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**For Staff at the Eastern Institute of Technology, is
Ōtātara a Placeless Geography?**

or

a Geography of Significance?

A thesis
submitted partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Masters of Environment and Society in, School of Social Sciences
at
The University of Waikato
by
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
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A deep human need exists for associations with significant places. If we choose to ignore that need, and to allow the forces of placelessness to continue unchallenged, then the future can only hold an environment in which places simply do not matter. If, on the other hand, we choose to respond to that need and transcend placelessness, then the potential exists for the development of an environment in which places are for [people], reflecting and enhancing the variety of human experience. Which of these two possibilities is most probable, or whether there are other possibilities, is far from certain. But one thing at least is clear - whether the world we live in has a placeless geography or a geography of significant places, the responsibility for it is ours alone.

(Relph 1976, 147)

Abstract

This thesis explores the experience of place for a group of tertiary employees in a regional area of New Zealand. Staff based at EIT Hawke's Bay in Taradale, Napier can see the Ōtātara Pā Reserve from several vantage points on campus, and often visit because of its immediate proximity. Originally, joined and now adjacent, the cultural significance of this land for Māori over some centuries prior to Pākehā settlement, is still being uncovered. Through a series of interviews, the historical significance of this place is joined with the experiences of staff in being in this space. A range of meanings including belonging, attachment and sense of location were described by participants, showing the development over time of threads of connection for themselves, family, community and also staff members.

Ideas in the literature of place were considered including attachment to meaningful locations and landscape. A particular interest in the thesis was bringing this more general literature into focus for a New Zealand place, which has substantial Māori history connections including for participants of both Māori and Pākehā backgrounds. Several methodological issues were discussed within a series of interviews including cultural appropriateness and representation. The researchers transition from an English cultural upbringing, to developing and extending indigenous landscape knowledge, illustrates the changing recognition and involvement in an increasingly bi-cultural New Zealand, and demonstrates the implications of this in understanding place attachment.

Findings from this research were organised in three main chapters. The first, recounted historical material about Ōtātara, Māori and Pākehā times, exploring ideas of place and belonging. It also provided a natural anchor for the second and third chapters, which reported the findings of EIT staff enjoying being within, and feeling the presence of that history. Several themes emerged and were summarised as embodied landscape experiences, and the intriguing dimensions of social relationships and place for these tertiary staff.

Place is important across the social sciences as it is for other disciplines. It evokes on the one hand aspirations and ideals of an aesthetic and spiritual nature but at the same time, reminds human beings of their literal and biological being in time and space. The present study has contributed to this wider narrative by looking at one example and in one national bi-cultural setting.

The question posed at the start of the thesis considered whether EIT staff view Ōtātara as a place of significance or a geography which does not matter. The historical connections and physical closeness between EIT and Ōtātara, mean that the Institution and the landscape are inextricably linked. People are equally bonded to this place through culture and lived experiences. Often unconscious or incidental associations are handed down through the generations, within the organisation and throughout the wider community.

How we now occupy this place in a modern world, how we share the (hi)stories and become authors of new ones, will have a profound influence on the ways that staff continue to connect and develop feelings of belonging. Related to this, an idea about an institutional-wide hīkoi around the boundaries of the campus and Ōtātara is offered as an addendum. Our responsibility as educators is to signal to future generations that this is a landscape of significance ensuring that Ōtātara continues to be acknowledged as a taonga for EIT employees, and that it is nurtured in the same way as it nurtures us.

Acknowledgements

This thesis has been a journey of discovery as I have immersed myself in the Ōtātara landscape. When I began this study, I had no real sense of belonging to New Zealand often feeling an overwhelming desire for ‘home’, for England. Through undertaking this research, learning about the histories of Ōtātara, coupled with the privilege of interviewing colleagues about their own connections to place, I have come to the new realisation, that I do belong here.

It is with enormous gratitude that I thank my EIT colleagues, several of whom supported this mahi either practically, or through offering tea and sympathy when needed. Specific mention goes to Dr Mazin Bahho for his never-ending enthusiasm for place attachment and Ōtātara. The thoughtful discussions we have had over the years contributed to my own decision to study this landscape. I have tried to be respectful in acknowledging different histories and cultures relating to Ōtātara, and I thank Chad Tareha and Puti Nuku for their guidance in this regard, and their encouragement and enthusiasm for this study in general.

My research participants shared, often personal, and sometimes highly emotional stories relating to their ancestors, family members, friendships and students. I was humbled by their (hi)stories and hope that I have done them justice. The passion with which participants spoke of their experiences, and their future hopes for the Ōtātara Outdoor Learning Centre, was inspiring and their openness and collegiality, confirmed that EIT is a campus symbolised by both the people and the place.

Turning next to Professor Priya Kurian, Dr Fiona McCormack, Dr Juliet Roper and Dr Amie Lennox, the University of Waikato teaching team. I was ‘green’ when I started this degree, having never read an academic article, nor even heard of a rubric. Their patience and kindness in helping me through the academic mire is much appreciated. Dr Edgar Burns, accepted the role of guide through the thesis stage, and like a good ship’s captain, he ensured that I had enough fuel, set the sail and gently nudged me to keep on course. In good humour, we debated my ideas, leaving some behind, to pick up on the next journey. As a forty-something, extra-mural student, juggling family responsibilities, a busy job and battling with the unwavering desire to “only do the very best”, Edgars encouragement, feedback and care has given me new knowledge, skills and renewed confidence, for which I am extremely thankful.

Finally, I am incredibly grateful to my family without whose love and support I would not have finished. Dad was often at the other end of a phone debating place attachment theories and reminding me not to split infinitives, whilst mum spent several hours searching out family photographs and newspaper clippings. With good humour, Derek and Jasper endured my grumpiness and constant reading and writing - even on family holidays. I am forever thankful to them both. Their support saw me through to the end, but I would not even have started without the legacy left by my grandmother. Phyllis instilled within me a love of nature and the Kentish countryside. I hope, that in turn, I can similarly inspire Derek and Jasper, and that after reading this, they will understand the significance of the ‘hill up the road’, forever feeling connected as a family unit through our shared ‘home’ landscape.

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Kupu Māori/ Glossary

Aotearoa - New Zealand

Awa - river, stream, creek

Iwi - extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.

Hāngi - earth oven - earth oven to cook food with steam and heat from heated stones.

Hapū - kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe. Whānau sharing descent from a common ancestor.

Harakeke - native New Zealand flax

Hīkoi – to step, stride, march or walk

Hui - to gather, congregate, assemble, meet

Kaitiaki - guardian

Kaitiakitanga - guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship, trustee

Kanohi ki te kanohi - face to face

Karakia - to recite ritual chants, say grace, pray

Kaupapa - topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative.

Ki uta ki tai - from the mountain to the sea

Mahi – to work, to make

Mana - prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma

Manaakitanga - hospitality, kindness, generosity, support - the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.

Mana whenua - territorial rights, power from the land, authority over land or territory, jurisdiction over land or territory - power associated with possession and occupation of tribal land

Māoritanga - Māori culture, Māori practices and beliefs, Māori way of life.

Marae - courtyard - the open area in front of the *whareniui*, where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the *marae*.

Maramataka - Māori lunar calendar

Mātauranga Māori - Māori knowledge systems

Maunga - mountain

Mihimihi - greeting

Ngāti Kahungunu - tribal group of the southern North Island east of the ranges from the area of Nūhaka and Wairoa to southern Wairarapa.

Ngāti Pārau - mana whenua hapū for Ōtātara

Pā - fortified village

Pākehā - English or European

Papatūānuku - mother earth, earth

Pepeha - a form of words linking a person ancestrally with the communities and physical features of a landscape (mountains, rivers and oceans)

Pou - post or symbol of support, metaphoric post.

Pouarataki - Head of School

Pou whakairo - carved panels

Pūrākau - myth, ancient legend, stories

Raranga - weaving

Rongoā - indigenous medicinal plants

Raupō - bullrush

Taonga - treasure

Tapu - sacred, forbidden

Te Ara o Tāwhaki - EIT's Hawke's Bay campus marae

Te ao Māori - the Māori world, including the Māori language, rituals, processes, practices, sites of importance, and ties to whānau, hapū and iwi

Te Reo - Māori language

Te Taiao - Environment

Te Tiriti o Waitangi - The Treaty of Waitangi

Te Ūranga Waka - EIT's School of Māori Studies

Tikanga - Māori protocols, customs and practices

Tūrangawaewae - standing, place where one has the right to stand

Wāhi tapu - sacred place or site, often a place in which ritual restrictions on access or use apply

Waiata - song

Wairua - spirit or soul

Whakapapa - genealogy

Whakawhānaungatanga - process of establishing relationships

Whānau - extended family, family group

Whānaungatanga - Relationship, kinship and a sense of family connection. A relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging.

Whareniui - meeting house

Whenua - land / placenta

These definitions were compiled from: maoridictionary.co.nz, gwrc.govt.nz, teara.govt.nz and Mansvelt et al. 2017.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Mihimihi

Ko Grand Sour te maunga

Ko Air New Zealand te waka

Ko Len me Harrietsham ngā awa

Ko Ngāti Ingarangi te iwi

Kei Taradale ahau e noho ana

Ko Paul Passey tōku pāpara

Nō Maidstone ki Ingarangi ia

Ko Diana Lambert tōku whaea

Nō Harrietsham ki Ingarangi ia

Ko Emma Passey tōku ingoa.

1.2 Introduction

The Hawke's Bay campus of the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT), is in Taradale and lies in the lee of two ancient Pā sites; Ōtātara and Hikurangi (Figures 1 and 2). This historic hillside once supported a Māori community of around 10,000 people (Pischief 1997), and is now divided into different parcels of land including an historic reserve, farmland and the built campus. This thesis examines the ways in which Taradale based employees connect with the Ōtātara landscape, and whether they consider it a place of significance or a geography which simply does not matter.

Tertiary campuses are often, by default, formal places of learning, with well-ordered physical spaces, modelled on efficiency, timetables and structure. This, together with the recent amalgamation of all sixteen New Zealand Institutes of Technology into one tertiary institution, Te Pūkenga, The New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST), and the increase of globalisation and urbanisation means that we progressively live and work in highly planned and regulated places. This has the potential to create educational spaces across the country which are banal and look and feel the same, increasing the feeling of placelessness. This thesis examines how taking the time to explore social histories, and to engage physically with the landscape in which we work can be incredibly powerful, maintaining a significant geography and supporting a deep human need to belong.

This introductory chapter first considers the importance of belonging and having a meaningful connection to place, contextualised through my own experience as an English-born and raised

researcher living and working in Aotearoa. I explore the relevance of introducing oneself through pepeha, whether Māori or Pākehā. Next, I set-out my own attachments to the English Harrietsham landscape within which I was raised, and the Ōtātara landscape in which I now work. These reflections, have supported my ability to consider how others may connect to places. The second part of the chapter investigates the physical connections that EIT has to the landscape, before defining the aims and scope of this research.



Figure 1 View from the Ōtātara hillside looking east with the EIT campus below and the Tūtaekurī River to the east.

Source: Emma Passey, December 2020



Figure 2 Looking west towards Ōtātara from the EIT entrance.

Source: Emma Passey July 2021

1.3 My Pepeha

Opening with a mihimihi and including a pepeha, is a powerful way to anchor oneself. It describes how our spiritual, emotional and physical sense-of-self is intimately connected to a particular place of significance, or the place where we feel that we belong. Traditionally, Māori first acknowledge natural landmarks such as mountains and rivers, followed by genealogy. This is because of the belief that without Papatūānuku our ancestors would not exist. Despite my English heritage, I often adopt this traditional Māori form of introduction and Māori terms, and have included a kupu Māori/glossary (page 10). I use this form of introduction partly because having emigrated to Aotearoa it is a positive reminder and acknowledgement, of the place and the people that have shaped my own personal and cultural identity. This format also immediately gives me, the speaker, and you, the listener, “an opportunity to recognise and acknowledge connections through shared whakapapa” (Mansvelt et al. 2017). It is an opportunity to break down barriers, as I share a window into my soul, by sharing my tūrangawaewae, or the place where I feel at peace, and where my mana is strongest.

The first few lines of my mihimihi introduce my pepeha. My childhood home was a ragstone house built in 1779. It is steeped in social history, and for two centuries it was one of the focal points of the village of Harrietsham, in the South East of England. It was built as the village Poor House, a parochial establishment that housed and even provided work for the most vulnerable and poor in the parish. Later it was converted to a pub, which my parents bought in 1975 and renamed Westmead (Figure 3). It became our family home.



Figure 3 Westmead, Harrietsham. Circa 2000.

Source: Passey Family Photo Album.

Westmead is situated on the main village street, close to a small stream, a tributary of the River Len. As a child, I enjoyed dangling my feet from a small wooden bridge and I recall feeling an acute sense of ecstasy despite, or perhaps because of, the icy temperature. My brothers and I would often measure who could keep their toes in the water for the longest, causing much hilarity, especially as our feet began to turn blue!

The river rises in bluebell woods close to the village, which lies at the foot of the North Downs, a ridge of chalk hills, much of which is protected in law as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The ancient Pilgrims Way runs along the foot of the ridge from Winchester to Canterbury and beyond to Camino de Santiago in Spain. It is a pre-historic drove road used by early nomadic people (Margary 1952), and was later the route taken by Pilgrims visiting one of the most important shrines in Christendom, that of Thomas Becket (Scully 2000). It has even been enshrined in several novels and commonly but erroneously, thought to be the route featured in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, which I enjoyed hearing about when we undertook our own family weekly pilgrimage to visit my grandparents in the nearby hamlet of Goddington. We often took a detour to climb the main hill, Grand Sour (Figure 4), which provided expansive views across the parish and beyond. Growing up in an historic home and undertaking family walks in this ancient landscape has given me a feeling of connection to my ancestors and the villagers who had gone before.



Figure 4 Grand Sour, Harrietsham. Circa 1992.

Source: Passey Family Photo Album.

The second part of my mihimihi introduces my closest family members. My father was raised in Maidstone, the County Town of Kent, a stone's throw from Harrietsham, where my mother spent most of her formative years. My mother's parents also came from this area and are buried in the local churchyard. My parents met in Harrietsham, were married in the village church and raised their four children in the parish. I am the youngest. The family have all moved away from the village, but despite this, my attachment to the Harrietsham landscape, my ancestors and those with whom I grew up remains deep.

1.4 Transcending Placelessness

Harrietsham brings many joyful memories, but many of the childhood experiences I recall in the landscape transcend a feeling of placelessness to create a sense of real meaning to the place where I belong. When I was nine years old, for example, villagers undertook the task of walking the parish boundary as a group (Figure 5). This walk was not just a matter of location but of celebrating ancient traditions and rituals. Beating the Bounds of the Parish, had a long history in Harrietsham, with the first recorded pilgrimage in 1757. The establishment of England's village boundaries can be traced to Roman times, when they were often marked by large boundary stones. Throughout the Middle Ages and Tudor times, the Parish Priest and other officials would lead the village boys to each marker, where they would beat the boundary stone with a stick, or sometimes be beaten themselves. Afterwards, a celebratory feast was held. The purpose of this boundary walk was to encourage familiarity with the landscape and to ensure this knowledge would be passed to future generations (Harrietsham Parish Council 1983). Additionally, should villagers fall on hard times, they had to prove that they lived within the parish boundary before being supported by the Poor House. Familiarity could mean the difference between welfare or starvation.

In May 1983, villagers were encouraged to revive this walking tradition for three reasons. Firstly, it was considered to be part of the fabric of English rural society, secondly it encouraged villagers to become acquainted with the detailed character of the countryside in which they lived, and thirdly it provided an opportunity to see areas which would not normally be accessible to them (Harrietsham Parish Council 1983). I did not walk on 7th May but instead, friends and I performed maypole dances to replicate traditional merriment when the beaters returned. For several weeks leading up to the walk however, our family would don our walking shoes, and search for and then mark out the boundary route (Figure 6) ably led by my father, a chief organiser of the event.



Figure 5 Beating the Bounds of Harrietsham. Photos feature several of my close neighbours and friends, my grandmother Phyllis Lambert emerging from the woods, and my brother James Passey (resting on the grass verge).

Source: Adscene Newspaper, Friday 13 May 1983

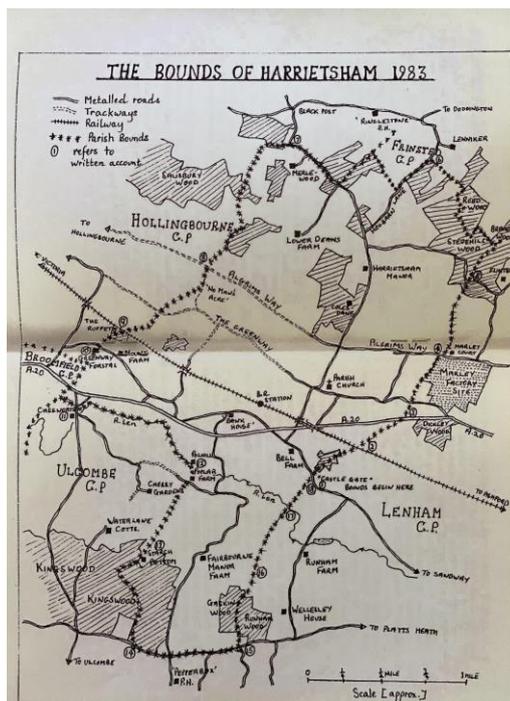


Figure 6 Hand drawn map of the boundary of Harrietsham by Paul Passey.

Source: Beating the Bounds of Harrietsham Pamphlet 1983

The walk provided the opportunity for villagers to come together, to acknowledge past social histories and revive traditions. I am sure that for many, like me, it was a meaningful experience that forged a connection to the landscape. The social experiences, the history and the geography have contributed to shaping who I am, securing Harrietsham as significant in my heart.

These childhood bonds also influenced my career choices. I long held the desire to protect important landscapes whilst enabling people to enjoy all that they provide and to forge their own significant connections to places. In pursuit of this, I gained a BSc (Hons) in Rural Enterprise and Land Management, later qualifying as a Rural Practice Chartered Surveyor. I joined ADAS the UK's largest environmental consultancy, before working as part of the Countryside Agency's National Parks team, specialising in sensitive landscapes and public access.

My move to Aotearoa 19 years ago was motivated by a desire to live in a country which marketed itself on being "100 percent Pure New Zealand," as the tourism marketing campaign launched in 1999 aptly explained. New Zealand boasted a unique combination of landscapes, activities and people (Tourism NZ 2017). The spectacular landscapes rich in wildlife encouraged me to migrate and find a new place of belonging. I began working at EIT, as part of the Marketing team and more recently as the Environment and Sustainability Manager. My responsibilities include facilitating projects relating to the Ōtātara Outdoor Learning Centre (OOLC) focusing on connecting our communities with the environment. The background to the OOLC project is given in Chapter 4.5. The main campus and the OOLC are located beneath the Ōtātara Pā Reserve, and the juxtaposition of the campus and hillside (Figure 7) fondly reminds me of the physical relationship of Grand Sour and Harrietsham. The similarities in the landscape in which I now work, coupled with my new-found EIT 'village', helped me to find a new sense of belonging in Ōtātara.

