



## OPOTIKI TOWN CENTRE HISTORIC HERITAGE STUDY PART ONE

Prepared for  
Opotiki District Council  
New Zealand Historic Places Trust  
Environment Bay of Plenty

By  
Matthews & Matthews Architects Ltd  
Lyn Williams  
R A Skidmore and Associates  
Archaeology B.O.P.

March 2006

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The aim of the Opotiki Historic Heritage Study is to gather information about the development of Opotiki, and to use this information to look at the ongoing management of heritage resources from a base of understanding and knowledge. It is important to recognise that there can be a shift in what we value over time, particularly as information and knowledge of a place is extended. Places we value now may not always have been recognised or valued as highly.

The Study has confirmed that the Opotiki town centre contains a built heritage resource of regional and national significance. Research, inspections and analysis undertaken as part of the study provide comprehensive information about heritage resources in Opotiki.

The Opotiki Historic Heritage Study includes an historic overview of Opotiki which summarises key themes in the historic development of the centre. This research has been used to analyse built and archaeological heritage resources in Opotiki town centre and to review the approach to management of these resources, as a knowledgeable starting point for this debate. Potential options to enhance the management of heritage resources in Opotiki have been proposed.

The social history of Opotiki can be divided into two widely different phases focussed on the year 1865: life for Opotiki's residents was vastly different before and after this date. Several hundred years of occupation by tangata whenua Whakatohea leading a traditional Maori lifestyle had been slowly influenced over the first few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century 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. Initial Maori-Pakeha contacts in the settlement of Pakowhai 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 Whakatohea at Opotiki.

In 1865 a major clash of cultures ended in Whakatohea's land being confiscated. Opotiki 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. Whakatohea and other Maori gradually moved back into Opotiki and today have a strong influence in local government and administration.

Opotiki's first years as a European settlement were as part of the military frontier of the colonial government. Opotiki provided a base for troop movements, with newly-built wharves allowing relatively easy sea access for people and supplies. The town's growth depended strongly on its coastal location, especially as agricultural development in the surrounding districts resulted in large quantities of maize, wheat, dairy products, wool and other produce requiring export. The port facilities grew, and Opotiki became a service centre for the rural communities, not just providing commercial services but social, recreational and religious activities as well. Government agencies and local bodies had their bases in Opotiki as the largest town in the district.

Opotiki's boom time was the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century through to the 1930s. In 1921 Opotiki 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, now counteracted with new

enterprises, the establishment of small industries, fruit growing and the attractions of the eastern Bay of Plenty as a retirement haven.

The history of Opotiki is evidenced in physical and material remains represented by archaeological sites, historic buildings and other structures. Studying the architecture of the town's buildings reveals evidence of different phases of its history. The history is known also through people's memories, through traditions, through stories passed on within whanau and hapu, clubs and church groups, and through the records of local individuals, councils, businesses and organisations.

The town centre is one of the best surviving examples of a town centre from the late 19th Century early 20<sup>th</sup> Century in the upper North Island, retaining a broad range of building types. In addition to the historic commercial core in Church Street it retains many of its early churches and church halls including St Stephen's in Church St; St John's church in St John St, the Presbyterian church in Ford Street; the Salvation Army Barracks in King Street, the Maori Mission Hall (former Temperance Union hall) in Elliott Street and the Methodist Church in the southern area of town, built in 1911 from bricks made at the Opotiki brick kiln. These buildings provide further evidence of the size and consolidation of the community in the decades around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The longevity of the Roman Catholic parish is represented by the old schoolrooms on Grey Street. The commercial centre contains some of its earliest timber shops such as Shalfoon Bros, hotels including the Opotiki Hotel, Masonic Hotel and former Royal Hotel, together with a number of early commercial, theatre, retail and industrial buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. During the phase of rapid expansion, many of the simple buildings were replaced with substantial structures built of permanent materials. The intact survival of a broad range of building types gives Opotiki a unique heritage character.

Archaeological sites exist within the town centre and its environs; however there are no recorded sites in Opotiki. Many sites will have been damaged by later developments if those later developments involved radical earthworks. Many sites will be sealed in by paving or tar seal and floors of buildings. But in many cases some evidence of the previous use of the site will be retrievable through methodical archaeological mapping, excavation and analysis. A review of potential archaeological resources has been carried out as part of the study.

Recent nationwide surveys by heritage organisations in England reflect similar feelings in many New Zealand towns and cities: that communities really value their distinctive, local, ordinary places and the overall context and character created by the relationship of people to a particular place over time. Scheduling and heritage inventories by contrast have tended to focus on the extra-ordinary, the best examples, and most significant individual places.

As a result of the study options for statutory and non-statutory methods to enhance the ongoing management of the collective values of heritage resources and future development in Opotiki are put forward.

The research undertaken provides an amazing resource for Opotiki that will help in understanding what is there, what is special about it, and hopefully promoting that to the community, new investors and tourists. The information collated can be readily utilised to develop heritage walks and to provide interpretive information about Opotiki to enhance understanding for visitors.

The study will also assist Opotiki District Council in the process of identification of buildings prone to earthquake damage and developing a strategy to mitigate potential risk. Research and inspections undertaken provide the base data that will assist with ongoing structural assessments.

The Opotiki Historic Heritage Study report is in two parts. Part One includes the thematic historic overview, a summary of cultural heritage values associated with the town centre as a



whole and a review of management of heritage resources. Options for enhancing heritage management through statutory and non-statutory methods are proposed.

Part Two contains an inventory of heritage places within the town centre study area. This is supported by record forms for twenty seven places which have been researched in detail, as part of this Study and by the Trust. Partial record forms have been prepared for a large number of additional places to collate base information that was gathered during the study. Further research for some of these places is suggested where the study has shown that they warrant further investigation and possible protection.

Appendices contain supporting information including a more detailed review of Regional Policy Statement and District Plan sections related to the management and protection of heritage. New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Record Forms prepared for three archaeological sites/ archaeological landscapes in Opotiki are included in the appendices.

OPOTIKI TOWN CENTRE HISTORIC HERITAGE STUDY - PART ONE

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## **OPOTIKI HISTORIC HERITAGE STUDY- PART ONE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Opotiki Historic Heritage Study is a joint initiative of Environment Bay of Plenty, Opotiki District Council and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT). These agencies have agreed that comprehensive information on the historic heritage of Opotiki town centre is necessary for this resource to be protected and managed appropriately in the future.

The Opotiki town centre contains a historic heritage resource of regional and national significance. The town centre has played an important role in several phases of New Zealand's history and it is one of the best surviving examples of a town centre from the late 19th to early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the upper North Island.

The study is aimed at providing an overview of key historic themes which have shaped Opotiki. This approach enables consideration of the cultural heritage values of places in the town centre within a broader context and looking at the full range of types of heritage that may be present.

While the study area is specifically focused on the town centre, the historic overview provides a summary of the centre in context of the broader area, identifying key themes in the historic development.

Based on an understanding of these themes, the surviving fabric and urban pattern within the study area have been analysed. Current heritage listings have been assessed to see if there are any gaps, or significant aspects of the area's history which may have been overlooked.

A broader and more integrated approach to heritage can be achieved, moving beyond initial identification of heritage which has tended in most towns and cities to focus on the most architecturally significant places, or best known places of historic value. Further research and assessment enables a better understanding of the relationship between places and people, the physical and historic context, the stories associated with the area, the value of continuity, and the collective contribution of groups of historic places which may be much greater than the value of each individually. It enables a clearer understanding of the unique, irreplaceable quality and character that the retention of heritage buildings and places provides.

This thematic contextual approach is being used increasingly in New Zealand as a way of reviewing the identification and assessment of heritage, and is well established overseas.

The study has addressed concern regarding the structural integrity of unregistered heritage buildings in the town centre declining in the absence of recommendations and assistance for their future protection and management. Investigation into requirements for earthquake prone buildings under the Building Act 2004 has been carried out.

A review of the current planning mechanisms for managing historic heritage resources in Opotiki has been undertaken. Recommendations for potential options, both statutory and non-statutory, for the ongoing management and improved understanding of Opotiki's heritage are put forward.

Research has been undertaken on a number of significant places in Opotiki, to enable a more thorough assessment of significance, and to build up the data base for places of cultural heritage value.

Support from the Opotiki community during the progress of the study has been invaluable and has provided a wealth of information to aid the research and analysis tasks.

## **2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The assistance of the following organisations and people during the study is gratefully acknowledged:

Opotiki District Council  
Environment Bay of Plenty  
The New Zealand Historic Places Trust  
Whakatohea Maori Trust Board  
The Opotiki Historical and Agricultural Society  
The Opotiki Library  
The Opotiki Arts Society  
Whakatane District Museum & Gallery  
Land Information New Zealand (Hamilton)

Kinsa Hays  
Harold Bridge  
Percy Newell  
Edward Gibson, the Opotiki Lodge  
Glenda Andrews  
John Cresswell  
Peter Cooke  
Wayne Carter  
Vic Carter, Opotiki Volunteer Fire Brigade

The project team also gratefully acknowledge the interest and assistance of the community in Opotiki, and the many people who came to the display in the library or provided information during the course of inspections and research.

## **3. BRIEF AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

The key objectives for the study are:

- To identify the historic heritage in Opotiki Town Centre.
- To complete an assessment of historic heritage in Opotiki Town Centre.
- To provide recommendations for the protection and ongoing management of historic heritage in Opotiki Town Centre.

Key project tasks have included:

- Research and preparation of a contextual history for the study area to identify key themes in the historic development of Opotiki Town Centre.
- Review existing inventories and registers in light of identified themes.
- Identify any significant places that may have been overlooked or gaps in current listings.
- Prepare more detailed field survey record forms for particular historic places, including a summary of history and cultural heritage significance, and overview of condition.
- Review existing planning mechanisms for heritage protection and provide recommendations for future protection and management of heritage resources in the study area.
- Prepare a report summarizing research and investigation undertaken.

#### 4. THE STUDY AREA

The study area includes the Opotiki Town Centre shown on the following map. This reflects the area currently in the Town Centre Zone in the Opotiki District Plan. The area contains a core group of historic buildings and places which were identified in a report prepared by Kingston Morrison in 1997. The extent of the study area has been adjusted to reflect a broader range of themes associated with the development of Opotiki, and significant patterns in its urban development.

Appendix 1



## **5. HISTORIC CONTEXT AND KEY THEMES**

### **5.1 AN OVERVIEW OF OPOTIKI HISTORY**

The outline thematic framework for Opotiki is based on the draft New Zealand thematic framework and includes the following key themes:

#### **A. ENVIRONMENT**

#### **B. OPOTIKI PEOPLES AND THEIR INTERACTIONS**

Te Whakatohea te iwi  
Early relationships with Europeans  
Living in two worlds-time of change for Whakatohea  
Cultural upheaval  
The new-comers

#### **C. GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND LAND OWNERSHIP**

Land management post-1865  
Land issues for Whakatohea  
Military rule  
The new governance structure  
Other authorities

#### **D. BUILDING A NEW SETTLEMENT**

Laying out the new settlement  
Architectural development

#### **E. CREATING THE INFRASTRUCTURE: SERVICES AND AMENITIES**

Services/facilities/ amenities:  
Post Office  
Fire brigade  
Health care and related services  
Information services  
Water supply  
Sewerage and waste disposal  
Streets, footpaths and drainage  
Electricity

#### **F. PROVIDING TRANSPORT AND ACCESS**

Shipping  
Roads and walking routes  
Air and rail transport

#### **G. WORKING: - INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE**

Early industry  
Early businesses  
Farming and harvesting

#### **H. DEVELOPING CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND WAYS OF LIFE**

Spiritual needs  
Community organisations and clubs  
Schooling  
Sport and recreation  
Social life, arts and entertainment



## 5.2 THEMATIC HISTORY

The social history of Opotiki can be divided into two widely different phases focussed on the year 1865: life for Opotiki's residents was vastly different before and after this date. Several hundred years of occupation by tangata whenua Whakatohea leading a traditional Maori lifestyle had been slowly influenced over the first few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century by the introduction of European religion, material goods, livestock, crops, agricultural techniques and equipment, quicker boats and wider trading networks, alcohol and diseases. Initial Maori-Pakeha contacts in the settlement of Pakowhai 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 Whakatohea at Opotiki. There were a few intermarriages, trading relationships, religious instructors and pupils. The relationships were equitable and harmonious, with Whakatohea employing Pakeha men as shipbuilders, Pakeha missionaries employing Maori women as housekeepers, and the mutual interchange of resources.

In 1865 a major clash of cultures ended in Whakatohea's land being confiscated. Opotiki became a European-style township with a predominantly European population, under the Auckland Province and adhering to New Zealand laws and customs. Whakatohea and other Maori gradually moved back into Opotiki and today have a strong influence in local government and administration.

### A. Environment

Situated in the eastern Bay of Plenty, Opotiki has a warm sunny climate with lots of rain and few frosts. The long summers provide excellent growing conditions for kumara, other Polynesian traditional crops and more-recently introduced grains and fruits.

Nearby marine environments of sandy beaches, estuarine mudflats and rocky promontories provide a variety of kai moana, seaweed and other resources. Opotiki is situated on flat land within a loop of the Otara River which flows on the east, north and northwest of the town then merges with the Waioeka River which flows on the west of the town. Until a few decades ago, a side channel of the Waioeka flowed much closer to the town (beside Potts Avenue) around a low-lying island, but this channel is now filled in. The two tidal rivers together form a natural harbour which opens to the sea about 1 km away. The harbour was sometimes referred to as River Opotiki<sup>1</sup>. Once the continually-shifting sand bar at the entrance is negotiated, there is easy access by sea around the East Cape to Gisborne, Tauranga and Auckland. The Otara, Waioeka and other rivers provided routes inland for transport and communication. They also provided freshwater resources such as eels, fish, birds, mussels, raupo and flax.

The Otara and Waioeka Rivers are prone to flooding, with major floods occurring in 1878, 1904, 1918, and 1964 and with numerous and frequent lesser floods. Four floods occurred between 1957 and 1960 alone. In the flood of March 1964 both rivers broke their banks: the central business district was inundated by over 1.6m of water and two people lost their lives. Stop banks were improved, so that by 1967 the town was fully protected from further flooding.

However, such flooding has led to the development of a fertile alluvial plain easily farmed for crops and pasture. The Opotiki Flats, about 4000 hectares in extent, were considered in 1919 to be "some of the most fertile land in the Dominion"<sup>2</sup>. Inland hills are less fertile. They used to be covered in native bush, traditionally sources of food, timber and other materials for clothing and shelter.

Opotiki lies in a volcanic region, with White Island, Mt Edgecumbe and Tarawera being relatively near. The Tarawera eruption of 1886 was felt in Opotiki and the area was affected by its ash.<sup>3</sup> Severe earthquakes occur frequently.

<sup>1</sup> Map: *Plate Is*

<sup>2</sup> Bradbury 1919: 138

<sup>3</sup> McCallion et al: 38

A. ENVIRONMENT



Opotiki is situated on flat land within a loop of the Otara River which flows on the east, north and northwest of the town then merges with the Waioeka River which flows on the west of the town. Until a few decades ago, a side channel of the Waioeka flowed much closer to the town (beside Potts Avenue) around a low-lying island, but as this photo shows, by 1947 this channel had almost filled in. The two tidal rivers together form a natural harbour which opens to the sea about 1 km away.  
 Copy of aerial photo dating from 1947.





View of Opotiki looking south from the northern shore of the Otara River. Thought to be around 1910. Church Street is visible to right of centre.  
Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection, 1309 ½.



Opotiki town centre after the 1964 flood.  
Copy of photo in Opotiki Museum.

## **B. Opotiki peoples and their interactions**

### **Te Whakatohea te iwi**

Maori oral tradition records that several canoes arrived in the Bay of Plenty direct from Hawai'iiki (Eastern Polynesia) and that people from Nukutere, Mataatua and other waka settled in the Opotiki district. Their descendants now identify as the iwi Whakatohea. Branches of Whakatohea who were based in and around Opotiki were Upoko-Rehe (to the west), Ngati Ngahere (near the coast), Ngati Patu (to the south), Ngati Ira and Ngai Tama (further south), Ngati Rua (to the east) and Ngati Muriwai.

The name 'Opotiki' comes from the name of the spring on the eastern bluff above Waiotahi Beach called Opotiki-mai-Tawhiti. Tradition states that Tarawa, a significant Whakatohea ancestor, was guided from Hawai'iiki to Waiotahi Beach at Paerata by his two pet fish. After landing in his waka Te Arautauta, he placed his pets in the spring. It became known as O-Potiki-Mai Tawhiti (of the pets from afar).<sup>4</sup>

The region became heavily-populated, with abundant marine, freshwater and forest resources, fertile soil for agriculture, and easy transport and communication routes up rivers and along the coast. Traditional and archaeological evidence confirms descriptions of early European explorers that many settlements existed on the coast, inland near rivers and around harbours and river mouths, and that cultivations were extensive. By the early 19th Century, and possibly much earlier, a large village called Pakowhai (Pa Kowhai) existed in what is now Opotiki township. The kainga was on the bank of the Otaru River, near to its confluence with the Waioeka.

Traditional Maori tikanga prevailed, governance being through chiefs of each hapu and seniority within each family or whanau. Land ownership was communal and territorial, with boundaries and ownership being disputed from time to time between hapu, and between Whakatohea and other iwi. Several defended pa existed in the immediate vicinity of Pakowhai, and "the alluvial plains ... were covered with well-built villages containing many beautifully-decorated houses", the Whakatohea being celebrated for their wood-carving.<sup>5</sup> Pakowhai itself is sometimes described as a pa, ie fortified, but may have been surrounded only by a simple palisade fence.<sup>6</sup>

### **Early relationships with Europeans**

Initial contact with Europeans was sporadic and indirect. In 1769 people further east had an encounter with Captain Cook's party; in 1828 missionary Henry Williams and two government officials anchored off-shore but did not land as they "were not impressed with demeanour of Maoris who came out in canoes".<sup>7</sup> Whakatohea would have had contact with the whaling stations operating at Whale Island, Te Kaha and Waihou Bay in the 1820s, possibly working with the whaling crews, or trading food and other supplies.

In 1823 and 1825 a Ngapuhi taua, armed with muskets, devastated Pakowhai and other pa around Opotiki, killing or capturing nearly all the inhabitants.<sup>8</sup> Attacks by Ngatiawa in 1828 and Ngati Maru in about 1830 also had drastic outcomes for different hapu of Whakatohea. In

<sup>4</sup> Whakatohea Maori Trust Board website [www.whakatohea.co.nz/prod03.htm](http://www.whakatohea.co.nz/prod03.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Cowan: 109

<sup>6</sup> An 1866 sketch map shows that Pakowhai was situated either side of a small tidal swamp, with the smaller western area reaching to the junction of the Otaru River and the Waioeka River side channel and the eastern area just upstream on the Otaru. The site as sketched would lie west of St John St and part might have extended to Grey St. The sketch shows 13 buildings, but this may be representational rather than exact. A large whare, possibly a meeting house, still existed on site in the 1930s.

<sup>7</sup> *Early journal of Henry Williams*: 120-122

<sup>8</sup> Gilling:5

1832 a party of Whakatohea invaded Poverty Bay, but were defeated by the superior musket power of their opponents.<sup>9</sup> Another major engagement occurred at Te Kaha in 1834, against Ngai Tai. After these disputes, captured Whakatohea were taken as far afield as the Waikato and Northland; many returned in 1831, establishing themselves again in and around Opotiki by 1840, under Titoko's leadership. By the mid 1840s it was estimated that there were 1200 people at Opotiki, a further 3000 in the eastern Bay of Plenty coastal area, and 2400 in the Urewera ranges.<sup>10</sup>

Contact with Christianity occurred first through the work of Maori missionaries such as Piripi Taumatakura who had been taught at the Bay of Islands and returned to the Opotiki area in 1834, and with William Williams' mission on the East Coast. When the Church Missionary Society's Rev. A.N. Brown at Te Papa mission (Tauranga) sent Ngakuku (called Wiremu Maihi or William Marsh) to Opotiki in September 1839 to prepare the way for a resident missionary, converts were already holding regular services there. In late 1839 Whakatohea requested the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to send them a missionary. Ngakuku returned on December 29 with Rev. J.A. Wilson. By 8 January 1840 Wilson had selected a site for the mission "on the western side of the river, and about three-quarters of a mile from the great pa.... After nine days of making arrangements the Ngaitama tribe met on 17 January 1840 and concluded the sale... the value of the trade goods was approximately £300." At the same time he also purchased land for his family.<sup>11</sup> This was the first recorded sale of Whakatohea land.

The kainga of Pakowhai was large enough to encourage the Roman Catholic Church to establish a mission also. Bishop Pompallier visited Pakowhai in late March 1840. He was welcomed by a large number of people including Moka, a northern chief who had married a high-ranking Opotiki woman. They had built a church of reeds "... and it was in this modest little building that Pompallier celebrated the district's first Catholic mass and baptized a baby girl. Pompallier said there were 700 Maoris at Opotiki." Pompallier drew up a deed to help protect their land, and provide land for a Catholic mission.<sup>12</sup>

On the 27-28 May 1840, seven Whakatohea chiefs signed the copy of the Treaty of Waitangi taken to the eastern Bay of Plenty by James Fedarb.<sup>13</sup> Three of the chiefs, Tautoro, Rangimatanuku and Rangihaerepo, wanted it noted that they were Roman Catholic, so Fedarb drew a crucifix next to their names. The other signatories were Te Aporotanga, Takahi, Atua and Wakiia.<sup>14</sup>

From late 1840 Whakatohea's contact with European culture became direct and sustained with Pakeha living with or near to the people of Pakowhai.

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<sup>9</sup> Bentley 1999: 166

<sup>10</sup> sketch drawn by CMS missionary John Wilson in c. 1844-45

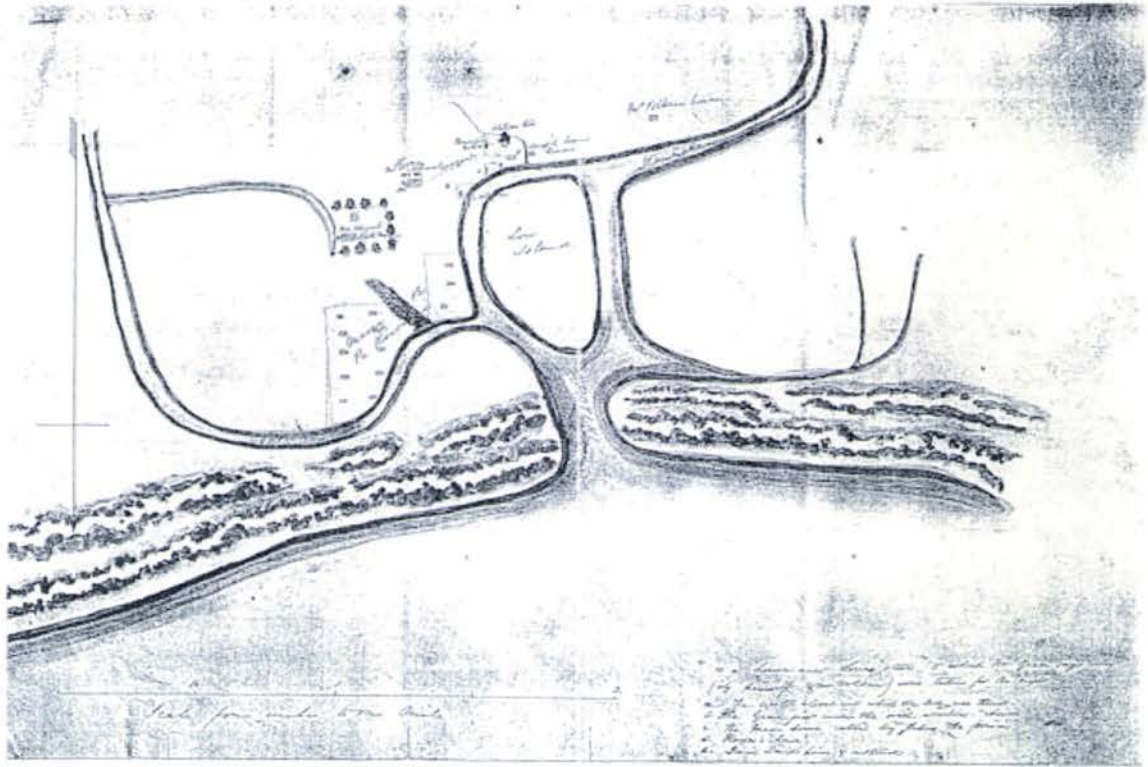
<sup>11</sup> Irwin 1967 :163

<sup>12</sup> Westgate 1991

<sup>13</sup> McKinnon. pl.36a.

<sup>14</sup> Cresswell 2004: 23-24, Orange 2004: 304-5. Orange suggests alternative spellings for three of the chiefs' names may be Tauatoro, Te Whakia and Te Awanui Aporotanga.





Map of Opotiki showing the site of Pakowhai to the north of the Roman Catholic church. The map was prepared for court hearings following the death of Carl Volkner in 1865. Copy held at Whakatane Museum. Original believed to be at Archives NZ.



Maori settlement at Waioeka. The settlement at Pakowhai at the northern end of Opotiki may have looked something like this. Opotiki District Council Photo Archive. Vol. 1, 1.



### Living in two worlds - time of change for Whakatohea

Rev. John A. Wilson took up permanent residence at the CMS mission at Hikutaia in December 1841, Ngatuku (William Marsh) continuing teaching in the interim. In 1848 Wilson reported that there were 1000 professed Christians of the Opotiki district assembled at a hui. In his 1851 report he said there were 163 communicants in Opotiki, and 121 baptisms had been carried out during the year while 230 candidates for baptism remained. When he took up his appointment there were only two baptised Maori in the district.

In 1854 Wilson's replacement, Rev. Christopher Davis, shifted the mission station closer to town. His retirement in 1855 left the Opotiki parish without a resident minister, but it was looked after by Archdeacon Brown from Tauranga, Rev. Chapman from Rotorua, Rev. Rota Waitoa from Te Araroa and Bishop Selwyn.<sup>15</sup> Late in 1859 Rev. Carl S. Volkner, a German, arrived to look after the CMS congregation. Volkner purchased two small plots of land in Opotiki for a vicarage, which he called Peria, and a more substantial church. The latter was built on the site of the raupo chapel built in 1843. Construction of Hiona, now St Stephen's, began in late 1862 and was completed in 1864.<sup>16</sup>

Some of Whakatohea preferred the Roman Catholic concepts. In 1841 Father Rozet and his French servant established the seventh Catholic mission in the country. A raupo chapel was built, with a wooden floor because of the mud and flooding. The Roman Catholic mission was immediately adjacent to Pakowhai<sup>17</sup>. After Rozet left, the mission was managed from Whakatane until Father Chouvet took up residence at Opotiki in 1843 until 1846. In 1850 the Mill Hill Fathers took over the mission with Fathers Grange and Garavel. Garavel remained there till 1865.

Amongst the practical skills taught by missionaries was the cultivation of wheat. Wheat was ideally suited to the arable soils of the Opotiki plains, and cropping was soon under way. Whakatohea were quick to develop markets for their wheat and other produce such as flax, pigs, sheep and potatoes, and rather than relying on European traders, by 1843 had acquired two ships of their own which could transport this produce to the growing population of Auckland. European goods and equipment were brought back. Father Chouvet recorded the purchase of a ship at Opotiki in about 1844 "... from a Jew called Russell. This Englishman was selling them a schooner of twenty tons for the price of two hundred pigs ... the contract, drawn up in the Maori Language, was read out and signed by two or three leading chiefs and the seller."<sup>18</sup>

Whakatohea were then competing with the Pakeha traders established along the coast, so many set up as shipbuilders, employing European shipwrights who came to live at Opotiki. Independent shipwrights also settled in the district, mostly from early 1840s to late 1850s. Hezekiah Hunt built five ships in Opotiki between 1851-1856; Lovatt Thoroughgood built three ships 1850-52; William Webb and Thomas Williamson built one in Opotiki in 1846. Four other shipbuilders with no ships registered in their names were John Middlemass, David David, Joseph Curtiss and John Vickery.<sup>19</sup> A small shipbuilding industry was flourishing at Ohiwa also.<sup>20</sup> Three of the ship owners were Tepana, Rangimatanuku and Rangitokino, with other ships being registered simply under the iwi's name. Whakatohea owned at least 19 (possibly 22) named ships between 1840 and 1860. The ships were often not very seaworthy, couldn't be maintained and didn't last long. Many were wrecked, in Opotiki estuary and elsewhere.

Greater quantities of wheat were grown in the 1850s after ploughs were introduced. By the early 1860s, three tribally-owned flour mills run by waterwheel power were built in the Eastern

<sup>15</sup> Cresswell 2004: 28

<sup>16</sup> Cresswell 2004: 30

<sup>17</sup> This is now the block between Grey and Kelly Streets, east of Church Street.

<sup>18</sup> Van der Wouden, A. 1985:91 quoting Chouvet

<sup>19</sup> Van der Wouden, A. 1985: 97-98

<sup>20</sup> Cresswell 2003: 26

Bay. At least one of these was owned by Whakatohea who in 1858 contracted Messrs Galloway and Dixon to build the mill. "Construction did not proceed smoothly, for a year later the Whakatohea committee complained about the workmanship of the mill .... Final payment was made in August 1860." The mill ran for several years, despite difficulties.<sup>21</sup> Production began to decline because of soil exhaustion due to over-cropping, damage to ploughs, and the inability of the Pakeha millwright to maintain equipment. The Australian market declined also in the late 1850s, affecting Maori exports.

