

Kai Aku Rika Economic Development Strategy

Breaking New Ground in Waikirikiri Selwyn
A Strategy for Economic Transformation 2024-2034



Te Ihiraki Contents

Executive Summary	3	Play To Our Strengths	17	Action Plan	27
Introducing Our Work Together	5	Farming The Future	18	Catalyst Projects	28
Our Strategy For Our Place.....	6	Becoming The Knowledge Capital.....	19	Strategic Priority Actions	29
Our Economic Context.....	7	Backing Māori Success	20	How We Will Deliver On The Strategy	32
By The Numbers	9	Creating An Innovation District.....	21	How We Will Measure Success	33
Strategy Map	10	Grow From Within	22	Frequently Asked Questions	34
Our Vision.....	11	Future Ready Workforce	23	Footnotes	35
Our Focus Areas	11	Destination Management	24		
Get The Settings Right.....	12	Proactive Infrastructure	25		
Working Together	13	Supporting Green Practices.....	26		
Business-Friendly Council.....	14				
Attracting Investment	15				
Building Our Brand and Telling Our Story	16				



He Whakarāpopototaka Executive Summary

At the heart of this strategy is the idea that growth must be purposeful, inclusive, and sustainable. It aims to leverage our unique strengths and opportunities to shape an economy that provides enduring benefits to future generations. Our strategic approach is centred on three key themes: getting the settings right, playing to our existing strengths, and growing from within to harness what we already have.

The rapid pace of global change presents both challenges and opportunities. From digital transformation and climate change to evolving societal needs, we must adapt and innovate to ensure our region's future prosperity. Waikirikir Selwyn has been one of the fastest growing regions in New Zealand. To continue our momentum and be future-ready we need to be intentional about the type of growth we nurture. This strategy is not just about economic growth; it's about building a resilient community that thrives amidst change and uncertainty.

We have identified 12 priorities to provide immediate opportunities to realise this vision. These range from enhancing digital connectivity and infrastructure resilience to promoting innovation, supporting local businesses, and leveraging our agricultural and knowledge economies.

Alongside these priorities, we have committed to a portfolio of catalyst projects that provide the necessary momentum and uplift to harness the energy required to realise this strategy over the next generation. These projects exemplify our commitment to immediate action.

Our strategy was developed through extensive community and business engagement, with contributions from over 250 local leaders. This collaborative approach underscores our commitment to partnerships and shared responsibility for our economy. By working together, we can harness our collective strengths and accelerate our journey towards a thriving, future-fit economy.

This strategy will evolve as we progress. It calls on everyone—business owners, workers, students, retirees, and the community at large—to play an active role in shaping our region's future. It represents a collective pledge to nurture an economy as dynamic and diverse as the community it serves. Together, we embark on a path towards regenerative growth and inclusive economic development, ensuring Waikirikir Selwyn remains a place of opportunity, innovation, and prosperity for all.

He toki ki te raki, he kō ki te
whenua, he pito mata ki aku rika.

Carve it in the sky, ground it in the
earth, the potential is in our hands.

This proverb speaks of raising the toki (adze) to the sky and planting the kō (digging stick) in the land, symbolising the potential we hold. The toki, used to shape wood, represents craftsmanship, strength, and courage, while the kō signifies cultivating land and resources. With these tools and the expertise within our community, we have everything we need to succeed.

How does a strategy like this help the economy?

- **Better Returns** – Helps direct funding to where it will create the most impact.
- **Consistency** – Rallies our community around common goals for our economy.
- **Investment Readiness** – Positions Waikirikiri Selwyn as open for business.
- **Advocacy** – Bolsters our capacity to advocate effectively for resources and support.
- **Focus** – Narrows our strategic focus, optimising our efforts for maximum gains.

How the strategy works:

- This strategy has three focus areas and 12 priorities with associated actions.
- These form an enduring blueprint for economic transformation across a decade.
- The strategy will be collectively owned and delivered – by and for Waikirikiri Selwyn.
- The action plan tells us how to start and stage work to deliver the priorities.
- It highlights seven catalyst projects to spur momentum and unlock opportunities.

He whakataki i tā tātau mahi tahi

Introducing Our Work Together

Waikirikiri Selwyn has experienced rapid economic growth, supported by expanding industries and an influx of new residents. However, in a changing world, we can no longer take growth for granted and there are structural challenges we need to acknowledge.¹

Change is happening all around us; digital disruption, new technologies, electrification, climate change, biodiversity and habitat loss, growing inequities, and global security concerns to name a few. As the world evolves, so must we.

Global challenges are local opportunities. The challenge of living within our means has seen an increase in economic opportunities associated with innovations that help us meet that challenge. This strategy sets us up for success in a rapidly evolving global economy.

It provides a co-ordinated effort across our economy to target the right growth, and guide investment and activity to achieve it. We have focused on three key themes supported by 12 priorities.

