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Buildings inspired by culture, heritage and environment excel in Gisborne / Hawkes Bay Architecture Awards

[Download gallery of winning images](#)

A colourful school infused with environmental and cultural stories, a herringbone-patterned port building and an exquisitely refurbished historic church are among the winners of the 2016 Gisborne Hawke's Bay Architecture Awards.

Ten projects received awards this year at an event held at Iona College's Blyth Performing Arts Centre, in Havelock North. The peer-reviewed awards, a part of the New Zealand Architecture Awards programme run by the New Zealand Institute of Architects, set the standard for good architecture in the region.

Napier architect John O'Bryan, the awards jury convenor, said the quality of the projects submitted this year was inspiring. The award-winning buildings, O'Bryan said, are exemplary responses to a range of cultural, heritage and environmental conditions.

"These awards demonstrate the range of skills architects need to have," O'Bryan said. "The list of winners reveals architects working as mediator, collaborator and project manager, pulling together disparate project strands, satisfying commercial and environmental imperatives, and driving projects to successful conclusions."

A case in point, O'Bryan said, is Toko Toru Tapu Church, which the awards jury described as "one of the most important Māori churches in New Zealand, and probably the most historically significant church on the East Coast." Architects 44 undertook heritage preservation work on the church and also drafted funding submissions.

"The refurbishment and strengthening project shows the architect going well beyond a typical design engagement," O'Bryan said. "Today, Toru Tapu Church is not just restored but improved upon, ready to play an important role for future generations."

Where Toko Toru Tapu Church provides important lessons in dealing sympathetically with older structures, O'Bryan said RTA Studio's Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngāti Kahungunu o Te Wairoa shows architecture's power to enhance learning.

Young people were drawn into the design process for the kura kaupapa, a Māori immersion school

interwoven with stories of culture and environment, helping, for example, to choose the building's primary colours.

"This work is 'true' architecture, interwoven with references to the past that will now inform the future, and with significant cultural and environmental elements that have been adapted into physical form with great finesse," the judges said.

In receiving a trifecta of awards, Napier-based Paris Magdalinos Architects (PMA) showed strength across a number of building types.

Napier Port, a winner in the Awards commercial category, is a "deft response to site", the jury said. Distinctive and rhythmical herringbone patterns and pronounced windows give the building an identity. Viewed from a distance, the segmented vertical and horizontal elements look like stacked containers. "This building is entirely suited to its locale," the jury said.

Once a tobacco warehouse, the Hawke's Bay Business Hub by PMA is now a "vibrant contemporary workspace that is sympathetic to the rich industrial tradition of Ahuriri Napier", said the jury.

EIT Campus Amenities, PMA's third award winner, is a multi-purpose facility centred on an impressive atrium. The jury said the structural elements of concrete plinths and glulam 'branches' acknowledge well-established tree canopies in the building's courtyard."

One factor that distinguishes good from merely competent architecture is the ability to meet a client's brief while providing wider community benefits. In giving Aon Hastings a commercial award, the jury said Matz Architects passed the quality test.

On Hasting's Karamu Road, which has been degraded over the years by a succession of buildings that pull away from the street edge, the jury said Matz Architects has achieved a praiseworthy remedial result with the Aon Building.

"Aon revives the street edge," the jury said. "It illustrates that through the modulation and scale of façade elements, this stretch of road can indeed be rehabilitated.

Matz Architects also received an award for Aon's interior architecture. "The overwhelmingly positive staff reaction to their new work environment speaks volumes of the success of this interior project," the jury said.

In recent years, Citrus Studio Architecture has gained a reputation for well planned, crisply designed and 'fun' public amenities. Clifton Road Reserve Public Toilets continues the trend.

"Happy to be seen in the round" and "robust and practical and vibrant and cheerful" is how the jury described this small project architecture award winner.

Two houses received architecture awards this year. As designed by Brendon Gordon Architecture, the Karl Residence, a strong and symmetrical house that sits serenely above a commanding view, is “a confident and dramatic design beautifully constructed from understated materials,” the jury said.

The unassuming entrance to the Nicol Holiday Home, designed by Clarkson Architects, belies a new home evocative of the more humble baches of yesteryear. “This intimate pavilion-style house is surrounded by open-air walkways and orientated for seaviews,” the jury said. “Cleverly constructed from robust but neutral buildings, it sits lightly in the landscape.”

All winners of 2016 Gisborne Hawkes Bay Architecture Awards are listed below. These projects are eligible for shortlisting in the New Zealand Architecture Awards, which will be decided later in the year, with winners announced in November.

For more information, images of winning projects, or to arrange an interview with jury convenor John O’ Bryan, please contact:

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Full list of awards winners: (photo credits relate to [this gallery](#))

Commercial Architecture

Aon Hastings, *Matz Architects* (Photo: Richard Brimer)

Hawke's Bay Business Hub, *Paris Magdalinos Architects* (Photo: Jeff Brass)

Napier Port, *Paris Magdalinos Architects* (Photo: Jeff Brass)

Education

Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngāti Kahungunu o Te Wairoa, *RTA Studio* (Photo: Patrick Reynolds)

EIT Campus Amenities, *Paris Magdalinos Architects* (Photo: Richard Brimer)

Heritage

Toko Toru Tapu Church, Manutuke, *Architects 44* (Photo: Brennan Thomas)

Housing

Karl Residence, *Brendon Gordon Architecture* (Photo: Amanda Aitken)

Nicol Holiday Home, *Clarkson Architects* (Photo: Richard Brimer)

Interior Architecture

Aon Hastings, *Matz Architects* (Photo: Richard Brimer)

Small Project Architecture

Clifton Road Reserve Public Toilets, *Citrus Studio Architecture*