



REALISING THE REPUBLIC

ISSUES AND OPTIONS PAPER –
THE FUTURE OF WHANGAMOMONA

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INTRODUCTION

What is the Future of Whangamomona?

Whangamomona has always been the master of its own destiny and we want it to stay that way. It's been a "Republic" since 1989 and has icon status as a must-see stop on the Forgotten World Highway.

It's also a significant part of the Stratford district and the council has a role to play in making sure its services and infrastructure meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

Although there is a big difference in the population size between Whangamomona and the township of Stratford, per head of population the Whangamomona area

probably outstrips the bigger town in terms of number of events.

Whangamomona's reputation as a tourist hot spot has been growing over the years and its potential for further growth got a recent boost with Taranaki being named the second-best region to visit in the world in 2017.

With council launching the Stratford 2035 Making it Real campaign, we thought the republic needed its own focus paper, and not just be a small part of a district-wide economic development strategy or district plan review.

Where does it fit into the big picture?

The long term plan vision is for a progressive, prosperous district where communities are celebrated.

The Whangamomona community definitely fits into that broader district vision.

The review of the economic development strategy, the review of the district plan and

a new concept plan for the Stratford town centre are projects arising from the current long term plan. This issues and options paper will inform all of these strands.

Together all of these projects are being referred to as Stratford 2035 Making it Real.



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

We want to develop a plan of action for Whangamomona that can inform the bigger strategies and plans underway. A good place to start is to identify the main issues.

Most of what follows has been collected from community meetings and feedback.

The condition of the Forgotten World Highway

There are several slips still to be fixed from the June 2015 flood event. It's an issue that has had a high profile in the media. It has an ongoing effect on the community and the economic development potential of the region.

There is also a 12 km section of the Forgotten World Highway at Tangarakau that is not sealed. This has also attracted recent media attention. It is well below standards expected of a state highway.

Future management of Whangamomona Road

Council has not maintained the Whangamomona Road for the last 20 or so years. A recently obtained legal opinion suggest that this may not be the best form of practice. Council needs to decide whether it goes through the process

of formally stopping the road, or taking a more traditional role of maintaining a level of service that is fit for purposes. The Whangamomona Road is used for a range of recreational purposes, and striking the right balance could be a challenge.



Management of other local roads

While probably not in the same category as Whangamomona Road, the ongoing maintenance of other roads has been criticised. The method and type of funding

required to maintain satisfactory levels of service will be an issue for future budget setting rounds.

Water

If residents and tourist night stays are to increase, council will need to look at the quantity and quality of the water

Whangamomona needs. Currently there is no reservoir or reticulated supply.

Other tourism and recreational opportunities

Council has a decision to make about what role it will play in developing and maintaining mountain-biking and other type of trails in and around Whangamomona. Council has received a clear message from the community that no ratepayer money should go into these types of ventures until it finds a solution for the ongoing maintenance of the Whangamomona Road.

A user friendly walking trail network would be a good asset for the community, and may need Council to work more closely with the Department of Conservation to realise what this could look like.

Internet, Broadband and Mobile Blackspots

The level of service is best described as marginal. There is one line of thought that this adds to the area's attraction, being slightly remote and cut off from the rest of the world. From a safety and emergency response perspective the view is slightly different. Providing this type of infrastructure to small communities comes at a cost, and how this cost is apportioned is an issue on the horizon.



Rules and regulations

The republic is fiercely independent and its certainly not council's intention to cloud that with too many rules and regulations. The current district plan applies blanket provisions to Whangamomona, and treats it no differently to any part of the rural zone. However, the concentration of tourist-

related activity and heritage values, may suggest this is not the best approach to take into the future. Some rules may be required to protect the values that many see as important to the fabric of the community and the landscape it sits in.

Playing a team game

Teamwork is required, even more so for a remote community that is not the easiest to get to. As well as regular interactions between council and the residents,

a stronger relationship is required with the regional councils and central government agencies on the issues highlighted in the paper.