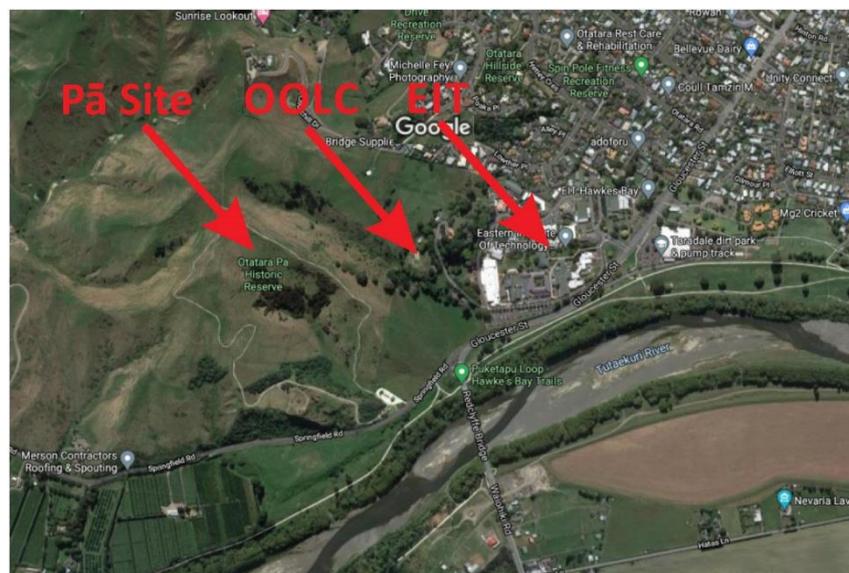


Figure 7 Aerial view of Ōtātara Pā and EIT Campus in relation to the Tūtaekurī River and Taradale township.

Source: Google Maps, extracted 19 April 2021

1.5 EIT's Physical Connection to the Ōtātara Landscape

EIT serves the east coast region, with over 130 programmes from foundation level to Masters. With several campuses and regional service centres, the organisation's largest campus is in the Napier suburb of Taradale, Hawke's Bay. Around 300 personnel support 10,000 equivalent full-time students per annum thus creating a significant community. The campus covers around 68 acres, of which approximately 20 acres is considered rural, comprising pasture, woodland, native plantings, an historic homestead site and a log cabin. This area once formed part of an historic Māori settlement, Ōtātara Pā, considered to be the largest fortified Pā in Aotearoa extending over 70 acres (Parsons 1997). A short chronology of the area is given in Chapter Four.

Since the 1970s this historic landscape has been split into two legal entities. One part, which includes a lower and upper Pā, Ōtātara and Hikurangi respectively, is designated as an historic reserve and collectively known as Ōtātara Pā. The site is managed by Heritage New Zealand with Ngāti Pārau, the mana whenua hapū for Ōtātara and EIT, and the Department of Conservation. The remainder is within the EIT legal boundary and referred to simply as, Ōtātara. For the purposes of this research study, Ōtātara is defined as from the Pā car park at the base of the hillside adjacent the Tūtaekurī River in the east, to the built development at Hetley Road in the west, and from the base of the hillside running along Springfield Road to the south and the built development of the EIT campus to the north (Figure 7).

1.6 Research Aims and Scope

This research focuses on land attachment theory exploring a bi-cultural, ethnographic approach with specific reference to Ōtātara. There is a long history of physical and social attachment dating back over 600 years (Chad Tareha) and since the early Māori occupation, multiple individuals, families and groups are likely to have created meaningful attachments through their cultural practices, work and recreation. Consequently, there are doubtlessly a range of experiences, values and emotions which frame the complex sense of connection to this landscape.

The hillside is recognised for its historic and cultural importance (Parsons 1997) and much of it is protected as an historic reserve. Part of the original Pā site is now occupied by the EIT Hawke's Bay campus and includes the OOLC and farmland, which is also open to everyone to enjoy for recreation or use for teaching purposes. Preliminary findings from a pilot study (Passey 2019) indicated that this ease of access, provides an opportunity for staff to strengthen a feeling of tūrangawaewae and belonging for their workplace, weaving them together with a common sense of identity and belonging, and fostering a deeper understanding of kaitiakitanga and personal responsibility towards

the environment. If educators and others feel connected to the landscape in which they work, then in turn, they can positively influence learners to connect with the place in which they study and encourage others to form a greater attachment to the landscape in which they live. The purpose of my research is to understand the ways in which Taradale-based employees connect with the Ōtātara landscape, whether they consider it a place of significance and if it contributes to a sense of belonging.

There is little documentation about the history of people's recent connections to the land, and therefore this research will add to the stories of Ōtātara and demonstrate the ways in which this place is meaningful to the workforce. Consequently, it will also contribute to our understanding of place attachment in a tertiary setting and could provide the hapū, EIT and the Department of Conservation, with feedback about what is valuable to individuals. More specifically, this research could lead to steps being taken to protect further and so acknowledge the importance of this whole landscape in a wider context. I hope it may enable employees to forge a greater connection with their environment, their colleagues and their workplace.

1.7 Next Chapters

In this opening chapter the idea of attachment to place has been approached from different directions, grounding the reader in terms of the sense of research involvement, exploring the significance of place and highlighting the role of tertiary professionals and educators working in this culturally significant place. In Chapter Two, this is expanded, and the discussion considers literature that illuminates general concepts of place attachment, meaningful locations, connections to landscape specifically, and discussions of place relating to Ōtātara and the EIT campus. Chapter Three sets out the methodology, including my positioning as a researcher, ethics and cultural safety, data collection, processes and analysis, before the research findings are addressed.

The research outcomes are provided in the following three chapters. Chapter Four sets out a discussion of the historical and cultural context of the landscape, and a brief chronology including histories of Māori occupation, the homesteads that were built on this land and the more recent EIT activities. This discussion supports the interpretation of interview accounts presented in successive chapters. Chapter Five explores some of the ways in which staff members encounter Ōtātara through embodied landscape experiences including the physical characteristics of the landscape, spiritual attachments and wellbeing, physical work and the impact of historical events. Subsequently, Chapter Six examines social relationships and place, in particular the impact of

childhood friendships and memories, physical work undertaken with others and the relevance of keeping local histories alive, before conclusions are drawn.

Concluding remarks are presented in Chapter Seven and summarise the overarching themes by which EIT personnel connect to Ōtātara, and also establish whether individuals view it as a landscape of significance or a placeless geography. Other significant findings and limitations to the study, in addition to opportunities for future research are also considered. An addendum recommending an Institution-wide hīkoi to the EIT Administration is included and explained at Chapter Eight.

Chapter Two

Meaningful Locations, Landscape and Place: Ōtātara and EIT

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One I explained my background and position as an English-born and raised researcher, who has spent the last twenty years living and working in Aotearoa, and considered the importance of belonging and feeling connected to place. Whilst I value spending time in a place of natural beauty, immersing myself in nature and taking in scenic views, not all landscapes are perceived as equally interesting or valued. Individuals form deeper bonds to some landscapes more than to others, which is why people-place attachment is of interest to researchers from different disciplines including anthropology, sociology, philosophy, geography and those studying the environment. To this end, Chapter Two considers ideas of general place attachment stepping through three main sections; firstly, the idea of attachment to a meaningful location, secondly, place attachment to landscape, and thirdly, a discussion of place focusing specifically on Ōtātara and the EIT campus. Place research spans decades and includes quantitative and qualitative studies but this review focuses specifically on the latter, bounded by studies relevant to this thesis.

2.2 Place Attachment as a Meaningful Location

A meaningful location is a simple definition of place and includes both physical and social dimensions. Tuan (1974, 1977) and Relph (1976) developed what is referred to as the 'classic' way to define place; "a bounded entity with unique identity and historical continuity, a cosy place of rest and defence against the dangerous and alien 'outside'" (Lewicka 2011, 210). However, modernist perspectives (Massey 2004, Harvey 1996, Williams and Van Patten 1998), define place as "an 'open crossroads', a meeting place rather than an enclave of rest, a location with 'interactive potential' (Milligan 1998)." In 2010, Maria Lewicka a Polish Psychologist undertook an extensive review of place attachment literature, and concluded that; "place understood as a stable, bounded and historically continuous entity corresponds to a traditional, conservative view of society, the concept of place as a source of potential social interactions better describes the features of the globalised world spaces of today." Place as a meaningful location, could therefore be the home in which a person lives (Easthorpe 2004), a landscape (Kaltenborn & Bjerke 2002), a sacred site (Mazumdar & Mazumdar 1993), or a workplace (Milligan 1998) such as Ōtātara and EIT.

Place attachment theory is complex and research often focuses on discrete aspects. Lewicka (2011, 208) states that in the literature, concepts such as place attachment, place identity, rootedness, sense of place and place dependence are treated as "individual pieces of a broken jigsaw parcel which may, (and should) fit together." A plethora of articles have been written, indicating that

different academic disciplines tend to view relationships between place related terms in different and often incompatible ways.

There are several key players in the development of place attachment theories including work by Yi-Fu Tuan (*Topophilia* 1974, and *Space and Place* 1977) and Edward Relph (*Place and Placelessness* 1976). Both human geographers were part of a group of scholars which questioned “how people create a meaningful world and meaningful lives in the world” (Cresswell 2008, 2) central to which was the notion of place, ‘experience’ and ‘feeling’. Tuan’s work emphasised the relationship between ourselves as humans, our relationship to our environment through experiences, and how we feel connected to a place. Later, French urban theorist, Henri Lefebvre introduced the concept that space is socially constructed, meaningful and lived (Lefebvre 1991). Stedman (2003a, and 2003b) argues that there is an intermediate link between physical properties of a place and the strength of an individual’s emotional bond with it, and Peart (2005), an Aotearoa based planner, argues that the character of a landscape is influenced by natural and human forces and the connections between people and the land over several generations. There is a general agreement therefore that it takes time to establish an emotional bond with a place; “Abstract knowledge about a place can be acquired in short order if one is diligent... but the feel of a place takes longer to acquire” (Tuan 1977, 183).

2.3 Place Attachment and Landscape

Not only do definitions of place and place attachment vary but definitions of landscape can differ across academic disciplines too. Landscapes are not simply a scenic view of the natural environment as suggested in Chapter One, but also include the built environment such as roadways, cities and schools. Independently of one another, people over time, often “produce a continuous and coherent landscape that fits together perfectly” (Bell 2012, 3). This is referred to as a self-organised cultural landscape. In contrast, planned landscape is a term relating to ancient land tenure systems, subdivisions of agricultural lands into fields and early irrigation systems. Bell (2012) argues that the two systems have worked alongside each other for centuries. The juxtaposition of the EIT campus and Ōtātara is an example of this. When Māori occupied the hillside, it would have most certainly been considered a planned landscape with reliance on its natural resources for food and shelter. Now however, it is a self-organised cultural landscape which sits adjacent to a highly planned and urban environment, thus linking together two differently defined landscapes and stitching together two different histories and cultures.

Landscapes and people are intrinsically linked. Ingold (2000), a UK-based anthropologist, argues that landscape is diverse in character, measured by quality with no beginning nor end, continuously connecting one feature to another. In other words, mountains are connected to streams, which are connected to rivers, which might run through a forest, or a village and eventually out to the sea. Such a description embodies the Māori philosophy, *ki uta ki tai*, from the mountains to the sea, recognising that all of nature is interconnected with landscape and that “through living in it, the landscape becomes part of us, just as we are part of it” (Ingold 2000, 191). Consequently, landscape is not something ‘out there’ (Stephenson et al. 2010, 10) but it is where we live, we work and we study. This frames the idea, whether or not this is consciously apprehended, that the ancient roots of Ōtātara are foundational and formative of who and what EIT is today. This is because the landscape is not just physically connected to the built environment of the campus, but embedded into the culture and lived experiences of the people and is considered further in Chapter Four.

Although there is agreement that people and place cannot be separated, landscapes can have several meanings representing “different things to different people” (Peart 2005, 3). The concept of the Aotearoa landscape as a scene was particularly powerful around the time of colonisation when Europeans coveted landscapes for their scenic, survival and resource functions (Stephenson et al. 2010). This Western view was influenced by landscape architects such as Capability Brown who designed splendid gardens at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, and Kew Gardens Surrey. Poets such as William Wordsworth produced imaginative and emotional writings were characterised by both English Romanticism and the picturesque movement of the late 1700s. Although the picturesque movement was short-lived, the “perceptual structures of framing have been passed on, often unnoticed, and remain dominant in environmental aesthetics” (Hess 2008, 27).

This framing continues to shape how Westerners often relate to landscape today. Wordsworth poem, *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, remains one of Britain’s most popular poems:

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o’er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

(Extract, William Wordsworth, 1998).

This stanza conjures up personal and deep emotions as I recount happy memories of spring walks along the Pilgrims Way; however, for others, it may be meaningless. We each develop our own relationship with landscape and place depending on our experiences and how we view the world.

Jackie Bowring writes; “Landscapes are soaked in memories, personal and collective, and they are a constant reference point to who we are, our perspectives on place and how we portray ourselves” (Stephenson et al. 2010). As introduced in Chapter One, my childhood landscape was entrenched in the memories of those who walked the Pilgrims Way centuries ago and those who continue to walk it today. Whilst the long views from the Way now show more built environments and farming practices have changed over time, there are several constants. The blackberry hedges are still foraged, the bluebell woods are still enjoyed and even the old stile connecting Grand Sour to Crouch’s farm (Figure 8) is still used.



Figure 8 Stile connecting Grand Sour to Crouch’s Farm.

From left to right: my brother David, my father and my brother Stephen.

Source: Emma Passey, circa 1992.

The same can be said of Ōtātara. Whilst Māori no longer live on the Pā there are several key physical markers of the social history of the Pā site such as remnants of the kūmara beds and the old gardens. Whilst a powerful earthquake in 1931 caused the geography to change forever, as illustrated in Figures 11 and 12 on page 48, the Pā remained intact. Such dramatic changes in the landscape can be overwhelming and unsettling to those who have a connection to it. What once was familiar and stable, and rooted many individuals, changed forever.

2.4 Place Attachment and EIT

A tertiary campus is a place which encourages creative thinking, innovation, civic and community engagement, research and the development of new knowledge. It is also a place where the

community gathers, friendships are made and leisure activities occur. As such EIT is akin to a small town. Although much of the campus is urban in nature, the attractiveness of the campus is not limited to the built environment but extends to the natural landscape in which it is located. Dober (2000) argues that green space enhances the image of the city in which a university is located, and in turn it could be argued that EIT's image is enhanced due to its green spaces and proximity to Ōtātara.

Mt Akhir et al. (2017) identified the ways in which learners perceive and interact with outdoor campus spaces, concluding that the "quality of landscape setting for leisure space plays a significant role in student satisfaction" (Mt Akhir et al. 2017, 65). Additionally, there is sizable literature arguing that learner performance is also positively impacted with access and views to quality landscape (Dongying and Sullivan 2016; Lau et al. 2014; Speake et. al. 2013; McFarland et al. 2008).

The benefits of having access to nearby natural areas is well documented by Shroeder (1998); Kaplan and Kaplan (1989); and Frumkin (2001). A review of related research (McFarland et al. 2008), indicates positive outcomes when individuals can view vegetation or mountains. Studies by Ulrich (1979) indicated that individuals feel significantly less stressed after exposure to nature scenes, and Kaplan (1992 and 2001) concludes that individuals who can actively view or access a natural setting are happier than those who cannot. The results of research by Fried (1982 and 1984) and Frey (1981) also concluded that "the strongest predictor of local residential satisfaction was the ease of access to nature" (Kaplan 1992, 128). Providing access to a natural environment that is conducive to teaching and learning is important therefore, to reduce stress and in turn affect academic performance (Hamaideah 2012). An implication of this is that happy students would make lecturers feel more positive and connected to the campus.

2.5 Summary

This discussion of ongoing and developing literature about people and place confirms that definitions of place, place attachment, landscape and meaningful locations, vary depending on different academic disciplines. What is generally accepted however, is that a meaningful location is personally influenced by individual framing, created through physical and social dimensions over time. So too, the notion that people and place are intrinsically connected whether or not this is consciously apprehended. These concepts, in conjunction with the physical and historical connections between Ōtātara and EIT, which are examined in Chapter Four, signify that those that work and study here, are linked to each other and the landscape by the past, culture and lived experiences.

In order to identify the ways in which employees feel connected to Ōtātara and the degree to which individuals consider it to be a significant geography, Chapter Three first lays out the method and methodological issues in carrying out this study. The methods are examined, including factors relating to the context of this research, the process of interviewing EIT staff members, and the process of analysing data and identifying themes

Chapter Three

Methodology and Ethics

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research, laid out in Chapter One, is to explore a bi-cultural, ethnographic approach to land attachment theory, to investigate the ways in which Taradale-based EIT personnel connect with Ōtātara, and the degree to which it is considered a place of significance supporting a sense of belonging. Having reflected on my own feelings of belonging to place and considered some aspects of place attachment theory, Chapter Three reviews the research methods. This methodology was a series of interviews with employees which began by exploring factors relating to the context of the research. Firstly, whilst my positioning was introduced in Chapter One, Chapter Three sets out how it has influenced my research and interpretation of data. Particular reference is made to how my relationship with the environment has been influenced by my academic background and early career. Secondly, I share my ongoing learning journey of mātauranga Māori, and reasons for influencing my research with some Māori kaupapa principles. Thirdly, I explain the collection of historical data relating to Ōtātara.

The latter part of the chapter focuses on my participants. The importance of ethics and cultural safety are addressed before reflecting on lessons learnt from a pilot research study, and feedback received after presenting at a University of Waikato student conference (Passey 2020). These methodological discussions report how I, as a researcher, have undergone interpreting the data collected. The research process is summarised with reference to how participants were selected including considerations of culture, gender and vocation and how participant information was shared and consent granted. The chapter concludes with the interview process, transcription, analysis and identification of themes.

3.2 How My Positioning Influenced My Research and Interpretation of Data

My own relationship with Ōtātara is framed by my early English landscape experiences, pivotal childhood memories including Beating the Bounds of Harrietsham, which is introduced in Chapter One, walking with my grandmother, and my land management training at Harper Adams Agricultural College. My early career as a rural practice Chartered Surveyor focused on the protection of, and public access to, sensitive English landscapes whilst balancing the needs of farmers, landowners and recreational users. Consequently, my relationship with rural landscapes has been somewhat influenced by both my love of nature instilled during childhood, and a science-based utilitarian relationship between people and the environment, which was nurtured at university.

