

# Newsletter

April 2023



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## A Message from the Board



### Kia ora tātou katoa,

It is great to take this opportunity to update you on The Colville Project progress. This is a very exciting time for the Project. Momentum for the Project is building rapidly as we work towards completing our assessments and other planning in preparation for applying for resource consent.

Anne Mountjoy, our Administrative Lead is currently busy engaging the multiple engineering contractors required for the different parts of the consent process for this phase of the work. In these times this is not an easy task, so if you are someone with the technical background who could help, or you know anyone with the technical background who could help, please do

get in touch.

Our architect Gerard Dombroski is refining the Wellbeing and Education Centre design. Gerard attended our community meetings back in November to share his design concept with attendees. As part of this process he is continuing to consult with the community and the people who will one day be operating out of the Wellbeing & Education Centre.

We continue to seek funding from multiple sources and have contracted a communications and fundraising expert, Nicole Turner, to lead us in this area. Our plan is to continue to hold some fun events in our local community and for this we need volunteers to be on our events committee. If you enjoy being involved in the community and have a little time to spare, do please get in touch, as we would love to have you on board.

Community engagement and networking are important to us. We held meetings with our neighbours and the community later last year. We participated in a community meeting with Te Tara o te Whai, the Hauraki PHO (Primary Health Organisation), who are working on the locality plan which includes the Northern

**To get involved,  
send an email to**

[admin@thecolvilleproject.nz](mailto:admin@thecolvilleproject.nz)

## Our Plan for 2023

Coromandel. This plan is for health care delivery into the future, a matter very close to the heart of our project, and further opportunity to meet together is planned. We are also in the process of preliminary meetings with local organisations, and with potential partners whose values and visions align with those of The Colville Project, to explore possibilities for how we might work together.

We are interested in meeting with other groups particularly those who offer, or could offer a service to our communities.

Most recently, we presented to the Coromandel Colville Community Board at their March meeting held in Colville, which was also attended by the Mayor, Len Salt. This was an opportunity

to introduce the project to our new Community Board representatives, and provide an update about where we are at and where we are heading.

Again, if you have any thoughts or ideas, can help or know someone who may be able to help, please be in touch.

