

CONFERENCE PAPER ABSTRACT

NAME OF	E. Yarina, P. Allan, M. Bryant
PRESENTER:	
TITLE OF PAPER:	The tensions of conservation and resilience: landscape as
	middle ground
THEME:	Theme 4: Heritage as a Pillar of Sustainable Development
PAPER ABSTRACT:	
Conservation and resilience are inextricably connected. Both are concerned with the identification	
and protection of core values in the face of disturbance; both recognise the importance of adaptation.	
Yet sometimes they produce contradictory rather than complementary outcomes. Levuka on the	
island of Ovalau in Fiji is a good example. In this recently listed UNESCO World Heritage Site, the	
conservation of buildings in a colonial port sits at odds with an indigenous culture struggling to thrive	
in a place beset by economic and environmental disturbance. The recent Cyclone Winston, which	
devastated the island, brought these contradictions to a head, prompting the question: how can the	
tensions between conservation and resilience be reconciled?	
While adaptive re-use is one way of encouraging conservation and resilience to coexist, if a culture is	
to thrive, it must be able to adapt to an ever-growing array of economic, political and environmental	
disturbances. The research team analysed the reciprocal relationship between culture and landscape	
in Levuka and its surrounding settlements. Using a design research methodology, we discovered that	
where built fabric needs to be conserved, peri urban and interstitial urban places can act as useful	
alternative sites for adaptation. This protects built fabric while encouraging culture and landscape to	
co-evolve and allows for a quicker response to fast shocks like hurricanes, earthquakes and floods. It	
also buys time for the slower adaptive cycles of protected built fabric. In this way, landscape emerges	
as a potential middle ground between the tensions of conservation and resilience.	
BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRESENTER:	
Lizzie Yarina is a Research	Associate at the MIT Urban Risk Lab where she is involved with multiple
projects which investigate disaster preparedness and response in the built environment. Her personal	
research focuses on climate change risk and displacement. She recently completed a one year	
Fulbright research grant in New Zealand, studying the spatial implications of climate change migration.	
Penny Allan is a Professor of Landscape Architecture at UTS. Her most recent design research	
projects, MOVED to Design, Earthquake Cities of the Pacific Rim, and Rae ki te Rae, deal with the	
relationship between environment, culture, resilience and design. All received national awards	
Professor Martin Bryant is head of UTS Architecture. He is a landscape architect, architect and urban	
designer with more than three decade's experience in private practice and academia.	