



BENNEYDALE

TOWN CONCEPT PLAN

Executive summary

This is your plan generated to guide the changes that Benneydale faces over the next 15 years.

Benneydale is a special place located in the heart of the King Country. It has a welcoming community and plays an important role as a gateway to the Timber Trail - an 85 km track winding through the Pureora Forest Park.

At the most recent census, Benneydale had a total of 200 permanent residents which has remained relatively steady.

Looking into the future and in the face of changes, we heard from you:

- It is important to retain the special character of Benneydale, but also to embrace new opportunities that will enhance the village; and
- That there are areas where small changes would make a large improvement, whether you are visiting or make Benneydale your home.

Benneydale Today

Captured in this Concept Plan are the features and issues of Benneydale which we know about, and those that you shared with us:

- Location as a gateway to the Timber Trail
- Connecting the two active parts of the village
- Benefits and issues of being located on the State Highway
- The contained nature and size of the village is a defining character.
- Encouraging more visitors to stop and discover Benneydale.
- Increasing footpath connections and making these safe to use.

Key Moves

We have represented your ideas for how Benneydale could be improved or strengthened as a place in the following two Key Moves:

- Strengthen the visitor experience as the gateway to the Timber Trail. Look at future ways to encourage people to stop/visit & explore.
- Increase the public and community facilities for people living in Benneydale.

Future Benneydale

These Key Moves will shape the Benneydale of the future, as a village with a well defined entry, which associates it as a gateway to the Timber Trail, but also a contained village where people stop to explore the other treasures that the village has to offer.

Benneydale will flourish through its central location to other exciting places, including the Tapuwae Garden, Timber Trail and Mapara Track. Visitors will have an opportunity to stop and appreciate the stunning backdrop, the relaxed atmosphere, country lifestyle and community spirit that the village is renowned for. The qualities that make the village what it is today will be retained. Getting around Benneydale will be made easy through new signage and a network of paths that take you to key destinations.

The hall/library will provide a focal point for the community to gather and socialise through upgraded facilities and community events.

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What you love about Benneydale...



"The access to the countryside"

"The community, especially the way neighbours look after each other"



"The children – they are country kids with a practical approach to life"



"The way people cooperate on tasks and events."

"The relaxed atmosphere and country lifestyle"

"The community events and spirit"



"How welcoming and kind people are"



01

Introduction

What's the Vision?

The Council's Vision for the Waitomo District is "Creating a better future with vibrant communities and thriving business". The intent of the vision is to make the District an attractive place that people will want to come and visit, work and live in. The Moves, Actions and Plans (MAP) in this document provide direction on 'how' this Vision can be achieved in Benneydale. The Key Moves align with the community outcomes identified in the Long Term Plan to meet Council's vision. A summary of these community outcomes is contained in the Appendix at the back of this plan.

How has this Concept Plan come about?

The Council identified early on in the District Plan review process that it was important to have a strategic approach. This plan provides this approach for Benneydale.

The plan has been developed in conjunction with the community, tangata whenua, Council staff, Councillors and stakeholders.

A MAP for the future:

This Concept Plan identifies the key features of Benneydale and the known challenges / issues. Using this information as a starting point, 2 key strategic Moves/directions have been identified. The Moves are as follows:

- Move 1: Strengthen the visitor experience as the gateway to the Timber Trail. Look at future ways to encourage people to stop/visit and explore.
- Move 2: Increase the public and community facilities for people living in Benneydale.

For each Move, several Actions have been suggested. A Plan for how each of the actions will be realised is also presented. The Plan is prioritised in terms of what actions can happen soon and which actions are likely to happen later.

Underpinning these moves, actions, and plans is the need for infrastructure (including electricity supply) that is well planned, safe, and resilient.

How will the MAP be used?

The MAP will be used to provide a cohesive way forward for Benneydale. It provides direction for Council on how public areas (such as parks, roads, and walkways) can be developed. It also tells Council which areas the community of Benneydale want to develop and in what order. This helps Council, and other infrastructure providers, to plan for infrastructure in an integrated manner. It provides community groups with a common basis for community projects. For people who are wishing to develop in Benneydale, it provides a blueprint for where and what the community want to see developed. In addition to all of these things it will help both the Council and the community develop our new District Plan. It is a launch pad for the future!

Timeframes

It is anticipated the Concept Plan will run for the life of the District Plan ie: 15 year framework with the ability to update if needed.



Context: Location and History

Key features are:

- Benneydale is located in the heart of the King Country, approximately 3 hours from Auckland and 4 hours from Wellington, between Lake Taupo and Te Kuiti.
- State Highway 30 connects Benneydale to Te Kuiti 35km to the north west (30 minutes drive away), and it is central to Mangakino and Tokoroa to the north-east.
- After coal was discovered in 1931, a mine was built at the Town's present location. In 1940 the government bought the mine and created the township of Benneydale. The mine closed after a major fire in 1962.
- Benneydale's name is a combination of the undersecretary of mines at the time (Mr Benney) and the mine superintendent (Mr Dale).
- At its peak the town had a population of 2000 with a butchery, bakery and picture theatre. There were jobs in the coal mine until the early 1990s, but the population has now declined to approximately 200 permanent residents.
- Benneydale now mainly operates as a farm service town and it is the closest town to the Timber Trail in the Pureora Forest Park. The local meatworks, farms and DoC also provide employment.
- Just one kilometre out of Benneydale is believed to be the centre of the North Island, as well as the Southern Hemisphere.
- During both the winter and summer solstice, Benneydale is a hive of activity, and the community hosts a country fair the last Sunday of every month over summer.

Some of the issues are:

- The State Highway runs through the village with high vehicle volumes and large trucks.
- The town's proximity to the Timber Trail needs to be explored further.
- The history of the town offers an opportunity to provide context and attract visitors interested in New Zealand's timber and mining history.

Pages 15-25 suggest how we address these issues, pages 29-32 give detailed information.



