

Ōpōtiki Town Centre

Masterplan and Implementation Plan

January 2021



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Ōpōtiki Town Centre

Masterplan and Implementation Plan

1. Introduction and Overview

Ōpōtiki is at the gateway of change. The current work to improve the harbour entrance, the significant expansion of the local aquaculture industry and demand associated with the development of the marine related activities will undoubtedly lead to economic growth in the town as a whole. This brings the opportunity to reconsider the role of the Town Centre and to plan for its future.

The Ōpōtiki District Council has already brought together a clear Structure Plan for the Town Centre area¹. This identifies the key opportunities and challenges as well as principles for revitalising the Town Centre. The production of this Masterplan for the Town Centre is the first step to implement the Structure Plan.

This Masterplan and Implementation Plan have been prepared to provide a long term vision for the Town Centre area, with the final detail of developments to be prepared on a site by site basis by individual developers in discussion with the Council.

The Masterplan supports the revitalisation of the town centre through the use of good practice urban design and which is informed by a thorough understanding of the local property and development market. To achieve this the Masterplan:

- Identifies the key attributes of the Town Centre as existing.
- Considers what forms of development could be feasible in the Town Centre, now and moving forward.
- Provides a vision for the Town Centre
- Identifies specific projects, and includes these in an Implementation Plan



Figure 1: Masterplan Summary

Councillor and Public input into the Masterplan

- A workshop was held with Councillors in September 2020 to obtain their early input into the masterplan. A further workshop was held with Councillors in December 2020 to discuss the emerging draft masterplan. The masterplan has been updated to reflect Councillors comments and views.
- In preparing the masterplan conversations were arranged with the Whakatōhea Maori Trust Board, local business people and developers. These people provided valuable input which has influenced the Masterplan.
- In addition, account has been taken of the Town Centre Structure Plan, which was itself generated through a consultative process, and of the many responses to the post by Councillor Rapihana on the Ōpōtiki Community Notices Facebook group asking what residents liked and disliked about the Town Centre. Many of the important matters raised in the Facebook post are addressed in the Masterplan.

¹ The Ōpōtiki Town Centre Structure Plan Summary, June 2020

2. The Existing Town Centre

A. Area and Uses

- Ōpōtiki Town Centre covers a 11ha area, including the commercial areas of Church Street, Elliott Street and King Street.
- The northern boundary of the area is marked by Kelly Street, the south by Richard Street and west by Potts Avenue.
- The western boundary is located within the block between Church Street and St.John's Road (State Highway 35).
- The land is zoned Town Centre in the Ōpōtiki Operative District Plan
- As well as the Ōpōtiki District Council controlling the roads within the Town Centre area, the Council also owns a number of sites within the Town Centre.
- A number of Council sites are being redeveloped, including for the Te Tahuu o Te Rangi technology and research centre (corner of Church Street with King Street), and sites to the north of this.

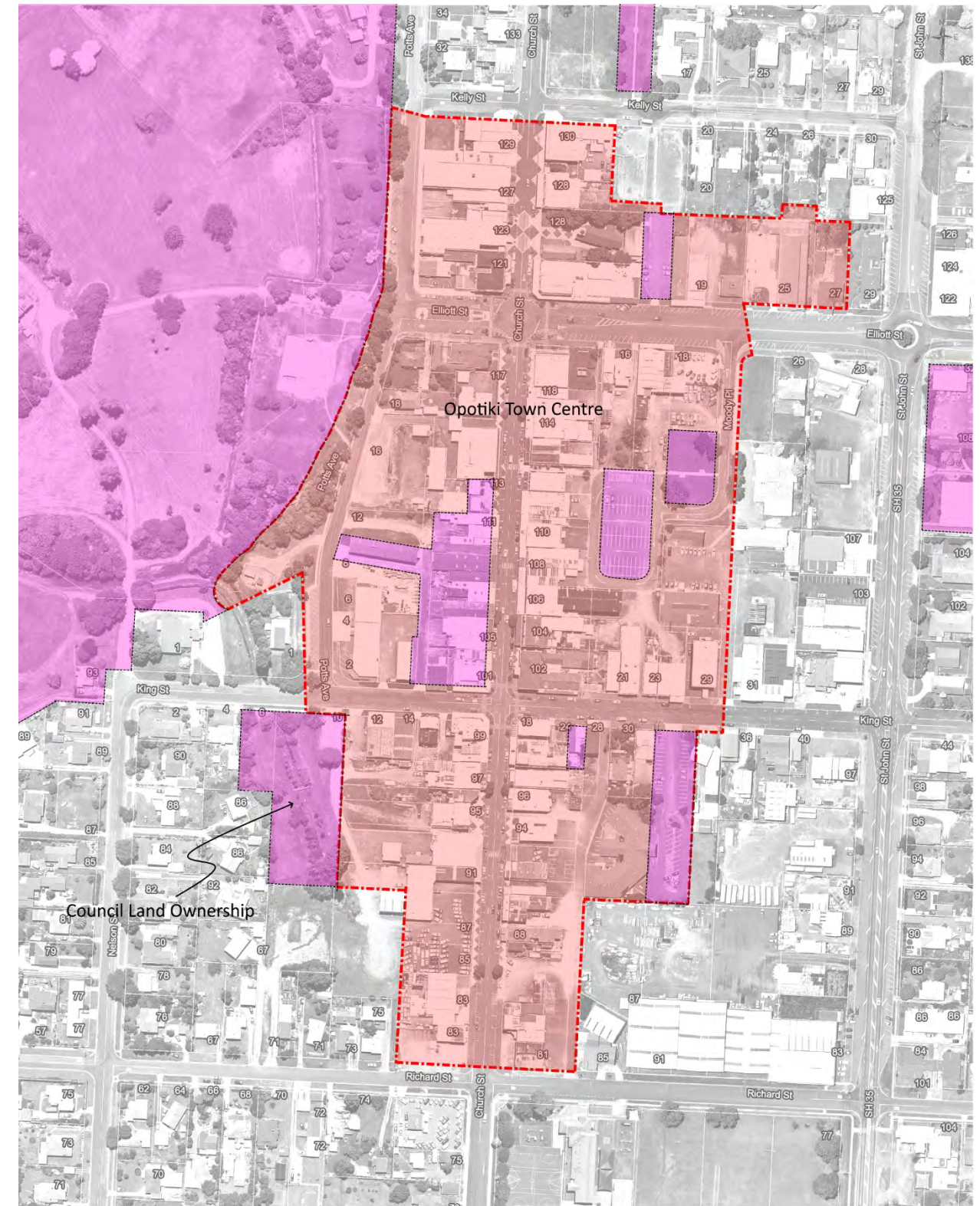


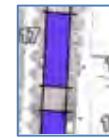
Figure 2: Boundary of the masterplan area dashed red.

B. Urban Structure and Movement



State Highway

- State Highway 35 by-passes the Town Centre; one block to the east and two blocks to the south.
- Apart from street signs, there are no obvious markers along the State Highway indicating the location of the Town Centre.
- It is important to ensure that casual users of State Highway 35 become aware of the location of the Town Centre and are encouraged to enter and explore.



Local Roads

- Ōpōtiki township is formed around a grid network of local roads, which provide simple access to the Town Centre from all directions
- These roads also link to State Highway 35, providing easy access to the Town Centre. However, as noted above apart from street signs, there are no obvious markers along the State Highway indicating the location of the Town Centre.



Rear Lanes and Roads

- A series of rear lanes and road provide access to the rear of shops.
- These are important as they take delivery and service vehicles away from the main street areas.
- They also provide significant flexibility in relation to the future redevelopment of sites, allowing upper floor uses to be accessed from the rear, meaning that continuous shop frontages are not interrupted by doors serving upper floors.
- It is important that these lanes/roads are retained and supplemented with new routes where possible.



Pedestrian Linkages

- Within the Town Centre footpaths and linkages allow for pedestrians to move through the area at a finer grain.

Street Design

- An enhancement scheme has already been implemented within the Church Street area. This incorporates patterns which reflect the cultural significance of the area. These are most clearly seen within the section of Church Street between Elliott Street and Kelly Street, where the patterns extend across the carriageway.
- Pohutukawa trees are planted within Church Street; as a native tree these provide an important link to the cultural significance of the area.
- Whilst there are issues associated with this paving being slippery in wet weather (a matter which will be addressed independent of this masterplan), there remains the potential to increase the use of this design within the Town Centre area, utilising alternative materials. This approach has been adopted for the external landscaped space to the rear of Te Tahu o Te Rangi technology and research centre, where the design for the new area reflects the designs seen within the street but utilised alternative materials.

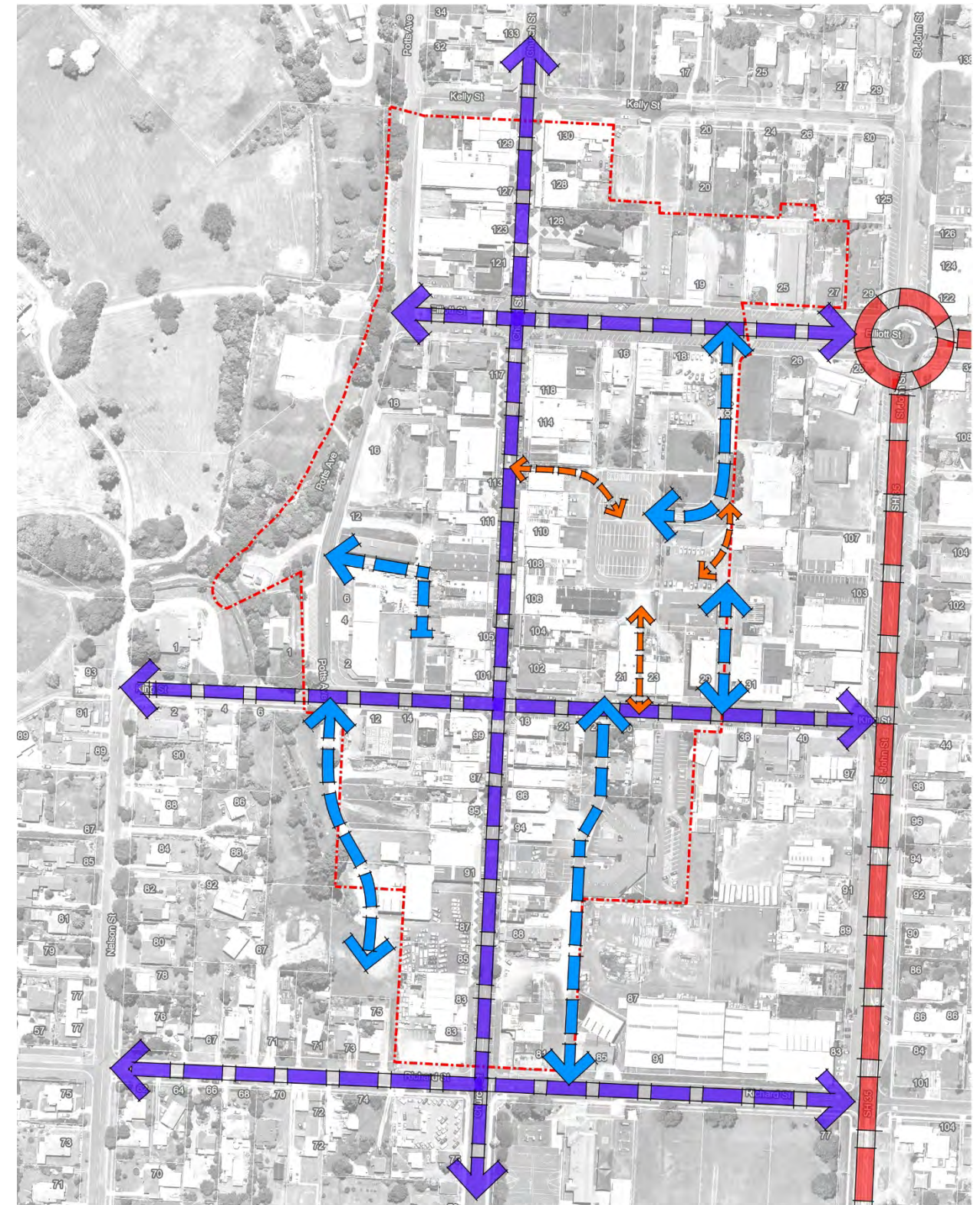


Figure 3: Street network

C. Heritage and Character Buildings

The History of Ōpōtiki Town Centre²

Ōpōtiki Town Centre has been recognised as one of the best surviving examples of a late 19th Century early 20th Century town centres in the upper North Island. It retains a broad range of building types, including both commercial buildings and early Churches and church halls.

