

TO: COUNCIL
FROM: HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR, MR T SHADBOLT
MEETING DATE: TUESDAY, 26 September 2017

MAYOR'S REPORT

Report Prepared by: His Worship the Mayor, Mr T Shadbolt

SUMMARY

List of engagements and current issues.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received.

IMPLICATIONS

1.	<i>Has this been provided for in the Long Term Plan/Annual Plan?</i> N/A.
2.	<i>Is a budget amendment required?</i> N/A.
3.	<i>Is this matter significant in terms of Council's Policy on Significance?</i> N/A.
4.	<i>Implications in terms of other Council Strategic Documents or Council Policy?</i> N/A.
5.	<i>Have the views of affected or interested persons been obtained and is any further public consultation required?</i> N/A.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

ENGAGEMENTS

- SIT – Korean Liberation Day
- Events Committee Meeting
- SIT Filming
- Invercargill Branding Launch
- Interview with The AM Show
- Interview with More FM
- SIT – Indonesian Independence Day
- Visit James Hargest High School History Class
- South Island Civil Defence Emergency Management Conference
- Meeting with Blue River Diary
- Southland Express Photo
- Invest In Youth Celebration

- SIT Graduation
- SIT – Indonesian Night
- Invercargill Medical Centre Function
- Polyfest Opening
- Federated Farmers – Meet the Candidates Evening
- Meet with Body Audit NZ
- Meet with Otago University 3rd Year Medical Students
- Southland Stags Rugby Games
- SIT – Malaysian Independence Day
- Meet with Labour Party Candidates
- Extraordinary Council Meeting
- Meeting with SIT and NZQA
- SIT – Vietnamese Independence Day
- Meeting with Shakespeare in the Park Trust
- Dan Davin Conference
- Welcome The AM Show to Invercargill
- Netball New Zealand Quad Series
- Open Southland Pop Up Job Shop
- SIT Site Inspection of Student Apartments
- Friendly Presentation – Plunket
- Chairmens Meeting
- Meeting with Medispace
- Meeting with Invercargill Indoor Bowling Club
- Interview with Southland Express
- International Lunch at Cornerstone Church
- Radio Interview with Corey Fuimaono
- The Legion of Frontiersmen Mid Year Dinner
- Meeting with Andrew Little
- Regulatory Services Committee Meeting and Workshop
- Hanami Celebration
- Immigration New Zealand Public Meeting
- SIT – Pacifica Night
- The Rock Riverside Speedway Opening
- NZ Mens Netball Nationals and Prizgiving
- Re-opening of First Presbyterian Church
- Southland Mayoral Forum
- Opening of Branxholme Water Treatment Plant
- Funeral – S Morrison
- Inspection of Invercargill Dog Pound
- Infrastructure and Services Committee Meeting and Workshop
- Invercargill Aiport Inspection Tour
- Invercargill Airport Limited Board Meeting
- Events Committee Meeting
- Inspection of Well South Offices
- Interview with Mark Sainsbury
- The Ordination and Instalation of the Bishop Elect
- SIT – Filming
- Trust Power Community Awards Presentation
- Council Workshop

REPORTS

WWI

Over the next year I'll be making regular reports on those who made the ultimate sacrifice in WWI. I realise that the concept of sacrifice is considered rather outdated. Self interest is the prevailing motivating factor in most peoples lives. I still feel it is important to study the tragedies of the past because they teach us the importance of strategic thinking. We can also learn about how to live in peace which is the basis of the Sister Cities movement.

Attached are reports on the battle for Le Quesnoy, and our Sister City visit to Kumagaya and some statistics on dogs and yet another Malls Report





Rifleman 72271 ALEXANDER JAMES "JIMMY" RIDLAND

All Black and Southlander

Died 5 November 1918 as a result of wounds received at the Battle of Le Quesnoy, France,

4 November 1918. Buried Caudry British Cemetery Northern France.

Alexander James Ridland (known as James or Jimmy) was born in Invercargill on 3 March 1882 to William and Elizabeth (nee Cheyne) Ridland.

