

Part 2: A future vision

2.1 Long-term vision for Newlands Centre

Newlands Centre is a vibrant, functional, attractive and pedestrian-friendly mixed-use urban village with good access to community services, public transport, and outdoor and recreational facilities. High quality development is important and the centre should be laid out to provide vibrant spaces that connect with surrounding areas. New buildings and public spaces enhance the area's sense of place. Newlands Centre is an inviting and safe place to be in.

Newlands Centre was developed as a commercial centre in the 1960s to provide retail and servicing facilities for a growing suburb. It was once a bustling shopping centre with a range of shops and services on hand for local residents. However, over the years there has been a marked decline in the quality and role of the Newlands Centre as a community shopping centre. Much of this decline can be attributed to the development of Johnsonville town centre and its shopping mall and a subsequent lack of investment in the Newlands Centre.

Newlands Centre has significant potential to strengthen its role as a district centre serving the day-to-day needs of the surrounding suburbs of Newlands, Woodridge, Johnsonville East and Paparangi. Many positive attributes support its long-term revitalisation and redevelopment including:

- close proximity to the central city through road and public transport
- a range of good community, education and recreational facilities in close proximity
- a large area of flat and accessible land within the centre
- interesting topography and visual connections to surrounding hills and ridgelines

- good car parking
- a growing population base
- opportunities for residential living within close walking distance of shops, services and public transport.

These positive attributes provide an opportunity to develop the area in a more integrated manner, with an emphasis on encouraging more mixed residential, retail and commercial development into the centre. The Council will work with landowners, investors, businesses and the community to develop Newlands Centre into a more vibrant urban village.

The future development of Newlands Centre will be guided by the development principles set out in section 2.2 and the concept plans in section 2.3. The concept plans set out the vision for Newlands Centre and identify potential short and long-term development opportunities yet are still flexible enough to cope with change. The plans identify sites with potential for redevelopment by private landowners and developers, as well as opportunities for Council investment, such as public space and car parking improvements, better pedestrian connections and Council housing improvements.

2.2 Key guiding principles

To help achieve the long-term vision, the following key principles (explained in more detail on the following pages) will guide the future revitalisation and redevelopment of Newlands Centre:

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| (a) | role and identity |
| (b) | land use and activities |
| (c) | vehicle movement and parking |
| (d) | public open spaces and the pedestrian cycle network |
| (e) | urban form |

(a) Role and identity

Create a stronger 'gateway entrance' to Newlands Centre, develop a stronger focal point for the shopping centre, and enhance the area's sense of place.

Explanation:

Improvements to the Newlands Road approach to the centre, and to its key entrance points in the main shopping area of McMillan Court will help create a better sense of arrival and a more attractive, welcoming entry to the centre.

The development of a stronger focal point/centre of activity for Newlands Centre will help boost its vitality and vibrancy. The Council, in conjunction with landowners and developers, will work to improve the quality and attractiveness of the centre, particularly the central McMillan Court shopping area. Improvements to buildings, public spaces and streetscape will help create a stronger sense of place and increase community pride in Newlands Centre. The Council will work with local businesses, private landowners and developers to ensure development proposals contribute to a more vibrant and attractive centre.

Short-term and ongoing strategies:

- Improve and enhance the centre's sense of place through ensuring good quality urban design in new developments, the creation of strong pedestrian connections and linkages, and incorporation of existing character features where appropriate into the design of new buildings and public spaces.
- Retain and enhance the important elements that contribute to Newlands Centre's distinct and identifiable character, including the small-scale strip retail buildings fronting the McMillan Court area, the character signage and the planted banks.

- The central McMillan Court car park area should be designed as a multi-use space for both vehicles and pedestrians, supported by good quality buildings around its edges to support a high amenity pedestrian experience.
- Enhance the centre's main entranceway off Bracken Road for pedestrian and vehicle traffic. This could include improving the main vehicle entrance/exit point, ensuring good quality landscaping, improving footpath and pedestrian provisions and retaining the Newlands shopping centre sign.
- Create a single main public space/pedestrian focal point located between the existing retail shops, the old bakery building and the McMillan Court car park area. Integrate with the proposed improvement of the north-south pedestrian route and the car park upgrade.
- Retain and enhance long views through Newlands Centre to surrounding hills and ridgelines.