The name 'Ōpōtiki' originated from the name of a spring of the eastern bluff above Waiotahi Beach called "O-Potiki mai-Tawhiti." This name goes back to the migration from Hawaiiki. It concerns a chief Tarawa who decided to join his people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Tarawa set sail for Aotearoa New Zealand in a canoe named Te Arautauta (also referred to as Te Araumauma), accompanied by two Tanahana fish pets known as O-Potiki-mai Tawhiti, meaning "two pets from afar". Landing on the Waiotahi Beach, Tarawa found a spring as an abode for his two fish pets. The spring thereafter became known as O-Potiki-mai-Tawhiti because of the continual reference to the inhabitant fish of the same name.³

Maori have occupied the area for many hundreds of years, with the tangata whenua Whakatōhea initially leading a traditional lifestyle. The early 19th Century saw this traditional lifestyle being slowly influenced by the introduction of European religion, material goods, livestock, crops, agricultural techniques and equipment, faster boats and wider trading networks, as well as alcohol and previously unknown diseases.

Whilst initial Maori-Pakeha contacts were indirect and sparse; by the 1840s this had changed to more sustained, longer-term contacts with a few Pakeha living near to or amongst Whakatōhea at Ōpōtiki. During this time, one of the few cavalry charges in the country occurred, which was an attack on Te Tarata Pa (located on the current Pile Road).

In 1865 a major clash of cultures ended in Whakatōhea 's land being confiscated. Ōpōtiki was surveyed and became a European-style township with a predominantly European population, under the Auckland Province and adhering to New Zealand laws and customs.

The first European settlement in the areas was part of the military frontier of the colonial government. The town provided a base for troop movements, with the newly built wharves allowing relatively easy sea access for people and supplies. The wharfs provided a convenient location for the export of produce from the emerging agricultural development within the surrounding district. As the port grew the Town Centre became a service centre for the surrounding rural community, providing a location for commercial services, as well as social, recreational and religious activities as well. As the largest town in the district, Government agencies and local bodies had their bases in Ōpōtiki.

Ōpōtiki 's greatest growth was in the last decades of the 19th Century through to the 1930s; in 1921 Ōpōtiki was much bigger than Te Puke, Whakatane or Taupo, but improvements in road and rail transport and the silting up of the harbour meant that sea freight became more difficult and less economic. The result was a slowing of growth in the area.

Whilst many of the historic heritage buildings and other buildings of character within the Town Centre stem from a period when Whakatōhea were less represented in the evolution of the Town Centre, the remaining buildings nevertheless represent a significant period in the growth and significance of Ōpōtiki and assist with telling the story of the town. As highlighted below, a number of these building have been recognised as being of national significance and are included on Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga's New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero.

The Value of Heritage

- Ōpōtiki Town Centre has clear historic character and provides a venue for recreation and business which is distinct from other locations which are more recently developed. It is a location which could prove to be of more interest to a wider range of residents and visitors than more recently developed areas which lack its history.

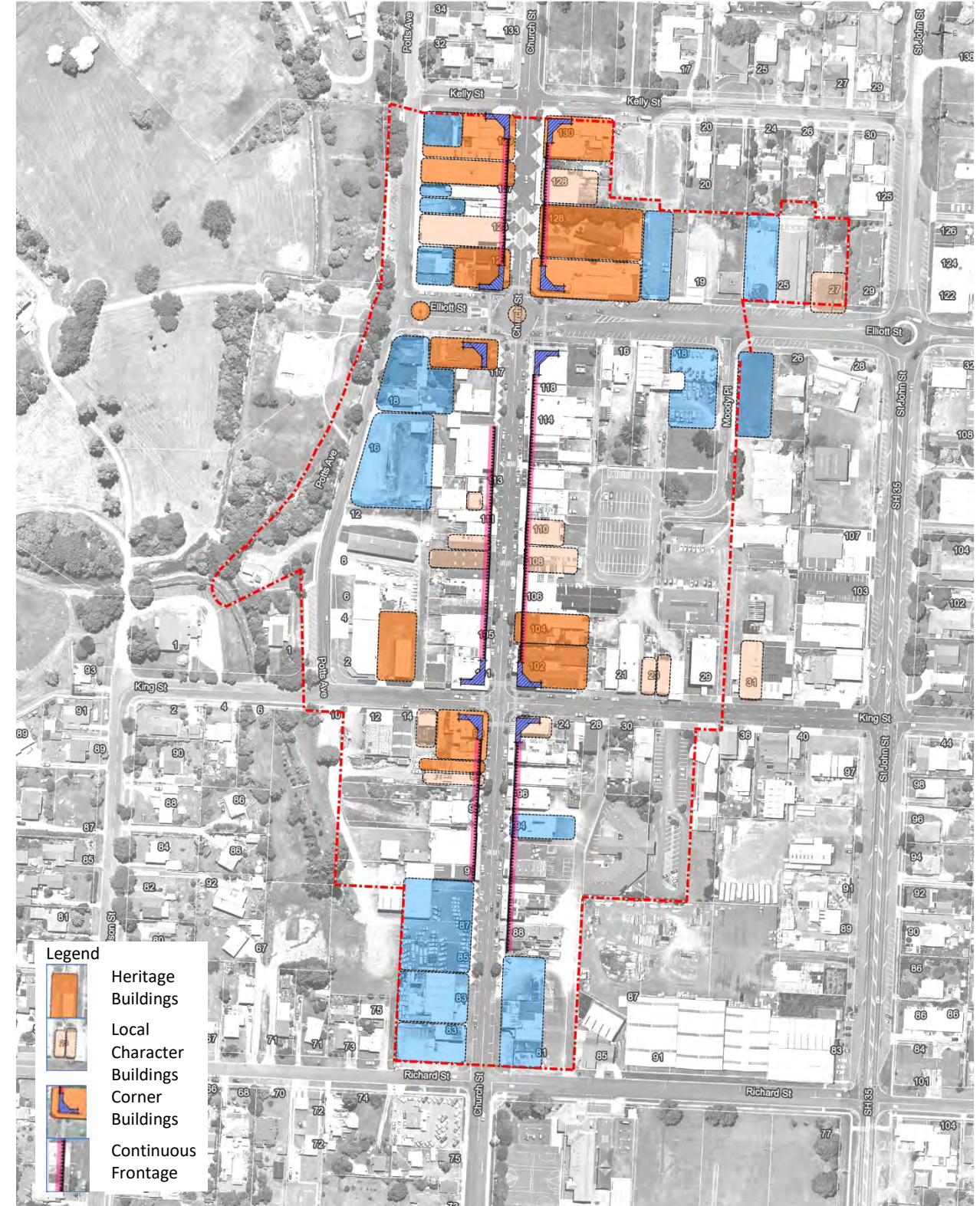


Figure 4: Heritage Buildings, Local Character Buildings and Townscape Features

- Case studies have shown a clear link between increased economic activity and historic regeneration, and it is generally accepted that improvements to the historic environment have helped to support job creation and safeguarded existing employment.⁴
- Repurposing the Town Centre will bring the opportunity to build upon the cultural and historical significance of the area and to regenerate buildings and spaces along a common theme to create a distinct business neighbourhood which people can identify with and are drawn to.
- Cultural values and a sense of identity are seen as increasingly important within a 'global world'. Recognition of the special character of the area and involving the local community in the future management of the area can help to foster a sense of local and civic pride and make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Ōpōtiki's residents. This includes younger people; historic neighbourhoods have been shown to provide what younger buyers are looking for, and younger people have been shown to be generally interested in heritage, especially with the interactivity and experiences that using an such an area could bring. With population growth possible as a result of the increasing economy of the area, the maintenance and enhancement of the area can assist new residents to 'connect' with the local area and integrate with the local community.
- The historic premises and overall historic character of Ōpōtiki Town Centre can provide a range of opportunities not available elsewhere in the region; it could provide a setting for cafés and restaurants to thrive, creating an urban oasis which has a feel and vitality that is very different from often increasingly similar town centres and shopping areas. It could help to create an area that could appeal to business enterprises that might otherwise not have the chance to develop; one in four businesses in a UK study confirmed that the historic environment was an important factor in deciding where to locate and that a heritage environment was valued as importantly as road access. Property developers and professionals value protecting and preserving historical buildings and cultural monuments and see this as a very important characteristic of a development. They view local heritage as being their investment.
- Overall, the historic environment of the Town Centre provides the opportunity to stimulate diverse shopping, commercial and leisure experiences. Making the most of historic buildings and places is an important way to develop groups of businesses that are unique to the area, with areas with a concentration of historic buildings shown to bring commercial activity in the mid to high price range and more independent brands.

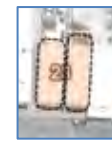
Heritage and Character Buildings

Heritage Buildings



- A significant number of buildings in the Town Centre are included in Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga's New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero ('the List'). Sites and building on the list are recognised as New Zealand's most significant and valued historical and cultural heritage places.
- These same sites are recognised in the Proposed District Plan (PDP) and are subject to the provisions of PDP Chapter 14.
- Investment in and the reuse of these buildings these buildings is key to realising the future potential of the Town Centre, as a place to shop, spend leisure time and to live.
- The existing judicial use of the Court Building is seen by many to have a negative impact on the Town Centre. Whilst it is positive that the building is in use and well maintained, a new use for the building could make better use of its high profile location.

Local Character Buildings



- In addition to the nationally recognised buildings, there are other building in the Town Centre which contribute to the character of the area, by reason of their attractive facades, sometimes including reference to original shop owners.
- Whilst these buildings are not protected in the same was the as the Listed heritage buildings, it remains important that in the very least their facades are retained, so they are still able to contribute to telling the story of Ōpōtiki, and continue to assist with telling the story of the town.

Earthquake Prone Buildings

- A large number of buildings in the Town Centre, including listed heritage buildings and local character buildings, area are potentially earthquake prone, however very few earthquake assessments have been carried out on behalf of owners so the actual number of earthquake prone buildings in the centre is not known.
- Anecdotal evidence, collected as part of the process to gain an understanding of the local Ōpōtiki property market for this masterplan, suggests that elsewhere owners have found it more economic to retain and strengthen earthquake prone buildings than to demolish them and to redevelop their site. In particular, it is reported that in Whakatane a few earthquake buildings have been strengthened internally rather than being rebuilt given the substantial difference in cost but with little difference in value. For example, an internal steel portal might cost \$100k compared to a full rebuild at several hundred thousand dollars with little difference in the eventual rent and capital value.