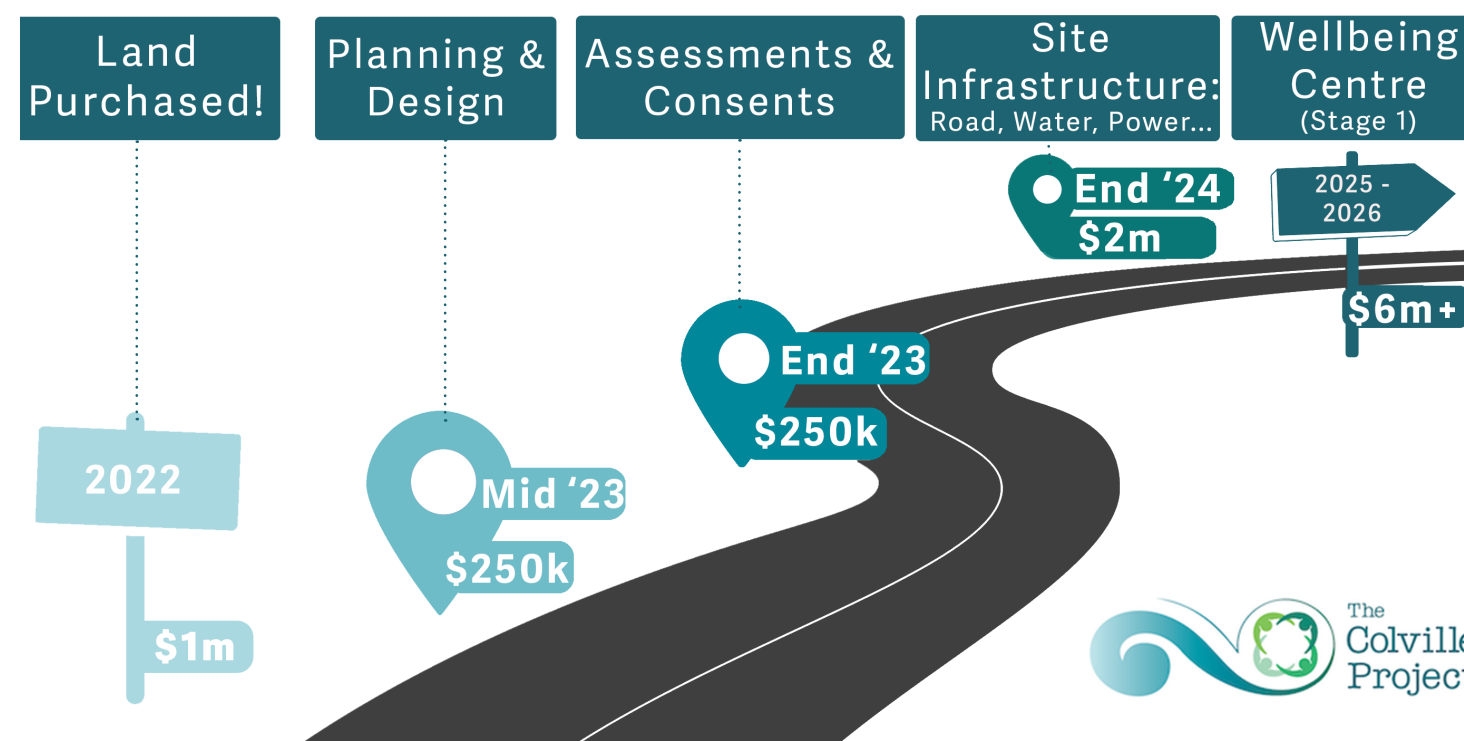
## He rau ringa e oti ai

### Many hands make light work

Ngā mihi

Jo Herbert & Bronwyn Blair  
Co-Chairs  
The Colville Project Board

## The Project Timeline





## Introducing Gerard Domboski

### What attracted you to working on The Colville Project?

I found out about it through Driving Creek after I built the Picalo Cabin during a month-long residency there in 2021. I've always loved working within the overlap of art and craft and there is a lot of that in the Coromandel. Also the community aspect and what the Project is trying to do, I think is pretty amazing. It is more forward thinking than many projects, for lack of a better word a Utopia! But an achievable Utopia, it has the potential to become a good example for the rest of the country - how to manage flood risk and climate change responses. We're trying to show how to create community through building. Architecture is becoming quite soulless, whereas we're trying to create something that is more Colville and celebrates community.

### How did you create your concept?

First it was important to visit the site in person which meant I also had a chance to drive around Colville, it is a very cool area. We've centred the structure on a site where the previous owner has cleared a flat area.

Creating a courtyard is a repeating theme in my work. It creates a sense of safety and enclosure. And the circle has connotations of unity. The building is out of town so architecturally you need to create a building that people want to go to. It needs to be a building that works functionally but also builds in community identity.



Within the brief we were given, there were 2 strong requests - flexibility and covered walkways. So the ring courtyard design means that you have covered walkways the whole way around. For flexibility, we are building a floor and roof which means people can fill in the insides and change as they need. We're trying to apply low tech modularity rather than something overly complex!

### A gentle environmental footprint is one of the values of the Trust, how have you incorporated that?

Firstly, we have a literal gentle footprint as we are laying the "donut" flat on a slightly sloping site, so it allows the building to sit off the ground. You'll be in the trees with a canopy view and minimising the need for earthworks.

We're working with a really good engineer who specialises in

environmental architecture. I think this building has a really good opportunity to show people how to make an energy efficient as well as as socially friendly.

As far as materials go, it is a work in progress. One of my dreams would be to use rammed earth and maybe even make our own bricks or clay tiles. To pull the project off as well as possible, we really need to play with trying to get handmade elements into a lot of those finishes. We need some texture!

Part of designing the lifecycle of a building is designing how we add onto it into the future, we want to make a building that is intentional about future growth or changing uses. The building needs a master plan for how you add onto it organically over time. So we're trying to foster that attitude rather than just creating a big shed.

