

# FIELD\_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

CONCEPT DESIGN: HUNT ROAD, CATLINS

## CONTEXTUAL FABRIC: HUNT ROAD PROJECT

Landscape architecture is context: “the circumstances relevant to something under consideration”. Landscapes can be described as fields, pulsing with active forces and flows (visible and invisible) these are dynamically embedded in the character and workings of the landscape. Climate, aspect, population, activation, politics and circulation are each examples of contextual fields that influence the landscape or environment in which we live. Design professions such as urban planning, planning, engineering and architecture tend to engage mechanical systems such as, buildings, roads, transport networks etc. Landscape architecture, however, is a profession with a focus on humans and social systems: the activation of space, balancing scale, engaging in the ephemeral nature of seasonal change, and the experiential characteristics of a given site.

In his teaching at Cornell University, as early as 1964, Colin Rowe began trialing, with his students, methods that engaged site context, operating in a manner that prioritized the method of investigation over the results. He found then, as we do now, that engagement with the contextual fabric of the site offers opportunities to produce new forms and also re-configurations of existing and older forms. This technique results in design interventions that become intrinsically linked to the character of the site and specific to the nature of that place. Too often sites are accepted as straightforward entities contained by their immediate boundaries. While physical design arguably has a focus on a finite place or site, the way that a site functions reaches well beyond those physical boundaries. Wind and bird movement, seed dispersal, aspect and orientation, are all elements that occur outside of site boundaries, yet have a direct and immediate impact on the physical shaping of the site. By viewing our living environments, built and un-built, as fields: streams of information, shifting scales, ephemeral moments in time, we can begin to develop a methodology that examines contextual information, and in turn, influence the design outputs we create.

One example of this methodology in practice is the Hunt Road Project, a collaborative proposal between landscape architect, architect and client. Located in a small rural community, the Catlins, provides the program for design intervention through linkages to the contextual implications of journey and the exposure of expansive, at times harsh, site scale characteristic of the region. For example, microclimates, overland flow, unexplored wetland opportunities, the muted tones and rugged materiality of the native landscape, and notions of journey, arrival and destination.

references:

Collins English Dictionary, 21st Century Edition, Harper Collins, 2001.  
S. Isenstadt, Contested Contexts, in C. J. Burns & A. Kahn, eds. Site Matters, Great Britain, 2005, p. 163.  
C. J. Burns, & A. Kahn, Why Site Matters, in, C. J. Burns & A. Kahn, eds. Site Matters, Great Britain, 2005, p. vii.

contact.

email\_studio@fieldla.co.nz

phone\_+64 9 550 5551

www.fieldla.co.nz

P.O. Box 147216, Ponsonby, Auckland 1144





**EXOTIC FEATURE GRIDS: 1,2,3,4,5:**  
refer plant schedule for species list

Turning point: a grove of cherries references the rural heritage of the South Island and provides a 'screen' from which begins the gentle ascent to the dwelling (refer plant schedule for species list).

Approach: a view of the 'twin peaks' is afforded on the approach to the dwelling.

Orchard and hen house (refer plant schedule for species list).

