

BITOU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

URBAN RENEWAL

OF PLETTENBERG BAY CBD & UPGRADE OF MAIN STREET:
STRATEGY, CONCEPTUAL DESIGN AND URBAN RENEWAL FRAMEWORK



to be the best together

CONCEPTWORKS

urbanism architecture design

14 FEBRUARY 2006

BITOU

LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

**URBAN RENEWAL OF PLETTENBERG BAY CBD & UPGRADE OF MAIN STREET:
REVITALISATION STRATEGY, CONCEPTUAL DESIGN AND URBAN RENEWAL FRAMEWORK**

SECTION A: REPORT

(To be read with Section B: Diagrams & Plans)

Compiled for the

By



to be the best together

**Executive Mayor: Alderman EV Wildeman
Municipal Manager: Mr MG Seifiso
Director Public Works: Mr D Friedman**

**Bitou Local Municipality
Private Bag 1002
Plettenberg Bay 6600
Tel: 044 - 501 3264
Fax: 044 - 533 3487**

CONCEPTWORKS

urbanism architecture design

**Tel: 021 - 674 1714
Fax: 021 - 671 4155**

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
PART I: URBAN REVITALISATION STRATEGY (URS) 1		
2	CONTEXT.....	1
2.1	Emerging trends	1
2.2	The CBD.....	1
2.3	Development priorities.....	1
2.4	Tourism as an economic driver.....	1
2.5	Need for development coordination.....	1
2.6	Current planning initiatives	1
2.7	Urban renewal	1
3	GOALS, PROCESS AND STRATEGY.....	1
3.1	Goals.....	1
3.2	A Multifaceted Approach and Process.....	1
3.3	Main Strategy Elements	1
4	CORE POLICY ELEMENTS & OBJECTIVES	1
4.1	Background	1
4.2	Activity and Development Nodes.....	1
4.3	Gateways	1
4.4	Spatial Equity	1
4.5	Community participation	1
4.6	The Urban Edge and Wildlife Corridors.....	1
4.7	Current and Future Development Trajectories Affecting the CBD.....	1
4.8	Densification as Urban Catalyst.....	1
4.9	Enhanced Development Rights.....	1
4.10	Public Land	1
4.11	Heritage Sites	1
4.12	Transportation and Parking Objectives	1
4.13	Urban Renewal Vision	1
4.14	Priority Intervention Areas.....	1
4.15	Objectives of the Urban Renewal Strategy	1
5	DEVELOPMENT IN THE URBAN RENEWAL (UR) AREA - GENERAL	1
5.1	Mixed-use development.....	1
5.2	Retail Development.....	1
5.3	Community and Cultural Facilities.....	1
5.4	Transport Facilities and Infrastructure.....	1
5.5	Car Parking Provisions	1
5.6	Enhanced Development Rights.....	1
5.7	Urban Design.....	1
6	CONTROLS & PLANNING APPLICATION CRITERIA	1
6.1	Development Controls	1
6.2	Legal Agreements.....	1
7	URBAN RENEWAL OVERLAY CONDITIONS: KEY CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS	1
7.1	Mixed-use	1
7.2	Dominant use.....	1
7.3	Compatibility of uses.....	1
7.4	Site Appraisals and Fit.....	1
7.5	People-Centred Development Sites.....	1
7.6	Continuous of Pedestrian Walkways.....	1
7.7	Urban Interface Elements	1

7.8	Sensitive and Controlled Development Sites.....	1	10.4	PUBLIC SPACE SYSTEM, ACTIVITY MAPPING AND STREET MARKETS	1
7.9	Cycle ways	1	10.5	EXISTING AND PROPOSED BUILT FABRIC	1
7.10	Environmental Improvement Contributions.....	1	10.6	CULTURAL, HISTORICAL AND TOURISM PLACE MAPPING	1
7.11	Information Required with Planning Applications	1	10.7	LANDSCAPE OF PUBLIC SPACES AND 'VALLEY SECTION'	1
7.12	Planning procedures.....	1	10.8	CONCEPTUAL 3-D STUDIES OF MAIN STREET AND ANCHOR PLACE	1
7.13	Grounds for refusal.....	1	10.9	TYPICAL MAIN STREET PROMENADE DESIGN STUDY.....	1
	PART II: CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FRAMEWORK (CDF).....	1	10.10	PROPOSED MAIN STREET UPGRADING	1
8	CONCEPTUAL DESIGN BRIEF	1	11	CONCLUSION	1
8.1	Background	1		PART III: URBAN RENEWAL FRAMEWORK (URF)	1
8.2	Other Planning Processes	1	12	INTRODUCTION	1
8.3	Participation Framework and Consultations	1	12.1	The Public Realm and Sociability.....	1
8.4	Development of the Brief	1	12.2	Coherence	1
8.5	Statement of Purpose and Limitations.....	1	12.3	Main Street Upgrading	1
8.6	Approach and Methodology.....	1	12.4	Renewal strategy, not 'Master Plan'.....	1
9	PROJECT AREA AND SCOPE	1	13	THE OVERALL RENEWAL PLAN	1
9.1	Definition of Project Area.....	1	14	THE BASE PLAN – DYNAMICS	1
9.2	Project Scope	1	14.1	Core activity zones.....	1
9.3	The Overall Urban Scale	1	14.2	Pedestrian movement	1
9.4	The Precinct Scale	1	14.3	Traffic Management	1
9.5	Focus Area Scale of the Main Street and CBD	1	14.4	Corridors	1
9.6	The Core Pedestrian Area Scale of Main Street (Phase 1).....	1	14.5	Topography and views.....	1
10	CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FRAMEWORK.....	1	14.6	Shoreline conditions.....	1
10.1	PROJECT AREA AND SCOPE	1			
10.2	PROPOSED VEHICULAR TRAFFIC PLAN	1			
10.3	URBAN SPACE SYSTEM: OVERALL PLAN	1			

15 THE TRAFFIC RING ROAD	1		
15.1 Primary access corridor roads.....	1	21.3 Detailed Site Works and Landscaping Design Plan..	1
15.2 Primary ring road.....	1	21.4 Detail Treatment of Pavement Levels	1
15.3 Secondary roads	1	21.5 Encroachments	1
15.4 Pedestrian priority precinct.....	1	21.6 Transformers.....	1
15.5 Parking	1	21.7 Treatment of Street Edges.....	1
16 PUBLIC SPACE SYSTEM	1	21.8 Public Toilets.....	1
16.1 Shared implementation.....	1	21.9 Liability for Damage to any Utility Services	1
16.2 Main elements of public space system	1	21.10 Public Pavement Width.....	1
17 THE NATURE AREAS.....	1	21.11 Delivery Bays and Traffic Circulation Issues	1
17.1 Green suburban character.....	1	21.12 Façade and Building Envelopes.....	1
17.2 Ecological corridors	1	21.13 Conclusion	1
17.3 Main nature area components.....	1	22 SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES: PUBLIC SPACE	
17.4 Sustainability	1	INTERFACE.....	1
18 THE BUILT FABRIC AND LANDMARKS.....	1	22.1 Sensitive and Controlled Development Areas –	
18.1 Existing Built Fabric	1	General.....	1
18.2 New Built Fabric	1	22.2 Departures and Special Conditions.....	1
18.3 Landmark sites	1	22.3 Detailed Site Works and Landscaping	1
19 SENSITIVE AND CONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT SITES		22.4 Detail Treatment of Pavement Levels	1
AND PRECINCTS	1	22.5 Encroachments	1
19.1 Urban Renewal Overlays.....	1	22.6 Transformers.....	1
19.2 Identified Specific Sites	1	22.7 Treatment of Street Edges.....	1
20 DISCUSSION OF URBAN IDENTITY	1	22.8 Public Toilets.....	1
20.1 Social character.....	1	22.9 Public Utility Services.....	1
20.2 Urban transformation.....	1	22.10 Public Pavement Width.....	1
20.3 Identity and Culture	1	22.11 Delivery Bays and Traffic Circulation Issues	1
21 PUBLIC SPACE INTERFACE.....	1	22.12 Facades and Building Envelopes.....	1
21.1 Sensitive and Controlled Development Areas	1	23 URBAN PRECINCT STRATEGIES	1
21.2 Departures and Special Conditions	1	23.1 Unifying systems and precincts.....	1
		23.2 'Fit' between developments and their precincts	1

24 THE MAIN STREET PRECINCT 01	1		
24.1 Current Situation.....	1		
24.2 Concerns, Constraints and Opportunities.....	1		
24.3 Key policy question.....	1		
24.4 Guiding Vision	1		
24.5 Objectives.....	1		
24.6 Precinct strategy.....	1		
25 PRECINCT GUIDELINES: UPGRADING OF MAIN STREET	1		
25.1 Traffic Measures.....	1		
25.2 Main Street Urban Surface	1		
25.3 Flexible Traffic Management	1		
25.4 Design	1		
26 THE LOWER CBD “VILLAGE” PRECINCT 02	1		
26.1 Current Situation.....	1		
26.2 Concerns, Constraints and Opportunities.....	1		
26.3 Key policy question.....	1		
26.4 Guiding vision.....	1		
26.5 Objectives.....	1		
26.6 Elements of the Precinct Strategy	1		
26.7 Proposed Intervention Steps	1		
26.8 Conclusion.....	1		
27 THE UPPER CBD “UPTOWN” PRECINCT 03	1		
27.1 Current Situation.....	1		
27.2 Concerns	1		
27.3 Key Policy Question	1		
27.4 Guiding Vision	1		
27.5 Objectives.....	1		
27.6 Elements of the Precinct Strategy	1		
27.7 Proposed redevelopment of GPO and SAP Sites	1		
		27.8 Proposed Intervention Steps.....	1
		28 THE TAXI / MARKET PRECINCT 04.....	1
		28.1 Current Situation	1
		28.2 Concerns	1
		28.3 Key policy question	1
		28.4 Guiding vision	1
		28.5 Precinct strategy	1
		28.6 Proposed Intervention Steps.....	1
		28.7 Conclusion	1
		29 THE MARINE WAY CORRIDOR 05	1
		29.1 Current Situation	1
		29.2 Issues, concerns and opportunities.....	1
		29.3 Key Policy Question.....	1
		29.4 Guiding Vision.....	1
		29.5 Objective.....	1
		29.6 Elements of the strategy	1
		29.7 Intervention Steps	1
		29.8 Conclusion	1
		30 THE BEACON WAY CORRIDOR 06.....	1
		30.1 Current Situation	1
		30.2 Concern	1
		30.3 Key Policy Question.....	1
		30.4 Guiding Vision.....	1
		30.5 Objectives	1
		30.6 Elements of corridor improvement strategy	1
		30.7 Proposed Intervention Steps.....	1
		30.8 Conclusion	1
		31 THE BEACHES PRECINCT 07	1
		31.1 Current Situation	1

31.2	Key Concern.....	1	34.4	Guiding Vision.....	1
31.3	Key Policy Question	1	34.5	Objective.....	1
31.4	Guiding Vision	1	34.6	Elements of the strategy	1
31.5	Objective	1	34.7	Conclusion	1
31.6	Elements of the Precinct Strategy	1	35 THE LOOKOUT NATURE AREA 11	1	
31.7	Intervention Steps.....	1	35.1	Current Situation	1
31.8	Conclusion.....	1	35.2	Concern	1
32 THE CULTURAL PRECINCT 08	1		35.3	Key Policy Question.....	1
32.1	Current Situation.....	1	35.4	Guiding Vision.....	1
32.2	Concern.....	1	35.5	Objective.....	1
32.3	Key Policy Question	1	35.6	Elements of the strategy	1
32.4	Guiding Vision	1	35.7	Conclusion	1
32.5	Objectives.....	1	36 THE PIESANG VALLEY CORRIDOR 12	1	
32.6	Motivation and cultural entrepreneurship.....	1	36.1	Current Situation	1
32.7	Elements of the Precinct Strategy	1	36.2	Concern	1
32.8	Conclusion.....	1	36.3	Key Policy Question.....	1
33 THE SIGNAL HILL NATURE AREA 09	1		36.4	Guiding Vision.....	1
33.1	Current Situation.....	1	36.5	Objectives	1
33.2	Concern.....	1	36.6	Elements of corridor improvement strategy	1
33.3	Key Policy Question	1	36.7	Proposed Intervention Steps.....	1
33.4	Guiding Vision	1	36.8	Conclusion	1
33.5	Objective	1	37 THE BEACON ISLE PRECINCT 13	1	
33.6	Elements of the Strategy and Proposed Intervention .	1	37.1	Current Situation	1
33.7	Conclusion.....	1	37.2	Concern	1
34 THE CENTRAL NATURE AREA 10	1		37.3	Key Policy Question.....	1
34.1	Current Situation.....	1	37.4	Guiding Vision.....	1
34.2	Concern.....	1	37.5	Objectives	1
34.3	Key Policy Question	1	37.6	Elements of the strategy	1
			37.7	Discussion of development criteria	1

37.8	Proposed Intervention Steps	1
37.9	Conclusion.....	1
38	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	1
39	REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This report proposes an urban renewal strategy for the Central area and CBD of Plettenberg Bay,

with an emphasis on the upgrading of Main Street as a first intervention to stimulate the process. It proposes a

*structured approach to the urban revitalization process through a number of instruments and strategies collated as a package of measures operating at different levels. Firstly there is an **Urban Revitalisation Strategy** that addresses the broader dimensions of the urban revitalization process. This is followed by a **Conceptual Design Framework** which sets out the vision for the eventual outcome and is supported by material of a more graphic and metaphoric nature. Finally, there is an **Urban Renewal Framework** that addresses itself to the more specific dynamics and urban subsystems in the project area and that identifies distinct elements and areas for intervention.*

The aim is to propose an attractive and workable vision for the town, one that will generate interest and assist in creating the conditions for significant private and public sector investment into key parts of the town.

This document seeks to translate broader goals and the overall strategy into actionable

components. This is done by identifying a number of precincts and specific interventions. The character and future roles of these precincts vary, lending diversity and richness of experience to the town.

*Thus a '**public space system**' of connected, mainly pedestrian-friendly spaces, is introduced to shift the balance towards a gentler and livelier urban experience and to provide unifying elements and continuity between the precincts, and the nature areas, special sites and scenic walks and drives identified.*

The investigation has involved the early development of propositions and hypotheses at a number of conceptual and physical design levels. These were discussed and modified interactively with the client system. Thus the study proceeded by an analysis of the 'summarization of current thinking' briefing from the Plettenberg Bay Urban Design Group, from detailed starting briefings from various individuals from the Bitou Mayor's Office, Councillors and from the Department of

Public Works, and progressively sought to incorporate ideas from these parties as well from consultants, and other interested parties as the process unfolded.

*The investigation generated a series of **strategic propositions and conceptual hypotheses as to how to approach the urban revitalization** of the town, translated into conceptual diagrams and 3-dimensional images and photomontages that were in turn tested on respondents in presentations and meetings. The resulting content was consolidated in the Conceptual Design Framework presentation which was placed on public display and for comment.*

The 10 sheets of the Conceptual Design Framework cover numerous aspects of the project in a summarized form, and Have been designed to air the ideas and elect comment early in the conceptual design process.

The present Report builds on the Conceptual Design Framework, as well as on information that has begun to emerge from the interest shown in

*and expectations generated by the conceptual proposals. This Report goes further in that it translates this conceptual content into more detailed actionable propositions in the form of **Precinct Strategies** and a concept discussion of the possible phasing of the components of, and processes involved in, the urban renewal process. This report therefore contains the elements of what could be in due course be formalised in the form of an emerging '**urban renewal charter**'.*

In summary it seeks to:

- *assist in the formulation of public policy;*
- *help the direct investment; and*
- *provide guidance*

to all potential stakeholders in the urban renewal process as it would move towards implementation.

*This Report was formally adopted by the **Mayoral Committee of the Bitou Local Municipality** on **14 September 2005** and as recorded in Item 988/09/05/ Public Works / File Ref S/10.*

1 INTRODUCTION

This document envisages a strategy for the **Urban Renewal of the Plettenberg Bay Central Area and CBD and for the upgrading of the Main Street** as commissioned by the Bitou Local Municipality.

The provisions contained herein are intended to function in parallel with planning initiatives that seek to coordinate policy at national, provincial, regional levels and local levels. These embrace socio-economic-, sustainability-, natural- and built environment issues and concerns. This strategy and framework are also produced in the context of an unprecedented effort in South Africa to formulate policies within a democratic environment – policies that seek to be principled, inclusive, integrative, socially just and that subscribe to a culture of the active pursuit of constitutionality and human rights.

This study is therefore proposed in the context of broader environment-related policy transition in which a number of policy documents that are still under construction. These documents are briefly discussed below. Some of the most relevant are the **Provincial Spatial Development Framework** (currently in draft form), the **Bitou Spatial Development Framework (SDF)** and the new **Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme**.

The aims of this document are more modest in scope and localized in character, and are to provide the Bitou Local Municipality with a framework and tools that it can exercise in

stimulating, steering and controlling development in the project area in order to achieve its urban renewal objectives. At the same time, it is intended to provide guidance to the local community, built environment professionals and property developers.

This strategy and design framework seeks to interpret the character and dynamics of Plettenberg Bay and to introduce concepts and tools derived from successful experiences in urban regeneration. It seeks to complement other legislation and policy, trying to go beyond the point where traditional and often conceptually rigid land use management regulations end. It proposes a vision of the Central part of Plettenberg Bay as a harmoniously constructed set of varied urban places and experiences for the delight of the greater Bitou constituency and visitors alike.

To this end, it comprises three parts.

Part I, The Urban Revitalisation Strategy (URS), describes the goals, objectives and main development guidelines.

Part II, The Conceptual Design Framework (CDF), describes the more qualitative aspects and design concepts developed to describe the possible urban renewal outcomes. It also formed the basis for eliciting comments from stakeholders and the public participation process.

Part III, The Urban Renewal Framework (CURF), sets out conceptually the requirements for the urban renewal process in greater detail and on a precinct by precinct basis within the project area. It contains general **Precinct Strategies** that elaborate on specific and localized aspects of the urban renewal framework. These Precinct Strategies form the basis for future conceptual and guideline studies, and from the background for the eventual formulation of development bid proposal calls that may be drawn up by the local authority.

All the concepts and provisions contained in this document are intended and have been developed to serve as the elaboration of a vision and an implied process.

As a contextual framework this document seeks to develop measures that will lead to a new energy and development impetus in the Central area of Plettenberg Bay.

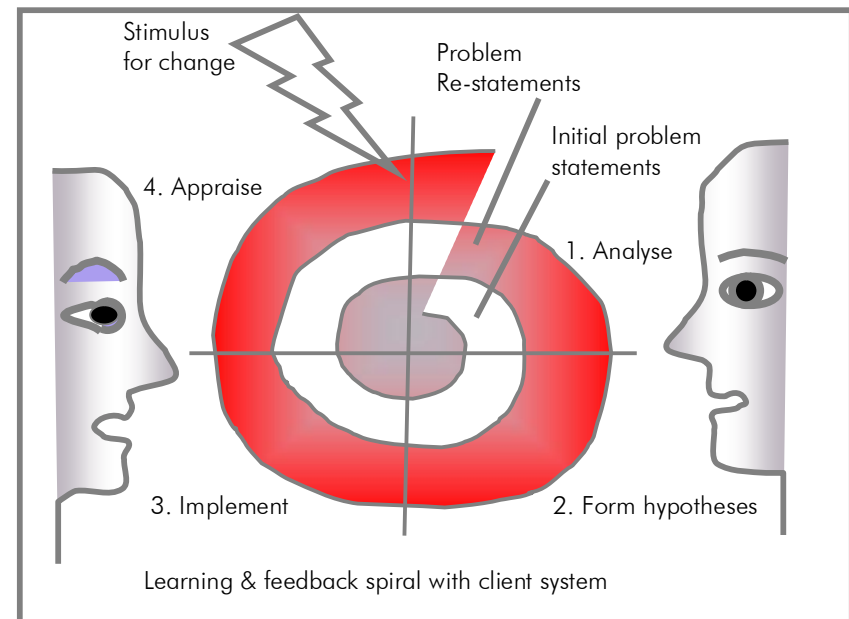
It seeks to present a robust conceptual framework capable of sponsoring flexible, creative and diverse development interventions in the renewal process.

PART I:

URBAN REVITALISATION STRATEGY (URS)

SEE SECTION B: DIAGRAMS, SHEETS AND FIGURES – PART I:
URBAN REVITALISATION STRATEGY

FOR DIAGRAMS



2 CONTEXT

Plettenberg Bay and its surrounds constitute one of South Africa's - and indeed the world's - most attractive and sought after natural settings and holiday destinations.

2.1 Emerging trends

The first decade of democracy in South Africa has seen the emergence of some significant new trends in the Bitou area and in Plettenberg Bay.

There have been political changes with a new and representative local government.

Resources from national, provincial and local allocation levels have been directed more strongly towards previously disadvantaged communities and the focus of local government has shifted towards the communities that had been previously disadvantaged under the apartheid system.

There has been a significant if not spectacular growth of investment in the town as a leisure and holiday home destination.

The permanent population of the town has increased dramatically, altering its previous character of seasonal holiday town. At the same time demographic composition of the permanent population also has shifted, evidenced by a significantly larger working- and emerging middle class population.

All this has led to a robust growth of the commercial, leisure and hospitality sectors. The character of the town as a seasonal holiday destination is gradually transforming towards a greater balance between the transient and permanent populations.

These trends have led to significant private investment in luxury holiday homes and in mostly themed and gated housing-, polo- and golfing estate enclaves. At the same time there has been significant development of retail and commercial facilities around the periphery of the town, creating new suburban retail and leisure nodes.

2.2 The CBD

The heart of the historic town, however, has largely been 'left behind', and it is argued, not benefiting from a degree of private investment, development and re-development commensurate with that in the outlying areas.

In the Central area and CBD, investment in infrastructure and public amenities and facilities has tended to lag far behind the general rate of public investment evidenced elsewhere.

The clearest illustration of this is the degradation of the Main Street, which consists of a collapsing concrete surface that hasn't been upgraded since it was built in the 1960's. What public urban furniture, lighting and landscaping there is, is fragmentary, half-hearted, and lacking in conscious design.

This has been exacerbated by ill-conceived private interventions and installations that generally help to augment the feeling of aesthetic and social neglect.

2.3 Development priorities

As noted, in the first decade of democracy, the local authority system has generally been focused on redressing the unacceptable living conditions, inadequate housing and lack of social and physical infrastructure for the previously disadvantaged majority of the population.

Some local authorities have found it difficult to manage the demands of the working- and middle class constituencies in the urban system, while simultaneously being able to justify or maintain a focus on traditional middle class suburbs, CBD's and leisure destinations.

2.4 Tourism as an economic driver

The 'previously advantaged' spaces collectively form important elements of the experiential infrastructure of tourism. The recognition of the economic contribution of tourism to all social classes and stakeholders has been finding broader political acceptance.

Since the 'advantaged' or 'privileged' areas in the urban system have been traditionally associated with private property interests, they have been largely left to take care of themselves through market mechanisms, with the local

authorities mostly acting in a passive and bureaucratic role in monitoring and moderating development proposals.

2.5 Need for development coordination

Without adequate controls, privately-driven development has a tendency to form un-coordinated and haphazard initiatives. Left unchecked this leads to a fractious, conflictual and self-serving condition of the urban and architectural fabric.

While seeking to maximize the investment return of individual sites, many such developments have a tendency to do so at the expense of the urban and environmental whole.

Streets, nature areas and public spaces, do not automatically benefit from such developments, which more often than not have little regard for the common natural and urban environment and which make little effort to contribute to the constructed urban landscape.

This has often been the case of the Bitou Municipality where a number of commercially driven developments of dubious urban integrity and without much cultural or social value have been built in recent years.

The local authority has found it difficult to encourage and steer investment in ways that contribute to a more harmonious and balanced urban environment in the Central area of the town and for the CBD.

The resultant public spaces in the CBD are hardly worthy of the premier status of Plettenberg Bay.

This perpetuates conditions of segregated environments displaying a separation of private and public realms, mostly as 'private luxury' from 'public poverty'.

An outdated zoning scheme and inadequately considered town planning regulations and by-laws have not helped, and have in many respects placed the local authority on the defensive and with inadequate policy and regulatory instruments when confronted by the demands and proposals of developers that seek to stretch conventional development envelopes.

It has therefore been almost unavoidable that what building development there has been in the Central areas and CBD, has tended to be managed as a series of exceptions, departures and special concessions. This 'exceptionalism' in managing urban development has resulted in a somewhat laissez faire environment that lacks cohesiveness and public-spiritedness and has begun to compromise the attractiveness and future viability of the CBD.

2.6 Current planning initiatives

A spatial planning process was initiated for the area of jurisdiction of the Bitou Local Municipality [hereafter referred to as the Bitou Local Municipal Area], which will result in a **Spatial Development Framework** for the Bitou Local Municipal

Area, referred to also as the Bitou SDF. The Bitou SDF is drafted in terms of the **Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2002 [Act 32 of 2000]**, requiring the Bitou SDF to be the spatial component of the **Integrated Development Plan** (referred to also as the Bitou IDP) for the Bitou Local Municipality, focusing on developmental issues, challenges and responses. The Bitou SDF takes due cognisance of the directives, contained in the **Development Facilitation Act, 1995 (Act 67 of 1995)** (referred to also as the DFA, 1995], focusing on compaction and densification.

The Bitou SDF represents a strategic spatial management tool for the Bitou Local Municipality, and presents a spatial logic, based on a normative framework, for the future spatial development of the Bitou Local Municipal Area. The spatial logic was a response to the Spatial Vision for Bitou, which is to create a **Place for All**. The Spatial Vision is concerned with creating a sustainable, efficient and equitable place for all.

The Bitou SDF initiated the concept of a **package of frameworks and plans**, comprising of the following components:

- (a) The **Bitou SDF**, being a strategic spatial framework for the Bitou Municipal Area;
- (b) The **Spatial Development Plans** (also referred to as SDPs), being detailed spatial plans for demarcated areas, for example the Plettenberg Bay Central Business Area and the object of the present Report;

- (c) The revision of the **Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme** (TPS); and
- (d) **Precinct Plans**, being detailed urban design frameworks for precincts within the demarcated areas of SDPs. These would be based on the Precinct Strategies contained in the present Report.

The present document is therefore situated in this broader framework as the

Urban Renewal for the Plettenberg Bay Central Business District and Upgrade of Main Street: Strategy, Conceptual Design and Urban Renewal Framework,

also referred to as the “**Plett Urban Renewal Strategy**”.

The Plettenberg Bay Urban Renewal Strategy and Design Framework proposed an urban renewal strategy for the Plettenberg Bay CBD, with an emphasis on the upgrading of Main Street as a first intervention.

