

Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai
Lower Hutt



Te Pokapū o Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai City Centre Framework

July 2025



Ngā hua o roto

Contents

He whakatakinga

Introduction

Aronga

Purpose

Horopaki

Context

Ngā pūtake ahurea

Cultural Foundations

Tākai Here – Mana Whenua

Partnership with Mana Whenua

Aronga whāiti

Framework on a page

Te pou tarāwaho

The Framework

Te whāinga matua

Vision

Ngā uara

Values

Ngā hua

Outcomes

Ngā kaupapa matua

Key moves

He ara whānui

The Meander

Te wāhi o High

High Street Precinct

He nohonga, he mahinga

Living and Working

Te Pāka o Riverside

Riverside Park

He kōwhiringa nekehanga

Transport Choice

Kia oho te hunga tūmatanui

Civic Activation

Āpitihanga 1: Ngā Kōrero Tuku Iho

Appendix 1: Cultural Narratives

Āpitihanga 2: Te Whiringa

Appendix 2: Engagement

Āpitihanga 3: Te pokapū o nāianei rangi

Appendix 3: The city centre today

Tirohanga whānui

Overview

Ngā waka me ngā nekehanga

Transport and movement

Ngā papa rēhia me te taiao

Public spaces and natural environment

Ōhanga me ngā nohonga

Economy, buildings and housing

Āpitihanga 4: Whakarāpopototanga o ngā kaupapa

Appendix 4: Summary of initiatives

Āpitihanga 5: Kaputaka

Appendix 5: Glossary

Āpitihanga 6: Ngā tohutoro

Appendix 6: Reference documents

He whakatakinga Introduction

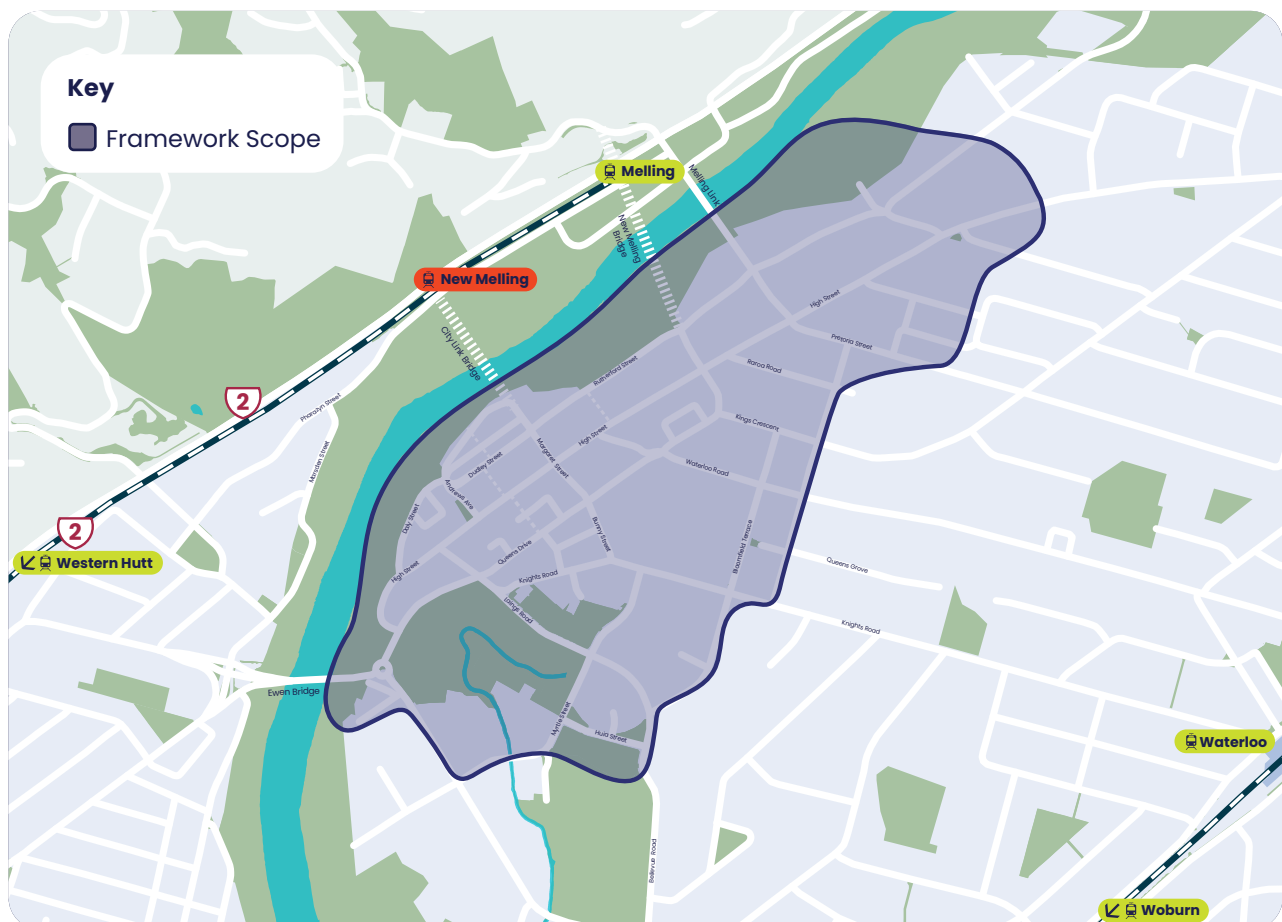
Aronga Purpose

The Central City Transformation Plan (CCTP) was adopted in 2019. Its purpose was to provide a vision for the city centre and to integrate Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (formerly RiverLink) proposals with the surrounding areas.

A lot has changed since 2019. This document, the City Centre Framework (Framework), provides an updated vision and strategy for the city centre. It builds on the strong foundations of the CCTP, responds to the latest designs for Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi and captures the current ambitions of the Council, Mana Whenua,

businesses and the community. The Framework looks ahead 15 years to 2040 and imagines a thriving city centre as we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi).

