

Waipu Placemaking Plan

Summary of Feedback Report

April 2022

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1. Placemaking Plans

The Placemaking Programme is a response to the growth and changes that are happening in the Whangārei District. While we have often planned for growth at a District level, there is a gap when it comes to understanding how this affects specific locations in our District.

A ‘one size fits all’ approach is not the best way forward for our diverse District because each place is different. Places have their own set of qualities, unique characteristics and people who make them special. Placemaking Plans are intended to be a shared vision between Council, community, tangata whenua/hapū, developers and other entities/organisations.

At a local level, the Placemaking plans are a tool to:

- Integrate planning for future development, which balances infrastructure, amenity and environmental outcomes
- Provide a vehicle for tangata whenua and community input into planning, development and infrastructure decisions
- Create a shared vision for how key locations will develop over the next 20 – 30 years.

The Placemaking Programme create a series of 20-30-year spatial plans for specific places across the District. Each Placemaking Plan will identify actions which will feed into the District Plan review process, the capital works, infrastructure, and transport programmes, and align their actions with the Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan funding.

The Placemaking Programme will generate a series of Placemaking Plans to create a 20-30-year shared vision for key locations and communities across the District. The plans are driven by:

- Growth and changes
- Infrastructure needs
- Good quality design
- Community and tangata whenua Values
- Spatial features
- A changing climate/environment

1.1 Where are we in the process?

Figure 1 Placemaking plan development process



With this report we have completed the first round of engagement. Our findings from the community engagement, internal workshops, discussions with external stakeholders and the preliminary analysis have helped us to identify key themes, issues and opportunities and set the direction for the Waipu Placemaking Plan. These findings will be used to draft the Plan and inform our response/action plan.

2. First round of engagement overview

The Placemaking Plans are a collaborative planning process. Meaningful engagement with tangata whenua and the community is key to the success of building these plans.

2.1 Response in brief

This section of the report outlines a summary of the sources of feedback received as part of the first round of engagement. Overall, we received 400 items of feedback as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Summary of feedback response



2.2 Purpose of engagement and engagement methods

The purpose of the first round of engagement is to introduce the Placemaking plans to the wider community, tangata whenua and stakeholders to understand the qualities, values, issues and opportunities. The first round of engagement was held over a five-week period, from 2 March 2022 to 6 April 2022. The online survey was extended to 11 April 2022.

A suite of engagement tools was used to enable participation and provide feedback. This consisted of public interactive workshops, an online survey, GIS drop a pin tool, print and social media and meetings on request (see Figure 2). Staff also received email feedback.

2.2.1 Online Survey

The online survey was live from 6th March 2022 – 11th April 2022. The survey was not limited to people who live in Waipu/ Bream Bay. People who regularly visit these areas to work, shop, visit

friends and whanau or use the parks, sportsgrounds and other facilities in these areas were also encouraged to take part in this survey.

The link to the online survey was distributed to contacts via email, Facebook posts and available on Council's 'Have your Say' website page. We received 157 completed surveys. Six key questions were asked in the online survey. These were

1. How are you involved in the Waipu area?
2. Which of the following facilities/places do you use or visit in Waipu?
3. What things do you value and love about Waipu?
4. What improvements would you like to see in Waipu?
5. What is your vision for how you would like Waipu to look in the future?
6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

The results and analysis of the online survey can be found in Appendix B.

2.2.2 Workshops

Two workshops were held in Waipu. There were open for all to attend. Due to staff resourcing (COVID impact) the first workshop scheduled was postponed. The purpose of the workshop was to listen to the community's ideas, aspirations and feedback. The workshops were held at different times (evening and daytime) and weekdays to enable participation. The workshops were held on

- **Wednesday 23 March 6.30pm-8.30pm at Waipu Presbyterian Church.** There were 25 participants plus 3 staff at the workshop. Workshop participants had the following affiliations, residents, landowners, Croquet Club, Waipu River walk, Bream Bay News, Waipu Museum and Waipu Residents and Ratepayers.
- **Tuesday 5 April 2022 10.00am-12.00pm Waipu Presbyterian Church.** There were 16 participants plus 3 staff at the workshop. Workshop participants had the following affiliations Waipu Residents and Ratepayers Association, tangata whenua, Waipu River walk, Men's Shed and Sport Northland.

A short introduction presentation was given by staff, followed by two interactive workshop sessions. Workshop participants were asked to create small groups and workshop two questions per session. WDC staff supported groups as observers, scribes and/or facilitators.