This **Plett Urban Renewal Strategy** document proposes a structured approach to the urban revitalization process through a number of instruments and strategies collated as a package of measures operating at different levels, and comprising of:

- An **Urban Revitalisation Strategy** that addresses the broader dimensions of the urban revitalization process;
- A **Conceptual Design Framework** that sets out the vision for the eventual outcome and is supported by material of a more graphic and metaphoric nature; and
- An **Urban Renewal Framework** that addresses itself conceptually to the more specific dynamics and urban subsystems in the project area and that identifies distinct elements and areas for intervention.

The aim of the **Plett Urban Renewal Strategy** is to propose an attractive and workable vision for the town, one that will generate interest and assist in creating the conditions for significant private and public sector investment into key parts of the town.

The **Plett Urban Renewal Strategy** seeks to translate broader goals and the overall strategy into actionable components, by identifying a number of precincts and specific interventions. The character and future roles of these

precincts vary, lending diversity and richness of experience to the town.

A public space system of connected, mainly pedestrian-friendly spaces, is introduced to shift the balance towards a gentler and livelier urban experience and to provide unifying elements and continuity between the precincts, and the nature areas, special sites and scenic walks and drives identified.

In conclusion, the present document is located within the ambit of a broader and integrated set of planning processes, and of which one of the some of the primary thrusts of relevance here are the **containment of urban sprawl** and the definition of an **'urban edge'**.

It is informed by urban planning and design methods and principles of social and environmental equity as elaborated in the Bitou SDF.

Some of the key aspects of these urban planning and design methods include the following key concepts referred to in the Bitou SDF documents under the following headings:

- Places for People
- Enrich the Existing
- Make connections
- Work with the Landscape
- Mix Uses and Forms
- Manage the Investment
- Design for Change

The ultimate aim of these approaches and measures is to redress the urban and social fragmentation wrought by Apartheid and to seek to achieve **a new, integrated urban landscape**.

2.7 Urban renewal

The present Urban Revitalisation Strategy, however, stems from an initiative that goes beyond fulfilling the minimum mandatory requirements for municipalities to have Spatial Development Frameworks and Town Planning (Zoning) Schemes in place.

It stems from a collective realization that more is needed of central Plettenberg Bay's fortunes are to improve. Its also stems from a desire to ask searching questions as to the quality of the urban experience of the Central Area of the town - Main Street, the CBD, the Beaches, the Nature Areas and Trails, and the Taxi Rank area, among others.

There has been a realization that new and more appropriate instruments are required to help direct and facilitate tangible local level interventions, and that is it necessary to go beyond the SDF and TPS, and to develop a more focused and clearly articulated vision for the town.

There has also been a consensus that this involves a coordinated strategic and process-based approach to urban revitalization and renewal.

The social vibrancy of the CBD and Beach areas, especially in season, nevertheless remains the **core 'intangible' asset**, of Plettenberg Bay. It is a core around which the revitalization effort needs to be built. While it can be argued that this vibrancy exists despite the (relatively poor) quality of its built environment, and that the scenic beauty of Plettenberg Bay and the vista's from the CBD over the Indian Ocean and the Lagoon help to transcend the very average South African 'dorp' character of the CBD, there nevertheless remains a concern that the CBD is living on borrowed time.

If commerce and passing trade are important indicators of social vibrancy and success, then the trend of competing alternatives eroding the CBD's 'market share' is serious cause for concern.

Existing and proposed new decentralized neighbourhood shopping- and convenience centres, are providing alternatives to the CBD as a retail and leisure destinations.

There is also a danger that the creation of satellite shopping destinations may lead to a social re-segregation into elite, middle class and working class neighbourhood shopping and convenience centres.

If this process is allowed to continue, and nothing is done to arrest the decline of the CBD - dropping rentals and increasing maintenance and refurbishment costs of due to

ageing building stock - , the CBD may well lose its character as the primary civic domain.

Plettenberg Bay's headaches are also compounded by the emergence of rival investment and tourism destination options in the immediate region.

3 GOALS, PROCESS AND STRATEGY

3.1 Goals

The broad goals of the Urban Revitalisation Strategy and its underlying process are:

- To enhance the attractiveness of the Central town area as a leisure, tourism and commercial destination.
- To bring significant benefits to the broader Plettenberg Bay community.
- To stimulate the revitalization of the Central Area and CBD.
- To enhance the built and natural environment.

These goals are translated into the present Urban Renewal Strategy to stimulate and channel a surge of appropriate urban development so as to revitalize Central town and CBD.

The strategy requires that a productive and profitable alignment between economic self-interest and the common good is achieved, and therefore suggests a cohesive approach.

At the same time it acknowledges that the strategy requires the alignment but also the diversity of thinking of many minds. Since a town is made up of unique areas with their own

particular characteristics and with their own momentum and development trajectories, a strategy needs a measure of flexibility and adaptability.

3.2 A Multi-faceted Approach and Process

The experience of successful urban regeneration interventions internationally and in South Africa has been that a concerted and multifaceted approach is required. It is necessary to mobilize and inter-mingle non-traditional actors, methods and policies in the pursuit of specific visions of urban sites and renewal areas.

Urban regeneration involves a process, which typically includes:

- (a) The creation of improvement districts as frameworks for managing public spaces (**See SECTION B, PART I; DIAGRAM 6**);
- (b) The mobilization of private sector resources to supplement local authority inputs, especially on security, cleanliness and basic facilities;
- (c) Close co-operation between public and private sector stakeholders and local communities in determining the needs of various urban constituencies;
- (d) The smoothing of various traffic flows and often the prioritization of pedestrian space;

- (e) Providing facilities for commuters, the public, 'street retailers' and informal traders and turning their contribution into urban assets;
- (f) The creation of rich urban experiences by attracting restaurants, encouraging mixed use developments – in particular also by introducing residential accommodation - and extending activity cycles of specific areas throughout the day and night;
- (g) Sponsoring urban 'connectivity', the desire for pedestrians to have 'random walks', opportunities for casual social contact; and the creation of opportunities for businesses to benefit from passing trade;
- (h) Consciously designed place-making and the upgrading of physical infrastructure and urban furniture; and ultimately
- (i) Producing a vibrant cultural atmosphere and urban- or place identity capable of being communicated, branded and marketed as attractive places.

Such a multi-faceted approach therefore goes well beyond the mere physical improvement of urban spaces.

Nevertheless such improvements are an essential element without which there would be no tangible experience.

Furthermore since some investment in public space infrastructure and landscaping is required, this helps to persuade investors and other stakeholders that their efforts will be supported and reciprocated by the local authorities.

This study is premised on, and envisages the introduction of these process and organisational aspects as a part of the process of furthering the aims of the urban renewal program.

3.3 Main Strategy Elements

The main elements of this Revitalisation Strategy are as follows:

1. A commitment to engage with local community, commercial interests and other appropriate bodies to achieve common goals;
2. To implement an overall urban renewal strategy that proactively encourages positive development options;
3. Using the integrated redevelopment of Main Street, Crescent Street, the Bitou Council site and public land below Sewell Street as the major catalyst for the urban renewal strategy;
4. Channeling and exercising sufficient controls on development to ensure that the objectives are achieved.

It is acknowledged that a number of sites have already been granted planning permission and development rights and

that these are at varying stages of implementation. These include:

- the Proposed Hotel Site on Signal Hill;
- "The Upper Deck" Development at the corner of Strand and Main Streets; and
- The re-development of "The Square" (Shoprite/Checkers site) on the corner of Church and Main Streets.

4 CORE POLICY ELEMENTS & OBJECTIVES

4.1 Background

The Plettenberg Bay Urban Renewal Area (URA) presents a number of issues, constraints and opportunities that are addressed as core policy elements informing the Urban Revitalisation Strategy and its more specific implementation provisions.

The Urban Renewal Area, as discussed above, has been extended to include the area as set out in the relevant maps.

It has four main areas.

At its heart it contains the CBD Area, which is mainly bounded by the proposed vehicular traffic ring road system.

To the south of the CBD Area, and stretching out in three directions are the Nature Areas, consisting of the first sub-area between Signal Hill and the Piesang River, the second between Sewell Street and the Old VOC Timber Shed, and the third between St Peter's Church and Lookout beach.

Along the coast line there is the Beaches area, which extends from the Beacon Isle through Central- and Hobie Beaches to Lookout Beach.

Finally there is the Beacon Isle Area, which includes the Beacon Isle and Piesang River mouth.

4.2 Activity and Development Nodes

The SDF is identifying the future development - and in particular the development of commercial activity zones - of Plettenberg Bay and the greater Bitou area - as being clustered around a hierarchy of focused activity zones and development nodes.

- The Main Road and CBD – the traditional commercial centre;
- The Market Square Shopping complex - the relatively new shopping complex now accounting for a significant if not larger amount of commercial floor space;
- The Central Beach area, which in addition to a small commercial component, has a number of fishing, tourism and leisure-related activities and businesses ; and
- The New Town Centre – a proposed commercial and administrative centre which is planned to be closer to the centre of gravity of Kwanokuthula/New Horizons the in terms of the recommendations of the SDF.

In addition there are some smaller 'Level 3' economic activity nodes that act as supportive economic activity zones to the

above, constituted by smaller commercial clusters and neighbourhood and convenience shopping building clusters.

As part of the overall transport planning and SDF proposals, the N2 highway is to be redirected to the north of New Horizons. The present stretch of the N2 between Kwanokuthula and Plettenberg Bay would be 'forcefully congested' and form an important linking corridor to the proposed New Town Centre.

4.3 Gateways

The two 'gateways' to Plettenberg Bay on the N2, namely the intersection at the Shell Service Station to the West and the Engen Service Station to the East, would be enhanced to form symbolic places and signals for the town.

The reconfiguration of the N2, the creation of new traffic circles at the two 'gateways', the development of the New Town Centre, and of the requisite transport modal interchange envisaged there, would require a public investment component.

4.4 Spatial Equity

The broader intention of the SDF is to distribute future urban opportunities, transport modal interchanges and cultural facilities closer to the major population concentrations – a concept described in the SDF in terms of 'spatial equity'. While the scope for promoting spatial equity in the Central

area is limited in terms of primary and basic needs-based infrastructure and facilities, it nevertheless involves a number of important potential contributions. These include upgrading of facilities for commuters at the taxi rank, the provision of enabling facilities for informal traders and small businesses and the creation of a common leisure and recreation spaces, facilities and environment to be enjoyed by all Bitouans.

4.5 Community participation

Issues of community participation need to be addressed at a number of levels, and in particular with reference to participants from the perspective of previously disadvantaged individuals (PDI's). These levels comprise:

- Community consultation and participation in policy formulation
- Community consultation and participation in the definition of 'real needs' experienced by ordinary people
- The creation of economic opportunities for emerging enterprises and businesses in the urban renewal process
- The creation of facilities and new opportunities for informal traders
- The transfer of skills
- The creation of job and trading opportunities

4.6 The Urban Edge and Wildlife Corridors

The urban edge refers to the outer limits of developable land as identified in the SDF.

However the boundaries of open public space and nature areas within the Central area of Plettenberg Bay are of equal importance and represent an 'inner' urban edge.

Wherever possible, these nature areas and open spaces need to be linked together so as to firm 'green fingers' of pristine indigenous land, that make up a network of wildlife corridors woven into the urban fabric.

4.7 Current and Future Development Trajectories Affecting the CBD

The SDF framework assumes broadly that the CBD will require revitalization and that a possible re-orientation of its primary focus will occur as it assumes new functions, a restructuring of transport nodes, and attracts a new basket of opportunities related mainly to services, tourism and leisure.

The CBD is currently, as noted earlier, subjected to a degree of uncertainty as to the trajectory of its future development.

The erosion of traditional independent shops and boutiques along the Main Street and in particular along the lower end of Main Street is cause for concern. It is widely acknowledged that the CBD needs some new impetus if it is to recover and

once again become a desirable commercial investment location.

A number of recent projects have led to an increase of parking space in the form of some parking garages above the Main Street area. While this helps to relieve traffic congestion and enhances shopping access, especially to the two shopping centres along Main Street, it has been noted by the Urban Design Group, that these interventions have led to a degradation of the environmental quality of the secondary streets in which they find themselves, and have all but disqualified these streets from having any form of street life. These interventions are in essence trying to fit or integrate a shopping mall model of development into the CBD.

There has also been a trend for single dwelling houses to be rezoned and for small office pavilions to be built on these sites, in particular along the upper CBD area along High Street. These in turn tend to try to fit an 'office park' model into the CBD fringe.

Both trends have a danger of trying to introduce inappropriate urban form that essentially tends to turn its back on the street – in the case of shopping malls; erode the street edge and create 'office sprawl' – in the case of the offices, and generally to perpetuate segregated functional zoning.

Given current urban thinking at the international level and also, for example, in the draft **Provincial Spatial Development Framework** (PSDF), the **Metropolitan Spatial Development**

Framework (MSDF) for the Cape Metro area, and the MSDF **Densification Guidelines Manual**, certain core principles - such as encouraging mixed-use development, defining the urban edge, densification of specific areas, and building street edge interfaces between buildings and public space - would suggest a need to encourage higher, mixed-use densities in the Plettenberg Bay CBD.

Where the municipal infrastructure can sustain this, the process of densification has been considered desirable from an overall policy point of view in most SA cities since it contains urban sprawl, maximises the use of existing road and services infrastructure and reduces commuting distances.

4.8 Densification as Urban Catalyst

Such a policy of densification, if well managed could also act as a catalyst for the revitalisation of the CBD.

Densification however generally implies a departure from previous land use parameters and the adoption of modified land uses.

Since it is in the power of the provincial and local authorities to grant such departures, whether in the form of the removal of restrictive conditions in property title deeds, outright rezonings, or the granting of departures, and relaxation of conditions, densification involves a process of negotiation and trade-offs between the authorities and developers, usually mediated by the relevant built environment professionals.

A densification policy therefore implicitly suggests the opening up of new development opportunities, which it is incumbent on the local authorities to direct and control for the benefit of the community as a whole and indeed for and for the benefit of future generations.

Augmenting the permissible effective bulk of specific sites – provided that this is done with effective parking solutions – provides a stimulus for directing new investment flows into the CBD and Central areas of the town.

4.9 Enhanced Development Rights

This stimulus to urban renewal relies strongly on the concept of enhanced development rights.

Enhanced development rights associated with specific sites and urban precincts are essentially invitations for property owners and investors to re-invest, thereby re-energising the area in question with new movement, tenancies and activities, thus bringing about urban renewal.

The concept of proactively offering enhanced development rights is therefore a fundamental aspect of this urban renewal strategy. It is grounded in the commercial reality that re-investment in- and therefore the recapitalization of older and previously developed urban sites requires economic feasibility. This in turn, especially in areas undergoing economic decline,

may require an increase the value and/or extent of the lettable or sellable area.

A careful re-consideration of densities, as translated specifically into building coverage and bulk, is therefore fundamental in any policy of urban renewal.

This also needs to be supported by a flexible approach to the requirements of developments as regards parking and other town planning provisions, since they are not Greenfield sites. On the other hand, reclaimed or recycled older sites and buildings can produce greater uniqueness and urban richness.

If a specific site can be ' bulked up', for instance, while adequately respecting regulations pertaining to height restrictions, key sightlines, overlooking features, setbacks, parking, etc., then it should be allowed and even encouraged.

This process however requires the involved parties to engage in a process and procedure of conceptual consultation, preliminary development proposal discussions, planning applications, approval-with-conditions processes, and eventually inspections, verification and signing off.

4.10 Public Land

As regards the Main Street, the resolution of the jurisdictional issues surrounding the actual land of the street – it is in the

process of being transferred from the Provincial Government to the Bitou Municipal Authority – will make it possible for long overdue public investment in this crucial asset.

The Bitou Municipality is also in the process of negotiating the acquisition and transfer of Central Government-controlled public land, in particular including the sites of the General Post Office (GPO) and South Africa Police (SAP) at the western end of Main Street.

The Bitou Municipality also owns a number of other properties. The Municipality also is in the process of formalizing and reviewing its rights to lease out public land along the coastline and in the Piesang river estuary.

Together, the effective control of how to develop and/or lease and/or dispose of these assets, puts the Municipality in a position to invite structured development bids for a number of key sites, which in turn are crucial parts of the CURF.

4.11 Heritage Sites

Plettenberg Bay has some significant heritage sites, both natural and historical in character. Some of these are insufficiently protected and are under threat.

These sites need protection and re-incorporation into a system of public spaces. Apart from their inherent testimonial value, they form an important aspect of the narrative structure of the story of the Town for locals and tourists alike. Sites such as

the Old VOC (Dutch East India Company) Timber Shed, the Old Chapel and Rectory, the Old Post Office, The Van Plettenberg Beacon, and the Signal Hill Mast confer historical depth and physical identity.

4.12 Transportation and Parking Objectives

Key transportation objectives of the urban renewal strategy are to address a number of key issues. Taxi and bus access points need to be improved the supportive the commuter circulation spaces and pathways upgraded.

The traffic congestion of the Main Street is to be reduced by improving flow and redirecting through traffic around the perimeter of the CBD. Traffic in Main Street is to be slowed and a pedestrian-dominated urban environment is to be created in and around the Main Street and Lower CBD precincts.

The provision and management of parking requirements needs to fit in with and generally support the urban renewal objectives, and should be functional and flexible, ensuring that pedestrianised areas are freed from undue dominance by cars.

4.13 Urban Renewal Vision

The vision expressed by the inception meetings for the upgrading of Main Street is one where locals and tourists alike share a harmonious and interesting set of public spaces,

centred round Main Street and a new Square to be created on the Bitou Municipal Council site, with eateries, restaurants, hotel, craft markets and unique shops forming an exciting, pedestrian-friendly experience. These spaces should make the most of the climate and scenic views over the Bay, and should be linked to the Central Beach.

(See SECTION B; PART I; DIAGRAM 7)

Some of the metaphors used by the participants included: 'the living soul of Plett', 'urban reactivation', 'faith in CBD', 'going sweetly to the beaches', 'the village', 'wine shops', 'nature walks' and the 'barefoot festival'.

4.14 Priority Intervention Areas

Priority interventions have been identified as being, in order of priority, the following:

- (a) The upgrading of the Main Street;
- (b) The redevelopment of the public land at the Bitou Municipality site at Crescent Street (which is to linked to Main Street and provisionally named 'Anchor Place');
- (c) The redevelopment of the taxi rank and informal market area at the intersection of Strand and High Street;
- (d) The redevelopment of Central Beach facilities and infrastructure.

4.15 Objectives of the Urban Revitalisation Strategy

The URS objectives are as follows:

1. To ensure that all development contributes positively to the social, economic and environmental regeneration of Plettenberg Bay and that it contributes to the greater Bitou Area;
2. To ensure that all development brings about a balanced and integrated mixed-use environment so as to benefit the local community and the Bitou area as a whole;
3. To promote the significant addition of residential units in and around the CBD and to stimulate the emergence of a permanent resident population there;
4. To make the core series of pedestrian-friendly public spaces - linking the Taxi Rank, Main Street, the Bitou Municipal site, the Central Nature Area, the Old Timber Shed and Central Beach – the focus for the urban regeneration and environmental enhancement.
5. To introduce and improve facilities and amenities for commuters and informal traders;
6. To safeguard the 'urban edge' by preventing further encroachment or sprawl onto public open space, and by protecting ecological niches and nature corridors in the Central area while;
7. To protect and promote places and buildings of historic value as part of Bitou's cultural heritage;
8. To improve and modify the transport system and infrastructure so as to ensure that:
 - a. The taxi- and public transport system is enhanced;
 - b. The pedestrian walkways making up the commuter access paths to the taxi- and public transport interchanges and taxi ranks and bus stops are upgraded;
 - c. The Main Street is altered in character so as to be more pedestrian-friendly and people-centred, and in such a manner that cars may be stopped from entering it on festivals, special events and market days;
 - d. The transport system around the CBD be re-organised in such a manner that vehicular congestion be minimized on Main Street, and that traffic be re-routed in a 'ring' road system around the CBD;

- e. That traffic flow be enhanced wherever desirable by means of traffic circles and other traffic engineering measures;
 - f. A pedestrian 'village' environment is created in a system of lanes and steps between buildings in the Lower CBD (below Main Street) and centering around the proposed Anchor Place development;
 - g. A major parking facility and additional outside parking are provided in and for the Lower CBD in such a way that the envisaged pedestrian environment is made possible;
 - h. That a system of parking 'off-sets' between development sites on public and private land is developed to assist the urban regeneration of sites that can't accommodate or don't require on-site parking bays.
 - i. Parking use is maximized by flexible measures, such as optimizing parking in mixed-use development sites by re-cycling of day-time shopping-, commercial- and office parking bays in the evenings for use by the patrons of restaurants and of other leisure and entertainment venues.
9. To improve environmental quality more broadly by:
- a. Promoting the upgrading the built environment;
 - b. Promoting high standards for new buildings and landscaping;
 - c. Ensuring that any sources of pollution or contamination are reduced and managed;
 - d. Providing facilities for the public and informal traders;
 - e. Promoting regeneration by encouraging partnerships and working with developers, residents and relevant outside agencies.

5 DEVELOPMENT IN THE URBAN RENEWAL (UR) AREA - GENERAL

5.1 Mixed-use development

It is a key objective that all developments in the Urban Renewal Area should have a genuine mixed-use character. Developments, wherever possible be encouraged to have a suitable balance and mix of uses.

While it is not practical or desirable prescribe the precise development criteria for each site in the CURF, it is nevertheless important that all scheme proposals should be true mixed-use schemes.

Development proposals will be requested wherever possible or within the powers of the local authority to do so, to ensure that any single dominant use on each site does not exceed approximately 65% of the floor space in the development (excluding parking), and that the balance be balanced with a suitable range of uses in the development.

Detailed guidance on desired mixes will be provided in specific policy provisions and documents associated with specific development sites and may be referred to in Precinct Plans (PP's). This will be particularly relevant to sites involving departures from current land uses and/or the leasing, alienation and/or joint development of public land.

In order to give effect to this mixed use requirement, the following types of development will be promoted, subject to other and more detailed provisions.

- Housing – this may be further conceptualized in terms of size, type and tenure, depending on the area and specific conditions.
- Commercial – this may be also further conceptualized in terms of size, type and tenure, and also as to the long-term or short term impact on the precinct in question.
- Office space – also to be considered in terms of size, type and tenure, depending on the area and specific conditions.
- Leisure & Hospitality – this broad category is crucial in reinforcing the urban renewal objectives of the CURP, and will be strongly supported in certain areas. Hospitality driven developments that generate a constant turnover of visitors will be strongly supported.

Wherever possible there should be small scale, community based facilities distributed throughout the UR area.

Lifestyle enhancing uses as restaurants, coffee bars, street-side café's, art galleries, informal and semi-formal food vendors and music venues will be encouraged, provided that their distribution and number is justified in terms of the specific precinct locations.

The principle of lifestyle hubs and restaurant streets may also be encouraged in certain cases, provided that the balance and mix of land uses and the comfort of the residential components are not adversely affected.

The Central Beach area constitutes a major attraction and developments and/or lessors on the site or within the precinct will be required to indicate how they will contribute towards the leisure and tourism based recreation.

The development of a cycle way through the town will be encouraged, in particular since it is envisaged to be part of a greater regional cycle way project with positive tourism, leisure and promotional potential.

5.2 Retail Development

Retail is a major potential catalyst in the creation of viable public spaces and in the regeneration process. Retail will be promoted, but subject to certain broader considerations.

As discussed earlier, retail developments need to be sensitively considered so as to ensure that development of retail centres across the Bitou area remains well balanced, mixed, and integrated with the surrounding residential and mixed use urban fabric.

Care should be taken to avoid the development of new centres, especially in decentralized and marginal locations that would lead to the weakening of existing and/or proposed future retail centres in the Development Nodes identified in the SDF. These Development Nodes are the Main Street/CBD area, Village Square, Central Beach and the proposed New Town Centre.

The character of the retail environment in the CBD is a mixed one, including:

- individual 'downtown' retail stores,
- independent 'high street' boutique stores
- small retail centres
- major retail shopping malls
- kiosk traders
- informal traders and street vendors

These types of retail co-exist in a shared and public urban environment. The whole Main Street and Upper- and Lower CBD area needs to be treated as a unified mixed-use environment. These diverse forms and scale of retail activity will be encouraged to co-exist and mutually support one another in this mixed-use environment alongside other commercial, leisure, entertainment, and hospitality, cultural and residential uses.

If successfully managed and supported by an 'improvement district'-type enabling structure, the CBD area would renew itself and succeed in re-establishing its

primacy as the social heart of Plettenberg Bay, and thereby transcend the relatively sterile shopping mall experiences that traditional American-style malls offer in other locations.

5.3 Community and Cultural Facilities

Wherever possible, facilities need to be located in the UR area that create and serve a balanced community. Uses such as a community hall, crèches, health facilities, public libraries, post-offices and educational facilities that serve their immediate areas need to be encouraged.

Development proposals and detailed Precinct Plans need to show how they accommodate, contribute to and/or support them.

5.4 Transport Facilities and Infrastructure

The improvement of taxi and bus access points and the reduction of car use on the CBD by improving parking and pedestrian circulation are key aspects of the urban renewal strategy.

All development applications will need to include a sufficiently detailed Transport Impact Assessment (TIA), unless a motivation is submitted to show, to the satisfaction of the municipality, why such a TIA may not be required.

The TIA will set out the measures proposed to deal with the traffic impact of the development proposal and will be used to assess the parking provisions and any contributions to public space enhancements that may arise out of the development.

An upgrading of the taxi rank and the provision of related commuter and operator facilities have been identified as priorities. In addition, bus shelters and seating will be required along the main corridors routes to the CBD along Marine Way, Beacon Way and Odland/Piesang Valley Road. Developments bordering these routes will be encouraged to contribute to the improvement of commuter pathways, and taxi- and public transport infrastructure and facilities.

The improvements envisaged for the transport system and infrastructure will therefore require measures to ensure that:

- (a) The taxi- and public transport system is enhanced;
- (b) The pedestrian walkways making up the commuter access paths to the taxi- and public transport interchanges and taxi ranks and bus stops are upgraded;
- (c) The Main Street is altered in character so as to be more pedestrian-friendly and people-centred, and in such a

manner that cars may be stopped from entering it on festivals, special events and market days;

- (d) The transport system around the CBD be re-organised in such a manner that vehicular congestion be minimized on Main Street, and that traffic be re-routed in a 'ring' road system around the CBD;
- (e) That traffic flow be enhanced wherever desirable by means of traffic circles and other traffic engineering measures;
- (f) A pedestrian 'village' environment is created in a system of lanes and steps between buildings in the Lower CBD (below Main Street) and centering on the proposed Anchor Place.

5.5 Car Parking Provisions

Managing the public spaces in such away that the primacy of pedestrians in a richly textured, human scale series of urban places is established and maintained is a key goal of the strategy.

