



# Whenuapai **GREEN**

## URBAN DESIGN STATEMENT

For: Neil Construction Limited

Prepared by



**CLIENT**

Neil Construction Ltd

**PROJECT**

Whenuapai Green Plan Change

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This report has been prepared by Lauren White of Urban Acumen Limited on behalf of Neil Construction Limited for the purpose of supporting a Private Plan Change Application.

Lauren White is a senior urban designer and owner/director of Urban Acumen Ltd. She is a qualified urban designer with a Master of City Planning and Urban Design and has approximately 25 years industry experience, in New Zealand and abroad. With extensive experience in growth planning, subdivision design, and medium density housing, Lauren is based in Auckland but works on a range of projects across the country, including the Wellington and Christchurch regions. She provides design direction, review and assessment, expert evidence and stakeholder engagement in the pursuit of delivering high performing urban environments.

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# 1.0

## introduction

### 1.1 executive summary

Neil Construction Limited are advancing a private plan change application to rezone approximately 16.4ha of Future Urban land on the northern periphery of Whenuapai. The application for rezoning is supported by a proposed precinct plan map and associated planning provisions.

Its development constitutes a logical extension of the urban area and is generally within walking distance of the emerging Whenuapai town centre and the existing Whenuapai Prima School and Kindergarten. Its boundary with Totara Road provides easy access to Brigham Creek Road and thereafter, Westgate, central Auckland, and the North Shore via State Highways 16 and 18.

The site is currently under rural use, has a gentle gradient, northerly aspect and is appropriate for residential development. Constraints for development include those associated with the ongoing operation of the adjacent Whenuapai airbase to the east, streams and riparian corridors and the management of stormwater. To the south, the existing context has been established by recent and ongoing residential development informed by the Whenuapai Structure Plan (2016) and typical of that delivered in Mixed Housing Urban Zones namely, comprehensively developed medium density neighbourhoods with a mix of detached dwellings and terraced homes. To the north and west, existing land use is a mix of rural and rural residential activity which is also zoned Future Urban in the Auckland Unitary Plan.

This report is provided in support of the plan change application and addresses the urban design components of the proposal including:

- undertaking a site analysis to determine relevant opportunities and constraints;
- understanding the relevant current statutory context and direction;
- making recommendations to inform precinct planning; and
- assessing the proposal against a set of urban design principles/outcomes.

The above process has resulted in a proposed zoning, precinct plan map and associated provisions that are supported from an urban design perspective. Specifically the proposal serves to direct development of the site which will:

- logically extend the existing urban area and make provision for future extension;
- be well connected both locally to the Whenuapai town centre and further afield;
- make good use of land within a walkable catchment of local services and facilities; including public transport;
- enable a mix of housing with good amenity and a focus around a neighbourhood park; and
- appropriately manage the site's interfaces with the existing residential and roading environment and Whenuapai Airbase.



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## 1.2 applicant, property details and the proposal

**Applicant:** Neil Construction Limited

**Location:** 98-100 Totara Road, Whenuapai, Auckland  
102 Totara Road, Whenuapai, Auckland

**Proposal:** The proposal seeks to rezone approximately 16.4ha of land zoned Future Urban under the Operative Unitary Plan to Mixed Housing Urban and apply a site-specific Precinct Plan and provisions to direct future subdivision and appropriately manage interfaces.

**Consultants:**

Planners



Traffic Consultant



Ecologist



Arborist



Geotech



Archaeology



Landscape Architect



## 1.3 purpose and methodology

This report is prepared to support a Private Change application by Neil Construction Limited and includes urban design analysis and recommendations to inform the development of the proposed Precinct Plan and associated provisions. It also provides an assessment of the proposal against relevant urban design guidance.

The process followed by Urban Acumen Ltd in preparing this design statement and assessment includes:

- attending a briefing meeting with the applicant;
- undertaking a site visit and site analysis;
- understanding the relevant statutory design drivers;
- making recommendations for consideration during precinct planning; and
- undertaking an urban design assessment of the proposed rezoning, precinct plan and associated provisions.

# 2.0

## location

The site is located on the northern edge of the existing Whenuapai urban area and within 1km of Brigham Creek Road and the Whenuapai local centre zone. Totara Road, along the site's western boundary provides primary access to the site and links it to Brigham Creek Road and thereafter the North-Western Motorway and Upper Harbour Motorway. The Royal New Zealand Airforce Base is located directly to the east of the PPC area.

The site's northern boundary is close to the coastal environment, where the Ratarua Stream enters the Upper Harbour.



Figure 1. Site Aerial (Google Earth)

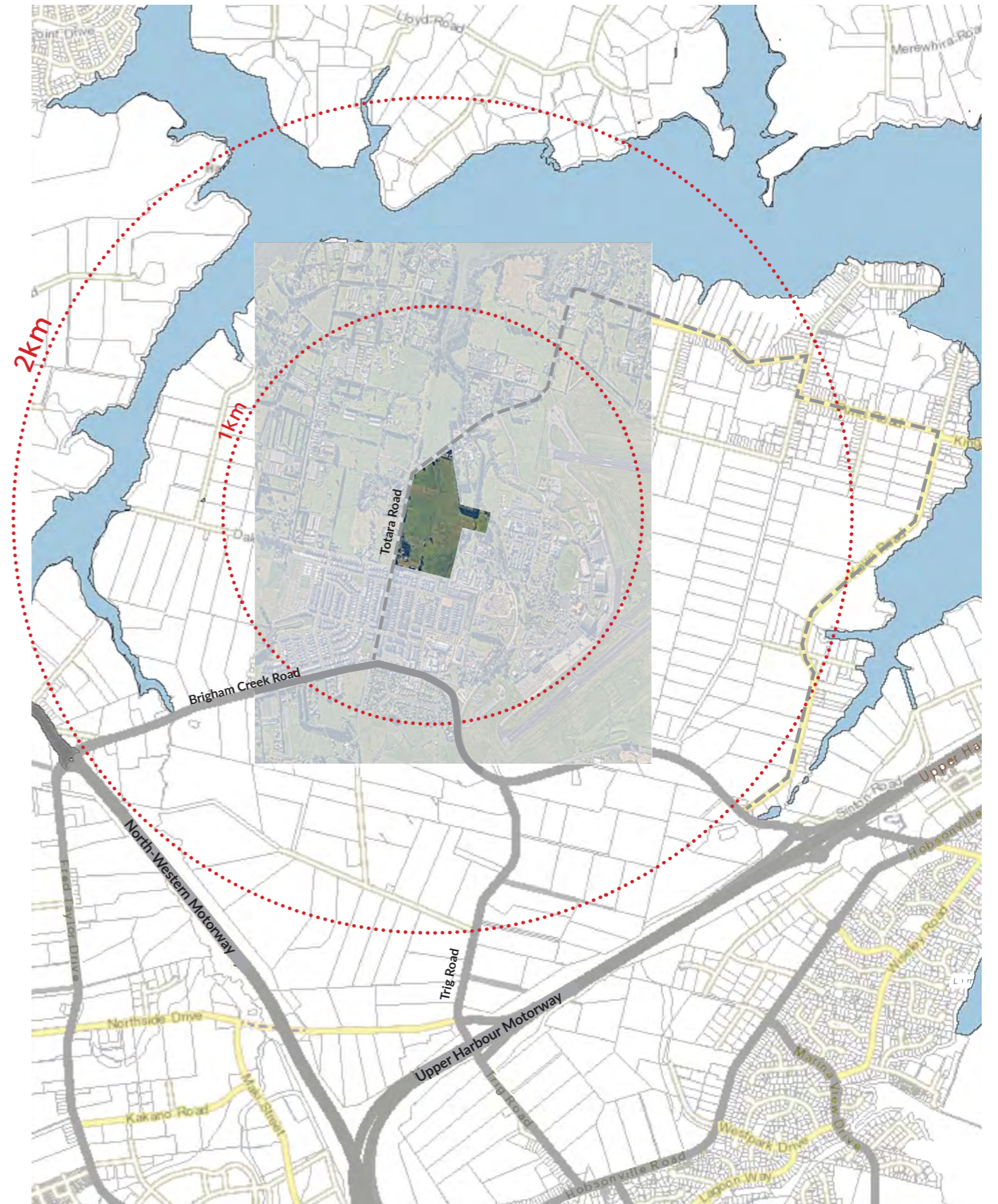
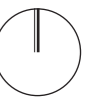


Figure 2. Location



Scale: 1:25,000 @A4

# 3.0

## context

### existing and developing context

The site is located on the urban edge of Whenuapai's urban area and a change from rural to urban use is anticipated through its Future Urban Zoning.

The site's immediate physical context to the south is part of the fast growing residential community of Whenuapai, characterised by medium density development. The subdivision pattern is typically a grid, responding/warping to respond to drainage corridors where necessary. The RNZAF base to the east contributes to the character of the area.

Proposed Private Plan Change 86 (Closed for Submissions) aims to rezone 5.19 ha of land at 41-43 Brigham Creek Road, Whenuapai from Future Urban Zone (FUZ) to Residential Mixed Housing Urban (MHU).

