

Draft Milford Town Centre Plan

4 November 2014



**Devonport-Takapuna
Local Board**



Auckland Council

Help shape the future of Milford

Devonport Takapuna Local Board is very pleased to present the draft Milford Centre Plan for public feedback.

Early in the process, we set up a working party to develop the draft Milford Centre Plan. The plan development process has been undertaken with the valued help of the Milford community's own Milford Village Forum's Community Led Visioning Report as a starting point, and on-going direction from the Milford Resident's Association, Castor Bay Residents and Ratepayer's Association and Milford Business Association. The local board was impressed with the passion and concern of these groups for the future of Milford.

The intention of the plan process is to maximise community and stakeholder input and feedback and has involved a multidisciplinary team to guide the development of ideas and assess their feasibility. The draft plan's development has been guided by direction from a number of strategic planning and community documents, including The Auckland Plan, the Long-term Plan 2012-2022, the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board Plan (2014), the draft Takapuna-Devonport Area Plan (2014), Milford Village Forum's Community-Led Visioning Report, Takapuna North Corridor Management Plan, and the former North Shore City Council's coastal walkways studies.

The information from these reviews, along with stakeholder workshops and meetings, and on site analysis, has been used to identify and understand the local values, issues, challenges, aspirations and opportunities for Milford Centre.

In November 2014 Auckland Council will share the draft document with members of the public via a series of public engagement initiatives. This will be your opportunity to give written feedback and contribute to completing the final plan.

I urge you to have your say on this draft plan.

Mike Cohen, QSM, JP

Chair, Devonport-Takapuna Local Board

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1 Introduction

Purpose of the plan

The purpose of the draft Milford Centre Plan is to improve on Milford's many excellent qualities as the town centre enters the next 30 years. At the heart of the plan is a focus on public realm projects (our streets and open spaces) that respects the centre's strong local identity and allows for the growth of a sustainable community.

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board is aware of the Milford community's concern about growth and its effect on the area. As such, it has used the community's own visioning work – the Milford Village Forum's Community Led Visioning Report – as the starting point for the proposals in this draft plan. Similarly, the plan is an opportunity for a local response to the high level directives signalled by the Auckland Plan.

The draft centre plan aims to meet the aspirations of all stakeholders – community, local business and the council. It proposes a local vision and five desired outcomes which respond to the Auckland Plan vision and to the important issues identified so far.

Partnerships

Creating a successful town centre will require collaboration from a wide variety of groups that include the Milford community, the council, and private landowners. The council will work together with these groups to make the most of available resources in delivering the aspirations of the draft centre plan.

Mana whenua are recognised as treaty partners and there are several mana whenua groups with an interest in the area. Ongoing consultation will help grow the relationship with mana whenua and explore their involvement in the many opportunities identified by the draft centre plan.

Study area

The study area (refer Figure 1) includes the Milford town centre and surrounding environment, including Milford Reserve and beach to the north, Lake Pupuke to the south and Wairau Estuary and marina to the west. At the centre of the study area is Milford's 'main street' - Kitchener Road, and the Milford shopping mall.

Milford's connection to the coast, estuary, and lake underscore the importance of the wider environment in relation to the town centre. This environment includes one of Auckland's remaining estuarine ecosystems and the only freshwater urban crater lake.



Figure 1: Draft Milford Centre Plan Study Area

2 The strategic context

The draft Milford Centre Plan has been prepared within the wider context of the following plans.

Auckland Plan Vision

The Auckland Plan is Auckland's strategy to achieve its vision of becoming the world's most liveable city. This means that Auckland will be a place with high living standards; economic prosperity; opportunities to enjoy nature and culture; a quality urban, rural and natural environment; and a successful transport system.

Auckland is expected to become home to an additional one million people by 2040. Based on what Aucklanders have said, the Auckland Plan aims to accommodate most residential, retail and employment growth within a high quality compact Auckland characterised by a hierarchy of centres. This will ensure that growth can be managed without compromising the qualities we most value about Auckland.

What does the Auckland Plan mean for Milford town centre?

Under the Auckland Plan, Milford is identified as a town centre and is expected to experience "moderate change" in the growth of households and businesses. Milford should become a local community hub that provides for a wide range of commercial services and community activities. It is also expected to provide for a range of living options and local employment accessible by frequent public transport. The Milford Centre Plan sets out actions to help manage this growth.

Draft Devonport-Takapuna Area Plan

The Devonport-Takapuna Area Plan presents a 30 year vision for the local board area, implementing at a local level the strategic directions of the Auckland Plan. The vision is for Devonport-Takapuna to continue to be an area that is attractive to live, work and play, as well as a visitor destination with a distinct character, experiences and point of difference.

Key priorities for the wider Devonport-Takapuna area include:

- Improve the public transport network.
- Continue to celebrate our natural treasures (such as Lake Pupuke, Wairau Estuary and Milford Beach).
- Recognise mana whenua and celebrate local Māori identity.
- Revitalise town centres and protection of special character.
- Devonport-Takapuna is a lifestyle and visitor destination.

The Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan

Prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991, the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (PAUP) will replace the Regional Policy Statement and 13 existing district and regional plans. The plan contains the proposed rules that will enable Milford to develop as a town centre, implementing the building form, activity, transport and environmental directions proposed in the Auckland Plan. Areas where PAUP rules already apply include historic heritage protection, protection of significant

ecological areas, where developments involve discharges to air, land, water or the coast and protection of sites of significance to mana whenua.

Integrated Transport Programme (ITP)

Auckland's ITP sets out the 30-year investment programme to meet the transport priorities outlined in the Auckland Plan across modes covering the responsibilities of all transport agencies. Developed by Auckland Transport (AT) and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) in collaboration with Auckland Council, the ITP provides a consolidated transport investment programme across the transport system over the next 30 years. Auckland Transport's role as the Road Controlling Authority means that some of the actions proposed in the draft Milford Centre Plan will require their funding and support.

Auckland Council's Long-term Plan

The Long-term Plan (LTP) is council's main budgetary tool for all Auckland Council and Council Controlled Organisations (CCOs). It sets out the projects and services identified for funding across Auckland over a ten-year period. Once completed, the Milford Centre Plan may include some actions for the local board to advocate for LTP funding from the Governing body or to reprioritise its own local board funding.

The 2015-2025 LTP is currently being prepared and any projects are subject to reprioritisation measures. As such, the timings listed for actions in this plan are indicative only.

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board Plan 2014

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board Plan 2014 sets out the priorities and objectives of the local board over the next three years. It provides guidance for local board decision making on local activities during that period. The centre plan can act as a longer term inspiration for guiding these priorities in relation to Milford. The local board plan is an opportunity to influence the council's annual budget over the next three financial years and also informs the council's long-term plan. The local board also has a discretionary budget which it can use to action smaller local projects and is keen to explore projects which include community involvement.