### How do you see the art informing the building?

The base design is the donut and around it we have these objects of curiosity. I'd really like to work on each of them with local artists. I have a theory that artists might make more interesting architecture than architects. The underlying theory is that we're trying to trick ourselves into creating a Colville architectural style and that requires collaboration with people who love to make things.



**"It creates a sense of safety and enclosure"**



#### AREA KEY

1. Health Professionals
2. Emergency services
3. Library, opshop, Colville Junction spaces
4. Covered outdoor: area raised to enjoy view
5. Seasonal cafe servery
6. Community dining and kitchen
7. Community lounge
8. Amenities: WCs, bathrooms, laundry
9. Non-residential housing (Stage 2)
10. Video conference and office space
11. Courtyard amphitheater
12. CHC Nursery, and potential market booths or studio spaces
13. Outdoor nursery
14. Possible location of future residential units (Stage 4)



## Meet Kay Ogilvie

### What is your background and your connection to the area?

I moved here when I was 28 on my own with 2 young children because I wanted to find like minded people. I made my own bread, grew veggies, tended our orchard and made a living spinning my own wool and making things.

There were people who were coming together around the country, especially in Coromandel, who wanted to be kind to the planet and live more sustainably - really the hippie dream! I lived in Colville for 17 years on and off so I really value the special community and am still nearby.

### How did you learn about The Colville Project?

I met Dr Kate Armstrong about 15 years ago when she was just starting to practise in the area. I had been in an accident in the UK that left me with a terrible back condition that really affected my quality of life. I found Dr Kate to be a great fit for me as a GP because she is the perfect balance of conventional and natural medicine and she turned my health around. So my connection is really through her.

She would talk to me about how fantastic it would be if we could have enough land for a new facility with accommodation for older people, supported by young people who want to move to the district. Dr Kate & her team could teach more students about rural medicine and holistic ways



of looking at health. All while doing it as sustainable and easy on the planet as possible.

### Why did you choose to donate?

The aims and ethos of the Project was such a match for my ideals. So I donated every year and then Dr Kate found this perfect piece of land. The whole community was pitching in to try to fundraise to buy it but it wouldn't stay on the market forever. I knew if I could give it a push, we could buy it so I sold what was going to be my retirement fund. I thought I couldn't get a better retirement plan

## Donor Spotlight

[than The Colville Project]! So I put the money in and they bought the site.

### What benefits to the community do you think there will be when it is completed?

Having a purpose built space and accommodation will facilitate teaching better medicine so there can be more doctors like Dr Kate. It is so important for Colville - there are many young people who grew up here and want to return to the area but there are no houses and few jobs for them. And for older people, there are no options - there are 23 people on the waitlist for the 9 pensioner flats in Coromandel! So I am constantly talking to people about the Project because I think it is such a fantastic idea.

### How does your art tie into your support of the Project?

I've always been artistic, from giving my brother interesting haircuts at age 12! Over the years I've felted wool hats, crocheted clothes, and made jewellery

but it was when I found pottery at 47 that it was like a light switch came on. Since then, I've sculpted life size figures, made jewellery out of clay, I teach it and I really just adore it. Everything I make from that goes towards the Project. It is one thing I can do - originally I would have been there with a chainsaw! But I can still make money so I do that. I just believe in it so much. All my life has been trying to live like that and now there is a whole project that wants to live like that!

There's so much worry about the future - are we going to have a health system, will the roads be rebuilt, will the seas rise? But at the Project they are setting up something that could be quite self sufficient. It is a really good insurance plan. It is going to be so sustainable. If I end up living on an island in the Coromandel I'll truck myself down to Colville and live in one of their units!







**Please donate today and help us bring our vision for The Colville Project to life**

The Wellbeing & Education Centre will transform the lives of the visitors & residents of the Northern Coromandel communities but we need your help to get it built.

We're asking for your support at this critical time as we prepare to apply for our resource consent.

## **Ways to donate**



**Internet  
Banking**

Colville Project Trust  
38-9020-0305267-03



**Credit Card  
over the Phone**

**Call** Anne on  
07 866 6920



**Donate  
online**

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to Donate**