This strategy favours a portfolio approach to economic development where we work together on a broad range of activities to achieve our goals. We want to attract investment, grow productivity, develop new businesses, retain local people, promote innovation and improve our quality of life. This strategy will deliver growth on our terms.

This strategy has been developed in conjunction with other Council strategies including Waikirikiri Ki Tua Future Selwyn², and the Investment/Divestment Strategy.

This strategy was built through engagement with our community and the contributions of more than 250 local leaders. We started how we intend to continue - through partnership and collaboration. We heard from inspiring people driven to do right by their community.

The work ahead of us is to harness our momentum and direct it into activities that shape more sustainable, inclusive and prosperous outcomes for our community. We are shaping an economy that regenerates the natural environment and creates agency for future generations.

By building on our strengths and facing our big challenges, we can embark on an exciting new era of inclusive and sustainable economic growth for Waikirikiri Selwyn. This strategy provides a coordinated response to those challenges and opportunities.

It is purposefully built around the idea that together, we can do more. By aligning and mobilising resources, we can achieve things faster. By providing for both immediate action and intergenerational thinking, we set the stage for a sustainable future for Waikirikiri Selwyn.



Tā tātau mahere rautaki mō tō tātau whaitua

Our Strategy for Our Place

Waikirikiri Selwyn has always been a place of abundance and possibility. Our roots run deep, shaped by the continuous presence of takata whenua, who have journeyed these lands and gathered food here for centuries.

Here, we dream boldly and aim high. Our community's innate optimism and innovative spirit fuel a shared excitement for what lies ahead. The future isn't just something we wait for, it's something we imagine and build together.

Our people are talented and diverse. Evidenced by a growing population that brings together a mix of cultures, ideas, and opportunities; our smarts reach far beyond our borders.

The land speaks of our past and inspires our future. Stretching from the mountains to the sea, the fertile plains and rolling hills are formative to our social, cultural and economic fabric.

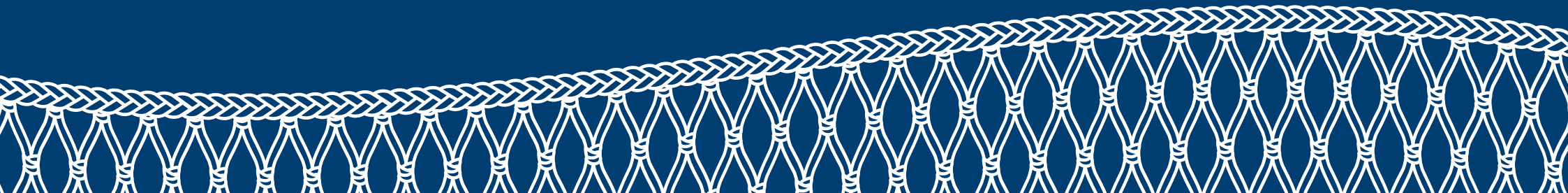
Connectivity is our economic pulse: our transport networks and innovative industries are more than merely infrastructure. In Waikirikiri Selwyn, connectivity is the gateway of economic success.

A community that grows together, stays together. People of all ages and backgrounds thrive here because it is a great place to grow up and grow old. It is a place of safety, opportunity, and belonging.

Open spaces fuel open minds. These are not just productive lands; they are lands of learning. We don't just grow food and fibre on them, we grow knowledge. Work ethic and ingenuity go hand in hand here.

This is our strategy.
For our economy.
For our people.
For our place.

Ko Waikirikiri tēnei.
This is Selwyn.
Open for business.
Open for ideas.
Open for you.



Tā tātau horopaki ā-oaoha

Our Economic Context

Waikirikiri Selwyn has become a magnet for people seeking opportunities, spurring huge population and economic growth. But growth produces positive and negative impacts and it's possible our successes have overshadowed some challenges we need to shine a light on.

Let's start with our strengths...

We are open and highly connected

- Proximity to New Zealand's second largest city.
- Transport and freight links across the country.
- Digital connectivity offering access to the world.

We are risk takers and innovators

- Higher rates of self-employment and business growth (than the New Zealand average).³
- Strong track record of economic growth and development.⁴
- Emerging strengths in innovation and technology.

We are growing and changing

- Strong employment and business growth.⁵
- Rapid population growth, especially migration of young families.⁶
- Becoming more multicultural and diverse.⁷

We have natural and earned advantages

- Fertile lands for growing.
- A compelling lifestyle proposition.
- Established infrastructure and economic sectors.



But we cannot afford to ignore our major challenges

We've got growing pains

- Housing affordability has deteriorated over recent years.
- Our population has spread out, threatening productive lands.
- Infrastructure has struggled to keep up with growth.

We're not as productive as we should be

- Productivity and average household incomes are just below the rest of New Zealand.
- Increased servicing of residents' needs outside of Waikirikiriri Selwyn.
- Our population is ageing and we're struggling to retain young people.

