
REPORT 4
(1215/52/IM)

MIRAMAR TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides a summary of the preliminary engagement undertaken on draft concepts for improvements to Miramar town centre, and seeks agreement to the purpose and scope of the Miramar Town Centre Action Plan.

2. Executive Summary

Miramar is an important centre. It has a diverse residential community, a long history, capacity to grow through mixed use higher density development on key sites, notable recreation offerings, and is home to world class businesses. It is also an area that is changing. Recent local developments like the Roxy Cinema and La Boca Loca Mexican restaurant are market signals of a centre that has a viable future.

An action plan for the Miramar Town Centre is being developed as part of the Miramar Peninsula Framework project. The action plan focuses on the area zoned 'Suburban Centre/Centres' under the District Plan and includes the gateway entrance to Miramar from the Cobham Drive roundabout.

The action plan builds on the findings of early engagement. It aims to address current issues, including car parking and transport, connections, public space, heritage, land uses, employment land supply, infrastructure and streetscape improvements. It also includes the creation of a 'focal point' (centred on the Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction) that provides improved connections and a civic space that supports local retailers and community activities.

Early engagement to stimulate discussion about the town centre, and particularly the issues associated with the Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction, was carried out during May 2011. The results show strong support for improving the area's safety, amenity and attractiveness, as well as enhancing the area as the focal point of the town centre.

The Miramar Town Centre Action Plan is the most advanced of the Miramar Peninsula Framework work streams and is the focus of this report. Other work streams contributing to the Framework include working with Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust (PNBST) on the future development of Shelly Bay, and working with landowners, key interested parties and the community to develop a vision for the future use of the large land holding on the northern point of the Peninsula currently owned by the NZ Defence Force.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note that initial engagement on draft proposals to improve Miramar town centre (specifically the Miramar Ave/Park Road junction) was undertaken during May 2011 with 72 feedback forms received and 113 on-street intercept surveys completed.*
3. *Agree to the purpose and scope of the Miramar Town Centre Action Plan (as outlined in Section 5 of this report), that is:*
 - *Addresses current issues and creates a 'focal point' that provides for improved connections and a civic space that supports local retailers and community activities;*
 - *Finalises a detailed design for improvements to the Miramar Ave/Park Road junction (and associated costing);*
 - *Develops concepts for streetscape and road improvements for the town centre gateway and Miramar Avenue approach in conjunction with GWRC and landowners of key sites;*
 - *Develops a coordinated response to town centre parking issues.*
4. *Note that funding for improvements to the Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction will be sought as part of the 2012-22 Long Term Plan process.*

4. Background

4.1 Strategic policy context

The development of the Miramar Town Centre Action Plan is consistent with regional policy (i.e. the Wellington Regional Strategy and Proposed Regional Policy Statement) and Council's strategies and policies guiding urban development, including the Urban Development Strategy, Centres Policy, Centre Planning Forward Programme, and the District Plan.

It is also consistent with the whole-of-city 30 year strategic direction outlined in the draft Wellington 2040 Strategy (currently being consulted on).

4.2 Miramar Peninsula work streams

The Miramar Town Centre Action Plan is one of several work streams feeding into the development of the overarching Miramar Peninsula Framework. The Framework is intended to be a long-term planning tool, looking at a wide range of issues relevant to the Miramar Peninsula and outlining a strategy to guide future development and investment.

The scale of this work and the different timeframes and relationships involved has seen the Framework development being undertaken in several work streams. The main work streams sitting under the Framework are:

- Miramar town centre – includes two sub-areas:
 - Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction
 - Gateway entrance and Miramar Avenue
- Shelly Bay
- Northern point (Watts Peninsula).

These work streams and their current status are described below and are summarised in the diagram in **Appendix 1**.

4.2.1 Miramar Town Centre

An action plan for the Miramar town centre (refer study area map in **Appendix 2**) is being developed as a priority work stream of the Miramar Peninsula Framework project.

Work on Miramar town centre is split into two sub-projects:

a) Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction

Improvements to the Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction area – a natural hub of the existing town centre – are being investigated as a priority action. Work on this area is being progressed ahead of actions for the rest of the town centre to demonstrate Council's commitment to improving the area. It also integrates well with new developments such as the Roxy Cinema and La Boca Loca Mexican restaurant which have significantly increased the attractiveness and vibrancy of the area.

b) Wider town centre – including gateway entrance and Miramar Avenue

This area encompasses the remainder of the Miramar town centre area and approach, focusing in particular on the town centre entrance from the Miramar cutting through to the Park Road roundabout.