This requires management of parking in innovative and creative ways, to free these pedestrianised precincts from the impact and dominance of cars.

The key measures required to achieve this are:

- (a) The creation of a major parking facility and additional outside parking are provided in and for the Lower CBD in such a way that the envisaged pedestrian environment is made possible.
- (b) Maximized parking bay efficiency in new developments by optimizing timing differences of parking in mixed-use development sites. This can be done by allowing the 're-cycling' of day-time parking bays used for shopping, commercial and office activities as night-time bays for use by restaurants, leisure activities and evening entertainment venues.
- (c) Introducing a system of parking 'off-sets' in development proposals. Thus sites on public and/or private land can supply parking in addition to their own requirements, in such a way that this parking can offset the under- or non-provision of parking on other nearby private land. This will assist with the urban regeneration of existing sites where on-site and off-street parking would be impossible or difficult to accommodate, or where pedestrian zones need to be kept free of parking.

5.6 Enhanced Development Rights

Existing property owners whose properties fall in areas for potential enhanced development rights could be encouraged to re-invest in their respective properties by the

revitalisation measures as a whole, as well as by the potential parking offsets.

Enhanced rights could include site specific measures such as extra bulk, additional coverage and a relaxation of parking requirements if parking is taken up in other allocated areas , such as for example in the proposed new parking garage under the Anchor Place development.

In return, the local authority may formulate and request any such reasonable and fair levies and requirements as may be applicable, such as betterment fees, augmentation levies and rates increases and physical infrastructural improvements and design enhancements, provided that these are possible within the legal and regulatory framework.

5.7 Urban Design

All development within the UR area will be expected to be of a good standard of design. Project proposals on or adjacent to Sensitive Development Sites shall reflect appropriate design responses in accordance with the character of their respective urban precincts and settings.

Further urban design guidelines may apply to specific precincts. All development proposal drawings should represent their context on site plans and building elevation studies.

6 CONTROLS & PLANNING APPLICATION CRITERIA

6.1 Development Controls

All the policy provisions contained in this document must be read in conjunction with the overall development control policies and legislation currently in force, and/or soon to be promulgated. These include the current Town Planning Scheme documentation, **Municipal By-laws**, and envisaged new **Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme** (TPS) and **Spatial Development Framework** (Bitou SDF) and collectively, these policies and provisions set out the standard planning criteria applicable to all forms of development.

6.2 Legal Agreements

Where planned projects have yet to be given planning permission, or where revised proposals are submitted, the CDF and URF provisions will be used to secure the highest design and environmental standards for the developments. The Council will seek to achieve the benefits envisaged in the URF and relevant precinct plan from such developments in the form of legal agreements and undertakings before permissions and occupation certificates are to be granted.

It is envisaged that many of the primary development areas and sites identified in the CURF will be considered for varying degrees of planning relaxations and the granting of special

conditions and approvals, since the current zoning is in many instances too limiting as to unlocking the most favourable development.

Where the Council considers that proposed developments would or could negatively affect and/or prejudice the strategy as a whole, it can refuse any specific concessions and/or departures requested, as prejudicing the intentions of the URF and relevant area.

7 URBAN RENEWAL OVERLAY CONDITIONS: KEY CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The following criteria shall inform the assessment of development proposals in the designated Urban Renewal Area.

These criteria shall be considered as Urban Renewal Area Overlay Conditions applicable to the existing and future New Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme and the Spatial Development Framework. The force of these overlay conditions shall depend on the precise status of the development area or site in question: for example, having more force in cases where public land and/or the need for departures and special conditions is involved, and progressively less force where no departures, special conditions or departures are required and where only building control measures apply.

7.1 Mixed-use

All proposed developments shall provide for a balanced and integrated mix of uses. These shall be compatible respectively with the overall urban renewal objectives of :

- The Plettenberg Bay Urban Renewal Area;
- The Precinct Plan in question; and
- Specific site development conditions in the case of a Sensitive Development Area (SDA).

7.2 Dominant use

In general the dominant use on any site or within any comprehensive scheme shall occupy no more than 65% of the proposed usable floor space. The remaining floor space shall provide for a balanced and complementary range of uses compatible with the overall objectives of the urban renewal strategy for the area, precinct and site in question.

7.3 Compatibility of uses

The proposed use shall be compatible with the mix of uses set out for the area and site, or with schemes already granted planning permission or under construction on adjacent or nearby sites.

7.4 Site Appraisals and Fit

On sites exceeding 2500m² where full details are not submitted with initial applications, initial site development appraisal submissions will be required to set out how the proposals are to be in accordance with the strategic objectives and criteria of the CURF. This will be followed by more detailed plans that will demonstrate an appropriate fit of the intended uses and form of development with the overall planning and intentions of the RA, relevant PP and site conditions of the SDA, if applicable. It is to be noted

that these conditions of fit will vary in accordance with the following broad qualitative areas

- The CBD Area
- The Beaches Area
- The Beacon Isle Area
- The Nature Areas
- The Town Access Corridors

7.5 People-Centred Development Sites

Development sites fronting onto the Main Street/Anchor Place Pedestrian Area; the Central-, Hobie- or Lookout Beaches; the Beacon Isle shoreline; and the Piesang River Mouth; shall be treated with special care as 'people-centred' sites. These sites, irrespective of the size, scale or permanence of buildings and facilities, will be expected to attract large numbers of people as visitors, residents and workers. Provision shall be made for access points to these sites for people arriving and departing by taxi, bus and tour-bus.

7.6 Continuous Pedestrian Walkways

People-centred sites as described immediately above, shall be developed so as to provide:

- Continuous pedestrian walkways along building façades edges, riverside edges, beach edges, and seashore edges
- Pedestrian through lanes in cases where a 'village' format and people-centred environment is required,

such as through the Lower CBD urban fabric including the Anchor Place development.

- Signage of a public and general character in accordance with a theme and guidelines to be provided from time to time by the local authority in accordance with the town's branding and marketing initiatives.

7.7 Urban Interface Elements

Attractive lighting and surface treatments appropriate to the location and environment shall be provided for along continuous pedestrian walkways. Attractive and well detailed urban interface elements including:

- shading devices and canopies;
- entry recesses, glass lines and threshold conditions;
- architectural-, door- and window elements;
- external lighting along the street perimeters, to delivery courtyards, etc;
- indications of type- and location of major signage elements;
- street furniture elements; and
- landscaping,

Shall form an integral part of the development of these sites and shall be clearly indicated on the final building plans to be submitted (after the planning approval application drawings).

7.8 Sensitive and Controlled Development Sites

Development sites that are considered important in respect either of:

- historical legacy and memorialisation;
- urban and spatial character;
- environmental sensitivity;
- people-centred focus (see (e) above); or
- general importance in the overall URS, CDF and/or CURF

will require design of a good standard, including representation of the immediately adjacent urban fabric in site development plans and elevation studies, based on due consideration of the proposals contained in the CDF, CURF and any future associated studies sponsored by the Bitou Municipality in the furtherance of the URS.

7.9 Cycle ways

The development of a continuous cycle way shall be allowed for and permitted to be developed in accordance with detailed urban design plans to be submitted and finalized. Parts of this cycle way may need to be accommodated by adjoining developments along which it may run. This cycle way shall in effect have a permanent route as indicated in the CDF. It is to run from the eastern approach of the N2 through the Marine Way Corridor, Central Town Area and through the Odland/Piesang Valley Corridor back to the N2 to the west. A special 'scenic loop' may be allowed in order to re-route this cycle way along parts of the pedestrian walkways snaking through

the prime people-centred sites such as along the Lookout Rocks, Hobie Beach and possibly along the proposed Central Beach boardwalk. This 'scenic loop' shall be a temporary measure permitted for the duration of limited special cycling events and subject to the requisite legal management agreements with the relevant organizing bodies.

7.10 Environmental Improvement Contributions

Reasonable and fair contributions towards environmental, aesthetic and infrastructural improvements will be required as part of proposed developments where such developments include discretionary and/or jurisdictional powers by the Bitou Municipality. These contributions will be secured by means of documented drawings and legal agreements. Should such agreed contributions not be fulfilled, the local authority will be entitled to withhold approvals and/or occupation certificates until such fulfillment.

7.11 Information Required with Planning Applications

The information and the proposals contained shall be developed in accordance with the relevant provisions and sections of the urban renewal framework and of its constituent aspects in the URS (Part I), CDF (Part II) and CURF (Part III) as a whole. All applications for development in the Urban Renewal Area (denoted by the Precincts 01-

13) will be required to include, where appropriate, the following supportive information:

- (i) Transport Impact Assessment;
- (ii) Retail Impact Assessment;
- (iii) Environmental Impact Assessment;
- (iv) Enhancement Proposals for the infrastructure of the public spaces and the urban and natural environment and local community generally;
- (v) Site Analysis and Design Principles Statement, including an explanation of how the urban design requirements and guidelines of the URS (Part I), CDF (Part II) and CURF (Part III) are adhered to in principle and adapted situationally to achieve the objectives of the urban renewal plan and strategy.

7.12 Planning procedures

It is recommended that developers follow the following essential steps in the planning and approvals process to with the relevant departments of the local authority:

- (i) Submission of development bid proposal call – if applicable;
- (ii) Conceptual consultations;
- (iii) Pre-approval submission;
- (iv) Planning application submission;
- (v) Building plan approval submission – including specification of all special departures and conditions if applicable;
- (vi) Legal agreements – if applicable for special enhanced development rights and/or conditions;

- (vii) Building inspections during construction;
- (viii) Verification of fulfillment of all special conditions, off-sets, contributions, etc.;
- (ix) Occupation certificate and transfer rights – if applicable, after the fulfillment of all conditions.

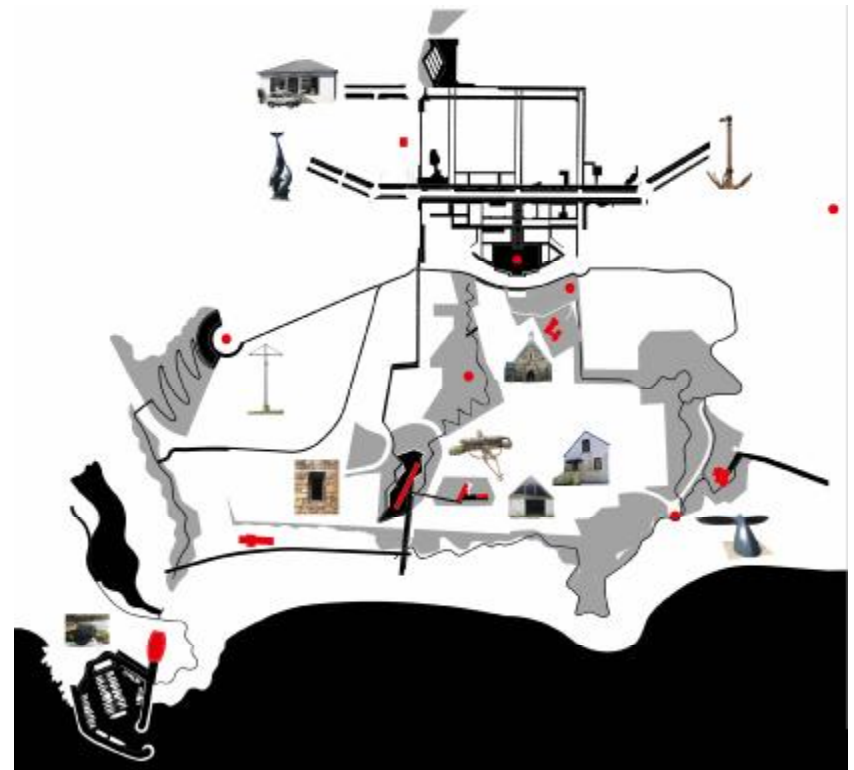
7.13 Grounds for refusal

Any development proposals that would be considered to undermine the objectives of the urban renewal strategy and its conceptual design framework will be refused.

PART II: **CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FRAMEWORK** **(CDF)**

SEE SECTION B: DIAGRAMS, SHEETS AND FIGURES – PART II:
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FRAMEWORK

FOR DIAGRAMS, PLANS AND IMAGES



8 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN BRIEF

8.1 Background

There has been a desire by concerned individuals to develop a plan to upgrade the urban environment of the CBD for some 20-25 years.

More recently the Plettenberg Bay Urban Design Group was constituted informally to revive the process at the behest of the Local Authority, who also appointed a Project Leader to co-ordinate the process.

A number of ideas, design concepts and significant accumulated insights were therefore brought together and formed part of the briefing process.

At the same time, the Office of the Mayor consolidated various elements of information and diverse conceptual development proposals, at various stages of resolution, and from the recent past and presented them as core aspects of the briefing process. In short the briefing process was from inception an inclusive one, involving the 'summarization of current thinking' from diverse sources.

The management of, and investment in the 'public' domain of the town has been traditionally limited to the functional minimums of providing the necessary streets, kerbs, pavements, signage and trees, often undertaken in an ad hoc, fragmentary manner. The result is more often than not a qualitative impoverishment of the public domain.

The Urban Design Group and the Mayor's Office, as well as members of the Council, Town Management and Department of Public Works recognized that a conceptual shift to regarding the public domain as an integrated environment was required and that an urban renewal or regeneration process was required that would consolidate diverse elements and help to steer development initiatives more consciously and in a more cohesive pattern.

8.2 Other Planning Processes

As noted earlier above, this Central Business District (CBD) Urban Renewal and Main Street Upgrade initiative is taking place against the background of the following planning processes, occurring in parallel:

- **The Provincial Spatial Development Framework** (PSDF);
- **Spatial Development Framework** (Bitou SDF);
- **The new Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme** (TPS);
- **The Integrated Development Plan** (IDP); and
- **The Local Economic Development Planning** (LED)

In addition, there are consultations underway between the Bitou Municipality and the Department of Environmental Affairs regarding the shared management responsibilities for the coastal- and nature reserves.

This is particularly relevant from a public participation process perspective.

8.3 Participation Framework and Consultations

It was decided between the Bitou local authority reference group, the Project Leader and CONCEPTWORKS that, in the first major and crucial rounds of public participation and engagement with stakeholders and the public, the urban renewal proposals were to be presented as something tangible and real, with a clear portrayal of the overall vision of the project.

Consequently the intended and visualized outcomes were developed as a series of studies and conceptual hypotheses for discussion. Planning and urban design abstractions were eschewed in favour of a Conceptual Design Study containing both textual and visual information.

The material contained in the Conceptual Design Study was presented to a number of formally constituted gatherings.

These presentations at different times included members of the Bitou Town Council, the Mayoral Committee, Senior Executives and Officials of the Bitou Municipality, the Project Leader and Urban Design Group (including members of the local chapter of the South African Institute of Architects, the Ratepayers Association (at its AGM), representatives of the local Chamber of Commerce, the local IDP Forum, the Taxi Drivers Association, the Bitou Ward Committees and members of the public.

The draft Conceptual Design Framework proposals were also presented to a number of other stakeholders and involvees on a more informal basis, such as for, example, local environmental activists, architects and developers with an interest in the project area.

8.4 Development of the Brief

Co-ordination of project brief, and its changes and evolution was conducted in consultation with the Project Leader, Paul Scheepers.

Amendments were incorporated as information emerged and the consultation process unfolded.

Development of the design also punctuated by presentations to the groupings mentioned earlier.

Specific aspects were work-shopped with the relevant directors, managers, department heads and professional experts in the Bitou Municipality in accordance with the issues concerned.

Consultations were also held with the Traffic Engineering Consultants Stewart Scott International.

The final Conceptual Design Framework was advertised and published for comment together with the SDF and NTPS proposals on 13 December 2004 and for a public comment period for six weeks.

8.5 Statement of Purpose and Limitations

The present Urban Renewal Strategy document is intended to function at different levels of conceptualization.

It is intended to serve as:

- A stimulator of development initiatives;
- A policy guide document at the local level; and
- An informant for the qualitative aspects of environmental and building design.

This document in no way therefore suggests the diminishing of existing standard planning rights on privately-owned properties, in so far as these comprise: allowed bulk, coverage, height, setbacks, restriction of overlooking features, parking requirement, etc. as set out in the existing Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme and Municipal By-laws and/or any other legal and/or development control provisions affecting servitudes, title deed provisions, and heritage- and environmental protection.

In so far as it reflects a specific level of public consensus reached, and promotes certain development initiatives, the interpretation of which may require departures and qualification of existing legislation, this CURF document will however provide guidance for the local authorities in considering the granting of departures for development proposals.

In cases where the Bitou Municipality takes the lead in stimulating development initiatives, then the provisions in this CURF may be used as guidelines to structure such processes, which will be reduced to legal agreements. These may include such cases as:

- (a) The alienation, leasing or granting of usufruct of public land for development;
- (b) The relaxation of obligations, legal planning restrictions and provisions to stimulate development that serves to fulfill the objectives of the urban renewal strategy;
- (c) Public-private partnerships in certain key development initiatives.
- (d) Conditions to be attached to developments to consist of private/public land exchanges.
- (e) The granting of development concessions in exchange for social commitment contributions by developers.

8.6 Approach and Methodology

This report is primarily an urban renewal strategic planning document. Urban renewal requires an approach different from the conventional 'structure plan' approach, which tends to be descriptive and physical-determinist. It is therefore not an 'urban design master plan'.

The approach here makes use of a broader range of conceptual instruments.

The research and strategy formulation process is strongly informed by action research methodology. This involves building active participation of the key stakeholders into the research and analysis phase early on. This has the benefit of developing propositions, testing emerging hypotheses, and obtain feedback and involvement by stakeholders in the research process itself.

Final recommendations and strategies are thus usually better integrated into the stakeholders' thinking and form a consensus urban renewal 'charter'.

Urban renewal policy formulation is based on a grounded theory approach, on case studies and on property development theory.

Conceptual design is inspired primarily by a landscape urbanism approach, in which fuses together aspects of urbanism, land art, architecture and design. It involves re-programming the urban surface with layered and mixed uses and a measure of creative congestion in pedestrian zones.

A landscape urbanism approach involves a conceptual shift from traditional 'formal' urban design, to a more fluid, strategic and conceptual approach to urban renewal. It recasts the design process as follows...

Conceptual shift in urban renewal approach:

From... landscape as static scenic decoration	To... landscape as a functioning matrix of connective tissue
From... the design of closed objects	To... the design of larger urban surfaces as open systems
From... the design of fixed spaces	To... the co-ordination of a dynamic field of interactive, layered and functioning elements: roads, paths, infrastructure, buildings, and places of significance
From... urban design as a collection of set pieces	To... landscape urbanism as the a dynamically designed urban surface responsive to human activities
From... design as passive ameliorant of the status quo	To... design as active accelerant for emergent new conditions
From... design as formal composition	To... design as strategic and tactical re-organisation
From... design as visually driven	To... design as a tactile working of inhabited ground

From... design as offering a sole interpretation and 'closed' work	To... design as offering multiple interpretations as 'open works'
From... design procedure as the separation of analysis and design	To... design procedure as the rapid oscillation between analysis and design
From... design as formula driven by design preconceptions	To... design as situationally driven, using contextual cues as design generators
From... design rooted in individual imagination and desire	To... design grounded in repeated visits and studies, uncovering layers of common meaning
From... imposing new designs	To... redirecting inherent forces
From... launch design from visual and physical givens	To... launch design from physical as well as non-visual and non-physical forces and processes

9 PROJECT AREA AND SCOPE

The Urban Renewal Strategy as a whole seeks to develop and illustrate a **strategic urban revitalisation and renewal approach**. It sets the stage for more specific and detailed investigations into the different focus areas.

It is proposed that such studies be interactively developed once there are clearer indications of the potential forms of activity and the likely forms of public and private investment in these locations.

9.1 Definition of Project Area

The definition of the Project Area and scope underwent some alterations during the planning and consultation process.

The focus area was initially the CBD area and the Main Street strip. In the second round of consultations, this was expanded to include the lower areas along the beaches, Piesang River mouth, lagoon and seaboard, as well as Signal Hill. In the third round of consultations the project area was expanded to include the taxi rank area and the main access corridors into the town.

The brief has also evolved into a more comprehensive consideration of the Central area of Plettenberg Bay, as it was realized that a more encompassing ambit would help to consolidate and give direction to the future development of the town.

It is widely acknowledged that areas such as New Horizons, Kwanokuthula and Wittedrift represent the areas of greatest social need and therefore require the most investment in essential infrastructure and community facilities.

Nevertheless the Central Area contains the core civic spaces that belong to and need to be appropriated by all Bitouans.

Investment of effort in regenerating the Central areas is therefore also an effort in securing the common civic heart of the broader Bitou community. The broader project area is shown in the relevant maps, in particular as bounded by the various precinct diagrams. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 1)**

9.2 Project Scope

In the context of the changes to the brief, which expanded the project area, the project scope was progressively altered so as to reflect different degrees of emphasis within these areas, thereby remaining within the time frame and resources initially allowed for.

The outcome was to define the conceptual parameters for the definition and development of a series of urban precincts, nature areas and corridors. These show the project area as an assemblage of 13 Precincts, although there are a number of unifying and continuous elements that reach across these precincts.

The project scope was therefore defined in terms of **four 'scales' of conceptualization**. Not all areas are considered in the same degree of detail. Greater detail was produced in accordance with a ranking of areas in terms of likelihood and priority of implementation. The project scope was hence differentiated into four scales and degrees of conceptual detail.

9.3 The Overall Urban Scale

The first scale is that of giving definition to overall urban space systems and sub-systems, and the essential urban character to be defined and broad interventions required or adapted across the whole project area. This comprises elements of continuity including the pedestrian and vehicular movement systems, public space system, green areas, landscape features and the shoreline conditions.

9.4 The Precinct Scale

The second scale is that of individual precincts, corridors and nature areas. The scope here is to establish the terms of the essential features and desired characteristics so as to inform localised urban character and to define the broad interventions to be further developed in future detailed studies.

9.5 Focus Area Scale of the Main Street and CBD

The third scale is that of the urban focus area, the centre-piece in the urban renewal of the town. This encompasses the CBD, with a particular focus on the Main Street and lower CBD. It includes all the public land that forms a continuous surface at the heart of the town. It comprises the length of Main Street and the link through Crescent Street to the present site of the Bitou Council chambers and some of the public land below Sewell Street bordering on the premises of St Peter's Church.

This involves a consideration of the guiding parameters for stimulating and coordinating the urban renewal process and the urban character to be achieved. The land of the Bitou Council and the adjoining public land that is earmarked for disposal and for redevelopment, was investigated as to possible massing and development potential.

This as a central enabling component of the urban renewal and is investigated in greater detail. Sectional sketches and 3-d visualization studies are included completed for the purposes of directing interest by potential public/private partnerships and/or development bid consortia.

9.6 The Core Pedestrian Area Scale of Main Street (Phase 1)

The fourth scale is at the level of the street, in this instance of the Main Street Precinct, also referred to as the Main Street Upgrade Area. This is investigated in a relatively detailed

manner, since it is envisaged to form the first practical implementation stage of the project as a whole. It needs to give impetus to the urban renewal process as a whole.

10 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FRAMEWORK

This Conceptual Design Framework (CDF) contains the material presented for **public participation**, and should be read in conjunction with the relevant CDF presentation Sheets 1-10. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEETS 1-10)**

The primary sections (e.g. "10.1 Project Area and Scope") correspond to the CDF presentation sheet headings. The secondary headings (e.g. "1 PROJECT AREA") each introduce a key concept or theme. These are numbered consecutively across the primary section headings for ease of reference. Taken together they provide a synopsis and at the same time give indications of the environmental and design qualities envisaged.

10.1 PROJECT AREA AND SCOPE

1 PROJECT AREA

The Plettenberg Bay Urban Renewal / Main Street Upgrade project comprises the Main Street and Central Business District (CBD) area, as well as the key spatial extensions from the CBD towards key places of interest and shoreline localities. The connections between these diverse elements need to be (re-) created by means of a pedestrian friendly public urban space system. The upgrade of Main Street and the adaptation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic is the first phase. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 1)**

2 APPROACH

The approach adopted by is informed by landscape urbanism. The urban surface is treated as a continuous social space to be transformed by a series of purposeful acts that arise from environmental concerns, the client's programmes and users' needs.

3 ACTIVITY NODES

The main activity nodes represent concentrations of public social activities and interactions. A proposed New Town Centre between Kwanokuthula and New Horizons will complement the existing nodes of the Main Street/CBD, Main Beach and Market Square.

4 IDENTITY ISSUES

The diverse constituencies of Plettenberg Bay need to be accommodated on the common civic ground of the central part of the town, which is and will remain its heart and key place of identity. The central area requires that the local identities are accommodated and expressed

5 STRATEGIC DISPOSALS

It is envisaged that the local authority will fund the upgrading and renewal project by means of strategic disposals, structured around bid proposals for strategic sites to be invited from developers.

This would include measures such as disposals, leaseholds of enhanced development rights subject to highly specific controls and conditions.

6 KEY ROUTES

In order to soften the heart of the town and to create a pedestrian-friendly environment, major through traffic will need to be diverted.

10.2 PROPOSED VEHICULAR TRAFFIC PLAN

7 RING ROAD

A new ring road system is proposed to relieve traffic along Main Street. Strand Street becomes a slow traffic area to allow Main and High Streets to extend southwards. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 2)**

8 MAIN STREET CALMING

Traffic is calmed by means of texture changes and slight level changes that signal pedestrian priority. Moveable bollards can be used to demarcate areas to be switched over from vehicular traffic and/or parking to other uses.

9 MAIN STREET PARKING

Angled parking is retained along both sides of Main Street for normal use and off season convenience. On special occasions such as festival and market days and/or in high season some of the parking surface will be given over to pedestrian and other uses.

10 TAXI RANK

The pedestrian connection between the taxi rank above High Street and Main Street will be enhanced. The taxi rank will in future require re-organisation and better facilities for street market traders and travellers.

11 PARKING OFFSETS

A major new parking facility off Sewel Street will provide parking for casual visitors to Main Street and for the retail and hospitality facilities immediately above. Parking may also be made available to offset shortages for adjacent properties applying for enhanced development rights to form the "Village" between Main & Sewel Streets.

12 SCENIC DRIVE

Sewel Street is reconfigured as part of a scenic drive connecting Odland Street and Beacon way.

13 PLAN 'B'

A more radical approach extending the ring road further away from Main Street may be implemented in future or if the findings of the detailed traffic impact study so require.

10.3 URBAN SPACE SYSTEM: OVERALL PLAN

14 MAIN STREET UPGRADE

The upgrading of Main Street and the alteration of its character to pedestrian priority lies at the core of these

proposals. The cross-sectional level changes in the street require a design strategy that turns this into a unique asset. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 3)**

15 THE STEPS

A grand slow stair and ramp system replaces the part of Crescent Street below Main Street. The steps are wide enough to accommodate market stalls on market days. They fall two stories over a distance of about 60 meters.

