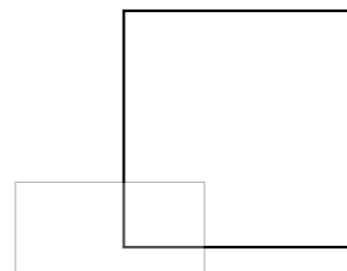
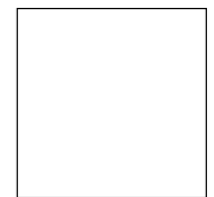
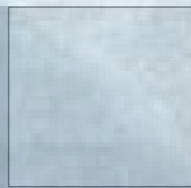
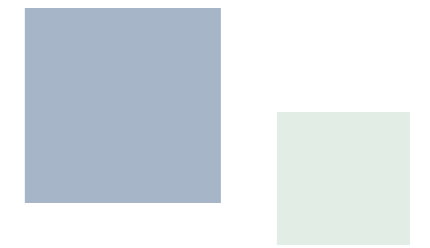
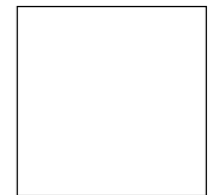


September 2009

Urban Design Study
Taupo Urban Commercial and Industrial Structure Plan





Report Status: **FINAL**
Date: September 2009

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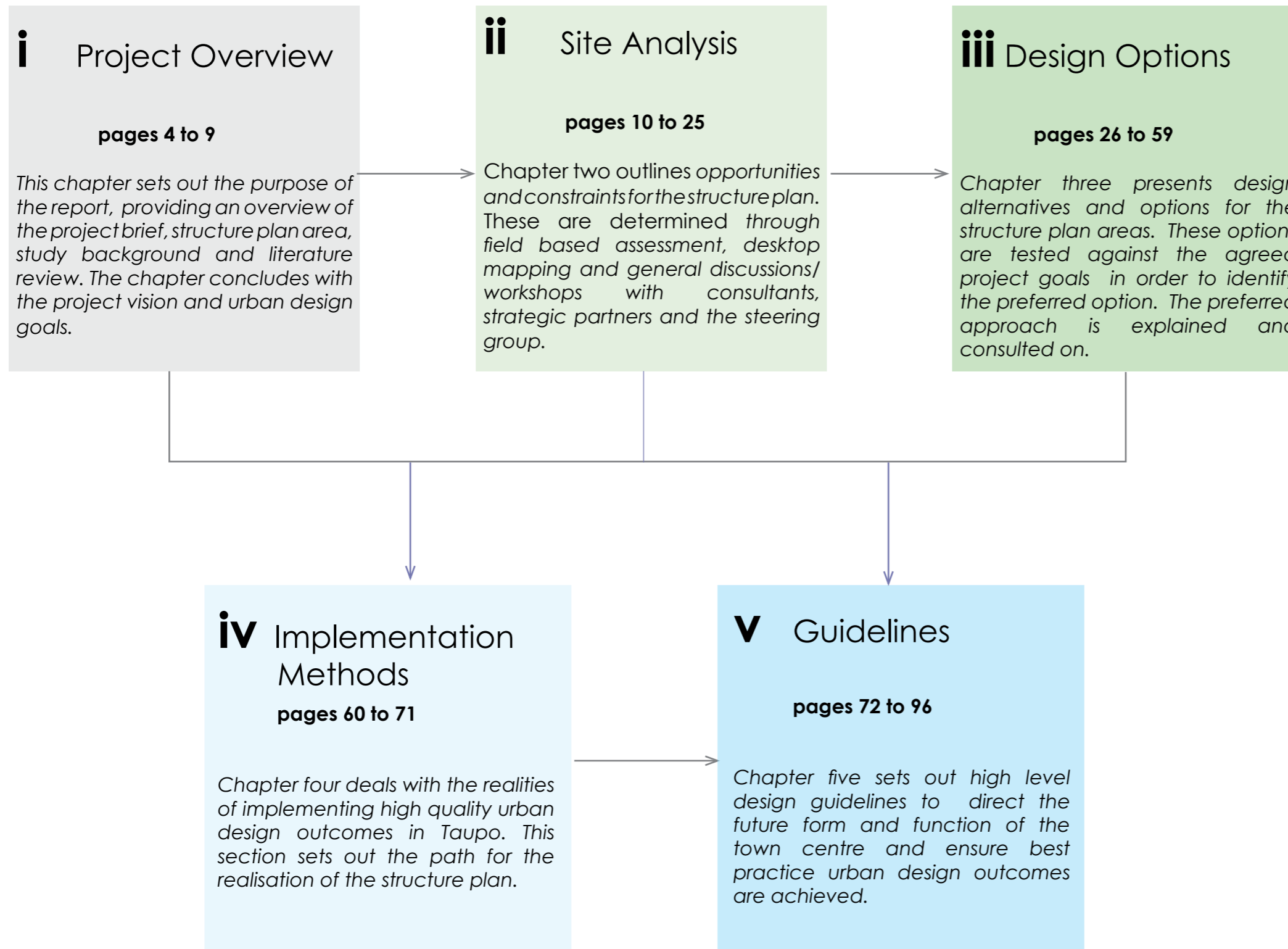
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Strategic Partners Forum
Other Stakeholders (refer
TDC Draft Inception Report 2008
for full list)
Village Well (Placemaking
Consultants)

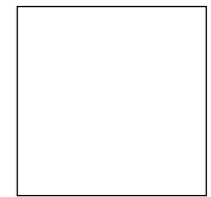
The purpose of this report is to provide guidance on urban design matters for the Taupo Urban Commercial and Industrial Structure Plan process. Taupo District Council have outlined the general scope of the study which includes the existing Taupo town centre area as well as land identified for commercial and industrial uses in the Growth Management Strategy Taupo District 2050 (TD2050).

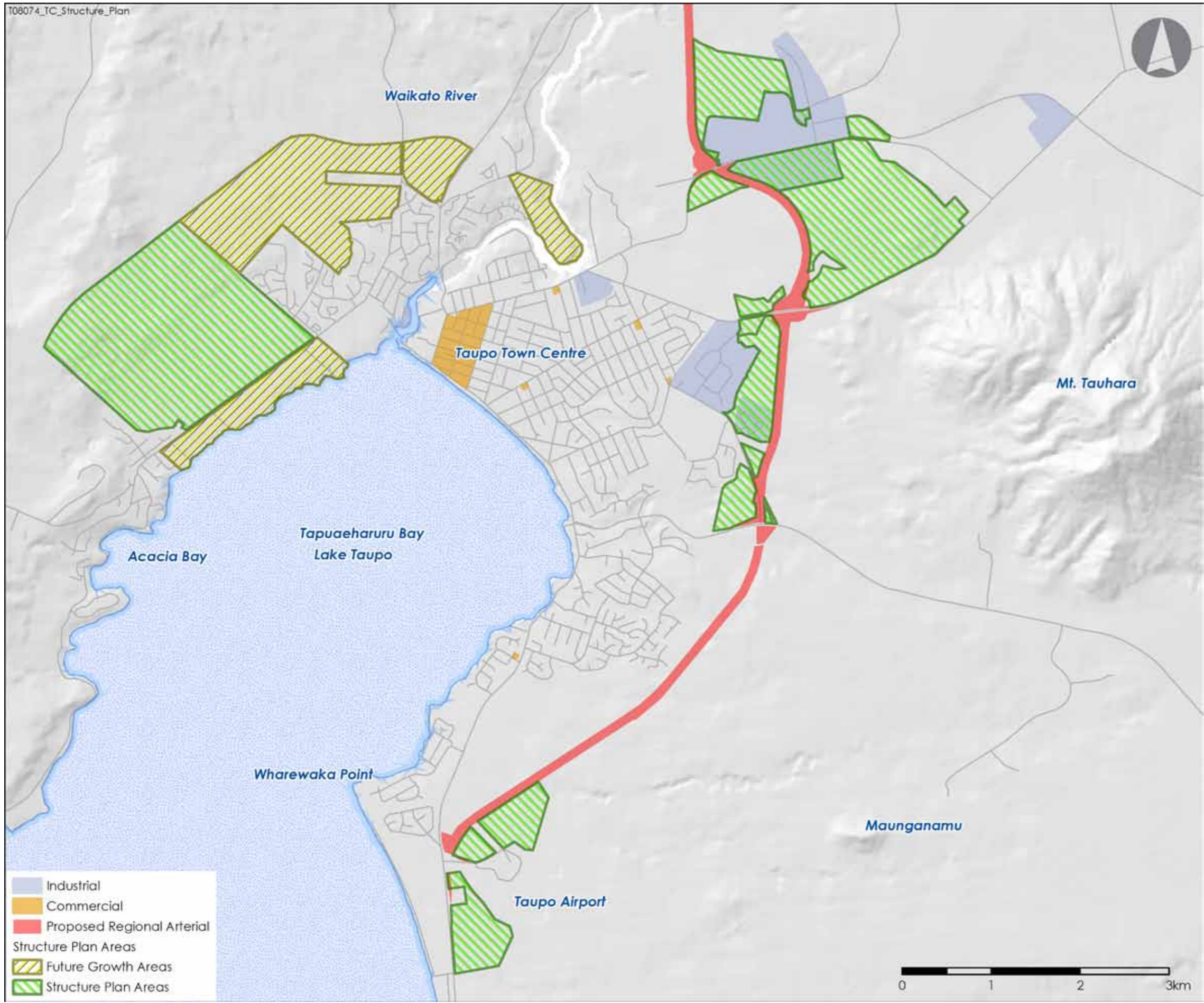
The adjoining diagram sets out the general format of the report. The project brief provided by Council listed the following objectives to be addressed in this study:

- 1 Reassess flows in and around the town centre as identified in the 2004 Town Centre Structure Plan.
- 2 Identify and evaluate options for re-connecting the town centre with the Lake, the boat harbour and Tongariro Domain.
- 3 Analyse the benefits and positioning of a civic centre within the town centre.
- 4 Explore options for the location of future growth areas for commercial and industrial activities.
- 5 Develop urban design guidelines for the town centre to provide direction for the future development of the town.
- 6 Assist in identifying revitalisation opportunities for the town centre that will act as catalysts for future growth.
- 7 Provide urban design input into District Plan provisions for greenfield commercial and industrial areas.
- 8 Identify potential 'gateway' opportunities along the ETA and provide guidance in terms of how motorists' experience of entry into town might be enhanced.



part i: *Project Overview*





Study Area

The primary areas of interest to this study are the existing and future commercial and industrial areas. These areas, shown on the adjoining map, include the town centre, existing commercial and industrial areas and the fringe areas alongside the ETA that have been identified for future growth.

The inter-relationship between the ETA, new growth areas and the functioning of the town centre requires an integrated approach to further planning and design.

The future growth areas for commercial and industrial activities were identified through TD2050 in consultation with the Taupo Community. The town centre study area covers the same general extent as that used for the Taupo Town Centre Structure Plan (2004).

The study area for the structure plan includes not only the defined commercial, industrial and retail areas, but also the key connections between them. As with any structure plan, the relationship with broader land use patterns, open space networks, traffic circulation and infrastructure are considered so the study areas are never looked at in isolation.



Taupo District 2050 : Growth Management Strategy

- + *Strengthen Taupo CBD's functions and its role as the primary business, retail, recreational, and entertainment hub for the district.*
- + *Identify, enhance and protect gateways to urban areas.*
- + *Ensure that there is an adequate supply of appropriate land for commercial and industrial uses.*
- + *Promote the establishment of large format retail to the north of the Taupo central business district on the northern side of Spa Road.*
- + *Plan and design new and changing urban areas to reflect the key urban design elements.*
- + *Achieve design excellence for all new prominent community buildings and public spaces.*
- + *Increase access to arts, recreation and other cultural facilities with a focus on developing a strong cultural environment that reflects the ethnic diversity of the district.*
- + *Encourage an innovative and diverse economy and the development of niche markets that complement the character and communities of the Taupo district.*
- + *Ensure that low impact urban design techniques and practices are considered when determining infrastructure requirements.*
- + *Provide for a comprehensive and integrated range of present and future public and private transport options within the district.*
- + *Networks of open space shall be used to help manage land use patterns and landscape values within the district and assist in shaping urban form.*
- + *Support community participation in planning processes, enabling local communities to articulate their future aspirations and enhance their sense of place and wellbeing.*

Urban Design Protocol: The Seven Cs

- 1** *Context: Seeing that buildings, places and spaces are part of the whole town or city.*
- 2** *Character: Reflecting and enhancing the distinctive character, heritage and identity of our urban environment.*
- 3** *Choice: Ensuring diversity and choice for people.*
- 4** *Connections: Enhancing how different networks link together for people.*
- 5** *Creativity: Encouraging innovative and imaginative solutions.*
- 6** *Custodianship: Ensuring design is environmentally sustainable, safe and healthy.*
- 7** *Collaboration: Communicating and sharing knowledge across sectors, professions and with communities.*

Policy Guidance

A wealth of information has been reviewed in the process of compiling this report. The documents reviewed include district policy, past town centre studies, design concepts, reserve management plans, and guidance documents.

The intention of this study is to build upon the work of past years and to tie together the loose threads to ensure the concepts and ideas can be translated into practical outcomes for the future of commercial and industrial activities in Taupo.

Taupo's growth management strategy TD2050 provides broader guidance with relation to urban design matters. The key strategic directions of relevance to urban design are summarised. Strategic direction 4 is of particular importance because it defines the need for good urban design in Taupo.

The benefits of well designed urban areas are accepted globally, and include greater integration within and between neighbourhoods, greater pedestrian use and reinforcement of the character and identity of an area...

Taupo District Council recently signed the Urban Design Protocol which identifies the key principles of urban design into the seven Cs which are also outlined. As a signatory to the protocol, TDC has made a commitment to create quality urban design and aims to realise the seven Cs.

The Taupo Commercial and Industrial Structure Plan is one of the projects contributing to the Taupo District Council's Urban Design Protocol commitments.



TCSP 2004: Town Centre Structure Plan

KEY ELEMENTS (refer preferred medium / long term structure below)

- + Downgrade of the highway/arterial status of Tongariro Street and Lake Terrace to reduce the barrier between the town centre and Tongariro Domain / Lake Taupo.
- + Redevelop the Domain to ensure it makes the most effective use possible of the resources existing therein (historical, cultural, recreational and aesthetic). Strengthen the civic precinct in the Domain and complete the crescent street to link up with Tamamutu and Tongariro Streets.
- + Provide a pedestrian and cyclist connection across the Waikato River to enhance the accessibility of the Domain.
- + Redevelop Lake Terrace and the lakefront area to create a destination for the community and visitors.
- + Undertake key street upgrades to pedestrianise Heuheu Street, Titiraupenga Street and Spa Road



Tongariro Domain: Reserve Management Plan

- + Provide for greater local community and visitor access to the whole reserve.
- + Protect and extend public open space including the relocation of the tennis club.
- + Develop a new Riverside Park on the site of the old motor camp including an amphitheatre, outdoor stage, riverside restaurant and playground.
- + Support the purpose of the Domain as a showcase recreational and community events destination.
- + Limit the development of new roading through the Domain unless it enhances reserve purpose and function.
- + Allow for the enhancement of arts and culture facilities.
- + Ensure that all buildings and structures on the Domain enhance the public use of the reserve and the efficient management of the reserve as per the Reserves Act 1977.

TUSP 2004: Taupo Urban Structure Plan

- + Manage the relationship between geothermal resources, urban growth and protection of Lake Taupo, as well as the management of demand for residential, business and recreational land.
- + Maintain urban amenity and compact urban form and provide certainty for future growth.
- + Maintain a continuity of approach to urban growth management to ensure expansion occurs in a coherent manner.
- + Provide a strategic link to Council's key documents and processes; pulling together TDC and Environment Waikato policy on the geothermal resource, water quality and land use management.
- + Provide an implementation framework for managing urban growth.

Urban Area Studies

A number of growth planning and urban design studies have been completed for the Taupo urban area and town centre since the early 1990s. Many of the directions, ideas and opportunities recognised in these various studies have influenced current thinking about the town centre and there is a clear consensus on many of the key issues. Many of the proposals and recommendations of these past reports are re-evaluated in section four of this report. It is noted that there is a summary of all relevant pre-2004 studies for the town centre within Section 3 of the 2004 Town Centre Structure Plan (TCSP).

The aim of the TCSP 2004 was to guide the continued growth and development of the town centre until 2024. The report provided advice as to how the Council could promote the on-going development of Taupo Town Centre so that it is vibrant, possesses a high level of amenity and has an 'urban form' that is inherently sustainable. The key actions arising from the study are listed to the left. It is noted that some of these actions are in progress or yet to be implemented.

The primary focus of the Taupo Urban Structure Plan 2004 (TUSP) was to provide a high level 20 to 50 year sustainable urban growth management strategy and implementation framework for Taupo town. The objectives of the TUSP are listed to the left.

The Reserve Management Plan for Tongariro Domain is of direct relevance to this structure plan given the value of this large open space area in close proximity to the town centre. The relevant objectives of the Management Plan are listed to the left.

The directions identified in all of the studies above continue to remain relevant as potential catalysts for change in Taupo.



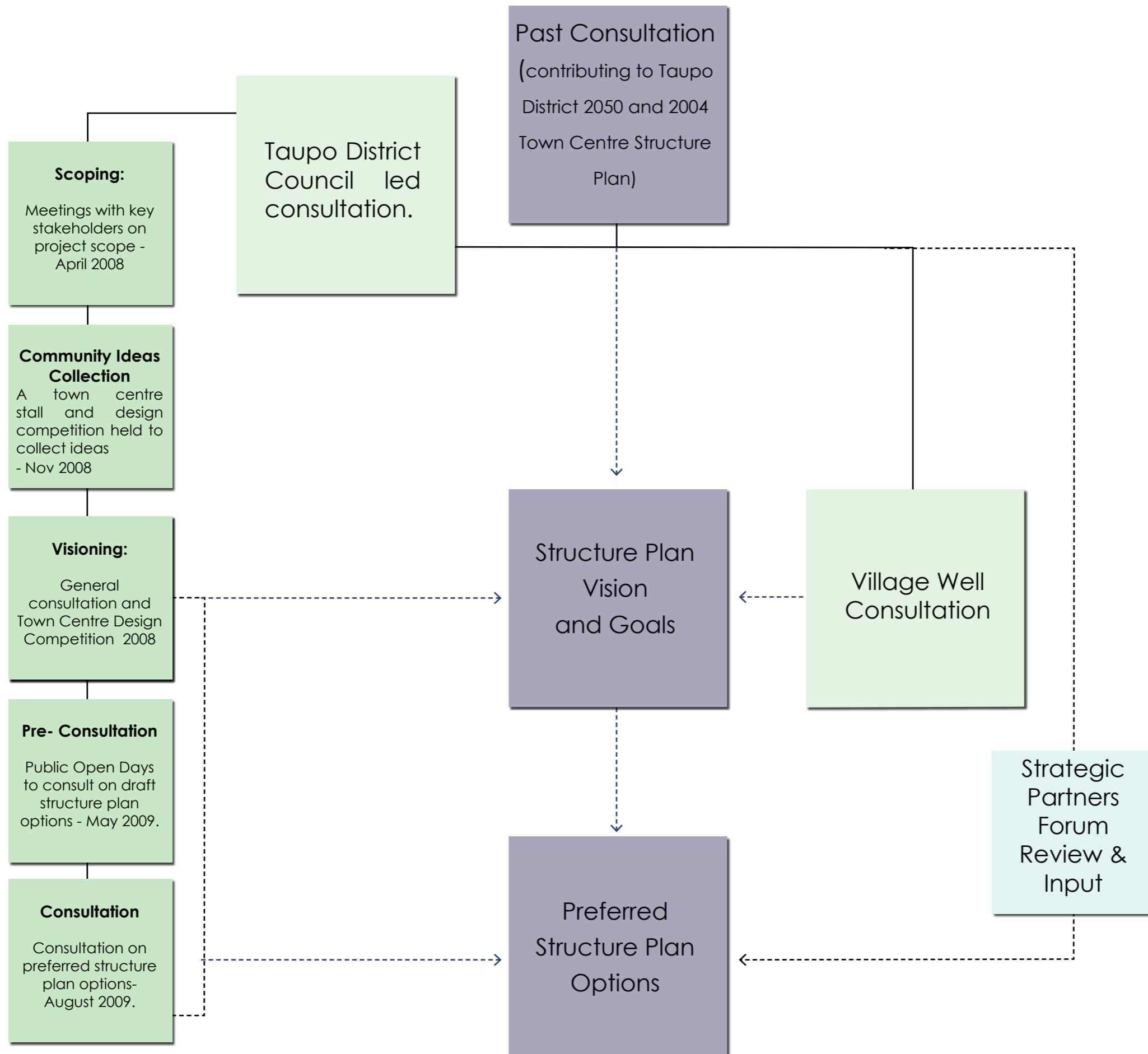
Consultation

Early in the structure planning process, Taupo District Council consulted with the Community through various forums to gauge opinions on key issues and identify key drivers.

Consultation led by TDC included direct discussions with the public, stakeholder discussions and a design competition which attracted a large number of responses from a broad cross section of the Community. Open days were also held to consult on draft design options. The compilation of consultation outcomes summarised in the TDC report 'Great Ideas- Town Centre Design' (November 2008) has been the primary source of information on Community aspirations.

Melbourne placemaking consultants 'Village Well' also held several seminars with retailers to capture their vision for Taupo's future. Village Well have produced a report entitled 'Taupo Town Centre Place Making Road Map' which summarises their findings.

The diagram to the left summarises the key phases of preliminary consultation. The ideas generated through consultation have followed through into the urban design vision and project goals.



What is already working?

Taupo possesses many unique attributes that distinguish it from other small towns in New Zealand. The starting point is the stunning lakefront setting and the volcanic landscape. The strongly defined street system is not only functional, but provides a visual connection with the landscape beyond. The relatively compact form of the town centre means that everything is in one place which makes it easy for people to work, shop and move about. The town centre offers a strong retail core with north-facing shopfronts, a promising laneway system and an abundance of public open space. These are the attributes that need to be retained and enhanced.

What needs to be improved?

To attract new business and revitalise the tourism industry, Taupo must re-direct its energies towards the art of placemaking. Taupo needs to develop into a town that is a highly livable home for its existing population as well as attracting new residents. To do this, Taupo must become an attractive location for business as well as a distinctive destination for visitors. As a tourist town, Taupo will need to transition from a stopover point into a destination, where visitors will want to spend several days or more. Building on the unique qualities of the landscape, the culture and the people, the town centre needs to become a vibrant, diverse and walkable heart for the district. It is vital that the town centre reconnects both visually and physically with the Lake and the Waikato river. New growth in the commercial, retail and industrial sectors must be accommodated and facilitated in a manner that enhances the vitality and function of the town centre. These basic ingredients will provide attractive and sustainable places to work and do business and provide the foundation for a vibrant and dynamic town centre.

The vision for Taupo's future must be shaped first and foremost by the aspirations of the Community. Consultation has highlighted the fact that Taupo has many positive attributes that are successfully meeting the needs of local residents. At the same time, it is clear that people are ready to embrace positive enhancement and change.

The key to the future of the town centre and commercial/industrial growth areas is to safeguard those attributes which are valued by the Community whilst introducing strategic design interventions that will enhance and uncover unrealised potential.

The vision set out to the left will be achieved through the realisation of eight overarching goals. The goals are intended to be high-level directives to provide the general direction for future growth. Further details and explanation of these goals can be found throughout the body of this report.

Note that the Village Well report 'Taupo Town Centre Place Making Road Map' developed with Town Centre Taupo through Community workshops also includes a vision statement. The statement focusses more on Community values, character and placemaking principles and are consistent with the vision and goals expressed to the left. The Structure Plan should incorporate and combine both streams of work.

1 Character

To reinforce the distinct character of Taupo by embracing and integrating the natural and cultural qualities that define the town and district.

2 Land Use

To consolidate future commercial and industrial growth in a way that enhances the quality of life for the Taupo community and protects or improves environmental values.

3 Built Form

To achieve a sustainable and compact urban form that projects a distinct image, promotes an active and vibrant street edge and improves architectural quality.

4 Circulation

To reconnect the town centre and new growth areas with the lakefront, the river and the surrounding residential areas to refocus towards pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. Connect existing and future commercial/industrial areas with sound transport links.

5 Public Spaces

To realise the untapped potential of Taupo's open space network and provide a diverse range of safe and functional public spaces from sheltered arcades through to a civic square and open-air events facilities.

6 Heritage & Culture

To protect and draw attention to Taupo's unique heritage and culture and provide an increased focus on events and the creative arts.

7 Economic Growth

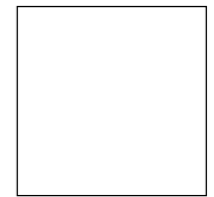
To develop an economy with multiple opportunities for employment and economic investment that is able to leverage off Taupo's lifestyle and image to retain and attract a diversity of people and business interests.

8 Sustainability

To ensure that future growth is delivered in a sustainable manner, both in terms of delivering efficient infrastructural solutions and embracing environmentally sustainable development (ESD) principles in the landscape and built environment.



part ii: *Site Analysis*
Broader Context



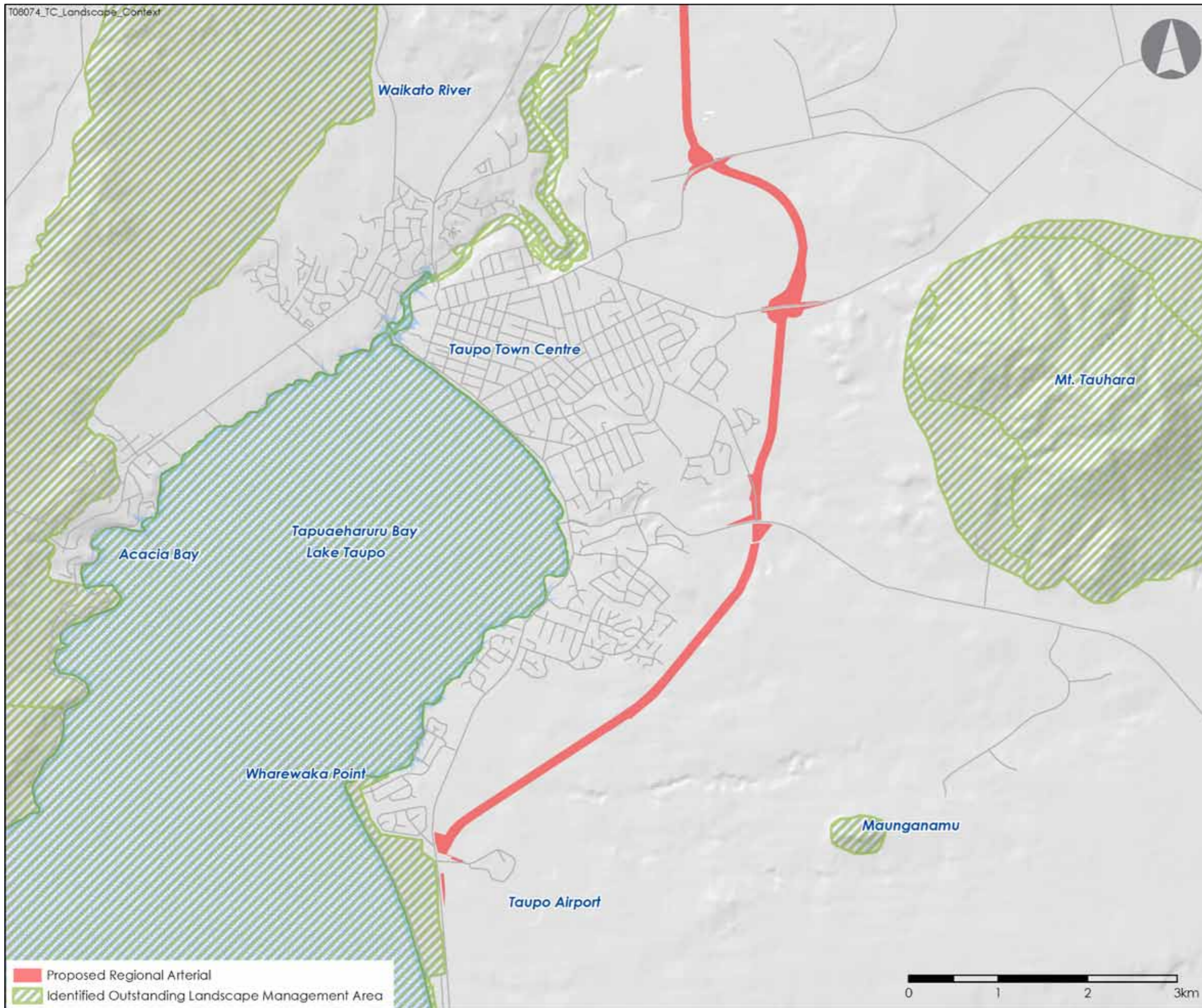
Landscape Context

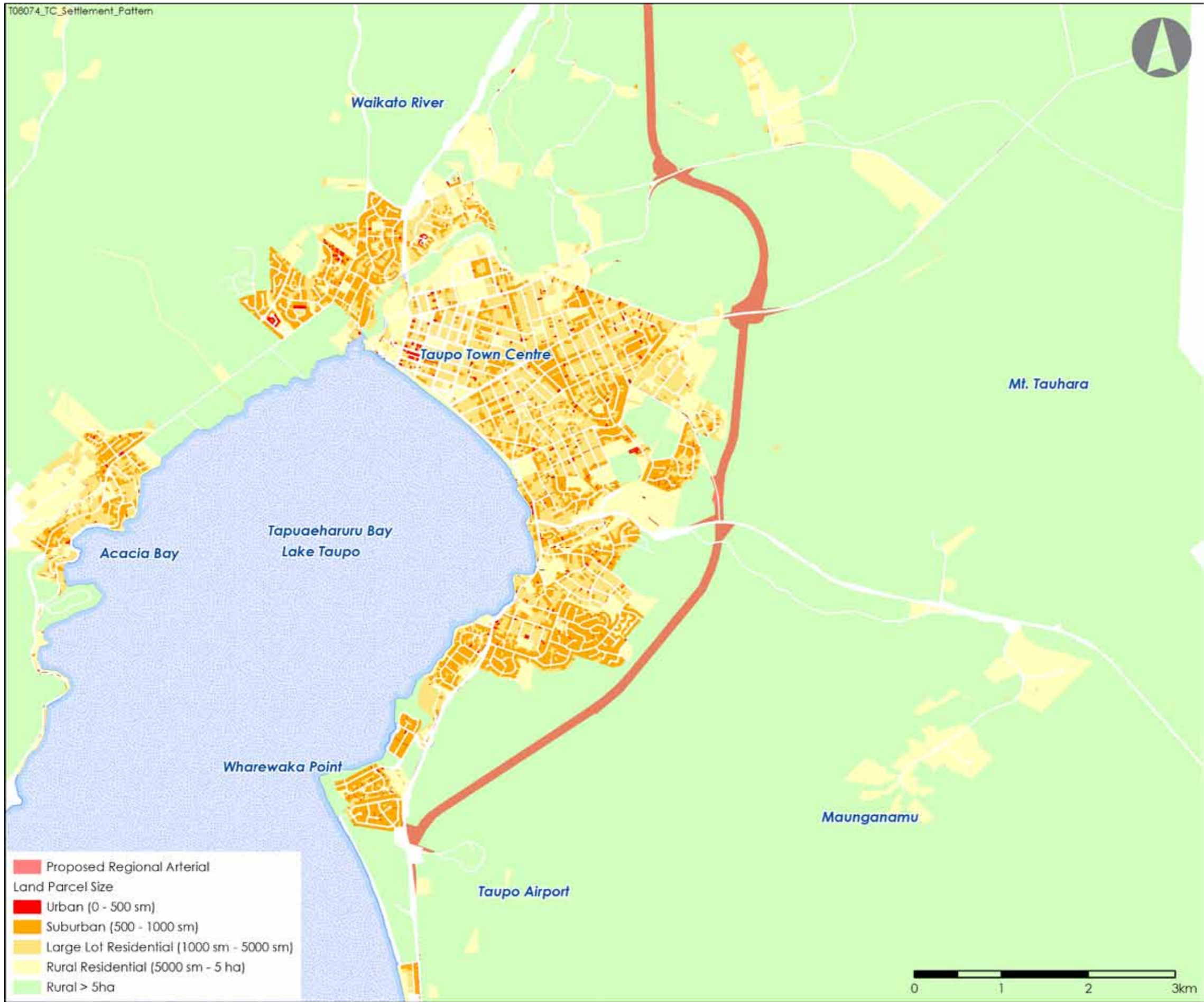
The sense of place or *genius loci* of Taupo is drawn primarily from the qualities of its landscape setting rather than its urban attributes. People tend to associate Taupo with the Great Lake, the Waikato River and the dramatic volcanic landscape. These iconic landscapes are of national significance and provide the backdrop to everyday life as well as serving as tourist landmarks.

Vistas towards the Central Plateau, Mount Tauhara and the Lake serve as organising elements for the entire urban area. Whether or not key viewshafts were intentionally considered when the town was initially laid out is uncertain, but regardless, these views orientate and provide structure to the town. Future growth of the urban area needs to be undertaken in a manner that reinforces the intimate connectivity between the town, its people and the surrounding landscape. The surest route to undermining the identity of Taupo would be to ignore the landscape characteristics that have shaped it.

Key Opportunities

- + Vistas to iconic landscape elements such as the Lake, Mount Tauhara and the Central Plateau are a key organising element and future growth needs to protect and build upon the visual connection with the landscape.
- + Enhanced connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists with Lake Taupo, the Waikato River and Mount Tauhara will make it easier for people to experience and interact with the natural landscape.
- + The use of integrating landscape elements such as wildlife corridors and native street trees will reinforce the connection between the urban areas and the natural world. Exotic species selected for their deciduous habit and autumnal colour could also be promoted in key areas.





Settlement Pattern

The urban area of Taupo town is contained within the broader rural landscape and there is a clear strategy to restrict urban growth beyond the future Eastern Taupo Arterial.