3 The local context

Existing context

Milford is a vibrant town centre offering a range of amenities and services for the local community and visitors to the area. The area benefits and derives its unique character from its proximity to the Milford Beach and coast, the Wairau Estuary, Milford Marina and Lake Pupuke.

The council needs to plan Milford's future in preparation for gradual growth and over time, respond to the environmental effects of climate change.

Milford town centre

Milford is a growing town centre providing a range of shops and commercial offices, surrounded by suburban residential living. The 'main street' (Kitchener Road) is currently typified by single and two-storey buildings with shop fronts facing onto the street and car parking to the rear. To the north of the main street and fronting Milford Road is the Milford shopping mall. A central car park and plaza area form an important connection between the main street and the shopping mall. The wider Milford area surrounding the town centre is currently characterised by low-rise, low to medium density suburban residential living.

Milford Beach and reserve

Milford's proximity to the coast is one of its greatest assets. Milford Beach and reserve draws locals and visitors to the area by offering them opportunities for active and passive recreation, along with views and access to the Hauraki Gulf (a World Heritage Park). The link between the town centre and coastal edge should be strengthened.

Wairau Estuary and Milford Marina

The Wairau Estuary and Milford Marina are hidden amenities on the western edge of the Milford town centre. The estuary supports diverse habitats and is a natural connector between the coastal edge, the marina and the town centre. It is important to keep improving its ecological value.

The estuary has a large catchment with upstream areas extending beyond the study area and including open spaces such as Bryan Byrnes Reserve. Land management in the whole catchment has an impact on the water quality and sedimentation of the estuary. There are concerns with sedimentation and contaminants in the estuary, and future weather events may affect its dynamics. Any proposals within a coastal or estuarine environment need to take these factors into account

Lake Pupuke

Lake Pupuke is a stunning natural feature with significant geological and natural value. However, the lake is obscured from the town centre, so that most people who arrive for the first time are unaware of its existence. The lake's uniqueness as a fresh water body in an explosion crater is an important element in Auckland's geological heritage that should be celebrated, while providing a range of recreational opportunities.

Opportunities for Milford's future

The 20th century has seen the transformation of Milford from a seaside holiday destination into a successful town centre. Looking forward to the next half-century the Auckland Plan has signalled

that Milford will play a role as a growing town centre. This will mean that, over time, redevelopment within the town centre and adjacent residential areas is likely to happen. As a relatively affluent and market-attractive area, Milford is in a strong position to respond to the challenges it will face. Some of the key opportunities include:

- Capitalising on the visioning work already done by the local community (Milford Village Forum's Community-led Visioning Report).
- Improving pedestrian, cycling, and public transport connections – making the most of the area's relatively flat topography - making the centre's accessibility and walkability its 'point of difference'.
- Improving Kitchener Road as a place for people while managing its role as a traffic thoroughfare.
- Celebrating Milford's stunning natural features and open space assets such as Milford Beach, the Wairau Estuary and Lake Pupuke by strengthening their connection to the town centre.
- Increasing legibility, way finding and interpretation of Milford's landscape features, natural and cultural heritage and ecological values.
- Providing for public realm and built form responses that cater to the needs of a growing population as envisaged by the Auckland Plan and to Milford's unique identity, as expressed in the proposed vision.
- Working with landowners and developers to enhance public areas through well designed development that makes reference to and celebrates Milford's topography and landscape features.
- Working with the community, landowners and developers to enhance environmental wellbeing, particularly in relation to the Wairau Estuary.
- Create opportunities for the expression of Māori cultural values in a local context.
- Building on the work of local initiatives to foster the growth of local businesses and employment.



4 Draft Milford Centre Plan – vision, outcomes and actions

A defining vision

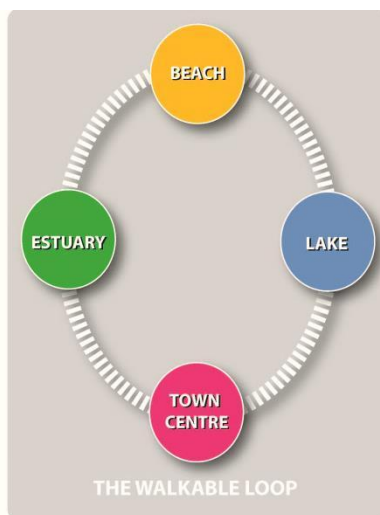
The vision for Auckland becoming the world's most liveable city can be achieved locally by making Milford more vibrant and accessible for everyone. In particular, Milford has the potential to build on its natural and cultural heritage as a visitor and local destination as well as its unique location between Lake Pupuke, Milford Beach and the Wairau Estuary.

This draft plan proposes a vision for a high quality and accessible centre expressing a strong local identity, with its own story and a friendly, relaxed community heart.

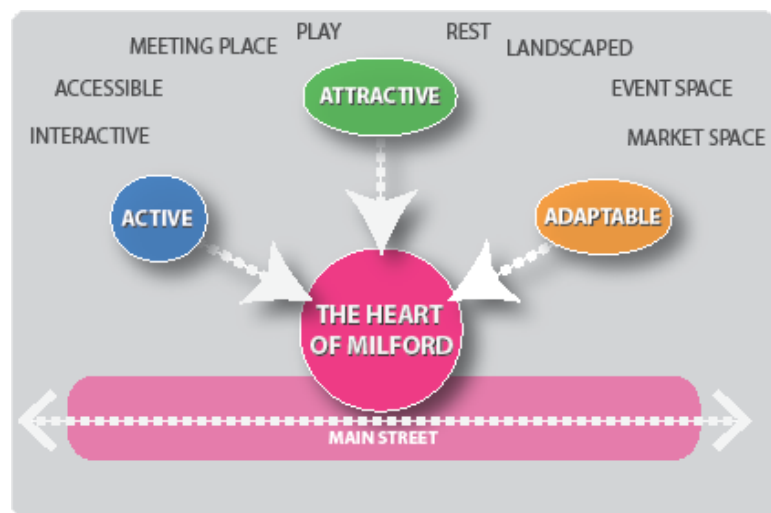
The vision is supported by five outcomes (refer Figure 2), they are:

- Outcome 1:** A strong connection between Milford town centre, Milford Beach and Lake Pupuke
- Outcome 2:** Kitchener Road as a pedestrian friendly 'main street'
- Outcome 3:** Quality destinations at the coastal edge and Lake Pupuke that attract locals and visitors to Milford
- Outcome 4:** A healthy and attractive Wairau Estuary that is a destination in its own right and has strong connections with the town centre and other Milford destinations
- Outcome 5:** An attractive, vibrant community focal point at the heart of Milford's town centre

The diagrams below visualise the important concepts behind the outcomes: walkable loops linking up the key features of Milford (detailed on the map in Figure 3) and the way community life can be focussed on the Plaza.



