

Opening the heart of a (post) colonial city

Histories, icons, and spatial structure in the city of Hamilton, Aotearoa New Zealand

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Planning is a cultural activity, with the way we represent the spatial structure of cities reflecting our worldview. Within Aotearoa New Zealand, planning traditions and approaches practiced by indigenous Māori have been marginalized by colonial planning practices based in Western epistemology. However, Māori are promoting their planning traditions through strategic planning documents.

Through the Treaty settlement process, Māori tribes are becoming major landowners in urban areas. Land returned as redress for grievances under the Treaty of Waitangi is developed for the benefit of the tribe. This research investigates tensions between the development of tribal land and local government growth strategies, by comparing the different icons, spatial structures, and development patterns visible in Māori and Pākehā planning documents. The research is based on critical discourse analysis of strategic planning documents, and interviews.

Focusing on the Hamilton district/Waikato-Tainui tribal area of New Zealand, this article considers the metaphor of the 'City Heart' employed by Hamilton City Council to reinforce the importance of the Central Business District; and the representation of the tribally-owned 'The Base' development as an icon of 'economic sovereignty'. Spatial concepts such as compact development emphasise the primacy of the central city. However, strategic planning which concentrates development around historical, colonial centres may ignore the possibility of other spatial patterns, such as indigenous centres of economic, political, social, and cultural activity. To reconcile these complexities, planners need to work within a 'dual planning framework' which recognizes both Māori and Pākehā planning traditions and spatial patterns. Planners must be aware of the historical development of their city, the importance of Treaty settlements, and work towards social justice.

Keywords: bicultural; metaphor; urban development; planning

Pākehā planning and Māori planning

Planning is a cultural activity and, within settler-colonial countries such as Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, planning is seen as an activity that originates within colonial culture (Porter, 2010). Acknowledging the colonial origins of 'Pākehā' planning also requires recognizing the existence of indigenous 'Māori' planning. For the last twenty years, Hirini Matunga, Professor of Indigenous Planning, has argued that Aotearoa New Zealand has "dual planning traditions" enshrined in te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), the country's founding document signed in 1840. Since colonisation, however, Maori planning has been practiced without recognition by Pākehā institutions such as local government "...through a process of deliberate colonial exclusion. As a discipline it did not disappear, but evolved outside the dominant tradition, which to this day has continued to disempower it" (Matunga, 2000, p36). Within both Pākehā and Māori planning traditions, the "...creation and use of symbolic representations", including icons and metaphors, is critical for communicating planning ideas, and influences how the spatial structure of the city or region is understood (Fischler, 1995, p15; Agnew, 1993).

The implications of dual planning traditions, and different concepts of spatial structure, are becoming increasingly visible as Aotearoa New Zealand begins to address its colonial history. Over the last twenty years, many iwi and hapū have negotiated agreements with the Crown, which acknowledge and provide redress for breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Te Tiriti guaranteed to Māori "te tino rangatiratanga", or in the English version of the treaty, "the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession" (Orange, 2012); however, this guarantee was not upheld – land and resources were confiscated from Māori, and livelihoods destroyed. Under the agreements, known as 'Treaty settlements', iwi and hapū use funds to purchase land parcels from a range of properties identified as surplus to Crown needs (Stone, 2012). Land identified as 'commercial redress' is considered as an asset to assist with rebuilding the economic base of the iwi or hapū. Treaty settlements provide a symbolic 'new beginning' for relationships between colonial government and indigenous Māori, as well as physical redress for grievances (Wheen and Hayward, 2012). Through Treaty settlements, iwi and hapū are regaining their status as major landowners in Aotearoa New Zealand cities.

This article argues that land returned to Māori as 'commercial redress' through Treaty settlement is being incorporated into Māori concepts of spatial structure, creating new icons of 'economic sovereignty' within an existing spatial network of mountains and rivers, meeting places, and settlements. This evolving spatial structure is evident in planning documents which promote Māori planning traditions as a complement and contrast to local government 'Pākehā' planning. Exploring planning histories of the city of Hamilton, also known as Kirikiriroa, in the Waikato region of Aotearoa New Zealand, I focus on two icons which illustrate differences between these two cultural planning traditions. The 'City Heart' metaphor used by Hamilton City Council to describe the Central Business District as an icon of 'city vitality' is compared with discourse around development at 'The Base', a large format retail and mall developed on land returned under Treaty settlement to the tribe Waikato-Tainui, and proposed as an icon of 'economic sovereignty'. Comparing these two icons, within the context of the different spatial structures articulated within Māori and Pākehā strategic planning documents, illustrates why conflict has arisen between Waikato-Tainui and Hamilton City Council over the development of Treaty settlement land outside the Central Business District.