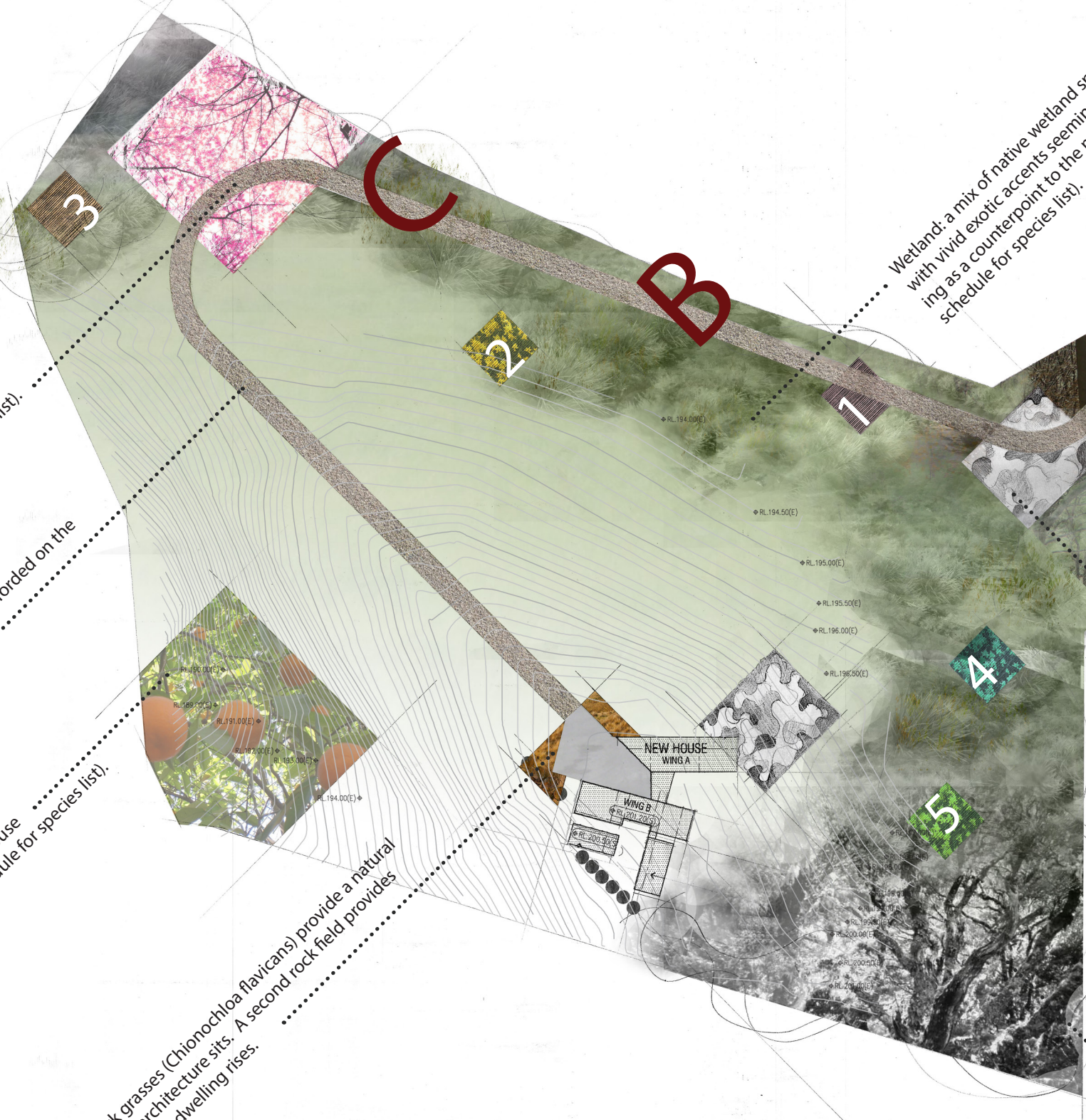
Destination: tussock grasses (*Chionochloa flavicans*) provide a natural anchor on which the architecture sits. A second rock field provides the base from which the dwelling rises.

Wetland: a mix of native wetland species are inter-dispersed with vivid exotic accents seemingly 'out of place,' but serving as a counterpoint to the muted natural tones (refer plant schedule for species list).

Emergence: a field of rocks provides a pause-point and affords the first view of the architecture. The formal configuration orders the rugged rocks found on the slopes nearby.

A grove of native forest species is planted on the South Western boundary providing food and habitat for birds and framing the hills nearby (refer plant schedule for species list).

Arrival: a grove of Silver Beech trees are irregularly spaced and planted in close proximity, creating vertical accents on entering the property. The driveway bisects the grove.