Benneydale showing Ellis Road (State Highway 30) through the township with School Road and Mine Road running parallel



Te Miringa Te Kakara meeting house, near Tiroa and Benneydale was an important meeting house and spiritual home of the Rereahu people. Photograph taken circa 1920 by Albert Percy Godber. Alexander Turnbull Library

Context: Mana whenua

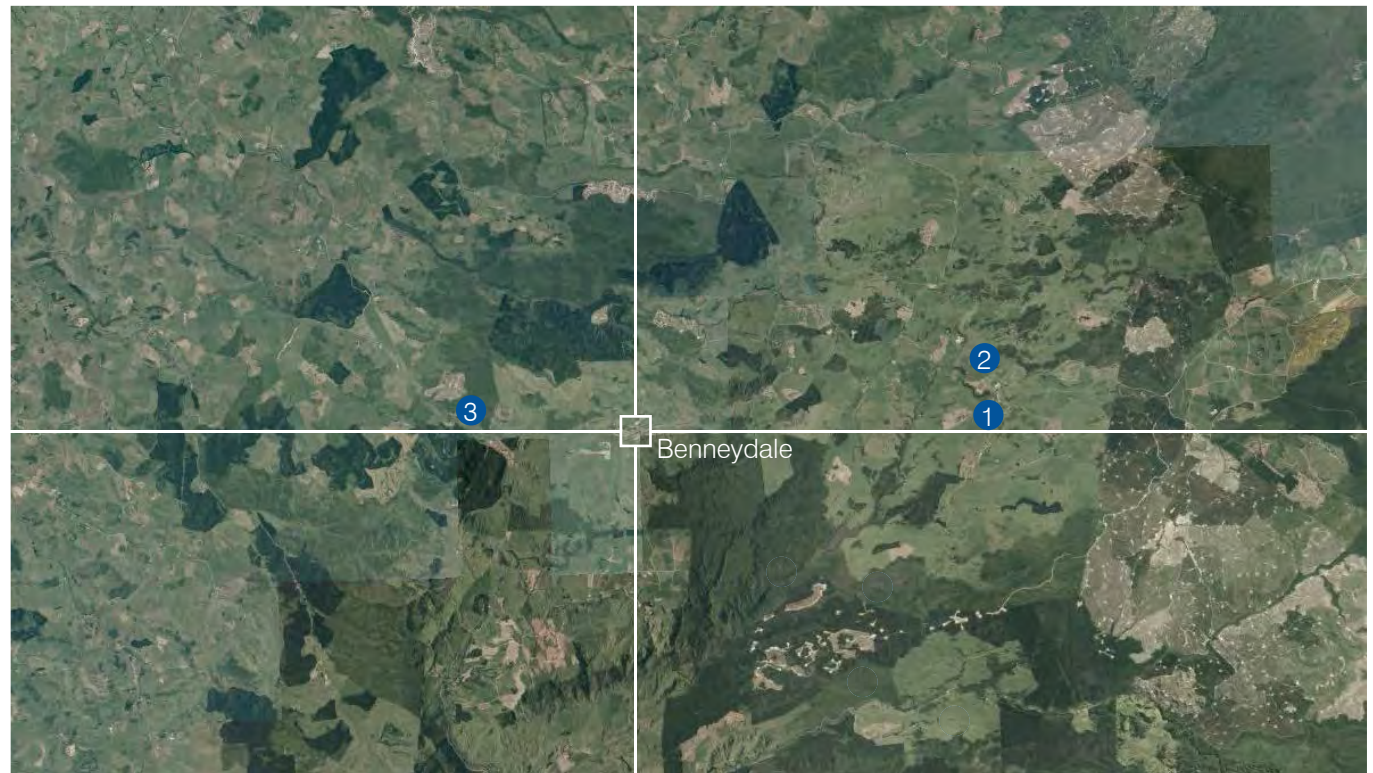
Key features are:

- Te Miringa te Kakara Marae and its history dates back to the middle of the 17th century when Pureora was named by a tohunga to mean “ritual of wellness”. Today people come to visit to meditate.
- Te Hape Marae is located 12km to the east, while Mangapehi Marae is located 5km to the west.
- The central position of Pureora Mountain had a defining influence on early Maori history, with the territories of three great tribal groupings meeting at a point close to it.
- The forests in the area were an important food source, being home to a variety of birds which were snared both in the swamps and forests.
- The King Movement protected the Pureora district from European settlement for almost 20 years after the 1863–64 war.

Some of the issues are:

- Improved reference to Māori history and sites of significance is required.
- Improved economic opportunities through the significant iwi-owned enterprises in the surrounding area are being built on.

Pages 15-25 suggest how we address these issues, pages 29-32 give detailed information.



1 Te Miringa te Kakara - This is the house built by Te Rā Karepe and Rangawhenua, leaders of the Pao Miere movement. It was named Te Miringa Te Kakara. It was built in the shape of a cross and had four entrances. The roof was covered with tōtara bark.

2 Te Hape Marae.

3 Mangapehi Marae.

Context: Natural Environment

Key features are:

- A small village of around 200 people nestled within a moderately steep, forest fringed valley.
- Located on the Mangapehi tributary, near the start of the Mokau River, which rises as a spring on the slopes of the Rangitoto Range in the Pureora Forest. After briefly following a north-westward course, it turns south-westwards and flows for 158 kilometres through the King Country.
- There is one garden of national significance located in Benneydale and some people say Tapuwae Garden has the country's best collection of magnolias. The garden has super rhododendrons, making it especially interesting from October to November when they are blooming.
- The start of the Timber Trail is located in Pureora Forest Park, 15 minutes drive from Benneydale township.

Some of the issues are:


- Low lying areas may be subject to flooding and inundation.
- The valley setting means the area has a striking backdrop and care is needed to manage the wider environment.
- The natural setting offers multiple opportunities for tourism activities.


Pages 15-25 suggest how we address these issues, pages 29-32 give detailed information.



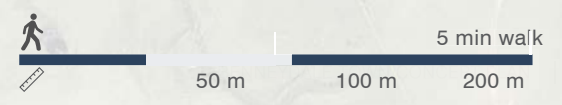


LEGEND

 Reserves

 Steep slopes

 View



Ellis Rd

Ellis Rd

Georgetti St

School Rd

Mine Rd

Benneydale Domain

Context: Built Environment

Key features are:

- Benneydale village is long in length and in two parts - approximately a 10 minute walk end to end.
- Roads are laid out parallel to the State Highway and the streets are well connected. The main roads face east-west, so the township is warm and sunny.
- Development is located on the south side of State Highway 30 with views north up to the valley slopes.
- Benneydale has the closest petrol station to Pureora Forest Park.
- The café on the corner is a feature building and stopping point (previously a pub), a foodmarket is 250m to the east and there is accomodation within the village.
- The village is fully serviced with water, sewerage and stormwater so development is not constrained by servicing requirements.
- The town has a police station, a garage, a corner store that sells hot food and basic groceries, a cafe with accommodation, and a primary school. There is also a meat works on the outskirts of town.
- Benneydale School (Year 1 to 8) has approximately 40 students.

