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Title of the project Whispering tales: using technology to enhance cultural landscapes and indigenous values

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Written statement:

Modern lifestyles have put oral narratives in Aotearoa/New Zealand at risk of being lost in a world dominated by written text. Intangible values, transmitted orally from generation to generation, in response to the interaction with nature and history, provide a sense of identity and community to indigenous Māori as they relate and experience the land based on cultural, spiritual, emotion, physical and social values. New technologies have the potential to reconnect these oral narratives with both the indigenous Māori, but also a wider public. This research extends the biophysical template of a landscape with virtual objects or information in truly mobile settings, providing a storytelling environment which is specific to a location. It engages with the narratives of real-world objects that simulate people's imagination of a hidden past using augmented reality. The methodology adopts a design-led collaborative participatory approach by engaging with Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa to create and visualise narratives through sketches, photographs, and computer imagery. It then tests the visual experiences and explores design decisions by mapping different context conditions at different scales and the representation of the narratives revealed. The use of augmented reality in landscape architecture allows for layering of history while retaining the existing landscape. In this way it enhances and modernises Māori oral narratives and encourages a deeper and broader engagement with landscape, promoting respect for cultural diversity through the use of mobile augmented reality.

For further information

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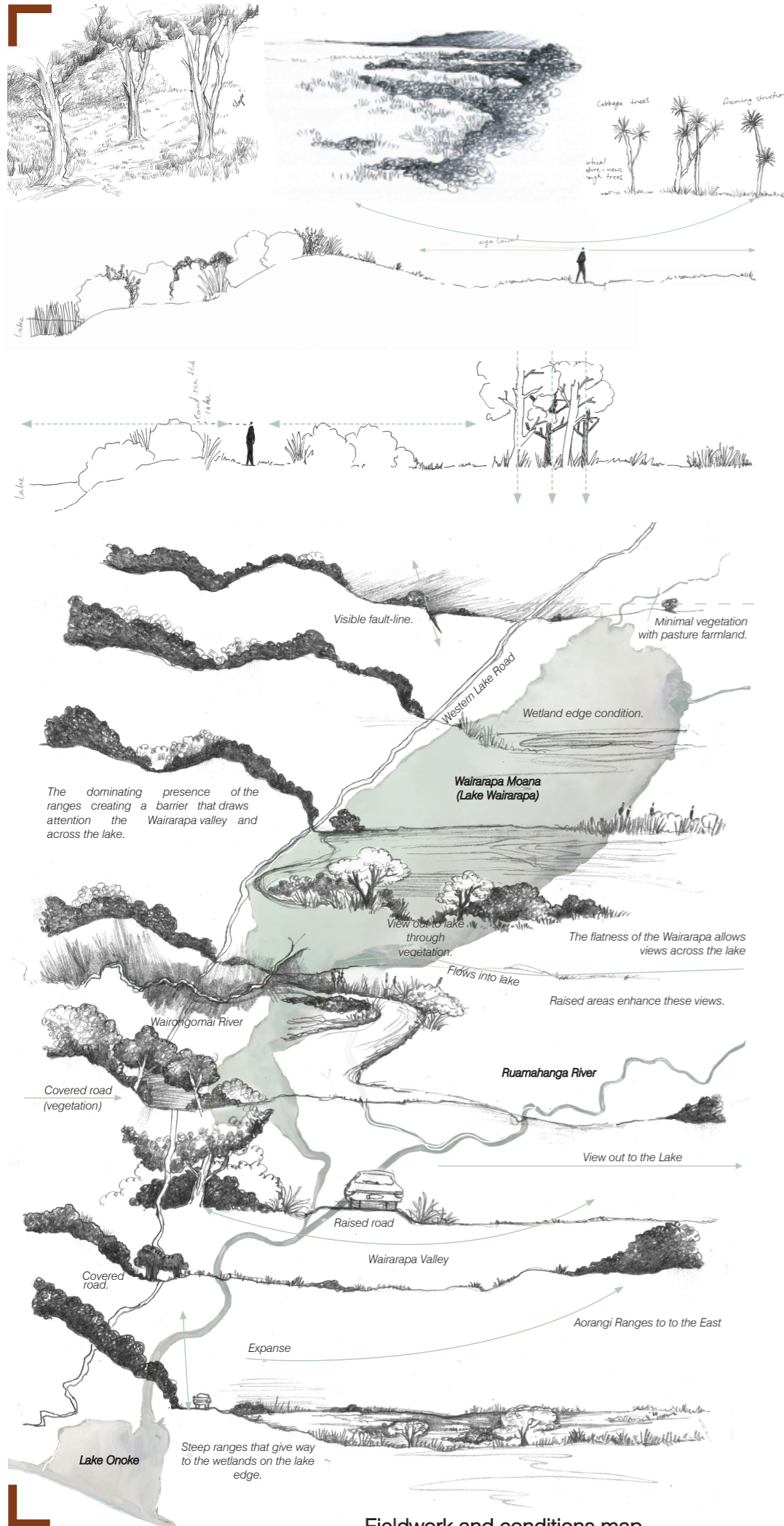
COAC - Colegi oficial d'Arquitectes de Catalunya