His parents were both from the parish of Dunrossness in the Shetland Islands and had arrived in Bluff in 1874 with four young children, as part of an extended family group of three married couples and several children. As with many immigrant families the Ridlands were another link in the "chain migration" of the time which saw family members and friends follow others from their home town to a new country. In this case the first link was the Cheyne brothers who were well known early pioneers of Invercargill, one of whom is commemorated in Cheyne Street in Invercargill.

Jimmy Ridland was the youngest son in a large family who had its share of grief. Six more children were born to William and Elizabeth after they settled in Invercargill. Two of their children died as infants and five as young adults. One son – Leslie, and one daughter – Jane ("Dolly" McEvoy), married and had children.

The family lived at 13 Dublin St in North Invercargill. The children attended North Invercargill School.

When he left school Jimmy worked as a blacksmith at James Macalister Ltd and in his spare time played as a forward for Star Rugby Club whom he helped to win several Invercargill Senior rugby titles. Between 1907 and 1913 Jimmy played in 22 matches for Southland including two internationals against England/Wales and Australia. He also played in the South Island side in 1909, 1910 and 1913. Jimmy was deputy captain of the Star senior side in 1907 and again in 1909. He debuted for the All Blacks in 1910 when they went on tour to Australia as well as captaining the Star senior team which he captained again in 1913. As well Jimmy gave time as a committee member from 1913 until he was conscripted. He was club vice-president in his last year – 1917. Jimmy was 28 and his job as a blacksmith would have helped him to develop a strong upper body. He was 5ft 9in or 1.75 metres tall and weighed around 69 kg or 153 pounds. By today's standards an average height and thin build. In comparison the smallest All Black today is Aaron Smith who is 5ft 7in and weighs 83kg.

In 1917 at the age of 35, James Ridland was conscripted for service in the Great War.

On the 4th of February 1918 he left Invercargill for Trentham Army camp and sailed from Wellington three months later for "Blighty" (England). In September 1918, after three months training at Brocton Military Camp in Staffordshire - the training camp for the NZ Rifle Brigade - his battalion marched into camp in Etaples, France.

On November 4, 1918 nine months to the day since leaving Invercargill, Rifleman Alexander James Ridland was part of the A Coy of the 1st Battalion of the 3rd NZ Rifle Brigade (affectionately known as

From: Mike Mitchell [mailto:mikemitchell@fastmail.fm]
Sent: Monday, 18 September 2017 9:04 p.m.
To: Wendy McArthur
Subject: Re: Jimmy Ridland

Hi Wendy

my source is the 'Star Rugby Football Club 1886-1961 Jubilee Official Souvenir publication, August 1961'.
Apologies, but I don't have more detail than what I can find below:

Jimmy Ridland was deputy captain of the 1907 Star senior side. A position he assumed again in 1909. Jimmy moved into the captains role in 1910. He was member of the club committee in 1911 and 1912. In 1913 he was again team captain and represented the Southland and South Island sides. 1914 and 1915 saw Jimmy again as a committee member. In 1916 and 1917 he was club vice-president.

He was involved in several Galbraith winning sides in his tenure at Star Rugby Club. He is reported in Star rugby club records as being one the great players of the First World War period who sadly paid the the supreme sacrifice on the battlefields of France.

Regards

18 September 2017

MEMO TO: Tim Shadbolt
MEMO FROM: Cameron McIntosh
Sister City Visit - Kumagaya 2017

Summary

Following an invitation from the Mayor of Kumagaya City, a delegation from Invercargill City Council led by His Worship Tim Shadbolt visited Kumagaya in August 2017. This visit was a continuation of the long standing relationship between our two cities, with a particular focus this time on the links with our schools and a shared passion for rugby. The sister city invitation was timed to coincide with a new fixture between the Highlanders Bravehearts and the Panasonic Wild Knights. A significant number of the Highlanders Bravehearts team were also Southland Stags players and this provided an excellent opportunity for local players to experience Kumagaya.

Next year will be the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the contact with Kumagaya and this visit has affirmed the importance that both parties place on the Sister City relationship.