Father Chouvet encountered a Pakeha-Maori (*mokai*) living in the neighbourhood of Opotiki, a man who was covered in *moko* but who was having difficulty accepting his newly-adopted lifestyle. Chouvet gave him some clothes. The man was presumably an escaped convict or deserter, as he said he would not return to European society.<sup>22</sup>

In 1853 and 1854 seven Pakeha shipwrights and one settler, Thomas Wilkinson, were listed on the electoral roll as Opotiki householders.<sup>23</sup> Most of these were British or continental Europeans. Samuel Levy, a trader, and his ship-captain brother Morris who came to Opotiki in 1863, were Jews from the Channel Islands. Dr Alfred Agassiz, a Frenchman, married a local woman and settled, as did his brother. Joseph Jeans (aka Jennings or Jahus), a Portuguese, lived at Opotiki for six years with his Ngatiawa wife.

By the end of the 1850s Whakatohea had become relatively wealthy; large numbers had converted to Christianity in either the Roman Catholic or Anglican denominations; crops were a mixture of traditional and introduced vegetables, cereals and fruit; they had horses, pigs, sheep and cattle; ownership of European clothes and goods was widespread. They were also more familiar with European ways, values and politics. The majority of Whakatohea men (and some women) would have been on a visit to Auckland or the Bay of Islands by 1860. A few Europeans were living at Opotiki, and irregular contact was made with visits by other missionaries and government officials.

These first interactions between Whakatohea and Europeans were amicable, based on religion and commerce. Pakeha residents were in very small numbers, not threatening ownership of land, but influencing spiritual beliefs and material lifestyle. Changes were slow but the situation changed radically in 1865.

### Cultural upheaval

Whakatohea had remained independent both politically and administratively, but by the end of 1861 adopted (not very successfully) the New Zealand government's system of runanga. Pressure from the Kingitanga movement to provide support for their anti-government campaigns in the Waikato and Taranaki saw a party of Whakatohea attempt to go to the Waikato in 1864 to lend their support for the Kingitanga. They were blocked by Te Arawa and British forces, and in a subsequent engagement the Whakatohea chief Te Aporotanga was killed. In addition to this grievance factor, the planting of sufficient crops was not undertaken, and typhoid and measles "had claimed a quarter of their number".<sup>24</sup>

Dissatisfaction amongst Whakatohea of the increasing intrusion of the government, the potential increased loss of tribal land and the recent disruptions were factors that provided a fertile ground for the acceptance of the new religion of Pai Marire when it was introduced to the Opotiki people early in 1865. Pai Marire began as a peaceful millenium movement following the teachings of the prophet Te Ua Haumene, but followers (termed Hauhau by Pakeha) became associated with war and violence as they sought justice for land grievances and the preservation of Maori sovereignty.<sup>25</sup> An additional factor was the belief that Volkner

<sup>21</sup> van der Wouden, 1984: 76

<sup>22</sup> Bentley 1999: 32

<sup>23</sup> Maori and women were not eligible to vote at this time.

<sup>24</sup> Grace 2004

<sup>25</sup> McKinnon pl.39a

was spying for the government, as he had advised Governor Grey that the Roman Catholic priest Father Garavel was assisting "rebels", as the Kingitanga followers were referred to. Garavel had delivered a letter from Wiremu Tamihana to an Anglican chief at Opotiki, but was not aware of its contents.<sup>26</sup>

At Opotiki in March 1865 Rev. Volkner was charged with several crimes by a group of Hauhau under Kereopa, found guilty and executed. The treatment of his body was particularly gruesome by Pakeha standards. Many of Volkner's own parishioners were involved in the killing and ceremonies, but Roman Catholic parishioners seem to have been less influenced by the Hauhau rhetoric. The aggression was specifically against Volkner, as other Pakeha including Rev. Thomas Grace were unharmed. Some were held captive for several days but the Levy brothers, being Jewish, were allowed to remain free.<sup>27</sup>

The killing of Volkner was a major catalyst for the subsequent turmoil of the late 1860s. Skirmishes between Maori and Europeans further along the coast led to the whole eastern Bay of Plenty area being declared by the government to be under martial law. A force of 500 colonial troops (including Te Arawa and other Native Contingents) was organised and on 9 September 1865 Pakowhai was invaded. Several Hauhau were killed.<sup>28</sup> Whakatohea and the Hauhau visitors were forced to retreat into the hills. Pakowhai village was occupied by the troops, a camp was established around Hiona St Stephen's church and the next day the erection of a defensive ditch and earth bank was begun.<sup>29</sup>

In subsequent months the military forces, supplemented by more men of the 1<sup>st</sup> Waikato and 2<sup>nd</sup> Waikato Regiments, maintained their occupation of Opotiki, erected other redoubts to the south and engaged Hauhau and their followers in several skirmishes. A battle at Te Tarata on the Waioeka River, on October 4 1865, resulted in 35 Hauhau dead and many wounded, and three dead and nine wounded on the government side. The Hauhau retreated; 200 men of Ngati Rua hapu surrendered. Later in October, 21 people were captured in the Waimana valley and brought to Opotiki for court-martial.<sup>30</sup>

Land was not all that Whakatohea lost. Food stores, stock, crops, personal possessions and taonga were looted. Lt Stoaite boasted that he was having six meals a day: pork chops, beef steak and potatoes. After five days on shore having "glorious fun" he left with a canoe figurehead, tomahawk, spear, paddle and some greenstone; he rejected the Maori books which were available in "any amount". At least 20 horses were appropriated as cavalry horses; a few were taken by officers and other horses were sold by auction. Major Charles Stapp wrote to his wife: "What a quantity of cultivations corn in abundance such fine potatoes, all their ploughing was done with Horses .... I should say they were very rich.... Ploughs brand new all sorts of implements.... [The force] have got thousands worth of property belonging to them." Stapp himself appropriated a wash stand, iron bedstead, table, chair, bath tub and straw bed.<sup>31</sup>

#### **The new-comers**

The men of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Waikatos were of British and Irish descent, some having been born in New Zealand but most recruited from goldfields in the South Island and Australia. Amongst them were farmers, small businessmen, carpenters or other tradesmen. For over a year Opotiki was a "men-only" settlement, and the visit by Colonel Haultain's wife in 1866 caused quite a stir. A contemporary account stated: "Now the whole camp off duty, with all the natives, men, women and children, were present to ... give us welcome. Mrs Haultain ...

<sup>26</sup> Vaggioli 2000:241-2, 243

<sup>27</sup> See Grace and Gilling 1994 for full descriptions of this episode.

<sup>28</sup> Cowan : 108

<sup>29</sup> Cresswell 2003: 67-8

<sup>30</sup> Cresswell 2003: 78

<sup>31</sup> Stoaite and C. Stapp as cited by Gilling 1994: 15-16

created no little excitement ... [she] ... is the first European lady that the natives have seen since Mrs Volkner left Opotiki."<sup>32</sup>

With the arrival of wives and children of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Waikato militiamen in 1867, Opotiki began to take shape as a colonial town. Conditions were harsh initially, as rations and pay were in short supply and rural land was not immediately available. Many families left. However by 1870 the population had become more settled. Figures for the non-Maori population of the whole county rose from 300 in 1874 to 773 in 1881 and a gradual increase to 864 in 1886. Population figures for the borough only show that the population continued to increase through the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, from 683 (non-Maori only) in 1906, to 1140 in 1921, despite the loss of c.50 men on active service in World War I. Total population figures show Maori numbers were also increasing, as was the proportion of Maori in the community. By 1956 the non-Maori numbered 1808 and Maori 538, making a total of 2346.

In 1893, 121 women registered to vote on the Opotiki roll, and a further 16 had signed the petition in 1892.<sup>33</sup> Of the women registered to vote, only 15 had occupations other than household duties/domestic duties. They were teachers, a storekeeper, milliner, nurse, housekeeper, tailoress, dressmaker, lady's help and cook.

The age structure of the population has been influenced by economic factors, young people having to leave for work, but during the 1970s new light industries plus more fruit growing improved employment opportunities. The quiet lifestyle and sunny climate also made Opotiki popular as a haven for retired people by the 1970s.

The population is predominantly Maori and European, with few Pacific Islanders, Asian or other ethnic origins.

Opotiki was much bigger than Te Puke, Whakatane or Taupo until at least 1921. A 1956 analysis of age of dwellings showed that 12% were constructed before 1901; 23% between 1901-20; 25% between 1921-1940, 40% 1941-1956, ie Opotiki was continuing to grow. Its growth rate was always similar to the New Zealand average, but pre-1920 it was higher than the Bay of Plenty average. Large scale developments in Tauranga and the Western Bay of Plenty during the 1950s-60s, has meant that comparatively, the rate of growth in Opotiki borough has been slower than most other local authorities in the region since then.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> account in *Daily Southern Cross* 1866: Anon p.48

<sup>33</sup> *Women's stories* : 70

<sup>34</sup> National Resources Survey 1962:. 308

**Living in Two Worlds**



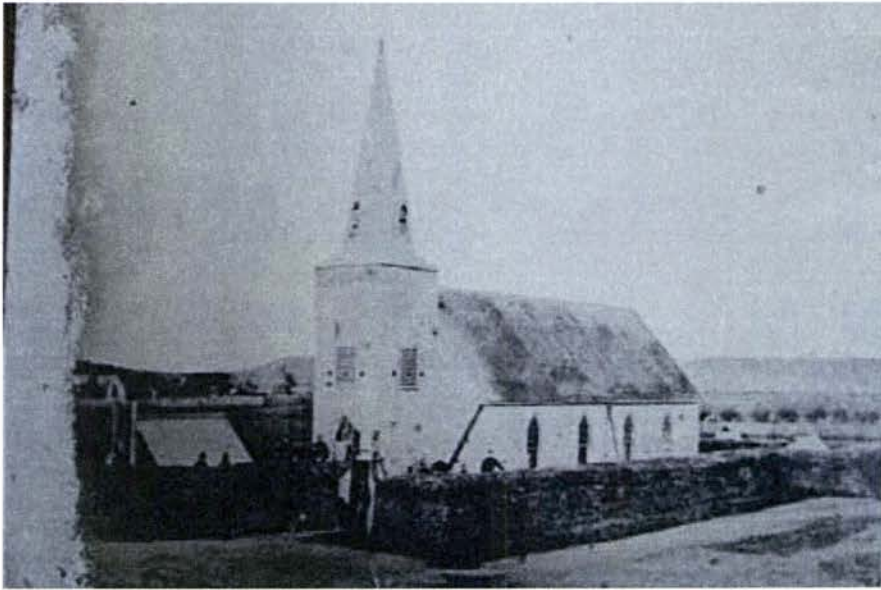
The earliest Roman Catholic Church in Opotiki situated where St Joseph's is today in Kelly Street. The Roman Catholic Mission was established here in March 1840, shortly after the CMS(Anglican) Mission. At that time there were 700 people living here, based at Pakowhai at the north end of what is now Church Street. Opotiki District Council Photo Archive. Vol 1, 11.



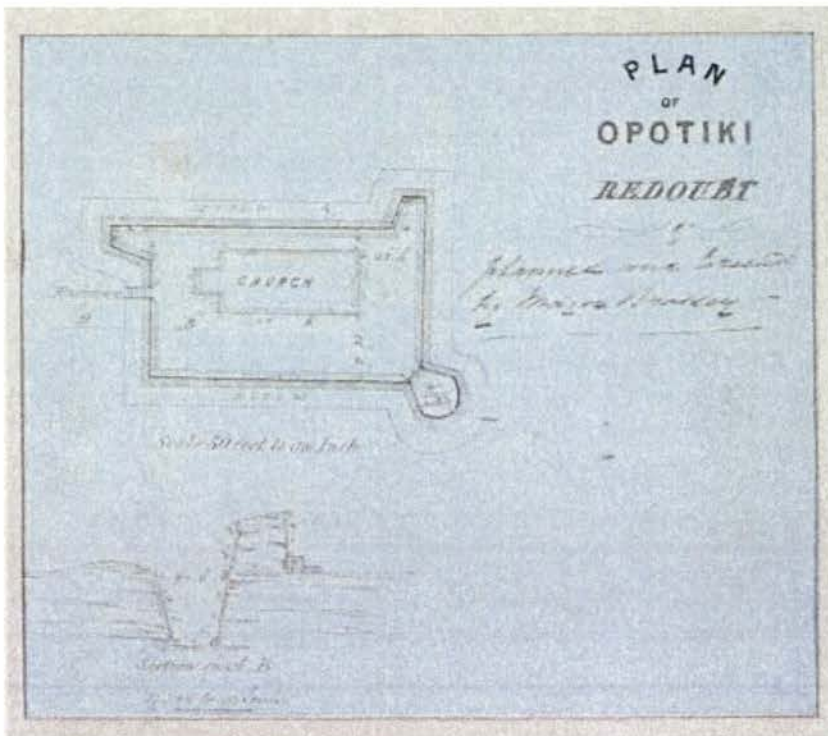
St Stephen's Church, after the redoubt had been formed. Opotiki District Council Photo Archive. Vol 1, 6



Cultural upheaval



Photograph of St Stephen's Church with the redoubt formed around it and rifle firing holes formed in the walls.  
Copy of photo held by Opotiki Library.



Plan of the redoubt formed around St Stephen's Church after the death of Rev. Carl Volkner.  
Map 4627, Auckland Public Library



### **C. Governance, Administration and Land Ownership**

#### **Land management post-1865**

In January 1866 the *New Zealand Gazette* published the proclamation by the Governor, George Grey, of the confiscation of land under the New Zealand Settlements Act, 1863, with the area to be called the Bay of Plenty District, on the grounds that the "Native Tribes and sections of Native Tribes" in that area "have been engaged in rebellion against Her Majesty's authority".<sup>35</sup> The confiscated land in the vicinity of Opotiki was allocated to militiamen in return for their service; some very small areas were returned to Whakatohea. They were still considered to be in rebellion.<sup>36</sup> About 50% of the land that was taken was fertile alluvial plain, the other 50%, mainly in the east and south-east, was rugged hills and virgin bush.<sup>37</sup>

One intention of the confiscation was to provide land for new European settlements, militiamen having been promised land grants in return for their service. A site was chosen for the Opotiki township by Colonel Haultain and Dr Pollen: "The position chosen for the town is situated on a piece of ground on the eastern side of the main river, about half-a-mile distant from the present position of the camp.... It is now earnestly to be hoped that no time will be lost before a staff of experienced and intelligent surveyors are set to work."<sup>38</sup> The town was also to provide a support base for a military frontier in the event of further confrontation.

Four categories of land management were described for the Opotiki district: land for military settlers, compensation awards, native reserves, and lands abandoned.<sup>39</sup> The militiamen of the No. 1 Regiment of the Waikato Militia each received 1 acre of town land and, depending on rank, from 50 acres to 400 acres of rural land. In this Opotiki had a similar history to Hamilton, Cambridge, Pirongia and Tauranga. Some of the rural blocks were inaccessible and not taken up. Land was also allocated to militiamen from other regiments and to Maori friendly to government.

#### **Land issues for Whakatohea**

The loss of their land and main kainga had major economic, spiritual, social and physical effects on Whakatohea's well-being. Their means of making a living, their personal property and agricultural equipment, their wahi tapu including burial grounds, and significant cultural property such as carvings had all been taken from them. Reserves that were allocated to them were on marginal less-productive land. Whanau and hapu were relocated to areas for which they had little or no spiritual attachment. Rev. T. S. Grace visited the area again in 1877 and commented on the major changes that had taken place for Maori since 1865: "Instead of their large populous village and good native houses, they are now living in small places – each a mere apology for a good native village – in scattered parties, from five to ten miles out of Opotiki." His comments include descriptions of their depressed poor state and that "our missionary efforts among them have been of a nominal kind."<sup>40</sup>

Whakatohea protested vigorously about the loss of their land, not just through further military engagements but in the courts. The first hearing of the Compensation Court for Opotiki claims was held from 7 March to 8 April 1867. Some 170 claims were heard; only about 70 were settled, some had judgement reserved and the rest were held over. Not all the claims involved Whakatohea, the court's jurisdiction extending to the Maketu area as well. The first

<sup>35</sup> *New Zealand Gazette* 1866: 17

<sup>36</sup> McKinnon pl.39b

<sup>37</sup> Lyall:175

<sup>38</sup> Anon :50

<sup>39</sup> *Map Country and Town Lots Opotiki* 18/2/68 (ATL ref A47 and A52), *Gazette* Jan 18 1866 and Sept 11 1866

<sup>40</sup> Grace :21

court was held at Opotiki, the next beginning on 9 September 1867 in Whakatane. At this sitting the Roman Catholic Church was awarded one acre, the area surrounding their chapel and accommodation buildings.<sup>41</sup> The Church of England (CMS) were similarly awarded their land again. In 1871 as a result of negotiations by the government agent J.A. Wilson (son of Rev. Wilson), Whakatohea were awarded Lots 92 and 93 in the Commercial Section, jointly in the names of Hira Te Popo, Topeora and Mihaka Rangiaho. Other allocations involved small sections in the town or larger rural blocks, some awarded individually and some communally.<sup>42</sup>

The claims process was complicated by varying descriptions of the boundaries of the area that had been confiscated. Re-surveys did not always clarify the issues. Whakatohea felt a strong grievance regarding the confiscation process and were not managing well on the small reserve at Opape that they had been allocated. "Several Royal Commissions of Enquiry have investigated the state of Whakatohea and/or the issue of confiscation. Each of them has concluded that Whakatohea were left with only a minimal amount of usable land."<sup>43</sup> Whakatohea issues were included in the 1907, 1921 and 1928 commissions of enquiry with unsatisfactory results. A partial settlement was made in 1946 and the Whakatohea Maori Trust Board was established to administer this. With the compensation money, loans, and efficient farming, the Board purchased some land back but it was not until 1993 after a hearing by the Waitangi Tribunal that a substantial financial compensation settlement was made. Perhaps more importantly, the Crown issued an apology for the attack on Whakatohea, the devastation of their property and confiscation of their land.<sup>44</sup>

#### **Under military rule**

Opotiki remained under military occupation for several years, as Hauhau forces, joined later by Te Kooti Arikirangi and his followers, meant the town was continually under threat of retaliatory invasion. There were frequent skirmishes inland, up the Waioeka River, at Ohiwa and towards Whakatane, but none in Opotiki itself. (although there were a few suspicious fires) In late 1866 a public meeting was held to discuss forming a volunteer cavalry unit. The Bay of Plenty Volunteer Cavalry was accepted as an active unit of the government forces on 23 December 1866. The BOPVC helped other units and patrolled the beach road to Whakatane<sup>45</sup>.

The number of men stationed in Opotiki fluctuated greatly. For instance Parkinson reported "on 1 January 1868 the military force totalled 27. By 17 March the number was 393."<sup>46</sup> The influx was in response to increased Hauhau activity. Later in 1868, settlers were urged to bring their families into the camp at the church redoubt for safety. The Armed Constabulary were at Opotiki 1869-70; in 1872 there were 22 men plus militia; about 20 AC still there in 1876 under Insp. F. Y. Goring.<sup>47</sup> By 1873 the hostilities were over.

During the military occupation, civil law was the realm of the militia, then the Armed Constabulary. The first court in Opotiki sat on 4 December 1865, a court-martial of the 21 people captured at Waimana. The prisoners were found guilty, but Governor Grey declared the trial illegal, and the men were taken to Auckland for a civil trial. Five were found guilty; three were hanged at Mt Eden Gaol on 17 May 1866.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Gilling 1994: 141-2

<sup>42</sup> For fuller accounts of subsequent claims refer to Gilling 1994, Mikaere and the Raupau\tu Document Bank.

<sup>43</sup> Gilling 1994: 168

<sup>44</sup> WTMB website [www.whakatohea.co.nz/prod05.htm](http://www.whakatohea.co.nz/prod05.htm)

<sup>45</sup> Cresswell 2003: 103-4

<sup>46</sup> Cresswell 2003:

<sup>47</sup> McKinnon pl.40b, pl.41b, 51b

<sup>48</sup> One of those executed was Mokomoko (Whakatohea) who had protested his innocence; he was pardoned in 1992.

The first lock-up was the steeple of St Stephen's Church when it was fortified as a redoubt, but a prison was built by 1872 and a Resident Magistrate (F.E. Hamlin) was appointed.<sup>49</sup>

The military barracks were on the site of the present primary school, drill hall and bowling green. For some time the Armed Constabulary were camped at Thornton Park, now a convalescent home.

In the late-19<sup>th</sup> Century- early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Opotiki was the centre for the administration of law and order in the eastern Bay of Plenty. A wooden courthouse was built on the corner of Elliott and Church Streets in the 1870s beside the police station, lock-up and post office. The courthouse was re-built in 1910-11, and remains as a landmark on its prominent site. It is, or has been, the venue for the District Court, the Maori Land Court, Youth Court, Disputes Tribunal and the registry for Births Deaths and Marriages.

### **The new governance structure**

Local government in the Eastern Bay of Plenty was established at a meeting in the Opotiki Courthouse on January 9, 1877 under the name Whakatane County Council. The name Opotiki County Council (OCC) was not officially used until 1899 when the council was divided into Opotiki and Whakatane County Councils. The counties were responsible for the main roads and bridges, whereas roading within the county was the responsibility of the roads board. Within the township, street construction was undertaken by the town board.<sup>50</sup>

The urban area of Opotiki was constituted a borough on May 25 1882 but practised as a Town District. The first meeting of the Opotiki Town Board of Commissioners, with Mr King as Chairman, was on June 26, 1882. The Borough of Opotiki came into being on August 1, 1911. The first borough council was elected on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1911, the first mayor being Mr H.E. Elliott. Meetings were to be held at the Settlers Hall as "not until 1934 did the council move into its own premises in King Street."<sup>51</sup>

In 1973 the Opotiki County Council and the Opotiki Borough Council (OBC) were amalgamated as the Opotiki County Council. For a while administration was divided between two offices, the engineering dept being in the old borough council building in King St, the rest in the OCC building on the corner of Elliott and St John Streets (now occupied by the Department of Conservation). The status (and name) changed to district council with the nationwide restructuring of local government in 1987.

Three historic buildings remain as testimony to this earlier era of local government: the Kowhai Takeaways building in Church St was the County Council offices from at least 1928 to 1947-48 when they shifted to the building in St John Street (now DoC).<sup>52</sup> The modest building that was the Borough Council office from 1934 still exists in King St.

Typical of other New Zealand towns and cities, the local bodies were dominated by men for several decades. The first woman county councillor in Opotiki was elected in 1974.<sup>53</sup>

### **Other authorities**

Numerous other local authorities have assisted over the decades with local administration and the provision of services. In 1938 some were the Bay of Plenty Electric Power Board, Opotiki Hospital Board, Opotiki Fire Board and the Opotiki Domain Board. Name changes and boundary changes have complicated the documentation of these bodies. At the broader regional level, Opotiki has been (or in some cases still is) part of Auckland Province, the Rotorua Employment District, the Bay of Plenty Region, the Bay of Plenty Hospitals and

<sup>49</sup> McKinnon pl.51 b

<sup>50</sup> *Opotiki 100 years 1877-1977*: 4, 7

<sup>51</sup> *Opotiki 100 years 1877-1977*: 60.

<sup>52</sup> Further research is required to establish their length of tenancy. The OCC annual meeting of 1902 was held in its new office, which may have been this building.

<sup>53</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 86

Charitable Aid Board, Eastern Maori Electorate, the Gisborne Land District, Mataatua kohanga reo district, Waiariki Land Court District, the Mataatua Maori Council and the Waiariki District Maori Council. An administrative error when setting up areas under the Native Districts Regulation Act 1858 (intended to control Maori access to alcohol) left Opotiki out altogether – the Bay of Plenty Native District being to the west and south and the Waiapu Native District to the east.<sup>54</sup>

In November 1989 all or part of 25 authorities were amalgamated to form the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, known as Environment Bay of Plenty, with responsibility for managing and monitoring broader environmental (including heritage) resources.<sup>55</sup>

Maori political and administrative bodies have played a major role in the wider community as well as attending to specifically Maori issues. Whakatohea Trust Board was enacted 1949, and the Board formed in 1952, to administer funds granted as compensation for confiscations of the 1860s. Over the years the Trust Board has disbursed funds for health, welfare, marae purposes and education and has encouraged hapu business endeavours. It has strong commercial ventures in dairying and horticulture, marine farming, forestry, fruit packing. The Board provides education, social and health care services to its people, and in doing so is a major employer in Opotiki and district.<sup>56</sup>

Several of these authorities have occupied heritage buildings in the town. The Whakatohea Maori Trust Board (WMTB) offices occupy the historic building that was built for the N.Z. Loan & Mercantile Agency Co. on the north east corner of Elliott and St John Streets. A subsidiary WMTB company occupies one of the oldest buildings associated with St John's Presbyterian Church further along St John Street. The Hospital and Charitable Aid Board once owned the Kowhai Takeaways building and on the opposite side of Church St, the Power Board owned and occupied the substantial Torrens building for nearly 40 years.<sup>57</sup>

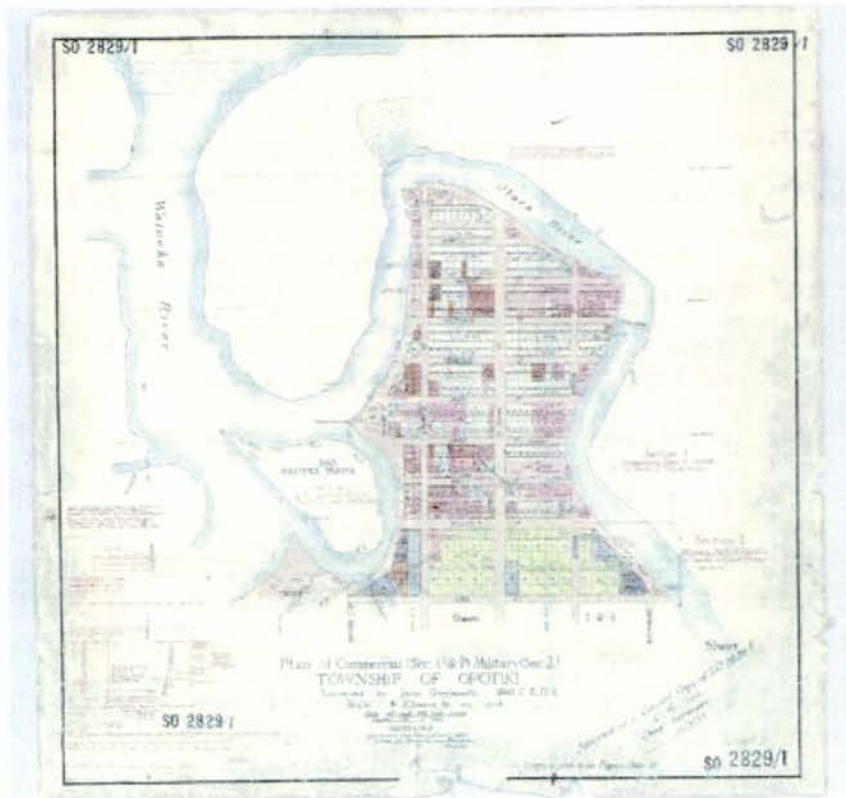
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<sup>54</sup> Gilling 1994: 21 citing *NZ Gazette*

<sup>55</sup> EBoP website [www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz)

<sup>56</sup> Website [www.whakatohea.co.nz](http://www.whakatohea.co.nz)

<sup>57</sup> Other connections have not been examined in this project.



Survey map of the northern part of Opatiki done in the 1860s after land was confiscated under the New Zealand Settlements Act 1863. The survey was carried out by John Gwynneth. Streets were marked out at right angles enclosing 10-acre blocks which were subdivided into ten 1 acre sections. From Elliott Street north smaller ¼ acre sections were surveyed for commercial use. Lower-lying swampy areas were marked as landing reserves, as was much of the strip adjacent to the two rivers.  
Map SO 2829/1, 2, 3. Land Information New Zealand.



St Stephen's Church with Militia in the 1870s.  
Opatiki District Council Photograph Vol 1, 8.

## **D. Building a new settlement**

### **Laying out the new settlement**

The survey of town sections was undertaken by John Gwynneth working with six assistants and military support when required in rural areas.<sup>58</sup> The area from Elliott Street north was designated 'Section 1 Commercial Part' with streets marked out at right angles enclosing 5-acre blocks subdivided into ¼ acre allotments. South of Elliott St was 'Section 2 Military Part'. Here the streets enclosed 10-acre blocks, sub-divided into 1-acre allotments.<sup>59</sup> Lower-lying swampy areas were marked as Landing Reserves, as was much of the strip adjacent to the two rivers. Several 'Plantation Reserves' were set aside, and later, a Mechanics Institute Reserve. Lot 333 was set aside as the Town Board Office. In 1873, a 4-acre block in Section 2 was gazetted as an educational reserve.<sup>60</sup> In 1868 a reserve was set aside for "Rebel Whakatoheas" and further "Native Reserves" were gazetted in 1910.<sup>61</sup>

Some of the men received their acre as four ¼ -acre sections in the Commercial Part, not always adjacent to each other; others received a 1-acre lot in the Military Part. The rural land allocated was often poor or inaccessible; also with the local Maori population still hostile, many Pakeha soldier-settlers were too scared to take up their land. Many left, either abandoning their land claim (in which case it reverted to the Crown) or selling it cheaply. Land auctions were held in June 1868, August 1871 and January 1874, the Province of Auckland being the beneficiary. One entrepreneur who bought up such land was John P. Parkinson whose five sons had been granted land. John managed his sons' land and added more to it.<sup>62</sup>

Elliott Street and St John Street were intended to be the main streets and were made wider than others. It was envisaged that the corner of Elliott and St John Streets would bear the government and justice buildings but as the owners wouldn't sell, a site on the corner of Church and Elliott Streets was bought instead. The commercial area grew from there, especially along Church St. Access to Opotiki was primarily by sea and goods stores were built near the jetties that were strung out along the backwater of the Waioeka River, a short block away at the end of Elliott St or at the end of Kelly St nearer to the confluence of the backwater with the Otara River. The earliest known photograph, taken about 1870, shows a small cluster of single-storey buildings (apart from the Masonic Hotel) at the Elliott St and Church St intersection, near St Stephen's church which was still a redoubt and offered a close refuge.

