20/20 Inner City Revitalisation Committee

Notice of Meeting
A meeting of the 20/20 Inner City Revitalisation Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Forum North, Whangarei on:

Wednesday
11 December 2013
3.00pm

Committee of:
Council

Committee
Cr P R Halse (Chairperson)
Her Worship the Mayor
Cr S J Bell
Cr C M Hermon
Cr G C Innes
Cr B L McLachlan
OPEN MEETING

APOLOGIES

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
Members are reminded to indicate any items in which they might have a conflict of interest.

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1. Strategic Setting for Whangarei District and Central City Development

**Reporting officer**  Paul Dell (Group Manager District Living)

**Date of meeting**  11 December 2013

**Vision, mission and values**
This item is in accord with Council’s vision, mission and values statement as it supports the creation of a vibrant and sustainable District and City through innovative strategic planning.

**Overview**
The attached report provides an overview of the strategic setting for managing growth and development in the Whangarei District in general and Central Whangarei in particular. It represents a synopsis of the strategic direction outlined in the Whangarei Growth Strategy / Spatial Plan: Sustainable Futures 30/50 along with the Growth Strategy Implementation Plan. These documents provide the strategic context for development plans and project plans such as Whangarei 20/20 plus and Whangarei 20/20 Momentum.

**Recommendation**
That the report Strategic Setting for Whangarei District and Central City Development be received.

**Attachment**
Strategic Setting for Whangarei District and Central City.
Introduction

Whangarei District Council (WDC) adopted the Whangarei Growth Strategy/Spatial Plan: Sustainable Futures 30/50 in 2010 and the Growth Strategy Implementation Plan in 2012. These documents set the strategic direction for managing growth in the district over the next 30/50 years to better enable the integrated management of land use activities, the orderly and efficient provision of infrastructure, and the management of long term cumulative environmental effects. The Spatial Plan addresses all four well beings – economic, environmental, social and cultural – in a comprehensive and integrated manner so as to better enable sustainable development of the district over the next half century.

The Whangarei Growth Strategy and Implementation Plan, based upon these longer term planning horizons, provide the overarching framework for a suite of planning documents required under those statutes prescribing the functions of local government. For example, beneath the Growth Strategy (30/50 years) sit the Coastal Management Strategy, Urban Growth Strategy, Urban Form and Development Report, Open Space Strategy, Walking and Cycling Strategy, Urban Design Strategy, 20/20 Plus Central City Development Plan, and a range of structure and village plans. These all adopt a 20+ year planning horizon. Below these documents sit the Long Term Plan formulated under the Local Government Act and the Whangarei District Plan formulated under the Resource Management Act both of which adopt a 10 year planning cycle.

Figure 1: Strategic Overview

Spatial Plan

The future development path for the district outlined in the Growth Strategy is based upon a five tier settlement pattern (see figure 2).

1. Whangarei City as the primary district and regional urban, commercial and business centre with a strong, protected and enduring CBD. This is characterised by the following:
   - strong and vibrant CBD closely linked to the Town Basin with good urban design principles incorporated into both CBD and Town Basin developments, including mixed use and inner city living;
- main centre for health and educational services, e.g. hospital and tertiary facilities;
- main centre for banking, business and professional services;
- civic centre for the district with local and central government services;
- recreational hub for the district and region with a multi-event stadium and major sporting facilities;
- cultural and community centre with well developed community facilities, museum, library, art gallery, etc.
- improved public transport, cycleway and walkways.

(2) A satellite town at Marsden Point/Ruakaka which complements (but does not compete with) Whangarei City. This is characterised by the following:

- Marsden Point/Ruakaka grows to a town of around 15,000 people with planned residential, commercial and industrial development;
- residential development a mixture of permanent residences, retirement villages and holiday homes;
- develops into an industrial hub for the district and region based around the deep water port and refinery at Marsden Point;
- strong transport links to both Whangarei and Auckland including rail and road;
- business and commercial development that complements Whangarei City but does not rival it;

(3) Five urban villages within greater Whangarei urban area, characterised by:

- suburban nodes at Kamo, Tikipunga, Onerahi, Maunu and Otaika;
- strong urban containment provisions preventing urban sprawl around the fringes;
- mixed use residential, commercial with limited light industrial development;
- commercial development consisting of retail shops, supermarkets, gas stations, pubs, post offices, suburban banking, restaurants, coffee shops, and local professional services;
- local recreational and entertainment facilities;
- good urban design principles retaining the identity and character of the locality;

(4) One rural and two coastal growth nodes, characterised by:

- a rural township at Hikurangi servicing its rural hinterland and parts of the northern coastal area;
- two coastal townships, one at Parua Bay servicing the north harbour, Pataua and Whangarei Heads areas and the second at Waipu, servicing the southern Bream Bay area;
- strong urban containment provisions limiting urban sprawl around the fringes;
- mixed use residential, commercial and light industrial development;
- good urban design principles retaining the identity and character of the locality;

(5) Two rural villages along with eight coastal villages, characterised by:

- rural villages at Maungatapere and Maungakaramea;
- coastal villages at Oakura, Matapouri, Tutukaka, Ngunguru, Pataua, Waipu Cove/Langs Beach, Mcleod Bay/Reotahi and Urquhart Bay/Taurikura;
- strong urban containment provisions to limit sporadic and ribbon development between villages;
- mainly residential with limited commercial development and little or no industrial development;
- natural character of the coast protected and public access to the coast maintained;
- rural residential development in identified areas and widespread sporadic development restricted;

Overall there is:

- firm direction to the spatial arrangement of land uses with increased control over future growth patterns;
- the provision of infrastructure (hard and soft) is proactive, orderly and efficient – facilitating development rather than responding to development pressures;
- the effects of development on the environment (natural and cultural) are managed sustainably;
- sense of place is protected and enhanced over time.
A range of methods have been identified in the Implementation Plan to implement the spatial plan and settlement pattern outlined in the Growth Strategy. These include statutory and non-statutory approaches. Three main statutes are relevant to the implementation of the Growth Strategy. These are the Resource Management Act 1991, Local Government Act 2002, and Land Transport Management Act 2003. Each statute prescribes a range of policy documents that are essential to implementing the Growth Strategy. The most important of these are the Whangarei District Plan, Northland Regional Policy Statement, Regional Land Transport Strategy, and the district and regional Long Term Plans.
A variety of non-statutory methods are available to assist implementation of the Growth Strategy. These include: National Policy Documents, Guidelines and Protocols; Strategies, Structure Plans, Development Plans, Urban Design Plans, Community Plans; Infrastructure Provision and Asset/Activity Management Plans; Development Contributions, Financial Contributions, Rating; Partnership Agreements and Protocols; and Information, Education, Advocacy and Collaboration.

