

Report

# Kopu Development Concept Plan - Stage 1 Report: Study Area Analysis

**Prepared for Thames-Coromandel District Council (Client)**

**By Beca Ltd (Beca)**

22 January 2014

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(Photo Right: Thames-Coromandel Gateway, viewed from the new Kopu Bridge)



## Revision History

Revision N°	Prepared By	Description	Date
A	Carl Lucca	Draft for client discussion and comment	22 January 2014
B	Carl Lucca	Final	7 February 2014

## Document Acceptance

Action	Name	Signed	Date
Prepared by	Carl Lucca		7 February 2014
Reviewed by	Richard Douch		7 February 2014
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## 1 Introduction

This urban design analysis report has been prepared to assist in the preparation of the proposed Kopu Development Concept Plan. It forms stage one of a three stage process:

**Stage 1:** Information Gathering & Analysis

**Stage 2:** Draft Concept Design – Kopu Study Area

**Stage 3:** Draft Concept Design – ‘Gateway Precinct’ and ‘Marine Precinct’

Specifically, this report:

- a. Analyses the existing strategic and physical context;
- b. Identifies potential urban design issues (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) that require responding to;
- c. Outlines potential responses / design principles (to assist in drafting the proposed Concept Plan) that respond to the urban design issues identified;
- d. Proposes a number of key moves (i.e. strategic design proposals), illustrated through high level draft concept drawings, intended as the basis for discussion with TCDC and key stakeholders moving forward to stages 2 and 3.

For the purposes of this reporting, the area subject to analysis is shown in Figure 1 below (refer page 3).

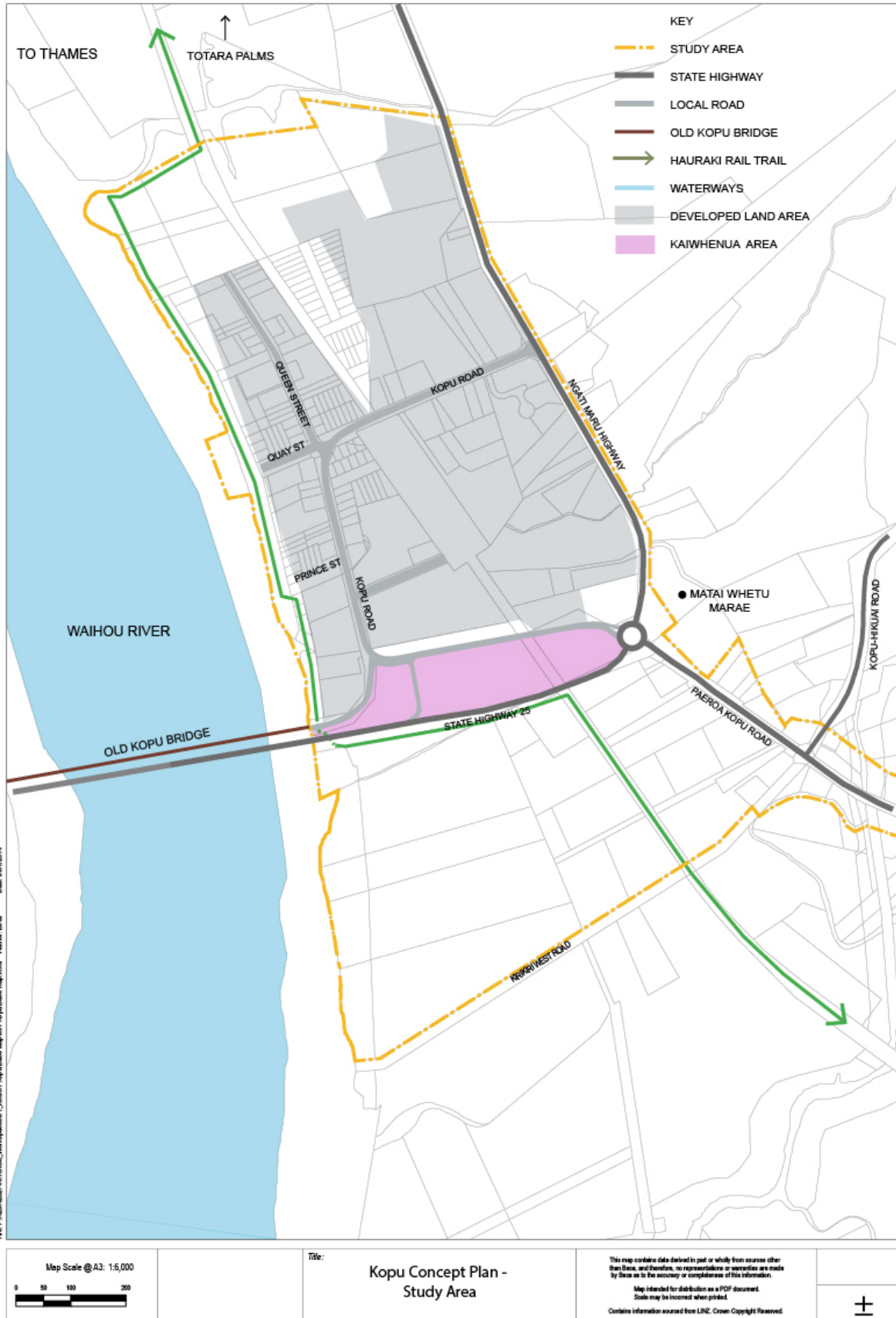


Figure 1: Kopu Development Concept Plan Study Area

## 2 Existing Strategic Context

This section contains an overview of the relevant national and local strategic planning and design context, and summarises those provisions that provide direction for the preparation of the proposed Concept Plan.

### 2.1 National Guidance

#### 2.1.1 New Zealand Urban Design Protocol 2005 (NZ UDP)

The NZ Urban Design Protocol (NZ UDP) provides guidance to communities in relation to specific urban design initiatives, intended to raise the quality of urban design throughout New Zealand's cities and towns. The Protocol identifies seven essential design qualities to consider as part of the day to day planning and design of their urban environments:

1. Context – seeing that buildings, places and spaces are part of the whole town or city
2. Character – reflecting and enhancing the distinctive character, heritage and identity of our urban environment
3. Choice – ensuring diversity and choice for people
4. Connections – enhancing how different networks link together for people
5. Creativity – encouraging innovative and imaginative solutions
6. Custodianship – ensuring design is environmentally sustainable, safe and healthy
7. Collaboration – communicating and sharing knowledge across sectors, professions and with communities.

While non-statutory, the NZ UDP provides a mandate for the consideration of high quality urban design. The Protocol also provides a greater collective understanding of what high quality design outcomes are and the value that is added by encouraging them in practice, and how it may be achieved. In conjunction with the NZ UDP, research was undertaken resulting in the publication of *The Value of Urban Design* (2006). The research showed conclusively that good urban design has the potential to create value for communities, individuals, the economy and the environment, with the potential benefits including:

- Better public health
- Greater social equity
- Enhanced land values
- A more vibrant local economy
- Reduced vehicle emissions
- More sustainable use of non-renewable resources.