Several of the northern streets were never constructed as the land was too unsuitable. Even so, several sections in town had to be drained before they could be utilised. The first houses were often raupo; some families utilized the abandoned whare at Pakowhai until the militiamen's allotments were granted. The 1-acre sections south of Elliott St were soon subdivided, as were the ¼ -acre lots in the Commercial Part as more shops and businesses were established. Houses that had been built there were replaced with business premises and shops as the commercial area expanded, although at least one remained in the 1940s<sup>63</sup>.

A few businesses were established in side streets in the blocks adjacent to Church St. These blocks were also subdivided to allow for in-filling with more shops, land agents, blacksmiths, butchers and bakers as the population and the economy grew.

<sup>58</sup> Cresswell 2003:

<sup>59</sup> Gwynneth map [1866]. [Marked as 1860.]

<sup>60</sup> Gilling 1994: 147 citing *Gazette* refs.

<sup>61</sup> ATL map A13

<sup>62</sup> Cresswell *JJP* : 15

<sup>63</sup> Bruce True, personal information, August 2005



An 1873 visitor had mixed impressions of Opotiki and its outlying districts: "The town certainly is made up of straggling houses, most of them on lots varying from one to four acres; but here and there a ruined house, dilapidated fence, and destroyed gardens....reminded the visitor of a vast deserted village..... I found a great many of the former inhabitants had moved.... We traversed the town belt ... for miles on both sides [of the Otara] lined with well cultivated fields..... as soon as the Government made the road, the settlers left town to occupy their farms".<sup>64</sup>

In 1923 Opotiki was considered to be "the most picturesque town on the East Coast...abounding with scenic attractions" and with "ornamental trees..., trim hedges ...and flower gardens" in the residential areas. The buildings were considered substantial, the streets well-paved and "the town bears a wide reputation for solidity in business".<sup>65</sup> This success was due not only to the fertility of the surrounding alluvial plains and lower hill country, but to the port, the volume of freight that passed over the wharves being considerable.

### **Architectural development**

Initially the commercial buildings were wooden with corrugated iron roofs, often hastily-built and of poor construction. Two hotels were amongst the first buildings: the Masonic Hotel and Wharf Hotel. Each was two-storeys with provision for accommodation, dining and entertainment including alcohol. They were similar to those in other ports or towns such as Raglan, Waiuku, Thames, Hamilton and Te Aroha that were developing as European settlements in the 1850s and 60s.

The construction of the Bank of New Zealand and the courthouse on two other corners of the Elliott/Church Sts intersection gave the town some substance, reinforced by the post office adjacent to the courthouse. The fourth corner was occupied by a shop which by the time it was occupied by the firm of Bridgers Ltd in the 1890s was large and imposing, even though only single-storey. It became more imposing when replaced in 1912 by a two-storey larger building in permanent materials. The construction of the two-storey Shalfoon's in 1912 on one corner of Church St and King St added to the grandeur with Rostgard's, the Royal Hotel and the Mechanics' Institute on the other three corners.

Other simple structures were also replaced immediately prior to the First World War and through into the 1920s by more substantial two-storey buildings in plastered brick or reinforced concrete. A few of the many examples are the BNZ, the Masonic Hotel, Patterson's Building and Torren's General Merchants. They joined existing substantial buildings on the east side of Church St south of the BNZ, the Strand Arcade and Oakes' arcade. The construction of cinemas and the De Luxe Theatre reflect that Opotiki was in a time of prosperity in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

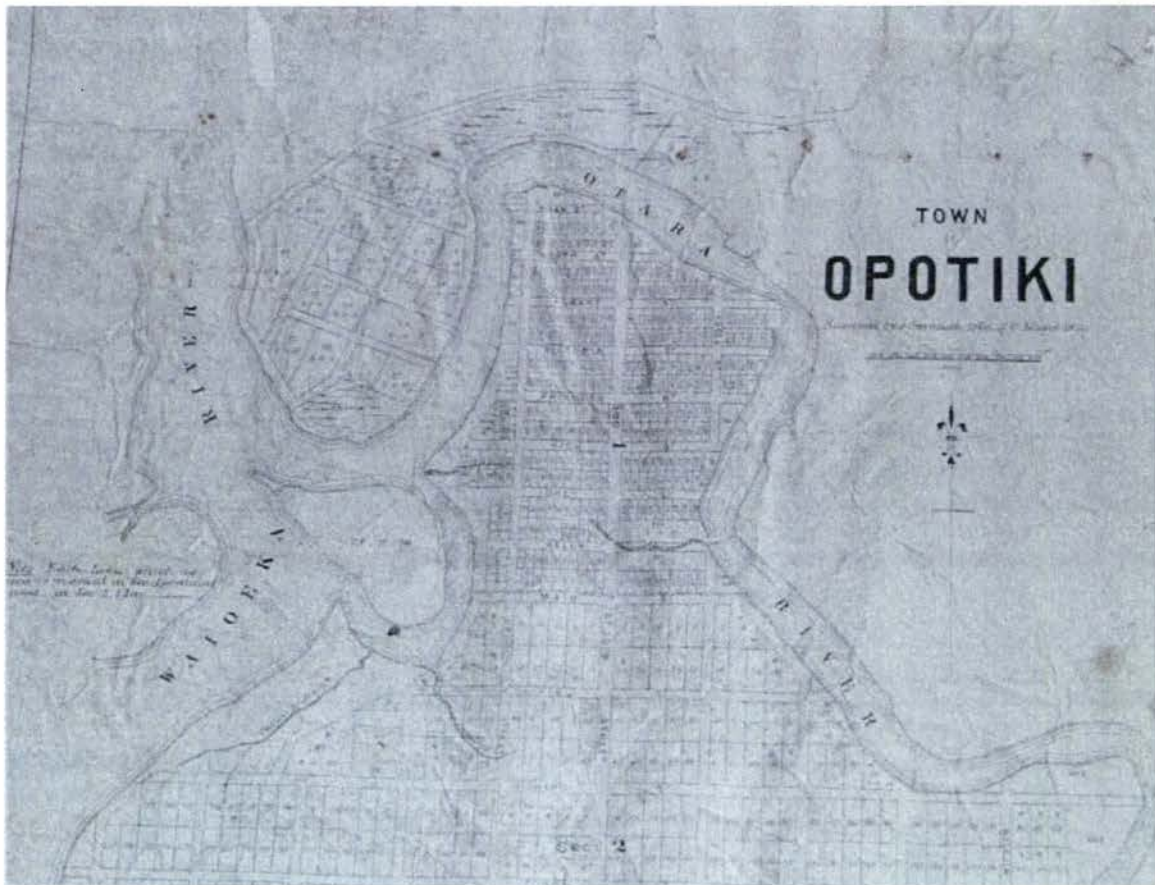
Most of the substantial buildings were situated along Church St, one of the exceptions being the NZ Loan and Mercantile Agency Co. Ltd which replaced the Town Hall on the corner of Elliott and St John Streets. Other warehouses and retail stores for farming supplies and equipment included Dalgety's in Elliott St. The sprawling villa that was owned by the Opotiki Club, though grand did not contribute to the town centre streetscape as it was in a back section surrounded by trees and shrubs.

Fire was a major hazard, with open fires for warmth and cooking, candles and lamps with naked flames, the combustibility of the timber and a lack of effective fire-fighting equipment. After a fire in 1913 destroyed several buildings, the fire only stopping at the brick wall of the Guardian newspaper office, the Borough Council established a brick area, and all premises erected since then have been constructed of brick or concrete.

<sup>64</sup> "Traveller"1990" A visit to Opotiki in 1873" *Historical review* 38 (2): 114-116 reprinted from *Bay of Plenty Times* 12/2/1873

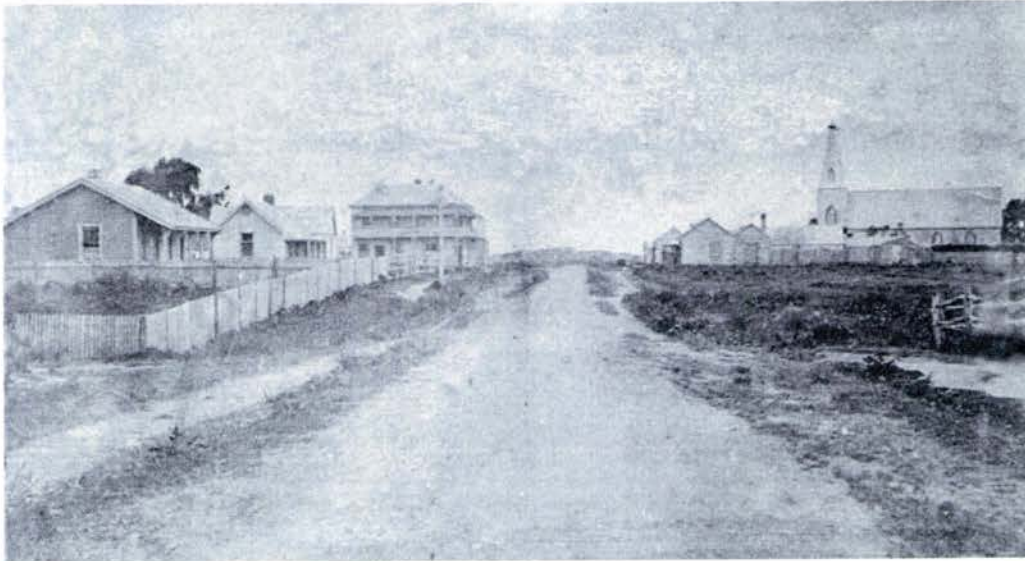
<sup>65</sup> *East Coast Guardian* Dec. 1923

**BUILDING A NEW SETTLEMENT**



Copy of survey plan for the Town of Opotiki made in 1876 by J Gwynneth and S C Lloyd. Note the width of the side channel of the Waioeka River around Rat Island (Volkner Island). Copy in Opotiki Museum.

### Architectural Development



Early image of Church Street in Opotiki, thought to be around 1875, showing the unformed roadway with grass verges at that stage. The Masonic Hotel and the Post Office are to the left and St Stephen's Church to the right. The cluster of buildings opposite the Post Office probably include Reece's blacksmith shop and Kelly's bakery. When first surveyed the area to the north of Elliott Street was the commercial part of Opotiki, while larger sections to the south were in the military part of the town.  
Opotiki District Council Photo Archive, Vol 1, 9.



One of the early shops in Opotiki, Shalfoon Bros was established in a house on the corner of Church Street and Kelly Street. The building was extended out the front in 1904, to provide the retail store which remains there today.  
Opotiki District Council Photo Archive, Vol 3, 24.





View south along Church Street, circa 1910-11. The first timber BNZ on the corner of Church Street and Elliott Street was built in 1877. The first permanent Post Office can be seen on the opposite side of Church Street, built in 1874. This burnt down in 1911 and was replaced by a larger masonry post office in 1913.

Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 1, 170.



Early shops along Church Street were modest timber buildings with simple parapets. An exception is the larger two-gabled Mechanics Institute, the first library. It is partly obscured by a building believed to have been the Borough Council office in 1916.

Close up of above photo, Vol 1, 170.



View east along Elliott Street c.1910-11 with the first timber Masonic Hotel on the left, and Bridger's store with the flag on the opposite side of Church Street. The BNZ Bank is on the right, and Dalgety's building is visible in the background further along Elliott Street. Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G- 191 ½.



View east along Main Street, now Elliott Street, around 1910. The large gabled Dalgety's store is on the left in the background. The Northern Steamship Company offices are on the left in the foreground. Beyond are the premises of J Gunther and a legal firm. Young's Butcher's is on the right. Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G- 1209 1/2





The first Masonic Hotel on the corner of Elliott Street and Church Streets was typical of many Victorian timber hotels around New Zealand. The buildings adjacent also indicate typical early commercial development in timber construction. Fire was a constant threat, and after 1913 the Borough Council made it a requirement to build in permanent materials in the town centre. Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 1,174.



View east along King Street around 1910. The Salvation Army Barracks built in 1898 are on the left, next to the Mechanics Institute which was on the site of the present Library. On the opposite side of King Street is the timber building with curved verandah which was on this corner prior to the construction of Rostgard's Building in 1914. A formed footpath with kerb and channel extends a short way along King Street. W. Kelly's Livery & Bait Stables (on the right) was the equivalent of today's parking building. Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G- 193 1/2



View north along Church Street near the intersection with King Street around 1910. The timber building on the left was replaced by Rostgard's Building in 1914. On opposite corners are the Mechanics Institute and the Royal Hotel.  
Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G- 1237 1/2



View north along Church Street in the 1920s. Arthur and Larmer's Building is on the left with a stepped parapet with ball cappings. The Post Office is visible beyond, set back with no verandah. The photograph illustrates the transition from simple timber buildings to more substantial buildings of permanent materials.  
Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G- 1311 ½.





Aerial photo of Opotiki dating from 1947 Whites Aviation, 6262.



Aerial photo showing Church Street in 1951. The large two-storey building left foreground is the earlier convent.  
Whites Aviation 27663.

## **E. Creating an Infrastructure**

### **Post Office**

The mission station had offered some postal facilities as early as 1841, but the first official post office was opened in 1866, in a tent. Mails came by sea or by runners on land. The military ran the overland service with despatch riders after the troubles of 1864 and in 1867 employed Maori runners. They were dependent on tides as the main route was along beaches and rivers had to be forded. They were vulnerable to attack during the on-going anti-government feeling of the late 1860s, and in June 1867 Wi Popata (Arawa) and his companion Bennett White were killed at Waitotahi.

Mr W. McKenna was the Postmaster in 1867<sup>66</sup>, the first permanent Postmaster being Samuel Elliott. The first permanent post office was built in 1874, in Church St. This burnt down in 1911 and was replaced by a larger more-imposing two-storey plastered brick structure in 1913.

In 1873 the postmaster was in charge of postal services, money orders and a savings bank,<sup>67</sup> and from March 1874, telegraph services.<sup>68</sup>

In 1907 there was a thrice-weekly mail coach service to Rotorua, operated by Robertson and Co.<sup>69</sup> In 1910 mail arrived twice weekly via Rotorua, and also by sea.<sup>70</sup> The service became daily in 1919 but in 1930 parcel mail still arrived only weekly.<sup>71</sup>

Residents had to collect their mail from the Post Office until the first household deliveries began in the principal streets in January 1901, the delivery staff walking or on horseback. Delivery all over the borough wasn't achieved until about 1920. A rural delivery service was not started until the early 1960s.

A telephone exchange opened in 1908 with 37 subscribers, local calls being possible at any time. However long distance calls depended on the telegraph service, and therefore were only possible after midnight or on Sundays. A new exchange with modern equipment was opened in 1963.<sup>72</sup>

### **Fire brigade**

The first fire fighting equipment in Opotiki were two fire bells, rung to alert citizens of a fire. One was mounted on a trestle in front of the courthouse on Church Street. A chemical fire engine was acquired in 1908 and business people contributed to the wages of a night watchman. In 1923 the Opotiki Municipal Volunteer Fire Brigade was formed. In 1929 the Opotiki Fire Board took over all duties, and in 1972 the council took over the administration of fire services.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>66</sup> *New Zealand directory for 1867-68* Stevens and Bartholomew, Wellington p.253

<sup>67</sup> "Traveller" 1990:115:

<sup>68</sup> Cresswell:166

<sup>69</sup> *Falling leaves*:33

<sup>70</sup> 1910 directory: 698

<sup>71</sup> Leighton's Directory 1930:595

<sup>72</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 14

<sup>73</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 49, 60



The first purpose built Post Office was built in 1874. After it burnt down in 1911 it was replaced by a larger plastered brick post office in 1913.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 1 156



The grandeur of the new Post Office reflects its role in the district.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive , Vol 2, 218.



### Health care and related services

The prevalence of disease and illness is not well-documented for the pre-1865 period, but as with other areas of New Zealand after the arrival of Europeans, measles, influenza and venereal disease had affected local Maori populations. There was an outbreak of typhoid in late 1864<sup>74</sup>; William W.A. Hooper, shipwright, had tuberculosis in Feb-March 1865 at the time of capture of the *Eclipse*.

Medical care was limited in the new settlement, with no doctor immediately available, and even by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, only one doctor for the whole district. Several women in the community acted as midwives: Bridget Kelly, Ellen Butler, Mrs Litchfield and Mary Capper. They sometimes lived in with the mother's family before and after the birth. Often, their own lives were not easy: Mrs Litchfield had to earn a living to support her family of 10, as her husband Charles had died relatively young.<sup>75</sup>

The first hospital, built of corrugated iron, was erected by 1868; the large District Hospital and maternity annexe was built later on higher ground to the west of the Waioeka River but is now closed. By 1910 three surgeons were listed for Opotiki: Francis Forbes, James Wadmore and James Crockett Hood. Dr Hood was a long-term resident of the Opotiki Hotel. Hotels were often the only places where out-of-town patients could be treated and convalesce.<sup>76</sup> Dr Reid was the only doctor for many years, serving the whole district.<sup>77</sup>

By 1910 Charles Andrew Ogle and William Bassett Hall were practising as chemists, and Frank Short and S.H. Tippett as dentists. District Nurse Robina (Ruby) Cameron had a house on the corner of Ford and St John Streets.

Funerary services were often undertaken by builders who made coffins as a side-line, C.C.P. Crosswell being one such in 1930. Somewhat more unusually, George Griffiths was a motor mechanic as well as an undertaker. An earlier coffin maker was Tom Connelly of Connelly's Corner.

The first Plunket clinics were held upstairs in the Farmers building on the corner of Elliott and Church Sts. In 1937-38 the Borough Council, with financial assistance from the County Council, built the Plunket Rooms and Ladies Rest Rooms on the west side of Church Street<sup>78</sup>.

Wahi tapu within the Opotiki town boundary have not been identified. The first European cemetery was the reserved land between Kelly and Grey Streets, near to the Roman Catholic campus. It is estimated that perhaps 60 people were buried there between 1865 and 1875, but records have not been found. Most of the initial grave markers would have been wooden; these have long since disintegrated. Several stone monuments have been broken and removed also. The cemetery holds military personnel, townspeople, and possibly a few Maori from other districts who were fighting on the side of the colonial government. At least by 1876, the main cemetery in southern part of town was in use for interments. The Kelly St cemetery was gazetted in 1975 as a recreation reserve.

In 1914 the Kelly St cemetery was enhanced with the erection of a simple marble monument to the men who died during the New Zealand wars in and around Opotiki. In a later age when war memorials were being erected all around the country, a much grander memorial was erected in Elliott St to commemorate the local men who died in the First World War. Additional plaques have been added to the memorial since.

<sup>74</sup> McLintock v. 3: 497; Cresswell 2003: 33

<sup>75</sup> *Opotiki, the women's stories; Opotiki 1877-1977*: 43; Their greatness: 45

<sup>76</sup> NZHPT registration notes, Opotiki Hotel

<sup>77</sup> CWI p.36

<sup>78</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977* : 78





Opotiki Hospital which opened in 1914. The Salvation Army Band are playing at the right, and the nurses are Lesley Graham and Mrs Alan Martin. The hospital burnt down in 1946. Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 3, 484.



Nurses in front of Opotiki Hospital. Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 3, 484.



Sister Cameron, the first District Nurse in Opotiki who was appointed in 1920. She founded the Women's Health League and showed great interest in Maori health travelling on horseback up and down the East Coast from Waimana to Cape Runaway. Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 3, 481.

### Information services

An indication of Opotiki's relative importance in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century is that it had two newspapers, the *Opotiki Mail* and the *Opotiki Herald*. These two amalgamated, but the town again had two papers with the establishment of the *East Coast Guardian* in the early 1900s. The newspaper offices undertook commercial printing as well.<sup>79</sup> In 1882 the *Opotiki Herald* was bought by Stuart Bates, at which time the paper was published twice weekly, Bates also serving as editor.<sup>80</sup> In 1919 the *East Coast Guardian*, run by W.B. Scott & Sons, was being published every afternoon.<sup>81</sup>

The Mechanics' Institute, an organisation that established libraries at ports around the country for sailors and the public to use, purchased part of the King to Elliott Sts block of Church St and by 1880 built a substantial weatherboard building on the corner of Church and King Streets. Subsequently, the land was acquired by council and a new public library built.

### Utilities:

#### Water supply

Soon after the Town Board was gazetted in 1882 the amenities included a public pump. Artesian boring began in 1909 but proved to be too expensive. Small windmills are visible in some early photographs, probably for powering personal supply bores as well as the public pump. Otherwise, residents would have been dependent on rain water collected from roofs. Installation of the borough water scheme was in progress in 1915 when a shipment of pipes arrived, but not completed for a few years. A natural water basin above Lewis Falls was dammed, the water piped to Opotiki across the Otara River and a gravity-fed reticulation system installed.<sup>82</sup>

#### Sewerage and waste disposal

Earth closets (outhouses) were in use until a 'nightsoil' depot was established in the sand dunes in 1904. Council took over collection of nightsoil from the contractor in 1912 but it was 1928 before a regular weekly collection was operating. Approval for a sewerage scheme was not given until 1951. The first section came into use in 1956 but construction for the rest of the works was still in progress in 1969.<sup>83</sup> An Imhoff tank for sewerage treatment was installed on the island (Volkner's Island), with a pumping station on the west side of Potts Avenue.

In 1910 a weekly collection of rubbish from shops was agreed to by the Council, but residential collections were much later.

#### Streets, footpaths and drainage

As early as 1897 some parts of Church St were kerbed and channelled, with some asphalt or concrete footpaths. The "surfaceman" spent considerable time keeping the streets clear of weeds. Street construction work within the town was the responsibility of the town board, and later, the borough council. By 1919 footpaths were sealed, in 1922 the main business section of Church St was sealed and by 1939 most residential streets had been sealed. Grazing on the streets was still allowed until 1939 but in daylight hours only.<sup>84</sup>

In 1919 provision was being made for a complete drainage scheme.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>79</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 34

<sup>80</sup> *Their greatness*: 22

<sup>81</sup> Bradbury 1919: 140

<sup>82</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 34

<sup>83</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 60, 61

<sup>84</sup> News article May 8 1979 by Lindsay Clark

<sup>85</sup> Bradbury 1919: 163

## Electricity

Lighting of streets began in 1887 with kerosene lamps, except for the three nights before and after the full moon, and sometimes not in winter. The first electric light was installed in the wharf shed by the Northern Steam Ship Company in 1908.<sup>86</sup> In 1919, a tourist guide book proclaimed "the town is lighted with electricity, this industry being in the hands of a private company".<sup>87</sup> This was an initiative of the OBC, who in 1912 gained a license to erect power lines and facilitated brothers Harold and Wilfrid Letts to establish a gas-engine generating plant in Richard St, Opotiki. The first output of the coal-fuelled plant was in 1914. "The electricity was direct current, and big suction-gas engines ran all day, the light night load being catered for by a huge bank of glass wet-cell storage batteries."<sup>88</sup> In the great flood of March 11, 1918, these batteries were ruined, night power subsequently being supplied by the smallest generator running all night.<sup>89</sup>

The need for rural reticulation was foreseen, and the appreciation of electricity's value was increasing with more and more appliances and electric machinery being developed. Of special importance to the district was the invention of electrically-powered milking machines and water heaters for cowshed use. The government was in the process of creating a national grid, but doubted that the Opotiki district's demand would warrant an early feed from Arapuni. The Minister of Public Works advised the creation of a local power board with a view to more locally-generated power. Consequently, on August 18, 1925, the Bay of Plenty Electric Power District was proclaimed, and its board met for the first time on October 28 1925, with an Inner Area that included Opotiki borough and parts of Opotiki and Whakatane counties. The Outer Area covered the remainder of the counties. At that time the closest point of reticulated supply was Ngongotaha, 100 miles away. The inner area had the direct current supply from the Lett's private company. The generating station was bought by the Board in September 1927 and ran until November 1928 when the reticulation of the Opotiki borough with the national grid was completed and the plant was closed down.<sup>90</sup> As well as the erection of power lines to meet up with the national grid, the re-wiring from direct current to alternating current and the installation of new wiring, electrical appliances and lighting was a major endeavour. The Power Board employed gangs of men in Opotiki and in the rural districts over subsequent decades as the reticulation was extended and had a large support staff in the Opotiki headquarters in Church Street.

The Power Board made its own concrete poles apart from a period in the 1930s when railway lines were used instead. In 1960-61 some of the work was undertaken by Stresscrete Ltd and Roberts Concrete Ltd. The Board bought the Stresscrete plant in 1963 and continued production of poles and other reinforced concrete products.

<sup>86</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 49.

<sup>87</sup> Bradbury 1919: 163

<sup>88</sup> Avery 1975

<sup>89</sup> Avery 1975

<sup>90</sup> Avery 1975: 71

## **F. Providing transport and access**

### **Shipping**

A major factor in Opotiki's settlement by Maori and its development as a European town is its coastal situation with a navigable harbour. Until roads and rail tracks were constructed, it was easier to go by sea, particularly for freight. Opotiki became a major port in the Bay of Plenty, exporting locally-made agricultural and other products and importing goods for local consumption. Initially the port was used for passengers also. Small private jetties and wharves were built along the shore of the Waioeka River backwater along what is now Potts Avenue. Macky built a wharf adjacent to a steamer wharf at the end of Kelly St; the main steamer wharf, often referred to as the cutter wharf, was at the end of Elliott St. In later years the Shalloons built a wharf handy to their King St/Church St corner store. Walker also had a private wharf.

By 1881 the Northern Steamship Co. was providing a weekly service to Auckland. By 1902 they had a regular bi-weekly service Auckland to Opotiki, the trip taking 19-24 hours, compared with 3 days overland. Other services connected Opotiki with Whakatane, Te Puke and Tauranga. The tenders Fingal and Paeroa were used to unload boats such as the *Waiotahi* and the *Terra Nova*, when the water at the bar was too shallow for them to negotiate. They were kept at Opotiki till c. 1905. Boats with shallower draft were put on the run by the Northern Steamship Co., but were still often halted at the bar.

In addition, the Waioeka backwater was slowly silting up and larger vessels were having trouble accessing the cutter wharf. In 1891 the Northern Steamship Company advised that the *SS Waiotahi* would not be able to continue trade until it could dock in high and low tides; it is probable that this pressure encouraged the building of the new wharf, in 1904. Ships the size of *Ngatiawa* (463 tons) frequently berthed there. Extensions and improvements to the wharves and wharf sheds were done in 1913, and again in 1923, 1936 and 1937. The Northern Steamship Co. leased the wharf from the council from 1931. The company had an office in town initially, but later moved to a new building close to the wharf.

The last run by the *SS Ngatiawa* was made on August 31 1922, passenger traffic having dwindled as road and rail services improved. Freight services continued however as a 1923 report stated: "Being a seaport town and the centre of an extensive and rapidly developing district, the volume of shipping that passes over the Opotiki wharves is considerable. The authority administering the harbour is the Opotiki Borough Council.... Until recently, the trade between Opotiki and Auckland was conducted by steamships, but owing to the local conditions, a specially-constructed motor-ship was substituted... the oilship *Motu*...."<sup>91</sup>

The wharf had facilities for loading and off-loading stock, with a race built along one edge. This led to a holding paddock with a shelter shed for pigs.

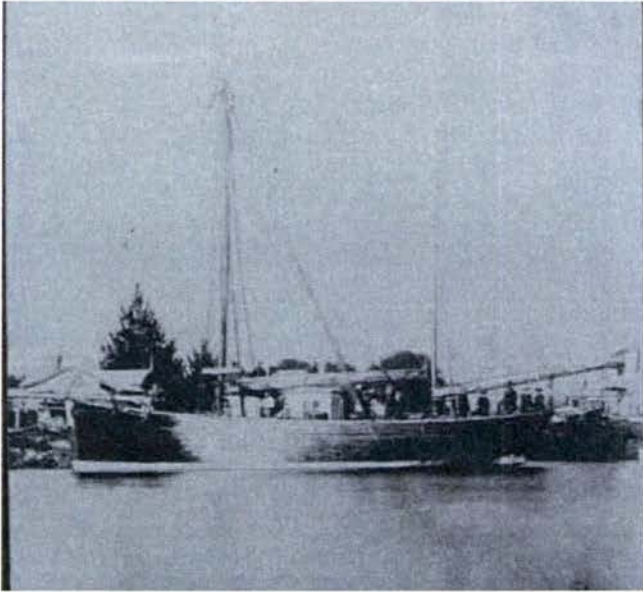
The Marine Department was advised in 1955 that the council wished to retain management of the Opotiki wharf for a further 14 years, but it was evident in 1957 that the shipping service to Opotiki would be discontinued. One of the difficulties was the seasonal shoaling of the harbour, making it difficult to maintain regular schedules. Cargoes subject to deterioration eg butter had to be unloaded and returned to cool storage, involving extra handling charges. The Port of Tauranga provided better facilities and more reliable access. "The last boat out of Opotiki was the *M.V. Tuho*e on August 16, 1957, with no outward cargo."<sup>92</sup> Use of the port was sporadic in its last two years of operation and in 1959 the Northern Steamship Company advised that, because of a decrease in trade it was closing its Opotiki office. The council then used the wharf sheds as its works depot. The sheds and their contents, which included council archives and records, were destroyed by fire on 20 February 1987.

<sup>91</sup> *East Coast Guardian* Dec 1923.