Carrer Arcs, 1-3
08002 Barcelona - Spain

12th International Biennial Landscape Barcelona

Barcelona November 2023

SCHOOL PRIZE

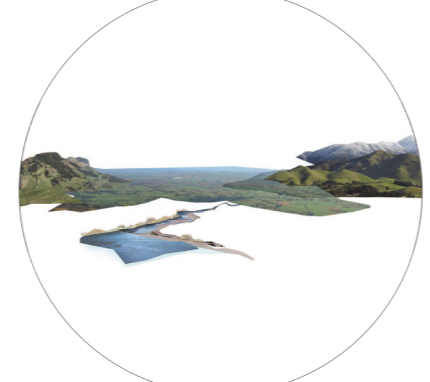


Fieldwork and conditions map

Design Criteria



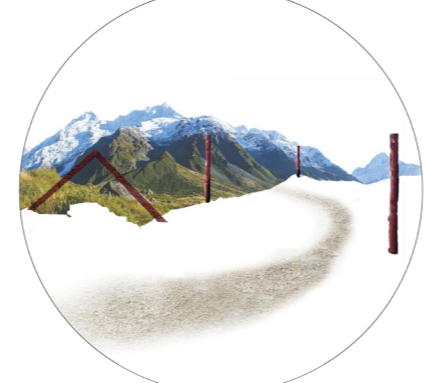
Represent narratives using **Mātauranga Māori principles** to drive the design decisions with a sense of **mana** (respect) for Māori culture and **whenua** (the land).