#### 2.1.2 National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design 2005 (CPTED)

The National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) provides local authorities with a framework for incorporating crime prevention within quality urban design by focusing on reducing the opportunity to commit crime. There are four key CPTED principles:

1. Surveillance – people are present and can see what is going on
2. Access management – methods are used to attract people and vehicles to some places and restrict them from others
3. Territorial reinforcement – clear boundaries encourage community 'ownership' of the space

4. Quality environments – good quality, well maintained places attract people and support surveillance.

In addition to the CPTED principles, the guideline introduces seven qualities of safer places, which are intended to improve the urban environment while reducing crime and the fear of crime. These are listed below:

1. Access: Safe movement and connections – Places with well-defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient and safe movement without compromising security
2. Surveillance and sightlines: See and be seen – Places where all publicly accessible spaces are overlooked, and clear sightlines and good lighting provide maximum visibility
3. Layout: Clear and logical orientation – Places laid out to discourage crime, enhance perception of safety and help orientation and way-finding
4. Activity mix: Eyes on the street – Places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times by promoting a compatible mix of uses and increased use of public spaces
5. Sense of ownership: Showing a space is cared for – Places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community
6. Quality environments: Well designed, managed and maintained environments – Places that provide a quality environment and are designed with management and maintenance in mind in order to discourage crime and promote community safety in the present and the future
7. Physical protection: Using active security measures – Places that include necessary, well designed security features and elements.

The CPTED principles and qualities are integral to achieving safe urban environments that attract users and contribute to community wellbeing. Site layout and the interface between buildings and public realm are particularly important elements in relation to CPTED.

## **2.2 Local Strategic Planning and Design Direction**

This section contains a brief overview of strategic and planning documents that assist to provide an understanding of the underlying issues relating to the Concept Plan area and/or relevant guiding principles or planning direction. In the main, these include:

- Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint (Thames-Coromandel District Council, Waikato Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Hauraki Whaanui, 2010)
- Thames Urban Development Strategy (Thames-Coromandel District Council, 2013)
- Kopu to Thames Structure Plan (Thames-Coromandel District Council, 2010)
- Thames-Coromandel Proposed District Plan (Thames-Coromandel District Council, 2013)

### **2.2.1 Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint**

The Coromandel Peninsula is experiencing an increasing demand for living opportunities and it is anticipated that housing will need to increase by approximately 15,000 properties by 2041. This growth, coupled with the attractiveness of the Coromandel as a tourist destination will continue to place a high demand on local employment opportunities, services and infrastructure.

The Blueprint identifies a number of key focus areas and most notably from a design perspective, the desire to focus development and concentrate future services and infrastructure within three key urban hubs – Thames, Whitianga and Whangamata; upholding the services and preserving the character of smaller centres and rural settlements, and avoiding development in hazard prone areas.

The Blueprint outlines a number of challenges that communities on the Coromandel Peninsula are likely to face in the future including: the need to stimulate the growth of the permanent population of the area in order to support the services desired by communities such as health, transport and recreational facilities; the need to manage development in small towns and coastal areas in order to protect their character and sense of place; and the need to manage both existing and new development to prevent or minimise the effects of natural hazards, for example flooding and erosion.

The Blueprint also outlines a number of community aspirations that are relevant from an urban design perspective. These are listed below:

- *Recognise the character of our communities and enhance or maintain their amenity and landscape settings*
- *Provide open spaces so that the special qualities of the Coromandel, including coastal areas, diverse settlements and recreational opportunities, are maintained or enhanced*
- *Provide for public access to our natural environment including waterways and coast in a manner which protects their special character*

The Blueprint outlines a range of priorities that were identified by communities in the district through consultation in order to achieve their community aspirations. It is noted that the protection of important landscapes, open space and biodiversity is a priority for the district and that one way of protecting these values will be by more consolidated or compact re-development of current settlements. The character, diversity and sense of place of settlements in the district has also been identified as a priority. The Blueprint identifies two key methods of preserving these values – limiting the spread and growth of smaller towns to within existing boundaries and to the anticipated capacity of infrastructure, and protecting/promoting the distinctive cultural heritage and cultural diversity of communities. Notably, Kopu is located at the junction of four principal travel routes and is also within close proximity to a sea-route. Kopu is also identified as a flooding area to be managed.



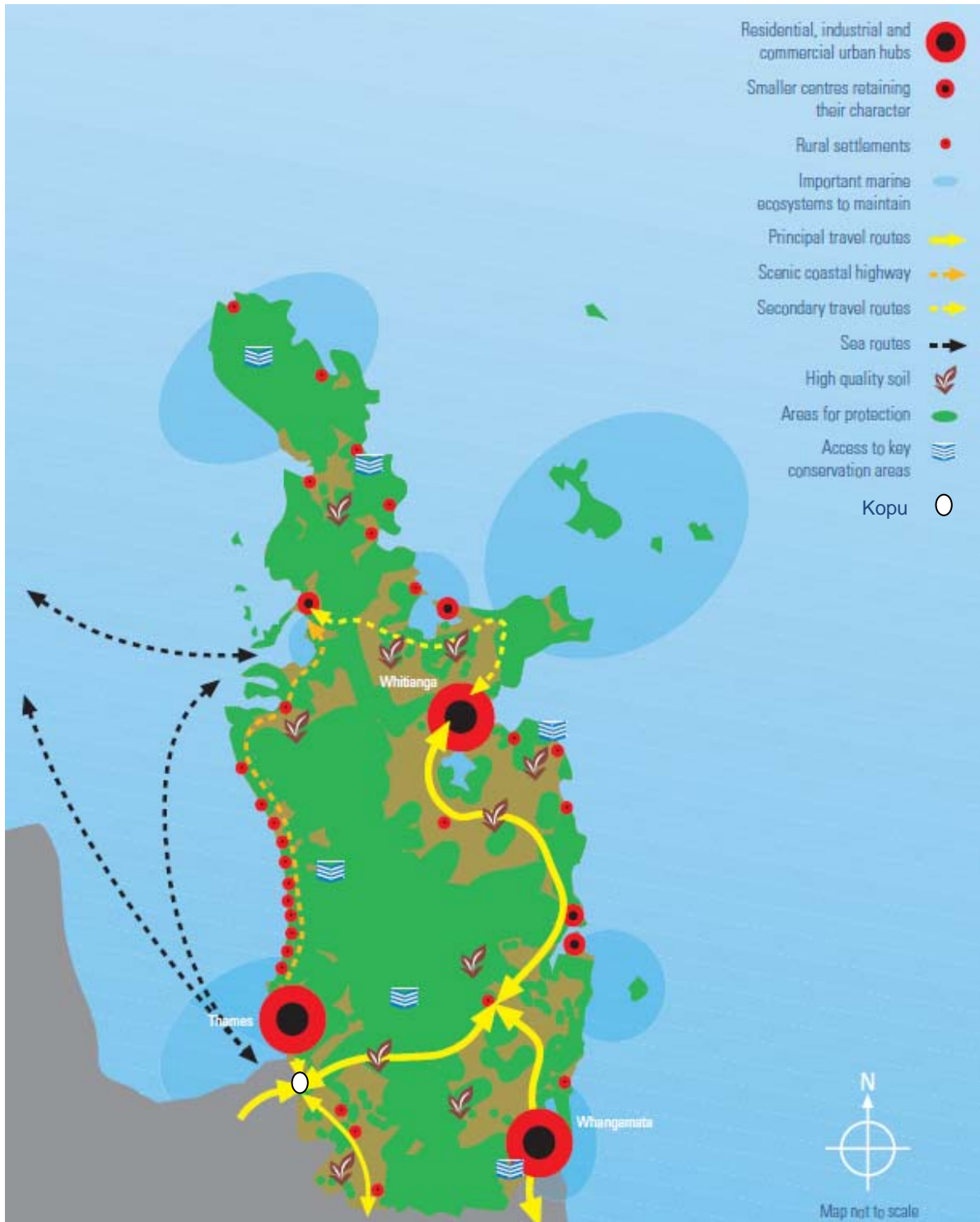


Figure 2: Kopu at the junction of four principal travel routes and within close proximity to a sea-route

