

## The pedestrian and open space network

The easy and leisurely flow of pedestrians through the town and to the town centre is important to its functioning as a beachside resort. It is essential to create a comprehensive network of open space and footpaths in a pleasant environment. The ability to amble at leisure along different routes and experience a range of interesting environments and features along the way, including wetlands, water features such as ponds and fountains, pleasant resting places at secluded spots along the stream and picnic areas with barbeques, sculptures and landscape features will all contribute to a memorable experience.

This will not be accomplished all at one but should be scheduled to take place progressively. The table (left below) indicates the priorities attached to the different routes. The routes not numbered are not of high priority, but should be acquired when the opportunity arises, like new development on an adjacent site etc.

It is important that the footpaths do not become just another concrete slab to pour. The footpaths are all set inside and will become part of the open space system and as such will need to contribute to the quality of the environment. They should feature a range of attributes that will add to the sense of place.

Combined with the key focal points, the footpaths will be the features to weave a cohesive and distinctively attractive Waihi Beach urban 'feel' or sense of place.

## Cycling in the town centre

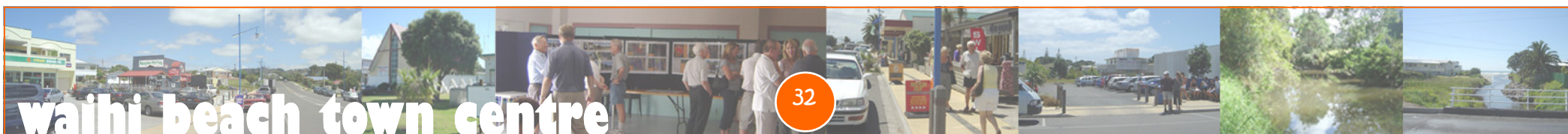
Cycling is growing strongly and especially so in tourist and leisure environments. Waihi Beach certainly qualifies on that score — but is even more relevant because of its mild gradients and easily reachable local destinations. However, in the town centre they will create problems if not catered for correctly and with clear indication. Cycling should not be allowed on footpaths here, but should be provided for on the street. Once vehicle traffic is calmed, this should be the safest and most logical way to accommodate for the many (and growing number of) cyclists.

After observing cyclists making use of the local facilities (or lack of it) we recommend to locate bicycle storage racks on both sides at both ends of the main street. Additional facilities can be provided at the two focal points and at the mid-block parking area at the back of the shops. Individual businesses can also cater for bike storage if they deem it to be in demand.

4.11 It is possible to turn driveways into pedestrian friendly environments leading to the stream if current driveways can be shared between adjacent properties. It is important that the link has adequate height and width.



4.12 Cycleways on main roads should be well marked, but on local streets speeds should be low enough to accommodate cycles in the traffic. Waihi Beach has a relaxed atmosphere without rush hour traffic pressures and having cycles on the road adds to its attractions.

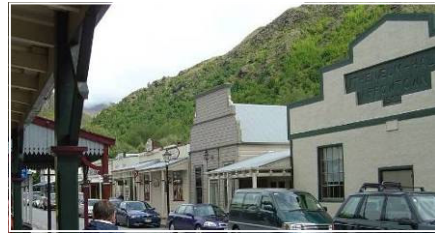




# Final Plan



4.13 Waihi Beach's most valuable assets, the beach and the Bay



4.14 Articulated facades with minimal advertising signage (left), pleasant alfresco dining (right) and marvelous tree-lined lanes (below) are features which defines a sense of place



## Developing a local design theme

A local design theme should be put in place to achieve some consistency in developments in the town centre. A typical Waihi Beach sense of place should evolve in and around Wilson Road over time. The main aim would be to create an atmosphere or sense of place with a seaside village feel to it. The following guidelines should be put in place to achieve this:

- Of foremost importance is the local natural environment in which Waihi Beach is placed. This should be the main inspiration for all development in the town centre, providing a local sense of place. Key view shafts connecting the town centre with the surrounding hills and the beach should therefore be protected. Development of the horizon on the hills or up the higher slopes will for instance deminish these vistas and sense of place, and will result in a loss to the town and to the Bay of Plenty.
- All new buildings should be designed in an articulated fashion to emphasize the finer grain of the urban fabric and to reduce the perceived 'bulk' of larger buildings. Architecture rich details and with subtle setbacks should be pursued to create an interesting, robust and timeless image. Buildings should have a variety of cladding materials but with a limit of glass surfaces to not more than 60% per elevation.
- Height limits within the town centre (for the area, refer to paragraph 'overlay zones' above) should be allowed to increase to 10.5 metres under specific conditions. This is to create flexibility for the development of mixed-use buildings with a maximum of three storeys.
- All buildings within the core area of the town centre should have commercial/retail activities with displays facing the street and/or the stream, at least on the ground floor level to create an interesting and vibrant streetscape, with largely continuous shop frontages.
- Development with underground parking should be encouraged for buildings with a commercial activity on the ground floor. Development with at least semi-underground car parking should be encouraged for buildings with a residential ground floor in the areas at the fringes of the business core.
- A signage policy which is flexible and guiding should be developed with a three-fold aim:
  - Create a non-obtrusive pedestrian environment
  - Create more efficient advertising opportunities, rather than having the various business people in the area 'screaming for attention'.
  - Create a consistent and recognisable sense of place in the streetscape