There is a need for work in this area to reflect the outcomes of Greater Wellington Regional Council's public transport review (currently underway). An option being considered could involve a new bus interchange in Miramar town centre, possibly along Miramar Avenue. Concepts for improvements to this area can only be progressed to a preliminary level until the results of GWRC's public consultation are available (expected in October/November 2011).

4.2.2 Northern Point (Watts Peninsula) and Shelly Bay

Two other key work streams forming part of the overall Miramar Peninsula project are the processes underway regarding the future development of Shelly

Bay and the northern point of the Peninsula (i.e. the land currently owned by the NZ Defence Force and Department of Corrections).

The NZ Defence Force declared 76 hectares of land on the northern point of the Peninsula (referred to as Watts Peninsula) surplus to requirements in 2008. The Defence Force is in the process of obtaining clearances from the Department of Conservation and NZ Historic Places Trust before the land can be disposed of under the Public Works Act. Both agencies have assessed the conservation values of the site and recommended the property be set aside as a Historic Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. Council officers are in the process of assessing the community, recreation, landscape and heritage values associated with this area to inform thinking about the future of the site.

A Mayoral forum on the future of the northern point is being organised for September. This will involve the land owners, Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and other key parties including the Department of Conservation, NZ Historic Places Trust, Greater Wellington, and key local advocacy and interest groups.

In regards to Shelly Bay, Council will continue to work with the landowners (PNSBT) on options for the future of this site.

5. Discussion

5.1 Purpose and scope of the Miramar Town Centre Action Plan

The development of the Miramar Town Centre Action Plan builds on the Council's community planning and consultation initiatives undertaken on the Peninsula over the past 10 years.

The plan aims to address current issues and create a 'focal point' that provides for improved connections and a civic space that supports local retailers and community activities.

The plan will be focused on identifying actions to improve and strengthen the town centre's role as the Peninsula's largest suburban shopping and service centre. It will help provide a coordinated approach/response to the key issues affecting the town centre.

5.2 Progress to date

Past community planning work in Miramar identified that the use of the Park Road slip road to bypass the Park Road roundabout poses safety issues for both vehicles and pedestrians. This area continues to be problematic with a high number of crashes and 'near misses'. The level of amenity and space for pedestrians is also lacking. In response, two preliminary design concepts proposing improvements were prepared for engagement purposes.

An informal steering group including the landowners, retailers and Enterprise Miramar Peninsula (EMP) was involved in developing the design concepts from the start of the process. Engagement with stakeholders such as Combined Taxis, the Accessibility Advisory Group, GWRC and Go Wellington also helped shape the proposals.

The engagement was used to kick-start the development of the town centre action plan and was designed to stimulate community feedback on specific aspects of the Miramar Avenue/Park Road area which could be improved ahead of other improvements in and around the town centre. The results of this early engagement are summarised in Section 5.3 below.

Research and information gathering to identify the issues and opportunities facing the wider town centre area (the area generally between the Miramar cutting and the Park Road roundabout) has also commenced. Key issues being considered include:

- GWRC's review of bus services in the city. This could bring changes to bus routes and service frequency on the Peninsula, with one potential option involving the creation of a bus interchange in Miramar town centre.
- The future use of key sites located at the gateway entrance to Miramar, e.g. CentrePort's strategically located site at Burnham Wharf and the Ropa Lane business/commercial area above the cutting (located near key infrastructure like the airport, State Highway 1 and Burnham Wharf and it is also highly visible).
- The quality and attractiveness of the main approach into Miramar town centre. Currently this is poor with several vacant sites, industrial sites and car yards lining the route from the airport roundabout to Miramar Avenue. There is an opportunity to create greater amenity and quality development along this key approach.
- The lower speed limit being introduced for the Miramar shopping area creates opportunities for associated safety and amenity improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The provisions for car parking across the town centre (including the location of car parks, quantity and time limits), including the pressures placed on the current system by changing land uses and the establishment of new business activities.
- The opportunity to promote greater diversity of dwelling types in the town centre by encouraging mixed use developments which include apartments on upper floors above commercial or retail uses. This would help support the centre's vitality and evening economy.