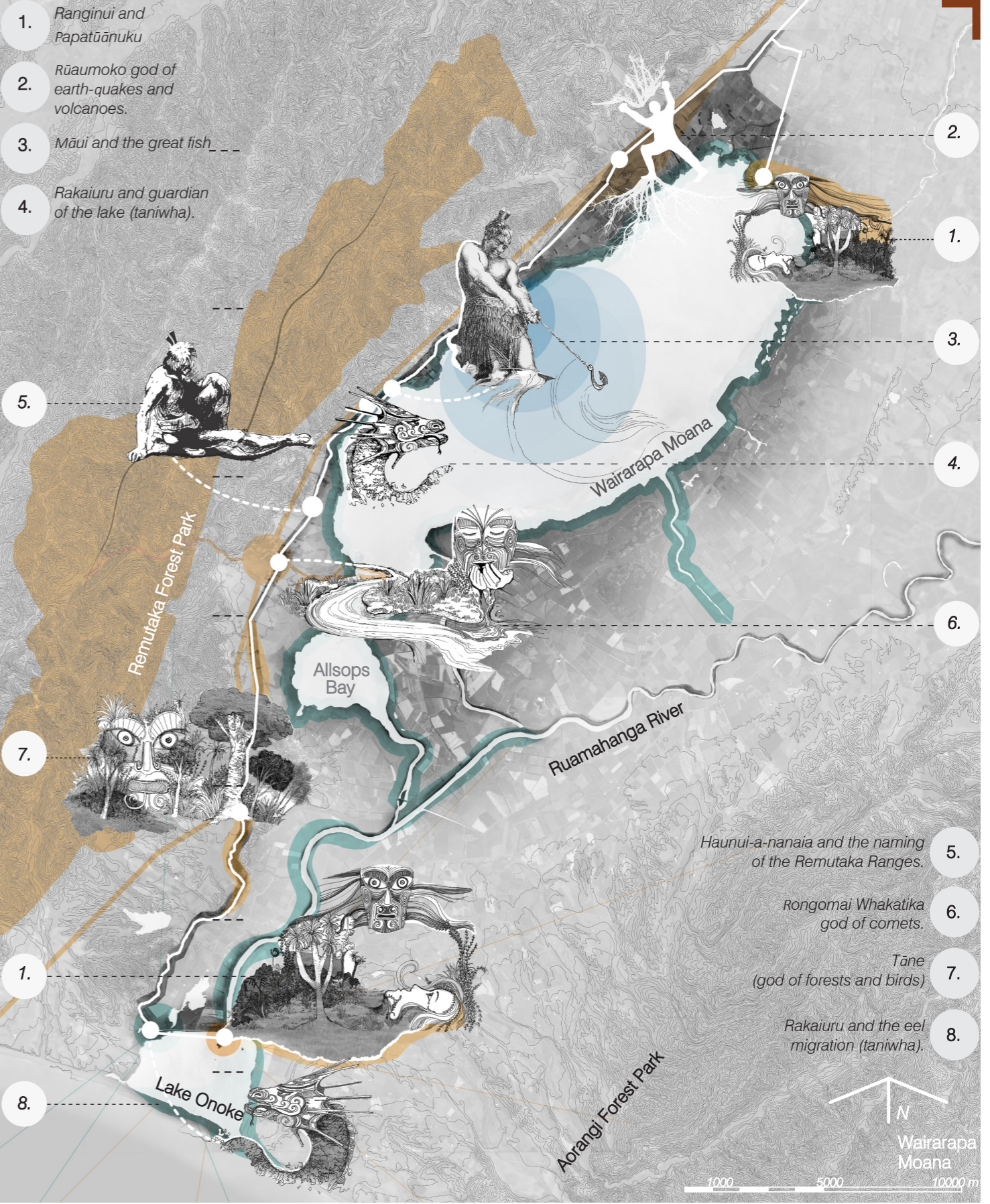
Use the **rural character** of the Wairarapa to represent the narratives of the land in a meaningful and powerful way.



Represent the **cultural narratives** through augmented reality in relation to the existing conditions and the environment



Use **simple structures/sculptural elements** to act as trigger points for mobile devices to establish **augmented reality** elements and represent stories.



Wairarapa Moana Narratives.

After looking at narratives at regional level, the area of Wairarapa Moana was targeted. Stories became more specific to particular areas and sites. This involved narratives related to local rivers, viewpoints and waterbodies. Members and relations from the Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa iwi began to feature, showing a progression through narrative scales from *Atua* (god stories) to *Waka* (iwi- tribe stories). This process of narrowing down the narratives allowed the selection of the sites where the design interventions could be implemented. This set up the design proposal framework identifying nine sites and located along a journey from North to South.



Site 02

This site is focused on the story of Rūaumoko, god of the earthquakes and volcanoes. The Wairarapa fault line can be seen clearly from this site therefore this design highlights the fault line and creates a journey through/ within the earth to a lookout point. Corten steel is used at the sides of the walkway, mimicking the rich colour of the earth as it ages and providing a surface where the story can be unfolded along the journey. The walkway varies in depth allowing the user to be at times completely immersed in the earth to then reemerge at the lookout at the end.



Video of Rūaumoko breaking the ground appears when triggered, with overlaid audio of narrative.

