

Waterfront Facilities & Cruise/Visitor Preparations Update

Council Briefing - 12 March 2020

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Cruise Research and Findings

From discussions with Focus Paihia, bus operators, Fullers, IDNZ Destination Management, other NZ cities experiences of cruise industry:

Cruise passengers roughly split up as follows:

- 1/3 on pre-booked tours
- 1/3 stay on ship
- 1/3 'free-rangers' catch a shuttle bus to Town Basin to wander around
 - Looking for unique and authentic experiences
 - Do not generally go shopping or go to cafés or restaurants
 - Often will not walk very far
- Will want to use public toilets when they get on/off the bus
- Free-rangers will use i-Site and may go on small mini-van type tours from the Town Basin



Cruise Research and Findings

Pre-booked tour destinations are likely to include:

- Whangarei: Hundertwasser Art Centre, Clapham's Clock Museum, Kiwi North, Quarry Gardens, Whangarei Falls, Poor Knights Islands
- South: Waipu Museum, Mangawhai vineyards, Te Hana, Matakoho Museum
- Locals stay away from visitor areas on a cruise ship day (Paihia experience)
- Dunedin has published an 'Operator Guide' for the cruise season based on a destination marketing approach
- Many small tour-van type operators will turn up on cruise ship day
- Temporary traffic management will be required
- Ambassadors will be needed to inform and guide visitors



Cruise Research and Findings

- i-Site function is critical:

- Warm welcome to Whangarei
- i-Site has a common symbol & function across NZ
- Sell tickets on behalf of small operators (revenue stream)
- Need a pop-up i-Site outside Northport fence, 'free-rangers' will use it after clearing customs and while they are waiting for shuttle buses



SITE



- Venues & Events team will be critical for cruise day operations
- Multi-agency approach is required
- Bay of Islands has a Cruise Ship Committee to ensure everything is organised each cruise ship day

- BOI & Auckland are very busy with 60-90 cruise ships per year
- Dunedin prepared a Cruise Action Plan to improve their offerings and quality of service to visitors



Cruise Research and Findings

- Northport has 10 cruise ship bookings now, and continuing to increase
 - Cruise ship dates (per Northport website on 3/3/20) are:
 - Thursday 4 June 2020 – 650 passengers & 375 crew
 - Tuesday 10 November 2020
 - Wednesday 2 December 2020 – 2500 passengers
 - Saturday 5 December 2020
 - Sunday 17 January 2021
 - Thursday 9 December 2021
 - Plus 4 dates over Jan-Feb 2022
- Bad weather in BOI could divert cruise ships to stop at Northport at short notice

