

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

29 CHARLES CRESCENT - RAINBOW POINT, TAUPŌ

25 JUNE 2025 | FOR CONSENT



CONTENTS

Introduction	3
The site	3
The proposal	4
Local Context	4
Area Specific Observations	5
Location Summary	6
Assessment	7
Urban Design Protocol	7
Taupō Housing Strategy	11
Taupō Transport Strategy	11
Proposed District Plan Change 44	12
Conclusion	16

INTRODUCTION

This Urban Design Assessment has been prepared by Heather Blewett of Studio Blewett Limited, on behalf of JT Design Architecture. It is intended to support the resource consent application for a proposed sixteen-unit residential development at 29 Charles Crescent. The development has been designed by JT Design Architecture, with planning input and Assessment of Environmental Effects prepared by CHEAL.

My involvement with the subject site includes the preparation of initial massing studies and the provision of feedback on design options developed by the architectural design team. I have recently visited the site and undertaken a review of the immediate and surrounding context, as well as recent development patterns across the wider township.

In addition my involvement on this site, I have contributed to the design and review of the Taupō East Urban Lands (EUL) development, including Kokomea Village, Lot 3, Lot 20, and the northern and eastern lots (yet to be comprehensively developed). The recently completed Kokomea development is located approximately 120 metres diagonally opposite the subject site and is visible from it. Through this work, I have developed a good understanding of both the existing character and the evolving urban form of the area.

As the operative District Plan does not contain specific urban design assessment matters, this report assesses the proposal against the Ministry for the Environment's New Zealand Urban Design Protocol, the relevant urban design matters set out in the proposed District Plan (Plan Change 44), specifically MRZ-R2 – RDIS activities, the Taupō Housing Strategy, and the Taupō Transport Strategy.

THE SITE

The site is approximately 3,316 sqm in area, comprising four legal titles fronting Charles Crescent and Rainbow Drive. The terrain is predominantly flat, with a gentle fall from Lake Terrace towards the lakefront. It sits noticeably lower than the Lake Terrace carriageway and approximately 3-4 metres below the homes on the opposite side of Lake Terrace.

Measuring approximately 88 metres wide by 38 metres deep, the site forms a three-sided block with three street frontages and a single residential neighbour to the south-east. The corners adjoining Rainbow Drive are chamfered, presumably to improve visibility at the junctions.

Currently, the site accommodates thirteen motel units, a manager's unit, and associated reception and service areas. These are arranged across the site, with the main entrance and reception near the Lake Terrace / Rainbow Drive corner. All existing buildings are single-storey with gabled roof forms. The current development breaches the 5-metre minimum road boundary setback along Rainbow Drive.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises sixteen three-bedroom homes ranging in size from 140 to 157 sqm. Of these, six are two-storey, and ten are three-storey. The site is zoned General Residential under the Taupō District Plan and proposal complies with several zoning standards, including site coverage. However, the proposal includes the following breaches, which have been considered specifically within this assessment:

- Plot ratio of just under 75% (exceeding the standard by 35%)
- Minor breach of the minimum road boundary setback at Unit 1 (910 mm within the 5-metre setback)
- Minor breach of the internal boundary setback at Unit 4 (400 mm within the 1.5-metre setback)
- Height in Relation to Boundary (HiRB) breaches along various road frontages, most notably Lake Terrace
- Maximum height breaches for part of the three-storey roof forms
- The distance of the driveway access to Unit 14 from the intersection

The compliant baseline schemes prepared by JT Design Architecture illustrate the site and existing residential zoning could conceivably provide for eight larger standalone homes, or twelve duplex and standalone homes, with up to eight vehicle crossings.



Render of proposal looking towards Charles Crescent / Rainbow Drive corner, by JT Design Architecture

LOCAL CONTEXT

The subject site is located at the corner of Rainbow Drive and Charles Crescent, with a frontage to Lake Terrace which is zoned General Rural adjacent to the site. It is located within Rainbow Point, a sought-after area close to the lakefront and several recreational trails, including the track to Five Mile Bay and the gully network characteristic of the area.

Directly opposite the site to the north is a small neighbourhood centre comprising a dairy, fish and chip shop, and pub. Diagonally opposite the site to the southeast is the newly developed Kokomea Village Centre, which includes a supermarket, retail tenancies, a café, gym, and soon-to-be-completed medical centre.

Taupō's central business district, offering a broad range of retail, recreational, and employment opportunities, lies approximately 5 km to the north, around a 10-minute drive or 15-minute cycle. Taupō Airport is located approximately 2.5 km to the south, within a 3-minute drive or 10-minute cycle.

