Dear Kylie

CONFIRMATION OF PROFESSIONAL VIEW EXPRESSED IN SUPPORT OF NZRPG PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE, MILFORD

Thank you for asking me to comment on whether the professional urban design views expressed in an urban design report dated March 2008 remain current.

I have reviewed the report and visited Milford again. In the time since the report was prepared a number of additional policy documents have been released or otherwise progressed. The key ones relevant to this matter are:

- Plan Change 6 to the Auckland Regional Policy Statement;
- North Shore City Council’s update to the 2001 ‘City Blueprint’, titled ‘City Direction’, Module 2 to the 2000-2024 North Shore City Council City Plan;
- Department of Internal Affairs ‘Building Sustainable Urban Communities’, 2008;

Also noteworthy are the following Auckland Council publications;

- ‘Auckland Unleashed: The Auckland Plan Discussion Document’, 2011; and

In ‘Auckland Unleashed’, Milford, as has been consistently the case in planning strategies since at least 1999, is identified as a town centre where “...the Council considers growth is desirable” (p 141). However in the most recent ‘Draft Devonport-Takapuna Local Board Plan’, Milford is identified differently, as a village. The draft plan is ambiguous on exactly what this may mean for accommodating growth although it does emphasise a need for strategic planning in the context of community dissatisfaction with what seems a relatively direct reference to the NZRPG Plan Change. I remain unclear on the extent to which a Local Board Plan may (or may not) be required by the Council to be consistent with the Auckland Plan, assuming that the Auckland Plan retains the classification of Milford as a town centre.

In urban design terms a village (such as exists in New Zealand) is considerably different to a town centre based primarily on scale, size of catchment, and range of goods and services supportable. For example, it would not be usual to expect a village and its local residential catchment to be able to support a relatively large shopping mall; this is a specialisation more typical of a town centre serving several suburbs. The reasons justifying what may be a considerable strategic shift in growth policy for Milford are not provided in the draft plan although it assumed that some form of technical analysis has been undertaken to support the draft plan’s position on this matter. Obtaining this information would be desirable.

In the Urbanismplus 2008 report the status of Milford as a town centre was agreed with and this, with respect to the Draft Local Board Plan, is at this time still considered the case.
However it is noted that if the Local Board Plan signals a change in formal Auckland Council policy away from seeing Milford as an important growth centre in Auckland then this would create a need for a more substantive reconsideration of the urban design report.

At this time however it is understood that no such policy decision has been made by the Council and that for now Milford's status as a town centre remains. The other documents identified above are considered to lead one to a view on Milford consistent with that reached in the 2008 urban design report and require no further comment.

On this basis and taking into account my recent visit to Milford where I observed what appears to be Council-led works to the small plaza in front of the Kitchener Road public car park, I can confirm that the analysis undertaken and views expressed in the 2008 Urbanismplus Ltd Urban Design Report remain valid.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can elaborate further any of the points identified above. Otherwise, I trust that this letter meets your requirements.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

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URBAN DESIGN REPORT
OF
a proposed private plan change to
the north shore district plan
FOR
milford centre ltd
AT
milford shopping centre, milford
MARCH 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to understand and inform a large scale urban redevelopment in a town centre. Common assessment methods can be based largely in green-field contexts or for small-scale incremental redevelopments based around a ‘comparing like with like’ decision making framework. These generally give greater emphasis to basic visual and landscape sensitivity analyses. This report undertakes a custom-designed approach specifically targeted towards analysis of strategic planning issues and urban character considerations. Part one of the report seeks to answer the following key questions:

→ Why focus on town centres?
Milford fits within regional and local authority planning mandates as a town centre planned for residential intensification. Despite this, analysis of both existing and desired characteristics of town centres suggests many centres are not and are unlikely to meet growth aspirations due to physical, contextual, regulatory and other constraints.

→ Why have intensification in Milford?
Understanding Milford’s strategic and local context relative to major sub regional movement networks, facilities, employment and social nodes reveals it to be a centre ideal to support a significant increase in density. This section includes a general audit of development height and mass provisions in growth centres, and Milford specific height considerations.

→ What would growth in Milford need to respond to?
Understanding what it is about Milford town centre that makes it special - and making sure that new growth or change retains this.

→ Where could growth in Milford go?
A ‘desktop’ capacity study of the town centre and residential environs finds very little short-term opportunity to intensify in or around Milford. Areas with most potential exist along Kitchener Road, Shakespeare Road and on the Milford Shopping Centre site.

→ What are the relative pros / cons of each growth opportunity?
Each of the growth opportunities and likely development forms are placed under character, constraints and deliverability filters to assess the relative impact of future development on Milford town centre.

Part one concludes that the Milford town centre is a highly suitable centre to provide for the community’s strategic growth needs. Specifically, future residential intensification on the Milford Shopping Centre site would be advantageous for a number of reasons. These are namely:

→ Capacity:
Milford is almost fully developed with the Milford Shopping Centre the only area where substantial growth could be located within short to medium timeframes.

→ Character:
Development on the shopping centre offers the most sympathetic location for growth to maintain the main street’s urban character (this is separate from the wider landscape assessment of the site).

→ Deliverability:
The very large site in the heart of Milford town centre exists under a single ownership offering comprehensive development opportunities.

Part two of the report outlines the urban design assessment framework applied to the Milford Shopping Centre site and the proposed Plan Change provisions.

The assessment identifies key urban design indicators and recommends urban design related District Plan provisions to help ensure future development of the site delivers a high quality outcome for Milford. This includes specific regard to a number of issues including:

→ The critical need to maintain a strong, direct connection between the shopping centre, future residential development entrances and Milford’s main street along Kitchener Road;

→ Managing horizontal and vertical building bulk and mass;

→ Ensuring pedestrian, private vehicle, private servicing and public shopper entrances and circulation routes are legible, well defined and operationally distinct from each other;

→ The need to encourage outward facing building frontages towards public open space and highly articulated façades;

→ Providing adequate architectural and landscape mitigation of parking areas through screening and sleeving with activity on lower levels.

→ Providing for building adaptability in terms of a mix of activities and flexible building design.

→ Management of stormwater quality and quantity.

Finally, the proposed Plan provisions are analysed against the degree to which they cover the above issues. The provisions are further evaluated using a conceptual development design as a ‘ground test’. Part two concludes that the proposed Plan Change provisions give adequate confidence an appropriate development response will occur on the Milford Shopping Centre site.
INTRODUCTION

PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE DETAILS

Milford Centre Ltd requests Private Plan Change approval to amend the current Operative North Shore District Plan (2002). This would provide for intensive redevelopment on the existing Milford shopping centre (MSC) site at 143 Kitchener Road, Milford (Lot 1 DP 180874).

The existing shopping centre is zoned Business 2 under the District Plan, on a 2.9 ha site currently containing 12,237m² of net lettable retail space and approximately 800 parking spaces. A separate application for resource consent to expand the MSC has been lodged. This seeks approval for an additional 2,590m² of retail/commercial floor area, car parking restructuring to provide for 180 additional car parking spaces for the mall and the development of 15 new residential units and associated car parking adjacent to the road frontage boundary on Milford and Ihumata Roads. This report will focus on the shopping centre site as it currently exists.

SCOPE OF WORK

Urbanismplus Ltd has been commissioned by Milford Centre Ltd to provide specialist urban design input into the Private Plan Change process and concept to ensure future development on the site is appropriate, of a high quality, and responds to sound urban design principles.