Considering the social justice context for the return of land to Waikato-Tainui, I argue that there is a need for bicultural planning practice which brings together both approaches, reconciling compact and concentrated development patterns with spatial structures which do not necessarily centre on the Central Business District of Hamilton city.

This research is based on critical discourse analysis of strategic planning documents published by Hamilton City Council and Waikato-Tainui, as well as evidence presented at a hearing of the High Court of New Zealand. Discourse analysis is complemented by data from interviews with case study participants who have created or used these planning documents, as well as interviews with key informants.

Colonial and indigenous origins of Hamilton city

To give context to the 'City Heart' metaphor, and to understand the link between social justice and development at The Base, it is important to explore the histories of Hamilton city. American geographer Laura Pulido has written that to understand contemporary spatial patterns of justice and injustice we must examine "...the historical development of urban space", accepting that "...these processes are inherently racialized" (2000, p.25). Discussing the origins of colonial settlements, such as Hamilton, Australian planning academic Libby Porter notes that:

'[t]ownship building had a significance beyond the immediate occupation of spaces...
Towns were a military strategy in the wars with Indigenous peoples' (2010, p72).

The city of Hamilton was established in 1864 by the 4th Waikato militia as a military town around redoubts on both sides of the Waikato River. The Waikato militia formed part of the colonial forces which invaded Waikato in 1863-4 to suppress the Kīngitanga, a movement which opposed land sales and supported Māori to "keep Māori land in Māori hands" (Mahuta, 2008, p175). The invasion of the Waikato was '...one of the major campaigns of the New Zealand Wars and involved over 12,000 British & Colonial forces against Māori forces unlikely to have numbered more than 2000 at any one time' (Hamilton City Council, 2014a). In August 2014, Hamilton City Council celebrated 150 years since the settlement of Hamilton. The Council website recorded that:

'This was the anniversary of the landing of the first British settlers in Hamilton/Kirikiroa and the establishment of the first militia settlement... [T]his date is recognised as the birth of the city of Hamilton as we know it today' (Hamilton City Council, 2014a)

Māori settlements existed on the site where Hamilton now stands, including the "...abandoned Māori village of Kirikiroa, on the west bank. Remains of other villages on both banks confirm this stretch of river had been well-occupied" (Swarbrick, 2015, p7). The significance of these settlements to the decision to site the future city is unclear. However, landscape architect Garth Falconer, who has recently written a history of urban design across 'kāinga, towns and cities' in Aotearoa New Zealand, records that while "...some surveyors would interview local Māori and interpret the landscape, on the whole they were in a hurry and little or no heed was taken of pre-existing Māori spatial patterns..." (2015, p43). Matunga sees this marginalisation as intentional, stating that the aim of the colonists "...was to remove any material evidence/reminder and memory of Indigenous communities, their places, sites, resources and villages, and replace it with a new colonial order,

ultimately creating a 'new' materiality and memory of/for settler communities" (2013, p9). In the case of Hamilton, the establishment of militia settlements was certainly an act of aggression. Towns were "a key mechanism of colonization...that began by stamping grid plans wherever it could" (Falconer, 2015, p13).

The development of the 'City Heart' as an icon

The town centre is a key component of a grid plan, which reflects the categorization of uses and the hierarchy of spaces common in Western understandings of urban spatial structure (Foucault and Miskowiec, 1986). The importance of the town centre as an icon of civic vitality is reflected in strategic planning documents produced by local government in the Waikato region. In the late 2000s, two planning exercises were undertaken to establish a development pattern for Hamilton city. 'Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy' was published by Hamilton City Council in 2010. The strategy characterises the Central Business District of Hamilton as the 'Hamilton City Heart', and identifies approaches for urban growth which include 'regeneration and residential development in the City Heart, transport hubs, suburban centres and areas of high public transport amenity' (Hamilton City Council, 2010, p8). The 'City Heart' term is used in the context of economic development, and also urban design. The second exercise, 'Future Proof', sets out a strategy for the development of part of the Waikato region encompassing Hamilton City, Waikato District, and parts of Waipa District. Community engagement resulted in support for a 'Compact Settlement' scenario, comprising an increased number of households in the urban area, and some increased housing density; combined with a 'Concentrated Growth' scenario, comprising significant housing intensification especially in Hamilton City (Future Proof Joint Committee, 2009). The 'Future Proof' strategy also emphasised the primacy of the Central Business District, using the language of 'City Heart' coined in the 'Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy'.