The Implementation Plan addresses all aspects of development – economic, environmental, social and cultural – so as to provide an integrated and holistic approach to managing growth in the district based upon sustainability principles. Implementing the full range of actions contained in the Implementation Plan is a long term task that will be phased over time to coincide with successive Long Term Plans. A separate document containing those actions relating to a particular Long Term Plan will be produced at the beginning of each Long Term Plan period (i.e. 3/10 years). In this way, the full suite of implementation actions will be implemented over time, based on assigned priorities, through successive Long Term Plans.

The following represent high priority implementation actions from the Implementation Plan:

- Provisions in the Northland Regional Policy Statement and Whangarei District Plan to implement the consolidated settlement pattern outlined in the Growth Strategy.
- Structure plan for Whangarei City and comprehensive development plan for inner city, including improvements to urban amenity and the night time and weekend economy.
- Sense of place/urban design improvements for CBD/Town Basin and selected nodes.
- Revitalisation catalyst projects such as the proposed Hundertwasser Art Centre, Hihiaua Maori Cultural Centre, and inner city hotel development.
- Economic Development Strategy for Whangarei District to improve local economy.
- Whangarei Community Development Strategy to rationalise community initiatives.
- Community village plans for Parua Bay and Otangarei as a trial for extending to other nodes.
- Whangarei Harbour integrated management strategy to enhance harbour management.
- Parks, reserves and recreational projects, including inner city open space/blue-green corridors, Pohe Island development, and walking and cycling initiatives.
- Development of arts, culture, heritage and civic amenities, including enhancement of heritage precincts at Forum North, Whangarei museum/heritage park and Town Basin.
- Collaboration with tangata whenua to improve economic, environmental, social and cultural well being, including an iconic Maori cultural centre to act as a catalyst for renaissance of Maori art, culture and performance, and support for socio-economic development initiatives as Treaty settlements are reached.
- Staged infrastructure provision to support the consolidated settlement pattern outlined in the Growth Strategy, and ensure delivery of an appropriate level of service to meet projected demand from population and economic growth in the district.

Some of these projects have been completed, some are in the process of being completed, and others are longer term initiatives. There many others in the Implementation Plan not on this high priority list. The actions outlined in the Implementation Plan are prioritised depending on available resources and finances. For example, structure plans for Kamo, Hikurangi, Maungatapere and Maungakaramea have been identified, and community village plans will be extended to other nodes after Parua Bay and Otangarei are completed. These structure plans and community village plans will lead to land use changes, infrastructure provision (hard and soft) and sense of place improvements.

Sense of Place

The Whangarei Growth Strategy/Spatial Plan highlighted the importance of “sense of place” in engendering a sustainable social economy. Increasingly, Whangarei will compete not only in New Zealand but globally to attract the professionals, business people, entrepreneurs, skilled workers, and families required to ensure a resilient economy and sustainable community. Additionally, Whangarei will compete nationally and internationally for visitors and tourists to the district. To compete successfully in both realms, sense of place was identified as an important attractor.

Sense of place is an important, multifaceted concept that attracts, retains and enriches communities in relation to a particular locality. A sense of place emerges through knowledge of the history, geography and sociology of an area, its natural and cultural heritage, the stories and myths associated with a place, and the relationships of communities with the land. Sense of place comprises two essential elements: the ‘community’ or those people who feel attachment or a sense of belonging to a place; and the physical and intangible elements of a place that contribute to its special character or ‘familiarity’.

A sense of place helps people identify with where they live and with each other. It can attract people and businesses to a place and help retain them there. It can also attract visitors and make them return to a particular place. It can assist in the promotion and ‘branding’ of a city or district. Sustainable tourism relies
upon a continuing sense of place. A strong sense of place can lead to more sensitive stewardship of historic/cultural and natural heritage. And an enduring sense of place assists social cohesion and social engagement. Thus, sense of place contributes to environmental, economic, social and cultural well being.

A number of aspects contribute to a sense of place and can be improved to enhance that sense of place. These include historic and cultural heritage, natural heritage and landscape, land uses, gathering places and focal points, views and gateways, and the built environment encompassing such aspects as local character and amenity, neighbourhood identity, and urban design. All these elements contribute to sense of place and can be protected and improved to enhance a sense of place. This is referred to as ‘place-making’, and is increasingly recognised as an important part of environmental, social and economic planning.

Urban design describes the physical features that define the character or image of a street, neighbourhood, community, city, or the district as a whole. Urban design is the visual and sensory relationship between people and the built environment. The built environment includes not only buildings and streets, but also the natural environments which are incorporated into the urban framework. Good urban design can create a sense of place where there was none, and will build on the assets of an inherently well located site. Mixed use, higher density, walkable neighbourhoods encourage local services and community interaction, making safer, healthier, more attractive places to live, work, play and visit. Developing a strong sense of place, through good urban design incorporating those values (both natural and historic/cultural) that currently exist, will enhance the district and its varied settlements as places to live, work and play. A sense of place also serves to attract visitors and tourists thereby contributing in economic terms to employment and social development. A strong sense of place contributes to economic well being, and economic prosperity contributes in turn to a positive sense of place. Both contribute to the sustainable development of the district over the long term.

Central Whangarei

Whangarei City is the main urban centre for the Whangarei District and Northland Region. It is the centre of manufacturing, retail, construction and service industries and provides the bulk of jobs in the district. It has a significant impact on the district and regional economy. It is the main centre for health, education, banking, business and professional services along with local and central government functions. It is the recreational hub for the district and region and the cultural and heritage centre. It is the civic heart and major provider of community facilities for the district. It is also the main entertainment centre and location of performing arts. It is also home to around 50,000 residents and is a destination to many short term and longer term visitors. It thus serves as both the ‘living room’ for residents and as an ‘attractor’ for visitors and the tourism industry.

As identified in the Growth Strategy, Whangarei City will retain its status as the primary residential, business and service centre for the Whangarei District and Northland Region over the next 30/50 years. Whilst port operations and some heavy industry have located, and will continue to locate, to Marsden Point/Ruakaka (which will develop over time into a significant town in its own right) Whangarei City will continue to be the main commercial, business, and employment centre for the district and region. It will remain as the main transport hub for the region and the major urban destination for the tourism industry.