Each academic discipline considers place attachment in different ways and with differing emphasis (Lewicka 2010) but my academic journey has straddled several disciplines including applied science, geography, sociology, marketing and anthropology. In many Western societies, people see themselves as superior to all other living creatures (Peet and Watts 1996) but I have never held this view, and feel more sympathetic to the holistic Māori belief that we live in unison with nature (Marques et al. 2019), similarly to the 'whole of landscape' philosophy *ki uta ki tai* which was introduced in Chapter Two.

Although this research is undertaken through my Western-influenced lens, my knowledge and empathy for *te ao Māori* perspectives of nature and the environment, has been growing over the last 20 years. The more I research, I realise the more there is to learn. Conversely, this study has also given new vigour to my own Western cultural perspective as I reflect on how my own values and knowledge systems have developed.

For almost two decades I have lived in Aotearoa and worked at EIT developing an understanding of *mātauranga Māori* through EIT's internal Māori development capability framework, *Herea te Rā*. More recently, I commenced my Masters in Environment and Society and became a student member of the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand. These experiences have extended my indigenous knowledge and consequently, the research methodology has aimed to be sympathetic with the principles of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* and *kaupapa Māori* (Rewi 2014) whilst influenced by conventional Western research concepts. Some *Te Reo Māori* terms, used in everyday campus discourse, have been included throughout, partly as an acknowledgement of the importance of this landscape to Māori, partly, to uphold bi-culturalism in recognition of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* and partly, because *Te Reo* has a cornerstone function in Aotearoa culture. In doing this, I have intended to strike a balance between respecting my own Western heritage and that of *mana whenua*. Whilst the discourse relating to *Papatūānuku* and protection of *te taiao* or the environment, is geographically different to mine, I am extending my own indigenous knowledge and potentially that of others.

For this research to be meaningful and have outcomes that are respected, and acted upon, it is helpful to engage a bi-cultural perspective. Gaining guidance and support from *mana whenua* and EIT members, who identify as Māori is a valuable part of this methodology. Chad Tareha whose ancestors occupied *Ōtātara* in the 1500s provided guidance relating to *tikanga* and *reo* (letter of support at Appendix 1). As the Chairman of the *Ngāti Pārau Hapū Trust*, an EIT staff member and also a representative of the Napier City Council Māori Committee, the *Waiohiki Marae Committee* and a Board Member for the Marine Culture Health programme at the Napier Port, he is a strong advocate for Māori, promoting culture, language and the historical and cultural significance of the

Ōtātara area. Chad is also respected as an orator of the Ōtātara kaupapa and welcomes this research as a means of sharing histories and keeping them alive. The hapū are the recognised custodians of the Ōtātara cultural history and I am grateful to him for his guidance from a Ngāti Pārau perspective of histories relating to the Māori occupation of Ōtātara, in Chapter 4.2.

Colleagues at Te Ūranga Waka and notably the Pouarataki Puti Nuku, in addition to lecturers from EIT's Diploma in Environmental Management have also been supportive in providing guidance. Several participants who identify as Māori took part in the research. Whilst I acknowledge that there are variations in views, where some individuals believe only Māori should interpret Māori viewpoints, this study has been conducted through my Pākehā lens with the limitation of a Euro-colonial perspective. I have tried to show respect and acknowledgment to a te ao Māori cultural lens throughout. This is considered further in Chapter 3.5, Ethics and Cultural Safety.

3.3 Data Collection Relating to the History of Ōtātara

A sense of history informs an individual's identity and is a dynamic interaction between memory and location, underpinning our understanding of the present (Glassberg 2001). To this end, I collated historical information relating to Ōtātara, which is set out in Chapter Four. This provides a chronological framework and depth to the interview accounts that are later presented. This history is also helpful to give readers a more visceral or felt sense of Ōtātara as a place.

Historical information was collated from a range of sources; some oral, and some written and several photographs are included from the last one hundred years or so. I understand that the EIT archives also include several items of historical interest relating to Ōtātara and in particular more recent European history. However, the material is currently inaccessible and yet to be curated. Ngāti Pārau also has written documents, photographs and pūrākau which are not widely available for public view.

3.4 Ethics and Cultural Safety

Whilst my positioning is beneficial to understand from a cultural perspective, it is also necessary to consider ethical implications relating to my employment history at EIT. I have enjoyed several management roles and more recently, been appointed as EIT's inaugural Environment and Sustainability Manager. My responsibilities extend to project managing the OOLC, facilitating the use of the physical environment by educators and learners. I have no direct responsibility for managing personnel.

My previous liaison roles enabled close working relationships to develop and over the years I have had several conversations relating to the socio-political environment of Ōtātara. These conversations were a nostalgic mix of happy memories, concern, upset and frustration. They related, but were not exclusive to, Māori and European histories, the displacement of the Arts and Crafts Centre, the neglect and then the refurbishment of the log cabin, the harakeke plantings, and use of the land by both Unison power company and EIT. Having reflected on these sometimes emotionally-charged conversations, some of which resulted in conflicting views amongst peers, they became part of my inspiration to understand better how and why staff connect to this place. My insider knowledge has been helpful in shaping the methodology and also highlighted that as a Pākehā woman interviewing male and female participants, who originate from different countries and cultures, establishing cultural safety is a priority.

All of the participants are well-known to me as colleagues and I have not had any line management responsibility towards them either now, or in the past. I have worked with half of them for 18 years and the other half for just over two years. One of whom is now retired. I consider my relationship with all participants as positive and friendly, and during the research process, have been mindful of ensuring their cultural safety; that they each felt spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically safe (Eckermann et al. 1994, cited in Williams 1999, 213). I also tried to ensure that they each felt at ease and free to express their “cultural identity without fear of judgement, harassment, racism or discrimination” (Newton 2021, 8). There are several ways in which I tried to do this.

Firstly, Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s landmark book *Decolonising Methodologies* (1999) investigates the cultural assumptions that are often made by non-indigenous researchers and consequently, I have been conscious of my worldview concerning the notion of landscape attachment and the need to respect bi-culturalism. Tuhiwai reminds us that we should recognise our own culture, and values are not the ‘norm’ and we must self-reflect and be critical of our own assumptions and beliefs (Tuhiwai-Smith 1999). Consequently, Chad Tareha suggested appropriate ways to engage with Māori research participants, so that they felt culturally safe and heard. For example, I acknowledge and respect that there are several interpretations of the histories of Ōtātara and during the interviews, I reiterated my desire to hear and document each participant’s reading of those, whether Māori or non-Māori. I have been mindful of not marginalising any particular comments in favour of another. Chad also guided me with Māori language and customs and was willing to be contacted by any research participants who had concerns. To ensure that this was a clear and transparent process, Chad’s details were highlighted on the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 2).

Secondly, I acknowledge that the suppression of Māori by colonial constructs has sometimes shaped the way in which individual Māori relate to landscape. This disconnect may have been exacerbated

as they have often moved from ancestral lands into increasingly populated urban areas (Marques et al. 2019). Whilst this thesis does not directly consider issues of colonisation, or the history of the 'handover' of part of Ōtātara to European settlers, or the resettlement of Ngāti Pārau to Waiohiki, a brief synopsis of the history has been included as part of the findings. This is included as an acknowledgement of my respect for those who were attached to this landscape in the past, those who are connected now, and those who will come in the future.

I was conscious of the need to be empathetic and listen attentively, during the interviews especially since those most likely to read and act on this research include my participants. During several consultations relating to the future development of the OOLC, a pilot study (Passey 2019) referenced in Chapter 3.5, and my research interviews, individuals sometimes shared deeply personal reflections, signalling multi-layered meaningful attachments often created over several years. One example included some staff feeling discontent and a sense of displacement and nostalgia relating to the process of, and physical removal of the Arts and Crafts Centre, which is discussed in Chapter Four. As an acknowledgement of this and to support a positive kaupapa moving forward, the OOLC Steering Group hosted a hui for anyone who wanted to share stories of the past and their ideals for the future. The aim was to create a culturally safe platform where individuals felt a sense of, "shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning together with dignity and truly listening" (Eckermann et al. 1994, cited in Williams 1999, 213). Consequently, the arts hui contributed to a healing process for some, although this may not be complete for all, and so there may be other issues still to acknowledge.

I openly expressed my concerns of being an inexperienced and European-born researcher when interviewing participants who identify as New Zealanders. This was particularly in relation to a landscape which is historically and culturally significant, because I did not want my own worldview to (re)inscribe a dominant Western discourse. I perceived that this set several of my participants at ease. The stories that they shared were often deeply personal, relating to past family histories, or personal experiences of a spiritual nature. Tuhiwai (1999) emphasises the need for researchers to reflect on the potential for representations to be documented as "truth" and consequently, I have felt a deep sense of responsibility to retell these (his)stories, acknowledging our cultural differences respectfully and acknowledging this research as my own interpretation of others' stories.

Finally, as a student member of the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand, I followed the Associations Code of Ethics and Professional Standards and those of the University of Waikato and EIT. Ethics approval was granted by both the University of Waikato and EIT prior to the research commencing (Appendices 3 and 4).

3.5 Pilot Study and Conference Presentation: Reflections

Conducting a pilot study can contribute to the understanding of research and plays a valuable role in qualitative studies (Wray et al. 2017). In 2019, I undertook an initial investigation which served as a useful reflective tool for shaping this study by:

- enhancing my personal development by increasing my research experience.
- informing and shaping the aim of this research by allowing me to explore different ideas before confirming my focus.
- improving the participant recruitment process by confirming that hand-picked participants with whom I already had a relationship, would most likely result in richer data, because they would be forthcoming in sharing their views and ideas.
- refining my data collection by developing my ability to recognise key phrases or ideas that indicated when there was an interesting rabbit hole, resulting in richer conversations and data.
- identifying practical issues of undertaking the interviews. For example, the pilot study was conducted online via Zoom, making it hard for participants to visualise Ōtātara. This feedback guided the idea of undertaking interviews at a location on or close-to Ōtātara and the need for participants to set the date and time of the interview so that they would be fully focused and not distracted by external stimuli.
- identifying the physical landscape area. The pilot focused on staff attachment to the OOLC, however the participants often referred to the whole landscape of Ōtātara. Consequently, the focus shifted to their attachment to the wider landscape.
- informing my interview methodology. The initial study focused on questions relating to the OOLC. This was limiting. Data was much richer if the interviews were more conversational in style and participant led.
- shaping the introductions to my interview. During the pilot study, I started my interviews with questions specifically related to my research outcome. This sometimes stifled participants, restricting their answers and making them less inclined to share valuable information relating to how they connect to landscapes generally. Consequently, in this study, I began by asking participants to share their own pepeha or comment on their 'home' landscape. This set them more at ease as the focus was switched from me to them.

Following the pilot study, I presented my thesis research proposal, at the University of Waikato Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Virtual Postgraduate Conference. It was an opportunity to practice communicating my research in a supportive environment and to receive some helpful feedback, much of which I have implemented.

3.6 My Participants

In October 2020, I phoned or met with several staff to seek interest in taking part in this research. This initial contact was followed by an email, outlining the research aim, timelines and expectations of the participants. All but two requests returned a positive response. One colleague chose not to acknowledge the request, and the other had already been interviewed during my pilot. In total I undertook eight interviews, including two participants who took part in the initial study, and who were agreeable to me using their initial responses in addition to this new material. A third person did not want to be re-interviewed, but agreed to me using their previous transcript.

There are 300 or so employees on campus, who are considered either as Academic lecturers or Allied staff who are responsible for campus services. They all have differing levels of engagement with Ōtātara and therefore I chose a cross-section of participants with different vocational experiences. Of the nine colleagues interviewed, six were part of the teaching body, one was a retired lecturer and one was a lecturer who had several years' experience as a Manager in support services. Two of the participants are Managers and one of the participants was recently a student, but now employed as an Allied service member who also undertakes some teaching.

In addition to ensuring different vocational backgrounds, it was helpful to explore a bi-cultural approach and therefore, engagement with individuals who identify as Māori and employees raised outside of Aotearoa was advantageous. Research indicates that Māori and Pākehā often have different cultural views of land attachment (Short 2021; Challenger 1985; Wilkinson et al. 2020) and whilst this thesis does not consider different land attachment from a cultural perspective per se, I specifically sought four participants who identified as Māori, one of whom also identified with Ngāti Pārau. Of the other five participants, four identified as New Zealand European.

Whilst a mix of cultural heritage was valuable, so too was a cross section of participants who identify as male or female. There is much feminist literature about the role of gender in connection to land, with ecofeminists arguing that women are much closer to nature than men (Meinzen et al. 2014). Meinzen et al.'s review reiterates that gender is a fluid social construct, and argues that motive and means will shape attitude to land more than gender. Although I made a point of interviewing five men and four women, I focused on interviewing colleagues whom I knew had been engaged in activity at the OOLC or who had expressed a special connection to Ōtātara previously. This approach was validated when several participants commented that they were grateful for the opportunity to formalise their stories and perspectives in this way. The flip side however, is that as a result the research does not report feelings or attitudes of those who have no specific connection, although one participant had had minimal engagement with the OOLC and claimed to have only walked up to

the Pā site once. The purpose for this was to identify the values that connect employees to the landscape in which they work so that they can be identified and enhanced.

3.7 Participant Information and Consent

Once participants confirmed their interest in being interviewees, I emailed them a Participants Information Sheet (PIS) (Appendix 2). The PIS clearly explained the purpose of my research and encouraged participants to raise any questions about the process or the research. Participants were:

- invited to reflect and share stories of their attachment to Ōtātara and other important landscapes. All of them shared examples of landscape connections.
- encouraged to invite a whānau member or support person to join in the interview if desired. No-one did this although two participants requested to be interviewed together.
- invited to review their interview transcript and provide any feedback within one month of the interview. One participant did this, and made minor factual edits.
- welcomed to decline answering questions and/or to withdraw within one month of the interview. No participants requested to do so.
- to be recorded and sign a consent form. All participants were agreeable to this, and all preferred to give verbal agreement.

All but one of the participants has been given a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality. However, there are several poignant comments made by one participant which makes his identity obvious to other EIT employees. Consequently, Dr Mazin Bahho, has agreed to be named as a participant in this thesis.

3.8 The Interviews

At the root of the interview process is an authentic desire to understand the experiences encountered by participants and the meaning that they attach to those experiences (Seidman 1991). Reflecting on my pilot study, I learnt that the more at ease individuals were, the more likely they were to be open to sharing experiences and stories. So, for this study, I suggested that we conduct the interviews at a location of participants choice at, or close to, Ōtātara to prompt memories, emotions and feelings relating to the landscape. Consequently, three participants chose to meet at the log cabin. The weather during these interviews was stifflingly hot, and the cabin provided a cool and informal refuge from the sun. We sat on floor cushions or chairs that could be positioned according to individual choice, and we left the log cabin door open so that we could hear birds singing and watch the breeze flow through the harakeke. One participant even watched and commented on rabbits playing on the grass bank.

Two participants chose to walk with me to the OOLC before commencing the interviews. One asked to sit at the shelter and the other preferred to sit on a grass bank next to a wildflower meadow (Figure 9). Here, we kicked off our shoes and absent-mindedly watched bees from nearby hives as they pollinated the flowers whilst we chatted. Walking together provided an opportunity to feel at ease before formally commencing the interview, which is in keeping with the sentiments of Lee and Ingold (2007) and Strang (2010) who emphasise the benefits of walking and talking when undertaking ethnographic research. Kusenbach (2003) also advocates that when we participate in something physical with our body we relax and feel more able to talk about what really matters. Several of the participants also commented that being able to hear, see and feel nature created a relaxing atmosphere conducive to sharing stories. Being able to point physically to the landscape whilst they recounted experiences was beneficial and provided a shared sense of connection to the place. However, undertaking the interviews in places that were visible to others or where we might be overheard, presented the potential to compromise participants' confidentiality. Fortunately, this was not an issue. Three participants were interviewed in an office formalising the interview and I had to work harder to create a relaxing atmosphere, however it did achieve confidentiality.



Figure 9 The wildflower meadow at EIT, Taradale.

Source: Emma Passey, October 2020.

Having established a mutually satisfactory date, time and location, I conducted the sessions in a way that would maximise information sharing. Several of the meetings began with a karakia. I had planned to start all of the interviews in this way, to settle the wairua, as a mark of respect to my

Māori participants, and as an acknowledgement of the importance of this landscape to Ngāti Pārau. I also hoped that it would calm my mood and settle my nerves as a novice researcher. However, I was nervous about my ability to speak te Reo Māori with colleagues and this tikanga is not something I am readily used to. A couple of my participants acknowledged the importance in starting in this way and a couple politely declined to take part, perhaps because they identify as non-Māori, or because they do not speak te Reo, or perhaps because they are non-religious. I did not question their reasoning because I did not want them to feel obliged to take part or be culturally unsafe. However, as the interviews went on I gained more confidence to suggest it.

I opened the formal part by asking participants to share where they came from or where they felt was 'home', and also to share their whakapapa. The purpose was to help the participant know that I was genuinely interested in hearing their stories about the places to which they felt connected. This initial sharing enabled me to elicit attitudes and feelings that each participant has towards landscape and place. It also gave me a better understanding of their social, professional and cultural background enabling me to build a more detailed picture of the context in which each answered. As an example, I asked participants to describe salient landscapes, encouraging them to share either physical attributes or social experiences. This provided a sense of what connects them to a place and why, and helped me to gently guide the conversation towards how this might influence their connection to Ōtātara. Seidman (1991), suggested that this approach could be perceived as a friendly conversation rather than a data-gathering interview. This technique, and my existing relationships positively paved the way for the tone of the interviews, and my questions were interspersed with chit chat and banter. This helped to relax participants and feel more open to sharing and consequently, no two interviews were conducted in exactly the same way.

Kvale (1996) argues that qualitative research interviews should ideally be "more concerned with being attuned to the participant than with necessarily following the same path with all respondents" (Knox and Burkard 2009, 567). I had been granted ethics approval to undertake participant-led, semi-structured interviews, and developed a series of questions and conversation starters to prompt discussions as recommended by several researchers including Guest (2012). As the research developed however, I hardly referred to them because as my confidence grew, participants were encouraged to lead the conversation with only gentle steering from me.

This approach is similar to the indigenous research methodology, Talanoa, which is a method preferred by some Pacific Island researchers, particularly those from Tonga. This was introduced into academic literature by Sitiveni Halapu and then further developed as a research methodology in education by Timote Vaoleti. The method focuses on talking openly from the heart (Fa'avae et al., 2016; Farrelly and Nabobo-Baba 2014, Vaoleti 2006). It is argued that talanoa is a more accurate

way to collect information in comparison to formal structured interviews, because it is nonlinear and responsive, leading to more authentic knowledge and responses (Vaiotei 2006, and Vaiotei 2013). Emotional closeness is required for this approach (Vaiotei 2006) and my relationships with each participant certainly reinforced this, so much so that several of the participants followed up with me afterwards to thank me for 'the chat'. One participant even came back after the interview to share family photograph albums of Ōtātara dating back to the 1980s, and two participants met for the first time after discovering a mutually historic connection with the log cabin.

