MID-RISE Wood Construction

PUNANGAIRI VISITOR CENTRE, DOLOMITE POINT

Snapshot Case Study

DESIGN

Sheppard & Rout

CONSTRUCTION

Naylor Love (Contractor)
RCP (Contract Manager)

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Lewis Bradford

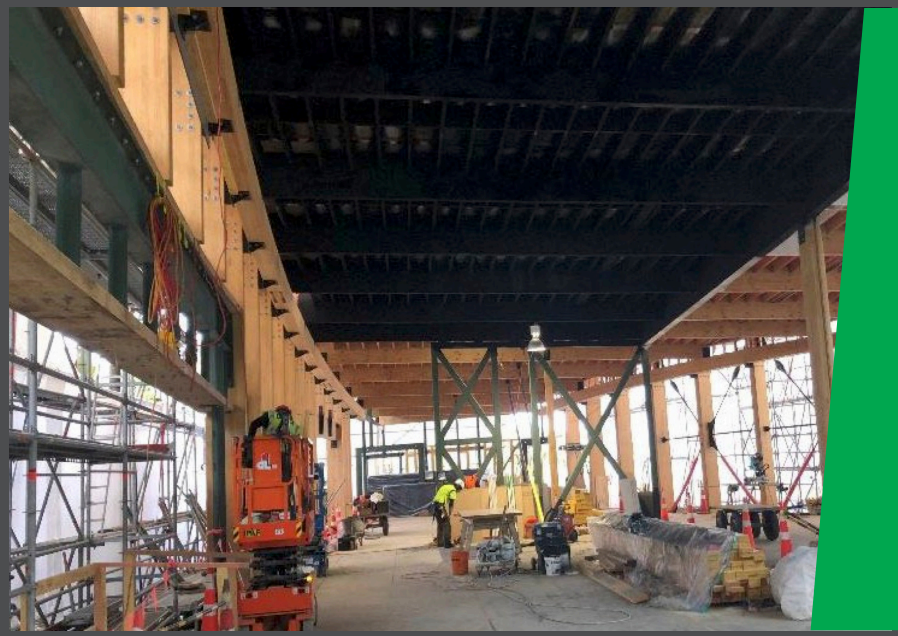
BACKGROUND

Dolomite Point Visitor Centre is a landmark tourism and environmental project situated in Punakaiki, New Zealand. The project is designed to blend into the natural landscape while demonstrating sustainable construction practices, including the use of mass timber elements to reduce embodied carbon and enhance resilience in the coastal environment.

Dolomite Point is renowned for its limestone geological “pancake rock” formations and spectacular blowholes. It receives over 500,000 visitors a year to view the natural attractions.

RED STAG INVESTMENTS

Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



EASY GAINS

- The use of engineered timber reduced environmental impact compared to conventional materials.
- Prefabrication enabled rapid installation in a remote location, minimising on-site disruptions.
- Timber elements provided superior thermal performance, reducing operational energy demands.
- Aesthetic integration with the natural surroundings enhances visitor experience and ecological harmony.

RESULTS SUMMARY

- Construction efficiency: Prefabrication accelerated build timelines and reduced site waste.
- Structural resilience: Timber design optimized for high-wind coastal conditions.

HISTORY/PROJECT BRIEF

The Dolomite Point project aims to enhance visitor facilities while preserving the ecological and cultural values of the region.

Mass timber was incorporated to align with sustainability goals and demonstrate innovative construction methods suitable for sensitive environments.

PROJECT LEARNINGS

- Site accessibility challenges required a **prefabrication-first** approach.
- **Moisture protection** and **durability** considerations were key for coastal conditions.
- The integration of **sustainable materials** supported overall project certification goals.
- **Timber's adaptability** allowed for creative structural solutions in an environmentally sensitive area.

BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

- **Navigating regulatory** compliance for timber use in public buildings added complexity.
- Logistical constraints in **transporting materials** to the remote site required careful planning.
- Coordinating **indigenous design principles** with engineered timber solutions involved stakeholder collaboration.