However, to fulfil this role successfully will require a range of initiatives to maximise the economic, social, cultural and environmental potential of the City. The inner city exhibits a number of classic urban planning issues such as traffic movement, lack of safe cycling and walking opportunities, lack of pedestrian amenity, lack of character and identity, parts of the CBD in decline, sprawling commercial activity weakening the CBD hub, restricted retail ‘energy’ and limited opening hours, concerns about personal safety (particularly at night), lack of night life, anti-social behaviour, and so on. There is poor connectivity between the existing features of the central City, such as the Cameron Street Mall, Forum North and Cafler Park, Laurie Hall Park, and the Town Basin - in particular between the CBD and the Town Basin. In terms of the Town Basin, the existing development, whilst of good quality, is limited in geographic extend and in function (see figure 3).

Whangarei City has enormous potential to become an attractive, world class medium sized city. It has strong natural, historic and cultural attributes that if integrated into the urban fabric of the City could transform Whangarei into a highly desirable place to live, work, play and visit. Currently these attributes are not capitalised upon and as a consequence Whangarei City, particularly the central city area, does not exhibit consistently high urban amenity nor a coherent sense of place. There are isolated areas of high amenity and strong sense of place, such as Forum North/Cafler Park, the Cameron Street Mall and the Town Basin redevelopment. There are further improvements planned for the Town Basin and CBD. However, parts of the CBD are unattractive, ill-kept, and afflicted with on-going vacant premises, resulting in a depressed, run-down appearance. The central city lacks a coherent sense of place based on consistent natural, historic and cultural themes coupled with strong, consistently applied urban design principles.
The central city also requires improved transport/land use integration to ensure both a people friendly inner city environment and the effective movement of traffic through the central city. There is a pressing need for improvements to pedestrian connectivity around much of the inner city, particularly between the CBD and the Town Basin. Related to this is the need for a continuation in improvements to traffic flow around the central city area. Works such as Porowini Avenue extension, the second harbour crossing, and ongoing improvements to State Highway 1, including the Kamo Bypass and Speeding Road extension have, and will, allow for improved traffic movement around the City which, in turn, should allow for increased pedestrian mobility in the CBD. Future planning for roading infrastructure needs to be closely aligned with land use planning, and visa versa. Whangarei's geography imposes inherent problems to providing transport infrastructure yet the same geography provides great potential for enhancing the City's sense of place.

Central Whangarei has an historical harbour-side location and strong natural and cultural attributes. The Town Basin and the forested slopes of Parahaka and Western Hills/Pukenui Forest framing the city centre is a superb natural setting. However these attributes are not fully capitalised upon nor well integrated. There is a lack of green open space in the centre of the City. Tarewa Park, Caffer Park, Laurie Hall Park and the Town Basin provide quality open space but the inner city would benefit from more green space in the CBD (possibly an extension of Laurie Hall Park or a small pocket park elsewhere) and the establishment of 'blue green’ corridors along the urban waterways to connect existing open space with the Harbour and the surrounding forested slopes. There is considerable potential to use the Hatea River, Waiarohia, Raumanga, Kirikiri Streams and Limeburners Creek to create a network of blue/green ecological corridors that together with existing and extended open space in the city centre will greatly enhance urban amenity, and biodiversity, and contribute to fulfilling Whangarei’s potential as a ‘blue/green’ city. The section of the Waiarohia Stream through Caffer Park illustrates the potential of these streams to contribute to the amenity, ecological, social and cultural values of the City and to its sense of place as a water-based settlement.

Whangarei City has a unique historic and cultural heritage that is not always recognised nor fully celebrated. This includes both early Maori occupation and later European settlement. To better utilise existing historic and cultural heritage and maintain and enhance the special sense of place in central Whangarei any future planning initiatives for the City need to contain strong heritage themes and strong land use planning and urban design provisions aimed at protecting and utilising Whangarei’s unique historic and cultural heritage. Such provisions range from building upon the colonial theme of the Town Basin, protecting and enhancing our historic buildings and architecture, and enhancing Maori cultural associations with Whangarei. For example, Parahaka holds strong cultural and historical significance as the location of the largest fortified pa in New Zealand. The site and associated stories could be better integrated into the cultural and historic fabric of Whangarei City. Similarly, with Whangarei's early European history, heritage buildings and sites need to be protected and maintained. Development in the City needs to incorporate heritage buildings and precincts wherever possible so as to retain and enhance the City’s heritage, and contribute to its sense of place.

One such initiative, and one that could act as a catalyst for a renaissance of Maori art, culture and performance in the district (and wider region) would be the development of an iconic cultural centre at a prominent location in central Whangarei. This is seen as an essential initiative in terms of enhancing and supporting Maori cultural practices, assisting Maori economic development and adding value to the district as a whole by encouraging tourism and associated business development. Both international and domestic visitors have a strong desire to experience Maori culture and learn about local history, and there is a real opportunity for Maori and Council to assist in providing a unique historic/ cultural experience in Whangarei.

A cultural centre at Hihiaua in the Town Basin has been proposed to provide a landmark cultural experience which contributes to Maori economic development, assists in keeping young people in the district by providing employment opportunities, supports Maori arts, culture and entertainment, provides a memorable experience for tourists, and contributes to the general economy of the Whangarei District. Such a centre could be part of a wider heritage and cultural experience precinct in the Whangarei Town Basin that would act as a cultural and heritage hub or cluster. Such a precinct could provide a significant boost to local culture and heritage and a major attraction for visitors to the district.

There are many other opportunities along similar lines that could be developed over time to benefit both Maori and the wider community. These include cultural tourism ventures, cultural performances, celebrations of cultural and historic events, cultural arts, crafts and music, concerts, conferences and many more. Cultural tourism could be integrated with eco-tourism ventures. Whangarei has the potential to become a major ‘destination’ for visitors seeking cultural experiences. In addition, the Whangarei District could become an integral part of a Northland wide historic and cultural experience for visitors. As the 'birth place' of the nation, Northland, with its natural and historic/cultural heritage could in time rival Rotorua and Taupo as a cultural tourism destination. This would have manifold benefits to the region and the district over the long term by increasing cultural, social, environmental and economic well being for both Maori and the wider community.
Whangarei City is the arts, amenity and cultural hub for the Northland Region and this role will increase in importance over the next 30/50 years. The city centre already hosts a range of arts, culture and civic amenities, such as the art museum, Clapham’s Clocks, art galleries, Quarry Arts Centre, a number of theatres, the central library, cinemas, music venues and conference facilities. The Whangarei District Council’s Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy advocates development of a number of arts/cultural ‘precincts’ in different parts of the City including Forum North as a ‘heritage and cultural generator precinct’ encompassing the central library, the old library building (Arts Promotion Trust), the Capitaine Bougainville Theatre, the Exhibition Hall and the former Whangarei Art Museum building; and the Town Basin as a ‘heritage and culture experience precinct’ encompassing the existing Clapham’s Clocks Museum, Reyburn House, the relocated Whangarei Art Museum, and the proposed Hundertwasser Museum and Maori Cultural Centre on the Hihiaua Peninsula. These proposals need to be incorporated into future planning initiatives for Whangarei City to ensure Whangarei’s development as the regional arts, amenity and cultural hub for Northland.

