KAIKŌURA DISTRICT COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Kaikōura is a **regenerative, resilient,** internationally recognised **mountains-to-sea** district: **affordable, connected, open for business year-round, culturally rich, biodiverse,** and known for **innovation, research,** and **environmental stewardship.**

Five-year Action Plan (2026–2031)

This Five-Year Action Plan gives effect to the Kaikōura Economic Development Strategy by translating long-term strategic direction into a practical programme of actions for 2026–2031. Actions are grouped into three categories:

- **Council Led Foundational Actions** – Actions that Council and its partners will actively lead, coordinate, or directly deliver because they are critical to implementing the Strategy and creating the conditions for long-term success.
- **Partner-Led Actions Supported/Enabled by Council** – Actions that are primarily led and delivered by external organisations, businesses, community groups, or other agencies, where Council's role is to support, facilitate, advocate, coordinate, provide planning assistance, or help remove barriers to delivery.
- **Future Opportunities and Pilot Initiatives** – Potential future initiatives that will be explored, tested, or investigated before any commitment to delivery.

The Action Plan reflects both the priority and maturity of different actions, as well as Council's role in delivery. Council-led Foundational Actions are the highest-priority initiatives and will be the primary focus of implementation during the first one to two years, as they create the conditions for achieving the Strategy's longer-term outcomes. Support/Enable actions are primarily delivered by partners, with Council providing advocacy, coordination, planning support, or other assistance where appropriate. Future Opportunity actions identify projects that may warrant further investigation or development but do not represent a commitment to implementation at this time.

This Action Plan does not approve projects, commit funding, or predetermine outcomes. Progression of actions remains subject to feasibility, partner commitment, funding availability, environmental considerations, community support, and future Council decisions through Long Term Plan, Annual Plan, District Plan, and other statutory planning processes. The Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed over time to respond to changing circumstances while maintaining the long-term direction of the Economic Development Strategy.

Action description	Action type	Lead entity	Pillar	Key partners	Timeframe (Years 1–5)	Resourcing required	Alignment with other plans	Key benefits	Indicator of success	Delivery Confidence Rating
Establish **Enterprise Kaikōura** as a business and investment leadership structure with an agreed Terms of Reference, membership model, and annual work programme, including speakers and workshops. It will be the primary KDC tool to Coordinate business engagement, investment attraction, diversification initiatives and productive economy forums	KDC led/ Foundational KDC to: - set up the core group - develop the governance structure - arrange the first meetings and forums	KDC	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura, local business, Enterprise North Canterbury, Destination Kaikōura, Innovate Marlborough	Within 12 months	Policy (project management) staff time; Community Development Resourcing	KDC Long-Term Plan, Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy, Marlborough Economic Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2032	Improved coordination, investor confidence, and business advocacy. It will be a way to share ideas and explore important developments in fields of interest; will primarily involve events, workshops and guest speakers	Enterprise Kaikōura established; minimum quarterly meetings held; annual work programme adopted and reported against	High
Launch a bold "**Why Kaikōura**" Workforce, Resident and Investment Attraction Programme	KDC led/ Foundational KDC to: - Design and launch the webpage	KDC	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy 4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	Local business, Destination Kaikōura, Kaikōura Healthcare New Zealand, Youth Council, Destination Marlborough	Within 12 months	Policy (project management) staff time IT services	LTP; Walking and Riding Strategy	Will provide an online business propositus and promote Kaikōura as a location for critical workers (healthcare and aged care ect.), remote workers and other targeted	Website launched; annual visitor numbers achieved (approximately 50,000 annual site visits); business and workforce attraction	High

								industries and groups	enquiries generated	
Monitoring, dashboards and annual community reporting	KDC led/ Foundational KDC to: - Develop a monitoring dashboard and launch it for public access	KDC	Supports all 4 pillars	Community groups and partners	Within 12 months	Analyst and reporting capacity; Communications and Community Development Staff Time	KPI Framework, Governance Framework	Transparency and adaptive delivery	Annual reporting dashboard publicly available and used in Council decision-making	High
South Bay Pohowera Park	KDC led/ Foundational KDC to: - Project manage the development of the park	KDC	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy 4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	Iwi; ECAN, Cycling Club, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura	Years 1–5	Project management time; landscapers; LTP funding	LTP, Walking and Riding Strategy	Supports healthy local living and tourism	Increased use of walking and cycling facilities or visitor/resident satisfaction	High
Establish a **Youth and Workforce Pathways Network** (containing those working in the youth field and youth representation)	KDC led/ Foundational KDC to: - Establish the network - Set up the governance structure - Organise the first meetings	KDC	4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	Schools, tertiary providers, employers; Te Hā o Mātauranga – Learning in Kaikōura	Within 12 months	Community Services staff time	Library Policy, Youth Policy	Map gaps and needs to work out targeted interventions; determine one or two galvanizing projects in the youth field; feed into the youth orientated aspects of this document	Youth Network established; annual action programme agreed; at least one priority initiative progressed	Medium
District Plan review and plan changes for housing and mixed-use zones.	KDC led/ Foundational KDC to: - Amend the district plan through the processes available - Investigate planning mechanisms that encourage better utilisation of	KDC	1. Housing and Community Wellbeing 2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	Government housing providers, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura developers, Aging Well Kaikoura	Years 1–3	Planning staff time and consultant support	District Plan; Spatial Plan, Regional Spatial Plan/land use chapter	Remove regulatory barriers to growth; enable more housing for workers and the aging population	Planning provisions implemented that reflect the Spatial Plan which align with the Planning Act	Medium

	existing housing stock and workforce accommodation									
30-year infrastructure report to feed into the Regional Spatial Plan (roading, transport, energy, and airport designation)	KDC led/ Foundational KDC to: - Develop the report and feed it into the Regional Spatial Plan	KDC	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy 3 A Resilient Economy 4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	MoT, potential investors, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura, Energy providers, EECA, iwi	Year 1 delivery of options paper to Council in preparation for the Regional Spatial Plan; with year two involving integration into the Regional Spatial Plan	Operations and Policy staff time Technical advisory services	Canterbury Climate Action Plan, Regional Spatial Plan, Regional Energy Strategy, National Infrastructure Plan	Future freight and industry enablement; clear pathway to energy resilience	Council infrastructure priorities submitted and formally considered through Regional Spatial Plan development	Medium
Environment limits and adaptation planning	KDC led/ Foundational	Co-led KDC / Regional Council	4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura, Te Korowai, ECAN, Marlborough District Council, MCERT	Years 1-3	Policy staff time; technical advisory services	Regional Spatial Plan (Natural Environment Act) and associated regional environment chapter, National Adaptation Framework, National Infrastructure Plan	Environmental regeneration; climate resilience	Climate adaptation risks and environmental limits incorporated into Regional Spatial Planning frameworks and the Natural Environment Plan	Medium
EV charging network expansion	Support/ Enable KDC to: - Provide the planning rules to facilitate	Private providers	3. A Resilient Economy	Lines companies, KDC	Years 1–5	Capital and private investment	Canterbury Climate Action Plan, National Infrastructure Plan	Supports low-carbon transport	Increase in publicly accessible EV charging points across the district	Medium
Blue-green corridors and ecosystem restoration	Support/ Enable KDC to: - Use the regional spatial planning structure to outline blue-green networks - Potentially engage directly in	DOC / community groups / ECAN	4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	KDC (coordination and support)	Years 1–5	External grants and partnerships	Spatial Plan, Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy, Regional Spatial Plan (Natural Environment Act) and associated Natural Environment Chapter	Environmental regeneration	Advancement of the blue-green networks as set out in the spatial plan	Low

	biodiversity initiatives						Predator-free NZ 2050, Marlborough Environment Plan			
Abbeyfield housing development	Support/ Enable KDC to: - Provide planning assistance - Provide legal support through financial assistance	Aging Well Group	1. Housing and Community Wellbeing 4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	KDC	Years 2–4	KDC administrative support to the Aging Well Group as available and appropriate	Aging Well Strategy	Enables aging in place, reduces demand pressure on acute services, supports community stability	A contract signed with a provider to build an Abbeyfield housing development in Kaikōura	Low
Business Park expansion and infrastructure readiness	Support/ Enable KDC to: - Provide the planning rules supportive of growth - Market the development as part of Why Kaikōura website and media campaign	Developers, utilities	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	Investors/ Commercial entities; KDC promotion	Years 2–5	Operations staff time	Spatial Plan, Regional Spatial Plan, LTP	Supports industry diversification	New businesses established within the business park	Low
Renewable energy on public buildings	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal KDC to: - Invest in solar on its own main building	KDC	3. A Resilient Economy	EECA, private sector, Manpower	Year 1	Capital funding (LTP); Policy (project management staff time)	Canterbury Climate Action Plan, LTP	Reduced emissions and energy costs	Installation of solar on public buildings	Medium
Enable papakāinga and Māori-led housing pilots	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal KDC to - Provide planning support	Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura	1. Housing and Community Wellbeing	Ngāi Tahu Property, Kāinga Ora, KDC	Years 1–3	Project management; Feasibility studies	District Plan/land use chapter, Spatial Plan, Regional Spatial Plan	Supports whānau wellbeing and housing affordability	Feasibility completed, planning pathway agreed, development consent secured, or dwellings enabled	Medium

Workforce Attraction, Retention and Skills Programme	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal KDC to convene partners, support funding applications, and facilitate programme delivery where aligned with Council priorities, including initiatives that support workforce participation, workforce attraction and retention, retraining, lifelong learning, skills development, and workforce re-entry pathways.	KDC	1. Housing and Community Wellbeing 4. Connected, Livable, and Environmentally Rich Places	Schools, tertiary providers, employers; Te Hā o Mātauranga – Learning in Kaikōura	Years 1–5	Programme funding; Policy (and project management) and Community Services staff time	LTP, Library Policy, Youth Policy	Improved workforce participation, job readiness, workforce retention, retraining opportunities, lifelong learning, financial literacy, and critical thinking; diversification from tourism	Participation in skills programmes increases and local employers report improved workforce availability	Medium
Consider and support diversification of Kaikōura tourism proactively toward land-based, innovative ventures beyond ocean activity dependence (Eco, Wellness, Dark Sky, Education Tourism)	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal	Destination Kaikōura	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	DOC, tourism operators, KDC	Years 1–5	Marketing and capability funding	Destination Management Plan	Higher-value, year-round tourism; keeps the economy strong until new sectors emerge	Number of new land-based tourism ventures established	Medium
Wakatu Quay Development	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal	KDC, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura,	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	Local businesses,	Years 1–5	Business case and capital funding; Project	LTP, National Infrastructure Plan	Supports tourism and local employment	Development partnership agreement	Medium

	KDC to work with the joint-venture partners to implement the development	and Private industry		community groups		management staff time			executed and project milestones achieved	
Māori-led enterprise and cultural experience development	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal	Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	MBIE, Destination Kaikōura	Years 1–5	Programme and seed funding	Māori Economic Development Framework	Economic resilience and cultural visibility	Number of Māori-led enterprises or cultural tourism experiences supported or established	Medium
Community microgrids for critical infrastructure	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal	Lines company / energy partners (technical lead)	3. A Resilient Economy	KDC (facilitator and asset owner where relevant)	Years 3–5	Feasibility and capital funding	Canterbury Climate Action Plan, Emergency Management Plan	Improved disaster resilience	New solar installations providing power for the community	Low
Establish the Kaikōura Research and Education Centre (KREC) as an anchor research and education institution through partnership formation, programme design, and staged development.	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal KDC to work with education providers and central government agencies to secure funding	KDC/Private investors	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	Te Korowai, Marine Guardians, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura, universities, education providers, MBIE, MPI	Year 1-2 deliverable: Governance model agreed; research and education programme framework defined; lead partners formally committed; pathway confirmed for physical facilities.	Technical advice on feasibility; Policy (project management) staff time; Central Government funding required	LTP	Anchor institution for year-round skilled employment, education pathways, applied science, marine decision-making, and global research collaboration; provide youth friendly learning activities to encourage youth to stay in the high-school and move here for study	Investors secured and an agreed governance model and framework developed	Low
Progress South Bay Harbour Development and integrated marine precinct master planning (Business case complete)	Pilot / Future Delivery Signal KDC to - Work with central government to determine potential funding	KDC (planning only)	2. A Diverse, Year-Round Economy	Harbour users, DOC, iwi; Te Korowai o Te Tai ō Marokura; MBIE	Years 3–5	Capital funding; Policy (project management staff time)	Infrastructure Strategy, Regional Deal, National Adaptation Framework, National Infrastructure Plan	Marine industry resilience, safety, research and recreation enablement	Investment secured for the development of the project.	Low

Delivery confidence rating:

High - Council controls most of inputs, costs are expected to be manageable and delivery pathway is relatively clear

Med – Require partner input, funding or planning support

Low – significant external dependency, funding, consents or feasibility risk