Nearby educational facilities include several pre-schools and Waipahihi School, which is within a 15-minute walk. Additional schools, including intermediate, secondary, and college-level institutions, are located in Taupō town centre.

The proposed development sits within an established suburban neighbourhood characterised by a traditional block structure. The area has a distinct identity, shaped by the green gully network that crosses Lake Terrace from mount Tauhara and leads towards the lake. Rainbow Point is bounded by Lake Terrace to the east, the lake itself to the west, and the gully system, creating a clearly defined and cohesive community.

Housing in the area varies in age and style, contributing to a diverse character. A new, emerging identity is evident in recent developments such as the Nga Roto subdivision and Kokomea Village, where homes sit above the carriageway and are visible from the street. These developments predominantly feature single-storey dwellings, with some two-storey examples. The Kokomea Village Centre, including its larger-scale commercial core, is clearly visible from Lake Terrace and includes a

large site for a three-storey apartment building which is anticipated under an approved S127 resource consent.

Rainbow Point's established character includes a mix of one- and two-storey standalone homes, with some duplex and terraced housing. Recent developments, such as the terraced homes on Chad Street, contribute to a growing medium-density character. Diagonally opposite the site, Kokomea Village adds significant commercial scale and building height to Lake Terrace. Future three-storey apartments are also anticipated here under approved consents.

AREA-SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

Lake Terrace

The long, south-east-facing Lake Terrace frontage is visually prominent when travelling in both directions along Lake Terrace. It offers a green outlook from the site across a wide grassed area with established trees, and elevated views beyond towards Grace Gully. Whilst the adjacent land is zoned General Rural, visually, it appears to create a wider berm area to Lake Terrace that frames the entry to Rainbow Point. The strip of land does not allow for any access to a secondary road, and is therefore unlikely to ever be developed due to the nature of Lake Terrace. The mature trees in the verge partially obscure the site.

Travelling towards the town centre, examples of commercial, hotel, and medium-density residential development (2–3 storeys) are evident. Medium Density Residential zoning begins approximately 500 metres north of the site, and despite being zoned General Residential, Kokomea Village introduces a more urban and larger-scale character just 125 metres away. In addition, all homes to the east of Lake Terrace are elevated above the carriageway to increase their scale and visual dominance to this side of the street.

The evolving character of Lake Terrace, shaped by recent developments, feels increasingly urban, with buildings set close to the street and varied in height (1–3 storeys). The subject site lies between the Kokomea commercial centre and the Rainbow Point neighbourhood shops, with Medium Density zoning further north. Given this, a more urban typology would provide an appropriate transition and enhance cohesion along the street, effectively bridging the gap between the established density to the north and newer development to the south.

The natural fall across the site and proposed retaining along the Lake Terrace boundary mean the development will sit below road level, further mitigating its scale.

Rainbow Drive

The site has a relatively short frontage (approx. 38 metres including splays) to Rainbow Drive, directly opposite the dairy, bus stops, and a phone box. This frontage is currently overgrown but has a more commercial appearance due to motel signage and activity on the corner. This is reinforced by the retail uses and car parking across the road. Beyond Charles Crescent, Rainbow Drive transitions into a traditional suburban street with 1–2-storey homes, a footpath to one side, and wide grassed berms.

Charles Crescent

Running parallel to Lake Terrace, Charles Crescent loops north from Rainbow Drive. A pedestrian access to the southwest connects the footpath to Aubrey Crescent Reserve via a grassed walkway sloping into the gully.

The site's Charles Crescent frontage is defined by a tall fence and single-storey motel units. Nearby dwellings include a two-storey duplex directly opposite and a two-storey standalone home to the south-west. Charles Crescent has a narrower carriageway than Rainbow Drive, with footpaths on both sides. It has three existing driveway crossings and one on Rainbow Drive. The character is clearly residential, with a strong built edge created by fences and visible dwellings contributing to a sense of enclosure.

LOCATION SUMMARY

The subject site occupies a prominent location, forming the entrance to Rainbow Point and sitting opposite a small, established neighbourhood centre. Its Lake Terrace and Rainbow Drive frontages convey a more urban and commercial character, influenced by proximity to Kokomea Village and medium-density developments nearby. The site sits slightly lower than the surrounding road network, making it less visually dominant, and mature street trees help soften its presence.

In contrast, the Charles Crescent frontage is more modest in scale, clearly residential in character, and defined by a narrower road reserve. The site offers an opportunity to provide a considered response to its mixed context—supporting additional height and density along Lake Terrace, while maintaining appropriate transitions to the surrounding residential fabric.