Within these strategic planning documents, the metaphor of the 'City Heart' has been employed to prioritise development in the Central Business District of Hamilton City. The Central Business District is seen as both the retail heart of Hamilton, and also the social/political/cultural heart of the region. Hamilton's Central Business District has historically been home to outlets for major shopping chains, and the CentrePlace mall. The nine-storey headquarters for Hamilton City Council, the second tallest building in the city, stands at the centre of the District, forming one edge of the square known as Garden Place. There are a number of central government offices nearby. Victoria Street, named after Queen Victoria whose representative William Hobson signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi, is the main street which runs through the Central Business District, parallel to the Waikato River. Victoria Street is also home to the Waikato Museum, the civic library, and the casino. Within the latest Hamilton City District Plan, the Central Business District sits at the apex of a hierarchy of commercial centres (Hamilton City Council, 2014b).

The use of the metaphor 'City Heart' conveys information about local government understandings of the spatial structure of Hamilton city. Within Western epistemology, it is not a new metaphor to compare the city to a bodily system (for example, see Sennett, 1994; Grosz, 1995). The metaphor of 'city as body' reflects the complex and interconnected systems within the city (Sennett, 1994; Grosz, 1995), and likening the Central Business District to a 'heart' implies a critical focus of activity, supporting the vitality of the city as the pumping of the heart supplies blood to support the vitality

of the body . The emphasis on economic development and retail activity reflects an understanding of the city as “revolv[ing] around commerce” (Grosz, 1995) and as a labour market (Bertaud, 2004). Considering the heart as the seat of the emotions in Western epistemology, the metaphor ‘City Heart’ also suggests the emotional connection residents may feel to their civic spaces as an expression or symbol of their city’s identity. Within the ‘Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy’ and ‘Future Proof’, the ‘City Heart’ metaphor emphasises the iconic role of the Central Business District to sustain and support the social and economic functioning of Hamilton city (Future Proof Joint Committee, 2009; Hamilton City Council, 2010).

‘Raupatu’ and the return of land through Treaty settlement

The colonial history of Hamilton city, and the emphasis on activity in the ‘City Heart’, contrasts with the history and development activities of Waikato-Tainui in the same region. Following the invasion of Waikato, and the establishment of the militia settlement which became Hamilton, 1.2 million acres of land were confiscated by the Crown from Waikato-Tainui. Termed ‘raupatu’, the ‘conquest of land’ (Mahuta, 2008), this confiscation “...has had a crippling impact on the welfare, economy and development of Waikato” (Deed of Settlement 1995, p4). The term ‘raupatu’ also “...indicated that a struggle for return must occur, even if it took generations” (McCan, 2001 p328). Following many years of discussion, Waikato-Tainui agreed a Treaty settlement with the Crown, legislated through the Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act in 1995.

During negotiation of the settlement, Waikato-Tainui representatives held to two principles - I riro whenua atu, me hoki whenua mai: As land was taken, land must be returned - and - Ko te moni hei utu mo te hara: The money is the acknowledgement by the Crown of the crime. In order to provide redress, the Crown agreed to return “as much land as is possible that the Crown has in its possession to Waikato” (Deed of Settlement 1995). An interviewee from Waikato-Tainui recalls: “We wanted everything. Everything. It could be a railway siding, it could be a forest... It was just a philosophy of land-for-land... we took everything that was on offer. We didn't reject anything” (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014). Eventually, Waikato-Tainui accepted 1800 properties across the Waikato and Auckland regions, including land formerly owned by Coalcorp, Railcorp, and Housing New Zealand, among others (Solomon, 1995; Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014). These lands were returned by the Crown “...to atone for these acknowledged injustices and... to begin the process of healing and to enter a new age of co-operation with the Kiingitanga and Waikato” (Deed of Settlement 1995, p.7).

The Treaty settlement has allowed Waikato-Tainui to begin to rebuild their tribal wealth. The total value of the land returned was approximately \$100 million, however, as with all Treaty settlements, this redress is estimated to comprise only a fraction of the value of the land that was confiscated (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2015). Properties returned included a significant piece of land at Te Rapa, situated six kilometres north of the Hamilton Central Business District. The land at Te Rapa has been described as “the jewel in the crown of the settlement” (Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council, 2010). Since 2004, the land has been developed into ‘The Base’ retail centre, the largest shopping centre in New Zealand, and Te Awa shopping mall. ‘The Base’ refers to the previous use of the site as a military base by the Crown, and ‘Te Awa’ (‘the river’) refers to Waikato river which runs through Hamilton City and which gives Waikato-Tainui their name (The Base, 2015).