Figure 5: Heritage Scheduled former Salvation Army Barracks ...

² Information taken from Ōpōtiki Town Centre Historic Heritage Study Part One, Matthews and Matthews Architects Ltd, 2006

³ Information taken from OpotikiNZ website: <https://www.opotikin.z.co.nz/history-opotiki>

⁴ As considered in unpublished paper for Hamilton City Council by Richard Knott Limited, including

Townscape

- Townscape relates to how buildings and streets are viewed together; how the cumulative value of all features in Town Centre can be 'more valuable' than the sum of the parts i.e. whilst some individual buildings may not have significant interest in their own right they can play a key role when considered with other buildings and the street as a whole.
- Ōpōtiki Town Centre includes many factors which together are considered to create good Townscape. These include:

Corner Buildings



- A number of corners within the town centre are successfully marked by buildings. Corners are important in that, providing the building on them is memorable or distinctive, they contribute to the overall legibility of the centre. They also assist with forming key spaces within the Centre.



Figure 6: The Rostgard's building positively marks the intersection of Church Street with King Street, providing a distinctive appearance and providing enclosure to the street.

Continuous Frontage



- The existence of an interesting continuous building frontage with shopfronts on the back edge of the footpath helps to contain the street (helping to create a scale which humans can relate to), and adds significant interest for pedestrians.
- Much of the Town Centre area has clearly defined building frontages. These continuous building frontages to the street, with fine grain ground floor shopfront bring interest to passers-by as they move along the street and provide the opportunity for a wide range of different retail and café/restaurant uses.



Figure 7: Continuous frontage in Church Street

Lack of Enclosure

- This links to the benefits of a continuous active frontage but is the exact opposite. Lack of enclosure or containment creates spaces which lack a human scale and which are not comfortable to use.
- This is most obvious in the southern section of Church Street, where the Mobil petrol filling station, Bay of Plenty Farm Source, Magnus Lennie and redundant garage/workshop opposite. These do not, on the whole, provide active frontages to the street.
- There are other sites in Elliott Street which would benefit from a continuous frontage.

A number of sites along Potts Avenue are also noted as lacking enclosure. The character of Potts Avenue is different to Church Street, and continuous frontage is not therefore expected in the same way. However, the identified areas would still benefit from buildings addressing the street.

Rhythm in Ground Floor Frontages

- Regular, narrow shop frontages and fine grained uses along streets provides greater interest for pedestrian than single users occupying long stretches of building frontage. This is achieved throughout much of the centre, apart from those areas which lack enclosure or lack continuous frontage as described above. This contributes to the overall vitality of the Centre.



Figure 8: Rhythm in Frontage; the street is made up of a number of distinct buildings with narrow shop frontage.

Significant Spaces

- Where a number of the above factors come together, or where there is a change of enclosure or continuous building frontage there can be ‘spaces’ formed. These spaces can add to the legibility of the Centre, as well as providing an opportunity for other activities to take place.
- Noted key spaces include (Figure 3):

1. Space around Cenotaph (linking with 2.)



2. Space around Pou Whenua and Waka Whetu (linking with 1.), fronted by the Heritage Court Building and Masonic Hotel.



3. Space to front of Public Toilets and Old Plunket Rooms (Ladies Rest Room)



4. Space at intersection of Church Street with King Street, fronted by heritage buildings and Te Tahu o Te Rangi.



5. Area to front of 95 Church Street.



Cenotaph, Pou Whenua and Waka Whetu

- As noted above, the cenotaph, the Pou Whenua and Waka Whetu all contribute to the overall character and interest of the Town Centre, and also act as important markers which assist with the legibility of the Town Centre.

Gateways

- It is often considered important that a Town Centre is a clearly defined area, and that residents and visitors have a clear sense of entering the Town Centre area; these are often described as Gateways and can contribute towards providing a sense of grandeur to the area and the idea that there is something worth visiting.
- In the case of Ōpōtiki Town Centre, there are no features which clearly mark the entrance to the Town Centre; this is a missed opportunity.

Key Destinations

- Within and around the Town Centre there are a number of key destinations which draw residents and visitors into the area. These include:
 - A. Wharf and Camp Ground
 - B. Deluxe Theatre
 - C. New start to the Motu Trail and associated car parking (currently being designed and constructed)
 - D. The Skate Park (soon to be revitalised)
 - E. Easy to access car parking at Moody Street
 - F. Ōpōtiki District Council offices (to the east of the Town Centre)
 - G. Te Tahuu o Te Rangi technology and research centre (currently under construction)
 - H. Ōpōtiki Community Health Centre
 - I. Ōpōtiki Primary School (immediately to the south of the Town Centre)

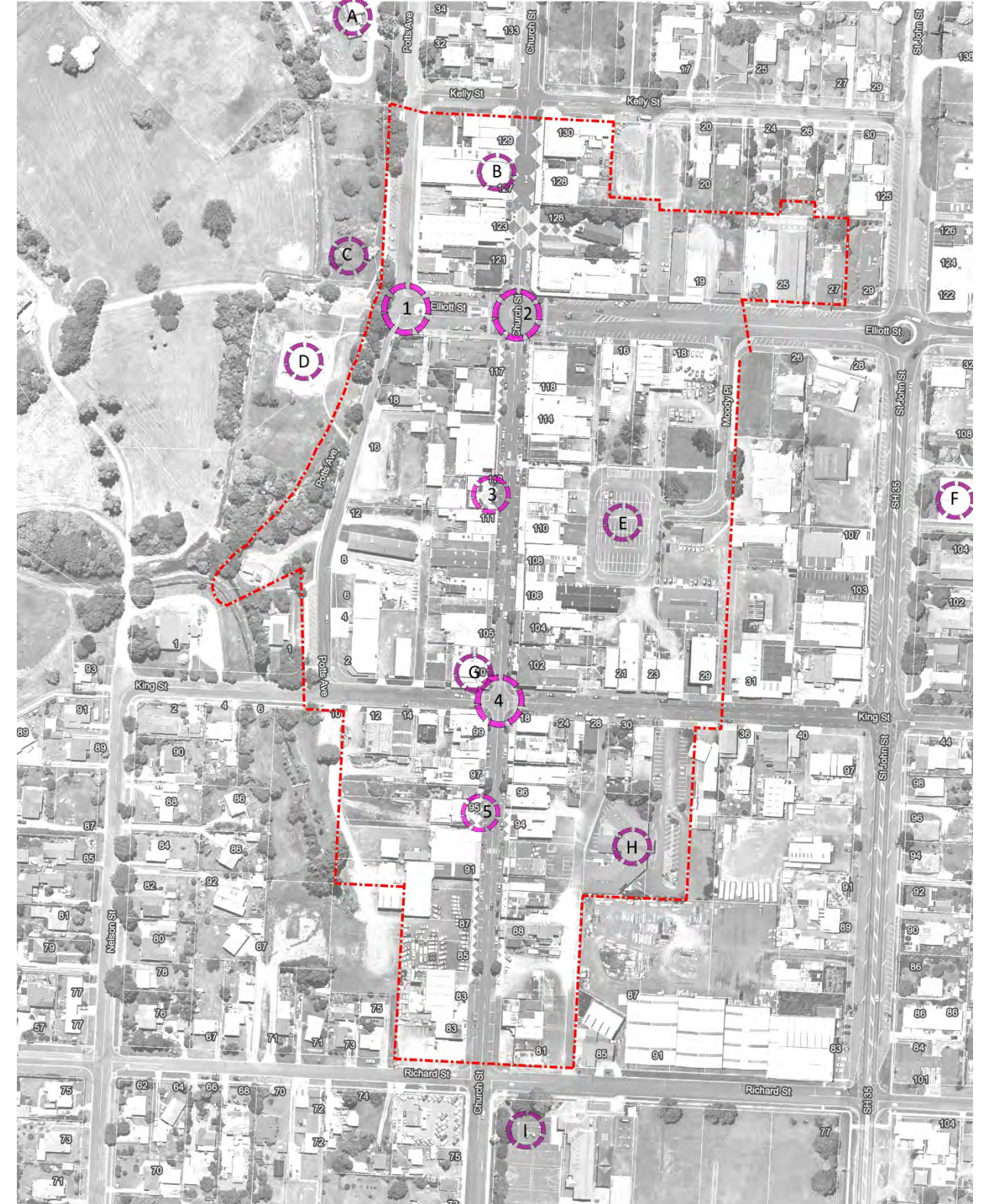
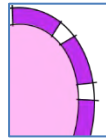


Figure 9: Significant Spaces and Key Destinations

D. Supermarket



- With population growth there may be demand for a further supermarket in Ōpōtiki.
- Whilst the existing New World, on Bridge Street, provides a high level of service for shoppers, locating an additional full size supermarket outside of the town centre could potentially have a negative impact upon the vitality of the Town Centre.
- The most desirable outcome would be for a new supermarket would be provided with a frontage to Church Street, to encourage shoppers using the supermarket to also shop within smaller Town Centre shops, to visit other local facilities and to use Town Centre restaurants and Cafes. A smaller supermarket in this location would be preferable to a larger supermarket elsewhere.
- However, it is likely that supermarket operators would prefer a site with easy access from State Highway 35.
- Should it be proven that there is demand for an additional supermarket a site between Church Street and St.John’s Street with easy access from State Highway 35 (via Moody Place) with a shopfront orientated towards Church Street or with a direct pedestrian link from the supermarket to Church Street may be a compromise, although is less advantageous than a smaller supermarket directly facing Church Street.
- Other retail development should also be discouraged along State Highway 35 as this could, in the present time, potentially detract from the vibrancy of the Town Centre.

E. Car Parking

- As part of the masterplan project Ōpōtiki District Council have considered the existing levels of car parking available within the Town Centre, both on-street and within the Moody Place car park.
- This survey, carried out on Thursday 1st October 2020, indicated that out of a total of 244 car park spaces with the Town Centre area:
 1. At 10am there were 102 spaces empty.
 2. At midday there were 65 spaces empty.
 3. At 2pm there were 90 spaces empty.
- Based on the survey there does not appear to be any immediate issue with a lack of car parking in the Town Centre.
- Given that regular and efficient public transport is difficult to achieve in rural areas it is likely that workers and shoppers will continue to travel to the Town Centre by car. The provision of parking within the Town Centre is therefore important.
- Should new development take place within the Town Centre parking requirements would need to be considered on a case by case basis.
- A new car park will be developed at the new start to the Motu Trail, at the western end of Elliott Street. The very close proximity of this to the Town Centre makes it ideal as additional Town Centre car parking should an event take place which draws in additional numbers of people into the Town Centre.

F. Crime

- Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are issues with some crime, including car break-ins in the Town Centre.
- It is likely that this can in part be attributed to the low number of businesses open in the Town Centre during the evening, and due to the lack of other activity within the area.
- Increasing the numbers of people within the Town Centre, including living within the Town Centre, is likely to increase the ‘eyes on the street’ and have a positive impact on crime.