ASSESSMENT

Urban Design Protocol

The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol identifies seven universal design qualities that contribute to quality urban design – the Seven Cs. These include:

- **Context** – seeing buildings, places and spaces as part of whole towns and cities
- **Character** – reflecting and enhancing the distinctive character, heritage and identity of our urban environment
- **Choice** – ensuring diversity and choice for people
- **Connections** – enhancing how different networks link together for people
- **Creativity** – encouraging innovative and imaginative solutions
- **Custodianship** – ensuring design is environmentally sustainable, safe and healthy
- **Collaboration** – communicating and sharing knowledge across sectors, professions and with communities

The Seven Cs serve as a checklist of attributes that contribute to successful urban design and are grounded in sound urban design principles recognised internationally.

Using these criteria, an assessment of the multi-unit residential proposal at 29 Charles Crescent is provided below.

Context

Quality urban design considers buildings, places and spaces not as isolated elements but as parts of the broader town or city. A building connects to its street, the street to its neighbourhood, the neighbourhood to its city, and the city to its region. Urban design has a spatial dimension and optimises the relationships between built form, spaces, activities and networks. It also acknowledges the evolving relationship between people, land, culture and the wider environment.

The proposed development sits comfortably within the existing and emerging context, with a building scale that responds to different frontages and surrounding character. Taller three-storey homes are positioned along Lake Terrace and Rainbow Drive, incorporating mono-pitched roofs to reduce perceived height. Smaller gabled roof forms are used for the two-storey homes fronting Charles Crescent, aligning with the scale of the adjacent two-storey dwelling at 27 Charles Crescent. The variation in roof forms, materials and articulation references neighbouring character and clearly presents a residential typology.

The proposal exceeds the permitted 8-metre height limit between 250mm - 500mm due to the three-storey building elements. The variation in height and massing reflects the existing 2-storey homes within Charles Crescent and the more urban character of Lake Terrace. The proposed three-storey elements on the Lake Terrace and Rainbow Drive corner are appropriate and contribute a welcoming character to Rainbow Point. Established trees within the grass berm help soften visual impact, while the site's level change further reduces street-level dominance.

In summary, the proposal responds appropriately to the local context, reflecting its constraints and opportunities.

Character

Quality urban design reflects and enhances the distinctive character and culture of the urban environment, recognising that character is dynamic and evolving. New buildings and spaces should be unique and appropriate to their location, complementing the historic identity of the area while adding value through increased investment, tourism and community pride.

As noted above, the character of the area is evolving, with ongoing greenfield development and intensification. The introduction of the commercial core at Kokomea Village builds upon existing facilities at Rainbow Point and Richmond, contributing to a well-serviced, walkable neighbourhood centre. This evolving context supports further intensification to improve housing quality and choice.

In response to this, the proposal presents a sustainable solution to housing on a brownfield site within an established and walkable community. Nearby zoning enables higher density housing, including three-storey apartments opposite Kokomea Village Centre. Furthermore, the Lake Crest Village Care Centre and serviced apartments will add to the urban scale visible along Lake Terrace.

For these reasons, the proposal is considered to respond well to local character and contributes positively to the 'dynamic and evolving' nature of the built environment.

Choice

Quality urban design fosters diversity and offers people choice in urban form, including densities, building types, transport options and activities. Adaptable design supports resilience and long-term usability.

The proposal replaces an ageing motel complex with sixteen new family homes, significantly improving the quality and diversity of housing in the area. The development of an established site within a mature neighbourhood offers a sustainable and efficient alternative to greenfield expansion.

The small, easy-care sections provide elevated views towards the lake. Garages offer practical parking and storage space, adaptable over time, with lift access provided to three storey homes to allow residents to age in place. The site's proximity to walking and cycling trails encourages active modes of transport.

Although the homes are not intended as affordable housing, they establish a precedent for sustainable infill development. Pricing is expected to be lower than for similarly sized dwellings on larger nearby lots.

Accordingly, the proposal improves housing choice and contributes to a greater variety of residential typologies within a connected and desirable neighbourhood.

Connections

Good connections enhance choice, foster social cohesion, improve safety, and encourage interaction. Quality urban design ensures that networks – such as streets, walking and cycling routes, infrastructure and communications – function cohesively to support healthy, liveable communities.

While the site presents limited opportunity for new connections through the block, the proposal enhances the interface with surrounding streets. A stronger presence is created along Lake Terrace, Rainbow Drive and Charles Crescent. Due to restricted access from Lake Terrace, upper-level windows provide overlooking and passive surveillance, with existing trees helping to scale the development sensitively. The orientation of homes towards Rainbow Drive and Charles Crescent establishes a welcoming and active frontage with improved planting buffers.