This urban design report seeks to inform the Private Plan Change for the Milford Shopping Centre that will ultimately:

→ Enable the promotion of integrated planning, transport, infrastructure and design outcomes for the Plan Change area;
→ Form the framework against which future intensified land uses inclusive of high density residential on the site can be designed and assessed using best practice urban design and planning principles.

The urban design report supports the Private Plan Change application and concludes it will achieve the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991. It will also promote the seven essential design qualities set out in the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol and the urban design principles advocated by the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) in its People+Places+Spaces - a Design Guide for urban New Zealand.
REPORT STRUCTURE

Part one: Coming to a view on growth in Milford.

Before any site specific assessment of the Proposed Plan Change can occur, comprehensive analysis of three key inputs are needed to firstly explain what level of building intensity in Milford and more specifically on the MSC site is appropriate.

These are:
1. The implications of strategic growth planning policies that encourage a compact, more sustainable form of urban growth in the Auckland region;
2. The implications of spatial opportunities within the urban character / context of the Milford town centre; and
3. The visual and landscape sensitivities of the town centre and the MSC site itself.

Building height and mass is a contentious issue in any maturing area undergoing its first ‘wave’ of re-development and physical transition towards a higher intensity of development. It is therefore critical that any recommended intensification for Milford town centre is robust, based on a combination of factors which balance character-related issues of today with tomorrow’s urban planning horizons.

To identify what scale of redevelopment may be suitable in Milford, Part one provides analysis of (1) the growth mandate and rationale for intensification, and (2) a place based study of the urban character, context and physical opportunities of the Milford town centre. These two strands of analysis need to be read in conjunction with a landscape visual assessment (essentially input ‘3’ above) prepared by LA4 Landscape Architects. Together these will provide an overall framework from which to determine preferred intensive development configurations on the subject site as a part of the Private Plan Change application.

As a starting point, all available and relevant Auckland regional and local level strategic urban planning and intensification policies, plans and guidelines (both statutory and non-statutory) have been reviewed for direction on how nodal centres earmarked for intensification (including Milford) should respond. The review indicated that whilst the ‘where’ and supporting ‘why’ of strategic growth has been very comprehensively addressed, the more important issues of ‘what’ and ‘how’ have not.

Part two: Coming to a view on the Proposed Plan Change

Part two provides an urban design review of intensive redevelopment on the MSC site as proposed under the Private Plan Change. This is informed by conclusions relating to appropriate building height and Milford’s urban character contained within Part one.
This document has been informed by a number of statutory documents and studies prepared by the Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Justice, Auckland Regional Council, North Shore City Council, and other Auckland Regional Territorial Local Authorities. Principal reference texts include:

- Auckland City Council (1999) Auckland City Operative District Plan Isthmus Section;
- Auckland City Council (September 2001) Residential Design Guide;
- Auckland City Council (December 2003) Growth Management Strategy;
- Auckland City Council (2005) Auckland City Partially Operative District Plan Central Area Section;
- Auckland City Council. Centre Plans (Mt Eden, St Heliers, Ponsonby, Parnell, Otahuhu, Onehunga);
- Auckland City Council. Liveable Community Plans (Avondale, Glen Innes, Panmure, Newmarket, Ellerslie (draft);
- Auckland City Council. Urban Design Strategy;
- Auckland Regional Council (1999) Auckland Regional Policy Statement (ARPS);
- Auckland Regional Council (2000) Urban Area Intensification Regional Practice and Resource Guide;
- Auckland Regional Council (2005) Auckland Regional Land Transport Strategy (ARLTS);
- Auckland Regional Growth Forum (1999) Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (ARGS);
- Auckland Regional Growth Forum (2001) Northern and Western Sectors Agreement;
- Manukau City Council (2002) Manukau City Operative District Plan;
- Manukau City Council (2003) Manurewa Town Centre Concept Plan;
- Manukau City Council (April 2004/2) Manukau Town Centre Strategy;
- Ministry for the Environment (March 2005) Urban Design Case Studies;
- North Shore City Council (2001) City Blueprint Action Plan;
- North Shore City Council (2002) North Shore City Operative District Plan;
- North Shore City Council (June 2005) Good Solutions Guide for Mixed Use Development in Town Centre;
- North Shore City Council (2007) Good Solutions Guide for Apartments;
- North Shore City Council (April 2007) Good Solutions Guide for Medium Density Housing;
- Rodney District Council (2000) Rodney District Proposed District Plan
- Rodney District Council (October 2004) Orewa Growth Project Discussion Document;
- Waitakere City Council (2003) Waitakere City Operative District Plan;
PART ONE

1. Growth implications

The Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (ARGS) and Auckland Regional Land Transport Strategy (ARLTS) are two strategies, along with the Auckland Regional Policy Statement (ARPS) that provide a clear regional direction for the sustainable intensification of existing centres to accommodate population growth.

1.1 AUCKLAND REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

The Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (ARGS) sets a broad direction for planning to accommodate projected regional growth in the Auckland region in terms of both intensification of existing urban areas and growth in new greenfield locations. The ARGS is of particular relevance as the Local Government (Auckland) Amendment Act (LG(A)AA) 2004 now statutorily requires all regional District Plans to be consistent with it. The Auckland region currently has a population of 1,358,200 (Statistics NZ, June 2006) and this figure is predicted to increase to 1.6-2.2 million persons by 2050. The ARGS advocates intensification around town centres and transport nodes to accommodate up to 70% of this future growth and calls for a compact, higher density urban form which provides for a mix of housing, employment, and other opportunities.

Milford town centre is specifically identified on the ARGS concept plan as one centre suitable to accommodate future population growth under the RGS. Refer to Figure 1-1.

1.2 REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT / PASSENGER TRANSPORT STRATEGIES

The Auckland Regional Land Transport Strategy (ARLTS) is another regional level planning document which in conjunction with the ARGS has direct implications for managing future growth in the Auckland region. The ARLTS notes that in 2001 (p28) 334,000 cars were used to take employees to work every day. Of the total work trips taken, 78% were by car - 73% being drivers, and 5% being passengers. By 2021 there are anticipated to be around 600,000 regional work trips per day, resulting in 4,996,000 vehicle kilometres travelled (87.7% of projected total work related trip km’s). The projected uptake of public transport from 6.6% to 8.7% or work trip kms will ultimately still be low and comparatively high environmental emissions and degradation will occur.

This places further emphasis on the value of intensifying around centres such as Milford and public transport hubs where the potential to improve passenger transport patronage exists. Milford, in addition to being a strategic intensification node is also to become a future defacto transportation node with an express through connection via Shakespeare Road to the Smales Farm Northern Busway Station connecting to regional and North Shore rapid transport corridors. It is noted that both Kitchener Road and Shakespeare Road are part of the Quality Transit Network (QTN) within the Passenger Transport Network Plan 2006-2016 (ARTA, November 2006) as priority corridors for passenger transport provision.
1.3 NORTH SHORE CITY GROWTH CONTEXT

The non-statutory City Blueprint Action Plan adopted by North Shore City Council in July 2001 sets out a 20 year growth plan for the North Shore responding to the ARG5S and Northern and Western Sectors Agreement (2001). The City Blueprint has been the mechanism to undertake community consultation regarding how the implications of the ARG5S could be best integrated and absorbed into the City. More detailed Centre Plans under the District Plan then give more specific responses (no Centre Plan exercise has been undertaken as of yet for Milford).

The City Blueprint establishes the major focus of future development activity will be through intensification in and around North Shore City’s town and village centres. Refer to Figure 1.4. Milford is identified as one of the main town centres of North Shore City with centres as follows:

- **2 sub regional centres**: Takapuna, Albany;
- **6 town centres**: Browns Bay, Devonport, Highbury, Glenfield, Milford, Northcote;
- **14 village centres**: Albany Village, Beach Haven, Belmont, Greenhithe, Greville, Hauraki, Long Bay, Mairangi Bay, Northcross, Sunnynook, Torbay, Unsworth, Wainoni, Windsor.