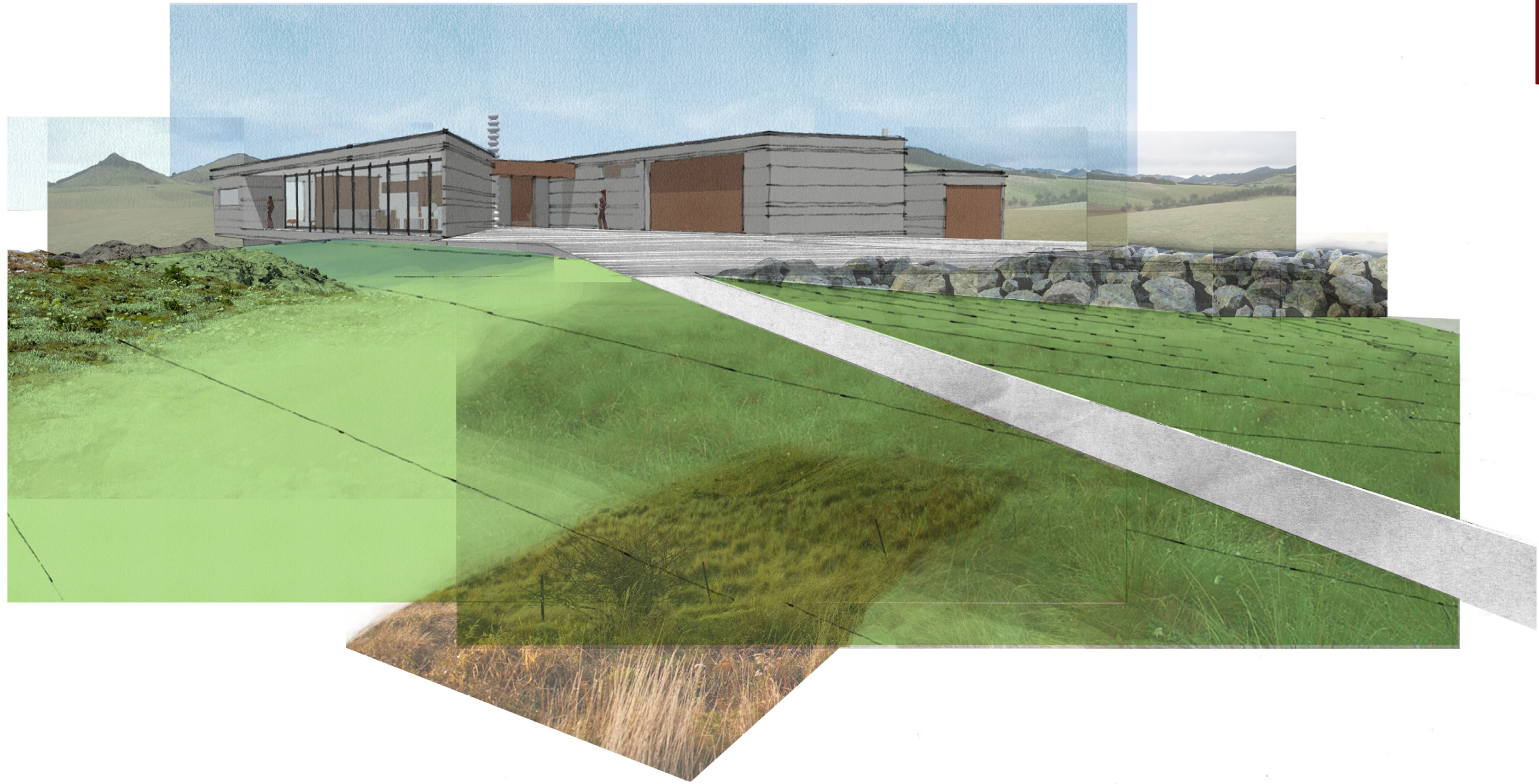


A

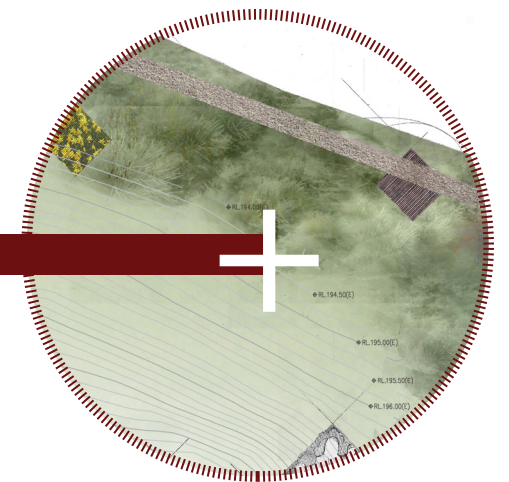




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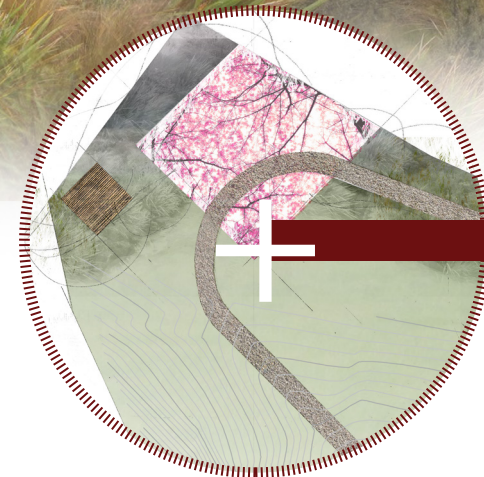
JOURNEY





C

ACCENT



WETLAND



Vehicle landing (dimensions TBC): Rock retaining



Destination: tussock grasses (*Chionochloa flavicans*) provide a natural anchor on which the architecture sits