Walkable loop concept: achieved through the combination of key outcomes



Heart of Milford concept: promoting Milford Plaza area as the focal point of the growing community

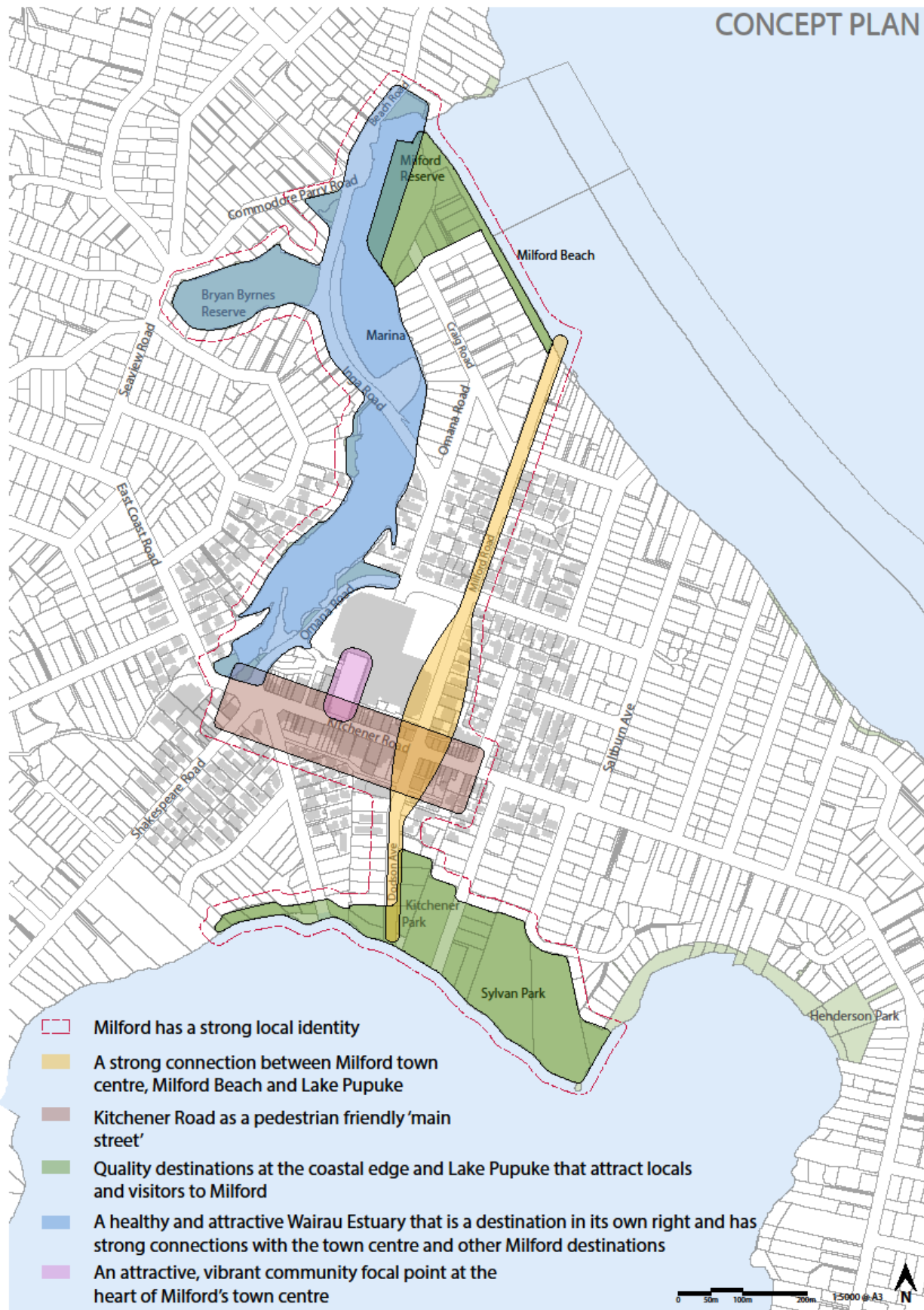


Figure 2: Draft Milford Centre Plan – Key Outcomes Plan



Figure 3: Draft Milford Centre Plan – Proposed Milford Walkway Loop and connections with existing networks, resulting from the combined Key Outcomes

The vision sets the overarching principles for all five outcomes. The vision will guide future public realm initiatives, and signal to the private sector, the council's aims for Milford. The five outcomes are explored later on in this plan. Each outcome is supported by a number of objectives and more detailed possible actions. Some of these actions will be easy to implement and others take a more considered and staged approach. Some require a new way of thinking about Milford as a town centre and the role it plays within the surrounding urban context.

The timing and delivery of the plan's outcomes, objectives and actions over the next 30 years will need to be worked out and will require a collaborative approach between the Milford community, private landowners, Auckland Council and CCOs.

A number of the projects and initiatives will be short-term improvements that could be implemented over the next five years subject to funding availability. Longer term projects will rely on funding from the council's LTP and partnering with other agencies and communities for funding and delivery. Opportunities also exist to undertake some of the suggested improvements as part of routine maintenance and renewals.

Having regard to the above, the actions identified as part of this plan have been grouped into the following time frames for implementation as follows:

- Short term (0-5 years)
- Medium to long term (6-30 years).



Vision: Milford has a strong local identity

Milford can express the values of the present community and become better at attracting visitors by increasingly demonstrating a strong sense of its unique identity and experience.

The local board is aware of the Milford community's desire for a town centre that retains a feeling of 'human scale' and not dominated by the effects of taller buildings. The draft centre plan will respond to the community's aspirations by focusing on public space improvements, including designs that reflect Milford's unique character.

At the same time, the intention is to influence thinking in the private sector, so that changes and new developments support the same outcomes and objectives. This process can be assisted by clear and strong design principles which are suggested below:

Principles:

The following principles will guide the achievement of the key outcomes and related actions (as explored in the following outcomes section).

Natural and cultural heritage

Milford's identity can be enhanced by integrating its natural, geological, cultural, and heritage stories into the design of local projects such as signage and landscaping. Natural and historic heritage sites can form part of an overall Milford story, contributing to cultural and social wellbeing. Figure 4 illustrates the location of known sites of heritage significance, sites and places of value to mana whenua¹, as well as attractions and destinations such as parks.

Conservation and rehabilitation of local ecology is also needed. With the help of mana whenua and the local community it would be possible to develop story-telling, education, and other projects that express this aspect of local identity.

Mana whenua as Kaitiaki or guardians

The council and the local board is committed to bringing forward Māori cultural heritage through appropriate projects and designs which reflect the Treaty of Waitangi partnership with mana whenua.