Most of the participants had not been interviewed as part of my pilot study, which widened my insights and views. However, re-interviewing others allowed for elements of deeper reflection on comments made during the initial study. I also followed up some interviews with 'corridor' conversations often chatting about the progress of my research. Although these were not formal interviews, they provided an opportunity to consider further any key aspects in the data analysis and provided a richer understanding of the dynamics of the history and socio-political elements at play. The opportunity to meet and review aspects raised in the initial interview allowed for new examples to be shared and to build on the previous exchange.

Finally, I gave each participant the opportunity to add any further comments. I offered them the opportunity to read and perhaps edit their transcription. However, only one requested to make amendments. At the conclusion of the interview, I presented each with a box of home-made truffles as a thank you.

3.9 Data Transcription, Analysis and Themes

There are several ways to transcribe data, undertake analyses and identify themes using paid transcription services, databases and technology. However, I chose to be fully immersed in the process, transcribing interviews personally, undertaking the analysis and identifying themes without the reliance on technology or other services. The interviews were recorded on my cell phone. Transcription took several weeks. It was a process which I enjoyed and found helpful because I could relive the tone of participants' voices as they shared their stories and experiences. I noted their intonation, utterances, laughter or sighs as I transcribed. Drisko (1997) argues that the level of transcription ideally complements the depth of analysis required. McLellan et al. (2003) argue that by recording this level of detail is foundational in identifying patterns and themes and also "demonstrate how social phenomena are framed, articulated, and experienced as well as the relationships within and between particular elements of such phenomena" (McLellan et al. 2003,

67). Hearing birds singing and other background noise was also a helpful way to transport me back to each conversation, adding a sense of closeness to my participants and the landscape.

As an EIT insider researcher there were several advantages to interviewing colleagues. For example, I had the ability to interpret and attach meaning to comments that may not have been possible for an outsider. This enabled me, the researcher, “to ‘read in between the lines of what is said’ rather than accept the interviewees’ accounts at ‘face value’” (McEvoy 2001, 50). An example of this is when references to historical conversations were made or banter ensued that was relevant to our relationship or past experiences together. An onlooker would be unlikely to understand our ‘in’ EIT jokes.

When I undertook the data analysis, I actively read and coded the transcripts based on elements that I found of interest and was able to highlight or comment on such references. After the initial coding, I identified several themes and patterns relating to the connections participants made with landscape in general and more specifically to Ōtātara. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis is a flexible, but also rigorous way to identify patterns and themes in data. Although this was time consuming, it afforded me a valuable opportunity to immerse myself by reliving conversations and my participants’ experiences. Consequently, I found myself with a swathe of rich data, pages of insightful narratives and personal memories.

In many cases the profound narratives raised more questions than answers, which whilst fascinating and spurred my desire to dig deeper, extends beyond the boundaries of this thesis. So, I combined these subject matters and identified two primary subject matters: those of; embodied landscape experiences, and secondly, those of social relationships and place. Embodied experiences are physical, cognitive or emotional feelings that become an intrinsic part of a person and for the purposes of this analysis will include investigation relating to physical characteristics of landscape, spiritual attachment and wellbeing, physical work and history. Much of the emphasis here is on individual experiences. Dengen (2015) identified that much of the literature to date had been about the depth of feeling for individuals’ experiences of place attachment; however, she eloquently draws on sociological and anthropological perspectives to argue the case that it is also collective and relational. This was notable in my own findings. Consequently, the second theme, social relationships and place, encompasses narratives relating to childhood friendships and memories, and collective experiences of events and physical work with others in addition to the significance of keeping local histories alive.

3.10 Summary

Chapter Three has considered a number of methodical issues which are important to acknowledge for meaningful research outcomes. These include my: Euro-centric upbringing; ongoing mātauranga Māori learning journey; amalgamation of different academic disciplines and Pākehā framing of knowledge. An authentic desire to understand the experiences of the participants was central to the way in which the methods were determined, the style in which interviews were conducted and the thematic analysis of interview transcriptions was undertaken. Self-reflection, my aim to acknowledge and be respectful of any cultural sensitivities, and the effort of personal transcription, immersing myself in each part of the process underpinned this aim.

In order to unpick the themes and make sense of them in relation to connections between employees and Ōtātara, it is now appropriate to consider some of the social histories. Chapter Four sets out a brief chronology to set these in the context of the landscape and to guide a visceral sense of the location, in addition to the examination of some of the Ōtātara history, people and place relationship. Chapters Five and Six then step through the interview findings which are divided into the two key themes identified: embodied landscape experiences; and social relationships and place respectively. Conclusions are drawn in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Four

Ōtātara: History, People and Place

4.1 Introduction

Chapters One, Two and Three introduced place attachment, the rationale for this research and the methodology adopted. Chapter Four examines the historical context of this landscape, and how it fits with EIT's own heritage is helpful to make sense of the interview accounts presented in Chapters Five and Six. However, historical interpretations can change over time, some of which conflict and some which are contested. This is partly because Māori traditionally share stories orally through waiata and storytelling from one generation to another. Consequently, history can change depending on who is sharing a story and a host of narratives relating to the same events or icons can be told (Robert Macdonald). Different accounts of events are not confined to indigenous storytelling however, and there were several examples during my interviews when non-Māori participants shared narratives of the same historical incident, but had different interpretations. Consequently, this summary is taken from documented history, rather than a debate of contested histories, oral accounts or a discussion focused on colonialism. Chad Tareha as an orator of Ōtātara and Cultural Advisor for this research, guided my interpretation of Māori history relating to the occupation of Ōtātara.

Chapter Four now sets out the historical and social relationships between Ōtātara the people and the place by means of a brief chronology of events to orientate the reader, and to provide a more visceral sense of the landscape. First, a summarised account of the Māori occupation is given, and includes background to why the area is a geography of significance to Ngāti Pārau. Second, there is a brief commentary concerning the homesteads that were built here and the impact and legacy that they left behind.

The second part of the chapter focuses on the impact of the Hawke's Bay Community College (later renamed EIT), and more specifically, the Ōtātara Arts and Crafts Centre and recently the OOLC. Underlying the discussion of history is the implication that attachment to place is not an individual psychological phenomenon, but a deeply social and cultural experience, even if not understood universally in this way.

4.2 Māori Occupation

Ngāti Pārau are one of seven mana whenua hapū of the Ahuriri area and have been connected with Ōtātara Pā (Figure 10) for over 600 years (Chad Tareha). Shell-samples from Māori middens have been carbon dated to 1490, which is compatible with traditional Māori historical accounts (Parsons 1997). At this earlier time, much of the modern suburb of Taradale and the land where EIT resides, was part of an extensive estuary and wetland system (Figures 11 and 12). The adjoining Pā sites were bounded by cliffs and steep spurs and the topography made it a relatively safe place to live especially since the views were extensive and there was easy access to the Tūtaekurī River, providing a fresh water source and abundant seafood (Fearn 2018). At its busiest, over 10,000 people occupied this area, a population three times that of Taradale today (Statistics NZ 2018) and similar to the number of students enrolled at the Hawke’s Bay campus in 2019 (EIT 2021). Clearly, the hillside was an important centre and a hive of activity.



Figure 10 Ōtātara Pā - View of palisades.

Source: Emma Passey, December 2020.

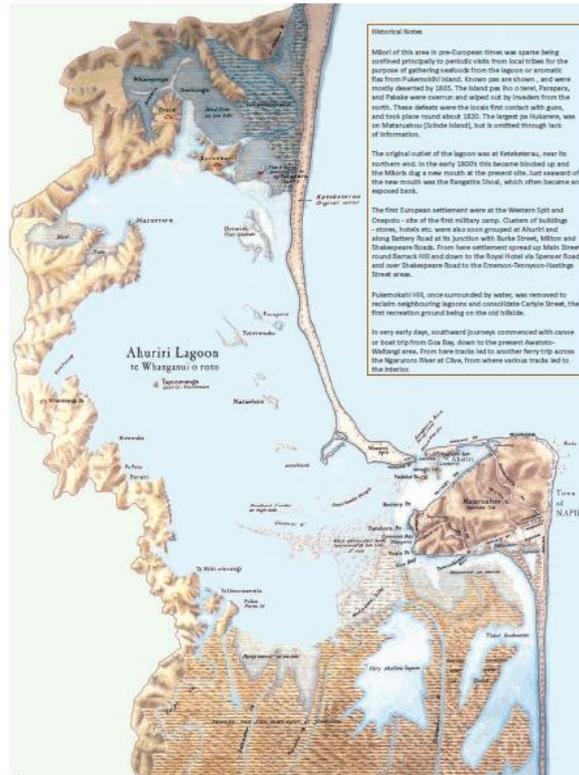


Figure 11 Map of Napier landscape prior to 1865, illustrating extensive estuary and wetland systems

Source: New Zealand Department of Survey and Land Information 1989.



Figure 12 Map of Napier landscape post 1965, illustrating change following uplift from 1931 earthquake.

Source: New Zealand Department of Survey and Land Information 1989.

Chad Tareha regularly takes groups up to the Pā site to share stories of the Māori occupation. He shares accounts of how in the 1500s, Taraia, the great grandson of Kahungunu, led Ngāti Kahungunu to Heretaunga and fought several battles with Tūrauwhā, the Principal Chief of Ōtātara to determine who would occupy the area. The invasion occurred somewhere between 1525 and 1575 (Morris Matthews and Johnstone 2015) and significant numbers were killed during this last battle. A wāhi-tapu, to restrict access was placed on the Pā. Local historian Patrick Parsons (1997), claims that “accounts of Taraia’s conquest are shrouded in the mists of time” (Parsons 1997, 22). However, it was considered by many as a truly significant event not least because “the ownership and the mana over Heretaunga (Hawke’s Bay) had been passed over to Ngāti Kahungunu” (Fearn 2018, 7), whose region now extends to much of the East Coast of the lower North Island. Parsons (1997) echoes these comments arguing that the authority of Heretaunga stems from the union of tangata whenua and Ngāti Kahungunu. He claims that Ōtātara is still notable because it was “a place where the old order died and a new dynasty was forged” (Parsons 1997, 22), in other words it is a geography of significance to Māori.

The hapū act as kaitiaki, working closely with Heritage New Zealand and the Department of Conservation to protect the environment and to keep the social and cultural histories alive. Chad Tareha argues that because the histories are not written down, it is important to share them so they are not lost. When sharing histories with those who visit the Pā, he inspires current and future generations to look after the area both spiritually and environmentally. Remnants of the Māori occupation such as terraces, kūmara pits, complex gardens, middens and evidence of fortifications, are still visible reminding us that: “Ōtātara serves as a memorial to ancestors and events belonging to another age” (Morris Matthews and Johnston 2015, 36). These archaeological features can also be seen from various vantage points on campus, acting as historical markers for visitors to EIT.

4.3 The Homesteads

In the 1830s Europeans first arrived in Hawke’s Bay and further changes were made to the landscape. In 1851, part of Ōtātara was purchased from Ngāti Pārau and was occupied by several different families including Donald McLean and the Dobel family who owned the land between 1865-1901. Bush was cleared from the hillside in the gullies and sheep were grazed. In the early 1900s part of the land, owned by the Dobel Family Estate, was sold to the Williams family, who built a homestead, named Ashridge (Figure 13) (Fearn 2018, Morris Matthews 2015, Moss 1996). Anglicising the names of places in this way could have resulted in the Māori cultural context being lost or lessened (Passey 2018). However, Airini Karauria Tamiwhakakiteaoterangi Donnelly, a prominent local Māori, and her husband George, bought the homestead in 1902, and the name

reverted back to Ōtātara as an acknowledgement of its connections to the Pā. The couple became well-known landowners and one of the largest sheep farming families in Aotearoa (Fearn 2018). Airini was a well-known figure with an impressive whakapapa, which gave her links to most of the hapū in the area and was known for her business acumen and larger-than-life personality (Fearn 2018).

When the Ōtātara homestead was badly damaged by fire in July 1914, the Donnelly's replaced it with an impressive homestead (Figure 14), allegedly using some 150,000 bricks in the construction (Fearn 2018). Horses became a prominent feature and were grazed on the flats, where the main campus now resides and "the house was surrounded by a beautiful garden looked after by two permanent men... in the garden were a glasshouse and tennis lawn" (Fearn 2018, 93). Remnants of the old garden remain features of the campus including brick walls and pathways. Concrete steps wind their way from the main campus to the top of the hill. Physically linking this history to the campus today is the avenue of London Plane trees (Figure 26), which once demarcated the driveway and now is a feature in the car park beside EIT's School of Tourism and Hospitality.



Figure 13 Ashridge, the Williams' homestead.

Source: IDEASchool, EIT.



Figure 14 Ōtātara homestead.

Source: IDEASchool, EIT.

Maude Perry, Airini's sister, inherited the homestead. Tragically, her granddaughter Patricia, aged eight, was killed by falling debris in a 7.8 magnitude earthquake in 1931. Thereafter, the family considered this part of Ōtātara as tapu and never rebuilt a home nor returned to live there (Fearn 2018). In 1941, Maude sold the site to Margaret and Arnauld Hetley who began building a new home. Arnauld Hetley died before the couple moved in and so Margaret lived there alone, before gifting the estate to Hawke's Bay for a university.

The occupation of Ōtātara has been littered with tragedy and bloodshed over several generations, from the battles when many Māori were killed, to the destruction of two homesteads and the death of both Patricia Perry and Arnauld Hetley. These events and the consequences of them still have an impact; "The blood of the people who lived and died there still flows through us today" (Tareha, T. Car park sign. Ōtātara Pā, Napier). Consequently, these are significant historic and social events, each impacting on one another and adding to the sense of spiritual importance of this place. As an educational organisation EIT has an obligation to acknowledge these histories, share, respect and learn from them, as they also become part of our personal and cultural selves, adding weight to the notion that Ōtātara is a geography of significance.

4.4 The Ōtātara Arts and Crafts Centre

In 1975 part of the Pā site was transferred to the Crown for the purposes of an historic reserve and part was quarried for red metal until 1986 (Walter and Gosling 2002, 10). All of this land is now protected as an historic reserve. In the same year, the Hawke's Bay Community College opened its

doors for the first time (Figure 15). As a mark of acknowledgement and respect to the significant connections of the Community College and Ōtātara, an artwork was commissioned for the entranceway (Figure 16). Linda Bruce, the artist, has had a long association with EIT and is currently a lecturer in IDEAschool. The artwork remains in situ and every day hundreds pass by this special taonga.

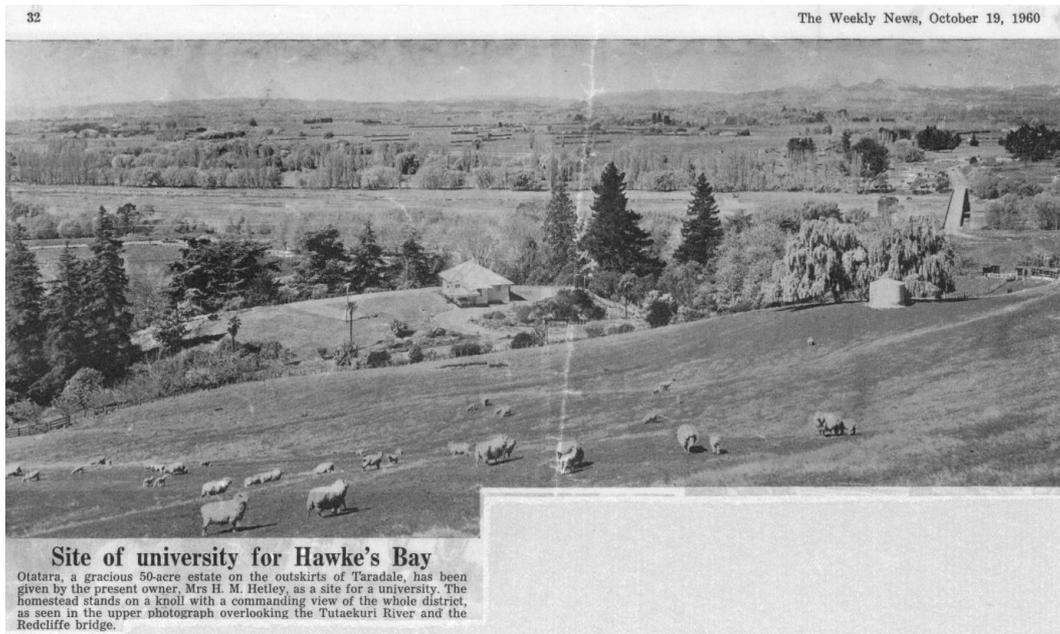


Figure 15 Ōtātara homestead and estate 1960.

Source: *The Weekly News*, October 19, 1960

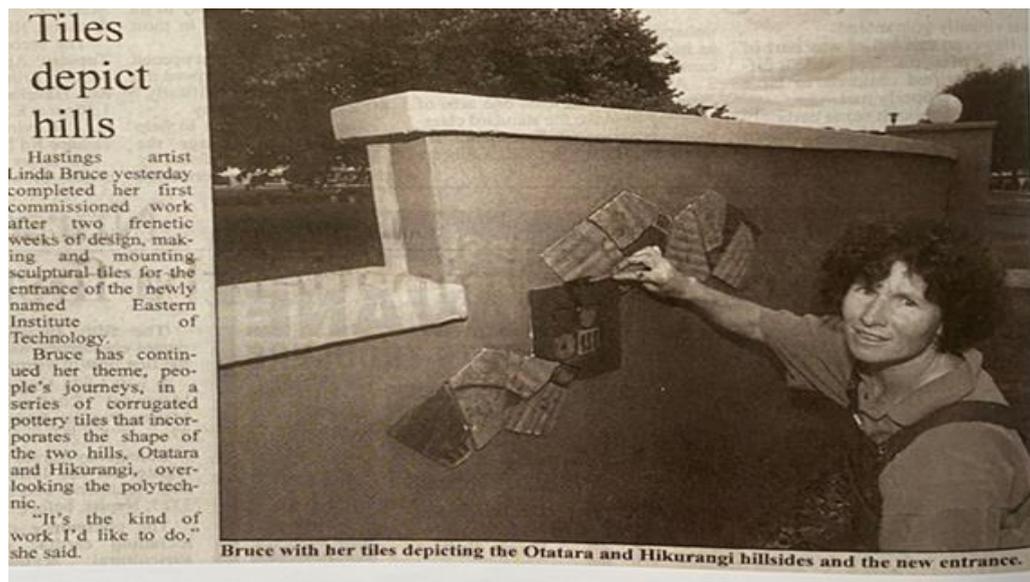


Figure 16 Linda Bruce with her tiles depicting Ōtātara and Hikurangi hillsides at the entrance of EIT, Taradale.

Source: Morris Matthews and Johnston 2015, 138.

