BUILT ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH CHALLENGES IN AUCKLAND AND COUNCIL’S RECENT RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

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Solomon, R. (2014), *Built environment research challenges in Auckland and Council’s recent research activities*, Keynote delivered at the 4th New Zealand Built Environment Research Symposium (NZBERS), 14 November, Massey University, Albany campus.
RIMU

• Research
• Evaluation
• Monitoring

“quality, policy relevant evidence to improve Auckland”
Built Environment and Council

- Leaky homes
- Design manual
- Valuations
- Development contributions
- Albert Street
- Consenting fees

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Built environment and infrastructure

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Future built environments

- Auckland Plan
  - 400,000 more dwellings

- Development strategy

- Policy priorities
  - Increased supply & choice
  - Improved quality
  - Improved affordability

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But …

- 55% of residential construction employees in very small businesses
- 34% are self-employed
- Built environment is “slow”
- Reversibility is difficult
- Mezzanine finance

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Challenge 1

• How might the industry be structured to produce the desired urban form?

• How and why do developers move between locations, building types and scales?

• How is the industry responding to the removal of 2\textsuperscript{nd} tier financing?
Unitary Plan

- Enabling development
- Capacity modelling
  - 260,000 to 417,000 dwellings
  - Infill
  - Redevelopment
  - Vacant land
- Mixed Housing Zone

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Challenge 2

- How do the different spheres interact in practice and what is the role of planning in particular?
- How does improved granularity change how we think about the built environment?

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Social aspects

• Housing and health
  – Housing as health determinant
  – Tenure matters

• Increased role for community provision

• Private rental
  – 145,000 (2006) to 168,000 (2013)
  – An option for renters
  – An investment

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Challenge 3

• Will expanding the role of the community sector in housing improve social outcomes for renters?

• How can the housing stock be made warmer and are different strategies needed for owners and landlords?

• How is the private rental market structured?

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Environmental aspects

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Challenge 4

• How can we address source issues that are outside of national frameworks?

• How long does it take to see the removal of pollutants in our environment?

• What stops sound evidence being key in decision making?

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RIMU projects

- Long term vacant land
- Small scale developers
- Retrofit your homes evaluation
- Overview of construction sector
- Housing choices and preferences
- Contaminants from artificial sports fields

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Conclusion

- Research needs are diverse
- RIMU has a response
- Challenges are relational
- How much evidence is actually necessary?

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