### 2.2.2 Thames Urban Development Strategy

This strategy has a strong emphasis on Thames but also alludes to a number of corresponding opportunities in relation to growth to the south and connections with Kopu. In particular, the strategy identifies the potential of a strip of waterfront land in Thames as a recreational resource for the community. Developing this land as a green strip has also been acknowledged as having potential to act as a safety buffer in the event of tidal surge or tsunami. This strip extends the length of the

Thames waterfront toward Kopu and includes the Hauraki Rail Trail walking and cycling route. There is potential to continue to enhance connections along this route and others, enhancing the overall connections between the two towns.

### **2.2.3 Kopu to Thames Structure Plan August, 2010**

The purpose of the Kopu to Thames Structure Plan is to identify the desired form of development within the structure plan area (refer Figure 3 below, page 5). By doing so the Structure Plan:

- Provides a framework for the provision of and management of business and residential growth;
- Provides more market certainty as to the type and location of development desired by the community to assist with boosting the local economy (with a focus largely on industrial development within the study area for the proposed Concept Plan);
- Enables Council to plan for and support the development of infrastructure upgrades required to accommodate increased commercial, industrial and residential activity.

In relation to the proposed Concept Plan, the Structure Plan provides supporting direction in the form of analysis (constraints and opportunities), vision and key outcomes sought, as described below.

#### **Constraints and opportunities, relevant to the Concept Plan study area**

##### *Constraints*

- A number of archaeological sites have been identified or are likely to exist given settlement patterns and uses;
- Te Kaupata and Waipapa Streams, which act as natural barriers for expansion of industrial development;
- The existing drainage systems do not appear robust enough to enable full development in the Kopu Industrial Area;
- Direct property access to the state highway to facilitate development adjacent to these routes will need to be avoided.

##### *Opportunities*

- To protect, enhance and celebrate cultural and heritage sites within study area;
- Landscape preservation and enhancement;
- Establishment of 'gateway' treatments (for both the peninsula and the township) using the highway as the primary viewing platform;
- Landscape mitigation to contribute to ecological enhancement and restoration, and community connectivity in the area;
- Opportunity to design a comprehensive stormwater system to provide development certainty and use parts of the potential stormwater disposal and treatment network for multiple purposes e.g. walkways, ecological restoration etc.;
- The future development of the study area and the wider structure plan area will enable long term protection of highway sustainability (including safeguarded land for additional lanes) and provide an opportunity to establish a "gateway" using the highway as the primary viewing platform and tie in transport and landscaping treatment.

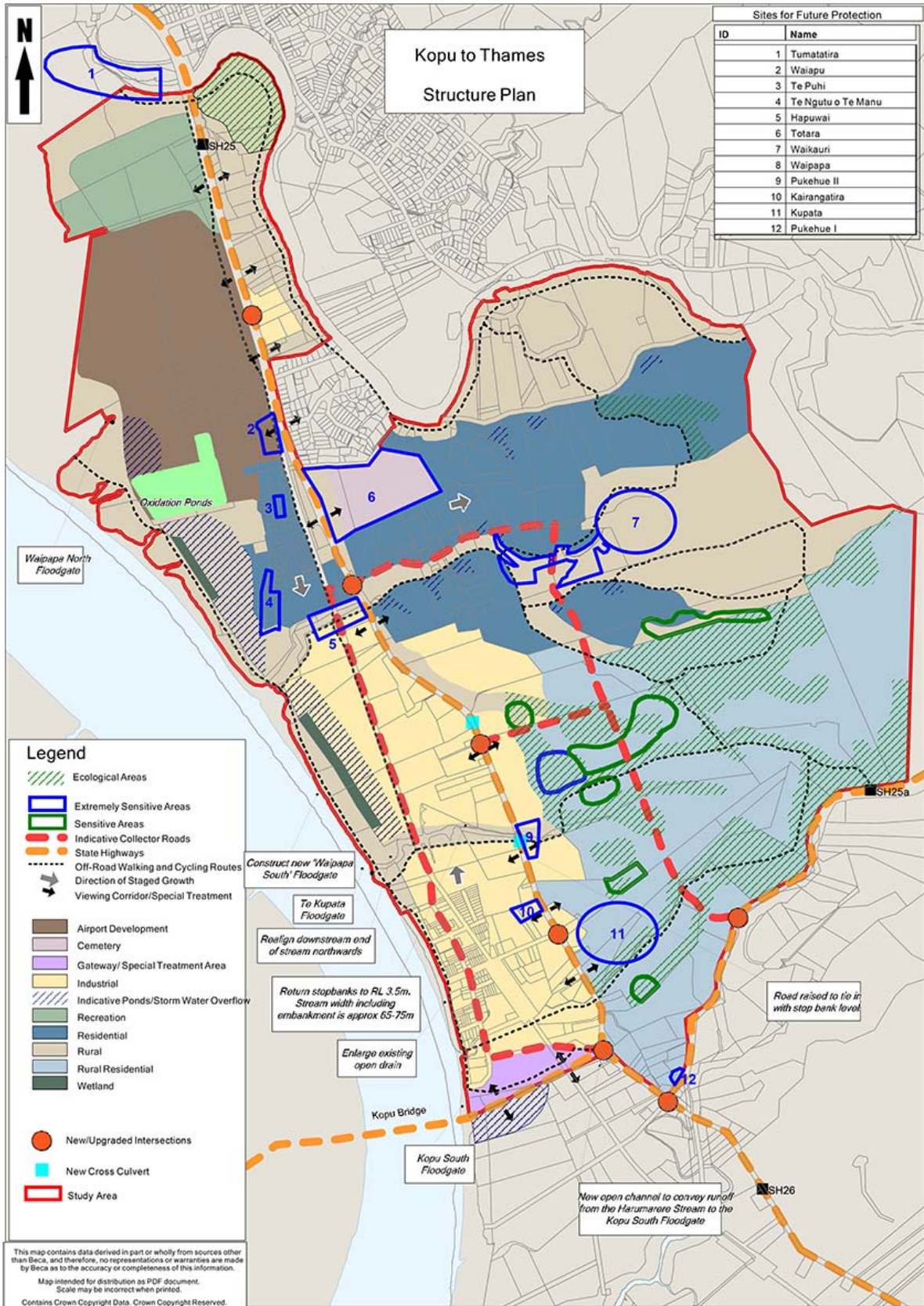


Figure 3: Kopu to Thames Structure Plan Map, August 2010

## Kopu to Thames Structure Plan Vision

Responding to the opportunities and constraints, the following vision has been identified for the structure plan area:

*“To develop a “gateway” to the Thames township and the Coromandel Peninsula, through development of industrial and residential areas that are readily accessible, visually attractive and have a character that embodies the landscape, ecological and cultural heritage of the Coromandel.”*

## Key outcomes sought & relevant urban design direction, relevant to the Concept Plan study area

### *Outcomes sought*

- Potential to develop a four lane highway between Kopu to Thames including the protection of three entrance points between Kopu and Totara Valley Road, thus preserving the highway’s function;
- Ecological diversity and function is protected and enhanced via the establishment of buffer zones for stream and coastal margins, and the multipurpose use of these areas for ecological/cultural/recreational/stormwater reasons, including using reserve land in order to minimise total area taken;
- Heritage and archaeological sites of significance are protected, enhanced and celebrated by employing mitigation measures and establishing protocols for development areas;
- Recreational potential between Kopu and Thames is maximised;
- A clear infrastructure plan for the area is developed that includes water, wastewater, stormwater and roading. Also, the development of an associated development contributions regime that is fair and equitable;
- Flood risk and stormwater management;
- A local transport network that is fully integrated with the regional transport network is identified.

### *Urban design direction*

- Low impact design solutions where practicable for infrastructure requirements – especially stormwater
- Urban design principles are incorporated to have regard to the landscape and visual amenity of the area
- Kopu to Thames walkway is established / enhanced
- Ecological corridors adjacent to rivers, streams and waterways – follow existing remnants of bush and low lying/flood prone areas adjacent to Waihou River. These areas can also be for shared use of stormwater management and passive cycle/pedestrian networks.
- There is a desire to keep ‘big box retail’ out of the study area (to avoid the impact this would have on similar and associated retail in Thames) and for any commercial activities within industrial areas to be either ancillary retail or retail required to support the industrial area e.g. takeaway food bars etc.

## Appendix B – Design Guidelines

Supporting the Structure Plan, a suite of “generic design guidelines” have been developed for residential, rural residential and industrial areas, as well as the Kaiwhenua area located north of the State Highway. These primarily provide for direction in relation to the form of development on individual sites, including the interface with the public realm. As outlined within the guidelines, *the*

*key principles for the industrial zones under the TCDC district plan is to maintain and enhance the industrial resource (including land, buildings and services) for future generations; and industrial activities are carried out in a manner that the amenities of the environment are maintained and/or enhanced, as well as, efficient and safe movement of vehicles to and from the zone.*

In relation to industrial areas, the guidelines provide direction in relation to:

- Treatment of berms and boundaries
- Preferred plant species for use on site and at boundaries, including planting and fences
- Design of building components and relationship with the street
- Building materials and colours
- Signs.

In relation to the Kaiwhenua area, the guidelines provide direction in relation to enhancing the entrance to Kopu and Thames. In particular, it recommends:

- *That a highway improvement strategy be developed as part of the structure plan that recognises and builds on the different characters of three distinct sections and nodes. These are roughly defined as:*
  - *The Kopu commercial corridor*
  - *The Totara residential area*
  - *Final approach and introduction gateway to the town of Thames*
- *These three different sections should also display common elements of landscape enhancement that relate to the overall landscape context of the road corridor, such as the meeting of key landscape types and features, such as the old shoreline running parallel to the road, the long distance views to the floodplain, estuary, sea and coastal hills with a planting strategy that recognises the diversity and distinctiveness of this setting. The three different sections should also contain cultural and heritage elements which relate to the region. The elements should be combined in a way which is aesthetically pleasing and reference significant features or events of Kopu/Thames history. This will promote character and help retain the distinctive identity for Kopu/Thames.*

The above guidelines provide useful direction, particularly in relation to the Kaiwhenua area to assist in the development of the proposed Concept Plan.

#### **2.2.4 Thames-Coromandel Proposed District Plan**

TCDC is currently undertaking a review of the District Plan. The Proposed District Plan has been prepared and is currently in the submission phase (13th December 2013 through to 14 March 2014). With regard to the Concept Plan study area, the following is noted (refer Appendix A: Thames-Coromandel Proposed District Plan Maps):

- The majority of the area is zoned Industrial, with land to the south of State Highway 25 zoned Rural;
- Land located along the eastern Waihou River banks within the study area is zoned Marine Service to the north of the State Highway, and Open Space to the south;
- The area includes a number of designations relating to:
  - Waikato Regional Council: Soil conservation and river control, drainage and flood protection
  - Kiwirail Holdings Limited: Thames Branch Rail
  - NZ Transport Agency: State Highway 25 widening

- The area is subject to Section 27.2 of the Proposed District Plan: Kopu to Thames Structure Plan.

### 2.2.5 Section 27.2 Kopu to Thames Structure Plan

The Kopu to Thames Structure Plan section of the Proposed District Plan has been based on the Kopu to Thames Structure Plan prepared in August 2010 (refer section 2.2.3 above). The structure plan area encompasses approximately 900 ha of land located between Kopu and Thames and predominantly provides for industrial activity at Kopu, residential development, rural activities and rural lifestyle development. To the east of the new Kopu Bridge and north of State Highway 25, there is land called Kaiwhenua. This land is dedicated for commercial and community activities that cater for tourists and local travellers.

The relevant objectives to urban design contained within Section 27 are:

- Objective 1: Kaiwhenua is visually attractive and memorable with visitor service activities and public facilities providing historical, cultural and landscape information about the District.
- Objective 2: Ecological corridors are established to protect and enhance the natural character of the landscape, catchment and drainage patterns.
- Objective 3: A high quality industrial environment is created within the Industrial Zone.
- Objective 4b: A transport system that provides for alternative forms of transport.
- Objective 5: Heritage and archaeological sites of significance are identified, protected and enhanced.

The relevant policies are:

- *Policy 1a: Kaiwhenua shall be enhanced to provide a positive and memorable first impression of the District after crossing the Waihou River.*
- *Policy 1b: A comprehensive development plan for Kaiwhenua shall be developed to achieve the following:*
  - a) *Area A: a highly landscaped area with strong vertical structures that creates a District gateway, which may incorporate stormwater infrastructure; and*
  - b) *Area B: a mix of small-scale commercial and community activities, generally located towards the northern side, and landscaping, planting, visitor information and landscaped stormwater infrastructure generally located towards the southern side; and*
  - c) *Area C: a wide range of possible activities that have dominant buildings or structures without significant landscaping; and*
  - d) *An efficient and safe road network; and*
  - e) *Building setbacks from the rail corridor and state highway; and*
  - f) *Coordinated water, wastewater, solid waste, telecommunications and electricity infrastructure on-site and with surrounding sites; and*
  - g) *Comprehensive management of stormwater collection from the wider Kopu area, treatment and disposal; and*
  - h) *An acceptable level of flood hazard risk (see Section 10 Natural Hazard Background); and*