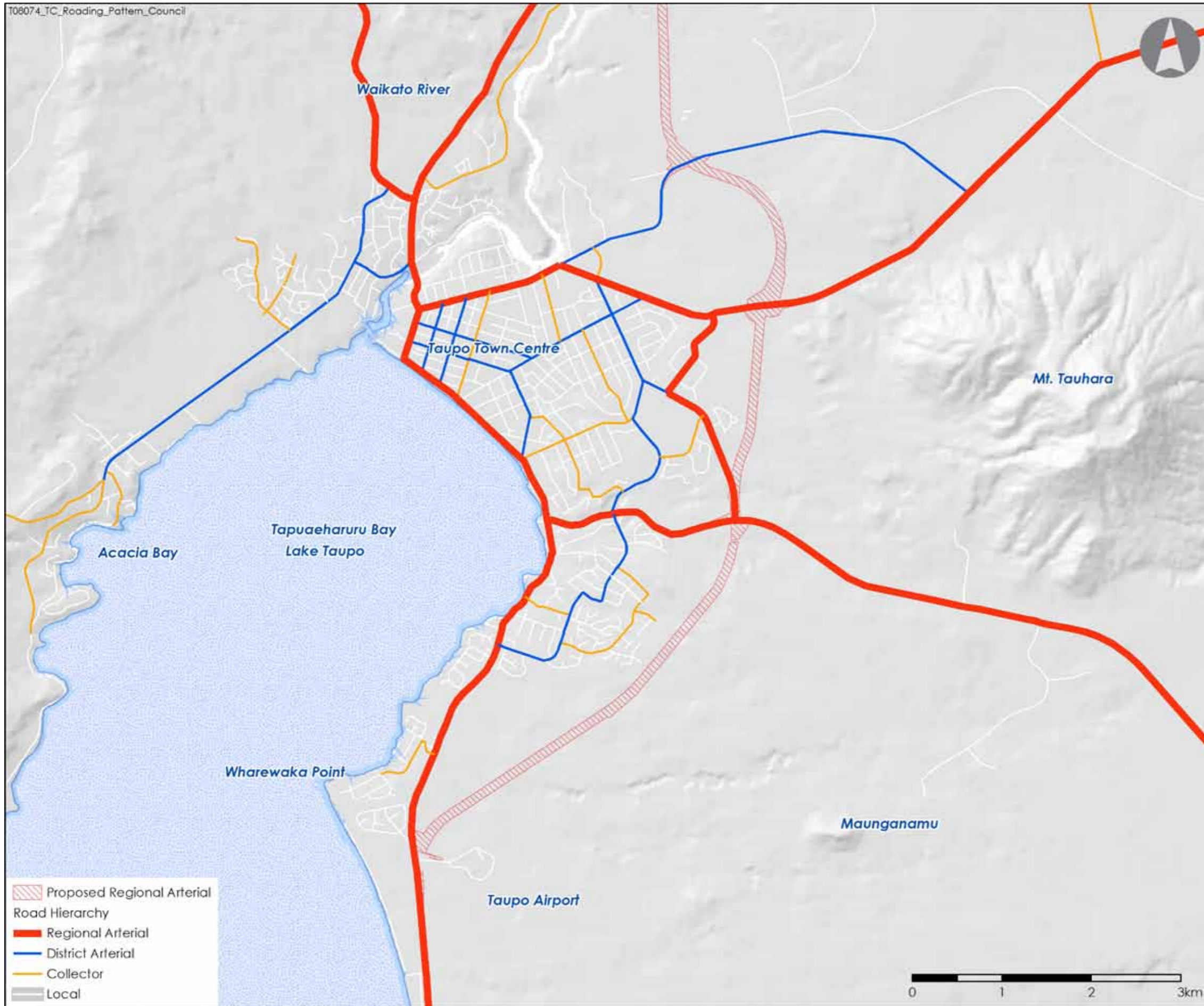
The adjoining map colour-codes parcel density to demonstrate the transition that currently occurs from higher densities (red and orange) through to productive rural lands (green).

The parcel analysis map demonstrates that despite some instances of sprawl-like subdivision, the future ETA corridor has the potential to function as an urban growth boundary.

The distribution of lot sizes in the urban area reflects a relatively homogeneous pattern with conventional to large lot residential dominating. The map reflects the experience on the ground in that the hierarchy from fringe to centre is not clearly discernible. This is due, in part to the lack of smaller lot and medium density housing and the large number of large parcels distributed through the urban area.

Key Opportunities

- + The proposed ETA corridor has significant implications for the containment of urban areas within the broader rural framework. The urban growth boundary function of the ETA needs to be backed up by future land use planning and plan provisions.
- + A more legible hierarchy and sustainable urban form could be facilitated in the long term by promoting an urban transect approach which transitions from higher densities in the centre through to lower densities at the rural fringe.



Roading Pattern

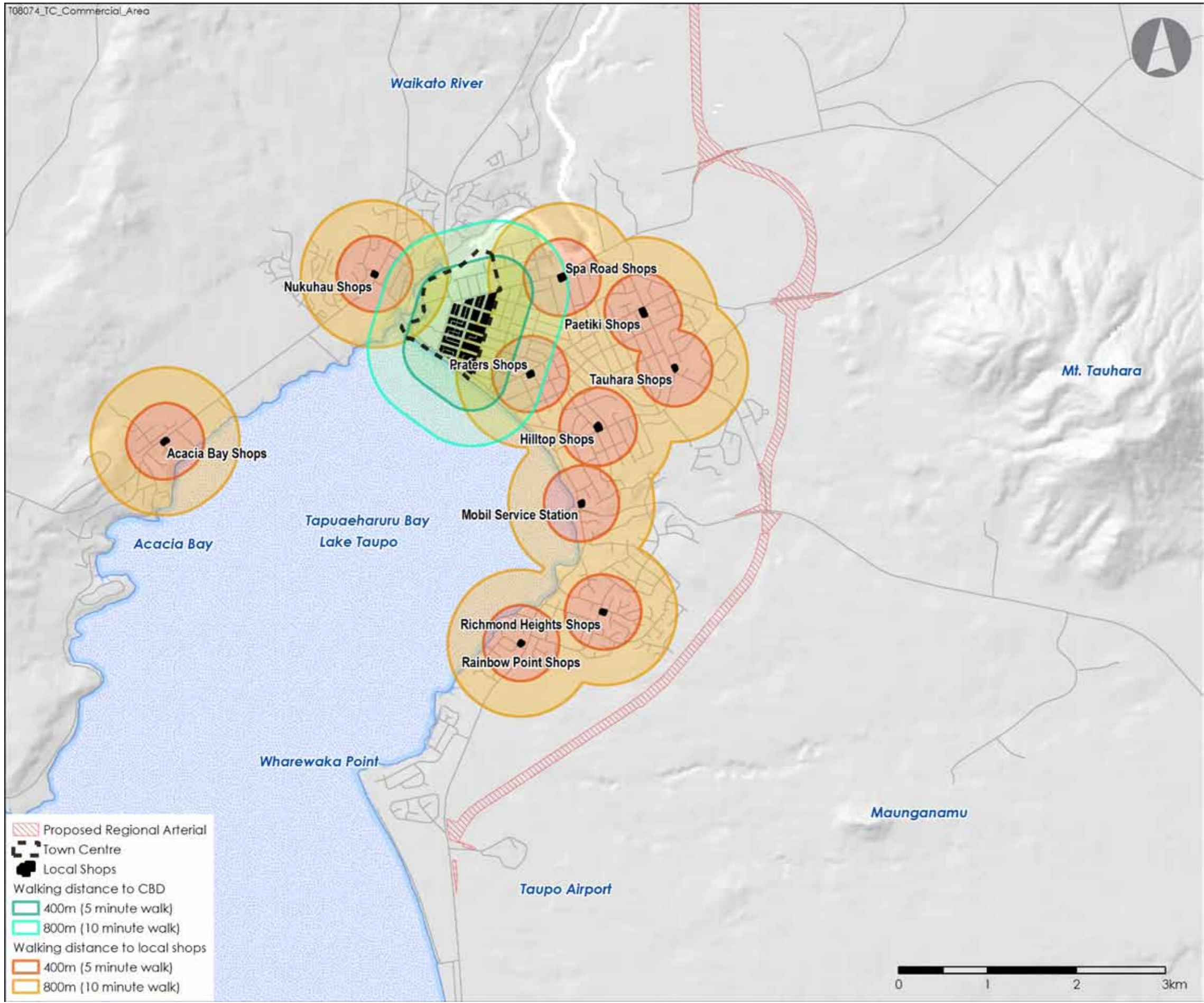
The adjoining map classifies road types to show the existing roading hierarchy. The purpose of the map is to demonstrate the interconnectivity between the ETA, future commercial-industrial growth areas and the town centre. The arterial links between the ETA and the town centre will play an important role in funnelling traffic and people into the town centre and as such will directly influence the vitality and function of the urban core.

The street network essentially moves from a rectilinear grid in the town centre through to a modified grid in older residential areas. Subdivisions that have occurred during the last few decades are often recognisable due to the 'can of worms' street pattern with large numbers of cul-de-sacs.

Key Opportunities

- + The key intersections with the ETA will serve as entry and arrival points into the town centre. As such, key intersections and arterial road corridors have the potential to be upgraded to enhance the experience of arrival into town.
- + Through the downgrading of Tongariro Street and Lake Terrace, the changes to traffic flows have the potential to influence the location of future land uses and activities.
- + Within new commercial and industrial growth areas, the use of a modified grid would enhance the permeability and efficiency of the street network.
- + Public transport routes should be identified at a conceptual level to future proof these routes, to connect key destinations and to influence the development of activity along these routes.





Retail Distribution

The adjoining map identifies existing retail and local convenience areas and walkable residential catchments. This shows that approximately half of the urban area of Taupo is within 10 minutes walk of a dairy or local convenience centre. The map also makes it clear that Taupo town centre currently has very little competition.

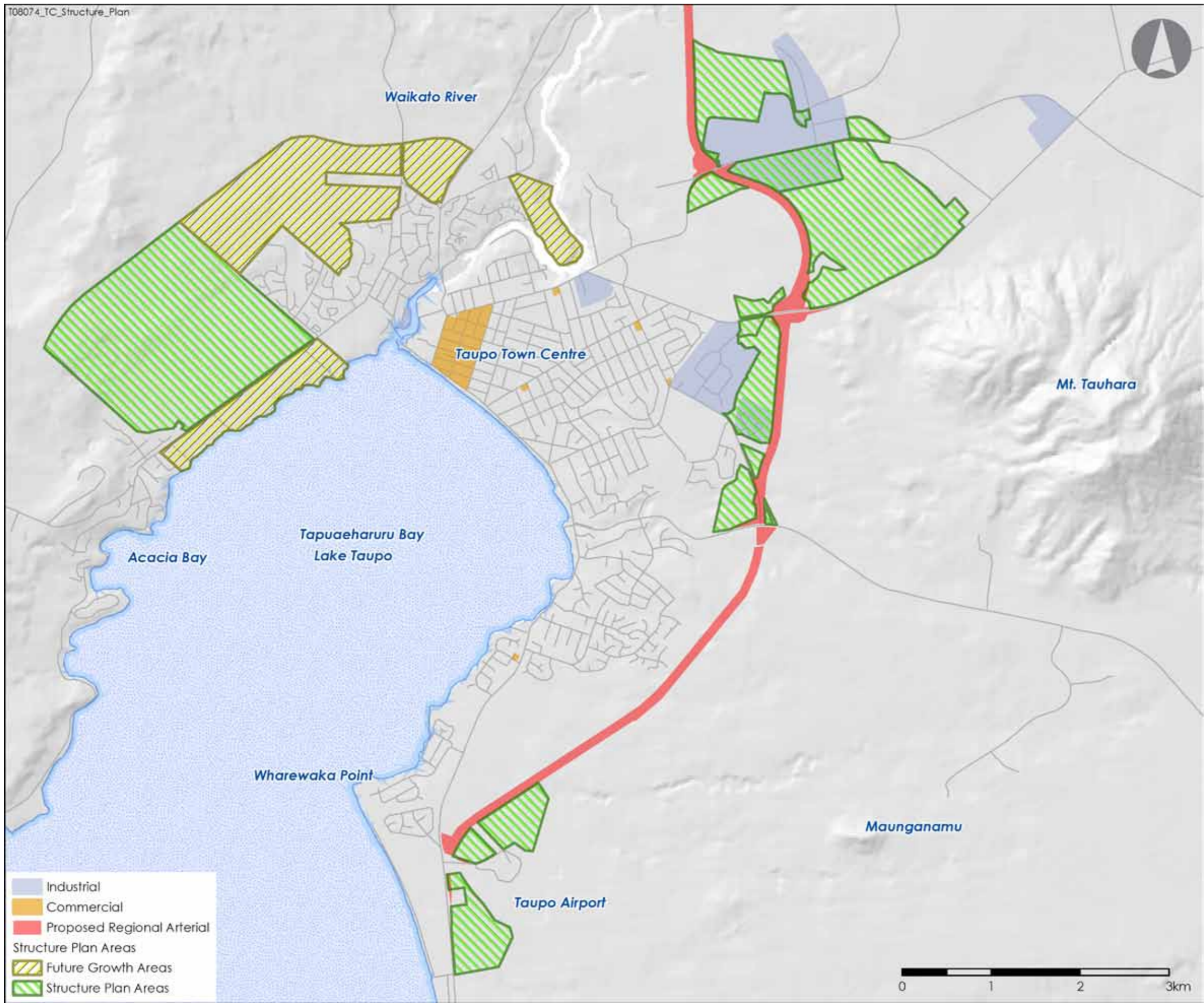
Given that the vast majority of Taupo's population would need to drive a car to access the town centre, there is potential for further residential intensification within 400-800m of the urban core.

The development of secondary retail centres to the east of the Waikato River is not addressed in TD2050 with the emphasis placed on enhancing the volume of retail and commercial activity in the town centre. Previous studies however have identified that future growth in the large format retail (LFR) sector could be absorbed by the Spa Road area to the north of the town centre.

Key Opportunities

- + Facilitate the establishment of LFR to the north of the Taupo town centre on the northern side of Spa Road with the transitioning of service industrial activities to areas adjoining the ETA. There is also an opportunity for LFR to be integrated into the retail blocks between Ruapehu and Titirapenga Streets.
- + Increase the walkable catchment for the town centre by enabling residential intensification within a 400-800m radius of the town centre.





Industrial Activity

As discussed in TD2050, the anticipated growth in population will increase the demand for commercial and industrial land. TD2050 determined that the northern growth area had the greatest potential to accommodate this growth.

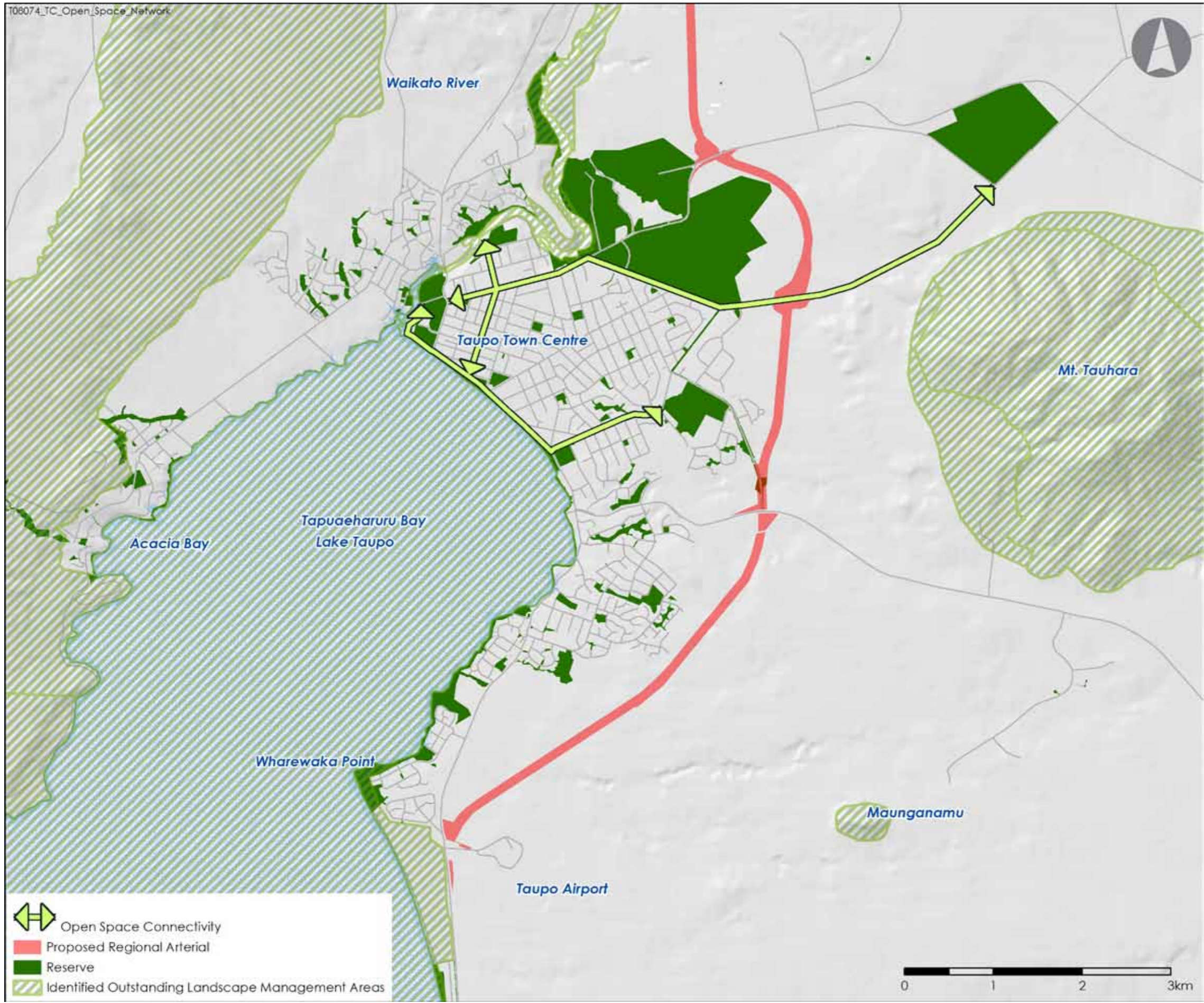
The identified growth areas shown on the adjoining map are distributed along the ETA corridor and in most instances are an extension of existing pockets of industrial activity. Constraints mapping has been completed for all of these areas based on geotechnical, archaeological/cultural, ecological and landscape attributes.

The adjoining plan shows each of these identified growth areas and the developable areas within each of these sites. Based on available resources and existing land use patterns, heavy industrial activity will generally be promoted in the area around Centennial Drive and Broadlands Road. The other growth areas will accommodate lighter industrial, service industrial and logistics / transport-related activities.

Key Opportunities

- + Co-locate heavier industrial activities with existing heavy industry and around the proposed Tauhara Power Station.
- + Light and service industrial activity should be targeted towards the identified growth areas to the west of the ETA near SH5, Miro Street and the airport.
- + Logistics and transport related activity could be encouraged in proximity to the airport.
- + Ensure that all site interfaces between new commercial-industrial growth areas and adjoining land uses are effectively treated to integrate the new activity into the receiving environment.





Open Space Network

The adjoining map highlights open space areas both in terms of Council reserves and landscape features such as the Lake, which provide amenity and recreational value to the Community. These spaces work together to create a loosely connected network of public open space.

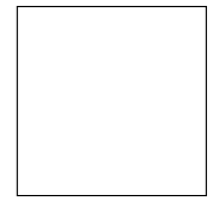
The connectivity of open space is high in some areas such as along the Waikato River corridor but relatively fragmented in other areas. As populations grow, the demand for the provision of diverse and well connected open spaces increases.

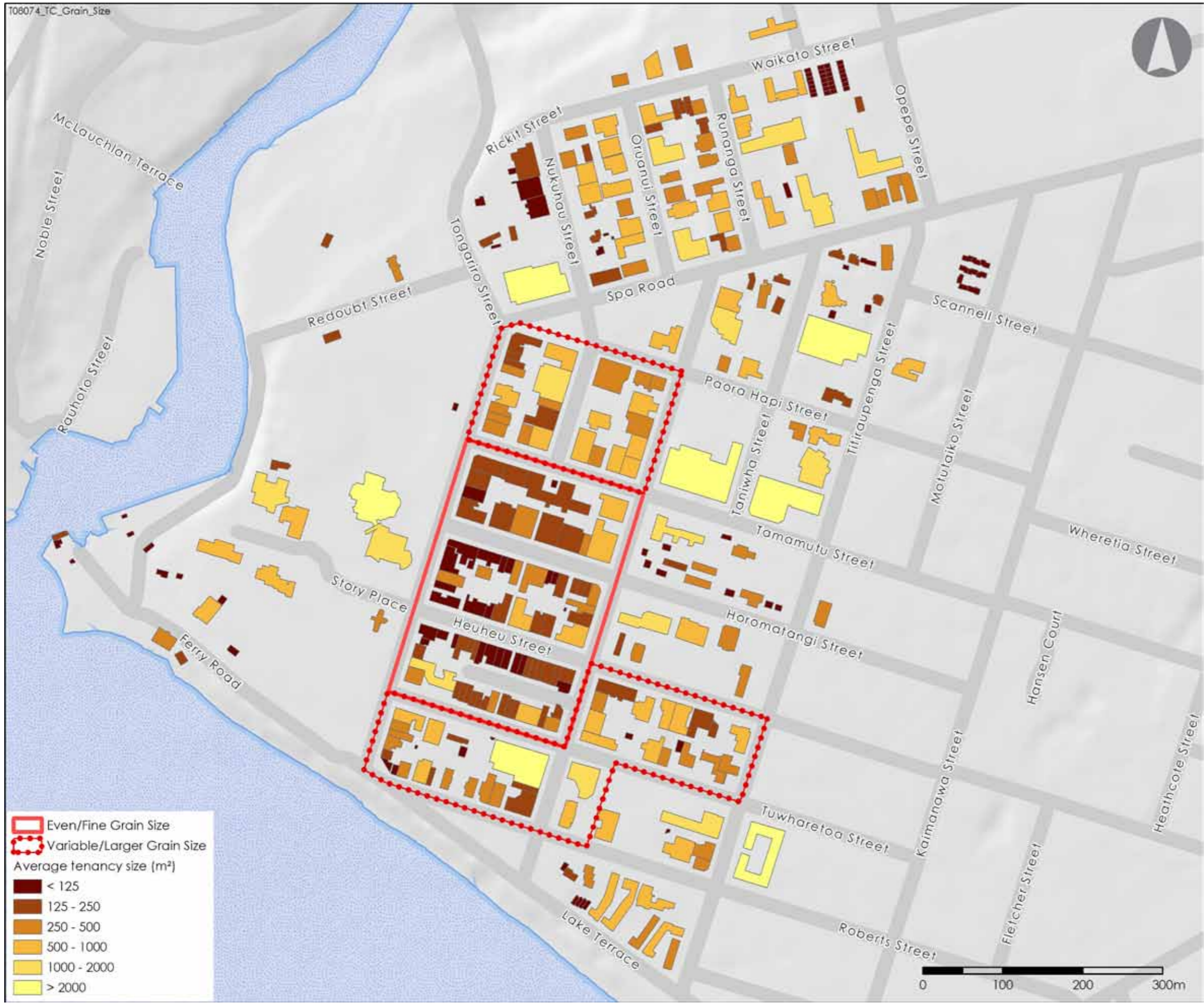
Key Opportunities

- + Upgrade and enhance lakefront and riverfront open space areas with the intention of developing a continuous chain of waterfront parks and pedestrian cycleways.
- + Identify key road corridors that connect key open space areas and develop as 'green streets' which are upgraded to improve amenity and pedestrian/cycle movement, e.g. Broadlands Road and Spa Road

part ii: *Site Analysis*

Town Centre Analysis





Urban Form

The diagram to the left colour codes existing built form in the town centre (by building footprint/ tenancy size) to provide an insight into its basic structure and the degree of spatial definition achieved by the built environment. The finer grained, continuous street frontages in Horomatangi and Heuheu Streets (within solid red line) provide a well-defined retail core with few vacant blocks. The second retail tier (within the dotted red line) also has a relatively continuous frontage but the grain size is larger and there is a higher proportion of vacant blocks.

Beyond the central retail core, built form tends to disperse, with larger building footprints, long stretches of vacant street frontage and less continuity. The location of larger, anchor retail stores such as supermarkets and department stores on the periphery, allows them to support the retail core by attracting people who often move on to spend time and money in the main retail streets. Many of the urban public spaces lack proper focus because they are treated as leftover spaces rather than being connected to or defined by built form.

The transition from the relatively even texture and finer grain size in the core through to the variable grain and texture of the fringe correlates with levels of pedestrian activity as shown in following plans. A fine grain is preferred in the urban core because it increases pedestrian permeability.

Key Opportunities

- + Consolidate the 'finer-grain' retail core by facilitating the growth of smaller, boutique tenancies in the central streets. Explore potential to subdivide larger blocks to create boutique retail opportunities.
- + Promote infill development in the fringe streets of the town centre to consolidate the core and develop a more continuous and active street frontage.





Roading Network

The town centre roading network is laid out as a modified grid with the key structuring road being the existing State Highway which runs adjacent to the Domain and along the lakefront.

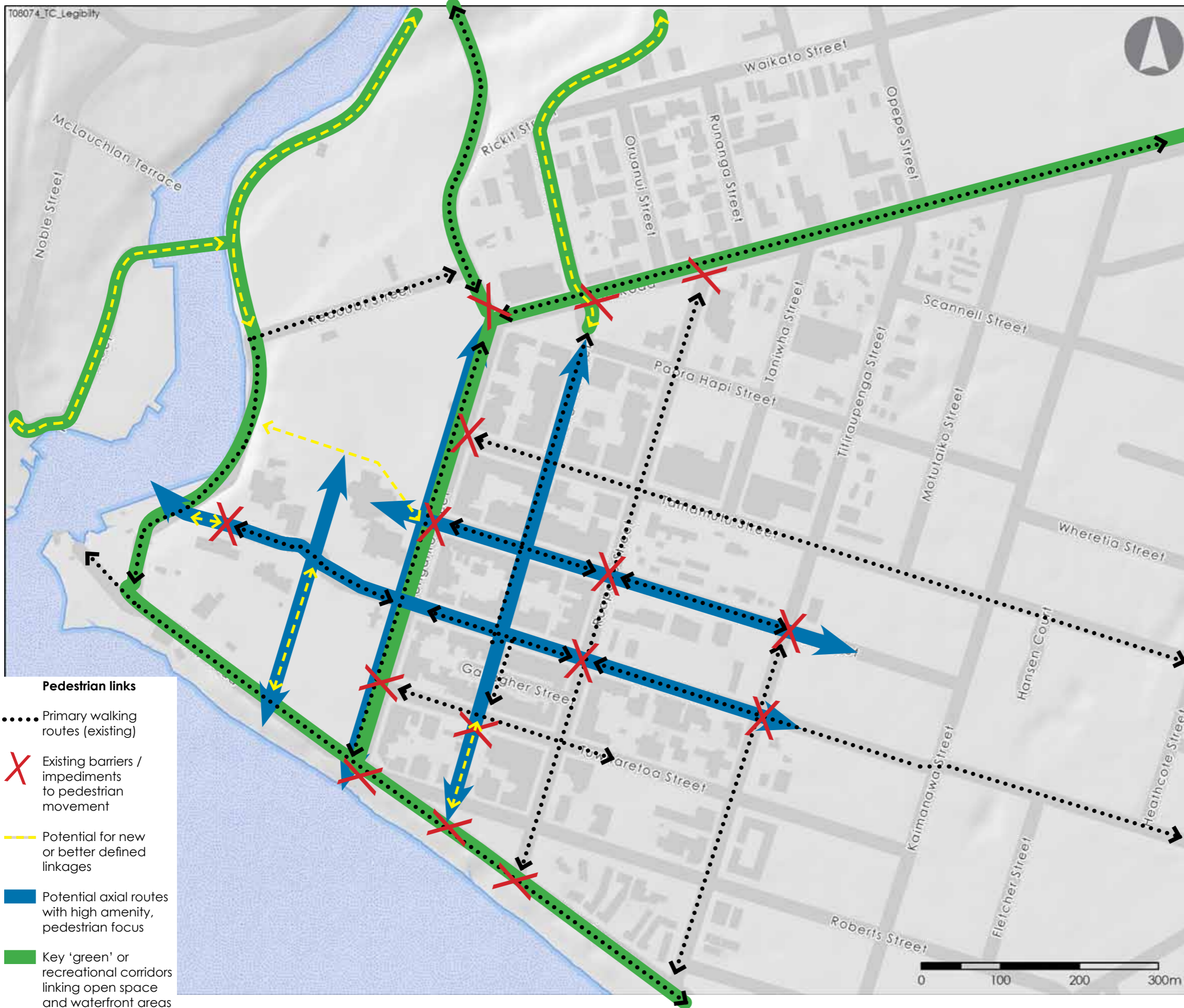
The key collector roads (Spa Road, Heuheu Street and Tamamutu Street) radiate from the central core and feed the town centre from the residential fringe. The busiest retail blocks which form the town's epicentre are located where these collector roads intersect with Tongariro and Ruapehu Streets. This epicentre of activity is reliant upon the energy and exposure that these roads provide. Reconfiguring the network will have direct implications for the functioning of the retail core.

Various options for the reconfiguration of the network have been modelled in the past and these will be re-evaluated in section four of this report.

Key Opportunities

- + Explore options for the pedestrianisation and downscaling of Tongariro Street and Lake Terrace to de-emphasise vehicular traffic.
- + Identify potential public transport routes and explore means to future-proof these.
- + Model the various alternatives for reconfiguring the roading hierarchy and test the implications of these changes in terms of retailing and town centre vitality.
- + Upgrade the key collector streets to increase their amenity, identity and appeal. Enhance pedestrian and cycleways along these routes to increase the numbers of pedestrians and cyclists commuting to town.
- + Explore opportunities for rationalising roading in the Domain to better connect with the town centre without negatively impacting upon open space values.





Pedestrian Network

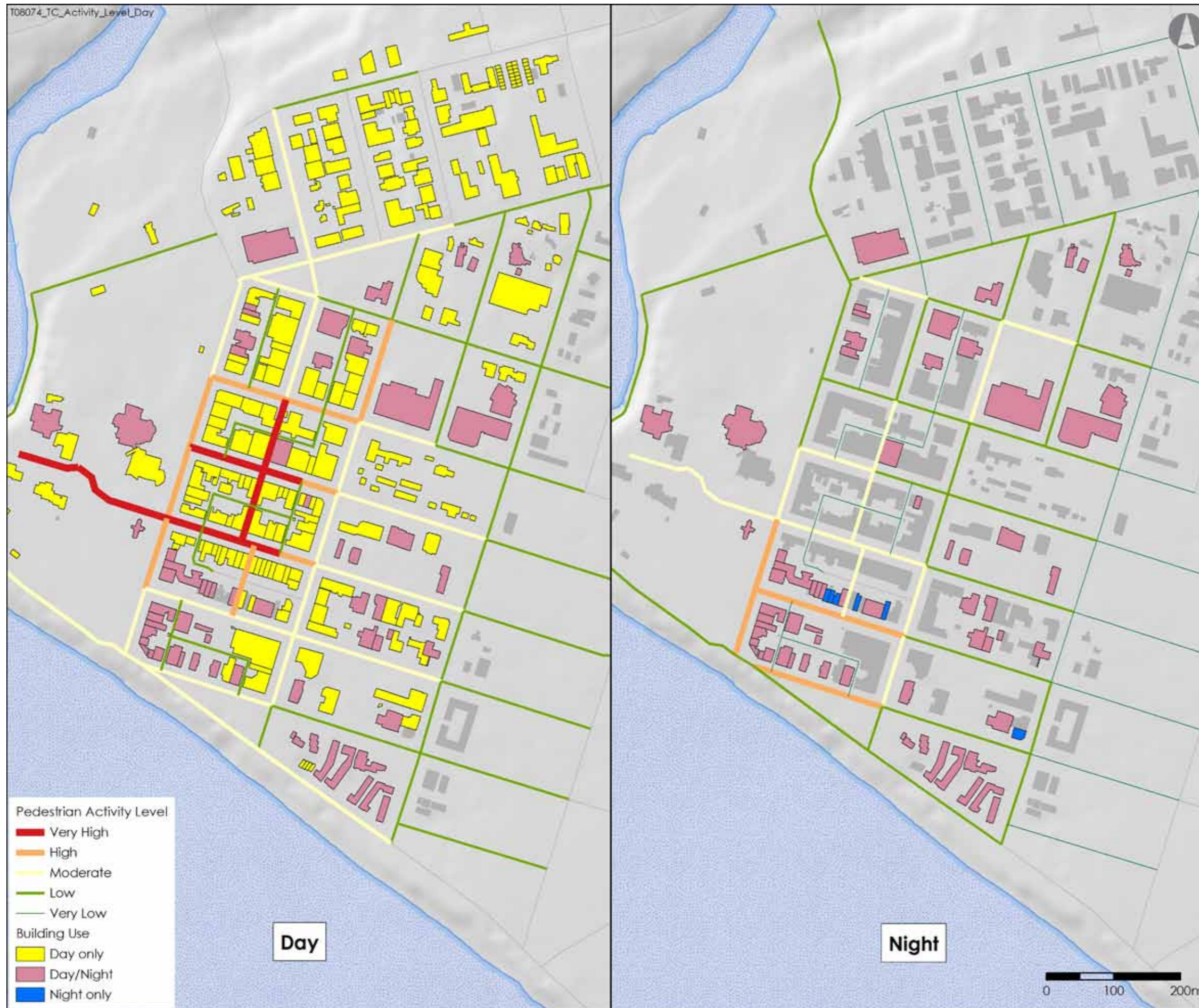
The TCSP 2004 recognised a pedestrian core and a 'vehicle-dominated' fringe. To achieve a greater connectivity between the core and the surrounding walking catchment, the pedestrian network has been appraised to identify future needs.

Firstly, a walkover of the town centre area identified key conflict points or barriers (see red crosses) to pedestrian movement which could be improved upon. Following that, new or strengthened linkages (in yellow) were recognised that would enhance the pedestrian network.

Key Opportunities

- + Improve the ease and comfort of pedestrian movement into the town core by overcoming the key conflict points between vehicles and pedestrians.
- + Promote and enhance the pedestrian focus of key axial 'streets' such as Horomatangi and the north-south system of lanes and arcades running through the central blocks.
- + Future redevelopment of the Council-owned carparks between Ruapehu and Titirapunga Streets could create new, mid-block pedestrian connections.
- + Improve the 'green network' of passive open spaces and walk/cycleways connecting open space areas, the waterfront and the town core.





Pedestrian Activity

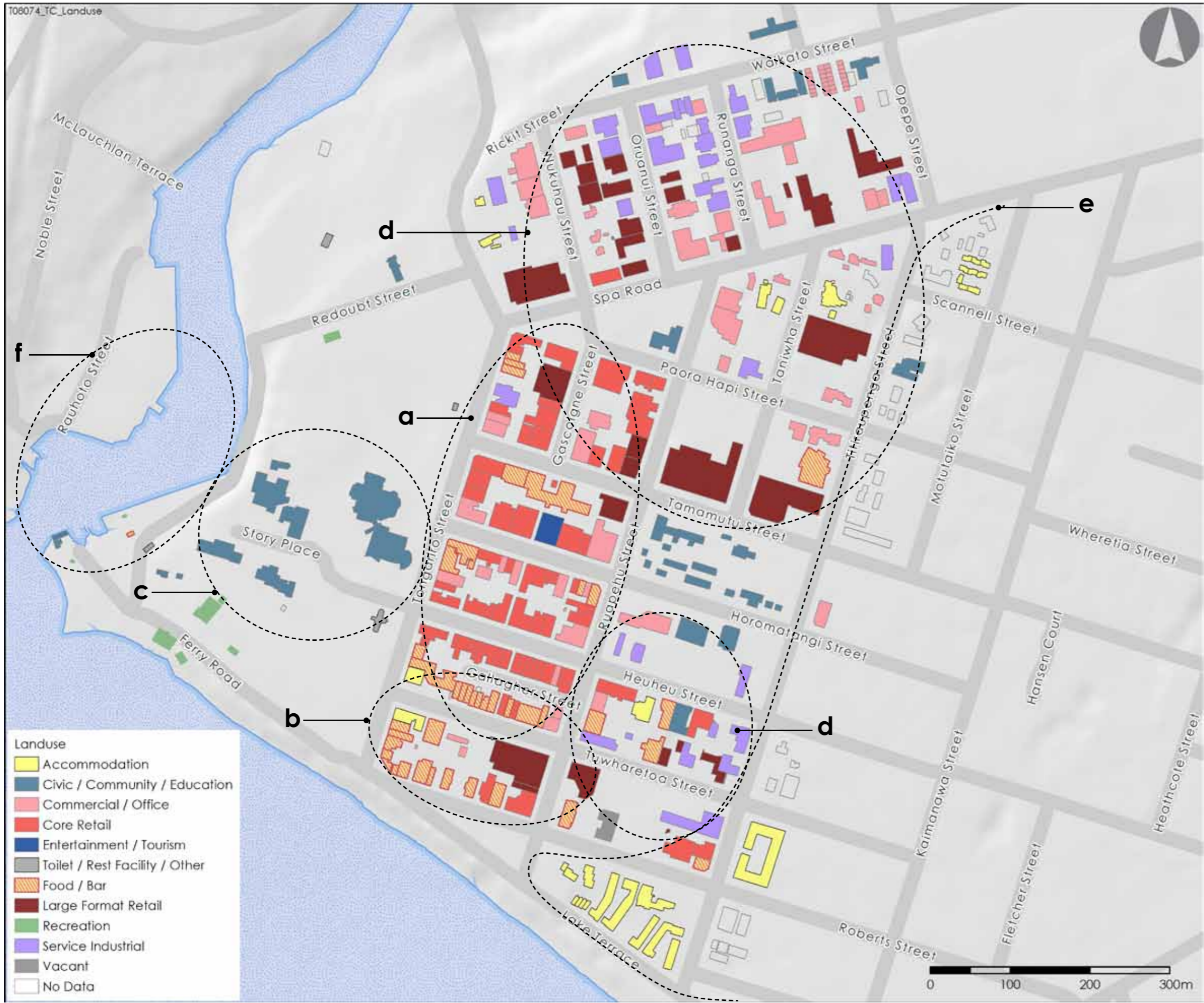
A snapshot of pedestrian activity levels was taken through a two-day survey of the town centre to gauge the vitality of city streets. Over a Friday and Saturday, pedestrian movement was observed to identify the most active and least active areas of the town centre. The thickness of the black lines on the adjoining map relates to the levels of pedestrian activity observed. Buildings are also colour-coded according to the time of day that they are generally open. The map on the left shows day-time activity and the right-hand map shows evening activity.

