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Corporate Plan Output: City Planning and Development	

The purpose of this report is to recommend future actions for New Brighton Mall. It presents a brief summary of the work undertaken since the July 1998 Community Board meeting, and the conclusions reached. Plans will be presented at the meeting.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

In early 1998, the New Brighton Mainstreet group submitted a proposal requesting a one way slow road through part of the Mall. The Community Board then requested a report from City Streets on the feasibility of a slow road. That report went before the Board in July 1998, a copy is attached as Appendix 1 (*see page 71*). It discusses the history and background of New Brighton Mall, the substantial amount of research and analysis undertaken since 1991, the relevant City Plan provisions, pedestrian malls generally, and stakeholders opinions. That report recommended that community consultation be undertaken.

THE PUBLIC WORKSHOP

A pre-workshop meeting was held on 12 August 1998 involving representatives of all of the stakeholders in the area. The purpose of that meeting was to decide upon the facilitator, date, time, venue, format, and method of public notification for the workshop. These issues were agreed to and the public workshop was held on Sunday 20 September 1998. Participants worked in groups to discuss questions such as; what do you like about New Brighton, what do you not like, how would you like to see it developed, and what are the key issues to be tackled? A summary of the feedback received is attached as Appendix 2 (*see page 83*).

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN

Since the workshop, a multi-disciplinary team of Council staff has been researching the Mall with a view to identifying actions that would contribute to the revitalisation of the Mall. In addition to analysis of the results from the public workshop, the research included the following:

- A survey of the usage of car parks
- A survey of building uses and analysis of vacant floor space
- Analysis of pedestrian and vehicular movement patterns
- Market analysis
- Development feasibility
- Meetings with key business people
- Informal discussion with Community Board Members
- Preparation of basic concept plans

The results of 'New Brighton Vision 2005' were also considered.

COMMUNITY BOARD SEMINAR

Initial recommendations were presented for comment to the Community Board at a seminar on 16 March 1999.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF ISSUES FACING THE MALL AREA

- A number of factors have combined to result in the general decline of the commercial area, eg changing economic circumstances, the proliferation of Saturday shopping in Christchurch, expansion in other centres, the 180° catchment area, the activity mix, the lack of a coordinated marketing programme, and the lack of physical upgrading.
- The current catchment is not able to sustain the large commercial area, and it is likely that the extent of the commercial area will diminish as a result.
- There is a lack of a single, strongly promoted image for New Brighton. This could also assist in developing a consistency of design theme/standard for the Mall in order to strengthen its identity. Activities in the area also need promotion.
- Although there are still a number of people visiting the Mall, they are dispersed across the large width and length of the pedestrian area, resulting in the Mall appearing to be relatively empty. A retail area needs to appear busy and vibrant to draw more people into it, particularly now that shopping is a leisure activity for many people.
- The irregularity of planting impedes views down the Mall. This contributes to 'hiding' the amount of people in the Mall, and the activities that the Mall offers. Not having a clear view also increases concerns for personal safety and security.
- The Mall is generally perceived as being unsafe at night. Few businesses are open, and the Mall is not brightly lit.
- Pedestrian links to car parking areas need to be maintained and enhanced.
- More wind-sheltered spaces are needed.
- The car parking areas are not functioning well. The Beresford Street car park is underutilised because it is too far from the Mall and is not seen as being very secure. Both the Hawke Street and Beresford Street car parks adjoin the rear of the buildings and the level of visual amenity is not of a high standard. The Hawke Street car park could be remarked to enable a greater number of car parks and to make it easier to use.
- The number of crossing points from the car parks onto Hawke Street needs rationalising to reduce traffic congestion.
- Signage indicating that you are entering New Brighton, and identifying the linkages from the Pier to the Mall, needs improving.
- The route that the traffic takes does not particularly encourage drivers' awareness of the Mall area.
- The bus routes are remote from the Mall, thereby losing any visual connection, and are on the south side which can feel unsafe being out of general public view.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE MALL AREA

When considering the issues facing the Mall, it is clear that some can be addressed through redesign of the Mall, others will have to be addressed by the business community, in consultation with the Council and the local community.

The design objectives for redesign of the Mall are recommended as follows:

To create:

- Public meeting space
- Safe and easy pedestrian links
- Car parking close to shops
- Linkage of Pier/Library with Mall
- Protection from wind
- Enhanced safety and security
- Improved amenity
- A distinctive character for the Mall.