- i) *A cultural assessment that identifies the history and value of the site to tāngata whenua.*
- *Policy 2a: Remnant bush areas and low lying/flood prone areas shall be secured for ecological corridors during the subdivision and development process.*
- *Policy 2b: Fragmented areas of bush should be connected and enhanced with native planting.*
- *Policy 2c: Ecological corridors and wetlands should be designed and located to enable use for stormwater management and cycle/pedestrian networks*
- *Policy 3a: Street layout and design shall:*
  - a) *Provide wide berms and landscape buffer planting between the road and site boundaries; and*
  - b) *Enhance ecological connections; and*
  - c) *Establish street planting down the road side adjacent to industrial properties.*
- *Policy 3b: Sites with frontage to the State Highway shall incorporate landscape planting between the road and buildings.*
- *Policy 4c: Land shall be set aside during the subdivision and development process for ecological and recreation corridors, encouraging walking and cycling.*
- *Policy 5a: Identified sites of archaeological significance and cultural sensitivity shall be recorded and their values protected from inappropriate subdivision and development.*

### **2.3 Summary**

The proposed Concept Plan is a logical next step in more detailed design for the Kopu area, following on from the broader Kopu to Thames Structure Plan. Accordingly, the emphasis now needs to be on how the proposed Concept Plan provides for future development in a manner that responds to the principles of the NZ Urban Design Protocol; the relevant qualities, objectives and policies outlined within section 27.2 of the Proposed District Plan; and the outcomes sought by key stakeholders for the area (including Mana Whenua, TCDC and landowners). In addition, seeking outcomes that tie in with Council's wider strategic planning will facilitate benefits for the wider community.

Based on the above, the following sections seek to analyse at a more detailed level the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to the study area, allowing for the preparation of a draft suite of design principles to take forward to the concept plan preparation. The design principles aim to respond to the overall vision for the structure plan area, along with other relevant guidelines, objectives and policies outlined above.

### 3 SWOT Analysis

This section contains an overview of the physical and cultural context of the study area, focusing on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (i.e. SWOT analysis) identified, and possible responses / design principles for consideration as part of the proposed Concept Plan.

Located at the gateway to the Coromandel peninsula, Kopu has recently been affected by the development of the new Kopu Bridge. While this bridge has enhanced connectivity over the Waihou River, it has also changed the flows of local traffic, with the realigned State Highway 25 redirecting much of the traffic around the Kopu township. This, along with the existing industrial land use patterns and other existing conditions has resulted in a variety of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats throughout the area.

Of particular note, and discussed further below, are the opportunities provided by the old Kopu Bridge, the existing boat launching area on the banks of the Waihou River, and the Kaiwhenua area adjacent to and north of State Highway 25.

**Photo description of study area – Notable Characteristics:**



**Photo 1: Local amenities on Kopu Road (corner of State Highway 25)**



**Photo 2: Local amenities on Kopu Road**



**Photo 3: Existing gravel and sand loading area alongside boat launch ramp / barge landing**



**Photo 4: Existing boat launch facilities**





**Photo 5: View towards Coromandel Ranges with Kaiwhenua Gateway area in foreground, coming from new Kopu Bridge**



**Photo 6: View towards Coromandel Ranges with Matai Whetu Marae on hill on foreground**



**Photo 7: Existing industry and typical condition of many roads in the study area**



**Photo 8: Hauraki Rail Trail, at the crossing point of the stop banks towards the existing boat launching facilities**



**Photo 9: Newly formed road running along the northern side of the Kaiwhenua area, including shared path**



**Photo 10: View over Kiwirail designated land, including hillock formed by dumping of spoil**



Photo 11: Pedestrian and cycle access over the new Kopu Bridge (left), and access to the old Kopu Bridge (currently closed) (right).



Photo 12: Aerial view of the existing boat launching facilities and adjoining barge loading area to the south.

### 3.1 Strengths and Opportunities

The following strengths and opportunities have been identified in relation to the study area. Where appropriate, these are illustrated in Figure 4 below. The responses seek to enhance social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing as the township grows in the future.