It was clear from observations that Heuheu, Horomatangi and Tamamutu Streets form the pedestrian hub during the day, with the adjoining section of Tongariro Street and Story Place also busy. In the evening, the focus of activity shifts towards the lakefront around Tuwharetoa and Roberts Streets with the remainder of the town quiet. The laneways and arcades play an important role in linking the retail area to the lakefront but this linkage could be improved.

The most active streets are generally finer grained and are the most connected streets in the sense that all key paths and roads intersect at the core. It is also noted that the busier pedestrian streets are also the busiest for vehicles - indicating that these two modes of travel can co-exist if effectively managed.

Key Opportunities

- + Improve pedestrian connections between the retail area and entertainment area / lakefront through laneways and arcades. Strengthen connections through the Domain to link the town centre and boat harbour.
- + Attract more people to live in or near the town centre to increase activity both day and night.
- + Manage vehicles in a way that improves pedestrian activity and comfort without draining the energy from busy, central streets.



Land Use Pattern

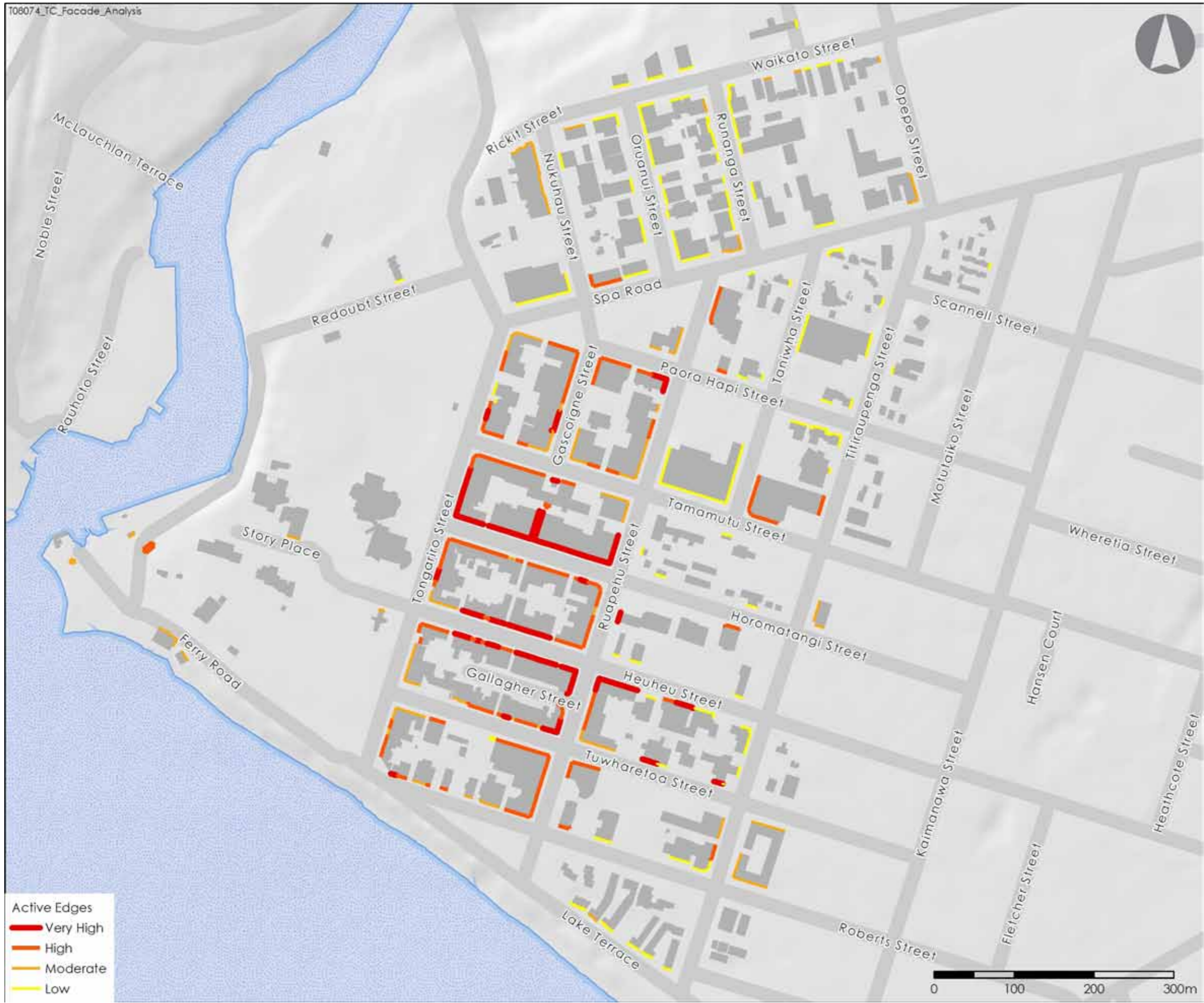
Beyond the coarse zoning definitions used to direct future land use, a more detailed analysis of the actual activities existing in the town centre starts to reveal key patterns and precincts.

Most land use precincts within the town centre are loosely defined at present. The broad areas circled on the map to the left simply highlight concentrations of different activity types. In reality each of these areas has a mix of activities but there is an opportunity to strengthen the identity of these areas in the future. Five precincts (or concentrations of activity) have been highlighted and present the following opportunities:

Key Opportunities

- a** **RETAIL CORE:**
Continue to promote boutique retail opportunities and a strong pedestrian environment at street level with mixed use (offices and accommodation) above. Enhance quality and amenity of streets and public spaces to encourage people to come more often and spend more time.
- b** **ENTERTAINMENT/ RESTAURANTS:**
Increase permeability of surrounding blocks to increase access and improve connection to the lakefront.
- c** **CIVIC / COMMUNITY USES:**
Potential for new civic centre to increase identity of area as the civic heart. Create city square or plaza and reconnect this with the retail core.
- d** **SERVICE INDUSTRIAL and LFR:**
Facilitate gradual transition of service industrial areas to new growth areas along ETA and promote commercial offices and LFR that will support the retail core.
- e** **MIXED USE FRINGE:**
Improve quality of pedestrian links to the waterfront and town centre so that higher density residential, hotel/motels and services are better connected to the town centre.
- f** **MARINA PRECINCT:**
Improve pedestrian connections and upgrade as a recreational, open space and entertainment destination.





Street Frontages

One of the keys to creating vibrant streets is the design quality of buildings and, in particular, the quality of façades and street frontages. Buildings that relate to the street and present an active edge provide a high degree of visual interest and coherence. The quality of street frontages was evaluated during the site survey based on the following criteria:

1. The degree of visual connectivity of the façade with the public realm (i.e. shopfront glazing through to solid, blank walls);
2. The provision of street awnings and shelter.

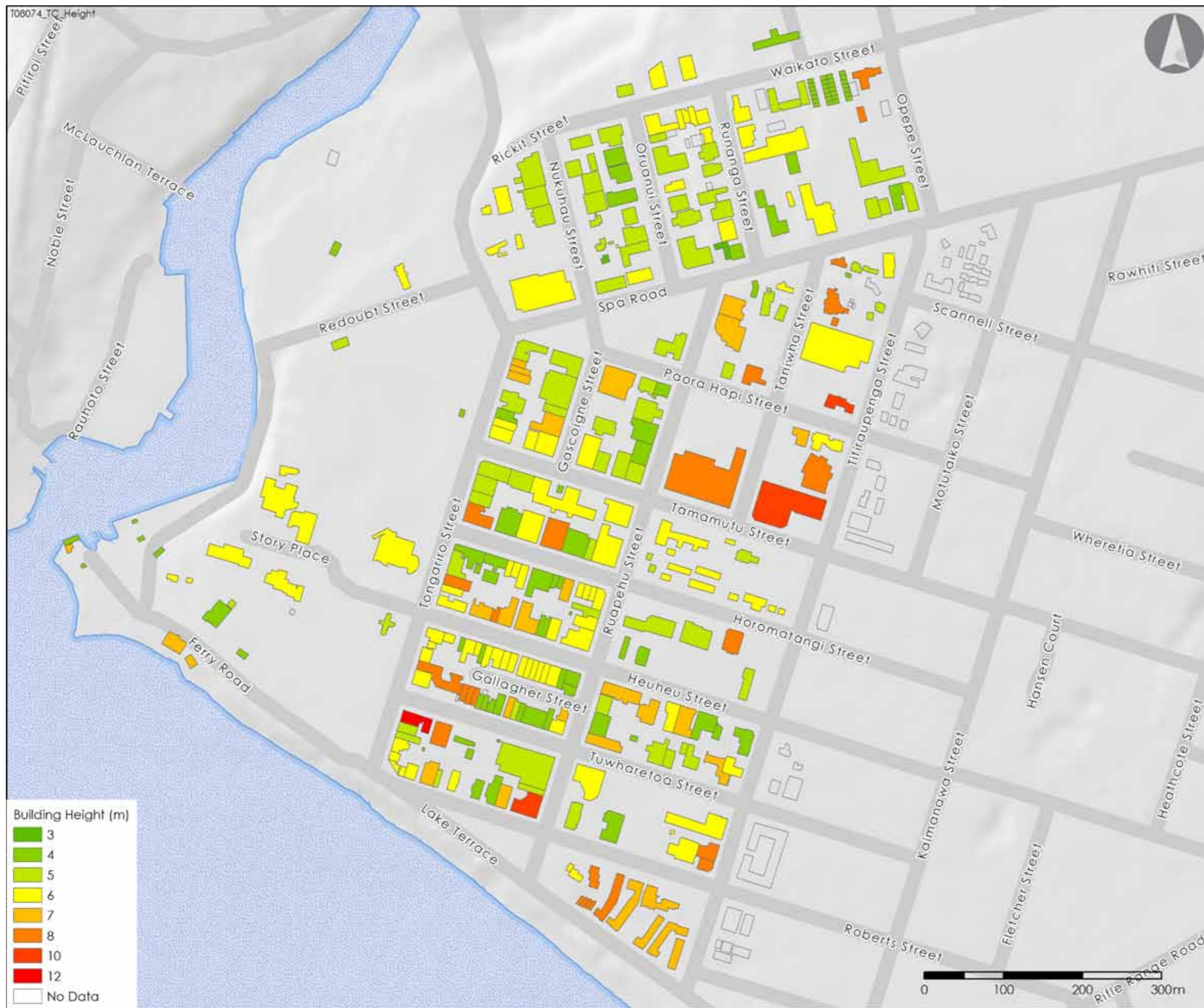
The quality of frontages has been ranked from low to very high where 'low' denotes a poor interaction with the street and 'very high' denotes a positive, pedestrian-oriented frontage.

An analysis of existing frontages in the city centre clearly shows that most of the retail core has reasonably well defined and active frontages. Outside the core however, the quality of street frontages is variable. Future growth and development of the city centre needs to facilitate the planning and design of buildings that will contribute more effectively to the image of the city, its streets and public spaces.

Key Opportunities

- + Develop guidelines for built form to ensure a best practice urban design outcome is achieved. Include guidance on street verandas, glazing and active frontages.
- + Take advantage of redevelopment opportunities to retrofit and redesign the street level frontages of key buildings.





Building Scale

The 3-dimensional scale and proportions of built form are a significant factor in determining the identity and function of a city. Universally, city centres are becoming aware that they need to develop a unique and marketable image. Taupo relies heavily on its landscape setting but there is a potential for the town centre to develop its own character and appeal. The scale of buildings and overall city form is one means of solidifying this image.

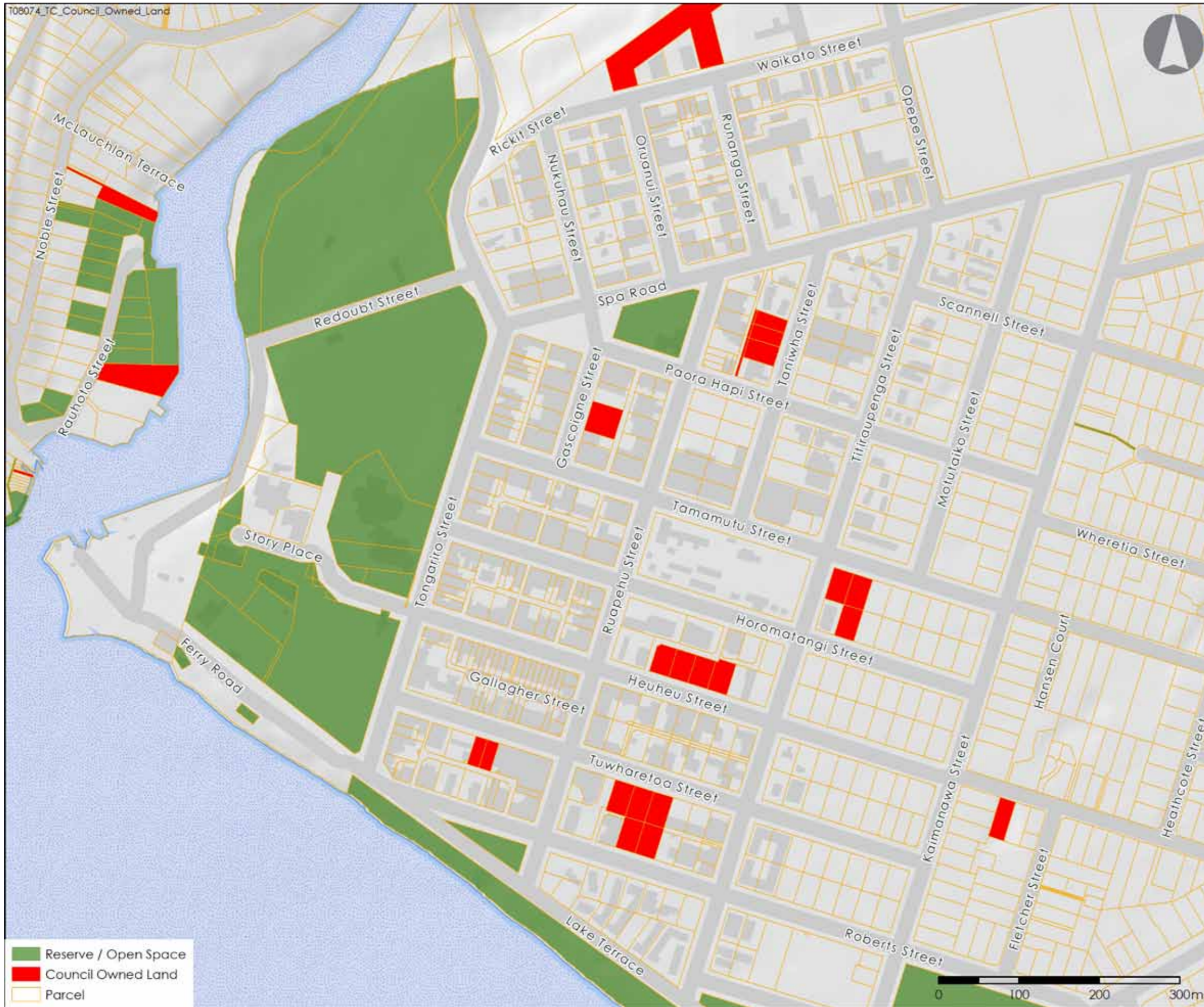
As shown to the left, Taupo's town centre is predominantly made up of single storey buildings with a relatively small proportion of double and triple storey buildings dispersed throughout. Interestingly, taller and bulkier buildings tend to be located on the fringe of the town centre. Due to the wide streets and low buildings, the current proportions of the main streets do not provide the spatial definition that helps to achieve a human scale. As Allan B. Jacobs writes in his book 'Making Great Streets', the most successful streets have a 'harmonious proportion' whereby vertical elements such as buildings or street trees create a defined and human space.

While very tall buildings are likely to be inappropriate in Taupo, an increased height in the town centre would be a positive outcome in terms of legibility.

Key Opportunities

- + Develop a cohesive approach to building scale for the town centre that will better define streets and achieve a more human scale.
- + Identify key locations such as major entry points or intersections where taller, landmark buildings could be located.
- + Use street trees to assist in balancing out the vertical scale of main streets.





Council Land

Through reserves, streets and property holdings, Taupo District Council has considerable potential to influence future urban form and public spaces through capital works. The strategic enhancement and redevelopment of these sites has the potential to serve as a catalyst for the transformation of the town centre.

The reconnection of the town centre to the Domain and the lakefront has been a desire of the Taupo Community for a long time. The edges of the Waikato River are also an untapped recreational and open space resource with tremendous potential.

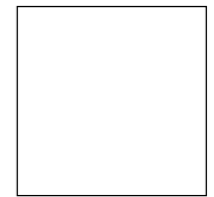
As well as reducing the barrier effect of Tongariro Street and Lake Terrace through pedestrianisation, the creation of attractors or destinations along the Lake and river edge will be essential to the success of the waterfront areas. The open space areas should be seen as a passive link that connects the destinations together.

Key Opportunities

- + Create multiple, connected destinations along the waterfront that draw people down to the edge and offer diversity, interest and vitality.
- + Create an interpretive public art trail which links destinations and guides people along the waterfront.
- + Re-design existing public open spaces so that they integrate more effectively with the urban edge.
- + Utilise Council owned land in the town centre to infill vacant spaces, enhance streetscape continuity and serve as best practice examples of urban design.
- + Enhance the existing marina as a destination for dining and entertainment.



part iii: *Design Options
Urban Gateways
& Industrial Areas*



Urban Gateways

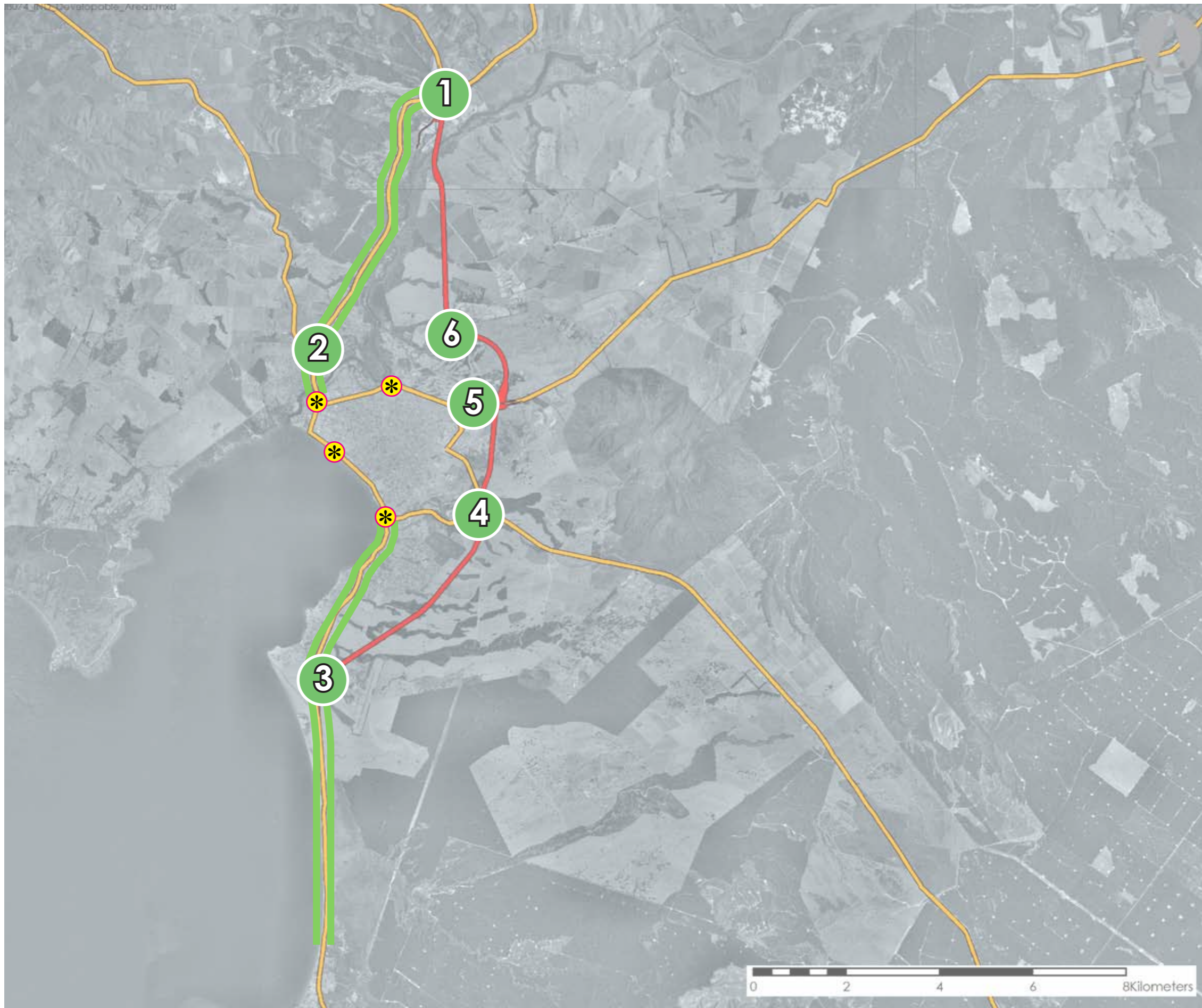
An immediate change resulting from the opening of the ETA will be the experience of travelling through Taupo. By presenting a series of alternative routes for moving into or through town, the ETA will place emphasis on a number of gateways.

Over time, the gateways and road segments leading into town can be designed to develop distinctive approaches into the town centre. While fixed gateways in the traditional sense should be part of the design response, the focus should be placed more holistically on the full arrival experience. The diagram to the left nominally identifies fixed entry points and key intersections but also highlights the movement corridors that will be instrumental in creating **arrival sequences**.

An arrival sequence considers the full and changing experience of arrival, gradually moving through a space rather than simply entering through a fixed point. For example, the northern approach to the town centre provides a series of experiences, from semi-enclosed, heavily planted sections of road through to other sections offering expansive views of the Lake. Design should consider the full range of experiences.

Generally speaking, there are two types of gateways identified:

- + **Entry points:** those that serve as the first point of arrival into Taupo's urban area (1-6);
- X **Key intersections:** those that are marked by the convergence of arterial roads and at the interface between urban and natural areas such as Roberts Street and the Lake. To be a future focus of road upgrades with high amenity planting.



Urban Gateways

The table to the left looks at each of the identified gateways and elaborates on their function, design opportunities and basic design elements.

ID	Location	Function	Opportunities	Key Elements
1	Northern Approach - Intersection of SH5 (to Rotorua) and SH1 (to Hamilton)	A filter that directs travellers either into Taupo town centre along existing SH1 route or to bypass town via the ETA. A key first point of arrival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed roundabout will act as a filter, separating through-travellers from those planning to stop in Taupo. Potential to 'capture' travellers who might be enticed into town for a rest or service stopover. Signage directing travellers along SH1 towards Taupo's shops, cafés, parks, lakefront and services should be combined with high amenity landscaping to attract people into town. Create and market existing SH1 route as a tourist / scenic route with emphasis on tourist experiences, and high amenity. Enhance and increase presence of Wairakei Tourist Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geothermal energy and rising steam; Large specimen trees planted in clusters; Dominant rural character with presence of built form gradually increasing on approach to town.
2	Northern Entry into Town - between Huka Falls Road lookout and Waikato River crossing.	This stretch of road is memorable for drivers because of the experience of coming into contact with the Lake and river. Panoramic views open out towards the Lake and can be seen from the lookout. The highway then descends through residential fences down to the bridge crossing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is anticipated that the majority of travellers headed for the town centre area from the north will continue to arrive via this route. As such, the route creates the all-important first-impression and sets the scene for the rest of the town. The stretch of road between gateways 1 and 2 needs to be treated as an arrival sequence that tells a story about Taupo. Currently the route has low amenity values offering up boarded back fences, a wide grassed verge and exposed cut faces. The view to the Lake is the defining element and this could be framed by appropriate street trees or sculptural elements that are designed to emphasise the experience of movement down and into town. There is potential to enhance the bridge crossing with a more defined gateway feature. The pedestrian link between the lookout and town could also be improved and the lookout enhanced and promoted as a pedestrian destination as well as a vehicle stopover. Points where traffic slows down (approach to bridge, roundabout) could be ideal locations for sculptural elements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panoramic view to Lake Taupo. Screen planting to reduce visual dominance of residential areas. Themed planting creating strong connection with town centre. For example deciduous trees with strong autumnal colour leading the eye down and culminating at the Great Lake Centre. Generally smaller trees (6 to 10m) planted in more linear / formal arrangements as one nears town centre. A sense of transition from the rural fringe to the urban area should be achieved. Themed signage or banners along the approach to town promoting key attractions and events. Bridge enhanced to create memorable entry experience.



View towards Lake Taupo arriving from the lookout (Gateway 2)



ID	Location	Function	Opportunities	Key Elements
3	Southern Approach - Around the intersections of SH1 with Anzac Memorial Drive, Ernest Kemp Rise and ETA.	New roundabout directs travellers either into Taupo town centre along existing SH1 route or bypass town via the ETA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear views of the town centre begin to open up from as far south as Waitahanui. There is potential to begin themed roadside plantings at these points, beginning with sparse clusters and building to a crescendo at Ernest Kemp Rise where more formal plantings could then lead into the urban area. • This airport intersection will serve as another filter, offering a choice between the bypass and the town. There is a clear opportunity to direct people towards the lakefront and town centre, introducing cues to entice travellers towards the lakefront, cafés, retail and civic heart. • South of the airport, the connection with the Tongariro Plateau and natural character values could be used as a basis for roadside planting schemes, drawing on native species and more naturalised approaches as a point of difference to the northern entrance. • A shift to exotic trees around the Anzac Memorial Drive roundabout to announce arrival. • Roundabout feature incorporating low feature planting and sculptural elements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scattered boulders, views to the Lake and town over Ernest Kemp Rise. • Clusters of native trees and shrubs along road corridor. • Dominant pastoral character, open space and views to Lake Taupo and Mount Tauhara. • Entry signage and defined gateway point at the Anzac Memorial Drive roundabout, welcoming people to Taupo. Signage should give a clear directional emphasis towards the town centre. • Attention should be given to the boundary treatment of new residential areas. Solid, boarded fences should be avoided or hidden behind planting.



View on southern approach to town near airport, (Gateway 3)

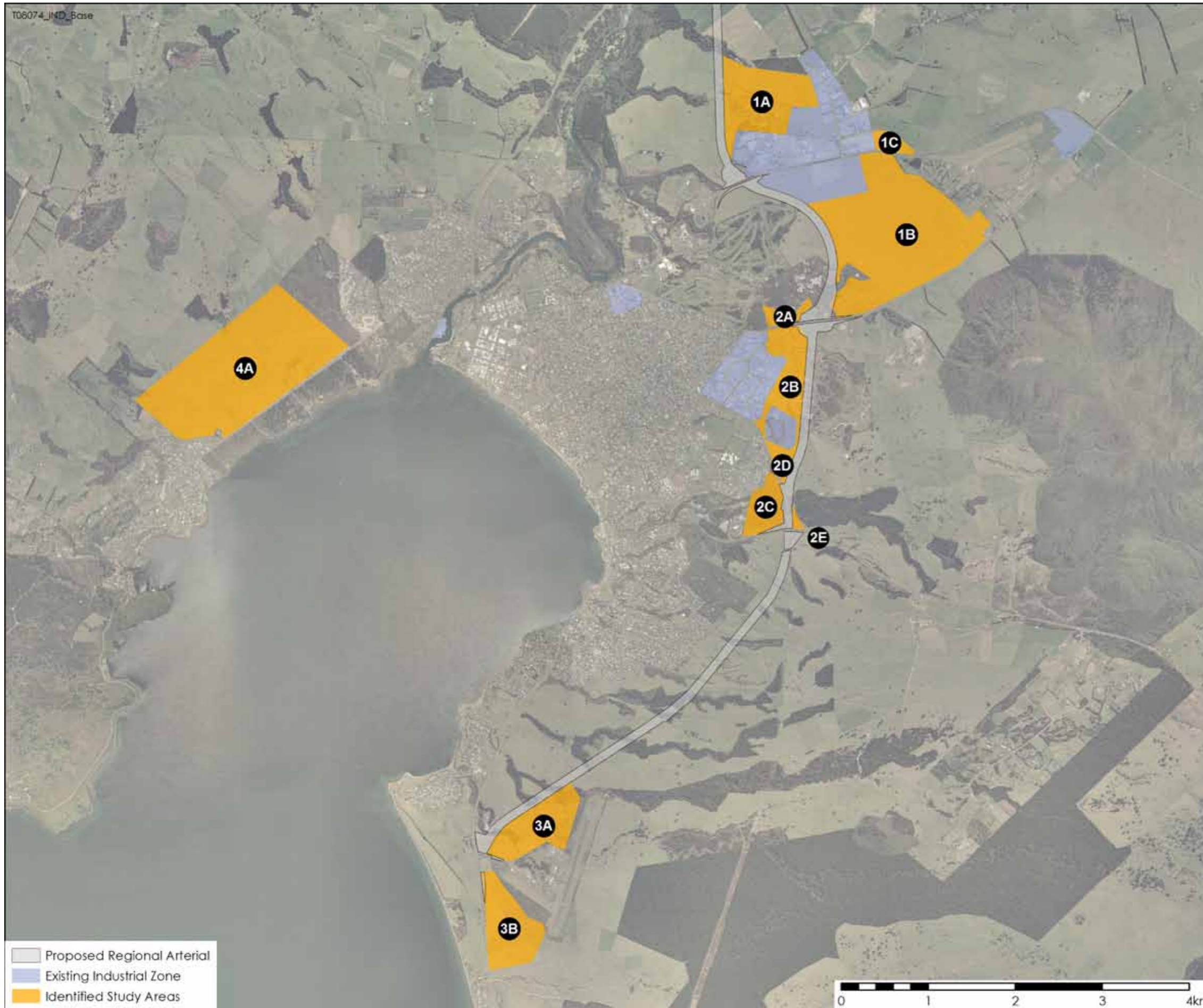


ID	Location	Function	Opportunities	Key Elements
4	Eastern Approach - Future intersection of ETA and State Highway 5 (Napier Road)	Arrival point from east coast with new roundabout at intersection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining clear viewshafts to Lake Taupo, town centre and rural backdrop. Roundabout designed as low-key feature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clusters of specimen trees to form plantation planting, matching existing landscape character. Native revegetation in gullies. Development buffered from the road corridor. Low-key entry signage.
5	Intersection of ETA and Broadlands Road	Secondary Entry Point and Transition between new industrial and urban / residential fringe. Entries to new industrial areas, OD Park and to AC Baths / Events Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specimen trees grouped to reinforce character of nearby golf course plantings. Use of materials, feature walls to reference nearby industrial activity. Potential to create special design feature of grade separation bridge and incorporate signage / town centre marketing material. Town centre signage at intersection between off-ramp and Centennial Road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clusters of specimen trees to reinforce golf course character.
6	Intersection of ETA and Centennial Drive	Secondary Entry Point and Transition between new industrial and urban / residential fringe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an ecological or green corridor between the geothermal reserves. Native plantings on fill batters around off-ramp. Town centre signage at intersection between off-ramp and Broadlands Road. Potential to create special design feature of bridge abutments near off-ramp to announce turn off to town centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native geothermal planting. Native revegetation in gullies and through geothermal reserves. Design of retaining walls and walls to reference geothermal character.



View towards Taupo arriving on State Highway 5 (Gateway 4)





Industrial Growth

For the purposes of this study 686 ha of land was identified as potentially available for future industrial use. These areas are shown in orange on the adjoining map. These growth areas are in addition to the 286 ha of existing industrial and light industrial land (shown in pale blue).

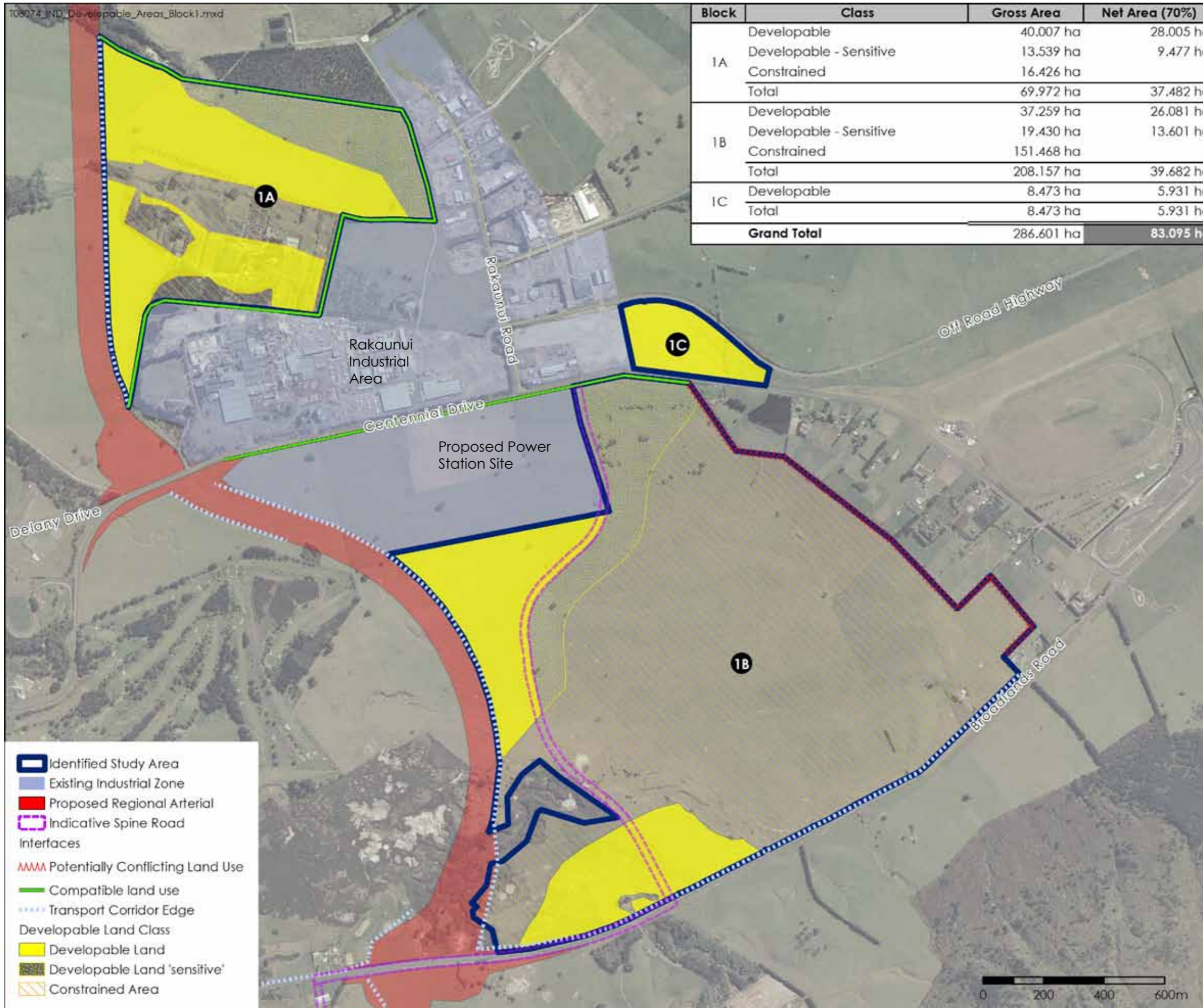
The draft economic assessment completed for the structure plan estimates that between 81 and 167 ha of additional industrial land will be required by 2026 with a median expected total of 124 ha. The range in these estimates is due to the uncertainties around the future mix of industrial activity as well as the spatial inefficiencies created by topography and other constraints.