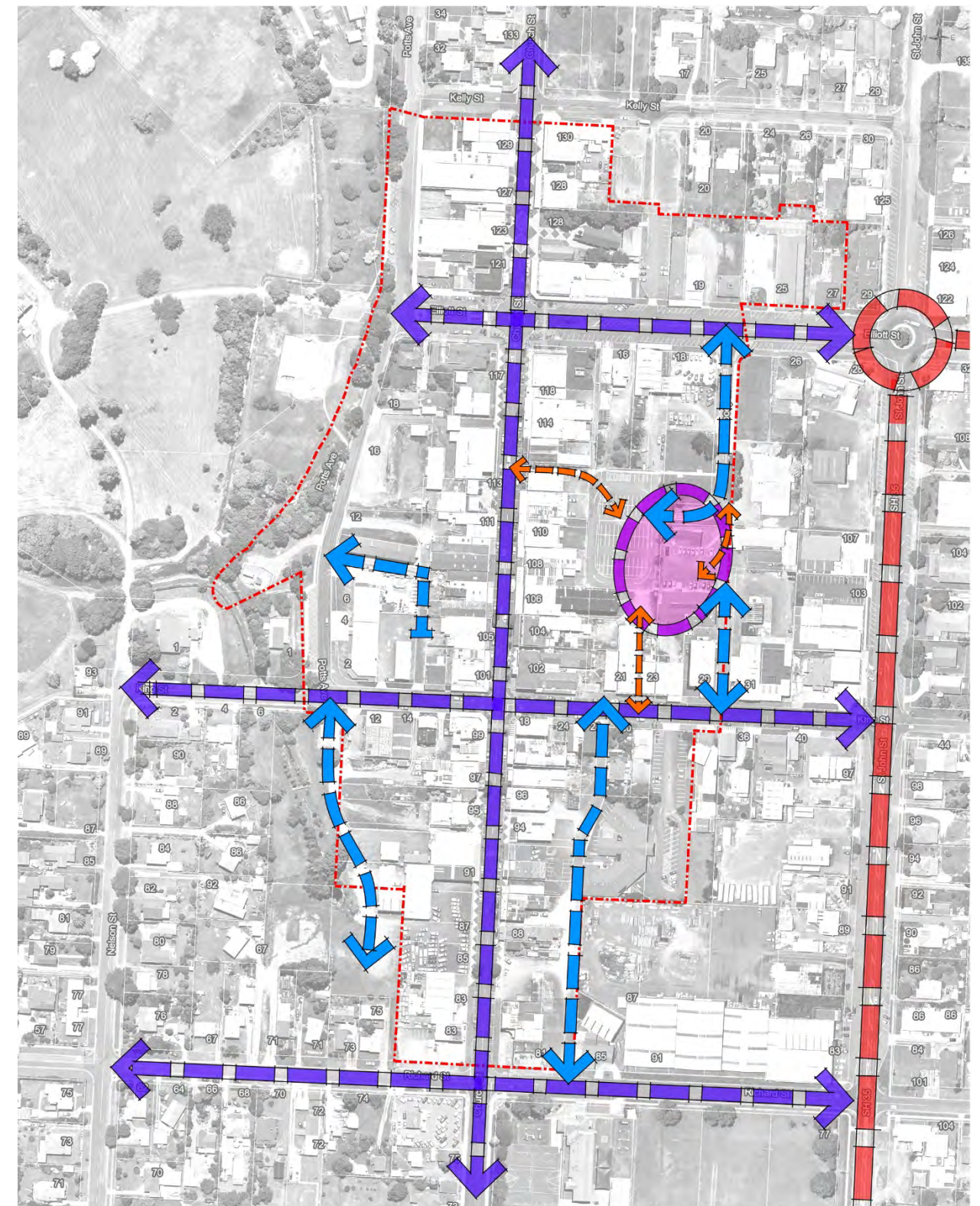


Figure 10: Supermarket Constraints

3. Local Development Economics

A. Relatively Likely Feasibility of Development

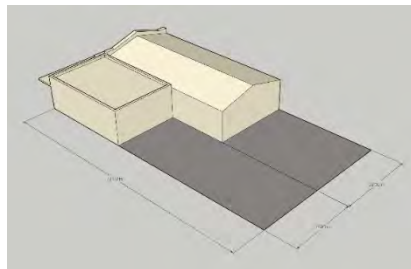
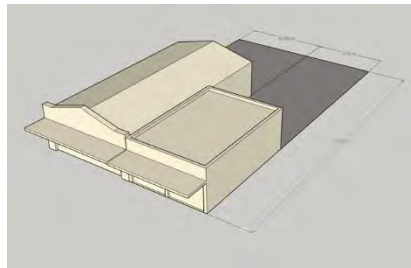
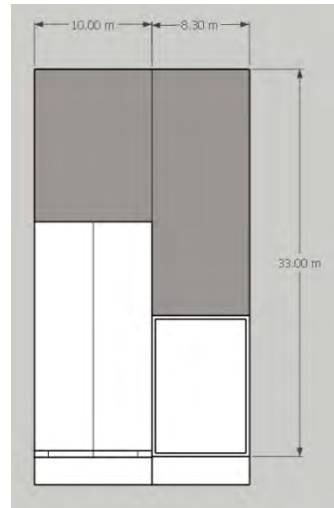
In order to ensure that the masterplan is informed by a realistic understanding of the local development market various development options for commercial and residential developments were considered to assess their relative likely feasibility. These options were based on hypothetical sites. It is important that any land owner or developer carries out their own development feasibility based on the specifics of their site and using up to date market information. However, the Commercial Street Frontage fictitious sites are typical of sites found in Church Street and the Non-Mainstreet Location fictitious site is similar to sites which could be formed in Potts Avenue.

Commercial Street Frontage Building Typologies Tested

Assumed site size (fictitious sites):

- Site 1: 10m(w) x 33m(d)
- Site 2: 8.3m(w) x 33m(d)

Option 1- Single Storey Commercial



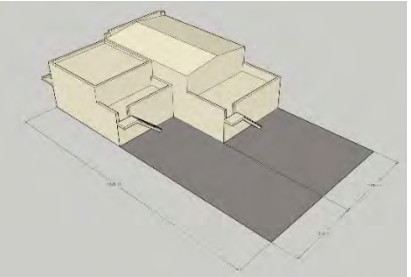
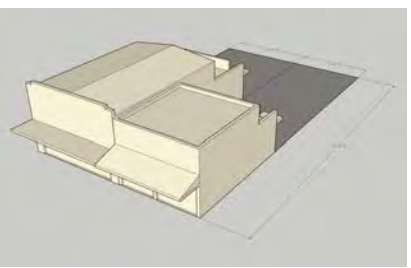
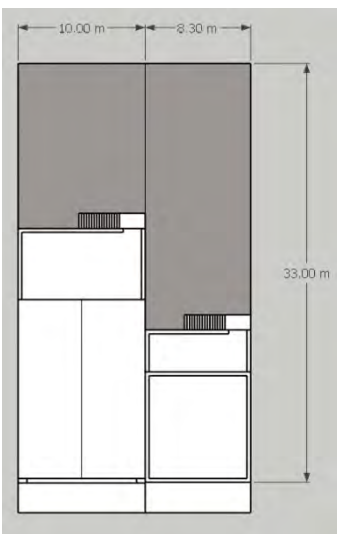
Building 1:

- 10m (w) x 20m
- 200m², or
- 2 x 100m²
- Assume 3m ceiling height

Building 2:

- 8.3m(w) x 12m
- 1 x 100m²
- Assume 3m ceiling height

Option 2 – Ground Floor Commercial and First Floor Residential



Building 1:

Ground Floor:

- 10m (w) x 20m
- 200m², or 2 x 100m²
- Assume 3m ceiling height (3.3m floor to floor)

First Floor:

- 144m² gross; assume 2 x 60m² apartments
- Access by external stairs at rear
- Rear unit has use of outdoor space above shop
- Front unit could have internal balcony; assume 5m²
- 2.7m floor to ceiling height

Building 2:

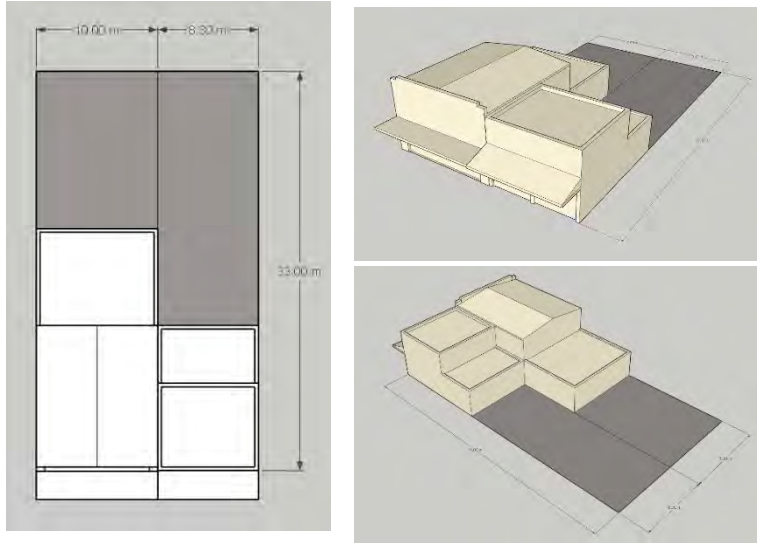
Ground Floor:

- 8.3m(w) x 12m
- 1 x 100m²
- Assume 3m ceiling height (3.3m floor to floor)

First Floor:

- 72m² gross; assume 1 x 60m² apartment
- Access by external stairs at rear
- Unit has use of outdoor space above shop
- 2.7m floor to ceiling height

Option 3 – Ground Floor Commercial and First Floor Office



Building 1:

Ground Floor:

- 10m (w) x 20m
- Net 195m², or
- 1 x 100m² and 1 x 95m²
- Assume 3m ceiling height (3.3m floor to floor)

First Floor:

- 120m² gross; assume 2 x 50m² offices
- Single staircase from street to serve both offices
-

Building 2:

Ground Floor:

- 8.3m(w) x 12m
- Net 1 x 95m²
- Assume 3m ceiling height (3.3m floor to floor)

First Floor:

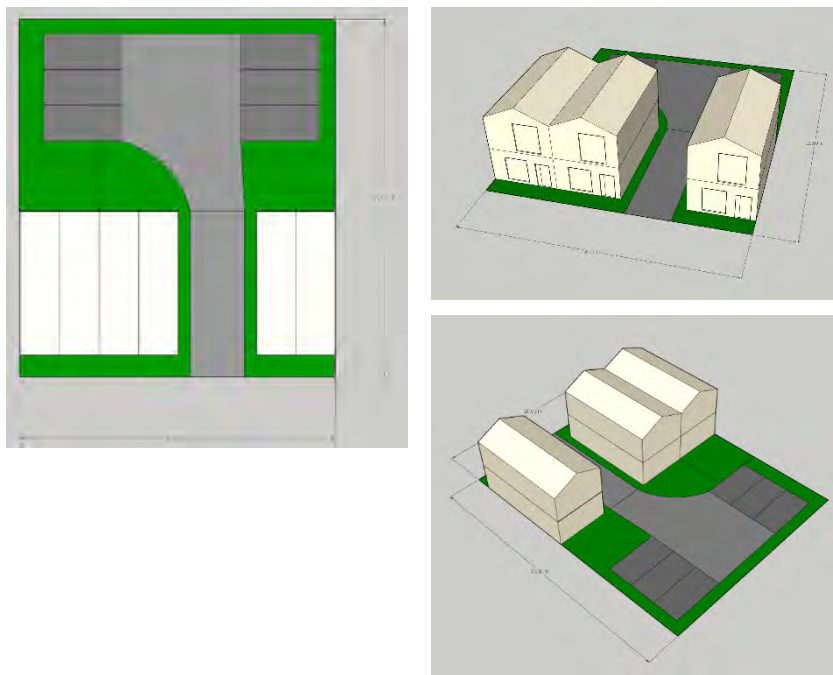
- 60m² gross; assume 1 x 50m² office
- Staircase from street