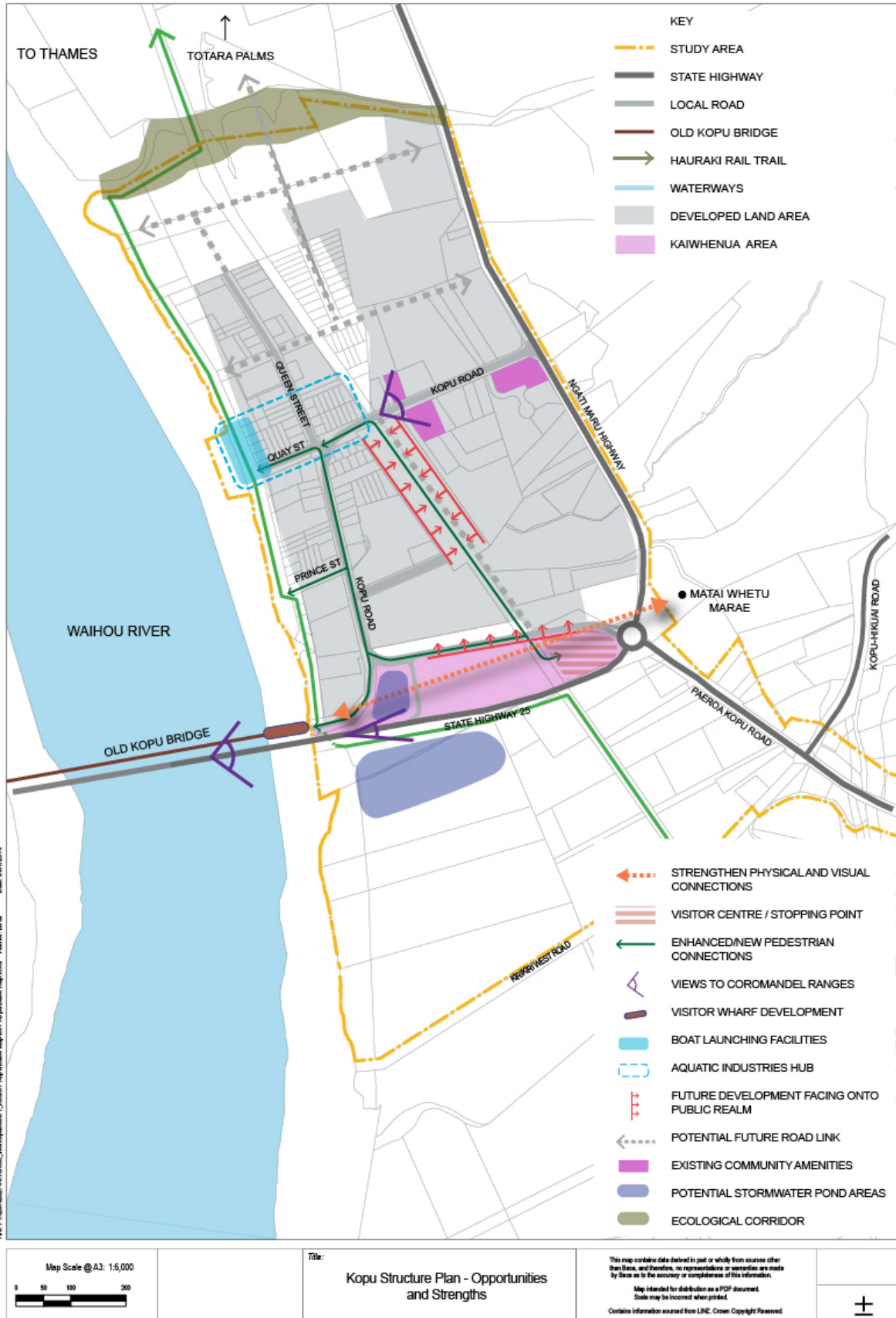


Figure 4: Kopu Development Concept Plan Study Area – Strengths and Opportunities

Strengths and opportunities	Recommended responses
<p>The study area consists of predominately low intensity industrial land use and adjoining vacant / developed lands, offering good potential for future development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to consolidate industrial activities within the existing zoned area, to increase density, retain walkability and increase infrastructure efficiency.</li> <li>■ Encourage smaller industrial and supporting land uses (e.g. outdoor stores, boat sales yard) that provide for a relationship with the street and or visual interest along primary local roads, particularly Kopu Road. Such an approach will assist to increase safety (through 'more eyes on the street') and interest along these routes.</li> <li>■ Abstain from developing south of State Highway 25 until existing Industrial zoned land to the north is largely developed and there is appropriate mitigation in place to manage amenity; infrastructure; transport and stormwater management matters.</li> </ul>
<p>The realignment of the State Highway has opened up land along a key movement corridor that provides tourism and commercial investment opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building on the opportunity provided by the roundabout, provide for visitor and passive recreation activities at the eastern part of the Kaiwhenua area (such as may include a visitor centre, toilets, cultural information and mapping, connections with local walkways), and low profile commercial development within the central Kaiwhenua Gateway area.</li> </ul>
<p>Encouraging and promoting tourism of the Coromandel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide for visitor and passive recreation activities at the northern part of the Kaiwhenua area, and low profile commercial development within the central Kaiwhenua Gateway area.</li> <li>■ Celebrate Maori and local heritage through the Kaiwhenua area and linking to the Waihou River through appropriately landscaped and detailed walking and cycling routes.</li> <li>■ Interlink on the ground tourism opportunities with contemporary technology, e.g. through enhancing internet access; provision of modern information access tools for local tourism, modern yet culturally based art interventions.</li> <li>■ Provide opportunities to explore locally, through clear way finding signage and safe walking and cycling routes.</li> <li>■ Provide the possibility for cycle hire (associated with the Hauraki Rail Trail).</li> </ul>
<p>Coromandel Ranges backdrop as part of the Thames-Coromandel Gateway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide for appropriate design guidelines within the Kaiwhenua area to enable development while not detracting from views experienced from State Highway 25.</li> <li>■ In particular, design guidelines / concept planning for the gateway area should consider building bulk and location, height, setbacks, planting, colour palette and orientation</li> </ul>

	(including roof slope and pitch).
Provide a cultural connection through design, both Maori and local heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Celebrate Maori and local heritage through the Kaiwhenua area and linking to the Waihou River through appropriately landscaped and detailed walking and cycling routes.</li> <li>■ Develop (subject to engagement with Mana Whenua) an ecological trail / cultural story between Matai Whetu Marae and the river.</li> </ul>
Views from Matai Whetu Marae.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Protect views from Matai Whetu Marae towards the old Kopu Bridge and Waihou River, across the Kaiwhenua area.</li> </ul>
Build upon natural waterways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Restore / enhance natural waterways through appropriate ecological restoration.</li> <li>■ Provide walking routes alongside natural waterways, for interest and recreation.</li> </ul>
Existing amenities – the study area consists of a number of amenities that are local community nodes and/or areas of interest. By way of example, these include the community hall site, the Kopu Station Hotel, the Kopu Cafe and the Kopu boat ramp (further discussed below).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide for safe, legible pedestrian linkages between existing and future amenities.</li> <li>■ Encourage co-location of existing and future amenities.</li> </ul>
Relationship with the Waihou River.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Working with Ngati Maru and TCDC, investigate methods / interventions to celebrate Maori and local heritage within the Kaiwhenua area and linking to the Waihou River (e.g. suitably landscaped and detailed walking and cycling routes).</li> <li>■ Open up new linkages between existing and future roads to the Waihou River and parallel Hauraki Rail Trail.</li> <li>■ Provide for open space and picnic facilities adjacent to the boat launch facilities and the old Kopu Bridge (with clear sight lines to surrounding activities).</li> </ul>
Existing riverside amenities, including the Kopu boat ramp and open space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Investigate upgrading the existing boat launching and related facilities at Kopu. This may include but not be limited to consideration of<sup>1</sup>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Concrete ramps</li> <li>–Parking facilities</li> <li>–Toilets</li> <li>–Boating pontoons</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Early discussion in relation to the boat ramp facilities has indicated the need for further information to assist in moving towards the development of concept options which could be discussed with the community. Information requirements include:

- Hydrographical levels, tide ranges, depth of river and slope – all of which will assist to inform the possible interventions for consideration going forward
- Likely users – commercial and recreational (likely to be understood by talking with local businesses, commercial fisherman, and community)
- Available budgets for upgrades and on-going maintenance (both of which will have implications on facilities provided).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Mini marina facilities</li> <li>–Dry stack facilities / trailer boat storage</li> <li>–Wind stops</li> <li>■ Provide appropriate signage and access to boat launch facilities and parking.</li> <li>■ Encourage, through appropriate incentives, co-location of marine related commercial and industrial activities adjacent to the boat launching facilities.</li> <li>■ Provide connections between the commercial marine area and Kaiwhenua Gateway.</li> </ul>
Heritage features – the area includes a number of heritage features, including the old Kopu Bridge and Cooks Memorial.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Retain access to the Waihou River by retaining part-there-of of the old Kopu Bridge as a wharf or similar structure.</li> <li>■ Provide for parking, BBQ and supporting amenities alongside the proposed wharf facilities.</li> <li>■ Utilise elements of the old Kopu Bridge within the landscape and wetland design of the Kaiwhenua area (subject to NZTA confirmation).</li> <li>■ Relocate the Cooks Memorial to the Kaiwhenua area, or incorporate as part of a heritage walk through the Kopu area.</li> <li>■ Provide visitor information in relation to the significance of the old Kopu Bridge and Cooks Memorial (i.e. Kopu’s location at the mouth of the Waihou River).</li> </ul>
Potential for roads to link east west and north south.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide for future development of roads, walkways and cycleways within a grid pattern, maximizing connectivity and permeability for future users, and enhancing connectivity with the river and north to Thames and Totara Palms.</li> </ul>
Use of rail corridor land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Investigate alternative uses for the rail designation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Possible recreation routes as part of the wider network of cycle and walking routes</li> <li>–Future road connection with adjoining land uses facing onto the street.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### 3.2 Weaknesses and Threats

The following weaknesses and threats have been identified in relation to the study area. Where appropriate, these are illustrated in Figure 5 below. The responses seek to reduce the possible threats and turn around the weaknesses such that a positive response is achieved where possible.

