginning of last year I began to look more into the circular economy concept and how we could adopt that for our business.

**MW** What have you produced for The Hotel Britomart?

**TH** We've created uniforms for front-of-house, porters, housekeeping and food and beverage. The uniforms are made from a set of garments combined in different ways and in different colours, maybe a different collar style. This is actually the biggest order that we've done, so it's a new scale for us, and the first time we've done a full uniform.

**MW** Linen is your preferred textile – why is that?

**TH** Yes, generally. It uses a lot less water than cotton to produce, and it's a really nice, hard-wearing textile. We do use cotton as well, and for the leggings that we've produced for The Hotel Britomart housekeeping, we've sourced an organic cotton which is manufactured in Australia. That's from a mill that's really focused on creating environmentally friendly product. I like the idea of using something that can be composted at the end of its life. Firstly, I want something that is made well so it has a long initial life but can be refreshed by overdyeing, or repaired to elongate that life even further. Once it's finished in that format, it can be dismantled and made into something else – a bag, or a hat or a patchwork quilt. And at the very end, it can be recycled into felt, which can be mixed with wool to make insulation or fabric blankets for movers, or it can be composted.



**MW** Where did you source the materials for the uniforms from?

**TH** We source our fabrics through local wholesalers and ask as many questions as possible about traceability and the factories they get their fabrics through. We then dye the fabrics here using GOTS-certified [Global Organic Textile Standards] dyes – the last New Zealand dye house, North Shore Dyers, is based in Auckland. The fabric is then pressed and re-rolled, before being sent to the cutters in Kingsland. We use Mother-of-Pearl shell and Tagua nut or Corozo nut buttons, which are both natural, sustainable products. The shell buttons come from oysters as a by-product of the food industry, and the nut buttons are sourced through sustainable rainforest projects in South America, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Panama.

**MW** You've also made the lovely slippers that are in The Landing Suites.

**TH** Yes. They use the recycled textile I mentioned before, which is made in Auckland from shredded clothing mixed with wool. That's the padding inside the slippers. The sole is made from Everol, which is a rubber flooring which is recycled from rubber tyres. It's Good Environmental Choice Australia certified, and is a natural, non-slip soling. They can be washed, unlike normal hotel slippers, which are thrown out after one use. Once they've reached the end of their lives, they can be returned to the manufacturer and recycled again. We've also made linen bags for The Landing Suites, to hold the hair styling tools and other items.

# The Barrington Sofrana Buildings

Right: The Barrington Sofrana Buildings under renovation. Photos by David St George.

The story of Britomart is also the story of the careful refurbishment of a group of the city's most important heritage buildings, bringing them up to Green Star standards and opening them up for use by a new generation of occupants. The Barrington and Sofrana Buildings were both constructed around the beginning of the 1900s as warehouses to service the city's busy port. Now, they're undergoing a thoughtful refurbishment that not only preserves an important part of Auckland's built heritage, but brings them into the 21st century by targeting a 5 Green Star rating for its reopening in late 2022.



# Building history Nicolau Domingues



Above right: Architect Nicolau Domingues. Photo supplied.

Peddlethorp architect Nicolau Domingues tells Melinda Williams about the pleasures of making the heritage Barrington and Sofrana buildings usable for a new era of occupants.

**Melinda Williams** The Peddlethorp team worked earlier on the refurbishment of the Australis and Nathan Buildings (now home to Tiffany & Co, Chanel and Miann, and Duncan Cotterill, Anderson Lloyd and Hobson Wealth in the office spaces above). Could you start by telling us a little about the background of the Barrington and Sofrana Buildings?

**Nicolau Domingues** Both buildings were designed by the same architect, John Currie, an Irishman who was also a founding member of the New Zealand Institute of Architects. His design for Sofrana House was completed in 1900, and for the adjacent Barrington Building in 1905. Each building has its own architectural style. They were warehouse buildings: Sofrana House was originally a warehouse for a British company – Messrs P Hayman & Co – that dealt in jewellery, tobacco, crockery, musical

goods and more. The Barrington Building was originally the G. Kronfeld Building. Gustav Kronfeld was a very successful trading merchant who grew up in Prussia, as it was called then and we now know generally as Germany, and had lived in the Pacific before moving to Auckland. He had a Samoan wife, Louisa, and traded in goods from the Pacific Islands. But when WWI broke out, there was a suspicion of people [with German ancestry], so he was interned in Motuihe Island and the Barrington building was confiscated. Not a very good ending. He collected a lot of wonderful treasures from the islands, which his descendants gifted to the national museum.