A vibrant night life is an important part of a city’s cultural and economic fabric, but Whangarei’s planning policies have been largely day-centric in focus and application. At present Whangarei has a limited night time and weekend economy. Many parts of the city suffer from lack of activity in the evenings and at weekends and there is an absence of a coherent and integrated night specific place-making strategy. It is timely to consider the development of Whangarei’s night time (and weekend) activities and spaces. Council has a role to play in creating a climate for a dynamic, diverse and multi-purpose night time (and weekend) economy in which public culture and commercial culture intersect. The CBD and the Town Basin offer opportunities for increased socially inclusive leisure and evening/late night/weekend uses such as cafes, restaurants, bars, entertainment places, music venues, and street markets. A four star hotel and conference centre in the Town Basin/CBD area could be part of the mix. Council has recently developed a Weekend/Night Time Economy Strategy, and an Alfresco Dining Policy, to try to invigorate the night time/weekend economy in Whangarei.

Other proposals to upgrade the CBD/Town Basin area have been put forward, and some completed, such as the harbourside loop walkway using the recently completed second harbour crossing to link the Town Basin with Pohe Island Reserve. An art/sculpture/heritage walkway along the Hatea waterfront has been completed providing an attractive open space with historical, cultural and artistic features for locals and visitors to the City. The award winning canopy on Victoria Bridge has provided space for an Artisans Market (and other activities) which have invigorated the weekends in the Town Basin, providing an attractive destination for locals and visitors, and greatly benefiting the weekend economy in the inner city. A new harbour side park is proposed adjacent to the Canopy Bridge which will provide a high amenity open space for residents and visitors alike and further improve the overall visitor experience to Whangarei City.

The most pressing issue is the revitalisation of the central business district and the associated business areas. Revitalisation includes improvements to pedestrian connectivity around much of the area, but especially between the CBD and Town Basin. A second, and related, issue is inner city residential use in appropriate areas, and some mixed use development, particularly around the CBD/Town Basin area. Mixed use/residential development has the potential to improve the vitality and attractiveness of town and city centres over single use development. Successful mixed use/residential development can have a beneficial impact upon the social and economic well being of an area, enhancing viability, generating a strong sense of place and often producing an environment which is both attractive and functional.

Not only does inner city mixed use/residential development enhance attractiveness, it also stimulates the evening/weekend economy, prevents ‘dead’ office/commercial zones and creates a safer environment by combining facilities used at different times of the day. In terms of the environmental aspect, successful mixed use can have a significant impact on environmental quality and appearance. These can be important factors in determining attractiveness. Mixed use/residential development provides greater opportunities for using public transport, and encouraging trips on foot, hence reducing the need to travel by private vehicles.

Conclusion

The Whangarei Growth Strategy/Spatial Plan and Implementation Plan provide the strategic direction to managing growth and development in the district and Whangarei City over the next 30/50 years. The Implementation Plan, in particular, provides a comprehensive framework for addressing economic, environmental, social and cultural issues in an integrated manner over the short to long term. The actions identified in the Implementation Plan will be implemented through a range of methods and tools, including Long Term Plans, the Whangarei District Plan, strategies, structure plans, community village plans, development plans, urban design guidelines along with infrastructure provision through asset/activity management plans. This strategic framework should better enable the Whangarei District to develop in a sustainable manner well into the future.
2. The Loop Walkway - Report to Inner City Revitalisation Committee

Reporting officer  Bruno Gilmour  (Senior Landscape Architect)
Date of meeting   11 December 2013

Vision, mission and values

This item is in accord with Council’s vision, mission and values statement as this project will contribute to the vision of creating a vibrant, attractive and thriving District by establishing a multi use concrete trail for four kilometres long around the inner harbour and through the Town Basin. This will enhance Sense of Place objectives through providing an open space experience particular to Whangarei, showcasing natural features and existing facilities, while providing a framework for future activities. The Loop Walkway will engage current Whangarei residents, as well as contributing to the Sense of Place objective of attracting potential residents to the city.

Background

This project builds on work completed in 2011 including the Art Park, Heritage Walk and Hihiaua walkway, as well as along Riverside Drive, to create a 4.2 kilometer (km) cycle and pedestrian loop around the inner harbor and Town Basin. This document provides an overview of Stage 2 of the Ring of Walkways, currently referred to as The Loop Walkway; essentially this is the 2.6 km of trail required to complete the 4 km loop.

A ‘vision’ document, presenting an overview of the project and its potential as a spatial and narrative connector was developed between January and March 2012. This was circulated widely, and presented to the Cycle Reference Group and the Positive Aging Advisory Group.

Council at its meeting on 28 March 2012 approved construction of further stages of the Loop Walkway within existing budget. A refinement of scope and budget generated a scheme that would potentially deliver the approximately 2.6 km length needed to close the ‘Loop’ around the northern half of Pohe Island and along Okara Esplanade Reserve.

In August 2012 council approved the proceeding with detailed design, construction documentation and construction with a view to having the works completed by June 2013.

This work was deferred in September 2012. In early 2013 councillors requested a report into how the Loop Walkway might be divided into four contracts, to be tendered as budget allowed.

In June 2013 council authorized the tendering of the entire Loop Walkway project, based on the detailed design form August 2012.

Tenders were let on 12 August 2013 and closed on 30 August 2013. More detail below.

The Loop Walkway

This document addresses the new 2.6 km section on Pohe Island and Okara Esplanade Reserve, which is currently under construction.

In its simplest sense, this is a 2.5 meter wide, high quality, multi-use concrete trail, functioning as a spatial connector. It will link a diverse range of public activities at various points along its route, some of which are already in use, including the skate park, BMX tracks and Art Park, while others are planned for the future, including multi-generational activity areas, a parkour zone, jetty/viewing platforms, parking facilities at key points, a children’s ‘trike track’ or learn to ride facility, along with suites of site furniture, landscape improvements and way-finding and interpretation elements.