Key directions identified for Milford town centre identified within the Blueprint include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY AIMS</th>
<th>DIRECTIONS FOR MILFORD TOWN CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CITY ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>Extend or enhance open space to support the Milford town centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING CITY</td>
<td>More intensive forms of housing in and around the Milford commercial centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKING CITY</td>
<td>Significant centre based employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significant shopping, entertainment and cultural centre and in conjunction with Takapuna to be part of the area to be promoted as a regionally significant tourist destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAYING CITY</td>
<td>Close proximity to water and active recreation e.g. Lake Pupuke, Milford Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local shops and cultural / social facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY TRAVEL</td>
<td>PT proposed bus station in town centre and cycle lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed works to improve bus flows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1.3**: North Shore new dwelling allocations (Northern and Western Sectors Agreement, October 2001)

**Figure 1.4**: Milford identified as a town centre (North Shore City Council, 2001:4)

**Figure 1.2**: Compilation of key growth directions for Milford from the City Blueprint document (table developed by Urbanismplus Ltd through analysis of the City Blueprint, NSCC, 2001).
1.4 ACCOMMODATING RESIDENTIAL GROWTH OBJECTIVES

As identified in various intensification strategies, consideration has been given to the ‘target’ household and population numbers identified for North Shore intensification areas including Milford town centre. It is noted however that the population projection figures cited therein are estimated population and household forecasts only with many of the figures being outdated. For this reason, growth projections have not been used as a determinant for accepting additional growth in Milford. Nevertheless, the projections are understood to be relevant in the sense that they represent strategic thinking undertaken by regional and local authorities that consider Milford as an intensification centre able to accommodate additional household capacity.

ARGS projections

As part of preparation for the ARGS, the Regional Growth Forum in 1998 identified the Milford town centre as a growth area with the future potential to accommodate 1,000 additional dwellings creating a total of 4000-5000 dwellings within 800m of the Milford town centre (Intensification of Urban Areas, March 1998). Milford town centre has been more recently recognised as a ‘high density centre’ under the Auckland Regional Policy Statement Proposed Change 6 (August 2007). High density centres are defined as specific localities selected for urban intensification due to physical or locational characteristics that include the intensity of existing development, the locality’s generation of, or association with, significant transport movements, and/or passenger transport nodes, and the locality’s capacity for further growth. (ARPS PC 6, August 2007).

Northern and Western Sectors Agreement projections

The Northern and Western Sectors Agreement (NWSA) (September 2001) provides an overall target projection of an additional 76,684 persons to be accommodated in North Shore City by 2021 with no specific target for Milford. Of additional growth allocated to North Shore, proportionally 28% is to be located in the centres and intensification nodes in the North Shore, 25% to infill development, 25% to Structure Plan areas, 21% to vacant residential land and 1% to rural areas. Under NWSA provisions the largest proportion of future growth (estimated at 8,500 dwellings) is to be focused in intensified centres and transport nodes.

2006 Census data

In 2006 there were 2,202 households and 5,196 people in the Lake Pupuke meshblock area covering 175ha including the Milford town centre and surrounding residential area (Statistics New Zealand, 2006 Census data). Milford has a lower than average household capacity size of 2.4 people compared to 2.7 people per household for New Zealand. This translates to a population density of 30 people per gross hectare and a household density of 13 gross dwellings per hectare (this is slightly higher than typical NZ suburban standards of between 8-10 gross dwellings/ha).

![Location of Milford within the 'Lake Pupuke' census area unit (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).](image)

![Density provisions for town centres under Proposed Change 6 of the ARPS (August 2007).](image)
1.5 MILFORD’S STRATEGIC CONTEXT WITHIN NORTH SHORE

The following issues and opportunities help provide a snapshot of Milford’s current situation within a sub-regional and local growth context.

Sub regional strategic position

→ Located proximate to major vehicular movement networks:

Northern Motorway (State Highway 1); Regional Arterials (Taharoto Road, Lake Road, Forest Hill Road; District Arterials (Shakespeare Road, Kitchener Road, Hurstmere Road, Beach Road).

→ Served by local and sub-regional passenger transport networks:

Milford is well served by public transport bus networks to Takapuna, Long Bay, Sunnynook and Auckland Central. It is also located on a future express route along Shakespeare Road to the Smales Farm Busway Station (located at the northwest corner of Smales Farm Technology Park next to Westlake Girls High School). Future bus priority measures are flagged for East Coast Road, Shakespeare Road and Milford centre in addition to the high occupancy vehicle transit lane currently in operation along Shakespeare Road during peak hours.

→ Located proximate to a major sub-regional centre:

Takapuna is identified as one of the three sub-regional centres in the ARGS, and is 2.5km away from Milford town centre. Milford plays a supporting / complementary role to Takapuna which in turn influences the types and scale of land uses (especially commercial) that will be drawn to and be appropriate for the area as a local service / retail centre.

→ Located proximate to major regional facilities and employment areas:

Milford sits in close proximity to Smales Farm Technology Park on Taharoto Road which once completed is intended to become one of the leading centres in New Zealand for technology-based industries and knowledge-based economic development. An economic impact report by Massey University (2004) has estimated the fully functioning park will have a working population of 6000-7000 people producing an estimated $700 million per annum and an additional $75.6 million due to a multiplier effect. Employees of tenants in the park are expected to spend $197 million of their income in the regional economy annually. Milford as one of the closest town centres will therefore potentially fulfill an important housing and convenience service / retail need to Smales Farm employees and clients. Milford is also well connected to the Wairau Valley general employment area.

Other regional level facilities and services include North Shore Hospital (located on Shakespeare Road) and many popular secondary schools.
**Urbanism**

**COMMUNITY**
- C1: Westlake Boys High
- C2: Westlake Girls High
- C3: Carmel College
- C4: Milford Primary
- C5: North Shore Hospital

**OPEN SPACE**
- R1: Lake Pupuke
- R2: Sylvan Park
- R3: Milford Reserve
- R4: Milford Beach

**ACTIVITY CENTRES / EMPLOYMENT**
- E1: Takapuna sub regional centre
- E2: Milford town centre
- E3: Key employment node at Smales farm

**MOVEMENT**
- State Highway 1
- Regional Arterial
- District Arterial
- Public transport bus network
- Bus priority measures
- Northern busway route
- Westlake busway station

**LAND USES / RECREATION**
- COMMUNITY
- OPEN SPACE

*above Fig. 1.7: Spatial relationships contributing to Milford's significance as a focus for intensification within the North Shore.*
1.6 SECTION 1 CONCLUSION

There are sound social, economic and environmental reasons to encourage intensification in and around town centres:

- Centres are at the heart of their respective communities and fulfil an invaluable social function;
- With greater use of local centres, car dependency can be reduced and travel distances shortened, bringing reductions in fuel use, pollution and expenditure;
- Increased support for public transport;
- Intensification in general assists the reduction of sprawl and all of its associated disadvantages;
- Greater residential catchment increases local retail spend in the centre thereby increasing local employment opportunities particularly in retail related jobs. Intensification also brings employment (albeit temporary) in construction related sectors and in 'flow on' jobs e.g. teachers and bus drivers needing to service the additional catchment;
- May provide the opportunity to ‘improve’ the centre from an urban design standpoint through flow on investment.