<sup>92</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 49, 61, 86, 34



**Providing transport and access**



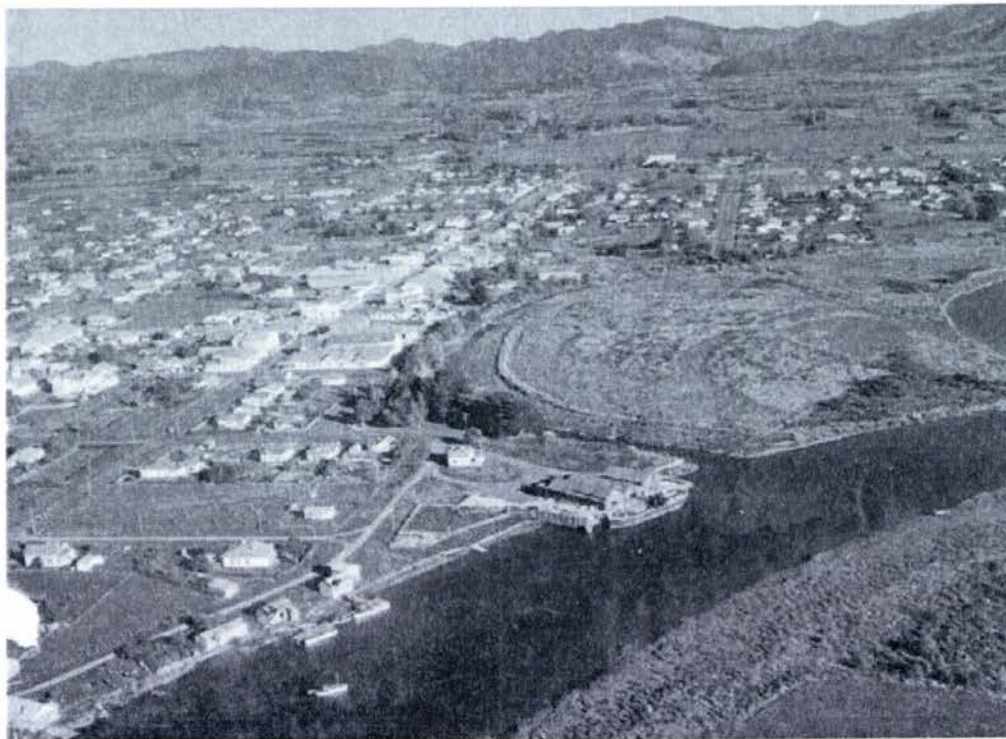
The locally-built schooner "Opotiki" which was owned by W. Kelly in 1872. Small ships like this were owned and sailed by Whakatohea and Pakeha traders. Whakatohea owned at least 19 (possibly 22) named ships between 1840 and 1860. Copy of photograph in Opotiki Library.



View of part of the Opotiki Wharf around 1910. Note the storage sheds and warehouses fronting onto the backwater in the distance, indicating the location of the earlier jetties. Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G- 1310 1/2



Opotiki Wharf c 1920s.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 2, 244.



The wharf while still in its heyday, 1947, showing the triangular holding paddock with shelter shed, the loading race and wharf sheds. Further upstream on the Otara River were jetties, ramp, boatsheds and storage sheds belonging to Walker and Mokomoko. Savage's boatbuilding yards were also in this vicinity. The white building on the circular lawn was the Northern Steamship Co. office.  
Whites Aviation 7281 May 1947; Opotiki Museum Vol 3, 617



### Roads and walking routes

A map produced in October 1857 shows two "roads" going east from Opotiki: one through the ranges to Turanga (Gisborne) and one around East Cape, but none to the west.<sup>93</sup> The inland route, known as Te Kowhai track, was a well-travelled Maori track, local people guiding Rev. William Williams this way during the 1840s.<sup>94</sup> The East Coast route remained little more than a bridal track for many decades.

Early Pakeha travelling to Opotiki from the west by land had to walk (or ride on horseback) from Whakatane to Ohope, cross Ohiwa Harbour by ferry, walk along the shore, ford the Waioeka River and walk in to Opotiki. The walk from Ohiwa to Opotiki took five hours: it involved fording streams and rivers and was best achieved at low tide.<sup>95</sup> The Ohiwa ferry (at various times a canoe, dinghy, punt, or motorized punt) was unreliable. It often depended on locals being bothered to help and the dinghy couldn't take vehicles, horses or stock (they had to swim). In 1873 a regular service was started by Captain J.R. Rushton as a requirement for his opening a hotel at Ohiwa; the service changed hands a few times. With increased use of wheeled vehicles, there was a need for a bigger craft. In 1900 Opotiki County Council became responsible for the management of the ferry, but gave it up by the end of 1915.<sup>96</sup>

In the mid 1860s there were two fords across the Otara River, one near the current bridge, and a ford across the Waioeka River at the end of Ford St, only negotiable at low tide.

Better roads meant wheeled transport was possible: "In the 1890s the Kelly Brothers of Opotiki ran a buggy service from Opotiki to Paengaroa from where [horse-drawn] coaches were available to take the traveller either to Rotorua or Tauranga. The Kelly's main source of income was carrying the mail, and the odd passenger they carried was a bonus....So when the Rotorua Motor Coaching Company expanded their business and began a coaching service to Whakatane and Opotiki, it opened up a new route which became popular, as from Rotorua it was possible to catch a train for Auckland. The first coach on this route ran in late 1906, and initially it ran twice-weekly."<sup>97</sup> By 1911 it was three times per week.

"In 1917 the Rotorua Motor Coaching Company bought three special passenger model Buick cars for the Whakatane-Opotiki route to replace the horse-drawn coaches."<sup>98</sup> In 1919, J. Edwards was running a daily motor service Opotiki-Whakatane-Rotorua with cars; Lovell's Alliance Motor Service was running the Royal Mail Service and taking passengers from Motu to Opotiki, meeting the train at Motu 4 days per week. The drive to Rotorua took 7½ hours. Kelly's stables in King St also ran a mail service and took passengers. Also Dickey and Kelly ran the Opotiki Livery and Bait Stables hiring out saddle horses, buggies and all classes of vehicles. They also did bookings for Black and Gold Motor Car Service which ran from Opotiki to Motuhora.<sup>99</sup> In 1920 the Aard Service of Napier set up agencies in the Bay, and were so successful that other companies were formed: the White Star Service, then also the Duco Service. The Labour Government rationalised the transport industry in 1937 and in 1940 took over local operators, forming the NZ Road Services.<sup>100</sup> NZR utilized the former stables adjacent to the Masonic Hotel from where Newsham had operated a much earlier service. The façade of the Masonic stables fronts on to Church St.

The change of focus from sea transport to roads is traceable in the directories for the district. The 1910 *Directory* lists several occupations related to wheeled and horse transport: blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carters, saddlers, cycle dealer, livery stables, two coach drivers, a

<sup>93</sup> ATL ref A68

<sup>94</sup> Williams, H. C.

<sup>95</sup> E.g. "Traveller" 1873

<sup>96</sup> Van der Wouden 1986

<sup>97</sup> Van der Wouden 1993:34

<sup>98</sup> Van der Wouden 1993p.34-35

<sup>99</sup> Bradbury 1919

<sup>100</sup> Van der Wouden 1993p.34-35

road foreman and a road overseer, but only one each of shipwright, wharfinger (wharf owner), mariner and boat builder. A further change is evident in the 1930 *Directory* that lists several motor garage owners, motor mechanics, motor car and truck dealers, a motorbike shop and a taxi proprietor. Only one boat builder, Valentine Savage, is listed.<sup>101</sup>

Land access was restricted by the rivers surrounding Opotiki. The first bridge serving Opotiki was built by Robert and Charles Abbot in 1874, across the Otara River<sup>102</sup>. It was situated near the showgrounds, and some still found the better alternative was to be rowed across the river in a dinghy.<sup>103</sup> The first bridges across the Waioeka and the Otara Rivers were wooden, on trestle structures which were vulnerable to damage during floods.<sup>104</sup> The Waioeka bridge was often unusable, not helped by the Waioeka's tendency to change course frequently. In 1902 two bridges were necessary to cross the Waioeka, one short one over the backwater and then the main one. The replacement concrete bridge across the Waioeka was opened in December 1927.<sup>105</sup> "In October 1930 J.G. Kerr's tender ... was accepted for the Otara East Bridge".<sup>106</sup> Its replacement was built in 1977. The bridge was the responsibility of the Opotiki County Council.

#### **Air and rail transport**

The first flight to Opotiki, on 12 March 1920, was a sea plane that alighted near the Opotiki wharf. It was bringing the Roman Catholic Bishop, Bishop Cleary, from Auckland, an event that warranted an official mayoral welcome in front of the large crowd gathered at the wharf.<sup>107</sup> At that time it was the longest one-day flight made in New Zealand.

An aerodrome was constructed at Waioeka Domain, but air passenger services were intermittent. Opotiki was included in the airline schedule of Union Airways, using Lockheed Electra aircraft, by mid 1939, but the service ceased with the outbreak of war. Between 1946 and 1954, there were no scheduled or non-scheduled air services operating through the Eastern Bay of Plenty. In 1957, the nearest service to Opotiki was at Whakatane airport. In 1958 the Whakatane service was extended to Opotiki, but this folded on 31 March 1959. By 1953, aerial topdressing services were available; the first helicopter was seen in Opotiki in February 1957. In May 1958 the Opotiki Aero Club was formed as a branch of the Tauranga Aero Club; aircraft and instructors were provided by the Tauranga club. Opotiki aerodrome "remained very much as [it] had been during World War II ... used mainly by local aeroclubs and air charter operators." Opotiki was still a registered civil aerodrome in 1960 and 1970.<sup>108</sup> The current airstrip is located on the former racecourse.

The nearest rail connection is at Taneatua, opened in 1928 when the line was extended from Frankton Junction via Waihi. Another line came from Gisborne to Motu but the intended rail link from Taneatua to Gisborne was never built. Rail and road combined became an easier option than shipping, even for freight, and contributed to the demise of Port Opotiki.

<sup>101</sup> *Directory...* 1910

<sup>102</sup> Cresswell 2003: 99

<sup>103</sup> Du Pontet ms : 3

<sup>104</sup> Photos: Waioeka Bridge ATL 1303 ½; Otara Bridge ATL 1299 ½; APGG1011

<sup>105</sup> Photo Waioeka Bridge ATL APGG1003

<sup>106</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 78

<sup>107</sup> Watson [1990]: 75

<sup>108</sup> Averes 1985



Horse drawn wagons provided early road transport. This wagon laden with wool bales is using a stream bed as an easier route.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 2, 249c.



Road access was not always easy. Shown here is the road between Toatoa and Motu.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 3, 410





Eldon Graham (standing in front) with his 1914 Daimler Truck. Graham bought the truck for transporting water pipes from the wharf to the Otara water supply for town reticulation, but as seen here it served as passenger transport. On Boxing Day 1915 the truck rolled off the road in the Waimana Gorge into the river, killing Graham and Mr Tressider. Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 3, 427.



The wooden Waioeka Bridge, built in 1890 by Charles Abbot. Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 1 17

## **G. Working - Industry and Commerce**

With the sudden influx of people needing goods and services, Opotiki's development as a centre for a rural district began from 1865. Private enterprise thrived almost from the start of the military occupation, traders and entrepreneurs recognising the opportunities. On 15 September 1865 Thomas Black and William Kelly landed sheep at Opotiki, while George Simpkins was the first merchant to establish his business by 2 October. Small coastal vessels began to call to supply the new European settlement and were soon able to unload at the new main wharf at the end of Elliott St. William Geoghan set up a bakery, Mr Macky built another wharf, and the Wharf Hotel was built across the road from it. John P. Parkinson tried selling beef but no-one had any cash. By 1868 there were two hotels (the Wharf and the Masonic), a large store run by William Kelly, a post office, a corrugated iron hospital and a number of houses and raupo whares.

### **Early businesses**

By the 1880s the town had two halls (the Settlers and the Town Hall), a high school, a bank, three hotels with accommodation and several retail shops.<sup>109</sup> Comparing an 1880 list of businesses in Church St with directories of 1910 and 1930 shows the development of the commercial area and the increased range of commodities and services available, a greater number of shops, lawyers and land agents. Speciality shops appear instead of general shops, and more businesses are in competition offering the same products and services.

### **Early industry**

Early minor industries were a lemonade and cordial factory (1867), bakeries, a brewery (by 1873), a flour mill (1877-c.1890), brick making, sawmills and shipbuilding. In 1919 coachbuilding and furniture manufacturing were noted as primary industries.<sup>110</sup> Later industries have included Michael Brothers factory and mill (skewers, broom handles, tees), clothing factories eg Nagels Creations Ltd and Millar Apparel Ltd, the Opotiki Footwear Co., Coast Biologicals Ltd, Opotiki Fruit Growers Association and other packhouses and cool stores, concrete products, bacon and ham processing, sawmilling and an ice-cream factory.

Opotiki's economic development was agriculture-based, initially horticulture based on wheat, maize plus some tobacco, but by the mid-1890s dairying took hold. Opotiki became a service town for the region's farmers, as well as the port for export and import of goods and produce. Stock and station agents opened retail stores and offices for their stock agents and insurance agents. Dalgety's had a large warehouse and store in Elliott St (extant) and the NZ Loan & Mercantile Agency Co. took over the Town Hall on St John St/Elliott St corner. When this burnt down it was replaced with a more substantial building of permanent materials and was expanded several times, an indication of its success and value to the rural community. Wright Stephenson's at one time occupied the Alhambra Theatre (now United Video) on Church St.

Businesses such as Bridgers and later the Farmers' Trading Co. stocked a wide range of clothing, hardware and home merchandise; the Loan & Merc. sold seed, saddlery, harness, farm equipment and farming supplies while Torrens General Merchants was partly in competition with each.

The Bank of New Zealand established an agency in temporary premises on 30 Dec 1875, and following the purchase of the land on the corner of Church and Elliott Sts, a more substantial building was completed with living accommodation for the agent in early 1877. In August 1914 a new brick and concrete two-storey bank building was opened, one of several structures built at this period that reflected the increasing affluence of Opotiki and its importance as a service centre for the farming district.

<sup>109</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 49

<sup>110</sup> Bradbury 1919

### **Farming and harvesting**

Until 1866, all locally produced wheat was Maori grown. Production had declined because of over-cropping; Pakeha settlers grew the same crops and also over-cropped. Diseases came in, and sparrows, first seen in Opotiki in 1875, also affected production. The Whakatohea flour mill was re-built by Charles Brockett in 1877, and despite being considerably damaged in a flood early in 1878, it operated for at least ten years. At other times wheat was shipped to Auckland for milling and some brought back for consumption. The last wheat was grown in Opotiki during the First World War.<sup>111</sup>

In the 1890s the price of maize fell. Dairying seemed a viable option with improvements in milking technology and hygiene, and overseas markets made more viable with the advent of refrigerated shipping. On 6 March 1895 it was decided to form the Opotiki Dairy Association. The Opotiki dairy factory was soon in operation with 15 suppliers. Until 1902, the factory manufactured cheese but later changed to butter. Before long, Opotiki was predominantly a dairying district. By 1905, the arable land was nearly all improved, bush country was being opened up and farming was prosperous. In 1937-38 the Opotiki dairy factory had the second-highest output in the Bay of Plenty/ East Coast region.<sup>112</sup>

Between 1885 and 1906 goods exported included wheat, cheese, butter, other dairy products, flax and tow, maize, cattle, bones, sheep, horses, potatoes and chaff.<sup>113</sup> In 1919 the primary industries were maize, stock fattening and dairying. Maize yields were high and of good quality due to the fertile alluvial soil and the climate. Sheep were reared on gently sloping land but were mostly inland on steeper country.

Fruit growing is a relatively recent industry for the area, with little commercial growing in the late 1930s.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Van der Wouden, Anton 1984

<sup>112</sup> Bradbury 1939

<sup>113</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977*: 49

<sup>114</sup> Bradbury 1939





Ploughing on a local farm.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 3, 419.



Stacking hay using a grab, on Talbot's farm, Paerata Ridge or Kutarere, during World War I.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 2, 227



Shalfoon Bros Store on the corner of Kelly Street and Church Street is one of the earliest and most enduring family businesses in Opotiki.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph archive, Vol 2, 24.



New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Co. Ltd. These timber buildings, on the corner of Elliott Street and St John's Street, burnt down in April 1928.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph archive, Vol 2, 271.



Offices of Johnstone and Hammon Land Estate Agents in King Street, thought to be built in 1912. Opotiki District Council Photograph archive, Vol 2, 275

## ***H. Developing Cultural Institutions and Ways of Life***

### **Spiritual needs**

After the events of 1865 the Anglican and Roman Catholic missions faltered in their service to Maori parishioners, The Catholic chapel was used initially for imprisoning Maori prisoners-of-war, and later as a venue for dances and other entertainment. It was burnt down, possibly the result of arson. St Stephen's church, as the only substantial building, had become the blockhouse and lock-up within a defensive ditch and bank, a situation not conducive to holding church services. Through the 1870s church services were re-established, but to serve the new mixed, predominantly European, community. Pai Marire (Hauhau) was still predominant amongst the Maori communities in the district. As the new community became more diverse other denominations were established: Presbyterian 1873, Salvation Army 1896 and Methodist early 1900s. A Presbyterian Maori mission was established in 1920. By 1936, Ringatu had become the predominant denomination among Maori.

The town centre retains many of its early churches and church halls including St Stephen's church in Church Street; St John's church in St John Street, the Presbyterian church in Ford Street; the Salvation Army Barracks in King Street, and the Maori Mission Hall (former Temperance Union hall) in Elliott Street. The Methodist Church in the southern area of town, built in 1911 from bricks made at the Opotiki brick kiln, is now a private residence. These buildings provide further evidence of the size and consolidation of the community in the decades around the turn of the 20th Century. The longevity of the Roman Catholic parish is represented by the old schoolrooms on Grey Street, the old church having been condemned after being damaged in April 1968 by a tropical storm and the convent, a large two-storey wooden building in Kelly St, being replaced by a more modern (and convenient) structure in 1973.<sup>115</sup>

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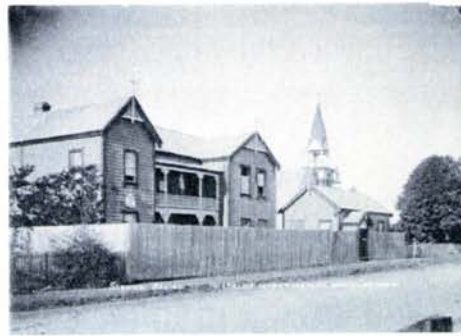
<sup>115</sup> Watson [1990]



**DEVELOPING CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND WAYS OF LIFE**



St Stephen's Church, built in 1862-64, replaced an early raupo church on the same site. Opotiki District Council Photo Archive. Vol 1, 6



Left: The earliest Roman Catholic church made of raupo, on approximately the same site as the later St Joseph's Church.

Opotiki District Council Photograph archive.

Right: View of St Joseph's Catholic Church and the two-storey convent building which used to be in Kelly Street, next to the cemetery.

Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G – 1306 1/2



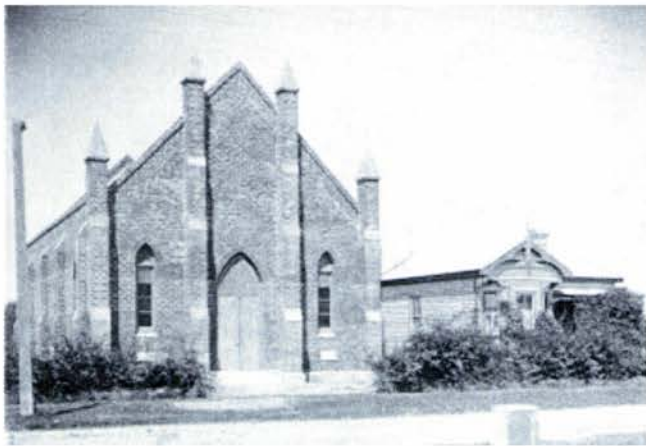
St John's Church built in 1909.

Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 2, 380.





Salvation Army Barracks built in 1898 in King Street.  
Alexander Turnbull Library 1931/2



The Methodist Church in Ford Street was built in 1911.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 2, 270.



Former Temperance Union Hall, later the Maori Mission Hall in King Street

### Community organisations and clubs

Like every other New Zealand town, Opotiki has hosted a variety of clubs and societies, whether these were formed for pleasure and relaxation, from common interests, patriotic fervour or altruistic motives. World War One prompted clubs for fundraising and patriotism, for instance the Opotiki Girls' Anzac Club and the Patriotic Committee. In February 1916, between 50 and 60 girls gathered under the auspices of the Opotiki Girls' Anzac Club, bringing with them 70 pairs of socks collected for soldiers serving overseas.<sup>116</sup>

The Country Women's Institute movement started in the Bay of Plenty in 1929, and became so popular that a separate eastern federation was established in 1934.<sup>117</sup> The Opotiki Women's Institute held a monthly meeting of its gardening circle during the 1930s at which talks were delivered and competitions were held. In 1933, the competition for a gentleman's buttonhole was won by Miss M. Thompson, the secretary, who had just resigned pending her marriage.<sup>118</sup>

The first company of Girl Guides began in the 1930s, the members being involved in community work and support.

### Schooling

A school for Opotiki was mooted in 1872. It was to be a native school, but ended up being approved as a mixed school, centrally funded through the native affairs department, an unusual arrangement. The school opened in April 1872 in a building near the wharf with a roll of 65 children only one of whom was Maori. The school's status was changed to a provincial school, to the concern of the Ngati Ira hapu of Whakatohea, who subsequently funded their own school in 1879.<sup>119</sup>

The main Opotiki school opened its new building in 1873, expanding rapidly in pupil numbers and with additional rooms. In 1878 the school became the Opotiki District School. By 1919 the roll was 265. From 1901 - 1922 the school had students until Form 3, children wanting further education having to travel to Whakatane or further afield to a boarding school. From February 1922 the school became a district high school with a secondary department of 32 pupils. "The school was forced into leasing various halls around the town to accommodate the secondary department and at various times classes were held in St Mary's, Masonic, Drill and St John's halls. Relief came in 1939 when eight acres of land...were purchased...". The new buildings for the secondary school were opened in 1941.<sup>120</sup>

In 1890 the Roman Catholic parish opened a fee-paying school, St Mary's, with 12 pupils, and St Joseph's School with 32 pupils. In September 1891 a boarding facility was opened. New school buildings were opened in December 1894 and 1919. High school classes opened in 1902 but closed in 1920, as did St Mary's. Pupils continued at St Joseph's, which celebrated its centenary in 1990.<sup>121</sup>

In the Mataatua kohanga reo district, which includes Opotiki, there were 15 kohanga established between 1982 and 86, and 38 established between 1986 and 1991.

### Sport and recreation

Horse racing was under way by August 1866; both Maori and Pakeha participated.<sup>122</sup> By 1891 Opotiki had a jockey and racing club.<sup>123</sup> The racecourse used to be at the aerodrome,

<sup>116</sup> *Auckland Weekly News* Feb. 24 1916: 56.

<sup>117</sup> Caverhill, in CWI\*\* : 3

<sup>118</sup> OHASM scrapbook :21

<sup>119</sup> *Opotiki Primary School*: 18.

<sup>120</sup> *ibid*

<sup>121</sup> Watson [1990]

<sup>122</sup> Cresswell 2003: 98

<sup>123</sup> McKinnon pl.54a

the wooden totalisator building remaining of this early history. The grandstand is reputed to live on as part of the grandstand at the rugby grounds and in a King St shop.

James White, one of the local businessmen in partnership with Abbot in a general store, was a renowned athlete and rower. White was part-Maori, born in Whakatane in 1850.<sup>124</sup>

In 1919, there was a gun club, two bowling clubs, tennis, rowing, golf clubs and the Opotiki Jockey Club. Shooting, surf-casting and trout-fishing were popular, with catches being plentiful. In 1923 croquet was played, but was not as popular as tennis or bowls. Cricket was languishing also, but "Rugby football and hockey flourish during the winter, Opotiki being frequently the scene of important matches".<sup>125</sup> In 1939 the range of sports clubs included hockey, tennis, surf, rifle, golf, rowing, athletics and cycling. The cricket reserve and the showgrounds were venues for the field sports. Several of these clubs were formed by the early 1900s.

The school baths were in the Otaru River in 1902.<sup>126</sup> St Joseph's acquired their swimming pool in 1990.

Fishing from the wharves and jetties has long been a popular pastime, enjoyed by Dorothy Du Pontet as a child in the early 1900s and continuing today<sup>127</sup>. Another sport based at the wharf was jumping from the roofs of the sheds into the river. The water was deep, but the jump needed to be a long one to clear the wharf. Walker, who owned one of the jetties upstream from the wharf, took people for fishing trips.<sup>128</sup> Sailing has also been popular, with the Opotiki Yacht Club having its clubrooms at the main wharf.

#### **Social life, arts and entertainment**

A notable event enjoyed by the community was the arrival of the first plane, a sea plane bearing the Roman Catholic Bishop, Bishop Cleary, on 12 March 1920. This entailed an official mayoral welcome in front of a large crowd gathered at the wharf, speeches, entertainment at the Catholic School, and in the evening a social at the Opotiki Hotel.<sup>129</sup>

A town hall was built on the corner of St John and Elliott Streets by 1880. It was used for meetings, dances and concerts until it was bought by the NZ Loan & Mercantile Agency. The idea for the hall was mooted in 1874, the initiative coming from businessmen and other members of the community, who wanted "a commodious venue for public purposes".<sup>130</sup> For the first ball given by the Opotiki Mounted Rifles, on August 10, 1901, the Town Hall was decorated with bayonets, rifles and ramrods "formed into artistic designs on the wall" supplemented with bunting from the SS *Waiotahi*. Supper was laid on tables on the stage, 30 couples at a time being seated, and with 80 couples having supper.<sup>131</sup> Other community and church halls such as St Stephen's Parish Hall have provided venues for social events, club meetings, temporary accommodation and gymnastic activities.

Opotiki had five cinemas or theatres, the earliest being King's Theatre in King St, opened by 1910.<sup>132</sup> Films were first shown there, then in the Alhambra in Church St run by the Kings by 1919. The Alhambra was still listed in the 1928 Directory; it showed films, was the venue for

<sup>124</sup> *Cyclopedia* : 949

<sup>125</sup> *East Coast Guardian* Dec. 1923

<sup>126</sup> *Opo 1877* : 49

<sup>127</sup> Du Pontet ms

<sup>128</sup> Comment: Percy Newell

<sup>129</sup> *Celebration and memories*: 75

<sup>130</sup> *Opotiki 1877-1977* : 14 (quoting 1874 *Bay of Plenty Times* article).

<sup>131</sup> Du Pontet and McCallion : 47

<sup>132</sup> The Alhambra may pre-date King's Theatre, as one report states Methodist services were held there prior to the building of their church, 1909. The early history of the Alhambra, King's, the Settlers Hall and the Temperance Union Hall requires further research and clarification.

a fundraising concert for the Red Cross and held a ball there. The Regent was built on the east side of Church St in 1926; it showed films, hosted live shows and boxing matches. The De Luxe Theatre, built by the Shalfoon brothers also in 1926 and at one time called the Regent, also had live shows including a Maori cabaret in aid of orphans at Turangawaewae marae in Ngaruawahia. The Lyric Theatre operated in the Oddfellows Hall by 1915 at least.

Four of these buildings remain in central Opotiki.<sup>133</sup> The De Luxe is the best preserved of the old theatres, having undergone extensive renovations in recent years, and the only one to continue its original function.

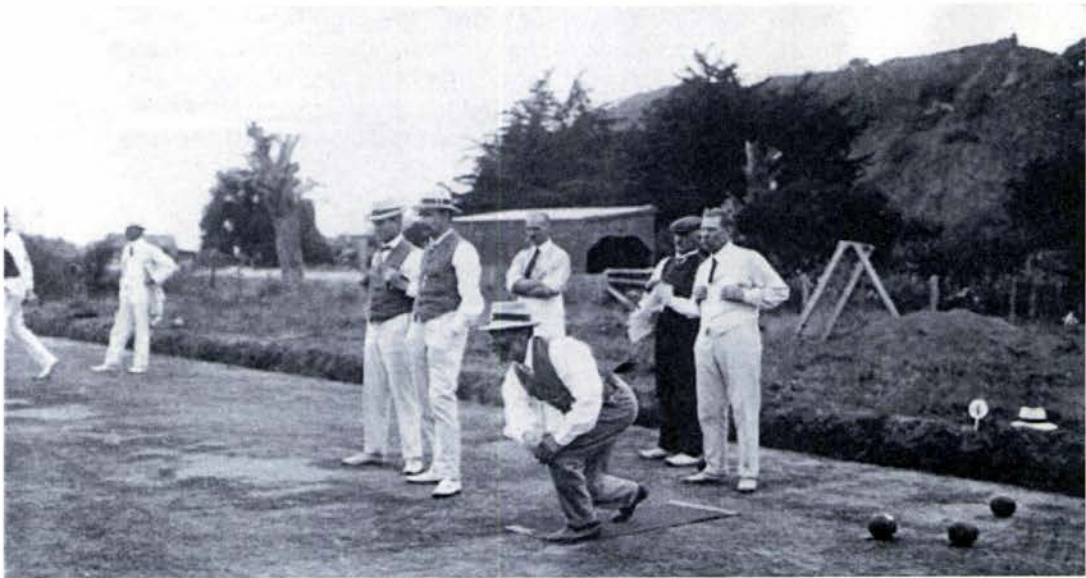
The ocean beach was a 40-minute walk from town and a favourite place for picnic parties. Until an eruption caused fatalities on the island, White Island was also a popular place for excursions.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> The fate of the Lyric has not been researched.

<sup>134</sup> Bradbury 1919: 171, 173





Opotiki Bowling Club. Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 2, 251.



Day trip to White Island in the 1910s.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 1, 192



The Opotiki Brass band around 1904. Opotiki District Council Photographic Archive Vol 1 145.



Epi Shalfoon and the Melody Boys.

Epi Shalfoon, the son of George and Raria Shalfoon, formed the Melody Boys band in the 1920s. They played at dances in Opotiki, then further afield in Gisborne and Tauranga. Epi married Yvonne Hawkins whose parents owned the Opotiki Hotel, and he eventually set up a full time music career. They moved to Rotorua, where they formed two bands and opened a music shop, and then to Auckland where he played at the Orange Hall and the Crystal Palace.

