

Save the buildings and save the climate. Save the climate and save the planet.

**The built environment is the main cause of climate change.**

How we build determines not only how we use, or waste, resources. It also determines how we live, work, and need to travel. Even more importantly how we build determines our ability to make moral decisions. A disempowering built environment, in which everyone lives in someone else's architecture, becomes a prison. The door is open, but the mortgage needs to be paid. An empowering built environment would allow owner-builders to make moral choices about their own lives. The Auckland Unitary Plan is little more than a commitment to dramatically increasing climate change in the next thirty years. A consumer society consuming diminishing resources.

**The built environment offers the easiest opportunities for necessary change.**

Changing our attitudes costs nothing. Changing our language is little more than a simple personal choice. Changing our priorities, and even our needs, does not require any resources. Comfort is the enemy of experience. Involvement is a necessary foundation for understanding. Setting people free saves the cost of building prisons.

**The problem is that all the significant decisions about the built environment are made by those who have no interest in minimizing climate change.**

We have developed a society where those with power take no responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Our politicians walk away after a term or two, only to be forgotten. The consequences of their actions will live for thousands of years. Our media tosses around opinions which will sell newspapers, while avoiding serious discussion, because that is too challenging. Architects, and planners, are nothing more than servants of those in power. At their May 2016 NZIA AGM New Zealand's architects voted against protecting the life of the planet. They voted against protecting the life of cities and even the life of buildings. They were terrified of the consequences of making an ethical choice, but their attitude was perfectly understandable. They made an economic choice.

Only one thing is missing from this Jasmax proposal for the Tamaki Campus.



The existing buildings.



The only truly sustainable building is the one you do not build.  
The next most sustainable building is the one you do not demolish.



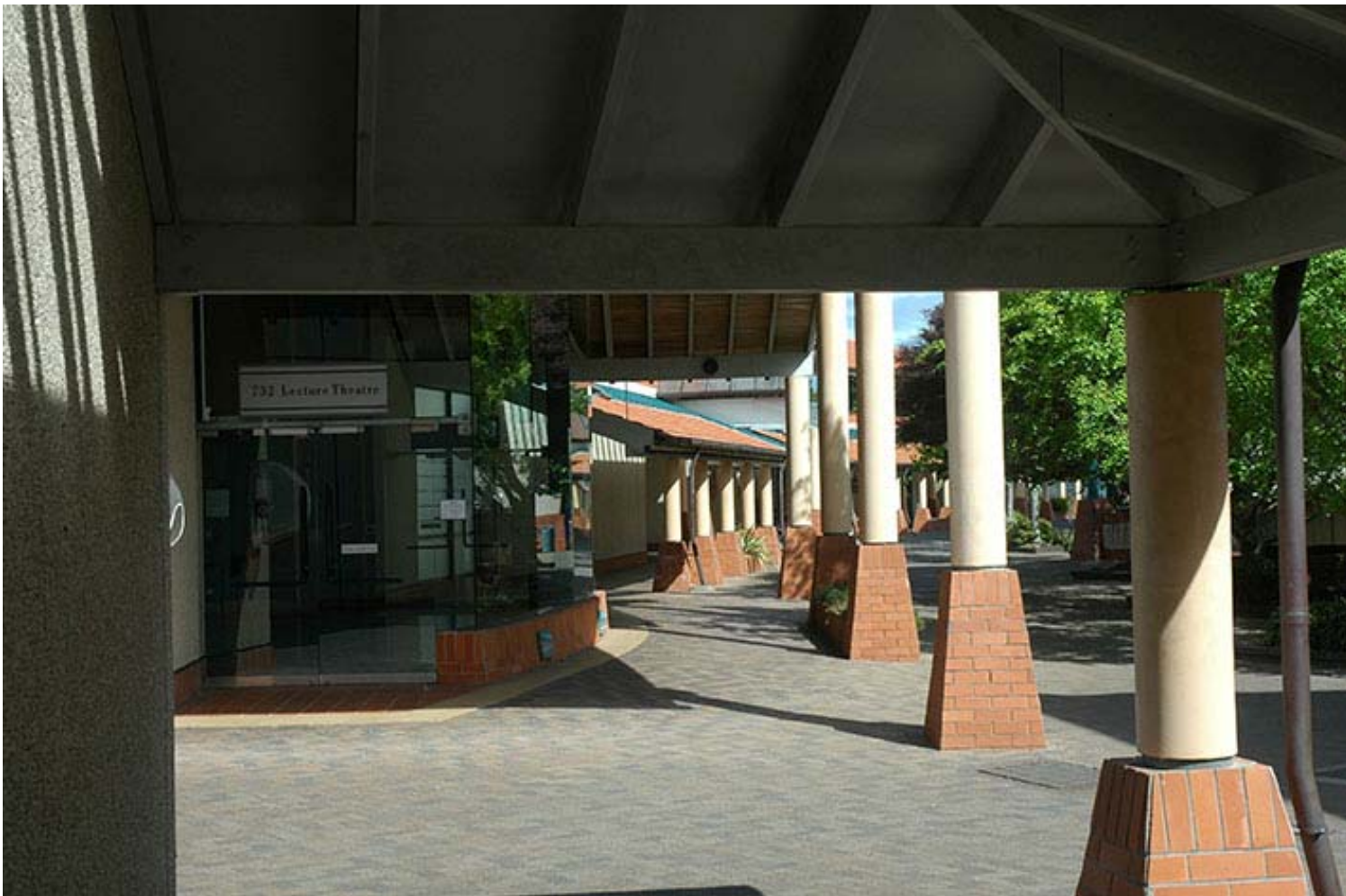
Doctors take an oath to protect life. Architects need to do the same.  
At least one Auckland firm has made a commitment to “living buildings”.



