

MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

# *Small Townships*

PROGRAMME

# Rārangi Township Plan



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## Part One: Introduction

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### Marlborough's Small Townships Programme

In 2013 Marlborough District Council adopted the Growing Marlborough District Wide Strategy which provides a strategic overview to guide Council's investment and development decisions through to 2031.

Council approved funding for a new Small Townships Programme (STP) in the 2015 – 2025 Long Term Plan to improve public amenities and build identities for townships as part of Council's commitment to implementing the Growing Marlborough Strategy.

A Small Townships Sub Committee was established with delegated authority to develop criteria, approve new projects, and monitor the implementation of the programme. This Sub Committee is currently chaired by Councillor Barbara Faulls.

The Small Townships Programme recognises the unique qualities of smaller communities as well as their challenges. The overarching goal of the programme is to foster sustainable growth and enhance the wellbeing of residents in the township.

The process for developing a Township Plan involves engaging with iwi and stakeholders to gain an understanding of the town's unique identity, key concerns, issues, and aspirations. Stakeholders include local residents and businesses, as well as community organisations and government agencies.

The Township Plan provides a reference for the Small Townships Programme's future investment in the area. Council's contributions usually relate to public spaces and infrastructure. However, a Township Plan can also offer a reference point for members of the community who wish to work on projects in their area. Having an agreed list of projects in the Plan will enhance coordination and may assist when seeking funding from external agencies.

### Tangata Whenua

Te Rūnanga o Rangitāne o Wairau, Ngāti Rārua and Ngāti Toa Rangitira are the tangata whenua of the area.

Council has shared an initial introduction to the Small Township Programme with local iwi representatives, inviting feedback on any aspiration's iwi have that may align with the kaupapa (principles and ideas) of the Rārangī Township Plan along with any Mātaranga Māori (Māori knowledge) of the area that they wish to share.

The cultural narrative of the area is captured in Ngā Kōrero Tukuiho, which is a resource developed through Te Tātoru o Wairau Project.

Council and iwi will have further conversations to discuss the community feedback and to consider how this relates to iwi aspirations.

## Purpose of this Plan

Council, iwi and the community have worked together to develop this Rārangī Township Plan. It identifies what makes Rārangī special and gives the township a voice at the Council's decision-making table.

Having a clear understanding of the most important challenges facing the township makes it easier for iwi, residents, community organisations, government agencies and Council to work together to achieve our shared vision for Rārangī and to address some of the challenges we have identified in this Plan.

## Scope

The Rārangī Township Plan is primarily focused on investments and actions which support environmental and social wellbeing strategies, such as restoration projects, active travel and recreation pathways, and placemaking projects. However, communities do not see their community in isolation, so feedback can often be much wider in scope than physical works, covering social dynamics, community development, business, tourism and more.

## Stakeholders

The following organisations were invited to contribute their ideas:

### External

- Rārangī Residents Association
- Rārangī Golf Club
- Department of Conservation
- Rārangī Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)
- Tua Marina School
- Rārangī Landcare Group
- Rārangī Dawn Chorus

### Internal

- Marlborough District Council's Parks and Open Spaces, Rivers and Environmental Science departments.
- Marlborough Roads.

## Budget

Past spending in Rārangī has supported the development of Blue Gum Corner. The budget allocation for future development is \$150,000.

## Development of this Plan

Public feedback on the draft Rārangī Township Plan, will be invited in August–September 2023, and will be used to create a 'final' version of this Plan. However, it will be a living document, with changes to be made over time as projects are completed and if the community's needs or priorities change.

## Implementation of this Plan

The community consultation drop-in day and 'have your say' surveys, as well as anecdotal information gained from engagement meetings with groups and individuals, identified the unique qualities of Rārangī and generated a list of ideas of how to make it even better.

The community has been very engaged in the process, with 37 individual surveys returned and a number of conversations between the Small Townships Programme Manager and individual residents. The community drop-in day was attended by more than 80 residents and interested parties, and additional community information and displays were provided by external stakeholders.

Part 3 of this plan lists the ideas shared through the engagement processes. Some of these actions can be funded through the Small Townships Programme (STP) budget, which focuses on recognising and enhancing the unique identity of Rārangī and outdoor public spaces to improve connectivity and liveability within the community.

However, improvements in Rārangī don't need to be limited to actions directly funded by Council. The full list of ideas has been included to give people the opportunity to work with others to make things happen in their community, which may include applying for funding to support a project.

## Timeline

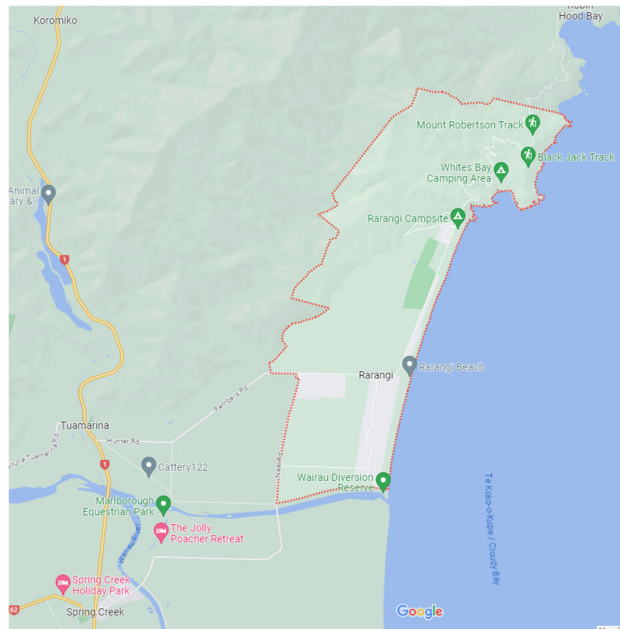
August 2022:	The Small Township Programmes (STP) Sub Committee decided to develop a Small Township Plan for Rārangī.
October 2022	Engagement with tangata whenua.
October 2022	Engagement with stakeholders commenced (see list below). Council mailed the following information to Rārangī residents and businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- An introduction to the programme</li><li>- An invitation to a community consultation event</li><li>- A survey</li></ul>
January 2023	The STP Sub Committee visited the township to learn more about the area.
April 2023	A Community Consultation Event was held.

## Part Two: Rārangi

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### Where is Rārangi?

Rārangi is a small coastal settlement 15km north-east of Blenheim and 24km south of Picton, which can be accessed via the turn-off at Tuamarina (along Pembers Road) or from Spring Creek.



### About Rārangi

Rārangi is a popular beach for day visits from Blenheim. People spend time walking, exercising dogs, fishing, four-wheel driving, bird watching, beachcombing, and surfing. There are a number of DOC walking tracks in the area.

Rārangi Beach hosts a large number of plants that have adapted to live in this harsh pea-gravel and sandy beach environment, creating habitats for associated insects, lizards and birds.

Since 2000, the Rārangi Landcare Group (comprised of local residents) has restored native plant species in plots along the foreshore with support from the New Zealand Landcare Trust, Department of Conservation, Marlborough District Council, Outward Bound Trust and local schools.

A number of artists have made this place their home over the years, and distinctive roadside letterboxes create a 'mailbox alley'.

The Rārangi Residents Association has been an active group in the community for many years and has supported or led many community initiatives in the area.

The Rārangi Volunteer Fire Brigade was established in 1960 and is part of Fire and Emergency Te Tau Ihu – Region 4. This strong volunteer service supports the community in a number of ways.

The Golf Club was established in 1957 through many community members' vision and hard work. The 18-hole course design has stood the test of time and has remained relatively unchanged since its inception. The clubhouse is available for hire for weddings, family functions and other gatherings.

## Cultural Significance of Rārangī

Rārangī is a culturally significant area for Ngāti Rārua, Ngāti Toa and Rangitāne, as confirmed by Treaty Settlements. The combined coastal and wetland environment was a rich resource for Māori who made this area their home. Many pūrākau (stories) tell the history of the whenua and the people of the area.

## History of the town

Remnants of the Marshlands Flaxmill, built in 1888, are a reminder of the flax industry that was a major contributor to the Marlborough economy following European settlement. However, most of the wetlands where flax grew were gradually drained for pastoral farming. Historically, the land to the west of Rārangī Beach has been extensively farmed. Areas of wet, heavy soils to the north have tended to be used for dairying, while sheep and cattle were run on the drier, stony areas further south. The Chaytor family's Marshlands Station is the major run.

A 1948 aerial photo of the Rārangī coast shows the current township area was dominated by a large block of pine trees at that time. Their wilding offspring are today's 'old man pines' in Rārangī.

Subdivision of coastal sections at Rārangī, and building of the first houses, began in the late 1950s. A 1973 photo of the settlement area shows not more than nine residences, plus the beginnings of the golf club facility.



## Who lives in Rārangi?



### Usually Resident Population

2006	529
2013	687
2018	765



### Census Night Population

2006	609
2013	762
2018	771



### Community Age

Under 15	135
15 to 29	93
30 to 64	399
65+	48



### Home Ownership

Home Owned	333
Home in Trust	96
Don't Own Home	147



### Ethnicity

European	708
Māori	96
Pacific	12
Asian	6
Middle East/Latin American/African	6
Other	12



### Employment

Employed Full Time	336
Employed Part Time	102
Unemployed	15

## Part Three: Vision, Issues and Actions

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### Introduction

The following statements are based on the feedback provided to Council during the Small Townships Programme consultation process. They will continue to be refined through ongoing discussions with the community.

### Vision for Rārangī

We love the seaside outlook and the flora and fauna and want to help protect and restore the natural environment.

This is a welcoming and accessible place for all ages and stages of life. Active travel, and recreational walking and cycling options, are important to us.

We share the history of Rārangī so that others can appreciate and respect this area, which is valued and enjoyed by many.

### We value:

- Our environment
- Way of life
- Togetherness/each other
- Teamwork
- Our willingness to work together for the benefit of all

### Living in Rārangī

Current residents are united in their love of the quiet, peaceful township. They appreciate their neighbours and share a sense of community togetherness with like-minded residents.

There is a strong community spirit, with a number of groups investing time and effort into making the place great.

Here's what people have said they appreciate about living in Rārangī:

- "Having been here for 46 years, speaks for itself. I adore the sea, the peace and being out of town."
- "Community, beach and the awesome Brigade!"
- "Space, clean air, great community committee."
- "The country/coastal aspect but still close to town. Lovely community."

## Key issues identified

### Maintain and add value to existing facilities

- Continued upkeep of current infrastructure.
- Maintenance of the tennis courts, and the potential for expanding their uses.
- A strong desire to further invest in the current community area (hall/FENZ building)
- Potential to add a BBQ, outdoor seating and gathering area, along with provision for pétanque.

### Inclusion and diversity

- Improved access for older members of the community and those with mobility issues. Ideas include seating to provide places to rest, and a bus service to town (maybe once a week on a Tuesday).
- Activities for teens – basketball as an addition to the tennis court facility.
- Clear identification of the places where dogs are allowed.
- Internet coverage is an issue for some areas in the township.

### Environment

- Impacts on the environment, including rubbish, vehicles accessing the beach, and freedom campers.
- The need to confine further development to current areas and keep the natural spaces clear.
- Information and storyboards about the history of Rārangī and its ecological values.
- Flood risk in some areas of the township.

### Business/services development

- A café/shop would be valuable for locals and for those who use the area and camp close by.
- One submission raised concerns about the waste services provided to residents.

### Connectivity and active travel

- Safe pathways for residents and visitors to use for recreation and active travel around the township with connection to Tua Marina and Spring Creek.
- Link with Whale Trail.

## Proposed actions

A number of project ideas have been gathered over time through the Rārangī Residents Association's informal consultation with the community.

These ideas were included as a list of potential projects in the STP survey form, and people were invited to provide feedback on which projects they supported, and which ones were the highest priorities.

More details about these projects are available in the Appendix – Background information.

## Results of the 'have your say' survey:

Project	Survey		Drop-in day display	
	Support	Prioritise	About	Support
Story boards – Blue Gum Corner	14	4		
Edgewater Estate entrance	13	1	7	4
Pump track repairs	12	1	7	5
Welcome/gateway sign	12	3	9	6
Community hall – outdoor area	27	5	26	26
Central outdoor meeting place	19	2	As above	As above
Signage celebrating the natural environment	11	0	9	6
Walk/cycle tracks	29	12	15	13
Hinepango Wetland	31	11	7	6

**Note:** Not everyone who expressed support for projects also indicated the priority level of the projects they supported.



## How Council can help

Action	Why	How	When	Who
Signage. Blue Gum Corner. Millennium rock sign and time capsule storyboards.	Unique Identity	STP	23/24	MDC – STP Iwi RRA
Hinepango Wetland restoration. Removal of invasive species ready for planting. Boardwalk design development.	Unique Identity	Grant	23/24	Hinepango Wetland Restoration Group
Landscaping. Edgewater Estate tidy entrance area.	Unique Identity	STP	23/24	MDC – STP MR
Gateway sign.	Unique Identity	STP	23/24	MDC – STP MR
Community hall outdoor area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pétanque courts</li> <li>• BBQ</li> <li>• Outdoor seating etc</li> </ul>	Liveability and enjoyment	STP Co-Funding potentials TBC	23/24	MDC – STP MR DOC Rarangi Fire Service RRA

MDC – STP     Marlborough District Council – Small Township Programme

RRA             Rārangī Residents Association

MR              Marlborough Roads

DOC            Department of Conservation

## Future opportunities

Action	Why	How	When	Who
Pump track	Liveability and enjoyment			
Basketball Additional facilities at the existing tennis courts	Liveability and enjoyment			
Signage celebrating the natural environment	Unique Identity			
Planting and restoration Rārangi Landcare Group Beach Management Plan	Unique Identity			
Cycle and Walkways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rarangi Beach Road 269 – 323</li> <li>- Corner of Pipitea and Ranangi Road to Hinepango Wetland reserve entrance</li> <li>- Rarangi Road from Pipitea Drive to Neal Road</li> <li>- Pembers road/Hunter Road to SH 1</li> <li>- Wairau Diversion to Blue Gum corner (foreshore Track)</li> </ul>	Connectivity and Liveability			