Part 1 of the workshop asked:

1. What do you love about Waipu?
2. What improvements would you like to see in Waipu?

Part 2 of the workshop asked:

1. What is your future vision/aspiration for Waipu? How would you like it to be in the future (next 20-30 years)?
2. What would some of the reasons growth should or should not occur here?

Workshop notes can be found in Appendix B.

2.1.1 Social media

Social media was used to support raising awareness of the open engagement and direct people to provide feedback via the online survey as well as inform people of the upcoming public workshops. Two public posts on our Facebook account were posted alongside the promotion of the Waipu Placemaking Plan. These posts received 118 reactions, comments or shares.

We also posted into two local Waipu Facebook groups. These were the Waipu & Waipu Cove Locals Community and Businesses group and Bream Bay Community Notice Board. We posted three times to each group. These posts received 46 reactions, comments or shares.

2.2.3 Emails

As part of the first round of engagement, one of the engagement tools offered were emails and meetings upon request. We received five emails. One of the emails received was prepared by a Planner at Reyburn and Bryant Ltd submitted on behalf of a group of Waipu residents and business owners. A summary of the emails received can be found in Appendix B.

2.2.4 ArcGIS

27 items of feedback were received on the 'Drop a Pin' ARC GIS tool. The tool was built internally but unfortunately it wasn't developed in time for the engagement launch on 2 March 2022. The tool was made available in the third week of engagement and open for feedback for approximately three weeks. It was promoted through our email contact list, Facebook posts and made available on Council's 'Have your Say' website page.

The tool asked people to tell us something you like, dislike or would like improved and show us where it is. The ArcGIS mapping tools allows people to share their feedback and place a comment on the interactive map to show where their feedback relates to. This can provide a better context and/or specificity. All comments posts are visible to other users. This new engagement tool has been well received. The data/results can be found in Appendix B.

2.3 Who has engaged with us?

We contacted a wide network of stakeholders, businesses, landowners, tangata whenua and local residents for feedback. Over the first round of engagement the following groups/ individuals and stakeholders engaged with us/submitted feedback

- Residents
- Landowners
- Businesses
- WDC Elected Member/Councillor
- Waipu River Walk Group
- Waipu Presbyterian Church
- Waipu Croquet Club
- Bream Bay News
- Waipu Museum
- Waipu Residents and Ratepayers
- Tangata whenua
- Waipu Men's Shed
- Sport Northland
- Waka Kotahi
- Ministry of Education
- Kainga Ora
- Kids 1st Childcare

As part of the next Plan Development phase, staff will reach out to the following groups/stakeholders as drafting commences

- Department of Conservation
- Heritage New Zealand
- Northland Regional Council
- Waka Kotahi

2.3.1 Tangata whenua engagement

Council staff began conversations with tangata whenua/hapū on the topic of Placemaking starting in late 2021/ early 2022. This involved reaching out to hapū kaumatua and contacts to start

conversations, build relationships and to introduce this topic via email, phone as well as coffee/in person catch ups.

At a meeting held on 19 January 2022, staff received the direction to form a roopu/working group made up of tangata whenua representatives to support the development of the Placemaking Plan. Council staff also presented to Te Huinga on 27 January 2022, lessons learnt from the previous Placemaking Plans and an update on the intended tangata whenua engagement approach to establish working groups for each Plan.

After the meeting held in mid-January, Council staff continued to build relationships with Waipu tangata whenua. The constantly changing COVID -19 environment made it challenging to plan a face to face meeting. Staff approached Patuharakeke Trust Board and Te Parawhau and received nominations to form the working group/roopu. The 'Roopu Tangata Whenua ki Waipu' members include Mere Kepa, Shilane Shirkey, Tamihana Paki, Gina Murray. Tangata whenua engagement is planned for late May 2022.

3. Summary of feedback received

This section of the report brings all the feedback received into common themes outlining the high-level issues and opportunities heard. Feedback has been grouped into the following themes/categories: connectivity, destination, and smart growth. These will be used to inform the development of the Waipu Placemaking Plan.

3.1 Connectivity

Strong support for multi-modal transport choice and enhancing active (walking/cycling) opportunities. There was concern about the safety of State Highway 1 intersections and balancing traffic movement through Waipu Centre. Need for roading improvements and investment to support a safe, connected and sustainable transport network.