It is the embodied energy of existing buildings which is important.  
The “in use” energy use of a building is but a small part of a bigger issue.



There is no point in recycling plastic bags and milk bottles if we are going to send our living buildings off to landfill.



Living buildings are like living people. They come in all shapes and sizes. We do not kill people we do not like. They have a right to life too.



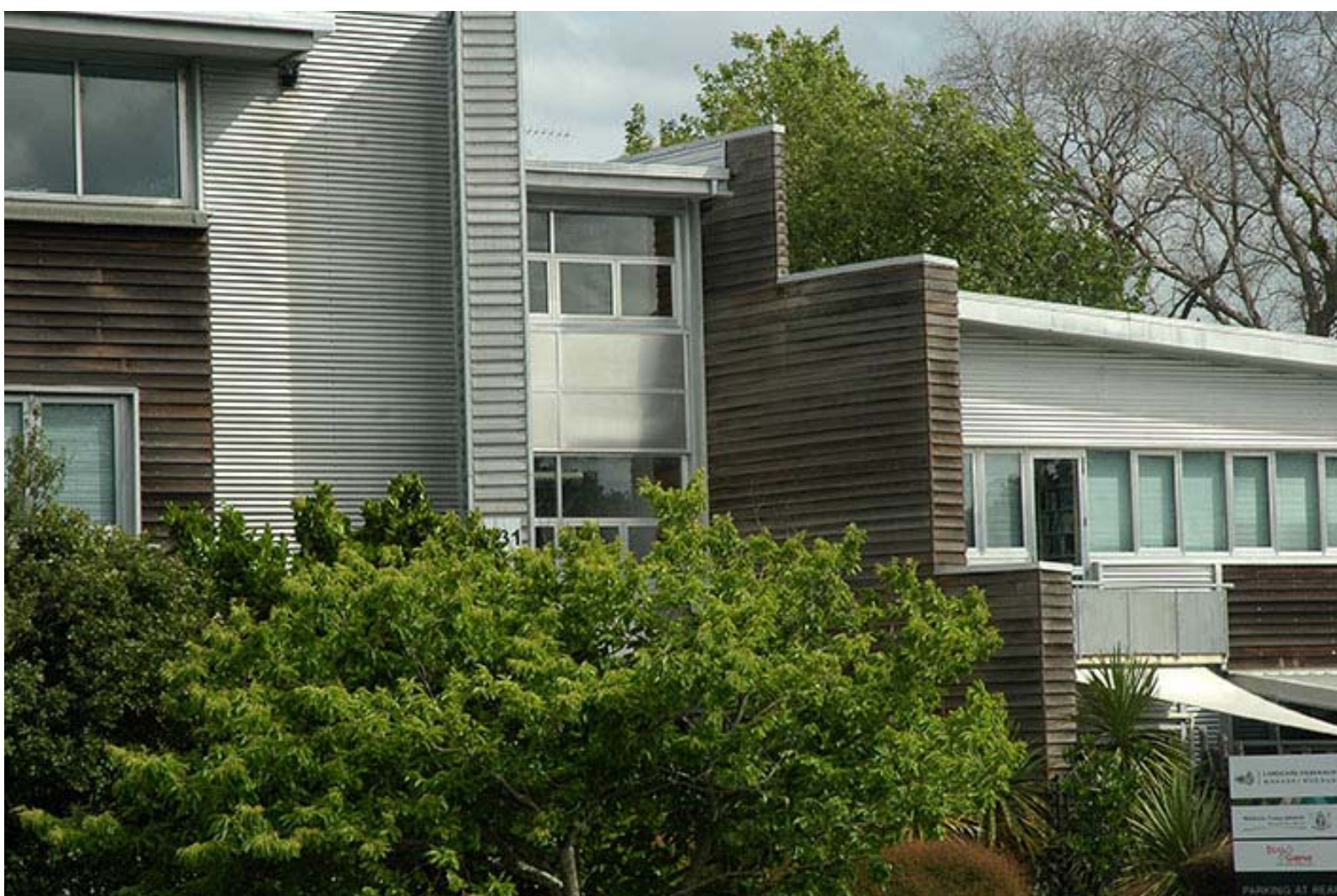
Giving buildings an architectural award assumes a commitment to care.  
If architects do not look after our best architecture who will?