Character

Milford's town centre has the potential to express its unique character or 'sense of place' by making the most of its relationship with the coast and lake edge.

New developments that connect well (both physically and otherwise) with the coast, Wairau Estuary and Lake Pupuke will help develop the character and economic vitality of the centre. The character elements of these natural features could inform the location, bulk and form of development. Similarly, future growth and activity will make sure the town centre remains the heart of the local community by keeping it economically viable.

¹ Sites of Value to mana whenua include, for example, burial sites and middens (details and explanation of the effect of these are as detailed in the Proposed Unitary Plan Part 3 and its appendices)

The key outcomes and actions propose the use of character defining elements (such as built form, way finding elements and the materials used) throughout the Milford area. This will help develop a consistent and recognisable 'sense of place' that everyone can appreciate and enjoy.

Public engagement on the plan will explore the degree of support for design guidelines. This can advise developers on ways to align their projects with the community's desire for a 'human scale' centre that respects its surrounding environment.

Accessibility

Milford is relatively flat and popular for walking. However, the current environment presents some challenges to getting around without a car. Improved accessibility for a wide variety of people, including families, those with disabilities, young and older people, has the potential to result in a range benefits. These range from increased exercise and decreased reliance on motor vehicles, to greater social interaction and environmental awareness. Improving connections, accessibility and legibility (i.e. promoting safe, efficient access, within a well-signposted environment) will enhance Milford as a destination that can be enjoyed by all.

Figure 4 illustrates 'desire lines' (i.e. routes between popular local destinations) within Milford, with particular emphasis on those where improving accessibility is desirable in the future. The draft centre plan identifies a possible network of routes to strengthen Milford town centre's connection with the coast, estuary, and Lake Pupuke, including the Te Araroa Walkway.

Social infrastructure

While Milford benefits from many destinations and areas of interest (refer Figure 4), a detailed needs assessment should be carried out to ensure future provision of social infrastructure will support the anticipated growth over the next 30 years.

A needs assessment can help understand what social infrastructure is needed to support Milford over the next 30 years. It will look at the gaps, duplications and opportunities to improve facilities. Smaller (but just as important) facilities like playgrounds can be upgraded to fit the future needs of the community.

Current facilities within Milford are run by a variety of private organisations, some in arrangement with the council. In the short term we can improve awareness of existing facilities and public transport connections to facilities in other centres like Takapuna and Sunnynook. In the medium to long term, the draft centre plan looks to promote local living and walkability by encouraging any new community facilities to be located within or nearby the town centre.



Figure 4: Key desire lines, destinations and attractors

Outcome One: A strong connection between Milford town centre, Milford Beach and Lake Pupuke

Milford town centre has potential to make more of its proximity to unique heritage and character features. Opportunities include improving the ecological and biodiversity values of the coast, the estuary and the lake. Similarly, Milford has the potential to become a significant focal point and part of the Lake Pupuke and Te Araroa walkway routes. The Milford Road / Dodson Avenue corridor is the primary connection between the coast and the lake. Streetscape upgrades along this stretch of road can help to reinforce Milford's unique location between the coast and lake by enticing people to explore the area's natural assets.

Outcome Objectives

- Enhance universal access, walking and cycling amenity and legibility along the length of the Milford Road / Dodson Avenue corridor, supported by way finding elements and landscape enhancements that reflect the character of the area and encourage people to explore further.
- Establish points of interest for visitors at the lake and coastal edges of the corridor, providing opportunities for all people to better enjoy the views and experience the natural and cultural heritage and character of the area.
- Encourage, and require where appropriate, the design of commercial or mixed use developments to relate to the street in a positive way, assisting to provide interest, activity and passive surveillance to the route (see example below right).



Example image: Ocean View Road coastal pocket park



Example image: Active ground floor use at the corner of Milford and Ihumata Roads would assist to draw people down Milford Road



Figure 5: Possible actions to assist in strengthening the connection between Milford town centre, the coast and Lake Pupuke (numbers refer to table of actions on the following page).

Possible Actions² for Outcome One (refer figure 5 for numbered references)

Possible short term actions (0-5 years)	
<u>Accessibility & legibility</u>	
1.	Enhance access to Lake Pupuke through landscape management, such as removing / thinning vegetation between Dodson Ave, the tennis courts and the lake edge, and providing new accent planting; and providing access suitable for wheelchairs and prams. Provide a significant way finding element at the end of Dodson Ave to assist in orientation.
2.	Provide consistent way finding elements along the length of the Milford Road-Dodson Avenue corridor.
3.	Investigate with adjacent landowners, the reinstatement of footpath paving over the existing service vehicle crossing adjacent to the supermarket.
4.	Investigate opportunities for improved pedestrian crossing points, such as through the use of kerb build outs, raised crossings and changes in road corridor materials at crossing points.
-	Investigate improvements to bus services as part of the new bus network (public consultation targeted for 2015)
-	Promote regular walking events along the Milford- Dodson Avenue corridor to raise awareness of the lake to beach link
<u>Private/public interfaces</u>	
5.	In the short term, work with the landowner of the shopping mall to create a living wall (or similar intervention to create visitor and community interest) along the length of the blank Milford Road supermarket façade
Possible medium to long term actions (6-30 years)	
<u>Accessibility & legibility</u>	
6.	Investigate pedestrian and vehicle improvements to the Kitchener Road / Milford Road intersection, including providing for more public space and amenity
7.	Investigate opportunities for wide boulevard-style footpaths along the western side of Milford Road from Ihumata Road to Milford Beach, integrated with landscaping and tree planting, way finding elements and street furniture.
8.	Reflect and strengthen Milford's character, and enhance local biodiversity, through appropriate landscaping, tree planting and materials. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Towards the north, vegetation, materials of paving, drainage and street furniture along the corridor should reflect the coastal character of the environment.

² Implementation of actions is subject to funding availability and priorities

Possible medium to long term actions (6-30 years)	
	<p>b) Towards the south, vegetation and materials of paving and street furniture along the corridor should reflect the lake character of the environment.</p> <p>c) Around the Milford town centre, landscaping, vegetation, materials of paving, drainage and street furniture along the corridor should reflect the urban nature of the town centre environment, while also referencing both the natural and cultural character of the environment.</p>
-	Investigate possible cycling improvements between Kitchener Road and Milford Reserve.
<u>Private/public interfaces</u>	
9.	Work with the landowner to enhance the existing shopping mall open space facing Milford Road, in particular, opening up visibility and accessibility to Milford Road (while retaining trees and shelter from the elements).
10.	<p>Encourage the activation of ground floor uses at the corner of Milford and Ihumata Roads (facing Milford Road) when the site is developed and encourage the landowner to work with Auckland Council to enhance the adjacent streetscape.</p> <p>In the long term, seek the provision of active commercial uses addressing Milford Road.</p>
<u>Destinations</u>	
11.	Continue current programme to establish a beach pocket park at the end of Milford Road, designed to maximise access to the beach for a wide range of users, and provide opportunities for sitting and watching.