Note: These are the design objectives for the Mall area. They are not the complete answer to revitalising New Brighton as a whole, but part of a total solution. The New Brighton Vision 2005 report identified strategies for the leisure/recreation, environment, housing and commercial sectors, and we will need to do further work and assessment with a view to implementing those strategies.

OPTIONS FOR THE DESIGN OF THE MALL

It is recognised that none of the options for the design of the Mall on its own will revitalise New Brighton Mall. Other issues, such as signage, pedestrian links, private car parks, the tenancy mix, bus routes, marketing, and events also need to be addressed. Action points addressing those issues are recommended later in this report.

After assessing all options for the design of the Mall, the following are put forward for consideration:

1. Facilitate Private Ownership of the Mall

Other commercial malls have to constantly update and redevelop to remain competitive in today's retail climate. On average, the larger malls would be looking to do significant expansion or internal refurbishment every five years or so. The Council could be subject to pressure to again upgrade New Brighton Mall in the future. The same situation exists at Bishopdale Mall.

The Property Projects Manager has provided the following brief comments. A separate more detailed report on this issue as it relates to both Bishopdale and New Brighton Malls will be put forward to the Projects and Property Committee in May.

“In 1994 considerable investigation was undertaken to explore the possibility of selling Council's ownership in Bishopdale Mall. Although some of the ownership issues at Bishopdale are more complex and the origin of the developments different, the current fundamentals are similar to those encountered at New Brighton. Accordingly, the following commentary is based upon legal opinions and investigations carried out at that time.

Simply put, the New Brighton Mall is legal road with a special purpose zoning of pedestrian mall, which is not dissimilar to Cashel/High Street in the city. The Council has no ownership or management in the properties fronting the mall, these are held in a multitude of private ownership and tenancies. The Council's management of the "mall" facilities extends solely to managing the features of the "mall" environment ie paving, landscaping, lighting and seating. The use of the word "mall" to describe New Brighton and Bishopdale is misleading in that you can not compare them with the typical "mall" concepts, such as Riccarton or Shirley where there is a single owner for the entire complex including the common ("public") areas.

In the New Brighton "Mall" Council only owns the road and improvements currently on it. Essentially sale of the "mall" would require the initiation of road stopping procedures for the pedestrian mall area with a view to disposing of the land to the adjoining shop owners whom would then be responsible for ongoing maintenance and upgrading costs. However, as road stopping must be publicly notified it is highly likely that there would be many objections to this proposal which would involve a number of statutory processes.

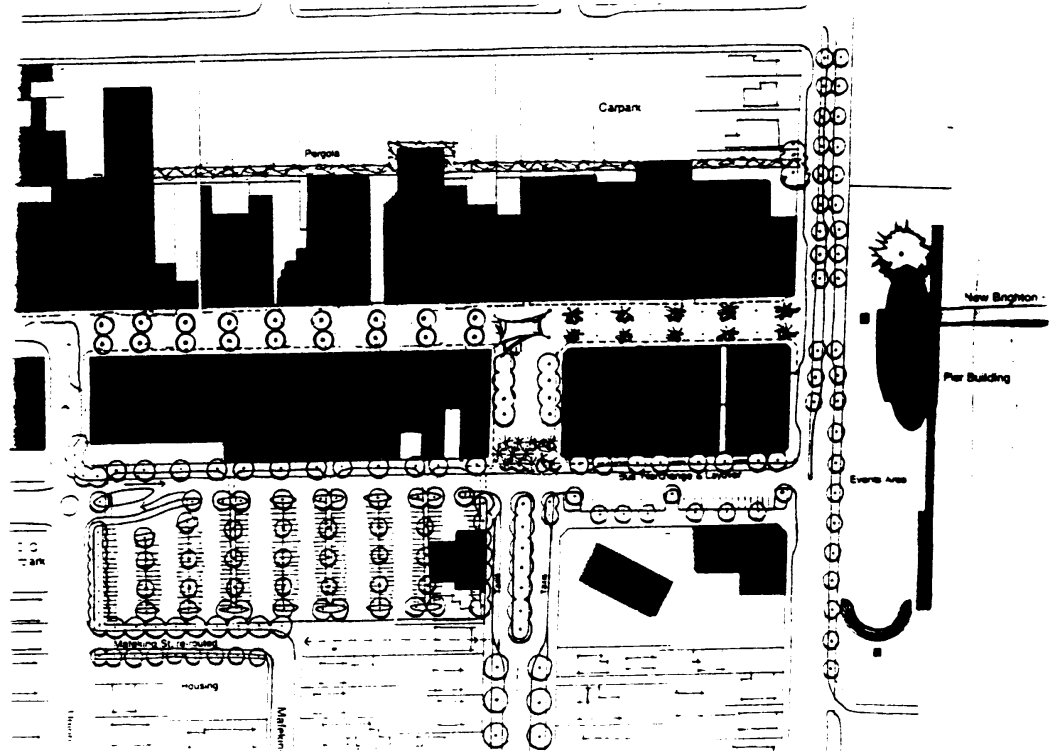
For this option to proceed there would need to be a willingness on the part of all adjoining property owners to form some sort of common ownership vehicle ie body corporate, company etc. This or a more complex structure of say Right of Ways or Easements will be necessary to maintain frontage and access rights. Due to the complex nature of the exercise compounded by the many individual proprietors involved with widely ranging objectives, this could be a long drawn out process with little chance of success.