Another consideration for the future is the gradual relocation of some of the service industrial activities in the Spa Road area within the town centre. An allowance of approximately 6 ha (representing about half of the Spa Road area) could therefore be included. This gives an overall expected total of 130 ha of gross developable area required.

Based on these figures, there is clearly a surplus of land with relation to the identified growth areas shown on the map to the left. The challenge therefore is to analyse the existing qualities and opportunities present in these sites to best determine the future phasing and release of industrial land for development.

The following plans look at each of the groupings of sites in more detail, considering constraints to development and developable land within the identified parcels.





Group 1

Located at the foot of Mount Tauhara with Broadlands Road to the south and Centennial Drive to the north, Group 1 represents the largest combined land area of all groups. Due to topographical, landscape character, geothermal and ecological constraints, large portions of land present significant obstacles to appropriate forms of industrial development.

The existing Rakaunui industrial area and the proposed power station on the opposite side of Centennial Drive create a substantial industrial node, making future industrial consolidation in the area a logical conclusion. There are also clear synergies with the location of industry in proximity to the geothermal resource present in the area. In general therefore, Group 1 is well suited for most forms of industrial activity, including heavy industrial.

Once constraints identified by various consultants were taken into account, gross developable areas were able to be calculated. The areas highlighted in yellow also allow for 5m wide buffers with existing boundaries.

With the guiding principle being the consolidation of future industrial activity around existing industry and the Centennial Drive corridor, gross developable area is clustered around Centennial Drive and the ETA. An indicative spine road through Area 1B has also been identified on the plan showing how the area might connect through to adjoining areas. This spine road is envisioned as a tree-lined boulevard including footpaths, cycling lanes and designed for public transport.

Key considerations for future industrial development in Area 1 will be maintaining high amenity interfaces with adjoining road corridors and rural zoned land. Requirements for planted buffers are recommended as well as minimum setbacks. Within identified 'sensitive' areas, built form, site coverage and landscape controls should be considered to reflect the particular values to be protected in each site.



Group 2

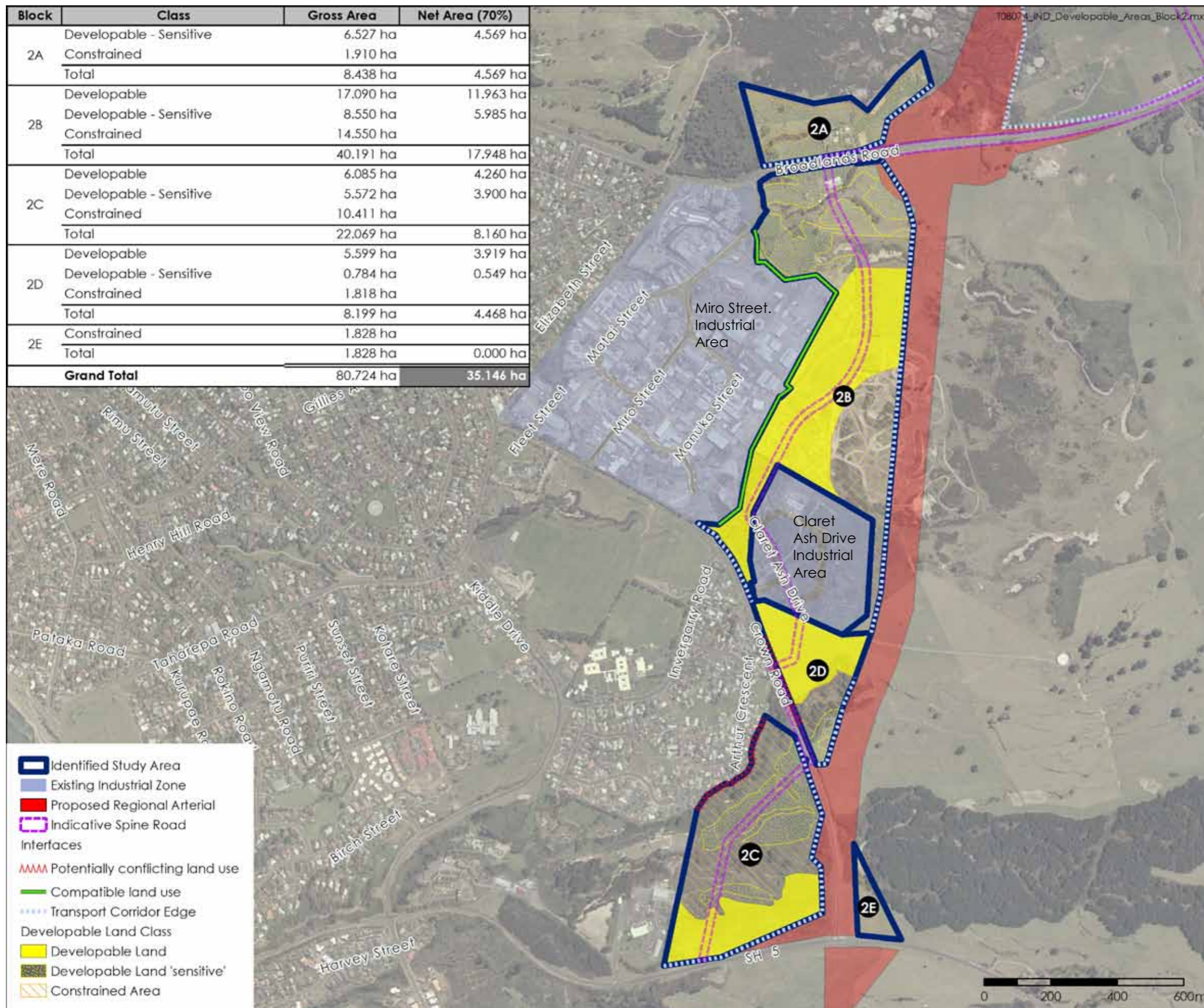
Group 2 is a linear stretch of land extending north from State Highway 5 through to Broadlands Road. Situated at the existing urban fringe, the group of sites will be bound by the ETA to the east.

Area 2B adjoins both the existing Miro Street Industrial / Commercial area and the newly developed Ashwood Park service industrial development. The future consolidation of service and light industrial activities in Area 2B would generally be an appropriate extension of existing land uses.

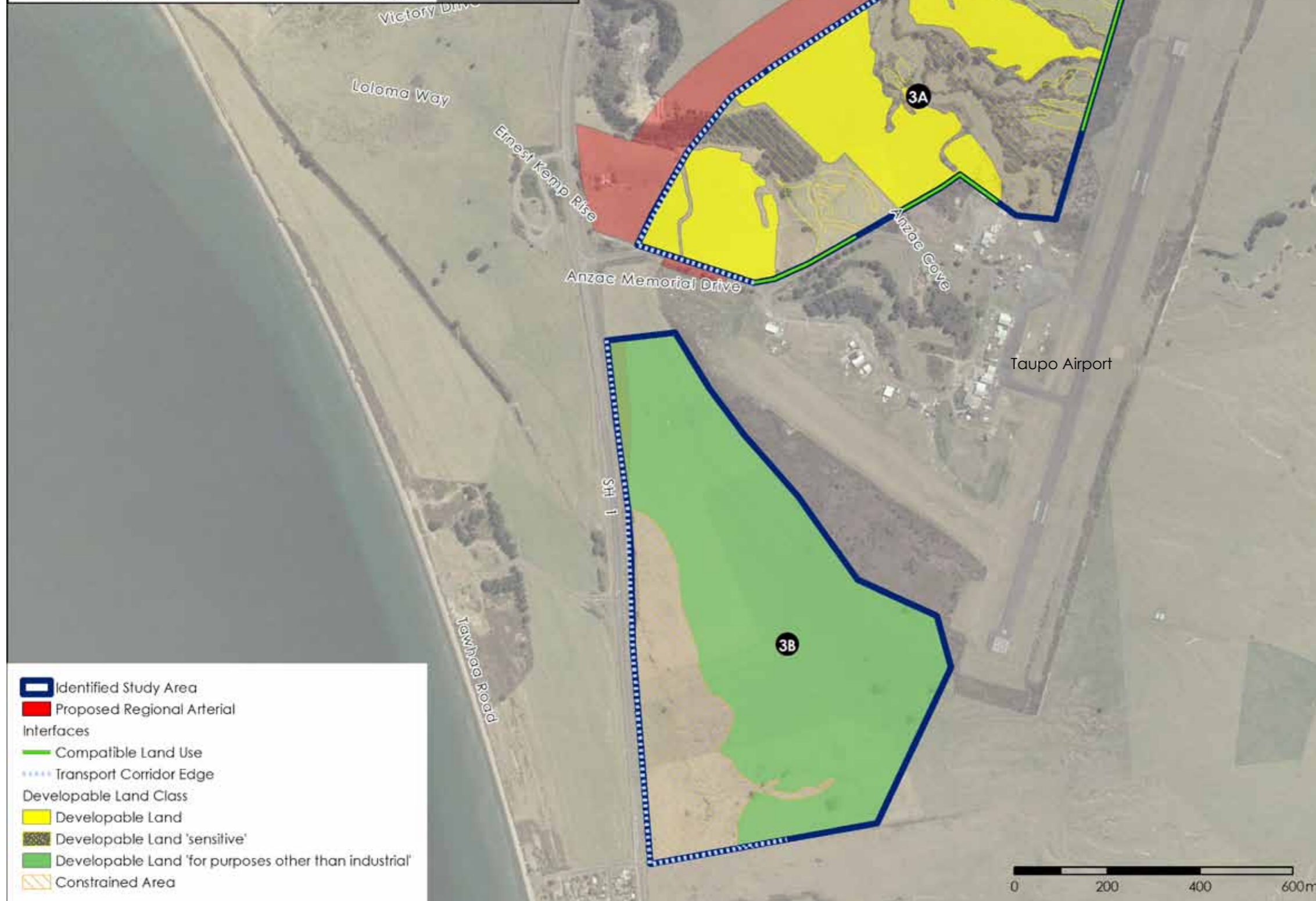
Area 2A and the northern edge of Area 2B front Broadlands Road which will have increased emphasis as an entry point into Taupo once the ETA is in place. Any development of these areas for industrial activity therefore needs to be undertaken in a manner that considers this arrival experience.

The areas identified as sensitive are fragmented by geothermal areas and areas of ecological value and the assumed protection of these areas would reduce the ability to develop these areas in a viable and sustainable manner.

A spine road alignment through Area 2B has been indicated with the purpose of ensuring that a north-south connection is provided for in future development. As with Area 1, the spine road should be designed to consider pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and include large framework trees.



Block	Class	Gross Area	Net Area (70%)
3A	Developable	19.720 ha	13.804 ha
	Developable - Sensitive	5.174 ha	3.622 ha
	Constrained	22.903 ha	
	Total	47.797 ha	17.426 ha
3B	Developable - Non Industrial	38.450 ha	
	Constrained	11.788 ha	
	Total	50.238 ha	0.000 ha
Grand Total		98.035 ha	17.426 ha



Group 3

Located to the north and south of the airport, access to Group 3 will be opened up via the airport.

The northern area (3A) is well buffered from potentially conflicting activities, but is also highly constrained and fragmented by the gully systems running through it. Proximity to the airport and associated business provides a strong rationale for the future industrial development of the area. This is particularly the case for transport, manufacturing and logistics-based industry.

The southern area (3B) is less constrained by topography but its orientation towards the Lake and high visibility from the highway make it a less desirable industrial site. From a landscape character perspective, this parcel of land would be suited to a higher amenity activity that would present a positive image at the southern gateway to Taupo. If industrial activity was proposed for this site, building bulk and scale, site coverage, colours / reflectivity and landscape buffers / mitigation would need to be considered.

The areas identified as sensitive are fragmented by the existing gully systems. The protection of these gully features would make the development of these land areas a more difficult prospect.



Group 4

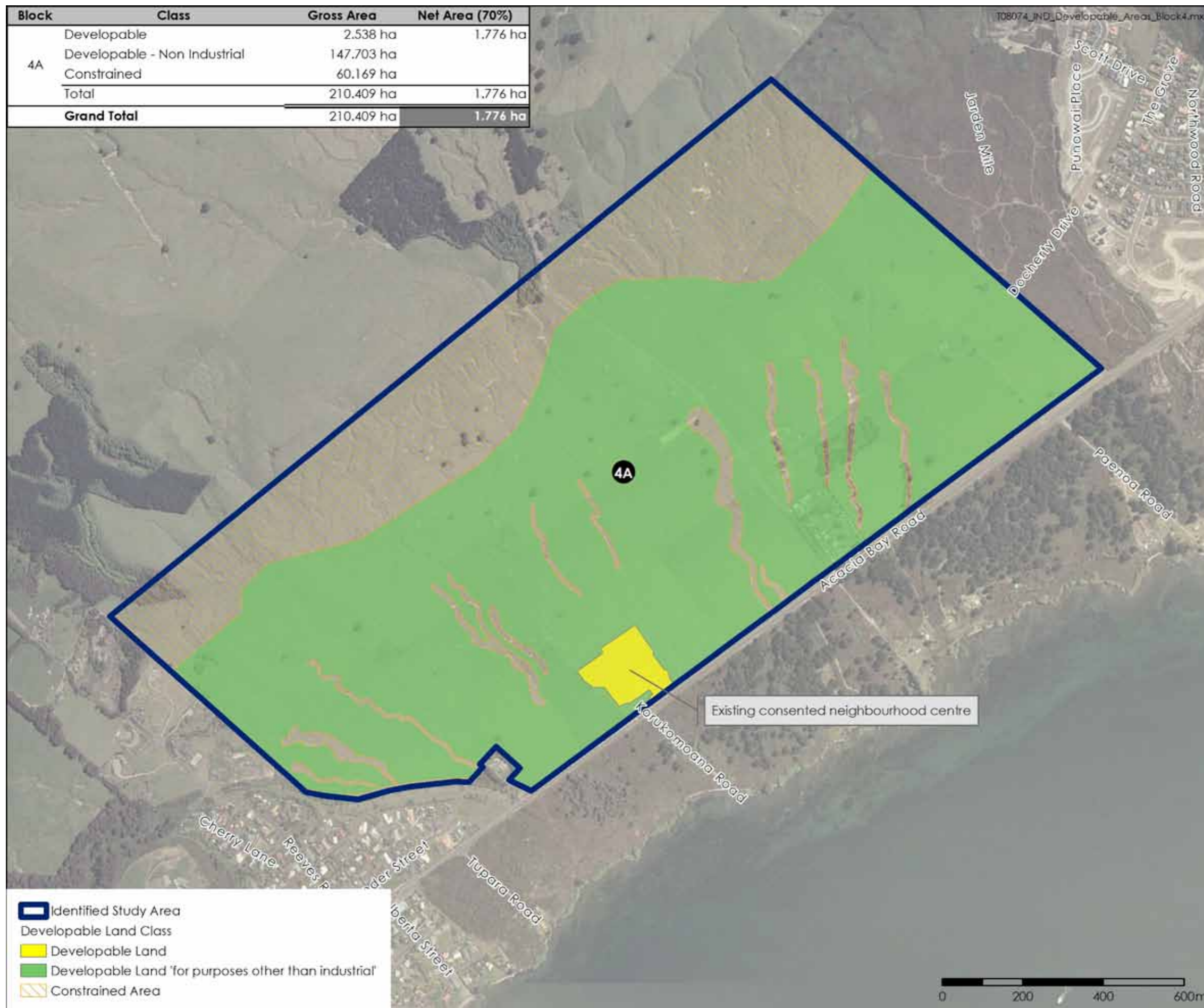
Group 4 is located on the western side of town between Acacia Bay and Nukuhau.

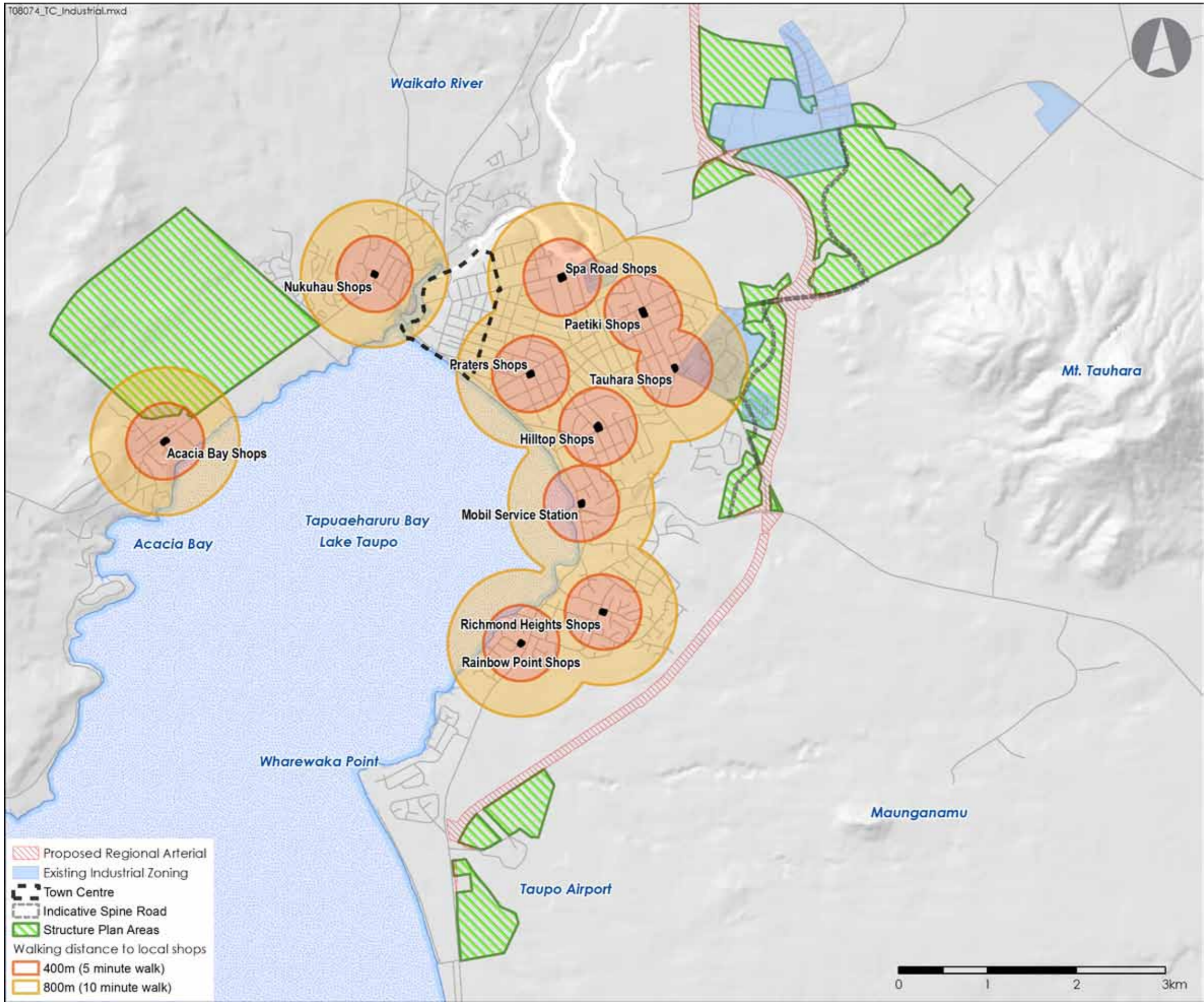
In terms of the aim of consolidating Industrial activity along the ETA, this site is not a suitable candidate for further industrial use. As discussed on the following page, efficient and sustainable land use planning aims to consolidate industrial activity in well defined areas that are well connected to major transportation routes. As more than adequate industrial land has been identified alongside the ETA, until 2026 there is no solid rationale to allow for further industrial land in Group 4 at present.

Given the future increase in the surrounding residential catchment however, neighbourhood centres would be expected to arise at walkable centres (approximately 800m separation).

The definition of these areas would need to be undertaken through a master planning process for the entire site, considering connections and the relationship to residential areas.

The interface between the existing consented retail / commercial site and surrounding residential area will need to be considered to achieve a high level of residential amenity.





Key Qualities

From an urban design perspective, the key matter in locating industrial activity is the consolidation of future growth in well defined areas. Concentrating activity around existing industrial nodes will reduce the unnecessary sprawl of industrial use into the rural fringe.

This approach not only reduces potential conflict between different land uses but is also the most efficient and sustainable means of delivering infrastructure and access. Other desirable qualities for industrial development sites are as follows:

- Located alongside key transport corridors;
- Bordering similar or compatible land uses;
- Minimal effects on landscape character;
- Minimal effects on amenity values;
- Minimal effects on ecological values;
- Minimal topographical limitations;
- Close to activity centres;
- Walkable catchment from residential areas for future employees;
- Sufficient developable land area to support critical mass;
- Has the ability to be buffered from residential activities.

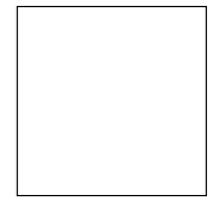
At the broader level, future public transport routes connecting to the industrial areas need to be considered, providing future employees with the ability to commute by bus to their workplace.

There will be a need for Council to develop typical boundary interfaces, open space edge treatments, pedestrian /cycle connections and public roading treatments to provide the Community with general guidance on these matters for new industrial areas.



part iii: *Design Options*

Town Centre



Existing Town Centre

Embracing Change

Over the years, there have been numerous ideas put forward for the revitalisation of Taupo's town centre. In the interest of continuity, these ideas have been comprehensively reviewed and integrated into a number of design options.

This section of the report briefly explains the various options that have been considered throughout the design process. These design options draw on previous studies completed by Council and various consultants as well as the ideas generated by the Community design competition. Pulling together the best ideas from various sources, a preferred structure for the town centre was then discussed with key stakeholders, the Community and Council.

A strong message that has come through all consultation is that the town has many existing strengths that need to be protected and improved upon as well as weaknesses that need to be resolved. With the construction of the ETA, Taupo's Community seems to be embracing the need for change but is also wary of needless alterations to elements of the town centre that are already working. Key strengths and weaknesses are summarised below;

✓	Strengths
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to the setting and landscape. • Well-connected historic grid. • Wide streets and laneway network. • Variety of shopping and retail options. • Plentiful open space.
x	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle dominance and poor walkability . • Lack of connectivity to the Lake, river and Domain. • Under-realised public realm. • Undefined precincts. • Dominance of surface level parking.



Defining Precincts

The term precinct (or district) is commonly used by planners and urban designers to describe a part of a town that has a unique and definable image. Precincts are often defined according to predominant land uses or activities (i.e. Chinatown or a boutique shopping precinct) but can also be defined by a particular location (i.e. lakefront), public space or physical characteristic such as topography or built form.

Well defined precincts are a vital component of towns and cities as they provide orientation, legibility and serve as destinations that draw people for a clear purpose. Better defining Taupo's precincts is the key to creating a strong image and identity for the future.

The diagram to the left shows the existing precincts in the town centre according to how well these are currently defined.

Riverside Park and the main shopping area are well defined precincts that the majority of people would recognise. Other precincts such as the Marina and the Roberts Street entertainment area are loosely defined by land use but send mixed messages to the people using them. To improve the legibility and image of Taupo's precincts, key characteristics need to be identified and reinforced into a legible unit. In other words, when people are in a cultural precinct with a library and museum, they can reasonably expect to find other like cultural and arts oriented activities. In this way, a place or precinct takes on a recognisable identity that draws people in.

The preferred structure plan option discussed at the end of section 3 provides an over-arching aim for each of the identified precincts.



	Well defined & recognised precinct.
	Loosely defined precinct.
	Undefined precinct.
	Riverside open space
	Lakefront open space
	Dedicated community events space
	Civic, cultural and community facilities
	Retail and commercial core
	Mix of commercial, larger format retail and surface parking/vacant sites
	Entertainment and tourism focussed activities
	Marina and river recreation.
	Mixed-use fringe
	Secondary commercial, service industrial and large format retail.



Pedestrian Movement



	Active street edges with potential for strong pedestrian amenity
	Public open space: Reserves
	Dedicated community events space
	Primary pedestrian corridors to be enhanced
	Secondary pedestrian linkages to be enhanced

One of the strongest trends in urban design and city planning internationally is the re-focussing on the needs of the pedestrian. Like the majority of New Zealand towns, Taupo is currently dominated by the private motor vehicle. Pedestrianisation does not mean a banning of vehicles from the roads but rather a shift in emphasis and priority. The needs of pedestrians and cyclists must be given precedence if the quality of Taupo's public realm is to improve. At the same time, maintaining a consistent flow of vehicular traffic is needed to ensure that the retail, commercial and tourism industries are given sufficient exposure and accessibility to traffic.

Analysis (refer page 20) showed that there are currently many obstacles to pedestrian movement in the town centre; particularly north-south streets such as Tongariro Street which prioritise vehicles and provide limited crossing options. The lack of direct connections from the town centre to the lakefront and river are also missed opportunities.






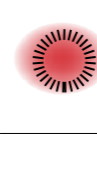

The adjoining plan overlays the existing pedestrian network with key additions and extensions, catering for pedestrian desire lines and enabling people to move towards their destinations with the least possible resistance. This in turn will serve to enliven areas such as the lakefront, the domain, the river and the marina enabling them to be developed as destinations.

As well as creating a more permeable pedestrian network, the routes themselves need to be designed to provide a high level of comfort, amenity and visual interest so that they provide an experience for pedestrians as well as being utilitarian.



Public Spaces



	Green corridor, continuous corridor of waterfront open space and walkways
	Areas of open space with passive recreational or amenity focus
	Key green spaces - focus of activity and complementary to the urban structure
	Active street edges with potential for strong pedestrian amenity
	Primary pedestrian corridors to be enhanced
	Pedestrian focused gathering areas with prioritised crossings
	Primary activity nodes developed as urban squares / plazas

In an overview of the public open space network, there are a number of existing and potential activity nodes in the town centre as shown to the left. These locations have become focal points for people and activity because of their location at the convergence of movement corridors, meaning people are naturally coming together at these points.

Existing nodes could be strengthened through better connections, further pedestrianisation and with more attention to the role that surrounding activities have in supporting these public places.

The potential of existing activity nodes needs to be harnessed to create a network of interconnected public spaces varying from pedestrian thresholds to semi-enclosed plazas. This approach will provide a variety of places for a diverse range of people, activities and events.

While alternate options such as the closure of Horomatangi Street or segments of Tongariro Street to create pedestrian malls were explored through the design process, it was concluded that these carried a high risk of disrupting the function of retail areas. Major street closures would also upset the integrity of the street grid and reduce the adaptability of the network to deal with large events and roadworks.

The Tongariro Domain

The Tongariro Domain is a large open space of strategic importance to the future of the town centre. The downgrading of Tongariro Street will enable a stronger connection between the Domain and the retail core, opening up numerous opportunities for the integration of the two areas.

The strengths of the Domain are its size, proximity to the retail core and dual frontages to the river and the Lake. The majority of the specimen trees in the town centre are clustered through the Domain as well as numerous sites of historic and cultural importance.

The Domain serves as the hub for a large number of events and discussions with events organisers have identified the need for a larger, dedicated open area for events that also has a stronger relationship to the town centre and Great Lake Centre. They also signalled the need for a bigger indoor area in the future.

Given the central location of the Great Lake Centre, library and museum, the Tongariro Domain also serves as a focal point to the town, although this is a function that could be improved. The Domain is often the first point of contact for visitors to Taupo and has the potential to be the hub for tourism, information, cultural, arts and community facilities.

The ad hoc dispersal of various buildings, surface car parks and semi-private facilities over the years has weakened the amenity, public accessibility and structure of the Domain.

Poor pedestrian linkages between the Domain and the river, boat harbour, lake and retail centre also limit the numbers of people using and moving through the space.

The plan to the left highlights the main impediments to the success of the Domain as a high quality green space and recreational hub.



Buildings and facilities are spread throughout the reserve in an ad-hoc, campus-style manner that restricts public and events use. Tennis courts and bowling clubs etc. are semi-privatised and limit potential for broader public use.

Events area is an irregular shape and is not well connected to Riverside Park, the river or the town centre.

Large areas of surface parking fragment the reserve and restrict pedestrian movement. Reserve roading provides no identifiable structure and makes it difficult to find your way and move around.

Existing cenotaph area is ineffective as a public space due to lack of connectivity and building edges that don't address the space.

Lack of visibility and access reduces the potential of the rose garden to become a focal point.

Large surface parking areas reduce usability of lakefront open space.

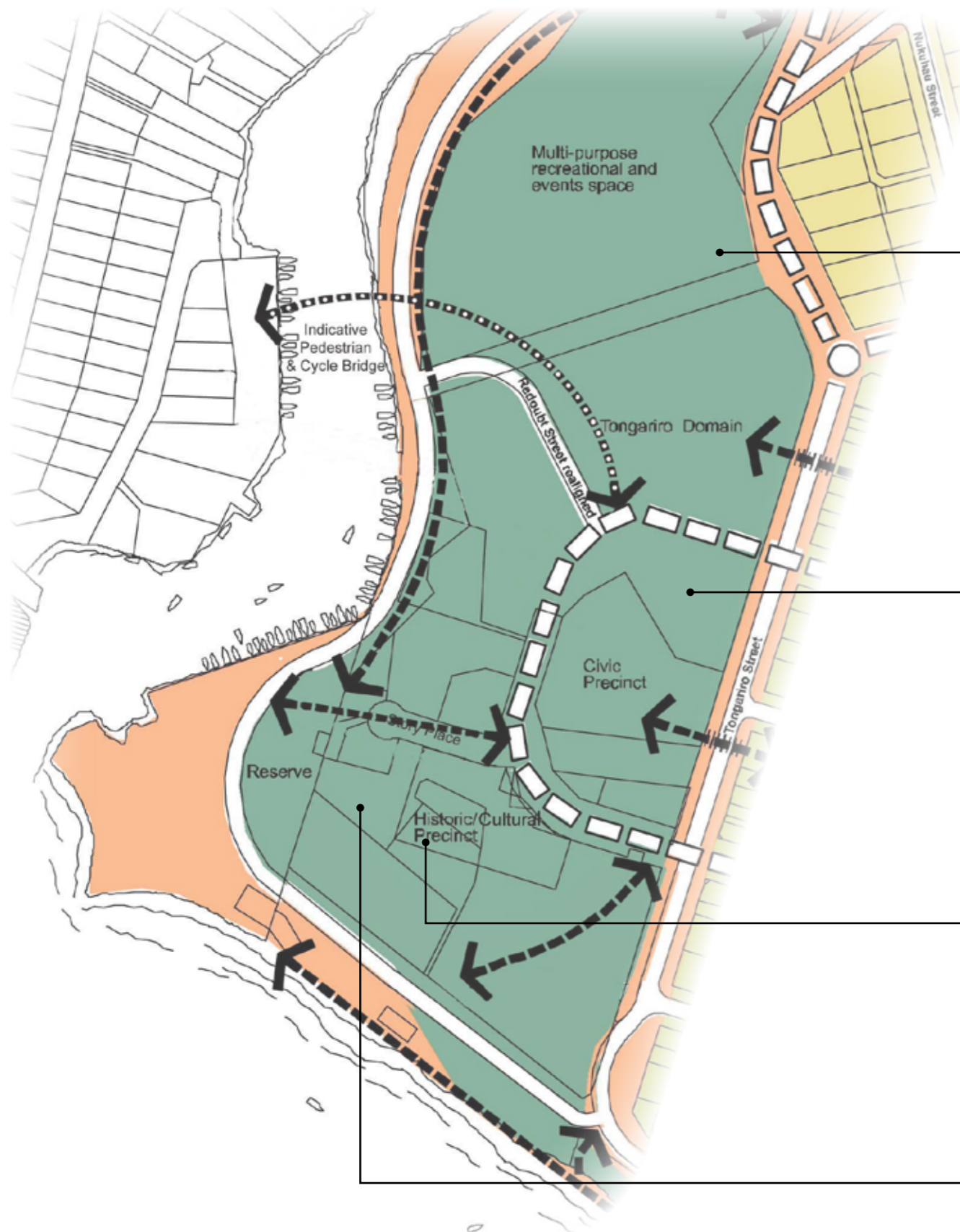
The marina, beach area and river mouth have untapped potential and could become key destinations and activity areas.

Lake Taupo



The preferred option for the 2004 Town Centre Structure Plan was adopted by Council and the principles of the plan form the foundation for current proposals.

The key aspects of the 2004 plan with relation to the Domain are identified to the left.

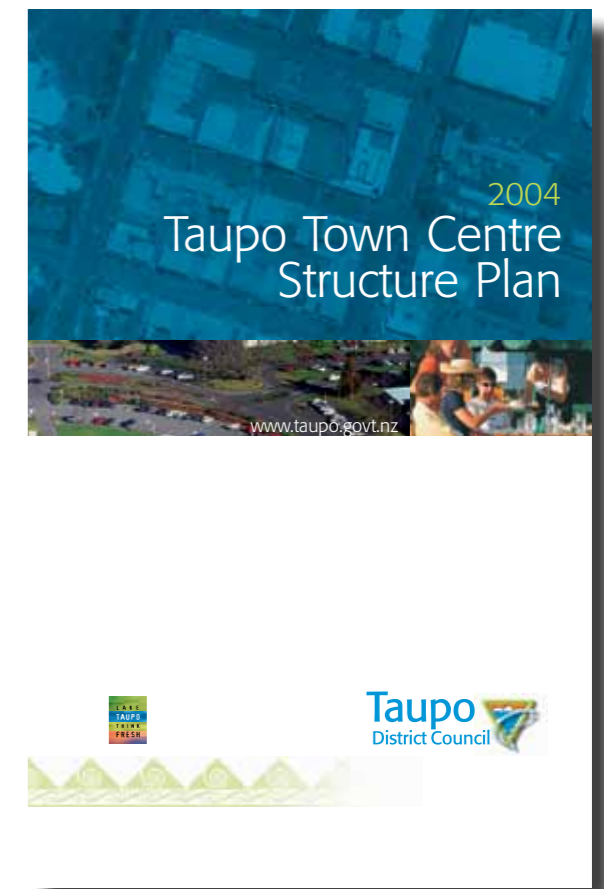


A large multi-purpose recreational / events space facilitated by the future closure of Redoubt Street.

A defined Civic Precinct formed by the extension of Tamamutu Street. The plan envisaged a 'crescent-shaped' road encircling the precinct with the new site to the north of the Great Lake Centre developed as a community building.

A historic / cultural precinct focussed around Story Place.

Relocation of the The Bowling Club, Tennis Club, Senior Citizens Club, Police Station and Court House



Key Improvements

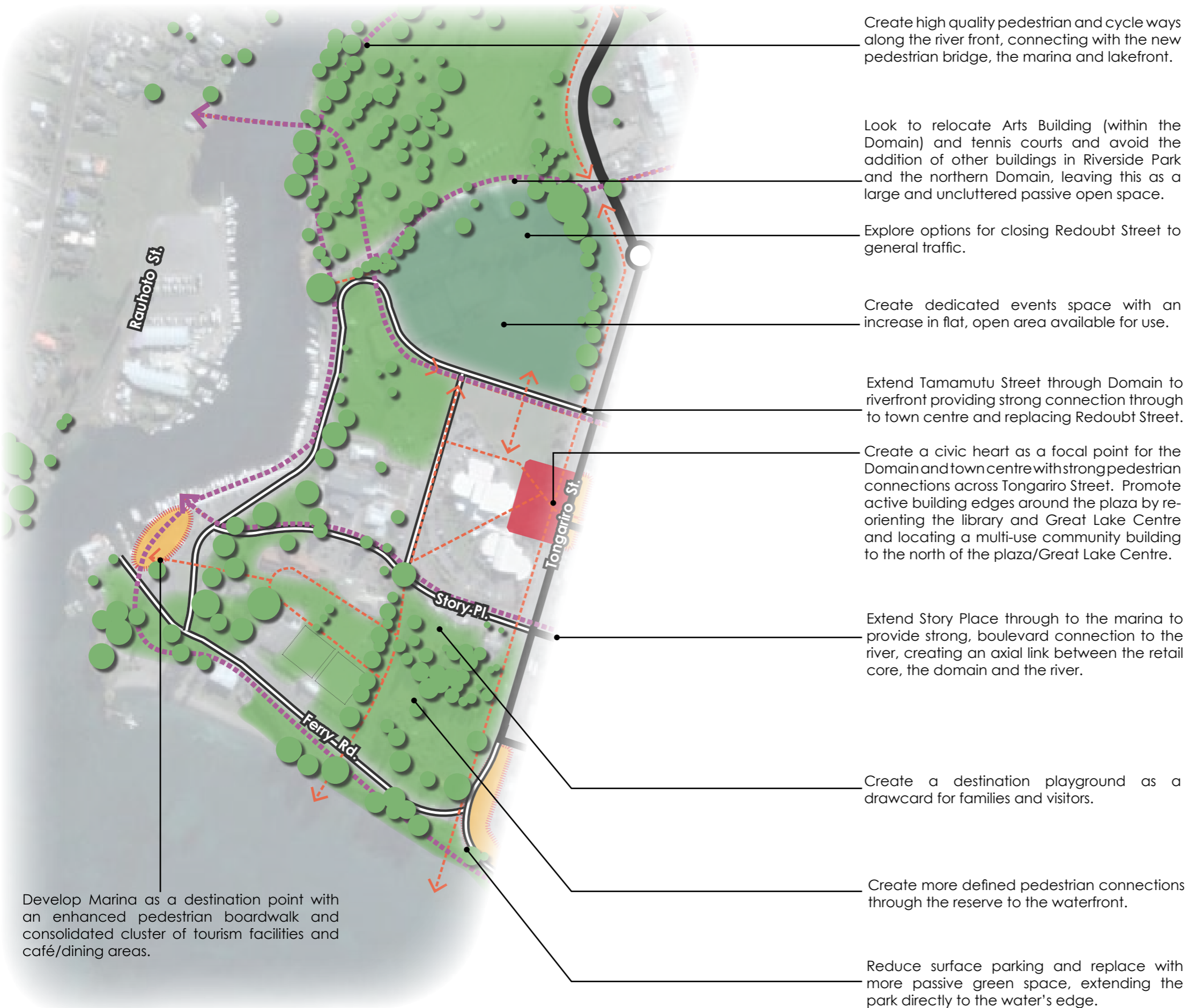
As identified in the 2004 Town Centre Structure Plan, one of Taupo's biggest opportunities is the re-structuring of Tongariro Domain. A stronger structure will serve to re-connect the green space and town centre with the twin jewels of the river and the Lake.

There is a need to halt the spread of activities throughout the Domain and replace the 'campus-style' approach with a more defined structure that consolidates built form in certain areas and leaves large areas of open space free and uncluttered for passive and active use. The diagram to the left highlights key design options.

The extensions of Story Place and Tamamutu Street to the river will introduce more direct connections and start to draw people down to the river's edge and marina, developing these as destinations and activity nodes. The extension of the grid also becomes the main mechanism for consolidating built form.

Existing and future buildings can be contained within the grid, leaving surrounding areas as uncluttered open space. This approach represents a genuine alternative to the ad-hoc approach which threatens to detract greatly from the Domain in the long term.

The proposed restructuring will also help to reduce the negative impacts of surface parking by shifting towards a more ordered, streetside approach to parking.



Roading Network

With the advent of the ETA, there is an opportunity to review the roading hierarchy and structure with the objective of improving vehicle access to and around the town centre. Various options have been considered through the design process. Following on from the site analysis (refer page 19), the primary change needed is to re-orient Tongariro Street and Lake Terrace towards a slower-speed, pedestrian focussed environment. The current situation (refer 'A' to the left) cuts off the town centre from the Domain and Lakefront.

A variation (refer 'B') would be to divert through traffic down Ruapehu Street but this would simply shift the barrier and create an impediment to future retail and commercial growth to the east of Ruapehu Street.

Further variations (Refer 'C' and 'D') would be to encourage through traffic along Titirapenga Street, either directly connecting with Lake Terrace or via Heuheu Street and Mere Road. The advantage of this as a through route is that it skirts around the periphery of the town centre whilst still providing an easily navigable route that enables people easy access to parking and the town centre.

Given that the existing grid provides multiple options through and around the town centre, the wisdom of identifying a single arterial or through-route has been questioned. The recommended approach to roading hierarchy would be to preserve the existing street grid and concentrate on the down-scaling of current arterials such as Tongariro Street and Lake Terrace.



A. Existing Highway



B. Ruapehu Street route



C. Titirapenga Street route



D. Heuheu / Mere Road Route





Roading Network

(Preferred approach)

The preferred approach to restructuring the roading network from an urban design perspective is to preserve the permeability and legibility of the grid.

Traffic entering from the north would have the choice of a direct approach via Tongariro Street or via Spa Road before feeding into the grid. The potential for a future (additional) arrival route into town via Nukuahu Street is provided for by way of a new roundabout at the intersection of Nukuahu Street and Spa Road.

The downscaling of Tongariro Street will slow traffic and facilitate a better pedestrian environment and as a result, through-traffic will naturally seek out more direct routes offered by the grid. The Tongariro Street route would provide a direct route to the retail core, civic heart, lakefront and marina.

Traffic from the north seeking a through route or easy parking would enter via the Nukuahu Street / Spa Road roundabout. On-street parking will be retained in the pedestrian core but any future multi-storey / surface parking would be located primarily between Titirapunga and Ruapehu Streets.

Traffic entering from the south into the town centre would be encouraged to access via Mere Road, Heuheu and Tamamutu Streets by way of Titirapunga Street and Lake Terrace. Direct movement via Roberts Street to the Marina would also remain possible. As in the 2004 Town Centre Structure Plan, Titirapunga Street is intended as the primary north/south distributor road with Ruapehu Street acting as a secondary distributor.

The choice of routes offered by the grid also presents different opportunities for the management of visitor and local traffic. It is envisaged that key intersections on approaches to town will serve as filters to direct and guide visitor traffic towards the key tourist destinations. These filters (shown indicatively on adjoining map) will seek to attract or 'capture' the attention of new arrivals into town, ensuring that

they are led as directly as possible to the main attractions. On the other hand, local traffic will disperse through the grid depending on the destination, with multiple routes available.

Through appropriate signage and streetscape design, visitors can be funneled down Tongariro Street directly into the civic heart and then on to the lakefront and likewise along Lake Terrace if arriving from the south. In this sense, Tongariro Street and Lake Terrace should be given a tourism emphasis as well as catering for local needs.

Extending the town centre grid into the Domain will provide a more efficient and direct link to the river. Heuheu Street / Story Place and Tamamutu Street will thus become important east-west connectors. It is envisaged that the new road linkages would be tree-lined streets with broad pedestrian pathways and surface parking would be largely replaced by on-street parks.

The extension of Tamamutu Street and Story Place would enable the partial closure of Redoubt Street to remove the problematic intersection with Spa Road as well as improving the connectivity between Tongariro Domain and Riverside Park.

The preferred option realigns Lake Terrace and Roberts Street to downplay its current dominance by vehicles and emphasise open space, recreational and amenity values. While the meandering alignment of Roberts Street maintains a direct link for traffic, traffic calming and detailed design would prioritise pedestrians.

Further information on the anticipated roading types is provided in section 5 of this report (guidelines).

It is expected that the basic structure proposed will be tested from a traffic engineering perspective and will evolve further through developed and detailed designs.

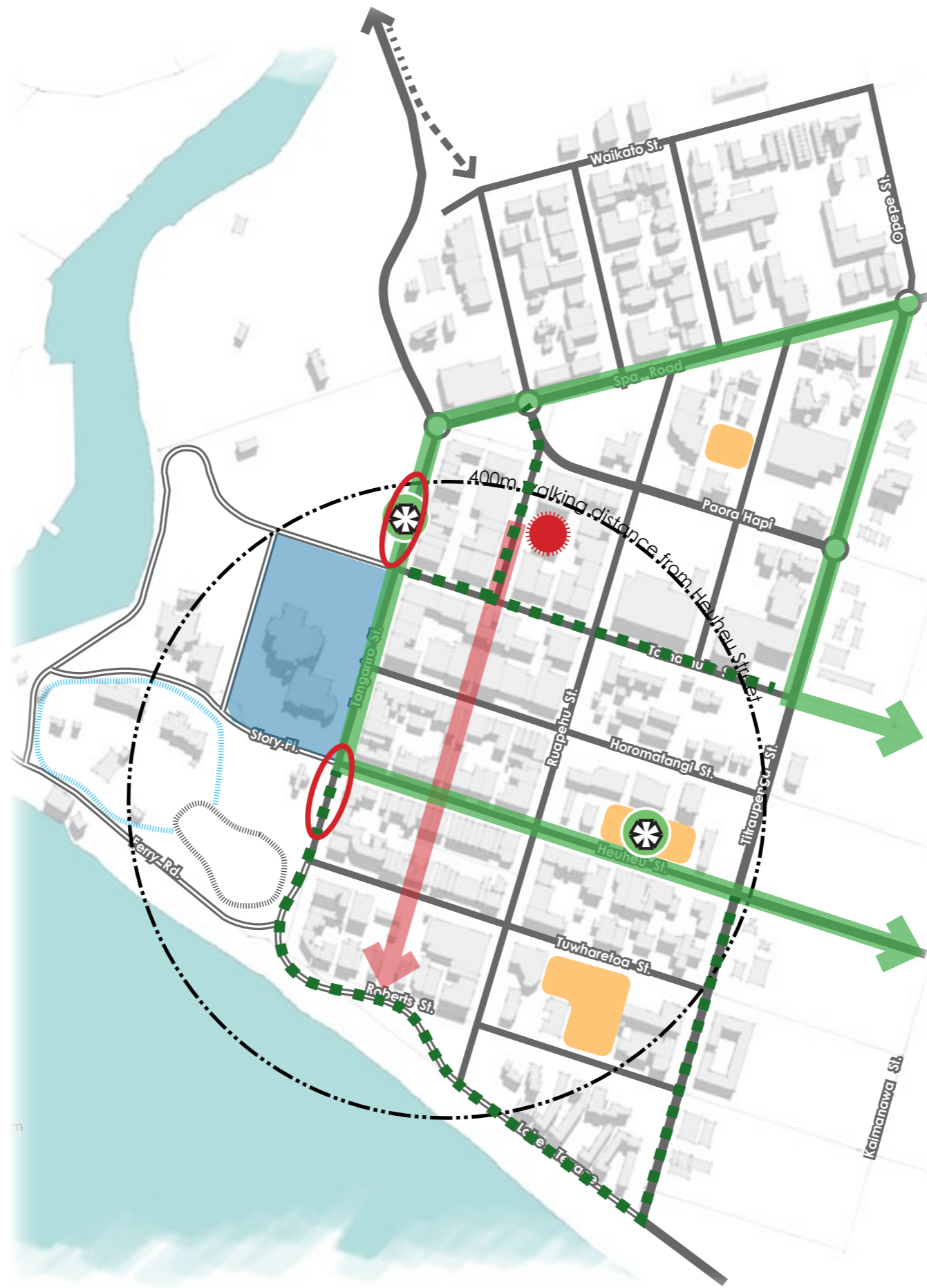


Key

	Existing 'Taupo Connector' bus loop.		Existing Bus Depot (Gascoigne Street) maintained in short term as primary depot for regional & intercity buses.
	Potential extension of loop to integrate key features		Potential location of parallel bus bays within Tongariro Street road reserve. (2-3 bays to north and south of civic heart as depicted in following sketch).
	Potential multi-level parking building locations (preferred locations identified by Opus (TTCPTC Study 2007))		Civic Heart
	Potential future locations of transportation centre (preferred locations identified by Opus (TTCPTC Study 2007))		Lion Express Childrens' train route. Possible extension in blue.
	Pedestrian Spine and Laneway Network through retail core.		



T Terminus AC Baths - drop off only on request
 Tauhara To Wharewaka



Public Transport

The future proofing of a public transport system is critical for Taupo's future. The preservation of the town centre grid provides maximum flexibility for future bus routes, enabling routes to be refined in response to future growth and demand.

The compact nature of the town centre means that most facilities and destinations are within a 5-10 minute walk as shown by the 400m walking radius centred on Heuheu Street. Future bus routes need to deliver passengers as directly as possible to destinations such as shopping and business, the civic heart, the marina, the lakefront and open space.

The green line to the left indicates the existing bus route and the dotted lines identify potential extensions or variations to this route in order to connect destinations such as the transport centre and lakefront.

The Town Centre Parking and Travel Centre Study recently completed for Taupo District Council by Opus identifies preferred sites for multi-level parking (in orange) and future transport centre sites (red circle).

The Opus report recommends that the existing travel centre in Gascoigne Street be maintained in the short term. It is noted that some minor streetscape improvements would strengthen pedestrian connections between the travel centre and the laneway network leading through into the retail core.

Alternative options to be considered in the longer term include the northern stretch of Tongariro Street (within the existing road corridor) and on Heuheu Street - both of which are located on the existing bus routes. The Opus report identified these sites as the preferred future (long-term) options based on costs and a range of selection criteria including urban design. This study supports those findings.

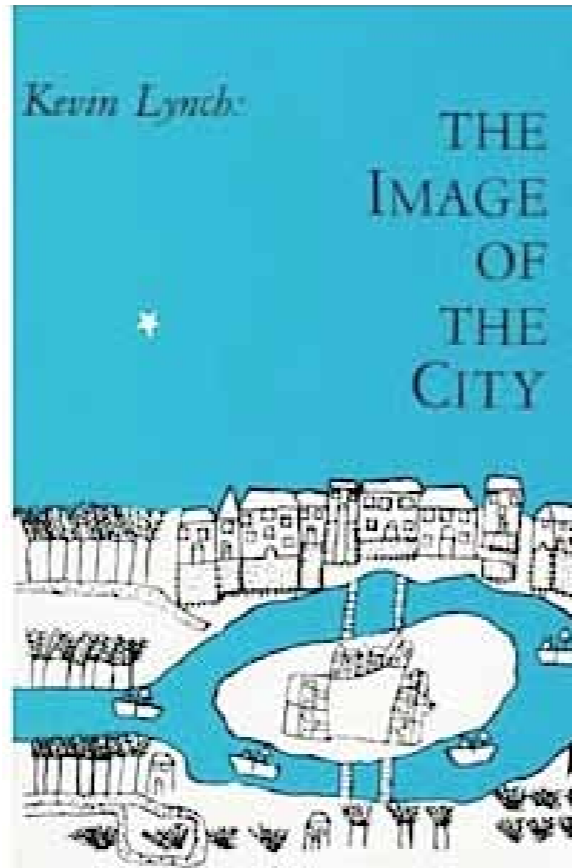




New Zealand's Urban Design Protocol (2005) provides high level guidance at a national level to facilitate good urban design outcomes. Part 2 of the Protocol outlines six attributes of successful towns including the need for **liveable** environments.

'Successful towns and cities provide a high quality of life where people choose to live and work. They provide attractive living environments, they offer good leisure and recreational opportunities, and they support a thriving cultural life... Their public spaces are accessible, well used and safe. Liveable places are healthy places to live, and they have low levels of crime.'

Taupo needs to focus on the quality of its public realm and move towards more liveable spaces where people can come together. A civic heart will facilitate community pride and a sense of ownership, civic engagement and in turn stimulate economic opportunities.

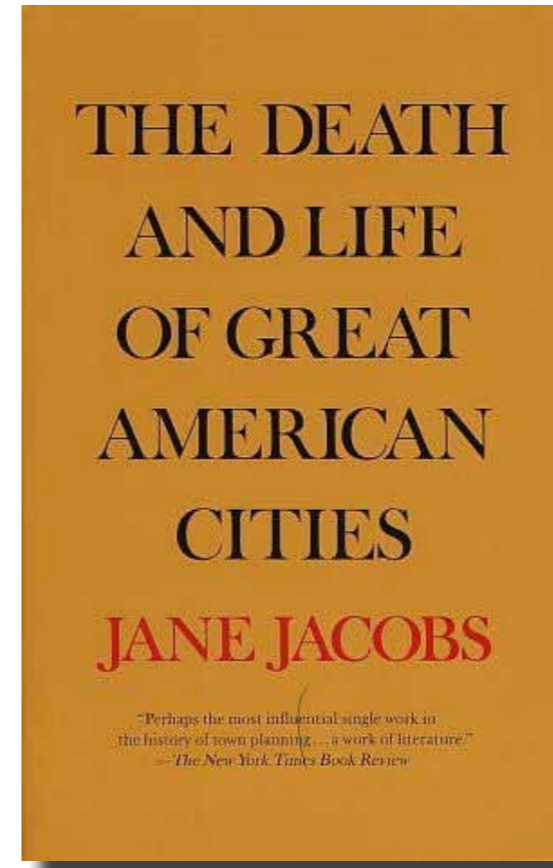


In 1960, Kevin Lynch authored the work 'The Image of the City' which became one of the seminal works in urban design theory and city planning. One of the key elements discussed in this work was the idea of the 'node'.

A node can be described as a focal point, a core, a point of concentration, a key junction or, in biological terms, as a heart. A node is commonly located at a primary junction or convergence of paths and tends to be an intensive focus of people and activity.

Towns need nodal points for the same reason that a house needs a living room - to provide a social core where people can come together.

Taupo currently suffers from the lack of true people-focussed spaces in the town centre but observation of activity levels (refer page 21) has shown clearly where activity is currently concentrated.



Unlike Lynch, Jane Jacobs had no formal training in town planning but through first-hand observation of her own home of Greenwich Village published 'The Death and Life of American Cities' which became, and remains, highly influential.

Amongst many other findings, Jacobs found that achieving a concentration of people was fundamental to the success of public spaces. Jacobs also strongly promoted the formation of districts which brought people together into one space for multiple purposes.

As discussed on the following page, Taupo has a wealth of green space but lacks high profile public spaces that achieve the critical mass of people needed to form a true focus for civic life.

A successful civic heart for Taupo would make people feel more connected to the town and help to build a stronger sense of community.

A Civic Heart?

One of the key matters to be addressed in this report is the potential for creating a civic heart for Taupo. The proposition of a civic heart in the town centre prompts several questions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ? | What are the benefits of creating a defined civic precinct? |
| ? | What do case studies tell us about creating a successful civic heart ? |
| ? | What are the activities that are desirable within a civic heart? |
| ? | Where should new civic and cultural buildings be located? |

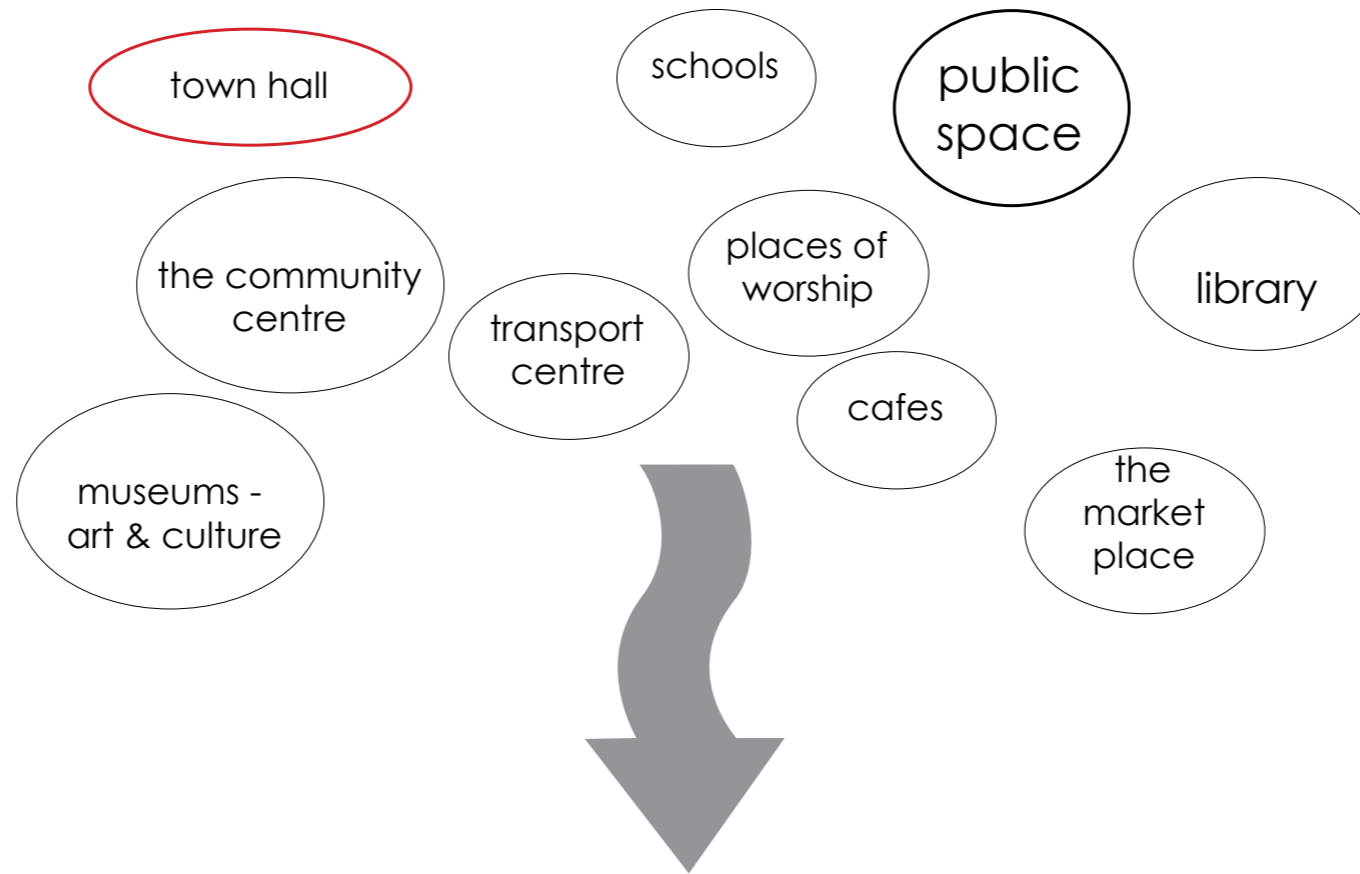
Civic hearts worldwide are undergoing a resurgence thanks to a growing understanding among communities, planners and politicians that an active public life and vibrant public spaces are vital to the success of town centres. As proposed by Jane Jacobs (refer summary to the left), social contact and the coming together of people in public spaces is fundamental not only for community well-being but equally for economic success.



from dispersed and isolated activities...

“ The choice is ours: either a society of homogenous pieces, isolated from one another... or a society of diverse and memorable neighbourhoods.”

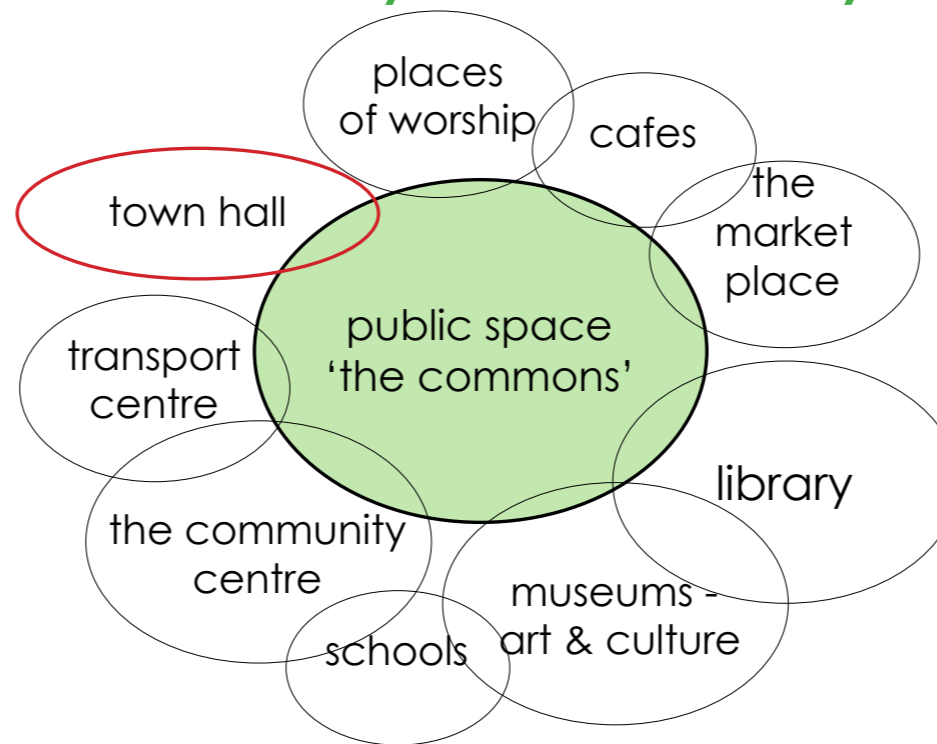
Andres Duany et. al., Suburban Nation - The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream, 2000.



to a focus of culture, arts, community and civic activity

“ Civic, institutional and commercial activity **should be embedded in neighbourhoods and districts**, not isolated in remote, single-use complexes”

Professor Alan Jackson Simpson (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK)



What are the benefits of creating a defined civic precinct?

Traditional approaches to the planning and design of towns has commonly been based around the concept of a civic precinct: a focal point for urban life. Whether it was built around a market place, the seat of government or a cultural institution such as a cathedral, these spaces were the place where public, community and cultural institutions were located. By clustering around a town square or commons, these civic buildings created a physical and symbolic centre, engaging the Community in public life.

In the automobile-age, many new towns developed without defined centres. Where cultural, community and civic facilities were once at the heart, they became dispersed and isolated as shown at the top of the adjoining diagram.

Contemporary approaches to urban design recognise that a well designed civic heart can have social, cultural and economic benefits. While in today's information age, a library is a more likely focal point than a cathedral, the established principle of organising a range of civic, community and cultural facilities around a central public space is still a powerful concept.

The creation of **places for people** needs to become a guiding objective for Taupo town centre. The benefits of core public spaces such as a civic heart are numerous, enhancing a town's image and providing a focus for public life and tourism which in turn encourages economic investment and revitalisation opportunities.

A civic heart for Taupo would create an anchor for the town centre, a focus of culture and identity and provide the 'front-door' and first impression for visitors and tourists.





San Francisco Library



Prague, Main Square



Aotea Square, Auckland



Civic Square, Wellington



Brisbane Square, Brisbane City



Mechelon Town Square, Belgium



Federation Square, Melbourne

“...the builders of historic towns customarily reserved their most noble sites for civic buildings.

The top of a hill, the end of a street, the side of a plaza – these would be set aside for the church, the town hall, the library, and other public structures worthy of honor.”

Andres Duany et. al., Suburban Nation - The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream, 2000.

What activities are desirable within a civic heart?

Civic centres vary in the activities that they offer but a review of civic centres internationally shows that there are a number of recurring elements.

Public Spaces

- **Markets and Events** are an essential aspect of thriving civic centres. Spaces able to accommodate these events should be a central focus.
- **Public art** and points of interest such as statues, fountains and water features are common and serve as meeting points.
- **Passive areas** where people can sit comfortably, watch other people and read a book.
- **Information** and good signage for visitors guiding them around town.

Public and Civic Institutions

The types of buildings found depends on the core values of the Community; sometimes democratic or government institutions are prominent but in other cases cultural facilities are the focus.

- **Libraries** are in many cases becoming the cornerstone of a civic centre where knowledge and learning are key values.
- **Town Halls and Government buildings** are traditionally a centrepiece where democracy and public involvement in political processes is highly valued.
- **Museums and Art Galleries** are common in civic centres, expressing a Community's history and collective identity.
- **Community Services** such as court houses, fire and police stations, community groups and organisations are often found but are generally not a focus.

• **Supporting retail** is increasingly common at the street level including cafés, galleries and tourist shops.

• **Transit stops** are centrally located and easily accessible.



Case Studies

What do case studies tell us about creating a successful civic heart?

To establish the factors for a successful civic heart, a number of examples in New Zealand and Australia have been examined to look at common elements.

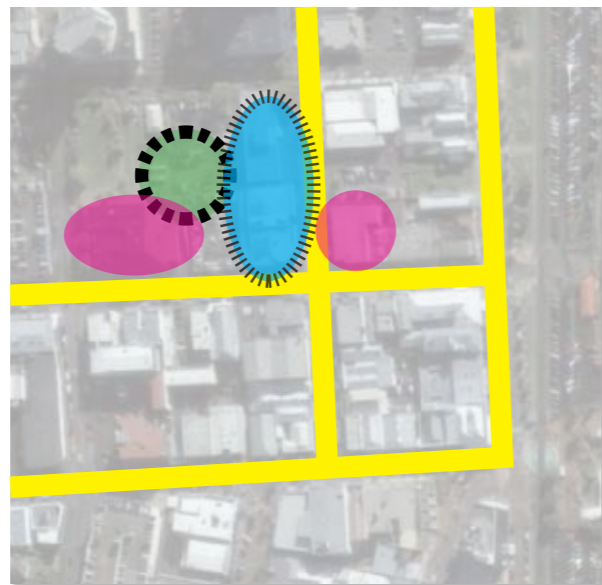
The thumbnail maps to the left show how each of the civic spaces have been structured. In all examples, they have developed as a consolidated cluster of civic, community and cultural institutions that create a recognisable and defined precinct.

The primary organising element for all of these civic hearts is a central square (Wellington, Adelaide) or a strong axial street (Christchurch, Brisbane). In the best examples both of these structuring elements are utilised. In the example of Melbourne, clusters of activity such as Federation Square and Southbank are distributed along the Street. Kilda Road corridor.

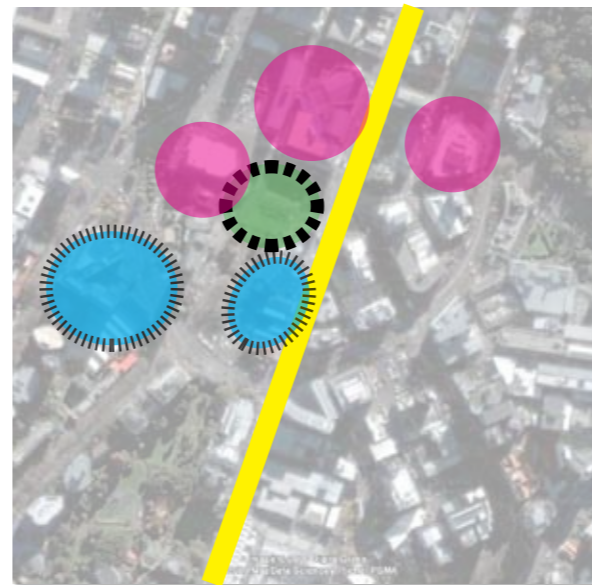
The following pages look at Christchurch and Brisbane in further detail. Recent efforts in both cities to move and consolidate their Council offices into a core cultural and civic precinct have direct relevance to Taupo's situation.