Invercargill Schools

Invercargill schools have developed a strong connection to schools in Kumagaya. Students from participating schools enjoy exchanges and two Invercargill schools were hosting students in the weeks before this Council visit to Kumagaya. Each group of students from Kumagaya is welcomed at a Mayoral Reception at Invercargill City Council and it is clear that this is a highlight and a memorable experience for the students. Many host families in Invercargill have also benefitted from the opportunity to include a short term visitor in their household and in some cases has led to an enduring friendship between the respective families.

Kumagaya 2017

The invitation from Mayor Tomioka is included (**Appendix 1**).

The delegation from Invercargill City Council was welcomed at a meeting with the Mayor, met separately with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Council.

At a formal welcome dinner with the Councillors, in a small break with tradition, Mayor Shadbolt introduced Kumagaya to the new Southland Stags' song and presented Mayor Tomioka with a Stags' jersey.

The delegation was variously escorted around Kumagaya and the Saitama province by City Councillors, senior Council staff and the Kumagaya Friendship Association.

Highlanders Bravehearts vs Panasonic Wild Knights

The visiting rugby team was welcomed to Kumagaya at a formal reception with speeches and presentations from both Mayor Tomioka and Mayor Shadbolt.

A summary of the trip from the perspective of the Stags team has been provided by Andrew Moreton, General Manager of Rugby Southland (**Appendix 2**).

Kumagaya will play host to Rugby World Cup 2019 games and has taken the opportunity to learn from Invercargill experiences of hosting large groups of rugby supporters.

The Panasonic Wild Knights are a top Japanese Club team, coached by Robbie Deans, and now base themselves in Kumagaya as their "home" ground.

The Sister City Partnership

The relationship has matured over the years with next year seeing the 25 year milestone. Evidence of the importance of the relationship was observed in many ways, photographs of previous large delegations from Invercargill are on display in prominent places, considerable effort is put into making our visits a success, but most of all is the genuine warmth of the hosts. A group of students from James Hargest College will be going to Kumagaya in September as part of the exchange programme.

Due to other travel commitments, the Invercargill representative of the Kumagaya Friendship Association was unable to accompany the delegation to Japan. Fortunately however we were able once again to secure the services of Midori Sasaki who provided essential translations of the key speeches at all the main functions and also assisted with travel logistics.

Future Events

Since our return, we have been contacted by a local rugby club seeking to take teams to Kumagaya. While in Kumagaya, the Invercargill City Council delegation visited a residential sports facility which would be an ideal base for visiting sports teams.

25 Year Anniversary

Next year the Sister City agreement will be 25 years in existence. No preparations have been made for this anniversary as yet.

Cameron McIntosh
Director - Works and Services

Invitation from Mayor Tomioka

05 JUL 2017

SCANNED

29th June, 2017

Dear Mayor Shadbolt,

I hope this letter finds you well.

We have only two years until the Rugby World Cup Japan 2019 will be held. We are working on various fields toward holding the Rugby World Cup. The Rugby World Cup 2019 draw was held on May 10, Japan and New Zealand are in different 2019 World Cup Pool, but we expect that Japan can advance to the finals tournament and play against New Zealand

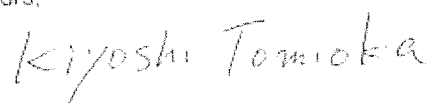
The Highlanders Bravehearts and the Panasonic Wild Knights match will be held at the Kumagaya Sports Cultural Park on 11th August
Panasonic Wild Knights is a rugby team which has a deep connection to Kumagaya city. I hear that the Highlanders is a team based in Dunedin. This will be an exciting match as a prelude to 2019 World Cup.

In Kumagaya city, there is an official welcome function on 8th August and Kumagaya fireworks display on 12th August.

Therefore, we would like to request the pleasure of the company of Mayor Tim Shadbolt or your representatives to these events in Kumagaya city.
We also would appreciate advice and suggestions on hosting international matches from your city with a wealth of experience on this occasion.
Could you send your RSVP? We look forward to hear from you soon.