The world is changing - fast

- The pandemic shifted consumer demand patterns and global logistics.⁸
- Digital disruption, electrification and automation are occurring at pace.⁹
- The climate is changing, and the world is racing towards net zero emissions.¹⁰



By the Numbers¹¹



\$3.6 billion

GDP in 2023



109,664

Expected population of residents by 2034



58%

Proportion of the population in 2054 that are considered working age (15-64)



94%

Proportion of businesses that employ less than 10 people



\$590M

Amount of money residents spent in Christchurch in 2023



5.7%

Average annual population increase over the past decade



43%

Increase in new businesses in the last decade



\$150M

Size of the prize if we closed the productivity gap with NZ



\$2.3 billion

Total exports in 2023

Mahere Rautaki Strategy Map

**Our economy sustains our people
and places for generations to come**

Our Focus Areas

Get the Settings
Right

Play to Our
Strengths

Grow from
Within

Our Priorities

Working
Together

Business-
Friendly
Council

Farming
the Future

Backing
Māori
Success

Future-Ready
Workforce

Destination
Management

Attracting
Investment

Building
Our Brand
and Telling
Our Story

Becoming the
Knowledge
Capital

Creating an
Innovation
District

Proactive
Infrastructure

Supporting
Green
Practices

Our Vision

Our economy sustains our people and places for generations to come.

Our Focus Areas



Get the Settings Right

By working together, being a business-friendly Council, attracting investment, building our brand and telling our story.



Playing to Our Strengths

By targeting growth opportunities in our productive sectors; food and fibre, knowledge, innovation, and the Māori economy.



Grow from Within

By upskilling the local workforce, attracting high-value visitors, enhancing connectivity and resilience, and embracing regenerative practices.

Get the Settings Right

Me tika te tiritiria o te whenua, e matomato ai te hua
The land must be properly cultivated, for the harvest to be bountiful

Our Priorities

- Working Together
- Business-Friendly Council
- Attracting Investment
- Building Our Brand and Telling Our Story

Te Mahi Tahī Working Together

Enhance co-operation between economic players.

To carve a path to success, we need to harness the power of collaboration. Our strategy involves uniting local businesses, local government, central government, mana whenua and the wider community to work towards our shared vision for economic development.

The rapid changes in global trade, technology, and workforce dynamics mean that no single entity can navigate the future alone. By embracing a focus on partnerships and collective action, we can capitalise on shared knowledge and resources to foster a smarter approach to economic challenges and opportunities.

Strategic collaboration will amplify our strengths, and promote a culture of mutual success. We will see our collective efforts translate into a thriving economic environment that is a catalyst for economic investment and activity.

We will cultivate strategic relationships that leverage collective strengths, from local expertise to global networks, to drive our economy forward.



He Kaunihera Taunaki Pakihi Business-Friendly Council

Make it easier for businesses to innovate and grow.

Our Council will be a supportive and enabling force for businesses, providing resources and guidance to foster growth and innovation. We commit to being a partner, not a hurdle, in the entrepreneurial journey.

By adopting an enabling mindset and business-friendly proposition, we will encourage and support ventures that contribute to economic diversification and resilience, ensuring Waikirikiri Selwyn is poised to meet the future head-on.

Our focus is to dismantle barriers and light pathways for our business community. We will streamline processes, provide clear guidance, and offer supportive frameworks that enable businesses to flourish.

By taking a strategic approach to business engagement, we will make Waikirikiri Selwyn synonymous with business growth and innovation. We will let the world know that we are open for business and our Council is here to help.



Te Whakapoapoa Haumi Attracting Investment

Draw more investment to fuel our economy.

We aim to magnetise investment by showcasing the plethora of opportunities our district offers, ensuring that Waikirikiri Selwyn is not just on the map but is a destination for smart capital and our fair share of public investment.

Attracting investment requires us to better understand and showcase our unique value proposition and competitive advantages. This is about more than just attracting funds; it's about building a sustainable funding and financing pipeline across the public and private sector to unlock infrastructure and innovation.

By aligning our investments, we can concentrate capital into high-impact and mission-aligned areas such as renewable energy, agritech, transport, logistics, and digital infrastructure.

Our approach to investment needs to be dynamic and proactive. We will amplify efforts to attract funding that aligns with our economic priorities and ensure that every dollar invested bolsters our strategic vision.



Te whakatairaka i a tātau Building Our Brand and Telling Our Story

Develop a distinctive and widely understood place-based brand.

Waikirikiri Selwyn boasts diverse landscapes rich in natural beauty; from the alps to the plains, through to the sea. Our district is bordered by the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers, with Arthur's Pass National Park in the Southern Alps to the west and the Pacific Ocean to the east. Our townships are rich in knowledge and cultural heritage. Yet, the true potential of our identity lies in the interweaving of these attributes with the lived experiences of our people.

To realise an enhanced identity, we must delve into the collective psyche, and seek to draw out a shared sense of place that is inclusive and reflective of our bicultural story and our diverse community. This means embracing the cultural narratives that have long been the undercurrent of our regional story and ensuring that the presence of mana whenua is integral to our identity.

To stand out in a cluttered environment, we must craft and narrate our own story. Our brand needs to build more emotional appeal and work across our visitor, business and community sectors more effectively to stimulate connectedness and economic activity. A strong sense of place is good for our economy. A strong presence for our district is good for our businesses.

We will forge an identity that resonates with authenticity and aspiration, reflecting the true character of Waikirikiri Selwyn and inspiring a new chapter of growth.



Play to Our Strengths

Kai te kaha o te kaikaki te tūperepere o te māra
The abilities of the gardener determines the vigour of the garden

Our Priorities

- Farming the Future
- Becoming the Knowledge Capital
- Backing Māori Success
- Creating an Innovation District

Te Ahuwhenua Anamata

Farming the Future

Improving productivity and diversification in the food and fibre sector.

Our food and fibre economy is a significant driver of growth and innovation.¹² The region's fertile lands, favourable climate for farming, and well-established value chain from production to sale, contribute to our thriving food and fibre sector.

Waikirikiri Selwyn is strong at all steps of the supply chain. There is vertical integration here that other places don't have. From farm-level activity through to processing and logistics; supported by agribusiness, research, and education.

However, there is a growing need to accelerate the diversification beyond traditional farming practices and embrace sustainable innovations in agritech at a much faster rate. Transitioning to low-emissions practices aligns with global and national trends towards environmental sustainability and addresses the challenges posed by climate change and biodiversity loss.¹³

The challenge we've set to enhance diversity and productivity is anchored in a fundamental truth: our district's future hinges on a more sustainable, innovative and value-add approach to our primary industries.

Our local businesses are not just growing crops; they're cultivating high-value, sustainable food and fibre systems that respond to global demand for ethically produced, nutritious food and products.

By fostering a highly productive and ecologically attuned approach to agriculture, we set the stage for a transformative era where further value is added at every step of the supply chain, from paddock to plate. By embracing regenerative practices and technology, we can enrich the health of the natural world, our community and of our economy.



Ko Konei hai Pokapū Mātauraka Becoming the Knowledge Capital

Waikirikiri Selwyn becomes known as the knowledge capital.

The knowledge economy is a system of consumption and production that is based on intellectual capital. In New Zealand, knowledge intensive employment has grown faster than total employment.¹⁴ The knowledge economy matters because it drives innovation and productivity growth and is the engine of sophisticated economies. Knowledge industries also help improve our wellbeing through better healthcare, and they nurture the next generation by providing them with new skills through education and training.¹⁵

Waikirikiri Selwyn is home to cutting-edge research, tertiary education, and a strong primary sector that has the potential to harness scientific discoveries and become a pioneering testbed. There are strong existing relationships between industries and an opportunity for scalability beyond our borders.

Becoming the knowledge capital will involve leveraging the intellectual capital already rooted in the region's knowledge-intensive businesses, Crown Research Institutes, and Lincoln University. This strategic focus can propel our district to the forefront of sectors such as agritech, clean energy, and digital technologies; sectors where knowledge translates directly into economic value.



Te Tautāwhi i te Akitu Māori Backing Māori Success

Deliberately support Māori business success.

Māori entrepreneurship is a key component of our business landscape, with significant growth opportunities. Māori economic development is a safe bet – growth in the Māori economy has consistently outpaced the general economy and is made up of businesses who tend to have a stronger connection to place.¹⁶

A report for Te Puni Kōkiri found that there were at least 234 Māori-owned businesses across Waikirikir Selwyn in 2021. Since 2012, the number of Māori-owned businesses in Waikirikir Selwyn has expanded by 27%.¹⁷ National-level data shows Māori businesses have a strong innovation focus, which has coincided with a growing appetite among trade partners to buy New Zealand goods whose provenance is underpinned by an authentic indigenous story.

By investing in Māori economic development, we support a holistic and integrated approach to economic activity that supports environmental, cultural, and social wellbeing. Te ao Māori offers rich guidance to navigate positive change throughout our whole economy. It can be understood and applied as a lens across the full breadth of priorities and initiatives within this strategy.

From small businesses and solo entrepreneurs to collective enterprises, there is untapped potential in the Māori economy. By creating opportunities that foster and leverage Māori economic development we can support the growth of a dynamic and innovative sector of our economy that positively contributes to overall regional prosperity.

He Takiwā Auaha Creating an Innovation District

Build a community where innovation thrives.

The goal is to build a district that not only nurtures innovation but is synonymous with it. Central to the strategy is establishing a vibrant hub that attracts start-ups and innovation-driven enterprises.

This innovation district won't just be a place of work; it will be a community. Fostering an eco-system that helps attract and retain the best talent to fuel innovation.

By providing the infrastructure - both physical and digital - that facilitates cutting-edge innovation and development, Waikirikiri Selwyn will become a magnet for creative minds.