Understanding The Base as an icon of economic sovereignty

Statements by Waikato-Tainui indicate that developing The Base is part of realising the Treaty settlement reached with the Crown in 1995. The vision for The Base held by Waikato-Tainui is clearly linked to the concept of 'economic sovereignty' visible in the tribe's strategic plan, 'Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050' (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2007; Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014). Waikato-Tainui leader Koro Wetere emphasises the contribution of income from The Base to the tribe's economic development and wellbeing, stating that The Base

'...is a springboard of opportunity that will enable us to develop a strong economic base that is capable of providing growth, financial independence and social self-reliance. Waikato-Tainui will continue to own the land in perpetuity and through the development of the site, will provide a future income stream for the tribe' (2009).

Land owned by Waikato-Tainui is developed by the tribe's 'intergenerational investor', Tainui Group Holdings. An interviewee from Waikato-Tainui highlighted the limited effect that the assets transferred at the time of settlement can have on the wellbeing of 60,000 tribal members, recovering from 140 years of loss. It is clear that tribal assets need to be multiplied, in order "...to be meaningful to tribal members", both present and future (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2015). Developments by Tainui Group Holdings provides dividends which the tribe distributes to marae and through educational grants. Development at The Base is also intended to deliver social benefits to Waikato-Tainui people, including employment, training, and management opportunities (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014).

The theme of sovereignty and economic development is reflected in the spatial structure articulated by Waikato-Tainui in their Environmental Management Plan 'Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao', published in 2013. The vision presented in the plan is a Maimai Aroha (roughly translated as a 'song of longing') composed by Kīngi Tawhiao, the leader of the Kīngitanga at the time of the Waikato invasion and raupatu. The Maimai Aroha traverses the Waikato region celebrating the fertility of the land and naming important places such as the mountains of Pirongia, Maungatautari, Maungakawa, and Taupiri, as well as the town of Ngāruawāhia, chosen by the first Māori king, King Potatau Te Wherowhero as his headquarters in 1858. The Plan also provides a map of the Waikato-Tainui rohe (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2013, p3). Sixty-eight marae are spread across the rohe from Umupuia in the north to Te Tokanga-a-Noho in the south. All marae are represented with the same graphic; none are smaller or larger. The map shows no cities, towns or roads – the outline of the landmass and the shape of the Waikato river running from Lake Taupo to the coast are the only orienting features. Through this representation, the Plan emphasises the diversity and independence of Waikato-Tainui hapuu, each of whom wishes to develop self-sufficient marae to support their social and economic well-being (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2007). As an asset critical to recovering the economic independence of the tribe, land returned under Treaty settlement, such as The Base, appears to be becoming an important location in the Waikato-Tainui spatial structure, and a focus for development. 'Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao' sets out the tribe's aspirations for the development of their land, including land returned under Treaty settlement. Although Waikato-Tainui owns land within the Central Business District, major pieces of land returned under Treaty settlement, such as The Base, are on the outskirts of the existing Hamilton urban area. The Plan

emphasises that economic development on Treaty settlement land is part of a bigger picture of social and cultural justice:

‘Ultimately the commercial benefit of any Waikato-Tainui development remains within the rohe and for the benefit of Waikato-Tainui tribal members and the wider community. The link between the economic and commercial success of Waikato-Tainui and their cultural and social success cannot be overstated’ (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2013, p219)

The location of land returned under Treaty settlement, the spatial structure of the network of Waikato-Tainui marae and the identification of other political/social/cultural ‘hearts’ such as Ngāruawāhia creates a distributed spatial structure that centres on sites significant to Waikato-Tainui, both before and after Treaty settlement. As on-going development at The Base suggests, to realise the benefits of Treaty settlements Waikato-Tainui may need to pursue a development pattern that differs from the pattern promoted in local government documents.

The Heart versus The Base

However, the peripheral location of The Base development has already led to conflict with Hamilton City Council. Over the last ten years, coinciding with the development of The Base at Te Rapa, the vitality of the Central Business District has declined. Hamilton City Council became increasingly concerned that ‘out of centre’ development was undermining the “sustainable and efficient operation” of the Central Business District (“Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council,” 2010), and the efforts of the council to retain the Central Business District as the primary retail centre for the city (Interviewee – Hamilton City Council 2015). Although The Base has been an economic success for Waikato-Tainui, further development at Te Rapa was not seen to be aligned with the development pattern set by the Hamilton Urban Growth and Future Proof strategies to create a compact and concentrated city (Early et al., 2015).