Iwi

Whangamomona falls within the rohe of Ngati Maru. They are in an advanced stage of treaty settlement. What the post-treaty

settlement may look like for the eastern hill country needs to be factored into future planning.



SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Council doesn't have a specific game plan for Whangamomona, but considers it high time it has one.

This is the main reason this paper is being put together. Council needs to know how it should position Whangamomona in the economic development strategy, the district plan and the budgets it needs to set in the annual and long term plans.

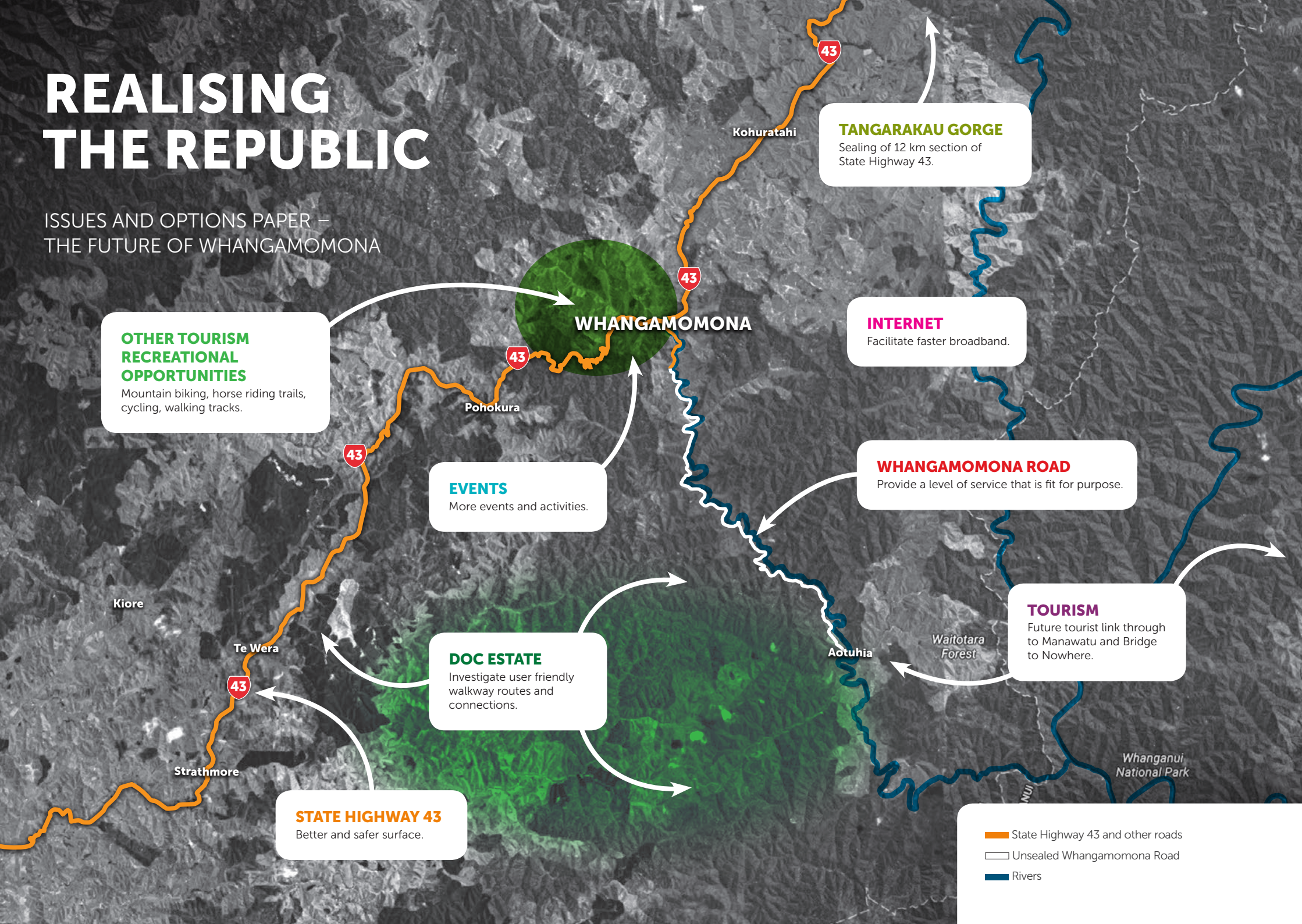
We think there is a bright future for Whangamomona across a spectrum of visitor/tourism experiences. This will put pressure on services and infrastructure and we may have to up the ante in terms of the amount of money that is invested in the area. While we are not expecting unanimous support for such an approach, we would like the community on board in the decisions that are made.