At the same time, the Loop Walkway forms a narrative experience, relating stories from the past such as the Okara fishing village, the present such as the Art Park, and the future, such as restorative work and future activities at William Fraser Memorial Park at Pohe Island. This diverse narrative will be enhanced with site specific art works and interpretation material.
Alignment of the Loop Walkway

The walkway contains two significant sections of new 2.5 m wide concrete path. One on the true right of the Hatea River, along Okara Esplanade Reserve and Hihiaua Peninsula, and the other along Pohe Island and Riverside Drive.

The Okara Esplanade Reserve section connects two bridges, the Waiaorohia pedestrian and cycle bridge (currently under construction as a separate contract), and Te Matua a Pohe. This enables cyclists and pedestrians easy access from the Town Basin via Hihiaua Peninsula, to Pohe Island as well as the retail area at Okara.

The Pohe Island section connects Te Matau a Pohe with Riverside Drive at the north western and south eastern corners of Pohe Island. From here a loop can be made back to the Town Basin via improved footpath access north along Riverside Drive, or a connection can be made along the road south to Onerahi.

Below are more detailed descriptions of all component sections of the Loop Walkway.

Hihiaua Section

The character of the Loop Walkway in this section is dominated by cultural anchors such as Reyburn House, the Art Park, the carving studio and the Waka and Wave sculpture. This will be reinforced by the establishment of the Hihiaua Cultural Centre. The important Maori cultural heritage layers of Hihiaua are not currently apparent. This will be remedied to some extent by the installation of interpretive structures such as exist at the Art Park.

To better integrate the Wave and Waka sculpture into the experience of Hihiaua and the Loop Walkway, a curved section of path has been added, to allow pedestrians and cyclists to flow around the sculpture. In addition, seating has been installed, to match the swing back benches in the Art Park and Town Basin, along with a heritage plinth, detailing the story behind the sculpture. As lighting is provided for the walkway route along the water’s edge of Hihiaua, it will be upgraded at the sculpture, to improve security and consistency with other areas nearby.

As part of the current works, sub surface drainage will be installed on Hihiaua from south of Riverside Theater car park, to the general location of the Wave Waka sculpture. This will be similar to that installed as a first step in the recent development of the Art Park, which significantly contributed to that projects year round appeal and usability.

Also, improvements have been made to existing features around Reyburn House. This included improved drainage and ground levels at the boardwalk, a concrete path connection between the promenade boardwalk and the path between Reyburn house and the art studio, removal of palms to facilitate the planting of heritage roses, and the addition of a heritage plinth outlining the history of Reyburn House.

Much of the actual walkway on Hihiaua is established. Additional lighting will be provided, from the Art Park (to match lighting in that location), along the walkway, to the end of the peninsula, where the walkway will be connected to the Waiaorohia pedestrian and cycle opening bridge.

Where the route passes through the Art Park, the grass immediately adjacent to the path was reinforced by top dressing with sand, and made flush with the concrete surface. This allows wheeled vehicles such as bicycles and strollers to leave the paved surface as they see fit, without the risk of sinking into a soft surface, or a sudden grade change. Creating The same strategy could be used along the rest of the existing path along Hihiaua. Head counts of path user numbers through the Art Park suggest that numbers have increased by 30,000 per year. This can be expected to rise with the delivery of the Loop Walkway and additional facilities along its route.

Okara Esplanade Reserve Section

This section connects the two bridges, and runs tightly between the Hatea River bank with its sea wall on one side, and property boundaries inland. Character distinction here is provided by the light industrial activity along its inland edge. Rather than ignoring this aesthetic, it will be referenced as an authentic aspect of the site, with the installation of site specific features derived from bridge building materials. Site specific riverside plantings will be installed along the northern portion, with shade trees in groups in the wider southern section. Heritage panels and interpretation structures will bring out some of the stories behind the landscape and its features.
Pohe Island section of Loop Walkway

The section north of Te Matau a Pohe is integral to the Loop Walkway connecting back to the Town Basin, while the section south of the bridge is a link to Riverside Drive heading to Onerahi.

The northern section is envisioned as linking numerous activity nodes, including a proposed multi generational area, parkour zone, and a jetty/viewing deck, along with existing 'family' BMX facility and Skate Park. Sections along the waterfront near the existing family BMX track will be widened considerably as proposed activities are added. It is anticipated that the existing internal road in this area, which the Loop Walkway shares, will be removed in the future, when it becomes redundant through the establishment of a new entrance from Riverside Drive. The concrete path that forms the walkway is constructed such that additional width can be added in the future, as need dictates and budget allows. The northern section of walkway on Pohe Island would be a likely first candidate for this.

Wairohia Pedestrian and Cycle Opening Bridge

While a separate project with its own budget, this bridge forms a crux in the Loop Walkway, linking Hihiaua with Okara Esplanade Reserve. This was conceived as a human scale bridge with its own integrity as part of the Loop Walkway, rather than a just a smaller version of Te Matau a Pohe. Visually the bridge references cultural heritage cues from the immediate vicinity, while being a strong aesthetic experience in its own right. Currently under construction, the anticipated opening date is May – June 2014.

Mangrove Management

A resource consent was obtained to enable the management of mangroves along the Hatea and Waiarohia Rivers in the area of the inner harbour. This has included the selective removal of mangroves to open up views to the harbor and an re-establish visual connection between river banks. Where mangrove stands were deemed to have ecological significance, such as the large groves at the south end of Pohe Island, they have been left intact. The re-establishment of views across the water has significantly contributed to diminishing perceived distances between the Town Basin, Pohe Island and Okara, reinforcing connectivity which the bridges make explicit.

Work programme

Tender Process

The Loop Walkway was tendered as 2 contracts in August 2013. The two tenders were created along geographical lines, being Riverside Drive and Pohe Island (contract 13004), and Okara Esplanade and Hihiaua Peninsula (contract 13006). A consideration in dividing the work into two contracts was that the smaller works could enable smaller local contractors to bid competitively.

The tenders were let on 12 August 2013, and closed on 30 August 2013.

Five tenders were accepted for each contract, from the following companies. Transfield Services (NZ) LTD, Steve Bowling Contracting LTD, Halls Brown Contracting LTD, Greengables Landscape, United Civil Construction LTD, and Robinsons Asphalts LTD.

The evaluation criteria for this contract was Price Quality Method, based on the NZTA model, with price making up 70% of the evaluation weight, and non-price attributes comprising 30%.