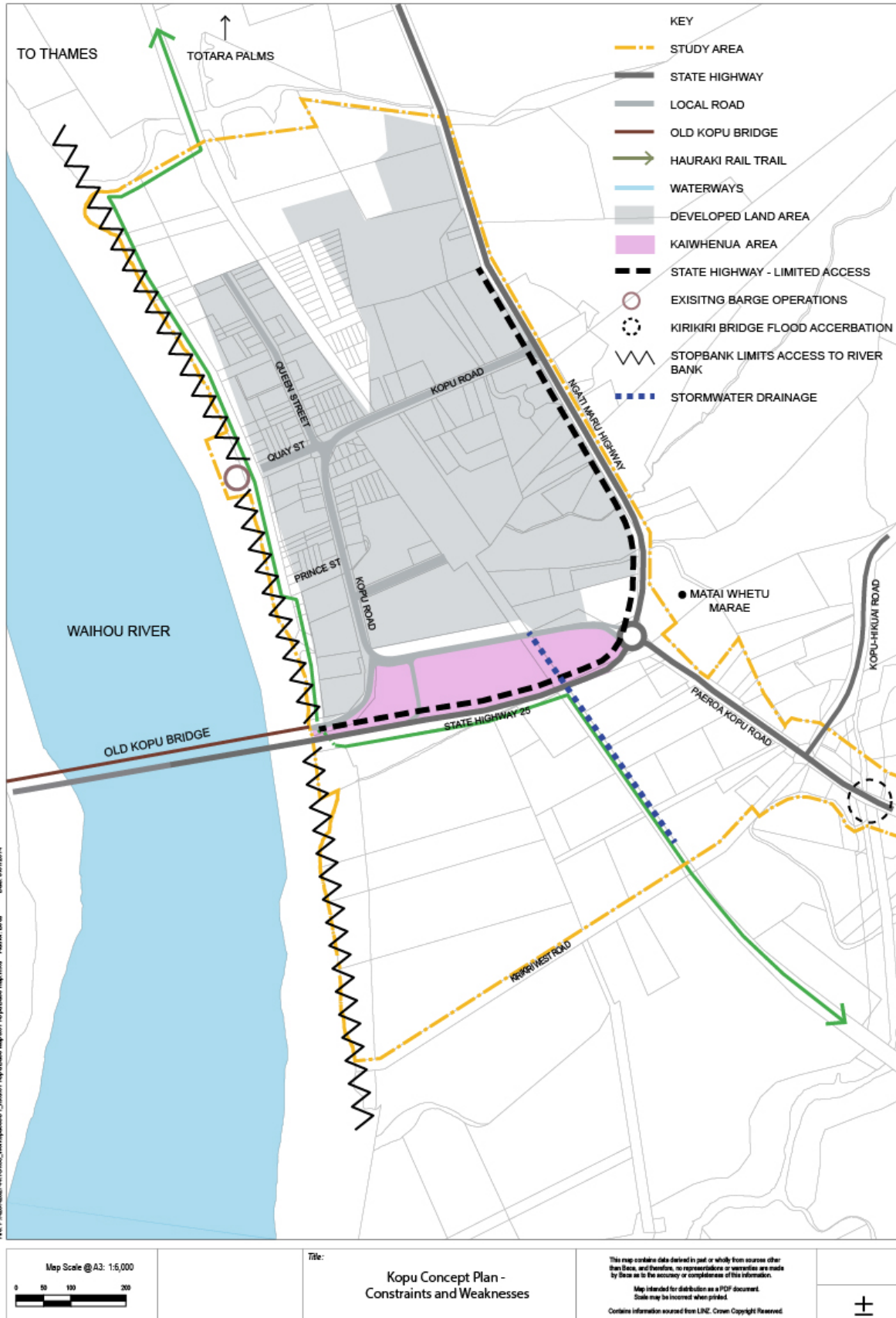


Figure 5: Kopu Development Concept Plan Study Area – Weaknesses and Threats

Weaknesses and threats	Possible responses
Access to sites of State Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identification of a number of key entry points to Kopu has the potential to assist in directing visitors to key points of interest, particularly where gateways are emphasized through appropriate signs and other wayfinders.</li> <li>■ Reduction of emphasis around access points has the potential to allow emphasis on planting (i.e. a comprehensive planting plan approach that assists to mitigate visual effects of development), and other interventions that enhance overall character of the gateway and Kaiwhenua.</li> </ul>
Safe crossing of State Highway / crossing to Matai Whetu Marae	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acknowledging that a formal crossing point is not required over the State Highway at this time. It is appropriate to design the pedestrian network to encourage pedestrians (through appropriate wayfinders and other indicators) to cross where vehicle / pedestrian visibility is at its highest. Accordingly, future design of pedestrian linkages should take such an approach into account (subject to liaison with NZTA)</li> </ul>
Risk of visual clutter; diminishing landscape values (particularly the Coromandel Ranges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide for appropriate design guidelines within the Kaiwhenua area to enable development while not detracting from views experienced from State Highway 25.</li> <li>■ In particular, design guidelines / concept planning for the gateway area should consider building bulk and location, height, setbacks, planting, colour palette and orientation (including roof slope and pitch).</li> </ul>
Safety issues, lack of street lights and toilets along the cycling trail, boat ramp facilities and other open space areas along the river's edge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide for appropriate lighting and clear sight lines between public roads and those areas likely to be frequented by the public, e.g. public open space. In particular, the boat launch area and proposed old Kopu Bridge wharf and any associated open space should be lit during evening and early morning hours, and visible from adjoining land uses.</li> </ul>
Culvert / stop bank potentially limits access to the river	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Appropriately designed walking and cycle access across the stop banks should not pose any issue. Rather, if designed appropriately, these can emphasize views and an understanding of the stopbank as an intervention to protect the township.</li> <li>■ Vehicle access does however remain challenging; however limited vehicle access</li> </ul>



	points are considered necessary.
Development requires off setting with stormwater retention <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Potential to provide stormwater retention in a number of areas – the large areas of land provide potential for stormwater detention areas without significant impact on investment opportunities; rather, if designed appropriately, these areas have the potential to add to the amenity and recreation values of the area.</li> <li>■ Provide for stormwater detention as part of a passive recreation / amenity at the southern part of the visitor Kaiwhenua Gateway, interlinked with walking and cycling routes.</li> <li>■ Use stormwater retention to enhance ecology, combining with appropriate planting networks.</li> </ul>
Major stormwater drains run along the rail line route and other areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Where appropriate, these waterways should be naturalized and/or adapted to form part of the overall movement and ecological networks.</li> </ul>
Broadband / internet connectivity issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhancing broadband capability in the area will assist to attract (or rather avoid deterring) future investors from the area. Where funding limits overall broadband access, provision should be concentrated on those areas where development is preferred, i.e. in line with wider service provision and encouraging greater intensity within the existing area.</li> </ul>
Kirikiri Bridge flood issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ It is understood that NZTA has plans to upgrade this bridge in the future, which will assist to alleviate flood issues to the south of the study area.</li> <li>■ Bridge design should reflect the character of the area.</li> </ul>
Archeological sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There are a number of archeological sites within the area, including Kaiwhenua. It is important that these sites be protected from inappropriate development and equally, particularly for Kaiwhenua, there is the potential to incorporate these sites into 'story-telling' where appropriate.</li> </ul>

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<sup>2</sup> At the time of writing, further liaison with TCDC's and Beca's stormwater engineer is required to further understand the stormwater constraints, particularly in relation to Kaiwhenua. It is understood that no specific design proposals exist in this regard; however, Kaiwhenua has been identified as being ideal for a landscaped area/flood storage zone. Having regard to the above, further understanding is also required on the quantum of space required for stormwater detention.