16 ANCHOR PLACE

Anchor Place is a raised square or plaza at the site of the current main Bitou Municipal building. It enjoys uninterrupted views of the ocean. It is lined with shops at plaza level, and which are under a raised upper level walkway. The upper levels would be devoted to hospitality industry venues such as a hotel and conference centre.

17 NATURE TRAILS

Three nature areas are to be developed with trails. Indigenous forest and other niche biome vegetation as well as rich bird life make these areas attractive. Community guides could provide security and interpretive tourism services.

18 CULTURAL PRECINCT

A new cultural precinct can be developed to include the Old Timber Shed (1778), Rectory, Chapel, Diaz Memorial, and site of the VOC Logging Slipway (displaced) connecting to the beach below. Museum, retail and catering facilities would enhance this area, which, together with the Nature area, forms a bridge between the CBD and Central Beach.

19 BEACH FACILITIES

Strategically negotiated leases can be used to encourage an overall upgrade of the Central as well as Lookout Beach infrastructure, comprising such elements as boardwalks and sunscreens.

20 WATERFRONT FACILITIES

A Riverfront development and Yacht Harbour are indicated as possible future projects to expand, complement and enhance the existing water's edge facilities. Promenades and special decks would link all these highly desirable places.

10.4 PUBLIC SPACE SYSTEM, ACTIVITY MAPPING AND STREET MARKETS

21 ACTIVITY CYCLES

The central area of Plettenberg Bay is characterised by significant seasonal fluctuations across a range of activities. Urban re-generation requires management

strategies to stimulate complementary activities to even out troughs and to create a vibrant urban centre with extended street life times.

(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 4)

22 ACTIVITY MIX

The particular mix of activities during high season has a strong holiday, shopping, leisure, water sports, beach lifestyle and dining out character (60 restaurants). This mix could be enhanced by adding interpretive cultural- and eco-tourism as well as by a more vibrant programme of markets and street festivals.

23 CONNECTIVITY

The activity mix requires easy pedestrian 'connectivity', which can be provided by a fluid and interesting pedestrian environment. The linear character of Main Street can be enhanced by a 'Village' structured by a network of interconnected lanes.

24 'SWEETLY GO' MARKETS

An interconnected set of places for permanent, temporary and/or seasonal market stalls has been identified, connecting the Taxi ranks through Main Street, the future Anchor Place, to the Cultural Precinct and Central Beach area. Visitors will be encouraged to shop along these connecting routes, and thereby 'sweetly go' between these venues.

25 EATING OUT

Eating out and outside is a major factor in Plett, and this is a key 'activating factor' in the public space system. In turn, successfully configured public spaces can create a hub effect that attracts inner town living and stimulates inner town hospitality developments, key drivers of urban revitalisation.

26 LEISURE

Leisure activities at Central Beach merge seamlessly with dining, hospitality and retail. This can be extended into the town by strategic interventions connecting the beach with the CBD by means of a cultural precinct and nature area and nature walks.

27 CYCLING TRACK

A cycling track is indicated, which would form part of a regional initiative to thread a major permanent cycling pathway through the Garden Route.

10.5 EXISTING AND PROPOSED BUILT FABRIC

28 LANDMARK OVERLAYS

Landmarks in the urban fabric include buildings and sites of special significance from either historical, cultural, scenic or leisure points of view. These form focal points in the urban fabric and are centre-pieces in the broader evolution of Plettenberg Bay's identity. They may become subject to Overlay Zone requirements as provided for in the new Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme

and protected in terms of the South African Heritage Authority. (See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 5)

29 BUILT FABRIC & THE 'VILLAGE'

Buildings collectively form the built fabric of the town. They also form the edges to streets and other public places. New fabric should be regulated to enhance the public space system. The area below Main Street is envisaged as developing a village-like structure with lanes and a pedestrian friendly network of outdoor spaces.

30 RESIDENTIAL BIAS

New fabric should be biased towards residential apartments on the upper levels, so as to encourage the town to become a lived in precinct. This would promote an urban lifestyle of using café's and outdoor spaces as an extension of the residential domain.

31 STRATEGIC DISPOSALS & HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Enhancement of the hospitality industry creates a multiplier effect since it circulates a relatively high number of visitors through the same infrastructure. The long-term and sustained success of the Beacon Isle Hotel should be replicated. Possible strategic disposals of state land in the case of the PO and SAP sites as well as of municipal land in the case of the Bitou Council site are cases in point.

Similar rationale applies to potential strategic leasing arrangements in the case of water's edge sites.

32 ENHANCED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Existing property owners whose properties fall in areas for potential enhanced development rights could be encouraged to re-invest in their respective properties by the revitalisation measures as a whole, as well as by the potential parking offsets. Enhanced rights could include site specific measures such as extra bulk, additional coverage and a relaxation of parking requirements if parking is taken up in the Anchor Place garage. In return, they would be subject to betterment fees, augmentation levies and rates increases charged by the Municipality.

10.6 CULTURAL, HISTORICAL AND TOURISM PLACE MAPPING

33 AFFECTIVE TOPOGRAPHY

The affective topography of Plettenberg Bay refers to the emotions and mental associations that its inhabitants and visitors assemble from their experiences. Whilst this is an intimate and personal process, the intention of this urban renewal process is also to map the possible configuration of themes and places that can play a role in generating positive experiences. (See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 6)

34 IDENTITY

The public space system and the interactions that it enables amongst people assists in creating a culture of dignity and urbanity. Public places should be configured in such a way that residents experience a feeling of identification with, and sense of ownership of, the spaces. Spaces should confer a “freedom of use” as a basis for this identification. The development of a unique physical identity for the town relates to how culturally-bound landscaping, architecture and infrastructure are woven into the natural and topographical characteristics of Plettenberg Bay. Such a unique identity also forms a basis for its differentiation as a destination of choice on a global scale.

35 MEMORIALISATION

Contemporary cultural policy in the South African context stresses the need for the memorialisation of aspects of our cultural heritage and history that have been previously distorted or repressed by a colonial mentality and under apartheid. Sites relating to repressed social histories are thus to be sought out and memorialized, e.g. slave quarters, unmarked indigenous burial sites, sites of struggle. Sites of colonial legacy need to be woven into this process and offered with new interpretations.

35 EMERGENT AFRICAN EXPRESSIONS

The emergence of a more integrated cultural identity has been made possible post-1994. The emergence of more indigenous and African social and cultural

expressions presents the town with an opportunity to reconfigure itself. Public spaces can become more interactive and vibrant. The proposed Cultural Precinct and African Sculpture Garden offers an opportunity to introduce contemporary South African cultural expressions into the founding historic heart of the town.

36 INTERPRETIVE TOURISM ROUTES

Numerous interpretive tours and routes can be woven through the fabric of the town, such as:

- A Slave Route
- A Market Routes
- A Food Route
- A Multicultural Experience Route
- A Luxury Goods Route
- Marine, Coastal & Forest Eco-tours
- A Walk Through Time
- 30 Minute Scenic & Nature Walks

A new tourism promotion centre is also envisaged for the town.

10.7 LANDSCAPE OF PUBLIC SPACES AND ‘VALLEY SECTION’

37 VALLEY SECTION

The valley section represents a pedestrian movement process from the high lying areas at the High Street Taxi rank, through Main Street, the “Village” area, Anchor

Place, Indigenous nature area, the Cultural Precinct and finally to Central Beach. The transitions and connections between these areas require unifying elements to ensure a consistent local identity.

(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 7)

38 UNITY & DIVERSITY

While unified, the pedestrian movement nevertheless also needs to unfold with a constant diversity of experience between areas and precincts.

39 CREATIVE CONGESTION

Vibrant and living urban spaces are characterized by creative juxtaposition and overlapping of functions, uses, programmes and human activities (work/leisure/eating/shopping/entertainment/education etc), including the mixing of people and cars with finesse.

40 BODILY SENSATION AND MOVEMENT

Bodily sensation and movement are the basis for structuring the pedestrian realm. Leisurely walking (promenading) as well as slow cruising by car are means for people to "assemble" their experiences.

41 THE WHALE - INTERACTIVE MEDIA CENTRE

The concept for "The Whale" as a landmark for Plettenberg Bay has been proposed by the Mayor's Office. Here the idea is proposed as a 25m bronze sculpture resting on Anchor Place. It would be entered

from an dedicated exhibition and marine eco-tourism centre below.

Once inside the Belly of the Whale there would be an interactive media centre with whale-sound recordings and a simulated under-sea audio/visual experience. Visitors would play a game that results in the periodic 'breath' of the whale with water squirting high into the air over Anchor Place. There would be peep holes from which to view the ocean.

10.8 CONCEPTUAL 3-D STUDIES OF MAIN STREET AND ANCHOR PLACE

42 PROGRAMMING THE URBAN SURFACE

The urban surface is regarded as a folded topographical plane on which humans write their natural-system interpretations, agriculture, social agendas, technological programmes and human uses. The diverse and at times contradictory requirements of a functioning CBD need to inform the design process. Rather than imposing a backward-looking "beautification", the approach here is to re-program the urban surface to anticipate emergent new needs, uses and desires. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 8)**

43 HORIZONTAL LAYERING

Programmatic requirements are developed as to their inherent logic and dimensional requirements and then combined by layering. Layered subsystems apart from

existing underground services infrastructure, include primarily two orders of trees, an indigenous planting strip, a raised walkway/boardwalk/promenade/ etc. as per diagramme to left.

44 MAIN STREET & PROMENADE AS "SOCIAL CONDENSER"

The raised Main Street promenade is conceptualised to act as the core civic space. It is the key to the configuration of Main Street as a "horizontal monument" onto which various elements of use, civic symbolism and metaphors of nature are inscribed. The street is a social condenser in that it brings together and compresses all the diverse constituencies of Plettenberg Bay into one realm.

45 ANCHOR PLACE

Anchor Place is a strategic disposal site in terms of broader planning.

Design parameters as to massing and parking infrastructure are developed to inform the development of bid call documentation for inviting development proposals.

46 'THE VILLAGE' PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT

The Village is a proposed plan to guide the future (re-) development of sites below Main Street. It would be a permeable and mixed-use pedestrian precinct with boutiques, individual and niche shops, café's, residential apartments, offices, etc. Parking would be

accommodated below Anchor Place through off-set arrangements.

47 SCENIC VIEWS

The urban structure of new buildings would preserve and enhance scenic views of the Ocean through lanes and over

10.9 TYPICAL MAIN STREET PROMENADE DESIGN STUDY

48 SPACES OF INTERACTION & DELAY

Main Street provides opportunities for chance meetings, casual contacts as well as interaction between relative strangers. This is enhanced by consciously seeking to create spaces that offer points to delay along pedestrian and vehicular movement zones . Promenading also provides opportunities to seek out encounters. Thus public space helps to weave together people in the broader social fabric through unplanned face-to-face contact. This also increases the ability of people to recognise the faces of fellow citizens and thus to form bonds of common identity. Main Street should contribute to overcoming the fractured social existence inherited from the past. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 9)**

49 SITES TELL STORIES

As a site Main Street tells stories that carry messages about culture, ecology, people and places.

The use of indigenous building and plant materials, as well as the participation of local labour in the production of the spaces, will help to narrate the site.

50 MATERIALITY & NATURE

The materials used seek to evoke a reading of indigenous nature, and to re-propose it symbolically. The urban surface is striated with elements that echo the structure of the coastline.

51 EQUIPMENT

The spaces are equipped with new light standards that serve to: signal the renewal process; provide appropriate low-level 'romantic' lighting for human street activities in the evenings; and for attaching banners and signs. The careful consideration other elements of street furniture, signs, bins, bollards, etc can help to give the CBD and 'new look' with relatively light footprint.

52 LAND ART

An attitude that regards intervention on the urban surface as a form of land art can be useful in guiding the contributions of various participants to the detail implementation of the renewal process. This is a collective creative adventure in interpreting, appropriating and transforming the local urban landscape.

10.10 PROPOSED MAIN STREET UPGRADING

53 MULTI-FUNCTIONAL URBAN HUB

The thinking is that the Main Street should be an enabling public space which would allow for changing configurations of use and activity. This is to be achieved by the design of an appropriate, 'programmed' urban surface. **(See SECTION B; PART II; SHEET 10)**

Thus the vehicular traffic would be calmed, and on special occasions could be re-routed altogether, allowing for festivals, markets and other street activities. The flanking parking surfaces would also be flexible, so that whilst being normally available for parking, these surfaces could be switched to other uses such as for trading stalls at specific times or for café tables in season. In any event the Main Street environment would become primarily a pedestrian friendly zone, thus also helping to integrate both sides of the street. The upper level on the western edge of the street would be widened to create a raised, comfortable and scenic promenade or 'boardwalk' capable of accommodating merchandise, café tables and street performances.

Once realized, this Main Street would become a lively, multifunctional hub, from early in the morning until later in the evening, in both low and high season. It would seek to be a kind of place that would offer something for all of Plettenberg Bay's diverse constituencies - permanent, seasonal and transient - alike.

Over time the Main Street would be complemented by other public spaces involved in a broader urban revitalization programme, with leisure-, commercial-, hospitality- and cultural focus points connecting to it. Here too, there would be a strong emphasis on connectivity by means of pedestrian movement enhanced by a canopy of indigenous trees.

54 PROMENADE

A Promenade deck showing the view out across Main Street. Elements of urban furniture and textured surface treatments are shown. The street will be configured in such a way that will allow a multiplicity of uses according to the times of day, week, month or season. (The major trees are here omitted for the sake of legibility.)

55 TEXTURES

Textures and plant life are to echo indigenous ecosystems. The paving can provide opportunities for emerging contractors to participate in labour-intensive stone cutting, cobble – and paving slab manufacturing and laying.

56 DESIGN LANGUAGE

Some comments to serve as design language guidelines follow. These guidelines are left sufficiently open so as to allow the participation of various parties and designers to the creation of an architectural

identity. It is therefore not intended that Plettenberg Bay should be 'themed' in any borrowed style, but that a quest for perhaps a more 'authentic' expression - in so far as it is uniquely rooted and/or adapted, should be encouraged. It is also important for the identity of Plettenberg Bay to differentiate sufficiently from that of other towns so as to become memorable and thereby to compete effectively for consolidate its share of 'mind-space' as a destination option.

A Fusion Approach to Design

Unique urban identity, differentiated from Colonial and Eurocentric styles. Avoid kitsch revivals and the commercialized recycling of foreign styles in favour of more authentic search for a South African identity and its local and regional emergence. The approach adopted here would be an approach based on design responses to contextual cues, climate, indigenous eco-systems, contemporary re-interpretation of inherited traditions, and the fusion of local- and appropriated foreign elements in a contemporary form of expression

Stone Steps and Walls

Stone steps lead from the promenade deck, out across the newly paved Main Street towards the stone drinking fountains and across to the major steps that lead to Anchor Place below. The ocean is visible in the distance. The trees, plants and grasses are to be indigenous to the greater Bitou area.

Pedestrian Spaces

The upgrading should seek to harmonize and smooth the pedestrian space in a series of generously proportioned boardwalks, terraces and decks, involving lighting, seating and landscape elements that would enhance the ethos and character of Plettenberg Bay.

Primary Architectural 'Wall' Elements

The detailed design of proposed buildings at street level should be sympathetic to a pedestrian-friendly and street-life culture. On the ground floor connection to the street, especially on important and pedestrian edges, there should be some wall articulation such as slightly recessed areas creating small 'in-go's'/transition zones at doors and shop windows. Main entrances should have an appropriate 'throat'. Long areas of blind, windowless walls, exposed technical services, walls to parking garages, and an excessive concentration vehicular carriageway crossings that crowd out pedestrians should generally be avoided.

Elsewhere a positive and bold use of generous surfaces of rendered (plastered) walls, with interesting openings as punctuations, can confer unity across buildings.

The treatment of the edges should also respond positively to heritage elements, if any and contribute to and reinforce the emerging character and design identity of the precinct.

Face-brick walls should generally be avoided, except as minor plinth- and/or highlight elements, or unless called for for unique site-specific reasons to echo existing similar elements.

Secondary Architectural External Elements

This refers to Decks, Structural Components, Struts and Ties, Door & Window Frames, Handrails, Sunscreens, Etc.

The use of such secondary elements is encouraged, since they give texture, interest and serve as micro-climate modifying devices that enrich the urban experience. The echoing of maritime references may also be appropriate in certain settings. All these elements in a specific development should be harmonized with one another, and so a sufficient degree with neighbouring and nearby ones on other buildings. That is not to negate the use of contrast and counterpoint in design where appropriately argued.

The finishes of proposed secondary elements should be combinations of the following.

Timber:

- (i) exposed timber (either treated or left to weather) - (no 'fake' colour stains);
- (ii) painted white and/or
- (iii) painted in light-toned greys/browns.

Steel:

- (i) exposed galvanized steel and/or

- (ii) exposed stainless steel and/or
- (iii) light-toned greys/browns for painted steel

Aluminium: (i) for windows: powder-coated in light-toned greys/browns. (No silver, bronze, dark grey etc tones)
 (ii) for sunshade elements: either silver anodized and/or powder-coated in light-toned greys/browns.

Glass: (i) clear glass and/or
 (ii) tinted in varying shades of pale grey (avoid blue, green, gold, silver etc reflective finishes)

External Lighting

The overall effect of lighting is a key determinant of urban quality and should be coordinated in such a fashion that new and existing developments contribute appropriate wall-mounted lighting, and that conversely the street lighting in the public spaces, especially in Main Street, the Lower CBD, the Central Beach and Cultural precinct areas, is sensitively integrated with the overall required effect.

Where overhanging elements such as canopies and decks occur over public spaces, and where these might cast the pavement area in shadow at night, it will be reasonably expected that soft lighting be

installed either on walls or on the underside of the proposed elements by developers and owners.

Pavements

Pavement widths need to be commensurate with the location in the town street grid. It is suggested that along the upper 'broadwalk' in this section of Main Street, the minimum pavement width should be as wide as possible, up to about 6m. It should not be less than 2,4m where constrictions occur due to ramps, stairs, special features, street furniture, etc. The pavements along secondary streets should not be less than 1,6m. Any constrictions exceeding this limit should be motivated as one of the specific departures.

57 STREET FURNITURE, 'BRANDING' AND SIGNAGE ELEMENTS

A branding and signage conceptual design strategy will be required to signify the renewal of the town and to enhance its image. It should be integrated with the broader architectural and urban design measures.

A proactive approach by indicating an intended signage management approach on the facades of developments for conceptual discussion is encouraged, so as not to nullify other urban design measures and so as to ensure a beneficial balance of aesthetic and commercial aims.

11 CONCLUSION

The approach and methodology **actively elicited comment** in the period preceding the publication deadline. Numerous ideas and concepts had therefore been incorporated into the Conceptual Design Framework.

The public comments received during the advertising period, referred to concerns about: the potential traffic impact in general and on Gibb-, Odland-, Sewell and Hill Streets in particular; noise pollution by trucks on the ring road; beach erosion; expense; public toilets; access for the elderly and disabled; better communication and public participation at ward level; control measures at the beaches.

On the whole numerous positive comments were made as to the desirability of the proposals as a whole.

While this Conceptual Design Framework outlines the thinking and strategies developed by the authorities in consultation with interested parties and through a public participation process, it is not intended to be rigidly prescriptive as to the finer implementation or design detail. In cases of doubts and differences of interpretation, reference should be made to the **underlying concepts** of its provisions and to the **strategy's objectives**.

Finally, it would be futile to seek to reduce the complexity and open-endedness of urban development phenomena to a static master plan. The document is therefore to be

interpreted primarily as a strategic and conceptual framework document.

Some of the proposals contained in the Urban Revitalisation Strategy and the Conceptual Design Framework involve robust physical intervention measures, in particular in terms of directing the development of common infrastructural and physical elements, such as roads, trafficable pedestrian surfaces, and new building alignments.

Nevertheless it does not seek to prescribe the precise final forms. It puts forward the drawn proposals as formal and spatial hypotheses for this urban context, so that these can be further explored, tested and hopefully improved on by environmental professionals when considering specific sites.

It gives an indication of a **desired overall environment** and thereby provides contextual conceptual points of reference for the development of individual sites.

PART III: URBAN RENEWAL FRAMEWORK (URF)



SEE SECTION B: DIAGRAMS, SHEETS AND FIGURES – PART
III: **URBAN RENEWAL FRAMEWORK**

FOR DIAGRAMS AND PRECINCT PLANS

12 INTRODUCTION

12.1 The Public Realm and Sociability

The investment of effort in the public realm is only really justified if it serves a social mission. It should not be a mere exercise in commerce or for entrenching a status quo that remains aloof from the lived experience of ordinary citizens. The physical improvement of the public sphere should therefore be seen as an integral part of an effort to construct a new social milieu and sense of harmonious urbanity for all citizens.

The **public “realm”** should be an expression the **self-determination, independence and sovereignty of citizens** and it should be carefully controlled and constructed to achieve this. In terms of its territoriality, the safety of this public realm is also a key to achieving this sense of sovereignty. There needs to a conscious strategic and physical design effort to create a system of public spaces connected by pedestrian pathways to serve these ends.

12.2 Coherence

This part of the Urban Renewal Strategy document develops the objectives of the Urban Renewal Strategy into an actionable conceptual **Urban Renewal Framework** (URF). It describes the major **sub-systems** that overlap the project area and that confer coherence to the renewal framework at a

more physical level. These include the **overall plan** and its key topographical features, main **landscape elements**, **key facilities** and the **traffic-, pedestrian-, nature areas-** and **built fabric** sub-systems. Thereafter key individual aspects of the framework as well as specific **urban precincts** are discussed in greater detail. In precincts where special provisions are envisaged in the form of incentives for developers, for example, as **Enhanced Development Rights** (EHR's), these are also discussed so as to develop some guiding criteria.

12.3 Main Street Upgrading

The core area of the urban renewal is the reconfiguration of Main Street. Main Street is seen as needing to become a soft, pedestrian-friendly public space that would allow for changing configurations of use and activity in accordance with the changing character of the CBD as a lifestyle- and tourism hub. Thus the vehicular traffic would be calmed, and on special occasions could be re-routed altogether, allowing for festivals, markets and other street activities.

The flanking parking surfaces would also be flexible, so that whilst being normally available for parking, these surfaces could be switched to other uses such as trading stalls or café tables in season. Both sides of Main Street would become more unified and integrated as a pedestrian friendly zone.

The upper level on the western edge of the street would be widened to create a raised, comfortable and scenic

promenade or '**broadwalk**' capable of accommodating merchandise, café tables and street performances.

Hopefully, once realized, Main Street would become a **lively, multifunctional hub, with a rich social life** from early in the morning until later in the evening, in both low and high season. It would seek to be a kind of place that would offer something for all of Plettenberg Bay's diverse constituencies - permanent, seasonal and transient - alike.

Over time the Main Street would be complemented by other public spaces involved in a broader urban revitalization programme, with leisure-, commercial-, hospitality- and cultural focus points connecting to it. Here too, there would be a strong emphasis on connectivity by means of pedestrian movement enhanced by a canopy of indigenous trees and flanked in some cases by nature areas.

12.4 Renewal strategy, not 'Master Plan'

Since this is an urban renewal strategy and framework, as opposed to a 'master plan' (which leads to physical deterministic planning and formalism), it seeks to direct activities and development without prescribing them. The attitude to the regulatory framework for the urban renewal process should therefore be one driven by **strategic intent** supported by a **flexible 'rule-making'** capability, especially for specially designated significant precincts and sites.

13 THE OVERALL RENEWAL PLAN

For the renewal plan to function successfully, needs to be sufficient integration between a number of elements, that can be considered as **interactive 'systems'** or sub-systems.

The most important element is the enhancement of a set of **inter-connected pedestrian spaces** that primarily connect the taxi rank/market area at the top of the town, the central CBD area and Central Beach area.

(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 1)

This envisages a coherent sequence of pedestrian movement routes and larger pedestrian spaces stretching from the taxi-rank and market area, along and across the pavements of High Street, down along Strand-, Kloof-, Anchor-, Church- and Gibb Streets to the new upgraded Main Street space.

Main Street is planned as an adaptable and multi-use urban space, which allows for mainly pedestrian, but also vehicular movement. A major system of stairs and ramps connects to the proposed Anchor Place plaza.

This in turns connects to a Village Green area in front of St Peter's Church, and three green connector spaces branch out to Signal Hill, to Central Beach and to Lookout Beach. The primary link is either down through the Central Nature Area, to the Cultural Precinct planned around the Old Dutch East India Company (VOC) Timber Shed, to the proposed timber boardwalk promenade along Central Beach.

From this boardwalk, pedestrians will be able to walk out to the Beacon Isle and Piesang River areas as well as to the Lookout Rocks and to Lookout Beach.

Another crucial element consists of a **re-configured vehicular traffic plan** and management system that decongests the central CDB area.

The **densification** of the central CDB areas by means of new buildings and possibly increasing the footprints of existing buildings to form positive street edges to a system of streets and lanes adds another key dimension.

Nature areas form connectors between the upper part of the town and the River- and Beach areas.

The whole area is punctuated by a series of existing **historical and scenic landmarks**, such as the Old Post Office, St Peter's Church, The Old VOC Timber Shed, etc. Proposed new landmarks include reinforcing the scenic and/or urban value of sites such as those at Signal Hill, Anchor Place, Central Beach and Beacon Isle.

14 THE BASE PLAN – DYNAMICS

The base plan is informed by a few primary urban dynamics and forces. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 2)

14.1 Core activity zones

The first is the centrifugal pull of the two primary zones of high attractiveness, namely Main Street and Central Beach. These are busy all year round, given that they constitute the retail/commercial centre and leisure/maritime hub respectively, and in which people and activities are concentrated.

14.2 Pedestrian movement

The second is the core pedestrian movement- and space system from the upper taxi rank/market area, through the CDD areas, down to the historical and Central Beach area.

14.3 Traffic Management

The third is the vehicular traffic flow and its redirection into a ring road system that surrounds the CBD, thus allowing passing traffic to flow more easily around the CBD and reduce congestion on Main Street.

14.4 Corridors

Finally, there are the three entrance corridors that connect the present "N2 gateways" through Marine Way, Piesang Valley Drive and Beacon Drive to the "CBD gateways" at the taxi rank/market and at either end of Main Street in the CBD.

14.5 Topography and views

Topographically, the CBD rests on a ridge which lies parallel to the ocean shore in a north-south direction. Since the town lies on a gentle slope above this ridge, this allows many buildings to look over buildings on the slope below them. This topographical characteristic makes it possible to have Ocean and lagoon views from many CBD streets and buildings, and in particular from second floor levels, which are the highest levels allowed. This sets Plettenberg Bay apart from many other commercial CBD's in the Southern Cape area, and had helped it to retain and attract ongoing investment in apartment accommodation in the CBD.