Wind-break: *Pittosporum 'Stephens Island'*

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A rock field provides the base from which the dwelling rises

*Coprosma acerosa 'Dunstan Blue'*

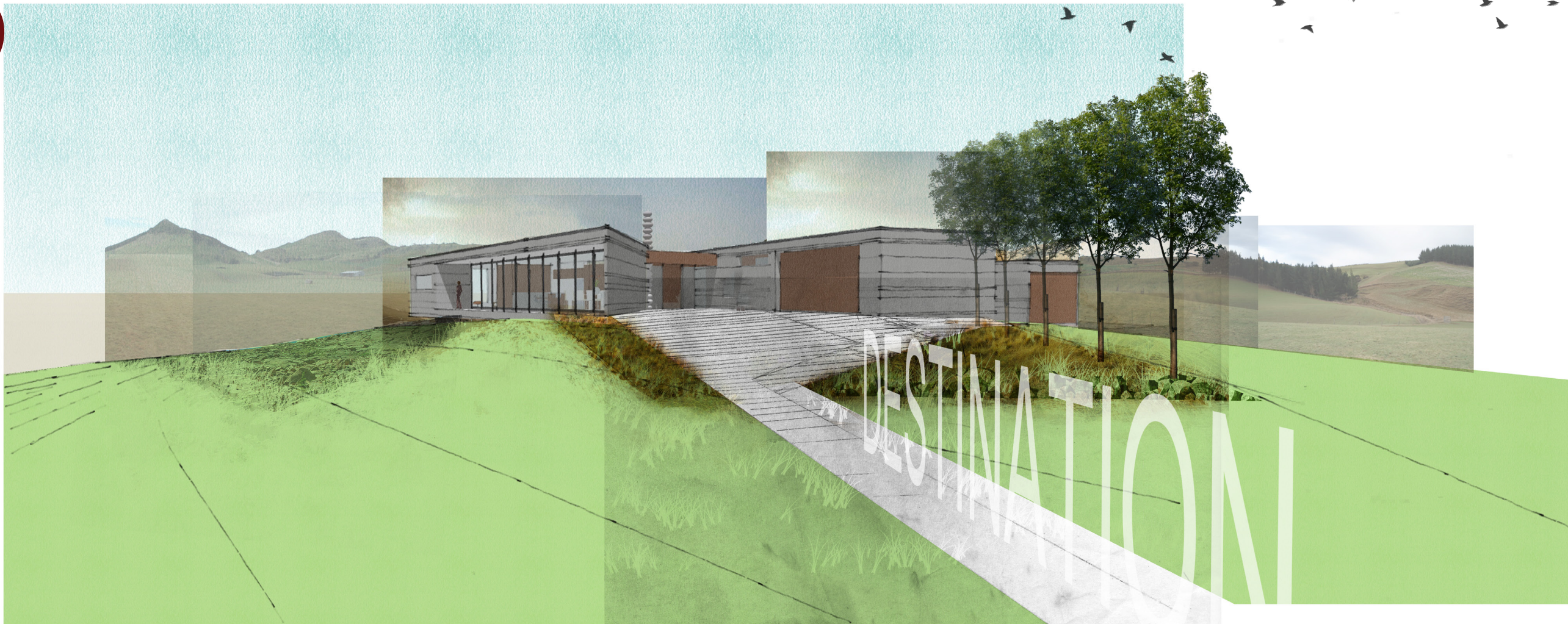
A selection of assorted ferns + mosses inter-dispersed with occasional rocks (locally sourced)