Both contracts were won by Transfield services (NZ) LTD. Contract 13004 for the sum of $591,663.60 Contract 13006 for the sum of $494,472.28

Construction

Construction began on 21st October 2013, in the north eastern section of Pohe Island and on Riverside Drive. It is anticipated that the section along Riverside Drive to the North West corner of Pohe Island, and the section through William Fraser Park to Te Matau a Pohe will be completed and open for use by Christmas 2013. The remainder of the work will be completed in the New Year, with the final milestone being the completion of the pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Waiarohia River.

Construction of the Waiarohia pedestrian and Cycle Bridge began on September 1st 2013, with completion programmed for June 2014.
Recommendation
That the report be received.

Attachments:
1. Loop Walkway Schematic Design
2. Loop Walkway Indicative Costs for Supplementary Features
Proposed jetty viewing deck
Proposed parkour facility
Recently refurbished ‘family’ BMX track
Proposed multi generational activity facility
Loopy Walkway

Pohe Island – schematic elements

December 2013

2.5 m wide high quality concrete multi use trail

‘Landfall’ sculpture seating to be installed

Walkway continues across Te Matau a Pohe
2.5 m wide high quality concrete multi use trail

Trike track and learn to ride facility

site appropriate re-vegetation
Pedestrian/cycle bridge - under construction

Trail will include site appropriate planting.

Trail will be fenced where appropriate and lighted.

Sculpture made from steel from bridge construction
Mangrove removal has reduced perceived distances between Town Basin and Pohe Island.

Possible future walkway segment from Waiarohia bridge along river edge, past carving studio.

Expanded parking and new play area with improved drainage.

Interpretive structures will relate cultural heritage.
## Loop Walkway - Indicative Costs For Supplimentary Features

### December 2013

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3. **CBD Stage 1 (Laneway) presentation**

**Reporting officer**  Nick Karlovsky (Urban Design Specialist)

**Date of meeting**  11 December 2013

**Vision, mission and values**

*This item is in accord with Council’s vision, mission and values statement as this project will contribute to the vision of creating a vibrant, attractive and thriving District as they will enhance the ‘sense of place’ through the enhancement of key CBD streetscapes. The resulting living environment will enhance the experience of the CBD for the public with flow-on vitality benefiting retail viability.*

**Project Overview**

This project sets out to extend the pedestrianised condition of the Cameron Street Mall one block further east along Cameron Street and half a block northwards along James Street towards the Robert Street intersection. One-way traffic will still be permitted through these streets, in a kerb-less ‘shared space’ configuration where pedestrian movement is given priority over vehicles. The project aims to create an enhanced pedestrian environment within these streets with an emphasis on alfresco dinning in Cameron Street, while extending the CBD’s core activity area down James Street towards the Town Basin. This is to be the starting point to strengthening the connection between the CBD and the Town Basin.

Standout features of this project are a large transparent canopy above the Cameron James street corner, and a second smaller canopy extending out across Cameron Street from Quality Street. These canopies enable undercover pedestrian connectivity from the Central City Car Park and through Quality Street towards the Vine Street carpark enabling an all-weather shopping environment within the retail heart of the CBD.

A preliminary working drawing set for this project was presented to this 20/20 Subcommittee on 8 May 2013. Since that time, detailed civil engineering design has been completed, and the civil works components of the project will be ready to go out to tender on completion of tender documents. In addition it is intended that the two canopies go out to a design and build tender among firms specialising in tensile structures.

**Public and Stakeholder Consultation**

Two concept designs were produced for this project in 2011 by Reset Urban Design. One concept (the ‘Mall’) depicted the full extension of the Mall for pedestrians only, while the other concept (the ‘Laneway’) depicted a narrowed one-way traffic lane with widened pedestrian amenity on each side.

These concepts were presented to the public at a stall in Cameron Mall attended by Council staff for three days a week throughout February 2012. In addition display panels and feedback forms were set up over the same period in the Forum North and Whangarei Library foyers, and separate consultation meetings were held for the public, stakeholders and local Architects.

167 feedback forms were received from individuals, businesses, groups and institutions of which 133 supported the project and 34 were opposed.

The text accompanying the displays emphasises Councils proposed delivery strategy of first building the laneway option and then, after time, reviewing whether to convert to a full Mall, noting that relatively little additional work would be required to do this, and that it would also be simple to close the Laneway to vehicle traffic for special events if required.

Feedback from local businesses showed a very strong preference for the Laneway concept, stressing that complete removal of vehicular traffic would be disadvantageous to their businesses.

Based on the feedback received Council’s Urban Designer further developed the Laneway concept, and collaborated with local firm Fabric Structure Systems to produce a concept design for the Cameron James Corner Canopy. The developed design was then presented to a stakeholders group on 31 October 2012 and to the Positive Aging and Disability Advisory groups on 8 November 2012. These groups were supportive of the concept with the stakeholders requesting further resolution of delivery vehicle parking and vandal proofing the canopies.
Suggestions from Positive Aging and Disabilities were for, varied heights and armrests for seating, limiting available parking to disability parks, ensuring the paving was anti-slip, and considering ‘stand-out decorative’ colour to the canopy support structure in preference to ‘blend in grey’.

**CBD Stage 1 Drawings & Rationale**

The drawing set appended to this report includes drawings from both the preliminary working drawings and engineering sets, selected to best illustrate the design intentions.

*The cover sheet provides an overview of the finished design layout within its urban context. Key features include:*

- **Shared space** – like the Mall the new sections will have an essentially flat surface from the building edge on one side to the building edge opposite. Unlike the Mall, slow speed one-way vehicular traffic will be retained in a ‘shared space’ configuration. This involves vehicles being permitted into an essentially pedestrian environment, where stripped of all the normal cues they usually rely on such as kerbs and signage, drivers assume greater responsibility for their own behaviour. As counter-intuitive as this may sound shared space street configurations have been proven to be safer streets for pedestrians than their conventional equivalents, while producing marked upswings in pedestrian activity and retail vitality.

- **ETFE canopies** – two strategically located canopies on the Cameron James corner and extending across Cameron Street from Quality Street, provide cross street linkages to encourage all-weather shopping in the CBD core. The large corner canopy is also intended as a gathering/meeting space, and will be clearly visible from the Town Basin end of James Street. It is envisaged that in the evenings this feature will be lit up to glow as a beacon to passersby along Dent Street.

- **Stage** – an extendable stage is located beneath the existing Melia tree and under the proposed corner canopy, for both informal performers and organised events to enliven the Mall area.