14.6 Shoreline conditions

The structure of the shoreline is also such that the small bay between the Beacon Isle and the Lookout Rocks provides a good anchorage location for commercial fishing vessels and private leisure yachts. This defines Central Beach as a transition zone between earth and ocean, adding a particular maritime atmosphere to the town.

15 THE TRAFFIC RING ROAD

The traffic management needed to assist in the renewal consists of two primary concepts:

Firstly, to alter the road infrastructure to make a **ring road bypass** system possible to decongest the CBD; and

Secondly, to manage the traffic through the heart of the CBD, and inside this ring road in a more flexible manner, by slowing traffic along Strand Street and even more so along Main Street, which becomes a **pedestrian priority zone**. Alternating use scenario's between normal car and pedestrian usage on one hand, and eliminating through traffic on special occasions such as on street festivals, at certain peak season times and on market days are to be facilitated and allowed.

(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 3)

The changes envisaged for the traffic infrastructure are reflected in the traffic ring road system, which provides for the following hierarchy of roads:

15.1 Primary access corridor roads

These consist of:

- Marine Way,
- Piesang Valley/Odland Drive and
- Beacon Drive

15.2 Primary ring road

This bounds the CBD, consisting of, (starting from Marine Way):

- Seawitch Avenue
- San Gonzales Street
- Perestrello Street
- A short piece of Odland Street
- Sewel Street (scenic boulevard)
- (Lower) Gibb Street
- (Lower) Main Street
- Hill Street and
- High Street

15.3 Secondary roads

These are located within the ring road, of which Strand Street remains an important, albeit slowed. Other secondary roads include Plettenberg-, Kloof-, Crescent-, Church- and Gibb Streets.

15.4 Pedestrian priority precinct

This occurs primarily in Main Street, which, while still allowing slowed traffic and parking, will become pedestrian friendly. The design of this road will allow changing configurations of use, for markets, street festivals, etc. Cars may be excluded on special occasions.

15.5 Parking

Parking garages both already existing and to be reconfigured in the Upper CBD area; and a proposed new major parking facility to be located in the lower CBD form the key enablers for the pedestrian-friendly environment. All of this parking is within the ring road and offers easy access to the CBD.

16 PUBLIC SPACE SYSTEM

The public space system is considered as a **network of continuous pedestrian surfaces** that stretch across the project area. It is anticipated that this system will evolve over time, beginning with the Main Street upgrading project, and subsequently being implemented piecemeal but in accordance with a unified design language and in matched materials, urban furniture and landscaping accessories. This network of spaces and pathways is to be flanked with indigenous trees wherever possible and appropriate. This continuous surface would require smooth surfaces and disabled access throughout. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 4)

16.1 Shared implementation

The implementation should be associated with and funded by either:

- **public sector** upgrading projects in the respective precincts, and/or
- **private sector** development sites that are immediately adjacent.

Most of the surfaces are on public land. In some special instances, it would be ideal to have the pathway network stretching across private land which is earmarked for Enhanced Development Rights (EDR) status and/or public

access spaces that form part of possible public-private partnership- and/or private developments on land that is currently public land.

Where it crosses streets and major roads, then its surface treatment should take precedence, forming a pedestrian surface texture that signals pedestrian priority.

16.2 Main elements of public space system

This public space system centres around a series of key features in the various precincts. These are:

- The **taxi rank** and **market area**;
- The **“Uptown” pedestrian routes** that connect the taxi rank with Main Street;
- The **Main Street promenading deck, pavements and street surfaces** which will eventually stretch from San Gonzales Street to the south to Hill Street to the north;
- **The Steps** (and pedestrian ramps), along the present lower Crescent Street, that connect Main Street with Anchor Place below;
- The **“Village Lanes”** than form a pedestrian network (allowing service and residents vehicle access only) in the Lower CBD Area below Main Street;

- The **Anchor Place** elevated square or “plaza” which will occupy the area of the present Bitou municipal council chamber and offices;
- The **Scenic Boulevard** which accommodates a scenic drive, cycling lane and pedestrian promenade;
- The **Village Green** above and around St Peter's Church;
- The **three trails/nature walks**, namely:
 - Perestrello Walk to Signal Hill and thereafter the Signal Hill Nature Trail to the Piesang River's Edge Walk;
 - Central Nature Trail to the African Sculpture Garden; and
 - Lookout Nature Trail to the Whale Tail Lookout point;
- The **African Sculpture Garden** around the Old VOC Timber Shed and which forms the heart of the Cultural Precinct;
- The **Old VOC Slipway** connection to Central Beach;
- The **Central Beach Boardwalk** with its associated facilities such as sunscreen elements and lighting;
- The **Lookout Walk** that connects Main-, Hobie- and Lookout Beaches and that goes out over the Lookout Rocks en route; and finally
- The future **Beacon Isle Walk** that would include possible harbour infrastructure.

17 THE NATURE AREAS

It must be noted that, apart from the core CBD area to be bounded by the proposed ring road, the central part of Plettenberg Bay is suburban and therefore quite 'green' in character, having been developed along "Garden City"-suburb principles. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 5)

17.1 Green suburban character

This environment is for the most part characterized by grassed verges, low fences between many residential properties and fairly generous - if usually exotic - tree cover. The Nature Areas therefore tend to blend visually across this greened suburban environment.

In effect, the lower part of the town still retains sufficient "public open space" sites that have permitted some indigenous fauna and flora to survive. It is therefore still possible to see guinea fowl traversing the suburban streets and verges to access the different nature areas. This public open space, which has largely survived by default as 'left-over' space, is to be more consciously protected and managed as an important environmental resource.

17.2 Ecological corridors

The interconnectedness of these nature areas is an important consideration, since it forms a system of "green fingers" that reach into the heart of Plettenberg Bay's urban fabric. These

nature areas and connections constitute a set of micro-scale **ecological corridors** that permit a continuity of habitat for the birdlife, small mammals, insects, etc. This system of interconnected green spaces and nature areas therefore complements the network of pedestrian surfaces described above.

17.3 Main nature area components

The main components of this system of Nature Areas include the following:

- The Gateways and Corridors from the N2 to the Central area are to be treated essentially as scenic drives and walks, to be generously planted so as to provide shade to pedestrians and commuters using these primary feeders into the heart of Plettenberg Bay.
- The Central or west-to-east set of nature areas, including:
 - The landscaping of the Marine Way Corridor;
 - The Village Green around St Peter's Church;
 - The Central Nature Area – which is an important ecological niche supporting a small area of remaining indigenous forest and associated bird-and wildlife; and
 - The vegetated dune ecological niche remaining between the Central Beach and the urban development above it, stretching from Odland Street to the end of Bull Street.

- The southern set of nature areas, including:
 - The Perestrello Walk, which consists of a treed walkway up to Signal Hill
 - The Signal Hill Nature Area which includes the wooded Southern slope of the bluff sloping steeply down to the Piesang River. This area is the termination of a much larger swathe of land flanking the northern slope of the Piesang River valley.
 - The Piesang River edge and estuary.
- The northern set of nature areas, including:
 - The grassed verges linking the St Peter's Church grounds with the Lookout Nature Area;
 - The Lookout Nature area itself;
 - The beach- and vegetated dune environment between the Lookout Rocks and the bottom end of Church-, Rice- and Formosa Streets.

From a scenic and ecological perspective, these nature areas preserve the **indigenous eco-systems** and **interweave them into the urban renewal** process. As noted in the Conceptual Design Framework in Part II above, these nature areas are to be developed with trails and eventually supported by community guides to provide security and interpretive tourism services.

17.4 Sustainability

The principle of sustainability the background of bio-regional planning as elucidated in the SDF suggests a strong bias towards re-introducing indigenous and therefore locally adapted flora in all areas to be rehabilitated or to be planted.

18 THE BUILT FABRIC AND LANDMARKS

The scope of the urban renewal is primarily to address the central area bounded by the proposed ring road and the blocks immediately flanking this ring on the outside.

(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 6)

18.1 Existing Built Fabric

The existing built fabric consists of a wide range of building types, from dense and internalized shopping malls, to courtyard-and arcaded urban buildings, individual buildings forming the street edge, to free standing 'pavilion' buildings that stand back from the street edge.

Over time the built fabric between Main Street and High Street has increased in density. In general the town's building **height restrictions** of **10.6 metres** for General Residential, Commercial and Business- and **8.5 metres** for Single Residential land use (zoning) provisions have been respected.

This has resulted in a relatively homogeneous treatment of the massing of built fabric in terms of its scenic impact. This height restriction has also encouraged architects to develop three storey buildings with flat roofs, which impart a specific and often more modernist or contemporary character to parts of the town.

There exist a reasonable degree of **mixed use** buildings, often with either office and/or residential fabric on the first and second floors. This contains the seeds of a successful urban renewal process, which relies strongly on residential fabric in

the CBD - and preferably of the hospitality and permanent dwelling type – for its success.

18.2 New Built Fabric

It is proposed that the central and especially CBD area be developed to a higher density and with a more **strongly urban** character. The precise character of the new and future urban fabric should therefore build these public edge conditions – meaning essentially that the street walls of all individual buildings should form the actual edges of the public space system and confer to it the all-important qualitative dimension.

The proposed new fabric diagrams indicate some key areas for suggested development and re-development. Broadly stated, there are two broad conditions:

- The CBD generally requires an 'infill' process. This involves building higher density fabric in all available, viable and development sites so that street edges are consolidated and redefined. The objective is to move beyond the monotonous linear or 'main street strip' format, and to create a town or village urban structure characterized by streets, lanes, alleys and stairs in and through which pedestrians can circulate in directed or random sequences.
- The more precious landscape and ecological areas points, such as the Main Beach, Beacon Isle, Piesang River

require very carefully considered built interventions that are nested carefully in these areas, with due attention to the degree of permanence and nesting into walks and other use and circulation patterns.

- found artifacts like the old timber wagon,
- the Van Plettenberg beacon and
- the Whale Tail lookout point.

18.3 Landmark sites

Landmarks consist of any places of intensity of activity and/or of interest, and not strictly of buildings only. They form important elements in the urban fabric. Places of **social, historical and ecological interest** have the capability to assist in providing a '**narrative**' of the town from an experiential- and **interpretive tourism** perspective. It is envisaged that the urban renewal process will revalorize existing as well as generate new landmark sites and buildings.

Existing landmark sites that form part of such a narrative include, for example,

- the Old Post Office (Pezula Shop),
- the Unknown Ship's Anchor at Anchor Place,
- The Signal Mast at Signal Hill,
- the grave sites at St Peter's Church and at the Harker Graves site,
- St Peter's Church,
- the little indigenous forest kloof in the Central Nature Area,
- the ensemble of buildings in the Cultural Precinct – the Old VOC Timber Shed, Rectory, Chapel – along with

19 SENSITIVE AND CONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT SITES AND PRECINCTS

Sensitive and Controlled Development Sites and Precincts are accorded this status due to either **historical legacy, memorialisation potential, special urban character, ecological and environmental sensitivity, social significance** or general importance in the **urban renewal objectives** of the URS, CDF and/or URF aspects of the urban renewal process as a whole. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 7)

19.1 Urban Renewal Overlays

Sensitive and Controlled Development Sites and Precincts require an **Urban Renewal Overlay** onto the provisions of the Spatial Development Framework, Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme, and on any other municipal building control provisions and bye-laws.

The areas requiring this overlay will therefore include:

- The Urban Renewal Precincts, Nature Area and Corridors and
- The designated sites listed below as "Identified Specific Sites".

19.2 Identified Specific Sites

The sites that have been identified are:

- A. The Anchor Place Development
- B. The Village Development Area (Lower CBD)
- C. The SAP and GPO Re-development
- D. The Signal Hill Development
- E. The Riverside Development (Piesang River)
- F. The Harbour Development (Beacon Isle)
- G. The Central Beach Facilities
- H. The Old Timber Shed
- I. The Old Rectory and Chapel
- J. "The Decks" Restaurant
- K. The Lookout Beach Facilities
- L. The Service Station Development (Marine Way/Wilder Street)
- M. The Taxi /Market Development
- N. The Marine Way Corridor (High Density Residential)
- O. The Development of the High Street Ridge
- P. The Old Post Office/"Pezula" Site Development
- Q. The Development around Church Street
- R. All Developments on Main Street

20 DISCUSSION OF URBAN IDENTITY

It can be safely stated that much contemporary urban theory recognizes the importance of correcting the extremes of modernist planning concepts and practices that assumed a 'blank slate' and often characterized by the mono-functional 'zoning' of discrete areas. This has often led to sterile environments and dead zones.

There is a renewed recognition that towns and cities that are considered successful and environmentally desirable, are made up of **unique parts** marked by their own topography, local histories and the idiosyncracies of individuals – all having given rise to particular urban forms and environments.

This has led to a reconsideration of towns and cities as having a **plurality of aspect** and as being constructed of a **multiplicity** of diverse elements. Distinctive urban precincts with their own urban character are accepted as essential constituents of and preconditions for viable and live-able urban environments.

20.1 Social character

The character of Plettenberg Bay's precincts has emerged over time, usually characterized by the historic period in which the precincts were developed. They are usually therefore also marked by a particular and **inherited social differentiation**.

In recent history under apartheid there was an element of **social control** and the **deployment of power** in space inherent

in the physical manner in which South African towns were planned and developed.

The study area is in the historic part of Plettenberg Bay and has been a 'white' group area and CBD zone.

20.2 Urban transformation

The recognition of precincts is translated into a **transformational strategy** that acknowledges the diversity and **co-existence** of the old, contemporary and future building and urban space developments in an urban setting. This allows the older, historic elements to be protected and valorised, however, within a transformational framework for each precinct.

This requires an awareness that the social and spatial **distortions of the past** need to be carefully considered, lest they remain embedded in the urban renewal practices of today.

Briefly stated, the positive aspects of a **precinct-driven approach** are it can sponsor:

- a diversity of experience,
- richness in urban spaces and places,
- interesting transition zones, and
- the identifiable character of
- unique urban ecological niches.

Obversely, the potential negative aspects, especially if broader policy objectives are not properly integrated, are that the potential for the **persistence of class- and racial-divisions** to play themselves out spatially, and the use of precincts is abused as an exclusionary tactic and as a means of resisting urban and social transformation by protecting the status quo.

20.3 Identity and Culture

The urban environment as it develops over time, and as it impacts on the experiential reality of human individuals, represents as the accretion of physical artifacts often driven by **economic, ideological and political forces on the landscape**.

This can be referred to as an aspect of '**material culture**'. These forces are usually 'blind' to the individual existential realities of most individuals in society.

It is left to individuals to discover and assemble a set of experiences of the urban environment, so that that environment begins to form a **landscape of memories and feelings** in their personal existential realities. Thus urban landscapes become '**affective**' or '**feeling**' landscapes and have different meanings to different individuals. A consensus around shared affective aspects of the urban setting gradually develops as people share the use of spaces and special events.

The extent to which some of these perceptions and existential realities merge into commonly held experiences and meanings is difficult to quantify.

Nevertheless is it often held a **shared identity** does in part emerge from shared language, living patterns, belief systems, but also from the physical context comprised of landscape, physical dwelling, living and working environments, etc.

If culture is the 'ideal' side of social life, than there is a fundamental role also for the built environment, especially of public spaces and collective facilities to act as 'condensers' of this latent cultural content. Public places therefore help to **reinforce sociability**.

21 PUBLIC SPACE INTERFACE

The sites and precincts identified as Sensitive and Controlled Development Sites are subject to the Urban Renewal Overlay. This requires that the framing of development proposals need to be in accordance with the terms, provisions and requirements of the URS, CDF and CURF.

21.1 Sensitive and Controlled Development Areas

If the urban renewal process is to succeed in producing an attractive and good quality environment, traditional development control measures such as Zoning Schemes and National Building Regulations need to be augmented with more focused and flexible instruments to guide development in accordance with the overall approach and renewal strategy.

This 'sensitive' site status will vary in accordance with the conditions of the site and precinct in which it finds itself, and may derive from qualitative factors that are not adequately reflected in the spatial development frameworks, zoning and other land-use legislation. Typically these include relevant heritage, ecological, social, functional, or other factors, and are to be interpreted in the context of the strategy for a precinct.

21.2 Departures and Special Conditions

It is common practice, in sensitive development areas, for the local authority to request reasonable improvements to the public space as trade-offs for granting acceptable departures.

In the case of the developer seeking acceptable departures therefore, the Bitou Municipality and the developer should seek to achieve mutually beneficial trade-offs, so that, the aesthetic treatment of the building and the edge conditions between public and private space be handled in a positive manner and according to urban renewal design guidelines.

Some practical examples of this are in the cases of proposed changes to the geometry of pavement areas to include steps and ramps for disability and trolley access and vehicular carriageway crossings. In such instance the Municipality may, for example, reasonably request detail design, paving and landscaping around the building to be executed by the developer at his expense and to the municipality's approval.

Departures in proposed scheme, which require approval at the discretion of the Municipality should therefore be managed accordingly. Any covenants and trade-offs negotiated between developers and the Bitou Municipality will be reduced to writing and drawings and be binding on the parties.

21.3 Detailed Site Works and Landscaping Design Plan

The design approaches adopted by developers and their professional team should demonstrate a positive response to the proposed concepts for the upgrading of the Main Street, CBD and designated areas generally.

In the interests also of the consistent upgrading of the public domain and of public accessibility and safety, the designs should show sufficient detail as regards:

- (a) Existing and proposed levels between the public street and building edges;
- (b) Disabled access from public pavements and roadway surfaces;
- (c) Smooth transitions by means of ramps and/or stairs;
- (d) Surface storm water drainage and rainwater catch pits on pavement if applicable;
- (e) Paving and surface treatments, with particular attention when connecting to any of the proposed Main Street 'broadwalk', and other landscaped and paved public areas;
- (f) Safety rails and or walls accompanying proposed level changes on pavements, such as between ramps and steps.

Some of these elements may not strictly-speaking be the responsibility of the developer (in cases where no departures are required), and would rely on a measure of cooperation and goodwill. Nevertheless, the omission of some of these items on public land and pavement areas could constitute a

breach of the National Building Regulations, and render the Bitou Municipality generally liable in public safety claims, hence a need for monitoring and cooperation.

21.4 Detail Treatment of Pavement Levels

Due to the often sloping topography of the town, careful attention needs to be given to all level changes and pavements. Careful consideration of level changes is required, especially at all street intersections.

21.5 Encroachments

In general it is not a good practice to allow encroachments onto publicly owned pavement areas, unless of a temporary nature, or unless these constitute an infrastructural asset carried out on behalf of the municipality

More importantly, any such encroachments should be granted on the basis of a detailed, individual application for the specific encroachment, and should be handled as a special and temporary condition which may be revoked at any time in the future. In granting permission, it should be supported by a leasehold agreement handled by the property and services section. Such encroachments should generally be for the benefit of the public.

21.6 Transformers

It is common practice to locate a transformer on-site in such a manner that it is accessible directly from the street by the technicians of the local authority.

21.7 Treatment of Street Edges

The detailed design of proposed buildings at street level should be sympathetic to a pedestrian-friendly and street-life culture. On the ground floor connection to the street, especially on important and pedestrian edges, there should be an avoidance of long areas of blind, windowless walls, exposed technical services, walls to parking garages, and an excessive concentration vehicular carriageway crossings that crowd out pedestrians.

Where retail and other public access is required internally to developments, such as in malls disabled lift access should be provided from ground to first floor in reasonable proximity to the external boundary of the site.

21.8 Public Toilets

Due provision is to be made for public toilets in key locations.

21.9 Liability for Damage to any Utility Services

The onus will be on developers to ensure that the location of any services such as electrical-, GPO-, fibre-optic-, and/or any other cables, as well as of any storm water-, water supply, sewerage, etc pipelines is determined beforehand, or by careful excavation during site works, and that no damage to any of these services occurs. Any interruption or damage should be for the account of the developer.

21.10 Public Pavement Width

Pavement widths need to be commensurate with the location in the town street grid. It is suggested that along the upper 'broadwalk' in this section of Main Street, the minimum pavement width should be about 2,4m where constrictions occur due to special features, street furniture, etc. In the proposed plans, there is a constriction of the effective pavement area due to the projection of the 'entrance timber box'. Although this element appears to be within the building lines, care should be taken to ensure that with the advent of any stairs, ramps, etc on the broadwalk area, the area should not be overly constricted.

21.11 Delivery Bays and Traffic Circulation Issues

Submitted plans must deal in a satisfactory manner with the anticipated requirements for delivery trucks and vans, both as to the impact on the traffic on the streets, (queuing, etc) and the geometrical design on site.

Delivery bays and courts should be designed so as to avoid congestion and conflicts with customer parking traffic.

All service areas need duly segregated and well designed resolution, and need to be managed in terms of cleanliness, thereby eliminating any potential negative impacts on streets requiring future upgrading. This applies particularly to the Upper and Lower CBD.

21.12 Façade and Building Envelopes

The following observations pertain to aspects of the facades and building envelope, and are offered in a spirit of constructive encouragement.

The ground floor glass lines should not be too sheer on façades and should be handles in such a manner that the walls and openings are friendly to customers and pedestrians. Slight recesses, the creation of small 'in-go's', transition zones and thresholds help to improve this interface.

Wall and/or canopy mounted street lighting is encouraged since it helps to create atmosphere and attractiveness.

The use of canopy elements can be a great enhancement to the streetscape and use of street spaces. Such elements need to be harmonized with one another and with other elements of the façades, as well as with those of neighbouring buildings and with buildings across the street or lane. The construction detailing of these elements should be of a good standard,

and should for example, make use of a combination of expressed metal and timber elements.

The treatment of the street edges and building facades generally should also respond positively to contextual, precinct-specific- and heritage elements, as encountered on the sites. These treatments should contribute to and reinforce the emerging character and design identity of the precinct. Developers and architects should strive to produce enduring qualities, spaces and forms of a high standard of design.

A proactive approach to signage should be taken, by indicating shop- and centre signage in the plans and drawings, to better visualize and control the overall streetscape.

21.13 Conclusion

It is hoped that these comments and provisions will be acceptable to developers and that architects and other built environment consultants embrace them in the spirit of co-operation.

The creative engagement between the role players can lead to a refinement of the interface between developments and the public walkways, spaces and streets.

Already two mixed-use developments currently in the plan approval stages have demonstrated a positive spirit of cooperation in this regard.

In the cases of both "The Square" (at the intersection of Main and Church Street – the Shoprite/Checkers site) and "The Terraces" (at the intersection of Strand and Main Street – the Old Post Office/Pezula site) the developers have been forthcoming in mandating their architects to respond positively to the suggestions contained in the Conceptual Design Framework.

Most of the recommendations that follow have been developed for the Upper and Lower CBD Urban Renewal Precincts. However they also have a broader application to the rest of the designated areas. The main 'jurisdiction' covered by these policy recommendations is the treatment of pedestrian and vehicular publicly accessible space, whether on public or private land.

The designs of the buildings promise to exemplify the environmental qualities envisaged as part of the revitalization of the CBD.

22 SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES: PUBLIC SPACE INTERFACE

22.1 Sensitive and Controlled Development Areas – General

The treatment of 'sensitive and controlled development' sites should contribute to the urban renewal, and seek to work towards a coherent identity that differentiates Plettenberg Bay. Developers and built environment professionals, especially architects, are invited to adopt this approach, and to contribute to the upgrading process of the pavements and on-street parking surfaces flanking proposed buildings, so as to begin the upgrading of the public space system.

22.2 Departures and Special Conditions

In the case of mutually beneficial departures are being negotiated, then the Bitou Municipality and the developer should seek to find agreement for the developer to include the landscaping of the public space of the pavements around the building as part of the project and to the Municipality's approval of detailed site works/landscaping plans. This would include any parking lay-by surfaces and kerb edges affected.

22.3 Detailed Site Works and Landscaping

- (i) Detailed landscaping should be included on the site- and ground floor plans and/or submitted as additional plans with all development applications and in building control plan submissions. The drawings should indicate the kerb- and building lines on the opposite sides of the relevant streets on the site plans, in order that the precise movement patterns and implication of designs can be easily assessed.
- (ii) Any detailed design affecting the Main Street area and its intersecting street should be carried out in accordance with the prototypical urban design proposals for the Main Street as published in December 2004.
- (iii) The developer's landscaping proposals here assume no encroachments, only light infrastructural improvements including existing and proposed:
 - kerbs,
 - storm water catch pits and channels,
 - street surfacing,
 - paving,
 - decking,
 - lighting,
 - retaining walls,
 - dividing walls (e.g. between ramps and stairs),
 - planters and planting,
 - safety hand rails, and
 - street furniture

22.4 Detail Treatment of Pavement Levels

The landscaping design plans referred to above as well as all street elevations, should indicate all existing and proposed levels at the road kerb and at the Erf boundaries. All level changes that depart from the existing levels on the public pavement areas, as well as any parking lay-by's need to be noted and dimensioned. The Main Street has been surveyed in detail by Mr. Phillip Tegan of VPM Land Surveyors on behalf of the Bitou Municipality, and these levels should be made available to developer on request.

22.5 Encroachments

- (a) In the case of applications for encroachments or of encroachments being indicated on building plans, the Municipality should request the developer to submit a separate plan accompanied by an application for any encroachments.
- (b) If the encroachments are material, then appropriate procedures for granting of Special Conditions will be required.
- (c) If the developer should request the actual use of temporary deck and/or canopy areas on the pavement, then the appropriate leasehold agreements will be required.

22.6 Transformers

New transformers are to be shown on the site plans and should be located on the erf adjacent to a street boundary, and accommodated with the appropriate specifications as to ventilation, access, etc. and adequately disguised.

22.7 Treatment of Street Edges

Developments should have articulated and generous gateways and doorways or 'throats' at their public entrances.

22.8 Public Toilets

Ensure that public access to the toilets is provided and sign-posted.

22.9 Public Utility Services

- (a) Any existing and proposed changes to and connections to existing public utilities such as electrical cables, sewerage lines, water mains, telecommunications cables, etc. should be shown on the submitted plans.
- (b) If this is not already standard procedure, developers need to request permission to undertake any works on public land, and assume all liability for possible damage.

22.10 Public Pavement Width

The landscaping plans should deal with any constrictions, and allow for a minimum of 2,4m circulation/pavement all along Main Street, and a minimum of 1,4m width all along secondary (pedestrian) streets such as along Church Street, Strand Street, Kloof Street, etc. Any constrictions exceeding this limit should be motivated as one of the specific departures.

22.11 Delivery Bays and Traffic Circulation Issues

- (a) Ensure that provision is made for on-site and loading bay access for delivery vehicles, especially where larger delivery vehicles are required.
- (b) Ensure a smooth flow of customer and delivery vehicles and minimizing of disruption to normal street traffic.
- (c) Ensure the correct minimum heights for delivery vehicles.

22.12 Facades and Building Envelopes

The design approach favoured would in general be to use large textured and plastered wall surfaces, highlighted by secondary elements and treatments such as timber facings and metallic and timber climate control devices that echo maritime and other relevant regional references.