Long-term strategies:

- Improve the visibility of the following key sites by requiring high quality design to be part of any future private redevelopment proposal(s). Design of buildings and spaces should be appropriate to their prominence and importance to the centre and their location on key approaches:
 - the corner of Newlands Road and Atkinson Street, and along the northbound Newlands Road frontage
 - the corner of Bracken Road and Newlands Road
 - the eastern corner of Stewart Drive and Batchelor Street.



Visualisation: A potential long-term vision for McMillan Court

(b) Land use and activities

Encourage and facilitate redevelopment in and around Newlands Centre for a range of uses and activities. Use the community centre to enhance the integration of activities and spaces across the Centre.

Explanation:

Encouraging a mix of uses and activities within Newlands Centre is of key importance to achieving a more vital and vibrant centre that will better serve the local community's needs. The future development of the centre should include a range of opportunities and choices for work, living and social interaction. This means an accessible and well-designed centre, with a mix of retail and commercial activities, residential activities, good car parking, good quality public spaces, and good access to public transport, community, education and recreation facilities.

A greater range of housing types will help cater for different housing needs, including residential living above the ground-floor activities in the centre, and more medium-density housing development in the residential areas surrounding the centre. Increased residential activities will also help increase the area's vitality.

The new community centre provides a much-needed boost to Newlands by adding increased community focus and amenity to the area. There is an opportunity to further enhance and strengthen the community centre's relationship with the rest of the centre, especially with the main retail/commercial area, through better quality pedestrian connections and public spaces.

Short-term and ongoing strategies:

- Work with private landowners and investors to encourage the development of a mix of retail, commercial and residential activities within Newlands Centre with active building frontages at ground level where appropriate.
- Recognise the new community centre as an important community asset and ensure its integration into the long-term revitalisation of Newlands Centre.
- Utilise Council-owned assets such as public spaces, Council housing, community facilities, recreational facilities, reserve land and legal road and reserve to help support the redevelopment and revitalisation of Newlands Centre.
- Support the revitalisation and redevelopment of Newlands Centre through District Plan objectives, policies, rules and urban design guidance.

- Investigate opportunities for redeveloping the Community House site on the corner of Batchelor and Atkinson Streets to help support the revitalisation and redevelopment of the centre.

Long-term strategies:

- Encourage more intensive residential living in and around Newlands Centre including:
 - above commercial/retail uses on Newlands Road and along the Batchelor Street frontage
 - on the western edge of Batchelor Street
 - on the corner of Batchelor Street and Stewart Drive, above commercial spaces for professional suites and home offices on the Stewart Drive frontage
 - in residential areas immediately surrounding the centre.
- Require active building frontages along the proposed east-west shared street, running between the community centre and the main retail shopping area, when any significant upgrade of existing buildings or redevelopment of sites are proposed.
- Longer term, encourage a mix of uses on the tavern site with any redevelopment proposal, including privately provided community uses and activities and medium-density residential living.
- As part of a more detailed master-planning process, explore the development of a community park, including a new community playground facility, within Newlands Park. Also investigate the potential for enhancing facilities for the youth community, an all weather track/ fitness course, a walkway link to Robert Street, improved drainage and parking facilities.
- Work with the Newlands Volunteer Fire Brigade to explore the relocation of the Newlands Fire Station to a larger more fit-for-purpose site, to enable clearer and easier access to Newlands Park, the skate park and the potential community park.

(c) Vehicle movement and parking

Ensure vehicle access and parking supports the centre's land uses, provides for accessibility, connectivity and safety, and supports high quality public spaces.

Explanation:

Providing safe and easily accessible vehicle access and short-stay parking is important to the successful revitalisation of Newlands Centre, and to ensuring its vibrancy and vitality. Good vehicle access to the centre and good parking for shoppers and short-stay visitors helps to support businesses and services (the key role and function of the centre). The provision of commuter 'park and ride' facilities within the centre's main shopping area (i.e. the McMillan Court area) is not consistent with the role of the centre. Vehicle access and parking should be developed in a way that enables the creation of high quality public spaces and considers pedestrian and cyclist needs and safety.