Non-Mainstreet Location Building Typologies Tested

Assumed site size:

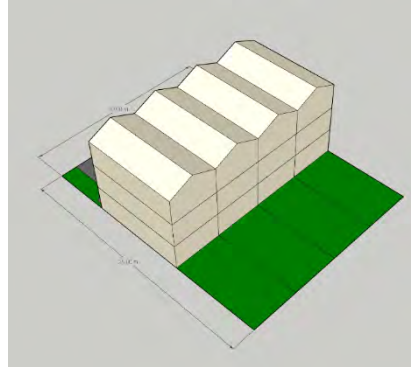
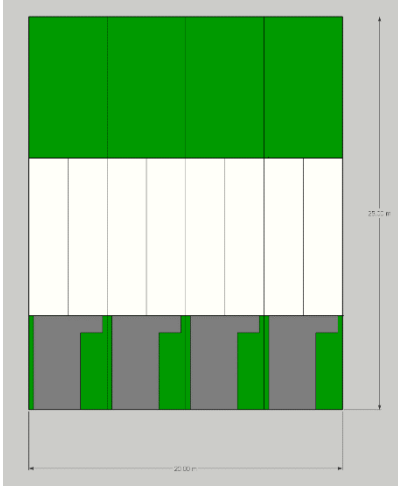
- Amalgamated site
- Approximately half block deep; 20m(w) x 25m(d)

Option 4 – Two Storey 3 Bedroom Detached/Duplex Houses



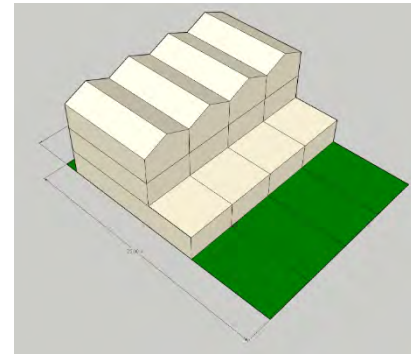
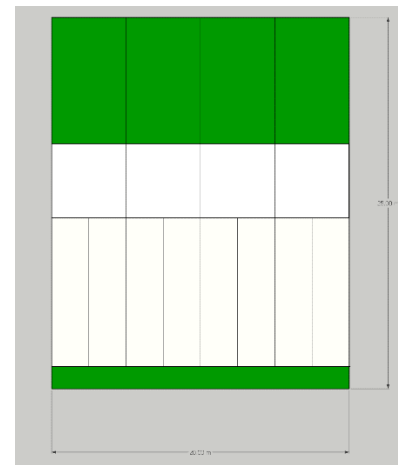
- 3 x 100m² units (each unit 5m x 10m over two floors)
- 2 x parking space per unit (external, shared area)
- 3m Floor to Floor
- Assume: 1 bathroom, 1 ensuite, G/F cloakroom

Option 5 – Three Storey 4 Bedroom Terraced Houses (v.1)



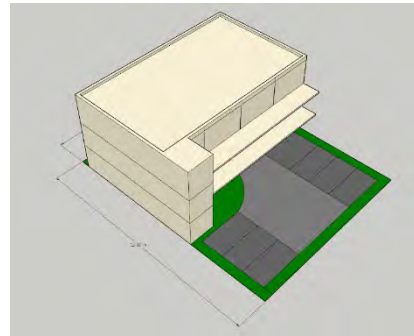
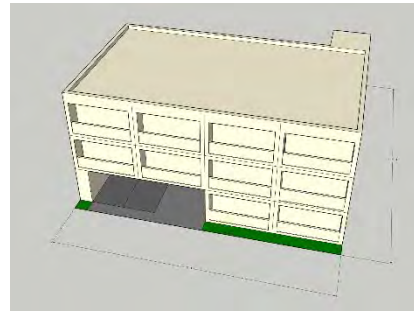
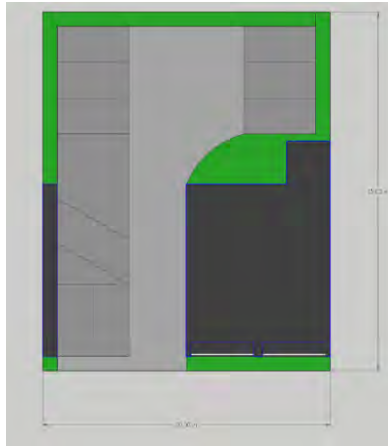
- 4 x 150m² units (gross) (each unit 5m x 10m)
- 1 x internal garage; assume 24m²
- One external parking space
- 3m Floor to Floor
- Assume 1 bathroom , 2 x ensuite, G/F cloakroom

Option 6 – Three Storey 4 Bedroom Terraced Houses (v.2)



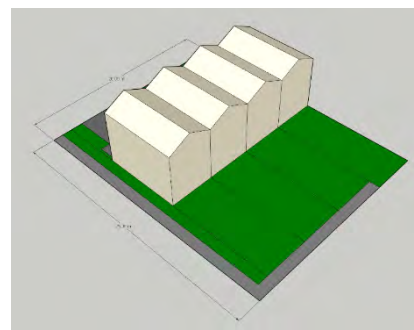
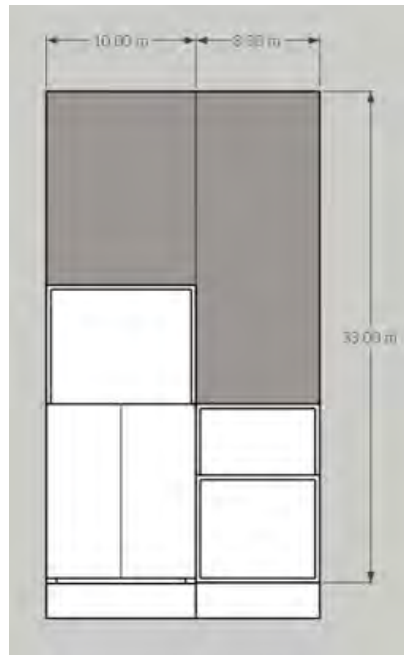
- 4 x 175m² units (gross) (G/F 5m x 15m, upper floors 5m x 10m)
- 2 x internal garage (tandem); assume 48m²
- One external parking space
- 3m Floor to Floor
- Assume 1 bathroom , 2 x ensuite, G/F cloakroom, G/F Utility/Laundry (*or possible 5th bedroom*)

Option 7 – 3 Storey 2 Bedroom Walk-Up Apartments



- 10 x 60m² Apartment (5m x 12m)
- 1 x external parking space per apartment
- 3m Floor to Floor
- Access from staircase at rear
- 1 x bathroom
- Balcony at front

Option 8 – 2 Storey 2 Bedroom Town House



- 4 x 72m² (4.5m x 8m)
- One external parking space
- 3m Floor to Floor
- 1 bathroom

Typology Testing Findings

- Most sites in the town centre are privately owned. There are many different owners, meaning that overall the land ownership is fragmented.
- For an owner or developer to redevelop their site the value of the new development will usually need to exceed the current use value of the site. A property is therefore more likely to be redeveloped as the value of the potential redevelopment increases.
- Development appraisals have been produced for each of the Commercial Street Frontage and Non-Mainstreet typologies to find which are most, and least, likely to be delivered in current market conditions and following potential future price increases. It is anticipated that the substantial expected public and private sector investment in the harbour, mussel farms and Marina is likely to lead to significant increases in residential and commercial values over time.
- Discussions with owners, developers and others involved in property development locally have found that many of these people consider that Ōpōtiki will increasingly offer investment and development opportunities. There were already more commercial transactions in 2020 than in the previous four years combined, and there have been significant increase in residential prices since the harbour funding was announced.
- Lower density development such as a single one-storey dwellings have not been modelled as these would not fit with the type of development expected in a town centre.
- The modelling carried out, summarised in Figure 11, indicates that:
 - o Two level commercial premises are unlikely to be built, unless there is a specific occupier asking for this.
 - o Low rise apartments and town houses may be viable over the medium term.
- Additional modelling was carried out for Options 1-3 to see whether viability altered if larger buildings were used. The overall viability of options did not change with this.
- As viability is marginal for most options, even if values in the area increase, it is likely that most of the existing buildings will be retained for many years rather than redeveloped. This may be the case even for the earthquake prone buildings; the discussions found that in Whakatane a few earthquake buildings have been strengthened internally rather than being rebuilt given the substantial difference in cost but with little difference in final value of the two options. For example, an internal steel portal might cost \$100k compared to a full rebuild at several hundred thousand dollars with little difference in the eventual rent and capital value.
- The discussions indicate that there is already a significant amount of retail floorspace in Ōpōtiki with many premises occupied on short term lettings or having some vacancy. It has been suggested in the discussions that it is likely that these existing buildings will be let and existing “tired” premises refurbished and improved before significant new retail developments take place.
- Even though Option 2 (commercial with residential above) becomes financially viable before Option 1 (single level commercial) there are challenges for an owner or developer looking to bring forward a two-level development. This means that investors and developers may not be so keen on this type of development.

Colour	Land value per sqm	Development viability
Red	Less than \$0	Unlikely
Yellow	\$0 to \$500	Marginal - lower
Light Green	\$500 to \$1,000	Marginal - higher
Dark Green	\$1,000 +	More likely

Option	Typology	Commercial Model Pricing			Residential Model Price		Indicative development viability at model price increases					
		Rent	Yield	Capital/s qm	Range	Adopt	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%	200%
1	Single level commercial	\$175	6.5%	\$2,692	N/A	N/A	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green
2	Commercial & residential	\$175	7.0%	\$2,500	\$325-375,000	\$350,000	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green
3	Two level commercial	\$166	7.0%	\$2,378	N/A	N/A	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
4	Three bedroom houses	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$450-500,000	\$475,000	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green
5	Four bedroom houses	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$550-625,000	\$600,000	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green
6	Four bedroom houses	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$550-625,000	\$625,000	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green
7	Two bed apartments	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$350-425,000	\$400,000	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green
8	Two bedroom houses	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$375-425,000	\$425,000	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green

Figure 11: Typology Testing

Note: These values are indicative, based on several assumptions as well as information provided by third parties, and should not be used for any other purpose.

B. Opportunity Offered by Marine Services Zone, Wharf Refurbishment and Motu Trail

- Land to the west of Potts Avenue is zoned as Marine Services Zone in the District Plan. It is intended that this area provides for the needs of marine related industries and recreational boating.
- Work is already underway to relocate the start of the Motu Trail to a new location at the western end of Elliott Street. This work, along with the potential refurbishment of the wharf and development of boating/fishing related facilities on Marine Services Zone land to the west of the Town Centre and a general interest in hunting in the local area is likely to bring additional visitors to Ōpōtiki.
- This could increase demand for both permanent and temporary residential accommodation close to these areas.
- It is therefore important that the masterplan recognises this and ensures easy access from these areas into the Town Centre.

4. A Vision and Masterplan for Ōpōtiki Town Centre

A. A Vision for Ōpōtiki Town Centre

- The Ōpōtiki Town Centre Structure Plan 2020 establishes a series of principles for revitalising the Opotiki Town Centre and includes three options for the revitalisation of the town centre; ‘Spruce it Up’, Heritage and Taonga’ and ‘Connecting Sea and Land’. This masterplan builds upon these principles and options, and brings forward a vision which encompasses all of these:

That Ōpōtiki Town Centre builds upon its cultural and historic heritage character to become a vibrant and attractive place to shop, spend leisure time, live and invest, and is the gateway to the marine environment of the eastern Bay of Plenty.