The site layout is legible, with a clear sense of address for each dwelling. Where possible, homes front the public street, while others are centred around two internal shared lanes with strong sightlines and visibility.

The site benefits from established local connectivity, with walkable access to the neighbourhood centre, local bus services, and recreational trails around the lake and gully networks. These support active travel and further integrate the proposal into its surroundings.

Although no new through-site links are created, the development respects and contributes positively to existing movement networks and reinforces safety and visibility in the public realm.

Creativity

Creativity in urban design adds richness and diversity, transforming functional spaces into memorable places. It allows designers to visualise future potential, embrace innovation and support vibrant urban identities.

This proposal represents a departure from traditional suburban development, instead offering a creative and sustainable infill solution on a prominent corner site. The response reflects the emerging character of Lake Terrace and adds architectural interest to the wider area.

The use of first-floor living spaces and balconies on the three-storey homes introduces articulation and activation to the streetscape, particularly at the corner. The variation in scale also contributes visual diversity.

Framed views towards the lake and gully enhance residential amenity, while building placement and height limit effects on neighbouring homes to the south.

While no public art or major public realm improvements are proposed, the development does significantly improve street interfaces, with quality landscaping and minimal or low fencing enhancing amenity and visual interest.

In summary, the proposal demonstrates a creative and site-responsive approach that contributes positively to the area's overall design quality.

Custodianship

Custodianship in urban design reduces environmental impacts and ensures that buildings and places are passed on in good or improved condition. It incorporates sustainable design, safety, and long-term stewardship, including the concept of kaitiakitanga.

The proposal applies sound urban design principles, including Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Clear delineation between public, semi-private and private areas supports legibility and safety. Shared spaces are well-overlooked and offer secure, legible access to each home, reinforcing a sense of ownership and community responsibility.

The redevelopment of an existing urban site represents a sustainable approach, contributing to intensification within a well-served area.

New dwellings will be thermally efficient and incorporate passive design principles. Homes maximise sunlight exposure and natural ventilation with dual aspects where possible. First-floor living areas within the three-storey townhouses allow homes fronting Rainbow Drive to face northeast while still maintaining strong street engagement.

Overall, the proposal reflects long-term environmental stewardship and will support the creation of a well-functioning community that matures gracefully over time.

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Collaboration

Urban environments are shaped incrementally through decisions by multiple stakeholders. Quality urban design requires coordination between central and local government, professionals, transport operators, developers and communities.

Throughout the design process, the project team has engaged other specialists, including urban design and planning consultants. The client team also consulted with neighbours, presenting the high-level concept and listening to feedback. Many of the neighbours responded positively, supporting the replacement of the ageing motel with newer, easy-care homes that would improve the street scene and strengthen community character.

While the existing motel units have temporarily accommodated affordable rental housing, they were not designed for long-term residential use and are no longer fit for purpose.

In this context, the level of collaboration undertaken is considered appropriate for the scale and nature of the development.

TAUPŌ HOUSING STRATEGY

The Taupō Housing Strategy outlines robust housing strategy principles for the area. The document presents four goals and five focus areas to support the overarching principles. These consider specially how council can respond to housing needs in the area and include a framework for delivery that also includes the private sector.

Most relevant to the development, the ‘four goals’ provide a high-level focus as outlined below:

1. More availability and choice of housing.
2. Homes are warm, healthy, sustainable, and resilient.
3. Our homes meet the diverse needs of our communities.
4. Our housing contributes to connected and integrated communities.

The proposal responds to each of the four goals, noting the proposals have been developed to respond to the current market trends to meet the needs of the community. The development presents a range of homes using a sustainable infill approach which contributes to housing choice and sustainability.

In addition to these points, the site is well located within an established and well connected community. The development will help to improve the quality of the housing stock in the area and present warm, healthy and flexible housing solutions that will add to the vibrancy of the area.

TAUPŌ TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Taupō Transport Strategy sets out a long-term vision for supporting inclusive, walkable living environments and managing growth. The site’s proximity to Waipahihi School and the Richmond Development creates a walkable catchment and aligns with broader goals of intensification around key amenities.

The location adjacent to the Kokomea Village commercial centre and along the Lake Terrace transport corridor (including a bus stop directly outside the site) further supports the area's potential for medium-density development. This contributes to a vibrant, walkable neighbourhood that can sustain retail, community and hospitality uses.

Lake Terrace itself is an arterial road with an established wide corridor and varied built form, including both commercial and residential buildings. To the north, elevated two-storey development creates a sense of enclosure that effectively reads as up to three storeys or more. Established examples closer to town also demonstrate this pattern.

Accordingly, the proposed three-storey development is appropriate and reinforces the area's established and evolving urban character along established transport networks.

PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN PLAN CHANGE 44 - COMPREHENSIVE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AS VIEWED IN DRAFT (MAY 2025)

Plan Change 44 proposes matters of restricted discretion that related to comprehensive developments and urban design matters. Based on the draft assessment criteria, below an assessment against these matters is provided for the proposed development at 29 Charles Crescent.

(a) The extent to which the development building design, siting and external appearance:

i. contributes to attractive and safe streets and public open spaces and provides safe pedestrian access to buildings from the street

The proposed development at 29 Charles Crescent has been designed to positively contribute to the surrounding public realm by creating active, attractive and safe street interfaces. Townhouses are oriented to face Rainbow Drive and Charles Crescent, with primary entrances and habitable room windows addressing the street, enhancing passive surveillance and improving the sense of safety and activation. The three-storey townhouses on the corner of Lake Terrace and Rainbow Drive provide a strong urban edge and visually reinforce the corner, while their scale is moderated through the use of mono-pitched roofs and stepped levels, aided by the visual buffer of existing mature street trees.

Safe pedestrian access is provided through clear, legible walkways leading from the street frontage and shared access lanes to each dwelling. The design avoids long driveways with poor visibility and instead favours short, direct routes with clear sightlines and passive surveillance, contributing to a safer and more welcoming public realm.

ii. achieves high quality on-site living environments, taking into account the surrounding context, site limitations and planned outcomes for the zone

The development achieves a high standard of on-site amenity and residential quality. Dwellings are arranged to maximise access to natural light and ventilation, with living areas orientated for solar gain where possible. The use of first-floor living areas and balconies in the three-storey homes allows for elevated views towards the lake and gully, while ensuring privacy from the public street. Shared

lanes are well-defined and overlooked by surrounding dwellings, reinforcing a sense of community and safety within the development.

The variety of dwelling types — including two- and three-storey homes — responds to both the existing residential character of Charles Crescent and the more urban context of Lake Terrace. The materials, roof forms and detailing draw on local character cues, while also presenting a contemporary and cohesive architectural language.

Overall, the development provides high-quality on-site living environments that are contextually responsive, appropriately scaled, and aligned with the planned outcomes for medium density development in this zone.

(b) The effect that the number of residential units has on residential amenity values and the streetscape

The proposal includes 16 residential units arranged in a cohesive, well-articulated layout that reinforces the existing street network. While the number of units represents an intensification of the site, the mix of two- and three-storey forms, variation in roof profiles, material palette and landscaping softens the visual impact and ensures compatibility with the surrounding context. The result is a development that enhances, rather than detracts from, the amenity of the surrounding neighbourhood, with increased passive surveillance, active street frontages, and improved architectural quality compared to the existing motel units.

(c) The extent to which the development responds to demand for smaller, affordable homes

The proposal does not explicitly provide affordable housing typologies, however, it responds to the growing demand for smaller, low-maintenance homes and easy care sections within an established, walkable neighbourhood. The replacement of ageing motel stock with compact, efficient homes represents a sustainable intensification model and increases housing stock in Taupō overall, assisting to meet demand. These new homes will generally be more affordable than traditional large-lot detached homes nearby and support the provision of housing diversity in the area.

(d) The extent to which the development responds to topography and site orientation and minimises significant changes to landform and large-scale retaining walls

The design responds sensitively to the site's topography with only minimal earthworks required. The corner location and level changes along Lake Terrace are used strategically to reduce the apparent height of the three-storey buildings from the street.

There is no reliance on large-scale retaining walls, and no substantial landform changes are proposed across the relatively flat site. The development takes advantage of the site's orientation to maximise solar access, particularly for living spaces.

(e) The extent to which development retains mature trees and provides landscaping to assist with the integration of the proposed built form with the surrounding context and provides on-site amenity

While the site itself does not proposed the retention of existing trees due to their low quality, the development acknowledges the existing trees on Lake Terrace, which contribute significantly to softening the built form. The landscape design includes generous planting buffers, low or no fencing to public frontages, and varied planting (including trees) to enhance visual interest and integration. A considered landscape design will ensure appropriate planting that will suit its location to have space to grow and thrive.

These features, combined with considered building articulation, provide a high standard of on-site amenity and help embed the development within the neighbourhood context.

(f) The extent to which residential units:

i. contribute to attractive and safe streets and public open spaces and provide safe pedestrian access to buildings from the street

As outlined above, units front public streets where possible, providing natural surveillance and improved safety. Pedestrian access is legible, direct, and well-connected to the public realm.