The Framework sets out the vision, values, outcomes, key moves and initiatives that will inform council decision-making and guide private sector development. It paves the way for streetscape improvements and other activities to create a vibrant, people-focused and economically resilient city centre.



Horopaki

Context

The City Centre Framework is consistent with wider Council strategies including the Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025–2055 (2025), the Integrated Transport Strategy (2022), the Reserves Investment Strategy (2024) and the Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy (2023).

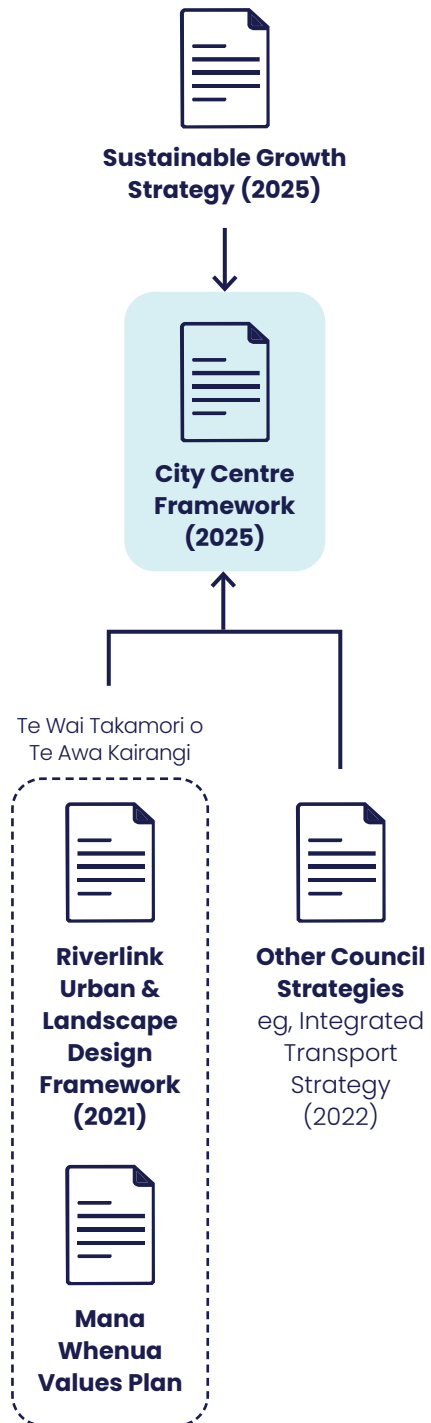
The Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025–2055 | Rautaki Whakatipu provides direction for urban growth and change in Lower Hutt over the next 30 years. It identifies “enhancing the heart of the city” as its first strategic move which aims to “revitalise the central city to create a thriving neighbourhood and destination”. It states that the central city is the area we most want to see grow for housing and businesses and lists a range of infrastructure investment to support this.

The Framework is also consistent with Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi documents including the Urban & Landscape Design Framework (2021) and Mana Whenua Values Plan. Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi is a wide-ranging programme of works including:

- stopbank upgrades
- a new State Highway 2 Melling interchange
- a new Melling Bridge
- a new pedestrian and cycle bridge linking the relocated Melling train station to the city centre
- a riverside park
- street upgrades

The Urban & Landscape Design Framework sets out the environmental, cultural, landscape and urban design context for the programme and the intended design outcomes for various components.

The Mana Whenua Values Plan sets the expectations, specific objectives and aspirations of Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o Te Ika and Ngāti Toa Rangatira (Iwi Mana Whenua). The plan guides the physical design and behaviors during the delivery of Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi Programme.



Ngā pūtake ahurea Cultural Foundations

Tākai Here – Mana Whenua Partnership with Mana Whenua

Manaaki whenua, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua.

*If we take care of the land and take care of the people,
we will take care of the future.*

Hutt City Council, Mana Whenua and hapori Māori (Māori communities) have strong and trusting relationships, working collectively to support and enhance the wellbeing of everyone living and working in Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt.

The City Centre Framework demonstrates the various ways Council is committed to keeping Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its legislative obligations at the heart of its work programme. Central to Council's work with Mana Whenua are the Tākai Here (partnership agreements). Through these partnership agreements, we work together to create a more inclusive and sustainable future for all our people.

We all acknowledge there is much work to do to address the inequities across our city centre so that all people can thrive.

The ambition to thrive outlined in Te Herenga Kairangi (Council's Māori Strategy) holds the interest of Mana Whenua and Māori at heart. The expression of makaurangi (identity), manaakitanga (care) and kaitiakitanga (environmental stewardship), in this framework, highlights the obligations of Mana Whenua to all people.

The five iwi organisations Council works with are:

- Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika Trust
- Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated
- Wellington Tenth Trust
- Palmerston North Māori Reserves Trust
- Te Rūnanganui o Te Āti Awa ki Te Upoko o Te Ika a Māui Incorporated

Information about Mana Whenua partnerships can be found at: hutt.city/mana-whenua



Aronga whāiti

Framework on a page

This page provides an overview of the components of the City Centre Framework: vision, values, outcomes and key moves. Together these set out the aspirations for our future city centre.

Vision

**Our city centre connects with and supports
Te Awa Kairangi (our river), our people and the whenua (land).
Together our mouri (life force) grows.**

Our city centre nurtures our people and our beautiful urban riverside, connecting and supporting our diverse businesses and communities to put roots down and thrive.

Values



Makaurangi

Our unique fingerprints



Manaakitanga

Supporting each other



Kaitiakitanga

Caring for the environment

Outcomes



Diverse

A centre of diverse cultural exchange.



Green

A green centre that re-balances our relationship with nature.



Liveable

A liveable centre that feels like home.



Vibrant

A vibrant centre full of business activity and creativity.



Accessible

An accessible centre that is well connected.