From analysis of long term strategic planning preferences and the broad context of Milford, it is concluded that Milford is an important town centre / intensification node in North Shore City which can (and should) accommodate future growth.

A continuance of the existing (inherited) spatial form of Milford into the future should be questioned given that the characteristics exhibited by Milford are ideal to support a far more efficient intensity of development relative to available amenities:

- There is a relationship between local residential catchment and economic development in Milford. Its proximity to Takapuna and Smales Park means Milford plays a supporting employment role in terms of retailing and local-catchment oriented commercial uses / professional services (travel agents, speciality and personal services, etc.). Continuance of this employment role and improving its immediate residential catchment would generally assist economic development in Milford;
- Milford has a very good provision of passenger transport, close to the Northern Busway, and on local and sub-regional bus routes. With greater use of local centres and support for public transport, services can be improved, car dependency can be reduced, and travel distances shortened bringing associated reductions in fuel use, pollution and income ‘leakage’;
- Milford is an attractive residential location with high provision of amenities (open space, views and proximity to the water) that can be efficiently used to meet the recreational and social needs of a growing population;
- Milford is at the heart of its community and fulfils an invaluable social function. A higher local population creates more practical opportunity to invest in the quality of local settings (streetscape upgrades etc.), which cannot be readily justified on the basis of a lower population given other demands for public expenditure;
- Milford is not bound by notable character and heritage constraints associated with other town centres such as Devonport;
- Milford and its adjacent amenities are all located on generally flat land, conducive to pedestrian-based movement (an underpinning goal of intensifying around activity and transport nodes).
2. Growth centres audit

This section seeks to understand the hierarchy of development intensities in urban centres (CBD, sub-regional centres, town centres and urban villages) under strategic regional and sub regional growth policies and the role each plays in terms of accommodating intensification. This section also outlines suggested reasons why nodal centres have not achieved expected levels of intensification.

2.1 CENTRES DESIGNATED FOR INTENSIFICATION

Whilst there is no agreed hierarchy for development intensities in centres, the language of the North Shore City Blueprint is consistent with the role of sub-regional, town centre and urban village centres outlined within the Ministry for the Environment’s People + Places + Spaces urban design guide as represented in the Figures 2-1 and 2-2 below.

Above FIG. 2-1: The range of urban environments existing and focus area of investigation. Diagram adapted from MfE’s People + Places + Spaces urban design guide (2002).

2.2 PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS IN ACHIEVING INTENSIFICATION IN CENTRES

The degree of intensification achieved in growth centres since the ARGs was released has not met expectations and there are several key reasons for this:

→ the property boom sustained since the late 1990’s has led to significant increases in land cost. Land can now commonly cost upwards of 2/3rds of the value of a property in town centres, meaning that the development yield must be notably larger than has previously been possible for viable economic returns to be made;

→ the approach of ‘up-zoning’ to higher densities has generally failed: land values have increased but owners often have no intention of developing - just to sell for the highest possible amount to a party that does. This can make development in centres at least as difficult as before the land was up-zoned;

→ the lack of vacant land and the often fragmented nature of land ownership in centres (including that in most town centres low-density infill has similarly compromised the centre’s peripheral land). In order to achieve sufficient land area to accommodate a comprehensive development, a number of sites need to be acquired. This process can be costly, risky and time consuming;

→ high costs and consenting delays associated from neighbour ‘rights’. Individual land owners are increasingly taking a litigious ‘NIMBY’ approach in opposing higher intensity development that they perceive may decrease the value of their property, often trying to use the RMA to stifle any change under the guise of ‘character’ issues;

→ the overall increases in cost associated with centre development has successively decreased the pool of available participants whom have access to the necessary capital. Now realistically only large and major players can effect change in centres, and they often have little interest in ad-hoc, site by site interventions;

→ on balance, low-density sprawl is still often just ‘easier’ to develop, reflecting the limitations of the RMA / resource management practice to deal with the complexities of increasingly dense environments - development is tending to occur not in the places that make the most ‘sense’, but in the places that attract the least opposition (again inherently favouring lower density settings).

Further reference should also be made to the following reports:

→ Auckland Regional Council (March 2007) Regional Growth Strategy Review - Findings of Technical Reports and Emerging Directions. W736-G06-02

→ Auckland Regional Council (December 2006) Draft: Long Term Sustainability Framework for the Auckland Region.
2.3 GROWTH CENTRES AUDIT— CENTRES HIERARCHY

This page provides a comparative analysis of various centres for intensification, detailing the respective characteristics of each and their role in accommodating growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBD</th>
<th>SUB-REGIONAL CENTRE</th>
<th>TOWN CENTRE</th>
<th>URBAN VILLAGE CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albany Village</td>
<td>Takapuna</td>
<td>New Lynn</td>
<td>Milford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany Centre</td>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>Remuera</td>
<td>Mairangi Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newmarket</td>
<td></td>
<td>Avondale</td>
<td>Torbay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manukau City</td>
<td></td>
<td>Panmure</td>
<td>St Heliers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples**

**Definition:**
The area identified by the wider city / region as the core urban downtown area which has the highest concentration of office, retail and residential activities. The area contains major transport nodes and significant tourist, entertainment and civic facilities.

**Key characteristics:**
- Highest density, small urban blocks, no setbacks, high buildings
- Centre of high intensity commercial and residential functions including hotels
- Civic and institutional heart with harder open space, squares and pocket parks
- Main tourist and entertainment facilities
- Generator of significant rapid and sub regional PT movements coming together from major transportation hubs
- Restricted on-street parking, parking mostly decked or underground

**Role in accommodating growth to 2050:**
Large capacity to accommodate growth per hectare but spatially constrained by available developable land area.

**Definition:**
A prominent urban area which is characterised by a diverse mix of functions including intensive retail, residential, community and business activities. Sub regional centres are usually of a larger scale and higher density than town centres. They may also contain higher order activities such as major public transport nodes, tertiary level health and education facilities and other significant tourist and entertainment facilities. Sub regional centres are usually the geographical heart of a wider urban community. If gives the wider urban area an identity and significant community focal point. A sub regional centre is generally defined as the area within an 800m radius, or a 10min walk of its centre. [Auckland Regional Policy Statement Proposed Change 6, Appendix D]

**Key characteristics:**
- Higher density, smaller urban blocks, smaller setbacks, high buildings
- Strong employment base with intensive business and retail activities
- Fulfils wider community needs e.g. regional health, education & recreational facilities, civic buildings
- Provides a distinct focus of activity for multiple communities and visitors, harder open space, squares, pocket parks
- Provides for intensive residential activities in the form of mixed use developments and higher density residential typologies e.g. apartment towers
- Served by rapid and sub regional PT movements coming together at a major transportation hub
- Medium provision of on-street parking, parking mostly decked, underground or internal to block

**Role in accommodating growth to 2050:**
Major role in accommodating growth due to developable land and yield intensity available.

**Definition:**
An urban area characterised by a mixture of functions including intensive retail, residential, community and business activities. Town centres give the local area and community much of its identity. Town centres differ from pure retail centres and business parks which tend to be dominated by single use activities. A town centre is generally defined as the area within a 400-800m radius, or a 5-10min walk of its centre. [Auckland Regional Policy Statement Proposed Change 6, Appendix D]

**Key characteristics:**
- Mixture of higher & lower density and urban block sizes, variable setbacks, some high buildings
- Finer grained intensive retail and commercial uses / employment
- May include larger format retail uses e.g. shopping mall
- Fulfils local community functions e.g. educational, public meeting spaces, healthcare, places of worship
- Provides a distinct identity and focus to the local community
- Provides for intensive residential activities. Currently some intensification in the form of mixed use developments and new residential typologies e.g. terraces, apartments
- Served by sub regional and local PT movements
- Maxime on-street parking, some parking buildings

**Role in accommodating growth to 2050:**
Supporting role in accommodating growth with a moderate yield intensity restrained by character issues.