*Blechnum* carpet, transitioning architectural elements into wider landscape

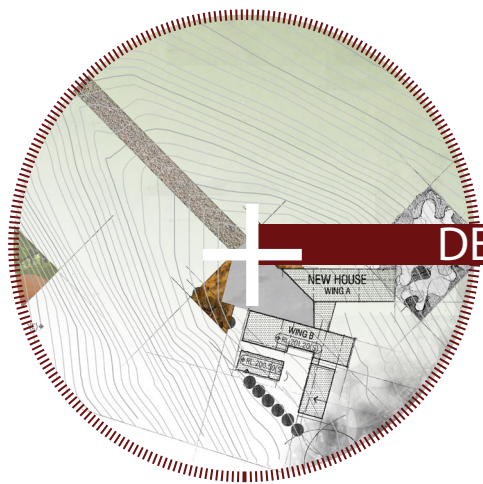




D



DESTINATION



DESTINATION



**House approach**

18 x Pittosporum 'Stephens Island' @ 1.5 m centres

Native grass (house approach):  
73 x Chionochloa flavicans @ 1 m centres

Coprosma (informal planting):  
Coprosma acerosa 'Dunstan Blue' (quantity to be advised)



**Orchard:**

12 x Prunus (plum) @ 5 m centres  
12 x Pryus (pear) @ 5 m centres  
12 x Malus (apple) @ 5 m centres

Note: plum and pear species cross-pollinating



**Cherry grove:**

19 x Prunus 'Shirotae' (Mt Fuji – white flowering) @ 6 m centres  
or  
34 x Prunus 'Accolade' (pink flowering) @ 5 m centres  
or  
34 x Prunus yunnanensis (pink flowers turn to white) @ 5 m centres



**Exotic feature grids (10m x 10m):**

25 x Cornus 'Eddie's white wonder' or Cornus 'Greenvale' (dogwoods) @ 2 m centres  
9 x Cornus 'Satomi' (pink) @ 3.5 m centres  
49 x Rhododendron bibiani (red) @ 1.5 m centres  
49 x Rhododendron 'Maketa's Prize' (scarlet red) @ 1.5 m centres  
49 x Rhododendron 'White Pearl' (white and pink) @ 1.5 m centres



**Wetland recommendations \*:**

Carex secta (Sedge)  
Carex virgata  
Carex maorica  
Carex tenuiculmis  
Opodasmia similis (OiOi)  
Chionochloa ovata (Tufted Snow Grass)  
Chionochloa oreophylla  
Olearia bullata  
Cordyline australis (Cabbage Tree)



**Native bush stand recommendations \*:**

Podocarps:  
Dacrycarpus cupressinum (Rimu)  
Dacrycarpus dacrydioides (Kahikatea)  
Prumnopitys ferruginea (Miro)  
Prumnopitys taxifolia (Matai)  
Podocarpus totara  
Nothofagus menziesii (Silver Beech)  
Metrosideros umbellate (Southern Rata)  
Weinmannia racemosa (Kamahia)  
Sophora microphylla (Kowhai)



**Assorted Ferns and Mosses**



**Blechnum**



**Silver Beech stand:**

Nothofagus menziesii



**Suppliers**

Exotics:  
Attention: John  
Wal's Plant Land  
Bush Rd,  
Mosgiel  
Otago  
(03) 484 7319

Natives:  
Arne Cleland  
Pukerau Nursery  
Gore  
Southland  
(03) 205 3801 or (027) 434 6174

\* Exact quantities and species to be specified at time of planting by local re-vegetation expert Arne Cleland (Pukerau Nursery)