



context

SECTION 2

CONTEXT

2.1 Marlborough snapshot

The need to plan for growth and development in Blenheim and the local communities is better understood against the background of some headline trends pertaining to economy, employment, population, and tourism in Marlborough. The following is based on reporting for the Blenheim town centre project and partly sourced from 'Marlborough's Townships and small settlements growth study' by Environmental Management Services Ltd for Marlborough District Council (June 2008).

State of the economy

Marlborough has transitioned from a horticulture-based economy to high value viticulture. This has led to employment growth but at the same time to a less diversified, and therefore, more vulnerable economy.

Employment growth is projected for Marlborough's core resource-based industries and many of these are characterised by low average earnings. This ties in with the fact that hourly earnings in Marlborough are lower than the national average.

Traditional production systems, transportation and ways of using resources may soon become inadequate as overseas markets demand more rigorous standards in response to climate change - and Marlborough's economy is still largely based on land and water resources.

Water and Marlborough

In drought-prone Marlborough the sustainability of water supplies is a key determinant of future growth. Responsible management of groundwater resources, which are crucial for water supply, is of the greatest importance. On the other hand, many parts of the district are flood-prone, or may influence flooding in surrounding areas, which severely constrains potential land-uses.

There are very few natural areas remaining in the District outside of parts of the public estate in the Sounds and the mountains. In the immediate environment of Blenheim and the settlements less than 1% of the original indigenous vegetation remains. The only significant potential sources of natural values are the remaining waterways. The once vast wetlands that covered the area have been drained and canalised into straight manmade waterways. Even though they are referred to as drains, they are the last surviving remnants of a habitat that is utilised by native species on a daily basis. Effects of urban development on freshwater ecology can be mitigated by controlling substrate, depth, flow and riparian vegetation. This process could potentially induce the return of species.

Provision of Retail Space

Existing retail supply is estimated at 84,700 square metres in the Marlborough District by Market Economics Ltd. Currently around 43,200 people reside in Marlborough District, 29,000 of which live within Blenheim. It is suggested that the area is generally well served by the current provision of retail floorspace based on a rough industry rule of

thumb of 2 square metres of retail space per person. However, this is not to say that more retailers should not be welcomed, only that the District does not appear to have an under provision of retail floor space.

Ageing population

Differing population projections for Marlborough to 2031 suggest a low decline to modest population growth (from the current 43,200 people to between 41,800 and 53,800). Therefore, population growth alone is unlikely to drive economic growth. The resident population is aging and the highest population growth comes from the over 60s, and those approaching retirement who are over 50 years old. The contribution of these groups to the local economy, economic growth and retail expenditure will likely decline as they age.

Tourism

The above trends emphasise the need to reinforce Marlborough's attractiveness in the competitive tourism market, which is dependent on adequate accommodation, services, sustainable infrastructure and the way that the townships look and feel. Blenheim, Picton and the smaller settlements each have a role to play in this.

One third of visitors to Blenheim are day visitors (450,000 of the 1.3m visits per year). This is more day visitors than tourists Blenheim is estimated to attract from the Inter Island ferries. Only about 50% of the 1 million ferry passengers per year travel past Blenheim, and less than a third of these are believed to stop and engage with Blenheim. Most Inter Island ferry visitors are older free independent travellers over 60 years old. The other major component of Inter Island ferry passengers are young independent travellers aged 20 to 29 years old. Only a third of Blenheim visitors stay over-night, with the average overnight stay of business and recreational visitors being only 1.6 nights.

Attracting a younger population

Trends show a loss of those aged 39 years and younger. This extends beyond Marlborough's young adults leaving for higher education, overseas, or big city attractions. The loss includes those in the family formation stages of their life. Figures suggest a large turnover of residents, with 50% of residents arriving within the last 10 years (but population growth in that period was less than 16%).

Like many other districts, Marlborough is facing the challenge of attracting residents to settle permanently in the district. Blenheim, Picton and the smaller communities could play a major role for Marlborough District in attracting and retaining young people, through the creation of a diverse recreational facilities, as well as employment, education and training opportunities. The development of attractive and affordable residential environments is crucial for the success of attracting a younger population. There is a real shortage of affordable housing for low-moderate income households, which is expected to intensify unless measures are adopted to supply affordable new housing. Each of the settlements has elements of distinctive character which can be further developed to reinforce community identity, enhance character and create points of difference.