**Definition:**
A smaller scale urban area serving a localised retail function for its immediate low density catchment. Serviced by local public transport. A urban village is generally defined within a 400m radius or a 5 minute walk of its centre.

**Key characteristics:**
- Mixture of medium & lower density, larger urban block sizes, variable setbacks, lower building heights
- Dominated by homogenous single use activities
- Fine grained, low density local convenience retail activities
- Lack of commercial function
- Small scale community facilities viable e.g. medical centre, kindergarten
- Predominantly low-medium density residential activities e.g. semi attached, terrace typologies
- Served by local PT movements
- Maxime on-street parking
2.4 GROWTH CENTRES AUDIT — CURRENT ‘PERMITTED’ SITUATION UNDER ZONING VS BUILT EXAMPLES

**CBD**

- **Maximum height range:**
  - ACC - 15-135m (However highly dependent on view corridor and other development restrictions)
- **No. of levels:** 5-45 storeys
- **Outcomes most commonly realised:**
  - Commercial / residential apartment towers
  - Hotel / visitor accommodation towers
- **Case studies:**
  - ACC - Auckland Central Area

  *Nb. The built examples represented above are based on the number of useable floors excluding the roof, spire and antennae features.*

**SUB-REGIONAL CENTRE**

- **Maximum height range:**
  - ACC - 10-30m
  - NSCC - 8m-unlimited
  - WCC - 10m-unlimited (Subject to Plan Change 17 and HiRTB controls)
  - MCC - unlimited (Subject to HiRTB controls)
- **No. of levels:**
  - ACC - 3-10 storeys
  - NSCC - 3+ storeys
  - WCC - 4+ storeys
- **Outcomes most commonly realised:**
  - Apartment towers with retail / commercial at ground level
  - Mixed use development
- **Case studies:**
  - ACC - Newmarket
  - NSCC - Albany, Takapuna
  - WCC - New Lynn, Henderson
  - MCC - Manukau City

**TOWN CENTRE**

- **Maximum height range:**
  - ACC - 10-20m
  - NSCC - 9-18m
  - WCC - 9-14m (Subject to Proposed Plan Change 19)
  - MCC - unlimited (Subject to HiRTB controls)
- **No. of levels:**
  - ACC - 3-7 storeys
  - NSCC - 3-6 storeys
  - WCC - unlimited (Subject to HiRTB controls)
- **Outcomes most commonly realised:**
  - Mixed use
  - Intensive housing typologies e.g. terraced houses, apartment blocks, semi detached
- **Case studies:**
  - ACC - Remuera
  - NSCC - Glenfield, Milford
  - MCC - Manurewa

**URBAN VILLAGE CENTRE**

- **Maximum height range:**
  - ACC - 10-20m
  - NSCC - 9-18m
  - WCC - 9-14m (Subject to Proposed Plan Change 19)
  - MCC - unlimited (Subject to HiRTB controls)
- **No. of levels:**
  - ACC - 3-7 storeys
  - NSCC - 3-6 storeys
  - WCC - unlimited (Subject to HiRTB controls)
- **Outcomes most commonly realised:**
  - Mixed use
  - Intensive housing typologies e.g. terraced houses, apartment blocks, semi detached
- **Case studies:**
  - ACC - Remuera
  - NSCC - Glenfield, Milford
  - MCC - Manurewa

---

**Using multiple case study centre locations and their current zone provisions under their respective District Plans, this page presents a measure of approximate building heights provided for within each centre type (the uppermost maximum height range) (orange). This is plotted against the highest built on the ground (or yet to be approved) examples (grey).**

**A notable discrepancy exists within town centres.**
2.5 SECTION 2 CONCLUSION

The following conclusions have been reached:

- Current North Shore District Plan provisions in ‘town centres’ are generally similar to provisions (whether existing or proposed) for ‘urban village’ centres.
- The District Plan provisions relating to scale and intensity in town centres are not considered consistent with their position in the centres hierarchy between sub-regional centres and urban villages.
- In many instances existing buildings in and around town centres are significantly higher than maximum height provisions. This may relate to the scale of yield and investment necessary to balance land and other costs in these locations.

It is not considered appropriate to expect that town centres should allow for an intensity level similar to an urban village. Given the significant amenity, service, and connections to public transport networks, town centres have a major advantage over urban villages to accommodate population growth. They also typically have higher land values per average square metre of land. This is not being recognised under current planning envelopes either in North Shore City but also the region generally. In this regard, it is assessed that urban villages are either being over supplied - their intensity provisions being greater than the available amenities would justify (arrow A in Figure 2-3), or town centres are being under supplied - their intensity provisions do not take best advantage of available amenities (arrow B). It is overall considered that the provisions relating to urban villages (including the Council’s Mixed Use Plan Change 19) are appropriate given the intensity of ‘background’ suburbia, and that therefore the provisions relating to town centres are not appropriate.

Although there are many centres which are classified as ‘town centres’ by the ARC that can theoretically accommodate growth, the real opportunity to intensify these centres is limited. Many of these centres are in fact subject to heritage and built character value constraints. Grey Lynn, Onehunga, Pt Chevalier, Howick, and Devonport are examples of town centres with high character and amenity values that create specific development restrictions. Almost all are further limited by the practical issues that have been observed in Milford: significant previous infill contributing to an overall lack of available land, fragmented ownership, urban structure and open space issues, and other land value / economics issues that cumulatively hinder intensification.

In reference to the above observations and analysis it is therefore highly likely that only a limited number of town centres will be able to achieve regional and local growth aspirations under the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (1999). For this reason, town centres which do feature the characteristics to support quality higher intensity development with less character constraints such as Milford, should have the ability to accommodate an even higher intensity and scale of development than other town centres that are more physically and strategically constrained.
In light of the conclusions reached from the growth centre audit it is recommended that current planning envelopes are revised to allow for greater intensity levels in town centres.

Aspirational development height is considered to lie in the general order of 8-15 storeys for town centres however development outcomes are also subject to the management of horizontal and vertical building mass. Local context and site specific considerations also apply in determination of building height and mass. For instance, aspirational development heights may vary according to each town centre’s physical ability to accommodate growth objectives, locational attributes of the centre and visual sensitivities of the centre or site.
3. Physical context of Milford

Section 3 addresses the built character issues associated with intensification taking a place-based approach to audit the physical settings in and around Milford. This helps to build a greater understanding of how and where growth could realistically occur in Milford town centre.

3.1 CORE CHARACTER QUALITIES OF MILFORD TOWN CENTRE

The Milford town centre has a linear form structured around Kitchener Road as a distinct main street corridor of retail and commercial activity (connecting ultimately to Takapuna centre). It has a linear retail length of around 590m. The core is located between Omana and Friston Roads, the lower end of East Coast Road and the eastern extent of Shakespeare Road. Its fringe extends laterally westwards along Shakespeare Rd and eastwards along Milford Rd.

In looking at the urban morphology of Milford (the relationship of streets, blocks and buildings) Milford also demonstrates a degree of dysfunctionality in relation to its amenities. Unlike many of the centres on the North Shore established for their proximity to the sea, Milford centre is away from the coast, instead anchored at a significant movement junction located approximately 650m from Milford Beach. The location of many community buildings such as churches and other places of assembly are atypical in their location, accessible only from local (residential) roads and set well back from the main street.