Some of the issues are:


- SH3 cuts through the centre of Benneydale with associated through traffic.
- There are empty sections and gaps in housing (where houses have been removed) which causes the street frontage to look disconnected and empty.
- Limited services.
- Cul de sacs limit direct pedestrian connections in some parts of the village.
- The signs signposting travellers to Benneydale need to be improved.
- There are opportunities to provide areas that are welcoming and entice visitors to stop.


[Pages 15-25 suggest how we address these issues,](#)
[pages 29-32 give detailed information.](#)







LEGEND

 Education

 Reserves

 State Highway

 Community facilities

 Points of interest



Ellis Rd

Ellis Rd

Petrol Station
Foodmarket
Public Toilet

Orchard

Orchard

Artdoc Gallery/
accommodation

Benneydale Playground

Wooden Heart Cafe &
Benneydale Lodge

School Rd

Benneydale School

Georgetti St

Maniatti Rd

Fire Station

Historical Display
& Library

Mine Rd

Benneydale Domain

03

What you told us.....

"Make Benneydale thrive by improving infrastructure for tourists and facilities for the community"

"Extend the Timber Trail into Benneydale along Mine Road"

"Clean up the reserves, improve the park and keep developing the food forest"

"Use local labour to keep the area maintained and nice"

"Clear all of the walkways and add bollards in places where the kids might run out onto a road. There are some great paths that could be developed"

"Council needs to address the overgrown sections and derelict buildings. This will help make Benneydale more attractive"

"Improve the signs directing people to Benneydale"



Community Involvement

An open day was held at the on the 4th of July 2018 at the local library. A second open day was held on 12 February 2019 to receive further feedback on this document. Maps, posters of the features, issues and opportunities for shaping Benneydale into the future were displayed. Council staff were present to assist with any questions and receive feedback from residents and the public.

Ideas boards captured thoughts and suggestions for the Benneydale township. People also filled in individual feedback slips. These responses have helped determine the future character of Benneydale and what Key Moves are required to get there. The main issues raised are summarised below with the corresponding Key Move; these are expanded on and illustrated in Section 4:

- Managing speed through the township. [Key Move 1](#)
- Improving and increasing key pedestrian paths. [Key Move 2](#)
- Add picnic tables and seating outside the front of the hall. [Key Move 2](#)
- Improve the signs and directions to Benneydale. [Key Move 1](#).
- Upgrade the playground. [Key Moves 1 and 2](#).
- Weekly bus service. [Key Moves 1 and 2](#)
- Extend the Timber Trail through to Benneydale. [Key Move 1](#).

Some of the issues are being addressed through other Council processes including:

Long Term Plan (LTP) - outlines what will be done over the plan's 10 year period, including key projects such as infrastructure upgrades to parks and other public facilities, the reasons for Council to do these projects and their cost.

Proposed District Plan (PDP) - The operative District Plan is currently being reviewed and modified. This document sets the framework for managing land use and development within Waitomo District. The MAPS identify where actions are being addressed through the LTP and PDP.

Iwi Engagement

A meeting was held with a representative from the Rereahu Regional Marae Committee on 4 July 2018. Issues raised in the meeting have been actioned, either integrated into the Concept Plan key moves, or followed up by Council. Key points raised for consideration in the Concept Plan were:

- Supporting the economic base for the long term survival of the community should be a fundamental basis for any actions and Rereahu have a number of proposed developments they would like integrated into the Concept Plan where possible. (Key Move 1)
- Rereahu are keen to explore opportunities which support appropriate social and economic development including rates remission for small businesses and for land retired for conservation purposes, and any projects which facilitate improved housing and community facilities. (Key Move 1)
- Rereahu would like to see the reinvigoration of the community, especially the development of new affordable housing on vacant land. (Key Move 2)
- There is concern that any tourism should be supported with the appropriate level of infrastructure, particularly adequate provision of toilet and washing facilities. (Key Move 2)
- A stronger focus is needed to manage biosecurity in the area as tourism development depends on the natural environment. (Key Move 1)

04

Key Moves

How do the Key Moves work?

The Key Moves provide themes that capture the Actions and Plans which were identified by the community as being important to support future development and growth in Benneydale. The following section provides further details on what has been identified as the MAP for Benneydale, with related plans and ideas of how these could be applied.

All of the identified Key Moves are equally important and need to be considered together to meet Council's Vision of "Creating a better future with vibrant communities and thriving business".

How will we do it?

Section 5 provides details on what methods will be used to implement Benneydale's MAP and the priority that has been given to each of these.

There are also opportunities for some of the identified Actions and Plans to be led by the community where appropriate.



Key Move 1

Strengthen the visitor experience as the gateway to the Timber Trail. Look at future ways to encourage people to stop/visit & explore.

The community suggested these actions to implement Key Move 1:

Action A:

Identify and define the ends of the village for people driving through and connect the two active parts with clear pedestrian connections and visibility of the village.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Use gateway design to define and announce the entrances to Benneydale.
- ii. Identify and support the retention of significant landmarks in the town to promote a sense of place and connection.
- iii. Establish a dedicated Volunteer Committee to champion the proposed changes and the initiatives which sit outside of Council remit.
- iv. Encourage new opportunities for living and development and help new businesses to establish.

Action B:

Measures to slow down the speed of vehicles passing through (encourage more human scale elements)

The suggested plan is:

- i. Consider the use of art and points of interest to slow down traffic.
- ii. Examine more formalised options to slow down traffic.

Action C:

Look at ways to build on the destination of Benneydale being the closest place to the Timber Trail.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Build on the connection with the Timber Trail across the township, parks, stream and public spaces
- ii. Improve the signs and directions to Benneydale.
- iii. Refine and utilise a colour palette to improve the main street and encourage more murals and local artwork.