CONTEXT

2.2 Inner Sounds snapshot

The Wairau River is the approximate divider between the drier, less forested south Marlborough area and the wetter more forested north Marlborough and Sounds area. This part of the Growing Marlborough Project focuses on Marlborough North, with specific focus on the most populated part, the Inner Sounds area.

Population

The Sounds population was stable between 1996 and 2001 but, since 2001, has grown by 4%. The Sounds' settlements' population growth has been concentrated in Waikawa (which has had a 17% increase in 10 years) and the small settlements in the Sounds. Picton's population (excluding Waikawa) has declined slightly but consistently since 1996. Havelock's population has been relatively stable since 2001.

Recreational opportunities, a mild climate and lifestyle opportunities attract a relatively large number of wealthy people retiring to Marlborough with the means to fund "higher-end" quality housing. This means that the population in the area is ageing and the affordability of housing and services is declining.

Non-permanent residents

The summer influx of people on vacation and tourists also have a marked effect on the population of Picton and the Sounds. For Picton, data suggest that the peak summer population is about 30% greater than on census night (March). In the Sounds, the figure will be much higher; perhaps 70 - 100% influx.

Economic activities

Key employment sectors include:

- Tourism;
- Aquaculture and processing industry;
- Marine services concentrated in Picton, Waikawa and Havelock;
- Forestry;
- Agriculture;
- Rail and ferry transport services and marine travel.

Picton and Havelock as hubs

Communities within the Inner Sounds areas relate to the larger centres for employment, services, education and other facilities. Picton and Havelock are the main hubs within the area, whilst Blenheim and Nelson fulfil this role for the needs that require a larger population base. Large travel distances, significant travel times, and reliability on private transport have a significant impact on the quality of life in the remote communities.

The importance of water

Water availability is one of the key constraints on future urban growth. Reliability of supply is necessary to maintain business confidence and will require a carefully



managed regime of water allocation, monitoring and management. Freshwater quality is an issue for many of the smaller settlements. Marine water quality is also an important issue for aquaculture that supports many Sounds settlements and for public health reasons in some Sounds' coastal settlements.

Ecology and landscape

Throughout the Sounds, much of the original forest has been cleared for farming or timber. Along with the original forest remnants, there are extensive areas of commercial pine forest as well as regenerating native forest and scrub. There are large areas of DOC estate held in a natural state. Reversing the historic trend of destruction and alienation of indigenous ecosystems, some landowners are returning land to native forest and tackling pests so that native fauna and flora can flourish.

Much of the land around the Sounds is not in its original natural state. However, it has at least a scenic or landscape value and at best it has an important ecological value too. The landscape has huge economic value and benefit to the community in that it forms an environment that people want to visit, experience and live near.

IN CONCLUSION: ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

Headline considerations for the Inner Sounds area are:

- The unique aspirations of the discrete communities;
- Accommodation of residential growth in relation to long-term water supply, sewerage infrastructure, geographic, and ecological constraints;
- Affordability of services and housing;
- Issues associated with large visitor numbers, such as impact from freedom camping on the natural environment, and seasonal pressure on facilities and services.
- Picton as service hub for the Queen Charlotte area and Havelock for the Pelorus and Kenepuru areas;
- Water quality; and
- Impacts from economic and urban activities on landscape and the ecology.

CONTEXT

2.3 Snapshot of the Picton-associated settlements

The following description of key features and urban issues in these settlements is based on public consultation that took place on 8 March 2010 and partly sourced from 'Marlborough's Townships and small settlements growth study' by Environmental Management Services Ltd for Marlborough District Council (June 2008).

NGAKUTA BAY

Key features

- Once a small quiet seaside residential enclave, now a relatively large Sounds settlement occupying the lower slopes of the valley that leads to the circular bay.
- Increasingly popular bay particularly for summer boating, water skiing, swimming, picnics, for Marlburians and visitors.
- The bay is an important ecological site, identified in the DOC Ecologically Important Marine, Freshwater, Island and Mainland as recommended for protection. It is one of a relatively few estuarine areas in the Sounds which is of high conservation value.
- Flood hazard associated with the stream that flows down the valley through the middle of the settlement. Further works are expected to be required on stormwater drainage.
- Instability hazard on the valley floor and the slopes within and surrounding the settlement.

