



 Resene Carefree





Kahurangi School

Auckland

Kahurangi School is the latest new school in the Wellington region. Kahurangi School, meaning 'prized' or 'precious' opened in September 2013, merging two existing schools, Strathmore Community School and Miramar South School. The design creates a new beginning, with buildings that provide a strong sense of its identity, reflecting the rich cultural diversity of its community and Pasifika and Maori in particular.

The planning and design process involved extensive consultation with the staff and communities of both schools. One of the challenges of the project has been determining how to merge two schools, both with long histories, into one that both recognises their individual pasts and also creates a new single identity for the future.

The design starts with the new administration building. Two elements are

brought together under a large sweeping roof. Its overhanging form is a reference to traditional Maori buildings and modern buildings such as Futuna Chapel where the overhanging canopy is an important part of the welcome.

The first element under this is a wall, behind which are located the admin functions. This helps define the boundary of the school. The ramp in front and roof over create the memorable entrance requested by the school during their briefing.

Bulging out from this, to claim the site on a sweeping corner of the road is the glazed lobby/library. In contrast to the wall, this element seeks to reach out and make a connection with the community. Its glazing allows the library to act as the shopfront for the school, inviting the community in. Having the library in the lobby ensures it is a multipurpose active space.

This new building is joined to the original

heritage 'Dominion' classroom block. It seeks to tie in with this heritage building in terms of heights and form, providing a bookend for its linear form, while at the same time making a contrast. Just as the Dominion Block spoke of New Zealand identity and place in the world in 1947, the new admin seeks to speak about our identity today as a Pacific country.

While respecting the heritage value of the original block, it is reconfigured internally to open up the spaces, creating a more interconnected school with a variety of learning spaces. A series of deck boardwalks, like wharfs on a small port town, interconnect a similarly refurbished 1967 block and the original 1920s buildings from Miramar South School. What was originally two manual classrooms with high ceilings and excellent natural light has become a large teaching space/hall with the wall in between removed.

Colour was a key tool for creating Kahurangi School's new identity. The original heritage buildings from both schools along with the 1960s block are painted in light subdued colours. This neutral palette respects the buildings' heritage values.

In contrast the new admin block uses colour to make a statement about the school's new identity. There is the large sheltering blue roof, in an obvious connection to the school's name and also the Maori word for the colour blue. The wall and glazed lobby are broken down in pattern and colour that link the two forms, inspired by contemporary New Zealand artists that investigate our Pacific identity. This use of colour and pattern in the glazed library element also ensures students

don't feel too exposed behind full height glazing. **Resene AquaShield mineral effect** in **Resene San Juan**, **Resene Manuka Honey** and **Resene Envy**, is used for the ply cladding because of the wonderful matt finish and texture it gives.

Weatherboards are finished in **Resene Sonyx 101 semi-gloss waterborne paint** in **Resene Tana**, with window joinery in **Resene Enamacryl gloss waterborne enamel** in **Resene Quarter Bianca** and baseboards in **Resene Waterborne Woodsman** in **Resene Skywater**. The timber decks are finished with **Resene Rodeo Dust** in **Resene Non-Skid Deck & Path**.

Internally the colour/material palette is a mixture of clear finished ply and

strandboard, finished in **Resene Aquaclear**, and rimu floors to provide the warmth of a natural material. This is contrasted with **Resene Zylone Sheen** in **Resene Merino** plasterboard walls providing a bright, light and spacious feeling with a subtle articulation of the **Resene Lustacryl** in **Resene Half Truffle** trim. The grey pinboard panels complement this neutral palette while at the same time making the students' presentation work stand out.

Colour is then introduced in the joinery and furniture to convey, following the colours used externally in the glass and on the ply cladding, that this is a special space and place for the kids in this community, rather than a drab unloved institutional facility.





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