Divesting requires consensus of all shop owners through negotiation; no options exist for the Council to force the position. Other than proportional ownership by immediately adjoining landowners, there are no practical or commercially viable third party ownership alternatives.

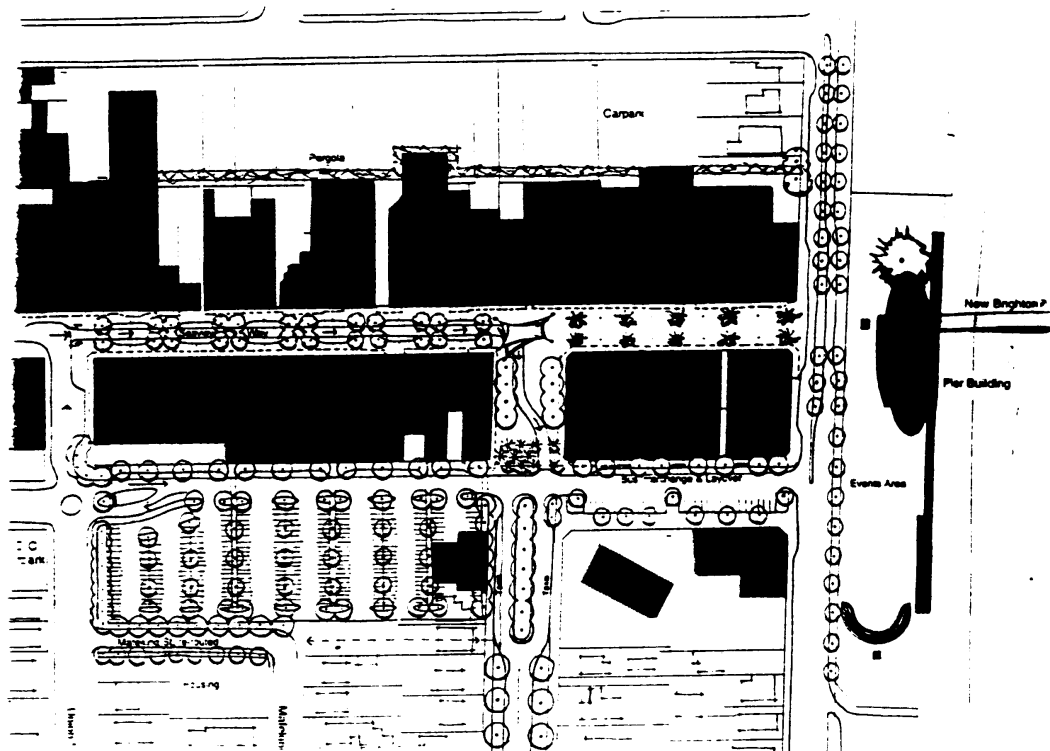
In the instance of the Bishopdale Mall, the upgrading that prompted the divesting investigation was carried out and ownership status of the mall left unchanged. The inherent difficulties with both properties remain the same and we are unaware of any developments in the last few years that would present further options."

The next three options are based on continued Council ownership of the Mall.