The residential character is provided, in part, by spacious road reserves and associated public open space corridors accommodating a variety of planting and footpaths and cycleways. A network of neighbourhood open spaces, connected by a network of pedestrian/cycle links adds to residential amenity.

Whenuapai's growth is supported by planned upgrades by Waka Kotahi (SH16) and Te Tupu Ngātahi Supporting Growth (upgrades to Brigham Creek road to accommodate walking, cycling and public transport).



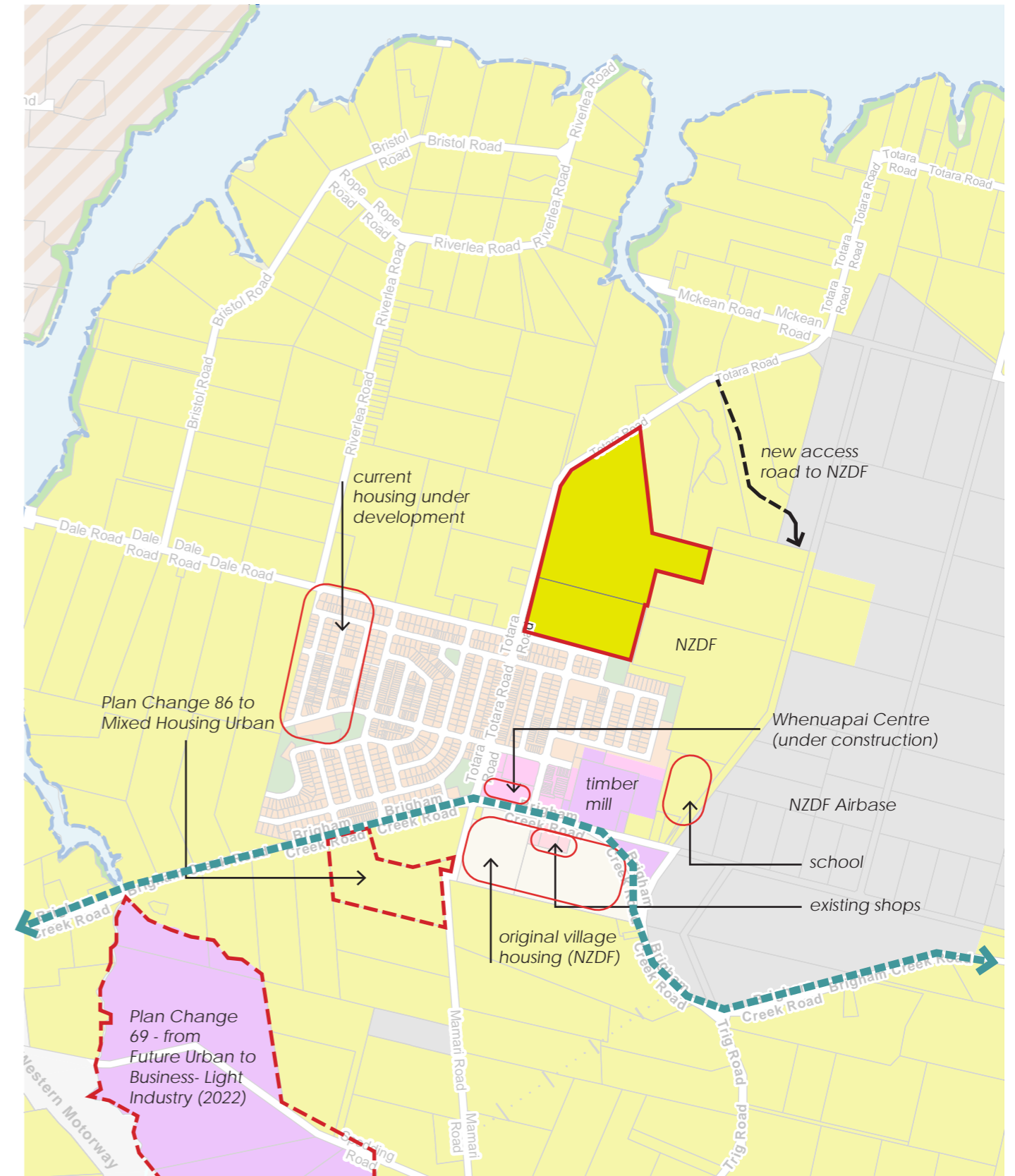
typical medium density housing in Whenuapai



Medium density housing delivered as part of a Special Housing Area for 650+ sites, the town centre and neighbourhood park along with transport upgrades.



Whenuapai Airbase on eastern boundary



- plan change boundary
- - - other plan changes
- - - - Brigham Creek Road upgrades



Figure 3. Plan Change area in context

# 4.0

## the site

The site measures approximately 16.4ha and is an irregular shape. It is comprised of two cadastral parcels. Typical of the Whenuapai area, the land is relatively flat. It falls approximately 10m over its length (650m approx), gently to the north. There are three existing dwellings and the site is currently used for grazing.

A permanent stream clips an eastern corner and there are two short lengths of intermittent stream and some minor overland flow paths. The site has a number of existing trees (exotic and native).



Figure 4. Aerial photo

# 5.0

## site analysis

### Opportunities

- relatively flat and free of topographical development constraints to accommodate medium density housing
- easy walking distance of the future Whenuapai town centre and public transport service promotes walkability and higher residential density
- good interface with Totara Road and opportunity to extend good pedestrian and cycle facilities along the road
- a mix of housing typologies to provide lifestyle choice and support public open spaces and public transport
- a new neighbourhood park - to enable future residents access to recreation space within an easy walking distance
- provide for integration with existing development to the south, particularly pedestrian and cycle connection to public transport, reserves and primary school
- potential connection to east (Future Urban Land/NZDF)
- potential inclusion of a primary school site
- enhance landscape character through ecological enhancement and riparian planting of streams and increase tree cover and biodiversity
- along with riparian corridors and reserves, utilise stormwater management to help create a connected open space network

### constraints

- access and development limitations associated with airbase, particularly noise
- permanent and intermittent streams
- areas required for stormwater management
- restricted vehicle access on Totara Road (requires rear access, which, in turn, favours a terraced typology)
- rural profile of Totara Road - needs upgrade
- aircraft approach - restricts building location
- reverse sensitivity - requires NZDF approval/conditions
- ownership and maintenance of riparian areas (cannot be vested with Auckland Council)

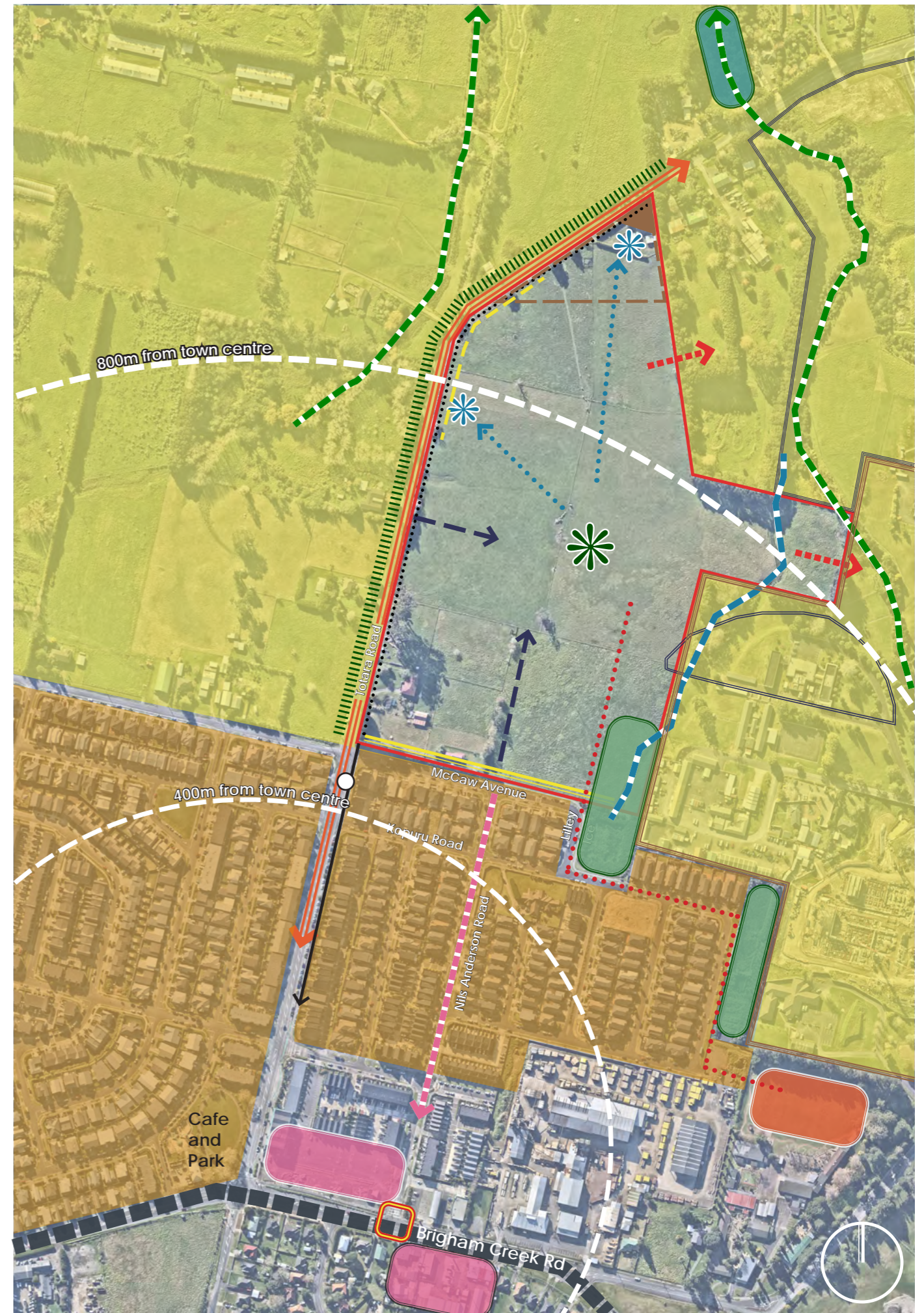
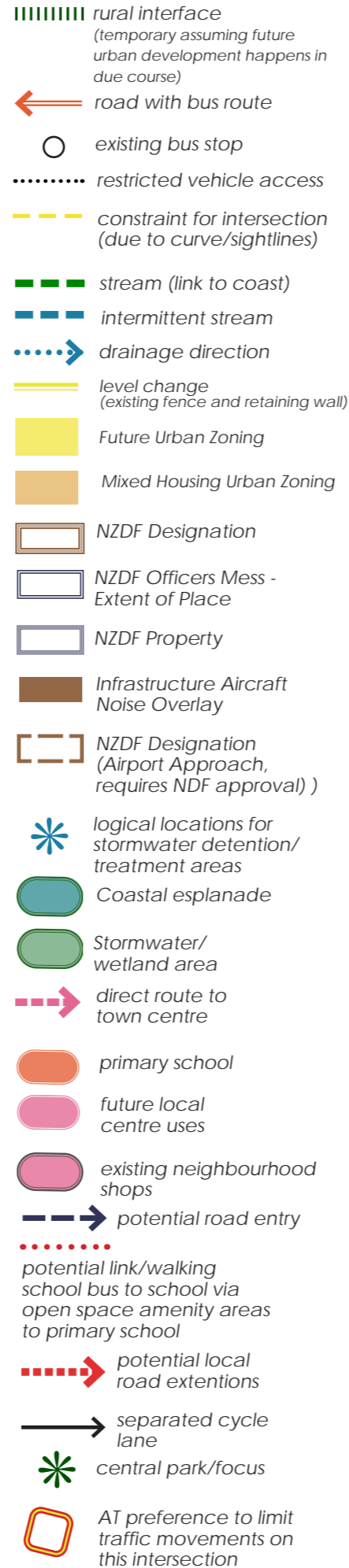