Additional crossings are proposed to both street frontages and pedestrian safety has been considered with the use of low-level planting to ensure good visibility splays from driveways. These crossings are generally paired to reduce interruption to the footpath with Unit 13 provided with an internal vehicular access (instead of being close to the road junction). Noting the permitted baseline scheme provided could allow for up to 8 vehicular crossings, the proposed 6 crossings consider a balance between legibility, access, and safety.

ii. maximise sunlight and daylight access based on orientation, function, window design and location

Dwellings are designed with 2-4 aspects where possible, and living areas are located to benefit from solar access. The second-floor living spaces in three-storey homes ensure daylight access is not compromised by adjacent buildings or topography. All homes are provided with practical outdoor spaces and generous windows that allow for views out.

iii. provide secure and conveniently accessible storage for the number of occupants the dwelling is designed to accommodate

All units include internal garages, which provide secure storage for vehicles and personal items. The design anticipates practical, adaptable storage for families and long-term residents. In addition, servicing access and space has been considered and is integrated into the design.

iv. provide the necessary waste collection and recycling facilities in locations conveniently accessible and screened from streets and public open spaces

Waste collection is managed through discreet storage areas screened from public view and easily accessible from internal lanes, ensuring minimal visual impact and functional integration.

(g) The extent to which the activity may adversely impact on network efficiency, road safety, on-site and street parking, and access

The development includes adequate on-site parking within each unit, with access provided via two internal shared lanes that support clear visibility and manoeuvrability.

The design improves street safety through passive surveillance and by activating the street edge and ensures the proposed vehicular crossings have good visibility for pedestrian safety. Given the site's proximity to public transport and walkable amenities, the number of vehicle movements generated is not expected to compromise the efficiency or safety of the network.

(h) Whether there is sufficient capacity in the stormwater, public reticulated water supply, and wastewater networks to accommodate the number of residential units and where adequate network capacity is not available, whether adequate mitigation is proposed

It is understood that the site is located within a serviced area of Taupō and benefits from access to existing public infrastructure networks. Where necessary, engineering input will confirm available capacity and propose mitigation measures. The intensification proposed is in line with Council's strategic direction and is expected to be accommodated within the existing or planned infrastructure upgrades.

(i) The extent to which building design, siting and landscaping of the structures minimises the extent of impervious surfaces

The proposal includes a balance of built form, access lanes, and landscaped areas. The use of compact footprints and internalised driveways reduces the overall extent of impervious surfaces compared to conventional suburban layouts. To note, the proposed coverage is low, with landscaping provided throughout the site, including garden spaces and buffers. This approach is intended to support stormwater infiltration and reduce runoff.

(j) The effects of non-compliance with any relevant Medium Density Residential Zone Standards

The proposal would comply with the draft Medium Density Residential provisions with the exception of minimum balcony size for units 07-16, and the location of the proposed driveway to Unit 14 (assessed as part of this application within the AEE).

The proposed balconies to units 07-16 are approximately 9 - 9.5sqm which is between 0.5 and 1sqm smaller than the minimum 10sqm required for outdoor space on upper floors. The balconies provided are very generous and open directly from the living spaces with views towards the lake. In addition, the homes have additional garden area / services spaces at ground floor level. On this basis, I believe the proposals meet the intent to provide functional and practical private outdoor spaces.

(k) The recommendations made in any urban design report or statement prepared by a suitably qualified professional, and submitted with the application for resource consent

As an experienced urban designer, I have been invited to support the early concept stages, with feedback incorporated throughout. I support the proposal's design response and consider it to be well-considered, contextually appropriate, and in line with best practice urban design principles. The design process has involved early collaboration and reflects feedback from various disciplines and stakeholders, ensuring a comprehensive and integrated outcome.

CONCLUSION

The proposed comprehensive residential development at 29 Charles Crescent has been carefully assessed against the principles of the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol, as well as the relevant assessment matters outlined in Proposed Plan Change 44. The development demonstrates a considered response to its context, balancing increased residential density with sensitivity to the surrounding character, topography, and built environment.

The design provides a high-quality living environment with well-articulated buildings, legible access, and passive surveillance to public spaces. It enhances the street interface along Lake Terrace, Rainbow Drive and Charles Crescent through varied roof forms, well-considered landscaping, and active frontages. While the proposal includes some height and daylight breaches, the overall bulk and scale are effectively moderated by topography, building orientation, and architectural treatment. Importantly, the breaches to the height in relation to boundary standards primarily affect the boundary with Lake Terrace and the Rural zoning which have no effect on neighbouring homes. Similarly, breaches to the maximum height are located well away from neighbours.

The proposal contributes to housing choice in a well-connected, walkable neighbourhood, supporting broader strategic objectives for intensification within established urban areas. It represents a creative and sustainable redevelopment of a brownfield site, utilising best-practice urban design and CPTED principles. Furthermore, it aligns with the objectives of the Taupō Housing and Transport Strategies and demonstrates a collaborative design process.

