



BRAD COOMBS

Brad Coombs has made an outstanding contribution to landscape architecture in Aotearoa / New Zealand through his work, his service and his leadership.

Brad has practiced for 21 years, fifteen as a Registered member. He honed his professional skills through employment in the UK, with Rotorua City Council, Wildland Consultants and, for the last 13 years, Isthmus. He was manager of Isthmus Tauranga Studio for ten years, leading and mentoring a team of landscape architects. A consequence of this history is that Brad commands the full range of landscape architecture skills and project types. He has won NZILA and other awards for projects across New Zealand.

Increasingly, though, Brad has specialised in landscape planning, and is now a senior and highly regarded member of the profession, giving evidence in such notable cases as Long Bay, the MV Rena, and Matakana Island. A particular feature is that he brings design to landscape planning, promoting an active and central role for landscape architects in such projects. The range of his clients (Councils, infrastructure agencies, land development companies, and the Department of Conservation) means he also has a balanced perspective on the role of landscape architects in the RMA process – and the wisdom that comes from understanding competing viewpoints. For those reasons, Brad has been appointed as a Commissioner to several Hearings Committees including the proposed Queenstown-Lakes District Plan during 2016 and 2017.

Brad champions landscape architecture beyond the profession, importantly through the quality of his work, and also through conference papers and participation in other organisations, particularly the cross-disciplinary Resource Management Law Association (RMLA). He was the founding chair of the Bay of Plenty Branch of that organisation and a member of the Organising Committee for the RMLA 2015 Mātauranga Maori Conference. He recently toured New Zealand leading one of the RMLA's popular 'Roadshow' on visual simulations.

Brad's role in Isthmus has grown at the same time. He was on the Isthmus Board for eight years (2009-2017), helping develop the company as a professional practice. He now leads and mentors the 'design planning' staff across the practice.

In addition to these responsibilities, Brad has provided service and leadership within the NZILA. He was elected to the National Executive for two terms 2005 – 2009, during which he directed the setting up of the Registration process. Following on, he continued his service on the Registration Panel – including as the Chair 2014-2016. He was chair of the NZILA Bay of Plenty Branch Chair for two terms 2009 – 2013, then stepped into the breach as interim chair during the Branch's hosting of what turned out to be the very successful 'Spirit of Landscape Conference' in Rotorua 2015. In a similar light, he has now stepped into the breach to fill the position of NZILA president.

Brad's contribution to the profession has been achieved in a quiet manner. He is not one to 'blow his own trumpet'. Yet he has gained mana through his service to others, the quality of his work, and his wisdom. For these reasons, he fully deserves election as a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects.