

## WAIHĪ BEACH COMMUNITY BOARD WORKSHOP

<b>DATE:</b>	Monday, 11 September 2023 at 9.00am
<b>HELD:</b>	Waihi Beach Community Centre, Waihi beach
<b>TOPICS:</b>	1. Safer Streets Conversation
<b>FORUM MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Chairperson R Goudie, Councillor A Henry, Councillor A Sole (via Zoom), Member H Guptill, Member D Simpson
<b>STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	A Hall (Roading Engineer – West), J Rickard (Community and Strategic Relationships Manager), R Leahy (Governance Advisor)
<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE</b>	Councillor R Joyce, M Appleton (Waihi Beach School Board Trustee), P Carter (ARUP), S Sherlaw (Beca), A Jeffcoat (Beca), J Bisley (Travel Safe) and R Coll ((Waihi Beach School Principal) via Zoom)

### 1. Safer Streets Conversation

Mr Carter, on behalf of the Waihi Beach School, presented a report regarding the improvement of the road safety on Beach Road. The following points were noted:

- Mr Carter had produced a high-level desk top study to identify accessibility issues and potential mitigating options.
- The study focussed on creating safe and equitable access for pedestrians, cyclists and bus users travelling to the school. Accessibility for cars was reasonably good as there were several different drop-off zones that parents could use.
- Currently teachers had to chaperone kids off the bus to get to the school safely.
- There were approximately 80 students that used the bus and 230 students enrolled in the school.

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- There was an option for the school to provide some land on Beach Road to create a bus stop for the school bus.
  - There was agreement with the Board and stakeholders that a designated bus stop in front of the school was the preferred option.
  - The school would need to educate parents not to use the layby for school drop offs.
  - The Board requested that a holistic approach be considered when looking at road safety in the wider area. The Community and Strategic Relationships Manager advised the Board that improving the road safety and transport connections around the RSA, Community Hub, Library and Skatepark would need to be addressed through the Long Term Plan.
  - The Board was advised that the school bus stop would be a capital investment and would be paid for out of their Community Board Roding Account.
  - The placement of the pedestrian crossing needed to consider the visibility, private access points and be a sufficient distance away from the bus stop.
  - The School Principal advised that the Ministry of Education would not fund a bus stop, however, they would be open to providing land for the project.
  - Narrowing the road and lowering the speed on Beach Road could assist with improving road safety.
  - The Roding Engineer advised against having a pedestrian crossing too close to the roundabout due to a number of safety concerns.
  - Council staff and the school would liaise with the Ministry of Education over obtaining land for the dedicated bus stop (once Council understood how much land was required, if any).
  - The Board agreed that the school bus stop project should be futureproofed and large enough to accommodate two buses.
  - The Board agreed that the wider road safety issues around the Community Centre should be looked at during the design phase of the new library and in conjunction with affected stakeholders.

### **Direction**

1. The Board and Stakeholders agreed that the preferred option was for a designated 'bus only stop' in front of Waihi Beach School on Beach Road.

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2. The Board agreed that at their next formal meeting they would resolve to fund a concept design for a bus stop through their Community Board Roding Account. The bus stop design would accommodate two buses and consider the placement of the proposed Beach Road / Browns Drive pedestrian crossing.

The workshop closed at 12:00pm.

# Waihi Beach School Access Improvements

## Desktop Concept Study

**For discussion purposes only**

September 2023

# Introduction

## Purpose and scope

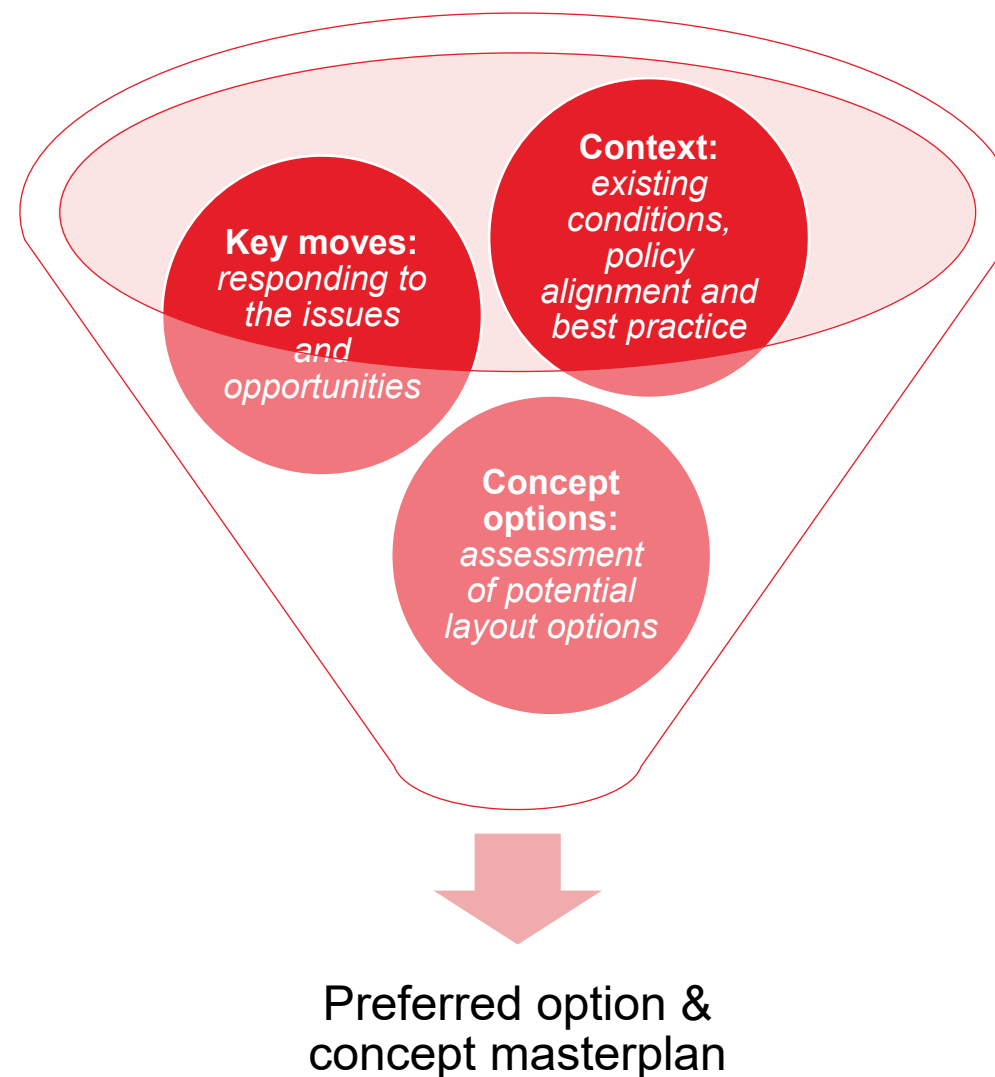
Waihi Beach School have engaged Arup to provide transport planning advice and to develop conceptual options to improve safety and access to the school and more broadly across the site.

This report summarises the context and investigations undertaken, recommends key moves to respond to the issues and opportunities, and presents the conceptual options developed.

The options developed aim to:

- Improve safety for the school community,
- Provide equity of access to and from school for a wider group,
- Integrate with the school and wider site layout, and
- Respond to local needs and uplift the values of the school community.

This work is the first step in developing a longer-term vision for access to, and movement within the site. The outputs intend to support ongoing engagement with council and stakeholders.



# Context

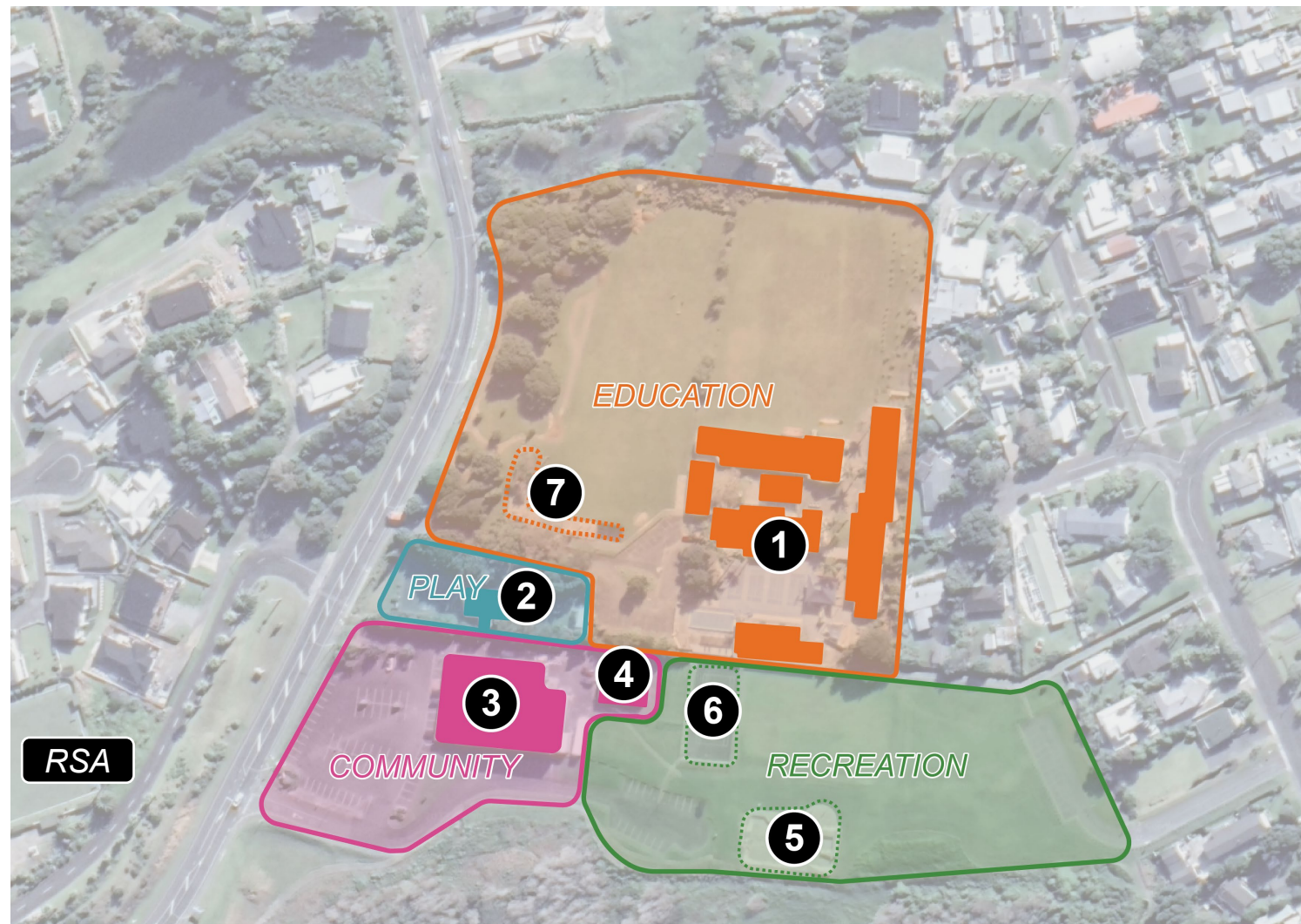
## Site features

Waihi Beach School is located on community zoned land on the outskirts of the Waihi Beach township. The school accommodates primary aged students with approximately 250 enrollments. The broader site hosts a mix of community, educational and recreational uses as follows:

1. Waihi Beach School campus: *The campus is also used for after school activities, Saturday farmer's market, Sunday church services and Zumba classes*
2. Play Centre
3. Library and Community Centre: *Uses include gymnastics, prizegiving's, events and concerts*
4. MenzShed
5. Skate Park
6. Tennis courts
7. Play equipment

Additionally, The RSA restaurant and club room is located to the southwest of the site. This mix of uses creates a community hub that is used by a broad demographic of residents, from young school-aged children through to the older and vulnerable people.

Proposals and initial concept designs for a new library, Council service centre and hub are earmarked for the site, between Beach Road and the existing library and community centre building. Associated changes to access at this end of the site are anticipated (eta. 2028).





# Context

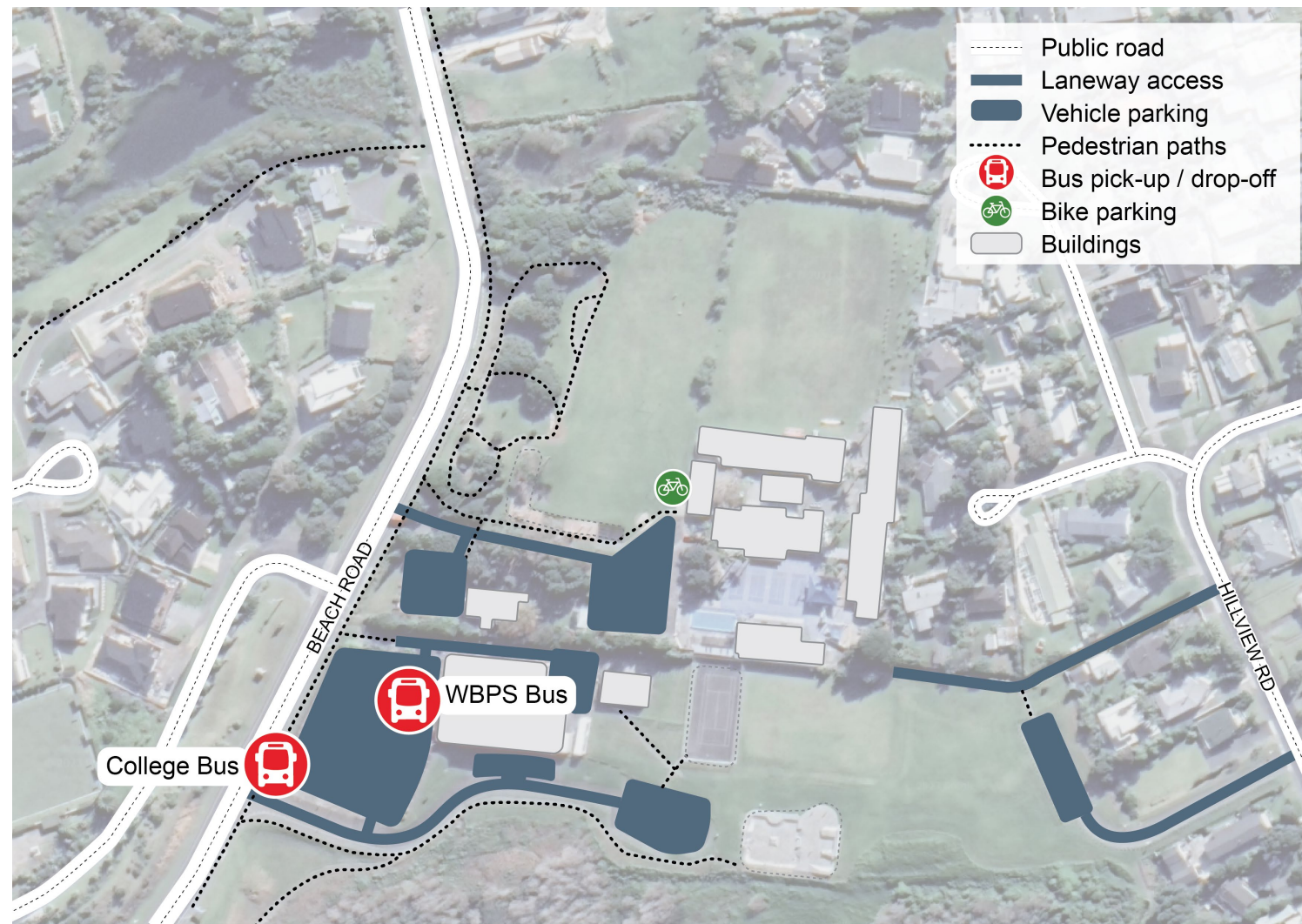
## Existing site access

Primary access to Waihi Beach School and other facilities on the site is via Beach Road, which is the main traffic route for access to the north-end of Waihi Beach. Secondary access is via Hillview Road which is a local road.

**Walking and cycling:** A network of paths provide pedestrian access to the site. This includes footpaths along the eastern side of Beach Road and a network of trails nearby the playing fields. Pathways throughout the site generally focus on connecting site features to car parking. Cycling primarily occurs on footpaths, with bike parking located by the main entrance.

**Bus:** The Waihi Beach School bus currently uses the Community Centre car park, requiring students to walk under teacher supervision through the school carpark and the Community Centre service lane which is a driveway used by users of the other facilities.

**Vehicle access:** A number of laneways provide access to the various parking areas on the site. These are used informally for pick-up and drop-off and parking for visitors to the site.



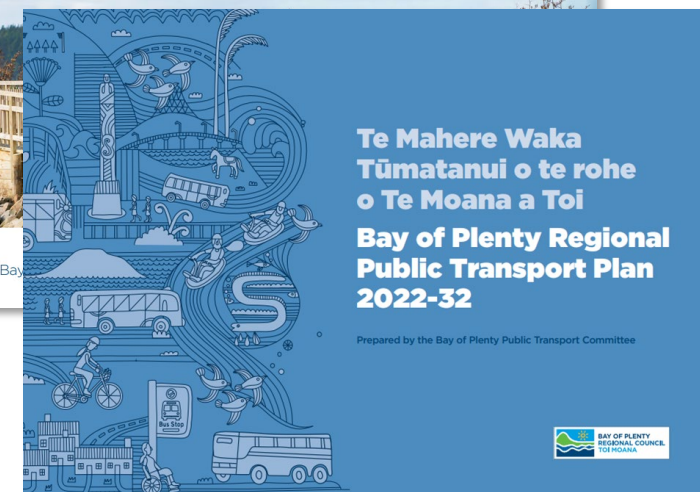
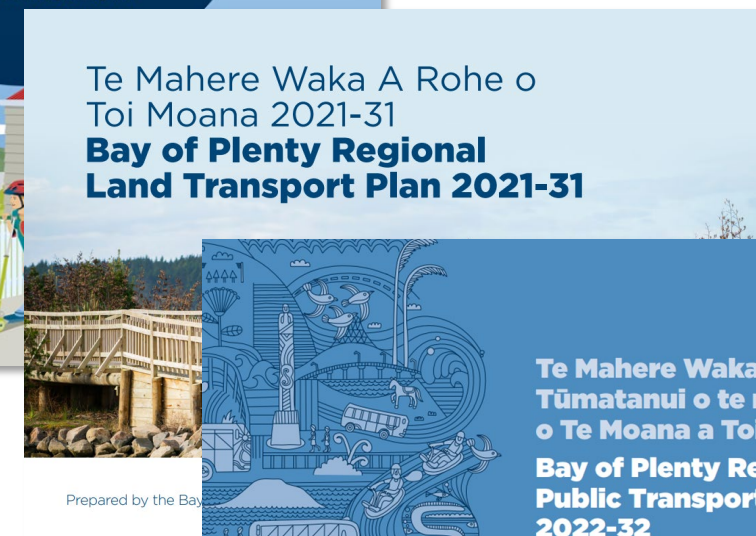
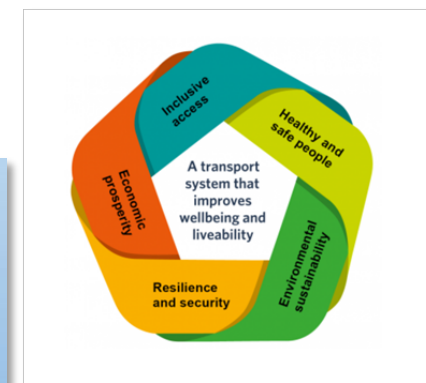
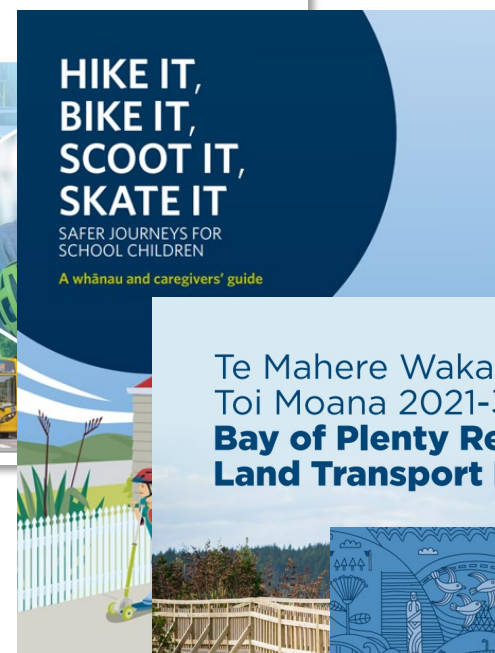
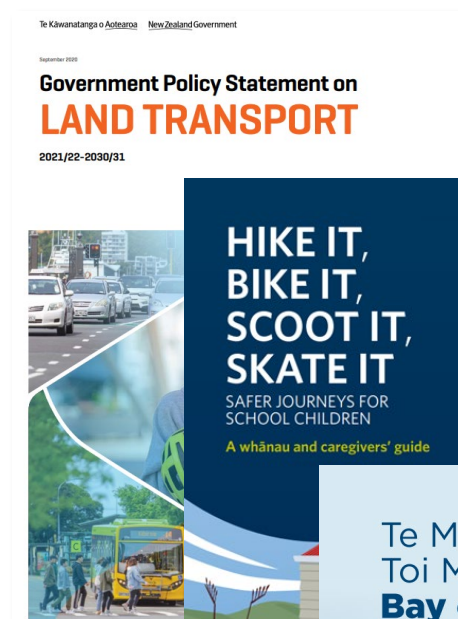
# Context

## Policy alignment

There are several relevant policies strategies and plans relating to transport and access in Waihi Beach at the national, regional, district and local level. The following documents have been reviewed to inform alignment with the outcomes of this project:

National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land Transport Management Act</li> <li>Ministry of Transport/Te Manatū Waka's Outcomes Framework</li> <li>Hike It, Bike It, Scoot It, Skate It; Safe School Travel Plan; (Waka Kotahi)</li> <li>Teach Road Safety (Ministry of Education/Te Tāhuhu o te Mātautanga)</li> </ul>
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bay of Plenty Regional Public Transport Plan 2022-2032 (Bay of Plenty Regional Council)</li> <li>Regional Mode Shift Plan (Bay of Plenty Regional Council)</li> </ul>
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking and Cycling Action Plan 2020-2021, Western Bay of Plenty</li> <li>Travel Safe Road Safety Action Plan Report 2019 (Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Taurunga City Council)</li> </ul>
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waihi Beach Community Board – relevant minutes</li> </ul>

These documents highlight the importance of improving safety for all road users, including through road safety education, providing inclusive access for all ages and abilities, improving environmental sustainability through a shift to active modes, and the importance of access to education.





# Context

## Best practice and design guidance

Planning and design for child-friendly cities is gaining traction around the world, acknowledging that if we build successful cities for children, we will have successful cities for all. The following documents were reviewed to inform the issues and opportunities for access to Waihi Beach Primary School:

- Cities Alive: Designing for Urban Childhoods (Arup)
- Playful cities design guide (CatalyticAction, Placemaking X, The Lego Foundation and Arup)
- Safe Kids Aotearoa (Starship)
- The Value of Play Report (Real Play Coalition)
- Urban Playground: How child friendly planning and design can save cities (Gill, T.)
- Children in the City: Reclaiming the Street (Karsten, L.& Vliet, W. V.)
- *Integrating Safe System with Movement and Place for Vulnerable Road Users (Austroads)*
- *Cycle Parking Planning and Design (Waka Kotahi)*
- *Design guide for Indented Bus Bays (Waka Kotahi)*

These documents highlight the limitations of modern childhood resulting from urban infrastructure, with most public spaces not built with children in mind. They conclude that some of the key challenges facing urban children include traffic and uneven access to place, with associated opportunities in reducing the speed of cars, creating narrow streets, adding more trees and integrating nature play.





# Context

## Issues and opportunities

Based on site observations, desktop reviews and supported by the review of relevant policy and best practice guidance, the following are considered the key issues and opportunities for access to the site:

### Issues

1. Access between the school and existing bus pick-up/drop-off requires walking through off-site car parking, resulting in a need for children to be escorted by a teacher;
2. Lack of conflict-free access for pedestrians to main site features and poor delineation of pedestrian zones;
3. Existing pedestrian network does not align with pedestrian desire lines, resulting in a number of informal pedestrian routes (observed, mapped);
4. Lack of formal pick-up and drop-off area resulting in children walking through car parks un-escorted;
5. Poor sight-lines and visibility at driveway crossovers.

### Opportunities

1. Provide formal pedestrian paths that align with desire lines and provide clear delineation from traffic;
2. Improve safety of bus access through creation of accessible area with turning circles on the school site (supporting an un-escorted outcome);
3. Formalise pick-up and drop-off area.





# Key moves

## Bus access and operations

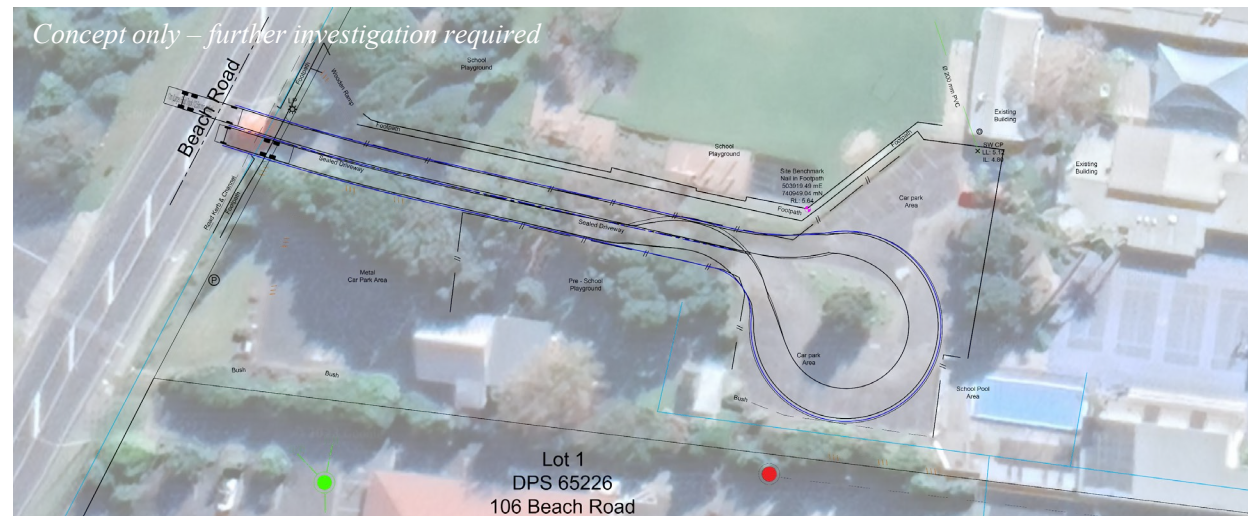
Ensuring the safety of school bus access is not only about the well-being of students but also about promoting overall traffic safety, community awareness, and adherence to regulatory requirements. It is a collective effort to create a secure environment for students and everyone on the road.

There is scope to improve access and safety to school bus services by formalising bus pick-up, drop-off and circulation. Currently, students access the bus via the school carpark and Community Centre service laneway to the waiting bus in the community centre carpark. There is no safe refuge for students getting on and off the bus, and they must be accompanied by teaching staff.

## On-campus options

As shown in the adjacent concept plans, there are two options for accommodating bus movements on-campus. This can be achieved within the existing main entrance driveway and car park footprint, creating opportunities for a central mobility hub at the front of the campus.

However, these bus movements require a significant amount of the current space which will lead to a loss of other functions such as parking and pick-up drop-off. Additionally, a degree of physical separation such as fencing would be required to prevent conflict between children and bus movements.





# Key Moves

## Bus access and operations

### Bus shelter and mobility hub

On-campus options for bus pick-up and drop-off present an opportunity to create a central mobility hub at the school entry.

Provision of a bus shelter connected to the school entrance would offer practical benefits such as weather protection, safety, and enhanced accessibility. This could incorporate improvements to cycle parking, with connections via an enhanced pathway network.

This has the potential to promote public and active transport for access to the school and wider site, while also contributing to the overall functionality and cohesion of the school community.

Design precedents





# Key Moves

## Bus access and operations

### Beach Road layby option

A layby to the north of the main entrance on Beach Road would create an alternative option for bus pick-up and drop-off with safe, conflict free, pedestrian access to the school via new and enhanced pedestrian links.

This option would also offer a pick-up and drop-off option for cars outside of bus operating hours. The proposed layby design would comfortably accommodate approximately four cars at any one time.

Provision of a layby in this location would require reconfiguration of the existing footpath on Beach Road.

### Existing operations option

There is potential to enhance the safety of bus pick-up and drop-off while retaining existing bus operations. This would require provision of new pedestrian footpath between the school entrance and Community Centre and Library.



# Key Moves

## Bus access and operations

Option 1: On campus	<i>This option relocates the bus pick-up and drop-off to the main entrance. The turning circle takes up the majority of available space.</i>	Benefits	Impacts / Challenges
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsupervised outcome</li> <li>• Opportunity to create mobility hub at main school entrance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus turning circle takes up majority of space, restricting other uses (parking, pick-up, drop-off)</li> <li>• Fencing and/or railing required</li> <li>• Loss of school/MoE land</li> </ul>
Option 2: On campus	<i>This option relocates the bus pick-up and drop-off to the main entrance. To exit the bus must make a three-point turn to position for exit.</i>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsupervised outcome</li> <li>• Opportunity to create mobility hub at main school entrance</li> <li>• Retains areas for parking, and pick-up drop-off</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing and/or railing required</li> <li>• Loss of school/MoE land</li> </ul>
Option 3: Beach Road layby	<i>This option relocates the bus pick-up and drop-off to a potential layby location on Beach Road. This is supported by improvements to pedestrian connections across the playing fields.</i>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to accommodate multiple users (cars, college bus)</li> <li>• Conflict free access to school campus and improved visibility for parents</li> <li>• Enhanced traffic calming</li> <li>• Reduced traffic into school driveway and interruptions on Beach Road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires council approval</li> <li>• May still require teacher supervision</li> </ul>
Option 4: Existing operations	<i>This option uses the existing bus pick-up and drop-off location, focusing on formalising and strengthening pedestrian connections to the location.</i>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved footpath connectivity between site features</li> <li>• New footpath connections also cater to other pedestrian demands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to still require teacher supervision</li> <li>• Requires removing existing fence</li> <li>• Potentially impacted by new library and council service centre plans</li> </ul>

# Key Moves

## Pedestrian access and amenity

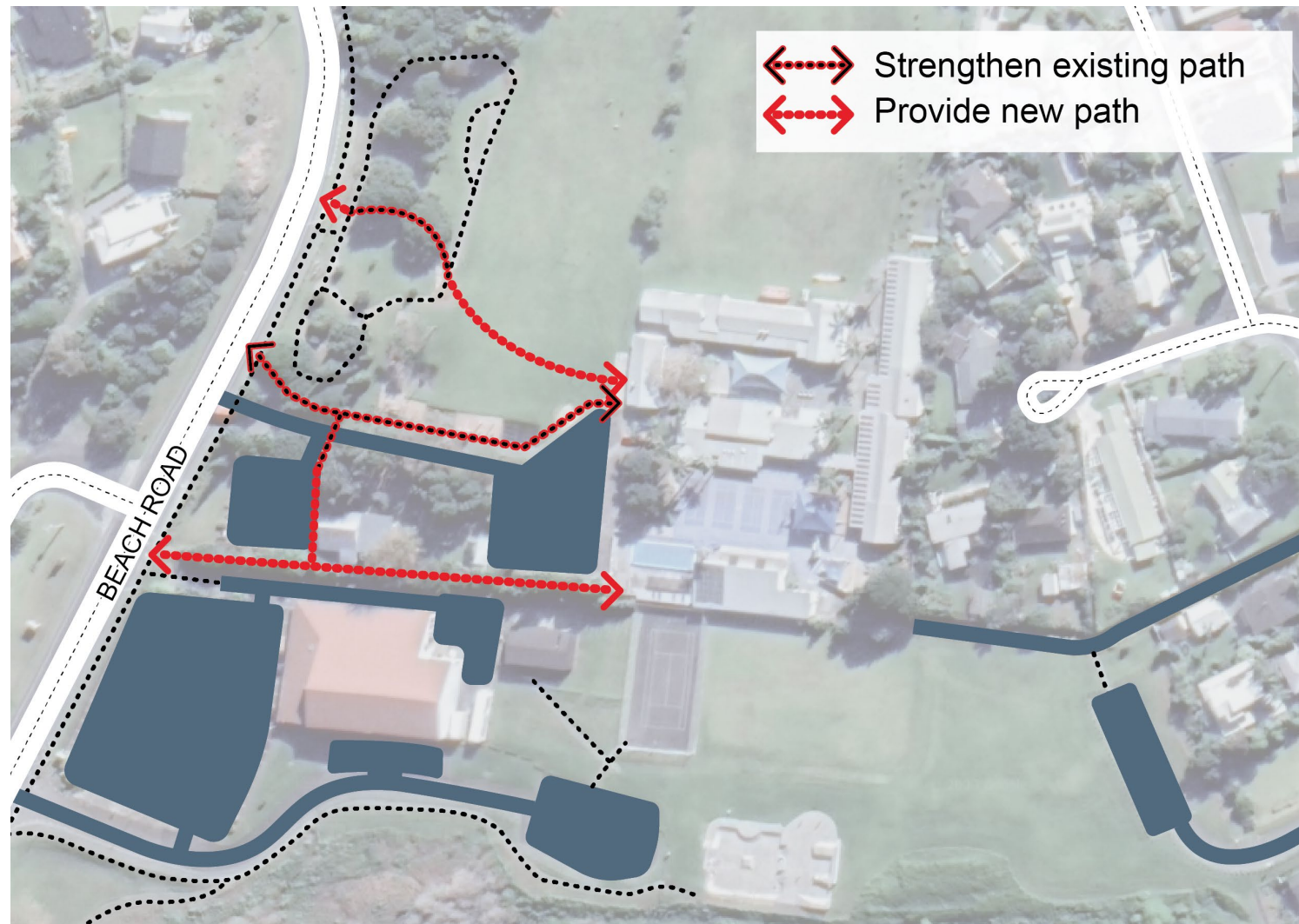
Safe pedestrian access to, and within schools is essential for the well-being and safety of students, the community, and the environment. It encourages physical activity, teaches important life skills, and contributes to creating a more livable and sustainable urban environment.

Currently, safe access to community facilities and services is compromised across the site due to poor provision and delineation of pedestrian zones. The existing path network does not accommodate key desire lines between the school, surrounding facilities and the wider community.

### Internal path improvements

By providing designated crossings, pathways, and traffic control measures, schools can reduce the likelihood of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.