Key moves



High Street Precinct



Civic Activation



Living & Working



Riverside Park



Transport Choice



The Meander

Te pou tarāwaho

The Framework

Te whāinga matua

Vision

Our vision is based on the feedback we received from businesses, the community and Mana Whenua. This vision is:

Our city centre connects with and supports Te Awa Kairangi, our people and the whenua. Together our mouri grows.

Our city centre nurtures our people and our beautiful urban riverside, connecting and supporting our diverse businesses and communities to put roots down and thrive.



Ngā uara Values

Values guide us in our actions, priorities and decision-making.

Our values are deeply rooted in the cultural foundations established by Mana Whenua of this takiwā (region). Tupua (guardian spirits) shaped the landscape, embodying makaurangi. The historical mahinga kai (food cultivation area) Te Umumamaku served as a vital source of sustenance, representing manaakitanga. Meanwhile, the protective action taken by Ruhia Pōrutu symbolises kaitiakitanga (guardianship). See Appendix 1 for more information on the cultural narratives.



Makaurangi

Our unique fingerprints

We partner with Mana Whenua and our diverse communities and businesses when shaping our city centre. We recognise that cultural heritage contributes to belonging and helps us better understand each other.



Manaakitanga

Supporting each other

We uplift our people to create a city centre that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible. We support the needs of everyone, whether you are eight, eighteen or eighty.



Kaitiakitanga

Caring for the environment

We champion the essential relationship between people and the environment. We acknowledge that the health and well-being of future generations depend on this generation restoring, connecting with and protecting te taiao (nature).



Ngā hua Outcomes

Outcomes are the results we seek.

Diverse



A centre of diverse cultural exchange

A place that looks and feels like our diverse communities. Our public places integrate Mana Whenua narratives through collaboration. Our streets and spaces provide for our cultural practices. Makaurangi is brought to life through art and cultural events that bring people together, celebrating our communities.

Vibrant



A vibrant centre full of business activity and creativity

A place that amplifies the potential of our people and businesses. People feel they can be a success here. It is a busy, buzzy, and fun place to be, with a strong evening economy. Social and commercial enterprises, hospitality and retail thrive, working together to form strong networks. There is easy access to skills, learning and investment.

Green



A green centre that re-balances our relationship with nature

A place where te taiao (nature) is woven into the urban fabric; lush, sustainable, and thriving. Hands in soil, feet in water. A city centre where te taiao and tangata (people) are deeply connected. Green links and corridors build climate resilience and create touch points to see, hear and feel nature. Our kaitiakitanga contributes to birdlife heard through the streets and taonga (treasures) thriving in our awa (river).

Accessible



An accessible centre that is well connected

A place where travel and movement is easy for all. Streets are welcoming and safe for pedestrians. There are wide footpaths with convenient crossings, and reliable public transport. Our kaumātua (respected elders) and people with disabilities travel independently, and our tamariki (children) scooter or cycle to school.

Liveable



A liveable centre that feels like home

More people live in our city centre because of a diverse offering of homes, parks and spaces, designed to support our everyday lives. Amenities like the library, schools and hospital are in easy reach, meeting the needs of our people at every stage of life. A safe place to live, to learn, to raise a family.

Ngā kaupapa matua

Key moves

Key moves are strategic programmes of initiatives to deliver our outcomes.

The initiatives under our key moves include both physical changes, like street upgrades, and non-physical actions, such as events or policies. The key moves work together to keep us moving towards our vision.

The matrix below shows how the key moves help deliver our desired outcomes.

✓ **Primary Focus**

✓ **Secondary Focus**

	 Diverse	 Green	 Vibrant	 Accessible	 Liveable
 The Meander	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 High Street Precinct	✓		✓	✓	✓
 Living & Working	✓		✓	✓	✓
 Riverside Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Transport Choice			✓	✓	✓
 Civic Activation	✓		✓		✓

He ara whānui

The Meander

A green, pedestrian friendly corridor.

The meander provides safe and easy access to key places – like Te Awa Kairangi, The Dowse, the Civic Precinct and Queensgate, for people walking or with a mobility aid. Streets and spaces are designed to invite people to explore, pause and enjoy spending time in our city centre. The meander brings nature and Mana Whenua narratives through our city centre, eg, Te Umumamaku. It strengthens ecological links between our natural spaces, supporting biodiversity.

Initiatives

What our priorities are

- **Street upgrades** – Street upgrades connecting to the City Link Bridge. This could include making Margaret Street, Knights Road and Laings Road greener, safer and easier to use for people walking or with a mobility aid. These changes could involve things like shorter wait times at crossings, new seating and more planting – including native planting or raingardens to help manage stormwater.
- **Public space improvements** – eg, Andrews Avenue. These improvements could be large or small/low-cost.



An example of a street that has both spaces for people to enjoy and transport function.



The Meander



Te wāhi o High High Street Precinct

An area of multicultural shops, cosy eateries and services that complements the Queensgate Shopping Centre.

New enterprises are able to start up and grow here. Existing businesses benefit from the vibrant character of the place and the proximity to other attractive businesses. Together they create an engaging destination and experience. Streets are safe and low-speed, balancing space for people with access for business customers. A network of laneways connects the precinct.

Initiatives

What our priorities are

- ➔ **Street upgrades** – These could include street upgrades in Dudley Street, High Street or Queens Drive to make them safer and easier to use for people walking or with a mobility aid, whilst maintaining access for businesses. Changes could include things like better pavements, safer crossings, new seating and improved mobility parking spaces.
- ➔ **Partnership** – Work with the Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce and businesses to attract investment in the city centre and support economic activity.

What we are we planning

- + **Placemaking** – Small-scale amenity and accessibility improvements, eg, High Street Seating project.
- + **Pop-ups** – Activating vacant premises or spaces.
- + **Making better use of pavements** – supporting outdoor dining or retail spill out spaces.
- + **Celebrating local businesses** – Building a unified identity for the city centre to maintain confidence and vibrancy.
- + **Disruption management** – A coordinated approach to managing construction disruption to help businesses stay resilient and connected during major works.