Consultation findings

Consultation identified the following issues for consideration in the project:

- Walking and cycling opportunities along Queen Charlotte Drive should be improved.
- Speed restrictions should be imposed to improve crossing opportunities for pedestrians.
- A café or store for the community, camp site and freedom campers was suggested.
- Many coastal properties are at risk from sea level rise.
- The jetty needs upgrading.
- There is some scope for residential development at the southern end.
- Water supply is a big issue. There are six sources but only one has resource consent. Water quality is average.
- Several sewerage systems are running at maximum capacity.
- Slow vehicle bays would improve opportunities for safely overtaking.
- There is Iwi interest in the Ngakuta Pa.
- There is a need for pest control of rodents, stoats and feral cats.
- Untapped resources and unknown expertise and experience are available in the community.
- Logging trucks through the settlement are negatively impacting on the quality of life.

MOMORANGI BAY

Key features

Key characteristics of Momorangi Bay have been identified as:

- Readily accessible by road from Picton.
- A settlement nestled into the small area of flat land at the base of a steep valley.
- Facilities and amenities include a camping ground, a convenience store, a boat launching area, and fuel sales outlet.
- There is a flood hazard associated with the stream that flows through the middle of the settlement.
- A land instability hazard affects the settlement.
- Water supply is from surface water. Wastewater disposal is to septic tanks (some of which have discharge consent).
- There is limited scope for development beyond the zoned area or for infill other than the camping ground which is district recreation zoned.

Consultation findings

There was no representation from the Momorangi Bay community at the consultation sessions, held in the Linkwater Hall on 8 March 2010.

WHATAMANGO BAY

Key features

- Parts of the strip of small-lot subdivision on the Port Underwood Road out of Waikawa are zoned Sounds Residential. They are all steep and elevated above the road with physical development challenges.
- The settlement at the head of Whatamango Bay is an attractive small settlement reasonably accessible from Waikawa and Picton.
- There is a substantial area of DOC reserve at the mouth of the stream with boat launching area and camping facilities.
- The river through the middle of the settlement causes a flood hazard.
- There is some limited scope for infill development within the Sounds Residential zone
- There are difficulties with on-site wastewater servicing due to high groundwater levels and springs.

Consultation findings

Consultation identified the following issues for consideration in the project:

- McCormick's Road is in need of an upgrade.
- There is need for 'No Camping' signage at the top of Karaka Point and at the end of McCormick's Road.
- The Council should clarify ownership and location of moorings in the bay.
- Lack of water supply and land instability are seen as growth constraints.
- A small sewerage system is required.

CONTEXT

2.4 Picton and Waikawa snapshot

The following description of key features and urban issues in Picton and Waikawa is based on consultation that took place on 8 and 9 February 2010 and partly sourced from 'Marlborough's Townships and Small Settlements Growth Study' by Environmental Management Services Ltd for Marlborough District Council (June 2008).

KEY FEATURES

Key characteristics of Picton and Waikawa have been identified as:

- Gateway to the Marlborough Sounds and the South Island set in spectacular landscape, with stunning views of the Picton environs and beyond.
- Ferry freight and travellers form a major part of the activity within Picton.
- Picton is a long established visitor destination which continues to grow in popularity.
- The Picton Port forms the concentration point for rail and road (SH1) freight.
- Activities on the waterfront include water taxis, marine services and access for Sounds residents. The area around London Quay is subject to a major reconstruction process.
- Picton and Waikawa are compact settlements contained by steep bush-clad hills and the harbour with linear development between the two nodes.
- Picton and Waikawa both accommodate a large marina and form an important cluster of marine services supporting recreational and commercial fishing and boating.
- Consolidation and improvement of marina facilities in both Picton and Waikawa is an ongoing process as demand for berths and services is growing.
- A deep water port is located in Shakespeare Bay.