- **Entry threshold** – the vehicle entry will occur at the Cameron and John Street intersection where a clear threshold of a rumble strip surface framed by Queen Palms on each side will signal the transition from conventional street to shared space. Removable bollards will be located at this juncture to enable closing the street to traffic for festivals, markets or special events.

*Drawing 1* shows existing layout highlighting items to be removed. Most prominent are the raised basalt stone planters and the trees within them. The intention is to re-use the basalt in the proposed bench seats and to retain as many of the Queen and Bangalow Palms for re-use as practical. The raised stone planters outside the Events Cinema entrance on James Street are to be retained, effectively demarking the transition from ‘shared space’ to conventional street layout. The Melia trees within those planters are to be removed and replaced with relocated Bangalow Palms to better connect the view from the James and Cameron Street intersection across the Town Basin and on to Parihaka. Also highlighted in red is the area of existing paving on Cameron Street to be uplifted for reuse.

*Drawing 2* shows revised tree and fixture layout. Four new Nikau Palms feature in the Cameron James Street corner vicinity to add a more human scale to this pivotal corner. Queen palms on either side of the vehicle lane entry point at the Cameron John Street corner demark the vehicular entrance point. The vehicle...
route is from that point defined by a combination of light poles, street trees and street furniture, as opposed to traditional curb and channels, signage and street markings.

The row of 6 Titokis on Cameron Street is retained. Two of the Titokis on James Street need to be realigned to make way for new slot drains replacing the existing open gutter to be inserted. The most prominent new fixture is a semi-demountable stage built around the existing Melia tree. Six new timber seats are located on stone benches built from the demolished planters, and two new timber bench seats are located on a remaining raised planter near the Cameron John Street corner. Two way-finding plinth signs are proposed.

Sheet No 20 shows the proposed paving layout. A key feature is the retention of the existing footpath paving. This measure offers a number of advantages to the project, including:

- lower cost than complete repaving
- aesthetic continuity with the adjoining streetscapes and mall
- a clear visual indication of the part of the street that is completely car free, for partially sighted, elderly and young
- better access and less disruption to businesses during the construction phase.

Although there have been issues with the existing pavers regarding slip resistance in wet weather, almost all area where it is proposed that they be retained are under cover.

The new paving in the shared space & pedestrian amenity zones is a bush-hammered concrete paver, which has greater slip resistance, and is more affordable, than the old clay pavers. The simplified layout and neutral tones of the proposed new paving is intended to compliment and refresh the existing theme. This plan also indicates the areas where the existing clay pavers shown on drawing 1 as being uplifted and retained for re-use, will be reinstated.

Sheet No 73 shows key sections through the proposed street highlighting structural soil cells around tree pits and the slot drain chambers that will replace the existing kerb and channels. The placement of trees at ground level within the shared space zone where cars or service vehicles can unload above tree-root zones requires a departure from WDC’s conventional planting practises if these trees are to thrive in this streetscape. The use of structural soil cells enables a combination of a sufficient volume of un-compacted soil with sufficient structural strength to withstand vehicle loads above while enabling service utilities to pass through undisturbed. The top cross section illustrates how tree pits will sit alongside the vehicular lane and new slot drain chambers that have been sized to compensate for the loss of the existing above ground storm-water capacity of exposed kerb and channel. Opus has designed to the principle that exposure to storm-water at the building edge is in no cases made worse than exists in the current configuration.

Sheet No 74 and 75 show the proposed stage. A permanent core to the stage is formed around the location of the existing Melia tree. It is intended that this tree remains, as a preferred option. Should the constraints of erecting the proposed canopy above this tree prove too challenging, it would be replaced by a suitable native specimen tree. By the addition of five removable components, the stage can be enlarged for performances with a viewing audience on the existing Mall side of the stage. The stage could be similarly enlarged on the two sides facing James and eastwards along Cameron, however this would bring the stage hard up to the vehicle lane and therefore necessitate closing the laneway to vehicles for this kind of set-up. As the stage extensions indicated on Drawing 4 could be installed while retaining the laneway open, only these have been detailed to date. It is however intended that the vehicle lane could be closed off for special events with the insertion of two removable bollards at the Cameron John corner entrance to the one-way vehicle lane.

Sheet No 78 shows permanent seating details. Seat type 1 is a simple timber slat bench seat inserted on two sides of an existing raised planter that is to be retained near the Cameron John corner. Seat type 2 is a twin level timber slat bench seat built above a low stone bench made from the recycled basalt from the demolished raised planters. The intention is that people can either sit at a conventional sitting height, or perch against the higher level extension on the back of the seat. In addition the portion of the stone wall projecting past the timber work can also be sat on. Six type 2 bench seats feature in the project.

The Cameron James Corner Canopy. The final three drawings have been prepared by Fabric Structure Systems to illustrate the design concept for the Corner Canopy. The Orthographic drawing shows the design concept as a computer model. The last two drawings are photomontages of how the structure would look from eye level.

The Corner Canopy is intended to be built from Ethylene Tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE), a transparent and durable high-tech fabric that is 1% the weight of the equivalent area in glass. Recent examples of structures
using this material include the Cloud on the Auckland waterfront, the Eden Park extensions for the 2011 world cup, the roof of new covered stadium in Dunedin, and the new entrance structure at Waitomo Caves.

This canopy is a specialist item that is intended go out to a design and build tender. This will need to occur prior to tendering the street works to enable the canopy foundations to be included in the overall civil works package, to avoid having to break up the paving in this corner twice. Fabrication and installation of the canopy itself, including the above ground support structure, could then either proceed concurrently with the streetscape works, or occur at a later stage.

Specifications for the Corner Canopy include:

- Ethylene Tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE) Canopy Fabric (or equivalent in terms of durability, transparency and weight)
- Canopy, foundations and support structure designed to a minimum lifespan of 50 years
- 4.5m minimum clearance above laneway
- Top venting to release heat build-up
- Support structure footings and uprights located to avoid: vehicular laneway plus 1m clearance on either side of laneway, the proposed new stage and all known underground service locations
- Support structure footings and uprights located to avoid to the greatest extent possible – the stage viewing zone and the seating zone indicated on the ‘Cameron James Canopy, Scope Diagram: Canopy Zone Plan
- Support structure footings and uprights located to enable 3m wide x 4.5m high passage for occasional emergency and service vehicle access between the proposed vehicle laneway and the existing mall

Recommendation

That the report be received.