**MW** Once the buildings are refurbished, what will the experience of walking into them be like?

**ND** They will be pretty impressive. If you're going in through the main office



entry on Galway Street, it's all very modern with a cantilevered canopy and massive pivot doors – very grand. And the exposed timber structure over the lobby is five metres high. Once inside, you'll see the new insertion of the steel and glass lift and stairs core which runs all the way up and through the building. This is a strong sculptural element that injects some 'new' into the building, but sensitively – it echoes the steel straps and braces used in the original construction. The original brick walls are being exposed and cleaned. The two buildings are being joined to give their users the option of large continuous floor plates. We're also revealing the original natural timber structures, with kauri floors and jarrah columns. They've all been cleaned back by garnet-blasting them, which removes paint but doesn't damage the bricks, and reveals the original saw marks in the timber.

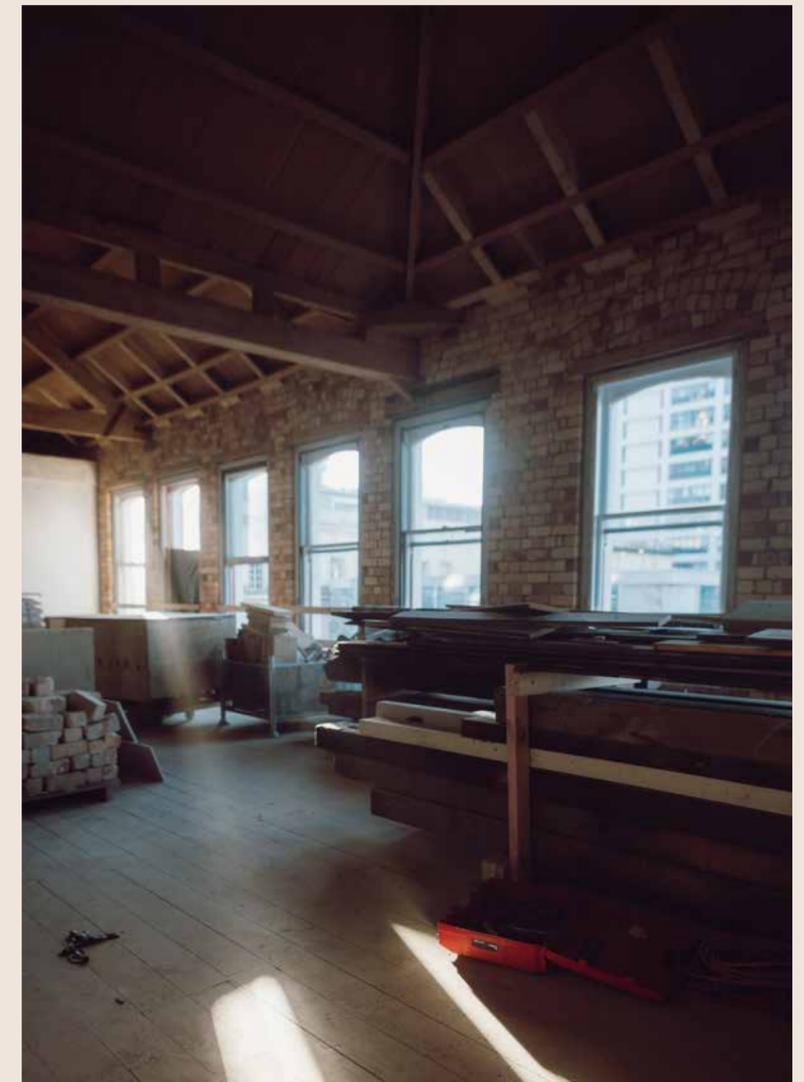
**MW** Did you have any particular architectural references for the way you approached the restoration?