Wellington Civic Centre



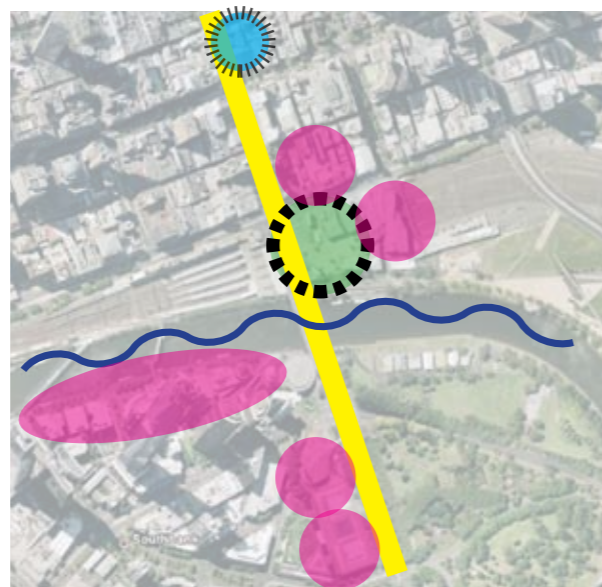
Tauranga's proposed Civic Square



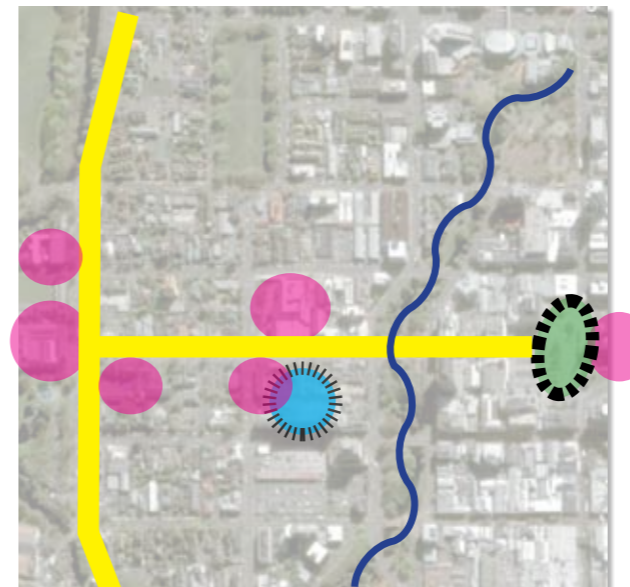
Auckland, Aotea Square



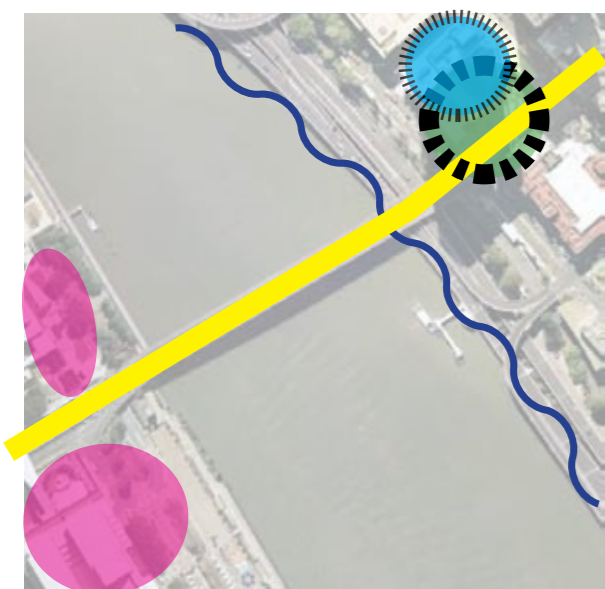
Adelaide Civic Centre



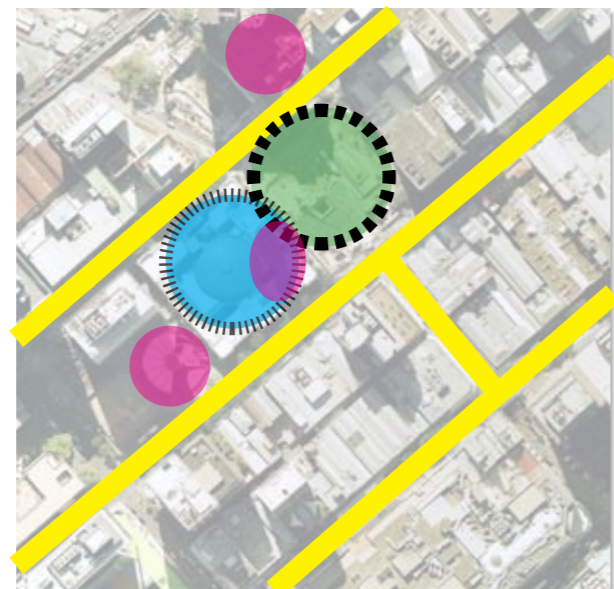
Federation Square, Melbourne








Cultural Precinct, Christchurch



Brisbane Square, Brisbane

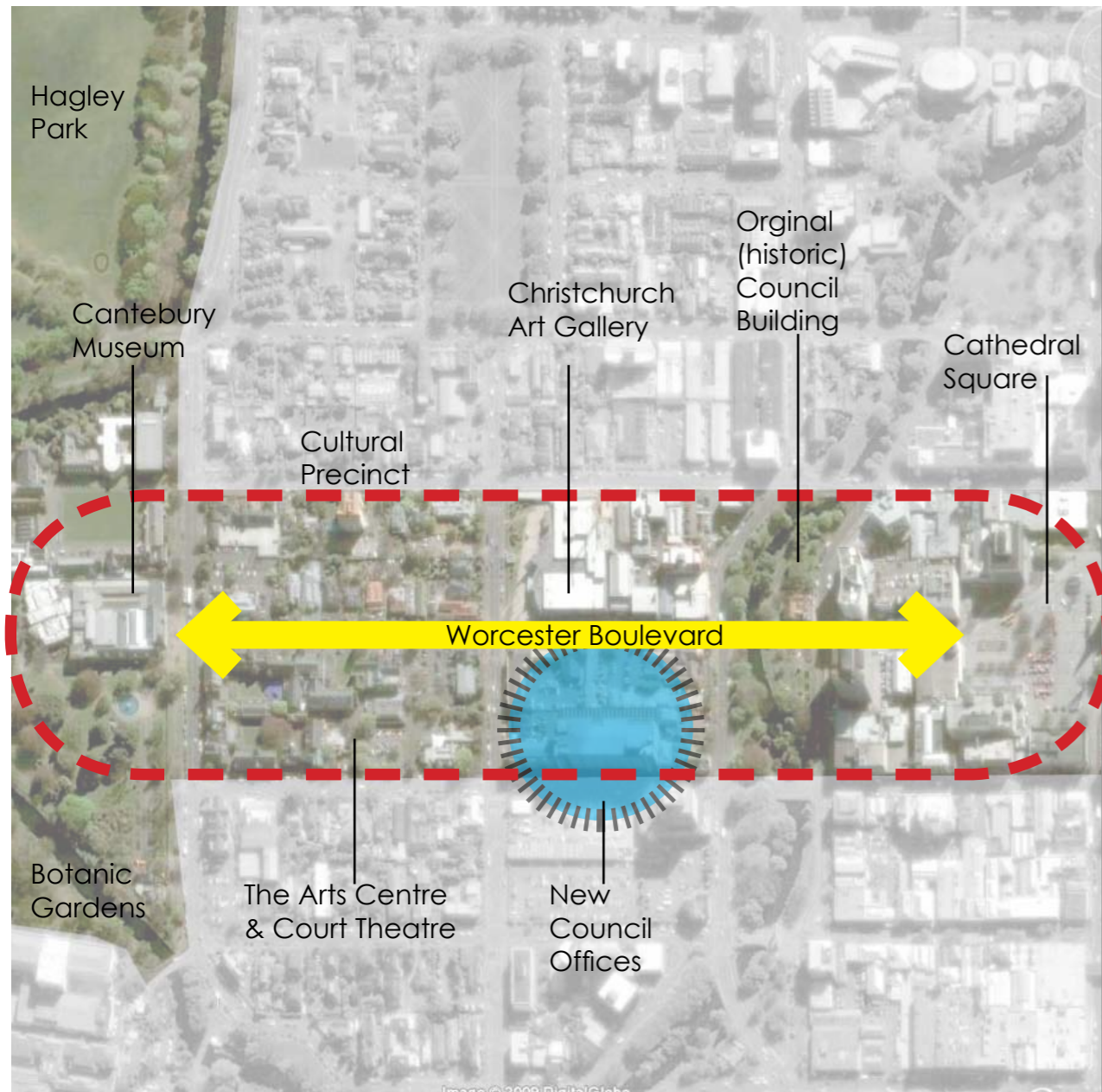


King George Square, Brisbane

	Key movement corridors and connector streets
	Major public space; square plaza or park.
	Town Hall or Council Buildings
	Major arts/ cultural or community facilities, i.e. galleries, museums, historic buildings, theatres & libraries
	Waterfront edge (where applicable)



Christchurch City



“Civic buildings and public gathering places **require important sites to reinforce community identity and the culture of democracy.** They deserve distinctive form, because their role is different from that of other buildings and places that constitute the fabric of the city.”

Professor Alan Jackson Simpson

“As a Council we are committed to revitalising the central city. **The new civic building will form part of the city’s cultural precinct,** is close to one of the city’s natural assets, the Avon River and will provide easy access for the public”

Gary Moore (Past Mayor of Christchurch) www.infonews.co.nz, October 2007)

Currently located to the south of the CBD about 400m from Cathedral Square, Christchurch City Council has made the decision to relocate all of its staff to a new site in the middle of the cultural precinct.

The civic building will be developed on the NZ Post building site in Hereford Street and connect into the Worcester Boulevard which links Cathedral Square and the Canterbury Museum on Hagley Park.

Revitalisation of the city centre was a driving goal of the new development and the Council building was seen as a key catalyst for the cultural precinct.

The location of the new Council building is at the heart of the cultural precinct and just 150m from the historic Council building. The shift back to the heart demonstrates that modern city building is embracing traditional concepts in contemporary forms, placing democracy and civic functions at the centre of community consciousness.



Christchurch Civic Building
(www.rcp.co.nz)



View from Worcester Boulevard
(www.ccc.govt.nz)



Proposed entrance to building
(www.ccc.govt.nz)



Brisbane City Council's new offices were deliberately sited in a prominent location to create a new public face for the Council and create an active plaza space along one of the city's busiest pedestrian thoroughfares.

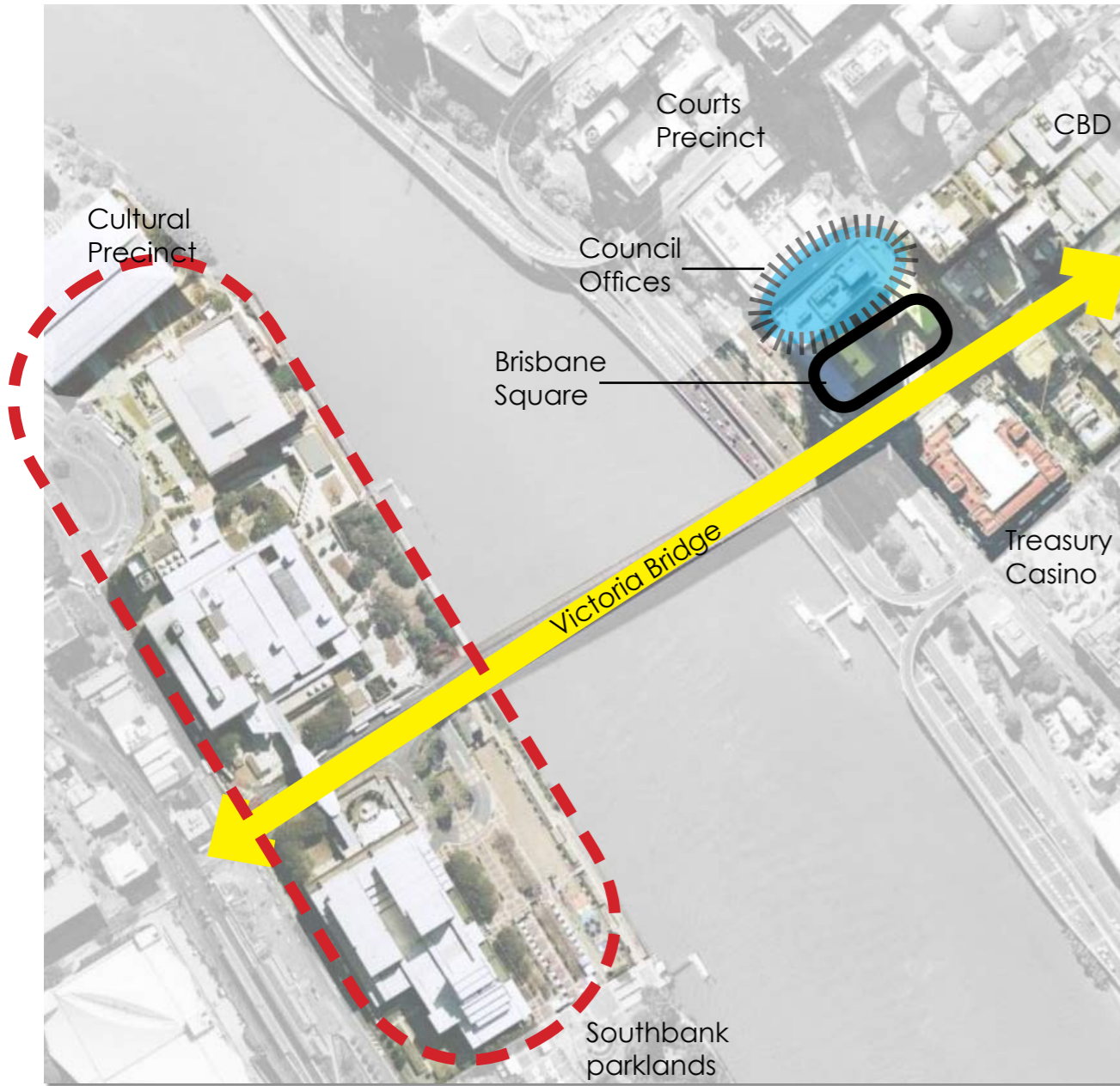
Located at the river end of Queen Street mall, the new site connects with both the river and arts/ cultural precinct and the commercial core to the immediate north.

The Council offices are located in a narrow, high-rise building with the ground plane designed as a plaza known as 'Brisbane Square'. The buildings around the square contain the customer services for Council, a library, cafes and food outlets as well as a newsagent, a bar and a travel agent.

Prior to the new development, the city block site had been a vacant patch of grass for many years, rarely used despite its proximity to the busiest part of the city.

Brisbane Square is now a busy civic space, frequented not only by Council staff but as a thoroughfare and gathering point for the public. The square has already become a focus for democratic activity with speeches, protests and rallies being staged within the space.

A focus on contemporary design, comfortable gathering / seating spaces and artwork has made a dramatic difference to the area.



" ..civic buildings are a required element for any new community. Indeed, land should be reserved for them at **the most prominent locations**, such as a high ground, a main intersection, or the town square."

Andres Duany et. al., Suburban Nation - The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream, 2000.

" Designed to be **an important social and cultural hub for the city**, the ground plane is dedicated to the public domain."

Denton Corker Marshall
www.worldarchitecturenews.com



View of retail areas lining Brisbane Square



Organised gatherings and events in the square



Artwork and sculpture was a key design focus.



Locating Civic Buildings

Where should new civic and cultural buildings be located?

A core question of the project brief was the potential location of a cultural, arts and heritage (C.A.H.) centre and a civic administration building within the town centre. The location of these new facilities is influenced by numerous factors of which urban design is one consideration. When viewed objectively as potential building blocks for the town centre, it is clear that both of the activities present a significant opportunity for improving the function and identity of Taupo.

The starting point with both of these facilities is whether they need to be located in the town centre environment or could function in a more peripheral location. Taking a sustainable long-term view, the scale of these facilities, the number of staff involved and the access requirements would make it impractical to locate them away from the town centre.

A peripheral location would also force dependence on private car usage, increasing travel costs and trip generation. Customer service is a key function of the Council and numerous businesses (and the general public) would benefit from a centralised location in town.

The C.A.H. centre would be an important hub for tourism as well as for the retail area and the co-location of this with existing cultural facilities (museum and library) is a necessity. Considering the above, best practice urban design would suggest that both of these facilities would need to be located within the town centre.

Taupo District Council staff are currently split between the main office on Rifle Range Road and the leased offices in Heuheu Street. From an administration perspective, moving all staff into a single location would improve productivity, customer service and create a more unified working culture. In essence, Council offices exist to serve the Community and are the physical centre of the democratic process.

Ideally, a new Council facility would not simply be office space for Council staff and elected members but a public resource utilised by a broad cross-section of the Community. If the physical layout to a town reflects the values of the Community, it is logical that key democratic institutions be located centrally and easily accessible to everybody.

A precincts-based approach to locating these facilities in the town centre is recommended given they have the potential to reorient and redefine the town centre. While precincts are not intended to be absolute in terms of dictating land use, every effort should be made to consolidate like activities together as this assists in building the identity, appeal and legibility of a town centre.

Various potential locations have been identified within the town centre for the civic administration building and C.A.H. centre. These locations are either partially or wholly located on Council land.

Preliminary feasibility studies and costings have indicated that a cultural arts and heritage centre would ideally be built in combination with the new Council offices to be financially prudent. It is estimated that the total floor area for the combined facility would need to be in the vicinity of 10,000 m². The Cultural Arts and Heritage Centre would be the primary and most visible activity with the civic administration comprising approximately one-third of the building.



- 1 Tongariro Street, North of Great Lake Centre
- 2 Story Place, South of Library
- 3 Tongariro Domain, Location of Existing Tennis Courts
- 4 Tuwharetoa Street Carpark (Entertainment Precinct)
- 5 Tuwharetoa / Roberts Street Carpark
- 6 Heuheu Street Carpark
- 7 Spa Road / Paora Hapi Street
- 8 Waikato Street
- 9 Existing location (Assumes all staff at Rifle Range Road)
- 10







Criteria

	1. North of Great Lake Centre*	2. South of Library*	3. Tennis Courts	4. Tuwharetoa Street Carpark	5. Tuwharetoa / Roberts Street*	6. Heuheu Street	7. Spa Road	8. Waikato Street	9. Existing location	10. Existing Museum*
i. CONSOLIDATED	3	3	1	1		1				3
ii. CENTRALISED	3	3	1	3	1	3	3		1	3
iii. A PUBLIC FOCUS	3	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	3
iv. WELL CONNECTED	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3
v. PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	3
vi. A VISITOR DESTINATION	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	1		3
vii. ADAPTABLE / MIXED USE	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1		1
viii. A SOCIAL HUB	3	3	1	3	1	1	1		1	3
ix. SITE CAPACITY	3	1	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3
x. PARKING	3	1	3	1	3	3	1	3	3	3
xi. COST-EFFECTIVE	3	3	3	3		1	3			3

* Sites highlighted in orange were selected by TDC Councillors on 20/07/2009 for further assessment and analysis.

Score	32	28	21	24	19	22	19	11	11	27
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	Meets criteria to very high degree	(3 pts)		Meets criteria to moderate degree	(1 pt)
	Meets criteria to high degree	(2 pts)		Does not meet criteria	(0 pts)

Locating Civic Buildings

The success factors set out below draw from the case studies as well as consultation and urban design theory. A successful civic heart for Taupo will be:

- i** **CONSOLIDATED:** Based around a consolidation of public activities, cultural, arts and civic institutions to produce a legible and identifiable civic precinct.
- ii** **CENTRALISED:** Located at the convergence of primary movement corridors and public transport routes, bringing people together into a central location and destination.
- iii** **A PUBLIC FOCUS:** Based around a major public space or activity node. Improves the usability, quality, diversity and continuity of the open space network.
- iv** **WELL CONNECTED:** Well connected to the waterfront, core businesses and retail streets so pedestrians can move easily between these activities.
- v** **PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY:** Designed to embrace pedestrians, activating street edges to improve the comfort and amenity of the pedestrian precinct.
- vi** **A VISITOR DESTINATION:** A focus for visitors and tourism, enhancing the ability to bring a diverse range of activities into one space and to run small and large events.
- vii** **ADAPTABLE / MIXED USE:** An adaptable space with a mix of land uses to create constant activity and serve multiple functions.
- viii** **A SOCIAL HUB:** Designed as a gathering point for people to draw on the vitality and level of activity in the town centre and enhance civic pride.

Further assessment criteria have also been added to cover the functional aspects and requirements of the site as follows:

- ix** **SITE CAPACITY:** The site is of an adequate size to accommodate a combined Council and C.A.H building.
- x** **PARKING:** The site is capable of providing adequate parking for the facilities on site without adversely impacting on the availability of parking in the town centre.
- xi** **COST-EFFECTIVE:** The development of the site will reduce the costs and thus benefit ratepayers while providing a long-term, sustainable solution.

The table to the left looks at each of the possible sites for the combined cultural/ arts/ heritage and civic administration building and evaluates them according to the identified criteria.

This process clearly shows that there are only a small number of realistic candidates in the town centre if urban design principles are to be given due consideration.

The two most favorable locations are to the north of the Great Lake Centre and to the south of the library. The lakefront area and Heuheu Street carpark also meet more than half of the criteria but realistically, the best end use for these sites are tourist/ retail / entertainment at the lakefront and consolidated retail/ commercial on Heuheu Street. The site to the south of the library could accommodate a civic administration building sleeved around the library and fronting onto Story Place but a combined facility would not be possible in this relatively narrow space.



Preferred Location

The **benefits** of locating the combined cultural/ arts heritage centre and civic administration building in the preferred location to the north of the Great Lake Centre are as follows;

- + The flat open area available for events will increase from 2.6 to 3.4 ha and in addition, the space could be transformed from an irregular shape to a more useable elliptical shape that would reconnect events with the Waikato River.
- + The more uniform shape of the events space could, with subtle recontouring, create a highly adaptable space suitable for a wide range of activities, from markets and events through to informal sports.
- + A broad central atrium or corridor would provide a strong physical and visual connection between the Great Lake Centre, civic square and the events area, allowing people to flow freely between the spaces. The new buildings would overlook the northern domain, increasing safety and the vibrancy of the reserve edge.
- + With a combined facility parking could be provided through underground and on-street parks, reducing the amount of surface parking in the Domain.
- + The prominence of the north-eastern corner of Tongariro and Tamamutu Streets makes it ideal for an arts and cultural facility making an architectural statement to express Taupo's identity to those arriving into town.
- + The enclosure of the civic square on three sides will enable the development of an active edge to the space and in combination with the surrounding facilities ensure a concentration of people in the square.
- + The direct connection of the buildings to the core retail and business precinct will ensure that activity generated in the civic heart will 'spill over' into the retail streets and vice versa.



Conceptual sketch of proposed civic square showing how the addition of a Council & Cultural / Arts / Heritage Building would enclose the space on three sides.

Recommended location of Council and C.A.H Buildings with a footprint of approximately 4,000 m² and a potential GFA of up to 13,500 m².

The preferred option to the north of the Great Lake Centre was displayed at the Community open day for feedback. More than any other location, the preferred site will serve as a catalyst for the revitalisation of the town centre as a place for people. During the open day, numerous people questioned the take-up of reserve area to accommodate the buildings. In reality, the combined facility will occupy a similar area to the existing tennis courts which are being relocated through a separate process. When coupled with the relocation of several other buildings in the northern domain, the end outcome will be to consolidate built form in defined areas and thus increase the quantity and quality of open green space.



Laneways

Taupo already has a number of reasonably successful lanes and arcades that are valued by the Community. They provide boutique retail opportunities, sheltered pedestrian spaces and offer a welcome alternative to the busier main streets. The challenge for Taupo is to take these existing lanes and turn them into a thriving network.

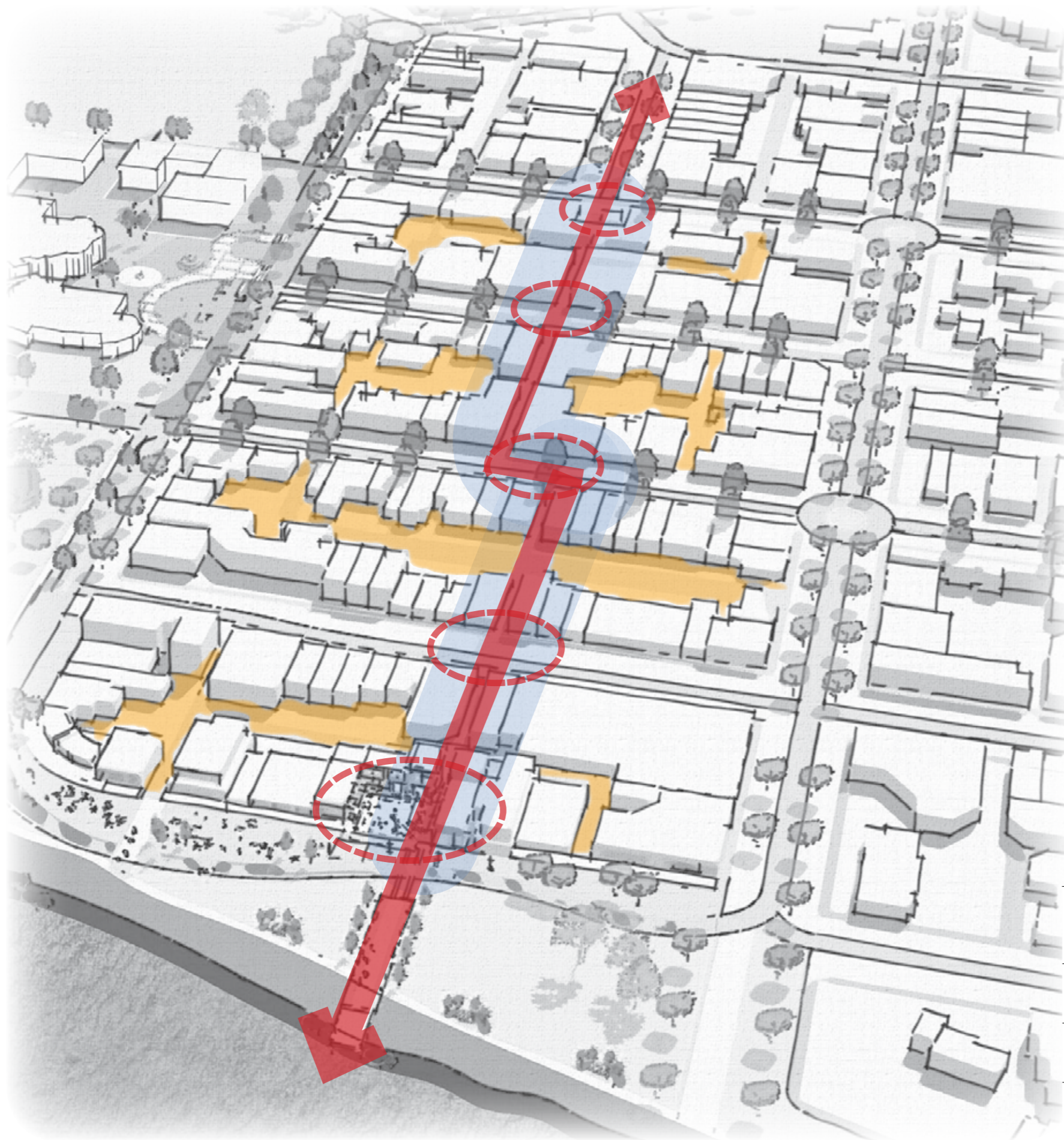
The first step then is to connect these lanes to form a chain of spaces, each with their own identity, but following a common set of design principles. These principles are set out in section 5 of the report (Refer Guidelines Section).





Connecting the lanes involves the creation of a continuous pedestrian axis linking Spa Road with the lakefront. The lanes currently link through to Tuwharetoa Street but need to be pushed through to Roberts Street where they could terminate at a future square and the lakefront.

The road crossings between the lanes need to be given pedestrian priority to create broad pedestrian zones to the centre of each retail street. Treatments similar to that used on Horomatangi Street should be applied to all east-west streets on the network. Pedestrians will then be able to move freely between lanes, turning this mid-block connection into the primary pedestrian thoroughfare.

A gradual increase in foot traffic along the lanes will facilitate intensification to enable the creation of smaller tenancies. The subdivision of larger buildings and a finer urban grain will encourage boutique retail and increase diversity in the retail offering. New developments will focus on developing an active frontage to the lanes.














In the longer term, the east / west service lanes will offer various opportunities for mixed-use development ranging from retail and office through to residential and visitor accommodation.



	Primary pedestrian axis made up of connected network of laneways and pedestrian priority spaces
	Pedestrian nodal points, designed to act as gathering and meeting points.
	Intensified retail activity with emphasis on smaller boutique tenancies.
	Service lanes provide opportunity for future mixed-use development.



Key

	Civic Heart
	Retail Core
	Retail expansion
	Entertainment
	Marina
	21st Century School
	Secondary commercial
	Intensification of fine-grain and boutique retail along laneways
	Proposed civic administration and arts/heritage/cultural building
	Public open space reserves
	Events focus dedicated community events space.
	Mixed-use fringe
	Community and reserve oriented facilities.
	Shared Space and Events Space Access

Preferred Structure

The preferred structure plan for the town centre incorporates all of the key elements discussed in the preceding pages of this report.

LAND USES / PRECINCTS:

- +** **The Civic Heart** is envisioned as a consolidated cluster of civic, arts, cultural and community-related activities. A new civic square will become Taupo's 'epicentre' and a focus for Community life, tourism and events. Gradual transformation of the civic heart will turn it into vibrant focus for a wide range of gatherings and activities. Built form will relate to the open space character of the Tongariro Domain and green, tree-lined streets will integrate the town centre with the surrounding green space.
- +** **The Retail Core** will be the focus for shopping and business with fine-grain, street-level retail and quality office space. High amenity, pedestrian oriented streets will be a feature of this precinct. A gradual increase in height and intensity is expected to achieve a critical mass of people and activity as well as providing a sense of spatial enclosure to streets. Intensification of the laneways is a specific focus of future development.
- +** **Retail Expansion** is encouraged to the southwest of the retail core with street-level retail including larger formats designed to deliver active street edges.
- +** **Secondary Commercial** development incorporating large format retail, office and service industrial will consolidate around Spa Road. A gradual shift of service industrial activities is expected with the release of greenfield industrial areas along the ETA.
- +** **The Entertainment Precinct** centred around Tuwharetoa Street, Roberts Street and the lakefront is strengthened as the hub for tourism, dining, night-life and recreation focussed activities. A lakefront plaza and high quality lakefront open space will be a drawcard.
- +** **The Marina** will be upgraded as a leisure and recreational destination with a low-key riverside 'village' accommodating tourist providers, cafés and restaurants.
- +** **A 21st Century School** will evolve on the Primary School site, providing an educational focus for the broader community.



Preferred Structure



Key

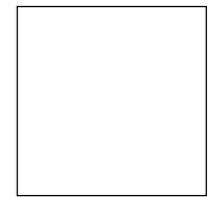
	Vehicular streets
	Potential bridge linking to Waikato Street.
	Low-key reserve road
	Urban street (Shared pedestrian & vehicle zone)
	Proposed plazas / squares
	Activity Nodes - pedestrian priority areas
	Primary pedestrian routes
	Proposed civic administration and cultural arts/heritage building (C.A.H)
	Public open space: reserves
	Dedicated community events space
	Intensification of fine-grain and boutique retail along laneways

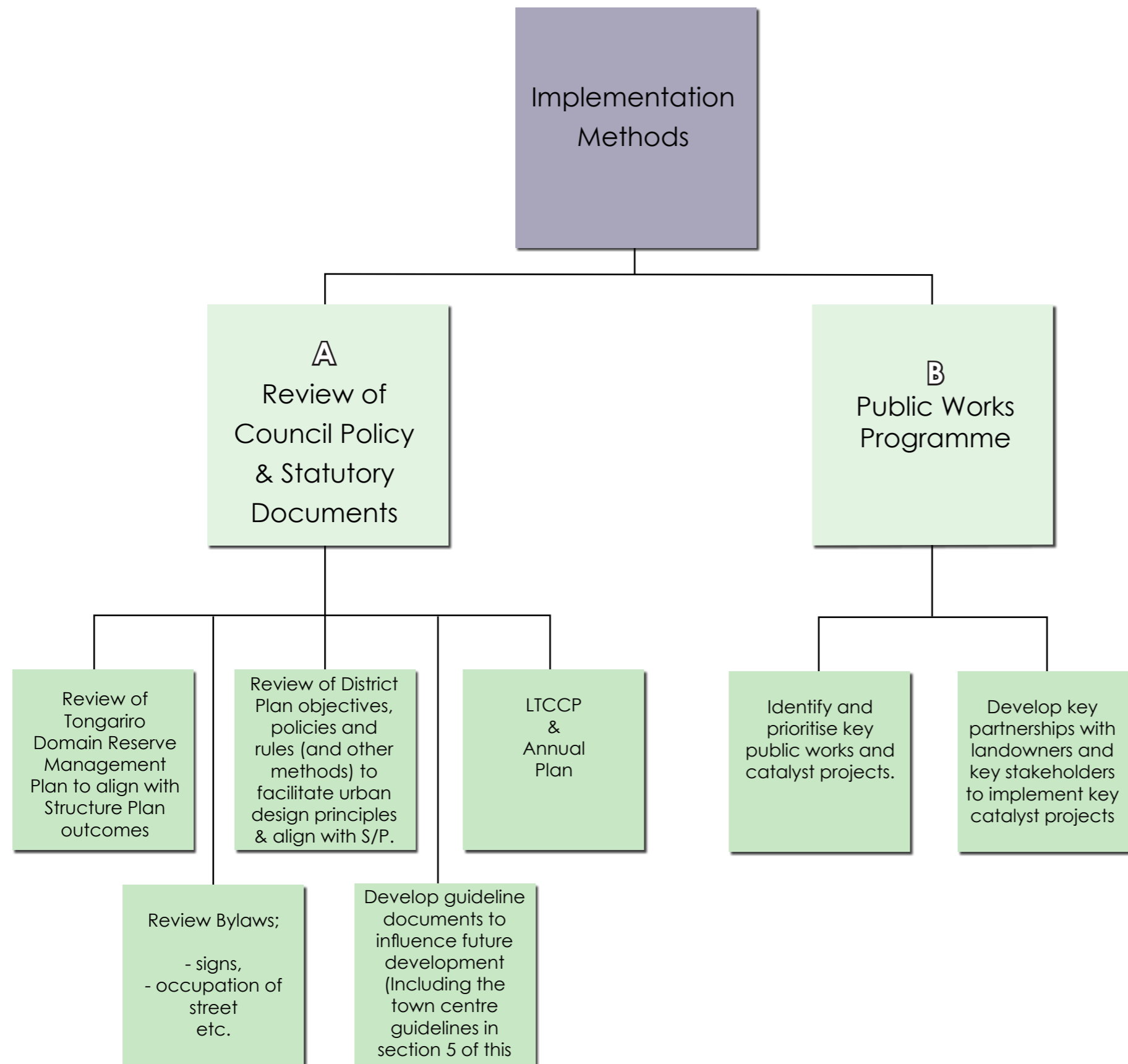
THE PUBLIC REALM:

- + Axial pedestrian corridors between the town centre and the lake/ river will be strengthened. Pedestrian connections along Tongariro Street, Ruapehu Street through to the lakefront and along Heuheu Street / Story Place and Tamamutu Street to the river will be given particular emphasis.
- + The existing system of lanes and arcades to be developed into a mid-block pedestrian axis connecting to the lakefront. Intensification is facilitated along this corridor. The corridor will terminate at a lakefront plaza and promenade and a high quality open space area overlooking the Lake.
- + A future roundabout at the intersection of Spa Road and Nukuhau allows for potential second entry into the town centre over the Waikato River.
- + Roberts Street / Lake Terrace are combined and re-aligned at the lakefront to slow traffic and increase areas of public open space.
- + Tongariro Street is downscaled to a two-lane boulevard, shifting from a highway to a high amenity street.
- + A new civic heart will spill over into Tongariro Street creating a pedestrian focus edged by the library, the Great Lake Centre and new civic / cultural buildings. The combined civic administration and C.A.H building will complete the civic heart and overlook the events space to the north.
- + A reconfigured events space will increase the quantity and quality of the space for large events and everyday use.
- + The Redoubt will become the centrepiece of a cultural park dedicated to cultural interpretation and history.
- + The rose garden will be reconnected to the surrounding green space and become the centrepiece of an enclosed 'village green' overlooked by community buildings and connected to the marina.



part iv: Implementation Methods





There are numerous tools available to the Council to implement the Preferred Structure Plan. These generally fall into the category of policy and statutory documents, and prioritising public works programmes. It is noted that no one tool will achieve all of the outcomes sought by the Preferred Structure Plan. In this respect, a combination of tools will be needed.

Section four of this report provides input into the implementation of the structure plan with a specific focus on urban design outcomes. The following information is not intended to be definitive but provide a general foundation of ideas and approaches that can be applied and developed by Council through the plan change and beyond.

Part B looks at key projects arising from the structure plan.