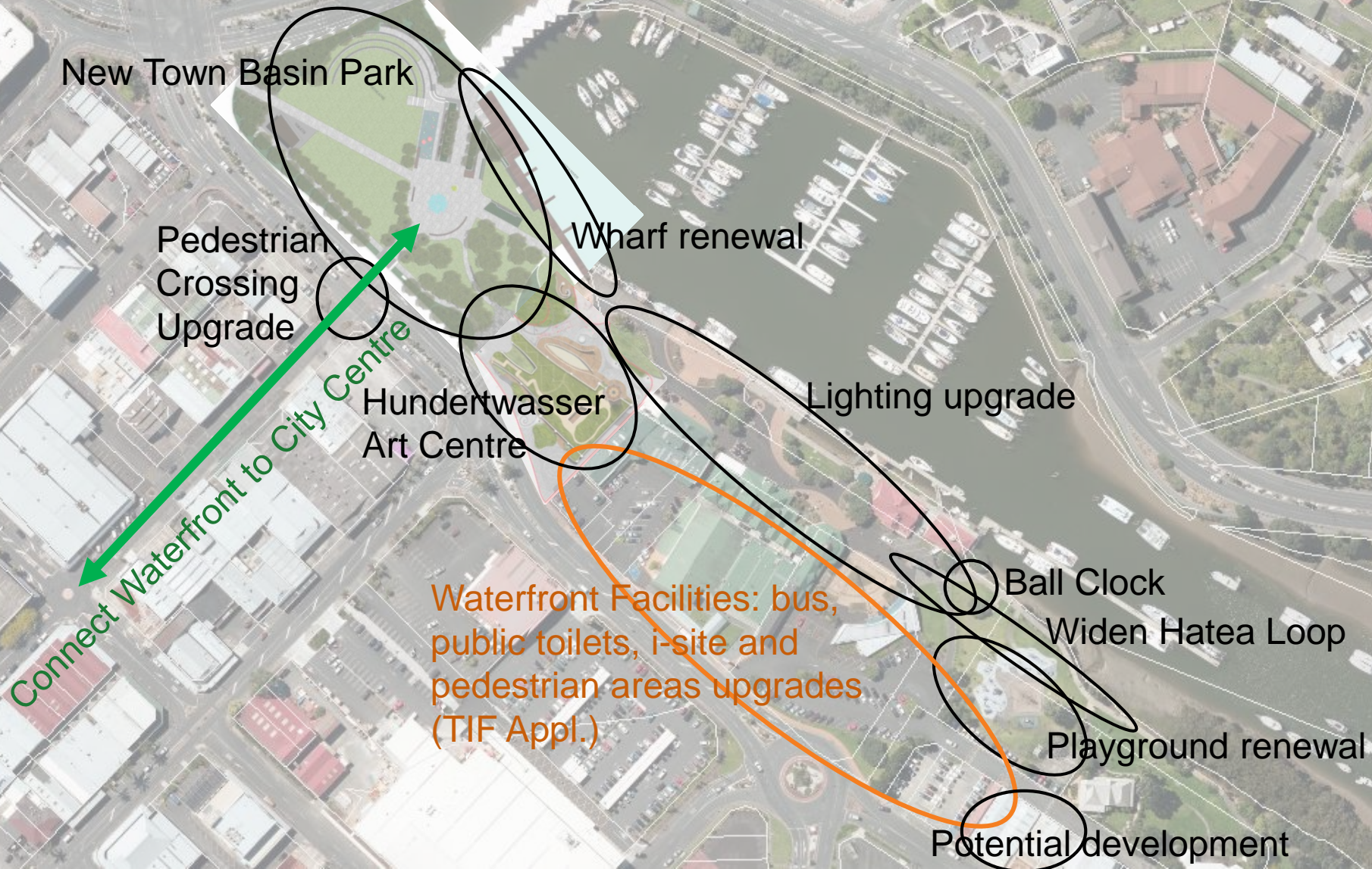


Cruise & Visitor Preparations

- Multiple agencies are working together on an action plan including WDC, Northport, Northland Inc, Chamber of Commerce, Ritchies Buses
- Actions for WDC
 - Various infrastructure projects
 - Connect waterfront to city centre – John St interventions
 - Wayfinding signs & bus operator information
 - Pop-up i-site at Northport
 - Traffic Management Plan for cruise days
 - Visitor experience – markets, events, entertainment, information, roving ambassadors
 - Extra rubbish collection, toilet cleaning on cruise days
 - Coordination among agencies
 - Communications