The endgame is a dynamic, self-sustaining ecosystem that gives us a productivity lift across all of our economic sectors and creates new emergent sectors and opportunities for our district.



Grow from Within

Nō roto i te purapura te whanake o te tipu
From within the seed comes the plant's growth

Our Priorities

- Future-Ready Workforce
- Destination Management
- Proactive Infrastructure
- Supporting Green Practices

He rākai mahi e rite ana ki te āpōpō Future-Ready Workforce

Equip our local workforce with future-fit skills and opportunities.

We recognise that great businesses are built by great people, and in the face of rapidly changing industrial landscapes, equipping our workforce with future-fit skills is essential.

The heart of our strategy lies in forging strong links between education and industry, ensuring that the training provided is directly aligned with the emerging needs of our future-ready sectors. This symbiotic relationship promotes a more seamless transition from learning environments to real-world application whilst helping retain more young people here.

Investing in the upskilling of our current workforce is just as crucial. Initiatives like continuing education programmes, digital literacy workshops, and training in emerging tech fields will be essential moving forward.

These learning and development opportunities will need to be designed to be flexible and accessible, enabling lifelong learning and ensuring that all members of the community have the opportunity to grow with the economy, not be left behind by it.



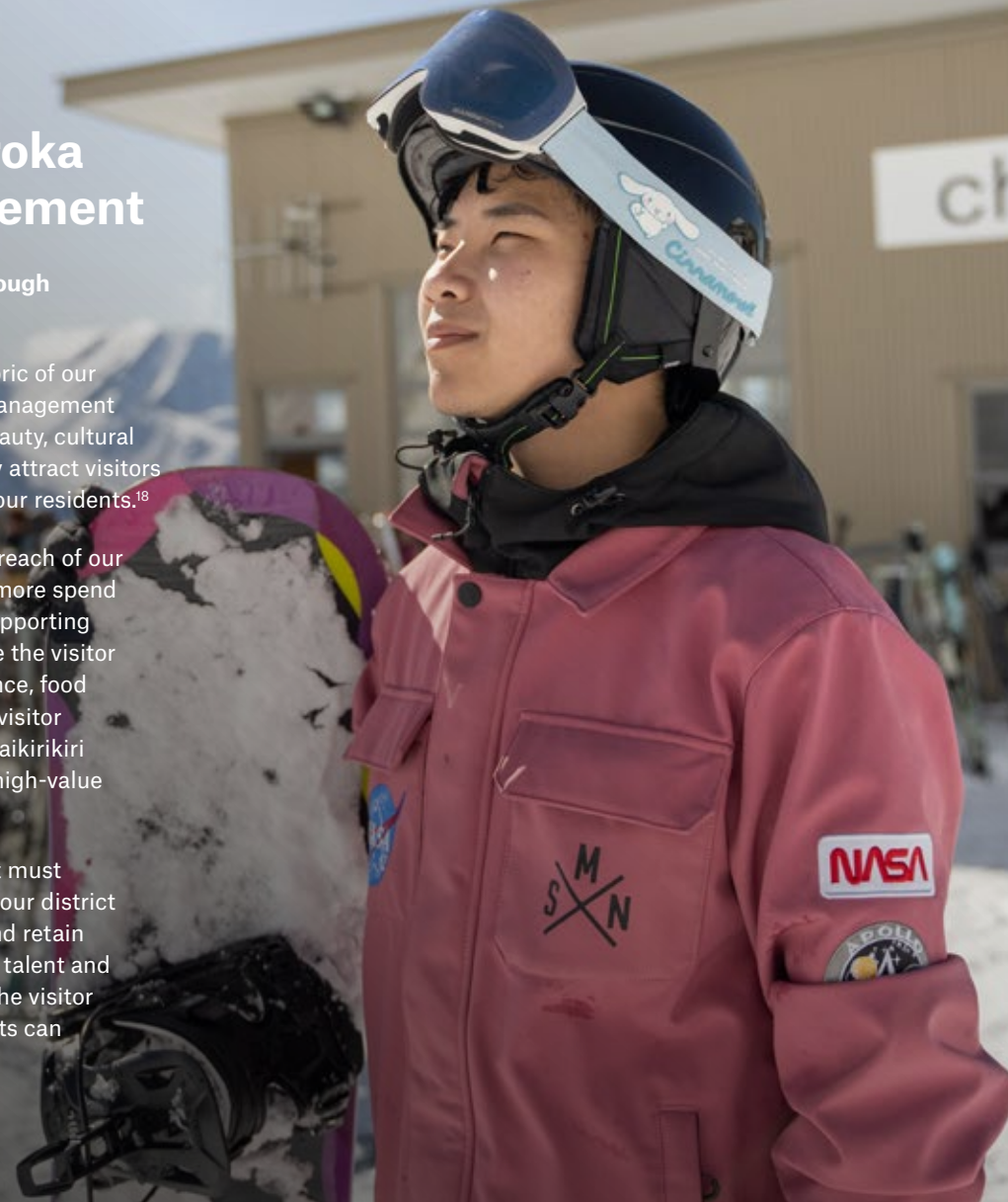
Te Whakahaere Toroka Destination Management

Increase visitor spend and retention through enhanced experience.