Whilst the main campus was developed on the flat land, an internationally respected arts college, the Ōtātara Arts and Crafts Centre (Figure 17) flourished on the hillside adjacent to the old Hetley homestead. During the 1970s and 1980s, the college administration was supportive of an innovative and creative approach to localised learning, which was embraced by the arts community. The Centre provided space for an Artist in Residence, traditional flax weaving and after school children's art classes. Harakeke was gifted from different marae in the region and the site became well known for raranga or weaving groups. Buildings were constructed by those that worked and studied here and recycled materials were sought for the build. Clay was even dug from the hillside to make hand-fired bricks for paving, which is still visible and a testament to the skills and the generosity of spirit of those involved. A log cabin was also constructed in 1986 as part of a Government scheme called Project Employment Programmes and speaking with colleagues who recall family members or friends being involved in this build, it provided a place that was community centred and underpinned by Māori values acknowledging cultural histories.

The log cabin is the only original construction to remain on site after the buildings were deemed unfit for purpose. The EIT arts programmes moved to the main part of campus and the buildings were relocated to Waiohiki in 2004. Several conversations have highlighted a sense of nostalgia for the Arts Centre partly because it was a place that represented a true labour of love, and partly because of the body of learners and educators who enjoyed using natural materials from the land with which to work and express freedom through creativity. There is much research relating to the emotional bonds that occur between people and meaningful landscapes (e.g. Low and Altman 1992; Scannell and Gifford 2010) and in particular, how groups like the arts community can often feel a sense of distress and grief if they are forced to relocate (Fried 1963; Fullilove 1996). A loss of identity and symbolic representation might also be felt (Sirima 2016) and at a reunion hui in 2004, one artist proclaimed, "you can only take part of it (the wairua), because it is rooted in this place" (Morris Matthews 2015, 95). In 2020 EIT hosted a hui, introduced in Chapter 3.5, to acknowledge those who worked at the Arts and Crafts Centre. Whilst this contributed to an overall healing process for this group, some still felt a sense of displacement and disappointment.

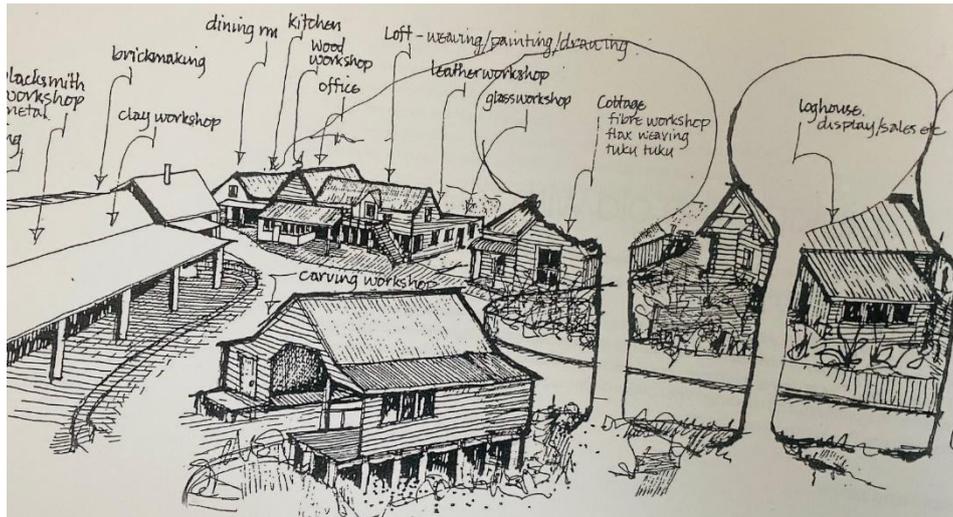


Figure 17 Jacob Scott's hand-drawn impression of the Ōtātara Arts and Crafts Community.

Source: IDEASchool, EIT

In 2015 lecturer Dr Mazin Bahho, began work to refurbish the log cabin (Figure 18) with the aim of it becoming a “demonstration facility for showcasing sustainable building design and construction technologies and an education tool and focus for the behaviour and values that support sustainability” (Bahho 2017, 27). Dr Bahho has shared many stories of the refurbishment, including how an army of volunteers contributed their time and skills for many different reasons, including an interest in sustainability, history or creating environmental spaces (Bahho 2017). One common connection was the passion for the history of the Arts and Crafts Centre and respect for those who worked here. He argues that the refurbishment provided a new swathe of learners to create their own cultural link and bond with the past. This is discussed further in Chapters Five and Six.



Figure 18 Log cabin after refurbishment.

Source: Emma Passey, October 2020.

4.5 The Ōtātara Outdoor Learning Centre

After the Arts Centre moved, the site was used by both Taratahi Agricultural College and Unison, the local power company. Access was restricted and few visited. However, in 2018 a new regional collaboration, including Ngāti Pārau, EIT, the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council and the Department of Conservation, developed an immersive outdoor learning environment, the OOLC. The initiative is part-funded by the Air New Zealand Environment Trust, with significant investment from EIT.

One aim is to promote nature literacy across the Aotearoa education curriculum, thereby encouraging learners to spend more time outside, connecting with the environment through learning and gaining a better understanding of kaitiakitanga. The project’s foundations are firmly centred on Ōtātara, the place, its people and its history. A Steering Group has been established, for which I am the Project Manager and we have developed a set of guiding principles for the management of the space underpinned by Māori values (Appendix 5). The log cabin has been further refurbished, a new outdoor shelter and eco-toilet have been built (Figure 19) and significant effort has been made to landscape the area with native plants, and provide ease of access for all.

Staff and students have already begun to immerse themselves in the revitalisation of this space. Volunteer “working bees” (Figures 20 and 21) have resulted in the creation of a rongoā garden, extensive native plantings and a new network of recreational pathways. Consequently, students from several programmes now have part of their curriculum delivered in this immersive outdoor space, providing an opportunity for the everyone to enjoy, learn and connect with the landscape.



Figure 19 Shelter and eco toilet at the OOLC.

Source: Emma Passey 2020.



Figure 20 Staff and community preparing a planting area at a working bee at the OOLC.

Source: Emma Passey, 2019.



Figure 21 Staff and community take a well-earned rest after a working bee at the OOLC.

Source: Emma Passey, 2019.

4.6 Historical Markers in Everyday Campus Life

There are several historical markers relating to Ōtātara, that appear either physically on campus or that are referred to in the everyday discourse and culture of the place. Like Billig’s notion of banal nationalism (Billig 1995), Ōtātara is often flagged through routine symbols and language and it could be argued that the notion of its importance has become so entrenched that it is actually hardly noticeable as social constructions of place have become significant in everyday campus speech including:

- sculptured tiles depicting Ōtātara and Hikurangi at the entrance gates (Figure 16).
- pou whakairo inside the whareniui of Te Ara O Tāwhaki, EIT’s Marae. Traditionally these depict ancestors, however because EIT is an educational institute several panels reflect social stories of the area.
- a bone carving (Figure 22) on display at the log cabin which depicts stories relating to the Arts and Crafts Centre.
- hand fired bricks at the log cabin made at the Arts and Crafts Centre.
- photographs and paintings of the different homesteads hung in the Council Room and on display in IDEAschool and books that have been commissioned to tell the history of EIT.
- the naming of campus entities such as: The Ōtātara Childcare Centre (Figure 23), The Ōtātara Bookshop (Figure 24), and the Ōtātara Trust.
- the fact that Ōtātara can be seen from almost everywhere on campus (Figure 25)
- harakeke plantings associated with the Arts and Crafts Centre.
- London Plane Trees by the School of Tourism and Hospitality, marking the driveway for the Ōtātara homestead (Figure 26).
- the physical closeness of the Ōtātara hillside and the campus (Figure 27).



Figure 22 Bone carving depicting stories of the Arts and Crafts Centre and the surrounding landscape.

Source: Emma Passey, June 2021.



Figure 23 Ōtātara Children's Centre signage.

Source: Emma Passey, June 2021.



Figure 24 Ōtātara Bookshop signage.

Source: Emma Passey, 2021



Figure 25 Ōtātara can be seen almost everywhere on campus. View from Facilities car park.

Source: Emma Passey, June 2021.



Figure 26 Avenue of London plane trees, which once formed the driveway to the Ōtātara homestead. (Ōtātara Pā is just visible in the left side of the photograph).

Source: Emma Passey, 2020.



Figure 27 The physical closeness of the Ōtātara hillside and the main campus. Photo is taken from the Ōtātara Pā viewing platform.

Source: Emma Passey, May 2021.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has attempted to trace both cultural and historical precursors of individuals belonging to place. The histories shared and the campus signage and symbols illustrate the importance of Ōtātara, representing deep emotional bonds not just to Ngāti Pārau, but also to EIT as an organisation and to those who have lived and worked at the homesteads, at the Arts and Crafts Centre and were involved with building and refurbishing the log cabin, and now those connected with the OOLC. In the interview findings set out in the following two chapters, this historical account serves as an anchor to hold back individualising or psychologising assumptions. The embedded experience of a place is, or can be, intensely personal and meaningful. The fact that it is refracted through one's own past and the places with which an individual person has past associations, does not mean they own, control or privately claim the place, but respond to it in both known and unknown ways.

Chapter Five

Embodied Landscape Experiences

5.1 Introduction

The history and the photographic evidence presented in the previous chapter provide a useful framework with which to understand ways in which staff connect to place. Crouch (2000, 68) argues that “individuals engage, encounter and grasp the world through a process of embodiment” and defines embodiment as the “the ways in which the individual grasps the world around her/him and makes sense of it in ways that engage both mind and body” (Crouch 2000, 63). Place attachment is significant to this.

The following chapter explores some of the ways in which EIT employees encounter Ōtātara through embodied landscape experiences. Firstly, the key physical characteristics of the landscape that are highly valued by participants are considered. Secondly, the value of the locale to enable spiritual wellbeing is explored, followed by the attachment benefits rewarded to individuals by virtue of physical work undertaken in the landscape. Finally, the ways in which participants personal histories have enabled a deeper connection to Ōtātara are set out.

5.2 Place Attachment: The Extraordinary Landscape Features of Ōtātara

The variety of physical characteristics of landscape, be it the geology, geography, plants or historical markings on the landscape from past agricultural or social practices, appeal to different people for different reasons, creating individual levels of attachment. Underlying the whole landscape is a continuous “record of symbols, bearing and transmitting the beliefs and power relations of different social groups” (Stephenson et al. 2010, 15). These social groups include tangata whenua, the European farmers whose animals grazed the land over the last 150 years, the arts community and the current workforce. Some of the symbols are historic, such as discarded kūmara pits, or the old bricks fired and laid by members of the Arts and Crafts Centre. Others are relatively new, such as the OOLC native plantings. During the interviews, participants mentioned several physical characteristics of special personal significance, which are summarised at Figure 28. However, the boundary of this thesis limits my ability to cover all of these aspects so, instead, I focus on how three factors help to create deeper bonds to place; the expansive views from Ōtātara Pā, walkways and the juxtaposition between the built landscape of the campus and the rural landscape of Ōtātara.

Physical Characteristics Connecting Staff to Ōtātara	Participant
The raupō bushes on the hillsides	William
The harakeke at the log cabin	Pene, Ria, George, Mazin
The wildflower meadow by the historic staircase	Lucy
The native plantings in the gully of the OOLC	Margaret
The walkways to the OOLC	Mazin, George and Wiremu
Expansive views from Ōtātara Pā	Wiremu, George, William and Mazin
Historic remains of the kūmara beds at Ōtātara	William
The Tūtaekurī River	Carl
Trees including natives, broadleaves and Moreton Bay Figs	Mazin, George, Carl
Physical closeness of the built environment and Ōtātara	William, Lucy, Wiremu

Figure 28 Examples of physical characteristics connecting staff to Ōtātara.

I turn firstly to the walkways and access points to both the OOLC and the Pā site. Three participants drew attention to the extraordinary ways in which the space can be accessed directly from the campus. The main accessway is via a narrow roadway which winds its way upwards to a plateau and the log cabin (Figures 29 and 30). The roadway is flanked by majestic horse chestnut and oak trees, smothered in ivy and interspersed with regenerated she oaks. This creates a dense enclosure blocking the views and creating a deep sense of mystery about what might exist beyond the trees:

The trees are so dense that you can't see through them but you keep following the road up... and you get to a plateau... and that's when something hits you as a surprise! Because you don't see this thing [pause] you don't see the buildings [the log cabin and shelter] but they suddenly appear. (Mazin)



Figure 29 The winding, narrow roadway from the campus to the OOLC. The log cabin is just visible through the trees.

Source: Emma Passey, June 2021

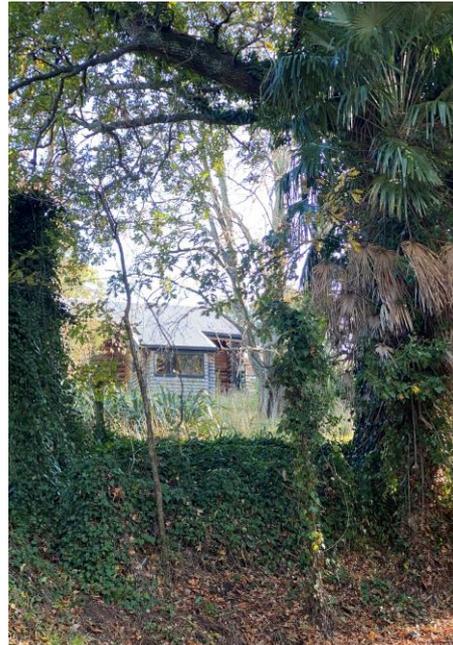


Figure 30 The log cabin building suddenly appears through the trees.

Source: Emma Passey, June 2021.

Whilst the tall trees and winding roadway help to create an unexpected entrance, there is a second, less well-known walkway which is equally surprising. Tucked behind a shed by the campus vineyard, is an old farm gate which opens into a small steep paddock. Looking east up the hill is a dark, narrow stairwell with imposing Moreton Bay figs arching over the steps (Figures 31 and 32). This charming walkway was once part of the old homestead gardens and has since fallen into a state of disrepair. Fallen twigs and leaves lie on the uneven steps winding upwards and ending abruptly. George painted a visual picture of the physicality of the steps with the two Moreton Bay Figs and leaf and twig debris as creating a “distinct atmospheric presence,” adding to a sense of “curiosity and mystery” and a “powerful experience.” He added, “moving up through the trees is quite something. It eases the spirit up to the log cabin. It’s a beautiful way in.” The spiritual nature of Ōtātara is considered in Chapter 5.3.



*Figure 31 Dark narrow entrance way to historic steps.
Source: Emma Passey, March 2021*



*Figure 32 Winding, narrow steps to 'nowhere'.
Source: Emma Passey, March 2021*

The intimate physical characteristics of the roadway and the steps shape the experience of the place, creating a sense of mystery, curiosity, physical and emotional connection for walkers (Passey 2020). They also enable individuals to easily walk from the built campus to different parts of the hillside. It is this ability to physically navigate and move through a variety of natural and formed landscape features, a secret enclosed pathway for example, which enables staff to discover, enjoy and connect with the place because, “when we are at close quarters with the land we move through: we feel the wind, smell the mown hay, are drawn by a curve in the road to take this path rather than that one, and we feel the demands of a steep incline as our muscles respond to the landform” (Brook 2019, 43). However, it is not just man made, formed features that create a connection to the landscape. Natural features, such as expansive views, regenerated bush, water features and mountains can exert a powerful pull on individuals too (Ashley 2007).

Several participants referenced walking the hillside in order to enjoy the distant views from the Pā site (Figures 33 and 34). George and William for example, enthused about looking outwards to the Kaweka and Ruahine mountains, and beyond to Mount Ruapehu some 130 kilometres away. William specifically reflected on the volcanic eruptions of Mount Ruapehu in the 1990s, which could be clearly seen from the Pā, a momentous occasion to connect him forever to such a special place. However, it is not just the scenery that has an impact. Such views also provide a refuge from the busy campus, to reflect, and to make sense of life. For example, George referred to the scenic outlook as helping him feel grounded, enabling a sense of belonging. He said that “the view links into a sense of tūrangawaewae” and stated that it is a place where he can reflect and look beyond himself:

You know I can see north, south, east and west up there and... ermm... I love that. I love being able to see the Kawekas and the Ruahines running down. Actually, I love seeing them, perhaps a little more than looking out to the ocean... [pause] so yeah, attached to that realm I suppose of viewing and feeling that it's a place that I can go and see the world. (George)



Figure 33 Expansive views east from Ōtātara to the Tūtaekurī River and the ocean beyond.

Source: Emma Passey, October 2020.



Figure 34 Expansive views south east from Ōtātara to the mountains.

Source: Emma Passey, October 2020.

Several participants were enthused by the ease of access these extraordinary places and the benefits of being in nature. William shared how the position of the urban campus environment and a rural landscape can make a big difference in connecting people positively with nature. Campus life is beset with routine, rules, a sense of confinement and the need to conform to a timetable set by an Institution. In contrast, walking in a rural area is “peaceable with sensations felt at slower rhythm” (Edensor 2000, 88). Edensor argues that walking is a “natural activity which frees the individual and the body from quotidian routine and physical confinement” (Edensor 2000, 83), thoughts which were echoed and trumpeted by the participants, and which help to provide a more positive sense of connectedness to the workplace:

I like it [the OOLC] for similar reasons [birds/plants/wildlife]. You know it's getting back to nature in the urban setting. (Ria)

I love the big trees and suddenly feeling like you're not in the middle of a tertiary campus. (Lucy)

It's a nice big space for learning and just to get away from the busy life of the city, I reckon. (Wiremu)

These examples illustrate how the physical characteristics of Ōtātara positively impact the connection that employees have with their local workplace. However, for some, the distinctive

features of the Aotearoa landscape also make them feel more attached to the nation as a whole. I draw on comments made by Mazin, an immigrant, like me:

When we came back [from overseas] on the plane, the rolling hills and special landscape had a kind of ermm... [pause] feeling. Something in my conscience that is really beyond the physical, beyond the way it looks. It hit me with something that is like an attachment. So, I wanted to come and be part of it [pause]. It is that kind of [pause] bond that people have with this special landscape and ermm... it is really [pause] you feel it when you go to a bush walk or you sit by the river or you go onto the waterfront and walk. It's just that kind of emptiness that you don't see in many other parts of the world. Sometimes you have a beautiful spot and you feel so special because you are the only one there and you can have it to yourself, you know? (Mazin)

This detailed description illustrates the special and intense connectedness that Mazin felt returning to Aotearoa following a visit to his homeland. This sense of attachment relating to the unique physical characteristics this country affords, resonates with me too, perhaps because it is this same landscape aesthetics that drew me to Aotearoa initially.

5.3 Spiritual Wellbeing and Importance of Place

Mazin's deep and personal reflection of his bond with the wider national landscape emphasises that connections can be "a kind of feeling" which is "beyond the physical." Relating these to the log cabin, his feelings have more than just a social, cultural and historic dimension. He says it is "not material, it's not physical, it's emotional and can I say, spiritual?" Most of the participants, like Mazin, talked of "a kind of feeling" that is aroused in this landscape, which can be attributed to this sense of spirituality and wellbeing. This section focuses on how features of Ōtātara contribute to a sense of spirituality and wellbeing as participants shared how the landscape bonds them to the place through ancestral connections, being in nature, and spaces to self-reflect, think or to experience catharsis.