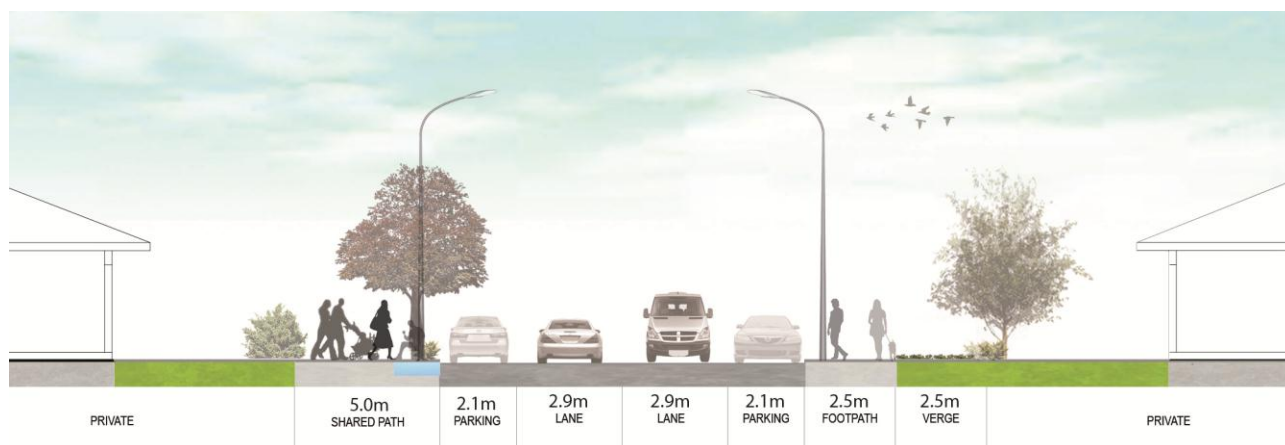


Figure 6: Indicative Milford Road cross section, illustrating boulevard style shared path to west (left) (Note dimensions do not indicate a final design).



Example image: Way finding elements can include local stories and/or art work, such as those in Onehunga (left), or the existing sculptures located within Milford Plaza (right)

Outcome Two: Kitchener Road as a pedestrian friendly 'main street'

Milford is a town centre with anticipated residential and business growth and has significant potential to attract visitors from beyond the Milford area. Improving Kitchener Road to become a more pedestrian friendly 'main street' will build on Milford's existing qualities which make it such an attractive destination. However, this needs to be balanced with the recognition that Kitchener Road is a main thoroughfare for both public transport and vehicles. This can be achieved through:

- providing for increased numbers of pedestrians and universal accessibility;
- improving the pedestrian realm to provide for on-street dining and other activities;
- and utilising spaces such as existing service lanes and seating areas,

Outcome objectives

- Enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility throughout the main street while managing its traffic functions.
- Enhance the character and legibility of the main street through progressive public realm upgrades, reflective of the surrounding coastal and lake environments.
- Provide opportunities for outdoor dining and other activities.

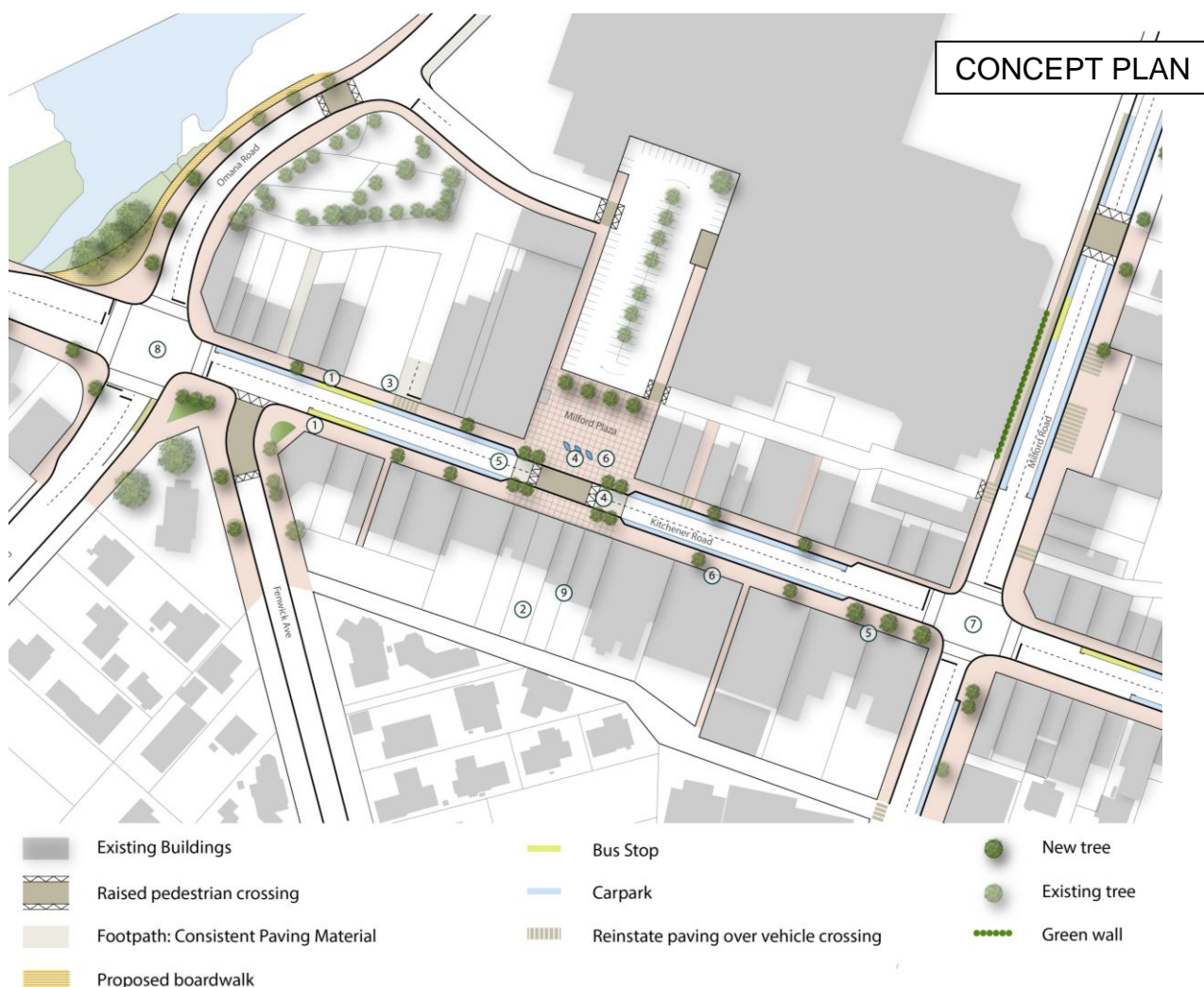


Figure 7: Possible actions to assist in enhancing Kitchener Road as a pedestrian friendly 'main street' (numbers refer to table of actions on the following page).