5.3 Consultation and Engagement

5.3.1 Miramar Ave/Park Rd junction

Feedback was sought on two preliminary concepts for improvements to the junction area (refer **Appendix 3**) between 3 May and 27 May 2011. ^{1, 2}

The feedback revealed a high level of support for improving the junction area so it better serves pedestrians and vehicular traffic visiting the centre. Eighty seven percent (87%) supported the creation of a 'community focal point' (e.g. a civic space for outdoor seating, markets and fairs) in this location.

Key improvements requested by respondents included:

- improving the road layout, in particular, the geometry of the Park Rd roundabout and nearby pedestrian crossings
- making the Park Road slip road safer for pedestrians and vehicles
- reducing congestion, particularly along Miramar Avenue
- making the town centre more pedestrian-friendly, and providing cycle lanes and bike racks
- creating a civic space for outdoor seating, markets and fairs
- increasing parking time limits and ensuring good access to car parking spaces
- improving the town centre's 'run down' image
- relocating the taxis stand away from this area as it uses valuable parking space and creates congestion
- sprucing up the tram shelter, including better lighting and heritage interpretation
- moving or upgrading the public toilets
- providing weather protection for bus users, especially on the eastern side of Park Rd
- replacing the rundown signage at the entrance to the town centre on Miramar Avenue.

These issues will be considered in the refinement of the detailed design for the junction area and in the development of the wider town centre action plan.

The summary of the engagement results is attached as **Appendix 4**.

¹ Posters explaining the two concepts were displayed in three locations around the town centre and information leaflets were distributed to businesses. Information was also sent electronically to the town centre landlords and stakeholders such as and the Residents Association, GWRC and Enterprise Miramar. The concepts were available on the Council's website and feedback forms could be submitted by post or electronically via the Council's website. A 'Questions and Answers' session for the public was held at Miramar Library on the 24th May. In total, 72 feedback forms were received. The majority of the feedback received (87%) was from people living on the Peninsula, most of whom visit Miramar town centre regularly (i.e. daily or several times a week).

² An intercept survey (a survey where people are intercepted on the street and asked to answer questions) was conducted in parallel with the engagement. The survey yielded 113 completed questionnaires. The responses to the survey closely correlate with the feedback received in terms of the issues identified and areas needing improvement.

5.4 Forward programme/Next steps

5.4.1 Park Road/Miramar Avenue junction

Given the support expressed through the engagement for improvements to the junction area, the preliminary concept plans are being reviewed and a preferred layout is being developed into a detailed design. This will take into account the feedback received and will involve further discussions with local retailers, landowners and service providers to ensure key issues are resolved. Input from other groups such as Living Streets Aotearoa, NZ Police, Cycle Aware Wellington and Miramar Maupuia Progressive Association will also be sought.

Key issues to be resolved as part of the detailed design include: parking locations and time limits, the location of taxi stands and mobility parking, pedestrian crossing points, the location of the public toilets, improvements to the historic tram shelter, and bus turning movements into Park Road.

The improvements will deliver benefits in terms of increased pedestrian and vehicular safety, and will create a 'focal point' that provides improved connections and a space for community activities that supports local retailers and activities.

Following the development of the preferred design, cost estimates will be completed and funding sought as part of the Long Term Plan process.

5.4.2 Town Centre Action Plan

Actions to address issues affecting the wider town centre area will be developed through further research and engagement from now through to November 2011. This timeframe will allow improvements to the gateway entrance and Miramar Avenue approach to be dovetailed with any changes proposed as part of GWRC's public transport improvements.

The proposed steps and timeframe for progressing the development of the action plan are summarised as follows:

What	When
Early engagement on improvements to Park Rd/Miramar Ave junction.	Complete (May-June 2011)
Development of preferred design for Park Rd/Miramar Ave junction. Further investigation of issues and opportunities affecting the wider town centre and drafting of actions to address.	August to November 2011
GWRC's public consultation on bus review proposals.	October 2011
Community engagement on preliminary design concepts for wider town centre (focused on gateway entrance and Miramar Ave approach).	November 2011
Preparation of draft Miramar Town Centre Action Plan including preferred design concepts and other actions. ³	December 2011 to February 2012
Funding bid for town centre improvements considered as part of Long Term Plan consultation process.	March 2012
Adoption of Miramar Town Centre Action Plan. Commence implementation of Park Rd/Miramar Ave junction improvements.	July 2012

5.5 Financial Considerations

Council has an important role in supporting Miramar town centre by ensuring a high quality public realm, streetscape and open spaces, good quality infrastructure, and appropriate supporting community and recreational facilities.