Direct quotes from feedback

- “Walking and cycling are increasingly favoured transport choices amongst residents and visitors. Waipu does not encourage w & c by way of safe passage through the village, wayfinding signage, bike parking facilities” (From Online Survey Response WP-81).
- “I would like the walkway/cycle way continue from Novascotia state, past the fire station into town. This would help get safely into town on this route without having to go onto the road” (From ‘Drop a Pin’ ARC GIS tool).
- “I’d like to see good footpaths (including cycle tracks) all the way between Langs Beach and the Cove, and further towards Waipu and Mangawhai. The traffic has increased so much in quantity and speed over the years that is it barely safe to walk on the roadside anymore” (from Online Survey Response WP-140).
- “Further footpath improvements to ensure that highly trafficked footpath connections are wheelchair/stroller/mobility scooter friendly including traversable/ramp connections” (from Online Survey Response WP-145).
- “I would like to see a bus service linking Waipu, Waipu cove and Langs beach as there are no taxis in the area. The shuttle idea will have huge support from locals and should be discussed” (from Online Survey Response WP-145).

Feedback	What we heard
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was support for improving transport choice including public transport such as providing a regular and affordable bus service from Waipu Cove, the Waipu Centre, Ruakākā, One Tree Point to/from Whangārei City • WDC should provide supporting public transport infrastructure such as bus stops and shelters
Walking and cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was strong support for improving accessible walking and cycling connections in the village and wider area and for completing the walking and cycling connection between Waipu and Waipu Cove, as well as a new bridge over Waihoihoi River to connect Nova Scotia housing area with Riverglen Road • There is a need to upgrade/improve and widen the footpaths for accessibility, such as outside the Four Square, along the Braigh, St Marys Road. • It is a priority of the community to create safer street environments including improving levels of service, lighting on walkways as well as planting suitable street trees • The community have the aspiration of a safe pedestrian-friendly, walkable village • There is support for supporting infrastructure for walking and cycling such as cycling storage/racks and water fountains at key locations • Attention was brought to the lack of footpaths; many streets have no footpaths or one on side of the road for example improving the footpath connectivity from the boat club to Uretiti Road.
Roading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was support for a park and ride facility/ commuters all day carpark located centrally for workers/businesses in Waipu village • There was support for more electric vehicle charging stations • There was a strong support for roading improvements and investment (improve levels of services in some areas), such as, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parking management in the village (suggestion to introduce timed parking - suggestion and reconfigure parking on the Centre Road such as removing the on-street angle parking) ○ A second pedestrian crossing at the eastern end of The Centre ○ To upgrade one-way bridges ○ Improve/upgrade key intersections such as Nova Scotia Drive, South Road, The Centre intersection ○ Remove/clear cluttered roadside signage (remove outdated signage) ○ Additional street trees planting ○ A ring road was suggested to alleviate traffic congestion, connecting Argyle Street to South Road ○ There is support to create a gateway/entrance from SH1 entry point into Waipu (signage and landscaping) ○ There is concern about the safety of SH1 intersections, the community was supportive of upgrading the northern and southern intersections to roundabouts ○ Measures were requested to address driver behaviour, specifically speeding

How can WDC and the Placemaking Plan address this:

- Support connectivity, walkability and accessibility within the Waipu Placemaking Plan.
- Support streetscape design, quality design and traffic calming outcomes in Waipu village.
- Support safer pedestrian crossings and walkability in the village.
- Explore and test opportunities to create a walking and cycling network within Waipu in reference to the wider Walking and Cycling Strategy.
- Identify key streets and intersections and their current and future role in the wider Whāngarei network. Identify gaps in the current transport network where future population growth needs to be accommodated for.
- Work with Northland Transport Alliance (NTA) and Northland Regional Council (NRC) to identify public transport opportunities in Waipu.
- Work with NTA and WDC design staff to explore and test opportunities to improve the transport network for all users.
- Explore options to increase the level of service in certain areas.

3.2 Destination

Waipu has a thriving commercial centre with bustling shops, community facilities and services. Within the wider area, there are popular tourist destinations at Waipu Cove, Langs Beach and Ruakākā Beach. The people of Waipu value their community, unique heritage, and culture. There is a strong sense of community which is a key reason people love to live, work and play in Waipu and the Bream Bay area. Learning and celebrating the unique dual (Māori and European) heritage; the people, place and landscape is important. Feedback has identified the need for more activities and amenities particularly for children, youth and older people.