This paper is being prepared at the start of a new local government term, and we need this round of feedback to help the new council to make decisions.



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OTHER TOURISM RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
Mountain biking, horse riding trails, cycling, walking tracks.

EVENTS
More events and activities.

DOC ESTATE
Investigate user friendly walkway routes and connections.

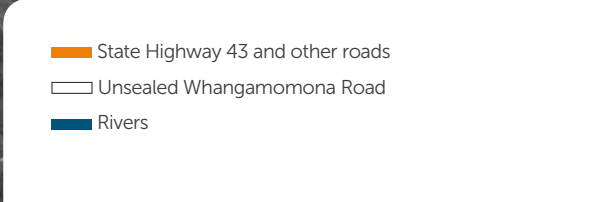
STATE HIGHWAY 43
Better and safer surface.

TANGARAKAU GORGE
Sealing of 12 km section of State Highway 43.

INTERNET
Facilitate faster broadband.

WHANGAMOMONA ROAD
Provide a level of service that is fit for purpose.

TOURISM
Future tourist link through to Manawatu and Bridge to Nowhere.



HAVE YOUR SAY

While a lot of the issues have come from earlier discussions with the community, its probably the first time they have been brought together in this manner and discussed as a package. We want to firm up a single plan of action, agree on it and move to a detailed costing and funding phase.

We want to hear from you by Tuesday 31 January 2017, so we can move to the next stages quickly after that.

This booklet has a submission form that you can fill in and send to council, and the Facebook page has an area where you can answer some specific questions or give us general feedback.

 /STRATFORD2035



HAVE YOUR SAY

 /STRATFORD2035

COUNCIL OFFICE

P (06) 765 6099 24 hours

E stratforddc@stratford.govt.nz

Hours

Monday to Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm



With the assistance of:



REALISING THE REPUBLIC

We welcome both general and detailed comment. Your feedback will be considered by Council before any major decisions are made. Please return your submission no later than Tuesday 31 January 2017.

Full Name/Organisation:

Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Speaking to your submission

Do you want to speak to Council in support of your feedback? YES NO
If one of the boxes is not ticked, we'll assume you don't want to be heard.

If yes, we will be in contact when the dates and times of the 2017 Council meeting schedules are confirmed.

1. Do you think Whangamomona should be promoted more as a tourist hub, or do you think this will destroy it's character?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Your comments:

2. Should all of the Forgotten World Highway be sealed, or do you think that would have too much of a negative impact on Whanga?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Your comments:

3. If Council were to play a greater role in the management of Whangamomona Road, what standard do you think it should be maintained to?

Your comments:

4. Whangamomona has a special character. Do you think this should be protected with specific policies and rules in the new district plan?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Your comments:

5. What other services and infrastructure do you think Council should be providing out in the eastern hill country and Whangamomona in particular?

Your comments:

6. Broadband and internet speed, are these a high or low priority for the eastern hill country and Whangamomona in particular?

- HIGH
We need it now
- LOW
Not a priority

Your comments:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

MAIL PO Box 320, Stratford 4352
DELIVER IT 61 - 63 Miranda Street, Stratford
EMAIL stratforddc@stratford.govt.nz
FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/stratford2035