There will be some future implications for capital and operational expenditure as a result of the action plan, however these are yet to be fully developed and

³ In terms of engagement and consultation on the development of draft concepts and actions to address issues in the wider town centre area, it is proposed that a similar approach to that used for the Park Rd/Miramar Ave junction area be used. This will include:

- A steering group representing the local landlords, retailers and the community to help refine our understanding of current issues, input into the identification of potential options and generally be involved throughout the process
- Targeted interviews with other stakeholders
- Community engagement on preliminary design concepts.

consulted on. It is anticipated that some of the actions identified in the action plan will be able to be achieved through existing Council work programmes and budgets. Actions proposing projects that require new funding will be clearly identified and assigned a relative priority.

Flexibility will be built into the timing and phasing of actions to recognise that some proposed projects will be subject to further feasibility investigation, as well as to help ensure affordability and recognise relationships with other Council projects and work programmes.

Early preliminary costings for improving the Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction estimate the costs to be in the range of \$650,000-700,000. Further work will be undertaken to confirm this figure so it can be considered as part of the Long Term Plan process.

5.6 Climate Change Impacts and Considerations

The action plan development process will provide an opportunity to take a longer-term view of the resilience of the area to climate change. Sea level rise has the potential to significantly affect the Miramar area, particularly with the stormwater network and the exacerbation of flooding issues. The Action Plan will identify where improvements can be made to address flooding issues over the short, medium and long term.

5.7 Long-Term Council Community Plan Considerations

Projects identified through the action plan's development and requiring new funding will be considered as part of future Annual Plan/LTCCP planning and prioritisation processes. For example, funding for the proposed improvements to the Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction will be sought through the upcoming Long Term Plan process.

6. Conclusion

An action plan for the Miramar town centre is being developed as part of the Miramar Peninsula Framework. The action plan builds on the findings of early engagement. It aims to address current issues and create a 'focal point' that provides improved connections and a space for community activities that supports local retailers and activities. The action plan will provide a coordinated approach to the issues and opportunities facing the town centre. Improvements to the Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction are being advanced as a priority action under the town centre action plan to resolve known issues and to demonstrate Council's commitment to improving the area.

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Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The Miramar Town Centre Action Plan implements Council's strategic direction for urban development as outlined by the Urban Development Strategy. The action plan is also consistent with the Centres Policy and the Centre Planning Forward Programme, the District Plan, and the objectives of the Wellington Regional Strategy and the Proposed Regional Policy Statement.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

The action plan aligns with the expectations set out in the current long term plan. Notwithstanding this, there may be some future implications for capital and operational expenditure as a result of the action plan. Projects identified through the plan's development and requiring new funding will be considered as part of future Annual Plan/LTCCP planning and prioritisation processes.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

The Miramar Peninsula is of significant importance to Mana Whenua and has been the subject of a Treaty of Waitangi settlement. PNBST/Shelly Bay Ltd are a significant landowner at Shelly Bay, and in terms of the Defence Force land at Watts Peninsula, have first right of refusal under the terms of its Treaty of Waitangi settlement.

In terms of the Miramar town centre, there are no known Treaty of Waitangi considerations.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision under the LGA. This report reports back on preliminary engagement on Miramar town centre improvements and seeks agreement to the forward programme of work for developing the Miramar Town Centre Action Plan – a non-statutory strategic planning document.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Early consultation and engagement has been undertaken with the community and key stakeholders on preliminary concepts for improving Miramar town centre. These specifically relate to improving the junction of Miramar Avenue and Park Road. Further consultation and engagement on other actions for improving the wider town centre area will be undertaken as part of the development process for the Miramar Town Centre Action Plan.

b) Consultation with Maori

Maori have been consulted as part of early engagement on the Miramar Peninsula Framework and they will continue to be consulted as part of the overall Miramar Peninsula project.