For these reasons, I am supportive of the proposal from an urban design perspective and consider that it will contribute positively to the quality, vibrancy, and amenity of the Rainbow Point neighbourhood.

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Contextual Analysis

29 Charles Crescent, Taupō

25 June 2025

Contents



Introduction	3
Site	
Nearby Zoning and Consents	4
Local Context	5
Existing site conditions	7
Site Photos	10
Local Character & Similar Suburban Examples	
Lake Terrace	11
Rainbow Drive	14
Charles Crescent	15
Higher Density Examples	16

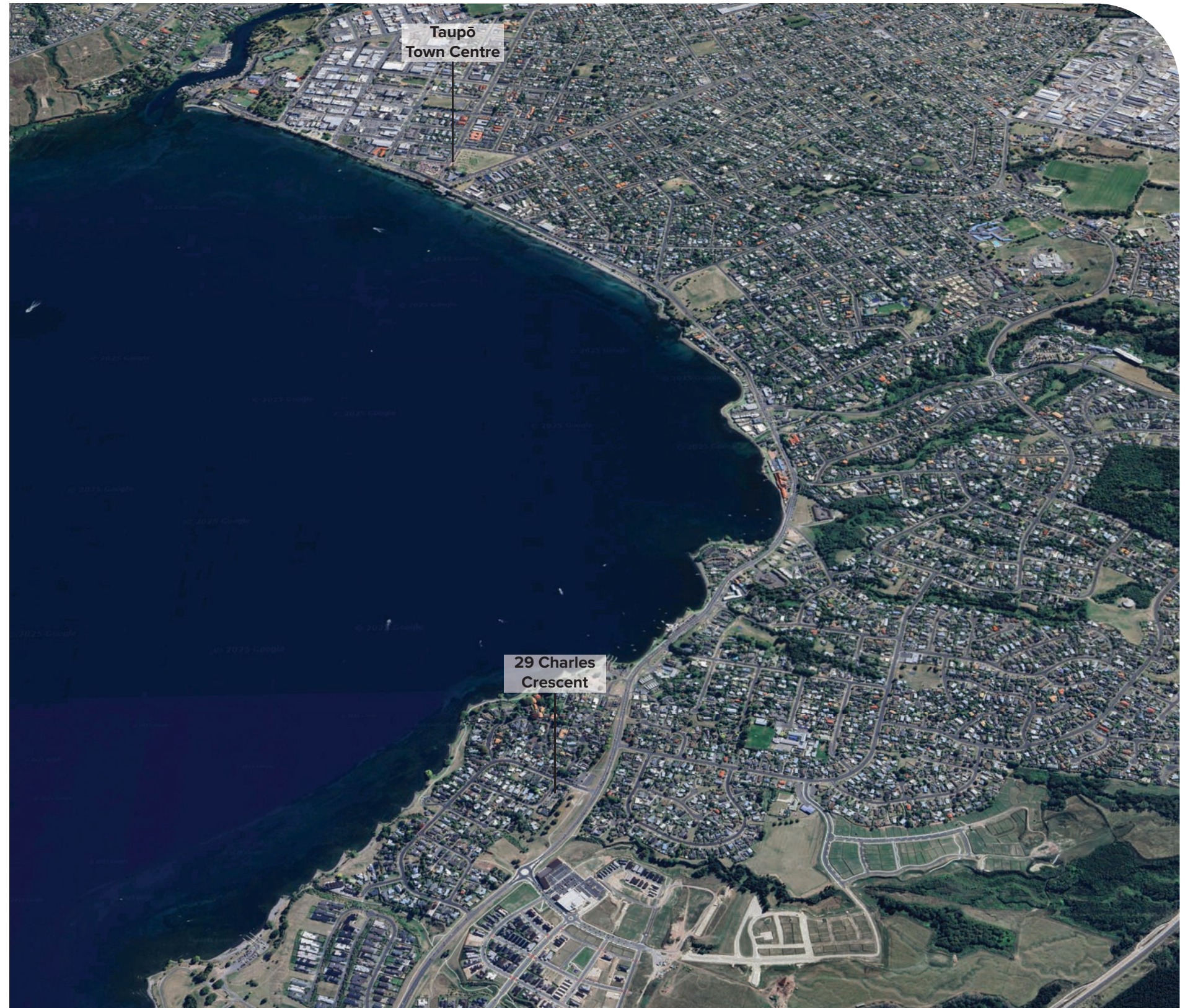
Introduction

Introduction

This document has been prepared by Studio Blewett on behalf of JT Design Architecture Limited to support development at 29 Charles Crescent, Taupō.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the local context and urban design analysis which has been completed to support the design development and the separate Urban Design Assessment, written to support the resource consent application.