Short-term and ongoing strategies:

- Use new development proposals as an opportunity to improve the design and layout of vehicle access, servicing and car parking within Newlands Centre.
- Ensure there is adequate car parking to support the day-to-day functioning of Newlands Centre, its businesses and supporting services, for example:
 - maintain public parking spaces within the centre and on the surrounding streets
 - manage time-limited parking within the McMillan Court shopping area so that there are adequate parking spaces available to shoppers and short-stay visitors

- formalise and upgrade car parking areas in the space behind the existing McMillan Court shops and adjacent to the tavern car park for additional parking areas (this includes securing appropriate access).
- Support the use of public transport services by working with Greater Wellington Regional Council to:
 - improve the accessibility, quality and safety of bus stops
 - ensure good pedestrian and cycle links to public transport, and the provision of secure bicycle parking areas
 - identify the potential for improved public transport networks and timetables for bus services.
- Examine the need to introduce kerb extensions to increase pavement widths and reduce road widths at crossing points and on corners at key pedestrian access points to the centre.
- Investigate the partial re-opening of Atkinson Street for vehicle traffic (limited access – left in/left out) to help improve accessibility to and from the centre, particularly the community centre.

Long-term strategies:

- At the time when any redevelopment is proposed to the commercial properties fronting Newlands Road, investigate introducing a service lane to help improve access to these businesses and provide for parking.



Visualisation: A potential long-term vision for Newlands Road/Atkinson Court

(d) Public open spaces and the pedestrian and cycle network

Improve the amenity and integration of the centre with better quality and safer public open spaces, pedestrian and cycle connections.

Explanation:

There is a strong community desire to turn Newlands Centre into a safer, more attractive and people-friendly area. This requires an emphasis on creating well-designed attractive public spaces and good quality pedestrian and cycle connections. Such improvements will help to better connect and integrate the different parts of the centre, and are of critical importance to its successful revitalisation. An improved pedestrian environment will make the centre a more attractive place to visit and to do business. Good lighting, attractive well-maintained spaces and high quality connections will also help improve the area and its safety.

More priority should be given to pedestrians within the centre with pedestrian-friendly street treatments such as paving, landscaping, signage, and limits on vehicle access and speeds. Stronger pedestrian and cycle connections to public spaces, public transport, schools, housing, and community and recreational areas, both located within the centre and on its edges, will be created over time with new development.

Emphasis will be placed on the development of two strong, high quality pedestrian links through the centre – one north-south (linking Stewart Drive and Newlands Road) and one east-west (linking Batchelor Street with the main shopping area of McMillan Court). A better quality central public space/gathering area (located between the existing retail strip, the old bakery building and the McMillan Court retail area) will be investigated with the strengthening of these pedestrian routes.

KEY PEDESTRIAN LINKS



Short-term and ongoing strategies:

- Improve pedestrian and cycle connections to and within the centre by ensuring any new development or redevelopment recognises the importance of pedestrians and cyclists and provides for accessible, safe and high quality connections.
- Strengthen pedestrian and cycle links to public transport facilities and support the development of secure bicycle parking areas.
- Work with Newlands Primary and Bellevue Primary to prepare a school travel plan to help increase safety in and around the Newlands Road area and to help address congestion issues.
- In any public space/streetscape upgrade works, ensure public open spaces link in with the pedestrian network by aligning public space entry and access points with pedestrian routes.
- Undertake a safety audit of the Centre prior to the planned supermarket development and the McMillan Court car park and public space improvements to identify and help address public safety concerns.
- Support opportunities for passive surveillance around the edges of open space areas, including car parking areas and pedestrian links to make them safer.
- Create two strong (visually clear, accessible, well constructed and high amenity) pedestrian links through the centre to form the foundation of an improved pedestrian network as follows:
 - between Stewart Drive and Newlands Road (north-south direction), including a connection across Newlands Road to the bus stop, community hall, Newlands Park; and
 - between Batchelor Street and the main retail shopping area (east-west direction).

- ← - - - - - → North-South pedestrian link
- ← - - - - - → East-West pedestrian link
- Bus stops



Visualisation: A potential long-term vision for Batchelor Street/new East-West shared street and square

- As part of any improvements to the pedestrian network, enhance key access points to the centre including:
 - the walkway between Newlands Road and the main shopping area
 - the entrance from Bracken Road and access through to the shops (including the existing ramp and steps from Bracken Road)
 - the entrance from Stewart Drive to the shops.
- As part of improving and enhancing the pedestrian connection between the community centre and the main retail shopping area, treat the accessway between the community centre and the tavern as a 'shared street'. Give a clear signal to vehicles that pedestrians have priority in this area by using clear signage, landscaping and limiting vehicle speeds.
- As part of improvements to the centre's pedestrian environment, explore the opportunities for improving the covered pedestrian area located between the existing shops (under the glass canopy) to help create a covered, useable, all weather space.
- Construct a new public toilet facility adjacent to the old bakery building and ensure it is clearly visible from the car park and pedestrian route(s) and is easily accessible.