	Key Actions - Broader Urban Areas	Priority
1	Conceptual design and development of Urban Gateways at key entry points (identified as 1,2,3,4,5 & 6) on 'Urban Gateways' plan. Includes streetscape work on key entry roads.	SHORT TERM
2	Conceptual design and development of key intersections (identified with an asterisk) on 'Urban Gateways' plan.	MEDIUM TERM
3	Identify the walkway/ cycleway/ bridle path network to establish the connections between the ETA/new industrial areas and the town centre.	MEDIUM TERM
4	Review ETA landscape and planting strategy to explore possibility for in-built buffer plantings for new industrial areas.	SHORT TERM
5	Engage in consultation with service Industrial businesses in the Spa Road precinct and develop a strategy for the gradual relocation of these uses to greenfield industrial sites near the ETA.	MEDIUM TERM
6	Develop a Public Transport Strategy for the new industrial areas to ensure that they are connected into the future network.	LONG TERM

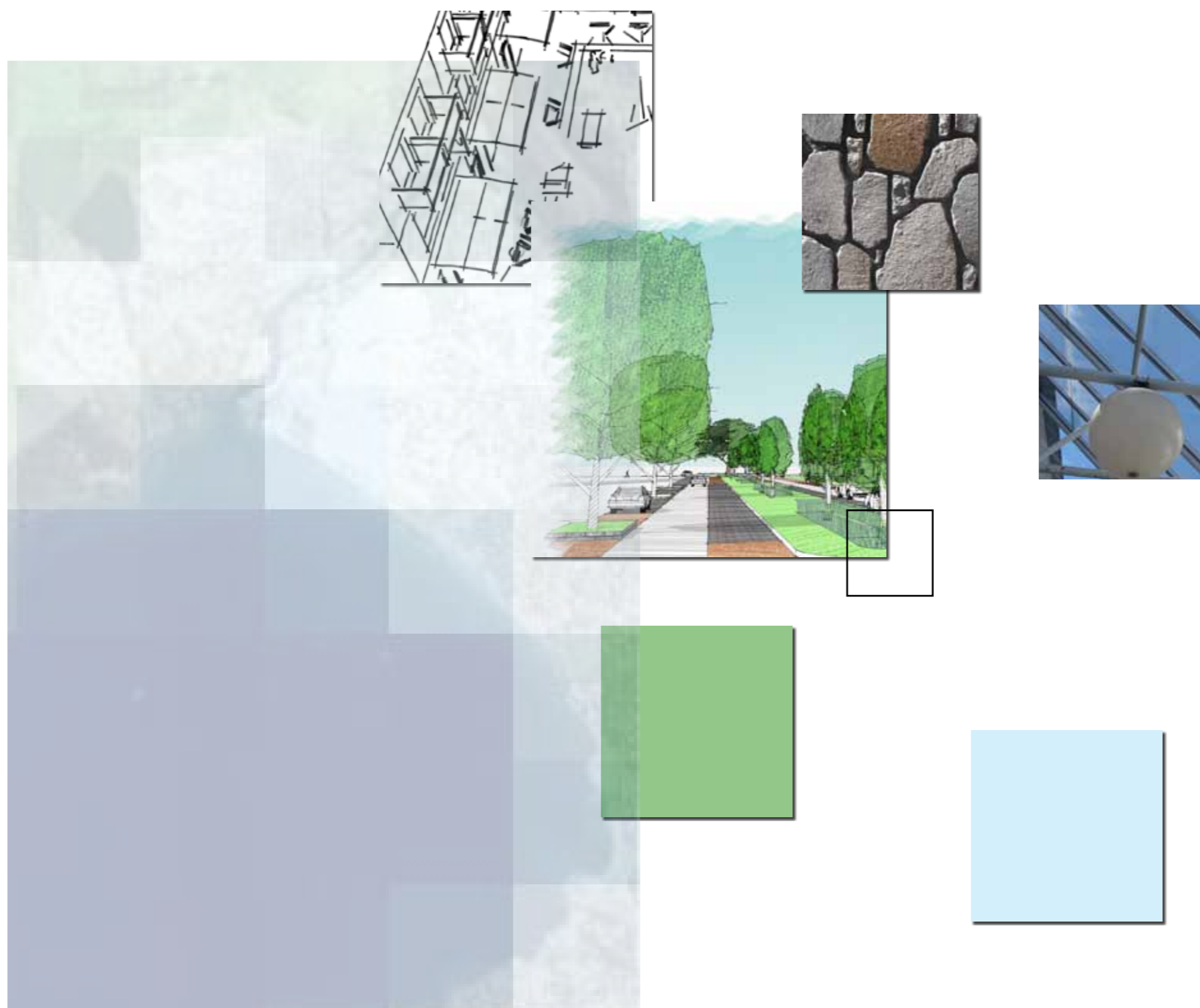
	Key Actions - Town Centre	Priority
1	Review and update the Reserve Management Plan for Tongariro Domain / Riverside Park in keeping with the Structure Plan. This should include a relocation strategy for various facilities such as the tennis courts.	SHORT TERM
2	Prepare a concept design for the Tongariro Domain focussing on the proposed events area, Redoubt/ cultural park, new streetscapes for adjoining streets (Story Place and Tamamutu extension) and relationships to the civic square. Include cost estimates for the designs.	SHORT TERM
3	Develop a concept design for the Tongariro Street upgrade and the civic square. To include a staged approach demonstrating how the future civic building/ C.A.H site will transition from a reserve space to built form. Also look at potential methods for increasing the active facades around the square, particularly the Great Lake Centre and library. Cost estimates to be included.	SHORT TERM
4	Develop a concept design for the other retail streetscape improvements proposed for the town centre including Heuheu and Tamamutu Streets.	MEDIUM TERM
5	Consult with landowners to enable the acquisition of site(s) needed to extend the laneway axis through to the lakefront. Develop a concept plan for the new lakefront reserve area and the Roberts Street Precinct including the new Piazza.	SHORT TERM
6	Develop an open-air art trail through the domain, laneways and along the lakefront.	LONG TERM
7	Develop a laneways strategy to direct the future character, development and gradual upgrade of the lanes as the primary pedestrian corridor into the town centre.	MEDIUM TERM
8	Engage directly with the Taupo Primary School to facilitate the development of a '21st Century School' Strategy.	LONG TERM
9	Develop concept designs for a combined Council building/ C.A.H facility including cost estimates. To be developed in parallel with civic square design.	SHORT TERM

B. Public Works

The diverse range of development opportunities identified in this structure plan will require political will, prioritised funding and the strengthening of relationships with key stakeholders to be realised.

The purpose of the adjoining table is to identify key actions related to core urban design initiatives arising from this study. The table lists the action/ project and relative priority (short/ medium or long term. This is seen as a starting point or input into Council's more comprehensive implementation program for the entire structure plan.

part v: Town Centre Guidelines

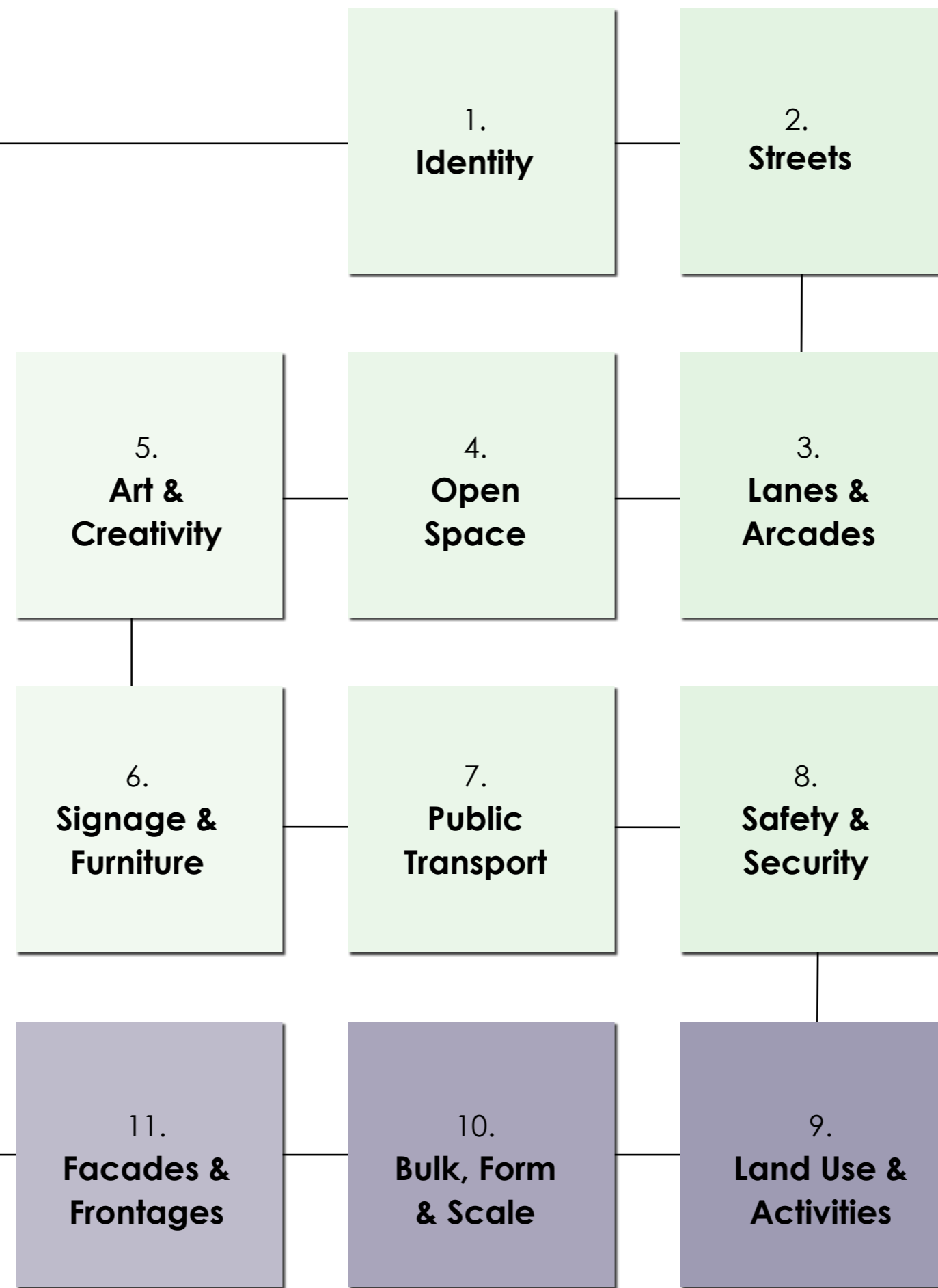
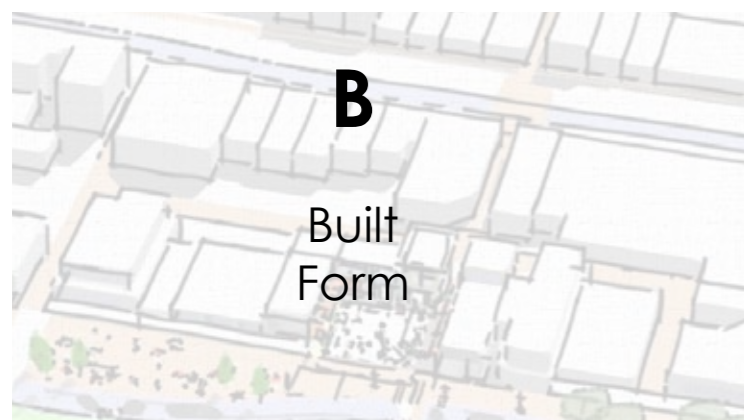
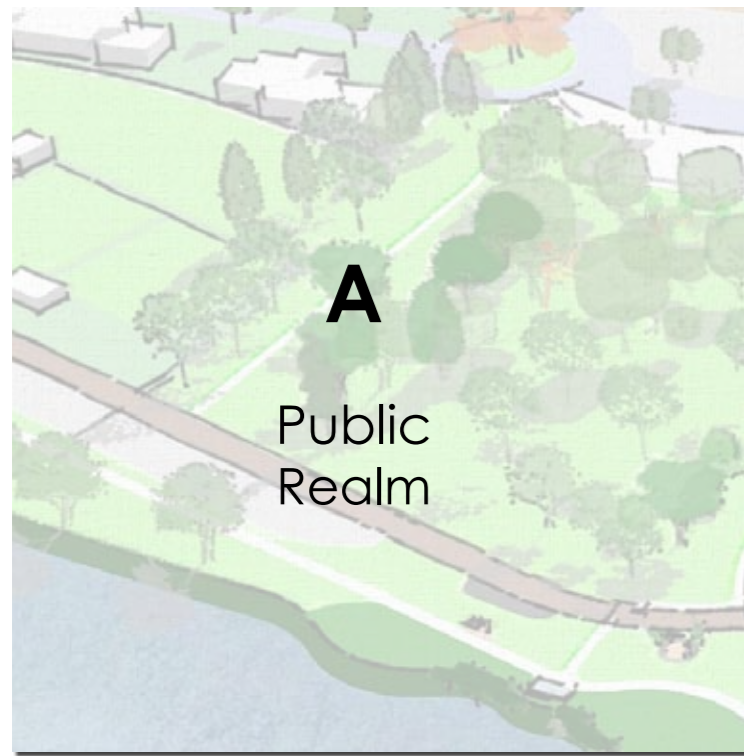


Guidelines Purpose

The project brief from Taupo District Council required Urban Design Guidelines for the town centre to provide direction for the future development of the town.

The Guidelines provide a general framework for the consolidation of the existing town centre as the heart of the Taupo Community. They provide a starting point and foundation for high quality urban design outcomes through both public realm and private development. It is anticipated that these guidelines will both influence thinking in the re-working of the District Plan as well as provide guidance to future works in the town centre environment.

The guidelines have been structured in 11 core sections as set out to the left.



1: Identity

Regardless of the scale, activity or purpose, all future development in Taupo's town centre environment needs to be mindful of the town's character and sense of place. While a town's character is often defined by the 'big things' such as the Great Lake in Taupo's case, the little things also matter a great deal to how a place is perceived and valued. As such, genius loci (the spirit of the place) should be an underlying consideration that informs all design decisions.

Consultation undertaken through the Structure Plan has shown that Taupo means different things to different people. While the Community is strongly connected with the natural landscape that surrounds the town, many other values, histories and meanings come into play. With acknowledgement to the many people who provided their thoughts and ideas through the consultation process, the values summarised to the left proved to be the most commonly expressed and shared;

The Natural Landscape

Taupo is strongly associated with its landscape setting and in particular Lake Taupo, the Waikato River, Mount Tauhara and the Tongariro Domain are significant to people's concepts of place.

The mountains are an iconic presence on the horizon and the identity of Taupo is strongly connected to these as recreational destinations and cultural icons.

Rising steam, geothermal energy and the Crater Lake are all reminders of the volcanic origins of the landscape and there is a general feeling that this could be embraced as a theme and starting point for future design work.

Parks & Gardens

People value the gardens and large trees in the Tongariro Domain and around the town and it is clear that these are a feature to be protected and enhanced.

Location

Taupo's central location within the North Island is an important factor both geographically and psychologically. For many, Taupo is the heart of the North Island.

Shared Values

History & Culture

People identified the importance of both Maori and Pakeha histories and the significant events that have shaped the town. At the same time it was acknowledged that these histories are not clearly expressed or represented in the town centre and that there was an opportunity to do so in the future. The Community want to ensure that variety, richness and depth of history and culture are reflected in the future development of the town centre.

Tourism & Events

Many see Taupo as a tourist town and particularly for non-residents, Taupo's image is strongly connected with tourism and the major events that are held throughout the year.



1: Identity

Guidelines

- + The borrowed landscape is a key design element for Taupo's town centre. Vistas to the Lake, the river, the Tongariro Domain, Mount Tauhara and the mountains need to be protected and enhanced through future development.
- + The names of places and streets strongly reflect history and the landscape. Names like Tongariro, Heuheu and the Great Lake Centre all send a message about the elements and people that have contributed to Taupo's identity. Future development should retain and build on this approach to place-naming and reinforce the meanings where possible through sculpture and information signage so that people can share in these histories.
- + Protect and utilise existing mature trees as a focus of new development. Place an increased focus on increasing the number of trees throughout the town centre, in streets, open spaces and within private developments.
- + Consider building historical, cultural and landscape references into future development through artworks, plant selection and detail design elements that reflect Taupo's unique characteristics.
- + Ensure that variety, richness and depth of history and culture are reflected in the future development of the town centre.
- + Increase the visible exposure of events in the town centre and develop all future public spaces with the objective of better providing for the running of events.
- + Consider retaining character buildings or elements in addition to those that are heritage listed. Refurbish, re-use or relocate heritage elements in keeping with their historic use and local context.



The borrowed landscape provides a constant backdrop to Taupo's urban life.



Well located sculptural elements can become well recognised cultural markers and landmarks.



Historical panels and interpretation signage add a new depth of meaning to the town centre.



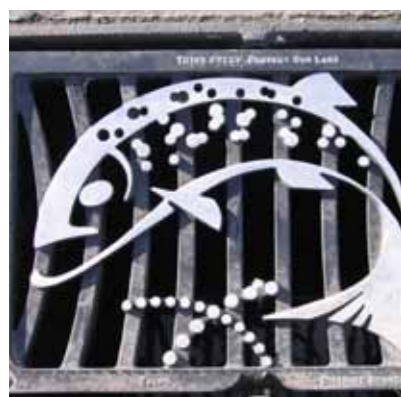
Seating areas provide the opportunity to sit back and contemplate the Lake and natural features.



Taupo's geothermal origins need to be embraced in future design.



Large specimen trees such as this oak in the Domain need to be protected as features.



Various motifs and textures that reflect Taupo's location, climate and community.





The interconnected grid should be retained to ensure a permeable road network. ✓



Dead end streets such as Story Place can be reconnected into the network. ✗



Tongariro Street is currently dedicated to vehicular movement and is difficult for pedestrians to navigate. ✗



Narrower carriageways, delineated parking zones and planting help to create a slow-speed, shared street environment. ✓

2: Streets

Streets are the arteries of a town centre; being the focus of energy and activity and the means by which people move through and experience urban life. Best practice urban design recognises streets as the key organising element of urban areas.

While Taupo's grid of central streets provides a strong and well-connected foundation, this network could be greatly improved to create a street network that not only works for vehicles but also attracts a high level of use by pedestrians, cyclists, the disabled and public transport.

Improving the central streets of Taupo will result in increased comfort, amenity and accessibility for pedestrians meaning that they will be likely to stay in the town centre for longer. Well designed street upgrades will also facilitate social interaction, increase public safety and thus increase the exposure of retail and business to foot traffic and assist commercial viability.

Greater success will be achieved in the streets of the town centre through the provision of a continuous active edge to the street. Active retail and building frontages onto streets will provide for increased passive surveillance as well as adding to the overall quality, character and vitality of the street edge (refer Built Form Section).

The key shift for Taupo's central streets is to overcome the mentality that the street is a divider that separates people, cars and activities and to realise the potential of streets as integrating elements that can be attractive places for people and urban life.

In planning for and designing the future streets network of Taupo, the following guidelines need to be considered:

Guidelines: (Street Network)

- + Streets and lanes should always connect through to other streets to provide a legible and highly permeable movement network for both vehicles and pedestrians.
- + Dead-end roads and cul-de-sacs should be avoided in future street modifications.
- + Streets should always act as thoroughfares to ensure maximum efficiency and legibility.
- + The street network should present a clearly legible hierarchy to assist wayfinding and manage the relationship between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Within the pedestrian environment, all streets are envisaged as slow-speed, shared environments.
- + Clear signage should help people to navigate through the town centre environment and lead people to their destination.





Views to the Lake and mountains are a defining characteristic of many of Taupo's streets. These should be protected and enhanced by design.



Many of the stark, vehicle-oriented streets in Taupo lack street trees, pedestrian amenity and human scale.



Existing trees should be retained and made a feature of future upgrades.



Street trees should be suited to urban conditions and be clear-stemmed to protect visibility.



Street trees should be regularly spaced to preserve views between shopfronts and the street.

2: Streets (Landscape)

Great streets often derive their character and charm from an axial vista framing an architectural or landscape feature. Taupo's streets offer many opportunities for strong axial views towards landscapes such as Mount Tauhara, Lake Taupo and the Central Plateau. The relationship of streets to open spaces and key landmarks within the urban environment should also be explored during the design process.

Street trees will be a vital ingredient in the improvement of Taupo's urban streets, providing shade and structure to the streetscape. Trees also provide a strong link between the urban environment and surrounding rural and natural landscapes.

The ratio of street width to the height of built form is fundamental in the spatial definition of the public realm. Where built form is not able to provide the necessary scale, street trees can be used to provide a vertical, framing element. The width of Taupo's town centre streets allows ample opportunity for the future introduction of street trees, both lining roadsides and within central medians depending on the particular needs of the street.

Guidelines:

- + Streetscape design should protect and enhance views to the 'borrowed landscape'. While views terminating on architectural landmarks are rare in Taupo, there is an opportunity to take advantage of these with future redevelopment.
- + Mature trees and vegetation within existing streets should be retained in future street modification wherever possible to maintain the character and comfort of the streetscape. Designing around significant trees and making them a feature of streets will add interest, variety and help to maintain a sense of continuity with the past.

- + A street tree programme should be developed for the town centre environment, identifying species and planting approaches to be used throughout the town centre.
- + Street trees of an appropriate scale and habit should be chosen for durability in harsh urban conditions.
- + Street trees should be pruned to maintain clear stems to a minimum height of 3.5m above ground level. Uplimbing allows for safe vehicle passage and visibility. As a general rule of thumb, shrubs and groundcovers within streetscapes should be maintained to a maximum height of 700 mm to allow views through.
- + Deciduous trees should be considered for use on east-west oriented streets to reduce the overshadowing of footpaths in the winter months.
- + Street frontages should include trees generally planted in a uniform pattern of species that reach a minimum height of one storey at maturity.

The spacing of the trees adjacent to retail frontages may be more irregular to avoid visually obscuring the shopfronts.
- + The introduced landscape shall consist of durable tree species tolerant of soil compaction and harsh urban environment.
- + Future street upgrades should explore the use of water sensitive urban design wherever practical, using swales, rain gardens, filters and other such approaches for the retention and treatment of stormwater within the road corridor.
- + Landscaping should be used to provide a clear distinction between public and private areas, enhancing safety, privacy and amenity between the public and private realms.





Lack of differentiation between traffic lanes and parking areas emphasises the width of the street and gives a low amenity outcome. ❌



Introducing a hierarchy of materials in the ground plane increases the legibility and appeal of the streetscape. ✅



Information signage needs to be easily accessible. ✅



Pedestrian crossings / thresholds need to be a focus of street upgrades. ✅



2: Pedestrian Areas

While some areas within the town centre are well designed for pedestrians, the majority of streets are dominated by vehicles. The appeal and function of the town centre could be dramatically changed by prioritising pedestrian needs.

Guidelines:

- + Broad footpaths should be encouraged to provide a comfortable and uncluttered pedestrian zone. Maximising the footpath width also encourages a wide range of transient activities (displays, coffee carts, buskers etc.) to thrive without being an impediment to movement.
- + Pedestrian crossings should be clearly marked and obvious to pedestrians as well as vehicles.
- + Paved surfaces and ground plane treatments should be simple, uncluttered and refined. High quality surfaces will provide uniformity to the streetscape.
- + Paving treatments, signage and landscaping should all help to communicate a clear hierarchy. Wide expanses of asphalt on existing streets should be reduced to differentiate between traffic lanes, parking zones and pedestrian footpaths.
- + Universal access should be considered in all future designs and upgrades, allowing for people of all abilities to move freely about the town centre. The needs of children, disabled and sight-impaired people should be given specific consideration.
- + Information and directional signage should be provided at key points so that further information about the town centre and shopping environment is easily obtained. A comprehensive signing strategy should be considered for the entire town centre area.

Parking

On and off-street and surface parking is readily available in the town centre and people rarely need to walk far from their car to their destination. The availability of on-street parking is a positive factor, however, large, unbroken areas of surface parking currently detract from streetscape amenity and disrupt the continuity of the street edge. The overall amenity and appeal of Taupo will be improved if parking areas are a less dominant element.

Guidelines:

- + On-street parking on Taupo's streets should be maintained and all future streets should provide for on-street parking. Maintaining parking on the main retail streets assists in the management of a shared pedestrian-traffic environment as it slows vehicles down and distributes parking throughout the streetscape as opposed to concentrating it in one location. Landscaping should be used to break up long stretches of parking to provide visual relief.
- + Priority for street parks in the town centre should be given to short-term visitors such as shoppers rather than longer term users such as workers. Timing restrictions should be applied to reinforce this prioritisation for short term parks.
- + Where parking is provided on-site, this should not be located at the street frontage but preferably below ground or above the ground floor. This enables the optimisation of ground floor space for retail and commercial activities.
- + Vehicle entrances off streets should occupy a minimal site frontage to avoid the interruption of pedestrian movement. As Taupo has a well developed system of rear laneways, options for obtaining vehicular access from the rear of sites should be prioritised. Vehicular entrances to parking lots, multi-storey parking buildings and garages should be no more than 6m wide at the street frontage.
- + All parking lots, garages, and parking structures should be located to encourage movement through the town centre and past shops. Pedestrian exits from parking structures and garages should relate directly to a street frontage.








2: Street Types

Town centre streets can be separated into a number of basic types based on the function, location and relationship to adjoining land uses.

Typical sketches have been developed for each of these street types to help clarify the key guiding principles for future modifications and upgrades. Note that these sections are conceptual only and are not intended to be fully resolved designs.

It is anticipated that all future upgrades for town centre streets will undergo a comprehensive design process with consideration for site-specific issues as well as Community and stakeholder input.



	Boulevard (Type A)
	Core Retail Street (Type B)
	Reserve / Reserve Edge Street (Type C)
	Collector / Distributor (Type D)
	Local Access Streets (General)



2: Type A



Typical View of existing Tongariro Street road corridor



Conceptual sketch of upgraded Tongariro Street with an emphasis placed on amenity and pedestrian activity

The Boulevard

Location	Primarily intended for Tongariro Street but could also be applied to sections of Spa Road.
Purpose	Provides a high amenity connecting road that draws people towards the shopping environment and lakefront. Intended as a pedestrian priority and community focussed shopping environment.
Land Use	Continuous street level retail to one side with open space and civic / community facilities to the other.
Traffic	Slow speed private vehicles and public transport. One travel lane in each direction. The street design creates a managed speed environment, prioritising pedestrian movement and slowing vehicles.
Parking	All on site parking is located to the rear of buildings. Angled parking on the street is retained adjacent to shopfronts but parallel parking is preferred adjacent to open space. A distinct paving material is used in parking lanes to reduce the perceived width of the carriageway. The parking lanes are broken into shorter segments through landscaping treatments.
Pedestrians	Streetside dining and other activities should be encouraged to create an active street-life, however, pedestrian flows should not be compromised. Pedestrian surfaces should be paved with an emphasis on simplicity and quality to achieve a strong sense of uniformity and legibility on the ground plane. Pedestrian crossings need to be placed at regular intervals. Cycle lanes are an important consideration and should be provided both on road and within a shared footpath.
Landscape	A high amenity streetscape is a priority and street trees are a vital ingredient. To enable the protection of street awnings, trees can be included within islands in the parking lane as well as in a broad central median that allows for larger trees.



2: Type B



Typical view of Core Retail Street (Heuheu Street looking towards Tongariro Domain)



Conceptual sketch of Core Retail Street, introducing higher quality surfaces and using street trees to spatially define the pedestrian realm.

Core Retail

Location	Intended for existing and future core retail streets including Horomatangi, Heuheu and Ruapehu Streets.
Purpose	Pedestrian priority shopping environment, community emphasis.
Land Use	Continuous street level retail with commercial / residential above. No set back from the footpath.
Traffic	Slow speed private vehicles. Narrow carriageways with one lane in each direction. Street design creates managed speed environment prioritising pedestrian movement and slowing vehicles.
Parking	Short-stay, visitor focused parking on both sides of street, broken by landscaped islands at regular intervals. Angled parking may be retained but parallel parking should be considered from a pedestrian/ traffic safety perspective. The parking lane is paved to distinguish from the main carriageway. Any on site parking is located to the rear of buildings.
Pedestrians	Pedestrian crossings to be placed at close intervals to allow for easy movement over the traffic lanes. Central crossing points linking laneways should be designed as dedicated pedestrian thresholds.
Landscape	Landscaping provided within the parking lane and the berm and specimen trees are provided at a scale that helps to spatially define the street. Footpaths are widened wherever possible and clutter (i.e sandwich boards) avoided to ensure pedestrian flows are unobstructed.



2: Type C

Reserve Street

Location	Relates to all roads within reserves or abutting open space areas. Includes all existing and proposed roads in the Tongariro Domain.
Purpose	This street type is primarily for the purpose of providing access to the Domain and the marina and is envisaged as a low-key, informal road corridor in keeping with the predominant open space character of the surrounding reserve. Roads are able to easily closed down during events.
Land Use	Open space to one or both sides of the street. Where built form is allowed for, it is primarily for civic, community or other use compatible with the objectives of the adjoining reserve.
Traffic	General vehicles in a slow-traffic environment.
Parking	On-street parking to be provided within the road corridor to provide for reserve parking without the need for large surface carpark areas. Parking lanes to be paved to distinguish from carriageway. Grass cell pavers or similar could be used in this situation to maximise permeable surfaces and minimise visual impact.
Pedestrians	Roadways should operate as pedestrian thoroughfares with broad pathways and cycle routes included in the design. The design should manage traffic to the extent that pedestrians feel comfortable crossing roads at any point.
Landscape	Roads designed around existing trees where possible. New street trees should be clustered informally to compliment the existing character of reserves. Large specimen trees should be incorporated wherever possible.



The current view of Story Place looking eastwards towards the town centre.



A conceptual view of the potential benefits in upgrading the street to provide an attractive and direct connection through the Tongariro Domain to the river and marina.



2: Type C

Reserve Street

The view to the left shows an alternative design treatment for a Reserve Street. The concept looks more specifically at the Tamamutu Street extension. It is anticipated that designs will vary to meet the specific needs of the street and adjoining activities.



An artist's impression of the proposed Tamamutu Street extension showing how the pedestrian oriented street might relate to the dedicated events space



Boffa Miskell



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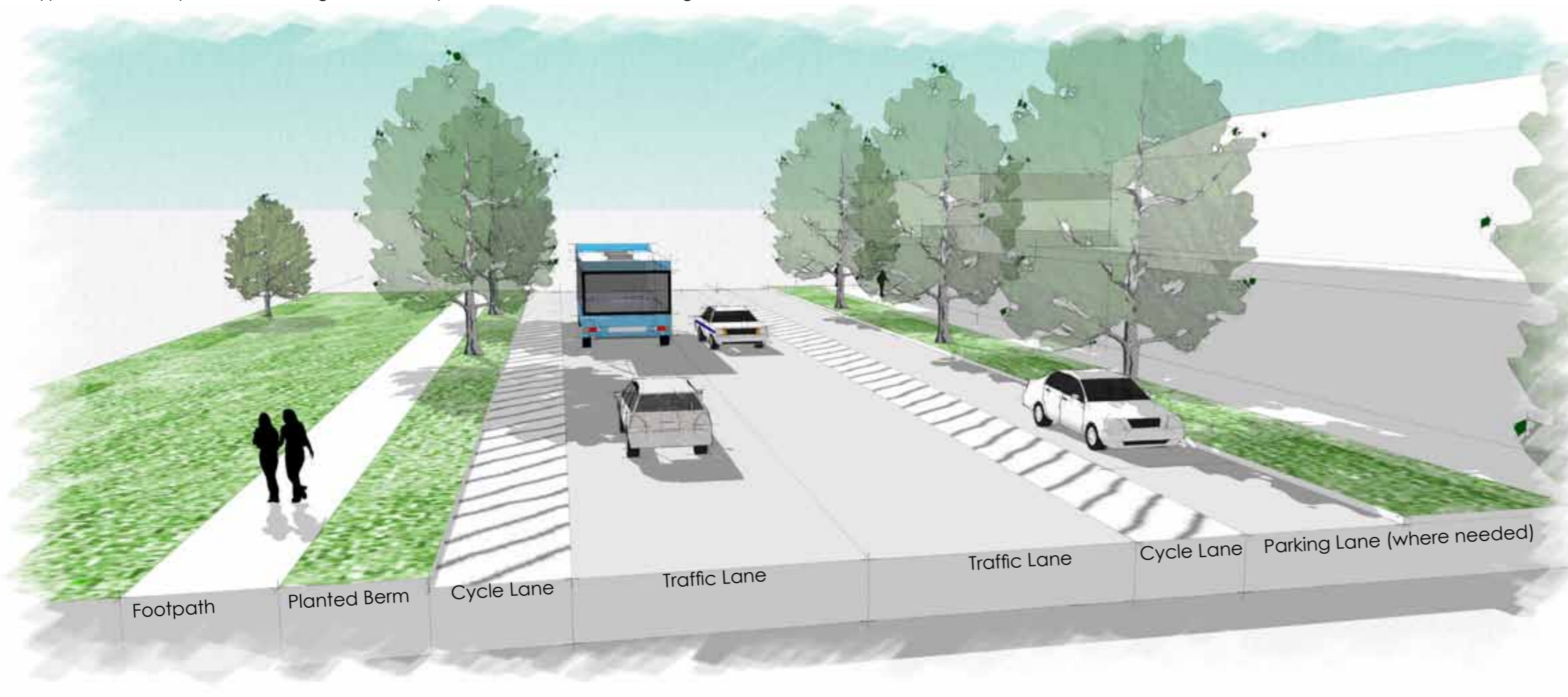
2: Type D

Collector / Distributor

Location	Relates primarily to Titiraupehu Street and segments of Spa Road.
Purpose	This type provides the path of least resistance for vehicles moving around or through the town centre and is the only town centre roading type that gives clear priority to vehicles. Provides easy and efficient movement of general traffic around town centre and feeder of traffic into town centre grid.
Land Use	Interface between commercial/retail and other land use activities such as mixed-use.
Traffic	General vehicles (excluding heavy vehicles) and public transport. Bus stops should be provided for at regular intervals.
Parking	On-street parking should be retained wherever adjoining land uses require it. Public parking buildings could be located on these streets.
Pedestrians	Signalised crossings should be used in preference to roundabouts and pedestrian crossing points need to be highly legible to increase safety and visibility. An on-road cycle lane and footpaths on both sides of the street should be provided.
Landscape	Street trees should be provided in the berm wherever possible and where parking lanes are retained, trees can be placed in newly created islands. Street trees play an important role in defining the road corridor and creating an edge between precincts and land uses.



A typical view of Spa Road looking in a westerly direction towards the Tongariro Domain.



Concept sketch showing the basic elements required of collector and distributor routes.



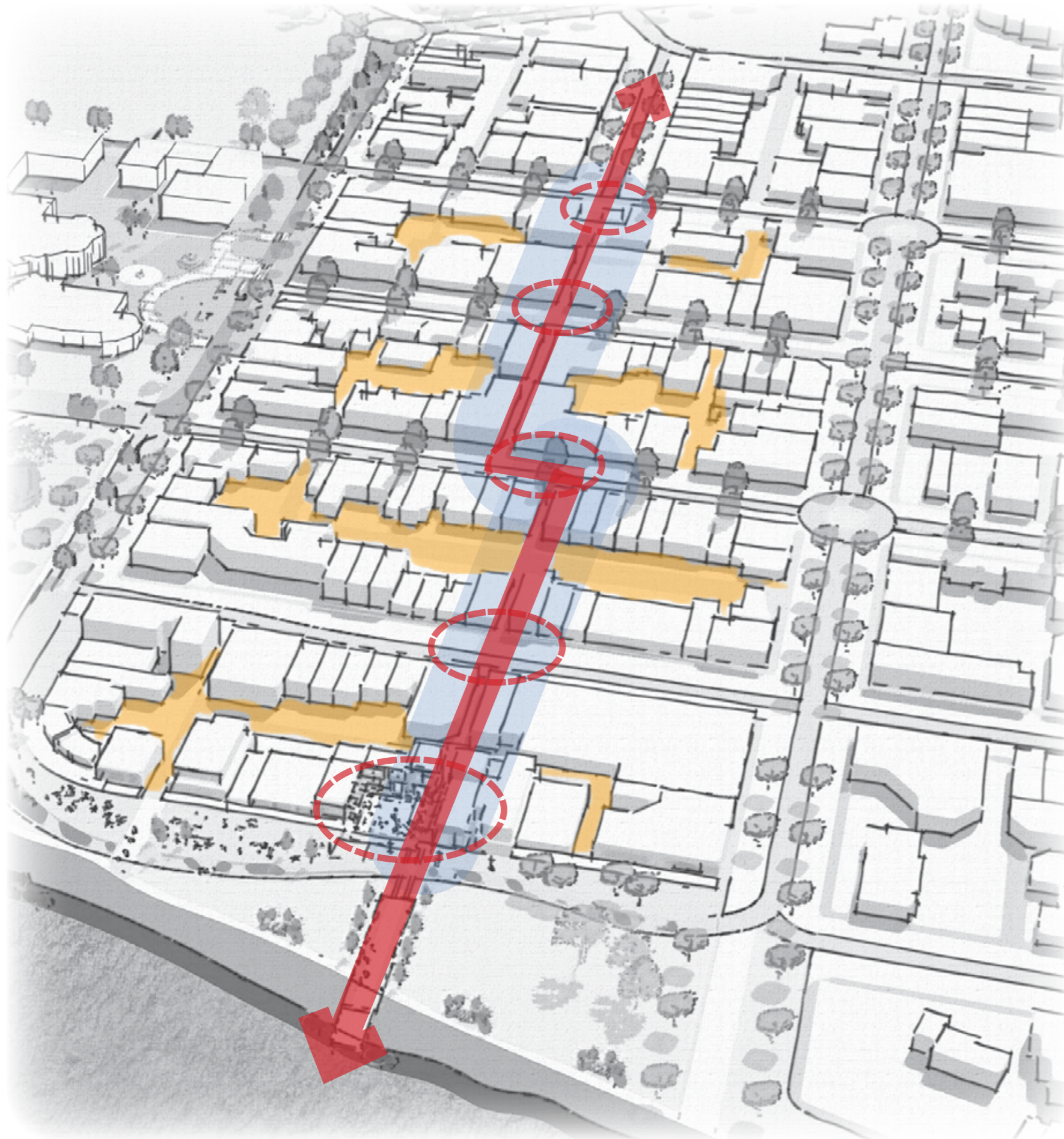
3: Lanes Network





Taupo's existing lanes and arcades provide a solid foundation for the development of a thriving network offering pedestrian friendly spaces, boutique retail opportunities and a highly permeable movement network.