As part of this assessment, both a desktop review and site visit has been completed.



Extract from Google Earth.

Site - Nearby zoning and consents



Overlay of adjacent zoning

Site - Local context



Site - Local context



Extract from GIS mapping showing contours and fall towards lake

Site - Existing site conditions

The site is approximately 3,316 sqm in area, comprising four legal titles fronting Charles Crescent and Rainbow Drive. The terrain is predominantly flat, with a gentle fall from Lake Terrace towards the lakefront. It sits noticeably lower than the Lake Terrace carriageway and approximately 3-4 metres below the homes on the opposite side of Lake Terrace.

Measuring approximately 88 metres wide by 38 metres deep, the site forms a three-sided block with three street frontages and a single residential neighbour to the south-east. The corners adjoining Rainbow Drive are chamfered, presumably to improve visibility at the junctions.

Currently, the site accommodates thirteen motel units, a manager’s unit, and associated reception and service areas. These are arranged across the site, with the main entrance and reception near the Lake Terrace / Rainbow Drive corner. All existing buildings are single-storey with gabled roof forms. The current development breaches the 5-metre minimum road boundary setback along Rainbow Drive.

As shown opposite, there are a number of established trees across the site, however, the species and size of these are not worthy of retention and are proposed to be removed and replaced with more appropriate species. The large trees highlighted within the grassed area off Lake Terrace will be protected and retained.

Legend



Approx. boundary



Existing trees on or adjacent to site



Existing vehicle crossings



Primary Road



Secondary Roads



Site photos



View of site from Lake Terrace. Positioned behind established trees (noting pine trees within the site to rear, to be removed)



Existing motel reception and entry to south-eastern corner



View looking south along Rainbow Drive. Existing motel to the left with established trees (noting pine trees on site to be removed)

Site photos



View looking along Charles Crescent boundary - solid fencing with motel units set back from the street



View from Charles Crescent looking towards corner of site. Existing driveway, buildings, trees and power box



View of north west corner and neighboring access

Site photos



Google street view looking towards the site - corner of Rainbow Drive and Charles Crescent

Lake Terrace - North of site



Google Street view showing elevated houses diagonally opposite the site on Lake Terrace. These 2-storey homes are elevated above the carriageway and approximately 3-4m above the site



Photograph showing pedestrian link opposite the site with access to Grace Crescent



Photograph showing vegetated boundary and elevated single-level house opposite the site off Lake Terrace

Lake Terrace - Kokomea commercial



Photograph showing the Lake Terrace facade of Kokomea Village (commercial)



Google street view showing commercial corner to Kokomea Village (diagonally opposite site) - elevated above the path



Photograph showing the Lake Terrace facade of Kokomea Village (commercial) with the supermarket in the background

Lake Terrace - Recent development



Extract from Google Street view showing single level homes elevated approximately 3m above Lake Terrace - Homes off Ngaru Terrace (opposite Rainbow Drive)



Photograph from Lake Terrace towards duplexed 2-storey development off Harakeke Drive. Raised homes are close to the street creating an urban character



View along the eastern boundary showing slight level change

Rainbow Drive - Rainbow Point commercial



Photograph showing Rainbow Point neighbourhood centre (commercial) opposite site off Rainbow Drive



Google street view showing blank commercial facade with no set back directly opposite the site fronting Rainbow Drive

Charles Crescent - Neighbouring development



Photograph showing 2-storey home at 23A Charles Crescent



Photograph showing 2-storey home at 25 Charles Crescent (immediately adjacent to site)



Photograph showing 2-storey duplex opposite the site on Charles Crescent



Google street view showing opposite side of Charles Crescent (2-storey home on corner of Charles Crescent and Rainbow Drive)

Higher density development - Local examples within suburban environment



Google street view showing nearby 3-storey terracing at 5 The Moorings. To note - the proposal is a similar scale and style



Google street view showing The Moorings - 2-3-storey terraced examples



Photograph of Norman Smith Street development (view from street showing 3-storey terraces)



Google street view from river showing long 3-storey terraces. These are also visible from Norman Smith Street and Tongaririo Street

Higher density development - Local examples within suburban environment



Google street view showing 2-3-storey development 'Two Mile Bay Residential Apartments' at 300 Lake Terrace



Google street view showing 3-storey townhouses at Lake Terrace / Napier Rd corner



Photograph showing 2-storey townhouse development at Chad Street



Photograph showing 2-storey townhouse development at Blue Dun Place