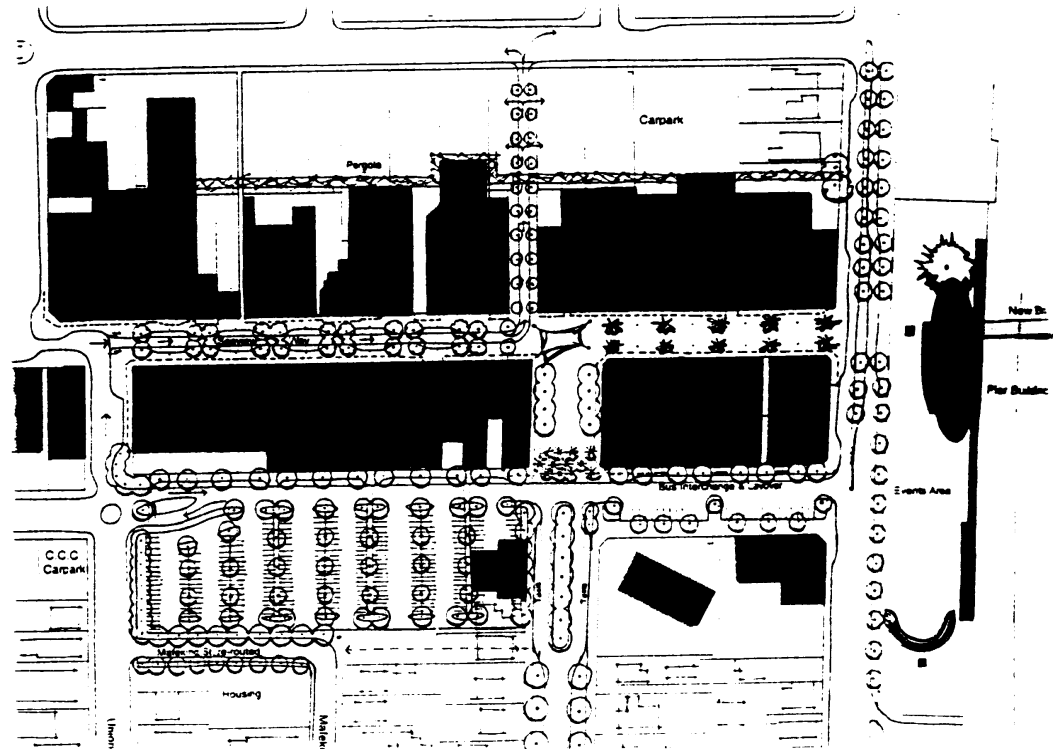
2. Renovate the whole of the existing New Brighton Mall



3. Renovate the eastern end of the Mall, and create a slow, one-way roadway through part of the Mall with the exit point through Oram Avenue



4. **Renovate the eastern end of the Mall, and create a slow, one-way roadway through part of the Mall with the exit point through a site on the north side of the Mall**



The above options 2, 3 and 4 would all result in renovation of the Mall, and all would meet the design objectives set out above. Any new lighting, planting and street furniture would be aligned so that views are not impeded, thereby improving the general perception of safety and security in the Mall, and providing shelter from the wind.

When considering the physical layout of the Mall, it must be kept in mind that the Proposed City Plan seeks to consolidate commercial development to the eastern end of the Mall. The area to the west of Union Street has been zoned to provide for small-scale commercial, and residential, activity. The main retail area will be to the east of Union Street, and it is quite possible that the activities between Marine Parade and Oram Avenue will become more focused on entertainment associated with the foreshore. The area between Union Street and Oram Avenue needs to appear busy and vibrant to draw people in.

A slow roadway through part of the Mall could assist in reducing the feeling of emptiness, and give more of a sense of a busy environment, while bringing the focus further to the east. People would be brought into the Mall, and the businesses would be exposed to passing vehicles. Short-term parking would be provided, with the roadway also feeding directly into car parking areas making shopping on impulse an easier option.

A strong concern has been expressed regarding the loss of amenity resulting from the introduction of a slow roadway. It is considered that designs can be achieved which will maintain a high degree of amenity, safety and security, while providing for a community space and meeting place. Footpath widths of 6 metres can be achieved, compared to the standard width of 3 metres in the central city, for example.