Figure 5. Site Analysis



# 6.0

## design drivers

Design drivers and urban design recommendations for precinct planning includes those associated with the physical site analysis and interfaces, consultation; and relevant statutory directives and other guidance including:

- Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), including the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021;
- National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020, updated 2022
- Auckland Unitary Plan
- The Future Development Strategy 2023 - 2053
- The Upper Harbour Local Board Plan 2023
- The Whenuapai Structure Plan 2016
- The Upper Harbour Greenways Plan
- Urban Ngahere Strategy

### 6.1 National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2022

From an urban design perspective, the key direction is considered to be:

**Objective 1: New Zealand has well-functioning urban environments that enable all people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health and safety, now and into the future.**

**Policy 1: Planning decisions contribute to well-functioning urban environments, which are urban environments that, as a minimum:**

- (a) have or enable a variety of homes that:
  - (i) meet the needs, in terms of type, price, and location, of different households; and
  - (ii) enable Māori to express their cultural traditions and norms; and
- (b) have or enable a variety of sites that are suitable for different business sectors in terms of location and site size; and
- (c) have good accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces, including by way of public or active transport; and
- (d) support, and limit as much as possible adverse impacts on, the competitive operation of land and development markets; and
- (e) support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and
- (f) are resilient to the likely current and future effects of climate change

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## 6.2 Auckland Unitary Plan - Objectives and Policies

The site is identified for urban activity by its current Future Urban zoning. To direct the urban form of this growth the Unitary Plan includes the following relevant high level objectives and policies (B2.2 and B2.3 - Urban Growth and Form):

### B2.2.1. Objectives

**(1) A quality compact urban form that enables all of the following:**

- (a) a higher-quality urban environment;
- (b) greater productivity and economic growth;
- (c) better use of existing infrastructure and efficient provision of new infrastructure;
- (d) improved and more effective public transport;
- (e) greater social and cultural vitality;
- (f) better maintenance of rural character and rural productivity; and
- (g) reduced adverse environmental effects.

**(2) Urban growth is primarily accommodated within the urban area 2016 (as identified in Appendix 1A).**

**(3) Sufficient development capacity and land supply is provided to accommodate residential, commercial, industrial growth and social facilities to support growth.**

**(4) Urbanisation is contained within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages.**

**(5) The development of land within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages is integrated with the provision of appropriate infrastructure.**

### B2.2.2 Policies

**A quality compact urban form:**

- Promote urban growth and intensification within the urban area 2016 (as identified in Appendix 1A), enable urban growth and intensification within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages, and avoid urbanisation outside these areas.
- Enable higher residential intensification:
  - (a) in and around centres;
  - (b) along identified corridors; and
  - (c) close to public transport, social facilities (including open space) and employment opportunities.
- Enable rezoning of land within the Rural Urban Boundary or other land zoned future urban to accommodate urban growth in ways that do all of the following:
  - (a) support a quality compact urban form;
  - (b) provide for a range of housing types and employment choices for the area;
  - (c) integrate with the provision of infrastructure; and
  - (d) follow the structure plan guidelines as set out in Appendix 1.

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### B2.3.1 Objective

#### A quality built environment:

- A quality built environment where subdivision, use and development do all of the following:
  - (a) respond to the intrinsic qualities and physical characteristics of the site and area, including its setting;
  - (b) reinforce the hierarchy of centres and corridors;
  - (c) contribute to a diverse mix of choice and opportunity for people and communities;
  - (d) maximise resource and infrastructure efficiency;
  - (e) are capable of adapting to changing needs; and
  - (f) respond and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- Innovative design to address environmental effects is encouraged.
- The health and safety of people and communities are promoted.

### B2.3.2 Policies

- Manage the form and design of subdivision, use and development so that it does all of the following:
  - (a) supports the planned future environment, including its shape, landform, outlook, location and relationship to its surroundings, including landscape and heritage;
  - (b) contributes to the safety of the site, street and neighbourhood;
  - (c) develops street networks and block patterns that provide good access and enable a range of travel options;
  - (d) achieves a high level of amenity and safety for pedestrians and cyclists;
  - (e) meets the functional, and operational needs of the intended use; and
  - (f) allows for change and enables innovative design and adaptive re-use.
- Encourage subdivision, use and development to be designed to promote the health, safety and well-being of people and communities by all of the following:
  - (a) providing access for people of all ages and abilities;
  - (b) enabling walking, cycling and public transport and minimising vehicle movements; and
  - (c) minimising the adverse effects of discharges of contaminants from land use activities (including transport effects) and subdivision.
- Enable a range of built forms to support choice and meet the needs of Auckland's diverse population.
- Balance the main functions of streets as places for people and as routes for the movement of vehicles.
- Mitigate the adverse environmental effects of subdivision, use and development through appropriate design including energy and water efficiency and waste minimisation.

### 6.3 Auckland Unitary Plan - Whenuapai 2 Precinct Plan

This precinct plan has driven the recent development to the south of the plan change site.

Key drivers:

- Totara Road which has separated cycle lanes
- a local road (town road north) extending into the plan change site
- medium density residential zoning which has delivered a variety of sites and dwellings, ranging from detached homes on sites of typically 360m<sup>2</sup> to terraced homes on sites as small as 65m<sup>2</sup>
- a swale street (Camp X Place) which culminates in the stormwater management area at the southern boundary of the site
- a parkside street adjoining the stormwater management area
- landscaping and fencing requirements for lots adjoining the RNZAF Base