Long-term strategies:

- With any significant future redevelopment of the tavern site, encourage a design that would set the building back, helping create a larger public space area fronting the accessway and Batchelor Street. This would increase the pedestrian friendliness of the area, create a more active street front, and enhance the relationship with the community centre.
- Formalise a pedestrian walkway connection from the end of Robert Street through to Newlands Road.

Improve the amenity of Newlands Centre by ensuring quality design of all new buildings and spaces.

Explanation:

Many buildings and spaces, including car parking areas, within the centre are currently in a poor state of repair, are poorly connected and unsafe. The urban form of the centre is also disjointed. A number of distinct sub-areas – such as the main shopping area (McMillan Court), Batchelor Street, and the Newlands Road commercial area – are poorly connected, especially for pedestrians.

New development and redevelopment of existing sites and buildings within Newlands Centre should contribute to the creation of a more attractive, efficient, accessible and well-connected urban area. New buildings and spaces that are well-designed, attractive and consider the context of the wider centre in their design, will considerably improve the overall 'look and feel' of Newlands Centre as well as its day-to-day functioning as a district centre serving the local community.

Short-term and ongoing strategies:

- New development and redevelopment activities within Newlands Centre should be consistent with the urban design guidance provided in the District Plan design guide.
- The Council will encourage the innovative, sustainable re-use of any existing buildings that are retained and incorporated into new developments.
- Ensure the two 'hubs' or anchors of Newlands Centre – the community centre and the main shopping area (McMillan Court) – are strongly linked and are the focus of the improved pedestrian network.
- Ensure the creation of good quality public spaces and car-parking areas as part of any redevelopment activities or improvements to the pedestrian environment, for example:
 - visually reduce the scale of large areas of car parking and create a more pedestrian friendly environment by using planting, landscaping and surface treatments like paving
 - create an inviting character for the main shopping area with shop fronts opening directly to pedestrian routes/ footpaths and public open space areas, and awnings for weather protection

- ensure good quality landscaping compliments all new buildings and developments
- align new buildings to better define and enhance the quality of existing and proposed future public space areas.
- Protect the character, amenity and outlook of residential areas neighbouring the centre by ensuring the buildings are scaled appropriately.

Long-term strategies:

- Encourage setbacks (floors above ground level are setback from the street front to make the building appear lower) for any redevelopment of the following sites, to maintain a 'pedestrian' scale and for amenity reasons:
 - corner of Stewart Drive and Batchelor Street
 - corner of Bracken Road and Stewart Drive; setbacks also to the car park to minimise overshadowing, provide privacy and reduce noise
 - Newlands Road – for residential amenity and to provide privacy and reduce noise; also setback from the rear service lane to ensure adequate sun penetration to all units south of the steep bank up to the higher part of the site
 - northern-most retail group next to the old bakery building – setback to the pedestrian route.
- Encourage the redevelopment and consolidation of the corner lot on Stewart Drive/Batchelor Street to provide a more appropriate building and higher intensity of use.
- Ensure that the scale, mass and proportions of any new building development along Newlands Road reflects the original scale of smaller lot subdivision.
- Make the most of the strategic location of the southern 'entry' point to Newlands – the corner of Atkinson Street and Newlands Road – by requiring any significant redevelopment of the site to include a high quality building, integrated with public domain and pedestrian elements. The corner building on this site could be a feature building.