Action **A**



Action **B**

Action D:

Identify any short walks available from the State Highway that would make people stay longer.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Look at ways to expose the hidden gems through short walks
- ii. Provide an accessible playground at the rest area for people passing through as well as the Benneydale residents.

Action E:

Continue the work currently underway to clear the gully next to the rest area of vegetation, to allow daylight to the stream and revegetate the margins with the potential to develop into a community open space.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Seek opportunities to develop and expand the access to and use of this area

Action F:

Build on the pause point at the superette/ toilet area and outside the café - places to sit, more information boards

The suggested plan is:

- i. Examine ways to encourage visitors to use the shops and facilities in Benneydale.

Action G:

Focus on the connection to the historic centre and playground on the adjacent reserve.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Increase the safety and accessibility of this route.

Pages 18-21 suggest how we implement this. Pages 30-31 provide detailed information



Action **D**



Action **E**



Action **G**



LEGEND

- Residential semi-private frontage
 - Residential fronting public space
 - Reserves
 - Public space
 - Activity zone
 - Key nodes
 - Actions
 - Hall
- 5 min walk
 200 m

Some ideas

Action A:

Define the ends of the village for people driving through with a sign that references the location of Benneydale as the nearest place to the Pureora Forest, Timber Trail and other outdoor activities. Consider human scale features around a bike theme or figures on bikes. This could be Mr Benney and Mr. Dale on bikes to provide a historic connection to the township. Alternatives are a signpost referencing timber as an industry.



Some ideas

Action A:

Extend a line of trees along the entry to connect the two active parts of the township which also addresses the speed issues in the village.



Action E:

Examples of food swap stalls and community gardens that can be established in the area next to the reserve.



Some ideas

Action C:

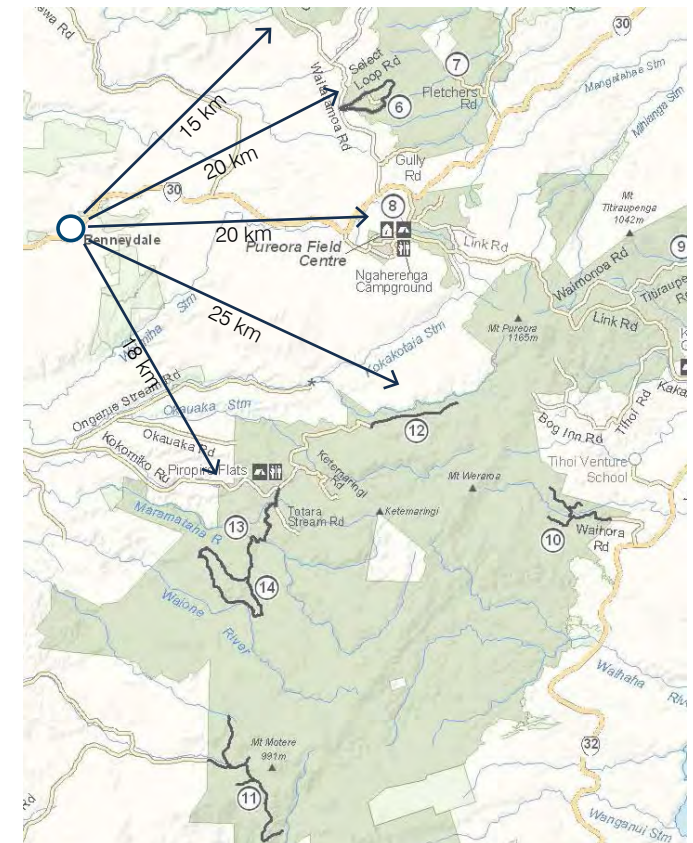
Build on the destination of Benneydale located adjacent to the Timber Trail - include signs in locations within Benneydale for local and nearby rides.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ongarue_spiral_Timber_Trail_interpretation_panels.JPG



Potential to utilise the Road extension (currently a paper road) as a 5km recreational cycle path between Benneydale to connect to the DoC field centre.