- Buildings should not have advertising displays above a level of 4.5m above street level
- Within the design theme, a certain assortment for local planting should be developed with assistance of a landscape architect.
- A certain range of materials/colours to be used in the open space design should be part of this to comply with the design theme and architectural colour palette
- All new development should have some form of pitched roofs (mono or double pitched gable roofs) with large overhangs to make the roofs appear light and reduce the impact of the bulk of the buildings

## Wilson Road - General approach to the streetscape

In order to create a more attractive and efficient business environment, Wilson Road should be subject of a modest redesign. The general aims are

- to better frame view shafts from both entrances to the town centre,
- connect to the town's proposed and existing focal points to their surrounding support areas,
- improving Wilson Street's layout with more space for pedestrians and increased safety and tidying up planting to create an overall memorable experience.

An important element of the functioning of the main street is the local sense of place — how people experience the street. One objective would be to make it more compatible with foot traffic, and therefore to slow down car traffic. The parking slots can generally be improved resulting in an slight increase. In addition parking can be extended to the east to the Dillon Street corner which will add some more spaces.

From time to time loading on Wilson Road cause some obstruction with poor visibility of pedestrians crossing and as a result can be dangerous, particularly in season. This should be reorganised, taking loading vehicles away from the flush median to a safer environment around the back of the shops as indicated earlier. This will also ease congestion problems encountered occasionally and contribute to a safer and more pleasant environment.



4.15 The 'Mainstreet' is defined by two entrances along Wilson Road

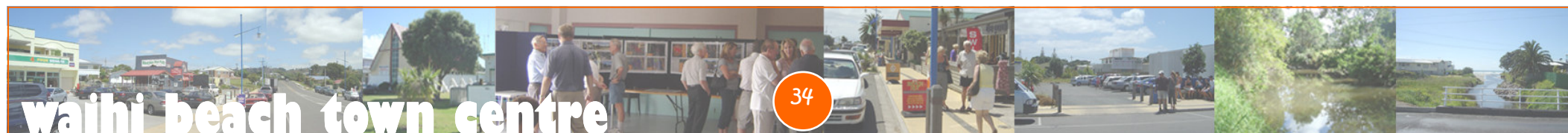
4.16 The view from a seating area on a curb extension in the central part of the town centre looking to the north west. The parking sign indicates the entrance to the 'backyard' parking on the south side..

The current lane width is conducive to driving too fast and the curb extensions provide very limited seating amenity.

The flush median makes for easy and relatively safe j-walking but the central refuges can obscure pedestrians behind them.

The sidewalk pedestrian space is limited, especially for peak season use, and sandwich boards and cycles tend to become obstacles.

The footpath finish suits the environment and helps to creating a relaxed atmosphere





# Final Plan



4.16 The phoenix palms as they are (above) and how it will look with them on both sides (below)



4.17 Tree-lined streets do make a difference. Jacarandas in bloom in Pretoria RSA (below left). A clean and simple, useable curb extension Portland, Oregon USA (below right)



## General summary of detailed changes required on Wilson Road

### Planting

- Plant some tall phoenix palm trees on northern side of the eastern end of the main street, by the corner of Dillon Street across the road from existing trees. They seem to be on private land, but actually are on public land (as shown on the left).
- Extend the current footpath treatment to the proposed new 'Beachside' focal point and along to beyond the Edinburgh Street intersection
- Reconfigure the curb extension refuges and seating and the landscaping. Tidy up planting areas to making sure nobody can walk through them at random