Totara Road looking north



typical streetscape



terraces on Hangar Lane

Figure 2 - Whenuapai 2 Precinct Plan

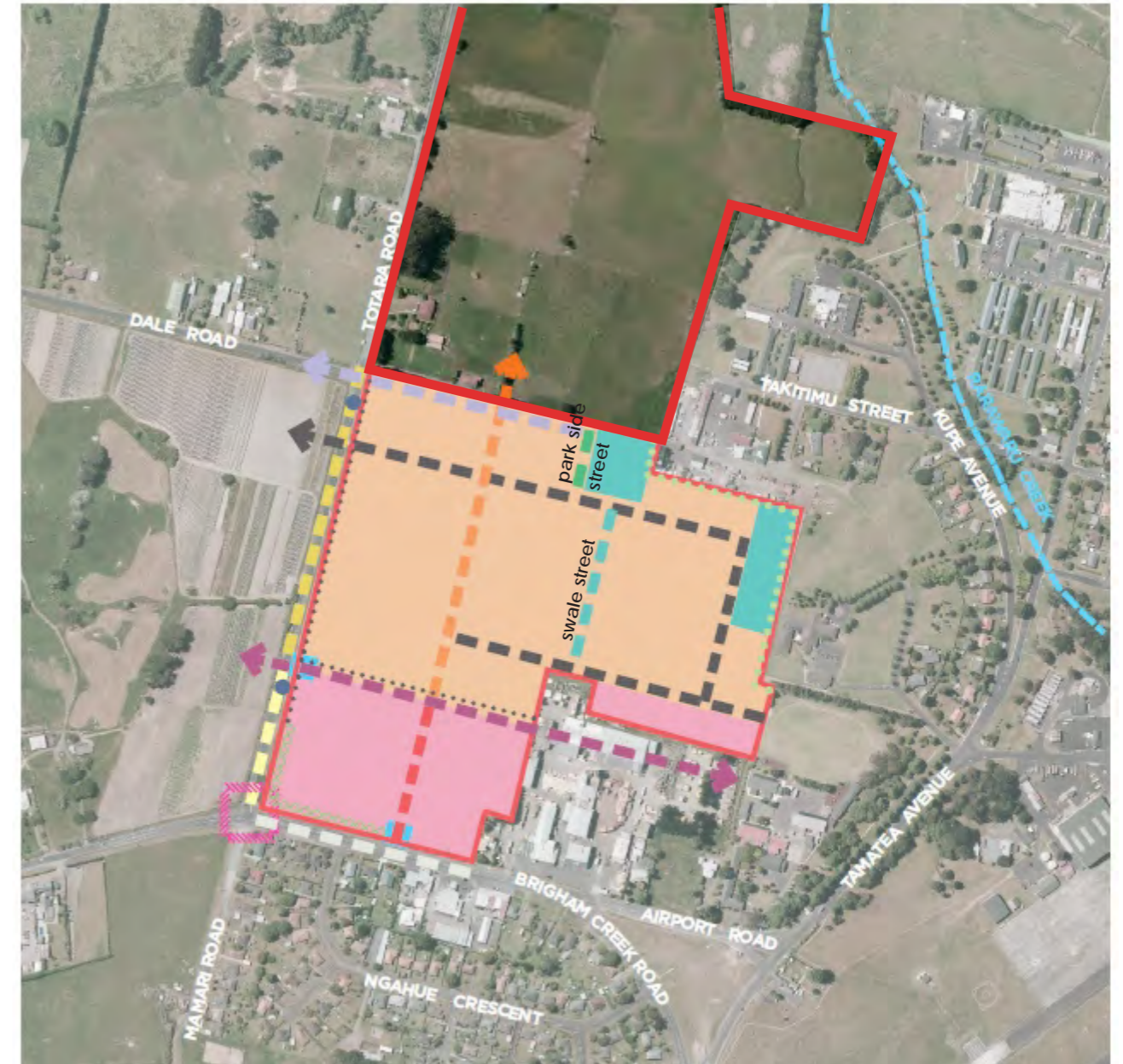


Figure 6. Extract from Whenuapai Precinct Plan, AUP

#### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- continue Totara Road cross section with separated cycleways etc. and restrict individual vehicle access to provide for traffic volume and safety as well as pedestrian and cycle priority
- continue Mixed Housing Urban Zone
- provide an active frontage to McCaw Avenue
- provide a connection to McCaw Avenue to provide access to future town centre and existing primary school
- extend/adopt appropriate landscaping and fencing controls for sites adjoining air base

## 6.4 Whenuapai Structure Plan, 2016

The Whenuapai Structure Plan's vision is for Whenuapai to be "a liveable, compact and accessible place with a mix of high quality residential and employment opportunities...that makes the most of its extensive coastline, is well connected to the wider Auckland Region, and respects the cultural and heritage values integral to its distinctive character."

As the Structure Plan does not identify any key cultural, natural or historic features for the plan change site, the relevant direction (for rezoning) is taken from the development and design principles as follows:

- (1.) create a well-designed, sustainable quality compact form with a strong sense of place
- (2.) recognise the presence and importance of Whenuapai Airbase while restricting residential development within areas of high airbase noise
- (7.) identify existing land owned by the Ministry of Education and private schools currently in operation while expecting that future schools within the proposed residential areas will be needed in future
- (8.) provide choice of residential densities and future dwelling types throughout the structure plan area
- (9.) concentrate higher density residential areas around centres and where future rapid transit network stops are being proposed
- (13.) protect waterways and enable the improvement of water quality and restoration of vegetation and habitat
- (14.) promote water sensitive design throughout the structure plan area, from site specific features to infrastructure in the public realm
- (16.) develop and maintain a well-connected transport network within Whenuapai and to the wider transport network
- (17.) create a safe and well-connected network of open space and reserves
- (18.) enable transport connections along and to the

Whenuapai Structure Plan September 2016

## Structure Plan Map

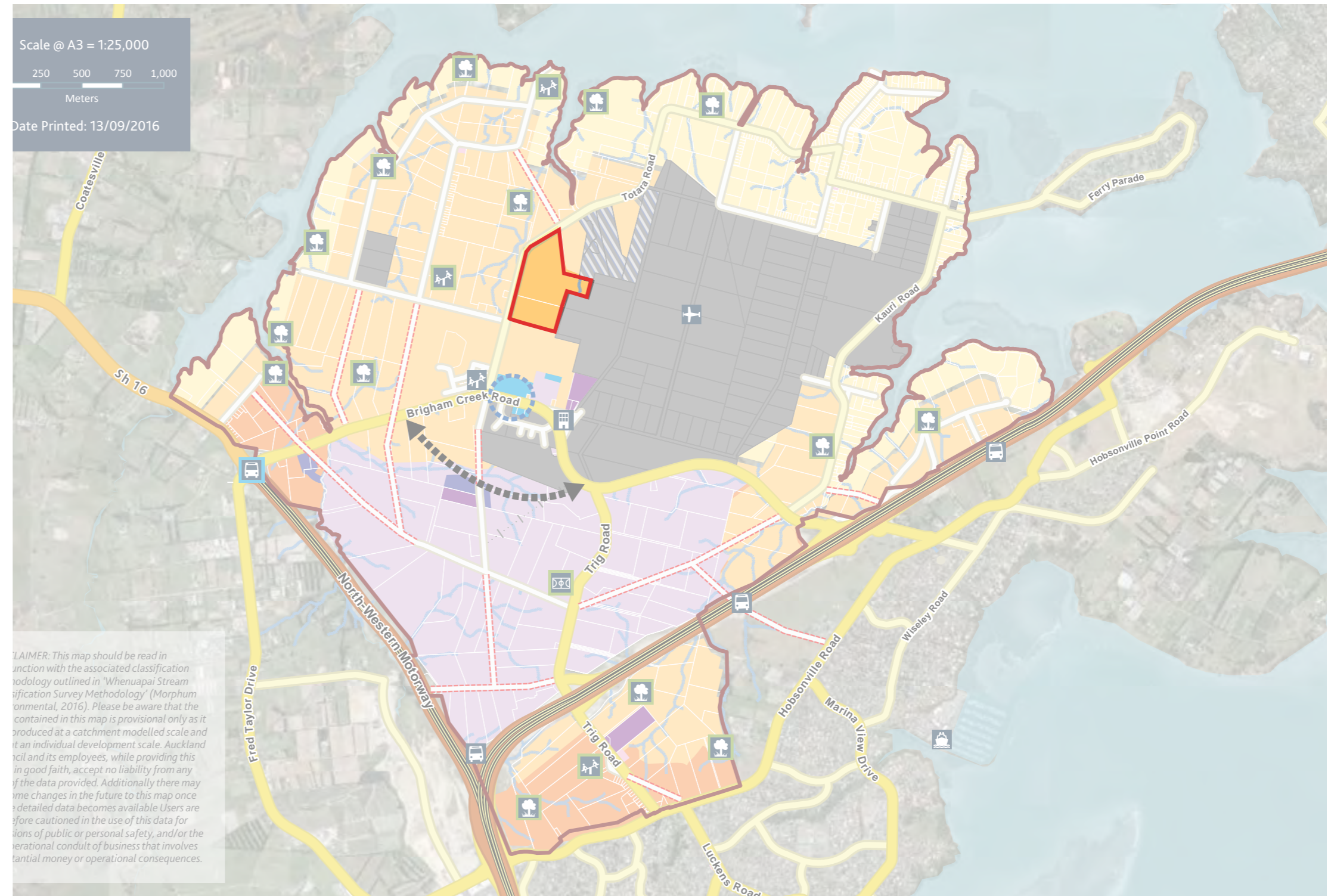


Figure 7. Extract from Whenuapai Structure Plan, 2016

coastline where possible while recognising the sensitivity of the coast to erosion and inundation

- (19.) provide a safe and well-connected network of streets that utilises existing roads where possible and enables multi-modal movement within the structure plan area
- (20.) provide transport infrastructure and connections that enable increased provision of multi-modal transport for both residential and business neighbourhoods
- (21.) Provide for the sustainable management of taonga (e.g. the importance of protecting the mauri of waterways, recognition of mana whenua culture, traditions, tikanga, place names, artefacts, wāhi tapu and historic places and areas) and how these elements can be incorporated into the structure plan and future plan change process as advanced by Te Kawerau ā Maki and Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara.