Possible Actions³ for Outcome Two (refer figure 7 for numbered references)

	Possible short term actions (0-5 years)
1.	Improve bus-stops with dedicated seating areas and a distinct destination/timetable board as bus service levels increase as per the New Network
2.	Encourage future development of the buildings to the rear of Kitchener Road, including pedestrian walkways, rear lanes and rear dining areas (refer figure 9, based on possible private development over time).
-	Develop a consistent palette of landscape elements and treatment (planting, street furniture, lighting, rubbish bins and cycle racks) as part of a comprehensive plan for the wider Milford pedestrian network.
-	See also Outcome 5 for accessibility improvements within the car park itself
-	Working with local businesses, develop an accessibility guideline for commercial premises, to encourage landowners to implement universal access.

	Possible medium to long term actions (6-30 years)
-	Investigate options for improving cycle safety through the town centre, along with locations for safe, accessible cycle “corrals” (on-street bicycle parking facilities).
3.	Investigate opportunities for a continuous footpath surface along the main street, such as providing raised crossings at side-streets to allow for pedestrian priority.
4.	Investigate with adjacent landowners the concept of removing vehicle access from Kitchener Road to the central car park to extend the Milford Plaza.
5.	In conjunction with 4 above, investigate opportunities to improve and widen footpaths along Kitchener Road (refer figure 8) by narrowing the vehicle carriage way.
6.	Investigate landscape improvement opportunities such as feature trees and rain gardens within the town centre, on Kitchener Road and within the Milford Plaza area.
7.	Investigate pedestrian and vehicle improvements to the Kitchener Road-Milford Road intersection.
8.	Investigate potential improvements to the Kitchener-East Coast Road intersection.
9.	Work with landowners to create new through site links and enhanced laneways (such as when adjoining development occurs) by way of lighting, way finding signage, art work (where appropriate), and consistent paving materials with the main street.

³ Implementation of actions is subject to funding availability and priorities

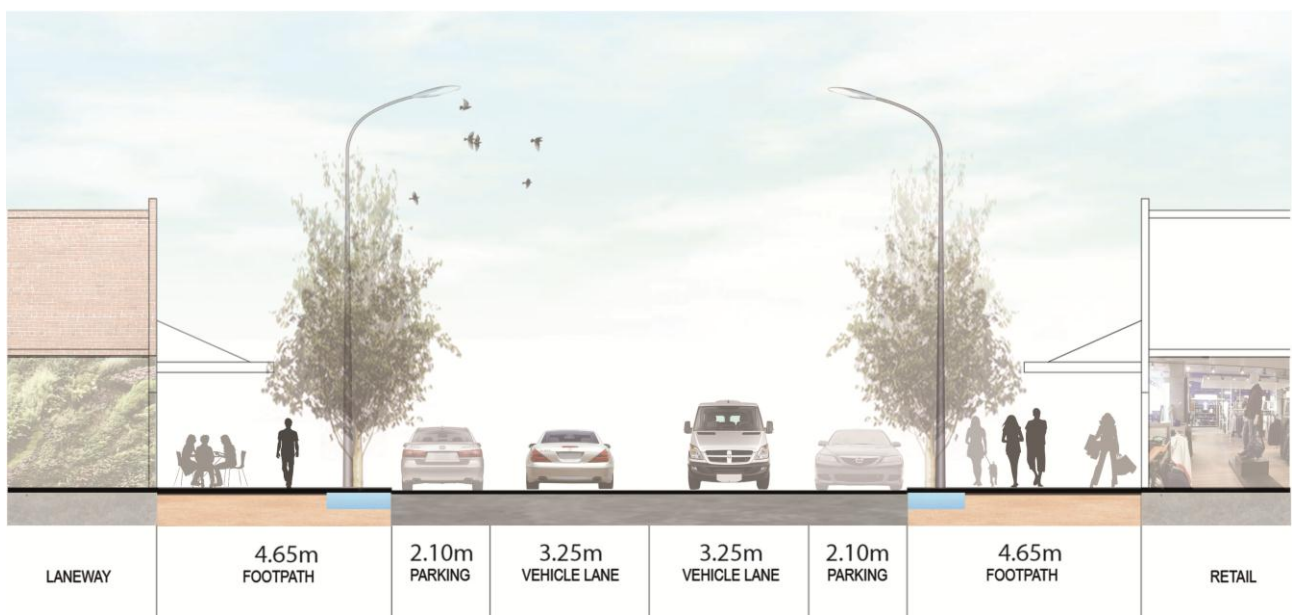
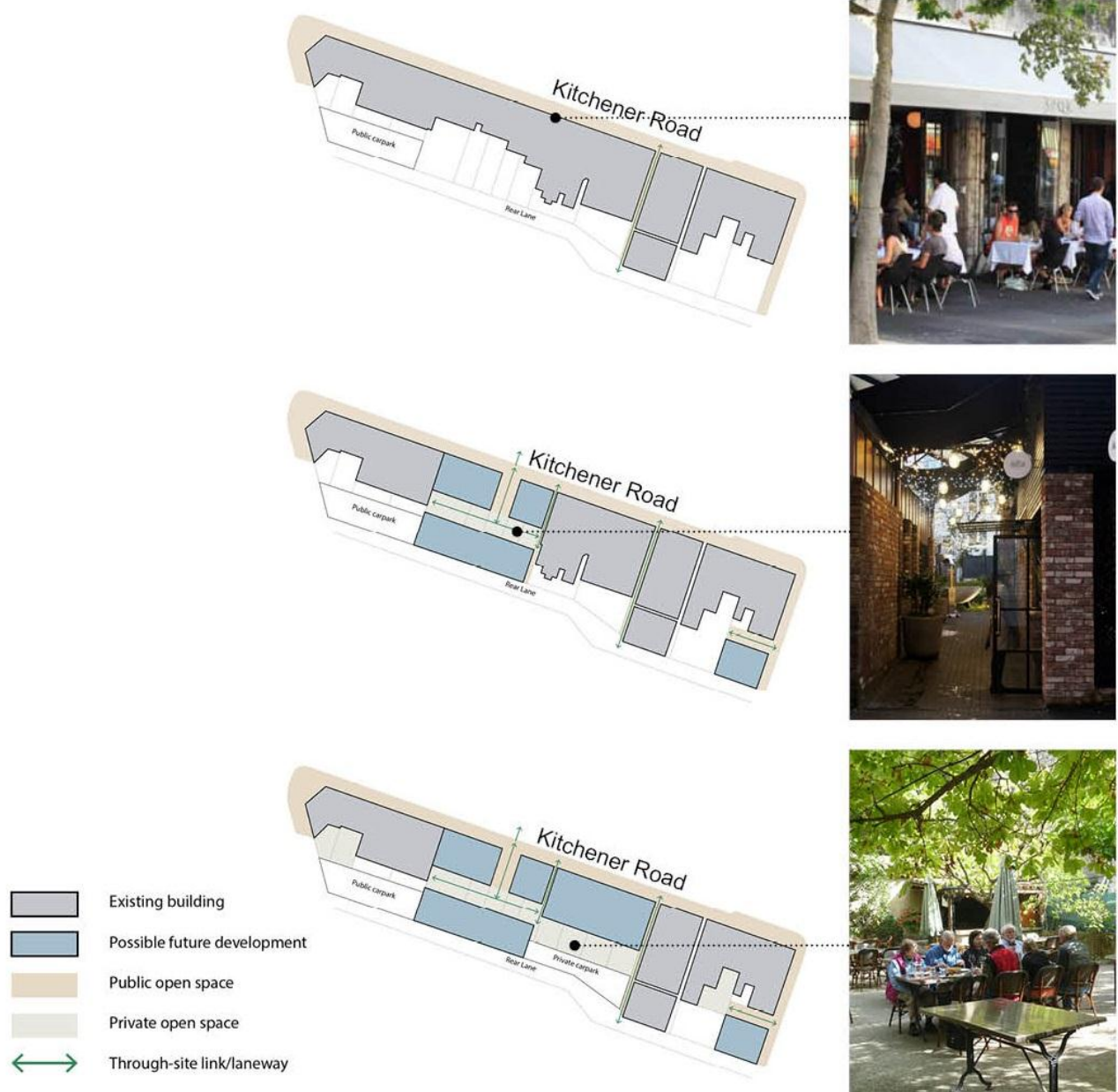