Attachments

CBD Upgrade Stage 1 Presentation Set

(This attachment is too large to display online. If you would like a copy, please contact our Senior Meeting Co-ordinator, phone +64 9 430 4200)
4. Carpark to Park presentation

Reporting officer  Nick Karlovsky (Urban Design Specialist)
Date of meeting  11 December 2013

Vision, mission and values
This item is in accord with Council’s vision, mission and values statement as this project will contribute to the vision of creating a vibrant, attractive and thriving District through the enhancement of the Town Basin interface between the CBD and the water’s edge. The resulting living environment will enhance the experience Town Basin across various community sectors while fostering more interaction between the Town Basin and the CBD.

Project Overview
This project envisages the transformation of the informal carpark area between the Canopy Bridge and Dent Street into a premium outdoor amenity park forming both a destination in its own right as well as a key linkage between the CBD and the Town Basin.

The site area for the project is the residual land alongside the Hatea River between Riverside Drive and the former NRC building that was created when Dent Street was realigned in 2005. Should the Hundertwasser Arts Centre proceed, the park will interface with that distinctive building and associated outdoor spaces.

In 2011 three concept designs were developed by Reset Urban Design on behalf of Council, depicting three distinct scenarios as to how this land could be developed. These were called, Big Wall/Urban Beach, Great Lawn and Activity Strip.

Big Wall/Urban Beach  Developed around a central water feature emerging from a large curved wall structure, with a series of lesser walls reflective of the Whangarei’s rural heritage walls to define the spaces within the park.

Activity Strip  Focused on a youth oriented integrated skate and basketball space and also featured a children’s water park and playground.

Great Lawn  Focused on a large passive lawn space.

Common to all three concept designs were, a pedestrian spine linking the Market Bridge and the main pedestrian crossing over Dent Street, a pedestrian cycle promenade parallel to the river edge, and a public toilet in close proximity to the Canopy Bridge. In addition all three made provision for service truck access to the commercial fishing boat wharf, on site carparking and vehicle access up to, and temporary parking in front of, the Canopy Bridge to facilitate market and event set up.

The three concepts were presented to the public in a public engagement programme spanning December 2012 and January 2013. This included a stall in the Artisans Fair, a public meeting at Reyburn House, a display with feedback forms in the Library foyer and a presentation to the Youth Advisory Group. The feedback forms were also made available on-line through the Council website.

Findings from public engagement
The Big Wall/Urban Beach was clearly the favourite among the 3 concept options, however the supporting comments indicated some considerable diversity as to expectations as to what this entailed ranging from expectations of a Brisbane or Cairns style artificial beach to the more circumspect view of the Youth Advisory Group that the Urban Beach would be “great for cooling off without needing to go out to the beach (&) without having to actually swim”. Virtually no comments mentioned the Big Wall component, except to point out that incorporating a climbing wall would create a safety hazard.

Although three distinct options were presented, staff involved in the process went to some length to point out that rather than being a simple case of choosing one of the three, Council wanted to know what the key elements were that people want incorporated into the final scheme. Responses to the part of the feedback form that required rating each of the elements listed indicated that the most popular elements were the ‘stage and viewing terraces’ and the ‘large lawn’.

20/20 Inner City Revitalisation Committee  11 December 2013
These are the key components of the Great Lawn concept option, and even where people have told us they favoured the Urban Beach/Tidal Pool, they still rated the ‘stage & viewing terraces’ and ‘large area of lawn’ as desirable elements to be included. After the ‘stage and viewing terraces’ and the ‘large lawn’ the next most popular element was the ‘children’s spray park’.

Least popular, both in terms of the concept options and the elements embodied in that option was the ‘Activity Strip’ This also included the largest focus for comments directed against any single element, a skate park.

The feedback from public engagement was presented to the March 2013 meeting of the 20/20 Inner City Development Subcommittee which made the following resolution:

“That Council’s Urban Designer and Landscape Architects, develop up a revised concept scheme embodying a combination of:

- ‘stage & viewing terraces/great lawn area
- a spray park/water feature zone with a broad appeal in terms of target age groups, that would also serve as a dry courtyard zone in cooler seasons
- shade from both shade cloth and tress
- terraces stepping down into the water at the river edge”

As per the original three concepts, the revised concept will continue to feature:

- service truck access to the commercial fishing boats
- on site carparking
- vehicle access up to, and temporary parking in front of, the Market Bridge
- a pedestrian spine linking the Market Bridge and the main pedestrian crossing over Dent Street
- a pedestrian cycle promenade parallel to the river edge, and
- a public toilet in close proximity to the Market Bridge.

**Further Development**

The Design team is currently developing design work incorporating the above elements, with the most recent iteration of this work attached.

In addition to the features listed above the design envisages provision for a future pedestrian bridge across Dent Street towards James Street and considers how the park layout would interface with the proposed Hundertwasser Art Centre. A strong framework of Pohutukawa trees is used around the street edges and to define the main activity spaces, and on-site parking has been paired back.

The design remains a work in progress with a number of options regarding layout under consideration.

**Recommendation**

That the report be received.

**Attachments**

1. Reset Urban Design’s three concept options
2. Developed concept
This concept is built around providing a program of activities for a wide range of age groups and a promenade and series of elements which engage with the river edge.

This concept features a large youth orientated activity space that may include integrated skate, bmx, climbing and basketball facilities. A series of lawn terraces are proposed either side of a river front promenade. These lawn terraces address both the activation space and the river edge. Activation of the river edge includes a pontoon wharf, small childrens water park and a number of large timber pontoons which provide seating and lounging opportunity. A compact lawn area and concert pavilion beside the proposed Hundertwasser museum provide space for small events and informal performances.
This concept is built around providing a large active water feature or urban beach as the central focus for activity. This key drawcard is augmented by a range of other attractors distributed across the site.

Featuring a large central water park, this shallow basin features sculptural rock features and play elements and would be ‘filled up’ on a seasonal basis ensuring its functionality is retained during the winter months. This large central space is defined by a number of stone walls referencing the use of them throughout the Town Basin. A compact lawn area features seating terraces and a stage set below the existing Pohutukawa as a venue for outdoor theatre and community events.
This concept is built around the flexibility of the large lawn as a place to sit, play and engage with community events. The space is conceptualised as an extension of the proposed museum, using colour, planting and built form to integrate these two key projects.

This concept features a large central lawn as a focus for active and passive activity. This large lawn is bookended by a large children's playground and stage sitting under the existing Pohutukawa as a venue for outdoor theatre and community events. A large river front promenade provides a backbone of which a series of terraces and observation points step down to the lawn and the river. A tapestry of planting and forms relating to the Hundertwasser museum has been used to provide visual continuity, extending the aesthetic of the museum into the park.