Direct quotes from feedback

- “Keeping the heritage of Waipu is important. The work done to restore the old bank is fantastic. When the new pharmacy was built, I was impressed with the effort put into keeping the look of old Waipu. With the growth in population and new subdivisions that have gone on over the last few years I think Waipu will have to expand its commercial & retail side but hopefully without losing too much of that quaint village feel.” (from Online Survey Response WP-136).
- “Waipu retail centre is tired looking and many shop fronts could do with a face lift; a cohesive master plan including a uniform signage policy would be useful along with a sponsor for a coat of paint” (from Online Survey Response WP-81).
- “Improvements in pram-friendly full loop walkways. Designated dog park for off leash exercise and play. Playground suitable for all ages toddlers specifically aren't catered for in Waipu. Town basin and Mangawhai are great examples” (from Online Survey Response WP-58).
- “I'd like to see the Main Street given some love; we need parking improvements. Upgrade to Waihoihoi Childrens Playground. Public Toilets installed in the park area opposite the Pizza Barn. A fully fenced dog park, so we have somewhere safe for our dogs to be let off lead. So many restrictions around beach use for dogs (understandably with threatened bird life) would be great to see somewhere for them to be able to be let off lead and socialise” (from Online Survey Response WP-1).

Feedback	What we heard
Arts, heritage and character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community was strongly supportive of Waipu's unique character and heritage and ways to celebrate it. • That people would like to be better connected to and celebrate Waipu's local history, stories of tangata whenua and dual heritage • There was support for the Waipu Museum, heritage buildings and the - built heritage character which makes Waipu unique. • There was support for the promotion of the local arts community • There was a suggestion for bi-cultural heritage information boards
Local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was strong support for local businesses, local activities/initiatives and events such as the Highland Games, Art 'n' Tartan and markets • The community expressed their appreciation for volunteer groups, initiatives and projects, and highlighted the need for ongoing support of community initiatives, ideas and projects • There was strong support for more diverse and well-designed activities, facilities, and amenities to cater to their community as well as visitors • The community has a strong sense of community and the friendly/ welcoming community is a key aspect of what is loved/valued • There was aspiration to attract more families and younger people, yet retain village character and community feel
Facilities/amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was support for Council to build on the youth activity zone at Waihoihoi Park and provide more things for youth to do such as a basketball court, mountain bike track, pump track, climbing structures and a community sports hub with club room facilities for all sports codes • There was demand for the provisions of better and more diverse playgrounds and park facilities such as an intergeneration playground and exercise equipment. Picnic areas, public toilets and rubbish/recycling bins as well as a dog park (off leash) • There was strong support for eco-tourism and sustainable tourism businesses/opportunities
Thriving village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community expressed their interest in the enhancement of Waipu's profile as a visitor destination as well as a place to live, work and play; there was support for the ongoing promotion and marketing of Waipu, in support of local businesses that can benefit from local northland visitors • There was strong support for main street improvements and beautification in the village, by improving footpaths, furniture/seating, trees/planting, and street lighting • There was interest in maintaining and enhancing the village character • There was consensus on how derelict property is an 'eyesore' on the main road, and the need for unique and well-designed public spaces, streets and buildings • There was support to enhance public spaces as key areas to relax and gather

How can the WDC and the Placemaking Plan address this:

- Support projects and initiatives which celebrates Waipu's unique character and identity/sense of place.
- Support good quality design and CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) outcomes in Waipu to drive key actions and future investment and development by council and the community.
- Explore opportunities to develop amenities and activities for young people and families within the community
- Identify opportunities to promote Waipu's unique character through design and assist in promoting Waipu as a destination.
- Identify and prioritise projects which achieve good quality design outcomes, connectivity, activity and create safe and inviting spaces.
- Work with council planners to ensure development and activities identified in the area can be achieved within planning regulations.
- It will be a key tool for the community and council to feed into statutory processes, such as the District Plan, and be considered for Long Term Plan and Annual Plan funding.

3.3 Smart Growth

Waipu offers a range of lifestyle opportunities. Waipu's proximity to Whangārei City, State Highway 1, the natural environment and amenities makes it an attractive place for growth. Coordinated and aligned growth with infrastructure is fundamental as well as design led development (including subdivision design) which is responsive to Waipu's unique character and the environment. Providing affordable housing options, activities/amenities for all ages and improving public transport and green spaces.