What's completed

- ✓ **Kia Haumaru Safety Programme**



An example of a clear and vibrant laneway off of High Street.



High Street Precinct



He nohonga, he mahinga

Living and Working

Encouraging developments with a mix of homes and office spaces above shops and services.

This will grow our residential and worker communities across the city centre. Key development sites along Te Awa Kairangi strengthen our connection to the river. A diverse range and size of apartment options support the growth and diversity of our people. With more residents and workers in the city centre, local businesses thrive, and the city centre stays active from morning to night.

The immediate priority for mixed-use development is in the traditional retail core south of the new Melling Bridge. Long-term, apartments and offices over shops and services are expected to expand north of Melling Bridge.

Initiatives

What our priorities are

- **Future development** – Work with landowners, developers and investors to support new shops, apartments and office accommodation in the city centre, including but not limited to sites acquired for Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi stopbank and transport upgrades.
- **Daly Street development** – Partner with a developer to create a mixed-use development (ie, a mix of shops, apartments and/or office space) on the Council-owned Daly Street site, integrating with the new stopbank to create a promenade.
- **Water infrastructure upgrades** – Complete the Infrastructure Acceleration Fund (IAF) upgrades to stormwater and wastewater bulk networks and build the new Eastern Hills Reservoir to support intensification in the central city and surrounding areas. Undertake detailed three-waters capacity modelling for local networks.

What we are planning

- + **Proposed District Plan** – Riverbank precinct and active frontage requirements.
- + **Sub-station relocation** – Work with GWRC and Wellington Electricity to facilitate the relocation of existing electric sub-stations from the stopbank and support future urban development in the city centre.

What's completed

- ✓ **Daly Street development preparation** – Geotechnical and contamination studies for the Council-owned Daly Street site.



An example of apartment living with connection and views to green space.



Living and working



Te Pāka o Riverside

Riverside Park

A corridor along the awa that mixes recreation, biodiversity and movement.

The Riverside Park invites people to reconnect with the river and supports inner-city living. Paths for walking and cycling, terraces, and open lawns set among native planting create space to pause, play, and spend time together. The design supports biodiversity and provides opportunities for cultural expression and Mana Whenua narratives, eg, Te Awa Kairangi. A riverside carpark and flexible spaces for markets or seasonal gatherings support ongoing community use.

Initiatives

What our priorities are

- **Flood protection works** – Stopbank and river works by GWRC to achieve 1:440 year flood protection of the city centre and adjoining areas. This involves increasing the height of stopbanks and widening the river corridor in places. It also involves the removal of some vegetation in the river corridor between the stopbanks.
- **Design and delivery of the Riverside Park** – Landscape works to create a destination open space next to the city centre within the river corridor, integrating Mana Whenua aspirations. This will involve planting of native species following the flood protection works.

What we are planning

- + **Mills Street stopbank upgrade** (underway)
- + **Ewen Bridge to Melling Bridge stopbank upgrade**



An example of a green space designed to support biodiversity and nature play.



Riverside park



He kōwhiringa nekehanga

Transport Choice

Well-defined routes for all modes of transport make the city centre easy to access and navigate.

Streets are designed to be accessible for all. Active and public modes of transport are supported through better connections, wayfinding, and end-of-trip facilities. Memorable arrival points welcome people into the city centre.

Initiatives

What our priorities are

- **Melling Station relocation**
- **Melling Bridge and intersections**
- **City Link Bridge and stopbank integration**
- **Pedestrian and cycling networks** – As part of GWRC’s river and stopbank works.
- **Bus interchange improvements** – Work with GWRC to improve bus movement around the interchange.
- **Streetscape Strategy** – Identify clear priorities for street upgrades in the city centre, including safety improvements.
- **Connecting stations** – Improve connections by bus and active modes between the city centre and Waterloo, Western Hutt and Woburn stations.

What we are planning

- + **Transitional Parking Plan** – A plan to mitigate the loss of car parking during Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi works.
- + **Disruption Management Plan** – Manage disruption to vehicle, pedestrian, and cycle movements during the construction of Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi and other upgrades.
- + **Locky Docks** – Install secure bike parking with built-in electric charging facility.

What’s completed

- ✓ **Bunny St bus shelters** – Working with GWRC to deliver improvements to Bunny Street bus shelters to improve safety.



An example of a sheltered bus stop with generous space for all users.



Transport choices



Kia oho te hunga tūmatanui

Civic Activation

Spaces are designed for play, social connection and a lively calendar of events and programmes.

Civic destinations like The Dowse and War Memorial Library continue to be upgraded to support the community and bring activation out into our public spaces. Installations, live music and performances pop-up throughout the city centre. Public art created in collaboration with our diverse communities adds to our city centre's vibrancy.

Initiatives

What our priorities are

- **War Memorial Library upgrade** – including temporary relocation of services in the city centre.
- **Riverbank Market relocation**
- **Open space improvements** – for example Riddiford Garden and Dowse Square, including small or low-cost improvements.

What's completed

- ✓ **Te Tōpunga Hapori i Daly Street** – Temporary activation of vacant Council site before it is redeveloped following the stopbank upgrade.
- ✓ **City Art Walk** – An app and online map to learn the stories behind some of the artworks in our public spaces.
- ✓ **Business-led promotions and events** – Various

What we are we planning

- + **Events coordination** – Coordinated programme of activities in public places, including events at War Memorial Library, Lower Hutt Events Centre and The Dowse Art Museum. This includes council-led activities and events led by businesses and the community.
- + **Collective marketing & promotion of the city centre** – to raise awareness of what's on offer.
- + **Street furniture relocation** – Moving furniture from the pop-up space, Te Tōpunga Hapori i Daly Street, once finished, eg, seating in Dowse Square.
- + **Activation Fund** – a contestable fund for external parties to deliver events and activities, helping to enliven the city centre.
- + **Mobile Business Policy** – to better enable pop-up businesses and activities for added vibrancy.
- + **Community Events Toolkit** – Practical guide for hosting events, eg, location logistics, waste plans, Health & Safety Plan templates
- + **Te Reo place names** – Exploring opportunities in the city centre for te reo Māori place names.