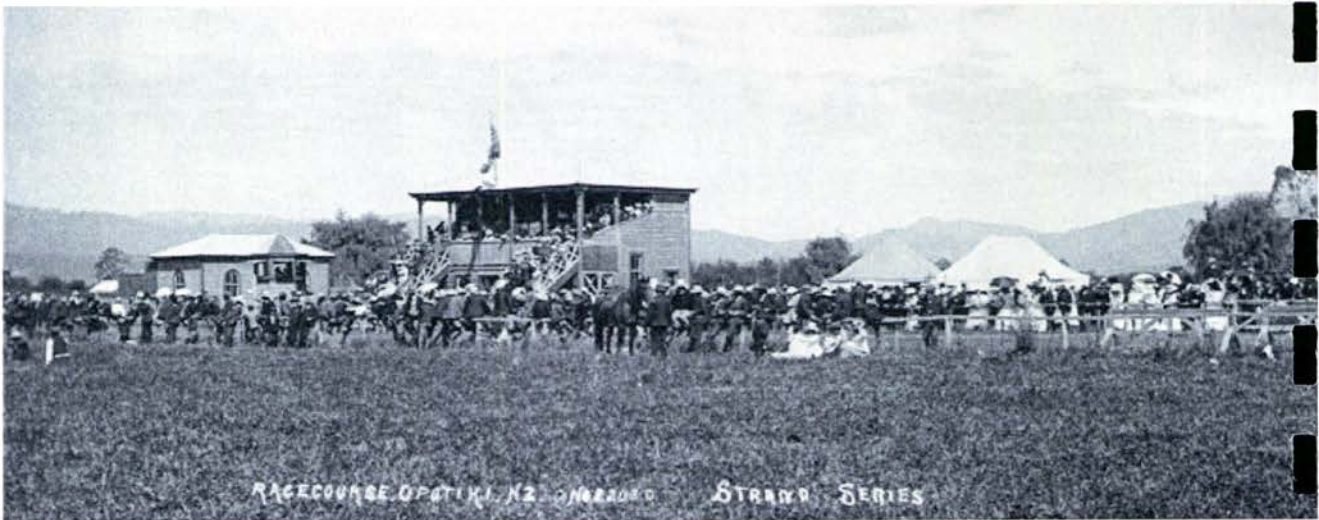
Back row: Cliff Roe, Bill Young, Jimmy Parkinson, Tony Shalfoon; Front: Epi Shalfoon, Jack Ross, Terry O'Sullivan.

Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive Vol 2, 286.





A & P show in Opotiki in 1907, held in the Police Paddock which is now the school grounds.  
Opotiki District Council Photograph Archive, Vol 1, 165.



The Opotiki Racecourse grandstand on race day in the 1910s.  
Alexander Turnbull Library, W A Price Collection G- 1208 ½

### 5.3 *TIMELINE*

- 1834 Piripi Taumatakura one of first Christian missionaries in Opotiki
- 1839 December: John Wilson arrived
- 1840 March: Bishop Pompallier arrived, several hundred converts
- 1840 May: Treaty of Waitangi signed by 7 Opotiki chiefs
- 1840 June: William Colenso visited
- 1841 March Roman Catholic chapel finished; Father Rozet at Roman Catholic mission
- 1842 visit by Bishop Selwyn and Chief Justice Martin
- 1843 raupo chapel for Church Missionary Society, on site of St Stephen's church
- 1843 Whakatohea own ships and shipbuilding yards
- 1844 visit by Bishop Selwyn
- 1849 William W.A. Hooper, shipwright, settled in Opotiki
- 1850 Mill Hill fathers take over Roman Catholic mission
- 1852 Wilson left, replaced by Rev. Thomas Davis
- 1855 Davis left, annual visits by Archdeacon Brown
- 1858 Opotiki part of Diocese of Waiapu, under Bishop William Williams
- 1858 Whakatohea offer contract for construction of a water-powered flour mill
- 1862 Rev Volkner appointed to Opotiki Parish; bought 2 small pieces of land, one being for vicarage called Peria; Bridson and Wilson began to build St Stephen's Hiona
- 1863 brothers Morris and Samuel Levy settled in Opotiki as traders
- 1863 beginning of Waikato wars
- 1864 church finished; Sir Julius von Haast visited
- 1864 party of Whakatohea prevented from joining war in the Waikato
- 1865 Father Garavel left
- 1865 February: Kereopa and Parata at Pakowhai, converted many to Hauhau faith, niu pole erected at Pakowhai
- 1865 March: death of Volkner
- 1865 September: invasion by government troops, occupation by troops
- 1865 first court hearing in Opotiki
- 1866 January: proclamation of land confiscation
- 1866 first official post office, in a tent
- 1866 survey of Opotiki township
- 1866 Bay of Plenty Volunteer Cavalry formed
- 1867 March-April: first hearing of the Compensation Court for land claims
- 1867 July: John P. Parkinson's first batch of local cordial sold
- 1867 wives and children of militiamen arrive
- 1868 June: visit by Governor of New Zealand, Sir George Bowen
- 1868 first hospital built
- 1869 Armed Constabulary in residence
- 1871 money order and savings bank facilities provided by Post office
- 1874 first permanent post office building
- 1874 telegraph services available
- 1877 Whakatane County Council formed in Opotiki
- 1877 Bank of New Zealand built
- 1878 major flood
- 1882 Opotiki Town Board formed
- 1886 June 10: eruption of Mt Tarawera
- 1887 two firebells purchased
- 1887 lighting of streets with kerosene lamps
- 1899 Opotiki County Council formed
- 1890 arrival of Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions; opening of St Mary's and St Joseph's schools
- 1901 postal deliveries within Opotiki
- 1902 Roman Catholic high school opened



- 1904 new wharf built
- 1904 major flood
- 1904 Opotiki Hotel burnt down, new one built
- 1908 telephone exchange
- 1908 first electric light, in the wharf shed
- 1908 the *Ngatiawa* was grounded on the Opotiki bar, captain died
- 1911 Opotiki Borough Council replaces Town Board
- 1911 February: post office destroyed by fire
- 1913 major fire: 10 businesses between Royal Hotel and Strand Arcade destroyed
- 1914 private electricity generating plant, some reticulation to homes, schools
- 1914 beginning of First World War, many local men enlist
- 1918 Major fire: Masonic Hotel
- 1918 major flood
- 1918 November: end of WWI; influenza epidemic at its worst
- 1919 major floods
- 1920 first flight into Opotiki, a sea-plane
- 1922 August 31: last passenger service from Opotiki wharf, on *SS Ngatiawa*
- 1925 establishment of Bay of Plenty Electric Power Board
- 1928 connection to national electricity supply, reticulation with AC to homes, farms, milking sheds
- Late 1920s-early 30s the great depression, Opotiki County Council staff redundancies, wages cut
- 1937 schools close because of infantile paralysis
- 1939 45 World War II; many men away in services, Home Guard operating in Opotiki
- 1948 schools did not open at beginning of year because of infantile paralysis
- 1957 May: major flood
- 1957 August 16: *MV Tuhoë* was last ship from Opotiki wharf
- 1960 February: flood
- 1963 first schools music festival in Opotiki
- 1964 March: major flood
- 1968 April: tropical storm, Roman Catholic Church condemned
- 1973 merger of Opotiki County Council and Opotiki Borough Council to form new Opotiki County Council
- 1984 new bus terminal
- 1986 old post office building demolished
- 1987 20 February: fire destroyed all the wharf sheds
- 1987 local body restructuring to form Opotiki District Council
- 1987 Opotiki District Council formed
- 1989 Bay of Plenty Regional Council (Environment Bay of Plenty) formed
- 1994 Crown pardon to Whakatohea; Waitangi Tribunal settlement

## **6.0 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF HISTORIC HERITAGE IN OPOTIKI TOWN CENTRE**

### **6.1 METHODOLOGY**

The process of identifying and assessing heritage resources in Opotiki Town Centre has involved two key steps:

- Establishing the criteria or values to assess heritage places
- Establishing the methodology to identify heritage places

A previous Built Heritage Assessment study prepared by Kingston Morrison for Opotiki District Council in 1997 provided a starting point to consider places that had been identified as significant based on preliminary information, and required further research to assess their heritage significance more fully.

Detailed criteria for assessing heritage values and places in the Bay of Plenty region have been developed by Environment Bay of Plenty. These criteria are based on the identification of six key qualities which contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures which are set out in the Resource Management Act. The criteria in the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) are organised to assist with assessing each of the six qualities of historic heritage. The RPS also includes a set of generic values which should be applied in the assessments of historic heritage.

The consistent use of these assessment criteria by local authorities to assess historic heritage throughout the Bay of Plenty region is a key aim of the RPS. These criteria have been used to assess historic heritage in Opotiki town centre as part of this study. The criteria have been used to summarise the significance of the town centre as a whole (in the preparation of a summary statement of significance) and have also been used to assess individual places based on detailed research. The criteria have been used as the basis for developing the field record forms.

The thematic overview prepared for Opotiki provides a way of interpreting heritage values within a broader context and looking at the full range of types of heritage that may exist. The use of a thematic approach provides an understanding of the key themes in the historic development of the centre and a context for identifying places that represent those themes. It enables a better balance between "representative" and "iconic" places, and provides a useful tool in reviewing existing inventories.

The historic heritage assessment criteria contained in the RPS include generic values which relate to key aspects of the historic area or place which are important to consider when assessing significance:

#### **PERIOD**

*The development sequence of a place or area, the likely age, duration of use or chronology of a place or area.*

#### **RARITY OR SPECIAL FEATURES**

*The unique, uncommon or rare features of a place or area*

#### **INTEGRITY**

*The condition, quality and state of original features of a place or area. Comparison with other examples of its class. The quality of any restoration, addition or modification of the place or area.*

**REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*The characteristics and relationship of the place or area to other places or areas in its class, for example in respect of design, type, features, technology, use, activity, location or origin.*

**CONTEXT OR GROUP VALUE**

*Association with other places, areas or elements of its context. Association with and illustration of broad patterns of history. Places or areas in which evidence of the association or event survives in situ, or in which settings are substantially intact.*

**DIVERSITY (FORM AND FEATURES)**

*The characteristics, diversity and pattern of a place or area. The cultural influences which have affected the form and components of a place or area. Form, scale, colour, texture, and materials. The historical context of the place or area with particular reference to the ways in which it has been influenced by historical forces or has itself influenced the course of history.*

**FRAGILITY OR VULNERABILITY**

*The components, form and structure of the place or area and the effect of this on its survival. Its vulnerability to deterioration or destruction. The degree to which it is threatened and its context in terms of protection and services.*

In addition to the preceding generic criteria, the following specific criteria relate to each of the six qualities of historic heritage identified in the RMA:

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL QUALITIES**

**Information**

*The potential of the place or area to define or expand knowledge of earlier human occupation, activities or events through investigation using archaeological methods.*

**Research**

*The potential of the place or area to provide evidence to address archaeological research questions.*

**Recognition or Protection**

*The place or area is registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust for its archaeological values, or it is recorded by the New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Recording Scheme, or it is an archaeological site as defined by the Historic Places Act 1993.*

**ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES**

**Style or Type**

*The style of the building is representative of a significant development period in the region or the nation. The building or structure is associated with a significant activity (for example institutional, industrial, commercial, or transportation.)*

**Design**

*The building or structure has distinctive or special attributes of an aesthetic or functional nature. These may include massing, proportion, materials, detail, fenestration, ornamentation, artwork, functional layout, landmark status or symbolic value.*

**Construction**

*The building or structure uses unique or uncommon building materials or demonstrates an innovative method of construction, or is an early example of the use of a particular building technique.*

**Designer or Builder**

*The building or structure's architect, designer, engineer or builder was a notable practitioner or made a significant contribution to the region or the nation.*

**CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE**

**Sentiment**

*The place or area is important as a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment.*

**Identity**

*The place or area is a context for community identity or sense of place, and provides evidence of cultural or historical continuity.*

**Amenity or Education**

*The place or area has symbolic or commemorative significance to the people who use or have used it, or to the descendants of such people. The interpretive capacity of the place or area and its potential to increase understanding of past lifestyles or events.*

**HISTORIC QUALITIES**

**Associative Value**

*The place or area has a direct association with, or relationship to, a person, group, institution, event or activity that is of historical significance to the Bay of Plenty or the nation.*

**Historical Pattern**

*The place or area is associated with broad patterns of local or national history including development and settlement patterns, early or important transportation routes, social and economic trends and activities.*

**SCIENTIFIC QUALITIES**

**Information**

*The potential for the place or area to contribute information about a historic figure, event, phase or activity.*

**Potential – Scientific Research**

*The degree to which the place or area may contribute further information and the importance of the data involved its rarity, quality or representativeness.*

**TECHNOLOGICAL QUALITIES**

**Technical Achievement**

*The place or area shows a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular time or is associated with scientific or technical achievements.*



## **6.2 SUMMARY STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

### **SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR OPOTIKI TOWN CENTRE**

Opotiki town centre represents an amazing layering of the area's rich cultural history. Many important historic strands that have shaped New Zealand as a whole are represented in the development of Opotiki and can still be seen in its surviving built fabric and layout. The history of Opotiki is evidenced in physical and material remains, represented by archaeological sites and historic buildings and other structures. Studying the architecture of the town's buildings reveals evidence of different phases of its history. The history is known also through people's memories, through traditions, through stories passed on within whanau and hapu, clubs and church groups and through the records of local individuals, councils, businesses and organizations.

The significance of Opotiki town centre has been assessed and summarised using the applicable heritage criteria in the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement. The same set of criteria has been used to assess each building or place on the individual record forms, which are contained in Part Two.

### **NATURAL CHARACTER**

Opotiki is situated on flat land within a loop of the Otara River which flows on the east, north and northwest of the town then merges with the Waioeka River which flows on the west of the town. Until a few decades ago, a side channel of the Waioeka flowed much closer to the town (beside Potts Avenue) around a low-lying island, but this channel is now filled in. The two tidal rivers together form a natural harbour which opens to the sea about 1 km away. The harbour was sometimes referred to as River Opotiki. Once the continually-shifting sand bar at the entrance is negotiated, there is easy access by sea around the East Cape to Gisborne, Tauranga and Auckland. The Otara, Waioeka and other rivers provided routes inland for transport and communication. They also provided freshwater resources such as eels, fish, birds, mussels, raupo and flax. The proximity to rivers and sea, and proximity to fertile land influenced both Maori and later European settlement and development of the area.

### **HISTORIC QUALITIES**

#### **Associative Value**

Abundant resources and easy access via rivers and along the coast, made this area one of the most densely populated areas of Maori settlement in the Bay of Plenty. Maori oral traditions record that several canoes arrived in the Bay of Plenty direct from Hawai'i (Eastern Polynesia) and that people from the Nukutere, Mataatua and other waka settled in the Opotiki district. Their descendents now identify as the iwi Whakatohea. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century and possibly much earlier a large village called Pakowhai (Pa Kowhai) existed in what is now Opotiki Township. Several defensible pa were located in the vicinity of Pakowhai and the alluvial plains were covered with well-built villages and extensive cultivations. Opotiki grew from this Maori settlement, which was the key reason for the establishment of Anglican and Catholic missions in the early 1840s. Early production of wheat, flour milling and shipbuilding were significant early industries in which Whakatohea played a major role between 1840 and 1860.

The social history of Opotiki can be divided into two widely different phases focussed on the year 1865: life for Opotiki's residents was vastly different before and after this date.

Early contact between Maori and Christian missionaries has influenced the physical development of Opotiki. Its surviving early Anglican mission church, Hiona St Stephen's, became pivotal in the development of Opotiki. The killing of Rev. Carl Volkner in 1865, the subsequent alienation of the local Whakatohea people and the settlement of Opotiki by militia settlers and their families radically changed the development of the town. Opotiki was surveyed and laid out after the arrival of government military forces and the subsequent confiscation of land to enable allocation of land to militia men in return for service. The existing street layout and town plan resulted from the survey undertaken at this time.

Opotiki's first years as a European settlement were as part of the military frontier of the colonial government. Opotiki provided a base for troop movements, with newly-built wharves allowing relatively easy sea access for people and supplies. The town's growth depended strongly on its coastal location, especially as agricultural development in the surrounding districts resulted in large quantities of maize, wheat, dairy products, wool and other produce requiring export. The port facilities grew, and Opotiki became a service centre for the rural communities, not just providing commercial services but social, recreational and religious activities as well. Government agencies and local bodies had their bases in Opotiki as the largest town in the district.

Seeking redress for the confiscation of land has been a significant strand in the historic development of Opotiki. Whakatohea's protests against the loss of their land were initiated as early as 1867. Whakatohea issues were included in the 1907, 1921 and 1928 commissions of enquiry with unsatisfactory results. A partial settlement was made in 1946 and the Whakatohea Maori Trust Board was established to administer this. With the compensation money, loans, and efficient farming, the Board purchased some land back but it was not until 1993 after a hearing by the Waitangi Tribunal that a substantial financial compensation settlement was made. Perhaps more importantly, the Crown issued an apology for the attack on Whakatohea, the devastation of their property and confiscation of their land.

The establishment of the military settlement in Opotiki provided the impetus for the establishment of a resident European population and growth of the commercial town centre. Military forces left Opotiki in the 1880s.

The development of the town since has followed broadly similar patterns in other towns and cities throughout New Zealand that grew as service centres for rural areas engaged in primary production. Increases in the local economy led to the steady consolidation of the town centre, replacement of simple early buildings with more substantial ones in permanent materials, and the growth of cultural and social institutions to provide for the local community.

The remote location of Opotiki with access primarily by sea during its early development also created the need for self sufficiency and provision of a strong service base.

Opotiki has important associations with smaller coastal communities in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, with inland communities such as Waioeka Pa, Waimana, Taneatua, and Kawerau, and with Gisborne and Whakatane.

#### **Historical Pattern**

The relationship to the rivers is an important characteristic of this centre, with early bridges and the wharf providing evidence of the development of transport infrastructure.

Opotiki is strongly defined by the survival of a variety of building types including shops, as well as early store buildings, churches, halls and historic houses in or close to the mainstreet shopping precinct (see Map 1).

St Stephen's Church and early commercial development close to the Church and wharf formed the commercial heart of the community, which expanded progressively south along Church Street as the population grew.

Opotiki demonstrates in its built fabric the progressive development of the area as an important town centre from the 1860s onwards. There was a significant period of built development around the turn of the 20th century, and in the 1920s. At the height of its development in the 1910s to 1930s the town centre with its busy port provided practically all of the supply, service, social and entertainment needs of the community and surrounding area.

The area demonstrates the developments in taste and design of typical suburban centres in New Zealand, from establishment in the Victorian and Edwardian eras through to consolidation and development in the 1920s and 1930s. Commercial buildings are generally two-storeyed, and of brick or plastered brick construction, or timber construction. Many buildings in Opotiki retain original shop fronts and interior details.

The following summary map shows building dates/ key periods in development of town centre.

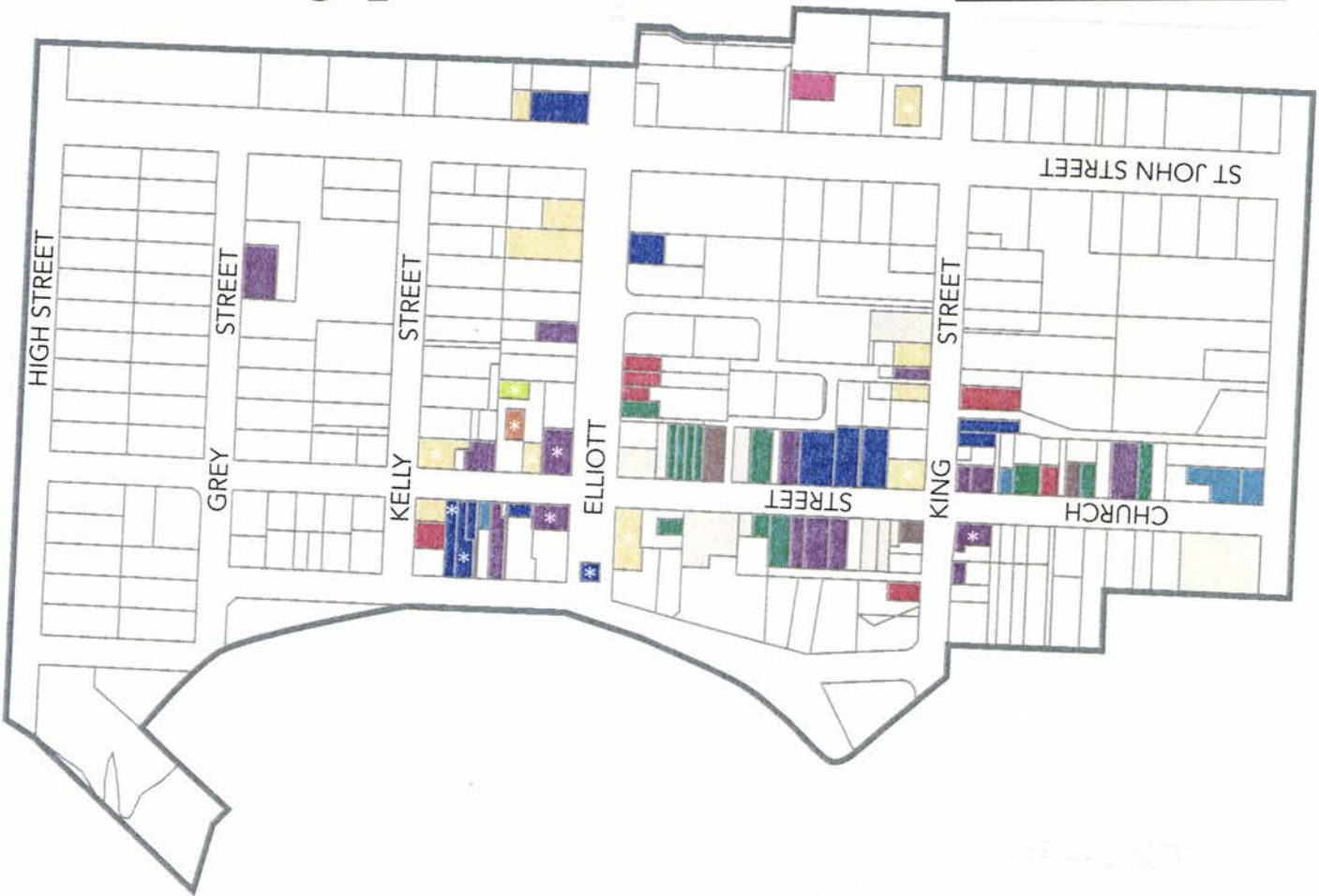
(Note: Not all buildings in the town centre have been assessed and the approximate age of some has been assessed without in-depth research. Part Two of the report contains the research record forms which were prepared for a prioritised list of buildings in the centre. Partial record forms have been prepared for a number of other buildings, recording date of construction where possible.)

**Opotiki Town Centre**  
Map showing approximate age of historic buildings

Map 1

# Opotiki Town Centre

Map showing approximate age of historic buildings



**Approximate date of construction for heritage buildings in the town centre**

Pre 1880	1910-1920	1950-1960
1880-1890	1920-1930	1960-1970
1890-1900	1930-1940	Post 1970
1900-1910	1940-1950	Buildings currently scheduled or registered by NZHPT

Note: Not all buildings in the central area were assessed.



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL QUALITIES

### Recognition or Protection

There are currently *no recorded* archaeological sites in the town centre. However; archaeological sites exist within the town centre and its environs. These are sub-surface and not obvious. A thorough archaeological survey might find evidence relating to the site of Pakowhai and earlier Maori settlements and activities; the defensive ditch filled in around St Stephen's; evidence of the first Roman Catholic mission buildings and activities; houses, stores and shipbuilding sites from the 1840s-65; shops, hotels, smithies and sawmill from the late 1860s- 1890s. Many sites will have been damaged by later developments if those later developments involved radical earthworks.

### Information/ Research

Many sites will be sealed in by paving and tar seal and floors of buildings. But in many cases some evidence of the previous use of the site will be retrievable through methodical archaeological mapping, excavation and analysis.

The archaeological assessment of the study area reveals a potentially extensive and significant archaeological resource that can provide an understanding of the formative years of Opotiki and the eastern Bay of Plenty generally. The evidence is extremely diverse reflecting all aspects of pre 1900 activities including commercial, industrial, residential and military activity that shaped the modern day Central Business District. According to written records and oral accounts, the Kelly St cemetery holds the remains of perhaps 60 people, yet only six graves are marked today. Sub-surface mapping could plot these graves without disturbance or damage. Also amongst the emerging Business district were many early residences some of which survive to the present day.

The most poorly understood archaeological resource within the area is that of the pre European Maori period.

The early cultural / historical / archaeological sites within Opotiki represent an archaeological resource with potential to provide further information on the development of Pakowhai and Opotiki township.

## ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES

### Context or Group Value

Opotiki's town centre retains built evidence of all stages of its development including one of its earliest mission churches, Hiona St Stephen's, dating from 1862-64, early timber commercial buildings such as Shalfoon Bros together with good examples of later, more substantial early commercial buildings from around 1900-1920. Opotiki retains a broad range of types of historic buildings including simple shops and more sizeable shops, administrative buildings, churches, halls, small utilitarian warehouses and blacksmiths' workshops, theatres, schools, motor garages, the wharf, as well as early houses in close proximity to the commercial centre. Many buildings within the centre retain original shopfronts and interiors. It is the intact survival of groups of a broad range of historic buildings as well as the intact survival of the fabric of individual buildings which is relatively rare and gives Opotiki an authentic historic character. Research into individual places reveals the people, businesses, uses, and events that have been associated with it.

The town centre retains many of its early churches and church halls including St Stephen's; St John's church in St John St, the Presbyterian church in Ford Street; the Salvation Army Barracks in King Street, the Maori Mission Hall (former Temperance Union hall) in Elliott Street and the Methodist Church in the southern area of town, built in 1911 from bricks made at the Opotiki brick kiln. These buildings provide further evidence of the size and consolidation of the community in the decades around the turn of the 20th Century. The longevity of the

Roman Catholic parish is represented by the old schoolrooms on Grey Street, the old church and convent having been replaced.

Due to its large early population and role as a major service centre Opotiki also retains a significant stock of representative housing around the town centre, which also makes a strong contribution to its unique identity and historic character.

The two war memorials, one in the Kelly St cemetery and one in Elliott St, present a tangible reminder to other aspects of the town's social history.

#### **Design/ Designer or Builder**

Within the town centre two architectural practices have made a significant contribution to Opotiki's building stock. Thomas Henry White (who was an early proponent of concrete construction in New Zealand) has designed a number of buildings in Opotiki including St John's Church, the Royal Hotel and the former Masonic Lodge. H L D West or the practice of Whincup and West are responsible for a number of significant buildings including Rostgard's Building, and the building nearby at 16 King Street, Arthur's and Larmer's buildings in Church Street, the Masonic Hotel, the former Bridger's building and Patterson's Building. All of these utilise a similar range of decorative motifs and detail and make a strong contribution to the built character of Opotiki.

#### **Construction**

Buildings in Opotiki town centre generally demonstrate typical materials and construction techniques relative to the period in which they were built. Several buildings retain locally-made bricks, and concrete products such as power poles are a reminder of earlier industries and the self-sufficiency of the community.

### **CULTURAL QUALITIES**

#### **Sentiment/Identity/Amenity or Education**

Opotiki's history is both typical and unique. Typical in that it has followed general trends in developments that have formed New Zealand, from settlement by East Polynesians who developed Maori culture over several hundred years; through cultural interactions in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century as New Zealand adjusted to its inclusion as a British colony; the influence of developments in shipping, storage, manufacturing and new technologies; struggles over sovereignty and land ownership; participation of its citizens in wars overseas, the effects of epidemics, improved health care and the national economy; to becoming a vibrant growing community that celebrates its diversity and its place in the modern world.

And Opotiki is unique, being a product of its environment and geographical location, its tangata whenua, and its local responses to national influences. Opotiki's boom times economically were the 1840s-50s, with Whakatohea's wheat growing, shipbuilding enterprises and exports, and the 1890s-20s when Opotiki grew again as a service centre for agricultural-based production and the port for exports and transport. Physical remains of the first period are limited to archaeological investigations, but the later period is evidenced by a range of substantial buildings that reflect a community that had grown in spiritual diversity, entertainment needs, commercial and industrial developments, and improvements in transport and utilities. Opotiki's history is known also through written records, archives and photographs, through traditions, and through people's memories and stories. These resources and stories enhance our understanding of the built heritage.

### **SCIENTIFIC QUALITIES**

#### **Information/ Potential- Scientific Research**

The development of Opotiki provides information about Maori occupation, early contact between Maori and Europeans, more sustained contact, and the cultural clash which led to

the implementation of military rule, confiscation of land and establishment of an initial military settlement. There is potential in Opotiki to investigate potential archaeological evidence of the site of Pakowhai and earlier Maori settlements and activities; the defensive ditch filled in around St Stephen's; evidence of the first Roman Catholic mission buildings and activities; houses, stores and shipbuilding sites from the 1840s-65; shops, hotels, smithies and sawmill from the late 1860s- 1890s.

### **TECHNOLOGICAL QUALITIES**

Historic buildings in Opotiki town centre generally demonstrate contemporary construction techniques, materials and changes in approach over time, typical of most New Zealand towns. Major fires in the early twentieth century saw the introduction of construction in permanent materials as a requirement in the centre of town.

The early use of concrete is evident in Opotiki with buildings such as the former Strand Arcade, which was built of reinforced concrete prior to 1911. It is a simple and relatively early example of concrete construction for a commercial building. Use of plastered brick or timber construction for commercial buildings was still much more common at this time. Opotiki retains a number of buildings constructed from distinctive red bricks manufactured at the local kiln which was located at the eastern end of Elliott Street.