Milford does not have a defined built heritage or architectural character / theme unlike other examples (notably Devonport, now decreasingly considered a growth node reflecting this limitation). The centre exhibits no particular cultural or architectural distinctiveness and its defining identity feature is considered to be attributed to its open, street-based ‘main street’ condition.

Milford town centre is low rise in nature with predominantly single storey retail units and a handful of 2 storey retail/commercial properties serving a low density residential catchment. This is not considered to result from any particular landscape sensitivity or ‘ideal’ character. Milford is instead considered to exhibit an inherited function of prevailing development economics up to 1990. In summary the North Shore developed as a consequence of car-based low density population. The large availability of cheap land, and major public investment road based transport infrastructure helped create a context whereby 1-2 level buildings were in many cases all that were typically viable in order to achieve an adequate return on land without overcapitalising it.

Refer to Figure 3-1 which represents outward urban expansion on the North Shore from 1900 to today.
Like all intensification nodes in transition, a tension exists in character terms between an inherited and prevailing, well-established 1-2 level building height condition and an increased height commonly associated with a 'first wave' of re-development over time. Only recently have density levels in centres (particularly the sub-regional centres of Albany and Takapuna) been increasing, typically at high density and due to very high unit sale prices. Other growth has been occurring in village centres where development yields similar to that possible within town centres are possible but on land that is typically much cheaper to acquire. Growth in the North Shore’s town centres has been relatively modest, mostly relating to residential infill around their peripheries.

It is not considered supportable to use ‘character’ as a reason to curtail change in Milford simply because it may reflect a greater intensity of settlement than is presently the case. The existing built condition has more to do with prevailing economics of the time rather than an actual coherent ‘character’.

**FEATURES OF MILFORD’S MAIN STREET:**

- Sense of open spacious main street;
- 1-2 storeys retail / commercial buildings;
- Zero building line setback;
- Narrow land parcels;
- Continuous solid verandahs along the main street mean that good solar access to the footpath is retained only by virtue of road orientation and the lack of building height;
- Pedestrian friendly street based retail;
- Pedestrian environment complemented by various amenities e.g. street trees, lighting, seating, splitter islands, paved footpaths;
- Easy grade, mostly flat;
- Prevalence of active, outward facing uses along the street;
- Parallel on-street parking for vehicular access and pedestrian safety;
- No coherent architectural or other character consistency.
Specific analysis of Milford town centre has identified:

→ A lack of a unifying built character or ‘style’ but a walkable and pedestrian oriented main street;

→ Buildings are a mixture of designs and tastes from a range of architectural periods. Refer to Figure 3-2.

**ABOVE FIG. 3-2:** Examples of the varied and non-unified built character within and around Milford centre.
3.2 FUTURE EMPLOYMENT GROWTH IN THE MILFORD TOWN CENTRE

While this document focuses on residential intensification, employment growth opportunities within the context of the Milford town centre have - out of practical necessity - been considered. Providing for employment growth and protecting commercial well being in Milford is considered important given the existing shortage of suitable business land within North Shore and Auckland Region. In 2002 there were 771 businesses located within the Milford area (Statistics NZ, 2008).

Given its close proximity to Takapuna (a centre fulfilling a sub-regional employment function), the Smales Farm Office Park as a regionally significant knowledge based employment area and lastly the Wairau Valley as a general employment area, future employment growth in Milford centre is likely to continue serving a local service / retail function.

Strategically, the MSC is a very suitable site to accommodate future local level employment growth in Milford. However, in looking at the areas which are realistically and practically developable on the site (being the underdeveloped band from the edge of the existing mall to the site boundary at the rear of the mall) the physical and visual disconnection to the main street of this location presents a condition which is more conducive to uses other than retail or commercial.

In general, employment expansion is likely to continue along Shakespeare and Kitchener roads being main routes with greater accessibility including passenger transport provision and visibility desired by retail and commercial businesses. To a limited extent, some further commercial activity extension may occur along Milford Road however this is expected to be limited due to the proximity of residential development and the distance from the main street. Refer to Figure 3-3.

1. MILFORD CENTRE - KITCHENER ROAD MAIN STREET

1-2 level retail and commercial uses within the core town centre shopping area and 1 level commercial units (converted houses) along the southern most portion of Milford Road. Some opportunity to provide for future employment growth in retail / commercial activities further east of the existing town centre along Kitchener Road, and in commercial uses further north along the eastern edge of Milford Road.

SOME POTENTIAL

2. MILFORD SHOPPING CENTRE SITE

Little likely opportunity to establish viable, good quality retail or commercial uses at ground level or above due to the physical and visual disconnection around the Omana and Ihumata Road frontages from the movement economy generated along the Milford main street.

Some potential may exist to provide for live/work units along the Milford Road frontage provided the pressure for small scale commercial uses along the Milford Road axis continues.

LIMITED POTENTIAL

3. MILFORD CENTRE - SHAKEPEARE RD

Existing small to mid size commercial uses as well as reconverted houses / live-work units along the northern most section of Shakespeare Road. A particular dominance of health care related activities exists.

The dynamic suggests a continued ‘natural’ extension of domestically scaled commercial uses, capitalising on the movement generated along the Shakespeare Road axis to Smales Farm, the motorway interchange and the Northern busway station.

MOST POTENTIAL
MILFORD SHOPPING CENTRE EMPLOYMENT CONDITION

Analysis of the internal configuration of the MSC and its proximity to the movement generated around the site provides a greater level of understanding as to the site’s ability to provide for future employment on the developable areas of the site fronting Omana, Ihumata and Milford Roads.

The positioning of the retail anchor
The mall layout encourages the majority of pedestrian movements from the Kitchener Road frontage through the food court to the central circulation space within the mall. The mall has two major anchor tenants or ‘attractors’ (The Warehouse which is positioned along the north-western edge of the existing building as well as a Woolworths supermarket at the south-eastern edge of the centre) and one ‘mini major’ (Whitcoulls next to the Warehouse).

Shopping malls usually design around large, well known anchor tenants that locate at either end of a mall corridor to act as magnets that induce foot traffic past smaller stores. Given the orientation of uses around the MSC site, there is obvious logic in the location of the anchor tenants where they currently sit, as it acts to help balance the main focus of entry and food court facing the public car park and the Kitchener Road main street.

Essentially the shopping centre will inevitably have blank, inactive external walls along some facades unless the land use fundamentally changed to another model. The approximate location of these as they sit around the existing shopping centre are considered to represent the ‘best’ likely outcome for an internalised shopping mall and it is not likely that any major changes (including public access to the shopping centre) would be viable along these areas of poor frontage condition. The exception would be a ‘sleeve’ of non-mall uses attached to the exterior of the shopping centre facing the street.

Capturing movement energy generated by traffic
Although the MSC site has a considerable amount of road frontage, in reality, there are few commercial or retail uses which can take advantage of the way the movement economy works around the Omana, Ihumata and Milford Road frontages. The site has little ability to capture passing trade from morning peak traffic flows since they are outside of normal commercial trading hours. Consequently, for the majority of the day there is a relative lack of people and energy generated around the ‘rear’ of the site until the evening peak traffic flow begins. It is expected that the site will continue to have its main energy concentrated at the existing entry points (primarily from the Kitchener Road carpark and from Milford Road).

As such, the dynamics of the movement economy are considered unsupportive of active retail or commercial uses around this rear frontage. The most likely commercial use is the continuance of inactive big box retailing through expansions to the existing mall. The highest quality frontage response can therefore be best achieved by residential activities.
3.3 FUTURE RESIDENTIAL GROWTH CAPACITY OF MILFORD TOWN CENTRE

After consideration of the physical capacity for further residential intensification / growth in and around the town centre, opportunities to fulfil Milford's growth potential are considered to be limited. Refer to Figure 3-5 and proceeding discussion.

1. SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Other than rezoning and rebuilding, surrounding residential areas offer limited opportunity to deliver higher density residential due to the large amount of infill housing that has occurred and lack of available vacant sites for development.

Southern business zone interface (1A) with existing residential requires sensitive treatment to minimise potential reverse sensitivity issues e.g. development set backs.

LIMITED POTENTIAL
Refer to page 25

2. MILFORD SHOPPING CENTRE SITE

Milford Shopping Centre - potentially a suitable site with sufficient vacant land to deliver higher density housing providing commercial function is protected (particularly at the ground level).

MSC is not restricted by many of the limitations otherwise associated with intensification as it is subject to a single land owner and can practically deal with parking requirements on site.

Development can be reasonably setback from neighbours and is better able to contain effects on site e.g. shading.

STRONG POTENTIAL
Refer to page 30

3. MILFORD CENTRE - KITCHENER ROAD MAIN STREET

Limited opportunity to deliver comprehensive residential development due to small site sizes and multiple land ownerships. This causes practical difficulties in managing the effects of intensification and parking requirements.

Potential for development on Council owned car park site providing alternative parking is provided.

SOME POTENTIAL
Refer to pages 26 & 28

4. MILFORD CENTRE - SHAKESPEARE RD

Limited opportunity to deliver higher density residential in Res 6A zone constrained due to existing levels of intensification, shape of sites, fragmented ownerships and potential resistance to intensification by lower density neighbours.

SOME POTENTIAL
Refer to pages 26 & 29
3.4 CAPACITY STUDY TO EXAMINE AVAILABLE RESIDENTIAL YIELD

By applying a 400m radius around the MSC site and completing a desktop examination of the zoned, theoretical, potential and actual residential capacity, greater certainty can be offered that under current zones and provisions of the District Plan, Milford’s existing environment presents very little intensification opportunity.

In looking at the main zones it has been found:

→ In the Residential 4A zone there has been substantial infill development and only a handful of sites have sufficient land area for new or additional infill. Existing infill of residential areas surrounding the MSC weakens the capacity of Milford to accommodate higher density developments in the future without costly demolition of units and reorganisation of property boundaries;

→ In the Residential 6A zone multi unit developments already prevail thereby limiting further residential development without demolition and a replacement yield high enough to recoup these costs (as well as for structured or underground car parking at present required rates);

→ In the Suburban 2 zone along Kitchener Road, height limits, car parking provisions and existing and likely future development would effectively enable in many cases only 1 level of residential above ground floor and parking. A gross 1:120sqm density per building level has been assumed as a plausible floor plate which takes account of private residential space as well as circulation and common spaces etc (delivering around 85sqm net floor space per unit).

For other assumptions used in the summary table below refer to pages 26 and 27.

BELOW FIG. 3-6: Summary table of available residential yield within a 400m distance of the MSC.
RES 4A

Significant infill has already occurred in existing residential 4A areas.

Limited yield (approx. 19 additional units) assuming parcels can be appropriately amalgamated and development controls i.e. HiRTB / setbacks / coverage can be complied with.

Delivery of further yield in the 4A zone would require demolition of existing dwellings which is not considered generally plausible.
RES 2B

1 unit per 600m²

Limited potential yield capacity (approx 4 additional units) due to Wairau Creek foreshore yard setback restrictions, insufficient lot sizes and existing infill development.

RES 6A

1 unit per 450m² / 1 unit per 150m²

Extremely limited yield (approx 1 additional unit) due to existing multiple unit and infill development.

Unless multiple sites are purchased and amalgamated to create a land parcel >1,500m² for intensive residential development further intensification is not likely.

BUS 2 / GEN 9

Height restriction:
9m building height = 3 levels

Parking requirements:
One for each residential unit with a gross floor area of 50m² or less
Two for each residential unit with a gross floor area in excess of 50m² + visitor parking requirements

Limited residential yield:
Approx 1 level assumed capacity above ground in Bus 2 zone. Takes into account existing 2 level developments, GL commercial uses and potential level 2 non res uses. No residential in Gen 9 due to strategic need to protect land for employment purposes.

RES 7

1 unit per 200m²

No yield availability.

It has been assumed 1 dwelling per site is feasible, changing to commercial over time.

SPECIAL PURPOSE ZONE 6 BOAT BUILDING

SPZ 6 does not provide for residential activities.

No yield availability.
3.5 UNLOCKING THE LOCAL GROWTH POTENTIAL WITHIN THE URBAN CHARACTER / CONTEXT OF MILFORD

The challenge, like elsewhere, is to unlock the full potential of the Milford town centre as a growth node by providing for an appropriate development response in the most appropriate locations that still reflect the overall “scale” or “quality” of the place and in particular along the Kitchener Road main street. The critical questions needing to be asked of any higher intensity development in and around Milford town centre relate to the ability of the development to (a) maintain the open spacious quality of the main street, and (b) manage property access and parking while maintaining a pedestrian street based emphasis.

As such, each of the areas identified as potential growth capacity areas in Milford as per Figure 3-7 are examined in turn in terms of the likely impact future development in this area would have on the main street quality and features of Milford.

It is noted that in all three potential growth areas, the primary impediment to growth is likely to relate to an assumed general community resistance for higher intensity development and change in the character of the place.

**Location**

**KITCHENER ROAD MAIN STREET**
- Mixed use res / commercial

**SHAKESPEARE ROAD**
- Medium density residential corridor

**KITCHENER ROAD SHOPPING CENTRE SITE**
- High density above or sleeving the mall

**Strengths**

- Distinct corridor of retail / commercial activity
- Served by PT networks
- Supports the main-street condition
- Delivers a more spread-out sense of low to mid rise buildings
- Single land owner
- Large site, provides surety of accommodating growth
- Located within Milford centre, main street, employment, PT networks
- Draw card for 24/7 activity
- Increase in separation distance to boundaries
- Shadowing mostly on itself (mall)
- Northern aspect to estuary

**Weaknesses**

- Significant character change in main street
- Multiple, fragmented ownerships
- Would require land amalgamation of individually owned lots – costly, time consuming
- Southern zone interface with residential & reverse sensitivity issues
- Res 6A / 4A zoning limitations
- Fragmented ownerships
- Would require land amalgamation of individually owned lots – costly, time consuming
- Already intensified
- Intensity of corridor and bus priority may lower amenity along the edge
- Intensification of the MSC site needs to be guided to maximise the contribution to the ‘main street’ or a wider connection into the town centre
- The degree of ‘change’ may be unpalatable to some locals
- Development would only be economic / worth pursuing on top of a functioning shopping centre if the yield was relatively high

*ABOVE FIG. 3-7: Strengths and weaknesses associated with potential growth areas in Milford*
DEVELOPMENT ALONG KITCHENER ROAD

The existing business zoned land on Kitchener Road has limited intensification opportunities because amalgamation of a number of small lots would be required in order to provide sufficient redevelopment area for medium / higher density uses. Property acquisition of several individually owned lots, in order to obtain a suitably continuous area and shape can be uncertain, time consuming and costly. Car parking requirements are such that further intensification could not occur unless a comprehensive solution and structure were provided to deliver necessary capacity (typically unlikely to be public given common Council resource constraints), or if each site provided its own underground or above-ground parking. A typical ‘structured’ car parking space can cost around 10 times the cost of an ‘at grade’ equivalent. The development yield needed to make this cost viable quickly leaps from needing a 2-3 level building to a 5-7 level one. This is not consistent with the provisions of the Business 2 Zone which allow development up to 9m i.e. a maximum of 3 levels.