That the above points be considered and endorsed and/or added in amendments to the plans, for:

- Glass lines and threshold conditions
- External lighting all along perimeter, from Main Street all around to the deliveries courtyard, etc.
- Enhancement of canopies design
- Indication of type- and location of signage
- Enhancement of size and configuration of main centre entrances.

Fake commercial 'theming' such as faux-'Tuscan', casino-style extravaganza's, and other superficially decorated kitsch is to avoided at all costs, and should be regarded as an attack on the emerging architectural identity of Plettenberg Bay and its urban renewal precincts. A more locally appropriate, contemporary and 'life-style-sensitive' design approach should be adopted by designers.

23 URBAN PRECINCT STRATEGIES

It is hereby proposed that the implementation of the **Urban Revitalisation Strategy** and **Conceptual Design Framework** should be organized strategically around a set of specific urban precincts. This allows each precinct to be regarded as a project area within which to develop its own momentum and dynamic, which its own champions and stakeholder groups. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 8)

An urban precinct is typically an area with a distinctive character, formed by its orientation, topography, distinguishing street and building patterns and landmark buildings and memorable features. Towns and cities are merely an assemblage of partially overlapping precincts that also emerge, disappear and transform over time.

23.1 Unifying systems and precincts

In order for the urban renewal process to translate into actionable propositions, but also for it to be more manageable, it has been divided into distinct urban renewal precincts.

Public places and pathways give a unifying structure to the urban experience. The overall systems for pedestrian circulation, public spaces, vehicular circulation, nature areas, etc therefore also require a unified and integrated approach across the project area. The landmarks and key buildings that form the edges of the unifying elements, however, tend to

confer elements of unity but also of diversity to the urban structure. Yet it has also been argued that a successful environments also relies on the variety provided by specific and identifiable urban precincts and nature areas. There are aspects of the urban renewal strategy and framework that are best served by treating specific areas as individual precincts. This recognises the need to celebrate and at times to emphasise the inherent diversity of these precincts.

23.2 'Fit' between developments and their precincts

The resulting concept for the renewal strategy is therefore one of **weaving a continuous series of pedestrian surfaces through a series of distinct urban precincts**. The regulatory and technical measures required for orderly implementation therefore need to take this into account by establishing the necessary parameters against which any specific interventions are measured as to their 'fit'. This assessment of 'fit' of proposed developments and interventions in these precincts requires a reverse checking against the vision, goals, strategic definition and objectives of the URS and CDF.

The criteria for any bundles of measures to be considered in the development of any specific site should therefore be drawn from the overall process and specifically from the strategic pattern of the public space system, roads reconfiguration, etc and from the precinct proposals.

Specific interventions and the negotiations around and control of such interventions can then be managed by the normal procedures already in place in terms of land use- and

building legislation and controls, together with the urban renewal overlay conditions.

However once these conditions have been established, it is equally essential that individual project interventions respond to the unique local context and character of the precinct in which they are situated.

The following sections therefore discuss the various precincts identified in the course of this study in order to describe the main elements of what can be considered as emerging Precinct Plans.

**SEE SECTION B: DIAGRAMS, SHEETS AND FIGURES – PART
III: URBAN RENEWAL FRAMEWORK**

FOR DIAGRAMS AND PRECINCT PLANS

24 THE MAIN STREET PRECINCT 01

24.1 Current Situation

Main Street is the social heart of Plettenberg Bay and the core urban point of reference for the Bitou area. Main Street is the primary social space. It is the richest and most intense public space, providing opportunities for chance encounters and social interactions amongst its diverse citizens.

Its linear character is derived from its historical role as a regional vehicular thoroughfare. Its legal status reflects this, since it is in transition from control by the Province to the Local Authority. It is configured as a typical main road commercial strip. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 9)**

Over time these commercial activities have intensified, resulting in a 'deepening' of the footprints of a number of the commercial buildings on the upper (Eastern) side of Main Street. The two major shopping malls that have been introduced create a typical 'strip-meets-mall' condition where the malls act as internalized perpendicular pedestrian streets.

24.2 Concerns, Constraints and Opportunities

As it stands, the Main Street is on a cusp of becoming both functionally obsolescent and negatively congested. It stands to lose its focus as a premier shopping and entertainment destination in the town to the Market Square regional shopping centre development some kilometers away which is

causing it to become superseded in many respects, as well as to surrounding neighbourhood centres. Should a new future regional shopping centre open up near the township areas, the CBD could suffer a terminal blow to its commercial fortunes.

The primary concern is therefore about what interventions would be required to create a new impetus for altering the dynamics of the Main Street so that it can be at the core of the urban renewal process for the CBD.

The upgrading of the Main Street presents the following constraints and opportunities.

Constraints

- The space can be monotonous for frequent pedestrian use due to its linearity
- Vehicular thoroughfare dominates the pedestrian experience
- Traffic congestion as the intensity of use increases and as large, regional delivery trucks don't have alternatives
- The slope on from East to West running across the street has lead to a plethora of individual interface conditions between buildings, the pavements and the street edges. A number of steps, ramps, walls etc, 'cut across' the

pedestrian strip along the upper (East) side of Main Road, making for a chaotic and fragmentary pedestrian use of the pavements.

- The role of Main Street as a heavy trough traffic and CBD feeder, also has led to the lateral, or side streets (Kloof, Crescent, Church and Gibb) to be car dominated and pedestrian unfriendly.

Opportunities

- The Main Street strip lends focus and intensity to the town – 'creative congestion'
- The emergence of Plettenberg Bay's identity has occurred over a long period of time and is marked by a number of buildings of diverse era's and styles, which offer potential to act as landmarks and focal points with historical character and depth.
- The linear pedestrian promenades along the Street edges, despite their problems are an asset to be re-covered and enhanced.
- An interesting juxtaposition and intermingling of pedestrians 'promenading' and drivers 'cruising' does occur.
- Lifestyle elements such as pavement café's and restaurant decks have begun to enliven the street and define its character as an evening leisure destination.

24.3 Key policy question

What should therefore be done to revitalize and renew the Main Street and by extension the CBD, and would a cosmetic 'upgrade' of the street be sufficient to avoid its incipient decline?

24.4 Guiding Vision

If the town is to be revitalized, then there is a need to break the old mould, and to recast it in a new one: from Main Street as a car-dominated road to Main Street as a pedestrian-friendly social space.

24.5 Objectives

The objectives for this area are as follows.

If the town is to be revitalized, then there is a need to break the old mould, and to recast it in a new one: from Main Street as a car-dominated road to Main Street as a pedestrian-friendly social space.

This requires an approach whereby the 'creative congestion' that it now has is retained, but is aggressively managed.

Layering a new experiential and interpretative dimension onto it:

Experiential: enhance the promenading and café society lifestyle

Interpretative: trigger reflections on heritage aspects and stimulate alternative cultural visions.

This requires a primary integrative gesture: i.e. a 'plot' to the scripting of urban space. Scripting refers to the 'performance' of people as they go about acting out their lives in the public space arena (promenading, conversing, shopping, etc.) and to the 'narrative' of the elements in the urban spaces (symbolic elements, sculptures, street furniture elements, etc.) Architects, urban designers and landscape artists must be challenged to stretch their designs to become extroverted public art forms and to include "signals, signs, readings, imagery and cultural perspectives that users of space will relate to". (John Spiropolous, 2004)

24.6 Precinct strategy

(a) Pedestrian Dominance

This 'plot' is proposed in the form of the introduction of an adaptation of the promenade or 'sauntering walk' along the Upper/Eastern side of Main Street. This should give new impetus as an integrating spine that introduces primary to the pedestrian experience, and it should be well equipped with the essential components of surfaces, seating, lighting and other street furniture. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 10)**

(b) Broadwalk

This raised, comfortable and scenic promenade or 'broadwalk' would have many valences: promenade, stage, ocean viewing deck, shopping street, restaurant and café sidewalk, street art scene, etc. capable of accommodating

merchandise, café tables equipment and street performances.

(c) Traffic: Re-routing, Slowing and 'Scenic Drives'

Vehicular traffic is slowed dramatically and delivery vehicles can, for example, be controlled to within certain days and times. This would be made possible by the re-routing of traffic by means of the proposed ring road system. Vehicular traffic, would however still be present, more in the character of easy scenic drives and slow cruising.

Traffic slowing should be achieved by texture changes in the street and by speed limits. The character of the Main Street therefore is altered to an access street and not a primary thoroughfare. This will be further defined in traffic engineering studies and detailed design.

(d) Configurations of Use

The Main Street should be an enabling public space which would allow for changing configurations of use and activity. Thus the vehicular traffic would be calmed, and on special occasions could be re-routed altogether, allowing for festivals, markets and other street activities. The flanking parking surfaces would also be flexible, so that whilst being normally available for parking, these surfaces could be switched to other uses such as for trading stalls at specific times or for café tables in season.

(e) Integration of Both Sides of the Street

As mentioned earlier, the Main Street environment would become primarily a pedestrian friendly zone, thus also helping to integrate both sides of the street.

(f) Extended Activity Cycles

Hopefully, once realized, this Main Street would become a lively, multifunctional hub, from early in the morning until later in the evening, in both low and high season. It would seek to be a kind of place that would offer something for all of Plettenberg Bay's diverse constituencies - permanent, seasonal and transient - alike.

Over time the Main Street would be complemented by other public spaces involved in a broader urban revitalization programme, with leisure-, commercial-, hospitality- and cultural focus points connecting to it. Here too, there would be a strong emphasis on connectivity by means of pedestrian movement enhanced by a canopy of indigenous trees.

(g) Technical Design Aspects

Some of the technical aspects and suggested actions that need to be taken into account are:

- Existing by-laws, temporary uses of pavement spaces and other arrangements
- Contours, levels, ramps
- Vehicular and pedestrian crossings
- The need for detail design to begin early in the process due to the complexity of the levels and existing pavement configurations and in order to develop a realistic budget
- Costs

- The design integration of diverse requirements and stakeholders
- The co-operation of all affected parties and stakeholders
- A block-by-block approach to resolving issues and implementing

24.7 Conclusion

The Main Street requires urgent physical intervention as not only the centre-piece of the urban renewal process but also to signal the intent of the Bitou Local Municipality to commit the town to the urban renewal process.

25 PRECINCT GUIDELINES: UPGRADING OF MAIN STREET

25.1 Traffic Measures

The re-configuration of the Main Street can only ultimately function as intended if some of the existing traffic is more systematically re-routed around the CBD in a Ring Road System. At present the possibility exists for through traffic to bypass the Main Street, however this should be enhanced, initially through traffic routing signs, traffic lights and traffic slowing measures, and later by the construction of traffic circles as per the proposed traffic management plan.

25.2 Main Street Urban Surface

The Main Street reconfiguration needs to be designed so as to make it a 'multi-programmable' urban space so that alternative use scenarios can be activated.

25.3 Flexible Traffic Management

While it should be able to function much as it does at present for localized (non-through traffic) off-season traffic, it should be possible to restrict traffic more on-season, when its character as a holiday street should be activated. The central part of the street should also be completed closable to cars for limited periods such as on festival or

market days, thus effectively becoming a pedestrian square. Then the whole street should be closable for special occasions such as for ceremonies, processions, marches, sports races. etc.

25.4 Design

Therefore the physical design of the street needs to lend itself to these changing uses, by a correct combination of elements that are both:

- non-specific – such as a flowing, continuous urban surface; and
- specific – such as texture and level changes, temporary barriers, permanent barriers, territorial 'markers', etc.

26 THE LOWER CBD “VILLAGE” PRECINCT 02

26.1 Current Situation

The lower CBD consists of the urban blocks between Strand and Hill Streets and between Main Street above and Sewell Street below. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 11)

This area is structured by the strip of commercial buildings on Main Street, some of which have made creative uses of the lateral pedestrian lanes and level changes and. At the same time it still has vestiges of the Main Street's former primary status as a provincial road, with two service station sites, and other warehousing and workshop areas, mixed with residential apartments on the lower parts of the urban blocks, or on upper stories generally. Topographically, the blocks form a 'ridge' to the upper town area, and the lateral alleys, lanes and streets have clear views of the ocean beyond.

The lower edge of this area contains the municipality complex and significant open space to the East. The municipality is considering the alienation of some of this public land in a structured bid proposal and tender process, whereby prospective developers will contribute to the urban renewal strategy and process.

26.2 Concerns, Constraints and Opportunities

The main consideration is whether it would be advantageous for the lower CBD to follow the pattern of the mall/parking

garage redevelopment that has characterized the upper CBD area. There is a serious concern that this would further entrench the negative aspects outlined above in the Main Street Precinct discussion, and that it would accelerate the relative decline of the CBD as a viable town centre. There is an incipient over-concentration and congestion of the Main Street and a withdrawal of interest in the minor town streets of the CBD. This is also evidenced by a trend for offices and service businesses to relocate out of the urban core into peripheral areas of the town, such as above High Street.

If this process continues, there is a concern that the Main Street upgrading would become a case of a disjointed and cosmetic, 'too little too late' measure, incapable of affecting the revitalization of the urban core of the town. The current linear character of the Main Street strip makes for a limited register of experiences that is quickly exhausted and can lead to monotony after a few repeat visits. It risks merely becoming a funnel into privatized mall spaces, as pedestrians are not being encouraged to explore the side and back streets.

The fact that there is still a significant amount of space on the existing erven, and the fact that the Bitou Municipality is considering alienating the Council Chamber site together with some of the surrounding land, provides an opportunity to set in motion the revitalization of the whole Lower CBD area. The redevelopment of the Council Chamber site together with the pedestrianisation of Crescent Street linking it to Main Street could be the catalyst for this process.

26.3 Key policy question

What approach and strategy should be followed for this area to ensure its integration with the town centre, to render it more attractive? And how could the planned alienation and redevelopment of the public land be leveraged to form a key element in the revitalization of this precinct?

26.4 Guiding vision

The concept for the Lower CBD Precinct is to create a 'village' consisting of a number of pedestrian lanes (allowing service vehicles where possible) running both perpendicular and parallel to the Main Street. In effect the current urban blocks would be subdivided into smaller sub-blocks thus forming a village. This would lend depth to the CBD. The Lower CBD would have, as its centre-piece, an elevated square with scenic views of the Ocean at the current municipal site.

26.5 Objectives

The objective for this precinct is to stimulate an aggressive programme of property investment in the CBD, using a combination of measures, and in so doing, to steer the individual interventions in such a way that a uniquely attractive outcome is achieved.

The goal is to promote the creation of a highly desirable set of places and destinations, and thereby to intensify the pedestrian circulation through the precinct. The precinct should become a highly attractive holiday lifestyle environment, and would seek to stimulate all-year round tourism and occupancies.

26.6 Elements of the Precinct Strategy

(a) Consolidation of Public Land

A number of erven owned by public authorities, including the Municipal offices site and parking areas are to be consolidated into a new 'super-erf' between Anchor Crescent and the St Peter's Church site. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 12)**

(b) 'Anchor Place' Development Components

The site is to be redeveloped in such a way that it contains the following key components:

- A raised public square - known provisionally as 'Anchor Place' which is to allow for example, controlled street trading as an extension of the Main Street public realm.
- A pedestrian stair and ramp linking Main Street with Anchor Place.
- A complex of hospitality, leisure and conference facilities.
- A large underground parking garage that accommodates three parking components.
 - Parking for the Anchor Place development
 - Precinct public parking for both Anchor Place and the Village
 - Reserved parking for tenants, residents and visitors to the new buildings to be constructed in the Village

(c) Parking Component Public/Private Partnership

The parking infrastructure would require a form of public/private partnership. A 'parking off-set mechanism' would be developed so that developers of the Village sites

would acquire parking bays from this entity when they redevelop their respective sites in accordance with the required guidelines.

(d) The Village Private Re-development: Enhanced Development Rights

The existing erven in the Lower CBD surrounding the Anchor Place site, would require a strong stimulus for owners and developers to re-develop them to granting specific and conditional Enhanced Development Rights type I (no/or limited on-site parking) (EDR I's).

These EDR's would:

- Allow the bulk to be increased;
- Be guided by site specific development guidelines which would be subject to public comment;
- Be dealt with substantially as departure applications and on a case by case basis,
- Be subject to the implementation of the parking off-set mechanism referred to above.

(e) Development Controls

The height restrictions and building lines would be strictly controlled. There would be a public participation and appeals process to regulate the impact of the proposed buildings.

(f) Cost Recovery Mechanisms

The process and procedures would need to be worked out in due course, involving cost recoveries by the local authority for

consultants' inputs, special scrutiny fees, Heritage Impact assessments, etc.

(g) Connection to Adjacent Precincts

The Lower CBD 'Village' Precinct needs to be connected organically with the processes of implementing the Main Street Precinct above and the Central Nature Area below, so as to ensure a seamless flow of public spaces between them.

26.7 Proposed Intervention Steps

Urban design guidelines and zoning scheme regulations will be assembled to guide developments. The assistance of urban designers, legal advisors, property finance specialists etc. may be required, and some of the measures to be considered may include the following.

(a) Subdivision

The granting conditional subdivision rights to existing property owners so that the land for new and re-development can be traded, should be considered.

(b) Proposal Calls

Development Bid Proposal Calls for Anchor Place site should be formulated and issued to prospective development consortia.

These proposals need to include ancillary aspects to ensure that a completed urban infrastructure and landscaping is

achieved on surrounding public land, including such aspects as:

- The re-routing of underground municipal services;
- The-direction of Sewell Street as the new scenic avenue;
- The landscaping of the new public thoroughfare between Main Street and Anchor Place consisting of ramps and stairs;
- The landscaping and paving of adjacent lanes, roads, etc.

(c) Bid proposal call documentation

The development of a Bid Proposal Call documentation for these sites will therefore require a preliminary feasibility study and design guidelines according to which the vital information including the analysis of aspects including: parking requirements, commercial space, services spaces, hotel-, residential hotel- and normal apartments etc. are all comprised in a true mixed use development frameworks. (Refer also the section on the Beacon Isle Precinct for more detailed suggestions in this regard.)

(d) Re-Development Proposals on Existing Sites

To issue a call for re-development proposals of the existing properties in the Village, including similar landscaping measures for the public thoroughfare areas. A set of conditions and urban design guidelines need to be developed for this purpose.

(e) Land Uses

All development and redevelopment proposals should be strongly biased towards mixed use and the introduction of:

- Niche retail, boutique stores and office suites on the ground levels; and
- Residential and/or hospitality building stock.

26.8 Conclusion

The Anchor Place development is the key catalyst for the urban revitalization of the CBD, and it should be organized in such a way that it ensures the complete revitalization of the immediate Lower CBD Precinct. This precinct should define the new identity and development direction of the Plettenberg Bay CBD for years to come.

27 THE UPPER CBD “UPTOWN” PRECINCT 03

27.1 Current Situation

This proposed precinct area stretches between Hill and Jackson Streets and between Main and High Streets, with some additional blocks as shown on the plans. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 13)

27.2 Concerns

The key concerns are similar to those discussed under the headings of the Main Street Precinct and Lower CBD “Village” Precincts above, and have to do with arresting the incipient decline of the attractiveness of the CBD as well as seeking ways to lift it to a new level by stimulating investment into it going forward into the future.

The existing and proposed parking garages threaten to turn the heart of the upper CBD into a concrete jungle ‘back’ area, thereby blighting the urban fabric.

27.3 Key Policy Question

What is an appropriate response to the urban regeneration of the Upper CBD, and in particular of the urban fabric in the immediate CBD periphery, that is within the proposed ring road system and above the Main Street?

And, since this area does not envisage a major single public/private sector development initiative such as for Anchor Place, how can this be achieved by incentivating private sector development alone?

27.4 Guiding Vision

The vision that has emerged for this Precinct is one of a compact, vibrant, mixed-use, and “Lived-in” Town Centre or an “Uptown”.

It should be characterized by a denser urban fabric with buildings creating positive street-edge conditions and furnishing the street edges.

It should be strongly complementary to the Main Street and Anchor Place pedestrian-priority zones, and it should cater for the more permanent component of the town (as opposed to highly seasonal activities), in the sense of providing the comfortable amenity of:

- Street-edge based commercial and business premises;
- Easy vehicular access;
- Adequate on-site parking; and as far as possible:
- Entertainment and restaurant venues;
- Affordable residential accommodation for permanent residents; and
- Centrally located B&B's.

27.5 Objectives

The core objective for the Upper CBD “Uptown” Precinct is to stimulate private investment in a mixed use urban centre and

in so doing to consolidate and enhance the urban character of the upper CBD.

This entails stemming the downgrading of the street edges occurring at present, in part due to the negative impact of the existing and proposed parking garages.

This part of the CBD should retain a predominantly permanent character (as opposed to a seasonal one) and therefore needs to offer plausible and attractive property solutions to investors and tenants alike.

Measures in the form of Enhanced Development Rights similar to those for the Lower CBD "Village" Precinct are proposed, which will entail on-site parking provision.

27.6 Elements of the Precinct Strategy

The following strategic elements will be developed, along similar lines to those described for the Lower CBD Precinct above. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 14)** These elements include:

- (a) Uptown Re-development: Enhanced Development Rights
- (b) Development Controls
- (c) Cost Recovery Mechanisms
- (d) Connection to Adjacent Precincts

(e) Rezoning of single residential erven

(f) Accommodation of new ring road system

(g) Co-ordination with proposed reconfiguration of proposed Taxi/Market precinct

27.7 Proposed redevelopment of GPO and SAP Sites

The above sites may become available for disposal, in which case similar measures to those for the Anchor Place site regarding Bid Proposal Calls may become necessary.

It is proposed that the redevelopment of these sites be managed as possible catalysts and as a fundamental part and parcel of the "Uptown" CBD Precinct.

Since the public and local authorities can exercise greater leverage, this may include stricter development conditions, such as for example, the provision of affordable apartments for prospective permanent town residents.

27.8 Proposed Intervention Steps

(a) Urban Renewal Guidelines

Since here the strategy is to stimulate private investment, rather than to intervene proactively, an effective set of measures, including the conceptual definition of the scope of

departures to be granted, re-zonings, development controls, etc. should ideally be developed by the local authority as a template for advising developers proactively.

(b) Traffic Re-routing

These will have to be co-ordinated with the proposed ring road traffic system and any possible impact of arising from re-routing and one-way systems. The impact of the traffic re-routing on the residential sites will also need to be carefully assessed and planned for. The traffic flow at the South end of Main Street should be restored as a two-way system.

(c) The Uptown Re-development: Enhanced Development Rights

The existing erven, would be provided with a stimulus for owners and developers by granting specific and conditional Enhanced Development Rights type II (with on-site parking) (EDR II's).

These EDR's would:

- Allow the bulk to be increased on a case basis;
- Be guided by site specific development guidelines which would be subject to public comment; and
- Be dealt with substantially as departure applications and on a case basis.

(d) Taxi/Market Area

This area is to be reconsidered as a separate but overlapping precinct, as per the relevant diagrams.

(e) The Rezoning of the Residential Erven

The Rezoning of the Residential Erven to the West side of High Street will need to be implemented subject to restrictive conditions, partly to accommodate the ring road and partially to allow for a higher density 'buffer' of commercial/residential buildings forming the uppermost edge of the CBD.

27.9 Conclusion

The Upper CBD Area is without doubt the present economic driver of the Plettenberg Bay Central Area, and it needs to be managed so as to ensure that the investments in it are managed positively. The precinct strategy is therefore mainly and incentive-driven approach that seeks to stimulate private investment in a mixed-use urban centre and in so doing to consolidate and enhance the urban character of the upper CBD.

28 THE TAXI / MARKET PRECINCT 04

28.1 Current Situation

The current taxi rank acts as the primary gateway for taxi commuters from outlying areas and suburbs into the CBD. The large numbers of commuters passing through it make it a strong informal trading hub. There are a number of semi-permanent and temporary street trading stalls both around the taxi rank and sporadically along the pedestrian pathways leading to the CBD along High Street and then down along Strand, Kloof Crescent and Church streets. In addition a number of businesses catering to this taxi-commuting clientele have located along these pedestrian pathways. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 15)

28.2 Concerns

This important taxi rank and trading area is however inadequately equipped for the informal trading activities and the volume of taxi users. Furthermore the taxi routing presents some problems as to the Strand/High Street intersection, in particular as regards the traffic from the ranks rejoining Strand Street/ Marine Way. Delivery vehicles using the upper end of Kloof Street between the taxi rank and the shops also cause congestion when mixed with normal through traffic.

The congestion of this part of the town have some creative aspects and some negative ones.

On the positive side, the taxi rank and market area form a successful bustling urban gateway and hub, conveniently close to the CBD, and from an important area and asset to the town in terms of its urban mix. As with all bustling and vibrant urban settings, there is a degree of 'creative congestion': pedestrian movement, normal-, delivery- and taxi traffic all tending to overlap. The mixture of commuting movement, shopping, working, taking refreshments and chance social encounters between commuters make for an area serving the definition of successful spaces at least at an activities programming level.

On the negative side, apart from the traffic congestion mentioned earlier, there are also a number of problems. Taxi- and pedestrian crossings, congestion at the end of High Street, the lack of toilet amenities and the fragmentation and dispersal of informal trading activities as 'marginal' and makeshift.

This leads to a relative urban 'disqualification' of this site and therefore of its users - that social constituency of Plett that can only afford taxi transport. For commuters, this marginality may well be reinforced by such factors as the dangers of traffic crossings, street-edge trading, temporary and precarious rights for traders, lack of basic amenities like water, toilets, storage for traders and their customers alike.

28.3 Key policy question

What is an appropriate response, therefore, in 'lifting' the status and functionality of this mainly taxi-rank and informal market area?

28.4 Guiding vision

The guiding vision is to turn the taxi rank and market area into a precinct with a distinct flavour and character as one of the Plett CBD's vibrant hubs.

It can thereby become the centre-piece of a more extensive street market system that should be an attractive to and safe for tourists and Bitouans of all walks of life. It can therefore become an emergent precinct with its own unique and perhaps more 'African' cultural character.

As a taxi/market area it can, and perhaps should, have a degree of creative congestion (at least for pedestrian users), and it should be robust, inexpensive to use and appropriately 'urban' in character.

A well constituted street market component complementing the taxi ranks would permit this precinct to be raised in status from a place people 'have' to move through, to one where they would want to move through, even when not using a taxi.

28.5 Precinct strategy

Since it is of great importance to the Bitou's emergent small businesses and previously advantaged groupings, this area should be given priority for a significant investment.