This can be achieved by strengthening the existing pathways onsite, with a particular focus on routes from the school to Beach Road via the Community Centre, as well as establishing new pathways through the site to create safe and secure access to and from the school campus.





# Key Moves

## Pedestrian access and amenity

### Pedestrian amenity

Incorporating pedestrian-friendly amenities demonstrates a commitment to the well-being and safety of the school community while also contributing to the overall quality of campus life.

Provision of new pathways and strengthening of existing pathways offers an opportunity to enhance the overall amenity of public space in across the campus and also serve as an educational tool. Incorporating features like informational signage, nature trails, and sensory activities can provide learning opportunities outside of the classroom.

### Existing conditions



### Design precedents



Sensory pathway example



Play along the way, Peacocke, Hamilton



Yokine Regional Inclusive Play Space (AUS)



# Key Moves

## Pedestrian access and amenity

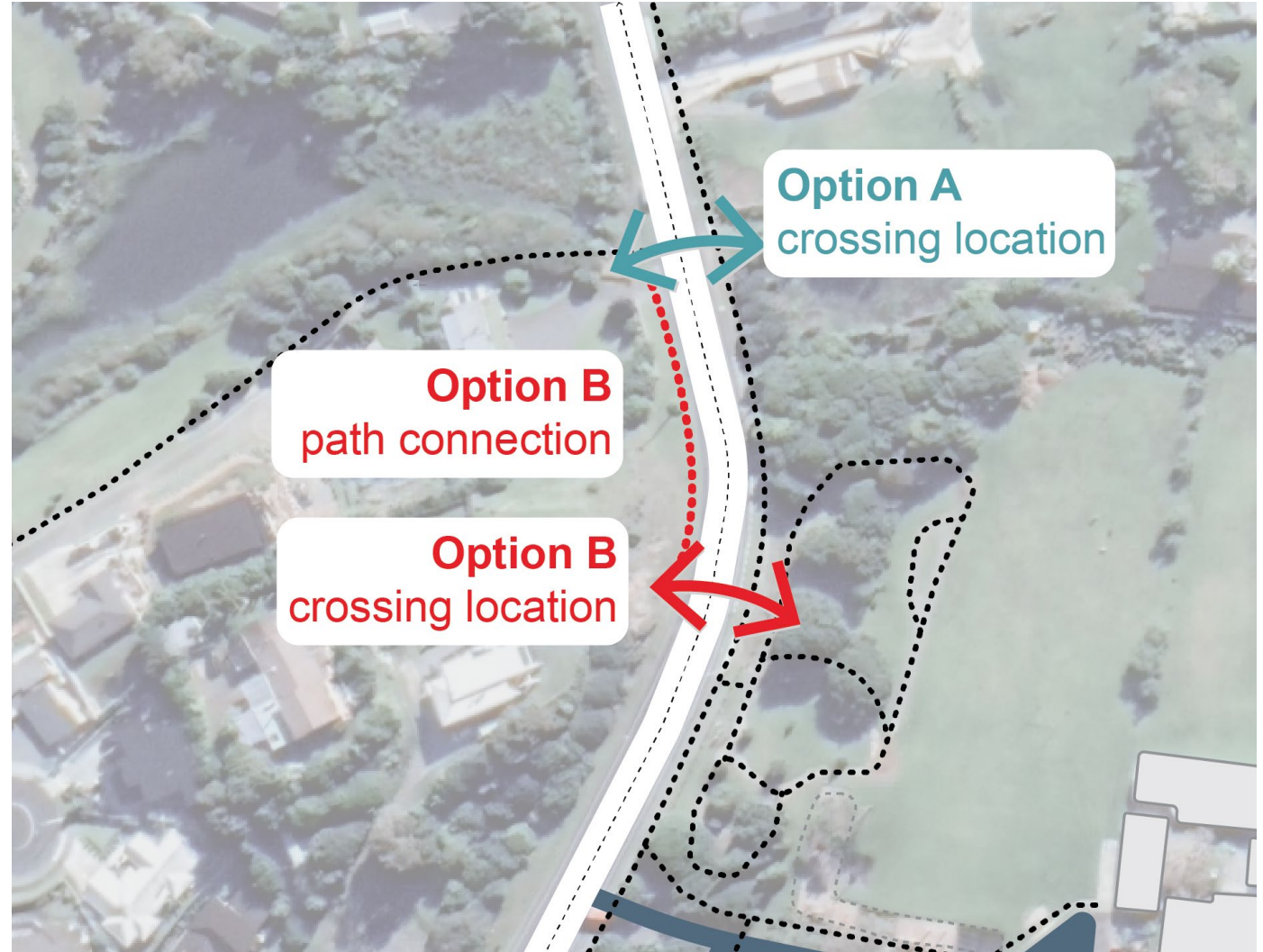
### Beach Road refuge

Currently there is a lack of formal, safe crossings of Beach Road and no footpaths on the western side of the corridor.

There is demand for a pedestrian connection across Beach Road, in the vicinity of Ralph Lane. Ralph Lane provides the most direct access to residential areas to the west, with path connections provided through a gully environment.

As shown in the adjacent plan, there are two options suggested for further investigation:

- Option A: this option accommodates existing desire lines and has the potential to act as a traffic calming gateway and reinforce the change of road environment and speed. There are constraints associated with this option as the road would require widening to accommodate a median refuge. Widening works have potential impacts on the creek (culvert extension), and gully environs.
- Option B: This option is located on a wider segment of road, not requiring widening. Construction of a new footpath between the crossing location and Ralph Lane would be required. While this option supports movements to and from the school, it has less utility for the wider community. Sightlines and speed management need to be considered as part of further investigations.