CONSULTATION FINDINGS FOR PICTON

On 8 February two focus group meetings took place to exchange ideas between groups of stakeholders, Council staff and the consultant team. On 9 February a public meeting was organised to exchange ideas between the local residents, Council staff and the consultant team. These meetings generated spatial and non-spatial ideas and suggestions for Picton and its context. The two focus groups and the public meeting

constituted a wide range of representatives and sometimes contradictory ideas and opinions were raised for consideration in the project.

Focus Group meetings

- There is a local need for affordable housing and services.
- The community is advocating the construction of a swimming pool. A possible location is still to be decided.
- The library requires expansion or relocation into larger premises.
- Efforts should be focussed towards attracting a younger population to Picton.
- Night-time safety would be improved by additional CCTV surveillance cameras in the town centre and near the foreshore.
- Connections between residential and natural areas should be improved.
- Pedestrian and vehicle connections between the ferries and the town centre should be improved.
- Signage directing visitors to the town centre is generally poor.
- The visibility of the i-Site should be improved.
- Parking pressure is at its maximum from Boxing Day until the end of January. During that period there is a need for increased parking capacity for holiday-makers and temporary residents of the Marlborough Sounds.
- Walking and cycling opportunities should be promoted and improved.
- Vehicle speeds on Kent Street near the Picton School are a safety concern.
- The discussion whether Auckland Street or Kent Street should be designated as SH1 is ongoing.
- Waikawa and beyond totally relies on Waikawa Road for its connectivity for cars and cyclists. Improvement of this road or secondary network should be investigated.
- The streetscape of Upper High Street should be upgraded in accordance with that of Lower High Street.
- The rich history of Picton should be celebrated. There is a need for clear building controls, also to protect Picton's heritage and encourage fitting new architecture.
- Apartment developments increase the pressure on town centre nightlife activities, such as music of bars, people going home, cleaning and expedition noises, etc.
- Instability of surrounding land constrains Picton's expansion opportunities.
- Council is faced with expensive measures pertaining to securing Picton's long term water supply.

Public meeting

- Accessibility to services and facilities for all sectors of the population should be improved.
- Picton needs its own swimming pool as local residents now rely on the pool that is part of the Queen Charlotte College, or Stadium 2000 in Blenheim.
- The library should be extended up or out with spaces for community services upstairs.

- There is a need for more indoor activities for young people.
- Connectivity between the ferries and with the town centre should be improved together with signage to direct visitors to the town centre.
- The Waitohi and Waikawa Streams should be beautified and made more accessible for recreational purposes.
- Walking and cycling should be improved by the construction and connection of tracks. Pedestrian crossings are required to improve pedestrian amenity in the urban areas.
- Streetscape upgrades should include better street lighting and safety and amenity improvements, particularly for mobility scooters.
- “Welcome to Picton” signs should be erected on the approaches to the town.
- There is a need for more boat moorings and carparking in Picton to cater for the wider Sounds population and visitors.
- A passenger transport service to and from Blenheim was suggested, either by rail or bus.
- Kent Street traffic forms a hazard around the Picton School.
- Traffic pressures on Waikawa Road negatively affect its safety.
- Complaints by apartment dwellers or occupants limit town centre activities.
- Heritage items should be protected.
- Establishing the National Whaling Museum in Picton was suggested.
- Waitohi Park will become available after relocation of the Waitohi Rugby Club to Endeavour Park. Industrial development appeared to not be favoured.
- Clean drinking water and clean air should be secured for Picton.
- There are several areas affected by stormwater drainage and flooding issues.

- Improving the safety for all users of Waikawa Road as the main connection between Picton and Waikawa and beyond.
- Providing better opportunities for walking and cycling, and safer and more efficient ways to get around by mobility scooter.
- Considering the Auckland Street vs. Kent Street as designation for SH 1.

IN CONCLUSION: ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

Headline suggestions for Picton and Waikawa Bay are:

- Establishing improved visual and physical connections between the ferries and the town centre.
- Improving signage to direct visitors to the town centre, as well as to mark the urban entrances to Picton and Waikawa.
- Developing standards and guidelines to protect heritage items and to ensure future buildings respect street scale and important views to the harbour, and to enhance the quality of building design.
- Improving the safety and amenity of the town centre for residents and visitors.
- Accommodating residential growth within the tight local constraints.
- Finding a balance between potentially conflicting activities within the town centre.
- Finding the best way to accommodate the increasing library services.
- Investigating options to locate a possible Swimming pool.
- Extending and enhancing biodiversity connections.