2.3 Newlands Centre concept plans: possible short and long term development visions

2.3.1 CONCEPT PLAN DEMONSTRATING KEY ELEMENTS OF THE SHORT-TERM VISION (1-5 YEARS)



Short Term Development Vision, 1-5 years

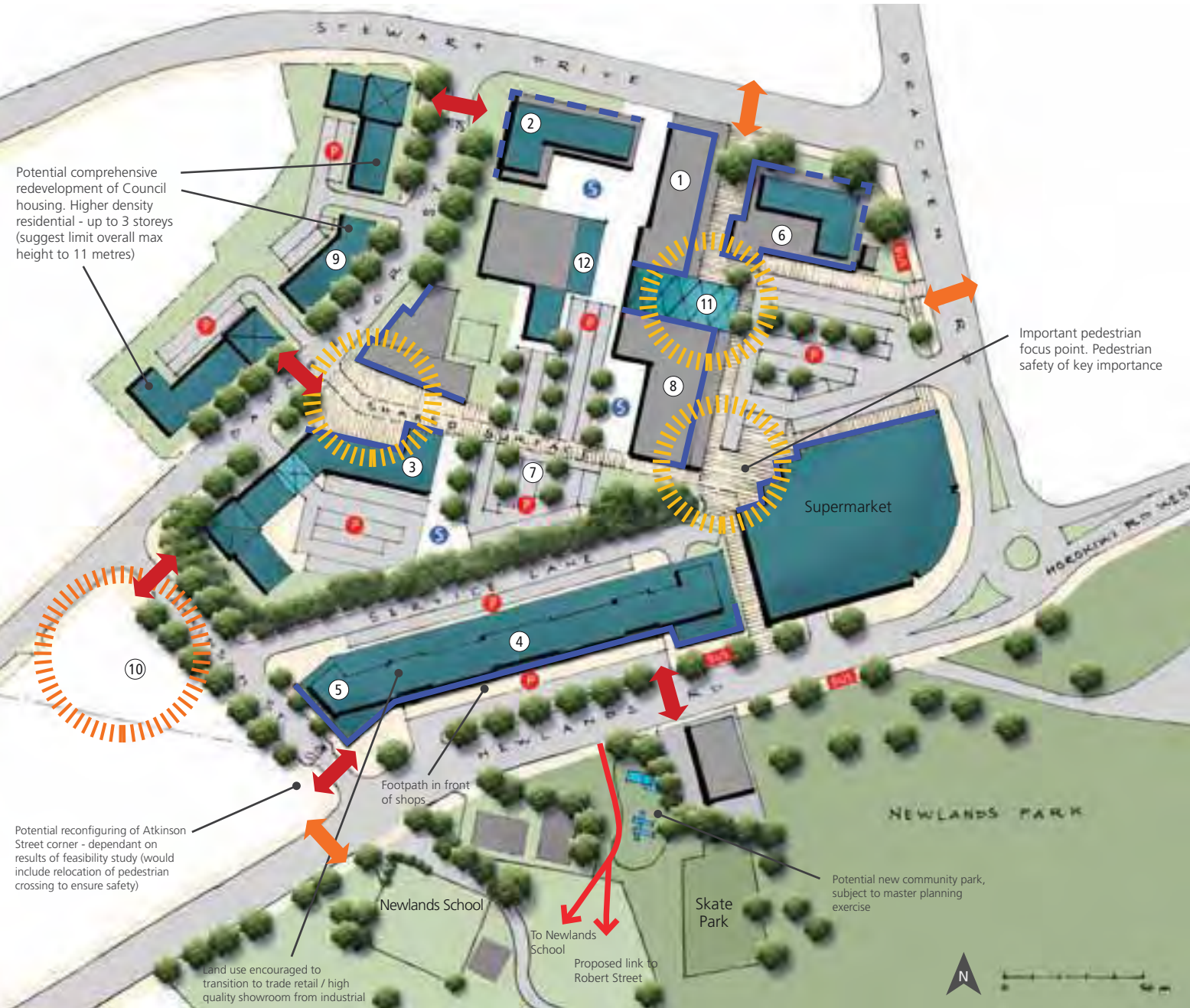
LEGEND

| | |
|---|--|
|  | public open space |
|  | open space |
|  | pedestrian network |
|  | existing buildings |
|  | potential new development |
|  | active frontages |
|  | parking |
|  | service area |
|  | bus stop |
|  | new pedestrian focal point |
|  | existing pedestrian crossing (zebra) |
|  | enhanced pedestrian crossing point (indicative location) |