## 4 Next Steps – Development of Key Moves

Having regard to the above analysis, and subject to further discussions with TCDC, key stakeholders and the community, the following overarching principles and key moves are put forward for discussion, to assist in the development of the draft Kopu Development Concept Plan.

### Overarching Principles

- a. **Land use** – focusing on the visitor experience (particularly at Kaiwhenua and along Kopu Road), and enhancing community wellbeing through employment and recreation opportunities
- b. **Connectivity** – promoting opportunities for future pedestrian, cycle, water and vehicle connections, that assist to build positive energy along key routes, facilitating safety and vibrancy.
- c. **Landscape** – connecting with the water, and celebrating views and the natural landscape – facilitated through appropriate provision of community and visitor amenities.

### Key Moves

- i. **Land use** – Focus development around three key nodes: the ‘Marine Hub’ (boat launching facilities); the Old Kopu Bridge Wharf; and visitor information and rest amenities
- ii. **Connectivity** – Enhance connectivity between the three nodes, particularly along Kopu Road; and encourage land uses which assist to provide safety, visual interest and vibrancy along the route.
- iii. **Landscape** – Develop a landscape scheme that reflects local character and cultural, and assists to ‘tie’ the three nodes together, along with other local amenities.

A number of permeations exist to achieve the key moves. For the purposes of progressing discussion, several are illustrated in Figures 6 and 7 below. The purpose of the concept drawings is not to illustrate a complete approach to the proposed Concept Plan, but rather focuses on establishing a number of key moves going forward, that will assist to build a positive energy within the area, contributing to economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing). Each option has benefits and disbenefits and will need to be further investigated in the light of stormwater constraints and the wider opportunities within the study area.

By way of example, Concept A provides for convenient vehicle access from the State Highway roundabout, and the possibility to enhance the gateway effect along the State Highway corridor. However, the visitor information and rest amenities are located some distance from other nodes, therefore having the possibility to diminish incentive to explore the area on foot (thus reducing the potential energy gained by the visitor information and rest amenities). Accordingly, emphasis needs to be placed on connectivity between the nodes, and activity and/or interventions along the connections.

A more compact approach as shown in Concept B. This option potentially reduces accessibility (and visibility) of the visitor information and rest amenities when coming from the southeast; however, once within the area, visitors provided greater incentive to walk down to the old Kopu Bridge or explore along Kopu Road.

The concepts will be drilled into in further detail as part of stages 2 and 3 of the design process. This will include further detail into each of the key nodes described (including more detailed plans at 1:1000 scale), options for development, and benefits and disbenefits of each.

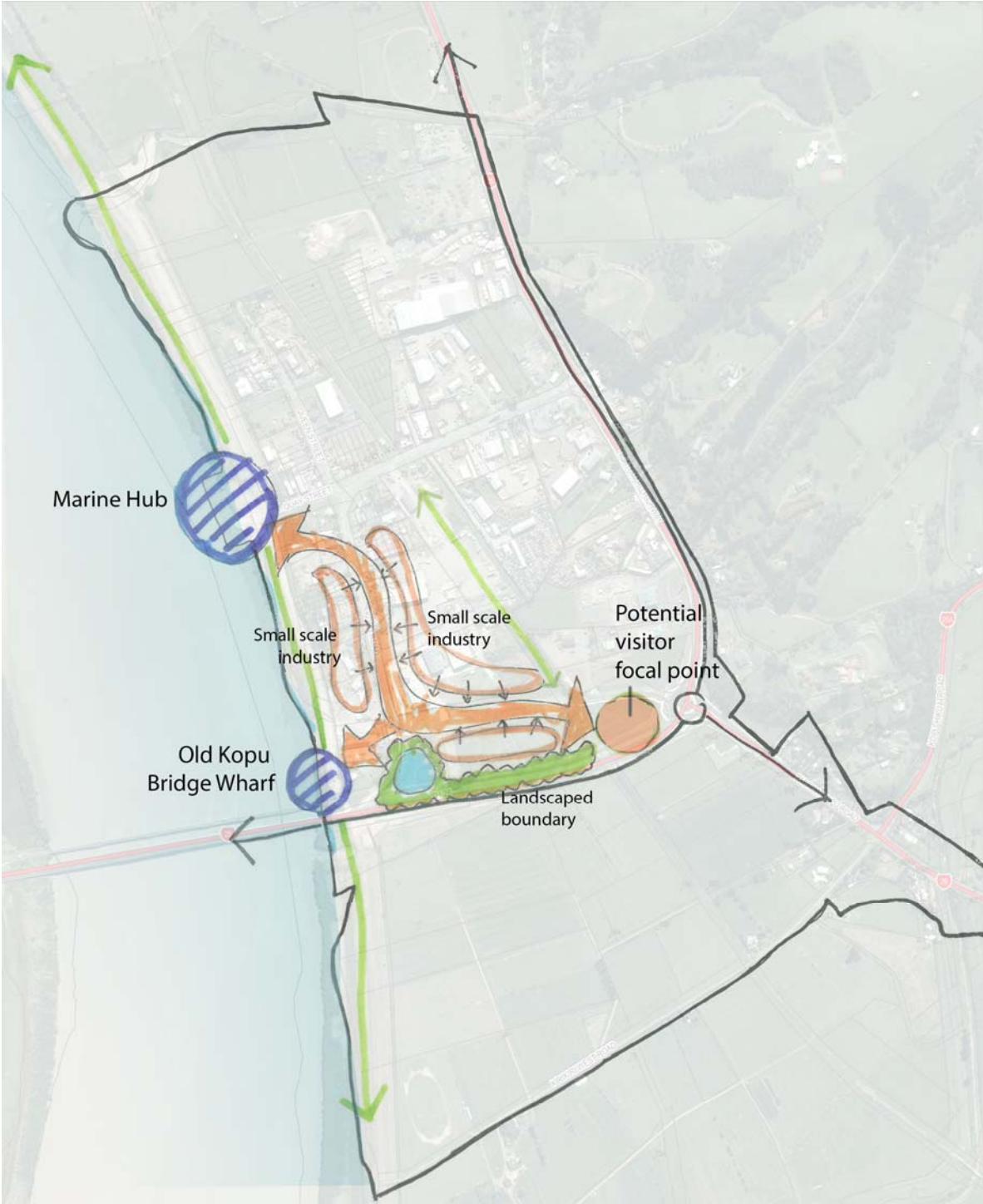


Figure 6: Concept A – Accessible visitor information and rest amenities, for discussion



Figure 7: Concept B – Compact Approach, for discussion