A vibrant visitor economy enriches the fabric of our community. By focusing on destination management that protects and enhances our natural beauty, cultural richness, and innovative spirit, we not only attract visitors but also enhance the living experience of our residents.¹⁸

This will help us to develop the value and reach of our visitor economy by focusing on retaining more spend within our district. By encouraging and supporting the development of activities that enhance the visitor experience (for example, dark sky experience, food and beverage outlets) as well as enabling visitor infrastructure such as accommodation, Waikirikiri Selwyn will appeal to both residents and high-value visitors alike.

For Waikirikiri Selwyn to attract visitors, it must attract locals first and foremost. We need our district to be vibrant and active to help develop and retain entrepreneurial talent. Our aspirations for talent and business attraction are inseparable from the visitor economy as that is how most new residents can experience Waikirikiri Selwyn first-hand.



He Tūāhaka Takatū Proactive Infrastructure

Meet growth and resilience demands in our infrastructure network.

Strategic enhancement of our infrastructure network serves as a vital link between current capabilities and future growth. Better connections within our infrastructure mean optimising what we already have – ensuring that each element, from roads to digital networks, is not just functioning, but connecting.

By embracing a more collaborative approach to infrastructure development, we acknowledge that economic opportunities lie in broad, cross-sector partnerships, thinking differently and smart solutions.

We see an opportunity in transforming one of our greatest challenges into opportunity through the provision of future-fit enabling infrastructure and infrastructure-led innovation in transport, energy and green solutions that help Waikirikiri Selwyn service its own needs and become a testbed of innovation.

Our infrastructure will become a benchmark for innovation, a driver for economic growth, and a reflection of our commitment to a resilient future.



He tautoko i kā tikaka whakahou Supporting Green Practices

Reduce environmental impacts through improved resource utilisation.

Reducing environmental impacts through better resource use and moving towards regenerative practices offers a transformative approach to managing our resources. This means reimagining our economic and product lifecycle from a linear and waste-heavy system to one that focuses on making materials last longer and reusing them.¹⁹

We must embrace and prioritise green economic practices including transitioning to zero-carbon transport and production methods and reducing overall energy use. More of our total energy inputs need to be generated from renewable sources and much less from fossil fuels. Green economic practices can also include reducing waste and pollution by circular resource use. That is, reusing or repurposing any waste as an input to another economic activity, with end-of-life use considered in product design. We can also use nature-based solutions to work with nature, and actively restore the health of our local ecosystems.

By eliminating waste and reducing carbon emissions, we have an opportunity for growth by creating a closed-loop system where every output is repurposed as an input elsewhere. This shift from a linear to a circular model not only reduces environmental impacts but also encourages innovation and stimulates local economies.



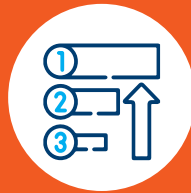
Te Mahere Mahi Action Plan *Staging the Work*



Strategy Activation

From now until 2025

Stakeholder engagement, refining actions, and establishing projects.



The First Years

2025 to 2028

Starting to deliver priority actions, business cases, and catalyst projects.



Medium Term

2028 to 2034

Updating priorities, delivering actions, and fine tuning the system.



Long Term

2034 and Beyond

Continually refining, testing, developing, and implementing new ideas.



Kā Kaupapa Whakaarotau | Catalyst Projects

Catalyst projects are identified as high-impact initiatives that can kickstart the strategy's implementation and provide momentum to help unlock other opportunities and investment.

Initially, these projects will be set in motion by Selwyn District Council, in partnership with key stakeholders. This may change as potential owners or leaders step up through the process.

Selwyn Futures Forum

By building on the success of the engagement that occurred during the development of this strategy, this would be a platform for local leaders to meet, pool resources, share knowledge, and stimulate activity. Where there are quick wins identified that don't require a lot of external resource, these could be progressed at pace by partners, helping maintain focus and momentum.

Identity Project

Refresh our identity to highlight our unique strengths and stories to attract investment, talent, and visitors. This project aims to boost our reputation by creating an integrated place-based brand that promotes business opportunities and showcases the best of Waikirikiri Selwyn.

Living Lab Initiative

Establish Waikirikiri Selwyn as 'The Living Lab' for food and fibre to promote agritech and future foods. This approach treats the entire food and fibre ecosystem as a space for real-world experimentation and innovation, leveraging our agricultural strengths, reputation, and partnerships with Lincoln University and others.

Māori Economic Development Partnership

Create a focused plan for supporting Māori Economic Development with mana whenua and relevant agencies. This would be subject to discussion and led by Te Taumutu Rūnanga and Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga. The strategic partnership aims to leverage the strengths of Māori economic development, ensuring inclusive economic growth and direct investment in Māori success.