An example of activation and performance in our public spaces.



Civic activation



Āpitihanga 1: Ngā Kōrero Tuku Iho

Appendix 1: Cultural Narratives

The whakataukī (proverb), "Titiro whakamuri, hiko whakamua", which means "Look to the past, walk towards the future" encourages us to reflect on history to guide our present and future actions. This proverb highlights the importance of Mana Whenua authority, the rights of local indigenous people and their cultural narratives as valuable sources of wisdom. Therefore, Mana Whenua has provided the following cultural narratives, illustrating Mana Whenua history within the Framework area. These form the Framework's cultural compass guiding the strategic direction, values, and priorities.



Maraenuku Pā; natives preparing to leave the Hutt. [ca 1845]. Brees, Samuel Charles, 1810?-1865. Ref: A-179-013. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, natlib.govt.nz/records/23052000.



Ruhia Pōrutu: Ruhia, daughter-in-law of Te Rīrā Pōrutu. Tahiwi, Mairatea, 1908-1997. Ref: PAColl-5345-1. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, natlib.govt.nz/records/22884114.

Te Awa Kairangi – The impressions of tupua on the landscape

Following the legendary tales of Māui and the deeds of Te Kāhui Mouna (the mountain clan) atop Pukeatua (Wainuiomata Hill) to calm the great fish that would become Te Ika a Māui (the North Island), two tupua (guardian spirits) – Ngake and Whātaimai – came into being. It was Ngake and Whātaimai, who once inhabited the lake known as Te Wai Mānga, that were responsible for shaping Te Whanganui a Tara (Wellington) as we see it today. For a time they enjoyed their home, but as the years went by, these two tupua grew bigger and the boundaries of their lake grew smaller.

Ngake, having become imprisoned by the lake's confines, launched himself with such great speed and energy across the lake that it shattered into huge chunks of rock and earth, creating a pathway through to Te Moana o Raukawa (Cook Strait). Battered and bruised, Ngake was finally free to explore the sea, the domain of Tangaroa. This event created two things, the lake became a harbour and the power of Ngake's tail on the land at Whiorau (Lowry Bay) created our river, Te Awa Kairangi.

Since this time, Te Awa Kairangi, winding through once densely forested terrain and abundant with natural resources, served as a vital artery for travel, communication, and trade for many generations. Along its banks many kāinga (villages) flourished, linked together by the river.

Te Umumamaku – A legacy of cultivation

Te Umumamaku is traditionally recognised as an important large-scale mahinga kai (food cultivation area) located within Te Awa Kairangi. This area was renowned for its fertile soil and abundant natural resources, which made it a vital food basket for the local Māori communities.

The extent of the area has been recorded through oral histories and passed down through generations. Through waiata koroua (traditional chants) and whakapapa (genealogy), the outline of the garden can be traced to the closest – though not exact – area. Its boundaries can be roughly described as follows:

- Starting at Market Grove, near the Ewen Bridge on the Hutt River, from there, the boundary extends eastward, passing through the Huia Pool and the Hutt Recreation Ground.
- It continues to the intersection of Hinau Street and Penrose Street.
- From that point, the boundary heads south, running near the Woburn Railway Station.
- Finally, it turns west and follows the true left bank of the Hutt River (the left bank when facing downstream) back to Market Grove, completing the loop.

While much of the physical remnants of this once thriving garden have largely been erased as a result of urban development, Te Umumamaku remains an important historical area on the ancestral lands of Mana Whenua.

Ruhia Pōrutu – The embodiment of kaitiakitanga

Ruhia Pōrutu, the daughter of Kōkiri of Waiwhetū, was a woman of high status and one of seven recognised owners of the area known as Te Umumamaku.

Ruhia was married to Ihāia Pōrutu, son of Te Rīrā Pōrutu, a rangatira (chief) of the Ngāti Hāmua hapū of Te Āti Awa at Pipitea Pā (fortified settlement) in the early to mid-1800s. It was while living at Pipitea that Ruhia became famous for saving the life of a teenage immigrant named Thomas Wilmor McKenzie.

In 1840, the people of Pipitea were building a house for Dr George Evans, a lawyer for the New Zealand Company. For Māori, a house under construction is considered tapu, or out of bounds. However, McKenzie who had just arrived by ship, decided to shelter there for the night, not knowing that he was breaking tapu. Just as he and a friend were settling down for the night, Te Rīrā Pōrutu found them.

Furious with the boys, he raised his greenstone weapon, named Horokiwi, ready to strike – but before he could, Ruhia threw her kaitaka (cloak) over McKenzie. This act saved his life, as in Māori custom, throwing a cloak over a person symbolises protection.

Chief Pōrutu spared McKenzie, who grew up to be a prominent Wellington citizen and a lifelong friend of Ruhia and her family. When he died in 1911, the kaitaka was placed over his casket.

Āpiti hanga 2: Te Whiringa

Appendix 2: Engagement

As we set out to refresh the vision for the city centre, we connected with Mana Whenua, businesses and the community to understand their current aspirations and priorities. Their insights have been instrumental in shaping the Framework.

Mana Whenua

Who we engaged with

The draft plan was considered by Mana Whenua. Through five workshops, Mana Whenua helped to shape the cultural foundations, vision, values and outcomes, ensuring iwi priorities are embedded.