**ND** There's a building in America, the Bradbury Building, which was in the movie *Blade Runner*, that was built around the same time, 1893. It has these wrought-iron stairs and lifts that were of the period, and a big glass canopy atrium in the centre. So we referenced that beauty in this project – in a modern version, but that same type of feel. We've been very strict about keeping everything in one of the structural bays in steel, because we didn't want to introduce any new materials apart from what was required for circulation. When we designed the lifts, we added a skylight

“This is dummy text, to fill the space.”



Top: A view of Customs Street East, early 1900s. Right: The Barrington Building in the early 2000s. Below: Refurbishment under way. Photo by David St George.





“With a heritage building, it’s a unique space, where you can have an experience that you couldn’t have anywhere else.”

to the roof above where the lifts are, to bring light down through the floors. So when you move through the building, whether you’re using the glass lifts or the steel stairs, you see all the little ledges and joist pockets that existed where the timber floors used to be, and you get a sense of how the original building was made, which we think is quite a special experience.

**MW** What about the modern technical elements of the office spaces, those details that make the spaces comfortable environments to work in?

**ND** We were a little bit obsessive around the new elements – in an office building, the integration of services is key. The main services vertical risers are hidden behind recycled timber cladding and the horizontal distribution of air-conditioning ducts and electrical cable trays on each floor are architecturally amped up because they are all exposed up under the beautiful timber ceilings. Everything has been aligned with the heavy timbers to maximise the internal heights, whilst being sympathetic to

the rhythm of the timber structure. The lighting is a cutting-edge dali system that provides for almost infinite control of every light fitting and can control the brightness and dimming of each. There are light sensors so the system can automatically adjust itself according to the sunlight coming in. You will get a lot of natural light from the northern facade on Galway Street because the arched windows are quite beautifully large; these windows will have new sashes and be reglazed for improved acoustics and energy (heating and cooling) efficiency. The bathroom blocks are completely new and very modern, with floor to ceiling LED lighting, minimalistic fixtures, and very particular detailing, though you don’t see that from the office areas, because they’re clad in recycled timber boards to integrate them into the original fabric.

**MW** It’s pleasing to see these heritage buildings and the materials in them being preserved for a new generation. It’s true that sense of history makes character buildings lovely to work in, doesn’t it?



**ND** With a heritage building, it’s a unique space, where you have an experience that you couldn’t have anywhere else. We think there’s such a richness of character in these spaces that there’s always something to fall in love with. We [Peddle Thorp] are in a heritage building here in the Northern Steamship building in Britomart, and we just feel so fortunate to be here.



This page: Renderings showing the Galway Street elevation and interiors of the building, which will open in late 2022.



# Our Community

Our annual survey of the people who work in Britomart.

# 05

# Survey Results



Above right: Takutai Square during one of Britomart's Street Kai on Takutai events. Photo by Joe Hockley.

We conduct an annual survey of Britomart community members as part of our reporting under the Green Star Performance Tool. This covers aspects like thermal and acoustic comfort levels, lighting and air quality in buildings. This year we also included questions related to wider environmental issues to establish a benchmark for future surveys.

The survey was sent out to members of the Britomart community by email, and received 325 responses.

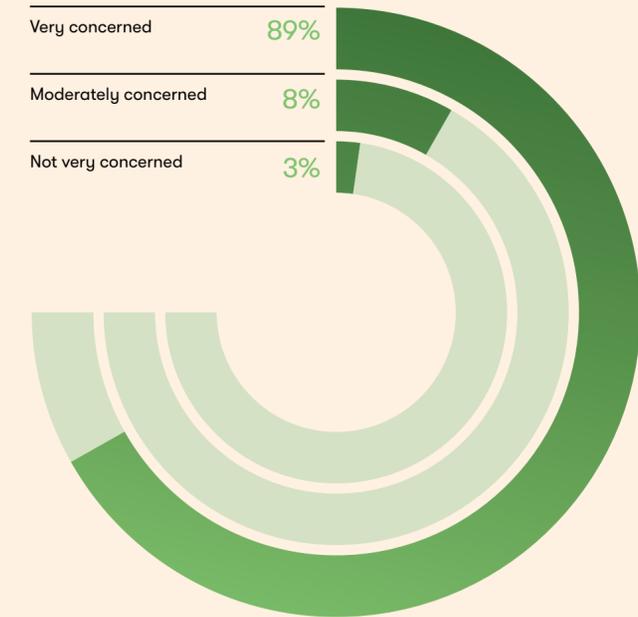
The survey size means the results displayed here are not definitive, but we believe the questions about wider environmental issues in particular provide a useful benchmark for us to track attitudinal changes each year. In this sense, the emailed survey is another tool which allows us to take a broader view of our sustainability efforts, and to ensure our initiatives