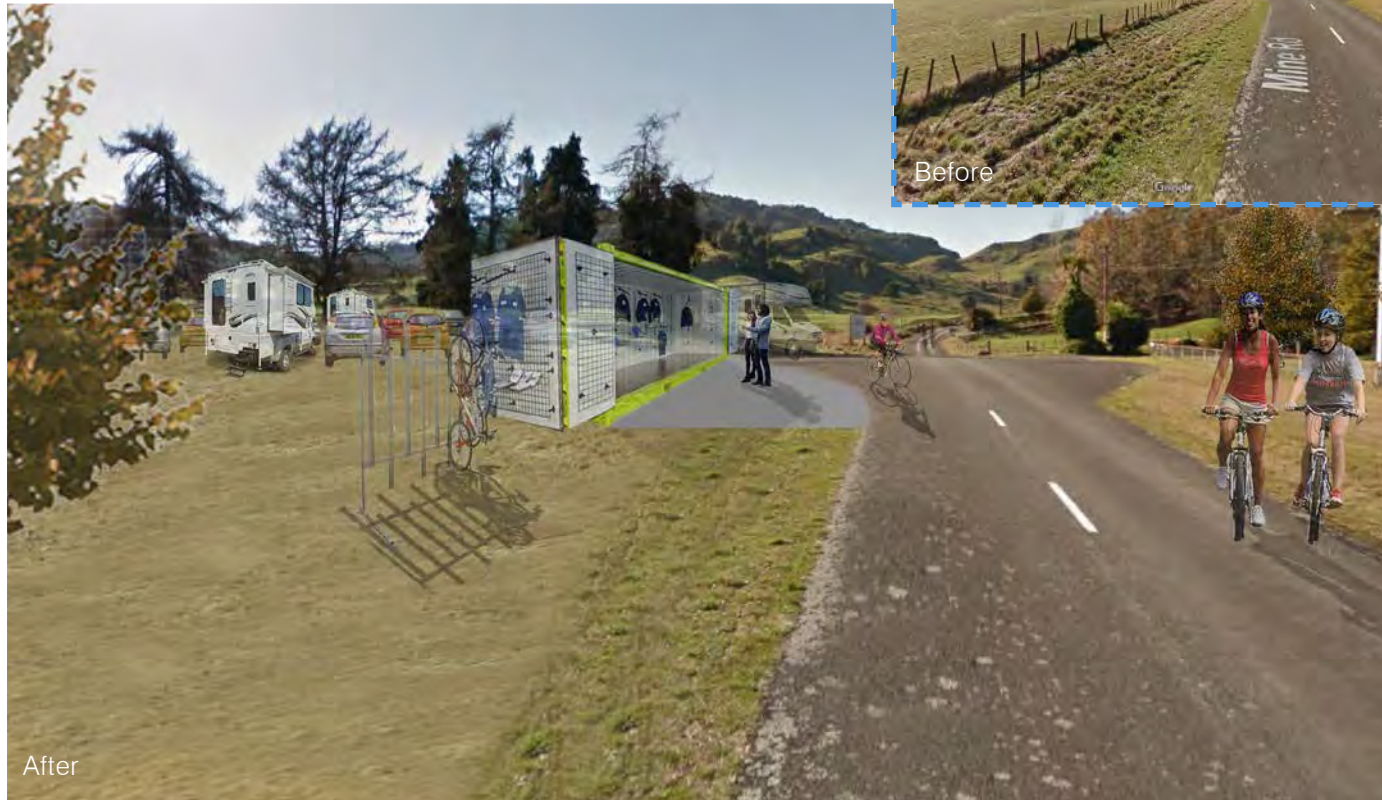


Distance from Benneydale to the DoC Field centre (number 8 on the plan) and other mountain bike rides within a 25 km radius. Map excerpt from the DoC pamphlet on the Timber Trail bike trails.

Some ideas

Action C:

Build on the connection to the Timber Trail by creating an option for people to start the trail in Benneydale. There is the potential to create parking areas, a camp site, a place for bike hire and a place where information on the trail can be provided.



Key Move 2

Increase the public and community facilities for people living in Benneydale

The community suggested these actions to implement Key Move 2:

Action A:

Continue to clear out and revegetate reserve areas (i.e. continue the type of rehabilitation completed south of the Georgetti St bridge).

The suggested plan is:

- i. Add signs/boards inviting people to explore the stream and reserve area

Action C:

Open up views and access from Georgetti Street to the central playground.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Consider methods to improve the safety and accessibility of this route.

Action E:

Improve lighting.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Consider whether/where lighting is required and how this might assimilate into the environment.

Action B:

Make clear pedestrian links for school children from the school to the footpath along the State Highway.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Restore the current walkways and access points and ensure that these are clearly marked.

Action D:

Increase the footpath connections.

The suggested plan is:

- i. Examine the wider needs of the community in terms of pavement and roading.

Action F:

Increase the opportunity for the hall, library and surrounding space to be better employed for local residents and visitors.


The suggested plan is:

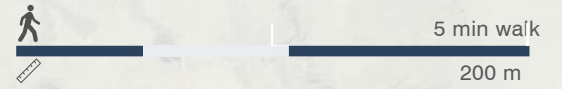
- i. Add events and opportunities to expand and develop the existing facilities.
- ii. Build on the relaxed atmosphere, country lifestyle and community spirit.

Pages 24-25 suggest how we implement this. Page 32 provides detailed information



LEGEND

-  Key nodes
-  Areas to clear/improve landscaping
-  Reserves
-  Pedestrian access
-  Actions
-  Streams



Some ideas

Action D:

Create safer crossing points connected to footpaths, across the State Highway connecting destinations



Action E:

Improve lighting next to the shops and create pockets of feature lights at the entry to short walks.



Some ideas

Action F:

Upgrade the existing hall and surrounding space to create a focal point for the community.



Key Points for District Plan Implementation

Council asked the community what the District Plan needed to deliver so it could support Benneydale's role as a home to its residents and as a gateway to Pureora and the Timber Trail. This is what the community said:

- A good level of visual amenity is very important. People must feel safe and welcome when they come to Benneydale so rules about the upkeep of properties, the condition of signs and the management of noise are necessary.
- Ensure that the District Plan allows landowners in the Rural Zone to capitalize on tourism opportunities, such as accommodation, farm stays, farm tours, quad biking and horse trekking and backpacker lodges.
- The District Plan should encourage the repurposing of disused and empty buildings and the development of vacant sites where this space is being converted to a different use or being used for employment generating activities.
- There is the potential for the Settlement Zone to truly provide opportunities for Benneydale by allowing flexibility for residents to establish home businesses, accommodation, cafes and souvenir shops, handicrafts, pop up stores and seasonal tourism ventures.
- Provision should be made for a variety of housing types, whether these are communal, papakaainga or tiny house developments, supporting diversity in the housing stock is important.
- There are lots of opportunities to make better use of the public space. The District Plan zone rules need to allow open space areas to be used in innovative ways.
- The area is rich in history, so the District Plan needs to identify and protect heritage buildings, landmarks and cultural sites.
- Many community members work very hard to keep the area looking smart so including a colour palette as a guide for new development should help to protect and improve the amenity of the area. This could even extend to guidelines about the type of trees and landscaping so there is some consistency.

Implementation Plan

How will the MAP's be implemented?

This section of the Report provides further detail on how the Key Moves identified in Section 4 of this document will be carried out. This includes:

- i. An implementation plan for each of the Key Moves, Actions and Plans identified in Section 4. It also provides an indication of priority based on community feedback and cost to undertake. This plan also recognises which projects have been identified in the current Long Term Plan and which matters will be addressed in the District Plan review.
- ii. The draft zoning proposed as per Key Move 1.

The wider statutory framework that this Concept Plan with its Moves, Actions and Plans fits into, is illustrated in the Appendix on page 34.

When will the Benneydale Concept Plan be reviewed?

The Concept Plan will be reviewed in full prior to the preparation of the next District Plan.



S RD S H 30

05

MAP (Moves, Actions, Plans)

What are the Priorities?

The priorities identified in this Section are based on the following timeframes:

1= Urgent, quick win (1-2 years).

2= Urgent, more complex issues require addressing (2-3 years)

3= Medium term priority (3-5 years).

4= Longer term priority (5-7 years).

In the preparation of this Concept Plan there are already some projects that have been able to be incorporated into the Long Term Plan (LTP) - these are in green text in the following implementation tables.

Projects that will form part of the proposed District Plan (PDP) are in blue text.

Other sources of Funding

There are multiple ways that the Actions and Plans identified in this document can be achieved, other than the Long Term Plan. These include:

- Community led.
- Fundraising.
- Funding/grants.

