

eminent 'domaine'

Auckland is draped around more than fifty volcanic cones, craters and vents. Many have been preserved within the public domain and form a precious green refuge from urban life. These volcanic cones astride a narrow isthmus linking two harbours and two great oceans help define the city's topographic, climatic, cultural and historic identity.

Prominent amongst these cones is The Domain, a cluster of explosion craters accommodating the War Memorial Museum, the Botanical Winter Gardens and acres of parkland.

To the south west of The Domain lies Newmarket, undeniably the retail and fashion hub of the city, lying in a valley at the end of the affluent northern slope ridges of Remuera.

Lying at the heart of these diverse influences, and looking north over George Street across the Domain, SouthPark Corporation has aggregated a 7800m2 site and briefed Archimedia (in competition) to develop a Master Plan for its staged development.

Archimedia first analysed the urban design structure of the precinct, recognising the need to provide adequate access into the deep post-industrial site, creating legible urban blocks defined by human-scale streets.

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public 'domain'

A strong pedestrian 'desire line' through the site links the Carlton Gore Valley with the Domain. Conversely, students and workers adjoining the Domain travel to Carlton Gore for retail, food, entertainment and public transport. A natural northern entrance occurs on the intersection of George Street, the central axis of the Museum and the convergence of Titoki Street.

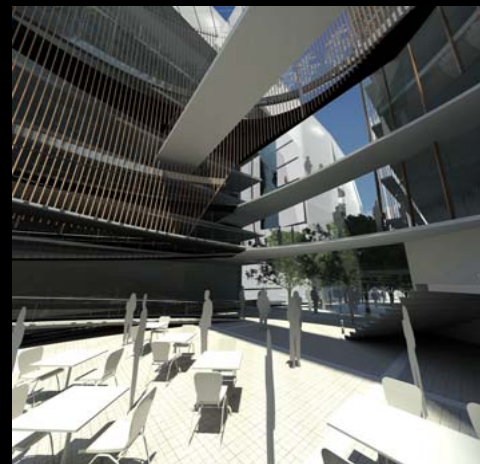
The northern entrance is extended as a shared traffic and pedestrian plaza deep into the site, culminating in a sunny forecourt which creates a George Street address for three separate mixed-use buildings.

From the south, Clayton Street, with tree planting and controlled parking, has the potential to be a charmingly scaled urban street. Extension of the Clayton Street axis leads to a natural arrival point at the southern entrance to the site. Between the north and south entrances, the site rises nine metres.

The "grain" of the existing industrial/urban block is too large to facilitate street edge activity and access within it. To accommodate the traffic volumes envisaged, an "exit loop" was suggested westward to Morgan Street.

This new public street creates multiple frontages and two new development sites. These two north facing sites complete a legible urban block discernibly separate in character to the balance of the development.

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network 'domain'

Recognising the showery isthmus micro-climate, the south sloping topography and the need to create both a visual destination and an iconic "green" emblem for the development, Archimedia created a naturally ventilated, sheltered outdoor space that enclosing a central public pedestrian "street".

This sculptural, timbered form is a visible destination from both Carlton Gore Road and George Street, providing sheltered sunny spaces into which food, convenience and meeting spaces extend to service and enliven the adjoining workplaces and apartments.

In the eastern precinct of the site, five star workplace footprints up to 2000m² are proposed, with green rooves and internal "encounter" voids and stairs linking levels vertically. Abundant under-croft car parking and cycle storage is provided.

The workplace environment is of unique character, with views over The Domain to the Waitemata and Parnell, Newmarket and the City close by. Newmarket shopping, bus and rail transport and sporting and leisure facilities are all within walking distance.

Archimedia consulted with Ecubed Building Workshop to determine the optimum mix of sustainable features for best practice work environments, minimising operating and life-cycle costs.

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private 'domain'

Archimedia maximises each commercial project to establish a baseline for subsequent investigations. Interpreting Development Rules to maximum advantage is critical to viability. In this case, a recent District Plan Modification introduced Bonus amenities that supported the maximum 4:1 FAR on the site.

Archimedia brings a Master Plan methodology to every project. The necessity for large developments to be realised in autonomous stages is future-proofed by this approach.

As part of the Archimedia process, the feasibility of each of the five separate stages proposed was tested to ensure viability. The public space infrastructure necessary to transform the site was integrated into the first stage, which was purposely structured to support the initial investment required.

Where-ever possible, Archimedia pursues an environmental strategy to create live / work urban environments. Capitalising on the superlative residential address over-looking the Domain, the George Street precinct was dedicated to apartments, and a design focussed retail showroom at ground level.

Light-filled apartments with external living on transitional balconies were extended into the central and southern precincts, capitalising on the views west and south over the Newmarket Valley to distant volcanic cones.

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interior: steve hermann



SOUTHPARK

'domaine' newmarket

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