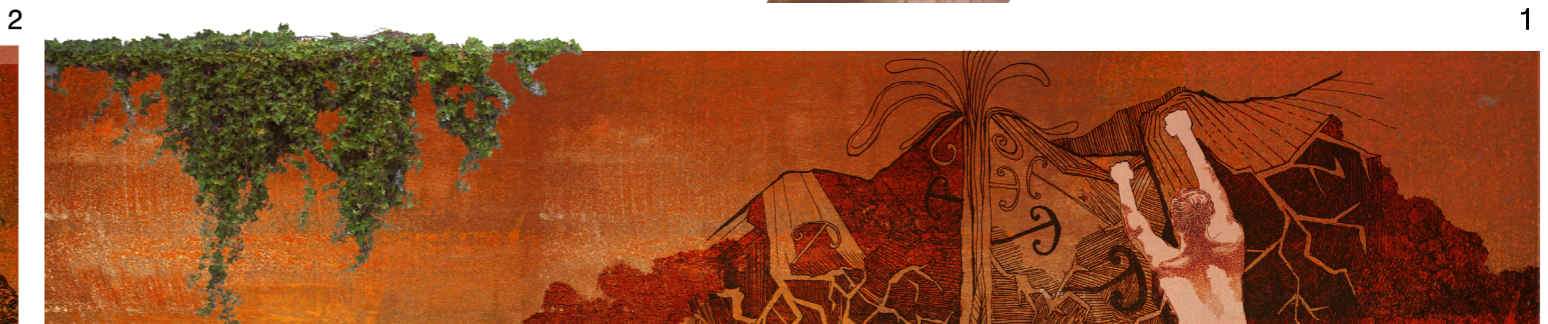
Rūaumoko AR overlay



9 Sites location

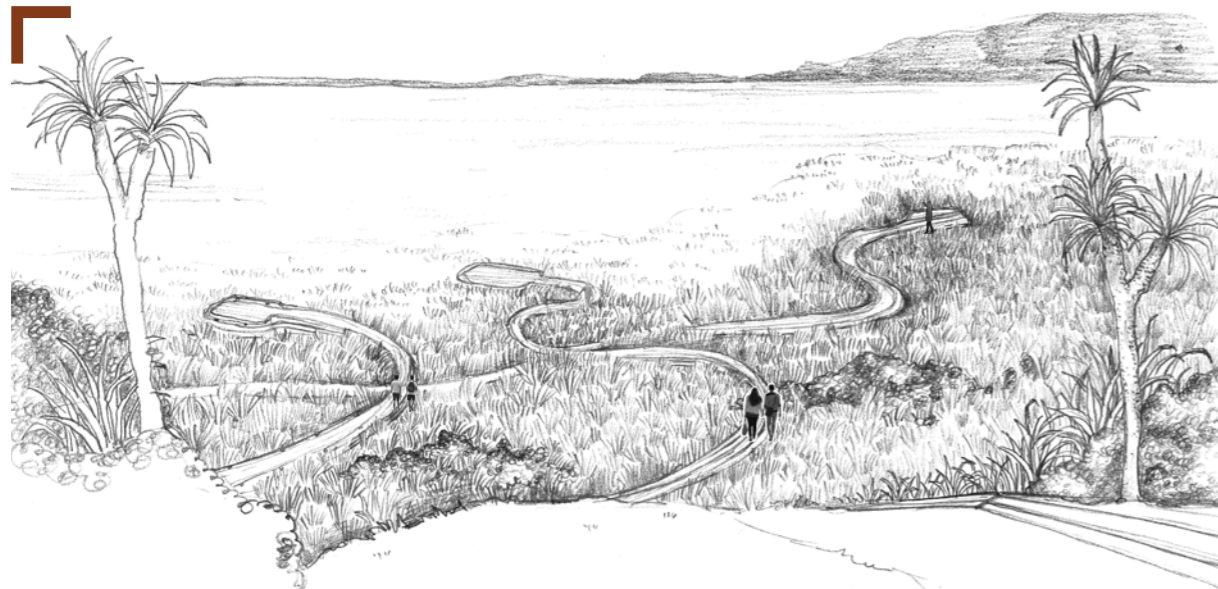


The narrative is illustrated and engraved on the corten steel along the journey. The first stage tells the beginning of Rūaumoko, with his mother (the earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father). When Ranginui and Papatūānuku were separated Rūaumoko remained unborn in the womb of Papatūānuku.



The restless rolling and turning of the earth is said to be Rūaumoko moving in the earth. This movement can be attributed to the anger of not being able to join his siblings above ground.