However, in the long term greater residential opportunities in the heart of the town centre above the retail / commercial uses should be pursued to deliver a truly mixed use main street with sufficient activity to sustain its ongoing viability. If it is assumed growth does occur in the town centre and takes the likely form of 3-4 storey mixed use development with residential uses located above commercial (i.e. physically 2-3 storeys higher than existing), generally speaking it is difficult to see how likely typologies can achieve good outcomes for Milford. Although it is accepted that with time and at significant development cost good urbanism could be achievable, development has the potential to cause significant change to Milford’s main street identity undermining valued main street qualities and causing tension between development fronts and backs with neighbouring land uses.

Main areas of conflict are outlined as follows:

→ Increased building height obstructs solar access to pedestrian areas. To maintain existing levels verandahs may need to be upgraded to transparent glass;

→ the narrow road width of Kitchener Road (approximately 14.0m) and higher buildings on the street edge have the potential to over enclose the main street and considerably change its existing character;

→ Residential uses located above ground floor retail/commercial uses that directly overlook the street changes the pedestrian experience of the main street;

→ Although property access could be obtained from the rear service lane thus protecting the main street pedestrian condition, this layout creates conflict between residential backs in terms of traffic generation and parking interface. The service lane takes on an upgraded role to that of a public street (refer to Figure 3-9).
DEVELOPMENT ALONG SHAKESPEARE ROAD

The scale of existing and likely future development along Shakespeare Road is more reflective of the existing surrounding context and is hence more likely to be a widely acceptable ‘transitional’ growth form for the Milford community.

Shakespeare Road has a mixture of residential and business activities (predominantly health care related) of various of styles and designs. Many older higher density multi unit housing developments e.g. ‘sausage flats’ are evident along the eastern extent of Shakespeare Road. Within 800m of the town centre there are limited opportunities for further infill development unless underdeveloped sites are amalgamated for intensive residential developments. Land cost makes this option prohibitive although land is cheaper along Shakespeare Road than in the town centre along Kitchener Road.

Main areas of conflict are outlined as follows:

→ Indirect impact on the town centre in terms of greater dispersal of pedestrian and vehicular energy away from core retail / commercial area along Kitchener Road;
→ Potential for neighbour resistance to higher densities;
→ Maximising development potential may undermine good urban design.

RES 6A ZONE

ABOVE FIG. 3-10: Res 6A zone along Shakespeare Rd showing typical development and subdivision patterns of infill & multi unit developments

ABOVE FIG. 3-11: Res 6A zone along Shakespeare Rd illustrating the degree of neighbour nuisance issues that would need to be addressed in redevelopment (up to 13 units)

SUMMARY - DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>SHAKEPEARE ROAD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likely development form</td>
<td>Medium density residential corridor</td>
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IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

SOME VISUAL IMPACT ON ENTRY TO TOWN CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT ON MILFORD SHOPPING CENTRE SITE

In light of analysis of development potential along Shakespeare Road and Kitchener Road and the impacts of this on Milford, the large scale single ownership site within the town centre (the 2.9 ha MSC site), is deemed to be a critical strategically located land parcel. It enables easy, comprehensive opportunities for higher density residential development that otherwise may only occur by way of a slow, irregular and uncertain process.

This site offers the most sympathetic growth capacity to the main street condition. Increased intensity here is not without conflict however, but is considered to have the least likely impact Milford’s town centre character and street based pedestrian condition along Kitchener Road. Development can be effectively set back sufficiently to have minimal impact to identity of main street. This allows for a ‘human scale’ and fine pedestrian grain to prevail along the main street with lower scaled development. Refer to Figure 3-12.

Main areas of impact are outlined as follows:

- An increased building profile is a significant change to the existing physical form of Milford;
- Has greater impact to a range of viewing distances - near (along East Coast/ Kitchener / Shakespeare Roads), and from the main street and streets around the shopping centre;
- Difficult to maintain connection to the main street because of limited feasible developable area. Access and amenity can only be significantly improved by redevelopment of the Council owned car park site on Kitchener Rd.
4. Summary - Ideal Building Height in Milford

4.1 MILFORD: A CENTRE HIGHLY SUITABLE FOR INTENSIFICATION

It has been determined that Milford’s strategic and contextual advantages makes it a town centre well suited to accommodating higher intensities. Subject to specific contextual, visual and landscape assessments, the aspirational development height for town centres is considered to lie in the order of 8-15 storeys.

Detailed consideration of local opportunities and constraints in Milford in conjunction with the assessments of LA4 from a visual and landscape perspective, suggest that within Milford, the shopping centre site could accommodate development at the upper end of the aspirational height ‘window’ (subject to detail design and management of horizontal mass).

An intensity within the order of 15 levels is broadly recommended taking into account:

- Appropriately recognising the key character elements of Milford town centre;
- The growth mandate for higher intensity development anticipated for sub-regional centres, town centres and village centres and the characteristics of each within a hierarchy. This is based heavily on the strategic growth role of a town centre to fulfil a fundamental intensity gap between the higher order sub-regional and the lower order urban village;
- The proximity of Milford’s existing 12 level ‘The Circle’ apartment tower;
- The reasonable locations where higher intensity growth could be accommodated in Milford and need to provide future surety in being able to meet growth objectives;
- The likelihood (by virtue of the function and proximity of Takapuna and Smales Farm, (and Wairau Valley) that Milford’s economy will remain focussed on service-type retail and commercial uses means the best way to grow jobs is through increasing the local residential catchment;
- The strategic location of Milford. The town centre is located within close proximity to a wide range of close, easily walkable amenities that will not be efficiently utilised should Milford not accommodate a level of growth notably beyond a typical urban village;
- The range of amenities offered in Milford genuinely provides for all daily needs of a full demographic range. Unlike many other town centres that only provide some of these amenities (typically assumed only convenience retail / professional / personal services and some local employment), Milford offers education (pre-school through to secondary), general and specialist healthcare, retail (street based and larger format) and commercial employment. Milford’s adjacent amenities make it extremely rare in the Region with few other settings offering such a comprehensive, wide-ranging quantum of immediately accessible (or if car travel is needed only very short trips) amenities;
- The lack of an inherent built environment character but clear identity particularly associated with its main street condition;
- The absence of an alternative local centre plan or similar response to strategic growth issues that could present alternative or more detailed evidence to the contrary.

SPECIFIC IMPLICATIONS FOR BUILDING HEIGHT:

A 15 level mixed use building could, if endorsed within a District Plan change height ‘envelope’, could be structured as follows:

1 x levels of non-residential ground floor uses, preferably retail. This would normally have a stud height of around 4.0m;
2 x levels provided as good commercial space that may also be used as residential. These would normally have a stud height of around 4.0m;
12 x levels of residential-dominant use with a normal stud height of up to 3.5m.

Note: with each of these, this is the height between the centres of structural beams. It is operationally likely that up to 400mm of service space for pipes, ducting and so on would apply so the net floor to ceiling height on each level would reduce i.e. from 3.5m to 3.1m net.

Up to 6m of roof service, lift machinery, and so on. This is considered a generous allowance but one that is realistic.

This would equate to (1 x 4m) + (2 x 4m) + (12 x 3.5m) + (1 x 6m) giving a TOTAL height of the building (excluding spires or antennas) in the order of 60m. A height envelope of this order would give much confidence that at 15 level building could eventuate.