CONTEXT

2.5 Snapshot of the Havelock-associated settlements

The following description of key features and urban issues in these settlements is based on public consultation that took place on 8 March 2010 and partly sourced from 'Marlborough's Townships and Small Settlements Growth Study' by Environmental Management Services Ltd for Marlborough District Council (June 2008).

RAI VALLEY

Key features

- A small township, beyond the Sounds, and close to the District's boundary with Nelson, and serving an increasingly diverse rural community, with dairying, forestry, meat and wool as the key rural outputs
- Compact layout with a distinct central commercial core
- A small range of commercial shops and services targeting the rural community and travelling public, along with trade, contractor and engineering businesses that support local industry
- Visitor accommodation facilities, hunting and fishing guides, etc
- Elaine Bay Aquaculture
- Almost all zoned residential land is occupied except for new rural/residential subdivision on the west side of the town
- Approximately 7,000 m² of the zoned mixed use Town Commercial zone is available (with a significant "tooth gap" created by the loss of the former mussel factory)
- Highly popular and well supported Rai Valley A & P show is a feature of the area
- Rai River flows along the eastern side of the township and is an important habitat for some of the native fish species
- Flood hazard associated with the Rai River

Consultation findings

Consultation identified the following issues for consideration in the project:

- Rai Valley accommodates a diverse community in terms of affluence
- There is a reserve located to the south that serves as a camp ground
- Vehicle speed on SH6 through the township is an issue
- There is a good provision of community facilities, but medical facilities are lacking
- There is poor provision of mental health services
- The Rai Valley area school is an important community facility
- What to do with derelict mussel factory?
- There are rural residential lots for sale on the western side of the township
- The Anzac monument is an important historical element

OKIWI BAY

Key features

- A relatively large settlement within Croisilles Harbour - accessible by a long and winding road route from SH 6.
- Okiwi Bay accommodates a camping ground, a convenience store, and fuel sales as well as a boat launching area and small wharf at the northern extreme of the harbour.
- There are generous areas of formed parking bays interspersed along the grassed public foreshore reserve.
- There are also generous areas of DOC and MDC reserve along and near the foreshore. A helicopter landing area is located on the foreshore.

Consultation findings

Consultation identified the following issues for consideration in the project:

- The traffic safety for pedestrians near the playground should be improved.
- There are community plans for a wetland and a walkway in the central community area of the settlement.
- Public access to the jetty should be retained.
- There is limited scope for residential growth in the western area.
- A community sewerage system has recently been developed. There are also plans for a community water supply system.

CANVASTOWN/ WAKAMARINA

Key features

- A small settlement within a rural community with strong heritage associations to former mining and milling.
- The settlement is accessed from but set back from SH6.
- There is no land specifically zoned for residential development but there is a reasonably dense concentration of rural residential development in two areas: along the Wakamarina Road and along a loop of the former state highway.
- There is a cluster of commercial services at the SH 6 junction (tavern, shop).
- The Wakamarina River is a permanent flowing river from a large steep catchment with consistently high water quality.

Consultation findings

There was no representation from the Canvastown/ Wakamarina community at the consultation sessions, held in the Linkwater Hall on 8 March 2010.

ANAKIWA/ TIRIMOANA

Key features

- A cluster of two settlements nestled into the small areas of flat or delta land at the base of the steep Sounds hills.
- One of the few settled areas of the Sounds that are not affected by land instability or flood hazard.
- Both settlements are readily accessible by road from Picton.
- Anakiwa accommodates the Cobham Outward Bound School and jetty.

Consultation findings

Consultation identified the following issues for consideration in the project:

Anakiwa

- Vehicle speeds on the road along the foreshore should be addressed. A speed bump near the jetty was suggested.
- There is a need for sea defences to prevent erosion.
- All visitor accommodation should be consistently indicated with signage.
- More public parking is required, especially near the jetty.
- There is a need for a boat washing area near the jetty.
- 'No Overnight Parking' signage should be erected near the backpackers and Outward Bound.