The Open Space and Recreation Map of the Whenuapai Structure Plan indicates the Ratarua Stream as an indicative esplanade and highlights the potential for streams to function as ecological linkages and accommodate walking and cycling infrastructure.

The Structure Plan also indicates the future Whenuapai local centre and this is reflected in the current Auckland Unitary Plan zoning. Plans for development have been consented and construction is underway.

*"The current resource consent approved by Council comprises a centre with integrated building complexes with an approx 10,000m2 of Floor area, encompassed over 4 separate buildings. The whole project is anticipated to take approx 3-4 years to be totally completed. The Local centre will contain a wide variety of facilities a medical centre, super market, gym, motel, retail outlets cafes, restaurants and office."*

<http://www.whenuapaicentre.com>

### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- adopt the Mixed Housing Urban Zone which provides good opportunity for medium density residential development while managing the interface with the air base
- extend the existing pedestrian and cycle network and ensure good connections for all modes to the future town centre, primary school and public transport in order to promote low carbon lifestyle
- explore opportunity to link (pedestrian and ecological) to the coast
- provide for all-mode connections to adjacent Future Urban Zoned land (including futreproofing access to RNZDF land)

Whenuapai Structure Plan September 2016

## Open Space and Recreation

Figure 15: Open Space and Recreation map

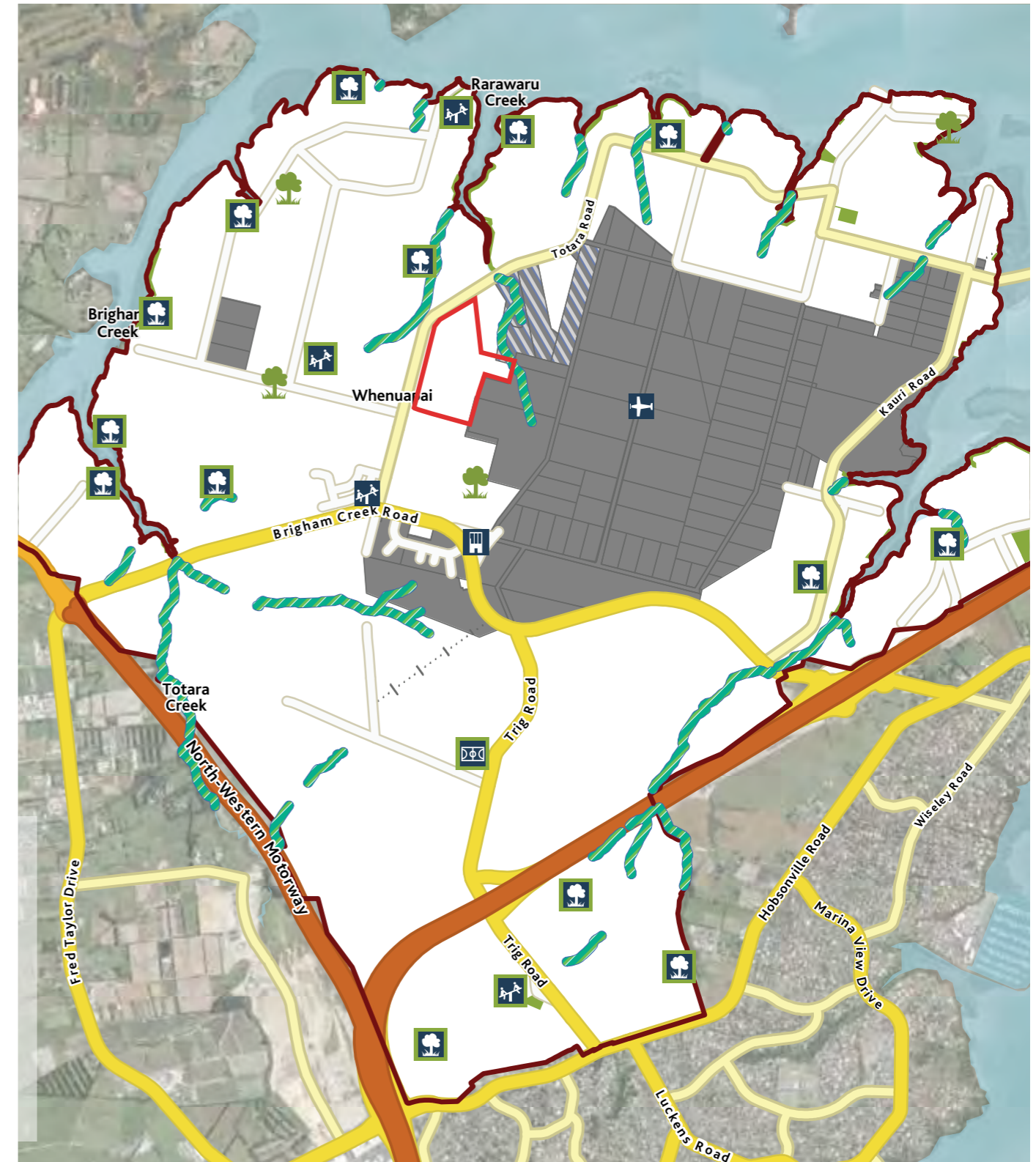
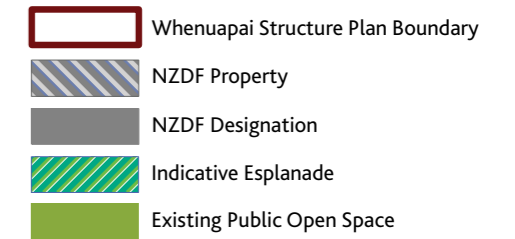


Figure 8. Extract from Whenuapai Structure Plan, 2016

## 6.5 Auckland Council Urban Ngahere Strategy

Auckland's urban ngahere is the realm of Te Waonui o Tāne (the forest domain of Tāne Mahuta) and consists of the network of all trees, other vegetation and green roofs – both native and introduced – in existing and future urban areas. Auckland's urban ngahere is diverse; it includes trees and vegetation in road corridors, parks and open spaces, natural stormwater assets, community gardens, living walls, green roofs and trees and vegetation in the gardens of private properties. The urban ngahere, like the pōhutukawa fringing Auckland's coastline, is an important part of Auckland's identity and natural heritage and shapes the fabric of the landscape. We will know we have been successful when we have:

- increased canopy cover across Auckland's urban area
- enhanced the associated social, environmental, economic and cultural benefits
- addressed unequal distribution of canopy cover through increasing canopy cover in neighbourhoods with previously low levels of cover
- increased the network of green infrastructure on public land
- improved linkages between green spaces by establishing ecological corridors
- effectively engaged with private landowners to support a thriving urban ngahere on private land
- planted diverse tree and plant species on public land
- shared knowledge of our urban ngahere
- instilled a sense of pride in Aucklanders for their urban ngahere.

Along with more recent policy direction like the Auckland Climate Plan, and the National Adaptation Plan, the above direction requires a planning response to deliver sufficient canopy cover, connected ecological corridors and biodiversity.

### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- ensure capacity for street trees in all public roads
- explore opportunity to create connected vegetated corridors between stormwater management areas, riparian corridors and public reserves while recognising the limitations for tree canopy due to the air base
- enhance and protect riparian corridors traversing the plan change area

## 6.6 Cultural Impact Assessment

A Cultural Impact Assessment was provided by the Te Kawerau Iwi Tiaki Trust for a fast track application for housing within the Plan Change Area in 2021, with the purpose of providing “the Client and relevant statutory agencies with documentation of Te Kawerau ā Maki's cultural values, interests, and associations with the project area and its natural resources, and the potential impacts of the proposed project activities on these (and) recommendations as to how to avoid, remedy or mitigate any potential cultural effects that arise from the project.”

Recommendations include:

- The adoption of 100% native eco-sourced plantings for all streetscape, reserve or public spaces within the development
- The adoption of a combination of tree pits, vegetated swales, proprietary devices or other methods such as to develop a secondary or tertiary (three-step) stormwater treatment process for the development
- Stream restoration (including in order of preference daylighting/use of bridge/decently sized culvert with fish passage design) within the property footprint including riparian planting
- That the developer encourages neighbouring properties to undertake stream restoration works, and, where possible, co-ordinate efforts for a net positive outcome
- Retain or reinter cut soils within the Site as much as possible, including through landscaping or other means
- Work with TKaM on incorporating our wāhi tohu and history into the development through things like street naming, park/reserve naming, and naming the new school (if applicable)

Consultation with Te Kawerau ā Maki and all mana whenua groups has been undertaken for this PPC. No response has been received from mana whenua. The applicant wishes to ensure that previous advice and recommendations are incorporated within the plan change request.

The applicant is committed to ongoing collaboration with Mana Whenua and will continue to engage throughout the PPC process.

### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- identify and revegetate and protect the riparian corridors through a combination of identified reserves or controls over individual properties which include or adjoin these spaces
- explore the retention or relocation of totara and cabbage trees where practical

## 6.7 Upper Harbour Greenways Plan 2019

The purpose of Auckland's Greenway Plan is to identify potential links between local open spaces, streets, educational and community facilities, libraries and parks, to create safe and accessible walking and cycling networks that will improve community health and ecological connections and inspire a reduction in private vehicle use for local trips. It is a long-term plan with the aim of significantly improving walking, cycling and ecological connections within the urban and rural environs of the Upper Harbour Local Board area. The Greenways Plan walking and cycle path network is comprised of four distinct path types, each having a design treatment based on their proposed use and environmental context.

**Express Path** - Forming the base structure of the path network, express paths are cross city connections that provide walking and cycling separated from vehicles, creating links to regional and local centres.

**Local Path - Street** - An On-street Local Path has pedestrians accommodated on footpaths with streets that are safe enough to cycle on without the need for separated cycle lanes. Traffic calming tools, pavement markings and signage are used to improve safety for all street users.

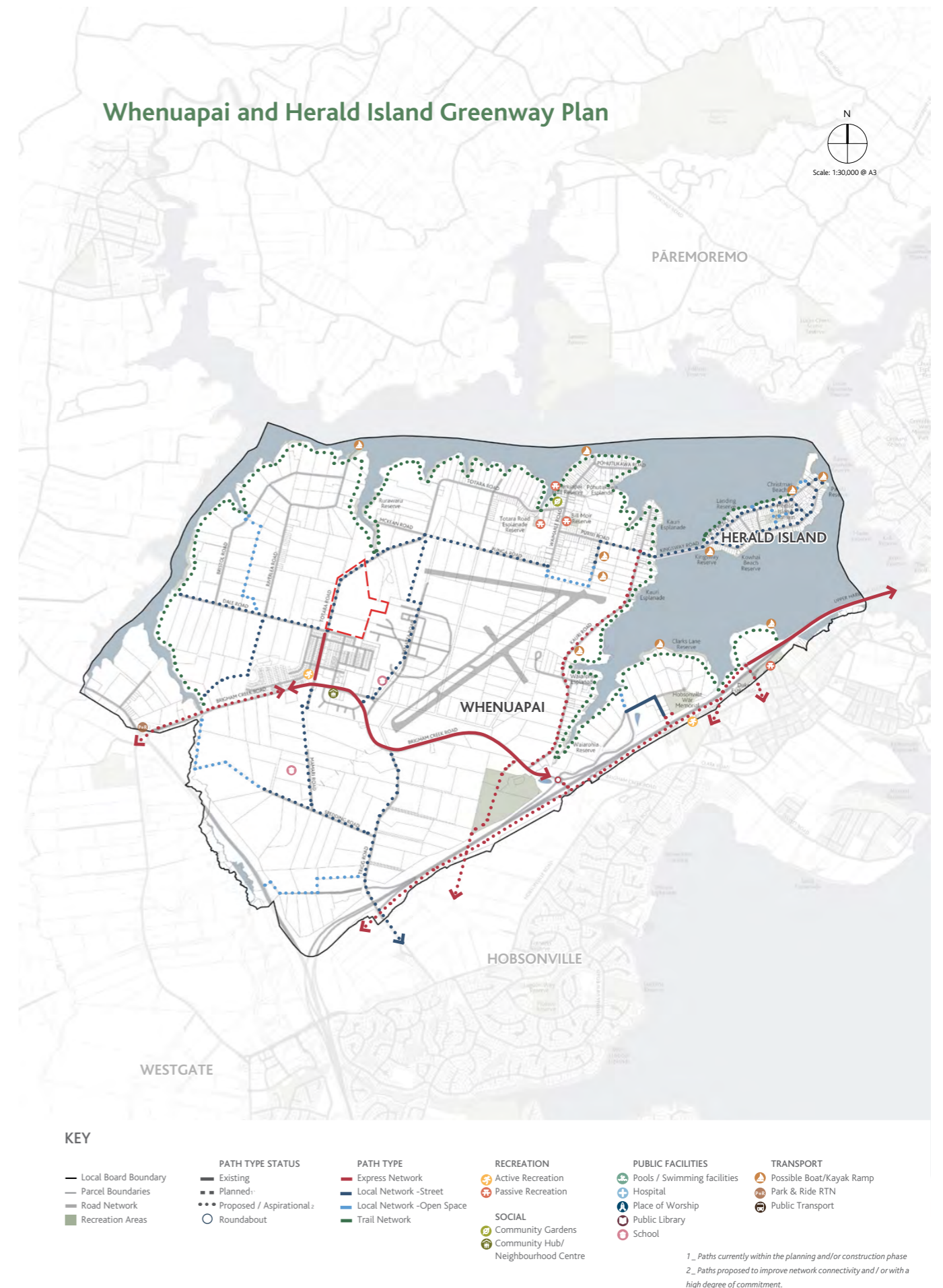
**Local Path - Open Space** - Off-road Local Paths run through parks and open spaces and accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians. Together with On-street Paths they are designed to create links to local centres parks, schools and transport links including express paths.

**Trail** - Distinct from a Local Path, a Trail is found alongside streams, coasts or in rural or bush settings and are primarily for recreation. Trails may connect to off road Local Paths and can also allow for horse-riding alongside walking and cycling. Trails are not generally intended to form a connection between destinations, and often run in loops through and around open spaces.

Focus Area 5 includes Whenuapai and proposes Key Connection 5B to link to the proposed Express Path between SH16 and SH18. This connection is proposed along Totara Road, the western boundary of the plan change site. The design of Totara Road to the south of the plan change site aligns with this intention as it has a separated cycle lane on both sides of the street.

### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- continue the current design for Totara Road to include separated cycle paths
- provide for street trees on Totara Road to support ecological connection
- explore the potential to include a local/site specific link for pedestrians and cyclists that also supports ecological values by connecting green spaces, riparian corridors, the coastal environment and/or tree canopy





## 6.8 Interfaces

### Royal New Zealand Defence Force

Land to the east is zoned Future Urban but also subject to a Airbase Restriction Designation which protects the continued operation of the Whenuapai Airbase. The ongoing activity on this site is sensitive to the numbers and types of birds in the area and the degree of reflectivity on structures within the approach/flight path. A key matter of concern for the Ministry of Defence relates to the potential for housing to be established under the approach path to the runway on the adjacent Whenuapai Airbase. This is protected through Designation 4311, which requires written approval from NZDF for subdivision or changes to land use within a specified part of the Whenuapai Green site.

The PPC area is also subject to noise, including engine testing, associated with aircraft.

The boundary interface itself is not considered to constitute a constraint to general residential amenity. It is generally open; buildings are setback from the boundary and NZDF accept a 1.8m closed boarded fence along the boundary.

The NZDF land is zoned Future Urban and it is possible that some future residential activity may eventuate there or that the facility could benefit from additional vehicle access points (e.g. to increase resilience).

#### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- manage/mitigate noise
- place lots such that they “back on to” the NZDF land and thereby reduce potential visibility and access
- locate non-residential uses (such as stormwater management/dry pond areas) adjacent to the boundary where practical
- adopt restrictions to limit reflectivity values of structures and risk of bird strike
- provide the ability for local roads to extend into the NZDF site in the future in order to futureproof connectivity (subject to NZDF approval)

### McCaw Avenue

This street constitutes the immediate residential interface and the opportunity for the plan change site to integrate seamlessly with the existing urban area.

#### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- provide for a mix of dwelling types and designs which reflect the urban character of McCaw Avenue; and
- provide for multi-modal connections to McCaw Avenue and further south to the future town centre

### Adjacent Rural Activities and Totara Road

Land to the north, east and west is currently rural or rural lifestyle in use. Land to the north and west is however, zoned Future Urban in the Auckland Unitary Plan and anticipated to develop as a medium density residential environment by the Whenuapai Structure Plan (2016).

Given this zoning, it is not considered necessary to provide a specific transition, for example a low density zoning or greater yard setback. Much of the site boundary is defined by Totara Road which in itself provides a setback from existing rural activity to the north and west.

Adopting a zoning adjacent to the boundaries which provides for a lesser density (e.g. Mixed Housing Suburban or Single House Zone) is not considered appropriate for the following reasons:

- this rural activity interface condition is assumed to be temporary and that future urban land will eventually develop;
- **Totara Road is a collector road and subject to individual vehicle access restrictions which in turn favours rear access typologies and dwellings actively fronting the street.** This typology is best provided for by the Mixed Housing Urban Zone which enables smaller site sizes and slightly higher building coverage. The key difference is that the MHU Zone provides for three storeys in building height. Whilst this may allow for greater building form adjacent to existing rural activity, it does continue the built character already established on Totara Road and reflect the **collector road** status. It also provides for greater passive surveillance of the street which is beneficial given the pedestrian priority and cycleways;
- the design for Totara Road to the south accommodates on-street parking and street trees/gardens that can assist with the transition from rural to residential activity;
- land to the south of the plan change area is zoned MHU and development therein has established the current built character and sense of place;
- Whilst Auckland Council/Plan Change 78 has not yet determined the zone for land to the south of the plan change site, Mixed Housing Urban Zone is the predominant zone through the urban area; and
- implementing a lesser density or greater building setback along the interface reduces the potential residential yield and efficient use of the land resource in a highly accessible/walkable location (relative to the future town centre).