I wish for further prosperity of Invercargill city and good health of you

Sincerely yours,



Kiyoshi Tomioka
Mayor of Kumagaya City

タイム・シヤドボルト市長 様

謹啓 時下ますます御清祥のこととお慶び申し上げます。

熊谷市は、二〇一九年のラグビーワールドカップ開催地であり、開催まで二年余りとなりました。現在、様々な分野で準備を進めております。

五月十日にはラグビーワールドカップの組合せ抽選会が行われ、日本とニュージーランドは別のプールとなりましたが、決勝トーナメントで対戦できることを期待しています。

このたび、八月十一日に熊谷スポーツ文化公園で、日本のバナリニックのワールドナイツとバイランダーズの試合が開催されます。バナリニックのワールドナイツは熊谷市にゆかりの深いラグビーチームであり、ダニエゴを本拠地とするバイランダーズとの対戦は二〇一九年を前に楽しみを試合となることとしよう。

熊谷市では八月十一日の試合の前夜、八月八日には選手を交えた歓迎会が、八月十二日には熊谷花火大会がござります。

つきましては、遠路御多忙のところ誠に恐縮ではございますが、この期間市長様または代表者様を熊谷市へ御招待したいと存じます。また、この機会に国際試合開催中の様々な取り組みについても御助言・御提言等賜ることができれば幸いです。

インバーカーギル市がこの招待を受けてくださるととてもうれしいです。

どうぞよろしくお願いたします。

インバーカーギル市のさらなる御繁栄と市長様の御健勝を御祈念申し上げます。

謹白

平成二十九年六月二十九日

熊谷市長 高岡 清

Extract of Email from Mr A Moreton – General Manager, Rugby Southland

"I am happy to provide a brief summary of the Southland Stags trip to Kumagaya.

Rugby Southland was fortunate to have been offered the opportunity by the Highlanders Super Rugby Franchise to prepare and play against the Panasonic Wild Knights in Kumagaya.

When we were initially consulted in regards to our interest in providing players for the Highlanders Brave Hearts we of course needed to weigh up the pros and cons of the trip as well as the risks of player fatigue playing an international game only week prior to our first match in the 2017 Mitre 10 Cup.

With the benefits far outweighing the risks the consensus was of course to proceed with the trip. The trip also came at minimal cost to rugby Southland.

The Stags players and management wanted to represent themselves, Invercargill city, and the Southland province with respect and pride while in Japan.

The team held numerous player development sessions prior to departure understanding the Japanese culture, learning some useful Japanese phrases to help reduce the language barrier, and also agreed on performing a haka an waiata at the mayoral welcome.

It is believed that this may have been the first time a Stags side have performed a haka or a waiata despite our long history.

The immediate benefits for Rugby Southland from the Kumagaya trip was the great opportunity for our players to understand, experience, and respect the Japanese culture. This matched well with the teams 2017 values of pride, respect, and performance.

The fact our squad was able to prepare in a quality "team camp" environment for a week was extremely beneficial for the younger players.

The team was available to train under the eyes of the Highlanders coaches and management. This was of great benefit to both players and coaches. We trained on a very good artificial turf at Rissho University, and had the use of the swimming pool at the High School.

The accommodation and hospitality at the Kings Ambassador Hotel was of a high standard. The service the whole time we were in Japan was excellent.

We were hosted well at the civic reception and were introduced to some Kumagaya and Saitama councillors and other dignitaries.

The team enjoyed the activities at the High School which included flower arranging, the character symbol painting, and tea ceremony. This put the boys outside of their comfort zone but they adapted well. As a mark of thanks the team performed an impromptu waiata to the school at the conclusion of the visit.

I understand that Kumagaya Girls' High have an existing relationship with Southland Girls' High so hopefully our visit may further enhance the connection.

We have established some initial relationships with some key rugby personnel at Risho University and staff at the High School.

Former Panasonic Wild Knights and Japan fullback Atsushi Tanabe is currently with the Southland Stags helping in the role of Attack Coach and travelled with the team to Kumagaya and is strong connections in the city and in Japan.

We have already received interest from a local Invercargill rugby club keen on sending two primary school teams to Kumagaya in 2019.

Rugby Southland completed a profitable international rugby academy program in association with Southland Boys' High earlier this year involving Chilean and Argentinian students.

We are currently working through extending our academy offering to include other countries including Japan as we would see this as a natural progression.

We would be keen for the Panasonic Wild Knights to play a pre-season match in Invercargill in the future but this would be up to the Highlanders management."

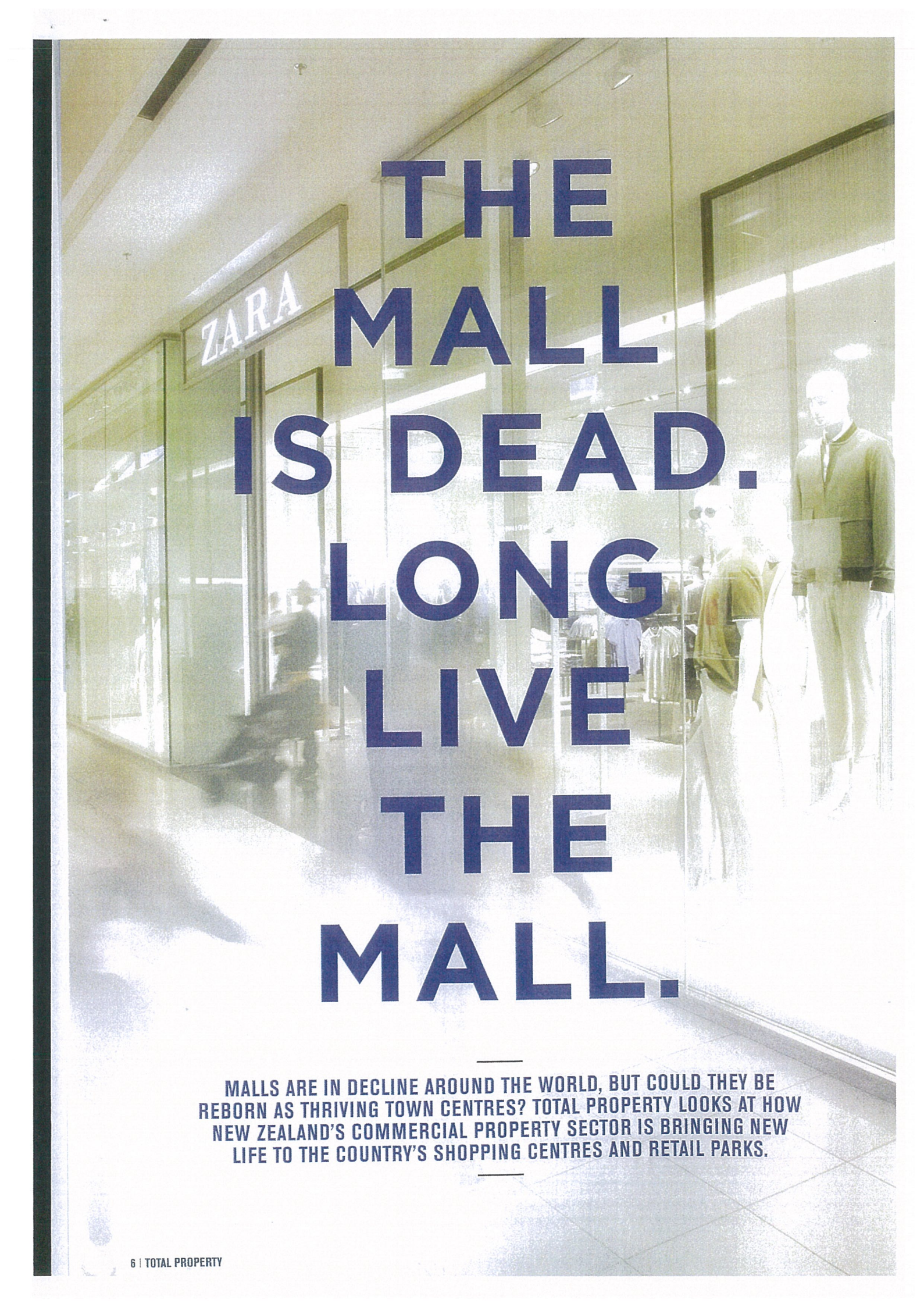
*Andrew Moreton
General Manager*



Dog Statistics as at 14 September 2017

Total Owners	7,094
Total Owners	218

Dog Numbers	<u>Total</u>	<u>Registered</u>	<u>Unregistered</u>
Status - Normal	8,986	8,283	703
Dangerous Pet	2	2	
Menacing Pet	138	126	12
Responsible Desexed	3,352	3,324	28
Responsible Pet	1,773	1,734	39
Responsible Service	16	15	1
Standard Desexed	1,301	1,211	90
Standard Pet	2,164	1,637	527
Standard Working	240	234	6
Status - Location Unknown	242	1	241
Menacing Pet	17	1	16
Responsible Desexed	5		5
Responsible Pet	5		5
Standard Desexed	10		10
Standard Pet	203		203
Standard Working	2		2
Total Dogs	9,228	8,284	944



**THE
MALL
IS DEAD.
LONG
LIVE
THE
MALL.**

MALLS ARE IN DECLINE AROUND THE WORLD, BUT COULD THEY BE REBORN AS THRIVING TOWN CENTRES? TOTAL PROPERTY LOOKS AT HOW NEW ZEALAND'S COMMERCIAL PROPERTY SECTOR IS BRINGING NEW LIFE TO THE COUNTRY'S SHOPPING CENTRES AND RETAIL PARKS.

THE TRADITIONAL SUBURBAN shopping mall is in crisis as operators face declining revenues and a customer base that seems increasingly intent on getting its retail fix online.

The decline has been most noticeable in the US, where thousands of mall-based stores have shut up shop in what's fast becoming one of the biggest waves of retail closures in decades.

An over-saturation of malls offering too much of the same thing, and a failure by landlords to revisit their tenant mix to reflect new retail trends and bring tired infrastructure up to date have all had an impact.

Analysts estimate that more than 25 percent of malls in the US, or roughly 310 of the country's 1,300 shopping malls, are at high risk of losing an anchor store - a huge blow when you consider that most mall anchor tenants occupy up to 9,290m² of space in high-profile spots.

Many property experts are unwilling to write malls off, though, believing they can be reborn as vibrant town centres that offers visitors an experience that goes beyond shopping for goods.

It is becoming the norm now to say that shopping centres of the future will tap into the town centre experience of old: becoming a meeting place within the suburbs that house them and offering not only retail outlets but also hotels, office towers, entertainment options and residential spaces.