Direct quotes from feedback

- "A master plan is required to maintain the essence of a village environment as it grows, along with design/planning controls and guidelines to encourage buildings, landscaping and spaces that reflect the cultural diversity. There's a disconnect between the retail centre, primary school, residential and industrial areas and Waihoihoi Park. Little known is the incredibly rich biodiversity in the river catchments that run through Waipu and the unique flora/fauna in the lowlands and uplands behind Waipu- fairy tern, dotterels, inanga, kiwi, hochstetter frogs, bats etc" (from Online Survey Response WP-81).
- "Land developments need to cater for public access corridors that allow for a larger network of walkways and cycle ways throughout the district. We should optimize the value of the Te Araroa walkway through the coastal district" (from Online Survey Response WP-92).
- "It should be a destination town with its history, museum, beach, river and events. Like an Arrowtown of Northland" (from Online Survey Response WP-46).

Feedback	What we heard
Future growth and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are concerns about rising rates and development contributions and a request for these to be invested in the Waipu community • There is support for the retention of productive land for farming and horticulture activities • The community expressed their interest in attracting more businesses and employment opportunities • There is support for additional social infrastructure and services to support an ageing community and changing population demographics • The community expressed the need for future growth and development to be connected and developed in a coordinated way with better subdivision design and in a way that it will retain the village character • There is support for the protection of the natural environment and to consolidate growth to around the township – some desired an ‘urban limit’ or growth boundary and a green belt around the village • There is support for infrastructure investment for the existing and future population growth particularly wastewater and stormwater investment • Due to the increased traffic and congestion, there is need for safer roads and intersections for all transport modes (cars and pedestrians) • There is support for housing variety, medium density housing options such as walk up apartments/town houses
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community highlighted the need to align growth and infrastructure (well-planned and implemented) • There were concerns about the existing infrastructure (particularly sewage and stormwater), its capacity and coping with the projected growth
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is interest in the preservation and enhancement of existing green spaces such as improving landscaping, seating, rubbish/recycling bins, improving water quality of the waterways, pest and weed management/control and planting of more native trees and plants (on private and public land such as on Department of Conservation land) • There is strong support to promote and develop blue green network, ecological and walking/cycling connections along the rivers/waterways • The community would like improved access to river reserve areas along the Waipu Estuary and the upgrade/enhancement of infrastructure to access to water such as boat ramps • There is strong demand for the management of vehicles on the beach (driving behaviour, as well as limiting/restricting access to the beach)
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was strong support for improved public transport as well as walking and cycling connections within the village and with the surrounding environment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vision of the community is that of a pedestrian friendly and walkable village, with priority to support physical/design changes in the main street to achieve this outcome
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was a call to encourage uniformity in the building style, particularly along the main street, as well as well-designed developments, subdivisions and buildings

How can WDC and the Placemaking Plan address this:

- The Waipu Placemaking Plan will be a shared vision between the community, Council, tangata whenua and key stakeholders and will provide a vehicle for the community and tangata whenua to feed into statutory processes, such as the District Plan; and be considered for Long Term Plan and Annual Plan funding.
- It will provide guidance to the community, including those seeking to develop.
- Explore opportunities with the community to empower private landowners to improve the quality of their properties.
- Support good quality design outcomes in Waipu through the Placemaking plan to drive key actions and future investment and development by Council and the community.
- Identify diverse housing and development opportunities in appropriate locations of Waipu to guide the community and potential developers and protect natural environment.
- Identify opportunities for redevelopment, infill and greenfield development potential in Waipu to guide future subdivision and diverse housing development.
- Provide a level of certainty for infrastructure providers, communities and potential developers and guide future investment in the District.
- Support population growth with actions around the provision of infrastructure, amenities to meet potential demand and capacity.
- Highlight Waipu’s unique rural character as a key feature to be considered within the Placemaking Plan and development opportunities.

4. Next steps

We have identified key themes, issues and opportunities for Waipu which will inform the drafting of the plan. This report has outlined the key issues and opportunities raised in the first round of engagement and how it can be addressed.

- Continue/ongoing engagement with tangata whenua, a workshop is planned for late May 2022.
- Ongoing collaboration between internal staff and key stakeholders to investigate issues/opportunities and test ideas/concepts to create more alignment and provide certainty around opportunities and drafting actions. Staff will conduct further spatial analysis/mapping to identify key locations, sites and areas to look at in more detail.
- We have established key contacts with individuals and community groups as well as other external stakeholders. We will continue to update our contacts and invite them to engage with us further as we develop these plans.
- We will begin drafting Waipu Placemaking Plans, key outcomes, transformational moves, strategic locations and actions. The drafts will be presented to Elected Members prior to second round of engagement. The purpose of the second round of engagement is to seek feedback on the draft Plans.