KEY ELEMENTS











- ① Potential retail/commercial development active frontages of redeveloped building should be provided (minimum 70 per cent transparency) where shown.
- ② Enhance area as a focal point for pedestrian activity comprising attractive, usable space.
- ③ Remove small canopy from North-South link, redesign public space area to work with proposed pedestrian focal point at 2.
- ④ Improved pedestrian conditions. Southern most shop 'turns the corner' with window to improve safety.
- ⑤ Require active frontage to the tavern site (fronting accessway) with any significant redevelopment proposal.
- ⑥ Potential supermarket development. Active building frontage to the main car park. Clear and visible pedestrian access to existing retail and proposed supermarket entry. Parking underneath supermarket - access off Newlands Road. Development subject to road stopping application - to be consulted on at a later date.
- ⑦ Retain and enhance the walkway linkage to Newlands Road. Supermarket to provide awnings and lighting to ramped section alongside its western edge including wrapping around to Newlands Road.
- ⑧ Proposed East-West shared access link. Surface treatment is to be consistent with the pedestrian network through the site. Link to be used by a range of users, but priority to be given to pedestrians. Appropriate signage and safety measures required. Access to be negotiated.
- ⑨ New public toilets, well lit and visible from street, bus stop, and car parking area.
- ⑩ Improved safety for pedestrian access across Newlands Road. To be subject to more detailed design process. Could include new pedestrian crossing and bus stop relocation.
- ⑪ Investigate re-opening Atkinson Road to left in-left out traffic with kerb widening to prioritise pedestrians and to slow vehicle speeds.
- ⑫ Consider relocating the Bracken Road pedestrian crossing to form continuation of East-West link alignment if car park entry moves north with supermarket development.
- ⑬ Formalise car parking areas.
- ⑭ As part of any new development proposals, buildings on Newlands Road to provide pedestrian entry canopies to footpath. Relocate footpath to front of buildings to improve pedestrian safety.
- ⑮ Fire station building to be removed if Fire Service relocates, enabling space to be potentially redeveloped as a community park including a new community playground.
- ⑯ Investigate the opportunities (and their feasibility) for redevelopment of the the former Community House site.

2.3.2 CONCEPT PLAN DEMONSTRATING KEY ELEMENTS OF THE LONG-TERM VISION (LOOKING FORWARD 20 YEARS)



Long Term Development Vision, 20 years

LEGEND

| | |
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|  | public open space |
|  | open space |
|  | primary pedestrian pathways |
|  | existing buildings |
|  | potential new development |
|  | relocated canopy |
|  | active frontages |
|  | minimum 50% active frontages |
|  | parking |
|  | service area |
|  | bus stop |
|  | new pedestrian focal points |
|  | existing pedestrian crossing (zebra) |
|  | enhanced pedestrian crossing point (indicative location) |
|  | potential redevelopment site |

KEY ELEMENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>① Potential for comprehensive redevelopment of this site as mixed use with retail / commercial focus.</p> <p>② Potential for redevelopment as mixed use with residential focus (could include home offices) : potential for 3 storeys.</p> | <p>③ Long-term redevelopment opportunity for mixed uses - opportunity to reconfigure building form and street frontage. Work with owner to incorporate a high quality public space with a relationship to the community centre. 2-3 stories possible.</p> <p>④ Enable redevelopment of units on Newlands Road as commercial / trade retail at ground level with residential or commercial above. Possibly 3-4 storeys in height. Opportunity to reconfigure parking as part of redevelopment.</p> <p>⑤ Future redevelopment of Newlands Road units provides opportunity to create high quality gateway entry to Newlands, including landmark building on visible corner with Atkinson Street.</p> <p>⑥ Future redevelopment of Old Bakery site to support a mix of uses including potential for residential above ground level (would need good design to provide appropriate level of amenity for residents as well as an attractive facade to the car park on McMillan Court).</p> <p>⑦ If / when long stay parking areas no longer required, work with key landowners to ensure development of Council land for more active uses is viable.</p> <p>⑧ Potential redevelopment / refurbishment of existing shop buildings fronting onto McMillan Court to provide low scale central retail building (max 2 storeys). Require redevelopment (if it occurs) to be integrated to maintain integrity of horizontal form and sense of 'one building.' Redevelopment to consider reducing building footprint to provide more pedestrian space to south of building.</p> <p>⑨ Potential redevelopment of existing Council housing to provide higher density residential of up to 3 storeys. Possible mixed tenure. Would be dependant on feasibility study and new funding and/or partnership with third party.</p> <p>⑩ Potential redevelopment of Council reserve land - dependant on the results of the feasibility study to be undertaken in years 1-5.</p> <p>⑪ Investigate potential to provide covered all-weather space which could be achieved by extending the existing canopy.</p> <p>⑫ Hindu Temple potential extension</p> |
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