are in tune with the desires of our community.

This year's survey revealed high levels of environmental concern but – and this may be pandemic related – fewer companies emphasising sustainability policies, and an increase in the percentage of people who choose to drive to work.

## 01

### How concerned are you about climate change?

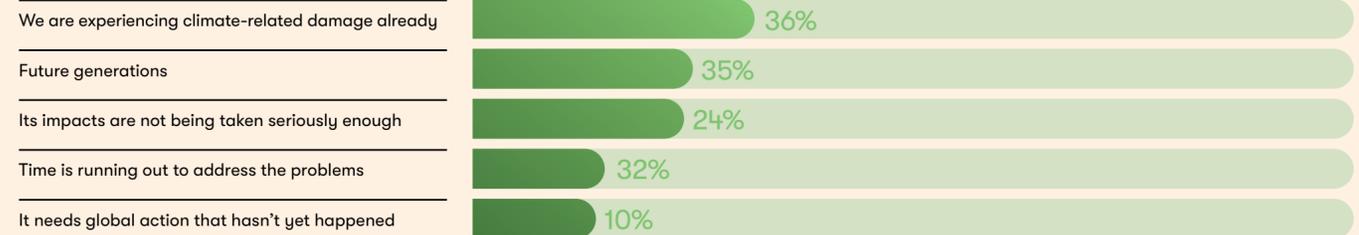


This is the first year we have tracked environmental concerns in our survey.

## 02

### What are you most concerned about?

Respondents could write in their own specific concerns, but they fitted into these broad categories.