## Appendix – Background information

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### Reference Documents

- Te Tātoru o Wairau – Ngā Kōrero Tukuiho
- Growing Marlborough Strategy 2013
- Department of Conservation – Rārangī Coast Operational Plan
- Rārangī Landcare Group Beach Management Plan
- Growing Marlborough Strategy 2013
- Rārangī Trial Feasibility Assessment

### Project descriptions

#### Blue Gum Corner

The Small Townships Programme commissioned planting and work at the car park in 2021. Part of the original consultation and preliminary designs identified options for signage and information panels, including cultural and historical content.

#### Pump track

The track was built in 2012 as a combined project between the Rārangī Residents Association (RRA), Marlborough District Council (MDC), Department of Conservation (DOC) and Ground Effect (rack building company).

The track is on DOC land, and its use is covered by a management agreement between DOC and RRA. Any changes or additions to the site will need to be discussed with DOC.

The pump track is described on the Marlborough Mountain Bike Club website as a track with a difference and is also mentioned on the Marlborough NZ website as a family bike spot.

The track needs repair, and the RRA's initial research on an approach to restoring it has involved discussions with Damian Stones (the original builder of the track) and Kurt Lancaster (Living Trails). Both suggest using the existing track as the base, with a view to asphaltting it.

Estimated costs are in the range of \$50,000–\$75,000.

#### Bus shelters

The first shelter was built by like-minded parents, with materials donated by ITM, to ensure local children could wait for the school bus out of the weather.

We are unsure of the history around the other shelters of the same design that are now in existence. The shelters are on road reserve.

#### Walk/cycle tracks

There is a current walk/cycleway that commences at Pipitea Drive and goes along Rārangī Road to Blue Gum Corner. From here, the track transitions to the western side of Rārangī Beach Road past the golf course and community facilities, finishing opposite the DOC car park just before 269 Rārangī Beach Road.

Council has received interest from residents around a number of tracks being extended or developed, as listed below.

- Extension from approximately 269 Rārangī Beach Road to approximately the corner of Rarangī Beach Road and Port Underwood Road.

- Development of the existing beach track from the Diversion to Blue Gum Corner.
- Extension along Rārangī Road from Pipitea Drive to Neal Road.
- Development of the walk/cycleway through to Tua Marina and Spring Creek.
- Residents have also expressed interest in walk/cycleways that support school pupils to bike to school and cycleways that connect to Spring Creek and the Whale Trail.

A submission to this effect was submitted to the MDC annual plan process in 2017, and Opus undertaken a feasibility study in the same year. This report recommended using Blind Creek Road and Thomas Road to connect with either Neil Road and/or the Wairau stop bank.

All of the track options would come at considerable costs, for which Small Townships does not currently have a budget, but which have been recorded on the plan's future project list.

### Welcome signage

The STP Manager has consulted with the Rārangī community on a welcome sign to the area that follows the same format as other signs going up in small townships such as Renwick, Wairau Valley, Seddon and Havelock.

These signs support communities in creating a sense of identity through the use of photos taken in the area and a tagline that captures the feel of the community/township.

A tag line of 'First to see the Sun' was chosen during this consultation.

The proposed sign is likely to be located on Pembers Road, between Neal Road and Beatrice Street.

### Edgewater Estate entrance

Residents have shared that ever since the start of the subdivision works, there has been a large pile of rocks with a piece of timber, with Edgewater routed onto it. Residents have expressed an ongoing desire to see this area tidied up.

### Hinepango Wetlands

Jobs for Nature staff, DOC and volunteers are currently restoring an area of DOC land that stretches approximately 2km from Pipitea Drive to the Diversion.

This area currently has an informal path that is used by locals and visitors from town who enjoy walking, biking, exercising their dogs, and riding their horses.

There is potential to install boardwalks in future.

### Blue Gum Corner coastal waterfront

Residents have suggested that the coastal waterfront area in front of Blue Gum Corner would be an ideal space for undertaking a restoration project that would be in keeping with the work identified in the Rārangī Landcare Group Beach Management Plan.

### Basketball/teen facilities

Youth in the Rārangī area are interested in existing tennis court facilities including basketball. The design has been discussed with council Parks and Open Spaces Department and Rārangī youth have presented the idea to the youth council. A formal application to youth council for funds is pending.