

## Rationale for locating public art

Public art can significantly enhance people's experience of a place. It does this by drawing on the important or distinctive qualities of the place in ways that add to the interest and enjoyment of the user. In the TEL project, this means identifying key locations that are meaningful to the local community and that can also help 'tell the story' of the area.

Public art, like patterns or textures on retaining walls and noise barriers, is often most successful when it is abstracted rather than literal.

It is not the role of this framework document to define or limit the scope of any public art commission, but to indicate areas or experiences along the journey whose significance warrants a 'special' design response, and to put forward some design approaches as a starting point. These design approaches may take the form of enhancements to the highway itself (including its structures and landscape) or the introduction of separate elements at key locations.

On this project there are two 'special places' where the TEL can give something back to the area. They are very different in character, role and function and require different levels of engagement from stakeholders.

The first is primarily relevant to the driver experience – the Paengaroa roundabout at the start of the project (southern end). It is about heightening the interest of the journey and creating a sense of the travel sequence.

- This is a regional connection for major routes, a key decision point for drivers, and the place that changes from rural to urban (in future this will be even more the arrival and leaving point for the 'Tauranga urban' experience).
- There are opportunities to integrate marker elements with the design of the roundabout.

The second place is of particular significance to the local community, and at many levels – historical, cultural, and environmental – the Kaituna River crossing / Wildlife Management Reserve area. This experience is one of stopping, resting, taking time out from the journey to enjoy the surroundings.

- The river has very high cultural significance for Maori and also has significance in terms of early European settlement. Here stories of Maori and European occupation overlap - a former pa lies to the north-west of the crossing, and an early flax mill was also located near the river.
- This area is 'special' on a number of levels and enhancing access to it and enjoyment of it will make a significant contribution to the local area including the future residential population.
- Because this area is less relevant for through traffic than for pedestrians and cyclists, an intervention here needs to be able to be enjoyed at the pedestrian scale rather than at the scale and speed of vehicles. It is more likely to have value if located at or near the riverbank, accessed from the pedestrian / cycle path, and if combined with seating, shelter and interpretive signage.
- Building on the possibilities for interpretation for pedestrians and cyclists at the river level, there is an opportunity to link the river to the natural Reserve environment, both visually and physically.
- Access to the river (both banks) will be enabled through pedestrian and cycle shared paths, creating a new opportunity for appreciation and enjoyment of the river and Interpretation of the site.

## Public art design objectives

- Locate and design public art to respond and contribute to the character of the area
- Use public art to enhance people's understanding of the cultural significance of the place
- Combine a gateway statement at the level of the highway with interpretation of the site at the level of the river
- Integrate built elements with the landscape treatment.
- Develop a consultative process with local iwi to inform the design concept.
- Develop a commissioning process to ensure that public art can be provided after construction of the TEL.



## Public art design inspiration

Vertical elements incorporated with the road design or as stand-alone sculptures punctuate the journey. The scale of these elements is critical, to add interest without distracting drivers. Successful projects, clockwise from top left below, are:

- kinetic (wind) sculptures on the approach to Wellington airport. As part of a sequence of art pieces that play with the idea of 'windy Wellington' this is a work that reinforces a sense of place



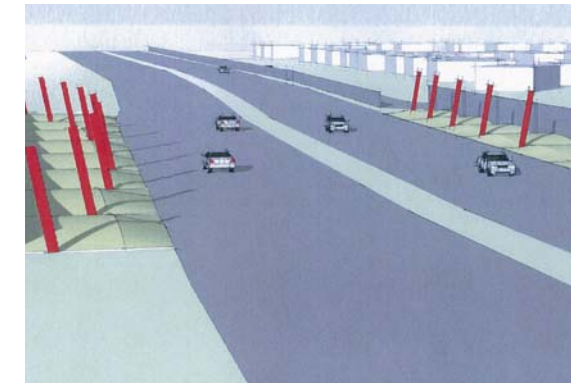
- red poles in the central median along the Westlink M& (NSW) are part of the Light Horse Interchange, representing a parade of the light horsemen of the First World War. It is not necessary, however, to know the history to enjoy this modest intervention in the landscape.
- large angled blue poles make a dramatic statement on the Craigieburn bypass (Melbourne) where their size and spacing is appropriate for fast-moving traffic and in the context of a global 'city of culture'.



The concept sketches on the right were prepared by Isthmus as initial explorations of potential enhancements to key locations.

### Te Maunga approach

- balance any gateway treatment with features on both sides of the road
- locate, angle and size vertical elements to reinforce the sense of 'threshold'
- mounding grass and timber beams represent, respectively, the sand dunes and wharf piles that characterise Tauranga.



Te Maunga: approach to Tauranga City

### Kaituna River

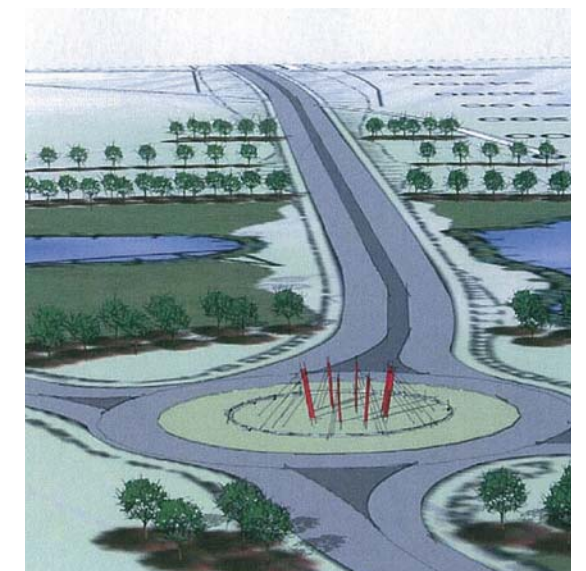
- change drivers' experience to make them aware of the significance of the place, for example with larger sculptural elements.
- This location could generate a unique experience for TEL users



Kaituna River: gateway and special place

### Paengaroa roundabout

- reflect the landscape character of Paengaroa (kiwifruit and avocado orchards) both with structured planting and a sculptural feature in the centre of the roundabout
- the concept design shown here uses timber beams with tensile wires reflecting the support trusses used for kiwifruit circulation
- design any roundabout feature to provide continuity with the materials and treatment at the north-western end of the TEM, emphasising its start and finish thresholds.



Paengaroa roundabout: start / finish of the TEM

These concepts were important as a starting point in identifying where the travel experience could be enhanced. Further work has shown that the Te Maunga approach is too constrained for a large gateway treatment and that the Paengaroa roundabout will be a more significant entry into the Tauranga urban area. The Kaituna River area offers more potential for pedestrians and cyclists who travel relatively slowly and can access the river than it does for drivers who have no means of stopping. This concept would therefore be modified.