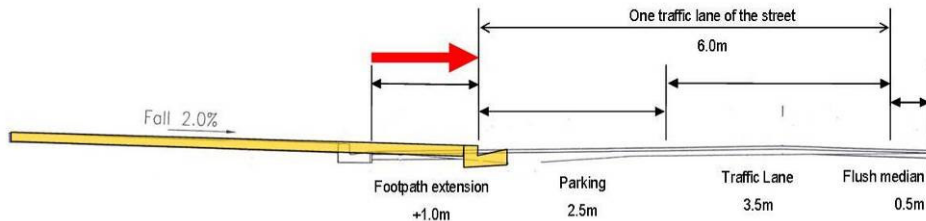
### Motor vehicles

- Slow down the traffic:
  - Narrow down the total width of hot mix by reducing car parking to 2.5m and pave with a different colour to the street surface
  - Throttle the carriageway at either end by bringing out the kerb extensions
  - Change the colour of the whole street from Dillon Street to Citrus Ave to a very light sandy tint and emphasise the entrance to the town centre at both ends by raised platforms of the same finish
- Reorganise parking by
  - Organise parallel parking by painting lines to designate individual parking places and for ease of manoeuvring paint white dots adjacent on the road to indicate the midpoint of the parking spots
  - Add car parking at eastern end of Wilson Rd
- Reorganise loading during summer months:
  - Improve the parking and loading area behind the shops on the southern side and create a one-way system with entrance over no 19 Wilson road and exit on current location (between no 23 and 27)





- Create loading bays at the rear of the current Gym with concrete pathways or ease of access
- Create site for long vehicles like towing boats or caravans along the outside of the site
- Build detention pond to protect site from flooding, separate from adjoining properties and provide some ambience. Fix soil and drainage to make tractable in wet season
- Northern side of the road:
  - Investigate the amalgamation of back yards to allow for trucks to enter and exit without problems. Single site usage and development will hinder long term redevelopment opportunities for individual property owners
  - The proposed loading area behind the south side shops won't reduce delivery distances significantly – Wilson Road shops generally only take front door deliveries



4.18 The typical cross section of Wilson Road shows how the footpath can be widened whilst maintaining the parking and traffic lanes at a convenient and safe standard

## Surplus council properties

The council owns a variety of properties in and around the town centre. Two of the important ones are the parking site by the police and the car park site behind the shops. The council also owns 4 sections on Edinburgh Street on the stream.

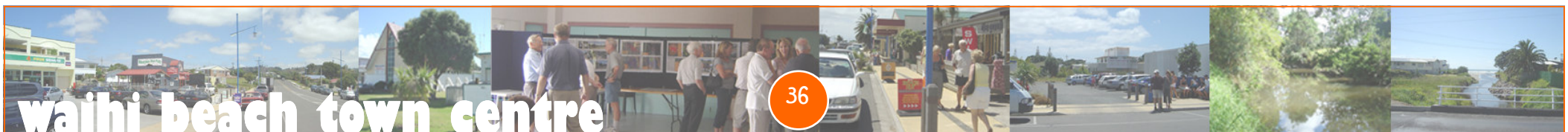
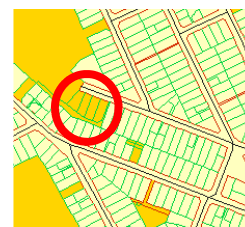
These properties are currently let as a landscaping materials storage site, but will be excellent for apartments or accommodation as indicated in the draft proposed plan. However, the sections are subject to some surface flooding which needs to be addressed. The site is depicted in the photo montage below and is indicated on the accompanying map.



4.19 Refuges could be confusing! (above) and an already tight footpath further obstructed (below)



4.20 The council site (below) is an eyesore and detracts from the local residential environment. The location is shown on the map (left).



# Final Plan

## Development program

There are numerous large and small items to be attended to over time. A few of them are vulnerable and are sensitive. If they are not secured right away they may not be available to implement specific elements of the draft plan. As such they should receive priority treatment. The table below outlines key elements to be attended to in a five year time frame or beyond. However the implementation is subject to funding and Councils Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP).

Issues & actions	Time in years				
	1	2	3	4	5
Plaza focal point & footpath 7	•				
Beachside focal point	•				
Stream walk (no7)	•				
Loading area		•			
Footpaths					
1	•				
2	•				
3			•		
4			•		
5				•	
6					•
Wilson Road upgrade	•				
District Plan changes	•	•			
Sell surplus council sections					





# Funding for the Implementation

The development of the proposed walkway along Two Mile Creek and the link to Edinburgh Street is stage one and estimated at \$1.5 million. The proposed development will be funded as follows:

- o Sale of four Council owned properties in Edinburgh Street, currently undeveloped;
- o Sale of new sections to be created on the South-western corner of Broadlands Block;
- o \$360,000 from the Town Centre Development fund over the next five years, subject to consideration through the LTCCP 2009-2019 process.

*Proposed new sections and road*

*Four existing sections to be sold*