## 03

### We asked people about environmental policies in the places they work.

# 75%

of businesses actively encourage sustainability

This figure is down from 85% recorded in our 2020 survey

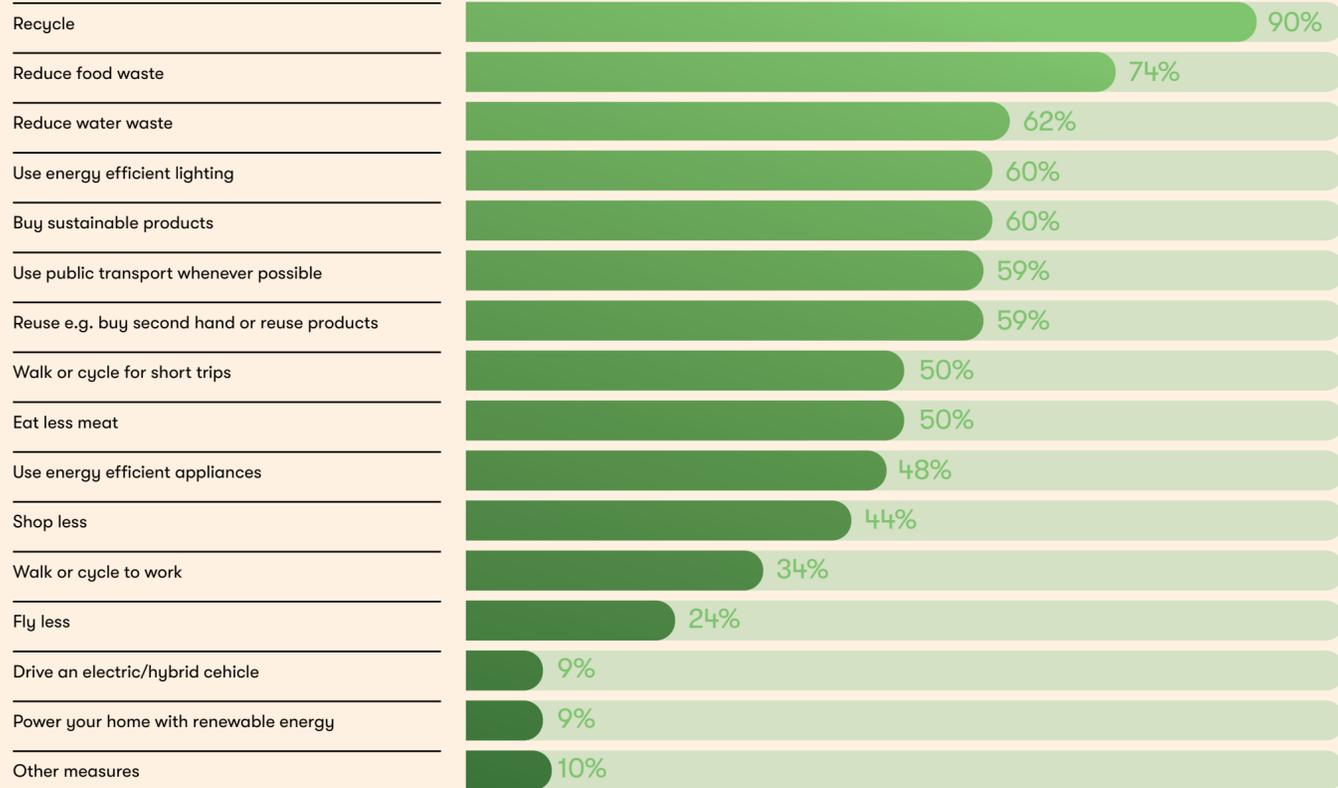
# 45%

of businesses set sustainability targets

This number is up 1% from our 2020 survey

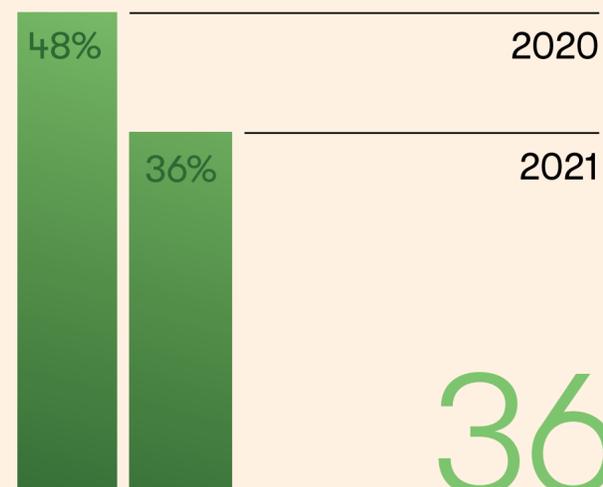
# 04

## What do you do to minimise your personal environmental impact?



# 05

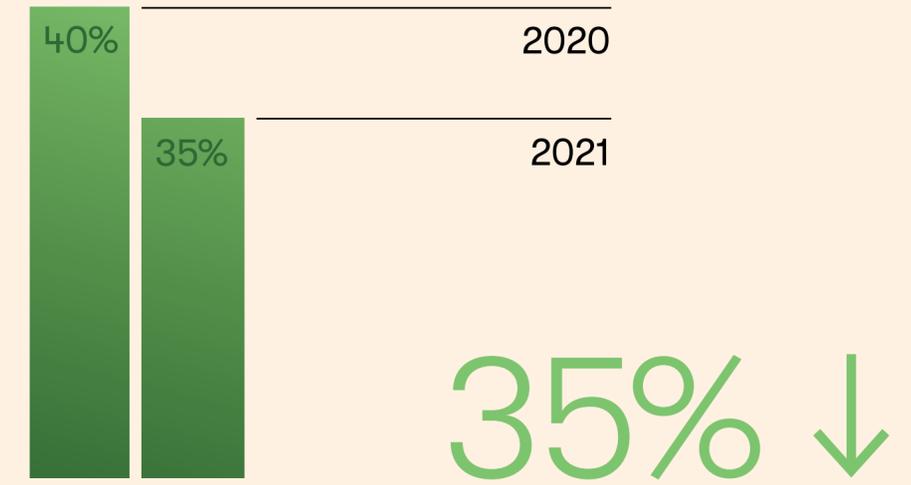
The number of nominated sustainability representatives in Britomart businesses also dropped. In 2021, 36% of respondents said their company had a sustainability representative, down from 48% in 2020.