When will the implementation table be reviewed?

The implementation actions will be reviewed annually, with an update on the Waitomo District Council website on the projects that have been completed.



Key Move 1

Strengthen the visitor experience as the gateway to the Timber Trail. Look at future ways to encourage people to stop/visit & explore.

The community suggested these actions to implement Key Move 1:

The priorities are based on the following timeframes:

- 1= Urgent, quick win (1-2 years)
- 2= Urgent, more complex issues require addressing (2-3 years)
- 3= Medium term priority (3-5 years)
- 4= Longer term priority (5-7 years)

-  Projects that will form part of the proposed District Plan (PDP) are outlined in blue; and
-  Projects that are incorporated into the Long Term Plan (LTP) are outlined in green.

ACTION + PLAN		PRIORITY
ACTION A) Identify and define the ends of the village for people driving through and connect the two active parts with clear pedestrian connections and visibility of the village.		
PLAN	i) Use gateway design to define and announce the entrances to Benneydale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the type of gateway signs that would be appropriate and whether these should be linked to a theme or identity. • Locals suggested a bicycle theme as a welcome sign to Benneydale. Mining was also touched on. • Employ the gateway design to help reduce vehicle speed. Many complaints regarding the speed through town on the State Highway. Wider discussion with NZTA required to help lower speeds at the gateways. • Examine the use of planting/landscaping to green the area around the gateways. • Look at the opportunities that exist as current buildings to help build and cement character elements to the entries. • Consider local views about the gateway entrance locations – many different ideas which will need to be discussed with NZTA. In theory the gateway should be at the 50km location and then perhaps the community would like another sign at the northern end of Murcott Tce. • Other suggestions for entrance signage included a corrugated iron or number eight wire bicycle, tree or representation of coal mining. 	2
	ii) Identify and support the retention of significant landmarks in the town to promote a sense of place and connection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building/structure Heritage Inventory is also underway. • Review the landscaping approach, planting, seating and street furniture in the town and public spaces to ensure it is welcoming, connects to the surrounding public spaces, walkways and to the stream. • The community comments that planting along the main street would promote a sense of place and connection. Examples of trees smaller than 5m in height suggested were Taiwanese cherry, Australian bottlebrush, Kowhai and liquid amber. 	2
	iii) Establish a dedicated Volunteer Committee to champion the proposed changes and the initiatives which sit outside of Council remit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee could be part of the Community Hall group. There was some local talk about a disbanded ratepayer group. • The community members are extremely motivated and very capable of championing these initiatives. This could include – a newsletter, social media, interactive webpage, a remit to stimulate growth in creative ways, champion extending the walkway, new signs, the colour palette etc. The community already run fairs on the domain and numerous events at the local venues. 	1
	iv) Encourage new opportunities for living and development and help new businesses to establish. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rates remission of up to 50% for one year is now offered to new businesses or new developments. • Ensure the Proposed District Plan allows for flexibility in zoning - eg: home businesses, more accommodation, cafes and souvenir shops, handicrafts, pop up stores and seasonal tourism ventures. • As part of the LTP, Council is participating in the proposed Waikato Regional Economic development agency and the South Waikato Economic Development Action Plan. • Encourage the repurposing of disused and empty buildings, the development of vacant sites and management of derelict buildings. It was felt that Council needs to take some responsibility for condemning buildings once they get to a certain point. The community feel they harbour pests and add to the general air of neglect. The same applies to overgrown sections which become a fire hazard. • Allow for tiny house developments 	2
ACTION B) Measures to slow down the speed of vehicles passing through (encourage more human scale elements).		
PLAN	i) Consider the use of art and points of interest to slow down traffic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the locally generated ideas about signs and statues – a lot of discussions about the approach Waihi has taken where the art is part of the street. So sculpted figures would be engaged in activities which would slow traffic because these statues would be initially viewed as people walking/playing etc by the park or store. • Gateways were widely supported for reducing speed but also making it clear where the town started. 	2
	ii) Examine more formalised options to slow down traffic. These matters need to be discussed with NZTA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The flashing speed sign is working well at the eastern end of town but vehicles have sped up by the western end. • The community suggested white diagonal lines painted in the road as you come into the town and every so often a speed camera car is stationed there. • The community suggested that the centre lines should be double yellow and not white dashed to stop overtaking. • Consider the location of a pedestrian refuge and whether rumble strips could be used to slow traffic. 	2

