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## SCAPE Public Art announces new landmark for Rolleston Town Centre.

SCAPE Public Art, in partnership with Selwyn District Council and the Rolleston Residents' Association, is proud to announce a new permanent public artwork to become an iconic landmark of the Rolleston Town Centre.

Arts laureate Dr Areta Wilkinson (Ngāi Tahu) was selected by a panel from the Rolleston Residents' Association, Selwyn District Council, SCAPE Public Art and Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki ki Taumutu as mana whenua, to create a new public artwork for Rolleston. The work will be located in Rolleston Town Centre's newly developed reserve, surrounded by the community enrichment of Te Ara Ātea, a sensory garden, and youth recreation space.

Dr Wilkinson's distinctive and meaningful new artwork, *Toro Atua*, takes inspiration from ancestral rock art of Te Waipounamu. The work will take the form of 20 light-reflecting stainless-steel figures, mounted on tall, slender poles to vibrate with life, shimmering slightly in the air far above our heads. The tallest of these will be 4 metres high and the 20 figures will be arranged in groups throughout the reserve, leading people through the landscape and indicating areas of importance.

*Toro Atua* adds an important voice and perspective to the narrative of the region, reflecting Selwyn's environmental history and unique cultural identity. Dr Wilkinson conceived the artwork as imagined guardians; timeless swimming, standing or flying creatures. Her vision is for a recognisable herald of the Rolleston community hub that also sits in harmony with its landscape, delighting and intriguing residents and passersby.

"The opportunity of creating a taonga work for this community is immensely fulfilling and a true highlight. The process to date has been very thoughtful and the new objects will land in a beautiful environment warmed by people."

Speaking about *Toro Atua*, Ruahikihikitanga Portfolio Leader Puamiria Parata-Goodall said, The sculpture Areta will create is based upon the cultural narrative Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki ki Taumutu gifted to the Selwyn District Council for Te Ara Ātea. The narrative speaks to the whakapapa, kōrero and mahinga kai traditional food and resource practices. It also speaks to the importance of the site as a pou whenua or marker in the network of traditional and now contemporary trails across the landscape of Tauwharekākaho Rolleston."

The Residents' Association and the Council agreed for the public artwork to be installed in the Rolleston Town Centre and to partner with SCAPE to deliver the artwork.

The Rolleston Town Centre is a rapidly developing project which is already becoming a thriving and vibrant social hub. Regular community events combine with a variety of retail and entertainment facilities to attract visitors from throughout the Selwyn District and surrounding regions.

Mayor Sam Broughton says it's great to see the vision for art in Selwyn being realised with beautiful public artwork in the town centre.

"It's been a real community project working with the Residents' Association, SCAPE, mana whenua and other representatives all involved, and it's exciting to have something that fits so well into the wider vision of the Town Centre and the stories it tells about what makes us Waikirikiri Selwyn."

We are proud to be part of the team producing this significant artwork for the Selwyn District," said SCAPE Public Art Executive Director Richard Aindow. It is a work that celebrates an award-winning Ngāi Tahu artist and the heritage and stories of this beautiful area. As a resident of Selwyn this is especially exciting for me personally. *Toro Atua* will connect Selwyn with a wider collection of high-quality public artworks in Waitaha Canterbury, furthering SCAPE's vision to enrich our communities and make public art accessible to all."

SCAPE is managing a mixed funding campaign. The Rolleston Residents Association confirmed delegated funds of \$220,000 from the Selwyn District Council. These funds, along with the \$220,000 funds to be raised by SCAPE, will bring the budget to \$440,000 which will cover the full cost for delivery of the public artwork.

The foundations for *Toro Atua* have been laid and the estimated completion date is April 2024.

## ENDS

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