Skills and Workforce Programme

Develop a skilled workforce by connecting job opportunities and education, proactively addressing skills shortages, and retaining local talent. Focus on how to retain youth and older people by providing targeted training, internships, and whole-of-life employment opportunities.

Energy Plan

Develop a partnership plan with energy distributors, major energy users, universities, and other stakeholders to explore and incubate independent energy projects by engaging public-private partnerships to drive the development of decentralised renewable energy solutions.

Innovation Network and Hub

Explore developing an Innovation and Business Hub in Rolleston, with satellite hubs in other towns to support low-risk expansion opportunities for start-ups, small businesses and larger businesses with an interest in Waikirikiri Selwyn. By providing space for new entrepreneurial ideas to flourish as well as supporting existing businesses, this will strengthen the region's reputation as a hub for innovation.

Kā Mahi Whakaarotau ā Rautaki | Strategic Priority Actions

Get the Settings Right

Working Together

- Establish the Selwyn Futures Forum for economic leaders.
 - Pursue partnerships with key institutions to support strategy activation.
 - Continue engagement with the business and community sectors.
 - Create an inventory of groups and leaders, including their skills, resources and assets that can support this strategy.
-

Business-Friendly Council

- Review the Council procurement policy to align with this strategy.
 - Create a Prospective Business service to engage prospective businesses.
 - Establish a Business Navigator to provide a central point of contact for businesses who need support to navigate regulatory pathways, open up shop or get connected locally.
 - Streamline business processes and experience through digital solutions.
 - Align and integrate with other relevant strategies such as Waikirikiri Ki Tua Future Selwyn.
-

Attracting Investment

- Align the Council's Investment/Divestment Strategy with this strategy.
 - Formulate a Regional Deal proposal with local leaders to provide to central government.
 - Create a series of business cases for relevant catalyst projects.
 - Support improved uptake of existing funding opportunities for local business.
 - Create an Investment Prospectus to encourage investment into Waikirikiri Selwyn.
-

Building Our Brand and Telling Our Story

- Develop a distinct place-based brand identity for Waikirikiri Selwyn.
- Amplify the brand with a campaign to profile local businesses and people, and attract new talent to the business community.
- Create a toolkit for businesses to activate the brand.
- Strengthen amenity opportunities through placemaking and events.
- Coordinate with regional partners to support cross-territorial businesses.

Playing to Our Strengths

Farming the Future

- Commission a Food and Fibre Opportunities study to focus activity and support.
- Explore the potential of the ‘Waikirikiri Selwyn as a Living Lab’ concept.
- Create food clusters around small niche industries to support growth.
- Explore an Innovation Fund for agritech and sustainable practices.
- Develop the Selwyn Food and Fibre Story within the wider identity project to better connect with local consumers and attract new activity.
- Develop stronger links with the visitor sector to expose visitors to products and lift exports to ex-visitors.

Becoming the Knowledge Capital

- Sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Lincoln University to support commercial opportunities.
- Host a Knowledge Symposium to bring together commercial and academic sectors.
- Organise hackathons focused on local issues, starting with infrastructure.

Backing Māori Success

- Subject to discussion, develop a Māori Economic Development Partnership; led by Te Taumutu Rūnanga and Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga.
- Create a focused plan for supporting Māori Economic Development.
- Facilitate access, opportunities, and investment with Te Puni Kōkiri.

Creating an Innovation District

- Create an Innovation Identity and Network for Waikirikiri Selwyn.
 - Explore an Innovation and Business Hub facility in Rolleston; utilising best practice from national and international examples.
 - Explore the potential for satellite hub opportunities in other towns.
 - Deliver a targeted innovative business and talent attraction campaign.
-

Grow from Within

Future Ready Workforce

- Establish a Workforce and Skills Development programme.
 - Partner with industries to identify skill gaps and work with education and training partners to create targeted training programmes.
 - Map Innovation Hotspots for focused workforce development.
 - Support initiatives for both youth and older persons to enable whole-of-life employment opportunities.
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Destination Management

- Support a focus on actions identified in the Ōtautahi Waitaha Destination Management Plan.
 - Explore the cost and timeframe for Dark Sky accreditation for Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill areas.
 - Develop experience and event opportunities in arts, culture, recreation, and food and beverage. Recreation could include activity products such as dark skies and natural attractions.
 - Scope investment opportunities for filling visitor accommodation gaps in the leisure tourism market (for example inland Waikirikiri Selwyn) and the business traveller market (for example Rolleston).
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Proactive Infrastructure

- Create a local Energy Plan that investigates renewable energy opportunities, including decentralised models.
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Support Green Practices

- Expand waste reduction initiatives to reduce waste from businesses.
 - Create partnerships to increase carbon measurement and reduction.
 - Support carbon sequestration and native afforestation initiatives.
 - Investigate green investment opportunities.
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Tā mātau whakatinana i te rautaki

How we will deliver on the strategy

This strategy and action plan is about delivering results and outcomes for the district to advance the aspirations of our community.