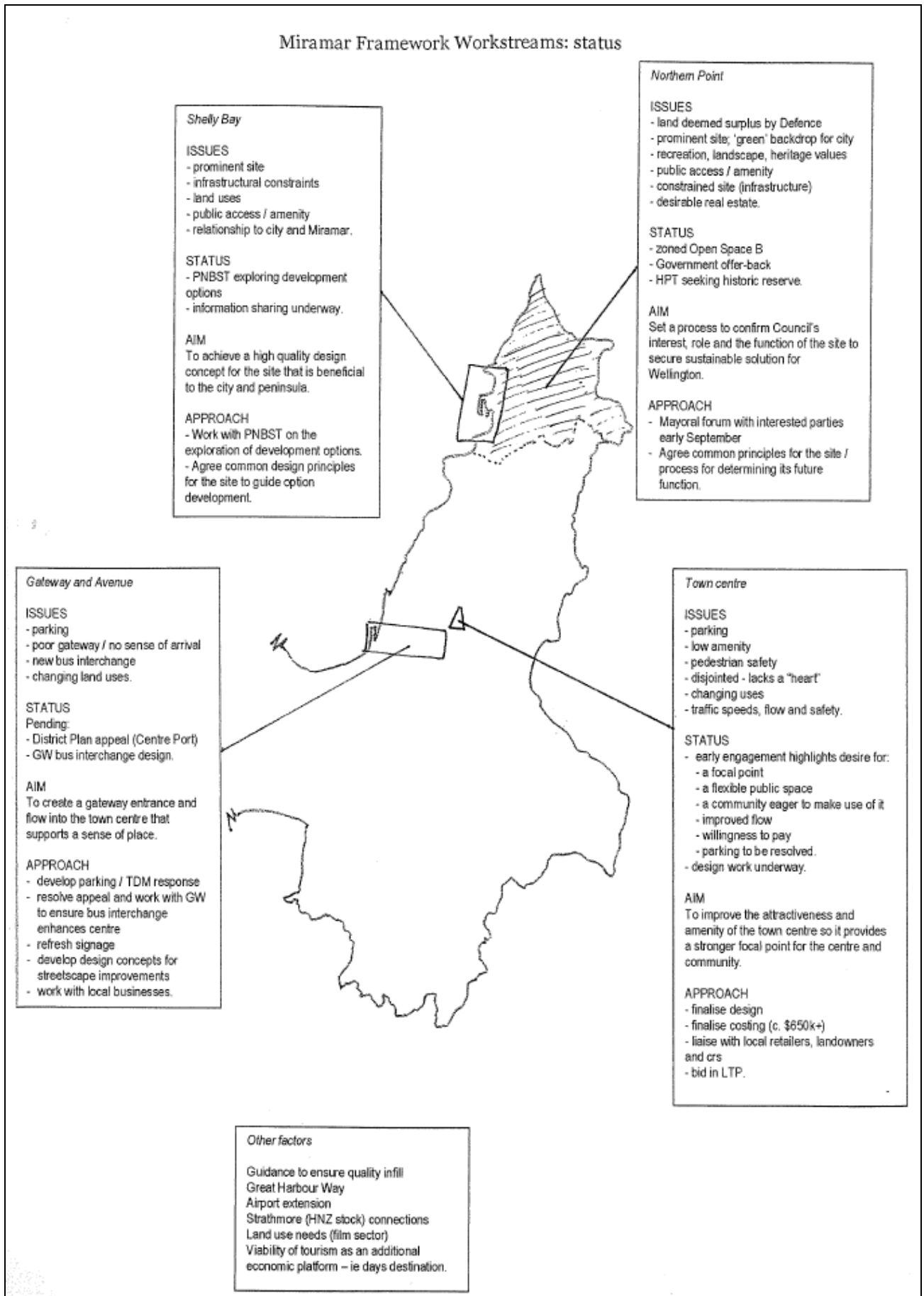
6) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications at this stage.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is consistent with Council policy. The development of the Town Centre Action Plan is consistent with the strategic direction as set out in the Urban Development Strategy and the Centres Policy. The consultation undertaken to date has been consistent with Council's engagement policy. The action plan is also being aligned with other key Council policies such as the District Plan, as well as Council's asset management planning.

Appendix 1: Summary diagram of key work streams



Appendix 2: Miramar Town Centre Action Plan - Study Area

MCC Intranet Viewer Map



Disclaimer
 Property boundaries, 20m Contours, road names, rail line, address & the points
 sourced from Land Information NZ. Crown Copyright reserved.
 Property boundaries accuracy: ±1m in urban areas ±4.50m in rural areas
 Contour data - Statistics NZ
 Protocols - NZ Post
 Assets, contours, water and drainage information shown is approximate and
 must not be used for detailed engineering design.
 Other data has been compiled from a variety of sources and its accuracy may
 vary. See Appendix 1-11m.

Scale 1:2500

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Appendix 3: Preliminary concepts for improvements to Miramar Avenue/Park Road junction (consulted on in May 2011)

Appendix 4: Miramar Town Centre – Engagement summary report