An urban ensemble comprising a market, reconfigured taxi rank, and possible service station with 24hr shop on a nearby site, all configured with a smoothly flowing system of vehicular and pedestrian flows would form a powerful catalyst for this potentially vibrant urban gateway site. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 16)**

28.6 Proposed Intervention Steps

(a) Key conceptual design actions

This precinct would therefore require the following:

- (i) The study and resolution of the negative traffic crossing points, namely taxi's, normal traffic, delivery vehicles, commuters, shoppers, etc. This requires consideration of this precinct's connection to the proposed ring road system, public space system and Upper CBD Precinct.
- (ii) The exact placement of a traffic circle so as to maximize smooth flow and traffic distribution whilst not negatively affecting pedestrian crossings, carefully considered and implemented.
- (iii) The location of all key facilities of the taxi rank and market within the proposed ring road system so as to

integrate them with the CBD from a pedestrian point of view.

- (iv) The location of a possible new service station site nearby but perhaps outside of the ring road system in such a way that it avoids congesting it.

(b) Detailed Design

Once this re-organisation and decongestion is designed, the new specific functions can be conceptualized:

- (i) The process of alighting onto and from taxis, and the connection with market activities;
- (ii) The process of operating small and micro enterprises;
- (iii) The process of drawing tourists and shoppers 'up' from the CBD and across High street into the precinct;
- (iv) The rationalization and functioning of all hard and soft surfaces as the 'functioning urban surface', including landscaping elements;
- (v) Investigating the feasibility of creating a market area around the existing taxi rank as a landmark gateway structure – provided that it does manage to attract shopping feet across it;

(vi) Introducing key amenities for

- The public (ablutions, lighting, security, public telephones, seating, other street furniture such as bins, etc.)
- Traders (adding stall spaces, water points, electrical points, storage facilities, etc.)
- Taxi operators (adding vehicle parking/queuing space, a command station, signage, etc.)

(c) Participative and proactive management

This would need to be complemented by proactive urban management that assists in the differentiation and encouragement of daily, weekly, monthly and seasonal market stall activities along an extended route throughout the public space system. One way to stimulate this would be for example, to allow traders to relocate to different sites at different times, thus providing them with opportunities to trade, for example at the taxi/market, on Main Street, in the Cultural precinct and at the Central Beach, depending on the day, season, event or occasion.

The infrastructural and administrative support would need to involve both the local authorities and any possible other relevant urban renewal stakeholders and interest groups representing, taxi operators, small traders, larger businesses, etc.

(d) Funding Strategy

A funding strategy and financial plan would need to be developed. The elements of such a financial plan could comprise a set of diverse funding sources and measures, including, for example:

- (i) The defraying of the cost of building the traffic circle by the involvement of a potential developer for a service station site to be proposed;
- (ii) The mobilization of funds from public land disposals for the construction of the market and core associated amenities;
- (iii) Cost recovery via levies and fees for various operators and/or management and subletting agreement for an operator for the taxi-market area;
- (iv) The defraying of the cost of re-paving the surfaces of the upper Kloof Street area, which could be pedestrianized, by the owners of adjacent properties in exchanged for possible enhanced development rights.

28.7 Conclusion

The proposed new taxi/market area within the context of the urban renewal of the CBD and beyond is reflected in the plans for the Upper CBD-, Lower CBD-, Central Nature Area-, Cultural- and Beach Precincts. The taxi/market area clearly

forms an upper gateway and the start of an eventual sequence of pedestrian-friendly public spaces right down to the Central Beach.

The market component would be a key strategic element activity system to activate and energise the rest of the 'public space system'.

The definition and upgrading of this Taxi/Market precinct is one of the most important aspects of the process and of fundamental importance bringing about the integration of this neglected though heavily used area into the CBD. It is perhaps one of the precincts in which any renewal will make a palpable difference to the less affluent members of the greater Bitou community, and its importance in the overall framework of the urban renewal process cannot be overestimated.

29 THE MARINE WAY CORRIDOR 05

29.1 Current Situation

The Marine Way corridor is the main access route from the N2 into the CBD, especially for traffic from the Knysna direction as well as for local traffic from New Horizons and Kwanokuthula. A new traffic circle has been installed at the N2 intersection. This also anticipates the eventual re-routing of the N2, and the conversion of the present N2 to a major local traffic arterial road. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURES 17a & 17b)**

The Marine Way corridor is marked by a major Shell service station close to the N2, and is flanked by a number of housing cluster developments along its length. This trend for higher density housing developments is expected to be further promoted by the municipality.

Marine Way has wide verges on either side, before the boundary lines of the erven.

The corridor is heavily used by working people on foot, walking either the entire, or part of the distance between the N2 and the CBD to and from taxi and bus pick up points.

29.2 Issues, concerns and opportunities

The corridor forms one of the most important first impressions that visitors form of the town. It presents a relatively neglected road, with inconsistent treatment of edges, ad hoc and poor

quality signage, crooked and unsightly fences, bins, and a pedestrian pathway in a generally poor condition. The new housing developments are of vastly different styles, ranging from thatched bush style to fake Tuscan to indifferent featureless buildings. This adds to the neglected and messy air of the corridor.

The Bitou Municipality and government own some tracts of land roughly halfway between the N2 and the CBD along Marine Way. These are under consideration for alienation, in which case development conditions relating to the upgrading of the corridor may be attached to the sale.

The ongoing re-zoning of land for higher density development gives the local authority a great degree of leverage to request improvements to the corridor.

The relative width of the corridor affords space and opportunities for introducing adequate pathways, improved driveways, tree-planting and signage that won't interfere with the heavy vehicular traffic and sightlines.

29.3 Key Policy Question

What should the character of the Marine Way Corridor be, and how can this character be improved by public- and private investment?

29.4 Guiding Vision

The corridor is seen as a drive/walk that forms a 'spatially extended gateway' in the form of a 'scenic avenue' that forms a structured entry process into Plettenberg Bay.

29.5 Objective

From the point of view of arriving by car, it presents an experience lasting about 3 minutes from the N2 to the Taxi rank/market area and then to Main Street, at which point vista's of the Ocean and of Central Beach open up. These vista's act as a further inducement, for the outside visitor and tourist, to drive down to the Central Beach area as a completion of the entry process into Plettenberg Bay. This 3 minute entrance process should be deliberately structured as an experiential process forming a fitting introduction to Plettenberg Bay. For outside visitors as well as for the many daily commuters, both on foot and in taxi's and busses, this corridor should be present a 'scenic avenue' that is interesting, sheltering, ambiguous and having an element of changeability through announcements and signage. These interventions should consciously seek to present an image of the town consistent with the overall vision of the urban renewal.

29.6 Elements of the strategy

The key strategic elements to form the corridor pertain to the following sub-areas:

(a) Roadways

The treatment of the roadway itself including traffic islands, pedestrian crossing pints, and carriageway crossings;

(b) Road Reserves

The treatment of the road reserve verges as a green zone including linear pedestrian walkways for commuters and a cycleway;

(c) Private Improvements

Harness the improvements from private sources in the form of the paving of access lanes from the carriage-way crossings to gates; as well as

(d) Edge Conditions

The design of edge conditions of gateways and boundary walls into the corridor; and finally

(e) Urban Furniture

The design of urban furniture: sheltering facilities, road signs, private and advertising signage, bins, seats, street lighting and other infrastructural elements.

All of these diverse elements need to be co-ordinated as to design, colour, materials and scale.

29.7 Intervention Steps

Since the intervention on the corridor mostly on public land, and since the elements are more of a landscaping character,

the main steps suggested for intervention are biased towards physical design outcomes and controls. The following key steps are recommended:

(a) Overall Corridor Design

Undertake an overall design of the corridor, including physical design suggestions for the typical conditions as described above, and with particular attention to the gateway conditions and transitional areas.

(b) Public/private co-ordination

Develop a set of reasonable measures, including conceptual definition of the improvements that can be expected by developers on adjacent properties. The scope of departures to be granted, re-zonings, development controls, etc. should ideally be developed by the local authority as a template for advising developers as to what the desired outcome of the corridor should be, and in relation to contributions by developers.

(c) Surface Design Guidelines

The treatment of all surfaces should be co-ordinated to ensure a coherent outcome, for example, the types of paving surfaces and approach to landscaping.

(d) Greening Guidelines

The greening and tree-planting aspects should be taken into account to provide shade cover for pedestrians, but also to be from local flora that is adapted to the local climate and are therefore sustainable and inexpensive to maintain.

(e) Edge Condition Guidelines

The suggest a repertoire of edge condition design elements and guidelines, including for fences, palisades, walls, gates, gateway structures, refuse collection elements, external lighting, paving, and their colours and materials. Development proposals would be requested to be submitted in terms of the urban renewal- and design framework overlays, and would be dealt with on a case basis.

(f) Urban Furniture Guidelines

To develop a set of innovative and distinctive urban furniture elements, including, as noted above, sheltering facilities, road signs, private and advertising signage, bins, seats, street lighting and other infrastructural elements.

(g) Public Art

To identify locations and sites for public art contributions and to set a conceptual framework for the thematic content of these artworks.

29.8 Conclusion

The definition and upgrading of the Marine Way corridor has been identified as a priority in terms of signaling the approach to the town and the urban renewal process, as well as providing tangible benefits, in particular to the local commuter population that uses it every day.

30 THE BEACON WAY CORRIDOR 06

30.1 Current Situation

The Beacon Way corridor is a major access way from the N2 at the Northern side of the town in the Port Elizabeth direction. It presents a gateway condition at the N2 intersection.

There is an Engen service station at the intersection, followed by the large 'Village Square' shopping complex. The suburb of Poortjies lies to the East between Beacon Way and the Keurbooms River Lagoon. The character of this suburb is quiet low key and very treed, and the Beacon Way corridor is wide and provides a generous strip of green open space. This is helped by the blocks of public land of the Nature Conservation Department, the open space buffer between it and Frederick Sreet, and the tongue of lagoon land coming in next to Cupid Street. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURES 17a & 17b)**

On the whole, apart from the aggressively commercial impact of Village Square, the corridor makes for an appealing and very green scenic drive. The road then winds up towards Main Street, entering the CBD at the intersection with Hill Street. When traveling in the opposite direction from the CBD towards the Lagoon, the drive unfolds dramatic scenery over the Keurbooms River Lagoon and coastline.

There is a never-ending stream of pedestrians, mainly working people walking to and from the suburbs and CBD and between palces of work and taxi stops.

30.2 Concern

Beacon Way itself is in a generally poor state, having degraded over many years of intensive use. There is no adequate pedestrian and/or cycling pathway. The impact of the commercial complex near the N2 has altered its image, and more injudicious commercial sprawl along it would only exacerbate its incipient identity crisis between scenic drive and mall strip. Further commercial development also threatens the regeneration of the CBD, as identified in the SDF and discussed earlier. An accretion of un-coordinated and poor-quality signs and roadside elements lower its tone.

As is the case with Marine Drive (see above) the relative width of the corridor affords opportunities for introducing adequate pathways, improved driveways, tree-planting and signage without interfering negatively with road-use.

30.3 Key Policy Question

What should the character of the Beacon Way Corridor be and how would its character be enhanced and its future development controlled?

30.4 Guiding Vision

The corridor should, in the case of the Marine Way Corridor, form a 'spatially extended gateway' in the form of a 'scenic drive' that forms a structured entry process into Plettenberg Bay. On its upper side, Beacon way forms an interesting winding scenic drive, almost sensuous and baroque in its experience. Lower down it has a green, informal and almost rural character. These qualities are to be emphasised and

reinforced in an experiential 'entrance process' design. The rural character and informality of the lower part of the corridor should be retained.

30.5 Objectives

The main objectives for the corridor design are to achieve:

- (a) An improvement of the existing roadway surface;
- (b) A proper pedestrian pathway, especially on the upper side is required, and a future cycleway band should be provided for. (Refer also to the section on the Marine Way Corridor.);
- (c) The retention of the rural and informal character of lower area;
- (d) The possible partial screening of the commercial parking lots by tree planting nearer to the N2;
- (e) To freeze further re-zonings and/or departure for commercial development on its edges; and
- (f) The creation of places for rests and seats in the corridor.

These interventions should consciously seek to present an image of the town consistent with the overall vision of the urban renewal.

30.6 Elements of corridor improvement strategy

As in the case of the Marine Way Corridor, the following broad intervention and design strategy elements are identified:

(f) Roadways

The treatment of the roadway itself including traffic islands, pedestrian crossing pints, and carriageway crossings;

(g) Road Reserves

The treatment of the road reserve verges as a green zone including linear pedestrian walkways for commuters and a cycleway;

(h) Private Improvements

Harness the improvements from private sources in the form of the paving of access lanes from the carriage-way crossings to gates; as well as

(i) Edge Conditions

The design of edge conditions of gateways and boundary walls into the corridor; and finally

(j) Urban Furniture

The design of urban furniture: sheltering facilities, road signs, private and advertising signage, bins, seats, street lighting and other infrastructural elements.

All of these diverse elements need to be co-ordinated as to design, colour, materials and scale.

30.7 Proposed Intervention Steps

The intervention on the corridor is almost exclusively on public land and the elements are mostly of a landscaping

character. The approach is similar to that described for the Marine Way corridor above, including the following processes:

(a) Overall Corridor Design

Undertake an overall design of the corridor, including physical design suggestions for the typical conditions as described above, and with particular attention to the gateway conditions and transitional areas.

(b) Public/private co-ordination

Develop a set of reasonable measures, including conceptual definition of the improvements that can be expected by developers on adjacent properties. The scope of departures to be granted, re-zonings, development controls, etc. should ideally be developed by the local authority as a template for advising developers as to what the desired outcome of the corridor should be, and in relation to contributions by developers.

(c) Surface Design Guidelines

The treatment of all surfaces should be co-ordinated to ensure a coherent outcome, for example, the types of paving surfaces and approach to landscaping.

(d) Greening Guidelines

The greening and tree-planting aspects should be taken into account to provide shade cover for pedestrians, but also to be from local flora that is adapted to the local climate and are therefore sustainable and inexpensive to maintain.

(e) Edge Condition Guidelines

The suggest a repertoire of edge condition design elements and guidelines, including for fences, palisades, walls, gates, gateway structures, refuse collection elements, external lighting, paving, and their colours and materials. Development proposals would be requested to be submitted in terms of the urban renewal- and design framework overlays, and would be dealt with on a case basis.

(f) Urban Furniture Guidelines

To develop a set of innovative and distinctive urban furniture elements, including, as noted above, sheltering facilities, road signs, private and advertising signage, bins, seats, street lighting and other infrastructural elements.

(g) Public Art

To identify locations and sites for public art contributions and to set a conceptual framework for the thematic content of these artworks.

30.8 Conclusion

The corridor is an important entrance process and commuter access corridor. The improvement of the corridor also requires, however a policy direction that retains its informal character prevents further 'strip mall'-type commercial developments.

31 THE BEACHES PRECINCT 07

31.1 Current Situation

The Precinct has three beaches: Central, Hobie and Lookout Beaches. These beaches are different from and complementary to one another in character and usage. A fourth beach, Robberg Beach beyond the Piesang River mouth and Beacon Isle peninsula, completes the spectrum, although it is excluded from the present project area. Central and Hobie Beaches are contiguous with one another and function as a unit. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 18)**

Central Beach probably ranks as one of South Africa's premier high-season holiday beaches and is an invaluable asset among the spectrum of offerings within Plettenberg Bay and in the greater Bitou area.

The primary focus of the present study is Central Beach, although some aspects of potential future intervention in the precinct as a whole and in the Lookout Beach area are touched on.

Central Beach is a 'working beach' with an intermingling of activities. It presents a fascinating situation with its dynamic arrangement of overlapping functions, including as:

- a. A leisure beach – involving tanning, socializing, swimming and picnicking;
- b. An entertainment venue – involving major music concerts and beach parties in high season;

- c. Leisure sports – for kayaking, surfing, motor-boating, sailing and jet-skiing;
- d. Recreational fishing;
- e. Eco-tourism excursions – dolphin and whale watching and diving;
- f. Commercial fishing and fish transportation;
- g. Lifesaving;
- h. Control and Inspection functions;
- i. Commercial functions – retail shops; and
- j. Hospitality functions – restaurants, a pub and fast-food outlets.

The area for launching and landing boats lies to the northern end of Central Beach. This is also the location of the historic slipway along which timber was dragged from the Old Timber Shed into the sea and floated out for loading onto ships for the Dutch East India Company (VOC). This area is heavily used throughout the year and effectively is used as the primary boat launching area given the absence of a harbour. At any one time there is usually a number of yachts and fishing vessels anchored off the beach.

31.2 Key Concern

Over time various constituencies that use this beach have sought to lay their respective claims to this beach in exclusive ways, such as, for example holiday makers seeking to exclude fishermen, power-boating or commercial fishing.

It can be argued that some of the resulting tensions are the product of a kind of 'zoning'-inspired prejudice whereby urban activities are to be strictly compartmentalized. It is an approach that finds it difficult to conceptualise multi-functional environments. In South Africa this approach to zoning has often been a thinly-veiled pretext for elitism and social segregation in the past, and in the present it is still justified on security grounds. This has amounted to a difficulty by some in accepting the working character of Central Beach.

There is a concern that the Central Beach, being state land, and under the partial tutelage of the local authority, is not being managed to the best advantage of the broader Bitou community, and that the facilities are low grade and unsightly.

31.3 Key Policy Question

Given the sensitivity of the site and to some extent its ambiguous jurisdictional status, what degree and quality of intervention are required if Central Beach in particular is to be enhanced as a key precinct and transformed into an attractive activity node in the urban renewal strategy?

31.4 Guiding Vision

A similar approach to Central Beach would entail recognizing its unique character as a premier leisure- but also 'working

beach', and seeking to deal with any possible conflicting activities in a more situational manner.

This entails considering the beach as a site containing a degree of 'creative congestion', involving a diversity of activities and a mingling of diverse users. In any event, the boat-launching section of the beach is a specific area, leaving most of the beach free for other beach-going leisure activities. It would be a vibrant and relaxed part of Plettenberg Bay, giving beachgoers and visitors an array of choices including beach-going, beach-related sports-, leisure- and eco-tourism activities, as well as a choice of restaurants, coffee bars and niche retail outlets.

31.5 Objective

The key objective of the urban renewal of the immediate Central Beach area is to ensure that Plettenberg Bay becomes without question 'the best beach in South Africa'; and to further enhance the total experience of visiting the beach, also ensuring that the qualities of informality, relaxation, and excitement that make up the diverse moods of the beach are retained and extended. In the process, an overall, sensitive upgrading of the beach facilities is required.

(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 19)

31.6 Elements of the Precinct Strategy

The main elements of the strategy would be to:

(a) Integration

Introduce an integrative element - suggested by the CDF as an exciting pedestrian boardwalk with sunscreens and lighting - that forms an edge between the beach and against which the various facilities attach themselves;

(b) Extension of Activities

Seek to extend the activity cycles into the evenings and into traditionally quieter seasons and times;

(c) "Working Beach"

Retain the mixed use 'working beach' character, ensuring an improvement of the infrastructure;

(d) Beach Facilities

Improve and expand the beach facilities ensuring an appropriate and high standard of design.

(e) Pedestrian Connections

Ensure a good set of connections with other adjacent areas and precincts.

(f) Street Markets

To expand the opportunities for street market activities at the parking area between the Central Beach and the Piesang River, and behind the Central Beach buildings.

31.7 Intervention Steps

Beaches and the immediate surrounds, including vegetated dunes, rocks and similar ecological niches are essentially natural systems, and call for an extremely light footprint in any interventions considered. The Beaches Precinct is therefore not a 'development' precinct in the traditional sense. The intangible elements of what makes for a beach experience are more important than a fixation on physical elements and interventions. The informality of beaches is precisely what makes them so adaptable and useful and Central Beach is a case in point.

The proposed approach is therefore as follows:

- (a) Research the tangible and intangible qualities that would need to go into ensuring that the beach was unique and special. This entails understanding the expectations and desires of beach-goers, managing the beach accordingly and encouraging the lessees of facilities and operating concessions to meet these requirements.
- (b) Review and renegotiate all relationships with existing and potential lessees and concession holders.
- (c) Initiate stakeholder and prospective lessee consultations on the facilities to be provided and the contributions to be made. This should preferably result in an ongoing public/private joint improvement and management effort of the precinct.

(d) Efforts should also be made to extend the activity cycles of the beach on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis, so that it has more presence of people in the evenings, for example.

(e) Consider the juxtaposition of diverse activities of the leisure and working beach as positive assets. Lessons can be learnt from successful multi-functional beach and waterfront and harbour areas elsewhere. For example, the experience of the re-development of the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town since the late eighties has broken the mold of the traditional zoning approach and demonstrated the viability of mixing diverse leisure, commercial and hospitality functions together with those traditionally associated with a working harbour.

(f) Identify the new physical design elements required and initiate the design process.

While respecting the need for a light footprint, there is also a need to enhance the whole beach experience and to improve the aesthetics and level of amenity.

31.8 Conclusion

The Beaches Precinct of Plettenberg Bay contains probably the best combination of scenic and natural beauty complemented by ease of access and amenity of all beach locations in South Africa and certainly in the Southern Cape region.

32 THE CULTURAL PRECINCT 08

32.1 Current Situation

One of the key components in Plettenberg Bay's urban vitalization process is the tutelage of its geographical and historic 'heart'.

There is a natural kloof that has survived urban development, stretching from the present Bitou Municipality Council building on Crescent Street to Central Beach. The lower section of this kloof has a natural cove at the base of which sits the **Old VOC Timber Shed**, the **Old Rectory** and **Chapel**. The old Shed consists of a partially restored and dramatic stone wall ruin while the latter two buildings are in a state of severe decay and require urgent conservation efforts. Similarly many old indigenous trees, including numerous old milk-woods - and some of which are on private properties adjacent to the Timber Shed site - are a key asset and lend character to the area. These trees function as important social 'memory devices' and confer depth to the experience of this Precinct.

(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 20)

32.2 Concern

There is a serious concern that the few remaining buildings and trees in this historic area are under threat from neglect and possible demolition. This area of the kloof is a neglected and unsafe zone in the town, and needs to be recuperated and integrated into the public space system.

32.3 Key Policy Question

Given this group of historic buildings and landmarks, and the surviving ecological niche of the area, what could be done to enliven and integrate this area into the urban renewal process and its proposed pedestrian spaces?

32.4 Guiding Vision

The vision is for a cultural precinct at the historic heart of the town, situated between and linking the two main activity cores of the CBD and Central Beach. It would introduce a note of contemporary African cultural expression to the historic character of this oldest part of the town.

32.5 Objectives

The memorialisation of this and other key sites in Plettenberg Bay should be seen as part of a broader cultural programme for the recovery and re-interpretation of cultural memory and identity, as part of the current phase of nation-building in South Africa.

Thus the identification of a cultural precinct provides an opportunity to:

- (a) Create a central focus for the Bitou area and Plettenberg Bay's broader cultural history and identity, for example, by being a focal point for tour guides to 'narrate' the environment and its people. In this instance, for example,

this would involve re-telling the story of the contact between indigenous peoples and the arrival of the colonial agents interested in timber, agriculture and later whaling.

- (b) Restore and re-utilise the physical historic buildings, namely the Old VOC Timber Shed, the Old Rectory and Chapel, as well as the old trees and milkwoods as centerpieces for a new ensemble.
- (c) Introduce a new programmatic and component in the form of a sculpture garden in the precinct. This can be develop along the lines of, for example, a "garden of contemporary SA expressions" or "African Sculpture Garden" (an idea developed by the Mayor's Office) thus introducing a fresh and dynamic energy into this area.

32.6 Motivation and cultural entrepreneurship

This initiative ties in with a broader project of memorialization that is being sponsored at national level by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). Its goals are to memorialize aspects of South African history that have been repressed or that generally help to build a narrative of our collective past. Particular attention is paid to 'history from below', the surfacing of untold stories, oral tradition and the experience of subaltern groups as a basis for researching sites worthy of memorialization. Academic historians also seek to re-narrate history from a multiplicity of

perspectives - women, the oppressed, material culture, history from below, etc. These interpretive efforts contribute towards the construction of a new self-reflection of South African society. Subjects that were previously taboo and memories that were repressed are brought to light and re-examined. History and therefore cultural and social identity are prised away from the often stifling constraints of contingent political agenda's and the hegemonic discourses of elites. The natural and built environment and the imprint of material culture on the landscape provide strong evidence and support to these efforts of 're-narration'. Physical places act as 'memory triggers' around which these emerging stories are told and re-told.

In terms of the discussion above, this initiative would introduce an "Africanisation" theme into this historical and cultural precinct, thereby conjoining and interweaving pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial material culture narratives.

Such a cultural precinct, enhanced also by its proximity to Central Beach, could form a major attraction and asset. Some of the ideas that have been proposed for this precinct are that it could form the basis for a project of "cultural entrepreneurship" capable of attracting sponsorship and patronage from some of Plettenberg Bay's more enlightened and privileged ratepayers and from the corporate sector. It could, also for example, be the focus for cultural initiatives such as an annual Southern African

sculpture exposition, art and cultural festivals and the promotion of a local art education project.

32.7 Elements of the Precinct Strategy

The physical layout elements envisaged for the precinct include the following: **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 21)**

- (a) The Old VOC Timber Shed that could be re-utilised as a museum and café available also for indoor and outdoor exhibits;
- (b) An African Sculpture Garden surrounding the Shed thatv would be inspired by the surrounding cliffs, natural topography of the 'hollow' and partial cover of the surrounding indigenous forest;
- (c) The Van Plettenberg Beacon and the tourist pathways, green spaces ad vantage point;
- (d) A re-instatement of the old VOC Slipway - by which cured logs were dragged from the timber shed to the beach for floating out to the waiting sailing ships - in a similar location. The proposed VOC slipway would create a physical pedestrian link between the Old VOC Timber Shed of the Cultural Precinct and the proposed new timber boardwalk of Central Beach.
- (e) The Old Rectory building and the Old Chapel (both on privately owned land). The sensitivity of this site merits some detailed guideline considerations:
 - (i) It would be best to restore the buildings and keep the open character of the grounds. If, however this would not be possible without adding more bulk to the site (for economic reasons) then as a matter of last resort, a "backdrop" building could be considered to the west of the Rectory and the Old Chapel;
 - (ii) The front area to the south and east should be left as an informal and green area, linking this character through to the Old Timber shed, so that they act as an ensemble forming the centre pieces of the proposed Cultural Precinct;
 - (iii) The memory of the site as a "wooded indigenous kloof meeting shoreline forested dunes" associated with the material culture of early logging, curing and building of the 1700's and beyond should be preserved; and
 - (iv) All should be done in such a way that the extension of Plettenberg Bay's public space system through and on the edges of the site is respected and embraced as a real asset.
- (f) Old indigenous trees (on private- and public land)
- (g) Surviving artifacts related to the site: the old timber wagon, old ship's anchors, old implements, etc.

32.8 Conclusion

The Cultural Precinct is strategically located between the Central Beach and the Central Nature Area, which is in turn below the proposed Anchor Place development.

It thus forms part of the continuum of public spaces that are envisaged to stretch from the Taxi Rank and Market Precinct through the CBD to the Beaches Precinct.

