

Walking Heritage Trails in Urban Areas: The Planning and Development of Trails that Incorporate Built Heritage.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on urban heritage trails — attractions that fall within the realm of heritage, urban areas, and tourism. Heritage trails are put forward as platforms for showcasing built heritage and the history of the city for the purposes of revitalising urban areas and for conserving heritage buildings. Two cities in New Zealand — Dunedin and Napier — were chosen to study their development and management of heritage trails. Primary data collected in Dunedin and Napier provided an insight into the characteristics of heritage visitors in New Zealand. To provide a complete picture of the various stakeholders' views on the development of heritage trails, interviews with heritage managers in the two cities were undertaken. In Dunedin, where a heritage trail was being developed, members of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust were canvassed for their opinion in relation to trail management and themes for the interpretation of heritage buildings. For the established Art Deco Walk in Napier, the success factors in relation to its development and management were identified. To facilitate the conceptualisation of heritage trails, the Boyd and Tham (2003) typology based on formalisation of heritage trails is introduced to provide guidance on heritage trail development. The model illustrates the paths heritage trails tend to follow as become more formalised. This research highlights important issues which heritage trail developers should address and these include place marketing, partnership with the city council, and involvement of local residents in the identification of themes and participation in deciding the direction of tourism development. Since the trails are located in an urban environment, services such as retailing, food and beverages, accommodation, and transport infrastructure also need to be considered to enhance the leisure experience of visitors. Based on heritage trails, a model is proposed for guiding the management of sustainable heritage tourism in urban areas.