Destroying living buildings destroys our memory.  
Buildings enshrine our stories and our traditions.



We cannot blame architects or anyone else beyond ourselves.  
Everyone who does not speak out must carry the guilt. Silence kills our architectural heritage.



The Landcare building has been respected as probably the "greenest" building in Auckland.  
Trashing it makes a nonsense of all those fine words and ideals.

## Everything is interconnected.

The economy relies upon disconnection. One person makes a profit from exploiting the environment. Another person carries the cost. The little people amuse themselves putting plastic into recycling bins. The big players make a profit out of plastic and run. A new operating system renders your perfectly good printer/scanner obsolete. You purchase another one. Someone makes a profit. The environment carries the cost. An economist, or an architect, asks only one question in relation to climate change. "How can I make money out of it?" Anyone interested in minimising climate change needs to change the question.

## We all need to take responsibility for architectural choices.

The first move in dealing with climate change is to develop a society where everyone takes responsibility for the consequences of their actions. It then needs to be recognised that human-induced climate change is an ethical rather than a technical question. It is a big ask, but climate change is a big question.

## We need to focus on our first moves in the game of life.

History teaches us that making the wrong first move renders every other decision irrelevant.

## Global euthanasia is our choice to make

In the long march a useful first step would be to save the existing buildings on Tamaki Campus. A useful next step would be to save the 7500 homes being destroyed to make intensification of the traffic on Auckland motorways possible.



If I might paraphrase Niemoller...

First they came for the Edmiston Wing, and I did not speak out -  
Because I had not donated anything towards the 1971 Anniversary of the City of Auckland.  
Then they came for Coolangatta, and I did not speak out - Because I was not an Arts and Crafts architect.  
Then they came for 7500 state houses in Tamaki, and I did not speak out - Because I was not a state house tenant.  
Then they came for Tamaki Campus, and I did not speak out - because Universities are themselves supposed to be the critic and conscience of society.  
Then they came for me - and there was no one left to speak for me.



*First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out— Because I was not a Socialist.  
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—  
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.  
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—  
Because I was not a Jew.  
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.*  
[Martin Niemöller](#) (1892–1984) (who spent the last seven years of Nazi rule in concentration camps.)