Malls were built to replicate the experience of being in a vibrant town centre, as high streets were beginning to decline. Indeed, the father of the suburban shopping mall, US architect Victor Gruen, hoped they would bring a town square experience to what he thought was sterile suburbia.

At their most basic, malls are large, sprawling buildings - about 25,000m² in size - with lots of shops and parking. They are typically located along major arterial routes and are essentially "the high street", just in a different physical form.

THE BIRTH OF MALL SHOPPING

The mall made its debut in New Zealand on October 30, 1963. Lynnmall, in west Auckland, was heralded as "New Zealand's first American-styled shopping centre", and came as Auckland's burgeoning population was pushing westwards.

The shopping centre, built on a previously bare 2.8ha site on Great North Road, close to the Crown Lynn pottery factory, was home to 35 shops - including Farmers, Woolworths and Milne & Choyce - and offered parking for 500 cars.

More malls and shopping centres



A bird's eye view of Sylvia Park, in south Auckland, shows the extent of the mall's transport connections.

"WE INCREASINGLY SEE OURSELVES AS TOWN CENTRE INVESTORS, OUR PROPERTIES ARE PLACES [IN WHICH] TO SHOP, WORK, CONNECT, LIVE AND GROW!"

KIWI PROPERTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
CHRIS GUDGEON

followed, and there are now more than 150 shopping centres scattered across the country, covering more than 2 million square metres of rentable area. However, New Zealand's mall footprint has never really reached international levels - it is 0.5m² of mall space per person, compared to 1m² in Australia and 2.3m² in the US.

New Zealand's unique geography, small population and distance from other major countries have all played a part in limiting mall development. And until recently, popular international brands have been reluctant to establish a presence here.

Retail NZ public affairs general manager Greg Harford says: "By international standards, New Zealand is a relatively small market. While it's taken time for global firms to move into New Zealand, our relatively strong economy has encouraged a lot of overseas retailers to enter the market. This makes it even more important for Kiwi retail businesses to provide outstanding customer experiences."