What we heard

The key themes from Mana Whenua engagement are:

- **Partnership** – Communication and collaboration between Mana Whenua and Council throughout the transformation process.
- **Āhua (Form)** – Ensure the city centre looks and feels like the aspirations of Mana Whenua, cultural narratives inform the design of public spaces, and cultivate an authentic sense of place.
- **Ranginui** – Foster the transmission of ancestral knowledge, where Mana Whenua are strong and confident in their mātāwhiri (knowledge).
- **Manaakitanga** – Create a city centre where people are supported and their needs are provided for. Work towards sustaining intergenerational wellbeing and quality of life.
- **Kaitiakitanga** – Work towards the restoration of ecological balance, taonga species, and reduce known and unknown pressures on Te Awa Kairangi and the whenua. Safeguard and preserve the environment for future generations.
- **Taruna (Connected)** – Design spaces and activities where connections are strengthened, including connection to the river, the whenua, and between friends and whānau (family).
- **Mokopuna (Future generations)** – Empower and strengthen our people towards a sustainable, tūpuna-driven (ancestor-driven), mokopuna-focused future.

City centre businesses

Who we engaged with

On behalf of Council, First Retail Group conducted one-on-one interviews with a mix of 25 city centre businesses, commercial property owners, residential providers and organisations.

What we heard

The key themes from the business engagement are:

- **Accessibility** – Ensure that the city centre that is easy to access for people of all ages and abilities, with a variety of transportation options and convenient parking.
- **Safety** – Create a safe and secure environment that actively addresses anti-social behaviour and promotes a sense of well-being for residents, visitors, and businesses.
- **Vibrancy** – Foster a lively, active centre with a mix of businesses, events, and spaces that attract people to the area regularly.
- **Inclusivity** – Design spaces and provide amenities that meet the needs of this community and visitors, including families, older adults, people with disabilities, and those with complex needs.
- **Economic Opportunity** – Support businesses and encourage investment to create a thriving local economy with diverse employment opportunities.
- **Collaboration** – Provide communication and collaboration between the Council, businesses, property owners, and the community throughout the transformation process.
- **Awareness** – Maintain an economic lens on the area's performance throughout the project.

Community

Who we engaged with

The community was invited to share ideas on how to improve the city centre through an online survey (12 April to 7 May), intercept surveys at the opening of Te Tōpūnga hapori i Daly Street, the Daly Street pop up space (12 April) and an in-person workshop (22 May).

Insights were also gathered through interviews with members of ethnic communities and rangatahi (young people).

What we heard

The key themes from the community engagement are:

- **Basics** – The basics matter. People want clean, safe, accessible and welcoming streets as the foundation of a thriving city centre.
- **Accessibility and facilities** – People love the easy access to schools, shops, cafes, the river, the weekend market, playground, library, swimming pool and other services close-by.
- **Events and activities** – The community desires more events, music, night markets, a food precinct, safe spaces for kids and rangatahi, more bars and restaurants, and making better use of the riverfront.
- **Amenity** – People want more trees and 'greenery', seating, picnic areas, art, cycling facilities, safe pedestrian crossings and pedestrian-only zones.
- **The river** – The importance of respecting the river as a taonga to cherish, protect and care for.
- **Mana Whenua** – Strong support for a more visible Mana Whenua presence throughout the city centre, reflecting the deep cultural connection to place.
- **Rangatahi** – Rangatahi need more places to hang out, connect, and see themselves reflected in the design and identity of public spaces.
- **Hubs** – The Dowse Art Museum and War Memorial Library are important hubs in the city centre, with potential to strengthen their role in civic life.

Āpiti hanga 3: Te pokapū o nāianeī rangi

Appendix 3: The city centre today

Tirohanga whānui

Overview

The city centre is a major commercial and employment hub. At the end of 2024, there were over 11,000 jobs and 1,700 businesses with an address in the city centre¹. This represents over 20% of all jobs in Lower Hutt. Queensgate is a regional shopping destination and the city centre is home to a number of long-established businesses and government agencies. The retail, commercial, food and hospitality offerings play an important role in attracting and retaining employers, businesses and visitors.

Over 1,200 people called the city centre home in the last census². These residents have access to several schools, the Hutt Hospital and other health services, four supermarkets and several shops and services nearby. The city centre also provides exceptional facilities and green spaces with the War Memorial Library, the Huia Pool + Fitness Centre, the Hutt Recreation Ground and extensive open spaces along the river corridor.

Over the last two decades, Council has proactively invested in the city centre to make it more attractive to businesses, residents and visitors. This includes investments in The Dowse Art Museum, the Events Centre, Riddiford Garden and the Council building, as well as a redesign of High Street in the core business area.

Investment in Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi will improve access to the city centre with the relocated Melling train station, a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the river connecting the

station and the centre, a new interchange on State Highway 2 and improvements to local roads and public spaces. The programme will increase the flood protection for Hutt Central and help connect the city centre to the river with new buildings along a riverside promenade. It will also embed Mana Whenua designs that contribute to a distinct sense of place. Together these will make the city centre a more resilient location for housing and businesses with riverside amenity and excellent access to public transport and services.

Significant investment in water infrastructure is underway and will increase the capacity of our wastewater, stormwater and water supply networks and help support more residents and businesses locating in the city centre.

There is more work to be done to ensure the city centre provides a safe and attractive environment for residents, workers and visitors with the services they need. Work is also needed to attract more employers to the city centre and ensure our businesses thrive. More residents and better transport connections should help with this, but a programme of improvements and activities is also needed to create a vibrant city centre.

¹ Infometrics, 2024. Quarterly Economic Monitor: Lower Hutt.

² StatsNZ, Census 2023.



View north towards High Street.



View east towards Margaret Street.

Ngā waka me ngā nekehanga

Transport and movement

There are challenges for people moving through the city centre. However, there are also opportunities to improve connectivity, safety, and accessibility within the city centre.