### **PERIOD**

Several hundred years of occupation by tangata whenua Whakatohea leading a traditional Maori lifestyle was slowly influenced over the first few decades of the 19th Century by the introduction of European religion, material goods, livestock, crops, agricultural techniques and equipment, quicker boats and wider trading networks, alcohol and diseases.

Opotiki town centre grew from a Maori settlement Pakowhai sited within the area of the existing town centre, which dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century and possibly much earlier. The substantial Maori population and settlement here was the key reason for the establishment of Anglican and Catholic missions in the 1830s and 1840s.

Opotiki retains built evidence of early European development from the 1860s together with progressive change over time.

### **RARITY OR SPECIAL FEATURES**

Special characteristics of Opotiki include the original Maori settlement Pakowhai, of which there may be archaeological evidence, together with the survival of very early European structures, the military settlement layout, and the intact retention of a broad range of types and ages of historic buildings.

Opotiki is one of the most intact historic town centres in the upper North Island retaining one of its very early mission churches, its original town plan based on the survey for a military settlement as well a broad range of historic building types dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Its establishment predates comparable and relatively intact historic townships such as Te Aroha and Waihi. It provides built evidence of its historic development from its very early contact period between Maori and Europeans through to the establishment as a military settlement and ongoing consolidation of the town as an important port and service centre for the surrounding rural communities.

## **INTEGRITY**

Opotiki retains a very intact historic town centre. It retains its original town plan, and intact groups of historic buildings from the 1860s onwards. Many historic buildings in Opotiki remain in remarkably original condition, with many retaining original detail such as shopfronts, interiors and verandahs. The blacksmith's door still has the marks where brands were tested.

## **REPRESENTATIVENESS**

Other examples exist of Maori and mission settlements that have evolved into townships, but few have also been the result of a designed military settlement. After the confiscations that followed the Waikato Wars, Tauranga, Hamilton, Cambridge, Ngaruawahia and Pirongia were each also established as militia settlements intended to form a military frontier against further Maori resistance. Of these settlements, only Tauranga was also a mission base. These settlements have similarities to Opotiki but marked differences in geographic location has resulted in Opotiki's history being distinctive in other aspects.

## **CONTEXT OR GROUP VALUE**

The collective value of the original town layout, the survival of intact groups of historic buildings and a broad range of building types, together with historic trees and archaeological resources is fundamental to the value of Opotiki.

## **DIVERSITY**

Opotiki town centre retains a broad range of building types including early churches, early commercial buildings, early industrial and service buildings such as warehouses and smithies, early theatres, together with ongoing commercial and retail buildings. Historic housing also remains in close proximity to the town centre.

## **FRAGILITY OR VULNERABILITY**

The Otago and Waioeka Rivers are prone to flooding, with major and lesser floods occurring frequently. While such flooding has led to the development of a fertile alluvial plain easily farmed for crops and pasture, the impact on the town centre has been devastating. In the flood of March 1964 both rivers broke their banks: the central business district was inundated by over 1.6m of water and two people lost their lives. Stop banks were improved, so that by 1967 the town was fully protected from further flooding.

Opotiki lies in a volcanic region, with several active volcanoes being relatively near. The Tarawera eruption of 1886 was felt in Opotiki and the area was affected by its ash. Severe earthquakes occur frequently, and as in other New Zealand towns, early buildings, particularly masonry buildings, are at risk of potential damage.

Buildings in Opotiki have also been vulnerable to damage or destruction by fire. Significant losses have included early timber hotels in the late 19th Century, and the whole block on the east side of Church Street between the Royal Hotel and the former Strand Arcade in 1913. Other threats have included redevelopment in the 1980s which saw the demolition of two key buildings including the BNZ Bank and the Opotiki Post Office. The loss of these two buildings is still noted by the Opotiki community.

Similar to other New Zealand towns and cities historic buildings are also vulnerable to deterioration due to deferred maintenance and inappropriate alteration.

### **6.3 IDENTIFYING GAPS IN THE SCHEDULE**

Using the thematic historic overview for Opotiki to review the current District Plan Schedule, it is evident that relatively few places have been scheduled, and that scheduling has generally tended to focus on those historic places which also have the highest architectural values. The schedule includes the most substantial or historically significant places such as the hotels, as well as including representative examples of other aspects of Opotiki's history such as St Stephen's Church, St John's Church, the Courthouse, the De Luxe Theatre, Shalfoon Bros shop and the war memorial.

In addition to the individual scheduling of places it is also important that the *collective* character and values associated with the Opotiki town centre be carefully considered. There are many places in the town centre which form part of intact groups of traditional buildings but may not be of sufficient individual importance to warrant scheduling. Other mechanisms to protect the collective character need to be considered.

The following section reviews the key themes in the historic development of Opotiki town centre with a discussion of places which represent particular themes. A summary is provided showing which places are currently scheduled, and which places should be considered for scheduling to ensure that a broad range of historic themes are represented in the district plan schedule.

#### **A. ENVIRONMENT**

The original landform and path of rivers around the town centre have been modified over time to prevent flooding. Archaeological evidence may reveal the location of early jetties. Inlaid designs in paving could be used to mark where the river edge used to be located. Markers on posts or buildings could indicate the highest flood levels with dates.

#### **B. OPOTIKI PEOPLES AND THEIR INTERACTIONS**

##### **General Discussion**

It is thought that the meeting house at Pakowhai may have been on the site until the 1930s. While there are no structures surviving from Pakowhai, the area of the settlement is shown on maps prepared shortly after Volkner's death. Local people may have further information regarding its boundaries.

Currently there are no recorded archaeological sites in central Opotiki.

Hiona St Stephen's is now the only early structure that survives from the time that the Anglican and Catholic missions were established in Opotiki and contact between Maori and settlers became sustained. This church is highly significant also because of its associations with the death of Volkner and the military response that followed, which significantly affected the development of Opotiki.

The site of the Catholic mission between Grey Street and Kelly Street retains later school and church buildings.

The existing Opotiki wharf is one of a number that were previously located along this part of the Waioeka River. It represents the importance of the wharfs and rivers in early trade and transport in which Whakatohea played a major part in the period between 1840 to the early 1860s.

##### **Representative Examples/Key Listings**

Hiona St Stephens Church is a key example structure, built between 1862-64 as the second Anglican mission church on this site, replacing an earlier raupo chapel.



There may be evidence of earlier structures on the site, including the redoubt formed around the church following the government's military occupation.

This is currently the only structure or place that is listed that represents the early development of Opotiki (pre 1865).

#### **Further Possible Listings**

The site of the Catholic mission is significant and likely to contain archaeological evidence of earlier development. The oldest surviving school buildings associated with the Catholic Mission in Opotiki should be scheduled.

The Kelly Street cemetery is the first European cemetery in Opotiki, and holds military personnel, townspeople and possibly a few Maori from other districts who were fighting on the side of the Colonial Government. It has a monument erected in 1914 to the men who died in and around Opotiki during the New Zealand Wars (one of very few monuments in New Zealand to these conflicts).

The Opotiki wharf should be scheduled for its associations with early trade and transportation in Opotiki.

Further research may reveal the homes or sites of militia men.

The site of Volkner's house Peria to the south-west of the town centre, is now the location of a home for the elderly. This may also retain archaeological evidence.

Archaeological research may also reveal the location of other houses, stores and shipbuilding yards dating from the 1840s-1865, for instance Levy's store, Agassiz' house or Tawai's house, or sites associated with Pakowhai, and other redoubts and military camps outside the central area.

### **C. GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

#### **General Discussion**

Opotiki retains a number of buildings purpose-built for or associated with its early and ongoing administration. The Courthouse is the only representative example currently listed in the District Plan. Three historic buildings remain as testimony to this earlier era of local government: the Kowhai Takeaways building in Church St was the County Council offices from at least 1928 to 1947-48, the building they shifted to in St John Street (now DoC), and the modest building that was the Borough Council office from 1934 in King St.

#### **Further Possible Listings**

Other important examples which should be considered for listing include the Kowhai Takeaways building which was leased to the Opotiki Borough Council, together with another small building in King Street used by the Borough Council, and the former Torrens Building in Church Street which was occupied by the Bay of Plenty Power Board from the 1920s until 1968. This building is now occupied by another significant local administrative group, the Whakatohea Trust Board which was enacted in 1949. The former Loan and Mercantile Building in St John's Street is also owned and used by the Whakatohea Trust Board.

The former police station re-located to northern Church St should be acknowledged by a plaque or notice board and communicated through a heritage walk brochure.

## **D. BUILDING A NEW SETTLEMENT**

### **General discussion**

Opotiki retains its original street layout from the plan prepared for a military settlement after the confiscation of land in 1866.

Opotiki town centre's building history follows a general, New Zealand-wide pattern, of the establishment of original wooden buildings, followed by incremental replacement with masonry buildings. Progressive periods of redevelopment have resulted in a combination of some early timber buildings together with masonry buildings of one to two storeys.

Opotiki's town centre retains built evidence of all stages of its development including one of its earliest mission churches Hiona St Stephen's dating from 1862-64, early timber commercial buildings such as Shalfoon Bros together with good examples of later more substantial early commercial buildings from around 1900-1920. Opotiki retains a broad range of types of historic buildings including simple shops and more substantial commercial buildings, churches, halls, small utilitarian warehouses and blacksmith's workshops, theatres, motor garages, the wharf, as well as early houses in close proximity to the commercial centre. Due to its significant early population and role as an important service centre Opotiki also retains a significant stock of historic housing around the town centre, which also makes a strong contribution to its unique identity and historic character.

Opotiki buildings are also, by style, typical of buildings in many other New Zealand towns. The work of two key architectural practices has resulted in an identifiable group of similarly designed buildings which contribute to the character of Opotiki.

Opotiki town centre remained largely unmodified until the 1980s when a period of redevelopment saw the replacement of two key historic buildings including the BNZ Bank and the Post Office. However the centre still retains a predominantly intact historic character based on its original street layout.

The town centre retains groups of mature street trees in St John's Street. Research to date has not revealed the date of planting, but these trees make a significant contribution to the character of the town centre and are evidence of the planned role of St John's Street and Elliott Street as the main streets, also indicated in the width of these two streets.

### **Representative Examples/Key Listings**

Existing listing of heritage buildings in the District Plan is based on those places which have been registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Current listings related to this theme in the town centre include:

- Hiona St Stephen's Church hall and surrounds
- St John's Church
- Opotiki Hotel
- Masonic Hotel
- Royal Hotel
- Shalfoon Bros.
- Rostgards Building
- Courthouse
- De Luxe Theatre.
- The War Memorial

### **Further possible listings**

Additional individual commercial and retail buildings in the central area which represent this theme should be scheduled including:

- Former Bridger's Building
- Shalfoon's 1914 Building
- Kowhai Takeaways
- Opotiki Wharf

Patterson's Building  
Platt Bros and the shop adjacent  
Former Blacksmiths, in King Street  
Former King's Theatre, in King Street.  
Former Salvation Army Barracks  
Former Masonic Hotel stables/ bus depot  
Former Loan and Mercantile Building  
Former Masonic Lodge  
Former Bay of Plenty Power Board (Torrens) building  
St Stephen's Church Hall

Other places which should be further researched for possible scheduling include:

Former Temperance Union Hall  
Former Dalgety's Building  
Former Geo Hall Land Agents Office  
Backpackers House  
Doctor's Surgery  
Former Alhambra Theatre (United Video)  
Arthur and Larmer's Building

Generally the current pattern of individual scheduling in the town centre does not adequately identify the surviving historic commercial streetscape character or key groups of historic commercial, community, industrial and retail buildings which remain intact, and represent themes in the centre's development such as industry, commerce and shopping. The survival of this broad typology, together with small lanes, is a primary asset of Opotiki. In addition to Opotiki's significant individual buildings, key areas retaining largely intact groups of historic commercial and retail buildings contribute to the uniqueness of the town.

Protection of historic street trees through scheduling should be considered.

## **E. CREATING THE INFRASTRUCTURE: SERVICES AND AMENITIES**

### **Further Possible Listings**

Former Bay of Plenty Power Board (Torrens) building  
Kelly St cemetery

Other places which should be further researched for possible scheduling include:

Site of the private electric power plant  
Concrete power pole factory site  
The sites/extant buildings of the first newspaper offices  
Plunket Rooms and Ladies Rest Rooms  
The site of the first hospital  
Houses associated with early nursing and medical staff.

The site of the first library, the Mechanics Institute, should be acknowledged by a plaque or notice board and communicated through a heritage walk brochure.

Older areas of the main cemetery could be researched and interpreted through heritage walks and brochures.

## **F. PROVIDING TRANSPORT AND ACCESS**

### **Representative Examples/Key Listings**

Existing listing of heritage places in the District Plan is based on those places which have been registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Current listings related to this theme in the town centre include bridges outside the town centre:

#### **Further Possible Listings**

Opotiki Wharf  
Former Masonic Stables/NZR depot

Other places which should be further researched for possible scheduling include:

Locations of fords and original bridges  
Sites of livery stables  
Motor garages

### **G. WORKING - INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE**

#### **Representative Buildings/ Key Listings**

Current listings related to this theme include:

Opotiki Hotel  
Masonic Hotel  
Royal Hotel  
Shalfoon Bros.  
Rostgards Building

#### **Further Possible Listings**

Additional individual commercial, industrial and retail buildings in the central area which represent this theme should be scheduled including:

Former Bridger's Building  
Shalfoon's 1914 Building  
Kowhai Takeaways  
Opotiki Wharf  
Patterson's Building  
Platt Bros and the shop adjacent,  
Former Blacksmith's in King St  
Former Masonic Hotel stables/ bus depot  
Former Loan and Mercantile Building  
Former Bay of Plenty Power Board building

Other places which should be further researched for possible scheduling include:

Former Dalgety's Building  
Former Geo Hall Land Agents Office  
Backpackers House  
Doctors Surgery  
Former Alhambra Theatre (United Video)  
Former boarding house in Elliott St

#### **Further Research**

The Opotiki Dairy Factory has played a major role in the development of Opotiki, and should be further researched /investigated for scheduling.

Research and archaeological investigation may reveal the sites of the sawmill, ship builders, brewery and flour mills.

### **H. DEVELOPING CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND WAYS OF LIFE**

Opotiki town centre retains a large number of early churches and church halls which indicate the consolidation of the town and its role as a provincial centre.

#### **Representative Buildings/ Key Listings**

Current listings related to this theme include:

St Stephen's Church

St John's Church

**Further Possible Listings**

*Additional individual buildings in the central area which represent this theme should be scheduled including:*

Former Bridger's Building  
Opotiki Wharf  
Patterson's Building  
Former King's Theatre, in King Street.  
Former Salvation Army Barracks  
Former Masonic Hotel stables/ bus depot  
Former Masonic Lodge  
St Stephen's Church Hall  
St Joseph's School, early classroom buildings  
Drill Hall  
Former Temperance Union Hall

Other places which should be further researched for possible scheduling include:

Methodist Church, Ford Street  
Earlier St John's building  
Former Temperance Union Hall  
Former Dalgety's Building  
Former Geo Hall Land Agents Office  
Backpackers House  
Former Alhambra Theatre (United Video)  
Former race course totalizator building/ surrounds  
Opotiki Primary School early classroom buildings



## 6.4 EARTHQUAKE PRONE BUILDINGS

This Heritage Study contributes to the process of identifying earthquake prone buildings in two ways; identifying places in Opotiki town centre which are of heritage value, and providing base data on these places to assist with the preliminary assessment stage of identifying buildings that are potentially earthquake prone.

Record forms for individual buildings provide a brief overview of age (for example all buildings older than 1936 when requirements for seismic resistance were introduced after the Napier earthquake are potentially earthquake prone, or all buildings built prior to 1960 when standards for earthquake resistance were less), number of levels, materials and construction and general condition. While possible threats such as potential damage in the event of an earthquake have been flagged, this assessment has been carried out by conservation architects not structural engineers, so is a preliminary indication only. The purpose is to gather useful data during the course of our study to assist with a subsequent evaluation by a structural engineer. It is recommended that structural assessments of buildings in Opotiki be carried out by structural engineers with experience in the strengthening of historic buildings.

Summary information has been collated as part of the inventory of significant heritage places.

### **Building Act 2004**

Section 131 of the Building Act 2004 requires territorial authorities to adopt a policy on earthquake prone buildings by 31 May 2006.

The definition of an earthquake prone building is set out in Section 122 of the Building Act 2004 and in the related regulations that define a moderate earthquake. This definition covers more buildings and requires a higher level of performance than the previous Building Act 1991. It encompasses all buildings not only those constructed of unreinforced brick or unreinforced concrete.

Opotiki District Council has prepared a draft policy based on the requirements of the Building Act 2004.

A building is defined as earthquake prone if after consideration of its condition, construction and the ground on which it is built will have its ultimate capacity exceeded in the event of a moderate earthquake, and would be likely to collapse causing injury or death, or damage to another property.

Residential buildings are excluded unless they are two storeys or higher, or contain more than three household units.

A moderate earthquake is further defined in relation to existing buildings as one which would generate shaking at the site of a building of the same duration but one third as strong as the earthquake shaking that would be used to design a new building.

Opotiki is in a zone of moderate seismicity and its buildings include a range of types and ages dating from the 1860s through to modern buildings constructed in the last decade. The majority of buildings in the town centre would date from the late 19th and first half of the twentieth centuries.

Opotiki District Council has actively pursued a policy of strengthening unreinforced masonry buildings since 1968. Opotiki District Council are committed to reducing earthquake risk over time in a way that balances the social and economic impacts for ratepayers.

In order to do this Council will:

- Review its whole building stock to identify buildings which fall within the scope of potential earthquake prone buildings under the Building Act 2004.
- Assess broadly the performance of those buildings in relation to the new building Standard, particularly that defined for earthquake prone buildings.
- Prepare a list of buildings that are earthquake prone in terms of the Building Act 2004
- Advise and consult with building owners to determine work required to reduce risk.

The requirement to undertake earthquake strengthening will be triggered by building consent applications for significant upgrading or alteration, or if a change of use for a building is proposed. It will be a requirement of a building consent that a building owner make a detailed assessment of the earthquake performance of the building. If it is found to be earthquake prone then Council will require that it be strengthened to comply as closely as practicable with the requirements of the Building Code.

In order to identify buildings which may be earthquake prone Council will

- Undertake an initial desk top survey, followed by brief inspection.
- Carry out an initial evaluation of performance using the NZSEE Initial Evaluation Method.
- Request building owners to do a detailed assessment following the initial evaluation
- Assemble a list of earthquake prone buildings based on these results
- Categorise earthquake prone buildings according to:
  - Buildings with special post disaster functions
  - Buildings that contain people in crowds or contents of high value to the community
  - Buildings with a heritage classification
  - Buildings with an Importance Level less than 3 as defined in AS/NZS 1170.0:2002

New Guidelines for the Assessment and Improvement of structural performance of earthquake risk buildings have been developed by the New Zealand Society of Earthquake Engineers. These have been developed to be compatible with the Building Act 2004 and the new earthquake loadings standard NZS1170.5.2004.

These will provide a practical guide to the way to approach inspections, identification of potential hazards and how to assess the existing earthquake resistance of a building. Based on this assessment it is then possible to determine the level and type of strengthening required to upgrade the building meet the current earthquake loadings standard.

Typically strengthening work will include a range of methods including additional bracing through diaphragms in floor or ceiling planes, additional shear resistance through strengthened walls, improved connections of existing structural members (floor and ceiling junction with walls, possible reinforcement of masonry facades, sub floor bracing, and securing hazards such as chimneys or parapets.

In Opotiki it is important that building assessments and recommended strengthening works are carried out by structural engineers who have experience in upgrading historic structures and buildings.

## **6.5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This archaeological assessment was prepared by Ken Phillips of Archaeology BOP to form part of the Historic Heritage Study of the Central Business District of Opotiki. The project brief involved a review of available archaeological literature pertaining to the study area and an assessment of the archaeological components of archival information compiled by Lynn Williams and Jane Matthews as part of this project.

An archaeological site, as defined by the Historic Places Act 1993, 2(a)(i) and 2(b) is, "any place in New Zealand that was associated with human activity that occurred before 1900: and is or may be able through investigation by archaeological methods to provide evidence relating to the history of New Zealand". Archaeological sites may not be destroyed damaged or modified except pursuant to an authority granted under section 14 of the Historic Places Act.

An assessment of the cultural significance of an area can only be competently made by the affected tangata whenua. It should be noted that an assessment of cultural significance might not necessarily correlate with an assessment of archaeological significance.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Prior to the assessment the records of the New Zealand Archaeological Association (N.Z.A.A.) were consulted in order to determine if archaeological sites have been recorded within or in the immediate vicinity of the study area. Records for archaeological sites in the general vicinity were examined. Early survey plans were examined for information relating to human activity in the area.

Aerial photos were examined for evidence of archaeological or historic features. The earliest available aerial photos were flown by New Zealand Aerial mapping in 1940. Stereo pairs from this series were examined under a stereoscope in order to determine if earthwork features could be identified. Recent aerial photos of the area taken in 2003 were also examined at Global Aerial Surveys Tauranga.



**RESULTS**

**Previous archaeological research**

A search of the New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Recording File for Opotiki District revealed no previously recorded archaeological sites within the study area. The nearest recorded sites are located at least 1 kilometre to the south, east and west of central Opotiki. They include four pa, an urupa, an undefended pit and terrace site and a trench. Only one site W15/171 falls between the Wairoa and Otara Rivers.

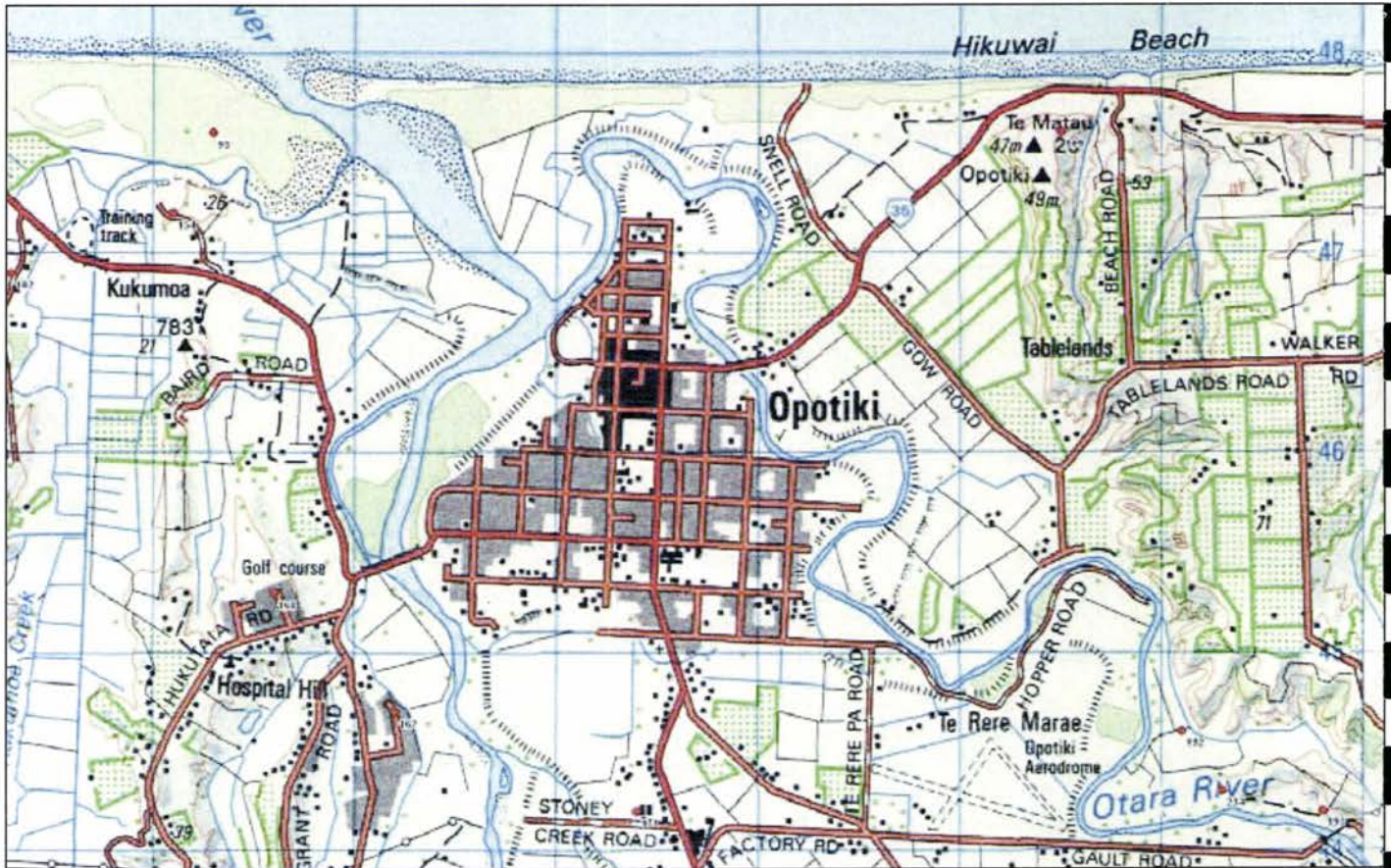


Figure 1. Topographic Map NZMS 260 Sheet W15. The small red dots show location of recorded archaeological sites in the general vicinity of the Study area. The table below describes each site.

Site No.	Site Type	Easting	Northing
W15-93	Urupa	2884300	6347600
W15-109	Pa	2888400	6347700
W15-154	Pa	2884100	6347200
W15-162	Pa	2885000	6344700
W15-168	Trench	2884600	6345300
W15-171	Pits Terraces	2886400	6344200
W15-192	Pa	2889100	6344600

Table 1. Recorded archaeological sites within 2km of the study area.



The lack of recorded archaeological sites within the study area is likely due to the limited surface expression of the subsurface archaeological resource. Recorded sites in the general vicinity of the study area are principally earthwork sites on hill country including clearly visible defensive earthwork features, occupation terraces and crop storage pits.

Identification of sites within the study area and the wider flood plain between the two rivers is generally only achieved during ground disturbance such as development earthwork, ploughing or archaeological investigation. Limited development in the study area has meant there have been few opportunities to determine the extent of subsurface archaeology in the area. A rare opportunity occurred in October 2003 when Ken Phillips and Rachel Darmody inspected foundation excavations for the Opotiki Museum development (Figure 2). Artifacts from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century were noted in foundations trenches however no archaeological investigations were carried out as part of the Museum development project.



**Figure 2. Ground disturbance associated with the Opotiki Museum development. C. 1900 historic artifacts were disturbed during the excavation of foundation trenches.**

Available survey plans including plans produced for the Native Land Court did not provide information indicating the location of traditional Maori archaeological sites within the study area. One sketch plan produced in the 1860s provided information relating to Pa Kowhai.

Examination of available aerial photography did not provide evidence for the presence of archaeological or historical sites. This was primarily due to unfavourable scale of available aerials and vegetation cover obscuring the surface contour.

### **Review of Archives**

Archival research carried out by Lynn Williams and Jane Matthews included an assessment of pre 1900 human activity that may have left an archaeological record. The archaeological potential was found to be generally high reflecting the known human history of the area. However, the patchy nature of the archives relating to pre 1900 structures and human activity meant that identifying archaeological sites based on this information would necessarily be



incomplete and provide a false impression of the extent and significance of the archaeological landscape within the study area.

Given the high concentration of pre 1900 human activity within the study area it was considered more appropriate to identify an archaeological alert zone encompassing all archaeologically sensitive areas.

#### **Post 1900 Ground disturbance**

It was not within the scope of this project to visit each property in the study area. Site visits are of limited use in built up areas where the archaeological resource often has no visible expression. It is recognized that a number of buildings within the study area have significant basements or foundations that may have destroyed part or all of any archaeological features that may have been beneath the building footprint.

The extent of ground disturbance from building foundation and basement structures can be partly established by examination of building blue prints, however, survival and availability of such information is limited and varies from property to property particularly buildings constructed prior to 1920.

Physical examination of building footprints and basements can provide some information as to the likely extent of ground disturbance that occurred during construction.

Many archaeological investigations carried out in Central Business Districts throughout New Zealand have identified significant intact archaeological remains beneath multi story buildings pre dating about 1960. Foundations used prior to this period are typically wooden pile, brick plinth, with trench and raft foundations in later buildings. The ground surface between foundation excavations was generally left undisturbed if the property contour permitted.

Before an accurate archaeological assessment can be made for any single property within the study area further research and site inspection is required. In many cases archaeological assessment can only be achieved following demolition of existing buildings and subsurface investigation.

## THE NATURE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

### Pre European and early contact Maori Sites

Little is known about the pre European Maori occupation of the study area, however, by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and possibly much earlier, a large village called Pakowhai existed in what is now Opotiki township.

The only clue to the location and extent of the village is provided on a sketch plan produced following Volkner's death. The pa is illustrated in two sections divided by a possible wetland or stream extending south east from the Otara River. The larger enclosure occurs to the east of the wetland and is illustrated with 10 buildings within a fenced or palisade enclosure. The smaller western enclosure is illustrated with three buildings also within a fenced enclosure. Both areas are located on strategic sections of the Waioeka and Otara Rivers. It is highly likely that the village included undefended areas not illustrated in the sketch plan where cultivations and undefended activities occurred.