ACTION C) Look at ways to build on the destination of Benneydale being the closest place to the Timber Trail.		
PLAN	i) Build on the connection with the Timber Trail across the township, parks, stream and public spaces. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the use of a bicycle(s) in the gateway design. Provide bike stands in appropriate places. Investigate the extension of the Timber trail so that it starts at the end of Mine Road and follows an old tramline (paper road) through Peacocks, then through Te Hape Bock to Pa Harakeke Chalets, then to Barryville. This requires further discussions with the landowners. Work with Rereahu to develop an area of land on the old school site as a commercial operation providing secure Timber Trail parking. Link businesses to the Timber Trail e.g.: encourage a shipping container store providing bike repairs and goods (freeze dried food, bike parts etc.), ask local businesses to run caravans during peak season to provide coffee, ice creams etc. Upgrade the great website to better link into the attractions eg: great accommodation in the area, Tapuwae garden of national significance, Pureora forest, car touring, Omaru waterfalls, Miringa te Kakara, Endeans Mill, the Ongarue Spiral, Maramataha Bridge, Lake Maraetai, Porootarao memorial and wider attractions around Taumararui and Te Kuiti. The Waitomo Caves are only 45 mins. Increase the presence of the Timber Trail on the Tourism NZ website – it's not there currently. Consider using the cross arms on the power poles along the main street to hang banners to promote the town and local features. Consider opportunities for campervan parking. 	2
	ii) Improve the signs and directions to Benneydale. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss provision of better signage with NZTA – no directions currently from either the Te Kuiti or the Mangakino sides of SH30. 	1
	iii) Utilise a colour palette to improve the main street and encourage more murals and local artwork. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add an agreed colour palette and consult with the community on the appropriateness of the palette. Ask whether this should be enforced through the new District Plan. Currently the town's residents work hard to paint older buildings. Support this by seeking sponsorship for improving exteriors – Dunedin South took a similar approach. 	2
ACTION D) Identify any short walks available from the State Highway that would make people stay longer.		
PLAN	i) Look at ways to expose the hidden gems through short walks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a cleverly designed and illuminated paths or use fairy lights and/or installation art to be adventurous with the spaces around the streamside reserve/through the trees. Work with the Department of Conservation to open up a walk around the old mine and signpost this attraction from the centre of town. Examine the potential for an interactive trail around the town or old mine using smart phones. Consider the potential for a swimming hole or even a natural hot pool that is safe and well lit. There is a walkway off the SH opposite the end of Murcott Tce which could be upgraded. The walk along the old tramway at the end of Mine Road (considered elsewhere as an extension to the Timber Trail) is a popular route for locals and could be upgraded and signposted. Provide seating and picnic areas along the stream banks and signage about the history. 	2
	ii) Provide an accessible playground at the rest area for people passing through as well as the Benneydale residents. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is underway. 	1
ACTION E) Continue the work currently underway to clear the gully next to the rest area of vegetation, to allow daylight to the stream and revegetate the margins with the potential to develop into a community open space.		
PLAN	i) Seek opportunities to develop and expand the access to and use of this area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine linkages with the existing fruit tree orchard. The community signalled that a walkway there would be appropriate. Need to be careful where clearing occurs as a whole area of the reserve has been planted out by the community in fruit trees. The community plans to develop a food forest as a local attraction Explore the potential for a community garden located near the food forest. Consider the development or addition of an art feature such as a waterwheel or waterbike in the stream. Strengthen and tidy the planting on the corner of Ellis Rd and Murcott Tce. Explore the potential for a Sharing shed/Food Swap near the food forest. 	3
ACTION F) Build on the pause point at the superette/ toilet area and outside the café - places to sit, more information boards		
PLAN	i) Examine ways to encourage visitors to use the shops and facilities in Benneydale. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tidying up around the dairy is underway as part of the new park development. Some residents suggested that marking the parks on the street outside the superette may be helpful. Link the attractions around Benneydale to the information provided on the boards and encourage people to explore the short walks and surrounding area. Could also consider EV parking at this location. Indicate website links and any interactive walks that are available Consider the ability to provide free wi fi at this location. 	3
ACTION G) Focus on the connection to the historic centre and playground on the adjacent reserve.		
PLAN	i) Increase the safety and accessibility of this route. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important connections and routes are identified in this document for further community discussion. Signage will be part of a wider process to identify what is needed and where it should be located. Improve street and feature lighting where required. 	3

Key Move 2

Increase the public and community facilities for people living in Benneydale

The community suggested these actions to implement Key Move 2:

The priorities are based on the following timeframes:

- 1= Urgent, quick win (1-2 years)
- 2= Urgent, more complex issues require addressing (2-3 years)
- 3= Medium term priority (3-5 years)
- 4= Longer term priority (5-7 years)

- Projects that will form part of the proposed District Plan (PDP) are outlined in blue; and
- Projects that are incorporated into the Long Term Plan (LTP) are outlined in green.

ACTION + PLAN		PRIORITY
ACTION A) Continue to clear out and revegetate reserve areas (i.e. continue the type of rehabilitation completed south of the Georgetti St bridge).		
PLAN	i) Add signs/boards inviting people to explore the stream and reserve area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider making the access point from the new playground and toilet area so that this site is an anchor. • Ensure that there are clear views of the area and any walkways so people feel that the access is safe and inviting. • The community were particularly keen on flowering trees and fruit trees replacing the overgrown areas. 	3
ACTION B) Make clear pedestrian links for school children from the school to the footpath along the State Highway.		
PLAN	i) Restore the current walkways and access points and ensure that these are clearly marked. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore the walkway entrance between Mine and School Roads. The community suggested bollards to stop kids running or cycling out into the road. • Evaluate the cost of providing pavement access part way or along the length of Mine Road. • Examine whether lighting is required in these areas and how this might assimilate into the environment. • Once new tracks and walkways are established, ensure they are well maintained. 	1
ACTION C) Open up views and access from Georgetti Street to the central playground.		
PLAN	i) Consider methods to improve the safety and accessibility of this route. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there are clear views of the area and signs so people feel the playground is safe and inviting. This relates in part to increasing visibility through more prominent entranceways and improving the connection to the town centre. • Examine the potential to upgrade the playground – the community has signalled it needs new rubber chips and the courts need hoops at either end. • Explore whether there is the potential to provide a more multi-use site eg: a coin operated BBQ • Fix the walkway and the bridge to Georgetti Street. Access is not good for prams or mobility scooters and the rails on the bridge are broken 	3
ACTION D) Increase the footpath connections		
PLAN	i) Examine the wider needs of the community in terms of pavement and roading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider adding pavement outside the Art Docs building • Examine the speed issues (adjacent to the school) and consider whether traffic calming measures are required. • Consider a pedestrian refuge outside the superette to increase connectivity and slow traffic. 	4
ACTION E) Improve lighting.		
PLAN	i) Consider whether/where lighting is required and how this might assimilate into the environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the type of lighting that might be appropriate in and around the public spaces including the hall, stream walkway and the reserves. 	3
ACTION F) Increase the opportunity for the hall, library and surrounding space to be better employed for local residents and visitors		
PLAN	i) Add events and opportunities to expand and develop the existing facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to make this area a focal point for visitors. Many note that the hall has good bones. Ideas have included greening and paving the space so it is more of an experience and invites people to stop, use the area for community events (i.e. farmers markets, crafts market, car boot sales), restoring the old school dental surgery and moving it to outside the hall with information or interpretation boards, adding seating and picnic tables and planting gardens, fencing the area and demarking parking and/or sealing areas around the hall so they are not so muddy. • Create a community gallery, vacant sites could be used for this. • Explore whether a community led group could be supported by central government initiatives or by other funders to apply for funding for ongoing maintenance. 	2
PLAN	ii) Build on the relaxed atmosphere, country lifestyle and community spirit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents indicated that they loved the community, the services, the access to the countryside, the relaxed atmosphere, the way neighbours look after each other, the visitors, country lifestyle, community events and spirit, the children and their country-focused skills and the cooperation on tasks and events. A welcoming kind community. They consider that the Hall has an important role as a community centre and should be a focal hub. • Capitalise on the local knowledge and share the amazing history of the area. • Add a designated motorcross track for the local kids so they don't use the roads and paddocks. Ask the community on where this should go. • Improve the community sports facilities for all of the town. Longer term the community aspires to improve the facilities that they have to allow for more sporting and arts based activities • Invite the Project Piopio Trust to speak to the community – they come from a small community and have a wealth of knowledge, experience and lessons learned. 	4

05

Proposed re-zoning

The zoning suggested on the following maps is draft. It is being shared with the community in order to gather feedback about the zones proposed. The final zones will be determined through the formal part (submissions and hearings) of the proposed District Plan.