Wilderness spirituality is defined as:

a feeling of connection and interrelationship with other people and nature; a heightened sense of awareness and elevated consciousness beyond the everyday and corporeal world; and cognitive and affective dimensions of human understandings embracing peace, tranquillity, harmony, happiness, awe, wonder, and humility (Ashley 2007, 53).

There are several studies relating to spiritual landscapes and their connection with place (Ashley 2007, Counted and Zock 2019 for example), but sometimes "past and present spatial relationships

are often held in unconscious levels of the psyche, which are difficult to articulate” (Bingley 2003, 329). This was so with some of the research participants. For example, when asked what makes Ōtātara so special, Wiremu said, “it’s hard to explain but ermm...[pause] it’s just a feeling. It’s just a feeling that you get when you’re on your mountain.” A place that individuals consider as home, or in Wiremu’s case, as their mountain, can evoke “strong affective ties of emotional commitment and connectedness, of a sense of history, belonging and rootedness” (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 1993, 236). For Māori, mountains, like a family heirloom, are passed from generation to generation, acting as ‘psychic anchor(s) (Cooper Marcus 1992) and for many, becoming a taonga. This coupled with the ability for staff to be able to walk and experience the place where their ancestors or colleagues’ ancestors lived, enriches a sense of spirituality and connectedness.

Studies by Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2004) echo this and provide insights into how the aesthetics of a landscape can facilitate ways in which both “religious believers and non-believers relate to the sacred in a particular geographic setting through events (e.g. war conflicts, terror attacks, violence, protests), rituals, artefacts and storytelling” (Counted and Zock 2019, 13). Wiremu’s sense of spiritual connection is heightened because he ritually shares his ancestral stories in the landscape, pointing to the pou which were carved and erected by his whānau. He shares stories those who have passed, and as a consequence, he says that he “feels his ancestors everywhere on Ōtātara.” Pene also has ancestral connections, which she only discovered recently despite having worked at EIT for more than a decade. She identified this new-found knowledge as “really special” and mused, “I was meant to be here...I was brought here... you know.” The words she chose to describe her feelings and the timbre expressed in her voice as she spoke, make it clear that her ancestral ties help her to feel anchored to this place, emphasising a sense of spiritual belonging.

Wiremu gives other examples of how the natural world spiritually anchors him and supports his sense of belonging, by telling tales of how he sometimes visits the Pā to cleanse himself with the winds. He said that Māori have a saying that “whenever you go through hard times you return back to your mountain and purify yourself with the winds of Tāwhiri.” In a sense, the winds enter the body to purify the soul in an act of spiritual cleansing. This metaphorically connects Wiremu with the physical geography and illustrates how the landscape provides a sense of spiritual healing as people physically and emotionally connect with the sights, sounds and smells of the natural world (Passey 2020). However, it is not just Māori who have a sense of spiritual connection with landscape. Whilst not specific to Ōtātara, Carl revealed that his spiritual wellbeing is supported by a local lake. Finding this hard to articulate, he said that he felt physically better and calmer for being near ‘his’ special place. George also talked about how the expansive views at the top of Ōtātara provided a quiet space for self-reflection, which is discussed in Chapter 5.2. These examples illustrate how natural

landscapes provide the opportunity for individuals to explore the physical world, to be alone, to think, and to experience a sense of inner calm and peace, all of which contribute to a sense of spiritual belonging.

This feeling of spirituality closely aligns with health and wellbeing. Natural settings such as this are “increasingly seen as therapeutic environments, [and] places for cathartic experiences” (Ewert et al. 2003, 141). Margaret’s student cohort loved the fact that the natural form of the native gully at the OOLC provided a quiet place away from others, where they could reflect and she quipped, “if they needed to come up and scream [laughs] they could do that.” The ability to take a break from study or work, take a walk and find a place to release emotions has many benefits, partly because individuals can disconnect from their usual busy, social worlds. Wiremu described Ōtātara as great for “lifting the spirits and recharging the batteries” and Lucy said that it was a great place to take a break from work to find “some sunshine, some peace, some tranquillity and some breathing space.”

The desire to find breathing space is understandable. Campus life is busy, and orderly. Signage directs people from where they should walk, to where they should sit and its urban nature is one of structure, restrictions and law and order. This is in direct contrast to the informal landscape of Ōtātara which represents a place of wilderness and freedom (Passey 2020). This was illustrated by Lucy who described her elation at being at work, but free to remove her shoes and feel the grass beneath her feet. This ability to create a physical connection with the landscape in this way, is something that humans have done for millions of years, creating a direct relationship with the earth. The freedom to be able to connect physically to the ground with bare feet in this way enhances embodied landscape experiences connecting people more firmly to place.

5.4 Connecting to Place Through Physical Work

It is not just through walking barefoot that staff can physically connect with the earth but also through touching the soil or plants with their bare hands. This section comments on three of the physical projects that participants described as supporting their connection to place: planting trees with students; building work on the log cabin and also raranga which is commented on briefly here, and more fully in Chapter Six.

Much of Margaret’s account related planting projects and the power the projects have had in connecting her students with Ōtātara and each other, which she attributed to her own feeling of attachment. Several of the plantings have taken place at the OOLC and one such project was undertaken by her cohort of students over a two-year period. She went to great lengths to recount how the student group were involved throughout the whole growing process from; planning what to

plant and where, to planting seeds and propagating plants, to physically digging the earth and planting the trees in the ground. It was “an intimate experience” for all who were involved particularly since, she said, the power of such a project was that Ōtātara provided a place for students to transform the landscape and transform themselves in the process. She revealed:

It’s about really empowering students to be able to do it, because you know, you can show them how to do stuff and you can demonstrate. And then they can begrudgingly plant a tree, which is how a lot of people start in the beginning and then they just get into it... they come back and they think, “oh, I actually planted a tree” you know? And now it’s grown. And you can do that on an annual basis with your vege garden. You can get that reinforcement of what you have taught and demonstrated to students, and they can get that reward. Or with cuttings and growing seeds, they all have that reinforcement and for some people they have never had that. They have never experienced that ever.

You know and it’s true... they have never been encouraged... lots of my students would come and would say, “whoa, I don’t know about that Miss. I’m just dumb” ... and it’s kind of lifting them out of that to, you know, see what they can do with their own hands and that they can actually produce something. Something positive. So yes. That is what it was. And when we looked back on what we had done, you know that we had planted it [the gully], it was just like, wow!

They would actually have the opportunity to transform something. You know. Because a lot of them, my students, have never had that opportunity. You know, to transform anything, especially their own social situations. (Margaret)

Margaret’s account and our subsequent conversations highlighted that active, hands-on participation in a project such as this, creates a sense of pride for having created a beautiful space for the benefit of the community and the environment. For some, it also imparts a feeling of self-worth and personal fulfilment, particularly for those who feel that they have never had the opportunity to transform or take control of their personal situations before. Margaret believes that an authentic feeling of belonging emerged for many of the learners since several years later they still relay these stories, signalling the significance of this place for them as individuals. This in turn, strengthens Margaret’s fondness for the area.

Carl also feels pride in this place, because his dad, then a Manager for the Salvation Army, was responsible for building the log cabin in the early 1980s. Forty years on, Carl now works at EIT and often spends time at the OOLC. It was clear by the emotion in his voice, that he feels proud of the work his dad undertook. The detailed workmanship can still be seen, admired and appreciated

decades later. Carl's pride is perhaps enhanced by his memory of helping his father on site all those years ago:

I can remember helping dad up there. Maybe just one day though. Yeah because when they put the logs in, sticking them on top, you drive like a wedge at the ends. I can remember hammering those wedges in and I can still see them up there! (Carl)

I have since visited the cabin and looked for the 'wedges' he describes. Despite having never met Carl's dad, I find myself feeling quite overwhelmed that the father of a colleague physically constructed the original building which is still used and admired by so many. Mazin also feels deeply connected to the building having spent several months working on its refurbishment, which is detailed further in Chapter 6.3. However, my attachment to the cabin comes not just because I like the building, but because I know how much it means to these two colleagues and the amount of work, time, and emotional energy that has been poured into the building over time.

Like the cabin, the harakeke has also been on site for decades but were unmanaged for several years. However, with the drive and commitment of the OOLC project, there has been a revitalisation and new desire to nurture these plants. Two of the participants recounted the enjoyment they gained from the health and wellbeing properties of physically maintaining the plants and the bonds formed with others from weaving together.

Ria detailed how the physical act of cutting the leaves and weaving with others has enabled her to embrace her own whakapapa and Māoritanga in addition to helping her students to embrace theirs. Considered by Māori as a gift, raranga practices are handed down from ancestors, connecting past and future generations. Traditionally it was a collective practice which occurred daily, contributing to the whole settlement through the creation of practical objects such as fishing nets, food baskets and sails (Te Kanawa 2008). Whilst the materials used are not always harakeke, they are often gathered from the local environment ensuring that women became familiar with the characteristics of their own landscape, similarly to Beating the Bounds in England, physically touching the plants as they cut them and transforming them into new, woven objects. These physical connections reinforce the notions of kaitiakitanga and Māori cultural heritage and identity (Te Kanawa 2008). In this case, it has also contributed to Ria's sense of belonging to Ōtātara and EIT.

5.5 Social History as a Means to Connect with Place

The examples already shared highlight that Ōtātara is layered in social histories and how these connect different generations of families and students throughout the years. This section sets out

some of the ways in which history connects staff to this place from ancestral connections, to attachments through the Arts and Crafts Centre and the log cabin.

Both Wiremu and Pene shared their ancestral connections to the Pā. Wiremu grew up aware of his family history and holds a strong belief in the need to keep researching the history and sharing it with others. He said, “I am always finding new stories and sharing them” believing that keeping history and traditions alive is the most effective way to encourage people to respect Ōtātara and understand the importance of being kaitiaki. He explained:

A lot of our traditions have been lost and if we keep practicing our ancestors’ traditions it keeps them alive. Future generations don’t really learn this in schools so the only way they learn it is through the whānau and just participating in events. [Pause]. It’s not really taught in schools so the only way to teach is to just do it. To take people there and [pause] just getting people involved. (Wiremu)

In contrast to Wiremu who grew up with the knowledge that his ancestors lived at Ōtātara, Pene, only recently discovered that her hapū also had historical links:

Our family are the only survivors of that hapū left so that was really special, like super-special because I had been working at EIT for over 10 years at the time. So, to know that I was working at the foot of the maunga, my maunga was really special. (Pene)

She mused about how she had often felt that she “was meant to be here,” and I was keen to know if she had felt any historical sense of attachment previously to discovering her whakapapa:

Yeah I did. I remember when we used to go up there for a little hīkoi, our kuia would say, you know, “I wouldn’t go up there, there is blood everywhere - battles and after everything that happened up there.” And I would say, “Ah? No. It’s beautiful.” I always felt good. (Pene)

Pene’s comments reveal that there are some colleagues who believe the site is tapū and so it is appropriate to continue to acknowledge and respect these feelings. Her comments are truly humbling and I feel privileged that she was keen to share this information with me. I listened to her story of discovery numerous times on the transcript recording and felt moved by the depth of her emotion and passion as she shared her personal account. She has a kind and unassuming nature and this, I think, makes her new-found ancestral connection to this landscape all the more remarkable.

Whilst Pene has always felt drawn to the physical hillside, Mazin felt an instant pull to the log cabin and he is quite emphatic that anyone who worked on the refurbishment increased their passion once they discovered the stories and histories of those who worked and studied here in years gone by. He said that the refurbishment project, which is outlined further in Chapter 6.3.3, created “a kind

of cultural link and bonding with what happened in the past,” and that once people know the history of the Arts and Crafts Centre, they really started to appreciate the work of those who had gone before becoming enthused about the past. He said:

They have this inherent passion. For some the power and the context for them is history and heritage and they could see the people that came before them and left their marks on this place [the OOLC]. The builders would come and see the bricks that the students baked by hand, one by one, and laid. [Pause]. I can say that this is one of the few places in Hawke’s Bay where you can see or you can feel history and culture and heritage and it kind of... [pause] you feel an attachment to that place and you feel a kind of peace that only sites with heritage can give you. (Mazin)

Mazin’s comments are reinforced by a chance meeting that I had with a recent EIT graduate, who was enthused by the work being undertaken at the OOLC. She shared how her parents had strong connections and fond memories here, having they themselves been students at the Arts and Crafts Centre in the 1970s. They had contributed to making the bricks that still adorn the entrance and had marked their initials on them before laying them. Although some have since been removed they are stored on site, and she was determined to find her parents mark, sifting through each one in the hope of finding them. This family history, she confided, made her feel more attached to the space, and a greater desire to look after a landscape which had previously been nurtured by her parents. In particular she longed to take them back, to reminisce together in the landscape and to show them the spaces that she and a new generation of students have revitalised.

Carl also feels bonded to the log cabin through his family history. His dad, who has since passed away, touched all of the logs, as he undertook the build, and they are still in place today. Carl explained that “he loved it up there. It was his little project”. I asked him how he feels when he visits the cabin now:

Well the first time that I went up, I kind of went, “Ooooh, dad!” [emotion in voice]. Not so much now though that I go back and forth. But the first time I went up I definitely thought, ‘oh wow’ and just stood there for a few minutes thinking that I’d been up here with dad. (Carl)

Wiremu and Pene have deep ancestral attachments to this area and Carl has strong family connections with the log cabin and immediate surroundings. Whilst Mazin’s connections are not through his family, he clearly feels a deep sense of empathy and compassion for those who have lived and worked here previously. The interviews revealed personal and often emotional stories reiterating that when we create meaningful social histories or are made aware of them, we forge

deeper connections to those involved and the places in which they were formed. The interviews took place in the landscape in which the histories were created and this added another meaningful layer of attachment.

5.6 Summary

These anecdotes merely touch the surface of the ways in which staff connect to Ōtātara through embodied landscape experiences. They highlight that different physical characteristics influence participants' preferences within the same locations. For example, some are quite specific in preferring enclosed 'secret' spaces such as narrow walkways, whilst others feel more attuned to the wide-open views afforded from the top of the Pā site. For some, the connection is beyond physical. The spaces provide a therapeutic environment which allows individuals to connect spiritually with ancestors, to think, to self-reflect, and to experience catharsis. The historical connections facilitate some participants to keep their ancestral stories in the forefront of colleagues' minds, and for others, it nurtures empathy and compassion for those who previously lived or worked here. Finally, through physical encounters such as planting trees, weaving, building and refurbishing the log cabin, participants also evolve their own personal sense of empowerment, ownership, attachment and value to Ōtātara.

These individual narratives connect disparate parts of participants' lives and illustrate how embodied experiences are deeply entangled with place. Whilst it is clear that these attachments differ from person to person, one thing is common; Ōtātara is a "good kaupapa to bring everyone together" (Wiremu). The following chapter explores this further and considers how Ōtātara, as a place of social engagement becomes more meaningful through the ways in which people are encountered.

Chapter Six

Social Relationships and Place

6.1 Introduction

Chapter Five illustrates that there are several factors relating to the way in which staff feel connected to Ōtātara through embodied landscape experiences. However, in many ways, the narratives relating to the positive impact of social relationships and collective experiences in place have a greater influence in helping employees to feel connected to the landscape in which they work. The following analysis investigates how communities and places of significance are intrinsically entwined, and how the ability for individuals to work and enjoy recreation in the landscape, can create positive and lasting connections with others. It also examines how encountering communities, be it a student cohort or colleagues in the landscape, can deepen connection to place.

There are several means by which these narratives emerged and these are considered in turn.

Firstly, several interviewees recalled positive memories of childhood friendships in place. Three of them grew up and played in or around Ōtātara whilst others enjoyed equally influential locations. The significance of forming these pivotal memories in place are discussed. Secondly, reflections were shared of planting native trees at the OOLC, contributing to the refurbishment of the log cabin, and the past activities at the Arts and Crafts Centre. These examples of hands-on joint action, are considered next. Thirdly, the final section highlights the power of storytelling in landscape and the ways in which collectively sharing profound experiences in a place can create feelings of belonging

6.2 Childhood Friendships, Memories and Place

Several participants made positive mention of childhood freedoms, playing outdoors. All of them recounted tales of places other than Ōtātara that were significant in this regard, and several of them attested that playing outdoors as children, contributed to their enjoyment of the outdoors in adulthood. Researchers equally argue that partaking in purposeful childhood experiences in nature directly affects our relationship with the general environment later in life (Waite 2007 and Bingley 2003).

To illustrate the impact of childhood landscapes and perception of belonging to a place in adulthood, I asked each participant to share their pepeha; their mountain and their river, or to describe the place to which they felt a sense of 'home'. The responses were varied. All but two quickly and easily identified a physical location that they would associate as their 'home' landscape, and all of these responses were connected to the place where the participant spent their formative years.

Interestingly, four of the participants, Wiremu, Pene, William and Carl grew up physically close to Ōtātara with William specifically describing it as his childhood "backyard" and reminiscing that "as

soon as I knocked off from school I'd be, ermm... up on the [Ōtātara] hills and come home at dark...." In good humour, he reflected how the physical landscape lent itself to teenage antics:

So, yeah. That was our back yard anyway so we used to spend all our time up there. We would go up there and chase goats and [laugh] climb over broken fences and fall out of trees and cause chaos [laughs enthusiastically]. There were some big raupō bushes and swamps we used to play around. We used to just make tracks through them, race through them, hide through them, disappear in them and then jump in the trough before we came home because we were covered in mud from head to toe [pause]. I fell out of a tree and knocked myself out for the first time being chased by a bloody... [pause]. And giving girls on horses a hard time so they chased us, and I ran up a tree and I kept on going up and up and up until the branches got too weak and I came down rather fast! [laughs] (William)

Carl enthusiastically described the area around Ōtātara and the Tūtaekurī River, as his regular childhood hangout and the place he felt most connected to, musing that "when I was a kid we used to spend so much time down there. Weekends and that. We just lived down that river. It was our main life." Lucy reiterated the freedom she enjoyed around Napier Hill and the links between the friendships made and the characteristic "steep windy roads." She described the hill as "really important... because of my childhood there and the memories that were created then."