If a slow roadway is created, it could have a north or south exit. While a north exit would preserve the width of the Oram Avenue part of the Mall, there would be significant additional cost involved in buying a site to use as roadway. For this reason, it is recommended that the southern exit via Oram Avenue be used.

RECOMMENDED ACTION POINTS

As it was stated earlier, no one action will revitalise New Brighton and the Mall, and it is important that it is recognised that a combination of actions is necessary. A slow roadway through the Mall will not be the sole answer to its problems. The following is a summary list of the action points that are recommended at this stage:

Firstly, staged action points that could be implemented by Council are recommended as follows:

Stage 1

- Renovate the eastern end of the Mall between Oram Avenue and Marine Parade, including new lighting. Align planting and street furniture to enable views.
- Review the current bus routes, and the interchange location.

Stage 2

- Redevelop Beresford Street so as to bring parking closer to the Mall.
- Release surplus parking along southern edge of existing parking for residential development.

Stage 3

- Introduce a slow roadway into the Mall, west to east, with parking bays between Union Street and Oram Avenue, north or south exit achievable. Install new lighting, and align planting and street furniture to create views up and down the Mall, and to give shelter from wind.
- Maintain Oram Avenue, or part of Oram Avenue, as a community space/meeting place, while developing an events space adjoining the pier building.

Secondly, the following are actions that the community and Council can work towards together, but they are initiatives that will require a strong commitment from the business community, in particular. Clearly, there is no point in the Council committing significant time and funds to upgrade the Mall if a commitment from the property owners is not shown. We do not want the situation where buildings have no access to the Mall, and effectively turn their backs to it, as happened recently at the eastern end of the Mall. It is expected that the community would drive the following types of initiatives.

- Achieve coordination between all sector groups, perhaps through the Mainstreet programme.
- Investigate a special rating area to finance some initiatives.
- Improve entry point signage to New Brighton, and signage linking the Mall to the Pier and the beach.
- Encourage internal pedestrian links through existing and future development to support stronger public access to shops from car parks both in Hawke Street and Beresford Street.
- Clearly identify and enhance external public walkways/lanes between car parks and Mall.
- Encourage landowners to integrate and enhance car parks on the northern side of the Mall.
- Encourage improvement in the coordination of building frontages and presentation of display windows.
- Preparation of a full marketing plan, including matters such as image identification and enhancement, common opening hours, promotion, tenancy mix studies.
- Investigate holding more attractions, events and entertainment.

FUNDING

There is currently \$300,000 allocated in the Annual Plan under Amenity Improvements for work in the New Brighton commercial area. In July last year, the Annual Plan Working Party decided that the Brighton Mall lighting upgrade sought by the New Brighton District Business Association submission would be funded from that \$300,000 provided in 1998/99, subject to consistency with later design work.

A rough order of costs has been estimated for the proposed stages of work listed above as follows:

Stage 1	Renovate eastern end of Mall	\$335,000
Stage 2	Beresford Street car park	\$890,000
Stage 3	Roadway exiting Oram Avenue	\$675,000
	Consequential works required to Oram Avenue and Beresford Street	\$415,000
	TOTAL COST	\$2,315,000

(An amount of approximately \$150,000-\$180,000 will be obtained from the sale of land involved in the Beresford Street car park redevelopment.)

There is the possibility that some of the works could be funded through a special rate. Investigation of a special rate for this area is included in the community action points listed earlier.

It is recommended that the \$300,000 already allocated be put towards design work and Stage 1 construction. To design only the new lighting before the designs are prepared for the whole Mall would not ensure an integrated theme. Stage 1 would include new lighting in the eastern end of the Mall. New lighting for the western end would be included in Stage 3.

- Recommendations:**
1. That the Community Board support the recommended action points.
 2. That concept designs for the works be prepared for public consultation.
 3. That the \$300,000 currently allocated for lighting be used to fund Stage 1 of the proposed actions, ie renovation of the eastern end of the Mall.
 4. That the Community Advocate work with the Mainstreet Group and the community at New Brighton to obtain commitment to the second group of action points.
 5. That the Community Board support further funding to complete Stage 1, and construct Stages 2 and 3 during future budget rounds.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the Community Board support the aforementioned recommendations, relating to the renovation of the eastern end of the Mall and the creation of a slow, one-way roadway through part of the Mall with the exit point through Oram Avenue.