In 2010, Hamilton City Council notified a variation to the Hamilton City District Plan, limiting further retail development at The Base. The variation was appealed to the High Court by Waikato-Tainui. During the High Court hearing, the ‘City Heart’ metaphor was evoked in evidence given by Robert Simcock, the Mayor of Hamilton City, who emphasised the investment of Hamilton City Council in the Central Business District noting that the Council “...has recently committed very significant public resources to CBD enhancement projects” including funding for the upgrade of Garden Place “...the central public space in the heart of the CBD” (2010). A 2015 report illustrates the depth of feeling about the conflict, with interviewees describing the planning and location of The Base “...as ‘disastrously bad’ and ‘quite destructive’; it ‘maimed’ the CBD shops” (Early et al., 2015, p79). However, delivering his decision to quash the variation, Judge Allan objected to Hamilton City Council’s lawyer presenting the issue as “...a choice between competing interests: Tainui’s ownership interest versus the public interest in protecting the CBD” (Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council, 2010, para 74). The Judge instead promoted improved consultation between Waikato-Tainui and Hamilton City Council, “...a process by which parties with different interests can discuss in good faith their concerns and suggestions for proposed plans” (Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council, 2010, para 74).

Through association with the decline of the Central Business District, The Base, Tainui Group Holdings and Waikato-Tainui have been blamed for the poor health of the 'City Heart (Interview with Key Informant, 2014). However, discourse which frames development at The Base in opposition to development of the Central Business District ignores the history of colonial invasion in Waikato, the opportunity to redress historical injustice through development of land returned under Treaty settlement, and the status of The Base as an icon of economic sovereignty for Waikato-Tainui.

Conclusion – Opening the City Heart

Planning is a cultural activity, set within a historical context. The way we represent growth and development in the city reflects our own traditions and epistemology.

Hamilton is a colonial city, with its origins in raupatu, conquest, and confiscation. Waikato-Tainui is an increasingly powerful urban landowner. In this context, the icons and metaphors planners use to represent the spatial structure of our cities do not simply communicate planning ideas, but influence the direction of policy and investment, and perhaps our ability to address issues of social justice. This research argues that the emphasis placed by Hamilton City Council, through the 'Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy' and 'Future Proof', on the development of a vibrant City Heart in the colonial centre of the city has contributed to conflict with Waikato-Tainui. Dual planning approaches are clear - Waikato-Tainui represent development at The Base as an iconic expression of 'economic sovereignty' linked to the social and cultural wellbeing of their tribal members; but the same development is criticized by Hamilton City Council as undermining the vitality of the 'City Heart' of the wider Hamilton community.

Reconciling these dual planning traditions requires practicing 'in the presence of history'. To support the realisation of Treaty settlements, planners working within Pākehā planning traditions need to recognise the possibilities and implications of Māori planning traditions and approaches, such as the spatial structure and potential development pattern offered in the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Management Plan. It is difficult to contain the diverse interests of urban communities within a single model for urban growth. It is particularly difficult to do so when the history of the city includes the dispossession of indigenous people, a century of urban growth, and then the return of land to indigenous owners. However, it is a challenge we must understand. Hirini Matunga concludes that:

'...understanding the archaeology of the city and country, 'accepting' its Indigenous and colonial history, and facilitating a more nuanced reading of its multi-layered materiality and memory through architecture, planning, urban design, and environmental management, is arguably the greatest challenge for spatial planners and urban designers today' (2013, p.9).

By remembering the many histories of our cities, recognising the significance of both Māori and Pākehā urban icons, and carefully considering the drivers behind different planning approaches, we can open the colonial City Heart to indigenous concepts of vitality, spatiality, and development for economic sovereignty.

Glossary (adapted from Moorfield, 2010)

Hapū - Kinship group, subtribe, consisting of a number of whānau sharing descent from a common ancestor. A number of related hapū usually share adjacent territories forming a looser tribal federation (iwi).

Iwi - Extended kinship group, tribe. Often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.

Kāinga – Village, settlement

Kīngitanga – A movement which developed in the 1850s, culminating in the anointing of Pōtatau Te Wherowhero as King. Established to stop the loss of land to the colonists, to maintain law and order, and to promote traditional values and culture. Also known as ‘King Movement’

Māori – Indigenous New Zealander

Marae - Community base for a whānau, hapū or iwi

Maunga - Mountain

Pākehā – New Zealander of European descent

Raupatu – Conquest, confiscation.

Rohe – Territory

Urupā – Burial ground

Whānau - Extended family, family group

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