Taupo's lane network needs to be developed to form a logical hierarchy of lanes from narrow, semi-enclosed arcades through to broad service lanes. The north-south lanes are primarily **pedestrian corridors** whereas the east-west oriented **service lanes** are shared traffic and loading environments. Preserving these primary functions regardless of future development options will ensure that access and servicing needs are maintained. The potential of the laneway network can be realised through consideration for the following;

Guidelines:

- + Connectivity between lanes and other pedestrian spaces should be maximised. Crossing points, laneway entries and service lane crossings should be the focus of future upgrades to enhance the ability for pedestrians to move through the network.
- + Increased frontage within blocks makes more efficient use of under developed rear lots and buildings creating greater amenity.
- + Ensure lanes contribute to improving access to key destinations or public transport.
- + Ensure crossing points are safe, legible and efficient. Crossing points between lanes should be located to provide for direct connections so that pedestrian desire lines are not compromised.
- + Increasing the number of linkages reduces the overall block size, creates more frontage and greater value. This makes it more feasible to provide basement or multi-storey car parking away from main pedestrian routes.
- + Consider potential opportunities for future mid-block laneway connections in the redevelopment of blocks between Ruapehu and Titiraupenga Streets.



	Primary pedestrian axis made up of connected network of laneways and pedestrian priority spaces
	Pedestrian nodal points, designed to act as gathering and meeting points.
	Intensified retail activity with emphasis on smaller boutique tenancies.
	Service lanes provide opportunity for future mixed-use development.



3: Pedestrian Lanes

Taupo's north-south lanes are typically 4m to 6m in width and vary in length. Narrow lanes have several particular design considerations which are explored below:

Guidelines:

+ Pedestrianisation and Spill Out Zones

In general, emphasis needs to be placed on ground level uses within buildings to create a source of space for activities, such as outdoor dining and product display alongside lanes.

+ The design of ground level building façades will need to have a strong indoor/outdoor relationship that exposes a high proportion of the frontage to the lane (e.g. concertina doors). This is preferable to other alternatives such as moving dining areas to rear courtyards where the benefits of the activity are lost from the public spaces along the lane.

+ Moveable and Temporary Street Furniture

Narrow lanes will be shared by a variety of activities through time and design needs to consider adaptability and temporary activities.

+ Street furniture should be designed for quick and easy removal with qualities such as being light, stackable and retractable.

+ The storage of street furniture and other elements will need to be on private property or in designated storage areas as often provided for market stalls.

+ Security

The dark and narrow nature of many lanes requires careful thought when considering pedestrian use and safety. Pedestrian priority lanes to be used at night need to be well-lit and related to night-time activities such as cinemas, restaurants and clubs/ bars.



While many of the existing lanes provide a valuable mid-block pedestrian connection, there is ample opportunity to recreate them as destinations in their own right.



Encouraging active ground floor edges and developing a strong indoor/ outdoor relationship will be key to the success of future lanes.



3. Service Lanes

Service lanes are those lanes designated primarily for vehicular traffic, providing service corridors for local business use. Although used heavily by vehicles, they still contribute to the overall lanes network and should be given some design consideration, particularly where they intersect with pedestrian priority lanes or squares.

Guidelines:

+ Clear Hierarchy

Service lanes need to read as the third tier in the movement hierarchy of the City, behind primary streets and pedestrian priority lanes.

+ New developments are encouraged to create dedicated service areas off the lanes to avoid conflict with other lane uses.

+ Service lanes should still be visibly recognisable within the lanes network and appear well managed. Entrances to lanes should provide a paved threshold that matches the network it resides within. This integrates with the lane treatment and gives an early warning to drivers exiting onto pedestrian priority lanes.

+ Priority

If separation is well defined motorists will generally assume an automatic priority to lane space. Quality lane environments are ones where motorists feel like invited guests in the pedestrian domain.

+ If separation is desired or required then it is best to do this subtly such that confident pedestrians maintain a measure of comfort walking in a vehicle passage. This also helps moderate vehicle speeds.

+ Security

Most service lanes should be primarily for day use only with consideration given to security lighting and other measures at night.



Service lanes do not need to look neglected - they can be people-friendly spaces as well as being functional.



Entry thresholds to the lanes can be given particular attention to lift their amenity and appeal.





Adjoining activities should relate to the laneway rather than blocking it out. ❌



Smaller, boutique retail provides opportunities for local businesses and add interest and vitality. ✅



Lane entrances should be clearly signed and easily visible from the main street. ✅



The intimate scale of lanes and shelter from the elements creates an ideal setting for alfresco dining. ✅



Retailers should be encouraged to express the identity of their site through artwork and attention to details.

3: Lane Elements

Studies of successful lanes have shown that they have a number of key elements or design characteristics. These include (1) fine urban grain, (2) building line continuity, and (3) lane entrances and corners.

Guidelines: Fine Urban Grain

This characteristic relates to the small and frequent division of lanes, buildings and features which increase land use diversity and richness of detail. These lanes, and the buildings that enclose them, are experienced at close range and demand greater pedestrian interest and attention to detail than other parts of the city.

- + Promote frequent and smaller 'boutique' units along laneway frontages using good façade details and textured materials to create a distinctive and interesting ground level when viewed at close range and at slow walking speeds.
- + Develop buildings with flexible structures to allow for units to easily divide, merge or extend.
- + Where existing coarse grained building stock exists break down elements by retrofitting with detailed and articulated façades or sleeving development.
- + Avoid the creation of iconic or landmark buildings in laneways. Small yet recognisable features, artworks and displays work better in a tight lane environment. Lane corners should be positive yet discrete to keep the edges of an urban block intact.

Guidelines: Building Line Continuity

Lanes are distinct from other streets by the heightened sense of enclosure and intimacy created by buildings that line both sides. This is less influenced by building height and more by the continuous building façade at lower levels.

- + Ensure buildings define lanes and squares by providing a continuity of building edge.
- + Buildings should generally be built up to the building lines. Building setbacks should only be used to create larger squares and public spaces adjacent to laneways.
- + Avoid small recesses along the lane edge. If necessary, use gates or sliding doors to continue flush with the building line.

Guidelines: Entrances and Corners

Entrances to lanes are an important threshold where lanes meet primary retail streets, public spaces or other lanes. These cross-over points should generally be discrete and understated in nature and reinforce the element of discovery and surprise which is intrinsic to most laneways.

+ Building Corners and Safety Sightlines

Buildings framing the entrance to lanes should have positive corners but could be transparent at ground level to provide a more welcoming atmosphere. Corners, if glazed, could allow the activities on the inside to connect and contribute to the laneway atmosphere and forewarn pedestrians turning the corner to expect oncoming traffic or safety threats.

+ Lane entrances should remain clear and visible and maintain good sightlines from the street into the lane. Any visual obstructions on the approach to the lane entrance should be avoided. Clutter should be avoided, and where required should be located against building edges.

+ Buildings fronting onto lanes should incorporate glazing to provide a visual connection with the street. Glazing should not be completely covered up with signage or displays.



4: Open Space

Open space is an essential element in the composition of Taupo's town centre. The parks, green spaces and waterfront reserves throughout town contribute greatly to the quality of life enjoyed by a growing population. The abundant opportunities for outdoor living and recreation are one of the reasons why tourists visit and people decide to move to the district. In the face of growth and development pressures, maintaining and enhancing open space will be central in achieving the quality of life expected by current and future generations.

Guidelines: Open Space Network

- + Pedestrian and cycle connections should interconnect as much as possible with minimal obstructions to movement.
- + Those using the open space network should be encouraged to move through and explore other spaces. Locating landmarks, points of interest and destinations throughout the network facilitates exploration.
- + One of the basic needs for Taupo's open space network is for the strengthening of connections (both physical and visual) with the river and lakefront. Key streets connecting to the water should be given particular attention.
- + Public spaces need to be distributed throughout Taupo's town centre environment to ensure that all areas of town are within walkable distance of usable open space.
- + Public spaces need to reflect Taupo's identity and express the unique characteristics of the area. Materials, landscaping, sculpture and other elements should reflect local culture, heritage and environment.

Taupo has the potential to develop a well-connected network of open space, made up of a diverse range of spaces ranging from busy urban squares through to quiet, natural sanctuaries. The needs of all people should be met - from thrill-seeking tourists through to children, the elderly and office workers wanting somewhere to eat their lunch.





The ability to hold a wide range of events in open space areas should be protected and enhanced



Cultural and historical elements should be highly valued and become a focus for future design improvements.



The provision of strong pedestrian connections between the retail area and the waterfront will be fundamental to the future open space framework.



A successful open space network is not only about green, passive reserve areas but also needs active urban spaces. Even pedestrianised areas within the road reserve can provide valuable linkages and gathering spaces. Taupo needs to pay more attention to the quality of its urban spaces.

4: Open Space

Guidelines: Open Space Variety

- + The best urban environments provide a variety of public spaces to meet all interests, needs and climatic conditions. The town centre needs to cater for an increased variety of people and situations, complementing open reserve areas with more structured and more urbanised spaces.
- + Public open space areas should form a diverse network linking passive green spaces, active reserves, sheltered plazas and gathering areas. Future open space design should consider the physical and visual connections with other areas of open space.
- + Compact forms of open space such as plazas and pocket parks need to be located in central locations and larger, passive parks should continue to be situated at the fringe where the land meets the water and areas of high natural character.
- + Provide for both passive and active recreational activities where opportunities exist.
- + Ensure that proposed designs, activities and facilities reflect the needs of the target user groups in a balanced and realistic manner.
- + Consider ways that the open space might adapt to users at different times of the day or year.
- + Where space permits, provide flat, open areas that do not overly restrict use.
- + For larger areas of open space such as the Tongariro Domain and the lakefront, seek to develop a series of smaller spaces or destinations each of which has its own purpose and identity. For example, the Redoubt site could become the focus for a distinctive historic reserve with its own theme and identity.

Guidelines: Open Space Interfaces

- + Successful public spaces relate and engage with their surroundings. Interfaces with other land use activities need to be carefully designed to achieve a positive outcome.
- + Urban open space should generally be fronted by buildings to ensure that it is overlooked; increasing safety and the comfort of users. Buildings should never back onto public spaces or present blank walls/façades as this detracts from the safety and amenity of these spaces.
- + Where public spaces adjoin private or semi-private spaces, there should be a clear definition between these activities to ensure a compatible relationship. Public edges, such as roads and footpaths should be encouraged.
- + All areas of open space should be designed to have prominence within the urban structure. Accordingly, built form should be designed to enhance the edge of open spaces.
- + Open space should be designed to protect significant views for public enjoyment. Views to the lake, river and broader rural landscape should be protected and enhanced through future design. Open spaces located on the waterfront should be given particular emphasis and engage visually and/or physically with the water.



4: Open Space

Guidelines: Open Space Access

- + The site, layout and detailed design encourage universal access to the greatest extent possible (with a minimum of 2.5m wide shared walkways/cycleways).
- + Seek to provide distinct and safe pedestrian entries, linkages and shortcuts through reserves that respond to existing desire lines.
- + Provide vehicular access and parking as needed but always give pedestrians, cyclists and public transport priority.
- + Provide access for emergency and service vehicles.
- + Avoid unnecessary barriers, structures and level changes that might impede use or movement.


Guidelines: Open Space Safety

- + Create activity nodes in key locations to encourage social interaction. Include appropriate street furniture such as park benches and picnic tables within these nodes.
- + Avoid solid fences or planting which limits visibility into the reserve and/or passive surveillance.
- + In areas requiring high visual access, avoid planting dense shrubs and small trees between the heights of 0.7m to 2.0m that will block visibility and create dark, concealed areas.
- + Strategically locate signage and site/navigation maps to give people clear information about open space areas.




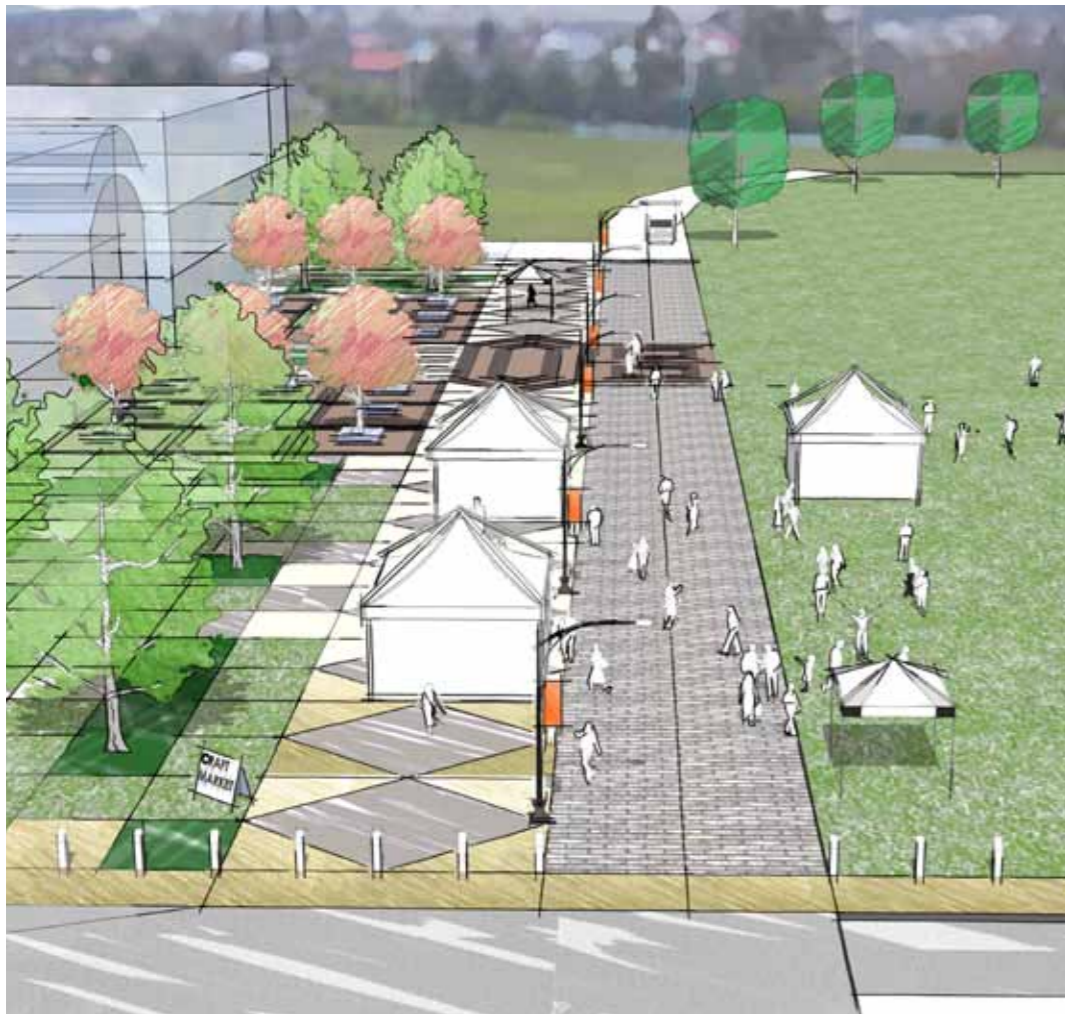
Surface parking in the Tongariro Domain impedes pedestrian movement and prioritises vehicles. 



Broad pathways in some areas of the Tongariro Domain make for easy pedestrian and cycle movement. 



Shrubs planted densely around the car parks near the Great Lake Centre create an easy target for criminals who can break in to vehicles hidden from view. 



An artist's impression of a street adjacent to a reserve showing how an active street edge can be achieved through the provision of buildings that provide street frontage and the creation of activity nodes that encourage social interaction.





Level changes, planting that impedes access and lack of an active building frontage are key design issues with the Cenotaph area. ❌



Squares need active frontages and multiple pedestrian connections to work effectively. ✅



Getting the scale of squares and plaza right is critical. While horizontal proportions need to relate to the scale of surrounding buildings, the minimum dimensions shown above enable multiple uses to occur. ✅



The bottom line for squares and plazas is that they need to become centres of activity. Events, performances, markets, rallies and exhibitions need to be actively encouraged by Council and key stakeholders.

4: Open Space

Squares are prominent and more highly urbanised spaces that form an integral part of the open space network. They provide periodic relief from the confines of the lanes and streets, providing points of interest and opportunities for rest along the route. They also provide a means for gathering and community events.

Guidelines: Squares and Plazas

- + High quality squares should be flexible in nature and able to cater for a variety of activities.
- + Squares should be enclosed on at least three sides by buildings with active frontages and regular building entrances.
- + Squares work most effectively when there are multiple connections into the space from different origins. This provides through movement and helps activate the corners and edges of the square as pedestrians take direct routes to their destination and interact en route. These connections could be lanes, arcades, pedestrian corridors, open spaces or streets.
- + Urban blocks surrounding a plaza or square must be highly permeable to maximise through-movement.
- + Squares need to be complementary in scale to the built environment. Many successful squares are quite small but need to be big enough to differentiate them from lanes and function as event spaces when required. Public spaces should be designed to accommodate a minimum circle of between 10m - 25m in diameter to achieve this.
- + While provision should be made for street furniture and public artworks that people can gather around and use, it is important that these do not interfere with the freedom to move through the square or restrict its periodic use as an event space. Fixed elements should be kept to the edges or minimise the extent of space they occupy.

- + Squares should be designed to accommodate large groups of people during events and markets but should also be flexible enough to allow for everyday use.
- + Moveable furniture may be incorporated to provide flexibility and be available for other uses (e.g. seats used as vehicle barriers during the day and stage by night).
- + Squares should have a simple ground plane of materials with minimal changes in level. Where changes in level are necessary these should be gradual so as to encourage free flowing movement. Permanent shrub and garden bed plantings that inhibit pedestrian movement should be avoided.
- + Prevailing winds should be considered when designing new lane connections, public spaces and building forms.
- + Shelter structures should be partly or fully transparent to allow light penetration to the footpath and views along building façades. The scale and extent of shelter structures need to balance the need for wind protection with pedestrian flows through the square to avoid fragmenting the space into discrete spaces.
- + New buildings should be designed to minimise overshadowing of public squares. Buildings on the northern and western sides of squares should not exceed a 1:3 height to width ratio to ensure squares receive at least two hours of sunlight during peak activity periods (i.e. 12pm- 2pm) in winter.





5: Art & Creativity

Public art offers the opportunity to create a unique sense of place and identity. Taupo has some excellent examples of public art that express the unique history and character of the area. A managed approach to public art in the future will strengthen the way that sculpture, murals and other creative pursuits are reflected in the town centre. Artwork should be promoted along key pedestrian corridors such as the laneways, the lakefront and Story Place to create an arts and sculpture trail that will guide people around town.

Guidelines:

- + Art should be incorporated into the design of buildings, public spaces, street furniture and paving in a way that is reflective of the character of the location and context.
- + Use art to emphasise key views, landmarks or gateways.
- + Integrate public art into the development early in the design process. For example, prominent corner sites should consider the inclusion of public art in the concept design phase.
- + Art can be created through a process of community involvement that can help link future development and upgrades with community aspirations.

LEFT: Various examples of street furniture and artwork located throughout the town centre.

6: Street Furniture

Visual clutter is a clear issue in the town centre, resulting from an ad-hoc approach to signage, discordant streetscape materials and a general lack of architectural continuity. Clutter is the unauthorised or uncoordinated use of signs and street furniture in intensely used urban areas. As lanes and pedestrian spaces are particularly confined spaces, they are highly susceptible to the accumulation of clutter, which can have a visual and physical effect on aesthetics and function.

Guidelines:

- + Street furniture should be located on the edges of spaces to provide clear pedestrian access ways and allow for a wide range of outdoor activities to occur.
- + A defined suite of street furniture should be developed for the town centre as a whole to provide consistency of quality and identity across the board. While this would allow for variations in different areas and from street to street, the implementation of a single suite would greatly strengthen Taupo's urban identity. The street furniture suite would apply to all of the pedestrian environment and cover paving, lighting, seating, bollards and signage.
- + Street signage should be designed to be incorporated with other street furniture elements if possible. Combined information signage should be located at key intersections in preference to individual signs.
- + Commercial signage should be attached/hung from buildings where possible. Maximum signage sizes should be set in place to avoid attempts to 'out-shout' other commercial enterprises.
- + Sandwich boards should not be allowed in areas where there is a narrow footpath, at lane entrances, or within lanes.

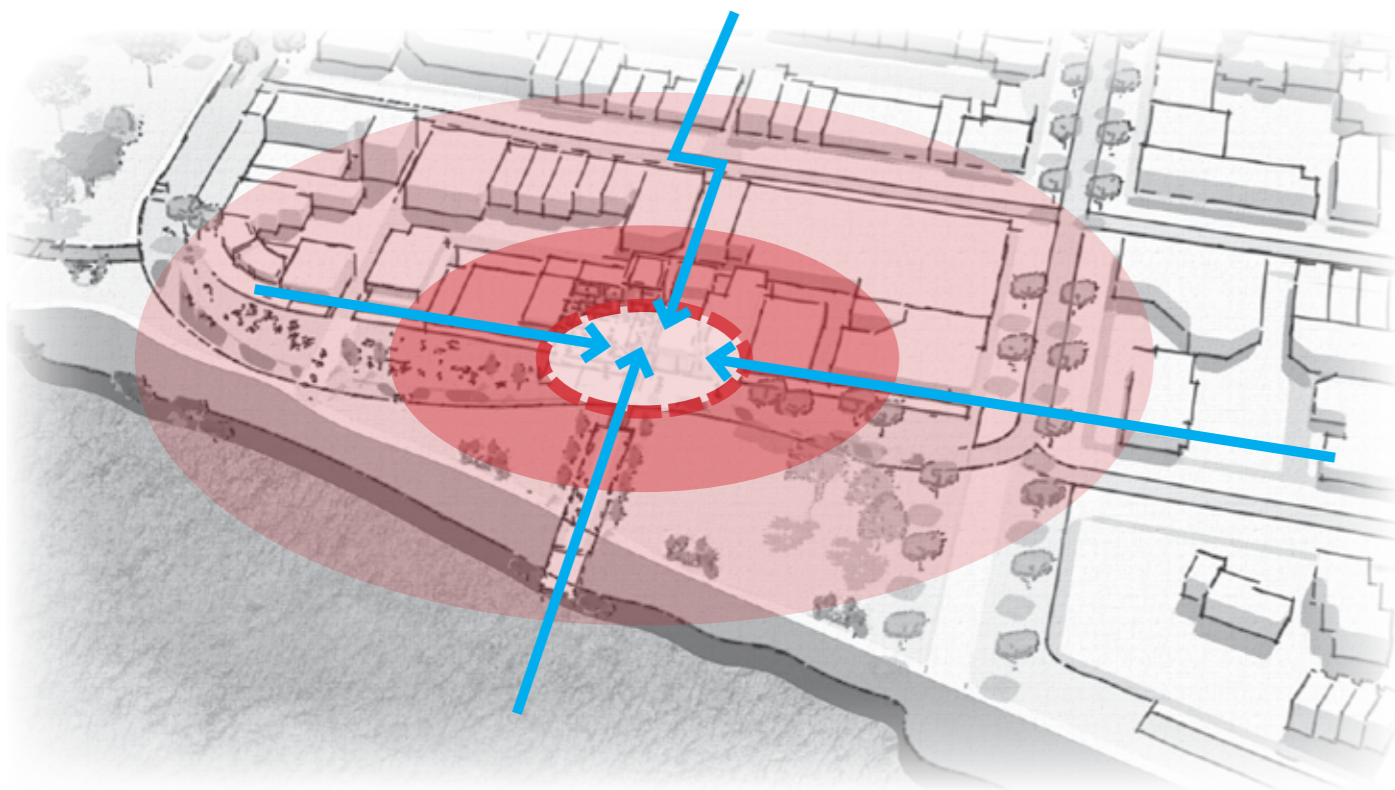




Some of Taupo's rear lanes suffer from a lack of attention and there is a general perception that some areas are unattractive as well as unsafe. Improved lighting, paving and future development will help to improve these spaces.



Transit-oriented development works because public transport is placed at the centre of new developments, close to destinations and easily accessible



The above shows how a bus stop (located by way of example on Roberts Street) can be sited at the core of a precinct with more intensive development (shown by the red shading) around it and pedestrian connections leading directly to it. Careful siting of transport stops can dramatically increase usage.

7: Public Transport

Public transport is in its infancy in Taupo and establishing an efficient and well-utilised bus network is a long-term goal. Future-proofing the town centre for buses however is a pragmatic step towards the promotion of higher public transport use.

Guidelines:

- + Public transport stops should be provided for at regular intervals and given priority over car parks.
- + The principles of transit-oriented development (TOD) should be considered in all future comprehensive redevelopment projects in the town centre, ensuring that centrally located and easily accessible transit stops can be provided. TOD recognises that public transport use is greatly increased when stops are supported by intensified, mixed-use development and well-connected pedestrian and cycle routes.
- + Higher intensity activities that generate public transport use must be located in close proximity to public transport stops. As a general guide, intensive development in Taupo should be located less than 400m (up to a 5 minute walk) from a bus stop.
- + The future bus network will need to connect various destinations around Taupo's town centre, including the new civic heart, marina, events spaces and future transport centre. Redevelopment of these areas will need to consider the future bus network.
- + The tourist industry is of vital importance to Taupo and as such tour buses, campervans and the like need to be accommodated. Future redevelopment of the civic heart, Domain and lakefront open spaces need to consider the needs of tourist traffic and increase the likelihood that tourists will stop and spend time in the town centre. Better accommodation of mass transit will also enhance the running of major events.

8: Safety & Security

CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) principles aims to improve both public perception and the reality about personal safety by minimising the potential for crime through positive behavior. A CPTED assessment should be undertaken before a public space is upgraded to ensure it is addressing any existing issues, and not creating further safety and security issues.

Guidelines:

- + Active ground level activities should be encouraged to occupy and use vacant street edges.
- + Avoid recessed areas in the public realm that could inadvertently create concealed hiding places.
- + Provide pedestrian lighting only in spaces that are designated for pedestrian priority to avoid unplanned use of unsafe spaces. Concentrate activity in areas that are regarded as safer for night-time use.
- + Increase the sense of ownership and maintenance to show that public spaces are cared for. This applies particularly to less refined areas in the town centre such as the service lanes.
- + Mid-block connections such as service lanes should be straight with a visually clear movement corridor through the block or to key internal destinations.
- + Create well defined routes, spaces, and entrances that provide for convenient and safe movement. Avoid dead ends and dog legs.
- + Promote a compatible mix of land uses and facilitate increased use of public space.
- + Where necessary, include well designed security features and elements such as security cameras and physical barriers.



9: Land Use Mix

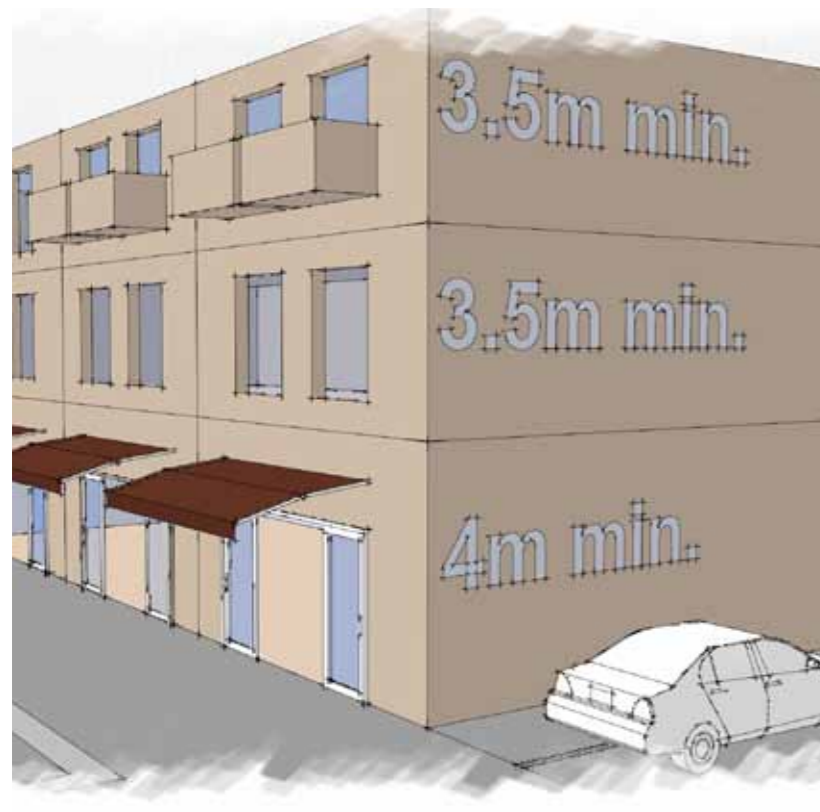
Mixed-use development is one of the basic ingredients for a more vibrant, liveable and economically viable town centre in Taupo. Mixed use development typically contains non-residential land uses (commercial, community, recreational or institutional) alongside residential ones. These uses may be organised either vertically or horizontally, or as a combination of the two, and generally in close compatible relationships.

Guidelines:

- + Increase and diversify the land use mix in the town centre during day and night for safety, vitality and a more robust economy.
- + Locate activities in appropriate places, seeking compatible relationships between activities and managing conflicts between them. Buildings should be designed to enhance the legibility of the given precinct
- + Encourage more permanent residential and visitor accommodation in the town centre.
- + Vertical stacking of land uses is preferable. Retail, cafés, bars and restaurants are best suited to the ground floor. Upper levels and rear parts of the building are more suitable for residential uses. Commercial uses often fit in between, where quicker access and a greater public profile is achieved.
- + Locate all primary building activities, pedestrian entrances and windows along the street or lane frontage to contribute to street activity and create positive surveillance from all building levels.
- + Generally avoid residential uses within the entertainment precinct unless a suitable buffer such as an intervening building is provided.
- + Design mixed use buildings to be adaptable to allow for a wide range of uses to occupy buildings and adapt as precincts, activities and market demands evolve.



Vertical stacking of land uses in the town centre will help to achieve a work/live/play mix all in one building. Multi-use buildings such as these should be encouraged.



Floor heights in commercial buildings should be kept to minimum dimensions of 4m at ground floor and 3.5m for floors 2 and 3. This ensures that internal spaces are flexible and adaptable over time - so that spaces can be easily modified if activities change.



One of very few examples of a mixed use development in Taupo with apartments located over ground floor retail.





Recent developments in Taupo have shown that a variation of one to four stories can be accommodated without being incompatible with the scale of the existing streetscape.



An example from Perth shows how larger buildings can be broken down into smaller components to reduce the perception of bulk. ✓



The breadth of Taupo's retail streets and low building height couple to create an expansive and uncomfortable scale. ✗



Typical Parisian streets are well known for their human scale, utilising a uniform, medium rise building envelope and street trees to enclose the street. ✓



Larger and bulkier retail formats (shown in orange) can be successfully integrated into the streetscape if sleeved with finer grain retail frontages.

10: Bulk, Form & Scale

Traditional town centres in New Zealand and their European precedents are often characterised by a continuity of building height. A continuous and consistent building height contributes to the coherence and enclosure of the streetscape, creating a comfortable and inhabitable space at a human scale.

Proposed alternatives to the existing 48m height limit are proposed in the Plan Change to provide a more targeted approach to delivering a well-scaled streetscape with good solar access.

Guidelines:

- + Building mass, form and scale should generally be compatible with that existing in the street or precinct. A height variation of one to three storeys within a street or block can provide some diversity and visual interest, however, continuity of height should be a guiding objective.
- + New buildings should be encouraged to build to the maximum allowable height for the given location or precinct. This approach maximises the usable floor area and provides a sense of enclosure to the streetscape.
- + Buildings with a larger bulk and mass than is typical in the street or precinct should be visually broken down into smaller components. For larger format and bulkier building forms with long street frontages, building modulation should give the impression that the façade is made of multiple finer-grained elements. Breaking a large frontage down should provide more diversity, colour, texture and visual interest.
- + Blank walls on street frontages and prominent sidewalls should be avoided. Active edges should be promoted to engage with the public realm.

- + Overheight buildings should step down towards the street edge at intervals to integrate with the scale of existing built form.
- + Additional building height is often appropriate on key corner sites where a landmark building is desirable. Additional height may also be appropriate where the intention is to frame a focal public space or provide an entry statement.
- + Developments on key corner sites should also explore options for additional set back at street level to provide a larger pedestrian area and well defined entry.
- + Façade elements such as awnings and verandahs should be continued around street corners. Generally, a higher level of detailing, material quality and lighting should be expected for a corner site. Corner buildings should relate effectively to both street frontages.
- + Narrow lots and building frontages are encouraged, particularly in the core retail streets and around key public spaces. Typically building frontages of 7 to 12 metres provide a rhythm, grain and variety that contribute to an attractive streetscape.
- + Building envelopes should be mapped to ensure that sunlight can reach the southside footpath of all east-west streets throughout the year. Shadow diagrams should be produced for overheight buildings to demonstrate the potential effects on solar access to the street.
- + Where large format retail is proposed within the retail core or retail expansion precinct, it should be sleeved by smaller tenancies to create an active and fine grained edge to the street.





Approximately three-quarters of the street level facade should be glazed to create a direct visual relationship with the street. ✓

A continuous street canopy provides shelter and architectural continuity. Glazed awnings as shown also provide better solar access. ✓



Hanging or fascia-style signage as shown will reduce the amount of footpath clutter and provide a consistent appearance to the streetscape. ✓



Numerous examples of street level frontages in the town centre that present blank walls to the street. X X X

11: Frontages

Guidance around the design of building façades and frontages is intended to achieve a higher degree of continuity, identity and rhythm to Taupo's streetscapes without dictating architectural style and repressing innovative design outcomes.

Façades within the town centre are encouraged to achieve a fine grain streetscene with active edges, rhythm, human scale and architectural interest.

Guidelines:

- + Provide frequent yet subtle architectural modulation, façade relief, openings and a mix of textures in building design to enhance the visual interest of the street / lane frontage.
- + Use durable, high quality building materials and details that will engage the eye of the pedestrian and express Taupo's volcanic landscape and identity.
- + All visible building edges should be fully designed, avoiding any blank walls that are visible from streets and public spaces.
- + Buildings should be designed to overlook the street and feed in to the activity in the public realm.
- + On retail streets, approximately 75% of the street level façade should be glazed to create a strong relationship with the street. Other street frontages in the town centre should aim to achieve at least 50% glazing at street level. Highly tinted or reflective glass should be avoided so that shoppers and passers-by can see easily inside.
- + Second floor façades throughout the town centre should also aim to maximise transparent and glazed surfaces. A suitable target is 40-50% of glazing for walls facing the street or public spaces.

- + A continuous canopy or awning should be provided at street level along all pedestrian edges in the town centre. Taupo has a number of examples of transparent canopies which provide shelter as well as allowing sunlight through to the footpath.
- + Entry points to buildings should be clearly demarcated and located for high visibility and ease of access.
- + Internal floor levels must be aligned with street level or as close as practical (no greater than 500mm level change) to allow easy access and avoid the creation of a barrier.
- + Façades should make reference to local character and heritage and express the individual identities of the building occupants or function. Public art, innovative use of materials and attention to detail should be encouraged to achieve a diverse and layered streetscape.
- + Signage should be as small as possible to avoid visual clutter and dominance (refer Guidelines Section 7). Hanging or fascia-style signage is encouraged to reduce the amount of footpath clutter. Signage over glazed areas should be avoided.



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