Food and beverage and retail businesses were less likely to have an environmental policy, a sustainability representative, or to be setting sustainability targets.

# 06

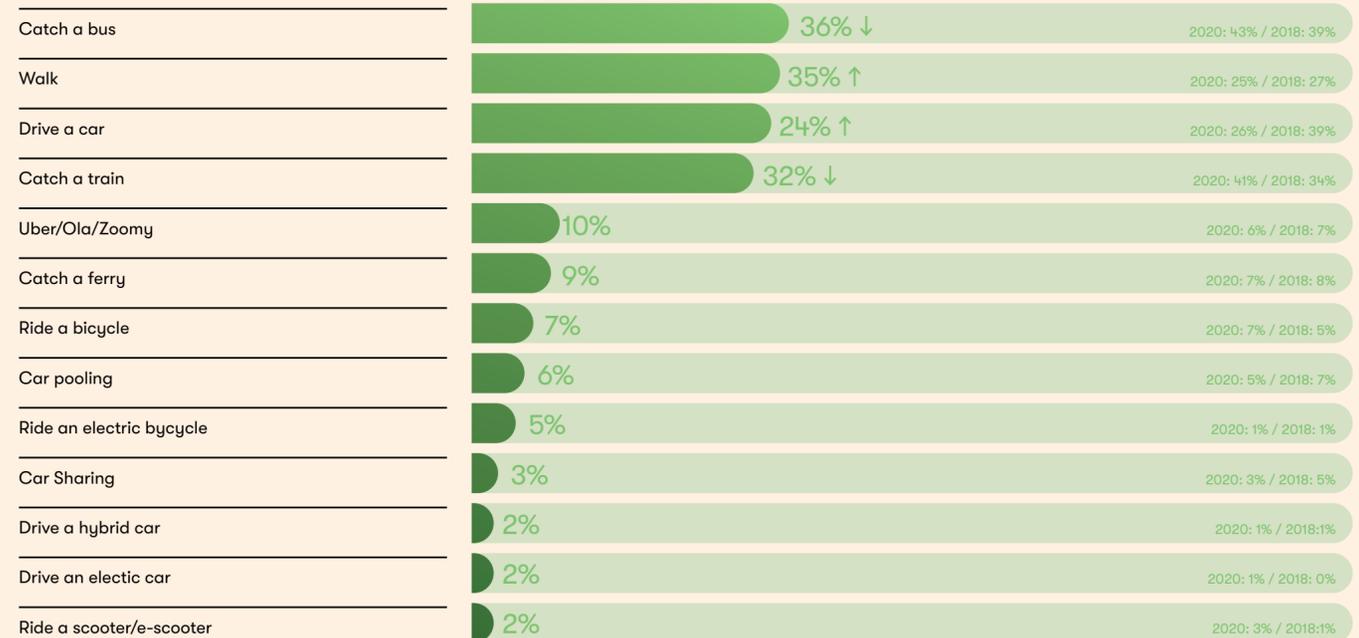
We asked workers if their companies had an environmental management policy. Only 35% said yes, down from 40% in 2020.



# 07

## How do you get to work?

Respondents could choose more than one option. Driving was up, a Covid-related pattern seen across the city.



51%  
Cheapest option

These respondents chose their mode of transport because it was the cheapest option.

42%  
Environmental

These respondents took environmental factors into account when choosing their mode of transport.

33%  
Only option

Over a third of drivers said coming to work by car was the only option available to them.