Challenges

- Many streets and intersections are difficult to navigate for people on foot, on bike and using mobility aids.
- The bus interchange is congested and, at times, feels unsafe.
- Separate cycling facilities are difficult to integrate in constrained road corridors.
- The planned reduction in car parking in the city centre as a result of Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi works.

Opportunities

- + Reduce pedestrian waiting times at intersections.
- + Add pedestrian crossings to make walking, cycling and access by other active modes safer and easier.
- + Replace roundabouts with traffic signals in areas where high pedestrian volumes are desired.
- + Work with MetLink to improve the layout of bus stops.
- + Improve public transport and active mode connections to surrounding stations, eg, Woburn, Waterloo, Western Hutt and Melling.
- + Create slow streets where cyclists feel safe sharing the road with people in vehicles.
- + Improve active mode connection to schools.
- + Manage on-street parking in a way that supports businesses.



Key

- Bus routes
- - - Shared / Cycle paths

Melling

New Melling

Western Hutt

Waterloo

Woburn

Bus Interchange

Queensgate Shopping Centre

War Memorial Library

The Dowse Art Museum

Huia Pool + Fitness

Hutt Valley High School

Ss Peter & Paul School

Sacred Heart College

Eastern Hutt School

Chilton Saint James School

Hutt Intermediate School

2

Ngā papa rēhia me te taiao

Public spaces and natural environment

There are challenges for people accessing public spaces in the city centre and the nearby natural environment. However, there are opportunities to enhance the visibility and connection to these spaces and to create a greener city centre.

Challenges

- The height of the stopbanks means the river is not visible from street level in the city centre.
- Microclimate, particularly prevailing winds, impact tree species and public space designs.
- Recognise the presence of Mana Whenua in the city centre and along the river.
- Ensure the city centre reflects the rich cultural melting pot that is Lower Hutt.
- Competing demand for space in city centre streets for trees, parking, active modes, seating, outdoor dining, etc.
- The maintenance of planting in streets and public spaces.

Opportunities

- + Relocate the Riverside Market during Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi works to continue attracting people to the city centre.
- + Maintain and improve existing open spaces in Riddiford Garden, Hutt Recreation Ground and along Te Awa Kairangi.
- + Make Māori culture and Mana Whenua stories visible through the design of streets and spaces.
- + Support story-telling and cultural celebrations.
- + Weave stories, art, designs, colours and flavours from our diverse community into events and projects.
- + Continue to acknowledge and provide for the key role of Mana Whenua as kaitiaki (environmental stewards) of Lower Hutt and Te Awa Kairangi.
- + Add trees, rain gardens and planting in streets and public spaces where practicable.
- + Improve ecological corridors in the city centre.
- + Improve access to the river from the city centre.
- + Add seating in our streets and public places for people to sit, rest and enjoy kai (food).
- + Make better use of Andrews Avenue once Daly Street is permanently closed (as part of Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi).
- + Make better use of Dowse Square for events and community gatherings.
- + Support to use Anzac lawn for activities appropriate to the memorial setting.
- + Create safe and welcoming spaces for rangatahi.
- + Support Riddiford Garden as a whānau-friendly destination.
- + Invest in well-designed, flexible public spaces that support everyday use and events.



2

Key

- Green space
- Sports & Recreation

Melling

New Melling

2

Queensgate Shopping Centre

Riddiford Garden

Playground

War Memorial Library

Dowse Square

The Dowse Art Museum

Huia Pool + Fitness

Woburn

Ōhanga me ngā nohonga

Economy, buildings and housing

The city centre faces challenges which affect its economic vibrancy and appeal. However, there are opportunities to strengthen the city centre as a place to live, work, and spend time.

Challenges

- Limited evening activities.
- Empty retail and commercial premises in the city centre.
- Limited stock of high-grade office accommodation (100% NBS) suitable for large corporate or government tenants.
- Aged building stock.
- Minimise disruption to businesses during the delivery of Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi and the Infrastructure Acceleration Fund upgrades.
- Housing density in the area surrounding the city centre is relatively low. This limits the resident population that can most easily access the city centre.
- Opportunities to provide new housing in the city centre are infrequent and often not fully realised due to the cost of development in the area (particularly foundation costs given potential impacts on the Waiwhetū Aquifer).

Opportunities

- + Consolidate hospitality offerings in the core of the city centre to create a stronger food or evening destination.
- + Work with property owners to temporarily fill vacant shops.
- + Investigate opportunities for new office accommodation when re-developing sites demolished for Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi.
- + Encourage investment in existing buildings, especially heritage buildings.
- + Encourage the re-purposing of older commercial buildings for apartments.
- + Facilitate the re-development of sites no longer fit for purpose into modern shops, offices or apartments.
- + Make use of alternative locations during the upgrade of War Memorial Library.
- + Support more varied housing options in the city centre.
- + Build on the existing specialty food shops of the city centre to create a rich food experience.
- + Weave stories, art, designs, and colours from our diverse community into our built environment.



Key

Proposed District Plan

- City centre Zone
- Mixed use Zone
- High Density residential Zone
- Medium density residential Zone
- Light industrial Zone
- Riverbank precinct

Āpitihanga 4: Whakarāpopototanga o ngā kaupapa

Appendix 4: Summary of initiatives

Initiative	Funding	Status (as of June 2025)
Streetscape Strategy	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Underway
Streets and public spaces upgrades	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Planning stage
Partnership with businesses	Covered by operational funding	Underway
Placemaking	Funded in 2024-2034 Long term	On-going programme
Activating vacant premises	Unfunded (new initiative)	Not started
Making better use of pavements	Covered by operational funding	Not started
Celebrating local businesses	Covered by operational funding	Not started
Disruption Management Plan	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Underway
Future development	Covered by operational funding	Underway
Daly Street development and preparation	Planning and investigations funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan	Planning stage
Water infrastructure upgrades	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan	Design stage
Proposed District Plan	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan	Underway
Sub-station relocation	Funded by GWRC under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Planning stage
Riverside Park	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Planning stage
Flood protection works	Funded by GWRC under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Mills Street stopbank upgrade: Underway Ewen Bridge to Melling Bridge: Design stage
Melling Station relocation	Funded by GWRC under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Design stage