New Zealand's limited exposure to the economic headwinds affecting retail markets in the US should give mall owners and developers here freedom to experiment with new forms, and transform malls from "absolute destinations" - ones that require a concerted decision to visit - into community hubs.

The buzzword within the industry is "placemaking" - the creation of vibrant centres in which people can live and work. As populations grow, so too have people's demands on towns and cities - and developers are responding by buying up underutilised land and integrating it back into the landscape for community use or redeveloping existing, strategically located assets into desirable destinations for residents, visitors and businesses.

In London, "placemaking" has been credited for breathing new life into previously closed-off and neglected corners of the city.

A former gasworks site in west London has been transformed into a prime new destination offering retail and leisure spaces, parks, high-quality infrastructure and 3,750 new homes. The nearby White City Living development is set to offer homes surrounded by bright open spaces and a boutique retail and leisure offering that complements the neighbouring Westfield London shopping centre.

TRANSPORT IS KEY

New Zealand doesn't need to look far for an example of this future, with Sylvia Park, in South Auckland readily embracing the "town centre" concept and



An artist's impression of Kiwi Property's plans for a new dining alley and office tower at Sylvia Park. Kiwi Property refers to Sylvia Park as a town centre, not a shopping centre.

adding office space and high-end dining experiences to its retail offering.

First opened in 2006, the 80,000m² mall now attracts 12.6 million visitors a year, generates more than \$500 million in annual retail sales, and is home to 203 tenants - with a long list of retailers keen to have a presence there.

Connectivity is without a doubt its main strength - it has its own train station, is linked to major arterial roads and is no more than a 20-minute drive away for 50 percent of Auckland's population.

Owner and operator Kiwi Property refers to Sylvia Park as a town centre, not a shopping centre, and points to the fact that even Auckland Council categorises it in the Unitary Plan as a Metropolitan Centre - defined as a regional centre around which commercial activities will be clustered.

"We increasingly see ourselves as town centre investors, creating diverse, engaging environments for New Zealanders. Our properties are places [in which] to shop, work, connect, live and grow," Kiwi Property chief executive Chris Gudgeon said earlier this year.

Kiwi Property owns seven shopping centres and two lifestyle retail centres valued at \$2 billion, and five office buildings valued at \$879 million. Its retail portfolio generates more than \$1.7 billion in sales annually, and boasts 950 tenants. Sylvia Park, valued at \$755 million, is its jewel in the crown.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL ASSET

Change is seen as vital to its continued success. "It's all about town centre intensification and that's exactly what's happening here. Sylvia Park is a multi-generational asset. There will be continuous development. In 10 to 20 years, there might be residential, a hotel, more offices," Mr Gudgeon says.

Construction workers at the park are busy building an \$80 million 10-storey block that will offer 11,200m² of office space to be anchored by multinational insurance firm IAG. Also on board as a tenant is Kiwi co-working firm BizDojo.

"We can offer office accommodation with a real point of difference. You've got your own railway station on the site, bus interchange, great motorway access, plus you've got all the amenities of the shopping centre," Mr Gudgeon says.

Following Kiwi Property down the "town centre" path is New Zealand Retail Property Group, which recently showcased its plans to radically transform its shopping mall offerings in Auckland's North Shore.

At its Highbury holding, it plans to build five high-rise luxury apartment blocks above a vastly expanded shopping mall, while at Westgate, in Massey, already one of Auckland's largest retail offerings, it plans to add high-rise apartments.

The company already plans to use the airspace above Milford Centre, its

**"SYLVIA PARK WASN'T
AN OVERNIGHT SUCCESS.
IT TOOK TIME TO MEET
ITS MARKET."**

FIRST RETAIL GROUP MANAGING
DIRECTOR CHRIS WILKINSON

14,000m² mall on Auckland's North Shore, to build 115 luxury apartments, and when building Westgate, NZRPG worked with Auckland Council to ensure it replicated a town centre, with street-based shops as well as internal retail, commercial business, public areas, and strong transport links

CHANGING EXPECTATIONS

Mall design consultant Vincent Zawodny predicts that growth of major cities will lead to more satellite urban areas that will need to be serviced by a town centre-style mall. "Residential and commercial will build into spaces, meeting all consumer needs. It will not be a shopping centre but an experience," he says.