Tirimoana

- Vehicle speeds on the road along the foreshore should be addressed.
- Council should support the maintenance of the Link Walkway.
- A children's playground was suggested for the foreshore reserve.
- Ensure access to the reserve by buying the section that is for sale on Thompson Place.
- More public parking is required, especially near the boat ramps.
- There is a need for a boat washing area near the jetty.
- The area by the jetty should be dredged.
- New public toilets should be introduced in the popular jetty area.
- There is a need for sea defences to slow erosion.

THE GROVE/LINKWATER

Key features

- The Grove is a north-facing residential settlement nestled between native bush hill and the water.

- The area is readily accessible from Picton.
- The settlement adjoins a large area of flat Rural-zoned farmland.
- Grovetown is subject to instability hazard.
- There is an area of flood hazard on the adjoining flat farm land associated with the Ada Creek's flow into the estuary.
- The Linkwater area consists of a loose cluster formed by the Linkwater Hall, Primary School, Service Station and some shops, surrounded by farmland

Consultation findings

Consultation identified the following issues for consideration in the project:

- Vehicle speeds on Queen Charlotte Drive are an issue.
- There is a need for a walkway off the main road in The Grove.
- A picnic area near the jetty was suggested.
- The jetty is in need of repair.
- A breakwater to protect the jetty was suggested.
- The boat launching ramp needs replacement.
- The Grove Foreshore Reserve needs reclassification to 'recreation' so that the community can do the maintenance.
- The farm on the southwestern side of The Grove has a caveat on it that states that it cannot be subdivided.
- Freedom camping by non-self containing campers creates problems in The Grove.
- There is need for better signposting of public toilets along Queen Charlotte Drive.

OHINGAROA BAY

Key features

- A long narrow strip of Sounds Residential development along Kenepuru Road, which connects with Queen Charlotte Drive at Linkwater.
- Relatively distant by road from both Havelock and Picton.
- Sections are generally steep being located between the elevated road and the coastline.
- Much of the Sounds Residential zoned land is subject to land instability hazard.
- Wastewater disposal is to individual on-site septic tanks and other on-site treatment and disposal systems.

Consultation findings

Consultation identified the following issues for consideration in the project:

- There is need for Slow Vehicle Bays on the straight stretch of road through the populated area to increase opportunities for safely overtaking.
- The Council should consider freedom camping prevention with enforcement.
- A new jetty in Willow Bay or Ohingaroa Bay should be considered within the Jetty Strategy.

CONTEXT

2.6 Havelock snapshot

The following description of key features and urban issues in Havelock is based on public consultation that took place on 8 February 2010 and partly sourced from 'Marlborough's Townships and Small Settlements Growth Study' by Environmental Management Services Ltd for Marlborough District Council (June 2008).

KEY FEATURES

- Gateway to the Pelorus Sound.
- Quiet coastal aspect.
- Key port facilities with lots of daytime and night time activity.
- Relatively large marina with daytime and night time activity.
- Physically contained by the bush-clad amphitheatre hills, harbour, and Pelorus and Kaituna estuaries.
- Compact town centre along main road elevated above harbour with some notable heritage buildings.
- Medium density housing concentrated in two areas near the town centre and at Queen Charlotte Drive intersection.

FINDINGS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

On 8 February a public meeting took place to exchange ideas between the local residents, Council staff and the consultant team. This meeting generated spatial and non-spatial ideas and suggestions for Havelock and its context. As the public constituted a wide range of people, sometimes contradictory ideas and opinions were raised for consideration in the project. Refer to appendix 1 for a detailed overview of these inputs.

The headline suggestions for Havelock are:

- Visual and physical connections between the village and the port and marina area
- Access to the port for heavy traffic, via Outram Street (1)
- Havelock as a quiet seaside village
- Redevelop the northern end of the Port area (2)
- Encourage the development of more restaurants around the Slip-Inn Restaurant (3)
- Develop a heritage trail
- Encourage recreational activities for children and older youth
- Utilise the area near the old timber wharf (4)
- Develop a north-facing beach (5)
- Redevelop the motor camp for other purposes (6)
- Address vehicle speed and severity of traffic through town
- Improve traffic safety for school children (7)
- Increase public parking close to shops
- Consider residential growth relative to land stability issues, stormwater and capacity of services

- Opportunities to create, extend, and connect recreational walking and cycling tracks
- Visitor attractions