Initiative	Funding	Status (as of June 2025)
Melling Bridge and intersections	Funded by NZTA under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Design stage
City Link Bridge	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Planning stage
Pedestrian and cycling networks	Funded under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Design stage
Bus interchange improvements	Unfunded (new initiative)	Not started
Connecting stations	Unfunded (new initiative) - this would fall under the implementation of the Disruption Management Plan.	Not started
Transitional Parking Plan	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan under Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Underway
Locky Docks	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan	Underway
War Memorial Library upgrade	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan	Planning stage
Riverbank Market relocation	Covered by operational funding	Planning stage
Open space improvements	Funded in 2024-2034 Long Term Plan	Not started
Events coordination	Covered by operational funding	Ongoing
Marketing and promotion	Covered by operational funding	Planning stage
Street furniture relocation	Covered by operational funding	Ongoing
Activation Fund	Covered by operational funding	Not started
Mobile Business Policy	Covered by operational funding	Underway
Community Events Toolkit	Covered by operational funding	Planning stage
Te Reo place names	Covered by operational funding	Underway

Āpitihangā 5: Kaputaka

Appendix 5: Glossary

Te Reo Māori terms

Āhua	Form or appearance.
Awa	River.
Hapori	Community or collective.
Kai	Food.
Kāinga	Village
Kaitaka	Cloak.
Kaitiaki	A guardian, protector or steward – especially of the natural environment. Can be a person, group, or spiritual being.
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship or stewardship, particularly of the natural environment; the practice of caring for and protecting te taiao.
Kaumātua	Respected elder(s).
Mahinga kai	Garden, food cultivation area.
Makaurangi	A metaphor for identity and cultural imprint. Fingerprint, spiral lines – as on the skin of the fingers. To adorn with spirals (in carving and painting).
Mana Whenua	Local Māori with territorial rights and responsibilities over the land and its natural resources.
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, kindness, and the act of caring for others.
Matauraura	A dialectal variation from Taranaki of the widely used Māori term for education – mātauranga. Specifically Māori bodies of knowledge and wisdom
Mokopuna	Grandchildren or descendants; future generations.
Mouri	The life essence or vital energy of a person, place, or object.
Pā	Fortified settlement.
Pukeatua	The original Māori name for the Wainuiomata Hill.
Rangatahi	Young people or teenagers.
Rangatira	Chief.
Ranginui	Sky Father. Metaphor for the pinnacle of success.
Ruhia Pōrutu	Mana Whenua tupuna (ancestor). The daughter of Kōkiri of Waiwhetū.
Tākai Here	Binding agreements or formal partnerships, in this context referring to the Council's partnership with Mana Whenua.
Takiwā	A district, region or area. Often used to describe an area of cultural or ancestral significance.
Tamariki	Children.
Tangaroa	Son of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, Sky and Earth. Atua (guardian) of the sea.
Tangata	People or person. In many contexts, it refers collectively to communities or individuals.
Taonga	Treasure.
Tapu	Sacred place, restricted or out of bounds.
Taruna	To be connected, includes connection to place and each other.

Te Awa Kairangi	The esteemed and plentiful river – the original Māori name for the Hutt River.
Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai	Te Awa Kairangi at the coast – refers to the Lower Hutt area, the river as it meets the sea.
Te Herenga Kairangi	Council's Māori Strategy
Te Ika a Māui	The fish of Māui – the original Māori name for the North Island.
Te Kāhui Mouna	The mountain clan.
Te Moana a Raukawakawa	The original Māori name for the Cook Strait.
Te taiao	The nature that surrounds us – land, water, climate and living beings.
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand's founding document.
Te Umumamaku	Name of an important large-scale food cultivation area.
Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	The soothing waters of Te Awa Kairangi – The gifted name for the city-shaping programme formerly known as RiverLink. It acknowledges the mana and significance of the river.
Te Whanganui a Tara	The great harbour of Tara – the original Māori name for Wellington Harbour.
Tupua	Guardian spirits.
Tūpuna	Ancestors.
Waiata koroua	Traditional chants.
Whakapapa	Genealogy.
Whakataukī	A Māori proverb or saying that expresses ancestral wisdom or guidance.
Whānau	Family or extended family group.
Whenua	Land. Metaphor for one's connection to land, their whakapapa (genealogy).
Whiorau	The original Māori name for Lowry Bay.

Other terms

Active modes	Travel options that involve physical activity, like walking, cycling, or scootering.
Mixed-use development	A building or area that combines different spaces, like residential (where people live), commercial (stores, restaurants, offices), and sometimes even recreational areas.
On-street parking	Parking spaces located on the side of roads, as opposed to off-street or parking structures.
Placemaking	Creating public spaces that are lively, welcoming, and reflect the needs and identity of the community.
Streetscape	The design and visual appearance of streets – including footpaths, trees, lighting, and seating – and how they work together to shape the look and feel of the area.
Wayfinding	Signage and design elements that help people navigate a space or area.

Āpitihanga 6: Ngā tohutoro

Appendix 6: Reference documents

Central City Transformation Plan (2019)

City Centre Insights Report (2023)

Draft Reserves Investment Strategy (2024)

Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy (2023)

Infrastructure Strategy 2024-2034 (2024)

Integrated Transport Strategy (2022)

Long Term Plan 2024-34 (2024)

Lower Hutt Climate Action Pathway Te Ara Whakamua o Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai (2022)

Parking Strategy (2024)

Proposed District Plan (2025)

RiverLink Mana Whenua Values Plan (2021)

RiverLink Urban & Landscape Design Framework (2021)

Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025-2055 (2025)

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