#### Recommendations for Precinct Planning

- adopt the Mixed Housing Urban Zone to enable a range of dwelling types and lifestyle choice
- continue the design of the eastern berm of Totara Road to include street parking and landscaping

# 7.0

## proposal

In response to the sites' opportunities and constraints, urban design effects and overall statutory direction, a precinct plan and associated provisions have been developed to inform future subdivision and development.

Key features of the proposed Precinct Plan include:

- Mixed Housing Urban zoning
- the indicative location of local roads which ensure connectivity with existing and potential future adjacent urban activity
- the indicative location of a neighbourhood park
- a pedestrian and cycle link
- identification of green/riparian corridors associated with intermittent and permanent streams

Other Precinct specific provisions include:

- provisions to ensure residential amenity with respect to noise
- provisions to protect the safe and effective operation of the airbase

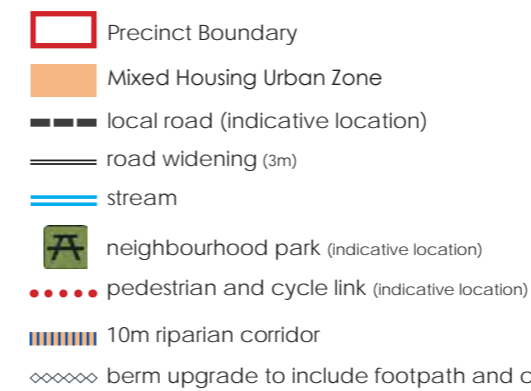
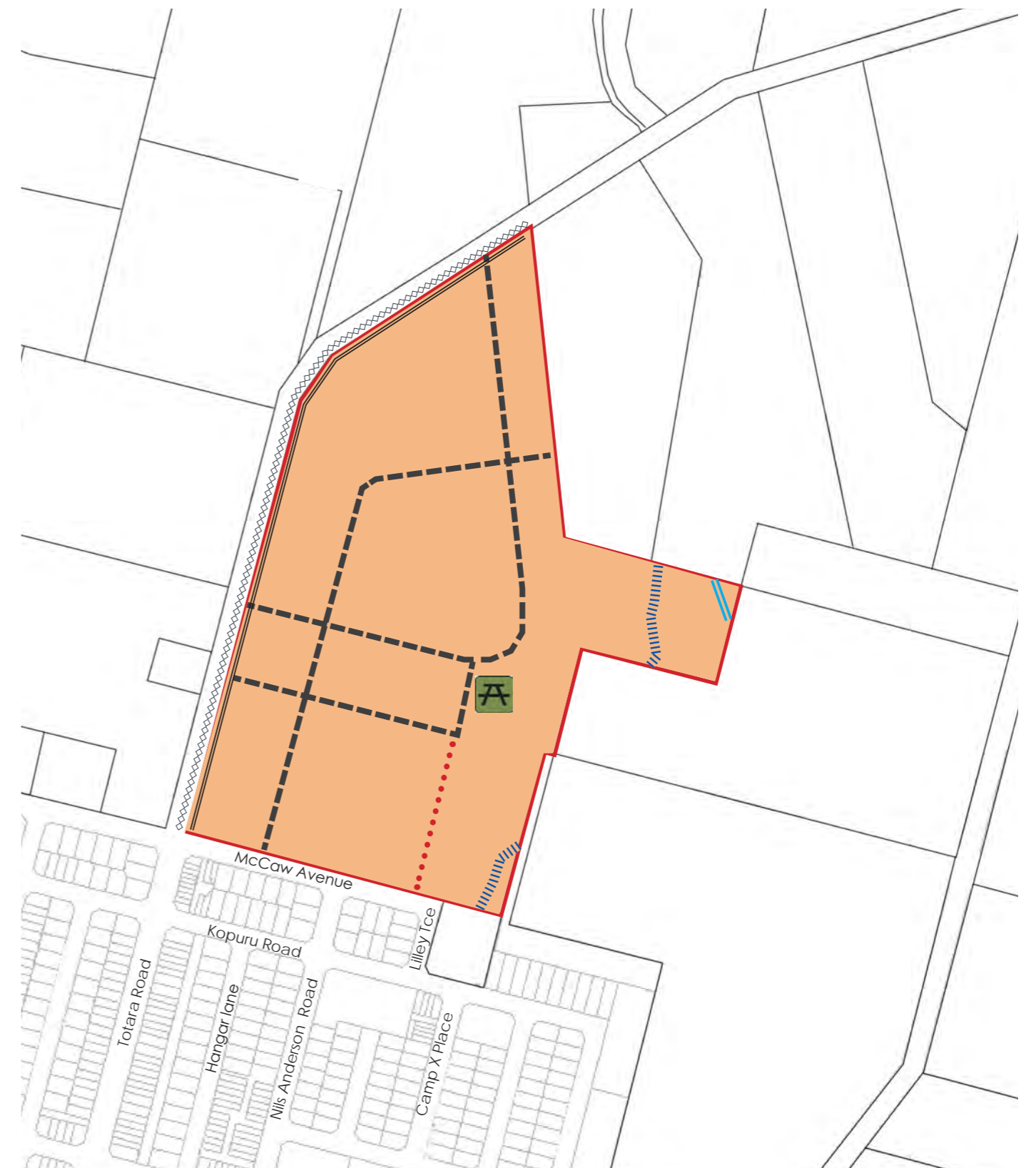


Figure 9. Proposed Whenuapai Green Precinct Plan

# 8.0

## assessment

### 8.1 Approach to Assessment

The proposal is for a plan change to rezone the site from Future Urban Zone to Residential - Mixed Housing Urban Zone, supported by the adoption of a site-specific Precinct Plan and Provisions that respond to site specific opportunities and constraints. Future subdivision of the site and housing development are subject future resource consent processes.

In response to site analysis and design drivers, the appropriate framework for this assessment covers how the proposed zoning, precinct plan map and provisions align with:

- current national and regional policy;
- the Auckland Unitary Plan;
- the Whenuapai Structure Plan; and
- urban design best practice, informed by the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol and other recognised sources

Based on the above direction, the specific criteria developed to assess this plan change proposal from an urban design perspective therefore include whether or not it:

- makes good use of the land resource and provides for housing that meets local requirements and market conditions
- ensures residential amenity and access to local facilities and services, including open space
- responds to its specific interfaces
- integrates with the existing and developing local context
- connects to existing and future urban environments
- provides for healthy streets that also contribute to local amenity and character
- promotes use of public transport and provides for active transport modes to reduce car dependency
- promotes connected open space corridors

### 8.2 Development which makes good use of the land resource and housing that meets local requirements and market conditions

The proposed Mixed Housing Urban Zone (MHU) is supported from an urban design perspective for the following reasons:

- the site is generally within a walkable catchment which supports the existing neighbourhood centre and the zoned/developing local centre;
- it is a logical extension of the existing residential environment which is also zoned MHU;
- it provides for a mix of housing types including detached dwellings, duplexes and low rise apartments (up to three storeys);
- it aligns with the developing market and provides for both comprehensively developed sites and houses as well as “vacant lots” with a minimum site size of 300m<sup>2</sup>;
- it provides for built form that is consistent with the existing and developing residential character in Whenuapai which is characterised by two and three storey dwellings in either detached, duplexed or terraced form;
- it provides for a similar degree of residential amenity as the Mixed Housing Suburban Zone (e.g. outlook, outdoor living space et.) but provides for greater building height and higher density (through a smaller minimum subdivision size);
- whilst a Terrace Housing and Apartment Zone would provide for greater residential density (due to greater permitted building height), built form of this scale aligns with the Whenuapai Structure Plan and is considered better located closer to the town centre where it would reinforce its legibility and benefit from closer proximity to local services;
- no transition to rural areas, low density residential areas or the coast is necessary due to the scale of the future urban zone and distance from the coast;
- the precinct plan includes a neighbourhood park which provides opportunities for medium density housing typologies to benefit from greater opportunity for recreation and also provides for greater potential passive surveillance of the park;
- it is understood that existing and proposed infrastructure can accommodate the likely density of a MHU zone; and
- as precinct provisions and other mechanisms can protect residential amenity with regard to potential effects associated with the airbase, a lower density response if not required/ appropriate.

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In summary, the Mixed Housing Zone provides the “right density in the right place” and balances land and infrastructure utilisation with the local context and likely market conditions and preferences. It is also consistent with the Whenuapai Structure Plan, which indicates the plan change site as “medium density”. This zoning is also considered to be consistent with the direction of the NPS:UD and Chapter B of the AUP, particularly given:

- it provides for housing choice appropriate to the location
- enables a higher residential density than a Mixed Housing Suburban Zoning (notably through building height) close to a local centre and bus route
- is flexible and can respond to market changes/trends
- ensures on-site residential amenity outcomes through a combination of current zone development standards and proposed precinct plan provisions

### 8.3 Residential amenity and access to local facilities and services, including open space

On-site residential amenity will be ensured by the current provisions of the AUP’s Mixed Housing Urban Zone. The site is generally within easy walking distance of the existing neighbourhood centre (south of Brigham Creek Road) and the developing new local centre which is intended to accommodate a range of uses including a medical centre, small supermarket, offices, and hospitality and retail units. It is also within walking distance of Whenuapai Park. The proposed cycleways along Totara Road connect to the existing cycleway which leads to the town centre, the Parkhouse Cafe, Whenuapai Park and Playground. Pedestrian and cycle facilities on Totara Road are prioritised over vehicle crossings (individual crossings are proposed to be restricted by the proposed precinct provisions) which promotes the safety and convenience of these active modes.