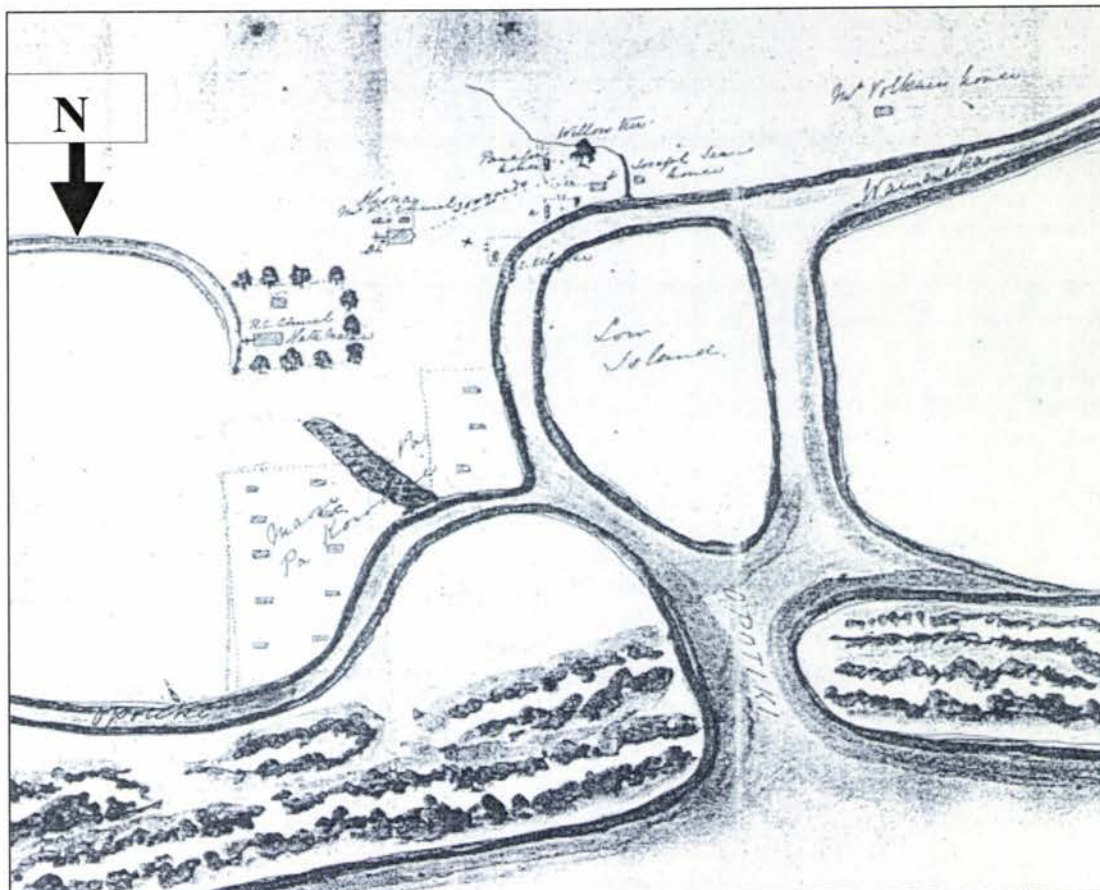


Figure 3. Sketch plan of Opotiki produced following the death of Volkner.

The geography of the sketch plan is heavily distorted and features such as internal structures must be considered an indicative rather than actual representation of the village. The location of the pa complex roughly translates to that part of the town north of Kelly Street and extending east to St John St. The oxbow extending to the Roman Catholic Church on Grey Street is evident on early survey plans but the wetland or stream dividing Pakowhai is not. It is possible that the illustrated wetland is Otamarau Kupa Creek.



## Pre 1900 European Sites

### **Commercial**

There is considerable archival information relating to the pre 1900 development of the commercial centre of Opotiki. Sites of early hotels, stables, blacksmiths, retail shops etc have proven to be valuable archaeological resources elsewhere in New Zealand and given its early development similar sites in Opotiki are likely to be equally informative. Archaeological investigations of such sites have added significantly to the understanding of the local and regional history's as well as more specific evidence relating to economic development, wealth, consumer behaviour, availability of resources and trading networks.

### **Industrial**

The identification of early industrial sites in Opotiki requires further research. Such sites were often pivotal to the success and development of small settlements and the archaeological resource associated with these sites is generally very informative. Early industries within the wider Opotiki District include a flour mill, timber mill, brick works, brewery, soda water manufacturer and sugar processing factory to name but a few that have been encountered in the archives or known to local historians.

The number of industrial sites within the study area remains unclear, however, the early development of the Wharf area may be preserved under subsequent reclamation work. A sugar processing plant is thought to have been established near the Royal Hotel in 1882, however, the exact location could not be established from available archives.

The following information regarding the Opotiki Sugar industry was presented in a Historical Review Article by Jack London in 1974.

*Mr Dumergue imported a one horse-power Victor cane mill from the United States. He has leased a half acre allotment opposite the Royal Hotel, which he has enclosed by a good substantial paling fence 5 ft in height. On this piece of land he has sunk a well and got good water, and has had a weather boarded house erected, which is used as store, boiling, and drying room.. The house has a galvanized tin roof, with a very large ventilator, to carry off the steam caused by the operations. The house is not built on blocks but has a concrete foundation and floor; through the foundation is a four inch pipe drain to take away the washings of the boiling room. Outside the building is the mill, which is worked by a horse in the same way as the horse power threshing machines or chaff cutters. It is a very substantial piece of machinery with remarkable crushing power in its rollers.... The juice is conveyed from the mill into the receiving tanks in the boiling rooms by a 2 inch tine pipe.<sup>135</sup>*

London's efforts to determine the location of the premises where the processing of sorghum took place were unsuccessful.

### **Residential**

Archaeology relating to early residential properties within the study area has the potential to add significantly to our understanding of the living conditions, health, wealth and access to resources of the first European settlers in Opotiki. The early sketch plan presented in Figure 3 illustrates a number of early structures in the general vicinity of the western end of King Street.

### **Military**

The military presence in Opotiki during the 1860s and early 1870s is presented in a number of publications. The most well documented military site within the study area is the redoubt

<sup>135</sup> London 1974:81-109

constructed around St Stephens church. The defensive ditches and other associated subsurface features almost certainly remain buried and intact and constitute a highly significant archaeological resource within the study area. Archaeological investigations of military sites including redoubts, camps and stockades have provided valuable information relating to this pivotal period in the history of New Zealand.



Figure 4. Early photo of St Stephens Church clearly showing the earthwork defenses of the encircling Redoubt.

### ***Standing Structure Archaeology***

Pre 1900 buildings such as those identified in this heritage study are regarded as historical documents in their own right and by employing established methodologies in the archaeology of standing structures they can be made to yield valuable social, economic and technical data.

### ***Cemeteries / Burial Grounds***

While cemeteries are not generally recorded as archaeological sites archaeological methodologies are often employed when they are encountered during earthwork or when attempts are made to relocate graves or burial grounds. The Kelly Street Cemetery has numerous unmarked graves that may be able to be relocated using archaeological methods.

There are a number of ground based remote sensing options such as resistivity, magnetometry and radar that can identify subsurface structures or cavities with varying degrees of success. The different techniques are effective on different soils and for different types of features. To be more effective several methods should be used in tandem to provide comparative data. They are more effective in identifying larger in-filled cavities such as Christian style graves and buried stone or brick structures.





**Figure 5. Photo of the surviving grave stones of the Kelly Street cemetery.**

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of the archaeological assessment of the study area reveal a potentially extensive and significant archaeological resource that can add to our understanding of the formative years of Opotiki and the eastern Bay of Plenty generally. The evidence is extremely diverse reflecting all aspects of pre 1900 activities including commercial, industrial, residential and military activity that shaped the modern day Central Business District. Also amongst the emerging Business district were many early residences some of which survive to the present day.

The most poorly understood archaeological resource within the area is that of the pre European Maori period.

The early cultural / historical / archaeological sites within Opotiki represent a non renewable resource. While the perceived value of this resource may vary widely within the community the protection of, or recovery of information from, these sites allows us to better understand the history of people and places that have shaped the modern community of Opotiki.

### **Recorded Archaeological Sites**

Three archaeological sites or archaeological landscapes were recording during the course of this assessment.

#### *W15/1030 Redoubt / St Stephens Church*

The military redoubt constructed around St Stephens church in 1865 is perhaps the most obvious omission in the archaeological site inventory for Opotiki District. The redoubt has been recorded along with the church which pre dates the redoubt by several years. The archaeological resource within Allotment 49 of Section 1 Town of Opotiki including the defensive ditches and other associated subsurface features almost certainly remain buried and intact and constitute a highly significant archaeological resource within the study area.



*W15/1031 Pa Kowhai*

Pa Kowhai was a large 19<sup>th</sup> century Maori pa or kainga that eventually became the modern day Opotiki. It played a significant role in the military engagement of 1865 and, given the limited modification to land in this area, there is reasonable cause to suspect that subsurface archaeology relating to this pa survive. The extent of the site corresponds to the Pa Kowhai archaeological alert zone illustrated in the Opotiki town heritage study prepared by Matthews and Matthews Architects Ltd.

*W15/1032 Pre 1900 Opotiki Central Business District*

Archival research carried out by Lynn Williams and Jane Matthews has revealed a potentially extensive resource relating to the pre 1900 commercial and residential area of Opotiki that is now defined by the central business district. There is reasonable cause to suspect that significant subsurface archaeology relating to this activity survives within the study area. The extent of the site corresponds to the Opotiki Central Business District archaeological alert zone illustrated in the Opotiki town heritage study prepared by Matthews and Matthews Architects Ltd.

Recommendations to protect archaeological resources are contained in Section 8.

## 6.6 REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANNING FRAMEWORK

This section provides an overview of the existing statutory framework that relates to the identification and management of heritage resources in Opotiki. This includes the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement, the Opotiki District Plan and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Recommendations to enhance and extend the existing framework are set out after the review.

### Operative Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement

#### Chapter 13 – Physical Resources/Built Environment

Chapter 13 of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) relates to physical resources/built environment. In the background discussion it is noted that the nature and character of the region's physical and resources and built environment have evolved from a diverse range of factors, including 'the heritage, culture and resources of people'. The management of the built environment to protect heritage and cultural values is not identified as an issue for the Region in this chapter. The discussion of issues focuses on efficient infrastructure management and protection of natural resources. As a result, there are no objectives and policies that relate to urban form and character in relation to cultural heritage values in this section.

#### Chapter 15 – Heritage

Chapter 15 deals specifically with heritage resources. The background discussion provides a thorough overview of: the role of heritage resources; the different types of sites, buildings and places that contribute to the heritage resource; the difficulty in identifying and determining the values of some heritage places; the role of education and awareness in promoting heritage management; and the different agencies involved in heritage management.

From this discussion a clear set of issues are identified. The overarching objective (15.3.1(a)) is identified as:

*The protection of heritage places from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.*

The associated policies are clear and relate to the identified issues.

A number of actions are clearly set out as methods for implementing the policy framework. A primary action set out for Environment BOP is to facilitate the establishment of criteria for determining the significance of heritage places and to promote, support and be involved in compiling a regional heritage place inventory bringing together and refining existing heritage place inventories. The importance of clearly communicating this information to various sectors of the community and integrating it with other aspects of resource management processes is also identified.

A clearly identified set of 7 anticipated environmental results are set out.

#### Proposed Change 1

In May 2004, Proposed Change 1 to the RPS was notified. The Change makes considerable changes to Chapter 15 to tighten the wording and be more explicit about the intentions for heritage protection. Most significantly, Proposed Change 1 introduces assessment criteria for: the assessment of heritage values (contained in Appendix F); and the assessment of whether subdivision, use and development in regard to heritage values and places is inappropriate (contained in Appendix G). The need for such criteria was previously identified in Chapter 15. The Plan Change is accompanied by a User Guide.



Appendix F contains 5 sets of criteria:

- Set 1 Natural character;
- Set 2 Natural features and landscapes;
- Set 3 Indigenous vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna;
- Set 4 Maori culture and traditions;
- Set 5 Historic heritage.

## Opotiki District Plan (2005)

### Chapter 4 – Heritage

#### *Policy Framework*

The chapter provides an introduction summarising the role of heritage resources in the District. As the District Plan was prepared prior to Proposed Change 1 of the RPS, there is no reference made to the detailed framework provided in the RPS, and particularly, the assessment criteria for assessing heritage values.

Six issues are identified, including the lack of information currently available about the District's heritage resources and the resulting potential damage to items or places of value that are currently unrecorded.

The Plan contains two primary objectives. The first (4.2.2.1) is:

*The recognition and protection of the heritage value of resources, including buildings, objects, trees and archaeological sites.*

This objective does not make reference to places, or the group significance of some collections of heritage items. The objective is supported by a number of specific policies relating to modification or damage to heritage resources and carrying out works on or around heritage resources.

The second objective (4.2.2.2) is:

*Improved public awareness of the heritage resources that exist in the district and a community commitment to the recognition and protection of these resources.*

The policies that relate to this objective focus on identifying the District's heritage resource and effectively communicating this to the community, recognising the sensitivity of some Iwi and Hapu sites and the importance of not publicly disclosing their location. The policy framework also recognises the role of and importance of working with other agencies involved in the management of heritage resources.

#### *Rules*

The Plan provides for minor works to heritage resources (identified in Appendix 4) that do not require structural modification and are in the same or similar materials and design as those originally used, or works relating to the part of an item not protected, and for minor trimming or surgically treating notable trees as a **controlled** activity.

The matters which the Council has reserved its control over are set out. However, some of these read more like assessment criteria than a listing of the matters Council has reserved control over. It is not clear how the assessment criteria that follow relate to the matters for control. The criteria do not provide clear guidance as to what should gain approval.

Modifications to heritage resources not complying with those set out above, works within the drip line of a protected tree, and the structural modification, or removal of any heritage resource or part of any heritage resource listed in Appendix 4, is listed as a **discretionary**

activity. The matters of discretion are set out. These are supported by a set of criteria for assessing the significance of the heritage site.

The demolition or removal from the site of any identified heritage resource is listed as a **non-complying** activity in section 4.3.4 however it is also included as a **discretionary activity** as noted in section 4.3.3, item 4.

Appendix 4 contains those sites that are registered with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, together with three other places. The list contains a relatively small number of buildings, memorials, structures and waahi tapu sites. Currently there are no heritage areas identified. There are no archaeological sites specifically identified. There are no trees identified.

Currently scheduled buildings or places in the town centre include:

Hiona St Stephen's Church hall and surrounds  
 St John's Church  
 Opotiki Hotel  
 Masonic Hotel  
 Royal Hotel  
 Shalfoon Bros.  
 Rostgards Building  
 Courthouse  
 De Luxe Theatre  
 The War Memorial

This short list of places in Opotiki town centre features some of the most significant places. However based on the thematic research carried out for the Historic Heritage Study there are a number of other places in Opotiki which have been assessed as being of cultural heritage value.

Some district plan schedules provide an indication of the particular criteria associated with a place, which have been recognised in its scheduling. This layer of information could be added, based on the heritage assessment criteria included in the Regional Policy Statement.

## Chapter 12 – Town Centre Zone

The study area is largely contained within the Town Centre zone. The introductory statement for this zone recognises the heritage values of the Town and the role these play in determining the Town's character. The introduction provides a list of characteristics that contribute to the Town's character. This could be added to and re-ordered to ensure that the identified heritage character of the centre is at the top of the list.

### *Policy Framework*

The policy framework seeks to manage the Town Centre to ensure its continued vitality and function as an attractive and pleasant retail, commercial, cultural and community focal point. To achieve this, policies are directed to maintain the character of the zone and to protect the buildings within the zone that are of heritage importance (this refers back to Chapter 4).

Objective 2 is:

*Avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects on the retail character of the Town Centre zone.*

This is supported by a policy to identify a 'policy area' to provide continuity of retail frontage and verandahs.



### *Activity Status*

The activity status of buildings correlates with the status of the associated activity. For example, buildings and activities accessory to a permitted activity are permitted. Commercial, restaurants, retail, public carparks (other than fronting Church Street) are all listed as permitted activities, so their associated buildings are also permitted. Any activity that is not listed in the Plan and which complies with the zone standards is also deemed to be a **permitted** activity.

For **controlled** activities, the Council has identified a number of matters of control that relate to design and how the site development impacts on the character of the zone. However, these are not well supported by assessment criteria.

A number of community focussed activities are listed as **discretionary** activities including educational facilities, places of assembly, community activities. Other discretionary activities include activities requiring on-site customer car parking, residential accommodation at ground level, visitor accommodation, service industries and public car parks fronting Church Street.

### *Zone Standards*

The zone standards provide very little restriction over building location, scale and form.

There is no site coverage requirement.

The height limit is 9m.

Daylight protection – just off boundaries with Residential or Mixed Activity zones – 2.7 + 45°.

Yards – 4.5m from Residential or Mixed Activity zone boundary.

Screening of storage areas from public areas and any Residential or Mixed Activity zone is required.

Loading and unloading to be accommodated on-site to the rear of the site.

Signage restrictions apply.

Retail frontage requirements (display windows fronting footpaths, arcades and pedestrian precincts, and verandahs, in Town Centre Policy Area. There are design requirements for the verandahs.

An activity that does not comply with the zone standards is deemed to be a **non-complying** activity.

### *Subdivision*

Subdivision standards include:

- A minimum lot size of 300m<sup>2</sup>
- A minimum frontage of 10m
- A minimum depth of 18m

Subdivision that meets these standards is a **controlled** activity; otherwise it is a **discretionary** activity.

Chapter 10 sets out the matters that Council has reserved control over. This includes protection of cultural, historical, ecological or archaeological sites and values (10.3.2.1), but does not make any reference to established character.

### **Chapter 13 – Residential Zone**

The introduction of the Residential zone and the Resource Management Strategy does not recognise the role of the residential area surrounding the Town Centre in contributing to Opotiki's heritage and character.

As a result there are no objectives, policies or rules that relate to the protection, alteration or removal of dwellings that may be of heritage/character value. The 'Other Methods' section does identify the 'development of a heritage programme to ensure that heritage values of a particular residential area are promoted.'

Recommendations to strengthen and enhance the heritage management framework are included in Section 8.

## **7.0 MANAGEMENT OF HISTORIC HERITAGE IN OPOTIKI TOWN CENTRE**

Opotiki District Council has the primary responsibility under the Resource Management Act for land use management including the management of heritage resources. They are supported in this role by Environment Bay of Plenty and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

Opotiki District Council have made steady progress in the recognition and protection of heritage resources through research reports such as the Heritage Assessment completed in 1997 and working together with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and Environment Bay of Plenty to undertake a more detailed Heritage Study for the town centre.

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust has completed detailed research in support of the registration of a group of ten places in central Opotiki. This list forms the basis for the current schedule of historic places included in the District Plan.

Environment Bay of Plenty through the Regional Policy Statement have established clear goals for heritage protection in the region and have prepared detailed criteria for determining the significance of heritage places, which will form the basis of assessment through district plans.

The Opotiki town centre contains a historic heritage resource of regional and national significance. The town centre has played an important role in several phases of New Zealand's history and it is one of the best surviving examples of a town centre from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the upper North Island.

However very few historic buildings in the central area are scheduled in the District Plan or registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Places that are scheduled include some of the most historically significant buildings, and generally the most architecturally significant examples in Opotiki. This emphasis primarily on architectural values doesn't adequately reflect the range of heritage values associated with Opotiki, nor does it recognise the collective character of the town centre. There are no recorded archaeological sites in Opotiki town centre which places this resource at risk.

Currently the retention of heritage values and character of Opotiki town centre relies on limited development pressure and the high regard that the community generally has for the centre, together with limited formal heritage management. Because so few places are scheduled there are currently limited controls to protect or encourage the retention of heritage character, or opportunities for Council or the community to comment on possible redevelopment proposals. Previous demolition of key buildings in the centre including the BNZ and the Post Office are still fresh in the minds of the local community and highlight the issue.

The need for information about heritage resources and formal identification of heritage values and collective character was fundamental in the preparation of a Heritage Study. The limited number of places that are currently scheduled potentially contributes to an impression that other individual places are not as important, gives no opportunity for review or comment on redevelopment, nor strong incentive for a high standard of maintenance and care. While non-statutory incentives and guidelines can be used to advocate and advance heritage conservation, these would be more effective when used in combination with some form of additional statutory control.

Opotiki's surviving historic buildings and places are a primary asset of the centre and a finite resource. There is an opportunity to enhance the economic development of the centre with

integrated management of heritage resources and ongoing development, particularly with regards to cultural tourism. Authenticity and good communication about Opotiki's historic heritage are the key to encouraging this growth.

### **Options to Enhance Heritage Recognition and Protection**

In order to better recognise and protect heritage resources in Opotiki it will be necessary to strengthen the existing district plan sections which relate to heritage and the town centre, and to consider new options for the ongoing management of heritage resources.

An overview of the main options follows with a discussion of advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

#### **Key options for the protection of heritage resources in Opotiki Town Centre include:**

1. Do nothing/ retain heritage management framework as it currently exists
2. Utilise a range of non- regulatory methods to encourage heritage protection
3. Add to existing Schedule with inclusion of more individual places
4. Create a Heritage Character Overlay Zone or Conservation Area
5. Use a combination of some increased scheduling, a Heritage Character Overlay Zone and non-statutory techniques and incentives

#### **Option 1- Do nothing / retain heritage management framework as it currently exists**

Continuing with the existing pattern of scheduling which includes a limited number of scheduled historic places does not adequately reflect the heritage values in Opotiki and is not consistent with the RMA, Regional Policy Statement or objectives and policies set out in the District Plan. It places heritage resources at potential risk through uncontrolled development, and does not necessarily reflect community aspirations based on strong support for heritage in Opotiki.

Future redevelopment options that involve the removal of currently unrecognized heritage places could lead to community opposition, unfairly or unwittingly placing developers who quite reasonably comply with current district plan provisions in an adversarial position in the community. It is preferable to clearly define and recognise heritage resources valued by the community to provide certainty and clear understanding.

Retaining the current pattern of scheduling leads to the impression that other places in Opotiki are not as important, and could therefore be modified in potentially inappropriate ways or possibly even removed. The research clearly shows that there are a number of other places which are very significant.

#### **Option 2 - Utilise a range of non-regulatory methods to encourage heritage protection**

Non-statutory techniques to encourage greater understanding of the history of the area, and promotion of heritage to assist the tourism potential of the town could be developed in conjunction with the local community. Options include development of self-guided heritage trail brochures, display of interpretive material such as copies of original architectural drawings within shops and buildings, production of promotional material using historic photographs or drawings, use of historic material and stories as cues for the design of public places such as parks, plazas and streets and their furniture.

Other methods to encourage building owners to conserve and maintain heritage buildings include things like funding assistance for preparing conservation plans, offering free advice on heritage paint schemes, preparing guidelines on the right approach to maintenance and adaptive reuse, or assisting with funding assistance for conservation work.

Use of non-statutory techniques is based on encouragement and incentives rather than additional controls. This is very important but if this was the only additional approach used in



Opotiki it would offer maximum flexibility, but no clear identification of what Opotiki's heritage resources are, no opportunity for review or comment and no control if inappropriate redevelopment is proposed. It assumes that all development will be to a high standard, which unfortunately is not always the case.

**Option 3- Further Individual Scheduling**

Research carried out as part of the Heritage Study clearly establishes the values associated with specific historic places in the town centre based on assessment criteria set out in the Regional Policy Statement. The addition of further individual places on the schedule recognises their heritage value, allows appropriate review and control over development to ensure it is sympathetic to the character of particular places, and provides information and knowledge about heritage places. It provides certainty and understanding about places that are particularly valued by the community. Further scheduling in Opotiki would be based on the thematic overview to reflect a range of themes in the development of the place.

Strengthening of existing District Plan sections which relate to scheduled items would also help to more clearly guide the approach to alterations and additions, maintenance and conservation.

Scheduling of individual places however does not adequately acknowledge the overall / collective heritage character of the town centre as whole and intact groups of buildings and places within it. Places which contribute to the streetscape character and overall historic context of the centre may not individually be sufficiently important to warrant scheduling. Individual scheduling does not always properly recognise the unique local, everyday character of a place which is often highly valued by the community. It may not adequately recognise or protect archaeological resources. Also, individual scheduling does not address the role of new development in respecting and reinforcing the overall heritage character of the town centre.

Recent surveys by English Heritage reflect similar acknowledgement in New Zealand towns and cities that communities really value their distinctive, local, ordinary places and the overall context created by the relationship of people to a particular place over time. Scheduling and inventories by contrast have tended to focus on the extra-ordinary, the best examples, and most significant places.

Some councils waive resource consent fees for applications for modification to scheduled historic buildings. This provides an opportunity for the local authority to review and comment on proposals and an incentive for owners of historic buildings.

Further registrations by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust based on research prepared for this study would also reflect the broader range of values associated with Opotiki.

**Option 4- Create a Heritage Character Overlay Zone or Conservation Area**

A heritage character overlay zone or conservation area could be established in the historic core of the town centre. This approach has been successfully applied in a number of other historic town centres. It is a way of acknowledging the collective values and overall character of a place, and providing a degree of control over how existing places are cared for and how new development can respond to and enhance the character. Historic town centres like Opotiki often retain intact groups of historic buildings. Not each of these would meet the criteria for individual scheduling but as a collective group they define the particular historic streetscape character.

The introduction of a heritage character overlay zone would address the relationship between the Centre's character and heritage items that are collectively important to retain and reinforce.

The aim of such an overlay zone would not be to freeze the built environment but it would ensure that the particular character of the area as a whole is understood, and that future



change could be managed to protect the distinctive character of the centre. The retention, conservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings would be a primary aim, balanced against high quality, sympathetic redevelopment that would reinforce the character and form of the centre.

A similar "Archaeological Alert Zone" could also be developed to highlight the area within the town centre which is most likely to contain potential archaeological resources, to achieve better recognition of this resource, potential for information and certainty.

In order for ongoing use and change to be managed there is a need for some form of control and opportunity for Council to review and comment on proposals. Removal, redevelopment and/or major alterations to existing buildings within the overlay zone would trigger a resource consent process. A limited discretionary or discretionary activity status is preferable to a controlled activity status. This would enable Council to review and carefully manage change and development, to ensure that the unique character of the town centre is retained and enhanced.

Within an overlay zone it would be useful to identify those existing places which are the most important in defining the historic character of the town centre, and those places which may not be so important, but support the overall historic character of the centre. Differing levels of control could be utilised to ensure that places of greatest cultural heritage value are more carefully managed while a greater degree of flexibility would be possible for the places which support the heritage character.

The extent of the overlay zone in Opotiki would be based on the core of historic places in the historic heart of the town including St John's Street which was intended as the main street and also includes a number of historic buildings. While there are a number of sites which contain buildings of no particular cultural value the proximity of these sites to the core and to other heritage buildings means it is important to consider what development could occur here in the future, and to think about whether it is desirable to have a greater degree of control over all development in the historic core to ensure it enhances the identified character.

**Option 5 - Combination of increased scheduling, a Heritage Character Overlay Zone and non-statutory techniques and incentives**

A combination of approaches would potentially achieve the best outcome for Opotiki. It would respond to the limited existing schedule as well as acknowledging the collective character of the centre. It is important to achieve a balance between statutory methods that provide certainty and some control and non- statutory methods to encourage and provide incentives for the ongoing care and use of buildings and places.

It would encourage careful management, appropriate care and adaptive reuse of heritage places, and enable future development to positively contribute to the centre. It would provide certainty, and a clear basis for moving forward. It acknowledges more fully what it is about Opotiki that is treasured and valued enough to want to keep and build on for future generations.

**Opotiki Town Centre**  
Potential Overlay Zones

Map 2

# Opotiki Town Centre

## Potential Overlay Zones



	Recommended extent of potential central Heritage Character Overlay zone
	Buildings assessed as being Heritage Character Defining
	Buildings assessed as being Heritage Character Supporting
	Recommended extent of potential Archaeological Alert zone
	Significant heritage buildings (Character Defining) outside the central zone.
	Historic Street trees
	Core Retail Precinct
	Preliminary Overview of historic residential development, indicating approximate location of villa or bungalow type housing.



## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

A range of approaches will be required to enhance the recognition of heritage resources in Opotiki and to make sure that they are adequately protected and that new development can be achieved in an integrated way. Based on the research and analysis carried out in the Opotiki Heritage Study it is recommended that a combination of approaches including additional statutory and non- statutory techniques be considered and that the community be consulted regarding options. A preferred approach would involve some additional control balanced against non- regulatory methods.

This section includes a range of recommendations including:

- 8.1 Recommendations to enhance/strengthen existing District Plan provisions related to heritage.
- 8.2 Recommendations for new options to enhance the recognition and protection of heritage resources.
- 8.3 Recommendations for non- statutory techniques to encourage the retention and care of heritage resources.
- 8.4 Recommendations for protection of archaeological resources.
- 8.5 Recommendations for architectural conservation and maintenance.
- 8.6 Recommendations for assessment and improvement of the structural performance of earthquake risk buildings.

### **8.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE/ STRENGTHEN EXISTING DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS RELATED TO HERITAGE**

Based on the review of the Regional Policy Statement and District Plan policies related to heritage protection the key recommendations to strengthen the existing district plan framework include:

- Objectives, policies and rules should be more closely aligned with the Regional Policy Statement, and, in particular, the detailed assessment criteria introduced in Change 1 should form the basis for criteria in the District Plan to assess heritage resources. These criteria have been used in this heritage study to assess places and areas.
- Policy frameworks currently focus on the heritage value of individual places and not necessarily on the collective value of the town centre as a whole. The policy frameworks should be added to so they clearly recognise the collective value of heritage items in Opotiki town centre, contributing to its overall character.
- In order to provide greater guidance on the desired approach to alterations and additions to existing heritage buildings greater clarification of the matters Council will have control over is required, and more detailed assessment criteria should be set out for alterations to existing buildings. Similarly to guide the approach to new buildings so that they respond to and enhance the existing character of the town centre there is a need for clarification of the matters Council will have control over and clear assessment criteria.

The following recommendations are suggested to strengthen the existing heritage management framework.

## **Regional Policy Statement**

### **Recommendation**

- Inclusion of some discussion and policy framework in Chapter 13 relating to the role of heritage/character (lower order than individually scheduled items, and the collective value of places / areas) in the functioning, identity and sense of place of settlements in the Region. Cross reference this to Chapter 15 and the role of heritage resources.