# Britomart Neighbourhood

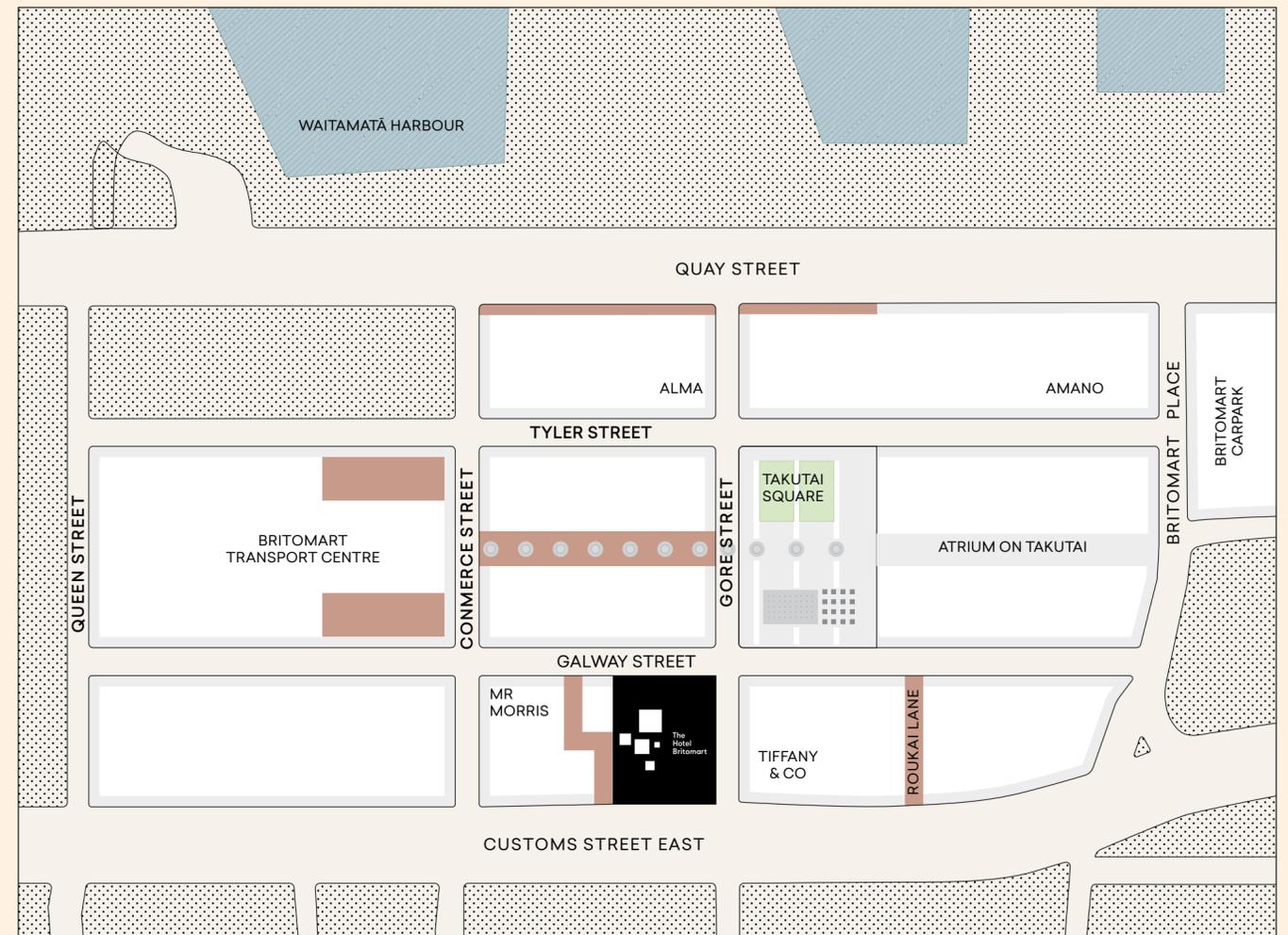
The nine-block Britomart precinct is situated on the edge of the Waitematā Harbour, just east of Queen Street.



Britomart is founded on a 2004 agreement between the Britomart Group and Auckland Council. Cooperand Company is the asset and development manager for the Britomart Group, which holds a contract for the long-term ownership and development of the Britomart Precinct.

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Caption in here. Photo by David St George.





TIFFANY & CO.

The Hotel Erickson

JARDEN

allbirds