In addition to Whenuapai Park, a proposed neighbourhood park within the plan change site will provide opportunities for recreation within a 5 minute walk for all future residents of the plan change site.

Access to Whenuapai Primary School is also enabled through proposed connections to McCaw Avenue.

### 8.4 Interface Response

The precinct plan and associated provisions respond appropriately to the plan change sites’ interfaces namely:

- it adopts a zoning which can deliver development along McCaw Ave with a similar scale and type of housing to that of the immediate neighbourhood
- it upgrades Totara Road to an urban standard which will extend the footpath and separated cycleway

With respect to the adjacent NZDF land, a zoning response is not considered necessary (e.g. proposing a lower density) nor a greater yard/building setback. It is anticipated that appropriate boundary treatment (such as a 1.8m closed boarded fence) will be provided along the boundary and this can be confirmed at resource consent stage. Future landscaping along the boundary can also serve to soften the interface but this is not considered necessary as a precinct provision and various appropriate design solutions can be determined at the resource consent stage.

The northern part of the plan change site is subject to an Aircraft Noise Overlay and a designation which requires approval from NZDF for future land use and subdivision in the plan change site. Previous consultation with NZDF has resulted in the development of a range of precinct plan provisions to appropriately manage effects on the air base, including:

- no complaints covenants in respect of aircraft noise
- measures to avoid risk of bird strike, lightning and glare
- noise mitigation and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms located within the plan change area

With respect to protecting residential amenity within the site, the proposed noise attenuation measures are considered sufficient. As part of the PPC, it is proposed to remove the small area (less than 5m) of the Historic Heritage Overlay associated with the Officers Mess from the site. The remaining extent of the overlay on NZDF land is not considered a constraint as the site is separated from the building by a riparian corridor and existing fence.

Land on the western side of Totara Road is predominantly used for more rural activities compared to remaining land surrounding the plan change site but is also zoned Future Urban in the Auckland Unitary Plan. It is therefore expected to be urbanised in due course. This change will further support the efficient use of land and infrastructure, particularly Totara Road with its bus route and separated cycleways. As such, no specific precinct plan response is considered necessary as a transition or buffer to rural activity west of Totara Road. A lower density, greater yard/building setback or fencing/landscaping requirement will reduce the efficiency of development and create an artificial boundary within the urban area in the future. Furthermore, enabling built form to actively enclose and front Totara Road to provide active frontage and passive surveillance (on both sides) is a positive urban design outcome.

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## 8.5 Integration/connection with the existing and developing local context

The precinct plan map illustrates an appropriate level of roading to ensure development integrates with the immediate context and provides sufficient permeability. The indicative location of local roads ensures connections between Totara Road and McCaw Avenue but allows for some flexibility with respect to the locations of intersections etc.

The indicative local roads promote linkage to Totara Road which has good pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and feeds movement along the desire line to the town centre. Whilst Nils Anderson Road provides a direct connection to the town centre and Brigham Creek Road, it is considered preferable to limit the number of vehicles using this road and the Nils Anderson Road/Brigham Creek Road intersection and instead prioritise the signalised intersection at Brigham Creek Road and Totara Road. However, pedestrian and cycle connection along Nils Anderson Road towards the town centre are still provided for through an identified connection on the precinct plan map. This is proposed as an active mode connection only due to the short distance between Nils Anderson Road and Lilley Place which precludes another road intersection along McCaw Avenue, unless it intersects directly with Lilley Place which in turn is a low capacity “park edge” type road.

While multi-modal connections are generally considered best practice urban design, in this instance, and due to the constraints described above, this is considered acceptable.

It is assumed that the pedestrian and cycle link will be provided as a vested public open space via a future resource consent process. The location, length and interfaces of this link will be determined at a future resource consent stage as a Restricted Discretionary Activity. As such, the urban design outcomes associated with the pedestrian and cycle link are ensured by the current MHU direction as follows:

The precinct plan map also illustrates a local road which terminates at the boundary with the NZDF site on the eastern boundary. This provides an opportunity for future connection should that land be rezoned or redeveloped in the future or if NZDF wish to have an additional site access. It also provides for public access to the stream corridor.

A future road connection is also provided to the boundary of 94 Totara Road which is also zoned Future Urban in the AUP. This ensures connectivity between individual stages/developments in the future and the ability for those residents to access the proposed neighbourhood park and further to the town centre.

## 8.6 provides for connectivity and streets that also contribute to local amenity and character

Local roads, of varying width, are included in the precinct plan for the plan change site and provide for a clear hierarchy of movement. Totara Road is indicated as a collector road and accommodates active modes along with carriageways that carry buses and a central flush median to facilitate left and right turning movements and pedestrian refuges. Like the existing urbanised portion of Totara Road, it also has parking bays and street tree berms.

Three options for local roads are proposed for the plan change site. The key local road, providing a link from Totara Road through the plan change site, has a 20m width, with the remaining local roads proposed being either 15m or 17m in width. All of the local roads proposed accommodate 1.8m footpaths on both sides of the carriageway, with the 17m and 20m local roads also having provisions for landscaping and parking bays. They are proposed to accommodate traffic calming measures and include a 30km/hr speed limit to provide a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The indicative location of the local roads on the precinct plan provides for connectivity and permeability but does not promote overly long or direct routes which could encourage high speeds or “rat running”.

The 20m local road loops through the plan change site and has dedicated landscape berms on both sides of the carriageway (in addition to the street trees between indented parking bays) which enables significant tree planting. This assists with a number of good urban outcomes including:

- visually reinforcing the function of the key local road and thereby the legibility of the roading network
- providing amenity for all road user, particularly pedestrians
- providing opportunities for planting, such as street trees, which can assist in creating ecological corridors between passive and open spaces and assist with climate change and biodiversity loss

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### 8.7 promotes use of public transport and provides for active transport modes to reduce car dependency

The proposed precinct plan requires the upgrading of the eastern berm of Totara Road to include a footpath and separated cycleway which provides the primary active mode link to the town centre. All local roads are proposed to accommodate footpaths on both sides of the carriageway. Local roads are intended to be slow speed environments which accommodate cycling on the carriageway.

The proposed Mixed Housing Urban zoning promotes a higher residential density (than Mixed Housing Suburban) which better supports bus services. The existing bus route (Bus 114 between Hobsonville Point and Westgate) is located on Totara Road. The precinct plan's indicative local roads connect to Totara Road in three places (with a maximum separation distance of approximately 500m), providing a suitable minimum level of linkage to the bus network. Additional pedestrian linkages could be provided depending on the final location of drainage reserves.

Pedestrian and cycle connections to McCaw Ave are ensured through the precinct plan to provide an alternative/additional connection to the town centre and Brigham Creek Road

### 8.8 promotes healthy and connected open space corridors

The precinct plan indicates the location of a green link which enters and exits the site in two locations. This corridor is associated with an intermittent stream which enters the property from the existing stormwater management area on Lilley Place. This stream exits the property (onto NZDF land) and re-enters further north, after which it exits again to continue its path towards the upper harbour. A small portion of the permanent Ratarua Stream enters and exits the plan change site across a north west corner.

Given Auckland Council's preference for public open space not being located within riparian corridors, this land will be covered by the proposed Mixed Housing Urban zoning. The appropriate precinct plan provisions will ensure adequate riparian corridors are provided and maintained by future owners.

The indicative pedestrian and cycle link on the proposed Precinct Plan provides an open space link between the existing passive open space at Lilley Terrace and the proposed neighbourhood park. This link can be delivered through the provision of vested and landscaped open space via future resource consent processes.

The retention of permanent and intermittent streams where they cross the plan change area, along with adopting a native planting strategy and an effective stormwater management system will align with recommendations made in the Cultural Impact Assessment by Te Kawerau ā Maki.

# 8.0

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## conclusion

The proposed rezoning and precinct planning process has recognised urban design analysis and recommendations and, through assessment against a set of principles/outcomes has been shown to be consistent with best practice urban design.

It is also considered to:

- be a logical extension of the existing urban area, an appropriate land use and a contribution to compact urban form;
- make provision for future extension/connectivity;
- be well connected both locally to the Whenuapai town centre and further afield;
- respond to the site's unique opportunities and constraints;
- make good use of land within a walkable catchment of local services and facilities; including public transport;
- enable a mix of housing with good amenity and a focus around a neighbourhood park; and
- appropriately manage the site's interfaces with the existing residential environment and Whenuapai Airbase; and
- be consistent with the high level direction with respect to urban design, particularly the Whenuapai Structure Plan (2016).

As such, it is supported from an urban design perspective.