## **District Plan (2005)**

### **Chapter 4 – Heritage**

#### **Recommendations**

- Include in the introductory section a definition of heritage resources based on that in the Regional Policy Statement. Include reference to the collective significance of heritage items which is a finite resource that also needs to be adequately recognised and, managed.
- Objective 1 could be re-worded to align more closely with the key objective in the Regional Policy Statement; “The recognition and protection of heritage values and places (including buildings, groups of buildings, structures, objects, trees, natural features and landscapes, cultural landscapes, waahi tapu and archaeological sites).
- Add to the policies under Objective 1 to note Council’s strategy for the recognition and identification of heritage. In order to recognise and protect heritage values in Opotiki the District Plan includes a schedule of Heritage Resources (Appendix 4).
- Add a separate objective to protect and enhance *areas* of significant historic, cultural, scientific or public interest or value. Note other potential mechanisms such as a Heritage Character Overlay zone or conservation area which may be applied in Opotiki’s town centre, where the collective value of surviving historic buildings provides a unique character.
- List in full the heritage assessment criteria used to identify heritage resources, based on those in the Regional Policy Statement.
- The need for more thorough identification of heritage resources and information on heritage resources is identified as one of six key Resource Management Issues. Policy 2.1 sets out the need to quantify those resources within the district that have heritage value. Set out the strategies to achieve this including preparation of a thematic overview for Opotiki and a Heritage Study for Opotiki Town Centre. There is still a need for ongoing research in the surrounding area. Recognition/Identification of Opotiki’s historic housing stock for example has been raised by members of the community. Identification of further places outside the town centre area will be ongoing.
- Provide clearer drafting of matters of control/discretion for controlled or discretionary activities, with clear supporting assessment criteria. Base assessment criteria on the criteria in the Regional Policy Statement.
- Clarify the status for the demolition or removal of a heritage resource contained in the Schedule as a non-complying activity.

## **Chapter 12 – Town Centre zone**

### **Recommendations**

- Add to the introduction to describe the identified heritage character of Opotiki town centre, noting its retention of a broad range of heritage buildings and that the

relationship between places and their collective value gives Opotiki its unique character.

- Add to the current description of key characteristics that contribute to the character of the zone. Retention of heritage buildings is a primary asset of the centre, well recognised and valued by the community and should be at the top of the list. Expand wording to describe the intact historic street pattern, retention of intact groups of heritage buildings and places which provide evidence of heritage values associated with Opotiki's history.
- Objective 1 could be strengthened by a more explicit statement about the heritage character of the town centre. Sympathetic treatment of surviving early buildings in Opotiki will provide a high quality identity, reinforcing the unique character of Opotiki.
- Policy 1.4 should remove reference to facades. A holistic approach to heritage buildings is preferable.
- Differentiate between assessment criteria for new buildings and alterations to existing buildings.
- Check appropriateness of status for new buildings/ alterations to existing buildings, which needs to be considered in combination with extent of scheduling (protection under Ch. 4).
- Review assessment criteria, particularly for controlled activities.
- Add criteria for alterations to existing buildings.
- Add to criteria for the site layout, design and appearance of new buildings and associated site development. The existing character of particular blocks should guide any redevelopment:
  - Generally 1 and 2 storied scale of commercial buildings, with predominantly plastered brick construction, and timber construction.
  - Configuration of shopfronts and verandas, and survival of original detail, including interior detail, to a number of buildings.
  - Relatively narrow lot widths.
  - Build to street edge consistent with neighbouring development.
  - Where sites front the Mainstreet, a primary orientation and level of detailing to that frontage should be required.
- 12.3.2.5 iii - Expand to include the effects of the activity on neighbouring sites, heritage *areas and heritage streetscape*.
- Review zone standards and subdivision standards against existing character elements. The 9 m height limit generally reflects the two storey maximum of existing heritage buildings.

#### **Chapter 10 Subdivision**

##### **Recommendations**

- Review the matters for Council's control/discretion in relation to controlled and discretionary activity subdivisions to ensure they respond to the role of the street and lot patterns in contributing to the overall character of the Town Centre.

## **Chapter 13 – Residential zone**

### **Recommendations**

- Assess the role of the residential neighbourhood around the Town Centre and the role it plays in contributing to the Town's heritage/character values. Opotiki retains a stock of historic houses including Victorian and Edwardian villas and cottages as well as bungalow type houses. These contribute to the perception and understanding of Opotiki as a historic centre. No residential properties are currently scheduled in the district plan. The residential zone provisions do not necessarily reflect the character of historic housing. A more careful survey of the character associated with historic housing should be undertaken, and the zone provisions reviewed if necessary to retain historic residential character.
- Research and assessment of houses should be carried out to determine whether individual properties warrant scheduling.

## **8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW STATUTORY OPTIONS TO ENHANCE THE RECOGNITION AND PROTECTION OF HERITAGE RESOURCES**

Surviving early buildings in Opotiki are a primary asset of the centre, and sympathetic treatment will provide a high quality identity, reinforcing the unique qualities of Opotiki.

Even if the current District Plan provisions related to heritage places are strengthened it does still not adequately recognise the full extent of heritage resources in Opotiki town centre, or adequately protect heritage values.

Additional identification and methods of control for heritage resources in Opotiki are necessary if the resource is to be properly managed in the long term. This involves a change to the current approach and the community should be consulted regarding the potential options.

The key options for additional statutory mechanisms include:

### **Additional scheduling in the district plan**

And/or

### **Developing a heritage character overlay zone or conservation area**



### **Additional scheduling in the district plan**

#### **Recommendation**

- In addition to a potential overlay zone some individual places, buildings and trees should be scheduled in the District Plan, to adequately recognise places with very high cultural heritage values. Scheduling should include whole buildings, including surviving historic shopfronts, verandahs and interiors. Suggested places have been researched and are identified in Part Two: Heritage Inventory.

Places which have been researched in detail during this study and which should be considered for scheduling in the District Plan include:



Name	Address	
Shalfoon's 1914 Building	100 Church Street, Opotiki	
Patterson's Buildings	102-106 Church Street, Opotiki	
Kowhai Takeaways Building	125 Church Street, Opotiki	
Former Bridger's Building	126 Church Street Cnr Church and Elliott Streets, Opotiki	
St Stephen's Church Hall and St Stephen's Sunday School	Church Street, Opotiki Include whole site with existing scheduling of church	
Former Bay of Plenty Electricity Building	128 A Church Street, Opotiki	
Kelly Street Cemetery	Kelly Street, Opotiki	
St Joseph's School Building	20 Grey Street, Opotiki	
Opotiki Wharf	Wharf Street, Opotiki	
Former Salvation Army Barracks	153 King Street, Opotiki	
Former King Street Theatre	21 King Street, Opotiki	
Former Black-smiths Platt Bros Building adjacent to Platt Bros	23 King Street Opotiki 25 King Street, Opotiki 27 King Street, Opotiki	

Drill Hall 59 St John's Street, Opotiki



Whakatohea Maori Trust Board.(Former Loan and Mercantile Co Building) 122-126 St John's Street, Opotiki



Former Masonic Hall 125 St John's Street, Opotiki



Places which initial research indicates are of cultural heritage value which should be further researched for possible inclusion in the schedule include:

Name	Address
Church Street Surgery	94 Church Street, Opotiki
United Video (Former Alhambra Theatre)	98 Church Street, Opotiki
Arthurs and Larmers Building	Church Street, Opotiki
Former Regent Theatre	Church Street, Opotiki
Paper Plus	106 Church Street, Opotiki
Former Strand Arcade	110 Church Street, Opotiki
Paper Plus	
Ladies Restrooms	Church Street, Opotiki
Former Dalgety's Building	Elliott Street, Opotiki
Former Car Showroom and workshop	16 King Street
Pohutukawa House	King Street, Opotiki
Former Real Estate Agents Building	King Street, Opotiki
Opotiki Backpackers	30 King Street, Opotiki
Former Maori Mission Hall	34 King Street, Opotiki
Methodist Church	Ford Street
Opotiki Cemetery	
Former Opotiki Race Course	Opotiki Aerodrome
Totalizator building	

## Developing a heritage character overlay zone or conservation area

### **Recommendation**

- Consideration should be given to the development of a heritage character overlay zone or conservation area. This approach would recognise the collective value of the Opotiki town centre and manage heritage protection, adaptive reuse and new development in an integrated manner. The aim is to encourage sympathetic adaptation, conservation and maintenance to a high and consistent standard, as well as high quality new development.

A draft Heritage Character Overlay Zone has been prepared based on research done as part of this study and follows this summary of key methods.

Within the heritage character overlay approach buildings identified as “heritage character defining” and “heritage character supporting” should be retained, conserved and adapted for ongoing use in preference to redevelopment.

If sites are to be redeveloped then controls on new development should be strengthened to ensure that new buildings reinforce the character of the centre.

Controls on major alterations or additions to character defining buildings should be put in place.

To enable review of redevelopment or adaptation of historic buildings resource consents should be required to extensively modify existing buildings or redevelop sites in the town centre.

The overlay zone could also be successfully used to identify the area where archaeological resources are most likely to be evident and where further assessment may be required if any redevelopment requiring significant site works is proposed.

The existing character of particular blocks should guide any future redevelopment:

- Generally 1 and 2 storied scale of commercial buildings, with predominantly plastered brick construction, and timber construction.
- Configuration of shopfronts and verandas.
- Relatively narrow lot widths.
- Orientation of buildings to front the Mainstreet, with service areas provided to the rear.
- A strong built edge to the street, with the exception of some public buildings which are set back from the front boundary.
- Greater detail and fenestration on facades fronting the Mainstreet, with simpler side and rear facades.
- Mix of commercial, residential, industrial and church uses within or close to the mainstreet commercial core, which give Opotiki a unique character.

### **“Heritage Character Defining” and “Heritage Character Supporting” Elements**

Opotiki contains buildings from a variety of eras, many of which may be considered to be historic, and others that while not clearly identifiable as historic, contribute to the particular character and vitality of the town centre.

Based on an understanding of the historic development and analysis of the urban character of Opotiki town centre, buildings or groups of buildings have been identified as “*Heritage Character Defining*” or “*Heritage Character Supporting*” in terms of their historic and/or architectural, urban design and overall character importance. This approach is intended to encourage the retention of the streetscape character and context of the centre by tailoring a



level of control relative to the importance of each element. Surviving early buildings in the centre are a primary asset. Sympathetic treatment will provide a high quality, authentic identity by reinforcing the centre's unique qualities. It is not the intention to freeze the built environment, but it is intended that the particular character of the area is understood, and that change can be managed to protect the distinctive character of the centre. Innovative and congruent development likely to add to the appreciated attributes of Opotiki should be encouraged. Existing buildings, groups of buildings, structures, or trees in this centre have particular significance in terms of the social, aesthetic, technological and historic values of the centre.

*"Heritage Character Defining"* buildings and elements are those that make a major contribution to the character and heritage significance of the centre, and if removed would create a serious loss in identified character. Their retention is strongly advocated. These elements are seen as key participants in the historic character and sense of place of Opotiki. These would include all those places that are currently scheduled, all places that are researched and recommended for scheduling as a result of this study and most of those places which have been recommended for further research.

Relatively few of these are currently scheduled for protection in the District Plan. Both the *heritage character defining* and *heritage character supporting* elements act to support and provide historic and streetscape context for the scheduled historic places within each area.

Similarly, elements identified as *"Heritage Character Supporting"* currently make a positive contribution to the character and heritage values of the centre. They have been identified as *"heritage character supporting"* if they contribute to the historic character and sense of place or are consistent with the character and values of the *"heritage character defining"* buildings. For example, they may contribute to the streetscape character, or form part of an intact group of traditional 'mainstreet' buildings, but not be of particular historic, social or architectural value. In order to protect these values as part of the Heritage Character Overlay Zone, removal, redevelopment and/ or extensive alteration within the zone should trigger a resource consent process.

The retention and ongoing use of *"heritage character supporting"* buildings is also desirable, however potential change will be more readily accommodated in these locations without detracting from the overall identified character of the centre. With redevelopment of sites within the Heritage Character Overlay Zone controlled by a resource consent process, there will be opportunity for direction, to respond to identified character, and review proposals.

**Additional methods that Council could consider to encourage retention and successful adaptive reuse of historic buildings:**

- Encourage the preparation of conservation plans for scheduled historic buildings. Research prepared as part of this study will be a useful starting point for conservation plans.
- Look at possible incentives to encourage building owners to retain and conserve historic buildings for ongoing use such as waiving resource consent fees, and providing free advice on architectural conservation or historic colour schemes, waiving development contributions where heritage buildings are conserved in accordance with a conservation plan.
- Continue with research on individual places that have been identified as significant during this study, but which were not able to be researched in detail.
- A similar process of research and identification of items of heritage significance should be undertaken for areas outside the town centre, including assessment of Opotiki's historic residential stock, and significant trees.



### Archaeological Alert Zone

The early cultural / historical / archaeological sites within Opotiki represent a non renewable resource. Where possible the record forms for particular sites identify known earlier structures or uses however the information available for each site relating to pre-1900 structures and human activity within the study area varies. Identifying specific archaeological sites based on this information would therefore be incomplete. Recording sites within specified property boundaries based on available archival data would result in a false impression of the extent and significance of the archaeological landscape within the study area.

Given the high concentration of prehistoric and post contact activity within the study area it is considered more appropriate to identify an archaeological alert zone encompassing all archaeologically sensitive areas.

It is recommended that all significant ground disturbances associated with redevelopment within this zone should be subject to further archaeological assessment and possible monitoring. This would ensure that significant archaeological sites not identifiable by surface expression or archival information are identified and recorded during the course of redevelopment.

### 8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NON- STATUTORY TECHNIQUES TO ENCOURAGE THE RETENTION AND CARE OF HERITAGE RESOURCES.

The following non- statutory techniques and incentives could be considered to encourage the retention and care of Opotiki's historic buildings and places:

- Develop simple guidelines for building owners and developers to assist with conservation and maintenance, and guide proposals for sympathetic adaptive reuse of historic buildings in the centre.
- Develop design guidelines for new development in the historic centre.
- Encourage the careful conservation of key historic buildings in the town centre as a catalyst. Projects such as the recent conservation and repainting of St Stephens Church, and well maintained buildings such as the Masonic Hotel and De Luxe Theatre are important in setting standards of care and ensuring that the place looks loved. Other upcoming projects such as the conservation of the former Salvation Army Hall in King Street will also have a very positive outcome for Opotiki town centre.
- Council could establish a heritage task force to help building owners apply for funds where possible, identify potential funding sources, and help put people in touch with others who can help the process.
- Establish a body such as the Waipa Heritage Council, which has representatives from the Waipa District Council, Historic Places Trust, the local historical society, local museums and an archaeological advisor, with the aim of preservation of sites and buildings.
- Encourage sustainable development through the retention and reuse of historic building stock in preference to redevelopment.
- Enhance understanding of the significant Maori and European history of the area, potentially through:
  - a heritage walk brochure,
  - published history,
  - interpretive signage within or about key buildings,
  - on-site markers or signage.
- Investigate options to further highlight aspects of Opotiki's history such as some appropriate demarcation of the site of Pakowhai, marking out a typical one- acre lot,

marking the approximate locations of early jetties, marking in paving the previous edge of the backwater channel where the jetties were located.

- Encourage building owners to display historic photographs, architectural drawings or other archival material within private buildings, E.g. historic photos displayed inside the Masonic Hotel.
- Add to archives held at Opotiki Library by supplying copies of historic material gathered during this study.
- Add to building files at Opotiki District Council with copies of research material gathered during the study.
- Encourage research and creative programmes already running at Opotiki College and other schools such as, research projects, oral history projects, photographic and art exhibitions and competitions based on Opotiki's heritage.
- Co-ordinate with tourism agencies to explore ways of promoting the heritage values of the Town to local and international visitors to the area.



#### 8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROTECTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The archaeological information presented in this report is insufficient for the purposes of resource consent and Historic Places Trust authority applications. The following recommendations are provided for the future management and mitigation of effects on archaeological resources within the study area.

- Future redevelopment proposals within the archaeological alert zone will require further archaeological assessment, including site inspections before and after demolition of existing buildings. Redevelopment projects that will damage or destroy archaeological features will require prior authority from the New Zealand Historic Places Trust before the commencement of ground disturbance. However, thorough archaeological assessments may also preclude the need for Historic Places Trust Authorities or further archaeological fieldwork if previous ground disturbance is found to have been extensive.
- The value and significance of the archaeological resource within the study area can only be realized through archaeological investigation. Therefore, the mitigation of effects on archaeological sites within the study area will ultimately result in the damage or destruction of the site carried out under the conditions of a Historic Place Trust Authority.
- The study area arguably contains a very significant archaeological resource in the context of the pre 1900 history of the Bay of Plenty relating to both early Maori and pre 1900 European activity. Consideration should be given to the establishment of an archaeological alert zone encompassing all land within the areas illustrated in Figure 2 and that all significant ground disturbances within this zone are subject to further archaeological assessment and or monitoring. This would ensure that significant archaeological sites not identifiable by surface expression or archival information are identified and recorded during the course of redevelopment.
- That further research is carried out to identify the nature and location of early industrial sites in the Opotiki District. Early industrial sites in New Zealand invariably have high archaeological values and their identification, preservation and investigation is important to our understanding of the economic development of small town New Zealand.

## 8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUILDING CONSERVATION AND MAINTENANCE

The Opotiki town centre is a mixed-use area with commercial, retail, community and entertainment and light industrial functions in close proximity to residential development. Most buildings are generally well maintained and presented, and in largely original condition.

A range of solutions will be required for the conservation and maintenance of buildings within the area, depending on the particular building and the requirements of the owners and users however some general recommendations are set out below.

### General Recommendations

- Where possible existing “character defining” and “character supporting” buildings should continue to be maintained and adapted to new or ongoing uses in preference to building new structures.
- Additions or alterations should be in keeping with the architectural and historic form, proportions, and style of the existing building. Particular attention should be paid to integrating any new structure with the original by sympathetic consideration of massing, form, fenestration, colour, texture and materials.
- Redecoration, repair and maintenance of existing fabric should be carried out in a manner and design, and with similar materials to those originally used.
- Adaptive reuse proposals involving significant impact should be based on appropriate professional advice.
- Original verandah detailing should be maintained.
- Surviving original shopfronts should be retained where possible.
- Surviving original interior detail should be retained where possible.
- New buildings should have regard for the physical setting and context provided by the adjacent buildings and the street. New development should maintain the high standard of the area and be designed with particular attention to scale, form, fenestration, materials, finishes and verandah types.
- Consideration should be given to providing incentives for building owners to undertake maintenance to existing buildings, such as providing professional advice on repairs and colour schemes.

### Signage

Sign design should follow simple principles with regards to scale, graphic design and position on the building, to ensure that they clearly communicate, and enhance the architectural character of the building. Corporate colour schemes for buildings should not be used to turn the entire building into ‘signage’.

### Recommendations

- The design and placement of signage, particularly above verandah level should not conceal architectural detail. Signage should be subservient to the overall building form and should sensibly relate to the proportions and architectural style of the building façade.



- All signage should be to a high graphic standard, preferably professionally designed and sign-written. Where evident raised plastered lettering can provide a basis for contemporary graphics.
- Signage schemes should be developed and coordinated with existing or proposed colour schemes.
- Signage should not be painted directly onto building facades, unless there is precedent on individual buildings for this.
- There are a limited number of examples where existing signage detracts from the buildings on which it is located which should be avoided. These include:
  - Perpendicular parapet level signs mounted unsympathetically over building detail.
  - Signage and large scale graphics painted directly over building facades, elements and parapets.
  - Signage applied over architectural detail or windows above verandah level.

### **Shopfronts and verandas**

Buildings in Opotiki retain their original shopfront and verandah detail to a high degree. Retention of this detail is particularly important for pedestrians and contributes strongly to the character and authenticity of this centre, and should be protected and enhanced.

Buildings such as the Bernina Sewing Centre and adjacent Superette retain amazing leadlighted top lights. Rostgard's Building has original recessed entries with tile work and original shopfronts. Shalfoon Bros provides an example of even earlier timber shopfront detail.

Verandahs include early examples supported on posts as well as suspended verandahs. The curved verandah which extends in front of Patterson's Building and the adjacent former Regent Theatre is a very significant part of the streetscape character.

There are some buildings which were designed without verandas such as the row of small utilitarian buildings in King Street including Platt Bros and the former blacksmiths. This is part of the original architectural concept, or to do with the utilitarian purpose of these buildings, and contributes to the quality and character of the streetscape. It is preferable that these buildings do not have verandas added.

### **Recommendations**

- Surviving original shopfronts within buildings contributing to the heritage streetscape should be retained.
- Shopfront frames including columns and stall boards should be appropriately finished to relate to the building façade as a whole. Surviving original fabric on character defining buildings should be retained and conserved.
- New shopfronts should be sympathetic to the design and materials of the building in which they are located. In particular, floor to ceiling curtain windows should be avoided.
- Original verandas should be retained and conserved within the mainstreet area. Consideration of the verandah edge fascia should be made when designing signs for the fascias.

- Buildings without verandas should be retained as existing.
- For new buildings the verandah design should be sympathetic to the height, proportion and style of existing types, particularly on adjoining sites.

### **Interiors**

Many of the early buildings in the centre retain original interiors or some of their interior detail. Shop interiors are clearly visible from the footpath through plate glass shop windows, are accessible to the public and form part of the "public realm" within the centre. The survival of historic interior detail contributes strongly to the authenticity of heritage character buildings in Opotiki. In the same way that surviving original shop fronts reinforce the pedestrian experience of the heritage qualities of the centre, it is further enhanced where interior detail remains.

### **Recommendations**

- Retention of surviving original interior detail should be encouraged, consistent with the approach to historic shop fronts and veranda detail.
- The inclusion of interiors with the scheduling of key historic buildings should be considered.

### **Paint schemes**

The painting of building facades in strip retail centres is one of the most effective ways of enlivening the pedestrian environment and most importantly ensuring it looks cared for.

Maintaining painted surfaces is a continual process so there is room for change and a little experimentation. The use of colour is important as it can significantly enhance the appearance of a building.

Research into heritage paint schemes, particularly for residential buildings from the Victorian and Edwardian periods has enabled most paint companies to produce heritage paint ranges for the domestic market.

Little research is available specifically on colour schemes applied to early commercial buildings in New Zealand however physical evidence suggests a reasonably conservative palette based on natural materials. Many buildings from the early 20th century originally had a natural plaster or brick finish. Often plasterwork was intentionally lined and finished to look like stone. Timber buildings were often painted in a similar manner to give the appearance of a monolithic surface.

During the late 1920s and 1930s there was also a use of softly tinted plasters in terracotta and ochre colours, often contrasted with areas of brickwork. Terrazzo and New Zealand marble and granite were often utilised for shopfront frames and stall boards. Paint finishes tended not to use very dark or very bright colours that would fade too quickly, and tended to reflect natural materials and finishes such as stones, brick and tinted plaster.

Modern architectural international influences on New Zealand architecture following the second world war generally saw the use of much lighter colour schemes, however the principle of honesty to materials was important and again natural materials were expressed as part of the over all design intentions.



Greater experimentation with colour on building facades in traditional shopping areas has occurred in the post-modern period of the late 1970s and 1980s. During this period colour has been used much more freely to highlight architectural detail. More recently there is a trend toward more natural but darker colour schemes.

#### **Recommendations**

- Existing painted surfaces should be maintained in good condition.
- Selection of colours should relate to the design and materials of each individual building. It is recommended that selected colours be based on investigations of the original colour schemes. This can be done with onsite 'scrape backs' and paint sampling and reference to early photographs of buildings where available.
- Professional advice on individual colour schemes is strongly recommended.
- The overall design and appearance of building shopfronts, signage and colours should be considered collectively.
- Unpainted naturally finished surfaces such as plaster, brick, stone or tiling should not be painted.

#### **8.6 RECOMMENDATION FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE STRUCTURAL PERFORMANCE OF EARTHQUAKE PRONE BUILDINGS**

Due to the existence of a large number of historic buildings and places in Opotiki Town centre it is recommended that structural assessments to identify earthquake prone buildings, and structural design to improve the structural performance of earthquake risk buildings be carried out by engineers with experience in the upgrading of historic buildings.

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#### Maps

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ATL map A13 1868

*A map of the Province of Auckland illustrative of the operation of the Native Land Purchase Department*). ATL ref A68 October 1857

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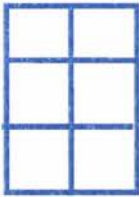
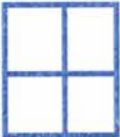
*APPENDICES*


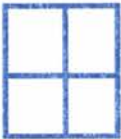
**APPENDIX**

**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
SITE RECORD FORMS**



**W15/1030, W15/1031 & W15/1032**



<b>NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION</b> <b>SITE RECORD FORM (METRIC)</b> Metric map number sheet: W15 Metric map name: Whakatane NZMS 260 map: 1988		<b>NZAA METRIC SITE NUMBER :</b> W15-1030 <b>DATE VISITED:</b> November 2005 <b>SITE TYPE:</b> Redoubt / Church <b>CODE:</b> <b>SITE NAME:</b> St Stephens Church / Redoubt <b>OTHER</b>	
<b>Grid Reference</b> <b>Easting</b> 2886334 <b>Northing</b> 6346479			
<b>Aids to relocation of site (attach sketch map).</b> 128 Church Street, Opotiki and surrounding sections. Allotment 49 of Section 1 town of Opotiki.			
<b>2. State of site and possible future damage.</b> Ditch of redoubt in filled and part of redoubt and external military camp built over.			
<b>3. Description of site (Supply full details: history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)</b> Church constructed in 1862 – 64. Church remains standing and in regular use. Redoubt Constructed in 1865. The redoubt was constructed around the church. No visible evidence of the redoubt or associated military camp is visible however there is reasonable cause to suspect that significant subsurface archaeology associated with the redoubt and the camp survives. Refer: Opotiki Town centre Heritage Study – Prepared by Matthews and Matthews Architects Ltd			
<b>4. Owner</b> Address		<b>Tenant/manager</b>	
<b>5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit) - Archival, literature and photos</b> Photographs (reference numbers and where held) photos taken – Aerial photographs (reference numbers and clarity of site)			
<b>6. Record Update:</b> Ken Phillips Address		<b>Filekeeper</b> Rachel Darmody <b>Date</b>	
<b>7. New Zealand Historic Places Trust (for office use)</b>			
			
Type of site		Present condition and future danger of destruction	
Local environment		Local body	
Land classification			

<b>NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION</b> <b>SITE RECORD FORM (METRIC)</b> Metric map number sheet: W15 Metric map name: Whakatane NZMS 260 map: 1988		<b>NZAA METRIC SITE NUMBER : W15-1031</b> <b>DATE VISITED:</b> November 2005  <b>SITE TYPE:</b> Pa <b>CODE:</b> <b>SITE NAME:</b> Pa Kowhai <b>OTHER</b>	
<b>Grid Reference</b>		<b>Easting</b> 2886430	<b>Northing</b> 6347275
<b>Aids to relocation of site (attach sketch map).</b> The location of the pa complex roughly translates to that part of Opotiki north of Kelly Street and extending east to St John Street.			
<b>2. State of site and possible future damage.</b> Land in this part of Opotiki is relatively unmodified			
<b>3. Description of site (Supply full details: history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)</b> The location and extent of the village is provided on a sketch plan produced following Volkner's death. The pa is illustrated in two sections divided by a possible wetland or stream extending south east from the Otara River. The larger enclosure occurs to the east of the wetland and is illustrated with 10 buildings within a fenced or palisade enclosure. The smaller western enclosure is illustrated with three buildings also within a fenced enclosure. Both areas are located on strategic sections of the Waioeka and Otara Rivers. Refer: Opotiki Town centre Heritage Study – Prepared by Matthews and Matthews Architects Ltd			
<b>4. Owner Address</b>		<b>Tenant/manager</b>	
<b>5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit) - Archival, literature, photos</b> Photographs (reference numbers and where held) photos taken – Aerial photographs (reference numbers and clarity of site)			
<b>6. Record Update:</b> Ken Phillips <b>Address</b>		<b>Filekeeper</b> Rachel Darmody <b>Date</b>	
<b>7. New Zealand Historic Places Trust (for office use)</b>			
	Type of site Local environment Land classification		Present condition and future danger of destruction Local body



<b>NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION</b> <b>SITE RECORD FORM (METRIC)</b> Metric map number sheet: W15 Metric map name: Whakatane NZMS 260 map: 1988		<b>NZAA METRIC SITE NUMBER :</b> W15-1032 <b>DATE VISITED:</b> November 2005  <b>SITE TYPE:</b> Historic - Commercial <b>CODE:</b> <b>SITE NAME:</b> Opotiki <b>OTHER</b>	
<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Easting</b> 2886265	<b>Northing</b> 6346505	
<b>Aids to relocation of site (attach sketch map).</b> Central Business District of Opotiki			
<b>2. State of site and possible future damage.</b> Extensive pre 1900 archaeological resource relating to early commercial and residential Opotiki.			
<b>3. Description of site (Supply full details: history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)</b> There are no visible archaeological features the Opotiki CBD but there is reasonable cause to suspect that subsurface archaeology relating to pre 1900 structures and features survive. Part of Pa-kowhai (W15/10310 is also thought to extend south in the CBD. Refer: Opotiki Town centre Heritage Study – Prepared by Matthews and Matthews Architects Ltd			
<b>4. Owner</b> multiple land owners Address		<b>Tenant/manager</b>	
<b>5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit) - Archival,</b>  <b>Photographs (reference numbers and where held) photos taken –</b>  <b>Aerial photographs (reference numbers and clarity of site)</b>			
<b>6. Record Update:</b> Ken Phillips Address		<b>Filekeeper</b> Rachel Darmody <b>Date</b>	
<b>7. New Zealand Historic Places Trust (for office use)</b>			
	Type of site  Local environment  Land classification		Present condition and future danger of destruction  Local body