A link between the Cultural Precinct and the Central Beach promenade completes the public space system and adds an interesting dimension to the town, introducing a cultural experience that complements the leisure experience centred on the beaches.

People would be able to meander from the beach to the cool and leafy area of the cultural precinct and its historic buildings, and engage in more contemplative and interpretive experiences.

33 THE SIGNAL HILL NATURE AREA 09

33.1 Current Situation

The Signal Hill Nature area is characterized by a steep bluff and hill top overlooking the whole coastline, with panoramic views from Robberg to the Lagoon. Its name derives from its location for signalling to ships. The bluff, partly due to its steepness on the Piesang River side to the south has remained undeveloped. It is continuous with a much larger nature area stretching up the Piesang River valley.

Signal Hill has a timber viewing deck and is a destination for tourists to take in the sights. It has no other facilities.

The Bitou Municipality has already granted conditional development approval to a hotel group for the construction of a boutique hotel facility. According to the terms of the approval, the developers would be expected to safeguard the natural environment and ensure full public access to the existing and/or a new public viewing deck, as well as provide additional amenities for the public. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 22)

33.2 Concern

A concern has been expressed that the Signal Hill could lose its scenic character, both from the vantage point of its crown, as well as from below, where it forms a green bluff as a backdrop to the river and beaches. There is a concern that its development would, not only cause a loss of indigenous

fynbos-type veld, but also deface the bluff and crown of the hill.

33.3 Key Policy Question

The question hinges around unlocking the latent tourism potential of the site, a fact that is widely acknowledged, however with contenting perspectives. Should it be primarily 'nature' - a pristine, undeveloped scenic spot - or 'culture' - supporting some significant tourism infrastructure? Given that the Bitou Council seems to have pronounced definitively on the matter, the question is about integrating these aspects, taking into account the fact that as a nature area, its scope goes beyond the immediate crown of the hill, and the policy question is also about how this area connects to different aspects of the urban renewal strategy.

33.4 Guiding Vision

The vision is to redefine it as a significant scenic destination for tourists and locals alike. However in so doing it is important also to make it a significant point on a pedestrian spatial continuum, and to move beyond regarding it as merely a spot accessible by car and tour bus for a 10 minute hop-out.

33.5 Objective

The objective is therefore to visualize this unique place as a key element of the experience of Plettenberg Bay in a proactive manner, while respecting its sensitivity. The nature

area should be integrated into the pedestrian-friendly 'public space system' of the urban renewal process as a whole.

33.6 Elements of the Strategy and Proposed Intervention

It is proposed that the strategy for this nature area should include the following: - **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 23)**

- (a) Upgrading the pedestrian link between the CBD and Signal Hill, particularly along Perestrello Street, which would be planted to shade the pathway;
- (b) The development of a nature trail – possibly in the form of a timber board walk;
- (c) The improvement of the traffic turning and parking facilities at the existing traffic circle on the hill;
- (d) The engagement with prospective developers of the hotel, and efforts to ensure that:
 - (i) the scenic impact of the development is minimized;
 - (ii) the buildings are tucked around the western side of the crown of the hill;
 - (iii) the public's access and level of amenity is improved in a non-elitist manner and at the very least for toilets and refreshments;
 - (iv) the development should co-sponsor the proposed nature trail linking to the Piesang River and Central Beach, and that

- (v) contribution were made to the traffic, parking and general landscaping of adjoining public land;
- (vi) heritage- and environmental impact assessment reports be submitted; and

- (e) Recovering a sense of the hill's maritime history and associations – for example by preserving the signal mast.

33.7 Conclusion

The hilltop site is used to give a 'scenic introduction' to tourists visiting the area. By integrating the whole nature area into the urban renewal framework, in particular its link to the Lower CBD and Anchor Place area, a new set of connections can be established to unlock some of this area's latent potential.

It is recommended that the spirit and procedures of the URS, CDF and CURF should be applied to the proposed hotel development as an urban renewal precinct overlay to ensure the attainment of appropriate outcomes in the broader urban renewal framework.

34 THE CENTRAL NATURE AREA 10

34.1 Current Situation

The central nature area has survived as an open space probably more by default than design.

As a green area in the centre of the town, it is 'unused' by human agency, yet has provided a haven for indigenous trees and plants, small animals and abundant birdlife. This 'public open space' on the Town Planning Scheme is from a human point of view, neglected, unsafe to traverse, littered and isolated. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 24)

It is also a vestigial remnant of the natural forested kloof directly above the site of early colonial settlement. Although not excavated, it may well have been a site of early human occupation, given its strategic geographical location. (See discussion of the Cultural Precinct)

34.2 Concern

It is perceived as unsafe, neglected and 'wasted'. There is a concern that it could be overtaken by development in due course, thus leading to the permanent loss of a valuable natural asset.

34.3 Key Policy Question

The question is what can and should be done with it, given its central location, and to render it safe and accessible?

34.4 Guiding Vision

Conceived as one of three nature areas in the project area, it is part of a system of 'green fingers' or urban wildlife corridors that reach into the fabric of the town. It is seen as offering the possibility of an indigenous forest nature trail rich in natural birdlife, right in the heart of Plettenberg Bay. It provides a natural connection between the proposed Anchor Place and the Cultural- and Beach Precinct below.

34.5 Objective

The main objective is to ensure the cleansing of the kloof, and to attend to the recovery, protection and rehabilitation (if necessary) of the indigenous plant species. It should also be rendered safe, accessible and traversable by means of nature walks as a leisure- and interpretive eco-tourism asset, with due sensitivity towards the fauna and flora.

34.6 Elements of the strategy

The approach and interventions should include:

(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 25)

(a) To clean the area;

- (b) Define its edges and gateways;
- (c) Introduce pathways and seats;
- (d) To begin a process of participative management between the local authority and possible operators, such as community-based nature guides;
- (e) To rehabilitate and safeguard the indigenous fauna and flora.

34.7 Conclusion

The Central Nature Area – it would sound better named after the earliest indigenous place name, if this could be traced – provides a unique opportunity to experience a sheltered and 'hidden' natural piece of indigenous forest in the spatial and historic heart of Plettenberg Bay. It forms a remarkable complement to the more open and scenic character of other public spaces.

35 THE LOOKOUT NATURE AREA 11

35.1 Current Situation

The nature area bounded by Lookout Beach, the 'Whale Tail' viewing area, Formosa- and Harding Streets, is characterized by indigenous bush and fynbos, although there appears to have been some encroachment of non-indigenous plant species. It is surrounded mostly by older and well established suburban residences and is crossed by a few paths. The closure of the upper part of Salmac Road to vehicular traffic has given the area a respite, and this now makes the nature area more continuous. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 26)

35.2 Concern

This nature area is underutilized, and would benefit from more frequent pedestrian use, especially since it offers a pedestrian shortcut between the CBD and the "Decks" restaurant on Lookout Beach.

35.3 Key Policy Question

What can be done to encourage more pedestrian use and to increase the presence of people on the pathways?

35.4 Guiding Vision

As one of three nature area's in the project area, it is part of a system of 'green fingers' or urban wildlife corridors that reach into the fabric of the town.

It provides a scenic nature walk between the lower CBD area, more specifically from the Anchor Place and Village Green area around St Peter's Church to the Whale Tail scenic spot and Lookout Beach area.

35.5 Objective

The objective is to rehabilitate the indigenous plant species, to render it safe, accessible and traversable by means of scenic nature walks and jogging tracks.

35.6 Elements of the strategy

The approach and interventions should include actions to: (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 27)

- (a) Clean the area;
- (b) Define its edges and gateways;
- (c) Introduce pathways and seats;
- (d) Soften and indigenize the road verges along Formosa and Church Streets so as to create a micro wildlife

corridor to the St Peter's grounds and connecting to Hopwood Street and the Central Nature Area; and to

- (e) Rehabilitate and safeguard the indigenous fauna and flora.

35.7 Conclusion

The Lookout Nature Area forms a complementary to the more open and scenic character of other public spaces.

36 THE PIESANG VALLEY CORRIDOR 12

36.1 Current Situation

The Piesang Valley Corridor connects the N2 from the Knysna direction at Castleton to Odland Street at the Piesang River Mouth.

This corridor winds down to the river area and serves mainly to connect the southern suburbs and residential estates of Robberg, Brackenridge, Whale Rock Ridge. etc. to the N2 as well as to the CBD. While it has traditionally had the character of a rural road, it has begun to be characterized by high density residential and commercial development at the area around the Longships Drive intersection. It also has a significant pedestrian and taxi route traffic serving mainly working people walking to and from the suburbs and CBD and between places of work and taxi stops. **(See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURES 17a & 17b)**

36.2 Concern

There is a concern that the character of this area is in transition and that unless a clear policy is developed, it could become negatively transformed by commercial sprawl. Like the other corridors, it is starting to accumulate an accretion of un-coordinated signs and roadside elements.

As is the case with the Marine Way- and Beacon Way Corridor (see above) the relative width of the corridor affords

opportunities for introducing adequate pathways, improved driveways, tree-planting and signage without interfering negatively with road-use. The concern about commercial encroachment also relates to the threat posed to the regeneration of the CBD by satellite developments, as identified in the SDF and discussed earlier.

36.3 Key Policy Question

What should the character of the Piesang Valley Corridor be and how would its character be enhanced and its future development controlled?

36.4 Guiding Vision

The corridor should, in the case of the Marine- and Beacon Way Corridors, form a 'spatially extended gateway' in the form of a 'scenic drive' that forms a structured entry process into Plettenberg Bay, treated as an experiential 'entrance process' design. The rural character of the corridor should be retained.

36.5 Objectives

The main objectives for the corridor are as follows:

- (a) A proper pedestrian pathway, especially on the upper side is required, and a future cycleway band should be provided for.
- (b) The rural character of the valley area should be retained.

- (c) Further commercial development by re-zoning and/or departures on its edges and indeed across the Piesang River as a whole should be frozen.
- (d) The overall corridor design should include places for pedestrians and cyclists to rest and sit.

These measures should consciously seek to present an image of the town consistent with the overall vision of the urban renewal.

36.6 Elements of corridor improvement strategy

As in the case of the Marine- and Beacon Way Corridors, the following broad intervention and design strategy elements are identified:

(a) Overall Corridor Roadway Design

The treatment of the roadway itself, including traffic islands, pedestrian crossing pints, and carriageway crossings;

(b) Road Verge Design

The treatment of the road reserve verges as a green zone including linear pedestrian walkways for commuters and a cycleway;

(c) Private Improvements

The harnessing and co-ordination of the improvements from private sources in the form of the paving of access lanes from the carriage-way crossings to gates;

(d) Edge Conditions

The co-ordination of edge conditions for gateways and boundary walls along the corridor; and

(e) Urban Furniture

The design of urban furniture: sheltering facilities, road signs, private and advertising signage, bins, seats, street lighting and other infrastructural elements.

All of these diverse elements need to be co-ordinated as to design, colour, materials and scale.

36.7 Proposed Intervention Steps

The intervention on the corridor is almost exclusively on public land and the elements are mostly of a landscaping character. The approach is similar to that described for the Marine- and Beacon Way Corridors above, including the following processes, more fully described in the Marine Way Corridor section above:

(a) Overall Corridor Design

(b) Public/private co-ordination

(c) Surface Design Guidelines

(d) Greening Guidelines

(e) Edge Condition Guidelines

(f) Urban Furniture Guidelines

(g) Public Art

36.8 Conclusion

The corridor is important as an entrance process and commuter access corridor. It should retain its rural character and no further commercial development by rezoning or departures should be allowed.

37 THE BEACON ISLE PRECINCT 13

37.1 Current Situation

The areas to the south of the Piesang River Mouth, fronting onto the Piesang River and stretching to and including the Beacon Isle present a prime location in the South African- and indeed global context. (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 28)

37.2 Concern

No significant infrastructure has been added to this area since the construction of the Beacon Isle Hotel some 30 years ago. The Parking area and tennis courts have had some minor but random and un-coordinated accretions that have not contributed to enhancing the area. In comparison to waterfront developments in other parts of the country, this must rank as one of the most neglected prime areas.

37.3 Key Policy Question

The key policy question is: What needs to be done to unlock the vast tourism and economic potential of the site in a balanced, aesthetically and environmentally pleasing and sustainable manner.

37.4 Guiding Vision

The vision is for the Beacon Isle precinct to be unique as a tourist 'hot spot', working synergistically with the more relaxed and informal atmosphere of Central Beach adjacent to it.

The Beacon Isle precinct would offer a superior level of amenity, hospitality and other leisure and retail choices. It should also be lively and vibrant with a strong pedestrian relationship with the water's edges, both on the ocean and river. It should be a choice site for promenades. Having a small working harbour would be part and parcel of this experience, and it should avoid becoming a sanitized and bland environment.

37.5 Objectives

The objective is to develop unrivalled tourism-, hospitality- and other leisure facilities with a high turnover of people. The site lends itself for a mixed use development comprising hotels, restaurants, boutiques and leisure and tourism and leisure industry operators generally.

The fact that Plettenberg Bay lacks a harbour and yacht basin has been a long-standing concern. This fact also severely restricts it from attaining world class status – if that is considered desirable – as a global tourism spot.

37.6 Elements of the strategy

The concept for translating this strategy into an actual and viable waterfront precinct is to combine four key elements into an integrated plan: (See SECTION B; PART III; FIGURE 29)

- (a) A proposed deep sea harbour for fishing vessels and ocean-going yachts– to be inserted between two rock spurs that project into the ocean off the Beacon Isle;
- (b) A harbour-front development creating a backdrop to the yacht basin;
- (c) A riverfront development along the Piesang River; and
- (d) The integration of the Beacon Isle Hotel into the whole ensemble, with a proposed new harbour pier extending out on axis with the building itself.

The existing access roads and parking area would be reconfigured and the possibility of creating a new parking deck over a portion of the existing parking area, and backing onto the proposed harbour front development, investigated.

37.7 Discussion of development criteria

In developing this precinct, it should be a non-negotiable condition that Plettenberg Bay's public space and pedestrian system should be allowed to meander and weave through and past all the above-mentioned four facilities so as to provide a rich and informal public experience. Elitist isolation of the precinct should be avoided.

Security concerns should be addressed by means of creating a system of 'territorial supervision' by the stakeholders in the area to provide a public, but secure area.

Perhaps the most fundamental challenge of the precinct strategy is the financing of the harbour infrastructure, since it is likely that most if not all funding would have to be raised from private sources, which would require sufficient critical mass in terms of development of other buildings. Any suggestion of building a mock 'harbour-front'-without-a-harbour should be resisted since it could lead to the elitist 'misappropriation' of an important natural asset and its development as another luxury private holiday-residential estate. Such unfortunate turn of events would permanently close the door on the opportunity to create the harbour infrastructure in future.

The river- and harbour-fronts are therefore regarded as requiring sufficient critical mass as developments to fund at least a significant part of the harbour infrastructure.

The river- and harbour-fronts should not be sold off as private residential developments that remain unoccupied for most of the year as this contradicts the URS.

37.8 Proposed Intervention Steps

This precinct's development would largely be driven by private sector development, and the detail design and proposals would have to emanate from the bidders. The structuring of bid proposal calls by the Bitou Municipality

would establish the development parameters and requirements and the urban design frameworks.

The following are some of the key aspects required in the planning process by the Bitou Municipality.

(a) Structuring of Bid Proposal Calls

The development of a Bid Proposal Call documentation for these sites will therefore require a preliminary feasibility study and design guidelines according to which the vital information including the analysis of aspects including parking requirements, commercial space, harbour services spaces, a boutique hotel, hotel rooms, residential hotel apartments (strictly to be available to hotel rental pools), harbour and yacht basin facilities etc, are all catered for in a true mixed use development frameworks in accordance with the principle as set out in the rest of the URS, CDF and CURF documents.

(b) Assembly of cost information

As part of the bid proposal call structuring, these different components should be analysed in terms of order of magnitude costings by quantity surveyors and presented in the form of a preliminary and broadly viable financial model, so that broadly attractive land parcels can be proposed for the bids. Some land parcels may be required to be bundled into the proposals from elsewhere, i.e. not on the Beacon Isle and Piesang River area in.

(c) Legal information

The legalities regarding leases and other forms of land tenure including that of the Beacon Isle Hotel would require some preliminary investigation. This would include the uses and servitudes of the coastline.

(d) Precendent studies

Some precedent studies should also be part of the process of drawing up the bid documentation. Such studies should consider the financial modeling, economic multiplier effects, and infrastructure development issues experienced in similar projects, such as for example in the Granger Bay development in Cape Town.

(e) Harbour viability plan

A moderate size harbour, due to the constraints of the topography of the site and costs, might not fulfill the requirement for the berthing all fishing vessels permanently, but this could nevertheless allow for temporary docking for loading and refueling, and be complemented by the present system of anchoring off the Central Beach.

(f) Engineering issues

The engineering implications of creating a deep sea harbour need investigation. A further infrastructural element meriting consideration is a duct drawing sea water from the rocks on the ocean side and channeling it to the Piesang River so as to flush the (currently silted) mouth. It is thought that this silting has been caused by stopping the natural tidal flow with the construction of the present access road and parking area,

thereby effectively turning the Beacon Isle into a peninsula. This consideration would also of course require expert engineering input.

(g) Precinct urban design plan

The precinct should be designed in greater detail to facilitate the bidder's design proposals. The public space system for the precinct, as outlined in the conceptual design diagrams, is envisaged to connect to the broader Plettenberg Bay space system across the existing Bridge over the Piesang River Mouth, which would in turn be near to the Central Beach boardwalk.

The river-front development is envisaged as one appropriate to the riverine environment of the Piesang, with a timber promenade deck on stilts over the water. The idea of a small craft harbour has also been mooted for this area, but this would depend on investigations of the dynamics of the sand, river flows and possible requirements for dredging.

37.9 Conclusion

The ideal outcome for this precinct would be a well-rounded experiential domain, stretching from the Piesang River to Lookout Beach. The interventions should be calibrated to be appropriate to each specific area. This should provide the unfolding of a series of spatial and (authentic) thematic experiences along the coastline, while protecting and making the most of the natural splendour of these sites. A pedestrian sequencing would be, for instance:

Robberg Beach - Riverfront - Small Craft Harbour - Harbourfront - Yacht Basin - Beacon Isle - Central Beach - Beach Boardwalk promenade - Working Beach - Hobie Beach - Cultural Precinct - Lookout Rocks - Lookout Beach. There would also be the option of random and circular walks through the various connected spaces.

38 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This Report has been structured in terms of three components parts of the overall Urban Renewal Process. Each part addresses orders of concern with different scopes and scales of concern.

The first part contains an **Urban Revitalisation Strategy** component that is concerned with the broader dimensions of the urban revitalization process.

The policy contained in this part of the report are to be considered in conjunction with the overall development control policies and legislation currently in force, and/or soon to be promulgated, including amongst others, the current and proposed new Town Planning (Zoning) Scheme, Municipal By-laws, Bitou SDF. These policies and provisions collectively set out the standard planning criteria applicable to all forms of development. Proposed developments should be assessed in terms of the relevant development controls; legal provisions; and 'urban overlay conditions', so as to seek the highest design and environmental standards for all new developments.

The second part contains a **Conceptual Design Framework** that offers a series of conceptual ideas and that sets out a

vision for the eventual outcome of the urban renewal process as a whole.

This section contains material of a more graphic and metaphoric nature and forms the material around which the public participation and comment process was structured. Since the complexity and open-endedness of urban development phenomena are not reducible to a static master plan, this section of the document needs to be considered foremost as a strategic and conceptual framework document.

The third part is an **Urban Renewal Framework** that addresses specific dynamics and urban subsystems in the project area. It also identifies distinct elements and areas for intervention.

It proposes that the implementation of the Urban Revitalisation Strategy and Conceptual Design Framework should be organized strategically around a set of "Unifying structure or system" and specific and diverse Urban Precincts.

This allows each precinct to be regarded as a project area within which to develop its own momentum and dynamic, which its own champions and stakeholder groups.

In order for the urban renewal process to translate into actionable propositions, but also for it to be more manageable, it has been divided into distinct urban renewal precincts.

Public places and pathways give a **unifying structure** to the urban experience. The overall systems for pedestrian circulation, public spaces, vehicular circulation, nature areas, etc therefore also require a unified and integrated approach across the project area.

There are aspects of the urban renewal strategy and framework that are best served by treating specific areas as **individual precincts**, recognising the inherent diversity of these precincts.

The document seeks to propose approaches that ensure the development of **appropriateness and “fit”** between developments and their respective precincts. This assessment as to the ‘fit’ of proposed developments requires a reverse checking against the vision, goals, strategic definition and objectives as provided in the Urban Revitalisation Strategy and the Conceptual Design Framework. It is therefore the perspective of this report that this urban renewal strategy and framework seeks to direct activities and urban development strongly but without prescribing them rigidly as to the details.

The attitude to the regulatory framework for the urban renewal process should therefore be one driven by the strategic intent of the urban renewal process as a whole – including the aim of creating an integrated urban environment, supported by a flexible ‘rule-making’ and planning capability.

In conclusion, it is hoped that the provisions contained in this document will contribute towards the creation of an attractive and workable vision for the town. Hopefully this report will inspire the relevant stakeholders to contribute constructively to the process, so that the ultimate ambition of the Bitou Local Municipality to bring about the reality of an **integrated, harmonious and exciting urban environment** may be realised.

SEE SECTION B: DIAGRAMS, SHEETS AND FIGURES – PART IV: PROGRAMME OF ACTION

FOR INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSALS

Adoption as Urban Renewal Policy Document:

The Final Draft of this Report, and of which all substantive content remains unaltered, was formally adopted as a guiding policy document by the Mayoral Committee of the Bitou Local Municipality on 14 September 2005 and as recorded in Item 988/09/05/ Public Works / File Ref S/10.

39 REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements

The project process has been informed by briefing sessions, information from, and consultations with the following key participants, whose contributions are acknowledged:

- The Honourable Mayor, Alderman Euan Wildeman;
- The Deputy Mayor, Mr John Truter;
- Town Councillor, Mr Len Levendal;
- The Municipal Manager, Mr George Seitisho;
- The Director of Corporate Services, Mr Carl Mattheus;
- The Director of Public Works, Mr David Friedman;
- The Chief Town Planner, Mr Ludolf Gericke;
- The Town Engineer, Mr Henry Geldenhuis;
- The Project Leader, Mr Paul Scheepers;
- The Urban Design Group:
 - Mr Willy Meyer,
 - Mr Paul Scheepers,
 - Mr. Angus Greig,
 - Mr. Roberto Boni
- IDP Representative and Ward Committee Member, Mrs Nokuzola Kolwapi;

Valuable insights have also been gained from the following professional participants:

- Mr Jacques van der Merwe of Visi Africa Strategic Planners and Bitou SDF and IDP Consultants
- Mr Roy Bowman of Stewart Scott International (Traffic Engineering)

Comments have also been contributed by other Ward Councillors and Bitou Officials at Public Participation and Presentation Meetings at held at Kwanokuthula during November 2004.

Many of the ideas contained in these proposals are adapted from a summarisation of current thinking collated by the Director of Corporate Services Mr Carl Mattheus on behalf of the Mayor's Office and by the Project Leader Mr Paul Scheepers on behalf of the Urban Design Group.

Sources

Other sources consulted in the course of this investigation also include:

Amidon, Jane, 2001. Radical Landscapes: Reinventing Outdoor Space. Thames & Hudson, London.

Angéli, M, 2003. Inchoate: An Experiment in Architectural Education. Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich.

Botha, PR, Groenewald, PG and Kruger, PWB, 1992. Local Structure Plan for Plettenberg Bay. Town Council of Plettenberg Bay.

Cape Metropolitan Council, 1995. Curituba: Lessons for South African Cities. Cape Metropolitan Council, Cape Town.

Cape Metropolitan Council, 1996. Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework, Technical Report. Cape Metropolitan Council, Cape Town.

Cape Metropolitan Council, MHL Architects & Planners, and MCA Urban and Environmental Planners, 2000. Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework, Handbook. Cape Metropolitan Council, Cape Town.

Cape Metropolitan Administration, City of Cape Town, 2002. Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework, Density Guidelines Manual. Cape Metropolitan Administration, City of Cape Town, Cape Town.

City of Cape Town, 1999. City of Cape Town Spatial Development Framework: Argument and Key Principles. City of Cape Town.

City of Cape Town, 2002. Land Use Procedure Guide (Version 5). City of Cape Town.

City of Cape Town, 2003. Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework Review (Draft). City of Cape Town.

Corner, J, Ed. , 1999. Recovering Landscape – Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture, Princeton Architectural Press, New York.

CNdV Africa Planning & Design, 2005. Provincial Spatial Development Framework Proposals (Draft 1). Provincial Administration, Western Cape, Cape Town.

CSIR and Institute of Security Studies, 1998. Environmental Design for Safer Communities in South Africa. CSIR, Pretoria.

Evans, L, Ed., 2004. "Egocentricity is Dead – Practice Profile/Interview with Gapp Architects and Urban Designers ", *Architect & Specificator*, Jan/Feb 2004, pp 8-11.

Evans, L, Ed., 2004. "Zones & Codes – Interview with Erky Wood of Gapp", *Architect & Specificator*, Mar/Apr 2004, pp 16-17.

Evans, L, Ed., 2004. "Public Meets Private –Interview with Anne Stefny & John Spiropoulos, Kagiso Urban Management", *Architect & Specificator*, May/Jun 2004, pp 22-25.

Evans, L, Ed., 2004. "Paradigm Shift – Practice Profile/Interview with omm Design Workshop", *Architect & Specificator*, Jul/Aug 2004, pp 10-11.

Evans, L, Ed., 2004. "Urban Environments – Practice profile/Interview with studioMAS", *Architect & Specificator*, Nov/FDec 2004, pp 10-11.

Dewar, D, Uytenbogaardt, R, with Hutton-Squire M, Levy, C and Menidis, P, 1978. Housing: A Comparative Evaluation of Urbanism in Cape Town. Urban Problems Research Unit, University of Cape Town.

L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, 2002. " Programme et Forme", *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, Vol 339, Mar/Apr 2002, pp 38-104.

Najale, C, Fannin, C, and Ortega, L, 2000. "Landscape Urbanism: Models and Modalities" – *Course Guidelines*. Architectural Association School of Architecture, London.

Southworth, B, 2003. "Urban Design in Action: The City of Cape Town's Dignified Spaces Programme – implementation of new public spaces towards integration and urban regeneration in South Africa", in *Urban Design International*, September 2003, vol 8, no. 3, pp 119-133.

Stevenson, D, 2003. Cities and Urban Cultures. Maidenhead & Philadelphia: Open University Press, Philadelphia.

Storror, P, ca.1990. Portrait of Plettenberg Bay. Centaur Publishers, Cape Town.