B. New Precincts

- In order to deliver the Vision for Ōpōtiki Town Centre it is recommended that the Town Centre be considered as four new precincts:

1. Heritage Precinct

- Based around the section of Church Street between Elliott Street and Kelly Street, this section of the Town Centre has the highest concentration of heritage buildings and buildings of character.
- It is expected that there will be ongoing investment into the heritage buildings and buildings of character to ensure that they remain in good condition for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.
- There are no major alterations suggested to the public realm of the heritage precinct.

2. Food and Drink Precinct

- Located around the identified Significant Spaces, ground floor cafés and restaurants are encouraged around the perimeter of the spaces, to create vibrant, pleasant spaces. Detailed recommendations are made regarding each space.

3. Apartment Building Precinct

- The typology testing has identified that two-bedroom apartments could be viable within the medium term (75% model price increase).
- The provision of apartments along the western edge of the Town Centre would bring improved passive surveillance of Council reserve land, including the skate park and relocated start of the Motu Trail.
- These views will add to the desirability and values of the apartments as well as be likely to decrease the potential for antisocial behaviour in the reserve areas.
- Encouraging apartments will increase the diversity of housing stock in Ōpōtiki.
- Future improvements to the wharf, capitalising on the 24/7 all tide access to the sea brought by the harbour entrance improvements, is likely to assist with encouraging this form of development.

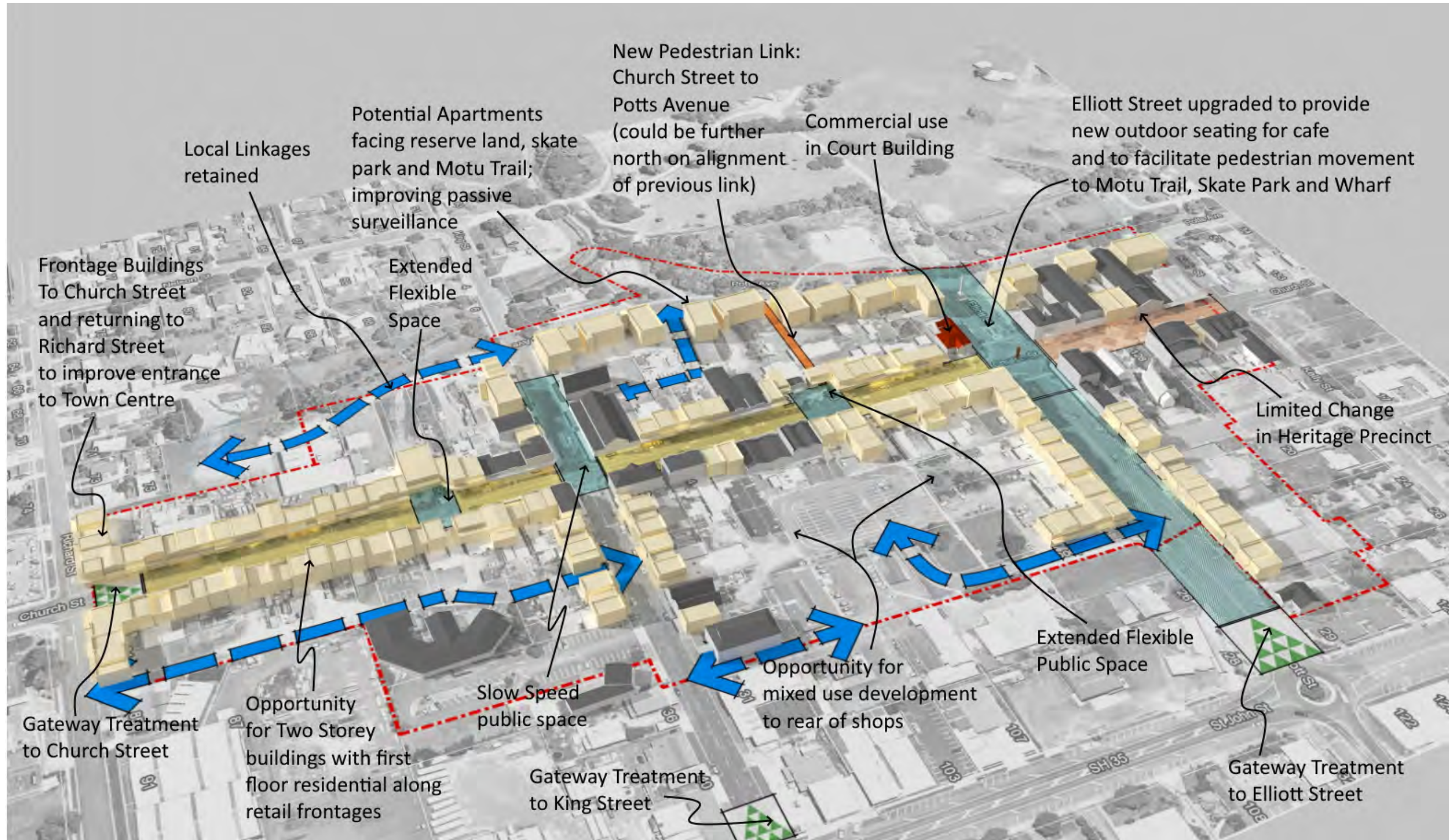
4. - Shopping and Living Precinct

- This covers the majority of the Town Centre area.
- Encouraging first floor apartments as part of any redevelopments which come forward in this area will assist with increasing the diversity of housing stock in Ōpōtiki, increase the number of people in the Town Centre generally and at night time, bring improved passive surveillance of the streets and rear areas, and likely assist with decreasing antisocial behaviour.



Figure 12: Proposed Town Centre Precincts

C. Masterplan Summary



- Legend
- Court House
 - Retained Buildings
 - Opportunity for New Development

D. Public Realm Improvements

A number of public realm improvements are suggested to assist with the delivery of the Masterplan Vision:

1. Elliott Street (West)

- This space plays a key role in linking the Town Centre to the skate park, Motu Trail, camp ground and wharf.
- The wide width of Elliott Street allows the sun to penetrate the space for much of the day.
- Coupled to the change of use or redevelopment of sites along the north and south of the space, the area provides a significant opportunity to provide outdoor café seating, general public seating, remain available for special events and to improve walking links to the Town Centre.
- Possible changes to be considered include:
 - o Removing some parking and widening footpaths
 - o Redirecting traffic to only the northern side of the street
 - o Removing kerbs and channels to raise the carriageway to footpath level to allow for easier pedestrian movement
 - o Recognising the importance of traffic moving through the area to the Motu Trail car park (to be developed)

2. Heritage Precinct

- Whilst there are some issues with the existing paving being slippery, the design of the public realm in this area and the way that it extends over the carriageway successfully provides a clear identity to this part of the Town Centre and recognises the cultural significance of Ōpōtiki .
- It is recommended that little change be considered in this area, apart from the consideration of additional interpretative material.

3. Elliott Street (East)

- This section of Elliott Street plays a key role in bringing visitors into the Town Centre from State Highway 35.
- However, the street is very wide and dominated by asphalt.
- Consideration should be given to the provision of tree planting within the street between Church Street and St John Street, along with introducing patterning over the street inline with that seen in (2) above between Church Street and Moody Place..

4. Shared Space

- The area to the front of the Ladies Rest Room and modern public toilets in its current form adds little to the character of Church Street. This is perhaps because it is not fronted by active frontages which bring activity into the space.
- Consideration should be given to creating a larger, more flexible space. This could be achieved by:
 - o Removing car parking in this section of Church Street
 - o Raising the carriageway to allow easy pedestrian movement across the space and to reduce vehicle speeds.
 - o Purchasing the site at 111 Church Street to allow the space to be made larger and for a new development to open out onto the space on its southern side.
 - o Redeveloping the toilet building to provide for new uses which can extend into the space (smaller public toilet facilities could be provided in this building).
 - o Additional pattern over the street in line with that seen in (2) above.

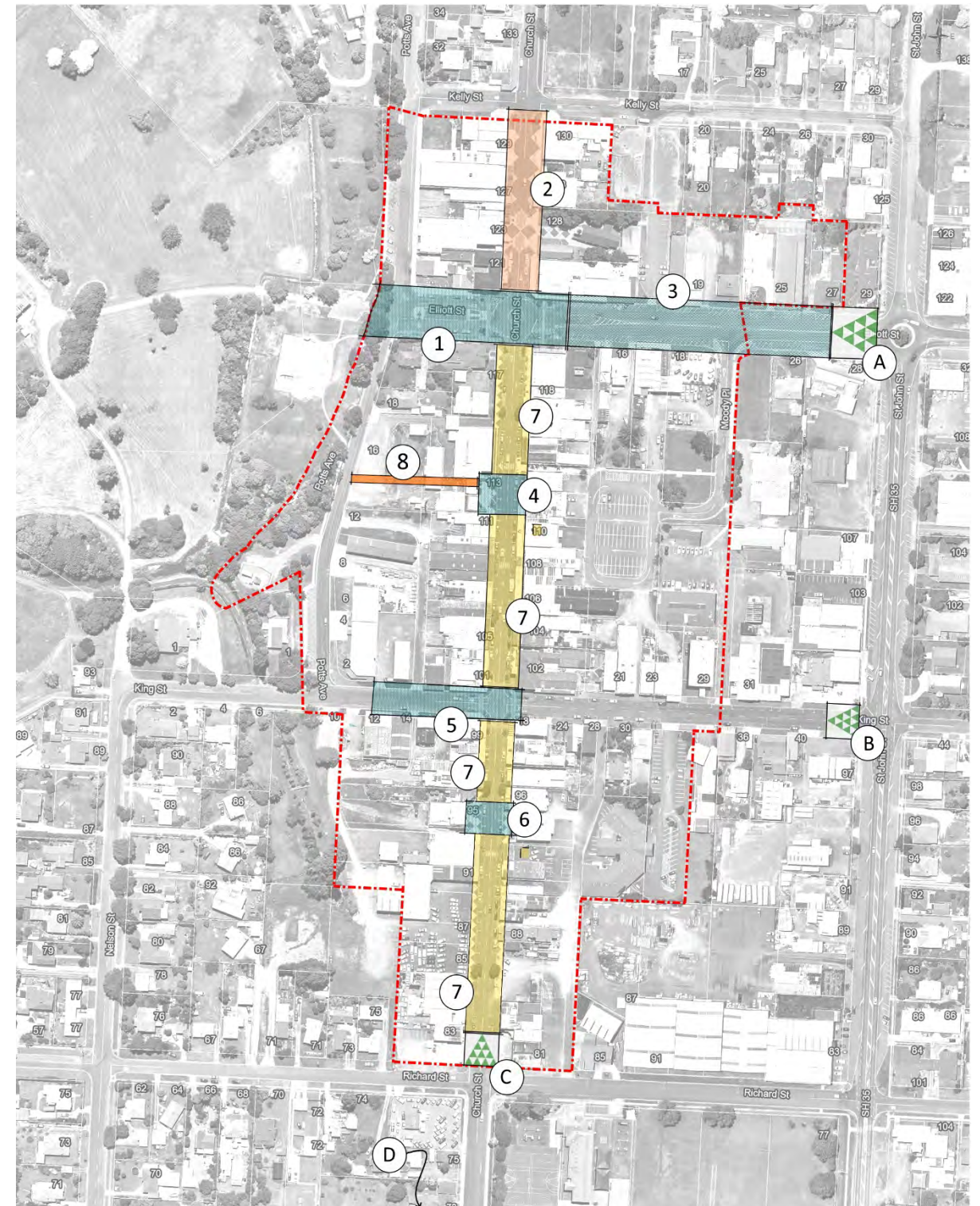


Figure 13: Public Realm Improvements

5. Slow Speed Space

- This area is fronted by heritage buildings, a building of local character and the Te Tahu o Te Rangi.
- There is potential for alterations to be made which allow greater space for outside seating outside of the Rostgard's Building and 18 King Street which benefit from a northern aspect.
- The carriageway could be raised to footpath level to allow easier pedestrian movement through the area.