The physical features of Ōtātara and the Tūtaekurī River enabled both William and Carl to enjoy good times and forge positive friendships and memories. However, in analysing the responses I began to question whether it is the place where we play or those we play with that have the greatest impact on our sense of belonging? As an example, Lucy reiterated that her feeling of belonging was more akin to the friends she spent time with rather than the landscape in which she actually played. She emphatically stated "it's *not* the place, it is the people within the place" that she felt connected to and continued:

I guess for me, it's all about the people. It [Ōtātara] is a place that brings people together outside of perhaps their normal office space and it's about the conversations and the connections that you make in that space. I mean, I think that lots of it [Ōtātara] is beautiful...but it's really about who I am with and how we spend that time together in that space." (Lucy)

The emotion in her voice indicated that she did have a sense of fondness for places too. Similarly, to difficulties in articulating feelings of spirituality in place, introduced in Chapter 5.3, some found it hard to explain these strong associations with specific locations. To illustrate this point further, Carl also found his connection to the Ōtātara area difficult to pinpoint. He lived close to the Tūtaekurī

River as a child and currently lives within a stone's throw of the river. When asked if positive childhood memories motivated his decision to live there in adulthood he paused, and then said:

It could have been. Or maybe not obvious, but now that we have been talking [pause]. I was thinking yeah that's weird, that's where I wanted to be and get back down that end. Yeah, something is working in the background. (Carl)

It is therefore apparent that although our connections to a particular place are sometimes difficult to articulate, there are often feelings relating to places that we do not consciously notice. However, natural environments such as the Tūtaekurī River and the Ōtātara Hills often provide a place in which children can play, building their social relationships and enjoying collective experiences. In turn, this creates meaningful memories, positively connecting individuals to those places into adulthood (Waite 2007).

6.3 Significant Geographies and Collective Experiences

It is not just childhood play in nature that creates pertinent connections with place, so too, do our experiences in adulthood with friends, colleagues and others. Researchers extort the notion that “a sense of place is closely tied into a sense of community” (Weinstein et al. 2015, 1142). People can be pulled together when there is a bond such as employment or study, that creates common interest in a place, such as Ōtātara. This also enables them to “express common sentiments through joint action” (Wilkinson 1991, 7). Collectively creating something of lasting value in a specific place can create both tight bonds between colleagues and learners and creates significant geographies. Several examples were shared by participants working with others on practical collaborations which, they in turn, considered as a way of connecting themselves to the landscape.

This section touches on different examples of this from community bonding through action at the Arts and Crafts Centre, to the way that nature can provide a conduit for whakawhānaungatanga, the process of establishing relationships, and how that can connect people with the landscape. Finally, the ways in which meaningful and purposeful work can result in a co-creative relationship between Ōtātara and EIT staff members is discussed.

6.3.1 A Community Rooted to Place Through Arts and Crafts

Mazin and Pene shared stories of the Ōtātara Community Arts and Crafts Centre. Mazin taught here for a while and Pene was a student. Soon after leaving school she had helped to move an old building onto site. This was then refurbished and used as an informal arts space. Pene was enthusiastic in her account of how much fun she and others had had undertaking this renovation,

which she amusingly described as “gross.” Comments from both learner and educator reiterated that the physical landscape and the philosophy behind the teaching influenced the local arts community which, whilst no longer on campus, still has its roots firmly bound in this place. In remembering the days working at here Mazin said:

It felt like this is a kind of [pause] a place of warmth and [pause] and it’s like when you go up there, you feel at peace and it’s just the clean air, sunny days, students around who are smiling and working and talking to you and you go about your work. It wasn’t work. It [pause] felt like a celebration so that was the special thing about Ōtātara. (Mazin)

Mazin was clearly touched by the vibrant environment which created a people-focused teaching and learning space, which had been the intent of the administration and the philosophy by which the arts programme was delivered (Thorburn 2012). In other words, the people “steered the learning outcomes in a wild and natural way, emulating the landscape, rather than following a structured Several interviewees and other colleagues still talk about the positive legacy which continues to bond local artists through the community-focused teaching and learning philosophies, which are forever entwined with the physical landscape.

6.3.2 Nature as Conduit for Whakawhānaungatanga; Bonding People with Landscape

The landscape also lends itself to physical projects that bring people together from around the region such as caring for harakeke, planting native trees, and volunteer working bees. The following two examples relate to the harakeke and how nature acts as a conduit for whakawhānaungatanga, bonding people with each other and the landscape.

Firstly, as Mazin fondly recalled stories of the Arts and Crafts Centre, he enthusiastically paid tribute to the Pā harakeke. These special plants were donated by individual marae from around the region as a means to maintain attachments to different hapū and enable raranga. One tutor, Bana Paul, would travel from Wairoa, some 50 miles away, and ensconce herself in what was fondly referred to as the Flax Building. Here, students would gather, learning the traditional ways and bonding through the collaborative act of collecting the leaves and weaving them together. To travel regularly such a distance, in order to pass on her traditional knowledge and skills, is testament to the passion that Bana Paul had for sharing her craft in this place.

Ria re-lived similar stories and the value of the Pā harakeke (Figures 35 and 36) for her own attachment to Ōtātara. She described how it positively impacts her own teaching, bringing both lecturers and students together with a common purpose. This collective act of weaving illustrates how both women, Bana and Ria ensured that this traditional knowledge continues to be passed on.

Learning these customary practices in the landscape where the plants are grown, and linking them perhaps to the Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar, and the weather, can also give learners a greater awareness of the physical environment in which they study. It also results in the group feeling a collective responsibility as guardians. Ria commented that this has strengthened her own sense of belonging and that of her students:

Part of my journey of embracing my whakapapa and my Māoritanga, has come through weaving. [Pause] I was really excited to be a part of it [the OOLC] when it was all opened back up. I think it is amazing actually. [Pause] It is an amazing resource to bring our students to. It is safe, and it feels like theirs and ermm... [pause] yeah, it's a good place to teach. (Ria).



Figure 345 The Pā harakeke.

Source: Emma Passey, October 2020



Figure 36 Chad Tareha supporting the mahi.

Source: Emma Passey, October 2020

It is not just through the harakeke and weaving where bonds with the landscape are formed. Recent volunteer working bees to establish and maintain the OOLC have also enabled new roots to establish as present-day students and employees familiarise themselves with this place. For example, in 2015 Margaret led a mass group planting of native trees in the gully at the OOLC (Figure 37), which was outlined Chapter 5.4. Not only did it empower the group through embodied experiences, but the physical work also created close relationships within the student group and forged ongoing links to the landscape. This was partly because of the intensity of the project. The group visited the site once a week to plan the project including what to plant and where, and how many specimens were required. Learners and educator would stand for several hours, soaking up the atmosphere, feeling

the breeze, and observing. They would think, reflect and review all elements of the site, considering factors such as where the sun rises and sets and how this would affect the planting site, which side of the gully is shaded and which is mostly in sun.



Figure 37 View of the gully at the OOLC planted in native trees.

Source: Emma Passey, January 2021.

Gribb (2018, 298) emphasises the importance of learners working in the field in this fully immersive way stipulating that through practical work in situ, learners “can integrate the cultural manifestations on the landscape with its physical attributes, providing a more complete understanding of that landscape.” Gribb (2018) also argues that having a social purpose, such as planting native trees to improve EIT’s environment and increase biodiversity, directly results in a deeper understanding of any project. However, in this example not only did it give learners a greater understanding of the landscape, but their joint action also created a more meaningful experience and greater sense of attachment to the place. Margaret confirmed this premise:

It’s like focusing and shining a light on this piece of land. It becomes an intimate experience, which is what I wanted to transfer to the students, so that they could start to use observation about what, and how, and where, and what was best to do there. [Pause] I wanted it to be meaningful for them... That was part of it for me. As a teacher, it was just allowing the students to have a connection with that land themselves. And interestingly enough, they still do. They still have that. You know? (Margaret)

After the initial planning stages, the class undertook the planting. It was a difficult site, a gully with steep sides and one that was also thick with blackberry. The scale of physical work required was immense and so to make it less onerous a larger collective project emerged, bringing educators and learners from across the region together. Two, one-day planting events were organised with all the necessary tools, skills and food provided. George was also involved and he described it as a celebratory-type event, which is still remembered by those who took part several years later.

Margaret provided details:

We realised that we were never going to be able to plant 1500 trees. We would never be able to do it on our own. So, we invited all the horticulture students from Wairoa, Central Hawke's Bay, Maraenui and they all came and we organised this huge planting day. Well, we did two of them. But at one of them we had a BBQ, you know it was a real celebration. And Aaron and his class were there, but some students from over at Maraenui also came on that day. And some from Gisborne. You know, students that I have met going up the coast remember that day... Yeah there were probably about 30-40 of us. It was quite a large thing and everybody... [pause] it was because we were all doing it together. You know. So, the task was not so huge. Yeah. It was really good. [Pause]. I didn't really get to participate up there because I had to prepare the lunches [laughs]. (Margaret)

Years later Margaret still encounters graduates who had been involved. Several still enthusiastically recall these group plantings. Although the timeframe itself was relatively short, the memories continue to last because they were intense, immersive and extraordinary experiences, which elevated emotions for all.

The planting of the gully has not been a stand-alone project and several other similar events have occurred since. George reiterated the emotional intensity of physical group and how they can be enjoyable and memorable because, he says, "it's teamwork. People working together. Yeah, a combination of place and people." Jepson et al. (2019, 34) suggest that "experiencing an event together as a family (within the leisure life domain), can facilitate collective memories, familial bonding, and potentially create thick sociality or 'we-relationships'." Although EIT educators and learners are not family in the traditional sense, the close bonds that they form during their time spent together in class time, can provide them with familial bonding. This is so at EIT, where I have often heard colleagues refer to each other as whānau.

These examples serve to illustrate that Ōtātara is a place that creates both individual and collective experiences and "while natural environments may promote relationships between people: Natural spaces foster a sense of relating to the outside world, which generalizes to a caring and closeness

with other people.” (Weinstein et al. 2015, 1142). Consequently, an authentic sense of whānaungatanga is created by working together as kaitiaki or guardians in this way, deepening the bonds with each other and the place in which action occurs.

6.3.3 Landscape: It is Part of Us, Just as We are Part of It

It is not just the natural landscape at Ōtātara that lends itself to bringing people together through physical work, but also the built environment. The log cabin is the only building which remains of the Arts and Crafts Centre after what is now known as IDEASchool, moved to the main part of campus. Its original refurbishment occurred between 2012 and 2017 when Dr Mazin Bahho, an EIT lecturer at IDEASchool and one of the participants of this research, undertook his PhD study. Dr Bahho’s main focus was to rebuild the cabin, then almost derelict, as an exemplar of sustainable building practice. An army of volunteers, contributed their time, expertise and energy to the project helping for several reasons including a desire to showcase a sustainable building, an interest in the history of the site, an interest in the architectural history of the building and also an interest for some to create environmental spaces on campus (Bahho 2017). Students were so engaged with the retrofitting of the log cabin, that they chose to miss classes to help:

The special thing is that people were so engaged with Ōtātara. I relied on volunteers. I relied on the trades school and that stuck in my mind because the trades students and tutors tried to deviate their programme to fit my project. There are a few tutors in particular who were driven to help me and facilitate for students to come up. And the students used to come up and help me and miss their timetabled classes. They stayed [laugh] which caused me a lot of embarrassment because [laugh] the tutors wanted to talk to the students about something else. But they came up and they kind of wanted to spend time working up the hill. And maybe they found freedom, maybe they found something fun to do, I don’t know, I don’t know what their reasons were but I found that they were attached with the location.

(Mazin)

Countless volunteers helped with rebuilding from students to trades tutors and research professors. One notable Academic spent a couple of days “with his apron and tools” and a local retired builder also volunteered his time and skills taking pride in teaching some of the volunteer trade students, “how to measure and how to nail, fix and teach them a lot of tricks.” However, it was not just retired builders and professors who gave their time freely. One local craftsman who had been involved in the original build also volunteered:

When he heard that I am doing this job, he just came and he said, “ok I don’t have any jobs now, I’ll help you.” And, so, he comes every morning with his van. He doesn’t have money but he pays for his petrol to come from Bay View to Taradale and help me. [Pause]. Both of us used to work during the holidays. (Mazin)

It is easy to be swept up in the enthusiasm expressed by Mazin, Ria and Margaret as they share their fondness for the log cabin, the harakeke and planting projects at Ōtātara respectively. Their ongoing passion and that of the volunteers and students, demonstrates that when groups engage in physical activities such as these, they themselves become an intrinsic part of the social history and fabric of the landscape. Essentially, as we undertake meaningful and purposeful activities in the landscape, we become co-creative of each other (Brook 2019).

6.4 Belonging Through Storytelling in the Landscape

Whilst physical activity is a helpful conduit for landscape attachment, connections to people and places are also made through sharing social (hi)stories. Storytelling, in the place where events occurred, is an important medium through which we can connect to a place and to each other. It is also a way in which to keep traditional histories in the forefront of people’s minds. Wiremu shared this sentiment:

We like to hold family events up there [Ōtātara] to keep the histories alive. A lot of our traditions have been lost and if we keep practising our ancestors’ traditions, it keeps them alive. It’s not really taught in schools so the only way to teach is to just do it. To take people there and just get people involved. (Wiremu)

Wiremu points out, it is not just the act of telling histories that connects us to one another or to places, but the active participation of people. Events in place, where individuals are given the encouragement and freedom to share their personal stories, intensifies their feeling of belonging. A recent celebration of Matariki, the Māori New Year by staff, learners, whānau and elders at the OOLC is testament to this. Ria, Pene and Wiremu each recalled how students and staff alike sung ancient waiata and shared traditional pūrākau. The all-night celebration, which included setting a fire and enjoying a hāngi, elevated the intensity of emotions, which are illustrated in this evocative account:

It involved all the Māori students and the teachers and any members of the community so it was a really good event bringing a lot of people together. A lot of learning took place during that night. It was a night event so there was no sleeping involved [smiles and pauses]. We put the hāngi down at around 9pm and that was ready for a 6am breakfast [smiles]. So, we

had a bonfire throughout the night, we did karakia [pause] and then we walked down to the river. The river is just at the foot of the Ōtātara Learning centre so that's handy. It was a good walk. We walked down to the river and put our feet in the water. That was good. At six in the morning it was quite cold also [laughs]... We all went back to the Ōtātara Learning Centre and sat in a circle around the bonfire and told stories. We shared a lot of stories. The purpose of the event was to remember those who had passed away over the previous years. Yeah, this was a tradition that our ancestors did. Not many people know this tradition, but one of the past students did some research into this and brought it back to Te Ūranga Waka and we brought that tradition back to life. Hopefully we can continue to ermm... [pause] use that tradition and the site to do this event again. It was awesome... [pause] I feel my ancestors everywhere on Ōtātara whether at the pa site or the learning centre... Not that we could see anything but because it was Matariki we were trying to look out for the Matariki cluster - we didn't see it but [laughs] it gave us a closer connection to the stars I think. [Pause] Yeah, yeah, [pause] a few tears were shed also... We bond a lot during class time and stuff like that. But when we are in the classroom, it's strictly business really. But at the site [Ōtātara] we were able to open up a little bit more... [pause] share more personal stories. It was a safe environment. It was... [pause] emotionally beautiful! [smiles] (Wiremu)

The combination of being outside throughout the night, observing the stars, lighting a fire and cooking food in the elements, contributed to the group enjoying a new level of fellowship. Ria claimed that the "students raved about it" because, despite the fact that they had previously met in classroom settings, this event at Ōtātara created a safe space in which they felt that they could share their personal and sometimes emotional stories. Pene added that those who took part, now feel like Ōtātara and the OOLC is "their space." Those who attended this Matariki event and the narrators of these accounts, are staking a claim to belonging to Ōtātara through their ability to tell such sensual and impactful stories, and it is this profoundly social and collective way of sharing experiences in the landscape that creates a sense of belonging (Degnen 2015).

6.5 Summary

This chapter developed the embodied sense of location and experience of Ōtātara by tracing the ways in which EIT staff and consequentially others, have formed profound social relationships in the landscape supporting feelings of belonging. Encounters were shared ranging from the friendships formed in childhood and the positive memories of the locations where interviewees played, to community driven activities and the benefits of enjoying fellowship at Ōtātara. The examples in this chapter confirm that experiences-in-place with others and the memories of profound social

experiences are highly significant in determining the degree to which EIT staff feel attached to Ōtātara. This is for several reasons: firstly, because we all have an innate need to connect with others and to the world around us (Ryan and Deci 2000, Kneezel and Emmons 2006), and secondly, because we feel closer and more connected to the natural environment after we have had contact with it (Mayer et al. 2008, Weinstein et al. 2009). The narratives shared are evidence that some EIT staff are intrinsically entwined with Ōtātara. For others, there is much to be gained from taking part in social experiences in the landscape to engender a geography of significance for the benefit of educators and learners alike.

Turning to the final chapter, the conclusion draws together ways in which EIT staff create attachments to the landscape in which they work. Other findings, limitations and research opportunities are also addressed.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This thesis examined the degrees to which EIT staff feel attached to Ōtātara, a remarkable natural landscape steeped in social history. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether employees consider it a place of significance reinforcing a sense of belonging to the place in which they work, or if they consider it a geography which simply does not matter. The timeliness of this research has been significant since all of New Zealand's institutes of technology have recently been amalgamated into one organisation, potentially eroding the distinguishing characteristics of each regional institution, and could contribute to a feeling of placelessness. At the outset, I proposed that exploring the histories, and physically engaging with the EIT community in the Ōtātara landscape is a powerful way to increase the feeling of belonging.

These notions were addressed by an exploration of place attachment theory, examining factors which contribute to the creation of a meaningful location and the ways in which individuals connect to landscapes. Discussions of place pertaining to the location of Ōtātara and EIT were included, so too, the historical context of the hillside to provide a chronology and meaningful interpretation to interview accounts. A qualitative approach was undertaken through a series of ethnographic interviews taking place mostly within the landscape in question. A critical analysis of place attachment and considerations of cultural norms, beliefs and behaviour has also been given.

This final chapter begins with a summary and reflection of the main findings and recommendations for future policy and practice to enable personnel to gain a greater connection to Ōtātara and doubtlessly to EIT. Other valuable outcomes not directly related to the research scope, limitations of this study and opportunities for further research are identified before concluding remarks are presented.

7.2 Other Significant Findings, Limitations and Research Opportunities

This study confirms that Ōtātara promotes landscape attachment and has the potential to strengthen a feeling of belonging for EIT employees. However, there were several other key findings which contribute to existing knowledge gaps and which also present opportunities for additional research. This includes, but is not limited to, the way in which staff attach different meanings to common entities, the desire by some colleagues to leave a legacy for future generations and the benefits of sharing places of belonging and connection with others. Whilst these factors are not all specific to Ōtātara, they add to our overall sense of rootedness, bonding to a place of work and to each other.

Firstly, Ōtātara boasts multiple layers of social and cultural history and staff attach different meanings and levels of importance to these common entities based on their own individual framing. For example, memories of the Arts and Crafts Centre are cherished by many, however, one cannot, nor should not, assume that others have the same degree of passion for these past connections. This was evidenced by those participants who had no interest in discussing these histories. Additionally, several participants consider the OOLC as a positive development however, they do not necessarily possess an equal desire to get their hands dirty, nor agree with each other on future development proposals. These observations were not addressed in detail during the interviews but would be valuable to consider further.

Secondly, reflecting on my personal research journey, I have grown in confidence to share my pepeha, discovering a powerful reinforcement of my roots. This Māori tradition serves as a useful reminder of where I have come from, my journey, and the places and communities that have shaped my own identity and values. Not only does it anchor me to the places that I call 'home', Harrietsham and Ōtātara, but it is also an acknowledgement that my identity and value systems are borne from significant geographies and my ancestors. I propose that enabling different perspectives, and encouraging staff to share background information of where they belong, will promote understanding and respect, and in turn, create greater acceptance of one another and one another's values (Hiruy 2009).

