

Mapua Area Masterplan Working Group report

June 2021

The Māpua Waterfront Area Masterplan was approved by Council in November 2017, following community consultation which began late in 2016. It aims to set out a strategic direction for the Māpua waterfront and adjacent areas, recognizing the interconnectivity of the waterfront areas.

A group of “key stakeholders” had previously been set up by the Mapua and Districts Community Association, to facilitate ideas and issues and be the conduit between the local community and TDC. This group was disbanded and by Council when it established a group to work on the actions included in this Masterplan which “will comprise Council staff . . ., local community, local business, iwi collectives and other interested parties”. The Working Group was established early in 2018 and began work under a new independent Chair in September of that year.

Membership

The Masterplan envisaged membership by Council staff from the departments of Community Development, Engineering Services, Environment and Planning and Corporate Services.

The Reserves and Facilities Manager and the Property Services Manager joined the group.

Iwi collectives were represented by members from Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Rārua and Ngāti Tama.

Community interests include members from Māpua and Districts Community Association, Māpua and Districts Business Association, Tamaha Sea Scouts and the Māpua Boat Club.

The representative of Friends of Māpua Waterfront resigned in 2020 and that group declined to nominate a replacement.

Due to pressure of work commitments, the Ngati Rārua representative has resigned. The Working Group’s chairman, David Martin, has been in the role for three years and will stand down in August 2021. David’s tenacity, relationship building, work ethics and community minded spirit will be greatly missed

Ngaio Reserve

(The area between Golden Bear Brewery and the Estuary).

A wide scale community consultative exercise identified key components for the design of this area. A plan was drawn up and subsequently modified in the light of budgetary considerations and further community feedback. It had been planned that contractors would begin work in April 2020, but after many delays work finally began in early May 2021.

Additional funds will be required to facilitate the purchase of a pou at the entrance and interpretive signs

Cultural and archaeological issues made the preparation of the site especially sensitive. Careful consideration was given to the effect on neighbouring businesses, access to the Rabbit Island ferry and the need for Tamaha sea scouts to continue to launch their boats.

Boat Ramp Facilities

The Masterplan references “division amongst the community about the proposal for a new ramp in the Waterfront Park”, but concludes that Council’s preferred option was for a regional solution

The recent resolution to allocate funding for the provision of a community boat ramp in the Waterfront Park as part of the Council’s Long Term Planning process potentially resolves the issue of a replacement boat ramp for the Māpua community. Although the resolution is clearly inconsistent with the Masterplan, such a ramp would allow boat launching at Grossi Point to be restricted, thereby removing a significant safety issue.

The inconsistency will need to be addressed at the review which is due late in 2022 so as to deal with the effect on the Waterfront Park, Grossi Point and on parking and traffic management strategy.

Reserves Management Plan

TDC is currently reviewing its Waimea-Moutere Ward Reserves Management Plan, which includes some of the sites in the Masterplan..

Māpua Wharf Area

Many of the actions identified in the Masterplan have been achieved, but the group feels that a more strategic approach to traffic, parking, roading and signage is needed.

Waterfront Park

The Masterplan calls for the retention of this area as open park space and for the enhancement of community facilities and use. It remains underutilized mainly as a consequence of it being windswept. The amphitheater, promenade and petanque court are little used. Because the clay cap to the remediated area must not be disturbed, planting and other possible modifications to the area are limited.

Remediated Land – Aranui Road and Tahi Street

The Masterplan calls for the Council to retain ownership and to landbank the area. Meanwhile it is used for vehicle and trailer parking during peak periods. The Group recommends that no changes should be made to the use and ownership of this land in the foreseeable future.

Grossi Point

The group conducted a pilot survey amongst residents of Tahī Street in order to gauge community support for different options at Grossi Point. It plans to extend this to the whole of Māpua Village but awaits the archaeological assessment of the area which will determine what is possible. Issues include the removal of concrete blocks along the shore and their replacement by an effective and more sightly sea defence, and the very large exotic trees which provide shade but are assumed to be near the end of their natural life.

The lack of any local alternative facility and the very limited access to the boat ramp at the Wharf, has given rise to increased use of the Reserve for boat launching. At peak times there are obvious safety issues connected with a small congested area with a very strong tidal stream being heavily used by swimmers, powered boats, kayaks, children and jet skis. The group's preference is for boat launching to be restricted to small hand launched craft, but for this to be feasible a suitable alternative boat ramp for powered craft would be needed.

Parking

Although a number of relatively minor improvements have been made to the management of parking in the area, a more strategic approach is needed. As with many other related issues, much will depend on the decision to go ahead with a boat ramp in the Waterfront Park.

Lighting and Pedestrian Safety

TDC has installed solar lighting in Waterfront Park, from Aranui Road cul-de-sac to public vehicle parking in Waterfront Park. These are down lights and work well. Changes have been made to lighting in the Wharf area.

Operation of the retractable bollards continues to be an endemic problem. The working group suggests alternative methods be evaluated that will allow vehicular traffic (including emergency vehicles) access on an "as approved" status, but restrict all other movements, including motorcycleists and riding of bicycles.

Recommendations

Membership:

A new independent chair needs to be appointed to take office on 1st September.

Mark Johanson, the current Property services Manager will retire on 30th June and needs to be replaced. Consideration should be given to appointing an officer who has direct contact with Council tenants at the Wharf so as to avoid some of the communication problems that the Group has encountered.

The review of the Masterplan should take place as scheduled in late 2022

The Working Group should review its terms of reference at the same time

The Council Traffic Engineer engage with the working group to facilitate a consensus-based strategy for managing vehicle, pedestrian movements in and around Mapua Wharf area and immediate surrounds.

The Ngaio Reserve be completed, to include all planned items which are not part of the current construction contract