6. Shared Space

- This space offers similar opportunities to (4) above, albeit that it is likely to be of lower immediate priority.

7. Church Street

- Whilst of an overall lesser priority than other spaces above, consideration should be given to alterations which could provide for greater opportunity for outside seating/dining and to slow vehicle speeds in Church Street as a whole.
- This could include:
 - o Alterations to introduce angled parking at entries from the north and south, to slow vehicle speeds. Care needs to be taken to ensure that these changes do not limit pedestrian movement across the street.
 - o Greater use of pattern over the street in line with that seen in (2) above.

8. Pedestrian Linkage

- The formation of a new public pedestrian linkage from Church Street to Potts Avenue would assist with improving pedestrian connectivity to the skate park, Motu Trail, camp ground and wharf.
- This could be in conjunction with Shared Space (4) or could be located further to the north, on the alignment of the previous linkage along the northern edge of 115 Church Street and 16 Potts Avenue.

E. Gateways

- As noted above, it is often considered important that a Town Centre is a clearly defined area, and that residents and visitors have a clear sense of entering the Town Centre area; these are often described as Gateways and can contribute towards providing a sense of grandeur to the area and the idea that there is something worth visiting.
- Providing Gateway features at the key entrances to the Town Centre can provide an indication to users of State Highway 35 that there is a Town Centre which is worth visiting and exploring.
- It is recommended that Gateway features, as discussed in the Whakairo Outline Brief (attached as Appendix 3), be established in the following locations:
 - A. At the intersection of Elliott Street with St. John's Street, consisting of a Pou whenua in the centre of the roundabout and patterning on Elliott Street.
 - B. At the intersection of King Street with St. John's Street, consisting of patterning on King Street. This patterning should be a narrower band than created at (A) given that this is a less significant route into the Town Centre.
 - C. In Church Street immediately to the north of Richard Street, consisting of patterning on Church Street.
 - D. In Church Street immediately to the north of Bridge Street (and ideally extending into the Bridge Street carriageway), consisting of patterning on Church Street.

F. Potential One-Way Street

- During the production of the masterplan we have considered whether Church Street should be made a one-way street. It was decided that this should not be recommended as:
 - Making Church Street a one-way street could limit the accessibility of the Town Centre, taking away from the benefits offered by the grid road pattern.
 - One-way streets can in some circumstances lead to higher vehicle speeds, which would have a negative impact on the safety of all users of the street.
 - Alternative changes to surfacing, footpath alignment, car parking and other matters could bring greater advantages than offered by the one-way street option.



Figure 14: Paving in the northern section of Church Street

G. Priority Sites

- Four sites are identified as priority sites:
 1. Rear of 121 Church Street, currently used as a liquor store
 2. That part of 18 Potts Avenue located to the rear of the Court House.
 3. The Court House
 4. Former Garage site at intersection of Church Street with Richard Street.
- Sites 1 to 3 all relate to the aspiration to upgrade the western end of Elliott Street to create areas of public and café seating, and to improve the quality of the pedestrian linkage from the Town Centre to the skate park, relocated Motu Trail entrance, camp ground and wharf.
- Site 4 relates to the desire to improve the visual quality of the entrance to the Town Centre from the south, and to form a Gateway to the Town Centre in this location, to achieve a sense of arrival.

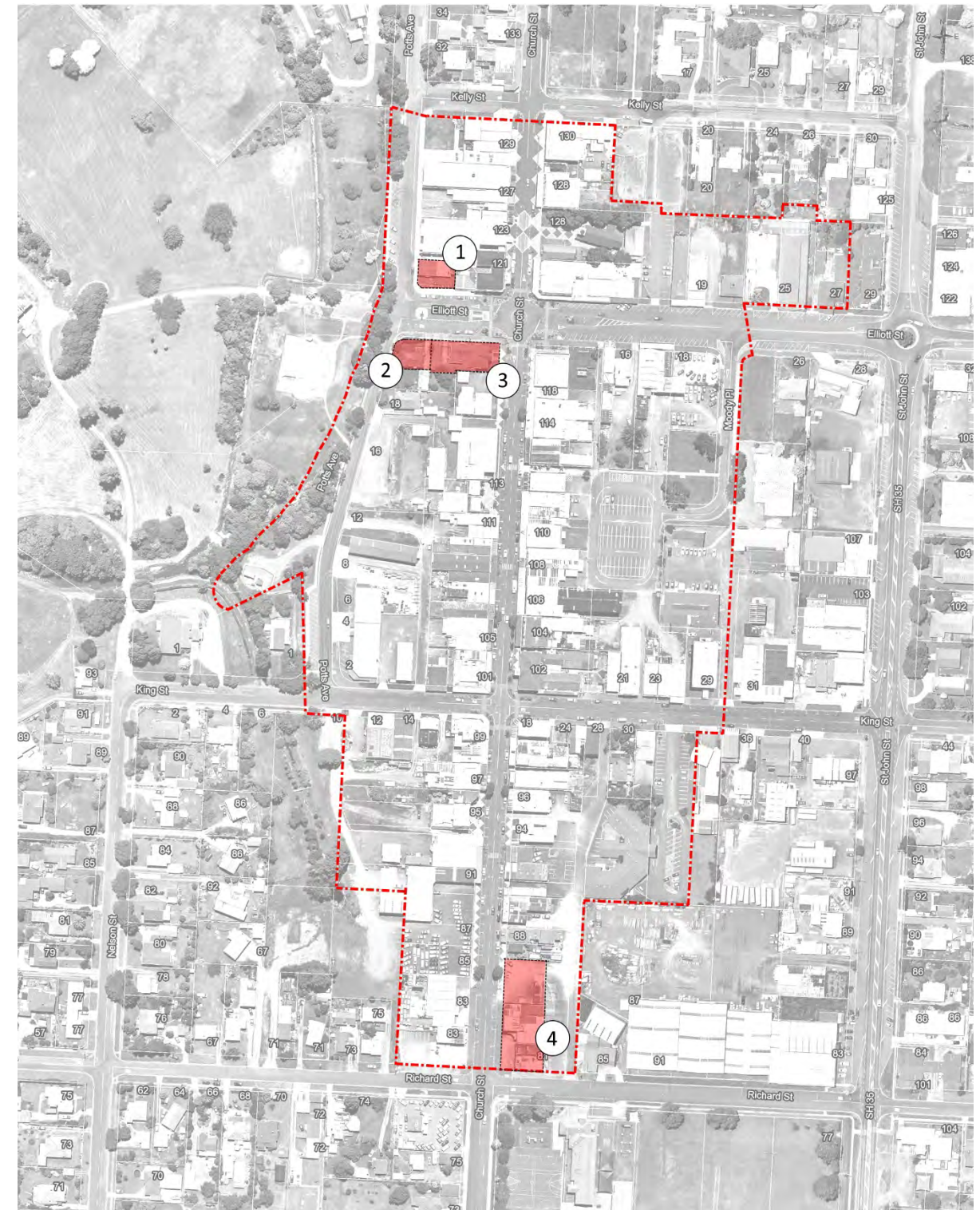


Figure 15: Priority Sites

H. Masterplan Images

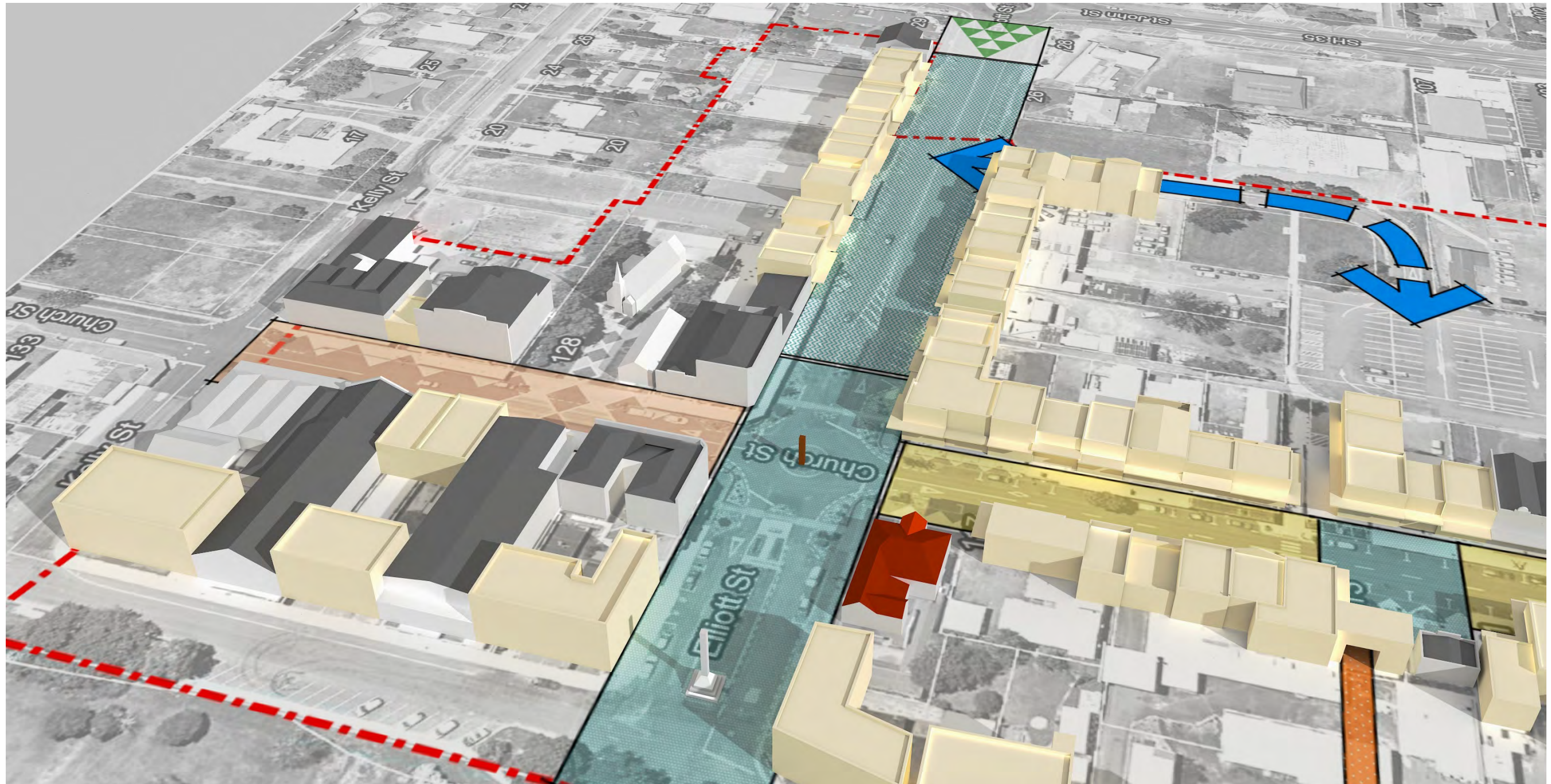


Figure 16: View of the western face of the proposed Heritage Precinct/Apartment Precinct, illustrating apartments placed between existing buildings and facing the Elliott Street (west) space