Thirdly, whilst there is a plethora of research relating to place attachment theory, there is a limited amount of accessible documented evidence relating specifically to the Ōtātara landscape. This study has identified that information about historical incidents in this landscape are not fully documented or if they are, the information is not easily accessible. Work is being undertaken relating to Māori histories and more recent evidence relating to the histories of the homesteads is still to be archived. My own research has highlighted the value in documenting stories and some of the activities that have occurred, such as the native planting events and the Matariki celebrations at the OOLC. Additionally, employees have various connections with Ōtātara, through their childhood, cultural practices, or their current EIT work for example, and yet these stories are not well-known, or have not been shared. For the first time, some have now been documented, but there is further opportunity to record these and other stories in more detail. This will have several benefits such as, keeping histories alive, supporting understanding of past actions and highlighting the ways in which Ōtātara is significant to so many staff.

This research also confirms that undertaking learning experiences at Ōtātara creates meaningfulness, ownership and belonging as both educators and learners transform themselves through kaitiakitanga and physical and emotional care for the place. In connection with this, several

participants suggested future collective actions, such as more planting days, as a means of leaving a legacy for future generations of employees and learners. This opens the door for further research because whilst the outcomes of this study point to the assertions of Dober (2000), Fried (1982 and 1984), Frey (1981) and Kaplan (1992), that accessible nature spaces enhances, in this instance, workplace satisfaction, the image of a tertiary institution and reduces stress (Ulrich 1979) we do not yet know if there is a similar correlation between EIT and Ōtātara. This would be a valuable future research opportunity.

Another useful study relates to the limitations of my research methodology. In this study, the small sample size and method for identifying participants were constrained. A larger cohort, covering a wider range of vocations would have been helpful. This was because three participants had an environmental management background and two participants have ancestral connections to Ōtātara, inferring that they already had a positive and conscious awareness of the landscape around them. In fact, I deliberately invited participants who are, or have been actively engaged in the OOLC. This discrete sample also meant that there were several EIT programmes and service roles that were not represented. In a larger study, it would be useful to compare how staff with no obvious connection with Ōtātara feel attached to the place, compared to those who frequent the OOLC or Ōtātara Pā for a work purpose.

Related to this it would also be useful to compare the different levels of attachment to the physical environment between staff and students. Most learners come and go, frequenting the campus for six months to up to three years depending on their level of study. However, contrary to Tuan (1977) who inferred that it takes a long time to get to know the real 'feel' of a place, in the case of my interviewee, the length of time that they had been employed had less bearing on their attachment than their own engagement in the space. It would therefore be useful to confirm if the length of time or the type of exposure had the greatest effect on creating a connection with the landscape.

Finally, not only was the sample size a limitation, but so too, the period of time over which the research was undertaken. The interviews were a snapshot in time and it would be beneficial to undertake a behaviour change analysis over a longer period. It would be useful to ask questions such as: does the OOLC inspire employees to be kaitiaki, or stewards of their workplace and in turn to pass this knowledge onto their students? Do individuals need to have a particular set of values in order to better connect to the physical environment? And, do cultural activities in place help form a greater connection and sense of belonging both to the physical landscape and to the EIT community? The outcome of these questions would help to shape future development of the OOLC and recommendations for specific activities.

7.3 Final Reflections

The research has shown that staff connect with the landscape in a multitude of ways whether or not this is consciously apprehended. Whilst some of the more meaningful connections with Ōtātara are influenced by personal framing, several common attachment themes emerged relating to embodied landscape experiences, and social relationships and place. These associations highlight the significance of the landscape to staff and include but are not limited to:

- Ancestral connections
- Positive childhood memories
- Environmental projects which transform the landscape and lives
- Spaces and events that create a culturally safe environment
- Activities that support Māoritanga and recognise cultural traditions
- Ease of access to a natural environment

In 1996, Tim Twist, the then Chair of the Hawke's Bay Polytechnic said of Ōtātara; "Surely there are few centres of tertiary education which can boast of such a close association with a site of such mana" (Moss 1996, 3). The physical closeness of Ōtātara and EIT ensures that the landscape and the Institution are forever linked, but the significant Māori histories and the more recent narratives illustrate that the people and the landscape are also inextricably connected. One way in which such engagements could be further strengthened, is through an annual institutional hīkoi taking staff around the boundaries of EIT and Ōtātara, this is mooted as an addendum in Chapter Eight.

With the passage of time, many EIT staff develop multiple strands in a network of association or belonging to the campus. Often, this unconscious or incidental process, comes from living nearby and working at the Institution, or simply observing the landscape and historical markers daily. For others there may be a process of discovery of connections that may involve interpretation of what Ōtātara means in their lives. The discovery of place may go back to any earlier stages of life that include, whakapapa connections, visits, family members in education or other more distant but real influences of this place on their lives. These associations are handed down through the generations, within the organisation and throughout the wider community. This coupled with the fact that tertiary institutions are leaders; influencing, transforming, empowering and inspiring literally thousands of people each year, engenders an authentic meaningful relationship between people and place.

Finally, despite the formation of one super-tertiary organisation and notwithstanding globalisation, modernity and ongoing urbanisation, or perhaps because of these phenomena, the significance of

Ōtātara to the Institution and to employees is increased. Ongoing respect and acknowledgement for this remarkable place is critical because this landscape has made, and continues to make, a significant contribution to shaping the identity of individuals, the organisation and the wider community. How we now occupy this place in a modern world, and how we share the (hi)stories and become authors of new ones, will have a profound influence on how staff continue to connect and develop feelings of belonging to both Ōtātara and EIT. Our collective responsibility and legacy is to signal to future generations that this is a landscape of significance, which should be acknowledged as a taonga for EIT employees, and that it is a place to be respected and nurtured in the same way as it nurtures for us.

Chapter Eight

Addendum: Recommendation for an Institution-wide Hīkoi

Having completed my research and drawn my conclusions I now have the responsibility to pass on the knowledge that I have gained, supporting others to feel a more meaningful sense of belonging to Ōtātara and EIT. This addendum firstly sets out what prompted my desire to understand better the nuances of place attachment and then offers some reflections and a recommendation to the EIT Administration for an Institution-wide hīkoi, to help employees to secure deeper bonds to the organisation and to each other.

When I set out to write this thesis, we were in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic and Aotearoa had been plunged into lockdown. During this time and since, international travel was severely curtailed. I had planned a visit to see my family in March 2020 but the restrictions meant that I was unable to travel. I still have no certainty when I will be able to visit again. This level of insecurity, having had the freedom to travel withdrawn combined with several conversations with colleagues about their own attachments to special places, deepened my desire for 'home.' My memories of the English Harrietsham landscape, have without doubt intensified and become more meaningful.

I look back with great fondness at the newspaper clippings and photos from May 1983 when Harrietsham villagers walked the bounds of the Parish (Introduced in Chapter One). Forty years on and I now realise that Beating the Bounds cemented by our collective footsteps, a common place of belonging at a particular time in life. I recently shared newspaper clippings and photos with friends and villagers who had taken part. Several responded by sharing their own memories and photos with a sense of sentimentality and amusement, even prompting one villager to contact Harrietsham Parish Council and suggest a revival. It is quite remarkable that three decades on and despite a distance of some 12 thousand miles, the Harrietsham landscape and our collective experience continues to weave the walkers together through meaningful memories.

An annual hīkoi, taking in the boundaries of the Ōtātara Pā Reserve and Hawke's Bay campus could equally embed a greater sense of belonging to each other and the place in which we work, study or live. It would enable individuals to undertake a deeper examination of the physical space around them through physical, communal, and social experience, important factors in securing a geography of significance.

One purpose of an Institute-wide hīkoi would be to encourage familiarity with the landscape by all staff and students. This would be similar to the ideals established by Māori who have for centuries collectively gathered harakeke for weaving, and my own experience of Beating the Bounds in England. Employees would potentially see parts of Ōtātara that are not usually accessible, and the walk would increase individual awareness of the physical geography, the trees, plants and wildlife. Individuals would be able to gain a better understanding of the work currently being undertaken by

mana whenua, the Department of Conservation and EIT to protect and manage the hillside and to hear pūrākau in place shared by traditional knowledge holders. Supporting staff to look at the Ōtātara area through different cultural lenses will also help individuals to gain a greater awareness and understanding of others associations and histories and ultimately provide a means for this landscape to be a conscious part of the fabric of the Institute.

Community walks occur universally, with individuals partaking and creating a sense of connection to the landscape for their own reasons; be it for example, to ensure knowledge of their civic or tribal boundary, or spiritual or personal transformation. However, a hīkoi to Ōtātara would bring town and gown together, benefitting both entities (Ford 2016) through supporting bi-culturalism, sharing cross-cultural experiences, acknowledging and respecting ancestral connections, increasing well-being and fellowship.

One way in which this hīkoi could reinforce bi-culturalism is the way that everyone would come together in one place to celebrate. Lucy enthusiastically suggested that a hīkoi could bring educators, service employees and learners together on an even footing, with people becoming kanohi ki te kanohi, or face to face, and breaking down any perceived hierarchies. Everyone could enjoy the sharing of food, culture and historical stories, which could also serve to increase awareness and knowledge of tikanga Māori, and facilitate cross-cultural experiences in 'our' wider communal landscape. It could also provide a valuable opportunity for some to reconnect with ancestral lands as individuals retrace the steps of ancestors and hear tribal stories and histories in the landscape in which they occurred. Pene reiterated this notion in her interview when she shared an example of a local historian who had hosted a series of guided walks to different Pā sites in the region. She had heard and read different stories and legends, but emphasised that to stand on the ground and see the key landmarks with others was "amazing." Providing an atmosphere for mutual learning and sharing in this way, and collectively hearing and observing social and cultural histories, acknowledges the significance of a place, respecting those who have gone before and intensifying the feelings of connectedness.

The physical act of walking with others also intensifies this sense of attachment. Maddrell's research (2013, 67) focusing on the therapeutic benefits of pilgrimages in significant landscapes, finds that such experiences "can echo the psychological and physiological experiences of other intense shared activities such as music festivals or football matches." Among other reasons, this is because it can provide collective social contact for those who may benefit from being around others, promotes social equity and personal well-being.

Finally, walking in natural environments has several well-known health benefits not least because the physical movement and rhythm can “simultaneously separate from and still the claims of everyday life, while ‘speeding up’ or energising the body” (Maddrell 2013, 68). Facilitating individuals to switch off from the noise, clamour and busy nature of campus and urban life also makes space for personal reflection and fellowship (see Edensor 2000; and Maddrell 2013). In a similar way to my experience of Beating the Bounds all those years ago, an institute wide hīkoi could be an active way to enable teachers and learners to forge new or deeper relationships with one another and feel a profound attachment to EIT and Ōtātara. Tilley (1994 29-30, 333) said that “through walking, in short, landscapes are woven into life, and lives are woven into the landscape, in a process that is continuous and never-ending” and such an experience will contribute to shaping and influencing individuals’ identities and their sense of belonging to this place.

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Personal Communication

Robert Macdonald, personal communication, October 15, 2018

Chad Tareha - various 2020-2021

Dr Mazin Bahho - various 2020 -2021

Appendices

Appendix 1: Cultural Support Letter

22 July 2020

To whoever this may concern,

I am writing to confirm that I am happy to support Emma Passey as a Māori advisor for her Master's thesis in Environment and Society. Emma's thesis will focus on EIT staff connections and attachments to the Ōtātara landscape in Hawkes Bay. Ngāti Pārau is the mana whenua hapū of Ōtātara and EIT, and I am the current Chair of the Ngāti Pārau Hapū Trust. I am an EIT staff member and the current Chair of the Napier City Council Māori Committee, the Waiohiki Māori Marae Committee and of the Marine Culture Health Programme for the Port of Napier. I am a strong advocate for Māori concerns promoting culture and language and am passionate about ensuring that people have an awareness of the history and cultural significance of the Ōtātara area.

I have worked alongside Emma as a member of the Steering Group for the Ōtātara Outdoor Learning Centre for which she is Project Manager for the last 18 months. I am happy to support her with queries she may have around Te Reo Māori me ōna tikanga and if research participants have concerns about the interview process or questions from a Māori cultural perspective, I am happy to be contacted. If you have any queries I can be contacted on 071 2624192

Ngā mihi,



Chad Taroča
Chairman, Ngāti Pārau Hapū Trust
0212624192

Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

How Staff at EIT Connect with Ōtātara

Researcher: Emma Passey

Contact Details: emmapassey@rocketmail.com/ 021 2379113

Research Topic: My research focuses on land attachment theory and the conceptual framework of Tūrangawaewae. It links a bi-cultural, ethnographic approach with specific reference to Ōtātara Pā and the Ōtātara Outdoor Learning Centre (OOLC), which is a community focused, collaborative nature-based education space at the EIT campus in Taradale. The main objective for this study is to identify how EIT staff connect to the Ōtātara landscape.

Who is paying for the research or sponsoring it: The research is part of my Masters in Environment and Society at the University of Waikato. Whilst no one organisation is paying or sponsoring the research, I am the Project Manager of the OOLC and employed by EIT. The outcome is likely to be of benefit to my role as Project Manager, EIT and the OOLC Steering Committee because it will aid decision making for future land use and policy at the site.

Participants Role: Participants will be asked:

- to sign a consent form agreeing to take part in the research
- take part in an audio recorded, participant-led interview, for approximately one hour. Please note, the recording will only be made available to Edgar Burns, my Master's Supervisor
- to invite a whānau member or support person to join the in the interview if desired
- to reflect and share stories of their attachment to Ōtātara
- to review the transcript from their interview and provide any feedback or edits that they feel necessary within one month of the interview

Major Outcomes of the Research (including where findings will be published / disseminated):

This research will help to determine how EIT staff feel connected to Ōtātara. The results of this research will provide a greater understanding of why and how people feel attached to this place, and how this might directly influence responses to proposed land use policy at the Ōtātara Outdoor Learning Centre (OOLC). Documenting this, will help to support the wider understanding and respect of individuals views and opinions linking these with the OOLC projects guiding principles and milestones. In the longer term, this will foster greater collaboration, partnership and engagement for

the OOLC Project as individuals feel that their views are better understood and considered in decision making.

The findings of this study will be shared with all participants, the OOLC Steering Committee and Edgar Burns, my Master's thesis supervisor. If opportunities present themselves, the research may be published and/or presented to the OOLC User group and a conference.

Confidentiality: It is usual practice for the identity of participants to be confidential and remain anonymous in the written documentation. Each participant will be referred to as a pseudonym.

Collection of Information and Storage. Data will be collected via interview and transcribed.

Transcripts of interviews and data will be securely kept on a password protected PC and held by me for 5 years following completion of this research.

Māori Advisor

Chad Tareha, is the Māori Advisor for this research project. Chad is Chairperson of Ngāti Pārau hapū Trust (Ngāti Pārau is the manu whenua hapū), Chair of the Napier City Council Māori Committee, the Waiohiki Māori Marae Committee and of the Marine Culture Health Programme at Napier Port.

Chad is also the Māori Advisor for the Ōtātara Outdoor Learning Centre Steering Group and an EIT staff member. If participants have any concerns relating to the interview process from a Māori cultural perspective or any questions about this research, he is happy to be contacted. Chad's office is based at the Learning Support offices in the EIT Library or he can be contacted on 021 2624192.

Participant Promise: Participants are welcome to invite a whānau member of support person to join them during the interview. They may decline to answer any particular question and are welcome to withdraw from the project within one month of the interview. Participants are welcome to ask further questions about the research at any point during your participation.

Please confirm:

I wish to receive a copy of the transcript of my interview to review:

YES | NO (Please circle your choice)

I wish to receive a copy of the final report:

YES | NO (Please circle your choice)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. Please retain a copy of this Participants Information sheet for your files.

Appendix 3: Ethics Approval Letter Granted by University of Waikato

**Division of Arts, Law, Psychology &
Social Sciences** | Te Wānanga o Ngā Kete

The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240
New Zealand

Te Piringa – Faculty of Law
Dr Nathan John Cooper
Tel: +64 7 838 4463
Email: nathan.cooper@waikato.ac.nz
www.waikato.ac.nz



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Emma Passey

Edgar Burns

Social Sciences

24 August 2020

Dear Emma

Re: FS2020-42: Ōtātara – How Do Staff at EIT Connect with Ōtātara?

Thank you for submitting your revised application and covering letter to the ALPSS Human Research Ethics Committee. I have reviewed the final electronic version of your application and am now pleased to offer formal approval for your research activities, as detailed therein.

Please contact the committee should issues arise during your data collection, or should you wish to add further research activities or make changes to your project as it unfolds. All the best with your research. Thank you for engaging with the process of ethical review.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Cooper'.

Nathan Cooper, Chair
Division of Arts, Law, Psychology & Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 4: Ethics Approval Letter Granted by EIT



31st August, 2020

Primary researcher: Emma Passey

Our reference: 20/21

Dear Emma,

This is to confirm that we have received your research ethics notification "How Staff at EIT Connect with Ōtātara" (Ref 20/21).

As per the process stated in the PA214 QMS document, this does not require a full application.

As you continue with your research, please refer to the EIT Code of Research Ethics. As a reminder, if your proposal changes in any significant way, you must inform the Committee. Please quote the above reference number on all correspondence to the Committee. Please send all correspondence to REACapprovals@eit.ac.nz.

The Committee wishes you well for the project.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Hines
Secretary - Research Ethics & Approvals Committee

Eastern Institute of Technology

Headline Bay Campus 501 Gloucester Street, Tonsdale, Napier, 4112, New Zealand. P 06 574 8000, F 06 574 8910, E info@eit.ac.nz
Postal P.O. Box 1201, Herald's Bay Mall Centre, Napier, 4142, New Zealand

Tairāwhiti Campus 290 Palmcession Road, Gisborne, 4010, New Zealand. P 06 858 0810, F 06 859 0629, E kt@wairarapa.ac.nz
Postal PO Box 618, Gisborne, 4048, New Zealand

Auckland Campus Level 8, 238 Queen Street, Auckland, 1010, New Zealand. P 09 300 7410, E euc@andrew.ac.nz

Regional Learning Centres: Central Havelock Bay, Hastings, Manawatu, Tokoroa, Uwharoe

www.eit.ac.nz

Appendix 5: Principles of the OOLC

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Nāu te raurau

Nāku te raurau

Ka ora ai te iwi

With your food basket and my food basket the people will prosper

We will:

- foster an understanding of kaitiakitanga and personal responsibility towards the environment
- grow knowledge, skills and appreciation of the use of the outdoor environment for learning
- empower people to act sustainably
- collaborate with others to mainstream the use of the environment for learning
- use Te Ao Māori principles to guide all that we do
- be mindful of the following values Whānaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga, Tino Rangatiratanga & Rangatiratanga, Mahi Kotahitanga