

1. NEW BRIGHTON REVITALISATION REPORT

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of the process relating to the revitalisation of New Brighton and seek approval from the Council to proceed with the development of a Master Plan.

INTRODUCTION

There has been a long history on New Brighton and a considerable amount of work has gone into preparing reports on the revitalisation of the area. There have been numerous proposals from developers covering a range of activities. The biggest problem is the obvious lack of co-ordination and lack of a collective vision.

This failing has been recognised and a process has been put in place to deal with it. Considerable urgency has been placed on this work with a requirement of reporting back to the Council by the end of March being a significant milestone in the process. The report needs to clearly identify the following:

- There is a general consensus between all the parties on a vision for New Brighton.
- The vision is being used to develop a Master Plan for New Brighton.
- The inputs required to implement action points resulting from the Master Plan.

BUDGET

The following budget allocations have been made for New Brighton. These allocations were made when the plans to introduce a slow road into the mall were being pursued.

2001/01 Financial year	\$500,000
2002/03 Financial year	\$700,000

In addition to the Council allocating this budget, agreement was reached with the New Brighton Business Association over the introduction of a special rate. The purpose of this special rate was for the businesses to repay \$610,000 to the Council over a 25 year period on the basis that the slow road was built.

The Taskforce, on behalf of the community is currently considering a submission to the Draft Annual Plan. In addition to the Taskforce a number of other groups will be making submissions.

As well, there are other Council projects allocated for the New Brighton area. A co-ordinated approach to the implementation of these is required.

THE PROCESS

At the Council meeting in September 2001, it was suggested that a Community Forum be established to look at the New Brighton issue. The meeting resolved to recommend to the incoming Council to review and approve the setting up of such a forum. At the December 2001 Council meeting, the Council resolved to establish a Community Forum for the revitalisation of New Brighton.

Subsequent to this, Council officers worked with Councillors to develop a strategy for the implementation of the Forum. Carl Pascoe was engaged as an independent facilitator and assisted in the process for the development of the strategy.

The process is summarised as follows:

- Establish a vision for the future of New Brighton in concert with a Community Taskforce.
- Establish a Taskforce to take the vision and develop it into a Master Plan.
- Continually check back with the community to verify the vision.

A key to the success of this was identified early as being the need to get the community to have initial input into establishing a vision. The community must take ownership of the Master Plan and the need for collective vision and appropriate compromise by all parties needs to be recognised and respected. The Master Plan is intended to be a 'best fit' for all of the needs of all the parties.

The community is defined as residents, developers, business owners and the Council. All of these groups have been involved and must continue to be involved.

ACTIVITY TO DATE

A public meeting was held on 30 January 2002, at which approximately 150 people attended where the bones of a shared vision were developed. From this meeting a Taskforce of 15 people was established from a list of approximately 40 people who volunteered their time and energy. In addition to the volunteers, a number of independent advisers were appointed to assist the process (a mix of staff and external consultants). This Taskforce has been meeting weekly since 14 February.

A second public meeting was held on 11 March 2002, again with an attendance of approximately 180 people. The Taskforce presented their work to date and sought feedback from the community. The feedback obtained gave a clear signal that the Taskforce was on the right track. The overall concept can be broken down into the following more specific themes:

- Developing the beach, including on the water and foreshore activities. The beach needs to have active recreational activity.
- Strengthen the connection and accessibility between the beach and the central business district.
- Focus and define the CBD area as a village with a seaside themed shopping/café area.

Obviously the issue of the slow road, which had previously polarised the community needed to be brought to the forefront of people's minds. The slow road is only one part of the Master Plan that is being developed, but due to its previous significance, needed to be addressed. The slow road was described as one which is pedestrian friendly, incorporates significant safety issues etc, only goes through part of the mall (exiting out Oram Avenue), is one way and one lane only.

In addition to seeking feedback on the above themes, the following points were put to the meeting and a show of hands was requested to indicate support for and opposition to the points:

Description	Support for	Against	Could live with
A slow road through the mall	90%	5%	5%
Seaside theming of the Eastern end of the mall	99%		1%
Narrow down Marine Parade where it passes the mall	95%	2%	3%
Block off Marine Parade where it passes the mall	50%	50%	
Active recreational area on the foreshore	100%		

OUTCOMES

The Taskforce was instructed that their primary concerns at this stage are:

- The development of a Master Plan for the re-vitalisation of New Brighton.
- The identification of a number of items, from the Master plan, that could be implemented quickly including giving the City Council an indication about the use of programmed funding in the current and upcoming capital budgets.

To date the Taskforce has made considerable progress towards the preparation of a Master Plan. In the few weeks that the Taskforce has been meeting, the themes, as detailed above, have been the basis of a large number of more specific suggestions on what could be done. A considerable amount of work needs to be done in determining the feasibility of the ideas.

The Taskforce has developed an action list and has categorised the items into short, medium and long term items. This list was presented to a Council seminar held on 4 April.

FUTURE ACTION

The Taskforce now needs to develop the themes of the Master Plan, putting some real, and achievable, details in place.

The Taskforce has identified some short term gains. These need to have implementation details sorted out so they can be progressed.

The medium and long term action list items need considerable further development. The Taskforce will continue to work on these.

There is a need to consider the integration of projects from a number of Council units. There are a number of projects currently being considered by asset units for work in the New Brighton area. The Taskforce needs to be aware of this and consider how the integration might occur. The input of Council staff will be crucial to the successful coordination of projects.

CONCLUSION

The Taskforce has recognised the importance of keeping the community informed and involved and is continually seeking comment/approval for the work it is doing. Part of the success of any future action relies on having this support. The continued support of Community Board and Council are key ingredients to the success of the whole process.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Council:

1. Support the work of the New Brighton Community Taskforce and expect updates from the Taskforce in the delivery and development of the priorities and strategies for New Brighton renewal including the development of a "Master Plan".
2. Support the commencement of design detail for a number of the short-term initiatives to be incorporated into relevant Council unit work programmes as appropriate.
3. Support a call for a request for proposal for an anchor activity, on the north side and adjacent to the library.
4. Support the implementation of feasibility studies for activities proposed for the foreshore area.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council support the work of the New Brighton Community Taskforce and seek updates from the Taskforce in the delivery and development of priorities and strategies for New Brighton renewal including the development of a "Master Plan".
 2. That the officer recommendations 2, 3 and 4 as contained in the report be tabled for further consideration.