Operative District Plan



Proposed District Plan



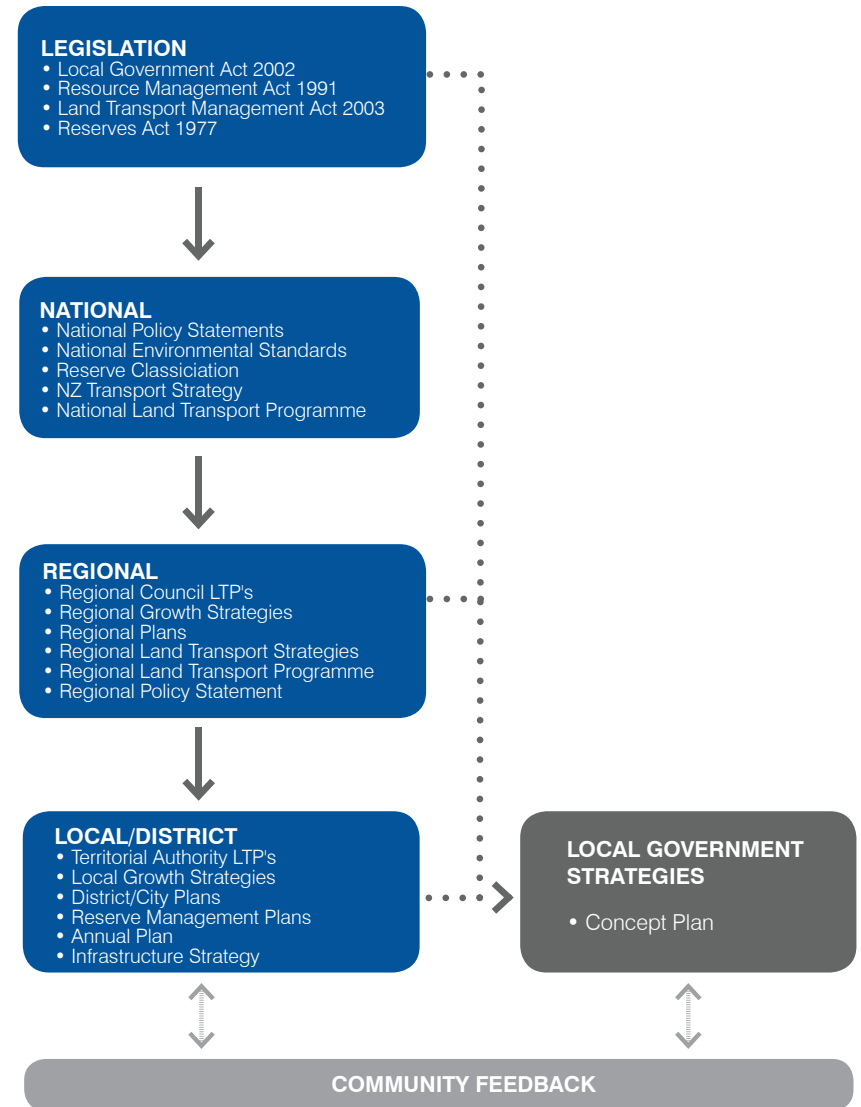
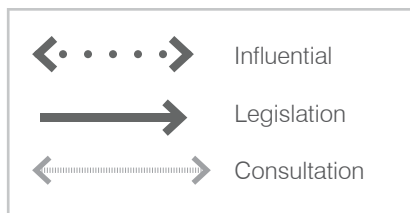
Appendix: Statutory Framework

How it fits in

This Concept Plan informs not only the community but also the District Plan, long term planning and other strategic documents at a local and regional level as shown in the diagram.

Councils are required to prepare a Long Term Plan (LTP) under the Local Government Act 2002 every three years, that describes the community outcomes for the district, and what its priorities are over the next 10 years.

A Concept Plan can provide a longer term capture of community aspirations and thereby inform the LTP. Waitomo District Council has just completed their LTP. Some of the Key Moves and actions identified in this Concept Plan will inform the next LTP.







Appendix: Community Outcomes

Waitomo District Community Outcomes

The Community Outcomes identified in Council's Long Term Plan provide an important framework for future planning and reflect the results that Council aims to achieve for the District in the future. Waitomo District Council's areas of focus are:

- Sustainable development.
- Community connectivity and development.
- Economic development.
- Good asset stewardship and management.

These focus areas and the projects and initiatives identified in each Key Move, are aimed at achieving Council's vision and community outcomes, following a sustainable development approach.

VISION	COMMUNITY OUTCOMES		FOCUS AREAS
Creating a better future with vibrant communities and thriving business.	Vibrant Communities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A place where the multicultural values of all its people and, in particular, Māori heritage and culture is recognised and valued. 2. A place where all age groups have the opportunity to enjoy social, cultural and sporting activities within our District. 3. A place where young people have access to education, training and work opportunities. 4. A place where young people feel valued and have opportunities for input into the decisions for the District. 5. A place where we preserve the natural environment for future generations, ensuring that natural resources are used in a sustainable manner. 	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOOD ASSET STEWARDSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
	Thriving Business 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. A place that attracts more people who want to live, work and play, and raise a family. 7. A place where wealth and employment are created through local businesses and tourism opportunities and facilities are developed, facilitated and encouraged. 	
	Effective Leadership 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. A place where the development of partnerships for the delivery of programmes and services is encouraged and pursued. 9. A place where the governance actively seeks to participate and take a leadership role in regional and national initiatives aimed at the development of the District. 	
	Sustainable Infrastructure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. A place that provides safe, reliable and well managed infrastructure which meets the District community needs and supports maintenance of public health, provision of good connectivity and development of the District. 	