A cross-sector group consisting of a broad range of stakeholders will be formed to drive actions associated with this strategy. This group will have a title that is independently recognisable from Selwyn District Council. A Terms of Reference for this group will be established and will recognise that Selwyn District Council activities will have governance associated, with its own Council committee. Selwyn District Council will have authority to make decisions related to Council expenditure.

The catalyst projects and strategic priority actions are the most dynamic aspects of the strategy as we recognise our actions and priorities will evolve over time.

The strategy will be supported by a more detailed Action Plan, which will set out:

- A lead collaborator for each catalyst project or strategic priority action
- A project partnership group consisting of aligned stakeholders
- A pathway for resourcing and activation
- Consideration of other projects to enable collaboration opportunities
- Milestones and deliverables to ensure accountability
- Measures of success to track progress.

The action plan will evolve as actions are successfully implemented, new opportunities emerge, or as circumstances change. There will be many actions and projects that are delivered under the auspices of this strategy that will not be detailed in this document.

All stakeholders have a responsibility to support and deliver on the aspirations of the strategy in their respective areas of investment, activity and policy mandate.

The catalyst projects and strategic priority actions have been identified as worthy of progressing, but their development stage and requirements are all different. Some will require entirely new working groups to be established and project plans drawn up while others may be ready to take to business case or be investment ready.

Critically, the success of the strategy will depend on the collective commitment and ability of all stakeholders to deliver collaboratively on the identified priorities and actions. Everyone has a role to play in the success of this strategy.

Tā mātau whakatinana i te rautaki

How we will measure success

The success of the strategy will be measured on:

- Waikirikiri Selwyn becoming more productive than the New Zealand average. (GDP per job higher than NZ average).
- Waikirikiri Selwyn becoming economically more self-sufficient (Increase in share of spending retained in the district).
- People being included in our economy (measured using economic wellbeing indicators including that Waikirikiri Selwyn has a higher than average median income and high levels of employment).
- Reducing the carbon footprint of our economy (meeting, or exceeding, national emissions reduction and waste reduction targets).

Our success will be benchmarked against wellbeing outcomes identified to support economic performance and sustainability, alongside measures that are specific to each priority and take into consideration key outcomes such as job creation, investment into the Waikirikiri Selwyn district and positive activity.

The next phase of work will include a focus on identifying metrics and aligning them with each of the 12 priorities. Each metric will have a monitoring and reporting mechanism that will enable us to measure the delivery of the strategy, the outcomes created from that, and the benefits to the district.

As the convenor of the strategy, Selwyn District Council will report on the progress of the strategy and continue to deliver engagement and oversight in partnership with the community.

Kā Pātai Auau

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the strategy?

This is an economic development strategy for a future-fit Waikirikiri Selwyn. It aims to build on our success, play to our strengths and drive more purposeful growth in our economy.

Why do we need it?

While we have enjoyed growth and development, there are structural challenges and untapped potential in our economy that we need to address, to be fit for the future.

What will it do?

Provide a coordinated effort across our economy to target the right growth and guide investment and activity to help achieve it. By aligning and mobilising resources, we can achieve more together and make the change we're seeking happen faster.

How will it work?

Selwyn District Council is leading the strategy in partnership with business, community and mana whenua. Every decision and investment has an economic impact, so this is an integrated and whole of system approach to getting it right for our community.

What's the timeframe?

The strategy is for 10 years and will align with Waikirikiri Ki Tua Future Selwyn which looks out to 2050 and beyond, recognising that big shifts require an intergenerational view. To close the gap between aspiration and action, the strategy will be delivered in stages with a clear and concise list of priority actions that we can start work on right away. We know these will evolve over time and we need to be responsive to change.

Who has been involved?

We commenced formal engagement in November 2023 and delivered a range of online and in-person events across six months, with attendance from more than 250 local leaders from across Waikirikiri Selwyn's economy.

How does a strategy like this help the economy?

- Better Returns – Helps direct funding to where it will create the most impact.
- Consistency – Rallies our community around common goals for our economy.
- Investment Readiness – Positions Waikirikiri Selwyn as open for business.
- Advocacy - Bolsters our capacity to advocate effectively for resources and support.
- Focus – Narrows our strategic focus, optimising our efforts for maximum gains.

How the strategy works:

- This strategy has three focus areas and 12 priorities with associated actions.
- These form an enduring blueprint for economic transformation across a generation.
- The strategy will be collectively owned and delivered - by and for Waikirikiri Selwyn.
- The action plan tells us how to start and stage work to deliver the priorities.
- It highlights seven catalyst projects to spur momentum and unlock opportunities.

Footnotes

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13. Fit for a Better World, Accelerating our Economic Potential, Ministry for Primary Industries, 2020
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