Whangarei Town Basin Projects 2018-2021





***\$5.2m New Town Basin Park Project
open by June 2021***



***\$30m Hundertwasser Art Centre with
Wairau Maori Art Gallery open July 2021***



***\$0.9m Ball Clock Project
open by October 2020***

SITE CONCEPT



\$0.87m Town Basin Playground & Pedestrian Area Renewals open by October 2020



***Town Basin Playground Design:
view towards Reyburn House***

Waterfront Facilities Upgrade Project Background

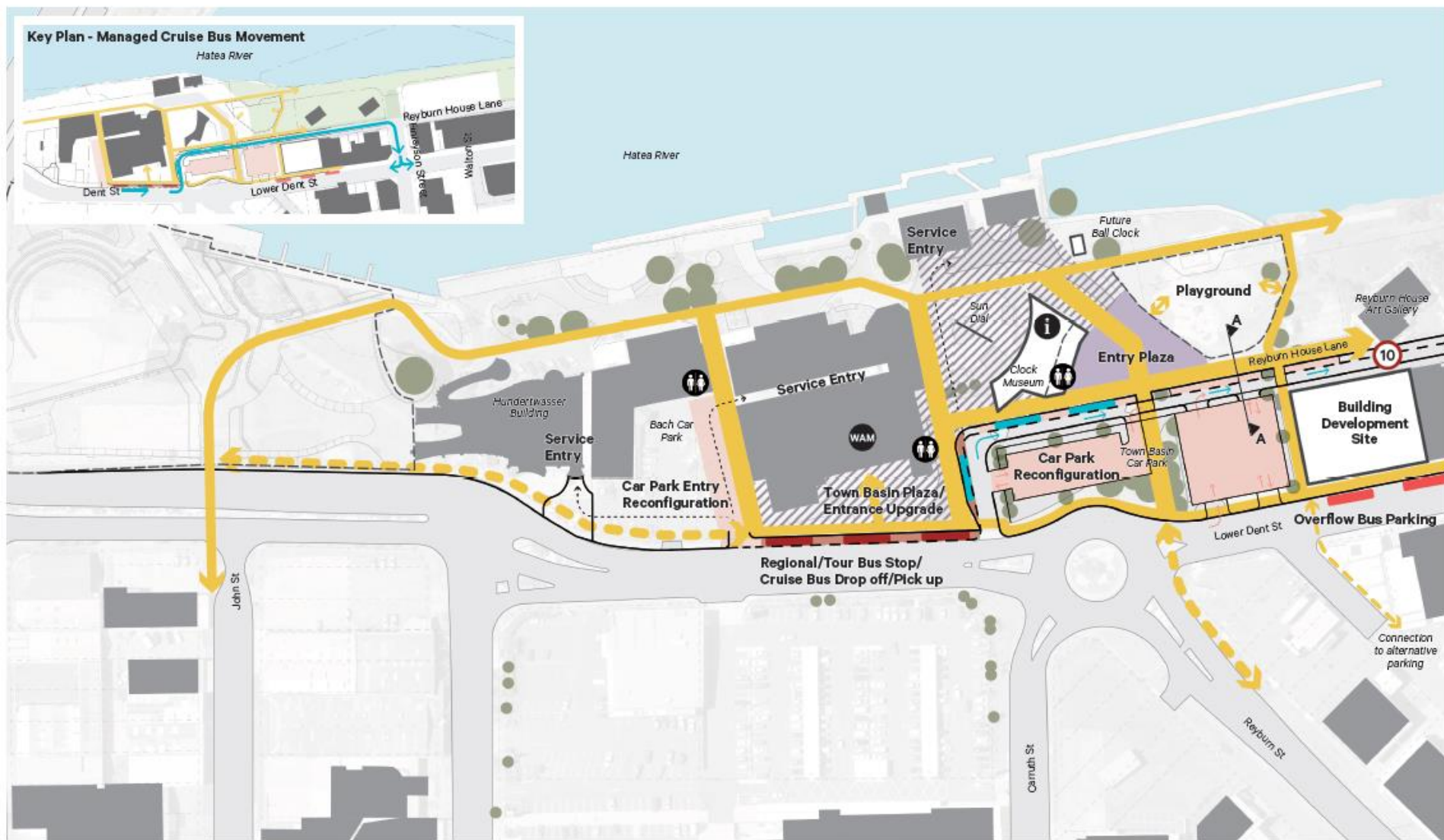
- Whangarei City Centre Plan was approved in 2017
- City Core Precinct Plan was adopted in 2019
- Implementation of the City Centre Plan actions:
 - Whangarei City Centre Complete Streets Masterplan is at final draft stage pending final traffic modelling
- Council approved budget in 19/20 Annual Plan for Waterfront Facilities Upgrade Project including provision of additional bus capacity
- Tourism Infrastructure Fund approved in Dec 2019 an application for \$1.67m additional funding for bus facilities, public toilets, shelters, i-site, wayfinding, digital information, pedestrian area upgrades and a visitor management plan
- Northern Advocate published an article on the TIF funding for this project and have asked if a follow up story could be published once we have a design and images to show



Dent Street & Reyburn House Lane

Key Plan - Managed Cruise Bus Movement

Hatea River



**\$2.5m Waterfront Facilities Bus Upgrade
open by July 2021**

Indicative cross section between Reyburn House Lane & Playground



Next Steps

- Playground construction starts in April 2020 and finishes by September 2020
- Cruise preparation action planning & implementation
- Continue with investigation and design of Waterfront Facilities Upgrade project
 - Continue internal stakeholder meetings to clarify design requirements
 - Work with Town Basin tenants on waste minimisation including rubbish collection and recycling initiatives
 - Prepare a Project Communications Plan