Figure 17: View from the West illustrating larger Apartment buildings overlooking the reserve area

- Legend
-  Court House
 -  Retained Buildings
 -  Opportunity for New Development

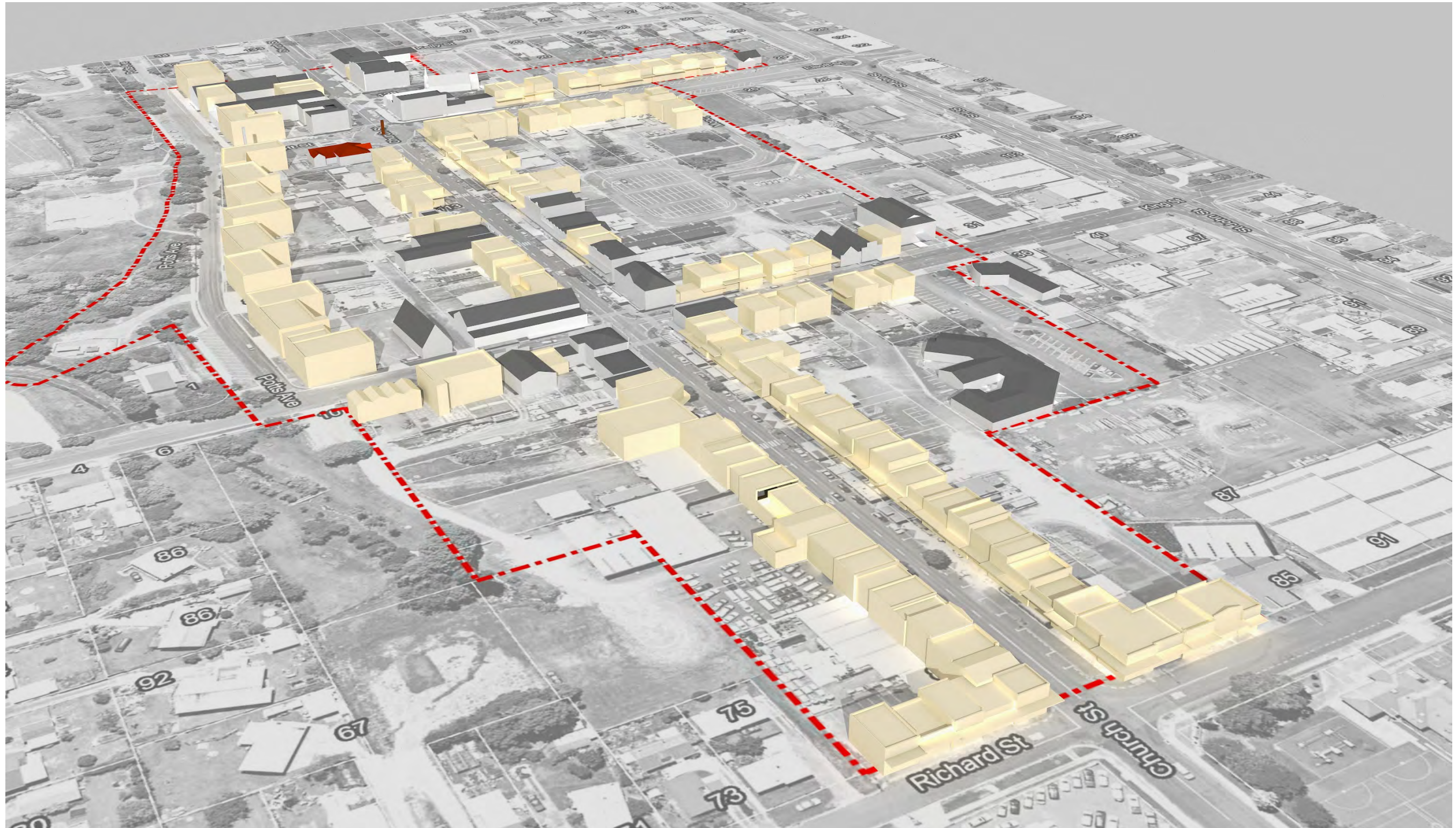


Figure 18: View from the South West illustrating the scale of new development encouraged by the Masterplan

- Legend
- Court House
 - Retained Buildings
 - Opportunity for New Development

Appendices

1. Building Design Guidance
2. Implementation Plan – streetscape projects and priority sites

Appendix 1 - Building Design Guidance

Architectural Style, Materials and Appearance

In order to ensure that new and replacement buildings respect the established heritage character of the Ōpōtiki Town Centre the following design policies should be considered when designing new buildings for the main street frontages, both within and outside of the Heritage Precinct.

Each principle has been carefully considered to ensure that it will not impose significant additional costs that might otherwise adversely affect a developer's intention to proceed and, in turn, possibly compromise the community's desire to have a vibrant and functional town centre that serves their immediate needs.

Policy 1: Reflecting Ōpōtiki's Heritage as a small rural town

- It is expected that new buildings within Ōpōtiki's town centre should have the appearance of buildings typical of a small rural town.
- Without careful thought and consideration it would be relatively easy for developers and landowners to propose new buildings that are not in keeping with Ōpōtiki's existing character and heritage. For instance, whilst standard retail building designs used within large towns and cities may fit comfortably within a more built up urban centre, they could easily be out of context with the scale and appearance of urban development that characterises Ōpōtiki and expected by the Ōpōtiki community.

Policy 2: Creating Interesting Street Frontages made up of Individual Buildings

- Whilst developments may be proposed on sites with long street frontages, it is important to ensure that each developed street frontage takes on the appearance of a number of individual buildings. This will give the appearance that the area has been developed incrementally and give the street frontages a fine grained scale and appearance.
- It is recommended that each 'individual building' is between 6m and 12m in width.

Policy 3: Individual buildings should vary in height and not seek to exactly match the height of their neighbour

- Not seeking to exactly match the height and form of the neighbouring buildings will emphasise the individuality of each building and the diverse and fine grain character of the town centre.

Policy 4: The use of plaster for elevations, mainly with parapets along the street frontage and profiled steel for roofs

- The use of plaster elevations with parapets along the street frontage is a common theme with older buildings in the Town Centre. Continuing this will allow new buildings to sit comfortably alongside old, without drawing undue attention.
- In line with other buildings in the area, windows, doors and other joinery should, where possible, be constructed in timber.

Policy 5: The Use of Traditional Style Shopfronts

- There are a large number of retained original shopfronts within existing buildings in the Town Centre, where as in many other centres it has been common for these to be removed and replaced by less interesting modern shopfronts.
- Where possible, traditional style/shopfront should be incorporated into the building façade design. These should be constructed in timber to reflect original shopfronts seen in the Town Centre.
- Desirable features of a traditional shop front would therefore include:
 - The use of pilasters and mullions to break up large areas of glass (and reduce glass replacement costs should windows be damaged).
 - The incorporation of a stallriser of a height suitable for the display of the goods to be sold in the shop. The stall riser should be made of durable materials that are easy to maintain.

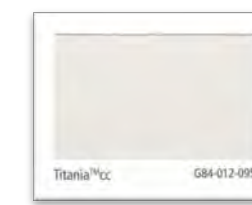
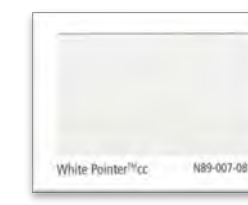
Policy 6: Colours and Finishes should reflect the historic character of Ōpōtiki Town Centre

- Chosen colours and finishes for all elevations, windows, doors and other joinery should reflect the historic character of Ōpōtiki as a small country town.
- Emphasis should therefore be placed upon using light greys or other neutral colours for elevations, white or other neutral colours for windows and rich, deep colours such as deep reds, blues and greens for doors, shopfronts and fascias.

- Suggested colours⁵ for doors, shopfronts, fascias and other highlight areas include:



- Suggested colours for external walls include:



⁵ Note: colours above are taken from the Resene Heritage and Paint range - alternative brands are acceptable.

Policy 7: Contemporary buildings are acceptable but should still reflect the overall materials and shapes of other buildings

- Whilst the emphasis is on the creation of traditional building forms, contemporary buildings are not discouraged. However, use of the recommended palette of materials and shapes/forms encouraged by this guide should still be incorporated into any contemporary building to ensure consistency with other buildings that have a more 'traditional' character reflective of a small rural town.

Policy 8: Advertisements and Signage Integrated into the Design of the Building

- The design of each building within the town centre should identify locations for business signage.
- Allowable signage would include:
 - o Signs hanging/projecting below verandahs.
 - o Signs on shopfront fascias and fascia boards (including on verandah fascia boards) providing they are not taller than the fascia board.
 - o Signs that are appropriately located on building elevations and on building parapets.
 - o Signs in other locations which sympathetically integrate with the style of building.

Policy 9: Limited Advertisements and Signage on Shop Windows

- Windows for shops and business premises should not be dominated by advertisements.
- Passers-by should be able to easily see inside the premises from footpath locations and employees should be able to easily see out.
- The need for clear and uncluttered windows will add to the interest of the Town Centre and also provide important passive surveillance which brings improved safety and security.

Policy 10: Access to upper level space should be provided at the rear where practical

- Providing access to upper level units from the street can disrupt the commercial frontage and cumulatively have a significant impact on the vitality of the retail frontage.
- The retention, and potential extension, of the Local Linkages ensures that in most cases it will be possible for upper level space, including residential units, to be provided from the rear with no impact on the retail street frontage.



Figure 19: Buildings and shopfronts designed to meet Design Principles

Appendix 2 - Implementation Plan – streetscape projects and priority sites

Public sector improvements (pages 19 and 20)

PROJECT	ESTIMATED START DATE	FUNDING
Elliott Street (East)	Early to mid 2021	PGF funding
Heritage Precinct	Early 2021	PGF funding
Elliott Street (West)	Early to mid 2021	PGF funding
Shared Space 4	Mid 2021	PGF funding
Shared Space 6	Mid 2021	To be determined
Slow Speed Space	Mid to late 2021	PGF funding
Church Street	Late 2021	To be determined
Pedestrian Linkage	Late 2021	To be determined
Gateways (A – D)	Early 2021	PGF funding
Potential one-way street	Early 2022	To be determined
Lots 9 and 10, Church Street	Early to mid 2021	PGF Funding and Long Term Plan

Priority sites (Page 21)

These sites are privately owned properties. Council can encourage the property owners to develop the sites, in line with the Masterplan but does not own any of the sites.

121 Church Street	Relates to the aspiration to upgrade the western end of Elliott Street, and to create areas of public and café seating, and to improve the quality of the pedestrian linkage from the Town Centre to the skate park, relocated Mōtū Trail entrance, camp ground and wharf.
18 Potts Avenue	Relates to the aspiration to upgrade the western end of Elliott Street, and to create areas of public and café seating, and to improve the quality of the pedestrian linkage from the Town Centre to the skate park, relocated Mōtū Trail entrance, camp ground and wharf.
Court House	Relates to the aspiration to upgrade the western end of Elliott Street, and to create areas of public and café seating, and to improve the quality of the pedestrian linkage from the Town Centre to the skate park, relocated Mōtū Trail entrance, camp ground and wharf.
Intersection of Church Street and Richard Section	Relates to the desire to improve the visual quality of the entrance to the town centre from the south, and to form a gateway to the town centre in this location, to achieve a sense of arrival.

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Ōpōtiki Town Centre

Masterplan and Implementation Plan