Figure 8: Indicative Kitchener Road cross section (Note dimensions do not indicate a final design).



Outcome Three: Quality destinations at the coastal edge and Lake Pupuke that attract locals and visitors to Milford

Milford town centre is surrounded by natural assets, in particular, the coast and beach to the north and Lake Pupuke to the south. Both of these areas have potential to be further utilised and promoted as unique destinations within Milford. Although Milford Reserve is currently popular, it can still be improved to make it a better destination for locals and visitors. Lake Pupuke is a hidden gem of Milford but access to it is restricted and it currently has little relationship with the town centre. This represents a great opportunity to improve connections to and around the lake, open up views and introduce new public amenities to help create an enhanced destination.

Outcome objectives

- Strengthen Milford Reserve and Milford Beach as quality visitor destinations through on-going improvements to amenities and access.
- Improve the visual and physical connections with Lake Pupuke, alongside improvements to accessibility, education and provision of local community amenities.



Historic Photo: Pirate Shippe Pool adjacent to Milford Beach (source: www.milford.org.nz)



Example image: Proposed Milford Estuary pedestrian and cycle bridge



Example image: Harbour View Sculpture Trail - Auckland - Sculptural pieces create viewports that make the space/piece connect to the greater city context. <http://www.thebigidea.co.nz>



Example image: Pakuranga-Auckland – A walk/cycle way with simple play features embedded in the landscape. <http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>



Figure 10: Possible actions to assist in providing for local and regional destinations along the coastal edge and Lake Pupuke (numbers refer to table of actions on the following page).

Possible Actions⁴ for Outcome Three (refer figure 10 for numbered references)

Possible short term actions (0-5 years)	
<u>Lake Pupuke</u>	
1.	(See also Outcome 1 actions to improve access to lake edge)
2.	Upgrade the overgrown footpath between Dodson and Pierce Roads and appropriately manage the vegetation along these footpaths to allow for better views across the lake.
3.	Undertake a study in relation to improve pedestrian connections around Lake Pupuke.
<u>Milford Reserve and Milford Beach</u>	
4.	Construct the proposed new Milford Estuary pedestrian and cycle bridge crossing towards the northern end of the estuary (subject to funding, as per Local Board Plan).
5.	Enhance pedestrian and cycling facilities throughout Milford Reserve (including connections with the proposed pedestrian bridge) and around the existing car park.
6.	At the time of renewal play equipment and other interventions should be themed to reflect the natural and cultural heritage of the 'Pirate Shippe' and salt water baths. Including equipment for older and young children and those with disabilities.
Possible medium to long term actions (6-30 years)	
<u>Lake Pupuke</u>	
7.	Enhance the existing boardwalks and trails around the edge of Lake Pupuke, including provision of a lookout platform, seating and information signage (including way finding and interpretation to tell the story of the explosion crater) at the lake edge.
8.	Prepare a development plan for Sylvan Park, with emphasis on provision of further water sports based facilities, and investigate demand for a playground.
<u>Milford Reserve and Milford Beach</u>	
9.	Review the configuration of existing car park to enhance the grassed open space directly adjacent to the beach, while maintaining good sea views from cars that are parked there. These views are valuable to the less mobile and in poor weather.
10.	Establish a beach pocket park, designed to maximise access to the beach for a wide range of users, and provide opportunities for sitting and watching.
-	In liaison with the community, prepare a comprehensive plan for Milford Reserve addressing safety, accessibility / connectivity, and active and passive recreation.

⁴ Implementation of actions is subject to funding availability and priorities

Outcome Four: A healthy and attractive Wairau Estuary that is a destination in its own right and has strong connections with the town centre and other Milford destinations

Wairau Estuary meanders from Milford town centre to Milford Beach and represents an important natural feature that could be fully embraced. Co-operation between local boards can help address the problems from upstream sources in the wider Wairau Valley catchment. It can also be improved aesthetically and provide a unique walking experience connecting the town centre and the coast. This includes becoming part of the Te Araroa walkway experience. Enhancing character and connectivity through the Milford area will improve accessibility, present tourism opportunities, and highlight Milford's natural values.

Outcome objectives

- Enhance the ecology, storm water quality and biodiversity of Wairau Estuary, assisting to improve local character, amenity and general wellbeing.
- Promote Milford Estuary as a local and visitor destination and walking route, and promote stronger connections with the town centre, Milford Marina and Milford Beach.





Figure 11: Possible actions to assist in enhancing the ecology and character of Wairau Estuary (numbers refer to table of actions on the following page).