# Key moves

## Pedestrian access and amenity

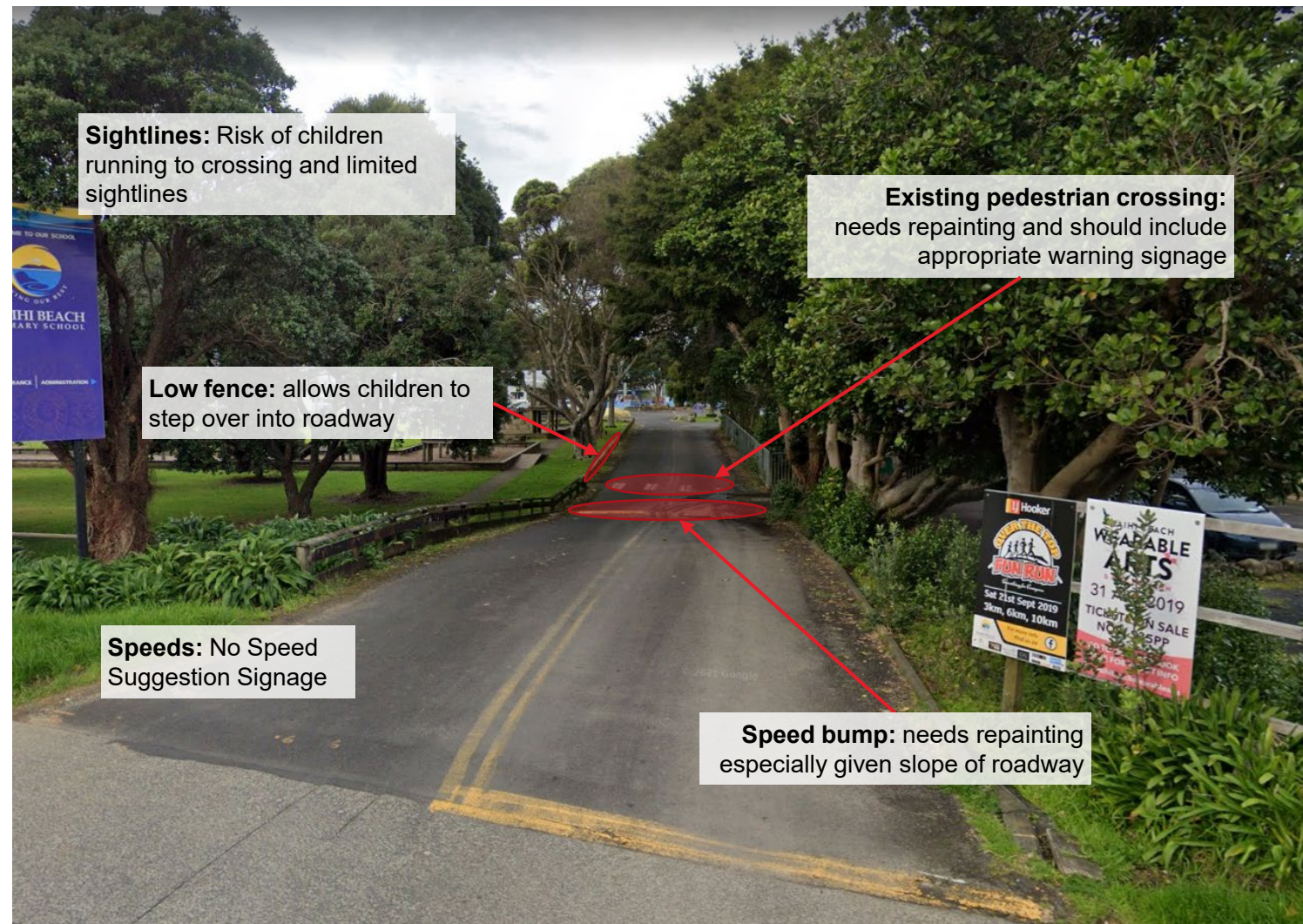
### Entrance gateway and sight lines

Creating a welcoming entrance to the site, with clear delineation between access modes, is the first step in formalising multi-modal access and reducing conflict.

The access drive also acts as a key pedestrian desire line between Beach Road and the school entrance. While there is a pathway parallel to the access driveway, this is less visible and indirect.

Additionally, there is demand for crossing the access driveway for access between the play centre car park and play equipment. This currently occurs in an area with poor visibility.

Reconfiguring the access driveway as a 'gateway' entrance feature through signage, change in road surface and on-ground circles will help inform drivers of the change of road environment. This will require management of existing plants, refreshing road markings and road resurfacing.



# Next Steps

## Progressing the key moves

A number of key moves proposed can be progressed independently, with next steps to suggested in the following table.

In addition, Waihi Beach School should consider:

- Developing a Travel Plan in line with the requirements of Ministry of Education 5 Year Agreement (5YA). This funding is available for traffic system improvements. To secure funding, project works needs to be planned in school's 10 Year Property Plan (10YPP). This includes ongoing engagement with relevant parties including:
  - Western Bay of Plenty District Council: as the 'road controlling authority' council has a responsibility for ensuring roads are safe and fit for purpose.
  - Local Board
- Collaboration with key stakeholders to develop a longer-term vision for access to, and movement within the site. The development of the new library, Council service centre and hub should act as a catalyst for improved site integration and connectivity with the wider community.

	Key move	Next steps
Bus access & operations	On-campus bus access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further investigation of the benefits and trade-offs and communication with existing users of the car park is undertaken prior to progressing design development. Pursuing the bus access changes will require Building Consent and likely Outline Plan of works, it is suggested engaging with Western Bay of Plenty District Council to clarify their requirements.</li> </ul>
	Beach Road layby bus access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Bay of Plenty Regional Council on potential alterations to Beach Road.</li> </ul>
Pedestrian access & amenity	Internal path improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed improvements to pedestrian access and amenity can be undertaken independently to bus access options. It is suggested that design development and implementation is costed and budgeted for as a priority.</li> </ul>
	Beach Road refuge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further work is required to determine the preferred location of a pedestrian refuge on Beach Road. It is suggested that Waihi Beach School engages with Western Bay of Plenty District Council to open a dialogue about alterations to Beach Road.</li> </ul>
	Entrance gateway and sight lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed entrance gateway and sight line improvements should be considered in conjunction with potential changes to bus access and operations and preferred bus access options.</li> </ul>