Video of eel movement appears when triggered, with overlaid audio of narrative.

AUGMENTED REALITY TRIGGER

Eel path AR overlay



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Ranginui appears against sky when triggered by tree marker.



Cabbage Tree | Trigger



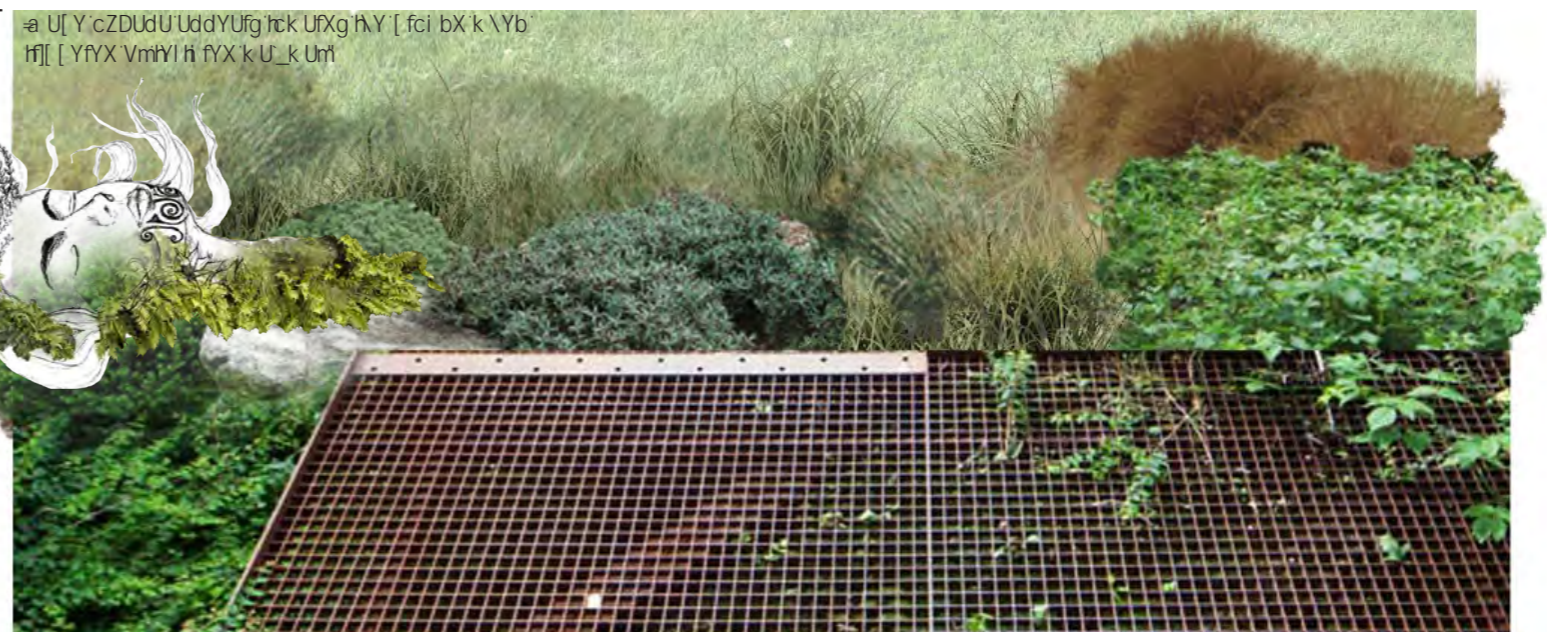
Site 01

This design seeks to use the character and conditions of the existing environment to make subtle changes to enhance the relevant narrative. Natural features such as vegetation and shifts in topography are used to do this.

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Pattern and texture of the mesh platform creates a trigger image for the AR.

Site 08

As the connected narrative involves migration of the eels, this design opens up views to see the eels journey and enhance the engagement with the lakes edge. Markings are engraved into the boards of the walkway to provide the trigger image for the AR component telling the story in increments through the site. Individuals can then direct their smart phone or device at the ground to follow the path of the eels and hear the oral narrative as they move towards the final lookout.



Augmented reality trigger