Chris Wilkinson, managing director of retail consultancy group First Retail Group, says: "Today a strong, successful town centre or mall is typically anchored by exceptional food and beverage offerings, its



contemporary public amenities such as a new library formats, arts and heritage destinations and a complementary mix of both quality independent businesses and bigger brands. Differentiation is vital as consumers are tiring of the 'sameness' associated with many high streets or centres."

By this token Kiwi Property isn't neglecting its retail market either. It plans to add another 20,000m² of retail space to Sylvia Park – a \$180 million fashion galleria that will sit above its prized tenant, Zara, and be home to a café court, new international retailers and potentially one or more department stores.

Refreshing its retail offering is expected to pay dividends. In the months following the grand openings of H&M and Zara last spring, visitor numbers rose 20 percent, with an average 100,000 shoppers bustling through the mall at the weekend. The \$19.2 million Kiwi Property spent building the fashion chain's stores has proved a canny investment, with other fashion tenants investing in new fit-outs to compete.

The recent A\$670 million transformation of Pacific Fair Shopping Centre, on Queensland's Gold Coast, indicates the path Sylvia Park is following.

The AMP-owned mall, which like Sylvia Park is served by its own transport hub, has positioned itself as a tourist destination, and its refurbishment programme - added 50,000m² of retail and hospitality space to the centre -

was aimed at providing a high-quality shopping and food experience for the hundreds of thousands of tourists that visit the Gold Coast each year.

The refurbishment has also spurred building activity in the surrounding area, including the development of luxury apartments and a new hotel.

Other mall owners in New Zealand have seen the advantage in refreshing the visitor experience they currently offer. Scentre Group, Australasia's largest mall group, plans to spend \$500 million expanding its Auckland Westfield malls in Newmarket, St Lukes and Albany, and add another hectare of shops and hospitality outlets at Christchurch's Riccarton mall.

Stride Property Group is set to start work on its \$150 million redevelopment of the Johnsonville Shopping Centre in Wellington's north, which includes space for a cinema, 120 retailers and 900 car parks, and it is believed the revamp will rejuvenate the suburb. Stride Property is also busy carrying out a substantial refurbishment of Queensgate in Lower Hutt, in response to last November's quake.

NEW SENSATIONS

Food is also seen as key to winning new customers. Also under construction at Sylvia Park is a new \$9.1 million dining alley, The Grove, which will offer six new restaurants offering high-quality, modern cuisine. For Kiwi Property, the setting is as important as the food. The Grove, which opens in December, will serve as a new main entrance to the mall and boast light-filled, open spaces, bespoke furniture and complimentary landscaping, as well as a retractable canopy that will allow visitors

to enjoy the space all year round.

Kiwi Property is keen to play up The Grove's town centre vibe: the design of the alfresco dining alley incorporates a town square and significant artwork. When announcing the development earlier this year, Kiwi Property's general manager of retail, Karl Retief, said: "Our plans showcase a world-class public space where the community will be able to go to relax, unwind after a busy day or be entertained with family and friends."

The Groove is an acknowledgement that people are increasingly devoting a bigger share of their wallets to experiences that can't be replicated online - restaurants, entertainment and technology.

Globally, food halls featuring new food sensations and fast casual outlets are growing in significance. Mall operators are fast realising that a well-stocked food hall can attract large numbers of shoppers, particularly millennials, who are keen to spend big on food experiences.

For mall operators, there are other upsides. Food tenants usually take on longer leases than other retailers and food is viewed as internet resistant. Some analysts believe that the food experience can make or break a new retail development, arguing that food can now act as an anchor tenant.

Mr Wilkinson says experimentation is the key to success. "Sylvia Park wasn't an overnight success, but took time to meet its market in terms of range and proposition. Some of those early retailers made way for more contemporary brands as the centre - and its audience evolved. Food and beverage was a key part of that evolution, recognising the increased role this has in attracting and engaging consumers."



Stride Property Group's Johnsonville Shopping Centre in Wellington's north is to undergo a \$150 million makeover.