Possible Actions⁵ for Outcome Four (refer figure 11 for numbered references)

	Possible short term actions (0-5 years)
1.	Develop a joint community / local businesses / Auckland Council ecological restoration programme for the Wairau Estuary, along with associated landscaping improvements and on-going education.
2.	Carry out maintenance work to existing vegetation along Omana Road, to lift the tree canopies and improve visual connectivity with the estuary.
3.	Investigate opportunities for safer pedestrian crossing points on Inga Road and Omana Road, such as through the use of kerb build outs and changes in road corridor materials to slow drivers down.
4.	Investigate opportunities for improvements to connect the walkway from Seaview Road to Commodore Parry and a pedestrian crossing enabling safe access to the proposed pedestrian bridge.

	Possible medium to long term actions (6-30 years)
5.	Work with landowners and Council to establish where practicable low impact design responses to stormwater management as development takes place, reducing the impacts on the Wairau Estuary.
6.	Investigate pedestrian improvements along Inga Road adjacent to Milford Marina and connecting with the proposed pedestrian bridge.
7.	Investigate the feasibility of a boardwalk from Omana Road to Inga Road, including a pedestrian access point, viewing platform and associated information at the southern edge of the Wairau Estuary.
8.	Investigate the provision of improved footpaths leading from Kitchener Road and the Milford Plaza down to Omana Road and the proposed boardwalk.
9.	Investigate pedestrian improvements to the Omana / Inga / Ihumata intersection.
10.	Investigate new footpaths along the western side of Omana Road, north of Inga Road.
11.	In liaison with the community, prepare a comprehensive plan for Bryan Byrnes Reserve addressing safety, ecological restoration, and active and passive recreation opportunities, including youth activities.

⁵ Implementation of actions is subject to funding availability and priorities



Example image: Blue Hills Wetland (NSW, Australia) - Timber boardwalk with platforms, lookouts and sculptural elements relating to cultural heritage of the site. Simple yet effective materials and form. <http://www.sturtnoble.com.au/>



Example image: Blue Hills Wetland (NSW, Australia) - The recreational, educational and cultural overlay prepared for this constructed wetland was designed to enhance the riparian and wetland plantings. <http://www.sturtnoble.com.au/>

Outcome Five: An attractive, vibrant community focal point at the heart of Milford's town centre

Milford currently lacks a central, convenient focal point where people can meet and gather. Such a space will be more important as Milford's local and visitor population continues to grow. The prime location of the existing plaza space and the council owned car park on Kitchener Road means that space has the potential to become an attractive civic heart. This could occur as opportunities arise to better manage demand for off-street car parking.

Outcome objectives

- Provide a safe, attractive Milford Plaza which can cater for a variety uses and reflects the unique character of the area.
- Work with adjoining landowners and key stakeholders to investigate the provision of improved community facilities adjacent to the plaza area, along with other appropriate uses that add to the vibrancy of the central public space.



Figure 12: Possible actions to assist in providing an attractive, vibrant community focal point at the heart of Milford's town centre off Kitchener Road (numbers refer to table of actions on the following page).

Possible Actions⁶ for Outcome Five (refer figure 12 for numbered references)

Possible short term actions (0-5 years)	
1.	Work with community stakeholders and the Milford Business Association to explore potential for a variety of uses (such as markets and events) within the Milford Plaza and over the car parking area, by designing the areas to be usable as a single space.
2.	In dialogue with surrounding landowners and stakeholders, encourage adjoining landowners to open out to, and activate the plaza and car park site edges.
-	Investigate potential shading of Milford Plaza in relation to future development, and mechanisms for minimising any potential adverse effects.
-	For the town centre and wider Milford area, undertake a detailed social infrastructure needs assessment to ensure that future provision will support growth and change over the next 30 years.
-	Make low cost improvements to the car parking area to improve pedestrian safety, provide additional disabled car parks and a wheelchair kerb crossing near the Senior Citizens' hall
-	Increase awareness of community facilities and events through provision of signage and noticeboards within and around Milford town centre.

Possible medium to long term actions (6-30 years)	
3.	In consultation with key stakeholders, investigate the configuration of the vehicle access from Kitchener Road into the central car park to enhance and activate the Milford Plaza area, such as extending the plaza to the east (refer indicative cross section below, figure 13). Provide high quality street furniture within the plaza and throughout the town centre reflecting Milford's unique identity and encourage active shop fronts to face onto the public space as development occurs.
4.	Investigate the configuration of pedestrian walkways around the car park such as narrowing vehicle lanes; and establish pedestrian priority over vehicle crossing points.
-	Investigate opportunities, including partnering, for a centrally located multipurpose community venue that would cater for community events and other activities.

⁶ Implementation of actions is subject to funding availability and priorities



Figure 13: Indicative Milford Plaza cross section, showing active frontages to each side (Note dimensions do not indicate a final design).



5 Implementation

The draft Milford Centre Plan identifies possible actions to assist with achieving the vision and five outcomes of the plan. The actions are intended to be progressed through a range of stakeholders and processes as outlined below. These actions can move from being aspirational to being funded and delivered, where funding has not already been allocated. This will involve partnership with key stakeholders, including the local board, community and key landowners within the centre.

Role of the local board

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board will play a key role in realising the future vision for Milford town centre, as depicted in this plan. This role may take many forms from direct investment in public works to advocating for positive changes. Supported by the council, the local board will also liaise with the community and key landowners to advocate for public and private initiatives that assist to achieve the outcomes and actions identified in the draft Milford Centre Plan.

Funding implications

The Long-Term Plan (LTP) is the council's main budgetary tool, which combines all the council and Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) funding across Auckland over a ten year period. Some of the actions are already budgeted for in the LTP. Actions that need new funding will require advocacy to become new LTP initiatives. It is important to note that the availability of funding from the council for proposed projects is not guaranteed. Funding and prioritisation will be determined as part of the LTP and Annual Plan process. This centre plan can be used as a tool to assist in decision making on funding priorities. The LTP is under review for the 2015-2025 periods and is subject to potential reprioritisation. As such, the funding opportunities for a number of the actions identified in this plan will need to be carefully considered.

Actions and timeframes

Some actions within this plan are already underway and have completion dates, delivery partners and resourcing determined. New projects and initiatives are also identified, and shown as short, or medium to long term actions. The timeframes aim to prioritise actions that will help achieve the desired outcomes for Milford, while being mindful of likely resource requirements. Notably, some actions are tied to development of adjoining sites, where there is an expectation by the community or landowners to assist in realising the outcomes sought. The timeframes identified by this plan are indicative only and are subject to agreements on funding availability.

Monitoring and review

The implementation of the plan is designed to be flexible to recognise that some actions require further work: such as additional consultation, feasibility testing, detailed design, a works programme or funding. A review process is proposed to ensure that progress can be tracked and necessary amendments made over time. Keeping the centre plan 'live' will assist in achieving the outcomes desired by the stakeholders.

For your notes
